

CAREE Communicator

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A DOUBLE ISSUE

We have lots of information for you in this double issue of *CAREE Communicator*. First you can find out about what should be two excellent sessions CAREE will be putting on at the AAR (American Academy of Religion) Conference in Philadelphia in November. If you are going to be at the AAR, or even if you are just in the area, you will want to catch these sessions. As well, we have reports of recent service in Eastern Europe from Dane Gordon and Paul Mojzes. Beyond that, we extend congratulations to and give information on two graduate student members who have completed their Ph.D. programs (Michael Jones and Heather DeHaan). This issue also offers a current list of the CAREE Executive.

CAREE before and at AAR

The upcoming annual conference of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) will be held November 19-22, 2005 in downtown Philadelphia. This year's AAR conference will have a special emphasis on Eastern Europe – not every session will focus on the region, but many will deal with it in one way or another. CAREE is going to be vigorously involved, sponsoring two sessions.

The first will be held on November 18, the day before the AAR gets underway: CAREE will put on a one-day conference dealing with the legacy of Pope John Paul II for ecumenism in Europe, with outstanding speakers offering assessments from their respective Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox perspectives. (See further information immediately below.) The second will be held during the AAR conference itself, in which CAREE is sponsoring a session focused on the role of religion in shaping Eastern Europe. (Further information is below.)

Please note that there is a registration fee for the pre-AAR conference (to cover costs involved). This conference will be advertised in the AAR information sent out to conference registrants. (CAREE members can register for this pre-AAR conference at a reduced rate.)

PRE-AAR CAREE CONFERENCE
Friday, November 18, 9:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.

“Legacy of a Slavic Pope in Eastern Europe: Prospects for Ecumenism”

Speakers:

- Rev. Dr. Keith Clements, General Secretary, Conference of European Churches (Western European Protestant)
- Rev. Dr. Peter Kuzmic, Evangelical Theological School, Osijek, Croatia (Eastern European Protestant)
- Prof. Dr. Miroslav Volf, Yale Divinity School: “A Voice of One’s Own: Public Faith in a Pluralistic World” (Eastern European Protestant teaching in North America)
- Rev. Dr. Joseph Loya, O.S.A., Professor of Theology and Religious Studies, Villanova University (Byzantine Catholic)
- Frederica Mathews-Green, author of *Facing East* and *At the Corner of East and Now* (Orthodox)

Please note: If you are interested in presenting a paper on the theme (or one related to it), please send an abstract to Paul Mojzes, pmojzes@rosemont.edu, by September 15.

At the time of this newsletter’s publication, the location for CAREE’s conference had not yet been decided (although it will be held in downtown Philadelphia near City Hall and the convention Center, at one of the venues to be used by the AAR). We have tentatively scheduled three sections for the conference: 9:30-11:30 a.m.; 1:00-5:30 p.m.; 7:00-8:30 p.m. The precise order of speakers will be decided once their respective travel arrangements and other obligations have been finalized. ***All this information will be posted on the CAREE website as soon as it is available: www.caree.info***

Registration cost: \$30.00; CAREE members and graduate students: \$20. For further information, and for pre-registration, contact Jim Payton at caree@redeemer.on.ca, or (905) 648-2139, x 4287.

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**CAREE’S AAR SESSION:
“QUO VADIS EASTERN EUROPE?”**

Moderator: Paul Mojzes, Rosemont College

Presenters:

Ines A. Murzaku, Seton Hall University

“The Basilian Monks of Grottaferrata and the Pursuit of Christian Unity”

The paper will articulate the intricate religious and political circumstances that gave rise to the movement of the Orthodox faithful of mid- and southern Albania to unite with the Catholic Church during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. This occurred at a time when the return of an exclusivist ecclesiology was ruling in the West. Special attention will be given to the Basilian missions to revive the country’s Byzantine Catholic tradition.

Walter Sawatsky, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

“Teaching About the Other Inter-Church Dialogue for Russian Ukrainian Christianity”

The paper will examine the conflicts between Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant communities in Russia and Ukraine since 1988 in light of what the schools and press appear to be teaching about the other churches, comparing that with the rise of global Christian consciousness in the West.

Gerald Shenk, Eastern Mennonite University

“Cordoba and Sarajevo: Contrasts in Religious Separation and Tolerance”

Recent studies of Medieval Spain (Menocal) and of contemporary Bosnia (Velikonja) invite comparisons between two very different chapters of strong Muslim influence in Europe. The interpretation of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity in various combinations, including both political power and disenfranchisement, suggests that conditions of toleration are more complex than merely external constraints of a strenuous secularism.

James Payton, Redeemer University College

“Turkish Millet, Religious Nationalism, and Civil Society”

The paper will examine the close interrelationship between nationality and religion, nurtured and fomented over centuries, in the southern regions of former Yugoslavia and the challenges faced in developing civil society in the present.

