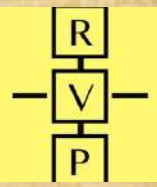




# Council for Research in Values and Philosophy



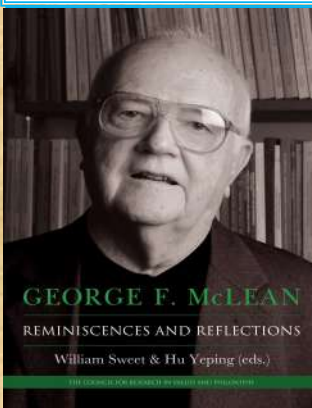
**RVP Newsletter — 2021**

## Message from the Executive Director:

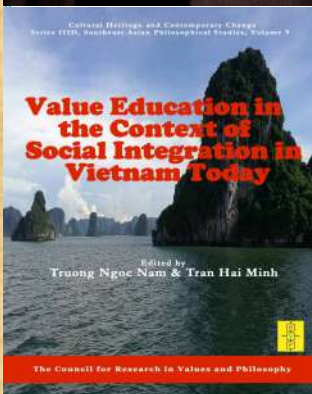
As usual, the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy had planned various activities for the entire year of 2020 and implemented a few in-person conferences before the global pandemic of the Covid-19. However, due to the unprecedented situation occurred across the world beginning in the Spring of 2020, the Council had to postpone all its activities since no one knew what would take place in this new uncertain situation. Gradually, the Council began resuming some plans, such as organizing international conferences and working on manuscripts. In order to attest the new form of intercultural dialogues and communications, the Council co-organized two online seminars. This was the first time in the history of the Council to have such a way of gatherings. It seemed the new online platform enabled participants from all parts of the world to meet each other without physical relocation. Although there were some technological challenges, all in all, the result was satisfactory. The following pages recorded the 2020 activities of the Council along with the CUA McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values.

The new global situation has raised new challenges. This requires philosophers and thinkers of the world to reflect in-depth on philosophical issues related to the existential conundrums of human beings and many aspects of the human condition. New and deep insights are needed by ways of drawing wisdom from all peoples, cultures and civilizations through a collaborative effort. In this light, the Council invites philosophers, thinkers and scholars from all parts of the world to think and work together not only for the new (or old) human situation but also for the unknown future.

*Hu Yeping  
April 2021*



1.49 *George F. McLean: Reminiscences and Reflections*.  
William Sweet & Hu Yeping, eds.  
ISBN 9781565183438 (paper) 2020



IIID.9 *Value Education in the Context of Social Integration in Vietnam Today*.  
Truong Ngoc Nam & Tran Hai Minh, eds.  
ISBN 9781565183414 (paper) 2020



# ONE-WEEK INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR (2020 )

## Delhi, India

January 6-12, 2020 (Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi): “**Happiness and Good Life: Philosophical Reflections through Cultures.**” This was a one-week seminar held at the International Guest House of the University of Delhi, India. This seminar took place before the global pandemic. It was initiated by **Geetesh Nirban**, Assistant Professor (Senior Scale) from the Department of Philosophy, Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi. When she was in Washington taking part in the RVP 2018 annual seminar, she was inspired and determined to organize a similar event in Delhi. Upon her return to India, she discussed her plans with **Balaganapathi Devarakonda**, Professor and



Geetesh Nirban



Left to Right: Ramesh C. Gaur, Ramesh Chandra Sinha, Kalpana Bhakuni



Balaganapathi Devarakonda

Chairperson of the Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, who gave his full support to this initiative. **Devarakonda** knew the purpose and methodology of such seminars from his experience of participation in the RVP 2005 seminar. **Kalpana Bhakuni**, Principal of Kamala Nehru College, offered her generous support on behalf of the College. **Nirban** also discussed the plans with **Ramesh Chandra Sinha**, Chairperson of the Indian Council for Philosophical Research (ICPR) and received the financial support from ICPR. Along with kind assistance from her family members and friends, the one-week seminar smoothly began as planned on January 6, 2020 and ended with great success on January 12, 2020.



