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As a result, we have been given much more than a compendium of the Polish theology of nation. Let us realise with a vengeance how much courage and consistent and nonconformist effort of carrying out research for years this work demanded. The book has been created when the political, academic and media mainstreams have been promoting the notion of the so-called modern patriotism (what stems from numerous media enunciations is that it only consists in using public transportation, cleaning up after your dog, being ashamed of your nation's vices, condemning any kinds of uprisings or "patriotic sacrifice" and replacing the word "homeland" with "this land").

Buczek has written and published his book at the moment (2015 AD) when Kajsiwicz is in fact unknown to the public (Rev K. Maleta wrote about him a lot, but he has been dead for 25 years); Wyszyński has been "trendy," but I have noted that the so-called open Catholic journalism has been debating about his vision more and more heatedly; there is an ongoing process of trying to turn Wojtyła into a full-on European and a driver of the train of globalism ("open to everyone and everything"); and the brilliant thought of Bartnik (30 years ago he understood well what we are only starting to note) is pushed aside, if not brutally attacked. All of this has been happening alongside the mockery of Poland (backwater, backwoods, surrounded by the mist of Smolensk, has not been enlightened yet, etc.)

And here we are, at the nadir of (pseudo)academic training, Buczek publishes 400 pages of study, calmly as if nothing had happened and reminds us the great Polish theology of nation – with all its grandeur, humility, universality (open to all nations, to their own theology of nation), condemnation of nationalism, chauvinism and xenophobia, as well as any kind of violence directed at other nations (all of which has nothing to do with Catholic Christianity). Buczek presents it, updates and interprets creatively. Just like a sip of fresh water from a crystal-clear spring...

Jerzy Szymik

Faculty of Theology of the University of Silesia

CHERYL M. PETERSON, *Who Is the Church? An Ecclesiology for the Twenty-First Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), pp. VIII+153.

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In not-only-contemporary theology, ecclesiology belongs to the most basic and ever important subjects. More and more publications confirm that it engages not only Catholic theologians, who very often recall and deepen ecclesiological concepts of Vatican II and the teaching of John Paul II. We also come across valuable works about this topic among Protestant authors, e.g. a study by Cheryl M. Peterson that we shall review. Having previously lectured at the Marquette University in Milwaukee for a few years, she has been professor of systematic theology at the Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus for 10 years now. She is pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. *Who Is the Church?* is her first book, which have gained favourable reviews, especially amongst Protestant readers. The book is based to a great extent on her PhD thesis entitled *The Question of the Church in North American Lutheranism: Toward a Theology of the Third Article*, defended at the Marquette University in 2004.

Referring to both Protestant assumptions of the understanding of the Church and some contemporary visions of it, Peterson makes a basic assumption about the necessity for deepening ecclesial and ecclesiological identity, and going beyond a one-sided reading of the socio-cultural situation of modern societies, which seems to be the dominating trend especially in the Lutheran circles. Hence, the title question about what the Church is, and not what the Church is supposed to do and how to act (e.g. to initiate undeniably valuable kinds of evangelical activities). In her opinion, American Protestants need not focus on seeking ever newer strategies of surviving, failing to, as R. McNeal wrote, notice that a number of Protestant communities is “more secular than the cultures surrounding them.” It results in the situation whereby “people come to church, expecting to find God, [and] they often encounter a religious club holding where God is conspicuously absent” (p. 3). Meanwhile, the Church has run up against a profound crisis of identity, which calls for returning to God Himself, and particularly being open to the activity of the Holy Spirit, who “in the movement of God’s economy known as the *mission Dei* ... has given the church its distinctive identity” (p. 6).

