

Council for Research in Values and Philosophy



RVP Newsletter — 2015

Message from the President:

2014 was a busy year, some 15 books were published, over ten international conferences were held and two seminars were conducted. Below is the detailed summary of these activities.

2015 has already proven to be another active year. Please continue to send your ideas and suggestions for research projects. The RVP is ready to work with you and assist, especially with coordination of work in and between the various regions, and with its publication.

The RVP wishes to thank all who have made great efforts in promoting peace, dialogue and cooperation among peoples, cultures and civilizations.

The next World Congress of Philosophy will be held in Beijing in August 2018. The theme will be “learning to be human”. It is, indeed, a good question for us all to think deeply how to be a human being in these rather complex times. In order to help prepare the next World Congress, the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) is launching a research project on “**Humanity, Spirituality and Cultural Heritages**” and invites all philosophers and scholars to form research teams in their region to conduct in-depth studies and cooperative research. The RVP can publish their result both in print and on the web.



George F. McLean

*George F. McLean
March 2015*

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**For more information on the work, projects and publications of
The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP),
please visit its website: www.crvp.org**

PROJECT ON SECULAR AGE

50 Years After Vatican II

Towards
A Listening Church, A Discerning Church
A Welcoming Church, A Serving Church

RENEWING
THE CHURCH
IN A SECULAR AGE:
HOLISTIC DIALOGUE AND KENOTIC VISION

March 4-5, 2015
Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Rome

Pontificia Università Gregoriana
A Joint Conference with
Council for Research in Values and Philosophy
and the High Patronage of
Pontifical Council for Culture

Rome, Italy, March 4-5, 2015: “**Renewing the Church in a Secular Age: Holistic Dialogue and Kenotic Vision**”. The two-day conference was held at the Pontifical Gregorian University and attended by over 300 participants.

This was a joint effort of The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) and The Pontifical Gregorian University (PUG), with the High Patronage of the Pontifical Council for Culture of the Holy See under Cardinal **Gianfranco Ravasi**.

It was the result of an effort which began with the identification by **Charles Taylor**, author of *A Secular Age*, and **José Casanova** of four disjunctions between Church and People these related to: (a) seekers who have left ecclesial practice in search of the Spirit, and (b) the magisterium charged with pastoral responsibilities; and (c) its contemporary moral guidance, (d) in a world of plural spiritualities. Presently the project has advanced to articulate four emerging conjunctions of the Church as (a) not only listening to the experience of the laity (b) but discerning the path ahead, and hence (c) welcoming the seekers and (d) serving their broad religious needs in a context deeply marked by pluralism and diversity.

Scholars around the world, but particularly in the West, were invited to join the effort of Church renewal which this conference represents, based on the work of more than a dozen research teams in different parts of Europe and North America. The conference was intended to engage the intellectual mind and so better contribute to the universal Church as it faces the many present challenges. As such, the conference was intended also to function as a launching pad for similar initiatives to follow on the impact of secularization across Asia, Africa and Latin America and so contribute to the worldwide renewal of the Church as a communion of Dialogue in search of Truth, Beauty and the Good as the emergence of God’s Kingdom in human history.

As a cumulative effort by these research teams mainly from Universities in North America and across Europe, the conference drew on those who have been reflecting on the challenges and opportunities of secularity faced by the various cultural traditions in the West in the project “Faith in a Secular Age”. This project, initiated and carried out by the RVP, began in 2009 with a dialogue between Cardinal **Francis George** from Chicago and **Charles Taylor**, and moderated by **José Casanova**. Since then, the representatives of the research teams met annually in Washington and Vienna, Austria (see the reports of those annual meetings www.crvp.org) to plan with their members personal research, reflection, and writing. This gave founded hope that light would be shed on the crucial issues of our secular age. The teams consisted of leading religious scholars, philosophers, sociologists, etc.

Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

The Rome conference was preceded by a morning closed faculty seminar held at the Gregorian University (9.00am-12.30pm, March 4, 2015) with the 30 conference speakers, moderators and team representatives. It was a brainstorming session before the conference to reflect



pre-conference seminar in Rome

on the development of the conference thematic from four disjunctions to four conjunctions. In the afternoon of March 4, 2015, the conference was opened by **François-Xavier Dumortier** (Rector of the PUG); remarks by **George F. McLean** (President of the RVP); and an extensive address by Cardinal **Gianfranco Ravasi** (President of the Pontifical Council for Culture). It was moderated by **João J. Vila-Chã** (PUG and RVP Vice President).

The first panel "The Dynamics of Secularity in the West." **José Casanova** (Georgetown University, USA) «A Catholic Church in a Global Secular World» and **Hans Joas** (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany) «The Church in a World of Options»; moderators Archbishop **Thomas Menampampil** (India) and **João J. Vila-Chã**.

The conference then turned to four characteristics of a renewed Church as listening and discerning, welcoming and serving.

The second panel "A Listening Church: Implications of Science and Technology, Imagination, Subsidiarity." **Louis Caruana** (Dean of Faculty of Philosophy, PUG) «Nurturing the Human Face of Science»; **Leon Dyczewski** (John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland) «New Technologies and Styles of Evangelization»; and **Daniel Deckers** (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Germany) «Being Pope Francis»; moderators **Nicolas de Bremond D'Ars** (Centre d'Études Interdisciplinaires des Faits Religieux [CEIFR], France) and **Richard Rouse** (Pontifical Council for Culture, Rome).

The third panel "A Discerning Church: the Gospel Experience, and Foundations in Secular Times for Renewed Hope." Speakers included **Tomáš Halik** (Charles University, Czech Republic) «Discerning the Signs of the Times»; **Juan Carlos Scannone**



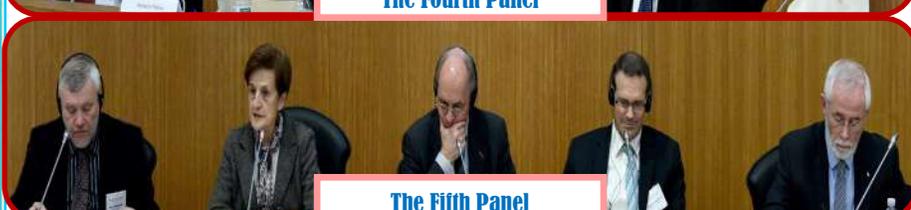
A conference session in Rome



(Colegio Máximo de San José, Argentina) «Iglesia y Discernimiento Espiritual en una Edad Secular y un Mundo Global»; and **Massimo Grilli** (PUG) «Tutto è grazia. Rilettura dei macarismi/beatitudine oggi, nella Chiesa»; moderators **Philip J. Rossi** (Marquette University, USA) and **Pavel Hosek** (Charles University, Czech Republic).



The fourth panel "A Welcoming Church: Pluralism, Encounter and Dialogue." **Robert Schreiter** (Catholic Theological Union-Chicago, USA) «Spirituality as Platform and Forum for Encounter»; **Anthony Carroll** (Heythrop College, University of London, United Kingdom) «Dialogue with Skeptics»; and **Adriano Fabris** (Università di Pisa, Italy) «Rethinking Universality for a True Interreligious Dialogue in a Pluralistic Age»; moderators **Helen Alford** (Pontificia Università San Tommaso, Roma) and **Taras Dobko** (Ukrainian Catholic University, Ukraine).



The fifth panel "A Serving Church: Polarization, Participation and Peace." Speakers included **Ade-la Cortina** (University of Valencia, España) «Religiones y Ética Cívica Transnacional en el Espacio Público: Un Camino hacia la Paz»; **Peter Jonkers** (Tilburg University, Netherlands) «A Serving Church: Overcoming Polarization through Participation»; and **William Barbieri** (Catholic University of America, USA) «Kenotic Ethics for a Servant Church»; moderators **Staf Hellemans** (Tilburg University) and **James Corkery** (PUG).

A magisterial lecture was delivered by **Charles Taylor** (McGill University, Canada) "Authenticity: The Life of the Church in a Secular Age"; commented on by **William Desmond** (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium) and moderated by **Mary McAleese** (Ex-President of the Republic of Ireland).

The conference concluded with brief notes of thanks by **George F. McLean**, **Louis Caruana** and **João J. Vila-Chã**.

At the end of each session participants from the audience actively engaged in dialogue with speakers and raised insightful issues. The conference was well attended by participants from all parts of the world, but mainly from the European countries



A conference session in Rome

such as Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Netherland, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and United Kingdom, as well as from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Cameroon, China, India, Mexico, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Peru, the United States, etc.

On March 6, 2015 late in the afternoon (17.30-19.30) there was a dialogue among **Charles Taylor**, **José Casanova**, and three Italian scholars **François Bousquet**, **Alessandro Ferrara** and **Giacomo Marramao** in a “Cortile dei Gentili” entitled “La Piazza e il Tempio”. It was moderated by **Giuliano Amato**.

During the conference some 20 reports in the Roman press as well as other news agencies (the *Osservatore Romano*, *Avvenire*; Catholic News Service, National Catholic Reporters; *Crux*; *Tracce*; *Società per l'Informazione Religiosa*; *Noticias*; *Zenit*; *Roma Sociale*, etc.) covered the conference. Live streaming of the conference can be found on the web at www.crvp.org.

