

BOOK REVIEWS

Anselm Kyongsuk Min, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World: A Postmodern Theology after Postmodernism* (New York: T & T Clark, 2004). vii + 245 pp., ISBN: 0567025705, US\$ 27.00.

Anselm Min is a Korean-American Roman Catholic, and has taught theology, philosophy and religion at the Claremont School of Theology and Graduate School since 1992. While he is, in all probability, a stranger to readers of *AJPS*, his new book is important for *AJPS* readers for at least three reasons: its taking seriously but not uncritically our postmodern situation; its presenting and defending a robust pneumatological theology; and its broaching global issues through the particularity of Min's Korean-American liberation theology perspective. Let me very briefly elaborate on these.

Part one of this volume includes four chapters wherein Min provides one model for doing theology in critical and constructive dialogue with postmodernism. While applauding how the postmodern emphasis on difference destabilizes the modern emphasis on totality, yet difference itself cannot be absolutized without undermining the possibility of ethical action. So even if Levinas rightly calls attention to the transcendence and infinity of the other, his denial that such is historically mediated results on our inability to engage the concrete factuality of others as particular historical beings. Similarly, Derrida's deconstruction and *differance* leads him to posit a messianism that is only ideal; thus Derridean "religion" is an ahistorical abstraction, irrelevant at best and legitimating of the status quo at worst. Both champions of the postmodern deconstruction of totality leave them incapable of engaging the actualities of the social, political, and economic realms within which all humans live, move and have their being. The modern totality and the postmodern difference therefore need to be sublated into "the solidarity of the different," and this precisely because of the demands of justice and liberation. Classical insights into human nature as referring to basic needs, capacities and structures common to all human beings allow for the possibility of justice, while postmodern perspectives on human nature as historically located insist that the concrete establishment of justice involves social, political and economic life. What emerges is a trinitarian dialectic between totality (concrete historicity), infinity (the immeasurable dignity of the other), and solidarity (the interdependence of others), each understood as permanent "existentials" of the human condition. Engaging this dialectic seriously requires a praxis that seeks to create liberating totalities.

In general terms, Pentecostalism both extends and rejects modernity, albeit in different ways. On the one hand, Pentecostal movements have been precipitated in part by the social changes accompanying modernization and globalization. On the other hand, the Pentecostal experience has also been seen as a counter discourse to the homogenizing forces of modernity: arguably, glossolalia not only resists the rationalizations of the western paradigm, but also legitimizes the pluralism of indigenous languages, cultures and ethnicities. Certainly Min's constructive yet critical engagement with postmodernity can help Pentecostals who are wrestling with their own questions about whether or not to get on the "postmodern bandwagon." But even more specifically, might Min's "solidarity of the different" serve as a sophisticated philosophical explication of the many tongues of Pentecost declaring the wonders of God?

Part two begins to answer this question by moving from philosophical to theological analysis and reflection. (Min is eminently qualified to move between and betwixt these disciplines given his PhDs in philosophy and theology from Fordham and Vanderbilt Universities, respectively.) The constructive pneumatological and postmodern theology after postmodernism of this book proceeds from two related moves: that of developing a theological anthropology of concrete totality, and that of renewing the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The former calls attention to the concreteness of human economic and social interdependence in our global context. If human beings are defined both by their personal and social aspects, and by their transcendental and historical—minimally: the economic, political, and cultural—dimensions (whereby each side mediates and is thereby dialectically constitutive of the other side), then theological anthropology needs to pay attention to both other-worldly and this-worldly salvation, the latter being the explicit domain of liberation theology. The latter renewal of pneumatology involves the retrieval of the patristic model of the Spirit as the mutual love of the Father and the Son in order to suggest that the Spirit is the power of relating, reconciling and creating communal solidarity in the life of the immanent and the economic Trinity. At the level of the immanent Trinity, Min insightfully sees a kind of "solidarity of others" since each of the trinitarian persons are persons in different ways, yet unified together. At the level of the economic life of the Trinity, Min's pneumatology emphasizes the Spirit's power to create, inspire and liberate finite creatures for relationship with God and for communal (historical) solidarity with other creatures. The body of Christ instantiates the solidarity of the Spirit, since it transcends fragmentation

