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Why Did Eli Fall?

On the Relationship between Story and History in the Book of Samuel

by Leo Kwan-hung Li

Interpretation as genre recognition

The opening of a work often guides us in a direction which the author or compiler wants us to follow. It sets up the scenery of the acts, portrays the protagonist(s) of the story, or even states the purpose and intention of the writing. However, it is very rare that an opening explicitly denotes what is the text's *genre*. Most of the time, the genre of a text needs to be conjectured by the reader. The opening of a text sometimes gives us sufficient clues in order to pin down what it is all about, how to categorize it, and how to interpret it accordingly. As K. Sparks states when discussing E. D. Hirsch's concept of *heuristic genre*, '[h]euristic genre is an imaginative conjecture in which readers make an educated guess about how a text ought to be read. The guess is not a leap in the dark because it begins with assumptions based on the generic traits and elements that readers already recognize.' However, if 'this initial guess misses, the result is an uneasy feeling that the text does not cohere and that it has not been understood. In such case, we often read the text several times, each time postulating anew how the piece's elements might function together as a unit and within a context' until 'a sensation that the text has been understood.' Sparks concludes that we can 'make sense of what is generically new through a metaphorical process that connects it,' i.e. the text, with what we already know (Sparks 2005, p.9).

By reading the opening of it heuristically and alternatively as 'story' and as 'history' — two very broad categories of genre — this essay will explore how the book of Samuel should be read. I will focus on the first few chapters of the book of Samuel in order to show the relationship between story and history in the Hebrew Bible and how this genre recognition process help us to adjust our reading strategy when we are encountering the narratives in the Hebrew Bible.

Why did Eli Fall?: a good story to tell

When we look at the first line of the Book of Samuel, 'There was a certain man ...', it looks much more like a 'story' beginning than a 'historical' account. How can we tell a work is an artistry story or not? Gunn and Fewell helpfully give three features that are typical of narrative (here narrative and story are used interchangeably). First, narrative constructs a verbal world that imitates and centers on *human characters*; second, narrative is distinguished by *plot*, rather than non-temporal images used in lyrics or proverbs; and finally, narrative is a genre that enjoys the *patterning play of words*, in other words, a self-conscious artistic use of language is in view (Gunn and Fewell 1993, pp. 2-3). It is undoubtedly that the beginning of the Book of Samuel presents us a story. The *characters* that the beginning of the story introduces are all members of a family: the husband Elkanah, and his two wives, Hannah and Peninah. However, the story is not about some ordinary family matter. As F. Deist observed, when the story is now ready to unfold, suddenly two (or three) new characters are introduced: 'at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the LORD.' It is, in Deist words, an 'abnormally presented piece of information' that 'interrupts the flow of the story and conveys information seemingly irrelevant for the story, but precisely for that reason draws the reader's attention.' (Deist 1992, p. 25) The beginning of the Book of Samuel is a story with the intricate *plot* that Elkanah, Hannah along with their unborn son, and the corrupt priests Hophni and Phinehas the sons of Eli, fatefully intertwined together at the sanctuary of Shiloh.

If we look further at the characterization of the main actors within the story, we find a high level of *artistry* in it. To use the characterization of Eli as a demonstration, the '*patterning play of words*' within the narrative illustrates that this work really is a good story. In this regard, the repetition of a word are worth noting. In 1 Sam 4:18, Eli is described as 'heavy' (*kabed*), and it is this heaviness that broke his neck — 'heavy' that finally killed him! Where did this 'heavy' come from? 'Why then look with greedy eye at my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded, and honor (*wattekabbed*) your sons more than me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel,' said an anonymous man of God on behalf of YHWH that announced the punishment on the house of

Eli (1 Sam 2:29). And YHWH declared 'For those who honor me I will honor (*ki-mekabbeday 'akabbed*), and those who despise me shall be treated with contempt.' (1 Sam 2:30). Eli earned himself 'honor/weight' and lost the 'honor' from YHWH. The root 'honor/weight' (*kbd*) is not only repeated around Eli, but it is also associated with the Philistine who took the Ark of YHWH. The narrative mentions that the hand of YHWH was heavy (*wattikebad*) upon the people of Ashdod, and was very heavy (*kabedah me'od*) upon all the Philistine's cities (1 Sam 5:6, 11). When they decided to return the Ark of YHWH to Israel, the Philistines also warned against 'hardening' (*tekabbedu*) their own hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh had 'hardened' (*kibbedu*) theirs (1 Sam 6:6). It seems that the Philistines better comprehended when to 'get heavy', and when to honor YHWH (1 Sam 6:5 'and give glory (*kabod*) to the god of Israel') than the Israelite priest Eli. The glory (*kabod*) associated with the Ark has repeatedly been cried out as 'departed', while at the same moment the daughter-in-law of Eli delivered his grandson Ichabod (*'i-kabod*), a name actually sounds like 'Where is the Glory' (or meaning Weightless one, due to his premature birth?) (1 Sam 4:21, 22). However, the occurrence of the word 'glory' (*kabod*) starts not with the incident surrounding Eli's family, but in the song sung by Hannah after she gave birth to Samuel: 'He raises up the poor from the dust; He lifts the needy from the ash heap; To make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor (*wekisse' kabod yanhilem*)...' (1 Sam 2:8). The word 'glory' / 'honor' (*kabod*) appears here to foreshadow the upcoming narrative, and it links with the other key word pregnant with dynastic meaning, 'seat' or 'throne' (*kisse*) which, in the first few chapters of the Book of Samuel, is strongly correlated with Eli (1 Sam 1:9; 4:13, 18). In other words, the song of Hannah is foretelling what will happen in the later narrative that someone (this may be Samuel, Saul or David) will take the 'seat of honor', or even better translated as 'throne of honor', of Eli, and implicitly predicts the fall of Eli's family.