This conference was made possible by the generous support of the Pontifical University of Gregorian (PUG) and the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) as cosponsors and two foundations: the Our Sunday Visitor Institute and the Raskob Foundation; the Oblate community; the staff members of the Gregorian's program office and many volunteer students from the University; as well as persons in China who designed the poster and in New York who created the online registration service; and all the participants. Those who shared the concerns but were not able to come to Rome are able to the conference on the RVP web. The conference papers will be published by the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) in 2015.



A conference session in Rome

Vienna, Austria

June 15-16, 2014: “**Faith in a Secular Age**”. This meeting was the fifth gathering since 2009 began in a dialogue of Cardinal **Francis George** of Chicago and Professor **Charles Taylor** author of *A Secular Age*. More than 20 related scholars from North America, British Isles, and Europe took part in this 2-day dialogical conversation.



Left to Right: José Casanova, Charles Taylor & George F. McLean

All are impacted by the secular culture in which they are raised, which is inescapable in daily life, and in terms of which all interpret present events and project their future. To retrieve the religious roots each culture must be deeply examined. For this some 16 research teams have been at work, each writing its distinctive volume.

The teams have focused on four growing disjunctions between Church and people traced out by **Charles Taylor** and **José Casanova**: (1) the departure of “seekers” from Church practice; (2) the mode of exercising the Church magisterium; (3) the content of its moral teaching and historicity; and (4) plural spiritualities. Each research team presented their plans for a volume. Preparation for the March Rome conference was also on the agenda.

This conference was to bind these research findings together in a complementary and coherent search for the wholeness and fullness of a religious life; to articulate the cross references between them; and by dialogue to point to what is seen and needing to be seen by a faith which transcends all.

Kenotic vision as the key spirit has been going throughout the entire project. In the long history, there was an intensive and enduring expectation of the transcendent power. However, this expectation had come to be misinterpreted and misrepresented in human and worldly terms of power and prestige. Hence, it was not only that the transcendent power put aside the form of God to take human form, but that he did so in the form of a servant; indeed of one who would surrender his human life in the most ignominious manner, namely, that of death on the cross. This was to be “other” to the extent of being the very antithesis of human expectations.

This set of a totally different model for humanity: not that of master, but of the ultimate servant; not



A conference session in Vienna

of one kingly master but as neighbor to all humankind in all of its endeavors. In terms of a veritable emptying (kenosis) of self and a form of a servant it points to emptying (kenosis) of self and a form of a servant it points to sacrifice and service for human fulfillment and wholeness in progressively inclusive physical, moral and social terms.

The conference noted two principles: 1. The disjunction between, on the one hand, the 'seekers' which presupposes that they have not found their way and, on the other hand, the 'dwellers' intent on what was seemingly doing better in the past, and the suggestion that faith be considered as a journey, meaning that faith is never fully understood or exhausted and



A conference session in Vienna

that we proceed by landmarks which give direction and guide our journey. 2. Pope Francis suggests engaging with all others in this spiritual journey in a constant and respectful interchange, and trying to understand and reinforce mutually what is held by others in a spiritual pluralism.

Both of these entail the need to get beyond the sense of an exclusive possession of religion and truth, and learning to live apostolically with others, whether as individual seekers or as the plural spiritualities of our day, in an attitude grounded in love. This generated fruitful dialogue which related the participants around the following three themes: (1) the seekers as individuals and communities, (2) plural spiritualities, and (3) the relation of truth and love. Some samples are described here, followed by a listing of the themes each of the participants suggested at the conclusion of these discussions.

Participants came from Canada (**Charles Taylor, Chantal Beauvais, and Sophie Cloutier**), Czech Republic (**Tomáš Halík and Pavel Hosek**), England (**Anthony Carroll and Marthe Lerlwokl**), France (**Nicolas de Bremond d'Ars and Yann Raison du Cleuziou**), Germany (**Holger Zaborowski**), Hungary (**Zsuzsanna Bögre**), Italy/Portugal (**João J. Vila-Chã**), Netherlands (**Staf Hellemans and Peter Jonkers**), Poland (**Leon Dyczewski, Przemysław Strzyzynski and Joanna Szegda**), Portugal (**Alexandre Palma**), Romania (**Wilhelm Dancă**), Ukraine (**Taras Dobko**), USA (**Robert Schreiter, Philip J. Rossi, William Barbieri and George F. McLean**), and Austria (**Herta Nagl-Docekal and Ludwig Nagl**).



Conference sessions in Vienna

ANNUAL SEMINAR

Washington, D.C.

August 18-September 19, 2014: “Religion: Key to Understanding Violence and Promoting Peace in Global Times”. During the five week seminar directed by **João J. Vila-Chã**, RVP Vice President, Gregorian University, Rome, the seminar participants carefully studied a set of classical materials related to the issues on religion and violence, such as Hobbes, Marx and Engels, Hegel, Arendt, Foucault, Deleuze, Gandhi, Gramsci, Zizek, Benjamin, Canetti, Girard, etc.

Through human history, the issue of religion and violence has been topical and significant in understanding and interpreting who we are, where society is going, and how to communicate with the “other”. On the one hand, it is necessary to avoid the idolatry of an egoism that absolutizes oneself and instrumentalizes the other to the destruction of both. On the other hand, one is drawn ever forward and upward to realize the human potential of a spirit incarnate in matter, yet which knows no bounds.

The key to both is the transcendence unique to humans which both constitutes and challenges their special dignity. Poorly conceived this can base attacks on others and religious wars. Yet correctly applied it constitutes the call for self-sacrifice for others and the appeal of peace.

Modernity reduced all to the relative, the reductively human and the secular. This is an essential ingredient of the post moderns and of contemporary philosophy. While the contemporary turmoil across the various regions of the globe leads to the sense that life without transcendence is destructive. The central issue of culture and its phases becomes: a sense of transcendence was needed in an earliest rural phase of life; and cannot be supplanted the rule of law immanent to human society in its modern urban configuration. What then of the present situation where the media so individualizes the context of meaning that it supplants the social forces of religious



João J. Vila-Chã



Group Photo

institutions on the religious/transcendent level, as well as of various social structures.

Issues discussed during the seminar included:

(1) the seekers who are leaving old institutions in search of new ways of living more meaningful and fulfilling lives;

(2) the institutional sources such as universities, academies and

religious communities generally called upon to guide and inspire this effort;

(3) the ethics for responding to the challenges of life; and

(4) the inter-relation of the plural form of spirituality which have become newly possible across the world in these global times.

These issues and others were treated in their specifics by the separate sciences appropriate to their particular order. The earliest insights are the most basic and most rich and substituted by later insights but remain as the essential substrata of all that follows. Thereby they serve as the continual corrective of the human tendencies to simplify and universalize, which leads to the extremism of ideologies.

Hence, the issue of transcendence for global times and as related to the varying phenomena and degrees of violence.

These include the increase in killing the marginalization and prejudice with regard to the underclass in modern urban societies, and the extremism and resulting paralysis and disorganization of the public institutions of today's media society.

Whether religion is essentially the cause of violence was a main burden of this seminar.



A Seminar Session in Washington, DC



A Seminar Session in Washington, DC

Through human history religion has been the essential key to the salvation of humanity, yet if poorly done or not attended to in a secular age it can lead to human stagnation and indeed to violence.

Seminar participants came from such countries as Argentina (**Horacio Esteban Correa** who presented a paper on “The Concepts of Yihad and Hiyrat in the Arab-Islamic Tradition”), Austria (**Brigitte Buchhammer** on “Violence against Women: A Pressing Current Problem of Philosophy Referring to Hegel’s Philosophy of Religion”), China (**Gong Qun** on “The Pursuit and Maintenance of Peace, One of Fundamental Purposes of Buddhism” and **Qiu Genjiang** on “Understanding Violence and Peace in Chinese Tradition”), India (**Joshua Kalapati** on “Religious Diversity in India: Issues Fostering Violence and Instruments Promoting Peace” and **Vensus George** on “Understanding Violence and Peace in Indian Culture”), Iran (**Abdolrahim Gavahi** on “Religious Understanding: Key to Understanding Violence and Promoting Peace”), Italy/Portugal (**João J. Vila-Chã**), Lithuania (**Jurate Morkuniene**), Nigeria (**Oladapo Jimoh Balogun** on “Re-Appraising the Elements Of African Traditional Religion For A Multi-Conflict World In Search Of Peace: Precepts From Orisa Intellectual Culture”), Poland (**Marta Turkot** on “A Quarter Century of Religion in a Free Country. Diagnosis of Contemporary



A Seminar Session in Washington, DC

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An Outing at the Grahams

Religion of Poles Based on a Paradigm of Desecularization”), Romania (**Rodica Pop** on “About Promoting Peace in the World. An Orthodox View”), Russia (**Olga Chistyakova** on “Christian Patristics, Postmodernism and Values of Peace in the Modern Society”), Serbia (**Marko Trajkovic** on “Can Law Squeeze Out Values?”), Taiwan (**Tsai Wei-Ding** on “Heidegger und Rahner: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue between Philosophy and Theology, a Hermeneutical Case Study”), Vietnam (**Tran Hai Minh** on “Humanity in Buddhism and Its Significance to the Development of Society in Global Times”), USA (**Seyed Masoud Noori** on “Theology of Violence in the Muslim intellectual tradition & its reflection in the contemporary world”, **Sayed Hassan Hussaini** on “The Gates to Violence in Current Islam”, **John Farina**, **John P. Hogan**, **Hashim El-Tinay**), etc. The research papers by the seminar participants will be published in the RVP series: “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change” Series VII, Seminars: Culture and Values.