and regionalism but not by mandating any kind of uniformity. This is why Min talks not about a “solidarity with others”—which still puts “us” in a privileged position—but about a “solidarity of others” where each is related to and dependent upon everyone else. Otherness is transcended in terms of difference with “us” even as it is preserved in the solidarity of “us all.” As such, solidarity resists both the hegemony of the individual and the totalitarianism of the whole.

Min’s creative re-reading of pneumatological themes in scripture recaptures familiar texts and passages and results in a cosmic and liberative anthropological pneumatology that goes far beyond traditional individualistic or ecclesial articulations of the doctrine of the Spirit. Here, Min elaborates further on the constructive liberation theology he has been working on for decades. Whereas his earlier *Dialectic of Salvation: Issues in Theology of Liberation* (State University of New York Press, 1989) advanced the thesis that human nature is not only personal but social and that salvation and conversion therefore have to be understood in both personal and social terms, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World* extends this basic anthropological and soteriological thesis through more in-depth pneumatological and trinitarian theological reflection. The much stronger theological axiom that emerges is that liberation dialectically conceived emphasizes social agency as part and parcel of the Christian life, neither accidental nor extrinsic to it, precisely because the incarnational and pentecostal movements of the trinitarian life have entered into history and been poured out upon the people of God who are thereby empowered to accomplish together what individuals on their own cannot: the concrete social and historical transformation of the human condition.

As important, however, is the attention Min gives to how to discern and respond to the presence and activity of the Spirit in our world. Two examples will have to suffice about how Min’s perspective is illuminating for spiritual discernment. The first concerns his bold but important claim that the economic dimension of human life is arguably the most important. If otherness is signaled by historical, social, ethnic, political, religious, cultural, linguistic, economic, etc., differences, the last is nevertheless the most crucial because economic discrimination allows for and realizes the kind of oppression that other forms of discrimination do not. Hence, otherness is defined ethically, in terms of economic justice and of our obligatedness to and solidarity with those with whom we live in interdependence. Because economic injustices demand social, political and structural action, the Spirit’s liberative presence needs to be measured not only by what individuals do, but by

collective human activities. Here, Min's personal and sustained engagement with the Korean situation over the decades has undoubtedly sensitized him to the concrete (even if complex) demands of theological praxis in global context.

The second example of how Min's analysis yields insight into spiritual discernment concerns the subject of religious pluralism. While the challenge of religious pluralism recurs throughout the volume, two essays address specifically the question, what about the other religious traditions? Min's liberationist approach to religious pluralism is to raise it precisely as a problem for praxis rather than just for cognition. The clash of religions today signals the challenges of different communities struggling for physical, economic, political and social survival. Hence, against both the exclusivism of traditional approaches which presumes a supra-historical position that judges other religious traditions "from above" and the relativism of pluralist approaches which abandons the uniqueness and normativity of Christ, Min proposes an inclusivist and "confessionalist pluralism of praxis." This recognizes that religious claims are inevitably confessions of faith continually negotiating the tensions between conviction and revisability, particularity and universality, the standpoint of faith and the pluralism of horizons. The integrity of religious differences therefore needs to be engaged not only theoretically and dialogically in terms of the interreligious encounter but practically in terms of interreligious initiatives directed toward peace and justice in our global village. Because religious beliefs and practices cannot be disentangled from the social, political and economic aspects of human life, the Spirit's liberative presence needs to be measured not only by what individuals claim to believe, but by what religiously inspired human action accomplishes.

