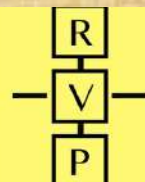




# Council for Research in Values and Philosophy



**RVP Newsletter — 2023**

## Message from the Executive Director:

The year of 2022 was rather complex. While the global pandemic began easing off and people's daily life more or less returned to its normal speed, the new conflict in Europe occurred along with the continued regional unrest around the world. The global situation was again full of tension and uncertainty. Changes in various aspects of our world seem dramatically faster than our thinking. Nevertheless, philosophers and thinkers have never stopped reflecting on our world. As part of the collective effort, the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy has been gathering many philosophical minds from different cultural traditions to think about issues and concerns related to the great changes in society. As the RVP founder **George F. McLean** often said there are challenges, there are opportunities. Philosophers and thinkers should work together to look into the foundations and the fundamentals so as to discern the current moment, understand our historical transformations, and find out the deep meaning.

As usual, the Council organized its annual seminar in 2022 both in person and online. A few participants came to Washington to attend the seminar in person for five weeks in August-September 2022. When in Washington, they also paid an academic visit to Purdue University in Indiana State. After the five weeks, the seminar participants continued their online meeting monthly, October 2022-May 2023, to discuss draft papers of each participant. The theme for the 2023 annual seminar has been dedicated to "Social Imaginaries and Social Transformation: Discerning the Dynamics of Reality," August-September 2023. It will also be conducted both in person and online.

Since the global pandemic was not completely under control in 2022, the Council proceeded with caution in terms of regional activities. In general, regional conferences were still held online so that participants from different parts of the world could join without physical presence. It co-organized some regional seminars on the theme of democracy and nation-state building in Central Asia and Latin America. It also invited a group of philosophers from different philosophical traditions to think through the theme of World Congress of Philosophy "Philosophy across Boundaries." In October, the research project on the Abrahamic traditions had an in-person gathering in Washington to discuss hermeneutical understanding of changes and transformations.

The special research project "Understanding the Signs of Our Times: Philosophical and Theological Perspectives" begun in October 2021 continued its online seminar series in April on the aesthetics of philosophical and theological thought of **Romano Guardini**.

In 2022, five books were added to the Council's publication series "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change," one of which was dedicated to **Vincent Shen**, the long-term collaborator of the Council. The full text of all RVP publications are available on its website.

Last but not least, the Council wishes to thank those who have worked closely with its effort and made generous contributions to its activities. It always extends its invitation to all who wish to think and work together to deepen our understanding of peoples, cultures and civilizations across the globe.

*Hu Yeping  
March 27, 2023*



## ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR (2022-2023)

## Washington, DC

*August 15, 2022-May 20, 2023: “Political Order and the Ethics of Peace.”* The global political order today is confronted with its most serious and dangerous crises since 1945. The violation of international norms and the massive scale of suffering and destruction have prompted vigorous and un-



precedented forms of cooperation aimed at attaining a peaceful resolution. The outcome of the crisis remains uncertain, but it is clear that the terms of the problem need to be thought through and understood. At issue is the complex relation between the modern state, which remains the supreme



form of political institutions in terms of its ability to organize economic production, channel aspirations for self-determination, and wage war on a large scale, and the ongoing historical project of





**João J. Vila-Chã**



**Anthony Chinaemerem Ajah**



**Deborah Sadile Anastacio**



**Tinatin Bochorishvili**



**Emmanuel Bueya Bu-Makaya**



**Denis Chistyakov**



**John Farina**



**Robson Rodrigues Gomes Filho**



**Oleg Kocherov**



**Maximiliano Llanes**



**Zeynab Malakoutikhah**



**Yaroslav I. Pasko**



**Daniel Florin Pozsonyi**



**Manuel Faustino Cardozo Ruidiaz**



**Evans Sagomba**



**Maria Sozopoulou**



**Yohanes Argo Twikromo**



**Iryna Fenno**



**William A. Barbieri**

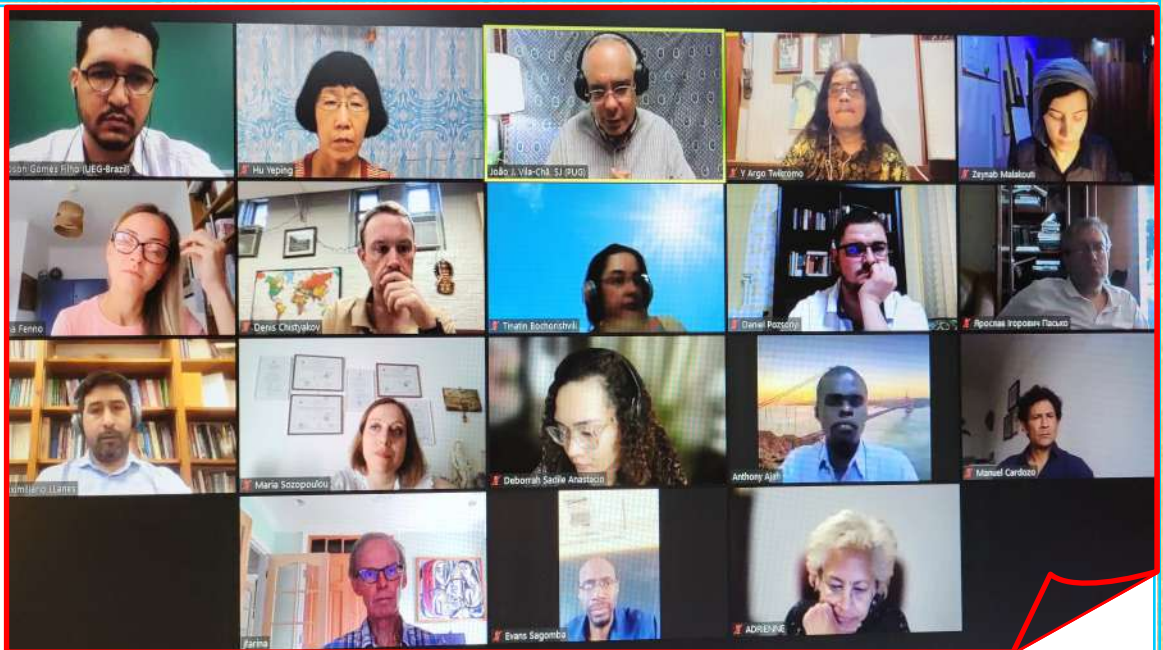
limiting violence and promoting co-existence via trans-national structures and norms.

