

Christoph Böttigheimer

Lehrbuch der Fundamentaltheologie. Die Rationalität der Gottes-, Offenbarungs- und Kirchenfrage. (Textbook of Fundamental Theology. The Rationality of the Questions of God, Revelation and Church.) Herder, Freiburg i.Br. 2009, 736 pp.

In this textbook of fundamental theology, Christoph Böttigheimer follows the classical structure of this theological discipline by beginning with a basic introduction to the discipline and to theological epistemology. Afterwards, he deals with the three *demonstrations*: the question of God's existence (*demonstratio religiosa*), of his revelation in history (*demonstratio christiana*) and of the Church as the place where the revelation is conserved and conveyed (*demonstratio catholica*). The claim of this textbook, which is mainly directed to students, is to be an (extensive) introduction to these different fields of fundamental theology. Therefore, the author does not deal extensively with other conceptions of fundamental theology and, e.g., does not really take up a stance within the discussion of the possibility of an ultimate justification but rather informs about it and adds only some short critical remarks on the different positions.

Keeping this in mind, this book can be read as a valuable source of information on the various topics – be it different conceptions of 'science' or of rationality, the different stages of critique of religion (beginning with antiquity, but also dealing with the challenges based on scientific experiments, especially neurobiology, and with the 'classics' like Feuerbach, Nietzsche, Freud, Sartre and Marx and ending with modern philosophy, where he mentions Habermas, Derrida, Vattimo, and Lévinas), the development of the understanding of revelation from the Old Testament to Second Vatican Council and theology of religion or the different aspects of the ecclesiology of this council. Whereas the ecumenical dimension is present throughout this work, the importance of Judaism for Christian identity and theology does not get the required attention.

Apart from that, this textbook is a very informative introduction to the different aspects of fundamental theology and very suited for students (perhaps except for the price).

(Thomas Fornet-Ponse)