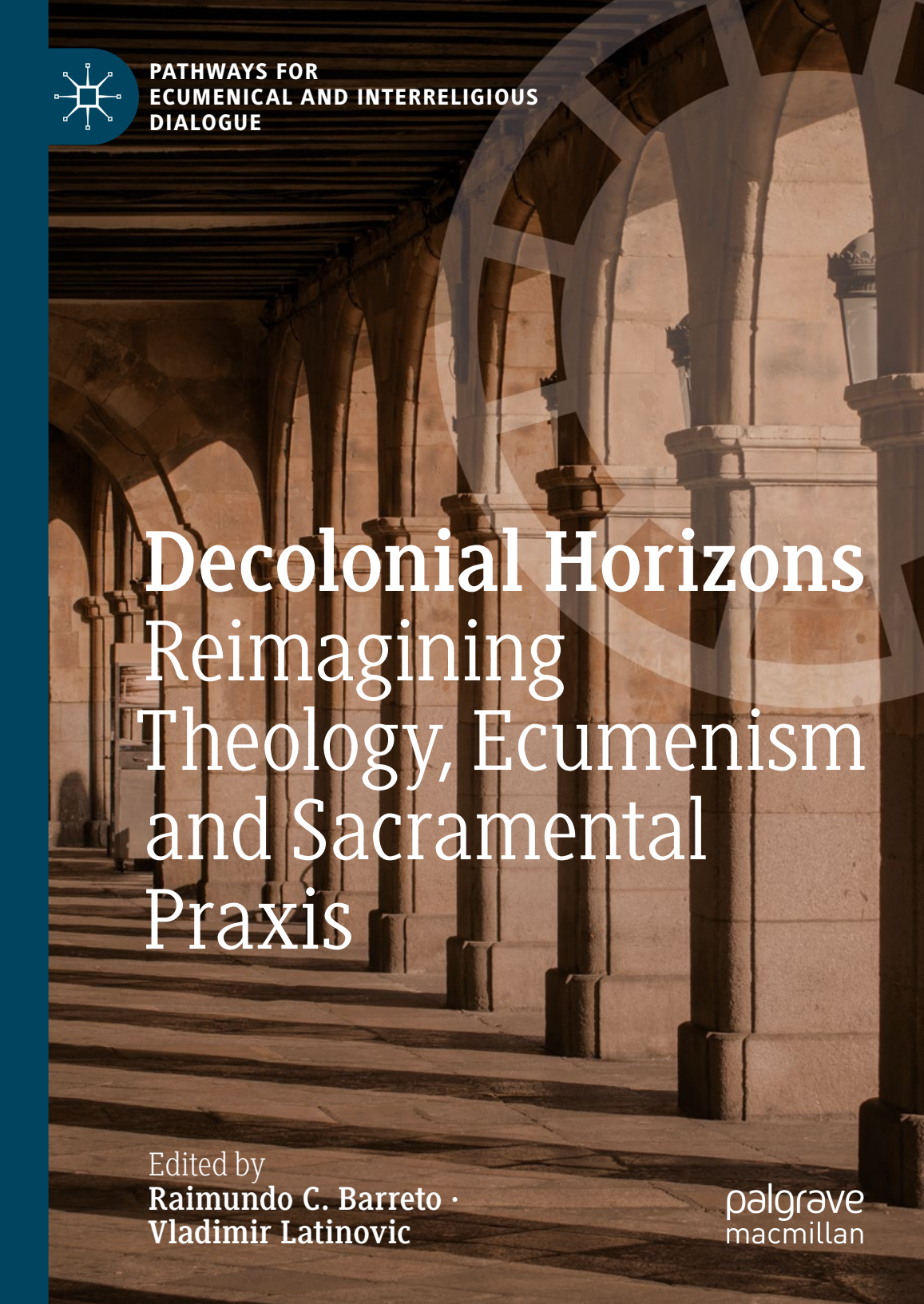
PATHWAYS FOR
ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS
DIALOGUE
Decolonial Horizons
Reimagining
Theology, Ecumenism
and Sacramental
Praxis
Edited by
Raimundo C. Barreto ·
Vladimir Latinovic
palgrave
macmillan

Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue

Series Editor
Mark Chapman
Ripon College
University of Oxford
Oxford, UK

Building on the important work of the Ecclesiological Investigations International Research Network to promote ecumenical and inter-faith encounters and dialogue, the Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue series publishes scholarship on such engagement in relation to the past, present, and future. It gathers together a richly diverse array of voices in monographs and edited collections that speak to the challenges, aspirations, and elements of ecumenical and interfaith conversation. Through its publications, the series allows for the exploration of new ways, means, and methods of advancing the wider ecumenical cause with renewed energy for the twenty-first century.

Raimundo C. Barreto • Vladimir Latinovic
Editors

Decolonial Horizons

Reimagining Theology, Ecumenism and Sacramental Praxis

palgrave
macmillan

Editors
Raimundo C. Barreto
Princeton, NJ, USA

Vladimir Latinovic
Tübingen, Germany

ISSN 2634-6591 ISSN 2634-6605 (electronic)
Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue
ISBN 978-3-031-44838-6 ISBN 978-3-031-44839-3 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG.
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Paper in this product is recyclable.

Dedicated to Dale Irvin in recognition of his leadership in organizing this conference and his exceptional scholarship.

Contents

Notes on Contributors

Raimundo C. Barreto is Associate Professor of World Christianity at Princeton Theological Seminary. He holds a PhD in Religion and Society from the same school and holds degrees from Mercer University and Seminário Teológico Batista do Norte do Brasil. His most recent publications include *Protesting Poverty: Protestants, Social Ethics and the Poor in Brazil*. Baylor University Press, 2023), and the co-edited volumes *Alterity and the Evasion of Justice in World Christianity* (Fortress Press, 2023), *World Christianity, Urbanization, and Identity* (Fortress Press, 2021), and *Decolonial Christianities: Latin American and Latinx Perspectives* (Palgrave/McMillan, 2019). Barreto is the co-editor of the *Journal of World Christianity* and one of the conveners of the Princeton World Christianity Conference.

Roberto Catalano, born in Turin, Italy, holds a doctorate in Missiology from Urbaniana University in Rome. From 1980 to 2008, he lived in India, where he was Cultural Officer at the Consulate General of Italy in Mumbai and taught Italian language in different institutions. Since 1996 he has been actively involved in interreligious dialogue. From 2008 to 2021, he was co-director of the International Office for Interreligious Dialogue of the Focolare Movement. In and from Rome he organized events of dialogue with Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and Jews. At present, he teaches theology and praxis of interfaith dialogue and theoretics of dialogue at the University Institute Sophia, Loppiano-Firenze (Italy). He authored articles for journals and magazines and published five books.

