

Introduction to the Fourth Nordic Forum of Sino-Western Studies on The Finnish School of Luther Research and Chinese Context (2014)

GAO Yuan

(University of Helsinki, Finland, 00014)

Author: GAO Yuan, Ph. D. Candidate at the Department of Systematic Theology, University of Helsinki, is engaged in the study of Philosophical Psychology, Dogmatics, Augustinian Studies as well as the Comparative studies of Sino-Western Philosophy. He received M. Phil. at Nanjing University in 2011, majoring in Chinese Philosophy and Eastern Religions. GAO Yuan, University of Helsinki, 00014 Helsinki, Finland. Tel. +358-44-9516-116. Email: gaoshanyuanquan@hotmail.com

The fourth Nordic conference of Sino-Western Studies took place in the University of Helsinki on the first day of December 2014, focusing on the theme of “The Finnish School of Luther, New Interpretation and Chinese Context”. Scholars from the Mainland of China, Hong Kong, Canada and Finland discussed many related issues concerning the Finnish school and the Chinese context, in which the new Finnish interpretation of Luther, Justification by faith, and his religious reformation in the light of the Chinese context have been drawing much attention. I address the background of the discussions as follows.

1. Theosis and the New Finnish Interpretation of Luther

The presiders Paulos Huang and Tuula Sakaranaho firstly introduced the history of the Mannermaa School and the value of Finnish Luther research for Chinese academics. Paulos showed that the Finnish school has new interpretations in many domains of Luther's theology such as apophatic theology (“*théognosie apophatique*”), the theology of the cross (*theologia crucis*), the distinction of the two righteousnesses, the three functions of the Law, the relation between the Law and the Gospel, Christ as the “Greatest Sinner” (*maximus peccator*) and the “Greatest Person” (*maxima persona*), *agape* and *eros*, grace and faith, participation (refers to *theosis*) and love, etc. Two findings of the Mannermaa school, Paulos stressed, are of importance in understanding the doctrine of justification and the relation between faith and love: one is “the Presence of Christ in Faith” (*in ipsa fide Christus adest*), the other is “faith is the creation of the divinity” (*fides est creatrix divinitatis*). These points are interrelated in their addressing of the essence of justification and *theosis*. In addition, the values of the Finnish school are also embodied in the following: 1. Improving the dialogue between the Finnish Lutheran Church and the Russian Orthodox Church; 2. Improving the dialogue between the Finnish Lutheran Church and the Roman Catholics; 3. Improving the concord announcement of justification

between the Protestants and the Roman Catholics; 4. Improving the classical interpretations on Martin Luther.^[1]

In the seminar, Risto Saarinen (Professor of Ecumenics at the University of Helsinki) introduced the Finnish Luther Research and the history of Ecumenics in Finland. He explained that Lennart Pinomaa and Lauri Haikola are precursors in addressing the Lutheran Studies in Finland, which held a high reputation at the beginning of the twentieth century. The new revival of Lutheran studies results from the Department of Systematic Theology team, led by Professor Mannermaa since the 1980s. Here lie the origins of the Mannermaa School.^[2] In recent years, some soteriological concepts such as gift, favour and recognition have been paid more attention to by the Finnish school in their dialogue with the Orthodox tradition.^[3] These concepts are of importance in addressing the idea of “the presence of Christ in faith” in the doctrine of deification, which is inseparable with the theology of the cross and the theology of love.^[4]

Olli-Pekka Vainio (Ph. D. at the University of Helsinki) shed light on the issue of theosis in Luther and explained the meaning of “the presence of Christ in faith”, along with some potential misunderstandings. In his article “Misunderstanding Luther’s View of Theosis”, Vainio lists the following misleading views:^[5]

- (1) “Theosis-terminology does not appear often in Luther’s writing. Therefore it is not central to him. Claiming otherwise means interpreting Luther against his own intentions.”
- (2) “Theosis means substantial absorption of human person into divinity.”
- (3) “Theosis leads one to look for certainty of salvation from inner experiences.”
- (4) “Theosis excludes imputation as the central feature of justification.”
- (5) “Imposing theosis as the central soteriological notion damages the unity of the Formula of Concord and the Lutheran Confessional uniqueness.”
- (6) “The Finnish scholars espouse Osiander’s doctrine of God’s effective indwelling as our righteousness.”
- (7) “Theosis can be used to solve ecumenical differences.”

