

support would have hindered some in the church (364). Moreover, he draws very little upon recent studies on the possible influence of sophists and rhetorical opponents in Corinth and takes no firm position on the precise meaning of the phrase *sophia logou* in 1:17 and 2:4.

In the end one cannot fault Fitzmyer for not interacting more closely the abundance of secondary literature; such would have required several 600-plus-page volumes. In its entirety, the commentary remains a very fine contribution, with the introductory essays and 'comments' sections being especially strong. This volume will make a great companion to Thiselton and is warmly recommended for any student, pastor, or scholar interested in this important NT letter.

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***Religious Experience of the Pneuma.
Communication with the Spirit World in
1 Corinthians 12 and 14***

Clint Tibbs

WUNT II 230

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SUMMARY

Tibbs investigates the statements of the apostle Paul on the Spirit of God in 1Cor 12 and 14 against the background of contemporary Jewish and pagan sources. His thesis "in the NT, 'the holy spirit' is a collective noun" as well as his perspective of a "world of holy spirits", presented by Tibbs as Pauline, are not persuasive in the end. However, the passages in which he explains the empirical relevance of Paul's statements on the Spirit prove to be stimulating: the New Testament testifies to a manifold, powerful, at times overwhelming activity of the Holy Spirit.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Tibbs untersucht die Aussagen des Apostels Paulus über den Geist Gottes in 1. Kor. 12 und 14 vor dem Hintergrund zeitgenössischer jüdischer und paganer Quellen. Seine These „In the NT, 'the holy spirit' is a collective noun" und die von ihm als pln. vorgestellte Anschauung einer „Welt heiliger Geister" überzeugen letztlich nicht. Als anregend erweisen sich aber die Passagen, in denen Tibbs den Erfahrungsbezug der pln. Aussagen über den Geist herausarbeitet: Das NT bezeugt ein vielfältiges, machtvoll, zuweilen überwältigendes Wirken des Heiligen Geistes.

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur étudie ici les affirmations de Paul sur l'Esprit de Dieu en 1 Corinthiens 12 et 14, à la lumière des sources juives et païennes de l'époque. Il soutient que dans le Nouveau Testament, le vocable « le Saint-Esprit » est un nom collectif et que Paul croyait à un « monde de saints-esprits », mais cette thèse n'est pas convaincante.

Cependant, les passages où Tibbs montre la pertinence empirique de l'enseignement paulinien sur l'Esprit sont stimulants : le Nouveau Testament témoigne d'une activité diversifiée, puissante, et parfois très forte, du Saint-Esprit.

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Paul, an advocate of "Christian spiritism"? The person of the "Holy Spirit" unknown to the New Testament? The discovery and experience of an archipelago of a "(holy) world of spirits" instead? The author of the present volume does not shrink back from provocation. With this study Clint Tibbs received a doctorate from the Catholic University of America, Washington. He purports to interpret 1Cor 12 and 14 in view of the religious experience of the original church (vii). Whereas these chapters are normally dealt with under the heading "gifts of the Spirit", the unconventional thesis of the author (T. himself writes „this somewhat maverick interpretation", 23) is about Paul dealing here with "Christian spiritism" perceived by T. as „communication with the spirit world" (22).

After the introduction, T. offers an overview of research (chapters 1 and 2). He considers the observation of a variety of functions of the Spirit through which the usually invisible world of spirits becomes a real experience to be the most important result of some enquiries (108f). Affirming similar activities of demons and good spirits (109), he evokes the subject matter: "If there were many good spirits, i.e., holy spirits, in the NT world, the question arises, what does 'the Holy Spirit' mean?" (110).

In chapter 3 (113-145) T. examines texts from the Greco-Roman (Plutarch) and early Jewish (Josephus, Philo and Pseudo-Philo) literature in terms of their description of a "communication with the world of spirits": spirits would speak to individuals by media perceived as "passive human agents" (144). These may also be good spirits (*daimonion*, "godship", *theion pneuma*, "divine spirit", "*spiritus sanctus*", "holy spirit"), who may reveal the will of god. [The absence of capitals for God and Spirit follows T.]

Therefore, T. intends to carry out his detailed exegesis of 1Cor 12 and 14 (chapters 4-6) with a sensitivity which he finds lacking in general; likewise, he proposes to interpret *pneuma* within the frame of an early Jewish pneumatology (15) and not in the light of the Trinitarian definitions of the 4th century. Because he presupposes an unbroken agreement between the ideas of the former authors and those of Paul, T. does not render the opening phrase in 12:1 in the usual way (Luther: "About the gifts of the Spirit..."), but in terms of "about spiritual things". Then T. expands on Paul's descriptions of various experiences of spirits – as he classifies them – in the verses to follow: speaking by the same spirit 12:1; presents and gifts 12:4; works and activities, energies 12:6; manifestations of the spirit 14:15; spirits of the prophets 14:32; spiritual persons 14:32. T. explains this