David Douglas Daniels III is the Henry Winters Luce Professor of World Christianity at McCormick Theological Seminary where he joined the faculty in 1987 and the Professor Extraordinarius at the Institute for Gender Studies, University of South Africa. Daniels serves as an associate editor of the *Journal of World Christianity*. He holds a PhD from Union Theological Seminary-NYC. He publishes on topics related to the Black Church and Global Pentecostalism in addition to African Christians in sixteenth-century Europe. He has served on research projects funded by the Lilly Endowment and other foundations as well as participated in funded research projects in Germany and Norway. He has delivered public lectures in the United States and other countries.

Oscar García-Johnson (PhD, Fuller Theological Seminary) is Professor of Theology and Latinx Studies at Fuller Seminary. He is an ordained American Baptist minister, was a regional minister with ABCLA; has planted four churches, and loves cycling, cooking, woodworking, and socializing. He uses decolonial theories in the fields of theology, religion, ministry, and cultural studies to reimagine Christian identity, doctrine, and praxis in the global space. His writings include *Spirit Outside the Gate* (2019), *Conversaciones Teológicas del Sur Global Americano*, ed. (2016), *Theology Without Borders* (2015), *The Mestizo/a Community of the Spirit* (2009), and the seven-volume work, *Teología del Nuevo Mundo* (Editorial CLIE, 2022).

Cristina Lledo Gomez is a native Filipina living on the traditional lands of the Darug and Guringai peoples. She is a Presentation Sisters Theology Lecturer at BBI-The Australian Institute of Theological Education and Research Fellow for Charles Sturt University's Public and Contextual Theology Centre. Lledo Gomez is the author of *The Church as Woman and Mother* (2018) and co-editing *God of Interruption: Mothering and Theology* with Julia Brumbaugh and *500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines: Postcolonial Perspectives* with Agnes Brazal and Ma. Marilou Ibita. Other forthcoming publications include chapters in the *Oxford Companion to Asian Theologies* (on ecclesiology) and *SCM Companion to Feminist Theologies* (on Mariology).

R. Ward Holder is a historical and political theologian and holds a joint appointment as Professor of Theology and Politics at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire. He writes on the manner in which religious convictions shape both theological and political convictions. Among

other works, he has co-authored with Peter B. Josephson, *The Irony of Barack Obama: Barack Obama, Reinhold Niebuhr, and the Problem of Christian Statecraft*, Ashgate, 2012; and *Reinhold Niebuhr in Theory and Practice: Christian Realism and Democracy in America in the Twenty-First Century*, Lexington, 2019. Most recently, he published *Calvin and the Christian Tradition: Scripture, Memory, and the Western Mind*, Cambridge, 2022.

Dale T. Irvin is Professor of World Christianity at the New School of Biblical Theology. He is also chair of Ecclesiological Investigations International Research Network and a founding co-editor of the *Journal of World Christianity*. He previously served on the faculty of New York Theological Seminary for 31 years, the last 13 of those as President. A graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary (MDiv) and Union Theological Seminary in New York (PhD), he is the author and editor of several books, including *History of the World Christian Movement*, a three-volume project with Scott W. Sunquist. Over the past several decades, his articles have appeared in a number of journals and edited volumes. He has held visiting or adjunct appointments at a number of theological schools and universities and has lectured throughout the world. An ordained minister in the American Baptist Churches USA, he is a member of The Riverside Church in New York City.

Vladimir Latinovic graduated from the Faculty of Orthodox Theology at the University of Belgrade and holds his PhD from the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the University of Tübingen. He is writing his habilitation (second doctoral thesis) at the Protestant Theological Faculty of the University of Heidelberg. He also works at the Ecumenical Institute in Tübingen, where he teaches dogmatics, ecumenism, and orthodox theology. He is a coordinating board member of the International Research Network Ecclesiological Investigations (EIIRN) and the founder and co-chair of the Orthodox Eastern Catholic Dialogue Group (OECD). He published three volumes on *Christology and Communion* (Ashendorff, 2018–2022) and edited six books on ecumenical and interreligious dialogue (Palgrave).

Craig A. Phillips is a retired Episcopal Priest and Lecturer in Theology at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire. He is a former assistant professor at Temple University. Craig has also taught at Georgetown University, Virginia Theological Seminary, and Rosemont

College. He holds a doctorate in Theology and Ethics from Duke University, an M.Div. from Harvard University, and an A.B. in Religious Studies and Classics from Brown University. His research focuses on the intersections of literary theory, philosophy, postcolonial and critical theory, and political and contemporary theology. Craig is an active member of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature.

Laurel Marshall Potter is Assistant Professor of Liberation Theologies at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, with interests including decolonial thought and praxis, Latin American theologies, and questions of theological method. She is co-author of *Re-membering the Reign of God: The Decolonial Witness of El Salvador's Church of the Poor* (Lexington, 2022), and her writing has appeared in *Ecclesiology*, the *NACLA Report*, and the edited volume *Valuing Lives, Healing Earth: Religion, Gender, and Life on Earth* (Peeters, 2021). Laurel enjoys over a decade of personal and professional relationship with ecclesial base communities in El Salvador, and her current project compares receptions of Vatican II–era liturgical theology and practices of liturgical in(ter)culturation in NuestrAmerica today.

Ryan T. Ramsey is a PhD candidate in Religion at Baylor University. His dissertation examines the life and religion of Mexican folk saint Teresa Urrea using the lenses of World Christianity and decolonial thought. He also researches, presents, and publishes on the history of Pentecostal and charismatic movements. He is a fellow with Baylor University's Academy for Teaching and Learning and a scholar with the Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute. He holds a Master of Arts in Religion from Yale Divinity School (2019) and a BA from Lee University (2014).

Cynthia Holder Rich (MDiv, MCE, PhD) serves on the Faculty of Theology of Tumaini University Makumira near Arusha, Tanzania, and at Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University, Columbus, Ohio, USA. She has also served in theological education in Madagascar and Michigan. She is the author of *Indigenous Christianity: The Power to Heal in Community* (Peter Lang, 2011) and the editor of *The Fifohazana: Madagascar's Indigenous Christian Movement* (Cambria Press, 2008) and *Christian Zionism in Africa* (Fortress Academic, 2021). She has published extensively on the impact and operation of race and gender in the church, missiology, confessional Christianity, and faith-based justice efforts. She is an ordained clergyperson in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Luis N. Rivera-Pagán is the Henry Winters Luce Professor of Ecumenics and Mission Emeritus at Princeton Theological Seminary. He is the author of several books, among them: *A la sombra del armagedón: reflexiones críticas sobre el desafío nuclear* (1988), *A Violent Evangelism: The Political and Religious Conquest of the Americas* (1992), *Los sueños del ciervo: Perspectivas teológicas desde el Caribe* (1995), *Entre el oro y la fe: El dilema de América* (1995), *Teología y cultura en América Latina* (2009), *Ensayos teológicos desde el Caribe* (2013), *Essays from the Margins* (2014), *Voz profética y teología liberadora* (2017), *Evocaciones literarias y sociales* (2018), and *Historia de la conquista de América: Evangelización y violencia* (2021).

