

REPORT OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON “SCRIPTURAL REASONING AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE” (2014-15)

From August 2014 up to now, the Research Committee on “Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Literature” has held the following activities to foster and support the spirit and thinking of Scriptural Reasoning (SR) among Chinese scholars.

1. September 22-25, 2014, the Committee organized the 10th “Theology and Humanity” Summer Institute and a roundtable in the 20th Congress of Chinese Comparative Literature. The theme of the roundtable and Summer Institute was “Comparative Literature and Religious Studies”. About twenty-four scholars from the UK, USA, France and mainland China presented their papers and discussed them in Yanbian, Jilin Province.
2. October 15, 2014, a special seminar was organized by the Committee in honor of German theologian Jürgen Moltmann, who dialogued with Chinese and British scholars on political theology and hope theology.
3. April 20-22, the Committee co-sponsored an international symposium with the School of Arts of Renmin University of China on “East-West Art: Contemporary Development”. The symposium seeks to practice Scriptural Reasoning in the arts, philosophy, and literature by gathering artists and philosophers with different faith interests and presenting diverse artistic forms and lively academic dialogues on spirituality and art. An exhibition entitled “Between Worlds: East-West Contemporary Art & Research Exhibition” was held simultaneously. One session of the symposium was even held in the gallery. The topics of the symposium covered a wide range, from literature to religious traditions, to contemporary Chinese art and philosophy. The exhibition contained different forms of art, from photograph to oil painting, installation art and sculpture. Works of four foreign artists and five Chinese artists were on display. The papers presented at the symposium will be published in two languages, and a 3D record of the exhibition will be kept in the University archive.

Apart from the conferences and symposiums, we had several publications. The chair of the Committee, Professor Yang Huilin published an English book, *China, Christianity and the Question of Culture* (Baylor University Press), which won the *Christianity Today* 2015 Book Award. Two issues of the *Journal for the Study of Christian Culture* were published, with topics related to Scriptural Reasoning. Issue 32 (published in Nov. 2014), on the theme “Trajectory of the Classics”, compared classics in the Chinese and western traditions and tried to show the issues presented in the process of translation and transmission. Some major articles include “Extreme Income Disparity: Traditional Wisdom as Contemporary Counsel” (David L. Jeffrey), “Moral Arguments form the Existence of God in Late Ming and Early Qing: Matteo Ricci’s ‘Moral Ability as Institution’ and His Appropriation of Mencius’ Ideas” (Ji Jianxun), “On the Translation of English Hymnals into Chinese in the 1920-30’s” (LIU Boyun & ZHU Shuai), “Revelation and Revolution: Friedrich Engels and the Apocalypse” (Roland Boer), “WU Leichuan and ‘Revolutionary Christianity’” (Chin Ken-pa). Issue 33 (published in May 2015) focused on the theme of “Controversies over the Translation of Religious Texts,” featuring the following major articles: “Poetic Desire and the Laws of Heaven: James Legge’s *Shijing* and the Translation of Consciousness” (David L. Jeffrey), “Rendering Foreignness into Chinese: Yan Fu’s Attempt to Translate the *Gospel of Mark*” (Archie C. C. LEE), “Translating Buddhism: Timothy Richard’s Christian Interpretation of *The Journey to the West*” (John T. P. Lai), “How Forgiveness is

Possible: A Theological Reflection on *Secret Sunshine*" (LIU Wenjin).

The Committee will keep promoting inter-disciplinary, inter-religious and inter-cultural studies in the future. In the next academic year, the committee will host at least three major conferences. July 5-9, 2015 the Committee will hold the 11th Summer Institute, focusing on the crises we are facing today and leading a discussion about the different traditions and resources that people today may draw from. October 18-20, 2015 the Committee will help host the Executive Council Meeting for World Sinology Conference and a small seminar on the past and future of sinology. In March or April 2016 another symposium on Art and Literature will be held in Beijing. As for publication, issues 34 and 35 of the *Journal for the Study of Christian Culture* will focus on the following two topics - "The Significance of Hope" and "Post-modern Theology". The Committee will also work with Brill on some of the best articles published in the past issues of the Journal and translate them into English. Besides, Baylor University Press will publish the essays of the conference in March 2014 under the title of "A Poetics of Translation".

Drafted by

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