Vainio argues that the Finnish school adopts systematic analysis to trace the inner logic of the thinkers and to expose the implicit connotations of the original texts. Although the terminology of *theosis* does not often appear in Luther’s texts, this does not mean that it is not the core of his theology. In Luther’s context, justification and *theosis* could be interpreted in the context of sacramental theology and ecclesiology, which shows that “the Presence of Christ” is the essence of deification. In deification, God and man remain distinct

[1] See Paulos Huang’s report, “The Finnish Interpretation of Martin Luther and Their Contributions”, in the Fourth Forum of the Sino-Western Studies 2014, 7-8.

[2] For the history of Finnish Luther Research and the revival of the Mannermaa School, see Risto Saarinen, “Justification by Faith: The View of the Mannermaa School”, in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther’s Theology*, ed. Robert Kolb et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 254-263; Miikka Ruokanen, *Luther in Finland: Der Einfluss der Theologie Martin Luthers in Finnland und Finnische Beiträge zur Lutherforschung* (Schriften Der Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft, 1986).

[3] See <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/ristosaarinen/luther-studies-in-finland/> and <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/ristosaarinen/lutheran-orthodox-dialogue-2/>.

[4] “The real presence of Christ in the believer is seen as the core of Luther’s theology and as a central feature (perhaps even “the” central feature) of his doctrine of justification. The idea of this real presence becomes connected with an “ontological” understanding of theology...Theology of love and theology of the cross are among the central features of the Finnish approach.” (See <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/ristosaarinen/z5/>).

[5] See Olli-Pekka Vainio’s presentation of “Misunderstanding Luther’s View of Theosis” in the Fourth Forum of Sino-Western Studies 2014.

in nature, so that human beings do not lose their personhood and individuality. Believers will not go through essential transformation.^[6] Vainio maintains, “It should be clear that the basis for the imputation of Christ’s righteousness is not the inchoate renewal caused by Christ’s indwelling but Christ’s own righteousness, which is given in faith to the believer.”^[7] As distinct from Osiander’s view that “only Christ’s divinity is the justifying righteousness”, Finns take the sacrifice of Christ (human-divine person) as the basis for theosis.^[8] Therefore the theology of the cross occupies the crucial position in the issue of deification. Although the Finnish school lays much stress on the dialogue with the Orthodox tradition, it is not to say that they have reached consensus on ecumenical issues. In some domains, the gap even becomes larger. For instance, Finns do not use the term of energy or the concept of “the justice of God that makes us righteous”, but maintain the Passion of Christ to be the foundation of the justification of human beings.^[9]

Antti Raunio (Professor at the University of Eastern Finland) demonstrated the issue of theosis from the point of view of a contemplative and active life. He maintained that “the essential feature of theosis is a sanctified life in the service of others”.^[10] Luther’s main point, Raunio stresses, is “that one has to apprehend Christ by the contemplative faith and become justified in order to be able to practice active life, which consists of acting for one’s neighbors in need”.^[11] In this case, the exercise of faith in love and patience is not only for the practitioners in the monasteries but for all the people who live in faith and exercise virtues in the mundane world.^[12]

Xu Fenglin (Professor at Peking University) offered an outline of the idea of theosis in the Orthodox tradition, arguing from the point of view of mysterious theology, soteriology, energy and the Holy Spirit to reveal the doctrine of deification in Eastern Christianity. He believes that the division of energy and nature in the Orthodoxy tradition involves both the divinity and the humanity and the connotation is beyond the theological scope, containing the elements of humanities. He argues that the participation in the divine nature is through human energies, which show their own freedom, will and plan and these energies are acquired for practicing and maintaining.^[13] He mentions that in comparison to Western Theology, the Orthodox tradition stresses more the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation. Redemption is not only through the person of Jesus Christ, but also involves the Holy Spirit, Who delivers the human being to unite with God. Therefore the

[6] “Anyway, Luther strongly underlines that the human being and God remain as distinct objects. The Believer does not lose his or her personhood or individuality and they do not go through essential transformation... Thus Luther acknowledges that he is not talking about anything like transubstantiation.” Vainio, “Misunderstanding Luther’s View of Theosis”, 5.

