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The ISCSC was founded in 1961 by Othmar Auderle, Rushton Coulborn and Arnold Toynbee in Salzburg (Austria). Pitirim Sorokin was the first president (1964-71). In 1971 the Society’s leadership moved to the U.S. Over 30 foreign countries are represented in the Society’s membership. Benjamin Nelson became the Society’s first American president (1971-77).
Message from Lynn Rhodes, President

Dear Members and Friends of ISCSC,

On June 15, 2018 ISCSC members gathered together in Suzhou, P.R. China at Soochow University for the 48th Annual ISCSC Conference. Preparatory work began for the conference in early 2017 by Professors Fang Hanwen and Shi Yuanhui along with Professor Zhu Xif, Dean of the School of Foreign Languages at Soochow University. They received assistance from the Chinese People’s Friendship Association, the head of the Jiangsu provincial government, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences of Peking University and other university officials. Professor Fang Hanwen served as the leader of the group and lead host in Suzhou.

Many new scholars joined the organization and delivered papers at the conference. Attendees from Australia, Iran, Japan, Canada, the U.S. and China came together for a rich adventure in scholarship to underscore the vision of the ISCSC which is: Civilizations Matter.

Attendees stayed at the comfortable Suzhou Dongwu Hotel, which was a short walking distance to the University. Our gracious hosts provided readily-available student guides to help with navigation and questions or concerns by the attendees. Please see the Suzhou Newspaper article about the conference elsewhere on the ISCSC website.

The conference opened with remarks from Professor Zhu Xinfu, Dean of Foreign Language School, followed by welcome speeches by Professor Fang Hanwen and ISCSC
President Lynn Rhodes. Subsequently, the program called for the many presentations on wide ranging civilizational topics. Some will be featured in upcoming publications of the Comparative Civilizations Review (CCR) Journal. Please send your paper, in MS Word to Editor in Chief Joseph Drew at joseph.drew@iscsc.org. Attendees have also been invited to submit papers to Professor Fang Hanwen for the Comparative Civilization Studies academic journal of the China Section of the ISCSC. Professor Fang Hanwen’s email address is 1813146530@qq.com.

The ISCSC Board and membership meeting was convened during the conference. One highlight from that meeting was the offer by Professor, and CCR peer review editor, John Berteaux, PhD, to explore hosting our 49th Annual ISCSC Conference at California State University at Monterey Bay in 2019. We are also exploring the offer by longtime ISCSC member Ashok Malhotra, to host our 50th Annual Conference in Bangalore, India in 2020.

Details will be forthcoming soon regarding these future conferences. There are also discussions underway to explore the possibility of a joint Ph.D. program between the ISCSC and Soochow University.

There many meaningful and exciting presentations delivered. Everyone was able to make new friends and not only experience their unique traveling experiences to and from China, but importantly to experience the rich Chinese culture and of Suzhou in particular.

Along with the Officers and Board Members of the ISCSC, we are looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible when we gather for our 49th Annual ISCSC Conference!

Warm Regards,

Lynn Rhodes, President

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Attendees. 48th ISCSC International Conference at Suzhou University, Suzhou, Jiangsu, China. June 15 to 17, 2018.
ISCSC’s Scholarly Legacy Continues to Influence the World  

By Vlad Alalykin-Izvekov, ISCSC Representative and Programs Coordinator (Europe, Russia)

During September and October 2017, I traveled to Europe and Russia. During the trip I have visited the ancient city of Trier in Germany, as well as the cities of Moscow, Saint Petersburg, and Veliky Novgorod in Russia.

In Moscow, I have participated in the congress “Globalistics-2017,” where I made three presentations on the scholarly legacy of ISCSC.

In the Saint Petersburg University, I gave a presentation to graduate students of the Department of Sociology, as well as conducted research of the Pitirim A. Sorokin’s scholarly works at the Saint Petersburg University’s Spetskhran (Special Storage Section)

I also took part in a number of scholarly events at the university, as well as performed extensive research in the libraries and museums of Nizhny Novgorod.

