infinitely and without limits.

Cloud of the Impossible is dense, and while at times Keller's theology is challenging, it is never inaccessible. The author has a knack not only for eloquently explaining multifaceted concepts from theology and continental philosophy but for rooting them in illustrations from popular literature, her travels, or intellectuals outside theology. The book's difficulty is one of its greatest assets, as the reader feels a sense of reward in tying together its complex themes. This feeling is compounded by the way voices such as those of Cusa, Whitehead, and Deleuze, as well as those of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Judith Butler, and John Cobb, frequently appear within the text. This volume offers a detailed account of human entanglement within negative theology, and flawlessly exemplifies how the study of theology can extend into other academic disciplines.

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August den Hollander, Alex Noord, Mirjam van Veen, and Anna Voolstra, eds. *Religious Minorities and Cultural Diversity in the Dutch Republic: Studies Presented to Piet Visser on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014.

This volume of sixteen essays gives primary attention to the religiously and culturally diverse landscape of the early Dutch Republic, focusing on identity formation and cultural hybridity among religious minorities, especially the Mennonites. Contributors to this volume employ multi-disciplinary approaches, highlighting not only religious but also social, political, and economic realities with a view of better understanding how Anabaptists/Mennonites and other dissenting groups established their identity, how they interacted with one another, and how they intermingled with the "outside world."

The book is a tribute to Piet Visser and marks his 65th birthday.

Since 2002, Visser has been a professor at the Doopsgezind Seminarium (Mennonite Seminary) located at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Over the years his work in historical literature, book history, and theology has opened up new avenues of thinking about how Mennonites evolved from being a persecuted minority to becoming respectable burghers of the Dutch Republic. The volume builds on Visser's scholarly agenda, taking into account his interest in the long-term view, addressing developments in Anabaptism from the 16th to the 20th centuries.

Several of the essays take note of the Dutch Republic's highly competitive religious market. Through considering various theological writings, the production of martyrologies, and the cultivation of rituals, the authors note how religious groups sought to reinforce internal cohesion and legitimize their place within Dutch society. In an age of confessionalization, one might expect a reification of religious attitudes, a thickening of boundaries between competing communities without the possibility of mutual exchange. However, as a number of essays demonstrate, the boundaries between religious communities were often porous. Mainstream groups and dissenting minorities frequently exchanged ideas, images, and rituals. Commonalities that surfaced often superseded denominational and group distinctions, reflecting a high degree of religious and social hybridity.

A major contribution of *Religious Minorities and Cultural Diversity in the Dutch Republic* is its attention to the way in which Mennonites interacted with the world of the Enlightenment. Broadly speaking, paying attention to the theme of Mennonites and modernity is not new. More than a century ago, Ernst Troeltsch assumed that Anabaptists, with their emphasis on voluntarism, equality, and toleration, anticipated the values of the modern age. Because of persecution, however, they eventually missed the opportunity to shape modern history in any profound way. American Mennonite historians agreed with Troeltsch, but added that the Anabaptists lost their relevance either because they surrendered their essential identity to the inward-oriented focus of pietism, or because they capitulated to the diluting forces of assimilation.

The essays collected here challenge these interpretive frameworks. The authors shun essentialist thinking and withhold judgment about pietistic (or "spiritualist") affinities and assimilating propensities. Instead of portraying

Mennonites as being negatively influenced by the Enlightenment, many of the contributors, in a non-judgmental fashion, suggest ways in which Mennonites were actually participants and shapers of that era. Rather than telling a story of a movement in decline, they fashion an account that highlights Mennonite engagement and constructive participation in the modern project.

The contributors to this volume clearly want to tell the Mennonite story without expressing confessional biases or offering judgments. In the introduction, the editors insist that the historian's task properly understood is about describing and explaining; it is not about making normative judgements. I am sympathetic to the concern for greater historical objectivity, but I have difficulty believing that it is possible to engage in the historical field in a disinterested fashion without offering some kind of evaluation or appraisal. In the telling of any story, aren't normative judgments in some sense unavoidable?

That said, there is much to celebrate about this rich collection of essays. The attention paid to the long-term view is especially fruitful, in that it provides a complex and nuanced imaging of Mennonite life. Instead of a static depiction of Mennonites quietly minding their own business—a common representation of Mennonites in North American historiographies of the past—this volume portrays them as evolving, dynamic, and refreshingly "worldly." Indeed, the book has complicated the Mennonite story, which is why it should be required reading for any serious student of Mennonite history.

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