

that Christian Studies in Mainland China bring fresh ideas to the issues of social welfare, social transformation and morality. It would enrich the pluralistic culture and society in China on the whole.

Most interviewees recognize the positive effect on their spirituality from the academic study of Christianity. Some interviewees committed to the Christian faith because of their studies. Some others though not converted are more open to the transcendence and religiousness of life. There is still another group of interviewees caught in the tension between Chinese traditions and Christian culture especially when they strive for the personal transcendence and spiritual contemplation. To them, Christian faith is appealing, but they are seeking some solution in the tension.

Through these interviews, I find a close relationship between scholars' attitude to Christianity and their professional training. Generally speaking, Marxist scholars usually hold a more indifferent or even alienated attitude towards Christianity. At the same time, few of these scholars have commitment to Christian Faith. Secondly, the research of the younger generation often engages directly with

theology instead of doing their research from other humanistic approaches as the older generation did. Therefore there are more younger scholars who commit to the Christian faith and the relationship between Christianity and traditional Chinese culture is one of their major concerns. Thirdly, I feel that most scholars do not just regard their studies of Christianity as a job. They often show a kind of care which extends to the spirituality of human being, and to Chinese society, ecosystem, environmental problems and moral issues, etc.

Although we can find some common ground of the young scholars through this survey, this is a not a comprehensive one due to the limited number of samples. We also could hardly draw any decisive conclusions on the trend of scholars of Christian studies in Mainland China. But it is worth mentioning that during the interview many scholars agreed that it is a time to do a larger survey. It is because we now have had enough resources to carry out such a survey so as to draw some conclusions from the past twenty or more years. Furthermore, it would also be beneficial to the future development.

The Fifth Tao Fong Literary Prize

For encouraging Christian studies in the academia of Mainland China, ISCS established the "Paul Hsu Prize" and the "Reichelt Prize" since 1999 for high-quality theological theses and translated works respectively. In 2008, the result of the fifth Tao Fong Literary Prize was announced. All participating titles must be related to academic studies of Christianity from any perspective and are published in Mainland China from 2004 to 2007. The committee of recommendation was founded by 19 young scholars from different higher institutes in Mainland China, and three monographs and three translated works were recommended by each scholar. The committee of final judgment is responsible for selecting the best one from the recommended list. In 2008, the members of the committee of final judgment include Prof.

LI Tiangang (Fudan University), Prof. LI Qiuling (Renmin University of China), Prof.

GAO Shining (CASS), Prof. Milton Wan (CUHK), Prof. ZHUO Xinping (chairperson of this prize, CASS), Prof. LAI Pan-chiu (CUHK), Prof. LIN Hongxin (Taiwan Theological Seminary), Prof. BAO Limin (Zhejiang University), Prof.

CHIN Ken Pa (Chung Yuan Christian University) and Prof. FU Youde (Shandong University). The following two books won the prizes and speeches of the author and translator are listed below.

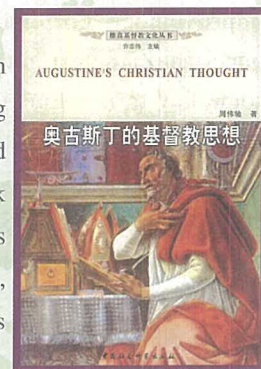
Paul Hsu Prize for Theological Thesis

ZHOU Weichi, *The Christian Thought of Augustine* (Beijing: China Social Science Press, 2005)

In the ocean of information today, a book is just like a drifting bottle. The chance for it to be picked up is really low. However, the book *Augustine's Christian Thought* is not only being read by some people, but also brings back a prize for its author. It is really a happy surprise.

It would rather be rated as praise for Augustine's genius than an encouragement for an ordinary author. Augustine, a remote great star, at last shed his bright light into the modern Chinese world after 1600 years, through the gravitational fields of geography, language, culture and bias.

If there is something deserving to be read in this book, then it is because the author treats Augustine's thought like a person knocking a walnut, shelling off its hard rind of philosophical terms, and taking out its soft nucleus. Church



fathers and scholastic philosophers were immersed in the Greek philosophical tradition. They had to use the hard-shelled philosophical terms, but the contents they expressed were still doctrines of living faith. Similarly, sometimes the Neo-Confucians used Buddhist or Daoist terms to express their own Confucian thoughts.

It will be difficult for us to understand the written words of ancient thinkers unless we know their life, because at that time philosophy was still a kind of practice, not a discipline in a modern university. Thus through their life stories and experiences, putting their thoughts back into their contexts, reconstructing the lively transformation of these thoughts, will be useful for us to understand their basic beliefs. At that time they were fishes, not fish fossils. Augustine, as “the first modern man” among the ancients, is not a lofty dead body, but a lively common person, as you can know when you open any page of his books.

I see myself as a researcher of Christian thought. To my object my attitude is “to understand sympathetically, to analyze objectively”. It is similar to the attitude of any modern scholar when he studies other religions, such as Buddhism or Islam.

There are still some regrets in my book. My understanding of Chinese philosophy and Christian theology was not profound enough when I wrote it, so unavoidably there were some mistakes and shortcomings when I narrated and explained Augustine. The expression form also needs improvement. For example, I should have added some important Latin text in the footnotes to help the reader grasp some key terms. Luckily most of these problems can be solved in the forthcoming second edition.