[7] Ibid., 10.

[8] Ibid., 11.

[9] Ibid., 12.

[10] Antti Raunio, *Summe des Chrislichen Lebens. Die Goldene Regel als Gesetz der Liebe in der Theologie Martin Luthers von 1510-1527* (Mainz: Zabern, 2001). Cf. Vainio “Misunderstanding Luther’s View of Theosis”.

[11] Antti Raunio, “Knowing God and acting for one’s neighbor. Contemplative and active life in Luther’s Theology,” in the Forum of Sino-Western Studies 2014, 7.

[12] Ibid., 8.

[13] The Chinese text is: “东正教神学中关于神的本质与能量划分理论,其意义已超出了神学范围本身,包含一种人学。神有本质与能量的划分,人也有本质与能量的划分……人加入绝对者、完善、完满的存在,不是通过自己的‘本质’,换言之,不是通过人的某种固定不变的规定性,或人本质的某些部分,或人性的某些方面(特别不是通过人的理性本身),而是通过自己的‘能量’,也就是人的意向、人的自由冲动、内在方针,而且这些意向在人身上不是必然具有的,而是可能有也可能没有,可能出现也可能消失,需要人进行专门修炼和维护。”徐凤林 XU Fenglin, “东正教的‘成神’与中国哲学的‘成圣’ Dongzhengjiao de ‘chengshen’ yu zhongguo zhexue de ‘chengsheng’” [The Orthodoxy Theory of Deification and Chinese Philosophy of Sanctification] (第四届国学与西学北欧论坛报告 Disijie Guoxue yu xixue Beiou luntan baogao [the Fourth Forum of the Sino-Western Studies]), 4-5.

emphasis of the person of the Holy Spirit, Xu Fenglin maintains, is a characteristic of the doctrine of deification in the Orthodoxy tradition.

Zhu Donghua (Professor at Tsinghua University) evaluated Luther's theory of deification from the point of view of the historical disputation of Nestorianism. He argues that Theodore and his school was marginalized as a heresy due to their thesis of the division of divinity and humanity in the person of Christ which violates the regulation of "without division" in the Council of Chalcedon (451).^[14] For Luther, Zhu explains, the mistake of Theodore is not his view of "division of divinity and humanity", but his rejection of the union of word and man (*communicatio idiomatum*), since Luther is in line with the formulations of Irenaeus and Athanasius.^[15] In this way Zhu asks, if Mannermaa's interpretation of the union of divinity and humanity as "one" is right, then Luther's view of "*communicatio idiomatum*" becomes problematic, for it violates the formulation of "without confusion" in the Chalcedon creed as well.^[16] The issue of whether God and men are united as one, Zhu maintains, is fundamental for understanding the concept of thesis in Luther.

2. Justification and Faith

After the discussion of Lutheran interpretation of theosis, the conference moved on to the second core issue in Luther: Justification by faith.

