TRANSLATING AFRICA FOR GERMANS:
THE RHENISH MISSION IN SOUTHWEST AFRICA, 1829-1936

A Dissertation

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This dissertation examines German Protestant missionaries in Southwest Africa, their networks in Germany, and their notions of race. The Rhenish Mission Society was the dominant mission society in Southwest Africa until the early twentieth century. Its missionaries were the first European “experts” on the Herero, Nama, Damra, and Koi-San. They took part in the German genocide of the Herero and Nama (1904-1907) and remained in Southwest Africa after Germany lost its colonies during World War I. After 1916, the Rhenish Mission struggled to regain support. With the onset of the National Socialist regime in 1933, some mission leaders and missionaries sought to curry favor with the Nazis and reshaped their depictions of Africans to fit racist ways of thinking in the new Germany.

Drawing on archival sources in Germany and Namibia, this study engages scholarly debates on continuity and change in German history. I show that Rhenish missionaries and their notions of Africans represent a significant strand of continuity that stretches from the Napoleonic period through the Nazi era and even beyond. The study begins with conservative religious reactions in the post-Napoleonic period and ends in 1936, three years
into the Nazi regime, when missionaries in Africa seemed ever more distant from Germany with its focus on rearming in preparation for war in Europe. Across this period, the study identifies the intellectual and religious underpinnings of missionary notions and practice that found expression through the stories and reports missionaries sent home. Their writings reveal continuities in German history, even while they recounted developments in Africa and responded to changes back home.

Although stationed on another continent, Rhenish missionaries were active in Germany. They used their narratives to raise support for overseas mission work and promote revivalist religion at home. As “cultural mirrors,” missionary publications connected the German and the African through lessons in piety. They linked intellectual, religious, political, and racialist currents in Germany to produce potent ways of thinking about Africa. In the process, missionaries bound Christian faith to war, genocide, and racism and paved the way for Germans to accept, even expect, acts of extreme violence toward Africans.
For Tracy, Elena, Timothy, and Elliot.
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dissertation to you.
### ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>BMB</td>
<td>Barmen Missionsblatt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRMG</td>
<td>Berichte der Rheinischen Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DKMF</td>
<td>Der kleine Missionsfreund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELCIN</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMW</td>
<td>Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen</td>
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<tr>
<td>EZAB</td>
<td>Evangelisches Zentral-Archiv in Berlin</td>
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<td>JBRMG</td>
<td>Jahresberichte der Rheinischen Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>LKAB</td>
<td>Das Landeskirchliche Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche von Westfalen</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>VEMA holdings for Bethel Mission</td>
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<td>NAN</td>
<td>National Archives of Namibia</td>
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<td>RMG</td>
<td>VEMA holdings for the Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft</td>
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<tr>
<td>VEM/UEM</td>
<td>Vereinte Evangelische Mission/United Evangelical Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>VEMA</td>
<td>Die Archiv- und Museumstiftung der Vereinten Evangelischen Mission</td>
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INTRODUCTION

MISSIONARIES AND CONTINUITY IN MODERN GERMAN HISTORY

As we celebrate today’s Missionfest, we think not only of our nation and what is happening around us and what still needs to happen. We also cast our eyes on the great work of the mission and the mission fields of the world. One could say the required work is dauntingly huge, but our text today concludes with a double ‘Amen’ from God the Almighty, who assures us that all countries will be full of His glory. This gives us comfort and joy in our work.1

~ the “collection pages” of the Rhenish Mission Society, 1909

The scientific racism that took hold in Europe during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries fixated on Africans. Nationalism, Social Darwinism, and the “Scramble for Africa” inspired scientists and anthropologists, as well as novelists and artists, to contribute ideas to the growing discourse on “race.” But few Europeans, including Germans, ever encountered black people.2 Where then did their knowledge of blacks come from? Who or what informed notions of blackness in Germany?

1 “Wenn heute Missionsfest gefeirert wird, wollen wir nicht nur an das denken, was in unserm eigenen Lande und in unserer nächsten Umgebung geschehen ist und noch geschehen muß. Wir wollen auch einen Blick werfen auf das große Missionswerk und Missionsfeld der Welt. Entmutigend groß, könnte man sagen, ist die Arbeit, die noch zu geschehen hat; aber unser Textwort schließt mit einem doppelten Amen des allmächtigen Gottes, der uns auch heute die Versicherung gibt, daß alle Lande noch einmal seiner Herrlichkeit voll werden sollen. Das macht uns getrost und arbeitsfreudig.” Kollekttenblätter, no. 3 (1909), 5-6.

Missionaries living in Africa provided a vast amount of information about Africans to Germans in Europe. Unlike some Europeans who thought of Africa as “empty spaces,” missionaries experienced Africans face-to-face: they talked with them, observed their cultures, taught their children, doctored them, traded with them, and, of course, evangelized them. Missionaries described their encounters with various African “tribes” in their reports, letters, books, and on occasional visits home to Germany. They hoped these stories would foster support and win new recruits for the African mission. But removed from the original contexts, these accounts of black people penetrated German society and became a body of knowledge from which Germans could abstract notions about blacks, race, and themselves.

Missionaries made “the strange familiar” to Germans.\(^3\) Although neither homogeneous nor unanimous, missionaries from more than three hundred mission societies in Germany had a vital role in the exchange of ideas between the mission field and the home front that corresponded to the evolution of modern racism.\(^4\) Long before Germans read books by Nazi eugenicist Eugen Fischer (1874-1967), before they encountered black colonial soldiers from Francophone Africa during the occupation of the Rhineland after World War I, before blackface minstrels performed in Germany during the 1890s, and even before 1885, when Germans began to acquire colonies for their still-new nation, missionaries were producing knowledge for white Germans about black people. Missionary stories and reports served a dual purpose: to promote mission work abroad and further religious renewal at


home. Reciprocity defined missionary narratives: author and audience each had a formative role in constructing and transmitting notions about Africans, Asians, Americans, and other people.\(^5\)

Thousands of German missionaries have evangelized in Africa since the eighteenth century.\(^6\) I focus on members of the Rhenish Mission Society, a Protestant organization based in Barmen in the northern Rhineland. This society trained hundreds of religious workers and sent many of them to places where Germany would later establish colonies.\(^7\)

In Southwest Africa, the Rhenish Mission was the dominant representative of Christianity until after the colonial wars and genocide of 1904-1907. It retained prominence until well after World War II, even into the present. At home, the Rhenish Mission built a support network that spread across the northern Rhineland and Westphalia and to other German and European states. The society consisted of Pietist Lutheran and revivalist Reformed Christians under Prussian rule, a broad spectrum of German Protestantism. With its archives in Wuppertal and in Windhoek intact, the Rhenish Mission, its missionaries and


network, makes possible a focused study of overseas missions and representations of Africans.

As “experts” on Africa, missionaries played a significant role in African-German relations. Interactions between missionaries and Africans presumably influenced how Africans viewed Germans, but this subject is not within the scope of my study. Instead, I focus on the other side of the relationship: how Germans viewed Africans. German missionaries published books about the “tribes” of Africa. They advocated native land reserves and tried to convert herdsmen into European-style farmers. They witnessed colonial conflicts and mediated between belligerents. Most notably, when the German military brutally murdered the Herero during the colonial war of 1904 to 1907, missionaries lured Herero to concentration camps where many more died, even while missionaries petitioned Berlin for humane treatment of the prisoners. In all their work, missionaries depended on support from the German public, and they regularly wrote home to nurture ties with the mission.

This study spans more than a century from 1829 to 1936. I examine the Rhenish Mission in Southwest Africa from its inception in the years after defeat of Napoleon to its reconfiguration in the early National Socialist period, when German rearmament and international conflicts isolated the missionaries in Africa ever more. Nazi policies and practices absorbed some of the missionary notions of race, but others were irrelevant, even offensive, in the new Germany. Put differently, this analysis begins long before the mission society dispatched a single missionary to Africa and concludes two decades after South African forces defeated the Germans in Southwest Africa and placed the former German colony under South African rule. Taking this long view allows an assessment of changes and
continuities, and it also enables analysis of how missions functioned, both outside and inside a colonial framework.

What did Rhenish missionaries communicate about their experiences in Southwest Africa to the mission society and its network? To address this question, I analyze private and published missionary correspondence from the founding of the society in 1829 until 1936. Based on those sources, this dissertation argues that missionaries represent significant continuities across nineteenth- and twentieth-century Germany. They connected Germany and Africa. They linked intellectual currents -- Pietism, awakening, revivalism, Kant’s and Hegel’s notions of race, and Herder’s interpretation of language, culture, and geography -- to popular practices within Protestantism. They bridged home and field, clergy and laity, Christianity and war, white and black. From their roots in the Rhineland and the memory of the Napoleonic period, to an overseas base in Southwest Africa, the site of Germany’s first colony and genocide of the Herero, to efforts to retool as a source of racist thinking in the Nazi era, missionaries connected epochs of German history in potent ways. Although living in Africa, Rhenish missionaries remained rooted in Germany. Their writings reveal continuities in German history, even while recounting developments in Africa and responding to changes back home.

**Europeans on “Blackness”**

The missionary discourse was part of a wider discussion in Europe on African “blackness”. Andrew Curran surveys this discourse as it appeared in adventurers’ travel logs, anatomist experiments on African bodies, and meanderings of the *philosophes* during the early
modern period. He argues that religious and biological explanations of blackness gave way to an ever-hardening climate theory that believed “the African” was a product of environmental and cultural factors. A common question in journals, says Curran, was, “What is the physical cause of niègres’ color, of the quality of their hair, and of the degeneration of the one and of the other?” Central to the question of an essential African identity was the idea of moral, intellectual, and physical “degeneration” that separated whites and blacks.

According to the evolving race theory rising from the eighteenth century, “blackness” came from the outside and penetrated the interior being, whereby even the organs of the body -- especially the blood and the brain -- became “black.” This “blackness” determined the destiny of the African, who, as a degenerate, was lazy, barbarous, idolatrous, and erotic. Even the liberal-minded Montesquieu proposed a notion of the sauvage that inspired the philosophes to privilege climate theory and cultural characteristics as the explanation for African character as indolent and of diminished moral capacities. Johann F. Blumenbach formalized this “science” by dividing humanity into five

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9 Curran, 2, citing from Journal des scavans in 1739, see Curran, 226-25, endnote 6.


11 Curran, 4, 124-27.

12 The phrase “noble savage” first appeared in John Dryden’s The Conquest of Granada (1672), and Montesquieu’s sauvage is perhaps better translated as “unsociable” or “wild,” rather than “savage”; ibid., 134.
essential categories, which became a legacy of the eighteenth century that drove the European scientific and philosophical discourse on race.\(^\text{13}\)

The German discourse on blackness was parallel to the rest of Europe and followed Blumenbach, but racial concepts were not without contest. The German philosophical tradition centered on the question, “What is man?” and the answers were predictably Euro-centric, racial, and sexist. Although Immanuel Kant and Georg W. F. Hegel saw humans as rational beings and distinct from animals, where it concerned the African, they questioned whether rationality was common to all humans.\(^\text{14}\) Kant placed races in a hierarchy: “Humanity exists in its greatest perfection in the white race,” he claimed, “The yellow Indians have a smaller amount of talent [and] the Negroes are lower, while the lowest are a part of the American peoples.”\(^\text{15}\) According to Kant, the African appeared incapable of rationality. Through persuasion, when accompanied by a whipping with a bamboo switch, the African might gain reason that could “produce a will that is good.”\(^\text{16}\) But his moral and cultural development was dependent and could only begin when the African “apes the man


who has character.”\textsuperscript{17} Kant added that until maturity began, the African was inert and incapable of producing “anything great in art or science or any other praiseworthy quality.”\textsuperscript{18}

Hegel also displayed a triumphalist Eurocentrism when addressing race and Africans. Although he saw history as a vital force that formed human nature, the “passive negro” existed outside of human history and had, therefore, not realized personhood.\textsuperscript{19} Similar to Kant, Hegel argued that the African lacked rational and moral capacities, adding that, since the African lived in a terra nulla of “lawlessness,” “fetishism,” and “cannibalism,” he lacked a sense of freedom, had no capacity to form political institutions, and was prone to brutality and moral lethargy.\textsuperscript{20} History had created the great civilizations of Europe and Asia, while Africa had remained dormant and had “no movement or development to exhibit”:

What we properly understand by Africa, is the Unhistorical, Undeveloped Spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature, and which had to be presented here only as on the threshold of the World’s History.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{17} Imitation would not in itself constitute character, but in time imitation would effect the rational and moral development of the imitator; “Jener ist der Nachäffer des Mannes, der einen Charakter hat”; Immanuel Kant, \textit{Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht}, J. H. Von Kirchmann (ed.), (Berlin: Heimann, 1869), 214-15.


Hegel deemed Africa incapable of producing history and, therefore, unable to produce a civilization without the assistance of the historically grounded cultures of Europe and Asia. He insisted that Africans could not contribute to human history until they were colonized.\textsuperscript{22} History was everything, according to Hegel, who shaped a perspective of Africa that dismissed its historical rootedness and, like Kant, denigrated the African.

Kant’s and Hegel's prescriptive criteria for personhood depended on their notions of race, whereas Johann Herder offered a universal view of human nature less bounded by physical distinctions and more determined by environmental factors. He rejected Kant’s and Hegel’s arbitrary division of humanity by rational or historical rootedness and offered a different set of propositions about what to expect from the vast continent of Africa. In an essay titled “The Organization of the African People,” Herder denied outright the prevailing notions:

> The black color of the Negro has nothing in it more wonderful than the white, brown, yellow, or reddish, of other nations. Neither the blood, the brain, nor the seminal fluid of the Negro is black, but the reticular membrane beneath the cuticle, which is common to all, and even in us, at least in some parts, and under certain circumstances, is more or less colored.\textsuperscript{23}

Herder denied both exoticism and hierarchy when comparing “the African” to any other race and not least to the white race. He was unwilling to forge a biological division between

\textsuperscript{22} Bernasconi, 55.

the “races,” just as he was unwilling to forge a harsh separation of human reason and the human senses, as Kant had.24

If Herder saw limits in African development, he did not yield to Kant’s chauvinism; rather, the African people embodied the richness that existed in all of humanity. He suggested that the problem with Europe’s perspective on Africa lay in the eye of the beholder, not with the object of observation: European ignorance about Africa was the problem, and time would prove that Africa was culturally rich.25 He accused Europeans of being too lazy to properly investigate Africa and its people.”26 Slaves, he said, were not appropriate subjects of study because they were no longer in their natural environment.27 In order to apprehend African cultures and people, he argued, Europeans had to go to Africa, learn its geography, and study its environment. Herder saw humanity as a unified spiritual entity rooted in culture and geography. Reason and rationality were vital and common to all, he insisted, but these were not in themselves sufficient to achieve human perfection; emotion, human senses, and faith were also essential.

The nineteenth-century German Protestant missionary movement found inspiration in Herder’s conception of “the African” and his relationship to the rest of humanity, though missionaries dithered between Herderian acclamations and Kantian-Hegelian derogations.


27 The eighteenth-century discourse on blackness often focused on slavery; Curran, 167-215.
Herder had restored a religious argument for the question, “what is man,” which had high appeal, especially among the revivalist circles that arose in the post-Napoleonic period, where much support for the missionary endeavor originated. In Africa, revivalists hoped that missionaries might uncover evidence for their religious sensibilities.

Missionaries were not the only voices to generate and convey notions of “blackness” in Germany during the nineteenth century. In a recent study, Jonathon Wipplinger argues that blackface theatre began in the mid-century and “had the effect of forcing a reevaluation and reinterpretation of the very notion of what it meant to be German in modernity.” Although some Germans did not appreciate the faux portrayal of blacks, Wipplinger notes that their aversion was in effect a cultural engagement of distaste for what blurred the lines between black and white as “a threat to racial and national identities.” But blackface minstrels were not portraying notions of blackness in a vacuum. The intellectual discourse on blackness was more than a century old when minstrels took the stage. At a cultural level, mission societies had already evolved an equation for whites and blacks that focused on actual black people from Africa.


30 Wipplinger, 458.
I agree with Wipplinger that portrayals of blackness associated white and black in complex ways that challenged German identities, but I contend that missionary narratives had a more enduring impact in Germany. Missionary portrayals of Africans were no joke for public entertainment; rather, these narratives presented “the African” as a reflection that the German could internalize through prayer, financial support, and participation in mission events at home. In addition to being informative, mission societies constructed literature that connected readers to the subjects of the narratives. Support for the mission came in large part from the German religious circles. But support went both ways. In exchange for their financial resources, revivalist congregations received missionary stories as tools to promote their religious aims within their communities. This reciprocity gave the narratives a key role in forming German religious culture and made them relevant to national culture too.

As tools of religious renewal, missionary stories were reflexive: a blend of the exotic and the familiar that gave the narratives their efficacy in “bending back” meaning onto the readers. 31 These “cultural mirrors” appealed to religious anxieties in a changing world and illustrated a belief about the moral and spiritual progress of society. Through story, missionaries made Africans, Asians, Americans, and people of the Middle East recognizable and relevant to the German reader’s own social, religious, and cultural experience.

Reflexive reading can be paradoxical; it can create both distinction and identification between the reader and the subject. In missionary narratives, Africans sometimes served as examples of “heathendom,” sometimes as models of faith, and other times as illustrations of abandoned faith. Similar to a mirror, these stories offered both parallel and counter

movements: Africans moving toward Christian faith and piety, as Germans were drifting away; Africans abandoning a newfound faith for old habits, as Germans abandoned a long-held faith to indulge new habits and new beliefs. The positive image of the African shamed the German for losing what the former appeared to be gaining. The negative image illustrated how “God opposes the proud” and warned readers that when a rebellious society degenerated and abandoned its moral foundation it would be met with severe divine chastisement, including violence and death. However, negative images of the African could also be cut off from their mirroring function when missionaries came under pressure from fellow Germans for sympathizing with Africans in ways that implied criticism of Germany.

German colonial expansion in 1885 complicated the reflexive view in missionary narratives by bringing the audience and subject face to face, often in direct conflict with one another. Missionaries became anxious that the poor spiritual condition of colonists might corrupt the African, much as older children might corrupt a younger child. They tried to minimize contact between Africans and colonists. But the lean years of the 1890s in Southwest Africa forced many Herero to accept colonial employment. During these years, an increase in rape, beatings, and other injustices against the Herero by settlers and traders

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also heightened missionary anxieties over coming conflicts between whites and blacks.\textsuperscript{33} The Rhenish Mission warned Germans and the government of impending trouble, a prophecy that was fulfilled on 12 January 1904.\textsuperscript{34} The debates surrounding the Herero-German War altered the missionary discourse on blackness. Missionaries observed up-close and reported on the initial outbreak of war. But facing criticism at home for their apparent lack of patriotic loyalties and sympathies for the African, Rhenish missionaries and their society drew ever closer to the imperial aims for the Herero throughout this conflict until they became willing participants in the murder and destruction of the Herero.

\textbf{Historiography}

Since the 1960s, studies on Germans in Southwest Africa have focused on the relationship between Germany’s colonial experience and its empire. The wars in Southwest Africa (1904-1907) feature centrally in this scholarship. East German historians were among the first to draw attention to this history.\textsuperscript{35} Heinrich Loth, Horst Drechsler, and Helmut Bley decried the abuses of German imperialism in the colony as evidence of a western propensity for oppression. Subsequent scholarship builds on their work often by focusing

\begin{itemize}
\item Gewald, \textit{Herero Heroes: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia, 1890-1923} (Oxford: James Currey, 1999), 110-40; Drechsler, 168.
\end{itemize}
on military and colonial cultures. Jon Bridgman outlines the murderous brutality of the German military.\textsuperscript{36} In a parallel study, Lora Wildenthal portrays German colonies in Africa as a testing ground and juncture for radical gender and racist attitudes from Europe and a space where women believed they could participate in preserving German identity.\textsuperscript{37} Jan Bart Gewald (1999) builds on Robert J. Gordon’s (1992) arguments for how Europeans imposed the very idea of “tribes” that shaped the ethnic geography in southern Africa.\textsuperscript{38} Gewald surveys this development among the Herero of Southwest Africa as it contributed to the Herero-German war.

Recent scholarship has probed strands of connection across time between Africa and Germany to show links between racism and genocide. Some scholars have sought to identify a link between German colonialism and the Holocaust that Hannah Arendt first articulated, but failed to substantiate, in \textit{The Origins of Totalitarianism} (1951).\textsuperscript{39} Jürgen Zimmerer (2003) sees a causal relationship between the colony and Germany. He argues that German military and colonial practices were genocidal and foreshadowed genocidal practices during the Holocaust.\textsuperscript{40} Racist violence in Southwest Africa, says Zimmerer,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{36} Jon Bridgman, \textit{The Revolt of the Hereros} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).
\item \textsuperscript{38} Robert J. Gordon, \textit{The Bushman Myth: The Making of the Namibian Underclass} (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992); Jan-Bart Gewald, \textit{Herero Heroes}.
\item \textsuperscript{40} Although the concept of genocide with a definition based on intent may be implied by the \textit{Blue Book} (1919) and later by Drechsler’s and Bley’s works, neither Hull or Gewald uses this term. Zimmerer has led the charge that the destruction of the Herero constituted genocide; J. Zimmerer, “The First Genocide of
produced “a reservoir of cultural practices” that the Nazis appropriated.\(^41\) In contrast, Isabel Hull offers a different explanation for extreme violence. She emphasizes the role of German military culture rather than racism as explaining the massively destructive nature of German warfare in 1870, 1904-1907, 1914-1918, and by implication 1939-1945.\(^42\) Hull does not link the conflict in Southwest Africa directly or uniquely to the Holocaust. Instead, she focuses on the German military, which in East and Southwest Africa -- as in Europe -- pursued an annihilationist policy -- “absolute destruction” of the enemy -- as its only accepted form of victory.\(^43\)

Scholars of German colonialism tend to underestimate missionary roles and sources. Drechsler dismissed them as handmaidens of capitalism.\(^44\) Bley, Bridgman, and Wildenthal use missionary sources but pay only cursory attention to their roles, although these scholars recognize that the missionaries were in a conflictual relationship with the settlers.\(^45\) By


\(^43\) According to Hull, von Trotha drew on military lessons from 1870 onward, which he applied to the colonial wars. She notes that the annihilationist policy was in keeping with von Trotha’s personal racist attitudes but was not necessary guided by his racism.


\(^45\) Bley, 208-16; Bridgman, 34-36, 51-52; Wildenthal, 81.
contrast, Gewald (1999) draws on missionary sources to identify missionary self-interest in the political and social development of the Herero and the Herero-German War, which he argues contributed to the escalation of violence.46 Nils Ole Oermann (1999) adds nuance to Gewald’s narrative by showing that missionaries had disparate and sometimes conflicting views about race and state power.47

My study complements this historiography by looking in the opposite direction, at how missionaries extended their influence beyond Africa to Germany in order to maintain the vitality of their mission. Missionaries had a German audience in mind when they wrote; they used their encounters with Africans to arouse tangible commitments from Germans along with a sense of participation in the mission through gifts, moral support, and new recruits. Where Hull identifies military culture as a main bearer of continuity in modern German history, I argue for a parallel role of missionary culture. Missionary culture in the nineteenth century institutionalized patterns of thinking and behaving that fostered an acceptance of violence in the early twentieth century. Here my work also builds on Zimmerer’s idea of a “cultural reservoir” of violent practices. Missionaries created, shaped, and transmitted “knowledge” about “the African” that prepared Germans to accept acts of prejudice, exploitation, and murder.

Scholarship that addresses the role of the German missionaries in relation to the German Empire often focuses on how overseas missions prepared the way for colonial domination. Following this argument comes the charge that missionaries destroyed the cultural identities of other people. This accusation in turn has encouraged scholars to focus

46 Gewald, 32, 63-64, 135, 142-44, 216-17.

47 Nils Ole Oermann, Mission, Church and State Relations in South West Africa under German Rule.
on changes that missionary work caused in indigenous societies. In 1971, Lothar Engel published a study of the Rhenish Mission, perhaps the first written by someone outside mission circles.48 He rejected the idea that the Rhenish Mission and its missionaries operated in isolation from “worldly” conflicts and interests, but he saw this engagement primarily in Africa, not in Germany. Yet Engel, who took 1842 as his starting point, did acknowledge that missionary ideas originated in pre-imperial Germany and not solely in the African experience. I agree, but my starting point is in the late eighteenth century with Herder’s philosophical, theological, and cultural claims and the conservative reaction to the Napoleonic period in the early nineteenth century.

A more recent study by Ulrich van der Heyden resurrects earlier claims made by East German historian Heinrich Loth in 1963. Loth provided the first external, critical study of Rhenish missionaries in Southwest Africa in contrast to the apologetic claims by Heinrich Vedder in his 1934 study, *Das Alte Südwestafrika*.49 Van der Heyden states that missionaries had “a completely Euro-centric worldview, so it seemed appropriate not merely to reject


49 Vedder claimed that African elites were bent on the self-destruction of their people had not the German missionaries, together with the British and German colonial administrations, intervened. Loth argued that missionary intervention, especially in the 1850s and 1860s, was destructive to African political structures. He was perhaps typical of 1960s scholarship in that he did not attribute agency to Africans nor recognize the internal dynamics of African societies. His assumptions were later corrected by Alvin Kientez and Brigitte Lau, who, for their part, tended to minimize the activities of the missionaries and place them in a more passive role. I note that these historians did not connect their study back to German society nor to the Nazi period. See Heinrich Vedder, *Das Alte Südwestafrika* (Berlin: Martin Warneck, 1934); Heinrich Loth, *Die christliche Mission in Südwestafrika*, Alvin Kientez, “The Key Role of the Oorlam Migrations in the Early Europeanization of South West African (Namibia),” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 10, no. 4 (1977): 553-72; Brigitte Lau, *The Emergence of Kommando Politics in Namaland, Souther Namibia 1800-1870*, (Cape Town: University of Cape Town, 1982); Brigitte Lau, ‘Pre-colonial’ Namibian Historiography: What is to be Done? Conference on Research Priorities in Namibia, 23-25 July 1984, University of London.
‘heathen’ cultures but also to legitimize an active battle against them.” 50 German missions, I argue, were more complex; on the surface, missionaries appropriated “heathen” cultures through their studies of cultural artifacts: language, rituals, religious beliefs, myths, oral history, and natural environment. This appropriation, I claim, was part of a larger religious and cultural project that harkened back to Germany, in the forms of religious awakening, revivalism, conservative politics, and racism. At the root of van der Heyden’s argument, however, is an important claim that missionaries utilized the knowledge they produced to attack indigenous cultures. My study agrees that the missionaries did indeed utilize their knowledge of Africans in a manner that prepared the way to accept the destruction of other people. I argue that missionaries used their knowledge and relationships with Africans to become participants, not passive observers, in racist action during the German genocide of the Herero and again in the racist dialogue during the Nazi era.

Some scholars object to Loth and van der Heyden’s Euro-centric model of analysis, arguing it is inadequate for colonial studies. Karla Poewe suggests that the discussion around genocide in Southwest Africa has distracted scholars from seeing the vital roles of Africans in shaping their societies. 51 She wants to shift the focus from European influences toward African agency. Another kind of inversion of the prevailing scholarship is to turn the unidirectional perspective of metropolitan influence in the colony on its head. Susanne Zantop did this when arguing that stories and artifacts from unknown regions in South


America stimulated “the German colonial imagination” back home.\(^5\) Her perspective informs my research on Southwest Africa, where Germans have had a long-term presence and, unlike in South America, a colony. The reciprocal exchange of information that missionaries fostered between Africa and Germany helped shape the racial and colonial “imagination” -- or what I have termed “notions” -- of mission enthusiasts in Germany.

In the historiography relevant to my study is an enduring question of continuity between practices in the nineteenth century and violence in the twentieth. The Sonderweg (“Special path”) thesis in the 1970s and 1980s spawned a contentious debate in German historiography around the question of Germany’s distinctive development in the modern period, in view of the collapse of German democracy in 1933. Early Sonderweg scholars privileged structures and processes in society as “turning points where Germany failed to turn.”\(^5\) But these early scholars often failed to connect social and cultural history in meaningful ways. The Bielefeld School made up for this deficiency by stressing distinctive German institutional, cultural, and societal traditions rooted in the nineteenth century, especially in the period between Bismarck and the arrival of National Socialism.\(^5\) In part,

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\(^5\) Of the Bielefeld School scholars, Wolfgang Mommsen and Jürgen Kocka criticized parts of the Sonderweg thesis and tempered it with a claim that the thesis may explain the failure of the Weimar Republic but not necessarily the rise of the National Socialists; for a summary of this debate see Jürgen Kocka, "German
disillusionment over the failure of liberal progress among liberal, socialist, and Marxist scholars after 1945 motivated this scholarship. But in the late 1970s and 1980s, scholars began to dismantle the *Sonderweg* thesis and the Bielefeld School’s claims. Geoff Eley and David Blackbourn’s study of nineteenth-century German bourgeois society and politics sought to demonstrate that early twentieth-century authoritarianism was in essence middle-class, modern, and not uniquely German, rather than upper-class or backward-looking. This new perspective led historians in the 1990s to focus on shorter-term causal explanations than those sought in the *Sonderweg* thesis. As a result, connections to the nineteenth century had limited importance for historians who rejected the thesis.

The contention among historians over the relationship of the nineteenth century to the twentieth has not gone away. A recent return to the question on “continuities” has reawakened questions about colonial connections and their meaning in the interwar years and to the Holocaust. Since the 2006 German Studies Association Annual Conference, where H. Glenn Penny led a discussion of “rethinking” the nineteenth century and its place,

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questions of continuity have escalated. Geof Eley has been instrumental in reviving the importance of the colonial period in an anti-\textit{Sonderweg} framework as another way Germany was more like France, Britain, and the Unites States than it was different. In 2008, he and Helmut Walser Smith weighed in by defining what is at stake in this renewed debate. Eley problematized transnational history with three pertinent questions: “What is the new and distinctive work which the concept of the ‘transnational’ is being asked to perform? What does it add? And not least: what is the politics of knowledge it produces?” He stressed that, while this approach has much to offer, it does not supersede or negate national histories in the nineteenth century.

Walser Smith’s 2008 book, \textit{The Continuities of German History: Nation, Religion, and Race across the Long Nineteenth Century}, fueled the debate by accusing historians of “a failure of imagination” that “would mean our loss of mastery,” if we were “not to insist on depth of field … and the longer life of the past into the shorter moment of cataclysm.” Eley has since called for a renewed study of “race” concepts in Europe, noting that the notion of race became a “real” social practice that occupied all Europeans and generated assumptions of “racial difference.”

Walser Smith observes that the historical reference point in German historiography, or the “vanishing point” (Sehepunkt), has in recent years shifted from 1933 and the collapse of German democracy to 1941 and the escalation of the Holocaust.\textsuperscript{62} This move, he claims, has deepened the field of study by visually aligning strands in history that integrate the “brutality practices” of the latter century with methods of the former.\textsuperscript{63} More importantly, says Walser Smith, this shift opens up questions about “the collapse of fellow feeling and the ideologies of nationalism and race that enabled this collapse.”\textsuperscript{64} Scholarship in the past two decades often privileges 1941 by exploring the “powerful currents” at play in biopolitics, East European conflicts, antisemitism, Stalinism, and colonialism, as the framework of the Holocaust.\textsuperscript{65} In different ways, Walser Smith and Eley each highlight longitudinal and transnational studies that map these strands of history and examine their meanings.

The renewed interest in the evolution of racial notions is significant to my study. According to Walser Smith, “savagery and primitiveness” returned to continental Europe in 1941.\textsuperscript{66} “Racist ideas,” he maintains, “cheapened a sense of the sanctity of human life and rendered increasingly brutal a colonial discourse that called into question the humanity of the...
He outlines an older discourse on “nation” that melded with a new scientific discourse on “race” in the late nineteenth century, and he describes the process as “the path from thought to deed, speech to act, writing to riot.” In so doing, Smith weaves together a “modern” context that makes room for the peculiarities of the interwar period and National Socialist policies without denying the historical ancestry of race notions. Smith tempers his claim by suggesting that the links between the two centuries concern “partial identities,” not “whole identities.” My work analyzes how the missionary movement constructed identities for its network of supporters using literary products from Africa.

As Walser Smith’s title indicates, an important continuity, and perhaps the longest arc, was religiously motivated violence against outsiders, especially Jews. Such attitudes became “rooted in popular consciousness” through cultural products: works of art and festivals that shaped a cultural script that encompassed themes of Jewish ritual murder, host desecration, betrayal, and unfair privilege. David Blackbourn adds another dimension when he notes that the “flow of exotic commodities rested on exploitation and led to racial stereotyping as a marketing gambit.” Although not literal commodities, missionary narratives were products of a political category -- the “subnational” -- which Blackbourn recommends we study.

Yet when Walser Smith addresses the question of colonial contributions to underlying attitudes toward outsiders, he turns his attention to ideological links of historians

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68 Ibid., 178.

69 Walser Smith, 2009 Vanderbilt Lecture.

70 “Forum,“ German History (2008): 88

71 Blackbourn is responding Eley’s two suggestions,”the transnational” and “the national”; ibid.
and political theorists who straddle the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For example, he highlights Paul Rohrbach’s *Germany's Isolation: An Exposition of the Economic Causes of the Great War* (1914), which had a celebrated run of 75,000 copies. I contend that, by comparison, the missionary literature had a longer, more enduring, and pervasive presence in Germany than the examples Walser Smith privileges in his study. The cultural products of the missionaries affirm his basic thesis, although they also imply qualifications.

As Walser Smith stresses, continuity does not equate to the static “sameness” that Thomas Nipperdey criticized in the Sonderweg scholarship centered on 1933. Rather, continuity speaks of evolving notions through the nineteenth century that fed attitudes toward the violence of 1941. Evolving notions of race took shape through seven critical historical moments that significantly shaped the Rhenish Mission and its support network. The first moment came about through a religious reaction to the Napoleonic invasion that gave birth to the missionary movement. The 1848 Revolution fueled its cultural agenda for restoring German piety. Unification (1871) and colonialism (1885) challenged and extended the mission’s projection of its moral agenda, but the Southwest African wars (1904-1907) brought its legitimacy into question in Germany. When Germany lost its colonies in 1916 and two years later the war, the mission faced a severe crisis over its assets and had to restructure the mission. But when the National Socialists came to power, many of the people engaged in mission work saw renewed hope for their effort.

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72 Walser Smith traces the evolution that merged ideas about “nation” and “race” in Ranke, Treitschke, and Razel, to Rohrbach’s colonial lesson, the eliminationist policies of Wilhelmine period, and the scientific racism of the National Socialists.

Walser Smith identifies 1941 as a vanishing point for scholarship in German history, but in the history of the Rhenish Mission, the key vanishing point was 1904-1907. The extreme violence of the colonial wars generated ways of thinking of themselves and others that projected forward to 1933, when Barmen seminarians joined the Stormtroopers en masse. Although most withdrew again a year later, this flip-flop revealed urges at work in the missionary movement that led to the vacillations of the Rhenish Mission toward Nazism and missionaries’ early role as legitimators of the regime. Doris Bergen identifies the attraction of missionaries to the German Christian Movement, noting that by 1934, when most of the missions-minded abandoned the Stormtroopers, the National Socialists had already received a valuable endorsement from their burst of enthusiasm. Until at least 1936, evident in the writings of missionary Heinrich Vedder, missionaries continued their efforts to win over the National Socialists to the cause of mission. Whatever Vedder and the seminarians saw in Nazism appealed to them as missionaries and products of a culture that the Rhenish Mission had cultivated since it first began in 1829.

Sources and Methodology

This study relies on German sources located in archives and libraries in Germany and Namibia. These sources include published and unpublished correspondence, financial accounts, reports, sermons, journals, tracts, books, textbooks, and pictures belonging to the missionary movement and Rhenish Mission. Through these sources, I have sought access to

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key individuals, events, and ideas that shaped the missionary movement in the Upper Rhineland and Westphalia.

Through published materials, I reconstructed the relationship between the mission field and the network at home by focusing on key individuals and their writings. I have sought to verify this history and deepen my analysis through a careful reading of related unpublished mission correspondence, protocols, and reports. Unpublished sources come primarily from the archives of the United Evangelical Mission in Wuppertal, the Protestant Church Archives in Bielefeld, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Namibia in Windhoek, and the National Archives and Library of Namibia, also in Windhoek. Given the vast period of my study, my analysis is selective and qualitative: I have focused on individuals representative of the missionary movement at home and abroad whose publications and correspondence are available in archives and libraries.

The publications of the Rhenish Mission and its network contain the stories used in my study. My reading began with the biweekly *Barmen Missionsblatt* (1826-1939), which aimed its narratives at the ordinary reader. Its success surprised even Barmen mission leaders, who initially commissioned 6,272 prints but had to scramble for another 4,572.75 By 1832 the local biweekly had nearly 30,000 subscribers.76 When the Rhenish Mission formed, its reports blended news of the mission field and developments in the home network through the annual reports of the Rhenish mission, *Jahresberichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft* (1829 - 1846), and later through the monthly reports, *Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft* (1846-

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76 The reputation of the *Barmen Missionsblatt* spread through Protestant German states, and copies can still readily be found in libraries throughout Germany; RMG 1160.
The publications of the Rhenish Mission provide essential documentation of its activities and are a valuable resource for historical study. After 1848, the mission society increased its publication efforts, beginning with a monthly journal for children, *Der kleine Missionsfreund* (the little mission friend) (1855-1927), which I have utilized for its many stories. Volunteers distributed door-to-door a quarterly collection flyer, *Kollektenblätter für die Rheinische Mission* (1859-1922). This publication represented the Rhenish Mission’s most public face, providing short mission narratives followed by a brief description of the collection’s purpose. Also aimed at the wider community was the flyer, *Flugblätter der Rheinischen Mission* (1904-1919), which came into existence during the Southwest African wars when the mission was in danger of losing its permit to hold the regular door-to-door collection. I have not utilized the monthly publication for women, *Meisterens Ruf* (the call of the master) (1909-present) because it began rather late in my period of study.

The collection of mission tracts (*Traktate*), consisting of 119 regular tracts, 39 small tracts (*Kleine Missionstraktate*), and 10 shorter publications, often focused on Africans. The mission society published these for regular distribution at a minimal cost. These narratives varied in length and told stories of both Germans and “heathen Christians” connected to the mission. The mission also published several larger monographs over the period of my study.77

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77 In 1902, the Rhenish Mission had an annual run of about 1,500,000 prints. The *Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft* had a monthly distribution of 5,912; the children’s publication *Der kleine Missionsfreund* had a monthly distribution of 35,550; the *Barmer Missionsblatt* had a biweekly distribution of 20,827; the annual print for the *Flugblätter* was 76,000; and the quarterly *Kollektenblatt* printed 104,192 tracts for distribution. These statistics are not available for the *Traktate* or the periodic monographs. See Thorsten Altena, “... ein Spiegelbild der aussendenden Kirche’: Betrachtungen zum Verhältnis von ‘Heimat’ und ‘Missionsfeld’ am Beispiel der rheinischen Owambo-Mission in Deutsch-Südwestafrika,” *Monatshefte für Evangelische Kirchengeschichte des Rheinlandes* 54 (2005), 50; citing from “Zahlen bei Huyssen,” 219.
Chapter Divisions

Neither the start nor the end of this study reflects abrupt moments in the history of the Rhenish Mission Society. From 1799 to 1871, a period historians refer to as the German Sattelzeit, the Rhenish Mission developed its intellectual and cultural shape. The first chapter covers much of the background to show how, after Napoleon was defeated, religious-minded individuals were anxious to define “Germanness” in the wake of revolution, invasion, and rising rationalism. Drawing on theological, philosophical, and geographical ideas, they looked to mission work as a means for uniting and renewing Germans.

The second chapter provides examples of missionary publications and narratives from Africa to illustrate how the missionary movement used stories from overseas mission work as cultural mirrors for German renewal. These stories conveyed lessons aimed at shaping the ethical and national character of Germans, which supporters could internalize through religious practices, including rituals, prayer, communing with like-minded believers, and sacrificial giving, whereby notions about exotic people melded with religious and national ideals.

After German unification, missionary stories not only informed Germans about other people and cultures; they also spoke to how missions-minded Germans might view others and understand their place in the world and especially back in Germany. Chapter three explores this change, by looking up-close at one missionary, Gottlieb Viehe, whose narratives reveal how conflicts at home and in the field shaped notions of the African and the German for popular readers.

The penultimate chapter shows how violent events during the Herero-German War and resulting genocide (1904-1907) moved the Rhenish Mission and its missionaries closer to imperial aims when their notions of “the African” became contested at home. The final
chapter shows how efforts to regain legitimacy at home after the German genocide of the Herero, and again after the First World War, led some mission leaders in Barmen and missionaries in the field to adapt their depiction of Africans to the language of race and nation that took hold in the 1930s. Some even hoped to place the mission work under the Nazi banner.
CHAPTER 1:
THE EARLY YEARS:
FROM REVOLUTION TO REVIVALISM, 1799-1832

If only we knew the numerous peoples who dwell beyond these arid regions from the innermost Africa to Abyssinia, among whom, from many indications on their borders, we may expect to find more fertility of the soil, beauty, strength, arts, and civilization, then we might fill in the shadows of the human picture in this huge part of the world and should perhaps find not a single gap.

~ Johann Gottfried Herder, 1775

The Rhenish Mission Society had roots in the French Revolution and Napoleon’s invasion of German states during the first years of the nineteenth century. The ominous presence of French armies in Berlin in 1806 begged the question of how a “horde” of unbelievers and Catholics could make it all the way to the heart of the Prussian Kingdom and hold the Protestant king hostage. Observers reasoned that if the outside world could so easily penetrate and reshape German society, something fundamental must be wrong with the German people. But in the early nineteenth century there were no clear distinctives to

define “Germanness”: there was no “German” economy, no “German” state, no “German” culture, and no “German” faith.

Some Germans deemed religion to be a means to strengthen “Germanness.” Heinrich von Treitschke once described the response to Napoleon’s defeat as “the first reawakening of a serious political will in the exhausted Rhenish territories.”\textsuperscript{79} But another kind of “awakening” also gained impetus from the events of 1815: Napoleon’s defeat ignited religious zeal and fused it to a patriotism that sought to purge the German states of foreign contamination.\textsuperscript{80} Protestants of the Upper Rhineland and Westphalia called for a religious “awakening” (Erweckungsbewegung) to purify the German faith. They turned to missionary work to find tools to fuel their revival. A foreign revolution and invasion thus became the impetus for a missionary movement that developed in the Rhenish town of Barmen.

This chapter outlines the formation of religious sentiments, commitments, and mission activism in Upper Rhineland and Westphalia during the first four decades of the nineteenth century. I focus on post-Napoleonic anxieties that found expression among Protestant pastors through a union of revivalism and missionary interests. A combination of influential ideas and individuals, institutions, and a network of popular support produced the Rhenish Mission Society. That confluence resulted in a missionary effort that was as focused on Christians at home as it was on “heathens” abroad.\textsuperscript{81}


\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{81} I will dispense with quotation marks for “heathen,” understanding that this word was used by those in the missionary movement to describe non-European people. The term evoked notions of religious difference but also of cultural difference. Thus “heathen Christian” was a reference to converted non-Europeans. For a discussion on mission terminology, see Esme Cleall, \textit{Missionary Discourse of Difference: Negotiating Otherness in the British Empire, 1840-1900} (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
Three individuals are central to my analysis. The notable Prussian pastor and court chaplain Friedrich Wilhelm Krummacher (1796-1868) illustrates how political interests evolved into religious activism. He aligned early Burschenschaften ideals with Herderian and Kantian ideas to formulate a revivalist impulse that undergirded the Barmen and Elberfeld missionary movement. Institutional formation followed. Pastor Wilhelm Leipoldt (1828-1842), the first director of the Rhenish Mission Society, illustrates how mission leaders institutionalized missionary work abroad to be a formative religious force for those at home. The mission school in Barmen used a curriculum of philosophy, natural science, and revivalist theology that mixed in notions about Africans. Concurrent with these developments in Barmen was the evolution of a support network, of which Pastor Heinrich Volkening (1796-1877) was a leading figure in Ravensberg, where much support for the African mission originated.

**After Napoleon: Awakening in the Wuppertal**

Napoleon’s reforms had a lasting impact. Historians have noted the restructuring of the Prussian political and military apparatus and the accompanying calls to reform the religious and moral structure of the German people. Gordon Craig captured this intersection of politics, military, and religion in Fieldmarshal August von Gneisenau’s response to King Friedrich Wilhelm III in 1811, when the king dismissed as “good as poetry” Gneisenau’s recommendation to organize a popular uprising against the French

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invaders. “Religion, prayer, love of one’s ruler, love of the fatherland,” Gneisenau replied in classic romanticist zeal, “these things are nothing other than poetry.” According to Gneisenau and others who called for reform, Germans would gain strength against future invasions through an alliance of state, popular fervor, patriotism, and renewed religion.

In fact, the role of popular sentiment, including religion, in the defeat of Napoleon was limited. Napoleon’s wars in German lands were among rulers; no significant uprising against the French took place from 1806 to 1814, and it took a coalition of Austrians, Prussians, and Russians to defeat Napoleon in 1813. Yet fantasies of popular heroics entered the mythical memories that stirred generations of Germans. The allied victory over Napoleon at Leipzig, the celebrated “Battle of the Peoples” (Völkerschlacht), spurred popular fervor around the themes of king, military, and religion. Although the hastily assembled military reserve units (Landwehr) were poorly trained and disbanded in 1814, heroic stories, poems, and songs about routing the enemy abounded. These spoke of a war of liberation, a momentous event in the history of the German people.

Likewise, nationalist and romanticist imaginations stirred the Burschenschaften: a movement that emerged at the same time as the Völkerschlacht and consisted of university students enflamed by the Napoleonic experience. The Burschenschaften started at the

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86 Each regional Landwehr (e.g., Silesian, Königsberger, and Pomeranian) had its memory and mythology of the 1813 battle; see Craig, 59-60; Erich Pelzer, “Die Wiedergeburt Deutschlands 1813 und die Dämonisierung Napoleons,” Gerd Krumreich and Hartmut Lehmann (eds.), "Gott mit uns": Nation, Religion und Gewalt im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 133-56.
University in Jena in 1813 and spread to universities across the German states, including Austria and Switzerland. The introduction to their 1813 manual captures their sentiments:

The time nears when Germany will rise again, when the national interests of all people will be secured by an enduring peace. As long as Germany’s sacred soil groaned in fear beneath the feet of a crushing protectorate, the free word from a pure breast was dead.87

The *Burschenschaft* youth loathed French domination, but they did not want a return to a pre-Napoleonic status quo. Some asked why the German states had so easily fallen to the French and concluded that the reason was reliance on a framework of rationality rooted in the French Enlightenment. According to their manual, “rationalism” was not a tool for nation building.88 But what was the tool? Taking their cue from Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852), Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769-1860), Johan Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814), and Jakob Friedrich Fries (1773-1843), the *Burschenschaften* wanted to create their own history, rooted in romantic ideals of what they believed to be distinctly German.89 For some, religion was essential to forming this new Germanness.

**Friedrich Wilhelm Krummacher: from Jena to Barmen**

The ideals of the *Burschenschaften* hold clues to the fantasies of German Protestants and the role they imagined for themselves in the world. Some of the leaders who helped to

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88 Ibid., 35, 36.

establish the Rhenish Mission Society in 1828 were part of the movement and drew from their experience romantic ideals, which they later converted to religious ones. Friedrich Wilhelm Krummacher and Johann Heinrich Volkening arrived in Jena during the early years of the Burschenschaften and experienced the enthusiasm of the movement prior to the Carlsbad Decrees in 1819.90 Krummacher became a noted Reformed Pastor in Barmen and Elberfeld, a professor at the Barmen Mission Seminary, and later Court Preacher in Berlin.91 Volkening also played a leading role in the missionary movement in Westphalia.

**Jena and the Burschenschaften**

Krummacher claimed he had entertained rationalist ideas while a student in Halle, but in Jena he became impassioned by the Urburschenschaft.92 Students had founded this particular version of the Burschenschaft on 12 June 1815 out of the militia units known as the Luetzow Frei Corps, which had fought Napoleon at Leipzig in 1813. Krummacher entered Jena in 1817. He experienced “the holy brotherhood” as a turning point that “unfolded itself into a form altogether of the fairest and purest character … with a large, dense mass of young men, all full of hope, the representatives of a new era to our Fatherland, as we thought ourselves to be.”93 As these young men celebrated their newfound unity in the

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90 Volkening began his studies in Jena in 1816; Krummacher in 1817.

91 Krummacher came from a family of distinguished theologians and preachers that included his father, Friedrich Adolf Krummacher (1767-1845), brother Emil Wilhelm Krummacher (1798-1886), and uncle Gottfried Daniel Krummacher (1774-1837), who was a pastor in Elberfeld; *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot), accessed 10 July 2010, http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/index.html


songs that melded the memory of “French hordes” with sentiments of “a sublime, holy feeling,” Krummacher observed a fusion of political, patriotic, ascetic, and religious sentiments: “all manner of earthly and heavenly thoughts and affections mingled themselves together therein.”94 These components were inseparable, according to Krummacher.

