

# **Memories of Uli Luz**

**23.2.1938 – 13.10.2019**

**Voices from the EELC**

Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr  
Jena, Deutschland



Dear colleagues and friends,

I have the sad obligation to let you know that our dear friend Ulrich Luz passed away on Sunday, October 13.

Everybody of us is aware about the huge loss and about how deeply Uli has influenced New Testament scholarship during the last five or more decades, not least as president of the SNTS. However, much more important for us was his initiative and his enduring engagement as the founder and indisputable leading figure of the Eastern Europe Liaison Committee. This activity has made him very special in all NT scholarship worldwide.

I have no words to express my gratefulness to Uli for his work. I am full of memories of so many encounters and joint activities or journeys in connection with our EELC projects during the last more than thirty years. Until most recent time, I had always the privilege and the pleasure to consulting him as his follower at the EELC and to receiving his advice and encouragement for our common work. My last visit to Uli in Berne in late August this year happened when he was in a rehabilitation clinic after a surgery in July. I found him in a very weak condition then, but full of spirit and enthusiasm as ever when we talked about future projects in Eastern Europe.

This is my memory of Uli that will remain, in addition to all the activities that he initiated and that are going on. Please, join me in my sorrow and my deeply felt gratefulness and bliss for having been close to such a wonderful and kind human being like Uli.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord  
that they may rest from their labors,  
for their deeds follow them!

Karl-Wilhelm

Christos Karakolis  
Athen, Griechenland



Uli ist leider nicht mehr bei uns! Ich habe sehr viele und schöne Erinnerungen von ihm als einem ganz lieben älteren und erfahrungsvollen Freund und bin ihm für immer zutiefst dankbar. Vor allem erinnere ich mich an seine Höflichkeit, seine Demut, seinen Optimismus, seine Freundlichkeit, seine unendliche Energie, seine Hilfsbereitschaft und sein Engagement besonders in Sachen Osteuropa. Er war imstande wissenschaftlich sehr streng zu sein und zugleich auch verständnisvoll und liebenswert mit den jungen Bibelwissenschaftlern umzugehen, zu denen ich auch mal gehört habe. Ohne Uli's Unterstützung und Vertrauen, hätte ich mich persönlich (und das gilt, denke ich für alle seine Schüler und Freunde) nicht so entwickelt, wie ich heute bin. Er war ein inspirierendes Beispiel und Vorbild für uns alle. Nach all seinen Mühen ist jetzt die Zeit gekommen, in das Reich der ewigen Ruhe, des Friedens und der Freude Gottes zu kommen.

Lieber Freund Uli, auf Wiedersehen!

Christos

Tobias Nicklas  
Regensburg, Deutschland



Als Autor hat mich Uli Luz schon seit meinem Studium begleitet. Sein Matthäus-Kommentar gehörte zu den ersten wissenschaftlichen Büchern, die ich mir (recht mühsam abgespart) kaufen konnte. Umso mehr habe ich mich gefreut, ihn dann persönlich kennenzulernen – als einen Menschen mit Ecken und Kanten, großem Mut und Rückgrat und voller Ideale, einen Menschen mit Charisma. Ich erinnere mich besonders an einen wunderbaren gemeinsamen Tag unterwegs mit Uli und Salome in serbischen Klöstern, in Studenica und Gradac, viele, manchmal nicht ganz einfache Diskussionen, an Ulis kluge, immer offene Fragen, sein Interesse für das Andere, vor allem aber seine Zuwendung zu Menschen. Dass wir uns bei der Feier zu seinem 80. Geburtstag zum letzten Mal in diesem Leben sehen würden, hatte ich nicht gedacht. Zu intensiv waren diese Tage.

Ich habe Uli nicht nur als einen wirklich großartigen Exegeten, sondern als einen außergewöhnlichen Menschen kennengelernt. Wie viel er mir bedeutet, ist mir jetzt noch einmal neu und anders klar.

Ich bin sicher, er ist in Gottes Hand!

Carl Holladay  
Emory, USA



Dear Colleagues,

Like the rest of you, I mourn the death of Uli and extend heartfelt condolences to Salome and their family. I also have deep appreciation for the many ways in which he enriched the life and mission of SNTS, and of NT scholarship more broadly. My memories of Uli are mainly through experiences with him at SNTS meetings and EELC events. I was always struck by his passion and enthusiasm for whatever topic he was discussing or addressing, whether the Gospel of Matthew or the pressing needs of Eastern European colleagues and institutions. He brought energy and creative imagination to our discussions, always reminding us that bold initiatives entail risks.

Attached is a photo of Uli at the 2010 EELC meeting in Minsk; and a second photo at the 2013 EELC meeting in Belgrade.

