



January 1988

## Recent Publications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/jhcs>



Part of the [Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

(1988) "Recent Publications," *Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies*: Vol. 1, Article 6.  
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7825/2164-6279.1006>

The *Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies* is a publication of the [Society for Hindu-Christian Studies](#). The digital version is made available by Digital Commons @ Butler University. For questions about the Journal or the Society, please contact [cbauman@butler.edu](mailto:cbauman@butler.edu). For more information about Digital Commons @ Butler University, please contact [digitalscholarship@butler.edu](mailto:digitalscholarship@butler.edu).

present study is the introduction of Paul Devanandan into its survey of Protestant approaches to religious pluralism. Again, the basic context is one which has been described often—the Tambaram debate and its aftermath, whose influence continues into the present. However, to Thomas' credit, other elements from the Protestant tradition are noted, especially the dominance of secularism and its manifestation in the tradition in the thought of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Arend van Leeuwen. At least in part as a reaction to the confrontational oppositions of Christianity to other religions (Barth/Kraemer) and of secular Christianity to all religion (van Leeuwen) there emerged another approach primarily among the churches and interchurch councils of Asia. This was a theology of Christian partnership with other religions and secular ideologies involved in the struggle for new life for people. The contribution of Stanley Samartha to this emergent theology is rightly noted, as is that of C.S. Song, and the various deliberations related to the work of the East Asia Christian Conference.

The concluding portion of the book considers the contribution of Paul Devanandan to the continuing 'common quest for a new humanism'. Certainly, as Thomas argues, the significance of Devanandan for Christian ecumenism is in his insistence on and stimulation of interfaith dialogue as an ongoing concern of the church in the common search for human community. Basically, Devanandan is convinced that in the new awareness of 'person,' 'history,' and 'community' all faith comes into a common circle of theological-anthropological concern and into the orbit of the process of a common human history. This requires an acknowledgement of "our common humanity" as well as "a secular framework" within which people of all religious traditions and of no religion can struggle together to enrich the common life of the human race. These confront all people with the twin tasks of "redemming all religions from the other-worldly preoccupation of pietism on the one hand and self-centered introversion or communalism on the other". In all of this Devanandan challenges every faith to

clarify its perspective on the common humanity, the secularity which expresses it, and the place and function of religion and religions in the process of building human community. To this dialogue the Christian faith brings the gospel of the common life, of the possibility of deliverance from bondage to forms of evil that are of human creation. In the creation of this common contemporary history, the gospel of the New Humanity in Jesus, the Christ plays an essential role. Hence, all faiths, including Christianity, are compelled to open themselves—or close themselves more firmly—to one another and to Jesus, the Christ in a new way.

Basically, both Panikkar and Devanandan urge us beyond the opposition of Christianity to other religions and ideologies to recognize Christian faith as the sign of the kingdom and the fermenting leaven in the universe of faith, bringing to all humanity the transforming knowledge of the universal presence of the Christ, the mediator of human and cosmic salvation. In this process both men outline major features not only of the Christ who is more than the Jesus of Nazareth, but also of a people of Christ in world history which is more than the historical community of those who openly acknowledge Jesus as God and Saviour. True, Panikkar's "unknown Christ" of traditional faiths and Devanandan's "acknowledged Christ" of renascent faiths may have to be redefined, but both indicate a reality which demands a new understanding of the church of Jesus, the Christ in relation to a wider people of Christ.

If, as Thomas concludes, the New Humanity in Christ is to transcend Christianity, other religions, and atheistic ideologies, it must transform them all from within. Then this New Humanity will be able to take new and diverse forms in them all. Thus, the truly ecumenical ecumenism, which is really unity in the Christ has to be understood as resulting from inner reform and must accommodate diversity. Perhaps this is what it means to risk Christ for Christ's sake.

David C. Scott  
The United Theological College  
Bangalore, India

## Recent Publications

### BOOKS

Helen Ralston, *Christian Ashrams: A New Religious Movement in Contemporary India*. Lewiston NY and Queenston, Ontario: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987. This book focuses on the emergence and development of Christian ashrams as a religious movement which seeks to amalgamate traditional Hinduism and traditional Christianity in contemporary Indian Society. The study is based on visits to twenty Hindu ashrams and thirty-one Christian ashrams in India.

*Modern Indian Responses to Religious Pluralism*, edited by Harold Coward. Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 1987, 340pp, \$14.95 pb., \$44.50 hc. This book studies the way in which religions living in India have responded to the encounter with one another. Part I examines various responses from within Hinduism. Part II analyzes the responses from other religions in India, including Christianity.

### ARTICLES

Helen Ralston, "Models of 'Church': A Cross-cultural Perspective." *Journal of Comparative Sociology and Religion*, 12, 1985, 9-37.

Helen Ralston, "Ashrams, Christian Indians and Nationalism." *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, 15, 2, 1988.

### VIEWPOINTS

#### Dialogue in India

If publications and dialogue meetings are of any indication, then the dialogue initiative has come to stay in India. During the last two decades this initiative has grown among Hindus and Christians, though it is difficult to give the exact percentage of Indians who are affected by the dialogue movement. In the name of dialogue various centres are opened by the Christian communities and well-informed Hindus participating in inter-religious seminars and prayer meetings are in the increase. They find that more of 'living-together' for a few days rather than formal