Members of the Burschenschaften rejected relying on rationalism alone for social reform, preferring instead a purified national emotion (Gefühl), which for Krummacher and the likeminded included religious fervor as an essential ingredient. Krummacher described the Burschenschaften as having “manifest a moral earnestness wrestling with the traditional rudeness of academic life.”95 Raw rationalism failed as a moral guide for youth because it was merely “the Philistine narrowness of all pig-tail and dunghill cock society.”96 A rationalist professor, even when he retained a form of Christian piety, “was repulsive to us and afforded us only a compassionate laugh, or made us shrug our shoulders at [his] naiveté and folly.”97 Rationalism was too universal, too French, and lacked ideals that were distinctly “German.” But in Krummacher’s view, some professors at Jena offered students “a more extensive German patriotism, with the exclusive spirit of the Landsmannschaft; and at the same time a felt need for a positive faith.”98 Nearly seventy years later, Otto von Ranke


95 Krummacher, 68.

96 Ibid., 69.

97 Krummacher, speaking of his elderly professor, John Philip Gabler; ibid., 68.

called this period in Krummacher’s life “a German-Christian rebirth of the Fatherland in the

country.”99 The two identities -- “German” and “Christian” -- were inseparable to
Krummacher, Ranke observed; they were forged into a single idea at the Burschenschaft rituals
and festivities in Jena and Wartburg.100

The radicalization of the Burschenschaft disturbed the conservative and religious-
minded among its members, who began to turn elsewhere for direction. In his memoirs,
Krummacher claimed the movement possessed “noble ingredients” that “were as yet only in
embryonic and impure condition.”101 During his time with the Burschenschaft, Krummacher
had befriended Karl Ludwig Sand (1795-1820), “a man of an upright mind, animated by
Christian principle, deeply moved toward all that was noble and beautiful, and grieved at
heart on account of the moral condition of the Fatherland.”102 When Sand murdered the
reactionary playwright August von Kotzebue in 1819 and Metternich declared the Carlsbad
Decrees, the bloodshed revealed a penchant for violence within the Burschenschaften.103
Krummacher observed that this tendency was pervasive, evident by those who dipped their

243-46.

100 Ibid.; on Germanizing the Gospels in Krummacher’s sermons, see H. Schroeter-Wittke,
 anhand der Figur Elia (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2000), 164-86 (esp. 167-68).

101 According to his family, Krummacher hid his memoir and only after his death in 1868 was it
discovered and published in 1869, in the context of the wars of unification; Krummacher, preface and 72.

102 Krummacher, 73-74.

103 George Williamson, “What Killed August von Kotzebue? The Temptations of Virtue and the
handkerchiefs in Sand’s blood on the scaffold in Mannheim.\textsuperscript{104} To Krummacher, this revolutionary drive looked more like the despised French Revolution than the religious renewal he and others had imagined.\textsuperscript{105}

As he grew dissatisfied, Krummacher went looking outside the \textit{Burschenschaft} and the university. Although the lectures were learned, he complained, “they were devoid alike of enthusiasm and penetrating thought.”\textsuperscript{106} Likewise, in the church, clergy gave sermons steeped in rationalist thought, “so nothing remained … but to seek refuge from this spiritual famine in reading.”\textsuperscript{107} Still, in his memoir, Krummacher expressed how his life was an outworking of \textit{Burschenschaft} ideals.\textsuperscript{108} He turned to the writings of Herder, Johann F. Kleuker, and Friedrich Schleiermacher, through whom he learned to “rise on the wings of faith to a higher and purer elevation.”\textsuperscript{109} Through Herder, Krummacher came to believe that he had found religious grounding to undergird the ideals he retained after leaving the \textit{Burschenschaft}. Herder was a likeminded intellectual who sought to overturn the impact of rationalism on German thought and society and to elevate faith.\textsuperscript{110} He and others wanted a legitimate religion and culture that would be distinctly German, but at the same time

\textsuperscript{104} Krummacher, 74.

\textsuperscript{105} The not-so-secret society of the “Blacks” (“Schwarzen”) was of concern to Krummacher, who commented skeptically on its motto, “Healthy, free, and joyful” (“Frisch, frei, und fröhlich”); Krummacher, 75.

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., 77.

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., 67-68.

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., 78.

\textsuperscript{110} This circle included Johann Friedrich Kleuker (1749-1827), Pietist theologian at the University of Kiel; Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (1743-1819), a philosopher; Johann Georg Hamann (1730-1788), the older \textit{Sturm und Drang} theologian; Friedrich Karl von Reventlow (1755-1828), curator at the University of Kiel; and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), theologian at the University of Berlin.
universal in its appeal. The young, disillusioned theological student F. W. Krummacher agreed, and his pastoral career represents the transmission of Herderian ideals to the local and popular fora of church pulpit and community action.

*Encountering Herder: Awakening a Nation*

Herder’s writings fell on fertile ground with those eager to nurture a new kind of German society. As a classicist, teacher, and member of the German-speaking communities in Latvia, Herder understood “nations” in a manner that derived from identifying what was distinct about his community but based in a universal principle. He used two metaphors -- an originating cedar tree that produces a forest of cedars, and the process of mineralizing water that gives a spring its own flavor -- to argue that each national culture had a distinct revelation of itself and the Divine rooted in “the manner of the fathers.” Thus national character gained its essence from language, history, geography, and religion. The Jews, Herder maintained, had managed to survive as a distinct people, even outside their natural geography, because they secluded themselves from surrounding nations. If a people became dislocated, they had to rely on the integrity of their remaining

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111 I draw on works by Herder available to the founders of the missionary movement, notably *Fragmente zur deutschen Literatur* (1767), *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte* (1774), and *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784-1789). English translations available: Johann Gottfried Herder: Selected Early Works, 1764-1767: Addresses, Essays, and Drafts; Fragments on Recent German Literature, E. A. Menze, K. Menges (trans.) (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2011); Johann Gottfried Herder: Another Philosophy of History, and Selected Political Writings, Ioannis D. Evrigenis and Daniel Pellerin (eds.) (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2004).


113 The Jewish preservation of national spirit through its religious and cultural products was for Herder exemplary for other nations. See Herder, *Fragmente*, 23-27, 34-35.
sources of national strength. Herder believed that religion, as the highest expression of

Writing in the pre-Napoleonic context, Herder’s ideas gained meaning for his German
readers after the defeat of 1806 and 1807. He argued that foreign influence in the German
states had created an “irreparable loss” by offering Germans enlightenment and revolution
in place of their knightly and heroic character.\footnote{115}{Herder, \textit{Auch eine Philosophie}, 524-32, 544-45, 554-57.} He was speaking of a cultural
contamination: “no greater injury can be inflicted on a nation than to be robbed of her
national character, the peculiarity of her spirit and her language.”\footnote{116}{“Jetzt denke weiter! Kein größerer Schade kann einer Nation zugefügt werden, als wenn man ihr den Nationalcharakter, die Eigenheit ihres Geistes, und ihrer Sprache raubt: überdenke dies, und du wirst den unersetzlichen Schaden sehen.” Herder, \textit{Fragmente}, 152, cf. 38-39.} Citing Tacitus, Herder
saw the present as less virtuous than the past, when German tribes did not “degrade
themselves” through race mixing and remained “a peculiar, unadulterated, original nation.”\footnote{117}{“Die Völker Deutschlands, die sich durch keine Vermischung mit andern entadelt, sind eine eigene unverfälschte originale Nation, die von sich selbst das Urbild ist.” Herder was citing Tacitus’ \textit{Germania}, see Herder, \textit{Fragmente}, 152-53; on the utilization of Tacitus in German philosophy, see Christopher B. Krebs, \textit{A Most Dangerous Book: Tacitus’s ‘Germania’ From the Roman Empire to the Third Reich} (New York: Norton, 2011).} He saw hope in regions where society had remained “unadulterated,” but Germans who
lived within German states, he believed, were destroying their national character.\footnote{118}{Herder, \textit{Fragmente}, 152-55.}

Herder elevated the religious impulse as a tool for creating national strength.

Through faith, humanity could move “toward reason and freedom, toward senses and
desires, toward a sensitive and robust health, toward the occupation and dominion of the

earth.” Faith preceded reason because through faith people discovered their authentic character and destiny in the world. But the question remained: who would give practical expression to Herder’s ideas and turn the tide of national degeneration? Revivalists, among them Krummacher, disregarded Herder’s condemnation of expansionist jingoism and ethnic hubris but heard his urgent call to rediscover and preserve the essence of a nation.

Wuppertal Revivalism: A Workshop for Faith

Young pastor Krummacher entered the Barmen and Elberfeld religious circles in 1825, where he attained a leading role among Protestant Germans who sought a moral and spiritual grounding for the German people. A group of young businessmen gathered around the industrialist Johann Caspar Engels to start a church in Barmen-Gemarke. Among these were the merchants Johann Keetman and Ernst Wilhelm Müller, who would later serve as the first lay presidents (Präses) of the Rhenish Mission, spanning the years 1843 to 1873. The new church in Barmen-Gemarke, needing a respectable pastor to guide its blend of religious and industrial advancement, extended an invitation to Krummacher.

The Wupper Valley provided a dynamic and ready religious climate for Krummacher’s ideals, a community that resembled the secluded spaces of which Herder had


121 Krummacher, 124ff.


123 Members of Krummacher’s parishes in Barmen and Elberfeld; Kriele, 50-54; Menzel, 38-44.
written, and whose residents Krummacher would later describe as “a people of quick reflection … created with a religious capacity for Calvinism.”

The Duchy of Berg, or Bergischeland, already had an activism that had been missing in the idealism of the Burschenschaften, but it needed stirring. Six years into his pastorate, and soon after the first Rhenish Mission ordination of missionaries to Africa, Krummacher noted “the beginnings of a certain lassitude appearing” in Bergischeland. Local devotion to doctrine impressed him, but he was disturbed by the lack of heartfelt fervor and believed his appointment was to bring a “fresh youthful breath of the ‘First Love’ of the Lord.” He was determined not to disappoint but to “blow upon them” and fan into flame the fervor of his congregants.

Revivalist pastors believed their activism and cooperation reflected the ideals behind the 1817 Prussian Union. Once he settled in Barmen, Krummacher moved in both Reformed and Lutheran revivalist circles. The Lutheran pastor Immanuel Friedrich Sander was the first to welcome Krummacher to the valley. Sander was a founding leader in the early missionary movement in Barmen and later an avid member of the Rhenish Mission board. Krummacher also befriended two young pastors who would serve in close proximity to him: Wilhelm Leipoldt, a Lutheran who became the First Inspector, or daily leader, of the Rhenish Mission, and Karl Wilhelm Snethlage, who had been wounded at Leipzig in 1813 and was later among the first instructors in the Barmen Mission Seminary, located just a ten-

124 Krummacher, 126.
125 Ibid., 136.
126 Ibid., 130.
127 Ibid.
minute walk from Krummacher’s church. Pastor Ignatius Lindl, a former Catholic priest who held Lutheran views while serving a German community in Sarapta, Russia, became the first principal of the new Barmen Mission Seminary in 1826. Also important was Krummacher’s prominent uncle in Elberfeld, Gottfried Daniel Krummacher, a leader in the local awakening movement. This community of colleagues was Krummacher’s initial taste of ecumenism between Lutheran and Reformed Christians.

At first, unity centered on the *Farbmühlen-Konferenz*, a conference that brought pastors together to exegete scripture, produce a newspaper, and plan Christian gatherings. Revivalist clergymen of the Wupper Valley forged a bond around religious fervor and opposition to rationalism. They produced several small Bible and mission associations along with annual celebrations to promote various causes and distribute edifying stories. Krummacher would later idealize the “precious fellowship” of two traditions that had been at odds for decades: “What in a particular manner helped to brighten my life in Barmen was

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131 Menzel, 16. *Westphalia, eine Zeitschrift* reported on *Pfarreramt Gemeinden* that consisted of fourteen pastors who met bi-weekly to discuss how to direct religious culture in the region. Pastor Sanders appears to have been the organizer; *Westphalia, eine Zeitschrift*, 4 Feb. 1826.

132 According to Krummacher, Schleiermacher once said to a young man from Wupperthal, “You come from the valley, do you not, where stories are made.” Krummacher thought Schleiermacher was referring to the vast number of religious tracts that circulated well beyond the region; Krummacher, 141.
the confidential fraternal relationship in which all we ministers, Reformed and Lutheran, stood to one another.”

Krummacher also observed a dynamic solidarity among lay people in the region. He characterized the congregations as “the Christianity of industrialism.” Nowhere in the Prussian kingdom, he boasted, “has there been displayed ... so active a zeal for missions, for Bible and tract circulation, for the cause of young men’s associations, and for all kinds of Christian work.” These Christians, he maintained, were generous and charitable. Even in the outlying regions, Krummacher noted, small congregations had joined in missionary efforts. Religious activism in the Wupper Valley, Krummacher concluded, was a model for all of German society. Indeed, he and others engaged in revivalism believed there was a divine calling on the region.

When Prince Friedrich Wilhelm visited Wuppertal in 1833, Krummacher gave the Sunday homily in the Elberfeld High Church, using King Solomon’s induction of the temple festival in an impassioned “throne and altar” speech. Drawing a direct line to the 1813 Völkerschlacht, Krummacher noted that such an important festival should not be built around a “bloody field.” Rather, it should bring together people from around the region, who “are

133 Ibid., 151.
134 Ibid., 221.
135 Ibid.
136 Krummacher’s boast that projects had been paid for “without any state aid” was not entirely true, because the Berlin government endorsed the quarterly door-to-door collections; Krummacher, 221.
137 Ibid.
138 Ibid.
139 1 Chronicles 8: 65-66; Krummacher included the sermon verbatim in his autobiography, indicating what an important moment this was for him; Krummacher, 176-99.
stirred up by their zeal for the Lord.” In 1813, he declared, “a new era broke over us,” as religiosity and piety grew throughout Prussia, the “Israel of the New Covenant.” He called for “a more evangelical form of culture” that included new schools, new science pursuits, and “flourishing mission schools under the shelter of a gentle royal scepter.”

Krummacher blessed the prince with an early allusion to Germany’s “place in the sun”:

Raise thyself aloft, Prussian Eagle, on the wings of faith, and choose for thyself thine element in the marvelous light of that Sun, under whose wings there is health and salvation. Build thine eyrie in the rock of Christ, and thou shalt never be overcome, and the gleam of thy crown will make the nations tremble.

Krummacher would later serve as Friedrich Wilhelm IV’s court preacher. But revivalist activity in Barmen and Elberfeld did not lag without its statesman at the helm; his colleagues and successors extended their efforts through Bible and tract societies, and they cultivated an especially vibrant interest in mission.

**Institutionalization: A Foreign Mission for the Home Front**

The memory of the French invasion bolstered a call for religious renewal, which became the priority of the missionary movement. Only a handful of Protestant mission societies existed in the German states prior to the French Revolution, but during and after the Napoleonic period the missionary movement gained momentum. Initiatives in the

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140 Ibid., 185.
141 Ibid., 182-85.
142 Ibid., 185.
143 Ibid., 199.
144 On his calling to the royal court, see Krummacher, 192, 194.
145 The Moravian (Herrnhuter Brüdergemeinde, Unitas Fratrum, Bohemian Brethren) and the Danish-Halle Mission were the prototypes of Protestant missions; “Die Geschichte und wissenschaftliche Bedeutung
towns around Barmen and Elberfeld were already in place nearly three decades before the founding of the Rhenish Mission Society, but these were small and lacked the strength to become a sending missionary body. In any case, sending missionaries abroad was not the main goal of the nascent missionary movement. For practical and ideological reasons, the priority during the early years was to collect and disseminate resources from the wider missionary movement that would cultivate religious commitments at home.

Wilhelm Leipoldt: A Pastor’s Concern

Krummacher’s colleague, Wilhelm Leipoldt, the First Inspector of the Rhenish Mission, explained the priority of Heimat in his 1834 Geschichte der christlichen Kirche (history of the Christian church). According to Leipoldt, the Protestant church in the German states needed to follow the opposite path from the one France had taken. He warned against unbelief and noted, “how it tears apart the holiest bonds and plunges people as individuals into deep misery, as the example of France serves to warn us.” Leipoldt provided a chronology moving from the birth of the Christian church to the conversion of the German tribes, through the “night” of the Middle Ages to the “dawn” of the Reformation, followed by the Pietist “struggle” for truth, only to return to unbelief in Germany. The result was humiliation at the hands of the French from 1806-1814. In the wake of this history,

146 Missionaries from this region did not serve under the mission society until 1829; Menzel, 21, 52-56.

Leipoldt asked his readers to consider whether it was possible for Germans again to achieve “blessedness.”\textsuperscript{148} Was Germany lost?

Leipoldt’s otherwise pessimistic history concluded with a glimmer of hope: the missionary movement would turn the tide of history. In the last section, titled “Our Times,” he argued that where unbelief had taken hold, counter-movements arose to restore faith. In recent years, these counterforces had come in the form of interest in missionary work. England, Leipoldt observed, also had its share of anxieties stemming from the French Revolution and Napoleon.\textsuperscript{149} But in England a host of missionary societies had sprung into existence and spread to America and the Netherlands. Now, “the completion of this holy Christian obligation” was being seen in Germany.\textsuperscript{150} The subsequent chapter described the heathen of the world, concluding with a success story about conversion of an African slave.\textsuperscript{151} Leipoldt then turned to the “tireless work” of the Bible and Mission Associations at home, a “clear sign that in our day an active Christian life has been awakened in the Protestant church.”\textsuperscript{152} It was not enough to throw off the yoke of the French, Leipoldt told his students, Christians must also carry on the “war” by turning inward, applying the “power of faith” to enact change.\textsuperscript{153} The church must become “a great reformatory.”\textsuperscript{154}

\textsuperscript{148} “Ist denn der Weg zur Seligkeit, - und das ist doch die Wahrheit, um die es gilt – so verborgen, so schwer zu finden, so betrüglich und unkenntlich, daß man sie nicht erreichen kann?” Ibid., 191-92.

\textsuperscript{149} “Früchte des Glaubens in England.” Ibid., 199-203.

\textsuperscript{150} “Auch Deutschland blieb der Erfüllung dieser heiligen Christenpflicht nicht zurück.” Ibid., 202.

\textsuperscript{151} “Ausbreitung des Christenthums in unsern Tagen.” Ibid., 203-214.

\textsuperscript{152} “Die Bibel- und Missionsvereine und ihre unermüdete Wirksamkeit sind ein lautes Zeugniß, daß in unserem Tage ein reges, christliches Leben in der evangelischen Kirche aufwacht.” Ibid., 214.

\textsuperscript{153} Ibid., 214, 221.

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., 221.
Leipoldt outlined his historical framework for a popular audience in 1835 in the biweekly mission newspaper, the *Barmen Missionsblatt*.\(^{155}\) He likened the *Missionsfreunde* to the people of Israel, to whom the Prophet Isaiah had proclaimed, “the heathen will be converted by your light.”\(^{156}\) Israel was to have been “a priestly kingdom, a testimony of God to all people and a light to the world.”\(^{157}\) But Israel had not lived up to its calling, and so God had taken the promised blessing and given it to the gentiles, among them, Leipoldt announced:

… to you, beloved Wuppertal and your richly blessed communities, God has entrusted … the heathen in distant parts of the world to be converted in your light … because it pleased Him to plant and nurture here for 300 years so that [the Gospel] will be carried to two other parts of the world in our day.\(^{158}\)

Evidence that people in this region had accepted the calling could be seen, according to Leipoldt, through the local enthusiasm for evangelism and mission work.\(^{159}\) Leipoldt’s narrative was a blend of historical and theological reflection aimed at reminding his readers, the *Missionsfreunde*, that they lived in a pivotal moment of human history. Like his colleague Pastor Krummacher, Leipoldt melded regional, national, and transnational jingoism around the divine plan for Barmen, Elberfeld, the surrounding hamlets, Germany, and the world.\(^{160}\)

\(^{155}\) *Barmer Missionsblatt* (BMB), June 1835, 14-15.

\(^{156}\) “Es war dem Volke Israel durch Jesajas verheißen: die Heiden werden in deinem Lichte wandeln.” BMB, June 1835, 14.

\(^{157}\) “Wie groß und herrlich stand Israel da in dem Berufe, ein priesterlich Königreich, ein Zeuge Gottes unter den Völkern, eine Leuchte der Welt zu sein.” BMB, June 1835, 14.

\(^{158}\) “Ein Theil dieses herrlichen Berufs ... ist auch dir, geliebtes Wuppertal, und deinen reich gesegneten Gemeinden anvertraut worden ... daß auch Heiden ferner Welttheile in deinem Lichte wandeln; in jenem wunderbaren Lichte ... weil es ihm gefallen hat, es hier zu pflanzen und 300 Jahre zu pflegen, um es in unsern Tagen von hier aus in zwei andere Welttheile hinüber zu tragen.” BMB, June 1835, 14-15.

\(^{159}\) “Im Blick auf diesen heiligen Beruf, der uns vertrauet ist, dürfen wir es als etwas Großes ansehen, daß unser Thal der Mittelpunkt einer Bible-, Tractat- und Missionsgesellschaft ist.” BMB, June 1835, 14-15.

\(^{160}\) On the supposition of a divine election uniting national expansion and religious identity among Germans, see Harmut Lehmann, “‘God Our Ally’: The Chosen People Theme in Late Nineteenth- and Early
Missionary work was not a sudden innovation; there were models to draw on. Krummacher had found a vibrant network among revivalist clergy and lay people that had roots in the Moravian sect, with its energetic mission effort. Pockets of Germany had some noteworthy initiatives, notably Pastor Johann Jänicke’s Missionary School in Berlin. As Leipoldt noted, England, America, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and even Denmark, all inspired through example. Not only had the British been an ally against the French armies, they had also developed their own brand of Protestant fervor, which produced the London Mission Society and the Church Mission Society. The English, Leipoldt observed, had a strong rationalist urge, but among them were nevertheless “many true Christians who gladly used all their strength to spread Christian awareness and Christian life.” As for the Danes, they had sided with the French and paid for this lapse of judgment with dissolution of their empire. Yet they too had established a missionary society in conjunction with Lutherans in Halle. The Swiss, for their part, had formed a mission society in Basel. But working with the British, Danes, or Swiss would not suffice. Leipoldt and others wanted a distinctly German missionary movement. Four Protestant


162 Oehler, Vol. 1, 115-16.

163 Leipoldt, 199.


165 “So sehen wir nach dem Vorgange des Christlichen Englands, überall ein erfreuliches Bestreben, das Reich Gottes weiter auszubreiten.” Leipoldt (1844), 203.

mission societies that had sprung up in the Upper Rhineland and Westphalia in the early
nineteenth century united around the centre in Barmen to form the Rhenish Mission Society.

Founding Missionary Societies in Elberfeld, Barmen, Wesel and Cologne

The Elberfeld Mission Society was the first of its kind in the Wupper Valley. According to legend, on 3 June 1799, the Monday after Pentecost Sunday, some ten laymen met in the home of the leather merchant H. J. Ball to draft a charter for their mission society. Pastors were part of the early gatherings but were not members of the society. The charter’s eleven articles specified that membership of the society should not exceed twelve, an apt biblical number. There were no plans to send missionaries through this society, only to support them. But when the French blockade of England from 1806 to 1812 made sending money across the channel difficult, the society turned toward supporting continental, and in particular German, missionaries. According to Kriele, members of the society were despondent during the French occupation, but as they considered “God’s great deeds among the heathens,” they became “cheerful and energized.”

Whereas the Elberfeld Mission Society had lay roots, clergy instigated the Barmen Mission Society. While an assistant pastor in the Lutheran Church of Barmen-

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167 I rely on internal published histories by Kriele, Menzel, and Oehler, because the primary sources are limited in quantity and detail. Some early history also appears in the reports of the Elberfeld Mission Society, Nachrichten von der Ausbreitung des Reichs Jesu überhaupt und durch Missionare unter den Heiden. Christopher Clark provides a brief overview of the Elberfeld Mission Society; Clark, 103-108.

168 Kriele mentions nine men by name; Menzel ten; Kriele, 19-28; Menzel, 18-19; Oehler, 181.

169 Kriele, 20, 23.

170 Elberfeld Mission supported the London Mission Society but during the war years looked to the Basel Mission Society; Kriele, 21.

171 “Sammelten sie sich meist trübe und bedrückt um den einfachen Tisch ... sie hatten sich getröstet an dem Reich, dessen Herrlichkeit ihnen aus den großen Taten Gottes in der Heidenwelt entgegenstrahlte ... fröhlich und erquickt verließen sie in später Abendstunde das Gemach.” Ibid., 23.
Wichlinghausen, Leipoldt promoted the cause of missions and gathered likeminded pastors, schoolteachers, and theological students. Seven of them formed the Barmen Mission Society on 8 September 1818. By their first meeting on 5 October they had ten members, and the number grew to seventeen “directors.”

In 1825, the Barmen society founded the Barmen Missionschule, a seminary for training missionaries, and in 1826 a biweekly mission newspaper, the Barmen Missionsblatt. The mission school brought young men to the area, who took part in local congregations. Even with new recruits, the Barmen society was not strong enough to become a full sending agency.

At first the Elberfeld and Barmen Mission Societies focused on creating a mission consciousness in the local churches and town. Both societies were a union of Reformed and Lutheran. They established rigid rules. The Elberfeld charter presented a format for meetings and spelled out the responsibilities of each member to collect, read, and distribute missionary literature. Members were expected to donate generously to the mission, to collect gifts, financial or otherwise, to record names and amounts, and to decide together where to send the funds. The Barmen society fined members who showed up late or delayed meetings. Both societies supported missionary candidates attending Jänicke’s Mission School. In 1817, the Elberfeld society found three students to sponsor: Friedrich Wilhelm Becker as a missionary to Polish Jews, Johannes Bonekemper to the Volksdeutche

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172 Kriele, 28-29.
173 Ibid., 35-37.
174 Ibid., 70-71.
175 On distribution of literature, see Menzel, 18-19; cf. Kriele, 19; Clark, Politics of Conversion, 103-08.
176 Kriele, 22-23.
177 Ibid., 31-32.
communities near the Black Sea, and Heinrich Grauer to serve the newly formed Basel Mission Society in Liberia.\textsuperscript{178} Although none of them became Elberfeld missionaries, these three reflected the priorities of the Elberfeld mission: the Jews, ethnic Germans outside the German states, and the heathens.\textsuperscript{179}

In Wesel a small network of mission associations developed in the years after the defeat of Napoleon. Most directed their support toward the Basel Mission Society. On 29 May 1822, they united to form the Wesel Mission Assistance Society.\textsuperscript{180} Although their loyalties were initially with Basel, the original name proposed -- “Mission Assistance Union of the Mission Assistance Society in Barmen” -- indicates a strong identification with Barmen. As the Missionsleute in nearby Barmen and Elberfeld moved to unite into a single society, the Wesel leadership chose to be a part of what was happening there.

Protestants near Cologne also formed a mission society. Living in a predominantly Catholic area, they became anxious over the 1801 Treaty of Luneville because political interests were leaning toward France. In 1814, the year of Napoleon’s first defeat, Cologne Protestants formed a Bible society, and eight years later gathered local associations into a single mission society. Already in 1823, the Cologne Mission Society appealed to Barmen in the hope of forming a united society for the Rhineland. Wesel showed interest; Barmen did not.\textsuperscript{181} The Cologne Mission Society drew on the missionary literature coming out of Basel, and according to Kriele, the Missionsfreunde often clashed with the “rationalists” in

\textsuperscript{178} Ibid., 24, 27; Menzel, 21.

\textsuperscript{179} The Elberfeld Mission had special interest in the mission to Jews, which remained its domain within the Rhenish Mission after the merger in 1829; Kriele, 26-27; cf. Menzel, 21, 23-25; Clark, 105-08.

\textsuperscript{180} Kriele, 46-47; Menzel, 22-23.

\textsuperscript{181} Kriele, 44; Menzel 23.
Cologne. A number of the local mission associations were Pietist and Lutheran, but they tolerated Basel’s Reformed tone as long as the “mother society” supplied them with ample ammunition, namely missionary literature, for the battle against rationalism. Still, they expected an eventual union with Barmen, not Basel, given the Lutheran element of the Barmen missionary movement.

The Rhenish Mission Society

On 28 September 1828, the four societies joined as a “union of mission societies within the Prussian Rhineland province.” Barmen remained responsible for the bimonthly newspaper, while Elberfeld retained its mission to the Jews. The Barmen Mission Seminary would be part of the joint society because it served the common aim to become a sending agency. All endeavors to build mission stations and send out missionaries would be the joint effort of the new “United Rhenish Mission Society for the sending of messengers of the Gospel to the heathen,” or simply The Rhenish Mission Society (Die Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft). A year later, the Prussian King granted royal recognition.

The work of the Rhenish Mission extended beyond the four original societies. Its first General Assembly in 1833 included representatives from other Missionsvereine and Missionsgesellschaften from other localities. The published financial records from its first years

182 Kriele, 46.
183 Ibid., 44-45.
184 Die Vereinigung der Missionsgesellschaften in den Preußischen Rhein-Provinzen; Menzel, 23, citing VEMA A-a 1- p.2.
185 Vereinigte rheinische Missionsgesellschaft zur Aussendung von Boten des Evangeliums unter die Heiden; Menzel, 24.
indicate that individuals and churches without local mission associations also provided gifts. There were non-German connections too, including support from Norway for Hans Christian Knudsen (1818-1863), one of the three first Rhenish missionaries to Southwest Africa, and interest from ethnic Germans in the Baltics, Ukraine, and North America. Even in these early years, it was evident that a far-reaching mission network was emerging around the Rhenish Mission Society.

**Intellectual Preparation of Rhenish Missionaries**

Rhenish missionaries did not arrive in Africa *tabula rasa*. The missionary movement provided a dynamic interchange of knowledge: missionaries took with them ideas about places and people they would encounter, which returned home in narrative form. A synthesis of philosophy, natural science, and revivalist theology undergirded their work and notions about Africans. To be sure, missionary notions about Africans melded with real experiences and observations, but these were filtered through the conceptual framework they received at the Barmen Mission Seminary.

**A Missionary Curriculum**

According to the first annual report of the Rhenish Mission, the Barmen Mission School was the “heart and center of the whole mission union.” Missionaries required a different training from theologians or pastors. These religious entrepreneurs were “true preachers of the Gospel to the heathen and even more so … chosen vessels of blessing to

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their brothers."\textsuperscript{188} Herder had described this “blessing” \textit{(Seligkeit)} as an “internal peace” achieved through union with God.\textsuperscript{189} Missionaries were not only to evangelize the heathen; they were to “bless” those at home by inspiring personal piety. The mission school would provide the foundation for missionaries to fulfill this task.

The mission seminary began with the \textit{Heimat} in mind. In 1825, the Barmen Mission Society started a \textit{Vorschule} to prepare candidates to assist mission work abroad and at home or to enter a higher level of missionary training.\textsuperscript{190} But the school did not achieve a high academic level. Students studied for three days and worked at a trade for three days. On weekday evenings, the students helped in local mission gatherings, which were usually for children and youth; on Sundays, they served local churches. Four years later, the program expanded to a full-fledged mission school that prepared “missionaries to send out as ordained clergy.”\textsuperscript{191} Dr. Johann Heinrich Richter (1799-1849), the schoolmaster of the Royal Teachers College in Halberstadt, became its principal, while his brother, Wilhelm Richter, served as an instructor in theology alongside local pastors, including Krummacher.

\textsuperscript{188} “... treue Prediger des Evangeliums unter den Heiden und selbst auserwählte Werkzeuge zur Seligkeit ihrer Brüder sein können.” Cited from the 1878 \textit{Gedenkbuch der Rheischen Missionsgesellschaft} in Menzel, 27. For the original outline of the Seminary’s purpose and plan in 1829, see “Beilage III: Berichte über den Gegenstand, die Würdigung und das Ziel der einzelnen Lehrfächer im Barmen Missions-Seminar,” \textit{Erster Bericht der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft vom ihrer Stiftung im Jahren 1828} (Barmen: Friedrich August Schober, 1830), 21-26.


\textsuperscript{190} For the mandate for the Barmen School, see “Vorwort,” \textit{Sechste Berichte der Missions-Gesellschaft zu Barmen} (Elberfeld: Samuel Lucas, 1826), 6-9, 28-29; Menzel, 26-31; Kriele, 65-74.

Leipoldt, and Sanders. But Richter was unimpressed with the low quality of students and wanted to raise the caliber of missionary candidates. He initiated a rigorous recruiting process for candidates who would be willing to serve the local community and churches by promoting missions while preparing for their work abroad.

The seminary curriculum reflected the Rhenish Mission’s intellectual framework. Seminary bylaws stipulated which subjects students would study and the time allotted to each discipline in the three-year program. The curriculum included systematic and practical theology, church history, ecclesiology, and eschatology in line with the Awakening ideology of J. August W. Neander, Karl Immanuel Nitzsch, and F. August. G. Tholuck. The young age of many of the leading influences on the Rhenish Mission and Barmen Mission School in 1830 speaks to the energy, idealism, and social status of the movement.

Extra-biblical studies were as important as bible study. Missionaries needed practical skills in mathematics, handwriting, and -- perhaps especially -- history, anthropology, geography and linguistics. In line with Herder, linguistic preparation was deemed vital. The bylaws praised the “natural learning tools for understanding and perception” that

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194 The annual report of the Rhenish Mission’s first year of operation, 1829 to 1830, laid out the teaching priorities and curriculum of the seminary; “Beilage Nr. III: Statuten der Rheinishen Missionsgesellschaft,” Jahresberichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft 1830, 21-26.

195 In 1830, the leaders of the missionary movement influencing the Barmen Mission School included: J. Ch. Blumhardt (25), R. Stier (30), H. Richter (31), W. Richter (early 30s), I. F. Sander (33), W. Leipoldt (36), F. W. Krummacher (34), K. I. Nitzsch (31), A. Tholuck (31), and A. Neander (41), who was deemed a senior in the movement. The first two Presidents of the Rhenish Mission were Keetman (37) and Müller (32).

missionary candidates would learn in place of “the dead, mechanical, and narrow general rules for the natural development and organic laws of learning of languages.” Initially, missionary candidates did not study the biblical languages, only linguistics and modern languages. Students used Luther’s translation of Scripture, as well as English and Dutch translations, to familiarize themselves with translation principles and the relationship between languages. The curriculum for linguistics came from Simon Heinrich Adolf Herling, a linguist whose ideas drew on Herder’s view that language shapes a culture and was nature’s portal into a people’s soul.

Geography and natural history were also important in preparing missionaries for work abroad. The history of Africa was not included as a primary discipline for forming knowledge about Africa in the Mission School. According to world history texts in the early nineteenth century, Africa was a continent without history, and for that reason it received little attention. But Africa and its people featured in the geography texts, where students could find detailed ethnic and topographical descriptions in the missionary writings useful to enhance their geographical conceptualization. According to the 1830 curriculum guide, geography lessons had to include more than “the mathematical, physical, statistical parts, but also ... the ethnographic, historical and religious.”

197 “... alle todten, mechanischen und engen Gedächtnißregeln den naturgemäßen Entwicklungsgang und die organischen Bildungsgesetze der Sprachen ...” Ibid., 25.


199 “Die Geographie beschränkt sich nicht bloß auf die mathematischen, physikalischen, statischischen Theile, sondern fast auch das Ethnographische, Historische und Religiöse ins Auge ... So wie Bewohner Deutschlands besonders dieses Land ausführlich und gründlich kennen lernen müssen, so müssen künftige Bewohner Süd-Africas dies Land möglichst speziell kennen lernen.” Ibid., 24.
which [Carl] Ritter handles his sources will be our model.” 200 Gottfried Heinrich Schubert’s natural history complemented geography as "the other part of God’s book ... that is especially important for missionary relations." 201

**Philosophy: Kant, Hegel, and Herder on Africa**

Philosophy, geography, and theology intersected in the Barmen Mission Seminary to provide a conceptual framework for racialist thinking about Africa. Herder’s ideas undergirded much of the pedagogy in the seminary even though his name did not appear in the curriculum outline. His ideas filtered through the theology of Friedrich Krummacher, the historical studies of August Neander, and the geographical studies of Carl Ritter. But a Kantian and Hegelian racial hierarchy was also at work in these interpreters of Herderian ideas.

Drawing on Buffon’s model of race, Kant’s criteria for personhood placed human races in a hierarchy of “perfection,” where moral and cultural development were mutually dependent on the rational abilities of a person. 202 “The white race,” he claimed, “possesses all motivating forces and talents within itself.” 203 Other races, he argued, did not possess

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203 “Die Rasse der Weißen enthält alle Triebfedern und Talente in sich; daher werden wir sie etwas genauer betrachten müssen”, from a lecture by Kant on geography. Friedrich Christian Starke (ed.) *Immanuel
sufficient rationality and autonomy to gain the moral agency needed to elevate to 

personhood:

The race of the American cannot be educated. It has no motivating force, for it 
lacks affect and passion. They are not in love, thus they are also not fertile. 
They hardly speak, do not caress each other, care about nothing, and are lazy.\footnote{204}  

Of the African, Kant was no less denigrating. He related a story of an African who ridiculed 
European clergymen for not knowing how to handle their European wives. Rather than 
discussing the African’s critique of European gender relations, Kant concluded, “this fellow 
was quite black from head to foot, a clear proof that he was stupid.”\footnote{205} Color determined 
mental capabilities and in turn moral perception, according to Kant.  

To Hegel, the “passive negro” existed outside of human history and could not 
develop a civilization.\footnote{206} African primitive belief structures would eventually disappear, he 
claimed, just as European witchcraft had.\footnote{207} Hegel did not deem the African capable of 
developing a society of law and political institutions because there existed no mutual respect 
among Africans on which to found such a society.\footnote{208} “Mutual respect,” he argued, was 
essential to initiate a people’s history, the essential ingredient of civilization.

\footnote{\textit{Kants Menschenkunde oder philosophische Anthropologie: nach handschriftlichen Vorlesungen} (Leipzig: Expedition des europäischen Aufsehers, 1831), 353.}


\footnote{Ibid.; see also pamphlet by I. Kant, \textit{Der Neger}, Eckhard Henscheid (ed.) (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1985).}

\footnote{See Robert Bernasconi, “Hegel at the Court of the Ashanti” in \textit{Hegel after Derrida}, Stuart Barnet (ed.) (New York: Routledge, 1998), 41-63.}


\footnote{Ibid., 216-17.}
Although he shared Kant’s and Hegel’s fascination with Africa, Herder offered more optimistic propositions about what Europeans might find in this vast continent. In his assessment, Africans were a fundamental part of world culture. Herder’s ideas had a distinct religious dimension; he saw humanity as a unified spiritual entity. He agreed with Kant and Hegel that reason and rationality were vital and did not deny that physical distinctions existed. But he rejected the primacy of biology in defining what it meant to be human and further argued that rationality was not sufficient by itself to achieve human perfection: emotion, the human senses, and faith were also essential. Central to his ideas was the union of the soul and body, which he claimed had been shaped by the geographical, historical, and cultural factors belonging to a people. Physical distinctions did not mark divisions between people, Herder argued; rather it was the natural environment that did so. The interaction between the soul of a person and the natural surroundings accounted for distinctive attributes, starting with language.

On Africa, Herder called readers to inquire more about this vast continent and its people. He dismissed Kant’s claims about Africa and bemoaned, “how deficient we are in authentic information regarding this part of the world.” But ignorance about the African people did not lead Herder to view race as a hierarchy. Instead he took a Socratic view of his ignorance. An honest inquiry, he claimed, should “lay aside our proud prejudices and

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209 On the conflict between Kant and his student Herder, see John H. Zammito, Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2002).


211 “Aber wie arm sind wir überhaupt an geltenden Nachrichten aus diesem Strich der Erde.” Herder, Werke, 4: 100.
consider the nature of this region with as much impartiality as if there were no other in the world.”212 He proposed that Africans -- the original humans (Urmensch) -- deserved an up-close and sustained investigation within their natural and cultural environment. He conceded that, when undertaking such an investigation, one might encounter African deficiencies. The European needed “to sympathize with the Negro, but not despise him,” Herder instructed, “since the conditions of his climate could not grant him nobler gifts, and let us honor Mother Nature, who gives by withholding.”213

Herder endorsed missionary sources to gain a better understanding of the African. He cited a Moravian missionary who provided an endearing description and concluded that reports by European adventurers were “certainly exaggerated.” Such Europeans were “unworthy to behold [the African’s] happiness,” he contended, “because [the Europeans] have unpardonably sinned, and still continue to sin, against this quarter of the Globe.”214 Herder insisted that one would have to do more than pass by African communities and make observations; it was necessary to live with Africans, learn from them, understand their languages, their myths, their rituals, and their environment. In the late eighteenth century, missionaries were the most likely candidates to meet Herder’s qualification for grasping cultural knowledge.

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213 “Lasset uns also den Neger, da ihm in der Organisation seines Klima kein edleres Geschenk warden konnte, bedauern, aber nicht verachten; und die Mutter ehren, die auch beraubend zu erstatten weiß.” Ibid.

214 “Sind gewiss übertrieben, wenn man sie auf alle Völker des innern Afrika verbreitet ... wie manch glückliche und ruhige Nation aber mag am Fuß der Mondgebürge wohnen! Europa is nicht wert, ihr Glück zu sehen, da es sich an diesem Weltteil unverzehlich versündigt hat und noch immer versündigt.” Ibid., 101, 217.
More than an apologetic for missionary work, Herder's ideas could also be utilized to argue for a latent, but essential, German character, parallel to that of the Africans. The German people were also diverse, divided, and lacking a singular identity. Herder's lecture on “The Organization of the African People” offered religious readers, including Krummacher and his revivalist cohorts, a link between living among people in other parts of the world and comprehending what shaped Germanness at home.

**Natural Science: Carl Ritter’s “Workshop of the Globe”**

What Herder did for history and language, Carl Ritter (1779-1859) did for geography. His published lectures served as a foundation of the two-hour weekly geography lessons for missionary candidates in Barmen, through which Ritter mediated the ideas of Herder by showing how geographical peculiarities shaped human cultures and personhood. Although Herderian, Ritter shared some Kantian racial sentiments on Africa.

Ritter’s work became formative for the field of geographical studies during the nineteenth century. He shares with Alexander von Humboldt (1869-1859) the distinction of being the founders of modern geography, and he held the first chair of Geography at the University of Berlin (1825-1859). His early education was under the influence of the Swiss educational reformer, Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827). In exchange for tutoring the children of Johann Jakob Bethmann Hollweg, Ritter was able to attend the University of

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Halle to study history and theology. While in Halle, he discovered the writings of Herder, after which he began an exclusive study of geography. His first book in 1817 revealed the influence of Pestalozzi and Herder. 217 In 1819, while in Frankfurt as a professor of history, Ritter befriended F. W. Krummacher, and when Krummacher moved to Barmen, Ritter moved to Berlin. 218

Ritter defined geography as a tool of natural theology and moral education. He outlined three sequential goals for the study of geography. 219 The first was “to discover the primitive land” of nations; the second, to find the points of diffusion in nature that affected its inhabitants; and the third, to increase this diffusion in order to create new or renewed cultures. The last goal was the true aim of geography. 220 “The ultimate object of our undertaking,” Ritter stated, was to shape the reader’s faith and moral ability; geography revealed “the sight of measure and law in the limitless fullness of God’s power, which impresses us irresistibly in the moral world with the conviction that the Maker’s hand is there.” 221 Uncovering the hand of God in nature, geographical knowledge led to self-knowledge, for it “teaches man to view the earth as the house in which he lives, sustaining the same relation to him that the body sustains to the soul.” 222 Students who internalized


218 Krummacher, 82, 92, 216.


220 Ibid.

221 Ibid., 56.

222 Ibid., 56, 253.
this knowledge of the external would find the moral strength to uphold their place in the world.\textsuperscript{223}

To be sure, the study of geography was not an individualistic pursuit. What geography revealed about the individual, Ritter noted, “is true of every nation”:

\begin{quote}
In the perfect development of this peculiarity lies the moral greatness, and indeed all the greatness of man; in this development, too, the nationality and individual greatness of nations.\textsuperscript{224}
\end{quote}

The force of nature on moral character would unite the past, present, and future of a people. Ritter stressed that Germans must learn from geography, but not only of their own context: they must gain an interest beyond their borders.\textsuperscript{225} A student of geography who acquired such knowledge became “a complete being,” and could in turn lead others on a path of awakening.\textsuperscript{226}

Ritter’s connection between geography and ethnic character explains the purpose of the often long and tedious geographical descriptions in missionary reports and narratives. By describing geography, missionaries were taking note of external factors they believed shaped the moral character of the people they were sent to evangelize. Ritter claimed his students would become experts in human nature, “able to illustrate and throw light upon it in its entire range, from its deepest abasement up to its noblest heights,” and thereby become “the immortal instructors of all nations of men.”\textsuperscript{227} To learn geography according

\textsuperscript{223} Ibid., 55-56.

\textsuperscript{224} Ibid., 57.

\textsuperscript{225} Ibid., 55-56

\textsuperscript{226} Ibid., 57

\textsuperscript{227} Ibid., 62.
to Ritter’s “model,” as the Barmen Seminary bylaws outlined, was to integrate natural science, philosophy, and religion in order to unlock the mysteries of a people, or a “race,” and actualize the Christian mandate to “go and make disciples of all nations.”

To shape a “nation” required the agent of change to go, rather than to wait for the object of study to come to him. Ritter repeated Herder’s concern that African slaves were dislocated and de-cultured people. Only “by returning to the old scenes once more,” could the emotional and internal conflict within slaves be resolved so they could begin to mature as a people.

Africa was a geography occupied by immature people, according to Ritter. Unlike Europe and Asia, the land mass had left the African in a state of “inertness” and “spiritual sluggishness” because nature had “exerted a retarding influence” on the people and left “tribes in the rudest stage of development.” Ritter noted that much of the continent had a static relationship to the sun, with no strong contrasts in seasons. As a result, Africans had not gained a yearning for a past or a future and were “only bound to the present.” If Africa was to be stirred from its slumber, the African would need help to “master the limitations and influences of nature, to free man from its fetters, and raise him above the narrow world which his own horizon bounds.” But who would teach him?

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230 Ibid., 285-86.


232 Ibid., 68-69.

233 Ibid., 332.
Ritter’s lectures provided a mandate for missionary work in Africa. He argued that some “unprogressive nations” had become stuck in a childlike past, divorced from an evolving geography. Such nations needed an upgrading of their relationship to the natural environment. It would not suffice to bring Africans, Americans, Asians, or Aborigines to Europe to enable them to mature through education or work in a “superior culture.” Nor would it suffice to leave them alone in their natural environment. Someone had to go and teach them. A Barmen seminarian who took his lessons to heart would conceive of geographical study as a religious activity, whether at home or abroad, and it was an honorable pursuit. Ritter had invited the missionary student of geography to join the experts of “the highest [level] of statesmanship” in effecting the course of a nation. This challenge corresponded to the divine calling to “go into all the world” and appealed to those who wanted to shape the moral and religious identity of a people, whether in the German states or elsewhere.

234 Other German authors of textbooks advocated a connection between geography and religion; see the works of J. G. F. Cannabich, Karl von Raumer, Christian Friedrich Haacke, Ferdinand Voigt, Eduard Hoche, Ernst Kapp, Moritz Von Kalkstein, Heinrich Berghaus, and Daniel Völter.

235 Ritter, 257.

236 Every case I found where Africans in Germany were connected to the Rhenish Mission, the goal of the mission society was not to integrate them into German society but to return them to Africa as soon as possible. For example, Andreas Fix came under the care of missionaries in Barmen. Their aim was to return him to Africa, but he passed away. See “Eben-Ezer, 1832-1844,” RMG 2.372, no. 15-16; *Protokolle der Deputationsitzungen, 1833-1838*, RMG 5, no. 78 §11, 85 §8, 113 §16, 119 §24; BRMG 7 (Aug 1835 – Aug. 1836): 7-8; BMB no. 23 (14 Nov. 1836): 3-4; DKMF no. 11 (1855): 11, 1-5.


238 Ritter, 62.
Theology: Neander, Nitzsch, and Tholuck and Theology of the Heart

Geographical knowledge would prepare missionaries while giving them self-understanding.239 This two-sided process was grounded in the Awakening movement, a theology designed as a bulwark against “rationalism.” Three men embodied the link between early awakening theology and the missionary movement. They were theologian and church historian Johann August Wilhelm Neander (1789-1850); university chaplain Karl Immanuel Nitzsch (1787-1868), who trained preachers for the pulpits in Germany through the Preachers’ seminary in Wittenberg; and theologian and university chaplain Friedrich August Gottreu Tholuck (1799-1877) at the University of Halle.

