

ABOUT THE HUMANITIES CONFERENCE

The Humanities Conference 2003 aims to develop an agenda for the humanities in an era otherwise dominated by scientific, technical and economic rationalisms. What is the role of the humanities in thinking through the human condition and the shape of the future? The conference's conversations will range from the broad and speculative to the microcosmic and empirical. Its over-riding concern, however, will be to redefine 'the human' and mount a case for the humanities. At a time when the dominant rationalisms are running a course that often seems to be drawing us towards less than satisfactory ends, this conference will re-open the question of what it is to be human—for highly pragmatic as well as redemptory reasons.

To the world outside of education and academe, the humanities seems at best ephemeral, and at worst esoteric. They appear to be of less significance and practical 'value' than the domains of economics, technology and science. This conference examines, and exemplifies, the inherent worth of the humanities.

Anthropology, Archaeology, Classics, Communication, English, Fine Arts, Geography, Government, History, Journalism, Languages, Linguistics, Literature, Media Studies, Philosophy, Politics, Sociology or Religion—if one of these or any related discipline is your trade, you won't need to be convinced that the humanities are have an important role to play in addressing our human futures. These are just some of the many disciplines which can will be represented at the Humanities Conference 2003.

Central conference considerations will include: the dynamics of identity and belonging; governance and politics in a time of globalism and multiculturalism; and the purpose of the humanities in an era of contested ends.

Hosted by the University of the Aegean and the Globalism Institute of RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia, the conference is to be held in a place where one defining version of what it is to be human began to take shape several thousand years ago.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

- Academics across the whole range of humanities disciplines.
- Research students.
- Educators.

THEME 1: GLOBALISM AND IDENTITY FORMATION

- The dynamics of identity and belonging.
- Cosmopolitanism, globalisation and backlash.
- The humanities and the construction of place.
- First nations and indigenous peoples in first, third and other worlds.
- Human movement and its consequences—immigration, refugees, diaspora, minorities.
- Ecological sustainability, cultural sustainability, human sustainability.
- Homo faber—the human faces of technology.
- Global/local, universal/particular—discerning boundaries.
- Differences—gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, race, class.

THEME 2: THE MODERN AND THE POSTMODERN

- Defining the modern against its 'others'.
- The postmodern turn.
- Nationalism, ethnonationalism, xenophobia, racism, genocide—the 'ancient' and the modern.
- Governance and politics in a time of globalism and multiculturalism.
- The causes and effects of war.
- Metropolis—the past and future of urbanism.
- Geographies of the non-urban and remote in the era of total globalisation.

THEME 3: THE 'HUMAN' OF THE HUMANITIES

- The human, the humanist, the humanities.
- What is history?
- The philosophy of ends or the end of philosophy?
- Anthropology, archaeology and their 'others'.
- The work of art in an age of mechanical reproduction.
- Literary-critical—changing the focal points.
- Ways of meaning—languages, linguistics, semiotics.

THEME 4: FUTURE HUMANITIES, FUTURE HUMAN

- Science confronts humanity.
- Humanities teaching in higher education—fresh approaches and future prospects.
- Schooling humanities—introducing history, social studies, philosophy, language, literature and the humanities to children.
- Technologies in and for the humanities.
- The purpose of the humanities in an era of contested ends.
- The humanities in the 'culture wars'—questions of 'political correctness' and the cultural 'canon'.

MAIN SPEAKERS

- **Tariq Ali**, London-based author of over a dozen books on world history and politics, five novels and scripts for both stage and screen. His most recent book is *The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Crusades, Jihads and Modernity*.
- **Giorgos Tsiakalos**, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and President, Nicos Poulantzas Society, Greece.
- **Dipesh Chakrabarty**, Professor of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago, USA. Author of *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* and *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies*.
- **Nikos Papastergiadis**, Deputy Director, The Australian Centre, University of Melbourne. Author of *Modernity as Exile, Dialogues in the Diasporas* and *The Turbulence of Migration*.
- **Paul James**, Professor of Globalism and Cultural Diversity and Director of the Globalism Institute, RMIT, Australia. Editor of *Arena Journal* and author of a number of books including *Work of the Future* and *Nation Formation*.
- **Mary Kalantzis**, Professor, Dean of the Faculty of Education, Language and Community Services, RMIT, Australia. Author of numerous books including *Productive Diversity* and *A Place in the Sun: Re-creating the Australian Way of Life*.
- **Tom Nairn**, Professor of Nationalism and Cultural Diversity, Globalism Institute, RMIT, Australia. He is the author of seven books including *The Break-Up of Britain*, which was pivotal in remaking our understanding of nationalism.
- **Fazal Rizvi**, Professor, Educational Policy Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA. Author and co-author of numerous works on education and globalisation, including *Education Policy and the Politics of Change*.
- **Michael Singh**, Professor, Head of the Department of Language and International Studies, RMIT, Australia. Author of *Appropriating English* and editor of *Global Learning*.

... and many more. Visit www.HumanitiesConference.com for regular updates.

