Introduction: Surveying the Spirit in the Late Modern World.

Theologians in the modern era inherited the patristic tradition on the Holy Spirit’s divinity, the medieval tradition on the Holy Spirit’s presence to and in the Church, and the Reformation-era tradition on the Holy Spirit’s justifying and sanctifying activities. Classic doctrines, all; and all have continued to dominate Christian theology to the present day. Yet the Enlightenment had ushered in a radical rethinking of what it meant to be human, and the scientific revolution had ushered in a radical rethinking of how to understand the universe. The saga of modern pneumatology is largely a story of how theology struggled to account and compensate for these shifts. We see an interplay of a variety of long-consolidated theological traditions, a few new ones, and an intimidating range of cultural shifts that continually reshape the Church’s local landscapes.¹

This essay arranges the projects that are happening everywhere in modernity’s recent world in an actual map of modern pneumatology. Its point is not to determine the normative place for reflection on the Holy Spirit, but to inform us about the wide variety of theological reflections in the modern era and about the Holy Spirit who is their object. A map of our country does not say which province or city is best. It shows where we live, who our neighbors are, reminds us where we grew up, and goes some way to explaining why we are the way we are.

But how should such a map represent these forces and traditions? What kind of theological cartography can make recent pneumatology more navigable? We could color in states or provinces – a sprawling Catholic Texas, a Vermont of process theology, a Pentecostal Quebec

¹ These struggles were already well underway by the era of this volume’s concern (roughly the past 150-200 years). Many were already fundamentally concluded – not to the satisfaction of all parties, of course, but certainly to the satisfaction of the various camps whose convictions remain those of their early modern champions: Wesleyans with their developed doctrines of experienced justification and sanctification, liberals who interpret theological claims in the experiential categories of Schleiermacher, and the like. As the Christian faith spreads worldwide with unprecedented scope and speed, these schools are more influential now than in their heydays.

Other dynamics were playing out in the modern era whose ramifications for modern theologies are of more strictly recent influence. The ever-changing industrial revolution transformed our physical and economic relationships with one another, with those near and far, with the earth, and with our own bodies. Ideologies arose and swept the world, altering not only theological imaginations but world history. Scientific thinking turned toward more and more of the human domain, generating whole disciplines that did not even exist around, say, 1850 such as sociology and psychology. Congregations’ ways of life have changed, and their habits and thinking along with them. These forces have shaped recent thinking on the Holy Spirit in both stark and subtle ways – even if only by creating new settings for the old convictions.
and then describe regional traits, local heroes, and migration patterns. But surveying a scene as complicated as ours would grow tedious, cataloging the interrelationships would become hopelessly complicated, and the borders we drew would train us against seeing the broad regional commonalities. Or we could draw a topical map, clustering common concerns such as the Spirit’s justice, restoration, gifts of life, power, revelation, and intimate presence like the transitional ecological zones of a topographic rendering. Yet many of those concerns spring up all over our territories, not just in one region. Few theologians, let alone churches and traditions really focus on just one topic, or even one stable cluster. Pentecostals seek order too, just as Calvinists invite the Spirit’s transformation.

Instead, we will sketch a map like a seismic survey that identifies a variety of social forces\(^2\) shaping modern pneumatology such as technology, culture, philosophy, and especially ecclesiology. In an era of such vast changes, this broad focus suggests a map of a frontier territory rather than settled domains, with familiar landmarks, rugged country, distant lands, complicated interactions, flux, plenty of unknowns – and, in and through all of it, a mission, laid out before us like the vast Roman world into which the Spirit propelled Jesus’ designated witnesses (Luke 24:48-49).

Such a portrait leaves much concealed that a different kind of map might expose. Yet it reveals a number of significant features of the complicated theological world of the past century and a half.\(^3\)


\(^3\) In some ways this grid resembles H. Richard Niebuhr’s popular typological spectrum of ‘Christ and culture’ (H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* [New York: Harper, 1956]), but it better respects the dynamic forces at work in both domains. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw both awakenings and upheavals in dominantly Christian societies. At the same time, the faith migrated to new locations worldwide – emerging industrial landscapes as well as foreign civilizations – and intellectual ferment at home as well as cultural influences from abroad shaped Christian imaginations. (Niebuhr’s typology would have worked better as a typology of eschatologies relating ‘church and world.’)

This grid also bears resemblances with Frei’s types of Christian theology (Hans Frei, *Types of Christian Theology* [New Haven: Yale, 1994]). However, Frei’s types seem difficult to locate on this grid and no longer fall along a neat line. Frei’s types 1 and 3 would seem to lie at the bottom of the grid, with 3 on the right. Type 5 arguably belongs along the top, tending towards the right. Types 2 and 4 seem to scatter diagonally along the frontiers rather than falling at precise points. The mismatch occurs because so much more is going on in recent theology than just an encounter between theology and philosophy (or any one field), and the results that are too messy to fit along Frei’s spectrum. A whole world is changing, along with the innumerable little worlds within it.
This map will help us plot five sorts of modern pneumatology:

1. We start with the gospel’s “capitals”: long established ecclesial settings where classic claims rule.

2. Next we travel “abroad” to new social and ideological settings in which the Spirit is understood in different terms than in orthodox Christian tradition.

3. Then we backtrack to the “frontier settlements” of the gospel’s social frontier – the modern era’s new social settings in which traditional Christian life and faith have taken root.

4. We cross over to another frontier, the ideological, whose “border towns” are shaped as much by residents’ reactions to modernity’s new claims about the Spirit as by their own theological heritages.

5. Finally we visit the center of the map, an internal frontier where the new world and the old interact and intermingle and shape a “cosmopolis,” whose faith and theological imagination incorporate and react to features of both classic and modern life.

In each quadrant we will identify a predecessor whose influence marks the pneumatology done in that place, note several prominent and influential figures and schools of thought there, draw generalizations and find a representative figure, and finally ask who the Holy Spirit is as
manifested there. Then we can conclude by considering briefly whether the overall picture has overarching pneumatological significance.

1. **Pneumatology in capitals.**

   Historical theology displays a bias toward new developments by highlighting them; these innovations are, after all, what distinguish an era. This bias tempts us to overlook some of the most important movements in recent pneumatology: to go nowhere, or else back to the theological milestones of earlier eras.

   The eighteenth and nineteenth century Christian world was implacably separated into divided confessional traditions, so we can point to no one common predecessor who inspired traditionalist pneumatology across the church’s various theological capitals. Each tradition had its own. One representative predecessor, whose influence in later American Christianity is uncontested, is Jonathan Edwards. The leader of America’s First Great Awakening began and remained firmly in the Westminster tradition of English Puritan Calvinism, helping weave its threads into the durable fabric of American Christian thought and spirituality. Where pneumatology is concerned, we can add that Edwards’ account of “the distinguishing marks of the work of the Spirit of God” influenced, among many others, a young John Wesley who in 1738 was developing his pneumatological understanding of personal and ecclesial revival.4 However, even the capitals of nineteenth century American theology were provincial backwaters compared to their counterparts in the Old World. So this analysis focuses on Europe.

   In response to the challenges of modernism, nineteenth-century Catholic Neo-Scholasticism relied on formalized positions and methods from the medieval scholastics – above all Thomas Aquinas, whose theological style had become effectively canonical for Roman Catholics. Pope XIII commended the Neo-Scholastic approach in his 1879 encyclical *Aeterni Patris*. This recharged the Roman Church’s appreciation of the Holy Spirit with the rich resources of Augustinian-Thomistic classic western pneumatology.5

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When a number of Catholic theologians found Neo-Scholasticism’s formalism stale and unsatisfying, they turned back even further, to the giants of the Patristic era. Their ‘turn to the sources’ came to be known as the *Ressourcement* movement. Leaders such as Hans Urs von Balthasar, Yves Congar, Jean Danielou, and Henri de Lubac helped revitalize western appreciation for the groundbreaking pneumatological work of Origen, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Augustine. This laid one of the foundations of the renaissance of Trinitarian doctrine in the twentieth century. This revival’s consequences for pneumatology continue to reverberate throughout current Christian theology.