Rev. Dr. Kristine Suna-Koro is Professor of Theology at Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH, USA. She is a diasporic Latvian-American Lutheran theologian working at the intersections of sacramental and liturgical theology, postcolonial, and decolonial thought as well as diasporic studies and migration discourses. She is the author of *In Counterpoint: Postcoloniality, Diaspora, and Sacramental Theology* (2017). She is serving as Co-Editor in Chief of Dialog: *A Journal of Theology* (Wiley) and Co-Chair of Religions, Borders, and Immigration seminar at the American Academy of Religion.

CHAPTER 1

Decolonial Horizons: An Introduction

Vladimir Latinovic and Raimundo C. Barreto

This collection of essays, the first of two volumes, emerged from the Decolonizing Churches Conference organized by the Ecclesiological Investigations International Research Network on June 22–25, 2022, in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The conference took place at the Metropolitan Campus of the Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico (UIPR) in San Juan with the support and participation of the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico, Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico, and other regional institutions. Due to the ongoing global uncertainties caused by COVID-19, the conference was held in hybrid mode.

We invited proposals for papers addressing the need and rationale for decolonizing churches and theology in the Caribbean, Latin America, and their diaspora. We also welcomed papers dealing with the topic of colonization/decolonization in other global contexts. Intrinsically related to the

V. Latinovic (✉)
University of Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany
e-mail: vladimir.latinovic@uni-tuebingen.de

R. C. Barreto
Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ, USA
e-mail: raimundo.barreto@ptsem.edu

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_1

idea of decolonizing theologies, papers presented at this conference included topics addressing oppressions based on gender, racial, and ethnic identities; economic inequality; social vulnerabilities; climate change; and global challenges such as pandemics, neoliberalism, and the role of information technology in modern society. As Ecclesiological Investigations seeks to foster interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary scholarship, we invited proposals for papers from historical, dogmatic, social scientific, and practical disciplines. The conference welcomed paper proposals reflecting perspectives from all major Christian traditions. Some papers focused on specific case studies while others dealt with comparative ecclesiologies or theologies. Fostering what S. Wesley Ariarajah has coined as "wider ecumenism,"[1] we also welcomed proposals dealing with the need to decolonize interfaith relations and which addressed challenges and promises of pluralistic contexts.

Papers were presented in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. Non-English papers were translated in advance into English and submitted to the conference planning committee so that they could be posted prior to the beginning of the conference, facilitating the participation in discussion sessions of those who do not speak these languages. Plenary sessions that were conducted in Spanish or Portuguese were translated simultaneously. While these two volumes do not exhaust the wealth and thoroughness of the conversations held during the conference, the select essays chosen for each volume offer a good insight into the main concerns and the diversity of contexts, (inter)disciplinary approaches, and language that informed those conversations. Some of the essays the reader will access in English in these two volumes were translated, since this publication is aimed at the anglophone academia. The editors are aware of the paradox involved in the prioritization of English readers in a work meant to advance the cause of decoloniality. We accept the risks of such an enterprise, though, convinced of the need to help those operating in anglophone bubbles to engage the important scholarly production emerging, particularly on this important theme, in languages such as Spanish and Portuguese. Furthermore, as it has been the case with other publications with which the editors have been involved in the past several years, we operate in the

[1] See, for instance, chapter 6, titled "Wider Ecumenism: A Promise or a Threat?," in S. Wesley Ariarajah, *Strangers or Co-Pilgrims? The Impact of Interfaith Dialogue on Christian Faith and Practice* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2017), 105–113.

PART I

Migration, Diaspora and Decolonization

CHAPTER 2

Coloniality, Diaspora, and Decolonial Resistance

Luis N. Rivera-Pagán

The Bible… unlike the books of other ancient peoples, was… the literature of a minor, remote people – and not the literature of its rulers, but of its critics… The prophets of Jerusalem refused to accept the world as it was. They invented the literature of political dissent and, with it, the literature of hope.
–Amos Elon (Amos Elon, Jerusalem: Battlegrounds of Memory *(New York: Kodansha International, 1995), 19)*

L. N. Rivera-Pagán (✉)
Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ, USA
e-mail: luis.rivera-pagan@ptsem.edu

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_2

Introduction

I originate from Puerto Rico, a Caribbean island that has been aptly described by a foremost juridical scholar as "the oldest colony of the world."[1] Christopher Columbus claimed possession of the island for the crown of Castile in 1493, and it remained part of the Spanish empire till 1898, when it was conquered and possessed by the United States.

The transfer of imperial sovereignty from Madrid to Washington was accomplished through the two classical ways of solving conflicts among powerful nations: war and diplomacy. War was perpetrated in the tropical Caribbean and the Philippines; diplomacy was negotiated later in elegant and cosmopolitan Paris.[2] No need to consult the Puerto Rican natives. Washington, Madrid, and Paris were the sites of privileged historical agency. In early 1898, Puerto Rico was a Spanish colony; at the end of that fateful year, it had become a colony of the United States.

This event marked the end of the Spanish imperial saga and the initial stages of imperial *pax americana*.[3] It was part and parcel of the Age of Empire, so aptly named by the British historian Eric Hobsbawm.[4] From the Philippines, Guam, and Hawaii, in the Pacific, to Cuba and Puerto Rico, in the Caribbean, the American ideology of manifest destiny, with its vigorous religious undertones, aggressive military perspectives, and strong commercial interests, was transgressing national boundaries.[5] The military conquest of those Pacific and Caribbean nations, according to the then president of the United States, William McKinley, took place "under the providence of God and in the name of human progress and civilization."[6]

[1] José Trías Monge, *Puerto Rico: The Trials of the Oldest Colony in the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

[2] The war between the United States and Spain concluded with the Treaty of Paris, signed December 10, 1898. Spain, militarily defeated, was forced to relinquish its dominion over the Philippines, Cuba, Guam, and Puerto Rico to the new American colossus. Alfonso García Martínez, ed., *Libro rojo/Tratado de París: Documentos presentados a las cortes en la legislatura de 1898 por el ministro de Estado* (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1988).

[3] Stephen Kinzer, The True Flag: Theodore Roosevelt, Mark Twain, and the Birth of American Empire (New York, NY: Henry Holt, 2017).

[4] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875–1914* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987).

[5] A classic exposition of the North American ideological mythological construct of "manifest destiny" is Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1935).

[6] Quoted in Kinzer, *The True Flag*, 132.

CHAPTER 3

Immigration, Immunity, Community, and the Church: Roberto Esposito's Biopolitical Immunitary Paradigm

Craig A. Phillips

In his 1977–1978 lecture at the Collège de France, "Security, Territory, Population," Michel Foucault employed the term "biopolitical" to describe ways that emerging European nation-states exercised political sovereignty not only over the life and death of the populations under their control, but also to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of their citizens.[1] His lecture identified the role of governmental systems in regulating populations and the spaces they inhabit. While Foucault's lecture did not focus explicitly on immigration and the status of refugees, it did make clear the links between populations and their respective territories and the security apparatuses regulating the flow of people within and across the

[1] Michel Foucault and Paul Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader*, 1st ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984). See also, Michel Foucault and Robert Hurley, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1, An Introduction*, Vintage Books Edition ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 140–45.

