

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document: "FOUNDING A HEAVENLY EMPIRE":  
PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES AND  
GERMAN COLONIALISM, 1860-1919

Jeremy Best, Doctor of Philosophy, 2012

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This dissertation investigates the relationship between German Protestant missionaries and secular leaders of colonial politics and culture in the German colonial empire during the nineteenth century. In particular, it examines how missionaries defined their collective identity as an international one against pressures that encouraged mission societies to adopt and promote policies that favored the German colonial state and German colonial economic actors. Protestant missionaries in Germany created an alternative ideology to govern Germans' and Germany's relationships with the wider world. The dissertation examines the formation of an internationalist missionary methodology and ideology by German missionary intellectuals from 1870 and the shift to traditional Protestant nationalism during World War I. It then examines the application by missionaries of this ideology to the major issues of Protestant mission work in German East Africa: territorial rivalries with German Catholic mission orders, mission school policy, fundraising in the German metropole, and international missionary cooperation. In so doing, it revises

conventional interpretations about the relationship between Protestantism and nationalism in Germany during this period.

“FOUNDING A HEAVENLY EMPIRE”: PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES AND  
GERMAN COLONIALISM, 1860-1919

By

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## Dedication

To Amy who has been with me on this from the start. And to Benjamin who provided me with the energy to get to the finish.

## Acknowledgements

Over the many years that it took to bring this study to its completion I have incurred a significant collection of debts. In an effort to repay some fraction of those debts, I offer here some acknowledgements of the many people and institutions to which I owe my gratitude. I hope that these words can convey my deep appreciation.

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During my research in Germany and the United States I was fortunate to work with many highly professional and extremely helpful staff members at institutions in both countries. The services of the archivists and librarians at the *Hauptarchiv Bethel* in Bielefeld; the *Unitätsarchiv* in Herrnhut; *Frankesche Stiftungen* in Halle; the *Schriftarchiv* of the *Vereinte Evangelische Mission* in Wuppertal; and the *Berliner Missionswerk* and *Staatsbibliothek* both in Berlin, were invaluable. In America the staffs of the Library of Congress and the University of Maryland libraries were invaluable resources. In particular, I must express my special thanks to the Interlibrary Loan staff in College Park for locating hard to find materials and patience with my requests, especially during the final stages of this dissertation.

Naturally, a project of this size and duration has been supported along the way by a number of friends, acquaintances, and colleagues. Jeffrey Herf challenged me to

produce a dissertation that I could be proud of. He pushed me to become a historian from the first day we met during a visit I made several months before enrolling at Maryland. I offer him my deepest thanks for the support and kindness he has shown me over the last seven years. The other members of my committee, Richard Price, Paul Landau, and Andrew Zimmerman were each important contributors to my growth as a scholar and to the arguments of this dissertation. During my years in College Park I made many other friends among the students and faculty. The many hours that they listened to my ideas about missionaries, empires, and Pietism I owe back to them many times over. The history graduate students at Maryland make the department a lively and engaging place to study.

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I must close with an acknowledgement of the support of my family. My in-laws Becky, Joel and Gini, Adam, and David, provided good humor and positivity at many a family holiday and helped me survive the perils of graduate school. For that they will also have my love and gratitude. To my own family I owe everything that I have become. My mother, Linda, and my father, Herbert, did not hesitate to provide whatever support and advice they could as I worked on this project. Christopher has always been a loyal and

true friend, more than just my brother. His home with Anna was a wonderful refuge for a time from the difficulties of writer's block, my love to them both. Finally, I must close with Amy and Benjamin – I used to only have one favorite but now I have two.

All of the people who have helped with this project along the way deserve my everlasting thanks. Of course, any errors or failings of this project reflect upon its author and not upon those who aided him along the way.



## Table of Contents

Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Figures.....	vii
Introduction.....	1
Chapter One: Missionary Politics on Paper.....	44
Chapter Two: Confessions in Conflict.....	92
Chapter Three: Language and Labor.....	141
Chapter Four: Mission on the Home Front.....	198
Chapter Five: Mission Conferences and the Persistence of Internationalism.....	249
Chapter Six: From Edinburgh to Versailles.....	297
Conclusion.....	346
Bibliography.....	359

## List of Figures

Figure 1. German Mission Stations in German East Africa, 1914.....	vii
Figure 2. Strategy Map by Martin Klamroth [1902].....	126

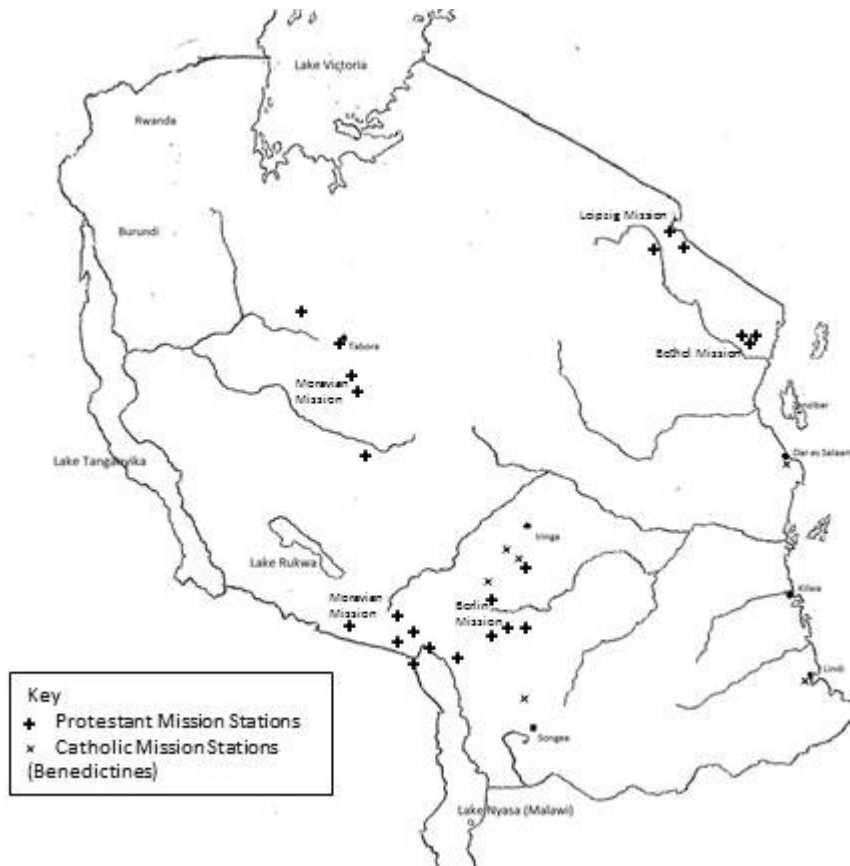


Figure 1. German Mission Stations in German East Africa, 1914 (Source: Roland Oliver, *The Missionary Factor in East Africa* [London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1952], facing page 174.)

## Introduction

German missionaries of the nineteenth century supported an internationalist ideology of Christian evangelization. When Gustav Warneck, leader of the German Protestant mission movement, described the purpose of mission work, he declared that mission “should found an empire, but not a global empire” for Germans. Instead, missionaries should strive to create a “heavenly empire” of Christians.<sup>1</sup> In this dissertation, I argue that late nineteenth-century German Protestant missionaries, German mission societies, and the German mission movement in general viewed themselves and their community as members of an international community of believers. German Protestant missionaries and supporters defined their work as an integral component of the universal, evangelical movement of global Protestants that made up the ever-expanding Kingdom of God that would, given time, coincide with the entirety of humanity. German missionaries believed themselves internationalists, but they struggled against nationalist conceptions of their purposes, initially from the outside but eventually also from the inside of their movement. I will demonstrate the relative strength of German missionaries’ internationalism, how this internationalism led the German missionary movement to respond to the colonial state and other secular colonial powers, and show how circumstances after the turn of the twentieth

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<sup>1</sup> Warneck, “Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik,” *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* 28 (1901): 169. The *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* is hereafter abbreviated AMZ in footnotes.

century allowed a nationalist mission theory to preempt the older tradition of internationalism.

German Protestant missionaries' internationalism, in nineteenth-century German politics and culture, defined itself contra nationalism. Throughout this dissertation the term internationalism will be used to refer to German Protestant missionaries' preference for a community of Protestant Christians dispersed around the globe but joined together by a common identity devoted to bringing all of humanity into their evangelical community. The Protestant missionaries called this community a Christian community but Protestant missionary leaders only sporadically considered Catholics and other non-Protestant Christians members of this community. In spite of these sectarian tendencies, the German Protestant missionary worldview was universalist because it imagined a community open to all peoples and able to encompass all peoples who willingly embraced the Gospels and Protestant denominational forms. Missionary internationalism challenged nationalist articulations of identity because it rejected any "natural" or historical human communitarian differences as irrelevant to Protestant Christian bonds of kinship and fellowship.

This definition of missionary ideology raises a number of corollary arguments regarding the self-conception, the practical activities, and dominant ideologies of Protestant mission culture during the *Gründerzeit*, the period preceding the official establishment of a Prussian-dominated German Empire in 1871, and into the *Kaiserreich* of Bismarck and Wilhelm II. First, missionaries' preference for internationalism over national particularism refutes in the German case depictions of

Christian mission as a tool of the colonizing state. Missionary intellectuals' ideology denied links with the colonial powers, and missionaries regularly challenged colonial officials, colonial policies, and other colonial interests in ways that missionaries interpreted to favor colonized peoples. Second, when calculating the relative strength of various interest groups, Protestant missionaries emerge as one of the most unified and influential lobbies in colonial politics. Missionaries' ambivalence toward economic and settlement colonialism means that their influence is an important factor in assessing the intents, "successes," and "failures" of German colonialism.

The importance of the German Protestant mission movement within Germany has been underappreciated up to this point. In 1905, twenty years into Germany's colonial venture, sixteen Protestant missionary societies drew support from German donors and ten of those societies operated in the German colonial territories. A mission census in 1903 indicated that over 1,000 missionaries performed the work of these sixteen societies in the mission field for approximately 500,000 converts. (For the Protestants converts were men and women who had undergone several years of instruction in Christianity and who had been subsequently baptized). In either case, the measured strength of German Protestant missionaries had doubled since 1885. Though mission societies never directly presented data on the numbers of their financial supporters, together the societies collected over 5 million marks in donations in 1903;<sup>2</sup> in 1914, just at the outbreak of the First World War, mission societies claimed an income of over 10 million marks in Germany.<sup>3</sup> As a comparison, the main

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<sup>2</sup> [Gustav Warneck], "Die gegenwärtige Lage der deutschen evangelischen Mission," *AMZ* 32(1905), 157.

<sup>3</sup> "Bericht über den Stand der Missionsarbeit bei Kriegsausbruch 1914" (n.d. [1914?]), BMW/bmw1/2257.

colonial lobbying group in Imperial Germany, the German Colonial Society, peaked at a membership of just over 43,000 in October 1914.<sup>4</sup> In addition to missionaries' preeminence in the metropole, German missionaries also represented the most organized and numerous segment of Germany's white African population.<sup>5</sup> It is a safe conclusion that the influence of the Protestant mission movement in Germany outstripped any other colonial interest group in terms of support base and yet little work has been done on the political operations of the movement.

The political activities of the German Protestant mission movement make up the central concern of this dissertation. The political and religious views of Africans in the German Protestant mission territories are an important factor in any history of the German Protestant mission movement but this project is designed to analyze the dynamics within German Protestant circles that governed the formulations and fate of German Protestant missionary internationalism. As a result, this dissertation will only be able to make broad reference to the intentions and influence of African communities and polities during this period leaving a consideration of Africans' participation in the formation of a German Protestant missionary Christianity for future research. Instead, in order to argue forcefully for the internationalism of the German Protestant mission movement and its eventual turn to nationalism in the last years of the *Kaiserreich*, I will concentrate on the leadership of the German Protestant missionaries. These men formed a circle of friends, colleagues, and acquaintances

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<sup>4</sup> Richard Victor Pierard, "The German Colonial Society, 1882-1914," (PhD. diss., State University of Iowa, 1964), 106.

<sup>5</sup> According to the *Jahresbericht über die Entwicklung der Schutzgebiete in Afrika und der Südsee im Jahre 1907/08*, in 1908 missionaries were behind *Handwerker, Ansiedler, Kaufleute*, and *Beamte* in the African colonies overall. In East Africa, they outnumbered all occupational groups except *Ansiedler*. See *Jahresbericht über die Entwicklung der Schutzgebiete in Afrika und der Südsee im Jahre 1907/08*, Beilage zum Deutschen Kolonialblatt 1909, (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1909), Anlage A, 23.

that provided the intellectual and political leadership of Germany's most significant movement for overseas activities during the nineteenth century. They held posts as directors of mission societies, chairs of theology, country and city pastors, imperial officials, and leaders of missionary organizations that worked to support the mission societies abroad and in Germany. Their ideas about mission work appeared in formal publication and private correspondence. I will present missionary leaders' views on political action, inter-confessional relations, education, fundraising, and international collaboration to demonstrate the forcefulness of their international beliefs and the impact of political and economic changes in Germany, Europe, and the world upon those beliefs.

### **The Protestant Mission Movement**

German Protestant communities were present at the beginning of the modern mission movement. August Herman Francke gathered pietists at Halle in the seventeenth century, which stimulated Lutherans in Germany and Denmark to begin foreign mission work. The contemporaneous founding of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts in 1698 and 1701 in Britain further encouraged the Danish King Frederick IV to establish a mission within the small Danish trading enclave at Tranquebar in South India. The so-called Royal Danish Halle Mission sent forth two pietist theology students from Berlin, Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg and Henry Plütschau, in 1705. They



arrived in India after a long journey in 1706.<sup>6</sup> Less than three decades later the Moravians in Herrnhut quickly joined the mission movement with missions to the Danish West Indies and the British colonies.<sup>7</sup> British Christians responded to William Carey's *An Enquiry Into the Obligations of Christians*<sup>8</sup> by following Carey's call to expand the existing mission movement and set about establishing a collection of new mission societies – the Baptist Missionary Society in 1792, the London Missionary Society in 1795, the Scottish and Glasgow Missionary Societies in 1796, and the Society for Missions to Africa and the East in 1799 (after 1812 called the Church Missionary Society).<sup>9</sup> The Basel Mission Society's foundation in the same period<sup>10</sup> and the extensive recruitment of continental missionaries, especially Germans, by the British mission societies continued the history of the German Protestant mission movement.<sup>11</sup>

The four mission societies examined as part of this dissertation can be separated from the larger category of all German Protestant mission societies because they were the only four societies with an extensive history in German East Africa.

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<sup>6</sup> Daniel Jeyaraj, "Mission Reports from South India and Their Impact on the Western Mind: The Tranquebar Mission of the Eighteenth Century," in *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914*, ed. Dana Robert (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), 22-23.

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 29.

<sup>8</sup> William Carey, *An Enquiry Into the Obligations of Christians, to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens in Which the Religious State of the Different Nations of the World, the Success of Former Undertakings, and the Practicability of Further Undertakings, Are Considered* (Leicester: 1792).

<sup>9</sup> Jeffrey Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 70; and Porter, *Religion versus Empire?*, 40; and Bernd Holtwick, "Licht und Schatten: Begründungen und Zielsetzungen des protestantischen missionarischen Aufbruchs im frühen 19. Jahrhundert," in *Weltmission und religiöse Organisationen: Protestantische Missionsgesellschaften im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Artur Bogner, Bernd Holtwick, and Hartmann Tyrell (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2004), 225.

<sup>10</sup> Johannes Christian Hoekendijk, *Kirche und Volk in der deutschen Missionswissenschaft*, trans. Erich-Walter Pollmann (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1967), 23-24.

<sup>11</sup> Of the fifteen missionaries recruited by the Church Missionary Society between 1804 and 1813, only three were English-speaking. Porter, *Religion versus Empire?*, 56.

The Neukirchen and Schleswig-Holstein Missions began their work very late in the German colonial period and so never achieved any significance before the outbreak of World War I.<sup>12</sup> In addition, distinctions can be made among the four societies; the *Brüdergemeine*'s *Missionsdirektion*; the *Berliner Missionsgesellschaft* – before 1907 called the *Gesellschaft zur Beförderung der evangelischen Missionen unter den Heiden zu Berlin* (the Society for the Promotion of Protestant Missions amongst the Heathens), colloquially called Berlin I to distinguish it from the two other Berlin-based mission societies; the *Evangelisch-Lutherische Missionsgesellschaft* (Evangelical Lutheran Mission Society or Leipzig Mission for its home city); and the Bethel Mission (originally the *Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft für Deutsch-Ostafrika*, generally referred to by the acronym EMDOA); covered by this dissertation. The *Brüdergemeine* founded in 1732, Berlin Mission in 1824, and Leipzig Mission in 1832, all were considered “old missions” because they had been established before the creation of the German Empire in 1871 and the conquest of Germany's colonies in the mid-1880s. Meanwhile, the Bethel Mission arose directly out of the colonial movement in 1887 and was thus considered by German missionary circles as a “new mission.” Beyond these characteristics the German Protestant mission societies that took up work in German East Africa differed in other significant ways.<sup>13</sup>

Beyond the difference in each society's origins, there were also basic differences in the makeup of the mission societies. The Moravians of the

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<sup>12</sup> A similar distinction was made in Majida Hamilton, *Mission im kolonialen Umfeld: Deutsche protestantische Missionsgesellschaften in Deutsch-Ostafrika* (Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Göttingen, 2009), 14n26.

<sup>13</sup> John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 217.

*Brüdergemeine* had roots among the early Czech Protestants who had followed Jan Hus. In the early eighteenth century they fled Habsburg persecution into the lands of Nikolaus von Zinzendorf. Zinzendorf, a Lutheran who had learned pietism from Francke in Halle, sought to integrate the Moravians with the local Lutheran congregations around his holdings in the Oberlausitz of southwest Saxony. Eventually the *Brüdergemeine* formed its own religious community but one whose simple theology of spiritual renewal allowed it to merge with both Calvinist and Lutheran established churches across Germany and Europe.<sup>14</sup> The Berlin Mission's founders shared the pietistic roots of Zinzendorf, but they initially intended to avoid the fraught theological debates over Calvinism and Lutheranism and wanted to exist as a nondenominational organization. However, in 1817 the King of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm III, declared the union of the Lutheran and Calvinist confessions under one Prussian rite.<sup>15</sup> The Berlin Mission felt compelled to declare itself a mission within the Union when it was established in 1824. In effect the Berlin Mission adopted a "mild Lutheranism."<sup>16</sup> Members of the theological seminar of the Berlin Mission, men training to take up mission work in South Africa, objected to the changes. In particular, a number of orthodox Lutheran seminarians, as well as supporters of the established church in Saxony asserted their commitment to Lutheranism. The Dresden Mission Society (*Evangelisch-Lutherische Missionsgesellschaft zu Dresden*) had been established in 1832 as a support

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<sup>14</sup> Marcia Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika 1891-1941: Lutherans and Moravians in the Southern Highlands* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 9-10.

<sup>15</sup> Christopher M. Clark, *The Politics of Conversion: Missionary Protestantism and the Jews in Prussia 1728-1941* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 214-215; and Gerhard Ruhbach, "Die Religionspolitik Friedrich Wilhelms III. von Preußen," in *Bleibendes im Wandel der Kirchengeschichte: Kirchenhistorische Studien*, ed. Bernd Moeller and Gerhard Ruhbach (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1973), 307-330.

<sup>16</sup> Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika 1891-1941*, 14.

organization for the Basel Mission and its training of missionaries for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The Berlin defectors joined the Dresden Mission and with the strengthening of Lutheran sentiments amongst Dresden mission supporters the society declared its independence from the Basel Mission in protest of the expectation that seminarians accept the Anglican articles that the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel expected its missionaries to follow.<sup>17</sup> It was renamed the Leipzig Mission upon its relocation to the university city of Leipzig in 1848. The Bethel Mission arose in a time when these disputes amongst Protestants had mostly settled and had little role in the formation of the mission society.

The four mission societies, theologically different, also can be separated according to their organization. All of the mission societies had a ruling committee that served as the supervisory power for the mission society. The Berlin, Leipzig, and Bethel Missions all appointed directors to act as executives – these men made the majority of decisions for their societies. Even here there were further variations; though there is little scholarship on the Leipzig Mission's governing style, it is clear that the Berlin Mission Society and the Bethel Society both ruled their missionaries with a high degree of authoritarianism. The Berlin Mission Society was a collection of aristocrats interested in preserving traditional modes of authority within their society.<sup>18</sup> Friedrich von Bodelschwingh, the aristocratic churchman, philanthropist, leader of the Bethel community of religious reformers, and to whom the EMDOA

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<sup>17</sup> Paul Fleisch, *Hundert Jahre lutherischer Mission* (Leipzig: Verlag der Evangelisch-lutherischen Mission, 1936), 3.

<sup>18</sup> Artur Bogner, "Zur Entwicklung der Berliner Mission als Bürokratisierungsprozess," in Bogner, Holtwick, and Tyrell, *Weltmission und religiöse Organisationen*, 315.

owed its salvation from institutional and financial ruin in 1890,<sup>19</sup> organized the mission society so that he could dominate as patriarch even though he did not hold the directorship.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, the Moravians operated under the supervision of a *Missionsdirektion*, a committee of leaders representing each of the church's provinces that reported to the governing body of the entirety of the Brüdergemeine. In any case, all the mission societies maintained their independence from the organized churches of the German Empire.<sup>21</sup>

Bodelschwingh drew his missionary recruits from within his Bethel movement. Only the Bethel Society maintained an ongoing commitment to sending university-trained ministers to the East African colony.<sup>22</sup> The Leipzig Mission in its early years also committed to sending out only trained ministers but by the time the society was working in East Africa that commitment had slipped somewhat. Of sixty missionaries in the field around the world in 1903, twenty-three were theologians.<sup>23</sup> The remainder of the missionaries from the Leipzig Mission and the missionaries of the Berlin Mission received their training in seminaries run by the mission societies.<sup>24</sup> Many of these seminarians were drawn from the working classes and nowhere more

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<sup>19</sup> Thorsten Altena, "Missionare und einheimische Gesellschaft: Zur Kulturbeggnung der Bethel-Mission in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1916," in *Bethels Mission (1): Zwischen Epileptischenpflege und Heidenbekehrung*, ed. Matthias Benad (Bielefeld: Luther-Verlag, 2001), 7; Gustav Menzel, *Die Bethel-Mission: Aus 100 Jahren Missionsgeschichte* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany: Neukirchener Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1986), 45. For a short biography of Friedrich von Bodelschwingh see Hans-Walter Schmuhl, *Friedrich von Bodelschwingh* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 2005).

<sup>20</sup> Thorsten Altena, "'Brüder' und 'Väter im Herrn': Notizen zum inneren Machtgefüge protestantischer deutschsprachiger Missionsgesellschaften 1884-1918," in *Mission und Macht im Wandel politischer Orientierungen: europäische Missionsgesellschaften in politischen Spannungsfeldern in Afrika und Asien zwischen 1800 und 1945*, ed. Ulrich van der Heyden and Holger Stoecker (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2005), 68

<sup>21</sup> Hans-Joachim Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914" (PhD. diss., Freie Universität Berlin, 1971), 54.

<sup>22</sup> Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914," 31n9.

<sup>23</sup> Fleisch, *Hundert Jahre lutherischer Mission*, 168-169.

<sup>24</sup> Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika 1891-1941*, 15.

so than amongst those missionaries trained by the Herrnhuters. The *Brüdergemeine* sent out lay missionaries, especially artisans, and only gradually instituted a form of training like that given by the Leipzig and Berlin Missions.<sup>25</sup>

The final important variance among these four mission societies relates to their respective interconnections with other organizations and institutions within Germany and beyond. Two of the oldest missions operated internationally. The Moravian Church had three major provinces by the nineteenth century: Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These three provinces gathered at decennial synods to decide the direction of the church; the organization's leadership was called the *Unitätsdirektion* (Unified Directorate) and it supervised the *Missionsdirektion*.<sup>26</sup> The connections of the Leipzig Mission were also denominational and international. The Leipzig Mission's rejection of the Prussian Union included a desire to offer a "supra-regional Lutheran alternative" to the existing non-denominational mission societies operating in the 1820s. This meant that the *Generalversammlung* (General Assembly) of the Leipzig Mission included representatives from the Lutheran Churches of Hannover, Schleswig, Thuringia and elsewhere within Germany; Lutherans in the Russian Empire; and from the Swedish and Danish Lutheran State Churches until they each established their own mission societies in the 1830s.<sup>27</sup> The most intimate connections of the Berlin and Bethel Missions were, on the other hand, internal to Germany. The Berlin Mission enjoyed close connections with the royal

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<sup>25</sup> Wolfgang Gabbert, "Phasen und Grundprobleme protestantischer Mission im kolonialen Afrika – die Brüdergemeine bei den Nyakyusa in Tansania," in Bogner, Holtwick, and Tyrell, *Weltmission und religiöse Organisationen*, 520-521; and Altena, "'Brüder' und 'Väter im Herrn'," 61.

<sup>26</sup> Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika 1891-1941*, 12.

<sup>27</sup> Altena, *"Ein Häuflein Christen mitten in der Heidenwelt des dunklen Erdteils": Zum Selbst- und Fremdverständnis protestantischer Missionare im kolonialen Afrika 1884-1918* (Münster: Waxmann Verlag, 2003), 19; and Fleisch, *Hundert Jahre lutherischer Mission*, 6.

house and the pietist aristocrats of Prussia. King Friedrich Wilhelm III promised a yearly donation to the Berlin Mission Society of 500 thalers in 1833,<sup>28</sup> a donation which the ruling Hohenzollern dynasty continued through their reign.<sup>29</sup> Many other important political leaders from the Prussian aristocracy also supported the society and Max Berner, the last president of the society's governing *Komitee*, was also the official within the German Colonial Department charged with managing missionary affairs.<sup>30</sup> In many ways the political connections of the Bethel Mission were even more significant and made the society an extraordinary case. In the first place, the EMDOA was founded expressly to minister to Germany's new colony in East Africa and its executive committee included the adventurer and colonial pioneer Carl Peters.<sup>31</sup> The mission's integration into Bodelschwingh's Bethel movement brought the organization even more closely into conservative circles within Germany. It also meant that the Bethel Mission was tightly bound with the program of inner mission devoted to "re-Christianizing" Germany and institutionalized Christian welfare.<sup>32</sup> The Bethel Mission's unique nature meant that its attitudes toward fundraising and education were, as will be shown, distinct from the Protestant missionary mainstream.

The various ways in which the Protestant missions in German East Africa can be divided indicate the diversity of approaches and experiences of mission work that lay behind the label "Protestant mission movement." Nonetheless, as this dissertation

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<sup>28</sup> Clark, *The Politics of Conversion*, 227.

<sup>29</sup> Verhandlungen über die vom Abgeordnetenhaus gestrichenen 500 Taler (January 5, 1870), BMW/bmw1/1134; and Kaiser Wilhelm II to Karl Jacobi and Otto Bismarck (July 21, 1888), GStAPK, I. HA Rep. 89 Zivilkabinett, Nr. 23572, Bl. 115.

<sup>30</sup> Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann, "The Kolonialrat and the Missionary Societies," in van der Heyden and Stoecker, *Mission und Macht im Wandel politischer Orientierungen*, 44.

<sup>31</sup> Menzel, *Die Bethel-Mission*, 14-19; and Horst Gründer, "Deutsche Missionsgesellschaft auf dem Wege zur Kolonialmission," in *Imperialismus und Kolonialmission: Kaiserliches Deutschland und koloniales Imperium*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Klaus Bade (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1984), 76.

<sup>32</sup> Altena, "Ein Häuflein Christen mitten in der Heidenwelt des dunklen Erdteils", 55

will demonstrate, the Protestant missionaries of Germany shared certain basic principles. These principles formed the basis of an ideology of internationalism that would only be superseded by a nationalist ideal of mission work at the close of the German colonial era. Protestant missionaries' loyalty to their international community required active maintenance and led missionaries to take interesting stances on key issues of missionary concern. This dissertation is composed of six thematic chapters, each organized to interpret the development and changes in missionary thought and politics between 1860 and 1919. The six body chapters are designed to chronicle the major issues of the Protestant mission movement in order to reveal the political and ideological views of missionary intellectuals.

Chapter one, "Missionary Politics on Paper," covers the theoretical and political writings of German missionary ideologues and leaders on the correct relationship between spiritual and political activities. This chapter concentrates on the theory produced by missionary leaders in print, in particular by practitioners of *Missionswissenschaft*, the academic study of mission work. For over thirty years Gustav Warneck, founder of *Missionswissenschaft* and intellectual godfather of late nineteenth-century German Protestant mission culture, and other leaders argued for the strictest possible separation of mission activities from imperial politics. As late as 1910 many missionary leaders still held to this position, but around 1900 influential members of a younger generation began to propose that German Protestant mission should assume a more nationalist program. This chapter discusses the resilience of Warneck and his colleagues' intellectual position in order that later chapters can



deconstruct some of the ways in which historical contingencies challenged intellectual ideals.

The first instance of these challenges is the subject of my second chapter, “Confessions in Conflict.” This chapter focuses on the confessional conflicts of German metropolitan and colonial religious life. In particular it discusses a decade-long political conflict between the Protestant Berlin Mission and the Catholic mission order of Benedictines from St. Ottilien in Bavaria. This conflict reveals some of the contours of missionaries’ imagined international community and demonstrates the tenuousness of the Protestants’ internationalism. It also demonstrates the ways that colonial events determined elements of the internationalist-nationalist debate.

On the other hand, my third chapter, “Language and Labor,” demonstrates the resilience of internationalism and anti-nationalism. Missionaries saw schools as the central component of their activities abroad and defended indigenous-language instruction against pressure from the state and secular colonialists for German-language instruction. When missionaries believed their interests were threatened, they articulated some of their strongest defenses of their internationalist identity. Some of the same missionary leaders willing to use the state to defeat the Catholics stood strongly against the state on school issues. Chapters two and three illustrate that the transition from an internationalist ideology to a nationalist ideology depended on both political concerns and missionaries’ interpretations of their religious interests.

Financial concerns were the chief vehicle for the change from internationalism to nationalism amongst missionaries. I argue in my fourth chapter, “Mission on the Home Front,” that the financial troubles that beset German mission societies during

the 1890s helped justify a turn to nationalism. Around 1900 some in the missionary movement began to argue for the utility of mission work to the national colonial project and used this argument as an inducement for financial support. This argument received its fullest validation in the *Nationalspende* of 1913, the financial success of which convinced many of the possible efficacy of nationalist rhetoric for missionary work.

However, at the same time that missionary ideologues and pragmatists were beginning to accept the nationalist vision of mission work, a strong strain of internationalism persisted. The 1910 Edinburgh World Mission Conference, its prehistory, and its aftermath all legitimated the value of the international mission movement to German Protestant missionaries' goals. My fifth chapter, "Mission Conferences and the Persistence of Internationalism," demonstrates that the Edinburgh conference and the preceding three international mission conferences fit neatly into German Protestant mission societies' system of professional collaboration. Within a larger system of conferences, international mission meetings offered a venue for strategic and global concerns. They confirmed for many missionaries that the evangelization of all non-Christians was an international project. International conferences kept the hopes of internationalism alive into the 1910s.

The preceding five chapters traced the ebb and flow of nationalist and internationalist ideas amongst German missionaries. The sixth chapter of my dissertation, "From Edinburgh to Versailles," argues that the First World War finally settled the question. Though the trend in German missionary intellectual circles had been toward an embrace of "missionary nationalism," the matter remained unsettled

in 1913 and early 1914. However, as in so many other areas, the First World War transformed mission; after 1919 the German mission movement would be concerned with very different issues.<sup>33</sup> What had been a back-and-forth between advocates of the international and the national course came to an end. German missionary leaders interpreted the war and American and British behavior during the war as an assault on German Protestantism. Like so many groups interested in Germany's foreign policy, colonial empire, and international position; German mission societies endorsed a victor's peace while they mourned the end of international evangelical unity.

### Historiography

Benedict Anderson's definition of the nation as an imagined political community, imagined as both limited and sovereign, provides this study with a useful starting point for considering the relationship between internationalist and nationalist sentiments in the Protestant missionary community of Germany.<sup>34</sup> The leaders of Germany's Protestant mission movement imagined themselves members of an international community; expansive, universal, and disinterested in notions of national sovereignty. The national community that many in Germany longed for required the elimination of international loyalties like those held by the missionaries.

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<sup>33</sup> For an early identification of World War I as a major turning point, see Roland Oliver, *The Missionary Factor in East Africa* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1952), 231. For examples of German Protestant missionaries' concerns after 1919, see Karla Poewe, "The Spell of National Socialism: The Berlin Mission's Opposition to, and Compromise with, the *Völkisch* Movement and National Socialism: Knak, Braun, and Weichert," in *Mission und Gewalt: Der Umgang christlicher Missionen mit Gewalt und die Ausbreitung des Christentums in Afrika und Asien*, ed. Ulrich van der Heyden and Jürgen Becher (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000), 268-290.

<sup>34</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 6.

By describing the contest between missionaries' imagined international community and the limited and sovereign imagined political community of nationalism, this dissertation offers a significant modification to historians' understanding of German nationalism. First, internationalism was a much stronger force in the *Kaiserreich* than is usually credited; and, second, alongside the nationalist currents of foreign policy that particularly formed after 1890, Protestant missionaries maintained a longer, older tradition of internationalism that challenged the nationalism of the German Protestant state churches. Significant segments of the German population and colonial policy circles questioned the legitimacy of a limited national community.

German Protestant missionaries' loyalty to an internationalist ideal, one devoted to a universal Christianity directed toward a global, communal commonweal, challenges our conventional understanding of Protestantism's predominantly nationalist core from its founding by Martin Luther and its consolidation in Bismarck's rule. This interpretation of German Protestantism has spilled over into the few historical studies that have considered German mission work within the larger narrative of German history and helps support interpretations of German colonialism that see German colonial rule as more authoritarian, more violent, more excessive, and less complicated than other European colonial regimes. In point of fact, the universalistic and anti-statist tendencies of the German Protestant mission movement show that the history of German colonialism is more appropriately considered within a larger narrative of European colonialism.

The simple equation of Protestantism with nationalism and mission with German colonialism gained its greatest prominence in the work of German historian

Hans-Ulrich Wehler. Wehler's work ignored German foreign mission, an oversight that omitted a group that did not fit into his description of German Protestantism or his summary of Germany's colonial "adventure."<sup>35</sup> According to Wehler, the Lutheran church and the Prussian state joined together in mutual support, and Prussia's dominance of the German Empire meant this union effectively extended beyond the Hohenzollern monarchy into the larger imperium. The Prusso-German state placed its coercive powers at the disposal of the church, and the church returned the favor by ensuring the legitimacy of the state.<sup>36</sup> Wehler argued that the Protestant church became a force for the nationalization of German culture, feeding a nationalism aimed at both external and internal opponents. The internal opponents all shared an ambiguous relationship to the Protestant church and had suspicious links with communities which transcended national borders: Catholics, socialists, and Jews.<sup>37</sup> Though Wehler's assessment of the national political importance of Protestantism during the *Kulturkampf* is accurate, the missionary movement's ideology, international and uncommitted to the program of nationalism, raises important questions about the validity of Wehler's argument, particularly after 1878.

The general neglect of missionaries also problematizes a strict adherence to Wehler's well-known "social imperialism" thesis. With this thesis Wehler argued that the decision by Bismarck and the ongoing pursuit of colonial interests by successive German leaders, especially Kaiser Wilhelm II, represented an intentional effort to

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<sup>35</sup> Wehler does discuss Protestant inner mission; unsurprising, as he saw inner mission as "the militant daughter of the church for the defense of social stability," and thus a part of Wehler's formulation of the collaborative relationship of Church and State in the German *Kaierreich*. See Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, vol. 2, *Von der Reformära bis zur industriellen und politischen "Deutschen Doppelrevolution," 1815-1845/49* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1987), 469.

<sup>36</sup> Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire, 1871-1918*, trans. Kim Traynor (Dover, NH: Berg Publishers, 1985), 114-115; and Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, vol. 2, 459.

<sup>37</sup> Wehler, *The German Empire*, 103-104, 107.

deflect attention away from domestic reform onto a great nationalist project.<sup>38</sup>

Missionaries and religious interests writ large were excluded from the social imperialist interpretation of Germany's colonial program. Wehler elevated domestic politics in his interpretation and, as a consequence, eliminated colonial activities as a possible influence upon German politics and society. Many of Wehler's like-minded successors have repeated Wehler's oversight;<sup>39</sup> and those who have questioned the social imperialism thesis have missed the import of missionaries.<sup>40</sup>

Thomas Nipperdey and David Blackbourn both offered modifications to Wehler's linkage of the Protestant church with the national state. Nipperdey argued that the majority of the institutional church opposed the particularism of nationalism. However, Nipperdey conceded that after the Wars of German Unification the Lutheran Church gradually nationalized, and both liberal and conservative Protestants adopted a religious nationalism in which the Reformation and the moral power of the nation formed the foundations of German culture and society.<sup>41</sup> Blackbourn also acknowledged the growing strength of nationalism in Germany between 1870 and 1914, but argued that national identity was perfectly compatible with other regional, religious, or class identities. However, chauvinism did exist in the *Kaiserreich*; Blackbourn pointed out that exclusionary nationalism especially targeted Jews,

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<sup>38</sup> Wehler, *The German Empire*, 105.

<sup>39</sup> Wehler's general view was shared by Hajo Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany, 1840-1945* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), and somewhat less forcefully in Gordon A. Craig, *Germany, 1866-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978). For a more recent example see Katherine Anne Lerman, "Bismarckian Germany," in *Imperial Germany, 1871-1918*, ed. James Retallack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 18-39.

<sup>40</sup> For a discussion of the critiques of Wehler's thesis see the extended discussion in Arne Perras, "Colonial Agitation and the Bismarckian State: The Case of Carl Peters" in *Wilhelminism and Its Legacies: German Modernities, Imperialism, and the Meanings of Reform, 1890-1930*, ed. Geoff Eley and James Retallack (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 155-157.

<sup>41</sup> Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte, 1866-1918*, vol. I, *Arbeitswelt und Bürgergeist* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1990), 486-489.

socialists, and Catholics – the “gold, red, and black internationals.”<sup>42</sup> While Blackbourn largely supported Wehler’s interpretation of German colonial history,<sup>43</sup> Nipperdey included a brief consideration of foreign missions in his analysis. Unfortunately, his interpretation is limited. Though he acknowledged the occasional points of conflict between missionaries and colonial governments, Nipperdey argued that because mission profited from the spread of colonial empires these differences were not significant. Because the “international links of German Protestants were never very strong,” national colonial policy and mission policy naturally flowed together.<sup>44</sup>

The closest any work on Germany’s religious history has strayed to our concerns for the German missionary movement, nationalism, and politics is Helmut Walser Smith’s study of religious conflict during the *Kaiserreich*.<sup>45</sup> Smith described the activities of the aggressively anti-Catholic Protestant League (*Evangelischer Bund*) and parallel confessionally-charged activities of the Catholic Center Party. The Protestant League included on its founding membership rolls important members of

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<sup>42</sup> David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1870-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 424-425.

<sup>43</sup> Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century*, 332-333.

<sup>44</sup> Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte, 1886-1918*, vol. I, 489-490. Nipperdey references the colonial ideologue Paul Rohrbach as characteristic of the links between mission and national policy. However, Rohrbach’s thinking on mission is a very late intervention. *Die Kolonie* (The Colony) was published in 1909 after the Herero-Nama and Maji-Maji Wars had drastically changed many colonialists, including Rohrbach’s, thinking on colonies and given particular rise to a strain of anti-mission sentiment amongst many colonialists. Furthermore, Rohrbach was never officially affiliated with any mission society; rather his connection to the colonial sphere came through the colonial administration. Nipperdey seems to be taking the fact that Rohrbach was a university-trained theologian and that he wrote about missions as sufficient to make Rohrbach representative of missionaries. Rohrbach’s theories of a “Greater Germany,” “cultural Protestantism,” and “ethical imperialism” were more interested in the “informal” imperialism Germany directed toward the Ottoman Empire. See Walter Mogk, *Paul Rohrbach und das “Größere Deutschland”: Ethischer Imperialismus im Wilhelminischen Zeitalter* (Munich: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, 1972) and Rüdiger vom Bruch, *Weltpolitik als Kulturmission: Auswärtige Kulturpolitik und Bildungsbürgertum in Deutschland am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkrieges* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1982), esp. 69-89.

<sup>45</sup> Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology and Religious Conflict 1870-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

the Protestant mission movement and was, on occasion, accused by Catholic politicians of interfering with Protestant-Catholic mission relations.<sup>46</sup> According to Smith, these two organizations were indicators of a confessional rift within the German Empire that simmered beneath the common national culture within Germany.<sup>47</sup> However, Smith's study focused on the interaction of confessional loyalties rooted in national contexts and ignored internationalist agendas and priorities like those of the missionaries.<sup>48</sup>

Germany's missionary movement has received little more coverage in surveys of Germany's colonial history than it has from the major interpretative histories of the *Kaiserreich*. The two scholarly surveys of note, Horst Gründer's *Geschichte der deutschen Kolonien* and Woodruff D. Smith's *The German Colonial Empire* both left analysis of German mission societies and their advocates' activities in the metropolitan space out of their narratives.<sup>49</sup> Gründer's work did include missionary activities, but it was not a history of the colonial movement or metropolitan colonial policy. Rather, it was a history of the various German colonies and made its purpose the presentation of the German and indigenous histories of German colonialism in the colonized space.<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, Smith's work concentrated on the connection between Germany's colonial empire and domestic German politics.<sup>51</sup> However, it relegated the consideration of missionary participation in colonial political debates to

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<sup>46</sup> Alois zu Löwenstein to Karl Axenfeld (May 15, 1913), BMW/bmw1/895.

<sup>47</sup> Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict*, 10 and 82.

<sup>48</sup> Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict*, 235-238.

<sup>49</sup> Horst Gründer, *Geschichte der deutschen Kolonien*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2000) and Woodruff D. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978).

<sup>50</sup> Gründer, *Geschichte der deutschen Kolonien*, 9. For more on Gründer's more focused work on the role of missionaries in Germany's colonial history, see below.

<sup>51</sup> W. D. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, x.



a short section; governmental, economic, political, and secular associational groups all received more individual coverage in Smith's work than both Catholic and Protestant missionaries combined.<sup>52</sup> Both surveys confirm British imperial historian Jeffrey Cox's observations on the marginality of missions in colonial histories.<sup>53</sup> Germany's nineteenth-century history has been largely devoid of any reference to missionaries.

In the last decade-and-a-half, historians have returned to the German colonial histories in search of answers to larger questions of German history. In particular, a research agenda hoping to uncover the origins of National Socialism and the Holocaust has looked to the German occupation of German Southwest Africa (modern-day Namibia) and the Herero-Nama Genocide to explain the violence of the Third Reich. Historians Isabel V. Hull, Jürgen Zimmerer, and Joachim Zeller, resurrecting an older argument made by Helmut Bley, have argued that Germany's war against the Herero in 1904 to 1907 was a unique prologue to Auschwitz, linking imperialism and genocide as Hannah Arendt had in 1951.<sup>54</sup> Zimmerer has since conceded that Nazism arose from a multitude of causes besides colonialism; however, he has maintained that colonialism was an important source of ideas for Nazis.

Colonialism and specifically the Namibian genocides served as the "ultimate [and

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<sup>52</sup> W. D. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, 119-150.

<sup>53</sup> Jeffrey Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial Power in India, 1818-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 7-9.

<sup>54</sup> Helmut Bley, *Kolonialherrschaft und Sozialstruktur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika* ([Hamburg]: Leibnitz-Verlag, 1968); Isabel V. Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005); and Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller, *Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika: der Kolonialkrieg (1904-1908) in Namibia und seine Folgen* (Berlin: Links, 2003). See also: Hannah Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973) and Horst Drechsler, *Südwestafrika unter deutscher Kolonialherrschaft: Der Kampf der Herero und Nama gegen den deutschen Imperialismus <1884-1915>* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1966).

necessary] taboo break” preceding the conception and enactment of the Final Solution.<sup>55</sup>

Zimmerer, Zeller, Hull, and their predecessors’ arguments have not passed without critique. Robert Gerwarth and Stephan Malinowski challenged this new “special path” of German history. They argued that, in fact, Germany’s colonial past and the history of its colonial violence do not stand separate from European and American colonial behavior. Their thesis about Germany’s colonial past, like Geoff Eley and David Blackbourn’s thesis against the original *Sonderweg*,<sup>56</sup> argued that Germany’s history is better understood as a part of the Western history of imperialism.<sup>57</sup> The very weakness of the colonial state contradicted any claims of its totalitarianism.<sup>58</sup> Ultimately, the arguments of Gerwarth, Malinowski, and others agree with the findings of this study. As this dissertation will argue, German missionary history is important on its own merits and as a part of a larger history of European colonialism.

Missionaries are an important element of the story of the Herero-Nama War and, unsurprisingly, they figure prominently in the histories written of the Herero, Nama, and Namibia. A significant historiography has developed around the history of the peoples of Namibia, especially in German. Some researchers have barely considered the missionaries working amongst the indigenous peoples of the region in

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<sup>55</sup> Jürgen Zimmerer, *Von Windhuk nach Auschwitz? Beiträge zum Verhältnis von Kolonialismus und Holocaust* (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2011), 69.

<sup>56</sup> David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

<sup>57</sup> Robert Gerwarth and Stephan Malinowski, “Der Holocaust als ‘kolonialer Genozid’? Europäische Kolonialgewalt und nationalsozialistischer Vernichtungskrieg,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 33(2007): 439-466. Also supported in Jon M. Bridgman, *Revolt of the Hereros* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).

<sup>58</sup> Jakob Zollmann, *Koloniale Herrschaft und ihre Grenzen: Die Kolonialpolizei in Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1894-1915* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 350-351.

their studies,<sup>59</sup> but for others the relationships between missionaries and Africans form the core of the analysis. Missionaries acted as key “agents of social change” helping facilitate the spread of global trade and creating hybrid African societies.<sup>60</sup> In the aftermath of the Herero-Nama War, missionaries helped concentrate the surviving Herero and supported the creation of a modern Herero “nation.”<sup>61</sup> Overall, this historiography contributes important conclusions to the history of Namibia, but it sheds little light on the priorities and goals of the missionaries and says nothing about the mission movement in Germany.

In some of the same ways that the Herero-Nama War dominates the history of colonial Namibia, the history of German East Africa has had a strong focus placed upon the Maji-Maji War. The Maji-Maji War, 1905-1907, “[stood] – in contrast to all other rebellions – as the first organized – quasi national – rising of African societies against white rule in Africa.”<sup>62</sup> Its historical significance has garnered a very intensive historiography.<sup>63</sup> The German military response to Maji-Maji is amongst the most brutal responses to a colonial rebellion during the period with a combination of deadly tactics and the destruction of food crops to inflict famine upon the

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<sup>59</sup> Jan-Bart Gewald, *Herero Heroes, A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia, 1890-1923* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1999); Karla Poewe, *The Namibian Herero: A History of their Psychosocial Disintegration and Survival* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1985); and Peter Scheulen, *Die “Eingeborenen” Deutsch-Südwestafrikas: Ihr Bild in deutschen Kolonialzeitschriften von 1884 bis 1918* (Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 1998).

<sup>60</sup> Tilman Dederling, *Hate the Old and Follow the New: Khoekhoe and Missionaries in Early Nineteenth-century Namibia* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1997).

<sup>61</sup> Gesine Krüger, *Kriegsbewältigung und Geschichtsbewußtsein: Realität, Deutung und Verarbeitung des deutschen Kolonialkrieges in Namibia 1904 bis 1907* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999).

<sup>62</sup> Walter Nuhn, *Flammen über Deutschost: Der Maji-Maji-Aufstand in Deutsch-Ostafrika, 1905-1906: die erste gemeinsame Erhebung schwarzafrikanischer Völker gegen weisse Kolonialherrschaft: ein Beitrag zur deutschen Kolonialgeschichte* (Bonn: Bernard & Graefe, 1998), 9. Cited in *Maji Maji: Lifting the Fog of War*, eds. James Gibling and Jamie Monson (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 1; and Karl-Martin Seeberg, *Der Maji-Maji-Krieg gegen die deutsche Kolonialherrschaft* (Berlin: D. Reimer, 1989), 14.

<sup>63</sup> Felicitas Becker and Jigal Beez, eds., *Der Maji-Maji-Krieg in Deutsch-Ostafrika, 1905-1907* (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2005); and Gibling and Monson, *Maji Maji*.

resisters.<sup>64</sup> Estimates place the number of Africans killed in the rebellion at 100,000.<sup>65</sup> Unsurprisingly, histories of the German colonial period in Tanzania include the Maji-Maji War in their narratives as well.<sup>66</sup> And yet, these discussions of the Maji-Maji War rarely include any reference to missionaries in East Africa. The best explanation is that while missionaries in Southwest Africa were accused by their political opponents of having a hand in the Herero and Nama uprising,<sup>67</sup> missionaries in East Africa escaped such characterizations. As a result, histories of the Herero-Nama War have treated missionaries as historical subjects of inquiry whereas histories of the Maji-Maji War largely have not.<sup>68</sup>

Wider histories of German East Africa have not overlooked missionaries to the same degree as those that have focused on the history of Germany. However, there has been only limited treatment on the concerns of this dissertation. Prior works have done little to investigate the metropolitan aspects of the missionary movement and when they have, they have neglected to consider the importance of political ideology. None has given serious consideration to the conflicts over national

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<sup>64</sup> Introduction to Giblin and Monson, *Maji Maji*, 8-9.

<sup>65</sup> W. D. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, 107.

<sup>66</sup> Bernd Arnold, *Steuer und Lohnarbeit im Südwesten von Deutsch-Ostafrika, 1891 bis 1916: eine historisch-ethnologische Studie* (Münster: Lit, 1994); Detlef Bald, *Deutsch-Ostafrika 1900-1914: eine Studie über Verwaltung, Interessengruppen und wirtschaftliche Erschliessung* (Munich: Weltforum Verlag, 1970); and John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, esp. 168-202. The exceptions being Ralph Austen, *Northwest Tanzania under German and British rule: Colonial Policy and Tribal Politics, 1889-1938* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968); Jan-Georg Deutsch, *Emancipation without Abolition in German East Africa, c. 1884-1914* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006); neither Austen nor Deutsch include the Maji-Maji War in their research; and Michael Pesek expressly ends his study of colonial rule in East Africa before the war, Michael Pesek, *Koloniale Herrschaft in Deutsch-Ostafrika: Expeditionen, Militär und Verwaltung seit 1880* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2005).

<sup>67</sup> Nils Ole Oermann, *Mission, Church, and State Relations in South-West Africa under German Rule, 1884-1915* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999), 106-108. On the Rhenish Mission and the Herero-Nama War see also Richard Pierard, "The Rhenish Mission and the Colonial War in German Southwest Africa," in van der Heyden and Stoecker, *Mission und Macht im Wandel politischer Orientierungen*, 389-401.

<sup>68</sup> One exception is Gabriel K. Nzalayaimisi, "The Berliners and Violence in Eastern and Southern Tanzania, 1887-1919," in van der Heyden and Becher, *Mission und Gewalt*, 469-480.

particularity and international universality that took place in colonial and missionary circles. A brief survey of this literature will reveal the lacunae.

The earliest histories of German missions in German East Africa were produced by the missions and mission supporters themselves. These works provide valuable historical information but are too laudatory of missionary accomplishments and not sufficiently analytical for our purposes.<sup>69</sup> Scholars began to consider the history of missions within the context of colonial history after World War II. Kenneth Scott Latourette and Stephen Neill, who wrote in the 1960s, retained much of the celebratory tone of their forebears, and both men's scholarship was heavily Anglo-centric.<sup>70</sup> In the 1970s and 1980s the German mission movement attracted a burst of scholarship. This work generally focused on the role that missionaries played in the expansion of colonial power with some interest in the development of African Christianity and African politics thrown in.

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<sup>69</sup> General histories of the Protestant mission movement from the German perspective: Wilhelm Öhler, *Geschichte der deutschen evangelischen Mission* (Baden-Baden: W. Fehrholz, [1949-1951]; and Julius Richter, *Allgemeine evangelische Missionsgeschichte*, 5 vols. (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1908-1932). On the Moravian missions: Hartmut Beck, *Brüder in vielen Völkern: 250 Jahre Mission der Brüdergemeine* (Erlangen: Verlag der Ev.-Luth. Mission, 1981); J. Taylor Hamilton, *A History of the Missions of the Moravian Church during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Bethlehem, PA: Times, 1901); J. E. Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions* (London: Moravian Publication Office, [1922]; and Adolf Schulze, *200 Jahre Brüdermission*, 2 vols. (Herrnhut: Verlag der Missionsbuchhandlung, 1932). On the Berlin Mission Society: W[ilhelm] Gründler, *Hundert Jahre Berliner Mission* (Berlin: Buchhandlung der Berliner ev. Missionsgesellschaft, 1923); Ed[uard] Kratzenstein, *Kurze Geschichte der Berliner Mission* (Berlin: Selbstverhandlung des Missionshauses, 1878); J[ulius] Richter, *Geschichte der Berliner Missionsgesellschaft* (Berlin: Berlin ev. Missionsgesellschaft, 1924); and [Theodor]. Wangemann, *Geschichte der Berliner Missionsgesellschaft*, 4 vols. (Berlin: Im Selbstverlag des Ev. Missionshauses in Berlin, 1872-1877). On the Leipzig Mission: Fleisch, *Hundert Jahre lutherischer Mission*. And on the Bethel Mission: Gerhard Jasper, *Das Werden der Bethel-Mission* (Bethel bei Bielefeld, Germany: Anstalt Bethel, 1936).

<sup>70</sup> Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, 7 vols. (New York: Harper, 1937-1945); Kenneth Scott Latourette, *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age: A History of Christianity in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, 5 vols., (New York: Harper, 1958-1962); and Stephen Neill, *Colonialism and Christian Missions* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966).

Marcia Wright's study of the Berlin and Moravian missions in the southern highlands of Tanzania between 1891 and 1941 made clear the importance of missionary ideology and methodology for understanding the impact of evangelizing Christianity upon Africans. Wright argued that German missionaries were never able to reconcile their theory with their practice in the colony.<sup>71</sup> However, the work does nothing to engage with questions of how colonial conquest threatened the mission movement. As a result, the work did not engage with arguments over issues of national belonging and internationalism that took place in the metropole.

An unpublished dissertation by Hans-Joachim Niesel did more to address the influence of political contests and philosophy upon German missionary ideology. In particular, Niesel focused upon missionaries' engagement and participation in the administration of the German East African colony. Niesel disagreed with Wright's suggestion of nationalist influence upon German missionaries' approach to colonial administration. But for a few short years before the First World War, Niesel argued, mission maintained its ideology of internationality.<sup>72</sup> Niesel concluded that this meant little since the two entities, the colonial government and the missions in German East Africa, collaborated in the colony's work of "cultural uplift." Secular and religious efforts both contributed to the creation of a privileged class in the colony, a class with access to resources, education, and power in the colonial state.<sup>73</sup>

Niesel, like Wright, drew important attention to the complex relationship between the German mission societies and the colonial project. But both works have their weaknesses. Neither work brings the entirety of the Protestant mission

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<sup>71</sup> Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika 1891-1941*, 20.

<sup>72</sup> Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914," 287 and 289.

<sup>73</sup> Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914."

movement together when considering either the metropolitan or the colonial processes of missionary politics. Niesel excluded the Moravians from his analysis, Wright omitted the Bethel Mission, and both left out the Leipzig Mission Society. These omissions limit the extent to which Niesel or Wright's conclusions can be verified for German Protestant mission culture. Furthermore, neither scholar's work made a concerted effort to understand the national organizations and conferences of Protestant missionaries that constituted the core of Protestant ideological and political activity. This last absence will prove to be true for later works on the German mission in East Africa as well.

Mission scholarship continued along this vein, focusing on three general areas of research derived from similar priorities as that shown by Wright and Niesel's work. On the one hand, a number of scholars developed an interest in the study of missionary school policy – a subject which both Niesel and Wright touched upon.<sup>74</sup> Others built on the older questions of mid-twentieth century missiology, questions of theology, and sought to understand the interaction of theory and practice in German mission history.<sup>75</sup> This historiography shed important light on aspects of Germany's

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<sup>74</sup> Christel Adick, "Grundstruktur und Organisation von Missionsschulen in den Etappen der Expansion des modernen Weltsystems," in Bogner, Holtwick, and Tyrell, *Weltmission und religiöse Organisationen*, 459-482; Paul Jandl, "Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Schriftsprache für die Einheimischen – Überlegungen zur Funktion und Gestaltung kolonialen und aktueller Schulbücher in Westafrika," in *Kolonien und Missionen: Referate des 3. Internationalen Kolonialgeschichtlichen Symposiums 1993 in Bremen*, ed. Wilfried Wagner (Münster: Lit Verlag, 1994), 393-399; Bernhard Mirtschink, *Zur Rolle christlicher Mission in kolonialen Gesellschaften: Katholische Missionserziehung in "Deutsch-Ostafrika"* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Haag + Herchen Verlag, 1980); Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914," 145-154, 164-174, 193-197; and Rainer Tetzlaff, "Die Mission im Spannungsfeld zwischen kolonialer Herrschaft und Zivilisierungsanspruch in Deutsch-Ostafrika," in Bade, *Imperialismus und Kolonialmission*, 189-204.

<sup>75</sup> Dieter Becker and Andreas Feldtkeller, eds., *Es begann in Halle... Missionswissenschaft von Gustav Warneck bis heute* (Erlangen: Verlag der Ev.-Luth. Mission, 1997); Torben Christensen and William R. Hutchison, introduction to *Missionary Ideologies in the Imperialist Era: 1880-1920* (Aarhus: Forlaget Aros, 1982), 8; Hans-Werner Gensichen, "German Protestant Missions," in Christensen and Hutchison, *Missionary Ideologies in the Imperialist Era*, 186-187; Heinrich Loth, *Zwischen Gott und*

colonial and missionary history, however none of it dealt directly with questions of missionary internationalism or with the political motivations or activities of missionary leaders in Germany.

However, one unique research agenda did develop around the study of missionary politics and activities in the metropole during the period of the Second German Empire. Werner Ustorf and others shed important light on the relationship between local domestic political actors in the merchant towns and cities of northern Germany and the North German Mission Society. In Ustorf's study the motivations for foreign mission amongst the upper-class *Bürger* of those towns and cities had a good deal of their origin in fighting the democratization of municipal politics.<sup>76</sup> Similar local and regional political concerns informed the development of support for the Catholic mission movement in Germany.<sup>77</sup>

The most well-known missionary figure in the history of German imperialism is Friedrich Fabri. Fabri is frequently credited with launching the German colonial movement with his pamphlet, *Bedarf Deutschland der Kolonien?* (*Does Germany Need Colonies?*);<sup>78</sup> and his influence as an associate of Bismarck's in this early

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*Kattun: die Berliner Konferenz 1884/85 zur Aufteilung Afrikas und die Kolonialismuskritik christlicher Missionen* (Berlin: Union Verlag, 1985); Niels-Peter Moritzen, "Koloniale Konzepte der protestantischen Mission," in Bade, *Imperialismus und Kolonialmission*, 51-56; Karl Müller, *Missionstheologie: eine Einführung* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1985); Gunther Pakendorf, "Berlin in Afrika, oder der historische Ort der Deutschen Mission: Ein Beitrag zum Thema Kolonialmission," in Wagner, *Kolonien und Missionen*, 472-487; Johannes Lucas de Vries, *Namibia: Mission und Politik*, tr. Wolfgang Bunte (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1980); and Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika 1891-1941*, 1-20.

<sup>76</sup> Werner Ustorf, ed., *Mission im Kontext: Beiträge zur Sozialgeschichte der Norddeutschen Missionsgesellschaft im 19. Jahrhundert* (Bremen: Übersee Museum Bremen, 1986).

<sup>77</sup> Robert Hoffmann, "Die katholische Missionsbewegung in Deutschland vom Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ende der deutschen Kolonialgeschichte," in Bade, *Imperialismus und Kolonialmission*, 29-33; and Stefan Dietrich, "Katholische Mission und kolonialer Staat: Fragen und Überlegungen," in Wagner, *Kolonien und Missionen*, 202-221.

<sup>78</sup> Friedrich Fabri, *Bedarf Deutschland der Kolonien? eine politisch-ökonomische Betrachtung* (Gotha: F. A. Perthes, 1879).



period is hard to deny.<sup>79</sup> But Fabri's importance is to the colonial movement more than to the German Protestant mission movement. In fact, by the time Germany's Protestant mission societies were involved with the German colonial empire Fabri had been forced out of his position at the head of the Rhenish Mission *because* of the close link he sought between mission and colonial expansion.<sup>80</sup> The leadership of the Rhenish Mission Society and the German Protestant mission movement, namely Gustav Warneck and Franz Michael Zahn, forced Fabri from his post at the Rhenish Mission in 1884 and from leadership in the various national mission conferences.<sup>81</sup> As a consequence of Fabri's marginality by the mid-1880s, this study does not concern itself with his activities. An accurate assessment of the involvement of Germany's Protestant missionaries in the German colonial project requires closer attention to actors within the movement rather than the swiftly excluded Fabri.

The most significant work of scholarship on missionaries during this early phase of research was Horst Gründer's study of Christian mission and German imperialism.<sup>82</sup> In it Gründer argued that the intertwining of mission and imperialism was not an unintended byproduct of mutually autonomous activities. In fact, the union of these two activities was a concrete outcome of political, economic, and social

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<sup>79</sup> Klaus J. Bade, *Friedrich Fabri und der Imperialismus in der Bismarckzeit: Revolution – Depression – Expansion* (Freiburg: Atlantis Verlag, 1975), 314. In addition to his work on Fabri, see Bade, *Imperialismus und Kolonialmission*. Other notable works on Fabri includes Wolfgang R. Schmidt, *Mission, Kirche und Reich Gottes bei Friedrich Fabri* (Wuppertal-Barmen: Verlag der Rheinischen Mission, 1965).

<sup>80</sup> Oermann, *Mission, Church, and State Relations in South-West Africa under German Rule, 1884-1915*, 35;

<sup>81</sup> Bade, *Friedrich Fabri und der Imperialismus in der Bismarckzeit*, 221-231; Loth, *Zwischen Gott und Kattun*, 20-21; and Menzel, *Die Bethel-Mission*, 11-12;

<sup>82</sup> Horst Gründer, *Christliche Mission und deutscher Imperialismus: eine politische Geschichte ihrer Beziehungen während der deutschen Kolonialzeit (1884-1914) unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Afrikas und Chinas* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh: 1982).

conditions in the metropole.<sup>83</sup> After 1871 national consciousness within the new German Empire colored missionaries' attitudes and this, in turn, led the German mission movement into a close partnership with the colonial state. Christian "spiritual expansion and conquest" worked alongside the migration of European settlers, the spread of European languages and technology, and institutions and capitalist modes of production to affect that Europeanization.<sup>84</sup> In short, to Gründer, the work of missionaries was part and parcel of a total program of European political, economic, social, and spiritual conquest of the world.<sup>85</sup>

Gründer's argument that German missionaries' work in the colonies entangled itself with the colonial project of economic and political conquest is true. However, this dissertation agrees more closely with Johanna Eggert's assertion that Germans traveled to Africa without any particular national feeling.<sup>86</sup> First of all, missionaries, in their ideology and activities, remained ambivalent towards Gründer's program of "Europeanization." Most German Protestant missionaries viewed capitalism as a dangerous force that threatened to immiserate and proletarianize the African people. And missionaries showed a certain degree of apathy as to who their political rulers should be (they were far more concerned that they be allowed to do their work undisturbed and that the political powers could maintain the peace). Furthermore, missionaries and settlers viewed each other with such suspicion that cooperation was

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<sup>83</sup> Gründer, *Christliche Mission und deutscher Imperialismus*, 13.

<sup>84</sup> Horst Gründer, *Welteroberung und Christentum: ein Handbuch zur Geschichte der Neuzeit* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlag – Haus Mohn, 1992), 13-15.

<sup>85</sup> Gründer's thesis is echoed in this less sophisticated study: Heinrich Loth, *Kolonialismus unter der Kutte* (Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1960).

<sup>86</sup> Johanna Eggert, *Missionsschule und sozialer Wandel in Ostafrika: der Beitrag der deutschen evangelischen Missionsgesellschaften zur Entwicklung des Schulwesens in Tanganyika 1891-1939* (Bielefeld: Bertelsmann Universitätsverlag, 1970). These competing hypotheses received a careful consideration in Hamilton, *Mission im kolonialen Umfeld*.

impossible. In short, missionaries were hardly advocates of European colonialism. Individual missionaries and their home mission societies all viewed themselves as evangelists first, advocates for indigenous peoples second, and colonialists third, if at all. The nationalization of the mission project, as this dissertation will show, was an outcome of developments within the missionary movement intermittently influenced by outside forces. It was only with the arrival of a new generation of leaders that the German mission movement took on a national character; Gründer's periodization is simply too early and not borne out by the evidence of missionaries' metropolitan activities.

Africanists working on this problem in southern Africa have trod rather extensively over this ground. Like historians of German colonialism, historians of British colonialism are similarly divided over the relationship between missionaries and colonial conquest. Some argue quite forcefully that missionaries actively solicited British intervention. Intervention was usually justified by these missionaries as necessary to overcome African leaders' resistance to mission-induced social and political change.<sup>87</sup> Others have presented missionaries and "humanitarians" as working at times in contrast with other colonial interests to promote the spread of British "civilization" to colonized African populations. In this case, missionaries were also willing to criticize other colonialists when they thought the British had transgressed and become "uncivilized."<sup>88</sup> Still others have argued that missionaries and Christianity were used by savvy African political actors to buttress African

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<sup>87</sup> Anthony J. Dachs, "Missionary Imperialism-The Case of Bechuanaland," *Journal of African History* 13(4): 647-658.

<sup>88</sup> Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-century South Africa and Britain* (London: Routledge, 2001), 23 and 43.

modes of authority and power under British colonial regimes. In this interpretation the colonial system is moved into a space in which negotiation and collaboration often stimulated the expansion of Christianity in African societies.<sup>89</sup> In the end, the role missionaries played in creating the colonial state seems to have been more complicated than a simple binary of complete colonial conquerors or independent critics.<sup>90</sup>

Since Gründer's work there have been a number of studies of German Protestant missionary activities. In general these works have not examined the political activities of mission leaders. Historian Thorsten Altena did exhaustive work researching the biographies and backgrounds of German missionaries. His goal was to reconstruct missionaries' understandings of Africa and Africans and to understand the ways in which missionaries' backgrounds affected their experience in Africa. Missionaries in the field found themselves confronted with an Africa and Africans that refused to conform to the missionaries' provincial worldview. Instead, missionaries developed a collection of "African images" which they used to develop their own self-conceptions and impressions of the Africans.<sup>91</sup> These "African images" rested on constructed African pasts that supported the missionaries' paternalism. Gunther Pakendorf has also argued that a mixture of pietism and Romanticism, colored the basically conservative attitudes of German Protestant missionaries.<sup>92</sup> Altena's work on missionaries' "self-conception and conceptions of the 'other'" gives invaluable aid to historians' understanding of missionary identities and motivations,

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<sup>89</sup> See for example, Paul S. Landau, *The Realm of the Word: Language, Gender, and Christianity in a Southern African Kingdom* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1995).

<sup>90</sup> Porter, *Religion versus Empire?*, 316-330.

<sup>91</sup> Altena, "Ein Häuflein Christen mitten in der Heidenwelt des dunklen Erdteils", 413-414.

<sup>92</sup> Gunther Pakendorf, "Berlin in Afrika, oder der historische Ort der deutschen Mission," 477 and 487.

but its focus on the colonial space sheds little light upon the political motivations of mission society leaders and intellectuals beyond proving their general anti-modernity.<sup>93</sup>

One area of particular research interest amongst scholars working on German missionaries has been the role of missionaries' in education. In particular, German scholars have focused on the concern for "training the Africans to work" (*Erziehung der Neger zur Arbeit*). Altena notes it as a central concern of missionaries<sup>94</sup> but it is Sebastian Conrad who gave the matter the closest examination in his work on German conceptions of labor during the imperial period.<sup>95</sup> Conrad and Altena's interpretations ignore the priorities of German missionaries and overlook the ambivalence of most missionaries regarding the economic development of Germany's African colonies.<sup>96</sup> What is important about Conrad's contribution is that his work brought missionaries into the discussion of Germany's history during the period of nineteenth-century globalization before the First World War. This interest in the global history of Germany is an important historiographical development, one designed to move the colony and the metropole into one analytical field.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Altena, "Ein Häuflein Christen mitten in der Heidenwelt des dunklen Erdteils", 417-418. A similar but much less theoretical work on women missionaries, so-called "mission brides" is Dagmar Konrad, *Missionsbräute: Pietistinnen des 19. Jahrhunderts in der Basler Mission* (Münster, Waxmann, 2001).

<sup>94</sup> Altena, "Ein Häuflein Christen mitten in der Heidenwelt des dunklen Erdteils", 417.

<sup>95</sup> Sebastian Conrad, *Globalisierung und Nation im Deutschen Kaiserreich* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2006).

<sup>96</sup> See chapter three of this dissertation.

<sup>97</sup> Sebastian Conrad & Jürgen Osterhammel, eds., *Das Kaiserreich transnational: Deutschland in der Welt 1871-1914* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004). Historians of the Anglophone foreign mission movements have pursued the same research path in recent years as well. As nineteenth-century German missionaries continually measured themselves against the British and American mission movements, a consideration of the historiography on the interaction between metropolitan and colonial mission activities in Britain and North America is invaluable to this project. Excellent examples to consider: Hilary M. Carey, *God's Empire: Religion and Colonialism in the British World, c. 1801-1908* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*; Jeffrey Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*; Norman Etherington, ed., *Missions and Empire*

Scholarship on Germany's global history, in particular efforts to integrate Germany's empire with Germany's more traditional historiographies, has led to important methodological approaches to transnational history. In the German case early precursors to this approach focused on the cultural significance of Germany's empire<sup>98</sup> and more recent interventions include David Ciarlo's work which brings together the history of Germany's empire with the history of advertising and print technology.<sup>99</sup> In contrast to Zimmerer and Hull's quest for a causal link between colonialism and the Holocaust, some historians have sought a more fruitful analytical connection between imperialism and Germany's imperial rule in the Eastern European lands of Poland, the Ukraine, the Baltic States, and European Russia during the *Kaiserreich*, World War I, and the Third Reich. This work includes studies by Woodruff D. Smith, Wendy Lower and Shelley Baranowski<sup>100</sup> on the Nazi period and in the path-breaking compilation by Sebastian Conrad and Jürgen Osterhammel on

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(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Colony and Metropole in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Andrew Porter, ed., *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880-1914* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003); Porter, *Religion versus Empire?*; Richard Price, *Making Empire: Colonial Encounters and the Creation of Imperial Rule in Nineteenth-century Africa* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Susan Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in Nineteenth-century England* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); and Alison Twells, *The Civilising Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792-1850: The "Heathen" at Home and Overseas* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

<sup>98</sup> Russell Berman, *Enlightenment or Empire: Colonial Discourse in German Culture* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998); and Sara Friedrichsmayer, Sara Lennox, and Susanne Zantop, *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and its Legacy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998).

<sup>99</sup> David Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire: Race and Visual Culture in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

<sup>100</sup> Woodruff D. Smith, *The Ideological Origins of Nazi Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); Wendy Lower, *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); and Shelley Baranowski, *Nazi Empire: German Colonialism and Imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

the Bismarckian and Wilhelmine periods.<sup>101</sup> Similarly, George Steinmetz's research into the role of ethnographic knowledge and colonial administration connected colonial concerns with the political culture of the German Empire.<sup>102</sup> Beyond cultural studies, Conrad's work is part of an important effort to integrate Germany's economic, political, and intellectual history into larger currents of the inchoate nineteenth century. Both he and Andrew Zimmerman share an interest in the effects of economic change and shifting systems of labor upon the cultural and intellectual history of Germany, Africa, and, in Zimmerman's case, the United States. Both show that the German colonial experience was an essential element in the forms that globalization took before the First World War.<sup>103</sup>

One of Conrad's most important theses is his argument that increasing nationalism is a component of the process of globalization. As the boundaries of distance erode before the forces of economic integration, constituencies become ever more concerned about who should be included in and who should be excluded from a community.<sup>104</sup> It is no coincidence that at the same time global economic integration reached levels just before 1914 that would not be matched again until the 1980s<sup>105</sup> the

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<sup>101</sup> See especially Andreas Eckert and Michael Pesek, "Bürokratische Ordnung und koloniale Praxis: Herrschaft und Verwaltung in Preußen und Afrika," in *Das Kaiserreich transnational*, Conrad and Osterhammel, 87-106; Philipp Ther, "Deutsche Geschichte als imperial Geschichte: Polen, slawophone Minderheiten und das Kaiserreich als kontinentales Empire," in *Das Kaiserreich transnational*, Conrad and Osterhammel, 129-148; and Helmut Walser Smith, "An Preußens Rändern oder: Die Welt, die dem Nationalismus verloren ging," in *Das Kaiserreich transnational*, Conrad and Osterhammel, eds., 149-169.

<sup>102</sup> George Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa and Southwest Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). See also Bruch, *Weltpolitik als Kulturmission* for an argument regarding the uses of knowledge for foreign policy purposes during this period.

<sup>103</sup> Conrad, *Globalisierung und Nation im Deutschen Kaiserreich*, 17-18; and Andrew Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 247-248.

<sup>104</sup> Conrad, *Globalisierung und Nation im Deutschen Kaiserreich*, 6.

<sup>105</sup> A. G. Hopkins, ed., *Globalization in World History* (London: Pimlico, 2002), 29.

international community was standardizing national identities with the passport.<sup>106</sup> In the case of Germany's Protestant missionaries this contest between the two poles of globalization – nationalism and internationalism – lay at the core of missionary politics. Missionaries were not the only corporate group challenged in their internationalism by the pull of national communitarian forces.