Eastern capitals were busy too. The Christian East had always prized its patristic heritage and cultivated its memory with unparalleled devotion. Orthodox theology is not always as conservative as it can be made out to be; Russian Orthodox theology in particular carried on sustained conversations between Byzantine and Slavic tradition on the one hand and modernity on the other. Still, the vigor with which Orthodox theologians developed and defended convictions from the Cappadocian Fathers to Gregory Palamas and John of Damascus kept these voices vital in twentieth century Orthodoxy, as well as powerfully accessible to the western Christians who were drawn into those conversations.

Where the Holy Spirit was concerned, this legacy was constantly felt along the fault lines between the Augustinian and Cappadocian doctrines of the Spirit’s procession. Vladimir Lossky and many other Orthodox theologians regularly alleged that western scholasticism depersonified the Holy Spirit by misconstruing his relations of origin as the Father’s and Son’s shared nature, and reasserted the classic eastern doctrine of the Spirit’s single procession from the Father. Their critiques have been heard by a growing audience of sympathetic westerners, effectively reopening the question of the *filioque* in some western circles.

Another modern impact for traditional Orthodox pneumatology concerns tradition itself. The issue of authority has dominated western theology since the Great Schism. Its eras can practically be named in terms of battles over the authority of the Bishop of Rome and his *curia*, the authority of civil governors, the authority of reason, the authority of scripture, the authority of individual conscience, and the authority of the community.6 Champions of each often described its force in pneumatic terms: the magisterium exercises its teaching office as a *charism*

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of the Holy Spirit, the Bible is inspired and therefore authoritative, and so on. Here the Orthodox contribution was, above all, to reassert its longstanding conviction that Holy Tradition in its entirety is the Spirit’s work and legacy. Dumitru Staniloae puts it concisely: “Church, tradition, and Scripture are woven into a whole, and the work of the Spirit is the soul of this integral unity.” Authority is not vested in one location, or in a simple hierarchy with the Pope or the scripture or the local community at the top; authority describes Jesus’ sacramental presence throughout the whole body and life of the church whose saints, liturgy, leaders, scriptures, councils, and sacraments all manifest the light and grace of the Triune God. This perspective has proven attractive to a number of westerners, particularly evangelicals, who have tired of the old disagreements.

Some Protestants were going back to their sources too. John Calvin was ever popular reading in Protestant capitals. His power as a systematic thinker, channeled through heirs such as Charles Hodge, Herman Bavinck, Louis Berkhof, and Hyung Nong Park made Reformed thinking a center of theological gravity that pulled evangelicals into its orbit from everywhere on its wide confessional spectrum. Reformed theology has a robust, if sometimes underappreciated, pneumatology which understands the Holy Spirit to be the agent who accomplishes God’s ongoing work in the world. The Spirit inspires the apostles and prophets and illuminates the minds of those who hear their message. He confirms the truth of the gospel as only God’s internal witness can. His word and sacraments kindle faith in believers, applying the grace of Christ that alone turns God’s elect into God’s holy ones. His fruit of love, joy, and peace animate the church’s worship, and his law disciplines decent and orderly communities.

Pietism (here an umbrella term for movements stressing that authentic relationships with God must be vital and actual, not just formal) was another dependable force for modern Protestant renewal. Theologically robust Pietism is pneumatic at its heart, insisting that the personal Spirit effects not just formal faith in forensic righteousness but rebirth into truly personal relationships with God in Jesus Christ. Carried into worshippers’ hearts and

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8 For a further development of this argument see Telford Work, “Gusty Winds, or a Jet Stream? Charismatics and Orthodox on the Spirit of Tradition,” delivered at a joint session of the Evangelical Theology and Orthodox Theology groups at the 1999 annual conference of the American Academy of Religion, http://www.westmont.edu/~work/lectures/GustyWinds.html.
congregational lives through prayers, hymns, meetings, revivals, catechisms, and devotional guides, modern Pietism claimed little that had not already been said by Philipp Spener in the seventeenth century and the Wesleys in the eighteenth. It facilitated a knowledge of the Holy Spirit and a respect for his dominical discipline that refreshed (and sometimes splintered) generations of Lutherans, Anglicans, Reformed, Baptists, Methodists, and Adventists. Pietism is, if not the heart of worldwide evangelicalism, certainly one of its chambers.

The pneumatological convictions of all these traditionalists remain immensely influential in conservative circles of Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants in America. They are even more influential in the growing churches of the global south that have begun to dominate their worldwide communions and set their agendas. With a few massive exceptions, such as the world’s charismatic and Pentecostal Wesleyans, Christians of the twenty-first century will tend to understand the Holy Spirit along lines set out before the seventeenth.

One other return to the sources deserves mention here: biblical studies. “Grammatical-historical exegesis” and much historical-critical exegesis investigate the meaning of biblical texts in their original historical contexts. Historians and biblical scholars have recovered a level of knowledge of first-century Judaism and its Greco-Roman world that is probably surpassed only by those generations themselves. Such rediscoveries have sometimes called settled traditions into question, so we will visit biblical pneumatology again in the other sections of this analysis. However, after two centuries of often overly skeptical historical criticism, responsible scholarly historiography has also overturned a number of fashionable but flimsy revisionisms while also broadly confirming and reinforcing earlier traditional stances. As a result, one important function of biblical pneumatology in the past 150-200 years has been to reassert, with greater scholarly precision and sophistication, many of the classic claims of the past. Jewish pneumatologies in the centuries leading up to Jesus and the apostles make a particularly informative backdrop for interpreting the New Testament’s different portrayals of the Holy Spirit. Richard Bauckham appeals to recovered Jewish doctrines of God and God’s Spirit in arguing that Jews excluded divine mediator figures such as angels from God’s identity. By identifying Christ with God, then,

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the New Testament church was claiming nothing less than full divinity for Jesus. Nicene Trinitarianism is thus not a development away from apostolic Christology as sometimes alleged, but a translation of the original Jewish Church’s teaching into Hellenistic categories of essence and personhood.

The stubborn theological issue of the Spirit’s procession has done more than polarize east and west. It has driven ecumenically minded theologians and organizations in the twentieth century to draw on the common “great tradition” to reconceive the Holy Spirit’s personhood in ways that respect the stances of their divided camps. Spirit-Christology rethinks the Spirit’s relationship to the Son even more ambitiously by retracing the role each plays in the ministry of the other in the economy of salvation, finding an explicitly pneumatological dimension to Christ’s work of redemption and even a necessary reciprocity between the two. These scholars and leaders sometimes recruit voices from outside the tradition, but the source of the radical impulse is often within the tradition itself – as Martin Luther and many others discovered. This is the case for biblical scholar James D.G. Dunn’s work tracing the early church’s experience of Christ and the Spirit. The sometimes radical edge of conservative biblicism demonstrates that theology in the capitals may not just preserve the past.

We might personify traditionalist schools of pneumatology in the figure of John Henry Newman, leader of the Oxford Movement. Newman’s encounters with the Bible and Reformed orthodoxy as a child and around 1840 with Augustine helped impress on him a Catholic vision in which the Spirit develops Christ’s church from its apostolic infancy to its mature stature. He strengthened English Catholicism immensely – not through innovative theology, concessions to liberalism, nor sensitivity to the nineteenth century Zeitgeist, but through a deliberate retrieval of

12 Catholic ecumenists produced such a study in 1995 of “The Greek and the Latin Traditions regarding the Procession of the Holy Spirit,” claiming more common ground for ecumenical convergence than is often recognized.
13 del Colle, 3-4.
theological wisdom from the church’s first five centuries, along with sheer steadfastness in the face of opposition. Newman’s counterparts in every Christian tradition assure that, whatever else happens, one of the most powerful dynamics in future theology is sure to be continuity with the past and present.

There is one final matter to consider in this section: Here in the gospel’s capitals, what does all this thinking show the Holy Spirit to be? These developments cannot define him, but they do manifest him. The Holy Spirit is the Lord, alive in the living church. In theology’s capitals we see the seven spirits before God’s throne, whom the Son of Man holds and sends out to all the earth (Revelation 1:5, 3:1, 5:6) – the Spirit of the Son who abides in his body of disciples (1 John 4:13) to remind them of everything he teaches (John 14:26).

2. Pneumatology abroad.

Imperial Britain’s elites barely tolerated Catholics in Newman’s day. Both the Soviet bloc and humanist western Europe were inhospitable environments for Orthodox and Catholic ressourcement. Defensive American traditionalists had to reassert ‘fundamentals’ of the faith in response to modernist intellectual incursions. Often what was pressing in upon these centers of Christianity was a “beyond”: a world moving out of the church, already emigrated into secularism, or not yet reached with the gospel. Modern pneumatology was happening there too, even among secular imaginations who rejected Christianity’s core assumptions.