Good books raise important questions. Perhaps in future work, Min will further elaborate on his christological and soteriological theology of religious pluralism. Also, how Min's affirmation of Jesus Christ as the "final, universal, normative Savior of humanity" (p. 187) relates to his pneumatology and to Western/Latin doctrine of the *filioque*? There also remains the question of what kind of eschatology follows—or ought to follow—from the thoroughly dialectical philosophy of history which Min deploys: can Min tell us anything more about how both history and the eschaton retain their full integrity in our theological reflection given their dialectical relationship?

In the meanwhile, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World* will help Pentecostals think through prolegomena issues related to epistemological, hermeneutical, and methodological issues for a

postmodern and Pentecostal theology. Further, Pentecostals rethinking their understanding of the Holy Spirit will benefit from Min's dialectical approach to pneumatological theology. But most importantly, Min's emphasis on the necessity of concrete social, political and economic praxis to sound pneumatological thinking cannot but help challenge Pentecostal theological reflection. This is just as Min would have it; he is thus to be thanked for this book.

Amos Yong

French L. Arrington, *Encountering the Holy Spirit: Paths of Christian Growth and Service* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 2003). 546 pp., Paper, ISBN: 0-8714-8226-6, US\$19.95.

Pastors, students in Bible colleges, and Christians who want a practical and reliable account of how the Holy Spirit is currently operating in fulfillment of New Testament prophecy might consider professor Arrington's new guide a "must read." Although the book is aimed for the educated layperson and Bible college student, scholars also will not at all find the work unprofitable, given that the domain of the Holy Spirit, especially the gift of the Holy Spirit to disciple-believer-witnesses who pray earnestly for this empowering gift, is in need of further clarification. Given several centuries of confusion following the Lukan cessationism of the Reformers, further embellished in the Evangelical traditions, fresh approaches are in order. Building on the past century of scholarship and experience in the Pentecostal tradition, together with that in the various Charismatic Renewal Movements among the Orthodox, Roman Catholics, and increasing blocks of Protestantism, Arrington sweeps away a good bit of the ecclesiastical fog surrounding a vital and timely topic. Here we have a realistic guide for practicing Christians who want to use their Bible in an understandable and accurate manner, becoming cognizant of a budding scholarly tradition within the Pentecostal Reformation, now the fastest growing sector of world Christendom.

It is a pleasure to welcome this well written and persuasive presentation of what the Bible actually says about leading a Spirit-filled life. Arrington engages the biblical witness with great care and clarity. Aside from his lucid explanations of biblical passages and their connections, we find many helpful summaries of main points, along with lists of penetrating questions causing us to think afresh about ourselves. I

must say that it is not often that we have the opportunity to consider and apply such needed lessons in concert with a work of obvious integrity. In today's book market we sometimes find authors who tell us about what they would like the biblical writers to have written, instead of what they actually wrote. It is refreshing and pastorally instructive to read *Encountering* and readily appreciate an author's genuine faithfulness and humble submission to the inspired witness of the Bible.

Beginning with "The Witness of the Old Testament to the Holy Spirit" (pp. 27-52), Arrington reviews with thoughtful precision the activities of the Spirit, focusing especially upon the prophecy of Joel. We live in a time of prophetic fulfillment when God is fulfilling this prophecy in its entirety as cited in Acts 2:16-21. In addition we are offered a rich review of all the OT references to the Holy Spirit along with a guide for discussion (these discussion-guides judiciously placed throughout *Encountering* make this book especially suitable for use by small groups of Spirit-filled believers on the mission field and in local churches.)

In "Encountering the Holy Spirit in Conversion" (pp. 55-80) we see how the Spirit helps convict us of sin, bringing repentance, faith, forgiveness, salvation and conversion, as in the soteriological nexus of Luke's portrayal, and incorporation into the body of Christ, as in Paul's description. One might also infer a personal relationship of repentant sinners to the Father, given the parable of the Prodigal Son. From the examples and precedents recorded in the Gospels, this particular ministry of the Spirit began during the ministry of the earthly Jesus¹ and it continues today. Arrington develops the early Christian concept of walking in the Spirit, a metaphor for experiential (including non-rational) personal fellowship with God, as leading to spiritual fruits and righteousness. All Pentecostals, Neo-Pentecostals or Charismatics, and Evangelicals will benefit from a deeper grasp of our relationship with the Spirit that this section provides.

