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Newsletter

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AFRICA: IS THERE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL?**

Five elements are necessary for the normal development of a human being. The first is water. Trees, animals or children die without water. The second is food. The third is health, because when water and food are available, but man falls sick, he may die. The fourth is education. When man has water, food and health, he needs education in order to be able to open up new horizons and new opportunities for himself. And finally, the fifth is peace, order and security. Without them not a single one of the basic necessities can be stable.

Anonymous Somali wise man

In May 2002, that is, exactly six years ago, this author, in his paper “Africa and Challenges of the 21st Century” ventured to enumerate the main conditions for the revival of the continent. They are as follows:

A sharp rise in the volume of the advanced countries’ aid to concrete aims on the principles of partnership;

Settlement of the present armed conflicts and prevention of possible conflicts in the future;

Better, more transparent, accountable and predictable governance and restricted corruption;

Continuing and increasing investments in “human capital”, above all, education, health protection systems, especially in combating HIV/AIDS pandemic, malaria and tuberculosis;

Greater involvement of women in economic and social life;

Prevention of the outflow of capital and brain drain;

Prevention of the laundering of criminal money and its transfer to banks in advanced countries;

The inclusion of Africa in the information revolution.

Naturally, Africa is so multiform and versatile that there can be no single formula for all countries. It is only natural that the above conditions are far from all, they only give a general outline of what is to be done and in what direction to work. Besides, these conditions are so closely intertwined that the order of their enumeration does not presuppose their hierarchy.

I shall add a usual reservation: there is no Africa as a single whole, despite the existence and development of a number of continental African structures; individual countries differ so sharply in their civilizations, and the levels and rates of economic development that they seem to be situated on different continents. But we speak of a region where the majority of the poorest countries of our planet is concentrated, sometimes with a decaying economy. A definite vagueness of definitions is also due to the fact that sometimes the word “Africa” means the entire continent, sometimes the countries south of Sahara, and sometimes these very countries without the Republic of South Africa.

Can we speak of the present day of Africa with optimism?

Yes and No.

At the very end of the 20th and in the early 21st century a certain dynamics of the strengthening of peace and security in Africa was observed. Quite recently, a territory larger than the entire Western Europe was in the grip of armed conflicts. Blood was spilled in Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cote d’Ivoire, Somalia, Algeria and Southern Sudan. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, have died as a result of military hostilities or from hunger, many millions have become refugees. There could be no talk of any progress or the liquidation of poverty in the conditions of constant conflicts. A conflict has now been raging in the western part of Sudan – Darfur, and in Somalia. These tragedies demand the most urgent solution. But their scope is incomparable to what was going on in Africa some 10–15 years ago. Kenya, too, was on the brink of a civil interethnic war quite recently, but the maturity and the feeling of responsibility of the Kenyan leaders,

the efforts of the African Union and of the entire world community have stopped the bloodshed and helped find a compromise formula to resolve the conflict.

The African Union has been playing an ever greater role in maintaining peace and security on the continent. There has been considerable progress with regard to the development of an African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), although the formation of the African Standby Force remains incomplete, and it will hardly be fully deployed by the year 2010, as planned. Despite this, the force is present in Darfur and Somalia. The decision in support of the African Standby Force has been adopted by the UN Security Council.

A group of wise men has been formed in Africa in order to give recommendations for finding ways and means to resolve conflicts and tackle the problems of post-conflict construction. Certain steps have been taken to set up an early warning system against conflicts on the African continent. With the help of the G8 and other partners the African Union organizes conferences and sets up technical working groups to evolve strategies for the development of logistics, communications and civil components for the peace-keeping operations and post-conflict construction.

It should be noted that the European Union and the United States render considerable financial aid to set up the African Standby Force. Russia takes part in practically all operations to maintain peace on the African continent and in training the necessary personnel for the corresponding force units of the African Union.

Steps have been taken within the framework of the African Union and regional organizations to preclude the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons and to monitor their stocks. The point is that some new NATO member-states sell arms of Soviet make to African countries at dumping prices, which increases the possibility of armed conflicts and steps up the activity of illegal armed groupings. Certain African countries have adopted stricter measures against the illegal arms trade. Proper real, but not declarative, measures within the NATO framework, could contribute to these efforts. After all, these new NATO member-states could follow the example of the Republic of South Africa, which scrapped the redundant stocks

of arms, despite the obvious economic losses.

During the past five to six years Africa has demonstrated a sufficiently rapid economic progress. Although the target of the annual growth of the GDP at 7 percent set in order to reach the Millennium Development Goals has not been reached, the overall results are not bad. In all, the continent has registered the growth by 5.6 percent in 2005; 5.7 percent in 2006, and about 6 percent in 2007. The same figure is expected in 2008.

In 2006 the GDP growth in 23 African countries was more than 5 percent, and in 2007 there were 30 such countries.

In 2006 there were 12 African countries with the GDP growth at 3.5 percent, and in 2005, their number grew to 15.

The African export of commodities and services increased by 15.2 percent in 2007, and import – by 13.2 percent.

Beginning from 2001 economic growth in Africa exceeds the growth of the GDP in the OECD countries.

This is caused by the growing requirements for African raw materials, the rising prices of hydrocarbons, metals and minerals, the writing-off of debts, the inflow of capital, especially within the framework of the Official Development Aid, as well as direct foreign investments. Certain results have been achieved in the implementation of reforms in some African countries. In any case, there have been no cases of famine in Africa in the past two or three years.

A more efficient macroeconomic management, the introduction of better governance and greater security were also among the factors which contributed to the economic successes of Africa.

At the same time, the medium- and long-term prospects of economic growth remain vague. A definite slowing down of the growth of the world economy may lead to a reduction of export from Africa. Any drop in the prices of African raw materials will tell on the situation of the continent. The growing price of oil, which is advantageous for the oil-producing countries, is pernicious for the oil-importing countries. The situation on the world financial and currency markets is

unpredictable. If the present financial crisis turns into a recession in the main centres of the world economy – the United States, the European Union and Japan, it will be felt in China, and, to a still greater extent, in Africa.

The productivity of agriculture is growing, but mainly due to extensive methods. So far, the African agricultural producers have been unable to adequately feed their own population. 42 African countries remain net importers of food, and with the growing world prices of food products, the impact on the poorest sections of the population may prove too heavy and lead to social upheavals.

Climate changes are having an ever greater negative effect on the situation in Africa, but we shall dwell on this in details later on.

Despite the relatively high rates of economic growth, poverty in Africa has not diminished. One of the main Millennium Development Goals is to reduce the number of the poor and the malnourished by 50 percent, and it will not be reached by 2015. The real number of those living in abject poverty (on less than a dollar per day) has practically not changed during the past 15 years, it has even increased. The absolute number of the poor in Africa has grown since 1990 up to now by 90 million. The income of the poorest sections of the population has diminished, and of the richest ones has grown, which has only enhanced inequality in the distribution of incomes. The growth of the GDP was not accompanied with the creation of additional jobs, and the unemployment level remained quite high.

Economic activity is moving from agriculture to the capital-intensive sectors, such as the extraction of mineral raw materials and oil. The private sector has not shown enough activity in creating new jobs so far, although there are good exceptions.

There is a consensus among Africans and experts on African development on the following issue: the simple growth of the GDP is not enough for the reduction of poverty. Some people maintain that an accelerated economic growth is the main lever for reducing poverty. Others claim that the reduction of poverty calls for the combination of economic growth and social policy in favour of the poor, the so-called pro-poor development. The latter view presupposes that economic growth

should decrease social inequality in favour of the poorest sections of the population and give them more opportunities for access to economic activity.

Economic growth in Africa should be concentrated, above all, in agriculture, employing almost 70 percent of the indigenous population, and should be accompanied with an increase in its productivity. Naturally, the Africans expect growing investments, including foreign ones, in agriculture.

We should note that in the African countries with the growing agricultural production, the number of the absolutely poor diminishes. In 2003, at the Maputu summit the African leaders mapped out measures to increase agricultural production by 6 percent annually. They called for channeling 10 percent of all budget expenditures of the African countries to agriculture and the development of rural areas. By now very few African countries have come close to this figure. The growth of agricultural production does take place, but mostly due to extensive methods.

The African village, just as the entire economy, cannot develop without the corresponding infrastructure – roads, bridges, telecommunications, storehouses, ports, railways, and the sources of energy. And this is precisely what Africa is short of. And it is the poorest sections of the population that bear the brunt of the absence of transport, energy and water. At present, the expenditures on the infrastructure in Africa amount to about 10 billion dollars a year, including local and foreign capital, and state and private investments. But the necessary figure is 17 to 22 billion. The deficit comprises some 7 to 12 billion at present. It is not accidental that the NEPAD programme considers the development of the infrastructure to be a priority task.

Many people in Africa connect their future with the development of information and communication technologies (ICT). During the past decade new opportunities have opened for Africa's participation in the global economy based on information networks. This had an impact on all sectors of society. African countries have evolved a general view on the problem and a development strategy of society, which should take into account the possibilities of informatics, among

other things. They recognize ICT not only as an instrument of economic innovations, but also as an impetus to socio-economic development, and access to information and knowledge as a necessary condition for reducing poverty and developing health service and education. The President of the Republic of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, said in May 2006: “We have said, and now repeat, that it is impossible to overestimate the role of information and telecommunication technologies in national, regional and continental development, especially, in creating wealth, new jobs and reducing poverty. The existing “digital divide” demands common measures, which would ensure the use by Africans of information and communication technologies”.

There are opportunities for the successful activity of private business in Africa, including in the ICT sphere, despite certain political and social risks. A case in point is the Afro-Arab entrepreneur Mo Ibrahim. In 1998 he decided that there was a market for mobile-phone business in Africa. But not a single giant corporation dared engage in business in Africa, because of political risks. Mo Ibrahim set up the “Celtel” Company, which now has more than 20 million subscribers in 15 countries. “Celtel” hires 8,000 employees and indirectly provides work to another 170,000 people all over Africa. In 2005, Mo Ibrahim sold the company for 3.4 billion dollars to a Kuwaiti operator. Mr. Ibrahim believes that the continent is open for private business, rather than charity. In his view, “the way forward for Africa is investment”.

Mo Ibrahim began virtually from scratch. Born in Sudan and raised and educated in Egypt, he started off as an engineer at Sudan’s national phone company. After further study in Britain he went on to become technical director at Cellnet, the wireless arm of the “British Telecom”. He left in 1998 to set up an engineering consultancy and designed mobile networks. In 2000 he sold it for 900 million dollars to “Marconi” Co. By that time he already developed “Celtel” and needed additional money.

Mr. Ibrahim takes the future of Africa close to heart. Recently he set up a foundation for promoting good governance in Africa. It plans to award an annual

prize of 5 million dollars to retired African leaders who ruled well and then stand down, rather than trying to cling to power. The foundation works in cooperation with Harvard University to establish a scoring system with which to assess potential candidates. The prize committee is chaired by Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations. The first winner of the prize in 2007 was the former president of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano. His prize will be given annually in parts of 0.5 million each for a period of 10 years. Then he will receive a pension for life amounting to 200,000 dollars annually.

