



TOWARDS PEACE AND HARMONY

Volume 21/1

January 2017

Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth

Pune 411014, INDIA

www.jdv.edu.in

Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies

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Jnanadeepa (= "Light of Wisdom" pronounced as *Gyanadeepa*) 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 411 014, India.

Jnanadeepa is published biannually, in January and July. Views expressed y 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 (prferably as a Word or RTF and PDF files) or through E-mail as file attachment.

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

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Subscriptions could be sent from India either by Money Order or demand Draft. From foreign countries Internationnal Money Order or Crossed Cheque is preferred. From Commonwealth countries British Postal Order is preferred. All payments (Cheque, drafts, etc. are to be made in the name of *Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth*.

Typeset & Print: JDV Computer Centre

Publisher: Kuruvilla Pandikattu for Jnana Deepa Publications.

Subscription Rates

Country	One Year	Three Years
India	₹ 150	₹ 400
SAARC Countries	₹ 240	₹ 650
Other Countries (Air Mail)	\$ 25 (€ 25)	\$ 55 (€ 55)
Institutional Rate	\$ 50 (€ 45)	\$ 110 (€ 110)

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Editorial: **To be in PEACE, Not PIECES**

Peace is something that no one wants to lose. By all means human beings want to possess it. They are ready to go to any length, even violating the basic ethical principle that the end does not justify the means. Peace is sought after in oneself, in families, in one's society and the world at large. However, peace is often understood differently by different people. It is not uncommon to see peace being colored by self-centredness and short sightedness. That is why, as there are efforts to establish peace, there are also other forces, equally strong if not more, to destroy the peace of others for one's own selfish motives and vested interests. Over the centuries, as humanity gets complex and complicated, those efforts of destabilizing peace also get dangerously complex and complicated. Therefore, the need to critically and constructively look at peace - its nature and implications, means and methods to establish it – is also steadily increasing.

The efforts for peace must be made in a holistic manner. Peace touches upon every aspect of our existence. Therefore, the efforts for such peace must also be holistic. All the piece-meal approaches towards establishing peace don't bear fruit precisely because they fail to treat peace in a holistic manner. Even in science, we are forced to learn that piece-meal approaches do not work in understanding reality. In getting a fair picture of reality inter-disciplinary approaches are required, whereby various domains and streams of science come

together to investigate nature, which is multifaceted and multidimensional. Similarly, peace also needs to be approached in a holistic manner, not in a piecemeal manner; for instance, we cannot speak of peace without serious and committed efforts for justice, because the minimum requirement of genuine peace is justice. Without justice no real or lasting peace can be established. The peace that is sought after on the basis of violence or oppression, unjust actions or exploitation, can never be genuine and it may last only as long as those oppressive forces prevail.

Today India and the world at large experience lots of violence, explicit or implicit, misoriented actions to establish peace and harmony. For instance, in the process of creating peace and harmony, progress and prosperity, the ruling class and the vested interests fail to recognize and encourage multiple viewpoints. They abhor dissent and every effort is made to evolve a sort of 'consent', to unify all thinking to forcefully go along with the thinking of the ruling class. Different opinions and dissenting voices are silenced by various means like absorption, domestication and homogenization. The uniqueness and the otherness of the others are ignored so that one ideology and one set of practices can be imposed upon. Unity is a value, but not uniformity; if these voices are stifled, a system may continue to be in its own ignorance and arrogance; in fact, most often arrogance results from ignorance.

In protesting against the attempts by the Central Government to polarize the people in terms of cultural practices and religious ideologies, several intellectuals of the Nation returned their Sahitya Akademi awards. For they fear the Government is ruining the multicultural and multi-religious fabric of India. The inhuman assassination of M. Kalgurgi, Narendare Dabholkar, Govind Pansare, and Mohamed Akhlaq in the past years is vehemently deplored by the intellectuals and the ordinary people alike. These killings are the heinous expres-

sions of the brutal attempts to mute the critics and to manipulate the public opinion. India has a great tradition of tolerance towards difference of opinion. The recent suppression of dissent is in fact an insult to this long cherished tradition of India. As Amartya Sen points out the great emperors of India, like Ashoka and Akbar, not only exhibited mere tolerance but also respected and encouraged the heterodox voices. India has always been and still wants, as Jonardon Ganeri explains, to be “an open assimilative, and spacious one, sustaining a plurality of voices, orthodox and dissenting, of many ages, regions, and affiliations” and he invites the modern India to study the valuable ancient traditions, to deliberate and to learn from them to decide “who to be, how to behave, and on what to agree. That is a fundamental freedom, one which ought not to be surrendered in binding.” Without heeding different voices and opinions no real or genuine peace can be established. Again it is a threat to the peaceful fabrics of our nation, where the freedom of speech and constructive criticism are strangled.

We are thus forced to reflect upon the nature and the means of establishing genuine peace, based on justice. One such serious effort was undertaken by the Association of the Moral Theologians of India (AMTI) last year; it is our pleasure to bring out the proceedings of the seminar on “The Challenge of Peace and Harmony: An Indian Moral Theological Response,” held on October 23-25, 2015, at Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth (JDV), Pune. *Jnanadeepa* Journal is delighted to disseminate the critical and creative ideas of the scholars to other theologians and the public in general.

The papers approach the theme of “The Challenge of Peace and Harmony” from various perspectives. Dr. Selva Rethinam, SJ, explores the notion of peace in the Bible to show that peace is wholeness, referring to both the secular and religious realms: secular in its individual and communal spheres and religious which is the result of righteousness, covenant, blessing

and salvation. He proceeds to present peace in the NT as the gift of Christ. Finally he establishes, by elaborating on peace as reconciliation and peace as Kingdom of God, that peace is a gift and a task as well. In the NT we do find some tough texts to assimilate and interpret. Fr. L. Joseph chooses one such theme of understanding peace in the context of sword; he chooses two texts from the Gospel according to Luke: “Do you think I have come to bring peace upon earth? No I tell you, but rather division” (Lk 12:51) and “The one who has a purse must take it, and likewise a bag. And the one who has no sword must sell his cloak and buy one” (Lk 22:36). Very often these texts, unfortunately, become very handy to justify violent approaches to solve issues, not only for self defense but also to make our missionary and evangelical activities more effective and fruitful. But the author raises a very pertinent question: “How to understand these texts of Luke’s Gospel, which is otherwise seen as the Gospel of Peace? To find some satisfying explanations the paper seeks to analyze the nuances of the usage of these two terms in the over-all context of Luke’s Gospel.

Peace seems to be a rare commodity for the tribals in India due to various factors. The conference has two papers to discuss this important perspective. Prof. S. M. Michael, SVD, in his paper, “The Challenge of Peace from Tribal Perspectives” explores the social, cultural and political identity of the tribals and shows how systematically and deliberately their identities are obliterated by violently taking away their lands, displacing them in terms of developments and confusing their identities with the caste groups. Tribal liberation movements focus on the exploitation and discrimination of the tribals and the callous, even criminal, attitude of the governments that don’t bother about the welfare of the millions of tribals. The author reiterates that in order to build peace and harmony within India from a tribal perspective, we need an inclusive development of tribals. Dr. Amrit Tirkey, SJ also follows similar lines of argument to show the tribals in India are exploited by all

quarters, starting from the governments, the corporates and industrialists. The paper critically discusses the burning issues of land acquisition, displacement and migration in the context of the State of Jharkhand and it ends with a clear and decisive call to all the people of good will and every citizen of India to support and collaborate with the Adidvasis in their legitimate struggles to regain their rights and dignity.

No doubt that every nation looks for development. But development for whom and at what cost? – is a serious question to be considered, so argues Prof. John Chathanatt, SJ, in his paper on “Integral and Sustainable Development: A Challenge for Peaceful Co-existence.” He is convinced that no integral and sustainable development can be ensured unless the social order is rooted in truth, built according to justice and graced by love. The author proceeds to show how exploitative and unjust structures are unacceptable to a serious follower of Christ. In order to have lasting peace in our society, he suggests that the models of Ambedkar and Gandhi need to be brought together, where the former is the symbol of equality, freedom and emancipation. He brings in Pope Francis who, according to him, adds a new dimension to the whole process of establishing peace, namely, ‘we cannot have peace without merciful love’.

While speaking about the ways and means of establishing lasting peace no one can ignore serious threats that emerge from another important source, namely, Religious Fundamentalism. Dr. Jose Thayil, S.J., presents an elaborate analysis of this notion to show how it poses serious threats to peace in India and elsewhere. He points out that no religion is free from the upsurge of the fundamentalistic attitudes; it happens due to various reasons and one of them is the advent of the modern secular world. The author suggests some possible and legitimate reactions to the issue of fundamentalism. Some might suggest that religion can be an effective tool in overcoming

violence and establishing peace. Dr. Morris Antonysamy takes this claim up for a serious scrutiny from the mimetic perspectives of René Girard. He argues that the nexus between religion and violence is centuries-old and it is not easy to separate them and make religion work for real peace. Adopting anthropological approaches he deals with the basic task of defining religion and proposes certain ways of overcoming mimetic conflicts and violence. Finally, a short report of the conference, prepared by Dr. Charles Davis and Dr. Morris Antonysamy, is also attached herewith.

Jnanadeepa Journal expresses deep sentiments of gratitude to the Association of the Moral Theologians of India (AMTI) for giving us the opportunity to bring out the proceedings of their Conference. The articles published here are the select papers presented in the said Conference held at Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune, 23-25 October, 2015. We wish its members and the contributors all the very best in their future endeavours. It is also our earnest wish and sincere prayer that all our efforts, academic and otherwise, may land our land, and the whole world, in lasting and genuine PEACE, not PIECES.

United in the efforts towards lasting peace and harmony,

Prof. S. Stephen Jayard

Director, JDV Centre for Applied Ethics
Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune
(Guest Editor)

The Editor thanks Prof Stephen Jayard, for editing this issue of the Jnanadeepa, on behalf of JDV Centre for Applied Ethics. He is also grateful to Prof George Karuvelil, the former editor, for making it possible. - K. Pandikattu



Biblical Understanding of Peace

Selva Rathinam, SJ

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Abstract: Peace is different for different people from different contexts. The Bible also has a vision of peace! What is it? Peace is wholeness. In the OT it refers both to secular and religious wholeness, secular in its individual and communal spheres and religious which is the result of righteousness, covenant, blessing and salvation. Peace in the NT is the gift of Christ which is described as the Peace of God which refers to three basic aspects: secular which is the cessation of war or strife, restored relationship between God and humans through faith and finally peace of mind coming as the fruit of the Spirit which is the 'indwelling presence of the risen Lord.' Then, the author speaks about two metaphors of Peace: peace as reconciliation which emphasizes our human effort to make peace on account of what Jesus has done and this begins with our sensitivity towards the weaker section; and peace as Kingdom of God which is a political and cosmic community based on justice and God's love. Thus, peace is both a gift and a task.

Keywords: Peace, Bible, Peace as wholeness, Covenant, New Testament, Old Testament

Introduction

What you see depends upon where you stand. What is peace? It is different for different people depending upon where they stand. Since there are different views on what peace is I would like to list some general notions of peace by

relating some recent incidents in our country. In 2011 Anna Hazare started an Indian anti-corruption¹ movement which was a series of demonstrations and protests across the country to establish strong legislation and enforcement against an endemic political corruption. His hunger strike at the Jantar Mantar in Delhi raised the awareness of the common people on corruption in the Indian government. Peace for the people was identified with corruption-free India. Corruption became the 'waterloo' for the ruling Congress party. BJP came to power in 2014. Now India has seen a near 25% increase in incidents of communal violence in the first five months of 2015 under the BJP government, compared to the corresponding period of the previous year when the Congress-led government was in power.² Now for people peace is identified with communal harmony! On 28 September 2015 a mob of people attacked a Muslim family in Bisara village near Dadri, Uttar Pradesh, killing Mohammad Akhlaq Saifi and seriously injuring his son on rumours of beef-eating. This incident is called 2015 Dadri mob lynching. Commenting on this BJP MP Sakshi Maharaj said that Hindus consider cow as their mother and one who attacks the mother gets killed in the process. After Dadri lynching episode, on 20 October 2015 in a gruesome incident of caste violence, two Dalit minors were burnt to death by people belonging to an upper caste in Sunped village of Faridabad, Chandigarh. Commenting on this incident the Union Minister V K Singh said that the Centre cannot be blamed if somebody throws a stone at a dog! In an earlier incident of 16 December 2012 in Munrika, a neighbourhood in South Delhi a 23-year-old female physiotherapy intern, Nirbhaya (Jyoti Singh Pandey) was beaten and gang raped in a private bus in which she was travelling with a male friend. In two week's time she died from her injuries. This generated widespread national and international coverage and was widely condemned. Here peace was considered to be giving dignity to every human person whether male or female, Brahmana

or Shudra. Farmer suicides in India are widespread. As many as 628 farmer suicides have been reported so far in the year 2015 in Maharashtra which has experienced the most deficient rainfall in the entire country.³ Here freedom from poverty is identified as peace.

All the above incidents show how different people view peace from different contexts and try to pursue it. Are all these views correct and keep in line with the biblical vision of peace? In order to seek genuine peace and pursue it we need to know what the biblical vision of peace is.

I. Peace as Wholeness

Shalom is the Hebrew word for peace.⁴ It occurs in the OT 250 times! *Eirene* is the Greek word for ‘peace,’ which occurs 100 times in the NT. *Shalom* is translated as wholeness, well-being, peace, prosperity, salvation and even ‘justice.’ *Shalom* also designates innocence from moral wrongdoing (Gen 44:17; 2 Kgs 5:19). *Shalom* is indeed a gift, but its maintenance in human life depends upon human response to the divine moral order for human society. These moral values include justice and righteousness. Hebrew and Greek words for justice in both Testaments occur 1000 times. This shows how enormously important justice is in Scripture.

A. Peace in the Old Testament

Peace is wholeness and it refers both to secular and religious categories.

1. Secular Peace

Secular peace is wholeness of men and women in their individual and communal spheres.

(i) **At the individual level** it involves health (Is 38:17) and good life which is synonymous with a good sleep (Ps 4:8), longevity (Prov 3:2), posterity (Ps 37:37) and tranquil death

(Gen 15:15).

(ii) **At the communal level**, the peace involves the prosperity and security of the family or the nation. This ‘prosperity’ often refers to economic prosperity (Pss 37:11; 147:14; Is 54:13; 66:12; Zech 8:12) although in some passages it refers to a state wherein society and nature are harmoniously joined in covenant (Lev 26:6; Job 5:23-24; Ezek 34:25; cf. Ps 72:3; Hos 2:18; 4:1-3). By ‘security’, peace often refers to political security (2 Kgs 20:19; Is 32:18; Hag 2:9) which may often mean the absence of war (Judg 21:13; 1 Sam 16:4-5; 29:7; 1 Kgs 2:5; Jer 14:13; 28:9) or the ending of war through a treaty or agreement of nonviolence (Dt 2:26; 20:10-12; Josh 10:1; 11:19; Is 36:16; Dan 11:6) although sometimes it refers to military victory (Judg 8:9; 2 Sam 19:24, 30; 1 Kgs 22:27-28; Jer 43:12; Mic 5:5). Isaiah’s “Prince of Peace” (Is 9:6) seems to denote a victorious prince.

Thus, peace can be personal and social. Personal peace is inner tranquility resulting from cessation of conflicts. It is in such peace, St. Ignatius claims that God speaks to us. Social peace refers to economic prosperity which results from the absence of corruption and injustice; and political security which results from the absence of war. St. Augustine defended the doctrine of just war on the ground of a just cause like the defense of the state against the outside enemy. St. Aquinas refined it saying that although the just war can be waged on a just cause, the intention of the ruler who orders it should have a right intention. Now when nuclear weapons threaten to wipe off the face of the earth, even this just war has to be revisited. The documents of *Gaudium et Spes* and *Pacem in Terris* speak eloquently on this.

2. Religious Peace

All peace is of God (Is 45:7) and the condition of peace is the presence of God (Num 6:26; 1 Chr 23:25). It is therefore

man's righteousness under the covenant which makes him peaceable.

(i) **Peace and righteousness:** Peace and righteousness are often combined (cf. Pss 72:7; 85:10; Is 48:18; 57:2; 60:17). The effect of righteousness will be peace (Is 32:17). Since to be at peace is to be upright (Mal 2:6) the antithesis of peace is wickedness (Ps 34:14; Prov 10:10; Is 48:22). Thus, the wholeness of man's life includes his obedience to God.

(ii) **Peace and covenant:** Peace is central to all three Monotheistic faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. All three faiths emphasize their special covenant with God, for Judaism through Moses, Christianity through Jesus, and Islam through Muhammad. The book of Ezekiel speaks about the covenant of peace (Ezek 37:26). Covenant is the relationship which restores man to wholeness of relationship with God which brings man the love of God (Is 44:10). For Yahweh to remove his peace is for him to abrogate the covenant (Jer 16:5). This covenant of peace involves a mutuality of relationship (which is absent in Islam 'submission').⁵

(iii) **Peace and blessing:** The blessing is Yahweh's gift to the wholeness of relationship. It could mean strength (Ps 29:11), pardon for sin (2 Kgs 5:19), joy (Is 55:12), assurance of an answer to prayer (Gen 41:16).

(iv) **Peace and salvation:** Because God rules over humanity his peace is salvation (Is 52:7). Thus, those who trust him can hope for salvation (Ps 119), have peace. Though judgment and trouble may precede the actuality of eschatological peace, Israel knows that her suffering is the "chastisement of our peace" (Is 53:5).

B. Peace in the New Testament

1. Peace of God: While in classical Greek it means the absence of hostilities between rival groups, in the NT it takes

on a new meaning partly because of the influence of the Hebrew word ‘*shalom*,’ and partly because of its usage in the context of Christian faith and experience. In a conventional salutation on meeting or parting, the Hebrew word came to be used. Although such greeting is found on the lips of Jesus when he says “Go in peace” (Mk 5:34; Lk 7:50) or “Peace be with you” (Jn 20:19, 21), it was much more than a mere salutation. With the word of peace went the actual bestowal of peace, and if this proffered gift was spurned, the peace returned to him who had offered it (Mt 10:13; Lk 10:5-6). Paul uses such greeting at the beginning of his letters and others follow his example (1 Pet 1:2; 2 Jn 3; Jude 2; Rev 1:4). “Peace” in these greetings is described as the “Peace of God” (Phil 4:7; Col 3:15) as it is considered to be coming from God and as the gift of Christ (Jn 14:27).

2. Distinctive meaning of Peace in the NT: There are three precise meanings of peace which can be distinguished from the NT.

(i) Peace in a secular sense

As in classical Greek it refers to peace as opposed to war or strife (Lk 14:32; Act 12:20). In Eph 2:14-17 Christ brings reconciliation between Jews and gentiles who were normally antagonistic to each other. In 1 Cor 7:15 it is ‘domestic peace’ between husband and wife (see Mt 10:34; Lk 12:51). Jesus speaks his blessings upon the “peacemakers” (Mt 5:9). In 1 Cor 14:33 it refers to orderliness in contrast to confusion in the conduct of Church meetings.

(ii) Restored relationship between God and man

Before his conversion man is ‘alienated’ from God (Eph 4:18; an enemy of God in Rom 5:10). In Christ this wrong relationship is set right (2 Cor 5:19; Col 1:22) and justified by faith (Rom 5:1). This is peace with God through Jesus Christ (Eph 2:15) himself is called “our peace” (Eph 2:14).

(iii) **Peace of mind**

Mind of the Spirit as the life and peace in Rom 8:6. In Rom 15:13 joy and peace is blessing. In Gal 5:22 “peace” as one of the fruits of the Spirit. At Phil 4:7 we read that “the peace of God...will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. In Col 3:15 “the peace of Christ” is to “rule in your hearts.” The actual mention of heart and mind as the sphere where peace rules points to this same meaning. In Jn 14:27 the gift of peace is offered in contrast to the troubled hearts of the disciples. It is nothing but the ‘indwelling presence of the risen Lord’ or the joy of the Resurrection (see Jn 20:11-18).

Therefore when one wished for another ‘peace from Christ’ it is used to embrace all three. In fact the peace which Jesus promises is more than freedom from fear and it is the presence of the risen Jesus within us and in the midst of us. When his kingdom that of above (Is 9:6-7; Ezek 37:26) penetrates the kingdom that is below, then, a contrast community, an alternative society becomes a reality.

II. Metaphors of Peace

A. *Peace as Reconciliation*

If we do not work for peace in this highly developed age of science both humanity and nature will be destroyed. Karl Friedrich von Weizacker said that “peace is a very important condition for our lives in the age of scientific technology.”⁶ That is why Jesus said, “Happy are those who work for peace” (Mt 5:9). “Those who work for peace” in Greek is *eirenopoioi* which means “make peace” and therefore it implies that peace cannot be achieved without our effort.⁷

In Ephesians 2:11-22 peace is explained as reconciliation with God, reconciliation among the humans and reconciliation with nature (Rom 8:19-23).⁸ All these three are possible on account of what Jesus has done. Although there is no change

in the attitude of God who is always loving and in the attitude of the sinner who is always rebellious, there is change in the situation on account of what Jesus has done on the cross. The uncovenanted gentiles established covenant (relationship) with God through the blood of Jesus who made laws impotent through his body. Such abundant love of Jesus restored our original 'image' at the time of creation. This restoration brought about a new human community which broke down the wall of enmity among the humans. This is made possible through the love which Christ showed on the cross. This new community is the manifestation of God's family with Christ as the centre and this grows until the whole universe becomes God's temple where God lives and rules.⁹ The people belonging to this God's family spread peace far and wide (Lk 10:10-12). Paul uses one compound verb, *anakephalaaiosasthai*, to express the idea of unity in diversity. "This one word is the key to the whole message of Ephesians. The first part *ana*, means to "sum up again," and the main verb, *kephalaioo*, the stem of which is *kephale*, means "head." So the meaning of this verb is that all things become one under Christ."¹⁰

It was this reconciliation and harmony we see in the story of creation (Gen 1:31). According to the Korean minjung theologian, Ahn Nyung-Mu, the "fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil" is something that belongs to everyone and by making it a private property the human has disobeyed God's command, which alienates the humans from God breaking God's peace.¹¹ This resulted in alienation with oneself and alienation with others in the Garden of Eden. This initial alienation snowballed into Cain killing Abel and Lamech boasting about his sin (Gen 4:23-24). Thus, alienation with God brings division after division in the world disrupting peace. In Gen 4:22 Lamech's son Tubal Cain made all kinds of tools from bronze and iron and it may be because of Lamech's confidence in weapons to avenge his enemies reminding us of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. today, both competing for power

through the number of weapons.¹² But peace can come not through the weapons of mass destruction (Pss 33:16-17; 44:6-7; 46:8-9) but through the tools of mass production as in Micah 4:3 “they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks.” Thus, peace is reconciliation/harmony and the opposite of peace is division. Here the other is not looked at as the other but as an indispensable partner¹³ (Is 11:6-9) where the basis of the harmony is the experience of God’s love.

“Peace in the biblical sense is different from the peace (*pax*) which the Romans used in the political context” (*pax Romana*).¹⁴ The biblical peace is peace with justice as the psalmist says, “steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other” (Ps 85:10) and “righteousness will go before the Lord and prepare for him a path of peace” (85:13). The eighth century pre-exilic prophets emphasized the need of justice for peace (Is 1:17; Am 5:24; Mi 6:8). The God of Exodus is the God who listens to the cry of the people (Ex 3:8; Ps 72:12). This God expected justice based on love (Ex 22:21-22). The Old Testament word for God’s love is *rahamim* which means womb translated as compassion. “Phyllis Tribble, in her book *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, says that the womb is the vessel and its contents is love. Woman who contain life in their bodies, and who care for this life, are more sensitive to God’s love. Furthermore, from the sociobiographic perspective, women who have suffered oppression and discrimination down through the years are more sensitive to the pain of the oppressed. Those who trample upon others are unable to feel the pain of those on whom they are trampling.”¹⁵ In fact, any exploited group will feel the pain of the suffering people. “If we want to see the corruption and injustice in the society we have to learn about and feel the suffering of those who are exploited.... If we ignore their cries and do nothing to solve the problems that cause their suffering, claiming that we have peace, we are

fooling ourselves. That is not peace, but only *pax Romana*. In Isaiah 11 we read about the fierce lion and the poisonous snakes playing together with children. There we can see equality and partnership. This is the vision of the world that we should try to achieve.”¹⁶

B. Peace as Kingdom of God

“Shalom is a political [and even cosmic] community based on justice”¹⁷ (Jer 7:5-7; Mic 2:1-12; Amos 4:1 and Ps 34:14). God in the Old Testament comes across as the “relative” (goel) of the widow, the orphans, the aliens and the poor and avenger of Israel. Such agreement is made through the covenant with God’s people and this covenant is a relationship based on justice. For prophets like Amos, Isaiah and Jeremiah to know God is to do justice (Amos 5:4-15; Jer 22:13-16; Is 1:17). Justice in the Bible is not abstract but looking at the structure of political and social relationship from the perspective of the poor and the weak.¹⁸ “In recent years we have become concerned about eco-justice, i.e., the just way in which we use natural resources and environment. Here too, how can we allow a section of society to consume a majority of resources when many have no access to it.”¹⁹ When personal and corporate responsibilities are there to build up a just society shalom will be experienced and a hindrance to such peace is selfishness (Is 57:17-21) expressed through our lifestyle, attitude and irrational prejudices against others.²⁰ Jesus’ proclamation of the Kingdom of God is the same as that of shalom in the Old Testament.²¹ His manifesto (Lk 4:16-21), Beatitudes (Lk 6:20-22) and credentials (Mt 11:2-5) revealed the perspective in which he looked at the society. His values expressed through his reaction to cult (Mt 5:23-24), law (Mk 2:27) and ritual (Mk 7:15) are the values of the Kingdom of God. His solidarity with the marginalized made him the enemy of the powerful who possessed unjust values and took him to the cross. Thus, “conflict was very much part of Jesus’ ministry

of Shalom. That seems to be the experience of people who follow Jesus. They are at odds with the inhuman and unjust values and structures of dominant society. Jesus was able to bear up the conflict not by retreating himself into a spirituality that is preoccupied with his own security (Gethsemane) but by committing himself to God who is present in the midst of his people for their liberation. In this sense Jesus knew that peace is the gift of God. It is also a task.”²²

Conclusion

Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:4-30 describes the church as a body, an organism of which Christ is the head and all Christians are parts. If the body is to be whole it needs all parts. In the same way we all need one another. Since the gifts of the spirit are distributed to all parts of the body, wholeness in Christ is primarily a communal and not individual.²³ “Paul’s point is that none of us has all the gifts which are necessary for the church to function as a community faith in mission. We all have some of the gifts. We all need one another. Only as we live, work and worship together is the church whole, fully equipped for the life of faith and mission. Christ our peace takes on a new meaning—Christ brings us together, whoever we are, and enables us to work together. As we work and worship together, we all find wholeness.”²⁴ For people like Micah and Isaiah the city of Jerusalem was a geographical centre for peace (Mi 4:1-4) from where the instruction for peace will come.²⁵ In fact, Jerusalem means the foundation or the city of peace. But such hope was dashed by Micah himself when he said, “Zion shall be ploughed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins” (Mi 3:12). Jesus himself wept over Jerusalem and said that it did not know the things that make for peace (19:41-44). We need for firmer foundation for peace. Peace is based no longer on a place but on a person, that is Jesus Christ (Jn 4:21-24) “upon whose sacrifice on the cross, in the giving up of his life, the shedding of his blood, lie the seeds of shalom... To

have this realization is the beginning of the discovery of the path God wants us to walk in this life.”²⁶

Notes

1. Corruption may be understood as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.
2. See Aman Sharma, “Communal Violence in the Country up by 25% in first five months of 2015,” in *The Economic Times*, July 21, 2015.
3. Priyanka Kakodkar, “628 farmer suicides in Maharashtra this year,” *The Times of India*, Mumbai, Sep. 5, 2015.
4. Here I basically follow E.M. Good, “Peace” in *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 3, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993, pp. 704-706.
5. Peace is central to Judaism, Christianity and Islam. This is shown in their greetings of Peace meant primarily to members of one’s own community: *shalom aleichem*, *pax vobiscum* and *salaam aleikum*. Peace in Arabic is salaam which is the root for Islam (surrender or submission) and Muslim (one who submits) and therefore stereotyping Muslims as angry mob is wrong and most Muslims are peace loving people. See <http://www.answering-islam.org/Authors/Sene/peacepromoting.html> accessed on 22/10/2015 where it is explained that for Muslims Allah is great and unknowable and therefore Muslims are slaves of Allah and ‘peace’ for them is to surrender themselves to the Will of God and not through establishing personal relationship with God which is not possible.
6. See Lee Oo Chung, “Peace is Harmony: Peace, Unification and Women,” in S.T. Martinez (ed.), *Christ our Peace: Building a Just Society* (Japan 1990), 59.
7. See Lee Oo Chung, “Peace is Harmony,” 59.
8. See Lee Oo Chung, “Peace is Harmony,” 60.
9. See Lee Oo Chung, “Peace is Harmony,” 60.
10. See Lee Oo Chung, “Peace is Harmony,” 63.
11. See Lee Oo Chung, “Peace is Harmony,” 61.