Moments in the formation of an international order include the Peace of Münster in 1648, the Vienna

Congress in 1815, the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, the foundation of the United Nations in 1945, the proclamation of the Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the Treaty of Rome of 1957, and the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The inter-state system, developed in the context of both the assertion of state sovereignty and the rise of economic globalization, forced states to face challenges both internally, from their own populations, and externally, in connection with the challenges of international



cooperation and competition. The Westphalian model of state sovereignty posited each state's equal entitlement to rule in its own territories and to enjoy immunity from interference by others. However, the "security dilemma" of the state placed all



major countries of the world in a process of actual or potential conflict with one other. Over time, efforts to articulate cosmopolitan standards of international law, the rights of peoples, and human rights have placed checks on the capacities of states to exercise violence. Not even the development of the United Nations system has fundamentally altered the logic and structure of the Westphalian model. Hence, the international community of states continues to face challenges at numerous levels, from the technological to the ecological, the organizational to the juridical, and the cultural to the civilizational.

The 2021 RVP annual seminar dealt with the ambiguities, the challenges, and the virtues of the nation, the state, globalization, and governance. On this basis, the 2022 seminar focused on issues related to political and global realities from both theoretical and practical perspectives, exploring inter-state relations, the causes of war, and strategies for peace. Particular attention was devoted to efforts of early Europe in its developing juridical norms and institutions designed to sustain an international order capable of resisting the conflict of interests among nations-states. Besides analyzing major aspects of the development of world societies, especially in the West, the seminar made systematic inquiries into the intricate relationships between state and law, justice and sovereignty. The peace ethics was studied on how the concept of order can be applied to the different fields of international relations. Relevant authors from ancient, modern, and contemporary times were read in order to illuminate different sides of the debate on the above-mentioned thematics.





**João J. Vila-Chã** along with **William A. Barbieri** worked out the seminar thematic. The 2022 annual seminar was held both in person and online. **Vila-Chã** moderated the entire seminar sessions. Seminar participants consisted of a group of international scholars: **Anthony Chinaemerem Ajah** (University of Nigeria Nsukka, Nigeria), **Deborrah Sadile Anastacio** (De La Salle University, Philippines), **Tinatin Bochorishvili** (University of Georgia, Georgia), **Emmanuel Bueya Bu-Makaya**



(Hekima University College, Kenya), **Manuel Faustino Cardozo Ruidiaz** (Katholische Universität, Germany/Colombia), **Denis Chistyakov** (People's Friendship University of Russia, Russia), **Robson Rodrigues Gomes Filho** (Universidade Estadual de Goiás, Brazil), **John Farina** (George Mason University, USA), **Iryna Fenno** (The Ukrainian Catholic University/Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine), **Oleg Kocherov** (Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia), **Maximiliano Llanes** (Pontifical Foundation Gravissimum Educationis, Vatican City/Argentina), **Zeynab Malakoutikhah** (Shahid Beheshti University, Iran), **Yaroslav I. Pasko** (Grinchenko Kiev University, Ukraine), **Daniel Florin Pozsonyi** (University of Bucharest, Romania), **Evans Sagomba** (Arrupe Jesuit University, Zimbabwe), **Maria Sozopoulou** (National and Kapodistrian University, Greece), **Yohanes Argo Twikromo** (Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University, Indonesia).

**Chistyakov**, **Gomes Filho**, and **LLanes** who took part in the 2021 online seminar, came to Washington to attend the entire 5 weeks of the 2022 seminar in person; **Bochorishvili** also attended in person for the last week of the 2022 seminar.





Seminar participant presented their reflections on related books: **Farina and Gomes Filho** on *Dawn of Universal History* (Raymond Aron); **Ajah, Bu-Makaya and Llanes** on *The Tragic Vision of Politics: Ethics, Interests and Orders* (Richard Ned Lebow); **Bochorishvili, Fenno, Pasko, Pozsonyi and Sagomba** on *Conquering Peace from the Enlightenment to the European Union* (Stella Ghervas); **Anastacio, Cardozo Ruidiaz, Malakoutikhah and Twikromo** on *Political Order and Political Decay* (Samuel P. Huntington); **Chistyakov, Kocherov and Sozopoulou** on *World Order: Reflections on the Character of Nations and the Course of History* (Henry Kissinger); **Pozsonyi and Fenno** on *The Great Disruption: Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order* (Francis Fukuyama); **Ajah and Sagomba** on *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French* (Francis Fukuyama); **Chistyakov, Gomes Filho, Kocherov and Malakoutikhah** on *The Rise and Fall of Political Orders* (Richard Ned Lebow); **Sozopoulou** on *Six Books of the Commonwealth* (Jean Bodin); **LLanes** on *Political and International Law in the Work* (Francisco de Vitoria); **Bochorishvili and Pasko** on *Law of Nations, or Principles of the Law of Nature: Applied to the Conduct and Affairs of Nations and Sovereigns* (Emer de Vattel); **Twikromo** on *On War* (Carl von Clausewitz); **Kocherov** on *The Art of War* (Su Zi); **Chistyakov and Bu-Makaya** on *A Project for Settling an Everlasting Peace in Europe* (Abbe Charles Irene Castel de Saint Pierre); **Anastacio** on *Perpetual Peace* (Immanuel Kant); **Ajah** on *Perpetual Peace: Essays on Kant's Cosmopolitan Ideal* (Jurgen Habermas); **Anastacio, Bu-Makaya, Chistyakov, Fenno, Kocherov, Malakoutikhah, Pozsonyi and Sagomba** on *Politics among Nations* (Hans Morgenthau).



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*Politics among Nations* (Hans Morgenthau).





