

UNISM

<http://unism.pjwb.org>

<http://unism.pjwb.net>

<http://unism.narod.ru>

Briefly, unism is a consistent ideological platform based on the principle of the integrity of the world. Due to this universal integrity, unism is the only consistent ideology. Considering the different aspects of integrity one comes to the idea of hierarchical complexity, and hence to the idea of the same world reproducing itself in infinity of ways. Conscious activity is a level of this reproduction hierarchy, and human spirituality becomes yet another expression for universal reflection. Unism accounts for all the achievements of the arts, science and philosophy as the fundamental levels of spiritual culture reflecting the objective trends of social development. It cannot, however, be reduced to either of these forms, nor to some their combination, being universally applicable to any area of human activity in general.

Creative Definition

Traditionally, we define something representing it a part of a wider something, an element of a class. Hence, formal definitions only refer to special things; they are never applicable to the universal. No philosophical category is formally definable; the usage of formal schemes in philosophy can only be a kind of illustration, or a figure of speech. This is even more so with unism in general, which is not yet another philosophy, but rather a comprehensive ideological platform. However much, mere reading is not enough here. To comprehend unism, one has to learn *acting* in a universal way in any specific situation, thus developing the ability of hierarchical perception. Individual creativity is the key to universal ideas.

Unism encompasses the classical logic, but it is much wider. One could suggest many sentences of the type "Unism is ...", and they all would be equally right, as well as equally wrong. Happiness, love, honesty, sincerity—all such ideas cannot be fully defined in words, one has to experience them, in order to understand them.

Of course, verbal explications are useful—as any other activity. A collection of texts arranged in a hierarchical manner can stimulate the reader's own hierarchical development, giving a stronger feeling of the world's integrity and a deeper insight into unism as its conscious reflection. That is, unism cannot be "taught", imposed on somebody from the outside as abstract knowledge. Learning unism rather means recreating it from one's own experiences, with some guidance by the others. In particular, these pages could serve as such conceptual aids for the reader's own creativity. The notions thus obtained may differ from mine, up to becoming opposite to me sometimes. However, any opposites are the opposite sides of the same, and they remain opposite only within their whole.

There is no limit for creation, and creative definitions cannot be final; they refer to something in development, and hence they develop as well. What seemed stable for a long time can suddenly appear in an unexpected turn, indicating that evolution has come to a critical point. This is especially so with human ideas which freely grow and transform into their opposites, violating any formal frameworks. Unism means freedom. It is incompatible with dogmas and blind beliefs; it is made of conscious convictions that will be always subject to critical revision on the current level of cultural development.

Basic Principles

Obviously, there is no way to reduce the ideas of unism to a number of abstract formulas. Depending on the applications and cultural conditions, different aspects of unism can become of primary importance, driving the rest into the background. The enumeration below is nothing but a summary of my recent discussions with the promoters of other ideologies; most probably, the future will find it trivial and self-evident, shifting the public attention away to more intricate questions. Somebody will suggest better formulations; the others will revise my approach and methodology... It's all right with me, I intend that.

Today, on the early stage of development, unism yet has to distinguish itself from the other cultural trends. That is why its principles mainly take negative form, describing rather what in the other ideologies is not compatible with unism than the characteristic features of unism itself. With time, positive formulations will accumulate, forming a specific language that may be far from what I can imagine now.

Coherence and Consistency

The first and foremost principle of unism comes from its very idea of universal integrity. Any activity (and any discussion in particular) must be an integral whole, and a part of whole. Following unism means being consistent in one's deeds and attitudes throughout one's life. In unism, thought is never separated from action, and practical needs are always coordinated with one's views and convictions.

This also implies the necessity of development and self-correction. However, the present is not separated from the past, and the future grows from what we do today. The integrity of life is maintained in the temporal dimension as well. One should not simply dismiss one's errors; one must explain them and learn from them. No shame, no repentance, nothing to forgive.

In reflection, all the possible forms are equally acceptable within unism. One does not need to be always strict and formal; vague contemplation, scattered thoughts and random attempts will necessarily complement methodical treatment. However, unism does not accept doing anything just for nothing, it demands that any freaky fad at least serve personal development, thus becoming a part of social development, and the development of the world in general.

Productivity

According to unism, conscious beings re-create the world following their needs. Nature thus becomes culture, the second nature, something made rather than self-existing. This universal creativity restores the integrity of the world, uniting its different parts or aspects.