The Main Building of the Moscow State University (built in 1953).

The Fundamental Library of the Moscow State University (built in 2005).
The venerable “Twelve Collegia” complex (built between from 1722 to 1744) is the main structure of the Saint Petersburg State University (founded in 1819).

The legendary 400-meter corridor of the Saint Petersburg University’s main building is considered to be the longest of its kind. It is decorated with images of famous scholars and contains antique books of the University’s Library.
Kremlin (a citadel) in Veliky Novgorod, Russia.

The “Millennium of Russia” bronze monument (1862) with the Cathedral of St. Sophia (built between 1045 and 1050) golden cupola in the background.

Cover of recently published by Vlad monograph “Philosophical and Historical Views of Pitirim A. Sorokin: Genesis and Evolution” (2017), which highlights the world-historic views of the Society’s founder.
The Challenge of Three Empires Project (CTEP) – A New Project

Review of CTEP Publication by author Bertil Haggman

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Swedish author Mr. Bertil Haggman, LL.M. has in the fall of 2017 initiated the Challenge of Three Empires Project (CTEP) in cooperation with the Center for Research on Geopolitics (CRG), Sweden. The project is partly a preparation for his forthcoming book Civilizational Completion in the West.

CTEP is an attempt to study the main present challengers to the United States and the rest of the West using geography, classical geopolitical theory and historical strategic thinking related to civilizational heritage.

Civilizational Completion in the West is a study of American civilization and the heliotropic myth. It includes a preface, an introduction and twenty-one chapters on the West’s historic road from Jerusalem to the United States.

The Classical Geopolitical Framework

The policy of the United States and its allies from around 1945 to the end of the Cold War was based on containment of the Soviet Union. At the end of the 1970s it was clear that it had failed. The West managed to avoid an overt “hot war”, a nuclear war; yet at the same time the Soviet empire was still expanding.

Classical geopolitical theorist, Dutch-American Professor Nicholas Spykman’s book The Geography of the Peace (1944) stressed that power in Eurasia directly affected United States security. Spykman was partly a geographical determinist and believed that geography was vital in the analysis of power relations in world politics.

Like Sir Halford Mackinder Spykman regarded the world as a whole. There was a large world landmass (Eurasia and Africa). It was the major land area and had the largest population. In comparison North America was regarded as an island. It was Spykman’s view that the Soviet Union in the past was too weak to exert in depth influence in Central Asia. One reason was the demographics of Siberia.

Russia

The Grand Project of Russia, historically a newcomer among world civilizations, is to challenge the West. This project is broad in its aim and would include a multifaceted approach to China, the European Union, India, Iran, and Turkey. This policy has also been termed” civilizational advancement”. One possible implication of this approach would involve allowing Western nations and China obtain access to what has been termed” storage of the world” (Siberia).

CTEP will explore if Russia could cease to be a threat when it disintegrates into smaller formations. Such a smaller separate formation might be able to develop more effective economies and be less dependent on the sale of raw materials. This could be a way to stimulate other forms of economic growth and cooperation.
China

CTEP will explore Chinese strategic thinking based on the Machiavellian theory that all politics is concerned with the struggle for power among individuals and groups.

There is a distinction between the “formal” and the “real” meaning of political rhetoric, which can only be discovered by analyzing the rhetoric in the context of the actual world of time, space, and history.

Rulers and elites hold power by “force and fraud”, and thus all governments are sustained by” political formulas” or myths. Societies are divided into a” ruling class” and the ruled. In all societies the “structure and composition” of the ruling class changes over time.

The most outstanding legalist “Machiavellian” in China was Lord Shang (Shang Yang), (born? – d. 338 BC). He was a radical opponent to Confucianism in Chinese history. Shang Yang believed that average man desired profit and fame and was afraid of pains and death. In foreign affairs Lord Shang practiced deception. The basic concepts of Shang Yang are described in The Book of Lord Shang.

