



# Council for Research in Values and Philosophy



**Fall and Winter, 2008**

## ***Brief background: philosophical goals and objectives***

For over 40 years the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) has focused serially and cumulatively on the cultural transformation of Eastern Europe (70s-80s), on the opening of China (80s-90s), and on Islam (90s-2000s), as well as related work in Africa and Latin America and other parts of Asia. As these processes mature we now face the daunting challenge of knitting these together for a cosmopolitan, indeed, global, world.

· *The goal of the RVP* is to achieve a deeper, more comprehensive philosophical understanding for our times. This must enable the multiple world civilizations -- by living their cultures fully, creatively and in-depth -- to find the cultural enrichment, moral motivation and mutual respect needed for a just and peaceful universe.

· *The objectives of the RVP* are to pursue this goal bottom-up, i.e., based on the many cultural heritages as lived, hence:

- (a) to mobilize local research teams of philosophers and related scholars to study the nature, interpretation and present application of their culture to life in our times,
- (b) to relate regionally these teams and their findings, and
- (c) to enable the resulting worldwide network to share cooperatively across cultures the emerging philosophical insights.

## ***General call for your participation***

On the occasion of the New Year and in inaugurating this newsletter of The Council, I wish personally:

- to thank the philosophers and related scholars from all parts of the world who have come together over the years to constitute the world wide RVP network, reflected in its 220 volume series: "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change";
- to invite your ideas for the philosophical agenda to be pursued jointly by the RVP network in the present anguished transition from an age built upon competitive individual self-interests to the new challenges of living together at deeper levels in global times; and
- to ask for your active cooperation in forming a research team or organizing a conference on specific issue to advance this philosophical effort in your home region, as well as more universally through the RVP website ([www.crvp.org](http://www.crvp.org)).

## ***Specific invitation***

You are invited to apply to participate in the following seminars, which will continue the work done in 2008.

- *"The Sacred and the Secular: Complementary and/or Conflictual"* a five week seminar will be continued on September 28-October 30, 2009 (applications invited);
- *Islam: "Living Faithfully in Changing Times"*: this month long seminar, which resulted in the foundation of the International Society for Islamic Philosophy (ISIP), will be continued on August 24-September, 18, 2009 (applications invited); and
- These and the many other activities described in this newsletter and in much greater detail on the web ([www.crvp.org](http://www.crvp.org)) depend upon your active participation which is urgently requested. Please send your offers of work in your home region and seminar applications for seminar participation to [cua-rvp@cua.edu](mailto:cua-rvp@cua.edu).



**From the General Secretary**

George F. McLean  
December 25, 2008

## RECENT EVENTS

### Islamic Seminar: Faith and Reason in Our Day: Living Faithfully in Global

From March 1-31, 2008 the RVP held a seminar titled: "Faith and Reason in Our Day: Living Faithfully in Global Times." Ten Islamic scholars representing 10 countries (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kyrgystan, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa, Tajikastan, Turkey) joined with local scholars in Washington DC for an intensive research effort. The resulting collection of academic papers is now in preparation for publication in the RVP series "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change."

Special appreciation goes to the Raskob Foundation which made possible this successful project.



### Foundation of the International Society for Islamic Philosophy (ISIP)

*The International Society for Islamic Philosophy (ISIP)* (email: [isisophy@gmail.com](mailto:isisophy@gmail.com)): founded by the participants in the RVP Islamic seminar in March 2008, elected Professor Gholamreza Aavani, Director of the Iranian Institute of Philosophy, as President at its meeting during the World Congress of Philosophy in Seoul last August. Professor Osman Bakar, Vice Director of the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies, Malaysia, was appointed Vice President in January 2009 along with a set of regional directors. The ISIP cosponsored with the RVP the 10 university conferences in Indonesia and will cosponsor as well the fall RVP seminar on "Living Islam Faithfully in Our Day" described below. A meeting on "The status of Philosophy in the Present-day Islamic

World" is envisaged for November, 2009 in Tehran. Contact Gholamreza Aavani, President of ISIP, [aavani@irip.ir](mailto:aavani@irip.ir).



**Kyrgyzstan**



In July, 2008, the Kyrgyz University of Economics and the Bakieva Foundation celebrated the philosophical contribution of Prof. Gulnara A. Bakieva. In a day-long conference held at the university in Bishkek, philosophers, social scientists, economists, and scholars of folklore discussed the late-philosopher's major work, *Social Memory and Contemporaneity*, published by the RVP in 2007. Scholars came from across Kyrgyzstan for the conference. The RVP was represented by Maura Donohue, who edited the English translation and John Hogan who wrote its foreword. Both were invited to a private meeting with the president of the country.