Neander wanted to restore what he believed were the authentic historical roots of German Christendom.240 His anti-rationalist motto -- Pectus est quod theologum facit, or “the heart makes the theologian” – invited derision as “pectoral theology,” a theology of emotion (Gefühl).241 His historical studies were panned in intellectual circles, but they went through multiple editions and were translated into other languages, winning Neander the title in some Protestant circles as the “father of modern church history.”242 Neader sought an intimate

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239 “Man as an individual ... and nations ... cannot attain to perfect harmony with themselves before they find their true place to live and develop what is in them”; ibid., 63-64


241 Neader’s motto is thought to originate from the Lutheran reformer Melanchthon; see the preface to the 2nd edition, J. A. W. Neander, Allgemeine Geschichte der christlichen Religion und Kirche, Vol. 1 (Hamburg: 1826-1852), vii. Otto Pfeiderer, university chaplain in Jena, denigrated Neander’s theology as having “a serious lack of historical criticism”; see O. Pfeiderer, Die Entwicklung der Protestantischen Theologie in Deutschland seit Kant und in Grossbritannien seit 1823 (Freiburg: J. C. B. Mohr, 1891), 348-50; English text in O. Pfeiderer, The Development of Theology in Germany since Kant (London: Taylor, 1890), 279-81.

connection with historical faith, which, he claimed, rationalists lacked. This version of Herder’s union of the body and the soul was to find expression through a visible commitment to religious beliefs, values, and behaviors. Positive expressions would be a preoccupation with prayer, religious songs, scripture, edifying literature, and religious events that articulated revivalist ideals. Negative expressions were card playing, thieving, lying, cursing, drunkenness, infidelity, and unorthodox or heterodox religious ideas.

Revivalists realized that supernaturalism and Christ’s deity might not be provable concepts, so they turned to moral character as the litmus test for distinguishing between revivalism and rationalism. Revivalism meant a return to life through both regression and progression: to come back to what once was and see through the lens of the past the way forward as a people. Neander reminded his readers that “attatched to the review of the past is a glimpse of the future, a plea for protection from future sin.” Rationalism, he claimed, denied the Christian historical roots of German culture and thereby placed Germans on a path of degeneration. Neander shared the revivalist notion that the future depended on the ability of Germans to read and receive correction from the “signs of the times.”

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243 David F. Strauss, Das Leben Jesu: Kritisch bearbeitet (Tübingen: C. F. Osiander, 1835). On Neander’s response to Strauss, see A. Neander, Das Leben Jesu Christi in seinem geschichtlichen Zusammenhange und seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklungen (Hamburg: Friedrich Perthes, 1837); English translation, The Life of Jesus Christ in its Historical Connexion and Historical Development (1870). This debate fueled the theology of the Awakening; see Hagenbach, Neander’s Verdienste um die Kirchengeschichte, in Theologische Studien und Kritiken (1851); Otto Krabbe, August Neander (Hamburg, 1852); J. L. Jacobi, Erinnerungen an A. Neander (1882). On Neander’s influence, see Horst Stephan and Martin Schmidt, Geschichte der evangelischen Theologie in Deutschland seit dem Idealismus (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1973), 134-37.

244 An den Rückblick in die Vergangenheit schließt sich der Blick in die Zukunft, die Bitte der Bewahrung vor der Sünde in der Zukunft.” Neander, Leben Jesu Christ, 240.

245 Zu den Zeichen der Zeit, aus denen sie die Zukunft lesen konnten, wenn sie nur nicht leichtsinnig übersahen, was um sie her vorging, gehörte vor allem die Mahnung, welche durch die ganze Erscheinung Christi an dies Geschleeht erging. Neander, Leben Jesu Christ, 269.
The missionary movement sought to realize Neander’s idea of recreating the past as a vision for the future. Missions helped restore church history to the present by reconstructing the Acts of the Apostles in the lives of “primitive people” (*Urmensch*). The missionary movement thus offered present-day “signs of the times” to legitimize the reviverist vision of a restored Christian faith in Germany: a modern recreation of the past, where the mission field was a stage on which missionaries and the heathen acted out the Christian message.246

The pulpit also needed greater clarity, according to Neader’s co-reviverist, Karl Immanuel Nitzsch, rector of the Royal Preachers’ Seminary in Wittenberg, and later preacher for the University of Berlin.247 Nitzsch prepared pastors to move reviverist theology from the pulpit to the pew, a vision he spelled out in his 1847 textbook, *Practical Theology*.248 Dead orthodoxy would not do, he told his students, but free thinking would produce a “terrorist” handling of truth that would “lead to revolutionary heresy.”249 A pastor must have more than scholarly knowledge; he must pass “the moral test” in his life and instruction in order to bring renewal rather than despair.250 Such vitality, Nitzsch suggested, could be fostered through a union of the outer mission (*Außere Mission*) and inner mission (*Innere Mission*). The

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246 Title page images in the Rhenish Mission’s *Der Kleine Missionsfreund* illustrate this point. In 1856, Inspector Wallmann chose a series of images of Paul’s missionary travels.


249 “Bis es zur revolutionären Irrlehre (Häresis).” Ibid., 308.

250 “... sittliche Prüfung ertheilen.” Ibid., 312, 317.
former would provide the means for the latter to flow through local parish associations and awaken indolent listeners.\footnote{Ibid., 479-91.}

Nitzsch called preachers to express revivalist theology through narratives about other people. He taught homiletic students that a preacher’s job, whether in a German pulpit or under a tree on the mission field, was to engage listeners and activate piety. To this end, Nitzsch advocated the use of narratives that would get listeners to ponder the meaning of their lives.\footnote{“Ohne sich in Reflexionen zu verlieren, muß der Glaubende auf das Verhältniß der religiösen Erfahrung zu allen andern Erfahrungen sich nachdenkend richten, forschend, fragend, von neuem erfahrend, unterscheidend und vereinigend das glaubige Wissen an allem andern, in dem ganzen Gesichtskreise vollziehen, und so sich von sich überzeugen.” Ibid., 292.} Through such reflection -- what Nitzsch called “active religion” -- listeners would develop an internal God-consciousness. The reason, he claimed, was that “active religion” was apologetic: by reflecting on the “full spectrum” of other religions, including rationalism, a Christian would recognize that “passive religions” imposed a God-consciousness from the outside.\footnote{On Nitzsch’s influence, see Gershon Greenberg, “Religionwissenschaft and Early Reform Jewish Thought: Samuel Hirsch and David Einhorn,” Modern Judaism and historical consciousness: Identities, Encounters, Perspectives, Andreas Gotzmann and Christian Wiese (eds.) (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2007), 111-12. For distinction between active and passive religion, see Karl Immanuel Nitzsch, System der Christlichen Lehre (Bonn: Adolph Marcus, 1844), 29-30.} The heathen and rationalist were alike; they both possessed a self-alienated mind that was too flaccid to engage outside experience with the internal divine spark.\footnote{Ibid., 33-34.} The heathen, Nitzsch added, were stuck in a pre-belief state, while the rationalist was much like the degenerating Jews, who had sunk to a post-belief state.\footnote{“The Jew” often represented the epitome of rationalism in revivalist circles. Having once had the benefit of faith, Jews allegedly abandoned it by rejecting Christ and sank into “heathendom“; thus, to be a rationalist was to go the way of “the Jew.” The Protestant mission to the Jew should be seen as a special effort against rationalism, for Jews who converted to Christianity were evidence to revivalists that rationalism could be stopped. Menzel, 18-21; cf. Clark, Politics of Conversion, 17-18, 25-27, 43-49.}
Neander’s and Nitzsch’s influence on the missionary movement extended through their student and friend, August Tholuck, who trained several nineteenth-century mission leaders. As a young man, Tholuck set his sights on becoming a missionary, but ill health prevented him, so he pursued an academic career. Tholuck’s initial interests in linguistics and oriental mysticism, especially Sufism, were distinctly Herderian. During his studies in Berlin, Neander noticed Tholuck, whose apologetic ability he thought would be useful for recruiting young adults to the revivalist cause. Neander encouraged Tholuck to publish and drew him into revivalist circles with close ties to the Prussian court.

Tholuck’s elite relationships propelled his academic work. In 1826, at the age of twenty-seven, he was appointed professor of theology at the University of Halle. Once the heart of Pietism, by 1826 Halle had become a center of German rationalism, and the revivalists wanted to reclaim it. Tholuck’s championing of personal religious experience over what he deemed empty external rationalism, dry orthodoxy, and stale sacramentalism placed him among the revivalists. In time, Halle’s faculty of theology shed its rationalism for a soft revivalism, and Tholuck’s students took up positions in the church and mission societies. One of them was Johann Wallmann, a revivalist pastor and missionary enthusiast from Quedlinburg who led the Rhenish Mission from 1848 to 1857 and later the Berlin Mission Society.

256 Tholuck’s book, *Die Lehre von der Sünde und dem Verziehner, oder die wahre Weihe des Zweiflers* (Hamburg, 1823), showed his ability to debate rationalism in a way that would interest youth; see prefaces by Jonathan Edwards Ryland and J. Pye Smith in Frederick August Tholuck’s *Guido and Julius, or Sin and the Propitiator exhibited in the True Consecration of the Sceptic* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1854), 3-36.


Tholuck embodied Nitzsch’s idea of “active religion.” He taught that Christianity was not only a faith of thought; it was also a faith of action. In chapel services at Halle, he challenged students and faculty to re-Christianize the German states, reflecting, he said, “in [their] hearts on this question: ‘Have I striven for the knowledge of religious truth merely in order to know it, or in order to do it?”259 Their moment in history was vital, he told them, and pastors must pursue an earnest and active faith: “woe to the times in which admiration and applause of the speaker shall be substituted for taking to heart the truth that he delivers!”260 They must lead at the “grassroot” level, where, as in Herder’s liminal spaces, small faith conventicles could craft and preserve Protestant faith and identity. These local gatherings, Tholuck argued, would “practice an intense personal piety … organizing the pious into a centralized association crossing national and church boundaries; ecumenical tolerance; interest in mission; the spreading of written material; and the education of the young.”261 It would be a movement to end confessional strife and unite all Protestants around common activities.

The Mission Network

Missionary fervor was first a reflection of religious engagement at home, well before it became active abroad. Indeed the emergence of a missionary network preceded the formation of the Rhenish Mission Society and the commission of its first missionaries by three decades. Mission work depended on supporting networks, but Missionsvereine did not


261 Crowner and Christianson, 47.
require mission fields to justify their existence. In his 1834 history of the Christian church, Wilhelm Leipoldt described the “tireless activity” of the Missionsvereine during the early years as “a clear sign that a vibrant Christian existence has been awakened in the Protestant church.”

Although no exact number of supporting Missionsvereine exists, their importance was evident in the record of financial gifts. In its first year, 1829-1830, the Rhenish Mission reported that eighty-seven percent of its income came from supporting societies. Growth in the local networks was further evident in the quarterly door-to-door collection and the distribution of the Collektentblätter für die Rheinische Mission (collection tracts for the Rhenish Mission) (1859-1922). Pastors and Missionsvereine members formed collection committees, which by 1878, according to then First Inspector Fabri, had 20,000 members. Fabri may have exaggerated, but the lists of donations from supporting localities indicate the considerable reach these committees had into local communities. The first collection tract, published in 1859, reported that 79 localities had contributed nearly 6000 Thaler, or 2000 Marks. In 1871, 155 communities gave 11,432 Thaler, or nearly 4000 Marks, and by


263 The income from the Missionsvereine was 7386 Thalers, while the total income was 8532 Thalers. Expenses were 10,854 Thalers, leaving a deficit; ”Rechnung über Einnahme und Ausgabe der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft,” Erster Bericht der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaften (Barmen: Fr. August Schober, 1830): 75-80.

264 Collektentblätter für die Rheinische Mission, later titled Kollektentblatt der Rheinischen Mission. In 1829, Berlin gave permission to carry out the collection. After unification, Fabri had to renegotiate this permission with Berlin's Minister of Internal Affairs and Culture and the Senior President of the Rhine Province; see Fabri, “An die Vorstände der Hülfs-Vereine der Rheinischen Missions-Gesellschaft,” Barmen, 10 July 1876, in “Hülfsvereine, 1975-1902,” RMG 209.

1885, it was 304 communities and 62,504 Marks. At the start of the Southwest African Wars in 1904, 436 communities contributed 129,757 Marks. A decade later the number of collection committees operating in local communities on behalf of the Rhenish Mission had reached 574.266

Already in 1830, Rhenish Mission leaders realized that the assembly of Missionsvereine would need structure to maintain the network’s integrity. The leadership in Barmen provided nine ordinances to standardize and govern the Missionsvereine.267 These rules stipulated that the job of a Missionsverein was to conduct regular monthly prayer gatherings where missionary reports would inform members in the local association as well as the community at large of mission work. Leaders in the Missionsvereine would disseminate the monthly missionary literature, take up collections, and record the amount and source of each gift. In return for more prayer, more interest, and, above all, more donations, the Rhenish Mission offered greater say in the future direction of the mission society. At the 1842 General Assembly, the Deputation gave the Missionsvereine representatives authority to choose new locations for mission stations, the number of missionaries to send, and the destination of those missionaries. But to exercise this right, representatives had to be present at the General Assembly.

A reciprocal relationship evolved whereby a sending agency lent credibility to the Missionsvereine and supported the notion that the missionary work belonged to the

266 Collektensblätter für die Rheinische Mission, later Kollektensblatt der Rheinischen Mission (Barmen, 1859, 1871, 1885, 1903, 1914).

267 “Beilage no. VI: Statuten für Missionshilfsgesellschaften oder Hülfsvereine,” Erster Bericht, 59-60. The incomplete archival collection for the Missionsvereine provides twenty-nine files covering the period of 1829 to 1873, which show that some Missionsvereine had their own constitution and bylaws, but these bylaws, mostly in the later years, were remarkably similar; Missionshilfsvereine, RMG 210, Ältere Serie, 1829-1873.
*Missionsfreunde* as their mission, their missionaries, and their “heathens.”\(^{268}\) By the 1840s, Rhenish missionaries were in India, Africa, the South Sea Islands, the West Indies, and China.\(^{269}\) The network had grown to support this expansion, but costs often exceeded income, and the Rhenish Mission ran a deficit in two-thirds of its first eighty-five years of operation.\(^{270}\) Down by twenty percent in 1842, the *Deputation* asked the *Missionsvereine* at the General Assembly, “Shall we pull back?”\(^{271}\) This rhetorical plea was a request that the *Missionsvereine* step up their support.\(^{272}\) They had to push forward and see God “penetrate the church with a missionary spirit,” with the *Missionsfreunde* going “door-to-door, heart-to-heart,” calling neighbours to repent.\(^{273}\) In this way, the advance of mission work legitimized the activities of the revivalists who filled the ranks of the mission network.

In the “Mission Hour,” small groups of *Missionsfreunde*, sometimes divided by age or gender, gathered to read scripture and mission stories, to pray, and to take up a collection for the mission.\(^{274}\) These gatherings fused missionary and revivalist fervor, as noted in the annual report of the Ravensberg Mission Assistance for 1852: “The church mission hour is not only important for the mission to the heathen; it is of great importance also for

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\(^{268}\) Missionary literature referred to the “heathen Christians” (*Heidenchristen*) to differentiate converts from unconverted “heathens.”

\(^{269}\) “Wozu soll uns die Missionsnoth bringen,” BRMG (1842), 37.

\(^{270}\) Walter Spiecker, 79-80.

\(^{271}\) “Dürfen wir zurückgehen?” BRMG (1842), 37.

\(^{272}\) The income did increase over 10% the following year, and the mission also decreased their expenditures by nearly 10%, but they still had a deficit of almost 5%; W. Spiecker, 79.

\(^{273}\) BRMG (1842), 41.

awakening the community.”275 According to Pastor Sanders from Wichlinghausen, a church that made room for the Missionsstunden would be “saved from the dominion of darkness.”276

On the macro-level was the annual Missionsfest: “an important means for awakening fervor and brotherly unity,” Inspector Friedrich Fabri declared in 1859.277 The Missionsfesten grew in the latter half of the nineteenth century to become week-long celebrations, organized by the mission leadership and with an invitation for participation from other Protestant organizations. The Wuppertaler Festwoche in 1873 included, among others, The Rhenish-Westfalian Youth Alliance, Rhenish-Westfalian Association for Israel, Gustav Adolf Society, and teachers’ and pastors’ conferences.278 But the Wuppertaler Festwoche belonged to the Rhenish Mission, and its goal was to connect the mission to as much as possible within German Protestantism.

The Ravensberg Mission Assistance Society was a supporting society of the Rhenish Mission and is of special interest to this study. This society provided considerable financial support for the Rhenish Mission.279 It also had an interest in Africa, beginning with support for missionary Hans Hugo Hahn and later supplying notable missionaries to that field.


278 Die Wuppertaler Festwoche: Specialberichte, 10-17 August, 1873, vii-viii.

279 In 1877, the year of Pastor Volkening’s death, annual gifts from Ravensberg to the Rhenish Mission were over 33,000 Mark, or nearly eleven percent of the Rhenish mission budget that year. With additional gifts from the Ravensberg Mission to other missionary works, their giving amounted to nearly 80,000 Marks in 1877; Spiecker (1922), 80; Tiesmeyer, AMZ (1881), 414.
including Viehe and Vedder. The area around Ravensberg and Minden grew its own breed of Protestantism. During the Reformation, guildsmen had sided with Protestantism in opposition to the Catholic city councils. The result was Protestant enclaves in a region dominated by Catholics. In the three bishoprics of Paderborn, Münster, and Osnabrück, and two secular territories, Lippe and Rheda, enclaves of Protestants were left clamoring for attention from Berlin and eager to prove their loyalties to their Protestant Prussian king. In order to rally Protestants in this region around the missionary cause, the Ravensberg Mission founded a local publication in 1845, the *Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen*. This monthly served the wider Protestant community in the Westphalian regions and grew steadily from 4000 to over 18,000 subscriptions in 1890.

The Ravensberg Mission came into existence in large measure through the efforts of the Lutheran pastor Johann Heinrich Volkening (1796-1877). He established a *Missionsverein* in Gütersloh in 1825 and in 1838 moved to Jöllenbeck, north of Bielefeld. There he advocated for the missionary movement until his retirement in 1869. Part of Volkening’s enduring legacy was his mission hymnology. Music and song were important to revivalist culture, and Volkening assembled musical materials to promote mission work and practical

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281 In 1848, the Ravensberg Mission Society sided with the reactionaries.

282 EMW (1918/19), 113-15.

283 Johann Heinrich Volkening, *Kleine Missionsharfe im Kirchen- und Volkston: für festliche und außerfestliche Kreis* (Bielefeld: C. Bertelsmann, multiple editions ranging from 1836 to 1913); *Große Missionsharfe im Kirchen- und Volkston: für festliche und außerfestliche Kreise* (Bielefeld: C. Bertelsmann, multiple editions ranging from 1836 to 1913); *Auswahl gestlicher Lieder oder alte und neue Stimmen aus Zion* (Bielefeld: Bertelsmann, 1836). Carl Bertelsmann launched his publishing house with an interest in hymnology. His first book was *Thomele: eine Sammlung ausserlesener christlicher Lieder & Gesänge aus den vorzüglichsten deutschen Dichtern älterer & neuerer Zeit* (Bielefeld: C. Bertelsmann, 1824).
piety. His two versions of the Mission Harp (Missionsharfe) went through seventy-eight editions with over two million in print.\textsuperscript{284} He is also remembered for his extemporaneous preaching in local and regional Missionsfesten. According to one biographer, he wielded enough influence for King Friedrich Wilhelm IV to refer to him as “the Pope from Westphalia.”\textsuperscript{285}

Volkening came from Hille, in northeastern Westfalia. His father, a windmill operator, had invited Moravian lay preachers into his home, introducing Johann to their blend of fervent Pietism and missionary zeal. They practiced a radical form of Collegia Pietatis, small group meetings with lay leaders.\textsuperscript{286} In 1816, Volkening entered university in Jena. Like Krummacher, he took part in the Burschenschaften, rejected rationalism, and sought a more “heartfelt” expression of his faith.\textsuperscript{287} Rather than turning to Herder, Volkening preferred the Kiel revivalist Claus Harms, who recommended missionary work to revive a


\textsuperscript{286}For Moravian influence in Germany, Scandinavia, and the Baltic, see Nicholas Hope, German and Scandinavian Protestantism, 238-55; cf. Hanne Sanders, Bondevækkelse og Sekularisering: En protestantisk folkelig Kultur i Danmark og Sverige, 1820-1850 (Stockholm: Historiska institutionen, 1995), 43-50.

deteriorating Lutheranism. In 1818, Volkening transferred to Halle, then completed his exams in Münster and remained in Westphalia as a teacher and assistant pastor in Minden.

Drawing inspiration from the Moravians and Harms, Volkening sought a grassroots movement that gathered in small groups for prayer, Bible reading, edification, singing, and service to awaken a vibrant religious life. Aware that Moravian radicalism and lay movements had many detractors, the young pastor positioned himself between the two opposing streams of modern rationalism and Pietist idealism. He found his means to resist rationalism and cull fanaticism in the mission hour, the mission celebrations, and mission literature.

Pastoral leadership was essential to Volkening’s efforts. The Pastors’ Conference of Protestant Clergy in the District of Minden played a vital role in bringing pastors into the missionary movement. In line with Nitzsch, the conference sought a new breed of “preachers for the people” (Volksprediger). For Volkening, this meant the use of the common dialect, short narratives, and mental images to make his sermons accessible. Leopold von Ranke was to have said, after hearing him preach, “I have to confess that I have never encountered a more noble and popular eloquence.”

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289 Wilhelm Rahe, Volkening als Prediger.

290 “Pastoralkonferenz der evangelischen Geistlichen im Regierungsbezirk Minden”; Rahe, 6, 16-18. This conference was the forerunner to the later Westphalian Lutheran Conference; Wilhelm H. Neuser, Evangelische Kirchengeschichte Westfalens im Grundniss (Bielefeld: Luther Verlag, 2002); Historische Kommission für Westfalen, Westfälische Lebensbilder, vol. 6 (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagbuchhandlung, 1957).

291 “Ich muß gestehen, daß mir nie eine edlere, volkstümlichere Beredsamkeit begegnet ist.” Sermon by Volkening, delivered in Berlin, September 1853; see Rahe, Volkening als Prediger, 67-103 (the citation from Ranke is on page 82); also cited in Jahrbuch des Vereins für Westfälische Kirchengeschichte, vol. 65-66 (Bielefeld: Verlagshandlung der Anstalt Bethel, 1972), 10; and Gustav Adolf Benrath et al., Der Pietismus im neunzehnten und zwanzigsten Jahrhundert (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2000), 196.
colleagues were successful in convincing pastors of the merits of mission work, and in 1843, the pastors' conference united with the Ravensberg Mission.\(^{292}\)

Mission activity offered a positive approach to moral reform and Volkening’s quest for revival in Ravensberg. Volkening’s 1828 Christmas Eve sermon in Gütersloh indicates how he utilized the mission movement. He linked the heathen to the German people through themes of moral behavior, awakening, and mission. Missionary work, he preached, was a sign of “the victory of God’s Kingdom”:

Do not his messengers, true evangelists, appear with the cross in their hands and their hearts everywhere among the people of the earth, where now the altars of idols crumble and new altars are built to the glory of the only true and living God, our savior, Jesus Christ?\(^{293}\)

Although not a single missionary had yet been sent, Volkening was confident that missionary work would counter impious behavior: card playing, strong drink, dance, and breaking the Sabbath. Volkening’s converted heathen would be a model of piety for the German people, and the missionary movement bound them together. “Thousands of heathens are celebrating with us their first Christmas Eve,” Volkening preached in 1828:

Today hundreds of missionaries, together with their newly won flocks gather around the same manger, where we, too, worship. Yes, outwardly their bodies are black, but inwardly their spirits are washed clean in the blood of the Lamb through holy baptism, born again by water and the spirit. We reach our hands around the world as brothers in Christ and together we go to Bethlehem.”\(^{294}\)

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\(^{292}\) *Jahrbuch für Westfälische Kirchengeschichte*, vol. 77-78 (Bielefeld: Anstalt Bethel, 1984), 129.

\(^{293}\) “Treten nicht seine Boten, wahre Evangelisten, mit dem Kreuzpanier in der Hand und im Herzen überall auf unter den Völkern der Erde, wo nun die Götzenaltäre stürzen und neue erbaut werden zur Ehre des allein wahren lebendigen Gottes, unseres Heilandes Jesu Christi.” Rahe (1939) 50-51.

\(^{294}\) “Es ist wahrlich ein Freude erweckender, erhabener Gedanke, würdig des Festes, welches wir feiern, daß heute Tausende von Heiden mit uns ihr erstes Weihnachtsfest feiern daß in diesen Tagen hunderte von Missionaren mit den neuerworbenen Herden – äußerlich-leiblich zwar schwarz, aber innerlich-geistlich rein gewaschen im Blute des Lammes durch das Bad der heiligen Taufe, wiedergeboren aus Wasser und Geist –, daß sie mit ihnen versammelt sind an derselben Krippe, an welcher auch wir heute anbeten, daß wir rings um
The missionary movement in Westphalia had the appearance of a grassroots movement but it was structurally the product of pastors. One important element in the Missionsfest was popular speakers who could address religious life at home and abroad. Prominent political and high profile figures would address the Missionsfest, among them the founder of the Bethel Anstalt, Friedrich Christian Karl von Bodelschwingh, and the court preacher, Adolf Stöcker. But at the local level, Volkening was a favorite. He captured for participants the reciprocal relationship between the home and the field: “Through believing Christians the crucified Savior draws the heathen to himself, and through the converted heathen he draws apostate Christianity.”

Anxious over the memory of Napoleon’s invasion and taking their lead from philosophers, geographers, and theologians, pastors Krummacher, Leipoldt, and Volkening developed a vision for missionary work abroad that was inseparable from revivalism at home. Decades before German unification and colonialism, these leaders laid the foundation for an “active religion” that adapted Herder’s cultural ideas and drew on Ritter’s geographical expertise to legitimize expansion into the world. Neander, Nitzsch, and Tholuck infused an anti-rationalist impulse into the revivalist and missionary movement.

Although it appeared to be a grassroots movement, the Rhenish Mission with its vast network of Missionsvereine was above all the work of revivalist pastors and key lay leaders.

die Erde uns die Hände reichen als Brüder in Christo und vereint miteinander nach Bethlehem gehen.” Rahe, 85.


296 “der gekreuzigte Heiland, zieht durch gläubige Christen die Heiden und durch die bekehrten Heiden die abgefallene Christenheit zu sich.” Quoted in Huchzermeier, 90.
Krummacher traded political zeal for religious fervor and activism. Leipoldt adapted a vision for missionary work that focused on the German people as well as people in foreign lands. The Barmen Mission School immersed its candidates in community and mission networks while preparing them to serve abroad. Volkening inspired the faithful to gather in homes, churches, and districts under the banner of world missions. In return for their support, pastors and congregations received missionary stories to promote their revivalist agenda at home.
CHAPTER 2:

NETWORK:

THE RHENISH MISSION AT HOME

You must let your heart delight in the Mission. It will go well, because the Lord of heaven and earth attends to it. Let me now tell you a story …

~ J. C. Wallmann

Of all the outlandish stories Johann Christian Wallmann (1811-1865), First Inspector of the Rhenish Mission, could have used to launch the Barmen children’s journal, Der kleine Missionsfreund in 1855, he chose a story about a decrepit old ship named Alfred. He told how British children had raised money to purchase a ship to ferry missionaries around the world, while German missionaries were stuck with old Alfred to get them to Africa. In open water, Alfred sprung a leak and was in danger of sinking. While missionaries huddled in a corner to pray, the ship’s carpenter patched the vessel using materials found onboard. Then Alfred encountered a ferocious storm, and again fervent prayer accompanied the sailors’ effort to save the ship. Somehow, as if by providence, Alfred weathered the storm and arrived safely in Cape Town just two weeks late. Wallmann added that six ships more sturdy than Alfred did not arrive in port but succumbed to the storm.


A veteran of missionary narratives and author of missionary publications for popular consumption, Wallmann did not lack exotic stories from Africa, China, South Asia, the Middle East, or the Americas.299 But he told his readers, “I will not speak thereof today, though another time.”300 So why did he choose a story about an old ship? What did Alfred represent that a more enchanting story from unknown lands and strange people could not?

As a transport vessel between disparate people and localities, faced with a perilous environment in which Alfred was barely seaworthy, the transcontinental ship was analogous to the German Protestant Church. Revivalists believed that, likewise, the church was in disrepair and ill-equipped for the storms of rationalism. But on board this decrepit vessel was a small network of “friends of the mission” – Missionsfreunde. Just as Alfred had been repaired and survived the storm through the prayers of missionaries, so too revivalists believed the church could be renewed from within and survive the storms of the modern world by relying on the piety of its “missionaries” at home. The missionary movement, Wallmann believed, was a resource for renewal and restoration, if only Germans were serious about the work of the mission, read its stories, and became active in its associations. Alfred’s journey also identified the priority of the missionary movement: to instill religious commitments in a faithful and morally vigorous group of Missionsfreunde at home through engagement and support for the German mission work abroad.301 The Missionsfreunde would thereby be “missionaries” in their own right, with Germany as their “mission field.”


301 Thorsten Altena describes the Heimat-Feld relationship as “complex and intimate,” and one mutually beneficial; Thorsten Altena, “… ein Spiegelbild der aussendenden Kirche: Betrachtungen zum
This chapter expands my claim that the missionary movement was a revivalist tool for cultural transformation at home. I analyze missionary literature as a pillar of the Rhenish Mission Society that served as propaganda for integrating the work abroad with revivalist aims at home. The mission network disseminated its stories throughout the Upper Rhineland and Westphalian region of the Prussian kingdom. Readers could identify with the characters, engage them through prayer, and internalize the implied meaning of their actions. But stories that associated the reader with the subject also carried other concepts about “the African.” In this chapter and the next, I show that missionary narratives carried racial notions, which the reflexive utility of these stories enhanced.

A metaphor can have multiple meanings. Wallmann’s ship, *Alfred*, also represented the transmission of information and knowledge between two continents that informed German readers about Africa and its people and informed missionaries of things back home. Such information helped make missionary stories germane to readers. Pastors could then abstract simplified notions of “the heathen” and restate them in publications, sermons, and songs. In the 1823/24 annual report of the Barmen Mission Society, pastors Sanders and Leipoldt described missionary stories as sequels to the Book of Acts that awakened readers to faith.302 Through these stories, “the unconverted,” meaning unbelieving Germans, received “a good example of the converted heathen that they would want to follow.”303

A blend of the exotic and familiar gave missionary narratives of the Rhenish Mission efficacy as “cultural mirrors.” And through these stories, people in Africa, Asia, America, and the Middle East became recognizable to Germans. In his 1832 New Year poem, Herman Ball, editor of the Barmen Missionsblatt, identified “rural folk” and “the town’s poor” as his target audience:

Above all I am seeking rural folk
And the poor in the towns
Foremost for you, especially
Do I write this paper.

Through me comes a distant plea
From many “heathen-Christians”
O white brother, to the Lord
Repent, repent!304

Stories about people from afar, he claimed, would shape religious sensibilities of those at home, and the piety of “heathen Christians” would instruct German readers in matters of faith. The converse held too: their depravity would warn the impious.

As cultural mirrors, missionary stories reflected religious values, ideals, and anxieties.305 Post-Napoleonic anxieties and ideals had sparked the missionary movement in the Upper Rhineland and Westphalia; 1848 renewed those anxieties and fueled expansion at home and abroad. After 1848, the leadership of the Rhenish Mission in Barmen increased publication of missionary narratives, believing these stories would help change the moral direction of Germans. The stories offered parallel and counter images: Africans moving

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304 Vor allem such’ ich Bauersleut’/Und Arme in der Stadt/Für Euch zuerst, insonderheit/Schreib ich ja dieses Blatt //Den bittet hier aus weiter Fern’/Manch’ Heidenchrist durch mich:/O weißer Bruder, zu dem Herrn/Bekehr, bekehre dich!  BMB, no. 1 (19 January 1832).

toward Christian faith and piety as Germans were drifting away; Africans abandoning a newfound faith and returning to old habits as Germans abandoned a long-held faith to indulge new habits and beliefs. The African could shame the German for losing what the former was gaining or warn the German of how deep a society could sink when “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” Heathen piety and impiety taught moral lessons, validated revivalism, and raised support for the mission

**Missionary Stories**

Popular missionary literature appealed to revivalist pastors. At a pastors’ conference in Bavaria in 1827, pastors discussed the role of religious literature. One participant wrote to the editor of the *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung*, praising the mission reports to the communities for their vital role in German culture:

> It was broadly acknowledged what a rich blessing is brought about by these reports. From all over came recommendations of the *Barmen Missionsblatt* as especially instructive and intelligible for the people.  

The author noted a young preacher from Nuremberg whose congregants took part in a local Mission Hour. “In a short time,” the preacher took up a mission collection “without any grudging.” Other clergy, notably rural pastors, confirmed that donations increased among participants in the *Barmen Missionsblatt* reading circles: by promoting missionary literature, pastors could “easily gather donations for the mission, so that our people ... from their

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306 “Denn Gott widersteht den Hoffärtigen, aber den Demütigen gibt er Gnade.” 1 Peter 5:5.


308 Ibid.
impoverishment bring their voluntary offerings.”

Revivalist clergy hoped missionary literature would also capture people’s imaginations and guide their religious sensibilities.

Like Pastor Johann Volkening in Jöllenbeck, revivalist pastors had expressed concern about the character of missionary literature. They wanted stories, not long reports, in return for their efforts to gain support for the mission society. The stories, they argued, ought to strengthen the spiritual vitality of readers by inspiring and warning them about heathen ways. Some Missionfreunde found the style of reporting in The Annual Reports of the Rhenish Mission Society during the 1830s unappealing. Long accounts from missionaries in South Africa lacked drama. The Barmen Mission already had a tool to bridge the gap between detailed reporting by the mission society and common readers. The biweekly Barmen Missionsblatt turned long reports into narratives for a wider audience. Pastors wanted more such resources and asked the mission society to change its annual reports.

In letters to the Rhenish Mission from 1836 to 1839, Ravensberg pastors raised the issue of missionary literature again. The leaders in Barmen, for their part, wanted only to

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309 “Daß man auf diesem Wege am leichtesten Beiträge für die Missionssache erhalten könne, bis die Leute bei uns einmal so weit gekommen sind, auch von ihrer Armuth dem Herrn freiwillige Opfer zu bringen.” Ibid.


311 The file on the Barmen Missionsblatt is incomplete, providing production runs only for the first seven years. The initial run was 4000, which sold out and the society printed 4500 more. With 26 issues each year, the total first year run was over 220,000. In 1830, the biweekly print run increased to 14,000. The newspaper was 90% subscriber-based, with the remainder distributed freely; see “Missionsblatt (Barmer), 1825-1849, 1921-1936,” RMG 1160.

312 The relevant letters began on 21 October 1836 between Pastor Kunsemüller, Pastor Jacobi, and Dr. Richter, ending on 2 March 1838, when the matter of the Missionschriften content was brought up at the
inform supporters about the mission work and give account for the financial support.

Speaking for Ravensberg pastors, Minden Superintendent Berhard August Jacobi stressed that the mission society must construct missionary literature as a devotional tool. The pastors did not want sterile facts; they wanted stories.

Judging from annual reports in the first decade of the Rhenish Mission, the pastors’ concerns were legitimate. Readers would have to trudge through lengthy descriptions of the society’s various mission fields, extensive travel reports, and observations of new missionaries in the Feld. The editor declared missionary work a “sign of the times” and a “blessing,” but he neither specified nor interpreted those signs and blessings for readers. Readers had to dig deep to make the connections. Although revivalist pastors and leaders of mission societies might see the links, ordinary readers, particularly children, youth, and women, needed accessible stories that stimulated faith.

In 1845, the Ravensberg Mission launched the Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen (Protestant Monthly for Westphalia) as a partner to the mission literature coming from Barmen. Its opening poem called for an awakening in the church. Like Nehemiah, who had restored the walls of Jerusalem, the poem proclaimed the mission monthly would build a

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General assembly on 30 April 1839. Of special interest is a letter from Superintendent Jacobi in Minden to Dr. Richter, 2 March 1838; see “Ravensberger Missions- Hülfsverein, 1832-1845,” RMG 173.


315 Pastor Schröder wrote the Rhenish Mission to emphasize that the mission monthly would not compete with its missionary literature. Rather, it would complement by providing content primarily from home; “Ravensberger Missions- Hülfsverein, 1832-1845,” RMG 173, 4 January 1842.
new Zion and “the whole world shall joyfully declare the glory of [God’s] house.”

Militaristic language and apologetics also appeared, but the poem mentioned neither the heathen nor missionary work. In general, the Ravensberg editors left the task of reporting on missionary work to Barmen. This division of labor proved effective: the mission society in Barmen generated reports from the mission field, whereas the local missionary network interpreted that literature for those at home.

References to mission work in the *Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen* usually appeared in sermons from the *Missionsfesten*. The first issue in 1845 published a sermon from the Herford *Missionsfest* that indicates how missionary stories showed up in the second layer of missionary literature. Pastor Greve from Gütersloh spoke on a parable from the Gospel of Matthew where the Kingdom of God is compared to a lump of yeast. He noted three parallels to the missionary movement: it too began small, the progress was quiet, and the results would be victorious. According to Greve, the missionary movement would only grow “when God’s Kingdom arrives inside of people.” But for the moment, Greve worried, the growth of the yeast faced many obstacles:

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317 Some years have no accounts of mission work outside of those mentioned in *Missionsfest* sermons.


319 Matthew 13:33.

320 EMW, no. 1 (1845): 5, 6.

321 “Wenn das Reich Gottes ’inwendig’ in den Menschen kommt.” Ibid., 5.
[There are] so many powers to battle, so many pleasures to deny, so many habits that must be renounced, so many appetites that must be handled adversely, and then so much fighting, so much suffering, so much destitution, that must willingly be endured.322

Greve argued that German unbelievers were no different from the heathen in the mission field.323 After listing heathen sins of cannibalism, infanticide, fornication, and inhuman cruelty, Greve concluded that those exposed to the missionary work “become quiet, diligent, and chaste.”324 The same would be true, he maintained, for Germans who yielded to the yeast of the missionary movement.

The Rhenish Mission adjusted and expanded its literature in response to demands from the Missionsfreunde. There were in total eight biweekly, monthly, and quarterly magazines, as well as multiple tracts and monographs: in 1846, the long annual reports became shorter monthly accounts; in 1855, the society initiated a publication for children and youth; in 1859 came the quarterly tract used in the door-to-door collection. By 1914, the annual distribution of printed material reached over one and a half million prints.325

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322 “Vielen Hindernisse ... so viele Kräfte zu bekämpfen, so viele Genüsse zu verleugnen, so manche Gewohnheiten, denen muß entsagt, so manche Neigungen, denen muß zuwider gehandelt werden, dagegen so manche Kämpfe, so manche Leiden, so manche Entbehrungen, die müssen willig übernommen werden.” Ibid., 6.


324 Greve used the classic Pietist self-description as “the quiet in the land” (Stille im Lande), Ibid.

1848: Anxieties, Disputes, and New Leadership

The year 1848 brought something new: a widespread explosion of political participation across continental Europe. The revolutions affected people at nearly all levels of society, including religious people. Revolutionary fervor existed already in 1844 when workers in the Silesian district near Peterwaldau and Langebielau in Prussia attacked textile headquarters. Such pre-revolutionary tensions and clashes culminated in the mass uprising that began in the spring of 1848 and continued through to widespread insurrections in May 1849. Attached to the bloody battles was a radical element that included Karl Marx and Barmen’s own son, Friedrich Engels, whose grandfather was a founder of the Barmen Gemarcke Church and part of the revivalism and mission fervor that launched the Rhenish Mission Society nearly two decades later. Marx and Engels represent the post-Napoleonic Mittelstand generation that had grown dissatisfied with its Mittelstand parents. It was the conservative values of the parents’ generation that stood behind revivalism and mission.

With political participation taking deeper root in German society in 1848, revivalists, with their faux grassroots movements, faced a new kind of competition: not the old enemy of rationalism, nor an enemy in the shape of an angry mob willing to carry out bloody acts of

326 Not even Marx and Engels had predicted the impact of popular mobilization on Europe, though they found it disappointing in the end; James J. Sheehan, German History: 1770-1866 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 652-53.


329 Marx was born in 1818, Engels in 1820, and many of their companions belonged to the same cohort. In Westphalia a generation of radicals from the middle class include Karl Dresel (1813-1857), the son of a wine merchant; Otmar v. Behr (1815-1856), and Julius Meyer (1817-1863); see Frank Konersmann, “Politische Konflikte zwischen zwei Generationen im Vormärz: Die Kaufmanns- und Unternehmerfamilie Tenge in Ostwestfalen,” in Eine Region im Aufbruch: Die Revolution von 1848/49 in Ostwestfalen-Lippe, ed. Reinhard Vogelsang and Rolf Westheider (Bielefeld: Religionalgeschichte, 1998), 71-98.
violence, but rather an enemy that had mobilized German people to action. In his broad study, *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851*, Jonathan Sperber explains that the short life of 1848 has little to do with the failings of the revolutionaries and more to do with conservative reactionaries who had learned from the French Revolution “the danger of being too passive.” In his earlier and narrower study of the *Rhineland Radicals*, Sperber shows what this conservative activism meant in a region where the revolution was perhaps the most pronounced among the German states. Notwithstanding their diatribes against the revolutionaries, conservatives also took part in what the revolution brought. Most Catholic and Protestant church leaders, Sperber notes, stood askance at the revolution itself, yet took part in councils, even running in elections, and directing people to vote for the person with the right denominational loyalties. And conservative and reactionary organizations, not least the mission societies, appreciated the idea of greater freedom for the press that 1848 promised and delivered. Conservatives used their newfound freedom to promote a “throne and altar” agenda.

The events of 1848 renewed memories of the French Revolution. For some that association offered hope for a more liberal and democratic society. For others it raised fears that German society would succumb to godless revolutionaries. Such anxieties shaped

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332 A tract of the Rhenish Mission made this point explicit, even after first giving an overview of the revolution in European nations; see *Die Mission unter den Christen* (Barmen:Steinhaus, 1849).

missionary literature in subtle and overt ways.\textsuperscript{334} The Barmen Missionsblatt opened 1849 with a poem promising God’s help:

\begin{align*}
\text{Do not be frightened by anything} & \quad \text{Laß dich durch nichts erschrecken,} \\
\text{O band of Christian believers!} & \quad \text{O du christgläub'ge Schaar!} \\
\text{God will awaken your help,} & \quad \text{Gott wird dir Hülf' erwecken,} \\
\text{And himself hold true what is yours:} & \quad \text{Und selbst dein nehmen wahr:} \\
\text{After all, he has inscribed you} & \quad \text{Er hat dich ja gezeichnet,} \\
\text{In the palm of his hands,} & \quad \text{Gegrab'n in Seine Händ',} \\
\text{Your name is ever illumined before him} & \quad \text{Dein Nam' stets vor Ihm leuchtet,} \\
\text{So that he will send you his assistance} & \quad \text{Daß Er Sein Hülf' dir send't}
\end{align*}

By 1849, the Missionsleute saw an end to the furor and began to contemplate the path ahead. The home front, they decided, was still vulnerable to revolutionary forces and needed attention. To sum up the events of 1848, Pastor Ball used the metaphor of a ship in troubled sea: “The waves well up so high, the storm wind howls so terrifyingly, that we become fearful and despondent.”\textsuperscript{336} The preceding year, he said, had battered the mission physically, financially, politically and morally.\textsuperscript{337} In a barrage of mixed metaphors, including a reference to Jerusalem’s fall to the Babylonians, Ball accused the revolutionaries of trying to destroy the “little ship of the church”:

\begin{quote}
The children of Edom stand there and shout: “Tear it down! Tear it down! To its very foundation!” As each wave crashes over the little ship to devour it, they
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{334} Barmen also kept missionaries informed of developments in the revolution; see Letter (18 April, 1848) signed by the Deputation of the RMG, “An die in Südafrika Stationierter Sendoten der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft,” RMG 80 Copierbuch, 1848-1856.

\textsuperscript{335} BMB no. 1 (1849): 1.

\textsuperscript{336} “Die Wellen thürmten sich so hoch, der Sturmwind heulte so entsetzlich, daß wir ... erschrecken und verzagen warden.” BMB, Ibid., 1.

\textsuperscript{337} Ibid., 1-2.
gloat: “There, there, this we like to see.” Even now the church is robbed of human protection ... like a herd of defenseless sheep thrown to the wolves.338

The question facing Protestant Christians was: who, or what, would restore this ship, the Protestant church?

Ball called for greater unity between the work of the mission and the Protestant church and closer ties to the Prussian king.339 He described the church and the mission as two oars on a rescue boat. Both were needed to ride out the storm, but they could only do so under the Prussian flag. Adding another biblical metaphor, Ball reminded the Missionsfreunde to look to the “mountains from whence your help comes.”340 The “mountain,” he explained, was “our beloved, beloved king” who served the German people, and “the Lord their God.”341 He pledged the Barmen Missionsblatt to the service of the king and called on its readership to do the same.342

Heightened anxieties among the Missionsfreunde “awakened” them to combat. In 1849, a group of local pastors and Ludwig von Rohden (1815-1889), a teacher at the Barmen Mission School and later First Inspector of the Rhenish Mission, produced a tract titled The

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338 “Die Kinder Edoms stehen da und rufen: Rein ab! Rein ab! Bis auf ihren Boden! Bei jeder Welle, die sich über dem Schifflein bricht, es zu verschlingen, jauchzen sie schadenfroh: Da! Da! Das sehen wir gern! Und grade jetzt wird die Kirche alles menschlichen Schutzes ... wie eine Heerde wehrloser Schafe, mitten unter die Wölfe geworfen.” Ibid.; cf. Psalm 137.

339 Ibid.

340 Psalm 121.


342 Ibid.
Mission among the Christians.343 It promoted the idea of an “inner mission” for Germany. This counter-revolutionary tract argued it was not enough to rescue the heathen abroad when those at home appeared to be on a path into “heathendom.” The Innere Mission would not take the place of the “outer” mission. Rather, the two fields would reinforce and support one another. The tract did not specify the exact roots of the Revolution, though other conservative religious newspapers named liberalism, Catholicism, communism, and Judaism as the culprits.344

Leaders of the missionary movement regarded 1848 as an opportunity. In “the mission among the Christians,” the authors claimed that the Revolution had unleashed much “bad” but also made possible new efforts “to spread the Gospel in the Fatherland.”345 The task was urgent, the authors claimed, pointing to German sailors as examples of what might become of Germans if they were left to depravity. Like missionaries, sailors straddled the Christian and heathen worlds, but with disastrous results: “the crudest, most godless class of humanity,” their sins included “blasphemy, cursing, gluttony, fornication, and profanity.”346 They had become like the heathens. By contrast, missionaries, supported by a faithful mission network, bridged the two worlds yet were not contaminated. Having kept the faith

345 “Indessen weil durch die Unordnungen auch manches Böse verhindert wurde, und weil die Christen der Obrigkeit gehorsam zu sein, gelernt haben, auch wo es ihnen schwer wird, so begnügten sich die Christen in Deutschland, für die Ausbreitung des Evangeliums in ihrem Vaterlande zu thun, was sich unter den gegebenen Verhältnissen eben thun ließ. Nun aber ist eine große Veränderung eingetreten, wodurch ganz Deutschland für die Predigt des Evangeliums geöffnet worden ist.” Von Rohden, Die Mission unter den Christen, 17.
346 “Der rohresten und gottlosten Menschenklasse; Fluchen, Schwören, vollerei, Unzucht, Gotteslästerung ist bei ihnen zu Hause.” Ibid.
abroad, missionaries had a role to bring a “rebirth” to the German people. Benefitting from the new freedoms to publish, religious literature would be a prime weapon in the battle against “the Kingdom of the Devil.”

Revolution was not the only threat in 1848: the church and the mission were also fragmenting over confessional differences. The Prussian church union of 1817 had not resolved the conflict between Reformed and Lutheran distinctives. In the 1840s, a controversy over the Eucharist raged between the Lutheran and Reformed churches of Barmen and Elberfeld. The newly installed Pastor Feldner had his Lutheran congregation distance itself from the Reformed churches. Some of the Lutherans who were active in the Rhenish Mission leadership, including Pastor Sander, took a firm position on Lutheran doctrines. Pastor Hermann Ball reacted with equal vigor for the Reformed side. Old disputes and posturing threatened the ecumenism on which the Rhenish Mission and its network depended.

Confessional tensions within the Rhenish Mission intensified at a critical moment. Dr. Heinrich Richter, the First Inspector of the society, died unexpectedly in 1847, and the Deputation appointed a Lutheran pastor, Johann Christian Wallmann (1811-1865), as the new director for the Rhenish Mission. Wallmann took office in the early months of the

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347 A Rhenish Mission letter, dated April 1848, addressed the Revolution to its missionaries in Southwest Africa as a critical time for Germans to regain their spiritual purpose; see “An die in Südafrika stationierter Sendboten der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft,” April 1848, RMG 80 Copierbuch, 1848-1856.

348 Von Rohden, Mission unter den Christen, 17.

349 Krummacher described this controversy in his autobiography and his own efforts to stay outside the conflict; Krummacher, 222-24.