Warm regards

Carl



Armand Puig i Tàrrach  
Barcelona, Katalonien



Dear colleagues:

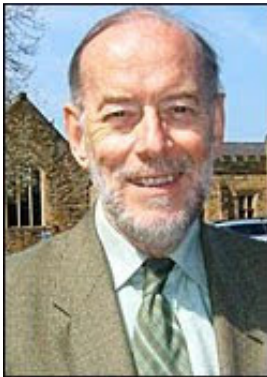
I join my voice to that of the colleagues who mourn the death of one of the greatest exegetes of recent times. Man of deep humanity and large vision, he understood the commitment of the West in relation to the East and worked hard for starting a common engagement that united so different people. Uli helped us to discover the importance of being scholars not closed in our own projects but, like true disciples of Jesus, and to give an answer to the needs of Eastern Europe.

My solidarity with Salome and the rest of the family.

Friendly greetings,

Armand

James D. G. Dunn  
Durham, Großbritannien



Dear All,

The loss - or should I say, upgrading - of Uli has been so unexpected and abrupt I still find it hard to take in. The memories of so many SNTS gatherings, committee meetings and groups, and the whole East-West initiatives (EELC) come flooding back (even though my memory otherwise is beginning to develop uncomfortable holes). What an example and inspiration he has been. How much we will miss him. We give humble and very grateful thanks for all that he meant to us and contributed to our discipline and to our lives. Meta and I will be in our cathedral on the 29th and will be remembering him and Salome with joy, sadness and great thankfulness.

Jimmy Dunn

Anatoly A. Alexeev  
St. Petersburg, Russische Föderation



Dear Karl-Wilhelm,

This is a grievous loss for me personally and for NT studies in Russia. Blessed is his name and memory in the Lord.

In my collection of photos there is one of 2010 I send to you now. We can see Ulrich standing by side Jury Pen's self-portrait in the Minsk State Museum. The painter was Repin's disciple and Mark Chagal's tutor. His portrait of Chagal painted about 1915 hangs on the same wall. Ulrich looks good in this scenery.

Anatoly





Ivan Dimitrov  
Sofia, Bulgarien



Dear Karl Wilhelm,

I thank you heartily for the message of the death of the great New Testament scholar Ulrich Lutz. After our conversation about his health at the end of last week in Ohrid, I still hoped his health would improve, but your message made me very sad.

I am grateful to him above all for his scholarly work, which has been one of the greatest contributions to New Testament science in the last half century, but also for his great passion for disseminating scientific knowledge around the world. Especially after the political changes in Eastern Europe, he very much sacrificed his powers and personal resources to establish the first biblical libraries in this part of the world. And this has given rise to similar initiatives in other parts of the world. We already have many young Bulgarian scholars who have been able to write valuable dissertations and other works, thanks to the many thousands of contemporary books in the New Testament field available in our library.

I pray that God will take his soul to Himself and give the consolation of the faith to the dear Salome and his children.

Ivan Dimitrov

Peder Borgen  
Oslo, Norwegen



Dear Salome and the whole Luz family.

It is with sadness that Inger and I have received the message that my colleague and friend Ulrich Luz has passed away. I, Peder, met Ulrich in the activities of SNTS. I had the privilege of succeeding him as President at the Conference in Copenhagen in 1998. He gave me a generous and supportive introduction when he passed on the gavel to me. He combined outstanding scholarship with a great ability to see specific historical challenges which were to be met. He combined knowledge and insight with the warmth of a friend. He had taken the leading initiative to establish the Eastern Europe Liaison Committee. Thus the joint effort of building up scholarly libraries in St. Petersburg and Sofia, seminars for scholars from east and west to meet, and educational sessions for young scholars grew up. And the members of the committee appreciated the 'table fellowship' which was added to their activities of reporting and planning. His excellent and able successor has had a firm foundation to build on for his own creative and active leadership. A great scholar and friend has left us. Moreover, both Inger and I appreciated very much when Uli also could bring his wife, Salome with him to some of the conferences. Please, receive our deep condolence. May the Christian hope strengthen you and thankfulness inspire you in the days which follow.

In deep sympathy,

Inger and Peder

Ivaylo Naydenov  
Bibliotheca Biblica Sofia, Bulgarien



Lieber Karl-Wilhelm,

wir trauern um einen Lehrer, Freund, Kollegen, einen großen liebenden Menschen, der uns geholfen hat zu verstehen, wie man das Menschliche in der Schrift lesen soll und wie man menschlich in Gott lieben kann.

Uli hat uns alle geliebt und verdient unser: DANKE!

Gott, erbarme Dich!

Ivaylo Naydenov

Hans Klein  
Sibiu/Hermannstadt, Rumänien



Danke, lieber Karl-Wilhelm für die Nachricht.

Uli war sehr vielen und uns allen sehr nahe. Schade, dass er nicht mehr nach Caraiman kommen konnte, dass wir uns alle von ihm verabschieden.

Gott schenke ihm Vollendung.

Dein Hans

Korinna Zamfir  
Cluj-Napoca, Rumänien



Dear Karl-Wilhelm,

This is indeed terribly sad. Cluj / Romanian biblical scholarship / the Sacra Scripta are deeply indebted to him. As I am myself.

I saw him last year in Bern/Laupen, at the symposium in his honour. I am very very sad.

Hoping you are well!

