

having faith or not still makes a fundamental difference. How ISCS might enhance the dialogue between scholars in academia and believers in the church remains a major challenge.

A related issue is: should the focus of Sino-Christian theology be put on just encouraging Christian studies, or should it aim at establishing a trend of thought? Seen from the result of Sino-Christian theology, it is more in the former than in the latter; ISCS has made a great contribution in this result. But should Sino-Christian theology be developed as be a theological trend and become a theological movement with its own foundational thought? There is much food for thought here.

Another question is: who is the subject of Sino-Christian theology? Scholars in Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and other overseas Chinese communities? The advantage of Tao Fong Shan is that it is situated in Hong Kong and has developed good relationships with scholars all over the world. Nevertheless, as there exist different life experiences among scholars, it is difficult to find a common theological thought and language. Chinese is not merely a linguistic medium, but

also a traditional resource and even a particular existential experience. Therefore the term “Sino” cannot erase the differences among the participants.

Sino-Christian theology emerges when the Word is experienced by individuals. From the history of Western thought, we know that the emergence of the concept of the individual owns a great deal to Christian thought. Whereas in China, the maturity of Christianity may require first the maturity of individual consciousness. In fact, “individual” is a concept developed in history and is still in the making. The full scope of its diversity yet to be seen. Therefore, the development of Sino-Christian theology does not only rely on its own internal dynamic, but also how it develops in the context.

In spite of everything, Sino-Christian theology has developed its own history and unique features. The marvelous result is obvious. Although there exist different kinds of issues, that could be seen as a natural consequence of its own history. How to deal with it depends greatly on circumstances of the context. ■

Academic Programs

Retreat Camp for Graduate Students from China 2006

The fourth Retreat Camp for Graduate Students from China was launched and organized by ISCS on 17 February, 2006. The event aimed at “promoting communication, stimulating reflection, sharing experience and fostering spirituality.” More than twenty students and scholars from Hong Kong Baptist University, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shandong University and the visiting students at ISCS, were invited and attended the programs and academic lectures.



After participated in some get-to-know social games, the students discussed their experiences, problems and ideas of the research process in four different groups. These groups were arranged according to different academic fields: systematic theology, philosophy of religion, biblical studies and comparative studies on religions and cultures. Students shared their research proposals or papers in each group, generated

heated discussions, and made friendly comments. Guest scholars were invited to share their valuable opinions and suggestions to the students at the end of the session.

In the afternoon, three visiting professors from Mainland China, Prof. ZHANG Qingxiong (Fudan University), Prof. YANG Huilin (Renmin University) and Prof. WANG Lu (Tsinghua University), delivered lectures on the topic “Sino-Christian Theology from the Distinction between the Human Sciences and Natural Sciences”. They elaborated the relationship between different sciences, philosophy and theology, the Sino-Christian Theology movement and modern Christian ecumenism, focused on the similarities and differences of their objects, issues, methods, limitation and objectives. In addition, they proposed the possibility of promoting more mutual interaction. Finally, they articulated their own opinions and comments on the future significance and direction of Sino-Christian Theology. Dr. CHOONG Chee Pang from Singapore and the research fellows of ISCS, Dr. Keith Chan and Dr. Jason



Lam, also joined the discussion and responded to questions raised by the participants. ■

Tao Fong Lecture

Immanent and Economic Trinity: The Trinitarian Theology of Karl Barth and Thomas F. Torrance

Dr. ZHANG Xuefu was invited to present a lecture on "The Trinitarian theology of Karl Barth and Thomas F. Torrance" on 2 May, 2006 at Tao Fong Shan. Prof. Zhang is a well-known scholar in the area of early Church Fathers and Greek philosophy. In this lecture, Zhang linked the thought of two modern theologians with two Greek church fathers.

Zhang began by pointing out that the first principle for modern Christian theology is the Trinity, and he briefly described the meaning of immanent and economic Trinity. The latter mainly refers to the revealed divine persons and the historical saving action in history. The former indicates the interrelationship between Father, son and Spirit. This distinction started with the thought of Irenaeus and Tertullian. Zhang noted that, in Torrance's understanding, the immanent Trinity is always the basis of the economic, although both of them are interrelated. The immanent Trinity represents the dynamic dimension of the Godhead, while the economic Trinity reveals the Being of this Godhead. However, the most important point is that the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity. It is not possible for us to comprehend the immanent God without the economy of His saving act. The immanent God must at the same time reveal Himself in his economic action. That is what Barth claimed: God's Being is His Act. Zhang also pointed out that Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa would comprehend the *ousia* of God from the perspective of hypostasis. God's "One" is His "Three". There is only one revelation and love, not two.



The participants raised some meaningful questions for Zhang, such as: about the distinction and differences between Barth and Torrance in their discussion of the Trinity; if the Being of God has ontological priority over the act of God, what can the "Act" of God contribute to the Being of God? These are questions worthy of a more thorough discussion. ■

The Eighth Annual Conference of the Fellowship of Hong Kong Theologians

The eighth annual conference of the Fellowship of Hong Kong Theologians was held at Tao Fong Shan on 19 June, 2006. The theme of this year was "Bible / Scripture". Papers presented by the participants investigated the theological value and functions of the Bible from the perspective of dogmatics and hermeneutics. ISCS visiting scholars from Mainland China also joined the event and had fruitful dialogue with other participants. The topics of the papers presented were as follows:



Dr. CHAN Kwong-pui

Wu Leichuan's View of the Bible

Prof. Andres S. K. TANG

Memory, Text, Praxis: Jürgen Moltmann's Theology of Hope

Dr. CHAN Sze Chi

The Inerrancy of the Bible and the Future of Christianity

Prof. LAI Pan-chiu

A Mahayanna View of the Bible and Biblical Theology

Dr. Jason LAM

The Relation between Narrative, Biblical Intertextuality and Interpreting Tradition: an Important Dimension Analyzing Paul Ricoeur's Thought

Prof. Peter K. H. LEE

Issues in the Development of Sino-Christian Theology from the perspective of Post-liberal Narrative Theology ■

