

BOOK REVIEWS

Speaking in Tongues by David S. Lim. Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publishers, 1998. Paper, v+60 pp. 120 Philippine pesos. ISBN: 971-10-0945-5.

One of the most provocative issues that has affected Christendom consequential to the emergence of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement in the twentieth century is that of speaking in tongues, either as an accompanying phenomenon to or the evidence of being “baptized in the Holy Spirit.” A century after the first report of glossolalia, the issue remains a watershed, resulting in Pentecostal apologia for the phenomenon and Evangelical polemic against its theological validity.

This monograph is a “revised, updated reprint” of an article published in the 1983-84 issue of *Christian Forum*, a publication of the Philippine Missionary Institute. Written from the perspective of an Evangelical who is also sympathetic to Charismatics (the term Lim uses to refer to Classical Pentecostals and all Neo-Pentecostals as a whole), the monograph is delightfully irenic in tone and spirit. Thus he advised non-Charismatics that though he remains Evangelical in his viewpoint (cf. p. 31), his “study will disappoint those who expect a harsh critique of the Charismatics” (p. 33).

An impressive quality of this brief work is the genuine attempt to be impartial and honest in its scholarship. Lim states openly that “he has not experienced anything as dramatic as a Pentecostal ‘baptism in the Spirit’ nor does he pray in tongues” (p. 33). At the same time, he is unabashed to admit that he “owns charismatic friends” and “has freely attended and ministered in their communities” even though he finds “some aspects of charismatic theology and practice less than biblical...” (p. 33). Throughout the monograph, Lim is consistent to his purpose in calling “for an objective, patient and serious study of the glossolalic phenomenon...as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ” by both glossolalics and non-glossolalics (p. 33).

The brilliance of this short monograph lies in Lim’s ability to anticipate and respond to the questions which Evangelical theologians and laity have posed about Pentecostalism in their own language. Lim demonstrates a keen awareness of the questions of non-Charismatics and he answers them with precision, lucidity and in a more helpful manner than many of the Pentecostal, Charismatic and Third Wave publications. For example, Lim’s explanation on the nature of “interpreted tongues” is a far more helpful one than that of D. A. Carson’s (*Showing the Spirit*)-one which Charismatics would wholeheartedly agree.

In thirty-two pages, Lim has done a masterful job of helping non-Charismatics to understand this “third force” in Christendom. He achieves this by providing a brief historical sketch of modern Pentecostalism, and then proceeds to discuss the nature and use of glossolalia; identify the main issues surrounding glossolalia; and outline specific problems that confront glossolalics and non-glossolalics.

Most publications on glossolalia tend to examine the issue from a theological perspective. So, a refreshing quality about this monograph is its consideration of the non-theological aspects of tongues, potentially fruitful dimensions of Pentecostalism which Charismatics have yet to explore. Lim, for example, raises the question of the psychological impact of glossolalia: “What happens psychologically when a Charismatic is being ‘baptized in the Spirit’” and “What psychological benefits and effects occur in the lives of recipients of such an experience of the Spirit?”

A further helpful aspect of this monograph is the endnotes and the six-page bibliography. Both of these are helpful to individuals wishing to pursue a fuller understanding of modern Pentecostalism. It is here that one finds the major blemish of the work. Significant Pentecostal publications and primary sources by Stanley Horton, William Menzies, Mel Roebeck, Gordon Fee, Murray Dempster, Henry Lederle, Max Turner, Robert Menzies, James Shelton, Chris Thomas, Jack Hayford et al. are notably missing. This points to the fact that this revised work fails drastically to draw on the insights of major and current scholars of Pentecostalism.

Despite this shortcoming and other minor deficiencies, this is a commendable work. Non-Charismatics will find a useful introduction that will help them better understand Pentecostalism while Charismatics will benefit by learning from this Evangelical the art of communicating their experience and theology to those who do not share their biblical perspective and spirituality. This monograph, too brief and general to be truly classified as one, will certainly serve as a very useful starting point or basis for dialogues between glossolalics and non-glossolalics.

Melvin Ho

Journeys at the Margin: Toward an Autobiographical Theology in American-Asian Perspective edited by Peter C. Phan and Jung Young Lee. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999. Paper, xxvii+178 pp. \$17.95 US. ISBN: 0814624642.

Reading this book was a surreal experience for me—a Malaysian-born Chinese, partly Malaysian- and partly American-raised, and American educated Pentecostal theologian. In some ways, it served as an invitation for me “return home,” and to re-embrace an identity that a part of my formative years, an identity not only as Pentecostal theologian, but as an Asian, even if Asian-American, theologian. This invitation was extended through the testimonies of those who have walked similar paths before me in the sense of having roots in Asia but who have either grown up in large part, been educated, or currently work in America.