Liu Lupeng (Professor at Shangdong University) introduced the function of faith in primitive religions in order to examine the essence of faith in Christianity. In his report "原始宗教的信 Yuanshi zongjiao de xin" ("Faith in Primitive Religions"), Liu maintains that irrationality is a main characteristic in prehistoric faith. It runs through various types of worship, including pantheism, totemism and witchcraft. He interprets, "The primitive belief does not care about rational analysis and the logical consistence, nor the consistence between the fact and the concept, but stresses the faith in their worship... The primitive way of thinking does not like analysis and it shows a characteristic of synthesis."^[17] The synthesis in primitive beliefs is different from Christianity, which defends faith by rationality and analysis. Another characteristic in primitive belief, Liu adds, is utilitarianism. For primitive people, they believe that their idols can bring benefit for them; if their requirements are not satisfied, they will beat the idols. This is also distinguished from Christianity, in which the pilgrim attempts to restrain from earthly desires in order to advance toward the divine world. Although there are many differences as such, Liu points out that they also share the same principle of pursuing the

[14] "Unfortunately Theodore and his school became marginalized in Western church history because 'those churches which accepted the definition of faith established by the Council of Chalcedon (451) judged Syriac Christianity as schismatic at best but in most instances as heretical.'" ZHU Donghua, "Martin Luther and Nestorianism", in the Fourth Forum of Sino-Western Studies.

[15] "Just as the Word of God became flesh, so it is certainly also necessary that the flesh became word. For the Word became flesh precisely so that the flesh may become word. In order words: God becomes man so that man may become God." (Luther Werke, section 1, vol. 1, 25-32) See Zhu Donghua, "Martin Luther and Nestorianism" in the Forum of Sino-Western Studies.

[16] "The Nestorian temptation represents a 'division' Christology, refuted by Chalcedon's stipulation, 'without division', while Luther's tendency to collapse humanity into the deity of Christ is in its own way just as problematic, in view of the stimulation 'without confusion'." See "Conclusion" in Zhu Donghua's "Martin Luther and Nestorianism".

[17] Lu's text in Chinese is: "原始逻辑不讲逻辑, 不惧矛盾, 只要基于信仰, 即便事实与观念之间出现断裂也不会产生怀疑性影响... 原逻辑思维很不喜欢分析, 它在本质上是综合性的特征。" 刘陆鹏 LIU Lupeng, "原始宗教中的信 Yuanshi zongjiao zhong de xin" [Faith in Primitive Religions] (第四届国学与西学北欧论坛报告 Disijie Guoxue yu xixue Beiou luntan baogao [the Fourth Forum of the Sino-Western Studies]), 页 4/Liu Lupeng, 4.

supreme goodness and the perfect union with the supreme being (…).^[18]

Hou Jianxin (Professor at Tianjin Normal University) made an analysis of the values of the doctrine of original sin and the idea of Justification by faith for political and social life. He argued that the concept of original sin is the fundamental basis for the dualism of the Church and the State in the political framework and the idea of Justification by faith offers a bridge for the modern equality of human rights. First, the original sin is not confined to humanity but also pertains to political powers. The weakness and the fallen state of human nature lay the foundation for the control of the secular power for righteous use. At the same time, the Church offers a picture of perfection in the future Kingdom of God, which shows an orientation for the present political and social life. Second, the theory of Justification by faith offers a notion of equality. Anyone baptized will become a new person and will be elected as a new member in the city of God. This idea breaks the social hierarchical order and displays individual freedom and dignity.

WangYaping (Professor at Tianjin Normal University) offered a historical background for the theory of Justification by faith. She examines the historical background of medieval politics, economics and education in Luther's era and argues that the economic transformation from seigniorialism to the market-oriented economy laid the foundation for developing the values of individuality, which became the social basis for the religious reformation. At the same time, she analyses the influence of the ideological trends of humanism, classical philosophy and the theological tradition, believing that Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, Oakham and Erasmus lay the foundation for Luther in developing the doctrine of Justification by faith. On this basis, she assents to Mannermaa's thesis that the Lutheran doctrine of justification is not opposed to the Orthodoxy theosis and she believes that "Luther's justification theory is based upon the ancient church teaching of Christology".^[19]

Jason Yeung (Professor of Systematic Theology at Ambrose University College) made an examination on the doctrine of Justification by faith as well as on the tradition of Lutheran spirituality. He maintains that monasticism had significant influence on the social life during the Medieval ages but the monastic problems were becoming increasingly prominent as shown in the story of *The Decameron*. Moreover, some teachings such as transubstantiation caused believers to not dare touch the divine bread and wine (…).^[20] In this context, Luther makes the reformation, arguing that grace has nothing to do with human merit and the improvement of human morality and spirituality is wholly dependent upon the grace of God. In referring to Luther's doctrine of Justification by faith, Yeung makes a comparison between Luther's view of spirituality and the Chinese philosophy of soul and discusses the doctrinal connections from his point of view. This comparison is meaningful for understanding the theme of Lutheran studies and the Chinese Context.

