

EDITORIAL

The Association of Christian Philosophers of India (ACPI) and the *Journal of Dharma* link up once again to publish some of the papers presented at the annual ACPI session held at the Christian Retreat and Study Centre, Rajput, Dehra Dun, from 7 to 11 October, 1996.

The theme of the 1996 ACPI meeting was **Philosophies of Liberation : Political Thinkers of Our Era and Their Impact on India.** Prof. S.M.Michael's paper, "Theoretical Issues in Social Movement," clarifies the meaning as well as the root of social movement, in addition to presenting the leading theories on the types of social movement and the elements that go into their making such as, ideology and leadership. Prof. Varghese Manimala analyses the "Revolutionary Humanism of Jayaprakash Narayan." JP himself went through several stages in his intellectual and political commitment, and was aware of the need as well as the limitations of what he was spear-heading.

Moving from theory to a concrete case, Prof. Johnson Vadakumcherry studies the emergence of the Jharkhand Movement, situating it against the background of contemporary Bihar and India's tribal communities. There are complex issues involved here, including the extraordinary mineral wealth of the area and patterns of social exploitation.

Though most of the political theories and movements presented at the ACPI session were Indian, there were also two papers highlighting Western contribution - one American and the other European. The political philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. was presented by Prof. Joe Mannath. It looks at the emergence of King as the most influential leader of the Africa-American community from the late fifties right up to his violent death in 1968, and goes on to analyse the element of his political philosophy.

Prof. Jose Pereppaden presents the Critical Social Theory of Juergen Habermas, whose impact on philosophy, theology, ethical theory and social sciences is acknowledged in academic circles, within and beyond his native Germany and continental Europe. Habermas challenges us to look at Marxian theory, hermeneutics and language philosophies in new and creative ways.

The paper of the Venerable Khenpo Migmar Tsering (Buddhist abbot in what could be called a Tibetan Buddhist seminary in Dehra Dun) deals with a different type of liberation - the path of truth as propounded by Nagarjuna, whom Tibetan Buddhist follow. After looking at Buddhist schools in general, the article goes on to elucidate concepts of liberation, its methods, its foundational truths, and the role of compassion as the main path.

Quite a different sort of paper is presented by Acharya John Sachidanand, founder of the Pratyasa Movement, which aims at a New Indian Renaissance. He spells out his vision for India, which includes both spiritual renewal and meaningful political commitment. He invites intellectuals to act for an enlightened political vision and action.

A heterogeneous collection of papers, as you see, each of them highlighting an important current or author or movement, and having something worthwhile to say on the general theme of political philosophy. They help us to clarify the different (and at times conflicting) meanings of the term "liberation," and, in doing so, challenge us to clarify our own stand to evolve coherent and convincing philosophies of liberation. Intellectuals cannot (and do not claim to) solve the bread and butter problems of humankind; but the work of clarifying goals and methods, and reflecting on what makes human society really human, is also a necessary and responsible duty of human beings. These articles serve as a small contribution to that.

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