A Group Photo after the Opening Session





**At the Opening Session**

As the seminar description stated happiness and good life are important ingredients of meaningful human existence. Happiness in itself interacts with various dimensions of good life, such as morality, health (mental and physical), wealth, knowledge, responsibility, self-fulfillment, etc. Happiness emerges not only as a right but the responsibility to be pursued for wellbeing. If positive psychology has been delving deep into happiness and wellbeing studies, philosophy as a discipline has also contributed immensely on the topics under consideration—both from Eastern and Western perspectives. For Aristotle, happiness is a pleasant state of mind which is a habitual conduct of virtuous deeds, thus good life is a happy life. Virtue in form of ‘action’ leading to ‘good life’ emerges as a philosophically resonating concept in Aristotelian ethics. The Indian ethics lays great emphasis on happiness and good life through philosophical thoughts within the subcontinent. *Bhagavadgītā*, the quintessence of Indian culture and philosophical theory, focuses on cultivating the spirit of *Sthitaprajñā* (stable intellect) while adhering to *nishkāma karma* (actions with detachment from consequences), specifically on social preservation, self-purification and self-realisation. While pursuing one’s duties a person learns to cut a middle course between indulgence and renunciation and revolves around the concept of *dharma* (duty/righteousness) to understand happiness and good life within the realm of *Bhagavadgītā*.



**At the Opening Session**





**A Visit to the University of Delhi**

In the contemporary world, people are facing great challenges in various situations of life, they grapple such questions as "What is happiness and good life? Are pleasure and happiness identical?" "Why and how can we lead a happy and good life while struggling amidst the pressures of competitive existence?" "Can materialistic outlook and technological advancement alone give us happiness and good life?" "How can happiness and good life be linked with responsibility/duty?" This one week-long seminar addressed many related issues through paper presentations contributed by participants from many countries based upon their own philosophical reflections and their own cultural traditions. This cross-cultural study of happiness and good life opened a new avenue for better understanding of different cultures across the world.



**A Visit to Raj Ghat (A Memorial to Mahatma Gandhi)**

Initiated by **George F. McLean**, the RVP Founder, there is a long history for the RVP to cooperate with ICPR and many universities and individual scholars across India. It has co-organized numerous conferences with various Indian universities and published some 16 philosophical studies written by Indian scholars in its publication series "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change."



**A Visit to the Largest *Bhagavadgita***





**A Seminar Session**

In December 1999 and under the auspices of ICPR, RVP brought 10 Chinese scholars to India to study the Hindu roots for the Chinese Buddhism. They visited a set of universities in Delhi, Varanasi, Bodhgaya, Santiniketan, Hyderabad and Madras/Chennai to exchange views and ideas with Indian scholars on different issues related to the general thematic. In December 2016 and January 2017 and again with the generous support of ICPR, RVP coorganized another set of conferences across India in Chennai, Jaipur, Varanasi, Santiniketan and Delhi on the general theme of re-learning to be human for global times. In between the two events there were various activities co-sponsored by both ICPR and the RVP and held in different universities in India. Many Indian scholars came to Washington to attend the RVP annual 5 or 10 week seminars over the years. This one-week seminar was the continuation of the same effort between the close cooperation of the RVP and its Indian counterparts: ICPR and various universities and individual scholars in India.

At the opening session **Sinha, Bhakuni** and **Ramesh C. Gaur** (Professor and Dean of Kala Nidhi Division at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts) gave remarks respectively about their understandings of the seminar theme on happiness and good life. On behalf of the organization committee **João J. Vila-Chã, Devarakonda, Nirban** and **Hu Yeping** spoke about the meaning of holding such a seminar and expressed their wishes for its success.

Seminar participants introduced themselves and addressed their own philosophical interests on the seminar theme. The first session was moderated by **Sebastian T. Velassery** (Panjab University, Chandigarh) and presented by **Debora Spini** (Syracuse University and New York University, Italy)



**A Seminar Session**





**A Seminar Session**

“The Appropriation of Happiness in Late Modern Western Societies” and **Iwo Greczko** (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland) “Happiness in the Context of Religion and Absolute Values.” **Vaishnavi Bhaskar** (Kamala Nehru College) commented on their presentations. The second session was chaired by **Vila-Chã** with two Indian scholars presented their papers: **Thomas Menampampil** (Peace Study, Guwahati) “Concern for Each Other is the Stimulus for Human Flourishing” and



**A Seminar Session**

**Anant Kumar Giri** (Madras Institute of Development Studies) “Rethinking Happiness and Good Life: Cultivating Transforming Faith and a New Ecology of Hope.” **Sudeep Raj Kumar** (Kamala Nehru College) responded their papers.