China’s project at present seems to be to achieve economic superpower status by 2035 and geopolitical superpower status in 2050. Xi in 2017 wants to fulfill “the Chinese dream” based on other values than the West. It was expressed by the Chinese leader in stating that China is moving closer to the center stage.

China wants to be a strong one-party state and prove that such a system can avoid the failure of the Soviet Union. The communist Chinese state has proven that it can deliver growing wealth to parts of the population. Unfortunately, this has been made possible with the cooperation of the West.

Iran/Persia

The Persian Sassanian Empire has been the organizational model (third to seventh century AD) for the Islamic Iranian state. The statecraft offered a bureaucracy, an effective military system and diplomacy intelligence. Muslim rule is built on classical Persian documentation which had been prepared for instruction of rulers and ministers.

The Sassanian Empire was centered on a Persian “power state”. The Book of Government (seyasat-nameh) by Nizam al-Mulk (d. 1092 AD) was prepared as aid to helping sustain fundamentalist Islam, but the origin of the work is completely Iranian.

Iran is a smaller and weaker empire than the Russian and Chinese, the two other empires on the world island. It is the home of endemic conspiracy thinking.

More information on the project is available from Mr. Bertil Haggman: bertilhaggman@hotmail.com

New Contribution to Civilizational Scholarship from ISCSC Members

Introduction to World Civilizations (Vol. 1) and Contemporary Civilizations (Vol. 2).

Several members of the ISCSC including: Alalykin-Izvekov, V., Drew, J., Drew, Sh., Hecht, P, Isaac, T., Rothman, N., and Targowski, A., contributed to the textbooks on INTRODUCTION TO WORLD CIVILIZATIONS (VOL. 1) AND CONTEMPORARY CIVILIZATIONS (VOL. 2).

Out of 16 chapters, 13 chapters were written by the members of the ISCSC. The editors were A. Targowski, J. Drew, and N. Dogan. The textbooks were ordered by the Anadolu University in Turkey and its representative Professor Nejat Dogan was representing the Anadolu University as the managing editor of these textbooks. All chapters were written
according to the template of a civilization provided in the chapter 1. These two volumes characterize 16 civilizations, including 7 early and 9 contemporary ones.

This publication reflects the ISCSC’s approach which is based on A. Toynbee’s criterion that a civilization is characterized by a religion. While according to our discussions in Comparative Civilizations Review - a civilization was characterized as a kind of a system which is composed of religion, spacio-temporal boundaries, society, culture and infrastructure. The authors hope that every member of our Society should have these textbooks which provide a good foundation for the comparative study of civilizational development.

One can purchase the books from the University thru its web site: https://kitapsatis.anadolu.edu.tr/

Joseph Drew edited the textbook about Political Science for this university too.

The Founding of the East-Slavic Kingdom – The Gothic Hypothesis – A Research Project

The Normanists and anti-Normanists have since the 19th century dominated the theoretical debate concerning the founding of the East-Slavic kingdom. There is, however, an alternative theory proposed in the 1980s by the Swedish scholar and archivist Dr. Stefan Söderlind (1911 – 2003).

I have recently addressed this issue in a short article in the Comparative Civilizations Review (“Svealand, Götaland and the Rise of the East-Slavic Kingdom – Response to Piotr Mutzionak”, No. 73, Fall 2016).

There are influential forces in Scandinavia and Russia supporting the old and, in my view, somewhat outdated Normanist and anti-Normanist theories. The Söderlind theory would in my view be of benefit to Ukrainian historiography.