**China**



Two conferences were held on ethics and public administration at [The School of Public Administration of Quangxi University in Nanning](#) (July 16-18) in the south of China, and [The School of Philosophy and Public Administration of Helongjiang University in Harbin](#) (July 21-22) in the north. For these colloquia the local professors and graduate students were joined by professors and chairpersons of other Chinese departments of public administration as well as participants from North America and Australia.

The overarching theme of the conferences was “The Role of Government and Citizen in the Promotion of the Common Good.” Particular emphasis was placed on the ethical dimensions of developing citizen participation in the service

of the public good. Coming on the heels of the strong public response to the tragic earthquake in Sichuan Province, this ethical reflection on Public Administration was most relevant.

Themes presented included: (1) Public Administration as Engaging Civil Society; (2) Engaging Citizens: A Value Ethics for Public Administration; (3) Conscience and Responsibility; (4) A Value Ethics for Public Administration; (5) The Role of Ethics in the Political and Administrative Dichotomy; (6) Ethics in Public Administration and the Good Citizen; (7) Institutional Ethics and its Value Demands; (8) Reciprocal Responsibility and Responsive Re-



## Korea: Philosophy Emerging from Culture



**The Theme:** The major RVP event of 2008 was its July 27-29 quinquennial international conference: “Philosophy Emerging from Culture,” which was organized as a “pre-conference” to the [XXII World Congress of Philosophy](#). The RVP conference was co-sponsored with The International Society for Metaphysics (ISM) and the The World Union of Catholic Philosophical Societies (WUCPS). The special co-sponsor and gracious host institution was Soongsil University, Seoul, Korea. A debt of gratitude is owed to Dr. Hyo-Gye Lee, President of Soongsil University, with Professor Seon-Wook Kim and especially Professor Wonbin Park of the same University, who provided excellent facilities, includ-

ing the lecture halls and the dormitory accommodation -- even throughout the time of the World Congress. A special thanks goes also to the friendly team of student volunteers who made the visiting professors stay more pleasant.

Participating in the RVP pre-congress Conference were some hundred philosophers from all parts of the world. They looked deeply into the resources of their unique cultural traditions in order to discover and evolve their philosophical potentials as a much-needed leaven for life in our times. The conference explored successively three topics: Modernity, Subjectivity and Culture.

These three interlocking topics constituted a progressive “bottom-up” approach to philosophy integrating the achievements of the past while moving toward a new paradigm for the global era. The entire set of abstracts (including many full papers) can be found on the RVP website ([www.crvp.org](http://www.crvp.org)). A volume of the proceedings will follow for which additional related papers are still invited (send to: [cua-rvp@cua.edu](mailto:cua-rvp@cua.edu)).

General program: Philosophy Emerging from Culture

### Plenary Sessions

1. *The Dynamics of Change: What remains of modernity and why is it no longer adequate for philosophy?*
  - a. an evaluation of modernity its strengths and weakness
  - b. the philosophical hermeneutics of the transition to a global era
2. *The Nature of Culture and its Potential as a Philosophical Source*
  - a. the subjective turn
  - b. the new awareness of values and virtues as cultures and civilizations
  - c. the emergence of philosophy from culture
3. *The Challenges and Opportunities for Philosophy from the Global Interaction of Cultures and Civilizations*
  - a. philosophy expanded to and by global horizons
  - b. philosophy deepened to basic meaning and values
  - c. philosophy and the integration of radical diversity: again, the one and the many

Parallel sessions in the afternoons were devoted to the day’s subthemes.

**The Invitation:** On the last day of the conference the general “business meeting” was attended by all participants. There was great energy in the room which showed a deep commitment to furthering the work of the RVP as a resource. One result of that meeting is this newsletter, which we hope will become a resource on many levels to keep all connected. Philosophers were invited then, and also in a subsequent mailing to suggest work in their region and to volunteer their leadership.



All are invited to respond to any or all of the following questions:

(a) What would be the most effective and efficient ways for philosophers to work together in your center/region in order to promote the collaboration of scholars and thinkers in facing the contemporary challenges?

(b) What topics, themes and ideas are in need of philosophical research in your center/region?

(c) Would you volunteer to set up a local team and perhaps eventually a conference involving philosophers and related scholars?

(d) What do you suggest to further the already existing network, and open new horizons of philosophical cooperations -- conceivably on the web.

Please send your recommendations to [cua-rvp@cua.edu](mailto:cua-rvp@cua.edu).

**The World Congress of Philosophy:** The philosophers participating in the RVP conferences in turn constituted a crucial five percent of the participants in the World Congress of Philosophy on the theme: “Rethinking Philosophy Today.” There the RVP sponsored five round tables on “Philosophy Emerging from its Cultures” focusing serially on the five regions of Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Newly Independent States and Islam. These continued and shared more broadly the themes examined in depth during the pre-congress Conference.