More than 30 years ago Mr. Ibrahim had to leave Africa for Europe in search of education and professional success. He hopes that fostering indigenous African companies will help ensure that tomorrow's engineers and entrepreneurs can find their opportunities closer to home.

Earlier the African continent was in the grip of military coups and military dictatorships, whereas now a substantial broadening of democratic principles can be observed. After the adoption of the NEPAD programme in 2001 and right up to the end of 2007, there were more than 45 election campaigns in African countries on a multiparty basis. Despite all and sundry recriminations (sometimes quite just) for the lack of election processes in such giant African countries as Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo or Ethiopia, the democratization process with African specificities is on an upsurge. Executive power becomes more efficient and the first features of a civil society emerge. Such document as the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (January 2007) was adopted. The international community supports these processes not only financially, morally or personnelwise. For instance, the armed forces of the European Union were temporarily deployed in support of the UN armed forces during the election campaign in the Democratic Republic of Congo in order to prevent the flare-up of violence.

Having adopted the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the African states have evolved the legal framework for the protection of the rights of man. The first eleven judges have been appointed to the African Court on Human

and Peoples' Rights. Additionally, the empowerment of women, a primary objective for the AU and NEPAD, was enshrined in the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa in November 2005 in order to guarantee gender equality in social and economic aspects. Most African countries have signed and ratified the Protocol. The desire to ensure the rights and equality of women in access to education and health service, in their economic and political activity is one of the proclaimed aims of the African countries.

During the past several years of this century Africa has made considerable strides forward in establishing good governance. The pan-African and regional institutions have played an important role on this path. It should be noted that the western countries regard their own system of governance as the proper one, presenting it in an idealized form. And African countries, while duly recognizing the western concepts of good governance and democracy, emphasize African specificity, the African traditions of collectivism, and the specific features of African mentality.

In 2002 the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) was set up as a genuine African participatory self-monitoring mechanism for political, economic and governance standards. It embodied the spirit of the reforms which covered the African continent and at the same time it was an impetus to these reforms. By the end of 2007 there were 27 countries which officially expressed readiness to take part in this process of mutual monitoring. Five countries – Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, the Republic of South Africa and Algeria completed monitoring and presented corresponding reports. The process continues in another 13 countries. The very form of such self-monitoring of Africans has found support on the part of the international community, including the G8.

The APRM made it possible for the countries taking part in it to better assess their realities and learn more about their strong and weak aspects. This mechanism allowed them to reveal the institutional, managerial, economic, organizational and other drawbacks, which obstruct the development and modernization of African societies. It enabled them to accumulate important experience of genuinely African

practice, which enriches the states of the continent with new knowledge and methods of governance.

The emergence of the AC/NEPAD as the structures and programmes created by Africans themselves with a view to socio-economically and politically transforming the continent was welcomed by the international community. The G8 decided to integrate the discussion of African problems in its annual summits and conduct a special dialogue with African leaders. This dialogue was broadened and institutionalized in November 2003, when, following the G8 meeting in Evian the Africa Partnership Forum was organized. It included the African countries – participants in the NEPAD programme, representatives of the African Union, as well as representatives of the G8 and the main regional and multilateral partners of Africa. The Forum sessions have become the important meetings for checking the fulfillment of the commitments adopted by both African governments and their donor-partners. At the same time the Forum has created a platform for a dialogue to discuss the socio-economic challenges to Africa and find ways and means to answer them by both the Africans themselves and the international community.

In 2005 the G8 at its summit at Gleneagles adopted a commitment to increase considerably the financial contribution to the economic upsurge of the developing countries. The G8 was joined by other advanced countries. It was decided that the official development aid on the part of the G8 and other donors to all developing countries would increase by 50 billion dollars in 2010, as against 2004. Half of this increase will be channeled to Africa. The G8 members wished to comply with their obligations. Since the time of the Gleneagles summit the official development aid to the developing countries increased from 79 billion in 2004 to 103.9 billion dollars in 2006. Official development aid to Sub-Saharan Africa rose to 28 billion dollars in 2006.

The writing-off of debts has been an important contribution to development, inasmuch as it considerably diminished their annual service. This enabled many African countries to invest more money in social programmes to reduce poverty. The initiative of writing-off debts of the poorest countries with big liabilities and

arrears put forward at the G8 meeting in Cologne in 1999 was reaffirmed at the summit in Gleneagles in 2005. By the end of 2007 19 African countries had their debts written-off completely, and 14 more states will be able to achieve this on certain conditions. In this connection it should be mentioned that Russia has written-off African countries' debts, apart from Libya, to a sum of about 16 billion dollars.

Direct foreign investments in Africa also grow, along with official development aid. Yet, at present the continent accounts for only 4 percent of all world foreign investments. They are distributed very unevenly. A greater part of them goes to North Africa and the Republic of South Africa, as well as several big oil producers in Africa south of the Sahara.

Africa follows the activities of the donor-countries and notes that the commitment of the advanced countries of the West on channeling 0.7 percent of their gross domestic product (the United States has not assumed this obligation) has not been fulfilled by most donor-countries, and, apparently, will not be fulfilled in the nearest future. The Africans hope to get access to grants and loans at low interest in order to break the vicious circle of their dependence on debts. Simultaneously, they insist not only on the complete writing-off of debts from the least developed countries with big indebtedness, but also on similar measures with regard to the countries of a medium development level, as Africans see it.

Corruption, one of the main African woes, remains a major concern, and the struggle against it is a top priority. The majority of African states have given priority to improving transparency and public financial management over the last few years. More than 40 African states have ratified the UN Convention Against Corruption, which went into force in December 2005. Earlier still, in 2003, the African Union adopted its own Convention on Corruption. Africa has thus put into place the provisions necessary for the prevention and criminalization of corrupt activities. However, the implementation of these standards is a continuous and significant challenge throughout Africa, and it is not alone in having to do this.

Africans note equal responsibilities of the corrupters and corrupted. They do

not point their finger to concrete transnational corporations which widely practice bribery, but everybody understands who's who and what's what.

“There are still shortcomings in the struggle against corrupters in the advanced countries, which obstructs the struggle against corrupt elements and corruption in African countries and does not allow Africa to get rid of the image of a corrupt continent,” said the Algerian deputy minister (minister-délégué) on the affairs of Maghreb and African countries, A. Messahel, at the Africa Partnership Forum held in Algeria in November 2007.

The illegal export of capital continues to undermine Africans' efforts aimed at economic development, the struggle against poverty and the construction of law-abiding states. In order to trace, confiscate and transfer the illegally acquired assets Switzerland has recently set up the International Centre for returning capital. This Centre provides consultations to African countries, international organizations and western countries, which need such knowledge and experience. The illegal incomes of a part of the African elite are channeled to financial institutions of advanced and industrialized countries which should bear responsibility for returning assets to their legal owners. Thanks to the activity of the Swiss bank and judicial systems considerable sums have been repatriated to Nigeria (about 0.5 billion dollars), and some countries of Asia and Latin America. Unfortunately, this is but a small part of the stolen money, and other countries are not in a hurry to follow the example of Switzerland, although they officially support the UN Convention Against Corruption, which they have signed and ratified themselves.

Until recently, the outflow of capital from Africa, both through official channels (service and repayment of credits) and through “black” or “grey” schemes, has exceeded the inflow of all types of aid and investments to the continent. This has been admitted, though in bypassing, in a report of G8 Africa personal representatives to the heads of state and government on the eve of the meeting in Heiligendamm in 2007.

During the past years the members of the “BRIC” – Brazil, Russia, India and China – have broadened their cooperation with Africa. They increase trade

turnover with countries of the continent and become active investors, issue loans and take part in development programmes. China has now become the third biggest investor in Africa and third trade partner of the continent. There are definite contradictions between Western countries, including Japan, on the one hand, and China, on the other, in their approach to cooperation with Africa. Western countries insist that all parties in their economic relations with Africa use the principles of trade, partnership, development, business standards, ecology, the principles of peace, democracy and human rights declared and adopted by the West. But neither China nor African countries have revealed any particular interest in acting in coordination with western countries and Japan according to their standards. This problem has not been solved so far.

Serious rivalry for Africa has been going on. This explains the greater frequency of summit meetings between the leaders of African countries and China and the European Union in 2006–2007. This year a summit meeting between India and Africa has already taken place, and soon a meeting between Japan and Africa (the 4th Tokyo International Conference on African Development) will be held.

The visits of President V. Putin to a number of African countries – Egypt, the Republic of South Africa, Morocco, Algeria and Libya – have demonstrated Russia's growing interest in Africa. Our country needs some raw materials mined in Africa and its agricultural products and wishes to develop trade relations with the countries of the African continent.

The destinies of the African peoples and the whole of mankind are interconnected. Solution to African problems is not a matter of altruism of the advanced countries, but concern of their own future. The global threat to life on our planet, namely, the warming of the Earth's climate, cannot be averted without cooperation between the peoples of all continents.

The African continent is responsible for only 3.5–4 percent of all discharges of greenhouse gases, whereas it is precisely the African forests, along with the Brazilian and Russian ones, that weaken the negative effect of these gases on the environment. But the area under these forests all over the world is diminishing

with catastrophic speed. The consequences of climate changes can prove the most tragic for Africa.

To see how rapidly the climate changes in Africa it will be enough to look at its highest mountain – Kilimanjaro. Since the beginning of scientific observations in 1912 its ice cover has diminished by 82 percent. Another 15 years, and the glaciers on the mountain will disappear. Is it necessary to talk of the consequences of this disaster for water supply in the area?

In the 20th century the average temperature in Africa rose by 0.7 degree, but temperature records fall on the end of the century. Scientists predict that by 2100 temperature in Africa on the surface of the continent may rise by 2 to 6 degrees Celsius. In its latest report the International Commission on climate changes admits that warming on the African continent will, perhaps, exceed the average global level, and in dry subtropical regions it will be higher than in humid tropical areas. On a greater part of the African continent precipitation will decrease.

Almost half of all African countries, or about 600 million people, will suffer from the shortage of water by 2025. This will be caused by the growth of the population, greater water consumption, reduced precipitation, and increased evaporation of reservoirs due to rising temperatures. We do not speak of such important question as the access of Africans to clean water.

However, in the equatorial regions precipitation will increase, which will result in severe floods. More frequent floods, droughts and humanitarian catastrophes, decreasing agricultural production, weaker food security, spreading diseases, the greater risk of conflicts caused by the shortage of the land and water resources – already plague many regions of Africa.

It is clear now that the conflict in Darfur has partly been caused by climate changes in the Sahel zone during the past 30 years and the degradation of the environment. The onslaught of desert in northern Darfur pushes the nomads southward and provokes their clashes with the local population.

Africa has the least possibilities for adaptation to climate changes. 70 percent of

the Africans live off agriculture. It provides 40 percent of African export, and crop productivity per hectare of land in many countries of the continent is falling.

Adaptation measures include readiness to take the risks of floods and droughts, the improved monitoring of weather, the use of drought-resistant seeds, an increase in the volume of reservoirs, and the development of industries with smaller discharges of greenhouse gases. Adaptation to climate changes has now been recognized the absolute necessity for the continent. But, according to estimates, Africa's adaptation to climate changes will cost from 5 to 10 percent of the GDP. If it is not given financial and technical assistance from the international community within the framework of partnership, all its plans to boost the economy, secure stable development, reduce poverty and combat diseases will be threatened with failure.

