



The Theological Importance of Prof. Uwe's Christian Poems

Paul Tseng (Tseng Kuei-chi), Ph.D.

National Kaohsiung Normal University Assistant professor at
Taipei University of Nursing and Health Sciences,
Taipei University of Technology and Open University, New Taipei City,
TAIWAN

ahkue@ms27.hinet.net



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ABSTRACT

Prof. Heinz-Uwe Haus is an internationally renowned director and is considered one of the world's leading authorities on Bertolt Brecht. Besides his theatrical achievements, he proves to have a profound knowledge of Christian doctrines, which is significantly well portrayed in his Christian poems. His poetic lines unveil the essential spirit of the New Testament. In this paper, a few poems are chosen to illustrate his theological thoughts, which are intricately connected with the core value of the New Testament, including Jesus' crucifixion, salvation, man's real nature, fundamental faith, and so on.

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I. INTRODUCTION

"Professor Uwe is an internationally renowned director and is considered one of the world's leading authorities on Bertolt Brecht. He was educated and trained in Germany at the Film Academy Potsdam-Babelsberg (Acting), as well as at the Humboldt-University in Berlin (Cultural Studies, German literature and theater

science.) In addition to his prestigious work in Germany, he has directed for the National Theaters of Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey, and worked with companies from Chile, Finland, Italy, South Korea, Canada, and the USA. His productions have appeared in Festivals throughout Europe. Dr. Haus has been a guest professor at more than a dozen North American universities. Besides publishing in his field, he writes about intercultural and

political topics in German, English and Greek medias.”¹

Besides these achievements, it should be pointed out that Prof. Uwe has a profound knowledge of Christian doctrines, which is significantly well portrayed in his Christian poems. His poetic lines unveil the essential spirit of the New Testament. Here, I choose several poems depicting Jesus' crucifixion, salvation, man's real nature, and so on, all of which are intricately connected with the core value of the New Testament. Accordingly, their theological importance is unfathomable. Living in Taiwan, an area that has been saturated by traditional religions and upholding the value of Confucianism, I seem to hear of the echoes of universal truths while reading Prof. Uwe's Christian poems, which are enlightening, refreshing and justified. And especially for Chinese readers, I translate these poems into Chinese and provide biblical sources for references. I will show you the awesome world and its horizon in Prof. Uwe's poems in the following sections.

II. DISCUSSION

1. Prof. Uwe's two poems—"What Then?" and "What We Better Than They?"—are concerned about the core value of the Christianity, that is, *faith and behavior*. Without behaviors, the Christian faith is useless and valueless. Real faith is based on the constant and persistent practice of God's words. And faith combined with deeds can help sincere believers conquer any possible persecutions in the real world. Actually, how can believers grow in spirit and mind? It is totally based on real faith which is rooted in good deeds.

In Morgan's *The Gospel According to Matthew*, he pointed out that God's

¹ see <http://www.rep.udel.edu/education/undergraduate-offerings/Pages/undergraduate-faculty-bio.aspx?PageID=30>

working in this generation is by sowing the seed of heaven. These seeds will influence this generation for they recognize God's sovereignty and accept God's management. On the other hand, those who cannot bear fruits, are those who have contacted the conception and ideal of the heavenly kingdom, but cannot bear fruits (Morgan, 427). Based on this, we can see how heavy the responsibility we shoulder is for our contemporaries. Our inner beings would affect whether they will well react to the gospel. That is our nature would decide their response to the doctrine of the heavenly kingdom (Morgan, 249).

What Then?

之後如何

Persecution arises for
遭受迫害

The words sake the ones
神的道灑在

Sown among thorns
荊棘叢裡

They are the ones who
他們聽了這道

Hear the word no more
就不再記得

May be remembered
Cursed is everyone who
掛在木頭上的

Hangs on the tree
都是被咒詛的

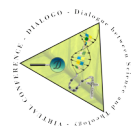
What then shall we say?
我們該說些甚麼呢?

Are We Better Than They?

人焉度哉

Those who hear the words
人聽見神的話

Accept it and bear fruit



接受並結果

But the birds

然而飛鳥

Came and devoured it

來吃盡種子

By faith apart from

只因為人

The deeds of the law

有信心卻無行為

For there is no difference

因為這與不信 沒有什麼不同

Matthew 13: 18-23

“Listen, then, and learn what the parable of the sower means. Those who hear the message about the Kingdom but do not understand it are like the seeds that fell along the path. The Evil One comes and snatches away what was sown in them. The seeds that fell on rocky ground stand for those who receive the message gladly as soon as they hear it. But it does not sink deep into them, and they don't last long. So when trouble or persecution comes because of the message, they give up at once. The seeds that fell among thorn bushes stand for those who hear the message, but the worries about this life and the love for riches choke the message, and they don't bear fruit. And the seeds were sown in the good soil stand for those who hear the message and understand it: they bear fruit, some as much as one hundred, others sixty, and others thirty.”

