

**Słowa kluczowe:** ruchy charyzmatyczne, Odnowa Charyzmatyczna, pentekostalizm, teologia pentekostalna, duchowość pentekostalna, tradycja chrześcijańska

**Keywords:** Charismatic Movement, Charismatic Renewal, Pentecostalism, Pentecostal Theology, Pentecostal Spirituality, Christian Tradition

*Michał Marciniak*<sup>1</sup>

PAPIESKI WYDZIAŁ TEOLOGICZNY WE WROCŁAWIU, POLAND

ORCID: 0000-0001-9243-230X

# REVIEW: A. SIEMIENIEWSKI AND M. KIWKA, CHRISTIAN CHARISMATIC MOVEMENTS: THREAT OR PROMISE?, VANDENHOEK & RUPRECHT VERLAGE, GÖTTINGEN 2021, SS. 353.

Cardinal Kurt Koch – President of the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity – has noted the significance of the process of pentecostalisation. It is, he says, both the most important change and the most pressing challenge in Christianity today – a reality that cannot be ignored.

*Christian Charismatic Movements: Threat or Promise?* is a response to this reality and a comprehensive reflection on Christian Charismatic movements. The book is authored by Bishop Andrzej Siemieniewski, who is professor and head of

1 Ks. Michał Marciniak – prezbiter Archidiecezji Wrocławskiej, Duszpasterz Ruchów i Stowarzyszeń Katolickich Archidiecezji Wrocławskiej, doktorant Szkoły Doktorskiej Papieskiego Wydziału Teologicznego we Wrocławiu (katedra Teologii Duchowości) (ul. Katedralna 9, 50-328 Wrocław). Przewodniczący samorządu doktorantów PWT Wrocław. Zainteresowania: teologia pentekostalna, pentekostalizacja chrześcijaństwa, teologia duchowości.

the Chair of the Theology of Spirituality at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław. He has been researching the charismatic movement and pentecostal theology for years. He is also an enthusiast of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and a frequent guest at Pentecostal conferences and ecumenical meetings. The book is co-authored by Rev. Mirosław Kiwka, assistant professor of systematic philosophy at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław. This publication is not their first joint work. The other three are *Języki z Ognia: Dar języków w Biblii, historii i we współczesności Kościoła* [*Tongues of Fire: The Gift of Tongues in the Bible, History and in the Contemporary Church*] (Wrocław 2017), *Boży płomień: Chrzest w Duchu Świętym* [*God's Flame: Baptism in the Holy Spirit*] (Wrocław 2017), *Na fundamencie apostołów i proroków: Przebudzenie biblijnego Kościoła* [*Upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets: The Awakening of the Biblical Church*] (Wrocław 2018) (all published by TUM Publishing House). These publications are dedicated to the charismatic movement and related issues. The authors also examine the extent to which the charismatic movement concords with Catholic spirituality.

A reader might think that the authors have now compiled these three texts to create a single book, one that makes the results of several years of research available to a wide range of English speakers interested in the charismatic movement. It should, however, be noted that some new parts have been added and others rewritten. The book was published in English by the reputable publishing house Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlage, which demonstrates its quality. The book's structure is clear and logical. The argumentation style is reminiscent of the classical method, where the first reference is Scripture, then the statements of the Church Fathers, the saints, and finally the Magisterium.

Apart from the introduction, conclusion, bibliography, index of biblical references, index of persons, and index of topics, the book contains four chapters: "The awakening of the biblical Church" (pp. 19–66), "Baptism in the Holy Spirit" (pp. 67–118), "The gift of tongues" (pp. 123–245), and "The global pentecostalizing of Christianity" (pp. 251–298). The book opens with relevant arguments from the Bible to show the continuity of such ecclesial movements in the Church. The authors then discuss the essence of the charismatic movement: Baptism in the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues. The hermeneutics of these gifts' continuity is a prerequisite for claiming agreement with Catholic spirituality. Demonstrating the tradition's continuity becomes the basis for reflecting on the topic of Christianity's pentecostalisation.

