

SPIRIT: DIVINE AND HUMAN

THE THEOLOGY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT OF HERIBERT
MUEHLEN AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR EVALUATING
THE DATA OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

BY

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DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AT FORDHAM UNIVERSITY.

NEW YORK
1974

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ABBREVIATIONS

- AAS Acta Apostolicae Sedis.
- AS Muehlen, Die abendländische Seinsfrage . . . (1968).
- Denz H. Denzinger, Enchiridion symbolorum. Edited by A. Schoenmetzer. 32nd ed. Freiburg, 1963.
- DV Vatican II, Dei Verbum, Constitution on Divine Revelation.
- E Muehlen, Ensakralisierung,
- GP Muehlen, Der Heilige Geist_als Person.
- GS Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes, Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.
- LG Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, Constitution on the Church.
- PG Patrologia Graeca. Edited by J. P. Migne. 161 vols. Paris, 1857-66.
- PL Patrologia Latina. Edited by J. P. Migne. 217 vols. Paris, 1878-90.
- SC Vatican II, Sacrosanctum Consilium. Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.
- SP Muehlen, Sein und Person nach Johannes Duns Scotus.
- UMP Muehlen, Una Mystica Persona.
- UR Vatican II, Unitas Redintegratio, Decree on Ecumenism
- VG Muehlen, Die Veränderlichkeit Gottes als Horizont einer zukünftigen Christologie.

Abbreviations for the books of the Bible follow the Jerome Biblical Commentary (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), p. xxv.

Standard Abbreviations are used for the works of the Fathers and Doctors of the church, using arabic numbers as in the New Catholic Encyclopedia.

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INTRODUCTION

"Spirit" is a very difficult conception to grasp, especially so in our scientifically minded world. As one writer has put it, "To speak of 'spirit' today is to indulge in mystification for most people."¹ What comes to mind with the word is an otherworldly ethereal quality, a dualistic separation from the hard facts of this world. The fact is, however, that the very opposite is the case. As Arnold Come has shown in his book Human Spirit and Holy Spirit, spirit is a unifier of body and soul in free personal action, a unifier of men with God and with one another because of spirit's other-directedness.² In a similar vein Paul Tillich has defined spirit as "the unity of power and meaning." He explains:

On the side of power it includes centered personality, self-transcending vitality, and freedom of self-determination. On the side of meaning it includes universal participation, forms and structures of reality, and limiting and directing destiny.³

Spirit is personal life itself as free, self-transcending, and entered on others.

¹ Arnold B. Come, Human Spirit and Holy Spirit (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1959), p. 11.

² Ibid., esp. pp. 34-37; 91-118.

³ Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, three volumes in one (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971, I:249-50).

Modern psychology has increasingly attended to this reality in speaking about the creative self in man. C. G. Jung was largely responsible for this emphasis. He reacted strongly against Freud's reduction of man to id, ego, and superego and pointed to the self as unifier of the universal collective substratum in man and the fully conscious ego. It is this self or spiritual center that is the mid-point and center of the systems of personality, the link to creativity and creative imagination, and the ground for authentic relationships with others. J. L. Moreno also has viewed the self as the contact with God, the ground of man's freedom and spontaneous creativity by which he continuously creates the world anew.

Thus, rightly understood, spirit does not separate us from our body but rather empowers our action in the world, brings power where before there was only idea or form, or meaning where before there was only blind emotionality. Spirit is the ground of our personal being, is, in fact, personal. Man has the possibility of such personal action but he has to grow into it, to become free and in touch with his creative center. Man fully activated manifests these qualities of spirit. Such were the "spirit-filled" leaders of the Old Testament--judges, prophets, rulers--as well as leaders of our own time. We will have to clarify the differences of these leaders, but each of them manifests release of hidden possibilities of man that all of us strive for. To free and develop man's spirit is thus to bring him to healing

or wholeness, to integrate the disparate aspects of his personality into his personal center.