The commitment of the international community, above all of the industrial countries, to reduce the discharges of greenhouse gases should be the key one for minimizing the negative consequences of climate changes on the planet, including Africa.

In 1994 a UN framework convention on climate changes was adopted. It went into force in 2005 when Russia ratified it, but prior to it, regular conferences were held discussing environmental problems. By now the convention has been ratified by almost all states of the world – 192 countries. Meetings of those who signed it take place every year. In 1997, at the third such conference in Japan, the so-called Kyoto Protocol was signed. Under it, the participants of the meeting pledged to reduce the total volume of the discharges of greenhouse gases by at least five percent during the period between 2008 and 2012, as compared with 1990. This pledge is not being fulfilled, although the G8 members, except the United States, have ratified the Kyoto Protocol.

The problem lies in the fact that expenditures on reducing the discharges of greenhouse gases diminish the competitiveness of industries. This is why the United States refuses to follow the example of the European Union where these measures have become laws in many countries. The European Union intends to

reduce the discharge of greenhouse gases by 20 percent by 2020 and increase to 20 percent the share of the renewable sources of energy in its consumption. More and more greenhouse gases are discharged in China, where power production is mainly based on coal.

As to Africa, almost all countries of the continent have ratified the Kyoto Protocol. At the 8th summit of the African Union in Addis Ababa in January 2007, they pledged to take part in measures aimed at preventing climate changes and include them in the national development strategies.

The task to reduce greenhouse gas discharges into the atmosphere runs counter to the measures aimed at stopping the deindustrialization of the continent, the development of industries, economic upsurge and the decrease of poverty. All this requires the development of power production. The most advanced country of the continent – the Republic of South of Africa – produces almost half of all electric energy and accounts for about half of all discharges of greenhouse gases. This is due to coal combustion. The RSA holds 11th place in the world in greenhouse gas discharges. This African economic giant is facing the great shortage of electric energy. Second place in Subsaharian Africa, as far as atmospheric pollution is concerned, is held by Nigeria, where enormous amounts of oil-well gas are burned by torches.

Africa is rich in energy resources, but they are distributed very unevenly. The generation of electricity is even more uneven.

Up to now, 75 percent of the population, or 550 million people, living in Subsaharian Africa (except the RSA) have no access to electricity. At best, this figure may become somewhat lower by 2015. Three-quarters of their needs for energy the inhabitants of Subsaharian Africa (without the RSA) satisfy with the help of the biomass, that is, firewood.

The development of energy production is a crucial question for stable economic growth, the diversification of the economy, the reduction of poverty and human development. In the past two years alone, energy crises have struck 28 African countries.

Africa has an enormous hydropower potential which is now used by only 4 to 7 percent. Its development requires huge capital investments. Foreign aid to the development of power production grows swiftly enough, but it is inadequate so far. The Great Inga project is in the offing. It will be the world's biggest hydropower complex, but it requires from 50 to 80 billion US dollars of investments, and so far nobody has assumed the commitment to finance this giant construction project.

Speaking of Africa's misfortunes, one should mention the problem of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and also the spreading of malaria and tuberculosis. Besides, there are seats of polio in Africa, too. The HIV/AIDS pandemic threatens to thwart the efforts of the African states and the international community aimed at economic development and the reduction and abolition of poverty. In 2005, the G8 adopted the decision to set up a special fund to provide universal access of all HIV/AIDS positives to medical treatment and ensure preventive measures. However, until now two-thirds of the Africans contaminated with HIV do not have access to therapeutic treatment. There are more women than men infected with HIV/AIDS (59 percent). There is a shortage of medical personnel, resources, equipment and medicines for treatment, as well as proper information about the prevention and treatment of this scourge.

Each year malaria kills about one million Africans, mainly children up to five. At present, due to greater precipitation in Equatorial Africa, the zone of malaria becomes wider. The G8 has renewed its commitments to fight malaria, as well as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. At its meeting in St. Petersburg in 2006, the G8 pledged to work with African countries to stem the spreading of malaria and reduce mortality caused by this disease by 50 percent by 2010. However, there is no firm confidence of the successful implementation of this task. The incidence and mortality rate of TB are on an increase. The problem is aggravated by the fact that TB and malaria go hand in hand with HIV/AIDS. Besides, the TB virus mutates and is difficult to cope with by medicines and treatment. Additional investments are needed to develop new medicines for the purpose. Corresponding decisions were adopted at the St. Petersburg summit.

It is clear that additional financing is needed to combat African diseases in order to come closer to the Millennium Development Goals. This should proceed parallel with the improvement of the national health protection systems. Yet, many African doctors and nurses do not see their future prospects in their native lands and leave en masse for advanced countries, thus the health service system of the continent deteriorates.

This paper does not aim at covering all aspects of the situation in Africa to assess the elements of optimism and pessimism. Many essential problems remained untouched here – a detailed analysis of foreign trade, the effectiveness of aid and capital investments, the prospects of education and scientific research, the conservation of biodiversity, the problems of migration, the preservation of African identity, to mention but a few. I shall repeat: the African problems are so closely intertwined that an attempt to isolate at least one of them without organic connections with others would be counterproductive and could be nothing more than a scholastic exercise.

“Africa needs to have an opportunity to play a role in global politics worthy of it,” as it was said in the G8 Africa Personal Representatives’ Joint Progress Report to the heads of state and government at the G8 summit in Heiligendamm. “We need a strong, democratic Africa in order to be able to answer the global challenges of today together, especially to ensure peace and security, combat poverty and climate changes...The African reforms will be successful, provided they are implemented by Africans themselves at the continental, regional and national levels. The African ideas and principles laid down in the declarations and resolutions of the African Union need to be integrated in the political course of the African Union member-countries”.

I’d like to conclude the paper submitted to you here on an optimistic note, because the situation on the continent as a whole is now better than it was 6, 8 or 15 years ago. Martin Luther King once said the words which became the motto of the Afro-Americans’ movement for equality in the United States: “I have a dream”. I’d like to repeat his words in a different context. I have seen the construction of

the High Aswan Dam in Egypt and also how the Nile hydropower units, the product of Soviet-Egyptian cooperation, began to work. I have a dream to visit the construction site of the Great Inga project, a dream to see it completed. And I have no doubt that it will take place sooner or later.

INSTITUTE FOR AFRICAN STUDIES

The Institute for African Studies (IAS) is a research unit incorporated in the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS).

The Institute was founded in October 1959 to conduct research in historical, civilizational, socio-economic, anthropological, ethno-cultural and political problems of the states of the African continent.

The founder and first Director of the Institute was Ivan Potekhin. Later, the Institute was headed by the Corresponding Members of the Russian Academy of Sciences Vassily Solodovnikov and Anatoly Gromyko. Since 1992 the Institute has been headed by the Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences Alexei Vassiliev.

The IAS is a key Russian research institution dealing with the problems of the continent; it is the core organization for the activities of the RAS Scientific Council for the Problems of Africa under the RAS Social Sciences Division.

The IAS comprises 102 academic staff members, among them two Corresponding Members of the Russian Academy of Sciences, seven professors, 22 Doctors of Sciences and 55 PhDs.

The Director of the Institute is the Corresponding Member of RAS Alexei Vassiliev. He is a well-known specialist on the history and political problems of the Arabic World, especially Saudi Arabia. He has written over 30 monographs and more than 840 articles for Russian and foreign academic journals. Concurrently he is the Special Representative of the President of Russia for contacts with African leaders.

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About Our Undertakings

The head of the Centre of Russian-African Relations, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary **Yevgeni Korendyasov**.

On May 16 there was a conference in Moscow organized by the Institute of African Studies, RAS, and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Russia on the subject “Hydrocarbon and Solid Mineral Resources of Africa: Possibilities of Russian Business’ Participation in Their Development”.

Among the speakers at the conference were the deputy chairman of the Committee on financial markets and money circulation, and the head of the group for cooperation with parliaments of African countries, of the Council of the Federation of the Russian Parliament, Professor V.V. Sokolovsky, the deputy foreign minister of the Russian Federation, A.V. Saltanov, the Director of the Institute of Africa Studies, RAS, special representative of the President of the Russian Federation for contacts with the leaders of African countries A.M. Vassiliev, the vice president of of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Russia G.G. Petrov, and representatives of academic and business circles.

The discussion centered around the potential of Russian-African cooperation in tackling the problem of replenishing the Russian resource base by using African sources of mineral wealth.

Emphasizing the importance of the subject, speakers pointed to the depletion of the resources of the prospected mineral raw materials in Russia, the high cost of the development of new deposits, which are situated, as a rule, in northern regions, high ecological risks, the

exacerbation of the global competition for natural resources, and the need to save Russian mineral wealth.

In the view of the participants in the conference, Africa should be regarded as a privileged partner in the mining industry. Africa possesses exceptionally rich and varied mineral resources, which are easy of access. Russian geologists have a wealth of experience of work on the continent. The relations between Russia and Africa are based on friendship and mutual respect. The African people favour the expansion of cooperation with Russia, including in the field of the development of natural resources.

A number of practical proposals were presented at the conference aimed at stepping up the efforts of both sides for raising the level of fruitful partnership cooperation.

The Secretary of the Academic Council of the Russian Academy of Sciences on African Problems, Anatoly Savateyev, about the 11th Conference of Scholars of Africa

On May 22-24 the 11th All-Russia Conference of Scholars of Africa on the subject: “Africa’s Development: Possibilities and Obstacles”. It was attended by about 300 scholars from Russia, Africa, Asia, Europe, America, and the CIS countries, as well as representatives of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, the Foreign Ministry of Russia, and heads of diplomatic missions accredited to Moscow, including those of the G8.

The conference had panel sessions and round-table meetings which were concluded in the atmosphere of free discussions.

At the opening ceremony a welcoming speech was made by the dean of the African diplomatic corps in Moscow, the Ambassador of Sierra Leone, Merloze Beyoh Kai-Banya. The paper “Africa: Is There Light at the End of the Tunnel?” submitted by the Director of the Institute for African Studies, RAS, and special representative of the President of the Russian Federation for contacts with the leaders of African countries, Alexei Vassiliev, dealt with the present-day problems of security, national economy, social sphere and health protection. He specifically emphasized the role of international and regional African organizations in the process of stabilization on the African continent (the full text of the paper is included in this Newsletter).

During the proceedings at the 20 panels of the conference papers were presented on a wide range of problems connected with the development of African societies in the civilizational, economic, social, cultural,

anthropological, linguistic, gender, and other aspects. The round-table meetings discussed subjects connected with the difficulties faced by the peoples of the continent in various spheres of human activity.

The concluding plenary session of the conference was addressed by the Director of the Centre of African Studies of the Institute of General History, RAS, Apollon Davidson, and the deputy chairman of the National Assembly of Mali, Abdramane Sylla. They highly assessed the conference, which united scholars of Africa from different countries. The importance of the conference for the expansion of Russian-African contacts in all spheres was especially emphasized.

Chronicle of Events

May 6. The Institute of Africa Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Russia held a conference on the subject “Hydrocarbon and Solid Mineral Resources of Africa: Possibilities of Russian Business’ Participation in Their Development”.