2. Prof. Uwe's "Palm Leaves" proclaims Jesus' gospel of peace, which is significantly manifested in this martyrdom. It is recorded in Scripture that Jesus is humble and rides on a donkey and on a colt, the foal of a donkey when he is on his mission of sacrificing himself to save the world. The palm leaves signify his love of peace. He is intended to make peace via his death on the cross. And

it should be noted that making peace is the core value of Christianity. Prof. Uwe uses several brief poetic lines which on the one hand record the last peaceful journey of our savior, and on the other hand uphold the core value of the peace-making in the gospel of the heavenly kingdom.

Here, in describing the savior's journey to Jerusalem, Matthew actually stressed two things: coming of the king, and the gentleness of the king. Jesus rode a donkey to the capital not only to portray his kingship but demonstrate his gentleness (Morgan, 415). In addition, the olive branch is symbolic of Jesus's desire to realize God's wish and fulfill his responsibility for the kingdom of God (Morgan, 425).

Although Matthew's dependence on earlier tradition prevents him from adapting everything in his Gospel to his reader's situation, enough of his emphases remain and fit what we know of the issues of his day (Keener 45). Savior's peaceful journey to Jerusalem is really a big issue of his day.

Palm Leaves

棕櫚葉

Martyrdom holding the breath

眾人屏息

Pressure of expectations but

緊張地看祂來殉道

He enters Jerusalem with

但祂來到耶路撒冷

Olive branches for peace

帶來和平的橄欖枝

Crucified

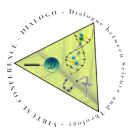
祂來殉道釘死

That they may see and believe

讓世人可以看見並相信

Matthew 21: 1-11

This happened in order to make come



true what the prophet had said: “Tell the city of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you! He is humble and rides on a donkey and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

3. Prof. Uwe’s “Mount of Olives” is associated with the most crucial prayer of Jesus Christ, who never ceased to ask for God Father’s will even when he had been determined to be betrayed, sold, and crucified on the cross. This is also an extremely important passage in the doctrine of the New Testament. It should be noted that Prof. Uwe delicately presents Jesus’ devotion to make a stark contrast to Judas’ sell-off. The tension of the verses is thus artistically shown off.

It is the common experience of mankind that times of special spiritual endowment or exaltation are followed by occasions of special temptation. The Messiah is no exception. No sooner is He anointed with the Spirit for the work of the Ministry than He has to undergo a fierce conflict with the great personal power of evil (Plummer 35). Under extremely evil circumstances, Jesus must conduct the crucial prayer.

The purpose of the author is to remind the community of the essential nucleus of discipleship: i.e., in order to follow Jesus we must be ready to identify ourselves with the hidden, misunderstood and crucified Messiah (Schneck 15), who readies himself to fulfill God’s will in the mountain of olives.

Mount of Olives

橄欖山

Withdrawn from his disciples

退去離開他的門徒

About a stone’s throw

一箭之遙

He prayed more earnestly

耶穌禱告更加懇切

Blood falling down to the earth

汗滴如血 滴落在地

Strengthened restructuring

出賣耶穌 用計用謀

Charges sell-off skills in

交易裡面

Deal making agreement

彷彿有成功的味道

Smoky smell of success

背後有吹哨看嗎

Was there a scream

當出賣時刻 成就之時

In the background

叛徒猶大的通風報信

Time to adjust to

激動了所有的人

Impact of sales

一切尚請說明

But a gospel of Judas

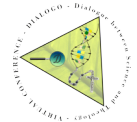
Will excite all of them

Plea for clarity

Matthew 26: 36-46

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee. Grief and anguish came over him, and he said to them, “The sorrow in my heart is so great that it is almost crushing me. Stay here and keep watch with me.”..... Again Jesus left them, went away, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then he returned to the disciples and said, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look! The hour has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the power of sinful men. Get up, let us go. Look, here is the man who is betraying me!”

4. Again, Prof. Uwe’s “Two Mites” presents the core value of Christian doctrines,



that is, to love your Lord wholeheartedly. The disciples of Jesus Christ should love their master with full strength and with their whole hearts. The core value of donation is inseparable from an individual's mind and heart. To be obedient is better than offering sacrifices. To learn in the temple is better than a monetary donation. This could be a theological pragmatism.

Two Mites

兩個小錢

Their gifts into the treasury

富人的奉獻

Out of their abundance

是出自他門的節餘

But when will there things be

何時我們為加利利人耶穌

Upon another for a Galilean?

