**IN QUEST OF UNIVERSALITY:**

**RESSOURCEMENT THEOLOGY AND MISSION IN INDIA**

**Enrico Beltramini**

**Keynotes**

The book targets a crucial question: how can Christianity be considered authentically “Catholic”—in the sense of the universality of the church and her mission—without assimilating Indian thought? The book addresses this question through the prism of a history of *ressourcement* theology, a distinct French stream of Roman Catholic theology that expanded in India.

The expansion of *ressourcement* theology in India was based on the assumption that the Indian civilization can play for Christianity the same role that Greek civilization played in the early centuries of the church. If Christianity is to rightfully claim to be universal (it cannot be a universal religion), it must be able to assimilate Indian religious hearts.. At the same time, the assimilation of India would help Christianity become more contemplative and less dependent upon the Greek-Semitic ideology that is still at the core of Catholicism.

In the decades after the Second Vatican Council, and in particular, with the rise of Hindu nationalism and the shift of the Church’s mission to India from contemplation to social justice, the role of the Roman Catholic Church in India changed: the search at the sources of religions was replaced with the social dimensions of evangelization and interfaith dialogurfde.

In this study, I return to a series of issues that were dominant in the debate on Catholicism and India in the decades immediately before and after Independence—and then forgotten. I believe that these issues remain relevant today. My aim for this book is to signal this situation of stagnation in the process of assimilation of Hinduism within Catholicism and the correspondent effects on its “universality.”

**Introductory Materials**

*Ressourcement* (the French for “return to the source”) has been one of the most influential theological movements in Roman Catholicism and beyond. It is credited with changing Catholicism’s viewpoint on modernity, from fiery opposition to critical acceptance. The Second Vatican Council was largely driven by the ideas of the *ressourcement* theologians, and pontiffs like John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis I are considered expressions of, or at least intellectually close to, these theologians’ positions.

*Ressourcement* theology developed a distinct approach to sacred tradition (or, “Tradition”), namely the transmission of the apostles’ teaching. Roman Catholicism, in contrast to Reformation thought, considers Scripture and Tradition to flow from one and the same body of truth; this means that Scripture and Tradition, in a certain way, merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. However, the definition of Tradition is itself a matter of dispute. For the theologians, philosophers, and authors of the *ressourcement* movement, Tradition primarily meant a return to the sources (texts and authors) of the first centuries of Christian life. Although “source” thus refers to a historical document, it does so only secondarily: the primary sense is a mysterious inner principle of spiritual life that perpetuates itself and perdures in the church, a fountainhead of dynamic spiritual life that never runs dry.

When they moved to India, *ressourcement* theologians applied the same approach to the sources (texts and authors) of Hinduism. For this theology, a meeting between Hinduism and Christianity can only be possible at the sacred sources—or Source—of both religions. At this one incomparable Source, not only would Hindu mysticism be Christianized, but Christian tradition, too, would be enriched by an Indian constellation.

This study is located in the extensive literature of Roman Catholic *ressourcement* theology but at the same time, it focuses on a substory—the growth of *ressourcement* theology in India—that has remained unexplored. The book links the trajectory of *ressourcement* theology to the state of the universality of Catholicism and, ultimately, to the meaning of World Catholicism.

In this theological historical study, the author recovers a lost line of thought, to show how it influenced Indian Catholicism before and during the Second Vatican Council and to consider its relevance to the present. Christian missionaries tried to reframe Indian philosophy in Christian terms, and Christian theology in Hindu terms. Their attempt failed, but the question of the encounter between Christianity and Hinduism remains relevant to this day.

The problems addressed in this study are the status of the “universality” of Catholicism and the role of India in the “universal” church. Although Christian Indians seem more interested in integrating their community within Indian society at large rather than evangelizing, the question arises of whether India will become Christian. If not, what exactly is the “universal” church?

Although the recovery of a lost line of thought is the aim, this study’s argument is that such a recovery is essential to the renewal of the sense of both the church’s mission and God’s universal plan of salvation for the whole world.

This book is an investigation of the *ressourcement* theology and mission in India. On one hand, this study addresses the status of the assimilation of Hinduism within Catholicism through the lens of *ressourcement* theology, a distinct French stream of Roman Catholic theology that expanded in India. On the other hand, the work investigates the destiny of contemplative mission in India.

In the context of the inherent tendency of the church to be universal (or “catholic”), the function of a Christianized India is to deepen the church’s contemplative resources. The Christianization (i.e., conversion) of India was pursued through a project of contemplative mission with the objective of assimilating Indian spirituality.

