

*Grund und Gegenstand des Glaubens nach römisch-katholischer und evangelisch-lutherischer Lehre. Theologische Studien* (Ground and subject of Faith according to Roman-Catholic and Evangelic-Lutheran doctrine. Theological Studies). Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2008, 610 pp.

The present volume contains the results of the first working phase of the international and interconfessional study group „Problems of Fundamental Theology in ecumenical Perspective“ which was established at the Pontifical Lateran University and consists of three Roman-Catholic (Guiseppe Lorzio, Massimo Serretti, Lubomir Zak) and three Evangelic-Lutheran (Eilert Herms, Wilfried Härle, Christoph Schwöbel) scholars.

This study group deals with the question of the unity of the subject to which the whole of the authoritative Roman-Catholic and Evangelic-Lutheran doctrine is related to: the dynamic ground and subject of the Christian certainty of faith. According to the leading hypothesis, this unity makes possible a methodical empathy because each theologian is able to acknowledge the ambition of the other confession's doctrine to relate to the same subject as his own tradition. Thus, it is possible to comprehend the approach of the other tradition and its consistence from its own perspective and to propose – where required – necessary emendations. Therefore, each of the discussed subjects in this volume dealing with fundamental theological aspects of revelation, faith, anthropology and ecclesiology is treated in four articles: Each tradition explains not only its own approach and understanding of the subject but also tries to understand the other tradition on the ground of its own tradition. Each of the four parts of the volume is concluded by the minutes of the discussion. Whereas I am not totally convinced if an understanding of another tradition is possible which is not influenced by my own tradition, this approach can overcome many misunderstandings, leads to a better understanding of both traditions and can avoid a false irenism.

Finally, this volume is very important for ecumenical theology not because of arriving at a consensus but because of its clarifications of the subject of faith and the relation of both traditions and their doctrines to it.

(Thomas Fornet-Ponse)