UNIVERSITY OF GRAZ

Department of Old Testament Studies

Invitation to the guest lecture by Titus Joseph:

Indian Methods of Biblical Interpretation: Dhvani and Dalit Readings

Friday, 11 December 2026 | 10:00–11:30

SR 47.14 | Universitätszentrum Theologie (Heinrichstr. 78/I)

Indian biblical scholarship has contributed two original hermeneutical methods: the dhvani method and Dalit hermeneutics. Both are essentially synchronic approaches to the text.
The dhvani method draws its inspiration from the 12th-century Indian poetics of Anandavardhana, while Dalit interpretation emerges from the lived experience of caste oppression and the struggle against untouchability. 70% of Christians in India are dalits („untouchables“). While the dhvani approach enjoyed considerable popularity in the 1990s, Dalit hermeneutics has become increasingly prominent in recent years.
In this presentation, I will first introduce the theoretical foundations of these two methods and then demonstrate their application: using the dhvani method to interpret the Book of Ruth, and a Dalit reading to interpret the Hagar narratives in Genesis 16 and 21.

Prof. Titus Joseph

P. Joseph Titus, born in 1972 at Kalpattu (Tamilnadu, India) is a catholic priest. He holds an M.A. in English from Annamalai University (India) and a Master of Theology from St. Peter's Pontifical Institute (Bangalore, India). He obtained the Degree of Doctor in Theology from the Catholic Institute of Paris and the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium). At present, he teaches Hebrew Bible and Old Testament at St. Peter's Pontifical Institute, Bangalore.



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