Korinna

Stelian Tofana  
Cluj-Napoca



Liebe Kollegen,

Luz war einer der Gründer der Biblischen Bibliothek von Cluj-Napoca. In diesem Sinne war und ist er einer der Unterstützer der biblischen Forschung in Cluj. Deshalb, fühlen wir alle seinen Abschied von uns als einen großen Verlust.

Demnach bitten wir Gott, ihm eine ewige und glückliche Ruhe in der Nähe seiner Auserwählten anzubieten.

Möge seine Erinnerung immer gesegnet zu sein!

Stelian Tofana

Predrag Dragutinović  
Belgrad, Serbien



Lieber Karl-Wilhelm,

Wir alle sind sehr traurig. Du weißt ja, wie wichtig Uli's Beitrag für die Bibelwissenschaft in Serbien war. Für mich persönlich kann ich nur sagen, dass ich Zeit brauchen werde, um den Verlust zu verarbeiten.

Hier zwei Nachrichten

(<http://binst.pbf.rs/index.php/predmeti/277-ulrich-luz-1938-2019-in-memoriam>

und

[http://www.spc.rs/sr/izjava\\_saucheshtsha\\_episkopa\\_irineja\\_povodom\\_upokojenja\\_dr\\_ulriha\\_1uca](http://www.spc.rs/sr/izjava_saucheshtsha_episkopa_irineja_povodom_upokojenja_dr_ulriha_1uca)).

Ich kann am 29. leider nicht nach Laupen. Ich habe die Woche Verpflichtungen und Termine, die ich einfach nicht verschieben kann. Ich werde aber sehr wahrscheinlich bald in die Schweiz müssen, um die Sache mit der Bibliothek mit Salome und Christine zu besprechen. Milan Kosteresevic wird die Organisation übernehmen, aber ich werde schauen, dass auch ich persönlich komme.

Viele Grüße,

Dein Predrag



William R. G. Loader  
Orange, Australien



Thank you, Karl-Wilhelm, for sharing this.

Uli was one of the most colourful NT scholars of our time, from whose works I learned much, and whose initiatives did so much to open SNTS up to the wider world.

We give thanks to God for all that he did and was. An amazing person.

Bill Loader

Bernard Lategan  
Stellenbosch, Südafrika



Dear Karl-Wilhelm

What a sad and deep loss. You describe his unique and enduring contribution so well. Not only in Eastern Europe but also in Africa and others parts of the world he rendered the same enthusiastic and selfless service to NT scholarship. His memory will remain with us all.

Thank you for letting us know and with very best wishes.

Bernard

Svjatoslav Rogalsky  
Minsk, Belarus



My dear Karl!

What a sad news! It is difficult to realize it just now, but without any doubt it is a great sorrow for us. Please accept my heartiest condolences as a person with whom Uli was cooperating and who is his successor as a President of EELC!

Uli was very much involved into development of the bible scholarly education in Belarus, and we remember it!

Hereby I would like to send you some rare photos, made by a cell-phone camera from the first visit of Uli Luz to Minsk in February, 2006. There were the first contacts with our students and professors (as well as with my family) and the beginning of our fruitful collaboration.

With love in Christ,

Sviatoslav





Sr. Margareta Gruber OSF  
Vallendar, Deutschland



Lieber Karl-Wilhelm,  
danke für die Nachricht. Ich bin dankbar, ihn noch kennen gelernt zu haben. Eine große  
Persönlichkeit. Er ruhe in Frieden.  
Deine Sr. Margareta

Clare K. Rothschild  
Chicago, USA



Dear Karl-Wilhelm,  
My condolences on the loss of a towering figure in the field and in the Eastern European  
effort. Uli was indeed a kind and very generous person whose legacy ought to be guarded and  
whose memory, kept alive. He is already missed.  
Best wishes,  
Clare

Anders Runesson  
Oslo, Norwegen



Dear Karl Wilhelm,

This is very sad news indeed. I met Ulrich just a few times, in Lund and at the SNTS, but found him to be a very nice person. As a scholar, of course, he belongs among the giants. He will be much missed.

Best wishes,

Anders

Markus Öhler  
Wien, Österreich



[an die Mitglieder der Fachgruppe NT der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie]

Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen,

Ulrich Luz, der so viele aus unserem Kreis durch seine Arbeiten und seine Art, neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Theologie zu treiben, beeinflusst und geprägt hat, ist in der Nacht zum Sonntag verstorben. Theologie und Exegese weit über den deutschsprachigen Raum hinaus haben einen ihrer Großen verloren, wie auch aus dem Nachruf seiner Berner Theologischen Fakultät deutlich wird. Unter anderem mit seinem Matthäuskommentar, vor allem aber mit den vielfältigen Arbeiten zur Hermeneutik hat er dazu beigetragen, die theologische Bedeutung der Exegese und das interdisziplinäre Gespräch zu stärken. Für den osteuropäischen Raum war er über Jahrzehnte die prägende Gestalt, sein unermüdlicher Einsatz ist unvergessen und eine Verpflichtung für kommende Generationen.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Markus Öhler