The Washington participants had an academic visit to Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana State. It was hosted by **Yang Fenggang**, Professor of Sociology of Religion, the Sociology Department and Director of the Center on Religion and the Global East at Purdue University. At the Center, **Yang** organized a one-day seminar to discuss issues related to the meaning and role of religion in different cultures and nations. **David A. Reingold**, Dean of College of Liberal Arts, spoke at length about the development of the University and the College as well as the significance of the Center. **Yang** gave a detailed description about the achievements of the Center. After the meeting, seminar participants visited the campus, the city center. The visit ended with a friendly cook out at the **Yang's backyard**.

ber 6 at the Oblates community to commemorate **George F. Mclean**, the RVP founder. **Asna Husin** and **Karim Crow** from the McLean Center also attended. After the celebration they were invited to join the community for lunch. When in Washington, they not only integrated with the neighborhood but also visited a several places around Washington, for instance, Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland State capital Annapolis, Washington Monument, etc.





Due to the time constrain, the 2022 seminar participants had additional online sessions to meet once a month after the regular sessions ended on September 16, 2022. Each participant was scheduled to present his or her draft paper in the additional sessions. The 2022 seminar ended on May 20 2023. On October 22, 2022, two presenters shared their papers: **Sa-gomba** "The Philosophical Explication of African Union's Initiatives toward the Attainment of Decolonial Peace" and **Cardozo Ruidiaz** "The Role of Social Media in Peacebuilding: The Truth Commission in Colombia and Its Digital Strategy 2019-2022." December 3, 2022 had two speakers: **Kocherov** "China's Views on Political Order and Ethics of Peace: Toward Intercultural Philosophy of International Relations" and **Pozsonyi** "Opus Iustitiae Pax: Holy See Contribution to the International Community." On January 21, 2023, three women participants presented their papers: **Bochorishvili** "The Impact of the War in Ukraine on Georgia: Will Georgia Open a "second front" against Russia? Freedom versus Peace," **Fenno** "Church and the War: The Impact of Russia's Current War on the Life of Christian Communities in Ukraine," and **Sozopoulou** "The Nature of Political Power and the Role of Law in Plato's Political Philosophy." On February 18, 2023, two presenters spoke: **Gomes Filho** "The Catholic Church and the Promotion of Peace and War between the 10th and 11th Centuries in Medieval Europe" and **Chistyakov** "Political Ressentiment in Post-Soviet Russia: Self-Protective Reconstruction of Reality." March 18, 2023 included **Anastacio** "A Habermesian Look at the Theory and Praxis of the Filipina Nobel Peace Laureate Maria Ressa" and **Yaroslav** "War as a Driver of the Political: The Politics of Force versus the Politics of Violence." On April 22, 2023, three speakers spoke: **Twikromo** "Rising Together to Build the Glory of World Civilization," **Bueya** "Power and Resistance: The Global Political Order from the Point of View of Subalterns," and **Ajah** "Social Desirability of World Government for Global Peace: Beyond the Fears of Tyranny and Loss of Diversity." The last presenter was **Khah** presented her paper "Systematic Failure: The Contribution of Human Rights for Establishment of Peace" on May 20, 2023.





# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (2022)

## Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

**March 5, 2022: "Features of Democratization in Central Asia."** This online seminar was conceptualized and organized by **Cholpon Erikovna Alieva**, Professor of Philosophy at Ala-Too International University, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. She took part in the 2012 seminar on "Building Community in a



**Cholpon E. Alieva**

Mobile/Global Age" and the 2021-2022 online seminar. The thematic of the conference argues that recent events in Central Asia indicate that the global struggle has shifted to regions/peripheries which are less known to the world community, and therefore often overlooked. Superficial and stereotyped views about these regions/peripheries are that these lands are backward and unpromising in terms of modern progress and democratic develop-



**Sanjarbek S. Erdolatov**



**Pulat D. Shozimov**



**Aliya R. Masalimova**



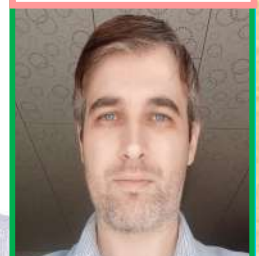
**Bogdana Todorova**



**Nigina Shermuhamedova**



**Baurzhan A. Nurumov**



**Igor N. Taranov**

ment. Indeed, a twofold struggle is unfolding in both the global and the regional levels: the struggle against international terrorism and religious extremism for the former, and the struggle against authoritarian regimes of personal and family power and the strive for universal democratic values for the latter, here specifically referring to Central Asia. In fact, the outcome of the regional struggle can determine the future of neighboring states as well as the relationship between the East and the West. Historically Central Asia has been the bridge between Europe and Asia since the time of the Great Silk Road (II century BC). Peace and stability of Central Asia can enable a fruitful intercultural dialogue and cooperation between the East and the West. One of assurances for a peaceful





region is to fight against extremist ideologies and authoritarianism which are the barriers to the process of democratization, namely the implementation of democratic principles of egalitarianism, people's participation, cultural pluralism, openness in the political system, the rule of law, observance of human rights, freedom, respect and protection of human dignity, fair elections, etc. These main indicators of the development of real democracy express the idea of social justice and the common good. However, democratization in Central Asia presupposes that tribalism and authoritarianism should be first and foremost overcome in all spheres of society's life. The key in this process is to change public consciousness. To understand the features of democratization in Central Asia, it is necessary to learn its rich history, culture and philosophy. Cultural traditions and philosophical wisdom are expressed not only in ancient books, various epics, but also in the work of medieval and modern thinkers of the region. These heritages provide a rich and solid intellectual and spiritual foundation without which it is impossible to develop an effective democracy in the region with its unique characteristics.

**Sanjarbek Saipidinovich Erdolatov**, Rector of Ala-Too International University and **Hu Yeping** on behalf of RVP spoke at the opening session. **Alieva** moderated the seminar sessions. Scholars from the Central Republics presented their papers on the topic: **Pulat Davronovich Shozimov** (University of Central Asia, Tajikistan) "Philosophy of Right and Historical Paradoxes in the Central Asian Context"; **Aliya Rimgazinovna Masalimova** (Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakhstan) "Youth in Modern Social and Cultural Realities of Kazakhstan: Generation Gap and Emotional Intelligence"; **Bogdana Todorova** (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria) "Islam (Sufism) in Central Asia: Understanding Difference"; **Nigina Arslanovna Shermuhamedova** (National University of Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan ) "Some Features of Gender Policy in the New Uzbekistan"; **Baurzhan Ablavich Nurumov** (The Regional Academy of Management Pavlodar, Kazakhstan) "The Role of Fine Arts in the Democratization of Kazakh Society" **Igor Nikolaevich Taranov** (The Ministry of Agriculture of the Kyrgyz Republic, Kyrgyzstan) "Organizational Culture and Values of Public Administration in Kyrgyzstan."





