



Council for Research in Values and Philosophy



SPRING and SUMMER, 2009

Welcome to the Summer edition of the RVP Newsletter.

Times of change provide opportunities for deeper understanding and values. The new global horizon calls for thinking that not only promotes the utilitarian and functional means of modern life, but explores further the meaning and goals of the dignity of human life and the flourishing of society. The Chinese have a happy expression for this, namely, *Tian Xia*, the unity of "all under heaven." Indeed the struggle to engage and enrich one's deep identity in the process of facing current challenges has been the constant concern of The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) and is reflected in its 220 volume research series: "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change". This now provides a unique platform whence philosophers can break the bonds of time and space to develop new ways of working together in the digital global age which is now dawning.



From the General Secretary

Planning Future Projects of the RVP World Network: Following upon the RVP general assembly in Seoul on the occasion of the World Congress of Philosophy (2008), the RVP invited all to propose their own projects and to indicate how the RVP might be of assistance in these and other ways. Many excellent responses have been received, some with advanced planning and others ready for implementation. A number of philosophers in each region agreed to help coordinate efforts in their area. All of this provides essential material for RVP strategic planning during the June/July 2009 meetings in Cambodia and China. To all we wish to express gratitude and encouragement.

Call for your Suggestions and Cooperation. Please continue to send your ideas for research projects. Typically,

(1) these have begun with a year of monthly seminars to produce the chapters of a cohesive volume in response to a specific need of one's people;

(2) additional scholars then join to critique and supplement the work in a regional conference; and

(3) the RVP publishes the resulting substantive volume in its series.

Please keep it informed as you plan a project of this or another type. The RVP is ready to assist, especially with coordination of work in and between the various regions, and with the publication both in print and digitally worldwide. In all such efforts we look forward to your suggestions and cooperation.

The RVP wishes to thank the Ford, H & L Bradley and Raskob Foundations, as well as the OSVI and the OST for their generous support.

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George F. McLean
May 2009

RECENT PROJECTS

Major Book Mailing to 350 Libraries across the World

RVP books over the years have served three purposes: (a) to stimulate and communicate the innovative work of the philosophical research teams in all cultures, (b) to make less heard voices available to thinkers and policy makers across the world, and (c) to put their important texts into the hands of scholars who often work with limited to library resources.

Recently the RVP has shipped sets of 36 of its new and recent titles to 350 university libraries across the world: 54 in Africa, 83 in East, South and Southeast Asia, 29 in North America, 50 in Central and South America, 7 in Australia/New Zealand, 40 in Western Europe, 76 in Central and Eastern Europe.

Full Text Available for Free Download

- on the Web
- in the Google Book Partner Program

RVP books are in multiple modes:

(1) the full texts in html free downloadable format on the RVP's website www.crvp.org under "publications";

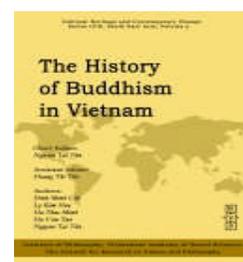
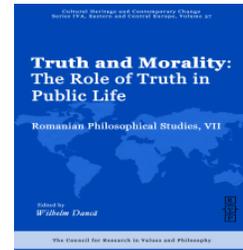
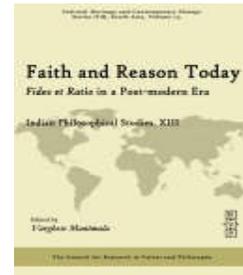
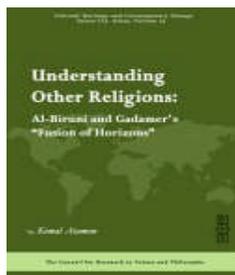
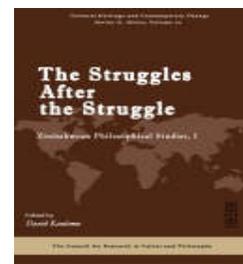
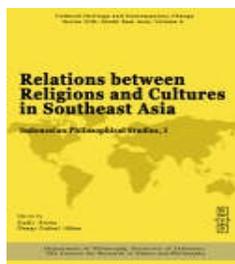
(2) full text, exact image versions of all RVP books are now available through the Google Book Search Partner Program. Though not downloadable there, all pages of each book appear in exact image for word search and research citation. Search by name of book, author, or title of any book or individual chapter at www.books.google.com.

