

The Chester Ronning
Centre Newsletter
is published
twice a year

The Chester Ronning Centre
for the Study of Religion and Public Life
Newsletter

Volume 10

Issue 1

Winter 2015

Editor

David J. Goa

Managing Editor

Nicholas Wickenden

Associate Editor

Rebecca Warren

From the Director's Desk...

Toward a Second Decade

On anniversaries and festal days Jewish prayer rings out with the words, "We give thanks for having reached this day!" Over the last decade we have given shape to the Ronning Centre working in various universities, the public square and with religious communities. Gathering people together at Augustana and in Camrose to listen and discuss many of the most difficult issues of the day, has been a singular personal pleasure. I grew up treasuring lengthy conversations with friends and strangers. Thinking together on a wide range of issues gives one an appreciation of how each person thinks and a glimpse into the development and movement of the human mind and heart. A special kind of friendship flourishes. Invited scholars, intellectuals, and activists have enlarged the conversation and added to our common work to understand various and often-competing perspectives and nurture hospitable ways of engaging each other. Working throughout Alberta, in other parts of Canada and internationally has led to a banquet of ideas and many new colleagues. At the beginning of the second decade of our work I am filled with gratitude for having reached this day, gratitude for all the friends of the Ronning Centre who bring their fine thinking and good hearts to a rich conversation, and, for the many colleagues locally and in other parts of the world who have come to engage us with the best of their knowledge, clear understanding and deep concerns.

I asked my colleague, the fine historian and good friend of the Ronning Centre, Nicholas Wickenden, to review the first decade of our work. You can read his review in the following pages. It remains to me to express my appreciation for what he has made possible for the Ronning Centre through his always gentle and incisive conversation and his fine skill and sense of elegance in the design of our publications.

I am also delighted to mention that we are finally moving ahead with formalizing our initiative establishing the International Fellows of the Ronning Centre. Catherine Caufield has vigorously engaged getting this initiative up and running and you can read about several of our appointed fellows in this newsletter. I encourage you to visit our website for a full listing of fellows and their areas of expertise. Others will be added over the next few months.

May the second decade of the Ronning Centre work continue to build on our local goodness, the ground, as George Grant was fond of saying, for the love of the good wherever it is found.

—David J. Goa

The Chester Ronning
Centre for the Study
of Religion and
Public Life

University of Alberta

Augustana Campus

4901 - 46th Avenue

Camrose, AB

T4V 2R3

<www.augustana.ualberta.ca/ronning>

Director

David J. Goa

<david.goa@ualberta.ca>

Office: 780 679 1104

Cell: 780 504 5942

Assistant Director

Rebecca Warren

<rebecca.warren@ualberta.ca>

Office: 780 679 1146

Interrogating Reconciliation after the TRC

As results from the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) on residential schools for Indigenous peoples in Canada are beginning to be discussed in public, and as we await the publication of the TRC's report in many volumes beginning this summer, the Ronning Centre is turning to the question of the possibilities for reconciliation between the Indigenous peoples and Euro-Canadians. To explore these possibilities, we have invited a distinguished guest in January of 2015.

Between January 18 and 21, Ronald Niezen, professor of anthropology at McGill University, will be discussing the results of his research into the TRC, previously published in part in his book *Truth and Indignation: Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools* (University of Toronto Press, 2013).

Dr Niezen shows the current process of reconciliation through the TRC as lacking in participation from governments and Euro-Canadians and as excluding the testimony of the persons who took part in the institution. As a result, the TRC tends to victimize the survivors of the residential schools and cannot fully pursue its role of establishing the grounds for restorative justice.

Reconciliation currently faces important challenges. The refusal of the federal and several provincial governments to collaborate with the TRC as well as the breach of their duty to consult Indigenous nations around resource development projects tends to set back attempts at any process of reconciliation involving the state.

In response, resistance is growing within some Indigenous communities to the very notion of reconciliation, seen as a way to bury the injustices of the past out of sight and mask those of the present (as found recently in the work of Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, University of Minnesota Press, 2014).



Ronald Niezen will bring many opportunities for learning and conversation tied to his perspectives on justice: restorative and social justice, from without and within Indigenous communities. It is our hope that on this basis, we can begin a reflection on the way ahead for reconciliation and respectful nation-to-nation relationships.

Ronald Niezen holds the Katharine A. Pearson Chair in Civil Society and Public Policy in the Faculties of Law and of Arts at McGill University and is the author of numerous books such as *The Rediscovered Self: Indigenous Identity and Cultural Justice* (McGill-Queen's, 2009) and *Public Justice and the Anthropology of Law* (Cambridge, 2010).

Educated at St John's College in the University of Cambridge and having taught at Harvard as well as Åbo Akademi University (Finland), he has been called as an expert witness on immigration and on Indigenous populations. Dr Niezen has accomplished research with Cree communities in Manitoba, Ontario, and Québec, as well as with the Songhay of Mali and the Sami of Europe.

— Jérôme Melançon

Respecting the Land: Reflections on the New Economy

Human ideas, solidified by time and practice, can appear as inevitable as the systems that govern the natural world. We can hardly picture the world without the gravity of the nation state, or the currents of international commerce, to dictate the flow of power and resources.

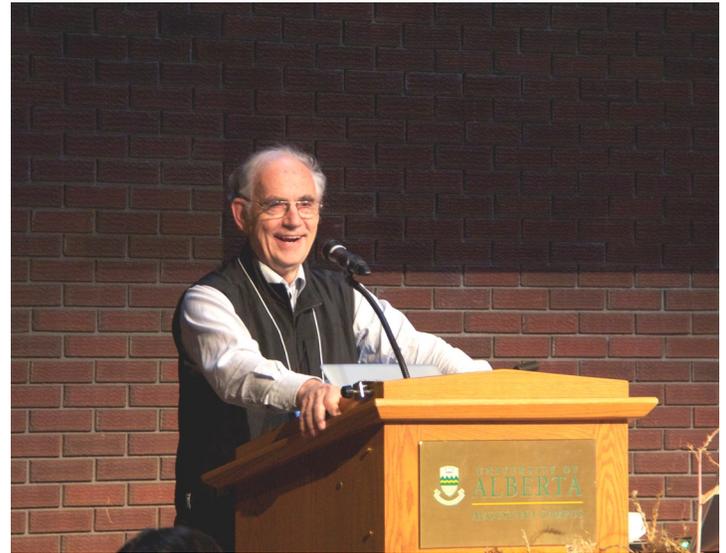
The trouble is, the structures we have designed are built upon natural systems that are fracturing under the weight of our ideas, and the time is upon us to think anew. “It’s just not economically viable” is a phrase that is commonly used to defend the status quo against transition initiatives aimed at restructuring our energy consumption, food production and business models.

We place a human construction – the economy – at the centre and allow it to dictate the limits (or lack thereof) and the direction of economic growth, with little consideration for the effect on the natural world that lies beyond our control and much of our understanding. We subordinate healthy, living systems to the ticker-tape of the stock market, and garner our self-worth from the performance of our investment portfolio.

It hasn’t always been this way.

When the first coin was minted, a revolutionary convenience was born that broadened relationships within and between communities. No longer bound to the barter system, individuals could procure desired products without having to trade something directly to the producer. Diverse goods could be obtained with a standard coin and disparity between commodities could be smoothed over with compensating currency. Coins facilitated relationships and made a standard evaluation of workmanship and quality increasingly possible.

When we look to our modern world, however, we sense that the foundational aspect of



Dittmar Mündel at the Respecting the Land conference

relationship in our monetary transactions has been lost somehow. It seems as though relationships are superfluous or even undesirable as we justify exploitative labour conventions, devastating extraction practices, and violent control of resources. We tolerate disintegrating communities and environmental ruin as long as the economy remains healthy, but as Erich Fromm asks, “Do we have to make land and people sick in order to have a healthy economy?”