12. See Lee Oo Chung, "Peace is Harmony," 62.
13. See Lee Oo Chung, "Peace is Harmony," 64.
14. See Lee Oo Chung, "Peace is Harmony," 64. *Pax Romana* is an enforced peace. Anyone who tried to protest the violence of the Roman military governors was punished ruthlessly.
15. See Lee Oo Chung, "Peace is Harmony," 65.
16. See Lee Oo Chung, "Peace is Harmony," 66.
17. K.C. Abraham, "No Peace without Justice: Biblical Perspectives on Peace and Justice," in S.T. Martinez (ed.), *Christ our Peace: Building a Just Society* (Japan 1990), 3.
18. K.C. Abraham, "No Peace without Justice," 3.
19. K.C. Abraham, "No Peace without Justice," 4.
20. K.C. Abraham, "No Peace without Justice," 4.
21. K.C. Abraham, "No Peace without Justice," 5.
22. K.C. Abraham, "No Peace without Justice," 5.
23. See Ann P. Wansbrough, "Wholeness of Community: Meaning of Peace for People with Disabilities," in S.T. Martinez (ed.), *Christ our Peace: Building a Just Society* (Japan 1990), 23.
24. Ann P. Wansbrough, "Wholeness of Community," 23.
25. Noriel C. Capulong, "From Swords to Ploughshares: A Foundation for Peace and Prosperity," in S.T. Martinez (ed.), *Christ our Peace: Building a Just Society* (Japan 1990), 73-74.
26. Noriel C. Capulong, "From Swords to Ploughshares," 75.

Article received: Feb 23, 2016

Article approved: Sept 22, 2016

No of words: 4050



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Sword for the Prince of Peace (Lk 22:35-38)?

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Abstract: Two texts from the Lucan version “Do you think I have come to bring peace upon earth? No I tell you, but rather division” (Lk 12:51) and ““The one who has a purse must take it, and likewise a bag. And the one who has no sword must sell his cloak and buy one” (Lk 22:36) – are among the challenging and difficult texts to interpret. Very often these texts are used to justify violent approaches to solve issues, not only for self-defence but also to make our missionary and evangelical activities more effective and fruitful. But the question is: Luke in the whole of the Gospel, emerges to be, among others, an evangelist of peace, but how come in these texts he encourages ‘division’ and the use of ‘sword’? Raising this pertinent question, the paper seeks to analyze the nuances of the usage of these two terms in the over-all context of Luke’s Gospel and invites the readers to find an answer for the question whether Jesus offers universal peace and all-inclusive salvation or division.

Keywords: Peace in NT, Sword, Peace on earth, Prince of peace.

Introduction

One of the harshest and difficult sayings of Jesus is, “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword” (Mt 10:34). In a way, Black is right when he says, such a statement from Jesus looks like “a cry of Muhammad proclaiming a Jihad or holy war, rather than a genuine utterance of the Prince of

Peace.”¹Understanding this difficulty, Luke has already tried to soften this harsh saying of Jesus by changing ‘sword’ into ‘division’: “Do you think I have come to bring peace upon earth? No I tell you, but rather division” (Lk 12:51). The absence of the word ‘sword’ suggests that either Luke has the fear that ‘sword’ would convey a literal meaning and hence be misunderstood, or as we would see later, Luke wanted to use the word not in this section, but elsewhere on the eve of his arrest, where no other gospel writer has referred to it: “The one who has a purse must take it, and likewise a bag. And the one who has no sword must sell his cloak and buy one.” (Lk 22:36).

This verse has led numerous Christians to justify their stand on weapons and say it is right and just to carry and use weapons not only for personal safety but also in the pursuit of missionary activity of bringing Jesus to the world. This also makes us wonder why on earth Luke, the evangelist, who emphasizes peace all through his gospel, suddenly talks about sword just before the arrest of Jesus.

I am of the opinion that the above mentioned two passages about division and sword (Lk 12:51 and Lk 22:36) should be understood in the light of the general context of the gospel of Luke where the concept of peace plays a theologically significant role. This paper hence attempts at first to see how, among the other Synoptics, Luke has made more use of the term peace to explicate the life and mission of Jesus. This will help, then, to appreciate the nuances of the difficult sayings of Jesus about division and sword. Studying the nuances of ‘peace’ and ‘sword’ in the light of each other, I hope, we would perhaps be able to find an answer to an age-old question - is what Jesus offers to the world, universal and an all-inclusive offer of salvation, irrespective of caste, creed and culture.

1. Peace in the New Testament

The Greek word for peace, εἰρήνη (*eirénē*) could be seen in the New Testament as many as 92 times. Although we find the word in every book of the NT, except 1 John, mostly the word is seen in the gospels and in the Pauline letters. It is interesting to note that out of the twenty five occurrences of the word in the gospels, it is Luke who uses the word more often than the other evangelists.² The meaning of the word *eirénē* in the NT could be perceived in three different shades of meaning. First, the word *eirénē* in the NT corresponds to the OT and Rabbinic understanding of the term *shalom*, meaning health, wellbeing and deliverance.³ Just as *shalom* is used as a normal expression of greeting of the Orientals, we also see that in Luke (as well as in the other books of the NT), *eirénē* is often connected with a formal way of greeting someone, not only at the beginning of the meeting, but also as a farewell greeting. The first thing that the disciples are asked to do, when they enter the houses to which they go, is to greet them and wish them peace. Along the similar line, the resurrected Christ greets the disciples, with the word 'Peace be with you' (Lk 24:36).⁴ Secondly the word could also be seen in the NT in the context of reconciliation of humans with each other (2 Tim 2:22; Eph 4:3; Jam 3:8) and with God Eph 2:16). Finally, *eirénē* could be seen as referring to the end time salvation. Foerster understands the references Lk 1:75 where Zachariah talks of peace, and Lk 2:14 where the angels sing of peace to the people of good will, pointing to the arrival of the end-time salvation.⁵ Taken in this way, one could say that the word *eirénē*, just like the Hebrew word *shalom*, could be understood or used interchangeably with the word σωτήριον (*sótérion*). In the gospels, however, especially in Luke, the word *eirénē* comes either from the mouth of Jesus, or at least, it is spoken in reference to Jesus.

2. Peace in the Infancy Narratives in Luke

Luke uses the word *eirénē* three times in the Infancy Narratives (Lk 1:79b, 2:14, 29). The first is placed in the *Benedictus* where Zachariah sings his song of praise to God and ends it with the prophecy about his son preparing the way of the Light which will “guide us in the way of peace” (Lk 1:79b). The arrival of Jesus is understood to be the arrival of the Light, whose mission is to guide people in the way of peace. Hence at the very beginning of the gospel, Jesus, his life and mission are shown to have something to do with peace. Donahue suggests that the Lukan phrase “*hodon eirénēs*” has its origins in the negative usage of the phrase in Isaiah 59:8. The Isaian condemnation is that the people do not know the way of peace. “They have made their ways crooked and no one who walks in them knows peace” (Is 59:8). While the entire ch. 59 talks about the evil doings of the Israelites and God’s judgement against them, the reference to peace in the *Benedictus* on the other hand portrays the phrase positively. In Donahue’s words, “The way of peace will be that kind and quality of life which Jesus will embody in the gospel and the way of discipleship to which he will summon his followers. The way of peace becomes a virtual paraphrase for the gospel itself.”⁶ Hence we see that the word *eirénē* is nothing but a synonym for the Good news which Jesus came to preach, and ultimately it refers to Jesus himself. The arrival of Jesus into the world is then to be equated with / to be understood as the arrival of peace for people on earth. This is again attested in the second reference to peace in the Infancy Narratives of Luke.

3. The Birth of the Messiah and Peace on Earth (Lk 2:14)

In the Roman world, the birth of a Roman prince would create an occasion for numerous poets in the empire to compose poems, singing of the prosperity and peace which

the newborn king would achieve. Luke is very much aware of such a practice and molds the announcement of the birth of Jesus in a similar way. But at the birth of Jesus, it is not the earthly poets but it is the heavenly angels who sing joyfully and proclaim the birth of the King of the World. The birth of Jesus is the cause for great joy for the heavenly hosts. Their song, “despite its brevity, recalls the opening and closing themes of the *Benedictus*: glory for God, and peace for those favored by him.”⁷ Hence Luke shows that the birth of Jesus brings peace to the world, as it was prophesied earlier. This peace, as Donahue rightly points out, has “more of the comprehensive nuance of the Hebrew *shalom*, the fullness of salvation.”⁸ But one doubts whether the phrase ‘peace only to the men of good will’ limits the recipients of peace. In other words, one wonders whether the peace (salvation) which Jesus is and which Jesus came to give, is all-inclusive. The overall context of the gospel of Luke does not justify such a view. The peace which the birth of Jesus brought to the world cannot be partial. Such an understanding is, as Donahue aptly puts it, coming out of “a wrong theology: that is, that the peace given in the birth of Jesus is somehow limited to those of good will. The opposite is the case... The gift is prior to the demand. Peace on earth will be a consequence of people’s realization that they are recipients of the goodness of God.”⁹ However when one looks at the wordings of Luke, they mean to show to the readers something different. Though the birth of Jesus is “a cause of great joy for *all* people” (Lk 2:12), the peace that is offered is *only to those men, on whom God’s favor rests* (Lk 2:14). This seems to show to the readers that here Luke does make a difference between those men on earth who have found God’s favor, and those who have not. This subsequently means that “true and lasting peace is the portion of those, and only of those, whom God has graciously chosen.”¹⁰ Such an understanding needs confirmation from other passages of Luke as well.

When we learn the word *eirēnē* we see that it is used here to denote more than a mere absence of war between nations or absence of fight or strife between individuals. It is not only about the peaceful co-existence of humans but more importantly it is about the harmony of mankind with God; apart from the fact that it “evokes a whole social order of well-being and prosperity, security and harmony,”¹¹ ‘peace on earth’ together with ‘glory in the highest’ suggests reconciliation between God and humans, which would lead one to salvation; in this way Marshall is right in saying, “εἰρήνη is thus tantamount to σωτηρία.”¹² Since this is brought by the birth of Jesus, glory and peace are “the twin fruits of the Incarnation.”¹³

The third use of ‘peace’ in the Infancy Narratives is placed in the *Nunc Dimittis*, on the mouth of the old prophet Simeon who, after having seen the Savior and holding the child Jesus in his hands, requests God that he might be “released in peace” (2:29). This ‘release in peace’ is understood by scholars as a Semitic expression of his peaceful death. As Bock suggests it could also be understood to denote the satisfaction of having known that the Messiah is born and the satisfaction of the achievement of the longing of Simeon.¹⁴ What was sung by the angels about men of good will has been actualized in the person of Simeon.¹⁵ Once again we see the concepts of ‘salvation’ and ‘peace’ coming together at the birth of Jesus. But the peace, offered through the birth of Jesus the Savior, is not only to the individual Simeon; for Simeon further states that Jesus is the light for the gentiles and glory to Israel (2:32). Does it mean then, that the peace which Jesus came to offer is an all-inclusive offer? When we further look at the words of Simeon, we tend to think in the negative. Simeon who foretells the unification of gentiles and Israel through the birth of Jesus also talks about division. This child of peace would be cause for the rise and fall of many in Israel (Lk 2:34). Once again question arises as to what Luke wants to say to the readers. If he is suggesting that the peace which Jesus came to give the

world is for all, why should Jesus then be the cause for the 'fall' of some and for the rise of others? An all-embracing concept of salvation once again comes under scanner.

4. “Peace be with You”: First Word in the Missionary Work of the Disciples (Lk 10:5)

After the Infancy Narratives we see a major section of peace-sayings in the missionary sending of the seventy-two disciples of Jesus in Luke 10:5ff. The first word that the disciples should say to those to whom they go is “peace to this house.” It goes along with the general form of oriental greetings when one meets another. Just like the sons of Jacob are greeted in Egypt (Gen 43:23), just like David sends greetings to Nabal (1 Sam 25:6), just like Nebuchadnezzar begins his speech with the initial greetings (Dan 4:1-2), Lukan Jesus asks his disciples to begin their ministry to the people with the initial wishing of peace. Luke however binds the word with the message of Jesus. The disciples who bring peace to the houses are the direct messengers of Jesus himself, who is Peace Incarnate. “In the name of their Sender these apostles not only *wish* peace but actually *bring* it.”¹⁶ Here we get a clarification for our earlier question, whether there is a universal offer of salvation. Yes, the offer of peace by Jesus is universal. Whomever the disciples meet, they are supposed to wish peace. However, it depends on whether the families and houses would receive peace or reject it. If there is a “son of peace” in the house, this peace will stay in that house (Lk 10:6). Through this Semitic phrase which Luke might have received from his source, Luke understands the resident of the house as one who loves peace and is committed to work for peace.¹⁷ Hence those who receive this peace in their houses receive Jesus incarnate himself. Luke makes it clear here that the offer of peace and salvation is offered to everyone who accepts Jesus and his message i.e., who is attuned to the peace offered by Jesus.

5. Entry into Jerusalem, the 'City of Peace' (Lk 19:37-38)

Another important Lukan addition of peace in the gospel is at the entry of Jesus in Jerusalem. We know that Luke has referred Jerusalem in his gospel with a great theological significance. The entire gospel of Luke is composed as a journey of the Gospel towards Jerusalem; when the first book ends with Jerusalem, the Acts, the second work of Luke continues this journey of the Gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the then known world. Such an importance to the city of Jerusalem is not only to be seen from a theological point of view but also from the literary point of view. This is why Luke begins his gospel from Jerusalem (Lk 1:5ff.) while the other synoptic writers begin with Galilee. The ending of the gospel too is placed in Jerusalem. The risen Christ would appear in the gospel of Luke in and around Jerusalem, while for the other Synoptics, the disciples have to go to Galilee to see the risen Christ. In the ministry of Jesus too, Luke writes in frequent intervals that Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem (Lk 9:51, 53; 17:11; 18:11; 19:11). Once Jesus is in the vicinity of the city and as the people welcome him singing joyfully, Luke once again uses the word *eiréné*. While the people who welcome Jesus into the city acclaim in other two synoptic gospels ““Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” (Mk 12:9-10; Mt 21:9), Lukan acclamation is slightly different. He changes the cheering of the people to “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! *Peace in heaven*, and glory in the highest heaven!” (Lk 19:38). This is intriguing and interesting because it takes us back to a similar acclamation of peace by the angels at the birth of Jesus (Lk 2:14). As Donahue rightly points out, Luke has sandwiched the entire ministry of Jesus into these two acclamations of *eiréné*.¹⁸ However there are differences between the two. While at the birth of Jesus it

was the angels who sang, now at his entry into Jerusalem it is the people who sing. While the angels sang, “*peace on earth* upon men of good will,” the people sing at the arrival of Jesus, “*peace in heaven*.” Why should Luke change the recipient of peace from earth to heaven? What does he achieve through such a change? In the apt words of Just, “at Jesus’ birth, there is peace *on earth*; as he enters into Jerusalem for his passion and resurrection, there is peace *in heaven*. Thus *earth and heaven* are joined together in peace through the incarnation and atonement of Christ.”¹⁹ Through the life, ministry and death of Jesus, *shalom*, i.e., the reconciliation between God and man is achieved. Hence the peace that Jesus came to bring is not only for the whole wellbeing of the humanity; it also unites God and man, destroying the barriers that hinder human’s relation with God. The question however is whether Jerusalem, which literally means the city of peace, actually understood and accepted such a gracious offer of peace. Luke answers in the negative.

6. Jerusalem’s Lost Opportunity for Peace (Lk 19:41-44)

Looking at the City of Peace, Lukan Jesus weeps (Lk 19:41-44). It is the only place in the Synoptics, where Jesus is seen weeping. His weeping is specifically over the City of Peace and its inhabitants: “If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes” (Lk 19:42). It is tempting to look at *eirénē* here in the context of war, since the next verse is about the destruction of Jerusalem (Lk 19:43-44). What exactly did Luke want to tell the readers with the phrase ‘the things that make for peace’? Scholars are divided in their understanding. There is definitely a pun involved between the phrase and the name Jerusalem which means the City of Peace. This peace, which Jerusalem fails to recognize is Jesus himself. Because for Luke, he is the giver of peace. Hendricksen suggests that

Luke infers penitence and conversion as the things that make for peace. Jerusalem does not repent, but hardens its heart instead of showing conversion.²⁰ In Donahue's opinion, Luke might have tried to contrast the way of peace, i.e., the way of Jesus over against the way of Zealots which was the way of war.²¹ Hence, the peace which Jesus points to, is not the peace that emerges out of a bitter battle but it is the peace which God alone could give. This God-given peace was gifted to Israel in the person of Jesus. Israel did not recognize it. Marshall goes a step further and states that peace here should be understood in its broadest scope as it is in the Hebrew word *Shalom*. Hence the things that make for (your) peace, is to be understood as your salvation - salvation of the entire nation.²² A city which is proud of prosperity, welfare and peace (*shalom*), has actually missed the opportunity to recognize the embodiment of peace who is coming to it. Hence, instead of peace, destruction awaits the city (Lk 19:43-44). Luke once again brings in the difference between the universal offer of peace by Jesus on the one side and its rejection by people of Jerusalem on the other, resulting in destruction.

7. Peace of the Resurrected Christ (Lk 24:36)

Luke climaxes his references to *eiréné*, at the resurrection event. The first thing that resurrected Christ offers to the desolate and confused disciples is peace. At a time, when the disciples were direly in need of someone who could strengthen them, Jesus comes in and wishes them peace. Nolland is right in his comparison between the resurrected Christ entering the house and wishing the residents with the disciples peace with the disciples entering and wishing peace to the residents of the house (Lk 10:6).²³ Although this looks like the casual greetings of the then known world it is here more than just a greeting. It is the same peace that Jesus came to give the world. It is the same "peace which Jesus had obtained for all his people by his death on the cross."²⁴

Summing up all the texts that refer to peace in Luke, we find Jesus is at the center of *eiréné*; his birth has inaugurated the period of peace; in his ministry Jesus bestowed this God-given peace to everyone who was ready to receive him. This peace took the form of healing, or forgiveness of sins or even assuring eschatological salvation. In short Jesus was the embodiment of *shalom* / *eiréné* which is summed up well by Luke in the Acts, “You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ - he is Lord of all” (Acts 10:36).

Such a strong message of peace, such a strong connection between the person of Jesus and concept of *eiréné* is disrupted by two short but very important references within Luke, which portray Jesus as someone who has not come to bring peace but division and sword. Why should Luke bring these references at important junctures of his gospel? What could be the teaching, which Luke would like to impart in the minds of his readers? How could they clear our doubts regarding the universal offer of salvation? We shall try to answer these questions below.

8. “Division, not Peace” (Lk 12:51)

The first of the references which deviate from the peace-bringing mission of Jesus is when he unambiguously says that his mission is not to bring peace but division. Such a strong statement from Jesus is very much shocking: the one who came “to guide our feet in the way of peace” (Lk 1:79), the one whose birth has brought peace upon earth to men of good will (2:14), instead of bringing peace, speaks of dividing even the basic societal structure of a family. To the question, why Jesus should say he has come to bring not peace but division, Donahue suggests that Luke perhaps had modeled this saying after Jeremiah’s prophecy, which condemns against the false prophets who advocate false peace: “For from the least to the

greatest of them, everyone is greedy for unjust gain; and from prophet to priest, everyone deals falsely. They have treated the wound of my people carelessly, saying, “Peace, peace,” when there is no peace” (Jer 6:12-14). Similar wording, we find also in Jer 8:11. Luke contrasts Jesus with these false leaders of Israel who assure false peace.

The peace which the Prince of Peace offers is not the peace that is proclaimed and promised by the false leaders of Israel. The leaders of Israel thought that the Messiah would bring apolitical peace achieved by a bitter war whereby Messiah would overthrow the foreign powers and would regain the land from the non-Jews. Luke points out to the readers, the peace that Jesus would bring, is not the peace which comes after a bitter war, not the peace emerging out of enmity, not the peace that glorifies one race and vilifies all the others. “The Lucan Jesus is the true prophet who rejects false peace and that peace which can be achieved only through sectarian violence.”²⁵ Godet tells it succinctly, “Jesus does not deny that peace should be the final result of His work; but certainly He denies that it will be its immediate effect.”²⁶ This means peace has its own price to pay. There would be misunderstanding, divisions even between the family members, suffering and even death for those who search and propagate such peace.

9. Sword for the Prince of Peace (Lk 22: 36)?

Another intriguing passage which seemingly goes against the peace-bringing mission of Jesus is Lk 22:35-38 where Jesus explicitly asks his disciples to buy swords for their protection; if one does not have a sword, he should sell his mantle in order to buy one (22:36). One could immediately see the contrast between the advice of Jesus here in Lk 22:36 and in 10:4-5. When Jesus sent the seventy-two disciples on their mission, he asked them not to carry purse, bag or sandals. What they carried along with them was peace which they

would offer to the house in which they entered. But here the disciples should not only take purse and bag; Jesus tells them a sword is more important for them than their mantle. Lk 22:36 is the only reference in the gospels which shows us that the disciples were advised by Jesus to possess a sword. Was the sword their own (one of the disciples of Jesus was in fact a former member of Zealots)? Was it found in the upper room and the disciples just took it in case of emergency? Above all the question that haunts us is that why it is, that Jesus allowed the disciples to carry a dagger exactly when he is going to be arrested?

One group of scholars say the advice of Jesus was and should be understood literally. At the time of Jesus, the cloak (*himation*) was an indispensable element of a person on a journey. A common man who was on a journey usually used his mantle as his blanket for the cold night in the open.²⁷ Jesus asks the disciples to sell even a cloak in order to buy a sword. Because “the sword was a part of a traveler’s equipment in the Roman world and the possession of a sword meant nothing more than protecting oneself.”²⁸ Since Jesus and the disciples were often on the roads travelling from one end of the country to another, they needed protection not only from bandits on the way side (cf. Lk 10:25-37), but also from wild animals.²⁹ Hence Jesus advised the disciples to keep swords for protection. It sounds logical but. But the placement of this advice by Jesus is intriguing and makes one wonder, why Luke brings in the procurement of swords, just before the arrest of Jesus. Did the Lukan Jesus want them to protect him and them against those who came to arrest him that night?

The other group of scholars, a majority of them, reply in the negative. They suggest, the advice of Jesus should be understood symbolically.³⁰ According to them, Jesus - who set his face towards Jerusalem even after known his fate, who asked his disciples to bless those who curse and pray for those

who abuse and even love their enemies (Lk 6:27ff; 9:54-55), and who just before his death would forgive and pray for those who killed him (Lk 23:34) - would have never advocated his disciples to use force. They suggest that the symbolic buying of sword is nothing but a call to be ready for battle against the spiritual enemy, i.e., Satan, as it is told by Jesus just a while earlier (22:31). In the words of Godet, the sword is an “emblem of avowed hostility... This weapon represents the power of holiness in conflict with the sin of the world.”³¹ Jesus actually reminds the disciples about the times when they were sent. They were asked to go without bag, purse or sandals. Yet they lacked nothing (Lk 22:35), for at that time of their ministry they were welcomed by sons of peace (Lk 10:6). But the times have changed. Instead of sons of peace, they would encounter hostility and rejection and suffering.