RVP NEW BOOK Distribution Center

The printed versions of the RVP publications can be ordered from usual book sellers (Amazon, etc.) and also from its new book distribution center:

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OST, San Antonio, TX
(attn. Mathew Martin)
285 Oblate Dr., San Antonio, TX 78216, USA
Telephone: (210)341-1366 x205;
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New Titles, January-May 2009



INDONESIA: 10 UNIVERSITY CONFERENCES ON "PHILOSOPHY EMERGING FROM CULTURE", JANUARY 2009



On January 4-16, 2009 the RVP in collaboration with International Society for Islamic Philosophy (ISIP) and The Islamic College for Advanced Studies (ICAS), Jakarta, sponsored a series of 10 colloquia across the Isle of Java, Indonesia. It was carried out with the generous support of the host universities, especially ICAS, Mizan Publishing and the H&L Bradley and Raskob Foundations.

The theme was: "Philosophy Emerging from Culture: Indonesian Culture and Islamic Thought." The goal was 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 was an important initiative of the new International Society for Islamic Philosophy (ISIP) newly founded in collaboration with the RVP. For full report please see <http://www.crvp.org/conf/2009/java.htm>.

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY (ISIP)

The International Society for Islamic Philosophy (ISIP) (email: 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.



UPCOMING EVENTS, JUNE-OCTOBER, 2009

Cambodia: South East Asian Regional Conference



Phnom Penh, Cambodia, June 24-25, 2009, "The Role of Philosophy in the Development of South East Asia". A full description and draft program can be found on the web at <http://www.crvp.org/conf/2009/cambodia.htm>.

In the aftermath of great tragedies a new generation of Cambodian philosophers is now emerging. A first sign of this is the invitation of The Philosophical Association of Cambodia (PAC) to host the bi-annual RVP Southeast Asia regional meeting – held previously in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. This meeting will be supported by UNESCO in collaboration with the PAC and the RVP.

Theme: The first session will reflect on how philosophy is rooted in the culture of a people whence it emerges through a process of progressively deeper reflection and understanding. The second session will identify elements especially characteristic of Cambodian philosophy. On this basis the conference will then turn to the contributions which Cambodian philosophy can make to education for development and in turn the challenge which such a task constitutes for the philosophy and philosophers of South East Asia today.

Shanghai: Fudan University

Shanghai: Fudan University, June 28-29, 2009 "The Enlightenment and Its Contemporary Reevaluation".

Theme: The May 4th movement in 1919 thought it necessary to put aside the ancient wisdom of Confucius in order to usher in "Mr. Science" and "Mr. Democracy." More recently, the very success of the resultant "hard power" of modernization has evoked a rethinking of May 4th. What now is the role of the "soft power" of the culture, values and virtues previously put aside; are these now needed to inspire and humanize the powers of the Enlightenment in order that all might continue to benefit from their fruits; rather than being exiled could Confucius and his classical confreres now be needed more than ever in these postmodern times as genial hosts enabling the "two misters" to be truly and fruitfully at home?



Shanghai: Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences



Shanghai: Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, July 2-3, 2009 "Diversity in Unity: Harmony in a Global Age".