May 22-24. The 11th All-Russia Conference of Scholars of Africa took place in Moscow.

June 5. Alexei Vassiliev, the Director of the Institute of African Studies, RAS, and special representative of the President of the Russian Federation for contacts with the leaders of African countries, received the Ambassador of Morocco to Russia, Nureddine Gefiani. During the meeting questions of bilateral cooperation in the political and economic spheres were discussed.

June 6. A meeting was held between Alexei Vassiliev, the Director of the Institute of African Studies and special representative of the President of the Russian Federation for contacts with the leaders of African countries, and Khemaies Jhinaoui, the Ambassador of Tunisia to Russia. During this courtesy visit the questions of the Institute’s cooperation with Tunisia University, the Centre of Strategic Studies, the Institute of Diplomatic Studies of the Tunisian Foreign Ministry, the Association of International Studies, etc. were discussed.

Our announcement

RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
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CENTERS OF HISTORY AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
CENTER FOR CIVILIZATIONAL AND REGIONAL STUDIES

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FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

"HIERARCHY AND POWER IN THE HISTORY OF CIVILIZATIONS"

June 23-26 2009, Moscow, Russia

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR PAPERS

Centers of History and Cultural Anthropology and for Civilizational and Regional Studies of the Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, and the School of History, Political Science and Law of the Russian State University for the Humanities are organizing in Moscow on June 23-26, 2009 the Fifth International Conference "HIERARCHY AND POWER IN THE HISTORY OF CIVILIZATIONS".

All the Conference events except culture program will take place on the Russian State University for the Humanities main campus.

The working languages of the Conference are Russian and English.

The Organizing Committee has considered all the panel proposals received by it. The descriptions of the accepted proposals please find below. The deadline for paper proposals (in the form of abstracts within 300 words in English) is November 1, 2008. Paper proposals should be sent not to the Organizing Committee but directly to the respective panel convenor(s) who is (are) to inform the applicant about his (her) application's fortune by December 1, 2008. The information to be submitted alongside with the paper abstract includes full name, title, institutional affiliation, full mail and e-mail addresses, and fax #.

However, in the case you feel your paper does not fit any particular panel but corresponds to the Conference general problematics, you may submit your proposal to the Organizing Committee by the same date (November 1, 2008) and it will be considered for scheduling for the Free Communication Panel. Besides, if the Organizing Committee finds it possible to unite an appropriate number of proposals submitted for the Free Communication Panel into a thematic panel, it may establish such a panel and propose one of its prospective participants to become the convenor. None of the proposals may be accepted or rejected on the basis of its submitter's previous academic credentials, ethnic or national origin, sex, or otherwise, but only on the basis of the proposal's relevance to and importance for, the Conference's problematics.

All the general inquiries and proposals for the Free Communication Panel should be sent to the Organizing Committee, for the attention of Ms. Anastasia A. Banschikova and Dr. Oleg I. Kavykin, Conference Secretaries preferably by e-mail (conf2009@conf2009.ru), or either by fax (+ 7 495 202 0786), or by ordinary mail (Center of History and Cultural Anthropology, Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, 30/1 Spiridonovka St., 123001 Moscow, Russia). The telephone number is: + 7 495 291 4119.

In the case the proposal is accepted, the Organizing Committee will send you the list of documents necessary to support your and your panel participants' visa application process at the Russian Consulate or Embassy in the respective countries in the beginning of the year 2009.

The Conference participant's registration fee is 150 euros (or the equivalent sum in US dollars or Russian rubles) which includes the visa application support at the Russian Federal Migration Service,¹ culture program, Conference Book of Abstracts, reception, coffee-breaks, is to be paid on the spot upon arrival. The fee for an accompanying person is 70 euros (or the equivalent sum in US dollars or Russian rubles) includes the visa application support at the Russian Federal Migration Service, participation in culture program and reception.

The Organizing Committee can assist in accommodation booking at the hotel of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Downtown Moscow. The prices for September 2007 are as follows: about 187 euros per night for a SGL room and 186 euros for a DBL room. Accommodation at the hotel "Uzkoye" of the Russian Academy of Sciences in a Moscow southern neighbourhood of is 97 euros per night (SGL room) and 123 euros (DBL room). Please note that the prices may well be subjected to changes in the direction of growth. The independent reservation in any other Moscow hotel well in advance is strongly encouraged; furthermore it can turn out to be more reasonable. For further information you may consult the Internet sites: <http://moscow-hotels.net> and <http://all-hotels.ru/moscow>. Please do note that the figures above may be subjected to some changes due to processes in transnational and national economy which are obviously out of the Organizing Committee's control. If such changes happen, the Organizing Committee will try its best to inform the Conference participants as soon as possible.

PANELS ACCEPTED FOR THE CONFERENCE (In the alphabetical order of titles):

Aggression and Power Control in Traditional and Industrial Societies

Convenor: Prof. Marina Butovskaya (Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mail: mbutovskaya@rambler.ru)

Aggression in the human society remains one of the most actively disputed social phenomena. Despite thousands of annual publications on aggression, attempts of its analysis from various angles, ranging from molecular to macrosociological, we are still far from being ahead with elaboration of effective methods of aggression control and prevention. A complex approach to estimations of factors provoking aggression and determining particular ways of its expression may provide an additional chance for better understanding of the nature of this phenomenon and reasons for its cross-cultural similarities and differences. In line with this Panel we are planning to discuss a wide range of questions connected to modern theories of interaction between aggression and power control on the within-group and between-group levels. We are expecting to discuss the issues of correlations between various expressions of aggression and mechanisms of power control from very broad positions, including evolutionary, ecological, psychological, sociological, and anthropological approaches. We suppose to discuss the family violence, aggression practices in small groups, as well as traditional socialization practices in cultures with clearly expressed gender asymmetry in power control. Theoretical and field studies of personal and group mechanisms of control over aggression are welcomed. Special attention will be given to studies of traditional institutions of power control connected to conflict resolution, as well as to investigations of transformations of traditional representations of power control within the family and on the level of small social groups in connection with rapid economic changes and transitions from one economic structure to another. We would highly welcome the presentations based to cross-cultural data, as well as mathematic models of interactions between aggression and power control on the in-group and between-group levels.

Analyses of Cultural Evolution

Convenors: Prof. Herbert Barry III (University of Pittsburgh, USA; E-mail: barryh@pitt.edu); Prof. Douglas R. White (University of California-Irvine, USA; E-mail: drwhite@uci.edu); Prof. Andrey Korotayev (Russian State University for the Humanities & Institute for African Studies, Moscow, Russia; E-mail: akorotayev@mail.ru)

Prior verbal theories of cultural evolution have led to empirically testable mathematical models of this process. The panel is aimed at discussion of further scientific methods for studying adaptive evolution of governmental extension and selection. During the past several thousand years, many independent communities have aggregated or been conquered to form portions of a chiefdom, nation, or empire. Other communities have remained independent. Some empires and nations have split into smaller aggregations. Methods of choosing a new leader of a community or nation include hereditary succession, conquest, selection by elite members, and a formal election by some or all adults. Adaptive evolution can be inferred when changes in cultural customs and in environmental conditions cause changes in governance methods. New governance methods cause adaptive changes in other cultural customs. Different governance methods are associated with differences in education of children and adolescents. Various techniques are available for analyzing adaptive evolution. The same communities or nations can be compared at different times. Similarities or differences after separation from the same antecedent society can be identified in communities or nations. Measures of governance methods, education, and other customs are available on a world sample of 186 societies. Mathematical models of cultural evolution are especially desirable but contributions without such models are also welcome

Cases of Records: The Concept of Written Evidence within the Context of a Socio-Cultural Hierarchy (Source Studies, Historical Anthropology, and Interpretation of the History of the Document from Antiquity to Renaissance)

Convenor: Dr. Nadejda A. Selounskaia (Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow; E-mails: spesbona@mail.ru; ravello@inbox.ru; spes@dr.com)

It seems impossible to give a definition for the concept of "written culture" as well as the interpretation of it beyond the hierarchal principle of the society's organisation. A written culture occupies a particular place within the hierarchy of cultural values . It usually relates to a so called "culture of elites" (contrary to "oral tradition", associated with low classes of the society). However, such a primitive opposition includes a risk not to notice the nuances of the correlation between social and cultural processes. The research of the cases of composition of the records provides several advantages. Firstly, we have the chance to identify multiple influence, initiated by the representatives of different social strata on the composition of the document(for example, it could be the discourse of the witnesses and the judges, or persons who ordered the documents and its composers. Secondly, it becomes clear, that the culture of the written, recorded evidence (including the aspects of law and the juridical culture) was wide spread among common people in the particular historical periods in the different regions of Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance Europe.

The main goal of the project is taking down the tradition of the primitive bipolar opposition written culture of the elite to the popular "law" oral tradition without the rejecting of the attempts to trace the correlation between the specific cases of the written evidence and the aspects, related to the complicated structure of society.

Within the framework of the section we are planning to discuss the following topics: 1). The reasons and the cases of the initial records of the law custom, oral and historical tradition, myth, rituals.

2). The distribution of the roles and of the functions in the process of the registrations of the cases. Initiators and translators of the records, the addressees:

the translators *sensu stricto* (in the stricter sense) of the word, the interpreters and the mediators, the audience and eyewitnesses. The analysis of the needs, the strategies, the goals of the initiators, translators and the addressees of the records.

3) The influence of the oral culture, tradition, customs, customary law and the performance of the rituals in the process of the creating of the record. The mutual influences. The record reproduces the voices and sounds, the atmosphere in which the written evidence was created.

4) The art of *scriba/notaria* from Antiquity to Renaissance époque. Medieval *Notarius*, the culture of the document through the centuries in the Latin West.

5) The principles, the aims and the goals of the recording and of the creating of the written evidence; the methods of the historical reconstructions. The technical details and formulae of the record; the case studies: the situations and peculiarities of the recording.

Civilization and State in Africa in History and at Present: Becoming and Disintegration Factors (Values and Law, Economy and Politics)

Convenor: Prof. Anatoliy D. Savateev (Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mail: asavat@mail.ru)

In the 1990s two inconsistent directions have arisen in an estimation of mutual relations of a civilization and State in the western scientific idea. The first, which ancestor was Francis Fukuyama, in essence abolishes a role of civilizational systems in world politics, approving a victory of western (American) political, cultural, economical institutes and values in planetary scale. The second approach, on the contrary, brings to the forefront relations between civilizations, which, as the founder of this thought Samuel Huntington considers, becomes the basic content of contradictions of the present. Opposition of the States, on its idea, is replaced with an antagonism of civilizations. At the same time two approaches to definition of a civilization exist in one civilizational paradigm in the basic: the first

one considers civilization as a socio-cultural reality, whereas for partisans of other approach a civilization is first of all a mental concept, a social construct.

