

EDITOR'S NOTE

INTERCULTURALITY AND THEOLOGISING

The way people perceive, understand reality, and express it is conditioned by their cultural upbringing. Thus, believers or religious people normally approach their scriptures and doctrines through the lens of the culture that has shaped their lives. It has also been documented that Sacred texts are mediated through human language which is an essential element of culture. Consequently, interpretation of Sacred texts and doctrines should involve the engagement of the culture of the text with that of the readers. Such an approach focuses on interculturality. Interculturality in theological studies opens new horizons in theologising and brings people of different cultures and worldviews together. From the Christian perspective, it makes the Word of God “scratch where it itches” to create transformative spaces where each becomes the other's keeper.

Papers in the current volume attempt this intercultural endeavour. They offer reflections on Sacred texts and beliefs through the lens of interculturality, challenging their audience to view religious faith as an essential part of daily living.

In their paper entitled, “Syncretism and Inculturation: The Encounter between Christian Theology and Ghanaian Religious Culture,” **Joshua Awienagua Gariba and Bernard Kwame Assenyoh** examine the encounter between Christian theology and the Ghanaian religious culture through the lens of syncretism and inculturation. They argue against the view that the Gospel is intrinsic to Euro-western culture and the Church cannot transmit the Gospel to African cultures without transmitting Euro-western culture. They underline the fact that inculturation, the encounter of the Gospel with African cultures, has been a challenge in Africa as a whole, and in Ghana in particular. However, Christianity has thrived due to interculturality and its irenic character.

François Batafe Ngole in his paper, “Interculturalité et Innovation Théologique dans la Bible: Enquête sur les Mythes et la Littérature Sapientiale,” discusses the interculturality of biblical texts and

biblical religion. With several examples, the author shows how Judaism encountered Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman religions interculturally. Furthermore, he explored myths and sapiential literature to explain how the binomial “interculturality – theological innovation” structures biblical theological discourses.

The third paper by **Cosmos Ebo Sarbah** with the title “Religious Attitude in the Middle Ages: Implications for Christian -Muslim Relations in the 21st Century Sub-Saharan Africa” examined the religious encounters and attitudes of the Middle Ages from a socio-religious and intercultural perspective to propose lessons for Christian-Muslim relations in the religiously pluralistic and increasingly secularized sub-Saharan Africa in the twenty-first century world. According to him, the varying religious encounters and attitudes provide fundamental models that continue to shape and drive Christian-Muslim relations today. He noted that the encounter between Christianity and Islam began in the Middle Ages. This initial irenic interculturality context enabled the Jews, Christians, and Muslims to co-exist peacefully in Palestine and the Middle East in a multi-religious context before the arrival of the exclusivist crusaders of Western Europe.

Sulaiman Sheu Adua and **Nafiu Ahmed Arikewuyo** in their paper “An Assessment of Managing Juristic Differences among Muslim Scholars in the Contemporary World” discuss the interaction among contemporary Muslim scholars over controversial juristic matters. They argue that the ‘fading’ out of the skills of ancient Muslim jurists in contemporary practitioners accounts for the hostility in juristic discourses in Islam in the contemporary world. To rectify this, the authors recommend periodic organization of workshops for Muslim preachers and scholars on the ethics of juristic disagreement.

Zechariah Manyok Biar, the Anglican Bishop of Wanglei Diocese, Jonglei Internal Province, South Sudan, discusses the basis of disagreement among the ‘orthodox’ and ‘liberal’ Provinces of the Anglican Communion on moral choices that impact the life of the faithful. He pointed out that the vulnerability of the Communion is due to the premodern, modern, and postmodern philosophical ideas that informed the decisions Church leaders make. Furthermore, he observed that cultures that come from different schools of thought, and traditions have strong influences on different provinces in the

Communion. He examines the question of how the limits of an acceptable tradition are to be determined and who determines them.

In the last paper entitled “The ‘Uncleanliness of Menstruation: An African Feminist Reading of Leviticus 15: 19-24,” **Emem Opoku-Agyemang** employs the Communicative Approach in intercultural perspective to interpret her chosen text. She noted that the natural phenomenon of menstruation is perceived in several African cultures as something that renders women unclean, thereby excluding them from certain places and preventing them from performing certain activities. For this reason, people hardly speak freely about menstruation; even when they do so, they resort to euphemisms. With examples, Opoku-Agyeman has shown how engaging the cultural perspectives of Ghanaians with that of the Bible transforms readers and invites them to assume a renewed perspective. She advocates for a change of perspective since what God has created cannot render the physical sacred space impure. Additionally, she proposes that the church should rather focus on the ‘new’ sacred space, which is the human body (1 Cor. 6:19). This should include support for personal hygiene kits and provision of an inclusive environment, free from any form of discrimination perpetuated by cultural traditions that are against the message of the Gospel.

May I take this opportunity to thank all our collaborators and readers.
Ayeekoo!!!

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