In my article I offered some preliminary views. The core of the alternative Swedish theory is that the Goths created a powerful First Great Gothic Kingdom in the east that lasted from the arrival of the Goths and other East Germanic tribes in the Pontic area in the second half of the 3rd century AD. They showed great military and organizational skill and created a kingdom that reached from the Black to the Baltic Sea. King Ermanaric’s kingdom was destroyed by the invading Huns at the end of the 4th century AD. The Goths continued to have a separate organization during Hunnic occupation. After the defeat of the Huns in 450 AD the remaining Goths created a Second Great Gothic Kingdom in the east that was later related to the Kyivan Rus founded in the 9th century. Gothic influence lasted until the invasion of the Mongols in the 1240s. It can be argued that the Russian empire was founded in 1480. Grand Duke Ivan III that year proclaimed Muscovy's independence of the Mongols.


The Gothic hypothesis can be traced back to Friedrich Heinrich Strube de Pyrmont (1704 - 1776), Theophilus (Gottlieb) Siegfried Bayer (1694–1738) and Herbert Gordon Latham (1812-1888). Söderlind expanded it to the Red-Blond-People hypothesis. It claims that the old forms "Rus" and "Rud" (English red) started to spread among Slavs of the area from circa 150 –350 AD. The Goths living in the same accepted the name for themselves around 400 – 600. It was borrowed into Arabic as Rūs. The ethnic name Goths has the same root as the ethnic names gautar and gutar in Old Swedish. The Swedish götar and gutar lived in both West and East Götaland and from East Götaland gutar/götar migrated to the Island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea, it should be added.

After having migrated to the Lower Vistula/Weichsel in present day Poland the Goths migrated to the area north of the Black Sea in what is today Ukraine. Some of the Goths were driven westward by the Huns. They later became famous for military achievements in Italy and
Spain.

The Slavic neighbors called the ruling Goths the Rus or The Red-Blond People. Söderlind in his original article in English in 1984 suggests the following chronology to explain the rise of the name Rus:

• 150 – 350 AD The Slavic name for the Goths is formed. There are two variants from Proto-Slavic stems *rūsŭ and *rūdŭ (red). It is used by the Slavs as *Rusi and *Rudi (the Red-Blond People).
• Circa 450 AD The Slavic name for the Goths is in common use in the area north of the Black Sea. That includes other East Germanic tribes like the Eruli, who settled east of the Amali Goths.
• Circa 400 – 600 AD The Goths accept the Slavic name for themselves. In the Gothic language the name is *RauPs.
• Circa 600 – 800 The Ancient Greeks and the Finno-Ugric tribes in the north borrow the Gothic name for the Rus: Rhōs in Greek, in Estonian Roots (which is also the word for Sweden) and Finnish Ruotsi, likewise the word for Sweden. The Arabs borrow the Slavic name for their Ar-Rus.
• Circa 800 – 1100 Both Finns and Slavs start using the name of the Goths also for Sweden. The Nestor Chronicle mentioned the Rus’ being Swedes in 862 AD. In the 9th century the Kyivan Rus was founded.

The 2019 ISCSC Conference and Planning for 2020

Please join us for the 49th ISCSC Annual Conference to be held
July 25th-28th, 2019
El Retiro San Iñigo
The Jesuit Retreat Center of Los Altos

Deadline for Registration: June 25th, 2019

Conference Theme: Comparison of Civilizations: Ancient and Modern and Theories of Civilizational Studies

Conference Details, Call for Papers & Abstracts, and Registration and Reservation payment information online at <http://www.iscsc.org/index.html>

Call for Book Reviews at the 2019 ISCSC Conference
ISCSC members who plan to attend the 2019 conference are encouraged to submit reviews of civilizationally-relevant books. Please submit as MS Word docs; if program time and space should be available, there might be arranged another book review session!

Members who attended the 2018 meeting at Suzhou are invited to send their reviews as MS Word docs to David Wilkinson, Book Review Editor for Comparative Civilizations Review to: dow@ucla.edu

Planning for 2020: We are exploring locations for our 50th Annual Conference in 2020, including Bangalore, India as a possible venue.