This fall, the Ronning Centre gathered nearly 200 people to participate in conversations that returned us to the relational nature of our economy. Over a weekend we heard from a host of community members who are forming the foundation of the new economy. Local business owners spoke of the struggles and joys of doing business outside of the box-store; passionate farmers shared the inspiration of being intimately connected with healthy land and animals; politically-minded community members helped us envisage new ways to build our city; and spiritual directors and artists connected the outer economy with the inner calling of vocation.

—Continued on page 4

Three New Centre Publications Announced

Coming soon, three new publications will put on definitive record some of the most challenging ideas expressed in recent Ronning Centre lectures.

In *Esoteric Muslim Perspectives on Christian Dogmas*, Reza Shah-Kazemi explores the perceptive responses of some of Islam's most distinguished religious thinkers to the Christian notions of the Incarnation and the Crucifixion.

Dr Shah-Kazemi, based at the Academy of Ismaili Studies in London and editor of the *Encyclopaedia Islamica*, has extensively revised his groundbreaking Augustana lectures given at Camrose and Edmonton in 2013. They constitute a landmark in the establishment of informed understanding between Muslims and Christians.

The brown desert and the Green Patriarch – this colourful combination appears in Rev. Dr John Chryssavgis's Augustana Lectures for 2014. The Egyptian desert was the home of a distinguished succession of religious thinkers and spiritual directors, women as well as men, in the early centuries of the Christian movement; Dr

Chryssavgis introduces us to some of their wise advice in his first lecture.

His All-Holiness Bartholomew, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, has earned the nickname of “the Green Patriarch” for his environmental concerns. As an environmental expert, and currently Archdeacon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Dr Chryssavgis finds in Christian teachings a model for an inclusive concern for nature.

Here at home, David J. Goa, Director of the Chester Ronning Centre, has drawn on his personal experience among the Muslim and other religious communities of Alberta for his series of four lectures on *The Christian Responsibility to Muslims*. The stories he vividly narrates illustrate the possible, sometimes actual, achievements of mutual sympathy among the Abrahamic faiths.

Keep an eye on the Ronning Centre website for announcements of each of these publications.

Continued from page 3

As the conference evolved, small, but compassionate and invigorating ideas coming to fruition across multiple communities provided both constant inspiration and avenues for action that will expedite the shift to more holistic economic models.

Our keynote speakers provided a glimpse at the large-scale projects possible when the web of economic relationships strengthens. Duane Gunia introduced Farmland Legacies (<farmlandlegacies.org>), a land trust in Saskatchewan that manages arable land through sustainable agricultural leases. James Magnus-Johnston broadened perspectives on the theoretical underpinnings of the steady-state economy and the governance necessary to promote resilient cities (<onegreencity.org>); and Mike Unrau sparked imaginations with his

introduction of Calgary dollars (<calgarydollars.ca>), one of the longest-standing alternative currencies globally.

As the Calgary dollars currency program was a particular source of inspiration for me, I'll leave you with an exercise that Mike Unrau introduced. I hope the vision will lead you to consider new approaches to your own participation in the new economy.

Exercise: At your next dinner party, have all the guests take a piece of paper and divide it into two columns. In the first column, make a list of the things you need. In the second column make a list of all the goods and services you have to offer (your talents and abilities – no matter how mundane). Compare notes and satisfy your economic needs within your own community!

— Leslie Lindballe

International Fellows Initiative Launched

The Ronning Centre serves as a site where a network of international journalists and others who shape public awareness, understanding, and opinion both within the academic world, journalists and leaders in public life may share ideas. On January 23, 2015 a new link was launched on the Centre website: International Fellows. The International Fellows initiative provides local, national and international publics with an additional opportunity, through the work of academics and other intellectuals, to enlarge understanding within public and religious communities regarding demanding issues associated with current news stories.

As are all links on Augustana webpages, “International Fellows” is located on the left-hand side of the Ronning Centre site. Once entering this area you will find an inaugural, and growing, list of International Fellows who are willing to respond and discuss these issues in public ways.

Religious perspectives are an enduring part of public discourse. In Canada relations between religions and between religion and government are for the most part conducted with decorum, even when the key participants remain isolated in their own silos and thus fail to draw the best thinking forward from all quarters. We need only to glance at recent headlines from Ottawa, Ukraine, Syria, and France however, to know that such issues are a matter of life and death. Every day our news media alert us to vital “hot-button” issues that demand an appreciation of religious and civil perspectives if they are to be dealt with effectively. A key attribute of the International Fellows appointed to the Ronning Centre is their ability to respond to such breaking news in hospitable and deeply knowledgeable ways.

A primary challenge facing those who wish to understand current geo-political and other issues is a deep and textured engagement with the various civil and religious perspectives that shape the understanding of these issues. A deeper understanding of both the religious and civil

traditions constitutes a rich source of insights seldom present in the narrow and too often virulent public discourse that forms the daily diet offered up by the media. All too often those charged with public policy decisions are not given the benefit of the best thinking coming from both these quarters.

The first step toward dealing responsibly with such complex and controversial issues is to establish and disseminate an accurate understanding of what the issues are and what they imply, taking account of diverse points of view. It is with this in mind that the Ronning Centre is bringing together a number of leading public intellectuals able to help shed light on current issues in Canada and abroad.

A variety of activities hosted and financed by the Ronning Centre at the Augustana Faculty in the University of Alberta are designed to provide a high profile to the International Fellows and what each may bring to enhancing the public conversation on the difficult and demanding issues of religion and public life, including:

- ¶ *Ronning Centre Briefing Papers* distil the key issues, ideas and sensibilities, civil and/or religious that enlarge our understanding of a current news story. As a journalist, we would contact you when a news story breaks on a topic in your area of interest. If you are able to provide such a brief we would make use of the International Fellows Portal on our website as well as social media to see that journalists working on the story could benefit from your understanding. We also encourage journalists to consult with our International Fellows to obtain additional in-depth knowledge and understanding as they require it.
- ¶ *Ronning Centre Triage Seminars for Journalists* offer timely communication when a news story breaks. These *Seminars* are accessible internationally through webinars available through our website.

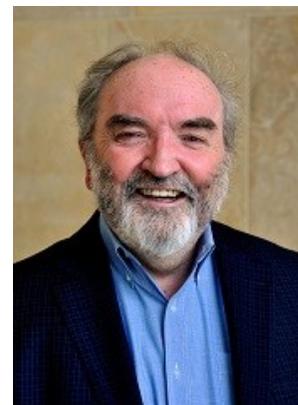
—Continued on page 8

Meet Four of Our



Dr Benjamin Berger is an Associate Professor at Osgoode Hall Law School. Prior to joining Osgoode, Professor Berger was an associate professor in the Faculty of Law and held a cross appointment in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Victoria, where he began teaching in 2004. He served as law clerk to the Rt Honourable Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of Canada, and was a Fulbright Scholar at Yale University. He is Editor in Chief of the *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* and is a General Editor for the Hart Publishing series *Constitutional Systems of the World*. He received the 2010 Canadian Association of Law Teacher's Scholarly Paper Award for an article entitled "The Abiding Presence of Conscience: Criminal Justice Against the Law and the Modern Constitutional Imagination". While at UVic Law, Professor Berger twice received the Terry J. Wuester Teaching Award, and was awarded the First Year Class Teaching Award; he received the Osgoode Hall Law School Teaching Award in 2013. He convenes the Osgoode Colloquium on Law, Religion & Social Thought (<http://lrst.osgoode.yorku.ca>), which is open to all interested members of the community.