Leslie Muray, Curry College

“The Legacy of Vilmos Apor and Jozsef Cardinal Mindszenty in Contemporary Hungary”

The paper will explore the legacy of Vilmos Apor and Jozsef Mindszenty in contemporary Hungary. Apor, who took an unequivocal anti-Nazi stand during World War II, and who was killed by a Russian soldier when he put his body in front of a woman about to be raped, has been beatified. Mindszenty, the staunch anti-Nazi, anti-Communist, “legitimist” Cardinal and Prince Primate, had a social conscience that has been ignored in the West. He has also been put forward for canonization.

Again, at the time of this newsletter’s publication, the precise time and location for CAREE’s AAR session had not yet been decided. That information will appear in the AAR

program and will be posted on the CAREE website as soon as it is available (www.caree.info).

CAREE MEMBERS’ RECENT ACTIVITIES IN EASTERN EUROPE:

Dane Gordon is Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at Rochester Institute of Technology. Over the last several years he has frequently traveled to and lectured in Eastern Europe (especially in Bulgaria). He recently sent the following report of recent involvements in Eastern Europe for publication in this newsletter:

“Early in 2004 I published a book, *Civil Society in South East Europe* (Rodopi Press), co-edited with David Durst of the American University in Bulgaria. The book consists of articles that investigate the history and development of civil society in post-communist Southeast Europe. Most of the contributors are from the area, and attempt to provide the reader with insight into the political crises, economic upheaval, ethnic tensions, and wars.

“In August 2004 my wife Judy and I traveled to St. Petersburg, Russia. There she taught English to 7th and 8th grade children. (Her specialty is English as a second language.) I presented lectures at the University of St. Petersburg on philosophy of religion and on the history and present character of religion in America – the latter to the University Center for British and American Studies. My presentation on this topic will comprise a chapter in a volume to be published in English by the St. Petersburg Press, the tentative title of which is *Aspects of American Culture*.

“While in St. Petersburg and Moscow we attended a number of Orthodox services. The magnificent choral singing and rich liturgy proved to be a moving experience and, for me, evokes some of the mystery of the Christian faith. We also attended a service in a small village church. (Some friends of ours have a dacha in that village where we stayed for a weekend.) The church had been desecrated by the communists; earlier it had been largely destroyed by the retreating Nazi forces in World War II. Recently, though, it has been restored and is now beautiful. The service attracted only a small congregation. We were told that no more than 10% of the population are active members of the Orthodox church, but from what I could gather it is influential throughout Russian society in ways that many Russians do not consciously recognize but are indirectly influenced by.”

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In April of this year, Paul Mojzes had the opportunity to teach at Evangelical Theological School in Osijek, Croatia. He sent this report for the newsletter:

“TEACHING AT THE EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL IN OSIJEK, CROATIA”

“From April 3–7, 2005, I was privileged to teach a course at the Evangelical Theological School in Osijek, Croatia, thereby following in the footsteps of Charles West and Gerald Shenk, CAREE members. The rector (president) of that institution of higher education is another CAREE member, Peter Kuzmic, while Miroslav Volf is a regular lecturer at that institution. I taught a course in “Eastern Religions,” covering in a “turbo” accelerated format Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam. This was perhaps the first time that the students of that institution were offered a world religions course. Twenty-four third- and fourth-year students

from nine different countries, about evenly of both genders, were enrolled in the course. I taught in English, although I offered also to teach in Croatian: the students all spoke English well enough to follow the three-hour daily lectures. They were eager and open-minded learners – I left with great enthusiasm for them and the school.

“A bit about the history of the school. It began operating in the capital of Croatia, Zagreb, in the late 1960s with a few students. About a decade later they seized the opportunity to move to the less expensive city of Osijek, where they were able to purchase an abandoned and partly ruined former synagogue from the Jewish Community, and with their permission altered it for Christian (more specifically, Evangelical Pentecostal) purposes. Adjacent to the church they built the school premises and the school grew to the point where they now have around 60 regular students, many of whom are residents in the school. While most of the students are Evangelical Christians, there are students at the school belonging to other denominations. The staff is also international, with the administration being more permanent than the teaching staff, since the school depends heavily on guest professors from home and abroad. Teaching is mostly in English, with or without translation into Croatian; all students daily take accelerated English classes, as well as Biblical languages. Courses are basically accelerated, with students taking four, two and even one week sessions. Students are expected to have completed high school; thus the level of instruction is generally the first four years of collegiate education, including a smaller number of graduate studies. It seems to me that the institution offers a hybrid of European and American higher educational approaches.

“Peter Kuzmic has succeeded in raising sufficient funds to equip the school with up-to-date computerized and electronic equipment and with an enviable, predominantly English language, theological library. He is proudly supervising the building of a very large structure that will house the library, some seminar rooms, and housing for visiting professors; the library is supposed to be completed by the end of 2005. Kuzmic’s ambition is to incorporate the school into the University of Osijek as one of the faculties and at that point to offer studies at a doctoral level. He maintains excellent contacts with the political, academic, and religious leadership in the city and the country, especially with the Catholic Theological School in Djakovo, near Osijek, a school with a very impressive history.

