Minutes of the Society for Ricoeur Studies Annual Meeting

October 30, 2009

Call to Order: President George Taylor

Introduction of Officers and Directors

George Taylor introduced the Officers and Directors: George Taylor, President; Dan Stiver, Vice-President; Roger Savage, Secretary-Treasurer; Scott Davidson, Editor; John Arthos, Webmaster; Directors Molly Mann (junior scholars and graduate students), Todd Mei (European relations); David Pellauer (relations with the Fonds Ricoeur); Charles Reagan (fundraising).

Old Business:

A. Post-conference Survey

Molly Mann incorporated a number of ideas into this year’s conference, including a panel with junior scholars responding to more senior scholars.

B. Fundraising Effort

Charles Reagan prepared a letter that was e-emailed to the Society’s membership. The Society retired its $3000 debt, which the Society incurred paying lawyer’s fees to incorporate the Society as a nonprofit.

C. Posting of Abstracts on Website

Scott Davidson has contacted presenters from past years to secure permission to post conference paper abstracts on the Society’s website. This effort is ongoing. Participants this year were asked to sign waivers granting permission to post conference paper abstracts on the website. Contact information for authors will also be published on the website.

D. Ricoeur Conference at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium.

Last fall, the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, held a four-day Ricoeur conference that provided a number of us an opportunity to meet and engage in greater interchange with our European colleagues. We also had the chance to introduce the Society and its work to these colleagues. European Ricoeur scholars are now much more aware of the Society’s efforts.

E. UK Conference

Last June, in a major effort, Todd Mei and cohorts organized a multi-day Ricoeur conference at the University of Kent. There were over 40 presentations with participants coming from 16 countries including not only the UK and Ireland but Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Russia, Turkey, and the U.S. High quality presentations reflecting diverse geographic interest in Ricoeur. One of the great benefits of the conference was a keynote presentation by Olivier Abel, who is a principal figure behind the Fonds Ricoeur in Paris. Oliver received a warm reception.

F. UK/Ireland Society for Ricoeur Studies

Todd subsequently organized a UK/Ireland Society for Ricoeur Studies that now has a working board of 8 members, including Todd.

George Taylor stated: “We’re greatly pleased that a number of presenters at Kent are joining us here in Arlington, and I want to introduce those from outside the US and Canada in a few minutes. I’ll also mention shortly the direction those at Kent decided to take to keep European Ricoeur conferences going in the future.

“I was delighted to participate in the Kent conference to appreciate first hand all of Todd’s work and witness the great work being done on Ricoeur. I also subsequently had the chance to meet in Paris with Olivier Abel and Catherine Goldstein, the lead organizer of the Fonds Ricoeur, to discuss further cooperation between our organization and the Fonds Ricoeur.”

G. Fonds Ricoeur

George announced that he learned in that conversation that the Fonds Ricoeur expects within the next few years to be making available online the Ricoeur bibliography compiled to this point by Frans Vansina in Belgium. As those who have looked at the Fonds Ricoeur website know, that site is already providing an update on the current Vansina volume as well as other bibliographic material.

H. Website

John Arthos has spent a great deal of time over the past year working to make the website structure more sound and productive. The wevbsite has been designed as a collaborative website. John gave a live demonstration of the current workings of the website including the PayPal and Amazon book purchases links. John explained that the Society receives a small percentage of sales from Amazon purchases made through the “Society’s website. John asked that member let him know books come out, and he will add them to the list. Members can write reviews to books by adding a comment. John also asked that he will add new links to related pages as members make him aware of them.

John and George explained the types of content that the Society is hoping to develop, which could include:

1. member information (possibly password-protected), with areas of research interest and expertise to facilitate use of each other as resources
2. conference abstracts (see C above)
3. an online, peer-edited journal
4. online discussions
5. teaching syllabi
6. information on graduate programs in different fields that support Ricoeur study;
7. links to the Fonds Ricoeur
8. links to other conferences and calls for papers
9. briefly annotated bibliographies for those new to Ricoeur, and for those looking to include Ricoeur texts in the course syllabi
10. related course syllabli

John and George welcomed other suggestions for developing the website, and asked that members contact either or both of them. George announced that the Society will be convening subcommittees to address individual issues.

I. Membership

George announced that the Society’s membership now totals 170 members.

J. Student Award

Although the award had already been announced, George offered public recognition to Sebastian Purcell for winning the 2008 graduate student award for his paper on: "Space and Narrative, or Enrique Dussel and Paul Ricoeur: the Missed Encounter." George awarded a certificate for Sebastian to honor his achievement.

New Business:

A. Announcements

1. Including participants in our conference and the SPEP Ricoeur session on Thursday morning, nearly 50 presenters on Ricoeur over three days. George commented that it is very exciting to see this growth and this development of Ricoeur scholarship.)
2. Thanks are owed to the panels committee for their efforts to put together the conference: Dan Stiver, chair; Boyd Blundell, Adam Graves; Greg Hoskins; Rebecca Huskey; Molly Mann; Todd Mei; Tim Maddox; Scott O’Leary; Roger Savage; and John Starkey. Although not formally members of the committee, Michael Johnson, Jim Sisson, and David Utsler helped with review of the abstracts as well.
3. Roger Savage undertook considerable efforts to work out the catering details with George Mason.
4. The Society will provide a $250 award for the graduate student paper at this year’s conference. We will send out a mailing to all graduate student participants for information on how to apply for consideration.
5. George welcomed those presenters coming from outside North America: Todd Mei, UK (board member UK/Ireland); Recep Alpyagil, Turkey; Eileen Brennan, Ireland (board member UK/Ireland); Chiara Chinello, Italy ; Annemie Halsema, Netherlands ; Gonçalo Marcelo, Portugal; Friedrich von Petersdorff, Germany. Two other international presenters had to withdraw at the last moment: Gabriela Castro, Azores; Cristal Huang, Taiwan. These participants represent nearly 25% of conference presenters, a figure we hope will escalate in coming years.
6. Those meeting in Kent decided to try to hold a Ricoeur conference annually in a different European country. A group of Ricoeur scholars from Portugal has taken on the challenge to hold a conference there this coming July and has been working assiduously already to make the conference a great success. We have with us one of the lead organizers of that conference, Goncalo Marcelo, who would like to say a few words about their plans:

