

D. sees three necessary tasks to reorient theology: (1) rethink resurrection in the light of the cross—the christological question; (2) explore what cross and resurrection mean for a proper understanding of God, which is to ask about God as Trinity; (3) and ask what God’s activity in cross and resurrection means for us, which is the doctrine of Pneumatology. This set of interlocking questions is meant to provide the framework for his book: “Cross and Resurrection—the Word of the Cross”; “Jesus Christ—Fundamental Problems in Constructing a Christology”; and “Trinity—The Theological Relevance of the Cross for the Idea of God.”

The last chapter, “Atoning Sacrifice,” is a provocative and sustained rejection of traditional understanding of the death of Christ as sacrificial, as well as a repudiation of liturgical interpretations that focus on sacrifice. It would find echoes in much contemporary Roman Catholic theology, which is mostly absent from this project. Although rigorously argued, this chapter seldom refers to the previous chapters and seems almost as an appendix to the rest of the work, although it is intended as the locus of his Pneumatology.

A few questions remain. D. finds fault with Moltmann for being unable to integrate a pneumatological component in the mystery of salvation, but D. himself provides only a very muted treatment of the Holy Spirit: the work is a thoroughly Christocentric project. Second, D. argues that until we get the grammar right, talk of inculturation of Christianity is premature. In today’s suffering, broken, and multicultural world, however, it is not clear that this grammar, finely tuned in the West, would serve as the only global grammar. The book is, nonetheless, a tour de force of rigorous theological argument.

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Religion and Violence: A Dialectical Engagement through the Insights of Bernard Lonergan.
By Dominic Arcamone. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2015. Pp. xii + 282. \$48; \$31.69.

Arcamone argues for a more nuanced evaluation of the link between religion and violence: he wants to understand “the link between religion and violence by religious agents who are concerned to bring social and cultural change through violent struggle and usually with a political outcome in mind” (ix). To this end, A. begins by offering a critical assessment of what he considers to be the limitations of current social scientific accounts of the link between religion and violence. In light of this review, he proposes a “dialectical engagement” with four symbols that link violence and religion: cosmic war, martyrdom, demonization, and warrior empowerment. This allows him, with the help of Lonergan, Girard, and Taylor, among many others, to develop a nuanced account of religion and violence that shows the conditions under which religion fosters or overcomes violence.

The argument holds interest, and there are genuinely helpful insights into the cultural and political conditions that affect religious agents. But the writing exhibits flaws that at times hinder an appreciation of the argument. The presentation of Lonergan is rushed and at times superficial. Complex notions that would require much more

explanation to be helpful to the reader are presented as if they were obvious. As a result, the reader with little or no background in Lonergan studies must accept with little understanding that these notions are well-grounded and relevant. At times, poor sentence structure can make following the argument difficult. Such flaws, however, could easily be remedied in a second edition; the argument itself warrants it, and the reader who is willing to follow through will be well-rewarded.

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Introducing Liberative Theologies. Edited by Miguel A. De La Torre. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2015. Pp. xxviii + 260. \$35.

As the number of edited collections in theology grows by leaps and bounds, theologians, scholars of religion, and students must establish ever stricter criteria to choose what to read and use in the classroom. Here are three criteria that I frequently use: a well-established editor, insightful voices, and stimulating topics. This book excels at all three. Much has been written about “liberation theology,” sometimes treating the subject as a vestige of the past (e.g., the 1960s), confined to a particular geographical region (e.g., Latin America), and unique to the experience of a very specific population (e.g., the poor). De La Torre’s vision shatters such narrow assumptions. This collection reminds us that when truly embracing a commitment to justice and better life conditions for all, theology is *liberative*. The term “liberative” is purposefully chosen to name the ever-present and urgent need for theology (and theologians) to act here and now in response to any form of marginalization. Liberative theology resists enshrinement in books, libraries, and systems. It is lived theology at its best.

This collection offers twelve instances of liberative theology unfolding in the USA and globally. Reading this book is a true testimony that the Spirit never ceases to inspire and move. Most of these liberative movements are Christian, although some are not. Some thrive in contexts stricken by poverty, others in wealthier realities. Some draw heavily from specific cultural contexts, others espouse more general perspectives. In many ways they have something to say to each other, reminding us about our shared humanity. Parts I and II of the book echo contemporary discourses with which the academy is increasingly familiar. The chapter on “Jewish and Islamic Liberation Theologies” is particularly enlightening. Part III, introducing US gender and sexual identity liberative discourses, is particularly prophetic as it highlights urgent areas of study that deserve much more attention by theologians and scholars of religion. Kudos also to Orbis for publishing a book that intentionally reaches out to the peripheries. The chapters are structurally and methodologically consistent. The glossary interspersed through the pages defining key concepts related to each chapter is a plus. The study questions and suggested readings at the end of each chapter are very helpful.

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