

BOOK REVIEW AND NOTE

***La Cité du Logos: L'ecclésiologie de Clément d'Alexandrie et son enracinement christologique.* By Léon-Ferdinand Karuhije.**

Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 173. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2022. xiv + 646 pp. €179.00 e-book; €179.00 hardback.

With “The City of the Logos” Léon-Ferdinand Karuhije, professor of dogmatic theology and church history at the Grand-Séminaire de Namur, presents a long-overdue, comprehensive study of Clement of Alexandria’s ecclesiology.

Karuhije’s extensive analysis is divided into four parts, each with a brief introduction and an interim conclusion. The first part explores the historical context of Alexandrian Christianity as well as Clement’s biography, oeuvre, and influences. Although Karuhije notes many historical uncertainties, his account is marked by cautious optimism.

The author declares the second part to be the “heart” of his study (p. 78). Here, Karuhije discusses the link between the incarnate Logos and the church, which is the incarnation continued, and examines metaphors that illustrate the manifold roles that the Logos assumes for the church. He shows how tightly Clementine ecclesiology and Christology are intertwined.

The second half of the work analyzes the believers within the church. As the new “people of God,” they’re defined both by charity across social boundaries and by certain cultic practices (Part Three). In and through the church, divine philanthropy is realized. Internally, it is structured into both a spiritual hierarchy leading to gnosis and an institutional one of less interest to Clement (Part Four). The intricate connection of individual and collective dimensions in Clement’s concept is emphasized.

Karuhije follows the methodology proposed by Clement in *str.* 7.111.1 through the metaphor of gardening: by collecting all the “plants” from the Alexandrian’s entire oeuvre (which Karuhije treats in great detail), he finally concludes that, when explored through extensive study, the Clementine ecclesiology is mostly coherent and systematic as well as dynamic (p. 541). However, Clement doesn’t answer many questions about how (“comment”) the church of his time works in practice, but rather why (“pourquoi”) it is important for the believers (p. 546).

Although Karuhije carefully dissects anachronisms in the reception of Clement’s work (p. 567), one might ask if his insistence on “l’Église” (*the Church*) might not also be construed as anachronistic for the reality of second-century Alexandria. However, the wide range of topics and materials discussed is commendable and makes this work worth reading.

Johanna A. Jürgens  
University of Göttingen  
doi:10.1017/S0009640724000854