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studies of great value have appeared. Shankara and Aquinas, Krishna and Christ, Hindu and Christian pilgrimages, the notion of Grace, Scriptures, God, etc. are today well-studied topics. But comparative studies are only implicit dialogues.

* * *

The fourth phase, I submit, challenges the fixed identity of both parties. The fecundation of the previous phases produces its effects. The fourth phase is a genuine Dialogue among people who happen to be Hindus and Christians. It is the religious Dialogue among Hindus and Christians.

The fourth phase starts a dialogue in which neither a politically dominating Hinduism nor an established and powerful Christianity have the upper hand or offer the frame in which the dialogue takes place. Nor is the dialogue purely dialectical or simply doctrinal. The dialogue has gone deeper, on the one hand, and more external, on the other. Deeper, for we discuss personal issues and beliefs with immense consequences for our lives. More external, in that we do not coinvent large communities or speak from the definite angle of a church or *sampradaya*. Both sides seem to be confronted with a similar technocratic civilization, even in the remote corners of the country-side.

It would amount to take a superficial stance and possibly to a betrayal of one's deepest convictions were we to deal with modern problems of technocracy, peace, justice, hunger, or simply business, and work, making abstraction of religious beliefs or relegating them to the private sphere. But the Hindu and Christian contexts are different. The contexts are religious and personal, but at the same time they are political, economic, secular, and they inform ordinary life. Do we need a Khomeini to remind us brutally that one side alone does not set the rules of the game? The fourth phase of the dialogue is a burning issue. The quick rise of an Indian middle class apparently successful in the rules of a competitive society in a technocratic set up is not an alien problem of the Hindu Christian Dialogue. It becomes a necessary dialogue—perhaps for survival.

It is, first of all dialogue. It is a dialogue between experts or common people, merchants or industrialists, intellectuals or artists which happen to more or less love their traditions, but who are not tied to them to such an extent so as to defend any fixed orthodoxy. The archetypes may play a more important role than the explicit ideas. To be sure, any authentic dialogue is a search for truth, and incurs thus the "risk" of finding itself also "outside" the

fold. But in this emerging fourth phase there are no non-negotiable topics, no "classified" materials or hidden agendas, not because previously people were not sincere, but because the very notion of orthodoxy has become flexible, dynamic, and not merely intellectual.

It would be a set back in the dialogue if this fourth phase were to fall into the temptation of superficiality.

The fourth phase is a new step. It is creative not only in interpreting the "other". It is also innovative in understanding "oneself".

I could put it in terms of depth psychology. A Christian, after twenty years of studying Hinduism, a Hindu, after a similar period of struggling with Christians, should they not assume that in an imperceptible way the studied subject matter has made inroads in the psyche of the Christian or the Hindu—just as one spontaneously imitates the gestures and idioms of the persons one lives with? Should we not suspect also that you may one day fall in love with the person with whom you are constantly dealing? Cultural symbiosis is also a phenomenon happening among religious traditions.

*Excerpts from Preface to forthcoming book: *Hindu-Christian Dialogue* edited by Harold Coward. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1989 (Fall).

NEWS

New Publication

Hindu-Christian Dialogue, edited by Harold Coward will be published by Orbis Books in the Fall of 1989, in its "Faith Meets Faith" Series. The ISBN number is 0-88344-633-2, \$13.95 (paper); 0-88344-634-0, \$26.95 (cloth). The book is a State of the Art review of Hindu-Christian Dialogue from its beginnings to the present. Chapters are written by Anand Amaladass, Ronald Neufeldt, Roland Miller, Richard Young, John Webster, Eric Sharpe, Richard Taylor, David Goa, Steven Gelberg, A. Frank Thompson, Paul Younger, Murray Rogers, Anantanand Rambachan, Robert Baird, Harold Coward, S. Wesley Ariarajah, and Klaus Klostermaier, with a Preface by Raimundo Panikkar.

"Christ and Krishna" Reissued

The book *Christ and Krishna* by Swami Bhaktipada, first published in 1985, has been reissued with an Introduction by the Christian theologian Harvey Cox of Harvard University. Cox recounts his visit to Vrindaban and his Christian response to

finding himself among the narrow streets filled with pilgrims singing and dancing their praises to Krishna. Cox comments, "I had felt close to God throughout all of this, without for a moment sensing any distance from the Lord Jesus or from the God I know and love in Him." (p. iv) This experience prompts Cox to ask the question, "Christ and Krishna. Krishna and Christ. What do these figures—perhaps the two most widely known and admired personalities in world history—have to do with each other?" (p. iv) Cox suggests that this question is a modern day counterpart of the much earlier question "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" Theological responses to the Athens-Jerusalem question, suggests Cox, provide a precedent for conciliatory thinking on the contemporary question "What has Nazareth to do with Vrindaban?" The latter question, however, Cox finds to be more complex.