Dr Michael W. Higgins served as the first Director of the St Jerome's Centre for Catholic Experience. He served St Jerome's University as Associate Dean (1989-1995) and then as Academic Dean and Vice-President (1995-1999). He then moved to Fredericton to become President and Vice-Chancellor for St Thomas University (2006-2009). Dr Higgins is currently Vice President for Mission and Catholic Identity at Sacred Heart College in Fairfield, Connecticut. Professor Higgins was a monthly columnist for *The Toronto Star* and writes for *Commonweal* and *The Globe and Mail*. He has researched and written a number of scripts for radio documentaries such as CBC's *Ideas* and is a regular contributor to CBC's *Morningside*, *This Morning*, *Sunday Edition*, CTV's *Canada AM* and TV Ontario's *Studio 2* and *Agenda*. Several of his programmes have been nominated and short-listed for public-broadcasting awards. He is the author and co-author of over a dozen books including *Heretic Blood: The Spiritual Geography of Thomas Merton* (1998), *The Muted Voice: Religion and the Media* (2000), *Power and Peril: The Catholic Church at the Crossroads* (2002, with Douglas R. Letson), and *Suffer the Children Unto Me: An Open Inquiry into the Clerical Sex Abuse Scandal* (2010, with Peter Kavanagh). He is the official biographer of the late Father Henri J.M. Nouwen, as well as a biographer of Thomas Merton and Gerald Emmett, Cardinal Carter.



International Fellows

Dr Mojtaba Mahdavi holds the ECMC Chair of Islamic Studies and is Associate Professor of Political Science at University of Alberta. His recent books include *Towards the Dignity of Difference? Neither End of History nor Clash of Civilizations* (co-editor; Ashgate Publishing 2012), *Under the Shadow of Khomeinism: Problems and Prospects for Democracy in Post-revolutionary Iran* (forthcoming), and *Towards a Progressive Post-Islamism: Neo-Shariati Discourse in Postrevolutionary Iran* (co-editor; forthcoming). Dr Mahdavi has given numerous public talks and lectures to many academic institutions and communities in North America, Europe, and the Middle East. He was the Liu Institute Visiting Fellow in Residence at Green College, University of British Columbia (2012-13). He is the guest editor of the special issue of *Sociology of Islam* on “Contemporary Social Movements in the Middle East and Beyond” (forthcoming). Dr Mahdavi is currently working on two research projects: “Universalism from Below? Muslims beyond Hegemonic Universalism and Regressive Cultural Essentialism” and “Political Sociology in Post-Revolutionary Iran”. He is the recipient of several awards and grants including grant from the conference fund of the SSHRC (Social Sciences and the Humanities Research Council of Canada); an IDRC Canada Partnership Grant; Killam Research Operating Grants; and a Worldwide University Network (WUN) Grant, among others. His contributions have appeared in several refereed journals and essays, edited volumes and interviews in North American, European, and Middle Eastern venues.



Dr Molly Worthen is an assistant professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she teaches courses in the history of North American religious and intellectual life and global Christianity. Her most recent book, *Apostles of Reason: The Crisis of Authority in American Evangelicalism* (Oxford, 2013) tells the story of the intellectual civil war within evangelicalism since the Second World War, and exposes the theological roots of today’s political conflicts. She is also the author of *The Man On Whom Nothing Was Lost: The Grand Strategy of Charles Hill* (Houghton Mifflin, 2006). Professor Worthen writes about religion and politics for the *New York Times*, *Slate*, and other publications. She received her PhD from Yale University in 2011.

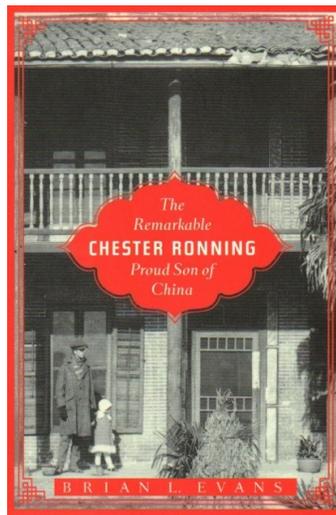
For a complete list of the Ronning Centre International Fellows, see our website: augustana.ualberta.ca/ronning/fellows

Continued from page 5

- ¶ *Public forums* engage in civic conversation on difficult and demanding current issues in order to nurture a hospitable interchange of insights across boundaries of interest and ideology. Co-sponsorship of these forums with appropriate broadcast media enhances conversation that both informs the public and provides a model for thinking together in deeper and more congenial ways.
- ¶ *Ronning Centre Symposia for Journalists* provide stipends for selected journalists to attend symposia in which International Fellows deepen and broaden their understanding of emerging issues in religion and public life.
- ¶ *National Conversations on Religion and Public Life* convene select groups of political leaders across party and ideological lines for conversation with our International Fellows on the issues of religion and public life on which they are expected to legislate.
- ¶ *Interfaith Conversation on Emerging Issues* builds on our current extensive partnerships with religious institutions to explore the finest thinking within these traditions in regard to emerging issues that challenge the global community.

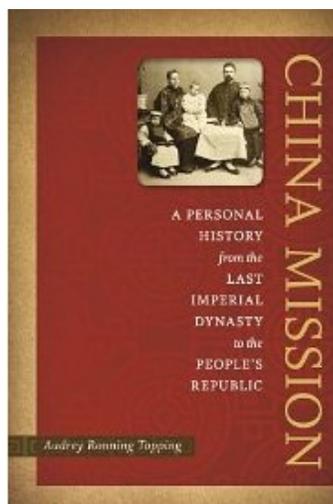
Conversation — even the great conversation envisaged here — by itself is never likely to bring about agreement on what to do about deeply divisive issues, but it can surely help us to deal with them in a more civilized, less acrimonious and destructive manner.

The Ronning Centre warmly welcomes all of its International Fellows, and expresses gratitude for their willingness to share their expertise with both the academic and the public worlds. We would like to profile a very few of our first Fellows, and invite our stakeholders to connect with them through the information available on the new International Fellows link.



Brian L. Evans

*The Remarkable Chester Ronning,
Proud Son of China*
Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press
Camrose: The Chester Ronning Centre
for the Study of Religion and Public Life



Audrey Ronning Topping

*China Mission: A Personal History
from the Last Imperial Dynasty
to the People's Republic*
Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State
University Press

Conversation, Partnership, Communication Are Keys

The Chester Ronning Centre: The First Ten Years

Ten years have now passed since the Chester Ronning Centre was founded. The time is appropriate to take stock of what has been done.

The Beginnings

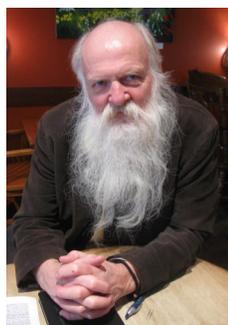
A momentous step was taken on the first day of July 2004 when Augustana University College – formerly Camrose Lutheran College, but since 1959 under its new name – merged with the University of Alberta as a new faculty with its own campus. In the negotiations that preceded this merger of a faith-based college with a government-sponsored and completely secular institution, the parties de-



ecided that under the terms of the agreement between them, a centre should be founded at Camrose to commemorate the College's most distinguished alumnus and sometime principal, the diplomat Chester Ronning, through focusing on both of Ronning's main concerns, religion and public life.

Direction and Administration

What institution could take shape without reflecting the special qualities and interests of those most closely involved? David J. Goa, appointed as the founding Director of the Chester Ronning Centre, must be credited in large measure with determining the Centre's structure and activities. His early religious background had been enriched by philosophical and religious studies at several universities in Chicago; his upbringing in Camrose, combined



with his research work while Curator of Folk Life at the Provincial Museum of Alberta – which brought him into personal contact with the adherents of many faiths – had endowed him with broad sympathies as well as a warm affection for his native province and town. Convinced of the importance of the issues raised by religious teachings and of the need to sustain the highest possible standards of civic and social life in the community, he was well prepared to take on the task of bringing both these concerns into a single conversation. His appointment to the Directorship followed naturally.

In the Rev. Dr Dittmar Mündel, a member of the Augustana faculty who became Associate Director, he found a remarkable collaborator. A graduate of the University of Göttingen who had received his doctorate in the United States, a countryman who had worked in rural development in both West Africa and Latin America, and an experienced Lutheran pastor, Dr Mündel possessed both local and international awareness as well as a keen understanding of and sympathy for social groups often left behind in the course of modern development.