In other words, if something goes wrong, one is to make it better, rather than merely adapt to it. Everybody has the right to call anything in question, examine it and suggest the ways to improve it. However, this improvement must always follow from the idea of the whole, it must be objectively justified. No something just for nothing.

Any communication between the conscious beings is mediated by their products. That is, people never get in touch directly; they rather change their cultural environment in a way that can influence the behavior of another person in a socially significant way. On the highest level, the reason in general (the spirit) develops through reproducing the whole world, as well as the world reproduces itself in the universal way through consciousness. To behave as a conscious being, one must at least be productive; however, to become truly universal, the product must be intended to mediate the development of the world.

Hierarchical Approach

It is important to observe that anything special can only exist in respect to something more general. Consequently, the context of an activity is as important for its characterization as its inner organization. This implies that any idea must also entail the aspects of applicability, and any act can only be judged within its historical and cultural context.

At any moment, the world can be represented with a hierarchy imposing a definite order on the material and ideal aspects of the world's self-reproduction. There are always lower and higher levels of hierarchy. However, there is no absolute superiority. Any order can only exist in a certain respect, while an opposite order is possible in another respect, or at another moment.

Unism is incompatible with any dogmas. Any statement can only be valid in a definite cultural context, there no eternal laws or indubitable truths. Any views can be critically assessed and revised, regardless of any authority. There are no absolutely true ways of thought and ways of life.

Developing Convictions

Due to its anti-dogmatic nature, unism rejects any religion, or any other system of beliefs, which are considered as a sign of ignorance. One may, when entering a new area of experience, temporarily accept some ideas without prior examination, trust them for the time being, just to have something to start with. However, such preliminary assumptions and working hypotheses have nothing in common with beliefs. The difference is in the critical attitude inherent in true spirituality, the demand of validating any idea in the specific historical context. When one's suppositions are supported by practical activity and social experience, they take the form of convictions, which do not require any verification until the cultural conditions develop beyond the limit of their validity. Convictions will then be subject to revision; however, this does not mean mere replacement of one idea with another. New convictions grow from the earlier convictions, they must belong to the same hierarchy, being the different aspects of the whole.

Religious belief is a primitive form of conviction. To overcome this primitivism one cannot merely declare that all religions are wrong and misleading; religion must be explained and evaluated in its historical development, to understand its place in the hierarchy of reflection and thus prevent its destructive penetration to more universal forms.

Freedom

In the under-developed society, where people have to sell their products to support their existence, the overall mentality of the society is turned to commodity production rather than creative universality. This leaves its imprint on the products, restricting their ability to mediate the development of the world as a whole. In particular, one's ideas often get censored by the considerations of the possible economic outcome. The market value of the product outweighs its cultural value.

Nevertheless, it is important to oppose the non-commercial aspects of any activity to its class nature and economic limitations. Unism holds that, even in the strained circumstances, one can learn to observe the universality of one's actions, thus putting them beyond social and economic censorship. Thus one becomes free and promotes freedom.

Though freedom can take many individual forms, it always makes an individual representative of the reason on the universal scale; freedom feels like being equal to the whole world.

What's in a Name?

For creative people, names do not much matter. Unism cannot be defined in mere words, even less can it be contained in its name. Any other reference would do as well. The name can be stolen, faked, vulgarized, debased—this does not change the ideological charge of unism as it is presented on this site.

Here, I have chosen the word "unism" as a hint to the uniqueness, universality and unity of the world, which constitute the "3U principle" lying in the basis of the philosophy of unism. This principle treats the integrity of the world in a more specific manner, allowing for many important consequences. On the other hand, unism could be compared to communism, its nearest cultural predecessor; in this respect, unism could be called communism without the "comm-" component, which stresses the necessity of getting rid of the relics of herd psychology, the need for advancing beyond the limits of

primitive communal existence.

The name of unism was chosen to avoid duplicating of terms used by other people in other context. However, this goal can hardly ever be achieved, and one could encounter a number of texts that use the word in a sense different from accepted here. For instance in theosophical writings by G. de Purucker, the term "unism" is used for what is here called "syncretism", the state of no distinctions that precedes any analytically divided state. One could also recall the aesthetic conception by Polish painter Wladyslaw Strzeminski, developed in 1920s, which carried the same name. Strzeminski's ideas have much in common with the aesthetics of unism developed here in its universal form—however the two approaches should not be mixed. Recently, different people borrowed the name "unism" to denote various philosophical and even religious doctrines; sometime their authors asked my permission; I cannot prevent them from using any names at all, since they are not patented or copyrighted; moreover, restricting the usage of the language is contrary to the very nature of unism. If anybody wants to express the same idea of universality in their own wording, their philosophy will be akin to unism regardless of whether they choose to call it unism or not. On the other hand, no religion, dogmatism, relativism, pragmatism, eclecticism can go for unism, even under the stolen name.

