



Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies

Volume 11

Article 12

January 1998

Reports & News

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Recommended Citation

(1998) "Reports & News," *Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies*: Vol. 11, Article 12.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7825/2164-6279.1185>

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REPORTS & NEWS

Society for Hindu-Christian Studies News

1998 Annual General Meeting

20-21 November 1998, Orlando, Florida

Friday, 20 November

7:30-10:00 p.m. [Location TBA; See SHCS web site or AAR/SBL program]

Theme: "Ritual Life of Indian Christians"

Corinne Dempsey, Syracuse University, presiding. **Eliza F. Kent**, University of Chicago, "The Golden Cord of Marriage: Protestant Christian Wedding Ritual in Tamil Nadu". **Matthew N. Schmalz**, The College of the Holy Cross, "A Space for Redemption: Dalit Christian Identity and the Rituals of Charismatic Healing". **Margaret L. Meibohm**, University of Pennsylvania, "Imitation, Innovation, and Replication in the South Asian Catholic Diaspora: The Oratory of Our Lady of Good Health". **Selva J. Raj**, Albion College, "Adapting Hindu Imagery: A Critical Look at Ritual Experimentations in Indian Catholic Ashrams". Respondents: **Harold Coward**, University of Victoria, and **Rachel Fell McDermott**, Barnard College.

Saturday, 21 November

9:00-11:30 a.m. [Location TBA; See SHCS web site or AAR/SBL program.]

9:00-10:30 a.m.: Panel Discussion on the theme: "Reading through Hindu and Christian Lenses: The Sivajnanabodham, Chapter 8". **Francis X. Clooney**, Boston College, Presiding. Panellists: **Laurie Patton**, Emory University, **Deepak Sharma**, University of Chicago, and **M. Thomas Thangaraj**, Emory University. Respondent: **Bradley J. Malkovsky**, University of Notre Dame.

We intend this to be an exercise in collective reading of a text from a number of different points of view, none of them "specializing" in the area of Saiva Siddhanta. We hope that members will come having read the text and being willing to contribute their ideas. For advance copies of the text, contact Kay Jordan, Philosophy & Religious Studies, Radford University, Radford, VA 24142-69438, tel: (540) 831-5899, e-mail: kjordan@runet.edu or visit the Society's website: <http://www.acusd.edu/theo/hcs-l>

Society for Hindu-Christian Studies Book Award

An early meeting of the Society decided to offer a book award every three years to an author for an outstanding publication in Hindu-Christian studies. The first such award was given at the 1997 annual meeting to Francis X. Clooney for his most recent book, *Seeing Through Texts: Doing Theology Among the Śrīvaiṣṇavas of South India* (SUNY, 1995). One session of the annual meeting was a discussion of Professor Clooney's book with his response.

Over a dozen texts were evaluated by the awards committee (William Cenkner, Daniel Sheridan, Judson Trapnell) with three texts moving into a final round of selection at which time the committee was increased (Anuttama Dasa, Anant Rambachan).

The committee saw Clooney's book much in line with his previous work in comparative theology, both in articles and his recent book, *Theology After the Vedānta*. He attempts to study a tradition from both the inside and outside, that is, the capacity to speak out of another tradition while committed to his own tradition. His profound

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reading of Śatakōpaṇ's *Thiruvāymoḷi* gives him the capacity to "see through a text" to a new reading of his own tradition. The awards committee noted his passion for the text, the excitement with which he engages it, and the unique construction of a new biblio-biographical self that results.

The next book award will be given in the year 2000, covering the preceding three years, 1997-99. The Society appointed Clooney as the chair of the awards committee for this evaluation.

William Cenkner
Catholic University of America

Report on the 1997 Annual General Meeting

The 1997 annual meeting of the Society was held on Friday-Saturday, 21-22 November, in San Francisco. This year for the first time the meeting was expanded to two sessions. At the first session, Friday evening, John B. Carman (Harvard Divinity School) presented a paper, "Extending the Christian Doctrine

of the Logos to Interpret Hindu Bhakti". Respondents were William Cenkner (The Catholic University of America) and Vasudha Narayanan (University of Florida). The Saturday morning session began with the presentation to Francis X. Clooney, S.J., (Boston College) of the Society's "Best Book in Hindu-Christian Studies, 1994-96" award. Vasudha Narayanan, the Society's president, was the presenter. There followed a panel discussion of the book, Clooney's *Seeing Through Texts: Doing Theology Among the Srivaisnavas of South India*. Panelists were Harold Coward (University of Victoria), T. S. Rukmani (Concordia University), and M. Thomas Thangaraj. Professor Clooney responded. At the business meeting, which followed the discussion of Clooney's book, Laurie Patton (Emory University) and Selva Raj (Albion College) were elected to the Society's Board of Directors.

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Studies, University of San Diego