The Augustana administration assigned to Debbie Smeaton the duties of assistant to the Director on a part-time basis, and the Centre owed a great deal to her energy, efficiency, and enthusiasm. When an administrative reorganization led to her departure for broader opportunities at Lakeland College, Rebecca Warren Van Arragon, the current Assistant Director, joined the Centre; her formidable academic training together with her administrative skill and unfailing sense of humour continue to expedite the conduct of the Centre's activities.

Advisers, Associates, Fellows, and Interns

In the autumn of 2005 an Advisory Committee met for the first time. It consisted of a number of appointees named by the Director for three-year (renewable) terms, representing both a broad spectrum of religious affiliations and a substantial range of academic expertise. The Advisory Committee customarily meets twice a year to review the progress of the Centre's activities and indicate possible new lines of development. Some of its members on retirement have continued to support the Centre in the role of Research Associate.

Research Associates constitute a local pool of scholars in different academic disciplines who share an interest in the varied problems arising in the interaction of religious with political and social groups. They are able and willing to act as resource persons on occasions when their special knowledge qualifies them to comment on current issues as they arise.

In contrast, Distinguished Visiting Fellows come from further afield – other parts of Canada, or even distant countries – to spend time at the Centre, to lecture, to advise on and assist with the Centre's research projects, or to meet with special interest groups in the community. The position of Distinguished Visiting Fellow was inaugurated in 2008, when Dr Roger Hutchinson of the University of Toronto was brought to Alberta as the first to hold this title. In the most recent development (see page 5), this month, another category was created, that of International Fellows: individuals who are appointed to join in the Centre's activities from distant points of the globe.

The Centre has always been aware of its responsibility to encourage younger scholars to acquire expertise in dealing with the issues in its sphere of interest. A small number of student interns was supported in 2007-08. "Responsibility for the Land" internships were awarded to four undergraduates in the summer of 2014. In addition, a category of Junior Fellows was created in 2013; Carmelle Mohr and Rajan Rathnavalu were the first to be appointed.



Supporters in the Community

Less conspicuous than its academic luminaries, but indispensable to the Centre's existence, have been the many donors who contribute to its finances. Their regular listing in the Centre's Newsletter is a modest recognition of their help. It is fair, though, to single out for special mention the Hendrickson family, whose generous support has made it possible to bring in Distinguished Visiting Fellows and to publish the series of booklets presenting the Augustana Distinguished Lectures and other significant studies written by scholars associated with the Centre.

Not to be overlooked are the Centre's good neighbours, residents of Camrose who on occasion have hospitably opened their homes to Centre-sponsored meetings and receptions.

The Augustana Lectures

The flagship activity of the Chester Ronning Centre is – perhaps surprisingly – quite traditional: a series of lectures. The Augustana Distinguished Lectures afford an opportunity for eminent scholars who are making substantial contributions to the study of religion and public life to share their insights in person with audiences in northern Alberta. The lectures began in 2006, with a pair of presentations by Jim Forest, Secretary of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship; he came from The Netherlands to analyse the roots of warfare and the obstacles to peace as they occur not only in states

but in the spiritual life of each individual. Subsequent lecturers have taken up equally fundamental topics.

The lectures have been scheduled at annual intervals (more or less), and delivered sometimes in Camrose and sometimes in Edmonton. Their impact has been extended in time and space by publication in booklet form, permitting wide distribution; so far eight sets have been issued, with two more currently on the way. Some of the lectures were also issued in CD-Rom format, but as use of the World Wide Web has become customary, now they are made accessible in audiovisual form on the Centre's website.



Cafés, Conferences, Conversations

The Centre claims a “mission” “to establish a hospitable ambience in which women and men of faith and of social concern are encouraged to join in a continuing conversation on the relationship between religion and public life”. There could be no clearer example of how this conversation can work than the series of “Religion and Public Life Cafés” inaugurated in February 2008. The settings have been tea and coffee houses in Camrose and Edmonton; the format has been a concise presentation by an expert “animateur”, leading to active discussion with and among those attending.

Modifications have been made in the course of time. The Edmonton sessions, organized by the

Director in collaboration with philosopher Martin Tweedale, were rechristened “Philosophers’ Cafés” from September 2010, and the Camrose Cafés began to meet in the Ronning House in the fall of 2014, where the usual refreshments were made available. What is not about to change is the liveliness of the discussion and the abundance of challenging ideas that emerge at these sessions.

The same spirit carries over into the Centre's other activities. From the very beginning of its programs in the fall of 2005, along with the expected addresses and lectures, the Centre has organized “forums”, “conferences”, “study circles”, “round tables”, “consultations”, and “conversations”. The long list of events from that year to the present gives an impression of variable geometry among this assortment of formats. One might observe that, in general, “forums” often feature contributions by active politicians, “study circles” are apt to last for several hours or meet repeatedly, and “consultations” tend to bring a representative of a particular vocation or commitment before an audience with a different background.



“Conferences” are on a larger scale than other events. Most notable of all have been the conference entitled “Responsibility for the Land: Conversations on Fracking in Alberta”, held in November 2012, and the two subsequent conferences following up on its theme. Three features have made these conferences special. One is their relevance to a local situation and a current issue; vital

decisions must be made on the practice of “fracking”, setting off underground explosions in order to recover oil and gas, in the light of the possible consequences for rural settlements and the environment. A second is their bringing together of farmers, representatives of industry, environmentalists, religious leaders, and the public, for a rare conversation with each other. Remarkable finally is the extent to which undergraduate and graduate students took an active part in the planning committees, attended the conferences, and undertook additional research. Their influence may turn out to be clearly perceptible and last for a long time.

In the last analysis, the distinctions among the variously named events sponsored by the Centre may not mean too much compared with the fact that they all bring knowledgeable experts into interactive communication with diverse groups, not least the general public. In so doing they help everyone to share, to examine, to criticize, modify, or extend, perhaps ultimately even to implement the most advanced thinking on the issues – often difficult, sometimes deeply divisive issues – that arise when divergent faiths encounter both each other and wider, possibly unsympathetic, communities defined in secular terms. Even the Centre’s most conventional lectures are followed by some form of “conversation”. Conversation may fail to resolve disputes, but even so it may modify the spirit in which they are approached and mitigate their potentially damaging effects.

Contributing to the University: Teaching and Research

The Centre has never forgotten that it is a part of the University of Alberta, with a responsibility to enrich the intellectual life of the institution to which it belongs. Most obviously it has done this by offering an undergraduate course at the Augustana Campus in each academic year since 2007-08, taught by the Director and/or the Associate Director of the Centre. It shows the Centre’s flexibility of approach that the topic of the

course may be broadly defined – the first was simply “Religion, Faith and Politics” – and changes each year, to promote thoughtful reflection on the concerns uppermost in people’s minds at the time. It is also characteristic that members of the public are invited to sit in on the course lectures and discussions. Every course the Centre has offered has met with a strong undergraduate response and substantial public participation.

Extension courses, typically shorter than the regular courses for undergraduates, and aimed at the general public, are a natural field for Centre activity, and several have been offered, starting with one on “Modern Ethics” in January to April 2008. Still more frequent have been lectures or seminars by the Centre’s personnel in the context of regular courses offered by various departments of the University. Extending the scope of such contributions, the Centre has taken a lead in the current development of the “Alberta Campus”, making its resources available to the collectivity of institutions of higher learning throughout the province.

Research has come to be seen, especially in recent years, as a particularly distinctive task of academic institutions. From the beginning the Centre envisaged becoming an active agency in promoting and sustaining research. A first project began in July 2008: a field study of ecumenism in action, exploring the formation, work, and self-understanding of the Camrose-based NGO Sahakarini, conducted by Dittmar Mündel and David J. Goa. The results were set out in a paper presented at a Fall 2009 workshop on “Inhabiting Ecumenism: Histories from North and West”.

