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of Metaphysics at Innsbruck), Enrique Dussel (the Latin American philosopher of liberation), Raimon Panikkar (advocate of diatopical hermeneutics, born of a Keralite father and a Spanish mother) and Paul Ricoeur (that great bridge between British linguistic philosophy and Continental phenomenology – existentialism). There are at least five Indians (and nary a woman among them): Pradeep Bandyopadhyay (“Toronto, Canada”), Sidney Mascarenhas (“Bangalore, India”), Giridhari Lal Pandit (“New Delhi, India”), Johnson Puthenpurackal (the nearest to a JDV representative) and Srinivasa Rao (also of “Bangalore, India”).

As for their answers, most mention the two World Wars, the establishment of the UN and the Fall of the Berlin Wall, with the consequent collapse of the Iron Curtain as key events that impacted on World History as also their own personal philosophies. None mention Vatican II which, in my opinion, was no mere religious event, relevant only to Catholics, but an epoch-making moment which had repercussions far beyond the pale of the Christian Churches. It gave great impetus to the growth of inter-cultural dialogue and the promotion of justice.

Responses are printed in the language in which they were sent in. Panikkar’s is in Spanish, Ricoeur writes in French and Coreth in German. One has, therefore, to be something of a polyglot to appreciate the work.

Dussel, writing from Mexico in Spanish, recalls the impact of the World Wars, Heidegger’s “*analitic existenciara*,” the philosophy of language inspired by the Vienna Circle and, above all, the “events of 1968,” that led him to develop his philosophy of liberation. Levinas’ “ethics as first philosophy” is a significant inspiration for him as to many others. Panikkar, as may be expected, calls for “*filosofía intercultural*” and a greater respect

for “*pluralismo*.” He also wants philosophy to become less an *opus rationis* and be animated by a “love of wisdom” as much as by the “wisdom of love”! “What has metaphysics to say in the face of the war in Rwanda,” asks Tanelle Bondi Kondé of Abidjan. “We are making test-tube babies, but have no remedy for death!” she (?) chillingly observes. There must be a decentralisation of the Ego, Reason, the One, the Father, God and Man (i.e. the Male), she continues: they dominate speaking and writing, they alone act, give orders and exclude – the rest may merely listen, remain silent and obey! John Puthenpurackal lists, besides the World Wars and the Fall of Marxism, also the Movement against Colonialism as also the forces of neo-Colonialism as significant events affecting Religion in the West, which is already making its presence felt in India. He wants a breaking down of the strict and exclusive “‘boundary’ that separates *truth* from *untruth*, *right* from *wrong*, *sacred* from *profane*.” “We have had enough of “perenniality and “dogmatism,” he avers. These must give way to an authentic “*philosophical humility* that takes man (sic!) and human knowledge in its essential finitude” (all emphasis original). This is echoed by Coreth who wants more serious reflection on the One and the Many, on Thinking and Living (i.e. Theory and Praxis). Shallow and uncritical assumptions about all these have led to lots of confusion. I would also add the need for a closer study of the causes at work in the decline and fall of Communism as we know it. Naïve ideas use this fact as a “proof” that Globalization and the Free Market are the unique and only saviour available to the oppressed masses of the Third World.

Certainly a thought-provoking book to delve into, even if one cannot read all the responses with equal fluency!

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