

Theological Poetry

[Editor's Note: The following poems were produced by students in the New Testament Theology class at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, March 2014.]

In the Tension

Anderson Godoy S

Will the day come, the day I'm waiting?
For even though I fight my sadness
Sometimes it really seems like madness
That you gave all but I'm still aching.

Where is the logic in your kingdom?
Why do we hurt as we grow old?
I don't see pearls or streets of gold...
Yet I believe and trust your wisdom

Since we are dwelling in the tension,
Please help me see the "here" you've given
When this "not yet" turns cumbersome.

Out of your mouth there's been no mention
Of all my sins you have forgiven...
I'll pray again, "thy kingdom come."

Kristaa Nun Thar [New Life in Christ]*Lal Pek Mawia*

Khua chuan ila, kan zo tlang hi,
 A mawi mange, khuanu kut chhuak;
 Tuk loh ram dai, sa va tin reng,
 Tu ngai lo a, tual an chaina;
 Aw zoram, dam reng ang che!

I mawi na a, nun rawng hluan e,
 Suih lung mawl luat vang em ni le;
 In-lu-lakna, i chhungah cham,
 Thim roelna, an zar hliah che;
 I sak hming, tlangrel thang e.

A khi raltiang, tuipui piah an,
 I suihlung mawl, puan ang chul hnu;
 Krista thui loh kawra tuam'in,
 Mi lula hnam, thlarau manah,
 Mingo val'in, a siam ta che.

Sakhaw tharah, sa phun thar'in,
 Zu no aiah, chhandamna no;
 Famkhaw lawina Rihlipui khi;
 Jordan a ti, a sakhmingan,
 Hnam nun tan, Krista a pe.

Glancing yonder, our Chin Land,
 How beautiful, *Khuanu*¹ handiwork;
 A virgin Land, full of animals,
 O green pastures, without concerns;
 O Chin Land, live forever!

O such beauty, it makes you rude,
 Ignorant heart beats foolish now;
 Head-hunting there, your local yard,
 That is darkness, which shadows you!
 O bad name, O known to all.

Beyond horizons, beyond oceans,
 Ignorant mind, shabby as cloth;
 Covered with Christ, as unsown cloth,
 Headhunting warrior, soul-winning
 warrior;
 The white man, thus make you be!

Being proselyte, it's new *sakhua*²
 From rice beer cup, salvation crown;
 Lo! *Rihlipui*,³ dead spirit abode,
 Called it Jordan, as its new name;
 Christ is giv'n for your culture.

(Continued...)

¹ God's

² An object of worship

³ Rih Lake

Rihdil aiah, Galilee dil,
 Zawlbuk aiah, Kohhran a pe;
 Hringlang tlang kha, Kros-in vui liam,
 Pawla sai hlah, thlarau an bang,
 I sakhming, Kristian tiin.

Tlawmngaihna ro, Hmanngaihna nen,
 Mihilui thim fa, eng fa mi thar,
 Hming hlui boin, sakhming thar nen;
 Sualna senduk, Kristaah phum,
 Thawhle hna, i chan lo ni.

Ngai ru! Chatuan, khua a lo var!
 Thil hlui a ral, a lo thar ta!
 Lei famchanna, chatuanin thlak;
 Dai tawh lo tur, Pa hmangaihna,
 Kristaah, kan lo chang ta.
 Amen!

Galilee Lake, for *Rihlipui*,
 Church is given, *Zawlbuk*⁴ instead;
 O *Hring-lang-tlang*,⁵ faded by Cross,
 No more spirits that fear *Pawla*,⁶
 O new name, called Christian.

*Tlawmngaihna*⁷ treasure, Agape love,
 Darkness old son becomes new man;
 The old name gone, the new name
 come,
 The sinfulness buried in Christ;
 Resurrection, it is yours now!

Behold, behold! There comes eternity
 The old has gone, the new has come;
 This earth death place, eternal life,
 Unconditional, the love of God;
 Be our own in Jesus Christ.
 Amen!

⁴ Community house

⁵ Humanity mountain

⁶ Guard

⁷ Altruism

Glossary

Khuanu: This name is used for god. And the name itself is feminine gender as well; in short, this is regarded as blessing giver, the most superior authority holder. People respected this name because they thought that all blessing is in her hand and all are comforted with this. However, the very reason why the suffix *-nu* (female gender) was added is that this god is female.⁸

Rihlipui: This is one of the lakes in Myanmar. It is located near the village called *Rihkhawdar*, which was named after this lake in Chin Land, Myanmar. In the early culture, the belief was that all dead spirits were unable to avoid this lake; so all dead spirits must go to it. That is why to say “dead people” used related words such as *Rih tlang Mual Liam*, which means one dead spirit is gone but ready to pass from the lake to the mountain (see *Hringlang Tlang*, below).⁹

Sakhua: An object of worship, a god who presides over the house or household.¹⁰

Zawlbuk: This is a community house located in the midst of the village, for all villagers. This is used for communal decision-making, communal action, and security for the community. The young men are to sleep in this house for village security and other uses. It is not far from the village chairman’s house. It is especially used for such things as war and security from wild animals or enemies. People never abandon this house; rather they always stay there, especially at night.¹¹

Tlawmngaihna: This is a Mizo term, which literally means resistance to being helped by others, but instead helping others who are in need. The emphasis is on a denial of self rather than an effort to be independent. The purpose of this self-denial is to serve the community and any person in the community who is really in need of help. It is an act of charity wherein self-interest is subordinated to the interest of community, and self-sacrifice for the need of others is to come spontaneously as a natural part

⁸ James Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung* (Aijal: J. D. Press, 1992), 28.