November 2010 saw the commencement of two major research projects, still being pursued, focusing on religion in Canada. “The Evangelical Church in Canada: Exploring its Tectonic Shifts” is a research and publication project undertaken with a variety of partners and participants including the Canadian Evangelical The-

ological Association (CETA) and several of the academic staff of what is now The King's University. "The Liberal Protestant Church in Canada: Exploring its Gifts and Challenges", a similarly structured project, is anchored by Dittmar Mündel, with the participation of a number of Research Associates of the Centre.

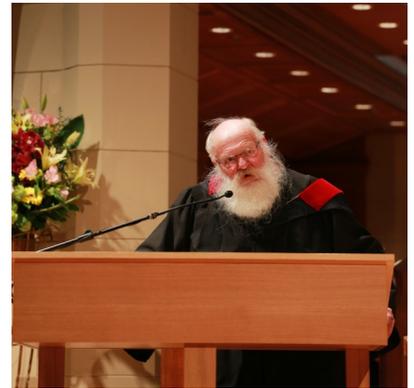
"Human Rights and Sacred Islamic Texts", a research project undertaken by David J. Goa and Azim Jeraj, was announced in June 2012. Its goal is to prepare a publication showing the relationship between present day human rights law and the aspirations found both in the Qur'an and in hadith literature. As this and further research projects develop, the Centre will amply validate its academic credentials as a sponsor and organizer of research.

In the Wider Academy

When we look at the Centre's contacts with other academic institutions, another of its key characteristics comes to the fore: its aptitude for partnership. This takes many forms, for example inviting or hosting lectures organized by the Centre, or calling on Centre personnel to direct or assess research being conducted or proposed.

There have been many partner institutions in Alberta and elsewhere, but the Centre is particularly grateful to The King's University College – now The King's University – for its frequent hosting of events in Edmonton. Along with King's, St Mary's University in Calgary graciously hosted day-long symposia in Edmonton and Calgary respectively on the theme "Religious Perspectives on Civil Life" in March 2011; in these symposia the Centre, the ECMC Chair of Islamic Studies at the University of Alberta, and the Istanbul Foundation for Science and Culture also participated. Proposals for long-term collaboration are now under discussion with Necmettin Erbakan University in Konya, Turkey.

A remarkable compliment was paid to the Centre when its Director, David Goa, was invited to give the convocation address at the Vancouver Theological School in May 2014.



Among Religious Institutions

Partnership has also been the key to the Centre's relationship with faith groups. Invitations to lecture or to join in panel discussions have come from all shades of the spectrum of Christian, Islamic, and other communities in Alberta and sometimes further afield. Indeed, the largest audience ever for a Centre lecturer was brought together by the conference of the Istanbul Foundation for Science and Culture in June 2010. David Goa, who had made a special study of the religious thought of the Islamic commentator Said Nursi, there spoke to a gathering of more than 2000. Another speaker on this occasion was retired Archbishop Lazar Puhalo of the Orthodox Church of America, an active Research Associate of the Centre.



Noteworthy, too, is the December 2009 invitation to David Goa to lecture from the Society of Edmonton Atheists.

The Centre has warmly appreciated the generosity of many different faith groups in providing venues for Centre events.

In State and Society

When we think of public life, we are apt to think first of government. Both retired and serving politicians with varied allegiances have from time to time generously shared insights and reflections with Ronning Centre audiences. Their role was formalized in January 2010, when a series of forums entitled “The Highest Public Calling” was inaugurated with the participation of the Honourable Verlyn Olson, QC, member of the Alberta Legislative Assembly for Westaskiwin-Camrose. This initiative will be ongoing. In March of the same year Mr Olson introduced David J. Goa and the work of the Ronning Centre on the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

It is noteworthy, too, that Consul General Wang Xinping, the Chinese government’s representative in Calgary, paid a welcome visit to the Centre in June 2014, not indeed to endorse any religious concerns, but formally to recognize Chester Ronning as the lifelong friend of China and its people that he was.

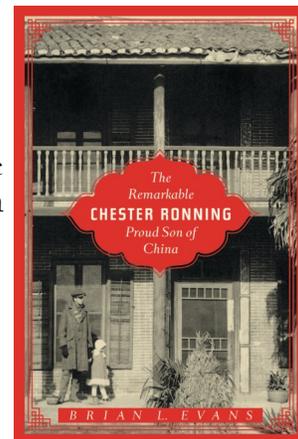


“The public square” is an expression that occurs often in the Centre’s descriptions of its activities. It is a short way of referring to the area of interaction of all the varied interest groups within a community. Religious and academic groups may well be found in this metaphorical “public square”; so, obviously, is government; but above all, the term lets us bring into the picture all the non-governmental organizations that in our day are coming to make up a more and more influential sector of society.

Partnership is particularly significant here. Just to mention some of the bodies that have invited addresses or in some way connected with the Centre: the Rotary Club in Edmonton, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, the International Palestine Action Committee, the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, the Camrose and Strathcona Regional Libraries, and Cardus, a foundation based in Ontario which identifies itself as “a think tank dedicated to the renewal of North American social architecture”. The “public square” is the Centre’s natural habitat, and work within it continues to set an example of civilly exchanging views on highly controversial subjects.

On the Record: Centre Publications and the Media at Large

Clear and accessible communication is essential if the Centre is to make its voice, or voices, audible beyond the confines of its location. Its communications program begins with its own publications, the series of Augustana Distinguished Lectures. The Centre has also partnered with the Al-Fatih Islamic Institute of Damascus in publishing an account of its history in English, and with the University of Alberta Press in publishing Brian Evans’s outstanding biographical study, *The Remarkable Chester Ronning*.



In addition to lectures, the Ronning Centre also publishes occasional papers and current briefings, all under the editorship of the present writer. Though it makes him blush, the Ronning Centre staff have insisted he note that they are deeply grateful for the care and attention he lavishes on each publication.

Thanks in no small measure to the technical virtuosity of Reiner Loewen of Edmonton, the Centre has been able to archive audio or visual recordings of a great many of its events, which can now be easily accessed on the Centre's website.

A YouTube channel, "ronningcentre", was set up in January 2011, as was a Facebook page.

In the realm of scholarly publication, the Director of the Centre has for some years served on the editorial boards of *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief*, an international journal published by Berg in the United Kingdom, and *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*, Canada's leading journal of religious studies; more recently, he has accepted invitations to join the editorial boards of *Marife, the Turkish Journal of Religious Studies*, at Mecmettin Erbakan University in Konya, and *Katre, the International Journal of Said Nursi Studies*, published in Istanbul.

Wider communication calls for active engagement with the popular media. One of the obligations of the Centre staff and Research Associates is to make themselves available, and known to be available, to journalists and editors of periodicals. Their contributions may range from producing whole articles, to being interviewed or simply quoted, to briefing journalists on issues currently attracting public attention. Both the print and the electronic media have often published statements by, or reported the views of members of the Centre, not only locally but also nationally through such channels as the *Globe and Mail* newspaper, CBC Radio, and CTV, among others. More and wider public communication can be looked for as time goes on.

A Centre for Our Time

Perilous though it must be to generalize about such things, the past two to three centuries have witnessed a widespread trend to pluralism. Where at one time religious and political communities were more or less coterminous, in Christendom especially, but also in non-Christian countries, the separation of churches (or mosques, or temples) from states has become not simply a partially established fact of life but an ideal, one compelling enough to be formally enshrined in 1791 in the First Amendment to the United States constitution.

As Charles Taylor has pointed out in his illuminating book *A Secular Society*, it was also in the late eighteenth century that the thinkers of the Scottish Enlightenment formulated the concept of "civil society", distinct from either religion or politics, but a vital component of what we think of as the "public square".