Germany's Protestant missionaries were not alone in their place in the betwixt and between of loyalties. Historians have addressed this issue of internationalists in the late nineteenth century swimming against a nationalist current in a number of other places. Scholars who have taken up the study of internationalism argue that the literature on nationalism is insufficiently aware of the nation-state's international context.<sup>107</sup> In fact, John Boli and George M. Thomas have argued that the tensions between the nation-state and the various forces of transnational groups strengthened both the state and transnational structures, supporting the view that internationalism and nationalism are mutually constitutive.<sup>108</sup> At the same time, scholars of the movement of lawyers to institute systems of international jurisprudence have shown the struggle of internationalist liberals against their own moderate nationalist ideas.<sup>109</sup> In this context, Akira Iriye argued, groups of people have striven to create alternative communities bound together by cultural interests. To the extent that a national community can be "imagined," as Benedict Anderson argued, Iriye posited that the

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<sup>106</sup> Mark B. Salter, *Rights of Passage: The Passport in International Relations* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003).

<sup>107</sup> Micheline R. Ishay, *Internationalism and its Betrayal* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), xv.

<sup>108</sup> John Boli and George M. Thomas, *Constructing World Culture: International Nongovernmental Organizations since 1875* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 1.

<sup>109</sup> Martti Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law 1870-1960* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 4-5; and Andrew Fitzmaurice, "Liberalism and Empire in Nineteenth-century International Law," *American Historical Review* 117 (Feb. 2012): 122-140.



international community must also be “imagined.” However, this study and other historical sources contradict Iriye’s second point that internationalism arose as a response to the rising strength of militarism and nationalism after 1900.<sup>110</sup> The history of socialism, Catholicism, and, particularly for this study, Protestant mission, all point to origins that predate 1900. Furthermore, in the cases of socialism and Protestant missionaries, it seems that it was nationalism and not internationalism which grew stronger after 1900. Nonetheless, the consensus among scholars is that the question of international identity was a significant one for many individuals and groups living during the late nineteenth century.

In particular, adherents of international socialism have provided a fruitful study for historians interested in internationalism, particularly after socialists across Europe abandoned international solidarity in August 1914. Historians of the Second International and international socialism before the First World War agree that internationalism and nationalism were intertwined concepts even though historians of nationalism have treated them otherwise, though the matter of national diversity presented an important challenge to socialist advocates. Kevin J. Callahan argued that the Second International created a mass political culture that performed a united representation of socialist solidarity while promoting ideological, national, and cultural diversity with a form of “inter-nationalism.” Leaders imagined the proletariat as a community representing all nations.<sup>111</sup> Michael Forman agreed with Callahan’s interpretation that the Second International wrestled with the “national question,”

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<sup>110</sup> Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 2-16.

<sup>111</sup> Kevin J. Callahan, *Demonstration Culture: European Socialism and the Second International, 1889-1914* (Leicester, UK: Troubador Publishing, 2010), xii-xv.

particularly over the contest between “multinationalism” and a growing *Zeitgeist* that emphasized ethnicity as the fundamental unit of politics.<sup>112</sup> And Susan Milner posited that while socialist leaders saw nationalism as incompatible with nationalism, their methods often arose from national strategies and priorities.<sup>113</sup> In every case, socialists who supported an international agenda for their movement were forced to struggle with a growing consensus, even in their own ranks, that politics should rise from ethnicities.<sup>114</sup>

The other major internationalist community during this period was the Catholic Church, a church of different cultures and nationalities “said [or imagined] to share a common religious identity in a global community.”<sup>115</sup> Unfortunately, scholars have done little work on the intertwining of international Catholic identity with national identities. The nineteenth century witnessed a movement in the Catholic Church, led from Rome, to create a more uniform, more centralized, and more “Roman” Church.<sup>116</sup> This movement, called Ultramontanism, has received the majority of its historical treatment in histories of church-state conflict with little consideration of the movement’s global communitarian agenda. In general, the scholarship that has touched on this material has focused on modernity of the movement. This was a movement built upon the popular Catholic press and a new

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<sup>112</sup> Michael Forman, *Nationalism and the International Labor Movement: The Idea of the Nation in Socialist and Anarchist Theory* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 11-12.

<sup>113</sup> Susan Milner, *The Dilemmas of Internationalism: French Syndicalism and the International Labour Movement, 1900-1914* (New York: Berg, 1990), 232-234.

<sup>114</sup> For example, see Kerstin S. Jobst, *Zwischen Nationalismus und Internationalismus: Die polnische und ukrainische Sozialdemokratie in Galizien von 1890 bis 1914: Ein Beitrag zur Nationalitätenfrage im Habsburgerreich* (Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 1996).

<sup>115</sup> Ian Linden, *Global Catholicism: Diversity and Change since Vatican II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 1n1.

<sup>116</sup> Christopher Clark, “The New Catholicism and the European Culture Wars” in *Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-century Europe*, ed. Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 11.

response to the forces of secularization.<sup>117</sup> Nicholas Atkin and Frank Tallet argued that this Ultramontanism was an effort driven by lower clergy and members of the central church hierarchy to escape the power of local bishops and the state, a movement geared toward creating a wider community even while others in the German Catholic community fought to create a national church.<sup>118</sup> Historian Karl Buchheim has agreed, arguing that the Ultramontanist movement was a form of democracy grounded in a “supranational, universal” thought.<sup>119</sup> While there is still room for more research on Catholic internationalism, it is clear from what has been done that within the Catholic Church nationalist and internationalist agendas vied for influence.

The final group that is useful to consider as representative of the tensions between universal, international contacts and local, national loyalties are those Africans and African-Americans who led the Pan-African movement, just in its infancy in the late nineteenth century. Though Pan-Africanists made universalist claims of community for a limited constituency, their movement also demonstrates the struggle between global and local identities. Protestant missionaries imagined their community as potentially congruent with the entirety of humanity while Pan-Africanists imagined the boundaries of their international community as racial and

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<sup>117</sup> Clark, “The New Catholicism and the European Culture Wars,” 23; and Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser, introduction to *Culture Wars*, eds. Clark and Kaiser, 4-5.

<sup>118</sup> Nicholas Atkin and Frank Tallet, *Priests, Prelates and People: A History of European Catholicism since 1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 130-131; and Klaus Schatz, *Zwischen Säkularisation und Zweitem Vatikanum: Der Weg des deutschen Katholizismus im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt: Verlag Josef Knecht, 1986), 44-46 and 106-123.

<sup>119</sup> Karl Buchheim, *Ultramontanismus und Demokratie: Der Weg der deutschen Katholiken im 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1963), 9.

defined by African ancestry.<sup>120</sup> However, as Tunde Adeleke has shown, there were many common characteristics between the Pan-African movement and the Protestant mission movement. In particular, both groups sought to ignore their Euro-American cultural connections or at least to transcend them for the sake of their international mission. However, such an attempt was impossible. Both movements believed themselves harbingers of a positive future, both bore civilization and the “civilizing mission” to the uninitiated.<sup>121</sup>

These three corporate groups – socialists, Catholics, and Pan-Africanists – offer some important insights into the frameworks that international groups utilized to construct their imagined communities. Missionaries, socialists, and Catholics were all imagined communities that proclaimed themselves representatives of humanity, international fraternity, human rights, and universal peace. Nonetheless, they maintained a critical awareness of the differences ensconced by cultural and national boundaries.<sup>122</sup> Pan-Africanists made similar claims with regards to their goals in the interests of black people around the world. A further similarity between these movements is the role of international conferences as key forums for nurturing and promoting international unity. Missionaries and socialists alike viewed conferences as venues for discussing strategy, tactics, and the principles of their movements.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Imanuel Geiss, *The Pan-African Movement: A History of Pan-Africanism in America, Europe and Africa*, tr. Ann Keep (New York: Africana Publishing, 1974). On the “imagined” bonds of community between African-Americans and Africans see Milfred C. Fierce, *The Pan-African Idea in the United States: African-American Interest in Africa and Interaction with West Africa* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1993).

<sup>121</sup> Tunde Adeleke, *Unafrikan Americans: Nineteenth-century Black Nationalists and the Civilizing Mission* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 7-9.

<sup>122</sup> Buchheim, *Ultramontanismus und Demokratie*, 12; Callahan, *Demonstration Culture*, xvii; Clark and Kaiser, *Culture Wars*, 3; and Milner, *The Dilemmas of Internationalism*, 2.

<sup>123</sup> Forman, *Nationalism and the International Labor Movement*, 12; Callahan, *Demonstration Culture*, 295; and Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

Catholic councils like the First Vatican Council in 1868 and the Catholic Social Congress in Liege in 1886 drew on an even older tradition for much the same purpose.<sup>124</sup> The Pan-Africanist movement held its first conference in London in 1900 and would only expand its scope after the First World War.<sup>125</sup> Germany's Protestant missionaries operated as part of an international movement of Christian evangelization and felt their commitments to that movement to be far stronger than any national loyalty. Until the last years before the First World War, like the socialists, the Protestant missionary movement proved unable to resist the strength of nationalism.

## Conclusion

Germany's Protestant missionary movement represents an important intersection in the history of nationalism, religion, and politics in the German Empire, Europe, and the world. German missionaries believed that their first loyalty lay to their understanding of biblical instruction. What is more, the bonds missionaries felt to the international community were in many ways more real than any connections the missionary leaders felt to a German nation. This dissertation takes the missionaries' words seriously and sets out to demonstrate that for forty years their worldview included a conviction that Christian community transcended cultural difference. This vision of community failed to recognize indigenous peoples as the full participants promised by the missionaries' ideology, but that does not make it any

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<sup>124</sup> Buchheim, *Ultramontanismus und Demokratie*, 339.

<sup>125</sup> Fierce, *The Pan-African Idea in the United States, 1900-1919*, 199-219.

less important. Protestant missionaries in Germany reached millions in Germany and abroad and their ideas about the world deserve investigation.

## Chapter One: Missionary Politics on Paper

The inaugural 1874 issue of the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* set out the journal's purpose. It declared that the era of Protestant mission was in full glory. The journal's founding editor and chief contributor for the next three decades, Gustav Warneck, wrote, "One can treat mission with contempt, one can be its enemy, but one can no longer ignore it, it has become a power."<sup>1</sup> He continued, elaborating upon the prodigious expansion of mission to "wherever the sailor, merchant or explorer" had set foot around the globe. In spite of this advance, there remained, in Warneck's opinion, many who opposed mission and impeded its evangelical purpose. The editorship of the *Missions-Zeitschrift* intended that the journal awake sympathy for mission in educated circles while improving the character of mission itself. Furthermore, the journal would bring to missionaries' attention those "culturally and religiously historical, geographic, ethnological, and similar questions" that bore upon the "evangelization of the peoples." While devoted in principle to the universalism of Christian mission, Warneck cautioned, "We are not absolute opponents of every particularism in mission." Warneck sought to respect the local activities of mission societies. He acknowledged the power of local support circles for the unique qualities of each mission society, but, nonetheless, Warneck defined the purpose of the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* and *Missionswissenschaft* as the furtherance of the

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<sup>1</sup> Gustav Warneck, "Dic cur hic? Unser Programm," *AMZ* 1(1874): 5.

Christian Gospel, over and above other concerns.<sup>2</sup> A decade later, when overseas empire became a reality for Germany, Warneck argued that the importance of missionary work had grown, because “German colonial policy implie[d] a greater responsibility [for] our mission activities, as well as [made] mission a partner in the civilizing activity of colonial policy.”<sup>3</sup> The following decades would see the German missionary leadership gradually adapting to the new political situation. Greater responsibility to Christians of all races and political entanglement led early missionary intellectuals to reinforce their support for Warneck’s founding principles.

Missionaries and missionary leaders like Gustav Warneck had a particular definition of politics in these discussions. In general missionaries insisted that their work was emphatically not political. As has been pointed out by historians, missionaries’ mere presence in non-Western societies was a political fact.<sup>4</sup> Their activities in the metropole, namely mission leaders’ participation in contests for political, symbolic, intellectual, and spiritual power all prove that missionaries were as political as anyone else. However, missionaries stridently argued, especially in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, that they were divorced from political concerns. In the missionary vernacular of Germany “politics” meant secular affairs. In particular this meant the activities of the state (and almost always the state churches) in the colonies. Though missionaries would willingly admit their role in a larger European, Western, or Christian colonial project, missionaries resisted participating in the

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<sup>2</sup> Warneck, “Dic cur hic?” 1-4.

<sup>3</sup> Editor’s Note to E[rnst] Reichel, “Was haben wir zu thun, damit die deutsche Kolonialpolitik nicht zur Schädigung, sondern zur Förderung der Mission ausschlage?” AMZ 13(1886): 39n2.

<sup>4</sup> Price, *Making Empire*, 94.



“political” activities of any *particular* German or other colonial project.<sup>5</sup> This chapter and the rest of the dissertation will use the missionaries’ definition of politics, keeping in mind the peculiarly constrained nature of this definition.

At the heart of German missionaries’ aversion to politics as they defined them was their certainty that their work as evangelists rose from a divine source. As servants of God’s purpose and bearers of the Gospels, missionaries determined that politics posed an existential threat to their activities. The command of Jesus that his followers bring Christianity to all peoples was seen as both older and superior to whatever motivations fed colonial expansion. Of manifest importance was the threat posed to the purity of missionaries’ spiritual work by the threat of politics. Politics in all its forms – inter-power rivalry, the false idol of the national state, and the meanness of public policy – was, at least intellectually, seen as a menace that would undermine missionaries’ duty to evangelize all peoples. Missionary culture in Germany also included a hefty strain of anti-modernism and skepticism toward the modern state. This meant that missionaries questioned any project that supported the interests of state or economic actors in the colonial sphere. The modern state and modern capitalism both threatened Christian values in Germany and abroad.<sup>6</sup> As a response to this double threat, missionary intellectuals during the late nineteenth century argued forcefully in favor of mission’s autonomous operation and maintained the strength of internationalist principles against any nationalist purpose. The rise of a

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<sup>5</sup> This is notably different from contemporary British mission ideology which, at least in East Africa, argued that commerce and the work of “unofficial empire” were part and parcel of the project of evangelizing the indigenous peoples. See Dana L. Robert, introduction to *Converting Colonialism*, 11-12.

<sup>6</sup> Altena, “*Ein Häuflein Christen mitten in der Heidenwelt des dunklen Erdteils*”, 917-918. Pakendorf, “*Berlin in Afrika, oder der historische Ort der deutschen Mission*,” 473-475. Werner Ustorf discusses how the old trading houses of the Hanseatic Cities of northern Germany joined with mission against the threat of “big capital” during the period of high imperialism, Ustorf, *Mission im Kontext*, 23.

nationalistic missionary ideology after 1900 came about as a response to changing circumstances that helped build a challenge to the anti-state and anti-national views of earlier generations of missionary leaders. This younger generation was educated and acclimated to a world that seemed shaped and governed by a new political logic of nations, empires, and global processes. These men understood history as driven by national forces and envisioned a future in which German missionaries rode as sidekick to a galloping German imperialism.

This chapter will examine a sampling of representative articles published by German Protestant missiologists<sup>7</sup> for consumption by the missionary community and interested observers from the colonial movement, academic faculties, the German colonial government, and the general public. The analysis will demonstrate the specifics of German mission theory when it came to the relationship between colonial and imperial ambition and the spiritual goals of global mission. The discussion will be organized around the arguments raised by their authors as to the correct balance between politics and religion. This leads to a certain chronological organization as the differences between the ideas of the older generation of missionary leaders in the 1870s, the corollary arguments raised by those same men in the 1890s and first decade of the twentieth century, and the later generation of *Missionswissenschaftler* reflected a changing emphasis in arguments over nationalism and internationalism.

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<sup>7</sup> Catholic *Missionswissenschaft* was much slower to organize as a professional discipline in Germany. The academic advent of Catholic mission studies in Germany is dated to the launch by Joseph Schmidlin of the *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* in 1913. See Horst Rzepkowski, "Gustav Warneck und die katholische Missionswissenschaft," in Becker and Feldtkeller, *Es began in Halle...*, 55-86.

### **The *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift***

From 1874 to 1919 the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* stood at the center of the intellectual sphere for mission ideology in Germany. The *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, founded in 1874, served Warneck and Germany's missionary leadership as a forum for working out key issues of German national missionary life, international missionary culture, and German missionaries' approaches to German colonial policy. Warneck's *Missions-Zeitschrift* served two generations of missionary theorists and practitioners as *the* venue in which Germany's Protestant mission movement debated and declared its positions on the key religious, political, and scientific issues of missionary life. For forty-five years, the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* served the intellectually- and academically-centered leaders of Germany's mission movement until it, like Germany's overseas missionary life, diminished by the First World War, lost its national influence and significance.

Though scientific and theological issues had been debated in the ecclesiastical and popular periodicals of the German mission movement before the publication of the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, Warneck's journal was a conceptual break.<sup>8</sup> It sought to elevate the quality and significance of missionary experience and experiences within German learned society beyond the closed sphere of traditional missionary supporters. The journal sought to legitimate the mission movement with scholarly credentials. Because the journal stood as the quasi-official voice of German missionary thought, in its pages historians can begin to discern the politics and

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<sup>8</sup> For a very brief treatment of German mission periodicals see Scheulen, *Die "Eingeborenen" Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, 44-45.

ideology of Germany's missionary movement. By the end of the 1880s the journal was publishing 2,600 monthly copies with a peak of 3,000 subscribers in 1912.<sup>9</sup> Its scope spread beyond the mission sphere in Germany with the Colonial Director and his aides as regular readers.<sup>10</sup> The *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* cast a wide net, offering its readers material on languages of the Himalayan plateau<sup>11</sup> as well as discussions of the history of Christian conversion in the medieval German lands.<sup>12</sup> This broad reach led the journal to become something of a hybrid publication mixing elements of a news-magazine, scholarly journal, and digest of mission society reports. What separated the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* from other missionary periodicals was its scholarly direction and broad sampling from all Protestant mission societies.<sup>13</sup>

In its composition the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* set out to achieve three goals. First, it presented articles about the activities of German mission societies around the world, in German as well as other European colonies. By doing so the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* helped communicate to its readers the global character of German mission, the inextricable intertwining of German mission

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<sup>9</sup> Joachim Kirchner, *Das deutsche Zeitschriftenwesen: Seine Geschichte und seine Probleme*, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1962), 278. The 1912 number appears in *Sperlings Zeitschriften-Adressbuch*, 1912, s.v. "Missions-Zeitschrift, Allgemeine."

<sup>10</sup> Some indication of how receptive the intellectual elite of the *Kaiserreich* was can be inferred from the influence of "cultural diplomacy" demonstrated by Rüdiger von Bruch when German thinkers sought a way out of Germany's "encirclement" by converting the military and diplomatic contest between the great powers into a cultural contest or by promoting international cooperation. Those drawn to von Bruch's model of "cultural mission" might have recognized German missionaries religious internationalism as another way out of Germany's diplomatic troubles. See Rüdiger von Bruch, *Weltpolitik als Kulturmission*.

<sup>11</sup> August Hermann Francke, "Die sprachlichen Verhältnisse der Himalayamission der Brüdergemeine," *AMZ* 25(1898): 439-446.

<sup>12</sup> [Johann Friedrich] Iken, "Die Missionsthätigkeit des Hamburg-Bremischen Erzbistums im Mittelalter," *AMZ* 19(1892): 145-159, 221-234, 278-289, and 511-529.

<sup>13</sup> On the metaphorical bookshelf of all 19<sup>th</sup>-century German missionary published materials, the monthly or quarterly society reports put out by every mission society take up the great majority of space. These mission society reports usually printed edited and redacted excerpts from the regular reports of their missionaries in the field. The *AMZ* frequently included examples of these reports in its pages. This was similar to the case of British mission periodicals, Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 112 and 114-145.

activities with all the colonizing and colonized peoples of the earth. Second, from this demonstration of German mission's global dimensions the editors and contributors to the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* connected its readers, supporters of German missionary work, to the broader international missionary movement. This goal was further supplemented by the frequent articles presented by foreign contributors and about non-German Protestant mission societies. Finally, the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*'s focus on presenting the best scientific and scholarly work for its readers helped mark out the journal as a modern, respectable publication. German missionaries came to see themselves as the most "scientific" missionaries, a quality that represented to them one of Germany's greatest contributions to the international mission movement.<sup>14</sup>

The editorial scope of the publication grew out of the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*'s place in its founding editor's idealized reorganization of Germany's missionary culture. Gustav Warneck wished to elevate the cultural and political place of Germany's missionary movement within German cultural life. In his view, Germany was a powerful nation that ought to be focused on the promotion of Christianity worldwide. In order to achieve this elevation of the German missionary movement, Warneck sought to federate the established mission societies of the German Empire into one national organization; connect that organization with the international missionary movement based in the British Isles, Scandinavia, and the United States; and mobilize the tens of millions of German Protestants to make

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<sup>14</sup> William Richey Hogg, "The Rise of Protestant Missionary Concern, 1517-1914," in *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1961), 109. On the quality of missionary knowledge see, for example, Harald Sippel, "Mission und Kodifikation: Der missionarische Beitrag zur Erforschung des afrikanischen Gewohnheitsrechts in der Kolonie Deutsch-Ostafrika" in Wagner, *Kolonien und Missionen*, 493-510.

Germany a leading missionary nation.<sup>15</sup> In the first several decades of its publication the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* went a long way to present missionary activities as independent from the German state and the German missionary movement as part of an international mission movement.

Warneck and his colleagues sought to keep mission separate from nationalist politics for three reasons. Missionaries' understanding of the Gospels and Epistles made any division of humanity other than Christian and non-Christian impossible. For this reason missionary thinkers from the 1870s onward maintained a view that no other possible human goal outweighed that of mission and thus they rejected nationalist politics as beneath the concerns of missions. The older generation of missionary leaders also rejected politics as corrosive to missionary endeavor. The earthly demands of colonial administration and national loyalty, they argued, led mission away from its higher purpose and would, as a consequence, unnecessarily prolong the process of global evangelization. Finally, should missionaries manage to maintain a completely autonomous missionary enterprise, international power politics would remain a threat to spiritual success. Politically-driven expansion could lead to political conflict which would unduly disrupt global spiritual progress. From the 1870s until the early twentieth century, Warneck, along with others who felt that international and national politics threatened German and global missionary life, dominated the field of *Missionswissenschaft*.

The role of nationalism and its tropes expanded in the German cultural, intellectual, and political sphere from the foundation of the *Kaiserreich* to the end of

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<sup>15</sup> Hans Kasdorf, "Zu Gustav Warnecks Bedeutung für Theologie und Kirche (unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Missionskonferenzen) in Becker and Feldtkeller, *Es begann in Halle...*, 24-26.

Wilhelm II's reign. State actors, political organizations, voluntary associations, and reformers all attempted to make use of the divergence between the interests of the authoritarian state and their particular definitions of the national interest. As a result nationalism became a contested area of the culture.<sup>16</sup> German missionaries, like other corporate groups in Germany after unification, were drawn into the process of defining the German nation. Many scholars have identified the establishment of a colonial empire as one of Bismarck's many successful applications of a national issue to secure domestic political advantage.<sup>17</sup> In fact, many scholars argue that the "nation" became a more significant factor in German society than it ever had before unification.<sup>18</sup> These processes were only intensified after the dismissal of Bismarck and the political course set by Kaiser Wilhelm II and his ministers after 1890. The period was one of "hybrid identities coexisting with the development of passionate nationalist, racist, confessional, and political loyalties."<sup>19</sup>

The year 1890 can be seen as a watershed in the history of the *Kaiserreich* because the waves impelled by the ongoing changes in Germany's economic and social conditions grew in intensity and speed.<sup>20</sup> The buffeting of German society by emerging political institutions and associations, industrialization and urbanization,

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<sup>16</sup> James Retallack, introduction to *Imperial Germany, 1871-1918*, 8.

<sup>17</sup> Lerman, "Bismarckian Germany," 29. See also Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Bismarck und der Imperialismus* (Berlin: Kiepenheuer u. Witsch, 1969) for one of the earliest historical treatments of Bismarck's use of colonial issues for domestic political purposes.

<sup>18</sup> Lerman, 31.

<sup>19</sup> Suzanne Marchand and David Lindenfeld, "Germany at the Fin de Siècle: An Introduction," in *Germany at the Fin de Siècle: Culture, Politics, and Ideas*, ed. Marchand and Lindenfeld (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 7.

<sup>20</sup> Suzanne Marchand and David Lindenfeld have proposed 1905 as a "turning point" in the cultural history of Germany. In either case, scholars seem to agree that the decades of Wilhelm II's rule were distinctive from those of Bismarck's chancellorship. Marchand and Lindenfeld, *Germany at the Fin de Siècle*, 16-17. For an argument for 1900 as the "turning point" see the collected essays in Volker Drehsen and Walter Sporn, eds., *Vom Weltbildwandel zur Weltanschauungsanalyse: Krisenwahrnehmung und Krisenbewältigung um 1900* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1996).

and the ongoing issues of national unification changed the shape of German society in ever-expanding ways.<sup>21</sup> In the case of German missionaries, intimately involved in Germany's colonial project and eager to benefit from political opportunities while somehow protecting themselves from the risks, the problem of nationalism and national identity remained of key concern. With so many Germans calling for a second founding of the *Reich*, Germany's missionary leaders were continually participating (willingly and unwillingly) in the debate over German nationalism. To many cultural critics Germany remained divided along regional, confessional, and political lines. Germany, therefore, required a second founding to eliminate the remaining divisions. Missionaries' loyalties to an internationalist worldview only complicated issues. As one historian of Germany's nineteenth-century transnational history has emphasized, the study of the various links and influences that crossed state boundaries, religious and political in this case, opens up new perspectives on the networks that linked Germans with each other and with the rest of the world.<sup>22</sup>

### **The Primacy of Christian Evangelization**

From the very beginning German missionaries argued in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* that mission could never be fully blended with politics. Christian loyalty, they declared, must always outweigh any other obligation. The injunction to Christians to spread the Gospel to the entire earth, the great commission given by

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<sup>21</sup> Mark Hewitson, "Wilhelmine Germany," in Retallack, *Imperial Germany 1871-1918*, 41; Marchand and Lindenfeld, *Germany at the Fin de Siècle*, 3.

<sup>22</sup> Matthew Jefferies, *Contesting the German Empire, 1871-1918* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 167.



Jesus in the twenty-eighth chapter of the Book of Matthew, carried such great weight as the biblical command of Jesus that no other project could or ought to take precedence. This verse served as the chief justification for missionaries' most basic practice of their faith, the support and promotion of missionary work among Christian and non-Christian peoples.<sup>23</sup> Missionary authorities would not tolerate any other entity, concept, or group siphoning away one iota of support. This was the most forcefully argued of all the positions by *Missionswissenschaftler* in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* and even the later contributors who sought a greater accommodation between German nationalism and German mission Christianity made their case without denying the ultimate higher authority of the mission commission.

An early defense of the primacy of mission's religious purpose came from a leader of the oldest German missionary church, Ernst Reichel of the Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine. In 1886 *Missionsdirektor* Reichel argued that in order for colonial policy to support mission, missionary leaders must protect "its godly,...international, and...[politically] independent character." Europeans brought to the colonized sphere positive and negative influences, a dichotomy that Reichel referred to as the choice between "Jesus" and "the devil." The question was, whether the colonizer brought the benefits of moral, Christian life or the curses of alcoholic spirits and depravity.<sup>24</sup> The missionary must act as the intermediary, winning over the colonized peoples to the new order while encouraging benevolence amongst the colonizing Europeans.

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<sup>23</sup> Gustav Warneck, "Missionsmotiv und Missionsaufgabe nach der modernen religionsgeschichtlichen Schule," *AMZ* 34(1907): 3, cited in Ulrich Berner, "Religionsgeschichtliche und Mission: Zur Kontroverse zwischen Ernst Troeltsch und Gustav Warneck," in Drehsen and Sparr, *Vom Weltbildwandel zur Weltanschauungsanalyse*, 109.

<sup>24</sup> E[rnst] Reichel, "Was haben wir zu thun, damit die deutsche Kolonialpolitik nicht zur Schädigung, sondern zur Förderung der Mission ausschlage?" *AMZ* 13(1886): 40-42.

Reichel proposed that missionaries participate in the larger civilizing mission without committing to any German colonial program.

In addition to warning against chauvinism in German mission, Reichel also cautioned against any threat of worldly interests overtaking the godly purpose of mission work. He wrote, “Colonies serve the spread of power, the expansion and prosperity of the earthly Fatherland. Mission serves the spread of a kingdom that is not of this world, and which advances the power and honor [of Jesus Christ].” Missionaries could not allow themselves to be distracted when the interests of Kaiser and God conflicted. To Reichel the ultimate goal of Christian mission must be the “saving of heathen souls through the Gospel” and “forming heathen peoples into Christian peoples.”<sup>25</sup> While German missionaries would later utilize the language of the *Kulturkampf* in their own struggles against Catholic missionaries, Reichel’s article appeared when many in the educated middle class of Germany had grown disturbed by the interventions by the Prussian state in religious matters. Liberal assailants of the Catholics had begun to argue against the separation of church and state with regards to the confessional question and their conservative Protestant allies grew increasingly leery of government intrusions.<sup>26</sup> However, as the *Kulturkampf* both exceeded many middle-class Protestants’ wishes and failed to integrate the Catholic population into the *Kaiserreich*, missionaries must have begun to see the risks such a legal theory could have upon their own work.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Reichel, “Was haben wir zu thun,...” 42-44.

<sup>26</sup> Michael B. Gross, *The War against Catholicism: Liberalism and Anti-Catholic Imagination in Nineteenth-century Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 245.

<sup>27</sup> See David Blackbourn, *Marpingen: Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Bismarckian Germany* (New York: Knopf, 1994) and Ronald J. Ross, *The Failure of Bismarck’s Kulturkampf: Catholicism and State Power in Imperial Germany, 1871-1887* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1998). See also chapter three of this dissertation.

As a result, Reichel offered a clear articulation of a separation of state-based imperialism and missionary evangelization. Mission must remain politically independent. “Colonization and mission must remain cleanly separate[d] from one another” even though their interests mixed and intertwined in the colonies.<sup>28</sup> By maintaining complete independence and freedom of action, missionaries would be able to make whatever choices necessary on issues as diverse as language, native rights, and land ownership to ensure success in their holy purpose.

In 1891 the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* reprinted the text of a lecture given by Warneck at the Saxon Provincial Mission Conference in Halle. The Saxon Mission Conference had rapidly become a national organization that drew mission leaders as well as secular colonialists from across Germany.<sup>29</sup> The reprinting of Warneck’s thoughts by the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* ensured that an even wider audience of interested scholars and supporters could hear Warneck’s lecture on “The Project of Heathen Mission and its Present Challenges.” Warneck offered a spirited defense of mission as an “apostolic” project. He argued that mission was and should continue to emulate Jesus’s instructions to his apostles. “Jesus Christ,” Warneck told his listeners, “as the founder of mission is without doubt also the highest mission authority, his judgment [is] thus authoritative on the mission project.” And because Jesus was a preacher and not a technician, therefore mission must remain a fluid operation ungoverned by technocratic priorities. According to Warneck, those in the government and colonial movement who wished to see German missionaries serve the colonial empire more directly misunderstood missionary goals.

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<sup>28</sup> Reichel, “Was haben wir zu thun,...” 49.

<sup>29</sup> See chapter five of this dissertation.

He argued that missionaries should continue the work of Jesus and reveal God's love through teaching and sacrifice to all peoples not only in service of the German Empire.<sup>30</sup> Warneck's defense came at precisely the moment German statesmen around Kaiser Wilhelm II began arguing for greater political and economic exploitation of the German colonial empire.<sup>31</sup> New priorities in German colonial circles pressured German missionaries to direct their educational activities toward economic development.<sup>32</sup>

Protestant missionaries had grounds for arguing that their independence had borne fruit. In an 1892 summary of German missionary activities in the colonies, the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* presented data confirming missionary success. According to the report, in 1883 there had been 193,975 "Heathen-Christians"<sup>33</sup> and in 1890 that number had risen to 246,903 converts.<sup>34</sup> These numbers, reflecting as they did a period of missionary independence, gave support to Reichel, Warneck, and their fellow advocates of missionary autonomy.

After all, the colonial state was just another aspect of dangerous trends in contemporary society and culture. Warneck wrote that "civilization brings many useful things: trains, the telegraph, gas lighting and the comforts of abundance; but it does not bring Christian faith." The late nineteenth-century colonial state, according to Warneck, did little to create Christians with its supposed civilizing mission. He counseled, "Just like happiness, contentment and virtue...belief in the Gospels is not

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<sup>30</sup> [Gustav] Warneck, "Die Aufgabe der Heidenmission und ihre Trübungen in der Gegenwart," *AMZ* 18(1891): 99-101.

<sup>31</sup> W. D. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, 174-179.

<sup>32</sup> See chapter three of this dissertation.

<sup>33</sup> The term "Heathen-Christians", *Heidenchristen*, was German missionaries preferred term for converted indigenous peoples in the colonies. A problematic term to say the least bearing as it does the implication that converted "heathens" were not complete "Christians."

<sup>34</sup> [Gustav] Warneck, "Zur Missionsfrage in unsern Schutzgebieten," *AMZ* 19(1892): 444.

dependent upon a particular degree of civilization.” Missionary enterprise and Christian evangelization was not dependent upon the advancement of “modernity.”<sup>35</sup> And, thus, Warneck argued, Christian mission did not need to submit to the pressures of colonial and economic powers because mission’s goals were not dependent upon the benevolence of those powers.<sup>36</sup> Attachment to the colonial state would destroy this independence and violate the missionaries’ principles.

Perhaps not Warneck’s equal as an academic but certainly his equal in authority in the German mission movement, Franz Michael Zahn of the *Norddeutsche Missionsgesellschaft* (North German Mission Society) produced the most reasoned defense of mission’s superiority over nationalism. The North German Mission Society had been founded in 1836 and, after false starts in New Zealand and India, focused its work amongst the Ewe peoples in territories that would become part of Ghana and Togo. Zahn had been the mission society’s leader since 1862 and developed his ideology of mission before the establishment of the *Kaiserreich*. His argument attacked the fundamental basis of nationalist arguments for missionary particularism and left little room for compromise. He noted that since the establishment of German colonies German nationalists had suddenly become “mission friends” who wished to see German money and lives spent only in German colonies.<sup>37</sup> In his opinion, these new friends depended on an ideology, nationalism, which was an intellectual construct, built on shifting sands.

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<sup>35</sup> Warneck, deeply involved in German intellectual life, likely would have been familiar with the growing critique of modernity beginning to appear in European culture. For a discussion of this cultural moment and its prevailing currents see Marchand & Lindenfeld, *Germany at the Fin de Siècle*.

<sup>36</sup> Warneck, “Die Aufgabe der Heidenmission,” 111.

<sup>37</sup> F[riedrich] M[ichael] Zahn, “Nationalität und Internationalität in der Mission,” AMZ 23(1896): 62.

Opening with a discussion of the biblical origins of human difference and thereby demonstrating Christians' "moral imperative to respect" human diversity, Zahn proceeded to tear apart any concept of racial purity anywhere in the world. Attaching essential characteristics to any group of people, like the Germans or the English, would be an error. As he put it, "National character is always becoming, and its development takes place and is influenced not only from the inside out but also from the outside." Furthermore, because of changing borders, the movements of peoples, and exchanges of ideas across boundaries there was barely any people of a "world historical significance" that was not a "mixed *Volk*." God clearly intended that immigrants and emigrants lose their character and concentrate on living according to Christian morality in a great human conglomerate. After all, Zahn argued, "One gets a correct image only when one places national virtues beside national failings" and it is in the fighting of weaknesses that a nation's character develops.<sup>38</sup>

In fact, racial difference was largely illusory according to Zahn. The malleability of humanity would be impossible if all people were not of one race. Zahn supported the argument of Reinhold Grundemann, one of the oldest mission scholars and one of Warneck's founding collaborators on the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, who argued that before there were "peoples" on Earth, humanity had been united as one people. Therefore, the goal of history was to collect a "reunited humanity into which all difference [would] be absorbed." It was only an "immoral patriotism" which did not recognize this truth. So, where did mission fit into this project? For Zahn, the more advanced a culture the greater its role in the community of man, "The nearer humanity comes to its goal, the more it leads a communal life" without cultural

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<sup>38</sup> Zahn, "Nationalität und Internationalität in der Mission," 49-52.

or national distinction. Therefore, the more advanced a culture, the greater its responsibility to work toward the eventual reunion of the world's peoples. Only a "sickly overemphasis of national feeling" could cause one to move away from this communitarian purpose and ignore the good in another people.<sup>39</sup> After all, there were no borders for religion, and a divine purpose would lead humanity to unity in Christian salvation.

According to Zahn, dividing humans into separate nations reflected a false understanding of human history. Zahn explained to readers that the religious divisions among Christians arose from cultural causes unconnected with national difference. "There is no special 'German' concept of Christianity," Zahn wrote, "[and] nothing seems more wrong to me than taking on that [there] is in the German character an immunity to error..." The religious divisions of the Reformation and its aftermath had split humanity, contrary to God's intent. The international mission movement and its path forward toward universal human dignity and salvation provided the means to reverse the errors of the Reformation and re-foster human unity. Zahn warned that an "emphasis on nationality in mission would be a deplorable regression." Furthermore, the very origin of German mission was not national in character and not strengthened by national impulses.<sup>40</sup> The real future of Germany's missionaries, Zahn maintained, required an embrace of the international brotherhood of Protestant Christians, which would help tear down the false barriers of human difference. Zahn reminded his

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<sup>39</sup> Zahn, "Nationalität und Internationalität in der Mission," 54-55.

<sup>40</sup> Zahn, "Nationalität und Internationalität in der Mission," 55-61.

readers that “the highest service to God (*Gotteswerk*) of mission [was] not...service of national egoism,” but rather to being “dutiful to Christ.”<sup>41</sup>

Long after the establishment of the German Empire in 1871 German missionary leaders remained committed to their ethos of missionary independence. Though the structural realities of Germany transformed to reflect the new logics of industrialization, urbanization, and secularization, German missionary leaders like Zahn and Warneck maintained the independence of German Protestant missionary activities. The 1890s saw a new intensification of the nationalist forces, however. In the political sphere the parties of the Left, Right, and Center all competed to prove their national credentials. One of the marquee issues was colonialism and the German colonies had developed a “national aura,” which infused every colonial activity with greater political weight.<sup>42</sup> Missionary leaders of the older generation were forced to adapt to this change and the new generation of leaders would introduce a national perspective to missionary activities with little hesitation. Nonetheless, the older generation’s position would remain influential to the very last days of Germany’s colonial empire.

The strength of arguments that mission stood outside politics because of the intellectual, theological, and spiritual superiority of missionary work over and above colonial political motivations held strong for nearly thirty-five years. Those to whom Christian truth had been revealed must also seek to spread the Gospels. And so, Warneck concluded, this fact made mission international. While missionaries must belong to a nation, no matter which nation it was all missionaries bore the same

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<sup>41</sup> Zahn, “Nationalität und Internationalität in der Mission,” 67.

<sup>42</sup> Hewitson, “Wilhelmine Germany,” 45.



burden. To the early missionary leaders, mission work was through and through a moral project. Warneck insisted that “the salvation of souls remain[ed] the soul of mission work.”<sup>43</sup> The pursuit of souls for Christian salvation was extra-political and extra-national. For the missionary leaders of the nineteenth century, mission could not be constrained by worldly matters. Warneck wrote in 1901, “Mission should not make the peoples into Germans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, or Russians; [it] should make them into Christians” in preparation for a future heavenly kingdom.<sup>44</sup>

### **Politics, the Great Corrupter**

To the older generation of missionary leaders the politics of colonial administration and interest groups threatened to rot everything it touched, especially mission. Nonetheless, in some cases the prosaic concerns of colonial officials and politicians became authentic and troubling threats to mission activities that demanded missionaries involve themselves in political debates. Missionary leaders in the 1870s, -80s, and -90s all agreed that involving missionaries as active participants in the administration of German or other imperial powers’ colonial territories threatened the moral corruption of mission work. The threat was two-fold. First, any diversion of missionary energy to support colonial goals was a violation of Christian principles. Second, if missionaries involved themselves in any action by colonial powers then colonized peoples became all the more likely to equate missionaries with the colonial

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<sup>43</sup> [Gustav] Warneck, “Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik,” *AMZ* 28(1901): 164-165.

<sup>44</sup> Warneck, “Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik,” 169.

regime. Missionaries' supposed good deeds would be tainted by their affiliation with the irreligious and immoral colonial state.

Warneck in particular worried about the possible corruption of German mission by German colonial interests. An early example of this appeared in a short article by Warneck in the 1887 issue of the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*. In "French Nationalism and Mission" Warneck reported on the hardship faced by the Paris Mission Society, a French Protestant group. According to Warneck it was "colonial-political dogma" in France that mission served as an ally to colonial conquest. According to the prevailing view of German Protestant missionary leaders, France's overwhelming Catholic majority and French Catholic mission societies' eager alliance with the state, the Paris Mission Society in Madagascar was caught in a dangerous vise. In France, according to Warneck's article, not only were colonial policy and mission bound together, but French nationalism and Catholic mission were united in suppressing Protestant mission.<sup>45</sup> Warneck took this opportunity to instruct his readers about the threat of nationalism to missionary works.

Warneck's wider view of the correct relationship between the state, national loyalty, and mission came at the end of his short article. "Our French co-religionists fought a good fight...protesting against...the misuse of religion and mission for political and colonial political purposes." It was frequently an unpopular fight, Warneck continued, but it had to be fought. "It [would have] discredit[ed] mission at home and abroad if [mission] only serve[d] to provide a good conscience" for colonial powers. One expected that religion remain free from politics and it would be

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<sup>45</sup> [Gustav] Warneck, "Der französische Nationalismus und die Mission," *AMZ* 14(1887): 270-271.

regrettable if German colonial policy followed France's lead by interfering with the freedom of religion, Warneck continued.<sup>46</sup>

Four years later at the 1891 Saxon Mission Conference Warneck opened his lecture on the current challenges of foreign mission by explaining that mission work's long isolation from German politics had ended. Nonetheless, his opposition to a politicization of missionary endeavor remained strong. In his lecture, reprinted by the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, the missionary leader informed his audience that the growing influence of mission, its growth from "child to man" meant that now the secular world sought to "influence the mission enterprise, [and] give [mission] a direction that would fundamentally alter" the mission project. This was the newest challenge facing modern mission.<sup>47</sup> These suggestions were often cast as "reform" but by the end of his lecture it was clear that, for Warneck, "reform" was little more than window dressing hiding a dangerous corruption of Protestant missionary work.

Germany's rapid transformation into a colonial power between 1884 and 1887 brought the long-ignored mission movement into Germany's colonial and political calculations, Warneck warned his audience. What had become necessary, in the *Missionswissenschaftler's* opinion, was a definition of boundaries. "Technical worker education, plantation construction, agricultural testing stations, commodity marketing – these are all matters of colonial interests, not of mission....No [man] can serve two masters, [and] neither can mission." Economic development for the national interest would only lead missionary work away from service to God, as Warneck put it, missionaries should "build the kingdom which is not of this world, [a world] in which

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<sup>46</sup> Warneck, "Der französische Nationalismus und die Mission," 274.

<sup>47</sup> Warneck, "Die Aufgabe der Heidenmission," 97-99.

[mission] would be a queen [to Jesus].”<sup>48</sup> Increasingly German policymakers were seeking to make the colonies profitable, the recent suppression of the so-called Arab Revolt in German East Africa and the scandalous behavior of German colonial hero Karl Peters in the same colony had turned public attention upon events in the German territories. Some began wondering what place German missionaries should have in this national project as calls rose for a more responsible administration of the colonial empire.<sup>49</sup>

Accommodation with the colonial state was more common in an earlier period. Reichel of the *Brüdergemeine* had already asserted that missionaries could only maintain loyalty to the Fatherland and perform their “holy avocation” by maintaining the internationalism, spiritual focus, and independence of the Protestant mission movement. Experience had shown that wherever mission and the Gospel had been allowed a healthy course by the colonial powers, peoples had been more gently acclimated to the new colonial order. Through the church and schools, missionaries were able to create “industrious, intelligent, loyal and reliable subjects” for the colonial power.<sup>50</sup> Reichel perceived room for cooperation between the missionary and colonial projects but he still argued against systematic collaboration. His concession for some small place of cooperation, directed at German colonial politicians, emphasized the positive effects of missionaries’ independence. Nonetheless, this hopeful compromise remained secondary for Reichel to mission’s need for independence, godliness, and internationalism.

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<sup>48</sup> Warneck, “Die Aufgabe der Heidenmission,” 123-124.

<sup>49</sup> See chapter two of this dissertation.

<sup>50</sup> Reichel, “Was haben wir zu thun,...” 52-53.

Warneck went on to criticize anyone who would elevate the “civilizing mission” above the evangelical mission. He argued that it was natural that missionaries as Christians amongst the “uncivilized peoples” provide medical help; build hospitals; care for the hungry, orphaned, and widowed; and support the oppressed against their oppressors, but missionaries must remain focused on their main work – the salvation of the sinner and the planting of the Gospels in the hearts of heathens. As a consequence, Warneck came out against efforts by colonial administrators, traders, and concessionary corporations to instrumentalize mission stations and schools as training grounds for African labor. He cautioned that Jesus did not send out his apostles with the instruction to “teach them to work” but with the instruction to “make them my followers.”<sup>51</sup> Any secular colonialist who hoped for a more pliable workforce should accept that it would only come as a secondary effect of Christian mission.<sup>52</sup>

According to Warneck, secular colonial interests had cynically appropriated humanitarian rhetoric. He contended that the “interest in the uncivilized peoples [was] not characterized by the concern, how can these poor peoples be helped, instead [it was characterized] by the question: how do we extract the greatest use from [these peoples]?” Warneck’s position was that economic interests wished to create more effective workers and more capable consumers for their own profit while missionaries sought to educate the colonized peoples for selfless reasons.<sup>53</sup> The threat that German missionaries might be led astray from their divinely appointed task reinforced

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<sup>51</sup> Warneck, “Die Aufgabe der Heidenmission,” 105-107.

<sup>52</sup> Warneck, “Die Aufgabe der Heidenmission,” 109. There is no discernible connection between Warneck’s assertion of Protestantism as a goad to industriousness or other positive economic qualities and Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* published in its first part in 1904.

<sup>53</sup> See chapter three of this dissertation.

Warneck's view and that of his compatriots' that politics was corrosive to the key task of German mission work – the creation of Christians. Education, when left to secular colonialists, did not serve the interests of the student but of the teacher; therefore, missionaries had to keep themselves separate to avoid the corruption of their work.

### **The International Question**

Even a spiritually pure and universalist mission movement could not avoid the threat of earthly interests to its work. Though a minority of missionaries saw colonial expansion as a necessary support to missionary activity, the majority of the older generation remained ambivalent towards the global turn to empire and increased competition between the world powers that occurred in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In every case the fear was that overtly chauvinistic policies and bald antagonism would lead to a dangerous disruption of missionary activity. Furthermore, the tendencies of global capitalism and the intensification of global imperialism led missionary intellectuals to remain hostile to the colonial state. In the face of these threats missionary leaders articulated a determined internationalist ideology.

In the earlier, calmer period of imperial expansion before 1890, Reichel argued that based upon the experiences of his own society in the possessions of Britain, Holland, and Denmark, mission and the state could comfortably coexist. In the vast majority of cases colonial governments treated German missionaries well, did

not treat them appreciably differently from missionaries who shared the colonial powers' nationality, and used their power to support the work of German missionaries.<sup>54</sup> Reichel argued that the example set by other Protestant colonial powers – Great Britain, Denmark, and the Netherlands – required that Germany act with the same equanimity. In addition, German mission, in order to protect the international character of its work, must oppose any overzealous German patriotism within its ranks that might jeopardize international comity.<sup>55</sup>

German interests in East Asia intensified as a result of *Weltpolitik*, an aggressive foreign policy designed to garner for Germany greater world power. Wilhelm II and his like-minded advisors felt that Germany had a right to world power status and deserved her “place in the sun.” The industrial, scientific, and economic success of the *Reich* proved for these men that Germany was a nation on the rise. For them the colonial venue offered a powerful opportunity for Germany to assume the role that its elite believed it deserved. Economic colonialism, and its subsidiary ideology *Weltpolitik*, saw overseas territories as inherently valuable because of their economic potential. The expanded colonial empire Wilhelm, Alfred Tirpitz, Bernhard Bülow and other *Weltpolitiker* inside and outside the government wanted would offer expanded access to world markets and serve as tangible proof of Germany's strength and diplomatic prestige.<sup>56</sup> Policymakers increasingly directed German foreign policies towards worldwide aggrandizement and diffuse efforts to add to Germany's colonial possessions. In many ways these impulses were part of larger global

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<sup>54</sup> Reichel, “Was haben wir zu thun,...” 45-49.

<sup>55</sup> Reichel, “Was haben wir zu thun,...” 45.

<sup>56</sup> W. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, 12-13 and 174-5.

processes but they remained firmly grounded in the politics and rhetoric of the *Kaiserreich* under Wilhelm II.<sup>57</sup>

The acquisition by the German Imperial Navy of the territories around Jiaozhou Bay (Kiaochow) in 1898 as a concession from Qing China under a 99-year lease and the participation of Germany in the Eight-Nation Alliance against the Boxers both marked a new phase of German imperial activity. In fact, the Boxer Uprising left Warneck with a bitter taste. Many anti-colonial and anti-religious critics blamed the activities of German, and especially Protestant missionaries, for inciting the Chinese to violence. This must have proven for the aging missionary leader that politics was a dangerous field for missionaries. According to Warneck, the disorder in China grew out of the combination of Europe's relations with the Chinese government, the Chinese people's resistance to the reform agenda coming from the Chinese government, the expansion of territorial occupations by the European powers, and general forms of social and economic distress in China.<sup>58</sup> Warneck judged that the events in China marked a new epoch. The suppression of the revolt by the imperial powers would provoke a "sifting" in China, like what had already occurred in Africa, and which he did not guarantee would bode well for Christian interests in the Far East.<sup>59</sup> The reproach that Warneck directed towards the political powers in China reflected the *Missionswissenschaftler's* ongoing suspicion of colonial power.

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<sup>57</sup> Jefferies, *Contesting the German Empire, 1871-1918*, 168.

<sup>58</sup> Gustav Warneck, *Outline of a History of Protestant Missions from the Reformation to the Present*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, tr. George Robson, (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1901), 298-299. With thanks to Albert Wu for the reference.

<sup>59</sup> Warneck, *Outline of a History of Protestant Missions*, 299. See also Gustav Warneck, *Die chinesische Mission im Gerichte der deutschen Zeitungspressen*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Berlin: Martin Warneck, 1900).



As late as 1901, even as his ideas began to adapt to the growing importance of imperial powers in global missionary activities, Warneck warned his fellow missionaries of the threat to mission from imperial rivalries. At the 1901 meeting of the Saxon Mission Conference in Halle, Warneck took the events of the Boxer Rebellion as yet another chance to comment. Warneck's analysis arose as a response to the suggestion that Christian, and especially German, missionaries had been the chief provocateurs of Chinese resistance. The *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* reprinted Warneck's lecture for broader consumption and, in a footnote, requested readers distribute the text to even broader audiences.<sup>60</sup> Warneck recounted how in the earlier period of colonial conquest missionaries were enjoined to "replace religious missionary work with 'worker education'" and told that they must place themselves in service to the interests of the Fatherland. Missionary experts who defended the religious and universal character of mission "were denounced as 'unpatriotic'."<sup>61</sup> The earlier tribulations of the missionary leadership foregrounded the ongoing pressure on missionaries from colonialists. To him, the Boxer Rebellion and the succeeding public reaction were proof that mission must not become an annex to colonialism.

The events in China gave Warneck an opportunity to comment on the growing conflict between the European powers. This conflict concerned Warneck because as the European powers participated in "jealous national competition" for overseas influence they jeopardized the universal missionary project. International competition imperiled the principles of religious freedom and drew missionaries into the conflict in a manner which challenged the entire structure of international Christian

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<sup>60</sup> Warneck, "Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik," 161n.

<sup>61</sup> Warneck, "Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik," 161.

evangelization. As Warneck summarized it, the more mercenary a national colonial policy was and the “less understanding it [had] for the religious goals and spiritual equipment [*Betriebsmittel*] of mission, the more intolerant [that colonial policy] [would] be of foreign missionaries.” Furthermore, the more that missionaries of a given nationality attempted to serve their nation, the less they drove the missionary project forward.<sup>62</sup>

With his position clarified, Warneck then defined “overseas politics” as global power politics or relations, what could be collectively called “imperialism” in modern historical-political parlance. Warneck judged the competition for global territory as motivated by national greed that rendered any “civilizing advancement of humanity” subsidiary to “national egoism” and imperial expansion.<sup>63</sup> Warneck and others did not wish to have European missionaries associated with European soldiers. Finally, according to Warneck, mission and colonialism differed on one final point – it was the goal of empire to make of the colonized peoples loyal subjects or citizens of the ruling empire. Missionaries, as his listeners and readers knew, sought to create citizens of the Kingdom of God. The growing antagonism of international imperialism continued to threaten missionaries’ own internationalism.<sup>64</sup>

Because mission stood above nationalist competition and worked for all humanity, Warneck posited that this should be sufficient to compel the colonial state to support the missionary project without any remuneration from mission societies. Similarly, missionary work was well-served by the order that colonial power brought to the mission field, and so “a friendly position to overseas politics [was] in the

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<sup>62</sup> Warneck, “Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik,” 162-163.

<sup>63</sup> Warneck, “Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik,” 166-167.

<sup>64</sup> Warneck, “Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik,” 169.

interest of mission.” For this reason, both mission and imperialist forces should seek to care for a mutually friendly relationship in which the difference between the missionary and the administrator remained clear.<sup>65</sup> Warneck thus, in one place, brought together every aspect of his and his colleagues’ opposition to mission becoming a client of national policy. While missionaries were not alone in opposing the tide of imperial competition around the world, and for thirty years they claimed they kept their work unsullied by politics. However, when pressured the missionaries remained willing to justify their work as morally, culturally, and economically valuable for colonized peoples and colonizers alike.

That same 1901 lecture also saw the beginnings of a shift in Warneck’s ideas about world politics. By 1900 it was impossible for any observer of global politics not to believe that he or she was witness to important forces of change sweeping the world. European powers had finished the partition of Africa, the Spanish-American War had made it clear that the United States was an international power, and conflicts in China and Central Asia amongst the imperial powers (now including Japan) made it impossible for any politically active individual to ignore the dynamics of global foreign relations. In the case of Warneck and a few others this meant that other ideologies with international vision competed with universalist missionary Christianity. The old guard of missionary leaders discovered the threat of other global religions, especially Islam; the secular internationalism of socialism; and the integrative effects of global capitalism. These men did not turn away from their old principles but did seek to build a German mission movement that could deal with the challenges offered by competing internationalisms and nationalisms.

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<sup>65</sup> Warneck, "Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik," 170.

In that same remarkable lecture from 1901 on the Boxer Rebellion, Warneck discussed how the missionary and colonial projects might cooperate to advance both projects' goals and priorities: the occupation of mission territories, the protection of missionaries and "Heathen-Christians," and the welfare of native communities. Though he made it clear that the missionary and the imperial projects had significant areas of conflict or disagreement, Warneck argued that a friendly relationship was essential to the success of both projects. As Warneck saw it, it was in the interests of all humanity that European Christianity progress and bring the advantages of Christian values to the globe – promoting a sober, prosperous, and peaceful culture amongst all peoples.<sup>66</sup> The German intervention in China had arrested the attention of the German public, with a heated Reichstag debate about the conduct of the German soldiers as part of the allied invasion force raising questions of the moral repercussions of the intervention. With this backdrop, Warneck undoubtedly hoped to distance the German missionary movement from the sort of imperialism which readers of Germany's newspapers learned of via soldiers' letters: tales of abuses of the civilian population and mass executions that tarnished the benevolent representations of the imperial project.<sup>67</sup> Perhaps he even hoped to channel some of the forces of globalization for missionaries' purposes.

The result of God's design was that unbeknownst and unsought by the global powers, their competition brought about the spread of Christianity. That is, Warneck said, "the missionary contribution of global politics." God had created the impetus,

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<sup>66</sup> Warneck, "Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik," 170.

<sup>67</sup> Ute Wielandt and Michael Kaschner, "Die Reichstagdebatten über den deutschen Kriegseinsatz in China: August Bebel und die 'Hunnenbriefe,'" in *Das deutsche Reich und der Boxeraufstand*, edited by Susanne Kuß and Bernd Martin (Munich: Iudicium, 2002), 183.

and the European powers had carried out his will by conquering non-Christian territories for their own interest. This served God's purpose because European conquest had opened up non-Christian lands that had been formerly closed to missionary enterprise.<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, the injunction that Christians seek out new realms in which the peoples were ignorant of the Gospels had also supported the spread of colonial power. In the South Sea, wide sections of Africa, and other lands, Christian missionaries had opened territories to "civilizing influences" before the arrival of European political power. In a shift from his views in 1891,<sup>69</sup> Warneck concluded that as both missionaries and colonial powers sought to bring civilization to non-Western peoples, albeit emphasizing different aspects of "civilization," the expansion of mission territories could be seen as a goal of both projects. However, he limited this cooperation by noting that "political intrigue is in all cases a missionary sin...patriotism may not justify" such activity. The more mission avoided involving itself in calls for colonial expansion by a given power, the "surer it protect[ed] its religious and its international character."<sup>70</sup> Warneck continued to emphasize the danger of excessive national loyalty to missionaries' spiritual work.

Finally, Warneck closed his discussion with the unambiguous declaration that "in its whole project mission [was] the natural representative of the interests of the native." It was the greatest joy of missionaries when they could work "hand-in-hand" with the colonial government to serve the humanitarian needs and interests of colonized peoples. Cooperation was ideal, but because missionaries were bound to a higher obligation as advocates of indigenous peoples when "colonial-political

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<sup>68</sup> Warneck, "Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik," 171.

<sup>69</sup> See footnote 16 above.

<sup>70</sup> Warneck, "Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik," 174-175.

egoism” or ignorance of native peoples’ lives endangered the well-being of colonized and missionized peoples. The ultimate goal, Warneck contended, of mission activity should be an “economically self-sufficient existence” for colonized peoples.

Missionaries should care for the national identity of the colonized peoples against the frequent tendency of colonial governments to proletarianize indigenous populations, destroying their cultural differences and transforming colonized peoples into creolized laborers.<sup>71</sup> The threats of modern capitalism and the damage it had wrought in Germany’s small towns and villages, cities and neighborhoods could not be allowed to spread to Africa and Asia.

The *Missionswissenschaftler* Warneck revealed his political side in his discussion of the relationship between global imperialism and missionary activities. His argument that the colonial and missionary projects were distinctly different was compelling – the motivations of missionaries and of colonial officials usually derived from secular and religious sources respectively. However, in Warneck’s discussion of the promising areas for collaboration between missionary and colonial groups, the reader can begin to see how easily a missionary could fall into support for nationalist colonial activity. Warneck closed his lecture, “Global mission and global politics intertwine with one another” and if they could bring their disparate strengths to bear they could “save the non-Christian world.”<sup>72</sup>

Warneck’s 1901 speech came during a pivotal period in the history of German imperialism. In the immediate context, Warneck sought to respond to the massive outpouring of anti-missionary sentiment that came about in the Western press as the

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<sup>71</sup> Warneck, "Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik," 179-180.

<sup>72</sup> Warneck, "Die christliche Mission und die überseeische Politik," 180.

colonial powers sought to explain the sources of the Boxer resistance movement. The same event saw Kaiser Wilhelm II take the opportunity to offer one of his manic articulations of German expansionism, his famed *Hunnenrede* (Huns Speech) calling for German troops to recall their ancient ancestors in striking down the Chinese. At the same time Warneck's speech came as imperialism entered a second phase. There were few new territories available for greater colonial expansion by any power and German ultra-imperialists began to press for greater imperial territories. Such a strategy would risk greater conflict with the other imperial powers and Warneck's speech answered colonialist voices calling for Germany to claim its "place in the sun." In fact, Warneck sought to draw attention to the issue of missionary and imperial cooperation and interference and challenged the logic of *Weltpolitik*. If the world was going to be divided into imperial spheres then mission would have to develop a working theory for interaction with imperial powers. Finally, this speech is an important artifact because it revealed that Warneck was a mature and adaptive thinker. He adapted his view of Christian mission to accommodate the changing geopolitical circumstances at the turn of the twentieth century, but he also remained committed to his central principles: that mission, as Reichel had put it in 1886, protect "its godly,...international, and...[politically] independent character."<sup>73</sup>

At the 1906 meeting of the Saxon Mission Conference Carl Mirbt offered his thoughts on the mission motivation within Christianity. Mirbt, since 1890 Professor of Church History at the University of Marburg, was one of the preeminent academics of *Missionswissenschaft*. An expert on Catholic Church history, Mirbt also wrote a number of important works on Protestant mission. At the Mission Conference of 1906

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<sup>73</sup> Reichel, "Was haben wir zu thun,..." 42.

he offered an examination of the relative relationships among world religions. He cast his examination as a discussion of the “question of the justice of mission,” which ultimately came to the supposition that “[mission was a] granted right...and enjoined duty” of the Christian church. The right of Christendom to evangelize to all peoples was the “fundament and soul of all mission work, with this right [mission] stands [or] falls.”<sup>74</sup> He then embarked upon a justification of Christian global evangelization based upon its humanitarian benefits.

He began with a discussion of the major religions in the contemporary world. “What [was] playing itself out in Asia and in other forms in Africa,” Mirbt wrote, was a battle of world religions; a conflict between Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity that would be decided by the number of adherents and the evangelical drive of each faith. Mirbt worried over the insidious spread of Buddhist literature and ideas in Europe and America.<sup>75</sup> Japanese industrialization and military victories had also validated Eastern culture.<sup>76</sup> Mirbt interpreted both as signs not of the “inner strength of Buddhism” but instead as signs of the “weakness of the influence of Christian religion on individual groups within the educated circles” of European societies. An expansive Buddhism endangered the legitimate position of Christianity. On the other hand, the power of Islam in this battle of world religions was not a threat of “missionary spirit” but instead one of “missionary fanaticism.” Islam, according to Mirbt, had sought “the subjugation of the world under the crescent” since the seventh

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<sup>74</sup> Carl Mirbt, “Die innere Berechtigung und Kraft des Christentums zur Weltmission,” *AMZ* 33(1906): 446.

<sup>75</sup> Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute and Cambridge University Press, 2009), 270-271. 276-277; Marchand emphasizes how unlikely mass conversion to Buddhism was in Germany.

<sup>76</sup> Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 375.



century, a campaign waged now by “dervish orders, the elite troops” of Islamic might in Africa and Asia. The Middle East and the Levant already belonged to Islam; millions of Muslims lived in India, China and the islands off Southeast Asia; North Africa was long ago lost, and in the West and East of the continent Islam’s power was undeniable.<sup>77</sup> To Mirbt, the expansionist spirit of Buddhism and Islam threatened to overwhelm Christianity.

In order to explain this global religious conflict, Mirbt examined the numerical relationship of the three faiths. He placed the Christian population at about 535 million, Islam at somewhere between 175 and 345 million, and declined to offer an estimate of Buddhists (hamstrung by technical confusion over including Shintoists, Daoists, and Confucianists in the total). The intertwined nature of Far Eastern religious practices at the time confused Mirbt, and never mind that his entire calculation ignored Hinduism. The origins of Mirbt’s confusion regarding the relationship of Buddhism to other South, Southeast, and East Asian religions is strange, as by the turn of the twentieth century Buddhism had become “well known and its variants understood.”<sup>78</sup> One explanation might be an aversion by the devout professor to the radical, sometimes anti-religious interpretations of Orientalists studying Buddhism during the middle years of the nineteenth century, or he might have been more interested in avoiding work from the late century that acknowledged the historical priority of Buddha to Jesus. He may have avoided the scholarship out of

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<sup>77</sup> Mirbt, “Die innere Berechtigung und Kraft,” 448-450.

<sup>78</sup> By no means is this quote meant to indicate that the author believes Shintoism, Daoism, or Confucianism to be variants of Buddhism. On the development of German expertise on Buddhism between 1820 and 1870 see Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 103.

disdain for the scholars.<sup>79</sup> Mirbt contented himself by noting that the influence of Buddhism was undeniable based just on its power in the Far East. For Mirbt these numbers served as a useful marker of the religious-historical position of Christendom in the present. At the same time he cautioned that this numerical advantage should not be overvalued. “It would be dangerous to ascribe weight to such apparent success...because the cult of numbers should have no place in religious matters.”<sup>80</sup> After all, Mirbt pointed out that what truly mattered was the forcefulness of religious culture in the contest with Islam and Buddhism.

Mirbt’s concern over the global religious fight reflected missionary intellectuals’ growing global awareness. This new awareness included questions of what to do about the effects of global trade and commerce upon non-Western peoples and the missionary project. In the waning years of his life, Warneck became more concerned with the implications of globalization upon mission work. In particular, he wrote in the 1908 issue of the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* on the relationship of global trade and mission work. He opened by acknowledging the significant assistance that mission had received from trade, “whether mission preceded or followed world trade, [mission] received aid and temporal gains [from trade] whose worth [mission] fully value[d].”<sup>81</sup> Even so, this relationship was not always to the advantage of mission and Warneck summarized what he saw to be the key concerns raised by world trade for missionary activities.

The relationship between mission and trade had transformed, Warneck explained. Now, in 1908, very few mission stations remained isolated from the

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<sup>79</sup> Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 136-137, 270.

<sup>80</sup> Mirbt, “Die innere Berechtigung und Kraft,” 451-452.

<sup>81</sup> Warneck, “Die Mission im Schatten des Weltverkehrs,” *AMZ* 35(1908): 3.

systems of global exchange. In past eras mission could believe itself safe from outside influence; now mission had become in a sense a “city on a hill” that from its “exposed position” must accept the gaze of the world and public judgment. Warneck was certainly correct that missionaries and their mission stations had begun to receive ever greater scrutiny in the 1890s and early 1900s. What is interesting is that some part of this new attention came as a result of efforts by Warneck and others to raise the profile of mission activities amongst the German public. His earlier wishes for greater notoriety had been granted, yet Warneck did not seem fully satisfied with the result. He accepted that the outpouring of criticism of missionary societies’ work had to be accepted, when the criticism was justified and based in fact. However, Warneck continued, in the same way that a musical understanding was necessary to judge musical works, so was a religious understanding necessary for fair judgment of missionary activities.<sup>82</sup> The growing engagement of other Europeans with mission work as a consequence of the growth in global exchange had, in Warneck’s opinion, both introduced to missionary enterprise useful advice and subjected it to uninformed and dangerous criticism.

Many of these critics, Warneck went on, came from the growing diaspora of Christians. Such a spread could be advantageous for missionaries working in the field. The merchants, soldiers, officials, and settlers from Europe could undoubtedly provide missionaries with exemplary models of Christian life for their heathen students to emulate. Sadly, such an assumption was “only a beautiful dream.” The majority of Europeans in the colonies were, in fact, “no worthy representation of Christianity.” Instead their behavior provided the “heathen” with counter-examples of

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<sup>82</sup> Warneck, “Die Mission im Schatten des Weltverkehrs,” 4-6.

Christian depravity. The bad behavior of white Christians in the colonies and the bad example that set for missionized peoples marked, for Warneck, “a long, dark shadow thrown by world trade.”<sup>83</sup> The undeniable expansion of flows in people, goods, and information, which reached its peak in the decade before the First World War, worried Warneck. Much like localist anxieties in small German villages and towns, Warneck’s internationalist vision applied the same fears to the villages of indigenous people gathered around mission stations around the world. Missionaries’ anti-modernist impulses continued to drive their aversion to the secular project of colonization.

Beyond just the spread of despicable Europeans, Warneck warned of the spread of still more despicable European ideas. As German imperialism and mission interest began to direct more attention to China and the Far East, Warneck’s writings began to reflect a growing worry over the mixing of secular European culture with the so-called *Kulturvölker* of China, Japan, and India. He worried that academic works which undermined Christian belief by spreading “agnosticism, atheism, and materialism,” “modernism,” in Warneck’s shorthand, to “large half-educated circles of non-Christian *Kulturvölker* and no wall can prevent [its] entrance.” The spread of this literature created a public perception of Christianity in the upper classes of the non-Christian lands that Christianity had been supplanted by other religions in Europe and undermined the worth given Christianity through its attachment to European global power.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Warneck, “Die Mission im Schatten des Weltverkehrs,” 6-8.

<sup>84</sup> Warneck, “Die Mission im Schatten des Weltverkehrs,” 9-10.

The competition engendered by world trade and global exchange further imperiled Christian mission in the world. To Warneck, colonialism, world trade, and economic policies had brought overseas peoples little of worth, the only outcome had been “frequent brutality, violence and avarice.” One only needed, Warneck pointed out, to take note of the countless wars and uprisings led by native peoples in response to the excesses of colonialism, the opium and spirit trades, appropriation of property and proletarianization of indigenous peoples, the repression of economic independence, and the cruelty of work contracts to recognize the danger of economic modernization upon missionized peoples. Warneck’s interpretation of the effects of imperialism and globalization upon non-Western societies echoed in many ways critics like Lenin and Hobson from his intellectual left. Missionaries shared in the suffering of the peoples with whom they lived and worked, Warneck argued. He conceded that missionaries lacked the power to stop this global competition for power but they could, through their “Christian faith and Christian morality,” help mitigate the effects. The more Christian missionaries forced the Christian powers to participate in the competition for markets and trade in a moral fashion, the more non-Christian peoples would be able to participate in global trade and protect themselves from exploitation.<sup>85</sup>

Warneck’s analysis of the effect of world trade on mission overwhelmingly focused on the negative outcomes of trade. Warneck’s late thought (he would die in 1910) indicated a mixture of pragmatism with regards to dealing with the colonial powers but also a growing distaste for the impact of modern culture on Christianity. While his younger contemporaries began to find an accommodation with imperialism,

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<sup>85</sup> Warneck, “Die Mission im Schatten des Weltverkehrs,” 12-13.

he seemed to be moving toward a renunciation of the limited compromises he made at the turn-of-the-century. The spread of immoral “Christian” Europeans, the diffusion of anti-Christian ideas, and the exploitative nature of global capitalism all acted as retardants to missionary growth in Warneck’s understanding. In all cases, consequently, Warneck’s solutions focused on the European homeland as a secondary mission field. The best missionary methods for addressing the challenges of expanding world trade were methods for the homeland. “In the home country,” he wrote, “lie the sources of our missionary power, the engendering and care of Godly living in the home country remains the core of our mission work.”<sup>86</sup> No doubt for Warneck the power of the Reds and the Blacks (Socialists and Catholics) indicated a troubling effect of modern progress upon the very core of German Protestant mission. Ultimately, to Warneck the success of mission in a new era of globalization required victory on two fronts – against the growing subjugation of the non-Christian world<sup>87</sup> and against the old enemies of heathen superstition and recalcitrance.<sup>88</sup> The threat of modernity to Christianity had become a key concern of one of Germany’s leading missionary figures just as the expansion of global exchange had made greater missionary cooperation possible.

Warneck’s shifting position continued to reflect an aversion to politics as the missionaries defined them. The machinations of imperial powers for greater influence in the Far East, expanded trade opportunities around the world, and intensified colonial development all threatened the operations of missionaries and imperiled the lives and souls of indigenous peoples that missionaries sought to evangelize. While

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<sup>86</sup> Warneck, “Die Mission im Schatten des Weltverkehrs,” 15.

<sup>87</sup> See chapter four of this dissertation.

<sup>88</sup> Warneck, “Die Mission im Schatten des Weltverkehrs,” 16.

men like Warneck remained resolute internationalists, the waves of global economic and political development and change reflected much of the formative aspects of the later, more nationalist ideology of younger *Missionswissenschaftler*.

### **The Younger Generation**

Warneck and Mirbt, both established minds in the German missionary community, agreed that the world was beginning to change in 1900 and the concerns of missionary activity had to expand to deal with expanding challenges. The older generation continued to have its adherents, but a younger generation of thinkers also saw mission as part of a world in which forces beyond Christianity influenced the course of history.<sup>89</sup> The two leading figures, Julius Richter and Karl Axenfeld both came to see the “nation,” defined as a historical subject, as a determining factor in history and in the future of mission. They began working to overturn the dominance of Warneck’s doctrine of strict internationalism in the half-decade before and the four years of the First World War.

Richter and Axenfeld were both associated with the Berlin Mission Society and both resident in the cosmopolitan Prussian and imperial capital. In the decades after Warneck established his journal, Berlin had grown in size and prominence. By the 1880s Berlin held over one million people and by 1900 it had undeniably emerged as an international center and the capital of a powerful and assertive German

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<sup>89</sup> Niesel, “Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914,” 289.

empire.<sup>90</sup> The maturation of Berlin and the German Empire must have had a formative effect on Richter and Axenfeld. Both men, unlike Warneck and his colleagues, had only ever truly known a unified German state. Their maturation as *Missionswissenschaftler* took place firmly within the context of a German colonial empire. These two factors, their affiliation with the German metropolitan capital and their maturation, explain how both men would serve as the chief rhetoricians of a new melding between German national and missionary priorities. Berlin, as the center of German national power and intellectual life, led Richter and Axenfeld to think of themselves as at the center of a global German empire and to think about mission as a key constitutive element of German imperialism. Where Warneck and others would remain committed to the past, to the internationalist ideal, Axenfeld and Richter became ever more comfortable with the idea of a German missionary nationalism committed to promoting German Protestantism and German imperialism.

Finally, the same geopolitical shift around 1900 that led Warneck to make mild revisions to his theories would also introduce a new concern to German missionary intellectuals. Mirbt would be a trailblazer of these ideas in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, but others would follow. The slow success of mission work, the growth of Islam in East and West Africa, and the modernization of the non-Christian Japanese and Chinese empires led many missionaries to worry over the threat of non-western religions. In particular the perceived threat of Islam would serve as a counterweight to the forces pushing German missionary intellectuals away from international mission.

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<sup>90</sup> On Berlin as a colonial, metropolitan city see Ulrich van der Heyden and Joachim Zeller, eds., *Kolonialmetropole Berlin: Eine Spurensuche* (Berlin: Berlin Edition, 2002).



