

Abstract and Transcendental

The topic of the twelfth Mozaik is black and white thinking. Indeed, most of our thinking is dominated by dualistic concepts: black and white, good and evil, female and male, young and old, rich and poor, powerful and disempowered, centre and peripheries. In our ecumenical journal we explore these dualisms. Our sharing shows us that we often think dualistically, even if we are not aware of it. We hope to overcome an “us-them” way of thinking about important human issues.

This issue is also about hermeneutics, the methods of understanding and interpretation: how to formulate and ask open questions that do not necessarily lead to a simplistic yes/no answer. Issues are raised about how our thought processes and our society interact and affect each other; this includes power structures, mental structures and all kinds of relationships. This is a challenge to us all, to look critically at how we think, at where we want to change or reaffirm our way of thinking, and thus at how we approach the world.

Our topic was dealt with in the WSCF conference in Saint Cheron, Paris in November 2003: Stripping Culture and Religion of Black and White Thinking: Unveiling the Impact of Dualistic Thinking on Structures and Relationships. This was the most widely representative meeting of WSCF Europe in her recent history, having participants from more than half of the European countries.

We also had our European Regional Assembly (ERA), in Åland, Finland, in October 2003. Our Policy Paper approved there sheds a light on our vision and mission as Christian students in coping with the dualisms of our world.

We are grateful to receive inputs from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland and the United States of America. The contributors come from the United Church of Christ, the Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Reformed, Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions, colouring our rainbow.

The journal consists of three sections. In the first (Structural), we search for solidarity across boundaries of gender, culture and ethnicity. Identity is the core and systematizing principle in our search for integration and integrity. In the second (Methodological) section, we explore opportunities where to keep and where to transcend dualisms within the Church and Christianity.

The last (Artistic) third of the journal is about culture, art and literature, especially about Joanne K. ROWLING, William BLAKE and abstract painting and sculpture in the Church. Bible studies are a long tradition within WSCF and the Student Christian Movements (SCM). A psalm of David, number 51, inspired Arvo PÄRT and Daniel PASTIRČÁK to connect music, meditation and painting.

As always, we encourage our readers and supporters to write-in with responses to the essays contained in this issue of Mozaik. Please send all comments, feedback, questions and further ideas on our ecumenical journal to our email address (wscfmozaik@yahoo.co.uk). We are also looking for volunteer editors, illustrators and section editors, who could participate in making Mozaik more colourful, challenging and interesting.

We also have the pleasure to introduce our new copy editor in this issue. Sarah OTTO received a Bachelor of Arts in Religion and Psychology from the University of Rochester in Rochester, New York in 2003. She is currently pursuing a Master of Divinity at Harvard Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She belongs to the United Church of Christ and was first introduced to the CECSM and WSCF organizations through the Celebrate! conference that took place in December 2002. Her primary interests within the study of religion are ecumenism and interfaith dialogue, and she hopes both will play a role in her future vocation.

Finally, we are proud to introduce our illustrator, Ioana Irina ZAUS (1980), a member of the Romanian SCM (ASCOR Iași). She graduated from the University of Fine Arts and Design and is specialized on graphic arts. She participated in many art exhibitions and now she is very interested in studying photography and making installations and video works. Her illustrations make us wonder what separates the things in two, why they always should be a good part and a bad one. We start to wonder, whether one part outweighs the other, or whether there is equilibrium in one's own life.

Carissal Stagg

