

EDITORIAL

It is now twenty one years since the first conference on Black Theology was held in South Africa. It is therefore proper for us to pause for a moment, look back in the corridors of theological history again. We also need to refresh our memory of the greatest theological development ever to take place on this southern most tip of Africa. When we think back to the early days of Black Theology in South Africa, we can remember many names of black theologians who had a hand in its formation. All these names are important for us to remember because they are milestones on the long and glorious track of Black Theology in our search for liberation and theological self-expression. Among the names which need to be remembered is that of Steve Bantu Biko who, though not a theologian, was able to make theological history with his philosophical contribution. In his speech entitled ***Black Consciousness and the quest for true humanity***, Steve Biko linked Black Consciousness and Black Theology in a way in which no one in South Africa had done before. Ever since he made that linkage many theologians, social scientists and philosophers have debated and discussed Black Theology within the context of Black Consciousness and Black Consciousness within the context of Black Theology. That debate still rages even today. In this issue of our journal we include one article that continues this discussion within our changed situation in which confusion reigns supreme. In the next article the author takes us back again. This time to the history that, according to him, could explain the emergence of Liberation Theology. He takes us back to that theological movement which, though short lived, shocked the conservative theological world and excited those Christians who had been searching for the relevance of the gospel in society. In this present article the author traces the link between Liberation Theology and the American social gospel movement. In our own time and on our continent, especially at this southern most tip of it, it is not possible to discuss liberation and avoid questions on the relevance of socialism, not only for the future of oppressed and poor people, but also for that of Christianity. You will therefore find an article exploring the relationship between Christianity and socialism in this issue. The last two articles also deal with issues which are still very relevant for the theological discussions in this region. You will undoubtedly find them very interesting to read.