The relationship between missionary ideology and the constellation of forces customarily thought of as “modernity” by late nineteenth-century intellectuals was never clear cut. On the one hand, the roots of the nineteenth-century mission movement in the anti-Enlightenment religious awakening predisposed many missionary theorists to be suspicious of the influence of industrial society upon the world. At the same time a younger generation of missionaries, more comfortable with the mechanized landscape of fin-de-siècle Europe, saw technological developments as a sign of God’s providence, evidence of divine intention that Christianity finally spread across the entire globe. Gustav Warneck’s work showed this ambiguity, but Karl Axenfeld provided the best evidence of the younger generation – eager to evangelize the world with the tools of the modern age: he wrote, what would our forerunners say “if they could see the breach in the Chinese wall” blasted for an “express train out of the Christian West!”<sup>91</sup>

In one article, drawn from a discussion of the fourteenth verse of the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, Axenfeld clearly foresaw the glorious success of Christian mission without a single reference to colonial politics. This certainty was not unique to Axenfeld’s work; rather all missionary leaders shared his confidence. So, when we consider the relationship of religion and politics in German missionary activities it would be easy to dismiss the declarations of religious primacy as a form of rationalization. It is easy to believe that missionaries were unable to face the practical and political reality that their work existed only because of European political and military might. But Axenfeld’s article offers an object lesson in the fact that even the most political of missionary animals could see the project of missionary

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<sup>91</sup> Karl Axenfeld, “Weltevangelisation und Ende,” *AMZ* 38(1911): 253.

evangelization as spiritually, morally, and practically independent of political considerations. The engagement in politics by missionaries was best understood as the contemporary missionary leadership doing its best to see God's will fulfilled in their lifetime.

Axenfeld exulted, "the fulfillment of our promise is surely the greatest piece of evidence that God" has always guided the way and provided the means. God had placed Christian missionaries in a world with the steamship, telegraph, and railroad, Axenfeld argued, and "we live in the great time of fulfillment" of God's promise of a Christian globe. He went on, "the number of people on earth who have never heard of Christ and his authority [*Herrschaftsanspruch*] rapidly dwindles under the current global development."<sup>92</sup> Once all men and women were brought by mission to Christianity, every Christian would attend to the teachings of the Bible and would hasten the Millennium. However, this end of time and new kingdom would not come through human effort but by God's will, in the flow of history "unexpected like a thief, unpredictable like a lightning bolt." The decisive hour for the kingdom of God would be the hour when Christianity had vanquished all other faiths.<sup>93</sup>

How do we resolve this vision of Axenfeld's faith with his later career as a deeply political figure? When laid alongside Axenfeld's expressed desires for a more nationally efficacious form of mission work, his 1911 words with their purely spiritual direction seem unusual. (Even before the First World War Axenfeld would become an ardent nationalist). However, when these ideas were combined it seems unlikely that Axenfeld's devotion to national mission was an abandonment of a

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<sup>92</sup> Axenfeld, "Weltevangelisation und Ende," 253-254.

<sup>93</sup> Axenfeld, "Weltevangelisation und Ende," 259.

theological understanding of international missionary work. Were that the case he would not have composed such a conventionally structured discussion of the meaning of mission in Christian eschatology. Instead a more reasonable conclusion is that Axenfeld's support for a particularist, German mission effort was a result of a firm belief in the place of Germany in history; in his small corner of the world, perhaps, Axenfeld sought to utilize German exceptionality to help promote the eventual fulfillment of biblical prophecy. In the process, he offered a way forward for missionary leaders inclined to a nationalist interpretation of the evangelical project.

Julius Richter, successor to Warneck as editor of the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, wrote the introductory essay of the 1914 issue. From Richter's point of view, peace between England and Germany depended on "the comprehension that the vital interests [*Lebensinteressen*] of both great peoples [did] not stand in...opposition." World peace and world mission were, to Richter, "vitally connected." The past decades had witnessed the most significant human developments: European culture's spread across the globe and the rise of national consciousness among the peoples of Asia and Africa.<sup>94</sup>

The greatest achievement still ahead for European culture was to bring its powerful and important civilization to all the peoples of the world. Any complication of the process by military competition would be a "crime against humanity." Therefore, a war between Britain and Germany must be avoided because such a conflict would hinder global cultural development by interfering with the work of humanitarian mission. The two nations' spheres of interest would constrict and neither nation would be able to devote sufficient resources to support its "brave

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<sup>94</sup> Julius Richter, "Weltfriede und Weltmission," *AMZ* 41(1914): 4.

missionaries.” Richter concluded, “A world war between the Protestant powers would be calamitous.”<sup>95</sup> The congruent industrial development of England, Germany, and other Christian lands proved Christianity’s advanced cultural development. Should an un-Christian egoism bring those powers into conflict, then mission’s ultimate goal: the spread of the Gospel and world peace would become impossible.<sup>96</sup> Richter understood the complicated relationship between politics and mission. To him the growth of European power was natural and necessary to support the spread of Christian missionaries but by 1914, Richter had clearly grown apprehensive of the growing rivalry between Germany and England. What he hoped for, like many other German intellectuals, was that the two countries would recognize their shared interests. If they did not, Richter worried that the consequences for German mission and Protestant Christianity as a whole would be dire. Richter and Axenfeld’s rising nationalism will be examined in greater depth later in this dissertation.

## Conclusion

In their largest venue for ideological expression, the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, German missionary leaders considered the relative merits and correct relationship between political activity – defined as secular affairs in general, the national and colonial state, and any nationally stamped form of colonial activity. This group of intellectuals was made up of former missionaries or of men who had ongoing contact with missionaries in the field. This contact may have had an

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<sup>95</sup> Richter, “Weltfriede und Weltmission,” 5-6.

<sup>96</sup> Richter, “Weltfriede und Weltmission,” 7.

important impact upon the development of missionary internationalism but the main discussions about internationalism versus nationalism took place in a theoretical plane a step removed from practical mission activities. The determination that inflected missionary leaders' reactions to political activity as they understood it was always an intellectual position that, as will be shown, rarely stood up to the realities of German Protestant mission work.

For nearly thirty years the dominant view was that mission should hold itself strictly apart from the activities of the colonial state. This position was marked by four characteristics. First, it was spearheaded by Gustav Warneck and supported by his fellow members of the older generation of German mission leaders. All had been born before the establishment of a German nation-state and colonial empire and all judged that mission had been successful before there was a Germany and that it could and should remain successful independent of a German colonial empire in the future as well. Germany's mission societies belonged to an international community, a community that served God's design. Second, the biblical commission for all Christians to spread the Gospel to all peoples meant that the missionary project superseded all other human ambition. This meant that German missionaries' work was by definition international and subject to no secular agenda. Third, beyond missionaries' principled separation of mission and politics there was a vital practical basis for separating missionary activity from colonial political activity. Politics would corrupt mission work if given the chance. Consequently, the older generation of missionary thinkers cited protecting the integrity of missionary endeavor as a further reason to keep mission above and separate from politics. Finally, Warneck and his

compatriots agreed that politics in any form was a threat to the resources and attention necessary for missionary success. While this set of principles remained dominant until the turn of the twentieth century, it was after 1900 that it began to lose ground. The older generation began to become ever more concerned about other ideologies and the global influence of those ideologies. Warneck and others began thinking about politics as a global contest between Christianity and the other faiths. At no point did they completely concede that missionaries must engage in political activity, but they did propose that the missionary movement adapt to these new circumstances and push for support from the colonial powers. Finally, just before and during the First World War a younger generation of missionary leaders began to consider the power of the nation as paramount. Their nationalism rose to dominate the missionary world for the brief moment before the question of the relationship between German mission and German imperialism became moot in 1919.

## Chapter Two: Confessions in Conflict

Conflicts between Protestants and Catholics in Germany helped undermine the strong internationalist position that most missionary leaders followed during the nineteenth century. The vibrating strand of anti-Catholicism in German Protestant missionary discourse revealed the obsession with international and national loyalty that missionaries carried forward from the pre-imperial period into their own particular fixations. Nonetheless, for much of their history Protestant missionaries repressed their anti-Catholic urges and concentrated on their own work. And yet, Protestant missionaries' virulent criticism of the Catholic establishment was a taut strand stretched from before the establishment of the *Kaiserreich* to the First World War. It vibrated at varying intensities at different times, with its strongest vibrations occurring during the so-called *Benediktinerstreit*. A conflict over mission territories in German East Africa, the *Benediktinerstreit* called into question the very possibility of Protestant-Catholic coexistence. To this point the *Benediktinerstreit* has received little coverage from scholars. In general it has been folded into scholarship on the general question of territory and competition between mission societies regardless of denomination or confession. This chapter will draw upon the correspondence of the Protestant missionaries, the Colonial Department, and missionary periodicals to show

that the Protestant-Catholic division was far more significant than other such conflicts over territory or influence.<sup>1</sup>

The *Benediktinerstreit* lasted for half a decade; jeopardized the fragile coalition that undergirded colonial stability in German East Africa in the aftermath of the violent Maji-Maji War; and threatened to reignite confessional rivalries between Catholics and Protestants in the German metropole. It pitted the well-established Berlin Mission Society against one of the new German Catholic mission orders, the Benedictine Oblates of St. Ottilien which had been founded to work in the German colonies in 1884. To the Berliners and Benedictines the territorial disagreement between the Catholics and Protestants had the potential to send shockwaves across German society. The *Benediktinerstreit* proved to be less calamitous than Protestant, Catholic, and secular leaders predicted. In part this is because the First World War made the entire issue irrelevant; however, it is also because the *Benediktinerstreit* was a relatively unimportant event whose importance lay in its meaning as a signifier of German confessional and political patterns. Nonetheless, the sound and fury whipped up by the leaders of the Berlin Mission between 1908 and 1914 proves how important that period was to German Protestant missionary ideology.

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<sup>1</sup> Marcia Wright is the main exception to this, she notes the increasing conflict between Catholics and Protestants in the region, see Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika 1891-1941*, 119-121. In general the issue of Protestant-Catholic conflict only receives passing mention in scholarship that focuses on either the Protestant or the Catholic mission histories. For examples see, Gründer, *Christliche Mission und deutscher Imperialismus*, 99; and Ulrich van der Heyden, "Christian Missionary Societies in the German Colonies, 1884/85-1914/15," in *German Colonialism: Race, the Holocaust, and Postwar Germany*, ed. Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 226. For a discussion of Protestant-Catholic missionary conflict in the German colony of Kamerun see Heinrich Berger, *Mission und Kolonialpolitik: Die katholische Mission in Kamerun während der deutschen Kolonialzeit* (Immensee: Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft, 1978), 336-337.



The German Protestant mission movement at the time of the *Benediktinerstreit* found itself under a significant amount of stress. The reaction of the Berlin Mission Society to the Catholic “invasion” of its territory betrayed the pressure that the mission felt in German East Africa specifically, as well as the shifting identities of German Protestant missionaries during this period. A study of the reaction of the leaders of the Berlin Mission to the actions of the Benedictines indicates, in the first place, that the rising nationalist ideology among some German Protestant missionaries had impact upon colonial policy. Second, German Protestant missionary internationalism was not always a force for reconciliation and peace. Catholic internationalism and German Protestant missionary internationalism came into conflict over mission territories in East Africa. And, in fact, the German Protestant missionary movement, even before the development of a compelling nationalist mission ideology, proved, at times, to be more concerned with the conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism than with its internationalist or nationalist credentials. This raises the third point, the challenge that national culture posed to missionary internationalism. The border conflict with the Benedictines tapped into a long history of anti-Catholicism in Germany.<sup>2</sup> The ease with which the leaders of the Berlin Mission utilized old traditions of confessionally coded nationalism demonstrated the strength of national culture and how difficult it could be to transcend national particularity.

In the end the *Benediktinerstreit* had no resolution; the conflict disappeared along with so much else at the opening of the First World War. But the

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<sup>2</sup> There was also a long history of anti-Catholicism built into British and international mission history, Carey, *God's Empire*, 5.

*Benediktinerstreit*'s imprint upon the history of the Protestant mission movement in Germany far exceeded its imprint upon other histories. It came at a time when the previously redoubtable internationalist ideology of German mission life began to come under a succession of blows from without. The threats to Protestant mission in German East Africa already detailed above were just a small piece, the German mission societies also found themselves financially stretched, under pressure from secular colonialists and German arch-nationalists, and struggling to navigate an increasingly interconnected international scene; all while a new group of leaders arose within the movement promoting a nationalist ideology of mission work. The Protestant missionaries' turn to anti-Catholic and nationalist rhetoric during the *Benediktinerstreit* is an indicator of the slipping internationalism of the German Protestant mission movement around 1908.

### **Catholics in Germany**

The origins of German anti-Catholicism are chronologically distinct and yet the outbreaks are tightly linked over time. From origins in the Reformation and Thirty Years' War, through the Enlightenment, into the *Kulturkampf* of the 1870s, and continuing in the polemics of the Protestant missionaries' against Catholics and the Catholic Church followed familiar lines of argument. The anti-Catholic language of German Protestant missionaries followed many of the themes produced by Bismarck and his liberal allies during the 1870s which had themselves drawn from older traditions. This period of state-based anti-Catholicism, known as the *Kulturkampf*,

witnessed attacks designed to break the power of the Catholic Church in Germany. Priests and bishops were jailed, church property was seized, and the Jesuit order was exiled from the country in a flurry of liberal and statist opposition to the Roman faith.<sup>3</sup>

In response to concerted attacks by the state and liberal politicians, German Catholics banded together in opposition. Paradoxically, *Kulturkampf* legislation, designed to unite the new German Empire culturally, worsened the dissonance between Protestant and Catholic communities in Germany. It helped accentuate the developing social and political segregation of Catholic and Protestant Germans.<sup>4</sup> David Blackbourn has even argued that by the 1880s there were two Germanys within the *Kaiserreich*, one for each confession.<sup>5</sup> Even after the end of the *Kulturkampf* Catholics felt themselves the victims of an ongoing “silent” or “creeping” *Kulturkampf*. Laws across the German states continued to discriminate against Catholics and though one-third of the German population was Catholic, Catholics were underrepresented in the highest ranks of the Prussian state and German imperial civil services, a disproportionate minority in academia, and lagged behind Protestants in educational achievement.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> By the end, 1800 priests had been imprisoned or exiled and 16 million marks of church property taken by the state. Manfred Scholle, *Die Preußische Strafrecht im Kulturkampf 1873-1880* (Marburg: Elwert, 1974), cited in Blackbourn, *Marpingen*, 86.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Clark, “Religion and Confessional Conflict,” in Retallack, *Imperial Germany, 1871-1918*, 92; Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-century Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 277.

<sup>5</sup> Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century*, 286 and 301.

<sup>6</sup> Martin Baumeister, *Parität und katholische Inferiorität: Untersuchungen zur Stellung des Katholizismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1987); David Blackbourn, *Class, Religion and Local Politics in Wilhelmine Germany: The Centre Party in Württemberg before 1914* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980), 10; Jefferies, *Contesting the German Empire, 1871-1918*, 96; Ronald J. Ross, *Beleaguered Tower: The Dilemma of Political Catholicism in Wilhelmine Germany* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976), xiv, 20-22, and 32.

The experience of repression brought Catholics together into social and political organizations across class and occupation.<sup>7</sup> Foremost among these organizations was the Catholic Center Party which emerged as the center of political Catholicism and the primary advocate of Catholic interests.<sup>8</sup> And though the party was a coalition of economic, social, and regional constituencies, the party displayed remarkable durability with consistent support among German parties aside second only to the Social Democrats.<sup>9</sup> Because of the peculiar characteristics of the German political scene, the Center Party wielded phenomenal influence. From 1890 to 1914 it possessed one-quarter of the seats in the *Reichstag*. Together with the parliamentary decline of the nationalist National Liberals and Conservatives, traditional allies of imperial chancellors, and ascent of the permanently anti-government Social Democrats, the Center Party's parliamentary strength made it the only possible means for the chancellors to construct any parliamentary majority.<sup>10</sup> The Center Party, therefore, wielded significant power within the *Reichstag* and, as a consequence, in German political life.<sup>11</sup>

The political power of the Catholic Center Party certainly gave the Protestants pause during the *Benediktinerstreit* but did not ultimately dissuade the missionaries from attacking the Catholic faith. The *Reichstag* held significant influence in colonial

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<sup>7</sup> H. W. Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict*, 42-44.

<sup>8</sup> Blackbourn, *Class, Religion and Local Politics in Wilhelmine Germany*, 20; Ross, *The Failure of Bismarck's Kulturkampf*, 122; Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, 253-255.

<sup>9</sup> Blackbourn, *Class, Religion and Local Politics in Wilhelmine Germany*, 21; Jefferies, *Contesting the German Empire, 1871-1918*, 115; Ross, *Beleaguered Tower*, passim.

<sup>10</sup> Blackbourn, *Class, Religion and Local Politics in Wilhelmine Germany*, 23.

<sup>11</sup> Clark, "Religion and Confessional Conflict," 94.

affairs and the Center Party had proven its influence in these matters in the past.<sup>12</sup> In spite of these facts the missionaries believed that a strong campaign of nationalist anti-Catholicism could be the solution to their territorial conflict in German East Africa. The Protestant leadership believed that if the conflict in East Africa could be depicted as a battle against anti-nationalist Catholics, then perhaps the Center Party could be isolated and the missionaries' allies could join with the pro-government parties, the Conservatives and pro-colonial National Liberals, to force concessions from the colonial government or the Catholics. By appealing to a long tradition of anti-Catholic rhetoric from the conservative Right and Liberals in Germany the Protestant missionaries sought to compel the Colonial Department to enforce a system of territorial division that favored Protestants' long- and short-term interests<sup>13</sup>. Recent history may have also made it appear that the Center Party was out of favor and therefore politically vulnerable. Unlike previous chancellors, Bernhard von Bülow had not forged any coalition with the Center Party, particularly in the wake of the "Hottentot" Election of 1907 which had pitted the government against the Center Party and the Social Democrats.<sup>14</sup> The successful electoral campaign waged by the government and its political allies against the Center Party had demonstrated the

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<sup>12</sup> Bade, "Einführung: Imperialismus und Kolonialmission: Das Kaiserliche Deutschland und sein koloniales Imperium," in *Imperialismus und Kolonialmission*, 81; Mirtschink, *Zur Rolle christlicher Mission in kolonialen Gesellschaft*, 33; Jake Wilton Spidle, "The German Colonial Civil Service: Organization, Selection, and Training," (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1972), 22. For one Protestant missionary's view of the Center Party see [Gustav] Warneck, "Die Mission im deutschen Reichstage," *AMZ* 18(1891): 124-131

<sup>13</sup> For examples of the resonance of anti-Catholic attacks in colonial politics, see Johannes Horstmann, ed., *Die Verschränkung von Innen-, Konfessions- und Kolonialpolitik im Deutschen Reich vor 1914* (Paderborn: Katholische Akademie Schwerte, 1987).

<sup>14</sup> Blackbourn, *Class, Religion and Local Politics in Wilhelmine Germany*, 24.

residual strength of anti-Catholicism in German politics.<sup>15</sup> The missionaries clearly had reason to believe that the application of tried and true methods from the recent and distant past might lead to success.

Relations between Protestants and Catholics during the second half of the nineteenth century were suffused with a historical memory of the conflicts of the Reformation and the decades of religious warfare that had followed. Protestant religious identity carried with it the paired convictions that German Lutherans and other Protestants had the duty to complete the Reformation within Germany and at the same time a certainty that Catholics had engaged in an ongoing campaign to undermine German national strength.<sup>16</sup> German liberals and conservative Protestants were able to join together behind a program of integrative nationalism focused on a shared anti-Catholicism that defined the German nation as Protestant.<sup>17</sup> Protestants and the liberal national state adopted a view of German Catholic society during the early nineteenth century that suspected the Catholic Church, which was undergoing revitalization in the period, of conspiring to destroy German national life.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Klaus Epstein, *Matthias Erzberger and the Dilemma of German Democracy* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1971), 56-60; Jefferies, *Contesting the German Empire, 1871-1918*, 177; Helmut Walser Smith, "The Talk of Genocide, the Rhetoric of Miscegenation: Notes on Debates in the German Reichstag concerning Southwest Africa, 1904-14," in Friedrichsmayer, Lennox, and Zantop, *The Imperialist Imagination*, 107-124.

<sup>16</sup> See Helmut Walser Smith, *The Continuities of German History: Nation, Religion, and Race across the Long Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008); H. W. Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict*, 5; Thomas Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch: Deutschland 1870-1918* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1988), 81.

<sup>17</sup> Clark, "Religion and Confessional Conflict," 90-93.

<sup>18</sup> Gross, *The War against Catholicism*, 72-73; H. W. Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict*, 9-10 and 236-237; Olaf Blaschke and Frank-Michael Kuhlemann, eds., *Religion im Kaiserreich: Milieus-Mentalitäten-Krisen* (Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser/Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1996), 44; Martin Friedrich, "Das 19. Jahrhundert als 'Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter': Anmerkungen aus evangelisch-theologischer Sicht," in *Konfessionen im Konflikt: Deutschland zwischen 1800 und 1970: ein zweites konfessionelles Zeitalter*, ed. Olaf Blaschke (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 101-102; Ronald J. Ross, *The Failure of Bismarck's Kulturkampf*, 5.

The conservative Protestant and Liberal suspicion of a Catholic conspiracy bent on destroying the heritage of the Reformation provided the basis for the rhetoric and mindset of German anti-Catholicism. German Protestants, missionaries among them, viewed Catholics as possessing certain qualities that made them less than worthy members of the national state.<sup>19</sup> The liberals' attack on the Catholics during the period of the *Kulturkampf* tarred Catholics and their clergy as "stupid, medieval, superstitious, feminine, and un-German." Catholicism, in their view, was the antithesis of the German values of "rationalism, bourgeois individualism, high industrialization, free-market capitalism, the unified nation-state, and gender-specific public and private spheres."<sup>20</sup> Protestant missionary leaders adapted many of these accusations to their own needs. They too associated Catholics with hierarchy, absolutism, and censorship;<sup>21</sup> qualities that were anathema to a Protestant missionary leadership built on the ideas of individual and independent pursuit of personal salvation and a mission program dependent upon the protection of freedom of conscience in the colonies. The Protestant campaign during the *Benediktinerstreit*, by applying the arguments of German Protestant nationalism, subverted the very ideals of religious freedom and missionary internationalism that Protestant missionaries had treasured since before the establishment of a German Empire.

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<sup>19</sup> Most scholarship on these ideas has focused on the *Kulturkampf* of the 1870s but the material is applicable to later period including the *Benediktinerstreit* years. See Wolfgang Altgeld, *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum: Über religiös begründete Gegensätze und nationalreligiöse Ideen in der Geschichte des deutschen Nationalismus* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1992), 4-5.

<sup>20</sup> Gross, *The War against Catholicism*, 22.

<sup>21</sup> See Gangolf Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus und Politik: Zum Verhältnis von Liberalismus und Protestantismus im Wilhelminischen Deutschland* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (P. Siebeck), 1994).

## German East African Context

The German missionaries in East Africa, like missionaries in European colonies around the world, had intimate dealings with the colonial state. In the case of German East Africa, both the Catholic and Protestant mission societies had entered the colony either in collaboration with or at the urging of secular colonial groups within a decade of the establishment of the colony. This meant that both the Catholic and the Protestant missions passed through similar stages at roughly the same time in the colony. The Berlin, Bethel, Moravian, and Leipzig Missions struggled through the early phases of establishing a mission, an experience also shared by the Benedictines of St. Ottilien.<sup>22</sup> Missions of both confessions emerged from this early, challenging phase around 1900 and entered a period of expansion in the colony. In particular, the Berlin Mission and the Catholic Benedictines' growth and close proximity in the southwest of the colony contributed to the clash between the two confessions.

As has been discussed already, the relationship between missionaries and colonialism in Germany was, on an ideological level, ambivalent at best. Missionary leaders generally viewed the colonial state with skepticism. However, on the ground in the colonies missionaries still looked to the colonial state for protection and support and some institutions in the metropole brought missionaries and the colonizing state together. The most direct link between missionaries and the colonial administration in Europe was the *Kolonialrat* (Colonial Council). The *Kolonialrat* functioned as an advisory council to the German Colonial Director from 1891 until its

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<sup>22</sup> For a history of Catholic missions in Germany see, Hubert Mohr, *Katholische Orden und Deutscher Imperialismus* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1965).



dissolution in 1906. The *Kolonialrat* was seen by contemporaries as a check on the colonial administration that, nonetheless, generally supported the government's efforts.<sup>23</sup> The Protestant representative, Karl von Jacobi, his Catholic colleague, Franz Hespers, and their successors served as intermediaries between the mission societies and the metropolitan colonial administration. The *Kolonialrat*'s institutionalized position as an intermediary between colonial interests and the Colonial Secretary was left vacant after the council's dissolution during the Dernburg Reforms of 1907-1908.<sup>24</sup>

This link between the mission societies and the German government was supplemented by more prosaic relations in East Africa. The anti-slavery campaign provided one natural area of alliance between the missions and colonial state, an alliance that pitted the Germans against African slave traders.<sup>25</sup> But it is dangerous to overestimate the strength of these bonds as the German administration's campaign against slavery in German East Africa was intentionally deliberate. Missions of both confessions spent the 1890s, 1900s, and 1910s repeatedly pressing the colonial government in Berlin and East Africa to further suppress the slave trade and abolish slaveholding.<sup>26</sup> This complicated relationship did not prevent Berlin missionaries in the south of the colony viewing the colonial administration as an ally, even flying the flag of the administration and displaying portraits of the Kaiser and his wife the

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<sup>23</sup> Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann, "The Kolonialrat and the Missionary Societies," in van der Heyden and Stoecker, *Mission und Macht im Wandel politischer Orientierungen*, 37-38; and Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann, *Imperialismus vom Grünen Tisch: Deutsche Kolonialpolitik zwischen wirtschaftlicher Ausbeutung und "zivilisatorischen" Bemühungen* (Berlin: Links, 2009).

<sup>24</sup> See below.

<sup>25</sup> Loth, *Zwischen Gott und Kattun*, 86; and Thaddeus Sunseri, "Slave Ransoming in German East Africa, 1885-1922," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 26(3): 481-511.

<sup>26</sup> Deutsch, *Emancipation without Abolition in German East Africa, c. 1884-1914*, 2-3 and 122.

*Kaiserin*.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, Catholics in the colony showed their loyalty by close adherence to the administration's educational policy directives.<sup>28</sup> In return for their loyalty the missionaries were able to enforce compulsory school attendance with state assistance.<sup>29</sup> Mission schools and other ventures also received funding from the colonial administration, integrating them into the colonial state.<sup>30</sup> Colonial tax policy also helped incentivize mission and school attendance with tax dispensations for Africans resident at mission stations.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, missionaries still frequently viewed the colonial state as a rival, seeking to protect "their" Africans from the violence of the state and other interest groups like settlers and corporate enterprises.<sup>32</sup> Clearly, the relationship between missionaries and the colonial state was complex.

The actions of the government could, at times, provoke the concern of the Protestant mission societies. In 1892 the colonial government of German East Africa opened its own school in coastal Tanga and by 1902 about 4,000 pupils attended government schools. The schools trained translators, clerks, and skilled artisans for

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<sup>27</sup> Hans-Joachim Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika zur Zeit des Maji-Maji-Aufstandes 1905-1907," in *Mit Zauberwasser gegen Gewehrkugeln: Der Maji-Maji-Aufstand in ehemaligen Deutsch-Ostafrika vor 100 Jahren*, ed. Hans-Martin Hinz, Hans-Joachim Niesel, and Almut Nothnagle (Frankfurt-am-Main: Otto Lembeck, 2006), 77-78.

<sup>28</sup> Mirtschink, *Zur Rolle christlicher Mission in kolonialen Gesellschaft*, 78-79.

<sup>29</sup> Nzalayaimisi, "The Berliners and Violence in Eastern and Southern Tanzania, 1887-1919," 474-479. See also Mirtschink, *Zur Rolle christlicher Mission in kolonialen Gesellschaften*, 78-79; and Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika zur Zeit des Maji-Maji-Aufstandes 1905-1907," 81.

<sup>30</sup> Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914," 143. More broadly, see N. Thomas Håkansson, "Pagan Practices and the Death of Children: German Colonial Missionaries and Child Health Care in South Pare, Tanzania," *World Development* 26(9): 1763-1772.

<sup>31</sup> Arnold, *Steuer und Lohnarbeit im Südwesten von Deutsch-Ostafrika, 1891 bis 1916*, 131-134 and 183-190.

<sup>32</sup> Harald Sippel, "Mission und Gewalt in Deutsch-Ostafrika: Das Verhältnis zwischen Mission und Kolonialverwaltung," in van der Heyden and Becher, *Mission und Gewalt*, 530.

the needs of the colonial administration.<sup>33</sup> The schools were set up as non-confessional and were from the start the focus of hostility from missionaries.<sup>34</sup> Because these schools had been built in the coastal regions and catered to the Muslim coastal elite of the colony, missionaries worried that the schools might feature religious instruction in Islam.<sup>35</sup> Missionaries increasingly felt that the non-confessional schools, particularly their largely Muslim student body, meant the government was cutting mission schools out of the supply line for colonial administrators.<sup>36</sup> Catholic and Protestant missions joined together in opposition to the government schools but the schools remained in operation and they contributed to a fear of an expanding Islam amongst the Protestant missionaries. The growth of Islam in general in the region combined with the perception by missionaries that the colonial government favored its Muslim subjects to further intensify missionaries' apprehension about their future.<sup>37</sup> Efforts to change the policy in Berlin failed as did

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<sup>33</sup> Karim F. Hirji, "Colonial Ideological Apparatuses in Tanganyika under the Germans," in *Tanzania under Colonial Rule*, ed. M. H. Y. Kaniki (London: Longman Group Limited, 1980), 207-211.

<sup>34</sup> Franz Ansprenger, "Schulpolitik in Deutsch-Ostafrika," in *Studien zur Geschichte des deutschen Kolonialismus in Afrika: Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Peter Sebald* (Pfeffenweiler: Centaurus, 1995), 60. For missionaries' own view on the government schools see [Gustav] Warneck, "Eingabe an das Auswärtige Amt betreffend die offizielle Anstellung von mohammedanischen Religionslehrern an deutschen Regierungsschulen," *AMZ* 22(1895): 391-396; *Entwurf einer Eingabe an das Auswärtige Amt, Namen der ev. Mission* ([1894]), BMW/bmw1/2200; Consul Heinke to Berlin Mission Society (November 23, 1900), BMW/bmw1/2201; Minutes of the Berlin Mission Society Komitee (April 2, 1901), BMW/bmw1/48; and Berlin Mission Society Komitee to Gustav Warneck (April 25, 1901), BMW/bmw1/2202, pag. 198.

<sup>35</sup> Pogge von Strandmann, *Imperialismus vom Grünen Tisch*, 244.

<sup>36</sup> Viera Pawliková-Vilhanová, "Crescent or Cross? Islam and Christian Missions in Nineteenth-century East and Central Africa," in van der Heyden and Becher, *Mission und Gewalt*, 93; and Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914," 168.

<sup>37</sup> Michael Pesek, "Kreuz oder Halbmond? Die deutsche Kolonialpolitik zwischen Pragmatismus und Paranoia in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1908-1914," in Heyden and Becher, *Mission und Gewalt*, 109-110. There was a general perception that Islam was on the rise across Africa at the time and there is evidence that Sufistic *tariqa* brotherhoods were growing in the region. For one scholar, Carl Becker, this offered a tool to colonial administrators. See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 365-366. John Iliffe has also argued that imperialism drove the region more fully into the Muslim world, Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, 215; and see also Felicitas Becker, *Becoming Muslim*

missionary hopes to use the German administration's codification of African "common law" to suppress Islam.<sup>38</sup> Protestant missionaries by 1908 looked at the situation in German East Africa and saw their position pressed from all sides.

The central issue of the *Benediktinerstreit* was control over land. Missionaries' preoccupation with land rights reflected their existential need for access to indigenous peoples. In this pursuit of African "souls" schools served as a tool for drawing indigenous communities to the mission stations. A school could bring in people but missionaries had little interest in competing for those people. Thus mission societies sought monopolistic access to indigenous groups and sought to preserve exclusivity with territorial agreements with the colonial state and other mission societies. Part of this process involved contentious discussions for and in defense of missions' land ownership rights. Land ownership made visible to indigenous people missionaries' political and economic authority, and to prove this authority the mission societies fought against land concession companies and each other over territory.<sup>39</sup> In East Africa, extensive lands, alienated from Africans by the administration, were granted to the Berlin Mission between 1904 and 1907.<sup>40</sup> Paradoxically this policy

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in *Mainland Tanzania 1890-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); and Oliver, *The Missionary Factor in East Africa*, 202-207.

<sup>38</sup> Harald Sippel, "Mission und Kodifikation: Der missionarische Beitrag zur Erforschung des afrikanischen Gewohnheitsrechts in der Kolonie Deutsch-Ostafrika," in Wagner, *Kolonien und Missionen*, 502. Missionaries in Germany argued that Islam was a threat to Christian missionaries and to the colonial state because it had a "warlike spirit" and forced itself upon "pagans" while obstructing economic and social development by preventing the political, social, and moral education of Africans. See Holger Weiss, "Islam, Missionaries and Residents: The Attempt of the Basel Missionary Society to Establish a Mission in Yendi (German Togo) before WWI," in van der Heyden and Stoecker, *Mission und Macht im Wandel politischer Orientierungen*, 174.

<sup>39</sup> Valentin Amétopé Ahadjì, "Mission und Landfrage in Togo 1884-1914," in van der Heyden and Stoecker, *Mission und Macht im Wandel politischer Orientierungen*, 138; and Andreas Eckert, "Missions, Land Politics and Real Estate in Colonial Douala," in *Land Law and Land Ownership in Africa: Case Studies from Colonial and Contemporary Cameroon and Tanzania*, ed. Robert Debusmann and Stefan Arnold (Bayreuth: Eckhard Breiting, Bayreuth University, 1996), 189.

<sup>40</sup> Nzalayaimisi, "The Berliners and Violence in Eastern and Southern Tanzania, 1887-1919," 478.

included the destruction of indigenous land rights in a paternalistic plan to protect Africans against economic exploitation. In general, the colonial administration sought to prevent Europeans from monopolizing land in the colony and expanded the program after 1907,<sup>41</sup> and, since Protestant missionaries generally distributed land to Africans as an incentive for cooperation, missionaries' use of land generally complemented the East African colonial administration's intentions.

The different uses to which each confession put its lands further alienated Catholics and Protestants from one another. The Catholic orders had a stronger hunger for land than the Protestants who demonstrated "relative abstinence." The Catholic Church gathered significant land disproportionately in excess of the Protestant societies. Meanwhile, Protestant missionaries emphasized that the land would lead to the liberation of African farmers and the creation of an independent farming class, a goal that would be shared with the colonial administration following the Maji-Maji War and the institution of the Dernburg Reforms.<sup>42</sup> The Protestant missions probably truly believed that they sought land for the sake of their African neighbors and subjects but this frequently meant that the mission ended up taking on the political authority of a large landowner. Frequently this resulted in the mission becoming ever more interested in land for its own interests rather than for the interests of Africans. To the Protestant missionaries, as one scholar has described it, the construction of a Christian agrarian community represented a geographical

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<sup>41</sup> Harald Sippel, "Aspects of Colonial Land Law in German East Africa: German East Africa Company, Crown Land Ordinance, European Plantations and Reserved Areas for Africans," in Debusmann and Arnold, *Land Law and Land Ownership in Africa*, 17-18 and 25.

<sup>42</sup> Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914," 63 and 208; and W. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, 199-201 and 209- 215. See also Heike Schmidt, "(Re)Negotiating Marginality: The Maji Maji War and Its Aftermath in Southwestern Tanzania, ca. 1905-1916," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 43(1): 27-62; and Seeberg, *Der Maji-Maji-Krieg*, 91-92.

expression of the evangelical project.<sup>43</sup> The symbolic, economic, and political value of land explains Protestant missionaries' tetchiness about their territorial rights.

The Maji-Maji War was a seminal event in the history of German East Africa and in the history of modern Tanzania. Historians of the conflict argue that the defeat of African military resistance to colonial rule led to a turn on the part of Africans to educational and political paths of resistance.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore the near total destruction of African polities that had resisted by the Germans and the depopulation of the region as a result of guerilla warfare transformed the region. In late July 1905 societies of Africans dispersed across the southern portion of the colony, despite differences in language and culture, inspired by the prophecies of Kinjikitile Ngwale joined together in resistance against German rule. Fired by opposition to forced labor and certain in the power of the *maji* medicine propagated by Kinjikitile Ngwane and his followers against the bullets of German forces, Africans waged the final violent resistance against colonial rule in the territory. The symbolic value of *maji* to the resistance was as an organizing ideology, used to help bring unity and as a purifying medicine designed to renew African societies for the conflict with Germans and African collaborators. The acceptance of the *maji* medicine by local African leaders followed "established patterns of statecraft and authority."<sup>45</sup> The rebellion represented an organized, quasi-national rejection of imperialism by multiple African polities and societies.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Pakendorf, "Berlin in Afrika, oder der historische Ort der Deutschen Mission," 481.

<sup>44</sup> Introduction to Giblin and Monson, *Maji Maji*, 1.

<sup>45</sup> Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, 191.

<sup>46</sup> Introduction to Giblin and Monson, *Maji Maji*, 1.

African insurgents represented twenty-five different languages and their unified opposition to colonialism targeted whatever symbol of German rule they could find. Attacks on Zanzibari Arab, Indian, and German traders on the coast and inland, raids on Protestant and Catholic mission stations, the killing of the Benedictine bishop on August 14, all marked the beginnings of an insurgency that would stretch from the southeastern coast of the colony all the way to the shores of Lake Nyasa which made up the southwestern border of the colony. However, by late September 1905 the German forces had begun to turn the tide against the rebels. The suppression of the rebellion would last into 1906 and the pursuit of the leaders of various rebel groups continued into 1907.<sup>47</sup>

The suppression of the rebellion, particularly after the last pitched battles in November 1905, became a matter of German-led patrols whose main purpose was the seizure of food and the destruction of crops in order to force African resisters to submit. In response rebels seized food from loyalists and sought to create safe regions in which they could cultivate crops. The last two years of the Maji-Maji War were a guerilla campaign which created a widespread famine in the southern areas of German East Africa. Along with the massive death toll, the defeat of *maji* medicine may have also delegitimized indigenous faiths. Both Islam and Christianity grew significantly in the regions most affected by the fighting.<sup>48</sup>

Missionaries, targeted by Africans during the Maji-Maji War, had fought on the side of the colonial administration and their mission communities had suffered significantly. Clearly many Africans interpreted the missionaries as representatives of

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<sup>47</sup> Giblin and Monson, *Maji Maji*, 5-8.

<sup>48</sup> Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, 193-202.

colonial rule but, nonetheless, the mission leadership seemed to view their position vis-à-vis the Africans as distinct from the colonial state's role. The violent suppression of the African population during the later years of the war left both confessions' mission territories depopulated by the colonial forces' scorched earth methods. At the same time, the shortages of food and insecurity in the region led to phenomenal expansion of the missionized communities, further straining missionaries' land resources.<sup>49</sup> These problems coincided with a rise in the actual value of the land and together caused the Berlin missionaries to worry if they could secure the acres that they thought necessary for their stations.<sup>50</sup> The dislocation of indigenous groups as a result of the rebellion made control of territory, and therefore of African populations, even more crucial to Protestant leaders. At the same time, colonial development organized in the Dernburg Reforms under Colonial Governor Albrecht von Rechenberg worked as an incentive for missionary land use policies. Rechenberg set as his goal the development of African agriculture and, with the help of the newly appointed and promoted Colonial Secretary Bernhard Dernburg, secured financial support for a railroad to connect the densely populated regions of central and western German East Africa with the coast.<sup>51</sup> Colonial economic policy seemed to be falling in line with Protestant missionaries' goals, in particular, their support for

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<sup>49</sup> Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika zur Zeit des Maji-Maji-Aufstandes 1905-1907," 87.

<sup>50</sup> Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914," 211.

<sup>51</sup> Dirk van Laak, *Imperiale Infrastruktur: Deutsche Planungen für eine Erschließung Afrikas 1880 bis 1960* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2004), 130-146; and W. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, 199-202. The peoples of German East Africa were not practicing a purely subsistence economy, they had historically been integrated into larger networks of trade, the German colonial administration's efforts were intended to encourage existing trends within the colonial economy, Abdul Sheriff, "Economy and Society in East Africa in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries with Special Reference to Tanzania," in *Tanzania: Koloniale Vergangenheit und neuer Aufbruch*, ed. Ulrich van der Heyden and Achim von Oppen (Münster: Lit, 1996), 12 and 19.



the creation of an African agrarian populace.<sup>52</sup> The period after 1908 was therefore one of opportunity and scarcity – scarce resources and population in the area shared by the Berlin and St. Otilien missionaries, and promising opportunity from an economic policy in line with Protestant missionaries' vision of African economic development.

Political maneuvers in Berlin supported Protestant missionaries' interpretation of contemporary conditions. Dernburg was elevated to the head of the Colonial Department and the Colonial Department was made independent of the Foreign Office in the wake of the Herero-Nama and Maji-Maji Wars. Long-running shortfalls in colonial budgets, the cost of the two colonial wars, and the weight of successive scandals from the German protectorates in Africa provided the reform wing of the Catholic Center Party and the Social Democrats with the tools to undermine the government of Chancellor Bernhard von Bülow. The criticism reached its apex in 1906 and revealed that Bülow lacked an effective coalition in the *Reichstag*. However, the imperial chancellor saw an opportunity to turn his political weakness into advantage. The Chancellor dissolved the *Reichstag* and called new elections. He then set about making the elections a referendum on Germany's colonial empire – an empire he presented as essential to Germany's future and which he promised to reform.<sup>53</sup>

The standard bearer for this new program of colonial reform was the banker with a reputation for resurrecting moribund businesses, Bernhard Dernburg. The

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<sup>52</sup> Altena, "Ein Häuflein Christen mitten in der Heidenwelt des dunklen Erdteils", 416-418. Missionaries' ideal of the single-family farm was also judged the ideal economic unit by contemporary social scientists, Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa*, 15.

<sup>53</sup> W. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, 185-186.

election of January 1907 rewarded Bülow and Dernburg with a resounding victory. Dernburg and the government actively participated in the election, a first in German history as the government did not represent any party and was not responsible to the representatives of the *Reichstag*. The victory cemented a program of development and, where possible, expansion of the German colonial empire.<sup>54</sup> Rechenberg, governor in East Africa and eager to reform the colony, promoted economic colonialism (as opposed to settlement colonialism) focused on African development with Dernburg's blessing.<sup>55</sup> Rechenberg's program was designed to develop indigenous cash-crop production. Its marquee project was the construction of the *Zentralbahn* (Central Line) railroad from the coast to the densely populated areas in the west of the colony.<sup>56</sup> The *Zentralbahn* served African agricultural production and not European settlement by connecting large areas of African cultivation with the export market. The program of African agriculture bore fruit for the colony and quickly out-produced settler-controlled plantation schemes.<sup>57</sup> Dernburg's program of colonial development stimulated the Protestant missionaries' concerns over land. The use of colonial pressure groups and nationalist organizations by the government in the 1907 election would have put pressure on the mission movement to participate in the national program of colonial development. At the same time, Rechenberg's pro-African development program made missionaries' land all the more valuable.

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<sup>54</sup> W. O. Henderson, *The German Colonial Empire, 1884-1919* (London: Frank Cass, 1993), 88-91.

<sup>55</sup> W. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, 192-202.

<sup>56</sup> Gründer, *Geschichte der deutschen Kolonien*, 161-162. On the construction of the *Zentralbahn* and other railways in German East Africa see Thaddeus Sunseri, "'Dispersing the Fields': Railway Labor and Rural Change in Early Colonial Tanzania," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 32(3): 558-583.

<sup>57</sup> Walter Rodney, "The Political Economy of Colonial Tanganyika 1890-1930," in Kaniki, *Tanzania under Colonial Rule*, 134-137.

Protestant worries over land needed little encouragement to become a conflict with Catholics. In addition to the cultural and political prejudices arising from Germany, there were circumstances in German East Africa that further aggravated Protestant sensitivities. Since the German state had taken control of the colony from Carl Peters' *Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft* (German East Africa Company) in 1891 the Catholic missions had developed superior credentials with the colonial state and the secular colonial movement in Germany.<sup>58</sup> Catholics more eagerly accepted the role that colonialists wished for them and pursued a policy of education designed to prepare Africans to serve the colonial economy and state.<sup>59</sup> This left the Protestant missionaries jealous and suspicious of Catholic activities. Second, the distinction between Catholic and Protestant mission methods meant that the Catholic mission territories had the potential to grow faster than Protestant territories. Protestants enforced stricter criteria before baptizing applicants than the Catholics and therefore lagged further behind the Catholics in quantities of converts.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, Protestant attempts to create ethnically focused churches in their territories required significantly more time than the Catholics who baptized applicants more rapidly and hoped to develop orthodox belief over the longer term.<sup>61</sup> If territorial boundaries became meaningless and Catholics and Protestants were left to compete for African parishioners in a religious free market, the Protestants had no hopes of success. So, in

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<sup>58</sup> Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914," 69.

<sup>59</sup> Mirtschink, *Zur Rolle christlicher Missionen in kolonialen Gesellschaften*, 74-75. Also see chapter three of this dissertation.

<sup>60</sup> On Protestant missionaries' efforts at conversion see, Wolfgang Gabbert, "Social and Cultural Conditions of Religious Conversion in Colonial Southwest Tanzania, 1891-1939," *Ethnology* 40(4): 291-308.

<sup>61</sup> Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914," 56-57.

order to prevent a Catholic “victory” the Protestants sought fixed, monopolistic territorial divisions and, when pressed, chose to fight for their demands.

### **Methodological Conflict**

By the turn of the twentieth century the Protestant mission movement had formulated a detailed critique of Catholic mission work. Protestant missionary intellectuals had long viewed the Catholic mission movement with suspicion. German Protestants took pride in their long experience as missionaries in the “modern era” and judged Catholics as out of touch with the appropriate spirit of missionary work. Catholics lacked the tools of “scientific” mission work that distinguished Protestant and especially German Protestant mission.<sup>62</sup> The journals and pamphlets of the German Protestant missionaries claimed that Catholics manipulated the political system of the *Kaiserreich* to serve their parochial ends. The most frequent Protestant critiques were attacks upon Catholics’ supposed political corruption.

Catholics’ close relationship to the colonial state frustrated Protestant missionaries from a very early date. In particular, the Protestants felt the Catholics had done little to earn the colonialists respect. Franz Michael Zahn observed that, after all, Catholicism had had 450 years to “conquer Africa.” And yet, the Catholics remained more concerned with the “dressings of institutional life” than creating new Christians. Catholics, Alexander Merensky of the Berlin Mission argued, “educate[d]

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<sup>62</sup> A[lbert] Petri, “Die römisch-katholische Missions-Literatur in ihrem Verhältniß zur evangelischen Mission. Zugleich als ein Blick in die beiderseitige Missions-Methode,” *AMZ* 5(1878): 474.

the Negro to work” because they could not succeed by spiritual persuasion.<sup>63</sup> Protestant mission methods surpassed Catholic missions, according to Zahn; Protestant missionaries had needed just one century to match the achievements of the Catholic Church.<sup>64</sup> Infuriatingly, the colonial state still preferred Catholics’ determination to acclimate Africans to labor in the new economy of the colony. The administration’s preference for this approach, according to Julius Richter, threatened to undermine the strength of the German Empire. The Catholic missions, he cautioned, cared more for the “glorification of Rome” than either Christian evangelization or the German nation.<sup>65</sup> What Christianity the Roman Catholic converts had, one missiologist argued, was “Roman” rather than an independent “national” indigenous church. The civilizing mission that justified the entire colonial project did not mean perpetual tutelage, Protestants felt, and that was what Catholic mission promised to the Africans. Protestants believed the goal of the Catholic Church was not individual or national salvation but rather the expansion of the Catholic Church’s earthly influence.<sup>66</sup>

Protestant missionaries argued that their work was not only methodologically superior but also morally superior because it, unlike the Catholic mission, sought to create an indigenous Christian community. The Protestant mission societies, the

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<sup>63</sup> [Alexander] Merensky, “Welches Interesse und welchen Anteil hat die Mission an der Erziehung der Naturvölker zur Arbeit?” *AMZ* 14(1887): 162; and [Julius] Richter, “Die evangelischen, besonders deutschen Missionen in den deutschen Schutzgebieten,” *AMZ* 21 (1894): 435. Catholics were also willing to compromise with indigenous customs more, at least according to Protestant missionaries. One scholar described the Catholics as more willing to “sweeten” their ministrations with “song and dance,” Niesel, “Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914,” 153.

<sup>64</sup> F[rantz] M[ichael] Zahn, “Wer gewinnt Afrika?” *AMZ* 17(1890): 475 and 479-480.

<sup>65</sup> Richter, “Die evangelischen, besonders deutschen Missionen,” 435.

<sup>66</sup> Carl Mirbt, “Die Missionsmethode der römisch-katholischen Kirche,” *AMZ* 28(1901): 264 and 266-267.

argument went, worked *for* Africans as opposed to exploitative economic interests.<sup>67</sup>

Though Protestant missionary work took longer than Catholic because of the ease with which Catholics baptized converts, one Berlin missionary wrote, “the beautiful and rich successes [of Protestant mission]...are evidence that the way we promulgate the Gospel has a great strength.”<sup>68</sup> In contrast, Protestants argued, the Catholic mission societies worked to satisfy the needs of trading companies, plantation owners, and other European economic interests as part of a determined strategy to displace the Protestant missions.<sup>69</sup> As early as 1901, several years before the *Benediktinerstreit*, some in the Protestant movement called for a public campaign against Rome and the Catholic mission because of its supposed ultramontanist and anti-Protestant agenda.<sup>70</sup> The Catholic mission organizations were accused by German Protestant missionaries of service to a Catholic political agenda of world domination.<sup>71</sup> In fact, Carl Mirbt, a prominent scholar of Catholic Church history and Protestant missiology, proposed that the growing strength of Rome within the Catholic Church was a direct result and further impetus for the expanding power of Catholic mission in the late nineteenth century.<sup>72</sup> Warneck accused the Catholics of taking up an anachronistic “medieval mission of the sword” by declaring their

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<sup>67</sup> On investment in the colony see, Chris M. Peter, “Imperialism and Export of Capital: A Survey of Foreign Private Investments in Tanzania during the German Colonial Period,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 25(3-4), 197-212.

<sup>68</sup> Willi Gründler, “Eine Störung unserer Njaß-Mission durch die Benediktiner,” *Berliner Missionsberichte* 90(1, Jan. 1913): 22.

<sup>69</sup> Petri, “Die römisch-katholische Missions-Literatur,” 470.

<sup>70</sup> Pastor Paul, “Die römischen Konkurrenzmissionen, ihre wachsende Gefahr und ihre Abwehr,” *Verhandlungen der Kontinentalen Missions-Konferenz* 10(1901): 141-412.

<sup>71</sup> Mirbt, “Die Missionsmethode,” 267; and “Nationale Mission,” *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* 32(1888): 2.

<sup>72</sup> Mirbt, “Die Missionsmethode,” 258-261. Mirbt’s suggestion is, in part, supported by historians’ conclusions. See Gross, *The War against Catholicism*, 28, 29-73; and Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, 253.

activities a “crusade.”<sup>73</sup> The work undertaken by the Catholic mission orders to serve the colonial state, Protestant missionary intellectuals declared, concealed the real agenda of the Catholic Church, one which sought temporal power for the Pope.

Though Protestant missionaries did worry over the doctrinaire differences they had with the Catholics, their truest concerns were focused on more concrete differences. They mainly objected to the political success that Catholics had achieved in Germany. To them, Protestant mission was morally and methodologically superior to the Catholic variety of mission work and therefore more legitimate than the Catholic mission project. Moral and methodological superiority validated Protestant attacks upon the Catholic Church and provided fuel for Protestant missionaries’ anti-Catholicism. The main, usually unacknowledged, source for hostility was Catholic success relative to Protestant efforts. When Germany’s Protestants decided to implement a strategy of public anti-Catholicism during the *Benediktinerstreit* they turned to their own and older traditions for ideas.

### **Pernicious Popery**

The *Kulturkampf* had been the most direct form of anti-Catholic activity in the *Kaiserreich* and legal discrimination continued to be an affront to German Catholics, but the most aggressive attacks came from anti-Catholic groups like the Protestant League. The accusations of the Protestant League and its allies reproduced the nearly century-old indictments of Enlightenment critics and added the nationalist flavoring of the liberal supporters of the *Kulturkampf*. These attacks were designed to

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<sup>73</sup> [Gustav Warneck], “Ein moderner Kreuzzug,” *AMZ* 15(1888): 502.

undermine Catholics' credibility in German national politics. Catholics were depicted as anti-intellectual, anachronistic, superstitious, feminine, and generally without the fundamental German qualities of sobriety, industriousness, and rationality. Protestant activists argued the Catholics in Germany blindly followed the Pope, insincere in their protestations of national loyalty.<sup>74</sup> The bond between Protestant missionaries and the Protestant League was more than rhetorical; in fact, Gustav Warneck and Carl Mirbt were both members of the League as was contributor to the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* Paul Wurm.<sup>75</sup>

Even before 1900 Protestant missionaries attacked the nature of German Catholic mission life in order to advance their own agenda.<sup>76</sup> France was the center of nineteenth-century Catholic mission work and Germany's historic antagonism with the French made that association damning in the eyes of Protestant missionary advocates. Furthermore, the missionaries' latent suspicion of the centralizing forces of ultramontanism within the Catholic Church provided further evidence that Catholic missionaries did not serve German interests. Protestant missionaries knowingly adopted the nationalist discourses in their confessional fight with the Catholics. After all, Catholics, in the Protestant missionary narrative, lacked any spiritual motivation for their work. The Protestant attacks argued that when Catholics brought their institutions to the German colonies, they sought to promote the interests of the Catholic Church above the German nation. As one Protestant saw it, "[t]he Catholic

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<sup>74</sup> Clark, "Confessional Conflict," 91.

<sup>75</sup> H. W. Smith, *Nationalism and Religious Conflict*, 60n47. See also Hans Kasdorf, *Gustav Warnecks missiologisches Erbe: Eine biographisch-historische Untersuchung* (Giessen, Switzerland: Brunnen Verlag, 1990), 45-46 and 276.

<sup>76</sup> Holtwick, "Licht und Schatten," 230.



Church of today does not promote Christianity; [the Church] seeks only to erect papal hegemony across the globe.”<sup>77</sup>

Catholic actions in the colonies were dismissed as subterfuge to conceal the true intentions of Rome. Protestant missionaries were able to neatly undermine defenses of Catholic mission activities that cited the humanitarian achievements of the Catholic orders with this attack. Warneck suggested the Catholic Church only fought slavery as part of an attempt to cynically garner prestige for the church. He charged that the mission orders of the Catholics sought only “*ad maiorem gloriam*,” striving solely for the greater glory of the Roman Church and the Papacy. According to Warneck the Catholics had done nothing about slavery for centuries and this new anti-slavery agenda was thoroughly cynical.<sup>78</sup> “*Ad maiorem Dei gloriam*” was the motto of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, who had been banished from Germany during the *Kulturkampf* and whom had gained a healthy reputation as Counter-Reformation zealots and anti-Enlightenment crusaders. Warneck’s allusion to the Jesuits was clearly designed to draw upon historic German Protestant prejudices. According to another mission scholar the Jesuits dictated the path of Catholic mission work and used their power to continue their battle against the Reformation.<sup>79</sup>

The war against the Reformation that Protestant missionaries depicted was just part of the true strategy of the Catholic Church. Roman Catholic missionaries, in the words of Protestant missionary leaders, served only to promote the political ambitions of the Pope and had no true religious purpose. The Catholic Church cared

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<sup>77</sup> Paul, “Die römischen Konkurrenzmissionen,” 129.

<sup>78</sup> [Gustav] Warneck, “Zur Lage in Ostafrika,” *AMZ* 16(1889): 13-14.

<sup>79</sup> Petri, “Die römisch-katholische Missions-Literatur,” 470. Mirbt also identified the Jesuits as the core group in Catholic mission activities. See Mirbt, “Die Missionsmethode,” 258 & 265.

nothing for Germany's interests and true Germans had no interest in supporting the anti-German ambitions of the Roman church. After all, German missionaries pointed out, the bulk of support for Germany's Catholic mission orders came from outside Germany.<sup>80</sup> These attacks by Warneck and his associates created the image of a distinctly anti-Protestant and anti-German program of Catholic aggression emanating from Rome in the late nineteenth century.

The link to France added another layer to German Protestant missionaries' campaign to depict Catholic mission orders as anti-German. At the 1901 Continental Mission Conference in Bremen, one speaker argued that Catholic missionaries had at their service French diplomats and soldiers, while in Germany Protestants watched unhappily as the power of the Center Party promoted a Catholic triumph.<sup>81</sup> Catholics' success in the mission field came from political machinations not from any spiritual superiority. After all, the Roman Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, the *Propaganda Fide*, directed all Catholic mission work and did so at the direction of a Pope bent on Catholic world conquest. Even the relatively pacific journal of the Basel Mission argued that "the Roman mission is predominantly French, its resources and its missionaries are mostly recruited from France." This association with France was meant to raise concerns amongst Germans. According to Protestant commentators, German Protestantism's two great enemies, the Catholic Church and France had allied themselves to bring the home of the Reformation to its knees.<sup>82</sup> Carl Mirbt described France's internal politics as "thoroughly un-clerical" but in the French

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<sup>80</sup> [Gustav] Warneck, "'Zur Missionsfrage in unsern Schutzgebieten,'" *AMZ* 19(1892): 442 and 444-445; and Carl Paul, *Zwanzig Jahre deutscher Kolonialpolitik in ihrer Bedeutung für die Christianisierung unsrer überseeischen Gebiete* (Berlin: 1904), 110.

<sup>81</sup> Paul, "Die römischen Konkurrenzmission," 133.

<sup>82</sup> "Nationale Mission," 2.

Empire it was a different story. There the state was a “patron of the Roman Church.”<sup>83</sup> Protestant missionaries’ described Catholic missionaries’ political and religious connections as part of a vast conspiracy designed to serve the Pope and expand the secular and religious power of Rome which had even drawn in the fiercely anti-clerical Third Republic.

Before the *Benediktinerstreit* began in 1908 Protestant missionaries had already begun to hone their anti-Catholic message. They convinced themselves that the Catholic mission orders took direction from French Jesuits and the Pope in Rome. The Catholic orders did not serve the truest propagation of Christian faith but instead worked to increase Catholic political power at the price of Germany and the Protestant mission societies. Even before a nationalist missionary ideology appeared after 1900, German Protestant mission leaders peppered their anti-Catholic attacks with nationalist themes. These themes, developed from Protestant German cultural prejudices, would be readily available when missionary leaders, some quite amenable to nationalism, entered into their most vicious conflict with the Catholic mission orders.

### **The Fight over Territory**

It is no coincidence that this conflict broke out over the division of territory in Germany’s colony. While the actual ownership of land was important to missionaries, the issue of mission territories turned more on spheres of influence. For missionaries territorial control was only valuable for the communities that lived upon that territory.

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<sup>83</sup> Mirbt, “Die Missionsmethode,” 268.

Within their territories mission societies argued for exclusive privileges of Christian evangelization. In the last decade before the First World War the conflict over territory in East Africa between the Catholics and Protestants threatened to become a matter of national and colonial policy. This section will describe the general view Protestants took of Catholic territorial intentions and it will be followed by a discussion of the extended conflict between the Berlin Society and the Benedictines of St. Ottilien known as the *Benediktinerstreit*.

The intellectual leadership of the German Protestant mission movement saw the territorial rivalry with the Catholics as indicative of Catholic deviance and Protestants' control of their own territories as essential. Gustav Warneck explained the stakes of the conflict thusly:

Missions are the outermost outposts of a church and simultaneously the [means of their] territorial expansion. The destruction of one such outpost means the destruction of the foundation of a new church colony. Rome has attacked [our missions] and we should ultimately attack the [Catholics].<sup>84</sup>

To Protestant leaders like Carl Buchner and Warneck the Catholic Church had already shown with its behavior that it was hostile to every aspect of Protestant mission work.<sup>85</sup> The Catholics bore only political motives – anti-Protestant in the extreme, and Protestant leaders surmised that was the source of their brazen flaunting of border agreements.<sup>86</sup> The centrality of land and the necessity of exclusive privileges within a territory to the Protestant method of conversion meant that Catholics' apparent indifference toward territorial boundaries made events like the *Benediktinerstreit* threats to the fundamental activities of Protestant mission societies.

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<sup>84</sup> [Gustav Warneck], "Die gegenwärtige Lage der deutschen evangelischen Mission," *AMZ* 32(1905): 167.

<sup>85</sup> Buchner, "Die römische Aggression," 134.

<sup>86</sup> Warneck, "Die gegenwärtige Lage," 168-169.

Missionaries from the Protestant mission societies were able to point to apparently damning evidence of Catholic intentions in the pages of one of the Catholics' most bellicose publications. *Gott will es!*, the organ of the *Afrika-Verein deutscher Katholiken* (African Union of German Catholics) an organization which supported Catholic mission operations and took a militant line for Catholic causes. As early as 1893 the magazine was arguing that the balance of Protestants and Catholics in the German colonies would impact the balance of power between the confessions in Germany.<sup>87</sup> According to Protestant commentators, this call had sparked the dangerous expansion of Catholic mission organizations in Germany. One speaker at the Bremen Mission Conference of 1901 declared that the twenty-year-old goal of the pope had been achieved; "next to every Protestant mission church and school" now stood a competing Catholic mission."<sup>88</sup> The Catholics had waged a very direct and very effective campaign to catch up to the Protestant mission movement's infrastructural development and even threatened to overtake the Protestants.

Protestants in 1897, moved by what they perceived to be a Catholic assault, proposed radical action. At the Bremen Conference that year Buchner proposed an aggressive program of confrontation. Protestant missions should ignore the territorial divisions and show no regard for the activities of Catholic mission orders when establishing their stations and schools. The Protestant missions should also consider bringing their grievances into the public sphere. Buchner and others remained fully

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<sup>87</sup> "Warum sollen wir die afrikanischen Missionen unterstützen?" *Gott will es! Monatschrift für alle Förderer u. Freunde d. Bewegung gegen d. afrikanische Sklaverei insbesondere für d. Mitglieder d. Afrika-Vereins Deutscher Katholiken* 5(1893): 225-228.

<sup>88</sup> Paul, "Die römischen Konkurrenzmissionen," 125. This news was also reprinted in many German mission sources. For example, see "Etwas über katholische Missionsthätigkeit," *Nachrichten aus der ostafrikanischen Mission* 6(1, Jan. 1892): 29; Paul, *Zwanzig Jahre*, 110 and 116-117.

aware of the tenuous confessional relations in the *Kaiserreich*, bringing Catholic “excesses” into open debate would only reignite old prejudices. Buchner cautioned his audience in Bremen that “sadly...the aggression of the Catholic Church [would] not lessen, but instead [would] expand and that more and more...our Protestant mission [would] be forced...to resist these attacks more energetically than before.”<sup>89</sup> This strategy was not implemented but it demonstrated the near panic many Protestants felt under what they perceived to be near constant Catholic assault.

Still later, as the Catholic threat apparently continued unabated, Gustav Warneck proposed a more complete strategy for defending Protestant mission interests. He called upon mission societies to appeal to Protestants’ memories of and commitments to the Reformation. This would help make support for Protestant mission work and Protestant missionaries a matter of “honor” to German Protestants. These two elements of Warneck’s plan directly appealed to the German nationalist tradition and its anti-Catholic dimensions. Along with proposals designed to reinforce the fabric of Protestant mission work with improvements in mission methods to answer Catholic advantages and greater unity within the Protestant mission movement, Warneck’s nationalist strategy aggressively ignored his stated aversion to nationalist politics.<sup>90</sup> To him, the Catholic threat was an attack upon the spiritual character of Germany. The activities of Catholic missions in German East Africa and elsewhere represented to Warneck and his colleagues yet another battle in the centuries-long campaign by the Catholic Church to eradicate the Reformation.

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<sup>89</sup> Buchner, “Die römische Aggression,” 134-135 and 138.

<sup>90</sup> Warneck, “Die gegenwärtige Lage,” 170-171.

Buchner and Warneck's proposals presaged the form of Karl Axenfeld's eventual strategy during the final phases of the *Benediktinerstreit*.

### **The *Benediktinerstreit***

The Berlin Mission had set up mission stations among the Ngonde and Bena peoples on the shores of Lake Nyasa<sup>91</sup> in the southern highlands of modern Tanzania in 1891. By 1902 the Berliners had thirteen mission stations in the region. At the same time Catholic mission orders, the White Fathers and the Benedictines, had also established mission territories to the north, northwest, and south of the Berliners operating area. In late 1908 the Berlin missionaries built a new "outpost" at Isofi, near one of their stations at Lupembe. At least according to the Berlin Mission, this outpost had been built in response to Benedictine school construction in the region. The Protestant missionaries, already well-primed for an explosion, argued the Catholics had violated a 1906 territorial agreement and soon the Berlin Mission Society and the Benedictines of St. Ottilien were in a fierce conflict over mission territory in the southeast of German East Africa, the *Benediktinerstreit*.

Protestant missionaries distrusted the expansion of the Benedictines, particularly as it seemed designed to squeeze the Berlin Mission's Nyasa territories from two sides, the north and the south. The importance of mission territories for Protestant missionaries was long established; missionaries needed land to distribute to

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<sup>91</sup> The name of this large body of water in Africa's Rift Valley is disputed by the Malawian government. In Malawi the lake is known as Lake Malawi. I have chosen to use the name Lake Nyassa primarily because that is the name which German missionaries called it in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and because Lake Nyassa prevails in international usage.

converts and near-converts, they needed clear territories in which only the Protestant version of evangelism could operate to prevent the potentially more appealing Catholic version taking over, and the Protestant missionaries needed the territory as a tangible measure of their influence and power. However, the Protestant missionaries felt themselves to be under threat from diverse and powerful assailants. In the first place, the depopulation of the colony during the Maji-Maji War meant that resources were all the more dearly had. Secondly, the growth of Islam in the colony raised tensions between the missions and the colonial administration as did the apparent threat posed by government schools to missionaries' educational activities. Finally, the influence of the Center Party in Germany and the rapid expansion of the Catholic mission movement in the last decades left the Protestant mission societies worrying that they would be overwhelmed by a tide of Catholic mission friars and their hastily baptized parishioners. In addition, at the height of the *Benediktinerstreit* the Berlin Mission promoted the missionary nationalist Karl Axenfeld to its directorship. The *Benediktinerstreit* would mark an important moment when the strength of the nationalist mission ideology grew and old anti-Catholic prejudices would help undermine internationalist principles.

The *Benediktinerstreit* dragged on for five years. The length of the disagreement owed a good deal to the delays in communication as messages had to travel from Berlin to St. Ottilien in Bavaria, Berlin to the unofficial government expert on Catholic mission in Cologne Franz Hespers, Berlin or St. Ottilien to Rome, and, longest of all, Berlin or St. Ottilien to the mission stations several weeks travel away. This accounts for much of the time, however, even had the communication



been near instantaneous the conflict would have lingered. Protestant mission leaders perceived their work in East Africa to be seriously at risk and therefore the Berlin Mission had little interest in backing down. On the other hand, the Catholic Benedictines had no power to agree to the Protestants' demands. The *Propaganda Fide* forbade any lasting agreement with the Protestants over territory and thus made any agreement satisfactory to the Protestants impossible.

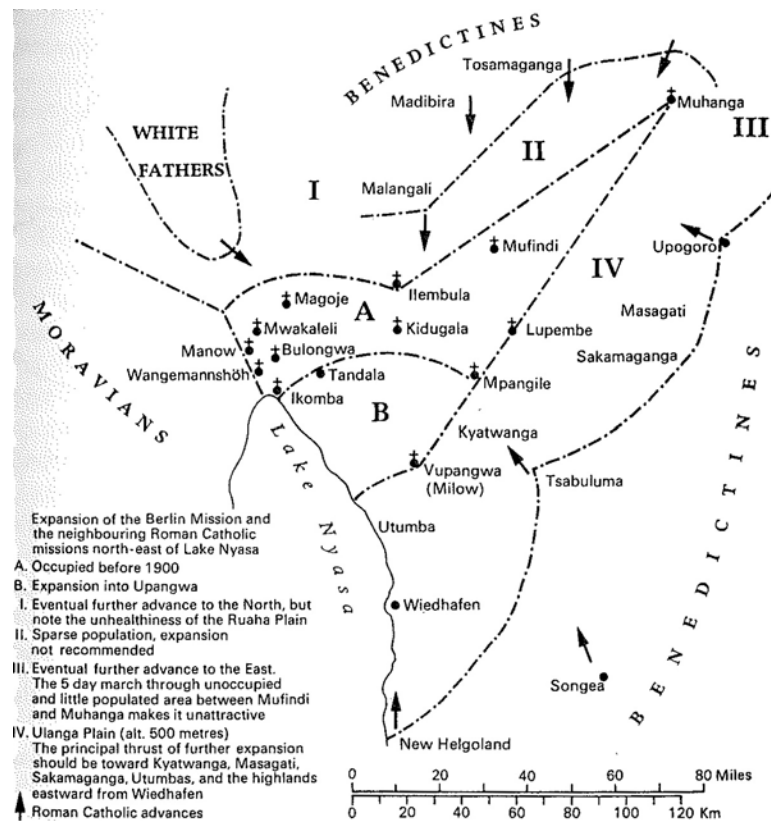


Figure 2. Strategy Map by Martin Klamroth [1902] Showing the expansion of Protestant and Catholic mission societies in the area of the *Benediktinerstreit*. (Source: Marcia Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika 1891-1941* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 109.)

For some, territorial agreements were violations of the principles of religious freedom. In fact, one in the Protestant mission leadership had dismissed such arguments. In 1890 Zahn commented on early proposals for the division of territories as being a violation of confessional freedoms enshrined at the 1884 Congress of

Berlin on Africa. To Zahn an official division of territories would violate the Catholic Church's principle of catholicity, enflame denominational differences in Germany, and draw international politics into mission as each mission society maneuvered for territory.<sup>92</sup> Nonetheless, in November of 1908, just at the beginning of the *Benediktinerstreit*, Governor Rechenberg and Colonial Secretary Dernburg were both willing to place civil peace over confessional freedom, only the Catholics refused to agree to any official divisions.<sup>93</sup> In 1912 the head of the Benedictines in German East Africa, Bishop Thomas Spreiter, made very clear the position of the Catholic Church. In a letter to Axenfeld he explained that the *Propaganda Fide* wished for "peaceful coexistence" with Protestant missionaries but would not permit any border agreements.<sup>94</sup> There was, in fact, no possible resolution to the *Benediktinerstreit*.

In the communications of the Protestant missionaries during the *Benediktinerstreit* the Catholic mission orders and their church were depicted as aggressively anti-Protestant. Naturally, the entire conflict was the responsibility of the Benedictines. Max Berner, the Colonial Department's liaison with the Protestant mission societies and member of the Berlin Mission Society's *Komitee*, agreed with the Berliners that no blame for the "border conflict" lay on the side of the Protestants.<sup>95</sup> Theodor Öhler of the Basel Mission Society and chairman of the *Ausschuß der deutschen evangelischen Missionen* (Committee of German Protestant Missions) at the time declared that recent history proved the willingness of the

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<sup>92</sup> [Franz Michael] Zahn, "Eingabe an den Reichskanzler betreffend die Grenzregulierung zwischen evangelischen und katholischen Missionen innerhalb der deutschen Schutzgebiete," *AMZ* 17(1890): 327-332. These worries were repeated again by the *Ausschuß* in March 1910, see Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (March 31, 1910), BMW/bmw1/1779.

<sup>93</sup> Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika 1891-1941*, 120-121.

<sup>94</sup> Thomas Spreiter to Karl Axenfeld (September 30, 1912), BMW/bmw1/894.

<sup>95</sup> Max Berner to the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (December 27, 1908), BMW/bmw1/8319, 12/27/1908.

Protestant missions to “make great sacrifices in the interest of peace.”<sup>96</sup> The *Ausschuß* was formed in 1886 by the German mission societies to serve as their national representative and lobbying organization. Its leadership was composed of five representatives, three of whom were required to be the executive officers of mission societies. By the middle of the 1890s the *Ausschuß* had emerged as the main organization of German mission life, acting as the Protestant mission movement’s main liaison with the German imperial government and with foreign mission organizations. Its support of the Berlin Mission Society demonstrates the breadth of anti-Catholicism amongst Germany’s Protestant missions.

At the same time, Protestant missionaries, predisposed to expect catastrophic intentions from their Catholic rivals, hoped that they might be able to turn to the colonial administration for a solution to their problems. Above all, the administrators hoped to avoid religious conflict. In Dernburg and Berner’s first correspondence on the matter, both men took the position that the government’s prime responsibility was to maintain peace and order in the colony in order to avoid any indigenous disturbance.<sup>97</sup> The matter required an assertive governmental position but that was not what came to be, Berner’s earliest attempts to facilitate negotiations came to little because the *Ausschuß* proved unable to forge a consensus among its member societies

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<sup>96</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to Berner (April 17, 1909), BMW/bmw1/894.

<sup>97</sup> Berner to the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (December 27, 1908), BMW/bmw1/8319. Though it is not referenced directly by Berner, it is very likely that the Colonial Department feared a repeat of the violence which had drawn in missionaries in the Kingdom of Buganda in the 1890s. For more on the events in Uganda see Jean-Pierre Chrétien, *The Great Lakes of Africa: Two Thousand Years of History*, trans. Scott Straus (New York: Zone Books, 2003), 207- 211 and 224-232; for general background and for a more specific treatment of the issue see Holger Bernt Hansen, *Mission, Church and State in a Colonial Setting: Uganda, 1890-1925* (London: Heinemann, 1984), 3-57; for an interesting treatment of the relationship between Christianity and African notions of honor in the Great Lakes in general and Uganda in specific see John Iliffe, *Honour in African History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 161-180.

even though the Catholics seemed amenable to discussions.<sup>98</sup> The Berlin Mission continued from 1908 to 1912 to demand that colonial officials enforce the territorial agreements that had been mediated before 1908, but Dernburg, his successors, and their subordinates took no action. Öhler of the *Ausschuß* pointed out to the Colonial Secretary that the Protestants had worked for a peaceful resolution against their own misgivings but any binding agreement would require the government's imprimatur and backing. Only in that way could anyone be certain of Catholic observance.<sup>99</sup> Even at Protestant urging the Colonial Department resisted taking an assertive action.