全然的奉獻?

Mark 12: 41-44

As Jesus sat near the temple treasury, he watched the people as the dropped in their money. Many rich men dropped in a lot of money; then a poor widow came along and dropped in two little copper coins, worth about a penny. He called his disciples together and said to them, "I tell you that this poor widow put more in the offering box than all the others. For the others put in what they had to spare of their riches; but she, poor as she is, put in all she had—she gave all she had to live on."

For the woman, the two mites are a gift of faith. Just as the temple is the house of God, so her gift is the symbol of her firm faith of sacrifice to God (Morgan 215).

5. Furthermore, Prof. Uwe's "Vanity" broadens our view of the real world. No war is justified for any sacred purpose. There is no side which can be unilaterally or absolutely

justified. Just as we cannot justify a terrorist, so we cannot justify the Western World. This is a paradoxically ethical and moral dilemma. Prof. Uwe's keen observation of the real war can be interpreted by the core doctrine of the New Testament, namely, to be justified by faith. Life and war are useless, but real faith counts. Man lives and is justified by his faith.

"... argue from fundamental conceptions of God, the right of reason in matters of faith. In what he says about the two great commands, he establishes fundamental principles and sentiments instead of rules, in control of life." (Gould xxix) . Faith counts in everything.

This proves that every posterity to whom this heritage was to belong was a fruit of faith. The case is applied to believers of the present. Thus righteousness, inheritance, posterity, everything, Abraham received by faith; and it will be even with us, if we believe like him (Chambers167).

Vanity (Romans 3:10)

虛空

Guilt evil defection and

邪惡的變節

Contrivance too late

計謀已晚

Too soon landslides of years

經年山崩

Sounds at morning

破曉聲隆隆

Impotent grenades till

手榴彈力微

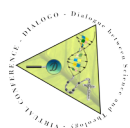
The day the car bomb

促使汽車炸彈

Exploded disintegrating his body

爆炸撕裂他的身體

In waves of heat and gas the sounds



熱氣瓦斯熱竄
 Blossom on sharp needles
 引線開花
 Cry out all memories
 回憶在呼號
 Battle cries separate peace
 戰爭的吶喊 撕裂和平
 It is written
 經上記著
 There is none righteous no
 沒有義人
 Not one
 連一個也沒有

Romans 3: 10

6. There is no one who is righteous.

Finally, in the beginning is the Word, and the Word is with God, and the Word is God. The core doctrines of Christianity depend on God's words, which are solid, powerful, and applicable to every aspect of the real world. However, the satanic dark discourse is closely and deeply associated with the words of the evil men, which are dishonest and useless. Prof. Uwe's "Neighbor's Osmosis" unveils the evil and sinister essence of the words of the world. It is his wisdom which can apply God's words to reveal the lies and deceptions of the evil neighbors surrounding us. Actually, this is an unavoidable aspect of our real life. And it requires us to use our wisdom to make a fair judgement.

Neighbor's Osmosis

鄰居的反滲透
 Their throat is
 他們的喉嚨是
 An open tomb
 敞開的墳墓
 But the fight is shifted in blue-ray's favor
 但口舌之戰皆為獲利

Whose mouth is full
 口舌充滿
 Of cursing and bitterness
 咒詛和苦毒
 Removes the speck from your brother's eye
 何能自省其過
 With their tongues
 他們的舌頭
 They have practiced deceit
 習於欺騙
 We'll decide on a case by case basis
 我們必須按實情判斷
 Due to
 一切
 Investment demand
 都是為名為利

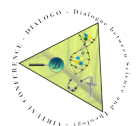
Romans 3: 13-17

Their words are full of deadly deceit; wicked lies roll off their tongue, and dangerous threats, like snake's poison, from their lips; their speech is filled with bitter curses. They are quick to hurt and kill; they leave ruin and destruction wherever they go. They have not known the path of peace, nor have they learned reverence for God."

It should be noted that flesh ceaselessly wars with the Spirit. And Christ ushers in a new order the New Testament (Bruce 29).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can see the universal truths in the light of Prof. Uwe's Christian poems. Their significance and importance in theology could brighten men's minds and lead their paths. The poetic lines bear the weight of wisdom, which is apparently a philosopher's insight. Hopefully, readers can broaden their horizons and extol their view of the world by getting a better understanding of Prof. Uwe's Christian poems.



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SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Paul Tseng was born in Taiwan, and got his Ph.D in Literature at National Kaohsiung Normal University. In addition to running a workshop of editing and translation to serve the needs of the campus, he has been a concurrent assistant professor at National Taipei University of Nursing and Health Sciences.

