

## **Book Review**

*The Birth of Jesus or the Birth of Christians?: An Inquiry into the Authenticity of John 1:13*, Denis Sahayaraj KULANDAISAMY, Scripta Pontificiae Facultatis Theologiae Marianum – 65, Nova Series – 37, Rome: Marianum, 2015, p. 350.

*The Birth of Jesus or the Birth of Christians?: An Inquiry into the Authenticity of John 1:13* is an exegetico-theological work divided into three parts. The research proceeds from the variant reading of Jn 1:13 in singular and in plural. The first part is characterised by textual criticism of Jn 1:13. The author has made an extensive survey of modern versions and various studies in order to make the argument clear. He begins his survey of studies in Jn 1:13 from 1896 until 2013. The author examines the external criticism of the text in question from text-critical commentaries, from the writings of the Greek and Latin Fathers of the Church and from other related works. Further, in the internal criticism he takes into consideration the grammatical analysis, the context and the style of the text. The author's confident search into the patristic evidence and into the previous studies through centuries makes his analysis more authentic.

The second part is more of exegetical characterised by historical-critical method. It expounds upon the literary form, linguistic-syntactic analysis and the literary structure. The detailed exegetical analysis leads the author

to conclude that Jn 1:13 points to the incarnation of the *Logos* and His virginal birth (*Virginitas in partu*). The third part delves into the theological implication of the Jn 1:13 with Christological and Mariological significance. The author tries to bring out the theological significance of Jn 1:13 in connection to other texts like Jn 1:45; 6:42; 20:31 and 1 Jn 5:18. The Mariological aspect of the text is enhanced by comparing Jn 1:13 with Lk 1:34-35 and the texts from the Second Vatican Council and papal teachings. It culminates in bringing forth the importance of 'Virginal Maternity' with the arguments in favour of *virginitas in partu*.

The strength of the arguments is that the book leads the reader to a faith-encounter in the truth of incarnation. After this faith-encounter, the work leads the reader to be faithful after the manner of Mary. It is noteworthy that the author does not merely expose the results of his research but takes a stand, a stand in favour of 'singular form' of the text, a witness for the incarnation of *Logos*. The tables and the graphics, an extensive bibliography, and index of the books of the Bible, of Jewish Writings, of Patristic Writings, of Classical Greek and Latin Literature, of the Magisterium and of modern authors provide the reader more opportunities for easy understanding and further reading. The outcome of this study of a young Bible scholar will surely be useful for the study in Johannine Literature, in Christology and in Mariology.

*Dr T. Xavier Terrence*