



Eric Vanden Bussche (front left)

Mr. Vanden Bussche observed that when the China-Burma border was being drawn, the Qing government handled the demarcation process almost entirely through its embassy in London, with little intervention from the imperial court in Beijing. He also described how the Qing negotiators in London reinterpreted traditional notions of sovereignty and applications of international law to initiate discussion on spatial fields. This also changed the definition of border areas among Yunnan Provincial officials and local officials and the exercise of sovereignty.

2012.09.11

The CCS and College of International Studies and Education for Overseas Chinese at Taiwan Normal University jointly held the first session of the 2012 Lecture Series on Cross-cultural Perspectives of Confucian Ethics. Professor Thomas Fröhlich from the Department of Sinology at Germany's University of Erlangen-Nuremberg presented a lecture on "Conquering Modernity with Confucianism: Tang Junyi's Vision of a Future China."



Professor Thomas Fröhlich (center)

Professor Fröhlich considered the historical and intellectual context of Tang Junyi's application of concepts like "civil theology" and "civil religion" and noted that contemporary critics of Tang Junyi miss a crucial point. He observed that Tang was keenly aware of the danger that Confucianism might engender that of being reduced to a "profane utilitarianism and positivism" which in turn might readily be turned into dogmatism by the hands of those in power. Professor Fröhlich also questioned whether modern Confucianism nourishes the individual's delusion of a modernity which fully submits to the ethical will of human agency, and thus exaggerates the role of human agency in a process which is, at least partially, characterized by developments outside the immediate reach of an ethical will.

2012.10.01

The CCS held the World Sinology Symposium on October 1. Professor Barend. J. ter Haar of the Sinological Institute at Leiden University in the Netherlands presented a lecture entitled, "Where are China's Witches" Professor ter Haar noted that China has a long tradition of witches (including shamans and mediums) but this tradition has been

rarely studied compared to the subject's academic treatment in the West.



Professor Barend J. ter Haar (left)

Professor ter Haar described his observations of witchcraft in China as a “witchcraft paradigm” with the main intention to interpret inexplicable phenomenon, such as weather changes and epidemics, and perhaps to sabotage social networks between people, for instance, by slandering a despised neighbor or even framing others with the charge of cult worship. Professor ter Haar further noted that the biggest manifestations of the witchcraft paradigm could be seen in the scenes of surging Red Guards, political accusations, and class struggle during the Communist Party of China's Cultural Revolution.

CCS News and Activities

Mid-autumn Festival Tea Party

The CCS held a Mid-autumn Festival tea party for foreign visiting scholars on the afternoon of May 26. A tea master demonstrated tea making skills to live musical accompaniment, giving the participating scholars a chance to appreciate the charm of tea culture and Eastern music.

Over 30 scholars and family members from 14 countries attended the party, which treated participants to a relaxing experience combining music, teaware appreciation, and tea tasting.



A group photo of the mid-autumn festival tea party

National Day Banquet

The NCL arranged a National Day banquet for recipients of the CCS Research Grants for Visiting Foreign Scholars and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Taiwan Fellowship grants. The participating foreign scholars were deeply honored to have the opportunity to participate in the National Day reception. A total of 24 scholars and family members from 16 countries attended the reception this year.

The event was held at the Baroque-style Taipei Guest House and garden area. Over 4,000 domestic and foreign dignitaries attended the program, which included Paiwan indigenous song and music performances by the Taiwu Elementary School Folk Singers from Pingtung County. The guests also feasted on Chinese and Western cuisine, including small steamed baozi from Din Tai Fung, Tainan danzai noodles, aboriginal millet mochi, and other delicacies.

International Conference on the Forbidden Legend: Jin Ping Mei