The repetition of one word not only reflects the fall of Eli's family/dynasty in a different dimension, but from the distribution of this word, we can construct a structure that tightly links the narrative of 1 Sam 1-3 with 1 Sam 4-6, which once separated by scholars as independent narrative. The noun form of *kbd* 'glory' (*kabod*), repeated twice at the birth of Ichabod (*'i-kabod*) in chapter 4,

also appeared in chapter 2 (2:8) and chapter 6 (6:5), i.e. before and after the birth of Ichabod. The verbal form of *kbd* occurs 4 times each, both before (2:29, 2:30 x 2, 4:18) and after (5:6, 5:11, 6:6 x 2) the birth of Eli's grandson. In other words, the pivot moment of the opening of the Book of Samuel is the birth of Ichabod, not the birth of Samuel. The story, from the families' issues of Elkanah and Eli, to the lost of Ark at the hand of Philistine, is structured around this symbolic birth.

Whilst this biblical book is named after Samuel, it is not until chapter 7 that Samuel takes precedence. Samuel's birth scene and the deeds of his parent (1 Sam 1-2) are used to set off contrast to the deeds of Eli's family (for this, R. Alter has already discussed it very well in his now classic *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, see Alter 1981, p.85). The prophecy received by the anonymous man of God and by Samuel (1 Sam 2-3), and the capture of the Ark (1 Sam 4-6), all focus upon the fall of the Elide dynasty and the consequences that it induced. From the repetitive use of the Hebrew word-root *kbd* (heavy/honor/glory), we can say that the theme of the opening of the book of Samuel is about the 'fall' of Eli. Why did Eli fall? Eli fell from his 'seat' because he was 'heavy'; Eli also fell from his 'throne', i.e. the fall of his dynasty, because he and his family did not deal with the matter of YHWH 'heavy' enough. Eli's own fall artistically and vividly symbolized the fall of a dynasty once ruled in the history of Israel.

History writing as a complex genre

Through the characterization by repetition of a key word I think I have shown the Book of Samuel indeed starts with a very good story-telling. However, can the Book of Samuel still be read as 'history'? Is the Eli's fall really a chapter of history of Israel, or is it only an ironic folk-tale story about a ruler lost his dynasty because of a theological reason that he was not respectful enough to YHWH and as such other rulers of Israel should take note? Once again, we should ask about what 'history' as a genre means. In response to the notion of J. Barr's 'Story and History in Biblical Theology' (1976), E. Nicholson once wrote that *historia* are the result of 'enquiry', in the sense that this term was coined and used by the Greek historian in 5th B.C.E. and the so-called the father of 'modern' history, Herodotus. In this regard, Nicholson further described that "[e]nquiry", questioning and a critical assessment of sources, the active pursuit of dependable historical information, all

of which are analytical of writing history in the way that the early Greek historians conceived this, are not in evidence in the work of...Deuteronomist.' (Nicholson 1994, p.147) In other words, it is hard to consider the Book of Samuel, as most scholars have accepted it as part of the Deuteronomistic History, as a history in the Greek historians' standard. What Nicholson reminded us is that 'in essentials a wide gulf separated' the biblical text and the Greek historians' history (p. 143). Is the Book of Samuel not a history at all? Or, as Nicholson quoted the words of Barr, is it 'merit entirely the title story but only in part the title history' (p. 149)?

Nevertheless, if we consider the oft-cited definition of history by Dutch historian J. Huizinga (1963, p. 9), that '[h]istory is the intellectual form in which a civilization renders account to itself of its past,' then *critical* enquiry into the sources that was employed by the Greek historian may only be one 'intellectual form' for writing history. It is legitimate for us to read the Book of Samuel as history as well if we consider the other 'intellectual form' of history writing. Certainly, there are other forms of history writing. R. Gordon notes that 'the most obvious thing to be said about biblical history, is that much of it is event-laden, personality-orientated.' And this kind of history-writing, '[a]ccounts of peoples and periods that pay attention to social structures, the role of the ordinary citizen and the family unit are currently enjoying enhanced status.' (Gordon 1994, p. 258) Gordon has further cited F. Braudel and L. Namier as historians who are associated and were practicing this kind of history writing.

