

# The American Weil Society

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Wednesday, June 17, 2015

Dear Friends and Members of the American Weil Society:

Thank you for your patience in awaiting the circulation of this newsletter, post-colloquy 2015. On behalf of the American Weil Society, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Dr. Christine Ann Evans, our host at Lesley University this spring for the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual AWS Colloquy, in facilitating such a welcoming time and space for the discussion of Simone Weil's works and life around the theme of "religion and rootedness." (This year's colloquy schedule is included at the end of this letter.) Like all of our colloquies, I valued the rich, trans-disciplinary spirit of our recent meeting. Those of us who attended had a wonderful time in Cambridge, engaging in deep conversation about Weil, indulging ourselves in the local bookstores, enjoying fresh seafood, and of course, catching up with each other. A special 'thank you' to Dr. Benjamin Braude for introducing us to some of Weil's manuscripts in the Boris Souvarine archive at Harvard's Houghton Library and thus opening a new window onto her life that many of us did not know existed.

If you attended our business meeting on April 25, you know that our next (2016) colloquy will be somewhat different from recent meetings, in that we did not have (or find) a convenient university setting to host our next conference. So, after conversing with several members about ideal locations and after doing some searching for reasonable deals, I have just yesterday finalized plans for our next meeting. Here are the details for the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Colloquy of the American Weil Society:

Theme: "Hope in Exile"

Dates: April 15-16, 2016

Location: Drury Inn and Suites meeting room, downtown New Orleans, Louisiana

Registration fee: \$30 (to help cover costs of meeting room rental)

Rates at Drury Inn for single/double: \$199/night

Submission details: The deadline for submission of abstracts is January 15, 2016. As always, the theme ("Hope in Exile") is deliberately broad, so that Weil's religious, social, political, and/or ethical philosophy may be addressed under the heading. The proposals will be peer-reviewed by a committee consisting of the President (Rebecca Rozelle-Stone), Vice President (Tomeu Estelrich), and past President (Eric O. Springsted). Your proposal should be a paper abstract of 300-500 words, and prepared for anonymous review. Along with your proposal, please submit a separate cover page with your name, affiliation, paper/proposal title, and email address/contact information. Please also indicate on the cover page whether you will require special equipment for your presentation and whether you would be willing to serve as a moderator. Email these two documents (proposal and cover page) in MS Word format (.doc or .docx) or as PDF to Dr.

Rebecca Rozelle-Stone at [adrian.rozelle@email.und.edu](mailto:adrian.rozelle@email.und.edu) by January 15, 2016. Notification of acceptances will be made by January 31, 2016.

Other details: Drury Inn and Suites is in a great location in New Orleans— far enough from the nonstop activity of Bourbon Street and the French Quarter (4 blocks away) but close enough to be in easy walking distance to countless excellent restaurants. I will be sure to send out a list of restaurants in the area for those who would like to make reservations. In the meantime, here is the website of the hotel/meeting site:

<https://www.druryhotels.com/PropertyHotelServices.aspx?Property=0004>

I am not planning an official AWS banquet, or any other organized group activities, for this colloquy. New Orleans has so much to offer, and such a diversity of choices, I would like to allow participants maximal time to explore restaurants, museums, etc., according to their individual tastes, in the time that remains after paper sessions each day. Our meeting dates (April 15-16) will put us right after the French Quarter Festival (April 7-10, 2016) and just before the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival (April 22-May 1) for those who might want to extend their stay. More details on this meeting will be forthcoming, including a hotel conference code for reservations at the Drury Inn.

In other news from our April business meeting:

- Following my 2-year term as President, which expires in April 2016 per our bylaws, the presidency of the AWS will be transferred to Dr. Tomeu Estelrich. The board agreed that a longer term seems appropriate going forward, so Tomeu will serve a 3-year term. We are grateful for his willingness to serve in this capacity.
- We are currently issuing a call for nominations for the next Vice President of AWS, to begin serving in April 2016. The Vice President's term will also be extended from 2 to 3 years.
- Dr. Joe Cosgrove will continue to serve as Treasurer of AWS until 2017.
- Dr. Lucian Stone will be retiring as the AWS webmaster in April 2016. We are seeking interested individuals to replace him.
- AWS would like to remind its members to submit their original articles and essays on Simone Weil to the *Cahiers Simone Weil*.