At some point, the project of contemplative mission eclipsed. This study addresses the eclipse of contemplative mission and the reason why it can re-emerge: both issues are crucial in a serious and detailed attempt not only to assess the past but also to discuss the future of Christian evangelization in India.

The methodology at work in this book is to survey the suggestions of theorists such as Giorgio Agamben, Walter Benjamin, and Slavoj Žižek, each of whom has identified a gap between the past as it was and its historical reconstruction. This gap is the space between reality and the normalization of the reality of the past (the past as it was and the past as it has been told). It is also the space of the potentiality, that is, the alternative stories and the lost futures. It is the space of missed opportunities. Agamben, Benjamin, and Žižek want to reintroduce possibilities so that what happened is actually one of the possible outcomes. It is not that the possibility that was actualized automatically canceled the others; they remain as ontological shadows. A correct reconstruction of the past, therefore, implies the inclusion of what actually happened as well as of what might have happened. It is history in the context of contingency rather than necessity. The recovery of the potentiality, the path not taken, works both as a better explanation of what actually happened and also as a resource for reactivation.

The study draws on the growing literature on the *ressourcement* movement in Europe to design a robust arch that spans the literary, philosophical, and theological work of the *ressourcement* movement in France and the work of Indologists, theologians, and philosophers of religions in India and their distinct approach to the sources. The book expands on a short 1993 biographical work on the Hindu pioneer Jules Monchanin and draws on his original French work on mission and spirituality never before translated into English. Finally, the work deepens a more robust literature on the history of Shantivanam, the ashram founded by Monchanin, to develop a much more comprehensive theological story on the *ressourcement* movement in India.

Combining daring, detailed interpretations of French theologians with a theological historical study of the primary and secondary literature of foreign and native authors in India, this study is a critical survey of the origins, formation, transformation, and longer-term significance of the contemplative mission in India.

Investigating the roots of *ressourcemen*t theology in France, its transplantation to India, and its rise and decline, this work certainly fills a gap in the history of theology both in Europe and in India.

The contributions of this book are the following:

* Establishing a connection between India and the universality of Catholicism;
* Investigating the expansion of French *ressourcement* in India;
* Addressing the theological project of contemplative mission in India; and
* Reconstructing the hermeneutical approach to sacred sources of Hinduism and Christianity.

**Structure**

The bookis composed of an introduction, eight chapters, and a conclusion.

The sequence of the themes is as follows:

* In the first chapter, I discuss the theme of the church’s universalism and the function of India in it;
* In the second, third, and fourth chapters, I address the theological side of the *ressourcement* project in India;
* In the fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters, I discuss the missionary side of the *ressourcement* project in India;
* In the seventh and eighth chapters, I elaborate on the aftermath and legacy of the *ressourcement* theological and missionary project, and return to the theme of the church’s universalism.

**Table of Contents and Chapter Summaries**

Introduction: The book targets this crucial question: How can Christianity be considered a true world religion without assimilating Indian religious tradition? The author addresses this question through the prism of a story, specifically the narrative of some Christian missionaries who tried to assimilate Indian mysticism within the church and Indianize the church, that is, to make it more contemplative and more Indian. Their attempt failed, but the question of a primary relationship between evangelization and contemplation in Indian Catholicism remains true to this day.

Chapter One: Catholic Universalism

The chapter focuses on Catholic universalism and the role of India in it. Catholicism cannot become more universal without benefitting from a highly dynamic concept of tradition, and Catholicism cannot benefit from a highly dynamic concept of tradition without becoming more universal. To put it differently, the *ressourcement* project of contemplative mission was meant as the pursuit of a creative interpretive exercise in which the clash with Hinduism served as a hermeneutical key to interrogate the sources of Christian faith. In turn, this re-interrogation of the sources of Christian faith deepened the understanding of tradition and ultimately offered ideas relevant to assimilating other religions. Thus, a universalistic tendency ultimately deepens the thought on tradition and avoids the temptation for ossification. On the other hand, a living tradition is open to being enriched by other cultures and ultimately supports the church’s universalistic tendency.

Part One: Theology

Chapter Two: *Ressourcement* in France

This chapter introduces the *ressourcement* movement that was a reaction to traditional Catholicism.

