

THE NOTION OF INTERCULTURALITY – A POSTCOLONIAL CRITIQUE

Abstract:

Over the years attention has been given to the importance of intercultural encounters and understanding but it is apparent that the problems persist. This justifies trying to examine the notion on interculturality from a more detached perspective. This research paper is an investigation into the subject area of interculturality from a postcolonial perspective.

In particular, this study attempts to investigate the concept of interculturality from a postcolonial perspective in the missionary religious writings of Placide Tempels (1906-1977) from a Belgian colonial context of Congo, Robert J. Schreiter who advocates “three waves of globalisation” and its effects upon the global and the local cultures, and Anthony J. Gittins with his thesis on *Living Mission Interculturally* from a more contemporary perspective.

The study attempts to explore the problematic around the concept of “interculturality”. In the case of Tempels, in spite of his sincere efforts in formulating a *Bantu* system of thought, it seems rather evident that his project was mainly undertaken to serve the interests of the Belgian colonial administrators and missionaries. For Schreiter, the paradigm of *contextuality* seem to suggest the better option for a genuine and enduring intercultural dialogue and exchange between the global and the local. Gittins moves on to explain how an intercultural community is radically different from that of a monocultural, bicultural, cross-cultural, and a multicultural community. As cultural identities do undergo constant transformation in a globalized world, further research is required so as to gain an in-depth knowledge in the area of intercultural encounters.

Albano Da Costa

Yarra Theological Union
Victoria – 3128.