A number of predecessors tower over this quadrant of our map, setting the terms for its pneumatology. For the sake of economy, this analysis will focus on one: Georg W.F. Hegel. With his Christian commitments and philosophical ambitions, Hegel himself belongs in a border town or the cosmopolis of our map’s middle. Yet his philosophy is seminal for modern western imaginations in the secularity “abroad.” As his influence spread, his system with its totalizing qualities and progressive pneumatology came to shape even visions antithetical to Christianity. Many dispensed with Hegel’s theology of a Triune God in the process of becoming and turned Hegel’s cosmology into a nearly inverted Platonism: the material world does not emanate from a

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17 Theology that is recognizable as pneumatology and relevant to this analysis seems to need at least some interaction with the Christian tradition. So the unevangelized “beyond” is out of this section’s scope.
prior and superior spiritual order, but progresses through historical processes of self-realization to attain its perfection as Geist – what could be called “Mind” or “Spirit.”

Communism, transcendentalism, social scientism, and liberal democracy are just four of the ways Geist could manifest itself, depending on the philosopher. Karl Marx took history’s self-realization to be the resolution of social contradictions in a workers’ paradise – a Kingdom of God without God, whose Geist is society itself. Ralph Waldo Emerson found in Hegel’s ‘Progressive God’ the grounds for accepting past human evolution and driving humanity to become “a triumphant and faultless race.” Emile Durkheim drew on Hegelians to imagine human knowledge culminating in the universal cosmopolitan truth that arises out of the integration of humanity’s diverse collective representations of reality. Since for Durkheim a society’s gods are its collective self-representation, this cosmopolitan unification is Geist itself – the spirit of self-realized society. When the Soviet Union collapsed, economist Francis Fukuyama proclaimed a Hegelian “end of history” in which Hegel’s Absolute Idea turns out to be human freedom exercised through liberal democracy and global capitalism.

Thus Hegel’s Geist, ever more tightly anchored to humanity, haunts the consciousness of the modern progressive west. Secularists cut it free from the God of Israel where it becomes the triumphant (or tragic) human spirit. Many Christian progressives on the political left and right identify it as the spirit of God – a god of liberty, prosperity, or solidarity with the oppressed.

Hegel is not the only voice of pneumatology abroad. While his theology of history and thus his pneumatology are fundamentally teleological, persistent objections to every Hegelian schema have come from dysteleological visionaries – those who see no point to history, no inevitable or even possible progress, no transcendental resolution to the universe’s complexities and contradictions, and no overarching goodness or badness. Here ‘spirit’ cannot be singular and

21 It might be pointed out that in a world characterized by sin, this cosmopolitan self-representation would be not the Holy Spirit but the Adversary that John calls “the ruler of this world.”
22 Francis Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man (Free Press, 1992). Fukuyama’s direct influence has mainly come through the counterarguments he provoked. However, he speaks for many who see progress and even a kind of historical finality in the evolution of global democratic capitalism and welfare-statism. Most western political parties since the Cold War have promoted variations of this common vision.
universal. What ‘spirits’ there are in a dysteleological universe must be contingent and plural; so they inevitably come into conflict.

For Nietzsche these spirits are individual wills vying for power. For Freud they are the dark psychological forces that drive single minds and whole civilizations. Among humanity’s countless groups and subgroups they are the countless human structures that Paul calls stoicheia or ‘elements’ of the world (Galatians 4:3) and that Walter Wink associates with the New Testament’s powers and principalities. For neo-Darwinians, who posit a never-ending biological flux in a world of change and adaptation, they can be the ephemeral species themselves, their ecosystems, the whole evolving biosphere, genes, or individual specimens.

The world’s spirits are thus embedded in an eternal struggle with one another and with the world that creates and destroys them. The cosmology of dysteleological modernity is pluralist, pagan, and ultimately nihilist. Ambition, shame, and envy rule the lives of individuals, families, empires, oppressed peoples, cultures, gangs, parties, and businesses – not because of original sin, because that has been dismissed out of hand, but because it is simply how things are. The power of this vision is as immense as its varieties are innumerable. Only a few prominent ones need mentioning: Social Darwinism makes “survival of the fittest” into a social ethic, to the point of imposing empire upon and even sterilizing the weak. National Socialism elevates the honor of a Volk above all human decency. Corporatism forges alliances between ruling parties and business, labor, and advocacy groups. Environmentalism weighs the conviction that ecological destruction ill-serves humanity against its suspicion that the real problem is humanity itself. Prejudice marginalizes whole groups in order to privilege others; meritocracy tries to defuse it by setting achievers against one another in a competition for access to power; affirmative action and then multiculturalism have turned the tables on the old winners in the name of justice.

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Modern pneumatology abroad lies “outside” of Christian contemplation and analysis of the Holy Spirit.\(^{26}\) Yet it is a mistake to imagine either place as aloof from the other (1 John 4:1-6). Theological capitals and foreign lands have often been overlapping, not separate worlds. Insiders worked with outsiders always in view, and often under their scornful eyes (or over their heads, depending on who held power at the time). As many abroad had upbringings in the church, so many traditionalists came to the inside only after spending years as skeptics. The Pietism that refreshed modern western Christianity also produced the ‘atheistic pietism’ that today characterizes moralistic but secular societies.\(^{27}\)

Martin Heidegger may be the best figure to personify such a conflicted cultural landscape. He oscillated between constructing a Spirit of cosmic history, fleeing it, and deifying the fleeting and shadowy spirits of this world. That’s quite a journey! Jacques Derrida sought a window into Heidegger’s philosophical development by tracing his changing regard for Hegel’s category of *Geist*.\(^{28}\) In Heidegger’s earlier work, Derrida finds avoidance and suspicion of the term, with its Hegelian connotations of grand divine unification. Then, from 1933 to 1935 – as he joined the National Socialist Party – Heidegger embraced *Geist* as resolve and a will to knowledge, and as the spiritual world of a people nourished in land and blood. *Geist*’s goal was no longer a Hegelian perfection of the cosmos but is bound to a particular people’s identity and culture. Derrida notes that both when Heidegger is avoiding the term and when he is using it, another, transcendent *Geist* haunts his work. Heidegger characterizes it as a world-unifying and people-gathering *pneuma* of divine presence. Finally, in the 1950s Heidegger translates *Geist* not in these earlier Hegelian ways, nor as *pneuma* (or anything else in the “Platonic-Christian epoch” he wanted to extricate it from) but *Flamme*, immolating fire, Being-outside-Itself.\(^{29}\)

So Heidegger moved from rejecting Hegel, to substituting a demonic Aryan sociological alternative, to tentatively embracing a teleological pneumatology, and finally to describing a consuming transcendence that puts things to an end and so begins others (echoing, Derrida suggests, the fiery Spirit of the Hebrew prophets). The turbulence of Heidegger’s sometime

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\(^{26}\) The term *beyond* seems odd when it describes increasingly dominant mindsets in parts of what were once firmly Christian societies: universities, principal cities, mass media, educational systems, and civic institutions. However, that is to take the societies themselves as central, not the new creation that outlasts them.

\(^{27}\) The term may have been coined by W.H. Mallock in *Atheism and the Value of Life: Five Studies in Contemporary Literature* (London: Bentley, 1884), 160.


pneumatology, tracked in Derrida’s own maddening jargon of ambivalence, characterizes the chaos abroad.\(^{30}\)

Who is the Spirit abroad? Still the Holy Spirit, of course. No theology or cosmology can change that. And still the Spirit of wisdom (Isaiah 11:2) whose mundane truth all the world can recognize and acknowledge (1 Kings 4:29-34). Yet where God’s truth is suppressed (Romans 1:18-19) the Spirit haunts rather than indwells, as the Spirit of truth whom the world does not know or see and cannot accept (John 14:17). Other stories and categories direct the imaginations of outsiders who sense his presence and power, sometimes revealing his qualities yet concealing his full identity as the Spirit of the Son. He consigns us to our darkness even while graciously luring us toward the light.

These interactions set up frontiers between the capitals of Christian pneumatology and the territory abroad. We are now ready to map these meeting places.