A visit to the Farina Family

Daniel Le Blanc, United Nations and **William Barbieri**, Professor of School of Theology and Religious Studies of The Catholic University of America as guests speakers spoke on the issue of the engagement and the initiatives of religious institutions in peace building across the world and theological readings on Girard respectively.

John Farina, **Graham family** and **Ahmad Irvani** and his colleagues **Seyed Masoud Noor** and **Sayed Hassan Hussaini** invited the group for various outings. Their generosity and kindness were deeply appreciated by seminar participants.



A Lunch at CSIME



Library of Congress

Vallendar, Germany

August 2-8, 2014: **“Education in a Global Context: Interdisciplinary, Intercultural, and Interreligious Approaches”**. This seminar was held at Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule Vallendar, Germany. It was planned and organized by **Holger Zaborowski** and sponsored by the European Academy and Bischof Stein Stiftung.

Education or the formation of an outlook and way of life has been a central issue throughout the human history, both East and West. For Plato, education was not simply to put knowledge into people's mind 'like putting sight into blind eyes' but rather to free the entire soul for what was 'brightest.' The educator is to go to society, as with Socrates. This meant turning to society to draw out its sense of truth, justice, courage and moderation, thereby enabling people to be friends of wisdom.

However, the theory and hence the pressures of modern life have associated knowledge with power which humans could use for their own benefit, both personal and professional. Recently the purpose of education has become further rationalized as a training process to enhance human instrumental reasoning. With the rapid development of science, technology, and industrialization, as well as of finance, market economics, and commercialization, education was turned into a means for learning skills and techniques. Thus, schools and universities have come to serve only utilitarian purposes, namely, to train students to learn skills or techniques to fit into the job market, to be promoted, to gain high salaries, and so on. In this sense, education is considered part of the commercial market focusing on competition for profits and interest, which neglecting such important dimensions of education as formation, cultivation and moral education.

This seminar was intended to open the meaning of an education and human striving to the formation of an enriched sense of personhood; to a life of caring with the means now



Holger Zaborowski

provided by science and technology in this explosive and fast developing age of information and communication; to the meaning of this for life in a democratic society, and to promote intercultural dialogue in these complex global times.

Indeed, education faces many challenges today:



Group Photo in Vallendar



Seminar Sessions in Vallendar

social, economic and political. These emerge from modern technology, the sciences, and globalization and entail rapid transformation of traditional ways.

Christian Bryan S. Bustamante (Philippines, "Student-Centered Teaching and Lifelong Learning: A Philosophical Assessment"), **Maria Dimitrova** (Bulgaria, "Educating in Responsibility for the Other"), **Villa Francesco** (Italy, "Education, Social Rights, Globalization and Cosmopolitanism: What Kind of Relationship?"), **Christiana N. Idika** (Germany/Nigeria, "Julius Nyerere on Education and Human Development"), **Workineh Kelbessa** (Ethiopia, "The Need for Environmental Ethics Education"), **Ruzana Pskhu** (Russia, "To Teach Oriental Philosophy is to Educate a Taste of Tolerance") and **Tony Svetelj** (USA, "In Search of Exaltation of Human Nature in the World of Globalization") took part in the seminar.

Each participant presented his/her paper. Discussions were intensive and insightful. Many new ideas were generated and new friendship was built as well. Meanwhile, various activities such as visiting a local museum, listening to a concert, outings, etc. enriched the seminar program and also allowed the participants to learn from the local culture. The participants also went to a local high school to observe how teachers and students interacted in class. All seminar participants enjoyed not only the intellectual interchange but also the friendly atmosphere during the one week seminar.



A Visit to the Museum

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

Shenyang, P.R. China

December 22-23, 2014: **“Value Conflict and Consensus in the Context of Cultural Diversity”**. This conference was held at the School of Marxism, Liaoning University located in the Northeast China. Six international scholars were invited by Xie Xiaojuan, General Secretary, and Fang Guangshun, Dean of the School of Marxism



A conference session at Liaoning University

In these global times, different cultures and civilizations are not only encountering but also affecting one another. This entails a collision and integration of values. Value is not only a core factor to a country's concept of national governance and the goals of its development; it is also a significant symbol of the country. Therefore, it is important to maintain and construct a country's values in new circumstances. Questions might rise: Can the values of different countries and nations achieve mutual respect? How to build consensus and to work with different value systems? How to avoid conflicts or confrontations when meeting with different value systems? How to live peacefully in a diversified society and in a complex world?

To answer these questions, an international perspective and an open dialogue between scholars from different cultural backgrounds are needed. In addition, with the increasing global communication and crisis, new shared ethical values of humanity based on tolerance, respect, and solidarity for the destiny of the whole humankind should be considered. This formed



A conference session at Liaoning University

only by overcoming arrogance and the sense of superiority regarding one's own culture and finding the internal points of correspondence and complementarity between different cultures. Global governance in the face of global crisis requires this dialogue and cooperation.

The goal of the conference was to promote academic research and the exchange of value studies, to improve the capability of running international conferences, to broaden students' academic vision, to build a platform for the growth of young teachers.



Opening Session: Fang Guanshun, Hu Yeping, Yang Luping, Zhou Fei & Xie Xiaojun

Zhou Fei, Deputy Secretary of the Liaoning

University, **Yang Luping**, Vice President of Liaoning Provincial Federation of Social Science Circle, **Xie Xiaojun**, **Fang Guangshun** and **Hu Yeping** were at the opening session.

Scholars from several Universities in China and abroad presented their papers. **Xie Xiaojun** (Liaoning University) "New Characteristics of Diverse Cultural Communication and Construction of Value Consensus"; **Hu Yeping** (RVP) "Cultural Traditions and Marxism in China and Poland"; **Peter Jonkers** (Tilburg University, Netherlands) "Value Conflict, Dialogical Pluralism and the Idea of Wisdom"; **Yu Wenli** (Peking University) "Cultural Identification and Systematic Reconstruction of Values"; **Edward J Alam** (Notre Dame University, Lebanon) "Understanding and Appreciating Cultural Diversity: The Limits and Opportunities of Modernity"; **Mikhalev Maxim** (Chinese Ethnic University, Beijing) "The Cosmic Ecology-Values and Cares of People from Altai Mountains"; **Wang Xiaohong** (Liaoning University) "Human Comprehensive Development as the Core Value of Socialism"; **Alex Palma** (Portuguese Catholic University) "Non Inscription Phenomenon: A Modern Way of Avoiding Conflict and Consensus"; **Dan Chitoiu** (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania) "Formative Ideals and the Value Conflict of Today"; **Xu Man** (Nankai University) "Research on the Construction of University Students' Core Value in the Cultural Diversity" and **Chen Wenxu** (Nankai University).

The conference was well attended by professors and students from the Liaoning University. **Gao Siyang** from the School of Marxism was coordinating and communicating conference details with the visiting scholars and also accompanied them to the Shenyang Industrial Museum and the 9.18 Museum.



Conference Sessions at Liaoning University

Yangzhou, P.R. China

December 18-19, 2014: "Reconstruction of Values and Morality in Global Times". This conference was held at the School of Marxism, Yangzhou University, Yangzhou located on the northern bank of Yangtze River.



Left to Right: Cao Jun, Wu Rongjun, Qin Xingfang, Vincent Shen, Zhou Jianchao, Hu Yeping & She Yuanfun

It is one of oldest historical cities in China. It was established in 486BC and has rich traditions. The city produced many well-known scholars, poets, painters and merchants. It is a garden city with many beautiful parks and gardens.

beautiful parks and gardens.

In order to promote academic research on issues related to ethics and values, to enhance cultural exchanges, and broaden the international perspective of Chinese scholars, especially the young scholars, the RVP co-organized an international conference "Reconstruction of Values and Morality in Global Times" at Yangzhou University, December 18-19, 2014, Yangzhou, P.R. China.

Ethics and values are core components of development of cultural traditions and the nation's heritage. It is significant to carry on and reconstruct these important components according to our changing times and circumstances. In the era of globalization, one inevitable fact is that different cultures and civilizations must interact and learn from each other in order to enrich and to be enriched through more cultural exchanges and cooperation among scholars from different disciplines and cultures; and to encourage young scholars' to go deeper into these central issues in order to develop capabilities and to be enriched through mutual understanding, recognition and knowledge on ethics and values.



Group Photo at Yangzhou University



A conference session at Yangzhou University

The conference intended to clarify fundamental issues related to ethics and values in different cultures and circumstances; to study the main challenges facing the era of globalization; to learn the latest achievements of international academic research; to pro

Liu Yong, Professor from the School of Marxism, Yangzhou University, initiated and organized this conference. **Zhang**

Zhixiang, Vice Dean of School of Foreign Languages, Yangzhou University, helped the organization and greeting the foreign participants. The University administration gave a support to the conference. **Zhou Jianchao** and **Qin Xingfang** represented the University at the opening; **She Yuanfu** and **Wu Rongjun**, Dean and General Secretary of the School of Marxism, as well as **Zuo Hongmei**, **Cao Jun**, **Shen Yiwen** and many others from the School of Marxism welcomed the participants. Many professors and students from the Yangzhou University made efforts to assure the success of the conference. Nearly 40 participants from China and abroad presented their papers. **Vincent Shen**, RVP Vice President, spoke on behalf the RVP at the opening; **Hu Yeping** presented the RVP publications to the University Library.

