

PHILIP GEISTER & GÖSTA HALLONSTEN
FAITHFUL
INTERPRETATIONS
TRUTH AND ISLAM IN CATHOLIC
THEOLOGY OF RELIGIONS

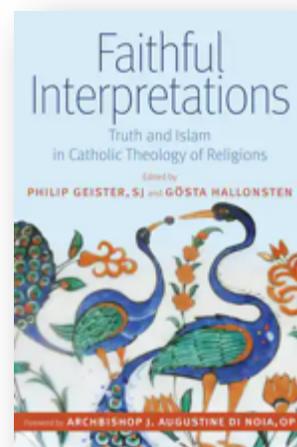
Foreword by J. Augustine Di Noia

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"Theology of Religions" is among the most burning issues within Christian theology today. The challenge to study and discuss different ways of handling conflicting truth claims and religious narratives between religions is taken up by a growing number of theologians across denominational boundaries. This is a common and ecumenical effort undertaken by Christian theologians all over the world. And yet, the impact of specific ecclesiastical or theological traditions on different concepts of theology of religions should not be underestimated. As well known, the Second Vatican council with its pivotal decree *Nostra Aetate* (On the relation to other religions) not only set the agenda for Catholic theology, but even influenced the wider discussion on the topic. The papers of this volume were all given at a conference in Uppsala, Sweden in October 2017. The structure of *Faithful Interpretations* follows closely the way the conference was conducted.

A general introduction to the development and present status of "Theology of Religions" by Marianne Moyaert opens the book. Archbishop J Augustine Di Noia of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith then treats the recent developments in the teaching of the Magisterium regarding theology of religions. Anna Bonta Moreland addresses the issue of Muhammad and Christian Prophecy. Diego R Sarrió Cucarella focuses on early Christian theological views of Islam and concludes that Islam has been from the beginning a "disturbing" factor in the Christian view of salvation history. Wilhelmus G B M Valkenberg discusses the impact of *Nostra Aetate* on the Church's relation to Muslims, using especially the precedent of Nicolaus of Cues as regards a constructive approach to Islam. Klaus von Stosch addresses a sensitive issue in Muslim-Christian relations and illustrates the advantages of the comparative theology approach for the theology of religions.

Complementing this perspective, Peter Jonkers offers a hermeneutical perspective on truth claims, and reflects on "the religious Other" with references to Jacques Derrida among others. Reinhold Bernhardt argues in favour of a biblically grounded "relational-existential" theory of

deborah@agencedeborahdruba.com phone +33142544389 mobile +33622081500

www.agencedeborahdruba.com

truth, which would be most helpful with regard to other religions. To conclude, the prominent Catholic specialist on Theology of Religions, Gavin D'Costa, widened the perspective by addressing the relation to Judaism from the point of view of the covenant and the promises of the land. Altogether, the papers of this volume give a clear impression of the status of Roman Catholic Theology of Religions.

PHILIP GEISTER, SJ is Rector, Newman Institute.

GÖSTA HALLONSTEN is professor emeritus, Lund University, Sweden.

ARCHBISHOP J. AUGUSTINE DI NOIA is Adjunct Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

PRAISE

"Will appeal to Catholics who are interested in the current state of interreligious dialogue and the theology of religion, both specialists and non-specialists."

~Scott Steinkerchner, OP, freelance theologian

"Since the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate*, Catholic theologians have debated amongst themselves how best to engage non-Christians in dialogue. To do so in a manner that maintains fidelity to the tradition of Christian revelation while at the same time acknowledges the validity of other religious experiences, has been a challenge, to say the least. The scholars in this volume deftly present readers with an historical overview of the debate while going beyond mere review to provide important speculative seeds that will assist a new generation of students to think more creatively about, and to engage with integrity in, interreligious encounter and dialogue"

~Anthony Direlli, Associate Director, USCCB's Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs

" *Faithful Interpretations* is a thoughtful collaborative contribution to Catholic thinking on Islam in light of Vatican II, the post-conciliar documents on dialogue and proclamation, with an eye to the new questions arising in this era of interreligious openness and learning. Each contributor thinks freshly about Islam and Catholicism from a theological perspective, attending to points of commonality and difference, questions of truth, and the path forward in productive exchange. Light is shed too on the state of the theology of religions discipline today. The volume should inspire similar theological and dialogical exchanges with the other great traditions of the world."

~Francis X. Clooney, SJ, Parkman Professor of Divinity, Harvard University

"The volume offers a fresh set of approaches to the often neglected question of truth in Christian theology of religions in general and with respect to Islam in particular. It addresses

some of the enduring theological challenges in Muslim-Christian comparative theology in creative new ways and it will thus be an important resource for scholars in the field."

~Catherine Cornille, Boston College

"This important collection of papers, first delivered at an international conference in Uppsala, both protects and pushes Catholic boundaries in interreligious dialogue, especially between the Church and Islam. Authors criticize both the theology of religions and comparative religions, rethink the nature of revelation, and offer breakthrough suggestions that open up new possibilities for dialogue: a must read for those hoping to make genuine progress in Christian/Islamic relations."

~James L. Heft, SM, President Emeritus and Founder of the Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies, University of Southern California