Conzelmann and others contrast advice of Jesus at the sending of the seventy-two disciples in 10:4, where he said not to take the three things (purse, bag and sandals) with the advice of Jesus now to take the three things (purse, bag and sword). Through the new addition of sword Luke brings a change in the period. This change is marked with the phrase *ἀλλὰ νῦν* (*alla nun*). Through this phrase Luke paves way not only for the beginning of the arrest and gruesome murder of Jesus; he also gives the foretaste of what the disciples would face in their community. Hence as the time of Jesus and his ministry comes to an end, the Time of the Church and its ministry is introduced in this verse.³² Jesus would no longer be with them physically. But it is hatred, suffering and threat to life which the disciples of Jesus would face. Jesus himself has been rejected by the leaders of Israel and hence all those who follow him should be ready to face the world which would be full of hatred for those who belong to Jesus. This is why buying a sword assumes its symbolic significance specially in the light of the fate that Jesus is to undergo shortly (Lk 22:37). The disciples are asked to empower themselves for

the coming days. They are asked to be armed as he would arm himself with Prayer before his arrest. In the Gethsemane scene Jesus prays to his Father for the strength to face the upcoming events (22:41-44) and advises the disciples to pray, because he knows only prayer will give them strength (22:40, 45-46). That shows to the readers what sort of sword his disciples should be armed with.

10. “No More of This Sword-Business!” (Lk 22:38, 51)

The symbolic meaning of the sword gets confirmed from what follows at the Last Supper. To the advice of Jesus to buy sword, the disciples answer, “Lord, look, here are two swords.” The reply of Jesus in 22:38 is significant for our understanding of the symbolic meaning of sword. As the disciples say to him that there are two swords there, Jesus replies to them “enough.” This does not mean that Jesus actually considered two swords would be enough to protect them; on the contrary, he recognized that the disciples have completely misunderstood what he meant by procuring swords. Still worse, the disciples have completely failed to recognize the mission and the message of Jesus all through. Actually the word ‘enough’, expresses the displeasure of Jesus. It is as if Jesus is saying “enough of it.”³³ With these two words Lukan Jesus has concluded the entire discussion, and thereby has convincingly conveyed to the readers that the disciples have completely misunderstood what Jesus was saying up until now. The sword he is talking about and the sword the disciples are showing are completely against each other.

Again another passage in Gethsemane scene elucidates that Jesus did not refer to sword in the literal sense. At the arrest of Jesus one of the bystanders took the sword and cut the right ear of the slave of the high priest. Jesus’ reply for this action

was once again, “No more of this!” (Lk 22:51). And Jesus does just the opposite of what the disciples did. He heals the slave. This shows the Prince of Peace has no need of swords. Even at the last minute he attempts to be an instrument of peace. Hence in his whole life, Jesus proves he is the one who has come to bring into the world God’s Kingdom of peace.

11. Lucan Message for His Community

The following lessons could be drawn from the Lukan references to the concept of peace and sword in his gospel and from Jesus, the Prince of Peace: At a time when the talk in the Roman empire was the enjoyment of *pax Romana*, Luke wants to show to his community, who alone could give that peace which would satiate the totality of the human person – Jesus Christ. As seen above, Luke began his gospel in Jerusalem the city of peace and ended there, showing thereby its important role in bringing God’s reign of peace in the world. In the portrayal of Jesus too, Luke has been careful in showing how the entire life of Jesus has moved along the divine plan of bringing peace to the world. At his very birth we hear the song of peace. Through this song, Luke has reminded the readers of the prophecy of Isaiah about the birth of the future King, who is the Prince of Peace. “For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Is 9:6). All through his life he has been the agent of peace, not only through his healing and giving health but also through his forgiving of sins and thereby reconciling men with God and assuring them of salvation. And as he is lifted up from this world, he once again wishes peace to his apostles and leaves this peace with them as his farewell gift to them. Hence the Lukan Jesus is the **embodiment of Peace**.

The two references in Luke regarding division rather than peace (10:6) and the advice of Jesus buy sword (22:36)

show to the readers, there is a heavy cost one must pay for this peace. The invitation and the **offer of peace by Jesus is an all-inclusive, all-embracing offer. But the reception of peace is not.** Only the “sons of peace” i.e., those who accept Jesus and his message are the recipients of peace offered by Jesus. In other words, the all-embracing offer of peace by Jesus, as Luke understands is not, and will not be accepted by all. This is very evident from the very passages of peace that we have seen. The joyful choir of angels who sing the song of Peace at the birth of Jesus, proclaims that Jesus’ birth brings peace, *not to everyone on earth, but to those who are favored by God*. The same Simeon who talks of peace after having seen the Prince of Peace, talks about ‘sword’ that would pierce the mother of Jesus. He prophesies about the child as “destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed...” (Lk 2:34-35). Simeon talks of salvation which is prepared for “all” peoples and of Jesus as ‘the Light of revelation to the Gentiles’ as well as of the people of Israel (Lk 2:31-32); all the same, only those who accept Jesus are the recipients of peace. This message is once again apparent from the sending of the seventy-two. Peace is offered to every house the disciples go. Only when they are received, this peace stays, otherwise it returns to them (Lk 10:6). The same is true again, when Jesus talks of division instead of peace (12:51). Division and hatred between family members is dependent on the fact who is for Jesus and who in the family is against him. The procurement of sword in Lk 22:36 also should be understood in the light of the rejection of Jesus by the leaders of Israel despite his continuous offer of peace. Hence the acceptance of Jesus and his disciples is pivotal for determining who would receive and enjoy the peace offered by God, for which Jesus came to this world and who would be excluded from such an offer. All the same, God through Jesus issues an unconditional, all-inclusive offer of Peace which affects every sphere of life, here on earth and

further in the future. It all depends on the individual to accept or to reject this offer.

Notes

1. M. Black, "Not Peace but a Sword: Matt 10:34ff; Luke 12:51ff," in *Jesus and the Politics of his Day*, ed. E. Bammel and C. F. D. Moule (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 287.
2. Matthew uses it 4 times and John 6 times; while Marks employs the term only once, Luke uses it as many as 14 times apart from the seven occurrences of the word in the Acts. See V. Hasler, "εἰρήνη," in *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Balz, Horst & G. Schneider, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1990-1993), 1, 395.
3. We would do injustice to the word *shalom*, if we translate it only with peace. *Shalom* in the OT has a wide range of meaning, whose root should be understood as overall wellbeing of a person including one's bodily health (1 Sam 16:5; 2 Sam 18:28; Jer 6:14; Is 57:18). Another important meaning of *shalom* is the enjoyment peace and prosperity in the land (2 Sam 17:3; 1 Kings 2:5). This means the nation is not tarred with war. But one should not reduce the meaning if *shalom* with earthly security, health and prosperity alone, as Neufeld suggests. He opines there is some "earthiness" in the meaning of *shalom*. See T. R. Y. Neufeld, *Ephesians, Believers Church Bible Commentary* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2001), 129. One cannot forget the religious nuance of the term. The Hebrew *shalom* is also used in the religious sense of salvation, and it is always a gift of God. It is God who is the source of Peace (Job 25:2) and it is He who grants peace to David and his house and all his faithful (1 Kgs 2:33; Ps 85:8; 147:14). He makes a covenant of peace with his people (cf. Nu. 25:12; Sir. 45:24; Mal. 2:5; Ezek 34:25; 37:26). In this way *eirēnē* and σωτήριο are interlinked. For further clarifications on the term see Foerster. W., "εἰρήνη," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich (Michigan: Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1976), 2, 400ff.

4. One would clearly see that Paul begins most of his letters with the phrase “grace and peace ...” (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; Phil 1:2; Col 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:2; Tit 1:4; Philem 1:3).
5. Foerster. W. in G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich, 412.
6. J. E. Donahue, “The Good News of Peace,” *The Way* 22 (1982), 90. Fitzmyer is of the opinion, Lukan idea of peace is not only influenced by the OT understanding of shalom; it is also influenced by the Roman ‘*pax Augusta*.’ The very reference to the rule of Augustus Caesar in the Infancy Narratives (Lk 2:1) displays this association. See Fitzmyer, J. A., S.J., *The Gospel according to Luke I-IX* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2008), 224.
7. R. E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, The Anchor Bible reference library* (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 391.
8. Donahue, 91.
9. Donahue, 92.
10. Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J., *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke.*, vol. 11 of *New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2001), 156; Bock too points out that the phrase ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας (*anthrōpois eudokias*) is a technical term for chosen people of God in the first century. Hence from this context peace cannot be understood as an inclusive term. D. L. Bock, *Luke: Volume 1: 1:1-9:50, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 1994), 220.
11. J. Nolland, *Luke 1:1-9:20*, 35A of *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word Books, 2002), 108.
12. I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text, The New international Greek testament commentary* (Exeter: Paternoster Press., 1978), 112; see also R. H. Stein, *Luke*, vol. 24 of *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 109. That the reconciliation between God and humans is seen in the Lukan reference to

peace could be well seen from the words of Jesus to a woman in Lk 7:50. The woman is of a sinful character and her reception of Jesus is highlighted over against the host Simon who invited Jesus to dine with him. Through her action of anointing Jesus with oil and wiping his feet with her hair, she has shown her reception of Jesus and thereby her sins are forgiven, which subsequently assures the peace, which is nothing but her reconciliation with God. Similar understanding is also present in the healing of a woman in Lk 8:48.

13. A. Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke* (London: T&T Clark International, 1896), 58.
14. Bock, *Luke*, 242.
15. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 457; Just too writes along the same line, “the peace the angelic host promised for all on whom God’s favors rests comes to Simeon.” See A. A. Just, *Luke 1:1-9:50, Concordia commentary* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1997), 120; also Donahue, 92.
16. Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J., *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, 574.
17. Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke*, 273; Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 419; Donahue, 93.
18. Donahue, 95.
19. A. A. Just, *Luke 9:51-24:53, Concordia commentary* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1998), 747.
20. Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J., *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, 877.
21. Donahue, 96.
22. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 718.
23. J. Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 35C of *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word Books, 2002), 1212.
24. Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J., *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, 1073.
25. Donahue, 94.

26. Godet, F. L., Shalders, E. W., & Cusin, M. D., *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke* (New York: I. K. Funk & co., 1881), 2, 114.
27. R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 1068; Black in Bammel and Moule, 337.
28. R. C. Blight, *An Exegetical Summary of Luke 12-24* (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2008), 442; also Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*, 1068.
29. R. E. Gingrich, *The Gospel of Luke* (Memphis, TN.: Riverside Printing, 2001), 63.
30. J. Bond, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (London: Macmillan, 1890), 149; Stein, *Luke*, 555; Fitzmyer, J. A., S.J., *The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2008), 1432; Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J., *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, 976; R. K. Hughes, *Luke: That you may know the truth, Preaching the Word* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1998), 326; D. M. Sweetland, "The Lord's Supper and the Lukan Community," *BTB* 13 (1983), 26.
31. Godet, F. L., Shalders, E. W., & Cusin, M. D., *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke*, 2, 302.
32. Conzelmann H., *Die Mitte der Zeit* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1964), 9,74,97,186; also Fitzmyer, J. A., S.J., *The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV*, 1432; Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 824. However Lampe doubts this view of Conzelmann and others, whether the *alla nun* bears the entire weight the turning point of two different Periods of the church. See Lampe G.W.H., "The Two Swords: (Luke 22:35-38)," in *Jesus and the Politics of his Day*, ed. E. Bammel and C. F. D. Moule (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 337.
33. Earle Ellis E., *The Gospel of Luke* (MI: Eerdmans, Grand Rapids), 257; Fitzmyer, J. A., S.J., *The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV*, 1434; Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 827; Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 1077; Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke*, 507; Sweetland, 26.

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Article received: Mar 14, 2016

Article approved: Aug 27, 2016

No of words: 7780



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The Challenge of Peace from Tribal Perspectives

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Abstract: There are two major contrasting opinions with regard to the social, cultural and political identity of tribes in India. There is one school of thought who believes that there is no difference between caste and tribe in India. Equally strong opinions are expressed that in India tribals have distinctive culture and they do not belong to caste. This politics of identity itself brings conflict between communities and gives rise to many tribal movements. If we take into consideration all the tribal movements, it could be said that the tribal unrest and the resultant movements were mainly movements launched for liberation from (i) oppression, exploitation and discrimination, (ii) neglect and backwardness, and (iii) a government which was callous to the tribals' plight of poverty, hunger, unemployment and exploitation leading to movements due to separatist tendencies. Unless they are brought to the full development in par with others, conflict is bound to show its ugly head. Hence, in order to build peace and harmony within India from a tribal perspective, we need an inclusive development of tribals. This is a priority.

Keywords: Tribal, Tribal Identity, Exploitation, Tribal Conflict, Tribal Rights, Tribal Movements, Inclusive development of tribals

1. Who are Tribals?

The definition of the term "tribe" has long been a subject for discussion among anthropologists, but so far, there

is no generally accepted definition (Naik, 1968: 85-86). Etymologically the word 'tribe' derives its origin from the word 'tribuz' meaning three administrative divisions of ancient Rome. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines a tribe as a "group of people of the same race, with the same custom, language and religion who live in a particular area and are often led by a chief" (Wehmeier, 2000:1387). The British applied it to "a population that lived on the periphery of political and administrative life and called them 'Scheduled Tribes' and guaranteed special rights and protection (Pereira, 2004)

But, the study of tribes in India and the perceptions of their identity begin by locating them not just in the social context, but also in their cultural, political and religious context of their living. Tribal India lives in the forests, hills and naturally isolated regions; it is known by different names, meaning either the people of the forest in the hills or the original inhabitants. It is believed that they were the earliest among the present inhabitants of the country (Vidyarthi, 1976:25-26).

The popular names given for them are: Vanyajati (castes of forest), Vanvasi (inhabitants of forest), Pahari (hill-dwellers), Adimjati (original communities, primitive people), 'Adivasi' (original first settlers), Janjati (folk People), Anusuchitjanjati (scheduled tribes), and so on. Among these terms 'Adivasi' is known most extensively and Anusuchitjanjati (schedule tribes) is the constitutional name covering all of them.

Yet, there is a vague idea on the term tribe. Its evolution is very complex. Sociologists and Anthropologist have not arrived at a unanimous definition of the term. But the most attempted definition took an evolutionary perspective, depicting tribes as backward and primitive. The McMillian Dictionary of Anthropology starts by acknowledging that, "this term has been widely used in anthropology, but there is no general consensus as to its precise definition or appropriate

application” (Symour-Smith, 1986:281). Others like Vidyarthi, (1968:87), “give a host of characteristics, mostly derogative ones denoting primitiveness” that must be fulfilled for a group to qualify as a tribe.

Guha (2015:50-57) describes that the term ‘tribe’ is used in Indian Sociology and Political discourse and does not fit the observed characteristics of the people labelled above in any part of the world. He says so because “all over the world tribes have been generally referred to a strong organisation, often possessing much latent military power” (ibid., 50) but in India we hardly find the tribes with latent military power (leaving out few retaliation in the name of tribal movements).

But for Xaxa (1999:1523), “Tribe is a society, like all other societies, made up of people with its own boundaries. It is a group of people who belong to a society by virtues, rules and which they obey. They have their boundaries which is linguistically, cultural and politically different.” Therefore, “they are a distinct group of people, who have a geographical isolation, physical features, simple condition of living, general backwardness to the practise of animism, special language etc” (Xaxa, 1999: 3589). With this he means to say that tribals are culturally different from the mainstream population of India.

2. Politics of Tribal Identity

There are two major contrasting opinions with regard to the social, cultural and political identity of tribes in India. There is one school of thought who believes that there is no difference between caste and tribe in India (Ghurye: 1943, 1959; Beteille: 1974; Bailey: 1960). Equally strong opinions are expressed that in India tribals have distinctive culture and they do not belong to caste.

Many scholars have presented evidences from the classical, medieval and contemporary sources to demonstrate the tribes of India to be distinctive category from caste (Bose, 1941;

Mandelbaum, 1956; Baily, 1961; Beteille, 1981 and 2008; Singh, 1994; Burman, 1994; Fuchs, 1973; Fuerer-Hemindorf, 1982). From an insider point of view several tribal groups identify themselves as “*adivasis*” or indigenous or most ancient inhabitants of India.

In all the above characteristics tribes are distinguished from the castes with regard to their cultural practices and social organizations (Misra, 2008:433). Tribes are an autonomous group who are having their own distinctive culture and who are not belonging to Sanskritic culture and not members of the Hindu caste system, though a lot of attempts are being made to sanskritize them through the course of Indian history. Their religious world view is not governed by the Hindu philosophical ideas of *karma*, *dharma*, *punergenma* and *moksha* principles. The tribals do not have the Hindu Sanskritic gods in their pantheon. They do not have temples or statues at their original sacred grooves. Thus, conceptually the following criteria were adopted to characterize a tribal community such features as geographical isolation, simple technology and condition of living, general backwardness to the practice of animism, tribal language, physical features, etc.

Xaxa puts it very clearly that the two division within the society was seen because of the social organisation. He says, “Caste was treated as a society regulated by the hereditary division of labour, hierarchy, principle of purity and pollution, civic and religious disabilities, etc. whereas, Tribes on the other hand were characterized by the absence of features attributed to caste” (Xaxa, 2003:384)

In spite of the distinctive characteristics of the tribes, there is a vigorous attempt to absorb tribals to Hindu caste social structure.

3. Constitutional Understanding of Tribes

From the above discussion it is clear that it is very difficult to offer a precise and clear-cut definition of the concept of tribe because the nomenclature is overshadowed by political, religious and economic implications.

According to the Article 342 of the Indian Constitution the President of India using his/her discretion schedules certain communities as Tribes eligible for certain governmental benefits. They are called ***Scheduled Tribes (ST)***. Thus, the term 'tribe' has a lot of political connotation. About 8.2% of the Indian populations are officially listed as Scheduled Tribes for the purpose of special benefits of political, economic and educational achievements. However, there are several ethnic groups in India who, by and large, retain cultural background 'analogous' to the officially listed tribes. Ethnicity and cultural identity have emerged as significant social issues for these groups in contemporary India.

4. The Rights of the Tribals: Three Major Policies

During the course of the development of Indian Nationalism, the question of tribal identity sprang up very strongly. . Elwin Verrier, though born a British, worked very closely with Gandhi and Nehru and adopted Indian way of living and thinking. He studied and lived with several of the country's little- known tribes. He married a Gond girl and made Mandala as his centre for social work. He is considered to be an authority on tribal culture. He argued that the tribals are the original settlers to this land. They lived with nature and their habits and way of life are conditioned by nature, and they have their unique cultural characteristics and identity. They have all the excellent characters of human beings. He argued that when these tribals come in contact with the non-tribals, they are likely to shed their qualities of life which may lead to their loss of nerve. So, he pleaded that they should be kept

isolated from the mainline of civilization. The proposition made by Elwin created a debate in India. The Gandhian workers argued that the tribals cannot be kept deprived of the benefits of civilization. Isolation in this case would keep them backward, ignorant, poor and illiterate.

The Hindu nationalists, on the other hand, had a completely opposite view of tribal identity. They denied a separate cultural identity for tribals. They are of the opinion that there is no cultural and religious difference between tribals and Hindu castes. So much so, G.S. Ghurye, the well known sociologists from Bombay University began to call them as “Backward Hindus” (1963:19). The Hindu nationalist wanted to absorb the tribals to Hinduism through an assimilation policy. Actually, he devoted two long chapters on tribal assimilation in his book “The Aborigines, So-Called and their Future”

Nevertheless, the liberal nationalist leaders who were not very much satisfied with the Elwins’ isolation theory and the Ghuryes’ assimilation theory, added number of provisions in the constitution so to benefit the welfare of tribal people. They gave the status of scheduled to this group of people so that they can have reservations in jobs and appointments. The constitution also brought in inhabited areas of tribals for the purpose of special treatment in respect of the administration. By doing so the Indian constitution had tried to ‘integrate’ the tribal communities into the trust of one nation (Xaxa, 2003:386). Thus the theory of integration was taken over by the constitution to define the tribes as scheduled group.

Article 342 of the Indian Constitution declares that, “the President may specify by public notification tribes or the tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purpose of this constitution be deemed to be scheduled tribe in relation to that state.” Thus, they were duly specified. However, it does not contain the criterion for the specification of any community as scheduled

tribe. Xaxa observes, “The question of tribes in India is closely linked with administrative and political considerations. Hence there has been increasing demand by groups and communities for their inclusion in the list of scheduled tribes of the Indian Constitution. That partly explains the steady increase in the proportion of the scheduled tribe in India especially in the period between 1971 and 1981” (1999:3589).

Therefore, in the post-independent India, successive governments have continued with the policy of “scheduling” areas, tribes, castes, and other backward classes despite the weaknesses and difficulties embedded in the process. This is primarily because political parties have found that it is easier to win the voters of “Scheduled India” than the voters of mainstreamed India. The scheduled tribes and castes usually have specific demands, and each political party presents solutions to their demands in its campaign in every general election. Thus the meaning of scheduled became very much misused and manipulated for political gains. This also affects and blurs the identity and their economic future of tribals in India

5. Hindutva Politics and Tribal Identity

India is a pluralistic country comprising multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural characteristics. But today this notion of Indian reality is under great threat. The Hindutva forces who are in almost all mainline political parties and in the government administrations are increasingly seeking to homogenize the culture of India towards an upper caste, Sanskritic, Brahmanic Hinduism. Anything outside this cultural orbit is denied legitimate existence in Indian society. For example, from ancient times, the tribals have been eating cow meeting. But today, the Hindutva forces deny this cultural practice of tribals by enacting laws against their culture.

Immediately after the Independence of India in 1947 and the promulgation of Indian Constitution in 1950, committees were set up for the reorganization of States in the Indian Union. The pleas of several tribals were rejected for their tribal states. The tribal population has been forcefully divided into several states. For example, the Bhil tribes had their own big kingdom in Pre-British India. They are denied for a state of their own. They are split in several states where Hindu caste people are the dominant population. Thus, Bhils are found in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Culturally, linguistically and politically, the Bhils are divided. How could they think of one cultural community in this condition? Similarly, the Adivasis of Chota Nagpur have been also divided in different states like Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand, Bihar and West Bengal. This is an injustice done the tribals of India by caste Hindus for their own economic and political advantage which plays out in the exploitation of tribals today in all aspects.

6. Tribals Are the Worst Victims of Development Activities

It is a strange paradox that although the tribes inhabit the most resource-rich regions of India, development benefits hardly reach them. They are the worst victims of 'development' activities, urbanization and industrialization, and eco-tourism projects. These activities cause involuntary displacement, alienation from the natural resources, cultural disorganization, disengagement with the intense community life, eventually pushing them into object poverty and squalor (Bodley, 1988). Many tribes in recent times symbolize the most victimized segments of our society caused by land alienation, poverty, indebtedness, industrialization and urbanization. The tribes of India are dejected people who are facing a loss of cultural identity as well as individual identity because of the interest of 'the other'.

7. Tribal Movements

This exploitation of tribals from all aspects of their life has given rise to many big and small, sometimes even violent ,tribal movements. These movements are primarily aimed at protecting themselves from the dominant caste communities

Tribal movements were not only agrarian but also forest-based. Some revolts were ethnic in nature as these were directed against zamindars, moneylenders and petty government officials who were not only their exploiters but aliens too. When tribals were unable to pay their loan or the interest thereon, money-lenders and landlords usurped their lands. The tribals thus became tenants on their own land and sometimes even bonded labourers. The police and the revenue officers hardly understand them and help them. On the contrary, they also used the tribals for personal and government work without any payment. All these factors of land alienation, usurpation, forced labour, minimum wages, and land grabbing compelled many tribes like Munda, Santhals, Kol, Bhils, Warli, etc., in many regions like Assam, Orissa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Maharashtra to revolt.

The management of forests also led some tribes to revolt, as forests in some regions are the main sources of their livelihood. The government policies not only deprived the tribals of several forest products but also made them victims of harassment by the forest officials. This led tribes in several regions to launch movements.

The establishment of heavy industries, construction of dams and launching of development plans in tribal zones has necessitated displacement of local population. Thousands of tribal families were displaced from their traditional habitats Contact situations with outsiders have been equally detrimental. Destruction of forests as a consequence of felling of trees for industrial purposes has threatened the small communities of hunters and food-gathers.

Those who could take advantage of new economic and educational frontiers were able to better their lot, while a large sections of the tribals, not adequately prepared to deal with new challenges, gradually depressed into poorer sections of the society. Against economic and social disparities, they have raised a collective voice.

The Naxalite movement of the tribals in Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh; the agrarian movements of the Gonds and Bhils in Madhya Pradesh and the forest- based movements of Gonds were mainly launched for liberation from oppression and discrimination.

Conflict over the mining of bauxite in Chota Nagpur region has taken a violent turn with killing of three innocent tribal people. Since 1993, the police have registered 80 criminal cases against the tribal people and activists. On several occasions, the police resorted to lathi charge. Activists were attacked and offices of the resistance movement were destroyed.

Another movement has been started in Keonjhar district of Orissa against mining in the 1990s for the displaced people, particularly tribals. In Keonjhar, the mining activities have led to heavy influx of workers from many parts of the country. The 1990s decade saw an increase in migration due to geographical and socio-economic reasons, leading to a threat of cultural invasion. Violence of all type increased. Mining has led to indiscriminate deforestation and displacement of inhabitants. The chief slogan of the movement against mining has been “Our lands, our minerals and our rights.” The villagers have been harassed by police and implicated in false cases for organising meetings, public rallies and hunger strikes. A number of villagers had been sent to jail in false cases between 1994 to 1999.

There are several other tribal movements related to the problem of their identity. For example, in the North-East, the

Bodo and Naga movement are related to this. Ethnic identity takes up political route for raising their interests. In all these separatist movement, uneven development and modernisation, concentration of gains in some area and their non-dispersal to other, and urban- oriented models of growth are the chief causes.

If we take into consideration all the tribal movements, it could be said that the tribal unrest and the resultant movements were mainly movements launched for liberation from (i) oppression, exploitation and discrimination, (ii) neglect and backwardness, and (iii) a government which was callous to the tribals' plight of poverty, hunger, unemployment and exploitation leading to movements due to separatist tendencies.

8. Inclusive Development as Means to build Peace in the tribal world in India

According to 2011 Census, the total population of Scheduled Tribes/Adivasis is 10,42,81,034 persons. It constitutes 8.6 % of Indian population. They are spread over the entire country but are most heavily concentrated in central, eastern and north-eastern India. The Government of India in its Draft National Tribal Policy of 2006 records 698 Scheduled Tribal communities. But as for the 2011 Census of India, the number of individual groups are 705.

Such a huge population of India is deprived of its cultural, economic and political identity. They are the marginalized communities of India. If we want to integrate them with other communities, then, the only way is that the State and Central governments must prioritize social, economic and political inclusion for rebuilding trust between tribal and other communities. The tribal culture should be respected; their land and forest rights should be restored. When big industrial companies enter the tribal areas, most of the non-technical jobs should be given to them.