The first chapter – "The awakening of the biblical Church" – begins with a sentence that serves as the starting point for the book: "May our Church be as it was in the first centuries! May it resemble the times of the first disciples of the Lord

Jesus!” (p. 19). Over the centuries, the Church has endeavored to remain as she was in the first centuries. It is, therefore, important to ensure continuity and draw on pertinent models and arguments from Scripture. Siemieniowski and Kiwka first offer an analogy from the world of physics, referring to wave-particle duality. The goal is to warn from the outset against contrasting the immutable with the work of the Holy Spirit, who makes all things new (1.1.1). This is followed by a thorough discussion of the “Biblical lists of ecclesial ministries” (1.1.2) and the “Fivefold ministry in Ephesians 4:11–12” (1.1.3). The authors also explicate the individual ministries of relevant Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Shepherds, and Teachers. These are evidence of the dual hierarchical and charismatic structure of the living Church. The authors argue that it is necessary to know and understand these ministries in drawing on models that belong to the essence of the biblical Church today (1.2 “New Testament ministers: Hierarchical and charismatic”). The first chapter concludes with an exploration of “Ecclesial movements in the New Testament” (1.3). There, the authors offer convincing arguments for the existence of genuine ecclesial movements in the early Church.

The second chapter is a systematic reflection on “Baptism in the Holy Spirit”. As before, Siemieniowski and Kiwka begin by quoting Scripture. They search for and analyze New Testament teachings on baptism in the Holy Spirit; they want to find its place in the New Testament’s structure. From the Synoptic Gospels (2.1.1), the Gospel according to St John (2.1.2), and the Acts of the Apostles (2.1.3), the authors demonstrate that the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles present the doctrine of baptism in the Holy Spirit. The Gospels open with John the Baptist announcing the coming of the Messiah, who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and Fire (see Matt 3:11–12; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:22; John 1:33). After the events of the Resurrection, there is a promise that the disciples will soon be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5). In the next section, the authors explore the history of the Church to look for more cases of baptism in the Holy Spirit. This proves to be a more difficult task (cf. p. 76). It is not enough to find the biblical term with its context. The authors also analyze descriptions of experiences (often put in existential categories), which have divergent terminology. In the end, they manage to find clear evidence of baptism in the Holy Spirit. There is the experience of Blaise Pascal (2.2), whose account refers to the Old Testament. The authors also identify definitions (2.2.2), traces of the subject in the Old Testament (2.3), and relevant testimonies of saints, mystics, and Christian groups. Later, the authors analyze the liturgy (2.4.1) and then cite accounts of saints like St Augustine (2.4.2), St Simeon the New Theologian (2.4.4), and the great mystics St Hildegard, St Gertrude, St Catherine of Siena, St Teresa of Avila, and St John of the Cross. By thoroughly analyzing the Bible, the liturgy, and

the testimonies of the saints, the chapter provides evidence of the gift of tongue's continuity in the Community of the Church.

The first part of Chapter 3 – “The gift of tongues” (3.1) – examines biblical testimonies from Acts and 1 Cor that are related to speaking in tongues. Siemieniewski and Kiwka conclude that the glossolalia described in Scripture represents an act of worship rather than an act of teaching or preaching in tongues (cf. p. 146). Glossolalia is a communal praise of God for his great Works. The next section deals with the testimonies of the Early Church (3.2). There is a special emphasis on the texts of four great Fathers: St Irenaeus of Lyon, St Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen (3.2.1). This is followed by testimonies of the great Fathers of the 4th century (3.2.2). The authors determine that, during this period, extraordinary gifts were not considered central to theological reflection. There was more of a commentary on past New Testament events. The authors also refer to St Augustine's teachings on jubilation (3.2.3) and challenge the claim that the gift of jubilation is identical to a manifestation of the gift of tongues in the biblical sense.