C. A. Phillips (✉)
Saint Anselm College, Manchester, NH, USA

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_3

established borders of territories. Security apparatuses seek to protect populations both from internal threats within the borders of the modern nation-state and from external threats, real and imagined, posed by populations outside its borders.

At the time of his death in 1984, Foucault had not completed his study of biopower. He had proposed that biopower first arose to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of citizens. If that were the case, how is it then that biopower can also exhibit such a negative and controversial force in modern life? This question is central to the work of three contemporary Italian political theorists, Giorgio Agamben, Roberto Esposito, and Antonio Negri.

Contemporary Italian political theory is uniquely equipped to address the challenges of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants within the context of modern biopolitics, because, as Esposito maintains, "it is grounded in concrete action on current issues while at the same time it investigates more ancient *dispositifs*," that is, configurations and mechanisms of power that serve to maintain and reinforce the exercise of power within the social body.[2] Where Agamben espouses a persistently negative stance toward modern biopolitics, seeing in it an excessive use of governmental force (or sovereignty), and Negri maintains a generally more positive view of its benefits, Esposito is best located in the intersection of these two positions, seeing both the positive and negative effects of the exercise of modern biopolitics.[3] He advances the concept of immunity as a way of understanding the internal and external actions of modern biopolitics toward those within the state (citizens), and those outside it (noncitizens). Esposito situates modern "biopolitics" in the tension between living in community

[2] Roberto Esposito and Zakiya Hanafi, *Living Thought: The Origins and Actuality of Italian Philosophy*, Cultural memory in the present (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2012), 4.

[3] This is evident in the respective views of how different nations have addressed the COVID pandemic. Where Agamben sees science as the new religion and vaccine legislation as a sign of the repressive use of sovereignty under the "state of emergency," Esposito holds a more dialectical view of the cost/benefits of such laws and restrictions. See Giorgio Agamben, *Where are we Now?: The Epidemic as Politics*, ed. Valeria Dani (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021). See also, Roberto Esposito. Interview by Tim Christiaens, "The Biopolitics of Immunity in Times of COVID-19: An Interview with Roberto Esposito," *Antipode Online* (June 16 2020), https://antipodeonline.org/2020/06/16/interview-with-roberto-esposito/.*Antipode Online* (June 16, 2020).

CHAPTER 4

Decolonizing Among Filipin@ Migrant-Settlers

Cristina Lledo Gomez

Parque Retiro, or Retiro Park, is Madrid's most famous and largest park and made a UNESCO World Heritage site in July 2021.[1] This park was also the site of a human zoo, named *Exposición de las Islas Filipinas*, or the "Exhibition of the Islands of the Philippines", opened in 1887 by Queen María Cristina.[2] Madrid journalist, Leah Pattem, describes the purpose of the exhibition:

[1] "Unesco adds Madrid's Paseo del Prado and Retiro Park to heritage list", *BBC News*, 25 July 2021, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-57955966; UNESCO World Heritage Convention, *Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences*, https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1618/

[2] "La Exposición de las Islas Filipinas (1887): UN Encuentro con Hispanoasia", *Madrid Historico*, Jan 14, 2021, at https://www.revistamadridhistorico.es/2021/01/la-exposicion-de-las-islas-filipinas-1887-un-encuentro-con-hispanoasia/

C. Lledo Gomez (✉)
BBI-The Australian Institute of Theological Education and Research, Sydney, NSW, Australia

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_4

> Over the course of six months, tens of thousands of Spaniards would have the chance to visit one of the farthest corners of the Spanish Empire – and even meet some of its people – without ever having to leave the country.[3] […] The grand inauguration of this exhibition took place in the *Palacio de Cristal* (Crystal Palace) – a beautiful, giant greenhouse built to house tropical plants brought over from the Philippines. Textiles were also added, as museum curators laid out paths using rugs woven by Filipino women. It was not just these items on display: the people who crafted them were too. Spanish colonisers brought 43 Igorot women and men from the mountainous island of Luzon in the Philippines, instructing them to act out their daily lives in front of spectators. A small village was built for them next to the palace, complete with streets, raised thatched huts and places of worship. A pond was dug in front of the palace and filled with water and fish for the Igorot people to catch. Traditional canoes made of hollowed-out tree trunks sat at the water's edge. Small farms were laid out and cattle were brought in to plough the land, all for the amusement of curious onlookers.[4]

This human zoo is indicative of how often the indigenous were seen by their colonizers as exotic, subhuman, uncivilized creatures to be ruled over, according to the whims of their invaders. A pamphlet created by the Spanish Ministry of Culture for a 2017 exhibition of the 1887 *Exposicion de las Islas Filipinas* similarly admits how Filipin@s were viewed at the time through the eyes of Spanish photographers who recorded two types of images: the first, in their own clothing, portraying them as "folkloric" or "exotic"; the second, in 'modern' European clothes, suggesting a vision of a possible future for the Philippines. The pamphlet explained these two visions, which worked hand in hand to justify the colonization of the Philippines by the Spaniards:

> The duality of backwardness/savagery and modernity were two sides of the same coin. The existence of the former justified – in the eyes of many people at the time – the need for intervention by the Spanish authorities (civil and religious) to bring Christian and Western 'civilisation' to these peoples.[5]

[3] Leah Pattem, "UNESCO's new world heritage site in Madrid was once a human zoo", August 2021, https://gal-dem.com/madrid-unesco-retiro-park-human-zoo-history/; cf. also https://madridnofrills.com/unescos-new-world-heritage-site-in-madrid-was-once-a-human-zoo/, accessed June 19, 2022.

[4] Ibid.

[5] *Imágenes De Una Exposición Filipinasen el Parque de el Retiro, en 1887,* Museo Nacional de Antropología, From 30 June to 15 October, 2017, pp.1–30, at 12.