A number of commissions and committees were appointed in the recent past to look in to the problems of developments in the tribal areas in the country and they have recommended a number of measures to remove the socio-economic disparity. While these policies are in themselves good, but the implementation is the problem. The caste bureaucrats who are coming from caste background do not feel the pain of the tribals. Hence they do not give the importance, these policies deserve for the tribal development. For example, as per the Census of 2011, the literary rate of tribal population is 59 %, which is far lower than the rate of all India which is 73 %. Similarly, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for tribals is only 11% as compared to the overall GER ratio of 21% for the country. This is only just one indicator in the disparity of tribals compared to others. Unless they are brought to the full development in par with others, conflict is bound to show its ugly head. Hence, in order to build peace and harmony within India from a tribal perspective, we need an inclusive development of tribals. This is a priority.

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Article received: April 7, 2016

Article approved: Aug 16, 2016

No of words: 3782



Tribals: The Endangered Species

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Abstract: The existence of the Tribal people is in danger. The Indian government refuses to recognize the Tribal people and *Adivasis* of India as the Indigenous Peoples of the country. *Jal-Jangle-Jameen* is at the centre of the Tribal people's meaning system and the organizational system. Land is at root of the Tribal identity. Therefore, land alienation of any kind is a threat to their Tribal identity. There is a systematic violation of the rights of the Tribal people. They do not enjoy their rights to their lands and resources. In the name of development and common good, the Tribal land is being grabbed by the government and the corporates. The Tribal people are displaced from their habitat and are forced to migrate because of actions and policies taken by government. Thus, the Tribal people become the victims of unbalanced and lopsided development. In the pretext of Naxalism, arbitrary arrests, labelling of indigenous peoples as terrorists, torture and extrajudicial killings — continue.

Keywords: *Adivasis*, development, Land Acquisition, Migration, displacement, Exploitation, *Jal-Jangle-Jameen* (water-forest-Land), Naxalism

Introduction

The Jesuit Conference of India, meeting in March 1978 accepted the recommendation of the Inculturation Committee to start Regional Theologates. From the time the idea of regional theologies was meted, attention was focused on

Ranchi because of its own distinct Tribal culture. The North-East Jesuit Conference of India in its meeting on November 21, 1979, decided that Ranchi Regional Theologate would be for the Jesuit Units of the Tribal Belt which included Ranchi, Jamshedpur, Madhya Pradesh, Hazaribag, Dumka-Raiganj and Darjeeling. It took a quite a time to identify a suitable location to start Regional Theologate. Finally, Regional Theologatge Centre (RTC), Tarunoday is situated in Arsandey, Boreya in Kanke block. It is about 10 km away from Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand State. The place was found suitable to do ‘Tribal theology’ because there were many tribal villages around Arsandey Boryea. RTC, Ranchi was formally inaugurated on the 30 June 1983. Fr. M. Amaladoss, S.J. delivered the keynote address: “Theologizing in a Tribal Context: Some Methodological Observations.” Today in 2016, when I come out of the RTC campus, I hardly see the tribal people. The context has drastically changed. Where have the tribal people gone? What happened to the tribal people who were living in the surrounding villages of RTC? Dr Hazel, the first American wife of late Dr Ram Dayal Munda¹, visited Ranchi in April 2016 after many years. On April 10, 2016, on the occasion of *Sarhul* feast, she expressed her joy to be in Ranchi. She remarked that Ranchi has developed, the skyscrapers have come up on both sides of the main road, but she said, “I do not see the tribal people on the road.”²

The ‘*Adivasis*’³ have the saga of displacement and exploitation. They are eliminated to meet the greed of corporate houses. Some of the tribes have been already extinguished and others are at the verge of being extinguished.⁴ August 9 is marked as the International Indigenous Peoples Day. On that day, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, U.N. special rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples told, “The sad situation is many indigenous peoples are not recognized in many Asian countries.” She noted that “systematic violation” of tribal peoples’ rights — arbitrary arrests, labeling of indigenous

peoples as terrorists, torture and extrajudicial killings — continue. “Many of them still do not enjoy their rights to their lands and resources. Many of them are still subjected to displacement because of actions and policies taken by government.”⁵ The paper analyses some of the reasons why the tribal people are in danger. How and why the *Adivasis* have become endangered species?⁶ It enumerates how the identity and very existence of the tribal people are at stake. The paper focuses on the tribes and the *Adivasis* of Jharkhand.

1. The Indigenous and Tribal People

The first settlers in multi-cultural societies are designated variously as natives, aborigines, tribes and indigenous. These are the people who are invariably subjected to exploitation by the later settlers. The United Nations when it decided to do something about these exploited people, chose the term ‘indigenous and tribal people’. The International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention of 1957, Article 1 (1) (b) No. 107 defines indigenous as “the members of tribal or semi-tribal populations in independent countries, which are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations, which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belong, at the time of conquest or colonization and which, irrespective of their legal status, live more in conformity with the social, economic and cultural institutions of that time than with the institutions of the nation to which they belong.” Similarly, Article 1 (1) (b) of the revised Convention No. 169 defines indigenous as: “Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.”

2. The Tribal People of India

The Government of India has ratified the Convention 107 of 1957, but not the Convention 169 of 1989, thus disagreeing to recognize the Tribals and *Adivasis* of India as the Indigenous Peoples of the country. The tribal peoples, whose status as Indigenous Peoples was denied by the Indian State in front of the United Nations several times yet the Supreme Court of India recognizes them as the Indigenous Peoples of India.⁷

It is disheartening and humiliating to note that the tribal peoples of India have been called by various names by non-tribals, which are often quite demeaning and derogatory. They have often given wrong picture of tribal peoples describing them as ‘primitive’, ‘illiterate’, ‘uncultured’, ‘rough’, ‘rude’. ‘savage’, ‘wild’, ‘*jungle*’, ‘half-naked’, etc.⁸ The *Sangh Parivar* uses the term *Vanvasis* for them. The term ‘*Vanvasi*’ is synonymous with the term ‘*jungle*’ and, therefore, the term ‘*Vanvasis*’ would simply and purely mean ‘forest dwellers’ with a pejorative meaning. This already shows the attitude of non-tribals towards the tribal peoples. The Tribals of Jharkhand identify themselves with the terms ‘*Adivasi*’ and ‘*Adivasis*’. These are the terms invented and used by them for their self-identity. From Sanskrit *adi* means ‘original’ and *vasis* means ‘inhabitants’. Therefore, The *Adivasis* are the original inhabitants of India. By calling the tribals *vanvasi*, Hindus and others are trying to obliterate the identity of the *Adivasis* as ‘original inhabitants’ of India.

The official selection of criteria to define the Scheduled Tribes is seriously mistaken, for its lack of correspondence with reality and for its deep-ethnocentric bias. In his report for the year 1952, the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes listed eight common features of Scheduled Tribes: (a) dwelling condition – they live in forests and hills; (b) ethnic origins – from Negritos, Australoids or Mongoloids; (c) language – tribal language; (d) religion – ‘animists’

worshipping ghosts and spirits; (e) mode of production – primitive, hunters, good gatherers; (f) carnivorous in good habits; (g) naked or semi-naked; and (h) fond of drink and dance.⁹ Unfortunately, this official characterization of the tribals has remained the same to this day.

The term ‘tribe’ is nowhere defined in a usual way in the Constitution of India. During the British rule, as seen in the 1931 census, the nomenclature referring to tribes is either ‘aboriginal’ or ‘deprived classes’. However, these adjectives were dropped in the 1941 census and these communities were termed as ‘Scheduled Tribes’ or ‘*Adivasis*’.¹⁰ Economic impoverishment and widespread illiteracy has led to categorization of some of these communities as primitive tribal communities. Stephen Fuchs, the Anthropologist, says that they are called ‘primitive tribes or *Adivasis*’ or ‘scheduled tribe’ (selected for protection and uplift). He also adds that the term ‘scheduled tribes,’ does not include all those so-called ‘aboriginal tribes’, while practically all the scheduled tribes can safely be included in the category of ‘aboriginal tribes’.¹¹

The list of Scheduled tribes is State/Union Territory specific and a community declared as a Scheduled tribe in a State need not be so in another State. The inclusion of a community as a Scheduled tribe is an ongoing process. The essential characteristics, first laid down by the Lokur Committee, for a community to be identified as Scheduled tribes are – a) indications of primitive traits; b) distinctive culture; c) shyness of contact with the community at large; d) geographical isolation; and e) backwardness. The Government of India, in its Draft National Policy 2006, records 698 Scheduled tribes in India. As per the Census of India 2011, the number of individual groups notified as Scheduled tribes is 705. The tribal population of the country, as per 2011 census, is 10.43 crore, constituting 8.6% of the total population. The decadal

population growth of the tribals from Census 2001 to 2011 has been 23.66% against the 17.69% of the entire population.

It is really an irony that a member of a tribe remains a tribal only within the state he/she is enlisted as tribe and not in other states. For example, the members of *Oraon*, *Munda*, *Santal* are denied Scheduled status in Assam on the basis that the list in Assam does not carry the names of the tribes. This is a constitutional way of defining the identity of a person and his/her community as a tribal or indigenous people. Moreover, one has to produce a certificate from the representative of the government to prove that he/she is a tribal. The identity of the tribals is at the mercy of the Government. One should not forget that one is born a tribal and does not become or made.

There is a plot in the action of the Government is clear from the fact, on the one hand it liberally signs the resolutions of the UN Conventions and on the other the Indian Government keeps denying that there are indigenous people in the country at all. As such it feels it is not obliged to abide by the decisions taken in the UN. It is a denial of the very existence of about 10 crores Indigenous *Adivasi* people. Instead they have been put in the conveniently created Scheduled tribes category and some bits and pieces are thrown at them most of which is eaten up on the way and do not reach them.

3. The *Adivasis* of Jharkhand

The state of Jharkhand was carved out of the state of Bihar in 2000. Ranchi is the capital of Jharkhand state. The state of Jharkhand came into being because of the fact that a large number of *Adivasis* live within its boundary. Presently 32 tribal groups live in the state. These are: *Asur*, *Baiga*, *Banjara*, *Bathudi*, *Bedia*, *Bijnhia*, *Birhor*, *Birjia*, *Chero*, *Chick-Baraik*, *Gond*, *Gorait*, *Ho*, *Karmali*, *Kharia*, *Kharwar*, *Khond*, *Kisan*, *Kora*, *Korwa*, *Lohra*, *Mahli*, *Mal-Paharia*, *Munda*, *Oraon*, *Parhaiya*, *Santal*, *Sauria-Paharia*, *Savar*, *Bhumij*, *Kol* and

Kanwar. Among these Santhal is the most populous tribe having a population of 2,410,509, constituting 34 per cent of the total Scheduled Tribes population of the State. The other major ethnic groups of *Adivasis* of Jharkhand are *Mundas*, *Oraons*, *Kharias*, and *Hos*.¹²

The Primary Census Abstract 2011, released by the directorate of census operation showed that the total population in the state as on March 1, 2011, was 3,29,88,134. In absolute number, the total population surged in 2011, as compared to 2001, was 60,42,305. In terms of proportion, scheduled tribe population constitutes **26.2%**. The proportion during Census 2001 was **26.3%**. There has been a decrease of **0.1%** during the last decade. At a time when there is 22.4% growth in the overall population in Jharkhand, that of the scheduled tribe, for whom the state was carved out of Bihar, has declined by 0.1%. How did the population of the *Adivasis* get reduced?

The periodic delimitation process after the decadal census is the process of politically reducing the political power of the *Adivasis*, reducing them to a minority. After the census 2001, the Delimitation Commission of India had proposed a reduction of Lok Sabha and State Legislature reserved seats for the Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand. However, the *Adivasis* opposed this proposal and the Central Government has to stay the implementation of this proposal.

4. Land Acquisition, Displacement and Migration

For the *Adivasis*, land is very basis and foundation of their identity and existence. For them land is first of all a source of livelihood. Secondly, land is the basis of the *Adivasis*' socio-cultural and religious identity. They get their social identity by belonging to their respective tribes in a special relationship with land and nature. The *Adivasis* have a symbiotic relationship with these beings and resources. Thirdly, land is also the basis

of the religious identity of the *Adivasis*. They encounter their God is His creation like in the *Sarna* (groves)

The post-independence period shows rapid economic development and social change in India through programmes carried out under the five year plans mostly in *Adivasi* areas. Under such plans, the *Adivasis* witnessed installation of large number of big and small mining and electric power units in their areas. Despite such developmental processes, their benefits did not really go to the *Adivasis* because the developmental projects opened up the flood gate of entry for people from outside the *Adivasi* areas. Thus the large industrial undertakings, gigantic hydel and irrigation projects, massive extraction of mineral resources have in fact brought about under-development of the *Adivasis* instead of their development. A large number of them were displaced from their land, which was the sole support of their livelihood.

The 'Land Acquisition Law' of 1894 of the colonial rule was kept intact for more than a century as result of which about 6 crore populations has been displaced for various projects such as small & large dams, mines, infrastructure, industries. Of them 40% are *Adivasis*. Only 25 % of them have been resettled. No one has been rehabilitated because that involves social and cultural dimensions. People are reaching a state of mind that enough is enough and have started to protest and resist displacement in more and more organized ways. It was this predicament which forced the UPA Government to pass a fresh 'Land Acquisition Law' of 2013 replacing the old colonial law of 1894.

The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (also Land Acquisition Act, 2013) is an Act of Indian Parliament that regulates land acquisition and lays down the procedure and rules for granting compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement to the affected persons in India. The Act has

provisions to provide fair compensation to those whose land is taken away, brings transparency to the process of acquisition of land to set up factories or buildings, infrastructural projects and assures rehabilitation of those affected. The Act establishes regulations for land acquisition as a part of India's massive industrialization drive driven by public-private partnership.

Hardly a year passed after the above said enactment, the new Central NDA Government has bought in 'Land Acquisition Ordinance 2014 – 2015' which has diluted the provisions of the Act, 2013. On August 31, 2015, because of the strong protest by the people, the government has withdrawn the ordinance. This is very clear sign that government is in hurry to grab the *Adivasi* land.

Jharkhand state was clearly oriented from the start towards mineral extraction. It was formed in 2000, and is known for Containing huge mineral deposits and a large *Adivasi* population with 26.2%. Interestingly, Jharkhand was not formed through the people's movements for achieving statehood - although it had a long history of resistance for this in previous decades – but at a time when the market was ready to exploit the natural resource.

The Tata Iron and Steel Company established its first steel factory at Kalimati in Singbhum district in 1907, presently known as the 'Tata Steel Ltd' Jamshedpur, and acquired the land of 24 *Adivasi* villages around the vicinity the same year. Reportedly, the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act was delayed until 1908 to allow this major forced land acquisition to go through for Tata's biggest steel plant, leaving a large *Adivasi* population and their descendents bereft. Many other industrial concerns followed suit over the years, until the intensive exploitation of minerals resources had led to a rapid industrialization of the district.¹³ Obviously this intensive exploitation of minerals has impacted negatively on the lives of countless *Adivasis* as well as wildlife.

Let us have a quick look at the situation of actual and proposed displacement and land alienation in Jharkhand during 1950-1995:¹⁴

1. TISCO: 7000 families; 35,000 persons were displaced; 3,564 acres acquired in Jamshedpur and 34,432 in Adityapur.
2. HEC (Ranchi): 12,990 families, and 64,950 persons were displaced; 9,200 acres of land was acquired.
3. Bokaro Steel Plant: 12,487 families were affected, 62,435 persons displaced and 34,224 acres of land was acquired

PEOPLE DISPLACED BY DAMS AND OTHER PROJECTS¹⁵			
Dam/irrigation projects	National Parks	PSU & Industry	Defence Projects
Maithon Dam 28030	Betla: 44480	BSL: 29615	Netarhaat: 49947
Tilaya Dam: 16120	Hazaribag: 47493	HEC: 15450	Dipatoli: 500
Panchet Dam 41467	Palamu: 192511	IEL: 1265	Hazaribag: 473
Konar Dam: 5747		BACL: 900	BSF: 479
Mayurakshi Dam 16500	Dalma: 88301	FCI Sindri: 4885	
Chandil Dam: 33865	Topchanchi: 7813	HZL: 283	
Icha Dam: 28000	Lawalong: 52785	HGL: 6000	
Koyal Dam: 53695	Koderma: 45224	Usha Martin: 169	
Auranga Dam:3745	Parasnath: 5916	Bihar Steel: 193	

Sundar Dam: 730		ACC Khalari: 128	
Torai Dam: 1730		Bokaro	
Ajay Dam: 1200		CTPS: 829	
Ghaghra Dam: 1500		Tenughat: 2279	
Bhaiba Dam: 370		BCCL: 134275	
Balsi Dam: 70		Glass Factory: 520	
Ramrekha Dam: 205		CCL: 28335	
Punasi Dam: 5000		Rajmahal Project: 7285	
		Maithon Thermal: 10000	
Total Displace: 2,37,974	Total Displaced: 496667	Total Displaced: 259551	Total Displaced: 51399

Land is at the centre of the tribal people's meaning system and the organizational system. Thus it is land, which is understood in a holistic sense, is at the root of the tribal identity. The tribal land alienation of any kind is a threat to their identity. Displacement on account of development projects has affected 15,703,017 persons in Jharkhand of which 41.0 percent are tribals.¹⁶ Similarly, tribal land alienation has occurred in Jharkhand by force and through fraudulence means by circumventing the land protecting laws like the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908 and the Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act 1949. Over and above, proper compensation and rehabilita-

tion was denied to the displaced *Adivasis*. Since they were ill equipped to face the new market forces, they were swept off their feet and thrown into the market for working as unskilled labourers inside and outside their own states. This has been the most tragic and painful experience of the *Adivasis* in the country as victims of unbalanced and lopsided development.

5. The *Adivasis* and Jungle (Forest)

Forests are the natural habitats of *Adivasis* as well as abode of spirits that they venerate- *Jaher and sarnas* (sacred grove). Forests also provide them their daily food in the form of roots, fruits, vegetables, meat and herbs and drug plants as cures for specific ailments and prevention of many more diseases. Forests are not simply a source of timber and fire-wood, but the very basis of their biological, cultural and spiritual sustenance as a people of certain identity, as a distinct people.

In so many ways, then, forests play a vital role in the life of *Adivasis*. Reciprocally *Adivasis* play a vital role in the protection and conservation of forests. *Adivasis* do not merely see the forest as a source of livelihood, but also treat it as their life support system. The forest defines their identity, autonomy and social security. *Adivasis* maintain a unique relationship with the forest, which involves worship of specially designated sacred groves. They have a symbiotic relationship with the forest. A renowned intellectual and leader of the 'Save the Forest Movement in Jharkhand', Dr Sanjay Bosu Mullick describes it saying, "There is a symbiotic relationship between the *Adivasis* and the forest, which is officially recognized by the Forest Policy 1988. Without forest, *Adivasis* are similar like a fish without water."¹⁷ The symbiotic relationship between *Adivasis* and their forest is being torn apart. There has been ruthless exploitation of forest resources carried out by contractors and other vested interests. Traditional rights of *Adivasi* villages over forests have been taken over by the Gov-

ernment. The government is set to throw open the management of up to 40% of the country's forests to the private sector to revive degraded forests that will further destroy complex ecosystems and deprive local communities of a livelihood.¹⁸ *Adivasis* who live in or around the forest and depend on it for their survival, are not allowed to enter or roam in it and villagers are unnecessarily harassed.

6. The *Adivasis* and Religion

The *Adivasis* have a religion of their own which they call *Adi-dharam* meaning the basis, the roots, the beginnings (*adi*) of the religious beliefs of the *Adivasis*. Such beliefs have been variously known. The Jharkhandi *Oraon Adivasis* call their religion *sarna dharam*. Despite there being similarities with the established world religions – Hinduism, Islam, Christianity – regarding the main concerns, such as, God, creation, the earth, human beings and their mutual relationships, the *Adivasis* have a distinctive and positive religious identity.¹⁹ Yet the census conducted every ten years, give to the *Adivasis* the choice of registering their religious identity under the category of “other.” Consequently, the *Adivasis* who do not identify themselves as Christians, Muslims or Buddhists are compelled to register themselves as Hindus. Consequently, the number of the *Adivasis* is declining. The census does not give the actual figures of the *Adivasis* as they are clubbed with the Hindus.

It is interesting to note the official Line on Identity in the census. 1872: The first census: Hindu, Muslim, Zews, Christian, Persian only. 1891 census commissioner JA Bens introduced a separate subhead tribal (nature worshipper); 1901: mentioned as tribal community, not as separate religion; 1911: Nature worshipper; 1921, 1931, 1941: Mentioned again as tribal community; 1951: Counted as “other religious group”; 1961: 1971, 1981: Other religious group; 2001: About 36 lakh *Adivasis* filled up *Sarna Dharam* in religious column.²⁰

The religious leaders of *Sarna Adivasis* claim that there are 42,35,786 followers of *Sarna Dharam*.²¹ Recently, *Praphat Khabar*, the local daily Newspaper published the Religion based census 2011.²²

Religion	Total Number	Total No. %
Hindu	22,376,051	67.85
Muslim	4,793,994	14.53
Christian	1,418,608	4.30
Sikh	71,422	0.22
Buddhism	8,956	0.03
Jain	14,974	0.02
Others	4,235,789	12.84
No Religion	68,343	0.21

Thus, the number of *Sarna Adivasis* is more than the Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains but still they are not given separate column in the census chart. Therefore, they are justly demanding for a separate *Sarna* Religious Column. The Indian tribals have intensified their demand for recognition of *Sarna* tribes as a separate faith by handing over a petition to the Prime Minister and Union home minister on October 6, 2015 in Delhi.²³

Sarna religion/Sarna Dharam is religion of tribals of India. They have their own worship place called “*Sarna Asthal/Ja-her*.” Some of the *Adivasis* have embraced other religions like Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, etc. Change of religion may or may not give the tribal people their indigenous identity. According to the Supreme Court ruling, the *Adivasis* adhering to Christianity retain their tribal status²⁴, whereas those who follow other religion forfeit it²⁵. Similarly, the children borne out of the wedlock of a tribal man and a non-tribal woman have the tribal status after the wife is duly received by her husband’s community. But the children born of the wedlock of a tribal woman and a non-tribal man do not enjoy this privi-

lege as per the customary laws of the tribal people, unless the woman's tribal community has reasons to decide the matter in her favour.

Of late lot of uproar at national level is being created by what the Hindutva forces call '*ghar wapsi*' (home coming) and the reason given is that the tribal religion is part of Hinduism. This is not right and the much trumpeted *ghar wapsi* programme of the *Sangh Parivar* is a senseless and illogical exercise that tries to make the world believe that the *Adivasis* were Hindus which they never have been. This way the *ghar wapsi* campaign is a 'forced conversion' of the *Adivasis* into Hinduism and that is illegal in the prevailing law of the country. On April 8, 2016, on the occasion of *Sarhul* feast of the *Adivasis*, the Chief Minister of Jharkhand said that '*Sarna* and *Sanatana dharma* are one'.²⁶ The statement of the chief minister could be misleading to the gullible *Adivasis*. In the parliament too the ruling party is pushing towards passing an 'anti-conversion' in the States and Centre. On the other hand, the Indian Constitution in Article 25(1) clearly states "subject to public order, morality and health...all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion."

7. The *Adivasis* and Naxalism²⁷

The 'Naxal Movement' has emerged as the biggest armed struggle in India over the last four decades. According to estimation in 2007, the Naxals²⁸ were active across 170 districts of nine states. It originated in a small village called Naxalbari, in Darjeeling district of West Bengal, and quickly had a massive direct impact in many regions of Jharkhand. The Indian government launched 'Operation Green Hunt' in Jharkhand on 10 March 2011, with the objective of cleansing the CPI-Maoist from the state. Nearly 10,000 security forces, Special Task Force and other groups, were deployed in the forests, schools

were converted into security camps, forests were sealed, and combing operations were started in the forests. And very often, the security forces were targeting innocent villagers. The anti-Naxal operation created uncertainty, brought threat to life and subdued the freedom of thousands of *Adivasi* villagers in different parts of the state.²⁹

Lots of atrocities are committed on the *Adivasis* in the name of fight against Naxalism. It is a well known fact that very many young men & women are held in prison on the suspicion of being “helpers of naxalites.” The 6000 and more *Adivasis* under-trial prisoners in Jharkhand alone are condemned to languish in jail for years to come. After arresting those other penal clauses are added on. It is an easy label that can be put on any one whom the police want to catch. It does not require any proof or witness. Let us keep in mind that they are not even members of any naxalite outfit. Supreme Court says even membership in a banned organization does not make a person a criminal. It is important to remember that of those who have been arrested under UPPA and CL-17 as part of *Operation Green Hunt* (the anti-naxal operation), there has not been even a single conviction.³⁰

8. Conclusion

There is an onslaught attack on *Adivasi* existence and identity. The *Adivasis* are being targeted from each and every corner – by the Maoists, corporate houses and the State. The irony of the development process in India is that the inhabitants of the areas, where industries, mines, dams and wild-life sanctuaries are undertaken, have never been consulted about them, nor are the benefits of these projects shared with them. Even if some compensation were made, it was not always land for land. In the name of development, which benefits only a few, the poor *Adivasis* in their large number have been forced to pay a heavy cost. Every week, they are being killed, raped,

tortured, falsely implicated as Naxals and thrown behind bars.³¹ Again the *Adivasis* are deceived when Jharkhand State defines the locals as those ‘People who have been residing in the state for purposes like business, job and other reasons for the past 30 years since issuance of this notification and have acquired immovable property, their spouse and children’.³² It will be bounden duty of us all to recognize where truth and humanity lay and fearlessly stand in solidarity with the *Adivasi* people struggling for justice.

Notes

1. A Tribal scholar and regional music exponent. He was awarded the padma Shri of the year 2010 for his contribution to the field of art. He was a Vice-chancellor of Ranchi University and a member of the Upper House of the Indian Parliament. In 2007, he received the *Sangeet Natak Akademi* Award. He died in Ranchi on 30 September 2011.
2. *Prabhat Khabar*, Ranchi, April 10, 2016.
3. Tribal people of Jharkhand like to call themselves ‘*Adivasis*’; because it rightly describes them as ‘the original settlers’ of this area.. In this paper I will use the terms ‘*Adivasis*’, Tribal People’, or ‘Scheduled tribe’ as synonymous according to the context and convenience.
4. According to the census 1991, Banjara are 432, Asur- 9122, Birjia- 4529, Birhor- 8038. See Prakash Chandra. Oraon, *Land and People of Jharkhand* (Ranchi: Jharkhand Tribal Welfare Research Institute, 2003), 6.
5. Ucanews.com, August 11, 2015.
6. I am not at ease with the term ‘species’ used for the tribals.
7. The Supreme Court’s judgment on the SLP (Cr) No. 10367 of 2010 Kailas & Others Vs State of Maharashtra.
8. Fidelis de Sa, *Crisis in Chota Nagpur* (Bangalore: A Redemptorist Publication, 1975), 2.
9. Agapit Tirkey, “Pluralism and Tribals in India,” *Sevartham* 40 (2015), 14.