Issues discussed at the conference included “Confucian Altruism, Generosity and Justice: A Response to Globalization” by **Vincent Shen** (University Toronto, Canada), “Modern Transformation of the Chinese Cultural Tradition in Times of Globalization” by **Hu Xuming** (University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, China); “Human Desire and International Global Capitalism: Challenges and Opportunities” by **Edward Alam** (Notre Dame University, Lebanon); “The Concept of Freedom (Liberty) in the Socialist Core Values with the Chinese Characteristics” by **Yan Jihong** (Southeast University, China); “The Non-Inscription Phenomenon: A Modern Way of Avoiding a Reconstruction of Value” by **Alexandre Palma** (Portuguese Catholic University, Portugal); “Mutual Recognition and Modern State Governance” by **Tang Huiling** (Yangzhou University, China); “The Modern Approach to Morality and Values in Times of Global Change” by **Igor I. Kondrashin** (World Philosophical Forum, Russia); “Business and Moral Responsibility in a



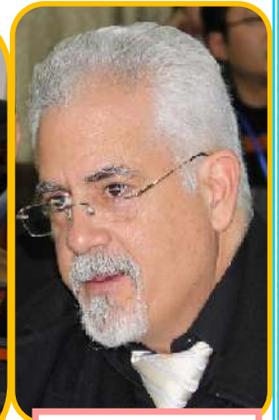
A conference session at Yangzhou University



Liu Yong



A conference session at Yangzhou University



Edward Alam

Globalized World” by **John Ozolins** (Australian Catholic University, Australia); “Equality as a Newly Emerging Social Value in China Today and Its Impact on the Chinese Society” by **Xu Haiming** (Shanghai Foreign Language University, China); “Metaphysical Reflections in the Age of Commercial Knowledge Production for Markets” by **Edward Wamala** (Makerere University, Uganda); “Utilitarian vs Rights-Based Constructions of Values” by **Chrysoula Gitsoulis** (City University of New York, USA); “The Value of Traditional Chinese Ethics in the Global Age: A Reconciliation of Confucian Way of Tolerance” by **Gu Mingdong** (University of Texas at Dallas, USA); “Reconstructing Values in Times of Radical Pluralism” by **Peter Jonkers** (Tilburg University, Netherlands); “Is Freedom always the Supreme Universal Value?” by **Xu Keqiang** (Nanjing Normal University, China); “Spirituality Role in Understanding Reality and Shaping Values” by **Dan Chitoiu** (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Romania); “Anti-Essentialism and Tahagatagarbha: A Parallel between Critical Buddhism and Continental Philosophy” by **Tu Xiaofei** (Appalachian State University, USA); “The Relevance of Love in the Era of Globalization: A Multicultural Perspective” by **Sreelekha Mishra** (Indian Institute of Technology, India); and “On Reconstruction of New Type of Socialist Collectivism” by **Yu Qing** (Yangzhou University, China).

The conference ended with concluding remarks by Liu Yong and Edward Alam, RVP Director of Middle East Center on behalf of the organizing institutes. Vincent Shen and Hu Yeping gave a lectures to professors and students respectively at the Yangzhou University.

The foreign participants visited Ge Bamboo Garden and the old city of Yangzhou where Marco Polo (1254-324), the first European traveler to China spent 17 years and was appointed as the first foreigner to be a local official for three years (1282-2285).



Marco Polo Statue



Ge Bamboo Garden

Shanghai, P.R. China

December 15-16, 2014: “**Philosophy and Life World**”. This conference was organized and held at the Institute of Philosophy, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS).



Vincent Shen



William Sweet

Philosophy is supposed to be universal knowledge. This means, on the one hand, that it is knowledge for all, necessary, and hence true; on the other hand, it claims to be the supreme principle for all the other kinds of knowledge. Indeed, philosophy has held



He Xirong



Shi Yongzhe

a favored position for human beings though it has contained many conflicts. Today, philosophy seems not to be as popular as it once was. Many of its areas are occupied by the positive sciences while the rest as pure speculation seems too far from human life.

However, new problems arise every day in our life, many of which cannot be answered by the positive sciences. What is the ultimate purpose of human’s life? Is there a reasonable limitation of desire; is it necessary and possible for human beings as a whole to be self-restrained? Such problems, which concern human destiny, cannot be resolved within positive sciences. Today we face more serious challenges than ever before. Humans create many crises as well as happiness. It is time to be more self-aware and to renew the above questions that our life is the result of our own choice and people are never satisfied with the way we live.

To work on the above problems, we need to exam our current life situation; to discuss how life in this planet could be sustained, and this not merely in favor of human beings but also of the whole sphere of life including nature and other beings. But traditional philosophy seems unable to solve the above problems. Therefore, we should not merely focus on one branch of philosophy, but open more broadly to other philosophies. Chinese philosophy is specially recommended here as it



Group Photo at SASS

calls people to be the harmony and unity of heaven, earth and man as Confucian philosophy stresses. The Chinese philosophy engages the problems of our life world, especially many aspects of social issues. The question might be how to complement and enrich each other from



A conference session at SASS

different philosophical schools in helping humankind to face these many challenges today.

He Xirong, Director of the Philosophy Institute, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and RVP Regional Coordinator, **Vincent Shen** and **William Sweet**, RVP Vice Presidents spoke respectively at the opening and concluding sessions. **Hu Yeping** presented the RVP books to the Institute.

Participants came from many countries, such as **Gholamreza Aavani** (Iranian Philosophical Institute, Iran “Modern Self: From Noumental Self to Phenomenal Self”); **Edward Alam** (Notre Dame University, Lebanon “Human Desire and International Global Capitalism: Challenges and Opportunities”); **Dan Chitoiu** (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Romania “Philosophy as Life Inquiry and Existential Attitudes”); **Chrysoula Gitsoulis** (City New York University, USA “Are Humans Selfish by Nature?”); **Wojciech Golubiewski** (Institute of Philosophy, Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland “Art as the Source of Natural and Moral Goodness in Aquinas”); **Hu Yeping** (Council for Research in Values and Philosophy “Philosophy as a Way of Life”); **Hung Tsz Wan Andrew** (Hong Kong Polytechnic University-Hong Kong Community College, Hong Kong “Mencius’ Idea of the Great Man as a Response to Isaiah Berlin’s Criticism of Positive Liberty”); **Peter Jonkers** (Tilburg University, Netherlands “A Revaluation of Wisdom as a Way to Reconnect Philosophy with the Life World”);



A conference session at SASS



Conference sessions at SASS

Igor I. Kondrashin (World Philosophical Forum, Russia “The East and the West Thinking on the Way to a Single Modern Global Mentality”); **Li Qin** (Institute of Philosophy, Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences, China “The Theory of Consumption Needs and Desire of Traditional Culture and Its Enlightenment”); **Bo Meinertsen** (Department of Philosophy, Tongji University, China/Denmark “Gratitude to Nature: Global Environmental Ethics for China and the World”); **John T. Ozoliņš** (Catholic University of Australia, Australia “Cultivating the Virtues in Mengzi and Aquinas: East and West Compared”); Alexandre Palma (Portuguese Catholic University, Portugal “Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy in Modern Times: A Critical Dialogue with Gilbert K. Chesterton and Eduardo Lourenco”); **Vincent Shen** (University of Toronto, Canada/Taiwan “Urban-Life-World Manifesting the Dao”); **L.P. Singh** (Delhi University, India “Philosophy and Life World: The Zen Buddhist Perspective”); **William Sweet** (St. Francis Xavier University, Canada “Personhood and Property: Eastern and Western Perspective”); **Edward Wamala** (Makerere University, Uganda “Metaphysical Reflections in the Age of Commercial Knowledge Production”); **Wang Youjun** (Department of Philosophy, Shanghai Normal University, China “Mathematical Method in Pascal’s Philosophy”); **Wang Tianen** (School of Philosophy, Shanghai University, China “The Ways of Philosophical Quest to Life World”); **Zhang Shuangli** (School of Philosophy, Fudan University, China “Karl Marx and Frederic Engels on the Connection and Contradiction between Philosophy and Reality: An Interpretation of Their Viewpoint of Philosophy in German Ideology”); **Zhao Qi** (Institute of Philosophy, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences “The Universal Love and the Sustainability of Human Beings: A Comparative Study of Confucianism and Thomism”).

The foreign participants took a city tour and were invited to a dinner near the Bund.

International Conference on
 "Philosophy and Life World"
 “哲学与生活世界”国际研讨会



Shanghai, P.R. China

December 12-14, 2014: “**Metaphysics: Past, Present and Future**”. International Society for Metaphysics (ISM) held the second conference at the East China Normal University (ECNU), Shanghai, after Yang Guorong and Yu Zhenhua, Professors of ECNU Department of Philosophy, took up the Presidency and the General Secretary of ISM at the World Congress of Philosophy in Athens in 2013. The first conference on “Metaphysics: East and West” was held at ECNU in December 2013.

Yu Zhenhua chaired the opening session. **Yang Guorong** sent his remarks; **Gholamreza Aavani** (Iranian Philosophical Institute, Iran), **He Xirong** (Institute of Philosophy, Shanghai



Yu Zhenhua



He Xirong



Gholamreza Aavani



William Sweet

Academy of Social Sciences, China) and **William Sweet** (St. Francis Xavier University, Canada) spoke at the opening session respectively. At the concluding session **Yu Zhenhua** invited suggestions and proposals for the future development of the ISM and displayed the ISM’s new website. Participants suggested topics and ideas for future conferences.