Members, please send any/all nominations for the next AWS Vice President and Webmaster to me: [adrian.rozelle@email.und.edu](mailto:adrian.rozelle@email.und.edu) .

Finally, I want to draw your attention to two important new publications:

- Eric O. Springsted has curated, edited, and introduced a significant volume for Weil studies, *Simone Weil: Late Philosophical Writings*, to be published by University of Notre Dame Press in September 2015: <http://undpress.nd.edu/books/P03212#description>
- David Pollard has just published his book *The Continuing Legacy of Simone Weil* with Rowman & Littlefield (May 2015): <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9780761865742/The-Continuing-Legacy-of-Simone-Weil>

I hope everyone is enjoying a relaxing summer. Safe travels!

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American Weil Society 2015 Colloquy at Lesley University (Cambridge, MA)  
“Simone Weil: Religion and Rootedness”

**Friday, April 24**

Session I 8:30-9:45: Weil, Friendship, and Companionship

- A. “Friendship in the Thought of Weil and Aristotle: Cosmic and Political Rootedness,” Andra Striowski, University of Ottawa and Lawrence E. Schmidt, University of Toronto  
B. “Toward Attentive Companionship: The Anti-Colonial Poetry and Praxis of Simone Weil and Gustavo Gutiérrez,” Benjamin Davis, University of North Dakota

Session II 10:00-11:15: New states, utopias, postmodernity

- A. “L’enracinement: Modern, Postmodern, Premodern,” Dr. David A. Scott, William Meade Professor of Theology and Ethics, Retired, Virginia Theological Seminary  
B. “A Compromised Utopia: The Role of the State in Simone Weil’s The Need for Roots,” Scott Ritner, New School for Social Research

Session III 12:30-1:45: Weil and Education

- A. “Laic Education in the Formative Years of Weil’s Thought and Spinoza as its Source,” Noriko Sato, University of the Sacred Heart at the School of Medicine  
B. “Rooting Justice in Education,” Kazuaki Yoda, Independent Scholar

Session IV 2:00-3:15: Weil, the Material World, and Work

- A. “L’Enracinement: ‘The object of my research is not the supernatural... Earthly things are the criterion of spiritual things,’” E. Jane Doering, Univ. of Notre Dame  
B. “Nobody is Working for the Weekend: Connecting Weil’s Spirituality of Work and Luther’s Concept of Vocation,” Adam Pryor, Assistant Professor of Religion & Director of the Varenhorst Center for Discovery, Reflection, and Vocation, Bethany College

3:30-5:00 Houghton Library, Harvard University, visit to view Simone Weil manuscripts in Boris Souvarine archive

## **Saturday, April 25**

### Session I 9:00-10:15: Assessing Critiques of Weil

A. "Marseilles, April-May 1942: Simone Weil's 'Three Sons of Noah' and Her Conversion Narrative," Benjamin Braude, Boston College

B. "The Need for Roots... 72 Years Later," Bartomeu Estelrich, Boston College

Break 10:15-10:30

### Session II 10:30-11:45: Iris Murdoch and Weil

A. "'To Look Until One Exists No More': Iris Murdoch and Simone Weil on the Metaphysic and Ethic of Attention," Vance Morgan, Providence College

B. "What Does It Mean to Have an Inner Life? The Language of the Nuptial Chamber and the Language of the Marketplace," Eric O. Springsted, Interim Senior Pastor, Swarthmore Presbyterian Church and Librarian, The Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton, NJ

### Session III 1:00-2:15: Weil and the Existentialists

A. "Kissing the Earth: Dostoevsky and Simone Weil on Rootedness and the Eternal in Acquiescence to Individual Suffering," David Banach, St. Anselm College

B. "Simone Weil and Albert Camus: Finding One's Roots in a Plague-Stricken World," Robert Reed, Boston College

### Session IV 2:30-4:15: Roots, Religion, and Place

A. "Moral Chlorophyll: Simone Weil on Roots and Attention," Jacquelyn Maxwell, University of Western Ontario

B. "Seeing the Impersonal Leaves of a Sky-Rooted Tree: Tracing Hinduism in the Thought of Simone Weil," Mauricio Najarro, Graduate Theological Union

C. "Does Religion Have a Place?: Weil's World-Affirming Philosophy as an Antidote to Worldliness," Ian Clausen, Valparaiso University