The third session was moderated by **Menampampil** and presented by **Phramaha Somphong Khunakaro (Unyo)** (Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand) “Buddhist Art of Happiness Comparing with The Stoic Concept of Eudaimonia (Happiness) ,” **Sunita Singh Sengupta**



**A Seminar Session**





**A Group Photo at IGNCA**

(University of Delhi) “Intrinsic Motivation as a Driver of Happiness” and **Megha Kapoor** (University of Delhi) “The Role of Politics in Happiness and Well-Being: A Gandhian Perspective.” **Anmolpreet Kaur** (University of Delhi) gave comments and responses to their presentations.




**Lalan Prasad Singh** (Magadh University) chaired the fourth session and **Colton T. Ames** (Indiana University, USA) spoke on “Becoming Happy and Well: Using New Zealand’s Well-being




**A Group Photo with Student Volunteers**

Budget to Explore Educational Ideology ”and **Piyali Mitra** (University of Calcutta) presented her paper on “The Pursuit of Happiness: From the Indian Perspective.” **Rashi Sharma** and **Sarnali Chatterjee** (Kamala Nehru College) responded their papers.



The fifth session was moderated by **Rajnish Kumar Mishra** (Jawaharlal Nehru University) and presented by **Lisa Häberlein** (Coburg University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Germany) “What Makes a Good Life at Late Life? Philosophical Perspectives on Happiness in Old Age” and **Carmen**

**Council for Research  
in Values and Philosophy**



**DELNET**  
Developing Library Network

**SEVEN DAY RESIDENTIAL SEMINAR**  
on  
**Happiness and Good Life: Philosophical Reflections through Cultures**  
JANUARY 6-12, 2020  
organised by  
Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi and Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi

**in association with**  
Council for Research in Values and Philosophy,  
Washington D.C.

**sponsored by**  
Indian Council of Philosophical Research,  
New Delhi

**in collaboration with**  
Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi &  
DELNET - Developing Library Network, New Delhi





**At the Concluding Session**

**Lai Jia Weng** (HELP University, Malaysia ) “Middle Path: Framework for Happiness and Well-Being.” **Deepshikha Sharma** (Kamala Nehru College) commented their presentations. There were three more papers to be presented by **Jayshree Jha** (Kamala Nehru College) “The Concept of Happiness and Well-being in Indian Tradition,” **Geetesh Nirban** “Happiness and Well-being through Mindfulness in Education” and **Balaganapathi Devarakonda** “Indian Conception of Happiness with Reference to Advaita Vedanta.”

In response to the seminar theme DELNET-Developing Library Network hosted a session at their office on “In Pursuit of Happiness: Embracing Compassion for Global Well-being.” The session was chaired by **Sangeeta Kaul**. Its founding Director **H. K. Kaul** along with **Kaveri Gill** (Shiv Nadar University), **C. V. Ramanan** (Center for Joy@Work, INMANTEC Institutions), **Menamparampil, Vila-Chã, De-Hu Yeping** gave a brief during the session.

Seminar participants Indira Gandhi National was hosted by **Gaur** who sion of the seminar. At the (former ICPR Chairperson sity of Delhi) came to de- and good life from the



also spent a day at the Center for the Arts. It came to the opening ses- Center **S. R. Bhatt** and professor of Univer- liver a talk on happiness perspective of Indian

**Left to Right: Geetesh Nirban, H.K. Kaul, Sangeeta Kaul, João J. Vila-Chã**



**A Session at DELNET**





**At Khuarana's Dinner Gathering**

philosophical traditions. **Bhatt** took part in the RVP annual seminars in the past and has been a strong supporter for the cooperation between the RVP and ICPR as well as various universities across India. At the Center **Sudhir Lal** presented his research on the Indian Vedic tradition; **Molly Kaushal** showed her documentary "Leela in Kheriya" (2016) followed by a discussion about the film; and **Shiv Aditya Purohit** led a Yoga and Sound Healing session for seminar participants.