A central section on Spirit Baptism (pp. 83-228) is divided into four useful parts: Understanding the Bible, Spiritual Empowerment after Conversion, Initial Physical Sign of Spirit Baptism, and Reception and Results of Spirit Baptism. Given the Pentecostal/Charismatic

¹ So too, William P. Atkinson, "The Prior Work of the Spirit in Luke's Portrayal," *Australasian Pentecostal Studies* 5-6 (2001), pp. 107-14; and Youngmo Cho, "Spirit and Kingdom in Luke-Acts: Proclamation as the Primary Role of the Spirit in Relation to the Kingdom of God in Luke-Acts," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 6:2 (2003), pp. 173-97

Reformation's phenomenal growth over the past century, it behooves global Pentecostalism to once again articulate the tenets of the Fourfold or Fivefold Gospel with substance and clarity. One of these prophecy-fulfilling tenets proclaimed over the past century as an integral part of the Gospel is the role of the heavenly Jesus as Baptizer in the Holy Spirit. Arrington offers here a substantial and stimulating pastoral grounding in this matter. Evangelicals who may be looking for a more accurate understanding of the Scriptures than they have traditionally been offered may find this presentation to be especially helpful.

Rightly dismissing the old Protestant Reformation-based popularization that the gift of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' teaching on prayer (Luke 11:2-4 with the presumptuous dispensational erasure of 11:5-13) was only intended for twelve male apostles and that its initial benefit then somehow theoretically trickles down to all future generations, Arrington implies that such dispensational theories only shape a dispensational Jesus, not the earthly and heavenly Jesus portrayed in Luke-Acts. Given that the heavenly Jesus remembers and supports the ministry of the earthly Jesus, such dispensational popularizations are so far removed from the intentions of the NT writers that they are long overdue for retirement. Instead of beginning with worn out theories, Arrington begins with what Paul and Luke actually write. He sketches out a set of instructive interpretive principles and shows that 1 Cor 13:12 refers to "baptism by the Holy Spirit into Christ at conversion" (p. 103). This figurative description is not to be confused with Paul's language of Spirit-reception (see Paul at 1 Cor 2:12 and Luke at Acts 2:38; 19:2). Then, the various delicate descriptions Luke employs for Christians being baptized in or with the Holy Spirit by the heavenly Jesus are helpfully tabulated (p. 109). These correlate nicely with Paul's language. Arrington's approach affords readers the opportunity to understandably perceive how the early Christians developed and commonly employed experientially descriptive language, language that allowed them to communicate effectively among themselves. Pentecostals might share more of this important message of NT connectedness. Another value of Arrington's work should be to help Evangelicals come out from under the confusing camouflage of the ecclesiastically self-serving dictums of "apostolic age" interpretation and into the clarity of communication that the early Christian communities apparently enjoyed due to a commonly shared experientially based language.

The treatment of "Spiritual Empowerment after Conversion" (pp. 115-51) and "Initial Physical Sign of Spirit Baptism" (pp. 153-87) affords English speaking people everywhere a thorough, accurate, and

easily understandable account of what Luke intends us to realize and personally apply. Luke renders the belief that the prophetic fulfillment of John the Baptist's prophecy (Luke 3:16), and Jesus' own encouragement toward its realization (Luke 11:5-13; 24:48; Acts 1:4, 5, 8), is now an ongoing promise to all disciple-believer-witnesses, to those who hear the Gospel and repent (Acts 2:38c, 39). From the examples and precedents recorded in Acts, we see the heavenly Jesus fulfilling the prophecy of Joel as coupled with the teaching and narrative prediction of the earthly Jesus, and also coupled to the narrative prediction of John the Baptist. This ministry of the heavenly Jesus continues today according to prophetic prediction. Despite the dispensational callousness which the Pentecostal Reformation has been exposed to and often intimidated by, given the proper historical realization of God's irrevocable intention to fulfill the prophecies which He has divinely inspired, it is arguably correct to make the point that the "Pentecostal experience is inseparable from Christian experience, since the Pentecostal life is Christian. In fact, Pentecostals believe that the Pentecostal experience is available and even intended for all believers."² Although scholarship may certainly anticipate more work along these lines, Arrington's treatment reveals this exciting personal application of ongoing prophetic fulfillment. His narrative investigation quite appropriately encourages determined prayer.