[18] “同一性(共在)、分享、向善(好)就是人类在宗教中一些保持不变的本根性东西……原始宗教,它的信,它在原始初民身上的表现,可以给我们一些启示:不确定性的生存环境、对美好与善的追求、心灵抚慰的需要,所有这些都是永恒的。” Ibid., 6-7.

[19] “路德的称义教义是建立在古代教会的基督教思想之上。”王亚平 WANG Yaping, “马丁·路德”因信称义“的社会基础 Mading Lude yinxinchengyi de shehui jichu” [The Social Foundation for Martin Luther's Theory of Justification by Faith], (第四届国学与西学北欧论坛报告 Disijie Guoxue yu xixue Beiou luntan baogao [the Fourth Forum of the Sino-Western Studies]), 9.

[20] 杨庆球 Jason YEUNG, “王阳明与路德的属灵/成圣操练对现代人的启迪 Wang Yangming yu Lude de shuling/chengsheng caolian dui xiandai ren de diqi” [The Enlightenment of Wang Yangming and Luther's Teachings of Spirituality for Modern Life] (第四届国学与西学北欧论坛报告 Disijie Guoxue yu xixue Beiou luntan baogao [the Fourth Forum of the Sino-Western Studies]), 13.

3. Lutheran Reformation and the Chinese Context

Yeung continued to illustrate the relationships between Luther and WangYangming's views on the training of morality. From the point of view of freedom in practise, Yeung argues that they are similar since Wang Yangming stresses the enlightenment of soul (明心见性, Ming Xin Jian Xing) while Luther sheds light on freedom from the law in one's heart. In this sense, both of these traditions are pursuing for the freedom of subject and the transformation of one's soul.^[21] From the point of view of the approach to freedom, Yeung believes that these traditions are opposite. Luther underlines the fundamental role of grace in improving human morality while Wang Yangming argues for flexible training without adherence to external matters.^[22] On this basis, Yeung concludes, "Wang Yangming's way of training (from individual spiritual freedom to the control over external matters) offers a positive factor for Luther's approach and it contributes to today's morality. Luther provides the doctrine of grace and sin to cause sinners to be humble in understanding the central role of grace in improving human morality; these two traditions show a balance between *Dao* and the Holy Spirit in practising one's soul."^[23]

FengZilian (Ph. D Candidate of Religious Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong) stressed the union between God and man in addressing the issue of theosis. He argues: "Justification does not mean that sinners are declared as innocent in the same way as a court would rule, but refers to the real union between God and man".^[24] Feng assents to Paulos Huang's view in saying that there are some consistencies between the Finnish interpretation of Luther and the Chinese doctrine of sanctification (e. g., sanctification in Confucianism, immortalization in Taoism and attaining Buddhahood in Buddhism).^[25] These consistencies provide a perspective for finding more sources in the Chinese context in the dialogue with Christianity and in producing the "Chinese school" of Lutheran studies.^[26]

LiuXinli (Professor at Shandong University) discusses the possibility of developing a Chinese school of Lutheran studies. She remarks that Mainland China has its own advantages in the field of Lutheran studies and a new research school is forming which is referred to as the "Chinese school".^[27] Liu traces the history

[21] Yeung compares Wang Yangming's teaching of four-sentence mottoes with Luther's view of grace and law. He exemplifies Wang Yangming's mottoes as follows: "The nature of soul is out of good and evil, while the inclination of mind creates good and evil. In the case of intuitive knowledge, it is aware of good and evil, while pursuing good in avoidance of evil is practicing for the investigation of matters." See Yeung, "The Enlightenment of Wang Yangming and Luther's Teachings of Spirituality for Modern Life", 18.

