

symboliska — utan att blanda samman de båda. Inkarnationen innebär därmed inte någon flykt från tiden och historien utan tvärtom det fundamentala bejakandet av dessa, till skillnad från en mer platonisk föreställning om sanningen som existerar någonstans utanför tiden. Inkarnationen blir i stället paradigmet för det «ögonblick», den «intervention» eller rent utav det «trauma» som löser människan från sina repetitiva tvångsbeteenden så att hon i stället förmår gripa sin egen historia. Kyrkan realiserar detta främst genom sin nattvardsliturgi, som är den källa ur vilken den kristna existensen flödar.

För det tredje vill Pound iscensätta ett möte mellan teologi och psykoanalys som tillvaratar psykoanalysens insikter — som han menar att den till dels ärvt från teologin — men utan dess nihilistiska konsekvenser. Den fundamentalt viktiga insikten om människan som en bristvarelse som aldrig kan bli hel leder oss inte tillbaka till intet utan till en fullhet vars själva outtömlighet innebär att människans begär aldrig kan bli mättat. Psykoanalysen skall bevaras genom att övervinnas av den kristna liturgin som ett slags kollektiv analysession.

Som Pound själv anmärker är det en tämligen annorlunda tes som försöker argumentera för en katolsk lära om nattvarden med hjälp av en ateist (Lacan) och en protestant (Kierkegaard). Uppslagsrikedomen i boken är stor, och Pound förmår förklara synnerligen komplexa teorier på ett tillgängligt sätt. Dess främsta förtjänster skulle jag vilja säga finns i första och tredje nivån enligt ovan; även om det finns invändningar mot hur Pound presenterar Lacan och Kierkegaard är själva djärvheten i Pounds paralleller nydanande och tjänar därmed också till att sätta relationen mellan psykoanalys och teologi i ett nytt ljus. Den andra nivån är jag däremot mer tveksam till, inte primärt mot det spekulativa draget i utläggningen av realpresensen men snarare att den teologiska utläggningen är ganska kortfattad givet ämnets komplexitet. En mer problematiserande presentation av nattvardsläran skulle öka såväl intentionsdjupet som förklara varför eller hurvida den är mer central än exempelvis en luthersk teologi om predikan eller en pentekostal teologi om tungotalet. Här skulle även en mer empirisk diskussion om den konkreta receptionen av nattvarden kunna belysa andra aspekter jämfört med en klinisk analys.

Men även om Pound inte är fullt övertygande i denna nivå har han mer än väl infriat min förhoppning om att någon skall vända på steken och visa hur det samtida mötet mellan psykoanalys, radikal filosofi och teologi också kan låta den kristna teologin hämta insikter från dessa andra fält och inte bara tvärtom. Och detta är knappast det sista ordet i frågan; redan hösten 2008 publicerar Pound som sin andra bok en —

som det heter i titeln — «(våldigt) kritisk tolkning» av Žižek.

*Ola Sigurdson*

J. Wentzel van Huyssteen: *Alone in the World? Human Uniqueness in Science and Theology*. 347 pages. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK 2006.

J. Wentzel van Huyssteen held the Gifford Lectures for 2004, which were published two years later. A Swedish translation (*Ensam i världen? Människans särställning inom naturvetenskap och teologi*, Nya Doxa, 2008) is now available. Translator Per Lennart Månsson has done a thorough work, and the scientific apparatus has been checked by expert Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm.

Having been the James I. McCord Professor of Theology and Science at Princeton for a number of years, South African van Huyssteen is used to collaborating with a wide range of scholars. His Gifford lectures are a bold attempt to look at human uniqueness in an interdisciplinary way, and how this uniqueness is perceived in theology and in palaeo-anthropology. The book is not an easy read, as we are taken along on two different routes, one ultimately theological, dealing with the transcendent expressed in mythological and symbolic language, the other palaeo-anthropological, dealing with the scientific study of the origin of human beings. While it brings us new insights of great value, the one route challenging the other, one is also reminded that any serious interdisciplinary study is risk-taking. I will come back to this.

The first two chapters are prolegomena and set the scene, both in terms of methodology and epistemology. Then the two main chapters follow: one about human uniqueness in theological form, the other about to what extent such a concept of uniqueness is applicable to palaeo-anthropology. Chapters 5 and 6 contain among other things a discussion about shamanism as the early religious expression of Homo sapiens as well as arguments for a cognitive evolution drawing on linguistics, neuroscience and neuropsychology.