At the concluding session **Bhatt** and **Rama Rao Pappu** (retired professor from Miami University, USA and founder of the International Congress of Vedanta) spoke on the seminar thematic respectively. **Bhakuni, Vila-Chã, Devarakonda, Nirban** and **Hu Yeping** gave concluding remarks. All the seminar participants expressed their gratitude to the local organizers, the sponsors and especially the student volunteers (**Deep-shikha Sharma, Rashi Sharma, Vaishnavi Bhaskar, Sangini Agrawal, Shiwakshi R, Manya Jindal** and **Sarnali Chatterjee** headed by the student convenor **Jayshree Jha**) for their hospitality and kind assistance. **Sakshi Khuarana** and her family hosted the last dinner at her house. The seminar ended with a lot of happy laughs and good memories. Plans for the next seminar to be held in Delhi was underway.



**A Yoga Session**



# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (ONLINE)

## Shanyang, P.R. China

July 18, 2020 (Liaoning University): “**Building Global Governance in a Time of Global Crisis**”. This was the first joint international conference held online after the Covid-19 pandemic took place across the globe. It was initiated by **Xie Xiaojuan**, Dean of the School of Marxism, Liaoning University, Shanyang, located in the Northeast China.



Xie Xiaojuan

At the opening **Fang Guangshun**, General Secretary of the School and **William A. Barbieri**, RVP Committee Chair, spoke on behalf of both institutions. There were two sessions (morning and afternoon, Beijing Time). Three speakers presented their research findings in the first session: **John A. Kromkowski** (Director of CUA McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values and Professor of Political Science) “The Search for a Science of Order: Elemental Aspects of Governance, Social Cohesion and Economic Well-being,” **Carlos**



William A. Barbieri

**Maldonado Castaneda** (Professor of Philosophy, University of Bosque, Colombia) “The Complexity about Fighting Poverty” and **William Sweet** (Professor of Philosophy, St Francis Xavier University, Canada) “Insecurity, Law, and Global Governance: Some Insights from the History of Philosophy.” Four speakers spoke in the second session: **Balaganapathi Devarakonda** (Professor of Philosophy, University of Delhi, India) “Re-Globalisation: The New Post-Pandemic Global Order,” **Holger Zaborowski** (Professor of Philosophy, Universität Erfurt, Germany) “The Corona Crisis and the Need for Global Solidarity,” **Dan Chitoiu** (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University Iasi, Romania) “Governance as Quest for Wellbeing: Crisis Scenarios” and **João J. Vila-Chã** (Professor of Philosophy, Gregorian University, Italy) “The Responsibility of Governance in the Face of a Major Crisis.” **Xie Xiaojuan** and **Hu Yeping** concluded the seminar, emphasizing the continued co-operation between the School of RVP.



John A. Kromkowski



Carlos Maldonado Castaneda



William Sweet



Balaganapathi Devarakonda



Holger Zaborowski



Dan Chitoiu,



João J. Vila-Chã



## Iasi, Romania

October 17, 2020 (RVP-Iasi Center, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University): **“Rethinking Borders and Boundaries: Exploring New Ways of Intercultural Encounters”**. This was the second online conference held in 2020. It was planned and organized by **Dan Chitoiu** and **Oana Cogeanu** of the RVP-Iasi Center at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Romania. It began at 9.00 in the morning and ended at 5.30 in the afternoon Iasi time. **Luca M. Scarantino**, President of The International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP) gave the opening remark. Scholars from different countries across the



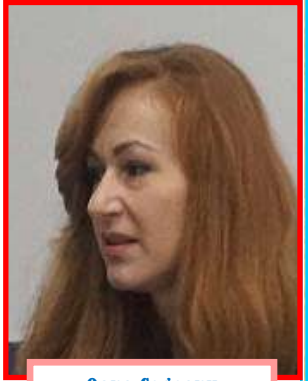
Dan Chitoiu

globe shared their experiences on the theme. **Ouyang Kang** (University of Science and Technology, China) “The New Boundaries Encounters in the Post Pandemic Time”; **John Ozolins** (Notre Dame University, Australia) “Australian of Covid 19”; **Asha**



Luca M. Scarantino

insights and experience of the conference. **Kang** (Huazhong University of Science and Technology, China) “The New Boundaries Encounters in the Post Pandemic Time”; **John Ozolins** (Notre Dame University, Australia) “Australian of Covid 19”; **Asha**



