Conversio im Wandel

Basler Missionare zwischen Europa und Süindien und die Ausbildung einer Kontaktreligiosität, 1834–1860

von
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In the first half of the nineteenth century, Basel missionaries travelled to India with strong religious convictions and values, which were shaped by the European Awakening. Yet, the encounter with Indians changed them: by modifying their beliefs and values and by adapting Indian concepts, they developed a contact religiosity. Judith Becker focuses on the 'Christian values' of conversion and sanctification and demonstrates how these concepts changed in the encounter. She relies on approaches developed in sociological and psychological studies on conversion. Using postcolonial concepts, Becker asks how people and religion in India were represented by the missionaries. The mission reports oscillate between exoticisation and an emphasis on equality and unity of mankind. There are, however, clear differences between the narratives written by people in Europe or in India. Those missionaries who lived in India for decades only seldom used exoticisation and adapted some Indian concepts. Their contact religiosity demonstrates the meaning of intercultural entanglements to the Europeans.>