10. Ramanath Nayak, *Tribal Planning Process: Peoples Participation in Tribal Sub-Plan* (Delhi: Gagan Deep Publications, 2004), 37.
11. Stephen Fuchs, *The Aboriginal Tribes of India* (New Delhi: Inter-India Publications, 1992), 11 & 13.
12. Prakash Chandra Oraon, *Land and People of Jharkhand* (Ranchi: Jharkhand Tribal Welfare Research Institute, 2003), 6-7.
13. *Forest Resource Survey, Chaibasa South*, 2006, published by the government of Jharkhand.
14. I am indebted to Stan Swamy for the statistical picture of Jharkhand.
15. Source: Figures from Jharkhand Economic Survey, Jharkhand Vikas Morcha and other sources (*Hindustantimes*, 15 August, 2015, 2)
16. Alex Ekka and M. Asif, *Development-Induced Displacement and Rehabilitation in Jharkhand, 1951-1995: A Database on Its Extent and Nature* (New Delhi: Indian Social Institute, 2000), 95.
17. Cited in Gladson Dungdung, *Mission Saranda: A War for Natural Resources in India* (Ranchi: Deshaj Prakashan, 2015), 43. The author comes from the *Kharia Adivasi* community of the state of Jharkhand. He and his family had become the victim of violence. He is a Human Rights Activist, Speaker and Motivator.
18. *Hindustantimes*, Saturday, September 12, 2015.
19. Ram Dayal Munda, *Adi-Dharam: Religious beliefs of Indian Adivasis* (Ranchi: Jharkhand Publications, 2000), 5, 40-41.
20. *Hindustantimes*, Ranchi, October 05, 2015.
21. *Prabhat Khabar*, Ranchi, Thursday 27 August 2015.
22. *Prabhat Khabar*, Ranchi, Wednesday 26 August 2015.
23. “Sarnas to Knock Delhi door for separate Identity” *Hindustantimes*, Ranchi, October 05, 2015.

24. In *Kartick Oraon Vs David Munzni* (AIR 1964 Pat 201-206, the court held that the Scheduled Tribe status is not lost due to conversion to Christianity in the matter of inheritance.
25. According to Hindu succession Act, 1956, by the passage of time if a tribal becomes *Hinduized* he shall be governed by Hindu law. This principle has been upheld in various court cases, and Section 76 of the CNTA also provides that if a tribal is Hinduized she/he would come under the Hindu Succession Act.
26. *Prabhat Khabar*, Ranchi, Saturday 9 April 2016.
27. For this section I am heavily depend on Gladson Dungdung, *Mission Saranda: A War for Natural Resources in India*, Ranchi: Deshraj Pradashan, 1915.
28. A Naxal is a member of any of the Communist guerrilla groups in India, mostly associated with the CPI-Maoist. The term Naxal derives from the name of the village Naxalbari in West Bengal, where the movement had its origin.
29. Gladson Dungdung, *Mission Saranda*, 19.
30. Stan Swamy, "Laws in Favour of Adivasis Remain Show-pieces," *Sevartham* 40 (2015), 93.
31. Gladson Dungdung, *Mission Saranda: A War for Natural Resources in India* (Ranchi: Deshraj Prakashan, 2015), 3.
32. *The Times of India*, Friday, April 8, 2016.

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Article received: Feb 24, 2016

Article approved: Sept 22, 2016

No of words: 5040



Integral and Sustainable Development: Challenge for Peaceful Co-existence

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Abstract: Every nation, no doubt, is interested in development. But what sort of development, development at what cost, development for whom – are serious questions to be addressed. Given the situation in India today, one must look for a right paradigm of development. A lengthy analysis of the notion of integral and health development is presented. Genuine development must be based on justice that ensures equal opportunities in education, job opportunities and realizing all other potentialities. It is clear that without justice authentic and integral development is impossible. The paper points out that it is not proper to always blame the Government for everything and the citizens of the nation should realize their responsibilities as well. Drawing insights from the recent writings of Pope Francis, like *Laudato Si* as well as *Misericordiae Vultus*, the paper finally seeks to propose a model for an integral and sustainable development that is suitable in India.

Keywords: Integral Development, responsibilities of the citizens, Pope Francis and Justice, Ambedkar as a icon for of equality, freedom and emancipation.

1. What Am I Focusing on?

Given the various contradictions in India today, here is a search for a new paradigm of integral and sustainable human development, in the light of the insights given in our

foundational constitutional document and the principles given in the social teachings of the Church. The establishment of such a paradigm is a *sine qua non* for peaceful co-existence today.¹ The insights of Pope Francis given in his various sermons and speeches² and the recent documents of *Laudato Si* as well as *Misericordiae Vultus* add richness to the already prevalent historical experience of the Church over the years given in the social teaching of the Church. They help us very much in molding this new paradigm of integral development.

2. The Experiential Reality

The heart-renting newspaper report of Soni should shake us from our slumber. It was reported in the front page of *Hindustan Times*, a prominent Delhi based English daily, that Soni, a poor village girl aged five, was eating mud laced with silica – a raw material for glass sheets and soap - just to survive. She is reported to have said, in all her innocence, that the mud she eats tastes like powdered gram.³

Yet in another world of the ‘richy rich’, it was reported that in a marriage the wedding ring alone was costing one million dollars; and another million dollars to design the garden where the wedding would take place, and the wedding dress costing another \$ 100,000. Besides, there is the reception expense. Another wedding reception of a marriage, costing 2.5 million dollars, took place in two continents! The famous case of one of the corporates having a 173 meter high, 27 storied housing complex with 3 helipads with 169 car parking slots just to house three people is a common knowledge and talk of the town! Whereas 500 million of his compatriots go to bed hungry!

This is today’s India of contradictions; of riches and squalor; of utter destitution unto death and display of riches unto scandal.⁴ These contradictions are reinforced by the ideology

of contemporary fundamentalist cultural ethos mingled with extreme sectarian religious sentiments.

There are thousands of such Sonis in today's world of destitution and riches; and there are lakhs of them, unheard and unreported in the unnoticed and even positively ignored villages and shanties of the city slums scattered and hidden all over India. There are dozens or even hundreds of such 'richy rich' displaying and squandering their wealth, created, by and large, by the sweat of the labourers who are denied of decent wages.⁵

Suppose you are facing a situation where the whole of Unites States and Canada starves every day, or the whole of Europe put together lives in utter destitution, having just a square meal a day! Believe me, the world today will not remain the same.

At the same time, we have a group of actors, those who are at the helm of governance, especially in countries like India, making positive efforts to hide poverty and destitution from the sight of especially the foreign visitors, as the Commonwealth Games (2010) revealed in the Capital city of Delhi, where large welcoming posters were put up to hide the slums behind.

In the last minute preparation for the Commonwealth games, which started in October 2010, a huge effort was done in Delhi to remove the slums situated, especially, near the sports sight. The poverty experienced in the villages of most of the north Indian states is driving them to form city slums of utter unhealthy atmosphere. Instead of removing poverty we seem to be working hard to remove the poor from the public sight, so that the people, especially the foreign guests who come for the games will not see the poverty of India. How long will we pretend to be 'rich'? Though we feel ashamed of the realities (eg. Poverty and destitution), we seem not to be guilty of the existence of the reality itself!

The naked reality stares at our face. According to a new measure called the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), created by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) at Oxford University and the Human Development Report Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), South Asia has the world's highest levels of poverty. 51 percent of the population of Pakistan is MPI poor, 58 percent in Bangladesh, 55 percent in India, and 65 percent in Nepal.

The analysis by MPI creators reveals that there are more 'MPI poor' people in eight Indian states (of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal – *they are known as the Bimaru /sickly states*), amounting to 421 million) than in the 26 poorest African countries combined (410 million).

Further analysis shows that in India, the Scheduled Tribes have the highest MPI (0.482), almost the same as Mozambique, and a headcount of 81 per cent. The Scheduled Castes have a headcount of 66 percent and their MPI is a bit better than Nigeria. 58 percent of other Backward Castes (OBC) are MPI poor.⁶ Dr. Jeni Klugman, Director of the UNDP Human Development Report Office and the principal author of the Report, said that The MPI provides a fuller measure of poverty than the traditional dollar-a-day formulas and that it is a valuable addition to the family of instruments we use to examine broader aspects of well-being, including UNDP's Human Development Index and other measures of inequality across the population and between genders. The MPI captures deprivations directly – in health and educational outcomes and key services, such as water, sanitation and electricity.

OPHI researchers analyzed data from 104 countries with a combined population of 5.2 billion (78 per cent of the world total). About 1.7 billion people in the countries covered – a third of their entire population – live in multidimensional

poverty, according to the MPI. This exceeds the 1.3 billion people, in those same countries, estimated to live on 1.25 dollars a day or less, the more commonly accepted measure of 'extreme' poverty.

Half of the world's poor as measured by the MPI live in South Asia (51 per cent or 844 million people) and one quarter in Africa (28 per cent or 458 million). Niger has the greatest intensity and incidence of poverty in any country, with 93 per cent of the population classified as poor in MPI terms.

At the same time, over the last few years, the number of USD billionaires in India is jumping to higher and higher numbers. India is paraded in the media, especially in the international media today as a success story. Countries like Britain has recently thought of reducing the developmental aid given to India because of such propaganda. Increase in the number of Indian billionaires from 9 in 2004 to 36 in 2006, and now in 2015 to 124, up by 15 from 2014, is treated with pride as success stories. The foreign exchange reserves is over \$350 billion, the movement of the Sensex over the years from under 6,000 to over 25,000, an emerging network of modern retail hyper markets dotting the Indian urban market space, new modern townships and super luxurious housing complexes, food chains like McDonalds, Kentucky Fried chicken, Dominos Pizzas, and now Starbucks, etc., are again the success stories.

We have thus an 'India' of the 'richy rich', who is never tired of parties and picnics, foreign tours in countries like Switzerland and doing week-end shopping in London, Singapore and Dubai. We have another 'India', better described as '*Bharat*' of the marginalized majority. Thus, a new class structure, something in correlation with caste, is emerging in our country, especially after India's embrace of the liberalized new economic policy in the 1990's, and this new configuration can be described as '*Bharat*' vs '*India*' –

the *Bharat* of the marginalized majority and the ‘India’ of the few affluent and the “richy rich.”

The question is whether the growth model of our economic planning, with its ideology of privatization, liberalization and marketization which are intrinsic to the newly embraced phenomenon of globalization, would help usher an egalitarian social order.

One can argue that globalization has brought in new opportunities to India: boost to Indian economy, employment creation through “outsourcing,” faster mode of communication, professionalism and competition, e-mail shopping, availability of luxury consumer goods, greater access to more markets and technology transfer. All these hold out promise of improved productivity and higher living standard. All of us are beneficiaries of internets, and e-mails, though limited mainly in the cities and towns. Our political dispensation talks of making India e-mail rich. Are they really concerned about making starving village people healthy? ” We talk of ‘shining’ India. Perhaps what is shining is the empty plate of the poor person!

So, in spite of all these and various other achievements in various fronts, India is still at a “crisis point” today. By crisis point I mean a critical crossroad in the development of the country affecting every sphere of our life one way or other – socio-economic, political, religious, cultural or even personal level – such that its continuing identity, aspirations, vision and mission, nay the very foundations of an envisaged free, secular and egalitarian India, as proposed by the freedom fighters, the fashioners of the Indian Republic and the founding fathers and mothers of the Constitution of the Republic, are seriously threatened.

Some of these success stories may be the very problem. The way globalization is affecting the majority of the people of

India, seems to be ugly and detrimental. It is making a negative impact on the marginal groups of our land. Poverty is on the increase. The recent policies of liberalization, marketization, and privatization, has brought in further marginalization of the already marginalized by caste-class structures of the social order. The assurance of a basic minimum floor of economic income for a decent and dignified life in society for a large section of the people seems to be receding resulting in hunger deaths and even suicides. **From 1997 to 2008**, i.e. in a decade, **1,82,936 farmers have committed suicide!**⁷ Globalisation of agriculture is killing families! We don't hear about farmers committing suicide, en mass, in USA or in European countries.

All the same, it is good to be reminded of the African Proverb that the most difficult person to wake up from sleep is the one who is pretending to sleep. In the pretension of "India shining," attempts are made to hide the fact of two (or even many) 'Indias', by and large, correlated with the caste make up.

The India of today is a country of contradictions. What is promised and proposed and what is actually taking place are substantively different. Majority of the population remains poor then and they continue to remain poor now, in spite of the human knowledge and technological progress for a better way of life. The commitments enshrined in the constitution are being subtly undermined by lopsided state policies, reinforced by liberalization at the cost of the social sector (eg. mining) and people's rights. The growth model adopted by the political dispensation in collusion with multinational and indigenous elites perpetuate poverty and destitution, forcing people to migrate to cities where they are thrown into the squalor and misery of the city slums, street corners, hutments along the railway lines and railway platforms. We need critical appraisal of our development models, government policies and planning, and structures of implementation. The validity and

applicability of our knowledge system, the blind application of modern technologies in the development process, the displacement induced method of development – all these need critical scrutiny. We need to listen to the marginal people, their aspirations, their sighs, their development model, mapping the grass root success, in the process of achieving a better paradigm of integral development.

In the light of glaring disparities, what kind of a social order should we aim at? What type of development should we pursue? What direction does the Church give through its social teachings? In the present privatized, marketised, globalised and liberalised (PMGL) world, the need of the hour is a positive pursuit of integral and sustainable development taking into consideration the grass-root level aspirations.

The real wealth of any country is its people, the human resource. People are not just numbers, but the employable, the creative, the resourceful, the caring, the innovative, who are the real assets and richness of a country – the sons and daughters of our *Bharatmata*. They are faces, not just numbers. *Why are we only counting them, not counting on them?*

3. Historical Aspirations

It is the particular type of growth models adopted for planning, policies implemented, cultural ethos adopted that have resulted in the uneven development that is taking place, and insurmountable disparity that are being produced.

On the eve of the Independence Day and the departure of the British, Jawaharlal Nehru, on August 14, 1947 declared: ‘Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge.’ ‘The achievement we celebrate today,’ continued Nehru, ‘is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the great triumphs and achievements that await us.’ He warned the country that the future tasks lie in ‘the ending of poverty and ignorance and

disease and inequality of opportunity.’ Six decades have passed since the promise of the redemption of the ‘pledge’. A critical look at this task in terms of a promise and fulfillment is necessary today, and attempted here.

Article 38 of the Indian Constitution on Directive Principles of State Policy, one of the best in the world on social order, directs the State to secure a social order for the promotion of welfare of the people – “(1) The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of the national life. (2) The state shall, in particular, strive to minimize the inequalities in income, and endeavour to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities, not only amongst individuals but also amongst groups of people residing in different areas or engaged in different vocations.”

Economic justice involves equality in opportunities, distribution of wealth, participation and preferential treatment for the weak, the infirm and the marginalized. Historical reality shows the paucity of this endeavour.

The preamble of our Constitution reads like a scriptural prophetic voice.⁸

With defined indicators and measurable targets, the United Nations, in the year 2000, signed the “United Nations Millennium Declaration” which includes eight millennium development goals (MDGs) to be achieved by the year 2015. MDGs are agreed global and measurable targets to be achieved by the global community. The very fact of giving such a declaration points to the fact of the failure, perhaps, of achieving the Nehruvian pledge in the Indian context. Has the growth model advocated by the international institutions like World Bank, IMF, etc., and adopted (or rather forced to adopt) in the case of countries like India in particular by its

planners, helped fulfill the pledge made by visionaries like Nehru, directive so clearly articulated in the Constitution, and the good life advocated by Institutions like the Brettonwoods sisters?

The Millennium Project was commissioned by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2002 to develop a concrete action plan for the world to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and, especially, to reverse the grinding poverty, hunger and disease affecting billions of people. In 2005, the independent advisory body headed by Professor Jeffrey Sachs, presented its final recommendations to the Secretary-General.⁹ The latest in this theoretical visionary process is the new 2030 goal of 17 items which just now the United Nations has adopted. The question is when are we going to put all these into practice?

4. Obsession with Growth

There seems to be an obsession with growth. Our planners, and the political dispensation talks only of growth. In their speeches there is hardly any mention of authentic and sustainable development. In this respect it is good to recall studies done elsewhere. In a study done by a working group of the Debt Crisis Network the root cause of the debt crisis is attributed to the growth model ideology of the financial system as such: “The roots of the international debt crisis penetrate to the core of the international financial system: the ideology of its founders and their preferred growth models; and the decades-long practices of bankers, elites, and government technocrats. These groups of individuals, like actors in a Greek tragedy, are well aware that their actions are contributing towards disaster, but none acts to alter its behaviour ... The time is long past for cosmetic changes. The entire system is in drastic need of reconstruction.”¹⁰

The plight of the majority of the people who cannot take advantage of the gains of modern growth based economy seem to be of no concern for the corporate managers, the planners, and those who are at the helms of decision making. The economic reform of improving efficiency and growth through free competition in an open market economy has not ushered in an era of integral development. Technological progress manifested in the few shopping malls, and massive buildings of the cities is not development of the type which this author is trying to fathom.

5. The Development Challenge

It is not that we should belittle the progress that we have achieved in the last six decades of our independence. But, when will we wake up to the other realities of India? If one Indian is starving the whole of India is starving.

There are hard, but unpleasant, questions to be raised. Will we rise up to the challenge or waist our time and hard earned money of the taxpayers in our rule makers' bickering and fighting on silly things in the parliament?

The present paradigm of development under liberalisation-privatisation-globalisation (LPG) model involves the fast depletion of non-renewable natural resources, especially through mining. People are displaced instead of developed. The parody seems to be that the guardians of democracy are unconcerned with the plight of the poor displaced ones. There is no tangible concern manifested and action undertaken on their behalf is the concern of many concerned ones.¹¹

One has to look beyond the issues of economic reforms, liberalization, deregulation, marketisation or even globalization. Attention ought to be given in our political economy to the neglecting of public policy matters dealing with education, healthcare, social security, employment creation, agricultural investment, social aspects of purity-

pollution, over emphasis and embrace of ethnic and casteistic politics, superiority complex and ethnic mindsets. Many seem to have rejected an egalitarian society of equality and dignity for all, resulting in deeper gap between the haves and have-nots.

6. The Great Divide

There is a great divide between the rich and the poor. There is persistence of extreme poverty and destitution. It has persisted for centuries; and, if the present pattern of LPG is what is going to continue, definitely, the gap will widen further to the detriment of human life itself. India is already showing the signs of human misery and destruction. Soni is only a symbol of what is going to happen, in large scale, if middle course correction is not adapted at the earliest. Time will not wait. It is already too late. One will have to struggle to save India and the world from this titanic destruction which the consumeristic culture would bring about. The death toll is already there, (eg. farmers committing suicide).

When we look at our concrete experiences like the case of Honda Factory workers in Gurgaon, Haryana, the brutal beating up of the striking workers and local people at Placimada, Kerala, the trouble at Singur, West Bengal and so on, they manifest another side of globalized India. These, among many others, manifest the labour problem in the contemporary Indian context.

Excessive accumulation of wealth in a few hands, and the subsequent experience of power that entails, have their correlated moral fall outs. The era of colonization did not allow the then India of yesterdays benefit from the prevalent industrial technology and thus missed the opportunity of an integral development, and even economic growth. Though our Prime Ministers are talking in terms of not ‘missing the communication era’, the contemporary India, with the nexus

of many of business corporates and executives, politicians, high level civil servants etc., does not provide the opportunity for the majority of the people of India with an atmosphere for integral and sustainable development. For these internal actors the new direction of the economy is a success story. But they remain a small minority. Looking at the reality through the optic of the vast majority, a different picture appears and a groan is heard. While “India” jubilates and celebrates, “*Bharat*” agonizes.

In a globalised, liberalized, and privatized world, a major section of the people are almost totally not only sidelined, but positively neglected and marginated. In the case of countries like India, even after sixty years of independence, a new ideology is emerging that the existence of the poor has to be taken for granted; that they will always be there. An embrace of this ideology is even protecting a large number of guardians of law makers from serious prick of conscience. The destitution and the inhuman conditions in which a sizable population of countries like India lives do not even prick the conscience of the planners and those who decide the destiny of the nation. Their marginalization is considered the unavoidable social cost of development. Development for whom is the big question today. What is going on in developing countries like India in the name of progress and planning for development is to be challenged, questioned and many of the items even discarded.

In countries like India, the new phenomenon and stage of development by the creation of SEZ (Special Economic Zones), need very careful critical appraisal, in terms of protection and enhancement of the dignity of the person, the principles of common good, social justice, preferential option and the values of solidarity and subsidiarity. Here a critical appraisal of SEZ is very much in order. The kingdom metaphor needs a revisit.

India is not a poor country. India is a very rich country with plenty of poor people in it. This is the contradiction of our life even after six decades of independence and developmental planning process. At the present scenario of globalised, privatized, liberalized and marketised world we need an alternate model of integral, humane and sustainable development (IHSD). Such an alternate development model can be created basing on Christian/authentic humanism and the Social Teachings of the Church. This model can emerge from our concrete commitment in the economic, socio-political and religio-cultural arena.

7. Integral Development

The phrase ‘Integral development’ indicates many parameters, and implies a hosts of policies, that work in tandem to foster sustainable development in the world today. The issue of development has become so important and crucial today as the nations of the world have become interconnected and integrated and are existing in a globalised, liberalized and privatized world.

“Development cannot be limited to mere economic growth. In order to be authentic, it must be complete: integral, that is, it has to promote the good of every (hu)man and of the whole (hu)man.”¹² We should not separate the economic from what is authentically human, nor development from human civilization. What is important is the person, the whole person, even the whole of humanity. Conditions that are more human are given by *Populorum Progressio* (PP): “passage from misery towards the possession of necessities, victory over social scourges, the growth of knowledge, the acquisition of culture.... Increased esteem for the dignity of others, cooperation for the common good, the will and desire for peace.”¹³ So, many economists, including our own A. K. Sen, began to reject the understanding and presentation of

development based on Gross National Product (GNP). It was clear that absolute poverty, imbalance in income distribution and unemployment were becoming more and more serious in these countries that claimed quick growth based on GNP.

The economy should be at the service of persons: “But it is unfortunate that (A) system has been constructed which considers profit as the key motive for economic progress, competition as the supreme law of economics, and private ownership of the means of production as the absolute right that has no limits and carries no corresponding social obligation.” This unchecked liberalism leads to dictatorship rightly denounced by Pius XI as producing “the international imperialism of money.” Further PP says, “an economy of exchange can no longer be based solely on the law of free completion, a law which, in its turn, too often creates an economic dictatorship. Freedom of trade is fair only if it is subject to the demands of social justice.”¹⁴ Excessive economic, social and cultural inequalities among peoples arouse tensions and conflicts, and are a danger to peace. The common good of humanity, according to PP, requires “to wage war on misery and to struggle against injustice is to promote, along with improved conditions, the human and spiritual progress of all (hu)men, and therefore the common good of humanity.”¹⁵ Development is the new name for peace.

Development is integral when it is seen “in terms of the expansion of the real freedoms that the citizens enjoy to pursue the objectives they have reason to value, and in this sense the expansion of human capability can be, broadly, seen as the central feature of the process of development.”¹⁶ Hence poverty is thus, ultimately a matter of ‘capability deprivation’. Normally economic growth is understood in terms of expanding Gross National Product. So, “(T)he success of development programmes cannot be judged merely in terms of their effects on incomes and outputs, and must at a basic level,

focus on the (quality) lives that people can lead.¹⁷ The seed of potency planted in the personhood of each individual and in the culture and community as a whole by the Almighty needs to be nurtured, enhancing the capability of each and every person in the community. When this is ensured, development will follow. Creation of that conducive atmosphere for growth is the responsibility of the government.

In the writings of classical political economists like Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill much interest is shown “in the foundational importance of our ability to do the things we value, so that they saw the freedom to lead valuable lives as intrinsically important – not merely instrumentally so.”¹⁸ To lead these valuable lives we need some very basic items. Food takes the number one place in the lists of items like shelter, clothing, leisure, and so on. Whether we put them in the category of ‘basic need’ or ‘fundamental right’ it does not matter; what is essential is that they are absolute necessities to live a dignified life. Otherwise, death will be our immediate gift. We must not forget the words of Pope Benedict XVI that “every economic decision has a moral consequence...”¹⁹ This implies that a particular model of development embraced will have moral consequence. There are foundational questions to be asked. People are getting frustrated with the consumeristic happiness; hence what is that which brings authentic happiness in the lives of people?

8. Social Teachings of the Church

Pope, saint John Paul II’s encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, written 20 years after Pope Paul VI’s encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, on development, reiterates principles of that letter and addresses the need to go beyond a purely economic concept of development to promote authentic human development for persons and society. Continuing problems on the world scene have led to questions about the adequacy

of traditional economic development theories/strategies and policies of international organizations, if the goal is to improve the condition of humanity and not only achieve certain macroeconomic standards of growth. The peoples of developing countries experience obstacles to human progress because of the structures and policies of their governments, and because of their dependence on decisions made by industrialized nations. John Paul II's systemic approach to social concerns is effective in questioning the values underlying current policies and operations, and in presenting an alternative, more complete concept of development for the world to consider.

Pope John Paul presents his new encyclical as a reconsideration, after a lapse of 20 years, of the central theme of "development," covered by his predecessor in *Populorum Progressio*. The new document is, in addition, the most recent in a long series of encyclicals dealing with the social question, which began with Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* (1891), followed forty years later by Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno*; then by Pope (now saint) John XXIII's *Mater et Magistra* (1961); by Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio* (1967); then by the same Pope's Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971); and Pope saint John Paul II's *Laborem Exercens* (1981). These represent not merely a chronological sequence, but a progressive application of the central concept of justice. The latest in the series of Church's thinking is the encyclical of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*.