Late efforts by the Colonial Secretary Wilhelm Solf in 1912 to mediate a solution came to naught. Solf's preference for a solution generated outside the government appeared in an internal note to Berner. He counseled Berner that "no method" should be left unused to ensure the peaceful coexistence of Catholic and Protestant missions.<sup>100</sup> The Colonial Secretary responded to the prompting from the *Ausschuß* by bringing in the key Center Party *Reichstag* member on colonial issues, Alois, Prince of Löwenstein.<sup>101</sup> Solf's decision to include him indicated the Colonial Department's interest in keeping the matter informal. From this point on most attempts to settle this matter would be handled by Berner, Löwenstein, and the mission societies. The exit of the Colonial Secretary from the scene made a peaceful resolution even less likely. Clearly, no one of any import in the German administration wanted anything to do with what was a politically toxic situation. The

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<sup>98</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to Berner (April 17, 1909), BMW/bmw1/894.

<sup>99</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to Wilhelm Solf (January 16, 1913), BArch R1001/8.16, Film Nr. 79832, Bd. 863, pag.46; and Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (February 20, 1913), BMW/bmw1/1779.

<sup>100</sup> Solf to the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (February 7, 1913), BArch R 1001/8.16, Film Nr. 79832, Bd. 863, pag. 50.

<sup>101</sup> Solf to Berner (February 7, 1913), BArch R 1001/8.16, Film Nr. 79832, Bd. 863. pag. 50.

new colonial governor, Heinrich Schnee, stressed once again that friction between the confessions threatened the entire colonial enterprise. His January 1913 proposal of a return to pre-1908 conditions was too little too late.<sup>102</sup> In fact, as we shall see, by then Karl Axenfeld and the other leaders of the Berlin Mission had determined to pursue a more aggressive stance. The Center Party's leading colonial and mission issues delegate in the *Reichstag*, Alois zu Löwenstein, proved just as willing to battle as Axenfeld.

The *Benediktinerstreit* confirmed to Protestant missionaries in the Berlin Mission and its allies that the Catholic Church was pursuing a new Counter-Reformation. However, the utilization of anti-Catholic critiques premised upon a Protestant definition of the German nation also demonstrated the growing engagement of Protestant missionaries with nationalist ideologies. To the Protestant missionary leadership, the weak response by the government to what was clearly an anti-Protestant campaign by the Catholics demanded that the mission societies make their struggle an issue of popular politics. Protestants began to expand upon earlier arguments that hinted at anti-German behavior by the Catholics. Whereas in the early years of the *Benediktinerstreit* the Berlin Mission's *Komitee* only reminded Governor Rechenberg, who they distrusted because he was a Catholic and "declared protector of the Benedictines,"<sup>103</sup> that negative restrictions upon the Protestant missions would contradict the good will Protestants had earned with their cooperation during the

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<sup>102</sup> Heinrich Schnee to Axenfeld and Klamroth (January 11, 1913), BMW/bmw1/894; see also Berner to the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (May 3, 1913), BMW/bmw1/8319.

<sup>103</sup> Axenfeld to Berner (December 29, 1908), BMW/bmw1/894.

Maji-Maji War.<sup>104</sup> Around 1912 the strategy of the Protestant missionaries became more blatantly populist.

The decision by Protestant missionary leaders to make the *Benediktinerstreit* a battle in the *Reichstag* and the press arose from opportunity. An apparently vulnerable Center Party, a threatened Protestant mission movement, and a new national mission ideology converged to encourage missionaries to utilize the rhetoric of nation and Protestant unity. Spreiter's letter of September 1912, finally explicating the Benedictines' inability to sign any territorial agreement, marked the immediate cause of the Protestants' nationalist strategy. However, it seems likely that Axenfeld would have taken the opportunity regardless. Shortly after Spreiter's letter, Axenfeld began gathering information from the Protestant missions active in the German East African colony to document Catholic "aggression." He and his colleagues spread articles about these Catholic "invasions" in sympathetic nationalist and ecclesiastical newspapers across the *Kaiserreich*.<sup>105</sup> For the Protestants, the Catholics' construction of schools and mission stations within what the Protestants perceived to be their mission territorial borders "demonstrate[d] that the hindrance of Protestant mission [was] more important than conversion" of Africans. Catholics had become, as Martin Klamroth, the Berlin Mission's leader in East Africa, put it, "enemies of the Gospel."<sup>106</sup> The *Ausschuß* believed Catholic actions were an intentional attempt to

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<sup>104</sup> Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society to Albert Rechenberg (December 5, 1908), BMW/bmw1/1192.

<sup>105</sup> G. T. Manley to Axenfeld (October 25, 1912), BMW/bmw1/894; and Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (December 3, 1912), BMW/bmw1/57. Examples of articles appeared in the *Berliner Neueste Nachrichten*, December 18, 1912; *Volks-Zeitung Berlin*, December 17, 1912; *Deutsch-evangelische Korrespondenz*, December 18, 1912; and *Germania*, December 18, 1912.

<sup>106</sup> Martin Klamroth, "Denkschrift" ([December 12, 1912]), BMW/bmw1/894.

impede Protestant evangelization.<sup>107</sup> Most within the Protestant mission movement believed in and began propagating a narrative that Catholic mission had begun executing a campaign to expunge the Reformation.<sup>108</sup>

In short order Berner, as head of the *Komitee*, and Karl Axenfeld had rallied the *Ausschuß* to the Berlin Mission's new strategy. Berner's letter to the leadership of the Protestant mission societies stressed the Berlin Mission's prior efforts to find a peaceful solution but now Catholic actions had made it necessary that the government and "public perception" recognize that the Catholics had made peaceful coexistence impossible. The press, Colonial Department, and Protestant missionaries' *Reichstag* allies were all notified of the change in purpose.<sup>109</sup> Catholics' political power required that the Protestants mobilize every ally they could in the public sphere. Part of this change included the full investment of Axenfeld by the *Komitee* with the authority to deal with the "invasion of the Benedictines into our territory."<sup>110</sup>

Axenfeld described the new situation in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* for an audience of mission intellectuals. His narrative of the conflict condemned the actions of Spreiter and his Benedictines. According to him, the Catholics had knowingly defied the legal representative of the Kaiser by breaking the border "treaty" of 1906. In addition, the Catholics had abandoned racial and religious solidarity by working to undermine established relations between the Berlin missionaries and African

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<sup>107</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to Wilhelm Solf (January 16, 1913), BArch R1001/8.16, Film Nr. 79832, Bd. 863, pag.45.

<sup>108</sup> Bishop Spreiter's protestations to the contrary notwithstanding. See Spreiter to Axenfeld (September 13, 1909), BMW/bmw1/894.

<sup>109</sup> Berner to Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (December 16, 1912), BMW/bmw1/8319.

<sup>110</sup> Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (January 7, 1913), BMW/bmw1/57.

leaders.<sup>111</sup> A similar article for the supporters of the Berlin Mission appeared in the society's mission journal, the *Berliner Missionsberichte*. This article shared with readers the hoped for outcome of Axenfeld's new strategy, pressure from the public sphere would force the government to act to restore order. The *Missionsberichte*'s summary of the *Benediktinerstreit* set up the lines of attack that would be used in the new campaign: the Catholics had no loyalty to German authority and cared little for the spread of the Gospels.<sup>112</sup>

In addition to its early efforts in the missionary press, the Berlin Mission Society began organizing its allies in the *Reichstag*. The chief of these allies were the Conservative delegate Kuno von Westarp and Reinhold Mumm, both men who would continue into prominence during the Weimar years as conservative politicians.<sup>113</sup> Mumm had succeeded his father-in-law Adolf Stöcker as leader of the Christian Social Party, a populist Protestant confessional party that had a history of religious agitation, most notably anti-Semitic attacks. In January of 1913 Axenfeld's successor as supervisor of East African mission work, Wilhelm Gründler, contacted Mumm with materials on the conflict with the Benedictines. Gründler counseled Mumm that the Berlin Society was not interested in "fueling the confessional quarrel" in Germany. However, he hoped that Mumm and his associates in the *Reichstag* would take up the matter in a unified way to assist the Society as the situation developed. In this interest, Gründler informed Mumm that Berner had also contacted von Westarp to prepare the Protestant missionaries' other parliamentary allies if it became

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<sup>111</sup> [Karl Axenfeld], "Ist friedliches Nebeneinanderarbeiten mit der römischen Mission möglich?" *AMZ* 41(1913): 26 and 30-31.

<sup>112</sup> Gründler, "Eine Störung," 24.

<sup>113</sup> Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914," 256.



necessary for a parliamentary intervention.<sup>114</sup> Gründler, Axenfeld, and the rest of the Berlin Mission were not so naïve as to think a parliamentary debate on Protestant and Catholic missions in conflict could possibly not “fuel the confessional quarrel.” It is far more likely that the possibility was exactly what they desired.

Axenfeld and his associates had by the spring of 1913 informed their supporters within the mission community of their new stance. Any reader of the articles in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* or the *Berliner Missionsberichte* would have believed the *Benediktinerstreit* was the result of a broad anti-German, anti-Protestant campaign by the Catholic Church. The *Komitee* and Gründler had marshaled members of the bureaucracy and the *Reichstag* for the coming conflict. All of this was a tactic used by the German mission movement in the past. Axenfeld took it one step further and began making contacts with the Protestant League. The League, determined anti-Catholic crusaders who felt the German nation endangered itself by including Catholics within its body, had a long history of inflammatory, demagogic anti-Catholic work in the public sphere.<sup>115</sup> At the Protestant League’s national gathering of 1913 Axenfeld enumerated the Berlin Society’s complaints against the St. Ottilien Mission.<sup>116</sup> This was the first direct and open step in the Protestant missionaries’ effort to bring their confessional conflict with the Catholics to the public.

There is some evidence that the Protestant strategy was beginning to produce the desired effect, but what it did most of all was provoke the Catholics. The Colonial

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<sup>114</sup> Gründler to Reinhard Mumm (January 30, 1913), BMW/bmw1/894.

<sup>115</sup> On the *Evangelischer Bund* (Protestant League), see Blaschke, *Konfessionen im Konflikt*, 56-57; and H. W. Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict*.

<sup>116</sup> Alois Löwenstein to Axenfeld (May 15, 1913), BMW/bmw1/895.

Department enlisted Franz Hespers to help make a peace between Axenfeld and the Father-Superior of the Benedictines, Norbert Weber. Berner expected that the Catholic leadership would “seek the means to lessen the sharpness” of the attacks and offer some accommodation.<sup>117</sup> Berner was mistaken. To Hespers, the actions of the Protestants were less a marker of strength than a marker of weakness. He counseled that the Catholics call the Protestants’ bluff.<sup>118</sup>

Axenfeld’s public attack upon the Benedictines at the Protestant League conference in the spring of 1913 drew an even stronger response from Löwenstein. Löwenstein, leader of the Catholic negotiators during the *Benediktinerstreit*, warned Axenfeld away from his belligerent course. He wrote that the Berlin Mission would not appreciate what the “Catholics might bring to a broader public” about the Protestants’ work. More importantly, Löwenstein acknowledged the dangerous state of confessional issues in the metropole. He warned Axenfeld that “should the current clash take on the poisonous form of a public incitement of the confessions, [it would] shatter the peace” and destroy any hope for peaceful, “neighborly” work. The Center Party leader wrote Axenfeld that “the Catholic side, and [he] personally,...discovered that you used a gathering of the *Evangelischer Bund* (Protestant League), our hated enemies, to publicize the conflict in East Africa.” Löwenstein felt both sides were lucky that the Catholic press had thus far ignored the conflict, but informed Axenfeld that he must restrain the Protestant press in order to “hold back a public fight.”<sup>119</sup> Such attacks were likely to lead to a public confrontation between both confessions. Löwenstein missed that this was exactly Axenfeld’s intent, to put public pressure

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<sup>117</sup> Berner to the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (May 3, 1913), BMW/bmw1/8319.

<sup>118</sup> Franz Hespers to Solf (May 4, 1913), BArch R1001/8.16, Film Nr. 79832, Bd. 863, pag. 223.

<sup>119</sup> Löwenstein to Axenfeld (May 15, 1913), BMW/bmw1/895.

upon the Catholic mission orders. He answered Löwenstein with offense, questioning Löwenstein's characterization of the Protestant League and arguing that whatever turmoil arose from the *Benediktinerstreit* in Germany was the fault of the Catholics.<sup>120</sup> To the Protestant missionaries the strength of the Catholic Center Party in the established political arenas of the *Reichstag* and the imperial government needed to be circumvented. The model laid out by Bülow in the 1907 elections must have offered a promising way forward.

Axenfeld's commitment to the conflict is very clearly seen in a letter from him to one of his leading missionaries in German East Africa, Christian Schumann. In that letter Axenfeld left unambiguous his mood in the late spring of 1913. He wrote of how his "battle" against the Catholics had moved into the open. According to Axenfeld, Norbert Weber hoped by closing two offending schools that would lead Axenfeld to "declare himself satisfied and silence" the fight in the press. Despite Weber's requests in the name of "religious consideration," Axenfeld intended that the Berlin Society immediately occupy the stations vacated by the Catholics. This "defeat" should be immediately communicated to the "natives" as a victory of Protestantism over Catholicism. By the end of May, Axenfeld saw the conflict with the Benedictines not as a misunderstanding but as an open confessional conflict which demanded that the Protestants give no ground. He ended his letter to Schumann, "God lead you justly in every responsibility and effort and in the battle [forced] upon us!" And he signed, "Your true companion and spear-carrier."<sup>121</sup> While Axenfeld's position in the late spring was clear, the *Komitee* continued to appeal to

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<sup>120</sup> Axenfeld to Löwenstein (May 24, 1913), BMW/bmw1/895.

<sup>121</sup> Axenfeld to Christian Schumann (May 30, 1913), BMW/bmw1/895.

the Colonial Department. For his part, the Colonial Secretary remained only concerned with protecting public order in the colonies and remained unwilling to take on any position that might anger either the Protestant or Catholic constituencies.<sup>122</sup>

The strategies utilized by the Berlin Mission during this final phase of the *Benediktinerstreit* indicate a number of things. First, the strategies demonstrate how weak the ideology of internationalism had grown by 1912. The entire missionary strategy was suffused with the despised “politics” and nationalism condemned by earlier mission intellectuals. Second, the efforts by the Protestants revealed how powerful confessional differences remained in German political and social life. Finally, Axenfeld and his associates’ efforts demonstrate that the Protestant missionaries believed these tactics would work. The examples of German political life from the 1870s and 1907 must have seemed like proof that the aversion missionaries felt towards “politics” might have denied the mission societies a tool that they could have used to build their position within Germany. The *Benediktinerstreit* was one example of a historical opportunity that the Protestant mission societies discovered and attempted to capitalize upon to defend their interests. Like the others detailed in this dissertation it required an accommodation with nationalist ideology that undermined missionaries’ commitment to internationalism.

The nearly intractable hostility between the Protestants and Catholics forced Colonial Secretary Solf to take action in December 1913. He felt the conflict was beginning to spill over to both missions’ African associates. So he forced a meeting between Spreiter and forged a compromise. The substance of the compromise was a

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<sup>122</sup> Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (June 3, 1913), BMW/bmw1/57 and Solf to Berner (May 29, 1913), BMW/bmw1/895.

formal dissolution of the treaty of 1909 and the earlier agreement of 1906. The Catholics and Protestants would both agree to avoid interfering with each other's work. As a third stipulation, Solf declared that both sides would cease promoting the conflict in public, especially in the press. Furthermore, the Berlin Society would publicize through its organs that an agreement had been reached (the Benedictines had no such requirement as, Solf stated, "they had made nothing public.") Solf offered these points as a basis for further negotiations toward a more lasting understanding. The Colonial Secretary bid the Berlin Mission appoint a delegate to work with Hespers in pursuing a more permanent peace.<sup>123</sup>

Negotiations on a permanent solution never came to much and, though the temporary solution to the conflict in East Africa held, the Protestants continued their campaign against the Catholics. They had won a partial victory and seemed determined to fight for a final victory, especially since it seemed to them that Catholic resistance might be waning. Already in June of 1913 the *Komitee* determined to cease negotiations, and informed the Colonial Department that the Berlin Mission "[was] no longer prepared to take part in negotiations with the Benedictine Mission and [could] no longer avoid" further expanding its public campaign.<sup>124</sup> The Berlin Mission's *Komitee* continued its attacks on the Catholics through the spring and summer of 1914 because, as Axenfeld put it, "Löwenstein knew for a long time of the pending conflict and could have prevented the public denunciations [of the Catholics], had he proposed timely solutions." Consequently, the attacks upon the Catholics had

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<sup>123</sup> Solf to the Berlin Mission Society (December 28, 1913), BMW/bmw1/895; and Berner to Axenfeld (March 1, 1914), BMW/bmw1/895.

<sup>124</sup> Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (April 7, 1914), BMW/bmw1/58.

continued.<sup>125</sup> Though the Berlin Mission worried that the balance of political power in Germany favored the Catholics,<sup>126</sup> on the eve of the First World War the *Komitee* again informed the Colonial Secretary that reconciliation was completely impossible and that full guilt lay upon the Catholics and their unwillingness to compromise.<sup>127</sup> The *Komitee* informed Berner and Solf of this decision and defended itself in writing, “We hope that you will agree completely with our even-tempered, factual presentation of our relations with the Benedictines...May this piece help bring final clarity to these tangled relations.”<sup>128</sup>

## Conclusion

The *Benediktinerstreit* was more an indicator of deeper patterns than an important historical event in its own right. At the end of four years of correspondence, conflict, and rancor neither the Benedictines nor the Berlin missionaries had retreated from their antagonistic rhetorical and territorial positions. However, the actions of Karl Axenfeld and his allies indicated much about the state of the German Protestant mission movement in the five years before World War I. These last years of the German Protestant mission movement seemed filled with opportunity and risk, especially to the new leaders who advocated a more nationalist course like Axenfeld and Julius Richter. The language of the nation and of German nationalist

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<sup>125</sup> “Bericht über die Entwicklung der Benediktinersache seit Mai 1913” (March 26, 1914), BMW/bmw1/895.

<sup>126</sup> Berlin Mission Society to “Freunde, die Patrone deutsch-ostafrikanischer Schutz- und Trutzschulen geworden sind” (May 18, 1914), BMW/bmw1/901.

<sup>127</sup> Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (June 3, 1914), BMW/bmw1/895.

<sup>128</sup> Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society to Solf and Berner (June 3, 1914), BMW/bmw1/895.

Protestantism offered a tool for the mission societies that might lead out of the challenges facing the societies. The episode also showed the weakening resolve of internationalists within the movement. They could no longer hold back the nationalists, especially when the nationalists seemed to be getting results.

Anti-Catholicism was always present within the German Protestant mission movement. It had old roots and internationalists like Warneck and Zahn did not lack ugly opinions of the Catholics and their church. However, the older generations' focus on internationalism and aversion to "politics" prevented anti-Catholic prejudice from facilitating a link between nationalism and Protestant mission work. However, a world that was seeing greater forces for interconnection and global collaboration also witnessed efforts by communities and polities to define their membership more stringently. The decade before the First World War witnessed Germany's Protestant missionaries joining in that contest of definition. The "Catholic International" became an enemy of German Protestant national mission as a response to a multitude of threats driven by expanding economic and political forces in the colonies.

## Chapter Three: Language and Labor

Mission Christianity, many believed and believe, reinforced and justified colonialism. Yet the activities of German Protestant missionaries challenged the economic colonialist's intentions particularly in school policy. German Protestant missionaries found the work of evangelization in East Africa and elsewhere challenging beyond their expectations. But they were neither without experience nor without ideas as to how to proceed. By the 1860s missionaries had settled on two strategies that they judged integral to their work, linguistic study and school building. Both required slow, arduous work. However, missionaries remained confident that in the long run their hard work would bear fruit. After all, this work was done at the command of God, with the promise of salvation, and, ultimately, for the very immortal souls of the "heathens." Mission societies expected that within the first year of establishing a mission station a missionary would establish a school and, if he had not already learned the local language either in Germany or at another mission station, that the missionary would commence serious study of local languages. To a Protestant missionary these strategies were essential. As Warneck put it, "Man thinks in his native language, it is the mirror of the spirit which enlivens him. And as with the individual it is the same with the nations; the national soul comes to the Word through the national language."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gustav Warneck, "Die Bedeutung der Muttersprache für die Mission," from *Der Betrieb der Sendung* cited in *Nachrichten aus der ostafrikanischen Mission* 11(1), 1-2.



Missionary autonomy in school and language policy was therefore a matter of central importance to missionary identity, methodology, and politics. Schools' centrality to the evangelical project made control over educational policy an existential issue for Germany's Protestant missionaries.<sup>2</sup> This chapter will examine both missionaries' own conception of education in the mission field and the strong internationalist critique of school policy promoted by secular German colonialists. Furthermore, the analysis will show that missionaries developed a theology that imagined a future in which non-European congregations would be equal partners in a global Christian community. From this theological viewpoint German Protestants defended their independent school policy against opponents from within the German colonial lobby. School policy called forth Protestant missionaries' strongest defense of Christian universalism.

German Protestant missionaries' educational agenda rested on the principle that a man or woman was more likely to receive the grace of the Gospels in his or her native language. This belief carried with it a view amongst most missionaries that regarded indigenous culture as a valuable conduit for Christianity. Some German Protestant missionaries' theology even suggested that indigenous cultures might possess special insight into scripture and help enrich global Christianity. Protestant missionaries from Germany therefore encouraged their representatives to learn the local vernaculars and to teach in their schools in local languages. Protestant missionaries in Germany's colonies instructed their students in many different

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<sup>2</sup> Johanna Eggert, "The School Policy of the German Protestant Missions in Tanzania before the First World War," in Christensen and Hutchison, *Missionary Ideologies in the Imperialist Era*, 201; and Edward Graham Norris, *Die Umerziehung des Afrikaners: Togo 1895-1938* (Munich: Trickster Wissenschaft, 1993), 81. See also Eggert, *Missionsschule und sozialer Wandel in Ostafrika*.

languages, all of them derived from local communal contexts. Indigenous-language instruction and cultural respect were important components of the German Protestant missionaries' internationalism. Their insistence on indigenous instruction and devoted internationalism led the secular colonial groups of Germany and, at times, the German colonial government to attack missionary independence. On several occasions the German Colonial Society attacked mission pedagogical practices in order to force a change to German-language instruction. To missionaries this amounted to an effort to subvert the entire Christian project of evangelization. The Protestant mission movement's internationalism provided a strong defense against efforts by outsiders to nationalize their work.

The chief opponents of the missionaries in this fight were economic and settler interests who either valued colonialism for its own sake or who saw support for colonial expansion as a tool for gathering support for their interests from segments of the population most motivated by nationalist or patriotic sentiment. As Woodruff D. Smith has pointed out, the groups who sought to capitalize on colonial politics for their own goals included Prussian Junkers, big business, and the various ultra-nationalist populist groups of the German Right.<sup>3</sup> To the secular colonial organizations indigenous-language instruction was an affront to German prestige and power. In addition, other groups saw German-language instruction as a key to economic development of the colonies. The Colonial Society and the Colonial Economic Committee (*Kolonial-Wirtschaftliches Komitee* or KWK) supported German-language instruction because of their support for the economic development

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<sup>3</sup> W. D. Smith, *The German Colonial Empire*, 119-121. For a more extensive study of the relationship between imperialism and nationalism in Germany see Birthe Kundrus, *Moderne Imperialisten: Das Kaiserreich im Spiegel seiner Kolonien* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2003).

of the colonies. Together the two groups favored a form of economic colonialism that demanded that Africans be trained for service on plantations and in other economic concerns.<sup>4</sup> This strain of thought sought economic self-sufficiency for Germany's colonies that would eventually develop into profitability. Leaders within these organizations and their supporters thought that Africans should be taught the minimum of skills necessary to become a viable labor force for market-oriented activities. Both organizations utilized nationalist rhetoric as a political lever to dislodge the missionaries from their positions.

Missionaries resisted this instrumentalization of their work on theological and practical grounds. When German ultra-nationalists demanded that missionaries make German the *lingua franca* of Germany's colonial empire, missionaries insisted that their evangelical goals demanded that mission policy respond to indigenous needs and demands.<sup>5</sup> Missionary intellectuals ridiculed chauvinist cultural views and defended indigenous cultures as positive sources of identity for missionized peoples. Mission schools helped build indigenous Christian cultures, missionary leaders argued, and therefore, for pedagogical and religious reasons, instruction had to continue in indigenous languages. Mission societies refused to adulterate their spiritual purpose for nationalist reasons and insisted vehemently that missionary schools must continue instructing in whatever indigenous language the missionaries thought most suitable. Missionaries interpreted the attacks by the nationalists and the

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<sup>4</sup> The most cited example of this position is Paul Rohrbach, *Die Kolonie* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Literarische Anstalt Rütten & Loening, 1905).

<sup>5</sup> Missionaries' stubborn adherence to indigenous-language instruction stood in stark contrast to British missionaries, particularly in India, who were "Vernacularists in principle, mission educators became Anglicizers in practice largely in response to student demand for English education." Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*, 190-191.

apparent support the nationalists received from the German colonial state as a mortal threat to the evangelical project, and when national “political” pressure threatened, the German Protestant mission movement returned to its basic principles, in this case the primacy of a universal Gospel over secular political concerns.

This chapter will discuss the Protestant mission movement’s self-understanding of its educational programs in the colonies and analyze the defense of indigenous-language instruction as evidence of the strength of missionaries’ internationalism. First, the chapter will briefly discuss missionaries’ own description of their educational policy. Then it will discuss the relationship between missionaries’ educational goals and the goals of economic colonialists. Missionaries’ response to the attack upon their educational policy rested upon their firm belief that those elements of indigenous culture that could be retained should be. These ideas make up the third section of the chapter. The final portion of the chapter takes up missionaries’ active defense of their linguistic policies and discusses missionaries’ eventual acceptance of Swahili as their language of instruction throughout German East Africa.

Education occupied such a central role in missionaries’ imagined international community that attacks upon it from nationalists led intellectuals in the Protestant mission movement to a profound restatement of their internationalist principles. The missionary leaders defended their indigenous-language instruction by defending indigenous culture. In the process, missionaries described a Christianity that may have had European origins but that could and should change some of its contours in response to local circumstances. Schools, key building blocks of missionaries’

imagined internationalist community of believers, had to be defended against efforts by national “political” groups meant to control missionaries’ religious work. This chapter will show that though missionary intellectuals in Germany were beginning to integrate missionary principles with nationalist ideals, the universalist and internationalist principles of the mission movement remained strong in many parts of the evangelical movement.

### **Mission Schools**

Missionary leaders called for full autonomy on the part of missionary schools and minimized any goal of educating Africans to create a compliant workforce. For missionaries, this issue symbolized an important battle over the correct relationship between their evangelical work and secular attempts to create a functioning, rational, and economically viable colonial empire. To missionaries, any commonality of goals represented only a happy coincidence and missionary goals should remain, as ever, supreme. They argued that for this reason their schools should remain independent and unburdened by the colonial state. Those missionaries willing to participate in a colonial project to “educate the Negro to work” and serve the colonial state remained a small minority. Most missionaries refused to tailor their educational programs to practical economic demands. Mission schools were instead designed to create the basic skills needed to be a good Protestant: basic literacy and numeracy, the basic principles of Protestant religious life, and to instill in the students the basic “Christian” values of sobriety, discipline, and industry. As one leading missionary put

it, “the best apology for the education of the native is that through education mission can promote [the native to] lead in his own affairs.”<sup>6</sup> Ideally, Protestant missionaries hoped to create the autonomous Protestant individual.

German missionaries viewed schools as the foundation of their work. By the late nineteenth century missionaries had settled upon schools as the best way to develop Christian communities. Children were seen as ripe for conversion because “heathen superstition” had yet to fully take root. Schools had the secondary virtue of providing indigenous leaders with an incentive to allow missionaries to remain in local communities. In those African communities where a central authority existed, missionaries were frequently welcomed with the expectation that they would establish a school. Missionaries cited examples in their many publications of the versatility of schools as *entrepôt* to indigenous societies. For example, the ruler of Bali in modern-day Cameroon “knew nothing” about the Basel missionaries who came to create a mission station among his people in 1902 except that they were teachers and this “was enough for him.”<sup>7</sup> Schools also provided the training grounds for indigenous catechists and teachers who could help spread the Christian Gospel, who could go to all the small villages like those on New Guinea and prove to resistant communities that one could be a “true Batak”<sup>8</sup> and also a Christian.”<sup>9</sup> While missionaries developed their fluency in indigenous languages, their pupils and local assistants also provided

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<sup>6</sup> [Alexander] Merensky, “Die Mission der Anwalt der Eingeborenen,” *AMZ* 29(1902): 166.

<sup>7</sup> Hermann Petrich, *Allerlei Schulbilder aus der Mission in den deutschen Kolonien*, Neue Missionsschriften Nr. 81, (Berlin: Buchhandlung der Berliner evangelischen Missionsgesellschaft, 1906), 3-4.

<sup>8</sup> This is a reference by the author of the article, Friedrich Würz, to the Rhenish Mission Society’s work amongst the various peoples of Northern Sumatra with whom German missionaries had been working since 1861. He uses this as an example to support his larger point about the utility of indigenous teachers to missionary work. Of course this also reflects the role that missionaries played in the creation of ethnicities in colonized areas. See footnote 63 below.

<sup>9</sup> Würz, “Die Arbeiterfrage in der Mission,” *AMZ* 36(1909): 217.

invaluable language practice and assistance. In short, schools touched on every aspect of the missionaries' work.

By the 1900s missionaries shared a common vision of the appropriate curriculum for a mission school. In 1897 the *Ausschuß* had sent the German Colonial Office a memorandum emphasizing schools' main goal as "plant[ing] and advanc[ing] the Holy Scripture" whose prerequisites included strict missionary autonomy and instruction in indigenous languages.<sup>10</sup> The actual curricula taught did not drastically differ from the curricula of late nineteenth-century grammar schools in Germany. Students received instruction in the elements of literacy (reading and writing), basic mathematics, some basic instruction in the social and natural sciences, and the arts.<sup>11</sup> According to one missionary leader, education in the schools should be confined to the simplest skills and in the "native tongue;" only older students should be given German-language instruction.<sup>12</sup> The *Ausschuß* defined mission schools as "Christian primary schools,"<sup>13</sup> and Julius Richter argued that the project of cultural

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<sup>10</sup> *Denkschrift des Ausschusses der deutschen evangelischen Missionsgesellschaften, betreffend das Missionschulwesen, insbesondere den Unterricht in fremden Sprachen in den Missionsschulen* (November 11, 1897), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6902, pag. 7-9.

<sup>11</sup> On schools in Prussia and the German Empire before 1918 see Andrew Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land: War Pedagogy, Nationalism, and Authority in Germany, 1914-1918* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); Ulrich Herrmann, "Pädagogisches Denken und Anfänge der Reformpädagogik" in *Handbuch der deutschen Bildungsgeschichte*, Vol. IV, ed. Christa Berg (Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1991); and Marjorie Lamberti, *State, Society, and the Elementary School in Imperial Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). For specifics of the subjects taught in Prussian and other German primary schools see the tables in Herrmann, "Pädagogisches Denken," 217-227.

<sup>12</sup> [Alexander] Merensky, *Deutschlands Pflicht gegenüber den Heiden und dem Heidentum in seinen Kolonien*, Beiträge zur Missionskunde, (Berlin: Buchhandlung der Berliner evangelischen Missionsgesellschaft, 1905), 17-18.

<sup>13</sup> Minutes of the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionssausschuß (October 14, 1904), BMW/bmw1/8186, S. 2. In attendance: Theodor Öhler, Alexander Merensky, Carl Buchner, Paul Schwartz, Gustav Warneck, Gottlob Haussleiter, and August Wilhelm Schreiber.

elevation, pedagogical principles, and the missionaries' goal to create a "solid native community" required instruction remain in indigenous vernaculars.<sup>14</sup>

School curricula from mission schools communicate clearly that the goals of mission education did not coincide with the goals of economic colonialism. The secular colonialists did not fail to note this discrepancy. In 1904, at the height of the Herero-Nama War, German secular colonialists attempted to use the shock felt by the German public and German leadership over the uprising to bring the German Protestant missions under control. At the urging of the secular colonial movement a law was proposed that would grant colonial governors extensive control over the placement of mission stations and "the right to supervise teaching activities" in mission schools.<sup>15</sup> The law capitalized on missionaries' dubious public standing at that moment. Settlers in German Southwest Africa and their allies had used the fact that missionaries had been spared by African forces as proof of their specious argument that missionaries were to blame for the uprising in the colony.<sup>16</sup> Gustav Warneck led the resistance to this law with an article in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*. This law, Warneck wrote, "made the governor a Pope with final deciding word on the content of teaching instruction...against which the Protestant and Catholic missionaries [would] energetically protest." The state would now be deciding on the content of religious instruction, Warneck argued. He went on to suggest that the secular critics of missionaries were motivated by missionaries' insistence that "Blacks are just as beloved by God as Whites," and that the secular

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<sup>14</sup> Julius Richter, "Mission und Kolonialpolitik," *Afrika*(1896):53.

<sup>15</sup> [Gustav] Warneck, "Der deutsche Kolonialbund als Missions-Gesetzgeber," *AMZ* 31(1904): 302.

<sup>16</sup> Oermann, *Mission, Church, and State Relations in South-West Africa under German Rule, 1884-1915*, 106; Richard Pierard, "The Rhenish Mission and the Colonial War in German Southwest Africa," 395.



colonialists wished only to see indigenous peoples made into serfs of trading concessions, plantations, and mining companies.<sup>17</sup> The emancipatory qualities ascribed by Warneck to mission schools challenged the secular colonialists' plans, and this fact, according to Warneck, provided the basis for the campaign against Christian missionaries. The missionaries' defense of their autonomy was successful; the colonial state had little interest in getting involved in administering the mission schools and, judging from the Colonial Department's aversion to religious matters during the *Benediktinerstreit*, colonial bureaucrats were probably also more than happy to avoid religious politics whenever they could.

### *Erziehung des Negers zur Arbeit*

German Protestant missionaries thought their role was to train Africans to the pleasures of individual industriousness. Paul Rohrbach and other economic colonialists hoped to train Africans to the demands of the global capitalist economy.<sup>18</sup> To economic colonialists Germany's colonies needed to be transformed into a source of raw materials for Germany's massive industrial sector and a market for Germany's consumer goods. This would be achieved by transforming the African populations into wage-earners working for large economic enterprises and using their wages to purchase German products. One of the chief proponents of this program of colonial development was the KWK, the major advocate of economic colonialism within the

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<sup>17</sup> Warneck, "Der deutsche Kolonialbund," 302-303.

<sup>18</sup> Kuassi Amétowoyopna Akakpo, "Missionspraxis im Lichte der Kritik: kontroverse Debatten über Paul Rohrbachs Thesen zur Missionsarbeit in Afrika," in van der Heyden and Stoecker, *Mission und Macht im Wandel politischer Orientierungen*, 71.

secular colonial movement. The KWK supported research into colonial development schemes and helped organize and promote the Tuskegee cotton-growing expedition to Togo in 1901-1909 as well as agricultural research in German East Africa.<sup>19</sup> While the Dernburg Reforms sought simply to make the German colonies pay for themselves, colonial development schemes like those promoted by the KWK sought to maximize colonial production and consumption. The schemes usually entailed the operations of concessionary companies and large plantation companies, entities with which German Protestant mission companies had already clashed by 1904.<sup>20</sup> These large capitalist enterprises demanded docile and reliable labor supplies and economic colonialists began to insist from the 1890s on that Protestant and Catholic mission schools provide a pliable work force.

Other scholars have discussed the connection between European educational efforts and European economic interests in their African colonies. Historians of the British colonial empire and of British missionaries who have considered the relationship between education and economic change have focused on the role that missionaries played in preparing Africans for participation in the capitalist agricultural and mining enterprises of European settler regimes. Europeans interested in maintaining the “aristocracy of color” in Britain’s colonies precluded African participation in European working-class traditions and helped encourage the formation of an African peasantry. According to Terence Ranger, Africans’ subordinate role in the colonial cultural system had been defined by mission

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<sup>19</sup> See Sven Beckert, “From Tuskegee to Togo: The Problem of Freedom in the Empire of Cotton,” *Journal of American History* 92(2): 498-526; and Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa*. On German East Africa see Juhani Koponen, “Knowledge, Power and History: German Colonial Studies in Tanzania,” in van der Heyden and von Oppen, *Tanzania*, 125.

<sup>20</sup> Ahadji, “Mission und Landfrage in Togo 1884-1914,” 138; Ustorf, *Mission im Kontext*, 23.

Christianity.<sup>21</sup> And Carol Summers' research in Southern Rhodesia also argues that missionaries were far more concerned with the desires of the settler population than they were with their own ideas of Christian equality; missionaries, when pressed, constantly hedged their answers about the possibilities of African uplift. For missionaries in Southern Rhodesia, settlers were an equally important constituency of mission education as the Africans actually being educated.<sup>22</sup> Both Ranger and Summers argue for a convergence of economic and missionary interests, which is not surprising among scholars of the British Empire. David Livingstone, William Carey, and their compatriots closely linked the spread of "legitimate trade" and European commerce with the positive spread of Christianity.<sup>23</sup> But this close linkage does not hold up as well in the German case. As has been detailed earlier in this dissertation, German missionaries were highly skeptical of the modern, capitalist world and sought to insulate their converts from the worst excesses of global trade and its purveyors.<sup>24</sup>

The most recent and well-known work on German Protestant missionary school policy argues that missionaries were happy to collaborate with economic demands for a reliable African work force.<sup>25</sup> In his study of German globalization and nationalism, *Globalisation and the Nation in Imperial Germany*, Sebastian Conrad argues that globalization and nationalism were interdependent products of the

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<sup>21</sup> Terence Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 213.

<sup>22</sup> Carol Summers, *From Civilization to Segregation: Social Ideals and Social Control in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1934* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1994), 81.

<sup>23</sup> Brian Stanley, *The Bible and Flag: Protestant Missionaries and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), 71-74.

<sup>24</sup> See chapter one of this dissertation. Ranger also acknowledges this distinction between the German and the British case without noting the cause by discussing the Basel Mission Society as an exception within a mission movement that he sees as disinterested in addressing Africans' developing status as peasants, Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa," 213-214.

<sup>25</sup> Edward Graham Norris makes a similar argument but it is much briefer and situated within an argument about colonialism as a generally "re-educative" institution. Norris, *Die Umerziehung des Afrikaners*, 92-93.

expanding “interlinkages” of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Conrad examines this link between German nationalism and globalization through the lens of nineteenth-century German debates about labor mobility and its possible repercussions. The concern over labor, Conrad asserts, came to be organized around an “ahistoric, unchangeable and nationally specific character of ‘German work.’” The growth of nationalism during this period was not a holdover from an earlier time but a product of international circulation, as efforts to define who was a member of the national community increased.<sup>26</sup> To Conrad, it was understandable that Germans and other Europeans became obsessed with defining membership in the national community during a time when the meaning of economic and political boundaries seemed to be disappearing.

One of Conrad’s key examples of the German obsession with the idea of work and labor is his discussion of the colonial project of “educating to work.” Conrad rightly shows that this was not only a colonial project but also tied to efforts to control the masses of unemployed and indigent in metropolitan Germany. German politicians acted to regulate and control the workforce which was continually shifting to include Poles, Belgians, Dutch, Italians, and even Chinese.<sup>27</sup> Politicians and academics scrambled to develop techniques and technologies like border controls, immigration policies, work passes, and racial science to identify who was and who was not German. Conrad’s argument for the link between the colonial and the metropolitan hinges upon the work of Friedrich von Bodelschwingh and his Bethel community. In the 1860s Bodelschwingh organized workers’ colonies in Germany for

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<sup>26</sup> Sebastian Conrad, *Globalisation and the Nation in Imperial Germany*, tr. Sorchá O’Hagan (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3-5.

<sup>27</sup> Conrad, *Globalisation and the Nation*, 24.

the vocational education of mentally handicapped individuals. In a little over a decade these institutions expanded to include training for the “vagabonds” and “work-shy.”<sup>28</sup> The Bodelschwingh workers’ colonies all taught a curriculum of manual labor for the salvation of the individual. When Bodelschwingh expanded his philanthropy to the German colony of East Africa, Conrad concludes, this obsession with inculcating the inexperienced, inept, ignorant, and indolent with the virtues of hard work was transmitted to the African who was, by turns, called all those things. The link between training poor Germans and Africans to work was not coincidental. As Conrad argues it, “‘Educating the negro to work’ [*Die Erziehung des Negers zur Arbeit*] was one of the main projects of state policy, and especially of church policy, since the acquisition of the first German colonies in 1884.” Missionaries were, in Conrad’s presentation, close supporters of a program of training Africans to raise the value of the German colonies for Germany.<sup>29</sup>

Conrad’s work is correct to link the operations of the Bethel community and Bodelschwingh in western Germany and in Africa. The connection between works of inner mission, efforts to save Christians at home, and foreign mission, efforts to create Christians abroad, have been covered quite well in the British context and his addition of a German case is invaluable.<sup>30</sup> The Bethel Mission Society provides the best example of this connection in Germany, but connections also existed within the Herrnhut Mission of the Moravian Brotherhood and in the work of the North German Mission Society as covered by Werner Ustorf.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, Conrad overgeneralizes

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<sup>28</sup> Conrad, *Globalisation and the Nation*, 102-111.

<sup>29</sup> Conrad, *Globalisation and the Nation*, 77-79.

<sup>30</sup> See Alison Twells, *The Civilising Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792-1850*.

<sup>31</sup> Werner Ustorf, *Mission im Kontext*.

from the particular, and assumes the other missions shared the Bethel Mission's preoccupation with national labor. While the Bethel Mission Society was undoubtedly interested in training Africans to work and was not opposed to working closely with the colonial government, other mission societies and their leaders were less eager to cooperate in an economically motivated program of "educating the Negro to work."

The reasons for this disparity lie in a number of factors. First, the Bethel Mission Society and its leader, Friedrich von Bodelschwingh, were the most politically conservative and nationalist of the German mission societies working in Africa.<sup>32</sup> Second, though many missionary intellectuals spoke of "educating the Negro to work," their meaning deviated greatly from Conrad's description of church policy. Finally, the Bethel Mission Society joined the ranks of the foreign missions in the 1880s, making it one of the so-called "new missions." Missionaries from the Bethel Society viewed themselves as part of a communal project to "elevate" colonized peoples and needed the work of "government schools and mission schools," "planters, administrators, teachers, and missionaries" for success.<sup>33</sup> The other societies operating in German East Africa had much longer histories stretching back into the era before there was a German Empire in Europe let alone one in Africa, and their view of "educating Africans to work" differed drastically as a result.

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<sup>32</sup> Bodelschwingh served on the Prussian Parliament as a conservative member and was also a friend of the anti-Semitic politician Adolf Stoecker.

<sup>33</sup> [Ernst] Johanssen, "'Deutschlands christliche Kulturaufgabe in seinen Kolonien unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Ostafrika," *Beth-El*(1912): 15-17.

Missionaries in societies other than the Bethel Mission developed an antipathy toward education for colonial economic interests early in the colonial period.<sup>34</sup> At the 1887 meeting of the Saxon Mission Conference two of German Protestantism's leading missionaries spoke in a session on educating "savage" peoples to work. The *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* reprinted their discussion shortly thereafter and appended an editorial afterword by Gustav Warneck.<sup>35</sup> The reprinted discussion opened with a presentation by the Berlin Mission Society's new Mission Inspector Alexander Merensky, a response by Theodor Öhler, who was Mission Inspector of the Basel Mission Society, and concluded with the editorial comment by Warneck. Each missionary leader considered what role missionaries should play in the integration of Africans into the colonial economy.

Merensky acknowledged that the health of a settlement colony depended upon the "labor question." Missionaries could not avoid the issue and their mere presence in the colonies demanded they take some role in the "education of the primitives to work."<sup>36</sup> However, Merensky's use of the phrasing "*Erziehung...zur Arbeit* [educate...to work]" was not the same as its use by economic colonialists. To Merensky the duty to educate arose from the need to speed the decline of "heathen traditional belief" and "plant the Holy Ghost" in indigenous people's hearts. Christian missionaries, Merensky wrote, had always kept the moral "improvement" of

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<sup>34</sup> Oliver, *The Missionary Factor in East Africa*, 179-181; Rainer Tetzlaff, "Die Mission im Spannungsfeld zwischen kolonialer Herrschaft und Zivilisierungsanspruch in Deutsch-Ostafrika," in Bade, *Imperialismus und Kolonialmission*, 190.

<sup>35</sup> The lecture also included a comment by Eduard Kratzenstein of the Berlin Mission Society but his remarks were of little substance to this discussion.

<sup>36</sup> Alexander Merensky, "Welches Interesse und welchen Anteil hat die Mission an der Erziehung der Naturvölker zur Arbeit?" *AMZ* 14(1887): 147-148

uncivilized peoples at the forefront of their minds.<sup>37</sup> Protestant mission, Merensky argued, should be certain to choose the “just, successful” path for training missionized peoples to work. Training indigenous peoples to the standards of the colonial state and colonial economic actors too often led to abuses of indigenous laborers, leading to a harmful association by colonized peoples of fruitful vocations and labor with violence and slavery. Mission should “exert itself in its own interest, as well as in the interests of the [missionized] peoples themselves.” Educational programs by the mission societies should be “grounded in the character of Christianity.”<sup>38</sup> Mission training was not for economic imperialist purposes but for Christian purposes focused on the spiritual transformation of indigenous peoples.

Öhler’s comment to Merensky’s lecture condemned training non-Western peoples for plantation work because such education only favored Europeans and helped “the rich become richer” while ignoring the “moral facets” of hard work. Labor for the sake of an employer lacked the moral value of independent toil. Öhler defended Africans’ work ethic against contemporary accusations of laziness. The “Negro” was not by his nature lazy but simply appeared to be lazy as a result of circumstance, Öhler argued. First,

There are amongst us [Europeans] many rich people who do not work very much because they are rich. Rich people believe it is not necessary to work. The Negroes, one can say, are rich people...they have a truly rich countryside which delivers that which they require and more to them in copious abundance with little effort. In this way are Negroes rich people as they have in excess what they require or [what they need] can be easily acquired in abundance.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Merensky, “Welches Interesse und welchen Anteil...,” 149

<sup>38</sup> Merensky, “Welches Interesse und welchen Anteil...,” 157.

<sup>39</sup> Merensky, “Welches Interesse und welchen Anteil...,” 165.



Second, whereas in Europe, Öhler contended, a man works for his wife and child; the “Negro” understands labor differently. It is much more the opposite, the wife and child work for the father and husband. Polygyny just intensified this situation and when the labor system of polygamous households was paired with slavery it created the “opinion that work [was] for wives and slaves and unworthy of a free man.” Finally, the “Negro” appeared to be lazy because he labored for whites. As Öhler put it, why work hard for a master when it only makes the rich richer and leaves the “Negro” poor?<sup>40</sup> Öhler’s comments represented what was for the time a sensitive rendering of African society and presaged the defenses of African culture that would be used in later debates by German missionaries to protect their school language policies.

Warneck’s editorial comment translated the conference discussion into a political position for the mission movement. He reminded his readers that the utilization of indigenous labor had become “the main question on the agenda for colonial political discussion.” The mission movement’s disregard for “training the Negro to work” placed the mission in clear opposition to the abusers of colonial power.<sup>41</sup> Work, and by this Warneck meant, like his colleagues, the hard work and industriousness of an independent individual, could serve to civilize and educate people in “the spiritual ethic” of Christianity. This work ethic could help root out negative cultural qualities like polygamy and slavery by showing African men the

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<sup>40</sup> Merensky, “Welches Interesse und welchen Anteil...,” 166-167.

<sup>41</sup> Merensky, “Welches Interesse und welchen Anteil...,” 171 and 173-174.

“dignity of work.”<sup>42</sup> Warneck and his colleagues agreed that “work” could help spread the gospel and build churches and schools but capitalist labor could not.

The discussion of Merensky and Öhler at the 1887 Saxon Mission Conference and Warneck’s commentary after the fact showed that missionaries did not devalue labor in all its forms. They did, however, oppose using the Christian missions to economically develop the colonies for Europeans. All three shared the view that Africans’ educational, economic, and moral conditions required a concerted strategy for improvement. They also agreed that missionaries should see the “improvement” of African culture as an essentially moral project. As special experts in “native affairs” and defenders of African culture, the missionary leaders pointed out, Germany’s missionaries were not in Africa to promote capitalist development. Their project remained one focused on instilling the social and cultural markers of Christianity. Mission schools were tools for making Christians, not for making a proletariat.<sup>43</sup>

The Protestants’ opinions of “*Erziehung des Negers zur Arbeit*” and the outcomes they foresaw of such training were supported by their rival Catholic missions’ views on education. In an 1897 debate the Catholic mission representative on the *Kolonialrat*, Franz Hespers, agreed that training Africans to the dignity of

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<sup>42</sup> Merensky, “Welches Interesse und welchen Anteil...,” 175 and 179.

<sup>43</sup> There was some dissent against this view though. Carl Gotthilf Büttner, a former Rhenish missionary who had worked in the territories that would become German Southwest Africa spoke in 1885 of the special opportunity that missionary schoolteachers had to help complete the conquest and civilization of indigenous peoples. Büttner was atypical of missionary intellectuals; he traveled with Heinrich Göring, German Southwest Africa’s first imperial administrator, to help organize the new colony and favored close missionary-state collaboration. See C[arl] G[otthilf] Büttner, “Mission und Kolonien,” *AMZ* 12(1885): 97-112; and Gustav Menzel, *C. G. Büttner: Missionar, Sprachforscher und Politiker in der deutschen Kolonialbewegung* (Wuppertal: Verlag der Vereinigten Evangelischen Mission, 1992).

labor would establish the first step to “cultural competence.”<sup>44</sup> Ten years later, Norbert Weber, abbot of the Benedictines of St. Ottilien, told a meeting of colonial enthusiasts in Strasbourg that Africans did not need to be educated to take part in the global economy. In fact, paying Africans wages was not necessary to induce Africans to purchase Western goods. Like Öhler twenty years before, Weber argued that Africans were not lazy rather, so long as the African, Weber wrote, believed the surplus of his labor would be taken from him by “brigands” (whom Weber implied included European merchants and colonial tax collectors), the African would be unwilling to work as the European wished. Colonialism required a government strong enough to protect its subjects from exploitation, and only then could Africans, Weber concluded, learn “work, because work ennobles men” and the newly industrious Africans would then be ready to advance further in their cultural development.<sup>45</sup> In this particular area, the attitudes of missionary personnel to training indigenous peoples to serve as a labor force in capitalist ventures, Catholics and Protestants found common ground. The agreement between bitter confessional opponents on this issue further highlights the peculiarity of the Bethel Mission and its missionaries’ attitudes toward labor.

On the local level in German East Africa, most Protestant German missionaries distrusted any project designed to “educate the Negro to work.” The majority of Protestant missionaries believed Africans gained little from any economically motivated educational program. Merensky, Öhler, and Warneck’s 1887 articulation of the missionary view held true for the entire German colonial period.

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<sup>44</sup> Minutes of the Kolonialrat, IV. Sitzungsperiode 1895/98, Nr. 17 (May 26, 1897), BArch R 1001/1.22, Film Nr. 80484, Bd. 6970, pag. 86.

<sup>45</sup> Norbert Weber, “Kulturtätigkeit im Süden von Deutsch-Ostafrika,” *Gott will es!* 17(7): 195-197.

“Educating the Negro to work” only had secondary value to educating Africans in the basic skills of reading, writing, arithmetic, and a basic knowledge of Protestant tenets. Mission stations did set up vocational instruction but such instruction tended to be in artisanal skills like cabinetmaking. Missionaries feared that involving their schools in the secular goals of the colonial state would pollute Christian mission. Karl Axenfeld neatly demonstrated the entirely different meaning that Protestant missionaries attached to inculcating Africans with the industriousness they supposedly lacked. He also took the opportunity to criticize Catholics: “The Berlin Mission [has] achieved pleasing results in the promotion of native culture and...the education to work...which is much more valuable, in my opinion, than the Catholic attempts [to make] the natives dependent upon plantations.”<sup>46</sup>

Over time missionaries’ resistance to economic colonialists’ goals drew greater and greater attention. Occasionally the colonial government joined with secular colonialists to criticize mission school policies, though the interests of the colonial governors were usually designed to promote the training of clerks, translators, and the occasional craftsmen to support the colonial state.<sup>47</sup> Secular colonialists wished to see Germany’s colonies, and their inhabitants, more directly put to work to serve Germany’s international economic and political interests. As a result, missionaries frequently locked horns with the secular colonial movement; the source of this conflict arose, in large measure, from German Protestant missionaries’ resistance to settlers’, plantation owners’, and concessionary companies’ frequently

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<sup>46</sup> Karl Axenfeld to Paul Otto Hennig, Carl Paul, August Wilhelm Schreiber, Julius Richter, and Diedrich Westermann (April 2, 1910), BMW/bmw1/2095. For Catholic attitudes towards training for the secular colonial movement, see Mirtschink, *Zur Rolle christlicher Mission in kolonialen Gesellschaften*, 43 and 78-79.

<sup>47</sup> See chapter two of this dissertation.

violent efforts to maximize their usage of labor. Missionaries regularly stood with colonized Africans against abuses by employers and the colonial state and criticized the “immoral” behavior of colonial administrators.<sup>48</sup> By the twentieth century, and particularly during the Dernburg colonial administration, missionaries and the colonial state had mostly worked out a collaborative arrangement. The colonial state provided support to mission schools because of the work schools did training advanced students in German. On the other hand, the secular colonial movement had increasingly adopted the white settlers in Germany’s colonies as the core of Germany’s overseas future and simultaneously resolved that missionaries needed to be brought to heel.

The intensification of the conflict during the first decade of the twentieth century led Julius Richter to formulate a new defense of mission schools. He acknowledged the shared interests of the missions and the colonial administration in schools. He wrote that in circumstances like education policy, where missionaries and administrators had the same goals, both sides should be governed by the slogan “march separately and attack in unison.” As Richter pointed out, both the government and the missions sought to improve the cultural level of the Africans but that did not mean either the religious or administrative forces should adopt any agenda but their own. Schools were necessary to the colonial state because the indigenous peoples of Germany’s colonies needed to be “elevated” in their cultural achievements before they could purchase German goods or produce products for Germany in large

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<sup>48</sup> Loth, *Zwischen Gott und Kattun*; (Niesel, “Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914,” 120; Nils Ole Oermann, “‘Hochverehrter Herr Gouverneur’ – Zum Verhältnis von Mission und deutschen Kolonialstaat im Zeitalter des Imperialismus,” in Bogner, Holtwick, and Tyrell, *Weltmission und religiöse Organisationen*, 610.

quantities.<sup>49</sup> And because Africans were not yet ready and required basic instruction, Richter argued, missionaries should be left to control their own schools and do the fundamental work of civilizing the Africans. This meant the care and development of African religious communities and churches built around Africans' "natural" communities and languages. The needs of the state could be met by providing students with "basic German instruction" in upper classes.<sup>50</sup>

Over time, and as the economic situation of Germany's Protestant mission societies grew more dire,<sup>51</sup> government subsidies grew increasingly essential to missionary schools. Warneck wrote in his protest over the intrusive law against mission schools proposed in 1904, "Certainly the school is an area in which the colonial government may have a word; so long as [colonial state] supports [the schools] financially." The aging missiologist went on to argue that the governors' power to interfere in curriculum should be limited, "especially in the content of religious instruction."<sup>52</sup> This admission of state power came hard to mission scholars. They recognized that surrendering power over the schools carried with it the threat of surrendering control over their most significant contact with the peoples the missionaries hoped to evangelize. The *Ausschuß* re-presented its position with regards to the relationship between mission schools and the colonial administration and its assertion of the necessity of indigenous language instruction to the new Colonial Secretary Dernburg in the summer of 1907. Again the *Ausschuß* argued for the primacy of Christian evangelization and the obligatory use of indigenous languages in

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<sup>49</sup> Richter, "Mission und Kolonialpolitik," 46 and 52.

<sup>50</sup> Richter, "Mission und Kolonialpolitik," 53.

<sup>51</sup> See chapter four of this dissertation.

<sup>52</sup> Warneck, "Der deutsche Kolonialbund," 303. See also Norris, *Die Umerziehung des Afrikaners*, 81.

instruction. However, this time the *Ausschuß* acknowledged the interest of the state in German-language courses. The association of mission leaders informed Dernburg of their “preparedness to implement German instruction in [their] schools” following elementary instruction of students in “local languages.”<sup>53</sup> In exchange the *Ausschuß* expected the colonial department to recognize the independence of missionary activities and resist the urge to interfere in mission schools’ curricula.

Though the internationalist and anti-economic colonialist vision of mission schools remained hegemonic amongst German Protestant missionaries up to the First World War, the area of school education did not avoid the creeping tide of nationalist feeling that had begun to appear amongst missionary leaders after 1900. Indicative of the growth of nationalist urges and colonial entanglements was the effort, led by the North German Mission Society and its nationalist leader August Wilhelm Schreiber, for the “publication of a German reader for the Protestant mission schools in the German colonies.” The proposal originated in October of 1908 with a letter sent to the leaders of German mission societies active in Germany’s colonies.

The North German Mission Society argued that the production of such a text would “emphasize the mutuality” of Germany’s colonial peoples. This mutuality, created by “German conquest, [the] development of commerce and trade, membership in the German Empire, and...the mission work of German Protestant missionaries,” justified a German-language reader to help strengthen German culture in the colonies. Remarkably, this reader would be produced with no “cooperation with members of the government and Catholic missions.”<sup>54</sup> The North German

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<sup>53</sup> Barch R 1001/8.25, Film Nr. 79397, Bd. 996, S. 102-121.

<sup>54</sup> North German Mission Society to Berlin Mission Society (October 24, 1908), BMW/bmw1/901.

Mission's proposal was endorsed by the other mission societies and Schreiber ordered the missionary Diedrich Westermann to plan the book along with a team that included Karl Axenfeld, Carl Meinhof, and Julius Richter, all of whom supported a nationalization of the German Protestant mission movement.<sup>55</sup> Together they proposed a text that would teach students to "understand and treasure" their "environs" and gain understanding for the conditions in other German colonies so that they could develop feelings of fellow membership in the German Empire with other colonized peoples. Children would be inaugurated into the "culture and learning" of Europe and "especially Germany," naturally with an "accentuation" of religious life; and, finally, the book should show "in what way and with what success European culture and learning had been transplanted to the colonies." The last should be done with examples from "real life." Westermann and his commission advised, "The difference between the old and the new period [should] be emphatically presented to the students. The blessings of the mission, government, trade and economic undertakings are overall on the rise...The dark pages of the present time need not be silenced, but rather minimized as the [understandable] dangers of so sudden and so energetic" an introduction of "civilizing" influences.<sup>56</sup> The German mission societies' textbook was to be a grand display of the community of German Protestantism that was emerging in the German Empire.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> North German Mission Society to Berlin Mission Society (December 29, 1908), BMW/bmw1/901.

<sup>56</sup> Diedrich Westermann to Berlin Mission Society (October 1909), BMW/bmw1/901.

<sup>57</sup> For more on the importance of textbooks in the history of mission education see, Paul Jandl, "Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Schriftsprache für die Einheimischen – Überlegungen zur Funktion und Gestaltung kolonialen und aktueller Schulbücher in Westafrika," in Wagner, *Kolonien und Missionen*, 393-399.



Little is heard of this project after 1909. Probably because the book's chief architect, Diedrich Westermann, soon found other work. An expert in the Ewe language and student of Carl Meinhof, Westermann joined the Seminar for Oriental Languages in Berlin as an instructor in Ewe and in 1909 became a professor of the seminar. These two positions marked his full membership in the growing academic establishment around African languages and anthropology. He seems thus to have shifted to more academic projects. The other notable members of his commission, Axenfeld and Richter, both continued to gain prominence in the German Protestant mission movement and likely lost interest in the project as their involvement in leading the movement expanded. But, nonetheless, the German-language textbook project offers an interesting point of emphasis for the exceptional unity of spirit which Germany's mission societies had achieved by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. It also shows the changing view of empire that the new generation of missionaries had. Westermann, Richter, and Axenfeld were all in their late thirties and forties in 1908 and all had a very different experience of the relationship between mission work and colonialism than their predecessors like Warneck and Zahn. The book which they proposed would have attempted to create a transnational German imperial culture of Christian subjects.

Nationalist missionaries like Westermann, Richter, and Axenfeld represented the potential for a radically different mission school policy. But they did not successfully change Germany's Protestant missionaries' commitment to an internationalist educational policy. Missionaries defended their autonomy in curricular planning and especially on decisions of instructional language.

Missionaries did wish to inculcate Africans with a Protestant vision of industriousness, a quality Africans supposedly lacked, but for missionaries “training to work” was directed towards individual productivity and not wage-labor.<sup>58</sup> Part of the defense that missionaries’ made of their schools included the development of a rhetoric that defended the cultural worth of indigenous, in particular African, ways of life. By defending the cultures of missionized peoples, missionaries took their internationalist worldview to its logical extent – arguing that Africans did not necessarily need to be transformed completely to become full Christians.

### *Kultur*

Germany’s Protestant missionaries had by 1900 embraced the practical theological principle of the *Volkskirche*.<sup>59</sup> The *Volkskirche* concept emerged as both the natural conclusion of Protestant missionary theology in Germany and as a practical solution to the challenges of managing and financing the growing communities of indigenous Christians that began to form around mission stations by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>60</sup> It meant, simply, that each identifiable “*Volk*,” a categorization process impeded from the beginning by colonialists’ flawed understandings of indigenous social organization, would organize itself into its own

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<sup>58</sup> Altena, “*Ein Häuflein Christen mitten in der Heidenwelt des dunklen Erdteils*”, 416.

<sup>59</sup> This term was also used by conservative Christian populists like Adolf Stoecker and Reinhold Mumm to refer to an idealized union of church and people in contemporary Germany as well. See Gangolf Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus und Politik*, 301; and Thomas Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch*, 90-95, 108.

<sup>60</sup> Friedrich Fabri, ever outside the missionary majority, believed the *Volkskirche* concept to be mistaken and argued against it during his time as a leader of the Rhenish Mission Society. See Gerhard Beiser, “Mission and Colonialism in Friedrich Fabri’s (1824-1891) Thinking,” in Christensen and Hutchison, *Missionary Ideologies*, 90.

church, like the Danes, Frisians, Saxons, Prussians, Dutch, and others peoples had in Europe.

On the one hand, missionaries expected that Christian communities built around the Protestant tenets would govern themselves, naturally with continuing advice and counsel from the missionaries, but formally independent. On the other hand, missionaries also wished to shift the economic burden of running these churches on to indigenous congregations. If pastors, teachers, and deacons could be found amongst the local Christian communities, then white missionaries could move to new areas and evangelize new groups of heathens.<sup>61</sup> In Warneck's view the transformation of a mission field into a *Volkskirche* was the ultimate purpose of all mission decisions and education. The "civilizing" project was only relevant when it meant the eradication of "superstitions" and "sins" like slavery, polygamy, sorcery, blood feuds, ordeal by poison, or the consultation of oracles.<sup>62</sup> He and other *Missionswissenschaftler* encouraged missionaries to work to develop the "völkisch" identities of their congregants so that those new Christians could become the core of a new "national" faith. In practice this meant the identification and cultivation of an indigenous "*Volkssprache*" or national language, cultivation of "natural" communal forms within the missionized community, the establishment of schools to reach the youth of the community, and enticements to keep Christians concentrated in communities – in sum, this was a campaign of "ethnicization" but not a concerted campaign of Europeanization. Schools were to help develop certain "modern" skills

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<sup>61</sup> Arthur J. Knoll, *Togo under Imperial Germany, 1884-1914: A Case Study in Colonial Rule* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), 98-99; and Rainer Tetzlaff, "Die Mission im Spannungsfeld zwischen kolonialer Herrschaft und Zivilisierungsanspruch in Deutsch-Ostafrika," in Bade, *Imperialismus und Kolonialmission*, 195.

<sup>62</sup> Niesel, "Kolonialverwaltung und Missionen in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1890-1914," 237.

needed to support a future independent church and also mediate between Christian ethics and European scientific and technological achievements but strive to avoid wholesale transformations of cultural practices.<sup>63</sup> As discussed in Chapter Two, missionaries wished to nurture the development of an African class of independent farmers that would form the social foundation for a healthy and vital *Volkskirche*.<sup>64</sup> This methodology had mixed results, but it did represent strong evidence of missionaries' belief in a universal Christianity and an educational program geared toward indigenizing Christianity and a denial of mission education as a tool for creating a pliant capitalist labor supply.<sup>65</sup>

At the same time Germans developed the theology of the *Volkskirche*, Protestants in Britain and America were in the midst of a traumatic crisis of the faith. According to Colin Kidd this crisis included challenges to the Bible's explanation of human origins posed by the expanding knowledge of human difference produced during the imperial era. He depicts this period as one in which monogenetic American and British theologians strove to interpret scripture so that it resisted a developing polygenetic description of human origins from the social sciences.<sup>66</sup> Kidd's work

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<sup>63</sup> Eggert, "The School Policy of the German Protestant Missions in Tanzania before the First World War," 202; Gensichen, "German Protestant Missions," 186-188; and Johannes Christian Hoekendijk, *Kirche und Volk in der deutschen Wissenschaft*, 94; and Klaus Fiedler, *Christianity and African Culture: Conservative German Protestant Missionaries in Tanzania, 1900-1940* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 13-22.

<sup>64</sup> There is some evidence that it was not only the Germans who wished to create free-holding agriculturalists. Canadian missionaries working with the indigenous peoples of the Canadian Great Plains shared the ideal of an independent yeomanry developing as a result of their labors. See Jamie S. Scott, "Cultivating Christians in Colonial Canadian Missions," in *Canadian Missionaries, Indigenous Peoples: Representing Religion at Home and Abroad*, ed. Jamie S. Scott and Alvyn Austen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 21-45.

<sup>65</sup> Wolfgang Gabbert, "Phasen und Grundprobleme protestantischer Mission im kolonialen Afrika – die Brüdergemeine bei den Nyakyusa in Tansania," in Bogner, Holtwick, and Tyrell, *Weltmission und religiöse Organisationen*, 518; and Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika 1891-1941*, 20.

<sup>66</sup> Colin Kidd, *The Forging of Races: Race and Scripture in the Protestant Atlantic World, 1600-2000* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 122 and 129.

does not consider the German case, but German missionaries were as much concerned with understanding human difference as Anglo-Saxon theologians. In the main, German missionaries' concluded that all human beings shared in the essential human ability to make and sustain a culture.

The German conception of *Kultur* differed from British missionaries' ideas about African societies and the process of acculturation. The German missionaries, like the British, were certainly an important force for the "colonization of consciousness," as Jean and John L. Comaroff described missionaries' impact upon the Tswana.<sup>67</sup> German Protestant missionaries may have imagined that they could eradicate "superstition" and replace it with Christianity, making little alteration to indigenous culture; but this prospect is clearly impossible. Missionaries' choices about which cultural practices entailed "superstition" and which cultural practices were appropriate representations of indigenous difference and values deeply involved missionaries in the process of colonization that included the contested and collaborative creation of African ethnicities and tribes.<sup>68</sup> The embrace by missionaries of African "customary communities" had important implications for African peoples.<sup>69</sup> British missionaries embraced their role in transforming African societies, with an unambiguous adoption of the civilizing project: the creation of African individuals in contrast to Africans' pre-colonial communal identities;

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<sup>67</sup> Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991-1997).

<sup>68</sup> In fact, Edward Graham Norris has argued that the educational project of missionaries was explicitly one of "deculturation." Norris's assessment places the missions too completely under the sway of other colonial interests, which were far less important to how missionaries formulated their views of Africans and education than Norris suggests. Norris, *Die Umerziehung des Afrikaners*, 86-89.

<sup>69</sup> Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa," 247-249. On the "tribalization" of Tanzania see Jan-Georg Deutsch, "Vom Bezirksamtman zum Mehrparteiensystem – Transformationen politischer Herrschaft im kolonialen und nachkolonialen Tanzania," in van der Heyden and von Oppen, *Tanzania*, 24.

instilling some basic affiliation among Africans with European culture through the English language, literacy, and Christianity; and integration of Africans into the capitalist marketplace as a laborer and consumer. British missionaries also sought to separate the African Christian from his non-Christian community. This British mission policy dominated at precisely the time German mission societies were embracing the creation of the *Volkskirche* which sought to create a core of Christians amongst non-Christians to encourage the spread of the faith by example.<sup>70</sup> Though German missionaries shared in the colonializing effects of European Christianity, their interest in the economic colonial project was weak. Instead, German missionaries created a practical theology of Christian evangelization that accommodated cultural difference.

German Protestant missionaries' substantiated their defense of autonomous mission schools with arguments that showed indigenous peoples had cultural value for themselves but also for German society. Missionaries argued that Africans were educable and, if superstition could be eradicated through good Christian teachings, capable of the same spiritual achievements as Europeans.<sup>71</sup> Missionaries' discussions about Africans' educability turned on the term *Kultur*. Translated simply *Kultur* means "culture," but in the missionaries' lexicon it came to represent culture, technologies, social mores, and every marker of "civilization." What differed about missionaries' use of the term was that Africans were not automatically judged to lack *Kultur*.<sup>72</sup> A further resonance of this term in German thought was the juxtaposition

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<sup>70</sup> Oliver, *The Missionary Factor in East Africa*, 173; and Summers, *From Civilization to Segregation*, 75 and 84.

<sup>71</sup> Norris, *Die Umerziehung des Afrikaners*, 84.

<sup>72</sup> Fiedler, *Christianity and African Culture*, 2-4.

presented by many in Germany of German “*Kultur*” and French or English “*Zivilisation* (Civilization).” In Germany *Kultur* was spiritually vital and alive, while *Zivilisation* lacked humanity. Missionaries could not have been unaware of the semantic power of rejecting *Zivilisation* and embracing *Kultur* for African communities. What follows will discuss German Protestant missionaries’ views on the issue of African cultural achievement and potential. It will then contextualize missionaries’ ideas within the anthropological social sciences. To the missionary intellectual, humanity was a diverse collection of cultures, each in need of Christian salvation but not necessarily in need of Europeanization.<sup>73</sup>

We must, of course, take this presentation of German Protestant missionaries as culturally enlightened vis-à-vis their contemporary European colonialists with a grain of salt. No matter what missionaries’ intentions, the extension of Western Christian culture through mission education could not help but facilitate the integration of African cultures into the global economy.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, missionaries’ authoritative descriptions of “authentic” indigenous cultures were themselves political declarations of authority in a contested German colonial space where, as George Steinmetz has shown, ethnographic knowledge translated directly into authority.<sup>75</sup> With their work to define indigenous cultures and “*Völker*” missionaries participated in a process that mirrored efforts by colonial administrators and scholars to define African traditions, customs, and politics – a process that, in the end, served to

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<sup>73</sup> Kasdorf, *Gustav Warnecks missiologisches Erbe*, 40-41.

<sup>74</sup> Christel Adick, “Grundstruktur und Organisation von Missionsschulen in den Etappen der Expansion des modernen Weltsystems,” in Bogner, Holtwick, and Tyrell, *Weltmission und religiöse Organisationen*, 459-482.

<sup>75</sup> Steinmetz, *The Devil’s Handwriting*, 45-55. See also Juhani Koponen, “Knowledge, Power and History,” 118-135.

essentialize indigenous cultures based upon an imagined past fashioned by colonizers and colonized alike.<sup>76</sup> On the other hand, contests between missionaries and Africans of all social strata who saw Christianity as a tool for political and social advantage constituted the fundamental genetic material of mission Christianity. In these negotiations Christian missionaries' understandings of African Christianity stretched and morphed as an outcome of missionary and African behavior.<sup>77</sup>

The key argument made by missionary leaders was that Africa was fertile ground for the spread of Western cultural values, for Christianity. Africans could learn but the process demanded patience and the application of the correct methods. The missionaries' approach to African cultures, undeniably paternalistic, reflected a surprising level of cultural understanding. Though from a twenty-first-century perspective we can recognize that the goal of replacing "native superstition" with the "truth of Christianity" denied any true possibility of a non-intrusive cultural exchange, it is remarkable how seriously the missionaries cautioned themselves and their readers to avoid unnecessarily interfering with African culture. As Warneck put it, "Christianity comes to the peoples as a foreign religion, and this foreign religion can only become indigenous to [these peoples]...if they [can] grasp it in their mother tongue."<sup>78</sup>

While Warneck's ideas appeared in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* for an educated readership, other examples of missionary views about *Kultur* appeared in

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<sup>76</sup> For an example of this process see Martin Chanock, *Law, Custom and Social Order: The Colonial Experience in Malawi and Zambia* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>77</sup> Altena, "Ein Häuflein Christen mitten in der Heidenwelt des dunklen Erdteils", 413-414; Landau, *The Realm of the Word*, xvii and 30-52; Price, *Making Empire*, 8; and Robert, introduction to *Converting Colonialism*, 4-5.