"Spirit," then, includes such characteristics as wholeness, integration, creativity, and growth. The one aspect we are not yet accustomed to consider explicitly is that spirit is interpersonal or communal. We are just now emerging from an age of individualism and subjectivism. Modern philosophy up to recently has been burdened with the question of Descartes of how man can know the objective world. Philosophers have come to realize that this is a false question. The person is already "in-the-world." He comes to himself only from the input of his environment, his parents and peers, and his response to it. Ludwig Binzwanger has pointed out that "we" precedes "I" in man's development,¹ and from the time of Fichte philosophy has seen that "if man is to exist at all there must be several."² This "ecstatic" aspect of the person has not been sufficiently exploited when talking about spirit. A single individual has "spirit" when he calls forth spirit in others. Spirit is interpersonal, or better, communal. Spirit is what opens us to communion with others. Thus charismatic leaders are those

¹ See Michael Theunissen, Der Andere, Studien zur Sozialontologie der Gegenwart (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1965), pp. 444-465.

² J. G. Fichte, Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, hrg. v. Reinhard Lauth und Hans Jacob, Vol. 1/3 (Stuttgart: Griedrich Fromman Verlag, 1966), p. 347. My trans. of: "sollen überhaupt Menschen seyn so müssen mehrere seyn."

that entice others for a common cause, and charismatic healers draw others out to a new openness and life.

Thus "spirit" implies a community of persons. There would be no creativity, no discovery of our deepest self, no poetry, art, or spontaneous life were there no community. Symbolic processes, whose highest form is language, are forms of communication, and dreams can only become real if they are shared.

Even as human spirit implies community and builds it, so also, in an analogous way, does divine Spirit. Thus God's creation was for man, and it was Yahweh's Spirit that hovered over the deeps and brought life to animals and men. It was Yahweh's Spirit that came upon the Judges and strengthened them for battle, that entered the Prophets and opened for them a vision of the future, that was permanently given to Christ himself (the Anointed) for healing and teaching with authority. Each of these outpourings was for the whole people of Israel, their defense and instruction, their healing and moulding into a "new creation," and "new people." As we shall show, the Spirit of God is fundamentally communal—one could say, "community in person." He is the one Spirit of Father and Son, and the one animating Spirit of the Church. As the perfect expression of the personal union in love of Father and Son, he is preeminently interpersonal, and he personalizes men by bringing them together in the very love that unites Father and Son in the Trinity. Teilhard de Chardin has shown that creation is a

process of unification and differentiation.¹ Both unity and diversity grow together, and the perfect image of this unity in diversity is the Trinity itself. The Spirit is the expression of the unity of the totally different persons of the Father and Son in an equally incomprehensible union of one person. The unity the Spirit effects thus differentiates and individuates at the same time, and vice versa, he personalizes not by separating men but by bringing them into a complex social unity.

Unfortunately, this communal personality of the Spirit has not been adequately treated in theology. As Come points out, the traditional dogmatic treatment of the Trinity concentrated on the first two persons with the Holy Spirit merely "roughed in" as the bond uniting Father and Son or as an extension of the Incarnation already described, or a "pure miracle of grace" that we must be silent before.² Augustine did speak of the Holy Spirit as the common gift of Father and Son, the bond of their love, but his preferred analogy of mind, its knowledge, and self-love emphasized unity of

¹ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, The Phenomenon of Man (Engl. trans.; N.Y.: Fontana Religious Books, 1965), p. 288.

² Come, Human Spirit and Holy Spirit, p. 139. His view is in no way undermined by a recent history of the theology of the Trinity which indicates a trend today to think "beyond the Trinity" and little advance over the traditional explanations for the Trinity by modern theologians. See Edmund J. Fortman, The Triune God: an historical study of the doctrine of the Trinity (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972), esp. pp. 316-318. Interestingly, this fairly comprehensive work does not even mention Muehlen's contribution to trinitarian thought.

essence rather than interpersonal unity.¹ Even Richard of St. Victor's view of the Spirit as "co-loved" did not clearly explicate the personality of the Spirit as communal but concentrated on the necessity of his procession from the selfless love of Father and Son.² In fact, up to the present the very notion of communality has remained largely undeveloped theoretically, which may well explain the "forgetfulness" of the Spirit in Western Catholic Theology as well as the undeveloped charismatic aspect of the Church. Thus the Constitution on the Liturgy of Vatican II, the first document of the Council, shows an almost complete lack of reference to the Holy Spirit in an area of work so peculiarly his own.³

One major goal of this thesis, therefore, is to contribute to the development of a fruitful analogy of the Holy Spirit by presenting the work of Dr. Heribert Muehlen. His life work has centered around the Spirit as communal and the importance of this truth for every facet of theology. Since his work is almost entirely still in German, it has had little impact in English-speaking countries despite its importance for a revitalizing of theology by the presence of the Spirit.