Oana Cogeanu

**Mukherjee** (Visva-Bharati University, India) “Borders and Boundaries: Tagorean Way of Encountering and Breaking”; **Michael Dua** (Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia, Indonesia) “Gotong Royong: A Philosophical Foundation of a Transversal Way of Thinking in Intercultural Encounters”; **Nur Kirabaev** (Russian People's Friendship University, Russia) “Dialogue of Civilizations: Intercultural Philosophy in the Time of Modern Social Crisis”; **Joseph C.A. Agbakoba** (University of Nigeria, Nigeria) “Heterosis, Colligative Hermeneutics and Fusional Scholarship: An African Perspective in Intercultural Philosophy”; **Jūratė Baranova Rubavičienė** (Vilnius University, Lithuania) “Teaching Solidarity through Multimodality: Philosophical Reflections”; **Riccardo Pozzo** (University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy) “Innovation for the Reflective Society.”

This online conference was originally planned as in person meeting to be held in Iasi. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it had to be conducted online. This meeting was part of the RVP Iași Center's



Ouyang Kang



John Ozolins



Asha Mukherjee



Michael Dua



Nur Kirabaev



Joseph C.A. Agbakoba



Jurate Baranova



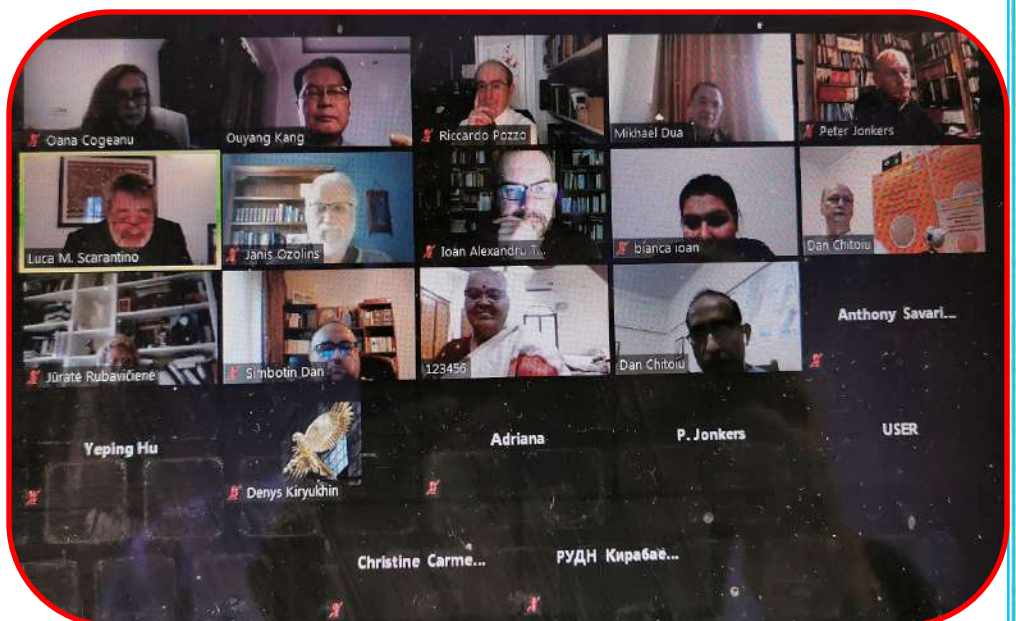
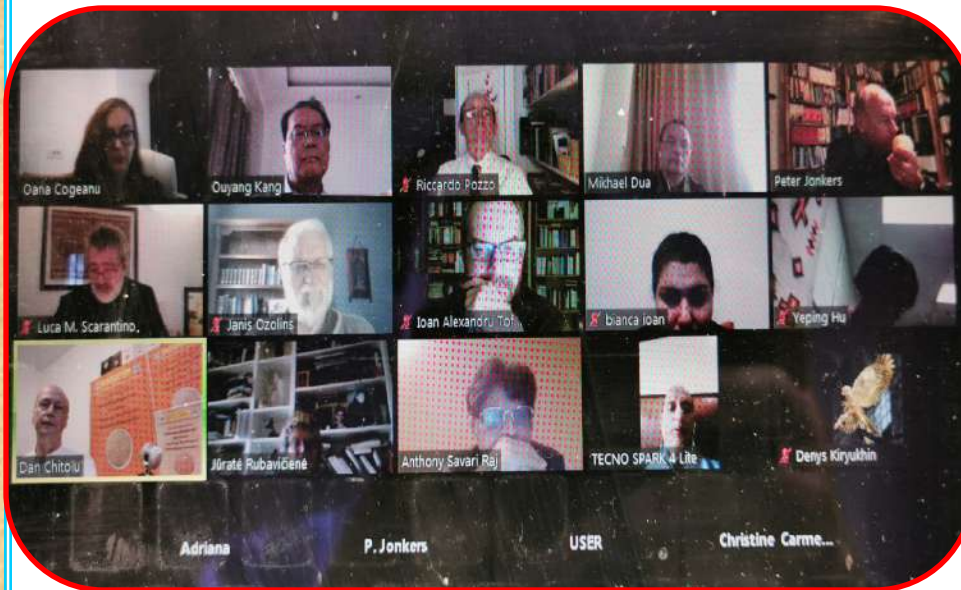
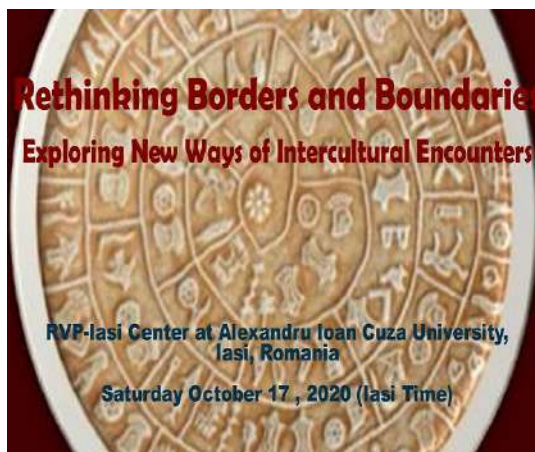
Riccardo Pozzo