All these definitions of history show that the concept of 'history' as a genre is in practice a very complex one. If we assert that the Book of Samuel is history, we still need to stop and clarify what kind of history *sub-genre* we are discussing. The Book of Samuel can be called 'history-like story,' a romance loaded with history-like information (after H. Frei). Another option is 'narrated history,' an account of the past written by consciously use of artistic narrative skills (after F. Watson). The difference between these two alternatives depends on the intention of the writing. Did the writer intend to write an entertaining story, by making use of history-like facts in the characters and plots (even they are fictive rather than factual); or did the writer intend to write a history (and care about the referential character of it), by using narrative skills in the presentation?

The historical intentionality of biblical story

B. Halpern's book *The First Historians* (1988) examined different passages from within the Former Prophet to address the issue of historical intention of the history writing in the Hebrew Bible. The criterion suggested by Halpern in order to judge the historian's intentions, is:

'[D]oes the work parlay the available evidence (sources) into coherent narrative about events susceptible to reconstruction from the sources? In other words, did the narrator have reason to believe what he or she wrote, or did the narrator depart at will from the sources, concocting freely about matters concerning which he or she had no, or contradictory, evidence?' (p.12)

Nevertheless, if the sources are no longer isolable or extant, Halpern further suggested an ancillary test, which is a corollary of the principal criterion:

'[T]he historian who is digesting sources into a coherent, justifiable presentation of a reconstruction will minimize divagations extrinsic to the evidence. He or she will focus upon events, states, and persons of historical significance. The historian may so far yield to the importunities of an antiquarian conscience as to incorporate details incidental to the main themes of the work. But he or she will avoid gratuitous decorations...whose reconstruction is *not* demanded by the evidence...' (p. 12)

As 'we should not expect to know more than the ancient sources *knew*, but we can hope to know more than they chose to *tell*,' (Hallo 1990, p.189) we might find the historical data that is in the Book of Samuel is not 'concocting freely' and focusing 'upon historical significance.' This can be shown by the work of archaeologist I. Finkelstein who found that the archaeology of the places that play a central role in the story of Samuel has not been discussed sufficiently. Using the archaeological findings concerning Shiloh, he suggested that the biblical memory on the prominence of Shiloh in early Israelite history, like at the opening chapters of the Book of Samuel, must echo the importance of the site no later than the tenth century B. C. E..

From the mentioning of the Philistine city Gath in the Ark Narrative, Finkelstein believed that it 'may have served the needs of the later author, but may also preserve an early memory.' Because if the story was fictively shaped in late-monarchic or exilic times, 'one would have expected to find in it the cities of Ashkelon or Gaza instead of Gath — in line with the information on the Philistine cities provided by the prophetic works of the time'. The overall conclusion drawn by Finkelstein is that 'even if the Ark Narrative was redacted or even compiled in later times to serve the religio-political agenda of Jerusalem temple and dynasty, or to encourage the Judahite exiles, it certainly echoes layers of earlier realities.' (Finkelstein 2002, p. 155)

Gordon also has a positive view on the historicity of the Book of Samuel. In his discussion on the reason behind the emergence of the Monarchy, he employed Finkelstein's earlier finding about the Israel's 'settlement pattern' in the central hill country of Palestine. Finkelstein's conclusion is that the Israel secondary development of the western part of the area resulted Israelite in friction with the Philistine inhabitants of the coastal plain. Gordon elaborated that 'Israelite expansion westward as well as Philistine interest in their neighbors' territory to the east' can be account for the situation described in Judges and 1 Samuel. Because of the inhabitants of Benjaminite territory suffered most directly from Philistine encroachments, this 'stimulus of Philistine aggression, facilitated by Israelite expansion,' played a role 'to the circumstances in which Israel discovered its need of a monarchy.' (Gordon 1994, p. 260) Gordon not only believed that the monarchy developed from a single reason ('nearly monocausality', p.257) can be confirmed by Finkelstein's finding, he also invokes the 'criterion of dissimilarity' to argue about the 'genuineness of the traditions about' Samuel. (p.262) 'Criterion of dissimilarity' means 'the presence of features in a narrative despite their conflicting with what would be regarded as normative or appropriate in the period when the traditions crystallized in more or less their final literary form.' (p. 262) One example of this criterion cited by Gordon is '[t]he plurality of offices held by Samuel' that at a later date was quite impossible. Thus, it should be that this tradition has its historic core when it was being written down at the date the narrative was formed.

All these tell us that, although we cannot absolutely certain about the historicity of the narrative in the opening of the Book of Samuel, we still have some way to check whether the 'history-like' characters of the biblical narrative are only devices in the telling of story or they have their referential value in reality. In other words, it is more likely that the narrative of the Book of Samuel was intended historically rather than just being a sensational and provoking story.

Biblical story as history: friend to trust or suspect to torture?

History is not about facts and figures. By 'an explanation of the meaningful connectedness of the sequence of past events in the form of an interested and focused narrative,' (Deist 1999, p. 380) the antiquarian interested narrator of biblical history drew the audiences into a distant reality, in order to influence the life and to shape the vision of those who wanted to find meanings in the present. The interplay of story and history is not to serve the purpose of modern historians who demand the pure objectivity of history inquires, but to serve those people who want to recognize their place in the present, the existence that is the continuation of the past. Story is the means to bring out the morals and significance of the history, and I believe in the Book of Samuel that the storyline serves well to the purpose of the historically intended author/redactor/narrator/historiographer, whoever he/she was.

