

Religious Responses to Violence: Human Rights in Latin America Past and Present. Edited by Alexander Wilde. Notre Dame, MN: University of Notre Dame, 2016. Pp. xix + 498. \$39.20.

This volume of essays emerged from the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies at American University in Washington, DC. The central theme of these essays is to understand “how Churches and individuals were motivated by their religious beliefs, particularly in the form of constructive agency to mitigate violence.” The authors also examine “a range of societies throughout Latin America to identify commonalities as well as contrasts” (xv). The first part of the book focuses on the historical work of the church since the 1970s, and the second half examines the current issues that Latin America is facing.

This book has much to offer. Featuring scholars from different disciplines, it presents a wonderful account of historical events and analysis of what Latin Americans had experienced during the political and social turbulence of the region from the 1970s to the present times. It describes how violence infiltrated into the social, political, and cultural lives in the region and in the church’s efforts to respond to the repression. The authors all take a critical approach to describe the process of the religious groups, so the individual articles describe the different tensions that existed within the church. This approach of transparency and historical analysis helps educators and researchers understand the influence of violence within the theological, social, and political lives of Latin Americans. From the revolutionary leaders like Father Camilo Torres from Colombia to the creation of peace commissions, the churches have had a central role in the construction of democracy in the region. Thus, the authors highlight the importance of the process that the religious groups went through in Latin America which have helped shape their perspectives in addressing social justice issues in the region.

These essays highlight the tremendous efforts that are a necessary read for anyone interested in understanding the Latin American approach to human rights. The book engages both human rights activists as well as scholarly readers. It presents accounts and details that rarely would be accessible in one book. Even though this book is an edited volume, the topics complement each other and are relevant to anyone working on this issue today.

Luis Enrique Bazán
University of San Francisco

The Christian College and the Meaning of Academic Freedom: Truth-Seeking in Community. By William C. Ringenberg. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. Pp. xxii + 319. \$100.

This book has three chapters; the first and third are devoted to the topic of the subtitle: “truth-seeking,” while the second is focused on the subject of the title: on “academic freedom.” Ringenberg suggests that his first section is philosophical, but it actually is a discussion of Christian virtues, and, while it is interesting, seems irrelevant to the

topic of academic freedom in universities and even in Christian colleges. The third section is rather informative as it contains case histories of various conflicts within Christian colleges. Some of these are historical, such as the conflicts over evolution, whereas many of them are very contemporary, such as gender, race, and ethnicity.

In the second section R. discusses the ways in which the issue of academic freedom has been handled over time in Great Britain, Germany, and especially in the United States. While I found the discussions of the history of tensions between theological doctrines and scholarly investigations in the US to be quite informative, I found the treatment of German universities to be often simplistic and occasionally mistaken. What is perplexing, is the lack of a discussion regarding the issue of separation between church and state in German universities and the roles that famous Protestant theologians such as Friedrich Schleiermacher, Ernst Troeltsch, and Adolf Harnack played in those debates. Rather than a scholarly account of the facts of academic freedom, this book is more about Christian values—a plea for how Christian colleges should address contentious issues. This may help explain R.'s antipathy towards the American Association of University Professors and his preferences for Wheaton College and Calvin College. His emphasis is mostly on “Christian” and not on “higher education” and his suggestions are primarily about practicing scholarship in the service of Christianity.

Christopher Adair-Toteff
University of South Florida

Turning to the Heavens and the Earth: Theological Reflections on A Cosmological Conversion: Essays in Honor of Elizabeth A. Johnson. Edited by Julia Brumbaugh and Natalia Imperatori-Lee. Foreword Mary Catherine Hilkert, OP. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2016. Pp. xlvii + 289. \$34.95.

At the heart of this volume is a noteworthy recognition of Elizabeth A. Johnson's unique capacity to inspire and challenge her beloved community of theologians, when boldly, she reminded her colleagues of their vocational responsibility to infuse into every theological endeavor an environmental consciousness. Exploring the mysteries of God's unfolding Creation and grasping the apocalyptic gravity of the ecological crisis, was not the task of a few, but of the many. Cosmological conversion was an imperative.

Creating a “web of relationality,” Brumbaugh and Imperatori-Lee have edited a compilation of essays written in Johnson's honor that includes the voices of theologians who span generations, continents, cultures and traditions. Holding in common a profound appreciation, indeed admiration, for Johnson's ground-breaking contributions, they give expression to how Johnson's works and witness have informed and influenced their own.

Following a foreword by Mary Catherine Hilkert, a prologue by Kathy Coffey and an introduction to Johnson's writings and accomplishments by the editors, the