

Poetics and Theology

Journal for the Study of Christian Culture

诗学与神学

基督教文化学刊

(第18辑·2007秋)

中国人民大学基督教文化研究所 主办



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主编 杨慧林 罗秉祥

本辑执行主编 杨慧林

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编者絮语：“诗学”与“神学” 的价值命意

The Common Significance of
Poetics and Theology

杨慧林

Yang Huilin, Renmin University of China

几年以前，斯皮瓦克（Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak）的新作《学科之死》（*Death of A Discipline*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2003）曾经激起巨大的反响。无论是喝彩还是讨伐，无论借此表达对文学研究的担忧、还是坚定地维护学科的合法性，这一危言耸听的“学科之死”，可能都促使我们不得不重新思考其“价值命意”的问题。这不仅是对研究方法的检点，也关涉于人文学术得以成立的前提。

“神学”与“诗学”的关联，是《基督教文化学刊》重点推助的研究领域；而“比较文学”和西方当代的神学—宗教学研究，正是这两个领域在学科意义上的具体延展。如果将其置于斯皮瓦克的问题背景，或许可以说二者的价值命意、立身依据及其对一般人文学术的根本启发，确实存在着诸多相似。

“宗教学”的学科及其观念，常常被追溯于缪勒（Max Müller）的

名言：“He who knows one, knows none.”由此而论，这恰恰也是“比较文学”的起点。其间为二者所分享的基本元素，就是对“他者”的进一步关注和界说。

“比较”的观念使单一的视角让位于多元，从而“说者”亦被说、“看者”亦被看、编织想象者亦被想象所编织，任何一种叙述都不再具有“中心”的地位。由此成全的是不同于“我们”的“全然的他者”，也是一个当代神学的命题：“让他者成为他者”、“让上帝成为上帝”。^①

在文学研究领域，这种“多元”或许是难以理解的。因此正是神学家才特别敏感地发现：海德格尔哲学中的语言，第一种功能并不是说，而是听。^② 其中暗含的潜台词，是单一“主体”之外的“他者”的出场。

由此开始的研究，最终不可能只是通常意义上的文学比较、文化比较、宗教比较，而必然要指向“话语”本身的重构。如果当代人文学术确实包含着对于权力话语以及既定真理系统的挑战，包含着传统的“确定性”遭到动摇之后对于确定意义的追寻，那么这也就是“比较文学”与“宗教学”所能提供的最重要启发。

进一步对照“学科之死”的危机，则可以说当代神学和宗教研究本身，就是传统神学之危机的一种产物和解决方式，是对某种单一话语的挑战。用埃里亚德(Mircea Eliade)的话说：不同的宗教现象，其实具有“最根本的一致性”；换言之，这也是“人们直到近代才

^① David Tracy, *Dialogue with the Other: the Inter-religious Dialogue*, Louvain: Peeters Press, 1990, p. 49.

^② [荷兰]谢列贝克斯著、朱晓红等译，《信仰的理解：诠释与批判》，香港道风书社，2004，第55～56页。

意识到”的“人文科学精神历史的统一性”。^①

从文学的角度反观宗教,同样可以得到某一种信仰立场未必能够提供的认识。比如 20 世纪神学的奠基者卡尔·巴特(Karl Barth),曾以专文讨论莱辛(Gotthold Ephraim Lessing)及其剧作《智者纳坦》,并最终用莱辛的名言来证明莱辛之灵和莱辛的大能:“人的价值并非来自一个人所掌握或者妄自认为所掌握的真理,而是他为探索真理所付出的真诚努力。一个人要增长自己的完美品格的力量,不能靠占有真理,只能靠探索真理。占有只会使人静止、怠惰、骄傲。假若上帝的右手握着所有真理,左手握有唯一的、不断躁动的追求真理的冲动……然后对我说:选吧!我会恭顺地扑向他的左手,并说:我父,给我吧!纯然的真理只属于你自己!”^②

又如 18 世纪的英国诗人克里斯托弗·斯玛特(Christopher Smart)曾作有长诗《羔羊颂》(*Jubilate Agno*):

H 是一种精神,所以 H 就是上帝(For H is a spirit and therefore he is God.)

I 是位格,所以 I 就是上帝(For I is person and therefore he is God.)

K 是君王,所以 K 就是上帝(For K is king and therefore he is God.)

L 是爱,所以 L 就是上帝(For L is love and therefore he is God.)

M 是音乐,所以 M 就是上帝(For M is music and therefore he is God.)