Roots and Sources

In general, unism, as a consistent ideology, must accumulate the ideas appearing in the human culture over millennia. Any portion of philosophy that carries the idea of uniqueness, universality and unity of the world can be said to belong to unism as its integral component. Still, there are philosophies that express that kind of ideas in the most clear and unambiguous manner. G. W. F. Hegel and Karl Marx can be called the nearest philosophical predecessors of unism: the former invented a consistent method for treating universality in philosophy; the latter demonstrated how this method should be used in a consistent way. In unism, one can trace the influences of Ancient Greek philosophy, the French philosophers of the Renaissance and the Early Enlightenment (Pierre Gassendi, Dom Deschamps), and, of course, Baruch Spinoza. There is also a definite mark of the Indian and Chinese teachings, especially their materialistic flavors.

Most modern philosophies fail to achieve the level of integrity charactering earlier teachings. In the XX century, the fundamental problem of the unity of the world has been reduced to mere reductionism, or even entirely dismissed. As a result, new philosophies either unreasonably extended the range of applicability of special methodological principles, or substituted inconsistent, sparse, chaotic, politically engaged verbiage for philosophical thought. A number of new ideas have been proposed in the former USSR, within its official (and very restricted) sort of Marxism, but, in general, modern philosophy is still rather stagnant; that is why it did not contribute much into the development of unism. In the end of the XX century, philosophers began to rediscover the ideas of dialectical and historical materialism, still diluting them in conceptual confusion and pseudo-scientific talk.

Science has certainly been one of the basic sources of inspiration for unism. The history of science provides an excellent example of hierarchical development, and the hierarchy of science was a ready model for hierarchies in general. In most cases, however, science contributed to unism in a negative way: the attempts to formalize the idea of hierarchy have lead to a clear understanding that such a formalization cannot be achieved without a drastic revision of the very logic of formalization, and the principles of hierarchical logic have been formulated as a result of the search for the limits of scientific research. No "meta-science" could be universal enough to become philosophy, and the need for a wider basis for unism became evident.

In particular, studies in formal logic and mathematics were very important for developing the logic of unism, the hierarchy of classical, dialectical and diathetical logic. Considering the foundations of mathematics and the numerous "alternative" and "nonstandard" theories, one comes to the idea of the hierarchical nature of formal truth and the necessity of a greater attention to the limits of logical and mathematical reasoning.

Interest to human psychology was one of the major sources of unism, since nowhere else the universal

reflexivity of hierarchical development manifests itself with a comparable clarity. Primarily, the psychology of art perception and psychological aspects of creativity were in the spotlight; later, most branches of modern psychology and even some aspects of psychiatry were involved. The formation of consciousness in the course of natural development has always been a central problem in the philosophy of unism.

Computer technology has much influenced the formation of unism as well. The history of ideas, hardware and software architecture, networking protocols and distributed computer applications give yet another model of the fundamental processes of development treated in unism. The rapid technological progress in computing makes them easier to observe. Also, computers seem to provide a universal simulation tool; they suggest active acquisition instead of mere contemplation.

And, of course, unism would be impossible without applications in the arts. Art is very diverse and dynamic; it allows quick implementation of any general idea, albeit in a syncretic way, which may hinder clear perception of the underlying principles.

Components

Unism demands all-penetrating universality, hence it must be universal itself, being applicable to any human activity at all. Unism cannot be reduced to any single form of reflection, and there is no special structure inherent to unism, since its inner organization corresponds to the organization of human culture in general, allowing for its hierarchical development.

On this site, only a few directions are presented; this should not be considered as a compendium; the structure only reflects some personal history and individual limitations. Everybody can influence this collection of topics suggesting a new section; in the archives, there are numerous texts that have not yet been published, and one is sure to find some considerations on almost anything.