The next section examines the gift of tongues as the language of angels, but Siemieniewski and Kiwka consider this interpretation to be unclear (3.3). They then cite Medieval testimonies of speaking in tongues (3.4), emphasizing St Thomas Aquinas' systematic and profound reflection (3.4.2). Subsequent sections draw on contributions from modern-age representatives, including the Magisterium (3.5.2) and the Spanish mystics (3.5.3). The authors then go on to analyze experiences of the gift of tongues after the Reformation, specifically in evangelical circles (3.6), radical Christian groups (Quakers, Shakers, and Irvingians) (3.6.3), and the Mormons (3.7). After studying the testimonies to date, the authors conclude the chapter by exploring the contemporary phenomenon of speaking in tongues (3.8). It turns out that speaking in tongues is no longer solely practiced by a narrow circle of saints but by millions of believers around the globe. The gift of tongues is then presented from the perspective of both the teachings of the contemporary Pentecostal movement (3.8.1) and the Catholic Church (3.8.2). Among the Charismatic Renewal's teachings, the authors identify two positions: a minimalist view (3.8.4) and a maximalist view (3.8.4). Theological minimalism is the view that speaking in tongues is an act of self-production and the use of techniques. Maximalism, on the other hand, is the position that the experience is inspired by the Holy Spirit and has a supernatural character.

The final chapter – “The global pentecostalization of Christianity” – is a reflection on the phenomenon affecting one-third of Christianity: the process of pentecostalisation. Siemieniewski and Kiwka explain that their positive opinion of pentecostalism has been developed in full awareness of the criticisms such a view can

engender. They go on to clarify some inconsistent terminology (4.1.1), especially the terms 'pentecostalism,' 'pentecostal spirituality,' and 'pentecostalization.' A notable issue is the pace, scale, and effect of the process, which is evident in the development of South American pentecostalism (where the movement is dominant) (4.2). There, new pentecostal communities encouraged people to personally experience the power of the Holy Spirit, while traditional Catholic communities were primarily concerned with the loss of followers, the problem of economic equality, and similar social issues. The authors further state that, thanks to pentecostal communities, the poor have found hope in a hopeless situation, while Catholic communities have largely become social welfare institutions (4.3). The key to pentecostal spirituality is (a) its ecumenical dimension, which results from the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit, and (b) its universal character, which opens up the experience of a living relationship with God. Siemieniowski and Kiwka maintain that this is the reason for Pentecostal Christianity's rapid growth (4.4). They recognize, however, that Pentecostalism is more than just a global, internally diverse, religious movement; it is also represented by researchers in the academic milieu. It is not only an option for the poor and the simple, but also chosen by scholars who make up the Pentecostal theological community. Pentecostalism is usually interpreted as a continuation of Evangelical Protestantism, which involves attempting to live the life outlined in the Acts of the Apostles. However, Catholics recognize it as a continuation of the early and Medieval Church's mystical currents – a continuation of tradition (4.5).

In sum, the book is a valuable work, one that deserves to be part of the series *Eastern and Central European Voice*. Inspiring thoughts and systematic reflections rooted in Sacred Scripture and Church tradition testify to Siemieniowski and Kiwka's ability to combine disparate issues into a coherent whole. It is, though, a pity that there is no mention of who authored which chapters. In any event, this publication is undoubtedly the most thorough Polish work on the relevant topic. The author's knowledge of contemporary Pentecostal theologians from around the world also deserves recognition. This book belongs in the library of not only Pentecostal theologians but also any reader who wants to explore the subject of new Christian movements and the process of pentecostalization.

**REVIEW: A. SIEMIENIEWSKI  
AND M. KIWKA,  
CHRISTIAN CHARISMATIC  
MOVEMENTS: THREAT OR  
PROMISE?, VANDENHOCK  
& RUPRECHT VERLAGE,  
GÖTTINGEN 2021, SS. 353.**

**SUMMARY**

This article is a review of the book by A. Siemieniewski and M. Kiwka titled *Christian Charismatic Movements: Threat or Promise?*, published in 2021 in Göttingen by the publishing house Vandenhock & Ruprecht Verlage.