Organizers of section suggest to discuss theoretical problems with reference first of all to history and the present of the African continent, and also the global world. They consider, that integrating of the State in Africa was preceded with penetration and strengthening of world civilizations - Islamic and Christian one (separately is Egyptian one). Simultaneously the development of statehood in its western forms promoted spreading of elements of western civilization (Christian religion, language, writing, the literature of various genres, an appropriate way of a life, a political culture, practical orientation of spiritual culture, a pragmatism in social sphere, evolution of facilities in a direction of raw-material producing type). However the evolution of western type statehood occurs under the strongest influence of African social and cultural systems the result of which becomes occurrence of original, Africanized political institutes and norms, forms, maintenance and organization of economy. Misunderstanding of features of the State in Africa, its (and economic life) intimate connect with traditional, ethnic, confessional, clan structures became the reason of disappointments of a greater part of the western and domestic researchers in results both pro-bourgeois, and pro-socialist transformations on the continent.

Unlike European civilization which as a whole was spread from above, by colonial administration and by European organizations, Islamic civilization in Tropical Africa got from below and it was fixed in society, focusing the person on maintenance of social communications, consolidation of a society and observance of morally-legal harmony. It to a lesser degree developed political institutes though promoted becoming of the large States, however has shown greater tenacity and flexibility in conditions of Africa. Moreover, separate societies, where the synthesis of the African social and cultural systems and structures of Islam happened, showed the world such original Islamic-African institutes which

appeared able to adapt oneself to present time, combining in itself economic efficiency and social and cultural consolidation.

In this connection the organizers of the Panel propose to discuss followings issues:

1. Co-operation of civilization and State in African conditions and other regions of the world.
2. The role of large States (empires) in life of people of continent and other parts of planet (positive or negative).
3. What is intercommunication of spiritual and financial components in the development of civilization and State in the history and modern times?
4. Does development of African societies and States conducts to appearance of analogues of western civilization, i.e. to westernization with its democracy and individual human rights or it deals with traditionalization of the modernity?
5. How do traditional moral norms and western type law combine in these terms? Ordinary law and civil society?
6. Do political institutes, cultures, economy of the African people evolve in what direction?
7. What part did the institutes, cultures, economy act in past and modern life of society and State? How did they influence upon civilizations?
8. Is there in the African social and cultural systems and economies internal potential of development, able to provide arise of societies and economies, like to same in South-East Asia and on the Far East?

Culture as a Major Factor in Relations between States and People

Convenors: Dr. John A. Taylor (University of Southern Illinois, Chicago, USA; E-mail: john_taylor84@post.harvard.edu); Mr. Ivan Nechepurenko (University of Calgary, Canada; E-mail: inechepo@ucalgary.ca)

Our panel will discuss one instance of this, the communication between Russians and English-speaking people, and we will also discuss Japanese and Russian

relations briefly. The panel will claim that characteristic and often-recurring difficulties hinder communication between Russians and English-speaking people.

During the time of the Soviet Union, everyone realized that communication between Russians and English-speaking people was difficult. The Soviet Union closed its borders to many travelers, and its official ideology was also closed to outside influences, for instance. These hindrances to communication were visible and objective. They presented great difficulties, deterring many American and British academics. Kremlinologists as they were sometimes called specialized in Russian language and politics, and they tried to analyze and predict the various turns of Soviet policy, although these scholars often did so wrongly, and few of them predicted the fall of the Soviet system. These scholars studied Russia intently, but they found it hard to obtain visas to visit the country itself, and they were limited and controlled when they did visit Russia. American and British visitors were often followed or otherwise kept under surveillance, for instance. On the other hand, scholars of Soviet nationality had even less access to America and western Europe. Only a small handful of Soviet citizens could obtain, and then with difficulty, the papers and hard currency necessary for travel abroad. In practice, few Soviet professors and even fewer students did travel. Most Soviet academics never met any American or British counterparts.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, these obstacles disappeared; nevertheless, other obstacles, most of them cultural, have since become evident. The emergence of these obstacles was a surprise. People on both sides ended the Cold War period with the assumption that the disappearance of official barriers to communication between Russians and the English-speaking world would mean that there were no longer any barriers at all. Most people hoped that combination would become easy and fully successful. Unfortunately, this goal proved to be too difficult to achieve in practice. In fact, some major cultural differences always existed but were concealed from the mainstream point of view during Soviet times. Since both the

conveners of this panel are involved in higher education, the panel emphasizes communication in education. Nevertheless, the authors hope that the panel may be of value to people in other fields as well, and in the conclusion of the panel they will very briefly apply its principles to broader issues.

One of the panel's conveners is an American specialist in British history who periodically teaches in Russia and who has also taught in Japan. Another is a Russian, currently studying at a Canadian University. We are prepared to discuss Russian communications with Japan as well. We are also prepared to invite more participants, Russians as well as foreigners; our connections in Russia as well as in America will allow us to do so. We think, that the subject of our future panel is especially important now, when relations between Russia and the outside world are being explained mostly in political terms. We argue, that cultural misunderstandings hinder successful cooperation between Russia and the outside World.

Despotism in the History of Civilizations

Convenor: Prof. Leslie Gunawardana (University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka;

E-mail: leslie.gunawardana@gmail.com; leslieg12@hotmail.com)

Reflection on hierarchy and power in the history of civilizations would invariably come to focus on despotism as a phenomenon of enormous interest. Despotism assumed varied forms in human history. The specific features of these diverse forms and the common elements that link them across space and time deserve careful study. While historical state systems, especially those in Asia, will attract particular attention, this emphasis will be moderated by the awareness of dangers of excessive limitation of spatial or chronological focus. It is expected that considerable attention will be devoted to economic, social and ideological bases of despotism, the common characteristics of despotism in history and factors

conducive to opening paths to emerge from despotism or to avoid the path of despotism.

The term despotism developed in contexts of acute political rivalry, as in the struggles against the Persians by the Greeks or against Sulla by leading Roman patricians. It was revived in French polemics on absolutism during the reign of Louis XIV when views on "despotism of the Orient" hardened into a concept that was carefully distinguished from the "legal" and "enlightened" despotism of European monarchs. During the expansion of colonialism in the "old world" and across the Atlantic, the term gained wide currency, and the despotic image was freely applied to archaic and traditional polities in Asia and elsewhere, thereby providing a popular justification for colonialism.

A major theoretical hypothesis on despotism linked it with needs of agriculture in arid lands on the argument that the crucial value to the community of the despot's work as "total entrepreneur" providing irrigation facilities was behind the acceptance of despotism in those lands. While the position and functions of the despot were supposedly strengthened by his "bureaucracy," the absence of economic and social institutions with adequate countervailing power to check his actions has been used among variant explanations for the rise of despotism, and the isolation of rural settlements has been cited as another contributing factor.

Presumptions about despotism are not always supported by available historical data. While large-scale hydraulic enterprise was usually state-sponsored, the daily maintenance and management of such works often passed on to third parties. On the other hand, religious institutions and private families were very often behind irrigation enterprise of medium and small scale. By retaining control of operations at these irrigation works they benefited from incomes derived from irrigation activity. Consequently, present within such types of irrigation society were social

groups with economic resources that enabled them to check and balance the growth of royal power.

Even though some scholars have drawn sharp distinctions between "irrigation" and "trading" societies, some irrigation societies in history have also been trading societies with merchant groups controlling considerable economic resources and capable of functioning as countervailing forces unfavourable to the growth of royal power. This meant that even if they came under the shadow of despotism, emergence from that state would not depend entirely on intervention by external imperial powers.

From Simple Societies to the World-System. Pathways and Forms of Political Integration

Convenor: Dr. Daniel Smihula (University of Constantine the Philosopher, Nitra, Slovakia & University of Vienna, Austria, E-mail: daniel.smihula@vlada.gov.sk)

In the framework of this panel several questions should be discussed:

- 1) A man as a collective creature.
- 2) Intra-social and inter-social relations.
- 3) Possible rules applicable in primitive societies.
- 4) Question of the group sees as the most important for self-identification
- 5) Differences between internal political system and international political system.
- 6) Possible form of organization of human beings.
- 7) Origin of the State.
- 8) Reasons of dominance of the State over alternative political structures.
- 9) Situation in collapsed states and in the time of decline of State power (for example in post-socialist countries after 1989) - Return to more primitive organizations? (e.g. organised crime, clans, tribes, mafia).
- 10) International system and its rules.

- 11) Special similarity between primitive social systems and the international system.
- 12) Regional international system.
- 13) World international system and its subsystems.
- 14) Challenges to today world international system.
- 15) Globalisation and the world government?
- 16) Unipolarism of the USA and its impact on the world international system and international law.
- 17) Potential disintegration of our today world international system.

Globalization: Reshaping the Research Agenda

Convenors: Prof. Fantu Cheru (The Nordic African Institute, Uppsala, Sweden; E-mail: fantu.cheru@nai.uu.se); Prof. Vladimir Shubin (Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mail: vladimir.shubin@inafr.ru; vlgs@yandex.ru)

Writings on globalization are rapidly proliferating. Yet systematic research on globalization is only slightly more than a decade in the making. It is connected to, but differs from, forerunner studies of world history, social theory, and related branches of international relations. Globalization studies has emerged as a means to explain the myriad features of worldwide restructuring in the last 20th and early 21st centuries. Notwithstanding major theoretical innovations, as a field of study, globalization is more of a potential than a refined framework, worldview, kit of tools and methods, and mode of resolving questions. Surely there are grounds for discontent with globalization studies. To some critics, globalization is seen as a promiscuous concept, one that cries out for ore analytical precision and empirical rigor. Moreover, globalization is sometimes deemed over determined - too abstract, too structural, and insufficiently attentive to agency. Not only does globalization seem to be too blunt a tool, but what does it leave out? What is not globalization?

What is the effect of globalisation in different regions? How do different forces respond to it?

These complaints are formidable challenges to globalization researchers. Of course, these scholars are not univocal. There are different interpretations and considerable contestation. But what are the different responses to the discomfort with this emerging field? Where to go from here, and what are the most promising research strategies?

"Great Kings" and "Lesser Kings": The Ranking of Political Subjects in Ancient and Early Mediaeval Times

Convenor: Dr. Alexander A. Nemirovskiy (Institute of World History, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mail: sidelts@inbox.ru)

This panel is dedicated to various phenomena of hierarchization and ranking of political subjects and units (communities, groups, functionaries, structural elements) which are of similar nature by themselves but receive different ranks within some system of inequitable mutual relations, so that they appear as elements of "vertical" scale or "horizontal" alignment according to respective highness of their status or power. It deals with ranking of rulers; dignitaries; administrative, territorial and tribal subdivisions; political communities; various groups of population of similar social nature but unequal status and rights, etc.

The most important varieties of these phenomena are as follows:

- distinguishing between "great" and "lesser" rulers and/or powers in international relations (while all of them are recognized as sovereign political units independent from each other);
- hierarchies of supreme and vassal rulers existing within one political entity (while all of them are positioned on different levels of one and the same political class described by a common title of "king" etc., or, vice versa, are regarded as elements

of totally different political classes which have no common title and constitute a kind of vertical scale);

- relative ranking of supreme and dependent rulers who are members of different political entities;
- hierarchies of supreme/ predominant and dependent political communities (suzerain and vassal states, hegemonic entities and their minor "allies" etc.);
- ranking of dependent political units (rulers or communities) in respect to each other within the frames of their common subordination to one supreme power (while these dependent units may or may be not co-subordinated to each other in their own turn);
- ranking of administrative, tribal and territorial subdivisions of one political entity (e.g. major and minor appanages in Mediaeval Russia and scales of seniority of "wings" or "juzes" in Turko-Mongolic societies) and various orders of succession of their rulers;
- ranking of dignitaries and other persons of extraordinary high status within one political structure or entity; the corresponding hierarchical scales;
- ranking of professional and social groups of similar or nearly similar economic nature (e.g. some castes in India).

