

Feature:

Bioethics and Religion

From Public Lectures

The rapid development of biotechnology raises various fundamental questions regarding traditional views of human beings and family, and the ethics surrounding birth to death. What answer can religion give to these bioethical challenges? This issue's feature includes recordings of public lectures given by four scholars. "Bioethics from the View of Buddhism" (2006) by Shoji Mori, then Professor at Toyo University, and "Buddhist Perspective of Recent Advances in Science and Technology" (2000) by Shuichi Yamamoto, Professor at Soka University, are lectures from the perspective of Buddhism. "Bioethics on the Beginning of Life" (2006) by Susumu Shimazono, Professor at the University of Tokyo, is a lecture from the perspective of religious studies while "Personalistic Bioethics" (2006) by Etsuko Akiba, Professor at the University of Toyama, introduces the Vatican's view of an early-stage human embryo.

In addition, this issue contains five articles from a joint symposium of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Oriental Philosophy. The symposium, the theme of which was "Themes of Humankind and Religion," was held at the Institute of Oriental Studies in Saint Petersburg in October 2006. Eight speakers from Russia and five speakers from Japan presented their views on how Buddhism, Christianity and Confucianism should address issues such as peace, the environment and gender.

This issue also includes five manuscripts from a joint symposium of the Research Center for Chinese Philosophy and Culture, Department of Philosophy, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the Institute of Oriental Philosophy. This symposium was held at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in November 2006 on the theme "Eastern Culture and Modern Society: Philosophical Dialogue among Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism." While the contemporary significance of the three religions was discussed and dialogue among them was pursued, their relation with Christianity, modern psychology and philosophy was also debated. It was attended by 29 researchers from 13 universities, of which 15 researchers made presentations.