## Washington, DC

**May 8, 2022: "The Meaning of Prayers and Meditations."** This online seminar intended to understand the meaning of prayers and meditations in various religious traditions across the world. Speakers from Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish, Catholic, Lutheran, and Orthodox traditions shared their



William A. Barbieri

insights and experiences on the topic. **William A. Barbieri** and **Karim D. Crow** moderated the event. Speakers included **S. R. Bhatt** (University of Delhi, India) "The Meaning of Meditations in Buddhism"; **Robert Eisen** (George Washington University, USA) "The Tension between Fixity and Spontaneity in Jewish Prayer"; **Munzela Raza Al-Mahdi** (Institute in UK, United Kingdom) "The Meaning of Prayer in Islam"; **Michael Suh Niba** (Catholic University of Cameroon, Cameroon) "To Pray is to Stay Connected to God: Catholic and African



Karim D. Crow



S. R. Bhatt



Robert Eisen



Munzela Raza Al-Mahdi



Michael Suh Niba



Katarína Valčová



Mamuka Dolidze

Traditions"; **Katarína Valčová** (Comenius University Bratislava, Slovakia) "Healing, Feeling and Experiencing: A Lutheran Perspective"; **Mamuka Dolidze** (Tbilisi State University, Georgia) "Phenomenological Approach to Prayers in Orthodox Christianity."





## Washington, DC

**May 14, 2022: "Philosophizing across Boundaries."** The purpose of this online event was to think through the theme of the 25<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Philosophy to be held in Rome, August 1-8, 2024, "Philosophy across Boundaries"; to relearn the meaning of philosophy; to think carefully of what exactly boundaries (positive/negative) mean to our world and beyond; to explore how philosophy is able to play its role across boundaries, not only within philosophical discipline itself — different philosophical ideas, traditions, other disciplines natural sciences each historical characteristics with and opportunities, sary to continue to derstand the pro-



Luca M. Scarantino



Asha Mukherjee



William A. Barbieri

schools, views, etc., but also with such as social and and so on. Indeed, moment has its its own challenges hence, it is neces-relearn and un-found meaning of



Robert C. Neville



Ni Peimin



Mary Ellen Waithe



Guillermo Hurtado Pérez



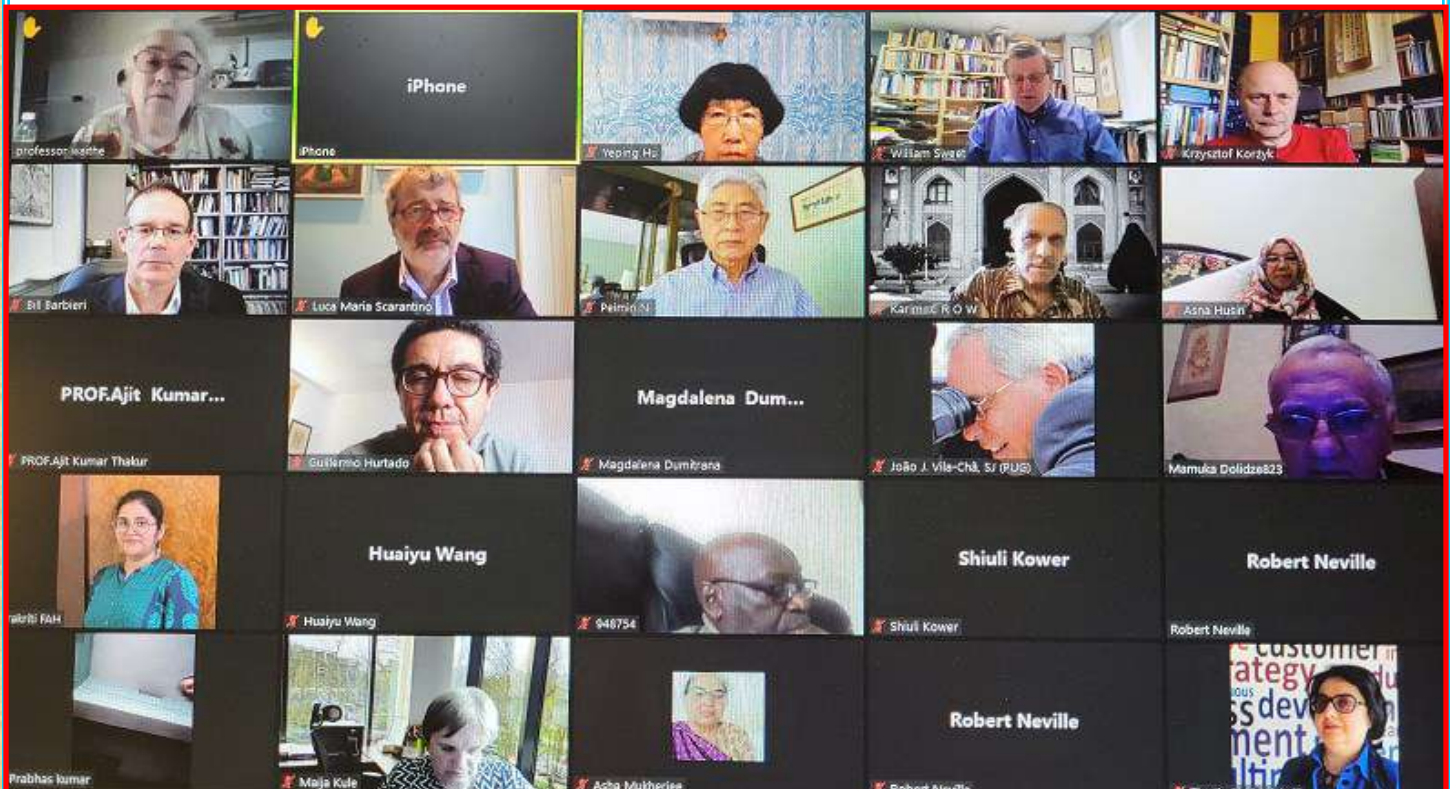
Karim Douglas Crow

"philosophy" and its relevance in ever-changing society. In order to achieve this, we need to work within the contemporary life of all peoples, cultures, and traditions and to generate new visions of philosophy that embrace all aspects of the lifeworld: economics, socio-politics, culture, ecology, science and technology, etc. We also need to look afresh at the fundamental philosophical questions

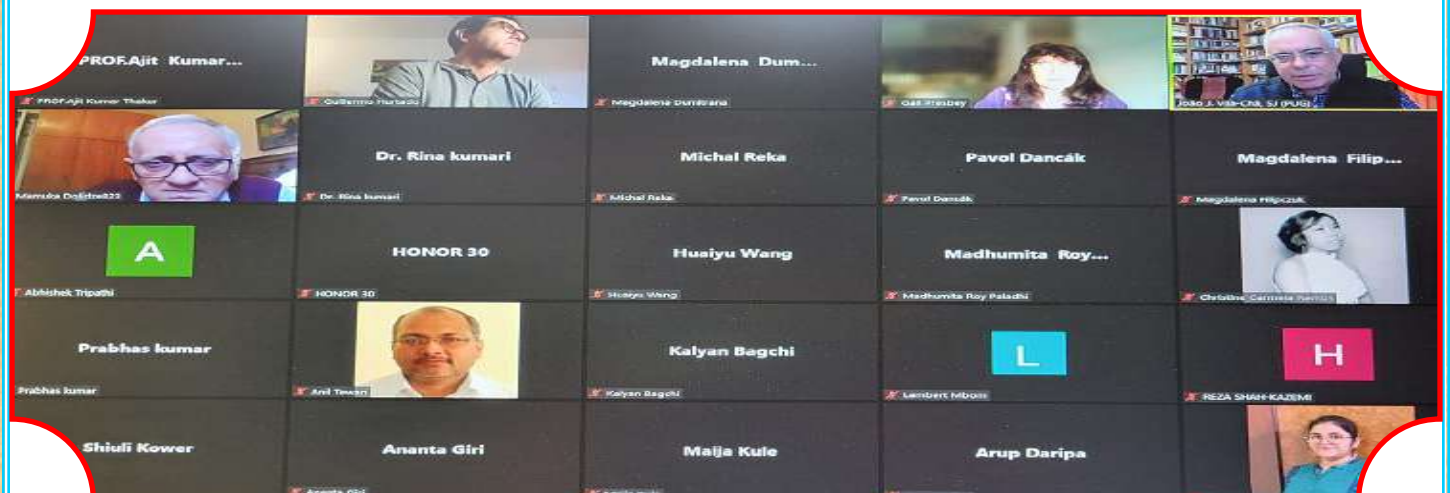




which are at the core of public discourse in all continents of the globe. In the global context, the role of philosophy is vital because all fundamental questions related to knowledge, reality, truth, values, humanity, and science lead to philosophical wisdom. Each people have developed their ways of thinking, acting, and being as well as their understanding of reality, accordingly, produced their own thought system. Each has made rich contributions to the world philosophy as a whole, while opening to other philosophical traditions through dialogue and communication.



The webinar was moderated by **Asha Mukherjee**, Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Visva-Bharati University and a Member of International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP) Steering Committee. **Luca M. Scarantino**, President of FISP and **William A. Barbieri** gave opening remarks on the thematic. The following scholars shared their philosophical insights: **Robert C. Neville** (Boston University) "The Adoption of Boundaries, and Going Beyond Them: Ultimacy as a Model"; **Ni Peimin** (Grand Valley State University) "World Philosophy as a Way of Gongfu [aka Kung Fu]"; **Mary Ellen Waithe** (Cleveland State University) "Contributions of Women Philosophers to World Philosophy"; **Guillermo Hurtado Pérez** (National Autonomous University of Mexico) "Latin American Perspectives on World Philosophy"; **Karim Douglas Crow** "Unbinding Boundaries and Expanding Philosophic Tasks."



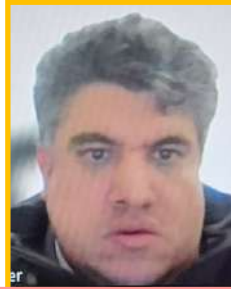


## Mexico City, Mexico and Goias, Brazil

September 26-27, 2022: **"Challenges and Opportunities of Nation-Building for Latin Americans in the 21st Century and Beyond."** This online conference was planned and coordinated by **Robson Rodrigues Gomes Filho** of Universidade Estadual de Goiás, Brazil and **Yves Bernardo Roger Solís Nicot** of Prepa Ibero and Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico. Both of them took part in the recent