### 3. Pneumatology in frontier settlements.

Some of the messengers who brought the gospel to fresh places and peoples were missionaries obeying the Great Commission. Others were accidental and even unconscious evangelists: relatives, neighbors, coworkers, travelers, or refugees. They carried the news of God’s Kingdom into new settings, making social frontiers where classical expressions of Christian faith can colonize or be replicated, but can also take new forms and resonate in new ways.

As Hegel towers over pneumatology abroad, so the Holy Spirit’s modern social frontier has an early and influential settler in John Wesley. Wesley was a revivalist, not a missionary – an eighteenth century Anglican Pietist who seems more at home in a capital city than here on the frontier. Yet Wesleyan faith proved to be particularly well suited to carrying the gospel into new social environments. Its zeal channeled incredible energy into spreading the message and renewing the church. Its ecclesiological pragmatism allowed liturgy, church structures, and private practices to spread as well as adapt in rapidly changing situations. It was Wesleyan piety, not the rurally developed Anglican parish culture, that could flourish in England’s newly industrialized cities and America’s immigrant cultures. Wesleyan sensibilities even generated a

\[^{30}\text{This is not to deny chaos in any other part of our grid.}\]
liturgical style that James F. White calls “the frontier tradition” in American worship. Its Arminian soteriology and stress on both personal and social holiness encouraged steadfast focus on the lost and the beleaguered, and on the Spirit who transforms them. By the mid-nineteenth century these qualities of Wesleyan spirituality had already diffused into other Protestant traditions, and pushed the Christian witness out from its center and into long unreached, newly emerging, and nearly forsaken sectors across the world, yielding a considerable harvest in our era.

In which new settings do we find classic claims being translated, repeated, contextualized, and newly applied?

The first and most obvious set of answers includes sub-saharan Africa, south and east Asia, and a number of other places where renewed Christian mission (sometimes irenic and fraternal, sometimes strident and colonialist) planted the seeds of today’s massive churches there. These churches are not merely western transplants. They inculturate Christian life and faith into both their indigenous cultures and the emerging global “third culture” that increasingly gives every city and suburb in the world something of a common feel. While some of their thought is better classified among the cosmopolitan theologies we will examine below, most tend to have strong traditionalist tendencies: loyalty to the liturgical forms and theological convictions of their confessions, often literalistic interpretations of the Bible, and conservative morals. They basically reproduce classical faith in a new cultural idiom, and even recover neglected biblical themes and revisit issues, crises, and developments from Christianity’s first centuries.

For instance, African and Chinese churches have incorporated affirmations, adaptations, or critiques of ancestral veneration practices; these as well as aboriginal Australian and American Christians have developed angelologies and pneumatologies of the creator Spirit to extents that go far beyond today’s withered western counterparts. Church disputes over the role of ancestors evoke ancient biblical struggles over household gods and ancestral patrons. Affirmations of the creator Spirit over the hegemony of technology are reminiscent of Irenaeus

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33 Sociologist Ruth Hill Useem’s term “Third Culture Kid” refers to a child growing up in a foreign culture because of expatriate working parents. For a contemporary Christian usage, see Dave Gibbons, *The Monkey and the Fish: Liquid Leadership for a Third-Culture Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009).
against the Gnostics. Korean Minjung theology’s calls for justice to the poor echo the prophets and early church. These churches also share a more pronounced stress on the Holy Spirit’s healing power and presence, often understanding the Spirit’s power to be mediated through baptism and other sacramental rituals – a baptismal theology that looks more like the north African and Greco-Roman theologies of the first few centuries than any contemporary western counterpart.  

The familiar issues and stances in these contextualized churches make their work resonate beyond their cultures. Early twentieth century pioneers such as Ní Tuosheng (Watchman Nee) and house church leader Wang Mingdao have followings in the United States, especially among traditionalists who recognize them as kindred spirits. Charismatic prayer ministries in the west admire and imitate the Korean morning prayer movement that began with Gil Sun-Joo.

The patterns that repeatedly emerge across the world suggest that one of these new settings is not restricted to one place or culture but is a presently emerging global culture. White American evangelicals and liberals often have more in common with their counterparts in the global south than they do with one another.

Within this global culture subsists many smaller new settings in which classic claims are seldom heard. One of them is the modern research university. Launched in Berlin in the nineteenth century, its architects struggled to articulate a convincing rationale for its faculty of theology. In the end, they failed. Theology faculties have migrated – often under escort – to the margins of the lives of their campuses. Most survived institutionally by turning themselves into departments studying religion as a field of scientific, historical, or comparative inquiry. As this happened, outspoken Christians became disciplinary orphans and even ridiculed minorities in now normatively secular academic environments. In response, campus ministries – both denominational outreaches and nondenominational organizations such as InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, the World Student Christian Federation, and Campus Crusade for Christ – rose to

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35 See, for instance, Thomas Harvey, Acquainted with Grief: Wang Mingdao’s Stand for the Persecuted Church in China (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2002).
37 See David Kelsey, Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).
support and reassert Christian faith in collegiate contexts. These ministries are doing more than just saving souls and growing churches. They are evangelizing the secular meritocratic elite who have been the principal architects of the global technological culture itself – and thus fostering the creation of yet another contextualized Christianity.

Outreach on university campuses is being matched by Christian outreaches in the arts, high tech, politics, business, militaries, trades, and professions. Churches, parachurches, and orders have sponsored many of these. However, outreach on believers’ personal initiative to their own informal social circles has been rising rapidly. Believers from the United States to China to Indonesia have grown impatient with institutional ministries and ventured out on their own. They have begun Bible studies, prayer circles, cell churches, and volunteer efforts in workplaces and neighborhoods. Underneath this “community-based ministry” approach is a missional pneumatology indebted to sixteenth century free-church ecclesiology, which trusts that God provides spiritual gifts to meet the needs of all local congregations – “wherever two or three are gathered” (Matthew 18:20). These communities rely explicitly on the Holy Spirit to mediate Christ’s leadership of their missions.

Each time the gospel takes root in one of these social circles, the good news finds expression in an additional idiom, critiques and remakes the world, and ushers in new creation in the Spirit’s power. The modern academy’s frontier settlements have spurred the rise of a new theological genre: interdisciplinary theologies constructed by disciples at these crossroads. Among the more traditional of these are C.S. Lewis, patron saint of evangelicals, working in theology and literature; Pope John Paul II, theorizing about theology and political economy at the conclusion of the Cold War; a whole constellation of scientist-theologians interrelating the faith with physics, psychology, biology, and the rest of the sciences; and others cross-examining theology and the various arts. Theologian Robert Barron, for example, draws on the literature of Dante Aligheri, William Faulkner, Flannery O’Connor, and others to articulate, contextualize, and refresh a basically traditional Catholic theology. (These voices’ more

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38 George Barna chronicles the trend in the United States in Revolution (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2005).
innovative counterparts tend to be synthesizers whose work we will examine below in the two other frontiers of our map.)

Because of the Holy Spirit’s roles in creation, life, providence, redemption, communication, and eschaton, these interdisciplinary projects soon gain direct relevance for modern pneumatology. Jeremy Begbie affirms David Bentley Hart’s contention that the music of J.S. Bach reveals “the uncontainable and infinite ‘inventiveness’ of the Holy Spirit at work in the world.”\(^{41}\) Begbie’s and Barron’s appeals to these other disciplines are not mere illustrations for pedagogy’s sake. They are source material for translating theological claims: signs and parables of the Kingdom for the spiritually discerning to see and trust.

These discourses can have a prophetic edge to them when they subject the disciplines of the modern world to the gospel’s judgment and deliverance. The prophetic tone of interdisciplinary theology is nowhere more pronounced than among a movement among mainly British theologians called Radical Orthodoxy. Its principals, foremost among them John Milbank, draw principally on sources from the Anglican and Catholic capitals to restore theology to its own terms, return it to the center of academic intellectual inquiry, and thereby bring the social sciences in particular back into its informing and transforming sphere.\(^{42}\) Since this is not about restoring a premodern university but evangelizing a postmodern one by speaking its own blunt academic idiom, Milbank’s project stands as a bold retranslation of classic theological claims, including the Augustinian doctrine of the Holy Spirit, in a new setting.\(^{43}\)

Mother Teresa is a compelling figure who personifies the Spirit’s frontier settlements. Called and gifted by the Holy Spirit in 1946 to lead the Missionaries of Charity, she left her cloister to live with the poor of Calcutta. Her ministry was not a radical departure from previous Catholic practice. Her theology was not some bold new vision of the gospel, but reflected her church’s holy tradition. Her account of the Holy Spirit’s involvement in her work and through her coworkers’ lives was conventional.\(^{44}\) Even her failings were ordinary. Yet her life


\(^{44}\) The constitution of the Missionaries of Charity states, “Our religious family started when our foundress, Mother Teresa Bogaxhiu was inspired by the Holy Spirit with a special charism on the 10th of September, 1946.
communicated and embodied Christian faith far beyond Christian circles. Insiders, outsiders, and frontiersmen alike from across denominations, religions, nations, languages, and ideologies all saw Jesus, and recognized him as Jesus, in the Missionaries of Charity.