“On the surface, Osijek (which, parenthetically, is my own birthplace) has recovered from the wars of the 1990s, but not economically. While travel between Croatia and Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, and Hungary is now without obstacles, nevertheless many people still harbor hatred, anger, and anxiety, as well as physical wounds, from the war. However, I did not notice any of these factors in the student body of ETS; chauvinistic nationalism seems entirely missing in the student body. I visited the neighboring city of Vukovar that was nearly completely destroyed in the war – it was the first Croatian city to be nearly pulverized by the relentless bombardments by the Yugoslav People’s Army in 1992. Fourteen years later, with considerable international support, parts of the city have been rebuilt, but almost every third house is in total ruins. Charles David Tauber, M.D., an American psychiatrist who has lived about a decade in Vukovar and who founded “The Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace” – a most worthwhile endeavor – was my guide in Vukovar. He pointed out that below the surface of normality there are many deeply traumatized people. Children walking to school daily pass by ruins of war and near mass graves, a situation that is bound to leave deep scars.

“My stay in Osijek afforded me some in-depth conversations, not only with Peter Kuzmic and the dean of the school, Mihael Kuzmic (not a relative of Peter’s), but also with Bishop Endre Langh of the Reformed Christian Church in Croatia, Prof. Darko Fischer, the head of the Jewish

Community, and Angela and Luka Ilic, young theologians currently residing in Belgrade.

“John Paul II died during my visit; I first realized that when the church bells rang incessantly for about 30 minutes. People in Osijek felt particular affinity to the pope because he visited them only two years ago (his third visit to Croatia), when about two million people gathered at the airport to hear him. So, Peter Kuzmic quickly organized an ecumenical commemorative service at the school at which the mayor, the representative of the county, the university, and leaders of the Jewish, Muslim, Lutheran, Baptist, and Adventist communities, and the Franciscan order as well, participated. This gave me the opportunity to reflect on the role of this Slavic pope, which seemed to particularly matter in this context. Newspapers and the media devoted major attention to the event; a number of them correctly predicted that Joseph Ratzinger was the front-runner for the election as the next pope.

“All in all, it was a very worthwhile visit. I particularly cherished my contacts with the students, with whom I was able to quickly establish a cordial relationship. I also thank my home institution, Rosemont College, for permitting me to go during the semester. I warmly recommend other academics of CAREE to offer their volunteer services to ETS; the rewards are likely to be mutual.”

CONGRATULATIONS TO TWO GRADUATE STUDENT MEMBERS!

Two of our graduate student members have recently completed their Ph.D. programs: congratulations to both Dr. Heather DeHaan (Ph.D., Russian History, University of Toronto) and to Dr. Michael Jones (Ph.D., Religion, Temple University).

Dr. DeHaan has accepted a tenure-track position at the State University of New York at Binghamton, New York. She begins her duties there this fall.

Dr. Jones is currently seeking a teaching position. At the invitation of the executive secretary, Dr. Jones sent in the following information about his training, for publication in this newsletter. If you know of positions for which he should apply, please contact him, or pass the information about him on to the appropriate persons:

“My Ph.D. was awarded by Temple University in June, 2005. My areas of specialization are epistemology and philosophy of religion. My dissertation advisor was Dr. Leonard Swidler, professor of philosophy of religion in Temple’s Department of Religion. My other dissertation committee members were Dr. Thomas Dean, professor of philosophy of religion in Temple’s Department of Religion, Dr. Joseph Margolis of Temple’s Philosophy Department, and Dr. Virgil Nemoianu of the Department of Critical Literature, Catholic University of America. My dissertation was entitled “The Late Romanian Philosopher Lucian Blaga and Contemporary Anglo-American Philosophy of Religion.” Blaga was a rising star in European philosophy between the two world wars, but was removed from the university and prohibited from publishing by the post-WWII communist government of Romania. The thesis of my dissertation is that the philosophical system which he constructed can make viable contributions to discussions in contemporary Anglo-American philosophy of religion. Major funding for my research was provided by a Fulbright grant. A revised version of my dissertation will be published under an as yet to be determined title by Fairleigh Dickenson University Press.

“I have not been back to Eastern Europe since I left Romania in 2002, but I hope to return this summer or next. I still serve as an editor for the *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, a publication of the Philosophy Department of Babes-Bolyai University,

Cluj-Napoca, Romania. I am also co-editing a collection of papers that were presented at an international colloquium on multiculturalism at Babes-Bolyai University. This will be published in Romania, but will be in English. I am also involved with some lesser publishing projects, am teaching a series on philosophy of religion at our church, and am writing lots of job applications.”

You can contact Dr. Jones as follows:

Dr. Michael Jones
2178 Industrial Drive
Bethlehem, PA 18017
e-mail: mjones03@yahoo.com

Please note: CAREE offers *gratis* memberships to Eastern European students engaged in a graduate program in North America, and to North American graduate students enrolled in an Eastern European studies program. So, if you know of students who fit on these categories, please let them know and invite them to get in touch with the executive secretary (as per the information on the masthead) or contact him with that information yourself.

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