Following on, in a lovely train of thought, is "The Reception and Results of Spirit Baptism" (pp. 189-228). Here we learn how our experience of Spirit-filling and inspired prophetic speech in unlearned languages is designed to provide more boldness to witness for Christ. This mysterious increase in our ability for personal witness, and increased appreciation of the non-rational dimension of the Holy Spirit, would of course vary with each individual according to God's will. Each disciple-believer-witness today, as Luke describes Christians at the end of his Gospel, may be empowered today by a "personal Pentecost" so as to increase his or her personal witness, given due obedience to the earthly Jesus' teaching on prayer. This personal Pentecost is a prophetic heritage for all believers. Arrington's pastoral study may serve to lessen the possible fear of the supernatural and facilitate understanding as to why speaking in unlearned languages (other tongues) is a good sign of Spirit-filling from the heavenly Jesus. This Spirit-filling as described by Luke leads to desirable experiential consequences in our spiritual life, to

² Paul W. Lewis, "Towards a Pentecostal Epistemology: The Role of Experience in Pentecostal Hermeneutics," *The Spirit & Church* 2:1 (2000), pp. 95-125 (103).

a deeper appreciation of His interior presence, thus helping us to work *with* the Lord to expand and make real His everlasting kingdom.

Going around or bypassing Luke-Acts and Paul's Spirit-reception language (1 Cor 2:12) to claim interpersonal spiritual gifts may be a slight of hand. This detour is unwise and little more than a dispensationally wedded extraction of Scripture from its original context. Arrington's "Introduction to Gifts of the Spirit" (pp. 231-73) is an appreciated counterbalance to a current trend in some Evangelical quarters that "all the Pauline spiritual gifts are for today." Such an admission, after centuries of denial by the Protestant Reformation tradition, is often theoretical or diplomatic, not a practical pastorally applicable statement. Participants in the Pentecostal Reformation should not be swayed by such potentially misleading trends taken out of biblical context, trends which may come and which may also quite easily go along with renewed efforts to protect ecclesiastical positions, but instead should adhere to the entire NT context as Arrington wisely does.

For Roman Catholic readers of *Encountering*, I would commend two pastorally useful volumes which are again harmonious with the entire NT context, but which might be best considered in light of the more extensive treatment provided by Arrington. These are those by Lucy Rooney and Robert Faricy,³ and by Raniero Cantalamessa.⁴ Noting these allows me to also call attention to Arrington's accompanying list of scholarly resources (pp. 491-517).

In a review of a five hundred page pastoral benchmark like *Encountering*, all its significant aspects cannot be adequately surveyed, but are nevertheless noteworthy and worthy of deployment, like Arrington's "Gifts of Leadership" and "Gifts of Service, Power, Revelation and Worship" (pp. 275-374). But I would like to close with what will continue to effectively serve the witness of global Pentecostalism, the credible personal testimony. In "Personal Stories of Encounters With the Holy Spirit" (pp. 423-66) we find a charming collection of personal testimonies that is both edifying and entertaining in the best Christian sense. Unlearned prophetic speech is understood and applied. Spirit-filling and its mysterious empowerment have practical consequences in the Christian life of a housewife. The Spirit guides missionary work in the inner city. Dreams, visions, and healings

³ *Lord, Teach Us to Pray*, 2nd ed. (Vatican City: International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services, 1998).