350 BRMG (May 1847): 33-38; on the deliberations over the appointment of Wallmann, see Protokollbuch der Rheinischen Mission, RMG 7, 291-92; For Wallmann’s biography, see Karl Endemann, Johann Christian Wallmann: ein Mann nach Gottes Herzen: Zum Gedächtnis bei der hundertjährigen Wiederkehr seines Geburtstages
revolution. The choice of a Lutheran revivalist was not happenstance. Caught between the factions, the Deputation turned to Wallmann as someone who might reconcile the two sides. For the Reformed pastors who supported the Rhenish Mission, Wallmann may have been a difficult choice, but to the revivalists, he was the right man. He was well-connected with the grassroots of the missionary movement, well-acquainted with setting up Missionsvereine in and around Quedlinburg, and well-equipped for missionary literature, having already established two successful mission magazines and mission monographs. If the Missionsfreunde could not unite on doctrine and practice at home, perhaps they would unite in missionary work abroad: this was the hope that the Deputation placed in Wallmann.

Indeed, Wallmann steadied the course. His method was to intensify the founding practices and instruments of the mission society. He refined the character of mission literature to meet the demands of the home audience and expanded its production. As a student of August Tholuck, the revivalist theologian in Halle, Wallmann saw in the missionary movement a pastoral urge that could shape the future of German society. His tenure with the Rhenish Mission lasted less than a decade, but he established missionary literature as a pastoral tool for spiritual reflection and cultural renewal.

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Wallmann followed Philipp Jacob Spener’s Collegia Pietatis as practiced by his professor August Tholuck; see Sauberzweig-Schmidt, Wallmann und Wallmannsthal oder ein Missionsinspektor und sein Denkmal, Vol. 2, no. 44 (Berlin: Berlin Evangelischen Missionsgesellschaft, 1895).

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351 Wallmann followed Philipp Jacob Spener’s Collegia Pietatis as practiced by his professor August Tholuck; see Sauberzweig-Schmidt, Wallmann und Wallmannsthal oder ein Missionsinspektor und sein Denkmal, 9ff. Wallman’s periodicals before coming to Barmen were Der Missionsfreund: Ein Volksblatt die Liebe zur Mission im deutschen Volke zu wecken, and Die kleine Biene for children. His monographs included Die Missionen der evangelischen Kirche: Ein Volksbuch (Quedlinburg: Ludwig L. Franke, 1843, 1848); Das Missionswerk ist ein Reformationswerk und wer ein Freund der Reformation ist, der muß auch ein Freund der Mission sein, (Schulze, 1846). Later he would publish Vocabular der Namaqua-Sprache, nebst einem Abrisse der Formenlehre derselben (Barmen: Joh. Friedr. Steinhaus, 1854), and Die Formenlehre der Namasprache: Ein Beitrag zur Südafrikanischen Linguistik (Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz, 1857, also in English by London: Williams and Norgate, and in French by Paris: F. Klincksieck).
To launch *Der kleine Missionsfreund* in 1855, Wallmann chose a ship metaphor to capture the purpose of the missionary movement. Supported by its home network, the Rhenish Mission traversed troubled seas, carrying precious cargo in both directions to restore the Protestant church. From the perspective of the *Missionsfreunde*, the return voyage was as precious as the outgoing, for it bore the lifeblood of the mission network: stories to revive German piety.

Wallmann did not disappoint the revivalists. In addition to his literary productions, he set in motion plans to build the Barmen Mission museum as a gathering point especially for children during the *Missionsfest*. He also raised funds to build a home for missionary children sent to Barmen for schooling, and he advocated a vision for the mission centers in Germany as models of a renewed society, where monastic-like communities engaged in the Christian mission.

In repositioning the missionary movement, Wallmann also adapted its ideals to the 1848 language of “freedom.” The *Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen* republished excerpts from Wallman’s *Der Missionsfreund*, in which he claimed that missionary work enabled freedom without being revolutionary. If Germans wanted greater freedoms, Wallmann declared, they would only attain them through religious renewal. He used examples from

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352 The museum collection dated back to the beginning of the mission work, but when Wallmann arrived he advocated for a physical space to house the museum. Three separate artifact collections are listed in the annual report of the Rhenish mission, JBRMG (1849-50): 51. Prior to 1850 the “museum” was portable and travelled from one *Missionsvereine* to another.


355 By the end of his sermon, Wallmann had defined “religious renewal” as an end to “flint, powder, and whiskey,” which he believed promoted hatred, conflict, and moral depravity respectively; Ibid., 217, 220.
the Americas, Asia, and Africa, and equated revolutionaries to abolitionists, who merely changed surface issues; they had only removed the “leaves and stems” without getting to the root of slavery.\footnote{“Die Blätter und Ranken ... lasse die Wurzeln in der Erde stecken.” Ibid., 220.} The real problem, according to Wallmann, was the “negro,” who, driven by hatred and enmity, had perpetuated the slave trade long before whites ever arrived in Africa and so was to blame for his own enslavement.\footnote{Ibid., 219-21.} Only by making Africans Christian, Wallmann insisted, would slavery end and genuine freedom come.\footnote{“Wollten die Neger ein Eigenthum des Friedefürsten, unsers hochgelobten Heilandes, werden, so würde auch Friede unter ihnen und damit der selaverei von selbst ein Ende werden. Nur der Herr Jesus kann die armen Neger aus ihrem Jammer und Elend herausschießen, der Durchbrecher aller Bander. Und so meine ich es denn auch, wenn ich an die Worte komme: ‘Macht der Selaverei ein End!’ Nicht: ‘Macht der Selaverei ein End, ihr Engländer und Franzosen und Spanier und Portugiesen!’ Mit Menschenmacht ist da nichts gethan, das ist nun nach gerade klar geworden. Sondern dem Herrn allein die Ehre: ‘Mach du der Selaverei ein End’ und es ist eine der schönsten Aufgaben der Mission: den Negern Afrika’s die Botschaft des Friedens und der Versöhnung zu bringen.” Ibid., 221.} The same held true among Germans, he implied; only through religious renewal would they gain true freedom.

The Rhenish Mission emerged from 1848 with new leadership, new vision for its work, and new literature to prove its impact. Wallmann had melded revolutionary language with the missionary vision to make an ambitious claim: missionaries would succeed where revolutionaries and abolitionists had failed. Their work abroad, especially among Africans, would prove that the missionary movement and its revivalist culture brought true freedom.

The \textit{Rundschriften}: Keeping Missionaries Attuned to the \textit{Heimat}

The growth of \textit{Missionsvereine} and \textit{Missionsfesten} from the 1850s to World War I placed further demands on effective communication. In order to transfer “the African” to Germany in story form, it was not enough to inform the network about missionary work.
Missionaries also needed to keep up with events and issues at home. There were two requirements here. On the one hand, Barmen needed missionaries to create stories with messages relevant to their readers. On the other hand, readers needed to know how to interpret missionary stories. But how could missionaries far away stay attuned to events in Germany? How could their stories be comprehensible to “poor rural folk”?

After the 1848 Revolution, Wallmann created a circular newsletter, the *Rundschreiben*, as a means to keep missionaries abreast of religious, cultural, and political developments at home. This initiative coincided with new publications for popular consumption, including *Der kleine Missionsfreund* and *Collektenblätter für die Rheinische Mission*. Wallmann wrote the first few *Rundschreiben* by hand and published them erratically, structuring them according to specific sections of interest. The first section, usually titled “Politics,” covered local, continental, and world events. A section on “Church” covered developments primarily within the Protestant Church, but at times there was also news about Catholics. A section titled “Mission” addressed the wide scope of other mission societies, mostly German, and focused on matters pertaining to individual Rhenish Mission fields. Finally, yet importantly, a section titled “Mission House” gave a brief overview of the schools in Barmen: the school for missionary children and the Barmen Mission School, covering parental concerns and future considerations for new recruits to the field. The *Rundschreiben* had personal and intellectual value, enabling missionaries to articulate their efforts abroad in the context of concerns at home.

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359 This section informed missionaries about their colleagues with whom they had trained and sought to inspire missionaries by hearing about developments on other fields. The Barmen leadership could also use this in-house circular to address sensitive matters; the first publication by Inspector Fabri addressed the complex issue of morality and monogamous marriage relationships on the mission field; “Rundschreiben der Missionsleitung an Missionsangehörige, 1847, 1853-1877,” RMG 93 (1857): 16-17.
Inspector Friedrich Fabri (1828-1891), who followed Wallman in 1858, utilized the Rundschreiben more consistently than his predecessor had. He also reshaped them. Rather than writing by hand, Fabri printed the circular and gave it the prefix “Quarterly,” indicating an official status for this in-house publication.\footnote{When Fabri failed to get Rundschreiben out on time he would apologize and promise to work harder; Rundschreiben, July – December 1862, RMG 93, 70.} Where Wallmann always began with political developments, Fabri usually opened with developments in the Barmen schools and administration. Political matters came later, though this did not minimize the importance of political news. Indeed, the political section was usually the largest, rivaled only by church news. For missionaries in remote areas, the Rundschreiben provided an overview of church and society in the German states, about which they could ponder, pray, and write.

The Rundschreiben reflected mission anxieties and expectations. The publication addressed confessional and moral issues and provided news about political developments: the gains and losses of liberals and socialists, the menace of the French “revolutionary chieftain” Napoleon III, and the wars of unification in the 1860s. Missionaries could shape their narratives with these events in mind. During the Austro-Prussian War in 1866, Fabri broke with the regular pattern of the Rundschreiben and opened the circular by informing missionaries that a “German Civil War” was underway.\footnote{Deutsches Bürgerkrieg; Fabri opened the Rundschreiben in April/July 1866 with the political context; he celebrated the war with Austria that had “made Prussia the Lord of Germany” and gave Germany an “unexpected predominance in Europe”; RMG 93, 113.} Fabri informed the missionaries that, while Vienna and Berlin quarreled, Germans faced a greater threat to the west: Napoleon III had set his sights on Belgium and perhaps even “a piece of the Rhineland.”\footnote{The suggestion of France’s interest in taking parts of the Rheinland is stated as a question, “ein Stück von Rheinland?” RMG 93, 111.}
Unity under the Prussian king was essential, and disunity among the German states only distracted them from the urgent threat of their mutual enemies.

Missionary reports from Southwest Africa in 1866 mirrored the concerns in the *Rundschreiben*. These reports focused on the effort to unify the Herero Chiefs under one chief, Kamaharero. Like the Germans, the Herero also faced aggressive and belligerent neighbors: Jan Jonker and the Nama. When, in 1871, the *Rundschreiben* detailed the celebrations of German unification following the Franco-Prussian War, missionaries reported on celebrations in Southwest Africa where the Herero, who had also just achieved their freedom from the Nama, joined in the celebration by shouting German nationalist slogans, affirming that German nationalism was alive abroad as well.

Regional publications of the *Missionsvereine* also linked events at home to events on the mission field. After 1849, the *Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen* of the Ravensberg Mission concluded each edition with a section titled “World Survey” (*Weltumschau*). Like the *Rundschreiben*, this section covered political, social, and religious developments in Germany and abroad. Initially, it was only a 300-word snapshot of key events, but by the end of the nineteenth century this section filled a quarter of the monthly, sometimes more.

In February 1871, the “World Survey” twinned the unification celebrations at home with a report by missionary Hugo Hahn on the outcome of violent conflicts between the

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363 On the relationship of the missionaries to Herero unity, see Gewald, 30-32, 63-64.


365 Prior to 1849 there was an occasional “Church News” (*Kirchliche Nachrichten*) section that would later include political news. In 1848, it became simply “News” (*Nachrichten*), and in 1849, it became “World Survey” (*Weltumschau*). The context is the 1848 Revolution, when Ravensberg revivalists determined to awaken their constituents spiritually and politically. The “World Survey” continued to grow in size; by the German wars of unification, it was a dominant part of the *Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen*, amounting to twelve of thirty-two pages (38%) in 1871.
Herero and Jan Jonker, captain of the Afrikaners. Hahn described the Herero military strength and weakened position of the Afrikaner captains, noting that the Herero had compelled Jan Jonker to recognize their right to exist as a unified people with control of Hereroland. At last, Hahn rejoiced, the Herero could live in peace and develop as a people without Afrikaner belligerence and oppression. Like the German black eagle in the 1871 German Coat of Arms, Hahn described Herero Chief Kamaherero as “the black lion” who had defeated the “jackal” Jonker, just as the Germans had done to Napoleon III. Hahn’s report mirrored the celebrations of German victory over France, featured in the “World Survey” that followed his report. Hahn’s narrative was more than clever writing; he elevated the missionary movement as the source of peace and freedom after a period of violent conflict and oppression.

The two reports represent a communication loop between the mission, the missionaries, and the mission network. Theodor Schmalenbach, editor of the Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen, noted that missionaries had a central role in the formation of the Herero people as free to develop without external threats. The missionaries were hard-working “ants,” he claimed: though small, they had made possible Herero unity and independence. Schmalenbach celebrated missionary Hahn as the primary negotiator and

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366 The article about Southwest Africa was based on a letter from Hahn; EMW (Feb. 1871): 47-50

367 Ibid.

368 On Theodor Schamlenbach’s role in the Ravensberg Mission, EMW, and relationship to Hugo Hahn and the Rhenish mission board, see “Protokolle der Deputationssitzungen (und der Generalversammlungen), 1884-1895, RMG 13 A/a 8; Friedrich Wilhelm Bauks, Die evangelischen Pfarrer in Westfalen von der Reformation bis 1945, Beiträge zur Westfälischen Kirchengeschichte (Bielefeld: Luther-Verlag, 1980), 440.

369 EMW (Feb. 1871): 47-50
heroic character who brought resolution to the conflicts between Kamaherero and Jonker.\textsuperscript{370}

The article ended with a prayer: as the mission’s “worrysome child” still in need of “much special nursing,” the Herero were at last in a position to receive the Christian message and become a Christian people.\textsuperscript{371}

As interpreter of events abroad and at home, Schmalenbach appeared to have deliberately linked the success in Southwest Africa to victory at home. He placed Hahn’s narrative near the end and leading into the “World Survey,” the monthly’s first opportunity to celebrate the German victory over Napoleon III and German Unification. The “World Survey” opened and ended on a serious note: “The past year is now behind us, but the misery of war is not passed … God’s hand is heavy on us, although much heavier on unfortunate France.”\textsuperscript{372} Schmalenbach then went into great detail about military battles and exploits that had led Germans to victory over France, similar to Hahn’s description of the Herero victory.\textsuperscript{373} After fourteen pages of details, the “World Survey” concluded:

What affliction and misery surrounds this world! Why is all dignity so futile, all luster so quickly lost! Why is there especially a surge now of all wealth and yet there are so much tears and blood! Blessed are those who not only know this world but also another [world] where there exists eternal peace. Living according to God’s peace, we learn to extend ourselves in this new world, the aim that this survey will serve in a world devoid of peace.\textsuperscript{374}

\textsuperscript{370} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{371} “Schmerzenskind … für unsere Mission … welches einer ganz besondern Pflege bedarf.” Ibid., 49-50.

\textsuperscript{372} “Das alte Jahr ist nun schon lange vergangen, aber der Jammer des Krieges ist noch nicht vergangen. Gottes Hand liegt schwer auf uns, aber noch viel schwerer auf dem unglücklichen Frankreich.” Ibid., 50.

\textsuperscript{373} As editor of EMW, Schmalenbach was the likely author of the “World Survey” section.

\textsuperscript{374} “Was für ein elend und jämmerlich Ding ist es doch um diese Erde! Wie ist alle Hoheit so nichtig, aller Schimmer so bald verblichen! Wie wogt es insonderheit jetzt in allen Reichen und wie sind der Thränen
At the moment of triumph, Schmalenbach reminded his readers that Germans must now turn to the higher purpose as God’s people. The “World Survey” had put the missionary, the Africans, and Germans on the same page, literally.

**African Stories: Chiefs as Thieves**

Stories about missionary work in Southwest Africa melded notions about geography, ethnicity, nation, and faith. These stories introduced German readers to the Nama, Damra, Herero, Bergdamra, and Khoi San, and made them familiar with African names, locations, customs, and beliefs. The stories were bi-directional: they described German Protestants fulfilling the mandate to “go into all the world,” while they also brought the world home, where the stories spread through the mission network, mission festivals, youth gatherings, children’s meetings, schoolteacher associations, and pastors’ sermons.

Missionary stories identified the readers with characters and situations that would rouse them to reflect on their own spiritual condition and moral behavior. For its inception in 1855, *Der kleine Missionsfreund* (*Little Friend of the Mission*) had a reflective quality. That year the stories originated from Africa (14), Borneo (7), China (6), and the German states (8). Wallmann opened the August edition with the Christian mandate to go into the “harvest field” for “the harvest is ready.” 375 However, Wallmann added with an emphasis on the visual appearance of converts, the harvest would be ready only when “the leaves turn white

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and the head of the wheat hangs down.” 376 What did Wallman have in mind here? Was this a racial reference, a religious reference, or just an agricultural descriptor? Wallmann left the interpretation open to his readers.

If Wallman’s reference to a “white harvest” was ambiguous, his notion of the process of preparing future converts was not. God would not “harvest” a proud people, he insisted, but only those “weary and burdened” and “stooped over.” 377 A few weeks earlier, the Rhenish Mission had commissioned five missionaries to Africa, and so Wallmann concluded his characterization of converts by asking readers to pray that God would “forcefully throw us out into Your harvest so that it is not damaged and the poor sinners do not become the Devil’s prey.” 378 By using “us,” Wallmann invited his readers to participate. Missionaries were on their way to Africa; those at home could have a “forceful” role in God’s harvest by praying that God would strip Africans of their pride, bend them over, and clothe them with humility, and thereby make them “white unto harvest.”

Prayer connected the reader to Africans. It was not always done on behalf of Africans: readers were also encouraged to pray along with Africans and even follow their example in prayer. In the August 1855 kleine Missionsfreund, Wallmann provided two

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376 “Aber wenn die Halme weiß werden und die Aehren ihren Kopf hangen lassen, ganz krumm darnieder.” DKMF no.8 (1855): 1. Wallmann alluded to John 4:35, which in Luther’s translation reads as; “Saget ihr nicht: Es sind noch vier Monate, so kommt die Ernte? Siehe, ich sage euch: Hebet eure Augen aus und sehet in das feld; denn es ist schon weiß zur Ernte.”

377 “Es giebt Menschen, die haben einen stolzen, steifen Sinn gegen unsern Herr Gott und tragen dabei den Kopf so hoch, als wollten sie ihm in den Himmel wachsen. Die meint der liebe Heiland hier nicht; die gehören nicht zur Ernte; Wiederum giebt es Menschen, welche mühselig und beladen sind und so gebückt vor Gott stehn, wie eine reife Weitzenähre.” DKMF no. 8 (1855): 1.

examples of “ripe heads” in the “harvest” field. The first was a Damra boy named September, presented on the cover of the monthly, clothed in a European-styled jacket (Figure 4). Wallmann told how the Damra were a “wild and coal-black” people whom the Nama had enslaved. One day September observed an older Nama praying in a prostrate position. Intrigued by this behavior, the boy began to mimic the Nama’s prayer. Wallmann noted that the boy was ignorant of what he was doing for “he was quite dumb.” Yet this act of prayer initiated September’s journey toward conversion. A series of “awakenings” followed, whereby September became aware of his proud and wayward ways. A missionary took note of his changed demeanor, invited September into his home, baptized him, and gave him the Christian name Naphthali. Wallmann’s point was clear: prayer marked the path to religious awakening. Wallmann followed with a story of a dying African child whose Christian piety inspired other African children and youth to meet for regular prayer. Their prayer sparked a revival in the community. Children reading these stories could learn how to practice Christian piety and prayer from African children and thereby spark their own revival in Germany.

The African was not always a model in missionary stories. Sometimes he could be the antithesis of Christian faith, particularly if he had once converted and then fallen back. In order for “heads” to bow, Wallmann noted, God sometimes had to “bring the proud

380 “Dies Volk wohnt in Südafrika und ist ganz wild und kohlschwartz.” Ibid.
381 “Aber er verstand nicht, was er sagte; er war ganz dumm.” Ibid., 5.
382 Ibid., 4-8.
383 Ibid.
low.”\(^{384}\) In late 1855, Wallmann described six African chiefs who “troubled” the missionaries.\(^{385}\) The young readers were asked to pray for these degenerate chiefs in this manner:

Loving Lord, these six are naughty Hottentots who bother our missionaries, Haramub, Oasib, Huisib, Unichab, Booi, and David Christian. Convert them so that they will praise your Word, and if they will not convert, then make them weak so that they cannot do as they wish to be freed from your commands, so that your word can spread widely again and be praised, as it is with us.\(^{386}\)

Wallmann’s appeal to divine wrath was not merely about “naughty” African elites; it was also about the reader. He concluded on a reflective note: “‘with us,’ that remains the question.”\(^{387}\) He asked his young readers to see their own world through the African narrative because pride was a universal problem.

Seasoned readers of the Rhenish narratives, including adult leaders of the Mission Hour for children, would recognize the names of the delinquent chiefs. All but one had converted to Christian faith and then lapsed. The name “David Christian” was an indicator that either he or his parents were converts, but his inclusion in the list indicated that he had abandoned the faith. A more subtle lesson embedded in the prayer also pertained to lapsed

\(^{384}\) “Nicht alle Menschen können mit der Ernte verglichen werden. Wenn die Halme auf dem Acker noch grün sind und die Aehren ihren Kopf hoch und grade in die Luft halten, dann sagt der Bauer nicht; ‘Das ist ein Erntefeld.’ Aber wenn die Halme weiß werden und die Aehren ihren Kopf hängen lassen, ganz krumm darnieder, dann sagt der Bauer: ‘Nun gebt Sicheln und Sensen her, jetzt geht die Ernte an.’” Ibid., 1.


\(^{386}\) “Lieber Herr, da sind unartige Hottentotten, die unsere Missionare plagen, Haramub, Oasib, Huisib, Uichab, Booi und David Christian, diese sechs, bekehre die doch, daß sie dein Wort preisen; und wollen sie sich nicht bekehren, dann leg` sie matt, daß sie nicht können, wie sie wollen und deine Boten von ihnen erlöst werden, und dein liebes Word wieder und weiter laufen konnte und gepriesen werde, wie – bei uns.” Ibid., 14-15.

\(^{387}\) “Bei uns’ – das bleibt die Frage”; Ibid., 15

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believers everywhere. Like the Africans, unrepentant and proud Germans needed God’s discipline and, if they resisted, His wrath.

As “cultural mirrors,” these narratives could exhort the faithful to action while warning the faithless of the consequences awaiting them. German readers could be shamed by the piety of some Africans and rebuked by the impiety of others. Either way, they could contemplate how it was possible that Africans could gain what Germans were abandoning, and how Africans could rise from their low state to be clothed in “white,” while unbelieving Germans would sink to the state of degenerate blacks.

*Jager and Junker Afrikaner*

Narratives about African elites -- chiefs, elders, and captains -- as thieves, liars, and murderers were moral lessons that also sensationalized racial stereotypes. Missionaries often wrote about their encounters with the African elite as a means of communicating the context of their work, their experience in Africa, and their perceptions of the Africans. They would identify which elites were hospitable, which were not, and other qualities. Elite sons were of special interest because they became students of the missionaries and would become future leaders. Chiefs could be colorful characters, wrapped in the intrigue of lies and murder associated with local wars and raiding parties. But they were not depicted as inferior by virtue of being African or as unlike “civilized” Europeans; instead missionaries often drew comparisons that highlighted similarities.

The stories did more than raise questions about personal faith; they also stressed the need for pious leadership. Stories about the Oorlam elite, who by mid-century had become a dominant force in the region, were useful narratives to address leadership issues. Rhenish missionaries wrote a number of stories about the Oorlams captain Jager Afrikaner (ca. 1760-
1823) and his son Jonker (ca. 1785-1861). The Oorlam originated in the north of South Africa and were descendants of Boer farmers and Nama and Khoi women. Those Nama who escaped from the Boers appear to have joined the Oorlam under Captain Jager Afrikaner’s leadership. Jager raided the Nama, Damra, and Boer farmers, which made him infamous among the white population as a fierce African warrior. In reality, the course of conflicts between the Oorlam and the Boers were what one might expect as the Boers pushed northward in South Africa and encroached on Oorlam territories. The Oorlam moved further north, which lessened tensions with the Boers but increased tension with the Nama and Damra living along the Orange River. Jager’s raids helped him maintain his cattle wealth. One such raid in 1811 included the Warmbad mission station, where the Oorlam killed Nama Christians living near the station. At this point Jager became a character in the earliest missionary stories from this region.

Germans first learned about Jager Afrikaner in the early nineteenth century through British missionary literature. These stories told of how the London Missionary Society was the first to make contact with the Afrikaners, after the missionaries had moved across

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388 The name “Afrikaner” did not refer to someone of Dutch descendant in South Africa. The Oorlam elites in Southwest Africa were frequent characters in Rhenish Mission literature. Jager and Jonker were the most notorious in the early part of the nineteenth century.


the Orange River. Reports in 1814 suggest that initial contact with Jager was positive, for he wanted missionaries to educate his sons.\textsuperscript{393} Jager also realized that cooperation with missionaries, who were more amiable than Boers, offered a valuable contact with the British colonial government. Likewise, missionaries had much to gain from a peaceful relationship with Jager, not the least the value of his conversion story.

The narratives surrounding Jager Afrikaner evolved in the nineteenth century to become a dramatic mission story that recast his conversion in the biblical mold of Paul.\textsuperscript{394} A Jager Afrikaner narrative appeared in the \textit{Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen} in 1856.\textsuperscript{395} The author began by instructing his reader to use the narrative in the local Mission Hour as a modern-day version of the biblical \textit{Acts of the Apostles}. Indeed, the similarity to Paul’s conversion is striking. For ease of comparison, I have aligned the two stories below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jager Afrikaner’s conversion</th>
<th>Paul’s Conversion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>\textit{Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen}</td>
<td>\textit{Acts 8, 9, 22, 26}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jager Afrikaner was an Oorlam “captain.”</td>
<td>Saul of Tarsus, was a Jewish rabbinical leader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jager oppressed and murdered early Christian converts at Warmbad.</td>
<td>Saul oppressed and murdered early Christians, who came to fear him.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{393} Ibid. This request precedes the LMS missionary Robert Moffat and suggests that reports of conflict between Jager and Europeans were either exaggerated or a later embellishment of his conversion narrative.

\textsuperscript{394} For an early version of a Jager narrative in the Rhenish Mission, see \textit{Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft}, 8 (23 April 1849): 113-126. The narrative begins with Jager, but was about his son, Jonker. The Basel Mission Society published a Jager narrative in a tract by A. Ostertag, titled \textit{Jager Afrikaner der bekehrt Räuberhauptmann} (Basel: Missionsbuchhandlung). The date of the first edition is uncertain, but by 1899 the tract was in its seventh edition. In 1930s, the Basel Mission continued to publish Ostertag’s narrative in a series titled \textit{Lichtstrahlen aus der Heidenwelt} (Basel: Evang. Missionsverlag). A number of tracts are in the United Evangelical Mission archives, Barmen.

\textsuperscript{395} EMW (1856): 342-48.
| Jager had a change of heart when he learned to read the Bible from Missionary Ebner. | Saul’s dramatic conversion took place along a remote northern road. |
| Jager changed his name to Christian after his conversion. | Saul changed his name to Paul, his Christian name. |
| After his conversion, Christian Afrikaner was still feared. | After his conversion Paul was still feared by many. |
| Robert Moffat, the first missionary to Namaqualand, sought out Christian and brought him to the religious and colonial leadership in Cape Town, the center of the British colony. | A Christian leader named Barnabus, later the leader of the first Christian missionary team, sought out Paul and brought him to the leaders in Jerusalem, the centre of Christianity. |
| Christian returned to his home in the north and began to spread Christian faith together with the missionaries. | Paul returned to Tarsus in the north, and a few years later joined Barnabus on Christianity’s first missionary trip. |

Jager’s conversion narrative was also adventurous in the same way a hunting story might tell of a pursuit after a dangerous lion or deranged elephant. It began with Jager’s raids on mission stations and neighboring villages and farms, which had led the nearby European and African populations to fear him. But in a feat of missionary prowess, the London missionary Robert Moffat decided to seek out Jager in order to “tame” the notorious African warrior. In 1815, Moffat succeeded and baptized Jager who took the name “Christian Afrikaner.” Four years later, in a dramatic display of adventurous missionary bravado, Moffat and Jager walked out of the northwest wilderness and dazzled religious and colonial officials in Cape Town. Moffat declared that the former villain had turned from his thieving ways to become a true “Christian,” as was now his baptized name. The author of the *Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen* version concluded by instructing readers to reflect on the meaning of Jager’s story:
No human heart is too defiant and wild for grace to tame and convert it: therefore, one should not give up hope, but rather arrest humans through prayer and witness. Because what is impossible for humans is possible with God.396

Jager’s story both edified readers and promoted missionary work. The lessons centered on being vigilant when striving for a religious awakening, be it in Africa or in Germany. The story also legitimized missionary work as a pacifying force on the depraved and defended Christian claims of being able to transform a sinner into a “father of his people.” Finally, Jager’s story called Europeans to push north into Southwest Africa.

Jager’s story progressed from “thief to father”; his son’s story, as told by Rhenish missionaries, was the inverse. The 1849 Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft drew this contrast between father and son in the first critical report on Jonker. Jonker’s “sad story” was one of lapsed faith, moral failure, and deception.397 Schooled by the British missionaries, Jonker had converted as a young man along with his brothers and uncles, save one, his uncle Titus Afrikaner. That Titus remained aloof to the Christian message may reflect a wise strategy on the part of the Afrikaner family in building a relationship with the missionary: one member of the elite family would be able to uphold the traditional expectations of the people who had not yet adopted or adapted to Christian ways. The author tells his readers that Jonker, however, also made a conscious decision not to follow his father’s faith. Instead, he set his sights on becoming “a great captain,” rejected piety, and pursued “the fire” of his lust, passion and sin, which “extinguished the light of grace” and

396 “Daß kein Menschenherz so trotzig und wild ist, die Gnade kann es zähmen, kein Mensch so verkehrt, die Gnade kann ihn bekehre: darum soll man an keinem Menschen verzagen, sondern mit Gebet und Zeugniß anhalten. Denn was bei den Menschen unmöglich ist, das ist bei Gott möglich.” EMW (1856): 348.

397 “Traurig ... Geschichte.” BRMG (1849): 114. The author was anonymous and likely not one of the three missionaries in Southwest Africa.
“diminished the fire of the Holy Spirit in him.”

As a second-generation “heathen Christian,” Jonker’s commitment to the Christian faith was in jeopardy from the start. The narrator claimed that Jager had admonished his family while on his deathbed to “watch out not to fall again into transgressions.” But when Jager died, conflict broke out between the sons. Jonker became “power hungry,” broke with his brothers in 1823, and moved north to lay claim to his father’s chieftaincy. He did not follow his father’s example in taking a Christian name, which was a further indication that his commitment was in question.

One of the problems for Jonker, from a missionary perspective, was that he chose to live in an environment that was not natural to him and his people. According to the Herder-Ritter paradigm, he would not be able to unite the external natural world with the internal spirit of his people in order to grow and develop according to the divine plan. When Jonker decided to move his people across the Orange River and push north into present-day Windhoek, any effort to carry out religious renewal would only frustrate these “foreigners.”

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398 “Junker hatte nur zu wohl gemerkt, was über ihn zwischen dem Statthalter und seinem Vater verhandelt wurde. Seit der Zeit verließ ihn die Lust nicht, ein großer Captain zu werden. Er war sonst ein frommes junges Blut; aber er pflegte selber von seinem Herzen zu sagen: ‚Mein Herz ist wie ein Zunderdose; wenn man den Deckel abnimmt und schlägt Feuer darüber, so fängt es zu brennen an; wenn man aber den Deckel wieder darüber thut, so gehen die Funken aus und wenn ich mein herz mit Sünden bedecke so verlöscht das Gnadenlicht.’ Das Gelüst nach Herrschaft ist bei Junker der Deckel auf der Dose gewesen, der bisher immer wieder das Feuer gedämpft hat, welches der heilige Geist in ihm entzunder hatte. Ich will im Kurzen seine Geschichte erzählen.” BRMG (1849): 113-14.

399 “Hütet euch, nicht mehr in die Uebertretungen zu fallen, zu welchen ich euch früher oft verführt habe; suchet vielmehr Gott und er wird sich von euch finden lassen und euch auf seinem Wege leiten.” Ibid. This admonition may well be for the audience.

400 The practice of taking Christians names at the time of baptism was common throughout the mission fields and not an invention of the Rhenish Mission.
in Southwest Africa.\textsuperscript{401} The author of Jonker’s story in 1849 took pains to describe the geography of the region as an unnatural environment for the Oorlam people and their young Captain. The area had belonged to the Nama, Damra, and Herero, but not the Oorlam.\textsuperscript{402} This observation was a second clue that Jonker’s religious commitments were in question: it would not be possible for the Oorlam to develop their divine character in a strange environment.

It was not for lack of trying that Jonker’s faith had failed. The narrator told how, before missionaries arrived, Jonker built a church and obligated his people to attend services. He sent out a call for a missionary to come, but when no one came, Jonker assumed the biblical role of priest-king by preaching, teaching, and even baptizing in his church. He appeared to have welcomed and embraced the Christian faith and sought to “father” the faith in his people. As Damra and Nama joined his people, Jonker became in time “one of the most powerful captains who ruled the Nama.”\textsuperscript{403} But without a missionary and removed from his natural context, Jonker’s efforts, the narrator concluded, were doomed.

Jonker’s story evolved toward familiar themes of lapsed faith, immoral behaviour, and theft. Jonker had not eradicated his and his people’s heathen instincts. The narrator asked his readers to reflect on this failure:

Yes, you can certainly tell yourself that the outlook was not bright. Jonker went to war, stole, hunted, drank his warm honey beer, took two wives, and refused to

\textsuperscript{401} Fremdlinge; BRMG (1849): 114.

\textsuperscript{402} He referred to the Herero as \textit{Viehdamra}, which by 1849 missionaries would know were the Herero. This is further evidence that the author was not in Southwest Africa but likely in Barmen. First Inspector Wallmann took charge of the African field, so it is probable that he wrote this narrative.

\textsuperscript{403} BRMG (1849): 115.
Jonker needed a missionary: “In such times it is best to have a good preacher.” But the only Christian missionary was old Schmelen in Komaggas, who was too far away and too ill to come. Left without moral guidance, Jonker slid back into heathen ways, and the Oorlam people and their Afrikaner Captain returned to a state of degeneration. The message was clear: missionaries were essential for preserving the spiritual condition of a people.

In time, Jonker got more than he requested. A British explorer, James Edward Alexander, came through Jonker’s area in 1838 on his way back to Europe. According to the narrator, Jonker pleaded with him to ask British and German mission societies to send missionaries. The Rhenish Mission in Barmen responded and ordained its first three missionaries for South Africa in 1841. The German-Latvian Carl Hugo Hahn and Heinrich Kleinschmidt crossed the Orange River in 1842 to set up a “New Elberfeld,” a mission station located next to Jonker’s settlement. When they arrived they discovered people who were “tremendously sunken,” yet desirous of piety. At first, Hahn was delighted by Jonker’s warm reception. But that optimism would vanish.

New Elberfeld appeared to be an ideal situation for religious reform. Missionaries re-established Christian worship, which Jonker again made mandatory and began preparations to conduct baptisms and celebrate the Eucharist. According to the author,

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405 “Indessen besser ist besser und wenn man einen guten Prediger haben kann.” Ibid.


407 Ibid., 120.
some obstacles faced the missionaries because the Oorlam were steeped in “honey drinking and sexual immorality, from the oldest to the youngest of just five or six years-old, who became pregnant.” A German reader in 1849 might recognize features of the chaotic social situation in New Elberfeld. The missionary story helped align the two contexts.

Soon the missionaries’ elation turned to disappointment in New Elberfeld, and disappointment turned to disgust with the Oorlam chief. Worse still, competition arrived. Jonker had also invited British Methodists to set up a mission station, or perhaps the Methodists had simply responded to Jonker’s call at the same time as the Rhenish Mission did. In any case, Jonker found himself with two groups of missionaries in his entourage, a remarkable coup for a chief in such a remote region. The Rhenish missionaries were not optimistic about sharing their mission field. How could they bring about a pure religion under such conditions? Hugo Hahn wrote in his journal of the deep sense of betrayal he felt. Jonker’s crimes, according to Hahn, were dishonesty, arrogance, deception, and wicked scheming against the missionary. In a Pietist framework, these were some of the worst signs of moral depravity.

408 “Honigbiertrinken, Hurerei und Unzucht von den Aeltesten bis zu den Kindern von 5-6 Jahren herunter ging furchterlich im Schwange.” Ibid.

409 “Unsere Missionare hatten ihm oft gesagt, daß sie mit den Methodisten nicht zusammen an einem Orte wirken könnten, und Junker hatte schon ein paar Mal auf das Entschiedenste den Ansinnen der Methodisten geantwortet.” Ibid., 121-22.


411 The Bible provided the mandate for moral behavior. Among the many sins one could commit, none were more likely to provoke the wrath of God (or the missionaries in this case) than notorious “seven sins” outlined in Proverbs 6:16-19 – “There are six things the LORD hates/seven that are detestable to him:/haughty eyes/a lying tongue/hands that shed innocent blood/a heart that devises wicked schemes/feet that are quick to rush into evil/a false witness who pours out lies/and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers.” Hahn saw Jonker as guilty of all seven.
Another way to read Hahn’s remarks is to recognize that it was not so much that Jonker had left the faith but rather that the German missionaries had abandoned Jonker. As the conflict between the ever-pious Lutherans and the seemingly lax Methodists increased, Jonker appealed to both groups to work together. But at a time when Lutheran pastors were re-digging the confessional divides between themselves and Reformed and Catholic Christians back home, a compromise on the mission field was impossible. Hahn closed down “New Elberfeld,” packed his oxen, and moved north to establish “New Barmen,” a mission station among the Herero people. According to the narrator, the Captain did everything in his power to prevent Hahn from leaving. He tried to coax Hahn back with gifts and promises, but Hahn resisted. Jonker, Hahn concluded, could not be trusted. In time, even the Methodists left Jonker; it would appear that God, together with his missionaries, had moved on. Jonker’s slide back into immoral behavior was deemed a consequence of having turned his back on the missionary. And history, at least as the missionaries told it, appeared to agree because Jonker Afrikaner and his son Jan Jonker lost power in Southwest Africa.

From a “father,” Jonker had deteriorated to the epitome of human degradation with an “antichrist drive.” Readers were told that, after 1848, Jonker went about murdering and plundering the Damra, contemplated a war of extinction against his enemies, heaped “ridicule and scorn” on the missionaries, and alienated Friedrich Wilhelm Swartbooi, the

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412 Evidence for Jonker’s efforts to reconcile himself with the two missionary groups comes from the Tagebücher of Missionary Kleinschmidt; “Kleinschmidt, Franz-Heinrich, 1844-1854,” RMB 1.573, see report for 3 May to 2 Sept., 1845.

413 BRMG (1849): 124.

414 “Antichristischen Treiben.” Ibid., 125.
Nama Chief and friend of Rhenish missionaries. 415 This “sad story,” the narrative concluded, “belongs to the dark side of mission experience.” 416 Still, there was a moral to be gleaned: Jonker’s story should provoke those at home to pray for the missionaries and the people he oppressed. “Then,” said the author, “I will have what I wanted.” 417

Stories of the waywardness of Jonker and other chiefs resounded until World War II. 418 These wayward elites were depicted as robbers and trouble makers. They committed gruesome acts, chopping off the feet of women and slaying peaceful chiefs, all described in detail in the children’s narratives. But Jonker stood out as the worst perhaps because he had once shown such great promise. When the colonial wars in Southwest Africa began in 1904, wars that led to the genocide of Herero and Nama, these stories of the violence of past African chiefs -- including Jonker and Nogoro, “the fat Ovambo chief” who had also spurned the missionaries -- featured in the children’s literature of the Rhenish Mission, in place of reporting on the plight of the Herero and Nama. 419 These reports formed a chilling mythology of how depraved Africans could become.

The notion of belligerent and thieving African chiefs had utility for the people who would one day look on Southwest Africa as their possession. In the hands of the future

415 “Verteilungskrieg; Spott und Hohn.” Ibid., 124-25.


417 “Es gibt Missionsfreunde, die mögen die Mission nur im rosenrothen Kleide sehen. Die werden dies Blatt mit Misbehagen aus der hand legen. Ich habe ihnen aber die Geschichte vom Deckel auf der Dose nicht schenken können. Es steckt doch eine seine Moral in ihr, und wenn’s im Topfe kochen soll, so gehört Holz darunter. Wenn du jetzt ein andächtiges Vaterunser für Hahn und Rath und Kolbe und Kleinschmidt und Vollmer und Jan Bam und die armen Damra und den armen Capitain von Windhoek und vielleicht für not einen betest, so habe ich, was ich wollte.” Ibid., 126.

418 Most notably with Heinrich Vedders’ multiple description in his history, Das alte Südwestafrika: Südwestafrikas Geschichte bis zum Tode Mahareros 1890 (Berlin: Warneck, 1934).

419 On Vedder’s negative depiction of Jonker, see Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, 221-37, 287-320.
colonizers, these narratives presented an “African” who was dangerous and not to be trusted. There was no reason to expect African elites to stick to treaties and agreements, for they would break with them when the terms were not longer convenient. The narratives also supported the notion that “the African” could be a threat to the European, where a measure of “discipline” might be needed to bend “the African’s” pride and arrogance. Only later did it become clear exactly what devastating forms this discipline could take.

Did missionaries misunderstand the people and cultures in Southwest Africa when describing cattle raids as theft (Rauberei)? Brigitte Lau argues that Rauberei was a form of enforced taxation used against subjugated people who failed to give their tribute. Yet missionaries were not ignorant. Rhenish missionaries, including Hahn, Kleinschmidt, and later Viehe, Irle, and Vedder, devoted their lives to studying the people they had come to missionize. They participated in the political conflicts and observed up close the implications that these raids had on the African communities. Rather than having misunderstood, their describing the raids as “thieving” was a conscious choice made for reasons rooted in the utility of the narrative for the home audience. Characterizing Africans as thieves, murders, liars, drunkards, and mischievous schemers was more effective than nuanced descriptions of the political and cultural dynamics of Africans.

Indeed, missionaries did have a complex view of their African neighbors. In the years 1842 to 1844, when Jonker was still in good favor with the missionaries, he carried out occasional raids on neighboring Nama and Damra groups. Yet Hahn made little of these

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actions in his journals, and the raids did not appear in stories or published reports. Later, after he had left Jonker, Hahn rarely referred to Jonker in his private journal as a thief or murderer. At times their relationship appeared to be quite friendly, or at least cordial. But the official image, the one translated back to Germany and recast for a German readership, was that Jonker had abandoned the ways of his father, deceived the missionary, and returned to thieving and murdering. As a villain in the missionary story, Jonker represented the rejection of the gospel and its messenger.

The post-1848 period was a critical moment for the revivalists and missionary enthusiasts in Westphalia and the Upper Rhineland. Revolutionary furor heightened anxieties that Germany might succumb to the rabble of liberalism, socialism, and communism. Protestant revivalists sought ways to rescue society and turn the tide of religious and moral degeneration before it was too late. Missionary stories were antidotes to revolution. They inoculated readers through warnings about human degeneracy from afar that reflected depravity at home. African chiefs became illustrations of God’s corrective discipline, as youths were directed to pray that God would unleash his wrath on the chiefs and all who erred if they would not submit to the Gospel. The terms of “weakened” (matt) and “stooped over” (gebückt) anticipated the later vocabulary of “crushed and “destroyed” (vernichtet), which became reality during the Southwest African wars.
No doubt you are all familiar with the name Hereroland and the black people, the Herero. They are not without beauty, nor without talent, and can readily gain the interest of Europeans. Something proper can become of them if they would only grasp the one thing that is necessary.

~ F. W. G. Viehe, *Der kleine Missionsfreund*, 1871

Early in the German colonization of Southwest Africa (1885-1916), Rhenish missionary Gottlieb Viehe invited young readers to reflect on how Africans might view them. He titled this inverted reflection, “How the Herero assess Europeans.” He recounted how, one evening while on a journey through the desert, he overheard some Herero men around the fire discussing “the Europeans” and “especially what they think of Germans.”

The men debated a number of critical points about the “strange” Europeans who seemed to “lack understanding.” Some men spoke of how the Germans, especially the missionaries, wore themselves out with hard work, while others noted that the hard work meant Germans

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423 “Wunderliche ... hätten wenig Verstand.” Ibid.
did not experience hunger and trouble as the Herero did. But the Herero men all agreed that Europeans were indeed industrious, even if to a fault.

The discussion turned to the benefits of European material goods. Some men noted that the cost of purchasing goods had impoverished the Herero; others claimed that the proliferation of guns had depleted their wildlife. But the real evidence of white ignorance, according to Viehe’s night-watchers, was the failure to adopt Herero ways while living in a desert environment: Europeans did not fit the African geography. One Herero concluded the discussion by noting that although whites lacked certain skills, they remained superior to blacks because of their special knowledge and connection to God:

The white man is rather limited in certain aspects; he has no observation skills and is easily duped; but God has taught him many wonderful things that the blacks lack, and for that reason God has favored him to stand over the blacks and be their lord.424

This affirmation and criticism of European, and especially German, qualities, invited young readers to reflect on about what Africans might think of them.

Whether Viehe had indeed captured actual Herero ethnical ponderings, or if instead the story was a construction of Viehe’s imagination, we cannot know. But the story does reveal the author’s intention when writing missionary stories for children. As a leading missionary in Southwest Africa and an author of narratives in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Viehe’s stories cloaked racial notions in the reflective quality that translated his experiences and observations of Africans into religious and moral lessons for Germans back home. As V. Y. Mudimbe argues, colonization consisted of “procedures of

424 “Der weiße Mann in gewissen Beziehungen recht beschränkt sei, daß er z. B. keine Beobachtungsgabe hätte und daß man ihn leicht überlisten könne; daß ihm Gott aber viele wunderbare Sachen gelehrt habe, welche dem Schwarzen vorenthalten seien, und daß er eben deshalb als Günstling Gottes über dem Schwarzen stände und dessen Herr sei.” Ibid., 104.
acquiring, distributing, and exploiting lands ... the policies of domesticating natives ... and the manner of managing ancient organizations and implementing new modes of production.”

He adds that these activities were to benefit the colonizers, not the colonized. After 1885, Rhenish missionaries worked parallel to the colonial enterprise: collecting, distributing, and shaping the image of “the African” in order to domesticate it for their readers as part of an effort to influence German religious culture.

These stories also represent a growing acceptance and justification for the violence Africans experienced under the German colonial system. Missionaries took part in the bidirectional dialogue on “scientific racism” that evolved during the nineteenth century and that addressed German self-perceptions as part of what they thought of others. They distributed “knowledge” about people from afar through their networks and German ethnological societies. But the missionary story also made a distinct contribution. War, conflict, death, and divine chastisement filled the pages of their narratives to form a schema through which members of the Rhenish Mission -- its missionaries, leadership, and support network -- could interpret disastrous events in Africa. This chapter builds on my argument that missionaries instrumentalized notions about “the African” as tools for religious and moral self-reflection. Missionaries also provided ways of thinking about Africans that linked devotional themes to an acceptance, even expectance, of extreme hardship and violence against “stubborn” and “stiff-necked” Africans.


The focus here is on the stories of Gottlieb Viehe. Viehe wove themes familiar to readers into stories and reports that represent formative notions about “the African” and demonstrate how missionary literature spoke to events back home. His stories appeared from the years leading to German unification and colonialism up to the end of the century, a period when notions of “Germanness” were still fluid. Through these years, Viehe intensified the reflective quality in his stories and increased their racial content. He saw a divine hand at work in the colony, which he framed in parables of the increasing violence experienced by the people of Southwest Africa.

Connecting *Heimat* and *Feld*

The history of colonial German Southwest Africa is incomplete without investigating missionaries. Jan Bart Gewald and Ole Oermann, among other scholars, have outlined the roles of Rhenish missionaries leading to the genocide in 1904-1907.427 No other mission society succeeded in establishing itself in Southwest Africa until the end of the nineteenth century, while the Rhenish Mission invested nearly six decades into this work, more than any other European institution or government. If, as Raphael Lemkin claimed, genocide often emerges from an extended process of violence, the long presence of missionaries in Southwest Africa alone suggests they were more than passive observers.428 I analyze the nature and significance of their involvement by examining what missionaries said in the stories and reports that connected the mission field to the metropole. What was the content


that connected Africa to Germany, where Germans accepted violence toward a people who had been the focus of so much missionary effort, prayer, and financial sacrifice? How did the content of missionary writings link to genocide in 1904-1907?

