

WISDOMS AND THE
PEOPLE'S THEOLOGY

Edited by

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Contents

Editorial

Part One: Who is the ‘People’

In Light of the People: Theologizing in Our Time 13
NANCY PINEDA-MADRID

Mission and Identity of the People of God: An Outgoing Church called
to service of the Kingdom 23
CESAR KUZMA

Part Two: A Conversation with Philosophy in the Age of Decolonialism

Interculturality and ‘people’: Continuing the Conversation with Latin
American Liberation Theology 35
RAÚL FORNET-BETANCOURT

Part Three: Theological Insights on Wisdoms & People’s Theology

Peoples’ Theology in Multireligious Communities 45
MICHAEL AMALADOSS

The Centrality of the People in Pope Francis’ Socio-cultural
Theology 55
RAFAEL LUCIANI

Power and Powerlessness: Engaging Marginalized Peoples
in Mission 69
WATI LONGCHAR

Inventing or Discovering our World's order?: Interpreting a
Biblical Text in Terms of an Indigenous World View 81
MARGOT BREMER

The People of God: An Incomplete Acknowledgement
(of Identity) 94
SERENA NOCETI

God's Flock of Lambs 108
LUIZ CARLOS SUSIN

Part Four: Theological Forum

Tapping Into Indigenous Wellsprings: Pastoral Responses to
the People Who are Victims of Global Violence 121
KARL GASPAR

Walking With 126
DAVE BRAUER-RIEKE

Inter-Faith Communion for Life fostering Culture 130
MARLENE PERERA

Editorial

More than half a century ago, the Second Vatican Council carried out a tremendous pastoral change, which had an epistemological impact on the meaning of the universal Church. It was an upgrade (*aggiornamento*) that promoted, in the local churches, a process of listening to the signs of the times to scrutinize the passage of God through history, with the inculturation of the Word of God that makes it possible. It also acknowledged the protagonism of the Christian communities located in the peripheries of the world. In sum, it was a complete project of ecclesiological renewal – some will say of reform – that has not yet finished.

In fact, due to *Lumen Gentium*'s vision of the centrality of the people of God and the prophetic impulse of *Gaudium et Spes* – two innovative constitutions of the new ecclesiological paradigm – Roman Catholicism has started a dialogue with other cultures, rationalities and ways of life, and has tried to go beyond the colonial vision of Christianity with his apologetic accent that has prevailed since Modernity (from the sixteenth century Movement of Counter-Reformation to the nineteenth-century crisis of Modernism).

In this sense, the wisdom of the peoples began to be taken into account by the Churches of Latin America, Asia and Africa. Such wisdom is not only like a seed of the Word but rather a genuine mitasogical experience that receives the divine revelation with fecundity an creativity and finds new meanings to the radicality of Jesus of Nazareth, confessed as the Messiah and the Son of God by the Church. Thus, in the fertile context of cultural pluralism, recognized as an inalienable postulate to achieve the universality of the Christian faith, the contextual condition of all theology – including the European one that ceased to be the hegemonic theology with higher rank than the others – meant a step forward in the gestation of the *catholicity* of faith in the God of life and in the primacy of the Kingdom of God announced by the Nazarene and consummated by the Holy Spirit who animates the new creation.

The theologies of the people that have flourished in the second half of the twentieth century – from the theology of liberation in Latin America and the Caribbean to Dalit theology in India, through many other expressions of the centrality of the world's poor – face now to the challenge of mutual recognition in their option for the excluded and for the victims of global violence. But these theologies also need to debate their differences of interlocutors, theoretical mediations and socio-cultural, political and pastoral options, which are manifested by the life of Christian communities in resistance to the suffering, violence and historical evil of our time.

This issue of *Concilium* – faithful to the spirit of the journal that was born precisely from the conciliar spirit – is dedicated to listening to those voices of wisdom and theologies of the people that arise in the global village. These theologies are born in times of uncertainty due to the growth of violence generated by the globalized capitalism, with the complicity of patriarchy and colonialism – external and internal – that are based on a sacrificial understanding of history, and that makes the disposable of the world invisible for the logic of efficiency and pragmatism, therefore immolating their lives for the sake of progress and wealth. But theologies born, above all, from the hope of the peoples in the midst of so much pain become true prophetic acts of resistance to the sin of the world, and as acts of eschatological imagination that comes from the wounds of the Crucified One and the crucified people of this world.

The reflections of Serena Noceti, Nancy Pineda-Madrid, Cesar Kuzma and Luiz Carlos Susin offer us the fresh theological panorama of what today is understood by 'people', especially in times of ecclesial renewal promoted by Pope Francis' ministry, fifty years later the Second Vatican Council. These perspectives show us the different faces of exclusion where people and Christians communities live the grace that comes from the Crucified One who has risen.

The theological reflections of Michael Amaladoss, Rafael Luciani, Wati Longchar and Margot Bremer offer an inspiring conversation since they think from the people according to the indigenous or urban cosmovisions and socio-cultural ethos. In other words these reflections emerge from the margins of the history of domination, assuming vulnerability and non-power as theological places that subvert all attempts at domination and sacrifice of the weak.

Editorial

As a concrete expression of these wisdoms and theologies of the people described here, the Forum presents three testimonies of Christian communities that want ‘walk with the victims of global violence’: the case of the Philippians disinherited from their land described by Karl Gaspar, the case of immigrants in the United States according to the testimony of the Lutheran Bishop Dave Brauer-Rieke, and the case of the victims of ideological violence in Sri Lanka, as Marlene Perera tells us, to recover the role of the communities of interest at their service.

The wisdoms and theologies of the people are at the centre of the life of the Church, as well as at the heart of critical reflection in times of global violence. We hope that these contributions – born from the pastoral practice altogether with critical thinking – will be a source of innovation for Christian theological thinking from different latitudes, with the only urgency to receive and think about the presence of God in history as a gift of universal love, whose urgent call for personal and community conversion inspire us to participate in the same mission of the Word that is incarnated so ‘that the world may have life and life in abundance’ (Jn 10.10).

Carlos Mendoza-Álvarez, OP & Po-Ho Huang