During conference participants discussed many important issues related to metaphysics: such as the different types of metaphysics throughout the history of philosophy. Metaphysical issues have



Group Photo at ECNU

been approached from different perspectives, and reflection on the similarities and differences among these approaches will enrich our understanding of metaphysics. Rethinking the tendency of anti-metaphysics or challenges to metaphysics. The legitimacy and the necessity of metaphysics have been challenged since modern times. On what grounds have these challenges been formulated? How to meet the challenges? What are the possible ways out of the crisis of metaphysics? Metaphysics and contemporary life. Metaphysics usually is depicted as a branch of theoretical philosophy and far away from our practical life. In which ways can metaphysics exert influence on contemporary life? Can metaphysics contribute to human life? Possible modes of future metaphysics. Metaphysics never stops renewing itself. A construction of possible new ways of doing metaphysics will enhance the vitality of metaphysics in the future.

Participants came from many countries as well as regions in China: **Gholamreza Aavani** (Iranian Philosophical Institute, Iran “Volunterism in Post-Cartesian Western Philosophy”); **Dan Chitoiu** (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Romania “Beyond Concept: Ways to Express Radical Experience”); **Chrysoula Gitsoulis** (City New York University, USA “The Role of Reason in Grounding Moral Standards”); **Wojciech Golubiewski** (Institute of Philosophy, Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland “Aquinas and Natural Goodness of Human Action”); **Victoria S. Harrison** (University of Glasgow, Scotland “The Metaphysics of Mathematics and Religion”); **Peter Jonkers** (Tilburg University, Netherlands); **Catherine Lynch** (Eastern Connecticut State University, USA “Li Zehou’s Historical Ontology and American Pragmatism”); **John T. Ozoliņš** (Catholic University of Australia “Mysticism and Logic”); **Vincent Shen** (University of Toronto, Canada/Taiwan “Articulating an Ontology of Events: Huayan Buddhism’s Concept of Event and Whitehead’s Ontological Principle”); **William Sweet** (St. Francis Xavier University, Canada “Transhumanism and the Metaphysics of the Human Person”); **Edward Wamala** (Makerere University, Uganda “Metaphysical Reflection in the Age of Commercial Knowledge Production for Market”); **Shi Weimin** (Department of Philosophy, Tunghai University, Taiwan “Hegel’s Idea of Metaphysics”); **Jen-kuen Chen** (Department of Philosophy, Huafan University, Taiwan “On the Activity and Formality of Zhu Xi’s ‘Principle’ -Li); **Andrew Tsz Wan Hung** (Hong Kong Polytechnic University-Hong Kong Community College, Hong Kong “On Cornell Realism and Shafer-Landau’s Non-Naturalism”); **Hu Yeping** (The Council for



A conference session at ECNU

Research in Values and Philosophy “Metaphysics as an Open Horizon for the Understanding of Human Life”); **Peng Guoxiang** (Department of Philosophy, Zhejiang University, China “A Confucian One-body Worldview: Rereading the Inquiry on the Great Learning”); **Wan Xiaoping** (Department of Philosophy, Anhui University “Rethinking on the Theory of Metaphysics of Li Shicen”); **Chen Zhiwei** (Tibet University for Nationalities



A conference session at ECNU

“Goodness and Righteousness: The Internal Architecture of Mencius’ Political Philosophy”); **Guan Yuefei** (Department of Philosophy, Anhui Normal University “The Physics of *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*”); **Hao Zhaokuan** (School of Philosophy, Fudan University “On Analyticity: Frege to Godel”); **Wang Xiaoyong** (Shangxi Academy of Social Sciences “Physical Metaphysics Starting from the aspect of Differentiation between the Object and Chinese Characters”); **Wu Ning** (Zhongnan University of Economics and Law “Commonwealth of Free People and Citizens of the World towards the Unlimited Communication”); **Wu Xiaoyun** (Shanxi Academy of Social Sciences “On Merleau-Ponty’s Phenomenology of Perception and Marxism”); **Yu Xuanmeng** (Institute of Philosophy, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, China “On the Self-Awareness of Life”); **Zhang Zemian** (Department of Philosophy, Wuhan University “Paradoxes of Unity and Sincerity: An Outline of Neo-Confucian Monism and Ethical Realism”); **Chang Tzu-li** (Si Man Humanities Institute of Advanced Studies, ECNU “Is There such a Thing as Personal Identity? A Comparative Study between Kierkegaard and Wang Yangming”); **Chen Yun** (Department of Philosophy, ECNU “From ‘Wu Ti Zhi Ti’ to ‘Yu Hua Wei Ti’: the Way of Heaven, Subjective, and Creativity in Traditional Chinese Thoughts”); **Paul D’Ambrosio** (ECNU “The Value of Lying in the Menzi: Falsity and Consequentialism in Early Confucianism”); **Fang Xudong** (Department of Philosophy, ECNU “A Comparative Study on Zhu Xi and Hegel: Focusing on Taiji”); **Guo Dongfeng** (Department of Philosophy, ECNU “Being and Ming: An Access to Approach to Confucian Metaphysics”); **An Weifu** (Department of Philosophy, ECNU “What Is the Thing Called Metaphysics from Aristotle’s Metaphysics (14 books)?”); **Zhang Hanzhou** (Department of Philosophy, ECNU “Dilemma in Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Acquaintance in Dilemma”);



A conference session at ECNU

in Dilemma”); **Zhang Lili** (Department of Philosophy, ECNU “A Metaphysical Study on ‘Cunzai’ - existence, ‘Shi’-being, and ‘You’-having”); **Zhang Xiaoyong** (Department of Philosophy, ECNU “Metaphysics as History”); **Zong Desheng** (Department of Philosophy, ECNU “Two Routes to the Refutation of the Essential Indexicality Thesis”).

Tehran. Iran

December 7, 2014: **"The Role of Religion in Preventing Violence"**. This conference was held at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran. It was initiated by Ayatollah Mostafa Mohaghegh



Ayatollah Mostafa Damad



Rahim Nobaha



Janet Blake



Edward J. Alam

Damad and Rahim Nobaha and coordinated by Janet Blake from the University. Edward Alam, Director of the RVP Middle East Center, took part in the conference with a delegation from Lebanon.

At the opening Hossein Mehrpour (Dean of the Faculty of Law) and Mustafa Mohaghegh Damad (Head of the Islamic Law department) delivered the welcome remarks. Hossein Mir Mohammad Sadeghi (UNESCO Chair for Human Rights, Peace and Democracy) gave the opening



Hossein Mehrpour



Hossein Mir Mohammad Sadeghi

speech on "Varieties of Violence and How to Fight Violence through Religious Teaching".

The issues discussed at the conference included Abrahamic faith and the idea of pacifism; peaceful and violent reading of religious texts; religious leadership: cases and examples; family and education for peace; theological treatment of violence; religious extremism, religious origins; the meaningfulness of life and peace; vs nihilism and violence, etc.

Edward J. Alam (Notre Dame University, Lebanon) "The Metaphysics of Violence: Comparative Reflections on the Thought of René Girard and Mahatma Gandhi"; **Mohammad Rasekh** (Shahid Beheshti University) "Religion and Violence: a Matter of Approach"; **Mohammad Seyed Fatemi** (Shahid Beheshti University) "Human Equality as the Pre-requisite of Positive Peace"; **Mostafa M. Damad** (Shahid Beheshti University) "Rational Principles as the Basis of Religious Culture"; **Chady Rahme** (American University of Beirut, Lebanon) "The Feminine Role in Religion: an Antidote to Violence";



A conference session at Beheshti University

Shahram Pazouki (Iranian Research Institute of Philosophy) "Inner Peace as the Way to Outer Peace"; **Mahmoud Youness** (American University of Beirut, Lebanon) "The Mythmaking of Divine Violence: Revisiting Benjamin's Critique in an Age of Apocryphal Caliphates"; **Janet Blake** (Shahid Beheshti University) "Protecting Religious Diversity for Reconciliation and Preventing Violence"; **Robert Gallagher** (American University of Beirut, Lebanon) "Role of Grace in Preventing Civic Violence and Economic Exploitation"; **Nader El-Bizri** (American University of Beirut, Lebanon) "The Metaphysics of Violence and Nihilism"; **Rahim Nobahar** (Shahid Beheshti University) "God as the Source of Peace and Security".

The conference was cosponsored by UNESCO Chair for Human Rights, Peace and Democracy and Research Center for Human Rights, Peace and Democracy.



A conference session at Beheshti University



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In order to share the work of the many teams and constitute a truly global network the **full text** for free down of all RVP books and their individual chapters are available not only in print, but also on the RVP web: www.crvp.org. Please see the "**Publications**" section of that website. Additionally, full text, exact image versions of all RVP books are now available through the Google Book Search Partner Program. Though not able to be downloaded, all pages of each book appear in exact image for word search and research citation. Search by name of book, author, or individual chapter at www.books.google.com.

Iași, Romania

June 21-22, 2014: “**Values and Identity in the World of Today**”. This conference was held in cooperation with the Romanian Academy—Iași Branch and Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași. It was planned and coordinated by **Dan Chițoiu**, the Director of the RVP Center in Iași.

