

The Mystery of Mother Teresa And Sainthood

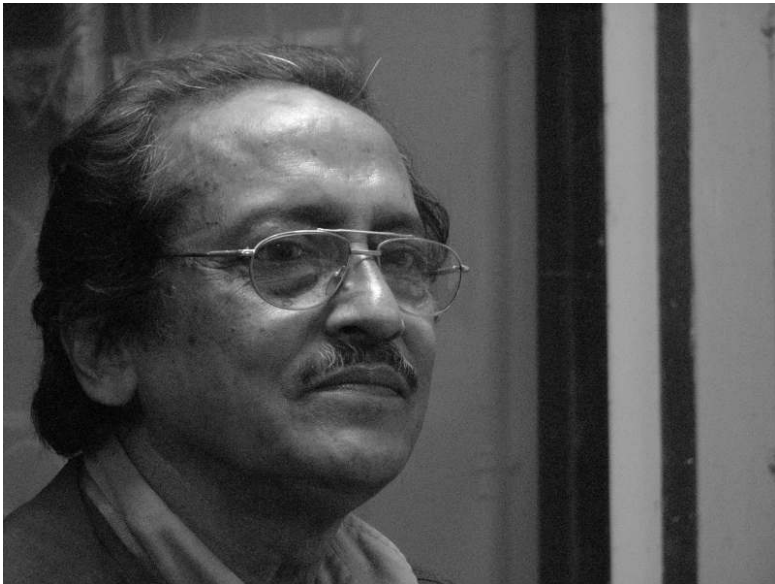


Prabir Ghosh

TRANSLATED BY
Sumitra Padmanabhan

www.uniquebook.com

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



“For several years Prabir Ghosh, general secretary of the Indian Rationalist and Scientific Thinking Association, has challenged Hindu "godmen" and exposed their miracles as what he describes as cheap hypnotic tricks better performed by magicians.

“Now he is challenging the claim of the Missionaries of Charity, who say a photograph of their founder, Mother Teresa, when placed over the stomach of 30-year-old Monica Besra, cured her of a tumour.”

-- **BBC News**, October 4, 2002

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/2299217.stm

“Prabir Ghosh, head of the Science and Rationalist Association of India. Ghosh... based in Calcutta, has deflated the claims of many of India's self-proclaimed Hindu holy men and miracle workers. He doesn't believe that Mother Teresa's miracle should be exempt from scrutiny...

“Ghosh tells TIME that he will shut down his association and turn over its 2 million rupees (\$40,000) to the Catholic order if the sisters will put the medallion to the test and have it cure another tumor.”

-- **TIME**, October 14, 2002 (The same article was published at **US edition** of the TIME on October 21, 2002)

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1003488-2,00.html>

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,501021021-364433,00.html>

“Prabir Ghosh, secretary of the Calcutta-based Indian Rationalists Association, openly questions the miracle... **Most agree with him that Mother Teresa does not need miracles to be declared a saint.**”

-- **BBC website**, October 16, 2003

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3181974.stm

Prabir Ghosh, the 62 year-old General Secretary of the Science and Rationalists' Association of India, is a renowned author, columnist, film maker and political scientist. He is the internationally famed debunker of godmen, astrologers and other merchants of “destiny and spiritualism”.

In his crusade against social evils he has survived at least 20 attempts on his life since the mid-1980s. He is also the undisputed founder of the modern concept of Contemporary Rationalism and the pioneer of the rationalist movement in India. Establishing the legal right to mention “Humanism” as religion is just one out of his numerous outstanding feats. He on behalf of the Science and Rationalists' Association of India offers US\$62,500 to anyone who claims to possess supernatural power of any kind and proves the same without resorting to any trick. Since his first collection of essays ‘*Aloukik Noy Loukik [Vol - I]*’ (literally translated means ‘Everything is Natural, not supernatural’) was published, Prabir Ghosh’s name was established firmly as an essayist with a difference, with a mission. His books feature in the list of best-sellers for the past 17 years. “Guru Busters”, the documentary made on him by Channel 4, BBC Television, 13 years back remains a sensation even now. He was also covered by The Times, London, and New York Times in their cover story. The uncompromising attitude and the stunning self-confidence which comes from deep conviction within, has given him a He-man image. But to those who know him closely, he is friendly, easily approachable, a loving and caring human being.