However, good intention will not guarantee good work. One may argue that the historically intended narrative does not mean that the narrative reflects the accurate historical situation of the past, and the ideological/theological purpose of the narrative will hinder the presentation of the history. Nevertheless, with a certainty of the historical intentions of the biblical stories, their 'witnesses deserve to be treated more like friends we should be able to trust than potential deceivers whom we need to suspect and torture.' (Goldingay 1994, p. 36)

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I GOT PASSION!

– Ada Ho (13 MACS)

In Ada Ho's new book, the cover shows a young lady posed upside down wearing a big smile. She had graduated from Georgetown University in the U.S., and got her Master of Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard. In 2009, she set up L plus H Fashion, a social enterprise, and has remained on the company executive board. L Plus H is based in Hong Kong specialising in the production of extra-fine knitwear. It creates decent job opportunities for displaced skilled workers and trains young designers, technicians and managerial staff. She also provides consultancy services to many enterprises and to public sectors, NGOs and schools. Meanwhile, she is Honorary Assistant Professor with Hong Kong University.

Finding 'Passion'

Recently, Ada started a company with the name of Paxxioneer and made herself the CEO. 'Paxxioneer' comes from the word 'Passion', which is what Ada looks for in life. Ada likes to travel and talks to people who have passion. 'These people are not necessarily the knowledgeable ones, but they could encourage others; they could show you a new perspective to the world.'

Ada admits that when she faces difficulties, she seek help from her mentors. She considered herself fortunate and knows it. Many are not and get trapped in the bottom of the well or are lost in a maze and helpless.

'I hope my network can help them get to know new friends and broaden their horizons.'

When Ada visited Greece, she talked to the local people about the crises they were facing: national debts, refugees and social issues. In Hong Kong, she introduces the ecological concept of aquaponic farming in the New Territories.

'As we grow up, we tend to lose our curiosity towards life. But when we travel, we are relaxed, become interested and open towards a new environment, and the people from all walks of life. Chatting with them is definitely better than learning from books.'

Ada calls people with a passion for life 'paxxioneers'. The two 'xx's represent two persons jumping up with both arms held high in celebration of a fruitful and passionate life. She wishes that the passion from the paxxioneers will be spread. She is connecting the paxxioneers all over the world with those who might have lost it.

With passion, Ada Ho helps many low-performing teenagers build up confidence, team spirit and positive values. She has produced two musicals with and for them, 'The Awakening' and 'Against the Wind'. Ada also took part in the re-construction works of Sichuan after the earthquake in 2008 and was honoured the 'Humanitarian Award' in 2008 by the Women's International Film and Television Showcase in Los Angeles.

Indeed, she is one of the paxxioneers, who always work with passion, to brighten, to warm and to care for the 'lost' people in many corners of life: those who have lost their jobs, their confidence, or a vision or mission in their lives.

Middle Child Syndrome

Ada is a middle child and compared to her other sisters and brothers, she did not feel the attention. She was sensitive as to how fair her parents were to each child. For example, who was most photographed? Whose name got most mentioned by relatives? Such childhood experiences affected her. She cares for the forgotten ones in school and society, and she seems to be fighting for justice. She is fond of the martial art novels of Jin Yung, greatly inspired by the



Ada was always invited to deliver talk in schools.



gallantry so brilliantly told. 'I long to help the weak. I don't have swords. But I have my mouth and I have my pen', Ada said excitedly.

For the interview, Ada picked a quiet and spacious cafe in a hotel. We were led to a nice corner, but soon, a couple was soon seated next to us. They were loud. 'We are forced to listen to the couple. Can you kindly change our table after we finish the main course? The restaurant is so spacious with few customers. Your colleague could have assigned us a better table in the first place. Problems are created if management only thinks of operational facilitation at the expense of customer satisfaction.' So, Ada advised the manager of the cafe politely. The manager was embarrassed and re-assigned our tables, 'This is an "occupational hazard", I can't help voicing out on an issue of management. I expect to see improvement in this cafe.' She confessed.

Similar stories are not rare in Ada's new book. Her brother, who wrote the Preface, let readers in on a secret.

'There were more boys than girls in our school days. She, as the "feminist", always fought for the rights of the girls. If the teachers were not fair in grading, she would not let go of them ...'.

'If I dare not voice out on small issues, I will not be able to voice out at critical moments and to seek justice in life. To me, this is a training process to be brave.' Ada elaborated.

Heroine @ Divinity School

Ada, the heroine, enrolled in the MACS (Master of Arts in Christian Studies) programme with passion in 2011. She was dissatisfied with the programme. 'The Divinity School of Chung Chi College is located in the Chinese University of Hong Kong where I expect concrete training in biblical interpretation and in critical thinking and academic discipline. I was disappointed.'

In her view, quality discussion is very important to consolidate and digest the knowledge learnt. 'We were asked to read many journals and articles before discussion; we were supposed to go deep. At Divinity School, we were spoon-fed with notes prepared by the lecturers. To learn passively is not my expectation.'