Who is the Holy Spirit we see moving in these frontier settlements? He is the one who comes “to convict the world regarding sin and justice and judgment” (John 16:8). He came to Jesus’ disciples when their risen Lord breathed on them (John 20:21-23), having sent them onward on his mission (John 20:20). Wherever they come, the Spirit comes.

4. Pneumatology in border towns.

Frontier settlements are a people’s early excursions, and incursions, into one another’s territory. Over time the newly acquainted peoples get to know one another and even begin to understand each other. As cultural exchanges become more regular and bidirectional, some frontier settlements give way to established border towns. As Ciudad Juárez, Mexico and El Paso, Texas face one another on opposite sides of the Rio Grande, so well acquainted insiders and outsiders to the Kingdom have long faced one another in theological equivalents. They distinguish themselves over against one another yet also absorb one another’s sensibilities.

The theology that goes on here has long been a favorite among Christian intellectual historians. This may be because sustained exposure to the secular academy sensitizes and then desensitizes Christian academics to forms of life across that border. The Christian academy is a kind of border town in its own right, fluent in the dialects of both the church and the university. Having grown used to the once-shocking ways of intellectuals, its products are tempted to look down on the church’s monolinguals and envy the world’s.

An archetypical predecessor here is Friedrich Schleiermacher, father of liberalism at the dawn of the nineteenth century. His attempts to draw Christianity’s “cultured despisers” back into the fold suggest an emissary from the capital or a frontier settler. Yet Schleiermacher’s approach was radical. He rejected his family’s Moravian Pietism for rationalism, losing his faith in college and returning to Christian practice only by reframing Christian faith in terms of the epistemic presuppositions of Immanuel Kant and other modernists. By the middle of the nineteenth century, liberalism’s border town theology was making major inroads in western

This inspiration...means that the Holy Spirit communicates God’s will to Mother.” Eileen Egan, “Polar opposites? Remembering the Kindred Spirits of Dorothy Day and Mother Teresa,” http://www.catholicworker.com/cwo001.htm, reprinted from Catholic Peace Voice (Fall 1997).
Christian traditions. It dominated European and American Christianity by the early twentieth century, and continued to do so despite emphatic attempts from Catholics, fundamentalists, and postliberals to defeat it.

If western Christian pneumatology already suffered from an attenuated appreciation of the Spirit’s person and work, modernity only intensified the problem. The Renaissance enterprises of scientific enquiry and critical history hardened into modern naturalism, historicism, and skepticism. From within the confines of the era’s Newtonian paradigms of creation as a closed system of causes and effects, every improvement in the knowledge of natural physical and social processes seemed to squeeze out more room for the Holy Spirit’s work. The result was a “Spirit of the gaps,” whose activity was relegated to the shrinking realms that learning had not yet penetrated.

In response, liberals tended to accept both this knowledge and the Newtonian (and Kantian) presuppositions that interpreted them, and cede ground on which their ancestors had once stood. The following is just a sampling of pneumatologically relevant revisions: Historical critics of church history, the tradition history of the Bible, and biblical events undermined both the Catholic sense of holy tradition and the Catholic and Protestant doctrines of direct biblical inspiration. Ernst Troeltzsch and Rudolf Bultmann privatized a faith that had once been essentially public, confining its pneumatic new creation to the inner worlds of believers and treating the visible church as a mere human institution rather than the Holy Spirit’s living temple. Generations of Deists dismissed miracles in the present age and explained away the definitive miracles of the Christian past, even the Spirit’s virginal conception and resurrection of Jesus. Harry Emerson Fosdick, called the greatest liberal American preacher of the twentieth century, not only rejected all these traditional doctrines but regarded substitutionary atonement (which Hebrews 9:14 envisions as an offering mediated by the Spirit) as an artifact of unredeemed thinking. Adolf von Harnack considered sacramental theology a pagan accretion, the more orthodox Edward Schillebeeckx treated sacraments in terms of their subjective effects on believers, as a personal encounter with Christ. Walter Rauschenbusch, leader of the Social Gospel movement, embraced an evolutionary anthropology that treated sin not as a condition in which humanity lies enslaved and dead apart from the Spirit’s reviving grace, but merely as the

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45 Robert Morgan, “Rudolf Bultmann,” in Ford, 74-75.
accumulated weight of past sins that believers must struggle against. These add up to a massive — and often dubiously Trinitarian — revision of orthodox Christian faith, with a radically different scope for the Spirit’s work. Paul Tillich exemplifies the systematic form of this vision. For Tillich, who followed Schleiermacher’s lead and consigned the issue of God’s threeness to an appendix of his systematic theology, the Holy Spirit is not a person in any orthodox sense but “the Spiritual Presence,” a meaning-giving symbol for the divine life.

Whether radically as in Tillich, or more moderately in a variety of liberal Catholics and Protestants, the power of modern paradigms and presuppositions compelled thinkers to re-envision theology even while they tended to conserve Christian vocabularies and liturgical forms. Liberalism provoked a number of reactions; we will highlight three.

Conservatives typically reacted by defending at all cost the claims that methodological naturalism seemed to be taking away. They insisted on the historicity of past miraculous “violations” of the laws of physics. They defended the supernatural divine power and character of the Word and sacraments. They affirmed the church as the earthly locus of Christ’s salvation and the Spirit’s redeeming work. They refuted textual and external evidence for the human histories of the biblical writings and asserted their propositional inerrancy. They rationalized or discounted the earlier racist, sexist, and colonialist injustices of their holy traditions. And they denied accumulating evidence for the evolution of species. When one of these approaches failed, conservatives might flee to the other side of the nature/supernature dichotomy and identify the natural and historical as the spiritual - thus turning the Spirit into the sprite of environmental conservation, the patron of our desires for freedom and prosperity, or the dispenser of psychic therapy.

The theological apex of this reaction was American fundamentalism, which sought to recover five of these fundamentals in spite of modernist arguments against them. Conservatives could articulate these as claims that sometimes superficially, sometimes deeply matched the

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49 Pneumatology is a similarly minor theme in another border town movement, twentieth century process theology. For instance, it is scarcely mentioned in John B. Cobb and David Ray Griffin, *Process Theology: an Introductory Exposition* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 1976). Yet process theologian Norman Pittenger offers an account of the Holy Spirit very similar to Tillich’s in *The Holy Spirit* (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1974). This suggests that liberal Protestantism and more radical theologies such as process theology share both a common formative milieu and a willingness to revise the meanings of traditional Christian terms radically without necessarily dispensing with the terms themselves or the liturgical forms in which they are used.

50 Frei lists a number of these in the first three of his types of Christian theology (28-38).
classic claims being made in capitals and frontier settlements. Yet even if they were, these were still border town visions, always framed in reaction to the city on the other side of the border and in suspicion or envy of sympathizers who resided within its own city limits. Fundamentalism’s Holy Spirit had many of the features of classic Protestant faith, yet maintained a sectarian edge: “Whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood” (1 John 4:6 NIV).

A second important reaction to liberalism began with Karl Barth and developed into postliberalism. Barth’s theology is one part ressourcement, returning to the giants of Reformation theology to rebuild evangelical theology after liberalism, one part concession to the long western obsession with epistemology by prioritizing the doctrine of revelation, one part rejection of common Catholic, Pietist, neo-Protestant, and fundamentalist approaches that Barth found inimical to the gospel of grace through faith alone, and one part prophetic critique of modernity and any other compromise of the gospel through unswerving loyalty to the principle of solus christus. This puts Barth and the postliberals who followed him closer to the middle right of our map than most of the border town theologies we have already examined. Yet Barthian theology has a border town character and agenda. Its fixation on modernity (understandable given Barth’s own history and postliberals’ later contexts), its frustrating struggles to free dogmatics from Kantian epistemological shackles, and its concessions to the twentieth century Zeitgeist (especially pronounced in its politics and vulnerability to universalism) all describe a theology for a church harried by the world.

