## CHINESE NAMES FOR GOD

In the course of research at the Alliance School of Theology and Missions, New York, Mr. Paul L. King has made a survey of 161 native speakers of Chinese, resident in New York City, Hong Kong and Taiwan, in order to discover their reactions to various names for God. Respondents were classified according to geographical area, sex, age, education in and outside China, occupation and religion, and departures of 10% or more from the norm or median were considered significant.

Mr. King concludes that "for Bible translation, or for the use of divine names in the church, there are no new suggestions", and that "by and large, the status quo" of current usage "was vindicated": Shang-ti, Shen and possibly Tien-fu Shang-ti being used by Protestants, and Tien-chu by Roman Catholics. Tien-chu also received a normal response from Protestants interviewed; however, Mr. King considers it "highly unlikely" that both Protestants and Roman Catholics will come to use the one term for God, since Tien-chu is also the Chinese name for Roman Catholicism.

Mr. King's research has not yet been published, but readers interested to know more of his methods or conclusions may write to him at 114 Catherine Street, Ithaca, NY 14850, U.S.A.

## NOTES AND REVIEWS

**The Sixth International Congress on Biblical Studies.** Oxford, 3–7 April 1978.

During the five days of this congress, 166 papers of various kinds were presented. Most of these are to be published during the next two years in the *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, or in a "projected sister publication devoted to the New Testament". A few of the papers were wholly or partly concerned with translation.

Among major lectures, B. M. Metzger discussed "Problems Old and New in Bible Translating", referring among other things to new (mainly Hebrew) lexicographical evidence from cognate languages; to the unresolved text-critical controversy over "rigorous eclecticism" in the New Testament; and to the current avoidance of so-called "sexist" language, especially in American English. P. J. Spicer of the Oxford University Press expressed the opinion that the Bible market was probably saturated, at least in the United Kingdom, and that if new versions were published, they would probably only take away sales from existing translations. Dr. G. Vermes outlined "The Present State of the 'Son of Man' Debate", suggesting that although there was still vigorous discussion of whether (as Vermes himself believed) "Son of Man" was a

circumlocution for "I", or whether it could have wider reference in Aramaic, a consensus had been established that neither in the gospels nor in Jewish apocalyptic writings was "Son of Man" used as a title. The logical consequence had been drawn by the Nueva Biblia Española of 1975, in which "Son of Man" in Dan 7.13 was represented by "una figura humana", and in the gospels by "hombre", or, where it refers to the speaker, by "este hombre". It would seem that translators into other languages should seriously consider the implications of this research. The point is not even that "the Son of Man" (in English as in Greek) is no part of common language. The point is rather that "the Son of Man", and its equivalents in other languages, normally sound like exotic titles; and this does not now appear to have been the impact of the phrase as used in either Old or New Testaments.

In a seminar group, Dr. R. J. Hammer, director of the Bible Reading Fellowship, introduced a conversation on "Translation, Interpretation and Communication", surveying ideas about translation from Hilaire Belloc to E. A. Nida. It emerged from discussion that "to translate the sense" involved a necessary choice of maximum fidelity to the semantic, rather than the grammatical or phonetic, content of the text. There was however some criticism of the maxim that a translation should have, as far as possible, the same effect on its readers as the original had, or was intended to have, on its first readers or hearers. In many cases, no evidence was now available concerning the effect on the original readers; while even if the author's intention may be inferred from the text, there is no guarantee that it was fulfilled. Stephen, for example, did not *intend* to be lynched.

Among shorter contributions, J. B. Orchard discussed "Ellipsis and Parenthesis in Gal. 2.1–10 and 2 Thess. 2.1–12"; D. W. Baker spoke on "Division Markers and the Structure of Leviticus 1–7"; and I. A. Moir distinguished between twelve kinds of circumlocution and euphemism in Luke, some of which (e.g. "mother" in 11.27 TEV) are eliminated in modern translations. J. Chmiel of Cracow spoke on "Semantics of the Resurrection", analysing components of *egeirō*, *anistēmi*, and their Hebrew counterparts. D. L. Holland discussed the deliberate ambiguity of the phrase *ēn pote hote ouk ēn*, attributed to Arius. The semantic and ontological status of the statement remained obscure, since a temporal element is no less present in the use of *pote* than it would have been in the use of a noun for "time". P. Ellingworth suggested that the difficult but well-attested reading *eis heautous* in Heb 12.3 made sense if it was understood as an allusion to Num 17.3 (EVV 16.38).

P.E.

**The Case of the Eclectic and the Neglected Ek of John 17**

Of the many things that do not cross my desk, I must admit that the monthly *Sojourners* is one of them. The Editor of *Technical Papers* has called my attention to the article, "The Practice of Peoplehood," which appeared in the May 1977 issue of *Sojourners*. What concerned him was the writer's statement that *ek* in John 17 can (and should) be rendered concordantly: