

um so auch ein historisches Profil der Frage zu gewinnen. Der Gerechtigkeit halber muß man freilich einräumen, daß vor allem Rohrmoser und Lübke sich um einige historische Reminiszenzen mühen. Vielleicht könnte es einem weiteren Kolloquium auf ähnlich hohem Niveau vorbehalten sein, die hier oft nur angerissenen Fragen noch weiter zu vertiefen und in mehr geschichtlicher Perspektive zu erörtern. A. Schilson

Breton, Stanislaus, *Unicité et Monothéisme* (Cogitatio Fidei 106). Paris: du cerf 1981. 168 S.

B.'s rethinking of the relation between monotheism and unicity builds upon the perennial philosophical problem of the one and the many. At the end of a dialectic, influenced by Hegel and Marx, emerges a Plotinian world view in which unicity and monotheism lose their traditional Christian meanings.

The initial chapter, following Frege, sees unicity as a concept of second level, or, ultimately, an affirmation of the existence of a first level concept, or essence. In such a conceptual context not only does the notion of perfection not involve necessarily a unique existence but also uniqueness always implies the existence of the contrary by which it is defined. In the second chapter B. defines religious thought as fundamentally relational, or functional; the unique God guarantees the uniqueness of His chosen people who find their "need of security" (51) fulfilled in Him. The third chapter traces the development of Biblical monotheism from Moses to the prophets. The experience of slavery forced Moses to appeal to the God of his forefathers for liberation, thus transforming a God of nature into a God of liberation: "the being of God is only the conclusion of His ought-to-be." (62) He provides the unexpected hope to unite and galvanize a people. The prophets universalized this vision, seeing God's care for justice extended beyond a particular people. They did not see far enough since they limited the insight to the privilege of the Jews. B. nevertheless prefers this moral insight to philosophical monotheism whose transcendent use of concepts does not escape from man's immanence. The fourth chapter focuses on the mediation of Jesus Christ in the Passion, which is the nothingness of the human and divine forms, and in the Resurrection, which causes the existence of the mediator in a transfigured human-divine condition. Christianity has traditionally assigned a unique, absolute value to Christ's mediation, even if such uniqueness is rationally justifiable only with difficulty. For "absolute" means a separation from others, hence is defined by others who question its exclusivity. Moreover, since Christ is unique in terms of His function, Christology must be functional, not primarily ontological. Thus the path is opened to relativizing the historical Christ through B.'s interpretation of the resurrection as the passage from a carnal, historical substance to a universal function, as Jesus' "becoming Christ". The empty tomb reveals the nothingness from which the elevation to universal significance arises, a return to the *ex nihilo* of creation, where the weakness and power of God are revealed, a nothingness capable of accepting all forms. Thus many writings can be inspired and many mediators discovered in a universal history. Thus faith need not be tied to any historical proof of Jesus' existence but allows the believer the play of his imagination to concretize faith in one or various symbols of universal mediation. Only such a pneumatic freedom prevents the idolatry of a unique image.

In the fifth chapter monotheism's alleged superiority over polytheism is criticized. The religions of manifestation (polytheism) complement the religions of revelation (monotheism). Reality, or Life, seems to consist in a fertile dialectic between the two. This perpetual circle of reciprocal becoming is grounded in some original Heraclitean "fire" beyond representations of the personal Unique. The perennial religious schema involves a procession-creation and a return-conversion that comprises the unity of all religion, "the simultaneous becoming of the one in the many and the many in the one" (147). Within this vision Christian becoming involves the cross as the sign of the recognition of one's nothingness, an intuition granted in suffering, which opens the soul to the fullness of form represented by the resurrection. Ultimately the "circulation without end" (136) between cross and resurrection, nothingness and being, is grounded in "the christic" (once called Christ), the metahistorical and metapsychological depth of becoming. A concluding chapter urges Christians to accept their uniqueness as one religion alongside many complements and to adopt humility in dealing with other religions.

In short B. offers a Buddhist or Plotinian critique of Christianity. Since his analysis of uniqueness is founded on concepts, to which existence is subsequently predicated, it is hardly surprising that uniqueness applies only to material individuality, the insignificance of number. Perhaps a deeper mediation on the paradox of the one and the many would lead him not to oppose these poles, but to see their reconciliation in terms of divine omnipotence and human freedom. The infinite one embraces the many without destroying them. Moreover, despite the Buddhist critique of "power" pervading his work, B. seems ultimately to conceive God as a non-personal force. In Judaism and Christianity God is not a mere power enabling an exodus from present injustice. He is the personal God of love. No less than any human person may God (and His Son) be completely relativized to human becoming (a one-sided interpretation of the one-many paradox in terms of the Heraclitean flux). He is not unique to guarantee power to privileged individuals or peoples. He demands sacrifice. Man can only dedicate himself totally to God in love, if there is one God to ground that dedication. So Abraham abandoned his past (Ur) and prepared to surrender his future (Isaac), so Jesus surrendered His life to the Father. Only in the surrender of love is the gift of life received. Christianity does not lose itself in a metahistorical, contemplative circle. Rather than a symbol of nothingness (*materia prima*), the cross is the point of decision where human love should respond to the divine love; one assumes the cross of finitude and sin in the here and now of history. Humility does not consist in reducing the claims of Christ, but in accepting the love of the crucified one who raises men to a share in His everlasting life.

J. M. McDermott, S. J.

Tsujimura, Kōichi/Ohashi, Ryosuke/Rombach, Heinrich, *Sein und Nichts. Grundbilder westlichen und östlichen Denkens*. Basel/Freiburg/Wien: Herder 1981. 71 S.

Bereits in seinem Bilder-Buch „Leben des Geistes“ (1977) hat Heinrich Rombach die hier erneut veröffentlichte Strukturanalyse (13–27) der „Krönung Mariens“ von Hans Baldung genannt Grien (Anfang 16. Jh.) vorgelegt, in der sich nach K. Tsujimura nicht nur „der Grundstandort seines Denkens... enthüllt...“, sondern zugleich auch seine Forderung der „intermundanen Kommunikation“ (31): des entsprechenden Gesprächs zwischen unvergleichlichen Welten ohne gemeinsamen Verstehens-Horizont, d. h. vor allem zwischen Ost und West. Denn das Altarbild auf dem Hochaltar des Freiburger Münster zeigt nicht nur den dialektisch vermittelten Ausgleich eines nicht versiegenden Widerstreites zwischen Vater (Macht) und Sohn (Sinn), der sich in die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Petrus (Katholizismus) und Paulus (Protestantismus) in die Geschichte (die beiden Seitenflügel) hinein fortsetzt. Vielmehr macht die strukturanalytische Betrachtung eine „neue Trinität“ von Unendlichem Geist (Tauben), erscheinender Liebe (Antlitz Mariens) und Demut der Endlichkeit (betend gesenkte Hände Mariens) sichtbar, die sich mit der „älteren Trinität“ zum „Wesenskreuz“ einer doppelten Vermittlung verbindet. Als Kreuzpunkt dieses Kreuzes und als Mitte der Vermittlung erscheint aber der unscheinbare Zwischenraum zwischen Krone und Haupt Mariens, d. h. der „Augenblick“ der Krönung, Erhöhung und Vollendung des Menschlichen, der sowohl ewig ist (in der Horizontalen der beiden „Ewigen Gestalten“), als auch epochal „augenblicklich“ geschieht (in der Vertikalen der Einstrahlung des Geistes in die irdische Wirklichkeit). Mit dieser „Augenblicksstätte“ der Ruhe für alle Bewegung ist dann aber auch der „gemeinsame Punkt der Entsprechung“ (9) gefunden, von dem her das „Weltgespräch“ zwischen östlichem und westlichem Weg in Gang gebracht werden kann, und zwar so, daß gerade die unüberbrückbare Verschiedenheit beider Wege „in Bildern sich selbst bekundet“ (63). – Von dieser Absicht geleitet wird deshalb dem Grundbild des abendländischen Denkens das Kakemono „Der den Berg hinabgehende Sakyamuni“ des alt-chinesischen Malers Liang K'ai (Anfang 13. Jh.) als analoges Grundbild des ostasiatischen Denkens zur Seite gestellt, dessen Struktur Tsujimura analysiert (31–45). Die Differenz der beiden Bilder beschreibt das Referat *Obasbis* eben vom „Ort des Augenblicks“ her (47–62). Dieser „atopische Ort“ (Platon) steht im „Augenblick“ des Abstiegs des Sakyamuni-Buddha als das „absolute Nichts“ im Vordergrund und beläßt die trinitarische Struktur von Oben, Unten und Mitte eher sekundär im Hintergrund, während das Bild „Krönung Mariens“ umgekehrt „das Wesenskreuz als Kreuz der Trini-