⁴ *The Mystery of Pentecost* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2001).

accompany missionary endeavor. This is the voice of the genuine prophetic tradition amidst suffering and struggle. This is why, for example, 90% of all Protestantism in Central/South America is Pentecostal. When the blinding constraints of rationalism and materialism are removed, and the heavenly Jesus is sought persistently in prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit according to the teaching of the earthly Jesus, then a host of personal stories inevitably burst forth among the bands of disciple-believer-witnesses around the world.

As we engage the task of evangelizing the world we need to encourage young people to consider the call to the mission field and not be ashamed of credible personal testimony related thereto.⁵ Similarly, reading Arrington's accounting of personal stories and his "Challenges for the Spirit-Filled Church Today" (pp. 377-420) could be a tonic to faith and a motivation to *get back to the basics*. *Encountering* offers many revitalizing and stimulating thoughts that can assist its readers to become better, more obedient Christians, combining accurate biblical guidance with much needed practical resolve.

Paul Elbert

Wonsuk Ma, William W. Menzies, and Hyeon-sung Bae, eds., *David Yonggi Cho: A Close Look at His Theology and Ministry* (Baguio, Philippines: APTS Press; Gunpo, Korea: Hansei University Press, 2004), Paper, pp. x+309 pp., ISBN: 971-8942-08-4, US\$14.50.

Twelve competent theologians and missiologists have contributed to this valuable book. Korean David Cho is pastor of the largest church in the world. It so happens, perhaps inevitably, that he is also one of the most controversial church leaders of any denomination. Therefore, it is timely and appropriate to have a public dissection of the ministry of this high profile man of God.

As would be expected, this series of essays is highly favorable of Cho. Four members of his staff contributed articles. The authors did, however, seek to objectively address various criticisms that have been leveled against Cho.

⁵ For example, in the account of Elva Vanderbout by Julie C. Ma, *When the Spirit Meets the Spirits*, Studien zur interkulturellen Geschichte des Christentums 118 (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 2000), pp. 74-86.

David Cho's theology and ministerial *modus operandi* have been extensively influenced by the American Assemblies of God. But Cho has sought to stamp his own imprimatur on his unique Korean style of contextualization. His "Five Fold Message" and "Three Fold Blessing" seek to relevantly impact his Korean audience. But, as several essayists point out, Cho was quite willing to swim against the current of Korean culture by emphasizing the extensive appointment of women leaders within his ministry.

Critics speak of "Cho's Pentecostal Shamanism." By this they mean Cho's emphasis on the spirit world, mountains as places of good spirits, and issues of poverty and suffering, all as being too much in line with Buddhism. Cho's answer is that he, in the interest of being relevant to the people, has contextualized the gospel to fit the Buddhist worldview. But he and his supporters adamantly deny syncretism.

David Lim, a Filipino church leader, praises Cho for his emphasis on cell groups. But he asserts the need to go beyond cells and seek to make each group into a viable, self-sustaining church. Lim also would like Cho to become more politically involved in society.

It was pointed out that Cho has numerous projects which assist the poor and needy. Chief among these is the 3.3 million US dollars that his church has contributed toward 3,000 heart operations. For this and other acts of social involvement the Korean Government bestowed upon Cho its highest civilian honor, the Moogoonghwa Medallion.

Wonsuk Ma, ever the visionary, in his essay suggests that Cho spearhead four initiatives: 1) to create a number of David Cho endowed chairs in various universities and seminaries; 2) to develop a top-rate Pentecostal academic journal; 3) to sponsor periodic theological forums; and 4) to fund a "Global Renewal Press."

All of the above would keep Cho's ministry and impact alive and current far beyond his demise. Of course, the scope of these projects would go beyond Cho as a person and into the Pentecostal movement as a whole.

My only criticism of this excellent book is the repetition throughout. But that is to be expected when twelve essays on one subject become a book. That notwithstanding, I highly recommend this insightful exploration of a man of God and his expansive ministry.

Phil Parshall