Among religious and political organizations, acceptance of the fact that dissent or even opposition exists and must be allowed for – either within or between the organizational structures – has become normal, while civil society has never fostered uniformity. All this growing pluralism, extending to the point of fragmentation, has given rise to a need for better understanding and communication to preserve a sense of human community. To the fulfilment of this need of our time the Ronning Centre makes its own modest but distinctive contribution.

Has the Ronning Centre an agenda? In the sense of promoting any exclusive dogma, obviously not; it works happily with faith groups, political parties, and social movements of whatever stripe, insisting only on their civility to each other. Where the Centre does take a stand is in its commitment to the value of mutual understanding, understanding that may not even be expected to lead to agreement, but can do much to forestall animosity and violence.

Serving its goal of fostering understanding is its dedication to communication, because understanding, if it is to affect practical decisions, must be shared not merely by elites but by widespread public opinion. Keeping its ultimate goal in mind, the Centre calls on the representatives of government and civil society to be constantly aware of the transcendent values defined in their different ways by religious groups, while at the same time it draws attention to the need for religious groups to take explicit account of the human standards and values developed over time in the evolution of secular society.

If such is its purpose, can the Centre claim to have achieved any success? Success in this context is not easy to measure. The poet William Blake wrote perceptively: “He who would do good to another must do it in Minute Particulars” Minute particulars are easily overlooked. But the Centre has unquestionably succeeded in getting many people to converse, to share ideas and values with each other, pondering and developing them. The multiplicity of formats that it uses may best be thought of as opening up so many points of entry into an undefined, but imaginable, Great Conversation, ongoing, unbounded by time or space, but in which even a modest contribution is worthwhile. By joining in that Great Conversation with the civility and hospitality that it wishes to promote, the Centre sets an example that has a value of its own.

Looking Forward

The Chester Ronning Centre moved into new quarters in the spring of 2014. Fittingly, they were

the house once lived in by Chester Ronning and his family, just a few steps from the Augustana Campus.



For the Centre they represented expansion, affording not only office space but meeting rooms, simple kitchen facilities, and places to shelve the Centre’s growing collection of books. Yet the modest dimensions of the house, with access to the attic storey by way of a pull-down ladder, remind one of how recent is the modernization of the formerly somewhat basic lifestyle of even prominent rural Albertans. Will the Centre in another ten or twenty years reflect other transformations as striking? All one can say with confidence is that the Great Conversation on religion and public life will continue, and in this the Centre, now working on its plans for an expanded Press Room and augmented phalanx of Fellows, will strive to make its message, or messages, heard, and perhaps listened to.

— *Nicholas Wickenden*

To keep up-to-date with the ongoing work of the Ronning Centre,
see our website <augustana.ualberta.ca/ronning>,
our audio archive <crcaudio.ca>,
and our YouTube channel <ronningcentre>.

Distinguished Visiting Fellow to Lecture in British Columbia

Archimandrite the Very Rev. Fr Dr Cyril Hovorun is a priest of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and is past chair of its Department of External Church Relations. He has been active in ecumenical dialogue among the churches in Ukraine, Russia, and abroad.

This March, the Ronning Centre is pleased to bring Fr Cyril to speak on a number of important issues facing the churches today, including the situation in Ukraine. Fr Cyril has said “It is already clear that the Maidan, regardless of its future, has changed the country, the society, as well as the relations between Ukrainian churches and the Ukrainian society. . . . The Maidan has a chance to initiate a process of reevaluation of the relationships between the church, the state, and society.”

Fr Cyril will give several lectures at the Monastery of All Saints in Dewdney, BC, at the University of the Fraser Valley in Abbotsford, BC, and at the Epiphany Chapel of the Vancouver School of Theology:

- “Nationalism as a Form of Secularization of the Church”, Sunday, 22 March, 3pm, Monastery of All Saints
- “Religious Ethos of Putin’s Regime in Russia”, Monday, 23 March, 1-4pm, University of the Fraser Valley
- “God on the Maidan and Implications of the Ukrainian Revolution for Eastern Christianity”, Tuesday, 24 March, 1-4pm, University of the Fraser Valley
- “Symphony and Its Reincarnations in Our Days”, Wednesday, 25 March, Monastery of All Saints
- “Faith and Public Life: The Case of Maidan,” Thursday, 26 March, 7-9:30 pm, Epiphany Chapel, Vancouver School of Theology



Archimandrite Very Rev Fr Dr Cyril Hovorun.

Full details for these lectures can be found in the calendar beginning on page 18.

Fr Cyril will set current issues in a deep historical perspective, drawing on his major work developing a “public ecclesiology” beginning with the Council of Nicea (Nike) up through the churches’ place in the current crisis in Ukraine and Russia, including an analysis of President Vladimir Putin’s religious orientation and ways of engaging with the Orthodox Church.

Fr Cyril teaches and does research on patristics, church history, ecclesiology, political theology, and the sociology of religion. He holds a candidate degree from the Kyiv Theological Academy and a PhD in theology from the University of Durham. He is the author of *Will, Action, and Freedom: Christological Controversies in the Seventh Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2008). Fr Cyril is currently a research fellow at Yale University, where he is working on a project about the church in the public square, focusing on the patterns of behaviour of Eastern churches.

Calendar of Coming Events - Winter 2015

For up-to-date information where details are not complete, please check the Ronning Centre website or call 780 679 1146

Philosophers' Café Series Edmonton

Theme: Beyond Right and Wrong

All Sessions Saturdays 1-3:30 p.m.
at Steeps, The Urban Tea House
11116 - 82nd (Whyte) Avenue
Edmonton

24 Jan Moral Right and Wrong vs Utilitarian Good and Evil (Animateur: Don Carmichael, Assoc. Prof. Emeritus, UofA)

7 Feb Ethics and International Relations: On Skepticism, Suffering, and the Status of Strangers (Animateur: Roger Epp, Prof. of Political Science, UofA)

21 Feb Kant and the Supposed Right to Lie (Animateur: Alan McLuckie, Postdoc Fellow Philosophy, UofA)

21 March Gifts, Bribes, and the Ethics of Business (Animateur: Jim Gaa, Prof. of Accounting, UofA)

28 March Did Socrates Deserve to Die? (Animateur: Kathrin Koslicki, Prof. & Canada Research Chair in Epistemology and Metaphysics, UofA)

11 April Nietzsche's Moral Mirror: If an ape looks in, can an angel look out? (Animateur: Robert Burch, PhD U of Toronto, 19th and 20th c. continental philosophy)

25 April Does the Jesus of the Gospels Teach a Moral Religion? (Animateur: David Goa, Director, Ronning Centre)

JANUARY

Thinking about the Paris Shooting and Charlie Hebdo

Conversations in the Agora with David Goa
Friday, 16 January, 12:00–1:30 pm
Ronning House, 4606 – 49 Street, Camrose
A light lunch will be served.

