

Mark. At the same time, Kenzo Tagawa published his five-volume *Annotated New Testament* and has more recently published *Works on the New Testament*, a critical commentary on the merits and drawbacks of New Testament translations into different languages. Further, Sadao Kawashima's *Gospel of Mark: Jesus' Road to the Cross* (1996) and Akira Ogawa's *Theology of the Gospel of Mark* – all constitute works of excellence in the field of New Testament studies. Another point to note is that many of the Japanese biblical commentaries are highly specialized, such as Katsumi Takizawa's three-volume *Reading the Bible: Exposition of the Gospel of Matthew*. In order to better understand the situation of Japanese biblical studies from an insider perspective, I audited courses in the School of Theology at Doshisha on "Biblical Theology" and "The Gospel according to Matthew" held by Professors Ritsu Ishikawa and Moriyoshi Murayama. Overall, both had been influenced by German literary criticism, English historical criticism and similar methodologies. In other words, contemporary Japanese biblical research must digest the academic achievements of Euro-American biblical studies, which is also one of the difficulties confronting Sino-Christian theology.

In contrast to biblical studies, Japanese studies in philosophy of religion have taken shape since World War II in the tradition represented by scholars such as Kitaro Nishida, Seiichi Hatano, Hajime Tanabe and Keiji Nishitani, even giving rise to scholars such as Tatsuo Koike who advocated the integration of Christianity and Buddhism. His Theology of Emptiness deserves the attention of scholars in Sino-Christian theology. Other scholars such as those at Tokyo University's Department of Philosophy and Religion have systematically promoted Eastern aesthetics research.

2. Thoughts on the Japanese Church

Japanese translations of Christian classics have been very successful. Important works, from the Complete Works of Augustine to the 18-volume Collected Works of Karl Barth have already been published. At one point, the distribution of the Bible in Japan took third place worldwide, just after Great Britain and the United States. The fact that so many Japanese are reading the Bible should not go unnoticed by Chinese academics. And yet, the scope and intensity of biblical research does not compare to that of biblical studies in Europe or the USA, one reason being that the Christian population of Japan is relatively small. It constitutes only 0.7% of the total population, not even one million people. Most Christians are elderly, and

the congregations of many churches are shrinking, resulting in an atmosphere of discouragement. Churches will likely have to be consolidated in the future. During my three-month stay, I mostly visited the services of the Kyoto Peace Church. Among the 40 or 50 believers who joined together for prayer, fewer than 10% were young people.

This spiritual condition has a lot to do with the flourishing of the Shinto faith in Japan, in which most festivals of daily life have their origins. Japan is a pantheistic society: most Japanese visit a shrine after birth, marry in a Christian church (non-Christians, too), and are buried in a Buddhist graveyard. The Emptiness of the Hōryū-ji Buddha Temple, the Flower Garden of Nara, the Zen Garden of the Golden Pavilion (Rokuonji) and of the Silver Pavilion... the rich symbolism in the traditional architecture of the Imperial Palace (in the sense of Daoist philosophy), the short-lived bloom of the beautiful cherry blossom; the cheerful industriousness of the Japanese and their passion for Impressionism, the throngs of people buying books in antique shops every evening: all these left a deep impression on me. Japanese society experienced the transformation from modernity to post-modernity beginning in the 1980s. In the digitalization, urbanization and consumerization the transformation to postmodernism is already complete. But other historical processes of individualization, humanism and spiritualization as experienced in the West in Japan developed into individualism, Japanism and spiritualism. This form of spirituality embraces faith in many gods, a true love of art and the pursuit of education.

Based on the aforementioned observations of Japanese society, the church and academia, the author, besides writing "Divine Logic" (a chapter of *The Logic of the New Testament Worldview: The Gospel of Mark*), was also able to finish writing some articles, namely "Translation and Theology of the Lord's Prayer", "A Portrait of the Japanese Spirit: From Restlessness to Tranquility", "Three Concerns in Conceptual Art", "The Truth of Fiction", as well as arrange for publication "A Genealogy of English Bible Translations". Thanks to the support of ISCS under its programme for "Overseas Academic Exchanges", not only was I able to test the conclusions I put forward in my *Logic of Japanese History* (1996), I was also greatly encouraged to conduct New Testament studies in Sino-Christian theology. Our three-month research stay was like the short bloom of the cherry blossom in Kyoto in the month of April, but my deep gratitude and appreciation will last a life-time.