[22] The Chinese text is: "正如阳明的良知不再拘泥于外在的工夫,这已是最高的境界。现代灵修学的要点是重新发现上帝的恩典,不是靠人的工夫去建造。工夫是需要的,但工夫是带领人到自由的境界,它本身是过渡的。" Ibid., 19.

[23] The Chinese text is: "阳明的成德操练由个体自由到统摄万有,可以为路德后来僵化了的属灵操练提供灵性自由的积极面向,对今天的属灵操练有一定的贡献;享受从上帝而来的真正自由而不会限于极端的主观及个人主义, '道'与'圣灵'成为个人心灵操练的平衡。从事工的发展比较,即所谓'外王',路德又较阳明确实,当主体的自由转化成上帝的旨意,人便承担了无上的责任……在罪人与义人之间体验上帝的恩典及人的无助,最后叫人无可自夸。" Ibid., 20.

[24] 冯梓琏 FENG Zilian,《信与爱:芬兰学派对马丁路德的新诠释——读〈芬兰学派之父曼多马文集:马丁路德研究〉》Xin yu ai: Fenlan xuepai dui Mading Lude de xin quanshi —— Du Fenlan xuepai zhi fu Man Duoma wenji: Mading Lude yanjiu [Faith and Love: A Reading of the Finnish New Interpretation of Luther] (第四届国学与西学北欧论坛报告 Disijie Guoxue yu xixue Beidou luntan baogao [the Fourth Forum of the Sino-Western Studies]), 5.

[25] Ibid., 8-9. Cf. Paulos Huang, "The Finnish Interpretation of Martin Luther and Their Contributions", 8.

[26] Feng Zilian, "Faith and Love: A Reading of the Finnish New Interpretation of Luther", 8.

[27] "随着这些特色的继续发展和广泛推介,中国语境下的德国宗教改革之研究将会在短时间内独树一帜,被国际同行学者称为'中国学派'。刘新利 LIU Xinli,《中国语境下的德国宗教改革研究》Zhongguo yujing xia de Deguo zongjiao gaige yanjiu [The Study of German Religious Reformation in Chinese Context] (第四届国学与西学北欧论坛报告 Disijie Guoxue yu xixue Beidou luntan baogao [the Fourth Forum of the Sino-Western Studies]), 2.

of Lutheran studies in the Chinese context, and divides it into three stages: The earliest introduction of Luther in the field of Church history originates from the time of the Opium War. A group of scholars such as Xu Jixu (徐继畲), Guo Songtao (郭嵩焘), Song Yuren (宋育仁), Kang Youwei (康有为), Liang Qichao (梁启超) and Tan Sitong (谭嗣同) were forerunners in introducing Luther's religious reformation into China. In the Min Guo Period, his tradition was followed by Wang Jingxuan (王敬轩), Zhao Zichen (赵紫宸), Xie Fuya (谢扶雅), Yang Shaotang (杨绍唐), Ni Chisheng (倪柝声) and Wang Mingdao (王明道). The second stage starts from the 1980s, when Chinese scholars were trying to interpret Luther from the point of view of Marxism. Some articles include Zheng Rulin's (郑如霖) 《论欧洲早期的宗教改革运动——批判黑格尔宣扬日耳曼民族优越的谬论》 (“Review of European Religious Reformation: A Criticism on Hegel's erroneous view of the Ethnic Superiority of Germans”) and Li Pingye's (李平晔) 《人的发现: 马丁·路德与宗教改革》 (“The Discovery of Men: Martin Luther and Religious Reformation”). In the third stage, Chinese scholars changed their stance in introducing the Lutheran theology. A series of books reflect their approaches. These are ones such as 《马丁·路德文选》 (“A Collected Works of Martin Luther”), 《马丁·路德选集》 (“An Anthology of Martin Luther”), 《马丁·路德的神学》 (“The Theology of Martin Luther”), 《这是我的立场: 改教先导马丁·路德传记》 (“This is My Position: The Forerunner of the Reformation, Martin Luther”), 《历史与思想研究译丛》 (“History and Thought Research and Translations”).^[28] In Liu Xinli's view, Chinese scholars show their advantages in addressing Lutheran theology from the interdisciplinary point of view in comparison to the Finnish school. She states: “China has an unique approach to the religious studies because of its special history. Traditional Chinese formulations such as the comparison between Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, the union between the three religions and the supremacy of Confucianism show their unique approaches in expressing religious theories”.^[29] From this stance, Liu believes that Chinese scholars have shown their advantages in collecting various sources and forming an unique “Chinese school”.^[30]