CHAPTER 5

"A World in Which Many Worlds Fit": Ecumenism and Pluriversal Ontologies

Raimundo C. Barreto

In his book *Decolonizing* Oikoumene, Gladson Jathanna revisits the colonial nature of the project that gave rise to what became known as the modern ecumenical movement. Connecting the origins of the modern ecumenical movement to modern missions as envisioned by individuals such as William Carey (1761–1834) and Gustav Warneck (1834–1910), he unveils two major theological motivations that informed the establishment of the modern *Oikoumene*:

> [O]ne, an attempt to draw human beings out of a "sinful" world and to absorb them into the church, just as the Roman Empire attempted to 'redeem' the 'uncivilised' non-Roman world to the oikoumene of Rome; and the other, to accentuate the need for 'social transformation' and 'redemption of history' as a demand of Christian faith and commitment,

R. C. Barreto (✉)
Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ, USA
e-mail: raimundo.barreto@ptsem.edu

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_5

> similar to what the Roman Empire claimed as bringing 'social transformation' and 'redemption' through its colonial project Pax Romana.[1]

Dale Irvin, by his turn, situates the origin of the modern ecumenical movement as taking place toward the end of the period that Eric Hobsbawm aptly called "the age of empire" (1875–1914). According to him, modern ecumenism was shaped under the influence of powerful "lingering memories of Christendom East and West" still haunted by the specter of Constantine.[2] Accordingly, the incipient Ecumenical Movement at the beginning of the twentieth century reflected the image of the Protestant communions that mostly comprised it. While disestablished in the United States, they nevertheless aligned themselves primarily with the dominant culture and its political and social life.[3]

By contrast, Irvin also argues that a new ecumenism is emerging. This new ecumenism, according to him, "resembles the fluid assemblages and cross-border flows of globalization and exile."[4] This chapter aims to contribute to this analysis by interrogating the worldview emerging from those cross-border flows of globalization and exile and their own contributions to the notion of 'the ecumenical,' reinterpreting this concept through decolonial lenses. The chapter draws, in particular, from Latin American experiences and recent theoretical developments in decolonial studies. Concurring with both Jathanna and Irvin about both the signs of an incipient new ecumenism, this chapter argues that the decolonizing of the ecumenical movement is an ongoing process. The lingering colonial memories that both Jathama and Irvin connect with the origins of modern ecumenism persist informing ecclesiastical and ecumenical structures

[1] Carey was a key pioneer of modern missions and Warneck the founder of the field of missiology as an academic discipline. See Gladson Jathanna, *Decolonizing Oikoumene* (London: ISPK and Council for World Mission, 2020), 27. The Greek word *Oikoumene* is at the roots of the word "ecumenical" and in its origins, in the context of the Roman empire, meant "the whole inhabited world" or "a house that includes the whole inhabited world." (p. 21) As Jathanna underscores, this Greek word is the overarching slogan in the logo of the World Council of Churches. His book examines the ambiguity implied in the use of *Oikoumene* in the modern ecumenical movement and seeks to shift its understanding through the use of a postcolonial lens.

[2] Dale Irvin, "Specters of a New Ecumenism: In Search of a Church 'Out of Joint,'" in *Religion, Authority, and the State: From Constantine to the Contemporary World*, ed. Leo D. Lefebure (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 3–32 (17).

[3] Ibid., 20.

[4] Ibid., 24–25.

CHAPTER 6

Colonization, Proselytism and Conversion: Can Interfaith Dialogue Be the Answer? Pope Francis' Contribution

Roberto Catalano

Introduction

For centuries, colonialism carried out by Western Christian countries—especially Spain, Portugal, England, Netherlands, France and, to a lesser degree, Germany and Belgium—has often contributed to forced or, at least, induced forms of evangelization characterized by proselytism and conversion. The original motivation could appear somehow justifiable from the Western Christian viewpoint in that the understanding of the times, based on the quasi-dogma *extra Ecclesiam nulla salus,*[1] resulted in the strong and unshakable conviction that all those who were not baptized

[1] For the emergence and evolution of this principle, see Francis A. Sullivan, *Salvation outside the Church? Tracing the History of the Catholic Response*, (London: Chapman, 1992).

R. Catalano (✉)
Sophia University Institute, Loppiano-Firenze, Italy

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_6

were, without exception, condemned to eternal damnation.[2] As a consequence, *missio ad gentes* became a sort of a race against time to save as many people as possible. Although the intention at the root of the process might have been somehow understandable—at least for the comprehension of the time—the fact that it was carried out hand in hand with colonial powers progressively led to a violent imposition not only of religious beliefs and doctrines but also of cultural patterns, which were alien to the colonized worlds.

The colonizers and the missionaries in Asia, Africa and the Americas were convinced that the European cultural model was superior, and as a consequence, they sought to subjugate or even erase non-Western cultures. Western values and traditions were considered to be expressions of the only culture and religion worthy of the name. Against this ethnocentric and exclusivist background, the Good News was preached all over the world with contrasting results. On the one hand, in Meso and South America, the local cultures were erased and Christianity took over as the only religion, to the point that today that part of the world is the one with the highest concentration of Christians. Nevertheless, many Meso and South American originary peoples resisted and survived, along with their cultures and religious traditions, which have actually experienced some revitalization in the past three decades. Recently, Christianity of that side of the world showed its maturity and depth with the election of the first pope ever outside of the European continent and the Near East. On the other side, in Africa, local traditional religions survived side by side with Christianity. Finally, we note that Asia—with the exception of the Philippines and Timor and, more recently, of South Korea—remained somehow insulated, if not repellent, to the Gospel to the point that for many "it is indeed a mystery why the Savior of the world, born in Asia, has until now remained largely unknown to the people of the continent".[3] Nevertheless, while Christianity remains a tiny minority in most Asian countries, that part of the world is the home of almost 400 million

[2] See *Cantate Domine*, Council of Florence, 1452 in Bernard Sesboüé, *Fuori della Chiesa nessuna salvezza? Storia di una formula e problemi di interpretazione* (Cinisello Balsamo - Milan: San Paolo Ed., 2009).

[3] Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia*, New Delhi, 06.11.1992, n.2.

CHAPTER 7

Decolonial Options for World Christianity: Thinking and Acting with Santa Teresa Urrea and Prophet Garrick Sokari Braide

Ryan T. Ramsey

Beyond Politics to Epistemologies

Though political colonialism continues to exist in many places, much of the discourse around decoloniality takes place in politically postcolonial contexts. Decolonial thought and work are necessary for the very reason that, as Boaventura de Sousa Santos states,

> [T]he term "decolonization" does not concern political independence alone, but rather an ample historical process of ontological restoration, that is, the recognition of knowledges and the re-construction of humanity. It

R. T. Ramsey (✉)
Baylor University, Waco, TX, USA
e-mail: ryan_ramsey2@baylor.edu

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_7

> includes, of course, a people's inalienable right to have their own history and make decisions on the basis of their own reality and experience.[1]

"Political independence alone" does not ensure epistemic or even economic independence. The modern world is replete with daily reminders that political independence is not enough. The recognition of formerly colonized peoples' complete humanity, epistemological insights, and ways of being in the world requires more than this. Decolonial thinking is a process to push past political independence. It seeks to "delink" from cultural ghosts and recalcitrant structures that colonize ways of knowing and being beyond what the modern west culturally and intellectually upholds.[2] While this process of decolonizing the mind—to borrow from Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo's book title[3]—ultimately has, I think, long-term *political* effects, the focus of decolonial discourse (in its current instantiation) often attends to the *epistemic* foundations of coloniality. Within the colonial matrix of power, humanity (colonized, colonizers, and the wide spectrum who operate as both) is restricted to modern western epistemological conventions.[4] For those of us in postcolonial contexts, decolonial thinking helps us step beyond politics to epistemologies—that is, to use de Sousa Santos's terms, beyond "political independence" to "ontological restoration."[5]

Decolonial thinking offers much to historiography. In particular, decolonial historians can try to identify, we might say, thinkers and actors who embodied decolonial thinking long before the modern theorizations. De Sousa Santos suggests especially that we need to look to practitioners and activists utilizing "artisanal knowledges": "practical, empirical, popular knowledges, vernacular knowledges," insights which only come from lived experience rather than free time and a comfortable chair.[6] Another

[1] Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *The End of the Cognitive Empire: The Coming of Age of Epistemologies of the South* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), 109.

