



January 2005

## Briefly Noted

Bradley Malkovsky

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/jhcs>



Part of the [Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Malkovsky, Bradley (2005) "Briefly Noted," *Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies*: Vol. 18, Article 21.  
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7825/2164-6279.1354>

The *Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies* is a publication of the [Society for Hindu-Christian Studies](#). The digital version is made available by Digital Commons @ Butler University. For questions about the Journal or the Society, please contact [cbauman@butler.edu](mailto:cbauman@butler.edu). For more information about Digital Commons @ Butler University, please contact [digitalscholarship@butler.edu](mailto:digitalscholarship@butler.edu).

## 66 Book Reviews

presented such alternatives, and points toward the possibility that other religious movements such as the cult of Murukan were “a focus of low-caste restlessness in nineteenth-century South India” (p. 248). Although there seems to be little research on such movements, I would have liked to see some further discussion of the parallels with conversion to Christianity. I am also curious about the suggestion in Kent's conclusion that it has not only been in the colonial period that “gaps and fissures” (p. 3) have appeared in Indian society which have provided the impetus and opportunity for social and religious self-transformation. What comparisons can be made between the conditions that prevailed in the colonial period and those of the times of the Buddha or the *bhakti* saints? Or is it the content of the message, rather than the context in which it is encountered, that is most responsible for its appeal?

It is likely that a consideration of such far-ranging questions would have led our author too far afield; the fact that they

spring to mind at all is an indication of the quality and value of this book. For while Kent's graceful prose and balanced presentation please the reader, the account she provides of the actions and experiences of her subjects is provocative. Part of the story is about collaboration, resourcefulness, and self-transformation, but Kent is right to remind us that these religious interactions also involved conflict, rupture, and uneasy compromise. Her focus on women in this arena, and on both Western and Indian women, gives her the opportunity to teach us much that is new about the processes and tensions of conversion and of the colonial encounter. And the sensitivity and imagination she brings to her portrayal of the people enmeshed with one another in this context makes their struggles and achievements poignant and compelling.

Leslie C. Orr  
Concordia University

### *Briefly Noted*

*Asian Christian Theologies: A Research Guide to Authors, Movements, Sources. Volume 1: Asia Region 7th-20th centuries; South Asia; Austral Asia.* Edited by John C. England; Jose Kuttianimattathil, S.D.B.; John Mansford Prior, S.V.D.; Lily A. Quintos, R.C.; David Suh Kwang-sun; Janice Wickeri. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis/ Delhi: ISPCCK/Quezon City: Claretian Publishers, 2002, xlv + 679 pp.

**THE** compilers, writers and editors of this fine three volume encyclopedia have taken on the formidable task of mapping historically, geographically, thematically and biographically the myriad expressions of Asian Christian theology. Of the three volumes, the first will be of greatest usefulness to those interested in the interaction of Hinduism and Christianity, since it covers South Asia and India. The general theme of Volume 2 (2003), by contrast, is Southeast Asia, that of Volume 3 (2004) Northeast Asia.

The project of compilation, which began in 1998, is ambitious; the editors'

expressed intent is to provide the “first wide-ranging attempt to chart the vast materials of Asian Christian theologies,” (p. xlv) to make available the key sources and tools in English for the study of Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Asian theology over the centuries. The focus throughout is on the understanding of Christian faith as expressed in theologies grounded in local contexts that draw on indigenous culture and religion. Accordingly, purely western theologies transplanted in Asia are of lesser interest. Special attention is also given to the voices of women in their “aspirations, faith and struggles against oppression” (p.

xxi), with the recognition of the urgent need "to rethink and review the development of feminist culture and theology, using it strategically and effectively to improve the social, economic, political and cultural status of women." (p. xxii)

One may use this volume as a tool to research studies on a given country's theological movements and leaders within a given historical era; or to seek information on general themes such as ethics, theologies of struggle, spirituality, and mission involving several countries at once; or to investigate regional movements in women's theologies, ecumenism and biblical hermeneutics; or to study selected texts by country, period or movement. Thus, as regards Christian theologizing in India, one finds such topics as Ashram Movement; Christology; Church and Society, Liberation and Development; Dalit Theology; Ecclesiology; Ecotheology; Ecumenism; Evangelising Mission; Holy Spirit; Inculturation; Inter-religious Dialogue; Theological Methodology; Theology of Religions; Tribal Theology; Trinity; Women

Doing Theology and many more. There is also a long section on India that is purely biographical, with more than a hundred Christian theologians listed from Roberto de Nobili (1577-1656) to those actively working today. In all cases a brief essay (sometimes only a few lines) on the topic or person is provided together with a literature list for deeper immersion. Frequent reference is made throughout to the impact of Hindu thinkers or movements on Christian theologians.

The one drawback in this volume is its limited opening table of contents, barely a page in length. Fortunately, however, in reading on one discovers at the beginning of each major section a detailed overview of the coming content. In addition, there are very helpful Indexes of Persons and Subjects at the book's conclusion.

One can only express gratitude and admiration mixed with awe for the publication of such a valuable research tool.

Bradley Malkovsky  
University of Notre Dame

### ***Recent Articles of Interest***

K. P. Aleaz, "S. K. George: A Pioneer Pluralist and Dalit Theologian," *Asia Journal of Theology* 17 (2003):315-340.

Michael Amaladoss, "Dialogue Between Religions in Asia Today," *East Asian Pastoral Review* 42 (2005):45-60.

Michael Amaladoss, "Do Ashrams Have a Future?," *Vidyajyoti* 67 (2003):977-990.

Subhash Anand, "Reconciliation: A Gandhian Perspective," *Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies* 6 (January 2003):25-38.

Joe Arun C., "Myths in Identity Making: 'The Other as Alien'," *Vidyajyoti* 68 (2004):277-294.

Francis X. Clooney, "Surrender to God, Interreligious Awareness, the Life of the Jesuit University," *Explore* 8.2 (Spring 2005):4-11.

Francis X. Clooney, "Interreligious Dialogue, Contemplative Paths, and the Vision of God: A Response to Prof. Arvind Sharma," *Prabuddha Bharata* 110 (May 2005):262-265.

Francis X. Clooney, "Hinduism and Christianity," *SCM Press Dictionary of Spirituality*, ed. Philip Sheldrake (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), pp. 336-338.

A. Walter Dorn, "The United Nations as a Spiritual Institution: the vision and commitment of Sri Chinmoy," *Interreligious Insight* 3 (April 2005):30-37.