Barth’s theology does emancipate the Holy Spirit from captivity to human subjectivity. But some judge his pneumatology to have done so by subordinating the Spirit’s work in creation and every other sphere to the soteriological. Moreover, to keep theology fixed on Jesus Christ, Barth arguably treats the Spirit as a mere adjunct or power of the Son’s salvation. Consequently, his pneumatology ends up narrower than either Luther’s or Calvin’s. Rather than a liberal or conservative Spirit of the gaps, he leaves gaps of the Spirit, which both friendly and rival pneumatologies have endeavored to fill.

53 Jenson does just this in Systematic Theology; so does Rogers in the rest of After the Spirit. Many others just return to anthropology.
A third response to liberalism was the liberationist stand of theology. This arose in nineteenth century Christian and secular social activism, expanded in the Social Gospel movement, energized the Second Vatican Council’s “Gaudium et Spes” and the broader Catholic Aggiornamento movement, and radicalized as liberation theology. Of our three strands of responses, this one is most sympathetic to liberalism, because it shares a deeper set of presuppositions and habits. Liberation theology appeals to an impressive list of texts from across the scriptures and later tradition demonstrating God’s regard for the stranger, the powerless, the weak, and the oppressed. Yet the principle for its analysis of injustice and thus Christ’s remedy comes from the social-scientific analysis of Karl Marx and its many cognates, not canonical tradition. In liberationist epistemology the oppressed gain a privileged epistemological status, and their experiences of oppression and liberation become definitive for the scope of salvation and the mission of the church.54 Traditional Christian teachings are appropriated selectively according to how well they fit this framework, becoming illustrative proof texts rather than substantive theological sources.

Border town theologies can be as motivated by a desire to give up as a desire to embrace. In the battle between liberals and postliberals over the theological priority of anthropology versus Christology, the filioque debate has taken on new significance. One of the factors making the filioque less popular among liberals is, as Barth noticed, its demand for integrating pneumatology with Christology. Given the Spirit’s role as revealer of God’s truth, the filioque therefore reinforces the classical dogma that one knows the Father only through the Son (Matthew 11:27). This is an obstacle for liberal advocates of religious pluralism, who wish to affirm that God can be truly and redemptively known through a variety of religious traditions.55 Religious pluralists prefer to treat Jesus as the agent through whom God is revealed to Christians, and the Spirit as the agent through whom God is revealed in other religious. Since 1968 the World Council of Churches has even pursued this strategy, which its secretary Konrad Raiser misleadingly labels “trinitarian,” over against the so-called “Christological” paradigm of church

unity and mission that had focused the WCC’s earlier efforts. The Spirit then becomes the god present in all the world’s spiritualities, whose divine work there need have no coherence with the work of Jesus Christ. The danger here was noted long before, for instance in the 1933 Bethel Declaration authored by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer, Barth, and others insisted on the *filioque* in their resistance to the frank paganism of Nazi Germany’s “German Christians.” The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Father and the Son.

If the *filioque* truly describes God’s internal relations, then these gifts are to be embraced. But if these benefits tempt us to deny the *filioque* out of its usefulness to the cause of religious coexistence or affirm it for the sake of Christ’s centrality, then we are in a border town.

Perhaps the best choice for a representative border town theologian is not a liberal icon like Tillich, a fundamentalist icon like B.B. Warfield, or a postliberal icon like Barth, but a feminist theologian. Feminist theology juggles an intimidating set of considerations from across our map’s boundaries. The feminist movement itself has roots in both Christian tradition and secular progressivism. Biblical and holy tradition both offer vital resources for appreciating both women’s and men’s full significance to God; yet they also embody the often oppressive patriarchal structures through which that appreciation was historically given. The liberationist paradigm that promises social justice, and for these theologians generally defines it comes from the “Masters of Suspicion” (Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Durkheim, and the like) across the border, channeled through modern sociology to the contemporary social consciousness especially of the western political left. Feminists have tended to draw pragmatically and unapologetically from a variety of anthropologies – relational ones, transcendentalist ones, individualist ones, and collectivist ones – according to how well they serve the causes of women’s liberation and gender equality. For Christians the matter of gender also extends beyond human creaturely life to the language of God: Both the history and threat of oppression and the history and promise of justice haunt the church’s liturgy, prayer, imagination, dogma, scripture, the saints, leaders, and

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strangers, and above all its deity.\(^{58}\) If ever there were a border town theology, Christian feminist theologies would qualify.

Elizabeth Johnson is a fitting representative of the movement, negotiating these vexing factors skillfully and firmly within the liberal tradition of Kant and Schleiermacher that prioritizes human experience.\(^{59}\) She describes a Trinity of Spirit-Sophia, Jesus-Sophia, and Mother-Sophia – terms culled from Christian tradition but rearranged to privilege feminine imagery. The principle of this selection and transposition is standard in feminist theology: the privileged epistemological status of women’s interpreted experience of liberation.\(^{60}\) Wisdom, heretofore associated primarily with the Son, is now identified with the divine essence shared among the persons. This shift is as radical as moving \textit{logos} (which in John 1 is practically equivalent to \textit{sophia}) from distinguishing the Son to describing the Godhead: Spirit-Word, Jesus-Word, Father-Word.\(^{61}\) The result is a Spirit whose relations with Jesus are subsumed into her relations with all humanity.\(^{62}\) This suggests a move in the modalistic direction that haunts much liberal Christian theology. Johnson relegates most of her treatment of inner-trinitarian relations to her critical review of the classical theological tradition, and with human experience as the evidentiary basis for Johnson’s reflective work on the Trinity, there is little to go on. When it comes time to speak constructively of the Spirit, Johnson describes her as “Spirit-Sophia, friend, sister, mother, and grandmother \textit{of the world}.”\(^{63}\) It is not surprising when she later downgrades the word “Trinity” itself to a simile,\(^{64}\) prefers a model because it best encourages human social justice,\(^{65}\) and concludes again with relationships \textit{to} creation rather than the persons’ relations to

\(^{58}\) Gendered terms are used for many languages’ pronouns for God, for the names of the triune persons, and for the bi-gendered images for God that permeate the biblical witness and subsequent tradition. At the same time, gendered language even more vividly describes forbidden idols that would construct the God of Israel as any created thing.


\(^{60}\) Johnson’s hermeneutical principle in drawing on scripture and tradition is “interpretation guided by a liberating impulse” in a community constituted by shared “struggle for emancipation from sexism” (77). The goal is thus definitive.

\(^{61}\) Why couldn’t another consistently feminine term, \textit{agape} (Hebrew \textit{ahabah}, Latin \textit{caritas}) have been similarly unpacked without having to migrate from a \textit{hypostasis} to essence, given the biblical (1 John 4) and traditional warrants for identifying it with the Godhead? Surely it has a deeper history in women’s experiences of liberation than the category of wisdom. Perhaps it is the subsequent Latin tradition’s shift to \textit{amor}, a masculine term. At any rate, Johnson is far more guarded about the term’s potential (143).

\(^{62}\) Johnson, 140 in the context of 133-146.

\(^{63}\) Johnson, 146, emphasis added.

\(^{64}\) Johnson, 205.

\(^{65}\) Johnson, 209.
one another revealed in creation. She calls the figure of Spirit-Wisdom and her two divine complements “the mystery of triune Holy Wisdom as imago feminae,” flouting her cross-town rival Barth’s warning that “one cannot speak of God simply by speaking of man” – or woman – “in a loud voice.” Johnson exemplifies border-town consciousness in both her patient and painstaking investigation of her Catholic tradition in critical deference to the liberal modern category of liberation, and her often subtle but radical reworking of that tradition as a practitioner rather than an emigrant or expatriate.

And who is the Holy Spirit in these tense and exhilarating border towns? He or she is the mysterious one who blows where he or she wills (John 3:8a), amidst a tempest of other spirits whose confused and contradictory testimonies are a worldly cacophony (1 John 4:1-3). The Spirit’s origin and goal may be mysterious to those blown about and reborn (John 3:8b). Yet such witnesses learn to perceive as the Spirit testifies, not always politely or gladly, to those in Christ’s churches who are listening (Revelation 3:6, 1 John 4:2-6). The Spirit displayed here is the patient leader, Torah and wisdom giver, and prophetic juror of an ancient border nation called Israel.

