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Selected Studies on the Bible in China***

Sankt Augustin, Monumenta Serica (Collectanea Serica), 351 p.

**Beatrice Leung**

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# Marian Galik, *Influence, Translation and Parallels : Selected Studies on the Bible in China*

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- 1 Professor Marian Galik's monumental work *Influence, Translation and Parallels : Selected Studies on the Bible in China* is a compilation of his continuing research on Bible studies in China aiming at a high standard of scholarship. He discusses the law from the Christian point of view with extensive quotes from the Bible, and with much consideration of the influence of the Bible in China.
- 2 In addition to introductory chapter written by a renowned biblical scholar, Irene Eber of Jerusalem, the book contains 18 scholarly essays on studies of the Bible in China. In Part I, eight articles are devoted to biblical studies in the Chinese language. With his macro-approach, Marian Galik leads readers to volumes of research by scholars from different Christian denominations of the translation of the Bible into Chinese. Part II over ten articles he turns to comparison, this time taking a micro-approach, discussing the literary works of contemporary Chinese scholars such as Lu Xun, Wang Meng, Mao Dun, Guo Moruo and a number of Taiwan writers and their connection with various books of the Bible.
- 3 I read Marian Galik's book with great interest and admiration, and with a great appreciation of his academic accomplishment in literary criticism, which is demonstrated in his comparative studies on Chinese literature and the Bible. And, as a consequence, I began to wonder why Chinese scholars in the Anglo-Saxon tradition have not achieved the same. For me, Galik is a mirror that reflects the answer. With a Slovenian cultural tradition and his closeness to the Jewish community and the Jewish culture since his childhood, together with his accomplishment in European languages, he grew up and lived within the environment and was equipped with languages that enabled him to study the Word of God. Biblical knowledge is in his veins. His

scholarship in Chinese literature has been acquired by his tireless efforts in studying the Chinese language and culture.

- 4 While my own discipline is social science, I am not qualified to comment on Professor Galik's great work. However, from religious and political points of view, I will try to discuss two minor questions raised by the author.
- 5 In the Essay titled "The Reception of the Bible in the Peoples' Republic of China (1980-1992)" (pp. 93-113), Galik discusses scholarly works of Zhu Weizhi (1905-1999), especially those published in the 1980s. Attention was given to Zhu's discussion on Job's suffering and unjust condemnation as recorded in the Book of Job.
- 6 Galik holds the opinion that "Job as a moral and literary character would not be possible in Chinese writing, since in China morality and personal behaviour of human beings were never sanctioned by an almighty and omniscient God" (p. 98). He continues, "I wonder also why Zhu Weizhi did not compare the word of God from chapter 38 [Book of Job] with those from *Tianwen* (Heavenly Questions) attributed to Qu Yuan" (p. 98).
- 7 For Zhu, Job's afflictions and unjustly condemnation was taken as discipline by heaven as suggested by Mencius (p. 97). In the case of Qu Yuan (*Tianwen*) whose suffering was equal to that of Job, one could not give any appropriate comment on Qu Yuan's suffering without seeking the explanation from religion. From *Tianwen* we understand that Qu Yuan was unjustly condemned by his emperor. Both Qu Yuan and Job suffered from the same affliction and were condemned unjustly. Qu Yuan had no way of being understood by his contemporaries. He drowned himself in the river, having recourse to death to show his loyalty and patriotism. Qu Yuan has no outlet, therefore death is the only sign he could give to the people around him, in particular to his emperor, to indicate his unshaken loyalty and patriotism when he had not encountered the Transcendental God who is the Eternal Judge. Job did not lay down his life because he has a Transcendental God from whom he trusted that God was the highest judge and that He will readdress the grievances which Job suffered for.
- 8 I would like to end the review by leading readers to a translator of the Psalms and the New Testament, Wu Jingxiong, (John C. H. Wu) (p. 21, pp. 84-88, p. 91). His translation of the Psalms is outstanding because of the Chinese literary style that he uses, which makes them a work of Chinese literature in themselves. From the people who know Wu, we learned that his translation work was a spiritual exercise allowing him to understand the Word of God more when he was seeking God in Western and Eastern civilisations in his profession as a lawyer, philosopher and diplomat. In Wu's legal writings, *Jurisprudence: A Treatise, Richly Illustrated with Cases and Readings* and *The Fountain of Justice*<sup>1</sup>, he spent one fifth of the length of these books discussing legal problems from the Christian point of view, the Bible heavily employed. I had the chance to read the Chinese translation of Christian Mathias' research titled "Rechtsphilosophie Zwischen Ost und West", on Wu's philosophy of law, and found that in the relationship between the Bible and law there is much uncharted territory for scholars to explore.

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## NOTES DE FIN

1. John C. H. Wu, *Jurisprudence, A Treatise, Richly Illustrated with Cases and Readings*, West Publishing Co, American Case Book Series, 1958 ; second edition : Taipei, Hua Kang Bookstore, 1976. John C. H. Wu, *Fountain of Justice : A Study in Natural Law*, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1955 ; Taipei, Mei Ya Publications, 1971.