(The Essay section is translated by Naomi Thurston)

Special Report

ISCS Research Fellow Visited Prof. Stackhouse

Prof. XIE Zhibin of Tongji University (ISCS research fellow in China) visited Pittsburgh Theological Seminary from Dec. 2013 to Feb. 2014. During his stay in Pittsburgh, he traveled to Massachusetts to visit Prof. Max Stackhouse (Professor Emeritus, Princeton Theological Seminary, an



eminent contemporary public theologian). Prof. Stackhouse visited ISCS in 2006 when he attended a conference in Hong Kong and offered great support to the academic work of ISCS in various ways. As a member of the academic committee for the "Public Theology Series", Prof. Stackhouse initiated this project and has contributed much. During the meeting they discussed issues on the social and political contexts of Christianity in China and the development of public theology in Chinese academia.

Farewell to Former Director Board Member Prof. Zimmerman

Prof. Theodore Zimmerman was born in China in 1948. In the 1950s, his family moved to Tao Fong Shan, where he



spent his childhood. He studied theology in the USA and worked in Taiwan from 1980 to 1989. After that he pursued

and obtained his doctorate in biblical studies in the USA and has been teaching in the Hong Kong Lutheran Theological Seminary since 1993. Since 2004 Prof. Zimmerman has been a member of the ISCS director board and became the chairperson in 2011. In June 2014 he retired and returned to the USA. ISCS held a farewell banquet for Prof. and Mrs. Zimmerman on 9 May 2014. On behalf of ISCS our associate publishing officer Billy YAN (who was a student of Prof. Zimmerman) presented him a gift – a Hong Kong double-decker bus model. Prof. Zimmerman smiled and said, “The Cantonese pronunciation of ‘the bus is coming’ is just like that of the Greek word ‘βασιλέα’ (the kingdom of God).”

Academic Activities

Conferences hosted by the Koinonia of Chinese Theologians



The Koinonia of Chinese Theologians hosted two conferences in the first half of 2014. The first time was on 6 Jan. 2014 at Hong Kong Bible Seminary on the topic “On Affection and Love”; the second time was on 9 June 2014 at the Applied Theological Education Centre, Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary on the topic “Theological Diversity and Ecclesial Unity”. Our research fellow Prof. Jason Lam participated in the two events and convened parts of the conferences as the secretary of the Koinonia. About 30 participants joined each event, including scholars from academia and within the church.

Conference on the Russian-Chinese Orthodox Lexicon

On 13 Jan. 2014 ISCS hosted a working conference for the Russian-Chinese Orthodox Lexicon. This project started



in the latter half of 2009 with the founding committee including Prof. ZHANG Baichuan of Beijing Normal University, Prof. XU Fenglin of Peking University, Prof. DAI Guiju of Beijing Language and Culture University, Prof. LIN Jinghua of Capital Normal University and ISCS director Daniel Yeung. Prof. Dai later withdrew from the project due to her heavy workload. We established a translation committee with the help of our guest research fellow Fr. Dionisy Pozdnyaev. He invited Sinologists

and theologians from Russia in order to assist in the translation work. The project has lasted for more than four years, and this meeting was the last working conference. The publication of the lexicon is planned for the near future.

Visiting Scholars from Nanzan University

On 18 Feb. 2014 the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture of Nanzan University from Japan visited ISCS. The seven visitors included Prof. KIM Sueng Chul, Dr. Paul Swanson, Dr. Naoko Frances HIOKI; we held a seminar for exchanging ideas. Director Daniel Yeung welcomed the guests, and research fellow Prof. Jason Lam introduced to them the contemporary situation of Christian studies in China and the ministry of ISCS. Dr. Swanson and Prof. Kim also introduced their institute and the contemporary situation of Christian studies in Japan. Both sides expressed hope to strengthen further exchange and cooperation.



Research Fellow visited Universities in East China

During 19-25 Feb. 2014 research fellow Prof. Jason Lam was invited to attend conferences and deliver lectures in Wenzhou, Nanjing and Shanghai. The Centre for Christian Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences established a research institute in the newly built Wenzhou



Christian Church Liushi Tang. This is the first academic unit jointly set up by both the church and academia in Mainland China. The opening ceremony of the church was hosted during 19-20 Feb. 2014, and the research institute took the chance to hold an academic conference on “Religious Mercy and Social Care”. About 50 participants from the church and academia in China and Hong Kong joined the event. Prof. Lam delivered a paper on “Can Religious Mercy enhance Social Care?” on behalf of ISCS.

After the conference Prof. Lam visited Nanjing University. On 21 Feb. he gave a talk on “Historical Narrative and Identity Configuration” in an afternoon seminar for history and philosophy research students. In the evening he delivered a lecture on “Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences” for undergraduates. Then Prof. Lam visited Shanghai for teaching his doctoral students. Apart from that he was invited to share on the topic of “Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences” for the staff of the Shanghai University Counseling Center on 24 Feb., and they had a good discussion on the change of the students’ understanding of religion in recent years.