In a 2011 forum for *German History*, Glenn Penny asked whether historians of modern Germany can get out from under the shadow of National Socialism and the Holocaust.429 My study faces a similar challenge: should the German genocide of the Herero be the defining end of this inquiry? Geoff Eley and S. Jonathan Wiesen weighed in on Penny’s question with a helpful perspective. They noted “a disquieting cynicism” in the discussion that followed.430 While acknowledging that new perspectives are still needed, Eley and Wiesen argue that the history of 1933-1945 has taken new shape precisely because of fresh approaches that continue to be applied to German history. Eley and Wiesen call for even more longitudinal studies and more intensive short-term investigations that explore new angles on the history surrounding the Nazi period.431 Even well-worn themes like “race,” they point out, can be renewed through a fresh perspective.

In this chapter, I arrive at a crucial point in my longitudinal study of missionary notions about Africans. Borrowing from Bradley Naranch’s study of Bernhard Dernburg, Director of the Colonial Division of the German Foreign Office (1906-1910), I look at “the exotic language and images of exploration of the non-European world … that often blurred

429 “Forum: German History beyond National Socialism,” *German History* 29, no. 3 (2011): 470-84. The question was posed as, “Should we continue to allow National Socialism and the Holocaust to structure our perceptions of what constitutes a ‘significant question’ to bring to the German past, or are there empirical and ethical reasons for moving to new perspectives?”


431 Eley and Wiesen offer one such idea: trends in material culture that have shaped the way individuals interact with their political, social, and economic contexts.
the boundaries between colonial and national discourses.” Naranch’s study shows how “evidence of imperial experience” informed “colonial knowledge and awareness” that was used to reshape notions about colonial people and, at the same time, national identity. Dernburg moved toward a more liberal perspective as a result of his “imperial experience” in East Africa. Here my study differs from Naranch’s. I show the opposite move in Gottfried Viehe toward a racialized perspective that condemned the indigenous person to destruction.

Rhenish missionaries had a presence that preceded and outlasted the colony. During the colonial period, they had a closer relationship with the victims of colonial violence than any other colonial agency or office. Missionary stories flowed through mission networks and connected Germans to Africans. Arbitrary distinctions between the Germans and Africans alone would not serve the missionary network; the stories also made guarded comparisons. Viehe opened his reflective narrative in 1886 by reminding readers that the Herero were fellow countrymen (Landsleute) of the German Empire:

> The Herero currently remain under the protection of our Emperor and in a manner of speaking, you should deem them to be your compatriots or at least consider them as belonging to the Empire.434

While this formulation sounds straightforward, the title of the article, “How the Herero Assess the European and especially the German,” implied something more subtle: Africans and Germans were distinct, they stood apart, and they formed ideas about each other. Viehe alerted the reader that the character in the mirror was also staring back, making judgments

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433 Naranch, 310-13.

about the reader, and recognizing distinctions. Indeed, Viehe made explicit in this story that missionary narratives bridged the colony and the metropole, bringing African and German together, even while emphasizing their difference.

**German Unification and Colonialism**

If the Napoleonic reforms in Prussia heightened anxieties for Protestants living in Catholic-dominated regions, as was the case in much of Westphalia, German unification in 1871 further increased such anxieties. The new nation included even more Catholics, as well as more Jews and more Poles.\(^{435}\) Catholics were not about to convert to Protestantism as was evident by the end of the *Kulturkampf*. When Prussia extended its influence to all of Germany in 1871, Prussian Protestants became anxious about the increased presence of Catholics. In particular, they worried that Catholics, and especially Jesuits, would have a defining role in education and family policies.\(^{436}\) The *Kulturkampf* (1871-1878) was in part an aggressive Protestant effort to quell Catholicism.\(^{437}\) It subsided as the struggle against socialism intensified and Protestants relinquished the inter-Christian battle for the ideological struggle against internationalism and atheism.


When the German states united under the Prussian monarch in 1871, various groups emerged to define the idea of “being German.” Helmut Walser Smith notes that mid-nineteenth-century Germany consisted of competing and often contradictory memories of the past as beacons for national unity.\footnote{On contested memories over the Thirty Years War and Gustav Adolf as liberator or conqueror, see Helmut Walser Smith, \textit{German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995) and \textit{The Continuities of German History: Nation, Religion, and Race across the Long Nineteenth Century} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 102-03.} Local interests took on national importance; competitive regionalisms vied to be the most authentic expression of “Germanness,” as Celia Applegate has noted in her study of \textit{Heimat} in Saarland.\footnote{Celia Applegate, \textit{A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).} Religion, including the revivalist and missionary movements, also competed for a defining role in German culture.\footnote{Michael Gross explores how this competition materialized in a competition between Catholic and Protestants through their involvement in missions and revivalism during the nineteenth century; Michael B. Gross, “the Catholic Missionary Crusade and the Protestant Revival in Nineteenth-Century Germany,” in \textit{Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Germany, 1800-1914}, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 245-65.} Emerging from the memory of a divisive and violent past, peculiar religious groups within German Protestantism and Catholicism sought a national pulpit from which to expound their version of Christian virtue and character. How were Germans to make sense of this cacophony of identity politics?

Even before unification, Germans were thinking about expansion. Christopher Clark identifies debates underway during the \textit{Sattelzeit}, about the “Christian State” and Jewish emancipation, as efforts to define “Germanness.” Bradley Naranch shows that a pre-1871 Austro-Prussian rivalry in the Far East linked overseas expansion to domestic unification.\footnote{Bradley D. Naranch, “Made in China: Austro-Prussian Overseas Rivalry and the Global Unification of the German Nation,” \textit{Australian Journal of Politics and History} 56, no. 3 (2010): 366-380.} The Rhenish Mission too was ahead of the game. Already in 1863 it had already set up a
mission colony and trading company in Southwest Africa at Otjimbingwe. Carl Hugo Hahn, frustrated by his quarrels with Jonker Afrikaner, his lack of progress with the Herero, and his failure to set up a new mission in northern Ovamboland, convinced Barmen to fund a model mission colony in Southwest Africa.

This colony of German families was to exemplify for the Herero how to live in a Christian community and demonstrate the benefits of agricultural practices. Hahn claimed that this utopian experiment would also show those at home how a united German Christian community ought to function. The trading company did not make enough money to keep the project afloat, and the Rhenish Mission abandoned the idea in 1880, at which time Hahn took a pastorate in South Africa. Friedrich Fabri, the Director of the Rhenish Mission, took up the cause of German colonies, even becoming a colonial official himself in 1885.

Bismarck, for his part, was initially unenthusiastic about colonialism. Yet in 1885 he decided to bring Germany into the colonial race as part of an effort to combat rising socialism. Colonial pursuits, he hoped, would direct popular energies toward empire building by fuelling nationalism and providing new opportunities for the under-employed. Ambitious imperialists, including the explorer Karl Peters (1856-1918, East Africa), the Bremen merchant Franz Adolf Eduard Lüderitz (1834-1886, Southwest Africa), and the explorer and medical doctor Gustav Nachtigal (1834-1885, West Africa), persuaded Bismarck to declare a protectorate over German interests in Africa. Within a few years

442 Der Rheinischen Missionshandelsgesellschaft, 1863-Menzel, Rheinische Mission, 83-89.

443 Menzel claims that Fabri wanted to make the mission colony and trading company profitable for the Rhenish Mission, which ultimately alienated Carl Hugo Hahn, who left the Rhenish Mission as the mission colony was disintegrating. In 1879, at the same time, Fabri wrote his treatise, Bedarf Deutschland der Kolonien? See Christian Albrecht, Friedrich Fabri und seine Bedeutung für Missionsgeschichte (Nordstedt: GRIN, 2009).
Germany had also entered the New Guinea islands, Samoa, and the Shantung Peninsula in China. Colonial and imperial expansion mobilized economic, intellectual, and religious interests in Germany. Expansion generated new enthusiasm for Germans venturing abroad and challenged existing interests at home. New mission societies appeared with interests in the German colonies: among them was the Bethel Mission Society, located outside Bielefeld, which began its work in East Africa in 1885 and competed with the Rhenish Mission Society for support from Westphalia.

Older German mission societies, including the Rhenish Mission, had a more complex role in colonialism. By 1884, the Rhenish Mission was already engaged in three of the six regions where Germans sought and gained a colonial presence: Southwest Africa (including parts of Botswana), Pacific Islands (New Guinea and Kaiser-Wilhelmland), and China (Jiaozhou Bay). The three remaining regions – East Africa (Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, and the Kionga Triangle in Mozambique), West Africa (Togo and Cameroon), and Samoa – became mission fields of other German mission societies. The


Rhenish Mission was also active on the islands of Borneo, Sumatra, and Nias, which became Dutch colonies. Missionaries’ cultural and geographic knowledge made them important partners for colonial governments, even if colonial governments were not always congenial partners for missionaries.

Gottlieb Viehe: A Missionary

The Rhenish Mission recruited missionaries capable of communicating ideas in language that would enhance support from the mission network. Missionaries needed to be eager for adventure yet grounded in the home milieu. Friedrich Wilhelm Gottlieb Viehe (1839-1901) exemplified the ideal candidate for the Rhenish Mission; he grew up within the Westphalian missionary culture to become a field superintendent for the Herero mission, the principal of the Augustineum Seminary, where missionaries trained indigenous evangelists and teachers, and a prolific story teller.

From birth, Viehe was part of a Protestant missionary culture. His family came from Menninghausen in Ravensberg, the heartland of support for the Rhenish Mission in Southwest Africa. His childhood pastor was Theodor Schmalenbach, editor of the Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen and regional promoter of revivalism and the missionary movement. When Viehe was five years old, his family immigrated to Bethlehem, Indiana, where they experienced first-hand “primitive living conditions.” Tragedy struck when


449 Viehe wrote his Lebenslauf after schooling in Barmen and before leaving for Southwest Africa, 27 Nov. 1866, RMG 551; see also RMG 1.603a Viehe, Friedrich Wilhelm Gottlieb, vol. 1, 1866-79.

450 Rechte Urwaldsleben; from Viehe's eulogy, BRMG, 1901, 69.
Veihe’s mother passed away. At the funeral, a student from the Barmen Mission School preached a compelling sermon, which Viehe would later recall as the moment of his evangelical awakening.\textsuperscript{451} He returned to Ravensberg and entered the Barmen Mission School in 1862. His training occurred in the decade preceding German unification, making war a formative theme in his life.

Viehe’s career started like that of other Rhenish missionaries. His schooling and training began in Barmen, where he became familiar with the Rhenish mission fields by drawing on communications between the mission house and field. After four years of schooling, the mission society ordained him and sent him to Southwest Africa. Once there, he was stationed first in Otjimbingue for language training. Three years later, his wife, Minnette Vogt from Gütersloh, joined him. After language training in 1871, Viehe pioneered a work in Omaruru (Okozondje). In Omaruru, the family had four children, but death was never far away, and his first two children died young.\textsuperscript{452} After a furlough in 1889, Viehe returned to the field as superintendent of the Herero mission and principal of the indigenous seminary.

As Viehe matured in his missionary work, he also developed as a seasoned raconteur. Among the Rhenish missionaries of the late nineteenth century, Viehe was one of the most prolific. His eighty-three reports and narratives evolved from geographical themes in the 1860s and 1870s to cultural themes after 1876. Most of these appeared in three of the regular publications of the Rhenish Mission: at least forty-eight reports can be found in the

\textsuperscript{451} In the 1840s the Barmen Mission School trained pastors for ethnic German communities abroad. Two student preachers, Tölke and Hoffmeister, worked in Bethlehem; Ibid.

\textsuperscript{452} Friedrich died shortly after birth in 1870, and Heinrich at age eleven in 1883; cf. DKMF, 10 (1883); Lebenslauf 136; VEMA Rhenish Missionaries biography card; BRMG, (March 1901), 67-71.
Rhenish Mission’s monthly reports, twenty-two narratives in Der kleine Missionsfreund, and two narratives in Barmen Missionsblatt.\textsuperscript{453} The mission society published separately three of Viehe’s tracts.\textsuperscript{454} He also produced ethnological and linguistic studies on Herero grammar, language, and culture for a more sophisticated readership back home.\textsuperscript{455} The Rhenish Mission published five scholarly treatises and three more articles were published outside the mission.\textsuperscript{456} Gustav Warneck’s missiological journal, Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift, published five articles by Viehe from 1878 to 1901 on topics ranging from linguistic studies to the Catholic-Protestant conflict in Southwest Africa.\textsuperscript{457}

The Barmen leadership had good reasons to look to Viehe for stories and insight into the Herero culture that would relate back home. The dual role of superintendent and principal gave him close ties to Herero youth and access to a wealth of information from various Herero circles. Drawing on such sources, Viehe constructed stories that exemplify the reflexive and racial characteristics of missionary narratives toward the end of the century.

\textsuperscript{453} From 1866 to 1956, at least ninety-three reports in BRMG refer to Viehe’s missionary work.

\textsuperscript{454} G. Viehe, “Reiseberichte eines Herero Missionars,” “Johannes Kariko,” and “Unter den Hereros”; belonging to the archival holdings of VEMA.

\textsuperscript{455} According to the VEMA biographical card on Gottlieb Viehe, he published articles on “Formules” (1873), “Mission und Zivilisation” (1885), and “Grammatik des Otjiherero” (1897). Viehe’s academic interests extended to natural science in Southwest Africa, and Klaus Dierks credits him with having established the first meteorological station there in 1885; K. Dierks, Chronology of Namibian History: From Pre-historical Times to Independent Namibia (Windhoek: Namibia Scientific Society, 2002).

\textsuperscript{456} G. Viehe, “Die eingeborenen Christen im Hereroland” (1884), “Eine Grammatik auf Kongosprache” (1884), “Die Lage der RMG in Hererolande” (1890), and “Nochmal die Gottesname b. d. Bantu” (1895), and one missing title (1884); see Viehe’s bibliographical card at VEMA.

\textsuperscript{457} The Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift also contain thirteen reports from 1878 until 1902 that appear to be either by Viehe or drawing on his work: AMZ (1878): 415; (1882): 66-85, 267-69; (1884): 481-90; (1888) 339-45; (1889): 233, 294; (1890): 158-70, 440; (1894): 450-51; (1895): 444-47; (1901): 239, 408, 429; (1902): 499.
Viehe on War

Conflict and unity were recurring themes in stories by the Rhenish missionaries. These were relevant topics at home, where the Rhenish Mission hoped to consolidate its network, even as Prussia sought to unify German states under King Wilhelm I. The three wars of unification during the 1860s seemed to confirm the paradoxical idea that violent struggle (Kampf) could unify, renew, restore, and strengthen a people. Viehe’s early narratives about the Herero in Southwest Africa reflected this assumption.

War themes featured in missionary stories during the decade prior to unification. Viehe was not the only missionary from Southwest Africa to write about war and conflict in the 1860s. Missionary Peter Heinrich Brincker (1836-1904) provided extensive reports about the 1863 Herero-Nama wars that the Rhenish Mission published in June and July 1864, at the peak of the Prussian-Danish War. Missionslente at home also stressed the importance of the Southwest African wars. At the 1864 Wuppertal mission week, Pastor Lösslad from Posen stressed the importance of the wars in Southwest Africa by noting that “the future of our African Mission is bound to the Herero Mission.” The Hereroland “race war” (Rassenkampf), he added, threatened the very existence of the mission.

Although the physical geographies of Germany and Southwest Africa are different, missionaries construed the political geography in the mid-nineteenth century as similar. Just  

458 The Barmen Missionsblatt also published stories of war and conflict in “Damraland” in 1864; see, BMB, 19 (1864), 1-2. During the 1866 Austro-Prussian War, the Barmen Missionsblatt ran a series titled “Des Herrn Krieg und Sieg,” which gave an overview of missionary success around the world; BMB, 15 & 16 (1866).


461 Ibid.
like the Germans, surrounding powers boxed in the Herero and threatened their existence, wealth, and autonomy. Only through unity would the Herero, and the Germans, establish their presence in the midst of foes and with outsiders living among them. During the period of the three wars of German unification, Rhenish missionaries emphasized the ongoing struggles facing the Herero and their cousins to the north -- the Ovambo -- and their bitter enemies to the south -- the Nama. A question persisted about what to do with the Damra who lived within Herero-dominated areas and often in a close, but subservient, relationship.

The San lived for the most part separate from the Herero in the desert regions. Missionaries could imagine that geographic and ethnic dynamics and conflicts appeared similar, if not identical, to those in Germany.

When Viehe arrived in Southwest Africa he was well acquainted with war. He had entered adulthood and his missionary career surrounded by war. The American Civil War (1861-1865) had begun before he left his parents’ homestead in Indiana, and the Danish-Prussian War of 1864 occurred during his third year of studies in Barmen. Although the war lasted over eight months, Viehe’s studies continued uninterrupted. When the Prussian-Austrian war broke out in the summer of 1866, Viehe was in the middle of preparing for his exams, ordination, and commission to Southwest Africa. The war delayed the usual summer ordination and commissioning service until 17 October, but everything went ahead as planned, and Viehe joined the group of mission colonists bound for Otjimbingue in 1866. His field training took place under the veteran missionary Hugo Hahn, before he began a

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462 Three factors contributed to the delay; the Austro-Prussian War, an outbreak of cholera, and a shortage of funds, see BRMG, 11 (November 1866), 321-26.
seventeen-year pioneering mission in Omaruru. One month after he had begun at Omaruru, word came of the Franco-Prussian War (July 1870 - May 1871).

The wars at home paralleled wars in Southwest Africa among the Herero, Nama, and Ovambo. When Viehe arrived in Otjimbingue in early 1867, the mission station and its surrounding Herero people had been under attack from Oorlam raiding parties to the south. By the end of that year, the Afrikaner captain Jan Jonker returned to attack the Herero who lived near the mission colony.\(^{463}\) Herero Chief Maharero (Kamaharero) retaliated ten days later with what Missionary Hahn called a “bloodbath.”\(^{464}\) The critical missionary voice coupled with the vulnerability of the Herero led Maharero in 1868 to move his people from the mission colony to a new Herero center at Okahandja. Viehe observed first-hand how Hahn’s idea of establishing a mission colony disintegrated almost as soon as it had begun as a result of war and disunity among the Herero and Nama.\(^{465}\)

War surrounded the Herero and hampered the expansion of missionary work in Southwest Africa. The Herero were also in a state of war with the Ovambo to the north. Missionary Hahn had attempted to reach the northern people, but backed away under the threat of violence.\(^{466}\) In order to maneuver around the dynamic of their mission field and changes caused by war in Hereroland, the Rhenish Mission sent missionaries to Okahandja to retain a relationship with Chief Maharero. They then brokered a deal with the Finnish

\(^{463}\) There is disagreement over the date of the Nama attack. Vedder claimed it occurred on 14 December 1867, Heinrich Vedder, *Das Alte Südwestafrika*, 434-38; Klaus Dierks sets this date on 12 December and the date of retaliation on 22 December 1867. Vedder did not provide a date for the retaliation. Dierks’ chronology is available online, http://www.klausdierks.com/FrompageMain.html

\(^{464}\) Cited in Brigitte Lau, *Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner’s Time* (Windhoek: Namibian National Archives, 1987), 139.

\(^{465}\) Sudermeier, 100-28; Vedder, 400-02.

\(^{466}\) Hahn described the failed mission to the Ovambo in *Tagebücher*, Vol. 4, 960, 970, 976ff.
Mission Society to send Finnish missionaries north into Ovamboland, which would at least be Protestant and Lutheran, if not German.\textsuperscript{467}

Viehe’s first narratives to children focused on the subject of war. In the 1868 December edition of \textit{Der kleine Missionsfreund}, he stressed the ongoing war and the warrior qualities of the Herero people.\textsuperscript{468} He contrasted the rugged geography of Southwest Africa with the seasonality and beauty of the German landscape and then employed the Herero voice to claim that the dry rugged terrain was the product of “much bloodshed.”\textsuperscript{469} Viehe reminded his readers of an image of a Herero woman in the Barmen Mission Museum that portrayed the Herero as “raw heathens,” naked, covered with red fat, steeped in ancestral worship and superstition.\textsuperscript{470}

The exotic and ominous blended in Viehe’s depiction of Herero warriors preparing for war:

The warriors, armed with rifles, spears and clubs, position themselves in a row. One steps forward from the row and speaks in broken sentences about their great deeds, but in such a disjointed tone that one can hardly make out a syllable. All the warriors hold their hands over their mouths and blurt out some sounds in unison at the end of each statement, in the manner that a rather large dog barks.\textsuperscript{471}

\textsuperscript{467} Menzel, 230.

\textsuperscript{468} DKMF (1868), 186-90.

\textsuperscript{469} “Das kommt daher, weil auf diesem Platze so viel Menschenblut vergossen ist.” Ibid., 188.

\textsuperscript{470} Ibid., 188-89.

\textsuperscript{471} “Die Krieger, mit Gewehren, Assagaien oder Knüppeln bewaffnet, stellen sich in Reihe und Glied auf. Einer tritt vor die Linie, und spricht in gebrochenen Sätzen von ihren großen Thaten, aber in so dumpfen Tone daß man fast keine Silbe versteht. Alle Krieger halten ihre Hände vor den Mund, und stoßen so gemeinsam am Ende eines jeden Satze ein paar Töne aus, was sich ganz anhört, als wenn ein recht großer Hund bellt.” Ibid., 190.
Viehe added that he had seen dogs in Ombimbi that behaved like the Herero. After describing what he saw as beast-like war dances, he reminded his reader that it was not easy to be a missionary, as they “daily live in danger of war.” His point was ambiguous, the product of a novice storyteller who had not yet refined his craft. Yet his theme was familiar to readers in the 1860s: he affirmed a view of war as a base and primitive activity, although necessary for ethno-national unity.

Three years later Viehe provided a more deliberate treatment of war in Southwest Africa that again paralleled the subject of war at home. Viehe recognized the need to be clear as he ended his narrative, commenting on his preaching in a manner that also rang true for his storytelling; “I must try to preach somewhat simpler.” But these stories belonged to a complex transcontinental context; they were not “simple.” The Rhenish Mission published Viehe’s “A New Station in Hereroland” in *Der kleine Missionsfreund* just a couple of weeks after the 1871 Versailles Declaration. Initially, he was ambivalent about war in Southwest Africa, noting the “physical and spiritual misery that heathendom brings.” Although peace was naturally more desirable than war, Viehe insisted that peace could not be expected of “avaricious and vengeful heathens.” An image of a fierce warrior accompanied this narrative (Figure 1). The line drawing portrayed an animal-clad and

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472 Ibid.

473 “Hier Missionar zu sein, ist nicht leicht, besonders jetzt, da wir täglich in Kriegsgefahr sind.” Ibid.

474 “Ich muß versuchen noch einfältiger zu predigen.” *DKMF* (1871), 24

475 Ibid., 19ff.

476 “Jetzt aber sitzt es in alle dem leiblichen und geistlichen Elend, welches das Heidenthum mit sich bringt.” Ibid., 19.

477 “Der Friede is abgeschlossen, aber es ist ihm doch nicht mehr zu trauen als allen Friedensbündissen habgieriger und rachendurstiger Heiden.” Ibid.

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muscular “African Warrior” with his spear, shield, and club in hand, taking large steps as he hurried through a dry valley to engage in battle. The image depicted the Herero as a fierce people who would go headlong into war unless someone intervened.

Missionaries imagined themselves as having a mandate to manage peace in Southwest Africa. In the text accompanying the image of the Herero warrior, Viehe told of how Missionary Brincker had opened his home to the Herero and Nama chiefs to settle a peace agreement. Meanwhile the rest of the missionaries spoke to the Herero outside about their need to seek God’s peace. Within days Kamaharero and Jonker retracted their agreement, leading Viehe to conclude that political leaders could not be trusted to keep the peace. Still, Viehe assured his readers, the missionaries would not back down; they would persist in forging a path for their work and continue to establish mission stations and churches, regardless of what the chiefs did.

In what may appear to be a jarring digression, Viehe shifted his narrative from war to a description of Herero burial practices. He told how he had decided to learn more, only to discover that they were steeped in superstition and ignorance about the afterlife. A Herero youth had died near the mission station. During the funeral, Viehe asked two young men about their understanding of death. They could tell him little, and Viehe mused that the Herero had no sense of the afterlife beyond notions of ancestors haunting them. He suggested that the two young men typified the Herero, who were losing their cultural

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478 The Rhenish Mission used the same image again when describing the outbreak of the Herero-German War in 1904; DKMF, 4 (1904): 55.


480 DKMF (1871): 22-23.
moorings, and he concluded by addressing his German readers directly, instructing them to thank God that they “were not born and raised in heathendom.”

Herderian ideas that permeated missionary ideology helped bridge the themes of war and burial in Viehe’s story. Herder had taught that a people could only achieve lasting peace when they fused external peace to internal peace; the political-social depended on the spiritual-religious. But Viehe interpreted Herder’s ideas for an audience of children rather than philosophers. His narrative implied that a people left to themselves, disconnected from their cultural roots, limited with regard to descriptive language, and bound to their natural geography would never find “eternal peace.” The two young men whom Viehe interviewed were evidence that the Herero were degenerating; a peace agreement between enemies would not suffice to rescue them. Neither could the Herero trust their political leaders. The two young men -- like the rest of their people -- had lost their cultural rootedness and now death loomed as a curse over them.

Relying further on Herderian ideas, Viehe’s narrative spoke to the question of “Germanness” (Deutschtum). His story implied that political peace, whether in Southwest Africa or Germany, was meaningless without “peace with God”; religious awakening was essential to an enduring national consciousness. Seen this way, Viehe’s narrative was neither disjointed nor simply ethnological. His story encouraged young readers at home to ponder the meaning of Christian Germany through the mirror of the Herero youth. It was not

481 “Ich hoffe vor allem dankt Ihr dem lieben Gott, daß Er Euch nicht im finstern Heidenthum hat geboren und aufwachsen lassen.” Ibid., 24.


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enough for politicians to settle wars and declare new nations: the German people, like the Herero, needed to rediscover cultural and spiritual roots to become a nation.

The Rhenish Mission saw the value of Viehe’s narrative to the home situation. Viehe had not written in the context of victory over the French, because the letter was dated 20 August 1870, six months prior to the armistice and only one month after the start of the Franco-Prussian War. This timing might explain Viehe’s muted tone and reluctance to overstate the importance, or even possibility, of attaining peace with France. But the editor of Der kleine Missionsfreund published this narrative in February 1871, just weeks after the armistice. For the Barmen leadership, the parallel between the armistice in the field and the victory over France at home was too good to miss. Viehe’s depiction of youth who needed to recover cultural beliefs to build an ethno-national consciousness struck the right tone.

Viehe’s 1871 story was the first of several in Der kleine Missionsfreund about how missionaries and indigenous people celebrated the new nation. In May, another narrative described the celebrations in Otjimbingue of victory over France and German unification. Shops closed and the Germans dressed up, while the Herero looked on amused. Then they too joined in shouting “Hurrah” to the king and to Germany. The narrative linked German unification with the spread of Christianity in Southwest Africa, noting that missionaries had baptized nineteen Herero and confirmed sixteen.

The growth of Christianity was a sign of Germany’s new place in the world but also a reminder that Germans had more to do. A narrative by the Rhenish Missionary Alheit in

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485 Ibid.
South Africa followed Viehe’s 1871 piece. Alheit reported on mission festivities in Stellenbosch, the model station of the Rhenish Mission in South Africa. He called this event the first Missionsfest in South Africa and echoed the style of reporting on Missionsfeste in Germany. He concluded by linking the celebrations in Stellenbosch with the German victory back home, reminding readers not to forget God’s war, which was yet to be won.486

German and Herero history merged in these narratives. The notion of the ferocious Herero warrior, embedded in Viehe’s description of the wars with their neighbors, merged with descriptions of the importance of internal unity and independence. According to Viehe, the Herero were no doubt more primitive and culturally degenerate than their civilized German counterparts. Yet the two people shared a parallel history: the Herero wars of freedom took place from 1860 through 1870, the same period in which Prussia engaged in a series of wars that led to unification.

After the 1870s, missionaries no longer portrayed the Herero as seeking unity or independence. Instead missionaries emphasized Herero victimization by their neighbors and -- because of their obstinacy toward the Christian message -- their repeated subjections to God’s chastising hand. Missionaries portrayed themselves as devoted to the work of evangelizing the Herero and to the interests of the German nation. Germans back home should likewise be faithful to both fields.

Viehe on Confessional Conflicts

As issues at home shifted, so did the content of missionary narratives. Political and religious conflicts preceded and followed German unification, and mission societies attended

486 Ibid., 64.
to the struggle for unity, evident in the language that permeated their literature. During the 1850s and 1860s, the Rhenish Mission had preached unity and cooperation in the face of confessional conflicts and the drive toward unification. But it was difficult to maneuver among the issues that divided Germans. The Barmen leadership could not afford to alienate large parts of their mission network over confessional issues, nor could the Rhenish Mission ignore conflicts that weighed on their supporters. From Viehe’s writings, it is apparent that missionaries in the field engaged in confessional debates and political conflicts, as did pastors at home.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the Prussian Church Union showed signs of fracture over issues around the Eucharist. The Rhenish Mission was well aware that its support came from various sides of this conflict. Most of the Rhenish missionaries in Southwest Africa held to the Lutheran confession and wanted to keep Reformed distinctives out of their field. Funding for their work came in large part from the Upper Rhineland and Westphalia and from predominantly Lutheran Missionsfreunde. The mission society had to tread lightly on confessional issues and yet appear strong if it was to maintain the loyalty of its friends.

The Rhenish Mission’s effort to preserve unity was evident in its struggle to find the right leader. The appointment of the Lutheran pastor Johannes Wallman in 1848 had


489 Ibid.
mollified revivalists, but Wallman was not comfortable managing dual confessions. In 1857 he resigned and went to Berlin. The Deputation then appointed Friedrich Fabri (1824-1891), a Bavarian Lutheran from Schweinfurt, whose training from Erlangen and Berlin was oriented toward Reformed theology. Fabri tackled the confessional issue by reassuring missionaries that, although the Barmen leadership would defend the 1817 union, they would permit each field to decide which confessional statement to use. A settlement reminiscent of the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, this compromise at home could turn into a hard line on the mission field where missionaries were justified in resisting all encroachments of the alternate confession. Still Fabri’s decision pacified supporters who wanted reassurance that “the African” would be Lutheran, not Reformed. As a result, Rhenish Mission churches in Southwest Africa became Lutheran.

To promote unity in the home network, the Rhenish Mission sought to forge new alliances that would strengthen its presence in Germany and within the Church Union. The Missionsfest and Festwoche became tools for Wallman and Fabri in their effort to position the Rhenish Mission close to like-minded religious organizations. The Gustav Adolf Verein, for example, was dedicated to preserving German religious and cultural consciousness among the ethnic Germans outside German states. It was a natural ally in missionary work.


492 Not much has been written about Gustav Adolf Verein/Werk, which began in 1832. German Catholics set up a similar organization in 1849, the Bonifatius Verein; see David Blackbourn, The Long Nineteenth Century: The History of Germany, 1780-1918 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 286. Archives for the Gustav Adolf Verein are in Berlin EZAB, Holding 200/1.
Likewise, Fabri sought to create a central missionary association that would bring together various European Protestant mission societies.\footnote{Fabri proposed this idea in the \textit{Rundschreiben}, December to March, 1866, along with his effort to organize an “allgemeine Missions-Conferenz” in Bremen, 8-11 May 1866; see RMG 93, no. 111.}

After German unification, confessional conflicts turned toward the well-worn divide between Protestants and Catholics. When the government in Berlin began its assault \textit{(Kulturkampf)} on the Catholic Church, a similar struggle ensued between Protestant and Catholic missionaries in Southwest Africa. Even before the Berlin Conference in 1884-85 and the “scramble for Africa,” Catholic and Protestant missionaries vied for dominance in Southwest Africa. Missionary Viehe reported this struggle to the Rhenish Mission and Protestant readers back home by shifting his focus from military to religious conflict.

The Rhenish Mission had always been protective of its mission field. In the 1840s, Missionary Hugo Hahn had wrangled with the Wesleyan Richard Haddy over influence with the Oorlam Captain Jonker Afrikaner.\footnote{Richard Haddy (1796-1871) set up a mission station in Windhoek from 1844 to 1849; see C. H. Hahn, \textit{Tageb"ucher}, Vol. II and III; cf. Menzel, 58. Vedder ignores this conflict in \textit{Das Alte Südwestafrika}.} The Rhenish missionaries succeeded in pushing out the Wesleyan, and for thirty years the field was theirs. But in late 1878, as the \textit{Kulturkampf} subsided at home, four Catholic missionaries from the \textit{Congregation of the Holy Ghost}, also known as \textit{Spiritans}, arrived in Omaruru. They came through the British port at Walfish Bay, south of Swakopmund, where they had assured the British emissary W. C. Palgrave that they were merely passing through en route to establish a mission among the northern Ovambo. They claimed to have no intentions to missionize the Herero, Damra, Nama, or San.\footnote{Stals, \textit{The Commissions of W. C. Palgrave: Special Emissary to South West Africa}, 327.}
When the Catholic missionaries set up a base near Viehe’s home in Omaruru, the Rhenish missionary became suspicious. Addressing his rivals in English, he inquired as to their motives:

As we perceive that you and other Roman Catholic missionaries have arrived in this country, and are at present staying on one of our mission stations, it must be of great interest to us to learn what is to be the object of your mission.496

Rhenish missionaries may not have succeeded in converting the Herero, but they were not about to accept help from Catholics, least of all non-German Catholics.

A heated exchange of letters ensued. According to Viehe, the Catholics were “invaders” who had failed to honor the missionary code of separate spheres of interest. Hereroland belonged exclusively to the Rhenish Mission, he insisted, and all other European interests -- religious, trade, or colonial -- needed to acknowledge the legitimate and central role of the Rhenish Mission in Southwest Africa.497 Viehe said he would welcome a Catholic agent in Omaruru, but because Protestants had arrived first in Southwest Africa, the Catholic missionaries must respect the Rhenish Mission’s claim and leave.498

Although Viehe wrote politely in somewhat stilted English, anger and anxiety were evident in his letter. It would be “dishonourable and unworthy of the holy mission” for the Catholic Church to infringe on Rhenish interests in Hereroland:

496 Letter to Rev Duparquet in Omaruru, 27 March 1879; RMG 93, F. W. G. Viehe, 135.

497 Heinrich Vedder lists thirty-three names of Irish, English, and Swedish settlers living in Omaruru in 1878; Vedder, *Das alte Südwest*, 580-84. Some settlers may have appreciated the Viehe’s Lutheran Pietism, but others were less impressed and welcomed the Catholic missionaries to help affirm their faith and establish schools for their children. Viehe denied that these settlers were Catholic, but the Vedder confirmed that some of the Irish and British settlers were Catholic; RMG 93, F. W. G. Viehe, no. 140 – 43; cf. Vedder, 580-84.

We feel almost sure that a mission, which is here established in opposition of that of our society, can gain very little success and the labourers of your society would doubtless be far more worthily and successfully placed into one of your own mission fields or into an entirely new field than into our Herero mission, where there is even now little room left for any more labourers.\textsuperscript{499}

It was not just concern for Herero souls that occupied Viehe; he feared that Catholics might “reap where they had not sown.”\textsuperscript{500} He exaggerated the Rhenish Mission’s success among the Herero, reminding his rival that it had been alone in the field for forty years and overcome “many obstacles” to learn the language and culture of the Herero and Damra.\textsuperscript{501} The Rhenish Mission had “made great progress” and established many mission stations so that “almost the whole nation of Ovaherero and other inhabitants of the country are already greatly influenced by the labours of our society.”\textsuperscript{502} Viehe appeared to accuse the Catholics of attempting to steal knowledge that Protestant missionaries had worked so hard to obtain.

The Catholic spokesman Father Duparquet responded with equal intransigence. He rejected Viehe’s territorial claim, suggesting instead exclusive influence over certain groups within Omaruru society. He reminded his Protestant rival that, if it was a question of who came first, Catholics had precedence. Protestants, he added, had a long history of interfering in Catholic interests.\textsuperscript{503} He reminded Viehe that Catholics and Protestants were not in the habit of consulting one another on where to carry out their work.\textsuperscript{504} If they had,

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\textsuperscript{499} Ibid., no. 138-9.
\textsuperscript{500} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{501} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{502} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{503} Ibid., no. 140-141.
\textsuperscript{504} Ibid., 140.
\end{flushright}
Protestantism would not have survived. Rather, Catholic missionaries had a right to go wherever they found converts or adherents of the faith, and in Hereroland there were both Damra and Irish who, as baptized Catholics, had a right to insist on Catholic baptism and schooling.\(^{505}\)

Duparquet promised to pass on Viehe’s concerns to his General Superior but emphasized he would never bow to Protestant demands: “The Catholic Church cannot and will not sacrifice the souls of her children, she can not refuse them the spiritual succours they have a right to demand of her.”\(^{506}\) As to having taken advantage of Protestant knowledge production, Duparquet assured his foe that if Catholics had benefited from the literary and cultural work of the Rhenish missionaries, it would not be long until the Catholics returned the favor.\(^{507}\)

Based on Viehe’s correspondence with Duparquet, the Rhenish Mission published three reports about the conflict.\(^{508}\) The first appeared in February 1881 in the monthly publication, *Berichte der Rheinischen Mission*. This report narrated events from the arrival of the Catholic missionaries until just before their departure from Omaruru.\(^{509}\) Viehe outlined how he had taken pains to warn the Herero about the deception of the Catholic missionaries and how the Herero Christians had refused to talk with the priests. The report ended with a

\(^{505}\) Ibid.

\(^{506}\) Letter to Viehe, 15 April 1879; RMG 93, *F. W. G. Viehe*, 1 (1866-79): 141.

\(^{507}\) Ibid., 142.

\(^{508}\) BRMG (1881): 51-53; BRMG (1882): 76-84; BMB (1882): 107-11. The original text for these reports is located in RMG 93, *F. W. G. Viehe*, 134-45; see also RMG 1.603a, 164-76.

threat from the Herero chiefs of impending violence against those Europeans who supported the Catholics if the Spiritans did not leave Omaruru.  

That same year a more comprehensive report from Viehe appeared in the national journal of the German Protestant missionary movement, the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*. Gustav Warneck, a Halle Theologian, former instructor in the Barmen Mission School, and editor of the journal, provided a lengthy footnote to Viehe’s narrative titled “Roman Missionaries in Hereroland and Their Eviction.” Warneck called Viehe’s report an “exempli instar” of a “systematic competition” perpetuated by Catholics against Protestants on the mission field. Borrowing Viehe’s vocabulary, and with a hint of Germanic history, Warneck alerted his readers to the “characteristic attitude of the Roman invaders.” He stressed that the Herero chiefs had commanded the termination of Catholic schools in the field and ultimately the removal of Catholics from Omaruru; they exemplified how secular leadership ought to oppose Catholic encroachments in society, just as the mission embodied religious resistance.

Again, Viehe pointed out that the struggle between missionaries was not merely over territory; it was also over who had the right to “translate” Southwest Africa.

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510 Ibid., 53. The popular biweekly newspaper of the mission society, *Barmen Missionsblatt*, published a similar report in 1882, a few months after the conflict had blown over.

511 Viehe’s article was a response to accusations by Catholic missionary Hogan in the South African newspaper *The Times*, 11 Jan. 1881.


513 “Bei der systematischen Konkurrenz, welche jetzt die römische Propaganda auf immer mehr Missionsgebieten dem evangelischen Missionswerke macht, wie es scheint, auf ausdrückliche Anweisung von oben, sind wir leider genötigt, diesem unerquicklichen Gegenstande mehr Aufmerksamkeit zuzuwenden, als in unserem Neigungen liegt. Der vorliegende specielle Fall, von dessen objectiver Berichterstattung das ganze Referat die Leser überzeugen wird, ist exempli instar eine charakteristische Zeichnung über das Verhalten der römischen Endringlinge fast allororts.” Ibid., 66

514 Ibid.
Mission claimed exclusive ownership of Herero cultural knowledge; Rhenish Missionaries had produced and published linguistic studies of Otjiherero. Viehe accused Catholics of stealing Protestant knowledge. According to him, they planned to bring in six sisters to run a school in Omaruru, while the priests pushed north toward Ovamboland.\footnote{Ibid., 68.}

Viehe implied that the Catholic presence undermined the German Protestant homogeneity of the Herero community.\footnote{Ibid.} Catholics won support from the British Special Commissioner to teach English in their school, rather than German or French. Furthermore, the priests had coaxed the European settlers into bringing their children to the English-speaking school and even baptized some children, beginning with one whose father was a Protestant settler and mother an African.\footnote{Ibid. This was a contest over the religious claims of children from mixed marriages that resembles Tara Zahra’s concept of “kidnapped souls” in central Europe; Tara Zahra, Kidnapped Souls, National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900-1948 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).} Viehe appealed to British officials to withdraw their support of Father Duparquet, threatening the British rule with non-cooperation of the Rhenish missionaries in the fourteen “influential” mission stations in Hereroland.

Viehe was also cautious in how he reported the conflict. He had to convey to the Missionsfreunde the urgency of the matter without implying that the Protestant mission to the Herero had failed. In his reports he reiterated his claim that missionaries from one church should not interfere in the field of another. If the door was left open to the Catholics, Viehe warned, more missionaries would soon be on the way, and in time there would surely be
“one missionary for every Catholic in the land.” He denied Duparquet’s claim that the priests were only serving Irish and English Catholics and feared that they had begun to build relationships with the Herero men in order to lure them into praying to the Virgin.

Rather than admitting this was a religious dispute, Viehe situated himself in a strategic position between the Catholic priests and the Herero chiefs. He pointed out that the Herero leaders -- notably Chiefs Kamaharero, Tyaherani, and Manasse -- had forbidden Catholic activity and schools in Omaruru. In an effort to enforce their authority, the Herero had nearly come to blows with the Catholic missionaries:

Tyherani swung his rod at [Fr. Hogan], which I deflected by quickly stepping between them. I insisted that everyone should stand up, leave the gathering, and go home. The Fathers and the other Europeans followed my request.

Viehe constructed his narrative on political rather than religious terms and made German Protestants appear as a source of peace. According to Viehe, the Catholics had exacerbated the growing tensions between the European settlers and the Herero. He noted that settlers and traders supported the priests by threatening to withhold munitions from the Herero should a war against the Nama or English occur. This tactic almost worked because, facing a threat from the Nama, the chiefs deliberated over reconciling with the
Catholics. Viehe warned that such reconciliation would embolden Catholics to further missionize the Herero who had converted to Protestant Christianity.\textsuperscript{522}

The drama ended when Paramount Chief Kamaharero sided with the Rhenish missionaries and expelled the Catholics. The priests attempted to negotiate with Chief Tyaherani and his brother Manasse, but Kamaharero stepped in.\textsuperscript{523} He persuaded the local leadership in Omaruru to support Viehe in opposing the Catholics. They did so, issuing a decree that threatened any Herero who dared to visit the priests with beatings or banishment.\textsuperscript{524} The Catholic missionaries protested and a scuffle occurred, but there was little they could do but leave.\textsuperscript{525} It would be two decades before Catholics would establish mission stations in Southwest Africa.

For the time being, Viehe could celebrate triumph. At stake was the threat of losing control over pastoral rights in the field, but also important was a concern for the production of knowledge for the home audience. The mission field was the mission’s laboratory for revivalist work. The conflict with the Catholics disturbed and threatened that project. By 1878, Bismarck’s aim to break the Catholic Church’s hold on matters relating to education and marriage was winding down. Viehe’s narratives implied that, while Bismarck and the Kaiser failed in their opposition to Catholics at home, missionaries afar had succeeded. The missionary network must help prepare the German people to withstand Catholicism and

\textsuperscript{522} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{523} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{524} A. P. J. Beris, \textit{From Mission to Local Church: One hundred years of mission by the Catholic Church in Namibia} (Windhoek: John Meinert, 1996), 13-18.

\textsuperscript{525} AMZ (1882): 66-84.
preserve the future of German Protestantism. They too ought to be a vanguard against Catholic invaders.

**Viehe on Similarities and Differences**

Viehe’s story of Herero men pondering “the European” at the outset of the colonial period had multiple layers of meaning. We cannot test the veracity of the event nor Viehe’s claim to have represented what the Herero thought. But the text does represent what the missionary wanted his readers to think about the Herero, the missionary, Germans, and the individual reader in relation to the narrative’s characters.

In his title “How the Herero assess Europeans,” Viehe used the word *urteilen* to stress that the dialogue was about how Herero men judged the German or European character. Viehe juxtaposed critical comments with more positive ones, as evident in the Herero comment that missionaries were going grey from excessive, though productive, work. This was hardly a criticism to readers steeped in the Protestant work ethic though Viehe hinted that the Herero were by contrast lazy. According to Viehe, then, the Herero men were engaged in a process of comparing and equating themselves with their European neighbors. If any criticism can be found in this text, it was as likely to belong to Viehe as to the Herero, for the missionaries were often critical of European traders and settlers who had invaded and threatened the missionary’s sphere of influence.

Viehe used the Herero dialogue to project his version of German and, in particular, missionary character. At the end of his narrative, he tipped his hand by telling how the Herero provided an alternative way of seeing “the German.” The Herero who spoke last, often a position of privilege in missionary narratives, told how he “could not fathom why
the whites look at something but fail to see what it is.” He noted how Herero saw things for what they were in the physical and material realm, whereas Germans often missed subtle details in nature. As an example, he pointed to the German ability to remember names yet not notice physical traits, whereas the Herero remembered physical traits and not names. Viehe had concluded his narrative by distinguishing an African materialist outlook from a German transcendent outlook that attached identity and meaning to the intangible.

What appears to be a mild criticism on the part of the Herero was rather a subtle point about the superiority of the German mind. Knowing an individual by name is a concept embedded in the Bible, where knowing God’s name indicates the highest level of knowledge. Viehe’s point, then, was not some light-hearted banter about Germans who failed to adapt to Herero ways. Rather, this dialogue stressed a point missionaries wanted to communicate back home: their mission was to encounter the materially perceptive Herero and give them insight and knowledge into the transcendent realm. If Germans did not always see everything in the natural realm, they -- especially the missionaries -- were able to see things beyond the material. In making this point, Viehe managed to place the Herero and the German in a dependent relationship: the Herero knew how to exist in the natural geography, whereas the German knew how to exist in the transcendent realm.

On the surface, the text affirmed differences and pointed to German virtues of hard work, diligence, productivity, and special knowledge. The missionary exemplified these attributes: his hair whitened while still young as evidence of his hard work, but the outcome

526 “Ich weiß gar nicht, wie die Weißen das machen, daß sie etwas ansehen und es doch nicht sehen.” DKMF (1886) 7: 103.

527 DKMF 7 (1886): 103-04.
of his labor was quite literally fruitfulness through his promotion of agriculture in the colony. By contrast, the Herero sometimes were left hungry for failing to provide for leaner times.

When the Herero men discussed the impact of the new commodities whites had brought to Southwest Africa, especially the rifle, Viehe was noting where important differences resided in the colony. Guns, the Herero concluded, had done more harm than good, for they had depleted the natural resources of the region. Here the difference was not between the Herero and the German but between the German missionary and the German settler and trader. The former had come to Southwest Africa to civilize Africans, whereas the latter had come to exploit Africans and their resources. A missionary’s hard labor might prematurely age him and wear him out, but at least he produced something. The activity of the trader and settler, in contrast, depleted the colony of its natural resources.

Viehe noted distinctions, but he also focused on similarities between the Herero and the German. He appeared to use the dialogue to avow a colonial, and possibly racial, hierarchy, but he did not want his reader to remain indifferent about the moral standing of the characters. Shifting to second person pronouns, he urged his young readers to consider the meaning of the Herero discussion. He asked, “And what do you, dear children, say about this assessment?” He offered an answer: perhaps the Herero “do not have it all wrong,” he wrote, “certainly before God, the whites and the blacks are the same.”

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528 Viehe might also have commented on how the rifle exacerbated conflicts between the Herero and the Nama, or discussed how prior to the traders, missionaries had sold guns and ammunition. Ibid., 100-02.

529 “Und was sagt ihr, liebe Kinder, zu diesem Urteil?” Ibid., 104.

530 “Die Herero, von ihrem Standpunkte aus angesehen, so ganz unrecht nicht hatten. Gewiß aber ist mir, daß die Weißen und die Schwarzen insofern vor Gott ganz gleich sind, als beide der Gnade Gottes bedürftig und fähig sind.” Ibid.
Through reflection, Viehe included his readers in the narrative, identifying them with the Herero.

One difference Viehe stressed was the obligation of Germans to evangelize and missionize the Herero. This obligation set the missionary outside the dualism in the narrative and created a triangulation of “the African,” “the European/German,” and “the missionary.” The first two shared some similarities, whereas the missionary was distinct. Only when Germans carried out their moral and religious obligation to extend the Christian faith were they different from the African, and, for that matter, from unbelievers at home.

This story of Herero musings illustrates that, at the outset of the colonial period, a missionary’s depiction of Africans did not have a sharp focus on racial differences. That changed by the end of the century, but in 1886, Viehe could still present “the African” as a blurred image of the German. Indeed, other Europeans also stressed humanistic similarities over racial differences between Germans and Africans. Anthropology, at that time a new discipline, paralleled the missionary movement. Andrew Evans argues that most early anthropologists held a liberal orientation and emphasized points of similarity rather than differences. Whereas missionaries used a theological argument, anthropologists examined social and cultural commonalities as fundamental points of humanity.