Ada also had complaints about certain professors. 'Some were late to the lectures for 10 to 15 minutes; some delayed the 10-min break by answering too many questions concerning papers raised by students. The failure of time management wasted one-third of my class.'

'The professors are too kind. They tried too hard to accommodate the diverse standards of MACS students. They simply lowered their demand. Basically, you could easily get a pass if you do simple research and come up with a conclusion of some differing viewpoints.' Ada was well-trained in social science academic writing. A paper with a number of book references would not pose any difficulty for her. 'Frankly, I gain a pass needing only my writing skill. Not much to do with what I have learned in class.'

'What should be the purpose of theological education? Is it to produce enough pastoral staff or to train up Christians with analytical skills and solid foundation? If it is the latter, how can we lower our standards?'

'In a norm-referenced evaluation for final grading, an E-grade paper might be marked up as a C-grade or D-grade under the system. This discourages a potential A-grade paper producer like me to work better.'

This is Ada Ho, a trouble-maker, unpopular personality, modern gallantry, revolutionist, heroine etc.

'I always feel discontent with the present situation. Seeing the failures in many aspects of life generates restlessness in me and drives me to improve, innovate, correct and seek solutions.'



Aquaponic farming introduced by Shing.



The new book written by Ada.

2016 Theology Day

The 41st Thanksgiving Service of the 2016 Theology Day Celebration was held on 7 November, 2016 at Chung Chi Chapel. Over 700 alumni, students, and friends of the School attended the service. Prof. Tam Wai-lun, head of the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies, Rev. Victor Y.N. Cheung, member of the Theological Council, and Rev. Dr. Ezra H.S. Kok, Associate Dean of ATESEA Theological Union, were invited to the Service; and Rev. Kok was the speaker on the topic 'The Three Worlds of Biblical Interpretation'. Rev. Kok encouraged the graduates to think from different perspectives, understand God's words in context and always speak the truth with courage.

After the sermon, Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang, Director of the Divinity School and Prof. Eric K.C. Wong, Associate Director of the Divinity School presented the new students and graduates. Also, Prof. Ying reported that there are over 100 new students and 90 graduates in the 16-17 academic year. He also introduced the four new teachers including: Prof. Alex Ip, Dr. Christina Wong, Dr. Marina Wang and Ms. Sonia Wong.

Over 330 guests attended the banquet. After the welcoming speech by our director Prof. Ying, Ms. Yu Oi To, our alumni representative, shared with us her experiences as a student at Divinity School. All the guests had a great time.



OPEN WEEK

Open Week 2016 was accomplished from 17 to 22 October with 97 participants this year. However, two of the auditing classes were postponed to the following week due to extreme weather conditions when the Black Rainstorm and Typhoon signal no.8 were hoisted respectively.

Participants pay a registration fee of HK\$50 and can join all the classes throughout Open Week in order to experience our theological education and training. Our School not only opened all the classes throughout that week, but also organized a sharing session on October 20, 2016 where participants had the opportunity to talk with our professors and obtain more information and advice on our programmes.



News on

The Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion and Culture (CSCCRC) and The Society for the Study of History of Christianity in China (SSHCC)



1. Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang (Director of CSCCRC) and Rev. Dr. Kelvin S.K. Choy (Vice- President of Alliance Bible Seminary) delivered a talk on 7 October, 2016 on 'Freedom or Control: comments on the revisions of the Draft of Religion Regulations'. About 100 people joined the event.
2. Centre for the Study of Religion and Chinese Society (CSRCS), Chung Chi College, CUHK, Centre for Catholic Studies, CUHK and Society for the Study of History of Christianity in China co-organized the Public Lecture on 'The Spirit of Martyrdom in the Chinese Catholic Dramatic Texts during the Republican Period' on 19 October, 2016. Prof. John T. P. Pang Lai (Director of Centre for the Study of Religion and Chinese Society, Chung Chi College and Associate Professor of Department of Cultural and Religious Studies, CUHK) delivered the speech and Prof. Cindy Y.Y. Chu (Professor of Department of History, HKBU) responded.
3. Prof. Wang Chenmian delivered a public lecture on 'United in resisting the Japanese Invasion — National Christian Council of China in the Second Sino-Japanese War' on 10 December, 2016. Prof. Wang is currently the Distinguished Professor of Graduate Institute of History, National Central University. Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion & Culture (CSCCRC) and the Society for Study of History of Christianity in China (SSHCC) co-organized the event. About 30 participants attended.

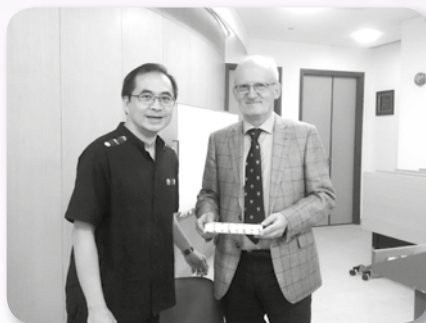
Term Commencement Service 2016-2017

The term commencement service was held at the School Chapel on 8 September, 2016. Rev. Timothy Y.L. Poon (04 M.Div.), Assistant Field Superintendent in Hong Kong Pentecostal Holiness Church, was invited to deliver the sermon. He reminded the students to internalise the words from God and practice them. He shared a lot of his past experiences in reading the Bible. A simple dinner for all was served after the service.