Theme: Global times call for the protection, promotion and interrelation of human diversity and creativity. In order for these multiple and diverse humane factors to make their rich contribution to social well-being in these times of global interaction, they must be able to be appreciated not as conflictual, but as complementary and relational. Does this, in turn, call for a new paradigm in which they are understood as existing within a larger, integrating whole? Will this enable the diverse realities to be essentially related, not merely physically, but in terms that engage the human search for meaning and purpose? What are the keys to the respect for nature and for one another on which truly global human comity can be built? If philosophy looks even further for the principles which reveal all as intelligible or true, and as life giving or good, does this call for a renewed understanding of the classical unity of "all under heaven" (*Tian Xia*), both for its inherent relationality and for the implications of this source and goal for the meaning and purpose of all? Here the classical philosophical issue of the one and the many reemerges in today's terms of the global whole.

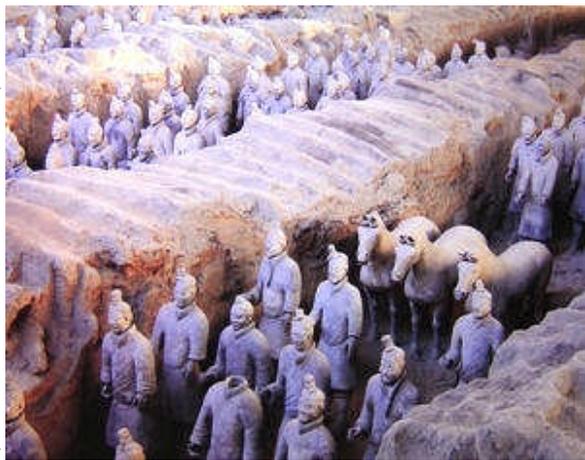
essentially related, not merely physically, but in terms that engage the human search for meaning and purpose? What are the keys to the respect for nature and for one another on which truly global human comity can be built? If philosophy looks even further for the principles which reveal all as intelligible or true, and as life giving or good, does this call for a renewed understanding of the classical unity of "all under heaven" (*Tian Xia*), both for its inherent relationality and for the implications of this source and goal for the meaning and purpose of all? Here the classical philosophical issue of the one and the many reemerges in today's terms of the global whole.

Xian: Xian Jiaotong University

Xian: Xian Jiaotong University, July 5, 2009 "The Role of Philosophy in the Development of China's Northwest".

Theme: Philosophy is challenged to guide the process of change along progressive paths that perfect and improve the status of nature and of humanity itself. For this it is necessary to understand human nature and continually to evaluate and adjust possible action so that the immense human effort, now broadly integrated across civilizations, will be positive and constructive.

This evaluative task is extensive as it touches upon every aspect of the changing world. It is itself multilayered, reaching from utilitarian and self-interested advantage to an ever deeper sense of the human person, to a broader and more inclusive range of social reality, and to the natural world in which we live and which we shape.



Urumqi: Xinjiang University



Urumqi: Xinjiang University, July 13, 2009 "Local Culture and Social Progress".

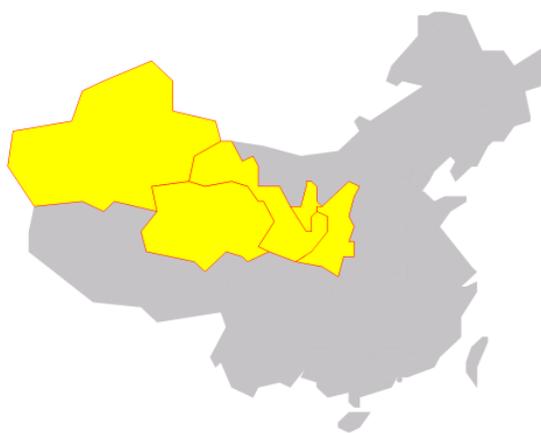
Theme: The Xinjiang region is the frontier of two great civilizations. If a civilization is the cumulative achievement of a set of cultures evolved over millennia as a concrete way of striving for human fulfillment, then this border situation is now of the greatest moment. For as we enter the global age life today is characterized not simply by one or another single culture or civilization, but by the interaction of multiple civilizations. This is the making of the global world whose nature will be determined by the way in which the multiple civilizations, like gigantic tectonic plates, interact and adjust to one another. This suggests the particular importance for human progress of the dynamics of local cultures on the frontier as they intersect and are mutually enriched and transformed thereby. What is the basis and degree of such mutual compatibility and complementarity; how can conflict be transformed into mutual reinforcement; can change be progressive for all concerned? These and other crucial issues must be considered in this colloquium.

