

Piotr Kroczek, Piotr Jaskóła

"Problem małżeństwa w relacjach ewangelicko-rzymskokatolickich. Historia i perspektywy nowych rozwiązań", Piotr Jaskóła, Opole 2013 : [recenzja]

Ecumeny and Law 3, 365-367

2015

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

Piotr Jaskóła: *Problem małżeństwa
w relacjach ewangelicko-rzymskokatolickich
Historia i perspektywy nowych rozwiązań*
Opole 2013, 310 pp.

The problem of mixed marriages, that is, marriages contracted between persons of different religions or denominations, is a serious problem from the perspective of any Church or other religious organization. In Europe, nowadays, the marriages in question are quite common, especially in the regions where there is a blend of different religions or denominations, like in the Silesian region, and because of the increase in the emigration movements.

The Catholic Church and the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland do not look favourably upon the mixed marriages. It is mainly because the lack of unity in the spiritual matters can dent the unity of the whole marriage. Of course, the Churches must, in some measure, tolerate the mixed marriages and make special pastoral and legal solutions for the couples. The problem is also an important subject of ecumenical discussions.

This preliminary statement leads to the first conclusion that the author of the reviewed book, Rev. Piotr Jaskóła, professor of theology at the Opole University (Poland), was brave enough to take up a challenging and demanding job of trying to fathom the described problem. He has been successful. His book is a very up to date study.

His book consists of three essential chapters. The first one is titled: “Biblical principles of the teaching on marriage.” In very compact way, it presents the most important elements of the Biblical teaching on marriage. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first one refers to the Old

Testament. The author dedicates his attention to the archetype of marriage. The next subject that he refers to is matrimony in the perspective of the theology of covenant. And, at the end, Rev. Jaskóła looks at the marriage from institutional-legalistic perspective. The second part of the chapter is, of course, focused on teaching of the New Testament. Testimony on marriage in Gospel and testimonies in the Apostolic Letters are presented. Trying to evaluate the chapter, one can say that the raised subjects are not a novelty in the literature. The problems are quite well known but, and it must be underlined, the author very intelligently picks up the most important fields of the teaching, which can be points of discussion and agreement between the Catholics and the Protestants.

The next chapter of the reviewed book is titled: "Reformation teaching on marriage." In about 50 pages the author summarizes the teaching of the Reformers: Martin Luther and John Calvin, as well as the teaching contained in the *Evangelical Confessional Books* and the *Reformed Confessional Books*.

The third chapter is a logical and historical continuation of the former one. It is entitled: "The Catholic answer to the reformation teaching on matrimony." There is presented mainly the teaching of the Council of Trent and the Roman Catechism.

The following two chapters, that is, the fourth and the fifth, contrary to the previous three chapters, are not exclusively devoted to one specific confession. They offer combined, that is, the Catholic-Evangelical perspective on marriage. Chapter four is entitled: "Matrimony in the contemporary Evangelical and Catholic catechisms." It is a presentation of matrimony in *Evangelical Catechism for Adults* and *Catholic Catechism of Adults* and *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Chapter five, "The Churches towards the problem of mixed marriages," offers theological and legal perspective on the mixed marriages that is contained in the most important legal and theological documents of the Churches in question, like: *The Official Policy of the Evangelical-Augsburg Church in Poland*, the Code of Canon Law 1917 and 1983, and some others documents.

After the duly done presentation of the positions of the two Churches, the author decides to confront their teachings and find common points between the Catholics and the Lutherans. The sixth chapter of his book is titled: "Common perspectives of Evangelical and Catholic teaching on matrimony — basis of ecumenical solutions." The author gathered therein and compared the Catholic and the Evangelical views on marriage from creationist, sacramental, Christological, and ecclesiological perspectives.

The final chapter of the reviewed work is titled: "Towards new ecumenical solutions." This part of the book is of special significance. It shows the foundations and possible ways of common, that is, Catholic

and Evangelical effort to work on mixed marriages as the problems of mutual importance.

One small element of the book must be mentioned here, that is, a 5-page “Conclusion: theology of blessing as a basis for the theology of the Evangelical-Catholic Matrimony.” It deals with an important but, unfortunately, marginalized in the literature problem of understating God’s presence in every marriage in form of His blessing.

The book, as everyone would expect from an academic publication, contains also a list of used abbreviations and a long list of cited documents, books and articles in bibliography. A very useful part of the book is the Appendix that contains excerpts of the essential and more frequently cited documents of the Catholic and Lutheran side.

Although Rev. Piotr Jaskóła is a theologian and his book has mainly dogmatic and ecumenical character, one must admit that he utilizes the juridical argumentation very efficiently. He understands deeply — which is, as a matter of fact, not very common knowledge among theologians — that legal norms are the emanation of theological truths.

It is worth underlining that the author very skillfully presents this multifaceted problem from the historical perspective and also offers prospective solutions, which can be expressed in form of *de lege ferenda* postulates.

To sum up, one can say that the book by Rev. Professor Piotr Jaskóła is a thoroughly written book. It should be recognized as a book of special importance for Catholic-Lutheran relations, particularly in the face of the serious problems that concern marriage and family in the contemporary world.

Last but not least, one must make a postulate that, if not the entire book, then at least the findings and conclusions, should be published in a language other than Polish to facilitate exerting more influence by the book on the European ecumenical movement.

Piotr Kroczek