

Paul Joshua (Edited by Joel A. Carpenter). *Christianity Remade: The Rise of Indian-Initiated Churches*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2022. XIV+249 pages. \$54.99. ISBN: 9781481304054.

Scholars of World Christianity are quite familiar with the idea of AICs, i.e., the African Initiated Churches. We may also be acquainted with what is termed indigenous Christianities, especially in relation to India. However, the IICs, i.e., Indian-Initiated Churches, represents a whole new nomenclature and somewhat bold expression. How do we differentiate between the two? How are the IICs defined? What is the significance of the movements called the IICs? These and related questions have been meticulously addressed by Paul Joshua with editorial assistance by Joel Carpenter in this captivating study on Christianity in contemporary India.

To be sure, *Christianity Remade* is not an isolated study as it has a strong foundation in the previous publications such as *Christianity is Indian* (2004) and “Indian Instituted Churches” (1999) both by Roger Hedlund with whom Joshua worked on a number of publications and has now come up with what we may call the culmination of the series. Thus, this is a welcome new interpretation of India’s indigenous Christian history.

IICs are defined as an Indian incarnation of the Christian faith that is visible in the local concerns, struggles, and hopes of Indian Christians. These movements are expressed in music, story, healing, exorcism, and preaching. The significance of IICs are seen in their increasing numerical growth, growth in the midst of increased threats of persecution, and role in transforming Indian Christianity from within.

The book comprises of seven chapters bracketed by an introduction that sets the method and scope of the work and a conclusion that underlines the Indianness of Christianity. I am using the term Indianness to express the idea of Indianness. The first chapter traces the origins of IICs. Here, with illustrations from Arulappan’s Christianpettah village in Tamil Nadu and Pandita Ramabai’s Mukti Mission in Maharashtra, Joshua argues that IICs emerged in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In chapter two, he briefly explores the various Christian revivals in India as the environment for the development of IICs. Chapters 3 and 4 zoom in on two important movements (1) The Indian Pentecostal Church of God (IPC), and the (2) Bakht Singh Assemblies (BSA). Both these movements are situated in the larger context of India’s struggles for independence. The author holds that the political and cultural context had significant impact in shaping these movements.

In chapters 4,5, and 6, we learn about the rise of India Bible Mission (IBM), the Yeshu Darbar (Court of Jesus) of Allahabad, and the New Life Fellowship (NLF) movement respectively. IBM is creatively studied with the lens of *Bhakti*, highlighting its significance for Christian devotion; Yeshu Darbar with the framework of power encounters, and the NLF with a focus on urban mission of the Indian church.

By way of conclusion, Paul Joshua sees IICs as movements inhabiting as well as transmitting the traditions of revival and reformation. He argues that IICs represent a Christianity “Made in India.” While the book is greatly enriched with the case studies of IICs in the south, west, and the north, one misses a representation from the northeast. Overall, an excellent addition to a historian’s library on Indian Christianity.

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