Liberation from the Past: Victim-Centrism in Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission

A Ronning Centre Lecture with Distinguished Visiting Fellow Ronald Niezen
Monday, 19 January, 7:30 pm
Atrium, King's University
9125 – 50 Street NW, Edmonton

Liberation from the Past: Victim-Centrism in Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission

A Ronning Centre Lecture with Distinguished Visiting Fellow Ronald Niezen
Tuesday, 20 January, 12:30–2:00 pm
A light lunch will be served.
F1-305, Augustana Campus, Camrose

The Limits of Truth-Telling: Inclusion and Exclusion in Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission

A Ronning Centre Lecture with Distinguished Visiting Fellow Ronald Niezen
Tuesday, 20 January, 6:30 pm
Epp Conference Room, 2-004
Augustana Campus, Camrose

Moral Right and Wrong vs Utilitarian Good and Evil

A Philosophers' Café animated by Don Carmichael, Associate Professor Emeritus, University of Alberta
Saturday, 24 January, 1:00–3:30 pm
Steeps, 11116 – 82 Ave, Edmonton

Calendar of Coming Events - Winter 2015

For up-to-date information where details are not complete, please check the Ronning Centre website or call 780 679 1146

FEBRUARY

Islamophobia and the Fear of the West

A Ronning Centre Lecture and Discussion with Prof Mustafa Acar, Rector, Aksaray University, Turkey

Monday, 2 February, 7:00–9:00 pm

Atrium, The King's University

9125 – 50 Street NW, Edmonton

Tuesday, 3 February, 12:00–1:30 pm

Ronning House, 4606 – 49 Street, Camrose

Ethics and International Relations: On Skepticism, Suffering, and the Status of Strangers

*A Philosophers' Café animated by Roger Epp,
Professor of Political Science and Deputy Provost Academic,
University of Alberta*

Saturday, 7 February, 1:00–3:30 pm

Steeps, 11116 – 82 Ave, Edmonton

Kant on the Supposed Right to Lie

*A Philosophers' Café animated by Alan McLuckie, Postdoc
Fellowship, University of Alberta*

Saturday, 21 February, 1:00–3:30 pm

Steeps, 11116 – 82 Ave, Edmonton

The Insistence of Hope

Conversations in the Agora with Rebecca Warren

Monday, 23 February, 12:00–1:30pm

Ronning House, 4606 – 49 Street, Camrose

A light lunch will be served.

MARCH

Hinduism Takes Root in Canada

*A Conversation with Distinguished Visiting Fellow Darrol
Bryant and David Goa*

Wednesday, 11 March, 12:50–2:05 pm

Library 2-103, Augustana Campus, Camrose

Film Presentation: “The Traveling Guru”

With Distinguished Visiting Fellow Darrol Bryant

Wednesday, 11 March, 5:00 pm

Epp Conference Room, 2-004

Augustana Campus, Camrose

A light supper will be served.

Hinduism Takes Root in Canada

A Conversation with Distinguished Visiting Fellow

Darrol Bryant and David Goa

Thursday, 12 March, 12:50–2:05 pm

F1-305, Augustana Campus, Camrose

Gifts, Bribes, and the Ethics of Business

*A Philosophers' Café animated by Jim Gaa,
Professor of Accounting, University of Alberta*

Saturday, 21 March, 1:00–3:30 pm

Steeps, 11116 – 82 Ave, Edmonton

Did Socrates Deserve to Die?

*A Philosophers' Café animated by Kathrin Koslicki,
Professor and Canada Research Chair in*

Epistemology and Metaphysics, University of Alberta

Saturday, 28 March, 1:00–3:30 pm

Steeps, 11116 – 82 Ave, Edmonton

Nationalism as a Form of Secularization of the Church

*A Ronning Centre Lecture with Distinguished Visiting
Fellow Archimandrite Very Rev. Fr Dr Cyril Hovorun*

Sunday, 22 March, 3:00 pm

Monastery of All Saints of North America

37323 Hawkins Pickle Rd

Dewdney, BC

Religious Ethos of Putin's Regime in Russia

*A Ronning Centre Lecture with Distinguished Visiting
Fellow Archimandrite Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Cyril Hovorun*

Monday, 23 March, 1:00–4:00 pm

University of the Fraser Valley

Abbotsford Campus, room A402

Calendar of Coming Events - Winter 2015

For up-to-date information where details are not complete, please check the Ronning Centre website or call 780 679 1146

God on the Maidan and Implications of the Ukrainian Revolution for Eastern Christianity

A Ronning Centre Lecture with Distinguished Visiting Fellow Archimandrite Very Rev. Fr Dr Cyril Hovorun
Tuesday, 24 March, 1:00–4:00 pm
 University of the Fraser Valley
 Abbotsford Campus, room A402
 Abbotsford, BC

Symphony and Its Recarnations in Our Days

A Ronning Centre Lecture with Distinguished Visiting Fellow Archimandrite Very Rev. Fr Dr Cyril Hovorun
Wednesday, 25 March
 Monastery of All Saints of North America
 37323 Hawkins Pickle Rd
 Dewdney, BC

Faith and Public Life: The Case of Maidan

A Ronning Centre Lecture with Distinguished Visiting Fellow Archimandrite Very Rev. Fr Dr Cyril Hovorun
Thursday, 26 March, 7:00–9:30 pm
 Epiphany Chapel
 6030 Chancellor Boulevard
 Vancouver School of Theology
 (On the campus of UBC)
 Vancouver, BC

Engaging Islam & Our Muslim Neighbours

With David Goa and Franz Volker Greifenhagen
Sponsored by Vancouver Lutheran and Anglican Churches, with the Ronning Centre and Luther College, University of Regina
Friday, 27 March, 7:00–8:30 pm
 First Lutheran Church
 5745 Wales Street, Vancouver, BC
Saturday, 28 March, 9:00 am–2:30 pm
 First Lutheran Church
 5745 Wales Street, Vancouver, BC

APRIL

Nietzsche's Moral Mirror: If an ape looks in, can an angel look out?

A Philosophers' Café animated by Robert Burch, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, University of Alberta
Saturday, 11 April, 1:00–3:30 pm
 Steeps, T11116 – 82 Ave, Edmonton

*For the latest information and updates,
 see the Ronning Centre website:*

augustana.ualberta.ca/ronning

Friends of the Chester Ronning Centre

Dr Anthony Almeida
 Dr Anna Altmann
 Mrs Doris Anderson
 Ms Muriel Anderson
 Dr Calin-Doru & Ms Cristina Anton
 Rev Bonnie Arends
 Dr J V & Mrs Janeen Asfeldt
 Mr Michael Barr & Ms Laurie Moffitt Barr
 Mrs Marion Bennett
 Mr Raymond & Mrs Norma Blacklock
 Rev Audrey Brooks
 Mr John Bruneau
 Dr Joseph & Mrs Rosanne Buijs
 Rev Raymond A. Christenson
 Mr Takota Coen
 Crooked Creek Conservancy Society
 Mr Lawrence & Mrs Denise Dufresne
 The Hon Dr Jim & Mrs Bette Edwards
 Mr Edward & Mrs Anna Elford
 Dr Brian L Evans
 Mr Arthur Fadum
 Ms Janice L Fehr
 Mr Alan & Mrs Valerie Fielding
 Mr & Mrs Alan & Ruth Ford
 Ms Irene Fraser
 The Hon Harry D & Mrs Margery Gaede
 Dr David B Gay & Ms J Anne Smith
 Ms Linda Gervais
 Dr Garry & Mrs Dorothy Gibson
 Mrs Sharon & Mr Milton Gilbertson
 Mr Bryan Graff & Mrs Kathryn Knudsen-Graff
 Mr F Volker Greifenhagen
 Mr Luther & Dr Bonnie Haave
 Dr William W Hackborn
 Mr Howard & Mrs Nielle Hawkwood
 Dr J Frank & Dr Ruth Henderson
 Ms Joyce Hendrickson
 Dr James & Mrs Sonja Hendrickson
 Pastor Gordon P & Mrs Grace Hendrickson
 Mr Ronald & Ms Arlene Hendrickson
 Mr James and Mrs Agnes Hoveland
 Ms Lobna Hussain
 Ms Sharon Jacobs
 Mrs Patricia Jevne
 Dr Ronna Jevne
 Dr Martin Katz
 Dr Henriette & Mr Doug Kelker
 Dr Dianne & Dr Thomas Kieren
 Mr Wolf and Ms Marie Edenloff Kirchmeir
 Mr Robert Klappstein
 Ms Sonya Kunkel
 Mrs Roseann La Place
 Dr David & Mrs Lois Larson
 Ms Fiona Lauridsen
 Rev Dave Lefsrud & Rev Karen Johnson-Lefsrud
 Ms Audrey D Lett
 Mr Leon Lohner
 Mr Robert & Mrs Lanis McClarty
 Ms Nancy McLeod
 Mrs Brenda Mantie
 Dr Cecily Mills
 Dr Jeremy Mouat
 Dr Michael & Mrs Brenda Mucz
 Dr Karsten Mündel & Dr Deena Hinshaw
 Ms Patricia Mader Mundel
 Mr Brian & Mrs Colleen Nelson
 Dr John O & Mrs Treva Olson
 The Hon Verlyn & Mrs Mardell Olson
 Mr Edward Paproski
 Dr Timothy & Mrs Ellen Parker
 Mr John & Mrs Carmen Person
 Mr Lawrence & Mrs Margaret Rathnavalu
 Ms Maya Rathnavalu
 Mr Rajan Rathnavalu
 Mr Donald & Mrs Christina Rebus
 Dr Linda Reutter
 Dr David Ridley
 Dr Morley & Mrs Mary Duane Riske
 Mr Nelius Ronning
 Dr Jack & Dr Jane Ross
 Mrs Sheilagh Ross
 Ms Carol Roy
 Rev Dr Telmor & Mrs Adelene Sartison
 Ms Kyla Sawden
 Mr Kevin & Mrs Debbie Schielke
 Dr Milton Schlosser & Dr Paul Harland
 Mr Bill Sears
 Rev Allen & Mrs Mary Severson
 Mr Kevin & Mrs Nola Sharp
 Ms Lisa Sharp
 Dr Peter W Sinnema & Dr Janet Wesselius
 Mr Bruce & Mrs Glenys Smith
 Mr Leon & Mrs Deanna Specht
 Dr Aruna Srivastava
 Mrs Joan E Stavne
 Mr David & Mrs Gail Stolee
 Mr Joseph & Mrs Barbara Stolee
 Ms Kathrine Stolee
 Dr Victoria Strang
 Mr David & Mrs Elaine Taylor
 Mr Nicolas Tyszka & Ms Pauline Evans
 Mr Barry Vall & Mrs Dawn Kilarski
 Mr Don Vinge
 Monsieur Matthew T Wangler
 Ms Katherine E Ward
 Rev Craig Wentland & Dr Paula Marentette
 Dr Nicholas Wickenden
 Ms Lois Wightman
 Reverend Vernon R & Mrs Johanna Wishart
 Mr Daniel Yang
 Dr Arlette Zinck & Mr Robert Betty