^① [美]埃里亚德著、吴静宜等译,《世界宗教理念史》第一卷,商周出版社,2001,第 30、32 页。

^② [德]卡尔·巴特,《论莱辛》,[德]莱辛著、朱雁冰译,《历史与启示》,北京:华夏出版社,2006,第 333 页。

O 是终结,所以 O 就是上帝 (For O is over and therefore he is God.)

P 是力量,所以 P 就是上帝 (For P is power and therefore he is God.)

Q 是迅速,所以 Q 就是上帝 (For Q is quick and therefore he is God.)

R 是正确,所以 R 就是上帝 (For R is right and therefore he is God.)

S 是灵魂,所以 S 就是上帝 (For S is soul and therefore he is God.)

T 是真理,所以 T 就是上帝 (For T is truth and therefore he is God.)

U 是整合,所以 U 就是上帝 (For U is union and therefore he is God.)

W 是价值,所以 W 就是上帝 (For W is worth and therefore he is God.)

X 有三的力量,所以 X 就是上帝 (For X has the power of three and therefore he is God.)

Y 是赞同,所以 Y 就是上帝 (For Y is yea and therefore he is God.)

Z 是热情,所以 Z 就是上帝…… (For Z is zeal and therefore he is God…)

这位当时已被关进疯人院的诗人本来并未引起文学研究的太多关注,但是在 1999 年,一群英国神学家出版了《激进的正统》(*Radical Orthodoxy*)一书,并将斯玛特的诗行引为该书题注。这些神学家还特别提到:“希望本书没有背离……克里斯托弗·斯玛特

的精神”^①。该书通篇讨论虚无(nihilism)、欲望(desire)、性爱(erotic)、身体(bodies)、城市(the city)、审美(aesthetics)、感知(perception)、音乐(music)等非传统的神学话题,其副标题却居然是:一种新的神学(A New Theology)。

另一位当代英国的神学家大卫·雅斯贝尔(David Jasper),一方面强调“研究伟大的文学作品最终会将我们引向无可逃避的宗教的结局”,另一方面也意识到“为了神学而阅读文学的重要性”。因此他从诗人柯勒律治(Samuel Coleridge)的论说得到启发,并希望这些论说重新引起当代人的警觉:“爱基督教甚于爱真理的人,接下来便会爱自己的团体或教会甚于爱基督教,最终则是爱自己甚于爱一切。”^②

由此应当想到海德格尔(Martin Heidegger)一段特别值得玩味的話:“当诗人作为诗人的时候,他们是先知性的(prophetic),但他们不是……‘先知’(prophets)……诗人的梦想是神性的,但他并不梦想一个神。”^③——而诗人雪莱其实早已从相似的意义上为诗一辩:“在较古的时代,诗人都被称为立法者或先知……我并不认为诗人就是广义的先知,所谓诗人的预言,乃是预见未来之事的精神,却并非预言未来之事的细节……如果以为诗是预言的属性、而预言反不是诗的属性,则会成为迷信的托词。”^④

① John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock and Graham Ward edited, *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology*, London and New York: Routledge, 1999, “Acknowledgement”.

② David Jasper, *The Study of Literature and Religion: An Introduction*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989, p. xi, p. 2.

③ Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, edited by Gil Anidjar, New York: Routledge, 2002, p. 54.

④ [英]雪莱著、缪朗山译,《诗之辩护》,见章安祺编订《缪灵珠美学译文集》,中国人民大学出版社,1998,第三卷,第138页。

近些年,教会内的学者对于文学研究与艺术批评的高度认可更是前所未有的。他们已经不只是宽容或者接纳文学研究对基督教内容的涉及,而是从根本上意识到文学研究与神学自身的相似性。比如英国格拉斯哥大学(University of Glasgow)设有“文学与神学研究中心”(Center for the Study of Literature and Theology),并陆续出版“文学与神学研究丛书”。美国圣托马斯大学(University of St. Thomas)也建立了“天主教研究跨学科委员会”(UST Catholic Studies Interdisciplinary Committee),甚至明确提出:“对于文学艺术的学术分析带有跨学科的性质,这为不同主题的综合提供了一种模式,而且恰好也是天主教研究的特征。”^①

当“诗学”和“神学”、“比较文学”和“宗教学”同时受到中国学者的关注时,其意义并不仅仅在于通过神学或宗教的背景深入西方文化的内核,而且在于二者的相互激发及其为我们认识自身所提供的灵感和启示。

^① Clinton A. Brand, “Catholic Culture in Literature and Art”, see Sister Paula Jean Miller & Richard Fussey edited, *Mapping the Catholic Cultural Landscape*, p. 5.