As Pope John Paul sees it, the Catholic concept of social justice was applied first at the individual level - between employer and worker, then to the relationship between the classes, inevitably confronting the Marxist concept of "class struggle"; and was only finally applied to the inter-relationship between nations, and indeed between the major regions of the

world. Pope Francis is very focused on this. He himself says that he is left of the centre in his thinking.

Pope Francis, through his encyclical *Laudato Si* (LS), calls for action on the greatest threats facing the human family today – climate change, growing global inequality and the destruction of biodiversity. Pope Francis sees these as reflections of a world which has put personal profit and the drive for relentless economic growth above all other considerations. He urgently appeals for a “new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all.” (LS, # 14).

‘Development’ is the application of the concept of justice specifically to that of relationship to one another. This gradual evolution from the individual to the international expression of justice follows the gradual development of the world economy itself. A world economy, linked internationally through the multinationals and the financial system, is a relatively recent phenomenon.

The Papal definition of “development” differs from the various purely political interpretations of the same concept (whether the liberal, capitalist, “free market” concept or the Marxist concept). Both of these define development in purely economic terms. The former insists that aspects other than the purely economic must be taken into consideration and must, in fact, regulate the adoption of purely economic remedies. The Simple accumulation of wealth is not true development. Greater availability of goods and services for some does not qualify for true development, if this is gained at the expense of the development of the masses, and without due consideration for the socio-cultural and religio-spiritual dimensions of the human beings.

In other words. “Development” which is registered in terms of higher GDP but which results in the disintegration of family and/or tribal cultural patterns, is not automatically to be regarded as progress - unless it can be shown that the institutions which have disappeared (like slavery) did not deserve to survive.

In the third section of his encyclical, John Paul II surveys the contemporary world and discovers that the social crisis which prevailed in 1967, and which it had been hoped that the application of Pope Paul’s principles would ameliorate, far from diminishing, “has become notably worse.” The awful expansion of poverty, the exacerbation of the housing crisis as a result of the flight of rural people to the “great wens” of the developing cities, the growth of unemployment and of under employment, war, terrorism, the tide of refugees, the heavy pressure of international debt - all of these constitute world-wide problems which are as familiar as they are apparently insoluble.

The Pope has no illusions concerning his own limited resources in finding a solution. The decisions which either accelerate or slow down the development of peoples are really political in character. “In order to overcome the misguided mechanisms mentioned earlier and to replace them with new ones which will be more just and in conformity with the common good of humanity, an effective political will is needed.”

As already affirmed in his encyclical, the Church does not have technical solutions to offer for the problem of underdevelopment as such. For the Church does not propose economic and political systems or programs, nor does she show preference for one or the other, provided that human dignity is properly respected and promoted.

What is possible for the Church is to (a) establish in the minds of its members a “commitment to justice,” (b) to offer certain guidelines as to the priorities which they should pursue, and (c) to delineate the special responsibilities of Catholics in seeking to influence the policies of their respective governments. John Paul II leaves no doubt that, for the Catholic, the central objective of social action is not to be found merely in its political dimension but in “our manner of living,” which should reflect the “love of and preference for the poor.” The Church advocates fostering of technical progress, spirit of initiative, expansion of enterprises, adaptation of methods of and strenuous efforts of all for production. These are the elements making for development.²⁰ Speaking of economic development, *Gaudium et Spes* reiterates: “The fundamental purpose of this productivity must not be the mere multiplication of products. It must not be profit or domination. Rather, it must be the service of (hu)man, and indeed the whole (hu)man, viewed in terms of his(her) material needs and the demands of his(her) intellectual, moral, spiritual, and religious life..... (E)conomic activity is to be carried out according to its own methods and laws but within the limits of morality.”²¹

9. Sustainable Development

It is a pattern of development wherein resources are used in a manner to meet genuine human needs not only of the present but also of the future generations. The Brundtland Commission gives the oft-quoted definition of sustainable development as that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Remember the word is ‘need’ not ‘want’. This ‘need’, especially of the poor and the marginalised, should take priority over the ‘want’ of the rich and the powerful.

The notion of sustainable development can be divided into three constituent parts: 1. economic sustainability,

environmental sustainability, and socio-political sustainability. It is a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for future generations. Pope Francis is very emphatic on this, in his recent writings and speeches.

Sustainable development ties together concern for the carrying capacity of natural systems with the social challenges facing humanity. As early as the 1970s, “sustainability” was employed to describe an economy “in equilibrium with basic ecological support systems.” Ecologists have pointed to the limits to growth, and presented the alternative of a “steady state economy” in order to address environmental concerns. Our overexploitation of natural resources addicted by short term economic interest results in evermore widespread destruction of the already fragile environment. Our present overexploitation of natural resources, and the manifest attempt to ever augment this exploitation at the hands of both internal and external exploitative actors (national and multinational corporations and industrial houses) under the generous patronage of political actors have resulted in people’s resistance movements, even to pockets of movements that have gone into ideological embrace. Naxal and Maoist resistances could be such entities. When a particular people are pushed to a corner, they seem to think in terms of ethnicity and casteistic groups, and even violence.

The following table gives a contrasting picture of Integral Development and Globalisation.

Globalization	Integral Development
Stress on competition	Stress on cooperation and solidarity
Production for making profit	Production for people's needs
Emphasis on having more	Emphasis on being more
Priority to the wants of the rich	Priority to the needs of the poor
Sees the poor as expendable	shows preferential option for the poor
Mass Production	Production by Masses
Disregards cultural values	Respects cultural values
Over exploits nature	Eco-sensitive
Guided by economic laws	Guided by moral laws

The following foundational principles could be enumerated.

Acceptance of some foundational issues are central in our attempt. The following, among others, could be enumerated:

1. If we want a just and integral India, we need to respect and ensure the dignity and sacredness of persons as our first priority.²²
2. Further, we ought to view the human person as a relational, corporate and social reality, related to other human beings as equals, and related to the eco-system, as protectors. The human beings are only stewards of the earth to protect and sustain it, not to use and abuse
3. Accept the reality of our human condition in all its truthfulness; accepting even the sinfulness of our condition in its personal as well as structural aspects.

4. Every economic system embraced or economic decisions made must be judged in the light of whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person.
5. All people have a right to participate as equals in the economic life of the society.
6. All members of the society have a special obligation to the marginalized because of the structures and mechanisms involved in the phenomenon of marginalization.
7. The objective of the economic institutions must be common good, not self-interest.
8. There can be no common good without social justice, and sustainability of the environment.²³
9. We ought to work for a social order “founded on truth, built according to justice, vivified and integrated by charity, and put into practice in freedom.”²⁴
10. Development of people and work of development without challenging structural injustices is not enough.
11. Liberation from unjust structures without relationship to human persons and community is not integrated and integral liberation. This is the principle because of which one cannot accept violent and conflict-creating form of resistances – including that of the Naxals.
12. In a divided world – divided economically, socially and politically – aid, kindness (i.e. relief, band-aid charity) based on pity and sympathy is not enough. We need affirmative action.
13. In a divided world, commitment to integral and integrating development, liberation, promotion of justice and human rights become true, valuable and

effective only through an option of the marginalised and marginated ones. The rights of the poor marginalized become a criterion for action, decision, priority and policy. Hence our approach is structural, political and always in solidarity.

14. Poverty is a condition, not a destiny; it is an injustice, not a misfortune; poverty is a face, and not a mere number to be counted. Hence the necessity of structural changes for integral and integrating development. Remember the idea of John Chrisostom that Poverty is the creation of the wealthy.
15. The task of the Church is to become a redeeming Church. It is said that over 92 times, at different occasions, Pope saint John Paul II asked pardon from history for our sinfulness of the past to redeem our history. Pope Francis too is continuing the same tradition. Our present ought to be molded by the memory of a past (which is wounded) and the hope of a future, which is already redeemed by the blood of Christ. “Our life is 90 percent despair and 10 per cent hope. But the 10 per cent hope should give enough energy to eliminate the 90 per cent despair.” Adolfo Nicholas (The Jesuit General).
16. In fine, we should prioritize the need of the poor over the want of the rich, the freedom of the dominated over the liberty of the powerful, and the participation of the marginalized groups over the preservation of a socio-economic or politico-religious order that excludes them.²⁵

10. The Promise and Fulfillment

The promise is greater access to more markets and technology transfer holding out improved productivity and higher living standard. On the other hand, the reality is: growing

inequality across and within nations, increment in rich poor gap, growing poverty and environmental deterioration, and frustration among people, leading even to violence. There is a gap today between ‘the miseries of underdevelopment’ and ‘a form of super-development’. This super-development, i.e. ‘an excessive availability of every kind of material goods for the benefit of certain social groups’ is detrimental to a peaceful social order of equality, justice and peace. In the context of the availability of capital and the allurements of the comfort of capital, corruption is on the increase.

We know that the problems we face have an ethical dimension and a moral character. Who is left out and left behind is always a moral question. Poverty is a face, a person, not just a number. The health of a society is measured by how it cares for its weakest, the minorities and the marginalised. Globalisation and the subsequent growth model of development has its own logic, but not its own ethic. At this juncture one could be reminded of the **seven deadly sins** enumerated by Mahatma Gandhi: “Wealth without Work, Pleasure without Conscience, Science without Humanity, Knowledge without Character, Politics without Principle, Commerce without Morality, and Worship without Sacrifice.”

11. A Few Proposals

The following proposals, among many others, could be helpful in arresting the negative effects of the growth model and its subsequent repercussions.

1. **Ending poverty is a moral imperative.** Hunger should not be on the streets. It should be in the museum (as Muhammad Yunus says). Poverty is the end result of an absence of a social consciousness and social contract; the absence of a socio-relational existence. It is not created by the poor. It is created by our mindsets, ideologies, religious beliefs especially of a

hierarchical anthropology. It is created by the policies that we pursue, the various institutions that we have built. It is created by the structure of wages that we give to those in the lowest economic level. In order to create a poverty-free world we need new mindsets, new conceptualization, new analytical framework which takes into consideration the dignity of every human being, irrespective of class, caste, race, colour or gender as its central task. In order to have peace we need integral development resulting in a poverty-free world. We need justice culminating in solidarity and fellowship. Today we need to seriously ask and answer two challenging questions in the Indian context: who am I in relation to the other; who is the other in relation to me?

2. Commitment to Common Good and Social Justice.

A firm commitment to the universal common good should be at the heart of an envisaged model of development.

3. Work for integral and sustainable development.

We need a vision of human progress and integral development that is consistent with human dignity and human rights, social justice, common good, respect for nature, and to a greater international solidarity. How to ensure that the poorest and most vulnerable participate, create and share in the benefit that is accruing through globalization, is perhaps, the greatest challenge.

4. A Humanisation process of development is needed.

Today we have to set a priority in terms of development with a human face; it is a great challenge to civilize economic growth from its cut-throat competition?

5. Creation of a Culture of solidarity, a new spirituality. We need to create a culture of solidarity

– a solidarity without marginalization. We have to move from an isolation to a culture of dialogue, from a culture of competition and consumerism to a culture of cooperation and sharing, from a culture of corruption to a culture of integrity in public life. In other words, good stewardship of our resources is a moral imperative. The economy of exchange can no longer be based solely on the law of free competition, which may end up in economic dictatorship. Freedom of trade is fair only if it is subject to the demands of social justice. In short, “every economic decision has a moral consequence” (Pope Benedict XIV, No. 37. *Caritas in Veritate*).

Conclusion

Socio-Economic and Integral human development as a subject of study has got to do with those aspects of human activity in society which make healthy human relations possible. Actualisation of our vision of integral development would take place only from a consistent and concrete commitment in the socio-economic, political, and religious-cultural sectors. So integral development is a ‘healthy human relationship.’ Fidelity to the demands of that relationship is justice. Hence without justice authentic and integral development is impossible.

The plight of the poor is seen not primarily as a call for charity, but as part of a disordered system calling for justice, understood as “fidelity to the demand of a (true) relationship,” and for the establishment of a new socio-economic relationship, starting with at least a minimum floor of availability of goods and services for a decent living worthy of the dignity of the human (the *humanum*), and acceptance as equals in a participatory social order. In our broken world tragically divided by various forms of injustice, personal and/or institutional, built into economic, social, religious or

political structures that dominate the life of individuals and nations and the international community, reconciliation, development, peace and communion cannot be brought about without an order founded on truth, built according to justice and graced by love. Hence a structural relationship in economics, politics, religion or culture, whereby at the local, national or international levels a tiny minority of the 'rich and powerful' control and exploit the masses of the poor, is morally unacceptable to a serious follower of Christ. Hence our social involvement to establish such relationship takes a sacramental significance because of the life of Jesus and His actions (see 1 Cor 1:30).

And lastly, not the least, one should have an yearning desire, a passionate pursuit, that we can achieve it. We should not make peace with poverty. The discomfort of utter destitution should prick our conscience and disturb our sleep. As Muhammad Yunus, the Nobel Peace Prize recipient and the Founder Managing Director of Grameen Bank, Bangladesh, says, 'poverty should be kept in the museum, not on the streets.'

There is a psychology in India that the government is the feeding parent. People tend to blame the government for everything. This is just a mechanism of a people who is not wanting to accept their social responsibility. Of course, the government should do its part. The very *raison d'être* of any government is the performance of the common good, the good of all and the good of each. That the government ought to perform this function should not be ignored. The government should be made accountable to this task, by the power vested in the people.

Hence the necessity of addressing this issue. A careful revisit of the social teachings of the Church is very much needed today in order to create a framework of critiquing the very idea of growth. What is happening to our option for the

poor? Was there a serious option either? The parameters of integral development need to be articulated and emphasized all the more. In the Indian context, perhaps, we need a combination of Gandhi and Ambedkar: Gandhi is a symbol of self-sufficiency and dignity, Ambedkar is a symbol of equality, freedom and emancipation. It is not an “either or,” but “both and” model that we should embrace. The insight of the Church is worth repeating: ‘We cannot have peace without development, we will not have peace without justice, and we cannot have peace without solidarity.’ And now Pope Francis has added a new dimension that ‘we cannot have peace without merciful love’. Without mercy and forgiveness we cannot even think of lasting peace. Development is the new name for peace. Development is freedom. Development is experience of dignity. Development is authentic relationship with forgiving love.

Such development is integral.

Notes

1. Some of the data given in this paper is taken from the forthcoming book, *Economic Growth, Democracy and Human Development: In Reference to MGNREGA & Panchayati Raj Institutions*, by John Joseph Puthenkalam and John Chathanatt. Bangalore: Claretian Publications, 2016.
2. See *Unto the Margins: Pope Francis and His Challenges*, edited by John Chathanatt, SJ. Delhi: Media House and Claretian Publications, 2015.
3. *Hindustan Times*, April 5, 2010.
4. I am reminded of Charles Dickens’s opening lines in the *Tale of Two Cities*:

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we

had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way. (*A Tale of Two Cities*, London: Chapman and Hall, 1880, p.1}

5. The first social encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, clearly mentions that the labour of the poor is indispensable, and “(I)ndeed, their co-operation in this respect is so important that it may be truly said that *it is only by the labour of the workingmen that States grow rich.*” (emphasis mine) (#27, *Seven Great Encyclicals* (SG), p.16). This is reiterated in *Quadragesimo Anno* (See #53.): “... that the huge possessions which constitute human wealth are begotten by and flow from the hands of the workingman....” SG. P.140.
6. *Hindustan times*, July 15th, 2010. See the *UNDP Human Development Report*, 2010.
7. *The Hindu* – Friday, Dec. 12, 2008
8. THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA
PREAMBLE:

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens:

JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation;

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.

9. The following are the 8 MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

- 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. 2: Achieve universal primary education. 3: Promote gender equality and empower women. 4: Reduce Child Mortality. 5: Improve Maternal Health. 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability. 8: Develop a global partnership for development
10. See. J. Chathanatt, “Reclaiming our Vintage Values: This Hour of the Economic History of India.” In *Jeevadharma*, p.448.
11. Thousands of poor people affected by the Bhopal gas tragedy, or lakhs of them displaced over the years due to the construction of large dams or removed from city slums. They are still waiting, perhaps for years, to get some sort of solace and justice to their very condition of existence.
12. See *Populorum Progressio (PP)*, No. 21. in *Gospel of Peace and Justice*, p.391.
13. PP. No. 21. *The Gospel of Peace and Justice*. p. 393.
14. PP. No. 59. *The gospel of peace and justice*, p. 405
15. PP. No. 76. P. 410
16. John Derez & Amartya Sen, *India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity*. New Delhi: Oxford University press, 1995. Derez and Sen give quite a lot of authors to substantiate their argument. See footnote 4, p. 10, in *India Economic Development and Social Opportunity*.
17. Ibid.
18. In the case of Smith, see both *The Wealth of Nations* and *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Smith, 1776, 1790), and in the case of Mill, *Principles of Political Economy, Utilitarianism, On Liberty*, and also *The Subjection of Women* (Mill, 1848, 1859, 1861, 1869). See Jean Dreze & Amartya Sen, *India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996.
19. *Caritas in Veritate*, No. 37.
20. Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, #64, *The Gospel of Peace and Justice*, p.301.
21. Ibid.

22. Muhammad Yunus, captures the sentiment very well: "Poverty is not created by the poor. It is created by the institutions we have built and the policies that we pursue. We cannot solve the problem of poverty with the same concepts and tools which created it in the first place. To create a poverty-free world we need new conceptualization, new analytical framework **which takes ensuring human dignity to every human being as its central task.**" (emphasis mine). *Towards Creating a Poverty-free World*, New Delhi: Institute of Social Sciences, 1997. p. 27.
23. Economic justice involves equality in opportunities, distribution of wealth, participation and preferential treatment for the weak, the infirm and the marginalized. Article 38 of the Indian Constitution states: "The state shall try to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting effectively a social order in which justice shall inform all the institutions of national life
24. Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, # 167, in *The Gospel of Peace and Justice*, p. 238.
25. See David Hollenback, *Claims in Conflict*, p. 34.

Article received: Mar 4, 2016

Article approved: Sept 16, 2016

No of words: 9050



Religious Fundamentalism: A Challenge to Peace

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Abstract: One of the serious threats that modern humanity faces is religious fundamentalism. The author, highlighting the origins of fundamentalism, tries to bring out the fact that it is a threat to the secular world. Fundamentalism of different religions is touched upon to analyze the salient features of religious fundamentalism. Arguing that fundamentalism is a reaction to the advent of the modern secular world, the author spells out the possible reactions to the phenomenon of fundamentalism.

Keywords: Fundamentalism, Appeal to Scripture, Christian, Hindu and Islamic Fundamentalism, Secular world and Reactions to Fundamentalism

1. What is Religious Fundamentalism?¹

Religious fundamentalists see themselves as the champions and faithful guardians of the ancient truths and moral commandments which constitute the essence of their particular faith. In other words, they claim to be the true exponents of the religious tradition they represent. Fundamentalism, while appealing to the past, is actually a new and modern religious phenomenon, and one that does not faithfully represent the faith in the way it claims to. It is new because it is a reaction to the advent of the modern secular world, and this is something which none of the great religious traditions had to encounter

before. That is why the term “fundamentalism” is less than 100 years old.

Far from being the loyal defense of Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism or Islam, fundamentalism is a religious aberration. For the fundamentalist Jew, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has been replaced by the Torah. For the fundamentalist Christian, God has been replaced by the Bible. For the fundamentalist Hindu, God has been replaced by the Vedas. For the fundamentalist Muslim, Allah has been replaced by the Qur'an. Their respective Holy Scripture has become the object of their faith – their God. This was not so in the pre-modern world.

So, fundamentalism may be described as a modern religious disease, for it distorts genuine religious faith in the same way as cancer distorts and misdirects the natural capacity of body cells to grow. Instead of bringing spiritual freedom and the realization of a spiritual goal, as all sound religions should, fundamentalism imprisons people into such a rigid system of belief that they find it difficult to free themselves. Fundamentalism takes possession of human minds and blinds them to the realities which most others accept as self-evident. Fundamentalism fosters a closed mind, restricts the sight to tunnel vision, hinders mental and spiritual growth, and prevents people from becoming the mature, balanced, self-critical persons they have the potential to become.

2. Deceptive Appeal to Scripture

The fact that fundamentalism is a modern phenomenon is not at all obvious at first, simply because it makes its claim on the basis of something which has long been central to the religious tradition in question: the appeal to Holy Scripture. This claim, by its very subtlety, often deceives even non-fundamentalists. They sometimes feel themselves at a disadvantage, for the fundamentalists appear to claim a high

moral ground. They are able to claim support for their case from the very words found in the Torah, the Bible, the Vedas or the Qur'an. Hindu fundamentalists quote their scripture to justify the killing of anyone who kills a cow or eats beef. They believe that they have a duty to do moral policing by forcing people to close dance bars, stopping of Valentine's day celebrations, free movement of boys and girls in parks and public places, and forcing boys and girls found together in public places on Valentine's Day to go to the nearest temple and get married, etc.

What is novel about fundamentalism is not the honouring of Holy Scripture, but the way in which it is done. Fundamentalists treat Holy Scripture as the starting point of their faith tradition when in fact it is the product: it gathered its authority only after the tradition had started. This is especially so with Judaism, Christianity and Hinduism, which existed long before they had Holy Scriptures. It is rather less so with Islam. But Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism and Islam each evolved out of an initially fluid faith tradition, in which there was still much freedom for creative change and development. As each produced its Holy Scripture, there certainly was a tendency for that creative spirit to diminish and for the living faith tradition to become frozen into a static and lifeless form. This was overcome, however, by devising a variety of methods of interpretation to accommodate the text to the changing circumstances in which people lived.

Up to the advent of the modern world, Jews, Christians, Hindus and Muslims certainly gave their respective Scriptures all due respect and honour – but they were not fundamentalists, even though there was the potential to become so. They felt free to interpret their scriptures in the light of new knowledge and fresh experience. Moreover, they were reading and interpreting their Scriptures in a cultural and religious context

which, while not the same as that in which they were written, was at least in reasonable harmony with it.

3. A New World-view

Till the advent of the modern world it was relatively easy for Jews, Christians, Hindus and Muslims to acknowledge the words of their respective Scriptures to be self-evidently true, as well as being divinely revealed. This is no longer the case. The advent of modern culture, with its accompanying knowledge explosion, has changed all that. The task of interpreting the Holy Scriptures in a way which is relevant to the changing cultural context and self-evident truth began to reach breaking point in the 19th century onwards. It was this that led to the modern religious aberration of fundamentalism. Fundamentalists reject much of the modern world view and insist, somewhat blindly, on remaining within a world view consistent with their particular Holy Scriptures.

What all fundamentalists have in common is not a set of specific beliefs but an attitude of mind. It is the conviction that they possess the knowledge of absolute truth of which they have become the divinely ordained guardians. This conviction then gives them a feeling of extreme confidence and of inner power in relation to all who differ from them. They become crusaders, bent on defending and spreading the truth as they see it. Fundamentalism breeds intolerance for it makes people absolutely sure that they know the mind and will of God on any subject which particularly concerns them. Fundamentalists see no value in tolerance because they regard tolerance as a form of moral weakness, an unjustifiable compromise with falsehood and evil. Intolerance, in turn, quickly leads to fanaticism. Fanatics are unreceptive to reasoning and will stop at nothing to achieve their ends, passionately believing them to be not their own ends but God's.

Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism and Islam have a history which shows how, at their best, they have accommodated themselves to changing circumstances. Each was a living, evolving tradition. Each can proudly point to its saints and stalwarts in the past – but these were not fundamentalists. By contrast, today's fundamentalists stifle religious creativity and deny their faith the opportunity to continue on its evolving path as it responds to the challenges of newly emerging knowledge. Fundamentalists tend to have a static view of reality: they have not come to terms with the ever-changing and evolving character of culture, religion and life itself.

In the ancient world, people believed in many gods. So the founding Jewish, Christian and Islamic prophets were iconoclasts. They destroyed the idols or tangible things which people put their trust in. This iconoclasm stemmed from the second of the Jewish Ten Commandments: "You shall not make for yourself any graven image, or any likeness of anything which is in heaven, or earth or under the earth, you shall not bow down to it or serve it." When one gives unconditional worship to any visible, tangible thing, even though it is Holy Scripture, it is this commandment which is disobeyed. Human mind is a real factory for the creation of idols. Fundamentalism is the modern phenomenon by which people, perhaps afraid of the uncertainties of the future, and certainly distrustful of the modern world, have raised their Holy Scripture to a tangible idol. They are doing what Aaron did by forging the golden calf when they were afraid Moses was leading them to a disastrous unknown future and they longed to return to the fleshpots of Egypt.

4. Origin of Religious Fundamentalism

The term 'Fundamentalism' derives from a series of 12 booklets titled *The Fundamentals*, which were published in America between 1909 and 1915. The booklets were

intended to counter the spread of liberal religious thought in the churches of America, which the publishers believed to be undermining the eternal Christian truths – “the fundamentals.” The booklets reaffirmed what the writers took to be the fundamental and unchangeable doctrines of Christianity: the infallibility of the Bible, the divinity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, historical reality of miracles, the bodily resurrection of Jesus, etc. However, they were chiefly concerned to condemn the new biblical criticism and the Darwinian theory of evolution, both of which had emerged in the 19th century. What received more publicity than the booklets was the infamous American trial in 1925 when a school teacher, John Scopes, was tried and convicted for teaching biological evolution in a Tennessee school.

The term “fundamentalist” was coined by a Baptist journalist in 1920. He thought the word “conservative” to be too weak. Thus, having started as the name of a Christian phenomenon in America, the term “fundamentalist” began to spread throughout the world. Today we speak of Jewish fundamentalists, Islamic fundamentalists and Hindu fundamentalists. The reason for this is that fundamentalists are rejecting what is common knowledge, based on scientific evidence.

According to Wikipedia, fundamentalism as a movement arose in the United States among conservative Presbyterian theologians in the late 19th century and soon spread to the Baptists and other denominations around 1910-20. The term “fundamentalist” is used to describe those who invoke religion to indulge in acts of extremism and violence against followers of other faiths, and even against followers of their own faith. These fundamentalists demand strict adherence to certain aspects of their faiths or holy books, selected by them, in order to impose their worldview on the societies they live in.²

Fundamentalism is characterized by profound dissatisfaction about the state of society and a strong preoccupation with fundamental religious beliefs. The extremity of action may be attributed to their unyielding belief that they are fighting a cosmic battle between the forces of good and evil which justify their actions as claims of their divine authority.³

Religious fundamentalism has generally five features, the first of which is *reactivity*, i.e. hostility to the secular modern world. From this basic feature follow four others: *dualism*, the tendency to evaluate in starkly binary terms, as good or bad: *authority*, the willingness to believe and obey the sacred book of their religion and/or its leaders: *selectivity*, the choice from the sacred book of certain beliefs and practices in preference to others: and *millennialism*, the belief that God will triumph in the end and establish his kingdom on earth.⁴

The fact that fundamentalism was not a short-lived reaction but, on the contrary, has continued to spread and is now manifesting itself in a wide variety of forms throughout the world, shows that fundamentalism is a powerful force which has deep roots. Fundamentalism is not one movement but a collection of movements like Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu and so on. Fundamentalists often find themselves bitterly opposed to one another. But they do have one common enemy and it is that which leads us to the heart of all religious fundamentalism. It believes that the modern secular and humanistic world is the enemy of religion and hence harmful to humankind.