Despite his apparent humanistic approach, Viehe’s narratives, as they evolved over the latter half of the nineteenth century, tell a different story. His optimism in 1886 contrasts with his dismal portrayal of the Herero in 1899:

531 “Gott aber den Deutschen sein teures Wort gegeben had und daß es ihre Pflicht ist, dies Gnadengeschenk vor allem auch ihren schwarzen Schutzbefohlenen zu bringen.” Ibid.

Note that I have told you about the affliction of the Herero people, and you all know the proverb: Adversity teaches one to pray. Whoever has adversity is driven by it toward God to beseech him for salvation.533

Viehe on African Youth

The arrival of other Europeans in Southwest Africa had rattled Viehe and exposed Protestant vulnerabilities. The Rhenish Mission needed to close gaps in its work where competing mission societies, traders, and settlers might stake a claim on Hereroland and its residents. Old methods had failed, but innovations proved too expensive and yielded little fruit. One innovation had been the missionary colony, a model to attract nomadic Herero to an agricultural economy. By 1882, progress was slow and the Herero Christian community remained small. Viehe’s boast of fourteen “successful” mission stations where “thousands” of Herero took part in weekly services was an exaggeration. The Rhenish Mission did not have enough personnel to missionize the 100,000 Herero, let alone the Damra and San. The Rhenish Mission needed a more effective strategy.

Viehe’s answer was to invest more effort into Herero youth. Indeed, Viehe was already experimenting with how to exploit Herero youth for mission work when the Catholics arrived in Omaruru. One feature in the letters that Viehe sent to Barmen was the careful handwriting in Latin characters, which was noticeably different from Viehe’s typical German scrawl. Moreover, the letters had been corrected in the same color ink, but in Viehe’s handwriting. In two letters to Barmen, Viehe explained that he was teaching a

Herero boy to serve as his scribe.\textsuperscript{534} Young Herero converts were employed to help integrate the Christian faith and Herero culture. These youths, brought up under the tutelage of a missionary and often living in the missionary home, eventually became evangelists and teachers for the mission, and thereby extended the missionary’s work at a significantly reduced cost. Viehe did not give a name, but the young scribe, and others like him, would become vital to the future of the Rhenish Mission in Southwest Africa.

In three segments of \textit{Der kleine Missionsfreund} in 1888, Viehe introduced his scribe to his German readers.\textsuperscript{535} His name was Asser Mutjinde, a Herero youth selected by the missionary and given special attention and training. Viehe described the selection process simply as Asser having shown interest in the missionary’s faith and manner of living, and had submitted to Viehe’s tutelage. Viehe’s success with Asser led the missionary to believe that training indigenous youths was the way to succeed. If success could not be measured by the quantity of converts, perhaps it could measured by their quality. This approach was consistent with Pietistic ideals whereby Asser, and others like him, would be living lessons to the German readers.

Others concurred, and at the end of the nineteenth century a number of missionary tracts extolled the benefit of working with indigenous teachers and evangelists. Although different from one colony to the next, in German Southwest Africa missionaries led in developing a class of indigenous intermediaries who could negotiate German-African relations. Their stated aim for the African youth they brought into their homes was that they

\textsuperscript{534} RMG 1.603, \textit{Viehe}, no. 99.

would “graduate” to become teachers and evangelists for the mission.536 Once trained by the missionary, some entered colonial service; others used their knowledge to gain access to indigenous power through their chiefs. In the introduction to a series of articles that explores colonial intermediaries, Benjamin N. Lawrence, Emily Lynn Osborn, and Richard L. Roberts identify the advantages and benefits that attracted potential intermediaries to Europeans.537 Not until the twentieth century were missionaries more explicit about how Africans may have benefited from these roles; motivations are rarely, if ever, noted.

As characters in children’s stories, Asser and other Herero youths were also useful to the Missionsfreunde in Germany. They embodied the success of missionary work and the steps toward “civilization” that the Herero were taking under missionary tutelage. Viehe constructed Asser’s story during his 1888 furlough in Germany as a typical narrative he could tell when he visited various Missionsfreunde associations, events, and schools. By 1887/88, Asser was already teaching in Omaruru and was soon to be posted to a remote station in Omburo. He was someone with whom young German readers might identify: a

536 Another example comes from missionary Bernsmann who wrote a tract in 1904, titled “From Shepherd Boy to Evangelist.” He told of a boy in Okahandja named Kanguase, who lived with one of the first generation Herero evangelists, Elias Kandirikirira. Kanguase was unhappy with the “moral character of [his] people” (die Sitten meiner Völkegenossen nicht gefallen) and sought “something better” (etwas Besseres). He was impressed by the agricultural and educational opportunities afforded by the mission and so converted in 1899 and took the name, Zachias. Trained as an evangelist, he served in Okonjati. The Rhenish Mission published Kanguase’s story during the Herero-German war to support the claim that the Herero could change when guided by missionaries. See Bernsmann, “Vom Hirtenjungen zum Evangelisten” VEMA, Traktaten, 1904. Another example was Traugott Kanopiruru, a Herero teacher and contemporary of Asser, who served under missionary Dannert; ELCRN, “Gemeinde Chronic, Omaruru”; Cabin V: 23.1.

537 Benjamin N. Lawrence, Emily Lynn Osborn, and Richard L. Roberts (eds.), Intermediaries, Interpreters, and Clerks: African Employees in the Making of Colonial Africa, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006). For the differing experiences of intermediaries usually based on location and the stage of colonial rule in which they served, see the editors’ introduction, “African Intermediaries and the ‘Bargain’ of Collaboration,” 3-34. Intermediaries often wielded considerable power and influence when their service was attached to an upwardly mobile employer. Sometimes that power came from a clever manipulation of their obscurity as an indigenous employee. But other times intermediaries became entangled in the questionable dealings of their employers with potentially disastrous consequences; see Emily Osborn’s chapter, “Interpreting Colonial Power in French Guinea: The Boubou Penda-Ernst Noirot Affair of 1905,” 56-76.
young boy, whose broken arm landed him in the missionary’s home, where he was selected to be part of this new breed of evangelists and teachers. Readers also learned that Asser had been naked, hungry, and without support from his family. Severed from his Herero past, Asser became a pioneer of the future Herero, at least as imagined by the Rhenish missionary.

Asser’s life was more complex than Viehe’s account. Indeed, he was not part of an elite Herero family, yet he would be able to achieve a position of leadership through his relationship to Viehe and the skills he gained. The church chronicles of the Rhenish Mission in Windhoek reveal an ingenious young man who showed much promise and made his own way. The skills Asser acquired from Viehe made him valuable to the Omaruru Chief Manasse, whom Asser served as a personal scribe.\(^{538}\) When he became a teacher in Omaruru, the records show he took his studies seriously.\(^{539}\) Having won the confidence of the Rhenish Missionary, he went to Omboru in 1890 to replace the Herero teacher Traugott Kanopirura, who had been promoted to evangelist and sent into the Omaheke desert.\(^{540}\) But the position did not appear to suit Asser, and later that same year, he severed his relationship with the Rhenish Mission and moved to Erongo with Chief Manasse.\(^{541}\)

Around 1891, Asser disappeared from Rhenish Mission history. During the Herero-German War in 1904, Asser re-established contact with the Rhenish Mission and appeared again in the Mission’s chronicle as “the former teacher.”\(^{542}\) He had escaped from Waterberg after the battle in August 1904 and had fled westward toward the British port of Walfish.

\(^{538}\) ELCRN, “Gemeinde Chronic, Omaruru”; Cabin V:23.1, no. 149.

\(^{539}\) “mit eifer und erfolg erweltet,” ibid., no. 150.

\(^{540}\) Ibid., no. 163.

\(^{541}\) Ibid., no. 165.

\(^{542}\) “der frühere Lehrer”; ibid., no. 298, 321.
Bay. He was among a group of Herero whom the Germans apprehended, interned, and sent to work in the mines of Nbabes, in the southern part of the colony. While there, Asser wrote a letter to the Rhenish Mission, claiming to have started a school and established ties with the Christian community in Concordia. Desperate to get out of Nbabes, he again offered his services to the Rhenish Mission. There is no evidence that the Mission responded, nor any further mention of Asser Mutjinde in mission and church archives.

In 1888, Asser had been a useful figure for the mission. He appeared in mission narratives as an example to German readers of Pietist virtues: diligence, dedication, and hard work. Young Asser represented the power of the missionary message. But his adult life did not fit this narrative. Indeed, if missionaries had paid attention, they would have seen his fate as an affirmation of what they taught would happen to stubborn and rebellious people who rejected their message. The only road left was divine chastisement, or God’s wrath. Asser had abandoned the missionaires, and according to the Church chronicles, his life was no longer deemed blessed as a result of his betrayal.

**Viehe on Divine Chastisement**

Nineteenth-century Pietists fixated on notions of dying “blessed.” Progress toward death needed to end well or there was no hope for the afterlife. Missionaries paid special

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543 Ibid., no. 321.

544 Ibid., no. 321.

545 On the biblical warning for those who once converted and then have fallen way, see Hebrews 6:4-6; cf. Johann Arndt, *Vom Wahren Christenthum*, Vol. 1, 102, 182.

attention to the cultural ideas about death that they encountered. Their narratives developed this theme for readers back home. Stories of death -- especially the death of children -- filled the pages of mission literature, including *Der kleine Missionsfreund*, where somber narratives served revivalist exhortations. The heathen perspective on death was useful to illustrate the death of the unrighteous. Hence, the duty of missionaries to rescue heathen from eternal damnation included preparing ethnological studies on beliefs about death and the afterlife.547

In 1871, Missionary Viehe had informed readers of *Der kleine Missionsfreund* that the Herero were ambivalent about death: “When one speaks with [the Herero], they do not deny that it is important to give thought to what comes after death for us poor humans.”548 But, he claimed, the Herero were incapable of looking beyond death, which explained their failure to comprehend the central Christian message of resurrection.549 He implied that the Herero were ripe for the introduction of a new concept of death: one that the missionaries could construct for them. Viehe decided “to experience how wide an understanding of the afterlife the people had.”550 He provided a detailed description of Herero burial preparation and procedures, taking special note of the lack of cleanliness of the corpse and the funeral
clothing.\footnote{551} When Herero youths informed Viehe how they feared the spirits of the dead, which would come out of the graves to haunt their village, Viehe saw a shadow of the Christian idea of resurrection, but it was a terrifying resurrection.\footnote{552}

As a moral lesson for German readers, Viehe’s narration on death implied that the Herero lacked self-awareness. He used the Herero voice to articulate the significance of having lost their understanding of the afterlife: “We do not quite understand these things correctly; we are no longer proper Herero.”\footnote{553} According to Viehe, the Herero were losing their cultural rootedness. Underpinning his narrative was the idea that a people who embraces the Christian message will retain or regain their true character as a people. At the conclusion of his narrative, Viehe asked his readers to personalize the knowledge he had just offered them about the Herero condition through prayer and giving thanks. The reader was to contemplate African “darkness” in order to appreciate and more fully embrace Christianity and the blessing of being born a German.\footnote{554}

Death and disaster narratives were more than moral lessons: missionary stories depicted the affliction of the heathen as divine chastisement needed to halt degeneration. Embedded in such stories was a deep-rooted belief in the imperative of God’s wrath as a means to bring unbelievers to faith. The missionary’s claim to be the only true advocate of “the African” provided the context to give meaning to instruction about the necessity of...

\footnote{551} “Wie der arme Mensch im Schmutz niedergefallen war, so hatte man ein altes Fell um ihn gehüllt und mit Riemen von einem Ende zum andern umwunden.” Ibid., 22.

\footnote{552} Ibid., 23.

\footnote{553} “Wir wissen diese Dinge nicht so recht, wir sind keine rechten Herero mehr.” Ibid.

\footnote{554} “Ihr aber, lieben Kinder, was denkt Ihr, wenn Ihr dies lest? Ich hoffe vor Allem dankt Ihr dem lieben Gott, daß Er Euch nicht im finstern Heidenthum hat geboren und aufwachsen lassen, und dann betet Ihr auch für die armen Herero, daß der Herr sie lehre das Wort zu verstehen, welches ihnen verkündigt wird.” DKMF (1871): 24.
severe discipline. Without this insight, it would be difficult to understand why people, who for years had gathered to read, pray, collect monies, and send family members as missionaries to Southwest Africa, could accept the extreme violence against the Herero and Nama in the wars of 1904 to 1907. Long before these wars began for readers back home, missionaries had illustrated and fuelled the idea of divine wrath toward “the African.”

Although Viehe showed sympathy and compassion for the Herero, his belief in the necessity of “severe discipline” against Africans transferred to young Germans through his stories. In the years leading up to the Herero-German War, Viehe built on themes of disaster, death, and the afterlife to present divine wrath as normative. In 1899, his last published narrative appeared in Der kleine Missionsfreund with the title: “Punishment and Its Effect.”

The story opened by describing that children respond differently to various forms of punishments. Some children, he observed, only needed a stern look from their parent, whereas others needed a level of discipline that would “crush” their “self-will” and enable them to abandon “bad habits.” There were some children, Viehe told his readers, who refused to be “corrected” by “mild discipline or severe punishment,” nor would they improve after “each new fall into sin.” Such children, he warned, would be eternally


557 “Aber es gibt auch Kinder, bei denen weder milde Zucht noch ernste Strafen etwas ausrichten, selbst dann nicht, wenn letztere bei jedem neuen Sündenfall verschärft werden.” Ibid.
damned unless miraculously rescued from “the evil One.” Viehe implied that something extreme was necessary to “break” these children.

Viehe melded his instruction on discipline with a narrative about divine chastisement. He compared the children at home with the Herero:

Such self-willed stubborn children, on whom all effort to discipline is ineffective, are like the vast majority of the Herero people in Southwest Africa. How often has the Lord already afflicted them with his rod, without them having a heartfelt repentance? According to Viehe, the Herero represented a prime example for the necessity of divine wrath. They were a people, described here as “children,” who would not heed the message of affliction and “bend” under the discipline of God’s ever-intensifying wrath.

Viehe’s narrative of God’s wrath against the Herero unfolded in Biblical proportions. He told how the Herero had refused to recognize that their cattle were a gift from God but instead continued to worship their ancestors as the source of their wealth. God punished them by sending the Nama to attack them and take away their cattle. As with Pharaoh before Moses, when the Herero did not repent, God sent a plague, the infamous Rinderpest, as a deadly cattle disease that came up from South Africa in the 1890s. Viehe noted that where the Nama had taken thousands of cattle, the Rinderpest took hundreds of thousands; God had upped the ante of His discipline. But unlike the Ninevites who repented when the prophet Jonah was sent to them, the Herero refused to repent and sit in

558 “Diese Kinder sind sehr zu bedauern; sie gehen zeitlich und ewig verloren, wenn sie nicht durch ein Wunder der Gnade Gottes von der Macht des Bösen gerettet werden.” Ibid.


560 Parallels in Exodus 1-14 (especially 6-14) and Jonah 3.
ashes, in spite of the years of German missionaries’ labor. Viehe acknowledged that a few Herero began to “bend,” but most “remained in their state of unrepentance.”561 The missionary puzzled over why the Herero remained so stubborn.562 The moment appeared ripe for change as the Herero became dependent on crops instead of cattle. Perhaps now the Herero would finally settle in one place so that missionaries would be able to evangelize them more effectively.

A few Herero did adapt, but Viehe noted that even these did not change in their character, so the chastisement became more severe. He reminded his readers that “God’s thoughts are different from our thoughts,” hence God sent a swarm of locusts to eat the Herero crops.563 But the worst punishment was still to come: in their weakness and hunger, the Herero succumbed to a horrible disease, most likely dysentery from the pollution of water resources by carcasses from the Rinderpest. Thousands of Herero died, and those who did not die were too sick to plant crops. The only glimmer of hope came from Germany when the Missionsfreunde sent relief. Although kindness left a “blessed impression” on the Herero, it did not induce them to convert.564

Viehe’s narrative ended without resolution, leaving the reader anticipating that more trouble would come to the Herero. He told his readers that, despite hardships, most of the Herero remained stubborn and unrepentant. The question remained: why? Viehe mused:

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561 “Das Volk als solches verharrte in seinem unbußfertigen Sinne.” DKMF (1899): 116. The Gemeinde Chroniken in Omaruru and Omboru recorded more baptisms in the years of affliction.

562 “Als die Rinder tot waren, dachte man, die Leute würden sich jetzt mit Fleiß auf den Ackerbau legen.” Ibid.

563 Ibid., 118.

564 “Gewiß hat die Barmherzigkeit der deutschen Christen auf viele Herero einen segensreichen Eindruck gemacht.” Ibid., 119.
Now, dear children, we cannot glance into the hearts, and though the Herero in general have a closed character and do not readily reveal their religious sentiments, it is difficult to give an answer to your questions.  

He reiterated his point that “there was no fundamental change of heart among the majority of them.” The Herero were reluctant to convert and place themselves under the missionary’s care. God chastises those who are His, Viehe concluded, but “how much more when it concerns an entire heathen people who are so deeply sunk in sin, superstition, and idolatry!” The only answer for such obstinance was prayer: Christian readers ought to pray that God would soften (erweichen) Herero hearts. No longer should children only pray for erring Herero elites: they should pray for the “softening” of the entire people.

This would be Viehe’s last narrative, just months before his unexpected death. Four years later the Herero-German war broke out. Viehe had left his readers to ponder what act of God’s chastisement would come next. He could not have predicted the future, but his narrative set in place a way of thinking about “the African” that anticipated and accepted increased violence to stubborn people as an extreme measure of divine “grace.” These ideas helped transformed the German executioners of the Herero into the vessels of God’s will and reinforced the idea well-established in Christian teaching that God punishes people.

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565 “Nun, lieber Kinder, wir können nicht in die Herzen blicken, und da die Herero im allgemeinen eine sehr verschlossene Natur haben und ihre religiösen Empfindungen nicht gerne anderen offenbaren, ist es um so schwerer, auf Eure Frage eine bestimmte Antwort zu geben.” Ibid., 120.

566 “Aber der Mehrheit des Volkes merkt man leider keine gründliche Sinnesänderung an.” Ibid.

567 “Wie viel schwerer ist dies erst bei einem ganzen heidnischen Volk, das so tief in Sünden, Aberglauben und Götzendienst versunken war!” Ibid.
When Barmen received Viehe’s 1899 narrative on divine chastisement, the editor punctuated the notion of a “broken African” with a drawing of a Herero man (Figure 2). The man was old, thin, and poorly clad, with his club set to one side. He was a somber contrast to the Herero warrior that was used alongside of Viehe’s 1881 narrative (Figure 1). These drawings appeared elsewhere in Rhenish Mission literature, but most striking was how these images bookend the narratives of the Southwest African wars and genocide. They were a visual representation of the link between the ideas in Viehe’s 1899 narrative and the Herero genocide five years later.

A divine hand appeared to be heavy on the Herero. Viehe was one among several missionaries who took part in shaping notions of “the African” from the 1848 Revolution through German unification and well into the era of German colonialism. He embedded his notions of war, conflict, youth, and divine chastisement in narratives and reports that entered Germany through the missionary network. As he matured as a storyteller, his narratives evolved to present chastisement as the final means that would induce religious renewal. This belief accompanied the Rhenish Mission and its networks as they entered the twentieth century. Viehe’s stories not only intensified the reflective quality; they contained notions about “the African” that included an ominous expectation for violence and destruction.

568 Ibid., 119.
Teacher, is it true what you have said? Has not God cast aside the Herero people? Is He now punishing and disciplining us as a Father would his disobedient child? In the past week, God took my last child from me, a twelve year-old girl. Then I thought, God is angry with us and has cast us aside. How great is this word that you have spoken to us today, that God will again have mercy.  


A parish church in the heart of the German empire exploded in 1893, and twelve years later a new Cathedral, the Berliner Dom, stood in its place. This magnificent structure was to be the supreme seat of the Protestant Church for the German Empire, equal to St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome and a symbol of Kaiser Wilhelm II’s boast that Germans had “conquered … a place in the sun.” On 27 February 1905, the Kaiser inaugurated the Cathedral, and the citizens of Berlin could enter to be mesmerized by a splendor that cost the Empire eleven and a half million Marks. From the middle of the colossal and naturally
lit sanctuary, an observer could look up into the heart of the Cathedral, the interior cupola, and read on gold-plated tablets divine pronouncements over the empire: “blessed are the poor in spirit,” “blessed are those who mourn,” “blessed are the hungry,” “blessed are those persecuted for righteousness,” “blessed are the meek,” “blessed are the merciful,” “blessed are the pure in heart,” and “blessed are the peacemakers.” The eminent imperial court painter, Anton von Werner (1843-1915), had illustrated each beatitude with a fresco that wed notions of German valor and virtue with representations of Christian faith.571

The illustration on the south side, which bore the title “Blessed are the Peacemakers,” was an audacious claim to Germany’s moral leadership in the world (Figure 3). Von Werner presented an imposing Teutonic Christ-figure in imperial regalia; in his right hand the knight held a cross, while his left hand stayed the spear of a scantily clad, dark-skinned warrior who was about to pierce a disarmed and terrified European in military garb (Figure 2). The aggressor had twisted the victim’s body and would have delivered a final blow had not the German knight stepped in. To the left of the knight stood a cupid, attempting to hold back his lord’s advance. To his right, a dove descended with an olive branch in his beak. Behind the figures were billows of clouds, indicating the knight’s sudden arrival to stay the violence of the dark-skinned man. In 1905, the wars raging in Southwest Africa framed this image as a divine sanction of the German empire.

During the wars in Southwest Africa (1904-1907), the German missionary movement needed to reinterpret the image of the violent African and noble German.572 For over six

571 C. E. McClelland, Prophets, Pansters, or Professionals? A Social History of Everyday Visual Artists in Modern Germany, 1850-Present (Bern: Peter Lang, 2003); M. Fulbrook, German History since 1800 (London: Hodder Arnold, 1997); O. Grau, Virtuelle Kunst in Geschichte und Gegenwart (Berlin: Reimer, 2001), 66ff.

572 The war officially ended on 31 March 1907, but J. Zimmerer and J. Zeller, Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika: Der Kolonialkrieg (1904-1908) in Namibia und seine Folgen, (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2004), note that the
decades, the Rhenish Mission Society had sought to missionize the Nama and Herero. But during the months leading to the inauguration of the Berlin Cathedral, the German military was murdering thousands of Nama and Herero, inverting the characters in von Werner’s fresco. It looked like the mission to the Herero might be lost. The tense situation in Southwest Africa and heated debates at home over the colonial conflict became a matter of survival for the Rhenish Mission. The mission society used narratives in its defense, placing the German missionary in the imaginative space represented by von Werner’s Christ figure. They scrambled to portray the missionary as the ideal German and representative of the empire because he, more than any other, had the courage to carry out Germany’s moral calling in the world.

Debates over the colonial wars in Southwest Africa fed the 1907 “Hottentot Vote” and provided the political backdrop to von Werner’s paintings. The debates threatened the Rhenish Mission, both its work in Southwest Africa and its network at home, where a positive view of “the African” was unflattering to many Germans. As one of the longest standing fields of the Rhenish Mission and the German Protestant missionary movement, Southwest Africa was in a crisis that demanded the mission society reshape the story and image of “the African.” The society needed to unravel the knots that had entwined “the German” and “the African” in missionary narratives during the foregoing century. By re-

state of war and practice of genocide extended into 1908 until the Germans had released all of the prisoners of war and the Nama chief, Simon Kopper, had ended his resistance.

translating “the African” in its literature, the Rhenish Mission hoped to renew its public image in Germany and place the mission at the centre of imperial aims to tame the African.

The “Cultural Mirror” and the Herero-German War

The German colonial expansion and the arrival of German settlers after Berlin conference in 1884/85 complicated the reflexive view in missionary narratives by bringing the audience and subject face to face. Missionaries became anxious that the moral and spiritual condition of the arriving colonial administrators and settlers might corrupt the Herero, much as older children might corrupt a younger child. The missionaries tried to minimize contact between Africans and the Germans. But during the lean years of the 1890s, the Herero entered employment by settlers out of necessity. Mistreatment and violence toward the people in Southwest Africa increased during these years, as did missionary anxieties over losing control of the relationship between the Herero and the German settlers. The Rhenish Mission warned the German people and government of impending trouble, a prophecy that was fulfilled on 12 January 1904.


575 Gewald, 110-140; Drechsler, 168.

The violence in the early months of the German-Herero war was neither a surprise nor an unusual occurrence in colonial history. Although the Herero initiated attacks on a hundred and twenty-three male colonists during the early months of 1904, the German military responded with extreme measures that brutalized, drove away, and murdered more than sixty thousand Herero. The Germans incarcerated those who survived, stripped them of their land and cattle wealth, and sent them to work in mines and farms.

Developments in the Herero-German War and genocide had a decisive impact on the Rhenish Mission and its missionaries that altered their work on the field and the way they depicted Africans to Germans back home. On 12 January 1904, the Herero attacked male German settlers and traders over the age of sixteen at Waterberg, according to missionary Wilhelm Eich, who provided the first up-close account of the Herero uprising. Eich reported that rumours of attacks on settlers came first, but then he watched from a


579 The most extensive studies to focus on missionaries the Herero-German War and genocide that resulted are Heinrich Loth, Die Christliche Mission in Südwestafrika, and Nils Ole Oermann, Mission, Church and State Relations in South West Africa under German Rule, 93-113. Jan-Bart Gewald integrates his analysis of missionaries through his study, Herero Heroes, which reflects treatments found in Dreesler, Bley, and Bridgman. For overview of German mission societies in the colonies through the colonial period, see Ulrich van der Heyden, “Christian Missionary Societies in the German Colonies, 1884/85-1914/15,” in German Colonialism: Reace, the Holocaust, and Postwar Germany, edited by Volker Langbehn and Mohammed Salama, 215-253 (New York: Columbia University press, 2011).

580 Prior to Eich’s report, German newspapers had only rumours to go on. Eich was the first to report first hand; Wilhelm Eich, Kolonialzeitgesch (4 Feb. 1904): 41; Deutsche Kolonialblatt (June 1904): 359-60.
distance as Herero warriors attacked and killed traders and settlers. The Herero spared the missionaries on order from Samuel Maharero, their Paramount Chief, and Eich accompanied the German women and children to safety.\(^{581}\)

Of the twenty-two mission stations, missionaries also reported from six: Karibib, Windhoek, Otjimbingwe, Okahandja, Otjosazu, and Otjihaena.\(^{582}\) Brockmann reported that his home became a sanctuary for fleeing whites, while the church building became a fortress for Herero combatants.\(^{583}\) During the initial Herero attack, some missionaries led white survivors to safety.\(^{584}\) August Kuhlmann and Philipp Diehl travelled into the desert to convince the Herero to surrender.\(^{585}\) Others stayed in colonial centers and waited for orders from Barmen.\(^{586}\)

In Germany, the newspapers abounded with reports on the Herero-German war.\(^{587}\) The Herero were the “bad and erring” children of the mission in both thought and outlook, whereas the missionaries were poor parents.\(^{588}\) The theme of children was invoked in more ways with regard to the Herero and the missionaries. Some accusations included unfounded


\(^{583}\) Brockmann’s report from Otjosazu,


\(^{586}\) Three new missionaries to Southwest Africa had just arrived with the war broke out. Barmen had not yet assigned them to a mission station or new pioneering work. These were Friedrich Meier, Johann Heinrich Brockmann, and Heinrich Vedder.

\(^{587}\) For a survey of German newspaper reports on the Herero-German War, see Andrew Deas, “Germany’s Introspective Wars: Colonial and Domestic Conflict in the German Press’ Discourse on Race, 1904-1907,” (MA Thesis, Brandeis University, April 2009) http://bir.brandeis.edu/bitstream/handle/10192/23234/adeas_mathesis_0509.pdf?sequence=1

\(^{588}\) “zwar als böse, unartige Kinder; aber Kinder seien sie in ihrem Denken und in ihrer Ausschauungsweise doch.” *Dortmunder Zeitung* (July 19 1904).
stories of Herero brutality toward German children. The *Bremer Nachrichten* reported that a Herero teacher, someone trained by the missionaries, had attacked a German home, stepped on a child, and when the child did not die, pinned it between the door and the wall until it succumbed. The *Berliner Tageblatt* claimed that Herero violence to women and children showed the Protestant missionaries had failed to tame the Africans and should be removed; Catholic missionaries should be sent in their place. The Rhenish Mission defended itself by insisting that the proof of the benefit of their work among the Herero was that converts at least had behaved in a somewhat civilized manner toward German women and children.

The war turned to extreme violence and genocide in July and August 1904. Governor Theodor G. Leutwein (1849-1921) had failed to push the Herero away from colonial centers and strategic resources, so the German government sent a military professional with a reputation for brutality, Lt. General Lothar von Trotha (1848-1920). Von Trotha gathered troops and resources to wage a decisive battle against the Herero warriors and families assembled near Waterberg. When the Herero broke through the German ranks on the eastern side and escaped into the Omaheke Desert, the German military closed off access to waterholes and sent units of soldiers into the desert to find and

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589 *Bremer Nachrichten* (Thursday, 17 March 1904).
590 *Berliner Literarisches Bureau* reporting from *Berliner Tageblatt*, nr. 148 (21 March 1904).
591 *Volkszeitung für Westdeutschland* (18 Mai 1904).
593 On the Battle of Waterberg, see Hull, 33-43.
kill any Herero who had not escaped across the desert to British territory.594 No missionaries took part in the battle at Waterberg on 11 August 1904. The mission issued a “pastoral letter to the Herero” in October, and leaders from Barmen began negotiating with Berlin a plan to end the killing in the Omaheke desert and collect surviving Herero.595

In December 1904, the Rhenish missionaries demonstrated their loyalty to the empire by taking the lead role in rounding up the Herero in four collection camps and transporting them to concentration camps. They gathered mostly Herero women and children.596 An estimated 45% of the prisoners died in the makeshift camps because of intolerable conditions. The Germans sent those suited for work to labor camps, mines, and settler farms.597 By 1907, there were few Herero left, and the German military was also winding up its war against the Nama.598 By that time the Rhenish missionaries had established stations near the concentration camps to attend to their “captive” audience of Herero prisoners, who converted to Christianity in large numbers. Missionaries served as


595 “Hirtenbrief,” BRMG (Oct. 1904). On Barmen negotiations in Berlin, see Oermann, 100.

596 Gewald, 185-91; Oermann, 100.


chaplains of the prisoners and their guards, while also providing pastoral care for the surrounding German colonists. 599

**The “Cultural Mirror” and the Colonial Debate in Germany**

In the wake of genocide, a veteran missionary to the Herero, Johann Jakob Irle (1843-1924), called God’s name into question in Germany. Irle offered this seemingly extraneous gesture at a moment when larger issues were at stake for the Herero Mission. Fellow Rhenish missionaries in Southwest Africa, he argued, had chosen the wrong Otjiherero name for God, and for six decades they had equated a lesser Herero deity, *Mukuru*, with the Christian God. He argued that *Njambi Karunga*, a benevolent non-wrathful Herero deity, was more suited. 600 Although logic, anthropology, and perhaps theology were on his side, Irle’s seemingly innocuous call for better contextualization of Christian theology was more than a mere distraction in the midst of extreme turmoil and violence. He wanted to address core missionary notions and misconceptions that he believed had fueled racial and anti-missionary reactions in Germany in 1904, beginning with beliefs about God’s character.

As a newly appointed home-field inspector for the Rhenish Mission and a recently retired Herero missionary living in Germany in 1904, Irle was an authority in Germany on the Herero during the 1904 crisis. 601 With thirty-four years of experience on the field, one

599 Gewald, 192-204.


601 Irle’s publications on the Herero include biographies, as well as oft cited linguistic and anthropological monographs: J. J. Irle, *Wilhelm Maharero*, Lebensbilder aus vergangenen Tagen der Herero-Mission (Barmen: Missionshause, 1915); *Der Evangelist Manasse-Kajattura-Harenge*, Lebensbilder aus vergangenen Tagen der Herero-Mission (Barmen: Missionshause, 1915); *Die Herero: Ein Beitrag zur Lands-, Volks- und Missionskunde; Was soll aus den Herero werden?* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1906); *Deutsch-Herero Wörterbuch*
might have thought he should have become an invaluable resource for the colonial office in Berlin. But Irle burned that bridge early in the conflict. In a letter to the national *Reichsbote* on 22 March 1904, he asked a poignant question of the German readership: if the peaceful Herero had become “murderous thieves,” then “who was their role model, their instructor that caused them to make such a horrible assault?” Their “teachers,” he answered, were the German colonists, through whom the Herero “have not only lost all respect for the whites, but they have also been filled with bitter hatred toward them.”

Irle pressed further:

> Is then Hereroland a land of destination for unclean and inconvenient sons, whose past life here [in Germany] is not only the cause of the current uprising, but the whole brutalization of the Herero? Why do we send out such dropouts who only bring shame to the German name and are not compatible with the blood of white cultivated people?

Irle was unequivocal: unscrupulous whites, not the Herero, were to blame for the violence in Southwest Africa. He followed this accusation with a list of injustices the Herero had endured and concluded with another list of heroic acts by Herero Christians toward whites in the recent violence.

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602 Irle, “Noch ein Wort zum Herero Aufstand,” *Beilage zu Nr. 69 des Reichsboten* (22 March 1904); a copy is in RMG 2.604e, Herero Aufstand Zeitungsausschnitte

603 Ibid.

604 Ibid.

605 Ibid.
An immediate outcry erupted at home and in the field. Pastor Anz of the Windhoek Lutheran congregation accused Irle of unfairly tarring all colonists with the same brush.\(^{606}\) In Germany, outrage came from the highest levels, when Chancellor von Bülow praised the self-discipline and faithfulness of the colonists but questioned the patriotism of the missionaries for their “attacks directed against our citizens … in a time when so many Germans have become victims of raw barbarity.”\(^{607}\) Von Bülow told the Rhenish Mission to get in line with the empire: “In the current battles in South Africa the place of the missionaries is on the side of their fellow citizens.”\(^{608}\) He refused missionaries “the right to neutrality” in this conflict and warned them against any pretense of being “accuser or judge” of German colonists.\(^{609}\)

German newspapers repeated similar accusations. Missionaries had “become black”; they were in league with socialists; they were protecting “barbarians [who] crushed little children between the door and the walls of missionary homes”; their annual collections in Germany had become a virtual “war chest” against the colonists and “sand in the eyes” of

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\(^{607}\) August Bebel criticized the Colonial Office on 9 May 1904, and von Bulow blasted the SPD and the Rhenish Mission in his response in the Reichstag that same day; cited in G. Warneck’s *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, 1904, 298; cf. Menzel, 244; Oermann, 104-05.


those back home.\textsuperscript{610} As for their converts, the Herero Christians, the press was incredulous about Irle’s claims:

The mission-negro, and especially the evangelical type, is the most worthless product of Africa. The men become scoundrels and the women become prostitutes. The wild bush-negros, who live under the influence of their rightful barbaric outlook, are a thousand times more valuable for the civilizing work of the whites than the distasteful pretentious ‘trouser-negros’ whom the mission have brought up.\textsuperscript{611}

Although such derogatory depictions of the “mission-negro” were common in Europe during the rise of scientific racism, this particular accusation was part of a wider threat against the Rhenish Mission network. The German government considered revoking the license for the annual Missionskollekten, a community fund-raising drive that provided a portion of the general income for the mission.\textsuperscript{612} But the impact was felt even deeper. The Ravensberg Mission Society reported the Herero uprising in its March issue of the Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen, relying more on newspapers for details than their parent organization in Barmen. The magazine repeated unconfirmed reports about the “gruesome murder” of German men, women, and children by “wild hordes” who “with a thirst for

\textsuperscript{610} For examples, see Koloniale Zeitschrift, 17 March 1904; Westfälisches Tageblatt, 16 March 1904; Westfälisches Tageblatt, 16 March 1904; Koloniale Zeitschrift, 17 March 1904.


\textsuperscript{612} The Kollekten-Blätter für die Rheinische Mission brought in a quarterly income of approximately 34,000 Marks in 1904 and 1905, with a slight increase in 1905. There is no evidence that income declined during this period. A slight drop between 1904 and 1905; rather, between 1904 and 1908 the overall income rose 24%; for income tables from 1830-1914, see Walter Specker, Die Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft in ihren volks- und kolonialwirtschaftlichen Funktionen (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1922), 79-81.
booty and blood looted remote homesteads without mercy even to spare children.” How was it possible, the editor asked, that the Rhenish Mission had worked for decades to convert the Herero, but had only baptized a tenth of them? Still, he was reluctant to blame missionaries for the violence or to repeat accusations of disloyalty toward the German Empire. After all, those who supported the missionaries in Southwest Africa appeared to be implicated by their association with the Rhenish Mission. If mission collections had become a “war chest,” whereby “gold was streaming out of the country” to fund enemy combatants, much of the money had come from the pockets of Missionsfreunde in Westphalia.

When the violence in Southwest Africa escalated to genocide after Waterberg in August 1904, the Rhenish Mission was already in full swing to restore and recreate perceptions of the Herero mission. First, the Rhenish Mission needed to silence independent voices abroad and at home, notably Inspector Jakob Irle. July 1904 saw an effort to cool the debate through conservative and supportive newspapers, among these the Volkszeitung für Westdeutschland (The People’s Newspaper for West Germany). The mission leadership in Barmen argued that “even if the Irle publication came out exaggerated and...

613 “die Bewohner grausam gemordet ... Ihr Mund ist für immer geschlossen, aber man kann sich denken, was es sein muß, wenn die wilden Banden den einsamen Gehöften heutegierig und blutdürstig nahten, Banden, die kein Erbarmen kennen und auch das Kind nicht schonen.” EMW (March 1904): 89.

614 Ibid., 88-90.

615 Ibid.

616 For examples, see EMW (1904): 221.

617 The section titled Weltumschauung in the Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen identified these financial and political tensions facing the Missionsfreunde in 1904, which led the Ravensberg Mission Society to stress African violence as a theme in the Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen, see Ibid., 250-51.
offensive to the nation,” the debate “must come to an end.”\textsuperscript{618} The Rhenish Mission had only defended itself against “the Chancellor’s extensive attacks,” which had “distracted the public from more important issues.”\textsuperscript{619}

The Rhenish Mission could not afford to malign the veteran missionary Irle, whose wife was the beloved daughter of Ludvig von Rohden, former head of the Rhenish Mission and teacher of the senior missionaries. The Missionsfreunde might not accept such discipline. To tackle this delicate issue, the Rhenish Mission reported that missionaries and colonists in Southwest Africa had met to settle their differences, and then they offered a cautious apology that distanced them from Irle.\textsuperscript{620}

We cannot possibly take responsibility for what has been written even in our own well-meaning press, nor of the content of a news report that outlines the lecture of one of our missionaries in Osnabrück. Everyone knows that such a report, without intending to give falsehood, will for the most part arouse impressions through one-sided portrayals and underscore individual positions, which in the context of the whole lecture was perhaps not the intention of the speaker.\textsuperscript{621}

The Barmen leadership made sure that no further stray reports would come from missionaries during this crisis. Inspectors Pastor Hausleiter and Johannes Spiecker decided

\textsuperscript{618}“... selbst wenn die Irlesche Publikation als übertreibend und auch national verletzend ausschaltet.” \textit{Volkszeitung für Westdeutschland}, 20 July 1904.

\textsuperscript{619}Ibid.


\textsuperscript{621}“Wir können unmöglich die Verantwortung für das übernehmen, was selbst in der uns wohlgemerkt Presse geschrieben worden ist, selbst auch nicht, wenn ein Zeitungsreferat den Inhalt eines von einem unserer Missionare in Osnabrück gehaltenen Vortrages skizziert. Jedermann weiß, daß ein solches Referat, ohne direkt die Unwahrheit zu sagen, doch meistens durch einseitige Hervorhebungen und Unterstreichungen einzelner Stellen einen Eindruck erweckt, der im Zusammenhang des ganzen Vortrages vielleicht gar nicht in der Absicht des Redners lag.” BRMG (July 1904); also reported in \textit{Volkszeitung für Westdeutschland} (20 July 1904).
that they alone should manage all references to Southwest Africa in public forums. The choice of Spiecker, instead of Irle, is telling. Both men held the position of Inspektor, and, though Spiecker had visited Southwest Africa in 1903, he was neither a missionary nor an expert on the Herero. Irle, in contrast, was a veteran Herero missionary with thirty-four years of experience, fluent in the language and culture of the Herero, and only recently retired from the field.

Silencing dissent would not suffice to rebuild the reputation of the Rhenish Mission in Germany. The Mission sought to restore confidence by demonstrating that missionaries were engaged in patriotic work, which upheld the aims of the German empire. They set out to change the question from the cause for the violence to accountability, emphasizing the mission’s parental role toward their erring Herero children.

To accomplish this task, the mission recruited pastoral leaders from the church community. The August issue of the *Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westafalen* published a mission conference sermon by Church Superintendent and Pastor Niemann.\(^{622}\) Niemann sandwiched the content of his sermon between remarks about the Herero-German war. He noted the widespread accusations against the mission and the especially contentious issue of the annual mission collection.\(^ {623}\) He then delivered his message of how sin entangles and entraps people, reminding his audience that although God is our advocate when we sin, He is also our Judge. Those who refused to repent were taking part in a “resistance” (*Widerstand*), and God would hold them to account. In case the audience missed his connection to the contemporary crisis, Niemann concluded that God “is also the salvation

\(^{622}\) Niemann was speaking at the annual Bünde Missions Conference on 6 July 1904.

\(^{623}\) The Ministry threatened to withhold permission in 31 December 1905, but did not follow through; “Mitteilung an unsere Hülfs-Vereine,” RMG 128 a & b, no. 25-30
for the sins of the Herero and heathen horrors.” In response to Niemann’s message in Bünde, the *Missionsfreunde* present gave a notable sum of 5372 Marks toward work in Southwest Africa.625

The mission society also sought to convey its parental role in the conflict. Appended to the monthly report of the Rhenish Mission in October 1904, the same month that General von Trotha issued his infamous “extermination order,” was a pastoral letter to the Herero.626 In this letter, missionaries made it clear that the Herero, and especially Herero Christians who had joined the uprising, had caused the missionaries much pain:

> It is our duty to warn you earnestly and to implore you urgently to leave the way of wrongdoing and begin at once to turn wrong into good again as much as is possible. Only when you have put down your weapons and changed your ways, can you again turn in faith to the Lord and His grace. Nothing more will be put on you than you can bear. You will then be in His hand and can receive in life and in death your refuge in Him.627

Outlining Herero transgressions, the missionaries called on the Herero not to place themselves in further peril but to humble themselves before God and man. The first sign of

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624 “Es kann in einer Art für alle Missionsfreunde gelten. Das sind die brauchbarsten Missionsleute, die zähen Leute, zähe in ihrer Liebe, die es gewiß wissen: Er ist die Versöhnung auch für die Sünden der Hereros, auch für heidnische Gruel; der ganzen Welt gehört er zu, wie uns; wem Gott Gnade gibt zur Buße, der ist gerecht durch ihn und rein, der wird selig werden. Amen.” EMW (1904): 227-34, quote from 234.

625 Ibid.

626 On von Trotha’s “extermination order,” see Oermann, 97-100

surrender would be to lay down their weapons, renounce their reasons for rebelling, confess their crimes, and make peace with the German government.\textsuperscript{628}

The Rhenish Mission threatened to wash its hands of the Herero if they refused to take the advice of their spiritual parents: “But if you will not permit yourselves to be advised and warned, and further disregard our charitable voice of admonishment, then we are at least innocent of your blood.”\textsuperscript{629} The Herero would then only have themselves to blame for what would come:

\begin{quote}
Therefore, keep yourself in the Lord of grace. Today, if you again hear His voice, do not harden your hearts! The Lord wants to give you room to repent and convert, and thereby protect you, so that you do not run with open eyes toward your destruction.\textsuperscript{630}
\end{quote}

The letter was even more ominous than the threats on its surface: it was not directed at the Herero, but at German readers. Indeed, there is no evidence that any Herero read the letter during the fateful months of late 1904. It was not accessible to them. Instead it was sent through the German mission network as a statement that the mission had done all it could to correct the erring Herero, who now stood under God’s wrath.

**Njambi Karunga and the God of the Herero**

Two years later, Irle’s proposed renaming of God in 1906 was a way of breaking his silence and restate his critique of Germans in Southwest Africa. He revived his pro-Herero

\textsuperscript{628} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{629} “Wenn Ihr Euch aber nicht raten und warnen laßt, vielmehr auch diese unsere mahnende Liebestimme mißachtet, dann sind wir wenigstens rein von euer aller Blut. Ihre geht dann mit offenen Augen in Euer Verderben.” Ibid.

\textsuperscript{630} “Davor bewahre Euch der Herr in Gnaden! Heute, da Ihr noch einmal seine Stimme höret, verstocket Eure Herzen nicht! Der Herr aber wolle Euch selbst Raum zur Buße und zur Umkehr geben und Euch davor bewahren, daß Ihre nicht mit sehenden Augen ins Verderben lauft!” Ibid.
argument to challenge the notion of the Herero as standing under divine wrath.\textsuperscript{631} Perhaps he imagined, as in the Hebrew scripture, where a new name for God (Yahweh) opened a new relationship between the Hebrew people and their deity, that Njambi Karunga would be a fresh start for the Herero.\textsuperscript{632} But in his monograph, \textit{The Herero}, Irle proposed more than a new theological orientation. He argued against those who claimed Africans had no culture, by providing an anthropological study of the Otjiherero language, arts, values, beliefs, sense of history, community rituals, dance and song, property concepts, marriage and family ideals, social roles, trade, military organization, and cultural integration with their Damra, KhoiSan, and Namaqua neighbors.\textsuperscript{633} Irle wanted readers to understand that the problems in Southwest Africa were not due to a lack of Herero culture but to European ignorance.\textsuperscript{634}

Not only did the Herero have moral or social capacities, Irle argued, they often surpassed their neighbors, including, and perhaps especially, the German. The Herero, he claimed, were hospitable, generous, trustworthy, and kind toward those who were weak. If

\textsuperscript{631} Bradley D. Naranch offers a similar account to Irle in his article on Bernard Dernburg, the Director of the Colonial Division of the German Foreign Office. After a visit in 1907 to the interior of East Africa, Dernburg became an advocate of indigenous forms of production, espousing greater confidence in African abilities to produce than European abilities, including German. Naranach’s study of Dernburg sheds light not only on individuals such as Dernburg and Irle who placed the African in a favorable light, sometimes even over the German, but also on how such individuals faced immense criticism from opposition groups and even from inside their own circle of support, until they were silenced and retired from their position. See Bradley D. Naranch, “‘Colonized Body,’ ‘Oriental Machine’: Debating Race, Railroads, and the Politics of Reconstruction in Germany and East Africa, 1906-1910,” \textit{Central European History} 33, no. 3 (2000): 299-338.

\textsuperscript{632} Irle, 72-75.

\textsuperscript{633} Irle wrote his monograph to oppose arguments by ethnologists in the 1880s, including Pechuel Lösche, who denied that Africans even had a culture and insisted they should become laborers for the colonial project, see Irle, \textit{Die Herero}, 336; cf.

\textsuperscript{634} Irle, \textit{Die Herero}, 60. A British reviewer in 1906 described Irle’s book as “agreeably and sympathetically written” but then complained about discrepancies within the text and that Irle sided “decidedly with the Herero”; “Die Herero,” \textit{Journal of the Royal African Society} 5, no. 20 (July 1906): 419-20. Here Bernard Dernburg and Jakob Irle were also remarkably similar in their claims about what constitutes true knowledge about Africans. Dernburg’s appeal to “evidence of experience” to support his claim was similar to Irle’s claim to the uniqueness of missionary experience at the grassroots; Naranch, 315-19.
they were proud and arrogant, they were “the same as every German who is proud of his land.”\textsuperscript{635} If they had acted violently toward Germans in the 1904, prior to the outbreak of war they had not murdered a single white. Irle asked, “when the number of murdered Herero on the side of the whites is tallied, what will then be said?”\textsuperscript{636}

Irle denied that the Rhenish Mission had a duty to engage in a civilizing mission. Granted, the Christian missionaries would bring with them forms of civilization, but this, he declared, was not their primary purpose. Instead, he concluded his monograph by stating:

The Gospel does not require that heathens first be civilized in order to understand it, because even the civilized white nominal Christian is just as difficult to convert as the uncivilized Negro. The mission is not dependent on this and its aim is not primarily to bring culture and civilize the heathen. Nor is its task, as some would claim, to turn natives into laborers for the whites.\textsuperscript{637}

Irle’s remarks reveal conflicts within the Rhenish Mission. In early 1905, the head of the Rhenish Mission, Inspector Hausleiter, defended the role of his organization in Southwest Africa in the national \textit{Reichsbote} and reaffirmed its commitment to the civilizing mission.\textsuperscript{638}

\begin{flushright}
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\textsuperscript{635} “Auch der Hochmut und Stolz, welcher den Herero nachgesagt wird, ist in vielen Stücken, genauer gesehen, ein Ehrgefühl, das nicht leidet, sich jedem Fremden skalvisch unterzuordnen. Der Herero ist stolz wie jeder Deutsche auch und besingt sein Land wie dieser.” Irle, \textit{Die Herero}, 64.

