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Abstracts

In-Suk Cha
Toward a Transcultural Ethics in a Multicultural World

This paper presents its author's famous distinction between globalization, as the process or vehicle by which ideas, habits and worldviews travel from one culture to another and are transformed in the process, and mundialization, as the taking in of the outside world into our own lifeworlds, a process by which the ideas and customs of other cultures are transported into our homeworlds. In this process, what was once strange and unfamiliar is transformed into something comfortable and familiar. This is the process that is generally known as cultural assimilation, and by virtue of which the boundaries of our individual homeworlds become constantly widened. Examining this phenomenon, which he calls the 'mundialization of home', leads the author to sketch the main features of a possible transcultural moral world.

Marietta Stepanyants
Cultural Essentials versus Universal Values?

This paper adopts a comparative approach to analyze the crucial issue of the dynamics between universally shared values and the essentials of different cultures. It presents the ways in which universal values are conceptualized in Western, Indian and Muslim philosophy, presenting not only a historical overview but referring to modern authors such as Daya Krishna, D.P. Chattopadhyaya, Richard Rorty, Muhammad Iqbal, S.H. Nasr and Abdolkarim Soroush to show how these authors implicitly use, or do not use, cultural essential and universal values in their own work. It is eventually claims that comparative philosophy is of crucial importance for the future of philosophical thought in a global world.

Mordecai Roshwald
Toleration, Pluralism, and Truth

This paper deals with three guiding principles of contemporary Western civilization. It explores the compatibility of Toleration, Pluralism and Truth, as well as their

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application to diverse domains of cultural activity and creation. There is no place for toleration, let alone pluralism, in the realm of logic and mathematics. Scientific conclusions allow diverse degrees of certainty. The realm of monotheistic religions excludes pluralism, but necessitates toleration. The domains of ethics and its related social institutions allow diversity in secondary matters, but essentially should be guided by universally valid principles. In the case of aesthetics, a diversity of taste suggests a virtually unlimited pluralism. Yet, a universal basic principle of aesthetic evaluation is suggested which would greatly reduce tolerable pluralism, although this assertion is made with less confidence than the insistence on basic norms in ethics.

Micheline Galley
The Continuity of Tradition: On the Prophetic Song of the Sibyl: *Judicii Signum*

In Malta and Southern Italy, legends centred on the prestigious figure of the Sibyl are still known by the older people. In Majorca, the prophetic song attributed to the Greek Sibyl, Erythrea (6th century BC), is still sung on Christmas eve in the monastery-sanctuary of Lluc. This paper focuses on the history of this prophetic song since its adoption by the medieval Church and on its surviving tradition in certain areas of Catalan culture – a fabulous example of cultural continuity.

Alain Bienaymé
The Universality of Economics and Cultural Diversity

The very diversity of cultures impels the economist to respect a principle of modesty when it comes to specifying the degree of universality to which the science of economics can lay claim. In considering this issue, this paper: a) criticizes the ambition of certain forms of economic thought to arrive at truths which are universal, and b) explores the modes by which contemporary economic science participates in a renewed pursuit of a universalist doctrine. It concludes that the logic of economic rationality implies a representation of the world that is incompatible with the diversity of cultures. At the same time, such diversity should not be raised to the status of absolutes. Combining difference and unity is a major challenge for current economics.

Bénédicte Fauvarque-Cosson
Towards a Renewed Universalism in Law

Despite the phenomena of internationalization and Europeanization, legal process remains essentially national in character. However, certain domains of law are already unified. Focusing mainly on the French tradition and its contribution to the construction of a European legal space, this paper: a) criticizes the traditional methods used to manage diversity in law – unifying the law and co-ordinating those

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legal codes likely to be conflictual; b) studies the debate between universalism and particularism in private international law, a discipline whose essential object is the resolution of the difficulties derived from pluralism; and c) attempts to discern an appropriate path towards a 'renewed universalism' by pursuing a comparative approach which can open the way towards unification but must also be able to preserve the irreducible diversity of law.

Pierre Cartier
Mathematical Universalism

This paper presents a historical view of the rise of mathematical universalism in modern times. It argues that 20th century mathematical revolution laid the foundations for a *new universalism* which extended to physics, economics, informatics, and recently biology. It describes the role played by the organization of mathematical work for closer co-operation among scientists on an international scale throughout the century, and stresses the importance of mathematics in the education process.

Gérard Toulouse
Snapshots from the Development of the Natural Sciences

This paper focuses on how the practitioners of the exact and natural sciences can make a contribution to the project of the social sciences to break free of a reductive Eurocentrism in order to achieve a renewed universalism. Focusing in particular on the last 50 years, the paper: a) describes the *1955–60 turning point* that can be perceived in techno-scientific development and its relationship with society; b) analyzes technical developments under the two modes of *gigantism and miniaturization*, putting them in close relation with the political evolution of the world (Cold War and post-Cold War era) as well as with the phenomena of divergence/convergence among disciplines; c) explains the 'ethical movement in science' namely by introducing the idea of *moral revaluation* defined by similarity/contrast with the older and now well-accepted concept of scientific revolution; and d) sketches a typology of the scientific community's varied responses to the growing social protests around topics such as nuclear installations, health crises, genetically modified organisms, nanotechnologies and so on.

Claude Albagli
Controversies around a Universal Model

Since Magellan's round-the-world voyage (1521), international issues have been embroiled in universalist claims. This paper investigates the controversial nature of a new economic universalism in the light of the social deficiencies and the limits of the available resources. The model of a global consumerism turns out to be inaccessible for billions of people. The market conceals a social dimension which ethics,

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equity, governance and identity are attempting to reintroduce. Consumerist universalism is faltering. The search for an alternative development model is crucial. It will need to be technically sustainable, socially more equitable, culturally more diverse and politically more participative.

Bonaventure Mvé-Ondo
Scientific Rationality and Cultural Diversity

This paper examines the dynamics between scientific reason and cultural diversity by: a) analyzing the epistemic structure of 'universalism' as conceived by science, both theoretically and through its historical determination; and b) focusing on the situation of science in Africa, presenting its limits and challenges. It calls for a co-construction of science at an international scale, which represents a key factor of development and cultural transmission, in particular, transmission of scientific scholarship.

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