Here, the primary focus of attention is on the philosophy of unism, and specifically on the philosophy of consciousness and reason. A general exposition of this philosophy has been presented in the book *Philosophy of Consciousness* (Trafford, 2009). A special chapter in this book is devoted to the logic of unism, which is closely related to the hierarchical approach.

A large part of the site is devoted to the arts, including a review of the aesthetics of unism as well as a number of applied ideas. Hierarchical approach has proved to be very productive in music and the visual arts; it has also found a good testing ground in poetry, with a couple of projects being maintained for quite a long time.

A special section is devoted to science (mathematics, physics, computer science, psychology). However, due to historical reasons, this direction is presented here by only a few assorted notes, while the main bulk of available materials remains in the drafts. Hopefully, some of them will be published in a new book.

A number of notes on various practical issues and social events draw unism to the everyday life. These notes may represent some private opinion; however, this opinion is based on convictions that have grown from unism, following its basic principles.

History

The true history of unism should start from the very first glimpses of universal reflection in the primitive society. Probably, such a review of the idea of universal integrity will be written in the future. Here, I only indicate a few milestones of the development of unism as a self-conscious ideology in XX and XXI centuries.

1970 ... 1974

Attempts to suggest a unifying scheme for the developing physical world, including organization

along with the spatial and temporal dimensions (P. Ivanov). The insufficiency of the traditional informational approach and importance of development has been realized.

1974 ... 1977

Attempts to construct a formal mathematical model of a hierarchy (P. Ivanov) have led to the understanding of the limitations of mathematics in general. The necessity of a more adequate logic has been realized.

1975 ... 1982

The hierarchical nature of music is revealed in the course of constructing a number of computer models of music creation (P. Ivanov, L. Avdeev), with its explanation yet remaining to be provided on the basis of deeper studies in the psychology of aesthetic perception.

1975 ... 1982

A critical analysis of a number of philosophies with a few unsuccessful attempts to develop a more consistent approach (P. Ivanov). The idea of philosophy as a level of reflection distinct from science and art has been formed.

December 1982

The idea of hierarchy has been clearly formulated for the first time and applied to human psychology (V. Koren).

January 1983

The first explicit description of the philosophy of unism (P. Ivanov, *Dialectics of Hierarchies*).

1983 ... 1985

A hierarchical model of musical pitch perception has been formulated; all the possible scales have been mathematically predicted and their aesthetic capacity has been derived from the hierarchical approach (L. Avdeev).

1983 ... 2005

The aesthetics of unism is extensively developed (P. Ivanov), including both the philosophy of the art and special issues.

1984 ... 1989

The idea of the integrity of the world is explicitly declared as the principal question of philosophy. The hierarchical approach is widely applied to psychology (V. Koren), biology and social development (P. Ivanov and Y. Rozhdestvensky). The philosophy of unism has been extended to cover all the scope of traditional problems (P. Ivanov).

1985 ... 2000

The hierarchical approach is applied to the foundations of mathematics and logic (P. Ivanov).

1987 ... 1995

The hierarchical model of musical pitch perception is extended to the perception of musical rhythm (L. Avdeev). Scale formation in the visual arts has been described (P. Ivanov, L. Avdeev).

1988 ... 1997

The hierarchical approach is applied to the foundations of physics (relativity, quantum mechanics, statistical physics). Hierarchy formation in atomic scattering is theoretically analyzed (P. Ivanov).

1991 ... 2004

A number of articles representing the ideas of unism have been published in various journals and thematic paper collections, as well as presented in a few Web forums. The publications are mainly concerned with the arts; however, they also discuss methodological issues from the viewpoint of unism.

December 1993

The first Web site devoted to unism has been opened at geocities.com (the service does not exist any longer).

2005

Collected works by Merailih have been published, including many examples of hierarchical poetry.

2006

The book *The Origin of the Musical Scale* by L. Avdeev and P. Ivanov has been published (as written in 1990). A review of the historical development of the idea of the scale in music has been given from the viewpoint of unism, and the formal theory of musical scales has been presented on the popular level adapted to a wide audience.

2007

A chapter by P. Ivanov in the *Ontology of Consciousness* (H. Wautischer, ed.) gives the first extended description of the philosophy of unism in press.

2009

The book *Philosophy of Consciousness* by P. Ivanov has been published. The fundamental principles of unism are discussed, including the description of the hierarchical approach and hierarchical logic, with their application to the problem of consciousness formation and development. The book contains an overview of the hierarchical approach to human psychology, as well as the first public exposition of the ethics of unism.

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