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Editorial

Asian Christologies

We find various Christologies in the New Testament as well as in the tradition of the Church. Although we believe in one Jesus Christ, how this faith is experienced and articulated depends on the concrete socio-cultural contexts and worldviews. What links various Christologies and what is essential is not uniformity, but the basic faith experience that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and the unique mediator. We can rightly say that no dogma or theological-philosophical formulation has completely exhausted the inexhaustible mystery of God revealed in Jesus Christ. That is, there is possibility and need of various Christologies and this is an ongoing theological process and task.

Christianity had its origin in Asia. Although the Western philosophical concepts and contexts were incorporated, the New Testament Christologies, to a great extent, can be said to be basically Asian. Moreover, during the first millennium, Asia continued to be the centre of theological developments. We find that variety in Christology continued when the West became the centre of theological developments as well. In the last few decades, despite resistance from some quarters, we find new attempts of developing various Christologies.

Asian theologians have attempted to develop new Christologies in the context of the plurality of religions, cultures and spiritualities in Asia, not considering them as threats, but as rich resources for understanding and experiencing more profoundly the inexhaustible mystery of the revelation in Jesus Christ. Besides, the socio-cultural and economic context of poverty, inequality, injustice, discrimination and subsequent suffering, and consequent search for justice and liberation have opened new paths in developing Christologies. This issue of *Asian Horizons* attempts to contribute to these developments in Asian Christologies.

While presenting various attempts to develop Indian/Asian Christologies, Sebastian Athappilly argues how the plurality in Asia and search for justice demand new attempts in this regard. However, he points out that there should be caution in making use of the symbols and concepts of other traditions. Jacob Parappally also emphasises the plurality of religions and cultures in Asia and the search for liberation, which demand a variety of Christologies. He outlines various initiatives in different parts of Asia to develop contextual Christologies. Naiju Kalambukattu, based on a brief analysis of the liturgical texts, outlines the Christological underpinnings of the Syro-Malabar *Qurbana*, and thus invites the readers to a more profound salvific experience in the re-enactment of the Christ-event.

Don Alex Nilantha analyses the “Covenant Christology” of Aloysius Pieris, who constructs a new Christological paradigm of contextually liberational understanding of the Christ-event. He proceeds to undertaking a critical conversation between Pieris’ model and the Latin American Christological model. Sebastian Elavathingal argues that Christology cannot be exhausted by words spoken and heard; it needs images depicted and seen, leading to the evocation of emotional tastes. Based on this methodology, he shows ways to develop Christologies. Edwin B. Odulio describes how Asian experience of Christ is connected to the different images of Jesus that they use in their worship or devotions, and shows the Christological implications of the image of and the devotion to the dead Jesus. According to Antony Kalliath, the witness of Jesus becomes all the more relevant in the present scenario of cultural fragmentations, political polarizations and religious fundamentalism. His discussion mainly focuses on the “Third-Witness” of Jesus which is beyond religious and dogmatic constrains of Jesus’ testimony and mission.

We have other articles on various themes. Wilhelmina Tunu Mruma analyses the contemporary official teaching of the Church on poverty. Reginald Alva examines the mission of the Catholic Church in promoting peace, reconciliation and mercy in the contemporary world. Paulachan Kochappilly reflects on the concept of conscience in the prayers of the Syro-Malabar Eucharistic celebration, and their implications for the formation of conscience.

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