

Conference Report

Third World Congress on Logic and Religion

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The Third World Congress on Logic and Religion (WOCOLOR), co-organized by the Logic and Religion Association (LARA), the Indian Institute of Technology at Banaras Hindu University (IIT BHU) and the DST-Centre for Interdisciplinary Mathematical Sciences (DST-CIMS), Institute of Science, BHU, was held in Varanasi, India, at the main campus of the BHU from November 4 to 8, 2022. The congress, which was postponed twice due to COVID-19 restrictions, featured many different international speakers and papers related to the broad fields of logic and religion. While some focused explicitly on the two main topics, trying to shed light on how these two supposedly disparate fields can enrich each other, others took a more liberal approach, focusing on a variety of topics ranging from cognitive philosophy to more narrow theological issues. The large number of participants forced the organization of concurrent sessions, which were generally well planned and thought out, although some compromises were necessary. On the whole, the contributions were of high quality, shedding light on various logical, mathematical, psychological, religious, social, and even artistic issues.

The five days of the congress offered the participants the opportunity to familiarize themselves with research in a wide variety of theologies, from Indian traditions to Christianity, Judaism and Islam. The special feature of the third edition of the congress was undoubtedly its emphasis on Indian philosophical traditions, from Jainism to Hinduism and Buddhism. The papers presented in these sections offered those present a glimpse into vibrant ongoing debates on the foundations of religious belief as they relate to epistemological and soteriological issues. This was also a slight difference between this and the second edition of the event, held in Warsaw in 2017, which focused more explicitly on Christian theologies and Judaism (and also featured one of Saul Kripke's final keynotes on the phi-

losophy of Descartes). Of course, it is hard to pick out the best papers in an event with more than 100 participants, but perhaps Purushottama Bilimoria's keynote address on the Jain theory of knowledge and omniscience deserves a special mention. One of the preeminent scholars in the broader field of Indian philosophy, Bilimoria presented nuanced arguments spanning philosophical traditions, from Jain and Buddhist texts to Heideggerian inquiries. Noting that Jain theories of knowledge seek to transcend the limits of ordinary sensory and rational knowledge, Bilimoria showed that, according to this tradition of Indian thought, it is possible for individuals to develop deeper insights by perfecting the instruments of knowledge. At the end of the lecture, some problems of omniscience were pointed out (e.g. does an omniscient being know everything at the same time, or what happens when two omniscient individuals meet?). Finally, Bilimoria brought the lecture to a close by opening the floor to a lively debate that left the audience feeling invigorated. Perhaps Jens Lemanski's excursions in Schopenhauer's graphs, Tarinee Awasthi's presentation of Tarkaratna Bhattācārya's twentieth century śākta vedānta and the workshop on the Buddhist tetralemma (*catuskoṭi*) and emptiness (*śūnyatā*) deserve special mention as well. However, given the number of participants, this selection is necessarily biased.

Inspired by Kurt Gödel's thought (especially his controversial proof of the existence of God), the event promises to sustain a lively debate among a wide variety of scholars from philosophy, theology, logic, mathematics, and cognitive science into the future. We are therefore already looking forward to the 4th edition of WOCOLOR, which has been announced as taking place in Sinaia, Romania, in September 2023.