We have endeavoured to make this list as accurate as possible.

Please accept our apologies if your name has been omitted or misspelled and please let us know so we may correct our records.

BUILDING TOWARD THE FUTURE

The Ronning Centre Distinguished Visiting Fellows Endowment provides the Centre with a nimble way of bringing creative thinking on current issues and themes into its work. The fellowships will attract scholars as well as public intellectuals to contribute thoughtfully and constructively to the discussion of the complex themes. James and Sonja Hendrickson in a challenge to our community, continue their pledge to match gifts to this endowment.

“It is our hope that others will value the work of the Centre and join us in this effort so the endowment can grow to its full potential.” — James & Sonja Hendrickson

The Ronning Centre Student Internships provide opportunities for Augustana students to work directly with Centre staff on research projects and program development, expanding their knowledge and understanding while developing the sensitive skill set needed by the next generation of scholars and public intellectuals to engage in the many demanding issues of religion and public life in restorative ways.

The Ronning Centre Annual Fund and Friends publications enhance the ongoing work of the Centre making it possible for many to learn and contribute to the understanding of religious perspectives on public life and public understanding of religious perspectives.

To find out how you can be a part of this visionary endowment and for information on matching funding please contact:

Bonita Anderson
Director of Development
University of Alberta
Augustana Campus
1-800-590-9992 ext. 1183
or 780-679-1183
bonita.anderson@ualberta.ca



Photo of Chester Ronning with a young Queen Elizabeth, courtesy of the Noel and Wendy Cassidy Collection.



THE CHESTER RONNING CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND PUBLIC

University of Alberta, Augustana Campus | 4901 46 Ave Camrose AB T4V 2R3 | 780.679.1558
www.augustana.ualberta.ca/ronning

OUR PURPOSE is to cultivate a deep understanding of issues and themes at the intersection of religion, faith and public life and to do so in the public sphere and in religious spheres.

OUR MISSION is to nurture a hospitable context that brings forward the finest thinking of women and men of faith and the depth and texture of their traditions in conversation with public intellectuals and various secular ideologies on the nature and shape of public life in our age of pluralism.

OUR GOALS are to focus the work of scholars on issues and themes where religion, faith and public life intersect and to nurture the public conversation as well as religious understanding of these issues and themes through:

- interdisciplinary research and publications shaping a new community of scholars and public intellectuals;
- thoughtful and ethical reflections which draw on religious sources associated with human rights, our care for the life of the world and our understanding of difference;
- expanding and communicating an understanding of the vital role of religious perspectives and their complex sources as they are brought to bear on public discourse in our communities;
- deepening the understanding within religious communities of the fragile and complex nature of the public sphere in a pluralistic society.



With your gift to the *Chester Ronning Centre for the Study of Religion and Public Life*, you become an honoured member of the **Friends of the Chester Ronning Centre**, connecting you to information and updates about the centre.

1 WHERE TO GIVE

- Ronning Centre Distinguished Visiting Fellows Endowment
- Ronning Centre International Fellowships
- Ronning Centre Annual Fund
- Ronning Centre Internships

2 WHAT TO GIVE

One Time Gift:

- \$1000
- \$500
- \$250
- Other

\$ _____

Monthly Gift Pledge:

- \$ _____ / month
- Number of Months: _____

Yearly Gift Pledge:

- \$ _____ / year

3 HOW TO GIVE

- Cash
- Cheque (Payable to the *University of Alberta*)
- Direct Debit (Please Enclose a Void Cheque)
- Credit Card: Visa MasterCard AMEX

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiry Date: _____ / _____

Name on Card: _____

4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & RECOGNITION (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

- I/we wish our gift to remain **anonymous**. Please **do not** publish my/our name on donor recognition materials.
- I/we wish our gift to be acknowledged. Please print my/our name on donor recognition materials in the following manner:

THE CHESTER RONNING CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND PUBLIC LIFE focuses its work on a set of issues and themes that demand our attention whether or not we are religious. We invite you to become a *Friend of the Centre* and join the table of hospitality that brings depth and texture to the discussion of vital questions on points where religion, faith and public life intersect.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Gifts to the Ronning Centre have direct impact on the depth and breadth of the program we are able to offer each year. Gifts pledged over time help to stabilize our funding and plan into the future by providing us with the security we need to engage speakers, support research and publications and to expand our reach into the communities we seek to inform.

Sample Payment Schedule Based on a 3 Year Pay Period and 20% Initial Gift

* A gift of:	20% Initial gift	Monthly (36 payments)	Annually (3 payments)
\$2,000	\$400	\$44	\$533
\$4,000	\$800	\$89	\$1,067
\$6,000	\$1,200	\$133	\$1,600
\$8,000	\$1,600	\$178	\$2,133
\$10,000	\$2,000	\$222	\$2,667

* If you work for a company that matches charitable giving, you can maximize the value of your contribution by following your employer's matching gift procedures. Please contact your human resources office for further information.



5 DONOR INFORMATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

6 SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

My gift is in honour of (optional):

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Please **do not** notify the honorees of this gift.

Please notify the honorees that a gift has been made in their honor. *(Gift amount will not be included).*

Honoree's Address:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

The personal information requested on this form is collected under the authority of Section 33(c) of the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act for purposes of donor recognition initiatives at the University of Alberta. Any questions or concerns about the collection, use or disposal of this information should be directed to:

**FOIPP Liaison, Advancement Services, 3-501 Enterprise Square,
 University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB Canada T5J 4P6
 (ph) 780.492.8225 (f) 780.492.1862.
 Charitable Registration # 108102831RR0001**



Chester Ronning Centre
 for the Study of Religion and Public Life