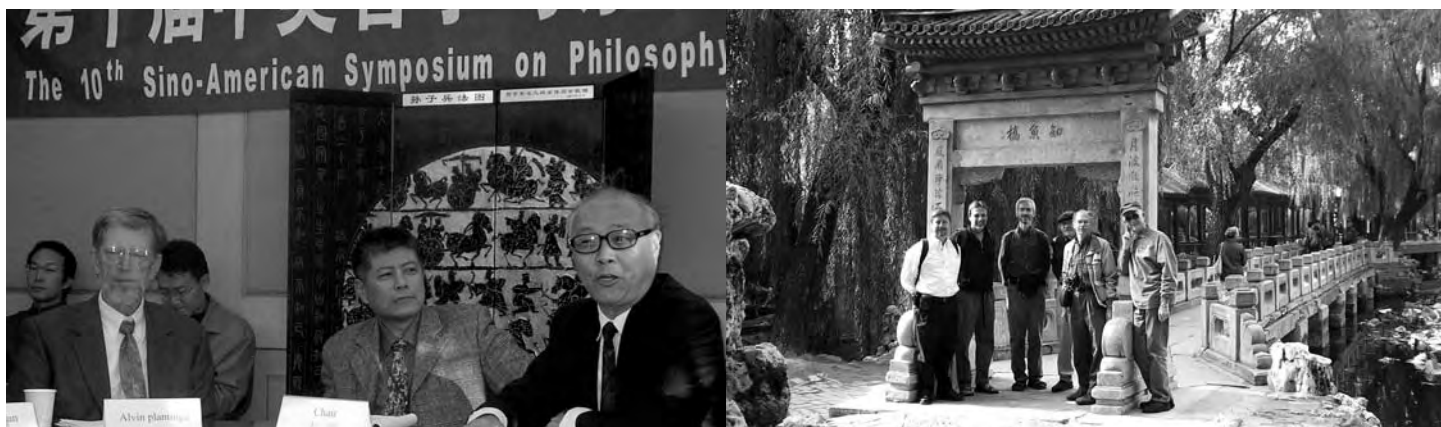




# The Society of Christian Philosophers



Linda Zagzebski, President • Kelly James Clark, Secretary/Treasurer • Spring 2005



Alvin Plantinga with Zhang Zhigang and Zhao Dunhua

From left: Doug Geivet, Ric Otte, Tim O'Connor, William Wainwright, Bruce Reichenbach and Mel Stewart.

## Tenth Anniversary SCP Symposium at Peking University

On October 23, 1994, after an exhausting 14-hour flight, a dream team of philosophers arrived to attend the first Sino-American Symposium at Peking University. The symposium theme was *Philosophy of Religion*. Most were unsure as to what sort of interest this topic would elicit from scholars in a country devoted to the Marxist paradigm. The meetings were sponsored by the International Institute for Christian Studies (directed by Daryl McCarthy).

While I was an IICS professor at St. Petersburg State University in Russia in 1992-93, I received an invitation to lecture at Peking University in spring of 1993. While there, I proposed the symposia idea to the heads of the Department of Philosophy, Chair Ye Lang, Vice Chair Zhao Dunhua, and Professor Zhang Zhigang. The rest is history.

That first conference was followed by four others at Peking University. Scenes from past venues flash by, but one hard to forget is of Bill Hasker riding a camel near the Great Wall. Hasker, perhaps SCP's largest member, is smiling and waving but the camel appears to be *frowning!* Other host universities include

Shandong University (2001). While at Shandong we visited Qufu, Confucius' birthplace, and we climbed the beautiful and holy Mt. Tai. Xiamen University (2000) is situated on beautiful Xiamen Island, home of the tea used for the Boston Tea Party. Tsinghua University (2002), is China's famous technical and scientific institute. And the ninth was held at Sichuan University in the far west of China. It was judged fitting and proper to return for the 10th anniversary to the University that gave it birth.

In his opening remarks at the anniversary symposium Chairperson Zhao Dunhua spoke of the Parable of the Sower, observing that the seed of earlier symposia had taken root in fertile ground and had yielded the fully-developed fruit manifest in more recent symposia.

A pre-symposium gathering brought together some Westerners who had been at the first conference—Al Plantinga, Eleonore Stump, Bruce Reichenbach and myself. Al Plantinga and Kelly James Clark were specially honored by editors of Peking University Press upon the appearance of their books in Chinese, *Warranted Christian Belief* and *Return to Reason*. Both books

had been partially translated by Professor Xing Taotao during a year-long visit to Notre Dame University's Center for the Philosophy of Religion.