Scholars of inter-faith dialogue are unanimous in their opinion that the fundamental message of all faiths is the same: universal peace, brotherhood, compassion, tolerance, etc. Adhering to the fundamentals of one's own faith and practising them is the key to combat fundamentalism.⁵

5. Challenge of the Secular World

To understand the modern phenomenon of fundamentalism, it is not sufficient simply to explain the origin of the term. We must go back further and examine the origin and nature of the modern secular world, to which fundamentalists are so violently opposed.

Humankind is currently caught up in the most radical cultural change which has ever taken place. Human culture, of course, has always been undergoing slow evolutionary change. In the past 200 years, however, cultural change has suddenly accelerated. It is now overturning beliefs and institutions which, in some cases, have lasted for millennia, and which are judged by some to be absolutely essential or fundamental to the meaning of people's lives and the welfare of society. In particular, within the three monotheistic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, modernity appears to be threatening the very foundation of all truth and meaning, namely the being and authority of God. Religious fundamentalists condemn the modern secular world as humanistic and godless. Those who believe the change to be fundamentally evil are resisting it to the point of waging war against it. Convinced that they must remain loyal to the fundamentals of the past, they condemn secular humanism as the work of the devil.

The theistic foundations of Christianity were challenged by the leading thinkers of the Enlightenment of 18th century. Theism, or belief in a personal God, was replaced by deism, or belief in an impersonal First Cause. Dependence on divine revelation was replaced by human endeavour and discovery. It is hardly surprising that not only fundamentalists but also even some fairly traditional thinkers and theologians look back to the Enlightenment with grave concern. Yet to the Enlightenment we owe many features of modern culture which most of us now take for granted and would not dream of surrendering – the freedom to think for ourselves, the freedom

to ask questions and to hold up cherished beliefs to critical examination, the freedom to express our opinions and doubts, the assertion of human rights, the acknowledgement of human equality, etc. Thus the Enlightenment was a very liberating period. It replaced the divine right of kings with democratic self-rule. It gave rise eventually to many new freedoms – the emancipation of slaves, the emancipation of colonies from imperial control, the emancipation of women from male domination and, more recently, the freedom of homosexuals to openly declare their sexual orientation.

6. Catholic Reaction

The ideas generated by the Enlightenment were so innovative that they were not readily acceptable to church authorities. Those who embraced the new thinking from the Enlightenment often found themselves forced out of the church establishment. Pope Pius IX in his *Syllabus of Errors* (1864) condemned the new freedom of thought then emerging. This was followed in 1869 by the calling of the ecumenical council now known as Vatican I. Among other things it made the infallibility of the papacy a mandatory dogma. This move attempted to protect Catholicism from modern thought by building a protective wall of authority around it. The Vatican had long forbidden the faithful to read books thought to be injurious to their spiritual health, by placing them on the Index. The impact of modernity did not show itself again in Catholicism until Pope John XXIII called Vatican II, when Catholicism took a sudden but cautious leap into the modern world with its policy of updating by reading the signs of the times.⁶

7. Christian Fundamentalism and Literalism

Christian fundamentalism has sometimes been equated with biblical literalism. In other words, fundamentalists are said to take the Bible literally. Indeed, they themselves often

speak of being committed to the literal inerrancy of Bible. But literalism is not a very satisfactory term. It is clear that, when the Bible refers to God as Father and Jesus as shepherd, the words are intended to be taken metaphorically and not literally. Fundamentalists have no problem with metaphorical language in that regard.

It is true that up to the 19th century the six days of creation in the biblical myth of origins were taken literally as 24-hour periods. But when the immense age of the earth became clearly evident on geological grounds, most fundamentalists tried to defend the “truth” of the biblical story by interpreting the six days as six geological ages, thousands or even millions of years in length. Thus, in order to defend the Bible as true in everything it says, fundamentalists keep shifting between literal and non-literal interpretations. Their purpose in doing so is to defend the fundamentalist dogma that the Bible, being the Word of God, is truly inerrant.

So fundamentalists are not consistently biblical literalists. They are literalists only when and where it suits them to be so. They are usually literalists when it concerns the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of Jesus as an historical event and the existence of eternal punishment in hell. But when Jesus says it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God they go to great lengths to interpret this in such a way that they do not themselves have to “sell all that they have and give to the poor,” as Jesus directed the rich young ruler who wanted to follow him.

The claim of fundamentalists to be the true guardians of their particular faith must be strongly rejected. In fact, fundamentalism is fast becoming one of true religion’s chief enemies. In condemning secular humanism, fundamentalism is actually opposing the legitimate evolution of the very faith it sets out to defend. It is sadly ironic that fundamentalism,

which sees itself as the guardian and preserver of Christianity, now constitutes one of Christianity's chief obstacles to its natural and logical development.

8. Muslim Fundamentalism⁷

In order to understand the rise of Muslim fundamentalism we must go as far back as the 18th century, when Muhammad al-Wahhab founded the Wahhabi movement in Arabia. He advocated a strict return to the original teachings of Islam as found in the Qur'an and Hadith (authoritative traditions of Muhammad). This move was very much like that of the first Christian fundamentalists with their slogan of "Back to the Bible." Wahhabism could be described as the first manifestation of Muslim fundamentalism.

Islam lends itself to fundamentalism even more than Christianity does, for the strength of fundamentalism lies, as we have seen, in its appeal to Holy Scripture. Islam possessed Holy Scripture from the beginning. As the words of the Qur'an continued to be uttered by Muhammad during his lifetime, they were accepted by Muslims as coming directly from God. Whereas it is the figure of Christ which is central to Christianity, it is the Qur'an, not Muhammad, which is central to Islam.

There are several aspects of the Wahhabi movement for Islamic reform, and they set the pattern for the later types of Muslim fundamentalism. Main aspects are Politics, force and jihad.

- It was politically active from the beginning. This is because in Islam there has never been the division between religion and politics. Islam is primarily concerned with the ordering of society, and only secondly with the spirituality of the individual. So for the Muslim, religion and politics are virtually one and the same.

- It had no qualms about using force to attain its goal. Wahhabism soon gathered sufficient military power not only to capture Mecca and Medina, but to take over the whole of Arabia and move into Iraq, where it captured and partially destroyed the mosque in Karbala, so sacred to the Shi'ites.
- It revived the practice of jihad. Though often incorrectly translated in the West as “holy war,” jihad literally means “struggle.” It can refer to the internal struggle which may take place in a Muslim in trying to be whole-heartedly obedient to Allah. But it can also mean the external struggle, not only to defend the boundaries of Islamic society but also to extend them to include unbelievers. It was always the ultimate aim of Islam to incorporate all nations into the brotherhood of Islamic society.

So the Wahhabis are to be seen as the forerunners of today's Muslim fundamentalists. Indeed a direct link can be traced from the Wahhabis to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, and from it to such groups of Muslim fundamentalists as Hamas, the Islamic Jihad and Al Qaeda.

Comparison: Just as Christian fundamentalists seek to restore the secular West to its original form of Christendom, so Muslim fundamentalists are motivated by the goal of restoring the Islamic world to its pristine purity. Both groups see the modern secular world as a materialist, consumer-driven society which has lost whatever spirituality it had in the past. One of the chief differences between the two fundamentalisms is that Christian fundamentalism is fighting against something which has its seeds within Christianity, whereas Muslim fundamentalism has set itself the task of eliminating all the evil influences which have come from the outside. Muslim fundamentalists began their fight against their fellow-Muslims, who in their view had succumbed to the

West. But more recently this has brought them into conflict with the West itself.

9. Hindu Fundamentalism

One of the leading Hindu intellectuals that greatly impacted the rise of Hindu movements, specifically during the British occupation was V.D. Savarkar (1883-1966). His most influential work was the fundamental *Hindutva* (Hinduness), which he wrote while he was imprisoned by the British. *Hindutva* is a manifesto for religious nationalism. Savarkar makes India Hindus' Holy-land. Although he accepts the presence of certain religions, such as Buddhism and Jainism in India, other religions such as Islam and Christianity are seen as foreign elements and do not belong in the subcontinent. Savarkar became the president of the *Hindu Mahasabha*. It was founded in 1915 in order to bring together the diverse local Hindu movements. It believed that in order for India to one day become a free Hindu state it would have to support and encourage Hindu brotherhood between different castes, including the untouchables.⁸

In 1925, the *Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangha* (RSS) was established under the leadership of K. Hedgewar, a former member of the *Hindu Mahasabha*. It was incepted as a voluntary organisation with the aim to create a Hindu cultural pride and brotherhood. It adopted a much more militant stand than that of the *Hindu Mahasabha*. It spread across all of India giving its members Hindu nationalistic education and paramilitary training. The organisation wanted to take the emphasis off of spiritual strength alone and incorporate the necessity of physical strength. Another organisation that has come to be very influential is the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* (VHP). It was founded in 1964 by some of the leaders of the RSS. Yet another party that emerged as a result of the RSS, that has become part of the mainstream political life of India

is the *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP), which emerged in 1980 out of the Janata coalition. It is one of India's largest political parties and it espouses Hindu nationalism according to the writings of Savarkar in *Hindutva*. Hindu fundamentalists have used extreme and violent means to achieve their goals. Such was the case with the destruction of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, by a crowd of nearly one million activists of the VHP, that led to violent clashes between Hindus and Muslims that left thousands dead and injured.⁹

Fundamentalism Divides People: The internationalism of the coming global society calls for flexibility of thought and practice, for empathy with those who differ, for compromise in a spirit of goodwill; it requires mutual co-operation for the common good. Since fundamentalism encourages people to become blindly loyal to specific fundamentals, whether it is a Holy Book or the overcoming of a perceived injustice, all forms of fundamentalism are socially and globally divisive. Thus fundamentalism is socially and internationally dangerous and a threat to peace.

10. How Do We Respond?

War Not the Answer

It is a grave error of judgment to assume that terrorism can be stamped out by war. Neither can terrorism be eliminated simply by planning to kill or imprison all terrorists. The state-ordered assassination of terrorists simply aggravates still further the hostility, hatred and sense of injustice, which were the original causes for the rise of terrorism. For every one killed, five more may appear somewhere else. Terrorism is the symptom of a deep malaise, a malaise which lies behind the current responses to terrorism as much as behind terrorism itself. Therefore, we must find out the motivating cause behind terrorism and deal with that.¹⁰

We can see that the current wave of terrorism around the globe is the product of fundamentalism. we encounter the face of Islamic fundamentalism in the terrorist acts of suicide bombers who are determined to kill and destroy. The Islamic world encountered the face of Christian fundamentalism and terrorism in the person of George Bush, the American President, who was ready to wage war against any nation that stands in the way of America's economic interests.

11. Conclusion

To sum up, here are the chief features of religious fundamentalism:

- Fundamentalism rejects the human freedoms which have opened up in the aftermath of the western Enlightenment, and is committed to combat secular humanism and all other aspects of the modern world which it regards as harmful to the spiritual condition of humankind.
- Fundamentalism asserts that humans must submit to the authority of the Divine Being, whose divinely revealed truths and absolute commands they believe to have been permanently revealed – in the Torah for the Jew, in the Bible for the Christian, in the Vedas for the Hindu and in the Qur'an for the Muslim.
- Fundamentalism consequently leads people to think in terms of black and white. Everything is either true or false, good or bad; there are few shades of grey, little uncertainty, and no area for debate and dialogue.
- Fundamentalism is distrustful of human reason. It does not enter into open dialogue but dogmatically proclaims. It is wary of democracy, the assertion of human rights and the equality of the sexes. It favours strong, male, charismatic leadership, both in religion and in society.

- Fundamentalism seeks to exercise control by establishing theocratic societies which conform to the (divinely revealed) absolutes. Hence Israel must be a Jewish state, Iran must be an Islamic state, India must be a Hindu State and America must be a Christian state.¹¹

Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam each have a cultural history of which its adherents can be justifiably proud. Fundamentalists in each tradition do their cultural heritage a great injustice by making it look like a rigid, intolerant sect. Christian fundamentalism is preventing Christianity from playing a positive and creative role in shaping the modern global society. Similarly, Muslim fundamentalism is distorting the face of Islam and giving the impression to the rest of the world that Islam, far from being the religion of peace, brotherhood and compassion which it can be, is simply a seedbed for violence and terrorism. Fundamentalism, whether Christian, Hindu or Muslim, distorts and does irreparable harm to the very religious tradition it claims to be defending.¹²

It has to be remembered that the fundamentalist organizations are not the majority of any specific religion. Their interpretations of the *fundamentals* of their religion may be so distorted that to really associate it with that religion as a whole would be detrimental. For it seems that rather than a religion creating these fundamentalists, it is the fundamentalist mentalities of powerful individuals that use religion as a tool to achieve their goals.¹³

Notes

1. See <http://www.religion-on line.org/show chapter.asp? title=2 732&C=24 38> accessed on 24.09.2015
2. See <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/to-be-a-fundamentalist-hindu>, accessed on 19.10.2015.
3. See also <https://tamaraalom.wordpress.com/hindu-fundamentalism-does-it-exist>, accessed on 19.10.2015.

4. Peter Henriot, *Religious Fundamentalism and Social Identity* (New York, Routledge, 2007), p. 6.
5. See <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/to-be-a-fundamentalist-hindu>, accessed on 19.10.2015.
6. See <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=2732&C=2437> accessed on 24.09.2015.
7. See <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=2732&C=2439> accessed on 24.09.2015.
8. See <https://tamaraalom.wordpress.com/hindu-fundamentalism-does-it-exist>, accessed on 19.10.2015.
9. See <https://tamaraalom.wordpress.com/hindu-fundamentalism-does-it-exist>, accessed on 19.10.2015.
10. See <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=2732&C=2440> accessed on 24.09.2015.
11. See also <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=2732&C=2437> accessed on 24.09.2015.
12. See <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=2732&C=2438> accessed on 24.09.2015.
13. See <https://tamaraalom.wordpress.com/hindu-fundamentalism-does-it-exist>, accessed on 19.10.2015.

Article received: Feb 26, 2016

Article approved: Aug 12, 2016

No of words: 4710

Science-Religion Dialogue

He who possesses science and art,
Possesses religion as well;
He who possesses neither of these,
Had better have religion.

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

A religion old or new, that stressed the magnificence of the universe as revealed by modern science, might be able to draw forth reserves of reverence and awe hardly tapped by the conventional faiths. Sooner or later such a religion will emerge.

— Carl Sagan

All good moral philosophy is ... but the handmaid to religion.

— Sir Francis Bacon

All of my knowledge, of both science and religion, I incorporate into the classical tradition of my painting.

— Salvador Dali

All religions, arts and sciences are branches of the same tree. All these aspirations are directed toward ennobling man's life, lifting it from the sphere of mere physical existence and leading the individual towards freedom.

— Albert Einstein

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Can Religion Overcome Violence? A Mimetic Perspective

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Abstract: The intimate relationship between religion and violence has been a perennial question in the realm of social harmony and peace. Many approaches have been attempted to explain this enigmatic link. However, this linkage is still exploratory and brings forth ever new challenges. This paper approaches this relationship from the viewpoint of mimetic theory of René Girard. From an anthropological perspective, mimetic theory tries to explore the roots of violence in the evolution of cultures. It takes us to the deeper question of how we define and understand religion. From a universal theorization we look at the Indian scenario which offers quite many insights as well as certain challenges. Indian history, just like the world history, revolves around the mimetic fabric of conflict and violence. In the light of this discussion, the author proposes certain means of overcoming mimetic conflicts and violence. Eventually it tries to address the question of divergence between religion and politics.

Keywords: Religion, violence, mimesis, conflict, politics

Introduction

Ever since 11/9 attacks, the relationship between religion and violence has come to the foreground in academic circles. Modernity's attempt to privatize religion has all the more

triggered its manifestation in public sphere in postmodern era. Against this background, Wolfgang Huber draws our attention to the ambiguity of the present scenario. He feels that “Our time is characterized by an open conflict between two tendencies. On the one hand, freedom and human rights, peace and justice are highly esteemed in our time. But, on the other hand, we observe not only a resurgence of the spirit of hatred and violence, but, even worse, its justification and promotion with seemingly religious reasons.”¹

The present paper is an attempt to highlight the ambiguity of religion, which is perceived to be the source of both conflict and harmony. It tries to investigate how religions could promote peace and harmony and help humans to control conflict and violence. For that purpose, it seeks the help of the mimetic theory of René Girard, a cultural anthropologist and literature critic. In the light of his mimetic theory, it arrives at a workable definition of religion. And then it moves to the Indian context where it critically looks at Buddhism and evaluates the historical development of Hindu and Islam terror organizations. Finally it proposes theological politics and positive mimesis as viable means for overcoming mimetic rivalry and conflict and ensuring harmony and peace. Hence the paper has four parts.

1. The Mimetic Theory
2. How to define Religion?
3. Mimetic Appraisal of the Indian Context
4. Social Harmony and Peace

1. Mimetic Theory of René Girard

Humans learn things by imitating their neighbours. One’s immediate neighbours inspire and define what one should

do and how one should behave. While this phenomenon of imitation leaves the human world fundamentally open for growth and development, it also leads to rivalry and conflict with our neighbours, if this mimetic nature is not positively oriented. Girard's mimetic theory finds itself between these two poles, -Aristotle's and Aquinas' optimistic *homo homini amicus*, or "man is a friend of man," and Hobbes' pessimistic *homo homini lupus*, or "man is a wolf to man."² It positions human nature something in between fundamental goodness and badness. In other words, humans can live in harmony or in conflict, depending on how they imitate one another. Therefore, humans are neither damned for chaos nor are they intrinsically angelic. Between these two choices, mimetic theory attempts to build on the aspect of freedom that renders the choice of human action ultimately open. This theory can be explained in three parts, i.e. mimetic desire, scapegoat mechanism, biblical difference.

1.1 Mimetic Desire

Apart from the natural instincts (hunger, sleep, sex) that humans share with animals, desire seems to be the unique phenomenon among humans. Humans desire eternally. Yet their desire does not have any essence as such. It is created by the proximity with one's neighbours and their desires. One learns not only to desire from his/her neighbour, but also learns what to desire. The object of desire is in fact provided by the model that one tries to imitate. From a perspective reading of the major novels of European literature, Girard postulates that human desire is not based on the spontaneity of the subject's desire, but the rather the desires that surround the subject.³ Since humans do not exactly know what to desire, they imitate the desire of others. Thus it becomes *mimetic desire*. The expositions or gestures of other people are not central to the mimetic theory, but rather the *desires* of others, their acquisitive urges. According to Girard, humans strive to

possess the exact objects that others already possess or desire. He argues that mimesis is most active in acquisitive human behaviour, and his term for this concept is *acquisitive mimesis*.⁴ On account of its extreme potential for conflict, Girard also refers to acquisitive mimesis as conflictual mimesis.⁵

While looking at the mimetic theory from the Buddhist perspective, Samuel Buchoul underlines the ideological compatibility between both of them. He argues that as mimesis negates the autonomy of the self,⁶ Buddhism too claims that the notion of an independent self is part of mental construction. From this angle he makes a small modification of Girard's terminology in his theory of the dynamics of desire.

We do not desire from the model but through the model. This new term allows for a consideration of desire as something fluid, a movement, a human feeling that we borrow from others and that will be borrowed from us later. A desire is never singular, specific to one individual who possesses it. We only continue the desires of others before us: our desires are only the adaptations, the copies of older desires, adjusted to a new setting. There are no new desires; they are only borrowed: desire can only be mimetic.⁷

Since human desire is basically mimetic, there is a danger for mimetic rivalry and conflict. As Girard argues, "the principal source of violence between human beings is mimetic rivalry, the rivalry resulting from imitation of a model who becomes a rival or of a rival who becomes a model."⁸ Moreover, he also distinguishes between external mediation and internal mediation in the realm of mimesis. In the former, there exists social difference between the subject and the model, which to certain extent contains the conflictual dimension. But in the latter, the mediation is no longer external due to close proximity. Therefore it must have been the concern of all societies to prohibit such mimetic desires that would eventually lead to conflict and violence. Typical example

for such prohibition we find in the Ten Commandments. The first eight commandments prohibit actions while the last two prohibit desires, precisely because they are mimetic (Ex 20:1-17). And in this context Girard hypothesizes how ancient communities should have evolved with some kind of mechanism in order to deal with mimetic rivalry and conflicts in order to protect the social order.

1.2 Scapegoat Mechanism

The means by which communities protected themselves from disintegration due to mimetic rivalry, hypnotizes Girard, was the scapegoat mechanism. And it may not have been consciously instituted by some groups but could have evolved spontaneously. He arrives at this by observing certain stereotypes in mythological narratives that reinforce the logical development of this mechanism.

Practically all the mythical stories begin with some sort of disorder, either social or cosmic. And suddenly somebody is accused of the cause for the disorder. Then the whole community gathers together and eliminates that ‘cause’ for disorder. Then the social order returns obviously. The typical example could be the proposal of Caiaphas, the high priest who “had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people” (Jn 18:14). In this mechanism Girard identifies two significant moments. One is the moment of crisis that transforms the community from *all against all* into *all against one*. The other is the moment of (mythical) peace after the expulsion of the victim. Wolfgang Palaver explains its operative mechanism.

At the height of crisis when all are drawn into violent rivalries and all objects have disappeared, mimesis can unify because all objects that created disunity have been replaced by hatred and violence between antagonists. Unlike exclusive objects, violence against a rival can be shared. Whereas mimetic desire in its acquisitive mode

causes “disunity among those who cannot possess their common object together,” it is its antagonistic mode—a highly increased form of mimetic rivalry in which violence between the opponents has been substituted for all concrete objects—that creates “solidarity among those who can fight the same enemy together.” The arbitrary blow of one of the rivals against another can fascinate others to such a degree that they imitate this deed and join in striking the momentarily weaker individual. The war of all against all suddenly becomes a war of all against one. The single victim is expelled or killed. Girard calls this unconscious, collective deed the scapegoat mechanism.⁹

The scapegoat mechanism allegedly restores the loss of differences that cause crisis in the social order. And Palaver explains how scapegoat mechanism re-establishes spatial, religious, temporal, cultural, and social differentiations.

By transferring the violence of the group to the outside—to the victim—the differentiation of space is created. Because of the sacralization of the victim this distinction is at the same time also the distinction between the sacred and the profane. The victim belongs to the sacred; the group is the realm of the profane. The scapegoat mechanism also produces the order of time. The death of the victim is the decisive moment: it separates between “before” that is the time of the crisis and “after” that is the time of peace and order. The same is true for moral distinctions. During the crisis there was no good and bad, no truth and no falsity. The scapegoat mechanism overcomes this uncertainty: the victim is guilty, the others are innocent. All the social distinctions like ranks, hierarchy, relationships of subordination are based on these elementary differentiations. Their main function is to prevent a further outbreak of a mimetic crisis. Social differentiations channel mimesis in a way that makes rivalries less likely.¹⁰

Since desires arise unceasingly, the need to contain its mimetic consequences also arises. Thus the idea of ritual sacrifice emerged, which is the ritual institutionalization of

the scapegoat mechanism. We shall reflect on the ‘sacrificial’ dimension of this mechanism in the next section. However, the crucial question is how do we come into grasp with this way of interpreting the mechanism? How do we identify victims and persecutors? In other words, how do we transcend the hermeneutics of mythical narratives? It takes us to the next step, the biblical difference.

1.3 Biblical Difference

In order to highlight the fundamental hermeneutic difference between myths and the bible, Girard discusses the story of Joseph in the Old Testament. He compares Joseph with the king Oedipus. Despite many similarities between both the narratives, the basic difference lies in the interpretation of the phenomenon of collective violence. In the myth, the expulsions of the hero are justified each time and the victim is thus always wrong and his persecutors are always right. In the biblical account, these expulsions are never justified. Collective violence is unjustifiable.¹¹ From this angle Girard pinpoints the structural similarity as well as the radical difference between myths and the Hebrew Bible. The structural similarity is the basis for the radical difference from the standpoint of the narrative’s identification with the victim. In spite of the numerous convergences of these two narratives, the single divergence is absolutely decisive.¹²

Analyzing the stories of Joseph and Job, Girard concludes that the biblical revolution has a universal meaning.

It’s the difference between a world where arbitrary violence triumphs without being recognized and a world where this same violence is identified, denounced, and finally forgiven. It’s the difference between truth and deception, both of them absolute. Either we succumb to the contagion of the mimetic snowballing effect and fall into the lie of victimization, with mythology, or we resist

this contagion and rise into the truth of the innocent victim, with the Bible.¹³

Similarly Girard highlights the plight of the victims in the New Testament. Focusing on the collective murders of Jesus and Stephen, he argues that the biblical authors always sympathize with the victims by representing the perspective of the victims and exposing the guilt of their persecutors.

From my anthropological perspective we can verify that the Gospels maintain the essential victory the Bible achieves, for the relation between victims and persecutors in the Gospels bears no resemblance at all to that of the myths. It is the biblical relation that prevails, the relation we have just discovered in the story of Joseph: just like the Hebrew Bible, the Gospels defend the victims wrongly accused and expose their persecutors.¹⁴

On the whole, the mimetic theory traces back to the anthropological roots of violence and religion. In order to comprehend their intimate relationship, we need to define religion in view of assessing its plausibility to offer harmony and peace.

2. How to Define Religion?

In a pluralistic context, as in India, we have different religious traditions. One might classify them under various categories. For instance, we may identify Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Sikhism to be religions of Book or revelation. Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism can be said to be religions of cultural ethos. Then there are also natural religions practiced by tribal groups. One can even label certain religions violent and others peaceful. Moreover, ideologies like capitalism and nationalism are also identified to be religion. Among this multitude of approaches to religion, mimetic theory proposes two kinds of religion, i.e. sacrificial religion and liberative religion. These two are not separate religions as such. Rather

they coexist within a particular religious tradition. This way of approaching religion can help us to understand one's own religion deeper and that of others better.

