

Psychological Substrates of Religious Conversion: A Systematic Literature Review

A paper proposal
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Abstract

At the heart of Christian missionary activities is conversion – internal and/or external. What are the psychological dynamics, comprising cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions, involved in religious conversion? Could “sudden conversions”, in contrast to “gradual conversions”, be predicted by insecure attachment between an infant and the care-giver? Moreover, are sudden conversions associated with religious radicalisation and even violent extremism?

In an attempt to answer these questions, the proposed paper aims to systematically review psychology literature related to religious conversion and identify emerging themes. Systematic Literature Review consists in searching, selecting, and analysing patterns in the selected peer-reviewed journal articles in an attempt to answer a set of research questions, then to report the emerging themes and discuss them in the context of the focus-area.

Following these steps, the present review will explore the psychological substrates of religious conversion. The findings would be insightful not only to scholars of mission studies but also active missionaries in the field.

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