In an early 20th-century French intellectual episode now forgotten, Roman Catholic theologians and missionaries shared a belief that so long as Christianity proves unable to assimilate Indian thought, it cannot claim to be universal (a world religion). The immediate result was a glut of dense, sophisticated books on the “spiritual riches of India” and a project of contemplative mission. The basic assumption was that an intellectual synthesis between Hinduism and Christianity is only possible at the sacred sources of both religions (i.e., *ad fontes*). But this notional exciting age of “Mystical India,” the assimilation within Christianity of the mystical treasures of India for the fullness of India *and* the fullness of the church, was far more than a historical curiosity.

Chapter Three: Jules Monchanin

In this chapter, an intellectual profile of Jules Monchanin, the mastermind of the transplantation of the *ressourcement* approach to the sources to the Indian context, is explored. Monchanin (1895-1957) was a *ressourcement* theology priest and philosopher who moved to India in 1939 as a missionary. His mission received assistance and support from theologians, priests, and the pope himself. The figure of Monchanin is central in defining the theological project of *ressourcement* theology and mission in India. He was a French philosopher and theologian on his terms; he was part of the *ressourcement* movement and a personal friend of some of its main representatives. Chapter 3 focuses on Monchanin’s vision of India in relation to the universal church. It is important to highlight the specific role of India in Monchanin’s thought and emphasize why it is relevant. In this chapter, I explain that Monchanin’s mission was based on a specific assumption: Indian civilization can play for modern Christianity the same role that Greek civilization played in the early centuries of the church. So long as Christianity cannot assimilate Indian thought, Monchanin argued, it cannot claim to be universal (a world religion).

Chapter Four: Ad Fontes

This chapter centers on the philosophical question of at which level should the integration of Hinduism and Christianity be pursued. The answer lies on the ontological level, i.e., at the level of the organic unity of visible and invisible creation in one system. *Ressourcement* theology is successful in recovering such a unity, once dismantled by both dogmatic Neo-Scholasticism and secularized modernity. *Ressourcement* theology frames the relationship of visible and invisible creation in terms of unity in distinction. According to Monchanin, Hinduism understands such a relationship in terms of Advaita Vedanta, non-duality. Monchanin aimed to synthesize Hinduism and Christianity by assimilating non-duality into the Christian framework of unity in distinction.

Part Two: Mission

Chapter Five: De Foucauld

The chapter describes the seminal figure of Charles de Foucauld and how his distinctive approach to mission inspired Monchanin and ultimately became embedded in his project of contemplative mission. It is important to highlight the theological differences between this project and the other projects of the same kind that were put into action in India in the same period and later.

Chapter Six: Spiritual Assimilation

This chapter addresses the missionary approach, i.e., the role of contemplative mission, in Monchanin and his *ressourcement* theology project. Monchanin identified the source of Advaita Vedanta in monastic spirituality. If he could convince Hindu monks that their spirituality was inferior, thought Monchanin, he would deliver India to the Christian faith. Thus, Monchanin needed to open an ashram and embrace sannyasa as a Christian. Thus, as a Christian sannyasi, he could reach his spiritual assimilation as well as prove that Christian spirituality supplants Hindu spirituality.

Chapter Seven: Nightfall or Eclipse of Contemplative Mission

In this chapter, I answer the question of whether the decline of the contemplative mission can be seen as an extinguishing or a simple overshadowing. Spiritual seekers are all over India: Christian monks populate their ashrams in both the south and the north of the country; priests in Varanasi, the spiritual capital of Hinduism, study the Vedas and encourage dialogue among religions; monks at the foot of the Himalayas seek to integrate both Hinduism and Christianity into their spiritual practices. In short, *Ressourcement* theology and mission have not disappeared: however marginalized, they are alive.

Part Three: Aftermath

Chapter Eight: Post-*Ressourcement*

In this chapter, I discuss the current situation in Catholic India. Roman Catholicism insisted on organic links between contemplation and evangelization in the first decades post-Independence, but later Indian Catholicism became more committed to social justice, in effect replacing the relationship between contemplation and evangelization with that between social justice and evangelization.

Chapter Nine: Catholic Universalism Today

This chapter returns to the role of India in World Christianity. The options for an Indian-Christian synthesis look desperate these days, and ignorance obscures Monchanin’s grandiose project of integration. Yet the problem of an intellectual platform for World Christianity stands. Can Christianity remain mostly a Western religion distributed worldwide? How can Christianity supersede its Greek–Hebrew synthesis and become a true world religion?

Conclusion: The questions that motivated Monchanin and his *ressourcement* theology project remain relevant. More studies on these questions are needed.