[2] Walter Mignolo, "Delinking: The Rhetoric of Modernity, the Logic of Coloniality, and the Grammar of De-coloniality," *Cultural Studies* 21, nos. 2–3 (Mar/May 2007): 449–515.

[3] Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London: James Currey Ltd., 1981).

[4] Anibal Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality." *Cultural Studies* 21, nos. 2–3 (2007): 168–78.

[5] de Sousa Santos, *The End of the Cognitive Empire*, 109.

[6] Ibidem, 43.

PART III

Decolonizing History and Theological Education

CHAPTER 8

Decolonizing the Reformation: Centering Ethiopian Christianity, Decentering the Eurocentric Narrative

David Douglas Daniels III

Reformation narrative can be expanded to include Ethiopian Christians and Ethiopian Christian texts since they played a role during the sixteenth-century Reformation in Europe. By including these Christians and their texts, the Reformation narrative can become crafted in a way that portrays the Reformation as more than an event among Europeans exploring solely European concerns and replying on solely European texts; the Reformation becomes an exchange between Ethiopians and Europeans in addition to an exchange between Europeans among themselves. Ethiopian Christianity became a source of Christian knowledge for European reformers during the Reformation.

The chapter will explore how Ethiopian Christians and their texts played a significant role during the Reformation. In the encounters between Ethiopian and European Christians, leading European Catholics

D. D. Daniels III (✉)
McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL, USA
e-mail: ddaniels@mccormick.edu

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_8

and Protestants learned from Ethiopian Christianity. In order to encourage decolonizing the Reformation narrative, this chapter seeks to demonstrate that Ethiopian Christianity was among the topics discussed during the Reformation, and that these Christians were interlocutors of both Catholic and Protestant reformers. The chapter also shows how Ethiopian-European exchange served as an alternative to the European colonizing model of engaging the Global South; it was a collaborative model that promoted peership between Ethiopian and European Christians.

Decolonizing the Reformation Narrative: Key Issues

Decolonizing takes seriously how knowledges of the global South within the vice of coloniality are discredited, devalued, erased, or outright, denied ever existing. The aim of coloniality is to make Europe the primary agent of history-making in order to legitimate European dominance and the subordination of the people of the global South through colonialism, imperialism, or neo-imperialism. A Eurocentric narrative does the intellectual work that "naturalizes" or justifies the geo-political maneuvers. As Enrique Dussel contends: "The effect of Eurocentrism is not merely that it excludes knowledge and experiences outside of Europe, but that it obscures the very nature and history of Europe itself." In this case, in the history of Europe, colonialism is constitutive of the later Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Enlightenment. The decolonizing project exposes these Eurocentric processes.[1]

By discrediting, devaluing, erasing, or denying the existence of the knowledges of the global South, Eurocentric narratives presuppose a hierarchy of peoples and knowledges, adopt a center-periphery schema with Europe at the center and the maker of history, deem Europe the authority and arbiter of truth, and recognize Europe as the repository of knowledge as well as the zenith of all civilizations. Eurocentric narratives promote European exceptionalism.

In the words of G. W. F. Hegel's characterization of Africa:

> For it is no historical part of the World; it has no movement or development to exhibit. Historical movements in it-that is in its northern part-belong to the Asiatic or European World. Carthage displayed there an important

[1] Enrique Dussel, "Eurocentrism and modernity (Introduction to the Frankfurt Lectures), *Boundary 2* [1993] 23 (3): 65–76.

CHAPTER 9

Race, Theology, and the Church: A Transatlantic Conversation, and a Model for a Church in Productive Tension

R. Ward Holder and Cynthia Holder Rich

What is racism, and how does it affect the church? Is racism a subversive power that undercuts all efforts to realize the spotless bride of Christ that earlier generations of Christians considered to be possible? Is racism a factor which can never be escaped, but for which systems of amelioration can be devised? Is racism the wrong consideration to bring to the consideration of ecclesiology—should theorists instead be considering colonialism,

R. W. Holder (✉)
Saint Anselm College in Manchester, Manchester, NH, USA
e-mail: WHolder@Anselm.Edu

C. H. Rich
Faculty of Theology of Tumaini University Makumira, Arusha, Tanzania

Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University, Columbus, OH, USA

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_9

or class/caste,[1] or colorism, or incarnational possibilities that seek to rise above the question of race?[2] All of these questions (and many more) were the fuel that drove the project that took on the joint educational enterprise that brought three researchers, thirty-eight students, and two institutions on two different continents together in the spring of 2021.[3]

Context frames the reality humans experience and provides crucial elements of its meaning. The context of 2020–2021 was significant in this investigation. On February 23, 2020, Ahmaud Arbery was murdered in Brunswick, Georgia. Most people knew nothing about this case until the *New York Times* made a video that went viral available on May 7.[4] This was because the district attorney had cleared Travis McMichaels, who had shot Arbery, and his father Gregory McMichaels who accompanied him. Ahmaud Arbery was a young black man who was out jogging. The McMichaels followed him in their pickup truck and murdered him. The reason they gave was that they believed he was stealing, though he had neither a weapon nor possessed any material. District Attorney Jackie Johnson refused to consider the case, possibly because Gregory McMichaels had worked as an investigator for her office.[5] On March 14, 2020, police

[1] Cf Isabel Wilkerson, *Caste: The Origins of our Discontents* (New York: Random House, 2020).

[2] The authors note that they are pursuing one approach out of a variety of possibilities. The literature from possible approaches is vast and growing. See, among others, Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, *En La Lucha: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), J. Kameron Carter, *Race: A Theological Account* (New York: Oxford, 2008); Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Eduardo Mendieta, eds., *Decolonizing Epistemologies: Latina/o Theology and Philosophy* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012); Roberto Goizueta, *Caminemos Con Jesus: Toward a Hispanic/Latino Theology of Accompaniment* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2013); Orlando Espin, *The Faith of the People* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1997, 2013), Eddie S. Glaude, Jr., *An Uncommon Faith: A Pragmatic Approach to the Study of African American Religion* (University of Georgia Press, 2018); Vincent W. Lloyd and Andrew Prevot, eds., *Anti-Blackness and Christian Ethics* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2017); and Raimundo Barreto and Roberto Sirvent, *Decolonial Christianities: Latinx and Latin American Perspectives* (Palgrave, 2019).