Nine Asian American theologians—Choan-Seng Song, a Taiwanese Presbyterian; Julia Ching, a Chinese Catholic from Shanghai; Paul Nagano, a Japanese American Baptist who lived through the internment of World War II; David Ng, a second generation Chinese American Presbyterian; Peter Phan, a refugee Vietnamese Catholic; Jung Ha Kim, a “churched Korean American woman”; and Jung Young Lee, Anselm Kyongsuk Min, and Andrew Sung Park, all North Korean-born with greater or lesser degrees of refugee experience, and serving the Methodist, Catholic and Presbyterian church respectively—tell their stories in these pages. Let me highlight a few integrating motifs of the book before asking about what these experiences might mean for authentic Asian Christian theologies in general and Asian Pentecostal theologies more specifically.

All of the contributors to this volume write of their theologizing from a position of “betwixt and between” (Phan’s phrase) various boundaries. This is the experience of marginality whereby one does not feel accepted (to put it weakly) or where one is explicitly rejected (to put it strongly) by either side (e.g., by the one’s land of birth as in the refugee experiences or by America as in Nagano’s World War II experience). On the margins, one stands on the fence, seemingly neither on one side or the other. To harden the boundary would be to further intensify one’s sense of marginalization; to blur the boundary would be to risk the minimal sense of identity one is clinging to. While the authors of *Journeys* have found life “betwixt and between” challenging, they have each chosen not to bemoan an “outcast” mentality but to see it as an opportunity to embrace a dual identity. In other words, what was potentially a debilitating existence has been turned into a strength whereby Asian

American theologians have two cultures or civilizations, two experiences, two sets of categories, two sets of traditions, and so forth, to draw from rather than just one.

This is most evident, for example, in the theme of “embodiment” that emerges throughout the volume. Embodiment is not a category used by the authors themselves, but rather one that I think best captures the sense of empathy with one’s homeland elicited in those with diaspora experiences who undertake visits “home” later in life. Thus, Ching, Lee and Min have powerful testimonies about how returning to their land of birth brought forth emotions, affections, and sensibilities long buried because of their sojourns in a foreign country. Even Ng, who was born and raised in San Francisco, tells of his recognizing his “Confucian DNA” as he grew older (an experience with which I resonate since I was raised to believe that we were simply Christians rather than cultural Malaysians or Confucians, and only recently—since I began graduate studies in religion!—have come to realize the Confucian way of life and thinking embedded deep within myself and my family).

Embodiment, however, translates into a robust emphasis on both the local and the global community (Ng), including both socio-political (Min) and ecclesial (Park) connectedness and responsibility. In contrast to dominant strands of western theology, for example, Asian-American theology understands the individual not as individual but as individuals-embodied-in-communities. This means that Asian-American theologizing derives from multiple locations and identities. Whereas these multiplicities might push one toward sectarianism or another toward assimilation, the better way forward is to “develop strategies of solidarity and common action with [others, and to] work for the coming of the reign of God on the global level” (Nagano, p. 79).

How do we work toward this reign of God? In part by telling stories, so respond Song and Ng—more specifically, our stories. Telling stories is methodologically intrinsic to what it means to be Asian, given the pervasiveness of various myths and mythological systems to the Asian mind. This volume is thus a testimony to the power of autobiographical theology. The characterization of their theologies as a journey (Lee and Park), a pilgrimage (Nagano), an inquiry (Kim), and as deriving from memory and imagination (Phan) all point to the dynamic, questing nature of Asian-American theological reflection. Because of the multiple locatedness of Asian Americans, telling stories enables one to connect these diverse stories with both the biblical stories and the stories, myths, and traditions of Asia.

This last point raises, of course, the issue that Asian theologians such as Aloysius Pieris have long called attention to: Asia's pluralistic religiousness and deep religiosity. Many Asians, including Jung Ha Kim, have been raised as Buddhists and Confucianists even while being practicing Christians! For this, among other reasons, Kim prefers to consider herself simply as a "churched Korean American woman," thus downplaying an essentialistic understanding of Christian faith and lifting up instead the particular ways of being in the world in the "Christian West." Kim's experience raises the question of what it means to contextualize the gospel in Asia—the central issue for Song's massive story-theology project. It also queries how the risks of "syncretism"—a reality that Ching not only theorizes about but actually embodies in her practice of Zen meditation—should be negotiated.