Topics covered at the 10th symposium centered on religious epistemology especially as informed by Plantinga and the Reformed tradition.

Plantinga's paper "Evolution and Design," was critically appraised by Cheng Lian of Peking University. Cheng's incisive yet humorous comments etched a profile of an expanding new generation of Chinese scholars not only trained in their own Eastern traditions but also remarkably at home with Western styles of doing philosophy. Clark's paper was a comparative epistemological study of Zhuangzi, an early Daoist, and Plantinga. Kwan Kai Man's paper defended the validity of religious experience. Zhai Zhenming from Sun Yet-sen University spoke to the issue of "Christian Belief and Communicative Rationality."

Michael Murray and Doug Geivet focused on the problem of evil, Hao Changchi on science and religious belief, and Stump and Zhu Xiaochang on the Incarnation. Robert Koons, Cheng Lian, Rick Otte. Zhu Xifang and

~ continued on back cover

# 2005 Executive Committee Minutes

- 1. The Executive Committee** is exploring the option of changing its leadership such that Secretary-Treasurer position will be eliminated and replaced by an Executive Director.
- 2. Regional committees:** Janine Idziak was asked to devise a template for regional reports. In addition some subsidy may be offered for conferences.
- 3. China Outreach Committee:** The 2005 symposium will be held at Fudan University in October, during its 100th anniversary celebration. The China committee organized teaching/lecturing stints for eleven SCP members in China for periods of one week to one month. The short term visitors were Eleonore Stump and Michael Murray (Wuhan University), Mel Stewart (Zhejiang University), Kelly James Clark (Sichuan University), George Mavrodes (East China Normal University), Ryan Nichols (Chinese University of Nationalities), Sander Griffieon (Fudan University), Christina Van Dyke (Chinese University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Baptist University), Richard Swinburne (various universities), Sander Griffieon (Fudan University) and Robert Koons (Peking University). Mel Stewart taught for a semester at Shandong University. Peking University Press has committed to translating and publishing six books by SCP members and has approved a series in Christian philosophy. Calvin and Hope Colleges

sponsored year-long visits by four graduate students from our chief Chinese sponsoring institutions (Peking and Tsinghua Universities). The special appeal to members to raise funds for these students met with great success. SCP members donated \$9,000, more than enough to receive a \$6,000 matching grant. The China Committee was granted permission to seek three-year pledges to the Student program from SCP members. Mike Murray arranged for funding and organized a meeting involving various organizations that have academic outreaches to China. The meeting was held in August, 2004 in New York City. While in New York, Clark and Murray met with the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia and the Luce Foundation to explore funding opportunities for SCP.

- 4. Russia Outreach Committee:** Richard Swinburne, Chair of the Russia Committee, announced his retirement from the committee effective at the end of this year. The major work of the committee has been organizing our participation in the conference on "The Problem of Evil" to take place in Moscow 6-8 June 2005. The SCP speakers for this occasion: Robert Adams, Marilyn Adams, Peter Van Inwagen, Ric Otte, Mark Wynn, Tim O'Connor, Michael Murray, and Richard Swinburne. There will be 6 speakers nominated by the Theological

Commission of the Russian Orthodox Church; and 6 speakers nominated by the Institute of Philosophy of The Russian Academy of the Sciences. Publication: The Russian translation of *Reason and Religious Belief* (by SCP members, Michael Peterson, Bill Hasker, Bruce Reichenbach, and David Basinger) should be published shortly. The proceedings of the Notre Dame conference on physical cosmology are going through the publication process. The English language version is to be published as a supplement to the October 2004 volume of *Faith and Philosophy*. Swinburne's *Is There a God?* has sold 3000 copies. In all these matters we owe enormous gratitude to Mel Stewart and Michael Murray in raising the necessary funds. The Executive Committee was apprised of the need for a serious effort at fundraising on a Society-wide scale, in order to push forward our work both in Russia and China.

- 5. Faith and Philosophy.** The President will appoint a committee to find a successor for William Hasker, Editor of *Faith and Philosophy*, who is coming to the end of his five-year term. The Philosophy Documentation Center is putting *F&P* into digital format. Library subscriptions will be raised to \$75.
- 6. Membership:** Linda Zagzebski and Dan Speak will develop and send targeted letters to (a) lapsed members and (b) prospective members.
- 7. Fund-raising:** The Committee would like to proceed immediately to approach a leadership group, including at least all who have been SCP Presidents or Executive Committee members, with the idea that they might raise a sum to kick off a wider fund-raising drive. A letter, signed by members of this leadership group, indicating the sum raised and the projects it will support should go out to the general membership soliciting their contributions. This procedure has been used with good effect by non-profits to establish momentum in approaching members and others for contributions. The Committee was advised to consult with Linda Zagzebski on fund-raising priorities.