<sup>78</sup> Warneck, "Die Bedeutung der Muttersprache," 1-2.



the publications of individual mission societies. For example, embedded within a fairly typical piece of reportage about the Herrnhut mission station on Lake Nyasa in German East Africa missionary Theodor Bechler demolished the idea that prior to European contact the Konde of Nyasa lacked any culture whatsoever. If their skills as weavers and ironworkers were not sufficient he could “speak of their huts, astoundingly clean and with four-cornered or round construction; of farming and cattle-raising; of boat- and bridge-building, of drums and pipes, of foodways [Kochkunst] and medicines....” There was more than enough evidence of culture. Since the arrival of the Moravian Church, the culture of the Konde, according to Bechler, had taken on a more “refined character.” The missionaries had introduced a written form of the local dialects and begun training teachers and catechists to work in their mission and form the core of a future, independent Konde church. In Bechler’s presentation *Kultur* was an important element of the missionary project; he wrote that, “Truly, mission is a culture-bearer of the first echelon! Work and cultured behavior [Gesittung], education and ultimate fortune are brought to those who not only have an equal right to *Kultur* as the white race, but also show themselves to be just as worthy.”<sup>79</sup> Richter agreed that mission “[tried] to bridge the abyss between our cultural affluence and the [Africans’] lack of culture [Unkultur].”<sup>80</sup> The *Kultur* of an African community could be improved by contact with Europeans and refined by missionaries’ efforts to build a *Volkskirche*.

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<sup>79</sup> Th[eodor] Bechler, “Einzug europäischer Kultur am Nyassa,” *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin, Neue Folge* 46(1904): 409-410 and 420-422.

<sup>80</sup> Julius Richter, “Die Bedeutung der Mission für unsere Kolonien,” *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin, Neue Folge* 40(1898): 322

Carl Buchner, a leader of the Moravians, defended Africans against claims of cultural decline in an April 1904 lecture to the Brandenburg Mission Conference, one of a number of regional conventions of German mission societies. According to Buchner, the evidence of the recent past showed that unlike other “uncivilized” peoples like the Eskimos and the peoples of New Guinea who had declined after contact with whites and Europe’s “celebrated and notorious” culture, peoples of African descent had prospered. He claimed that where the “influence of civilization” had ended civil strife and slave raids, peoples of African descent flourished with even greater success than peoples of European descent.<sup>81</sup> The great success of colonized Africans meant they had boundless capacity for improving their cultural achievements. His chief evidence: the condition of African Americans. He cited W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folks*, favorably and quoted at length a passage in which Du Bois laid out the technical, economic, and cultural accomplishments of African Americans. Buchner commented about these accomplishments that they “prove[d] nothing less than that the black race in America in every area of culture, science, and technic [has begun] to distinguish itself” and these successes undermined the accepted belief in the “spiritual inferiority of the Negro.”<sup>82</sup>

The apparent positive response of African peoples to “civilization” was a result of education, Buchner continued. Western civilization, in general, had failed to make an “earnest effort through education” to develop African people’s “psychic” and “intellectual” strengths. Missions had addressed some of this shortfall and, according to Buchner, “Wherever the formation and development of a mission

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<sup>81</sup> C[arl] Buchner, “Die schwarze Rasse und ihre Zukunft,” *AMZ* 31(1904): 393-394.

<sup>82</sup> Buchner, “Die schwarze Rasse und ihre Zukunft,” *AMZ* 31 (1904), 395-396.

station” had been permitted, one “[saw] how the primitive people [*Naturkinder*] first in garments, then in their housing, then in conventional labor, [and] gradually in language and spiritual views, as well, emulate[d] Whites.” Buchner’s description seems to violate the principle of leaving African cultures as untainted by “civilization” as possible, and this reflects the diversity of mission thought on the specifics of Africans’ potential. However, Buchner’s main point of the promise in Africans remains representative of the general position of missionaries in Germany with respect to African communities. With the good example of Christian missionaries and the training that missionaries offered to African peoples, Buchner argued, the African could be converted into a good Christian global citizen.<sup>83</sup>

Other leaders of the Protestant mission movement argued for the educative capacity of Africans. Alexander Merensky’s pamphlet, *Deutschlands Pflicht gegenüber den Heiden und dem Heidentum in seinen Kolonien* (Germany’s Responsibility with Respect to the Heathens and Heathendom in her Colonies), argued forcefully that the solution to the “native question,” as in “what to do about the natives,” lay in improving the material and spiritual conditions of indigenous peoples with effective and moral policies. Merensky’s pamphlet was intended for a broad audience and it conveyed the German missionaries’ viewpoint of African societies. He called for Germany’s colonial policies to be defined and determined “by the fact that natives are men [*Menschen*].” Non-Western peoples were in need of education because “these so-called primitive peoples [*Naturvölker*] [were] nothing other than members of a great human family who have lagged behind in their

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<sup>83</sup> Buchner, “Die schwarze Rasse und ihre Zukunft,” *AMZ* 31 (1904), 399-405.

development.”<sup>84</sup> He wrote that it was the responsibility of Germany to see to the moral improvement of its subject peoples but “[t]heir language, customs, morals, and legal views must be treated with care.” Only those practices which he called “pagan atrocities” could be forbidden.<sup>85</sup> Germans had the obligation to advance the material, moral, and spiritual capacity of their colonized people.

The “Mission Pastor [*Missionsprediger*]” H. Kurz produced a remarkable discussion of the meaning of *Kultur* in the Basel Mission Society’s journal in 1906. He differentiated *Kultur* carefully from “Mission.” In fact, he presented his work as a choice; “Mission or *Kultur*?” *Kultur* as a concept had two components; the subjective: “the labor, care, and formation of our spiritual constructions and physical capabilities”; and the objective: “the contest with the environment which surrounds us, its commodities and power, in order that we might make them useful.”<sup>86</sup> Kurz’s use of the term *Kultur* seems better understood as “civilization” and his skepticism of the benefits of *Kultur* are better understood as a rejection of the “civilizing” mission. Like Bechler, Kurz argued no “cultureless people” existed; differences in material culture mainly grew from environmental differences. For example, peoples of the equatorial regions had little use for warm clothing or housing and so they had not developed an extensive sartorial or architectural heritage. Though there were no “cultureless” peoples, Kurz did identify “culture-poor” peoples. The great difference between those peoples and “culture-rich” peoples (i.e. Europeans) grew out of the idea of “work which leads to the concept of property, and out of heterogeneity of the

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<sup>84</sup> Merensky, *Deutschlands Pflicht*, 10.

<sup>85</sup> Merensky offers *suttee*, the murder of twins, the exile of the elderly, and the drinking of poison as an ordeal as examples. See Merensky, *Deutschlands Pflicht*, 15.

<sup>86</sup> H. Kurz, “Mission oder Kultur,” *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin, Neue Folge* 48(1906): 317.

same trade and commerce.”<sup>87</sup> But clearly the concept of property could be learned, so no culture was excluded from the ranks of “culture-rich” peoples.

To Kurz *Kultur* represented a dangerous threat to missionaries. The peoples who were rich in *Kultur* were driven by their nature to conquer and their presence seemed to bring benefits – conquest brought “spiritual and material culture in its wake.”<sup>88</sup> So far, Kurz would concede, *Kultur* sounded a suitable partner for mission. After all, whites stood “in scientific-intellectual, esthetic-cultural and practical-industrial activities” above all other peoples. And yet, these “*Kulturmensch*” – the bearers of *Kultur* – frequently lacked religious elevation. Missionaries had to maintain a skeptical stance when it came to the “advancements” of European culture, the material benefits of colonialism were not reliable partners for the evangelist. Mission should focus on a clear moral uplift, not the promotion of European *Kultur*.<sup>89</sup>

By the first decade of the twentieth century Germany’s Protestant mission movement had developed a theology and anthropology that confirmed African communities as culturally relevant. Theodor Öhler, the head of the Basel Mission, summed up this view in the Basel Mission’s *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* in 1908. His article appeared during the height of efforts by the secular colonialists to force a change in missionaries’ pedagogical practices. Öhler reminded readers that there were no “culture-less” people, only those whose culture was “undeveloped,”

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<sup>87</sup> Kurz, “Mission oder Kultur,” 317-318. For more on cultural relativism in missionary thought see A[ibert] Hauck, *Evangelische Mission und deutsches Christentum*, Flugschriften der Deutschen Evangelischen Missions-Hilfe 4, (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1916); P[aul] O[tto] Hennig, “Die Erziehung des Afrikaners,” *Jahrbuch der sächsischen Missionskonferenz* 23(1912): 67-79; and “Die Stellung der evangelischen Mission in Afrika zur Volkssitte,” *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Missionsblatt* 46(1893): 291-293.

<sup>88</sup> Kurz, “Mission oder Kultur,” 320.

<sup>89</sup> Kurz, “Mission oder Kultur,” 330-331.

who were nonetheless “capable of development.”<sup>90</sup> The key to encouraging this development was education. Schools provided valuable literacy that helped deliver to “primitive” peoples a greater understanding of the “civilized” world. He wrote, “Schools destroy superstition with their lessons in history, geography, natural science [and] contribute to the destruction of heathendom.” These lessons in the cultural products of Western peoples showed the entangled vines of mission and *Kultur*; to Öhler “Nothing shows us more convincingly the close and indivisible connection between mission and cultural work than the area of mission schools.”<sup>91</sup> Schools could help eliminate superstition and develop the cultural life of non-Western peoples around the world.

Öhler acknowledged the impossibility of separating mission from *Kultur* but he did not surrender the independence of mission from political pressure. He recounted contemporary opinions that missions should act as “cultural pioneers,” promote the development of the colonies for the sake of the Fatherland, “train the Negro to work,” enrich scientific knowledge, and, “in the interests of the ruling nation[,] spread the language.” But with this aspect of *Kultur*, Öhler contended, mission had nothing in common. If mission followed these calls then it became faithless toward its true calling. In his opinion, “Mission [was] not in service of *Kultur*, but of the Kingdom of God” and should contribute to the spread of *Kultur* only for the good of bringing the world’s peoples to Christianity.<sup>92</sup> Öhler’s article expressed in another way the general principle that missionaries should remain aloof

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<sup>90</sup> [Theodor] Öhler, “Mission und Kultur,” *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin, Neue Folge* 50(1908): 49-50.

<sup>91</sup> Öhler, “Mission und Kultur,” 54.

<sup>92</sup> Öhler, “Mission und Kultur,” 55.

from the contemporary project of “civilizing” the African, since to many this project of “civilizing” meant subjugating Africans to European culture.

Missionaries’ ideas about *Kultur* and its presence or absence amongst Africans were not exclusively missionary ideas. *Missionswissenschaftler* regularly sought to learn from and even participate in anthropological discussions during this period. So, it is no surprise that their ideas had much in common with the ideas of contemporary anthropologists. Missionaries seemed to draw the line in their ethnological researches at the collection of body parts, however. Eugen Fischer solicited body parts from National Socialist concentration camps in much the same way that his predecessor Felix Luschan did from his contacts in the colonial administration and military.<sup>93</sup> This view seems to have transmuted into the racist, eugenicist vision of Eugen Fischer and other anthropologists who collaborated with the National Socialist regime in the 1930s and -40s. Unlike anthropologists in France, Great Britain, and the United States, German anthropologists of the middle and late decades of the nineteenth century were “liberal champions of cultural pluralism.”<sup>94</sup> In general, like missionaries, German anthropologists’ encounters with non-Western peoples were informed by factors other than politics. To the ethnologists of Germany the interaction with colonized peoples was motivated by cultural ideology. In fact,

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<sup>93</sup> Andrew Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 243.

<sup>94</sup> H. Glenn Penny and Matti Bunzl, introduction to *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire*, ed. H. Glenn Penny and Matti Bunzl (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), 2. On the trajectory of British anthropology from “xenophobia to tolerance” see Henrika Kuklick, *The Savage Within: The Social History of British Anthropology, 1885-1945* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991) and George W. Stocking, Jr., *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: The Free Press, 1987). On the French and American cases see Henrika Kuklick, ed., *A New History of Anthropology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008); and for the German historical origins of American anthropology see Matti Bunzl, “Franz Boas and the Humboldtian Tradition: From *Volksgeist* and *Nationalcharakter* to an Anthropological Concept of Culture” in *Volksgeist as Method and Ethic: Essays on Boasian Ethnography and the German Anthropological Tradition* ed. George W. Stocking, Jr., *History of Anthropology*, vol. 8 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 17-78.

German concern with *Kultur* and preserving indigenous peoples was set against the political and colonial designs of the other colonial powers in anthropologists' self-understanding.<sup>95</sup>

The shift among anthropologists to a nationalist agenda of service to the state around 1914 provides a useful comparison with Protestant missionaries' own ideological trajectory. While there is no evidence that missionaries' view of *Kultur* and race changed at the same moments and with the same results as anthropologists' views, similar forces explain the gradual shift in missionaries' views of nationalism and internationalism. One source of the change may have been generational. In missiology the accession of Karl Axenfeld and Julius Richter following the deaths of stalwart internationalists like Gustav Warneck and Franz Michael Zahn coincided with the shift to nationalist ideology in the mission movement.<sup>96</sup> Axenfeld and Richter had come of age in a period when nationalism and colonial ambitions suffused the political culture of the German Empire.<sup>97</sup> Like their anthropologist contemporaries, German Protestant missionaries' relationship to the secular state held the seeds of the movement's gradual adoption of a particularist vision of missionary activity. The historical link between Christian evangelism and European civilization meant that whoever could claim to be the "bearer of civilization" held the upper hand.

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<sup>95</sup> Harry Liebersohn, "Coming of Age in the Pacific: German Ethnography from Chamisso to Krämer" in Penny and Bunzl, *Worldly Provincialism*, 31-46.

<sup>96</sup> The literature suggests the generational differences as a source for the changing view of *Kultur* and race over the history of the *Kaierreich*. See Andrew D. Evans, *Anthropology at War: World War I and the Science of Race in Germany* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2010). See a similar effect amongst archaeologists working in the Ottoman Empire before World War I in Suzanne Marchand, "Orientalism as *Kulturpolitik*" in Stocking, *Volksgeist as Method and Ethic*, 323.

<sup>97</sup> H. Glenn Penny, "Bastian's Museum: On the Limits of Empiricism and the Transformation of German Ethnology" in Penny and Bunzl, *Worldly Provincialism*, 109. See also Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany*; and Suzanne Marchand, "Orientalism as *Kulturpolitik*: German Archaeology and Cultural Imperialism in Asia Minor" in Stocking, *Volksgeist as Method and Ethic*, 298-300.



Protestantism's close link with the state in Prussia and the German Empire meant that missionaries who rose to prominence after 1880 frequently held more favorable views of German nationalism and the German imperial state. At the same time they viewed the priorities of the secular colonial movement with more sympathy than their predecessors. Furthermore, the association of German mission work with the German Empire increased the likelihood that German Protestant missionaries would adopt a nationalist ideology of Christian mission. Finally, the crucible of the First World War affected German anthropological thought with much the same intensity that it did other fields, including *Missionswissenschaft*. In the case of missionaries, the First World War helped verify nationalist missionaries' depiction of a world divided into competing nations.<sup>98</sup>

During the late nineteenth century, missionaries argued that Africans possessed the facility to join the cultured peoples of the earth. This view not only validated their work as Christian missionaries seeking converts, it also argued for the value of missionaries' educational and social welfare activities. Missionaries likely held these beliefs for much of the nineteenth century but felt little need to justify themselves before 1900. The intensification of national feeling in Germany after 1900, the growing challenges to missionary capabilities in the colonies, and direct attempts by secular colonialists to force a change in missionary school language policy caused missionary intellectuals to produce defenses of their work. Their arguments for the cultural potential and value of indigenous peoples served to

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<sup>98</sup> Evans, *Anthropology at War*, 8-11. Sean McMeekin details similar efforts by German Orientalists during World War I in the Ottoman, Persian, and Central Asian territories. See Sean McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express: The Ottoman Empire and Germany's Bid for World Power* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010). Also see chapter six of this dissertation.

substantiate missionaries' claims for the superiority and moral value of their educational activities. Missionized peoples' cultural value supplied missionaries with justifications for maintaining indigenous language instruction and reasserted missionary internationalism. German mission scholars justified their activities as legitimated by the "truth" of human cultural equality. Missionaries deployed their pluralistic vision of humanity as a defense of indigenous language instruction.

### **Linguistic Conflict**

For missionaries, the language of instruction in their schools represented the very core of missionary activities. Schools' central place in missionaries' work meant that missionaries were sensitive to any perceived infringement upon their autonomy in education. The episode during the first year of the Herero-Nama War in which secular colonialists sought to place missionaries under the control of colonial governors, was only the most direct attack by the Colonial Society and other secular groups. The Colonial Society situated itself politically with the many nationalist groups extant in German civil society from the 1880s up to and beyond World War I. Like the Navy League it had a more moderate nationalist tone than groups like the Pan-German League but it remained firmly ensconced in the milieu of German popular nationalism.

To burnish its nationalist credentials, promote the economic development of Germany's colonies by large corporations, and support the interests of white settlers in the German colonies, the Colonial Society, with the support of other nationalist,

economic colonialist, and pro-settler organizations, made sporadic efforts starting in the 1890s to force mission schools to adopt German as their primary language of instruction. As has already been discussed, German missionaries considered instruction in indigenous languages essential to effective mission practice. Missionaries' resistance to German-language instruction drew accusations of disloyalty and "un-patriotic-ness" from the Colonial Society and its allies. To missionaries the question of language was one of existential import. The vernacular was the key to Christian evangelization because only through an "indigenization" of the Gospel could indigenous people find salvation. Missionaries therefore fought to preserve control over linguistic policy in their schools.

An example of an earnest move by the secular colonial movement to force German-language instruction began in 1896. At the 1896 meeting of the *Kolonialrat* the head of the German Colonial Society, Duke Johann Albrecht zu Mecklenburg, proposed that it should be obligatory that European language instruction be made in German. Mecklenburg cited "patriotic reasons" for his proposal and argued that if mission societies wished to work in German territories then they should not object to teaching in German.<sup>99</sup> Though Mecklenburg and his allies were chiefly annoyed by the teaching of English in the North German Mission Society's schools in Togo, this attack was interpreted by missionaries on the *Kolonialrat* and across Germany as an effort to interfere with missionaries' pedagogical efforts.

On the *Kolonialrat* Karl Jacobi spoke in defense of the North German Mission Society's right to teach as it wished. The Society offered English because that was

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<sup>99</sup> Minutes of the *Kolonialrat*, IV. Sitzungsperiode 1895/98, Nr. 13 (October 22, 1896), BArch R1001/1.22, Film Nr. 80484, Bd. 6968, pag. 8.

what the Africans wanted because English had developed a place as the dominant language of the coastal trade.<sup>100</sup> Jacobi argued that the proposal “[did] the mission no favors with such a reform, better to leave in place the freedom that mission has had up to now in [linguistic matters].<sup>101</sup> Jacobi’s opposition demonstrated how school language policy cut to the heart of German missionary principles. He supported missionary internationalism by arguing that if the German government sought to enforce language policy in its colonies then the work of German missionaries might be impeded in a similar manner by other colonial powers. By favoring independence in language instruction, Jacobi endorsed missionary autonomy and internationalism against nationalistic patriotism.

Jacobi’s defense of English-language instruction reveals a tantalizing hint of the role that African motives and politics played in school administration. The Basel missionaries continued to teach their students English because that was the language in demand in the region. Missionary motivations in other instances may have been for instruction in a local, indigenous language but in this case it’s clear that African parents and students did not wish to be instructed in their own languages but instead in the most economically useful language, the trade language of the region, English. Greater analysis needs to be done if similar pressures were brought to bear in German East Africa but it is apparent from missionary arguments in favor of Swahili as a language of instruction late in the colonial period that the missionaries hoped to transform Swahili, an administrative and trade language for the entire region, into a

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<sup>100</sup> For another example of the role that Africans’ educational demands played in the operations of mission schools see Carol Summers, *Colonial Lessons: Africans’ Education in Southern Rhodesia, 1918-1940* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002).

<sup>101</sup> Minutes of the Kolonialrat, IV. Sitzungsperiode 1895/98, Nr. 13 (October 22, 1896), BArch R1001/1.22, Film Nr. 80484, Bd. 6968, pag. 8.

language of Christian practice. Missionary leaders might have hoped that by adopting a language desirable to local Africans they could stimulate greater responsiveness to the Protestant missions' message.

Mecklenburg would not surrender on this issue. Two years later a memorandum was presented to the *Kolonialrat* "concerning the taking up of the German language in the curriculum of the schools in the protectorates." In the view of the head of the German Colonial Society, "we must act as the French and English;...we must show the natives that we Germans are the masters. Therefore it [was] undeniably necessary that German must be promoted...in the schools of the colonies." The Colonial Secretary, Paul Kayser, agreed with Mecklenburg's assertion that "it [was] our national responsibility" to teach German in the colonies. The Catholic mission representative, Franz Hespers, was able to deflect this attack upon missionaries' autonomy by making Mecklenburg's proposal voluntary for mission societies, with the incentive of government subsidies for those schools that taught German. Hespers' proposal was adopted unanimously and the meeting moved on to other matters.<sup>102</sup> But the issue would not remain settled for long.

The fight over missionary language instruction continued through the first years of the twentieth century. Secular colonialists sought to use the *Kolonialrat* and the *Reichstag* to force mission schools to change their language policies. Attacks in 1904 sought to create government schools as a direct challenge to missionaries' schools, expressly for the purpose of spreading German in the colonies.<sup>103</sup> And even

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<sup>102</sup> Minutes of the *Kolonialrat*, IV. Sitzungsperiode 1895/98, Nr. 3 (October 26, 1898), BArch R 1001/1.22, Film Nr. 80485, Bd. 6973, pag. 10.

<sup>103</sup> Minutes of the *Kolonialrat*, VI. Sitzungsperiode 1901/04, Nr. 9 (July 1, 1904), BArch R 1001/1.22, Film Nr. 80487, Bd. 6981, pag. 351-352. These proposed schools should not be confused with the

as late as 1913, when nationalism was increasingly becoming a priority of missionary intellectuals, many in the missionary ranks argued for schools to retain their educational autonomy. When the imperial governor of the German colony of Kamerun tried to force German instruction on the Basel Mission Society's schools in the colony, the Basel missionaries appealed to the Colonial Minister. They argued that for "pedagogical reasons and general consideration" German instruction should not be elevated above the educational interests of the mission schools. In the missionaries' view, a system of education "adapted to the cultural level of the peoples" did the colony greater service than a "rash and an inevitably superficial Germanization."<sup>104</sup> Friends of the missionary societies fought to protect missionaries' autonomy in the *Reichstag* as well. *Reichstag* Member Reinhold Mumm of Stöcker's Christian Social Party spoke in the early spring of 1913 against legislation designed to bring the mission schools under a "more exacting oversight."<sup>105</sup> Throughout this period missionaries held to a strong defense of their educational prerogatives.

In 1895, Franz Michael Zahn of the North German Mission Society offered a defense of missionaries' indigenous language use that integrated the practical benefits with a cultural understanding of indigenous peoples that embraced human diversity. The main thrust of Zahn's argument was that God had intended the world to be a diverse place. This diversity provided Christians with a multitude of cultural perspectives and revelations which collectively allowed for a more complete

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government schools set up in German East Africa during the 1890s and which aggravated missionaries in that colony during this same period.

<sup>104</sup> Basel Mission Society to Colonial Secretary Wilhelm Solf (April 23, 1913), BMW/bmw1/1701. The Berlin Mission Society also argued in 1911 that "mission must not aspire to a Germanizing or Anglicizing education, but instead an [education] appropriate to the unique qualities of the native." See Report from the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member societies (February 16, 1911), BMW/bmw1/1779.

<sup>105</sup> Reinhold Mumm to Theodor Öhler (March 11, 1913), BMW/bmw1/8336.

Christianity to develop. The imposition of German or any other universal language would therefore lead to the destruction of indigenous cultures and violate Christian dogma. Zahn's view on this point remained strong amongst missionary intellectuals even as nationalism spread in missionary circles, the linguist and mission scholar Carl Meinhof argued in 1906 that when a people gives up its language then that people gives up its "fundamental character and the form of its peculiar mentality."<sup>106</sup>

The study of language, to Zahn, allowed for believers to publish in every language the "great deeds of God," the use of indigenous language for evangelization "opened the door to the most expansive philosophical, philological, historical, [and] theological considerations." Language was, after all, the means by which a person expressed his or her spiritual being; it was only through language that a man or woman could fully participate in a personal and collective spiritual life.<sup>107</sup> Meinhof agreed, writing, "[T]he thousands of languages glorify the great deeds of God...with their own rhythms, their own melodies." The European understanding of Christianity was not universal, and "every non-European [finds] beauty in the Gospel that we [Europeans] do not see."<sup>108</sup> Like Warneck before him, Zahn argued that the only correct way to develop a person's faith was through his or her mother language, and the linguistic diversity of the earth reflected God's intentions.<sup>109</sup> The many and strange cultures of the world, Zahn felt, reflected the scattering of the nations as told in the story of the Tower of Babel. But these different peoples all possessed a spark of God's message; missionaries discovered everywhere peoples who "[spoke]

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<sup>106</sup> C[arl] Meinhof, "Das missionarische Sprachproblem," *AMZ* 33(1906): 208.

<sup>107</sup> F[rantz] M[ichael] Zahn, "Die Muttersprache in der Mission," *AMZ* 22(1895): 337-338.

<sup>108</sup> Meinhof, "Das missionarische Sprachproblem," 210.

<sup>109</sup> Zahn, "Die Muttersprache," 339.

differently and at the same time [thought] differently of God.”<sup>110</sup> Zahn defended indigenous language use on the grounds that it aided in the spread of the Gospels and that the multiplicity of languages on Earth sprang from a divine plan, and the challenge of reconciling human difference served to strengthen the global Christian faith.

In application, Zahn imagined mission schools as the key support for communities of Christians joined together in *Volkskirchen*. He wrote that “only a true national education, that is to say one conveyed in the national language, is healthy...” Foreign language instruction should be limited. The establishment of European languages as languages of instruction created an “educational construct [*Bildungsbau*] without a healthy national foundation and [bore] radical fruit,” Zahn contended. If language were detached from cultural roots, Zahn argued, peoples might learn a language but not develop an appreciation for cultural values. Another risk was that by not using the indigenous language for instruction the European colonial state would only create subjects able to “parrot” English, French, or German;<sup>111</sup> far better to integrate the moral education offered by the missionaries through their religious teachings with the education of indigenous peoples in their own languages.

Zahn concluded, “It is possible and it is necessary to missionize in native language[s].” After all, the “goal of human history and of mission history [was] not the earthly kingdom...” it was “one great people, whose numbers no one can count, out of all the peoples and tribes and nations and tongues standing before the Throne

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<sup>110</sup> Zahn, “Die Muttersprache,” 342.

<sup>111</sup> Zahn, “Die Muttersprache,” 352-353.



and before the Lamb...”<sup>112</sup> The message of revelation gave the ultimate basis to Zahn’s view that it was God’s intention that there be human difference and that the dissolution of that difference through Christian faith could only be aided by Christian missionaries. But first, all peoples would have to be made Christian, and only after that great success could the coalescence of humanity become possible. Because of this precondition to earthly salvation Zahn argued that the first step should be making the Christians and the appropriate way to do so, according to the scriptures and principled reasoning, was to evangelize in indigenous languages. Zahn’s argument neatly fused indigenous language instruction and German Protestant missionary cultural attitudes into a defense of missionary independence and internationalism.

Missionary intellectuals devoted considerable time and energy to explaining the importance of language in their work. Above all, a consideration of missionary language policy revealed missionaries’ influence upon the pasts and presents of the peoples among whom they worked.<sup>113</sup> In German East Africa the decisions made by missionaries encouraged the propagation of Swahili. The eventual decision by missionaries to instruct in Swahili in the East African colony arose from three missionary concerns. First, missionaries’ adhered to the overriding principle that Africans should be instructed in an African language to help stimulate the development of *Volkskirchen* and Christian communities. Second, missionaries hoped adopting Swahili as the language of their work would arrest the spread of Islam in the

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<sup>112</sup> Zahn, “Die Muttersprache,” 356-360.

<sup>113</sup> See Birgit Meyer, “Christianity and the Ewe Nation: German Pietist Missionaries, Ewe Converts and the Politics of Culture,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 32(2): 167-199.

colony.<sup>114</sup> Third, Africans on the coast and inland seemed to desire instruction in Swahili and, by obliging, missionaries could bring more Africans into contact with missionary institutions. Last, the colonial state's adoption of Swahili as a key language of administration allowed missionaries' to collaborate with the colonial state.<sup>115</sup> This gained them an ally in their fight against the secular colonialists who wanted German-language schools. This compromise with the East African colonial administration allowed missionaries to preserve their internationalist vision but it also reflected the German Protestant mission movement's growing difficulties in the decade before the First World War. Under threat from nationalists outside the movement and with internal proponents of a more national tone, mission leaders found a compromise on language issues that avoided total surrender to the nationalist trend.

Karl Axenfeld helped develop the missionaries' policy of Swahili instruction in German East Africa. As Axenfeld was one of the strongest nationalists among the German missionary leadership one might be surprised to learn he was no advocate of German-language instruction in the schools. There are two possible reasons for Axenfeld's position. In the first place, schools and the relatively positive views of indigenous culture that German Protestant missionaries held were essential to the German Protestant evangelical project. Their symbolic and intellectual importance

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<sup>114</sup> What is missing from missionaries' discussions of linguistics is mention of how Africans themselves helped mediate the creation of an idiomatically Christian Swahili. Two works offer good examples of the role played by indigenous linguists in creating the language and literature of mission Christianity. See Isabel Hofmeyr, *The Portable Bunyan: A Transnational History of The Pilgrim's Progress* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); and Landau, *The Realm of the Word*.

<sup>115</sup> Katrin Bromber, "German Colonial Administrators, Swahili Lecturers and the Promotion of Swahili at the *Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen* in Berlin," *Sudanic Africa* 15(2004): 39-54; and Ann Brumfit, "The Rise and Development of a Language Policy in German East Africa," *Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika* 2(1980): 219-331.

meant that even a nationalist like Axenfeld had no desire to undermine German mission principles and German mission school autonomy. Second, Axenfeld's ideas about Swahili took form around 1908, before transformative events of Germany's Protestant mission movement's history intensified his nationalist opinions. It was only in late 1908 that the *Benediktinerstreit* began and that would take four years for Axenfeld to fully commit to a strategy linking Protestantism with German nationalism. The financial difficulties afflicting Germany's Protestant mission societies had not yet led to the embrace of nationalist fundraising in the *Nationalspende* of 1913,<sup>116</sup> and the First World War was still six years away.

Axenfeld's 1908 essay on "The Language Question in East Africa from the Standpoint of Mission" proposed a closer link between the missions and the colonial government on language policy. Axenfeld counted more than 600 different languages in East Africa of which most, he claimed, were only spoken by "a handful of people." This linguistic diversity, if missionaries sought to instruct all Africans in their mother tongues, threatened to fracture the evangelical project into ever diminishing pieces. At the same time, Axenfeld reminded his readers of missionaries' basic principle that "every nation should be presented the Gospel in its native language" and that the "displacement of native languages by European [languages]" was a "pedagogical mistake." To reconcile these two challenges, Axenfeld proposed that missionaries consider consolidating their principles to better aid the establishment of "healthy native churches [*Volkskirchen*]." <sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> See chapter four of this dissertation.

<sup>117</sup> Karl Axenfeld, "Die Sprachenfrage in Ostafrika vom Standpunkt der Mission aus betrachtet," *AMZ* 35(1908): 561-562. Axenfeld's ideas likely grew, in part, out of the work of the mission scholar and linguist Carl Meinhof. In 1906 Meinhof wrote an article advocating the adoption by East African

However, Axenfeld felt the power of the government and economic growth had to be considered when choosing and developing linguistic policy. He declared that mission's powerful evangelical message, system of schools, development of indigenous-language literature, and training of catechists made mission a "great language-forming and language-preserving power; but the government and the tendency of commerce are stronger yet."<sup>118</sup> For this reason, Axenfeld argued, the most rational choice of a language for East African missionary instruction was Swahili.<sup>119</sup> Swahili was the language of East African coastal traders and their slavers, a group Axenfeld and contemporaries called "Arabs." The favor shown Swahili by the administrative and economic impulses of the colony meant that European missionaries should adopt the language, already favored by the indigenous elites, for practical, political, and religious reasons.<sup>120</sup>

Practically speaking, Swahili was, to Axenfeld's perspective, already the dominant language of the region. The language served in East Africa as the language of trade and Axenfeld suggested that the German government was likely to adopt the language as well.<sup>121</sup> In fact, in July of 1907 the *Ausschuß* agreed to Colonial Secretary Dernburg's request that the Protestant and Catholic missions working in

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missionaries or a regional communal language because of the economic and political advantages; Meinhof, "Das missionarische Sprachproblem," 205-206, 215-216, and 253-255; see also Eggert, "The School Policy of the German Protestant Missions in Tanzania before the First World War," 205.

<sup>118</sup> Axenfeld, "Die Sprachenfrage," 565.

<sup>119</sup> For a history of the origins of Swahili in the region see Derek Nurse and Thomas J. Hinnebusch, *Swahili and Sabaki: A Linguistic History*, ed. Thomas J. Hinnebusch (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>120</sup> For a discussion of the relationship between Swahili, mission education policies, and colonial administration in the Belgian Congo, see Johannes Fabian, *Language and Colonial Power: The Appropriation of Swahili in the former Belgian Congo, 1880-1938* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), esp. 70-91. In the Belgian case the colonial administration and Catholic missionaries seemed to have collaborated to help create a Swahili-speaking labor force.

<sup>121</sup> Axenfeld, "Die Sprachenfrage," 565.

East Africa come together and standardize the orthography of Swahili.<sup>122</sup>

Furthermore, Swahili had political advantages that missionaries could use to help increase the prestige of Christianity, as Axenfeld described it, to the “uneducated backcountry African [*Buschneger*]” whoever even “[spoke] broken Swahili” appeared “an educated man.”<sup>123</sup> If missionaries and their Christianized students came to be perceived as fluent in Swahili then, the reasoning followed, Christianity would come to be seen as a path to upward mobility.

Axenfeld’s final argument for mission schools to adopt Swahili as their instructional language envisioned the change in policy as an attack on Islam. The long-standing opposition to Swahili by older missionary leaders rested on the view that Swahili, as the language of the “Arabs,” was a carrier of Islam. Axenfeld countered, “The victory of Swahili [in the colony] is long since decided, but it need not necessarily be a harbinger of Islam.” Furthermore, Swahili was superior to German as a daily language because German, Axenfeld wrote, was too difficult for most speakers of Bantu languages. The adoption of Swahili would not be a concession to Islam; Axenfeld saw it as an opportunity to win a great victory against the spread of Islam. The key step was to convert Swahili from a written language which used the Arabic alphabet to one which utilized the Latin alphabet. Such a transformation would allow missionaries to appropriate the language of the Muslims for their own evangelical purposes.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Report of the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member societies (January 23, 1908), BMW/bmw1/1779.

<sup>123</sup> Axenfeld, “Die Sprachenfrage,” 566.

<sup>124</sup> Axenfeld, “Die Sprachenfrage,” 567.

As Axenfeld put it, “The land and the time needs a unifying language, and no one can prevent it from developing....One can lament the victory of Swahili for linguistic, cultural, or religious reasons but one must make the best of the matter. Not only the government but also the natives wish...for instruction in Swahili.” Mission could either take advantage of the situation or miss an opportunity to make itself indispensable to Africans and German colonial administrators alike. Axenfeld concluded with this proposal: in general, missionaries should continue to seek to learn and utilize the “higher-impact” local languages in order to communicate with the Africans in their mission fields. However, the major dialects should be elevated as the most promising general pastoral and school languages. On top of this local program, Axenfeld proposed that Swahili become an integral part of curricula; as either a secondary language or, wherever appropriate, as the language of instruction. In this way “the day [would] come when [the printed word in Swahili] [would] serve a greater Christian [purpose] in East Africa.”<sup>125</sup> The historical record shows that the work of missionaries and the German colonial administration helped spread a standardized Swahili from the East African coast into the interior of the colony.<sup>126</sup>

## Conclusion

The participation of Africans in missionaries’ schools was of inherent importance to missionary strategies. Debates between missionaries and secular colonialists over the language of instruction and the purpose of schools excluded

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<sup>125</sup> Axenfeld, “Die Sprachenfrage,” 572-573.

<sup>126</sup> Nurse and Hinnebusch, *Swahili and Sabaki*, 32.

African students, families, polities, and indigenous instructors from deliberations. This project does not attempt to develop the influence of African stakeholders upon the development of a missionary school policy. Missionaries may have engaged in debates with their own missionized communities but the influence of these likely but not evident in these sources contests over control are invisible from the intellectual and political literature of the mission leadership and the colonial administrations. It is reasonable to expect, without suggesting any level of collaboration, that African motives would have been more sympathetic with the goals of the missionaries than those of the secular colonial authorities.

Schools with indigenous-language instruction were, after all, the most important element of German Protestant missionaries' plan for evangelization. Missionaries rejected economic colonial demands that their schools work to train an indigenous labor force for economic exploitation. And when German nationalists targeted these schools as representative of missionaries' insincere devotion to the German nation, missionaries responded with a spirited and principled defense of their methods. To missionaries, indigenous language instruction was spiritually, pedagogically, and practically adaptive to the realities of mission work on the ground. The defense that missionaries formulated emphasized the appropriateness of indigenous-language instruction based on evidence from scripture and contemporary ethnology. Missionaries argued for a basic dignity of indigenous culture and defended their commitment to learn and teach in indigenous languages as essential to the successful spread of Christianity. In this area, education, missionaries held to their internationalist principles with strong resistance to efforts to integrate their ideology

with more nationalist views. However, missionary policies did make one concession to outside influences. The compromise with the East African colonial administration on the use of Swahili as a language of instruction represented a tactical maneuver that helped bring together the missionaries and the state during the period of the Dernburg Reforms when the colonial state and missionaries shared a general economic plan for the colony as well. Schools and indigenous-language development represented missionaries' most valuable tool and missionaries' historic internationalism, cultural sensitivity to indigenous peoples, and local political circumstances in German East Africa all came together to hold off challengers to their authority in the colony.



## Chapter Four: Mission on the Home Front

By the 1890s Germany's Protestant missionary movement had become firmly entrenched in the German colonial milieu. Missionaries from German mission societies labored in every German colony or protectorate, a Protestant and a Catholic clergyman sat on the *Kolonialrat* to represent missionaries' interests, and (at least for the Protestants) a national organization for German missionaries had been established. From a political perspective, the leaders of the German Protestant mission movement ought to have felt sanguine about their future prospects. Furthermore, the leadership had constructed an effective rhetorical and ideological defense of their aversion to "politics" and nationalism. The majority of the movement remained committed to autonomy and internationalism and the movement's political influence had matured. Even so, other factors had already begun to prepare the field for a new form of Protestant mission in Germany.

As shown in previous chapters, the turn of the twentieth century challenged German Protestant missionary internationalism. The changing economic and political conditions in the German East African colony revealed one danger to German Protestant missionaries' internationalism – the danger of a strongly nationalist anti-Catholicism leading to a general nationalization of the movement. In the same period attacks on missionary autonomy in the colonies in the form of secular colonialist calls for German-language instruction put missionary internationalism at risk but also led the mission movement to rearticulate a clear defense of Christian universalism.

Missionary leaders in Germany were similarly tested to maintain their remove from the national state by new challenges, particularly in key fundraising activities. On the one hand, it will be made clear in this chapter that the German Protestant movement would become a partial victim of its own success. The expansion of the mission movement and the construction of more and more mission stations, the “conquest” of ever greater mission territories, and the expansion of mission activities and services provided by missionaries would stretch the budgets of mission societies to their limits. As the missionary leadership would make clear in its private communications and public media, the old funding model for mission in Germany was not working.

The cause of this challenge, missionary theologians and theoreticians declared, was that the German people had an insufficiency of “*Missionsgeist*” (mission spirit). In their publications and at their conference meetings, missionary intellectuals debated the causes, symptoms, and effects of this shortage and proposed solutions to the problem. One marker of the crack in the internationalism of the missions was the jealousy German missionaries expressed regarding Britain and America’s strong financial and popular missionary support – an ideal internationalism would have celebrated the strength of the British and American movements as a universal benefit. Early solutions called on ministers and mission support networks to innovate and redouble their efforts to inspire religiously motivated support. The disappointing results garnered by these efforts and the growing popular nationalism in the Wilhelmine Reich suggested, for some, another path. At the same time that younger mission leaders like Karl Axenfeld and Julius Richter began articulating a new justification for national mission, the mission societies struggled with their

financial difficulties. Around 1900 a growing sentiment in favor of combining “missionary spirit” with a nationalist mood proposed to bind the evangelical mission to the German nation.

For some the 1913 *Nationalspende* would provide the potential for a lasting solution to Germany’s shortage of “mission spirit” and the mission societies’ economic troubles. But the *Nationalspende* placed internationalist mission leaders in an uncomfortable position. A national fundraiser with the Kaiser’s blessing, the *Nationalspende*’s full name was the *Nationalspende zum Kaisersjubiläum für die christlichen Missionen in den deutschen Kolonien und Schutzgebieten* (National Offering on the Kaiser’s Jubilee for Christian Missions in the German Colonies and Protectorates, *Nationalspende* for short). Missionary leaders in 1913, many of whom remained internationalist and ambivalent about the imperial state, suspected the motives and worried what the possible effects of a national campaign predominantly organized by secular colonialists and representatives of the Prussian state church might be. This chapter argues that the *Nationalspende* and the organization founded in its aftermath, the *Evangelisches Missions-Hilfe* (Evangelical Mission Aid), were phenomena that presaged the ultimate triumph of nationalistic mission ideology in Germany in the First World War.<sup>1</sup> The *Nationalspende* entangled the German mission movement more tightly with the secular colonial movement than ever before, and the *Missions-Hilfe* became an institutionalized representation of nationalist mission ideology within Germany.

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<sup>1</sup> Pakendorf, “Berlin in Afrika oder der historische Ort der Deutschen Mission,” 476.

## The Financial Problem

Germany's Protestant missionary societies were perennially concerned about their financial states. The cost of training missionaries, transporting missionaries and their supplies to distant mission fields, and supporting mission station operations was an expensive enough undertaking. What is more, harsh environments and long distances charged a significant toll of men and materiel. On top of these expenses, the driving impulse of missionary culture cost mission societies still more. By its nature, the mission project demanded nearly continuous growth, and that ongoing growth led to growing budgets for German mission societies.<sup>2</sup> A continual feature during the *Kaiserreich* for mission societies in Germany was the desperate search for financial security and a reluctance to appeal to official sources for relief.<sup>3</sup>

The costs of the constantly expanding missionary operations meant that German mission societies had to constantly increase their fundraising as well. In 1878 Gustav Warneck noted that between 1848 and 1878 the costs of German mission activities had increased from around 800,000 Marks to over 2.4 million Marks. In that same period the amount of money raised had also increased about three-fold, from

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<sup>2</sup> British mission societies faced the same challenges for the same reason during the nineteenth century, Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 101; and Porter, introduction to *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880-1914*, 2.

<sup>3</sup> A failed effort by the Berlin Mission Society to secure funding from the Prussian state church in 1871 was unlikely to encourage missionaries to turn to official sources in spite of their close ties to the Hohenzollern royal family. See Karl Jacobi to Otto von Bismarck (August 4, 1888), BArch R1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80477, Bd. 6895, pag. 24; and Karl Jacobi to Herbert von Bismarck (July 13, 1894), BArch R1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80477, Bd. 6898, pag. 130 on connections to the royal family; and on failed entreaties to the state church see Oberkirchenrat Ludwig Emil Mathis to Berlin Mission Society (April 6, 1865), BMW/bmw1/1118; and Mathis to Berlin Mission Society (August 30, 1865), BMW/bmw1/1118.

about 750,000 Marks to around 2.2 million Marks.<sup>4</sup> Even at this early date the German mission movement operated at a deficit. This problem was only likely to expand over time. In 1908 the Berlin Mission reported to the Twelfth Brandenburg Provincial Synod that the growing scale of its activities required still greater contributions from the German home front.<sup>5</sup> That same year the Herrnhut Mission considered the possibility of contracting its activities because of financial shortfalls.<sup>6</sup> Here was clear testimony to the source of mission societies' financial difficulties: expanding obligations driven by religious duty drawing on resources that failed to keep pace with mission costs.

The establishment of a German colonial empire did little to alleviate the financial difficulties of the German missionary movement. All of the fervor and excitement inspired in the German public by the creation of an overseas empire dislodged no new financial support from the official church. The Prussian *Oberkirchenrat*, the governing council of the Prussian state Protestant church, and the General Synod of the Prussian Church which met in the fall of 1885 urged that the mission societies in Prussia act quickly to support German imperialism by establishing themselves in the German colonies.<sup>7</sup> Yet, they extended no offers of financial support at the time. Even at the greatest moment of popular support for German colonialism, the Prussian state church remained unwilling to supply

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<sup>4</sup> "Die Belebung des Missionsinnes in der Heimath," *AMZ* 5(1878): 285.

<sup>5</sup> Report to the Twelfth Provincial Synod by the Berlin Mission Society (July 14, 1908), BMW/bmw1/1119.

<sup>6</sup> *Jahresbericht über das Missionswerk der Evangelischen Brüder-Unität (Brüdergemeinde) vom Jahre 1908* (Herrnhut: Druck von Fr. Lindenbein, 1909), 24-25.

<sup>7</sup> Präsident des Evangelischen Oberkirchenrats Ottomar Hermes to Otto von Bismarck (November 19, 1885), BArch R1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80477, Bd. 6894, pag. 50-51.

resources to foreign mission.<sup>8</sup> This did not concern Gustav Warneck all that much; he noted that mission had grown into a significant force without the help of the church, which he argued would continue to treat missionaries and their work as an “unimportant matter [*Winkelsache*].”<sup>9</sup> For many, mission work and support was more than simply gathering funds; it was also a deeply spiritual commitment to building a Christian world through personal sacrifice and devotion.<sup>10</sup> Transforming missions into official elements of the organized church might address financial troubles but would probably strip mission of its driving energies.<sup>11</sup> For these reasons, along with the close relationship between the Protestant church and German state, the official church and the state remained ideologically incompatible with German Protestant missions. Before the turn of the twentieth century the links between the colonial and national state on the one hand, and the German Protestant missionary movement on the other, had been kept intentionally weak by the missionaries.

Mission societies began to increasingly discuss their financial challenges in the 1890s. The venerable Moravian Mission faced tough choices on the eve of the twentieth century in particular. In a publication produced to prepare representatives to the Herrnhut General Synod of 1899, the Moravian mission leader Carl Buchner reported on the financial condition of the Herrnhuter Mission. According to him, the

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<sup>8</sup> Majida Hamilton suggests the entry of the German mission societies into the German colonies might have been an effort to attract greater financial support. However, she offers no evidence in support of this supposition and it seems to contradict the evidence of missionaries’ anti-nationalist views. Hamilton, *Missionen im kolonialen Umfeld*, 108.

<sup>9</sup> [Gustav Warneck], “Kirchenmission oder Freie Mission? Eine Antwort auf die Frage: In wie weit ist die Eingliederung der Mission in den amtskirchlichen Organismus berechtigt und ausführbar?” *AMZ* 15(1888): 104-105.

<sup>10</sup> [Friedrich] Danneil, “Soll sich die evangelische Heidenmission auf Vereine oder auf die evangelischen Gemeinden stützen?” *AMZ* 18(1891): 424. See also [August] Schreiber, “Die Organisation der heimatlichen Missionsgemeinde,” *AMZ* 17(1890): 145.

<sup>11</sup> The determination to keep missions free from organized church control was still strong after 1900. For example, see Julius Richter, *Die Organisation des heimatlichen Missionswesens*, Beiträge zur Missionskunde 7 (Berlin: Buchhandlung der Berliner evangelischen Missionsgesellschaft, 1904), 13.

mission's condition was so dire that it had to choose between abandoning old mission territories and suspending expansion into new mission territories.<sup>12</sup> The long-term financial challenges of the mission model of constant growth had to be addressed. Buchner feared that giving up new territories, especially in Africa, would threaten to place the Moravians in a state of stagnation. Possibly, abandoning the Protestant mission movement's quest to evangelize the world presented the Moravian Church with a hard choice. Buchner resisted abandoning expansion plans but could not see an alternative; abandoning the congregations the Moravians had developed in their existing mission fields was impossible in his opinion.<sup>13</sup> Buchner left the situation for the General Synod to decide but his agonized testimony exhibited in clear form the anxiety that financial matters provoked in missionary leaders.

In response to Buchner's concerns, the General Synod undertook a "point-by-point" reform of the Herrnhut Brotherhood's mission arm designed to allow the Brotherhood to continue to build its mission work rather than contract it. The solutions offered followed an old pattern. The General Synod proposed an improvement of the mission's printed materials to entice contributions from a "wider public."<sup>14</sup> Beyond this suggestion, most other proposals seemed simply to be seen by synod members as an opportunity to reform the general form of the Herrnhut Society's mission policies. None of them offered any real innovation or modification to the situation.<sup>15</sup> As it had for many decades, the financial hardship of the Herrnhut

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<sup>12</sup> Carl Buchner, *Unser Missionswerk: Zur Vorbereitung auf die General-Synode im Jahre 1899* (Herrnhut: Kommissionsverlag und Druck von Gustav Winter, 1898), 19-20.

<sup>13</sup> Buchner, *Unser Missionswerk*, 20-21.

<sup>14</sup> *Mitteilungen aus der General-Synode der Brüder-Unität vom Jahre 1899, No. 3* (Herrnhut: Druck von Fr. Lindenbein, [1899?]), 50-51.

<sup>15</sup> *Mitteilungen aus der General-Synode der Brüder-Unität vom Jahre 1899, No. 3*, 51-60.

Society, like its fellow Protestant mission societies in Germany, depended upon leaders ability to connect with the German public and inspire their “*Missionsgeist*” (mission spirit). The fault lay on the home front, and the missionary leadership began casting about for any way to inspire greater support from ordinary German Protestants.

### **Inspiring *Missionsgeist***

From the start of the mission societies’ financial difficulties, missionary intellectuals proffered suggestions to fill mission coffers. Yet, all their suggestions amounted to the same basic proposal: Protestant Germans should be convinced to meet their Christian obligation to support the mission societies’ work. This required in each case that the mission societies redouble their efforts to inspire and cajole parishioners across Germany to donate money with more and better religious rhetoric. In private and professional correspondence, at mission conferences, and in the publications of the mission societies, mission leaders and scholars called for an increase in German “*Missionsgeist*.” The strategies proposed tended to concentrate on traditional methods and target traditional constituencies. Leaders staunchly resisted using patriotism and the language of nationalism to secure support. German *Missionswissenschaftler* and mission committees remained devoted to traditional methods that did not threaten the international character of German Protestant mission culture.



A key tenet of missionary leaders' attitude towards mission and towards the German mission home front (called by missionaries the *Heimat*) was the idea that the existence of missions in foreign lands and the support of those missions by Christians in their homelands strengthened Christianity in European communities. Missionaries, the argument ran, provided parishioners and clergy in Germany with Christian paragons. In addition, by transmitting the ideas and values of Christianity to non-Western lands, Christian missionaries created a source for the spiritual rejuvenation of German society. By drawing ordinary Germans into supporting their mission societies, missionaries built up a bulwark against socialism, excessive rationalism, Catholicism, and other societal ills. Many *Missionswissenschaftler* and mission leaders also argued that mission connected Germans with a wider world and gave them a greater understanding of their own place in it. Finally, some even argued that by introducing the Gospel to new peoples German Christianity would gain access to new insights and a greater understanding of divine revelation.<sup>16</sup> All these arguments

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<sup>16</sup> For examples of these arguments see [Lars] Dahle, "Die segensreiche Rückwirkung der Heidenmission auf die heimatliche Gemeinde," *Verhandlungen der Kontinentalen Missions-Konferenz* 12(1909): 141-143; "Die äussere Mission eine Gehilfin der inner," *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* 26(1882): 7-12; "Die Belebung des Missionssinnes in der Heimath,"; R[einhold] Grundemann, "Die Mission auf der Kreissynode: Ein Beitrag zur Theorie des heimatlichen Missionswesens," *AMZ* 26(1899): 365-372; Carl Meinhof, "Gedanken über die Vertiefung unseres Missionsinteresses," *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* 56(1912): 164-170; H. Meinhof, "Welchen Gewinn bringt die Arbeit für die Mission Pastoren und Gemeinden?" *AMZ* 37(1910): 233-250; Th[eodor] Öhler, "Was kann die heimatliche Kirche von der Mission der Gegenwart lernen?" *AMZ* 35(1908): 217-233; Carl Paul, "Zwanzig Jahre deutscher Kolonialpolitik in ihrer Bedeutung für die Christianisierung unserer überseeischen Gebiete" in *Missionswissenschaftliche Studien: Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstag des Herrn Prof. D. Dr. Gustav Warneck* ed. Karl Axenfeld (Berlin: Martin Warneck, 1904), 103-128; [Gustav Warneck], "Die Rückwirkung der Heidenmission auf das religiöse Leben der Heimat," *AMZ* 8(1881): 145-170; [Gustav Warneck], "Pflanzung und Pflege des Missionslebens in Gemeinde und Schule," *AMZ* 14(1887): 385-405; Warneck, "Kirchenmission oder Freie Mission"; [Gustav Warneck], "Die gegenwärtige Lage der deutschen evangelischen Mission," *AMZ* 32(1905): 157-176; and the internal communication of the Bethel Mission, Walther Trittelvitz, "Grundlinien unserer heimatlichen Missionsarbeit (March 13, 1913), HAB 2/51-4.

were deployed in missionary periodicals to motivate supporters and justify the work of German Protestants in distant locales.

As early as 1876, before there was any possibility of German missionaries serving in a non-existent German colonial empire, Protestant missionaries and their advocates worried over the state of “mission spirit” in the German *Heimat*. At the 1876 Bremen Mission Conference a session was devoted to the question, “What is to be done in order to encourage and expand home mission circles?” August Schreiber of the Rhenish Mission (no relation to the second-generation nationalist August Wilhelm Schreiber) argued that, in order to inspire greater support, mission journals should be “descriptive and interesting,” a proposal backed by Gustav Warneck in the succeeding discussion and that was designed to broaden the appeal of the journals. At this time the mission leadership remained committed to drawing the educated middle class into its work, and Schreiber suggested one way to fight opposition in those circles to religious topics was with a natural scientific focus to emphasize the “universal cultural relevance of mission.” Schreiber and especially Warneck’s optimistic hopes for the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, only a few years old at this point, are apparent in their suggestions to their colleagues.

Others in the audience called for an intensification of “mission lessons,” lay study circles led by ministers and missionary candidates to spread knowledge and support for missions’ works. These salon-like activities fit neatly into existing philanthropic and social activities in the German middle classes at mid-century.<sup>17</sup> Missionary leaders believed that wherever a strong Christian conviviality existed one

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<sup>17</sup> [August] Schreiber, “Was ist zu thun, um die heimatlichen Missionskreise zu beleben und zu erweitern?” *Verhandlungen der Allgemeinen Missionskonferenz* 3(1876): 30-31.

could find the “roots for a love of mission” and that it would require only the barest of exertions from mission societies to reap the benefits of that affection. Franz Michael Zahn, in the ensuing discussion, argued that the “educational conditions” of the Germans impeded missionary efforts in the *Heimat*. The educated circles of Germany did not know enough of missionaries’ activities and so he called for the creation of a general periodical of mission information (like the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*) to raise awareness of mission work in all educated circles of the nation.<sup>18</sup> Nearly a decade before the establishment of a German colonial empire, Protestant missionary leaders judged Germany’s *Missionsgeist* inadequate. But there was no proposal that the spirit of German unity brought about by the creation of the German Empire in 1871 might somehow serve. It would take more than three decades of greater association with the German Empire and financial hardship to break the internationalist commitment to religious appeals.

As has been discussed in previous chapters, Friedrich von Bodelschwingh’s Bethel Mission Society differed from the older mission societies. From its inception it linked support for its work with support for and from the German nation. In an 1886 broadside the Bethel Mission Society called on “Germany’s women” to support its activities by joining the mission’s Women’s Committee. It argued that in Africa “a great, rich area of activity [*Arbeitsfeld*], a source of an improved German prosperity has been opened up by our wise imperial government with the help of bold, energetic men.” Supporting the hard work of the government and its “bold, energetic men” was a “Christian duty.” The Bethel Mission in German East Africa, founded explicitly to support the colonial project, linked financial support for its work with concrete

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<sup>18</sup> Schreiber, “Was ist zu thun...” 33-34.

contributions to the strengthening of the German nation. Through collaboration women and the mission could “honor God for the benefit of the German Fatherland.”<sup>19</sup> This same message was carried in broadsides produced for a wider audience that called on Germans to continue the long history of German achievement amongst the “heathens.”<sup>20</sup> Another argued that missionary service in the colony aided in the building of Germany’s “national strength” in East Africa so that “no other political power would dare challenge” the Reich’s claims to the region.<sup>21</sup>

In 1890 the Bethel Mission heightened its rhetoric. Bodelschwingh authored a supplement that appeared in the weekly newspaper of the Hospitalers (*Johanniterorden*).<sup>22</sup> The pastor opened his call to “the Christian nobility of the German nation, especially its youth,” with a glorious recounting of the outpouring of German volunteers, *Freiwilliger* (“among them many students of theology”), during the Franco-Prussian War. This recollection of German unity and service caused Bodelschwingh to ask if so many German youth would join a new “battle against the forces of darkness at home and abroad.” In particular, the struggle abroad demanded that trained ministers join with “natural scientists, officers, soldiers, merchants, administrators” to make the empire serve the nation against the threat of heathen,

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<sup>19</sup> *Aufruf an Deutschlands Frauen* (n.d., [1886?]), BMW/bmw1/1730.

<sup>20</sup> *Aufruf für die Zwecke der evangelischen Missions-Gesellschaft für Deutsch-Ostafrika* (n.d., [1886?]), BMW/bmw1/1730.

<sup>21</sup> *Aufruf an alle evangelischen Deutsche*, publ. by Silesian Support Committee for the Protestant Mission in East Africa (May 1887), BMW/bmw1/1730.

<sup>22</sup> On the *Johanniterorden* in Germany in the nineteenth century, also known as the *Malteserorden* and the successor to the Knights Hospitaler, see Andreas v. Block-Schlesier and Heike Spieker, eds., *900 Jahre Johanniter: Humanitäres Völkerrecht – Humanitäre Hilfe* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 1999); and Carl Alexander Krethlow, *Der Malteserorden: Wandel, Internationalität und soziale Vernetzung im 19. Jahrhundert* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2001).

Muslim, and Catholic domination.<sup>23</sup> Bodelschwingh's argument referenced one of the dominant missionary arguments in favor of mission, that the fight for the Gospels was also a fight against societal ills in Germany. Germans could join in the fight against unrest in Germany (socialism and ultramontanism) by joining in the work of spreading German Protestantism abroad. Bodelschwingh and his mission society rhetorically linked the Christian mission with nationalist goals at an early date, once again marking the society as idiosyncratically nationalist from the very beginning and during a period when the majority of Protestant mission societies remained opposed to adopting statist or nationalist agendas in their work.

Far from adopting a nationalist public face, the *Ausschuß* and its leader, Gustav Warneck, refused to accept any patriotic influence upon their mission work. The Protestant mission societies demurred when asked by the German imperial government to commence mission work in the new German colonies, citing the expense that would be entailed in taking on new territories.<sup>24</sup> Eventually the various societies did establish presences in the German colonies but not without financial and ideological reservations.<sup>25</sup> Warneck argued to his readers in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* that patriotism might draw "adventurers" to Germany's colonies but would

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<sup>23</sup> "An den christlichen Adel Deutscher Nation, sonderlich an seine Jugend," Separatabdruck aus Nr. 46 des Johanniter Wochenblattes vom 12. November 1890 (November 12, 1890), HAB Sam/B IX 14, Nr. 1.

<sup>24</sup> For a report of the various mission societies' replies to requests from the Imperial Government, see Kultusminister Gustav von Goßlar to Otto von Bismarck (January 30, 1889), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80477, Bd. 6895, Pag. 28-34.

<sup>25</sup> The aversion that missionaries felt towards the colonial movement in Germany may even have influenced their selection of mission field when they did enter German East Africa in 1891. The first stations of the Moravians and Berlin Mission Society were established in the remote southwest of the colony on Lake Nyasa. This claim is put forward in Oliver, *The Missionary Factor in East Africa*, 166.

turn away the sorts of men that made good missionaries.<sup>26</sup> And in March 1891 Warneck, writing to Colonial Secretary Paul Kayser for the *Ausschuß*, refuted Bodelschwingh's arguments and argued the familiar refrain that mission work was better work if it kept away from "worldly affairs."<sup>27</sup> Instead, in these years Protestant missionary organizations (with the exception of Bodelschwingh's Bethel Society) continued to pursue a policy designed to draw greater support out of Protestant congregations without appealing to national identity. This approach was typified by a presentation by August Schreiber of the Rhenish Mission that urged the deployment of the same mission festivals and mission study circles advocated by the gathered mission leaders in Bremen fourteen years before in 1876.<sup>28</sup>

In spite of the *Ausschuß*'s reluctance to join the colonial project, relations with the Colonial Office during the secretary-ship of Kayser remained congenial. Kayser included on his advisory council representatives of Protestant and Catholic mission, Karl Jacobi and Franz Hespers, respectively, and, in spite of Protestants' general reluctance to lend their support to a national colonial project, he voluntarily began publicizing the work of missionaries in the German colonies in the official publication of the Colonial Office, the *Kolonialblatt*. He informed Jacobi and Hespers that his intent was to "promote and nourish the interest of the public" in both confessions' activities with information about the numbers of missionaries and mission stations and maps of the mission territories.<sup>29</sup> The *Ausschuß* supported this

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<sup>26</sup> [Gustav Warneck], "Pflanzung und Pflege des Missionslebens in Gemeinde und Schule," *AMZ* 14(1887): 289-290.

<sup>27</sup> Gustav Warneck and the *Ausschuß* der deutschen evangelischen Missionen to Colonial Secretary Paul Kayser (March 15, 1891), BMW/bmw1/8244.

<sup>28</sup> Schreiber, "Die Organisation der heimatlichen Missionsgemeinde," 149.

<sup>29</sup> Kayser to Jacobi and Franz Hespers (March 9, 1896), AFSSt/ALMW-DHM II.6.2.I.

practice and warned its member societies that the Catholics were more assiduous about promoting their activities in this manner.<sup>30</sup> The presentation of these statistics was frequently applied to the problem of *Missionsgeist*. The missionaries' involvement on the *Kolonialrat*, their voluntary reporting for the *Kolonialblatt*, and the confessional rivalry with the Catholics all combined to stimulate an ever greater entanglement between the Protestant mission movement and the colonial state.

The use of the Catholic bogeyman to inspire Protestant mission circles appeared in other venues as well. In their internal conversations and in their presentations to a wider public the leadership of the German Protestant mission movement integrated appeals to confessional pride long before it considered appealing to nationalist pride. Warneck, a dedicated anti-Catholic, tried to apply others' anti-Catholicism to the project of inspiring greater *Missionsgeist*. He pointed out to readers of the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* that in the Catholic Church the "churchly consciousness" exceeded the "Christian consciousness." But, he claimed, in spite of this deficit the disunited Protestants still generated greater mission efforts. If Protestants could be inspired to match Catholics in "churchly" commitment then the contributions for mission work would grow.<sup>31</sup> Warneck's description of the Catholic Church provided a tool to try and shame his readers into greater efforts to inspire "mission spirit."

The financial crisis that began in the 1890s continued the long conversation amongst Protestant missionary leaders and intellectuals about the difficulties of inspiring sufficient support for their work in the wider Protestant public. As Warneck

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<sup>30</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (February 15, 1906), BMW/bmw1/1779.

<sup>31</sup> Warneck, "Kirchenmission oder Freie Mission," 106.

put it in 1896, “the home [*heimatliche*] Christians must take up [the] work [of mission]” if they wished for the mission project to fulfill the potential gains in a world opened by God for evangelization.<sup>32</sup> Twelve years later he remained determined to foster mission in the *Heimat* because, he wrote, “In the *Heimat* is the source of our mission strength,” and the strength of mission to “create and nourish” Christians in Germany remained a core element of the missionary project. In a reciprocal fashion, because of the connection Warneck argued existed between *Heimat* and mission field, the failings of mission were not only the fault of missionaries, mission methods, heathens and recent converts. The blame also rested in “large measure” on the spread of “Christians-in-name-only” from the West and metropolitan Christians who did not take their “mission obligations” seriously enough.<sup>33</sup> The challenges of financing missionary activities did not abate during the first decade of the twentieth century. And in response *Missionswissenschaftler* continued to advocate expanding religious paths to address the problem.

Local Protestant clergy frequently served as the focus of mission society leaders’ and *Missionswissenschaftlers*’ plans to cultivate “mission spirit.” In a communication with the Brandenburg Provincial Synod of 1908 the Berlin Mission Society emphasized local clergymen’s role. “We consider [the clergymen] as the natural guardians of mission life,” the Society wrote. The Berlin Society promised that it would improve its delivery of the latest in mission information so that pastors

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<sup>32</sup> [Gustav Warneck], “Der Anteil des evangelischen Deutschland an dem Werke der Weltchristianisierung,” *AMZ* 23(1896): 4.

<sup>33</sup> [Gustav Warneck], “Die Mission im Schatten des Weltverkehrs,” *AMZ* 35(1908): 15-16.



would not have to be “autodidacts.”<sup>34</sup> At the same time, the Berlin Mission complained to the Synod of its difficulties raising enough money to support its activities. Once again the hope that “in the future an active interest in mission work would be seized upon by our Protestant *Volk*” appeared from the leaders of the Berlin Mission.<sup>35</sup> And again missionary leaders proposed an intensification of educational efforts to induce donations, and the Berlin Mission called on the *Ausschuß* to take up the responsibility as well.<sup>36</sup>

In the same vein, a proposal was offered by Friedrich Würz of the Basel Mission Society to Paul Schwartz of the Leipzig Mission to combine the efforts of all the members of the Bremen Continental Mission Conference. By joining together their promotional activities the mission societies would both avoid conflict amongst themselves and alienation of their supporters. The leadership of the societies would be “loyal” to one another and prohibited from defaming sister organizations.<sup>37</sup> By the standards of promotional efforts up to this point, Würz’s proposal amounted to a radical innovation. The Berlin Society told its regional supporters that at the urging of the *Ausschuß* it proposed a regulation of fundraising and advocacy work to avoid unnecessary conflicts between mission societies and the wasted resources that could result.<sup>38</sup> The Berlin *Komitee* then forwarded to its regional supporters strategies proposed by Würz and Schwartz to address foreign mission societies’ fundraising

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<sup>34</sup> “Bericht über die Tätigkeit der Missionskonferenz in der Provinz Brandenburg im Zeitraum vom 1. Juli 1905 bis dahin 1908” (n.d., [1908?]), BMW/bmw1/1119.

<sup>35</sup> “Bericht über die Tätigkeit der Berliner Missionsgesellschaft in den Jahre 1905-1907,” (July 14, 1908), BMW/bmw1/1119.

<sup>36</sup> Minutes of the Berlin Mission Society Komitee (June 30, 1909), BMW/bmw1/54, Item 13.

<sup>37</sup> Friedrich Würz to Paul Schwartz (November 24, 1909), AFS/ALMW-DHM II.27.1.15.I.

<sup>38</sup> Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society to Provincial Association Chairmen of the Berlin Mission Society (May 4, 1910), BMW/bmw1/183. There are numerous examples in the archives of the mission societies of these sorts of conflicts over fundraising territories, for a good sampling see the records of the Moravian Church, UA.MD 505.

difficulties in the *Heimat*.<sup>39</sup> Pastors and other philanthropists in the provinces were asked by the Berlin Mission to follow the suggestion and commit to supporting one mission society rather than diffusing their support to multiple societies. This was expected to help concentrate moneys and prevent the duplication of effort by multiple societies, all in the interest of fundraising innovation.

At the 1909 Bremen Mission Conference some more “rethinking” of missions’ relationships to their supporters was offered by the Swede Karl Fries, founding secretary of the World’s Student Christian Federation. He was an important international figure in the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) and a leader in the student mission movement. His presentation, “Cooperation by the Educated Classes in Heathen Mission,” argued that while God made no preference for “educated” over “uneducated” followers, mission could benefit by concentrating on the educated circles because “[t]heir example work[ed] with ten-fold force.” The seizure of the educated classes for mission would be the key to a victory for mission in all social circles.<sup>40</sup> In reality, however, Fries’ proposal did not markedly differ from the very strategy Warneck and his associates had put into practice with their editorial policy at the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*. Fries examined the success of the lay mission movement in North America and provided a list of concrete suggestions for matching that success elsewhere. His proposals included “greater consideration” of the print media in the work of mission society leaders, recruitment of “distinguished” men to speak for the interests of mission, the greater development

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<sup>39</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (February 26, 1910), BMW/bmw1/183.

<sup>40</sup> Karl Fries, “Die Mitarbeit der gebildeten Volkskreise an der Heidenmission,” *Verhandlungen der Kontinentalen Missions-Konferenz* 12(1909): 118.

of effective publicity in the form of lectures and print materials, and “strengthening and deepening” of faith life.<sup>41</sup> In short, Fries proposed a typical program of greater awareness and education directed in the same manner toward the same groups whom German missionary leaders had sought out since the 1870s.

Fries was not the only missionary leader thinking about how to reignite the mission fire in 1909. The linguist Carl Meinhof presented on a similar topic to the Saxon Mission Conference that same year. He renewed the rejection by Warneck and others of official church sanction because “[h]eathen mission in Germany had always been a work of the freest love” drawn from people of every class. Even so, support for mission remained weakest in the prosperous and educated cities. Meinhof listed the causes for this, each, according to him, vested in a misconception. The educated and prosperous merchants and industrialists of the cities held misperceptions that non-Christians were converted by force, that conflict between the different churches damaged the esteem of Whites, that elevation of “natives” gave Europeans difficulties, that indigenous religions suited indigenous peoples better than Christianity, and that money and effort spent on foreign mission neglected necessary causes in Germany.<sup>42</sup> To each of these objections Meinhof offered a rebuttal and went on to suggest that once mission societies successfully delegitimized these ideas merchants and industrialists would support mission as an “obligation of honor.” This would be achieved by missionary leaders demonstrating the “mercantile, industrial, [and] juristic works” achieved by every mission enterprise.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Fries, “Die Mitarbeit der gebildeten Volkskreise,” 124.

<sup>42</sup> Carl Meinhof, “Die Laien und ihre Heranziehung zur Mitarbeit an der Mission,” *Jahrbuch der Sächsischen Missionskonferenz* 22(1909): 91-93.

<sup>43</sup> Meinhof, “Die Laien und ihre Heranziehung,” 95.

Meinhof's innovation was not in identifying the problem. But his call for Germany's mission leaders to demonstrate the utility of missionaries to practical interests shows the beginnings of a slippage away from the religious ideal of mission fundraising and popularization. He proposed the use of "magic lantern" shows in public gatherings to appeal to this target audience. It is noteworthy that these were the same methods used to great success by the Colonial Society and the Navy League to promote their nationalist agendas.<sup>44</sup> Meinhof's target audience resembled in every way the "educated circles" of earlier years; but Meinhof did acknowledge that the middle class had changed somewhat in character as a result of the industrial and commercial changes wrought in Germany during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He adopted the idea of a collective promotional organization for the German Protestant mission, telling his audience that "[w]hat one society cannot achieve with all its friends, could be achieved by all the societies" if they implemented an improved program of propaganda.<sup>45</sup> Most importantly, Meinhof opened the door for missionaries to make an argument for support that emphasized mission's "practical" over its "religious" utility.

### **The Nationalist Argument**

With his proposal that German mission sought to present a more popular public face to Germany's middle classes Meinhof joined a growing chorus of voices

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<sup>44</sup> On the Navy League see Volker R. Berghahn, *Der Tirpitz-Plan: Genesis und Verfall einer innenpolitischen Krisenstrategie unter Wilhelm II.* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1971); and on the Colonial Society see Pierard, "The German Colonial Society, 1882-1914."

<sup>45</sup> Meinhof, "Die Laien und ihre Heranziehung," 97.

in the mission movement interested in demonstrating the national utility of German Protestant mission. This change, as has been shown in other areas, took place around 1908 and 1909. As was true in the ideological debates of *Missionswissenschaftler* and educational policy debates amongst German mission leaders, the total shift to a nationalist tack was not complete until after the start of the First World War in August 1914. However, around 1908-1909 the financial difficulties of the missions provided those in favor of a more nationalist missionary program another opportunity to bring the nation into conversations about the missions' promotional messages. Voices within the Protestant mission movement had trouble overcoming more traditional "anti-"nationalists and much of the impetus for nationalization of missionary fundraising would come from outside the movement.

An indicator of this new situation came in 1909 in a memorandum from the *Oberkirchenrat* of Prussia as well as a report by a commission appointed by the General Synod of Prussia, both regarding foreign mission. In both documents officials of the organized church showed a new interest in the activities of the mission societies. In contrast to their ambivalence during the 1860s and -70s, the *Oberkirchenrat* chastised German Protestants for not doing enough to support the mission societies.<sup>46</sup> Officials of the *Oberkirchenrat* and the General Synod had apparently both been swayed to the growing view amongst some Christians (including many missionaries) that the twentieth century would be a century marked by great conflicts among the so-called "world religions." The memorandum produced by the Prussian church council noted the growth of national movements in East Asia as an indicator of the expanded need for Christian evangelization to protect against

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<sup>46</sup> Gensichen, "German Protestant Missions," 181.

the birth of “Christ-less culture[s] direct[ed] toward apostasy, atheism, and materialism.”<sup>47</sup> The commission of the General Synod shared these sentiments, “The searching and wrestling by awakened peoples for truth and freedom must be guided on the right course; only the Gospels can lead to truth and freedom, to the noblest culture.”<sup>48</sup> Drawn into a worldview that perceived the world’s cultures on the brink of some great religious clash, the official church authorities grasped at the mission societies as a tool to help win the struggle.