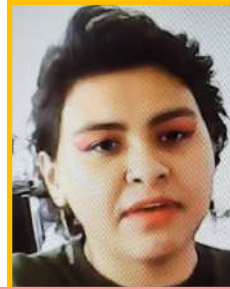
**Robson Rodrigues Gomes Filho**



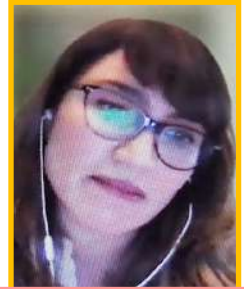
**Yves Bernardo Roger Solís**



**William A. Barbieri**



**Astrid Dzul Hori**



**Gema Santamaria Kloppe**



**Manuel F. C. Ruidiaz**



**Yael Siman Druker**



**João P. de Paula Silveira**



**Thomas Fischer**



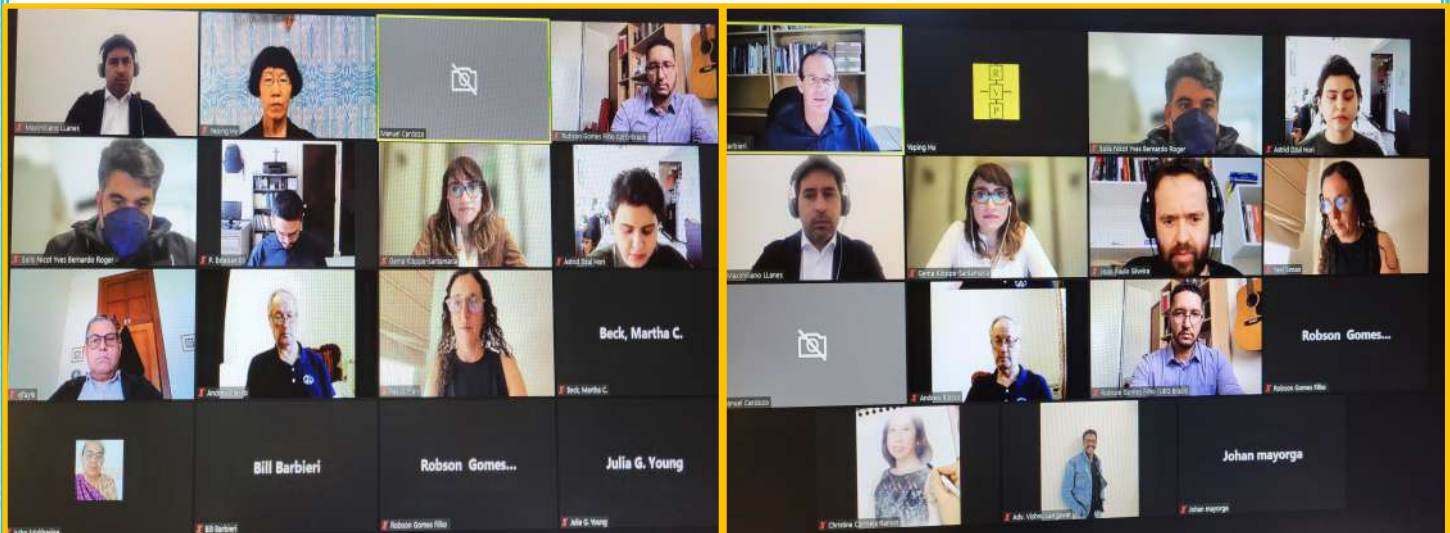
**Elizabeth Judd**



**Maximiliano Llanes**

RVP annual seminars. They invited thinkers and scholars from the Latin American region to have philosophical reflections and analyses on issues which are important for the continent in contemporary times and to provide some constructive suggestions and solutions for Latin America.

In fact, many thinks from the region have dealt with the regional problems and made various suggestions. For instance, Carlos Alberto Siri, a Salvadorian scholar, and Bolivar Echevarria, an Ecuadorian-born-nationalized Mexican philosopher, have written about Baroque contemporary societies as an alternative to modernity. In terms of Mexico, it has a very particular political history, because it is one of the few Latin American countries that did not suffer from military dictatorship. Social democracy especially defined by Robert Curley can be considered an alternative to political systems, however, such a political concept still needs more study. In many aspects, all major problems, such as the lack of rule of law, internal conflicts, sovereignty of natural resources, etc., are connected with systematic corruption, which has been a great challenge in all Latin American countries





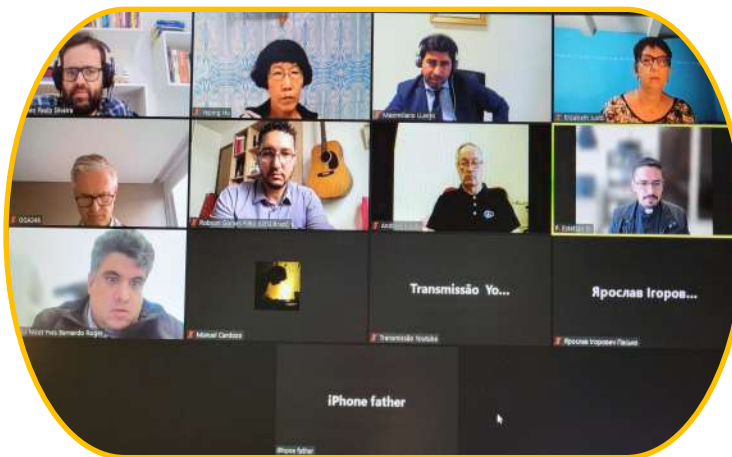
as well as in the entire world. Specifically, corruption is not only an endemic/pandemic problem but also a discursive weapon against popular governments in different levels. Thus, the rise of extreme right in the case of Cuba, Venezuela, etc., is a good example. People may ask: what are the causes of corruption? Is it due to the tradition, the socio-political system, the human nature? Or all of them?

Latin America needs a profound process of deepening the national-historical consciousness. This process is not based on nationalism but on cultural traditions and values developed through generations. Till today many people in the region still do not recognize themselves as Latin Americans because of the colonial past which has created a barrier that limits the access to the appreciation of their own culture and neighboring people. In this sense, people are isolating each other among themselves and weakening their own cultural identities

as Latin Americans. For instance, in Brazil, people are more aware of their African roots than the Latin American heritage both in music and in religion. **Miguel Angel Centeno** and **Andrés Lajous** in their article “Challenges for Latin America in the 21st Century” point out that Latin American countries do not have sufficient “conditions” for nation-building. Questions may be asked: What are conditions needed for Latin America to develop its nation-state? Can people look for such conditions from different indigenous traditions or a mix of past heritages? What are “useful” resources for generating such conditions? What is the “alternative modernity” that fits in one’s own land? What are the negative side-effects of just borrowing others’ models for one’s own use?

The two-day online conference was moderated by **Solis Nicot** and **Gomes Filho**. **William A. Barbieri** gave a brief opening remark. In the first day, the following scholars spoke: **Astrid Dzul Hori** (Prepa Ibero/Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico) “Violent Worlds or How to Reinvent Latin America: A Reflection from Science and Technology Studies,” **Gema Santamaria Kloppe** (Washington University, USA/Mexico) “The Monopoly That Never Was: Extralegal Violence and State Formation in 20th and 21st Century Mexico,” and **Manuel Faustino Cardozo Ruidiaz** (Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany/Colombia) “Transitional Justice in Colombia 2005-2016.” **Yael Siman Druker** (Universidad Iberoamericana, México) gave a elaborated comments on the three presentations.

