

This book by Nichols is a great tribute to the unique role of the journal *Sobornost* in the dialogue between East and West, of which Russian émigrés were the ferment. He splendidly illustrates the quotation from Dmitri S. Merezhkovsky given as an epigraph: ‘We are not in exile; we are on a mission’.

HYACINTHE DESTIVELLE OP

SPIRIT OF GOD: SHORT WRITINGS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT by Yves Congar, OP translated by Susan Mader Brown, Mark E. Ginter, Joseph G. Mueller SJ, and Catherine E. Clifford, *Catholic University of America Press, Washington DC, 2018, pp. xi + 297, \$65.00, hbk.*

This beautifully presented volume is a collection of eight of Congar’s *opuscula* on the Holy Spirit, originally written in French or German as lectures, talks, reference articles, and scholarly contributions to journals. They have never been translated into English, and the team who have assembled these articles and translated them have done us Anglophones a service. This volume is a labour of love, well-edited with extensive bibliographies and notes, presented by firm admirers of Congar’s work who rightly want to expose a new generation to his thought. Hence the translation is accessible, with Latin quotations helpfully translated into English as well as the odd editorial comment to facilitate understanding.

The translators have also provided introductions to guide the newcomer into Congar’s thought, his historical context, and the issues to which he was responding. Thus the eight articles are grouped into four sections, each with its own table of contents, and each section is preceded by a brief introduction that contextualises the texts in that section. The entire volume itself carries a General Introduction that explains the arrangement of the material, and it gives a brief overview of Congar’s work, his objectives and hopes, and traces the influence of Congar’s copious writings on the Holy Spirit. The translators say that ease of understanding has also determined the way in which the material is organised: thematically rather than chronologically. Personally, I would have preferred a chronological approach, and I suppose one could read them in that order, because part 2, which contained the earliest texts, seemed more foundational and would have helped one understand part 1 better. Furthermore, these writings were intended for different audiences, and so they understandably have ‘different but somewhat overlapping material’ (p. 3). Although I appreciated revisiting Congar’s key ideas, as they were presented repeatedly over the years, I think I would have preferred encountering these ideas chronologically so that one could more easily trace the development of his thought, and his re-articulation of his main pneumatological emphases.

The first and second parts are an impressive distillation of the ideas in Congar's monumental, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, written in 1979–80. It would certainly be helpful for readers to be introduced to Congar's pneumatology through these shorter writings to encourage them, hopefully, to tackle that three-volume work. The first part of this book is a single article entitled, *The Human Spirit and the Spirit of God* while the second part is another single article entitled *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*.

Congar's voice remains fresh, and his ideas in this article continue to enlighten, provoke, and challenge us today. Throughout, Congar has a pastoral orientation to his writings, and he is sensitive to ecumenical issues especially concerning the *Filioque* clause, and he attends to contemporary issues in ecclesiology. For example, I found his engagement with the Charismatic Renewal to be relevant to my own experiences of this movement which values spontaneity, enthusiastic displays of emotion, and a tendency to move beyond the rational. Congar recognises these traits and he welcomes the good in them, but he adds that 'the Spirit ought not to diminish what it is to be human' (p. 25), that is to say, to be rational.

Striking a note, indeed a chord, that will resonate throughout his writings, Congar thus says that the Holy Spirit is always to be united to the Word, just as St Irenaeus says that God forms the clay of creation with the two hands of the Son and the Holy Spirit; the two always act together. Thus, Congar warns against a pneumatology that considers the person of the Holy Spirit to be so free as to act independently of Christ and the Church, a danger that was found in the Joachimite idea of the age of the Spirit, or the Hegelian view of the *Zeitgeist* (cf p. 110). In our own time, one hears of calls for revolutionary reform in the Church that are often blamed on the Holy Spirit who has the freedom to blow where he wills. Congar, however, says that while 'the Word without the Breath would produce legalism', to have the Breath without the Word 'would perhaps be worse' because it leads to antinomian chaos (cf p. 264). He concludes: 'The health of all renewal in the Spirit or 'charismatic renewal' is to be found in the doctrine *de Christo* [about Christ], in being normed by the Word, the Scriptures, the sacraments, the apostolic pastoral institution. Christology and pneumatology assure each other's health' (p. 113).

Part three, entitled '*The Promise of the Father*', consists of three articles that, therefore, look at issues of sacramental theology and Christology. Congar's main emphasis, in relating Christology and pneumatology, is to say that the Holy Spirit 'seals' or completes and perfects in us that which is objectively accomplished and established by Christ in his Church and objectively given to us sacramentally. Thus, the third part of the Creed speaks of the works of the Holy Spirit in the Church, and Congar cites approvingly a striking Scholastic formulation: 'I believe in the Holy Spirit enlivening (uniting, sanctifying, catholicizing, and apostolicizing) the Church' (p. 192). The final part of this volume, entitled, *Pneumatological Ecclesiology* groups together the last three articles which are about the pneumatology found in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, and

its implications for the Church today, especially with regard to the role of the ministerial priesthood. Congar's observations remain inspirational and somewhat provocative, and maybe even aspirational for us today, especially if we strive to live as a Spirit-renewed Church.

My only reservation is that Congar's theology can seem somewhat idealistic. There is no doubting his pastoral and pragmatic intent, but these writings do not account for sin or failure in the Church, although he does speak often of the 'Already' and 'Not Yet' state that we are in. Perhaps this reflects the age of these articles. For at this time when the peccability of the Church is being scrutinised because of clerical sins, Congar's relentless optimism seems to come from an older, more innocent age. That age has gone, but perhaps Congar's pneumatology can direct us, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to a brighter, holier, future.

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***AESTHETICS: Volume I* by Dietrich von Hildebrand. Foreword by Dana Gioia, Preface by Robert E. Wood, Introduction by John F. Crosby, translated by Fr. Brian McNeil. Hildebrand Press, Steubenville, Ohio, 2016, pp. xxxvii + 470, \$18.99, pbk**

***AESTHETICS: Volume II* by Dietrich von Hildebrand, Foreword by Sir Roger Scruton, translated by John F. Crosby, John Henry Crosby, and Fr. Brian McNeil, edited by John F. Crosby, John Henry Crosby. Hildebrand Press, Steubenville, Ohio, 2018, pp. xxx + 574, \$19.99, pbk**

Dietrich von Hildebrand's wide-ranging two volume *Aesthetics* is now available in English translation. *Aesthetics* not only inspires and instructs us on how to look and listen to beautiful beings, it also provides us with fruitful conceptual distinctions for understanding and articulating the aesthetic values and disvalues we experience in nature and art.

As the editors' introductions and Sir Roger Scruton's wonderful Foreword make clear, von Hildebrand was unable to complete the final revisions of *Aesthetics* before his death in 1977. Nevertheless, despite having some repetitive passages and not fully developed theoretical insights expressed in less than consistent nomenclature, I found it to be an immensely illuminating work. *Aesthetics* is replete with von Hildebrand's insightful discriminations, judicious taste, and sometimes brilliant analyses of works of art; unfortunately, we rarely find rigorous arguments to defend them. But even though von Hildebrand will not garner universal consensus on his considered aesthetic judgments, he nevertheless does supply plenty of percipient distinctions that help us to sharpen our disagreements.

The first volume presents his aesthetic theory and the second volume applies this theory to shed light on the aesthetic values and disvalues found in architecture, applied arts, sculpture, painting, literature, and music, and