[3] See Laura Lemire, "Course Intertwines Race and Theology," May 6, 2021. https://www.anselm.edu/news/course-intertwines-race-and-theology, accessed 23 January 2023.

[4] "Ahmaud Arbery's Final Minutes: What Videos and 911 Calls Show." https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000007142853/ahmaud-arbery-video-911-georgia.html?searchResultPosition=2, accessed 17 January 2023.

[5] Martin Savidge and Angela Barajas, "Conviction of Ahmaud Arbery's Killers Puts New Focus on First Prosecutor." CNN, December 5, 2021. https://www.cnn.com/2021/12/05/us/jackie-johnson-brunswick-da-charges-arbery/index.html, accessed 23 January 2023.

CHAPTER 10

Nuevo Mundo Theology as a Latinx Decolonial Response to the Global Crisis in Theological Education

Oscar García-Johnson

Introduction

I will use two conclusive works to help us frame the crisis of theological education in the American Global South. The first work, "*El Pacto Educativo Global en América Latina: Documento de Trabajo*," is a self-reflective Roman Catholic review of theological education that registers the various episcopal conferences happening in Latin America since the

O. García-Johnson (✉)
Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, USA
e-mail: ogarcia-johnson@fuller.edu

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_10

1960s. These conferences include Medellin, Puebla, Santo Domingo, and Aparecida. I summarize its conclusions as follows[1]:

1. Medellín (1968) criticizes the deficiency of educational efforts in the face of the excessive number of people marginalized from culture, especially indigenous populations. The educational systems seemed more determined to maintain social and economic structures than to solve their inconsistencies.
2. Puebla (1979) further extends the criticism of Medellin by noticing the challenges of the secularization of culture, poverty of a large part of the population, lack of structured forms of education for indigenous peoples, political criteria in the distribution of resources, and the abandonment of religious education by the population.
3. Santo Domingo (1992) classifies as "pastoral challenges" the difficulties that surround education: excessive illiteracy still in existence, the crisis in the family as the first educator, the divorce between the Gospel and culture, the high prices for Catholic education, the religious ignorance of the youth, and the inappropriateness of education to certain cultures (such as indigenous and Afro-Latinos/as).
4. Lastly, Aparecida (2007) affirms that there is a delicate educational emergency in the Latin American context, due to a clear marketing approach to the region. For this reason, educational reforms appear predominantly focused on the acquisition of knowledge and skills and denote a clear anthropological reductionism—since they conceive education predominantly in terms of production, competitiveness, and the market.

The second document, *Otra Educación Teológica es Posible*, edited by Nicolás Panotto and Matthias Preiswerk, is an ecumenical conversation convened by Servicios Teológicos y Pedagógicos that registers a two-day encounter of theological educators working in the Latin American context.[2] The encounter took place in Medellin, Colombia, in 2014. This work highlights a number of institutional deficiencies inherited from the

[1] P. Luiz Fernando Klein, *El Pacto Educativo Global en América Latina: Documento de Trabajo* (Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano y Caribeño/Centro de Gestión de Conocimiento Observatorio Socio-antropológico Pastoral, 2019), 10–12.

[2] Nicolás Panotto y Matthias Preiswerk eds., *Otra Educación Teológica es Posible: Nuevos Sujetos y Campos* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Libro Digital, 2017).

PART IV

Worship, Rite and Sacrament as Decolonial Events

CHAPTER 11

Toward a Decolonial Liturgical Theology

Laurel Marshall Potter

In the 1960s and 1970s, Latin American liberation theology opened Christianity in the region to questions of faith, justice, and politics—to the reality of the majority experience of material poverty and to the damning judgment that the God of Christian scripture makes on the structures of sin that produce such suffering. In his July 1968 address in Chimbote, Peru, Gustavo Gutiérrez proclaimed that "[…] faith tells us that God loves us and demands a loving response. This response is given through love for human beings, and that is what we mean by a commitment to God and to our neighbor."[1] Jon Sobrino echoes by stating that "[…] the current and foreseeable historical situation continues forcing theology to direct itself according to the reign of God."[2] This "irruption of the poor"

[1] Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Toward a Theology of Liberation," in Liberation Theology: A Documentary History, ed. Alfred T. Hennelly (Maryknoll: Orbis 1990), 63.

[2] Jon Sobrino, "Centralidad del reino de Dios en la teología de la liberación," in *Mysterium liberationis*, vol. I, eds. Ignacio Ellacuría and Jon Sobrino (San Salvador: UCA Editores, 1991), 477, translation my own.

L. M. Potter (✉)
University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, USA, MN
e-mail: laurel.marshall@bc.edu

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_11

into the Christian theological imagination marked a turn to neighbor, to concrete communal and social reality, and to history and politics. For many of the Latin American faithful, liberation theology's call to social justice, to political struggle, and to the preferential option for the poor contrasted with their previous spiritual and ecclesial lives, which had been marked by "practices ordered to the salvation of souls, especially sacramental practices […]. This intense ritual activity corresponded with a passivity to historical reality."[3] Commitment to the church's embrace of the world—defended by frequent references to *Gaudium et Spes* in the postconciliar documents of the Latin American Bishop's Conference (CELAM)—shone forth as a fundamental contribution of the first generations of Latin American liberation theology, a justified corrective to an ecclesial lifestyle dominated by ritual celebration that encouraged disengagement from society.

It would be difficult to argue that liturgical or sacramental theology was a primary focus for the first several decades of liberation theology. Though critiques of previous theologies of liturgy and sacrament mark many of the field's classic texts, diverse and constructive liturgical and sacramental reflections have long been lacking from liberationist traditions.[4] In his 1990 essay "*Sacramentos*," Víctor Codina attributes the lack of a well-articulated sacramental liberation theology to the fact that, according to liberation theology's own self-understanding as reflection on ecclesial praxis, "liberation theology will not be able to reflect on the sacraments before a new sacramental praxis is configured."[5] Interestingly, in practice, many changes to liturgical life and sacramental practice flourished in the first several decades of the ecclesial base community experience: rural catechists were formed to be *delegados* and *delegadas de la Palabra* in order to facilitate liturgies of the Word when a priest was unavailable, and

[3] Rodolfo Cardenal, *Vida, Pasión, y Muerte del Jesuita Rutilio Grande,* corrected and expanded edition (San Salvador: UCA Editores, 2020), 191, translation my own.

[4] Notable exceptions to this claim include Leonardo Boff's *The Sacraments of Life, the Life of the Sacraments*, originally published in 1983 in Portuguese, which describes the "sacramental imagination" through narrative accounts of "little-s" sacraments from Boff's own life before introducing the basics of conciliar sacramental theology (trans. John Drury, Washington, D.C.: Pastoral Press, 1987), and William T. Cavanaugh's *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998), wherein Cavanaugh proposes a "eucharistic counter-politics" capable of vindicating Christian hope in the face of the "anti-liturgy" of state torture.