“From Baiyun Shan to Lion Rock” Theological Seminar

In the year 2014 the Presbyterian Church has developed theological education in China for 150 years. The Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China and the Divinity School



of the Chinese University of Hong Kong hosted a theological seminar titled “From Baiyun Shan to Lion Rock: In Search of the Theology of the Church of Christ in China” during 3-4 Mar. 2014. Many renowned scholars from the church and academia in Hong Kong were invited, including Rev. Prof. Archie Lee (Professor Emeritus of CUHK), Prof. YING Fuk Tsang and Prof. Simon Kwan (Director and Associate Director of the Divinity School, CUHK), Rev. Prof. Carver Yu (President Emeritus of the China Graduate School of Theology), Rev. Prof. Joshua Cho (President of Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary), Rev. Prof. Fai LUK (President of Bethel Bible Seminary). ISCS research fellow Prof. Jason Lam was also invited to be one of the speakers. He read a paper on “Searching and Reflecting on Local Theology: In Search of the Theology of the Church of Christ in China”.

Public Lecture by Prof. ZHANG Baichun

On 11 Mar. 2014, ISCS visiting scholar Prof. ZHANG Baichun from the School of Philosophy and Sociology at Beijing Normal University was invited by the Centre for the Study of Religion and Chinese Society at the Chinese University of Hong Kong to deliver a lecture on “The Confucian Rite and the Orthodox Ritual”. He pointed out the role of ritual in the revival of the Orthodox faith, and reflected on the significance of rite in the Confucian tradition. ISCS distinguished professor

Dr. Milton Wan responded to the lecture. Prof. Panchiu Lai and Prof. YING Fuk Tsang of CUHK also participated in the event and had idea exchanges with Prof. Zhang.



The Visit of Scholars from Tokyo Union Theological Seminary

On 20 Mar. 2014, the visiting group of Tokyo Union Theological Seminary including Prof. Heon-wook Park, Prof. Takayasu Yamaguchi, Prof. Jansen A. Wayne with 8 graduate students



came to ISCS. A seminar was held and chaired by Director Daniel Yeung. Research Fellow Prof. Jason Lam talked on “Contemporary Christian Studies in China”, and the guests shared with us the contributions of Tokyo Union Theological Seminary to Japanese theology and society. We are grateful that CUHK visiting scholar Dr. Yosuke Matsutani helped to provide interpretation for the event. After the seminar both sides had a discussion on the translation project of Prof. Kazoh Kitamori’s Theology of the Pain of God, which will be included in ISCS Chinese Academic Library of Christian Thought.

Research Fellow Visited Universities in Central China

From 29 Mar. to 3 Apr. 2014, research fellow Prof. Jason Lam was invited to visit universities in Kaifeng and Wuhan.



Prof. Lam visited Henan University during 29-31 Mar. He delivered a lecture on “Paul Ricoeur on the Constitution of Narrative Identity” at the School of Literature and met Prof. LIANG Gong and other scholars at the Institute for the Study of Biblical Literature.

During 1-3 Apr. Prof. Lam stayed in Wuhan. He visited the Department of Philosophy at Huazhong University of Science and Technology and discussed about future cooperation with ISCS. He delivered a lecture on “From Autonomy back to Theonomy? On the Return of the Sacred in the Post-Enlightenment Era” on 1 Apr. Prof. Lam also visited the Institute of European and American Religion and Culture the next day and met Prof. ZHAO Lin and other scholars.

Visiting Scholars from the United Board for Christian Higher Education

The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia organizes a summer institute in Hong Kong for young



scholars from Asia every year. On 13 Jun. 2014 some of the speakers and participants of the institute this year visited ISCS. The visiting group consisted of more than ten people from India, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, etc. ISCS held a half-day seminar chaired by Director Daniel Yeung. Research fellow Prof. Jason Lam introduced to them the contemporary Christian studies in China and ISCS's ministry. ISCS visiting scholar Dr. CHEN Bin, lecturer of Sociology from Hunan Normal University, shared with the guests his own experience in teaching and researching Christianity in Mainland China.

Internal Seminar for Visiting Scholars and Students in Spring 2014

From Jan. to June 2014, a series of seminars was held for visiting scholars and students to provide a chance for academic discussion and supervision. The topics of the presented papers are as follows:

Name	University	Position	Topic
YANG Junjie	Beijing Normal University	Associate Professor	Myth and Religion: Tillich on Martin Buber
LI Feng	Capital Normal University	Professor	Poetic Theology
ZHANG Lixin	Yunnan University of Nationalities	Professor Emeritus	Concept of Reasoning on Chinese Scripture and the Bible
ZHAO Ze	East China Normal University	Master student	The Eucharist in Luther's Theology
TIAN Qi	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences	Doctoral student	A Case Study of Beijing Longquan Monastery's Social Care
LIU Weidong	Wuhan University	Doctoral student	On the Enlightenment
SEOK Gui Hee	Fudan University	Doctoral student	Comparison between Jayuming and Piaoyunshan on their Biblical Views and Interpretations
REN Zuodong	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences	Master Student	On the Natural and Supernatural
Tatiana Fomitcheva	Renmin University of China	Doctoral Student	On Russian Orthodox Translation of the New Testament in Chinese