**Outstanding Features**

Written by a theologian with extensive knowledge of both French and Indian theologies, this book significantly expands the almost non-existent literature on the transcontinental relationship between European and South Asian Catholicism. The author will be in dialogue with both European and South Asian theologians.

This book also addresses the relationship between the French *ressourcement* theology in India and the notion of universality of the church. Once the connection is established, the author will have no difficulty demonstrating the crucial role played by *ressourcement* theology and mission in India and its heritage. Moreover, the study connects theology in France and India, as well as the subfields of theology and mission, through a narrative that moves from Europe to South Asia and across the 20th and 21st centuries. It focuses on the relationship between theologies in the context of World Catholicism and addresses the issue from both sides.

Finally, the book improves the existing scholarship on Monchanin’s mission by offering an in-depth comparison between the traditional missionary approach to India and Monchanin’s overall vision of India in the development of mutual enrichment between the Christian and Hindu sources. The study pursues this scope by working with French sources and translating passages of Monchanin’s writings (see below) never before translated to English.

Whereas existing scholarly studies on Monchanin are chiefly theological or biographical, this study contains more than a biographical profile. Though my own discussion does not seriously contradict previous work, it moves beyond them to offer a novel theological interpretation of Monchanin’s writings and opinions. In arguing for the central importance of Monchanin as an internal member of the *ressourcement* theology milieu, this book makes important new claims and will be judged thus.

*Bibliography:*

Jules Monchanin, *Mystique de l'Inde, Mystère Chrétien: écrits et inédits* (Paris: Fayard, 1974).

Jules Monchanin, *Théologie et Spiritualité Missionnaires*. Présentation E. Duperray et J. Gadille (Paris, Beauchesne, 1985).

**Apparatus**

* Bibliography
* Endnotes
* Index

**Comparable Literature**The study in discussion stands in comparison to both literature on *ressourcement* theology and Indian theology.

Although the literature on *ressourcement* theology is growing in Europe and North America (the references are too many to list), the only study on *ressourcemen*t in India is my work on Abhishiktananda (see below).

The proposed book is a supplement to the list of references on the history of Christianity in India (i.e., Daughrity and Athyal) and on theology of Indian religions (i.e., Kim). Recent books on Indian theology are Schouten’s *The European Encounter with Hinduism in India* (Brill, 2020), Joseph’s *Christianity in India* (Routledge, 2019), and Shah and Carpenter’s *Christianity in India* (Fortress, 2018).

The proposed book can also be seen as in conversation with more descriptive books on World Christianity, such as the series put out by Penn State University Press (ed. Dale T. Irvin and Peter C. Phan), Fortress Press (ed. Dyron B. Daughrity), Brill (ed. Kirsteen Kim, Stephen B. Bevans, and Miikka Ruokanen), and Taylor & Francis (ed. Michael Amaladoss et al.).

A book that is dissimilar in content yet aligned in scope is Hans Boersma’s *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology*. Boersma approaches *nouvelle théologie* (synonymous with *ressourcement* theology) historically and extracts one theological resource, sacramental ontology. Then he places this theological resource in the context of current Evangelism. Although his study focuses on French *ressourcement*, it is a valid benchmark for my book. Similarly, in fact, I will approach *ressourcement* theology historically and extract one theological resource, classical tradition. Then I place this theological resource in the context of current World Christianity.

Some other works similar to my proposed text are found among the literature on liberation theology, which has been addressed both in the West and in the East, promoting the emergence of a cottage industry studying on the differences and similarities among different streams and schools of thought.

*Bibliography:*

Dyron B. Daughrity and Jesudas M. Athyal, *Understanding World Christianity: India* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2016).

Sebastian C.H. Kim (ed.), *Christian Theology in Asia* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Jan Peter Schouten, *The European Encounter with Hinduism in India*, translated by Henry Jansen (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2020).

Clara A. B. Joseph, *Christianity in India: The Anti-Colonial Turn* (London: Routledge, 2019).

Rebecca Samuel Shah and Joel Carpenter (eds,), *Christianity in India: Conversion, Community Development, and Religious Freedom* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2018).

Hans Boersma, *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology: A Return to Mystery* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

There are several relevant studies about Jules Monchanin; however, most are in French. Although the literature on his theology is booming in France (for example, see Vagneux’s *Co-esse*, 2015) the most recent books published in English remain Rodhe’s *Jules Monchanin: Pioneer in Christian-Hindu dialogue* (1993), and two anthologies of the contributions presented at two conferences, one in France and one in India: *Jules Monchanin (1895-1957) as Seen from East and West*: Acts of the colloquium held in Lyon-Fleurie, France, and in Shantivanam, Tannirpalli, India (April and July 1995). The book in discussion will enter into dialogue with the French literature.