\textsuperscript{636} “Wenn weiter die Herero bis zum Aufstand nie einem Weißen gemordet haben, dagengen eine Anzahl Morde seitens Weiße an Herero festgestellt ist, wie will man denn dies nennen?” Ibid.

\textsuperscript{637} “Das Evangelium bedarf nirgends einer vorhergehenden Zivilisierung der Heiden, um verstanden zu werden, denn der zivilisierte weiße Namenchrist ist ebenso schwer zu bekehren als der unzivilisierte Neger. Die Mission ist nicht von der abhängig, ihr Ziel ist auch nicht in erster Linie, Kultur zu bringen und die Heiden zu zivilisieren, sie hat auch nicht die Aufgabe, die man ihr aufbürden möchte, die Eingeborenen zu Arbeitern der Weißen zu machen.” Ibid., 336.

\textsuperscript{638} Hausleiter, \textit{Reichsbote}, (1 April 1904); also in RMG 2.604e, Herero-Aufstand Zeitungsausschnitte, 076. That Irle was out of step with many of the Rhenish Mission on how to characterize the Herero is evident in \textit{Flügblätter} published at the same time as Irle’s book, \textit{Die Herero}. \textit{Flügblätter} praised the missionaries for “eine große Kulturarbeit getan unter diesen völlig kulturlosen Völkern.” \textit{Flügblätter der Rheinischen Mission}, no. 3. (1906).
\end{footnotesize}
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When Irle published his 1906 monograph, the debate in Germany over military action in Southwest Africa was well on the way to the so-called “Hottentot” election on 25 January 1907. The conservative and liberal parties hoped to use the debate to squash the Social Democrats, who opposed the government’s heavy hand in the colony. Irle’s rejection of the missionary’s responsibility to “civilize” the Herero and turn them into laborers for the colonial project was analogous to arguments coming from the left. Social Democrats, who were critical of colonialism, were especially concerned about the Herero-German War because of its military mobilization and associated expenditures.

The Rhenish Mission and its supporting network would not endorse Irle’s portrayal of a benevolent God known for His generosity and less concerned with accountability and punishment. Neither the financial nor the political climate was conducive to such a shift. Only in the 1920s, after the Germans had lost their colonies, did missionaries adopt Njambi Karunga as the Herero name for the Christian God.

By stressing the moral character of the Herero, Irle was providing an uncomfortable critique of German militarism and colonial ambitions. He had written reflexively, in the tradition of mission narratives as cultural mirrors, in order to defend the Herero against their

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640 On the debate over how to characterize the SPD’s relationship to colonialism and especially the colonial wars in 1907 during the so-called Hottentotwahl, see Jens-Uwe Guettel, “The Myth of the Pro-Colonialist SPD: German Social Democracy and Imperialism before World War I,” *Central European History* 45 (2012): 452-484. Guettel notes that Carl Schorske was one of the first scholars to accuse the SPD of harboring pro-colonial sentiments that weakened their opposition; Carl Schorske, *German Social Democracy 1905-1907: The Development of the Great Schism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), 85, 328. For a more recent restatement of Schorske’s argument, see Helmut Walser Smith, “The Talk of Genocide, the Rhetoric of Miscegenation,” in *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and its Legacy*, edited by Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, and Susanne Zantop, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 118.
German aggressors. He understood that missionary narratives were not merely literature for Germans about distant people, but that these stories ought to be about Germans. Parallel to the mirror, Irle portrayed the Herero as a counterpoint of “the German” that raised damning questions about the moral character and theological soundness of Germans, perhaps even about the missionary project itself.

The effort to silence Irle exposed a dichotomy in the Rhenish Mission Society between its mission to the Herero and its mission to the Missionsfreunde. The Missionsfreunde had patriotic loyalties and aspirations for the German empire that came into direct conflict with the mission during the Herero-German War.

Rhenish Missionary August Kuhlmann amidst the Herero

Other missionaries were more pliable to the immediate needs of the mission and the empire. Those still serving in the field shared Irle’s concern about the threat to the Herero Mission. They too wanted to engage the conversation back home to protect their interests. But when the initial reports by missionaries, coupled with Irle’s angry response, caused an outcry back home, the leadership in Barmen censured the missionary voice. The problem facing the Rhenish Mission was that it could not publish narratives of the Herero-German War in the reflexive mode that compared the moral character of Africans to Germans. Given the chaos, volatility, and violence in Southwest Africa in 1904, Germans would not find such an equation palatable. Yet, they demanded an explanation for the murder of their colonists. The Rhenish Mission decided the safest route would be to elevate “the missionary” as a heroic figure stepping into the fray to abate the violence.

The mission society needed a report that would dissuade its detractors from further criticism and characterize the mission’s role in the colony as aligned with the empire. Such a
report should show that Germans were wrong to assume the Rhenish Mission was in league with the rebellious Herero and the Social Democrats at home.\textsuperscript{641} Rather, its close relationship with the Herero placed it in a valuable position for the empire. The report had to show that missionaries were courageous and forged ahead into conflict, regardless of personal danger.\textsuperscript{642} The missionary would then be a valiant hero assuaging violence against Europeans by tempering African aggression. This ideal representative of the mission and the empire would legitimize the German presence in the colony as a peacemaker.

In the June edition of \textit{Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft}, the Barmen leadership decided to publish a lengthy report that would defend the interests of the mission society to the German public. A narrative by missionary August Karl Heinrich Kuhlmann (1871-1945) filled nearly half the available space in the journal that month. He defined the role of the missionary while supporting further action by the German government to quell the Herero. He broke with the traditional reflexive mode of associating “the German” with “the African,” in favor of depicting “the missionary” as representing the ideal German.

Kuhlmann’s background was similar to other Rhenish missionaries. His father was a tradesman, a stonemason, and his mother an ardent \textit{Missionsfreund} from Enger, near Herford in the Westphalian heartland of support for the Herero Mission. As a child, Kuhlmann was a member of a local youth group and took part in mission festivals. He claimed these

\textsuperscript{641} Any association with the SPD was likely to provoke a reaction from the \textit{Missionsfreunde} in Westphalia, where the Protestant Church had defined itself in opposition to the SPD; see W. Günther, “Die Spenger Schlacht: Das Wirken des ‘Knüppelpastors’ Iskraut im Kampf gegen die Socialdemokratie im Kreis Herford,” \textit{Jahrbuch für Westfälische Kirchengeschichte}, vol. 90 (1996): 181-204.

\textsuperscript{642} The head of the Herero Mission, Missionary Philipp Diehl, went alone to find the Herero and negotiate with them. “Diehl, Philipp, 1900-1918” RMG 1.606c, Vol. 3.
influences “awakened the love of missionary work.” As a young adult, he sought a trade as a shoemaker and found work in Berlin. Removed from the familiar rural setting, young men found their religious sensibilities challenged by the metropole. Kuhlman relied on the religious youth groups in Berlin to provide him with spiritual nurture and community; it was there he received his “call” to missionary work. He applied first to the Gossner Mission, but his mother persuaded him that the Rhenish Mission was more in line with Westphalian interests.

After six years of training, Kuhlmann arrived in Southwest Africa, where he began his work in the small outpost of Okazeva along the Nosob River bed and deep in the Kalahari Desert. His bride, Johanne Braches (1874-1901), a daughter of Rhenish missionaries in Borneo, died giving birth to twins. Kuhlmann then married Elisabeth Dannert (1878-1965), the daughter of missionaries in Southwest Africa. Together they raised eleven children and served in Southwest Africa for the remainder of their lives. When the Herero War broke out, the Kuhlmanns were living on the remote mission station of Okazeva with three small children.

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645 Elisabeth and August married in 1903. Raised in Hereroland, Elisabeth brought at lot of cultural capital to Okazeva and to August Kuhlmann, who notes as much in his short report in BRMG (1903): 214.

Prior to the conflict, Kuhlmann was unfamiliar to most Germans back home. The Rhenish Mission published only short reports from him, as from others.647 But he proved to be a competent missionary, an able linguist, and, like Irle, a expert on the Herero.648 In later years, he was the first to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into Otjiherero, and he provided studies about Herero character and customs.649

Life on a remote mission outpost had many insecurities only heightened by war. When the Herero vanished from the station, Kuhlmann and his young family packed their wagon and departed before receiving direction from Barmen. Instead of heading toward colonial strongholds in the west or south, the Kuhlmanns decided to travel north, deeper into the Kahlahari Desert to find the Herero war parties. The seasonal rains made travel through the desert possible because water was in ample supply. Along the way, the Kuhlmanns stayed with various groups of Herero. They encountered the Paramount Chief of the Herero, Samuel Maharero, who commissioned them to bring a letter to Theodor Leutwein. At last, they arrived at the colonial post, Okahandja, where Kuhlmann learned about the controversy raging over the role of missionaries in the Herero-German War. He provided a written report to the mission about his experiences among the Herero.650

647 See Kuhlmann’s reports in BRMG (1898): 273, 321, 381; (1899): 37, 78, 244, 299.

648 In 1903, Kuhlmann reported that he had baptized 25 converts and now had a community of 87 members in Okazeva; BRMG (1903): 374.


650 Kuhlmann’s later monograph Auf Adlers Flügeln (1911) covered his work with the Herero from his arrival to Southwest Africa through the period of the war and genocide. This text confirmed and expanded the report he sent to Barmen in April or May 1904; BRMG (1904): 203-226.
It was not easy to construct a report that met the needs of the Rhenish Mission abroad and at home. Kuhlmann had to show readers that survival of the Herero mission was contingent on its commitment to the German empire without compromising the integrity of the mission’s supporting network. Just as the Rhenish Mission could not afford to abandon the Herero after six decades of work, they could not afford to offend those at home for whom the stories of the Herero served as a source of religious renewal.

Kuhlmann also had his own reasons for aligning the interests of the mission with the empire. His investment in Southwest Africa was not located in the past, as it was for Irle. Rather, his hopes lay in what he, the mission, and the empire would accomplish in the future.

Kuhlmann published his report titled “The Storm in Hereroland: Seven Weeks in the Camp of the Rebellious Herero” in June 1904. He aimed to dispel the perception that the relationship between missionaries and the Herero was unpatriotic. Barmen likely received the report in April or May, just as the debate over the missionaries’ role was heating up. It contained something the mission needed: Kuhlmann recounted his family’s harrowing experiences in the weeks following the outbreak of the war, providing details about the Herero and the missionary’s role among them.

There was no denying the close relationship between missionaries and the “rebellious Herero.” Kuhlmann let his readers know, however, that missionaries were not afraid to use

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651 According to J. Lukas de Vries, like Irle, Kuhlmann was critical of the colonial government and the Rhenish Mission in the handling this conflict; J. Lukas de Vries, Mission and Colonialism in Namibia (Johannesberg: Ravan Press, 1978), 171-79.

652 It was a long report: twenty-four of sixty pages in Die Berichte der Rheinischen Mission.


654 A year later, the Rhenish Mission adapted this narrative for children and youth in a collection of narratives for Der Kleine Missionsfreund, titled, “From the Herero Christians at War”; Kuhlmann, “Von der Hererochristen im Kriege,” DKMF (1905) 7: 99-112.
this advantage to benefit the empire. He had first learned of the violence on the evening of 14 January 1904, when his local elder, Elias, sent a group of women with the Herero teacher to inform Kulmann that “the whole world is in revolt” and that “whites and blacks are murdering each other.”

They had come to assure Kulmann that his family would be safe. Kulmann claimed to have turned down any offer of protection. He showed his reader that the relationship with the Herero did not prevent the missionary from warning them that the German military would “soon come to exact revenge” for the murders of German settlers, traders, and soldiers. In his depiction, missionaries appeared as essential to resolving the conflict in the colony because they had the courage and opportunity to speak directly to the Herero.

Kulmann presented himself and his family as brave missionaries travelling through the desert to negotiate an armistice with warrior chiefs and to call Herero to repent. During their journey, the family encountered various war parties consisting of “heathens” and “Christians,” whose ear Kulmann claimed to have. He was overjoyed when “a large audience” attended his Sunday service on 14 February.

In his depiction, missionaries appeared as essential to resolving the conflict in the colony because they had the courage and opportunity to speak directly to the Herero.

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656 “Wir sollen Dich, Deine Familie und Dein Hab und Gut schützen.” Ibid.


658 “Eine grosse Zuhörerschaft.” Ibid., 216. Kulmann described the first encounter: “It was as though they could not believe their eyes when they saw us among the people”; Ibid., 210.
they placed their rifles in the bush.”\textsuperscript{659} They appeared respectful, standing silently as he spoke “freely and openly” of their need “to repent and call on the savior while there was still time.”\textsuperscript{660} Kuhlman saw this as an opportunity to warn the Herero that if they did not end the war, they would no longer see their teacher and “this war will end with the downfall of the Herero.”\textsuperscript{661}

An essential aim of this narrative was to get the reader to see the missionary as Christ-like, standing alone, a longsuffering victim. Kuhlmann’s account juxtaposed missionary fears with acts of sacrifice and bravery. Missionaries had suffered the loss of their homes, their possessions, and their ministry. They were frightened for their families. Yet they acted courageously. Kuhlmann admitted that at first he and his wife had been naive about the dangers facing their family; they were shocked and could not understand why the mission had become a target of the Herero, “to whom we had only done good.”\textsuperscript{662} At times, Kuhlmann deflected his own fears onto his wife and newborn child to stress the courage required to face their journey:

In the evening of 11 February, we were all, in the literal sense of the word, dead tired. The night was rather quiet and we were all able to sleep in peace. It was a great blessing for our barely three-month old son, who breastfed, that my beloved wife in the midst of all this

\textsuperscript{659} “Da sassen die Männer mit ihren um die Hüfte oder Schultern gelegten Patronengürteln; hinter ihnen, ans Gebüsch gelehnt, standen die Gewehre.” Ibid., 216-17.

\textsuperscript{660} “Manches Auge sah mich erstaunt an, als ich frei und offen zu Christen und Heiden sprach und sie ermahnte, das Heil ihrer Seele zu suchen, solange es noch Zeit sei.” Ibid., 217.

\textsuperscript{661} “Dass dieser Krieg mit dem Untergang der Hereros enden wuerde.” Ibid.

\textsuperscript{662} “Wir, meine Frau und ich, konnten es absolut nicht fassen, dass auch uns von den Hereros, denen wir doch nur Gutes getan hatten.” Ibid., 205.
danger so bravely and courageously cradled him, even though her mother’s heart often beat.\textsuperscript{663}

Here was an appeal to archetypes of the mother and child during war times.

According to Kuhlmann, a dichotomy between patriotism and religious duty was the cause of suffering for the missionary. He expounded on how this dilemma intensified when the family finally caught up with Elias and the Okazeva Herero from the mission station.

The “heathen” and “Christian” Herero were thrilled to see them and demanded, “teacher, if you do not stay with us, then we will be very restless and without joy, but if you stay with us, our hearts are lifted up.”\textsuperscript{664} As suddenly as they had abandoned their teacher, the Herero had now come to their senses and desired to return to the faith. Kuhlmann gave two reasons: “their guilty conscience and ... the feeling of having abandoned God and God’s Word, whose servant their \textit{Muhonge} [teacher] is.”\textsuperscript{665} Kuhlmann thought the Herero were willing to repent, but they needed their missionary to guide them.

Kuhlmann’s threat to leave the Herero was a warning to his reader that without support from home, the missionary would not be present to help resolve the situation in Southwest Africa. He used the voice of Herero elder Elias to ask if the Herero mission would survive: Elias pleaded with Kuhlmann to remain and perform the sacraments of


\textsuperscript{664} “Zeigt sich recht erfreut darüber, dass ich wieder in ihrer Mitte sei und hoffte, ich würde nun bei ihr bleiben … endliche sagen: ‘Lehrer wenn Du nicht bei uns bist, dann sind wir sehr unruhig und freudelos, wenn Du aber unter uns bist, so wird unser Herz gehoben.’” Ibid., 215.

baptism and marriage for the Herero. Kuhlmann then framed Elias’ question as a spiritual dichotomy between his patriotism and his duty as a missionary:

This was a difficult question for me, because I knew very well what he meant and what he was asking of me for those who remained in baptismal instruction. But could I now baptize anyone? Were they not all part of a frightful war that was no longer a mere war but much rather must be called a revolt against a divinely instituted government? So spoke my German emotion and sensibilities.

Kuhlmann juxtaposed his patriotism with a question about the Herero perspective: “What about the sensibilities of this people?” His response, however, was vastly different from Irle’s claims. Knowing that the Herero perspective was a sensitive topic, Kuhlmann stayed in the interrogative mode:

Did not this people see this war as a matter of justice from their vantage point? Was not the war they conducted, according to their view, a war of freedom, which according to them, they conducted according to the customs of their ancestors?

As soon as he raised the issue, however, he dropped it. The focus should be on the missionary’s inner struggle, not the Herero. Kuhlmann reflected on how these matters upset him “as a German who loves his fatherland and as a

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666 Kuhlmann told of other groups who similarly pleaded with him to stay with them; Ibid., 222.


668 “Aber ware es auch das Empfinden des Volkes?” Ibid.

missionary who loves this people.” 670 His greatest joy, he concluded, was “the salvation of their souls.” 671

Kuhlmann wanted his readers to view the missionary as occupying a better position than colonial officials and military representatives to negotiate with the Herero elites. After all, the German military did not even know where the Herero had gone. But the missionary had lived and walked among them. Kuhlmann turned Irle’s argument on its head: the intimate relationship between the missionary and the Herero uniquely positioned the missionary to “tame” the Herero. Kuhlmann recounted how the Herero Chief Kaijata, “an energetic … bold and thoughtful warrior,” had demanded that his warriors disarm in the presence of the missionary. 672 No other European in the colony had been able to do this, for fear of being the next victim. Only the missionary, according to Kuhlmann, had such impact.

Kuhlmann’s tone was urgent; the Missionsfreunde needed to support the Mission before it was too late. One goal of his report was to call the Missionsfreunde to “muster sufficient courage” to support the Mission “in view of the sad future” facing the Herero. 673 “The horror of the war” and the “plunder of the mission houses” would be for naught, he

670 “So sehr mich diese Fragen innerlich bewegten, die mich als Deutschen, der sein Vaterland lieb hat, und als Missionar, der das Volk lieb hat, unter dem er arbeitet, beschäftigten.” Ibid.

671 “So war für mich das Verlangen nach seelsorgerlicher Bedienung und nach dem Seelenheil, das mir hier entgegen trat, doch eine grosse Freude … Beim Beginn des Krieges schien mir meine Arbeit wie Spreu und Stoppeln, die von Sturm des Aufruhrs hinweggefegt würden; nun aber durfte ich die erquickende und zugleich glaubenstärkende Wahrnehmung machen, dass ich nicht umsonst gearbeitet hatte.” Ibid.

672 “Kaijata kam sogleich herzu, um uns zu grüssen; mit ihm kam auch viel Volks herzu. Als Kaijata sah, wie die meisten mit ihren Gewehren auf den Schultern uns begrüssen wollten, befahl er, sogleich die Gewehre abzulegen und zur Seite zu stellen; und als etliche Burschen nicht seiner Aufforderung folgten griff er wütend zu einem dicken Knüppel und wollte ihn auf sie schleudern. Da stieben alle mit Gewehren Bewaffnete auseinander, legten die Waffen ab und kamen, uns zu begrüssen.” Ibid., 220.

673 “Im Blick in die traurige Zukunft doch noch Mut machen kann.” Ibid., 222.
warned, “if we condemn the entire people as incapable of improvement and abandon them in their downfall.” The war may have been started by some “bad elements” among the Herero, but the mission should not be abandoned or destroyed. Rather the war provided an opportunity to start anew to “improve” the Herero if those at home would stand with the missionary.

The report was also an appeal for Germany to act quickly. The war showed that the Herero were on the verge of slipping back into a savage state of brutality, pulling with them those who had already converted to Christianity and undoing the hard work of the mission. The first Herero war party the Kuhlmanns encountered in the desert was under the leadership of Traugott Tjetoo, a son of a Herero chief. Traugott exemplified the turn to apostasy: he had taken a second wife and lost favor with the missionaries. Kuhlmann also noted how the “heathen” gathered at night to dance and make “nerve shattering” noises “from out-of-control fury.” Among the heathens, he bemoaned, were members of his community from Okazeva, who appeared to have degenerated in their short time away from their missionary.

A few weeks further into his journeys, Kuhlmann described a similar experience when he encountered Chief Kaijata’s war party:

From time to time the racket from the heathen games and war dances would become loud. How it pained us to stand by quietly and watch so many heathens and Christians dressed in the clothing of our missionaries. They hardly knew that we recognized the objects …

\[674\] “So weit ich Einblick in all diese traurigen Tatsachen gewinnen konnte, bekam ich doch den Eindruck, dass an den Gräueln des Krieges mit unsern Landsleuten sowohl, wie auch an der Ausplünderung unserer Missionshäuser sich fast ausschliesslich die schlechten Elemente unter den Hereros beteiligt hatten, und wir würden ein Unrecht begehen, wenn wir das ganze Volk als unverbesserlich verwerfen und dem Untergang presiesgeben würden.” Ibid., 221.

\[675\] “Einem nervenerschütternden Laerm, der oft in Raserei ausartete, verbunden war.” Ibid., 217.
Unfortunately I learned that the mission house in Otjofazu had been plundered in part by the Christians.676

That Herero Christians took part in the “wild” and “bloody” preparations and plunders of war was a sign to Kuhlmann that the Herero mission was disintegrating. If something was not done soon, there would be nothing left.

Throughout the report, Kuhlmann affirmed the right of the German military to teach the Herero how to be submissive colonial subjects. When the Herero scouts first sighted German soldiers on their way to Okazeva, the Herero packed up their belongings and fled into the desert. The silence at the mission station unsettled Kuhlmann, who feared that the Herero might have gone to the British in Botswana. He told his readers that German soldiers would be required to end this dilemma: “How often have I wished that our fellow countrymen would come quickly and hinder [the Herero] from taking flight, but there is no chance of that.”677 For Kuhlmann, the preservation of the Herero mission was well worth the presence of the German military. The Missionsfreunde back home ought then to support the Kaiser in sending the military to Southwest Africa before it was too late and the Herero were lost to the British.

Kuhlmann ended his report with an appeal for the German government to bring resolution. He used a Herero visitor to give voice to this appeal. The visitor had come to his home in Okazeva to tell him that German troops should stay home since the Herero had


677 “Wie oft habe ich da gewünscht, dass doch unsere Landsleute bald kommen und sie an einer solchen Flucht verhindern möchten! Aber dazu war gar keine Aussicht.” Ibid., 207.
no quarrel with them.678 Their argument was with traders and over land reservations, two issues that the Rhenish Mission had already raised with the colonial office. The visitor told how German traders had indebted the Herero and treated them unfairly. He provided a list of the abuses and noted that complaints to the colonial office had amounted to nothing but “much bitterness.”679 The visitor then ended his visit by claiming that the ordinary Herero only wanted justice and added that they did not want their elite left in charge:

If the Herero succeed in evicting the Germans from this land, it will not go well with us lesser [Herero]. Under German rule we were able to have cattle, which was not possible in former times when all belonged to the elite. That is how it will be once again, if the Herero become the lords of the region.680

Kuhlmann’s conclusion was nothing short of a thinly veiled invitation for the Germans to reinforce their colonial presence. The German colonial government should address Herero grievances against traders, resolve the issue of land distribution, and address inequities in the social structure to support ordinary Herero against their elites.

Although the report defended the interests of the Rhenish Mission, it might also inadvertently have implied problems between the Herero Christians and their missionary. Elder Elias and the Okazeva Herero seemed to have duped Kuhlmann and made him a pawn in their negotiations with the colonial government. Three days into the conflict in January, when Kuhlmann claimed tensions had died down, Herero women came by to see his newborn son. Kuhlmann “gave thanks to God that the former trust between us and the

678 Ibid., 225.
679 “eine masslose Erbitterung.” Ibid.
680 “Wenn die Hereros die Deutschen aus dem Lande vertreiben, so geht es uns kleinen Leuten nicht gut. Unter der deutschen Regierung konnten auch wir uns Kuehe halten; das war in alter Zeit nicht moeglich; da gehoerte alles den Grossen. Und so wird es wieder werden, wenn die Hereros die Herren im Lande sind.” Ibid., 226.
residents of the station had been reaffirmed.”681 However, Elias had suddenly vanished. A messenger came with an apology from Elias for leaving without telling Kuhlmann “where [he] was going or what [he] was doing.”682 Then all of the Herero left and it seemed Elias’s messenger had different instructions for the Herero. Indeed, the Kuhlmanns set off in a wagon not to escape from violence but to find the Herero. Kuhlmann was not the recognized leader at Okazeva; Elias was, and Kuhlman was only a reluctant follower.

At points in the report Kuhlmann seemed to acknowledge that Herero intentionally deceived him. When he asked Elias about the condition of the mission station at Okazeva, Elias told him the buildings were a mess. He blamed Nama and Ovambandjeru bands of soldiers, whom he claimed were in league with each other against the Germans and the Herero.683 Elias told Kuhlmann that he and his men had gathered up what he could find and put it “back into the house through the broken window.”684 Kuhlmann did not comment on the credibility of Elias’s report, but later he noted that the Herero were wearing items belonging to the missionaries.

Kuhlman’s claim that the Herero pleaded with him to remain with them is also suspect. One reason for wanting Kuhlmann to stay could be his usefulness in ritual war preparations. These rituals may well have incorporated Christian traditions as a way of

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681 “Wir danken Gott, dass so das alte Vertrauen zwischen uns und den Stationsbewohnern aufs neue befestigt wurde.” Ibid., 205.

682 “Ich bin vor meinem Lehrer fade geworden, etwa so viel wie: ich habe mich bei ihm in ein schlechtes Licht gestellt, weil ich ihm nicht vorher gesagt habe, wohin ich gehen und was ich tun wuerde.” Ibid.

683 Ibid., 215.

684 “durch die zertrümmerten Fenster ins Haus gesetzt.” Ibid.
recognizing that the Christian Herero were also a part of the uprising.685 In a land where water is scarce, baptism might be a cleansing rite in preparation for battle, and the Eucharist might represent ingesting the Christian God to get his power. Marriage rituals would strengthen family alliances and loyalties.686 That Kuhlmann felt torn between his patriotism and missionary duties was likely lost on the Herero, who had their own motives for wanting him there.

Kuhlmann threatened to leave the Herero if they did not repent. In reality, he could not do so. By the time he arrived at Kaijata’s party in Otjasazu, he was only five hours from Okahandja, the mission center and colonial military base (see map: Figure 5). Having travelled through the desert for several days with his family, Kuhlmann was unable to continue this short journey. Instead, the Herero brought him back to Okandjira for a gathering of the chiefs. He was not permitted to participate but had to wait in the village until he was summoned by Samuel Maharero and given a letter to deliver to Governor Leutwein. Only then did the Herero release Kuhlmann and his family. They hastened to Okahandja, ending their seven-week journey.687 The Herero chiefs had the final say in where the missionary went and what he could do. The commanding officer in Okahandja, Oberst Dürr, was suspicious of Kuhlmann’s role; he had barely arrived at the Mission Station in Okahandja when the commander pulled him in for questioning.688


687 Ibid., 224.

688 Ibid.
Kuhlmann overplayed missionary heroics in the face of a dangerous situation. There was no immediate threat to the missionaries beyond what one might expect in the remote regions of the Kalahari Desert. When word of the rebellion arrived after 14 January and the Herero suddenly left, Kuhlmann stated he had remained because “I have nothing to fear from Herero or Germans.” With the rain coming and crops just planted, he had the future to protect. When German soldiers told him to leave, he replied that he would rather protect the property and “the work of the Lord.” But a rumor spread that Hendrick Wittboii was leading a Nama war party north along the Nosob River toward Okazeva (see map: Figure 5). Only then did Kuhlmann decide to leave, unwilling to “fall into the hands” of the Nama. Still the Kuhlmanns waited at least a week to receive information from Otjihaenena, a station further up the river.

Kuhlmann’s description of the Herero also contained conflicting racial descriptions. He described the first war party they encountered led by the Christian Traugott Tjetoo as warm-hearted and welcoming. Yet they were dressed and fully armed for battle. He lamented, “Woe to the poor whites who fall into the hands of these people.” At other

689 “Da ich als Missionar weder Hereros noch Deutsche zu fuerchten haette; so wolle ich auf der Station bleiben.” Ibid., 207, cf. 204.
690 Ibid., 205-07.
691 Ibid., 205.
692 An unlikely rumour, though Wittboii may have wanted contact with the Herero to negotiate an alliance in their two wars with the Germans.
694 “Diese Nachrichten beunruhigte mich sehr.” Ibid.
points Kuhlmann described the Herero as “a wild horde” “communists,” “untrustworthy” (nicht vertrauenswürdig), “brash and impudent” (frech und dreist), and overall unequivocally “bad” (schlechte). Yet he recounted how the Herero protected him, respected his person and family, and listened to him when he spoke. The victimization of the missionary that Kuhlmann sought to convey does not emerge from his report: in fact, no missionary died or was wounded in this war, a detail Kuhlmann left unexplained.

“The African” Image and Story during the Herero Genocide

Between 1904 and 1907, the Rhenish Mission’s children’s journal, Der Kleine Missionarfreund, illustrated for its readers the transformation of the Herero from violent and wild warmongers to a broken people. Two contrasting images re-emerged to bookend the conflict. The society published the first image in the April 1904 edition with the caption “An armed Herero from earlier times” (Figure 1). This was a line drawing of a fierce African warrior, who conveyed aggression, movement, and musculature. His clothing of animal skins revealed a strong and youthful body. His face was stern as he gazed into the distance; his shadow fell backwards in the direction he had come as he walked toward the sun. Behind him was a desert valley from which he ascended, armed with a spear and shield in his left hand, and a club in his right hand. The image told its young reader that the Herero were a fierce people determined to wage war. They too sought their place in the sun. The Germans could not easily dismiss such a foe; they must meet him face to face.

696 Ibid., 219.

The second image ten months later was in stark contrast to the first (see Figure 2). The caption read, “A Herero Warrior and His Weapon.”698 But this warrior looked very different. He was older, haggard, emaciated, and stooped. His clothes were rags, his sandals worn. He was motionless with his weapon some distance behind him, reminiscent of Kuhlmann’s June 1904 narrative. His face resigned, he hardly looked to be a threat. The journal published this image nearly one year into the German mass murder of the Herero, in the period when the missionaries collected the surviving Herero and transferred them to concentration camps. It was a visual representation of Vernichtung, a word that is sometimes translated as “extermination,” but in 1905 it bore the meaning of “breaking” or “crushing” a people. Notable is the shadow behind this emaciated “warrior,” which does not fit his body shape. Rather the shadow appears to be a mirrored reflection of the warrior in the April 1904 drawing. These images illustrate a transformation from strength to weakness.

The surrounding stories interpret the images. Accompanying the first image was Missionary Brincker’s “Difficult times in Hereroland,” which appeared in the month of April, as news of the conflict in Southwest Africa was coming in.699 Yet Brincker did not write about the Herero-German war; instead he told a story from 1863 that focused on a war between the Herero and Nama. It was a deflection from the current crisis between Germans and the same two Southwest African groups that portrayed the Africans as warmongers, and it even implied that the Germans had brought peace to the region.

698 “Ein Hererokrieger und seine Waffen (Kirri),” DKMF (1905): 106.

The second image of the emaciated Herero warrior accompanied a compilation of narratives from Southwest Africa titled “From the Herero Christians at War.” This was the third time in 1905 that Der kleine Missionsfreund focused on Africa. The editor, Johannes Spiecker, claimed there was a renewed interest in Africa among the Missionsfreunde. He addressed the question: what next for the Herero mission? Too much was at stake, however, to let the missionaries speak uncensored. Spiecker strung snippets of reports into a synthesis that suited the Mission. He included portions of Kuhlmann’s earlier narrative, with its claims about the Herero Christians among the heathens that served as evidence of the Herero’s rapid degeneration. As the title indicated, the purpose of the article was to tell young readers what happened to heathen Christians when they rebelled against the German empire. The lesson was clear: they lost their faith, wealth, wellbeing, and ultimately their lives; they fell victim to their own rebellion and brought God’s wrath upon themselves.

Employing biblical imagery to legitimize violence against the Herero, the Rhenish Mission used narratives to support the right and necessity of the German Empire to crush the African. Spiecker noted that narratives from Southwest Africa filled his files. “But,”

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700 The author was presumably the editor, Johannes Spiecker, who identified three contributing missionary reports by Dannert, Kuhlmann, and Mrs. Hamann; “Vom den Hererochristen im Kriege,” DKMF (1905): 99.

701 “The Horrors of the Heathen” in Der kleine Missionsfreund (Feb. 1904) told how an Ovambo community neglected two San youth. Missionaries had stepped in to rescue the youth from certain death. “At war with wild animals” in Der keleine Missionsfreund (May and June, 1904) told about hunting in South Africa, focusing on the exotic and dangerous conditions of the African hunt; DKMF (1904): 29-32, 67-76, 93-96.

702 Spiecker opened his narrative by describing a photo on his desk of a starving Herero boy who had been reduced to a skeleton and “a picture of misery” (ein Bild Jammers); DKMF (1905): 99.

703 Kuhlmann stated, “it is better to bear the blame than to blame” (Schulden abtragen ist besser als Schulden machen); Ibid.

704 Ibid.
he reminded his readers, before becoming too occupied with the image of “the African,” “one must also think of our German brothers who are out there under arms and whose work is carried out under unfathomable affliction and need.”

Under these circumstances, Spiecker added, “success comes at a price.” He turned his attention to the biblical narrative of the flood, when God “baptized” the world in His wrath. Just as the dove had brought back an olive branch to Noah and also to von Werner’s valiant knight, Spiecker reported how the post office had brought letters, as “olive leaf” (Oelblatt), from the “storm flood” in Southwest Africa. He reported that missionaries had baptized nearly six thousand Herero in recent months, an indication, Spiecker added, that peace was finally at hand.

In an ominous and warped caricature, Spiecker condemned the Herero as immoral and lacking in natural affection. In war, he postulated, “many a conscience sleeps.” He accused the Herero of being deceivers, possessed by a “deep-rooted lying spirit.” One Herero falsehood, he noted, was that the Germans wanted to kill all Herero; another was that the Germans had already killed all prisoners at Swakopmund. In war, he charged, the

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705 “Aber unwillkürlich muß man auch denken an unsere deutschen Brüder, die da draußen noch immer unter den Waffen stehen and deren Arbeit unter kaum glaublichen Beschwerden und Entbehrungen getan wird.” Ibid.

706 “Wer wünschte nicht, daß bald die Waffen ruhen and der Friede wiederkehrte dem gedrückten Land.” Ibid.

707 “Noch ist’s nicht der Friede selbst, aber hoffentlich der Anfang davon.” Ibid., 100.

708 Spiecker used biblical language concerning the degradation of a people who reject their creator; Romans 1:18-32.


710 “Der Lügengeist ist ein Erbübel des Hererovolkes.” Ibid., 100.

711 Ibid.
Herero became thieves with an “irrepressible lack of restraint.” Chief David even admitted, Spiecker wrote, that he had hidden four thousand cattle: “Yes, teacher, on the mission station we are poor, but behind the bush we always have something.” Christian Herero also lacked a moral conscience: “Just as some Christians took part in the murders, so have many taken part in cattle theft.” But his most damning criticism of the Herero was his claim that they were without natural affection. When there was a shortage of food, he claimed, the adult Herero ate first and let the children starve. Children took the brunt of the conflict. Their bodies stacked up around the watering holes as they suffered for the sins of their fathers. Nowhere did Spiecker indicate that German soldiers were responsible for these deaths of Herero children.

This narrative, aimed at German children, assigned all guilt to Africans and suggested that anything positive was the missionaries’ doing. Spiecker presented the Herero as a murderous people. He pondered how it was even possible that the Herero had spared German women and children in the initial uprising since they possessed such hatred toward “yellow faces.” The only explanation he could imagine was that there remained some

712 “Es herrschte eine unhändige Zügellosigkeit. Man lebte in Saus und Braus.” Ibid., 101

713 “Ja, Lehrer, auf der Missionsstation sind wir arm, aber hinter den Büschen besitzen wir immer noch etwas.” Ibid.

714 “Wie sich einzelne Christen auch bei Mordtaten verkuendigt haben, so haben sich viele auch beim Viehstehlen beteiligt.” Ibid.

715 Ibid., 102.

716 Ibid., 102-03.

717 Ibid., 105.

718 “Wahrhaft erchreckend war der Haß gegen die ‘Gelbgesichter,’” Ibid. Although the Herero had spared women and children in the initial uprising, Spiecker was quick to add, “sparing and rescuing in times of war is not in character with the Herero” (Verschonen und retten im Kriege ist nicht Hererositte”; Ibid.
vestige of “the ennobling impact of Christianity.”

What lesson were young readers to take from the events in Southwest Africa? War had brought out the worst, he concluded, even among the Herero Christians, “just as with us,” he added. Although “wild heathens” first raided the mission station, Christian Herero followed them. In times of peace, the Christian Herero could be trusted with life and property but not in war. The war had uncovered degeneration and showed that the Herero mission was far from complete.

The Herero-German War and genocide led the Rhenish Mission to recast how it conveyed notions about “the African” in Germany. The hostility in Germany toward missionaries in 1904 cautioned the mission society. Irle’s defense of Herero character and culture, when contrasted with the Germans, was too offensive: a positive reflexive quality in narratives raised awkward questions about the moral and civilized development of the German people. The Rhenish Mission decided to focus on disparaging portrayals of “the African” as a warning against impiety.

Juxtaposed with the mosaic in the new Berlin Cathedral Church in 1905 (Figure 3), missionary images and stories reveal notions in the German empire about “the African.” Like von Werner’s Teutonic Christ-figure, the missionary stopped the blow of dark-skinned warriors about to murder European soldiers. Kuhlmann’s report and the children’s literature

719 “Wir verdanken es der veredelnden Einwirkung des Christentums.” Ibid.

720 “Freilich, schlechte Christen gibt es unter den Herero gerade so gut wie daheim bei uns.” Ibid., 106.

confirm the shift in how the mission utilized “the African” to depict the missionary as a true representative of Christian faith and German virtue. Missionary literature legitimized the idea that “God’s hand is heavy on this poor people” to bring them to repentance.\(^7\) God’s wrath, not German violence, was seen to be at work as tens of thousands died in the desert, hungry, thirsty, and sick.

\(^7\) Ibid.
CHAPTER 5:

MISSION APOLOGETICS:

FROM GENOCIDE AND WARS TO THE NAZI REVOLUTION, 1904-1936

Jesus’s command to do the work of missions is first to be understood as a gift and then as an assignment to be fulfilled. Neither an individual nor a whole people can refuse it without doing harm to themselves.

~ Heinrich Vedder, 1935

Uerieta Kazahendike, known among the Missionsfreunde as Johanna Gertze, or more often, Schwarze Johanna, was the first Herero convert of the Rhenish Mission. Baptized in 1858, she died in 1936 at the age of ninety-nine. Her life spanned the entire period of the Herero mission she had served since her youth. Over the years, the mission society published multiple versions of her story together with drawings and photos of her (see Figure 6). Some Missionsfreunde even met her face-to-face when she visited Germany with missionary Carl Hugo Hahn in 1859.

In 1936, missionary Heinrich Vedder again told her

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724 In addition to Hahn’s portrayals of her in Der kleine Missionsfreund and his own journals, Uerieta’s story surfaced in the early twentieth century when Johannes Spiecker mentioned her in a report from Africa in 1903 and again in 1905, during the Herero-German War and genocide. Jakob Irle mentioned her in his 1906 book, Die Herero: Ein Beitrag zur Landes-, Volks- & Missionskunde ( Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1906), 238. Hedwig Irle provided a longer narrative in Unsere Schwarze Landsleute in Deutsch Südwest Afrika ( Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1911), 127-31. Other than a few elites, no other Herero received as much written attention from the missionaries as Uerieta did.

story, this time shaping her into an African heroine for the Rhenish Mission and the Missionsfreunde. In Vedder’s presentation, Schwarze Johanna demonstrated the mission’s success in the past and embodied a call for Germans in the new era of National Socialism to do their duty toward so-called inferior peoples.

This chapter extends from the Herero-German War and the genocide that went with it, to the defeat of Germany and loss of its African colonies in World War I, and into the early years of National Socialist rule in Germany. Throughout this thirty-year period, the Rhenish Mission was on the defensive, and its representatives sought in various ways to prove its value to the German state and society. During the Herero-German war, this project involved defending the mission society and its missionaries against charges of sympathy toward Africans. Missionaries on the ground in Southwest Africa also served the aims of empire in direct ways, by aiding in the destruction of Herero communities and lives. After 1918, defending the mission meant fending off criticisms from Germany’s wartime enemies and trying to maintain a presence in Africa, even as the mission sold off properties at home and in territories no longer in German hands. With the ascendance of National Socialism in 1933, currying favor involved depicting overseas missions not as a sign of Christianity’s fundamental incompatibility with Nazism but rather as a source of a “properly” racialist understanding of the world. Although Hitler and the Nazi elite turned

726 In his 1928 history, Kriele depicted the Rhenish Mission at a virtual standstill during the World War I, both at home and abroad. A member of the Deputation, Kriele justified its decisions to sell substantial properties, including the Johanneum school for missionary children in Gütersloh and the farm at Omburo in Southwest Africa; Kriele 345-72; cf. RMG 18 Protokollen der Deputationsitzungen (und der Hauptversammlungen) 1917-1924; for deliberations on property sales, see 10 April 1922, 629-30.

727 This argument for the 1930s is made by Doris L. Bergen, “‘What God has put asunder let no man join together’ Overseas Missions and the German Christian View of Race,” Douglas F. Tobler (ed.) Remembrance, Repentance, Reconciliation 11 (New York: University Press of America, 1998), 5-17. Bergen shows that overseas missions had developed racist ways of thinking, notably racial specificity and divisionism, which Protestant leaders -- pastors and leaders of the missionary movement -- saw as “important lessons for race
out to have little use for overseas missions, some missionaries tried to find a place in the “racial state.”

Missionary stories, including Heinrich Vedder’s *Schwarze Johanna* in 1936, were rooted in these changing contexts. They reflected political, religious, and social upheavals, but they also represented missionaries’ attempts to intervene in events and shape them to fit their purposes. Analysis of the Rhenish Mission and its publications from 1904 to 1936 reveals a significant change since the nineteenth century. By the end of the Herero-German War, the reflexive quality of missionary narratives had practically disappeared. Gone too was evidence of the bonds of human solidarity between Rhenish missionaries and Africans. In German Southwest Africa, the “collapse of fellow feeling” that Helmut Walser Smith traces through the modern period to 1941 and the murder of millions of Jews was apparent in the actions and words of missionaries who promoted the German cause as they perceived it, no matter what the cost for the Africans around them.

relations” that “could be transferred on to Jews.” Bergen notes that this use of overseas missions went beyond the German Christian Movement and its members efforts to fuse Christianity and Nazism; Protestants who never joined the German Christians or who left the movement in 1934 also appealed to the racist practices and ideas found in overseas missions. This attraction to mission work as an outlet for racist thinking, Bergen adds, did not go away after the end of the war.

Wolfgang Wippermann, Michael Burleigh, and Detlev Peukert argued in the 1990s for the centrality of racial policies and ideology as the distinctive feature of the Nazi “racial state”; see Wolfgang Wippermann and Michael Burleigh, *The Racial State: Germany 1933-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Detlev J. Peukert, “The Genesis of the "Final Solution" from the Spirit of Science,” 236. A 2009 German Historical Institute conference was devoted to this claim and theme: see Mark Roseman, Devin Pendas, and Richard Wetzell (eds.) *Beyond the Racial State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2015).

The Herero-German War and the Challenge to Missions

The German colonial government in Southwest Africa entered what would be its final decade of rule with the mass murder of Herero and Nama. Horst Drechsler characterized the years that followed the genocide as “the peace of the graveyard.” With Africans removed from all active roles in colonial politics and those left alive reduced to bare existence, the German administration and military were able to consolidate their position while converting the Herero into a labor force for the colony. A heavy peace also settled over the Rhenish Mission and its work. At first the missionaries had appeared to falter in the face of criticisms at home over their role in the colony, but they found their bearings amid the wretchedness of the concentration camps. Through their involvement with the camps, the same missionaries who had observed at close range and reported in detail the initial attacks by Herero on German men in January 1904, could, after January 1905, provide close-up reports of Herero misery and at the same time demonstrate to Germans in Germany their crucial place within the contested colony.

In Southwest Africa the concentration camps, or what the Germans called Konzentrationslager, operated from January 1905 until the civilian colonial government abolished them in 1908. Many observers have emphasized the significance of the term, Konzentrationslager, but the directive from Berlin referred to “provisional accommodations.”

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731 Oermann, 109-12.

732 An example is Wilhelm Eich, whose account of the attack on traders and settlers near Waterberg in January 1904 was reported in the Kolonialblatt. As the genocide began, the Deputation in Barmen appointed Eich supervisor of the mission to the Herero.

733 On von Bülow’s use of the word Konzentrationslager in his instructions to set up these “provisional accommodations”, see Rene Lemarchand (ed.), Forgotten Genocides, 67, ft. 42.
These sites were not identical to the concentration camps of the Nazi period although there were parallels around the issue of forced labor. As of late 1905, an estimated 8,800 Herero prisoners worked as forced laborers in military and civilian projects spread across the colony.\footnote{Gewald, 195.} Smaller prison camps were likely also in place, but the majority of the Herero in 1905, mainly women and those unable to work, were consigned to the three main concentration camps at Swakopmund, Karibib, and Shark Island.\footnote{Ibid., 185-91.} The latter camp also held Nama prisoners of war. The military ran the larger camps with assistance from some civilians, including Rhenish missionaries.

The directive from Berlin on 14 January 1905 and missionary descriptions make clear the central role missionaries played in rounding up Herero survivors.\footnote{Kuhlmann was clear about the missionary’s mandate from General von Trotha, see the inclusion of von Trotha’s letter 18 Feb. 1904, \textit{Auf Adlers Flügeln} (Barmen: Missionshaus, 1911), 78-79.} Most of the estimated 15,000 Herero prisoners in the concentration camps were gathered and brought there by missionaries. The Rhenish Mission appears to have thrown its main energies into this process of collection (\textit{das Sammeln}). Kuhlmann provided a few details in \textit{Auf Adlers Flügeln}.\footnote{Ibid., 80-85.} By his account, the Herero would send a messenger to a missionary, and having been assured that the missionary was coming to bring peace, the messenger would leave and return with his entire community (\textit{Werft}). The Herero were then confined to an area bounded by thick bush and guarded by the military or militia. It is not known how long they stayed there before the military transported them to a concentration camp. Kuhlmann made
it clear that an armed military or militia guard accompanied him when he “welcomed” the Herero, adding that he was armed, too.  

There is an odd, pastoral tone to Kuhlmann’s discussion of this process. Prior to surrender, he called the Herero “a fleeing flock” (eine Schar Fliehender), reminiscent of the biblical language describing the disciples who abandoned Jesus in Gethsemane. Once the Herero surrendered, they became “the gathered” (die Gesammelten), reminiscent of ekklesia, the biblical word for “church” with a literal meaning of “the called-out ones.” The incarcerated Herero, whether in one of the concentration camps or in a work camp, he referred to as “our prisoners of war” (unsere Kriegsgefangenen), but he placed quotation marks around Kriegsgefangenen to indicate that this was not his term for them. Rather, they were his “little congregation” (Gemeinlein). Kuhlmann also described collection stations in the north managed by missionaries Johannes Olpp and Willy Diehl, noting that they found “great joy” (große Freude) in their work, especially when they were able to hand over Herero “ring leaders” (Rädelsführer) to the German authorities.  

Descriptions of the collection stations themselves are sparse. Kuhlmann referred to the “free hand” (ganz freie Hand) the governor afforded missionaries in setting up collection stations. He did not go into details about the provision of food or the numbers of people that could be contained. Missionaries set up four stations in early 1905 at Omburo, Otjosazu, Otjihaenena, and somewhat later at Otjozongombe. Photos from Omburo

738 Kuhlmann informed General von Trotha that he had collected, disarmed, and deprived of cattle 300 Herero survivors. He asked Trotha what to do with them, suggesting he transfer them to the Karibib concentration camp; Kuhlmann to von Trotha, 9 February 1905, reprinted in August Kuhlmann, Auf Adlers Flügeln (Barmen: Missionshauses, 1911), 74-78. Kuhlmann ends his book with the Herero prisoners still in the Omaruru collection camp, without further discussion of their fate; Kuhlmann, 80, 82, 84.

