

THEOLOGISCHE REVUE

121. Jahrgang

– März 2025 –

Jagodziński, Marek: *The Holy Spirit of Communion*: A Study in Pneumatology and Ecclesiology. – Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2023. 350 S. (Lublin Theological Studies, 4), geb. € 130,00 ISBN: 978-3-525-50021-7

The Holy Spirit of Communion by Polish professor Marek Jagodziński—a lecturer in Orthodox theology at the John Paul II Catholic Univ. of Lublin and a member of the Theological Commission—follows a trend. The book forms part of a steady stream of Roman Catholic theol. publications on the Holy Spirit suggesting that the Catholic Church is on its way to overcome *Geistvergessenheit*. As Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen stated in his textbook on pneumatology: “the times are gone when it was a commonplace to describe the Holy Spirit as the Cinderella of the Trinity: when the other two ‘sisters’ went to the divine ball, Cinderella was left at home.”¹

The author structures his reflections in four chap.s. After a fundamental first chap. on the trinitarian-theol. aspects of pneumatology, the second chap. focuses on salvation history in general. The third (and longest) chap. zooms in on the Church, after which a relatively short final chap. focuses on unity both within the Catholic Church and ecumenically.

A common thread running through the chap.s is the interest in communion, which for J. is a broad notion. God is relation and, therefore, communion (9). Yet communion also means all communication between human beings that establishes communion, which, religiously speaking, is ultimately grounded in what we receive from Christ (10–11). In all this, the Holy Spirit plays a key role: “[the Holy Spirit] is the Communion within the reality of the Trinity and forms the communion between God, man and the world, as well as within the reality of this world” (12).

The author develops his argument in relation to two types of sources: First, he makes use of the publications from authors who were part of the beginning of the pneumatological renaissance. He reads classics such as Walter Kasper’s *Die Kirche als Sakrament des Geistes* (1976), Yves Congar’s *Je crois en l’Esprit-Saint* (1979–1980), and Heribert Mühlen’s *Der heilige Geist als Person* (1989), to mention just a few examples. Second, references to more recent works come mostly from Polish authors, except for John Zizioulas.

That leads to a first point of critique. In the Introduction, J. states that he wants to use “the pneumatological potential available in the theological literature [...] leading to a fairly comprehensive study of pneumatology of communion” (12). In fact, the recent potential remains largely unused. For example, in his book *El Espíritu del Señor actúa desde abajo*, Victor Codina has explored how pneumatology helps to imagine a different Church, which listens and learns from people in the

¹ Veli-Matti KÄRKKÄINEN: *Pneumatology*. The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective, Grand Rapids 2018, 6. This is the reworked second edition of an earlier, 2002, book.

margins, and which focuses on liberation.² A Spanish Jesuit theologian who spent most of his life in Latin America, Codina stands for the larger stream of pneumatologically-inspired liberation theology that started with Joseph Comblin (*O Espírito Santo e a Libertação*, 1987) and which has broadened considerably into, for example, feminist and black theology.³ Another type of broader perspectives engages with the global south, such as Eugene Rogers, *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources outside the Modern West*, and the edited vol. *The Spirit over the Earth: Pneumatology in the Majority World*.⁴ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, a major voice in the field, also ventures into other religions, for example in *Pneumatology. The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (2018) from which I quoted at the start.⁵ By not using these resources, the author considerably weakens his notion of communion, excluding the voices of the marginalized. When listened to, these voices may be found inspirational and refreshing—in addition to being challenging.

A second point of critique relates to the author's choice to start with a chap. on trinitarian theology, something which is unusual in modern pneumatology. In the wake of the Second Vatican Council's salvation-historical approach to the faith, theologians have started to rethink theology. Rather than starting from God in his tri-une nature, it has become common to start theology from Scripture and salvation history. Pneumatology is no exception to that. Would prioritizing salvation-history have helped J. to speak more about charisms and the *sensus fidei fidelium*—topics that typically represent the Spirit's salvation-historical action, yet which receive little sustained attention? In addition, would prioritizing salvation-history have helped to be more cautious about claims that reflect a trinitarian-theol. *apriori* with little ground in Scripture? This holds true for statements such as the following: "The Spirit guided and inspired Christ throughout His mission. During the Passion, the Spirit remained in communion and deep compassion with the Son (and the Father) and gave the inspiration to accomplish and fulfil everything (Luke 22:37; 24:44; John 17:12; 18:9,32; 19:24,28,30,36." (82) Since Scripture does not speak about the Spirit remaining "in communion and deep compassion with the Son"—in fact, only one of the references mentions "the spirit"—how can J. avail himself of this information?

Maybe J. has good reasons to start with trinitarian theology, just as he may have good reasons for not including recent scholarship. The problem is that he does not explain it to the readers. The introduction *presents* rather than *explains* the approach of the book. In fact, this third point of critique also applies to the central notion of communion: the reader is not given any reason why communion needs to be the central concept of the study. These points of critique made the reviewer wonder how does the fairly classical pneumatology of this book further pneumatological reflection in the 21st century?

Less substantial questions were the following. I was surprised that the author seems to have decided to refer to the Polish translation of the works of authors such as Jean Daniélou, Gisbert

² Victor CODINA: *El Espíritu del Señor actúa desde abajo*, Santander 2015.

³ Joseph COMBLIN: *O Espírito Santo e a Libertação*, Vozes 1987, translated as *L'Esprit Saint libérateur*, Paris 1994. For the larger stream of liberation theology, see for example Linda THOMAS: „The Holy Spirit and Black Women“, in: *Christian Doctrines for Global Gender Justice*, ed. by Jenny DAGGERS / Grace JI-SUN KIM, New York 2015, 73–88 and Néstor MEDINA: „Theological Musings toward a Latina/o Pneumatology“, in: *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, ed. by Orlando ESPÍN, Malden, MA 2015, 174–189.

⁴ Eugene F. ROGERS: *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources Outside the Modern West*, London 2005, and *The Spirit over the Earth: Pneumatology in the Majority World*, ed. by Gene L. GREEN / K. K. YEO / Stephen T. PARDUE, Grand Rapids 2016.

⁵ Veli-Matti KÄRKKÄINEN: *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective*, Grand Rapids 2018.

Greshake, Walter Kasper, and Hans Urs von Balthasar (12, 15, 16 etc.). As this prevents non-Polish theologians like myself from engaging with the sources profitably, I wondered how it befits a book aiming to reach an international audience. In the same line, I was disappointed by the author's lack of gender sensitivity. Does a phrase such as "the Holy Spirit who [...] is the Communion within the reality of the Trinity and forms the communion between God, man and the world" (12) really need the word "man"? Why not use the word "person"?

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