We have traversed each quadrant of modern pneumatology’s map. One area remains: its middle.

5. Pneumatology in the cosmopolis.

In the strict sense, everything but the very edges of a map is its middle. The four areas we have described are obviously not corners where every claim is classic or new and where every setting is either church or world. Nevertheless, we could describe the preponderant qualities of each place for modern pneumatology in terms of its proximity to one of those corners.

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66 Johnson, 211-215.
Some places on this map are better described in terms of distance from any one corner.  
69 One, the cosmopolis, lies in the very middle of our grid. Its real-world counterpart is arguably the most significant emerging social setting across the globe.  
70 Across the world, cities are being flooded with immigrants from the countryside and abroad. Residents, torn from the tribal and family relationships that had sustained them, face economies and living situations that call for new skill sets. They also face similarly bewildered neighbors from backgrounds just as incomprehensible. Their frontier is internal.

Where contemporary pneumatology is concerned, an important cosmopolitan predecessor is John Locke. Locke’s enormous influence on the course of Deism might suggest another location for him elsewhere in our grid. Yet his belief in miracles and supernatural revelation, particularly that of the Bible, distinguished him from Deists. Moreover, both Richard Hooker and the Bible critically influenced his theological imagination. At the same time, Locke’s empiricism, natural theology, and Arian Christology and pneumatology  
71 departed from tradition.  
72 The result is a surprising amalgam of conventional Protestant claims concerning the Holy Spirit and rejection of historic orthodoxy. What could hold these disparate things together were a governing pragmatism and an eclecticism that distinguish the synthetic (some would say incoherent) cosmopolitan imagination from both the totalizing Enlightenment mindset in parts abroad and the reactionary paradigm of the border town.

Locke’s idiosyncratic pneumatology is by no means the only possible modern hybrid. Several other recent synthetic visions practically dominate global Christianity today.

The first is Pentecostalism. Theologically, Pentecostalism draws on the strong pneumatology of the Reformed tradition and the nineteenth century’s increasingly involved Wesleyan catalogues of sanctification, which affirmed second and even third blessings of the Spirit. Philosophically, modern propositionalism feeds a literalistic Pentecostal biblical

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69 Some of these are what urban planners call “zones of transition” – areas moving from one kind of cityscape to another. Yesterday’s frontier settlement might be tomorrow’s border town or capital, or if borders shift it might even be assimilated into another country. Repeatedly we encountered figures who lived in one place but influenced or migrated to others.

70 The cosmopolis is not a new phenomenon; ancient Rome probably qualified as one. What may be new in our day, however, is the uniformity of the global culture that has been emerging ever since the Industrial Revolution transformed transportation, communication, and international trade. There is enough commonality in this “third culture” to let us call the world’s sprawling metropolises the cosmopolis.


Pentecostals spoke in tongues at the Azusa Street revival of 1906. Interpreting the experience yielded pneumatologies with several striking features. The Spirit is the one who intends and grants a saving relationship with a particular existential shape (intimacy expressed through tongues) and vocational result (anointing to powerful ministry). Pentecostal theology has many traditionalist features, but its pneumatology is both distinct and more pronounced than in conservative Wesleyan or Reformed theology. It shares fundamentalism’s dependence on modern propositionalism and on the premillennial eschatology built on it; however, the Spirit’s outpouring sidelined that premillennial framework and centered charismatic communities elsewhere. The Azusa Street revival was not just another revival but a restoration. Its “full gospel” shaped a distinctive missional ethic for the closing days of the present age that is less defensive than border-town fundamentalism. And its Holy Spirit is not just a person; he is a personality.

The variety of these influences attests to a (Lockean?) eclecticism that matches a similar cosmopolitan pragmatism in Pentecostal liturgy, polity, and missionary strategy. These features give Pentecostal faith a cultural adaptability that helped it take root and flourish just about everywhere it was planted, from indigenous churches where its practices resonated with local sensibilities to non-Pentecostal Christian traditions (with the charismatic revival of the 1960s). One century after its official birth, one third of the world’s Christians may be Pentecostal and charismatic.

Adaptability is not incidental to Pentecostal pneumatology. The movement’s apparent lack of theological discipline can perplex systematic theologians from other traditions. But the

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73 The reasoning works like this: Because the Bible’s unified witness means tongues in Acts must be the same prophetic and devotional tongues as the ones in 1 Corinthians, they represent a unique spiritual gift that signifies a normative relationship with God. This gift is God’s promised “latter rain,” affording a special relationship with the Holy Spirit that mediated Christ’s intended relationship with humanity as savior, healer, sanctifier, and soon coming King. Glossolalia’s apparent earlier absence implies that the 1906 event was a new Pentecost that had inaugurated a restoration of the church which had slumbered, or worse, since the age of the apostles. The prominence of this gift here and there in the book of Acts makes tongues necessary evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit, a relationship many regard as constitutive of being saved and anointed to faithful service in the Kingdom. See Donald Dayton, Theological Roots of Pentecostalism (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987), cited in D. William Faupel, “The Restoration Vision in Pentecostalism,” Christian Century 107:29 (October 17, 1990), 938-941. For one of many narratives of early Pentecostal history see Samuel Escobar, The New Global Mission: The Gospel from Everywhere to Everyone (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), 113-116.

discipline is elsewhere, in the pneumatology behind these practices. Pentecostals regard their flexibility and diversity as the newness of the Spirit’s new creation. Amos Yong contends that Pentecostal pneumatology is well suited to respecting the local particularities of churches in the new global context, rather than subsuming their witness into a deceptively uniform theology.  

A second influential set of cosmopolitan pneumatologies is eclectic in a different way. Many western Christians ground some aspects of their vision (often doctrines of sin, salvation, and church) in the gospel, but ground others (often creation, anthropology, and ethics) in “natural law.” Calvinists may mistake this bifurcation as their necessary distinction between common and special grace; Lutherans may take it as their gospel/law dichotomy or Christ’s “two kingdoms”; Catholics may see revealed theology contrasted with natural theology. But the real pattern is Locke’s. Western civil religions and folk theologies amalgamate Christian and secular traditions in ways that honor both, but only partially. In the public realm, natural theology and empiricism reign. Christian specificity is confined to an ideological ghetto, while empiricism and its vague natural theology rule the cosmopolis from behind their castle walls. The word “God” becomes a public term that even presidents may use in official discourse; the name “Jesus” belongs in congregational sermons; and the term “Holy Spirit” is best whispered in private, or at least candlelight. This impulse comes so naturally to Americans that it must be deliberately pointed out to us, and we need even more strenuous training to keep from reading it into the New Testament. It is not pragmatism that arbitrates between these two separate orders. Nor is it Augustine’s much maligned doctrine of the Trinity. With further historical training we will learn to see the same principle in the spirituality of the Gnostics and the spiritualists of the radical reformation. Their Holy Spirit works to free the spiritual aspects of spiritual beings from the fetters of a material world governed by a different set of rules, and perhaps even a different god. This Holy Spirit is about our souls rather than our bodies – a still small voice uttering classified communiqués, a mystery accessible only to mystics, a sanctifier but not a creator.

Third, a number of theologians are cosmopolitan simply in the breadth of their influences. They mine a variety of sources, inside and outside the tradition, out of a habitual respect for both. This can do violence to one or both disciplines, or it can produce elegant

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75 Amos Yong, The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 18.
76 Of course, some loyalists of each of these schools adopt a Gnostic bifurcation of their faith they mistakenly regard as a true heir to their Reformation tradition.
syntheses such as Wolfhart Pannenberg’s appropriation of modern historiography. In North American evangelicalism one can appreciate Clark Pinnock’s pneumatology and theology more generally as commuting between cosmopolis and capitals, and the Emergent Church movement as conducting pneumatological investigations between cosmopolis and border towns.