Peterson starts off her systematic and mature reflections from the context of the Church that she knows best – from American Protestantism. In the first part of her book, she outlines its ecclesiological conceptions, from the puritan beginnings in the 17th century to the present situation (cf. p. 14-32). Having such multifaceted Protestant ecclesiology as a backdrop, the author presents and analyses two particularly important ecclesiological models – the Church as Word-Event and as Communion (Greek: *koinonia*). The first one of these comes from M. Luther himself and defines the Church as “created by the word.” The theological point of departure is God’s message aimed at people and, as a result, “our encounter with that Word, the living Christ who is made present to the believer in the *kerygma* ... proclamation of the Gospel” (p. 37), which at the same time creates the “event” of the Church, whenever man accepts the Word with faith. For a number of Protestants (like K. Barth), it is the most classical and traditional ecclesiological model, whereby the Church is seen as the *creatura Evangelii*, as it was described in a Catholic-Lutheran document *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* from 1994. Peterson stresses that for a number of Protestant theologians such an understanding of the Church is the principally the heritage of the Reformation, which cannot be forgotten. Furthermore, she believes that such an ecclesiological paradigm is in a way insufficient, because it does not concentrate on the essence of the Church, but on what God does in it. A danger of a functional, and thereby reductive, approach arises here. However, as far as the model of the Church as the *communio* is concerned, Peterson presents it according to the Catholic doctrine, especially the one of Vatican II. She emphasises her approval of the model which is focused on what the Church is, and not, as the previous one used to do, on what it does or what happens inside it. She draws our attention to the fact that the model in question have become the preferential object of a lot of ecumenical dialogues as a “promising concept for facilitating Christian unity” (p. 64). Furthermore, a number of significant bodies of the world’s Protestantism, both Lutheran and Reformed, consider it as an indispensable and central vision of the Church, even though this awareness seems to be little known among ordinary Protestants. Pointing out the value of the idea of the *communio* while trying to understand the Church, Peterson at once asserts that it needs to be supplemented by the mentioned emphasis on the missionary aspect of the Church, which stems from the double *missio Dei*: “sending of the Son in the incarnation and sending of the Holy Spirit at the Pentecost” (p. 76).

The stress placed on the mission, according the theologian from Columbus, unveils most adequately the approach to the Church, which is the orientation to the Holy Spirit, who creates the Church as a missionary community. Previously described visions are proper but insufficient in the contemporary aspect of deep secularisation, when the Church has ceased to be a visible and efficient sign that changes the world. We are in need of a new recognition and acceptance of the Church as a missionary society (community) patterned after Christ Himself and His mission from

the Father to the world. In its essence, the Church is the participation in the *missio Dei*. Recalling the opinions of two other Protestant theologians – D. Guder and C. van Gelder – Peterson claims to be in favour of understanding the Church as a reality created by the Spirit and guided by Him. This firm pneumatological emphasis situates the entire vision in the context of Eastern theology, especially the notion of *perichoresis*, which denotes the mutual indwelling and interpenetration especially of the Persons in the Trinity. It is in that sending of the Spirit as the essence of the “*missio Dei* that the Church finds its identity and purpose God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit,” and “the Holy Spirit sending the Church into the world” (p. 94-95). This is the way in which we should understand the Church with all of its mystery and mission. Making use of a narrative method in the following parts of her study, Peterson directs her thought, starting with the pneumatological content of the Acts in order to present “a narrative ecclesiology that starts with the Spirit” (p. 105). This “start with the Spirit” eventually leads her to the Apostolic Creed to – following Luther’s indications found in his *Large Catechism* – present the Church as a community sanctified by the Spirit and participating in the gift of forgiveness, i.e. the fruit of the Spirit. This Church is “inspired, led, and sent by the Holy Spirit to live in anticipation of its final destiny in the kingdom of God, living in the new life given to in the resurrection as ‘the communion of saints’” (p. 127). According to Peterson, this vision of the Church may also be used to reread the four essential features of the Church from the Nicene Creed (p. 131-137).

Having shown appreciation for the need of the very theological effort of presenting the Church in a new, fuller and valid way, Peterson ends her study by expressing hope that such realisation of its identity will allow the Church (i.e. Protestant Christianity) to comprehend how to renew Christian life practically and concretely in various communities. At the same time, as a community of life with Christ, the Church will be “Spirit-breathed people who are sent out into the world to share God’s forgiveness and *koinonia* with a hurting and broken world” (p. 147).

This attentively constructed work, which consistently moves on to the next stages of the reflection, is characterised by a lucid and precise language and a general logics of reasoning. In each chapter, the author formulates a few questions for further reflection and discussion, which may be particularly useful if the book is used as a theology textbook. An ever helpful index of names and subjects is also included (p. 149-53). Unfortunately, Peterson failed to include the selected bibliography. The author recalls a number of Catholic authors (e.g. A. Dulles, Y. Congar, N. Healy), but obviously mainly focuses on Protestant authors, especially of American origin (alongside the creators of the 16th-century Reformation, especially contemporary theologians such as K. Barth, a Presbyterian D. Guder, a Lutheran R. W. Jenson, an Episcopal M. Volf, a Reformed theologian C. Van Gelder). What makes this theologically deepened and ordered study stand out is also ever-present involvement on the part of the author, who is a deeply devout believer herself, concerned about the lot of the Word of God and the mission of the Church. It is also the reason why the reading of this thesis may be fruitful to a Catholic reader, even if he stays critical to certain claims of post-Reformation theology, especially when it comes to ecclesiology.

Slawomir Nowosad
Institute of Moral Theology at KUL