The second day, scholars included **João Paulo de Paula Silveira** (Universidade Estadual de Goiás, Brazil) “Religion, Ecology, and Utopia in Brazil,” **Thomas Fischer** (Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany) “True Commissions in Latin America and Colombian Crisis,” and **Elizabeth Judd** (Universidad Católica Lumen Gentium, Mexico) “From above and beyond to Becoming One of the Flock: A COVID Lesson.” **Maximiliano Gaston Llanes** (Pontifical Foundation of Gravissimum Educationis, Vatican City/Argentina) provided philosophical reflections on the three papers. Participants from other continents also joined the discussion and shared their views.





## Washington, DC

October 31, 2022: "**Hermeneutics of Religious Change in the Abrahamic Traditions.**" This one-day gathering was the first in-person meeting after the 2020 global pandemic. The purpose of the discussion was to study how different religious traditions, especially Abrahamic faiths, have faced social changes. Indeed, religion has been experiencing a continuous acceleration of social change, in



William A. Barbieri



Susannah Heschel



Wilhelmus Valkenberg



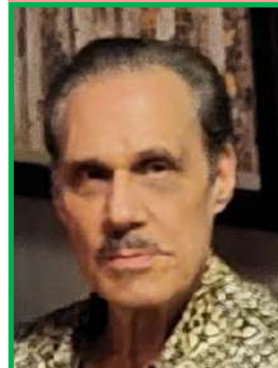
Yasmin Saikia



Robert Eisen



Edward Alam



Karim Crow

traditional outlooks and forces of global communities and greater proximity conflict with one socio-political, economic conditioning a "stress test" religious traditions amid systemic change,

which ongoing scientific and technological developments persistently alter the fabric of daily life, powerful tides of modernization and secularization erode and practices, alization thrust cultures into ever and potential another. These nomic and tech-nions are provid-for the abilities of to cope with rap-and they raise a profound, yet insufficiently explored, question: What effective practices and resources do religions have, singly and collectively, for adapting themselves to the challenge of changing times and maintaining their viability while retaining their integrity? In actuality, major religious traditions have long negotiated the delicate historical task of shifting their teachings and practices to adjust to new conditions while preserving core commitments and rites.

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After several online consultations with the key scholars from the three Abrahamic traditions, this event was realized as the initial step for the project on the transformation of Abrahamic traditions. It was supported by the Raskob foundation. The intent was to invite a small group of scholars from



the three traditions to explore issues related to the above mentioned concerns and challenges. **William Barbieri** moderated the discussion. Six scholars shared their research findings and views. **Robert Eisen** (George Washington University) spoke on "Judaism and Change: Preliminary Reflections." **Susannah Heschel** (Dartmouth University) provided a detailed response to the paper. **Edward Alam**

(Notre Dame University-Louaize, Lebanon) read his paper on "The Hermeneutics of Change in Christianity" which was responded by **Wilhelmus Valkenberg** (Catholic University of America). **Karim Crow** (McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values) talked about "Conversation beyond Boundaries: An Islamic Perspective," **Yasmin Saikia** (Arizona State University) responded with her detailed comments. At each session participants had a back-forth clarification and further elaboration, and shared their ideas, suggestions, and experiences on the related issues. A follow-up conference will be held in 2023.