Website: www.prabirghosh.tk , www.srai.org
Online magazine: www.thefreethinker.tk

THE MYSTERY OF MOTHER TERESA AND SAINTHOOD

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First published: December 2007

Published by

UniqueEbook.com

5715 Will Clayton # 6078

Humble, TX 77338

USA

sales@uniqueebook.com

Photo Courtesy:

BBC

TIME

AFP

AP

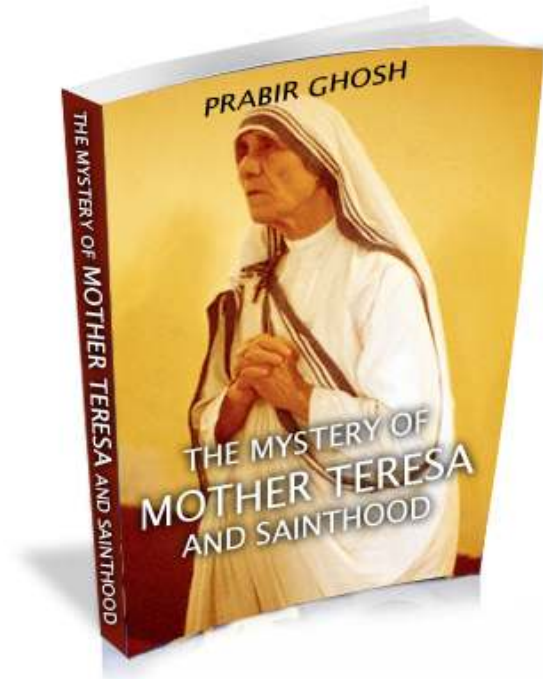
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PREFACE

To us Indians, the Christian world, or rather the western world stands for certain virtues. However much we may criticize the western ways, or try to find fault with the Big Brother, there is no denying the fact that in our hearts, we know that western culture carries a certain ethical value which is higher than the simple 'piety' practiced in India. It stands for certain uprightness and lack of hypocrisy.

So it hurt us all the more when we saw foul play in the Sainthood game; when we saw blind adherence to old customs at the cost of credibility, an effort to fool the gullible by pulling a fast one in the name of 'miracle'.

Mother Teresa, an epitome of saintly love and dedication was loved by millions throughout the world and was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. For the same reason had she been called a 'Saint' by the Vatican, it would not have raised any dispute. Mother herself had never in her lifetime displayed any 'miracle'. Now to attach bogus stories of miracles to her name was an insult to her memory. One would blame Pope John Paul II and Sister Nirmala of the Missionaries of Charity at a later date for this.

Politics of religion is not a new phenomenon and we have seen it earlier while scanning through the history of religions. Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hindutwa – each tries to establish its own supremacy. But it goes beyond all rationale and hits our sensibilities when Vatican City goes to the extent of fabricating silly stories of 'miracle' in this 21st century.

We rationalists are into the investigation of the seemingly supernatural since the last 20 years. Shib Bal Yogi of Bangalore and Mithai Baba (Gore Baba) of Pune – all have been in our agenda at various times. Our members, strewn throughout the country, are prompt to inform and call for our investigation whenever there is any report of 'miracle', big or small. We have seen the extent to which men can be fooled in the name of religion. We feel, to make mistakes is natural, and there is greatness in accepting one's mistakes. But to dogmatically stick to one's mistakes in the name of age-old scriptures or religious beliefs is an insult to human intellect. Hence, our detailed and prolonged investigation into the story of miracle posthumously attributed to Mother Teresa was worth carrying out. Our request to the new Pope Benedict XVI, Joseph Ratzinger is to make a fresh investigation into the incident for the sake of Truth.