Cox is particularly attracted by the fact that in a world filled with hatred and division, Krishna's message is for love and reconciliation. This resonates strongly with the central Christian teaching "God is Love." He suggests that the messages of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and Jesus' *Sermon on the Mount* transcend religious boundaries. His experience of God in Jesus Christ, says Cox, was "enriched by the Divine Spirit I felt in Vrindaban, and I am surer than I am of most things that that Spirit is the same One who came to dwell among us in a stable and died on a cross to conquer death." (p. viii)

(*Christ and Krishna* by Swami Bhaktipada, 2nd Edition. New Vrindaban, Moundsville, W. Va.: Bhaktipada Books, 1987. ISBN 0-933215-03-3)

Rethinking Christianity in the Indian Context

The *Christian Study Centre for Culture and Social Change* of the Kerala University, Trivandrum, organised a one-day seminar on "Rethinking Christianity in the Context of Indian Philosophy and Religions", on 17, March 1989. There were about a hundred participants from various walks of life. The keynote paper was presented by Prof. Dr. John Arapura of the Department of Religious Studies at McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada.

As Dr. Arapura explained the theme, it is not a call for indegenisation, but it is an attempt of self-understanding on the part of Christianity in its existence in the unique world of Indian Philosophy and Religions. Such self-understanding must lead to a revolution in Christianity's mode of being and self-expression in India, with undoubted effect upon Christianity globally.

Hence rethinking Christianity in the Indian context is much more than rethinking Indian Christianity.

Dr. M.M. Thomas is the honorary Director of this centre. The seminars organised by this centre are well attended and appreciated.

Living Together—Bombay (October 23-26, 1988)

An Inter-Faith Live-Together was organised by the Dialogue-Ecumenism Commission of the CBCI, Peoples for Peace Foundation and WCRP, Bombay for four days in Bombay. 195 people from all parts of India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka representing the major religions of India (Hindus, Muslims, Jains, Sikhs, Buddhists, Christians and Zoroastrians) took part. Living Together for Greater Harmony was the theme.

Living Together, sharing in prayer, workshop and informal chats the group experienced the bonds of friendship and love breaking the barriers of beliefs, customs and rituals. The group resolved to project these attitudes into its respective home towns in order to evoke an atmosphere of friendship and harmony in the whole country.

Similar Inter-Faith Live-Together is

planned at various regional centres like Coimbatore (21-23, April '89), and Trivandrum (28-30, April) and so on.

Living Together—Coimbatore (April 21-23, 1989)

Taking inspiration from the four day Live-Together for Greater Harmony held at Bombay last October, thirty participants from Tamilnadu decided to hold a similar live-together in Coimbatore, the Inter-Faith Dialogue Centre-Divyodaya.

Some of the salient features of this event are: This was a collaborative venture by Ramalingar Narpani Manram, Tamilnadu Sarvodaya Sangham, TNBC and CBCI Commission for Dialogue. Interfaith dialogue was linked with the social awakening with the particular reference to the need of Women's liberation in the context of the contemporary Indian Society. A peace march was conducted with a view to create a broader social consciousness among different religious communities. In this march eighteen organisations took part—such as the Women's Forum, Youth Forum, Tribal Welfare Organisation along with the Live-together organising groups. During the live-together the participants, as a group, visited a village nearby. This

exposure programme brought the participants closer in mind and heart to the village situation. This was the result of the deep communion the group felt during this live-together.

Mary and Murray Rogers Move to Canada

Mary and Murray left One Bamboo Hermitage in Hong Kong in mid-February en route to Canada. Their pilgrimage which began in Jyotiniketan, India is about to begin its third incarnation on a farm near Napanee, Ontario, Canada. There they will be starting a small centre for human and spiritual training. Their new address is:

River View Farm
Rural Route 6
Napanee, Ontario
Canada K7R 3L1

Future Issues

The next issue of the Bulletin will be published in June 1990. Articles, book reviews, publication information, news items, etc. should be submitted to the Editors no later than January 1990. Names of individuals and institutions to be added to our mailing list should also be sent to the Editors.

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