Various phenomena of such rankings can be combined with vertical subordination of subjects of different rank to each other (suzerain - vassal relations) as well as with their nominal and/or real independency from each other (great and minor sovereign states) or co-subordination to the common supreme rule (vassals of different rank). Distinguishing and study of these varieties will be one of the panel's aims.

Some other special aspects of the theme in discussion would be:

- correlation of reality and formalization within phenomena of ranking, i.e. the correlations between real subordination and difference in power on the one hand

and formalized rank differences (in titularies, rites, etiquette etc.) and nominal subordination on the other one;

- ideology and conceptualization of ranking and hierarchization;
- legitimate and illegitimate ways of changing a subject's rank within a hierarchy; revisions and redistributions of places occupied by various political units within a hierarchy (e.g. passage of a state into category of "great powers" from minor ones); mechanics of transition of a predominant position within a hierarchy from one political subject to another one.
- means used to maintain the ranking system (and the resulting hierarchy) stable and means used to reform them; attempts to struggle for full or partial abolition of some ranking system and hierarchy itself.

We are glad to invite to our panel everyone who would like to present a paper somehow related in subject to the themes enlisted above.

Hierarchies, Networks and Flows in the Sociopolitical Development of Southern Africa

Convenor: Dr. Franco Barchiesi (Ohio State University, Columbus, USA; E-mail: barchiesi.1@osu.edu)

The contributions presented in this panel discuss the conceptual relevance and intersections of hierarchies, networks and flows in shaping the contemporary definition of Southern Africa as a regional space. The panel combines different social science perspectives to specifically focus on Southern Africa's social and political development subsequent to the collapse of the South African Apartheid regime and the post-Cold War scenario of globalization.

Hierarchical views of the Southern African region have greatly shaped past scholarly debates and contrasting theoretical perspectives. This is the case both for views praising the allegedly modernizing role of foreign direct investment,

transnational corporations, and international financial institutions, and for critical perspectives looking at the role of South Africa as a regional hegemon, with the attendant regional socioeconomic inequalities and uneven development that followed the South African post-Apartheid transition.

At the core of such debates has often been the need to conceptualize regionalism in this specific case: Is the notion of a Southern African regionalism just a tool to enhance the area's competitiveness in global markets, which are on the other hand also characterized by hierarchical inequalities? Does it merely disguise South Africa's continuous economic and political dominance? Is it a metaphor for international economic and political cooperation within the evolving contexts of democratization and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), where Africa's role in relation to global powers and institutions remains fraught with ambiguities? Or can "the region" be thought of as a counter-hegemonic space, where alternatives to global free market capitalism are elaborated through networks and flows of ideas and practices connecting civil societies and social movements?

Paradigms focusing on the role of hierarchies in shaping the region are, in fact, often in need of insights into dimensions of grassroots agency and subjectivity that are relatively opaque from the standpoint of formal organizational and institutional analysis. Concepts of networks and flows can therefore be used to account for such neglected aspects that contribute to the continuous production and reproduction of a regional Southern African space.

The purpose of this panel is, therefore, to explore interactions between hierarchical processes (like top-down development discourses, structures of production and work, cross-border corporate investment, transnational commodity chains, social stratifications underpinning national social policies, and the position of the region in global divisions of labor), dynamics of flows (of migrations, cross-border

identities, ideas of citizenship and democracy, emancipatory discourses), and networks (of trade, informal economic activities, transnational entrepreneurship, social movements and collective identities). These are the main factors discussed in this panel, which interrogates the multiple meanings of Southern Africa as a regional space, and how they overlap and relate to local specificities.

Hierarchy and Power in the Sphere of Cyber Anthropology

Convenors: Dr. Alexei G. Loutskiy (Moscow Government; E-mail: shaanxi@mail.ru); Dr. Oleg I. Kavykin (Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mail: atrociter@mail.ru)

The panel's aim is a discussion on the following questions:

Cyber Anthropology in the context of contemporary Cultural Anthropology, i.e. specifics of the subject, object and researcher of the sub-discipline;

Power in Cyberspace / Power of Cyberspace (i.e. interactions between formal and informal relations in World village);

Net and hierarchy as the principles of organization of users in information networks;

Cyberspace as supporting system;

Projective systems and Cyberspace (i.e. ideologies of the Net \ ideologies in the Net);

Cyberspace and the processes of enculturation and socialization.

Leadership in Hunter-Gatherer Societies

Convenors: Dr. James Woodburn (London School of Politics and Economics, UK; E-mail: james@woodburn.org.uk); Prof. Olga Artemova (Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mails: artemova.olga@list.ru; olga.artemova@jcu.edu.au)

The focus of this panel will be on leadership in hunter-gatherer societies both in the past and at present. We will be concerned with societies with a known and locally acknowledged recent history of living largely by hunting and gathering including those societies whose present-day way of life may involve little or no hunting and gathering. Did such hunter-gatherers, and do they now, have distinctive forms of leadership? We seek discussion of the whole range of forms of leadership, both formal and informal, in both society-wide contexts and in smaller units including domestic units. We seek to consider both leadership roles which are exercised in a range of situations and those which are restricted to specific situations.

Many, though certainly not all, hunter-gatherer societies have been characterized in the hunter-gatherer literature as lacking formal positions of authority, as lacking institutionalized and recognized leaders. How do or did such societies operate? How, in particular, are or were decisions reached?

If many of these societies had no formal leaders, has this influenced the contemporary situation? Do formal relations of authority exist today and can those who today may occupy positions of authority persuade or compel other members of their societies to recognize and accept their authority? In what sense, if any, do those claiming leadership roles today (in political situations where leadership may well be crucial in the contemporary struggle with outsiders for land and other resources) gain the active acknowledgement, recognition and support of other members of their societies? Many of us in our research encounter individuals who claim to lead and represent their communities. Do other members of their societies accept their credentials and vest them with the authority to act on behalf of the community? How do such leaders come to power and how do they maintain their power? What continuities and discontinuities are there between leadership in the hunter-gatherer past and leadership in the contemporary world?

The aim of this panel is to achieve a better understanding of the nature of leadership in hunter-gatherer societies and to make this understanding available to all those hunter-gatherer leaders and followers who are today working productively to enable their people to retain and develop their rights to land and resources and to maintain and enhance valued characteristics of their culture and society.

Lineage as Legitimacy in Asian Religious Communities

Convenor: Ms. Amy Holmes (Australian National University, Canberra; E-mail: amy.holmes@anu.edu.au)

This panel will explore various facets of how hierarchy is developed and legitimised in Asian religions through focusing on lineage discourses in several religious traditions in Asia. Lineage serves to link together religious believers and practitioners into an imagined collective through commonly acknowledged ties with previous masters. Lineage ties together groups that are otherwise socially and sometimes culturally unrelated, thereby creating cultural models that are open for emulation and that are legitimated by association with the power of previously renowned practitioners. However, as well as their religious significance, lineages can also have profound social, economic and political implications.

The members of this panel all focus on different forms of lineage across different Asian civilizations in an attempt to portray the pervasiveness and potency of lineage in its various manifestations. Through looking at different cultures comparatively, several commonalities emerge that highlight the importance of lineage to the authority of religious communities. There are also important differences in the manifestations and depth of involvement of lineage for these collectives in their different cultural environments. Some religious groups remain spiritual in focus, while others become important political forces, or become linked to ethnic identity.

This panel will also explore the different ways in which lineage is constructed, and the methods by which particular lineages are propagated. Rather than seeing lineage as an imposing monolithic force, here we define it as negotiable and fluid, the manifestation of the sum of the individuals who are affiliated to it. This perspective allows for a freer understanding of how lineage affects the societies within which it is formed, and its contestability also remains crucial to perceiving its pervasiveness in the imaginations of individuals across such varying civilizations.

Macroevolution: Hierarchy, Structure, Laws, and Self-Organization

Convenors: Prof. Leonid E. Grinin (Volgograd Center for Social Studies, Russia; E-mail: lgrinin@mail.ru); Prof. Alexander V. Markov (Paleontological Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mail: markov_a@inbox.ru); Prof. Akop P. Nazaretyan (Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mail: anazaret@yandex.ru); Dr. Fred Spier (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands; E-mail: f.spier@uva.nl)

It is increasingly realized today that interdisciplinary research has a great potential. The study of evolution very much belongs to this type of research. The proposed panel is aimed at bringing together major scholars investigating different type of evolution in order to exchange the results and unify the efforts. The panel is supposed to consider cosmological, chemical, biological and socio-cultural macroevolution as both consecutive and co-existing types of macroevolution. We believe that this is a very important form of interdisciplinary cooperation, which may well help to achieve a better understanding of the trends, patterns, mechanisms, and peculiarities exhibited by all these different types of evolution. The experience gained with using ideas originating within one particular type of macroevolution (e.g., biological evolution) for the study of another type of macroevolution (e.g. social macroevolution) indicates that such an approach can be very fruitful. In fact, in certain respects it appears possible to consider

macroevolution as one single process. In this case it is especially important to understand the underlying regularities and laws, although some of these regularities and laws can be rather different, depending on the concrete entity evolving (cosmic, biological, or social).

We suggest the following range of topics for discussion:

- 1) comparisons between cosmic, chemical, biological, and social evolution;
- 2) General issues within Big History / Universal History;
- 3) The "evolution of evolution" (the evolution of evolutionary theories);
- 4) Particular types of macroevolution, or macroevolution "at the border between two domains" (e.g. with respect to ethology or biochemistry);
- 5) Other topics, such as linguistic, cultural, epistemological, or psychological macroevolution.

A main focus for the panel will be to look for those regularities and rules that are common for different types of macroevolution, as well as the analysis of the applicability of concrete rules to particular types of macroevolution.

Our main starting points are the following. Firstly, evolutionary rules should not be regarded as rigid functional relationships that are necessarily found in all evolutionary phenomena of a particular class, but rather as certain principles that tend to be supported by empirical data and that can therefore help us to provide a more adequate explanation of the studied complex processes. Secondly, there are important grounds for seeking to determine similarities between different types of macroevolution:

- a) In most cases we are dealing with very complex non-equilibrium yet relatively stable systems. The general principles of the functioning and evolution of such systems are described by general systems and complexity (non-linear dynamics) theories;

- b) We observe a complex interaction between systems and their environments that can be described by a few general principles (although they emerge in somewhat different ways in different types of evolution);
- c) It is important to become aware of certain "genetic" links between different types of evolution.

One further important task of the panel will consist of the analysis of evolution of various types of hierarchically and heterarchically ordered structures within different types of macroevolution.