December 2007

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AN EXORCIST'S BLACK-MAGIC AND MOTHER TERESA'S MAGIC-CURE: TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN: SUPERSTITION



The Pope's Defeat:

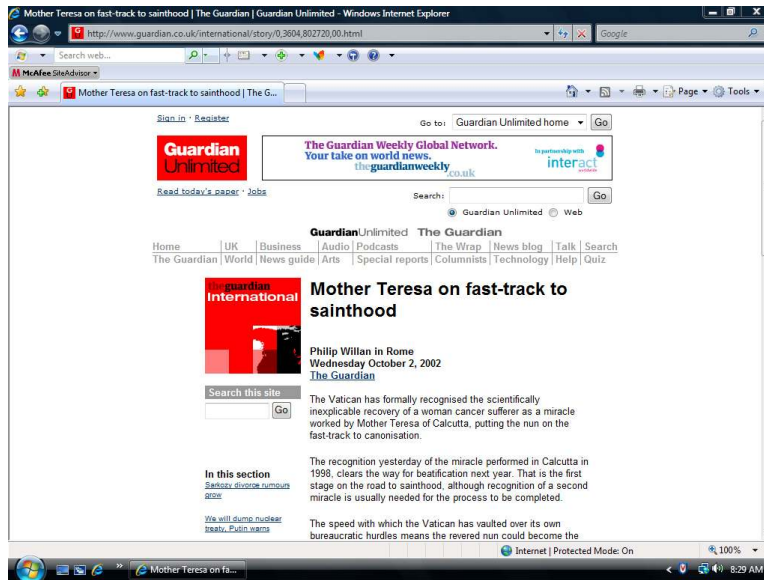
Pope John Paul II intended to announce Mother Teresa as a Saint on the 19th of October 2003. His effort did not materialize. The Rationalists of Calcutta, namely, the Science & Rationalist's Association of India foiled the arrangement so meticulously planned by the Catholic order.

According to the Catholics, nobody in his or her lifetime can be declared a Saint. Only after death, and following a few steps in accordance to the Catholic law, Pope can declare the deceased person as a Saint.

The steps to Sainthood are like this –

- As per the Canon Laws, or the system of the Catholic Religious Order, five years after the death of a 'great soul', preparations can be made to declare the person as 'Blessed'.
- Local priests shall investigate the life and activities of the person concerned and forward their reports to the Pope.
- The Vatican in turn, will send the report and recommendation to the panel of Cardinals or the ecclesiastics of the highest order appointed by the Pope. Once these Ecclesiasts agree, the title 'venerable' will be given to the deceased person by the Pope.
- The next step is the 'Beatification' ceremony. For this, a definite proof of the supernatural power of the deceased candidate is required. Here more specifically, the miracle is to be performed by the dead person's immortal soul.
- Next comes the sainthood ceremony. For this a second incident of miracle has to be detected. (collected from CNN.Com. Mother Teresa on road to Sainthood – Oct 1, 2000).

Mother Teresa on fast-track to sainthood



Philip Willan in Rome
Wednesday October 2, 2002
The Guardian

The Vatican has formally recognised the scientifically inexplicable recovery of a woman cancer sufferer as a miracle worked by Mother Teresa of Calcutta, putting the nun on the fast-track to canonisation.

The recognition yesterday of the miracle performed in Calcutta in 1998, clears the way for beatification next year. That is the first stage on the road to sainthood, although recognition of a second miracle is usually needed for the process to be completed.

The speed with which the Vatican has vaulted over its own bureaucratic hurdles means the revered nun could become the fastest canonised saint in modern times.

The Pope opened the way for her canonisation by waiving the five-year waiting period after death normally observed before starting the process.

Father Brian Kolodiejchuk, the priest in charge of promoting her candidature, said the cured woman was an Indian animist, 30, who had been taken to Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity order with an abdominal tumour. It disappeared after a "miraculous medal", worn by Mother Teresa, was placed on her abdomen.

The Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints started the saint-making process last week by recognising the "heroic virtues" shown by the nun in a lifetime dedicated to the care of society's outcasts.

Mother Teresa was born Agnese Gonxha Bojaxhiu in Skopje, in modern-day Macedonia, in 1910. She became a nun in Ireland aged 18 but found her true vocation in India, caring for the needs of Calcutta's destitute.