Goncalo first commented on the beautiful conference in Canterbury. The conference he announced is to be held in Lisbon from, July 7-10, 2010. The call for papers will be published in a couple of weeks. The conference title is *Reading Ricoeur Once Again: Hermeneutics and Practical Philosophy*. The conference will be a bilingual (French and English) symposium, Ricoeur specialists and specialists from other areas of philosophy are being invited. Goncalo announced that Axel Honnadt has agreed to come.

1. Anna Boriskenova suggested that the conerence might be hosted in Russia the following year.
2. For those attending next weekend’s American Academy of Religion meeting in Montreal:

encourage attendance at a Ricoeur Session on Sunday, November 8, 2009: 3:00-4:30pm

Theme: Paul Ricoeur and Theology: The Hermeneutics of Texts and the Phenomenology of Experiences

Presiding: Jeffrey Keuss

Panelists: Michael De Lashmutt, Pamela Sue Anderson, and Dan Stiver.

At the end of the session, attendees will discuss the possibility of developing an annual panel on Ricoeur at the AAR.

1. George honored new scholarship among Society members and announced books on Ricoeur or hermeneutics:
2. John Arthos: *The Inner Word in Gadamer’s Hermeneutics*: a major contribution to Gadamer and hermeneutics scholarship;
3. Alison Scott-Baumann: *Ricoeur and the Hermeneutics of Suspicion*;
4. Boyd Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur: Between Theology and Philosophy*;
5. Scott Davidson has edited a forthcoming book entitled *Ricoeur Across the Disciplines*, where authors apply Ricoeur to a wide variety of academic contexts;
6. Rebecca Huskey: *Paul Ricoeur on Hope*;
7. Greg Johnson, a book on utopia;
8. Todd Mei, *Heidegger, Work, and Being*: a significant discussion of Ricoeur;
9. Roger Savage *Hermeneutics and Music Criticism*: Ricoeur is a central figure;
10. Dan Stiver: Life Together in the Way of Jesus Christ: uses Ricoeur and hermeneutics as an organizing model for his work;
11. Brian Treanor and Henry Venema: *Narrative Transformations*;
12. also forthcoming is a book Jay Mootz and George are editing asking contributors to bring Ricoeur and Gadamer into conversation. Several people here are participating in that effort.
13. Finally, another prospective book effort: as an outgrowth of the Kent conference, Todd has sent out a call for book submissions for a book to be entitled *From Ricoeur to Action: The Socio-Political Significance of Ricoeur’s Thinking*. Submissions are due by the middle of April next year. More details are available on the Society website.

B. Next year’s meeting:

SPEP is meeting in Montreal, co-hosted by McGill and Universite de Montreal. A date is not available in SPEP materials.

C. Relations with Fonds Ricoeur:

* 1. When George met with Olivier Abel and Catherine Goldenstein in the summer, they mentioned a particular interest in finding out those who would be interested in translating into English work by Ricoeur that is unpublished and available only in French; appears on Fonds Ricoeur website. Idea is to present the translations on the website also. If interested, please let George know.
  2. Olivier and Catherine also expressed an interested in the translation into English of the Francois Dosse biography of Ricoeur. Perhaps a collaborative effort among a team of translators would be possible.

D. Online journal: presentation by Scott Davidson

Scott explained that the Board has been discussing publishing a journal. There has been ongoing interest is a journal. There has been discussion about the type of journal that would meet the Society’s objectives, and the form of publication it should take. The journal will likely be tied to the Society’s website. Members must be willing to support this effort by submitting pieces for publication and by helping review articles and other submissions.

E. Lexington Press interest in publishing work on Ricoeur

Dan Stiver announced that Lexington Books had contacted us ahead of the meeting and were interested in the political theory SPEP session, and possibly an edited book on political theory, economics, and legal theory. Lexington Press is a publisher of work related to Ricoeur. If you have a submission for a book, email Dan and he will provide email contact information. George will include this announcement in his post-conference communication.

F. Discussion of current conference:

* 1. Timing of information: apologies for delays in announcement of dates. We had difficulty securing rooms at GMU over the summer;
  2. We will try to give more advance notice for foreign participants;
  3. Other changes: hold the conference at the end of the week; length/number of days; kinds of panels; etc.
     1. Possibility of 3 concurrent sessions, which would allow longer presentations. Some paper sessions could accommodate 30 minute papers;

ii) Too much overlap with SPEP, which didn’t allow sufficient SPEP attendance;

iii) Distance of conference from SPEP.

George noted that holding conference at a local would hotel would cost approximately $1000/room.

7. Other new business:

It would be useful to make available on website list of Ricoeur experts, who would be able to act as external reviewers of work or grant proposals.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger W. H. Savage

Secretary-Treasurer