Material Landscape of Power: Gender, Political Identity, and Complexity in Archaeological Context

Convenor: Prof. Nikolay N. Kradin (Institute of History, Archaeology, and Ethnology, Far-Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Vladivostok; E-mail: kradin@mail.ru)

As a discipline distinct from anthropology and history, archaeology studies the longue duree of human life. From the traditional perspective history as a narrowly defined discipline begins with the invention of writing. Ethnologists investigate recent non-state societies, groups already influenced by modernization. Historical and ethnological studies are useful for archaeologists. Archaeological sources are more fragmentary than written sources and the observations of ethnographers. Ceramics, fragments of artifacts, and stratigraphic levels are all that the archeologist has. How is it possible to study authority with these poor data? What does a rich burial signify for status position or property? Is there a correlation between social inequality, power, and domination in prehistoric and traditional societies? How may we distinguish, for example, chiefdoms from other complex non-state societies and the states and civilizations using archeological sources?

We suggest to discuss the following problems:

- 1). Archeological criteria of rank and power.
- 2). Age, gender, and status in archaeological sources.
- 3). Elites, material symbols, and identity of cultural groups.
- 4). Landscape of power: architecture of habitation before and after death.
- 5). Archaeology of political spaces: peer polity, chiefdom, early state in material culture.

Movements and Revolutions from Net to Hierarchical Structures

Convenor: Dr. Bahram Navazeni (Imam Khomeini International University, Qazvin, Iran; E-mails: info@navazeni.ir; navazenib@ikiu.ac.ir)

The history of mankind has witnessed various types of state system in which the main subject had always been the distribution of power towards maintaining the true values of own. In each type, the old or modern, theocratic or democratic, despotic or pluralistic, different classes and groups have played different roles either in supporting or opposing the ruling power which may have some relation to a particular context of cultural, religious, social and economic power. Classes such as nobles, clergies, bourgeoisie, proletariats, and peasants and groups such as patriots, zealots, and nationalists may insist on their will and not ease until the victory of the revolution and the collapse of the whole system. But even when the revolutionaries came to power, they would find the distribution of power as the their first task. This game continues with the opposition groups as the counter revolutionaries.

Covering a large area of the political science field, this panel encourages all academics and scholars of politics, sociology, history and all those interested in the nature of the old or modern state, and the power it wields to use historical and contemporary materials to illustrate the theoretical analysis and the different and changing will and need of the ruling and revolutionary groups and classes. The Russian, Persian, British, American, Turk, Arab, Indian, Chinese, and African

revolutions, old or new, will surely be interesting and appreciated in this panel. I invite the interested participants to discuss the cause and process of movements and revolutions and to find a way to ease tensions among the civilization as a whole.

Political Dynamics of the Muslim World and Evolution of Islamic Political Thought from a Comparative Perspective

Convenors: Dr. Igor Alexeev (Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow; E-mail: ialxyv@gmail.com); Dr. Pavel Basharin (Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow; E-mail: pbasharin@yandex.ru)

The panel aims to discuss various problems of political history of Muslim societies and evolution of Islamic political thought from a wide interdisciplinary perspective.

The panel's concern revolves around understanding of both traditional forms of Islamic political culture and the recent developments. In particular, the panel seeks to evaluate the dynamics of traditional socio-political structures and ideological complexes as well as their transformation under the influence and impacts of modernization processes. Our theoretical premise is that the interaction between the tradition and modernization is by no means unidirectional, as well as the very meaning of these conceptions can hardly be unified. The panel participants are invited to theorize processes of crisis and transformation as permanent factors of political dynamics of various societies of the Muslim World. On the other hand, metaphysical and theological presumptions and constructs reflecting the dynamics of religion as politics and politics as religion can be also helpful to understand processes of intellectual reflection of the political as a general category of thought. That is why we are welcoming political historians and historians of thought as well as political scientists, anthropologists and other specialists interested in this problematique.

Power and Legitimation: Political Strategies in Early States

Convenor: Prof. Peter N. Peregrine (Lawrence University, Appleton, USA; E-mail: peter.n.peregrine@lawrence.edu)

I propose a three-dimensional model for describing and analyzing political strategies in early states. The dimensions are: (1) source of power; (2) implementation of power; and (3) means of legitimation. I suggest that there are less "costly" and more "costly" strategies along these of these dimensions, as well as less "stable" and more "stable" strategies, all dependent on the historical and social context and the physical environment. I suggest emergent leaders employ the least "costly" strategies available to them, but shift to more "stable" ones as they are able (and sometimes they are not, and the state collapses). This model is unapologetically "top-down" and formalist in its approach, but I believe this is a defensible position given both the limitations of comparative archaeology and, more importantly, the reality of political process in early states.

"Republic of Letters" as a Net Structure in the Cultural Space in the 16th - 18th Centuries

Convenor: Dr. Violetta Trofimova (Institute of Foreign Languages & St. Petersburg State University, Russia; E-mail: violet_trofimova@mail.ru)

This panel seeks to analyze various aspects of the birth and development of the "net" of the Renaissance and Early Modern European intellectuals called "Respublica Litteraria" or "Republic of Letters." The term itself was made popular by Erasmus in the early 16th century, and later was to describe the community of European scholars of the Western world in the Early Modern period.

From the very beginning "The Republic of Letters" was an elite community, and at some stages and in some countries it did not eliminate the idea of hierarchy - see,

for example, T. Boccalini's "Ragguagli del Parnaso" (1614), where the head of the "Republic" is Prince Apollo. Nevertheless, by the end of the 17th century the authors who discussed the phenomenon of the "Republic of Letters" underlined its non-hierarchical nature.

As for the Enlightenment period, which is considered the separate stage in the existence of the "Republic of Letters," it saw the wide spread of the ideas of universalism and cosmopolitanism, which had been promoted by the citizens of the "Republic." The end of the 18th century marked the eclipse of the very idea of the "Republic of Letters."

This panel focuses on the image of the "Republic of Letters" as a net-like, hierarchical/non-hierarchical structure in the minds of Early Modern people. It strives to represent "Republic of Letters" as a cultural phenomenon. It invites papers which discuss this phenomenon in the whole, as well as various subcultures in the "Republic of Letters," for example, separate intellectual networks, figures of intellectuals belonging to this community, literary works which were the result of the existence and activity of the "Republic of Letters" etc. It invites scholars to analyze the phenomenon of the "Republic of Letters" from historical, philosophical, sociological and other points of view.

"Republic of Letters" was an early predecessor of the Internet, and the ideas of the "citizens" of the "Republic" became the ground for such political structures, as UN and EU, as well as for the very concept of the global world.

Socio-Cultural Perceptions of Globalization: A Global Resemblance or a Local Recognition?

Convenor: Dr. Irina Vasilenko (Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia; E-mail: irina.vasilenko@research.vu.edu.au; bridgingrussia@hotmail.com)

In today's world, Globalization is more than the capstone of economic transition that drives local economies; more than the production of the higher-order capacity necessary for effective communication tools; it is a critical pillar of human development worldwide that, indeed, has remarkably intensified a socio-cultural transformation. A multifaceted nature of this influence creates an immense complexity in transformation registered in all spheres of social and cultural life affecting each nation or individual. The socio-cultural transformation manifests a complicated character of changes, conflicting tendencies, and a contradicted pattern of simultaneously occurring processes, endorsing assimilation, adaptation, and adjustment along with a reinstatement.

Globalization motivates changes occurring in traditions, culture, and mentality, collective as well as individual, and indeed, in education, arts, communication, and other social institutions. These changes are central to the transformation of not only a national intellectual capacity of local knowledge of being sufficient in a global environment, but also to a promotion of worldwide practices necessary to update individual knowledge and skills. A widespread discourse of these changes demonstrates that Globalization is more influential than ever in respect to the social and cultural transformation.

At that same time, to challenge the global influence is appeared to be the most critical dimension in the process of socio-cultural transformation. The increasing importance of local knowledge, tradition and culture is significant for surfacing the inverse changes answerable for a reoccurrence of traditionalism, conservatism, and nationalism in the post-industrial, industrial and transitional societies. It is also responsible for maintaining the various forms of social and cultural estrangement and for developing an intricacy of socio-cultural perceptions in different societies.

The complexity of socio-cultural transformations in a rapidly changing global environment has made necessary for a further discussion in respect to the

theoretical assumptions and policies concerning a global influence on a socio-cultural transformation in general, and a role of socio-cultural perceptions of Globalization for a national development on the core of a country's competitive advantage in the global environment, in particular.

The Panel invites scholars, social scientists, social anthropologists, humanists, international educators and independent researchers to discuss the complexity of socio-cultural perceptions of Globalization in the environment of traditional, post-industrial, industrial and transitional societies. The Panel calls for a presentation of papers, case studies, research, surveys, or personal observations informing about cultural and social transformations taking place in human development and revealing currently occurred changes in social life, psychology, arts, education, and culture as well as in the social institutions their represented.

The interdisciplinary theme of the Panel opens a wider opportunity to discuss different paradigms of socio-cultural perceptions of Globalization in various milieus; tendencies that support or restrict a worldwide integration; and forms of socio-cultural estrangement. The participants also encourage in stimulating a dialogue on both advantages and disadvantages of socio-cultural transformation, how different social institutions are responding to the challenges and opportunities of the global environment; and how Globalization affects not only the shape and mode of national operation but also a life of the individuals.

The Emergence of the State in Europe

Convenor: Prof. Alessandro Guidi (Verona University, Italy; E-mail: alessandro.guidi@univr.it)

Normally we consider ancient early states those of Near East, Egypt, Mesoamerica and Peru.

The archaeological researches of the last 25 years demonstrated that in many parts of Europe state systems are present, often before contact with so called "superior civilizations".

The aim of this panel is to analyze their emergence in early I millennium Italy and Spain, "Dark Age" Greece, late I millennium Central Europe, France and Britain).

Crucial themes will be:

- 1). Definition of different pathways toward the State;
- 2). Presence/absence of cities;
- 3). Endogenous vs. exogenous development;
- 4). Centre/periphery relationships.

The End of Socialist States and the Rise of Ethnic Nationalism

Convenor: Dr. Charles Rheume (National Defense Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada;
E-mails: rheume.cc@forces.gc.ca; crheau@sympatico.ca)

Various kinds of ethnic nationalism have developed at the turn of the 21st century. This phenomenon, as manifested in international relations, is to be traced in good part to the disappearance of the Socialist Bloc and its internationalist discourse. Among that paradigm shift's fiercest episodes were Yugoslavia's break-up and the Bosnian war, which had repercussions in contexts as remote as Canadian politics. The rise of ethnic nationalism expresses itself in subtle ways as well. This is the case with Russian-language humor from Russian immigrants against their receiving societies where they voice nostalgia for the superpower status of the Soviet Union.

The Forms of Social Stratification and Power Institutions in Chiefdoms and State Societies of South America and Mesoamerica

Convenors: Dr. Ernesto Gonzalez Licon (National School of Anthropology and History, Mexico City, Mexico; E-mail: eglicon@yahoo.com.mx); Dr. Carlos Armando Rodriguez (University del Valle, Cali, Colombia; E-mail: carodrig@univalle.edu.co); Dr. Anastasia Kalyuta (Russian Ethnological Museum, St. Petersburg; E-mails: anastasiakalyuta@mail.ru; kalyuta@ethnomuseum.ru)

The main objective of this panel is to discuss the civilizational and evolutionary models of socio-political development of two important regions in the pre-Hispanic Period: the northeastern part of South America and Mesoamerica. The panel is integrated by scholars from these regions and is open to other researchers interested in the comparison and analysis of the sociopolitical evolution of Chiefdoms and State societies in these regions as well.