After dinner, the new students' sharing session was held in the chapel. Many pastors from different churches joined and were very encouraging to the new students. Over 40 persons attended the session.



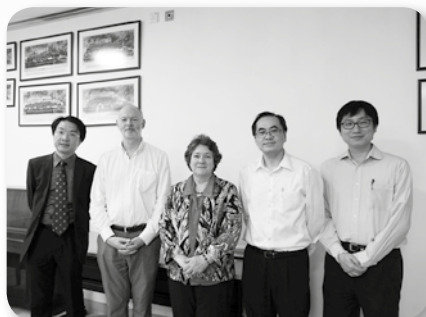
NEWS from the Centres



1. Prof. Werner G. Jeanrond delivered a public lecture on 'Love and Hope in Christian Life and Thought' on 17 September, 2016. Prof. Jeanrond is currently with the faculty of Theology and Religion where he got his Masters, at St. Benet's Hall, University of Oxford. In his research, he investigates the three theological virtues of love, hope, and faith, in the ever more globalising and pluralistic religious and cultural context. Centre for Christian Studies (CCS) and Centre for Catholic Studies, CUHK were the co-organizers.



2. Centre for Christian Studies (CCS) and Institute of Sino-Christian Studies co-organized a Public Lecture on 'Jewish Apocalyptic Literature: Does the Image of a Violent God necessarily entail an Ethos oriented toward Violence?' on 3 October, 2016. It was delivered by Prof. Dr. Peter Lampe, Professor of New Testament Theology, University of Heidelberg and Guest Professor of Institute of Sino-Christian Studies. Prof. Common Chan, Assistant Professor, Divinity School of Chung Chi College, CUHK was the moderator. Rev. Dr. Eric W. K. Lau (劉榮佳牧師), lecturer in Biblical Studies, HKSJKH Ming Hua Theological College responded. About 100 people participated.



3. Prof. Oliver Davies delivered a public lecture on 'The promise of Christianity in China in the light of new understandings of human sociality' on 18 November, 2016. Prof. Davies is currently Professor of Christian Doctrine at King's College, London. About 20 people attended. The Centre for Christian Studies was the organizer.

News on Centre for *for* Quality-Life Education (CQLE)

Centre for Quality-Life Education and LPD Educational Foundation organized the 6th Youth Conference on 'Mainstream Education: Inclusion and Rejection of Life Education' on 6 August, 2016 in LT3 Yasumoto International Academic Park. The Youth Conference aims at improving the skills of critical thinking and self-reflection for Form 4 to 6 students through public formal debate.



News on Resource Center *for* Contemporary Christian Studies



News on Resource Center for Contemporary Christian Studies (RCCCS) arranged the 14th Summer Academic Exchange Programme on 24 July to 20 August, 2016 for Master degree or Doctoral degree students in Christian Studies from Mainland China. For the first two weeks, 52 participants attended intensive lectures to ground their knowledge on Christianity. These lectures include 'Introduction to Old/New Testament' and 'Introduction to Christian Ethnics and Dogmatics'. The following two weeks are given over to individual supervision.

The Renewal of Appointment as Director of DSCCC

Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang will complete his three-year term as the Director of Divinity School of Chung Chi College, CUHK on 31 July, 2017. The Theological Council agreed to renew his appointment until 31 July, 2020 in the meeting held on June 2, 2016. The search process for a new director will be initiated in the foreseeable future.



Kwong Yuen Methodist Chapel



Ma On Shan Ling Liang Church



The Church of Christ in China — China Congregational Church



Church Visit

Over 60 teachers and students visited The Church of Christ in China — China Congregational Church, Kwong Yuen Methodist Chapel and Ma On Shan Ling Liang Church on 30 October, 2016. And a total of 25 teachers and students visited Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Sun Chui Church on 27 November, 2016.

Notice of Theological Council of Divinity School of Chung Chi College, CUHK

In full support of Ming Hua Theological College, HKSKH withdrew from Divinity School of Chung Chi College. The Standing Committee of the 6th General Synod has resolved that from September, 2016 onward, Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui ceased to be a Supporting Church of the Divinity School of Chung Chi College (DSCCC).

The decision was conveyed by the Province to the Theological Council of DSCCC in March. The Theological Council respected the decision made and will continue to keep close contact with the HKSKH in different ways. We thanked the HKSKH for the past contribution and support to the theological education of Divinity School.

Pastoral Programme

Theology Day (Diploma Programme)

Theology Day Thanksgiving Service for Diploma Programme was held on 8 October, 2016 at the School chapel. Rev. Chan Chi-kin (The Church of Christ in China Mongkok Church) was invited to be the speaker and the topic was 'Equipment for better service'. More than 100 guests attended.



The 10th Pastoral Conference

The 10th Pastoral Conference 'Internet: Network and Pastoral Care' was held from 13 to 14 September at Wing Kwong Pentecostal Holiness Church. Twelve pastors and scholars were invited to share their valuable experience in the conference. Near 100 pastoral staff took part in the event to discuss the future development of pastoral care through the internet.