project “Re-Learning to be Human for Global Times: The Role of Intercultural Encounters,” which focuses on the role of intercultural encounters, the meaningful experiences of cultural borders and the complex realities of border cultures. Conceptually speaking, a border is typically defined as an exterior limit, a surrounding line or the confine of a country or any region. However, a border can be also understood as a boundary that delineates and separates a community from others. This sense of boundary can refer to what people consciously or unconsciously want to keep or change their own cultural borders by learning from other cultural traditions.

A border can mark the contiguity of several spaces or territories where different communities meet. As a formalized place of transit, a border allows interaction and exchange of different peoples and cultures. Around borders hybrid identities are produced by diverse and heterogeneous hence the emergence of border-together dissimilar elements. only one side but rather must product of multi-facet interactions cultures become “fusion spaces” not only share the same act and integrate with one another.

As the world is increasingly of hybridization and intermingling stories become more intimate. The borderland as a producer of new cross-cultural identities presages what could happen in many regions of the contemporary world characterized by multiple identities and deterritorialization. People discover new meanings from their own (already hybrid) cultural understandings. When moving from one place to another, they carry their cultures and borders with them. If these particularities of cultural borders and border cultures are true, then borders can be seen as places engendering cross-cultural identities and hybrid identities in a continuous process of evolution.





# CUA MCLEAN CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Washington, DC

*January-April, 2020 (CUA McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values):* “**The Meaningfulness of Human Experience.**” This was the continuation of the McLean Center’s Wednesday colloquy series “The Meaningfulness of Life” begun in 2019. The Wednesday colloquy series was planned by **John A. Kromkowski**, the McLean Center Director. The goal was to invite CUA scholars and students on campus to enjoy both intellectual discussion and fellowship gathering during lunch time. The 2020 Spring series was the last in-person event before the close-down of the University campus in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



**John A. Kromkowski**

On January 22, **Nicholas E. Lombardo** (Professor of the CUA School of Theology and Religious Studies) spoke on “What Does It Mean to Speak ‘Literally’? Words, Metaphors, and the Literal Sense of a Text.” In many disciplines, but perhaps especially law, philosophy, and religion, people often focus on the “literal” meaning of a text. Sometimes the literal sense of a text is the final goal of interpretation, as when someone just wants to know what a text “literally” means. Other times the lit-

eral sense of a text is identified only to be cast aside in favor of a more flexible reading: for example, when the “literal” meaning of the book of Genesis is contrasted with its true religious meaning,



**Nicholas E. Lombardo**

or when the literal meaning of a law is contrasted with its actual legal force. Yet there is little agreement about what exactly the literal sense of a text consists in. Furthermore, the line between “literal” and “metaphorical” is a lot more blurry than is often recognized. This talk will discuss these question, highlight the importance of metaphor in the way words work, and offer some suggestions for understanding what it means to talk about the literal sense of a text.





