
jnanadeepa

Pune Journal of Religious Studies

**Ecological Concerns
Interdisciplinary Perspectives**



Volume 9 No.1

January 2006

Contents

Editorial	3
The Contemporary Ecological Crisis: Tracing Its Emergence <i>George Karuvelil SJ</i>	5
Science and Ecology <i>Job Kozhamthadam SJ</i>	21
Ahimsa: The Ecophilic Vision of Gandhi <i>Subhash Anand</i>	45
Ecology and the Indigenous Peoples <i>John B. Mundu S.J.</i>	63
Ecological Concerns: An Indian Christian Response <i>Mohan Doss SVD</i>	85
Ecologization of Christian Faith: Living The Love Commandment in an Ecozonic Age <i>Mathew Jayanth SJ</i>	101
Ethical Challenges from Ecology <i>George Therukkattil MCBS</i>	121
Environment: For Whose Development? <i>Walter Fernandes SJ</i>	139
Book Review	158

Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies

Editorial Board

Editor

Kurien Kunnumpuram

Secretary

Kuruvilla Pandikattu

Book Review Editor

Rosario Rocha

Associate Editors

Evelyn Monteiro

Isaac Padinjarekuttu

Cyril Desbruslais

Lisbert D'Souza

Paul Parathazham

Editorial Advisory Board

Abraham M.C.

Anthony da Silva

Chennattu Rekha

Errol D'Lima

Francis D'Sa

George Karuvelil

Jacob Kavunkal

James Ponniah

Job Kozhamthadam

Lorenzo Fernando

Mathew Jayanth

Michael Fernandes

Mohan Doss

Noel Sheth

Rui de Menezes

Scaria K.J.

Selvarathinam S.

Subhash Anand

Editorial Assistance

Denis Rodrigues

Jnanadeepa (=“Light of Wisdom”) is a biannual interdisciplinary journal of religious studies from an Indian Christian perspective. It is closely associated with Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth: Pontifical Institute of Philosophy and Religion, Pune 411014, India.

Jnanadeepa is published biannually, in January and July. Views expressed by the writers are not necessarily those of the editors. Manuscripts submitted for publication should be original and cannot be returned (writers' style sheet is available on request); they could be sent (preferably as a text or RTF file) in a computer diskette or through E-mail as file attachment.

All **correspondence** (requests for subscription, manuscripts, books for review – two copies, please – exchange copies of journals, advertisements, etc.) to:

The Editor, *Jnanadeepa*, Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune 411014, India Tel (office): +91-20-27034968, (res): +91-20-27034169 Fax: +91-20-27034801

E-mail: <kurusj@gmail.com>, <jdv@vsnl.com>

Subscriptions could be sent from India either by Money Order or Demand Draft. From foreign countries Crossed Cheque is preferred. All payments are to be made in the name of ***Jnanadeepa Journal***.

Typeset & print: JDV Computer Centre
Publisher: Kurien Kunnumpuram for Jnana Deepa Publications.
ISSN: 0972-3331

Subscription Rates

Country	One year	Three years
India	Ind. Rs. 80	Ind. Rs. 200
SAARC Countries	Ind. Rs. 140	Ind. Rs. 400
Other Countries (Surface Mail)	US \$ 20 (Euro) 16	US \$55 (Euro) 45
Other Countries (Air Mail)	US \$ 24 (Euro) 20	US \$65 (Euro) 55

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.4266611

Stable URL: <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4266611>

Editorial

There is a growing awareness among people all over the world today that we are facing an ecological crisis. As Samuel Rayan points out, “The Earth system is being polluted and destroyed through wasteful, profligate, and predatory practices by modern profit-oriented scientific-technological culture, be it industrial, agricultural, or communicational. The Earth’s standing, meaning, and history as the Home of Life are under threat of death.”

It is the awareness of this crisis that has made us choose ecological concerns as the theme of this issue of *Jnanadeepa*. We wish to develop inter-disciplinary perspectives on ecological issues.

There are two articles in this issue which deal with the factors that have led to the emergence of the ecological crisis. The first one seeks, from a philosophical point of view, to critique the overly romantic diagnoses of the ecological crisis and offer what the author considers to be a more realistic diagnosis. In his opinion the ecological crisis must be traced back to the growth of the market system and capitalist economy, which was facilitated by a mechanical philosophy of nature and the Protestant Reformation, which led to the reversal of the treasured values of a culture. The second article deals with ecology and science. It begins with a brief discussion of the ecosystem and goes on to describe the manifestations of ecological degradation. The author thinks that it is wrong to hold that science and technology are solely responsible for the ecological crisis. It is equally wrong to contend that science and technology are in no way responsible for this crisis. A more correct view would be to maintain that ecological degradation is the outcome of the dynamic interplay of socio-economic, institutional and technological factors. A third article deals with the relationship between development and the environment. The author points out that the type of development that we have adopted has led to environmental degradation and the deterioration of the condition of the poor in general and of women in particular. Hence we need to search for alternative models of development which are eco-friendly and supportive of the subalterns.

Included in this issue are two articles which discuss Indian approaches to ecology. The first article discusses the ecophilic vision of Gandhi. According to the author the foundation of ecophilia is Advaita, which can be understood as the inter-relatedness of all things. He also points out that for Gandhi the ashram was an expression of ecophilia. Ahimsa and satyagraha are the key elements of Gandhi's approach to human society and the cosmos. A second article seeks to articulate the understanding of and attitude to nature to be found among the indigenous peoples of central India. Their harmonious relation to nature is rooted in their religious beliefs, which are expressed in their myths. In order to preserve ecological balance we need to renounce our greed and our tendency to dominate and adopt the indigenous vision of the interdependence of all things and the practice of self-emptying servanthood.

There are three articles in this issue which attempt to develop a Christian perspective on ecology. The first one seeks to articulate an Indian Christian response to the ecological crisis. After a brief analysis of the causes of the ecological crisis, the author reflects on the Christian religious resources and the Indian religious experience for insights to respond to this crisis. He also points out the need for developing an eco-consciousness, an eco-spirituality and a healthy attitude to nature. The second essay attempts to motivate Christians to understand and live their faith in ways that would facilitate the healing of the planet. The main argument of the paper is that an ecological understanding of God and human beings provides the necessary motivation to link ecological concerns with faith. The theoretical framework of the argument is based on the love commandment, which points out the essential quality of being a Christian in the world. The third article discusses the ethical challenges arising out of the ecological crisis. After a brief analysis of the moral issues related to ecology, the author of the paper pleads for a holistic eco-ethic, as well as a socio-economically just ecological ethic. He also deals with the moral issues raised by the development of modern technology and the need to respect the rights of non-human nature.

It is our fond hope that the articles in this issue of *Jnanadeepa* will stimulate a lot of reflection and lead us to adopt a more eco-friendly life-style.

Kurien Kunnumpuram, SJ
Editor