The aim of the conference was to discuss the relationship between traditional values and cultural identity in the rapid present day global changes. Since cultural and spiritual traditions are vital



Dan Chițoiu



Opening session in Iași

for preserving the personal and the communitarian identity, it is necessary to reach the authentic meaning of tradition in a cultural context. The values are connected with specific cultural realities and moreover are dynamic since they are subject to the continuous evolution of human society. Also as traditions are under the impact of changing and dynamic values, their preservation is an active and creative process. Topics included the actual understanding of values and identity in various cultural perspectives, regarding the fact that there are some times sensitive differences in approaching them; how to define the role of spirituality in the world of today; and an analysis of what happened since the fall of Berlin Wall 25 years ago in Europe and in the world regarding cultural values and spiritual traditions.

At the opening of the conference **Teodor Dima** (Member of the Romanian Academy) gave a welcome speech; **Wilhelm Dancă** (University of Bucharest, Romania) represented the RVP and gave a keynote speech “Person and Value in Christian Social Doctrine”; another two keynote speakers were **Jove Jim S. Aguas** (University of Santo Tomas, Philippines).



Group Photo in Iași



A conference session in Iasi

“Emerging Realities and Their Impact on Cultural Values and Identity: Preserving Cultural Values and Identity” and Dan Gabriel Sâmbotin (Romanian Academy—Iasi Branch) “Basic Antinomies and the Problem of Identity”.

The conference was well attended with scholars from many countries as well as from various universities across Romania. Some foreign participants

could not present their papers in person, but made their presentations through skype. Visiting scholars from overseas included: **André Bueno** (State University of Paraná (UNESPAR), Brazil) “The Challenge of Traditions in Brazil Today”; **Meng Huang** (Xi’an Jiaotong University, China) “Datong Ideal. A Reinterpretation of “People-oriented” from Chinese Traditional Culture”; **Wei Hua** and **Cao Yuan** (Xi’an Jiaotong University & Liuhe Traditional Studies College, China) “On the Ecological Philosophy of Chinese Traditional Taoist Thinking”; **Thomas Menampampil** (Archbishop Emeritus, Jovai, India) “Respecting the Self-assertion of Communities”; **Bharathi Thummapudi** (S.P. Mahila University, India) “Dalit Experience: Contesting the Tradition”; **Iddo Landau** (Haifa University, Israel) “Doing One’s Best, Fulfilling One’s Potential, and the Meaning of Life”; **Umut Asanova** (Turkey Manas University, Kyrgyzstan) “Philosophical Identification of Self and Spirituality”; **A.G. Kosichenko** (Institute of Philosophy, Kazakhstan) “Religion in the System of Values of the Coordinates of Modernity”; **Teodor Negru** (Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands) “Deterritorialization of Culture and the Problem of Cultural Identity in the Age of Globalization”; **Felix Olusanjo Olatunji** (Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Nigeria) “The Value and the Indispensability of Justice in the Quest for Development in Mediterranean Africa”; **Abdul Rashid** (University of Karachi, Pakistan) “Islamic values and Identity in the modern World: Sufis teachings Perspective”; **Costas Athanasopoulos** (Open University, United Kingdom) “The Spiritual Challenge of Being European Today for an Orthodox: The New Atheist Attack on Traditional European Values and Orthodox Christian Identity”; **Kai Ana Makanoë Kaikaulaokaweilaha Kaululaau** (University of Bristol, United Kingdom) “To Apologize, to Be Sorry, to Regret, to Confess”; **Firoozeh Papan-Matin** (U.S.A) “Music as a Venue for the Expression of Faith among Indian Muslim Communities”; **Chrysoula Gitsoulis** (City University of New York, U.S.A.) “Where Do Moral Standards Come From?”.

Scholars came from various Universities in Romania: **Ana Bazac** (Polytechnic University of Bucharest, Romania) “L’esprit de Corps: Old and New Values of a Significant Social Identity”; **Smaranda Buju** (Asachi Technical University, Romania) “The Science of Wo/Man: from Desecration to Scientification of the Human”; **Marius Liviu Ciuraru** (Ștefan cel Mare College, Romania) “The Public Sphere and the Spirituality of the Christian Tradition. Paradigm of Giuseppe Lazzati



A conference session in Iasi

in a Secular Age”; **Petre Guran** (Romanian Academy) “Christian Faith versus Christian History. The Dynamic Character of Tradition”; **Ștefan Pălărie, Smaranda Simionescu** (Școala de Valori, Romania) “Studies Regarding the Values and Role Models of the Romanian Teenager”; **Maria Sinaci** (Francisc Neuman College, Romania) “Globalization and Global Ethics”; **Daniela Stănculescu** (Spiru Haret University, Romania) “Religious Language from Modernity to Postmodernity”; University of Bucharest, **Ștefan Grosu** “Pleading for Culture”; **Mihaela Adriana Macsut** “About Human Condition and Spirituality”; **Sabin Totu** “Byzantine Icon and Spiritualization of Human”; **Viorel Vizureanu** “The Play is Important, not the Actor: Cultural Globalization Theorizations and Their (Mis)Used Model of the Human Subject”.

Many scholars attended the conference from the Romanian Academy—Iași Branch: **Constantin Vică** “Cold Facts, Value-neutrality, and Cultural Identity on Wikipedia. The digital War of (Writing) History Today”; **Radu Bogdan Uszkai** “The Value of Cooperation in the World Today: Social Norms and Online Pirates”; **Alexandru Dragomir** “Logic and Its Role in Society”; **Constantin Rusu** “Temptation of Knowledge and Making of Values and Identity: Romanian Context”; **Alexandru Bejenariu** “The Phenomenological Critique of the Concept of Value and the Problem of the ‘New’”; **Mihail-Valentin Cernea** “The Value of Scientific Knowledge in Today’s World”; **Daniel Nica** “Giving Yourself an Identity. Creation of Values and Creation of the Self in Nietzsche via Foucault”; **Cristina Lucia Șutiu** “The Role of National Values in Western Contemporary Political Propaganda”; **Costel Matei** “The connection between globalization and the emergence of a global society”; **Liviu Petcu** “The Reception of Hesychasm in Romanian Spirituality: Tradition and Present”.

Scholars from Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași included **Rodica Pop** “Justification of Politics in Dumitru Stăniloae Thinking”; **Ioan Dura** “Religious Identity and Desacralization: Challenges of Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue in the World of Today”; **Celestin Eronim Blaj** “On the Moral Ideal, between Philosophy and Religion, in the Globalizing Context”; **Ani-Maria Gherghel** “Police Cynism Reconsidered”; **Daniela Doltu** “Organizational Ethos and Managerial Morality: The Romanian Public Institutions Managers’ Contribution”; **Carmen Cozma** “Ethical Values in Preserving the Communitarian Identity, on the Ground of Enescianism”; **Frăguța Zaharia** “On the Dignity of Being Human in the Present Context: Starting from Constantin Micu Stăvilă’s Philosophy”; **Alex Tofan** “Walter Benjamin’s Theory on Urban Experience: Theology, Politics, Critical Inquiry”; **Anton Adămuț** “Why Noica Did Not Write an Ethics”; **Petru Bejan** “Can We Define ‘Work of Art?’”; **Victor Alexandru Pricopi** “Nihilism and Western Values. From Gnostics to Martin Heidegger”; **Iulia Țuțuianu** “Moral Fulfilment: A Necessity in the Present Days”; **Dan Chițoiu** “Meanings of Tradition and Today Role of Spirituality”.



A conference session in Iasi



A conference session in Iasi

Klaipeda, Lithuania

June 17-18, 2014: **"Identity and Globalization: Ethical Implications"**. The conference was the result of cooperation between the RVP and Klaipeda University. This was initiated and organized by **Dalia Marija Stančienė**.



Dalia Marija Stančienė

The aim of the conference was to study how the dynamics of the process of globalization brings a vast range of cultural interchange that entails both hopes and threats. The threats include economic competition which puts great pressure on weaker peoples to reduce worker compensation below a living wage and to tailor their educational system to forming servants of the machine rather than free citizens. The hopes, however, are that cumulatively the best sense of human dignity will coalesce to form



John T. Ozoliņš

the aspirations of all peoples and orient their constructive efforts. Between these threats and hopes lies the decisive field of the human struggle of our times. Can we conceive of a more worthy identity; can this include the other and indeed all others in these mobile times, can our aspirations take us beyond the material to the spiritual? The topics of the conference included construction and deconstruction of cultural identity; interchange of cultures: historical and ethnographic; immigration and integration: the face of the Other in national culture; and the relation of material achievement to spiritual fulfillment and vice versa.

