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BOOK REVIEW

Ivo Coelho, ed., *Violence and Its Victims: A Challenge to Philosophizing in the Indian Context*, Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 2010. Pages: 380. ISBN: 81-7086-580-8

This is an edited book which contains papers presented at the 34th Annual Meeting of the ACPI held at Anugraha, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu. The entire book is divided into three sub-divisions: philosophical reflection on violence, religion and violence, and society and violence.

There are seven contributions under the heading Philosophical Reflections. The first paper is by Johnson Puthenpurackal. It consists of a philosophical meditation on human beings as violent, and begins by saying the great difference between animal violence and human violence. The next paper "Violence: An Ethical Response" by Sekar Sebastian, deals with the ethical response to violence. The third paper "Violence and Human Rights," is written by A. J. Mathew. The great philosophical question here concerns the basis of human rights. There is an indisputable relation between human rights and violence. The fourth chapter, "Interpretation and Violence," by Keith D' Souza, examines the phenomenon of violence in interpretation. The next chapter, "Body as Locus of Violence," written by Victor Ferrao, makes a postmodern reflection on the body as locus of violence. There is a strong relationship between body and violence. The sixth chapter "Gandhi's NonViolence: Significance for Christian Philosophising," by A. Pushparajan, explains the power and uniqueness of *satyagraha*. Satyagraha is a weapon of the brave and not of the weak; it is a matter of principle rather than of expediency; it is based on love rather than hatred or fear of the opponent. The final Paper in this section "From Violence to Peace: Agapeic Ontology as a Philosophical Response," by George Panthanmackel, presents what he calls an Agapeic ontology as a solution to the violence endemic in human beings and in society.

The second section, Religion and Violence, opens with an essay on violence in Hinduism titled, "Violence in Hindu Sacred Scriptures," by Shailendra.

He studies three sacred Hindu texts: the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, and the Law of Manu. In the following paper, "Islam and Violence," Selva Raj admits that Islam is a religion of peace, but points out that there is an increasingly large group of Muslims who considers violence to be in accord with the Quran. The next paper titled, "Violence and Meekness in the Teachings of Jesus," by Augustine Perumalil, shows that violence is contrary to universal love; it leads to a spiral of violence. The meekness advocated by Jesus is neither slave morality nor facile pacifism. It is, precisely, non-violent resistance to evil. "Christianity and Violence: A Look at the Church as 'Oppressed and as Oppressor'" by James Daniel Chelleppa explains the historical Christianity. While the church has been and still is oppressed in some parts of the world, it has also been an oppressor. The final paper of this section, "Buddhist and Jain Response to Violence," is by Andrew Anbarasu. Buddhist tradition understands violence as intentional destruction or harm to life. Jainism is more uncompromising in its attitude towards violence.

The third section of this book is on matters related to society and violence. The first paper, "Violence against Women in India," by Puliappallil Kochuthresia, begins with a description of the types of violence suffered by women in our country in the domestic as well as public sphere and goes on to call for a change in attitude. "Tribals as Victims of Violence" by Vincent Aind, describes the issue of tribals and violence. The author says that tribals are victims of structural violence. The next, "Violence Against Dalits: An Indian Christian Response" by Harry Emmanuel, explains the sufferings and problems of Dalits in the society and also within the church. He also suggests some suggestions to overcome their problems. "The Politics of Violence" by George Thadathil is the next paper. He proposes that it is part of the politics of violence to confuse the boundaries between aggressor and victim. The final paper, Robert Pen's, "Media Violence," lists the new media contributing to the creation of a youth subculture of violence, and notes how Indian cinema is a privileged arena for the construction of aggressive sexuality. This book deserves a special attention of everyone, who is aware of the need of building up a non-violent world.

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