⁹ Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, 34.

¹⁰ Lawmsanga, “A Critical Study on Christian Mission with Special Reference to Presbyterian Church of Mizoram” (PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2010), vii, accessed December 17, 2014, <http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/767/1/Lawmsanga10PhD.pdf>.

¹¹ Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, 184.

of one's life. Without the principle of *tlawmngaihna*, communitarian societies like the Mizo community cannot function. It would not be possible to build a harmonious society where members of the community practiced "decision by consensus," sharing their joy and sorrows and caring for one another.¹²

Hringlang Tlang: In Mizo belief, after the dead spirit arrived at a place that was called the porch of the village of the dead, they arrived at the mountain called *hringlang tlang*. *Hringlang tlang* means they could still feel the human climate or atmosphere. They stand alone on that mountain, missing the living and watching the human world. Only after this will they arrive at the village of the dead.¹³

¹² Lawmsanga, "Critical Study," 283.

¹³ Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, 35.

When I Found You*Josephine J. Bodegas*

Comes a time to see the light
Things around me seem so bright
In all its perfectness
In the absence of life's darkness

There in life moving forward into
Comes a question where to go
For travel without you
Is no better than straying through

All the ways are so dim
So weary in finding claims
Where to go, where to find you
Oh so afraid what a crushing into

In the corner of brokenness
Here comes a door for the hopeless
A gentle Savior from a manger
Who laid a life, a gift for a dear

Thy shed blood heals
Thy voice so sweetly tells
How precious and loved you are
That I came from afar

You heard a wordless prayer but tears
You count no wrong but cares
For a lost treasure in you embrace
For a troubled heart, joy and peace

Oh, Jesus how sweet is your saving
Found a Truth we are searching
The heavenly way awaiting
The Life we are living.

By the Grace of God

Lee, Jung Yeol

I have handicap.
It is Tourette Syndrome.
I call it a friend.
It is my inseparable friend.
I remember the day when I meet the friend.

My body trembled and my voice cried out continuously.
My body was wet with perspiration and voice became husky.
But I still trembled and cried out.
I had a sore throat. Body had tension in muscle.

Younger brother asked me, "What's wrong with you?" My mom asked me,
"Why...?"
My father said, "If you are going to act like that, I will bind you and stop
your mouth."
At that moment, something invisible crashed on me.

I went to school. Friends asked me, "What are you doing? Are you ok?"
I tried to repress trembling of body, but there was more trembling.
I must repress crying out, I must repress the trembling of my body, so I
was always tired.
I was nervous if someone observed me.

I thought Tourette Syndrome is a curse to me. I feel I cannot do anything.
I have no confidence. I was afraid to face people.
I thought no one liked me.
Even my family does not understand me; who will love me?

(Continued...)

I wanted to commit suicide.
If I commit it, I might go to hell...
God does not want me to do it.
But, I am so depressed and there is no way.
Oh God, why did you give me this great thorn?
Did You give Apostle Paul epilepsy to trust You more?
You told him, “My grace is sufficient for you.”

But look at me. I cannot do anything because of Tourette Syndrome. How
can I live?
But You let me commit my life to you in darkness and despair.
And You have been leading me until now.
Tourette might be your love for me;
Because of this, I love You more and I desire You more.
Thank You, Lord.

Who Is Jesus?

Ernesto Lozano Fernandez

Jesus, is my Savior, my redeemer, my hope,
Example to follow, He is also my
Strength, in which I trust
Under every moment and circumstance. He is a
Servant and model to me.

Image of the invisible God,
Sovereign over all things,

Lord of Lords, seated
On the Glorious throne.
Visible are His Blessings
Every day He is with me; He will never leave me alone.

우리의 발을 씻기셨죠 [You Washed Our Feet]

Park, Seonmok

설날 대명절
아버지께서
말씀하시길
형님을 도우라 하셨죠

Happy New Year
My father
Blessed me
To help my brother

절망과 눈물
형님네 가족
신통농장에
두 손길 도움 내밀었죠

Hopeless, melted snow
How they are
For his burden spirit in piggery
I gave my hands

이 엄청난 일
한 가족으로
받아들이는
내 두 손 더럽혀야 했죠

How wondrous it is
As my family
Into my concern
My hands became dirty

유월절전야
당신께서는
더러운 우리
우리의 발을 씻기셨죠

In the Feast of Passover
How you are
Unclean we are
You washed our feet

형님과 누님
눈물과 위로
그 때 그 날에
한 가족이 되었는데

My brother my sister
Their tears their comfort
That moment that day
We became one family

내 손 내밀어
내 손 더럽혀
형님네 식구
사랑으로 섬기겠어요

With my humble hands
With my dirty hands
My beloved family
I will love and serve

(Continued...)

당신을 믿고
당신의 말씀
순종하는 것
사랑으로 섬기는 삶이죠

생사화복
우리를 위해
당신께서는
십자가에 그 손 못 박혔죠

By believing in you
By obeying you
By your words
I will love and serve

Life and death
Good and bad
You are for us
By your nailed hands on the cross