Kęstutis Dučinskas, Chairman of the Senate of Klaipėda University, **Rimantas Balsys**, Dean Faculty of Humanities Klaipėda University, **Jānis T. Ozoliņš**, the RVP representative from Australian Catholic University and University of Latvia, spoke at the opening. **George F. McLean**, the RVP President, sent his remarks to the conference participants. The conference was attended by scholars from various countries as well as from Lithuanian universities. **Jānis T. Ozoliņš** (Australian Catholic University, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, University of Latvia) "Diversity, Identity and the Modern World"; **Olga Chistyakova** (Moscow State Institute for Tourism n. a. Yuri Senkevich, Russia) "Media Myths on Migrants and Formation of the Image of Other in Russian Culture"; **Mus-tafa Bilalov** (Dagestan State University, Russia) "Ethnic Culture in Civilizational Perspectives of Dagestan"; **Sabina Magomedova** (Dagestan State University, Russia) "Through Mutual



A conference session in Klaipeda

Concessions to the Dialogue of Cultures”; **Aleksander Sautkin** (Murmansk State Humanities University, Russia) “The “Life / Death” Border as the Identity Mechanism”; **Vasili Voronov** (Murmansk State Humanities University, Russia) “The Question of Processes (Forms) of Identification”; **Volodymyr Moroz** (Ternopil National Pedagogical University, Ukraine) “Church on the Way to Maidan: Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and Revolution of Dignity in the Ukraine”; **Troy Mack, Professor** (Florida A&M University, USA) “Locke’s “A Letter Concerning Toleration”: Politics and Religion in/to Society”; scholars from various Lithuanian Universities: **Povilas Aleksandravičius** (Mykolas Romeris University) “Notion of Open Identity and Issues in Multiculturalism”; **Povilas Aleksandravičius** (Mykolas Romeris University) “Notion of Open Identity and Issues in Multiculturalism”; **Algirdas Degutis** (Mykolas Romeris University) “Globalism: An Offshoot of Liberal Inclusiveness”; **Judita Džetūlskienė** (Kaunas University of Technology) “Towards the Change of Lithuanian Identity”; **John-Stewart Gordon** (University of Cologne, Germany and Vytautas Magnus University) “Human Rights and Cultural Identity”; **Basia Nikiforova** (Lithuanian Culture Research Institute) “(De)Construction of Cultural Identity in the Lithuanian–Polish–Belarusian Borderland”; **Vida Savoniakaitė** (Lithuanian Institute of History) “Rational Choices? Construction and Deconstruction of Lithuanian Identities”; **Rūta M. Vabalaitė** (Mykolas Romeris University) “Heideggerian Concept of Identity”; **Vytis Valatka** (Vilnius Gediminas Technical University) “The Proposal of Antique Greek Cynics to Global Society: The Universal Virtue of Temperance”; scholars from Klaipėda University: **Linutė Kraujutaitytė** “Methodologies of Deconstruction”; **Ernesta Molotkienė** “Identity of the Papparazzi’s Target: Ethical Implications”; **Valdonė Šaulienė** “Construction of Young People’s Cultural Identity in Lithuania’s Postmodern Society”; **Ligita Šimanskienė** “Immigration Process and Immigrant Identity Changes: Example of Armenian Immigrants in Lithuania”; **Eduardas Spiriajevas** “Interaction between the Territory and Identity: Social Geographic Approach”; **Dalia Marija Stančienė** “Lithuanian Cultural Identity and the Power of Modern Nomad”; **Gintautas Vyšniauskas** “Deconstruction of Lithuania”, etc.

City Mayor, **Vytautas Grubliauskas**, met some scholars at his office.



A conference session in Klaipėda



A visit to Mayor's office in Klaipėda

Sivas, Turkey

May 15-16, 2014: “**Religion and Relations between Culture: Peace beyond Violence**”. The conference was planned and coordinated by **Dursun Ali Aykit** from Cumhuriyet University. Aykit studied religion and theology in Washington, D.C. and attended the RVP annual seminar in 2008.



Dursun Ali Aykit



Opening session at Cumhuriyet University



Plamen Makariev

The conference was intended to explore how religion as a focal point for human action and interaction can help understand the ultimate source of meaning and value in human life. In the religions of the book this relates especially to how the sacred text is to be understood and interpreted as this shapes the influence that religion will exercise in the life of a people. Here hermeneutics emerges centrally, along with the socio-cultural context of the times. Differences in religious outlook can become sources for conflict and violence. When this cultural context veers toward the secular and suffers the loss of its religious richness it might be supposed that the tendency toward conflict would also diminish, but this would appear to be a poor bargain for it also diminishes the attraction and authority of the good. Hence along with the interpretation of scripture the whole process of education and the role of religion therein becomes particularly sensitive.

The conference was opened by **Sabri Erturhan**, Dean of the Faculty of Theology, and **Dursun Ali Aykit** from the same Faculty, and **Plamen Makariev** from University of Sofia, Bulgaria represented the RVP.



A conference session at Cumhuriyet University

Many faculty members and students from the University took part in the conference and expressed their considerable interest in the theme. Paper presentations and discussions were intensive and extensive.

Issues discussed included “Reading the



A conference session at Cumhuriyet University

Subject of the Forbidden Tree and Godlike Fire Once More Moving from the Mythology and the Quran” by **Talip Özdeş** (Turkey); “Religious Epistemology in Nigeria and the Role of a Viable Philosophy” by **Anthony Idoko** (Nigeria); “Ar-Rahman and Arrahmeen’metaphysical Uncertainly in Quran” by **Maryam Alieva Cholpon** (Romania); “Islam And Nomadic Philosophy” by **Grete Aksu**; “The First Living Together: Rights and Tolerance” by **Ali Education** (Turkey); “Caterogies of Dominant Religions in Interreligious Dialogue” (Nigeria); “Interreligious Muslims” by **Fatma Kurttekin** (Turkey).



Babur (Netherlands); “Culture of Central Asia” by **Erikovna** (Kyrgyzstan); “El Farabi’s (d.950) Moral Period of Islamic Society, and Tolerance” by **Tabarasi**; “The Other in the Two Nigeria and Its Impact on Dialogue according to

The University authority paid special attention to the conference. Rector came to one of the sessions and Vice Rector invited the foreign participants to his office for a visit. The foreign scholars were treated to a city tour.



A city visit



Rector's visit at a conference session

Jakarta, Indonesia

May 12, 2014: **“Extremism and Social Peace”**. The conference was held at Paramadina University. It was initiated and organized by **Husain Heriyanto** who had taken part in the RVP seminar in 2008 on “Faith and Reason in Islam” and is the RVP regional coordinator in Southeast Asia.

Indeed, extremism, in any form, is a symptom of a growing catastrophe in the present world. No matter which kind of extremism --religious, non-religious or anti-religious motive and its back-

ground, including extreme arrogance--this contemporary social pathology is life threatening. A devastated social order, a crisis of humanity, decline of civilization, absence of peace are global existential threats we face today.

Ignorance and reluctance to acknowledge this fact makes our situation worse. If as **Hannah Arendt** says, “Violence is a result of failure in human communication” then “The present malaise and catastrophe is a result of failure in man’s knowledge”. **Alexis Carrel**, a Nobel Prize Winner, says, “Modern man is a stranger in the world that



Karim Douglas Crow



Husain Heriyanto

he has created. He has been incapable of organizing this world because he did not possess a practical knowledge of his own nature”.

This conference provided a chance to talk about the world and ourselves. It raised deep questions in a broad framework to uncover the underlying root causes of extremism as a psychosociopathic phenomenon in the modern world. Questions on existing extremism were examined under three perspectives, namely, Critical Social Theory, Culture, and Philosophy. The first perspective employed root cause analysis on extremism as a social phenomenon. The second conceived extremism as a product of a certain mentality. The third applied philosophical reflection to extremism as a mode of human action. Each analysis generated fresh ideas and understanding on this peril to humanity and civilization.

The conference was well attended by 50 professors, clergymen, journalists, etc. **Nasaruddin Umar**, Vice Minister of Religious Affairs came to deliver a keynote speech. **Karim Douglas Crow** from the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS) Malaysia represented the RVP and

Invitation to an International Conference

Extremism and Social Peace



universitas
paramadina
Program Studi Falsafah dan Agama

The speakers

1. Prof. Dr. Karim Douglas Crow
2. Pipip A. Rifai Hasan, Ph.D.
3. Dr. Haidar Bagir
4. Dr. Husain Heriyanto

The conference will cover the issue of
Extremism, Social Peace and Justice, Extremism, Desperation,
and the Irrational, Radicalism and Instrumental Reason,
the Role of Islamic Intellectual Tradition
in Eliminating Religious Extremism, the Postmodern Age and Extremism

Time and Venue
Monday, May 12, 2014 at 09.00 – 15.30
Room Sevilla-Toledo, Paramadina Graduate School
The Energy Building, Sudirman Center Business District
(SCBD), Floor 22.

Only limited seat are available for 50 participants only. We will provide meal and certificate.
Please register to email: dwl.suslyati@paramadina.ac.id



gave the keynote speech “Extremism, Modernity, and Loss of Transcendence”. **Pipip A. Rifai Hasan, Haidar Bagir and Husain Heriyanto** also spoke at the meeting. **John Giordano** from ABAC, Thailand also attended the conference.

Both **Karim Douglas Crow** and **Husain Heriyanto** are Board Members of International Society for Islamic Philosophy, which was established by a group of Moslem scholars who took part in the RVP seminar “Faith and Reason in Islam” in 2008. Its president is **Gholamreza A'avani**, Director of Iranian Philosophical Institute, CD of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP).