Let me now make a few observations, specifically from a Pentecostal-theological perspective. First, Pentecostalism, as Walter Hollenweger and Harvey Cox have both reminded us recently, is a global phenomenon with deep roots in the experience of marginality. Ours truly is a journey "betwixt and between": North and South—meaning first world and third world—East and West, white and black, male and female, reason and emotion/affections, spiritual and material reality, spontaneity and sacramentality, individuality and communality, the mainline establishment and the prophetic/sectarian margin, the socio-economic lower classes and upward mobility, and Bible thumping and theological education and sophistication, just to name few. Rather than either resolving these tensions, or rejecting one or other pole, might not our embracing this journey in all of its complexity provide us with just the kind of broad and diverse platform we need in order to develop a truly global and Pentecostal, if not authentically Christian, theology? In other words, are these multiple locations hindrances or can they be pressed effectively to serve our theologizing, as authors of *Journeys* suggest?

Second, Pentecostals certainly practice an embodied spirituality through which a sacramental imagination—an imagination attuned to the expression of the divine reality through the human experience and the material world—is nurtured. Perhaps, as Cox and other observers of Pentecostalism have proposed, this is one of the keys to understanding the tremendous growth of the movement worldwide. What, however, might this mean theologically for us? What does this mean religiously for us and for our spirituality? To push the question further, might not the embodied nature of the Pentecostal experience drive Pentecostal theology beyond a theology of personal spirituality to, let's say, a theology of the

body, a theology of ethnicity or a theology of the land? These are questions that *Journeys at the Margin* provoke, at least for this reviewer.

Third, Pentecostals will certainly appreciate the emphasis in this book on autobiography as a legitimate means of theologizing. To be sure, we are reminded that not all autobiography is theological. Yet, it is also the case that all theology is autobiographical in some respect, as the postmodern turn also confirms for us. So, Pentecostal testimony is now recognized to function at a variety of levels. But what are the implications of theology as autobiography for Pentecostal theologizing? In conclusion, I want to push this particular question in conjunction with the complex of questions raised by Asia's long history of deep religious pluralism.

I am intrigued in this regard by the nature of "conversion." *Journeys at the Margin* actually presents us with stories of conversions. Without ever leaving either Christian faith or the church, all of the contributors at various points in their lives were "converted" back to Asia even as they reconnected with their Asian roots and heritages. In that process, they discovered valuable resources by which to understand their Christian identities and to articulate Asian-American Christian theologies. The question that arises in reflecting on the general readership of this journal therefore concerns Asian-born and Asian-educated first generation Christians. Most often, as studies have shown, first generation converts to Christianity from Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shintoism, or any other religious tradition are enabled to embrace their Christian identities precisely only by radically repudiating their former allegiances. How do these stories of drastic and powerful interfaith conversions translate theologically?

It is interesting that none of the authors of *Journeys* testify to anything that might be understood as a Pentecostal-Charismatic experience. Do such experiences of the Spirit provide for the kind of complete reorientation that requires abandonment of one's former way of life? On the surface of things, and especially rhetorically in Pentecostal-Charismatic communities, perhaps. Yet, it is also surely the case that Pentecostals, more than most groups, seem to be most successful at contextualizing the gospel and developing local churches and indigenous forms of faith and spirituality—often resulting in syncretism, conservatives within the movement and critics of the movement are sure to add. The kinds of stories Pentecostals tell continue to shape their experiences of God in the world; at the same time, the plurality of locations in which Pentecostals encounter the divine also continue to shape and form their testimonies. If nothing else, *Journeys at the Margin*

will force Asian Pentecostals to reflect further on what it means to articulate and live out a fully authentic Asian Pentecostal theology and spirituality. And especially for that reason, this is an important book for Asian Pentecostal thinkers.

Amos Yong

Pentecostal Perspectives edited by Keith Warrington. Exeter, UK: Paternoster, 1998. Paper, xviii+222 pp. ISBN: 0-85364-804-2.

This is a significant publication in every sense of the word. Keith Warrington, the editor of this volume, has done a masterful job of providing students of Pentecostalism with an array of stimulating essays about the history and current state of Pentecostalism in the United Kingdom, at least from the perspective of two major components of the British Pentecostal movement. The contribution to this volume by members of the Assemblies of God and the Elim Pentecostal Church in itself, is a delightful representation of Pentecostal ecumenism.

This work is significant for a number of reasons. First, there has been such a dearth of publications about British Pentecostalism since those by early Pentecostal leaders such as Gee, Burton, Polhill, Jeffreys and the Carters. While many are aware of American Pentecostalism through the relative availability of publications and works about the movement, few Pentecostals in the United States and around the world knew much about the history, nature and expansion of Pentecostalism in Great Britain. Therefore, this is a welcomed publication.

