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978-0-521-87003-0 - Theology, Political Theory, and Pluralism: Beyond Tolerance and Difference

Kristen Deede Johnson

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Theology, Political Theory, and Pluralism

How can we live together in the midst of our differences? This is one of the most pressing questions of our time. Tolerance has been the bedrock of political liberalism, while proponents of agonistic political thought and radical democracy have sought an answer that allows a deeper celebration of difference. Kristen Deede Johnson describes the move from tolerance to difference, and the accompanying move from epistemology to ontology, within recent political theory. Building on this “ontological turn,” in search of a theological answer to the question, she puts Augustine into conversation with recent political theorists and theologians. This theological option enables the Church to envision a way to engage with contemporary political society without losing its own embodied story and practices. It contributes to our broader political imagination by offering a picture of rich engagement between the many different particularities that constitute a pluralist society.

KRISTEN DEEDE JOHNSON is Associate Director of The CrossRoads Project and Assistant Professor of Political Science at Hope College in Holland, Michigan.

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*And as this grain has been gathered from many fields into one loaf
and these grapes from many hills into one cup, grant, O Lord, that thy
whole Church may soon be gathered from the ends of the earth
into thy kingdom.
Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

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Acknowledgments

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latter, I now find much more overlap between our concerns and visions than I once did. In the case of the former, the resonances between the two are obvious, as are the differences.

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