On January 30, **Sandra L. Hanson** (Professor of CUA Department of Sociology) and **John K. White** (Professor of CUA Department of Politics) presented a joint research on "Nation Dreaming: A Consideration of the American Dream in Poland, the U.S., and among Polish Americans." They



**Sandra L. Hanson**

have been working on this project for a number of years. This talk was their recent research which examines the cooperation and influences between Poland and the U.S on their respective Dreams, including the influence of the American Dream on Polish Americans and their potential distinctness from those who remain in Poland. Attitudes involving the Dream that are examined include beliefs about freedom, liberty, democracy, getting ahead, status/mobility, and inequality. Although scholars



**John K. White**

have compared these belief systems across countries, there has been no distinct focus on Poland and the U.S., and those who immigrate between these countries. Findings show that Polish Americans

agree with other Americans on a majority of elements of the American Dream. In contrast, Poles have significantly different opinions on each of the American Dream items. When three groups, Americans, and Polish Americans, and Americans, and Poles, our conclusions suggest a



er Americans on a majority of items measuring American Dream. Americans and Poles have significantly different opinions on each of the American Dream items. Usually it is more support of the American Dream considering the Polish Americans, Poles, our conclusions suggest a

Americans are a hybrid of other Americans and Poles when it comes to their views on the Dream. Conclusions and implications are provided within the historical context of the long history of cooperation between the U.S. and Poland in fights for freedom and democracy.





On February 12, **Julia G. Young** (Professor of CUA Department of History) spoke on “The End of Asylum? Notes from the South Texas Family Detention Center.” Since early 2017, the current administration has worked to dismantle the U.S. system of asylum and further degrade the due process rights of migrants and asylum seekers, making it harder for them to establish a credible fear of persecution, limiting the number of migrants processed at U.S. ports of entry, forcing them to remain in Mexico to await their immigration hearings, and declaring new groups of people ineligible for asylum. **Young** discussed the current legal and political threats to asylum in the United States, and reflected upon her experience as a volunteer legal advocate for detained women and children asylum-seekers at the South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, Texas.



**Julia G. Young**

**Young** is a historian of migration including Mexico and Latin America and Catholicism in the Americas. She has published intensively in this area. Her book, *Mexican Exodus: Emigrants, Exiles, and Refugees of the Cristero War* published by Oxford University Press in 2015, examines Mexican religious exiles, political refugees, and labor emigrants in the United States during



Mexico's Cristero war. Her co-edited book, *Local Church, Global Church: Catholic Activism in Latin America from Rerum Novarum to Vatican II*, was published by The Catholic University of America Press, in 2015. She has also published a number of scholarly articles in different journals. She is currently working on a new book about Catholicism in Mexico during the twentieth century.







James Youniss

On February 27, **James Youniss** (Wylma R. & James R. Curtin Professor Emeritus of CUA Department of Psychology) talked about his research on “Youth: The Key to Our Democratic Renewal,” which was based on the book, *Renewing Democracy in Young America* published by Oxford University Press in 2018, a co-authored work with **D. Hart. Youniss** is an expert on normal developmental processes in children and youth. He has been doing research in this field for over four decades. His initial focus was on cognitive development, but after a sabbatical year in South America in the 1970s, he began the study of social development, especially on the contributions of parents and peers within the larger cultural context. He further developed his interest in moral development and in political development in youth. For the past decade, **Youniss** along with his students and



colleagues has studied what the role of direct civic action or community service plays in generating political awareness, a sense of agency, and social responsibility among the youth. **Youniss's** work has been supported by government agencies and private foundations and has brought many honors to his academic achievements. **Youniss** has published intensively academic books and articles.





## Washington, DC

September-October, 2020 (CUA McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values): **"The Meaning of Democracy: Practicing Citizenship and Understanding Pluralism in America."** Since the constraints caused by Covid-19 required canceling all in-person activities, the Fall McLean Center Wednesday colloquy series offered a Zoom format. The Zoom format allowed to engage participants from other universities and academies of sciences associated with RVP across the world and enabled to reach other scholarly communities in various countries and to continue the exploration of important topics. Hence, a significant opportunity expanded the local participation of the Wednesday colloquy beyond the confine of the seminar room on campus.