variety as evidence of a world of the spirits which, during the foundation period of the church, communicated with Christians (151) and he translates: “now concerning spiritism”. In the following, T. decides on the exegetical agenda: already in chapter 1 in case of a missing definite article in front of *pneuma hagion*, or *pneuma theou* (as in 12:3), he defends the translation “a holy spirit” or “a spirit of god” (49f.). T. perceives the plural forms in 12:10 (*diakriseis pneumatōn*), 14:12 (*zelotai este pneumatōn*) and 14:32 (*pneumata profeton*) to be indicators pointing to a “spirit communication” with “holy spirits” (50-53, 207-213, 262-266), although T. himself has to admit that “Paul never qualifies the plural ‘spirits’ with the adjective ‘holy’” (271). How does the alleged plural “holy spirits” match Paul’s insisting on the “same Spirit” (12:4) and the “one Spirit” (12:9, 11) as the origin of the various gifts? T. is determined to find here a generic singular to denote spirits (271). He assumes the notion “one” in Israel’s confession “the Lord, our God, is one” is best understood in terms of “supreme” or “number one”, not that there is literally only one god” (189, cf. also 1Cor 8:4-6). T’s comparison of the “one spirit” in 12:9, 11 with the image of the “one body” in 1:10-11 and 3:3-4 is full of twists and turns. As the many members (mentioned by Paul) would form one body, so the many spirits (introduced here by T.) would make one world of spirits (193). By doing so, T. is smoothing the last uneven patches in the text which through this reading unanimously testifies to a spiritual world of good and evil, unholy and holy spirits. Therefore, T. continually translates “there are different distributions of gifts, but the same spirit [world distributes them all]” (12:4 cf. 12:11; 279).

At the end of his survey, T. articulates pithily “in the NT, ‘the holy spirit’ is a collective noun” (272). Is this really true? T. seems to have succumbed to the same mistake against which he warns in view of projecting a later pneumatology into the statements of the apostle Paul: he cancels out Paul’s statements on the Spirit by subjecting them to his perspective of a “world of the spirits” from other sources of Antiquity. Paul is not allowed to have said anything else. Is it really unimaginable that Paul should echo the ancient worldview when he speaks of spirits in the plural, but that he would place his own theological accents carefully (i.e. “one Spirit” in 12:11 may in fact well mean “one Spirit” and not “one world of spirits”)? T., following the history of religion school, arrives at an artificial contrast between an original experience and a dogma which seems to eclipse the former. Thus, not only the text of Scripture, but also other sources are at times interpreted in a peculiar way.

Annex 1 (279-283) comprises the Greek text and that eccentric translation of 1Cor 12 and 14; annex 2 (285-305) includes a parenthesis with regard to the meaning and use of the term ‘spiritism’ in the Old Testament; and annex 3 (307-319) presents a statistical analysis of the different grammatical forms of *pneuma* in the NT. Various indices conclude the volume.

Someone who, like the author of this review, is unable to follow T. in his exaggerated thesis, may still benefit from this stimulating and at times irritating book: first of all from the background material on contemporary Jewish and pagan sources. Likewise, the repeated and thus tedious warning against a dogmatically prejudiced interpretation is legitimate, especially when it encourages perceiving the texts with their tensions. The passages in which T. demonstrates the empirical relevance of Paul’s statements on the Spirit prove to be thought-provoking: it makes a difference whether we envisage the experience of God’s Spirit in terms of a romantic-artistic inspiration in which the individual person always keeps in control of the Spirit, or whether we expect to be overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit and enthused by the witnesses of the New Testament (166).

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Pauline Persuasion: A Sounding in 2 Corinthians 8-9

Kieran J. O’Mahony

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SUMMARY

O’Mahony uses 2 Corinthians 8-9 as a test case to investigate the value of Hellenistic rhetoric for understanding Pauline persuasion. He seeks to show that Paul had an extensive Hellenistic education and that, for this reason, one should use classical rhetorical theory to help interpret Paul’s letters. The major contribution of this work is the demonstration of how 2 Corinthians 8-9 fits together as one unit rather than as two letters (as Betz argues). The overall conclusion of the work – that Paul must be understood in light of both Judaism and Hellenism – pushes at an open door.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

O’Mahony verwendet 2. Korinther 8-9 als Testfall um den Wert hellenistischer Rhetorik für das Verständnis der paulinischen Überzeugungsstrategien zu untersuchen. Er versucht zu zeigen, dass Paulus eine ausführliche hellenistische Bildung genossen hat und dass man aus diesem Grund die klassische rhetorische Theorie als Hilfe bei der Interpretation paulinischer Briefe benutzen sollte. Der Hauptbeitrag dieses Werkes besteht darin, dass es zeigt, wie 2. Korinther 8-9 als Einheit zusammenpasst und nicht zwei Briefe darstellt (wofür Betz argumentiert). Die übergreifende Schlussfolgerung des Werkes – dass Paulus sowohl im jüdischen als auch im hellenistischen Lichte verstanden werden muss – rennt offene Türen ein.

RÉSUMÉ

À partir de l’étude de 2 Corinthiens 8-9, cet ouvrage cherche dans quelle mesure la rhétorique hellénistique permet