## Taiwan



The Asian Association of Catholic (now Christian) Philosophers (AACP) was founded in 1991 in Hong Kong on the occasion of a RVP colloquium with philosophers from Beijing and Shanghai. It met in Taiwan on Dec. 11-14, 2008 on “The Role of Christian Philosophy in a Global Age.” Participants came from most of the Asian countries; the RVP General Secretary, Professor George F. Mclean, was one of the keynote speakers and Professor Tran Van Doan, the RVP Asian coordinator, was elected President of AACP.

## Fall Seminar: The Sacred and the Secular: Complementary



From September 15 – October 17, 2008 the RVP held its Fall 2008 seminar in the seminar room of its Center for the Study of Culture and Values (CSCV) in Washington D.C. The five week seminar explored the theme: “The Sacred and the Secular: Complementary and/or Conflictual in Global Times?”

With more than 20 participants representing 16 countries, the combination of our visiting scholars, local participants and guest lecturers gave the seminar a truly international and intercultural richness of the highest order.

The seminar began from Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age* and examined the emerging attention to the religious voice in society in the later John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas. It examined H.G. Gadamer and Paul Ricoeus for deeper philosophical insights on ways in which this might be understood and accomplished.

The full text of the papers will be published 2009 by the RVP under the title, *Sacred and Secular: Complementary and/or Conflictual?*. A philosophical summary of the work of the seminar can be read at the [RVP website](#), it lists as well the participants by name and country.



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For more information on the works, projects and publications of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, please visit website: [www.crvp.org](http://www.crvp.org)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Indonesia: Philosophy Emerging from Culture: Indonesian Culture and Islamic Thought

January 4-16, 2009 the RVP in collaboration with The Islamic College for Advanced Studies (ICAS), Jakarta, will sponsor a series of 10 colloquia across the Isle of Java, Indonesia. The theme will be "[Philosophy Emerging from Culture: Indonesian Culture and Islamic Thought](#)." Its aim is to harvest the contributions of this culture to Islamic thought and to share this across the Islamic crescent from Indonesia to Morocco, and indeed with all philosophers. This is also an important initiative of the RVP and the newly founded International Society for Islamic Philosophy (ISIP) which will hold organizational meetings on the occasion.

### Major Book Mailing

In February, 2009 some 30 new titles from the RVP book series "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change" will be sent to approximately 350 university libraries world-wide. See the list of titles ([www.crvp.org](http://www.crvp.org)). Special thanks goes to the OSV Institute which has helped face the rising cost of shipping.

### June-July Conferences in China

A series of conferences are being planned for China in June-July, 2009. These will focus on the ethics and public administration, the newly emerging political science, the role of religion in social life, and unity and diversity.

### Southeast Asian Regional Conference in Cambodia

In the aftermath of great tragedies a new generation of Cambodian philosophers is just now emerging. One sign of this is the offer of Cambodian philosophers to host the bi-annual RVP Southeast Asia regional meeting – previously held in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. The papers delivered by philosophers from the region will be published in the RVP series.

The RVP annual five week Fall Seminar in 2009 will be held September 28-October 16, 2009, on the relation of

### Fall Seminar 2009: The Sacred and the Secular: Complementary and/or Conflictual (II)

cultural heritages to the secular age recently described by Charles Taylor in his *A Secular Age*. A description of the theme of this seminar and its provisions can be found at <http://www.crvp.org/seminar/seminar-2009-fall.htm>.

### Islamic Seminar: Faith and Reason: Living Faithfully in Changing Times (II)

August 24-September, 18, 2009 the RVP will invite ten Islamic scholars to an intensive month long seminar in order jointly to explore "Living Faithfully in Changing Times". This will continue the work initiated with Islamic scholars in the March 2008 seminar.



The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) was incorporated in the District of Columbia in 1983 with 501C3 status.

**Goals:**

To understand and appreciate the cultures and values that shape aspirations and motivate actions.

To understand one's own and other cultures and develop a positive yet critical appreciation thereof.

To build cooperation among peoples by providing horizons that heal deep tensions and promote peace and cooperation on a global scale.

**Objectives:**

To mobilize research teams to study the nature, interpretation and development of cultures and to apply them to the challenges of contemporary change.

To publish and distribute the results of these efforts.

To organize extended seminars for deeper exploration of these issues and regional conferences for the coordination of this work.

**Operations:**

Research teams applying the resources of the cultural traditions to contemporary issues, and one or two month annual seminar in Washington, D.C. for international scholars and representatives of the research teams.

Regional meetings for mutual critique and planning by these teams, and periodic world conferences for exchange of results on a global level.

Publication of the results of this research and critical reflection (over 200 volumes thusfar), and a unique distribution network to 350 university libraries worldwide, as well as through the usual book outlets, with the complete texts available on the web at [www.crvp.org](http://www.crvp.org).

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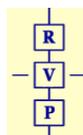
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