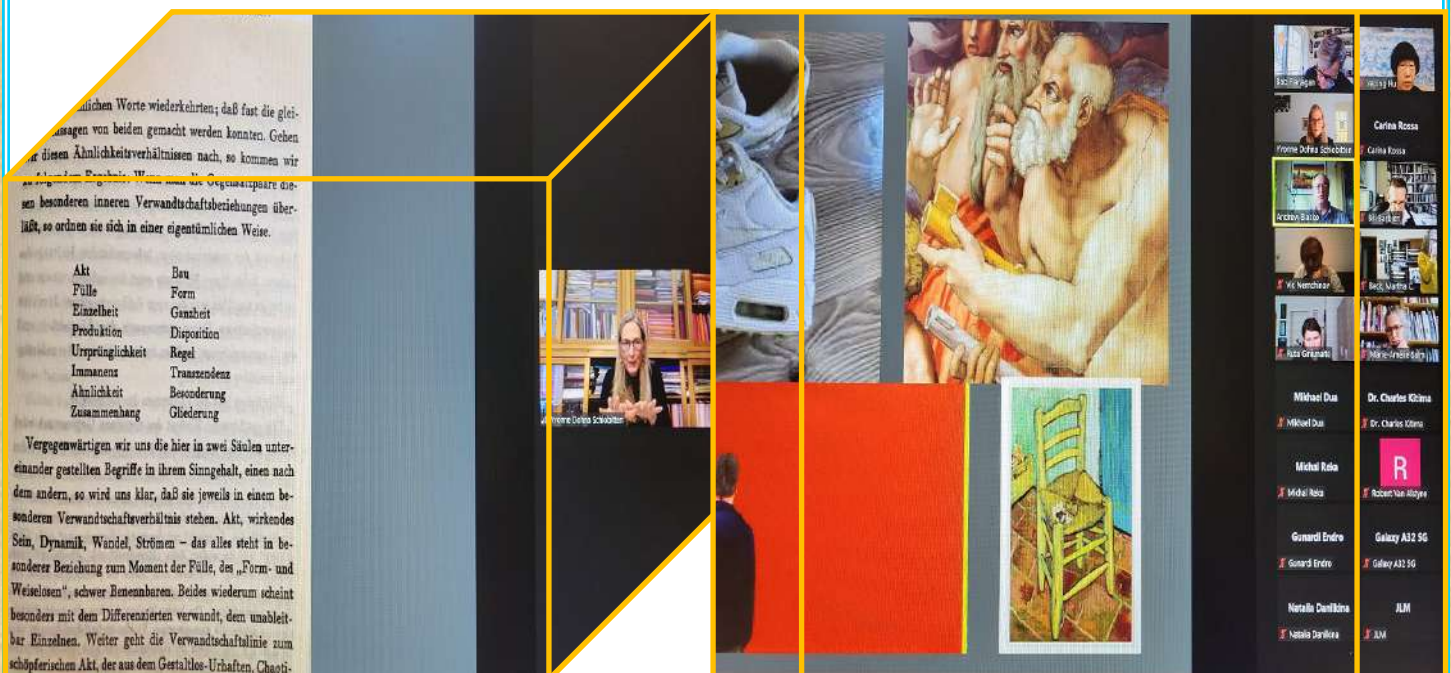
# A SPECIAL RESEARCH PROJECT

## Washington, DC

**“Understanding the Signs of Our Times: Philosophical and Theological Perspectives.”** This special research project was a collaboration with the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, Italy and the University of Erfurt, Erfurt, Germany. It was initiated during the global pandemic which brought not only deep anxieties and fears but also profound quests and search for root causes and answers for our challenging situations -- socio-political, cultural, ecological, etc. In order to understand the uniqueness and specificity of our times and to look for some resources that may help us deepen our understanding, this project intended to explore the philosophical-theological writings of a special figure, **Romano Guardini**, one of most important Catholic intellectuals in the 20th century. The goal was not just to focus on **Guardini** himself or one particular religious tradition but to look into urgent issues and challenges the entire humanity is facing today. **Guardini**’s philosophical and theological insights could provide us with a specific perspective to study and diagnose the contemporary conundrums and to inspire us to develop new insights and thoughts compatible and corresponding to the complex and globalized world in our times. The focus of this project was as follows: the crisis of the modern world, the impact of technology, morality and spirituality. A set of online seminars was conducted and will continue in the following years to study four most important works written by **Guardini**: (1) *The End of the Modern World*, (2) *The Letter from Lake Como*, (3) *The Virtues: On Forms of Moral Life*, and (4) *Spirit of Liturgy*. Two in-person conferences were also planned to be held at the University of Erfurt on “Modernity, Culture and Person” and at the Gregorian University on “Spirituality and Religious Experience.”

The project was coordinated by **William A. Barbieri**, **Yvonne Dohna Schlobitten**, Professor of Theological Aesthetics and **João J. Vila-Chã**, Professor of Philosophy from Pontifical Gregorian University, and **Holger Zaborowski**, Professor of Philosophy from University of Erfurt.

The first online seminar, “The Crisis of the Modern World,” was held on October 18 and November 1, 2021. **Zaborowski** led the reading of *The End of the Modern World*. The second online seminar was conducted on April 2 and 9, 2022. **Schlobitten** shared her reading on the thought of **Guardini**’s Aesthetics. Participants actively engaged in the discussion and shared their views.





The online seminar, "The Meaning of Romano Guardini's Thought in the Contemporary World," was held on January 15, 2022. It was part of a series of online/in-person meetings under the general theme "The Space of Knowledge: Grounding Cross-disciplinarity and Cross-culturality in Romano Guardini's Threefold Seeing of the



World." It was a joint project of Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Pontificia Facoltà di Teologia Teresianum, Libera Università Maria Santissima Assunta, Istituto Universitario Sophia, Virginia Theological Seminary and the CUA McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values. Speakers included **Michael Rutz** (President, Guardini Stiftung, Berlin) "The Story of 'Weltanschauung' for the Guardini Chair"; **Giuseppe Fraticello** (President, Center for the Study of the Catholic Comprehension of the World, Rome) "The



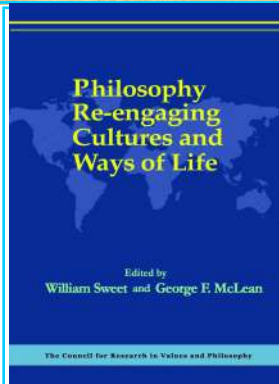
Role of 'Weltanschauung' in the Contemporary Scientific Thinking"; **Yvonne Dohna Schlobitten** "The Origin and Nature of Guardini's Polar Opposition" **João J. Vila-Chã** "From Guardini to Levinas: On the Meta-Ontological Dimension of the Problem"; **Holger Zaborowski** "The Look and Call of the Beautiful: Art in a Technological Age." **William A. Barbieri** moderated the session and also spoke on "Views of the World: Guardini and Visual Ethics."

Students and scholars from Italy, Germany, United States and other countries took part in the seminar. Not only the speakers but also the participants shared their views and discussed related issues from their own experiences and perspectives. Papers presented will be published as a special study on **Guardini**.

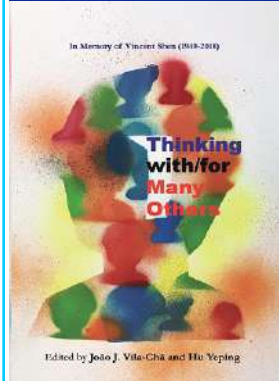




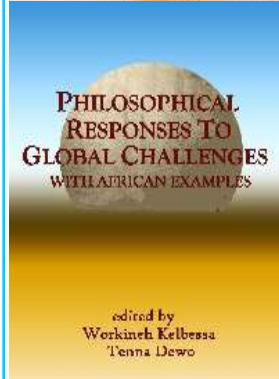
## NEW PUBLICATIONS (2022)



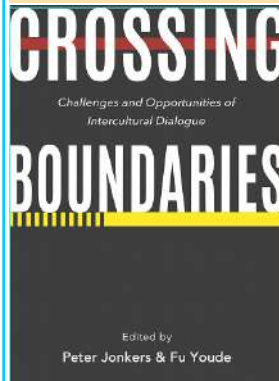
I.50 *Philosophy Re-engaging Cultures and Ways of Life*  
William Sweet and George F. McLean, eds.  
ISBN 9781565183384 (paper)



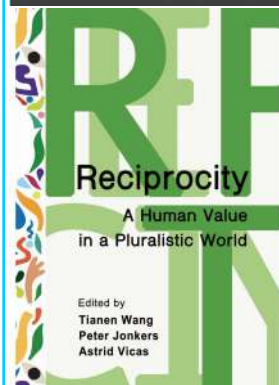
I.51 *Thinking with/for Many Others: In Memory of Vincent Shen*  
Joao J. Vila-Cha and Hu Yeping, eds.  
ISBN 9781565183506 (paper)



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Wang Tianen, Peter Jonkers and Astrid Vicas, eds.  
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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 important issues and regional conferences for the coordination of the effort.

#### Operations:

*Annual international seminars* in Washington DC inviting international scholars and representatives of the research teams to apply the resources of the cultural traditions to contemporary issues.

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

*Publications* of the results of this research and critical reflection, and a distribution worldwide with the complete texts available on the website as well as through the usual book outlets.

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