[5] Víctor Codina, "Sacramentos," in *Mysterium Liberationis*, vol. II (San Salvador: UCA Editores, 2008), 268, translation my own.

CHAPTER 12

Toward Decolonizing Penitential Rites: A Diasporic and Ecumenical Exploration of Worship on (Still) Colonized Land

Kristine Suna-Koro

Decolonizing Christian worship is a matter of theological, liturgical, ethical, and pastoral exigency in the present socio-historical era of postcoloniality. As the Western colonial modernity became a global colonial design,[1] postcoloniality—or its convoluted, metastasizing, and shapeshifting twilight which we currently indwell—manifests in a myriad of diverse ways across the planet in broader societies and faith communities alike. In the United States of America where I, as a diasporic Latvian-American theologian, currently live and work, the question of decolonization cannot be meaningfully addressed without first confronting the widespread oblivion and indifference among the so-called mainstream/mainline North

[1] Walter D. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

K. Suna-Koro (✉)
Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH, USA
e-mail: sunakorok@xavier.edu

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_12

American Christian churches about their own histories and legacies as instruments and conduits of colonial conquest of Indigenous nations and their land. It is not feasible to address here the whole "legion" of issues at the intersection of Christian worship and decolonization. Hence, my goal in this chapter is to probe the decolonial potential of liturgical confession and repentance through exploring the so-called Penitential rites of public communal worship.

As a *Lutheran* Latvian-American theologian, I can attest that Lutherans usually insist that they take repentance seriously. After all, if one only recalls the momentous events of 1517 when Martin Luther posted his "95 Theses," it all begins with repentance. Thesis #1 hammers home the centrality of repentance—understood here as way more dynamic, existential, and inherently soteriological transformation rather than a mere moralistic and transactional ritual or even an isolated sacrament: "Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, in saying 'Do penance[…]', wanted the entire life of the faithful to be one of penitence."[2]

[2] Martin Luther, "95 Theses" or "Disputation for the Clarifying the Power of Indulgences," *The Annotated Luther: The Roots of Reform, Vol. 1* (Volume and section ed. Timothy J. Wengert; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 34. Here Luther is still using the formulaic Matt 14:17 Vulgate translation *poenitentiam agite* for the much richer and holistic Greek term *metanoeite*. Luther and later Lutherans will expand on the nexus of transformations that *metanoeite* entails—change of mind, change of life, reorientation of values and yes, also repentance and penance. Luther also adds in Thesis #2 that repentance/penitence in the specific context of the complex and the contentious dispute about indulgences "cannot be understood as referring to sacramental Penance, that is, confession and satisfaction as administered by the clergy," ibidem. Luther also insists that the expanded penance cannot be limited "solely to inner penitence—indeed such inner penitence is nothing unless it outwardly produces various mortifications of the flesh," ibidem, 35. The inner penitence in this case would refer to the element of contrition in the standard medieval pattern of sacramental penance (*contritio cordis, confessio oris, satisfactio operis*). In his "Sermon on the Sacrament of Penance" (1519), Luther elaborates on the connection but also on the distinction between penitence/repentance and the Sacrament of Penance as it was understood and practiced at the time, see *The Annotated Luther: The Roots of Reform, Vol. 1*, 188–201. Luther's early sacramental theology entertained the understanding of Penance as a sacrament as did the early Lutheran confessional writings such as the Augsburg Confession and the Apology to the Augsburg Confession. Later theological, liturgical, and ecclesiastical developments, however, settled on affirming only Baptism and Eucharist as "proper" sacraments for the Lutheran and other Protestant traditions.

CHAPTER 13

Decolonizing Churches and the Right to the Sacrament

Dale T. Irvin

Churches by the inner logic of grace that compels them are called to be places of freedom. As such they are to be interstitial experiences manifesting what Homi K. Bhabha calls the "third space."[1] Kristine Suna-Koro in her book, *In Counterpoint: Diaspora, Postcoloniality, and Sacramental Theology*, has pointed toward the transforming possibilities that emerge when the ecclesia through its sacramental imaginary is reconceptualized as

[1] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 55–5 footnotes in 6 and elsewhere capitalizes the term. Others use the lowercase "third space." Edward W. Soja, who develops the concept further along Bhabha's lines of cultural production, terms it "Thirdspace," as one word. See Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing: 1996).

D. T. Irvin (✉)
The New School of Biblical Theology, Orlando, FL, USA

R. C. Barreto, V. Latinovic (eds.), *Decolonial Horizons*, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44839-3_13

third space.[2] The Eucharist in particular as a decolonized "semiotic event" is reconfigured as "[…] a hybrid sacramental mystery of non-hegemonic convergence and synergy of divine, human, and nonhuman agencies […]" that is open to all.[3] Building on her work, and in dialogue with Edward Soja and Henri Lefebvre regarding "the right to the city," I will make the case in this chapter for "the right to the sacrament" that extends beyond the ecclesia. In agreement with Suna-Koro, I will conclude that a decolonized sacramental imaginary is not ecclesiocentric, but what Letty Russell termed "oikocentric."[4]

Third Space

The concept of the third space has found its way into a range of disciplines and fields of theoretical work over the last several decades. Sociologist Ray Oldenburg is often credited with having coined the term "third place" in his 1989 publication, *The Great Good Place*, to name locations in urban life such as clubs, cafes, libraries, and even public parks where community

[2] Kristine Suna-Koro, *In Counterpoint: Diaspora, Postcoloniality, and Sacramental Theology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017). Suna-Koro has not been alone in developing the notion of the church as third space. Wonhee Anne Joh, *Heart of the Cross* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006) drew upon the concept throughout her book, linking it in a postcolonial framework with the critical Korean concept of *jeong*, which is variously translated into English as love, eros, compassion, relationality, or mutuality. Christopher Richard Baker, *The Hybrid Church in the City: Third Space Thinking* (New York: Ashgate, 2007/London and New York: Routledge, 2016), develops the concept in the context of postmodern urban experience in England. Kirsten van der Ham, "A Familiar Book in a (Un) Familiar Context: A Comparative Qualitative Study on Bible Usage of Indonesian Congregations in the Netherlands," *Journal of World Christianity* 12, No. 2 (fall 2022), 218–250, esp. 231–232 has applied the concept to churches formed from among Indonesian migrants now living in the Netherlands. Joining Suna-Koro in developing the concept of church as third space in practical theology is Sarah Travis, *Decolonizing Preaching: The Pulpit as Postcolonial Space* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014). Yohan Go, "Envisioning a Gospel-Driven Korean Methodist Ecclesiology: A Constructive Homiletical Theological Proposal" (PhD diss., Boston University, 2022), https://hdl.handle.net/2144/44827, has more recently drawn upon Joh and Travis to develop the notion of third space for decolonizing Korean churches through preaching.

[3] Suna-Korao, *In Counterpoint*, 286.

[4] Letty M. Russell, (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 89.