The *Oberkirchenrat* ignored its role in creating the historically disappointing support for mission. Instead it criticized the cultural place of mission in German society and, to do so, adopted a common motif of complaints around this period. The memorandum gloried in the strength of the mission movement in the United Kingdom and the United States and lamented Germany’s mission movement’s weakness. Unlike the situation in Germany, mission in the Anglophone countries was able to effectively bring together the religious, humanitarian, national, and economic impulses; mission was an essential element of British and American culture. According to the *Oberkirchenrat* mission was “*volkstümlich*” – an intimate part of British and American life. All hope was not lost, according to the authors of the memorandum. The colonial interest had begun to grow in Germany in recent years and hopefully Germans would soon begin to see mission work as a national project like the British did. The *Oberkirchenrat*’s memorandum must have met with the

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<sup>47</sup> “Denkschrift des Evangelischen Ober-Kirchenrats, betreffend die äußere Mission, Sechste ordentliche Generalsynode 1909,” (n.d.), BMW/bmw1/1120.

<sup>48</sup> “Berichte I. der Kommission IV für Äußere und Innere Mission über den Antrag des Synodalen Friedemann mit Amendementsantrag des Synodalen D. Scholz (Berlin), betreffend die Denkschrift des Evangelischen Ober-Kirchenrats über die Äußere Mission (November 4, 1909), BMW/bmw1/1119.

approval of the leaders of the mission societies because it was further distributed by the societies to their support networks. The Berlin society asked its supporters to distribute it to “small and middling” newspapers to ensure it reached as wide a public as possible.<sup>49</sup> Mission societies here demonstrated a response that would be repeated in 1913 during the *Nationalspende*; they themselves might not be willing to adopt a nationalist argument (excepting the Bethel Mission, of course), but mission societies had become more than willing to have other institutions and groups make the argument for them.

It was not only the organized church that sought to inspire Germans to greater missionary efforts out of rivalry with the Anglophone nations. Gustav Warneck noted the dominance of the British and Americans within the international mission movement as early as 1896.<sup>50</sup> He wrote, “Our Lord God ordered it so that the different nations possessed different gifts,” which required that Germany participate in the world evangelical project with its fullest resources.<sup>51</sup> And early in his career Julius Richter made a study trip in England and Scotland to investigate British fundraising and promotional methods. In 1898, he produced for the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* a report of his conclusions, which were, in short, that in all things Germany had much to learn from its co-religionists across the North Sea. The British missions’ activities rested in part on their success in the major cities, where they organized substantial “mission weeks,” during which mission gatherings were put on in such profusion that the “entire population [was] absorbed” with the topic of

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<sup>49</sup> “Denkschrift des Evangelischen Ober-Kirchenrats, betreffend die äußere Mission, Sechste ordentliche Generalsynode 1909,” (n.d.), BMW/bmw1/1120.

<sup>50</sup> Warneck, “Der Anteil des evangelischen Deutschland,” 4.

<sup>51</sup> Warneck, “Der Anteil des evangelischen Deutschland,” 7-8.

mission.<sup>52</sup> The great financial resources of the British mission movement both made possible and were provided for by the substantial publishing arm that English and Scot mission societies had at their disposal. And this literature effectively reached the British middle classes, the very soul of British religious associational life. This, according to Richter, was one of the greatest deficits of the German literature; it failed to appeal to the educated classes.<sup>53</sup> Unfortunately, German missions could not afford to do what the British did, spend considerable effort and sums on publishing efforts, which, according to Richter, “[brought] a return of millions.”<sup>54</sup> The British excelled at inspiring *Missionsgeist* amongst those groups the German missionaries had coveted for a generation. Richter’s report did not offer any substantive solution to the Germans’ deficits but the tone of awe and envy at British success betrayed a growing sense of inferiority amongst German leaders and supporters of mission. In 1898 the rivalry was not particularly heated, but the general message that the British and Americans were superior Christians by virtue of the support mission received on their “home front” would grow and help feed bitterness amongst German missionary intellectuals.

The commission’s report from the General Synod seized upon the clash of religions. It asked its audience, “Should German East Africa become Christian or Mohammedan?” The commission’s members argued that all of Protestant Christianity had been called to the flag, and Germany must take its place in the line of battle.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Julius Richter, “Die heimatliche Missionsarbeit in England und Deutschland,” *AMZ* 25(1898): 265.

<sup>53</sup> Richter, “Die heimatliche Missionsarbeit,” 268-270.

<sup>54</sup> Richter, “Die heimatliche Missionsarbeit,” 273.

<sup>55</sup> “Berichte I. der Kommission IV für Äußere und Innere Mission über den Antrag des Synodalen Friedemann mit Amendementsantrag des Synodalen D. Scholz (Berlin), betreffend die Denkschrift des Evangelischen Ober-Kirchenrats über die Äußere Mission (November 4, 1909), BMW/bmw1/1119.



Furthermore, Germany's place in the international order and responsibilities as a colonial power required that the nation support its missionaries. Both the General Synod's and the *Oberkirchenrat*'s reports show how the official church had gone from seeing support for mission as a matter of private faith to one of national purpose. This linkage was echoed in a report produced for the Berlin *Komitee* in late 1913. Siegfried Knak, one of the Berlin Mission's inspectors, noted that in eastern Germany the mission was "tightly bound" with the organized church. Knak noted the fraught nature of this connection as it might lead many of the mission's supporters to fear for the mission's independence. But Knak was not as concerned. He observed that the mission stood between the organized church and the Pietist associational movements that viewed the state church with suspicion. This position provided the "chance and therefore the responsibility...to cross-fertilize the vibrant vigor" of both religious groups and use them to advance the goals of the Berlin Mission.<sup>56</sup>

The new strategy of calling on Germans' national pride may have originated, in part, in the minds of officials of the state churches, but it had antecedents internal to the mission movement as well. It should be no surprise that Karl Axenfeld offered an opinion in this vein as early as 1910. He had been added to the *Ausschuß* and taken on the planning for German Protestant mission societies' participation in the 1910 Colonial Congress in Berlin. In that capacity he contacted the other mission societies. In his letter he urged the other missions to encourage their supporters to attend the Congress in support of German mission and German colonialism. He referred to the recently concluded Edinburgh Mission Conference with tones similar to Richter's 1898 report on England and Scotland. The Edinburgh Conference, according to

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<sup>56</sup> Siegfried Knak, "Vertraulicher Heimatbericht" (October 1, 1913), BMW/bmw1/57.

Axenfeld, had revealed that Germany lagged behind its “Anglo-Saxon cousins, especially in the winning of broader circles of the population to an understanding of the extent of our work” and, beyond that, the gathering of financial support.<sup>57</sup> The Berlin Congress presented the *Ausschuß* and its constituents with an opportunity to address this deficit. “It is rightly said that the Colonial Congress can earn for our German mission work a great reputation.”<sup>58</sup> Axenfeld represented a new generation of missionary leaders focused on the German character of the mission movement and interested in attaching it to the German nation. Along with this ideological goal Axenfeld also hoped the mission societies might address their financial needs.

Axenfeld’s view, though increasingly common, did not dominate in all circles. The future head of the *Ausschuß*, Theodor Öhler, clung to the message of Christian universalism during this period. His position as a member of the German mission movement based outside the *Kaiserreich* may have encouraged this stance but he was also made the head of the *Ausschuß* by his German peers. Though Öhler’s mission was headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, it was considered by the German mission societies to be one of their own. He argued that the strength of mission in the *Heimat* was its universalism and its ability to unite Christians religiously, not nationally.<sup>59</sup> Carl Paul of the Leipzig Mission noted that, in the past, mission societies founded from a “mixture of religious and national blood” were completely gone by 1900.<sup>60</sup> Both men continued to distrust the linkage of mission work with nationalist publicity even for financial purposes.

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<sup>57</sup> Karl Axenfeld to the German Protestant mission societies (July 29, 1910), BMW/bmw1/8340

<sup>58</sup> Axenfeld to the German Protestant mission societies (July 29, 1910), BMW/bmw1/8340. Emphasis in the original.

<sup>59</sup> Öhler, “Was kann die heimatliche Kirche,” 220-221.

<sup>60</sup> Paul, “Zwanzig Jahre,” 111.

But others began implementing new strategies to address mission societies' growing fiscal difficulties. In late 1913 the *Komitee* of the Berlin Mission shared a plan of action for "reviving the mission mind" in Germany. The report identified a number of strategies that could be pursued to maximize the effectiveness of mission activities in Germany in support of overseas evangelical work. Included was a commitment to "winning the colonially interested circles." This would be done by "clarifying" the importance of mission to colonial success and through presentations directly to these groups, including the officer corps. These presentations must have been organized around national themes, especially when one takes into account the strong nationalism espoused by the various associations and groups interested in colonial issues. These groups were more important to the plan of the *Komitee* than religious groups.<sup>61</sup> The *Komitee*'s new plan marked a shift in the thinking towards the national argument by missionary leaders when it came to solving the mission societies' financial challenges.

Axenfeld's interests echoed a mood amongst German Protestant missionaries gaining influence in the last years before World War I. He and like-minded leaders wanted to promote the place of the mission movement in Germany and to establish a specifically German mission movement as an important player within the international movement. Advocates of "Germanizing" the mission movement in this manner began aggressively campaigning for the next international mission conference to be held in a German city. The conference, scheduled for 1920 and conceived by the delegates at the 1910 Edinburgh Conference, had passed into the hands of a

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<sup>61</sup> "Vorschläge der Dezemberversammlung zur Belebung des Missionssinnes in der Heimat" (n.d., [February 1914?]), BMW/bmw1/58.

Continuation Committee which included Julius Richter and Friedrich Würz. The *Ausschuß* called on both to continue their advocacy in favor of a German host city for the conference to solidify Germany's place in the international mission movement and to legitimize missionaries in German national culture.<sup>62</sup>

Nine months later the *Ausschuß* produced an "expert opinion" that the 1920 World Mission Conference should take place in Germany. Their argument emphasized that the European continent was the important third leg of the world Protestant missionary movement (Great Britain and North America were the other two), and since Great Britain had hosted the 1910 conference and New York had hosted the 1900 conference, therefore the continent should be next, and Germany made the best candidate. Second, the *Ausschuß* argued that "Germany need[ed] the World Mission Conference." Germany had achieved unification and become a great people of global importance (*Weltvolk*) "overnight." This had complicated the crisis of faith in Germany encouraged by secularization and rationalism. According to the Germans, this crisis threatened to overwhelm all the other nations, but it could be avoided with a global mission conference, which could give German Protestants the strongest presentation of the achievements and practical successes of the "Age of Global Mission." A strong presentation of Protestant missionary strength could provide a key counterattack in the struggle against secularizing forces.<sup>63</sup> By holding the 1920 Conference in Germany the force of international cooperation would resolve

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<sup>62</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (February 20, 1913), BMW/bmw1/1779, Item 5.

<sup>63</sup> "Gutachten des deutschen Missions-Ausschusses über die nächste Welt-Missionskonferenz und ihre Tagung in Deutschland" (July 31, 1914), BMW/bmw1/8334. Karl Fries' lecture at the 1909 Bremen Conference made a similar case that Germans were less religious than the Anglophone nations, especially America and Canada. He offered this as an explanation for German mission societies' weak financial position as compared to the American movement. See Fries, "Die Mitarbeit der gebildeten Volkskreise," 120.

the “political and ecclesiastical” social crisis in Germany. At the core of this justification was a desire to assert Germany’s international influence in the mission sphere as a companion to its obvious international economic and political influence. Nationalist missionaries’ arguments matched the theories of German *Weltpolitik* being promoted by the Kaiser’s circle and in the ultra-nationalist movements during the period. Like those groups’ arguments, the missionaries’ position asserted German Protestant missionaries’ right to a place in the international missionary order commensurate with Germany’s status as a great nation.

### *Nationalspende*

In late 1912 and early 1913 some missionary intellectuals began to develop new ideas for developing Germany’s “mission spirit” oriented around patriotic justifications. Karl Axenfeld and Julius Richter led this move and articulated a new ideology of national mission in the literature of *Missionswissenschaft*. At the same time, a remarkable national event with repercussions for the German mission movement took shape. It started outside of the mission movement before drawing the mission societies into its operations. This event, the *Nationalspende*, was initiated on the national level by Kurt von Wedel of the Prussian *Herrenhaus*, the upper house of Prussia’s bicameral legislature, to honor Kaiser Wilhelm II’s twenty-fifth royal jubilee. The *Nationalspende* marked a true sea change in the relationship between the German Protestant mission movement and the rhetoric and institutions of the nation in Wilhelmine Germany. The fundraising campaign explicitly utilized the language of

national service and duty in conjunction with German missions, its organization and operations were coordinated in cooperation with the Prussian state and German imperial governments, the campaign in support of the offering brought in politicians and associations from the secular colonial and nationalist movements, and it ultimately confirmed to missionary leaders the effectiveness of adopting nationalist tropes in support of their religious mission.

The specific germ for the *Nationalspende* came from the mind of the Magdeburg-based publisher Robert Friedrich Faber. Faber favored the national liberal political view, joining the *Deutsche Volkspartei* (German People's Party) of Gustav Stresemann in the Weimar years. His influence as the chairperson of the *Vereins Deutscher Zeitungs-Verleger* (Association of German Newspaper Publishers) gave his support for the *Nationalspende* particular force. He communicated his initial idea for a celebration of the Kaiser's jubilee in a letter to the *Oberpräsident* (Provincial Governor) of the Prussian province of Saxony, Eduard Wilhelm von Hegel who, fortuitously, had experience in the Prussian Ministry of Spiritual, Educational, and Medical Affairs (*Kultusministerium*). Hegel's own political loyalties were with the German Conservative Party, for whom he served in the *Reichstag* from 1887 to 1890 for Jerichow near Magdeburg.

Faber proposed that the province make some gesture to honor the Kaiser's jubilee in 1913 and that the celebration be in support of German mission. He had been struck by the idea after reading an essay in Paul Rohrbach's book on Germany's "cultural work" in China.<sup>64</sup> The Magdeburg publisher noted Rohrbach's argument

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<sup>64</sup> Paul Rohrbach, ed., *Deutsche Kulturaufgaben in China: Beiträge zur Erkenntnis nationaler Verantwortlichkeit*, (Berlin: Buchverlag der "Hilfe", 1910). On Paul Rohrbach see Mogk, *Paul*

that “our world-economic and world-political expansion” included achievements in foreign mission, “but nonetheless [German foreign mission] remained not nearly as robust...as those of the great Anglo-Saxon nations.” German missions lacked the commitment from the highest to the lowest members of society that British and American mission societies enjoyed. Faber suggested that if German missions did a better job of supplementing their message of Christian spirituality with messages of economic expansion they would have greater success.<sup>65</sup>

The form of the event to honor the Kaiser was amorphous in Faber’s letter; he suggested initially a grand assembly of supporters of mission and hoped that such an event would be organized in every province of Prussia and the German Empire. The connection, for Faber, of missions and the Kaiser he explained to Hegel. He argued that Wilhelm II was “the first to recognize the necessity for [Germany’s] global economic and political activities,” a restatement of *Weltpolitik*. Faber continued that to him it seemed that it was also an “urgent and compelling national necessity” that an interest in Germany’s colonies be stimulated in the Empire. This program would assuredly excite the support of every citizen; if every German province took part then there would be no question of Catholic-Protestant animosity. He even noted that “Our Jewish countrymen would perhaps be prepared to contribute for medical mission.”<sup>66</sup> Faber’s proposal clearly had its roots in the secular colonialist movement as revealed by Faber’s direct reference to the work of Paul Rohrbach. Furthermore, it sought to

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*Rohrbach und das “Größere Deutschland”*; and H. W. Smith, *The Continuities of German History*, 167-210.

<sup>65</sup> Robert Friedrich Faber to Oberpräsident Eduard Wilhelm von Hegel (October 31, 1912), BMW/bmw1/1211.

<sup>66</sup> Robert Friedrich Faber to Oberpräsident Eduard Wilhelm von Hegel (October 31, 1912), BMW/bmw1/1211.

unify Germany's disparate confessions to support mission through the unifying language and ideology of nationalism – a devout wish of many German nationalists.

The early path from Faber's letter to the nation-wide *Nationalspende* is somewhat difficult to reconstruct from the records. In late December 1912 the younger Friedrich von Bodelschwingh, son of the founder of the Bethel movement and his father's successor, answered Julius Richter on the topic. Bodelschwingh's answer revealed that many missionaries were ambivalent about participating in the proposed *Nationalspende*. Bodelschwingh acknowledged that the proposed fundraising campaign violated the traditions of the mission movement. In fact, he regarded the plan with concern for the spiritual and political autonomy of missionary endeavors. But even without official mission society support the *Nationalspende* moved forward. Supporters had already begun forming provincial committees to manage activities locally.<sup>67</sup> From this evidence it took about two months for Faber's idea to move from proposal to a nation-wide organized fundraising operation. The spark of Faber's celebratory idea had clearly ignited waiting tinder amongst groups outside the Protestant mission movement.

The first meetings of the Central Committee for the *Nationalspende* took place in early December of 1912. These meetings were organized by presidents of the *Herrenhaus*, von Wedel, and of the Prussian *Landtag*, the Lower House, Hans von Schwerin-Löwitz. Both men were members of the Prussian aristocracy and firmly entrenched members of conservative circles. A second meeting was scheduled for January 9, and that meeting's attendees included powerful and influential individuals who stood in close proximity to the imperial royal family, as well as important

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<sup>67</sup> Friedrich von Bodelschwingh d.J. to Julius Richter (December 30, 1912), HAB Sam 2/50-4.



leaders of the Prussian religious establishment. Faber attended and was joined by the most important colonial publisher in Germany and economic colonialist member of the *Kolonialrat*, Ernst Vohsen.<sup>68</sup> Among those on the committee from the royal court were von Wedel, who, in addition to his position in the *Herrenhaus*, held the ceremonial title of *Rittermeister*; Albert von Schwerin, who had a long career of aristocratic philanthropy including the *Johanniterorden* and as a member of the Empress Auguste Victoria's *Evangelischer Kirchenbauverein* which raised funds to build churches to combat socialism in Germany's cities;<sup>69</sup> and the Court Chaplain, Ernst Dryander. Other key state officials on the committee included, along with Hegel, the President of the *Oberkirchenrat*, Bodo Voigts, and the President of the Consistory of the Protestant Church of Kassel, Kurt Schenk, the retired *Kultusminister*, Heinrich von Studt, and Undersecretary of the Colonial Office, Peter Conze, sent in Colonial Minister Wilhelm Solf's place.<sup>70</sup> Representatives of both the Catholic and Protestant missionary movements were also in attendance, from the Protestants: the *Missionswissenschaftler* Carl Meinhof and Julius Richter; the President of the liberal Universal Evangelical Protestant Mission Association, August Kind; and Max Berner, from both the Colonial Office and the Berlin Mission; and

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<sup>68</sup> Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa*, 187.

<sup>69</sup> For some discussion of the *Kirchenbauverein* see Wolfgang Ribbe, "Zur Entwicklung und Funktion der Pfarrgemeinden in der evangelischen Kirche Berlins bis zum Ende der Monarchie," in *Seelsorge und Diakonie in Berlin: Beiträge zum Verhältnis von Kirche und Großstadt im 19. und beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Kaspar Elm and Hans-Dietrich Loock (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), 233-263; and the much less scholarly Iselin Gundermann, *Kirchenbau und Diakonie: Kaiserin Auguste Victoria und der Evangelisch-kirchliche Hilfsverein*, Hefte des Evangelischen Kirchenbauvereins 7 (Berlin: Evangelischer Kirchenbauverein, 1991).

<sup>70</sup> Hans von Schwerin-Löwitz to Wilhelm Solf (January 2, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 86. 1/2/1913.

from the Catholics: Felix Porsch, chairman of the Catholic Center Party;<sup>71</sup> Alois zu Löwenstein, the Center Party's colonial expert; and Amandus Acker, head of the German branch of the missionary Holy Ghost Fathers. Apologetic non-attendees included Paul Rohrbach, Franz Hespers, and other esteemed secular and religious colonialists.<sup>72</sup>

From the beginning the Central Committee for the *Nationalspende* committed to making the organization “national...of all confessions and every middle-class [party].” Johann Albrecht zu Mecklenburg, Prince of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and titular head of the German Colonial Society, took the *Nationalspende* under his aristocratic protection, an act which further linked the movement with secular colonial interests. Catholic participation was assured by the Center delegates with the guarantee that moneys raised by Catholic Germans would be designated only for Catholic missions. The assembled agreed that funds raised should be restricted to the German territories and those “Christian missions working in a German spirit in the German protectorates.” This convoluted phrasing came about to assure that societies like the Basel Mission, whose base was in Switzerland, and the White Fathers, officially based in French Algeria but with a sizeable German branch operating in the German colonies, could be included as beneficiaries of the campaign. The missionaries in attendance did not give in completely to the national tone, arguing successfully that since missions were first and foremost a religious endeavor they would not participate in a campaign that completely deemphasized those qualities.

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<sup>71</sup> On Porsch see August Hermann Leugers-Scherzberg, *Felix Porsch 1853-1930: Politik für katholische Interessen in Kaiserreich und Republik* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1990).

<sup>72</sup> Sitzung betreffs Jubiläumsspende für seine Majestät den Kaiser in der Präsidialwohnung des Landtages, Berlin W. am 9. Januar 1913, Nachmittag 4 Uhr, pag. 1-2 (January 9, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 94-97.

They did, nonetheless, concede that the “civilizing” work of the missions was of “priceless value” and should be emphasized in promotional materials for the *Nationalsspende*.<sup>73</sup>

As its final action the committee formed a “working group” to take over most of the work of organizing the *Nationalsspende*. Wedel was made chairman with Löwenstein as his deputy. The other members were the two originators, Hegel and Faber; Porsch, Berner, Kind, and Richter. The option was left open to add a representative from financial circles. The working group was given its instructions and the meeting closed.<sup>74</sup> Shortly thereafter the Kaiser “benevolently sanctioned” the plan presented by the Central Committee.<sup>75</sup> The outcome of this first meeting was an integration of national priorities with the missionary project only barely resisted by the missionary representatives. This acquiescence was not universal, as we will see, but the *Nationalsspende* carried such symbolic and financial weight that it overwhelmed missionary attempts at independence.

The *Nationalsspende*’s Central Committee’s emphasis on national legitimacy came through in Schwerin-Löwitz’s letter to Solf following the meeting. Per Conze’s comments during the January 9 meeting, Schwerin-Löwitz inquired if Solf wished to accept a position on the Central Committee.<sup>76</sup> The president of the Prussian *Landtag*

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<sup>73</sup> Sitzung betreffs Jubiläumsspende für seine Majestät den Kaiser in der Präsidialwohnung des Landtages, Berlin W. am 9. Januar 1913, Nachmittag 4 Uhr, pag. 2-4 (January 9, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 94-97.

<sup>74</sup> Sitzung betreffs Jubiläumsspende für seine Majestät den Kaiser in der Präsidialwohnung des Landtages, Berlin W. am 9. Januar 1913, Nachmittag 4 Uhr, pag. 5-7 (January 9, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 94-97.

<sup>75</sup> Schwerin-Löwitz to Solf (January 11, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 90-92.

<sup>76</sup> Conze had informed the Central Committee that his presence at the January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting did not indicate that he had been sent as the Colonial Office’s representative. He said he was willing but believed that Solf wished to accept the position himself. See Sitzung betreffs Jubiläumsspende für

informed Solf that the Central Committee had agreed to support all German missions working in German colonies, and an agreement from both confessions had formed the *Nationalsspende* and the Central Committee as a communal project integrating members of both confessions. The presence of the Colonial Secretary on the Central Committee would further “legitimize” the endeavor before the nation.<sup>77</sup> While there is no extant record of Solf agreeing to participate on the Central Committee in January of 1913, in a later letter from Solf to Wedel, the Colonial Secretary asked to be included as a sponsor of the *Nationalsspende*.<sup>78</sup>

Among the instructions issued to the working group of the Central Committee was the directive to draft an appeal to the German people, an *Aufruf*, to launch the new fundraising campaign.<sup>79</sup> It was decided at an early point to use two separate appeals, one for each confession, because the Catholic bishops insisted that they could not place their seal upon any call for donations that supported the Protestant church, a principle that must have sounded familiar to anyone aware of the details of the *Benediktinerstreit* which was at its hottest in early 1913.<sup>80</sup> As a consequence, two committees, one for each confession, were formed for the production and distribution of the initial *Aufruf*.<sup>81</sup> These two committees would also produce a newsletter of the

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seine Majestät den Kaiser in der Präsidialwohnung des Landtages, Berlin W. am 9. Januar 1913, Nachmittag 4 Uhr, pag. 7 (January 9, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 94-97.

<sup>77</sup> Schwerin-Löwitz to Solf (January 11, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 90-92.

<sup>78</sup> Solf to Kurt von Wedel (January 23, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 99.

<sup>79</sup> Sitzung betreffs Jubiläumsspende für seine Majestät den Kaiser in der Präsidialwohnung des Landtages, Berlin W. am 9. Januar 1913, Nachmittag 4 Uhr, pag. 6 (January 9, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 94-97.

<sup>80</sup> See chapter two of this dissertation.

<sup>81</sup> Wedel to Solf (January 20, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 100.

*Nationalspende*'s activities for distribution within the organization and to interested third parties.<sup>82</sup>

In the end the published call for donations was not substantively different between the Catholic and Protestant versions. In both versions of the *Aufruf* support for the *Nationalspende* was cast as a national duty. Unsurprisingly, a call for donations in the name of the Kaiser opened with a declaration that the German people needed a way to express their "gratitude" to the emperor. The Central Committee made public its argument that the twenty-five years of Wilhelm II's reign had marked Germany's ascension to global prominence. Germany's colonies, "developed and brought to flower," served as evidence that "German character and German culture" were the basis of this success. And it told readers, "Among the most effective pioneers of German civilization [*Gesittung*] in the protectorates belong the Christian missions."<sup>83</sup>

According to the *Aufruf*, all of Germany bore the responsibility to serve the "national and humanitarian" project of the Christian missions in Germany's colonies.

<sup>84</sup> To redouble this appeal to Germans' national pride the writers of the *Aufruf* informed their readers that the other colonial states had recognized their responsibilities long ago and provided their missions with rich support. It was the design of the *Nationalspende* to address this "gap in the fulfillment of [Germany's]

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<sup>82</sup> An example: *Mitteilungen über die Nationalspende*. (April 16, 1913), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

<sup>83</sup> The early draft lacks this sentence. BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 102-103.

<sup>84</sup> The Catholic and Protestant versions are identical but for one paragraph. The Protestant version "Nationalspende zum Kaiserjubiläum für die christlichen Missionen in unseren Kolonien und Schutzgebieten" (n.d. [February 1913?]), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184; Catholic version: "Nationalspende zum Kaiserjubiläum für die christlichen Missionen in unseren Kolonien und Schutzgebieten" (February 16, 1913), BMW/bmw1/1211. Emphasis mine.

national duty.” The *Nationalspende* was itself an expression of national duty, the *Aufruf* made that obvious. It noted that Germans of both confessions had set aside their differences for the dual goal of honoring the Kaiser and raising awareness and financial support for the German missions. The missions were now transformed, against their wishes in many cases, into servants of German global power and German national culture. The call for contributions made this transformation of the mission societies all the clearer with the presence, displayed in the banner at the top of the *Aufruf*, of the name of the protector of the *Nationalspende*, Johann Albrecht zu Mecklenburg, President of the German Colonial Society, and proven opponent of missionary internationalism.<sup>85</sup>

The decision reached at the earlier meetings of the Central Committee, to emphasize missionaries’ “cultural work,” came through in the *Aufruf* produced for Protestant consumption. It told readers that Protestant missionaries, along with their religious work, had built up schools and medical services at their mission stations. Missionaries’ work would “train” the “natives” into “sensible, suitable workers...dependable people” with a “Christian philosophy of life.”<sup>86</sup> At the behest of the Colonial Society, secular nationalists, and government officials, the German Protestant missionaries were transformed in the *Aufruf* into adjunct members of the colonial economic and political machine. And this, as Faber had imagined it in October 1912, became the chief justification for support of German missionaries, not spiritual or religious duty. As the *Aufruf* concluded its plea, “The Jubilee of the Kaiser

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<sup>85</sup> See chapter three of this dissertation.

<sup>86</sup> By contrast, the Catholic version of the *Aufruf* read, “The work of our catholic missions for the development [*Bearbeitung*] of the Holy Ghost has been until now advanced by the enduring and deep zeal of the German Catholics. This zeal has, through the offerings of German Catholics, given our missions the means for a joyful upsurge. However, great works still remain unfinished.”

offers us [the German people] the opportunity...to help our missions and at the same time advance a national interest.”<sup>87</sup>

A second promotional broadside more explicitly emphasized the failings of the German people in contrast to Britain and America. This flyer, “A National Offering for the Kaiser’s Jubilee – for Missions?” (*Eine Nationalspende zum Kaiser-Jubiläum – für die Missionen?*), saw the financial support of the British and Americans for their missionaries as part of a “peaceful competition to conquer the world and draw the heathen peoples” into the American and British spheres. Their missions were the “pioneers of their trade and their national power. Why would we not wish to do the same [with ours]?” This plea continued the secular colonialists’ argument that German missionaries bring German culture to the colonies, that they act as the “first flag-bearers, trailblazers, and cultural pioneers,” and that they pave the way for complete cultural and economic development of the colonies. The *Nationalspende* was to bring together all Germans in “homage” to the Kaiser and the Fatherland. In a peaceful contest with the Anglo-Saxons, the broadsheet closed, America’s yearly contribution to mission was seventy million Marks; England gave 52 million Marks, and Germany contributed “only” 3 million Marks. This must be corrected, “Germany always to the front!”<sup>88</sup>

These calls were followed by the national organization and regional organizations with an extensive program of lectures, revival-style meetings, and publicity programs to promote support for Germany’s “national” missions. By March

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<sup>87</sup> “Nationalspende zum Kaiserjubiläum für die christlichen Missionen in unseren Kolonien und Schutzgebieten” (n.d., [February 1913?]), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

<sup>88</sup> “Eine Nationalspende zum Kaiser-Jubiläum – für die Missionen?” (n.d., [1913?]), BMW/bmw1/12639.

of 1913 most German states and nearly every Prussian province had a local committee for organizing events and gathering donations.<sup>89</sup> In the four months of its activities, over four thousand newspaper articles were published about the *Nationalspende*.<sup>90</sup> Prominent *Missionswissenschaftler* and nationalist mission leaders<sup>91</sup> did give lectures but they were far outnumbered by representatives of the secular colonial movement and their nationalist allies in the publicity campaign. Secular colonialists and nationalists proved more than willing to speak up in favor of Christian mission if it was directed toward German political and economic goals. Though the texts of these speeches are unavailable, it is hard to imagine that a former critic of missionaries' activities like Paul Rohrbach would give much emphasis to the religious achievements and goals of the Christian mission societies. Far fewer members of the mission movement volunteered to speak in favor of the *Nationalspende*.

Official church support was strong. The Prussian *Oberkirchenrat* continued its recent advocacy for overseas mission by throwing its support behind the *Nationalspende*. On Sunday, April 27, every Protestant church under the Prussian state church's authority held a special collection for the *Nationalspende*. The *Oberkirchenrat* instructed pastors to explain the offering as a "reminder of the Christian obligation" to mission and the "special responsibility of the German *Volk*" to the natives of Germany's colonies. The *Oberkirchenrat* also recommended that a

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<sup>89</sup> Wedel to Kultusminister August von Trott zu solz (March 22, 1913), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

<sup>90</sup> *Mitteilungen über die Nationalspende zum Kaiserjubiläum* (June 24, 1913), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

<sup>91</sup> For example, Carl Meinhof delivered a lecture in the Duchy of Anhalt entitled, "German Thought in the World," as part of the campaign for the *Nationalspende*. *Mitteilungen über die Nationalspende* GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.



special collection be taken up in every church on the day of the Kaiser's Jubilee, June 15, and care be taken that it not interfere with the traditional Pentecostal collection for mission in the Protestant churches.<sup>92</sup> The campaign for the promotion of the *Nationalspende*, though done *for* the Protestant and Catholic missions, operated thoroughly *outside* the traditional advocacy groups for Christian mission. The *Ausschuß* put together no organized campaign and, aside from publishing the *Aufruf* in their pages, missionary publications wrote very few articles in support of the *Nationalspende*. The nationalist tone of the campaign echoed a vocal minority's plans for the German Protestant mission societies, but most missionary leaders held their noses and left the nationalization of their project to outside forces.

This hands-off approach undoubtedly grew out of the financial straits into which the Protestant missions had sailed. The prospective government-supported bailout of their evangelical mission must have made many in the mission establishment willing to accept a change in emphasis and rhetoric. This change was, as has been argued, also supported by a new generation of missionary leaders and accepted as a solution to a decades-long financial crisis that had plagued the Protestant mission societies and had proven thoroughly unresponsive to traditional cures by missionaries to elevate Germany's "mission spirit." As a result, support for the *Nationalspende* from the mission societies themselves was sporadic.

According to Knak, the future director of the Berlin Mission, the *Nationalspende* had received a mixed response, "here great excitement, there surprise and restraint," and from other quarters concern and warnings from supporters of the

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<sup>92</sup> Oberkirchenrat to Königliche Konsistorium (April 21, 1913), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

mission society. Skeptics questioned if the nationalistic methods utilized in the *Nationalspende* were appropriately pious, if it were appropriate to address the “inner deficit[s]” of German faith with patriotic fervor for the prosaic goal of replenishing mission coffers.<sup>93</sup> Knak answered that, for one, the impetus for the *Nationalspende* had not arisen from the Berlin Mission Society. Therefore, he seemed to suggest, the Berlin Mission Society was innocent of any patriotic excess. According to the missionary leader, the new fundraising effort would bring contributions and support from groups previously unaware of missionaries’ activities and, it was implied, such support was vitally necessary for the Berlin Mission, which was deeply in debt.

Knak ignored the ways in which the *Nationalspende* entwined German missionaries with secular colonial organizations and instead emphasized that now more Germans understood the essentiality of mission to the vigor of the Gospels as a contemporary message, the import of missionary activities for the healthy development of the colonies, and the centrality of Christian mission to the fight against Islam.<sup>94</sup> Knak represented one important faction of the German missionary community, eager to see the utility of mission justified to a wider audience. For him and others the prospect of finally addressing Germany’s shortage of *Missionsgeist* had the potential to put to rest a decades-long challenge for German Protestant mission.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Siegfried Knak, “Die Nationalspende für Mission in den deutschen Kolonien,” *Berliner Missionsberichte* 81(1913): 125-126.

<sup>94</sup> Knak, “Die Nationalspende,” 126-127.

<sup>95</sup> By contrast to the Protestant response, the Catholic mission press eagerly welcomed the *Nationalspende*. See, for example, Bertram Kastert, “Die Missionsarbeit im Lichte des christlichen und nationalen Gedankens. Rede, gehalten auf der Generalversammlung des Vereins für das Missionshaus Knechtsteden von Pfarrer Bertram Kastert, Köln-Kalk,” *Echo aus den Missionen der Väter vom Heiligen Geist und unbefleckten Herzen Mariä* 15(3, Mar. 1914): 65; and “Die Kaiserspende für die Missionen in den deutschen Kolonien,” *Die katholischen Missionen* 42(2, Nov. 1913): 49-50.

## A New Source of Funds

The initial sum collected by the *Nationalspende* was nearly 4 million Marks. The Catholic missions received 1.3 million Marks, while the Protestants received just over 2.5 million Marks.<sup>96</sup> The impressive success of the *Nationalspende* led the newsletter of the campaign to gloat that the *Nationalspende* had given the question of Germany's commitment to the evangelical project its "final rest." Those who worked so hard over the months of fundraising had provided not only a service for the German missions, not only honored the Kaiser; they had also done an "extraordinary service" for Germany's reputation in the world. Germans should not revert to their old complacency; the Central Committee called on their countrymen instead to continue the "joyfulness of giving" into the future. According to the newsletter, Germany had achieved a great national success, and the German people had learned that mission's success was a matter of "great national importance."<sup>97</sup>

The moneys gathered by the *Nationalspende* would need to be distributed between the Catholic and Protestant mission societies. It would then need to be divided amongst the various mission societies by the Catholic and Protestant subcommittees of the Central Committee. Just over a week after the Kaiser released the funds to the two subcommittees,<sup>98</sup> Löwenstein reported to the *Kultusminister* that the Catholic committee had decided to proportionately distribute its funds among the

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<sup>96</sup> Zivilkabinett to von Trott zu Solz (June 19, 1913), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

<sup>97</sup> *Mitteilungen über die Nationalspende zum Kaiserjubiläum* (June 24, 1913), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

<sup>98</sup> Zivilkabinett to von Trott zu Solz (June 19, 1913), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

three Catholic mission orders<sup>99</sup> in Germany's colonies based on the number of mission stations, European personnel, and mission schools operated by a mission order in a colony, with an "adjustment" added to compensate the newest mission territories, which presumably had greater need.<sup>100</sup>

The payments by the Protestant portion of the *Nationalspende* generally followed a similar pattern as the Catholic portion. The initial decision communicated to the *Kultusminister* by Wedel divided the sum, now grown to 3.2 million Marks in July 1913, into three portions. The first portion, 2.2 million Marks, was to be divided in a manner much like the Catholic plan. Mission societies were to receive a share proportionate to the number of European employees they had in the colonies, the number of mission schools, and the number of students in the schools. Of the Protestant societies active in German East Africa, the Berlin Mission received the largest sum, more than twice as much as the Moravian, Leipzig, and Bethel Mission, all of whom received about the same sum.<sup>101</sup> The second portion, 800,000 Marks, but designated to increase to 1 million Marks if necessary, was dispersed to support operations which either "generally promote German Protestant mission in the colonies, or serve multiple missions communally." This included, among other institutions, the *Ausschuß*, which received a relatively small sum as compensation for its "great service" in the past and for the future. Two key figures of the new generation of nationally-minded mission leaders also received windfalls from this

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<sup>99</sup> This was, presumably, the Holy Ghost Fathers, Benedictines of St. Ottilien, and the White Fathers. The number comes from a letter from the Cardinal of Breslau, Georg Kopp. Von Trott zu Solz to Kardinal-Fürstbischof von Breslau Georg Kopp (July 5, 1913), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

<sup>100</sup> Alois zu Löwenstein to von Trott zu Solz (June 27, 1913), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

<sup>101</sup> Wedel to von Trott zu Solz (July 11, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 119-126.

portion of the Protestant division. The missionary nationalists Julius Richter and August Wilhelm Schreiber both were able to have institutions near to their hearts remunerated. Richter had his youth mission studies organization (*Missionsstudienkommissionen*) funded, while Schreiber secured support for a training school for women missionaries in Hamburg (*Schwesternheim Hamburg*). Finally, the second portion provided partial debt relief to those mission societies who had ongoing deficits. This meant that the Berlin and Bethel Missions received an additional sum of money to help restore their bottom lines. Finally, the Protestant payment's third portion was designated to serve two purposes. First, it would provide a reserve fund against unanticipated residual costs of the *Nationalspende*. Second, it would endow a new undertaking that would "in the spirit of the *Nationalspende*," continue to promote the national interest of Germany in the evangelical project.<sup>102</sup>

This new undertaking, which would eventually be named the *Deutsche Evangelische Missions-Hilfe*, gained the positive attention of the Kaiser, who placed it under royal protection and sponsorship in November 1913.<sup>103</sup> The official constitutive meeting for the *Missions-Hilfe* was held on December 6 in the Prussian *Herrenhaus*.<sup>104</sup> Its official purpose was "to awake, to nurture, and to advance" the cause of German Protestant mission in the German colonial empire.<sup>105</sup> The *Missions-Hilfe* consequently served a narrower purpose than any mission organization or mission society formed up to that point. It took a determined nationalist course and,

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<sup>102</sup> "Erläuterungen zum Teilungsplan," enclosed with Wedel to Trott zu Solz (July 11, 1913), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6908, pag. 127-143.

<sup>103</sup> Zivilkabinett to Kultusminister (November 28, 1913), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

<sup>104</sup> Wedel to Kultusminister (November 22, 1913), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

<sup>105</sup> Polizeipräsident Berlin C to Kultusminister (January 7, 1914), GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium, III, Sekt. 1, Abt. XIV, Nr. 184.

through its connection to the Kaiser and to the secular powers that had organized the *Nationalspende*, must have carried considerable influence in German religious and political circles.<sup>106</sup>

For the directorship of the *Missions-Hilfe* the Protestant committee of the *Nationalspende* selected August Wilhelm Schreiber, former director of the North German Mission. His predecessor, Franz Michael Zahn, had been a vocal critic of the mixing of German colonialism with Protestant mission, but Schreiber lacked those convictions. Schreiber's position at the *Missions-Hilfe* included editing the organization's periodical, the *Allgemeine Missions-Nachrichten* (Global Mission News) and a series of pamphlets and short books of *Missionswissenschaft* called the *Flugschriften der Deutschen Evangelischen Missions-Hilfe* (Pamphlets of the German Protestant Mission Aid). In addition, Schreiber continued his own work as a scholar of mission studies. His support for the creation of a universal German reader in 1908 for the missionaries in Germany's colonies betrayed his preference for a nationalized mission culture in Germany.<sup>107</sup>

Schreiber's own description of the *Missions-Hilfe* carefully defined its role in German mission and political culture. He took the same line as the committee of the *Nationalspende* that the aim of his organization was "to awaken, to nourish and to advance the general interest of German Protestant mission." The emphasis on German

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<sup>106</sup> There is some debate about whether or not Wilhelm II exerted "personal rule" during the *Kaiserreich*; see Lamar Cecil, *Wilhelm II*, 2 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Isabel V. Hull, *The Entourage of Kaiser Wilhelm II, 1888-1918* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1982); John C. G. Röhl, *The Kaiser and His Court: Wilhelm II and the Government of Germany* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994); John C. G. Röhl, *Wilhelm II: The Kaiser's Personal Monarchy, 1888-1900* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and for a discussion of older literature on personal rule see Jefferies, *Contesting the German Empire, 1871-1918*, 84-89.

<sup>107</sup> See chapter three of this dissertation.

mission, as exhibited by the *Missions-Hilfe*'s name but also by Schreiber's words clarified a rising culture supporting a "German Protestant undertaking of German Protestants" operating from a "national standpoint" and devoted to bringing the entire German nation into the Protestant mission project. The new relationship envisioned by Schreiber and other "missionary nationalists" argued that missionaries were the best equipped to "shine, burnish, and polish" the "natives, the gems of our colonies" for German use. No contradiction existed between service to God and service to the Fatherland. Schreiber argued that "the kingdom of God [would] outlive this world...But whether or not our German *Volk* shall remain a Christian people or not" that is the fight which German Christians must fight.<sup>108</sup> One part of the transformation of German missionary ideology during this period was a transformation of mission from a universal good, supported for the salvation of the individual and the entirety of Christianity, into a communal good focused on improving the German nation.

From the start, the broad mandate given the *Missions-Hilfe* led to conflict with the other national missionary lobbying group, the *Ausschuß*. Furthermore, its foundational nationalism must have remained a concern to those in the mission establishment still clinging to the old division of mission and "politics." A number of this old guard remained on the *Ausschuß*, including Theodor Öhler and Carl Paul. Inevitably the *Ausschuß* offered its opinion of the new organization in a circular sent to all its constituent members, which at this point included every Protestant mission based in Germany. In January it alerted its members to the formation of the *Missions-*

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<sup>108</sup> A[ugust] W[ilhelm] Schreiber, "Die Deutsche Evangelische Missions-Hilfe," *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin, Neue Folge* 56(1914): 351-353.

*Hilfe* while noting that it had had no role in the decisions made about dividing the collection of the *Nationalspende*. The *Ausschuß* is unlikely to have wanted to be in the position of choosing winners and losers from among its members, and when this aversion is joined to the skepticism of the *Nationalspende* felt by many of the leaders of Germany's missions (men who sat on the *Ausschuß* as well), it is not too surprising that the *Ausschuß* took no role. This suspicion took in the new *Missions-Hilfe* too. The members of the *Ausschuß* worried that the nationalist tone of the *Missions-Hilfe* might be mistaken as representative of *all* German mission societies.<sup>109</sup> Though the leadership of Germany's missions appeared to remain uncomfortable with the linkage of nation and mission, their difficult position did not allow nor did they choose to fully reject either the *Nationalspende* or the *Missions-Hilfe*.

The conflicts between the *Ausschuß* and the *Missions-Hilfe* would continue into the First World War. One chair of the *Ausschuß*, Paul Otto Hennig, referenced these difficulties in a November 1915 letter. According to him, though the two organizations were statutorily separate, "their work areas touch[ed] on one another frequently." Hennig sought to bring the two organizations together in their dealings with the government, hoping to dispel past difficulties.<sup>110</sup> Hennig and Schreiber met in order to find a new "understanding" in 1915. The *Missions-Hilfe*, the *Ausschuß* told its members, had done much good for the German mission movement but it was the special responsibility of the *Ausschuß* to care for every aspect of German mission

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<sup>109</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (January 28, 1914), BMW/bmw1/1779, Item 6.

<sup>110</sup> "Betrifft Aenderung in der Vertregung und Zusammensetzung des Deutschen Missions-Ausschusses, das Verhältnis desselben zur Deutschen Evangelischen Missions-Hilfe und Bitte um die Genehmigung persönlicher Vorstellung des gegenwärtigen Vorsitzenden" (November 15, 1915), BArch R 1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6910, pag. 88-89. See also, "Gedanken von P[aul] O[tto] Hennig" (December 1915), BMW/bmw1/8224.



life. The *Ausschuß* proposed that the *Missions-Hilfe* ought to be able to handle “minor questions and dealings” with the imperial government, but “larger questions of the *Ausschuß*” could not be left in the hands of a separate organization like the *Missions-Hilfe*.<sup>111</sup> In short, the *Ausschuß* argued that it was the superior organization with greater responsibilities to which the *Missions-Hilfe* ought to genuflect.

Schreiber’s response, in January of 1916, was to put off any suggestion of a “firm regulation” of the relationship. The director of the *Missions-Hilfe* deployed the organization’s influential connections, mentioning to Hennig that he had “consulted” with Provincial Governor Hegel, the progenitor of the *Nationalspende* Faber, and Colonial Department mission liaison Berner.<sup>112</sup> The issue was ultimately tabled, without resolution, at a meeting between the leaders of the two organizations in late January 1916. At this meeting both sides proclaimed their mutual admiration but resistance by the *Missions-Hilfe*’s supporters Hegel and Berner ultimately prevented any official reconciliation.<sup>113</sup> The final end to this conflict came from the privations of the First World War, which rendered the German colonial and national missionary organizations so completely irrelevant that it did not matter what issues belonged in which organization’s bailiwick. The remarkable weight given to this matter when presumably Germany had far greater concerns can only be explained by the import that missionary leaders gave to the currency of official influence that had been built up over the last forty years. The *Ausschuß* had achieved much before 1913 and the

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<sup>111</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (November 16, 1915), BMW/bmw1/1779, Item 8.

<sup>112</sup> August Wilhelm Schreiber to Paul Otto Hennig (January 11, 1916), BMW/bmw1/8224.

<sup>113</sup> Schreiber to Hennig (February 12, 1916), BMW/bmw1/8224.

hardships of the war seem to have made it suspicious of the political capital wielded by the *Missions-Hilfe*.

The *Ausschuß*'s concern for its proper place in the political hierarchy can be read as an indicator of its awareness that the new *Missions-Hilfe* may have superseded it on the national level. The President of the *Herrenhaus*, Wedel, and the Colonial Department's main liaison with the mission movement, Berner, remained affiliated with the *Missions-Hilfe* after the end of the *Nationalspende*. So, even as the First World War raged and the campaigns of the Allies in Africa and on the Pacific Rim ended the German colonial empire, and even as German mission societies grew ever more cut off from their overseas stations and the societies' financial resources dwindled, the *Ausschuß* continued to fight for political influence. The *Missions-Hilfe* would play a prominent role in the final death of internationalism in German mission ideology and the *Ausschuß* and other advocates of Germany's missionary internationalism would become relics of an earlier time. The decade-and-a-half before World War I marked the emergence of German missionary nationalism, and the War would give the nationalists their final hollow victory.

## Conclusion

The alteration of German Protestant missionaries' views on nationalism had causes within the intellectual field, as a younger generation of leaders rose to prominence and promoted a "missionary nationalism" organized to unite patriotic and spiritual motivations. Where schools and language policy were both areas that

missionaries held strong against pressure from secular nationalists who hoped to annex the evangelical project to the colonial project, missionary leaders in the 1860s, -70s, and -80s also sought to keep nationalism out of their activities in the *Heimat*. Unfortunately for those leaders, the German public did not provide enough financial support to sustain missionaries' activities. Initially, German mission societies attempted to inspire greater *Missionsgeist* with educational and promotional efforts focused on the religious justifications for mission work. But the organizational logic of mission, near constant expansion, only aggravated the financial deficits of German Protestant missions. Advocates of missionary nationalism began to promote patriotic methods and arguments as a way to address missionaries' money woes. This process began around 1908 and had its culminating event in the 1913 *Nationalspende* in honor of Kaiser Wilhelm II's twenty-fifth jubilee. The *Nationalspende* raised enough Marks to breathe new life into the Protestant mission movement, erasing or nearly erasing the operating deficits of a number of societies and providing a valuable windfall to every mission. The financial success of the *Nationalspende* marked, in yet another way, the waning influence of internationalism in German missionary culture in the years before World War I. It represented a clear shift in Germany away from the internationalist vision of mission work that Protestant missionaries had held for decades.

## Chapter Five: Mission Conferences and the Persistence of Internationalism

Paul Otto Hennig of the Herrnhut Brotherhood thought the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference was the “most important gathering since the Reformation.”<sup>1</sup> Gathered together in Edinburgh were the leaders of the national mission movements, “men from the missionary battlefield, and beside the sons of the Old World [were] members of a new Christianity: Indians, Japanese, Chinese...even...a Negro!”<sup>2</sup> Hennig was not alone in drawing a straight line of inheritance from the Reformation to Edinburgh. Other German missionaries reveled in the unity of Protestants gathered in the Edinburgh Assembly Hall.<sup>3</sup> To gleeful participants, the Edinburgh Conference belonged amongst the councils of the old church; councils where Christians had gathered in unity to guide the church. At Edinburgh the ancient tradition of unity had been resurrected by a “high church English bishop..., a Protestant monk,...a Baptist and a Quaker” seated together in communal prayer.<sup>4</sup> News of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference received attention in the general press of the German Empire. And the specialist presses of the mission movement tried to deliver the message of Protestant unity to their readers.

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<sup>1</sup> P[aul] O[tto] Hennig, “Der Weltmissionskongreß in Edinburg,” *Missionblatt der Brüdergemeine* 74(Aug. 1910): 197.

<sup>2</sup> Hennig, “Der Weltmissionskongreß,” 208. There was only one indigenous black African Christian in attendance at the Edinburgh Conference, Mark C. Hayford from Britain’s Gold Coast Colony. See Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 13.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Jahrbuch der vereinigten norddeutschen Missionskonferenzen* the Edinburgh Conference was identified as a direct answer to the 1910 “Borromaeus Encyclical” issued by Pope Pius X which marked the three-hundred year celebration of the canonization of a famed critic of the Reformation, Carlo Borromeo. See “Der Edinburger Missionskongreß,” *Jahrbuch der vereinigten norddeutschen Missionskonferenzen*(1911): 12.

<sup>4</sup> W[alther] Trittelvitz, “Die Tage von Edinburg,” *Beth-El* 2(1910): 190.

According to many attendees and the mission press, Christian mission spirit had dissolved national and denominational differences that summer in Edinburgh.

This ebullient internationalism sprang from the same German Protestant missionary movement in the process of developing a more nationalist character. The optimism expressed by German Protestants, including the missionary nationalist Julius Richter, for a stronger internationalism in the wake of the Edinburgh Conference proves that the story of German missionary politics is not simply a tale of gradually accelerating nationalization. The persistence of internationalist sentiment demonstrated the deep roots of internationalism and the incomplete power of nationalism in Germany before 1914. In this instance the German mission movement exhibited the growing global interconnectivity spurred by the transportation and communication revolution of the late nineteenth century. The shortening of distances allowed for greater international missionary collaboration and stimulated a brief revival of German missionary internationalism.

German missionaries had long been a part of international and regional communities of missionaries. By 1900, missionary associations and supporters had been connected with organizations of common purpose outside what would become the German Empire for at least a century. These connections eventually created a layer of international mission conferences and conventions that settled neatly over the top of long-running local and regional conferences to bind German Protestants into a network of evangelical groups and organizations international in scope and cosmopolitan in outlook. This chapter will discuss the various types of regional, national, and international conferences in which Protestant missionary associations in

Germany participated and it will discuss the attitude toward these various assemblies and meetings espoused by the German missionary leadership. It will show that the outpouring of joy provoked by the Edinburgh conference was not a radical departure but rather the outcome of a long historical relationship between Germany's missionary community and the international mission movement. Furthermore, it will show that German missionary intellectuals understood international conferences as an important tool for building Protestant evangelical feeling.

### **The Sequence of Mission Conferences and the German Conferences**

Germany's Protestant mission societies organized themselves into a system of conferences and associations. These organizations organically organized from the smallest geographical scope up to the largest. At the local level mission conferences and affiliations concerned themselves with the most local concerns, chiefly fundraising and promotion of local *Missionsgeist*. At the next highest level Germany's Protestants organized themselves into national conferences. These included the Saxon Mission Conference, the Halle Mission Conference, and the Herrnhuters' *Missionswoche*. These gatherings focused on promoting collaboration among Germany's many Protestant societies. Attendees at the national mission conferences would gather to hear presentations on the tactics of mission work and practical problems of theology and methodology. For reasons that will be presented later, the Bremen Continental Mission Conferences also belonged to this category despite its ostensible continental character. German missionaries ignored the 1866

Liverpool Mission Conference and the 1878 General Conference on Missions in London. However, they did begin to pay closer attention with the 1888 London Conference and the subsequent 1900 New York Conference. By the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, the German Protestant mission movement saw the international mission gatherings as excellent venues for the more abstract and strategic issues of global mission work. This neat system of missions with ascending geographical and topical scope wove German mission societies into the international mission movement and provided a justification for the traditional internationalist ideology by demonstrating exactly how German Protestant missionaries could participate in a global mission program.<sup>5</sup>

At the most local level German missionaries and their supporters organized themselves into Mission Conferences (*Missionskonferenzen*). Some of these, like the Saxon Mission Conference (*Missionskonferenz in der Provinz Sachsen*), grew to take on national significance. Others remained only of regional importance. An 1899 description of the various German mission conferences laid out an organized system of missionary collaboration. At the most local level, Germany had regular provincial mission conferences organized by regional communities of mission friends. These groups were generally organized to support a particular mission society. The author of the 1899 description, Pastor Richard Döhler, wrote, these provincial conferences were intended “to promote awareness and understanding of mission and to generally nurture... mission life” in the local sphere. On a larger scale, Warneck and his colleagues organized the Saxon Mission Conference in 1878 for the “awakening and

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<sup>5</sup> Missionaries from the European countries were also a presence at some of the international colonial conferences during this period, including the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 and the Brussels Anti-Slavery Conference of 1889-1890. See Heinrich Loth, *Zwischen Gott und Kattun*, 17.

care of mission interests” among those men of the “first class,” in other words amongst the influential political and educated middle classes of the newly established *Kaiserreich*. Döhler grouped the Bremen Continental Conferences in the same category with the Saxon Conference at Halle. The Bremen and Saxon Conferences, along with the *Missionswoche*, promoted cooperation among the German Protestant mission societies by encouraging the exchange of missionary techniques.<sup>6</sup> Still grander were the international mission conferences. According to Döhler, major gatherings like the 1888 London and 1900 New York Conferences dealt with issues of “mission praxis...important questions” that the whole of international mission needed to collectively consider.

Döhler’s taxonomy of mission conferences clearly laid out the tiered system of mission affiliations and gatherings that helped organize the lives of missionaries, missionary leaders, and mission supporters. The tiered system of mission conferences rose from regional mission conferences focused on individual mission societies; through the layer of national conferences, like the Saxon Conference, interested in promoting the shared interests of all German mission societies; up to the international conferences whose ecumenical task was to address matters of grand strategy.

The central conference of German Protestant mission life was the Continental Mission Conference, or the Bremen Conference. The Bremen Conference grew out of an idea proposed by Friedrich Fabri in 1860, for a gathering of missions. But it took several years for Fabri’s idea to catch on with Germany’s East African Protestant mission societies. The 1860 invitation was declined by the Berlin Mission and the Leipzig Mission as both had seen little worth in earlier efforts at such “universal”

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<sup>6</sup> [Richard] Döhler, “Die deutschen Missionskonferenzen,” *AMZ* 26(1899): 493-495.



conferences.<sup>7</sup> However, the 1866 Bremen Conference received a more positive response from the Leipzig Mission because the invitation promised to “set aside all confessional and churchly questions” and only focus on “practical-technical mission questions.” The two representatives dispatched to Bremen by the Leipzig Mission reported on their impressions at the 1866 meeting to the gathered leadership of Leipzig. The positive experience of the Leipzig missionaries at Bremen helped foster a “friendly understanding” between Leipzig and the rival Hermannsburg Mission, with whom Leipzig had quarreled.<sup>8</sup> From the start, the Bremen gatherings were designed to bring the German mission societies into contact so that they could find common ground from which to cooperate. In fact, when the Leipzig Mission could not send a representative to the 1868 Bremen Conference, the leader of the mission regretted missing an opportunity to meet with the Basel and Hermannsburg representatives as well as learn valuable practical lessons on “the relationship of mission to the universities, preservation of heathen customs, and caste issues” in India.<sup>9</sup> By 1868, the idea of a conference for the cultivation of Protestant mission methods and collaboration in Germany had built a strong following.<sup>10</sup>

The 1866 Bremen Conference served as the founding moment for the Continental Mission Conference. The quinquennial meetings of the Conference continued to adhere to 1866 ideals. And in 1909 the 12<sup>th</sup> Continental Mission Conference finally printed the “guiding principles” of the organization.<sup>11</sup> The

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<sup>7</sup> Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (September 4, 1860), BMW/bmw1/41; and Minutes of the Leipzig Mission General Assembly (May 23, 1866), AFS/ALMW-DHM II.2.1.

<sup>8</sup> Minutes of the Leipzig Mission General Assembly (May 23, 1866), AFS/ALMW-DHM II.2.1, Item 2.

<sup>9</sup> Minutes of the Leipzig Mission General Assembly (June 3, 1868), AFS/ALMW-DHM II.2.1.

<sup>10</sup> William Richey Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, 63.

<sup>11</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, 67.

Continental Mission Conference was a “free association of Protestant mission societies from the European continent.” It was not intended to interfere with or damage the full independence of its members nor the “confessional or national character” of its members. Instead, it was to “strengthen the unity of spirit and nurture personal relationships through the discussion of current theoretical and practical mission questions.” The associated mission societies would protect common interests and promote, whenever possible, a unified expression of continental mission “togetherness.”<sup>12</sup> Overall, the Bremen Conference meetings would continue to be gatherings to share practical, tactical information for the success of Protestant missionaries and make some overtures toward unifying the various mission organizations on political issues.

The Bremen Mission Conference loomed the largest in the minds of German mission associations for its significance. It was, in one report “inspiring” for the attending deputies of the German mission societies.<sup>13</sup> The gatherings in Bremen were international affairs, though Germans made up the majority of attendees. Along with representatives from the German mission societies (considered by all to include the Basel Mission Society), delegates from Dutch, Scandinavian, and French Protestant missionary groups participated. The significance of the Bremen Conference for Germany’s Protestant mission associations is perhaps most strongly indicated by the foundation of the *Ausschuß* at the 1884 meeting of the conference. In attendance at this seminal conference were representatives of every German foreign mission, along with leaders of the Danish, Dutch, Swedish, and Norwegian Protestant mission

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<sup>12</sup> Leitsätze zu den Vorträgen der XII. Kontinentalen Missions-Konferenz, Bremen, 6. bis 10. Mai 1909,” (n.d., [1909?]), UA.MD 573.

<sup>13</sup> “Eine bedeutsame Missions-Konferenz,” *AMZ* 12(1885): 545.

societies.<sup>14</sup> The *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* called the 1884 meeting the most “significant, vital, and practically important” meeting of mission societies. The October founding of the *Ausschuß* by nine German mission societies in Bremen, the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* promised, would “clarify the position of mission” in Germany.<sup>15</sup> The new *Ausschuß* promised to offer leadership for the Protestant missionaries of Germany and help stimulate greater cooperation. The significance of this meeting and the Bremen Conference in general prompted regular reports to the Prussian *Kultusminister*, Colonial Secretary, and Bismarck himself on the proceedings.<sup>16</sup>

Though the Bremen Conference was identified as a “continental” gathering and representatives from mission societies outside of Germany made significant contributions to the gathering, nevertheless, the mission conferences served as an extension of the German missionary movement. For example, the 1893 Bremen Conference had thirty official attendees. Of those thirty attendees twenty-four were German (twenty-six if you count the two representatives of the Basel Mission, which most attendees would have).<sup>17</sup> The attendance in Bremen of “a large number of clergy from Bremen and environs” in the audience would have added to the German character of the gathering. This conference also gives a good sense of how Germans

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<sup>14</sup> The attendees included Friedrich Fabri, Reinhold Grundemann, Karl Plath, and Ernst Reichel among other less notable leaders of the Protestant mission movement. Gustav Warneck was unable to attend because of illness. See “Sechste kontinentale Missions-Konferenz in Bremen. 20.-23. Mai 1884,” *AMZ* 11(1884): 309.

<sup>15</sup> “Eine bedeutsame Missions-Konferenz,” 545.

<sup>16</sup> Kultusminister Gustav von Goßler to Otto von Bismarck (October 8, 1885), BArch R1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80476, Bd. 6893, pag. 132-133; Kultusminister Gustav von Goßler to Otto von Bismarck (October 20, 1885), BArch R1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80476, Bd. 6893, pag. 141-142; Foreign Office to Otto von Bismarck (November 2, 1885), BArch R1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80477, Bd. 6894, pag. 9-24; and Franz Michael Zahn to Otto von Bismarck (December 2, 1885), BArch R1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80477, Bd. 6894, pag. 25-26.

<sup>17</sup> See Karl Rennstich, “The Understanding of Mission, Civilisation and Colonialism in the Basel Mission,” in Christensen and Hutchison, *Missionary Ideologies in the Imperialist Era*, 93.

expected the national mission conferences (Bremen and Saxon) to serve the German Protestant mission movement. These gatherings were expected to cover the tactical and practical needs of German missionaries. As such, the agenda for the 1893 Conference was indicative of the typical conference. It included a report on the activities of the *Ausschuß*, statistical reports on mission activities, a discussion of “our conduct with regards to the Roman missions especially in the German colonies,” lectures on questions of organizing indigenous congregations and baptismal rules for Protestant mission, and diverse other matters of metropolitan and mission field practice.<sup>18</sup> To further enhance the effectiveness of the meetings, participation in discussions was limited to a few score missionary authorities.<sup>19</sup>

The Bremen Conference held an important place in German missionaries’ associational worldview. The tenth conference was described by the *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Missionblatt* (Evangelical Lutheran Mission Gazette) with great reverence. Though the conferences’ attendees were usually small in number, in 1897 the forty men from eighteen mission societies represented about 950 missionaries “caring for over 600,000 Protestants”.<sup>20</sup> The union of missionaries from Germany, Switzerland, France, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland at the 1897 Bremen Conference was reported as an important collaborative event bringing together Protestants regardless of nationality or specific Protestant creed. The Leipzig Mission, producers of the *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Missionblatt*, shared that the meeting ended with a “communal meal which brought together the attendees and

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<sup>18</sup> [Carl] Paul, “Die neunte kontinentale Missionskonferenz in Bremen am 9., 10. und 12. Mai 1893,” *AMZ* 20(1893): 308-324.

<sup>19</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, 64.

<sup>20</sup> “Die 10. Kontinentale Missionskonferenz zu Bremen,” *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Missionblatt* 14(Jul. 1897): 257.

mission friends from Bremen...in pleasant hospitality” – a moment of true Christian unity.<sup>21</sup>

On the national level, missionaries also participated in colonial congresses organized by the German Colonial Society in 1902, 1905, and 1910. Though Protestant mission societies joined these gatherings, mission periodicals and intellectuals clearly showed their view that the colonial congresses were only tangential to missionaries’ work. The antecedent of the Colonial Congresses was the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Kongress zur Förderung überseeischer Interessen* (General German Congress for the Promotion of Overseas Interests). This 1886 gathering was undeniably nationalist in its goals. Its agenda covered the new “‘national questions’: colonial policy, the emigration problem and the defense of German language and culture beyond the Reich’s borders.”<sup>22</sup> As a consequence, only a small contingent from the German mission movement attended. Representatives of the newly established EMDOA attended, but this mission was an early incarnation of the nationalist Bethel Mission.<sup>23</sup> Friedrich Fabri did send a letter of support to the gathering, part of his eventual movement out of the mission movement and into the colonial movement.<sup>24</sup> In fact he had already left his post at the Rhenish Mission in

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<sup>21</sup> “Die 10. Kontinentale Missionkonferenz,” 280.

<sup>22</sup> Peter Walkenhorst, *Nation – Volk – Rasse: Radikaler Nationalismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 66.

<sup>23</sup> Ludwig Diestlkamp, a founder of the soon-to-be Bethel Mission attended, as did the locally resident Alexander Merensky, “Allgemeiner Deutschen Kongress zu Berlin,” (n.d., [August 16, 1886?]), BArch R1001/1.22, Film Nr. 80491, Bd. 7010, pag. 1-4; Matthias Ittameier of the Bethel Mission gave a lecture, “Bericht über die Verhandlungen des Allgemeine Deutschen Kongresses zur Förderung überseeischer Interessen,” (September 15, 1886), BArch R1001/1.22, Film Nr. 80491, Bd. 7010, pag. 32-39, Ittameier’s lecture was also reprinted, *Die Mission auf dem Allgemeinen deutschen Kongreß: Die evangelisch-lutherische Mission für Ostafrika und ihre Gegner. Eine Schutz- und Verteidigungsschrift* (Rothenburg-ob-der-Tauber: Druck der J. P. Peter’schen Offizin., 1887).

<sup>24</sup> Besier, “Mission and Colonialism in Friedrich Fabri’s (1824-1891) Thinking,” 92; and Gensichen, “German Protestant Missions,” 183.

1884.<sup>25</sup> No missionaries save these saw fit to travel to Berlin for the Congress. This set the precedent for future colonial congresses' marginality to missionaries.

Resolutions passed at the 1886 Congress on missionary activities, proffered by Matthias Ittameier of the EMDOA and approved by the overwhelmingly non-mission attendees violated contemporary missionary principles of internationality. After thanking the mission societies for their work Christianizing overseas territories, the Congress resolved that it was a "necessary and urgent duty" for German missions to expand their work to the newly conquered German colonies. As a part of this duty, German missions would have to restrict their activities in foreign colonies and foreign missions would have to be restricted in German colonies. Finally, the Congress resolved that "it be expected of the German missions in the German overseas territories, that their activities be aimed at a national affiliation of their converts towards the German Fatherland, as much as [aimed at] the education of the natives to work..."<sup>26</sup> Had more missionaries been interested in the 1886 Congress, such a resolution would have either been rejected or been made against the strenuous objections of the majority of missionary delegates as it clearly violated every principle of missionary ideology at that time. The resolution's messages highlighted the early irrelevance of secular colonial gatherings to the mission movement.

Little had changed sixteen years later when the Colonial Society organized its first Colonial Congress. The Basel Mission periodical, the *Evangelisches Missions-*

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<sup>25</sup> "Bericht über die Verhandlungen des Allgemeinen Deutschen Kongresses zur Förderung überseeischer Interessen" (September 14, 1886), BArch R1001/1.22, Film Nr. 80491, Bd. 7010, pag. 22-24.

<sup>26</sup> "Bericht über die Verhandlungen des Allgemeinen Deutschen Kongresses zur Förderung überseeischer Interessen" (n.d., [September 16, 1886?]), BArch R1001/1.22, Film Nr. 80491, Bd. 7010, pag. 56.

*Magazin, Neue Folge*, reported on the 1902 Colonial Congress in Berlin. To the *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* the 1902 Congress amounted to a simple piece of news that might interest readers. It observed that mission organizations of both confessions sent representatives in order to share information about their religious and cultural work.<sup>27</sup> The periodical reported the text of speeches by Carl Paul and Alexander Merensky on possible roles for missions in Germany's colonies. The article contained no reflections on the significance of the meetings for German mission, underscoring the relative unimportance of the 1902 Congress to the Basel missionaries. In fact, events at the Congress revealed that there was more risk than benefit possible for mission from the secular colonialists at the gathering. Paul and Merensky had to work quickly to prevent a resolution calling for greater colonial service from missionaries coming to a vote. A draft resolution had declared it was the "obligation of the German Empire" to "advance the physical and spiritual culture of the native population." For that reason, and the necessity of fighting heathen "horrors" and heathen "superstition," the Christian mission societies deserved the "energetic support of the government and widest sphere of our *Volk*."<sup>28</sup> This resolution would have contradicted the dominant missionary view of state service at the time but would have been completely in keeping with the spirit of the 1886 *Allgemeiner Deutscher Kongress*, had it been passed.<sup>29</sup>

Though missionaries remained skeptical of the Colonial Congresses and their organizer, the German Colonial Society, mission participation in the gatherings did

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<sup>27</sup> "Die Mission am deutschen Kolonialkongress in Berlin," *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin, Neue Folge* 44(1902): 504.

<sup>28</sup> "Resolution" (September 6, 1902), BMW/bmw1/2094.

<sup>29</sup> "Die Mission am deutschen Kolonialkongress in Berlin," 509-510.

increase over time. The 1905 planning committee included Karl Axenfeld as a representative of the Berlin Mission.<sup>30</sup> The program of the 1905 Colonial Congress included presentations from Carl Buchner, Theodor Öhler, Paul, Richter, Merensky, as well as delegates from the Catholic mission societies.<sup>31</sup> In fact, the significant presence of mission topics on the program pleased the *Ausschuß*.<sup>32</sup> The growing participation of the German Protestant mission movement in these conferences does provide yet another marker of the growing links between the mission movement, secular colonialists, and the colonial state.

Nevertheless, missionaries continued to worry about the influence the Colonial Congresses could exert upon their work. The 1910 Congress filled Karl Axenfeld with trepidation. He worried that the assembled would enact resolutions that either violated missionaries' principles or compelled missionaries to modify their activities. He wrote to the German Protestant mission societies in July of 1910 that it was crucial that a "considerable pro-mission majority" be present for the voting phases on resolutions at the Congress. There was too much danger that an "accidental majority" could take action that would alter the view of the German people about mission work.<sup>33</sup> At the same time, Axenfeld's nationalist sympathies also had him urging attendance so that the German people would recognize the important role that mission work played in developing Germany's global expansion. In fact, the 1910

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<sup>30</sup> German Colonial Society to the Berlin Mission Society (November 25, 1904), BMW/bmw1/1133; German Colonial Society to the Berlin Mission Society (December 3, 1904), BMW/bmw1/1133.

<sup>31</sup> Program of the 1905 German Colonial Congress (May 18, 1905), BArch R 1001/1.22, Film Nr. 80490, Bd. 7004, pag. 83.

<sup>32</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (n.d., [November 9, 1905?]), BMW/bmw1/1779.

<sup>33</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (July 29, 1910), BMW/bmw1/8340.



Colonial Congress would be the high point of missionary participation in the secular colonial propaganda effort.

Paul Schwartz of the Leipzig Mission accepted a position on the planning committee for the 1910 Berlin Congress, joining Axenfeld, who was repeating his prior service on the 1905 planning committee. Schwartz was tasked by the *Ausschuß* with trying to use the Congress as a means to promote cooperation with the Catholic mission organizations – an interesting task considering the simultaneous conflict between the Berlin Mission and the Benedictines of St. Ottilien.<sup>34</sup> The Protestants found their most eager collaboration from Amandus Acker of the Holy Ghost Fathers and the *Zentrum* politician Alois zu Löwenstein.<sup>35</sup> Soon the Protestant mission societies were collaborating with Acker and the Benedictine Norbert Weber, sharing materials in preparation for lectures on indigenous peoples' rights in the colonies.<sup>36</sup> After the Congress, Axenfeld told the various Protestant mission societies that the “relationship of both confessions in the colonies” were stronger than ever.<sup>37</sup> For secular colonialists the behavior of the Catholic and Protestant missions must have validated their conviction that German colonialism could be a great nationalist project that would bring together Protestant and Catholic Germans.

The Program of the 1910 Congress featured presentations from Axenfeld, Richter, Weber the Benedictine, the religious scholar Carl Mirbt, Joseph Froberger, who led Germany's arm of the White Fathers, the linguist and religious scholar Carl

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<sup>34</sup> Paul Schwartz to the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (December 6, 1909), AFSt/ALMW-DHM II.27.1.15.I. Also see chapter two of this dissertation.

<sup>35</sup> Karl Axenfeld to Theodor Öhler (January 13, 1910), BMW/bmw1/2095; Axenfeld to German Protestant mission societies (March 18, 1910), BMW/bmw1/2093.

<sup>36</sup> Axenfeld to Paul Otto Hennig, Carl Paul, August Wilhelm Schreiber, Julius Richter, and Diedrich Westermann (April 1, 1910), BMW/bmw1/2095; Axenfeld to Hennig, Paul, Schreiber, Richter, and Westermann (April 28, 1910), BMW/bmw1/2095.

<sup>37</sup> Axenfeld to German Protestant mission societies (October 21, 1910), BMW/bmw1/2093.

Meinhof, and Gottlieb Haussleiter of the Rhenish Mission Society. All spoke on issues of religious and “native” affairs.<sup>38</sup> In addition, the mission societies organized a supplementary exposition for the Congress. Axenfeld described it to his colleague Mirbt: the gathering would begin with three hymns and a brass ensemble. Then three lectures: “The Movement of the Peoples or At the Change of Time,”<sup>39</sup> “Mission as Colonial Duty,” and “Mission as Exercise of Belief.”<sup>40</sup> This event, along with the missions’ participation in the Congress organized by Axenfeld, betrayed his nationalist touch, and tied German mission more tightly to the colonial state than missionaries would have at their own conferences. Axenfeld explained the usefulness of the Congress to Mirbt in a later letter as a chance to convince the German people of their “moral and religious” calling to improve the condition of Germany’s colonial subjects.<sup>41</sup> On the eve of the Colonial Congress Axenfeld officially invited the Chancellor, *Kultusminister*, War Minister, Navy Secretary, and the Presidents of the Reichstag, Prussian *Herrenhaus*, and Prussian Lower House to the missions’ supplementary exhibition so they might see the service Germany’s Protestant missionaries rendered to the empire.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Program of the 1910 German Colonial Congress (June 8, 1910), BArch R1001/1.22, Film Nr. 80490, Bd. 7006, pag. 97.

