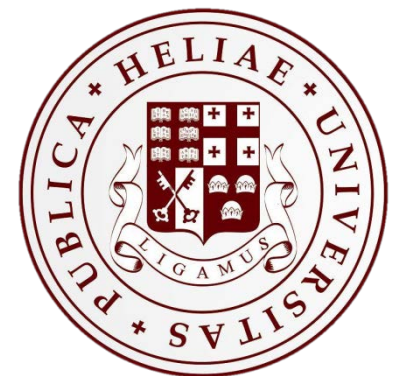


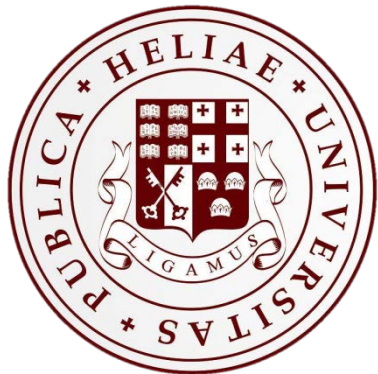
**INSTITUTIONALIZING SELF-
REFLECTION: FROM CROSS-
CULTURAL COOPERATION TO CROSS-
CULTURAL SYNERGY.**

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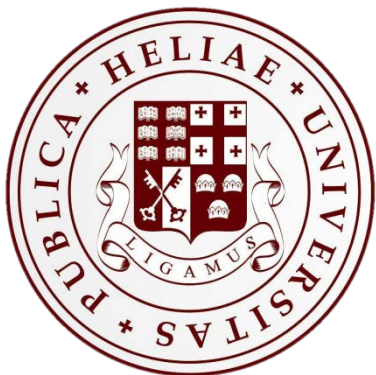
BRIEF HISTORY OF SELF-REFLECTION (1)

- Meditation and through it reaching contact with outer worlds – first versions of self-reflection;
- Meditation, as unique virtue of self-reflection, not eligible for everyone;
- Self-reflection, understanding yourself and acting according to this understanding – become the axis of civilization we use to call the East.



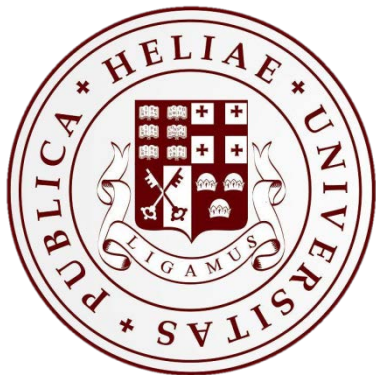
BRIEF HISTORY OF SELF-REFLECTION (2)

- Plato's cave myth - defining self-reflection as ultimate goal for every human – for reaching real life and real vision of state of affairs;
- Definition of self-reflection, as possibility for everyone – need and ought to reach to be successful, whatever meaning we are putting under this word.



BRIEF HISTORY OF SELF-REFLECTION (3)

- Thus, self-reflection became the foundation of European civilization: self-reflection as possibility can be reached by everyone to have success in everyday life.



BRIEF HISTORY OF SELF-REFLECTION (4)

- In the East, in the middle ages, oriental self-reflection tended to the western twin – by establishing Neo-Confucianism by Zhu Xi (Chu Hsi), and resulting in merit based bureaucracy system, we are still using (examinations, equal possibility for all, concept of civil servant, etc);
- In the West, western self-reflection in the Middle Ages transforms in like-oriental one – by practicing monastery life and cultivating schools of European mysticism (Nicolas of Cusa, Meister Eckhart).



BRIEF HISTORY OF SELF-REFLECTION (5)

- In Europe, Paltonian definition of self-reflection found its continuing in enlightenment, coffee and literary salons, merged as foundation of civil society and by the end – in democracy system and liberalism;



- There are a lot commonalities and differences between these two traditions of self-reflection, but there is one thing, that is shared by both cultures/civilizations: self-reflection, as institution and practice, in both worlds is banned and forbidden by dictators and in totalitarian systems;

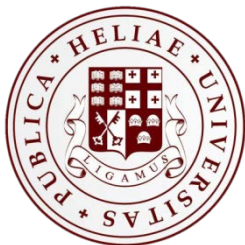


- So, we are observing very common trait in both civilizations – the process of institutionalization of self-reflection;
- And, in both cultures, self-reflection is the main enemy of totalitarian systems:



FEW EXAMPLES:

- Genetics, psychoanalysis and molecular biology was forbidden in Soviet Union, not to speak of philosophy;
- SR not only banned, but also, marginalized by totalitarian and authoritarian regimes: the Russian intelligentsia is an example.

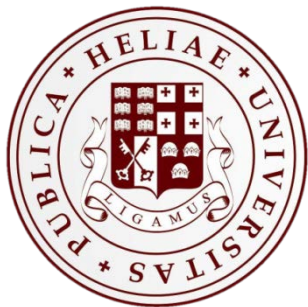


- SR is forbidden by totalitarists: SR is the way to freedom, way to understand not only yourself, but also, strengths and weaknesses of others.
- Self-reflection means to think about yourself, to know what you can and can not, your strengths and weaknesses.
- On institutional level self-reflection means to create systems which work on bettering themselves, i.e. developing entities.



The Institutionalizing of Self-reflection (ISR) means:

- On educational level - to teach students how to develop themselves, how to avoid prejudices and how to identify prejudices;
- On technology level - to find easy and effective ways to make environment and life conditions better ;
- On governmental level - to create system for free conscious choice and equal possibilities for every citizen;



- So, it easy to conclude, that commonalities and similarities between east and west, between European and oriental cultures and civilizations lies in orientation towards ISR.
- And through ISR we all are approaching better and safe life, better education and peace.



- We can easily evaluate achievements and prospects of every government and individual, if observe their efforts through lens of ISR.
- After using these lens, nobody can hide themselves under vague argument of the differences between cultures and difference approaches to the human rights.



- Therefore, the bridge between continents, cultures and civilizations is easily founded in ISR: we can cooperate towards Institutionalization of SR and easily understand each other, while speaking of weaknesses and strengths of self-reflection in us and in our worlds.



- And easily recognize simulation of ISR: much easier, then recognition of the simulation of freedom:

YOU CAN SIMULATE FREEDOM,
BUT YOU CAN NOT SIMULATE:

- **Presence of encouragement of critical thinking in textbooks;**
- **Efforts to finance environmental and healthcare programs/projects;**
- **Equal possibilities and free elections;**

IN ABCENCE OF THESE.



- Institutionalization of self-reflection can become the common theme we can and should speak about and act for:
- This is the theme everyone is able to understand and find encouraging examples in their own history and nowadays.
- This is the goal, we can explain to everyone from her/his own cultural perspective, not to rely on foreign experience and practice.



- If we take this tool as an instrument, the great **synergy** will merge: the synergy based on **understanding** and not tolerating, **cooperation** and not cohabitation, **communication** and not coexistence.



- Therefore, not only the way of better understanding of each other and countries lies in institutionalization of self-reflection, but also, the way of bettering our own worlds becomes much easier, when we begin it by observing the mirror we are for others and for ourselves.



Thank you

Hope did not bore you much