She was awarded the Nobel peace prize in 1979. When she died five years ago, aged 87, a million people attended her funeral.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,3604,802720,00.html>

This process of making a Saint is part of the ‘Canon Law’, or the body of ecclesiastical law of the Roman Catholic Church, approved by the Pope. We see, in the case of mother Teresa, the Pope himself broke the law. The Mother died in 1997 and within two years the Pope John Paul II started the procedure of Saint making. What may be the reason for not waiting for another three years? What was the hurry? Was it because the Pope’s health was fast deteriorating? Because he might not get the required time if he followed the specifications of the Canon law?

The Superior General, Sister Nirmala of the missionaries of Charity, Kolkata, joined the bandwagon. What was required was to find and establish a miracle. As always, the most effective and popular miracle is that of curing an ‘incurable’ disease! A patient was found, a tribal woman from a remote village in West Bengal; a housewife from an extremely poor family belonging to the Santhal tribe, Ms. Monica Besra. She was suffering from a difficult ailment. She was picked up, properly groomed and tutored, kept under custody of the Missionaries. One doctor R. N. Bhattacharya was also located who



Pope John Paul II

would readily vouch for Monica’s ailment. Dr. Bhattacharya certified that Monica had a tumour in her abdomen which was malignant. Modern medicine had no cure for this kind of advanced cancer. This impossible task was made possible by Mother’s ‘miracle’. On September 5, Mother’s birthday, while Monica was praying, a ray of light came from Mother Teresa’s photograph and fell on Monica’s body. The moment the holy light fell on Monica’s belly, the tumour vanished instantaneously.

Now the local Bishop’s report was needed. An investigation committee was formed led by Bishop Salvador lobo of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Baruipur in the district of 24

Parganas (South). This Committee in its report categorically reported that after medical science failed to cure Monica, mother's miracle made it possible to remove the tumour, completely curing Monica in an instant. The investigating Committee totally ignored the opinion of the doctors who actually treated Monica. What does it prove? Doesn't it make a very clear case of fraud in the name of religion?

There is enough reason to believe that the Missionaries of Charity and the Vatican made considerable attempts to declare sainthood on the 19th of October of 2003 completely disregarding the Canon laws. Arrangements were made accordingly. Only hindrance was the expose made by the Rationalists' Association of India, based at Kolkata.

Before we give a day to day report of the year long investigation made by the Rationalists, let us analyse the situation and the facts that led us to carry on this research work.

- 1) 19th Oct. 2003 was the 25th anniversary of the Pope John Paul II. May be this hurried declaration of sainthood was to commemorate this date. For this he did not mind going against the rules of Canonization or even resorting to tricks. The reader will surely agree with me after getting all the details.
- 2) The tumour or the lump in Monica's abdomen might not have been cancerous. Pope was probably aware of it. Otherwise in the face of all this controversy, he would have produced the relevant medical reports!
- 3) The only doctor who asserted about the cancer and its cure was Dr. R. N. Bhattacharya. But surprisingly, neither the missionaries of Charity nor the Vatican could bring the doctor to face the media, which would only be natural. No T. V. or print media could get hold of this 'doctor'. He vanished mysteriously, not to be seen or heard even at the grand beatification ceremony where Monica was present. After all, it was his report that confirmed the 'miracle'!
- 4) Vatican had sent a team to verify Monica's case. But they did not take the opinion of the doctors who actually treated Monica. The real story would have spoiled the supernatural hocus-pocus needed for commemorating the silver jubilee of Pope's reign.

Monica Besra was treated at Balurghat District Hospital at South Dinajpur (a district in West Bengal). Dr. Manjur Murshed, the Superintendent of this hospital told me at his interview that the MoC. (Missionaries of Charity) had pressurized him to agree that this was a miracle, but he did not yield. Dr. Murshed also said that a daily newspaper correspondent from Calcutta along with a representative of Vatican had earlier visited

him and tried to make him agree that Monica was cured inexplicably by the mother's picture. The doctors' interviews were already shown in the popular T.V. programme called "Khoj Khobor".

