

2015-16 REPORT OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE
ON “SCRIPTURAL REASONING AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE”

From July 2015 up to now, the Research Committee on “Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Literature” has conducted the following activities to promote the spirit of and discourse on Scriptural Reasoning (SR) among Chinese scholars.

1. From July 6-9, 2015, the Committee organized the 11th “Theology and Humanities” Summer Institute with a focus on “Confronting Contemporary Crises”. We invited 10 keynote speakers and 40 young scholars from mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, the UK, and USA to present papers and hold panel discussions at Anyang Institute of Technology, Henan Province. This was the first time we invited Buddhist scholars and extended the range of topics to other disciplines such as psychology. As an ancient city of profound cultural and historical significance and rich in archeological artifacts, Anyang provided an excellent setting for vivid dialogue and discussion.
2. From October 19-20, 2015, we held a conference entitled “Sinology in the 21st Century,” which gathered 15 Executive Council members of the World Conference on Sinology and provided a platform for scholars of varied disciplines to discuss their understanding and hopes for the development of “sinology” in the present century.
3. In November 2015, we held a small seminar for the President of Yale Divinity School, Professor Gregory E. Sterling, on the topic of “The Limits of Virtue”. Professor Yao Xinzhong, an expert on Chinese traditional Confucian ethics, hosted the seminar and led the conversation.
4. From April 22-23, 2016, we helped organize an international conference on Marxist studies in China, entitled “The International Horizon of Chinese Marxist Discourse: Perspectives from Literature and Philosophy.” The international academic world knows little about Marxist study and practice in China after the 1980s. This was a chance for scholars in China and other parts of the world to exchange ideas and communicate at a deeper level.

Apart from the conferences and symposia, we oversaw the successful publication of several works. With the help of Baylor University Press, the papers presented at the conference in April 2014 were collected into a book entitled *The Poetics of Translation Between Chinese and English Literature*, which came out in February 2016. The *Journal for the Study of Christian Culture* has upheld the spirit of Scriptural Reasoning in the choice of themes and articles. Issue 34 (published in November 2015), on the theme “The Significance of Hope”, reflects upon current social and religious challenges on the basis of Jürgen Moltmann’s dialogues with Chinese scholars. Key terms such as “just war”, “just peace”, or “universal values” were discussed from different cultural and social perspectives. In such face-to-face dialogue, we were able to stimulate each other’s thinking, an interchange deeply rooted in the spirit of the Scriptural Reasoning movement. Issue 35 (published in May 2016) will focus on the theme of “Post-modern Theology” and surprise the readers with the title of the editorial foreword, “Nonreligious Christianity and Atheist Religion”. This issue will feature translations of four post-modern thinkers’ articles: G. Vattimo’s “Toward a Nonreligious Christianity,” J. D. Caputo’s “The Rose is Without Why: An Interpretation of the Later Heidegger,” Mark Taylor’s “Networking Religion,” and Graham Ward’s “Bodies: The Displaced Bodies of Jesus Christ.” Echoing the featured articles, some Chinese young

scholars' studies on post-modern thinkers such as Slavoj Žižek and Giorgio Agamben have been chosen to demonstrate the sophistication and originality of reflection upon these ideas within the Chinese context.

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 10-14, 2016 the Committee will hold the 12th Summer Institute, focusing on discussions of “Universalism” or “Universality”, a topic once discarded by the leading scholarship but persistently resurfacing in philosophy and literature. In October or November, 2016, the committee will help organize the fifth World Conference on Sinology with the theme “Sinologies in Comparative Context: Tradition and Innovation”. As for publications, Issues 36 and 37 of the *Journal for the Study of Christian Culture* will focus on the following two topics - “Does *Tian* (Heaven) Speak?” and “‘Ethics of Ultimate Ends’ and ‘Ethics of Responsibility’”. The Committee will start a new project in 2016 by working with Brill and the editors of *T'oung Pao*, one of the three leading academic journals on sinology worldwide, translating the best articles published in the past century into Chinese. In three-year's time, the project plans to publish seven volumes in all, aiming to provide some fundamental research materials for Chinese scholars so that the dialogue and reasoning activities between Chinese and Western scholars may reach a deeper level.

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