Lastly, I would like to thank Mr. Daniel Yeung and Dr. Keith Chan of ISCS, all the members of the committee overseas and in Mainland China, Prof. Edwin Hui of Regent College, Prof. ZHUO Xinping of the Institute of World Religions, for their support and care.

Reichelt Prize for Translated Work

WEI Yuqing trans. (written by Karl Barth), *Der Römerbrief* (Shanghai: East Central Normal University Press, 2005)

The Reichelt Prize for translated work set up by ISCS is aimed at encouraging the development of academic translation. Thanks must be due to the encouragement of the academic committee of my work on *Der Römerbrief*!

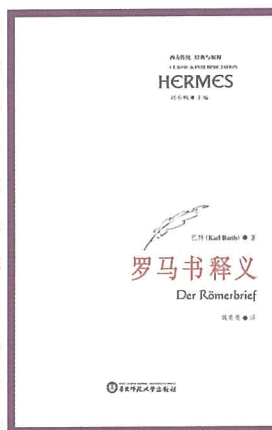
My academic area is in German literature. My daily

work is greatly different from scholars whose mother language is German – translation is a large part of the working constituents. I was fortunate to have worked on *Der Römerbrief*, especially when I knew that it is greatly significant to modern Christian thought. Therefore I spent much of the time in more than one year to translate this magnum opus and to overcome the various difficulties encountered. Looking back today, I found happiness in the bitter process like dancing with handcuffs.

In the process there were problems related to the characteristics of the original translated languages. To those who hold an idealistic view, Chinese is not an inflected language, lacks regular changes and is context dependent. German as the original language of the work is much “harder”. When translated into the “softer” Chinese some originally necessary elements may be seen as “over abundant”. This simplistic tradition of Chinese language is also found in the union translation of the Chinese Bible. When Barth elaborated some points through interpreting the Bible, he was dealing with some words omitted by this Chinese edition. If we want to use an authoritative version of scriptural quotation in translation, then translators really found themselves “dancing with handcuffs”. In this translated work all quotations are from the union version, but in fact this is not only different from Barth’s one, it also exhibits cultural distance from contemporary readers. In this situation we are forced to make supplementary interpretation on one hand and avoid too much differentiation from Barth’s original meaning.

Fortunately this tension is only felt in a comparative perspective. Although Chinese is “soft”, it still observes some “principles”, despite that they are not the same as German inflection. They may not be easily perceived on the surface but must be practiced in the sentences in a logical and structural way. Whether we are used to these expressions and whether we need to retain every original expression are other questions, but there are plenty of examples in *Der Römerbrief* that we may retain the original “meanings” despite neglecting some of the “forms”.

Translation is a trans-languages and cross-cultural exchange process. Shall we emphasize the possibility of



communication while neglecting the cultural characteristics, or shall we focus on the interferences of cultural elements? There are truly cultural hindrances in translating this book. It is difficult to translate the Chinese term “ren” (仁) into German; likewise in Der Römerbrief terms like “Treue” and “Gerechtigkeit” if translated into “xin” (信) and “yi” (義) may lead toward too much interpretation in the Chinese readers’ mind, not complying with the original meanings. It is really difficult for a translator to repeat the original meaning of an ambiguous term with its context.

Academic Programs

Seminar for Biblical Studies

One recent focus in developing Sino-Christian theology is on biblical studies. For the sake of nourishing new scholars, ISCS invited Prof. YEE Tet-lim as visiting scholar. Prof. YEE is a New Testament scholar, who obtained his Ph.D. from Durham University, UK under the supervision



of James Dunn. Apart from doing research, Prof. YEE conducted two New Testament seminars for our visiting students. They provided an introduction to academic studies on NT and a survey of recent advanced topics. These seminars lasted for four months and are the first and important step towards the establishment of New Testament studies in Mainland China.

Conference of “The Global Development of Christianity in the 21st Century and the Dialogue with Chinese Culture”

Director Daniel Yeung was invited to participate in the opening ceremony of the “Institute of Religious Culture in Europe and America” at Wuhan University from 9 to 11 December. ISCS cooperated with this institute and the department of philosophy of Wuhan University to hold the conference of “The Global Development of Christianity

In the translation process I have tried hard to overcome these problems, but many are still unresolved. There are many imperfections in this work and it is not worthy of a prize. These are not words of humility but from my heart. Although in translating this theological classic there were difficulties, I enjoyed the spiritual happiness. I hope to continue make a contribution in this enterprise. Thanks to your positive responses and the encouragement of ISCS!



in the 21st Century and the Dialogue with Chinese Culture”. There were one round



table discussion and six seminars on special topics. 20 more participants came from Mainland China and Hong Kong and were veterans and old friends in this field. Daniel held a seminar on “Research Proposals of Sino-Christian Theology” in the event.

Internal Seminar with Overseas Partners

This seminar was held in 30 October 2008 in Tao Fong Shan. Over 30 guests including foreign professors from Lutheran Theologian Seminary and other scholars from Hong Kong and Macau were invited. Visiting scholars and students also participated in the discussion. Prof. Dr. YEE Tet-lim from Malaysia presented a paper on “Doing Theology with(out) a Text? The Promise of