## Zagzebski Selected Phi Beta Kappa Romanell Award Winner

**L**inda Trinkaus Zagzebski, President of the Society of Christian Philosophers, has been awarded the Romanell-Phi Beta Kappa Professorship in Philosophy for 2005-2006. The professorship is presented annually to a philosophy scholar in recognition of distinguished achievement and the scholar's past or potential contribution to public understanding of philosophy. For complete details, see [www.pbk.org/news/releases/romanell05.htm](http://www.pbk.org/news/releases/romanell05.htm).



# Executive Committee Election

**Susan Brower-Toland** received her B. A. from the University of Arizona and her M. A. and Ph.D. from Cornell University. She is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Saint Louis University, where she has taught since 2002. She specializes in Medieval Philosophy, but also has general research and teaching interests in Philosophy of Language, Metaphysics and Philosophy of Religion. Her current research focuses on the philosophy of William Ockham, on medieval theories of intentionality, and on later-medieval discussions of the metaphysics of propositions.

**Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung** received her B. A. from Calvin College and M. A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Notre Dame. She is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College, where she has taught since 1998. She specializes in Aquinas's ethics and the history of ancient and medieval philosophy. Her publications include articles on various virtues and vices in *The Thomist*, *Medieval Philosophy and Theology*, and *Faith and Philosophy*. She is currently writing a book and a supplementary curriculum on the seven capital vices.

**C. Stephen Evans** received his Bachelor's degree from Wheaton College in 1969 and his Ph.D. from Yale University in philosophy in 1974. He is currently University Professor of Philosophy and Humanities at Baylor University. His published works have focused on Kierkegaard, philosophy of religion, and the philosophy of psychology. His most recent book is *Kierkegaard's Ethic of Love: Divine Commands and Moral Obligations* (Oxford University Press). Evans has published many professional articles and has received two Fellowships from NEH and a major grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts. Prior to coming to Baylor Evans taught at Wheaton College, St. Olaf College, where he served as Curator of the Howard and Edna Hong Kierkegaard Library as well as a member of the Philosophy Department, and at Calvin College, where, besides teaching philosophy, he served as Dean for Research and Scholarship and was the inaugural holder of the William Spoelhof Teacher-Scholar Chair. He is a past president of the Society of Christian Philosophers.

**John Greco** received his A. B. from Georgetown University in 1983 and his Ph.D. from Brown University in 1989. He has taught philosophy at Fordham University since 1989. He is the author of *Putting Skeptics in Their Place: The Nature of Skeptical Arguments and Their Role in Philosophical Inquiry* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), and co-editor of *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology* (1999). He is the editor of *Sosa and his Critics* (Blackwell, 2004) and *The Oxford Handbook of Skepticism* (forthcoming). He served on the Executive Council of the American Catholic Philosophical Association from 1999-2001 and has served on program committees for the ACPA, APA and SCP.

**John O'Callaghan** received his Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Notre Dame. He is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame, where he has taught since 2003. Before that he was an Associate Professor at the University of Portland, from 2001-2003, and an Assistant Professor at Creighton University, from 1998-2001. He specializes in Thomas Aquinas, medieval philosophy, and philosophy of mind. He recently published *Thomist Realism and the Linguistic Turn: Toward a More Perfect Form of Existence* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2003).

**Thomas F. Tracy** is Phillips Professor of Religion in the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Bates College. He has a B. A. from St. Olaf College and his M.Phil. and Ph.D. from Yale University, Department of Religious Studies. His research focuses on questions about divine action, providence, the problem of evil, and the relations between theology and science. His writings include *God, Action, and Embodiment* and an edited volume, *The God Who Acts: Philosophical and*

*Theological Explorations*.

**Edward Wierenga** received his B. A. in philosophy from Calvin College and his M. A. and Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. He is Professor of Religion and of Philosophy and Chair of the Department of Religion and Classics at the University of Rochester, where he has taught since 1977. Previous appointments were at Illinois State University and Calvin College. In 1986-87 he was a Distinguished Scholar Fellow at Notre Dame. He is the author of *The Nature of God* (Cornell University Press, 1989) and of a number of articles in the philosophy of religion.