Before going into a more critical evaluation let me highlight the following points. What is needed is a postfoundationalist rationality that is contextually sensitive to various traditions without making us intellectually imprisoned in our own contexts or locking us into a tribal kind of thinking. Such rationality can be seen as a skill enabling us to discern patterns of interpreted experience, using rhetoric, articulation, and critical judgement. This is where transversality (a geo-

metrical term) comes into play: voices are articulated without being contradicted or assimilated.

Van Huyssteen acknowledges the important role that Darwin has played. His *Descent of Man* makes perfectly clear that we are part of an unbroken continuum between animals and humans, and that the difference is one of degree. While this continuum is a given it is at the same time evident to Darwin that the humans have developed characteristics that are unique.

Apart from the biological evolution there is also an epistemological evolution. Without necessarily breaking up the Darwinian canon van Huyssteen demonstrates that the human embodiment still leaves a lot of space for surprises and new developments that are far from gradual when it comes to human cognition. While staying faithful to Darwin, there is quite a radical move beyond him as well.

The author already has positioned himself within his subject and this is becoming abundantly clear in his chapter on *imago Dei*. In short he explores the scarce Biblical texts on this doctrine, especially Genesis 1: 26–28. The historical overview makes clear how soon the image and likeness of God was to be interpreted as something having to do with the mind (notably Augustine talking about memory, understanding and will) and that this carried on well beyond Reformation times. The human function has been stressed alongside existential and eschatological interpretations. The history of the *imago Dei* is frequently marked by androcentrism and sheer misogyny and van Huyssteen is eventually helped by a Feminist theologian (Phyllis Bird) in rereading the texts. What has been largely missing until recently, and here Feminist theology has helped us to retrieve what was lost, is an interpretation that is embodied.

The second Out of Africa migration led to some remarkable artistic, cultural and religious expressions in southwest Europe and van Huyssteen has studied the sophisticated and awe-inspiring paintings in the caves of Cougnac, Niaux and Lascaux etc. With the help of scholars like Tattersall, Mithen and also Lewis-Williams, it is demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that these first modern humans were distinct in their evolution of their cognitively fluid minds that were open to symbolic, creative behaviour. Here evidently within a «short» span of time, perhaps only 20,000 years ago, characteristics like consciousness, language, symbolic thinking and symbolic behaviour developed and these characteristics are indeed directly related to religious awareness and religious behaviour. (Similar expressions, but not in such concentrated form [as far as we know], dating up to 100,000 years back, has been found especially in Africa.)

These are but a few essentials from a particularly rich book. Nevertheless I have some critical comments to make. As is common in all research, the strategy used in terms of terminology and method etc. will partly determine the outcome so that the result can be registered early on. This is the case here too. With postfoundationalist entries and with a notion like transversality, with a Darwinian canon that is transposed into cognitive evolution, with contextuality and embodiment, a specific *Vorverständnis* is created that is conducive to the subject matter. It becomes reasonable to talk about human uniqueness from a theological as well as a natural scientific point of view.

It is an open question how many of the palaeo-anthropologists that will learn from this, and one can see a weakness and a danger with this kind of research: those scientists like Tattersall and Lewis-Williams who have an open mind to religious imagination also become the dialogue partners, while Dawkins, the radical reductionist and atheist, hardly is consulted.

As to more specific comments there is first a need to discuss the terms «theology» and «science». The question whether theology is science (cf. *Wissenschaft, vetenskap*) will not disappear.

Secondly, Lewis-Williams may be perfectly right in seeing shamanism as one of the first primordial forms of religion. Without falling into the trap of abstraction, it would have been interesting to discuss the possibility of belief in a transcendent God in this connection.

Thirdly, the first part of the title, *Alone in the World?*, would rightly underline the radical shift that has taken place in the midst of an evolutionary process. And yet I think it is an unfortunate title; the very awareness, the ability to reflect on the other creatures speak of interconnectedness, even community in creation; and becoming human is intrinsically linked to being made in the image of God. As humans we are not alone, and Christologically we relate to that which is created and to the one who creates.

My last point regards van Huyssteen's interdisciplinary theology. In a convincing way he demonstrates that theology often suffers from speculation and unnecessary abstractions. Interdisciplinary theology can avoid that. According to the writer both Karl Barth and Jürgen Moltmann run into speculative abstractions when trying to describe *imago Dei* from a relational and social point of view respectively, having the Trinity as their point of departure. Palaeo-anthropology can help theology see the embeddedness of the unique *homo sapiens* in describing *imago Dei*.

Hans S. A. Engdahl

