

SUMMARIES – JOURNAL OF MISSION THEOLOGY 11/2009

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Foundational Values of Catholic Social Theory

The principle of subsidiarity is one of the main concepts of Roman Catholic social ethics. According to this principle all decisions should be made as near as possible to those people whom they might concern and only when this is not possible could higher administrative units interfere in decision making. The principle of subsidiarity is also one of the key questions of discussion of European integration. The aim of this article is to introduce some aspects of the principle of subsidiarity in the discussion of the European Union and its roots and connections in Roman Catholic social ethics.

PEKKA YRJÄNÄ HILTUNEN

The Areas of Engagement, Intentions and Actors in Religious Dialogue

The religions are truth communities. They cherish certain body of basic truths and practices. If the representatives or adherents of religions depart from their foundations, aims, and means, and if the requirement of a dialogue is admitting a new metatheory as a common ground for the discussion, the dialogue ceases to give voice to the respective original communities, and is no longer an interfaith dialogue, but a new form of exclusivism or inclusivism. The genuine pluralism and interfaith dialogue accepts the differences between religions without assumption of a new common basic foundation to be found beyond the given religions. When viewing further a given interfaith dialogue project trying to distinguish and differentiate the subjects, the intentions and the situation of a dialogue, one realizes to what extent it is a project of a secular actor and to what extent a project motivated by an inner ethos of a religious community. It is the task of a secular community/state to invite the representatives of its religious communities to seek for peace in the society. The initiative of a secular actor may in turn invoke the need for its religious communities for a genuine and mutual interfaith dialogue. The concept of interfaith dialogue may be divided into cultural, social, or religious interfaith dialogue depending on who is the initiator of the project, and what is the aim of it. The fact that there are several and various religious communities acts as a motivation for the secular or over all community to seek for means to guarantee the societal peace, a peaceful coexistence of the religious communities in the society.

NIKO HUTTUNEN

When Paul Consulted Paganism: Syncretism or Contextualisation?

The early Christianity encountered the Hellenistic culture. Analyses of Rom. 1:18–32 and Acts 17:16–34 illustrate how far the rising Christianity could adopt pagan philosophy. The authors of these texts emphasize two points against pagans: the rejection of polytheism and God's saving act in Christ. Otherwise, the

authors were open to philosophy and even its pantheistic theology. This openness may seem problematic within the modern doctrinal framework, but it is difficult to regard it as syncretistic.

ARTO HÄMÄLÄINEN

Pentecostal Movement in Europe: From Fragmentation to the Theology of Unity

The development in the Pentecostal European Fellowship shows that the term Pentecostal-Charismatic is many times imprecise including very different type of churches. This way of bundling overlooks the fact that the Pentecostal movement has developed structures in national, continental and global level. The European Pentecostalism has come a long way from fragmentation to the structure promoting the unity of the body of Christ which is now represented by the PEF with its branches. The PEF has balanced with its view concerning the church structure emphasizing the whole time the crucial role of the local church. In the past decades the comprehension about the collaboration and the importance of the supporting structures for it has been strengthened. The PEF as church structure has concentrated first to firm its own identity, but at the same time it is striving for a functioning relation with other Christians and the surrounding society. The theology of the body of Christ is becoming stronger.

RISTO JUKKO

From the French Revolution to Indifference: France at the Beginning of the 21st Century from a Missiological Point of View

The article illustrates the religious situation in France at the beginning of the third millennium from three aspects: first, the relationship between Church and State, especially from the point of view of the French Roman Catholic Church; second, the situation of historical and new Protestant Churches, some of which are founded by immigrants – and third, the situation of non-Christian religions, concentrating on Islam. The conclusion is a missiological reflection on the religious situation of France.

TEUVO LAITILA

The Serbian Orthodox Church and the Way to Independent Kosovo, 1998—2008

The process leading to the declaration of the independent Kosovo in 2008 can be traced back to the Kosovo War (1998-9), which put Kosovo under international, or UN, administration. The Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) strongly criticised the UN administration of favouring Kosovo's majority population, the Albanians. The Church also opposed the Albanian demand for an independent Kosovo and tried to influence the international policy in order to be acknowledged as a partner in negotiations on the future status of Kosovo. Here it was until the spring of 2004 supported by the World Council of Churches. When this policy

failed, the SOC attempted to affect the UN administration in Kosovo, and when this came to nought as well, the Church started to reassert its position in the independent Kosovo.

MAIJA TURUNEN

Western Missions and the Birth of the Russian
Neo-Charismatic Movement

This article examines the birth of the Russian neo-charismatic movement. When communism collapsed in Russia, one of the many new realities people were to face was a huge invasion of visitors from Western-based evangelical and charismatic churches. An eschatological vision of the world, and thus an emphasis on the importance of spreading the Gospel, together with the new freedom of religion in Russia, made it possible for a unique Russian neo-charismaticism to be born. Numerous new churches were established. The article analyses how neo-charismaticism has been contextualized and has acquired Russian characteristics. The analysis is based on diverse data: interviews, observation and texts that the neo-charismatic churches have produced.

MIKA VÄHÄKANGAS

Europe as a Mission Field for Christianity of the South

Recently, one of the remarkable changes in the nature of global mission has been the fact that the West is no longer only a sending but also a receiving area in terms of missionaries. Europe is a mission field in the eyes of many Christians of the global South. This is partly due to the swelling numbers of non-Christians in Europe – Muslims as well as non-religious and neo-religionists. Additionally, the secularization of Europe has made most of the church members look like nominal Christians in the eyes of the Christians of the South. One reason for this is that the often quite conservative Christians of the South cannot condone liberal interpretations of the Christian faith. Paradoxically, southern missionary impact in Europe is boosted both by affluence and by poverty. South Korean affluence is one of the reasons for the ubiquity of Korean missionaries, also in Europe. African missionary impact, in turn, is boosted by extreme poverty, which forces many Africans to immigrate in Europe. The growing number of African Christians in Europe gives birth to churches initiated by the immigrants. These churches usually have the vision of converting the secular Europe. Christianity of the global South is in Europe to stay, and it strives to plant here southern interpretations of the Christian faith.