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Benjamins, H.S.

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Marius van Hoogstraten, *Theopoetics and Religious Difference: The Unruliness of the Interreligious: A Dialogue with Richard Kearney, John D. Caputo and Catherine Keller* (Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2020), ISBN 9783161598005; xi + 259 pp., € 84.00.

This book is about the unruliness or anarchy of religious difference the author discovered when working for the Mennonite Church in Berlin, building interreligious relations. The anarchy of difference refers to the continuous shift of agreements and disagreements in conversations of interreligious groups between members of same and different faith. Van Hoogstraten wants to relate religious difference to theopoetics as an unruly way of thinking about God, which may make sense of what is going on in interreligious conversations.

In the first chapter, theologies of religion are introduced and discussed, namely pluralism, trinitarianisms, and comparative theology. They cannot pay due attention to the unruliness of religious difference, since they try to control and stabilize it by means of their own categories and concepts. Pluralism presupposes some transcendent reality beyond religious difference, trinitarianisms maintain their Christian vocabulary in relating to different religions, and comparative theology still works from the assumption that religions can be delineated and have a stable identity even though it dispenses with comprehensive schemes. Feminist and postcolonial critiques challenge the presuppositions of theologies of religion. Kwok Pui-Lan's theology is of particular importance, as she asks for a theology of difference that recognizes difference to have been constructed by various interests.

In the next chapters Van Hoogstraten gives a careful and clarifying description of the theologies of Richard Kearney, John Caputo, and Catherine Keller. In spite of his appreciation of their theopoetic approaches, he is moderately critical of the way they incidentally apply their theology to the interreligious. In Kearney's theology hospitality and the stranger play an important role, but these concepts retain the difference between host and guest and suggest that every non-Christian is a stranger. Besides, Kearney seems to work within a pluralist scheme as he suggests that the truth of all

religion is a sacred hospitality. Apparently, he would like to see anatheistic versions of all religions. John Caputo's theology of the event is assessed more positively, as it underlines the unsettling and disturbing effects of interreligious encounters for one's own tradition, without claiming that other names name the same God as one's own. Yet, there is a quasi-pluralism in Caputo. He does not assume that all religious expressions refer to the same, but rather supposes that the wide variety of religious language has the same destabilizing effect on all, as it points to the unprivileged status of any name we might give to the address of our faith. In the end, Caputo's theology is held to be insufficient for building interreligious relations and affirm our interdependence. Catherine Keller's theology is much more promising in this respect. Since all that is, is relationally constituted, all is characterized by relationality in difference. Religious relations, therefore, do not start from scratch and the religious other is not a stranger but someone with whom we are already entangled in a complex history. Keller articulates what may be called a "relational pluralism" according to which religions already are mutually enfolded.

In the final chapter, Van Hoogstraten develops a theo-poetics of difference and relates it to the concerns of the various approaches in theology of religions. Such a theo-poetics of difference would especially appreciate instances of interreligious encounter for shaking up things and reconsidering terms of togetherness in order to bring us into deeper relationships. In this final chapter, Keller's relationality, Kearney's narrative imagination and Caputo's deconstruction are read alongside and combined with notions from Bhabha, Derrida and Venuti in a rather complex way that is somewhat at odds with the clarity of the preceding chapters. The point is that we should not talk about religious others but about difference, and not about diversity as a plurality of identities but about a difference that is constitutive of our identities and destabilizes them as well. It commands us to look at religions and religious identities as always already entangled and born of each other. In order to protect difference, *différance*, *khora* or *tehom* should be recognized as an "un-principle" denying every first principle that might establish fixed identities. The *différance* calls our religious belongings or certainties into question and opens us up to our interdependency, which would allow us to engage with an indeterminate gathering. "An anarchist theo-poetics of religious difference would not seek to bring difference under control or banish it, but see togetherness arise precisely from it" (240).

As sympathetic as I am to this project and this challenging book, I wonder how it will contribute to the practice of building interreligious relations. The author is very sensitive to a liberal or postmodern exclusivism that

asks to go along with deconstruction and difference before being allowed access to the interreligious table, but his own theory seems to presuppose these very notions. How to find deeper relationships with those who deny the shaking of their foundations?

Rick Benjamins, Protestant Theological University Amsterdam

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