Xian and Urumqi : Ethics and Public Administration

Xian: Xian Jiaotong University, July 5, 2009 "The Role of Philosophy in the Development of China's Northwest".

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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

FALL SEMINARS, 2009

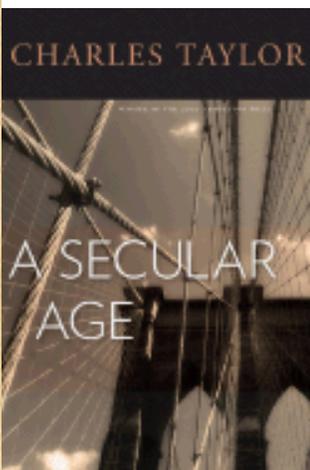
Islamic Seminar: Faith and Reason: Living Islam Faithfully in Our Changing Times

The RVP has invited 14 Islamic scholars to an intensive month long seminar in order jointly to explore "Faith and Reason: Living Islam Faithfully in Our Changing Times". August 24-September, 18, 2009.

Theme: The letter entitled "A Common Word" by 138 leading Islamic religious leaders calls for open, rigorous and creative work to bring the insights and inspiration of faith to bear upon the dynamics of our world as we enter the new reality of intense global interchange. Prominent issues here are: (1) the philosophical and spiritual foundations of human dignity and mutual respect embedded in faiths and cultural traditions, and (2) the nature of the relation of this heritage to contemporary change. For this it is important to think through how diverse religious perspectives can engage one another and the secular mind so that faith can be lived more fully, rather than attenuated, in the modern context.



Seminar on: The Sacred and the Secular: Complementary and/or Conflictual (II)

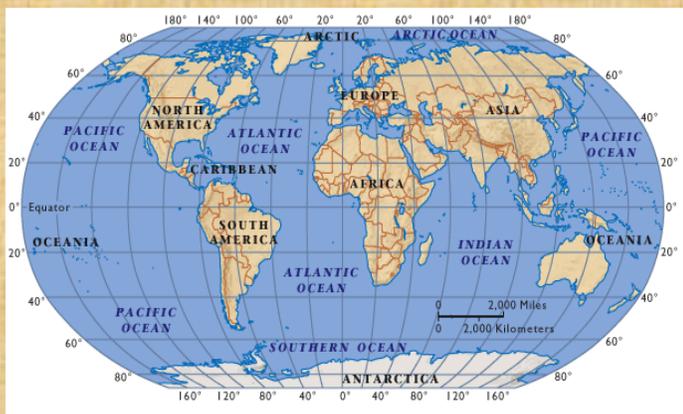


The RVP annual five week Fall Seminar in 2009 will be held September 28-October 30, 2009, on living cultural and religious heritages in the context recently described by Charles Taylor in his *A Secular Age*.

Theme: The work of Professor Taylor has recounted how from a time in which it was difficult not to believe the converse has become true. Sociological surveys reflect this to be an age marked by an existential search for identity and meaning, rather than by commitment to specific religious visions or communities. For philosophy this reopens in contemporary terms the deepest issues of the role of immanent and transcendent values and aspirations for the socio-political and the religious orders.

Special attention will be devoted to appreciating the unique differences and the relatedness of the world's religious cultures, their relation to the achievement of secular goals, and parallel to this the positive contribution of secular concerns for living religion fully in this world. The search is for a paradigm that enables mutual understanding and communication in which the many peoples and cultures, both sacred and secular, can be related in a positive manner as complementary.

This effort will be extended during the following 18 months by three research teams studying in detail aspects of the issue for personal growth, political life, and relations between cultures and civilizations in our global age.



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.

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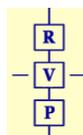
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