1. Thursday, July 24 - Round-Table "Dialogue of Cultures"

Moderator: Basarab Nicolescu [basarab.nicolescu@gmail.com]

Participants:

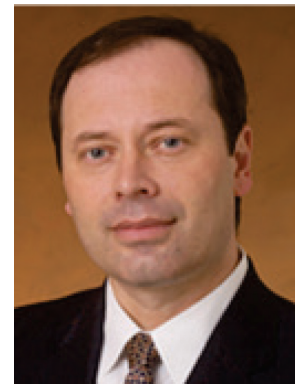| **Domniţa Dumitrescu,**	**Ileana Costea,**	**Gheorghe Drăgan,**	**Adrian Stoica**

MORE DETAILS BELOW

2. Thursday, July 24 - Tour of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory Coordinator:

Virgil Adumitroaie, JPL

3. Thursday and Friday, July 25-26   Exhibition of books and works of art

Coordinator: Anca Adumitroaie - Art from the following artists:

Alexandru Darida,   Eva Halus,   Katherine Arion,   Jerry McDaniel,   Maria Zamfir Bleyberg
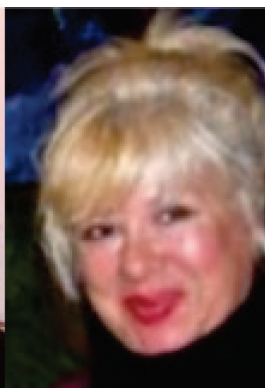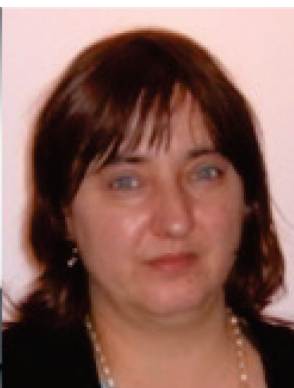
4. Friday, July 25, Banquet

Master of Cetemonies: Florina Kendrick Roberts

5. Saturday, July 26: Panel on Business and Entrepreneurship

Moderator: Jacob Segal (SEE SATURDAY in THE TOP MENU)

6. Saturday, July 26: Beyond the horizon - a TEDx-styled day at the ARA Conference

Organizers: Virgil Adumitroaie and Adrian Stoica.   (SEE SATURDAY in THE TOP MENU)

7. Trip to Las Vegas and Grand Canyon (Sunday-Tuesday, 3 days)

Details

1. Round-Table "Dialogue of Cultures"

Basarab Nicolescu:

Can we really dialogue? Each person has his/her prejudices, his/her convictions, his/her subconscious representations. When two people try to communicate there is inevitably a confrontation: representation against representation, subconscious against subconscious. As this confrontation is subconscious, it often degenerates into conflict. Language is the vehicle of these subconscious representations. We use the same words, but their meaning can be radically different. We are manipulated by our own representations. The dialogue is strictly impossible in the absence of a methodology of dialogue. We can only monologue. It is impossible to be at the place of the other. The same considerations apply in the case of nations, cultures, religions and spiritualities: interest against interest, representation against representation, dogma against dogma, hidden spiritual assumptions against hidden spiritual assumptions. This situation is aggravated by the large number of languages (more than 6000), which display each its own systems of representations and values. A completely accurate translation from one language to another is impossible. This is also aggravated by the contemporary immense means of destruction and the continuing destruction of the environment. The inevitable conflicts could lead, for the first time in the history of mankind, at the disappearance of the human species. A new model of civilization is necessary, the keystone is the dialogue between human beings, nations, cultures and religions for the survival of humanity. At this Round-Table we will discuss the following questions: - What is the methodology of dialogue between cultures? - The suspension, during the dialogue, of our prejudices to arrive at a "fusion of horizons" is it necessary? - The abandonment of the binary logic and the adoption of non-classical logic is it necessary? - Can we dialogue without first identifying the levels of reality involved in the dialogue? - How can we take complexity into account? - Is the transcultural crucially important for a methodology of dialogue of cultures? - The dialogue between cultures is it a social or a political gamble?   - Is the danger of the dissolution of cultures in the context of globalization real?   - Are there big cultures, small cultures and falling cultures? - Peoples of the world are they prepared for a real dialogue of cultures?   - What is the role of the spiritual dimension in this dialogue?

