

Conference Commentaries
ON EAST-WEST CULTURE
with Bing Escudero

The most important role of culture is the refinement of human character. The dignity and nobility of a people are shown by its culture. Cultural sites and events may be geographical. But its influence transcends political or national boundaries.

To know what refines human character is to come to the essence of a culture. The confluence of cultures, whether East-West or North-South, are in the ethical values and spiritual ideals that are truly universal, multidimensional and ageless. Principles that rest on the foundations of virtue transcend directional compass readings. These ideal principles are central to the higher aspirations and spiritual possibilities of all cultural heritages.

The real evolution of a culture is its evolution towards the real. The highest realities are of the nature of universal truths. What are these truths? It is those truths that make for unity, peace, openmindedness, uniqueness, peace, creativity, understanding, enthusiasm, beauty and other qualities that elevate our humanity.

Seek these ideal qualities imbedded in the symbols, rites, rituals, customs, ceremonies and traditions of cultural themes. Your findings will yield the universal and spiritual elements that reveal the oneness of humanity on this planet.

Our oneness with every human being, gone past the outer differences of dress, gesture or convention, is central to our cultural compass. This ethical centrality is not separate from our own highest spiritual center. The effort of every culture in the time scale of history is to evoke what truly is our divine potential.

Nowhere on our planet is the interaction between cultures as intense and widespread as can be found here in America. The potential for explosive encounters are equal to the tremendous opportunities for drawing forth and for bringing together the best and highest in each one of us. Out of this crucible will emerge a new humanity.

This new humanity will bridge the margins and chasms that separate and polarize people. They will be trans-cultural world citizens. Spiritual in outlook. Ethically sensitive. Principled in their dealings. Above all, truly humane in their humanity.

May we who are parents or seniors, help usher our next generation into the hastened emergence of this new humanity. May we have the vision and the wisdom to engage ourselves in these troubled transitional times.

May our youths grow into the full potential of their higher possibilities. May they find the ethical strength and the spiritual guidance that will make manifest those dreams for a better world, expressing the unity of all life on earth and in the heavens. May every triumph lead to even greater triumphs in the future made now.