**Celia Wolf-Devine** holds a B. A. from Smith College and a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Wisconsin in Madison. She is Associate Professor at Stonehill College. She is author of *Descartes on Seeing: Epistemology and Visual Perception, Diversity and Community in the Academy: Affirmative Action in Faculty Appointments*, and co-editor with Phil Devine of *Sex and Gender: A Spectrum of Views* (which includes a unit on the issue of naming the Supreme Being). She has served on the philosophy panel for the NEH, functioned as an outside evaluator for the National Science Foundation, and published a number of chapters in books, as well as articles. Her best known article is "Abortion and the Feminine Voice," an internal critique of those feminists who want to revalue the "feminine voice," arguing that their own principles should lead them to be pro-life. She has recently completed a manuscript on prayer entitled *The Heart Transformed: Prayer of Desire*. "Countering the 'Nothing But' Argument" was accepted for publication in *Faith and Philosophy*.

Please cut out and mail your ballot by Sept. 1 to: Society of Christian Philosophers, Department of Philosophy, Calvin College, 1845 Knollcrest Circle SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546-4402

## Executive Committee Election Ballot

Executive Committee (vote for four):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Susan Brower-Toland | <input type="checkbox"/> Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C. Stephen Evans    | <input type="checkbox"/> John Greco               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John O'Callaghan    | <input type="checkbox"/> Thomas F. Tracy          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Edward Wierenga     | <input type="checkbox"/> Celia Wolf-Devine        |



## Tenth Anniversary SCP Symposium ~ continued from cover

respondent Wang Lu focused on the evolutionary argument against naturalism and Zhou Weichi on the idea of warranted belief as it applies to the Christian, Judaic, and Hindu traditions. Xing Taotao offered a critical appraisal of Plantinga's apologetic strategy, and William Wainwright focused once again upon religious experience.

The serious focus of the symposium was balanced by the greater-good of humor when the SCP presented a gift of a beautiful mantle clock to honor Professor Zhao Dunhua for his support of these venues. Unfortunately, in China the gift of a clock symbolizes the final stage of one's life or end of one's professional career! One must never give a clock! When Zhao Dunhua saw the clock, however, he couldn't hold back his laughter. It was an appropriate *felix-culpa* ending to an auspicious and memorable occasion.

Following the gift presentation, Eleonore Stump, Kelly Clark, and Bruce Reichenbach shared comments on my service to the SCP as co-chair of the China Committee for ten years.

Many thanks to the participants East and West, to Peking University which served as a gracious host, and to the Paul & Dawn Sjolund Foundation for funding the symposium. Many thanks also to Kelly James Clark for planning such an outstanding program and schedule of presenters.

This report would be incomplete if

I didn't mention the numerous other initiatives which have flowed from these symposia. Many SCP members are teaching short term in China. Publications by various publishing companies, especially Peking University Press, are reaching an ever-expanding Chinese audience. Opportunities to teach in China for a term or a whole year are available for those who have an upcoming sabbatical, and short-term lecture series are currently being scheduled. Contact Kelly or myself (mystewart@sherbtl.net). And Chinese students are coming to study in America. If your college/university is

open to having a student from China study a year with a tuition and board/room waiver, we would be happy to add you to the list that now includes, Calvin College, Hope College, Bethel University, and Biola University.

Please consider a regular generous donation for these ongoing initiatives. They are tax-deductible if you send them directly to Kelly or Global Horizons, 17 Skiles Lane, Arden Hills, MN 55112 (designate your gift to the SCP China Committee).

— Mel Stewart

### Renew or Join SCP with

We have been looking into accepting credit card payments for SCP membership for several years. We have been processing non-US members' credit cards through the Calvin Bookstore but this has created a lot of problems and they have asked us to discontinue offering this service. We explored many options and Paypal is the easiest and least costly for us. If you'd like to start paying with a credit card, you need to register for a Personal Account at Paypal at [https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=\\_registration-run](https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_registration-run). This requires you to provide your credit card information to Paypal which then charges your card whenever you use Paypal to renew your membership (or make any other payment). Paypal is a secure site. After you've signed up, you can pay by logging in to your Paypal account and selecting "Send Money" from the top menu. That takes you to a page where you need to submit the following:

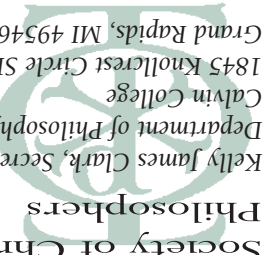
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