There is, however, a second and equally important goal. Western Catholic Theology has not only suffered from

¹ Fortman, The Triune God, p. 149.

² Ibid., pp. 193-194.

³ See Chap. IV, sec. C/5 of this thesis.

an eclipse of the Spirit but also from the lack of the experiential element that is essential to creative theology. As Thomas Oden has pointed out, there are four sources of sound theological method: tradition, Scripture (which can be seen as integral to tradition), experience, and reason. Each is indispensable. Tradition alone would lead to a narrow, triumphant institutionalism. Scripture alone to an unenlightened fundamentalism, reason alone to systematics without life, and experience alone to an undirected spontaneity.¹ The experiential aspect assures that theology is something more than lifeless speculation. It needs verification from the experience of healing, of saving knowledge that it is supposedly presenting. Karl Rahner has tried to bring back into theology the possibility of "experiencing" grace,² but the work of empirical theological verification has only begun. Basic to any such saving experience is the work of the Holy Spirit, and one area of rich experience in this saving work is the data of psychotherapy. It is psychotherapy that witnesses to the liberation of the person from enslavement of moral restrictions (law) or self-enclosure (selfishness and sin). It is the contention of this thesis that a theology of the Holy Spirit is the right perspective

¹ Thomas C. Oden, The Structure of Awareness (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), pp. 87-88. Also idem, Kerygma and Counseling (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), pp. 33-37.

² Karl Rahner, "Reflections on the Experience of Grace," Theological Investigations, Vol. 1 (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1963), pp. 86-90.

for properly evaluating this data of psychotherapy and integrating it, not in a patchwork way, but as one of the sources for a health-bringing theological method.

On the other hand, theology is not the only one that stands to profit. With all due respect to the independent methodologies of psychotherapy and theology, there is within the therapist a faith in healing and a vision of the whole man that would gain confirmation if shown to be supported by revelation and reason. This new light might also direct attention to new possibilities of healing and present hypotheses to be tested by the experience of therapy. This thesis has a second goal, therefore, of contributing to such a theological grounding, not limited to the dimensions of what psychotherapy has so far discovered, but measured by the total vision of theology. This vision, then, will be confronted by the data of three psychotherapists—Freud, Jung, and Moreno—to see what confirmation they provide as well as point out dimensions still too little developed in both theology and psychotherapy.

The first five chapters of the thesis present Muehlen's thought as it developed historically in order to give a fuller understanding of the dynamism of his ideas than a merely systematic presentation would allow. It begins with his ontological understanding of the person which he developed in a philosophical dissertation on Joannes Duns Scotus (Ch. 1). It moves on to consider the Holy Spirit as interpersonal bond in the Trinity, the Incarnation, and grace, a

position he arrived at after investigating the personal character of Mary according to M. J. Scheeben and concluding that a solid study of the Holy Spirit was needed if Mary's position in the Church was to be rightly seen (Ch. 2). With the foundation of the Spirit, Muehlen can then study the Church as the mystery of "one person (the Holy Spirit) in many persons (Christ and Christians)" (Ch. 3). Given this theoretical foundation, we can then draw out various implications that Muehlen derived from this changed perspective for many of today's theological questions—from infallibility to ecumenism (Ch. 4). Finally, thinking into the future, Muehlen has recently been working on an interpersonal philosophy (and theology) of being and its implications for the future of theology (Ch. 5). It is mainly this crowning chapter that will then help us evaluate the data of three psychotherapists: Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Jung, and Jacob L. Moreno (Ch. 6).