2.1 Sacrificial Religion

We have already seen how the mechanism of scapegoat has engendered the idea of ritual sacrifice in order to check the continual threat of social disorder arising out of mimetic rivalry. From this perspective one may believe that scapegoats save humanity from disintegration. With regard to the efficacy of the scapegoat, we find two stages which appear somewhat paradoxical. In the first stage the scapegoat is identified and killed, precisely because it is guilty and hence poisons the community. In the second stage, the ritual sacrifice substitutes the scapegoat with some other object or animal, on which the guilt is passed. Though the sin/guilt of the community is passed on to the sacrificial animal, it is still expected to be unblemished. It thus explains how the same scapegoat considered to be guilty belongs to the realm of the sacred.

The double role played by the scapegoat, that is poisoning and healing the community, reveals its sacrificial character. In other words, a scapegoat to become sacred it has to be first of all guilty of something. Precisely because it is guilty, it is 'sacrificed' and raised on to the realm of the sacred. This way of understanding sacrifice is totally different from the usage of the term in modern times where it has come to mean generous offering of oneself for the good of others as Christians would interpret the crucifixion of Jesus. In this context Girard brings out the tension within Christianity in articulating the death of Jesus as 'sacrifice.'

From the structural similarities the crucifixion does not differ from the scapegoat mechanism. The difference lies in the final event of the victory over the mechanism by exposing its satanic character of murder. The resurrection of Jesus

vindicates the power of God over Satan (death). However Girard regrets that historical Christianity has not completely understood this divine mystery of the cross and therefore it interprets Jesus' crucifixion as another sacrifice that saved us from all our sins.

Thanks to the sacrificial reading it has been possible for what call Christendom to exist for ten or twenty centuries; that is to say, a culture has existed that is based, like all cultures (at least up to a certain point) on the mythological forms engendered by the founding mechanism. Paradoxically, in the sacrificial reading the Christian text itself provides the basis. Mankind relies upon a misunderstanding of the text that explicitly reveals the founding mechanism to re-establish cultural forms which remain sacrificial and to engender a society that, by virtue of this misunderstanding, takes its place in the sequence of all other cultures, still clinging to the sacrificial vision that the Gospel rejects.”¹⁵

Palaver pinpoints the dangerous consequences of the ‘Sacrificial Christianity’ which needs our attention particularly to grow in self-criticism in a pluralistic context.

Sacrificial Christianity enables its followers to project interpersonal violence onto God, thus relieving themselves of the responsibility for this violence, which is universal and equally distributed among mankind. However, if this responsibility is not maintained by humans, it can lead to a spiral of violence that ends in the arbitrary persecution of scapegoats-onto whom the violence is unloaded. The persecution of other groups is therefore one of the typical characteristics of sacrificial Christianity; the systematic persecution of the Jews, heretics, and witches, as well as all inquisitions, crusades, and religious wars are the direct result of this decisive misunderstanding of biblical scripture.¹⁶

2.2 Liberative Religion

For Girard Christianity is a liberative religion, in so far as it protects us from the deception of the satanic mechanism of scapegoat. He distinguishes it from sacrificial Christianity which follows the logic of the scapegoat mechanism. In a recent interview, Palaver was asked about the interpretation of crucifixion of Jesus as a sacrifice. He begins to answer the question by stating that this interpretation is the most difficult and at the same time the most important aspect of Christian theology.¹⁷ He articulates that though Girard modified his position with regard to the sacrificial understanding of Christianity in his dialogue with Raymund Schwager, “he always emphasized the fundamental difference between the archaic sacrifices and the crucifixion of Jesus. But this difference should not mislead us that the inter-human violence can only be unloaded onto the ‘other’ (scapegoat) or endured (Jesus’ offer). Violence is evident in both cases. The ‘sacrifice’ of Jesus means a transformation of archaic way of (sacrificial) thinking...”¹⁸

The crucifixion therefore cannot be seen as a ‘sacrifice’ from the perspective of the scapegoat mechanism. On the contrary, it profoundly exposes the diabolic character of this mechanism and the enormity of its negative effect. As Girard argues:

Jesus’ death is one example among many others of the single victim mechanism. What makes the mimetic cycle of Jesus’ suffering unique is, not the violence, but the fact that the victim is the Son of God, which is certainly the main thing from the standpoint of our redemption. However, if we neglect the anthropological substructure of the Passion, we will miss the true theology of the Incarnation, which makes little sense without this anthropological basis.¹⁹

Henceforth, we may arrive at a conclusion that sacrificial and liberative religions are not different sets of religion as

such. Rather they could be active within a particular religious tradition, as we have just seen in the case of Christianity. This way of distinguishing religion liberates us in fact from generalizing or labeling religions as violent or peaceful. It helps us in a deeper level, to come into grasp with the internal tension within each religious tradition. From this angle, we shall now look at the Indian context.

3. Mimetic Appraisal of the Indian Context

Girard's theory is basically rooted in the biblical revelation of Christian tradition. Its fundamental premises refer to the relationship between (Christian) faith and practice. Nevertheless, he claimsthat his scientific analysis of mimesis is not the outcome of his Christian faith. Rather his mimetic approach revealed him the invincible truth about Christianity. In other words, (his) science had led him to religion. Reason has given way to faith. For him, Christianity is typical, if not unique, of the hermeneutic revolution that represents the perspectives of victims and exposes the guilt of their persecutors. However, we shall try to find certain convergence and divergence between mimetic theory and Buddhism. Furthermore, we try to understand the historical roots of Hindutva and Islamic terror groups in India, in the light of the mimetic theory.

3.1 Buddhism and Mimetic Theory

Even before the dawn of Christianity, in 6th century BCE, Buddha taught that desire is the root cause of human suffering and detachment is the only way to attain liberation (*nirvana*). Though Buddhist analysis of the danger of desire converges much with mimetic theory, it diverges sharply in two ways. First, Girard distinguishes between positive and negative mimesis, whereby he looks at desire as something basically good. For Buddha, all suffering begins with desire. But Girard would nuance a little deeper that even not to desire

at all is also a kind of desire. It is there his positive mimesis becomes operative. Secondly, according to Buddha there is no need of a supreme being for one's liberation. It is basically one's awareness of the impermanency that surrounds oneself, which liberates a person from all sorts of attachment. On the contrary, Girard goes along with Augustine and claims that the orientation to the divine alone can ultimately save humans from inter-personal divinization which in turn leads to mimetic rivalry and conflict. And it is the divine grace that fulfills what humans lack fundamentally in their being, which is attempted to be satisfied by material possessions or inter-human relations.

Thirukkural, a Tamil literary work of 1st century BCE, also coincides with the mimetic theory.

***Patruhapatratranpatrinaiappatraipatruhapatruvidarku*
(350)**

This verse is located in the section of renunciation. Here the Tamil word *patru* is used in a threefold meaning. It means acquisitive desire, the act of clinging on and the feet of God. It could be translated as the following. In order to get detached from all kinds of desire, one should cling on to the feet of God, and that desire alone can free a person from all other desires. Hence mimetic theory has been operative on the Indian soil even before Christian era.

The historical-political development of Buddhism pinpoints that it rose against two fundamental practices of Brahmanic Hinduism, i.e. caste system and animal sacrifice. Even today, caste plays a powerful role in Indian society. Looking at it from the perspective of the victims of caste system, it is basically a system of graded inequality and institutionalized injustice. At the very root of the system, the scapegoat mechanism is operative. And Buddhism revolted against the inhuman treatment of untouchables and opened

(*sangha*) communities for all people to live together. Most astonishingly, they allowed women to become nuns and live together with monks as a community of disciples. Thus Buddhism championed the cause of human dignity and social justice. Secondly, Buddhism also revolted against the practice of animal sacrifice, advocated vegetarianism and propagated the idea of *ahimsa*, i.e. not to harm any living being.

Though Buddhism emerged as a revolutionary movement, fighting for equality and justice and insisting on nonviolence, it would be simplistic to call it a peaceful religion, especially when we look at the events taking place in Sri Lanka and Myanmar. In these predominantly Buddhist countries, we see Buddhist monks publically provoking violence against other ethnical and religious groups and openly sympathizing with genocidal movements. This does not however make Buddhism as a violent religion either. It only makes the question of the relationship between religion and violence more complex and problematic. At this juncture, the mimetic theory offers us some means to understand this relationship at a deeper level. Let's consider the development of Hindu and Islamic Terrorism on the Indian soil.

3.2 Hindu and Islamic Terrorism

We may have been acquainted with Islamic terrorism or terror organizations. But Hindu terror groups are portrayed in the media as rightwing extreme groups. They don't even use the word 'Hindu' to refer to such groups. On the contrary, time again we hear about the reports of terror attacks by groups having affiliations to Islam. Though some kind of bias is evident on the surface, we shall try to grasp the mimetic roots of both these terror orientations.

When we consider the roots of Hindutva, the ideological fountain of Hindu terror groups, it takes us back to the period of the colonial rule of both the Islamic Moguls and the

Christian Europeans. C. Jaffrelot identifies the historical root of Hindutva with a political response to the colonial rule. He contends that the colonial attitude caused

A sense of backwardness and decline among colonized and dominated peoples, from which a certain élite stratum, chiefly comprising the intelligentsia, then set about reforming their traditions. Subsequently, their main concern was to endow that renewed tradition with the sanction of a theoretical 'Golden Age', an ideological interpretation of the past, perfectly fashioned in order to meet the challenge of the West.²⁰

Subhash Anand also observes how the hegemonic attitude of European missionaries provoked some kind of aggressive response from Hindu revivalists like Dayanand Sarasvati, who "set up Vedic Infallibility an authority to match and counteract the infallibility of the Christian Bible and the Muslim Qur'ān."²¹

The *Ratha-yathra* (grand rally) of L.K. Advani in September 1990 is another example of the wounded psyche expressing itself symbolically. The *yatra* began from Somnath in Gujraṭh. It was symbolically meant to reawaken the hurt feelings among Hindus over the destruction Somnath temple by Mahmud Ghazni in 11th century CE. This event became for the Hindus a 'chosen trauma.'²² S. Kakar also points out that

An event which causes a community to feel helpless and victimized by another and whose mental representation becomes embedded in the group's collective identity... ..A chosen trauma is reactivated again to strengthen a group's cohesiveness through 'memories' of its persecution, victimization, and yet its eventual survival.²³

From this background one can better understand how and why the movement for Ramjanmabhumimobilized Hindus and demolished the Babri Masjid in 1992.

Another example of such mimetic dynamic could be traced back to Moplah Rebellion in 1921 in Calicut and the genocide of Muslims in Gujrat in 2002.

A well-armed crowd of fanatic Muslims paralyzed the local government and attacked the Hindu population. Temples were desecrated and men were forcefully circumcised. Hindu women were raped, if they were pregnant, ripped open. People were flayed alive or murdered, their houses set on fire, their bodies dumped in wells, sometimes even when only half-dead.²⁴

The same events recurred in 2002 in Gujrat. The only difference is that the victims were Muslims. More than 2000 thousand Muslims were killed and their women brutally raped, pregnant women ripped open, and their credentials vandalized, and all done under the indirect support of the state machineries.

The demolition of Babri Masjid and the genocide in Gujrat did provoke some Muslims to join terrorist organizations to fight back, in other words to wage the 'just war.' Thus we witness a series of terror attacks by Islamic terror groups as reported by the media and the state. Nevertheless the terror attacks by Hindu terror groups are underplayed both by the media and the state machinery. Now the question is not to find out which group is guiltier. Our attempt is rather to understand the spiral of mimetic violence that seems to be unending and contagious. The universal phenomenon of mimetic violence is disgracefully visible in these developments. However, mimetic theory offers some hope to come out of the spiral of mimetic violence.

4. Social Harmony and Peace

While religions propagate peace and harmony on the one hand, they also seem to justify violence (if not provoke) under certain circumstances. Here, a distinction can be helpful

between ‘religious’ violence and violence in the name of religion. The former may induce violence for seemingly social causes, i.e. justice, self-defence, equality, whereas the latter might provoke violence for political reasons. Whatever be the reasons, history has taught us that violence cannot bring peace and harmony but can only produce more violence. It therefore calls our attention to reflect how and why religions are politicized and at the same time how they could bring about harmony and peace.

4.1 Political Theology and Theological Politics

Palaver distinguishes between political theology and theological politics. In the context of the interaction between religion and politics, he pinpoints the traditional model of friend-enemy patterns rooted in the scapegoat mechanism. In order to avoid such danger of scapegoating, he envisions counter-politics based on the biblical principles of love and justice.

The Biblical perspective has to become the starting point and not politics with its leaning towards divisions and distinctions. Political theology is not able to break with it (archaic sacred) because it is bound to the enmity going along with ordinary politics. Instead of making theology an ally of politics rooted in paganism (of sacrificial culture) we should therefore try to create political bodies that rely on the Biblical revelation. Political theology has to give way to theological politics.²⁵

According to Palaver, political theology orients itself primarily towards political concerns. In order to achieve political gains like power and position, it tries to use religious symbols and beliefs. Hence politics becomes an end and religion a means. On the contrary, theological politics challenges our political convictions and strategies in the light of religious values. Here politics becomes a means and religion an end. Let us consider, for example, the election theology of Israel.

Israelites believe that they are specially chosen by God. This choice has a religious meaning. For, God calls a particular people in order to save it from different kinds of evil. This (religious) election becomes politicized when they demonize other peoples who are not ‘chosen’ by God. Thus politicization of religion leads to hatred and enmity. We can also see certain politicization of the mission command of Jesus in Mt 28:16-20. The religious command of mission has been perceived in a political manner. That is, it was understood to Christianize nations and conquer lands and powers in a political sense.

The same politicizing attitude also manifests itself in the identification of religion and nation, which we also find in Judaism, i.e. Zion Movement. Anand also highlights how Aurobindo Ghose, one of the pioneers of Hindutva, identifies nation with religion. This could be seen as the combination of politicization of religion and communalization of politics.

Nationalism is not a mere political programme. Nationalism is a religion that has come from God; Nationalism is a creed in which you shall have to live. If you are going to be a Nationalist, if you are going to assent to this religion of Nationalism, you must do it in the religious spirit. It is a religion by which we are trying to realize God in the nation, in our fellow countrymen.²⁶

When we combine religion and politics in a political manner, that is, to use religion in order to accomplish political goals, the mimetic rivalry and conflict are inevitable. On the other hand, when we integrate them in a religious manner, which means, to make political arrangements serve religious values, there are chances of overcoming mimetic rivalry and conflict between religions and peoples. This demands the practice of positive mimesis and the hierarchy of spiritual goods.

4.2 Positive Mimesis and Spiritual Goods

The biblical revelation of the scapegoat mechanism overcame the archaic way of controlling violence. However, it has indirectly brought us a more frightening danger. For, when we are freed from the bondage of this archaic mechanism, we should be able to confront rivalries without the protection of this ‘sacrificial’ mechanism.²⁷ That does not mean we are helpless. The mimetic theory posits the efficacy of positive mimesis in order to deal with mimetic rivalry and conflict arising out of negative mimesis. In positive mimesis, subject and model remain non-rivals. In negative mimesis, subject and model become rivals. As a believer in Christ, Girard projects Jesus as the non-rival model par excellence. For, Jesus imitates his Father out of love and humility whereas Satan imitates God out of envy and pride. Thus Jesus’ God-*Abba*-experience is religious, while Satan’s God-encounter is political, i.e. to win over God.

In India we are blessed with different religious traditions. All of them struggle within fighting the tension between satanic and divine forces in different ways. Hence the obvious fight between religions is in fact deviation from the real problem. That means, to fight satanic forces within each tradition requires all traditions to be self-critical. For that purpose, positive mimesis needs to be rooted in the hierarchy of spiritual goods.

Catholic tradition has always emphasized the primacy of spiritual goods over temporal goods. The more we pursue temporal goods, i.e., power, position, wealth, the more we get into mimetic rivalry and conflict. On the other hand, the more we seek spiritual goods, i.e. love, peace, justice, the more harmony and equity we enjoy. I don’t think any religion would dispute with this way of going about. This becomes more and more evident when we look at the eruption of violence which is obviously unleashed for socio-economic-political reasons

but given religious flavour. Once it is given a religious colour it spreads like anything. That is why the relation between religion and violence becomes crucial and enigmatic. After all, human beings are both religious (transcendent) and violent.

5. Conclusion

The mimetic theory strikes at the anthropological roots of violence. The universality of mimesis vindicates the history of wars and bloodsheds all through the centuries. However, it is difficult to conclude that all religions must have come out of the founding murder/scapegoat mechanism as we have shown that Buddhism and Christianity have emerged as liberating religions in exposing the mechanism of scapegoat. Nevertheless, religions struggle from within to overcome this satanic mechanism. Hence the question of violence needs to be posed at a deeper level.

The violence which religions reportedly perpetuate is basically the result of human interaction with one another. The question of religious violence, therefore, is first and foremost a human question, a social and anthropological question, and not directly a religious question.²⁸ And Girard cautions us that “the violence we would love to transfer to religion is really our own, and we must confront it directly. To turn religions into the scapegoats of our own violence can only backfire in the end.”²⁹ And Jeremiah L. Alberg also underlines the anthropological openness and giftedness for overcoming violence and promoting social harmony.

Religion both in a primitive sense, that is the violent sacred and the Gospels continue to play a profound role in contemporary society. In its archaic form, religion infiltrates the latest technology, the newest gadgets and uses them as a way of violently controlling violence. Scandal and scapegoating are only its most obvious forms. The Gospels, in turn, reveal the scapegoat to be innocent and scandal to be based not on one's own

righteousness but on one's envy of the other. More than that, they encourage us to find new ways of relating to each other, undoing the lie upon which our identity is built and replacing it with being gifted with who we are.³⁰

Notes

1. Wolfgang Huber, "Religion and Violence in a Globalized World," *Bulletin of the GHI* 47 (Fall 2010): 51.
2. Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, in *Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Modern Library, 2001) 1058-59 (II55a); Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, vol. 3, trans. The English Dominican Fathers (London: Burns, Oates and Washburn, 1928), 177 (III), 54 (IV); Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, trans. Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 3-4; quoted by Wolfgang Palaver, *Rene Girard's Mimetic Theory*, trans. Gabriel Borrud (Michigan: Michigan State University, 2013), 37.
3. Palaver, *Rene Girard's Mimetic Theory*, 35.
4. Girard, *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World: Research Undertaken in Collaboration with J.M. Oughourlian and G. Lefrot*, trans. Stephen Bann and Michel Metteer (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987), 26; quoted by Palaver, *Rene Girard's Mimetic Theory*, 46.
5. Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 187; quoted by Palaver, *Rene Girard's Mimetic Theory*, 46.
6. According to Girard, the idea of autonomy of the self is a myth in the sense that mimesis controls the entire cognitive and behavioural processes.
7. Samuel Buchoul, "The Nonself of Girard," *Contagion Journal of Violence, Mimesis and Culture* 20 (2013), 111-12.
8. René Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, trans. James G. Williams (New York: Orbis Books, 2001), 11.

9. Palaver, "René Girard's Contribution to Political Theology: Overcoming Deadlocks of Competition and Enmity," in *Between Philosophy and Theology: Contemporary Interpretations of Christianity*, eds. Lieven Boeve and Christophe Brabant, 153 (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).
10. Palaver, "On Violence: A Mimetic Perspective," <http://www.uibk.ac.at/theol/leseraum/texte/137.html> (accessed November 10, 2015).
11. Girard, *I See Satan Fall....*, 109.
12. Ibid., 109.
13. Ibid., 114.
14. Ibid., 122.
15. Girard, *Things Hidden*, 181.
16. Palaver, *Rene Girard's Mimetic Theory*, 247; he also quotes from Girard, *I see Satan....*, 26.
17. Palaver, "The Message of the Scapegoat" (Die Botschaft des Sündenbocks), <http://www.uibk.ac.at/theol/leseraum/texte/1115.html> (accessed December 8 2015).
18. Palaver, "The Message of the Scapegoat"
19. Girard, *I see Satan Fall....*, 43-44.
20. C. Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics-1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity Building, Implantation and Mobilization* (New Delhi: Penguin Bks., 1999), 13; quoted by Subhash Anand, *Hindutva: A Christian Response* (Indore: Satprakashan, 2001), 13.
21. J.F. Seunarine, *Reconversion to Hinduism through Shuddhi* (Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1997), 24; quoted by Anand, *Hindutva....*, 15.
22. Anand, *Hindutva....*, 37-38.
23. S. Kakar, *The Colours of Violence* (New Delhi: Viking, 1995), 63.
24. R.C. Majumdar (Gen. ed.), *Struggle for Freedom, The History and Culture of the Indian People*, vols. X & XI (Bom-

bay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1965 & 1969), 60-63; quoted by Anand, *Hindutva*..., 36.

25. Palaver, "Enmity and Political Identity: Friend-Enemy Patterns and Religion," <http://www.uibk.ac.at/theol/leseraum/texte/874.html> (accessed December 10, 2015).
26. R.C. Majumdar, *Struggle for Freedom*, 77.
27. Palaver, "The Message of the Scapegoat"
28. Girard, "Violence and Religion: Cause or Effect?" *The Hedgehog Review* 6/1 (Spring 2004): 8.
29. *Ibid.*, 20.
30. Jeremiah L. Alberg, "Scandal Must Come," *Contagion Journal of Violence*..., 98.

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Article received: Feb 7, 2016

Article approved: Sept 12, 2016

No of words: 6695



Report of Conference on “The Challenge of Peace and Harmony”

**27th Conference of the Association of Moral Theologians
of India At Papal Athenaeum/Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth
Pune, 23rd -25th October 2015**

**Theme of the Conference: *The Challenge of Peace and
Harmony - An Indian Moral Theological Perspective***

The 27th Conference of the Association of the Moral Theologians of India (AMTI) began with the Holy Eucharist presided over by the President of AMTI Prof. Dr. Clement Campos, CSSR. In his homily and presidential address, he insisted upon the inner struggle of human beings between good and evil both at personal and socio-political level. He insisted that the promotion of peace is urgent in the age of violence and war which have overshadowed the humanity. The Secretary Dr. Augustine Kallely, the Treasurer Thomas Parayil, the local organizer Dr. John Karuvelil SJ coordinated the conference, which had paper presentations from diverse perspectives by scholars from different parts of India.

Dr. Selva Rathinam, President, Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune, India, the host University, pinpointed the need of the hour for the moral theologians of India to respond to the current scenario in India. He spoke on the biblical understanding of peace and highlighted the interdisciplinary approach in our efforts to realize peace and harmony in India. Dr. Morris Antonysamy elaborated on the precarious relationship between

religion and violence from the perspective of Mimetic theory of Rene Girard. Dr. George Kodithottam made an analysis of justice and peace tradition in the evolution of Catholic Social Teaching. Prof. Dr. Paulachan Kochappilly, the President of Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram of Bangalore, insisted upon the need of prayer in our inter-religious efforts for promoting peace.

Dr. Michael SVD presented a paper on the current scenario of the struggles and problems of the Tribals in India. The participants felt the need to preserve the tribal identity on the face of the cultural onslaught of their multidimensional identity and survival. Dr. Amrit Tirkey (SJ) who hails from the Oran Tribe from Jharkhand addressed the deeper dimensions of the alienation of the Tribals from their land. Dr. Aind Bisu Benjamin pointed out from his personal experience the serious threat by Naxalites in India. He brought out the triple agony of the Tribals: first, their natural resources are robbed by Corporates with the help of the government; secondly, the Naxals themselves threaten the security and mobility of the Tribals; thirdly, in the name of controlling the Naxalite areas, the State machineries torture and persecute the innocent Tribals.

Dr. John Chathanatt's paper was read out due to his inability to participate in the conference. His paper focused on the need for integral development from the perspective of the Catholic social teaching. Dr. Jose Thayil, SJ, the Rector of Papal Seminary, made a short survey on the history and development of the phenomenon of religious fundamentalism. He touched upon various religious traditions in understanding its deeper dimensions.

The Conference attempted to make a contextual response to the recently promulgated encyclical *Laudato Si'* by Pope Francis. Dr. Christopher VimalRaj expounded a preferential option for the earth from justice perspective. He articulated the

major shift from the preferential option for the poor to the option for the earth. Dr. Benny Abraham approached the encyclical from a Catholic anthropological perspective, particularly, by overcoming the dichotomy between anthropocentrism and ecocentrism. Dr. Stanislaus Alla looked at the encyclical from a Hindu perspective, namely, *nature as mother*. It was followed by an open hour whereby the participants of the conference contributed their own perspectives and approaches to the question of eco-ethics.

The Conference was fortunate to have eight new members including two who have recently defended their doctoral theses. They were given opportunity to present salient elements from their research. Dr. Seena Rose (MSMI) articulated certain important findings of her thesis, *the Moral Dignity of Marriage and Marital Fidelity among Christian Families in Kerala*. Dr. Christopher Vimalraj introduced his research project on *Legalisation of Euthanasia in India: A Moral Theological Reflection and Response*. He brought out some challenges and approaches from Catholic point of view. He referred to the case of Aruna Shanbaug who suffered 43 long years after being strangled.

Before the conclusion of the conference, the participants evaluated the current proceedings of the conference and suggested ways and means to improve the participation in future. The organizing committee welcomed ideas for venue and theme for the conference 2016. It was agreed upon to meet in Goa, from 21-23 October 2016. The organizing committee was thanked and appreciated for their efforts they put in for the success of the Conference. Totally thirty moral theologians participated in the conference.

Report Prepared by

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SCIENCE-RELIGION DIALOGUE

“Two things continue to fill the mind with ever increasing awe and admiration: the starry heavens above and the moral law within” (Philosopher Immanuel Kant)

“Science and religion are two windows that people look through, trying to understand the big universe outside, trying to understand why we are here. The two windows give different views, but both look out at the same universe. Both views are one-sided, neither is complete. Both leave out essential features of the real world. And both are worthy of respect.” (Physicist Freeman Dyson)

“As a blind man has no idea of colors, so we have no idea of the manner by which the all-wise God perceives and understands all things.” (Scientist Isaac Newton)

Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish.... We need each other to be what we must be, what we are called to be.” (St John Paul II)

“Culture (science) is the form of religion; Religion is the substance of culture (science).” (Theologian Paul Tillich)

“Traditional religious creation stories and evolution are complementary. Science and religion together can weave a rich tapestry of new meaning for our age.” (Theologian Philip Hefner)

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