<sup>39</sup> Axenfeld described this lecture as providing a picture of mission beyond the contemporary situation.

<sup>40</sup> Axenfeld to Carl Mirbt (July 23, 1910), BMW/bmw1/2095.

<sup>41</sup> Axenfeld to Mirbt (August 2, 1910), BMW/bmw1/2095.

<sup>42</sup> Axenfeld to Imperial Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, Kultusminister August von Trott zu Solz, Kriegsminister Josias von Heeringen, Navy Secretary Alfred von Tirpitz, Reichstag President Hans von Schwerin-Löwitz, Herrenhaus President Kurt von Wedel, and President of the Prussian Abgeordnetenhaus Jordan von Körcher (October 1, 1910), BMW/bmw1/2096, 10/1/1910.

## International Conferences

As they did with the Bremen Conference, German Protestant missionaries took a short time to warm to international mission conferences. In this case the reservations grew out of a disagreement about the purpose of those conferences. German *Missionswissenschaftler* criticized the early international conferences in England for their practical focus; German mission societies could get practical advice and counsel from their own national mission conferences. German Protestants wanted the international gatherings to provide a broad, strategic forum for the development of a truly coordinated international mission movement. Gradually, the international conferences evolved into a form that satisfied German expectations. The Edinburgh Conference of 1910 met those hopes and satisfied German desires. Before the 1910 Edinburgh Conference there were three international mission conferences of any significance, and Germans' reactions to those conferences help illustrate the gradual evolution of the international conferences into a form that satisfied German missionaries' expectations.<sup>43</sup>

The 1878 General Missionary Conference in London proved a disappointment for most missionaries in and out of Germany. Attendance from English mission supporters was "less than the combined attendance of the various mission societies' annual celebrations" across England. The Conference received only passing notice in the press, and, consequently, the nameless reporter to the Basel Mission's periodical wrote, "For the motivation of mission interest and the spread of mission knowledge in wider circles, this conference did not amount to much." A quartet of German mission

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<sup>43</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, 15-16 and 48-50.

leaders attended from the Berlin, Rhenish, and Basel Societies: Theodor Wangemann, Karl Plath, Elias Schrenk, and August Schreiber.<sup>44</sup> In spite of the disappointment, the article maintained a hopeful internationalism in its report, declaring its solidarity with the hope that soon the Gospels would “win over all enemies” and “the Kingdom of God [would] triumphantly raise itself over the ruins of heathendom.” Though the London Conference had been a failure, the author concluded, it should not serve as a negative mark against the hopes of international cooperation and the “blessings of Christian community.”<sup>45</sup>

The *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* also published an account of the 1878 London Conference. The majority of the article provided a simple report of the topics of discussion covered in the various sessions of the conference. However, Warneck, as editor of the journal, added his own epilogue to the article. He offered his judgment regarding the “arrangement” of such a universal conference with the hope that it would not be long before another such conference could be organized. Warneck’s suggestions showed the general feeling of German missionaries toward these international conferences. Satisfied with their own regional and continental mission conferences for matters of practical mission work, the German missionary intellectuals and leaders hoped for a gathering directed toward, as Warneck described it, “thoroughly talk[ing] through a single important topic,” rather than a diverse program of minor or specialized topics. He also wished for the future conference to be a “professional” conference so that the quality of discussions could be guaranteed for maximum effectiveness. Finally, Warneck suggested that, in order that the wider

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<sup>44</sup> “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in London,” *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin, Neue Folge* 23(1879): 41-42.

<sup>45</sup> “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in London,” 49.

public still received some benefit from the international conference, there should be co-located general assemblies of an educational nature for mission supporters.<sup>46</sup> In short, Warneck proposed a plan whereby the international conferences would neatly fit into a system of missionary conferences and gatherings to provide valuable contact between missionaries of different countries, promote major questions of missionary interest, and provide a boost to “mission spirit” in the host location. Warneck’s suggestion for closed expert sessions was taken up in future gatherings and would be used for the Edinburgh Conference in 1910, though it is not clear if Warneck’s was the decisive voice on this matter.<sup>47</sup> This neat accommodation may explain some part of the German mission societies’ and members’ pleased reaction to the Edinburgh Conference.

When missionaries gathered in London a decade later for another international conference the assessment of the conference offered by the *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* was more positive. The conference attracted more public attention in Britain, a pattern that would be repeated with each succeeding conference as well.<sup>48</sup> The 1888 Centenary Mission Conference was a “universal conference, called ecumenical with good reason.” Nonetheless, the *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* asked, “And the outcome?” Had the conference been a “great enterprise”? On the one hand, the London gathering had indeed been successful. The participants in the conference were joined by the “knotting of personal acquaintance and...the broadening of horizons” in “brotherly intercourse.” On the other hand, the conference

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<sup>46</sup> [Gustav] Warneck, editorial afterword to “Die allgemeine Missionsconferenz in London vom 21.-26. October 1878,” by [August] Schreiber, *AMZ* 5(1878): 579-580.

<sup>47</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, 50.

<sup>48</sup> Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 174.

had failed at one great goal. The program of the Conference declared its goal to be a new awakening of Christian mission spirit. In fact, the Basel journal wrote, outside England one could find “no trace” of that purpose. According to the report on the Conference in the Basel periodical, the problem was a difference of opinions on practical questions of mission work. The conference had failed to bring its attendees to the “principle tucked behind these practical problems” that all Protestant missionaries worked for the same purpose.<sup>49</sup> Another published report suggested that the gathered mission representatives at the 1889 Bremen Conference found the London program of 1888 valuable but disappointing because it replicated what attendees expected of the Bremen Conferences.<sup>50</sup> German missionaries did not expect the international conferences to deal with the tactical and practical concerns of missionaries: how to organize missionary schools, fundraising in the *Heimat*, et cetera; but rather to bring together missionaries to shape grand strategies for international mission effort.

Alexander Merensky, whose reputation from his work as a missionary in South Africa made him one of the best known German missionaries, described the 1888 Centenary Conference as a missionary gathering whose “impressive size had never before been matched.” Merensky’s opinion of the 1888 Conference showed that Döhler’s 1899 mission conference taxonomy had been a common attitude more than a decade earlier. Merensky noted the London Conference (like the 1878 London General Missionary Conference) had been an authentic attempt to organize a “real

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<sup>49</sup> “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in London,” *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin, Neue Folge* 32(1888): 25-28.

<sup>50</sup> “Bericht über die Verhandlungen der achten kontinentalen Missionskonferenz zu Bremen in der Himmelfahrtswoche 1889,” *AMZ* 16(1889): 2.

universal mission conference.” The 1878 Conference had marked the first time that delegates from both sides of the ocean gathered with delegates from the English mission societies. The 1888 Conference demonstrated the durability and value of the “decennial conference” for missionaries around the world and had expanded on the potential of the General Missionary Conference.<sup>51</sup>

The Conference, Merensky continued, provided an invaluable demonstration of the strength of American mission life, largely unknown on the continent and in Germany. Similarly it allowed for the propagation of Germany’s superior academic mission knowledge. Merensky’s article marked one of the first appearances of what became a common-place description of the three-legged stool of Protestant mission – an international project built on the British, American, and German mission movements. Merensky hoped that the London Conference of 1888 would also allow for the spread of missionary awareness in Germany amongst the general public and the awareness of mission’s internationalism amongst the German mission sphere.<sup>52</sup> As if to emphasize for his German readers the import of the gathering, Merensky spent time noting the size and grand furnishings of the conference. He noted that 1477 people registered as attendees of the conference, representing 129 mission societies gathered at Exeter Hall, the “most beloved locale of many blessed Christian gatherings and celebrations, whose name, in the colonies, is linked with... great public influence” upon “native affairs.” The gathering hall was decorated with a great wall map ten meters by twelve meters with the declaration that “The Field is the World.,” a reference to Matthew 13:38 and its suggestion of missionaries’ purpose,

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<sup>51</sup> A[lexander] Merensky, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in London vom 9.-19. Juni 1888,” *AMZ* 15(1888): 401-402.

<sup>52</sup> Merensky, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in London,” 403.

“the field is the world and the seeds are the children of the kingdom.”<sup>53</sup> The Conference was, for Merensky’s readers, painted as a grand gathering of international significance.

In the final estimation, to Merensky, the London Conference could only be assessed after some time had passed. He judged that it had had a disappointing impact on the wider public of London. Though it had failed as a public relations operation, Merensky judged the conference had proven the efficacy of bringing together the international mission community to collaboratively consider the challenges of the evangelical project. The Conference had functioned across the Protestants’ various confessional differences and shown a common commitment to the “battle against the power of heathendom.” It had formed a “coalition for a grand global struggle.”<sup>54</sup>

Merensky’s hearty endorsement of international mission conferences as vital to Germany’s missionary future was echoed by Warneck’s afterword to Merensky’s description. Warneck expressed his joy that “this time [as opposed to the 1878 Conference] special gatherings of experts” were organized for the discussion of theoretical and practical missionary questions, though those gatherings’ large size limited their effectiveness. The German mission leader hoped that the international conferences would continue to narrow the focus of their deliberations to “especially current questions” of mission interest. He offered examples: “the position of mission to contemporary colonial politics,...the international importance of mission, [or] the challenges of Protestant mission with regards to the growing Roman [Catholic]

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<sup>53</sup> Merensky, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in London,” 405-406.

<sup>54</sup> Merensky, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in London,” 543-544.



aggression.”<sup>55</sup> Warneck implored the organizing committee for the next international conference to include “**fewer** topics but a **more exhaustive** practical treatment [of those topics] and a wider space for discussion, and an exclusion of [superficial] rhetoric.”<sup>56</sup> Warneck’s suggestions were designed to transform the international conferences so that they would become something more than the practical, methodological conferences of international attendees with which German mission leaders already felt themselves well-supplied. The Bremen, Saxon, and regional mission conferences gave German missionaries the tactical assistance they required; international conferences could provide the grand strategy of international evangelization and combine the strengths of every Protestant nation. In addition, they could function as concrete proof of international missionary identity for the missionaries and for their supporters in the villages, towns, and cities of the *Heimat*.

The 1900 Ecumenical Missionary Conference in New York eclipsed the 1888 Centenary Conference in size. The cost and time required to cross the Atlantic limited German attendance but the extensive German-speaking diaspora in the United States helped keep the German mission movement supplied with reports of the Conference. The *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* published a report from Paul Menzel, of the German Evangelical Synod of North America.<sup>57</sup> He declared that the New York Conference was the “greatest ecumenical mission conference” ever organized. The

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<sup>55</sup> Merensky reported on the various main themes of the London Conference: mission methods, medical mission, instruction and education, women’s mission work, organization and leadership of congregations, mission and literature, cooperation with the metropolitan church, missionary comity, and the relationship of trade and diplomacy to mission, Merensky, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in London,” 479.

<sup>56</sup> [Gustav Warneck], editorial afterword to “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in London vom 9.-19. Juni 1888,” by A[lexander] Merensky, *AMZ* 15(1888): 409-410. Emphasis in the original.

<sup>57</sup> The German Evangelical Synod of North America had ties to the Basel and Rhenish Mission Societies.

meeting was so significant that even secular public opinion recognized the importance of the mission conference, which would “mark the new century as a mission century.”<sup>58</sup> In this case, as it would be for many at the Edinburgh Conference, the presence of powerful political figures marked the importance of the mission conference for Menzel and his readers. The Conference’s opening ceremony, he noted, was led by former President Benjamin Harrison and Governor Theodore Roosevelt of New York, who welcomed the delegates<sup>59</sup> on behalf of his state, and delivered President William McKinley’s greetings as well. Declarations of the size of the gathering also emphasized the worth of the conference for Germany. On the first day Carnegie Hall, the conference’s venue, hosted 3500 people.<sup>60</sup>

In addition to the import of the conference because of its size, for Menzel and the editors of the *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin*, the main message of the conference carried the most value. The reports made from every corner of Protestant mission work by attendees, *de rigueur* for these conferences, drove home the special requirement placed by God upon the German people. “America, Germany and England are the only Christian lands in possession of the Bible. Upon them rests the great, holy duty to bring God’s Word to the rest of the world.”<sup>61</sup> A remarkable statement that captured the strong confessionalism of Protestant missionary internationalism – perhaps the Catholic and Orthodox Churches had the text of the

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<sup>58</sup> [Paul A. Menzel], “Die allgemeine Missionkonferenz in New York. 21. April bis 2. Mai.,” *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin, Neue Folge* 42(1900): 344.

<sup>59</sup> Among whom were only two German missionary officials of any note, Alexander Merensky and August Schreiber. This excited distress from Menzel who called on German missionary circles to strive so that this would not happen in the future. Menzel does report on the letter sent by Warneck and read (in translation) into the record by Judson Smith, Foreign Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

<sup>60</sup> Menzel, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz,” 345.

<sup>61</sup> Menzel, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz,” 351.

Bible but they did not truly “possess” it. Protestants, thanks to Luther and his successors, had a true understanding of the Gospels that required the Protestant nations to preach the gift of the Reformation to the world.<sup>62</sup> The Conference attendees emphasized the international character of their work. The missionaries in New York had “filed an impressive certificate of authenticity for the unity of Protestantism.” Menzel wrote that “the now common phrases of national duty” calling on missionaries to bind their spiritual work to the colonial project were only “exceptions” at the New York Conference. Missionaries ignored pressure to instrumentalize their work for the colonial powers; instead the missionaries’ commitment was to “the Lord whose kingdom is not of this world.”<sup>63</sup>

German missionaries learned of the New York Conference if they read the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* as well. Warneck published the letter he sent to the Empire State for all to read. The letter, which Menzel reported was read into the record with “personal warmth” by Judson Smith, a prominent American missionary,<sup>64</sup> celebrated the cooperation among missionaries of every Protestant country who worked together to spread the Kingdom of God to the non-Christian world. The New York Conference, Warneck continued, was a “meaningful” part of this project. The ecumenical conference in New York would help the new century see the “opening of the door of belief for the heathens.” It was in this letter that Warneck began his campaign against the slogan proposed by John Mott, that the world could and should

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<sup>62</sup> The challenge of defining the Christian world and the mission sphere would nearly condemn the 1910 Edinburgh Conference to a premature death over whether or not to include mission work among Christian, but not Protestant, peoples. Eventually the conference agreed on a division that placed all Christians on one side of the mission project and all “heathens” on the other. See Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, esp. 49-72.

<sup>63</sup> Menzel, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz,” 354-355.

<sup>64</sup> Menzel, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz,” 353.

be evangelized in one generation. Warneck argued that deliberate, careful work would lead to missionary success. He wrote that the scripture read “Go forth in all the world,” not “fly forth.” Protestant missionaries could learn from the Catholic missionaries, especially their “organized concentration.”<sup>65</sup> According to the German *Missionswissenschaftler*, Protestant missionaries needed to come together and share their practical wisdom and work together to systematically evangelize all the continents. Warneck’s urge to participate in the conference, even from afar, demonstrated the growing utility that Germans saw in these international gatherings. His message for the other participants also revealed Warneck’s determination to guide the international mission conferences so that they supported international missionary cooperation.

Alexander Merensky, the seemingly peripatetic mission leader, had also attended the New York Conference, along with August Schreiber, as official emissaries from the *Ausschuß*.<sup>66</sup> He wrote that the conference was a “wondrous, hope-awakening sign for the future of Protestant mission work.” The ecumenical gathering in New York’s Carnegie Hall promised to fertilize the field of missionary endeavor for the new century. According to him, the conference “had achieved expansiveness as no gathering” of missionaries before: “The number of lectures was greater than at earlier occasions, their content was more significant, the discussions more fruitful.” Merensky wrote, “This conference [was] a victory of mission

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<sup>65</sup> [Gustav] Warneck, “An die Allg. Missions-Konferenz in New York,” *AMZ* 27(1900): 201-203.

<sup>66</sup> Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (December 12, 1899), BMW/bmw1/48, Item XI.

interests.”<sup>67</sup> Merensky echoed Menzel’s reports of the size of the gathering and the esteem it received from influential American statesmen like Roosevelt, and Presidents McKinley and Harrison.<sup>68</sup> Like international conferences before, this gathering of diverse Protestant communities in religious conviviality had healed wounds of doctrinarian difference with a balm of missionary commitment.<sup>69</sup> One generality that Merensky stressed might have distressed Warneck; he noted for his readers that the topics of the various sessions at the conference dealt with the “practical work” and “practical needs” of the mission movement.<sup>70</sup> Nonetheless, for Merensky and others, the New York Ecumenical Mission Conference of 1900 continued the growing enthusiasm shared in the missionary press in Germany for internationalism. German missionaries celebrated the size of the conferences as evidence of the size of international Protestantism, proof that the German mission movement was part of a grand, international community of Christians laboring for God.

### **Anticipating the Edinburgh Conference**

The final international missionary conference before the First World War, the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, was the most anticipated, and, ultimately most significant of all the global meetings of Protestant missionaries. The conference left German attendees universally proud of their place in the international mission movement and filled with positive expectations of their work’s future. Though some

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<sup>67</sup> A[lexander] Merensky, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in New-York vom 21. April bis 1. Mai 1900,” *AMZ* 27(1900): 316.

<sup>68</sup> Merensky, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in New-York,” 320-1.

<sup>69</sup> Merensky, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in New-York,” 317.

<sup>70</sup> Merensky, “Die allgemeine Missionskonferenz in New-York,” 325.

drew different lessons and assessments from the gathering in Scotland, all agreed that the conference had set an auspicious agenda for the future of Christianity. Even before the Conference met, German missionaries eagerly anticipated the effect the gathering would have upon world mission.<sup>71</sup>

In its report on the Edinburgh Conference, the periodical of the United North German Mission Conferences applauded the ecumenicalism of the gathering. In Edinburgh, “men and women from every major mission nation took part” in considering the “central questions” of Christian mission. To the nameless authors of the report the relationship between this important gathering and the Bremen Conferences was clear. In Bremen the members of the continental missions came together to consider “unique questions [*Spezialfragen*].” On the other hand, in Edinburgh the “Protestant Church” gathered to act on “world-historical concerns.” The Bremen Conferences were practical gatherings, perhaps even understood as tactical sessions, while the Edinburgh Conference represented a grand strategic gathering of global Christian importance.<sup>72</sup>

As has been discussed in other sections of this work, the German mission movement eagerly sought to have the 1920 World Mission Conference convened on German soil.<sup>73</sup> Even before then, around 1906 and 1907, German missionaries considered pushing for the 1910 conference to be held in a German city. Paul Hennig of the Moravian *Brüderunität* proposed the *Ausschuß* nominate Germany as the host

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<sup>71</sup> British missionaries felt no less excited, see Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, 3.

<sup>72</sup> “Der Edinburger Missionskongreß,” 2-5.

<sup>73</sup> See chapter four of this dissertation.

nation for the 1910 World Missionary Conference in the winter of 1906.<sup>74</sup> However, Theodor Öhler of Basel raised serious objections. First, he noted the language barrier that would be created by holding the gathering in Germany. He asked if it would be healthy for the goal of making mission international to hold either a German-language gathering, which many of the international participants would be unable to understand, or hold an English-language conference, which would prevent the wider public and a significant number of German missionaries and their supporters from joining the conference. Because fewer English-speakers spoke German than German-speakers spoke English, it made more sense to hold the event in an Anglophone location.<sup>75</sup> Other members of the *Ausschuß* agreed with Öhler's objections.<sup>76</sup> Nonetheless, in January of 1907 Alexander Merensky informed Germany's mission societies of the wish of the *Ausschuß* that Germany host the 1910 mission conference to the organizers of the 1910 conference.<sup>77</sup> But then the Moravian Mission, after longer consideration of the matter, reversed its earlier support for a German host location. According to the *Brüderunität*, American mission circles were not open to a mission conference on German soil. For the Americans having the event in Great Britain was enough of a compromise. To the Moravians, the idea of a German world mission conference now seemed hardly worth the effort as it seemed unlikely to

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<sup>74</sup> The *Missionsdirektion* of the Herrnhut Mission cited its American and English membership as proof of the international renown already garnered by German mission work and methods. As a result, See Paul Otto Hennig to Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (December 5, 1906), UA.R.15.A.73.c, 12/5/1906.

<sup>75</sup> Theodor Öhler to Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (December 20, 1906), BMW/bmw1/2184, S. 5-6.

<sup>76</sup> Gottlieb Haussleiter to Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (December 21, 1906), BMW/bmw1/2184, S. 7; and Paul Schwartz to Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (December 28, 1906), BMW/bmw1/2184, S. 8-9.

<sup>77</sup> Alexander Merensky to German Protestant mission societies (January 7, 1907), UA.R.15.A.73.c, S. 4.

occur.<sup>78</sup> In any case, it would be better to have an international conference in Britain than to have no conference at all. Shortly thereafter the suggestion was dropped. However, the enthusiasm of a significant portion of the German mission movement for the World Missionary Conference proved the strong internationalism that remained among the German Protestant missionaries, even as nationalist mission ideology made inroads by other routes.

This episode demonstrated the esteem that the international gatherings of missionaries had built in Germany's Protestant missionary culture. Eager to demonstrate the worth of their national movement to the rest of the world and keen to support the international evangelical program, German mission leaders set aside their own hopes and threw their organizational zeal into the planning of the Edinburgh Conference. The German missions were soon meeting to organize a statement of Germany's possible contributions to and expectations of the Edinburgh Conference. In May of 1908 the German mission societies sent deputations to a German meeting to compile a shared proposition for the Edinburgh Conference. The German mission societies agreed to propose that the Edinburgh Conference take on major, international themes of Protestant mission work, specifically the "encroachment of Islam in Africa and the defense against the same," and "alcohol in West Africa and a resolution against opium."<sup>79</sup> The assembled also made suggestions for greater international cooperation – the creation of an international mission library and the

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<sup>78</sup> Brüdergemeine to Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (n.d., [October 10, 1907]), BMW/bmw1/2184, S. 2-3.

<sup>79</sup> Minutes of the Deputierten der deutschen Missionsgesellschaften vor Vorbereitung des Edinburger Missionskongresses (May 18, 1909), UA.R.15.A.73.c, S. 25, Item 1.



standardization of a statistical rubric for recording mission work.<sup>80</sup> The minutes of that meeting clearly revealed the intentions and expectations of German missionaries that the international conferences should be strategic and collaborative. At the *Ausschuß*'s October 1908 meeting, Julius Richter celebrated the interest that the English and Americans had shown in German assistance, "like never before." This good will required a lively participation by Germany, he continued, and Warneck quickly seconded that notion.<sup>81</sup> International mission conferences appeared, to many Germans, to be proving the acclaim for German mission work on the international stage.

Shortly after the Germans enthusiastically joined the planning for the Edinburgh Conference, the conference planners in Germany began distributing surveys to Germany's mission societies in early 1909. Richter continued to take a leading role in the planning and his colleague, Johannes Warneck, joined the work. Johannes Warneck was the son of Gustav Warneck and a leader within the Rhenish Mission Society. He would also become one of the leading nationalists within the mission movement during the First World War. The surveys Richter and the younger Warneck worked to distribute were part of the preparation for the various commission reports planned for the Edinburgh Conference.<sup>82</sup> Respondents provided the best information they could as it related to the "preaching of the Gospels around the world," "the home base of mission," and other topics. The various commissions then

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<sup>80</sup> Minutes of the Deputierten der deutschen Missionsgesellschaften vor Vorbereitung des Edinburgher Missionskongresses (May 18, 1909), UA.R.15.A.73.c, S. 25, Item 2.

<sup>81</sup> Minutes of the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (October 27, 1908), AFSt/ALMW-DHM II.27.1.15.I, pag. 3, Item II.

<sup>82</sup> Julius Richter sent out the surveys for his commission to the various mission societies in February 1909. Richter to German Protestant mission societies (February 1909), Bmw/bmw1/2184, S. 50-54.

combined the gathered data into a report for discussion in the general assembly meetings in 1910.<sup>83</sup> Though these surveys did not always match the Germans' "tastes," they would provide a "sufficient basis" upon which to work, Richter and Warneck thought.<sup>84</sup> This organizational scheme served the elder Warneck's and other missionaries' earlier hope that the international mission conferences would focus on major issues of broad concern.

The Berlin Mission proposed that the World Missionary Conference organize an international commission for addressing international mission issues. The Berlin Society openly admitted the impetus for their proposal was the losses the mission had suffered during the Boer War and the attendant difficulties the society had had securing redress from the British government. The German missionaries claimed that "if an international mission commission were at hand" a group like the Berlin Mission Society could expect a better response from the British government. Beyond this narrow interest, the authors of the proposal noted that if the Edinburgh Conference truly intended to transform Protestant mission into a "world power" then it needed some "central organ" to defend the rights of missions against state powers.<sup>85</sup> The Berliners proposed that the commission represent the international character of mission with representatives from Britain, the United States, the Continent, Canada, South Africa, and Australia.<sup>86</sup> This commission would fit neatly atop the existing

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<sup>83</sup> For an example, see the procedure on the compilation of the Report of Commission VII, Missions and Governments, Brian Stanley, "Church, State, and the Hierarchy of 'Civilization': The Making of 'Missions and Governments' Report at the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910," in Porter, *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Mission, 1880-1914*, 58-84.

<sup>84</sup> Richter and Johannes Warneck to Moravian Mission (November 1909), UA.MD 574.

<sup>85</sup> "Antrag an den Edinburger Missions Kongress 1910, eine international Commission zur Behandlung internationaler Missionsfragen einzusetzen" (June 14, 1909), BMW/bmw1/2184, S. 91-94.

<sup>86</sup> The proposed composition was six delegates from Britain, six from the U.S., four from the Continent, and one representative each from Canada, South Africa, and Australia.

collaborative organizations of mission like the *Ausschuß*.<sup>87</sup> Full of the possibilities of international cooperation to serve the interests of the Berlin Mission, its leaders (including Richter) proposed a system of mission governance or association that mirrored the graduated sequence of conferences with a progression from local associations to national organizations, and with an international organization at the very top.

Before the Edinburgh Conference began its meetings, the son of Gustav Warneck, Johannes Warneck, shared his thoughts on the upcoming gathering in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*. His expectations for the World Missionary Conference showed he was, at the time, a strong standard bearer for his father's internationalism. He told his readers that the ecumenical character of the conference would display paths for future missionary cooperation. Warneck, citing an article in the *Christian Missionary Review*, argued the process would benefit from Germany's special contribution as the best informed of all mission movements because of the prominence of German missiology in Germany and abroad. Warneck expected the conference would bring together expert knowledge from all corners of the globe to address the most significant problems of the "modern mission era;" allowing discussions to be carried forward based on fact and causing "many illusions [to] fall away." The presentations and discussions in Edinburgh would be a "treasure trove...for mission theorists...an exhilarating afterword for practical [mission] workers, a corrective for doctrinaires, a challenge to deliberate for the over-extended

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<sup>87</sup> Antrag an den Edinburger Missions Kongress 1910, eine international Commission zur Behandlung internationaler Missionsfragen einzusetzen" (June 14, 1909), BMW/bmw1/2184, S. 91-94.

[*Vielgeschäftigen*].”<sup>88</sup> All the attendees would be provoked to rethink their methods and align themselves with the best in mission practice and belief. The mission conference gathering in Scotland filled Johannes Warneck with real optimism for the future of international cooperation. He told his German readers, “The German style [of mission work] is fully capable of complementing the English and American [styles of mission work]. But it would certainly not harm us [the Germans], if we allowed the dynamic industry and circumspect energy of our brothers across the Channel and the ocean to ignite our torch. We could learn much from them.”<sup>89</sup> Warneck’s pride in Germany’s Protestant mission work left plenty of room for authentic and significant collaboration with the nations increasingly represented in German political and popular culture as dangerous rivals

By the spring of 1910 Germany’s missionaries could barely contain their eagerness at the coming manifestation of missionary internationalism. The Moravians of Herrnhut in the spring of 1910, a few months before the Edinburgh Conference was to convene, echoed Johannes Warneck’s sentiments about the coming event. The Moravians hoped the gathering in Scotland would “call together Christians of every nation and church [and] gather them in supplication in order to join [their efforts] for the spread of the Kingdom of God in the heathen lands.” Every one of the 1200 places for attendees had already been taken, proving the universal, global interest the efforts of the world’s missionaries had attracted. The reflection went on to recount the lengthy and extensive preparations put into the great meeting, including the

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<sup>88</sup> Joh[annes] Warneck, “Zur bevorstehenden Welt-Missions-Konferenz,” *AMZ* 37(1910): 3-5.

<sup>89</sup> J. Warneck, “Zur bevorstehenden Welt-Missions-Konferenz,” 15.

compilation of a 300-page report from the eight commissions. All the preparations gave one the hope that the result would be a “blessed success.”<sup>90</sup>

### **The 1910 World Missionary Conference**

One of the representatives of the Herrnhut Moravians, Paul Otto Hennig, experienced his ten days in Edinburgh as proof of the universal power of Christianity; the conference had brought together in its 1200 attendees the “entire Christian world” – at least the Protestant parts.<sup>91</sup> Walther Tritteltvitz of the Bethel Society wrote that for ten days Edinburgh was the “spiritual center of the Earth, the capital city of Christendom.”<sup>92</sup> The *Jahrbuch der vereinigten norddeutschen Missionskonferenzen* (Yearbook of the United North German Mission Conferences) called the conference the “most important event” in recent mission history.<sup>93</sup> Hennig evoked the globe-spanning reach of the conference by noting that journalists sat in specially reserved seats with quick access to express telegraphs and postmen “in order to transmit the latest news of the Congress to every corner of the world.” Hennig’s account of the conference appeared in the *Missionsblatt der Brüdergemeine* (Mission Gazette of the Brethren), the society periodical of the Moravian missionaries in Germany. And with this and other anecdotes Hennig shared the message that the Edinburgh Conference was an event of world significance. He noted that the press of crowds during the lunch break was so great that it made it hard to find a friend for a lunch meeting. The

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<sup>90</sup> “Die Weltmissionskonferenz” (n.d., [March 1910]), UA.MD 574.

<sup>91</sup> Hennig, “Der Weltmissionskongreß,” 197-198.

<sup>92</sup> Tritteltvitz, “Die Tage von Edinburg,” 184.

<sup>93</sup> “Der Edinburger Missionskongreß,” 1.

great mass and diversity of attendees at the mission conference made clear that Germany was but one piece of the international mission movement.<sup>94</sup> The *Jahrbuch* agreed and took pride in the significant presence of German missionary leaders in Edinburgh.<sup>95</sup> For all attendees, whatever their background, the Edinburgh Conference was an intoxicating religious experience which left most participants feeling they had participated in a profound spiritual event.<sup>96</sup>

The gathering's significance for Germany was verified to Hennig by the attention lavished on the assembled German delegates in Hamburg prior to their embarkation on a special steamer for Edinburgh.<sup>97</sup> The German mission movement, Hennig made clear, matched intellectual achievements with the British and American mission communities, justifying German participation in the Edinburgh Conference.<sup>98</sup> Two-thirds of the representatives from the European continent were German, another source pointed out, and both Hennig and other reports of the conference made special note of the three German *Missionswissenschaftler* who received honorary doctorates from the University of Edinburgh as part of the conference celebrations.<sup>99</sup> Scottish hospitality included significant subsidization of German attendance at the Edinburgh Conference, as well.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Hennig, "Der Weltmissionskongreß," 202-206.

<sup>95</sup> "Der Edinburger Missionskongreß," 2.

<sup>96</sup> Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, xxi and 88-90.

<sup>97</sup> Hennig, "Der Weltmissionskongreß," 200.

<sup>98</sup> Hennig, "Der Weltmissionskongreß," 205-206. This view was probably widely shared among German missionary intellectuals, in particular when discussing the Edinburgh Conference. Richter and Johannes Warneck emphasized its value to the reports being prepared in advance of the Conference back in November 1909. See Richter and J. Warneck to Moravian Mission (November 1909), UA.MD 574.

<sup>99</sup> "Der Edinburger Missionskongreß," 8-9.

<sup>100</sup> Delegates were apportioned and subsidized based on the domestic income raised by societies. This meant that the Moravians received 12 delegates, the Berlin and Leipzig Missions 9 each, and the Bethel Mission only 2 delegates. Richter to German Protestant mission societies (June 1909), BMW/bmw1/2184, S. 88. However, this number for the Moravians included the income collected by

Hennig shared in the optimistic climate of the World Missionary Conference. He enthused, “We stand at the beginning of the mission era of the church, [and] we should expect greatness and will live through greatness!” This new era of greatness would be advanced by a new international consortium of mission associations, carried toward its culmination by the new Continuation Committee of the World Missionary Conference. This new body, itself an embodiment of the ecumenicalism of a wished-for future, had been “seconded by a Presbyterian, supported by a Methodist and a German pastor, and spoken for by the Bishop of Durham, a Quaker, and many others.”<sup>101</sup> The Continuation Committee would begin the planning for the next World Missionary Conference in 1920 and take the lead on other areas of potential international missionary cooperation. Hennig left his readers with an image of a world united by Protestant Christianity thanks to the Edinburgh Conference. He described a communion celebrated the final Sunday of the Conference. He told his readers how,

I found myself beside...a cleric of the Scottish state church,...a Baptist missionary out of distant India,...one or another from the German delegates,...and in the pew opposite me an Indian cleric and his... wife, both in their national dress. Beside him a Japanese woman, in the background the black face of a Negro. We celebrated communion with one another, the repast that the Lord bequeathed to his Church...<sup>102</sup>

For Hennig, the Edinburgh Mission Conference offered a true vision of Protestantism’s hopeful future, a gathering of all the peoples of the world, and the way towards that vision, a collective international evangelical effort. Trittelvitz, representative of the most nationalist of Germany’s mission societies, celebrated the

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the Brotherhood in the United States and Great Britain. The Moravians divided delegates amongst their three regions. See Benjamin La Trobe to Kenneth Machlennan, Secretary of the British Executive Committee of the Edinburgh Conference (July 9, 1909), UA.MD 574.

<sup>101</sup> Hennig, “Der Weltmissionskongreß,” 209-211

<sup>102</sup> Hennig, “Der Weltmissionskongreß,” 212.

Edinburgh Conference as proof of Protestants' "fighting camaraderie (*Waffenbrüderschaft*) against a shared enemy, against heathendom and Islam."<sup>103</sup>

In 1910, Gustav Warneck was too elderly to travel to Scotland for the World Missionary Conference, but he was not too old to indulge in the same epistolary guidance he had given previous conferences. He sent a letter to John Mott, the key organizer of the Edinburgh Conference, and had that letter published in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* so that Germans might know his thoughts. Warneck shared in the general consensus that the Edinburgh Conference was of great merit. He wrote that he considered the conference "decisive for the future of mission" and for missionaries' shared goal of seeing the Gospels spread to the entire non-Christian world. However, Warneck renewed his objection to Mott and others' call for Christian missionaries to "occupy the entire world in the present generation." Warneck thought this an unnecessary risk that would overextend the missions and leave them vulnerable to Islam.<sup>104</sup> Benjamin La Trobe of the Herrnhut *Missionsdirektion* also cautioned Mott in private that the advocates of "rapid advance" ought not to defame the hard work of older mission societies.<sup>105</sup> Even so, the international mission conference in Edinburgh had satisfied most German missionaries' expectations.

The experiences of the German Protestant missionaries in Edinburgh were uniformly positive. They found themselves overjoyed to join together with other Protestants and discuss how they might expand the international community of evangelical Christendom, how they might continue their work to create a global

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<sup>103</sup> Trittelvitz, "Die Tage von Edinburg," 188.

<sup>104</sup> [Gustav Warneck], "An die Welt-Missionskonferenz in Edinburg," *AMZ* 37(1910): 369-370.

<sup>105</sup> La Trobe to John Mott (December 4, 1909), UA.MD 574.



kingdom of God. The diversity of the gathering, the prominent place given German participants, and the overwhelmingly strategic character of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference helped confirm internationalists' vision for international mission conferences. The World Missionary Conference had been a gathering of unlimited optimism and supreme certainty that Christian faith and power would change the world. Though there were instances of competitiveness, discord, and trepidation, the German missionaries who attended returned home only thinking of the glorious potential they had witnessed in Scotland.<sup>106</sup> The gathering in Edinburgh in 1910 fulfilled the aspirations of Germany's old guard of internationalists and won, for a time, over many missionary nationalists as well.

### **Reaction to Edinburgh in Germany**

The earliest news of the Edinburgh Conference from German mission sources appeared in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* in 1910, only shortly after attendees began reporting back to Germany.<sup>107</sup> The missiological journal published a letter from the Edinburgh Conference delegates addressed to the "Christians of the world." The delegates alerted their audience that the next ten years would "in all likelihood" witness a "turning point in human history." The work of evangelization seemed to be, according to the message, teetering toward a final swing of all humanity over to Christianity. In preparation for this transformation, the World Missionary Conference members had begun organizing for the synchronization and strengthening of mission

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<sup>106</sup> Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, 16.

<sup>107</sup> Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (July 5, 1910), BMW/bmw1/55, Item 1.

activities around the world. However, every loyal Christian needed to contribute to raising other Christians' awareness of their responsibilities with regards to this divine purpose. The Edinburgh delegates explained, while global mission advanced closer and closer to its divinely ordained success, there remained threats to internationalism. According to the Edinburgh leaders, the rising demands from the state for "patriotism and sacrifice" threatened to defeat the parallel rise of Christian (meant as international) missionary zeal.<sup>108</sup> This, the first word out of Edinburgh, must have filled Germany's remaining missionary internationalists with elation.

For Germany, the World Missionary Conference had received great attention in the public sphere and many important missionary leaders followed up their attendance in Edinburgh with speaking engagements for Germany's middle classes. For example, Richter identified the echoes of the Edinburgh excitement in the Kaiser's sponsorship of the *Nationalspende*. After his return from Edinburgh, Max Berner reported to the Colonial Secretary that he had shared to good effect the German colonial government's "vital interest" in the concerns of global mission.<sup>109</sup> Many, according to Richter, saw that "through German mission German prestige [could be] promoted." This too Richter hoped would be a sign of a new era, an era of recognition for German missionaries' labors.<sup>110</sup>

To Richter, a man whose influence in German mission circles was growing daily, the Edinburgh Conference opened new possibilities for German and international mission. The cooperative structures formed and launched at Edinburgh

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<sup>108</sup> "Botschaft der Edinburger Welt-Missions-Konferenz an die Christen der ganzen Welt," *AMZ* 37(1910): 392-393.

<sup>109</sup> Max Berner to Friedrich Lindequist (July 8, 1910), BArch R1001/1.19, Film Nr. 80478, Bd. 6909, S. 85.

<sup>110</sup> Richter, "Die Wirkungen der Edinburger Weltmissionskonferenz," 12-13.

promised a renewal of the international program of evangelization. The establishment of the Continuation Committee had been the “high point” of the Edinburgh Conference.<sup>111</sup> For Richter it might have been that the internationalism of the World Missionary Conference showed him that he and his fellow Germans did not have to choose between nationalism and internationalism. Perhaps Germany’s national interests could be served by a universal program of Christian mission.

The Continuation Committee formed to carry on the work of the Edinburgh Conference proffered the best hope for this new universal program. Shortly after its formation Richter began to tout the contributions Germany could make to the new international association. Germany’s model of national association amongst missionary organizations, the *Ausschuß*, needed a counterpart in England so that the “chains of union” could be forged. In addition, Germany’s well-developed system of academic and practical missionary training could be transmitted to the American and British mission societies for a general improvement of global evangelism. He also began proposing international ventures to improve cooperation; he proposed a unified statistical collection and a global effort to influence public opinion through the daily press, and the creation of an “international mission journal.” Finally, he hoped that this grand international system of evangelical governance could create an international commission that could help intercede between Protestant mission societies, whatever their ostensible nationality, and the various colonial and national governments.<sup>112</sup> This idea was supported by the leaders of the Continental Mission

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<sup>111</sup> Julius Richter, “Das Continuation Committee,” *AMZ* 38(1911): 375.

<sup>112</sup> Richter, “Das Continuation Committee,” 376 and 378-381. In May of 1911, the same year Richter published his ideas, the Continuation Committee resolved that there would not be a special commission formed to deal with mission societies’ relations with foreign governments. It did,

Conference; the key German mission leaders Theodor Öhler and August Wilhelm Schreiber, backed Richter's proposal in a letter to the members of the Continental Mission Conference.<sup>113</sup> Richter jumped with both feet into the nascent international movement, and considering how strong his nationalism had been, his apparent change of heart demonstrates the enthusiasm for internationalism that the Edinburgh Conference stimulated in German missionaries of every outlook.

The *Ausschuß* valued the hard work of Richter on the organization of the Edinburgh Conference in 1909 and 1910 and continued to honor his work on the Continuation Committee. At its February meeting in 1911 the *Ausschuß* delineated its expectations for the new international mission commission. The commission, the *Ausschuß* felt, should serve the general interests of the international mission movement by caring for individual missions' needs. This could be done if the international commission concentrated on "societies whose rights [had] been interfered with by governmental procedures." The general interest of mission in matters of the reduction of the spirit trade; abolition of the opium trade; promotion of international treaties on the protection of indigenous peoples; opposition to slavery, the "coolie" trade, and the like; and the "elimination of infringements upon the rights of Christians and ensuring the interests of mission schools with regards to government policy in the mission territories." In short, the international commission

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however, resolve to serve as best it could to assist in matters which "in the judgment of any national Committee, imperatively call for some international action." See "Resolutions of the Continuation Committee of the World Missionary Conference (May 22, 1911), UA.MD 575.

<sup>113</sup> Öhler and Schreiber to member societies of the Kontinentale Missions-Konferenz (December 19, 1910), UA.MD 573.

should extend the areas of activity that the *Ausschuß* itself pursued in Germany into the global sphere.<sup>114</sup>

Other important missionary leaders spread the joyful news from Edinburgh. Paul Otto Hennig of Herrnhut reported to an English colleague that he had toured Germany in the months following Edinburgh and “found everywhere the most hearty [sic] reception.” The Edinburgh Conference had invested a new “missionary thought and spirit...[into] many Christians...[and] a spirit of cooperation among the mission societies.”<sup>115</sup> Hennig held these same views all the way into 1914 at the General Synod of the Herrnhut Brotherhood, the quinquennial gathering of Moravian religious leaders from around the world. Hennig’s mission report included a note that the Edinburgh Conference had made it clear that “every society or church that wishes to pursue mission...[must] situate its work within the entirety of global mission.” He went on, “Edinburgh showed us duties like never seen by God’s Church. The Lord [had] opened the gates of the world wide.” He only hoped the world would take up God’s holy purpose. But, and here Hennig took solace in the other function of the Edinburgh Conference which he had perceived, the Moravians had also learned that they did not “stand alone.” Other mission societies faced exactly the same challenges as the Moravians and that could be a profound source of strength.<sup>116</sup> The Edinburgh Conference had created in Hennig, and it is safe to assume others, a tangible sense of international purpose that would have served as a strong bulwark for many against the nationalizing pressures of the period.

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<sup>114</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (February 16, 1911), BMW/bmw1/1779, Item 2.

<sup>115</sup> Hennig to W. J. Oldham (January 19, 1911), UA.MD 575.

<sup>116</sup> *Mitteilungen aus der General-Synode von Jahre 1914*, Vol. 2, (Herrnhut: [Druck von Fr. Lindenbein, 1914]), 41. See also Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, 7.

Hennig was not the only missionary leader to cling tightly to the memory of the Edinburgh Mission Conference. Julius Richter, of the Continuation Committee, presented a lecture to the gathered missionaries at the 1913 Bremen Conference on “The Impact of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference upon Continental Mission Life.” Richter told his audience that the Edinburgh Conference was the “greatest, most unforgettable occasion in Protestant mission culture,” and every delegate at the conference would remember the “charm and magic” of that “holy day” as one of the most valuable memories of his or her life.<sup>117</sup> Richter detailed for his audience a number of important advances in the wake of the World Missionary Conference. His affectionate memories revealed, again, that though he was increasingly espousing a nationalist mission ideology, Richter still held strong internationalist aspirations.

The continental missions, Richter told his audience, had, in Edinburgh, been drawn out of their isolation for the first time. At the same time, the American and British mission circles had been brought into greater acquaintance with the talents of their European counterparts. Perhaps now, he mused, the “principles and methods” of mission work studied and developed by German *Missionswissenschaftler* would receive the attention they deserved beyond the Continental Mission Conferences. The opportunity for international collaboration would also be fruitful for continental societies, Richter exulted. German, Dutch, and Scandinavian missions could learn from the “example of the Anglo-Saxons” the best methods for cultivating mission support in their home countries. Even more importantly, Richter hoped that the

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<sup>117</sup> Julius Richter, “Die Wirkungen der Edinburger Weltmissionskonferenz auf das kontinentale Missionsleben,” *Verhandlungen der Kontinentalen Missions-Konferenz* 13(1913): 9.

brotherhood of missionaries that had arisen in Edinburgh would lead to a new “period of cooperation and missionary integration.”<sup>118</sup>

Many in the German Protestant mission movement felt that the next gathering place for international mission should be on the continent. Less than a year after the Edinburgh meeting, leading German missionaries sought to arrange for a German host city of the next international conference. The Continuation Committee undertook the planning for the 1920 World Mission Conference immediately after the Edinburgh Conference closed. The Canadians proffered Toronto as a host city but the *Ausschuß* felt a location on the European continent would be better suited. Öhler and the *Ausschuß* presented the case for a continental host city to the German mission societies. They argued with four major points. First, Protestant mission had three wings, American, British, and continental. The 1900 Conference had been in New York, 1910 in Edinburgh, so therefore the 1920 meeting should convene somewhere on the continent. Second, continental mission had a unique character with special “gifts and strengths”: a continental host city would allow these to come to their fullest potential. Third, were the mission conference held in Toronto, attendance from the continent would be very low, and as a result the conference would be a purely Anglo-Saxon affair. The Edinburgh Conference had shown, by contrast, that a European location was no hindrance to American attendance. Finally, by placing the conference on the continent, Christian missionaries would place “scientific and practical work” at

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<sup>118</sup> Richter, “Die Wirkungen der Edinburger Weltmissionskonferenz,” 9-11.

the center of the goals of mission by recognizing the importance of the continental (i.e. German) traditions of mission work.<sup>119</sup>

The Protestant mission societies seemed amenable to Öhler's proposition. At the next meeting of the Berlin *Komitee* in May of 1911 the gathered leaders resolved that they thought the continent the best location for the next global conference and agreed to help contribute to the costs of such a conference.<sup>120</sup> The same week the *Missionsdirektion* of the Moravian Mission replied to Öhler that they wished to "join in inviting the World Congress to the continent."<sup>121</sup> The *Ausschuß* took its time drafting a proposal to the Continuation Committee, delaying into 1912. But then the *Ausschuß* leadership agreed to suggest Richter use his position on the Continuation Committee to request a continental host city for the 1920 conference.<sup>122</sup> Then the 1913 Bremen Conference voted in favor of a continental site and selected Germany as the host nation.<sup>123</sup>

Julius Richter was not the only missionary nationalist who caught the international bug with the hope that it would improve Germany's mission culture. Karl Axenfeld produced another endorsement of Germany as host nation just a month before Germany's declaration of war on France and Russia in 1914. This proposal met with such approval from the rest of the *Ausschuß* that parts of it were reproduced in whole in a memorandum that the *Ausschuß* submitted to the Continuation Committee on the very eve of World War I. He presented the case for Germany as the

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<sup>119</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (April 1, 1911), BMW/bmw1/2186, S. 1-2.

<sup>120</sup> Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (May 2, 1911), BMW/bmw1/56, Item 2.

<sup>121</sup> La Trobe to Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (May 6, 1911), UA.MD 460.

<sup>122</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to member mission societies (May 14, 1912), BMW/bmw1/8334.

<sup>123</sup> "Gutachten des deutschen Missions-Ausschusses über die nächste Welt-Missionskonferenz und ihre Tagung in Deutschland" (July 31, 1914), BMW/bmw1/8334.



best continental location for a world mission conference. According to him, only Germany among the continental mission nations possessed large mission fields in every region of Protestant mission work around the world. Axenfeld used arguments that he had used in 1910 with regards to the German Colonial Congress.<sup>124</sup> He argued that Germany had fought for its political unity and had become a global power “overnight.” By holding the 1920 Conference in Germany, the victory of German unity and Christian development could be aided, helping bring the full strength of Germany into alliance with the international mission community.<sup>125</sup>

Axenfeld definitively described a future mission conference that fit neatly into the German system of mission conferences. He wrote, “The goal of the next world mission conference must be to secure the unity [of international mission] and through that make Christians more willing and more effective for their service to non-Christian humanity.”<sup>126</sup> A future German-hosted world mission conference should not be a carbon copy of the Edinburgh Conference; the “achievements of Edinburgh must constitute the premise for the next conference.” Axenfeld described how in just the four years since Edinburgh significant changes had transformed the mission sphere demanding that new strategies be developed in response.<sup>127</sup> The international mission conference of 1920, like the previous conferences, provided an opportunity, in Axenfeld’s mind, for international missionary leaders to formulate strategic plans for the global evangelical project.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> See chapter four of this dissertation, n61.

<sup>125</sup> Karl Axenfeld, “Die nächste Weltmissionskonferenz” (July 9, 1914), BMW/bmw1/2186, S. 39-44.

<sup>126</sup> Axenfeld, “Die nächste Weltmissionskonferenz.”

<sup>127</sup> Axenfeld listed the establishment of the Chinese Republic, the conquest of new Muslim territories by Christians (Morocco, Libya), the Young Turks’ revolution in Turkey, and other changes.

<sup>128</sup> Axenfeld, “Die nächste Weltmissionskonferenz.”

As already mentioned, Axenfeld's ideas carried great weight among German missionaries by 1914 and the *Ausschuß* duplicated many of them in its "Expert Opinion of the German Mission Council on the Next World Mission Conference and its Meeting in Germany." The *Ausschuß* directly reproduced Axenfeld's language regarding the necessity of a world mission conference in Germany. Where Axenfeld had proposed Berlin, the *Ausschuß* added Hamburg as a possible site. The leaders of German mission also preserved Axenfeld's argument that the next mission conference should be a strategic meeting. The topics covered at the Edinburgh Conference: developing indigenous churches, mission school policy, medical mission, and others were important but threatened to "schematize and flatten mission work." The *Ausschuß* proposed concentration on broader themes, themes less likely to be distorted by local political and cultural conditions in mission fields. In other words, strategic and broadly theoretical issues of Christian mission.<sup>129</sup> The guns of August would drown out German calls for a German host city for the 1920 World Missionary Conference; the hostilities of 1914-1918 also would put a final end to German missionaries' internationalist ideology. Nonetheless, the excitement felt about the 1910 Edinburgh Conference revived many German missionaries' hopes for an international community of Protestant Christians collaborating to create a heavenly kingdom.

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<sup>129</sup> "Gutachten des deutschen Missions-Ausschusses über die nächste Welt-Missionskonferenz und ihre Tagung in Deutschland" (July 31, 1914), BMW/bmw1/8334.

## Conclusion

At the same time that nationalist cultural norms encouraged German missionaries to adopt a more nationalist attitude in their fundraising and propaganda efforts, the same missionaries enjoyed a growing cordiality with their Anglophone co-religionists. The structure of mission conferences that missionaries in Germany erected over the course of several decades and the ease with which they adapted the international mission conferences to that structure, made it easy for German Protestant missionaries to embrace the internationalism of mission cooperation. The gatherings in London in 1888, New York in 1900, and especially Edinburgh in 1910, carried forward German missionaries' internationalist traditions. The meetings, especially the 1910 conference, provided tangible evidence of Germany's membership in an international fraternity of evangelism. They did so with such effectiveness that even avowed nationalists like Julius Richter and Karl Axenfeld integrated internationalism into their nationalism at times. While the patterns of missiological discourse and metropolitan propagandization marked a definite slide by German Protestant missionaries towards nationalism, the support for international conferences in Germany's mission culture demonstrated the persistence of German missionary internationalism.

## Chapter 6: From Edinburgh to Versailles

It is more than just cliché to describe World War I's effect on the German Protestant mission movement as the end of an era. The Protestant mission establishment viewed it as such from the very start. Missionaries experienced the war like every other German; many saw service at the front; German missionaries abroad in Entente territories had their activities restricted in ways ranging from mild to harsh, and mission houses gave over their space for use as hospitals and convalescence homes for the wounded. Missionaries, mission societies, and their national movement interpreted the wartime events a number of ways. For some the war was profound evidence of a new era; like the archetypal *Freiwilliger*, some missionary leaders charged headlong into the Great War hoping for a final forging of German Protestantism. To them the war promised to finally unify the people of the Reformation in one German nation devoted to its religious heritage and purpose. The Great War, for some, offered a chance to capitalize on the “re-founding” of the *Kaiserreich*. The furor of the war gave German mission leaders the chance to do more than just “roil the surface.” Axenfeld’s speech in September 1914 typified this idea, “Now the living, holy, all-powerful God speaks and reveals himself” as Germany’s only refuge. A Germany that joined together and called upon God for “assistance and [for] victory” would be joined in “unity and strength” and “purified and renewed” by

God's grace. Missionaries should pray for victory because such a nation, "ever more stalwart in the service of God" would show its gratitude in missionary deeds.<sup>1</sup>

More complex was the reaction by some missionary leaders who interpreted the war as a certain sign of God's will. Such commentators in the mission movement drew solace from the clarity they believed earthly events provided regarding divine providence. Still other missionaries (and sometimes the same ones who saw the war in a hopeful light) bore witness to the tragic effects of the war. In their literature they provided readers with narratives and descriptions of the practical impact of the war on German Protestant mission. Whatever the missionaries' initial reaction to the war became, as it dragged into its second and third years, proof that missionary internationalism was dead. Some thought it had been murdered by the British and Americans, while others thought the war proved missionary internationalism had never been more than half-dead to begin with.

The end of missionary internationalism in Germany was a two-fold process; first, German missionary leaders embraced the nationalist fervor of the war, forsaking in their own minds internationalism; second, over the course of the war, the British blockade and Entente conquest of German colonial territories indicated to German Protestant missionaries an Anglo-Saxon betrayal of the principles of internationalism. German missionaries simultaneously lost their interest in internationalism as the British and Americans seemed to militarily dismantle the international mission community. This chapter will discuss the German missionaries' initial reaction to the outbreak of war in August 1914, and then their reaction to British activities during the

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<sup>1</sup> Ernst Dryander & Karl Axenfeld, *Mission und Vaterland: deutsch-christliche Reden in schwerer Zeit* (Berlin: Buchhandlung der Berliner Evangel. Missions-Gesellschaft, 1914), 17-18.

war. German missionaries' interpretation of the war's events led to a final rejection of mission internationalism. The chapter will also close with a discussion of the effect the war had upon German Protestant mission in concrete terms.

### **Missionaries and the Spirit of 1914**

Jeffrey Verhey's study of the "Spirit of 1914" offers some useful insights for understanding the behavior of Germany's missionary leadership at the outset of the First World War. Verhey argues that the "myth of the Spirit of 1914" served the interests of every political faction within Germany.<sup>2</sup> In their version of that myth, German conservatives and liberals read contemporary political and journalistic accounts of the German public's emotional state in August 1914 as proof that Germans had finally recognized their common national identity.<sup>3</sup> The leaders of Germany's missionary leadership shared in this interpretation. As members of the intellectual elite, they, like other German intellectuals, dutifully sought to support this new unity.<sup>4</sup> Between August and October of 1914, German missionaries offered their own addition to the language of unity, embracing the potential of a unified German *Protestant* nation poised to complete the unfinished work of the Reformation.

On September 21, 1914, Karl Axenfeld delivered a remarkable speech in honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Brandenburg Aid Society for the Berlin Mission. The speech, hosted at the *Stadtsmissionskirche* in the Kreuzberg section of

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<sup>2</sup> Jeffrey Verhey, *The Spirit of 1914: Militarism, Myth, and Mobilization in Germany* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 232-234.

<sup>3</sup> Verhey, *The Spirit of 1914*, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Verhey, *The Spirit of 1914*, 132-133.

Berlin and reprinted by the Berlin Mission as the pamphlet *Mission und Vaterland, deutsch-christliche Reden in schwerer Zeit* (Mission and the Fatherland, German Christian Orations in Dire Times), featured Axenfeld speaking along with the imperial family's court chaplain, Ernst Dryander. Following a brief speech by Dryander, Axenfeld delivered his own discourse "*Vaterland und Mission*" (Fatherland and Mission). In his address Axenfeld celebrated the new unity that Germany had found in August 1914. The German people, Axenfeld told his listeners, had been called "to battle for life and death, to the fullest dedication of property and blood."<sup>5</sup> The war called upon all Germans to do their part for the nation's survival.

Germany's mission movement, Axenfeld stated without any shadow of a doubt, was in this fight as well. The war had import not only for the German homeland but also for "[t]he symbiosis [*Lebensgemeinschaft*] of the Fatherland and mission...in this hour." Axenfeld, ever mindful of the debate about internationalism and nationalism, defended his flank by acknowledging the universality of God's message remained. However, Axenfeld argued that too strong a devotion to internationalism ignored the "natural" and "God-ordained" relationship between mission and nation. In fact, by this reasoning, internationalism defied God's natural order. Axenfeld pointed out the significant assistance that Germany's Protestant missionaries had received from the German nation and its colonial empire; the *Nationalspende* was just one example of the valuable assistance Axenfeld identified. More generally the "church and national life, colonial economy, trade and international standing of our Fatherland," Axenfeld gushed, had been a "holy fount." In the dire times of war, Axenfeld went on to catalog the effect the war had already

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<sup>5</sup> Dryander and Axenfeld, *Mission und Vaterland*, 7.

had upon his mission society; a fifth of the missionaries in training now bore arms for the state, mission fields had been cut off from the *Heimat*, and the mission stations in German Kiaochow had been destroyed. Axenfeld argued that Germany's missionaries could not help but be part of Germany's war. He proclaimed that German mission was ready, like the entire nation, to take up its share of the duties, sacrifices, and sorrows:<sup>6</sup> "We believe and pray, we serve and sacrifice [ourselves] with our fighting, bleeding and dying brothers, with our beloved German *Volk*."<sup>7</sup>

In the first weeks of the war, German missionary officials encouraged the "spirit of 1914." The meeting minutes of the executive of the Berlin Mission in early August 1914 record that in the "present situation" the majority of the mission's leadership wished to know "[h]ow can we...best serve the Fatherland?"<sup>8</sup> August Wilhelm Schreiber of the *Evangelische Missions-Hilfe* wrote to the leaders of Germany's Protestant mission societies celebrating the "unforeseen unity and strength" of the German *Volk*. This unity needed to be cultivated. German missions had a "holy duty" to remind the German nation of the messages of the holy Gospels – messages like Jesus' mission commission.<sup>9</sup> Weeks before his speech at the *Stadtsmissionskirche*, Axenfeld wrote a colleague that the Berlin Mission Society had subordinated every other wish behind the desire to "serve the Fatherland."<sup>10</sup> He shared with the German members of the Continuation Committee on October 15, 1914, his belief that "Our *Volk*, divided like no other [people] before the war, [was]

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<sup>6</sup> Dryander and Axenfeld, *Mission und Vaterland*, 7-11.

<sup>7</sup> Dryander and Axenfeld, *Mission und Vaterland*, 16.

<sup>8</sup> Minutes of the Vorstand and Hauskonferenz, Berlin Mission Society (August 5, 1914), BMW/bmw1/58. Axenfeld reported on this meeting to the full Komitee of the Berlin Mission, Karl Axenfeld to Berlin Mission Society Komitee members (August 14, 1914), BMW/bmw1/2250.

<sup>9</sup> August Wilhelm Schreiber to leaders of German mission societies (August 8, 1914), AFSt/ALMW-DHM II.27.1.3.

<sup>10</sup> Axenfeld to Johannes Büchsel (August 11, 1914), BMW/bmw1/1120.



now joined in wondrous unity.”<sup>11</sup> Germany’s missionary leadership eagerly embraced the struggle that Germany had entered because they hoped to see a unified Germany ready to reinforce the mission movement.

Historical memory played an important role in missionaries’ efforts to express their enthusiasm for the war. Carl Paul reminded Leipzig Mission supporters that “100 years ago, when the German *Volk* struggled for its freedom, simultaneously [the *Volk*] underwent a religious awakening and deepening [of faith].” He hoped the coming battles of 1914 would “breed a similarly blessed fruit.” He, like many other missionary leaders thought the hardships of war might just complete the final transformation of Germany into a true mission nation.<sup>12</sup> Paul’s comparison of 1914 to the Napoleonic era was not unique. Julius Richter claimed that even in the case of a defeat by the Entente, Germany would experience an even deeper awakening as it had after Napoleon’s defeat of Prussia at Jena in 1806. He continued, if Germany were to win the war, though there would be no need for a revival like that after Jena, the nation would have to accept the responsibility of world power, a responsibility for which he thought it should already begin preparing.<sup>13</sup> Axenfeld identified this responsibility as the “responsibility for the elevation of the Gospels in the world and the direction of the mission injunction among the heathens and the Mohammedans.”<sup>14</sup> Germany’s final ascent to world power would also be a great victory for Christian

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<sup>11</sup> Minutes of German members of the Continuation Committee (October 15, 1914), BMW/bmw1/8229.

<sup>12</sup> Carl Paul to “die mit unserer Mission verbundenen Vereine in Deutschland” (8/6/1914), AFSt/ALMW-DHM II.11.5.

<sup>13</sup> Minutes of German members of the Continuation Committee (October 15, 1914), BMW/bmw1/8229.

<sup>14</sup> Axenfeld to Berlin Mission Society Komitee members (August 14, 1914), BMW/bmw1/2250.

mission in Germany – it would force upon Germany the duty that the Protestant mission movement had been trying to cultivate for forty years.

German mission leadership, especially Karl Axenfeld, but also more internationalist men like Carl Paul, joined in the nationalist outpouring at the beginning of World War I. This outpouring of nationalism had dire consequences for missionary ideas of international Christian fellowship. The voices of internationalism lost the initiative from the beginning and as the war continued the voices of nationalism grew stronger. The ups and downs of the war and the climate of uncompromising nationalism that prevailed in the German Empire muzzled any attempt to defend internationalism. After all, August Wilhelm Schreiber pointed out to the Moravian Mission leader Paul Otto Hennig, in August 1914, “the political outlook of mission [was] more difficult than ever before” and had mission stood against the war it would have only damaged the mission movement.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Deconstruction of Internationalist Ideology**

The outbreak of the First World War further intensified the nationalism of men like Axenfeld and Richter. Nonetheless, others still clung to the forms of missionary internationalism. In 1915 *Missionsinspektor* Detlef Bracker of the Schleswig-Holstein Evangelical Lutheran Mission Society (*Schleswig-Holsteinische Evangelisch-Lutherische Missionsgesellschaft*), better known as the Breklum Society, wrote an objection to what he saw as “a great danger” to German mission. This danger was the growing and sustained pressure for German mission to have a

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<sup>15</sup> Schreiber to Paul Otto Hennig and Gottlieb Haussleiter (August 10, 1914), UA.MD 517.

“national impact.” The chief target of Bracker’s criticism was Julius Richter. Bracker argued that Richter’s support for a mission with a national purpose was a grievous mistake and that a new clarification of the proper connection between the Christian and the national had become necessary. Bracker cited Galatians 3:28 as evidence that national difference was meaningless in the practice of Christian faith. As Bracker interpreted the passage, “All believers, whatever nation, whatever class and whatever sex they belong to...are all vines on one branch, not only ‘one’ but rather ‘One.’”<sup>16</sup> Bracker’s critique, Richter’s response, and Axenfeld’s intervention exemplify the impact of the political and military events of the First World War on the ideology of the Protestant mission movement.

Bracker’s article did show some of the changes in mission internationalism over the years. He wrote that the unity of all believers should not transform all Christians into “a-national cosmopolitans” but instead into prosperous members of their *Volk*. As Bracker put it, “Christianity is supranational [*hypernational*] (not international, because spiritual life is not internal, but instead transcendental); it should directly activate in itself the national-ness of natural life, the universal in the particular.” Mission must hold in balance its correct relationship to the “supranational” and the national. Mission’s primary obligation was to encourage a recommitment to unity from all Christians. Devotion to Christianity’s universal message should remain superior to national loyalties. To Bracker, if the German people began to see themselves as superior to other Christians it would lead to

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<sup>16</sup> [Detlef] Bracker, “Ein nationaler Einschlag?” *AMZ* 42(1915): 250 and 254-255.

Germans perceiving themselves as the chosen people without any obligations to other nations of the earth.<sup>17</sup>

Though German mission owed gratitude to the German people for their support of missionary work, mission, Bracker continued, could only pursue “religious goals, it must work religiously through and through, just as much at home [*in der Heimat*] as in the mission field, and must be completely selfless in national relations.” Deviation from this purpose, Bracker worried, would ruin the mission project. First, work in the mission field would be functionally destroyed. If missionaries could be accused of having national interests, Bracker argued, then missionary work would become tied up with national competition. And this, he concluded, would “fill the world with explosives” by combining national competition with religious fanaticism. Furthermore, the peoples to whom missionaries evangelized would become suspicious of missionary motives and turn away from salvation to superstition or, worse, Islam.<sup>18</sup> At home as well, mission would suffer because, as Bracker reiterated, “the Kingdom of God is always injured if the national is mixed with the spiritual.” Mission societies’ special role as the carriers of Christian spiritual reawakening in Germany would be endangered in much the same way as with the “heathens” abroad.<sup>19</sup> In short, to Bracker’s mind, while German missionaries retained certain obligations to their Fatherland, those obligations could not stand up to the higher duty of all Christians to the Gospels, and if national loyalty was wrongfully privileged over religious duty then the mission project would disintegrate.

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<sup>17</sup> Bracker, “Ein nationaler Einschlag?” 255.

<sup>18</sup> Bracker, “Ein nationaler Einschlag?” 255-7.

<sup>19</sup> Bracker, “Ein nationaler Einschlag?” 259-260.

Julius Richter acknowledged that the problem of the relationship between church and state was an issue of historical depth and consequence. He cast the matter as a question of whether or not a mission was authorized to extend its service to the political or economic interests of its home country. Richter acknowledged Bracker's point that the location and political circumstances of every German mission society caused political difficulties. With nearly half of all German missionaries working in British colonies and many others working in other foreign empires, many German societies could not actively pursue any national program. Furthermore, he acknowledged that the first obligation of any existing German mission society ought to be to existing mission fields, wherever they may be. Only when a new mission society organized should the requirement be that German colonies be the first choice for destination.<sup>20</sup>

All this was, to Richter's mind, no concession to Bracker. What he truly took exception to was the matter of the importance of nation. For Richter, the "awakening and strengthening of the national mind" across Europe was the "strongest and healthiest factor" in the history of the nations of Europe during the nineteenth century. And on top of that, the "most difficult, greatest and healthiest creation [of this period] was the powerful strengthening of German national tradition,"<sup>21</sup> whose overwhelming manifestation in the current world war, particularly during the critical days of August 1914, would be count[ed] amongst the most magnificent episodes of world history."<sup>22</sup> How could German missionaries run away from these two

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<sup>20</sup> Julius Richter, "Ein nationaler Einschlag im Missionsmotiv?" *AMZ* 42(1915): 299-302.

<sup>21</sup> Richter used the term "*Deutschtum*." With this term he referred to the sum of German heritage, tradition, and contemporary culture encompassed in a broadly defined German identity.

<sup>22</sup> Richter, "Ein nationaler Einschlag im Missionsmotiv?" 302.

phenomena of world historical significance? Richter tied this moment to the medieval religious and military missions of the Germans under Charlemagne and Friedrich Barbarossa when both great German emperors fought for “Germandom” and for Christianity.

Richter redoubled his claims with a passage from a speech he gave in January 1915. In this remarkable speech, Richter outlined a new path for German mission. He declared that as German arms expanded Germany’s empire, “*Germania* should keep her good German Christian heart...she should be no violent conqueror...We wish to be proud of a pious, constant *Germania*, our hearts should cheer her, as her pennant travels to distant seas.” He continued and declared German mission’s place in this future. Mission could not confine itself to a narrow sphere; it must lead the German *Volk* as the foundation of a Christian worldview for Germany’s new global reality.<sup>23</sup> This impending global reality would be reliant upon German missionary participation to ensure that it serve the coming Kingdom of God.

Richter returned to the terms of Bracker’s debate, and argued that mission must adapt to the new global and political reality. Bracker’s ideas were those of an earlier period, Richter countered, from a time when mission was not so deeply enmeshed with politics. The expansion of mission into national politics, colonial congresses, colonial mission conferences, mission professorships, and the 1913 sponsorship by the Kaiser of the *Evangelische Missions-Hilfe* all signaled the mission movement’s changed political circumstances. Richter offered his own guidelines for a new mission ideology [*Missionsmotiv*]: German missionary groups should recognize no mission ideology outside or besides a biblical, Christian existence. Mission

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<sup>23</sup> Richter, “Ein nationaler Einschlag im Missionsmotiv?” 303.

remained a general Christian duty, and a part of mission work was the transformation of Christian peoples into missionary peoples. However, Richter maintained, this second point required a nationally-minded mission theory. Missionaries should not divorce themselves from their heritage. Missionized peoples should be encouraged to accept the particular cultural identity of the missionaries who evangelized to them.<sup>24</sup> Richter brought together older ideas about the importance of the mission project with newer ideas about the value of nationalism.

Some months later, Karl Axenfeld observed that mission was in a “dual sense a citizen of two worlds.” Axenfeld discarded Warneck’s metaphor of mission as queen to a divine king ruling the entire globe for a metaphor casting Christianity as one identity over and above a global populace delineated into national communities. He noted that while mission served the “eternal” it also belonged to a particular nation. German mission could be regarded as “a part of the international texture of Christian mission, but also as a piece of German life.”<sup>25</sup> Axenfeld went on in a lengthy essay to discuss the complex relationship of German mission and German national interests.

The First World War shook German missionary leaders’ confidence in the capabilities and possibilities of international mission. Axenfeld’s account of the impact of the war on German mission echoed the complaints of other German Protestant missionaries. He described how German missionaries had sought at home and abroad a “brotherly community” with foreign mission societies. Abandoned in the first months of the war, first by the British according to Axenfeld, this

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<sup>24</sup> Richter, “Ein nationaler Einschlag im Missionsmotiv?” 308-309.

<sup>25</sup> Karl Axenfeld, “Was verdankt und schuldet die deutsche Mission ihrem Vaterlande?” *AMZ* 24(1915): 417.

international brotherhood proved nearly impossible to maintain. Axenfeld consoled his countrymen that the brotherhood had been “no illusion.” What had gone wrong was that the Germans had “overvalued that which united” the missions and “undervalued that which divided” them. That division lay in the national conditions of missionaries’ lives which gave every mission society its most fundamental character. Axenfeld argued that though Paul had written in Galatians that faith dissolved nationality, faith could not dissolve racial difference. Christianity could not remove the Christian from his or her family and, in the same way, membership in the Kingdom of God could not “dissolve or diminish the relationship between the individual and his national community [*Volksgemeinschaft*].”<sup>26</sup> Having defined the inviolability of national belonging, Axenfeld went on to situate German mission in German national life.

According to Axenfeld German mission was undeniably German, and Axenfeld held that this was a good thing. Where there was a “German Christianity” there was also a “German mission,” Axenfeld wrote. Germany’s thousand-year history of Christianity had led to the formation of a particular German Christianity. Axenfeld explained that when a German missionary traveled to Africa, he brought, “German Christmas! German song! Johann Sebastian Bach and Albrecht Dürer!” Germany’s mission movement bore the mark of Germany’s history and German idealism. He exulted, “We hardly know how [much] richer we are than many, many other peoples!” And, Axenfeld continued, this strength honored God. Mission owed much to its morally and religiously exemplary Fatherland, because the Fatherland had bestowed upon its mission societies the honor “of [the German] name,...[Germany’s]

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<sup>26</sup> Axenfeld, “Was verdankt und schuldet die deutsche Mission,” 417-419.



power, its science and technology [*Technik*],...its education,...culture of industriousness [*Zucht und Fleiss*], its urge for order and preparation,... [and the German] contemplative mind, internality and sobriety.” Furthermore, the special legacy of the Reformation had granted to Germany the grace to do for other peoples what God had done for Germans.<sup>27</sup> German Christianity, because of Martin Luther’s legacy, possessed the clearest mark of God’s holy intention, Axenfeld reasoned.

Axenfeld concluded that if German missionaries’ “character and their spiritual occupation and goals” allowed it they should “seek and care for” the concerns of their Fatherland. Reprising a traditional Christian position on church and state, Axenfeld wrote that where German secular power reigned, German missionaries should support the goals of the administration whenever it did not conflict with their spiritual mission. By the same token, wherever another power reigned, Germans should seek to instill in their parishioners and supplicants positive feelings for Germany. In essence, German missionaries should perform “soft diplomacy” whenever possible. Axenfeld enjoined his fellow missionaries not to go too far, stating that “We are Christians [and] wish no other Lord” but must also follow the word, “all things belong to you (1 Corinthians 3:22), which speaks not only of our freedom but also of our duties.”<sup>28</sup> German missionaries owed Germany their very essence and, as they could not abandon their national community, they must were duty-bound to serve the interests of the German nation as much as possible.

Bracker’s forceful defense of internationalism in Germany was an important indicator of the long-lasting durability of the imagined community of Christian

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<sup>27</sup> Axenfeld, “Was verdankt und schuldet die deutsche Mission,” 421-422.