On the above discussion, the conference moved to the issue of the relations between grace and freedom. Zhu Donghua put forward his question: “In the debate between Augustine and Pelagians, does the subjectivity which Pelagians advocates take the last triumph from the modern perspective?” Jason Yeung states that in modern society, subjectivity is put in a significant position, especially in Chinese culture, but in the Catholic tradition and Lutheran theology, grace is the central conception. Furthermore, the “complete freedom” which modernity advocates leads to nihilism. Paulos Huang adds that the essence of this issue is the relation between *Esse per se* and *Esse aliud* and *Esse per se* would probably lead to nihilism. Liu Lupeng argues that the authority of God restrains the human right(s), which is inconsistent with the modern spirit of freedom. Wang Yaping assents to Liu Lupeng's view and she adds that the concept of freedom could be involved with the spirit of law. Jason Yeung responds that human freedom does not mean that they can be saved by their own merits (according to the Catholic teaching); what is more important is the grace of God which is a crucial point in the issue of justification, sanctification and deification.

In my opinion, the Finnish new interpretation of theosis has a profound historical and doctrinal background – the development of Christian doctrines in the Latin West. This involves the whole historical

[28] Ibid., 6-7.

[29] Ibid., 16.

[30] Ibid., 16.

background of the Eastern and Western doctrinal disputations. In the face of the Eastern challenges, especially the criticism from Maximus, Simeon the New Theologian, Palamite and the twentieth century theologians such as Lossky, Meyendorff and Florovsky, who maintain that Augustine and the Latin West offer a wrong theory, saying that deification is merely a fulfilment of humanity without transformation into divine, the Finnish school returns to the classical formulation of theosis, that of “God became man so that man might become God” and makes a new interpretation. For Eastern orthodoxy theologians, Augustine and the Lutheran formulation of theosis is false since they do not have the division between energy and essence and they omit the role of the person of the Holy Spirit in the redemption and deification. As a response, the Finnish school focuses on the second person of the Trinity and the theology of the cross to develop the idea of “the real presence of Christ in Faith” as the basis of theosis. The new interpretation unites the theology of the cross and redemption, arguing that the foundation for theosis is not the divinity of Jesus Christ but His Passion and crucifixion. In this sense, the thesis of salvation by human merit and the deification without transformation are both misleading. We see that the Finnish school does not use the orthodoxy terminology of energy and essence and they return to their own tradition to interpret the Lutheran theosis in a new way. This approach offers a perspective for rethinking the Lutheran studies in the Chinese context. In order to form a Chinese school in the domain of Lutheran theology, traditional Chinese philosophy and religion should be paid more attention to and on this basis a dialogue with Christianity could be possible in this new global era. As Liu Xinli puts it: “For the enrichment of Chinese culture, some Chinese scholars are aware of the importance of involving Christian theology into the Chinese academic tradition; an exploration of religious reformation in the Chinese context associated with the international academic situation is now under consideration.”^[31]

[31] Ibid., 12.

中文题目：

第四届国学与西学北欧论坛报告：路德研究的芬兰学派与汉语语境（2014）

高源

芬兰赫尔辛基大学宗教学博士候选人。

University of Helsinki, 00014 Helsinki, Finland。电话：+358-44-9516-116。

电子邮件：gaoshanyuanquan@hotmail.com.