John A. Kromkowski

The Fall Wednesday colloquy series studied the theory and practice of democracy: its foundations and challenges. **John A. Kromkowski** moderated the series. The following speakers shared their research findings and experiences on the thematic:

**Joshua L. Miller** (Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Congress) "The Law-and-Order Presidents: From Catching Fugitive Slaves to Caging Immigrants"; **Steven P. Millies** (Associate Professor of Public Theology, Director, The Bernardin Center, Catholic Theological Union) "Just Two Words: Political Catholicism and Implications for Democracy"; **Eugene Halus** (Freedom Foundation at Valley Forge) "Civic Education as a Foundational Component of Democracy: Engaging the American Polity in a Time of Crisis"; **John K. White** (Professor of CUA Department of Politics) "Democracy on Trial: The 2020 Election"; **Ryan Fecteau** (The Assistant Majority Leader, The Maine House of Representatives) "Democracy in the Hallways of a State House"; **John Mickey** (CUA Doctoral Graduate) "Elements of the Rule of Law in Late Medieval English Politics"; **Emily B. Finley** (Postdoctoral Fellow, Stanford University, Managing Editor, *Humanitas*) "The Specter of Democratism"; **Cecil Chabot** (Postdoctoral Research Fellow and Lecturer in First Peoples Studies, Concordia University, Montreal) "Our Common Ground on the Edge of Humanity: Reflections on Power, Authenticity, Polarization and Entanglement."



Joshua L. Miller



Steven P. Millies



Eugene Halus



John K. White



Ryan Fecteau



John Mickey



Emily B. Finley



Cecil Chabot



## Washington, DC

*February-March, 2021 (CUA McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values):* **"The Meaning of Democracy: Practicing Citizenship and Understanding Pluralism in America."** This 2021 Spring Wednesday colloquy series was the continuation of the 2020 Fall series focusing on the same theme but stressing on culture and values. Culture is best understood as the cumulative dialogue through history between the initiative of the Spirit and the response of humankind in its varied environments. The goal of the McLean Center is to promote a creative mining of cultural traditions and their application to issues of contemporary life. As a new mode of philosophizing, it is to bring the rich values to life from, in and through the deep cultural commitments of the many peoples in order that they be lived intensively and pervasively across civilizations. What are the transmission belts to translate profound intellectual and spiritual insights and visions into the lived experiences of cultures and peoples? How can these insights and visions inspire them to govern themselves to practice democracy in more human ways? What will be the outcomes that are conducive to their flourishing and their personhood? What are the best collective ways of managing and perhaps celebrating the valued variants of our common humanity and our participation in the mystery of existence? The 2021 Spring series continued to look for answers and to learn from various traditions but highlight certain salient features of socio-political and religious thought in relation to the search for meaning in these complex, democratic and pluralistic times.

**John A. Kromkowski** moderated the series as well. The following speakers presented their papers: **Shaun Rieley** (CUA Doctorate) "Thomas More and Statesmanship: Reading Utopia as Political Theory," **Samuel Sprunk** (Georgia Gwinnett College and CUA doctorate) "Isaiah Berlin's Vision of a Liberal Nationalism," **Eugene F. Hemrick** (Director of Research, Washington Theological Union and CUA Research Associate, Institute for Policy Research) "Understanding Romano Guardini's Milieu Responsible for His Accomplishments," **John David Kromkowski** (Attorney) "Demographic Patterns and Ethnic and Racial Variety in America," **Renate Chancellor** (Chair, CUA Department of Library and Information Science) "The Truth Will Set You Free: Combating Misinformation in Today's Information-Driven Media Landscape," **Vinnie Rotondaro** (Journalist) "Italian American Historical Consciousness in Northeastern, PA: Mining, Exploitation and Political Alienation: A Case Study," and **William**

**Sweet** (Chair, Department of Philosophy, Professor of Bio-medical Ethics and Philosophy of Law; Jules Léger Research Chair in the Humanities and Social Sciences, St Francis Xavier University) "George F. McLean and the Project of Philosophy across Cultures."



**John A. Kromkowski**



**Shaun Rieley**



**Samuel Sprunk**



**Eugene Hemrick**



**John David Kromkowski**



**Renate Chancellor**



**Vinnie Rotondaro**



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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 thus far), 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 website.

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