Academic Exchange

The Visiting Group from Presbyterian University and Seminary in Seoul

On 13 Jan. 2014 the visiting group of Presbyterian University and Seminary from Seoul including Prof. Sung-Bihn YIM, Prof. Jye-Gil KO and Dr. Dongchuan LI came to ISCS. In the last few years Director Daniel Yeung and Prof. Jason Lam participated in the conference between China, Korea and Japan at the Presbyterian University and Seminary. Thus it was our pleasure that the Korean friends could visit us. Director Yeung and Prof. Lam introduced to them ISCS's ministry and the contemporary situation of Sino-Christian studies, and they also discussed the possibilities of future cooperation. ISCS visiting scholar Dr.



GAO Zhe from Minzu University and Korean visiting student SEOK Gui Hee also joined the discussion.



The Visiting Group from Shantou City

On 17 Jan. 2014, a visiting group of ten people from Shantou city led by the deputy mayor ZHAO Hong came to Tao Fong Shan. ISCS director Daniel Yeung, research fellow Prof. Jason Lam, director of Tao Fong Shan Christian Centre Dr. Jeff Hsu, president of Lutheran



Theological Seminary Prof. Simon CHAO, Prof. Nicholas Tai and Theodore Zimmerman welcomed the guests. They introduced to the visiting group the ministries of the respective institutes on Tao Fong Shan. The guests also shared with us the development in Shantou City and the religious situation.

The Visit of Prof. David Jasper from Renmin University of China

On 1 Apr. 2014 Prof. David Jasper from Renmin University of China visited ISCS. Prof. Jasper is originally a senior faculty member of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Glasgow in Britain. It is our pleasure that he agreed to become our guest professor to lecture in China, and we expect more dialogue between scholars

in the two countries in the future. Prof. John Lai from the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies at CUHK also visited us on the same day with their colleague. He has been working closely with our publication department.



Academic Research



Visiting Scholars

From Jan. to June 2014, ISCS hosted 8 visiting scholars:



Prof. YANG Junjie stayed at ISCS from Jan. to Mar. 2014. Prof. Yang is currently associate professor of Beijing Normal University. During his visit he collected materials for the research topic “A New Interpretation of ‘Paul Tillich and China’” and finished an article titled “Kai Perisson

Echōsin: An Interpretation of John 10:10b”. In addition, Prof. Yang suggested two research projects: editing the theme “50th Anniversary of Tillich’s Death” for *Logos & Pneuma* and translating Tillich’s writings on religious socialism.

Prof. ZHANG Baichun stayed at ISCS from Jan. to Mar. 2014. Prof. Zhang is currently professor of Beijing Normal University. The major aim of his visit was to participate in the working conference for the Russian-Chinese Orthodox Lexicon with other scholars from China and Russia. He also collected materials for the research topic “The Orthodox Tradition of Spiritual Practice: Horujy’s Reconstruction of Hesychasm” and “The Concept of Experience in the Orthodox Tradition”. In Feb. Prof. Zhang traveled to Guangzhou and lectured on “The Bible and the Transmission of Western Thought”. On 11 Mar. Prof. Zhang delivered a public lecture on “The Confucian Rite and the Orthodox Ritual” in the Chinese University of Hong Kong. During his visit, Prof. Zhang met Prof. Milton Wan, Prof. Ying Fuk-Tsang and Prof. Pan-chiu Lai of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.



Prof. XU Fenglin stayed at ISCS in Jan. 2014. Prof. Xu is currently professor of religious studies at Peking University. The major aim of his visit is to participate in the working conference for the Russian-Chinese Orthodox Lexicon with other scholars from China and Russia.

Dr. QU Xutong stayed at ISCS in Feb. 2014. Dr. Qu is currently lecturer of the School of Philosophy and Sociology at Beijing Normal University. During his visit Dr. Qu collected materials for his topic “Karl Barth’s Theology” and finished a paper on “Karl Barth’s Political Theology”. On 18 Feb. Dr. Qu was invited to host a seminar on “Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis” at Hong Kong Baptist University.



Prof. LI Feng stayed at ISCS from Feb. to May 2014. Prof. Li is currently professor of Capital Normal University. During her visit she collected materials for the research topic “Christianity and British Romantic Poetry: From ‘Olney Poets’ to ‘Coleridgean Victorian Poetry’” and finished a draft of her paper “‘Poetic Theology’ in the Chinese Context”. Prof. Li also visited Prof. Ying Fuk-Tsang and Prof. Pan-chiu Lai of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