The panel will be dedicated to the examination of general tendencies and particularities of appearance, evolution and functioning of social stratification and power in the South American and Mesoamerican societies in course of more than 3000 years from Formative Period to the first quarter of the 16th century, the time of Spanish Conquest. The Andean region and Mesoamerica are two of the few regions in the world, where complex societies and states emerged independently of contacts with other parts of the earth that gives to researchers the unique "opportunity" for checking the existing theories of complex societies and state formation. This moment is combined with exceptional richness of archaeological materials and written sources, which makes possible to reconstruct at least in general forms the main vector of South American and Mesoamerican civilizations' development as well as concrete variants of their evolution in various parts of the regions.

Departing from these general objectives, the panel will deal with three main blocks of questions to be discussed during its sessions:

- Discussion and evaluation of theoretical models, methodological approaches and / or archaeological indicators related directly to the societies in the regions and period mentioned above.
- Discussion of several aspects based on the archaeological record and/or ethnohistoric sources, related to the formation of hierarchical and net structures, social inequality, gender roles, funerary practices, long distance trade, diffusion of knowledge, and the possible relationship between these two regions and/or some of their forms of socio-political organization.
- Main economic and environmental factors of appearance and evolution of states and complex societies in South American and Mesoamerica;
- Economic, ideological and social bases of power in Formative, Classic and Postclassic societies

The Images of Power, State and Leaders

Convenor: Dr. Tatiana V. Evgenyeva (Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mails: etv@rol.ru; etv133@mail.ru)

While observing the facts and reasons, because of which the relations between the population and the power is undergoing changes, we'll pay attention to the context of power perception.

These relations is not be limited to the ratings, proposed by different sociologic agencies. it is necessary to analyse the structure of political perception in general, taking into account more complicated and fine mechanisms, than those fixed by sociological questionnaires.

Images of power have complex structure, in which one should distinguish alongside the rational level, which is being fixed in sociological surveys, also the level of unconsciousness, to find out which we need different, mainly psychological instruments. This level is composed not only under the influence of

the current political events, but also under the impact of the traditions of national political culture, those archetypes, which have been rooted in mass consciousness for a long time. Images of power are also based on the images of specific power holders in mass consciousness.

Within the research of the images of power it is necessary to compare images of power and images of the person of leader in public mentality, to find the basis of these images in national culture, including the image of the state, to explore dynamics of the attitudes of rank-and-file citizens towards real and ideal power.

We invite the participants to discuss the problems of real and ideal power and state, images of "our" and "alien" political leader, "our" and "alien" state, mass ideas of actual and "shade" political power and political system.

The Newcomers and Old-Timers: Intercultural Communication, Social Transformations and Migration Policy

Convenors: Prof. Dmitri M. Bondarenko (Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mail: dbondar@hotmail.com); Dr. Veronica V. Usacheva (Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mail: veronius@rambler.ru)

Activation of the migration processes, one of the key characteristic features of our time, is often seen as a source of social tension determined by cultural differences between the newcomers and old-timers in a society. Both cultural and social differences and contradictions between the migrants and initial citizens are to be given consideration in the Panel. One of the Panel's goals is to study the migrants and autochthonous population interdependent images in the each others' consciousness, stemming from the premise that the images of other cultures affect crucially the attitude to the respective cultures representatives. Owe to these images the stereotypic visions of other peoples are formed and reproduced, they

influence directly the practice of the relations with them. It is important to reveal not only the images as such but also the historical backgrounds for, and dynamics of their formation in different countries of the world, their specificity and directionality that depends on the socio-cultural features of both the "accepting milieu" and various migrant communities. Simultaneously with the formation of the mutual images of different cultures representatives - now dwellers of the same country and members of the same society, one more process is on, too. This process also has two aspects, dealing with which is a part of the Panel's tasks. On the one hand, the migrant communities are becoming diasporas - net associations that establish informal as well as semiformal and formal, links and hierarchies within themselves, with the recipient society, with the country of origin, and with the analogous compatriot communities in other countries. Although in the diaspora communities the pre-migration cultural traditions and social relations are supported and may remain unchanged for a much longer time than in the country of origin, these communities inevitable have to conform to the principles of the recipient society. On the other hand, the process of the migrant communities' socio-cultural integration in the latter presupposes securing by them of some social and professional niches what leads to transformation of the whole system of social hierarchies in a given society. The role of the directing force, of mediators and regulators in the relations between a country's cultural majority and the migrant communities is to be played by the civil society institutions and the state that pursues the migration policy in the legal, economic, social, cultural, educational, information, and other spheres. Hence, an important task of the Panel is to consider the migration policy in different states and the range and variety of the migrant communities and the wider, whole society's "responses" to the government's "challenges".

The Use of Symbolic Identities as Cultural Models of Power Legitimation: The Case of the Navy and Merchant Fleet

Convenor: Mr. Ioannis Sideris (Merchant Marine Academy of Greece, Thessaloniki; E-mail: siderisy@otenet.gr)

This proposal aims at the presentation of a research undergoing within the frameworks of the Maritime Education and concerned with the variety of cultural patterns of power legitimation on board military and merchant ships.

These cultural patterns of legitimacy construction are viewed as being parallel, converging, or conflictuous to the official mechanisms distributing authority and power in the setting of a military or merchant ship manned by a multinational/multicultural crew.

In particular, being the largest in the world by transporting capacity, the Greek-owned merchant shipping industry operates under a variety of flags [registries] and employs crews of many different national and ethnic origins [mainly Asians and Eastern Europeans]. The Greek-owned shipping industry is not only the most globalized and financially successful branch of the Greek economy, but it is so in comparison with the rest of its competitors as well.

As in any globalized economic environment, the imperatives structuring the coexistence of different national, ethnic, and cultural factors in the workplace are interweaved with and affected by a number of well known phenomena, namely inter-ethnic conflict, nationalist and religious presumptions, or, simply, unavoidable ingredients of a still semantically dominant but controversial "Clash of Civilizations".

In the light of the findings of the undergoing research, the above mentioned phenomena are not independent of the cultural models of power and hierarchy legitimation, as these latter often function as inter-cultural translators providing acceptable and workable individual perceptions of hierarchical relations.

Hierarchy as an organizing principle of human groups, and the creation, transformation, or mutation of symbolic identities as a means to overcome the conflictuous character of hierarchy formation, is the object of our study whose most salient aspects would be presented at the panel. More precisely, we shall make use of a research on the maritime microcosm to focus, in a structurally encompassing manner, on the following issues / problematics of the Conference:

- 1). ideology and legitimation of power in different civilizational contexts, where we shall examine the role of the socially dominant ideologies in the shaping of individual cognitive schemata;
- 2). cultural models of power's perception in different civilizations, where we shall try to articulate the artifact of symbolic identity with the existence of cultural patterns of legitimacy construction;
- 3). power, society, and culture in the era of globalization, where we shall propose an alternative reading of the inter-cultural dynamics in regard to what is currently considered as up-to-date theory in "Managerial Anthropology", inter-cultural management, and conflict resolution studies.

Traditional Identities in Modern Social and Political Processes in the Caucasus

Convenor: Dr. Enver F. Kisriev (Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mail: kisriev.dagestan@mtu-net.ru); Prof. Robert Bruce Ware (Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; E-mail: rware@siue.edu); Dr. Naima Neflyasheva (Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; E-mail: innef@mail.ru)

The Caucasus is a very specific region of the world where various communities based on deeply rooted traditional modes of social ties (clan-like, Jamaat-like, ethnic, religious and other identities) preserve their stability and actually reveal themselves in social and political life.

When after the collapse of the Soviet Union some radical political transformations occurred in the Caucasus, studies relating to regeneration of the traditional Caucasian identities and their participation in social and political processes developing in the states of the Southern Caucasus as well as in North Caucasian subjects of the Russian Federation acquired a strong scientific and practical interest.

Transfer of Institutions and Technologies in the Context of Dialogue of Civilizations

Convenor: Prof. Yuri V. Gromyko (Institute of Advanced Studies, Moscow, Russia; E-mail: nmu@dol.ru)

Among the most important constituent bases of the contemporary world are communicability and transferability, especially insofar as they concern institutions and technological systems (both industrial and humanitarian) at the level of interstate relations.

The study and explanation of phenomena such as the interaction and transfer of institutions and technologies, particularly from the perspective of power and politics, are thus one of the most challenging tasks pertaining to the goal of establishing regional and global security, as well as of preserving identities. Is Russia prepared today to not only borrow and acquire institutions and technologies - first and foremost "Western" ones - but also translate them? What are the place and role of the state itself as an institution and how can this institutional and technological transfer be accomplished in the context of dialogue of civilizations? What is to happen both to the country identity and to ethnic identities in such a context? What humanitarian technologies should be like? These are questions that actually inquire into the place, part, and functions of the state as a political institution in the contemporary world.

The present-day world of globalization is the Oikumene that is deteriorating because of the unrestrained expansion of a limited set of technologies over the entire universe - technologies destroying biological and sociocultural diversity in the world - as well as because of the imposing on all residents of the "global village" of a narrow circle of values obliterating their identities. The overcoming of "egoculturalism" and the building of an intercivilization dialogue are the most pressing problems of nowadays. The examination of these issues and possible projects of solving problems of global and regional security are the focus of the section.

Problems for discussion:

- 1). Principal characteristics of the contemporary world and the role of the state as a political institution
- 2). The transfer of institutions and technologies: historical, regional, cultural, and political aspects
- 3). The translation of institutions and technologies in the context of the issue of maintenance and preservation of identities

War, Economy and Society in Southern Africa, 1867-1902

Convenor: Prof. Ian Phimister (University of Sheffield, UK; E-mail: i.phimister@sheffield.ac.uk)

Such a panel, we believe, would engage with several of the wider Conference issues and themes, particularly those of 'from simple societies to the world-system: pathways and forms of political integration'; 'socio-political and cultural-mental factors of social transformation'; and 'violence and non-violence in the history of political institutions'.

Our reasons for thinking this are as follows: the violent integration at the end of the 19th century of the southern African sub-continent into the wider world of

European, largely but not entirely British, imperialism, has long attracted the interest of historians and other scholars. Yet both the long-term origins and the short-term causes of the South African ['Anglo-Boer'] War are still hotly debated. Amongst many possible explanations for this continuing historiographical controversy is the fact that the 'Boer' side, or sides, of the question has not been systematically examined. We are convinced that a revision of the Kruger [Transvaal / ZAR] state's standing in history is long overdue. President Kruger's own crucial role as an innovator, especially with regard to his insights and policies in connection with the economy of the ZAR, stands in urgent need of thorough-going investigation. Reassessment of the pattern of modernization of the ZAR and the part played by Kruger, is likely wholly to recast interpretations of the coming of the South African War. It will provide an opportunity to scrutinize critically, not least from a wide range of international perspectives, those polarized views that have seen the conflict as essentially one between Boer backwardness and British civilization.

We shall be glad to receive information about your research work as well as your comments on our Newsletter.