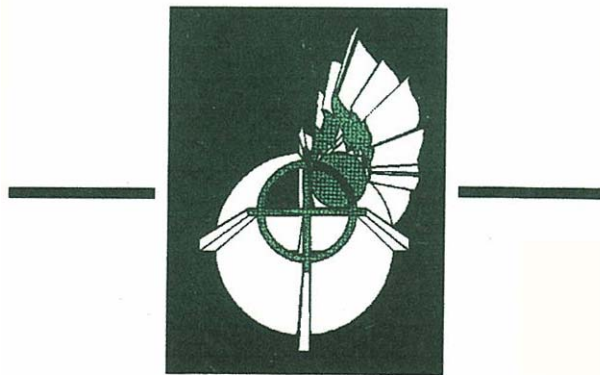


Dharma Deepika



Recent issue: **Theology in Ferment?**

Issue 29 Vol. 13 No.1 January – June 2009

Editorial:

Theology means a systematic “study of god”. It is evident that a “pure” study of god does not exist in a vacuum. Theology is done by people who live in a particular place, at a particular time, sharing specific worldviews. Their theological assumptions, concepts, and interactions reveal traces of non-religious influences. In their attempt to interpret and to communicate theological ideas people, either consciously or unconsciously, employ insights drawn from various non-religious aspects of human methods. They evaluate the result of this enterprise on their current living situation. They shape theologies that should empower them to build a better future.

Specific aspects of cultures, customs, linguistic idioms, economics, politics, and eschatology impact the way people do theology. As they learn to theologically address their deepest loyalties, they sooner or later find out that their theology should be god-inspired and people-oriented. Their vertical connection to god and their horizontal relationship with fellow human beings help them to create theologies that are in ferment.

This current issue of Dharma Deepika contains a few chosen essays that reflect multiple aspects of theology in ferment. Professor Richard Fox Young, a leading expert on Sanskrit-based religions, discusses how Christians interact with their cultures and construct pluriform identities. The realities of appropriating and locally interpreting the received Gospel inevitably create new aspects of theology. Nimi Wariboko, a trained manager of finance with extensive pastoral experience and an associate professor of ethics, employs sociological theories of time to understand both the increase and the decrease of religious fervor among peoples. When people fear that they do not have much time to realize their goals, their religious fervor tends to increase. If they presume that endless time remains at their disposal, their

religious passion becomes weak. The increasing and decreasing aspects of religious life produces certain types of theological articulations that deserve our attention.

Joe M. Thomas's essay makes use of theological and philosophical arguments. It asks important questions about the relationship between Christianity and non-Christian religions. The central issue revolves around the questions of divine revelation, salvation, and final destiny of human beings on the one hand, and the intricacies of religious continuity and discontinuity on the other. Thomas's deliberations include valuable insights into the arguments developed by Hendrik Kraemer (1888-1965) and Leslie Newbigin (1909-1998).

Dr. S. Robertson, Principal of Bethel Bible College in Andhra Pradesh, India, underlines the importance of religious plurality for healthy theology. He argues that no religion is static; it evolves as it interacts with the beliefs and practices of peoples belonging to various religious and non-religious persuasions. Dr. S. Liangao Soto discusses how relationally influenced Christological anthropology of the Naga peoples in northeastern India has an impact on Naga theology. Professor Robert Gnanamony examines Christological themes developed by a few European existential scholars. He pays much attention to select writings by the English novelist Henry Graham Greene (1904-1991). Father Joseph Mattam, a Jesuit scholar, discusses the importance of being faithful to the past and simultaneously being innovative to the present. He highlights how the concept of Christ's Pascal Mystery can be made authentic and meaningful to peoples of our own generation. Professor Kiran Sebastian's essay raises important questions about the nature, methodologies, achievements, and challenges of Dalit Theology. He contends that this liberative theology should not become a static element, but it should constantly work for the welfare of the poor and neglected. Therefore, Dalit Theology should remain in ferment.

- * "God of a Thousand Heads" – Richard Fox Young
- * "Inflation and Deflation in Religious Commitment" – Nimi Wariboko
- * "Newbigin & Kraemer: Continuity & Discontinuity" – Joe M. Thomas
- * "Pluralism Defended?" – S. Robertson
- * "Christological Anthropology of the Nagas" – S. Liangao Soto
- * "Existential Christology in Graham Greene" – S. Robert Gnanamony
- * "Reinterpreting the Pascal Mystery" – Joseph Mattam S.J.
- * "Methodology in Dalit Theology" – J. Jayakiran Sebastian

The editors trust that the readers will benefit from reading these articles. They welcome your feedback. editor@dharmadeepika.org

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Dharma Deepika

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