

## Review

Richard Fox Young (ed.), *India and the Indianness of Christianity: Essays on Understanding—Historical, Theological and Bibliographical—in Honor of Robert Eric Frykenberg*. Studies in the History of Christian Missions series. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009. xi + 283 pp. \$45. ISBN: 978-0-8028-6392-8 (paperback).

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A book honouring Robert Frykenberg is necessarily wide-ranging, involving political and church history, theology, and detailed work in texts and archives in several languages. Young's introduction surveys his career and influence, and the teaching from which the 14 contributors benefited; aspects of this are discussed further in each essay. There is a bibliography of Frykenberg's publications, and an index to the whole book.

Some of the essays take up Frykenberg's interest in indigenous agency in Indian history, in their accounts of Indian Christians and their leaders. Avril Powell describes the remarkably ecumenical Christian community in Agra between 1813 and 1825, led by the scholarly former Muslim 'Abdul Masih and, in its early years, Daniel Corrie. She points to the manuscript translations of 'Abdul Masih's lost Urdu journals and letters as sources for further research. Daniel Jeyaraj shows the interdependence of Tamil Christians and missionaries, mainly through a sketch of the life of Rayanayakkan (1700–1771), incidentally showing how Indian Christianity was beset not only by caste divisions but by imported ones between Catholics, Pietists, and Moravians. These divisions are examined further by Michael Bergunder, who examines conversions of Catholics by Protestant missions and vice versa, conversions between Protestant missions, and the complex denominational history of Kerala; he points out indigenous factors, particularly caste rivalry, in effecting change of denomination.

Another theme is relations between Christians and other Indians. Young's own essay is about an Indian, but not a Christian: an early nineteenth-century brahmin, Ragaviah, known only from manuscripts in the British Library. Writing in English, he criticized a typical British account of Hindu customs, offering 'a better description of the People'—by which he meant a more favourable one, based not on observation but on texts. Peter Andersen examines an account in Santali, written by a Christian around 1907, recording religious and political events from the 1870s. It appears that prayer, repentance and

divine punishment were seen by Santals as part of a route into modernity, which prompts a discussion of the concept of syncretism. Chandra Malamalli discusses two legal cases: one in which a Tamil Christian unsuccessfully claimed his deceased brother's property on the grounds of joint family ownership, and one in which a Catholic church was prohibited from practising caste segregation. In each case, 'Indian Catholicism' was 'de-Indianized' (p. 145) by the British-Indian legal system, preparing the way for the Hindu nationalist perception of Christians as outsiders. Gunnel Cederlöf discusses the difficulties of the Swedish mission, especially Bishop Johannes Sandegren, in the decades leading to independence: Indian suspicion of Western influence, British hostility to Germany (Sandegren's mother was German), differences between Swedish and German protestantism, and the communal divisions that, for some at the time, called into question the notion of an Indian nation. The same problem, seen within the frame of Indian politics, appears in Judith Brown's essay on the position of Indian Christians at independence, when Nehru had difficulty in making his secular state a reality in the face of state leaders, and indeed a President, who were at best indifferent to harassment of Christians, while he himself feared for national unity. John Carman reviews his own work, as a non-Indian Christian, in understanding and interpreting the theology of Ramanuja. Though he does not mention individual examples, he deals sensitively with the position of Indian Christians, which gives them 'a greater right to speak than less involved outsiders' like himself (p. 237).

Other essays are about missions rather than indigenous Christians. Geoffrey Oddie traces the influence of pandits on nineteenth-century missionary views of Hinduism. Pandits were members of an élite, though not all were brahmins, yet missionaries preparing to work among ryots and low castes had to rely on them for their knowledge of language and culture. Sometimes pandits reinforced the missionaries' tendency to seek 'real Hinduism' in Advaita Vedanta, but some, especially in South India, led them to discover bhakti. Brian Stanley studies the missionary hero, saint, or even martyr, Henry Martyn—who influenced 'Abdul Masih. He finds witnesses to a more sociable side of him than the picture of unrelenting seriousness presented by his Evangelical and Tractarian admirers, and by his own journal. Wilbert Shenk discusses Western attempts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to revive the ancient churches of Kerala and elsewhere, usually on evangelical lines. He shows that these attempts had both ecumenical and missionary aims, and suggests that these aims were not opposed.

Finally, two archivists point the way to further research. Rosemary Seton surveys holdings in the UK, and Martha Smalley those in the USA and Canada, some in the hands of missionary societies, others entrusted by them to university libraries. Each essay explains the various ways in which archives were acquired and organized, the information available in catalogues and on line, and the invaluable help provided to researchers by archivists and librarians.