

Claudio Carvalhaes. *Ritual at World's End. Essays on Eco-Liturgical Liberation Theology*. Pennsylvania: Barber's Sons Press, 2021. 401 pages. \$59.99.

The latest book by the renowned Brazilian theologian and liturgist Claudio Carvalhaes represents a work that synthesizes, grounds, and in turn further expands his theological scaffolding from several of his works and publications in recent years. In *Ritual at World's End* he offers two important approaches. He offers, on the one hand, the systematization of an elaborate eco-liturgical theology from the perspective of liberation theologies, and on the other, an exhaustive application of this framework from diverse fields of knowledge, problematics, and epistemologies that account for the contemporary challenges of theology, politics, ecology, and the religious, making the liturgical a field of epistemic revision.

As Carvalhaes himself mentions in the introduction of the book, the first two chapters are the most important since in them he develops this very uncommon intersection between liberation theologies, eco-theology, and liturgy. The singularity of this proposal is the epistemological expansion—both of the liturgical as a theme and of the theological task in a liberating key—from decolonial approaches, the matter of corporality, the queer approach, the environmental problematics, and the global economic critique, among other elements, which fulfill the double function of, on the one hand, re-signifying the epistemic/methodological proposal of liberation theology, and on the other, making liturgy a *locus theologicus* that serves to account for these elements. It is worth mentioning that the element of colonial critique is one of the most prominent in this work, again as a way of identifying the colonial legacies of liturgical practice, of its space/temporality frontiers (and restrictions), its naturalized borders of exclusion/inclusion, and its political performance.

The second chapter proposes to expand the well-known Christian *leges/lex* on the basis of a *lex naturae*, which acts not only as a field of reception but also as a decolonial device that deconstructs and questions the colonial-modern dimension that runs through both Christian theology and liturgy in its Western and modern version. In this way, the *lex naturae* is instituted as an axis of liberating and decolonial critique, especially in front of the hegemonized notions of subject, time, space, identity, and the inherited modern dichotomies between the sacred and the profane, the individual and the collective, and the religious and the political, among others.

From this theological frame, Carvalhaes inquires into an application of his proposal in the most varied themes, conjunctures and fields: the question of rituality and technology in the particular challenges of the Anthropocene and the post-COVID-19 global context (chaps. 3 and 6); a critical reading of public theology from an understanding of the liturgical as a public locus that radicalizes the commitment to socio-cultural, economic and political injustices (chap. 4); a critical understanding of the sense of multiculturalism from the concept of multinaturalism in its liturgical dimension (chap. 5); the intersectionality between inter-religious, socio-economic dynamics and political conflicts (chaps. 7 and 8); the liturgical as an instance of visibility and at the same time questioning of the processes of racialization and discrimination (chaps. 9 and 14); the challenge of queering our Christian practices (chap. 10); and the liturgy as an instance of socio-economic critique, particularly in its contemporary capitalist, neoliberal, and global logics (chaps. 11, 12 and 13).

All of Carvalhaes' works are characterized by maintaining a special balance between the theoretical-academic approach, the articulation of pastoral and political experiences, and the provision of liturgical resources for individuals and communities. *Ritual at World's End* continues with this same dynamic, offering ritual tools, narratives, and other liturgical

suggestions, which will serve to put into practice what has been elaborated in the different chapters in ecclesial, political, and civil society communitarian spaces, among others.

We can identify two major contributions of Carvalhaes work. First, the outline into a field that is still pending in the theological world (especially in Latin America), such as the revision of the liturgy from the liberation theologies perspectives. The particular approach offered by Carvalhaes allows, at the same time, to highlight the central contribution that liberation theology still has, as well as to give an account of how liturgy is a field that allows an epistemic “re-actualization” of these theologies within the framework of the contemporary dynamics of the religious and political world.

In this last sense, the second great contribution of the book is to make the distinctive elements of liturgy a field of critical review of the epistemic processes that cross the theological endeavor. Thus, the decolonial dimension, political critique, inclusive and queer practices, commitment to the environment, the impact of mobilization and activism, among other elements already highlighted, do not represent areas “attached” to the liturgical as a particular field, but constitutive elements of it, and from there to theology as an exercise. In other words, the inherent relationship of the liturgical with the ritual as community construction, with the earth as locus, and with social dynamics and complexities, are constituted as instances of theological-political revision at all levels.

Nicolás Panotto, Universidad Arturo Prat/Otros Cruces, Chile