Second, the essays (primarily distillations from the authors' masters or doctoral research works) reflect the growing theological maturity of the British Pentecostal movement. This maturity is illustrated by the penetrating analyses of the history and development of the Elim Pentecostal Church (Hathaway) and the Assemblies of God (Kay). It is also shown in the essays by Massey (word of God), Schatzmann (gifts of the Spirit), Petts (baptism in the Holy Spirit), Glass (eschatology) and Warrington (healing and exorcism). Each author of the latter group took a fresh look at some of the cardinal doctrines of the movement in an evaluative manner but each has tempered his criticisms with a pastoral tone. The final two chapters, which focus on the pastoral themes of worship and ordinances, are equally critical in nature. Consequently, this is a rare publication by a group of Pentecostal scholars whose theological reflections have much to do with a deep concern for the vitality of the

Pentecostal movement, the enhancement of the faith of Pentecostal believers and a greater commitment to authenticity in Pentecostal ministry. Indeed, this book is an excellent example of theology being a servant of the church, that is theology done for the edification of the church.

Readers will find helpful Massey's emphasis on the proper place of the scripture in the Pentecostal church and Christian life. Particularly relevant to contemporary Pentecostalism is his discussion on the relation between the scripture and modern day prophecy in the church. Schatzmann's revisitation of the gifts of the Spirit versus fruit of the Spirit issue points to the fact that the Keswick influence on British Pentecostalism on the issue of the relationship between charismatic gifts and sanctification is still very much alive.

Petts' apologia for the Classical Pentecostal position on the nature of the baptism in the Spirit and its attendant issues of subsequence and "initial evidence" is a novel and useful one. However, his interpretation of 1 Cor 12:13, that "...we have all been baptized in one Spirit *for* (i.e., for the purpose or benefit of) the one body" though innovative is unconvincing (p. 113). By forcing a grammatical function of *eis* to support his theological view of Spirit baptism Petts commits eisegesis. Paul used the exact same phraseology when he employed the analogy of the Israelites who "were *baptized into* Moses in the cloud and in the sea...drank from the rock..." (1Cor 10:2, 3) in the Old Testament as a parallel to the Corinthians' participation of new life in Christ and their experience of the Spirit. It is surprising that Evangelical scholars like Stott, Dunn, Turner and Carson as well as Pentecostals like Stronstad and Menzies have not recognized 1 Cor 10:2, 3 as the exegetical key to 1 Cor 12:13.

The articles by Warrington, Glass, Hudson and Bicknell in the subsequent chapters are equally stimulating and timely. Warrington's expose on divine healing is a more sophisticated articulation of the Pentecostal understanding of "healing in the atonement." His analysis of the various biblical texts that are related to physical healing and Christ's atoning death is by far the most balanced Pentecostal interpretation to date but his view that "anointing with oil" (James 5:14) is "primarily symbolic" in significance may not be acceptable to many. This underscores the urgent need for a comprehensive theology of healing, which Pentecostals critically need so that their frequent and widespread Pentecostal praxis of "praying for the sick" may have a solid biblical grounding. Warrington is correct in stating that a theology of healing must incorporate a biblical view of suffering (p. 175).

Contemporary Christians will find much fodder for thought from Glass' chapter on eschatology, Hudson's on worship and Bicknell's on ordinances. Each has raised important and insightful issues for present day Pentecostals to consider. Glass states,

...it is more crucial than ever to find a positive place for eschatology in evangelistic preaching. We live in a world...which has lost hope.... The task of the Pentecostal preacher and theologian is to articulate Pentecostal eschatology in such a way that it addresses both the great issues that concern our time and the great purposes of God of eternity (p. 146).

Hudson's insights into the issues of contemporary Pentecostal worship are equally compelling. One example is his observation of the place of "worship" in the church service:

The turnabout in worship...in style, the time allotted for it, and the significance attached to it, has been remarkable. From worship being viewed merely as the "preliminary" activity...before the preaching, it has become the *raison d'être* for many churches and individuals.... For unbelievers...worship has communicated to them, on an emotional and spiritual level, truth that they have not been able to receive on a rational level (p. 194).

Whether this observation or other of Hudson's viewpoints hold any validity is one question but his article does merit much attention and discussion by clergy and laity alike so that Pentecostal worship does not become too culture bound and pragmatically driven.