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS (August 2016– December 2016)

Director in News

On 3 July, 2016, Prof. Ying was invited by the Institute of Regional Studies of Chinese Christianity, to attend the 'International Conference on Chinese Christianity and Regional Society' held by Kyoto Tachibana University. He presented the paper 'The 1949 Divide in the History of Christianity in China.'

On 21 July, 2016, he was invited to deliver a speech in the Hong Kong Christian Book Fair on 'Life and Death Education: The Culture of Christian Cemetery'.

From 27 to 30 July, he was invited to the Biblical Seminary of the Philippine to teach 'History of Chinese Christianity' an Intensive Course. From 4 to 6 August, he was invited by Los Alamos Chinese Christian Fellowship to attend the 3rd Forum on Christian Faith of Chinese Intellectuals. He presented a paper 'Rethinking the Mission of Chinese Christian from a Historical Perspective'.

On 13 August, he shared his view on Sino-Vatican Relations in RTHK's 'Letter to Hong Kong'.

Professor in News

Prof. Eric K.C. Wong

Prof. Eric K. C. Wong attended a conference held by the New Testament, Asian Pacific Liaison Committee of Society for the NT Studies at Kottayam, Kerala, India from 20 to 24 October, 2016.

Prof. Tobias Brandner

On 18 June, 2016, Prof. Brandner attended the opening ceremony of a newly renovated former girls' school of the Basel Mission in Shenzhen and gave a short message. He also attended the academic round-table there.

From 11 to 17 August, 2016, Tobias attended the Conference of the International Association of Mission Studies in Seoul where he presented a paper on 'Conversion in the Context of Prison: Experiences, Narratives, and Transformations'.

From 1 August, 2016 to 31 July, 2017, as part of his sabbatical, Tobias is the visiting professor at the McGilvary College of Divinity, Payap University in Chiang Mai, Thailand. He is teaching a course on 'History of Christianity in Asia'.

From 21 to 26 October, 2016, Tobias was invited by the Prison Fellowship in Taiwan to be the keynote speaker at a seminar there. His lecture was on 'Models of Prison Ministry'.

From 20 to 26 November, 2016, Tobias was invited by ATESEA to join an accreditation team at Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary in Taipei and at Yu Shan Theological College and Seminary in Shou-Feng, Hualien.

Prof. Nancy N.H. Tan

Prof. Tan was the visiting Researcher at the Department of Theology and Religious Study, University of Leeds for Jan-Dec 2016 for her Sabbatical Leave.

Prof. Tan attended 'Orange is the New Bible' a one-day seminar at the University of Sheffield, organized by the Sheffield Institute for Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies on 19 February, 2016.

Nancy made a research trip to the Centre for Disability and Theology at Belfast Bible College from 24 February to 1 March, 2016. She presented a paper on 'Social Communication Disorder and the Image of God' on 25 February, 2016 to the faculty and research students at Belfast Bible College. She participated in the programs the Centre was running for the cognitively disabled, interviewed the people running the programs and also followed the team that was running workshops in the churches to promote awareness and helping them to make space to support the special needs and disabled members in the church.

She attended the Oxford Symposium on Religious Studies from 14-16 March, 2016 at the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford.

She also attended a Research Seminar 'Exploring Connections between Rape Culture and the Hebrew Bible' at the University of Sheffield, organized by the Sheffield Institute for Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies on 11 April, 2016.

On 10 May, 2016, Nancy presented a paper on 'Hong Kong Sex Workers: Mothers Reading 1 Kgs 3:16-28' at the Sheffield Institute for Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies, University of Sheffield.

On 13 May, 2016, she attended Durham Postgraduate Biblical Studies Day, at the Department of Theology and Religion, University of Durham.

From 25-28 July, 2016, she attended Society for Old Testament Study at Religions and Theology, University of Manchester.

On 3 November, 2016, she presented a paper entitled 'Toward a Feminist Hermeneutic of Genesis 1:26-28 for People with Social Communication Disorder' at the Research Day Seminar held in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Leeds.

Dr. Marina X. J. Wang

Dr. Wang attended the conference '2016 Meeting for the Yale-Edinburgh Group on the History of the Missionary Movement and World Christianity' held by University of Edinburgh from 23 to 25 June, 2016. She presented a paper entitled 'The Evolution of the Ecumenical Vision in Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Context: A Case Study of the Church of Christ in China (1927-1937)'.

She also attended the Ecclesiastical History Society Summer Conference 2016: The Church and Empire held by University of Edinburgh on 26-28 July 2016.

Dr. Christina W.Y. Wong

Dr. Wong joined the first consultation meeting for Journal of Asian Christianity. It took place from 2 to 3 November, 2016, in Chennai, India.

Ms. Sonia K. Wong

Sonia went to San Antonio, Texas, U.S. to attend the annual conference of 'Society of Biblical Literature' from 18 to 21 November. She presented a paper 'Gendering Nakedness and Sexual Policing: A Cross-Cultural Perspective'.