No existing book focuses on the theological and missionary project of *ressourcement* in India. Existing literature addresses the founders (Monchanin and le Saux) of the Shantivanam ashram, the history of the ashram, and the significance of the ashram in the Indian Christian context. My book locates Shantivanam in the background of French Catholic theology.

The work on the role of the Benedictine ashram that Monchanin established in 1950 is rich, but it is uniquely located in the history of India. Completely absent is a study of the French roots of the theology that is behind the establishment of the Benedict ashram. Another way to put it is this: anyone who tries to understand the meaning of Shantivanam is prompted by the existing scholarship to connect the ashram to the wider history of the church in India. Examples of this literature include the following:

Paul M. Collins, *Christian Inculturation in India: Liturgy, Worship, and Society* (Ashgate, 2007);

Sebastian Elavathingal, “Saccidananda Ashram—Narsinghpur: a New Paradigm for Inter-Religious Dialogue,” TM. 3 (2000):67;

Emmanuel Vattakuzhy, *Indian Christian Sannyāsa and Swami Abhishiktananda* (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1981);

Jose Kuttianimattathil, *Practice and Theology of Interreligious Dialogue. A Critical Study of the Indian Christian, Attempts Since Vatican II* (Bangalore: Kristu Jyoti Publications, 1995);

Sara Grant, *Lord of the Dance and Other Papers* (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 1987);

Mataji Vandana, *Gurus, Ashrams, and Christians* (Bombay: St. Paul Publications and Delhi: ISPCK, 2004);

Paul Pattathu, *Ashram Spirituality: A Search into the Christian Ashram Movement Against its Hindu Background* (Indore: Satprakashan Sanchar Kendra, 1997);

[Zdeněk Štipl](about:blank" \o "Search for more titles by Zdeněk Štipl), *The Christian Ashram Movement in India* (London: Routledge, 2020);

Bob Robinson, *Christians Meeting Hindus* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2020).

I do consider these sources, but my study aims to draw scholars’ attention to another option, that is, to place *ressourcement* theology and mission within the history of Indian Catholicism. Scholarship of Indian theology, therefore, will be confronted with two alternative views about the very subject matter of the book. For convenience, these may be referred to as the “Indian” and the “French” interpretations.

*Bibliography:*

Sten Rodhe, *Jules Monchanin: Pioneer in Christian-Hindu Dialogue* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1993).

Yann Vagneux, *Co-esse: Le Mystère Trinitaire dans la Pensée de Jules Monchanin (1895-1957)* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2015).

**Market Considerations**

This book will appeal to several sets of readers.

First, there will be those theologians and religious scholars interested in the relationship between East-West dialogue in the realm of theology. This is a growing area of scholarship, as demonstrated by the increasing number of schools of divinity, departments of religious studies, and seminaries dedicating undergraduate courses to the topic under the title World Christianity or Global Catholicism (indeed, I have been teaching one of these for 10 years). These courses lack a dedicated textbook and usually use a variety of books, some related to the history of religion, others more theological. The proposed book could function in such a course as a case study of the theological dialogue between schools of thought as well as living communities.

The second group includes those interested in the history of theology in India. Today there are excellent monographs on the subject (i.e., history of theology in India), but they generally emphasize single thinkers, or alternatively the social context in which theologians work. No internal history of this mode of theology exists, a history of theology that is addressed through theological filters and locates Indian theology in a global context. Therefore, the section of the book covering the transplantation of *ressourcement* theology in India (six chapters) is surely of interest to students of theology, particularly in graduate-level courses.

The same point can be applied to the initial and ending sections of the book, i.e., the two chapters focused on the universality of the church’s mission. This subject is of interest to several disciplines, particularly (a) historians of Christian tradition, (b) historians and theologians of Catholicism, and (c) readers interested in the evolution of theology in India studying at the master’s level.

Christianity in South Asia is a subject of growing scholarly attention, and elicits profound interest well beyond the narrowed realm of specialists. An example of such broad scholarly interest was the reception of books like **Chad M. Bauman’s *Anti-Christian Violence in India* and** Pulikottil’s *Beyond Dalits Theology*, which **moved the conversation from Hindu–Christian interfaith dialogue to the clash of Christian with Hindu nationalism.** My proposed book should likewise appeal to those seeking a better understanding of both the growing gap between Christianity and illiberal India, and also the destiny of Christian theology in South Asia.