Domnita Dumitrescu, PhD. Professor of Spanish Linguistics,

California State University, Los Angeles, and North-American Academy of the Spanish language

The dialogue of cultures means also the dialogue between individuals belonging to different cultures, and this dialogue, in order to be successful, needs to be based on cross-cultural communication. In this short paper, I intend to address the topic of cross-cultural (verbal) politeness, using the framework of the influential Politeness Theory of   Brown and Levinson (1987) -which has since been used, with or without modifications and criticisms, by all scholars working on verbal politeness in several languages of the world-, but I will incorporate the amendments made to this theory by the French linguist Catherine Kerbrath-Orecchioni (1992, 1997), and I will also make references to the Rapport Management Theory of Helen Spencer Oatey (2000,

2002), who has suggested that linguistic politeness should be seen only as one of the many resources available for managing relationships. According to Oates, the motivational force behind the management of relations comprises two components: the management of "face" (a concept first introduced by Goffman and central to the politeness theory in the Brown and Levinson approach), and the management of "sociality rights: ("face" is further divided into "quality face" and "social identity face," while "sociality rights" consist of the interrelated aspects of "equity rights" and "association rights"). On the other hand, Haverkate (2004) -taking his inspiration from Sifianou 1992-pursues and develops Brown and Levinson's distinction between positive politeness cultures and negative politeness cultures from their chapter on Sociological Implications. As the Dutch author explains, this distinction manifests itself at two different levels of analysis, depending on whether the research is focused on the intra- or the intercultural dimension of the communicative process. As far as the intracultural dimension is concerned, it has been shown that, in general, less privileged social classes manifest a predilection toward positive politeness, tending to establish in-group solidarity links. In contrast, higher social strata tend to orient themselves toward interpersonal distance, placing a particular value on negative politeness. But Haverkate is more interested in the intercultural dimension of politeness, which manifests itself in the alleged distinction between "positive politeness societies" and "negative politeness societies." He posits Mediterranean countries at one end of the spectrum with Great Britain and the Scandinavian Peninsula at the other end. My research has shown that Romanian culture is also a "positive politeness society" and that, in realizing certain traditional polite speech acts, it is close to the Greek one. If time permits, I will briefly illustrate the cross-cultural variability of two polite speech acts-complimenting and wishing-in Romanian, Spanish, French and English.

Ileana Costea, Ph.D. Professor of Automation Engineering and Chair of Manufacturing Systems Engineering and Management Department,

California State University, Northridge.

Language as a mode of communication is filled with ambiguities, even when those trying to use it to communicate with each other know that language very well. Then different parties might have only a partial knowledge of the used natural language, thus adding to the ambiguity. necessary, and yet not always possible in any kind of communication. But language is not the only mode of communication. It is only one aspect of it. The way one talks, the way one behaves, the way one dresses, the gestures one uses, the tone of the voice employed, the rhythm of the talk, the time one takes to listen, the way one has more patient to hear the other party's talk, or the frequency one interrupts, the biases one has from one raising/culture, all contribute to make communication difficult. Translating from one language to another is generally hard, on one side because the different structure of the language itself (but this can be overcome, solved by computer programs with more ease), but especially due to other causes: the presence (or lacking of certain concepts, notions) the meaning of a word, or concept being totally different in different cultures (the color of grieving death is black for the West side of the world, and white in China, the moving of one's head left to right or up and down can mean opposite things, a word, and expression might mean friendship or aggressiveness or even an insult in two different cultures, or a different thing (sympathy in English you have for someone going through a death, a drama, while in Romance language is a sign of affection, appreciation).

„Science – the unique source of information?"

Gheorghe DRAGAN, Ph.D. (Physics),

www.gdfdatabanks.ro

Cultures are mainly developed around the traditions naturally transmitted along generations. Traditions based on religious principles are the most powerful training large human communities. Dialogue of cultures is a good chance for constructive dialogue of religions while direct confrontation of religions produces bloody conflicts. Recent official statistics assume that over 90% scientists of all times are living today. Unfortunately, science has a de-structuring effect on traditions and represents one of the main disadvantages of globalization. The basic mechanism of this de-structuring process consists in the fact that contemporary scientists deny real facts

and promote fake products by using means without elementary ethics in view to sustain personal, economic and/or political goals.

Adrian Stoica, PhD

A jest's prosperity lies in the ear / Of him that hears it…

 …Never in the tongue / Of him that makes it" says Shakespeare. The same word will trigger different emotions and thoughts in each of us - further apart the more we differ in blood, history, faith, and education. We need to understand the culture - the cognitive style - of our dialog partners in order to have a meaningful and efficient communication. This includes understanding their value system, the belief system, and how they make decisions, words must be interpreted in their cultural context. Beyond words, one needs to understand what is implied, the body language, and even the reactions of passive observers. Modern technologies (planes, media, internet) influence the understanding.