Bicknell's article highlights the need for a more articulate Pentecostal understanding of not only the sacraments of the church, water baptism and the Lord's supper, but also rituals such as "the laying on of hands." He contends that "Pentecostalism has never really felt the need to develop a comprehensive theological scheme commensurate with its Pentecostal perspective, but has remained content with simply rehearsing the conclusions of evangelicalism out of which it sprang" (p. 213). The point that evangelical theology does not adequately represent Pentecostal beliefs and practices is one that Pentecostal leaders need to heed. It should spur Pentecostals to a greater appreciation for scholarship and encourage a bigger investment in the writing and publication of theological works from their perspective.

British Pentecostalism, though not widely known, has had extensively influence on a global scale through its missionary work in Japan, China, India, and Zaire; the itinerant ministry of notably Gee and

Carter; and indirectly, the by products of British colonization (e.g., the emigration of Pentecostal ministers and Christians to British colonies). To a great degree, Pentecostalism in New Zealand, Australia and Canada is deeply rooted in British Pentecostalism and to a lesser degree Pentecostalism in Singapore, Malaysia, India and other former British colonies. This book provides an invaluable self- understanding to readers from these countries mentioned above of the historical development of Pentecostalism in their countries. Readers from other nations will appreciate a new shade of Pentecostalism which in some ways may be quite distinctive from their own spiritual heritage but one that is equally, a fascinating work of the Spirit. The book rightly calls Pentecostals not only in the United Kingdom but also elsewhere to a greater thoughtfulness and reflection on their own history, theology and praxis.

Melvin Ho

New Life: A History of the New Life Churches of New Zealand, 1942-1979 by Brett Knowles. Dunedin, New Zealand: Third Millennium Publishing, 1999. Paper, Xxx+225 pp. \$NZ39.95. ISBN-1-877139-15-7.

This book is a useful resource for anyone wishing to study the development of Pentecostalism in New Zealand. Further, since attendance at Pentecostal churches, according to 1990 statistics, collectively exceeds all groups in the nation, second only to the Roman Catholic church, certainly the study of Pentecostalism deserves serious attention for anyone wishing to understand Christianity in New Zealand (p. 169). Originally, this book appeared as *The History of a New Zealand Pentecostal Movement: The New Life Churches of New Zealand from 1946 to 1979*, published by Edwin Mellen Press of New York. The original volume, published in hardback, had a retail price of \$99.95, which seemed excessive for the New Zealand market, so permission was granted for a less expensive version to be made available in paperback, locally printed. The only change in content is the elimination of footnotes, which was deemed to make it more readable for the average person in New Zealand. This lack of documentation does diminish the value of the paperback edition for serious scholars, to be sure.

The author has served the New Life Churches as a pastor, missionary, Bible school teacher and administrator over a period of more than twenty-five years. He has a Ph.D. degree from the University of Otago, where he currently teaches church history. It is evident from

examining the extensive bibliography, and from following the careful manner in which the book is written, that it is indeed a fine piece of scholarship.

Although the Assemblies of God is the largest Pentecostal denomination in the country, the New Life Churches are a strong second. All other Pentecostal bodies are much smaller than either of these two major groups (p. 169). It is certainly of interest, therefore, to have a responsible account of the complex evolution of this Pentecostal denomination which occupies a major role in the current configuration of New Zealand Pentecostalism.

The roots of the New Life Churches are complex, to say the least. The original influence came from American missionaries who fled Indonesia in 1942 to escape Japanese capture. They came from a splinter group in Seattle, called Bethel Temple. Bethel Temple teaching advocated a strict form of local church autonomy which resisted the inevitable evolution into denominationalism. Another Bethel Temple teaching was baptism in the name of Jesus, leading many followers in subsequent years to be re-baptized. This peculiarity has made it difficult over the years for the New Life Churches to avoid the accusation that they are "Jesus Only," even though the leaders have resisted that appellation. By 1946, the Bethel Temple group separated from the Pentecostal Church of New Zealand to form their own fellowship of churches. Over the years, the Bethel Temple churches adopted several names, eventually settling on the title New Life Churches.

Of special significance is the influence of the "Latter Rain," a renewal episode among Pentecostal churches in North America, peaking in 1947 and 1948. Although North American groups, such as the American Assemblies of God, strongly denounced what were considered to be excessive teachings, exponents of the Latter Rain convinced key leaders in the Bethel Temple connection in New Zealand of the value of the Latter Rain message. Featured in the Latter Rain were the dispensing of gifts of the Spirit through the laying on of hands, identifying latter-day apostles and prophets, and securing guidance through personal prophecies. These practices have continued as significant characteristics of the New Life Churches for more than fifty years.

It is rare for a complex, experience-oriented revival movement to receive the careful examination that Brett Knowles has provided. A reading of his history of the New Life Churches of New Zealand will give a penetrating insight into the dynamics of a typical Pentecostal revival movement.

William W. Menzies