



The myth of altruism and generosity surrounding Mother Teresa is dispelled in a paper by Serge Larivée and Genevieve Chenard of University of Montreal's Department of Psychoeducation and Carole Sénéchal of the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Education. The paper will be published in the March issue of the journal *Studies in Religion/Sciences religieuses* and is an analysis of the published writings about Mother Teresa.

Like the journalist and author Christopher Hitchens, who is amply quoted in their analysis, the researchers conclude that her hallowed image—which does not stand up to analysis of the facts—was constructed, and that her beatification was orchestrated by an effective media relations campaign.

“While looking for documentation on the phenomenon of altruism for a seminar on ethics, one of us stumbled upon the life and work of one of Catholic Church's most celebrated woman and now part of our collective imagination—Mother Teresa—whose real name was Agnes Gonxha,” says Professor Larivée, who led the research. “The description was so ecstatic that it piqued our curiosity and pushed us to research further.”

As a result, the three researchers collected 502 documents on the life and work of Mother Teresa. After eliminating 195 duplicates, they consulted 287 documents to conduct their analysis, representing 96% of the literature on the founder of the Order of the Missionaries of Charity (OMC).

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