



Cross Purposes: The Violent Grammar of Christian Atonement

Anthony Bartlett

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This seminal study of the Christian theory of the atonement examines the story of Christian violence. In *Cross Purposes*, Anthony Bartlett claims that the key Western doctrines of atonement have been dominated by a logic of violence and sacrifice as a means of salvation. Subsequently, the graphic suffering of the crucified in images and narrative has served to unleash a prolonged sacrificial crisis in which there is always a potential need to displace blame. These doctrines of atonement have sanctioned wide-spread violence in the name of Christ throughout history. But Bartlett argues that a minority tradition also exists. He contends that the tradition of the compassion of Christ provides the possible way out of Christian violence. Bartlett's study gives this tradition a dynamic new reading, showing how it undoes both divine and human violence and offers a powerfully transformative version of atonement for the contemporary world. *Cross Purposes* provides a rich historical and theological overview of the evolution of various atonement theories, using literature, art, and philosophy to provide a creative and provocative reading of Christian atonement. Anthony Bartlett is engaged in post-doctoral research and is an instructor in Religion at Syracuse University. For: Seminars; clergy; graduate students; professors>

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