



Seminar

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*Spirituality and “Christian” Values in the
German and English Awakening Movement*

Thursday, 3 December, 4:15 p.m.

In the Thunberg Lecture Hall
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala
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S W E D I S H
C O L L E G I U M
for ADVANCED STUDY

ABOUT JUDITH BECKER

Judith Becker studied Protestant theology, philosophy and history at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum and at the Sorbonne in Paris, and reformation history at St Andrews Reformation Studies Institute. She holds a doctorate in the History of Christianity from the Ruhr-Universität Bochum and completed her habilitation at Johannes-Gutenberg-Universität Mainz. She is a senior researcher at the Leibniz-Institut für Europäische Geschichte in Mainz, with a focus on reformed confessionalisation and religious migration as well as on Protestant church ordinances of the Reformation. Her second area of interest lies in mission and intercultural religiosity in early modern and modern times. She has also worked on the shift of values and on historical consciousness, particularly in the nineteenth-century mission movement. From 2010 to 2014, she directed a junior research group funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research on ‘Transfer and Transformation of Missionaries’ Images of Europe in Contact with the Other, 1700–1970’.

Becker’s books include *Conversio im Wandel: Basler Missionare zwischen Europa und Südindien und die Ausbildung einer Kontaktreligiosität, 1834–1860* (2015); *Gemeindeordnung und Kirchenzucht: Johannes a Lascos Kirchenordnung für London (1555) und die reformierte Konfessionsbildung* (2007); (ed.) *European Missions in Contact Zones: Transformation through Interaction in a (Post-)Colonial World* (2015); (ed., with Brian Stanley) *Europe as the Other: External Perspectives on European Christianity* (2014); (ed., with Bettina Braun) *Die Begegnung mit Fremden und das Geschichtsbewusstsein* (2012).

During her stay at SCAS, she will work on a project dealing with ‘Christian’ values in Pietism and Evangelicalism, focusing particularly on transnational spirituality in the transition period around 1800.

ABSTRACT

The awakening movements of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were highly international. The German- and English-speaking awakening movements featured a very similar spirituality, and the values they perceived as necessary for “true” Christians also seemed to be the same. This talk asks how these assumed “Christian” values were interpreted religiously and what they meant for the lives of Christians. It concentrates on the “Patriarch of the (German) Awakening”, Johann Heinrich Jung-Stilling (1740–1816), and his 1200-page-novel *Das Heimweh* (“Homesickness”). Published in 1794, with an additional interpretative volume (*Der Schlüssel zum Heimweh*) added in 1795, *Das Heimweh* was extremely successful. It incited several thousand letters to the author and prompted Jung-Stilling to set up a journal that ran until 1816.

The novel works on different levels. Most basically it tells the story of a young man, Christian/Eugenius, who suffers from homesickness and travels to the east in the hope of arriving at the kingdom of the “monarch”. He experiences several seductions and temptations, meets with ghosts who guide him, and later on he and his future wife, Urania, are abducted several times. In Egypt, Christian is himself initiated, immediately thereafter married to Urania, and inaugurated as prince and leader of the “true” Christians into the “land of peace”. In reading this novel, the audience could learn what values were important, to whom, and at what moment in their travel through life. They could also learn how values were transformed when a Christian grew in knowledge and sanctification. In his *Schlüssel*, Jung-Stilling transferred the story to another level and explained that the whole journey was an allegory of the way of Christians to self-knowledge, acceptance of God and unity with God. The figures were to be read as allegories of internal powers urging a person on. Through this novel, the talk will offer insight into the system of values and the spirituality of awakened Christians at the end of the eighteenth century.