Dr Yam Chi-Keung

On 3 May, Dr. Yam delivered the keynote speech in the seminar organised by the English Religious Radio Programme Committee of Radio Television Hong Kong. The title of the speech was 'Media, Religion and Social Schism in Hong Kong' at the annual Religious Broadcasters.

From 1 to 4 August, Dr. Yam participated in the 9th International Conference on Media, Religion and Culture held at Seoul, Korea, and presented a paper entitled 'Cinematic Dystopia, Public Discourse, and Religious Subtext: The Case of Ten Years in Post-Umbrella Hong Kong.'

On 31 August, Dr. Yam was invited to deliver a presentation on the topic 'Christ in Film' at the seminar 'The World Through the Christian Looking Glass' organised by Lumina College in Hong Kong.

Office News

Miss Sammie Siu was employed as the Project Coordinator for Pastoral Programme on 18 July, 2016.

Miss Anya Fan, who was responsible for Div School's programme, resigned in July. Miss Ho Lok-kam joined in August to be the successor.

Miss Jennifer Cheung was employed as the Project Coordinator on a short-term contract to substitute the staff on maternity leave.

Ms. Natalie Wai resigned in October 2016. Our School is thankful for her past contributions. Miss Louisa S.Y. Lo joined us on 21 December, 2016 to be the new Executive Officer.

Congratulations

Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang was promoted to Professor rank by the Chinese University of Hong Kong. May God lead him and bless him.

Ms. Backy S. M. Lee (07 BD) was ordained as the local church pastor of The Methodist Church, Hong Kong at the Faith Methodist Church on 23 October, 2016. May the Lord bless her work.

Mr. Yiu Chi-ho (07 BD), Ms Lo Pui-yee (09 BD) and Ms. Zoe Fung (13 MDiv) were ordained in the thanksgiving service held by the Hong Kong Council of Church of Christ in China on 28 October, 2016.

Obituary

Rev. Chow, Lien-hwa, a famous Taiwan theologian, pastor and author, passed away on August 6, 2016, at the age of 96. He graduated from the University of Shanghai with a degree in Business Management. In 1949, he went to America to study and obtained his Ph.D. from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Later, he undertook a post-doctoral research with Princeton Theological Seminary. He had been the researcher at the University of Oxford and earned a honorary theological doctorate from the States. He was the chairman of the board in Tung Hai University of Taiwan for many years. Aside from his contributions in the pastoral ministry and tertiary education, he also put a lot of effort in the theological education and evangelical movement in Taiwan. In 2004 and 2007, Rev. Chow was invited to our School as the keynote speaker for the Theology Day Thanksgiving Service. He spoke on the topic 'Chinese Theology of Tomorrow', and at the 1st Annual Pastoral Conference, he spoke on 'Pastoral Ministry in the Chinese Church Context: From the Biblical, Theological and Cultural perspective' respectively. Now, we still have his calligraphy 'To set sail again' in our office to commemorate the event of our renaming to 'Divinity School of Chung Chi College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong'.

Our deepest condolence on his departure. May God comfort his family members.

Ms. Tong Lai-sheung (83 BA) passed away on 17 September, 2016. The funeral service was held at the World Funeral Parlour on 8 October, 2016.

Ms Chu Lai-fong, the wife of Mr NG Shui Lai (former director of Christian Service), passed away and her memorial and thanksgiving service was held at Man Lam Christian Church, Hong Kong on 8 October, 2016.

Mr. Lau Kwok-neng, Mr. Parry W. H. Lau's father, passed away on 4 September, 2016. The funeral service was held on 29 September, 2016 at the World Funeral Parlour.

Ms. Ng Kit-ching, mother of Rev. Cindy C.C. Kwok (pastor-in-charge of S.K.H. St. Philip's Church), passed away on 15 September, 2016. The funeral service was held on 15 October, 2016.

*Emmanuel and Wishing you
a wonderful Year of Rooster!*

Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang

*With Staff and Students of the
Divinity School of Chung Chi College
The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

The Divinity School of Chung Chi College Financial Report (2015-2016)

Income	HK\$ 000	Expenditure	HK\$ 000
Chung Chi College Theological Council	1,943	Staff Salary	10,814
Pommerenke Foundations		Visiting Scholars	2,287
		Furniture and Equipment	11
Donations:		Administrations:	
Alumni	154	Advertisement	93
Supporting Churches	5,699	Office Entertainment	20
(The Church of Christ in China, Hong Kong Council,		Overseas Travel/ Conference Grant	11
Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong, The Methodist Church, Hong Kong, Hong Kong Pentecostal Holiness Church)		Postage and Telegram	151
Overseas Churches	15	Printing and Stationery	285
Individual Parish	471	Student Activities	63
Sundry Donors	406	Theology Day	83
Associate Student's Fee	3,527	Administration Fee for the non-CUHK student fee	666
Administration Service	502	Miscellaneous	100
Others	38	Maintenance of Classrooms and Offices	176
	12,755		14,760

Estimated Deficit for the year

(2005)

Chief Editor: Prof. Ying Fuk Tsang

Editor: Prof. Nancy N. H. Tan **Assistant Editor:** Ms. Li Kwong Ping

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