The three main themes of the book are the following:

* the universality of the church’s mission
* *ressourcement* theology in India
* contemplative mission

The first theme is addressed in chapters 1 and 9, which can serve to expand graduate students’ understanding of the state of the art for world theology in Roman Catholicism.

The second theme is investigated in chapters 2, 3, and 4, which could potentially be adopted in any undergraduate and graduate courses on the history of Indian theology in particular, and Christian theology in general.

Finally, the third theme is the focus of chapters 5, 6, and 7. These chapters are useful to graduate students in courses on such topics as ecclesiology, Christology, Christian history, interfaith dialogue, and missiology, especially where the course covers theological dimensions of evangelization.

*Bibliography:*

**Chad M. Bauman, *Anti-Christian Violence in India* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2020).**

Paulson Pulikottil, *Beyond Dalits Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2022).

**Status of the Work**

The manuscript will be 100,000 words, including notes and bibliography.

I plan about 10,000 words per chapter (about 80,000 words in total, including related foot/endnotes) and about 20,000 words for the Introduction, Conclusions, and apparatus.

The manuscript will be submitted 36 months after acceptance. The project has been underway for some time. The first draft will be ready 18 months after the signature of the contract. I intentionally did not publish material I plan to use for this book; however, I have already published a book on a secondary story related to the history of *ressourcement* in India, that of a French monk moving to India: *Passage of India: Abhishiktananda and the Retrieval of the Supernatural in Roman Catholicism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2021). Thus the proposed book comes at the end of a long preparatory project.

I presented topics related to the French *ressourcement* at the American Society of Church History, Berkeley, California, April 6–9, 2017: “History and Becoming in Henri de Lubac.” Recently, I published three articles on specific topics related to the proposal. The first, “Roman Catholic Streams of Hindu-Christian Dialogue,” Exchange – Journal of Contemporary Christianities in Context 47, no. 4 (2018), 313–334 is a first approximation to the theory of the two traditions, classical and living, in India. The second, “Images of Eastern Religions and Roman Catholic Identity,” *Mission Studies* 35, no. 3 (2018), 389–411, deals with the relationship between European and Indian theologies. The third, “Can One Person Belong to Two Faiths? The Experience of Three Catholic Monks in India” in *Studies in World Christianity* 20, no. 2 (2014), 103–123, focuses on the history of *ressourcement* in India. I do not plan to make use of the previously published material for the book, but the previous work represents an indispensable foundation for it.

**Sample Chapters**

At the moment, one chapter has been completed and can be submitted for review at your request.

**Author Background**

I started writing on Indian theology and the relationship between European and South Asian theologies in 2013. I received graduate training at the Jesuit seminary of Delhi (open to laymen), where I earned a doctorate in theology. Since then, I have published two books, with a third forthcoming, as well as almost 20 peer-reviewed articles on the subject. I am known for my theological interpretations of such giants of Indian theology as Raimon Panikkar, Michael Amaladoss, and Abhishiktananda. I have also published book chapters and presented several papers on the same themes at national and international conferences.

I am the author of three books on Roman Catholicism in South Asia: *Michael Amaladoss and the Quest for Indian Theology* (Fortress, 2023); *The Unknown Christ of Christianity: Scripture and Theology in Panikkar’s Early Writings* (Wipf and Stock, 2021);and *Passage of India. Abhishiktananda and the Recovery of Sacramental Ontology in Roman Catholicism* (Peter Lang, 2020).

My theological and historical work on South Asia has been published in academic journals such as *Studies in World Christianity, Exchange – Journal of Contemporary Christianities in Context, Journal of Hindu-Christian Dialogue, Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection, International Bulletin of Mission Research, Journal of Indian Theology*, and *Mission Studies.*

I have been trained as a theologian, historian, and social theorist and hold doctoral degrees in theology (Delhi, 2018), history (London, 2013), and business (Manchester, 2005).

My other areas of interest are the theology of digital technology and Latin patristics. I am the author of four books and more than 60 academic papers and book chapters in the realms of theology and religious history encompassing all my areas of specialization.

My books on Indian theology have been reviewed by the related journals where I publish regularly. One has been recognized by the American Academy of Religion. The same is true about my book on religious history.

I work on two social media platforms: one is Linkedin.com, on which I hold 3,646 connections and 2,138 contacts so far. The other is academia.edu, where my profile is ranked in the top 3 percent. My most uploaded article on the theology of technology has been viewed almost 900 times.