This 'unsaintly' effort to make a 'Saint' was sure to arouse a storm of controversy. And that it did. So the sainthood declaration had to be postponed to the future. In this case, truth was established with the cooperation of our media, with active support of the public and the numerous members and well-wishers of the Rationalists who would take keen interest in knowing the truth, rather than falling prey to fear, greed and corruption. Sometimes truth is suppressed by these three elements and is never made public. It is more common when the arbitrator is a religious institution and the country is a poor third world country. We have seen it many times in the past.

- 5) Representatives of the Vatican did not speak to Monica's neighbours. Why? Had they done so, they would have known that the tumour did not disappear overnight. It subsided gradually after prolonged treatment.

While citing the 'miracle' from West-Bengal, Pope had underestimated the Rationalists of Bengal. Earlier, BBC Channel 4 as well as National Geographic had made popular documentary films on the rationalists of Bengal titled 'Guru Busters' and 'India Diary' respectively; and the New York Times had published full-page articles on our activities. They had highlighted the rationalists as a force to reckon with. But still the Vatican and the MoC were complacent about the matter. They probably thought that compared to the big powers, who has demolished the politically powerful socialist countries time and again by their obscurantist forces, these rationalists were small fry.

And it is those evidences which Vatican had ignored or avoided, that have been recorded, photographed and telecast by the freethinking rationalists. Millions of people heard what Monica's neighbours had to say. India is a country ranking among the first few in corruption. But still, the programme shown on T.V. (Khoj-Khobor) proves that there are people with enough courage and brains to detect the truth and show it too. However small their number may be, there are media people who are upright enough not to be corrupted easily.

- 6) We wonder, when the Pope himself was ailing, why did he not use Mother Teresa's picture to cure himself? It could have accelerated the sainthood process, and would have snubbed the non-believers and skeptics once and for all. Is it his folly? Or plain

shrewdness? We have watched the pope on T.V. almost disabled with disease. Many viewers here in Bengal have asked us – ‘Why hasn’t he tried the Mother’s picture?’ Or ‘does he know that it was impossible to cure such disorders with the help of a picture?’

- 7) We remember the Pope’s assertion – that the first millennium had seen the dawn of Christianity in Europe. America was won in the second millennium. The third millennium is to win over Asia. Probably this was the first step towards that. India with its population of 110 million was a coveted target for multinationals. They have chosen Miss World and Miss Universe from India to promote their cosmetic products. They have used the popular cricket stars to advertise for their products, and capture the Indian market. All quite successfully. Now to sell Christianity in the Indian market, Mother Teresa’s image was the best pawn. She was the ideal model for promoting Catholicism in India.

Ironically, Mother Teresa herself never believed in these supernatural treatments. For her own ailments she took the help of modern medicine and has never claimed in her lifetime to possess supernatural power to cure people. It is disgraceful on the part of the missionaries to propagate such nonsense in the name of mother who believed in hard work.

In the world, Christian population is double that of the Muslim, and two and a half times that of the Hindu population. It is the Christian world that is ahead of all others by way of wealth and weapon. So it is natural that they would want to spread Christianity among all the rest. Then it would be easier to dominate over all by arousing Christian sentiment. It is part of the great American non-violent ‘brain-war’. According to this game plan, the third-world is supplied with large amounts of donation to form non-government organizations (NGO). Indian leaders of these notorious NGOs fill their own pockets with chunks of this foreign fund. But they in turn act as agents of the donor country. They feed the donor country with information and act on their instructions.

Sending missionaries far and wide, to spread Christianity all over the world is also part of this same brain war. Every year millions of dollars, sterling pounds and Euro are spent to nurture these missionary bodies.

The monetary help comes in a roundabout way. Let me give an example Christian Countries send donations in the form of powder milk, edible oil, wheat etc to the missionaries in very large quantities. The missionary organizations do not need them in such large quantities, so they sell out portions of these commodities in the local market.

With the money, they start construction. Starting from small bamboo sheds with tin roofs, in time they acquire acres of land and open hospitals, schools, churches and farmhouses.