Manila, Philippines

May 8-9, 2014: “Religion, Values, Identity and the ASEAN Integration”. The conference was the sixth Southeast Asian biannual conference. The previous ones were held in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia and Vietnam. This conference was planned and coordinated by **Feorillo Demeterio III** from De La Salle University in partnership with University of Santo Tomas and San Beda College in Philippines.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established in 1967 and includes ten member states: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. In 2000 the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Work Plan was formulated for 2002-2008, and a second Work Plan was formulated for 2009-2015, all with the intention of achieving an ASEAN Community. The second Work Plan embodies three blueprints in the areas of economic integration, political security integration, and socio-cultural integration. The theme of the



Sriwarakuel Warayuth



Feorillo Demeterio III

sixth Southeast Asian Biannual conference intended to explore the impact of the ASEAN Integration on religions, values and identities of the people in the member states. Hence it covered such



Jove Jim Aguas



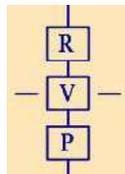
Group photo at De La Salle University

topics as local philosophies, systems of values and ASEAN integration; impact of the ASEAN integration on religion, values and identity; bridging diversities in the region; new possibilities in education and human capital; integration and the question on language; and other similar issues.

Feorillo Demeterio III read the opening remarks to the conference by **George F. McLean**, RVP President. **Sriwarakuel Warayuth** (Assumption University, Thailand) represented the RVP and delivered the keynote speech "Three Pillars of ASEAN Community".

Scholars and students from the various Universities in Manila took part in the conference and presented their papers: **Jove Jim Aguas** (University of Santo Tomas) "Interrelation of Diverse Identities and Cultures as Key Framework of ASEAN Integration"; **Mark Joseph Calano** (The Ateneo de Manila University) "Religious Pluralism and RH Law in Philippine Democracy"; **Jesster Fonseca** (San Beda College) "Thoughts on the Plurality of Religious Beliefs and Values and their Significance in Theology"; **Leni Garcia** (De La Salle University) "Humanistic Buddhism and the Filipino Worldview"; **Christian Bryan Bustamante** (San Beda College) "Filipino Philosophy in the New General Education Curriculum: Strengthening Filipino Identity in the Era of ASEAN Integration"; **Melvin Jabar** (De La Salle University) "Nursing Education in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore: Implications for the ASEAN Regional Integration"; etc.

The conference ended with closing remarks by **Jove Jim Aguas** from University of Santo Tomas where the participants held an academic visit.



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Moscow, Russia

April May 24-25, 2014: **"Islam as Unity in Plurality"**. It was held at People's Friendship University of Russia with cooperation among such units from the University as Faculty of Humanitarian and Social Studies, Department of History of Philosophy and Centre of Humanitarian Education in



Nur Kirabaev



A conference session at People's Friendship University



Ruzana Pskhu

Comparative Studies. It was coordinated by **Ruzana Pskhu** of Department of History of Philosophy. **Nur Kirabaev**, Vice Rector of the University opened the conference.

The Conference was part of the international scientific and educational program "Dialogue of Civilizations: East-West" and was a continuation of the international project of joint cooperation in the field of actual problems of modern philosophy and culture, which was attended by scientists from different countries and academic environment of the Russian Federation.

The conference discussed the problems of Islamic studies from different points of view and searched for ways of understanding the fundamental grounds of Islamic culture. Discussions covered such issues as spiritual foundations of the values, virtues and metaphysics of Islamic cultures; Islam as a tradition and as a cultural system; problems in understanding Moslem cultures; Islam as a political factor in modern life.

More than 20 scholars took part in the conference. **Vasiliev**, Academician, Doctor of History, Director of the Institute for African Studies, Head of the Department of Arabic and African of People's Friendship University; **Meyer**, President of the Russian Academy of Sciences, **Smirnov**, Professor, Corresponding Member of Russian Academy of Sciences; and many others took part in the conference.

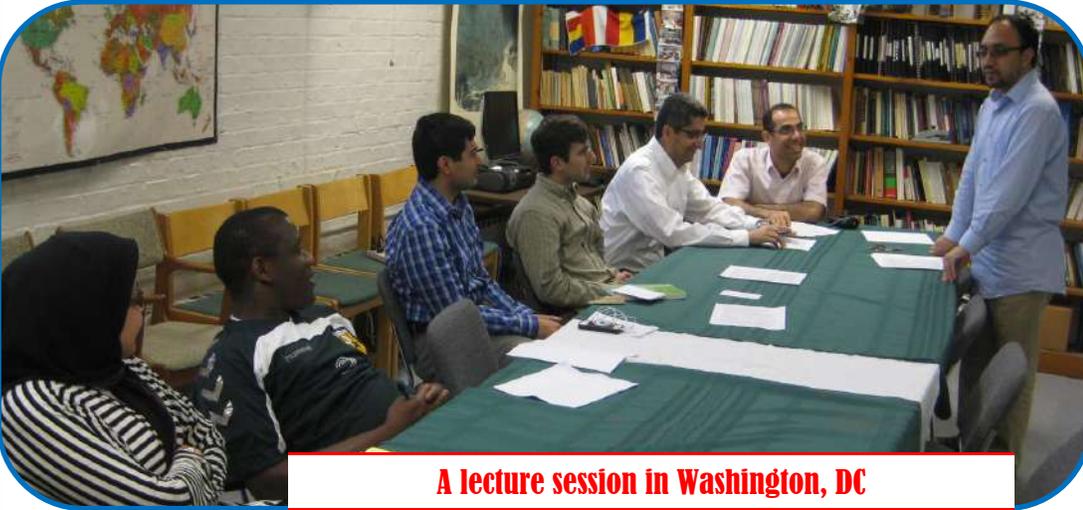


A conference session at People's Friendship University

OTHER ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Washington, D.C.

April 12-May 3, 2014: **Sayed Hassan Aklaq**, a visiting scholar at the CUA Center for the Study of Culture and Values, gave a set of five lectures on Islamic intellectual history, philosophy, theology, mysticism, law, etc. It



was attended by professors, students and those interested in learning about the Islamic tradition. The author has written a book on Islamic philosophy which will be published in English soon.

A lecture session in Washington, DC



October 21, 2014: **Karim Douglas Crow**, International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies, Malaysia, **Asna Husin**, University of Aceh, Indonesia and **Hujjat-ul Islam Sayed Muhammad Hussaini**, Nebras Studies and Research Organization, Kabul, Afghanistan visited the RVP office in Washington, D.C. for a seminar on Islam in Afghanistan and in Southeast Asia as well as Islamic education and philosophy in general.

The discussion was intensive and informative. Many issues raised during the discussion, especially in these complex global times. The RVP has been working with Moslem scholars closely in Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lebanon, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tunisia, Turkey, etc. and published a set of some 20 books written by Moslem scholars in its publication series. **Vensus George**,

Sayed Hassan Aklaq, **Qiu Genjiang** and **Hu Yeping** attended the seminar.



Discussion with Moslem scholars

Washington, DC

April 1, 2014: **Ouyang Kang**, Vice President of Huangzhou University of Science and Technology (HUST), Wuhan, P.R. China visited the RVP office in Washington, D.C. to discuss the issues related



A visit by Ouyang Kang

to dialogue and communication among peoples, civilizations and cultures, global governance, East and Southeast Asian challenges and opportunities, etc. HUST and RVP have been working closely for more than 20 years and both expressed their willingness and interest to continue this long cooperative tradition and effort. **John P. Hogan, Sayed Hassan Aklaq, Liu Yong and Hu Yeping** joined the discussion.

Rome, Italy

October 9-12, 2014: **George F. McLean**, RVP President and **Hu Yeping**, RVP Executive Director, visited the Gregorian University and the Pontifical Council for Culture in Rome in order to prepare



François-Xavier Dumortier & Louis Caruana

the March 4-5, 2015 conference to be held at the Gregorian University.

The conference was discussed in Vienna

in June and will be the cumulative result of research findings by some 16 research teams in North America and across Europe under the RVP general project "Faith in a Secular Age" initiated by **Charles Taylor, José Casanova and George F. McLean**.

The Rome visit finalized the program and related issues. **João J. Vila-Chã**, RVP Vice President and the Gregorian University made arrangements to meet **François-Xavier Dumortier**, Rector, **Louis Caruana**, Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and others at the Gregorian University as well as **Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi** and his colleagues at Pontifical Council for Culture. During the visit they also met **Juan Carlos Scannone**, from Colegio Máximo de San José, Argentina, with whom the RVP worked in early 1970s in Latin America.



Juan Carlos Scannone, George F. McLean & João J. Vila-Chã

PUBLICATIONS

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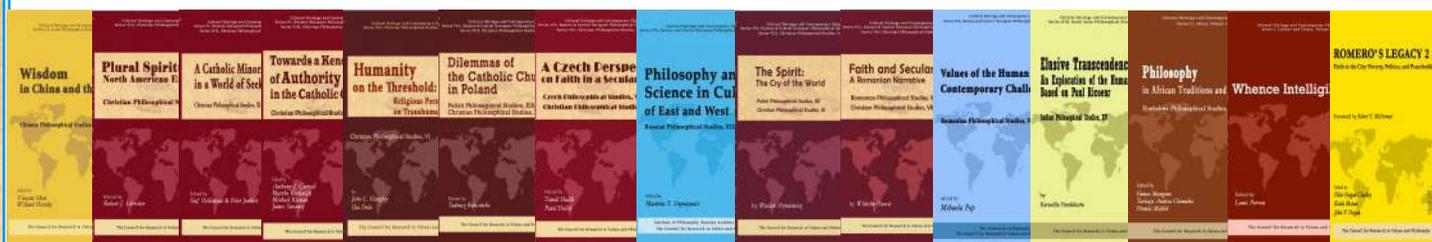
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The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) is a 501C3 not-for-profit entity with the following goals, objectives and operations.

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 friendship 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 six to ten week annual seminars 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 300 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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