The Common Significance of Poetics and Theology

Yang Huilin, Renmin University of China

A few years ago, the new work of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Death of A Discipline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), set off a spate of heated discussions that led to the reassessment of the common significance of Comparative Literature. Some applauded his thesis; others challenged it. Whether the reactions represented deep concern for the discipline or strong defense of its legitimacy, we do well to review its methodology, and more importantly, its fundamental premises.

The relationship between Theology and Poetics is one of the foci of our research interests. Comparative Literature and Western Contemporary Theological-Religious Studies are essentially academic extensions of Theology and Poetics. Set against the context and issues discussed by Spivak, the value definition of “Theology” and “Poetics”, their fundamental premises, and their contribution to the field of humanities draw many parallels with Comparative Literature.

Many quote Max Müller——“He who knows one, knows none”——as the seminal concept behind the discipline of Religious Studies. “Comparative Literature” is also grounded in the same notion. Both disciplines share the concern for “The Other” and its definition.

The concept of “comparison” by definition prefers a pluralistic

perspective to a monistic one, where “the speaker” is spoken to; “the observer”, observed; and “the conceiver”, conceived. No one narrative should monopolize the center stage. What we have then is a “Completely Other”, set apart from “us”. This is precisely the theme of Contemporary Theology: “Let other be other” or “Let God be God”.^①

Within the confines of Literature, such “pluralism” is somewhat hard to envision. But theologians have learned from the philosophical language of Heidegger that the primary function is not speech, but hearing.^② Here it implies the emergence of “the Other”, who exists apart from “the subject”.

With this as a starting point, our study will go beyond the common meaning of Comparative Literature, Comparative Culture, and Comparative Religion. We must look to the very structure of “speech” itself. If today’s humanities are challenging the discourse of power and appointed systems of truth, if they are seeking the certainty of meaning after traditionally ratified meanings have been shaken in their very foundations, then Comparative Literature and Religious Studies can contribute in a significant way.

To further the comparison with the peril depicted in *Death of a Discipline*, Contemporary Theology and Religious Studies are themselves the product and solution to a similar crisis in traditional Theology as they challenge any particular monistic speech. Mircea Eliade pointed out that

① David Tracy, *Dialogue with the Other: the Inter-religious Dialogue*, Louvain: Peeters Press, 1990, p. 49.

② Edward Schillebeeckx, *Understanding of Faith*, translated by Zhu Xiaohong, Hong Kong: Daofeng Press, 2004, pp. 55 - 56.

different religious phenomena actually share “the unique principle”. In other words, “we do not wake up to the coherence of the spiritual history ... until modern times.”^①

If we approach Religious Studies from the perspective of Literature, we could gain insights that may not be readily available from the standpoint of faith. For example, Karl Barth, father of 20th century theology, discussed in an essay Gotthold Ephraim Lessing and his work, *Nathan the Wise*. He validated Lessing's spirit and power with his famous words: “If God were to hold out enclosed in His right hand all Truth, and in His left hand just the active search for Truth, though with that the condition that I should ever err therein, and should say to me: Choose! I should humbly take His left hand and say: Father! Give me this one; absolute Truth belongs to Thee alone.”^②

As another example, consider 18th century English poet, Christopher Smart. Here is a quote from his long poem, *Jubilate Agno*:

For H is a spirit and therefore he is God.

For I is person and therefore he is God.

For K is king and therefore he is God.

For L is love and therefore he is God.

For M is music and therefore he is God.

For O is over and therefore he is God.

For P is power and therefore he is God.

① Mircea Eliade, *A History of Religious Ideas*, translated by Wu Jingyi, Taibei: Shangzhou Press, 2000, p. 30, p. 32.

② Karl Barth, *On Gotthold Ephraim Lessing*, see his *History and Revelation*, translated by Zhu Yanbing, Beijing: Huaxia Press, 2006, p. 333.

For Q is quick and therefore he is God.
For R is right and therefore he is God.
For S is soul and therefore he is God.
For T is truth and therefore he is God.
For U is union and therefore he is God.
For W is worth and therefore he is God.
For X has the power of three and therefore he is God.
For Y is yea and therefore he is God.
For Z is zeal and therefore he is God...

