

Interreligious Insight

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Editorial

What's In a Name?

Welcome to *Interreligious Insight: a Journal of Dialogue and Engagement!* It represents a new publishing endeavour at a time of profound transition in global relationships. As a shared venture between three interfaith groups, it aims to transcend narrow interests by providing a platform for reflecting with passion on many of the critical issues facing our world.

The name has been chosen with great care in order to mirror an emerging task. Given that they have traditionally acted as overarching worldviews, the religions have long been accustomed to thinking of themselves as self-sufficient, each tradition happily supplying its own separate vision of sacred truth. That era has now passed. It is the space between convictions that commands more and more of our attention. Maintained separately, the religions generate particular insights and wisdom, some having been shaped by long histories of cherished memory and some springing from more recent history. Yet in a world where the religions jostle together, often clash and sometimes cooperate, we are learning that the space between convictions is also a space with its own challenging insight. Put differently: in sight of one another we seek new ways of pursuing 'interreligious' wisdom; and one might hope that the dawn of interreligious harmony is now in sight.

There are significant theoretical and practical aspects to this new historical moment, as indicated by the journal's title. We are for Dialogue and Engagement.

Take Dialogue first. There may be as many definitions of dialogue as there are practitioners of the art, but at root there is the assumption that no one religion possesses the fullness of religious truth. Our convictions are precisely that, our convictions, fallible intimations of a mysterious transcendent reservoir of being and value. Dialogue implies that we have as much to receive as to give in the dynamic of our conversations with one another. We neither water down nor inflate what we offer in dialogue. Most of all, we cultivate self-criticism as the foundation of all criticism and the beginning of respect. The space between is a space of letting-go of outmoded prejudices, of rejoicing in differences and of discovering our interdependence before the sacredness that resides immanently in all things. We struggle in the making of judgements, for not everything generated by the religious imagination is conducive to human and planetary good. Yet the struggle is also against attitudes of inherited judgementalism.

What now of Engagement? The journal will reflect on practical projects, examples where faith-communities are working together in order to make a difference. What ethical values are being harnessed, or even generated, when people enter relationships of trust and so aspire to a greater common good? No doubt the failure of religious communities to cooperate has contributed to the sum total of anguish and pain in the world. Yet this history can be reversed, for the religions at their ethical best are fountains of compassion, harmony and hope. These are fundamental values that await their full flowering as shared values within the interreligious movement.

If the religions are interwoven with the world's problems, they also possess intrinsic elements of the solutions. Models of good practice are increasing around the world and we trust that this journal will lure many players to even further practical engagement. Interreligious Insight aims to embody a new mood. The argument for mutuality and interaction between varying religious voices has been largely won. Dialogue and Engagement have begun, but we are still in the foothills of the ascent. It is our hope that this journal will both assist in the exploration of the mountain slopes and communicate something of the wonders that will be glimpsed. Its pages will provide opportunities for hearing varying voices – voices crossing spiritualities, spanning generations and embracing practitioners from many different contexts around the world.

We are all invited to share this moment of global transition.

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