Finally, some of the interdisciplinary theologians we placed in frontier settlements have counterparts here. These are loyal both to the logics of their disciplines and the logic of the faith, refusing to silence either field’s voice even when the two seem to conflict. As Thomas Aquinas brought Islamized Aristotelian philosophy into a true critical exchange with medieval Augustinian theology, so physicist-turned-churchman John Polkinghorne turns the resources of both contemporary physics and Anglican Christianity to the issue of divine action. He finds quantum mechanics an appropriate warrant for seeing not a Deistic world of deterministic causes and effects but a universe structurally open to un-self-caused quantum events. The traditional dogmas of creation, incarnation, and resurrection offer theological language for what God does with that structural openness. The two testimonies together suggest that creation is sacramentally designed by and for the Holy Spirit, and thus indicative of his character and work. It may be too optimistic to say that Polkinghorne’s account really does justice to both the apostolic tradition and contemporary physics, but it is too critical to say he has simply domesticated either one to the other.

No one representative of cosmopolitan theology will call to mind both a John Polkinghorne and husband-and-wife Pentecostal pastors in a storefront church. However, a number of sophisticated and stimulating figures in cosmopolitan pneumatology are drawn to both of these types and many more. One of these is Jürgen Moltmann, a disciple of Karl Barth who has made eschatology rather than revelation the dominant category of his theology. Since

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77 Pannenberg’s theological vision is developed most extensively in *Systematic Theology*, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988-1993). For Pannenberg, “the dynamic of the divine Spirit [is] as a working field linked to time and space – to time by the power of the future that gives creatures their own present and duration, and to space by the simultaneity of creatures in their duration” (2:104).


eschatology describes God’s apocalyptic renewal of creation, the topics, disciplines, and practices that concern the aspects of creation that are most directly being renewed are central to his theological reflection. History, sociology, psychology, and the natural sciences are all disciplinary partners of systematic theology that are indispensable to Moltmann’s task. The Holy Spirit thus understood becomes “the divine wellspring of life – the source of life created, life preserved and life daily renewed, and finally the source of eternal life of all created being.”

Moltmann’s results are too shaped by theological categories to please many historians, sociologists, and scientists; like many cosmopolitan theologians, his work is of serious interest only to believers. And they are often too indebted to these other disciplines’ metaphysics to please theologians, who complain when Moltmann’s proposals violate important theological (and here pneumatological) rules. For instance, Moltmann’s social Trinitarianism, which construes the Spirit as one of three centers of consciousness, arguably owes too much to prevailing psychological notions of the self. His historicism ‘imports’ Christ’s suffering into the eternal life of the Triune God in ways that suggest a revival of theopaschitism, the heresy that construes the divine nature, and thus the Holy Spirit, as subject to suffering.  

Moltmann endorses a divine regard for creation and a pneumatic relationship to it (a little too motivated, one suspects, by political affinities and revulsions) that looks less like the pervasive apocalyptic eschatology of the New Testament and more like the philosophical panentheism for which he has long received (sometimes unjustified) criticism. And so on. Moltmann’s Holy Spirit has all the familiarity and strangeness of the cosmopolis, and of God seen through cosmopolitan eyes.

What does cosmopolitan theology suggest about the Holy Spirit? That he makes connections. He cries “Come!” along with the bride: inviting not just Jesus to come and restore the earth filled with violence and idolatry, but inviting the violent and idolatrous to come join the

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83 The extent of Moltmann’s engagement with a variety of “millenarian” eschatological visions and his consequent rejection of a number of orthodox features of ‘apocalyptic eschatology’ in *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004) suggest a preoccupation with the contemporary situation rather than the church’s biblical and traditional witness. Indeed, they suggest that Moltmann lives along cosmopolis’ border town fringes.
callers who have drunk the water of life (Revelation 22:17). The Spirit is the one who leads even John the prophet, whose book of Revelation might seem the least cosmopolitan vision in the whole Bible, to perceive a new earth dawning in his own day\textsuperscript{85} in which the godless nations may bring their treasure and their kings may bring their glory and honor (Rev 21:24-26). New Jerusalem’s gated walls are an open border housing a multicultural milieu: a border town that is becoming an eschatological cosmopolis. Its open invitation has stood since Jesus secretly journeyed to the old and doomed cosmopolis of Jerusalem to call on its worshippers to believe in him and become sources of the Spirit (John 7:37-39).

**Conclusion: Pneumatology on the map.**

What are we to make of all this? Some will be looking for clues for which sector is the one right place for pneumatology, or which is the author’s personal favorite.\textsuperscript{86} That is to miss the point.\textsuperscript{87} There are theological border towns and frontier settlements, capitals and the burgeoning cosmopolis, and there are places beyond the Christian tradition; and their residents will all think about God from wherever they are.

So it is not just one of these locations that shows us who the Spirit is. The Spirit is the Spirit everywhere. Not like an elephant that is only partially known by each of the blind men who interpret what little they can feel, but as one who can appear distinctly in a given context. To make this point we have drawn on the New Testament’s Johannine material to characterize the one Spirit of all five areas.


\textsuperscript{86} For readers who would be distracted by not knowing, I admire some of each place’s theologians, but my own sympathies and loyalties run along the top edge and down somewhat into the middle. I am a migrant from liberal Protestantism to evangelicalism and specifically Pentecostalism, worshipping most happily at a low-key, missional Pentecostal church in Los Angeles.

\textsuperscript{87} A map drawn fairly will reflect the cartographer’s opinions but need not suggest or express favoritism. Of course, where a map is centered and bounded influences the reader’s perceptions, and can be a clue to the cartographer’s biases. Saul Steinberg’s famous cover of \textit{The New Yorker} of March 29, 1976, entitled “View of the World from 9th Avenue,” does drive home the postmodern point that mapmaking is never objective.
We might also draw on the Acts of the Apostles, a work with such import for pneumatology that some call it “the Acts of the Holy Spirit.” Its characters would be at home in each quadrant and the middle of our map.

James, custodian of the apostles’ tradition after Peter’s departure from Jerusalem and ever mindful of its Old Testament heritage and loyalists (Acts 15:19-29), does pneumatology in his young tradition’s capital. Two very different figures exemplify pneumatology on the outside: Simon subsumes the Spirit into the categories of magic into which he was immersed as a Samaritan magician (8:9-24), while the Ephesian disciples of John have not even heard of the Holy Spirit (19:1-4).

Peter is Acts’ leading frontier theologian of the Spirit. Pentecost’s authoritative interpreter (2:14-40) is the very capitol of the tradition from its beginning (1:13-22), yet he brings the gospel into every kind of new place as Acts’ narrative unfolds. Stephen and the Party of the Pharisees both represent pneumatology in border towns. Stephen, a Spirit-filled Hellenic Jew, was both an apt servant of a neglected sector of the church (and an inspirer of belief among Jerusalem’s worshipping priests, Acts 6:7) and an excoriating critic of Jerusalem’s parochial and undiscerning rulers (6:8-8:1). By contrast, the Party of the Pharisees know the Holy Spirit so exclusively through the inspired Torah that they cannot at first appreciate what the Spirit has been doing among either the Gentiles or their own people (15:4-12). Acts’ and the whole New Testament’s most cosmopolitan thinker is Paul. A master of rabbinical Pharisaism, Hellenistic epistolary, and Greco-Roman diatribe, Messiah’s Apostle to the Gentiles skillfully retells the traditions of Jesus in the forms and categories of skeptical and receptive Jews and pagans, incredulous Athenian philosophers, and bemused rulers, and fearlessly theorizes about what the Spirit’s outpouring among the Gentiles means for salvation history.

Luke and the Fourth Evangelist know what the later church has received from them and remembered. The Holy Spirit is the Lord of the whole world and each of its ages, and our grid is itself the product and the domain of God’s unfolding missional work of new creation. That we could map John’s verses or Acts’ witnesses on it demonstrates perhaps the most important

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88 Among these are Jewish expatriates (2:14-40); then Jerusalem’s outcasts (3:1-10), crowds, rulers, and everyone else there (3:1-4:20, 5:28); then questionable Samaritan believers (8:14-23) and the surrounding Jewish country (9:32-35). Next Peter becomes the prophet and vanguard of the cultural revolution of the Gentiles’ incorporation into the church (10:1-11:18), the experience of which revolutionizes his missional theology (15:7-11). Peter’s journeys to Antioch (Galatians 2:11-14) and Rome (1 Peter 5:13) are assumed but not attested in Acts.
finding for an exercise in mapping modern pneumatology. Above all, it is simply pneumatology, whose object remains the same as ever.

Select Bibliography