<sup>28</sup> Axenfeld, “Was verdankt und schuldet die deutsche Mission,” 425-430.

evangelicism within Germany. However, the view shared by Axenfeld and Richter continued a decade-long move to challenge the established strength of missionary internationalism. The course of the war and the impact of the war on missionaries' values would bolster the younger generation's nationalism. By the end of the war, though the loss of Germany's colonies made the question largely irrelevant, most German Protestant missionaries had abandoned the old internationalism for a new missionary nationalism.

Siegfried Knak of the Berlin Mission shared in this redefinition of the relationship between mission and the nation. Knak described God's providential creation of the German nation as proof of God's desire for a specific strand of Christianity to develop in Germany. According to the Berlin missionary, Germany was destined to be the source of a renewal of the Reformation around the globe. Mission had a duty to bring this special "German spirit" to the world.<sup>29</sup> To Knak, the evidence from the war up to 1915 proved mission owed "more gratitude to the Fatherland" than to internationalism. Knak agreed with Axenfeld that in the past, community with Christians from other nations had been "overvalued," and community with the Fatherland had been "undervalued." Before colonialism, German missions had gone to the "heathens...only as children of Jesus," but now, with the "non-European world divided into protectorates, colonies, and spheres of interest," things must change. The missionary should remain a "child of Jesus," but now his "belonging to the German Fatherland [was] a stronger factor in his work than before." According to Knak, this change had significant effects. German missionaries had to

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<sup>29</sup> S[iegfried] Knak, "Erschütterung und Stärkung der Missionsgrundlage durch den Krieg. Vortrag auf der Halleschen Missionskonferenz am 8. Februar 1915," *AMZ* 42(1915): 103-104.

devote themselves to strengthening their homeland. The strength of the nation directly impacted the strength of its missionaries: “a weak Fatherland [made]...the ministrations of our emissaries amongst the heathens weaker and smaller, internally imperfect...”<sup>30</sup> Not only was it impossible to separate the missionary from his homeland, Knak argued, it was imperative that the missionary work to strengthen his homeland so that his own work could prosper.

For one leading missionary, the First World War had revealed the true state of German mission. Johannes Warneck wrote in the spring of 1915 that the war had “rolled back the particularistic and egoistic interests, and brought back selflessness, self-discipline, masculinity, valorousness, plainness,...faith in God, and self-reflection” within German society.<sup>31</sup> Like Germany, Warneck claimed, the nation’s mission societies were also undergoing a transformative experience. Perhaps in an effort to rationalize the losses to German mission of imprisoned missionaries, “orphaned” and “leaderless” indigenous congregations, destroyed mission property, and other losses of the war, the younger Warneck interpreted the war as an instrument of divine instruction. The war suggested a new path, one of greater unity. A unified German mission project could capitalize on the strengthening of German unity, and the crucible of the war would lead to a German society prepared to “work for the Kingdom of God.” A “hard, relentless war educates more than many years of untroubled prosperity,” Warneck wrote, and this education would focus the Germans on their mission duty.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Knak, “Erschütterung und Stärkung der Missionsgrundlage durch den Krieg,” 99-101.

<sup>31</sup> J[ohannes] Warneck, “Der Krieg als Erzieher,” *AMZ* 42(1915): 129.

<sup>32</sup> J. Warneck, “Der Krieg als Erzieher,” 132-133.

The growing commitment of German missionaries to nationalism, with Axenfeld driving his colleagues on, continued into 1916. A number of German missionaries, captured abroad by the Entente and repatriated to Germany in 1915, had pledged not to take up arms as members of the Central Powers' militaries. However, the German War Ministry did not recognize the authority of those pledges. The *Ausschuß* sought a way to accommodate the needs of the state while avoiding an embarrassing violation that might later prevent missionaries who broke their oaths returning to mission fields in British territories after the war.<sup>33</sup> Axenfeld, through his contacts with the German imperial government, worked to find a way for the missionaries to preserve their pledges and still serve the Fatherland.<sup>34</sup> In November 1916 Axenfeld informed missionaries that if called to serve they could be excused from armed service and take part in religious pastoral or labor service instead.<sup>35</sup> This compromise, brokered by the nationalist Axenfeld, kept German missionaries in service to the German state but allowed them to preserve the conceit of independence.

By 1916 new definitions of the relationship between religion and nation emerged. Christianity was not an “indigenous religion [*Volksreligion*];” *Volksreligions* were projections of their followers; Christianity was the “projection of God into the world.” That definition’s author, Albert Hauck, held a post as a professor of church history in Leipzig. He, like Axenfeld, made certain to protect his larger point from simple accusations of particularism. Mission must continue to be

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<sup>33</sup> Minutes of the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (April 27, 1916), BMW/bmw1/8346.

<sup>34</sup> Axenfeld to the Herrnhut Missionsdirektion (August 29, 1916), UA.MD 461 and Axenfeld to Basel, Hermannsburg, Leipzig, Goßner, Rhenish, Berlin, Herrnhut, German Baptist, Breklum, and North German Mission Societies (August 29, 1916), BMW/bmw1/8252, pag. 61.

<sup>35</sup> Axenfeld to “Missionen mit Missionaren, die ihr Ehrenwort abgegeben haben” (November 1, 1916), UA.MD 461.

ecumenical, his argument continued, and should the war end, Germany must be ready to renew its collaborative work with missionaries from other nations.<sup>36</sup> However, like Axenfeld, Hauck argued for the religious sanctification of national difference.

Hauck maintained that as men and women are not in one moment Christian and another moment German, religious work could only be taken up by missionaries “as Germans.” The necessity of this difference appeared in the particular ways that a Christian people might honor God. Albrecht Dürer could not have produced his devotional works in Rome, nor could the Sistine Madonna have been painted in Dresden (though, ironically, that was where it hung in 1916). Hauck pointed out that “art [was] only possible through national particularity.” Though there was no “German God” there was a “German Christendom.”<sup>37</sup> Mission could, through these religious and national truths, lead the spread of German culture and prestige across the globe, as England and its mission societies had during the previous century.<sup>38</sup> The First World War would act as a crucible that might burn away the “tensions of deep-seated dogmatic” division in German Protestantism. Mission, because it did not concern itself with these denominational differences, would gain strength from a united German Protestantism purified by the trials of war. Germany, as land of the Reformation, would then have the opportunity to finally complete Luther’s Reformation. Every German would be reminded by the trials of the war that “mission work [was] a national duty.”<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Hauck, *Evangelische Mission und deutsches Christentum*, 8-9.

<sup>37</sup> Hauck, *Evangelische Mission und deutsches Christentum*, 12-13.

<sup>38</sup> Hauck, *Evangelische Mission und deutsches Christentum*, 18.

<sup>39</sup> Hauck, *Evangelische Mission und deutsches Christentum*, 15-16 and 18.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Walther Tritteltvitz of the Bethel Mission understood the war as the final ordination of Germany as a mission nation. Bethel missionaries had consistently held the strongest devotion to the German nation and state. And on April 11, 1915, the leader of Bethel's East African mission gave one of a series of lectures with a title that many would use between 1914 and 1918, "The War and German Mission." Though the text of Tritteltvitz's lecture is lost, the publicity materials for the lecture series described its content. "After the war, the will to accentuate German character in the world," the description read, "will be stronger than ever before." The mission movement would become "a valuable aid" to the Germans' "will" to spread their character around the world. Tritteltvitz promised to answer in his lecture whether this meant that after the war "the emphasis on the particular [*Nationalen*] must hinder the Christian character of mission" and if mission could no longer be international.<sup>40</sup> The new devotion of mission to the nation and of the nation to mission that the war was bound to create provided Tritteltvitz with plenty of material for a long lecture. Even after the war Tritteltvitz remembered World War I as "not only a struggle with physical weapons, but also a contest of spiritual strength;" a war in which the ministers and missionaries of the Bethel movement all took part.<sup>41</sup>

The year 1917 brought about a new opportunity for German missionaries to reflect on the history of the Reformation and the First World War. Paul Otto Hennig found parallels between the current conditions of Protestant mission and the

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<sup>40</sup> "Wir möchten Sie auf die nebenstehend angezeigten Vorträge 'Krieg und Mission' ..." (April 1, 1915), HAB 2/51-6.

<sup>41</sup> Walther Tritteltvitz, "Ein halbes Jahrhundert im Dienste von Bethel" (n.d., [1948?], HAB 2/89-6 (674, 678).

Reformation. A beleaguered German nation found itself in the same position as Luther when he sheltered in Wartburg Castle from the Holy Roman Emperor. The connection between 1517 and 1917 had been best described by Carl Mirbt, according to Hennig. To make the link explicit in the minds of mission supporters Hennig advocated that the *Ausschuß* distribute Carl Mirbt's "Protestant Mission: An Introduction to its History and Character" to the various mission support groups.<sup>42</sup> Hennig continued with this quest to advertise the link between mission and the Reformation through the summer of 1917, producing a form letter for distribution to possible buyers of Mirbt's pamphlet.<sup>43</sup> In that letter he closed with what would become a common theme among missionary leaders, "We may hope a happy outcome of this war will channel our *Volk* toward a still greater global mission." The war could launch an evangelical project under the leadership of German Protestant missionaries, Hennig hoped.<sup>44</sup> The Berlin Mission even offered to organize a slide show with lectures to "awake an appreciation and love for our colonies at the front" and presumably help show the German soldier just what he was fighting for.<sup>45</sup>

As the First World War grimly moved into its second and third years, German missionaries' patriotism only intensified. The intellectual debate over internationalist and nationalist approaches to mission work entered its final phase and ended with a

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<sup>42</sup> Hennig to German Protestant mission societies (May 11, 1917), BMW/bmw1/8203. Others took up this line of argument when discussing the celebration of the Reformation's four-hundred-year anniversary. For examples see "Bericht des Vorsitzenden des Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschusses für die Versammlung der Vertreter der Missionsgesellschaften" (n.d., [November 14, 1917?]), BMW/bmw1/8186, pag. 16c; Hennig to "die Missionsgesellschaften" (May 25, 1917), BMW/bmw1/8341; and Wilhelm Gründler to Ernst Dryander (September 28, 1917), BMW/bmw1/1120.

<sup>43</sup> At least a dozen organizations purchased Mirbt's "Protestant Mission: An Introduction to its History and Character" in the summer and fall of 1917. See BMW/bmw1/8253.

<sup>44</sup> Hennig to unaddressed (n.d., [June 27/28, 1917?]), BMW/bmw1/8203.

<sup>45</sup> Berlin Mission Society to German Schutztruppen commander (September 27, 1917), BMW/bmw1/1132.

victory by the nationalists Richter and Axenfeld. The proof of their victory lay in the increasing nationalism of German Protestant missionaries' communications and sentiments in 1916 and 1917. Missionaries adopted interpretations of their wartime circumstances as proof of the inherent truth of national difference. Nationalism became proof of God's grand design and intentions for humanity. Still hungry for more explanations, some missionaries also argued that the war provided cosmological proof of God's past, present, or future intentions.

### **Global War as Divine Message**

Many missionaries sought a divine purpose in the destruction of the war. In general, the missionaries took solace in the certainty of God's benevolence and comforted themselves that Germany and its mission movement would come out of the spiritual war stronger than they had been. At an October 1914 meeting of the German members of the Continuation Committee with the American missionary John R. Mott, Julius Richter described the opening of the war as awakening the feeling in Germany that "God had something grand to tell us." At the same meeting, August Wilhelm Schreiber expressed his opinion that the war was proof that God had passed a judgment upon Germany, a judgment which would become clear in time.<sup>46</sup> Later, in 1915, the younger Warneck reflected that the war experience served notice to God's missionaries that unlike the last century, in which everything had gone "flat and even" and made the missions and their congregations "soft," the twentieth century

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<sup>46</sup> Minutes of German members of the Continuation Committee (October 15, 1914), BMW/bmw1/8229.



would require the mission movement to pass through “much adversity.” However, he wrote, “Adversity is the path to victory.”<sup>47</sup>

To the veteran missionary Siegfried Knak the war signified God’s intent: “The war, this great friend of truth, which has destroyed so many illusions, which [has] fixed the true worth of men and objects, which [has] brought so many of the deepest connections to light, it now [has] compelled here like everywhere a recognition” of the truth of God’s plans.<sup>48</sup> If mission could survive the trials of the Great War then a “new creation could emerge” on the other side of the “chaos.”<sup>49</sup> To those missionaries who joined Germany’s fate with the fate of their own missions, the war became an important source of revelation. The events of the war could give Germany’s Protestants a tool with which to discern God’s will. Most concluded that the war would forge Germany and the German Protestant mission movement into a sanctified tool for the evangelization of the world.

Paul Otto Hennig asked the same question as his colleagues had in a 1917 article in the Basel mission journal. The suffering of the First World War, the “persecution of [God’s] messengers,” must provide evidence of God’s will. All that remained was to discern that will. Hennig pointed out that German missionaries suffered in the world because the missionaries were German. Everything that Germany’s missionaries, he wrote, “suffer[ed]...as members of the German *Volk*. The distress of the missionary is a piece of the opprobrium that [the enemy] wishe[d] to lay upon the German name, German work, German spirit, [and] German reputation everywhere in the world.” German missionary suffering as a consequence of their

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<sup>47</sup> J. Warneck, “Der Krieg als Erzieher,” 130.

<sup>48</sup> Knak, “Erschütterung und Stärkung der Missionsgrundlage durch den Krieg,” 101.

<sup>49</sup> Knak, “Erschütterung und Stärkung der Missionsgrundlage durch den Krieg,” 117.

German-ness proved to Hennig that the mission sphere and all of German Christendom stood under a judgment from God.<sup>50</sup>

Hennig proceeded to lay out what he believed to be the causes of God's punishment. One source was the spread of German faithlessness and frivolity to the educated of the "heathen" world. The spread of atheism and hedonism impugned the honor of the white man, and especially "tarnish[ed] German Protestants" before God. Germans had failed to observe the "holy responsibility" that accompanied the label "Christian." The moral deterioration of the *Heimat*, so deleterious to the mission field, resulted, in part, from the neglect of the national by missionaries. The shared suffering of "German mission and the German Volk and even German mission and *Auslandsdeutschtum* [overseas Germandom]" during these years of war would have to bring German mission societies closer to the German nation, Hennig thought. In the future, mission would need (and want) to serve the German *Volk* at home and abroad loyally and unreservedly.<sup>51</sup> In the aftermath of the Edinburgh Conference Hennig had been elated to discover that the German mission movement belonged to an international movement, though he did not belong to the ranks of Germany's strongest missionary internationalists. His interpretation of the message of the First World War betrayed his complete transformation into a missionary nationalist by 1917.

Hennig's second interpretation of God's punishment of the German missionaries and their countrymen argued that German missionaries had lost some of their communion with the apostle Paul and the early church. Mission had, Hennig

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<sup>50</sup> Paul Hennig, "Die Antwort der Missionsgemeinde auf die Verfolgung ihrer Boten," *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin, Neue Folge* 61(1917): 330-331.

<sup>51</sup> Hennig, "Die Antwort der Missionsgemeinde," 331-332.

agreed with Johannes Warneck, gotten too easy. Missionaries had reveled in the ways that God had “prepared the way and the path” for their work with modern transportation and communication. The war was a sign from God to remind missionaries of the necessity of trials of the body and the spirit; joy should come from living in a time of revelation.<sup>52</sup>

The destruction of the resources of mission work in the colonies and at home by the advance of Germany’s enemies and the seemingly senseless destruction of modern war offered the third cause for judgment. Hennig argued that this was again a message from God that German missionaries had grown too committed to the financial side of their work. The dire straits of the war required a “reassessment.” Christian missionaries should recommit themselves to the spiritual side of their work and away from what Hennig saw as an inappropriate focus on gathering, distributing, and renewing capital within mission societies.<sup>53</sup> In a similar vein, Hennig ultimately condemned the work of the Edinburgh Conference. The Conference had shown that the Protestant missionaries of the world had lost faith in the strength of God and sought to control the spread of mission. The mandate for mission, “Go forth in the entire world and make all the people my children,” had only the authority to sustain small-scale organizations. Attempts to guide the spread of Christianity on a grand scale defied God’s power.<sup>54</sup> By implication, any expense of time or treasure upon activities not directly involving converting the unconverted was outside the scope of Christian activity.

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<sup>52</sup> Hennig, “Die Antwort der Missionsgemeinde,” 335-336.

<sup>53</sup> Hennig, “Die Antwort der Missionsgemeinde,” 337-338.

<sup>54</sup> Hennig, “Die Antwort der Missionsgemeinde,” 340.

Hennig saw the hardships of the war as divine proof of a conservative interpretation of the powers of Christian mission. He counseled missionary believers to use the trials of war to rededicate themselves to a simpler mission strategy, but one that also embraced the union of faith and nation. As he reminded his readers, the “shattered and consumed” strength of humanity required the faithful turn to the “strength of God.”<sup>55</sup> By 1917 Hennig was not alone in this interpretation. Schreiber wrote the advisory committee of the *Evangelische Missions-Hilfe* that the world war had been “the hardest test in [German mission’s] history.” But God had visited this trial upon his believers to prepare them for the hard work “after the peace.”<sup>56</sup> Even grimmer, Axenfeld wrote on November 3, 1918, as the German armies were collapsing on the Western Front, that “God [had] denied our *Volk* success and victory and directed us on the path of humiliation and hard work. [This path] must be more beneficial and more necessary for us than a triumph over all the peoples of the earth.”<sup>57</sup> To many missionary leaders in Germany, the failures of the previous decades had required God scourge away the flawed doctrines of internationalism and the secularism of German nineteenth-century culture.

Axenfeld’s dire pronouncement reflected a pessimistic bent that began to spread amongst the missionaries when they considered what the war might reveal about God’s intentions. Johannes Warneck reflected on the disappointing outcome of the war. Contrary to the spirit of 1914 and the hopes of the Protestant leadership, according to Warneck, the war had not fostered a religious revival as companion to a

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<sup>55</sup> Hennig, “Die Antwort der Missionsgemeinde,” 367.

<sup>56</sup> Schreiber to the Verwaltungsrat of the Evangelische Missions-Hilfe (May 1, 1917), AFS/ALMW-DHM II.27.1.3.

<sup>57</sup> Axenfeld to “unsere Gemeinschaft im Dienste des Vaterlandes!” (November 3.1918), BMW/bmw1/2255, pag. 68.

national awakening.<sup>58</sup> The hardships of war and the grim outcome had been a message from God, Warneck argued. “It is no accident...that the jubilee year of the Reformation coincided with [German mission’s] darkest hour.” The commemoration of the Reformation compelled German Protestants to remember the tribulations of that founding time, to treasure the truths, “unearthed from the word of God by Luther...the Gospel of mercy, of faith, of freedom.” The Reformation’s four-hundred-year anniversary in 1917 provided, in Warneck’s opinion, yet another opportunity for Germany’s Protestants to receive God’s grace.

Warneck wrote that in Germany’s “darkest hour” lay “hope for the future of German mission.” He reminded his readers that the Gospel of God’s grace was the “life-giving [*lebenskräftig*] root” of the mission enterprise. God had entrusted the Germans with a special duty to preserve and promote the Reformation and he interpreted the war as proof of this special destiny. German mission’s trials blessed God’s servants with the opportunity to renew their devotion to Jesus’ command to spread the Gospel around the world.<sup>59</sup> This sentiment may have strengthened by the end of the war, but it was not an absent idea in September 1914. Court Chaplain, Ernst Dryander, declared, with the German advance halted in France and Russians occupying Eastern Prussia, “the destruction of these days are only a question of time for the Lord of Eternity...Above the ruins He himself stands with his steadfast promise: ‘Look! I am with you always, till the world ends!’ That is why we do not

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<sup>58</sup> Johannes Warneck, “Unsere Hoffnung,” *AMZ* 45(1918): 1.

<sup>59</sup> J. Warneck, “Unsere Hoffnung,” 2-3.

despair!”<sup>60</sup> Missionaries claimed that Germany’s hope for the future was to recognize God’s message and rededicate itself to the church.

The growing certainty about God’s plans for Germany in particular rather than all of Christendom in general undermined support for internationalist interpretations. The hopes for internationalism took some time fully depart the Protestant mission movement in Germany. After all, many missionaries must have wondered, if God had meant for the cooperation of Edinburgh he would not have allowed a war between two of Protestant mission’s strongest powers. After detailing to a gathered audience in Berlin in September 1914 his sadness that Britain had joined with Russia and France in a war to destroy Germany, Axenfeld declared that while he knew Germany’s missionaries still loved their brethren in Britain, they still “wait[ed] with painful impatience for a clear testimonial from the English Christians, especially the men from Edinburgh,” that Britain’s “aggression” had caused the war. If none in Britain could acknowledge the injustice of the war then there could be no community between German and British missionaries, Axenfeld concluded.<sup>61</sup> Soon Edinburgh was treated as a distant memory in Germany. Knak told those gathered at the Halle Mission Conference in February of 1915, “the Edinburgh cooperation [now] lies smashed on the floor, the image of Protestantism become unified is gone like a dream in sobering daylight.”<sup>62</sup> Two months after Knak’s speech, Johannes Warneck wrote how the war had brought the German *Volk* into unity and the “vague cosmopolitanism [from before the war] had suffered a deadly blow.” To him, the attempts at a global mission confederation before the war deserved to disappear. Warneck thought it

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<sup>60</sup> Dryander and Axenfeld, *Mission und Vaterland*, 6.

<sup>61</sup> Dryander and Axenfeld, *Mission und Vaterland*, 16.

<sup>62</sup> Knak, “Erschütterung und Stärkung der Missionsgrundlage durch den Krieg,” 94.

would have been “more beneficial to have more intensively cultivated the unity and cooperation of German missions” than work to foster friendship with the British mission societies.<sup>63</sup>

Knak’s speech in Halle was the first explicit examination of the Edinburgh Conference during the First World War. He reminded his audience that the World Missionary Conference of 1910 had provided for many Germans the first inkling that they were part of an international community of Christians with a “communal project of overwhelming size” before them. And yet, the war showed that both England and Germany had turned away from internationalism. And since all things come from God, Knak reasoned, it must have been God’s design that Great Britain and Germany become enemies. After all, the dissolution of barriers between humans inherent in the Christian message, Knak explained, was God’s project, not humanity’s.<sup>64</sup> And so, to remind Christendom of His power, God had brought the war. Others in Germany doubted whether the spirit of Edinburgh had ever really existed. The Leipzig professor Albert Hauck, wondered if the “mood [of cooperation] which the reports [of Edinburgh] described...was ever a true” reflection of the atmosphere. After all, how real could the unity of Edinburgh have been when now “England had, as much as it was capable, destroyed German Protestant mission.”<sup>65</sup>

Perhaps one of the best pieces of evidence of how the First World War destroyed internationalism appears in the unpublished memoir of Walther Tritteltvitz. Tritteltvitz produced his memoir after the Second World War and his recollection of the Edinburgh Conference differed from the positive description he produced of the

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<sup>63</sup> J. Warneck, “Der Krieg als Erzieher,” 131.

<sup>64</sup> Knak, “Erschütterung und Stärkung der Missionsgrundlage durch den Krieg,” 97-98.

<sup>65</sup> Hauck, *Evangelische Mission und deutsches Christentum*, 6-7.

conference in 1910. In his retelling, Trittelvitz claimed that while no one knew when the storm of World War I would break, “we heard its distant rumbling to be sure.”<sup>66</sup> The journey to Edinburgh had been a conscious effort on the part of the German mission circle to avoid a war. And yet, at the conference “racial and *völkisch* differences between the participants” diminished the basic unity of Protestant mission.<sup>67</sup> Though Trittelvitz had reveled in the unity of the Edinburgh Conference in 1910,<sup>68</sup> the war experience altered the event in his memory. Apparently, to mission leaders after August 1914 Edinburgh and its internationalism had been only a figment and national difference the tangible reality.

### **Perfidious Albion**

Ernst Dryander, though not a formal member of the mission movement, delivered a momentous speech in the early days of the war that captured much of the mission leadership’s mood. He spoke of how many in Germany remembered the World Mission Conference in Edinburgh. “With uplifted hearts” the German mission men returned from Scotland, filled with certainty that they had witnessed a moment of portentous meaning unlike anything before. A new “community of the Redeeming Jesus Christ” had gathered and prepared to carry out holy work of mission. “And then the great *Völkermord* of this war came between” and destroyed the “fraternity [missionaries] had celebrated.”<sup>69</sup> Dryander may have been the first, but soon others

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<sup>66</sup> Walther Trittelvitz, “Ein halbes Jahrhundert im Dienste von Bethel,” 571.

<sup>67</sup> Walther Trittelvitz, “Ein halbes Jahrhundert im Dienste von Bethel,” 584-585.

<sup>68</sup> See chapter five of this dissertation, nn 4, 95, and 104.

<sup>69</sup> Dryander and Axenfeld, *Mission und Vaterland*, 3.



would recognize that the Great War had destroyed missionary internationalism as an ideology within Germany. Once missionaries came to an interpretation that blamed Britain for entering the war it was a short step to then blame Britain for the destruction of international cooperation.

In August 1914, Friedrich Würz of the Basel Mission, who considered himself German to the core<sup>70</sup> but fortunate to be in a country “strictly neutral and independent,” wrote to the Continuation Committee members in Germany, Britain, the United States, and elsewhere to stress the “heavy blow” the war had and would deal to continental missions, especially German missions. He followed with a reminder and a call upon the missions to try and maintain the “deepening christian [sic] fellowship” that had arisen amongst them since Edinburgh. His August letter continued, the British members could help the most with this challenge by urging their government to treat the German missionaries in British colonies well. Würz reminded his readers, “There have been German critics for many years who demurred that German missions should spend their energy upon British colonies. It will be very difficult to silence them any longer, if German missionaries in British territories receive unfriendly treatment during this war.”<sup>71</sup> In October he would repeat his message of unity at a meeting of the German members of the Continuation Committee, “What we experienced in and since Edinburgh, [was] a real community, which must persist.”<sup>72</sup> The Basel missionary’s words would prove cassandran.

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<sup>70</sup> Friedrich Würz wrote of his German identity quite explicitly to his friend and colleague Karl Axenfeld. See Friedrich Würz to Axenfeld (September 9, 1914), BMW/bmw1/2250.

<sup>71</sup> Würz to the Continuation Committee of the World Missionary Conference (August 12, 1914), BMW/bmw1/2250.

<sup>72</sup> Minutes of German members of the Continuation Committee (October 15, 1914), BMW/bmw1/8229.

The *Ausschuß* included several members of the Continuation Committee: Gottlieb Haussleiter, Paul Otto Hennig, and Julius Richter. At an October 1915 meeting of the *Ausschuß* all three defended their continued membership in the Continuation Committee against increasing criticism. Many in Germany had come to see the Continuation Committee as a tool of the British mission movement, and that the departure of Germany in protest against British “aggression” was meant to clearly communicate to the world German missionaries’ views. Richter argued that if the Germans left the Committee then it would hurt them with no tangible gain. Haussleiter and Hennig stressed the practical advantage for the future if the Germans maintained their affiliation with the organization. Other members of the *Ausschuß* did succeed with a proposal that the *Ausschuß* would not contribute any funds to support the Continuation Committee’s work.<sup>73</sup> The official report of the *Ausschuß*’s meeting described the group’s ultimate decision as designed to avoid closing future avenues of missionary activity.<sup>74</sup>

Schreiber of the *Evangelisches Missions-Hilfe* wrote to the German members of the Continuation Committee on August 10, 1914, that he thought the support of “English Christianity” for British belligerence was completely understandable from a “national standpoint” but still neglected Britain’s religious obligation to international mission. He went on, “I believe, the leading men of mission cannot neglect the world mission of Christianity and must, on their part, assist that the damage not be too great and the bitterness amongst living Christians and mission friends not become too

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<sup>73</sup> Minutes of the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (October 15, 1915), BMW/bmw1/8345.

<sup>74</sup> Hennig to member mission societies of the Ausschuß (November 16, 1915), BMW/bmw1/8204.

great.”<sup>75</sup> In early 1914, Schreiber sympathized with British missionaries’ nationalism. In fact, less than three weeks later he wrote Carl Paul of the Leipzig Mission on the value of good-hearted nationalism. He wrote, “If God, as it seems, intends something great for our beloved German nation” then the German missionary community must do all it could to maintain a just Christian spirit to preserve global evangelical mission.<sup>76</sup> This sentiment remained salient into 1915, when the *Ausschuß* encouraged its member societies to include examples of friendly activities by the British and other Entente powers in their publications.<sup>77</sup>

However, a residual commitment to internationalism in principle did not preclude many missionary leaders from abandoning Anglo-German friendship. An exchange between British and German theologians in a series of public letters illustrated the swift conclusion brought to British-German friendship by the First World War. Though a contest between theologians in the two countries in general, the rhetorical struggle in the fall of 1914 drew much from the German mission movement in particular.<sup>78</sup> The “Appeal to Protestants Abroad,” penned by Axenfeld and signed by numerous German theologians, reminded Christians outside Germany of the hopes for cooperation developed at Edinburgh and called for the mission fields of the world to be left out of the fighting to prevent the “heathens” seeing Christians kill one

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<sup>75</sup> Schreiber to German members of the Continuation Committee (August 10, 1914), UA.MD 517.

<sup>76</sup> Schreiber to Paul (August 29, 1914), AFSt/ALMW-DHM II.27.1.3.

<sup>77</sup> “Bericht über die Zusammenkunft der Missionsleiter in Verbindung mit der sechsten Missionswoche in Herrnhut” (October 14, 1915), BMW/bmw1/8369.

<sup>78</sup> Signatories of the “Appeal” included familiar names from the Protestant mission movement in Germany, including several men who had attended the Edinburgh Conference: Karl Axenfeld; Max Berner; Friedrich von Bodelschwingh, the Younger; Gottlieb Haussleiter; Carl Meinhof; Carl Mirbt; Carl Paul; Julius Richter; August Wilhelm Schreiber; Johann Spiecker, Director of the Rhenish Mission; and Johannes Warneck.

another.<sup>79</sup> The British theological establishment answered with a rebuttal called “To the Christian Scholars of Europe and America: A Reply from Oxford to the German Address to Evangelical Christians,” which identified Germany’s violation of Belgian neutrality as the moral cause of the war.<sup>80</sup> The British response seemed designed to excite a strong reaction from the Germans. It reminded its readers that the Germans had fought three aggressive wars since the 1860s, that the war reflected a historical plan on Germany’s part to expand with total disregard for other European peoples’ rights, and declared that “Until the saner elements of German public life can control the baser...will not the Christian scholars of other lands share our conviction that the contest in which our country has engaged is a contest on behalf of the supremest [sic] interests of Christian civilization?”<sup>81</sup> Schreiber’s reaction to the “Rebuttal,” as the Germans thought of it, was indicative of the document’s effect in Germany. He doubted that words could solve the “sharply embittered” antagonism between England and Germany and noted that the English clergymen had ignored “England’s jealousy of Germany’s expansion.”<sup>82</sup> Axenfeld viewed the response of the forty-two clergymen as proof that Germany could not expect a fair judgment from English Christians. He felt he and his colleagues could now only, “as Germans and

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<sup>79</sup> Charles E. Bailey, “The British Protestant Theologians in the First World War: Germanophobia Unleashed,” *Harvard Theological Review* 77(2, Apr. 1984) 201. For the opening efforts to solicit signatories see BMW/bmw1/2250 and AFSt/ALMW-DHM II.27.1.15.II.

<sup>80</sup> *To the Christian Scholars of Europe and America: A Reply from Oxford to the German Address to Evangelical Christians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914); and Bailey, “The British Protestant Theologians in the First World War,” 202.

<sup>81</sup> *To the Christian Scholars of Europe and America*, 4, 6, and 15.

<sup>82</sup> Schreiber to Axenfeld, Max Berner, Adolf von Harnack, Friedrich Lahusen, Julius Richter, and Johannes Spiecker (October 26, 1914), AFSt/ALMW-DHM II.26.67.

Christians,” hope that England would suffer a defeat and that experience would teach the British the error of their actions in August and the Fall of 1914.<sup>83</sup>

For many German missionaries, Britain’s declaration of war in 1914 had felt like a betrayal. August Wilhelm Schreiber described Julius Richter as probably the most deeply wounded of all.<sup>84</sup> Richter and his colleagues came to view Britain’s stated reason for entering the war – the defense of Belgian neutrality – as a lie. Richter said in October 1914 that “the war [was] a crime of official England against Christendom,” a war driven by “base motives of jealousy.” Schreiber agreed, calling the “formal question of the violation of neutrality” a “welcome pretense” for British aggression. He placed it alongside France’s “thirst for revenge” and Russian pan-Slavism as causes of the First World War. To complete the triumvirate of key nationalist missionary leaders, Karl Axenfeld also blamed the war on the “growing jealousy of England.”<sup>85</sup> Finally, the Leipzig Mission’s director, Carl Paul, who had dismissed the link between national interest and mission interest as flawed in 1904, gave a lecture in November 1914 that unequivocally cited British (and French) resentment of Germany’s colonies (“[symbols] of [Germany’s] developing world power status”) as the true cause of the war.<sup>86</sup> This impression of the war’s causes helped German missionaries certify for themselves that Germany fought a just war.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Karl Axenfeld, “Zu der Duplik an die Christen des Auslandes” (n.d., [October 20, 1914?]), BMW/bmw1/2251, pag. 76-78.

<sup>84</sup> Schreiber to Hennig and Gottlieb Haussleiter (August 10, 1914), UA.MD 517.

<sup>85</sup> Minutes of German members of the Continuation Committee (October 15, 1914), BMW/bmw1/8229.

<sup>86</sup> [Carl] Paul, “Das deutsche Kolonialreich im Kriege” (November 17, 1914), AFSSt/ALMW-DHM II.6.9.

<sup>87</sup> Menzel, *Die Bethel Mission*, 234. Most historians now agree that Germany knowingly risked a war with Great Britain in 1914, see Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht: Die Kriegszielpolitik des kaiserlichen Deutschland, 1914-18* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1961); Fritz Fischer, *Krieg der Illusionen* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1969); and for an assessment of the debate over blame for the war, see Annika

Some did try to prevent a total break between German and British mission. The unique position of the Basel Mission, based in neutral Switzerland but considered by Protestant missionaries around the world as a German mission, allowed its leader during the war, Friedrich Würz, to serve as something of an intermediary between the British and German mission movements. In late August 1914, Würz forwarded a call for prayer issued by J. H. Oldham, editor of the *International Review of Missions*<sup>88</sup> and secretary of the Continuation Committee, to Axenfeld.<sup>89</sup> Axenfeld's response was vociferous, "you in your acquired neutrality and Oldham on his island do not notice how audacious" such a call is when "murdering thugs [the French and Russian armies] break from left and right" into our house to rob and to murder. He went on, "every morning the casualty lists loudly cry of the blood of the sons of our nation" and drown out Oldham's call to prayer. Axenfeld guaranteed that God heard the Germans' prayers, "And what we have to say to [God], no Englishmen need teach us."<sup>90</sup> Axenfeld and Würz were old colleagues and friends, using the German informal "du" in their correspondence. Yet, Axenfeld did not hesitate to condemn his friend for suggesting any community of intentions with the British.

Axenfeld shared his true feelings with Würz. His more considered position he sent to Oldham. To Oldham he wrote that "Christians in [Britain] should do something completely different for [Germans] than aim religious challenges." He

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Mombauer, *The Origins of the First World War: Controversies and Consensus* (New York: Longman, 2002).

<sup>88</sup> Established in 1912 by J. H. Oldham, the *International Review of Missions* was an important journal of international scope that focused on missionary practice and theology.

<sup>89</sup> Würz was in contact with British missionaries throughout the war. For examples of his other efforts to keep the lines of communication open see: Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß to Spiecker, Haussleiter, Paul, Hennig, and Richter (11/2/1914), AFSt/ALMW-DHM II.11.5; R. Wardlaw Thompson to Würz (9/11/1915), AFSt/ALMW-DHM II.11.5; J. H. Oldham to Würz (10/12/1915), AFSt/ALMW-DHM II.11.5.

<sup>90</sup> Axenfeld to Würz (August 23, 1914), BMW/bmw1/2250.

informed Oldham, that though the Germans had once happily taken instruction from English Christianity, they would no longer. According to Axenfeld, England had taken the lead in the war conspiracy against Germany and had made the most important mission territories into battlefields in a civil war between Christians. Axenfeld condemned the British for turning African troops and “heathen” Japanese against Germany. For these reasons, Axenfeld went on, so long as British Christians failed to condemn the war, they “no longer possess[ed] the right to bear the same banner of Christ as other peoples.”<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, Axenfeld declared that he would not distribute Oldham’s call for prayer. For the moment, he claimed, Germans felt no community with the British. He did hope, however, “that a day [would] come again on which Christians who are now fighting [each other] [could] again take one another’s hand” in friendship.<sup>92</sup>

Axenfeld quickly became Britain’s greatest enemy in German mission circles. His strong nationalist feeling had been evident in his attitudes towards internationalism before the war, but the outbreak of fighting between the United Kingdom and Germany had radicalized him further. A few days after he wrote Oldham, Axenfeld wrote Bishop Benjamin LaTrobe, the British representative on the five-member *Missionsdirektion* of the Moravian Church. Axenfeld wrote LaTrobe that he regretted that so many of LaTrobe’s countrymen had allied themselves with “Russian arsonists, Catholic Belgians and Frenchmen, blood-splattered Serbs and heathen Japanese.”<sup>93</sup> Axenfeld’s words reveal how important the idea of religious

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<sup>91</sup> Axenfeld to Oldham (August 23, 1914), BMW/bmw1/2250.

<sup>92</sup> Axenfeld to Oldham (August 23, 1914), BMW/bmw1/2250.

<sup>93</sup> Axenfeld to Benjamin LaTrobe (August 26, 1914), BMW/bmw1/2250. This accusation was made on a broader level by Friedrich Würz of the Basel Mission. He wrote, “Moslems and possibly heathens are

unity, in particular Protestant unity was to him. The British betrayal of Protestantism for Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and “heathen” Asian faiths deserved nearly as much opprobrium as going to war with Germany had. In this letter and his letter to Oldham Axenfeld railed against the literal breaking of the faith by British Christians.

### War’s Toll

From the first months of the war Germany’s Protestant missions began chronicling the toll the war was extracting from their organizations. The Leipzig Mission reported that their activities in the German colonies were especially aggravated by “enemy attacks” because many missionaries had been drawn into the military by local administrators for the defense of the colonies.<sup>94</sup> Five days after the outbreak of the war Leipzig Mission Director Paul wrote to all of the Leipzig Mission’s supporters that the outbreak of war had put the mission in “distress.” Missionaries in training were called to the colors and finances were sure to be imperiled by the economic dislocation of war and the closed lines of communication for transferring funds to mission fields.<sup>95</sup> By 1916 the *Evangelisches Missions-Hilfe* published a pamphlet that included a depressing conclusion for supporters of German missionaries. It declared that Germany’s mission work in the entire British Empire

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compelled to fight under christian [sic] nations against Christians, and in the mission fields they will point with their fingers even at christian [sic] missionaries who in their eyes have become enemies of each other. The harm done to the cause of christianity [sic] by this war seems quite unmeasurable.” Würz to members of the Continuation Committee (August 12, 1914), BMW/bmw1/2250. See also Minutes of the Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschuß (October 7-8, 1914), BMW/bmw1/8204; for a discussion of Britain and France’s use of Muslim and “heathen” troops.

<sup>94</sup> “Die bedrohten deutschen Kolonialmissionen,” *Evangelisch-lutherisches Missionsblatt* 31(1914): 402.

<sup>95</sup> Paul to “die mit unserer Mission verbundenen Vereine in Deutschland” (8/6/1914), AFS/ALMW-DHM II.11.5.



was “as good as destroyed, the German missionaries [were] displaced or taken into custody, the [indigenous] congregations orphaned and left to instruct themselves.”<sup>96</sup>

In real numbers, Julius Richter reported in 1918 that after more than three years of war the number of mission stations had fallen by more than a quarter, from 744 stations to about 550. Even worse, the number of missionaries stood at only about 550 men and 150 women in the field, from a 1913 high of 1430.<sup>97</sup>

Just after the armistice in 1918, Karl Axenfeld made a set of proposals designed to salvage what remained of the German mission movement. A testament to the desperate straits in which he and his colleagues found themselves was his first proposal: all Germans pray. This would help the mission supporters “humble [themselves] and patiently await His hour and His way.” The lost territories, seized by Entente forces, would serve as a focus for continued exertions in the mission cause in Germany so that when the mission fields returned to their rightful masters mission work could begin anew with fresh energy. The experience would instruct the German people and renew their spiritual commitment, as all suffering and privation does, Axenfeld concluded. God would favor the German nation; he would “preserve and bless German mission.”<sup>98</sup> For Axenfeld the events of the war had not shaken his confidence in the ordained role of Germany in God’s plan for the world. In fact, if Germany stayed committed to Christian mission then Axenfeld believed God would

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<sup>96</sup> Hauck, *Evangelische Mission und deutsches Christentum*, 3.

<sup>97</sup> Julius Richter, “In schwerer Zeit,” *AMZ* 45(1918): 281-283.

<sup>98</sup> “Vier Losungen für die gegenwärtige Notlage der deutschen Mission,” *Allgemeine Missions-Nachrichten* 4(12, Dec. 1918): 1.

care for the German people. Axenfeld's thoughts received a wide audience as they were published in a number of German missionary periodicals.<sup>99</sup>

Mission leaders suffered more personal losses during the war. Julius Richter's son was killed at Arras in 1917.<sup>100</sup> Max Berner lost his step-son in the first month of the war,<sup>101</sup> and Karl Axenfeld lost his son Wilhelm in 1916. In 1936, Martin Schlunk, Professor of *Missionswissenschaft* at the University of Tübingen, sought to create a "roll of honor" of German missionaries who died during the First World War. He distributed a list of those mission workers and their family members that he knew to have died during the war. Though Schlunk's list was not authoritative (part of his purpose was to solicit additional names from the various mission societies); the list does give a picture of the losses by the mission societies. The Leipzig Mission lost 22 missionaries and missionaries' sons, including Gerhard and Siegfried Dachzelt, who served in the same regiment and died in the same battle; the Bethel Mission had 13 members killed in the war and the Moravians and Berlin Mission each lost 40 and 48 workers and family members, respectively.<sup>102</sup>

### **The Destruction of German Mission**

At the beginning of the war it was not uncommon to believe that the British would, in the end, repent their sins: "our errant brothers will yet regain their senses

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<sup>99</sup> Richter, "In schwerer Zeit," 288.

<sup>100</sup> Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (May 11, 1917), BMW/bmw1/59.

<sup>101</sup> Axenfeld to the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (September 8, 1914), BMW/bmw1/2250.

<sup>102</sup> Julius Steinmetz to Samuel Baudert (August 3, 1936), UA. MD 430.

and judgment and perform their penance.”<sup>103</sup> Karl Axenfeld cautioned that the “bitter disappointments” of the war should not lead to the slogan, “Just or unjust, I only seek advantage for my country.” The glory of service to all in the Kingdom of Christ, Axenfeld said, would not allow that.<sup>104</sup> Other leaders wondered at the evidence that the militaristic spirit ruled in England as much as Germany.<sup>105</sup> Of course, these ideas did not last long past the opening months of the war. Soon German missionary leaders began to feel certain that the British were determined to use the war to destroy German mission wherever they could.

By the end of 1914 many in the German mission movement had concluded that Britain was no longer a reliable partner in international mission. The Berlin Mission Society produced a report, “How has the War Affected the German Mission Fields?” In that report, Britain was accused of a “systematic incitement of the entire world against German culture [*Gedanken*] in every form.”<sup>106</sup> The *Allgemeine Missions-Nachrichten*, organ of the *Evangelisches Missions-Hilfe*, complained bitterly in early 1915 that there had been “no public protest by English mission friends” against English “aggression.” The editors of the *Allgemeine Missions-Nachrichten* wondered if some in Great Britain saw the “prostration of Germany and the destruction of its militarism” as a piece of the mission project “given to the English people by God” so that “His Kingdom of peace on Earth” might be established.<sup>107</sup> This ironic suggestion carried with it all of the growing bitterness in Germany towards its former mission colleague Britain. The *Allgemeine Missions-*

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<sup>103</sup> Dryander and Axenfeld, *Mission und Vaterland*, 6.

<sup>104</sup> Dryander & Axenfeld, *Mission und Vaterland*, 13.

<sup>105</sup> Knak, “Erschütterung und Stärkung der Missionsgrundlage durch den Krieg,” 95.

<sup>106</sup> “Wie hat der Krieg auf die deutschen Missionsfelder eingewirkt?” (1914), BMW/bmw1/2257.

<sup>107</sup> “Zur schmerzlichsten Enttäuschung...” *Allgemeine Missions-Nachrichten* 1(2, Mar. 1915): 2.

*Nachrichten*, unsurprisingly since its founding principles committed it to advocating a German national mission ethos, became a regular location for screeds against the supposed faithlessness and betrayals on the part of British missionaries. It also soon became a site for cursing the complicity of the neutral nations. The United Kingdom's violations of the Congo Act by interring German missionaries, namely the Act's guarantee of religious freedom; and desertion of "the solidarity of the white race" brought about no protest from the neutral mission nations, according to the *Allgemeine Missions-Nachrichten*.<sup>108</sup> The *Evangelisches Missions-Hilfe* made its displeasure known in a 1916 pamphlet as well; the author Albert Hauck, a professor of church history in Leipzig, bemoaned that the "hate and irrationality" shown by England in two years of war left German missionaries "little good to expect from the future."<sup>109</sup>

By 1917 even one-time internationalist Paul Otto Hennig saw the war as a tragedy for Christianity. He opened "The Answer of the Mission Community to the Persecution of Its Messengers," an article in the Basel Society's journal, with a description of an attack upon the eighteenth-century Pennsylvania missions of his Moravian Brotherhood.<sup>110</sup> The murder of eleven missionaries by "heathen Indians," Hennig wrote, fell within the normal tribulations and risks of mission work. But in 1917, Hennig continued, "it is not wild Indians; the mission does not suffer the obvious afflictions that a servant of Christ must be ready to bear." Christian

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<sup>108</sup> "Und die Christen der neutralen Länder schweigen dazu?," *Allgemeine Missions-Nachrichten* 2(6, Sept. 1916): 1.

<sup>109</sup> Hauck, *Evangelische Mission und deutsches Christentum*, 4.

<sup>110</sup> This attack on Moravian missionaries near Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in 1755 was particularly significant to German Moravians' efforts to make sense of the privations of World War I. It is also mentioned in the opening of the Herrnhut *Missionsdirektion's* annual report for 1916. *Jahresbericht über das Missionswerk der Brüdergemeine für das Jahr 1916* (Herrnhut: Missionsbuchhandlung, 1917), 3.

missionaries suffer the “blows and hatred of Christians who...we had thought” served and valued the same holy project as the Moravian Mission. Though it was Germans suffering these privations, the “present war makes the Christian peoples into destroyers” and the sight of Christian missionaries in detention camps is “only the physical sign of the deep inner suffering of a critically ill Christianity.”<sup>111</sup> Hennig’s description made it clear that he considered the British guilty of causing the illness in global Christianity.

Along with condemnations of their activities, the British were also condemned for their associations during the war. They had set the “perfidious Japanese” upon Germany and dragged the “unsuspecting *Naturvölker* [primitive peoples] of Africa” into the war.<sup>112</sup> The British had betrayed the union of Protestant Christians that had been sanctified in Edinburgh and joined Russia and France in a war to destroy Germany. England’s sins would allow the “*Heimat* of the Reformation and the most fertile soil of European culture [to be] ravaged by Russian hordes.”<sup>113</sup> Carl Paul worried that the fraternity of the Edinburgh Conference had only been “a beautiful dream.” And he pleaded that God protect Germany’s missions from “evil whites” and those that the “evil whites” had prodded into aggression against Germany.<sup>114</sup>

In the summer of 1917, the German missionary societies continued to blame the British for the demise of the principles of Edinburgh and of German Protestant mission. In June the *Ausschuß* produced a *Denkschrift*, an extended memorandum, on German evangelical missions for the Colonial Secretary, Wilhelm Solf. In section

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<sup>111</sup> Hennig, “Die Antwort der Missionsgemeinde,” 329.

<sup>112</sup> Dryander & Axenfeld, *Mission und Vaterland*, 4.

<sup>113</sup> Dryander & Axenfeld, *Mission und Vaterland*, 15.

<sup>114</sup> Paul to Axenfeld (October 22, 1914), AFSt/ALMW-DHM II.27.1.15.II.

three of the *Denkschrift* the authors, Axenfeld, Richter, and Schreiber, wrote that England had attacked its natural racial and religious allies, the Germans. The British had encouraged Japanese aggression and violated the religious freedoms guaranteed in the Congo Act of 1885, which had divided the African continent. The resentments against, and alienation from, the British were now so deep, the authors of the *Denkschrift* continued, that the religious bonds between Germany and England had been more grievously damaged than any other element of German religious life.<sup>115</sup>

In 1918 Julius Richter gave the final verdict on the First World War. The “World War led directly to a catastrophe of German mission,” and Britain and her allies had aggressively destroyed the mission. The Entente powers had abandoned international colonial mission for their own national interests.<sup>116</sup> The British government had applied to conquered German territories a “nationality principle,” according to Richter. And yet, even this policy was abused in the interests of a total destruction of German mission activities; even the Basel and Herrnhut Missions, both of which had significant membership from either neutral nations (Switzerland) or Entente nations (the Herrnhut Brotherhood, as has already been discussed, included significant communities in Britain and the United States) had been expelled from their mission territories. The British government, filled with “hate for Germany,” did not recognize even these missions as international, but instead as German.<sup>117</sup>

The entry of the United States into the war drew grave condemnation from the editors of the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*. What drew the greatest complaint was

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<sup>115</sup> Karl Axenfeld, Julius Richter and August Schreiber, “Denkschrift an Evangelische Missionen” (June 9, 1917), BMW/bmw1/2260.

<sup>116</sup> Julius Richter, “Die Veränderung unserer Stellung in der internationalen Missionslage,” *AMZ* 45(1918): 11-13.

<sup>117</sup> Richter, “Die Veränderung unserer Stellung,” 35.

the behavior of John R. Mott. The *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* reminded its readers that in the fall of 1916 Mott had declared himself committed to ecumenicism in the “struggle of the peoples.” However, after the entry of the United States, Mott telegraphed to the British YMCA that he was “no longer neutral” and was now ready to join the “battle for truth and justice” with the Entente against Germany.<sup>118</sup> Mott enthusiastically joined the American war effort and what, to German missionaries, appeared to be a movement of anti-German sentiment amongst British missionary leaders. As a consequence, the German members of the Continuation Committee petitioned that Mott be removed from his position as chairperson for damaging the “supra-nationality of Christian mission and the church of Christ.”<sup>119</sup> The official “Entwurf” (Proposal) produced by the German members of the Continuation Committee for the larger Committee opened with the accusation that Mott, “who we all had honored and whom we all had trusted,” had “consented to travel to Russia with the American political-military mission” with the intent to work against Germany. Therefore, Mott was now a “fellow combatant against the German Volk,” having abandoned his “supranational position.”<sup>120</sup>

Mott’s apparently eager participation in the American war effort, like the behavior of British theologians in 1914, struck German Protestant missionary leaders as a betrayal of missionary neutrality and internationalism and, at the same time, a specifically anti-German act. Mott joined the British religious establishment as symbols amongst the Germans of Anglo-Saxon infidelity to internationalism. While

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<sup>118</sup> “Erklärung,” *AMZ* 44(1917): 305.

<sup>119</sup> “Erklärung,” 308. Signatories included Richter, Hennig, Würz, Axenfeld, Berner, and Johannes Warneck.

<sup>120</sup> “Entwurf an die Mitglieder des Ständigen Ausschusses der Welt-Missionskonferenz” ([July?] 1917), BMW/bmw1/8230.

some in Germany continued to call for international cooperation with the reduced roster of possible partners (Scandinavia, mostly),<sup>121</sup> they were left with little legitimacy against those who maligned the destruction of international Christian mission at the hands of the British and Americans.

### **The Peace Settlement**

German missionaries were eager to consider the future of mission from the ruins of the German Empire in 1918. Germany, according to Axenfeld, had been “unlucky” because during the war its government was unable to “unify the will of the people.”<sup>122</sup> The failure of the “spirit of 1914” left Germany broken and defeated in 1918. Axenfeld, however, placed more of the blame for German missionaries’ position on Britain. According to him, “wherever [Britain] had the power” the British government had become increasingly “ruthless and brutal.” Britain’s policy was designed to destroy German mission and to keep German mission from recovering after the peace. In the occupied German colonies, German missionaries, “entirely uninvolved in the war,” were “imprisoned, deported, transported from place to place, brutally separated from their families” by British forces; their stations were plundered, their congregations “made orphans,” isolated from their home country and

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<sup>121</sup> The *Ausschuß* remained hopeful that the removal of Mott could revive the “Edinburgher spirit,” “Bericht des Vorsitzenden des Deutschen Evangelischen Missionsausschusses für die Versammlung der Vertreter der Missionsgesellschaften” (n.d., [November 14, 1917?]), BMW/bmw1/8186, pag. 16c.

<sup>122</sup> Axenfeld to “unsere Gemeinschaft im Dienste des Vaterlandes!” (November 3.1918), BMW/bmw1/2255, pag. 69.



mission leadership, “in short, everything done in order to ...destroy German mission.”<sup>123</sup>

The peace negotiations and the end of the war brought many of the indistinct fears that German Protestant missionary leaders had felt in 1917 and 1918 out of the realm of speculation and into real concern. Richter described German missionary friends’ “hearts trembl[ing]” with trepidation following the armistice and its terms.<sup>124</sup> The 1919 *Jahresbericht* of the *Brüderunität* reflected this worry and its confirmation by the Entente. According to the Moravian Church’s leadership, “From month to month we have hoped for the awakening of Christian feeling in the world...But now the once blossoming German mission realm lies desolate.” A destruction wrought by a “cool, abrasive ‘no’ [from] the victorious masters of the world” to German calls for mercy and justice.<sup>125</sup>

In March of 1918 the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society received the news via Würz in Basel, who remained in contact with Oldham, that the English government had made a fateful decision. German missionaries would no longer be suffered in British territories.<sup>126</sup> This news coincided with an offer made by the Church Missionary Society, again via Würz, to both the Berlin and Leipzig Missions. The Church Missionary Society asked for assistance from the German missions as it was going to be taking over their mission fields.<sup>127</sup> The Berlin Mission sent its response, authored by Axenfeld, back through Würz. Axenfeld asked that Würz inform the Church Missionary Society that the Berlin Mission Society could think of

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<sup>123</sup> K[arl] Axenfeld, “Der Weg der Boten Christi und die Mächte dieser Welt,” *AMZ* 45(1918): 103.

<sup>124</sup> Richter, “In schwerer Zeit,” 281.

<sup>125</sup> *Jahresbericht über das Missionswerk der Brüdergemeine für das Jahr 1919* (Herrnhut: 1920), 3.

<sup>126</sup> Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (March 5, 1918), BMW/bmw1/60.

<sup>127</sup> G.T. Manley to Würz (March 26, 1918), BMW/bmw1/1719.

no better society to take over its activities in East Africa. However, that did not mean the Berlin Mission would help the Church Missionary Society with the job. In fact, Axenfeld wrote, the Berlin Mission's leadership was certain that "God would return the colony to [its] Fatherland and the mission field to [the Berlin Mission Society]." <sup>128</sup>

The Versailles Peace Treaty made the informal British governmental reassignment of mission fields of 1918 official. Article 438 of the treaty guaranteed that those areas and properties that had been devoted to mission work under German mission societies would continue in that purpose. However, it gave over all those territories for the Entente governments to reapportion: "The Allied and Associated Governments, while continuing to maintain full control as to the individuals by whom the Missions are conducted, will safeguard the interests of such Missions." <sup>129</sup> In practice this meant a redistribution of the German mission fields to non-German mission organizations. According to the Komitee of the Berlin Mission, the "leaders of Anglo-Saxon mission life, at the top Dr. Mott and Oldham, [thought] the exclusion [of German mission societies] inevitable" and wished to see American and British missions take over the German fields. <sup>130</sup>

The abuses of the British in the last years of the war, Richter declared, could only be corrected by world opinion. The destruction of German mission societies and mission fields by Britain's "nationality principle" had decimated German activities in the former German colonies and in their old fields in the British colonies. Richter

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<sup>128</sup> Axenfeld to Würz (May 15, 1918), BMW/bmw1/1719.

<sup>129</sup> "The Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and Germany," June 28, 1919, Article 438.

<sup>130</sup> Minutes of the Komitee of the Berlin Mission Society (April 1, 1919), BMW/bmw1/60.

doubted the mission circles of the other Protestant nations could be depended upon; perhaps better to pray to God for salvation.<sup>131</sup> The decisions made by the British government, or at least the decisions that the German Protestant mission sphere thought the British government had made, both practically and theoretically put an end to German missionary internationalism. The nearly complete end of German foreign mission in Germany's former colonies and Britain's empire eviscerated the German Protestant mission movement. Furthermore, the manner of the mission movement's end embittered Germany so completely against the other two "legs" of the international mission movement that internationalism was left only as a bitter memory.

## **Conclusion**

Karl Axenfeld did not shy away from the question of internationality versus nationality at the end of the First World War. According to him the debate over the "national or international character" of Christian mission had begun in Germany, moved to the neutral nations, and finally to England and America. While this dissertation has shown the debate was older, Axenfeld placed its provenance at the outbreak of the war. He also argued that the question would receive a lasting resolution with the decisions made in the Versailles Peace Treaty. According to Axenfeld, the German mission project had held to international forms from its inception; German missionaries had served the British Empire in South Africa and India, he wrote: "If any state owes thanks to the mission of a foreign people for

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<sup>131</sup> Richter, "Die Veränderung unserer Stellung," 66.

selfless, loyal service; it is England to the Germans.” This selfless, loyal service grew out of the principles of foreign mission, Axenfeld explained. Mission must be independent from national control to distance itself from “the brutality of colonial conquest” and to gain the “strongest influence upon the native population.” And yet, the Berlin Mission’s leader continued, Britain had ignored the obvious “supra-nationality” of the German missions and aggressively destroyed the Germans’ operations.<sup>132</sup>

Axenfeld and his colleagues in Germany faced the destruction of their mission work during the First World War with grim sorrow. For them, British missionaries and the British government had been the most active force dismembering Germany’s once vital mission movement. One effect of this process was a firm dismissal from German mission ideology of the internationalist principle. Coming hard on the heels of the successful national fundraising work of the *Nationalspende*, the First World War and the nationalist outpouring from the beginning of the war onward also made internationalism seem illusory. How could promises of international community be anything more than figments when laid alongside the Marks delivered to German mission societies by the patriotic program of the *Nationalspende* and the outpouring of national feeling that arose in August 1914? The First World War destroyed any real international community of Protestant missionaries, but even more importantly it destroyed the imagined internationalist Christian community that German missionaries had cherished for more than thirty years.

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<sup>132</sup> Axenfeld, “Der Weg der Boten Christi,” 97-99 and 102-103.

## Conclusion

German missionaries' Protestant internationalism was an alternative adaptation to the dislocations and anxieties of globalization during the late nineteenth century. German missionaries, already skeptical of industrialization, urbanization, commercialization, and secularism before the establishment of the *Kaiserreich* in 1871, let alone the creation of a German colonial empire in 1884, found in their internationalism a ready-made response to the difficulties presented by a shrinking world. If the First World War was an "escape forward" for the old regime in Wilhelmine Germany, then missionary internationalism might also be considered an "escape forward" for Germany's missionaries. However, German missionaries did not construct a false ideal to justify their response to globalization. Their internationalism was sincere and consequential. It formed the core of an anti-nationalist imperialism that had profound effects upon the shape that German colonialism took before 1914. Missionary intellectuals and leaders in Germany fashioned and adhered to a remarkably consistent ideology of missionary internationalism into the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century.

The First World War concluded the long and rich history of German missionary internationalism. However, this is not to say that missionary internationalism was yet another illusion that the Great War dispelled. In fact, the commitment to a universal mission Christianity dissipated over the course of the decade or so preceding World War I, leaving the war to provide the final strong gust

that dispersed German Protestant missionaries' imagined international community. In fact, the story of Germany's mission movement during the late nineteenth century was not a simple tragedy – a tale of universalist internationalism slowly sliding toward a nationalist downfall concluding with a cataclysmic denouement. While the general trend of German missionary ideology did tend toward a growing nationalism, the events that shaped the shift to missionary nationalism were more complex, and missionaries did, at times, maintain their internationalism against nationalist pressure.

In fact, as I have shown in this dissertation, missionary internationalism was more a victim of circumstance than of fate. Certainly the nationalism of missionary leaders like Karl Axenfeld, Julius Richter, and August Wilhelm Schreiber fostered during their youth under the black, red, and white German imperial banner played an important part in the shaping of missionary ideology during the years after 1900. But even they, the strongest missionary nationalists, could not have fully inspired Germany's mission movement to abandon the internationalist community with which Gustav Warneck and Franz Michael Zahn had joined German Protestant missionaries during the 1870s, -80s, and -90s. As I have demonstrated, missionary internationalism remained a strong force even after 1900, in large part thanks to the strong precedents set by Warneck and Zahn that allowed their arguments to remain compelling into the twentieth century. German Protestant missionaries' devotion to an internationalist and European Christian universalist ideal bolstered the defense of missionary educational and linguistic policies and bound the German Protestant mission societies with a community of Protestants through a hierarchy of mission conferences. The final abandonment by Germany's Protestant missionaries of internationalism after 1914

came as a result of circumstances that encouraged missionaries to think of themselves as Germans first. The conflict between the Berlin Mission and the Benedictines of St. Ottilien and the fundraising success of the *Nationalspende* provided missionary leaders with tangible proof of the value of nationalism.

Nationalism seemed, in the end, to win out over internationalism because it proved more useful to the political and financial needs of Germany's Protestant missionaries. However, it is unclear how strongly Germany's missionaries felt their nationalism. Certainly Axenfeld and Schreiber longed to transform the German mission movement into an auxiliary force for the German Empire. But other missionaries may not have been so eager to abandon the internationalist path. Missionaries may have favored the nationalist path simply because the imperial state had made efforts to utilize nationalism to help mobilize the German populace for its purposes. By taking on the nationalist mantle missionaries gained an important ally and discovered in the process that nationalism could be a useful tool for promoting the goals of their mission societies. Nonetheless, whether missionaries' "converted" to nationalism out of real conviction or for more opportunistic reasons, German missionaries' nationalism took a long time to develop, and their restrained approach must lead historians to reconsider the link between German Protestantism and the German state.

Though the history of Germany's Protestant missionaries has been a story of change, the crucial debates that shaped that change were largely localized to the first and second decades of the twentieth century. The long century of German mission history before 1900 indicates a different significance to the German mission

movement. Missionary internationalism dominated the German Protestant mission movement for the entire nineteenth century and, as has been shown, did not disappear until after Archduke Franz Ferdinand died in Sarajevo. Missionaries in Germany articulated a clear, recognizable alternative communitarian ideal that did not ignore national concepts of identity and kinship, but rather claimed to transcend the nation and render ethnicity largely irrelevant. The broad reach of German mission culture made missionary leaders' internationalist Christian universalism a foil to German nationalist movements; a role that has not been sufficiently recognized in historical scholarship. Furthermore, German Protestant missionaries followed an ideology of colonialism that was not only unique to the German colonial interest groups but also unusual when considered alongside British missionaries' opinions of colonialism. Unlike their British counterparts, German Protestant missionaries (especially their intellectual leaders) questioned the value of commerce and trade to their evangelical project. On top of that, missionaries from the German mission societies rejected much of the "civilizing mission" as it had been defined by secular colonialists. To Germany's missionaries, the work of creating Christians did not require the transferal of the artifacts and accessories of modern industrial life. German missionaries' did not espouse a Christianity divested of its European antecedents, but they also did not, at least on paper, intend to Europeanize the globe. The longevity, forcefulness, and confidence of German Protestant missionaries' religious universalism indicated contrary trends within German colonialism and in European missionary evangelism.

The fundamental core of German missionaries' different expectations of the colonizing and the evangelizing projects rested in the literature of the mission



movement, in particular the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*. The periodical provided the forum in which Protestant missionaries expressed their internationalist ideology. The *Missionswissenschaftler* who supplied the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* with its material drew a stark line between the activities of missionaries and “political” activities. What emerged from the pages of the Protestant mission movement’s chief academic publication was an ideology of mission work which placed missionaries and their work converting indigenous peoples to Christianity above any economic or political program of colonization. Missionaries were cautioned against associating with the colonial state and counseled to focus on developing new Christian communities with no regard for “political” concerns. The *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* served as a key element in the creation of a German Protestant mission movement, copies of its issues reached every area of German Protestant mission culture and shaped the perceptions of mission leaders and mission supporters. Its strong internationalist position, especially before 1900, set the tone for German Protestant missionary culture.

Internationalism was undeniably a strong ideology for Germany’s Protestant missionaries; however, the period after 1900 presented the German mission societies with difficulties that some in the movement could not answer with the principles laid down by Warneck and his associates. In German East Africa the events of the Maji-Maji War and the changing character of German colonialism during the Dernburg Reforms disrupted Protestant missionaries’ sense of security. The expansion of the Catholic mission orders in the colony at the same time compounded the challenges that Protestant missionaries saw all around them. The political influence of the

Catholic Center Party and its natural sponsorship of Germany's Catholic mission orders led the leaders of the Protestant mission movement, Karl Axenfeld foremost, to abandon many of the principles of missionary internationalism during the *Benediktinerstreit*. The Protestants of the Berlin Mission Society and their colleagues in the broader mission movement soon transformed the territorial conflict with the Benedictines into a debate over the national loyalties of Germany's Catholics. The Protestants' anti-Catholic strategy had inconclusive results but the use of nationally-flavored rhetoric opened a breach in the internationalist redoubt. The nationalist strategy of the *Benediktinerstreit* offered a template for missionary participation in the politics of the *Kaiserreich*. Apparently, allies could be found in parliament and in the public sphere if Germany's Protestant missionaries connected themselves with supporters of a German Protestant national identity.

On the other hand, missionary internationalism did not give up its supremacy easily. The nationalism of German colonialists outside the mission movement did not appeal to the Protestant mission societies. When secular colonialists tried to appropriate mission schools and mission activities for the purposes of colonial development and administration, not only did the missionaries defend themselves with familiar arguments about the sovereignty of the mission project; they also developed a theological and ethnological extension to nineteenth-century Christian universalism. *Volkskirchen* became the future of the mission church and the development of congregations for the *Volkskirche* required a commitment to preserving indigenous cultures. Consequently, German missionaries refused to make German the primary language of instruction. They countered that indigenous

languages were the best languages for religious education and insisted that they would, whenever possible, instruct African schoolchildren in African tongues. Secular colonialists' demands, missionaries insisted, amounted to denying missionaries the best tool for evangelizing non-Western peoples. Germany's Protestant mission movement refused to adapt its educational and linguistic policies to economic colonialist demands for a "suitable" African workforce. Missionaries' educational goals were to create independent, self-supporting African churches made up of independent, self-supporting African Christians. Furthermore, missionaries argued that the transformation of African culture was not their goal. As missionaries described it, if they could convert African societies to Christian societies without destroying "healthy" African cultural practices then they would do so. Missionaries rallied around the internationalist and Christian universalist ethos of mission education and successfully defended the independence of their schools. In German East Africa this defense did involve a compromise with the colonial state, but the result was the adoption by the colonial government of an indigenous African language, Swahili, for its activities and a shift by mission schools towards a regional African language over local indigenous languages.

The conflicts over schools and with the Catholics in East Africa reached their crescendo in the decade before World War I. The years after 1900 had begun to demand more of missionaries, and missionaries faced increasingly tough financial challenges. Missionaries were no longer the only group interested in Africans; colonial administrations, colonial development schemes, and Catholic mission fields pressed against German missionaries' spheres of influence; the rapid pace of

economic change worldwide caused missionaries to worry over the future of their non-European congregants; and the intensifying nationalism that came to color international relations and domestic politics within Germany challenged German missionaries' self-conceptions. Missionaries' inability to raise the money needed to sustain their operations in an increasingly challenging field exposed new vulnerabilities. After abortive attempts to improve the mission societies' financial positions failed, some in the mission movement became open to alternative fundraising methods. The initiative proposed to celebrate Kaiser Wilhelm II's twenty-fifth jubilee disrupted missionaries' internationalism and made 1913 the most significant year for missionary nationalism's gradual triumph. The *Nationalspende zum Kaisersjubiläum für die christlichen Missionen in den deutschen Kolonien und Schutzgebieten* revealed in the most fundamental way the superior utility of nationalism for German Protestant missionaries' needs. Its fundraising success resurrected the financial condition of the Protestant mission movement. And the thoroughly nationalist *Nationalspende* provided a powerful counterpoint to the internationalist excitement following the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910.

The Edinburgh Conference was the most tangible proof of Germany's Protestant missionaries' internationalism. The restrained attitude of Germany's missionaries to the earliest international conferences of the 1860s, -70s, and -80s revealed that the German mission movement had very specific expectations for international conferences. The German mission movement had, by the 1890s, developed what was, to them, a very satisfactory system of missionary conferences,

starting on the local level and ascending to a continent-wide conference held every five years in Bremen, the Continental Mission Conference. The most local conferences were expected to deal with the very local and very specific tasks of inspiring mission confidence and mission support within the cities, towns, and villages of Germany's Protestant localities. The regional conferences served to provide the pastors and mission supporters who made up the local leadership of the mission movement with opportunities to share their ideas and learn new techniques for improving Germany's "*Missionsgeist*." At the top of the hierarchy, the national conferences in Germany gave mission society leaders, *Missionswissenschaftler*, and other experts the opportunity to discuss and debate the practical tools of mission work in the mission fields. Missionaries in Germany hoped for, and received in 1900 in New York and especially in 1910 in Edinburgh, an international missionary conference that could take a strategic view of the entire international evangelical project. The success of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference validated German missionaries' expectations and refilled the cup of internationalism that had nearly been emptied by 1910. In the years immediately after 1910 German Protestant missionaries exulted in a revitalized internationalism that they believed had the potential to develop into a fully mature and institutionalized international mission movement.

In July 1914 the German mission movement was balanced delicately between a long-resisted nationalist mission ideology and the traditional internationalism of Christian universalism. On the one hand, the stresses of colonial development and the fiscal difficulties of the mission societies seemed to indicate that the best way forward

was nationalism. On the other hand, the old ideas of mission supremacy in the colonized world, the *Volkskirche* concept, and the unambiguous performance of missionary internationalism at Edinburgh appeared to prove the ongoing reliability and value of the internationalist path. The outbreak of war in 1914 and the ongoing hostilities thereafter helped tip the balance to nationalism. The real and imagined behavior of British missionary leaders during the war, the human and financial losses of the war, and the climate of fervent nationalism within the *Kaiserreich* all demolished the support for internationalism within the German mission community. By 1917 no one in Germany expected a renewal of mission internationalism, and the peace treaty signed at Versailles transformed the German mission movement so that it would have been unrecognizable to the internationalist stalwarts Warneck and Zahn.

This account of the history of the Protestant mission movement in Germany during the nineteenth century has revealed a number of important questions that, if they could be answered, would clarify the social, political, and cultural influence of the German mission societies and their missionaries upon Germany during the period of high imperialism. The question of mission finances is an area which demands greater attention. It would be invaluable to know more about the size and sources of donations received by mission societies. In particular, the regional distribution of support needs closer analysis. Mission societies had deep roots in the provincial towns and small villages of Germany and a clear understanding of the financial involvement of the average resident of these towns and villages would shed important light upon the extent and reach of the German mission movement. Furthermore, such an analysis would complement studies that ought to be done on the linkages between

German communities and non-Western communities abroad forged by the German mission societies. By charting the connections between Germans' daily lives and the lives of colonized peoples, historians could develop a better understanding of the penetration of ideas about race, about world commerce, and about colonialism into German society.

A second area that needs greater explanation is the role of Islam in the history of the German mission movement. One of the declared goals of the Edinburgh Conference was to defeat Islam; the German missionaries in East Africa feared the growing strength of the faith in the colony; and a core component of Germany's *Weltpolitik* after 1900 included closer ties with the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, Germany had a long history of orientalist study stretching back at least to the Enlightenment. German missionaries' anxieties about Muslims played an important role in their conflict with the Benedictines of St. Ottilien. It would be beneficial to develop a better understanding of missionaries' knowledge and preconceptions about Islam. Protestant missionaries' suspicion that the twentieth century would be a century in which the great faiths of the world clashed might have had some impact on how missionaries interpreted their relationship with the German state, European imperialism, and the industrial capitalism of nineteenth-century globalization.

Finally, this dissertation would materially benefit from more extensive research in the archives of the German colonial period held in Tanzanian archives. Such research would allow for a more substantial discussion of how missionaries' experiences in Africa shaped their interpretation of the church-state relationship. Missionaries' encounters with indigenous authority figures may have followed a

similar pattern to missionaries' dealings with the secular state. However, if the encounter with African leaders and societies had a different effect on Germany's mission ideology then the answer is likely to lie in the records of missionaries and colonial administrators in local and regional archives in the former colony. Furthermore, many of the case studies, anecdotes, and personalities included in the analysis of this dissertation would benefit from additional material better able to provide the "on-the-ground" perspective than the records in missionary and administrative archival collections in Germany can.

Germany's Protestant missionary movement was a political and cultural phenomenon that redefined the relationship between the German state and the German Protestant church. For most of the nineteenth century German missionaries were more interested in the ties that bound them to other Christians and to "heathens" beyond Germany's borders than they were interested in their membership in a German nation. Missionaries' imagined internationalism created a different ideology of colonialism, and this explanation opens the history of German imperialism and German nationalism to a new analysis that questions the totalizing definitions frequently deployed to describe these two important elements of Germany's nineteenth-century history. The experiences of Germans and Africans during the first period of globalization before the First World War were shaped by German missionaries' ideology and, at the same time, by historical contingencies. African motivations played a role in the forms that German mission work and mission ideology took on, but this analysis has focused on Protestant German missionaries'



intents and experiences. Those intents and experiences have revealed that German Protestant missionaries preferred the work of founding an empire of Christians to the work of founding an empire for Germany.

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*Gott will es!*

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*Nachrichten aus der ostafrikanischen Mission*

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