At the time, Smart was seen as a mad poet, confined to an asylum and of little consequence to the literary world. But in 1999, a group of British theologians published a book, *Radical Orthodoxy*, quoting from *Jubilate Agno*. They noted: "we hope that what we have written is not foreign to the spirit of ... Christopher Smart."^① The book explores unconventional theological themes such as nihilism, desire, erotic, bodies, the city, aesthetics, perception, music, etc. and defines itself in the subtitle: *A New Theology*.

David Jasper is a contemporary British theologian. While he emphasized "the inescapable religious end towards which the study of great works of the imagination points us", he was also aware of "the importance of the reading of literature for theology". Inspired by the poet, Samuel Coleridge, Jasper hoped that Coleridge's thought would awaken the Christian community: "He, who begins by loving Christianity better than Truth, will proceed by loving his own Sect or Church better than

^① John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock and Graham Ward edited, *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology*, London and New York: Routledge, 1999, "Acknowledgement".

Christianity, and end in loving himself better than all.”^①

Martin Heidegger once said, “Poets, when they are in their being, are prophetic... but they are not prophets... His dream... is divine, but it does not dream a god.”^② These are thought provoking words. Earlier on, the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley had expressed similar ideas in defense of poetry: “Poets, according to the circumstances of the age and nation in which they appeared, were called, in the earlier epochs of the world, legislators, or prophets: a poet essentially comprises and unites both these characters. For he not only beholds intensely the present as it is, and discovers those laws according to which present things ought to be ordered, but he beholds the future in the present... Not that I assert poets to be prophets in the gross sense of the word, or that they can foretell the form as surely as they foreknow the spirit of events: such is the pretence of superstition, which would make poetry an attribute of prophecy, rather than prophecy an attribute of poetry.”^③

In recent years, many scholars in the Christian church are affirming the relevance of literary research and art criticism in an unprecedented way. It is more than mere tolerance or recognition that Christian themes exist in literature. They are fundamentally acknowledging that the study of Literature and the study of Theology have much in common. England's

① David Jasper, *The Study of Literature and Religion: An Introduction*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989, p. xi, p. 2.

② Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, edited by Gil Anidjar, New York: Routledge, 2002, p. 54.

③ Percy Bysshe Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*, translated by Miao Langshan, see *Translated Aesthetic Works by Miao Lingzhu*, Beijing: Press of Renmin University of China, 1998, vol. 3, p. 138.

University of Glasgow has established a Center for the Study of Literature and Theology and is publishing a series on Literature and Theology. University of St. Thomas in U. S. A. has also established the UST Catholic Studies Interdisciplinary Committee, and stated explicitly, "The interdisciplinary nature of the academic analysis of art and literature provides a model for the integration of diverse subject matter and approaches characteristic of Catholic Studies."^①

When Chinese scholars devote their attention to both Poetics and Theology, Comparative Literature and Religious Studies, they are not only discovering the essence of Western culture through theology or religion, they will be reaping the benefits of mutual invigoration and self discovery.

^① Clinton A. Brand, "Catholic Culture in Literature and Art", see Sister Paula Jean Miller & Richard Fossey edited, *Mapping the Catholic Cultural Landscape*, p. 5.

《基督教文化学刊》简介暨征稿启事

世界上的真理并不多。我们所关注和我们所能论说的一切，其实都是以既有的文化积累为前提，都是古老真理的延续或者前人思想的引申。

世人探寻真理的途径却很多。因此才有各自独立、而又彼此相关的信仰和文化，才有不同信仰与文化之间的交流或碰撞，才有精神信念的分享和文化创造的更新。

在近代以来的西方，基督教的信仰与文化已经成为一种基本的范型。其科学、人文以及社会体制的各个方面，无不浸透着基督教的内在精神。因而国人所谓的“西学”，在相当程度上正是导源于基督教的观念、学说和文化。

西学之东渐，使得百年来的中国文化问题始终离不开西学与国学的相互砥砺，离不开二者在认知方式、社会统序、生存态度、价值体系上的一系列磨合。其中的争论和辩难，往往成为传统或现代、持守或开放的主要标志。

而在近年的中国，对历史沉疴的反思以及与现代世界的融和，使我们发现自身的文化处境实际上与西方日渐相似。这既使更多的对话成为可能，又使体用之争、优劣之争失去了原本的意义。我们所需要的，已经不是过于直接地走向一个相对简单的结论，而是在争论和辩难的途中稍事停留。

从中国学人的角度讨论基督教文化，便应当是一次这样的停留。在平和的停留之中，应当包含着对西方文化精神的追索，也应