739 Ibid., 75-89.

740 Ibid., 81
indicate that the camps were constructed like a Kraal, using bushes to mark the boundaries.\textsuperscript{741} This set-up explains the temporary nature of these sites and the necessity for a military presence to guard the prisoners. Kuhlmann’s reports and later descriptions indicate that missionaries believed their “surprising success” with collection resulted from the relationship that existed between them and the Herero. They were quite certain that the Herero surrendered to them because of their “trust,” a boast that Rhenish missionaries and missionary leaders repeated each time they recounted the history of this period.

There are problems with this claim of trust. Kuhlmann noted that he carried a rifle with him in the collection process. The government had given it to him, he explained, an acknowledgment that missionaries were militarized for this task.\textsuperscript{742} Photos taken of surrendering Herero coupled with missionaries’ description of their condition at the time of capitulation, as documented by Gewald, Drechsler, and in the \textit{Blue Book}, indicate there was little choice for the Herero but to give in.\textsuperscript{743} Survival without surrender was nearly impossible. The harsh, dry conditions of the \textit{Omaheke} desert were compounded by the brutality of marauding units of German soldiers. They guarded waterholes and formed death squads that made forays into the desert to hunt down Herero. Though not explicitly stated, the death squads pushed the Herero toward missionary collection points. These sites show the complicity, or more accurately, the crucial and central role that missionaries had in this

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{741} Gewald, 194.
\item \textsuperscript{742} Kuhlmann, 82.
\end{itemize}
stage of the genocide. Their involvement marks the start of the destruction of the Herero through incarceration.

The numbers given of imprisoned Herero vary considerably. Kuhlmann, who ran the collection camp at Omburo, just north of Otjimbingwe, estimated that the Rhenish Mission rounded up as many as 20,000 Herero. He alone had collected an estimated 5000 Herero, he noted. Discrepancies in the numbers reported reflect two factors: the death toll in the collection process and in the concentration camps, and the children, who did not go to concentration camps but were placed under the care of Kuhlmann and Meier, in Otjimbingwe and Windhoek respectively.

Between 1905 and 1914, qualms back home about Rhenish missionaries as legitimate representatives of Germany evaporated. Missionaries who had been critical of Germans in the colony, notably Jakob Irle, were no longer in the field nor were they given any role in restoring the Herero mission. Other missionaries played a central role by collecting survivors and transporting them to concentration camps. As for the Herero mission itself, after 1904 it no longer targeted a nomadic people through isolated mission stations; instead it focused on a concentrated population of Herero held captive by military force. With the subsequent growth of the German settler population and its administrative demands, African interests fell under the jurisdiction of the missionaries, who took the role of representing the African population, including serving as native commissioners in the local advisory

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744 By 1906, Irle had not backed down in his criticism, evident by his book Die Herero.

745 Oermann, 113.
In these ways, the Rhenish Mission gained legitimacy in Germany for its work in Southwest Africa.

The German administration welcomed the new missionary roles. Indeed, it had a hand in their development. Just days before the Battle of Waterberg in August, Paul Rohrbach (1869-1956), a Protestant theologian turned colonial official, had met with Rhenish missionaries and urged them to extend their work. An opportunity to revive their Herero mission was coming, he told them. Rohrbach advised the missionaries to prepare to accommodate large groups of Herero prisoners. Apparently, von Trotha had ordered chains from Berlin and was clearing a detention area for the Herero in Okahandja. Rohrbach’s proposal to erect mission stations alongside concentration camps was in effect an invitation for Rhenish missionaries to take part in the military operation against the Herero.

The Rhenish missionaries received Rohrbach’s call favorably because they already intended to expand. In April 1904, they discussed plans for a new station at Swakopmund and announced they were in search of a second site. An article in the Kollektentblatt pledged to continue their work and expressed the view that the Herero uprising would end to the mission’s advantage:

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746 On the structural changes within the colony and the mission work, including the role of missionaries in the councils, see Oermann, 167-170.


748 Hull, 43.

749 BRMG (July 1904): 262.
Once the rebellion has been put down, our task will be to set our eyes on a new order for the mission there and to pursue in all seriousness the Christianizing of all that remains of the Herero people. We have already decided to begin a new mission in Swakopmund and also in Karibib, where Missionary Elger has worked blessedly for many years to build a house and a church. Thereby we will fulfill our duty.  

A few weeks before the Battle of Waterberg, the government announced plans for a second concentration camp at Karibib. The Rhenish Mission told its supporters that it too was ready and planned to establish an adjacent mission station. The missionaries had reported Rohrbach’s visit, and the Deputation in Barmen agreed that the moment was indeed opportune for expansion. The German military would be in charge of the campaign and concentration camps, but missionaries would serve as chaplains, medics, and pastors. In return, they would literally have a captive audience for their evangelization of Africans.

By focusing its expansion on locations for concentration camps, the Rhenish Mission endorsed the military campaign against the Herero. It did not restore stations emptied by the disruption of Herero communities, and there was no plan to go back to the way things had been. Instead, Barmen assigned missionaries to Okahandja, Karibib, and

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751 BRMG (August 1904): 301.

752 On the Deputation deliberation over Rohrbach’s advice to expand the mission once the Herero were put down, see RMG 14 Protokollen 1896-1905 (9 Sept. 1904): 428, par. 13. The Deputation rejected Rohrbach’s idea of large land purchases; RMG 14 Protokollen 1896-1905 (10 Oct. 1904): 431, par. 11.

753 RMG 14, Protokollen 1896-1905 (13 June 1904): 415-16, par 10. In July, the Deputation requested a report of the exact damages to stations, see RMG 14 Protokollen 1896-1905 (7 July 1904): 419, par 16.
Swakopmund, all locations where the German military planned concentration camps.
Swakopmund was not a new location for the Rhenish Mission; missionaries had tried earlier to establish a mission there but failed. In 1904, the port town appeared ripe for mission work. Eduard Dannert and Heinrich Vedder drew up plans for the mission station, where Vedder would serve as chaplain to the concentration camp, hospital, and military, as well as pastor for the German colonists.  

The mission society sought in other ways to position its missionaries in a favorable relationship with the colonial government. It promoted the passive and cooperative Wilhelm Eich as field superintendent and assigned the newest missionaries in the field to serve the military and colony. Both Friedrich Meier (1873-1928) and Johann Heinrich Brockmann (1873-1951) were young and familiar to the Missionsfreunde in Germany, so Barmen asked them to serve close to the military as either chaplains or medics. The effectiveness of these demonstrations of loyalty was limited, but it was not for lack of trying. General Lothar von Trotha had little use for the Rhenish missionaries, and when he arrived in the colony, he made it clear that Protestant missionaries were not welcome in the German military. As a result, initially only Vedder’s assignment in Swakopmund came to pass, and the mission had to find other work for Brockmann and Meier.  

754 Vedder, who was not trained for pastoral work, found that role least to his liking and pleaded with Barmen to find a replacement. He was relieved of the pastoral duties in 1906; RMG 14 Protokollen 1896-1905 (25-29 Aug. 1906); Vedder to Spiecker, 8 June 1906, RMG 1.660a, 628; cf. Baumann, 22-32; Oermann, 124.

755 Brockmann had observed Herero attacks in Otjusazu and blamed Germans for the violence. The Deputation discussed the negative impact of Brockmann’s report, which obligated Hausleiter to go to Berlin to pacify the Office of Foreign Affairs and the Reichstag; RMG 14 Protokollen (8 Jan. 1904): 388, par. 5.

756 Oermann,100.

757 Prior to the war, the Rhenish Mission planned to send Meier and Brockmann north to the Ovambo. Brockmann later pioneered a northern station in Franzfontein and subsequently went to Outjo and Okombahe; Altena, 442-43, 464. Meier stayed in Windhoek until World War I, Altena, 464.
however, the new civilian governor, Friedrich von Lindequist, lifted the ban. Meier was assigned to a concentration camp in Windhoek, where most of the 500 prisoners were women. Missionary Elger was posted at Karibib.

The missionaries and the mission society in Germany clearly shared information about Herero casualties. Even before the war ended, the Rhenish Mission took steps to prepare missionaries to care for a large number of orphans in the future. In June, Barmen commissioned Eich to take responsibility for children in Okahandja and to move the existing school in Otjimbingue there. By October, after Waterberg, mission leaders in Barmen changed their mind and commissioned Meier to care for Herero children in Windhoek, while August Kuhlmann would care for children in Otjimbingue.

A public relations campaign back home complemented efforts on the ground in the colony as the Rhenish Mission scrambled to respond to developments in Southwest Africa. In order to embrace the opportunity for growth, it would need to raise funds and publicize its successes. The Deputation wanted to place a representative from Barmen in the colony to help restore the Herero mission and write reports suitable for German readers at home. Johannes Olpp had just retired from the Herero mission and did not wish to return; Jakob Irle was too controversial. The Deputation chose instead Home Inspector Johannes Spiecker, who had just visited the field in 1903. Spiecker returned in 1905, and his reports

758 ELCIN V.37, *Chroniken Windhuk 1905*; Meier remarked on his “attentive” audience; also cited in Gewald, 196.


760 Kuhlmann went to Omburo, just north of Otjimbingue; RMG 14 Protokollen 1896-1905 (10 Oct. 1904): 431, par. 11.

dominated the Rhenish Mission news from Southwest Africa until later in 1906. The Deputation asked Missionary Carl Friedrich Wandres to write about the situation in Southwest Africa for a German newspaper in South Africa, but the daily rejected his article. The Deputation also appointed Johannes Olpp to prepare a memorandum for distribution in the colony and in Germany that would outline how missionaries were taking part in the war effort. Olpp’s mission apologetic culminated in 1914 with a tract on the “cultural significance of the Protestant Rhenish Mission for Southwest Africa.”

By the end of 1904, as the German military starved and murdered Herero in the desert, the Rhenish Mission stood poised for growth. It was not about to shrink back in the face of property losses in the field or defamation back home. In order to sustain expansion in Southwest Africa, the Rhenish Mission had to communicate that its work was vital to Berlin’s imperial aims and German greatness. Efforts in this direction had produced an outpouring of support in 1904, but mission leaders worried that support might subside. The 1904 debate on missionaries had raised concerns in Barmen about possible financial repercussions. Specifically, the Deputation feared Berlin might withhold the license for the quarterly house-to-house collection, which could bring upward of Mk 100,000. This was no small sum, given that the average cost per missionary in the field in 1904 was Mk 5000.

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762 RMG 14 Protokollen (13 June 1904); 415-16, par 10.


764 Johannes Olpp, Die Kulturbedeutung der evangelischen Rheinischen Mission für Südwest Africa (Swakopmund, 1914).

765 RMG 14, Protokollen 1896-1905 (27 April 1904): 401-402, par. 4.
In 1905, the Mission projected a deficit of about Mk 200,000, and it expected the debt to grow.\textsuperscript{766} In search of additional revenue, the Deputation appealed to the Protestant church and its associations in regions where the mission society had influence but no network.\textsuperscript{767} It also created a new publication, \textit{Flugblätter der Rheinischen Mission} (leaflets of the Rhenish Mission), to place in the hands of \textit{Missionsfreunde} for their neighbors and friends.\textsuperscript{768}

The mission society increased funding for public relations. “Propaganda” costs for the Rhenish Mission, which hovered between three and eight percent of the budget before 1908, grew to fourteen percent by 1914.\textsuperscript{769} The \textit{Flugblätter} were a key component of the public apologetic for mission work: articles appealed for support while defending the missionary. In 1905, the \textit{Flugblätter} reminded readers that the Herero mission was a “link in the chain” of 180 missionaries, 110 stations, 400 schools, 22,000 students, and over 100,000 converts of the Rhenish Mission, itself “a rather important link” in the overall Protestant German missionary movement. The “noble workforce” of that cause, the \textit{Flugblätter} announced, consisted of 7500 men and 4000 women.\textsuperscript{770} Supporting one link in the chain would help secure the whole.

If missionaries had fallen short in the past, the Rhenish Mission promised supporters back home that they would do better in the future. Missionary heroics and success became

\textsuperscript{766} RMG 128, “Rundschreiben an die Missions-Hilfs-Ges,” p. 7. The deficit in 1905 was Mk 125,387; in 1906 it increased to Mk 188,783, and by 1914 it reached Mk 256,178; see Walter Spiecker, \textit{Die Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft in ihren volks-und kolonialwirtschaftlichen Funktionen} (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1922), 80.

\textsuperscript{767} RMG 14, Protokollen 1896-1905 (9 May 1904): 410, par. 6.

\textsuperscript{768} \textit{Flugblätter der Rheinischen Mission} ran from 1904 until 1919. The first edition identified the Herero uprising and noted that Germans were well aware of the trouble, “von dem wir aus allen Zeitungen hören”; \textit{Flugblätter} 1 (1904):3; cf. RMG 14, Protokollen 1896-1905 (27 April 1904): 401-02, par. 4.

\textsuperscript{769} Walter Spiecker, 81.

\textsuperscript{770} “Sie ist nur ein Glied in der Kette, aber ein ziemlich bedeutendes Glied, zumal unter den deutschen Gesellschaften.” \textit{Flugblätter}, no. 2 (1905).
the focus of mission literature, upholding the image of a loyal, courageous missionary who was a true representative of Germany. Inspector Spiecker pronounced the missionaries “natural peace mediators … between the white compatriots and the colored natives in the colonies, because they love them both.”\textsuperscript{771} The missionaries, he claimed, enabled a solution to the colonial war. He presented their role in rounding up Herero and bringing them to concentration camps as “saving” the surviving Herero. Spiecker boasted that Willy Diehl, a second-generation missionary to the Herero, had collected 3561 Herero at Otjihaënena -- 1028 men, 1299 women, and 1234 children -- and August Kuhlmann had achieved a similar feat in Omburo.\textsuperscript{772} Spiecker repeated the claim that collecting survivors was possible only because of the “very great trust” between the missionary and the Herero.\textsuperscript{773} He neglected to report the brutality of the gathering process, the miserable conditions in the collection stations, and the deadly nature of the concentration camps. Instead he presented the missionary as the glue to restore a fragmented colony.

As the Rhenish Mission carried out its promise to recreate a strong missionary presence in the colony, people at home responded. The \textit{Kollektenblätter} reported a steady increase of donations, and the Rhenish Mission increased its quarterly print-run of the leaflets to 90,000 copies with hopes of seeing further increases to help offset the cost of expansion in the field.\textsuperscript{774} An internal study of thirty-two regional \textit{Missionsvereine} pinpointed


\textsuperscript{772} J. Spiecker, “Von der Friedensarbeit der rheinischen Mission in Otjihaenena (Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika).” \textit{Kollektenblätter}, no. 3 (1906): 2.


\textsuperscript{774} Donations through the collection grew only slightly: in 1903, Mk 130,516; in 1904, Mk. 134,766; in 1905 Mk. 133,842; no report for 1906, and in 1907, Mk. 143,813; statistics in \textit{Kollektenblätter}, no. 1 (1907): 1-2.
where growth had occurred and showed a remarkable increase of fifty-two percent in contributions from 1904 to 1909. The overall income of the Rhenish Mission continued to grow each year after the Southwest African wars until the outbreak of World War I.

In 1914, Johannes Olpp was Home Inspector for the Rhenish Mission with the Southwest African portfolio. In a report published in Swakopmund, he extolled the mission’s cultural work among the Herero. At the same time he whitewashed the memory of genocide to the point of denial:

> Not even the fiercest opponent of missions will deny that the research conducted by missionaries on native languages was a service of special importance to the subsequent colony [in Southwest Africa]. One only needs to ask how, without this preparation, it would have been possible to take possession of the land without bloodshed.

**World War I and Its Aftermath**

The years between the colonial wars and the Great War were a time to recover, restore, and rebuild the Herero mission, in part by strengthening its ties to the German imperial project. But the gains the Rhenish Mission made in that decade dissipated during World War I. Elation at the outbreak of war was shared by missionaries in the field and the *Missionsfreunde* and society at home, whose missionary candidates at the Barmen Seminary all

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775 The largest donations came from the Ravensberg Mission whose contributions increased by 32% in the period of study, and other regions also had impressive gains, for instance Märkisch Missionshilfsgesellschaft (58%) and Siegen Kreis Missionsverein (36%). Church associations also saw dramatic increases: the Cologne Missionsverein Synod upped its contributions by 56%; the Essen Synod Missionshilfsgesellschaft by a massive 350%. “Rundschreiben an die Missions-Hilfs-Ges.” RMG 128, 59.

776 Walter Spiecker, 80.


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were among the thirteen million German soldiers in the war effort.\textsuperscript{778} When Germany lost its colonies, however, the tie between the mission society and imperial aims was also lost. Once again questions emerged about the mission’s legitimacy as a representative of Germany in the world.

The Great War reached Southwest Africa on 15 January 1915, when South African forces invaded Swakopmund. They advanced across the German colony and by July 1916 had severed it from its metropol. German troops and reservists, estimated at no more than 3500 men, were no match for the 69,000 soldiers led by General Louis Botha.\textsuperscript{779} As the South African army advanced, it shut down the German administration, closing post offices and schools and pushing the Germans toward the north. When the German troops surrendered in Khorab on 9 July 1916, the victors sent the German reservists home to their farms but interned regular German soldiers in Aus until the end of the war. The South African government installed a new administration and appointed General P. S. Beves as military governor of the colony. South Africa retained full control over Southwest Africa, later establishing a colonial relationship over the former German colony.

Herero and other Africans fought on both sides of the war. Samuel Maharero dispatched Herero warriors who had fled the colony with him in 1904 to join the invasion

\textsuperscript{778} Roger Chickering, \textit{Imperial Germany and the Great War, 1914-1918} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 195. Chickering draws his number of German soldiers from Leo Grebel and Wilhelm Winkler, \textit{The Cost of the World War to Germany and to Austria-Hungary} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), 76. The number appears to be derived from Nazi propaganda books for students in 1940; see Richard V. Samuel and Richard Hinton, \textit{Education and Society in Modern Germany} (London: Routledge, 1949), 87-88. On \textit{Missionsfreunde} elation, see a September war sermon citing a poem that “the German character shall one day restore the world’ (Am deutschen Wesen soll dereinst die Welt genesen): EMW (Sept. 1914): 257-63; cf. Menzel 258-59.

\textsuperscript{779} See Klaus Dierks, \textit{Chronology of Namibian History: from Pre-historical Times to Independent Namibia} (Windhoek: Namibian Scientific Society, 2002), 33-93.
and the fight against Germany. Other Herero joined the South African forces when their German masters fled north. The South Africans also used soldiers from the Basters, an African group defined by their mixed racial heritage with Afrikaners. After having fought against the Germans, the Basters had to wrangle with the South African government to gain a measure of the promised independence for their role in the victory in Southwest Africa.

Some Herero fought alongside the Germans too in 1915. According to Gewald, the Herero had a role in the German military already well before the Herero-German War, and in 1908 some Herero soldiers took part in the final round-up of Herero. Some had fought with the Germans at the Battle of Waterberg, where today there is a memorial in the graveyard to those who fought against their people in August 1904. By 1912, 650 soldiers made up the Bambusen, a Herero military unit that the Germans had trained from boyhood and charged with implementing the laws of the colony. In 1915, the Bambusen fought with the Germans until the South African forces deprived them of their military status and society.

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780 Gewald, 231-32.
781 Troops of Basters fought in hope of gaining their independence from South Africa after victory. On the Basters conflictual relationship with the German colony and their role in the war, see George Steinmetz, The Devil's Handwriting: Pecoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 237-39.
782 These Herero represented a new tactic by the German military that replaced the missionary as the lure to gather up any remaining Herero who had survived in the desert or who had escaped from work camps.
784 Gewald, 206.
Prior to the war, missionaries had assured their African converts that any hostilities in Europe would be “a white man’s war.” Meanwhile they told Germans back home that the Herero had finally been taught obedience and were unlikely to rise against Germans ever again. They were wrong on both accounts. As German troops and settlers fled north in the colony, the Herero were freed from their German masters. Some returned to their former areas and ways of living; others joined the South African forces against the Germans. Herero warriors who returned after hostilities ended were able to secure cattle herds and reestablish themselves in Hereroland. Thus the end of the German colony, together with the newfound mobility and independence of the Herero, upset the illusory peace that missionaries had relied on to carry out and legitimate their work.

As for the missionaries themselves, the South African military regime interned five of them and two laymen. The military administration also deported three Rhenish missionaries back to Germany: Heinrich Vedder, Wilhelm Eich, and Johannes Olpp Jr. The rest of the missionaries stayed at their stations and continued their work. They were even supported financially by the South African government and banks through loans they would later have to repay. Back in Barmen the situation was dire, and the mission house was left nearly empty. The war drained much of the vitality from the Rhenish Mission. Germans became preoccupied with the front experience of the more immediate “field” -- the battle

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785 Oermann, 216-17.
787 Dierks, 33.
788 On growing conflicts between Herero and German settlers after 1915, see Gewald, 233-39.
field – rather than the mission field. All sixty-five missionary candidates at the Barmen Mission Seminary had enlisted in the war effort. But, as Roger Chickering reminds us, “the war was about dying,” and the effort to give meaning to the vast number of deaths at the front using heroic claims about Germany’s high moral purpose could not suppress the rising despondency among Germans. From the Rhenish Mission, sixteen mission candidates and twenty-four missionary sons died in the first year of the war. By the end of the war, that number had risen to twenty-eight candidates and forty-one sons dead, as well as seven sons of the Home Inspectors and two sons of the mission Director, Johannes Spiecker.

The Rhenish Mission also experienced the financial strain of the war as debts mounted. The mission society had faced its worst shortfall in 1917 and had lost contact with most of its mission fields. Without support and communication from home, missionaries in Southwest Africa had to rely on credit from South Africa. When the war ended, the Rhenish Mission faced international debts coupled with the ongoing costs of doing missionary work. The Deputation explored two options: either the society had to

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791 Menzel, 258; Kriele, 342-43.

792 Chickering, 100.


794 Kriele, 343.

795 Chickering, 103-08.


797 Kriele, 360-62; cf. Oermann, 218.
amalgamate with the Bethel Mission Society or reduce the size of its assets and fields.\textsuperscript{798} The two mission societies overlapped in Westphalia, where competition for support from the mission network was stiff. Amalgamation had come up already in 1903, but a rebellion in Tanganyika concurrent with the Southwest African wars had put the discussions on hold. A union in the post-war years would help centralize costs, but it might also increase the overall financial burden in an uncertain time.

The Rhenish Mission opted instead to sell property and turn over some mission fields to non-German mission societies. But trimming assets was not popular with the Missionsfreunde who were in effect the principal investors in the Rhenish Mission. Spiecker, by then Director of the Rhenish Mission, pleaded with the Missionsvereine to step in and help alleviate a shortfall of a half million Marks.\textsuperscript{799} By 1922, the situation had not improved, and the Rhenish Mission made an appeal to Protestant church presbyteries on the ground that mission work had long been a source of Christian renewal:

> Our congregations have a grave and sacred duty to help the mission in its time of need, because of the blessing that through [missionary] work has been returned to the Protestant churches of the Rhineland and Westphalia, and because the Lord of the Church has given the mission as the most important task to his congregations.\textsuperscript{800}

The plea worked, although it brought a new kind of supporter. Over the next five years, mission accounts showed a growing category of synodal mission associations alongside the


\textsuperscript{799} “Rundschreiben an die Missions-Hilfs-Ges.” RMG 128, 7; cf. Menzel, 260-61.

thirty-four Missionsvereine.801 By the late 1920s the Rhenish Mission was working more closely with the church synods than ever before.802

Courting the National Socialists: Heinrich Drießler

Amid war and genocide in Southwest Africa, the Rhenish Mission had cast its lot with the colonial project. The loss of Germany’s colonies and defeat in 1918 put an end to that partnership and brought new challenges. This time the mission responded by turning back to its base in the Protestant churches of the Rhineland and Westphalia. There it found renewed support, especially funding, not only from the local mission networks and individual pastors that had been its mainstay almost a century earlier but from church councils and bureaucratic structures.

The rise of National Socialism and Adolf Hitler’s appointment as Chancellor in 1933 tempted the mission society with yet another potential partner: the Nazi movement. Its energy and popularity appeared to many church people, including missionaries and spokesmen for overseas missions, to be evidence of German renewal. In the hope of participating in the national revival, some mission leaders offered their services. Their strongest card, based on experience with Africans and particularly the Herero, was missionary notions of race.

Heinrich Drießler, from 1928 to 1934 Home Inspector for the Rhenish Mission with responsibility for Southwest Africa, played a key role in this regard. On 1 April 1933, he joined the National Socialist Party and the national synod of the German Christian

801 Ibid., 44-53.
802 Ibid., 54-55.
movement (*Deutsche Christen*). He befriended Joachim Hossenfelder, the Bishop of Brandenburg who called the German Christians “the Stormtroopers of Jesus Christ,”803 and became a member of the *Inspectoratskollegen*, a group of missionary leaders noted for their “National Socialist orientation.”804 From key positions within the Protestant church, the German Christians aimed to purge Christianity of all vestiges of its Jewish roots by erecting institutions for dejudization of the Christian religion.805 They also sought a *Reichskirche* that would unite all German Christians -- Protestants and Catholics -- under the cross and swastika.806

Drießler added an attempt to link missionary notions of race to the Nazi racist agenda. His depictions of Africans sought to show that the missionary movement had long been a leader in defining and upholding racial differentiation.807 When the Rhenish Mission disassociated itself with the German Christians in 1934 and drew closer to the Confessing Church, Drießler stepped down and took a pastorate in Cologne.808 But his dismissal was

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803 On Hossenfelder, see Ernst Klee, *Das Personelleckikon zum Dritten Reich* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2005), 271; Bergen, *Twisted Cross*, 18, 65.


806 Bergen, “Catholics, Protestants, and Dreams of Confessional Union,” *Twisted Cross*, 102-18. Union of Protestants had long been the aim of the Rhenish Mission; the German Christians wanted to extend that drive for unity to Catholics, though this proved to be too ambitious.

807 Ibid., 29-39.

808 The Rhenish Mission did not officially sanction the Confessing Church, even when asked to do so by Lutheran Conference in Ravensberg-Minden in May 1934. Connections to the Confessing Church existed only through individual members of the Rhenish Mission. Menzel cites a letter from 14 May to Lutheran
quiet and he maintained good relations with the Rhenish Mission.\footnote{Bernhard Seiger, Reformationskirche der Gemeinde Köln-Bayenthal, 1905 bis 2005 (Cologne: Dumont), 62ff.} His early efforts continued to echo among those Missionsfreunde who likewise embraced the new regime in 1933.

Drießler’s biography was typical for a mission leader of the era. Born in Saarburg along the western Rhine, he studied theology at the University of Bonn. He impressed the Rhenish leadership, who, in 1928, brought him into the center of the mission society as Home Inspector. His duties included an eleven-month field inspection to South and Southwest Africa in 1931, during which he wrote seventeen reports and a monograph titled Die Rheinische Mission in Südwestafrika (the Rhenish Mission in Southwest Africa).\footnote{Heinrich Dreißler, Die Rheinische Mission in Südwestafrika (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1932); cf. H. Dreißler’s report in BRMG (1932): 4, 34; Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift (1932): 96ff, 113ff.} In his authorized history of the Rhenish Mission, Gustav Menzel portrays Drießler and the Missionsleute who supported the NSDAP as unrepresentative and isolated.\footnote{Menzel specifically uses the word “isoliert” and notes that only “nach seiner Absage an die Deutschen Christn” did the Rhenish Mission “wieder zusammenarbeit mit ihm.” Menzel, 306, also see footnote 545, 429.} But Drießler was by no means alone in his enthusiasm or his optimism. In 1933 the mission seminarians joined the Stormtroopers en masse.\footnote{Details about the Barmen seminarians were outlined in a private report by E. Delius in 1940, “Bemerkungen zur Geschichte der Rheinischen Mission in den Jahren 1929 bis 1939,” RMG 1.287; cf. Menzel, 304-06. According to Delius, some of the seminarians did not leave the SA until 1936; Ibid., 25. That the Rhenish Mission was rife with internal conflict over this issue is evident in a private letter from Warneck to Delius dated 15 January 1940. Director Warneck was clear about his decision not to take part in the church conflict and also implied that even by 1940 the internal strife had not dissipated: “Von den kirchlichen Kämpfen muss sich unsere Mission fern halten. Es ist schwer genug gewesen, den Frieden im Missionshause einigermassen herzustellen. Gefährden wir ihn jetzt nicht durch Wiederauwarmen der Streitigkeiten. Wenn einmal die Beteiligten alle nicht mehr am Leben sind, dann kann solch ein Schriftstück Wert gewinnen für den Historiker.” Spiecker to Delius, 1 Jan. 1940, RMG 1.287.} The Berichte der Rheinischen Mission gave
thanks to God for preserving German “self-determination” during the years of democracy, hinting that some credit for this steadfastness should go to missionaries. This sense of themselves, the report claimed, “helped” Germans find “inner renewal” and restored national hope in 1933. The Westphalian *Evangelisches Monatsblatt* went even further in its celebration of Hitler. It published a sarcastic account of the Weimar Republic titled “Promise and fulfillment in the fourteen year-old black, red, and gold republic.” The author rejoiced in the “national revolution” and “exaltation of the Fatherland” under the new leader, Adolf Hitler. Later in 1933, the journal hailed Hitler as a humble, health-conscious, courageous warrior, who battled the menace of socialism and communism on behalf of all Germans. It pronounced a Christian blessing over Hitler and his leadership.

Drießler’s descriptions of Africans appeared in the midst of this euphoria. In the February issue of the *Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen*, just in front of the “World Survey” celebrating Hitler’s rise to power, the editor advertised a book published by Drießler in 1932 with a directive to readers: “get it and read it!” The monograph was *Die Rheinische Mission in Südwestafrika*, an account of missionary work, based on Drießler’s 1931 trip to Southwest Africa. This book illustrates how mission leaders “translated” Africa for their audience during the early years of the Nazi regime.

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815 “National Revolution ... vaterländische Erhebung.” Ibid.


Drießler retold familiar missionary narratives but avoided all direct reflection that might equate the African with the German.818 Among the six groups of people in Southwest Africa that he discussed, the Herero were prominent. He contrasted them with the missionaries, who appeared as diligent and dedicated agents of German ethnological and religious activity. Missionaries were often misunderstood at home, Drießler wrote, yet they had labored for years to learn the Herero language and collect cultural products, including their fables, myths, and proverbs.819 The Herero, in contrast, had suffered under a fractured and despotic leadership that perpetuated “pride,” “self-righteousness,” and “distrust” of the whites and led them into degenerate acts of “theft, harlotry, idleness, and barbarity.”820

Drießler summarized for German readers in 1933 the missionaries’ explanation for the fate of the Herero. During the “wars of liberation” against the Nama (1863-1870), he maintained, missionaries had sought to help the Herero become a “free, independent people.”821 But freedom and unity had not enabled the Herero to progress; instead, they failed to leave “heathendom” and embrace the “great invisible power of Christianity.”822 According to Drießler, when missionary colonists made visible the intangible power of the Gospel by creating an agricultural community as a model for Africans, the Herero misread

818 Drießler’s sources were a three-volume ethnological work by the Rhenish Missionary Peter Heinrich Brincker (1936-1904), Die Stämme Südwestafrikas I. Nach der Geschichte; II. Nach Sitten und Gebräuchen; III. Nach Sprachen. He did not use Jakob Irle’s Die Herero; and Heinrich Vedder’s influential book, Das Alte Südwestafrika, was not published until 1934.

819 Drießler, 55-56

820 “Denn so verkommen sie in Diebstahl, Hurerei, Faulheit, und Grausamkeit waren, so stolzwickelten sie sich in die Lumpen ihrer Selbsgerechtigkeit.” Ibid., 70.

821 “Zum erstenmal sind sie als ein freies, selbständiges Volk anerkannt, und sie sind zum Bewusstsein gekommen, daß sie ein freies Volk sind.” Ibid.

822 “Das Volk als solches hat tiefe Eindrücke von der Richtigkeit des Heidentums und der Realität des Christentums als einer unsichtbaren, großen Macht empfangen.” Ibid.
diligence and hard work as “clawing at the dirt all day long,” which had no appeal for their idle character. Although missionaries had persisted in their effort to civilize them, the Herero, Drießler concluded, remained a stubborn people until the wars of 1904-1907 broke them.

Drießler also contrasted the missionaries to settlers and traders to reinforce how missionaries understood and upheld racial distinctions. Missionaries, he claimed, had focused on elevating “the African” to become a civilized Christian people. The way to improve the Africans was not through the cultural tools of arts and literature, he insisted, but through labor. Unlike missionaries, in Drießler’s depiction settlers and traders had an opposite “civilizing” aim: to indetb Africans and deprive them of their cattle wealth, land, and freedom. Missionaries understood that an essential racial hierarchy existed in Southwest Africa, Drießler claimed: the Nama were suited for domestic work, the Herero for farm labor, and the Ovambo for the mines. Each group had its place according to the level of “civilization” achieved and maintained through the missionaries’ efforts.

823 “Die heidnischen Herero verspotteten die Christen, wenn sie ihr Feld bearbeiteten: ‘Ihr seid wie die Perlhühner; die kratzen auch den ganzen Tag in der Erde herum.’” Ibid., 73.

824 After describing the Herero-German War and how the Herero were defeated, Drießler notes that the German colonial government looked to the missionaries to pacify the remaining Herero, which led him into his conclusion about the civilizing mission and praised over the impact of the Rhenish had on the Herero; Ibid., 146-55; 217-26.

825 One example of the “civilizing” work of the missionaries was in education, where the youth “must be educated through work“ and moral education: “Die Jugend soll zur Arbeit erzogen werden,” and “Die Haupterziehungsfrage im Leben der Südwesten Völker ist die Erziehung zur Sittlichkeit im engeren Sinner des Wortes.” Ibid., 311, 314.

826 Ibid., 191-97.

827 Drießler summed up his book by identifying the distinct labor value of each group, for which he credited the missionaries. Ibid., 299-304.
Drießler’s book was no mere recounting of missionary history: it was an assertion that violence was necessary to renew the spiritual life of a people. The “internal” condition of the Herero and Nama worried the missionaries, he wrote. From a distance one might be “overly optimistic” about their spiritual progress, but the Herero had a tendency to “backslide,” Drießler reminded his readers, and their rigid materialism kept them from seeing beyond the “here and now.” How was the missionary to give sight to the spiritually blind? Like Missionary Viehe decades earlier, Drießler believed death was the answer: “Only when death comes does the material world seem worthless, and they begin to turn their hearts fully to the grace of God.”

According to Drießler, death was the ultimate evangelist and bearer of “Good News” to the obstinate African. Africans who had faced death yet survived and yielded to God’s grace began a slow progression toward civilization; they were a model for their people. Missionaries had observed how the Herero who survived the extreme violence of 1904-1907 had become elders of their community by the 1930s and “the good seed of Christian knowledge.” This “seed” referred to the large number of conversions during and since


829 Drießler borrowed this description from Missionary Riechmann; “Das Gegenwärtige, das Sichtbare, das Greifbare beschäftigt ihre Sinne so sehr, daß der Blick ihres geistiges Auges im gewöhnlichen Leben nie über das Diesseits hinausgeht”; Ibid.

830 “Erst wenn es zum Sterben geht, will ihnen die sichtbare Welt wertlos erscheinen, und sie fangen an, ihre Herzen rückhaltlos der Gnade Gottes zuzuwenden.” Ibid.

831 “Der Todeschweiß erweicht, wie es scheint, das verweltlichte Herz und zerreißt die tausendfachen Fäden, die es an das Eirdische fesseln.” Ibid.

832 Ibid., 175.

833 Drießler quoted Missionary Diehl on the older generation who had survived the war as “den Grundstock der Gemeinden mit einem guten Kern christlicher Erkenntnis. Sie haben Opfer bringen müssen, um den Heidentum zu entsagen, und halten nun mit Zähigkeit an der Wahrheit fest.” Ibid., 176.
the Herero-German war. The lesson from Southwest Africa was clear: violence could produce spiritual life, and above all, Drießler emphasized, Rhenish missionaries had been present to guide the Herero through this process.\textsuperscript{834}

Drießler spoke for those mission leaders who wanted a restored German colonialism under the banner of National Socialism.\textsuperscript{835} Was it again time for Germans to be active in southern Africa, he asked? Germany had a responsibility in Africa to both the African and German communities, he insisted.\textsuperscript{836} After all, he argued, the Rhenish Mission’s work in Africa concerned Germans at home as much as Africans abroad: missionaries’ part in establishing German colonies, maintaining peace, and taming the heathen proved they were a vital resource for restoring Germany’s national integrity.\textsuperscript{837}

Other mission leaders also linked their hope for renewal to missionary work among Africans. Throughout 1933 Africa featured in the \textit{Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen}. In the February issue, Gerhard Jasper, Home Secretary of the Bethel Mission and later a member of the Confessing Church, celebrated African renewal in an article titled “Mission and civilization in the newly awakened Africa.”\textsuperscript{838} Rife with eschatological expectations, Jasper’s piece evoked the memory of past conflicts in Southwest and East Africa. The

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\textsuperscript{834} Ibid., 175.


\textsuperscript{836} “Es handelt sich um die innere Heimat der uns von Gott anvertrauten Gemeinden ... Die Lage, in die unsere deutsche Mission infolge ihrer Verbundenheit mit der Not des deutschen Volkes hineingeführt worden ist, kommt nicht ohne Gott.” Ibid., 96-97

\textsuperscript{837} Drießler builds his argument first by pointing out the need to connect the mission work and German settler churches closer: “Diese Verbindung von Missionsamt und Pfarramt ist, missionarisch gesehen, eine große Not.” Missionaries would then gain more support from the German settlers, and in return, they would help preserve German nationalism among the settlers. Ibid., 116-18.

African church, he declared, would take the lead in finding the African “definition as a people.”\(^{839}\) Fulfillment for Africans would not come through progress on earth, however, Jasper maintained, but through an apocalypse of divine judgment:

> Jesus also came for Africa, not to destroy but to fulfill, although this fulfillment too will only be won when humanity stands before God’s judgment. But the same holds for Africa as for all of humanity: only the end of times will bring complete fulfillment for the Negro.\(^{840}\)

### Making a Heroine: Heinrich Vedder and Uerieta Kazahendike

Among those who penned narratives about Southwest Africa in the first half of the twentieth century, Rhenish missionary Heinrich Vedder was perhaps the most prolific. Like Jasper and Drießler, Vedder was convinced the mission field had something valuable to offer in the new era of racist thinking. Although based in Africa, he kept a close watch on political and religious developments in Germany.\(^{841}\) He argued that a cultural and historical perspective would show that those who had robbed Germany of its colonies were ignorant of African depravity prior to the arrival of the missionaries. Only missionaries, he insisted, possessed the knowledge of the various African people needed to rule them. Vedder placed himself within this tradition by collecting African oral history, fables, and stories to construct narratives about African “tribes.” In the process he provided an unabashed apologetic for

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\(^{839}\) “Volkstumsgemäße Bestimmung.” Ibid., 79.


\(^{841}\) In 1927, the Rhenish Mission assigned Vedder to assemble “spiritual nourishment” for readers of German in Southwest Africa. Germans at home were to provide material. Vedder’s boxes of clippings and notes, housed in the National Archives of Namibia in Windhoek, indicate he also collected and disseminated political information. See BRMG no. 1, 5, 6 & 8 (1927): 15, 61, 89, 121; cf. NAN, Holding A-579, boxes 1-7.
the role of Germans in Southwest Africa and the value of missionary work to Germany: he was, quite literally, “a voice crying in the desert: ‘make way for the Lord.’” 842

Those who remember Vedder recall his many stories, among which were three narratives about Uerieta Kazahendike, Schwarze Johanna. 843 His 1936 version of Schwarze Johanna entered German society concurrent with a radicalization under the Nazi regime of notions of race. But racial ideas mattered to Vedder throughout his life. He started out as a young missionary critical of the German treatment of Herero prisoners during the Herero-German war and became a supporter of National Socialism in 1933. After World War II, he served as Senator for Namibian “natives” in the South African Senate and an advocate of apartheid.

Growing up amidst Ravensberg revivalism and mission fervor, Vedder was a product of the culture he would one day foster. 844 His mother steered him toward missionary stories

842 Vedder’s extensive publications include his monograph, Das alte Südwestafrika: Südwestafrikas Geschichte bis zum Tode Mahareros 1890 (Berlin: Martin Warneck, 1934) that went unchallenged until after Namibian independence. Also notable are H. Vedder Die Bergdama. 2 vols. (Hamburg: Friederichsen, 1923), H. Vedder, C. H. Hahn, and L. Fourie, The Native Tribe of South West Africa (London: Cass, 1966), and H. Vedder, Kurze Geschichten aus einem langen Leben (Wuppertal: Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft, 1953). The United Evangelical Mission Archive in Wuppertal has a record of Vedder’s publications through the Rhenish Mission, but the list does not include many of his outside publications for other mission societies, local religious journals, academic journals, newspapers in Germany and South Africa, government publications as a senator for Southwest Africa, and his numerous articles in the Afrikanischer Heimatkalendar, to which he was a life-long contributor; see Baumann, Mission und Ökumene (Leiden: Brill, 1965), 73-147.


844 Vedder’s biographies include Julius Baumann, Mission und Ökumene (Leiden: Brill, 1965); Brigitte Lau, “Thank God the Germans came: Vedder and Namibian Historiography,” History and Historiography (Windhoek: Discourse, 1995); and Altena, 480-481. Three archives in Windhoek house collections by Vedder: The National Archives of Namibia, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia Archives, and the Archives of
that would inculcate Lutheran piety and revivalist devotion. She narrated stories from her youth and encouraged her children to read *Der Kleine Missionsfreunde*, a publication to which Vedder would one day contribute. His mother’s efforts paid off. Already in his teens, Vedder aspired to be a missionary: he read the stories, became fascinated with other cultures and languages, and even began to study Greek. As the third child and second son in a lower middle-class farming family from Lenzinghausen, Vedder’s options for advancement were limited. In 1897, his brother took over the family business and built a home on the farm, at which time his father permitted Vedder to enter the Barmen Mission Seminary and prepare for a missionary career. Such a career offered a path for advancement for those who were religiously inclined, ambitious, and adventurous. In 1903, after six years and having learned six languages, Vedder was ordained by the Rhenish Mission and sent to Southwest Africa.

From the outset of his career, Vedder observed up close the extreme violence Germans committed against the Herero. Only a few months after his arrival in Southwest Africa, the Herero and Nama wars erupted. When genocide began in August 1904 and Vedder received his assignment to the concentration camp in Swakopmund, he oversaw mass conversions to Christianity among the Herero. Because war and genocide had shattered Herero communities, robbed them of cattle wealth, and imprisoned them in

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the United Evangelical Mission in Namibia. The last archive has a large, mostly un-catalogued, holding of Vedder’s work. The United Evangelical Mission Archive, Wuppertal (VEMA) also houses a large catalogued collection of Vedder’s work.


846 The number of baptisms reported in the monthly *Berichte der Rheinischen Mission* was remarkable. Even in private correspondence missionaries expressed astonishment; e.g., Vedder to Spiecker, 5 May 1908 and 1 Jan. 1909, RMG 1.660b, 67-8, 79-81.
concentration camps, their only exit was as laborers on farms and in mines. Vedder and the other missionaries could help secure employment.  

With the dispersal of the Herero and Nama after the war, missionary work became less cohesive and more logistically challenging. In 1910, the Rhenish Mission sent Vedder to Gaub to set up a school for teachers and evangelists who might alleviate the problem missionaries had in carrying out multi-lingual visitations in the new colonial context. Gifted in learning languages, Vedder was able to use this position to expand his linguistic skills and cultural knowledge. It also placed him close to African youth, which would serve him well after World War I.

The South Africans who conquered the German colony in July 1916 expelled Vedder, along with two more senior missionaries, Wilhelm Eich and Johannes Olpp (Jr.). After the war, Olpp wrote to Director Johannes Spiecker and noted that next to Vedder´s name on the list of those expelled was written, “Is hostile toward British rule and treats the natives very badly.” The latter charge, Olpp insisted, was a complete fabrication.

Once back in Germany, Vedder was put to work visiting the missionary network, where he developed his skill as a story teller. Only after the war did the Rhenish Mission publish his stories regularly. In his accounts, African chiefs often perpetrated violence, conflict, and disruption; ordinary Africans showed the destructive outcome of

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847 Gewald argues that survival or personal gain were not the only motivations of the Herero; he notes that conversion could also be part of a strategy to rebuild an identity as a people living under harsh conditions; Gewald, Herero Heroes, 193-204.


849 “...ist der britischen Regierung feindlich gesinnt und behandelt die Eingeborenen sehr schlecht.” Olpp to Spiecker, 19 August 1919; cited in Baumann, Mission und Ökumene, 39, footnote 78.

850 VEMA biographical file card for Heinrich Vedder.
“heathendom”; and wild animals symbolized the moral flaws of Africans, except for lions, who brought dignity, peace, and order, and usually symbolized the missionaries.851 Vedder’s stories appeared in four publications of the Rhenish Mission as well as in books and booklets. They also spread to other German periodicals, including the Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift edited by Gustav Warneck and Julius Richter, and appeared in local religious and popular literature, including the Evangelisches Monatsblatt für Westfalen.

For his stories, Vedder sought characters who could bridge the reality of the mission field and perceptions back home. One of his favorite characters was a woman he called Schwarze Johanna (Black Johanna). Her African name was Uerieta Kazahendike.852 Unlike his other characters, many of whom were villains and weak converts, Uerieta had embraced the missionaries, their faith and mission, and remained loyal to the end. She had ascended from the poorest in the Herero community, the Damra slaves, to stand as a heroine next to the northern “gods”: a helpmate in the work of elevating Africans “heathens” to civilization and faith.853 Starting in her youth, she held vital roles in the Herero mission as a translator, linguist, teacher, nurse, and evangelist. She also proved to be a primary source for Vedder’s compilation of oral history from Southwest Africa.854

Vedder “knew” Uerieta long before he met her. She was already highly regarded among Missionsfreunde of the Herero mission. According to missionary Carl Hugo Hahn in the 1850s, Uerieta’s conversion was the first sign that, at last, the Herero were surrendering


852 Various spellings are Ueriette, Urieta, Uerieta and Uerita.

853 Here I understand a heroine to be “a female intermediate between a woman and a goddess” occupying the space between the mundane and the divine; Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "heroine," retrieved 5 September 2012 from http://www.oed.com.

854 Uerieta’s name often appeared in Vedder’s notes. NAN, Holding A-579, boxes 1-7.
to the Gospel. In 1859, she travelled with Hahn and his family to Germany and became a sensation for those who had never before seen or met an African. Hahn acknowledged her role in helping him complete the Herero Bible and dictionary, and other reports celebrated her Christian piety and marveled at her fluency in European languages. Even Vedder’s mother met and spoke with Uerieta, an experience she relayed to her children.

Vedder appears to have viewed previous accounts of Uerieta as incomplete and inadequate for the new context. He wanted to reintroduce her to the Missionsfreunde and did so through no less than three narratives that elevated her from an impoverished young maid to a pious heroine. Each version characterized her differently. Vedder’s first account in 1921 told how he met her during the Herero war. In this variation, Uerieta represented renewed hope that the Herero could yet be civilized and brought to faith. In his 1936 two-volume iteration, Vedder presented Uerieta as a Herero matriarch of Christian faith and a model for the transition from heathendom to Christianity. The third and much shorter narrative came in 1949, in the context of the new apartheid system. Here Uerieta appeared as a faithful witness.

The 1936 version of Uerieta is of most importance for this discussion. Vedder retold Uerieta’s story for the new Germany. He did not merely adjust trivial facts or update her status. He presented details about Uerieta to fit his apologetic of German missionary work

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855 For Hahn’s report on Uerieta’s conversion, see BRMG, no. 9 (1958): 135.
and embedded his depiction of her in racialized terms he thought would suit the language of
the Third Reich.

Other sources leave little doubt that Uerieta was a remarkable woman. The daughter
of a freed Bergdamra slave, her dark complexion made her place in the Herero community
ambiguous. When Nama raiders attacked her village in the 1840s, leaving her family
impoverished, the family fled to Hahn’s New Barmen mission station at Otjikango. By
1848, the eleven-year-old Uerieta had endeared herself to the Hahn family and become their
house cleaner and children’s nurse. In this role, she learned the languages of the home --
English, German, and Afrikaans -- which gave her the expertise to assist Hahn in developing
an Otjiherero alphabet and a translation of the Bible. By the late 1850s, she was teaching
Herero and Bergdamra children in the mission school, and from the 1860s to 1880s she
travelled with her Baster husband, Samuel Gertze, to form new mission outposts. There is
no record for the next period of her life, but around the time of the Herero-German War,
Inspector Spiecker and Vedder rediscovered Uerieta living near the Otjimbingue mission
station, where she served Africans and Germans as a nurse and pharmacist. Her children
and grandchildren had taken up roles as evangelists and teachers in the Herero mission.

Vedder altered the previously known details about Uerieta. He retold her entrance
into the Hahn home, recast her relationship with the Hahn children, and revised the story of
her conversion.\textsuperscript{859} According to Vedder’s 1936 version, Uerieta’s entrance into the
missionary home was a single event centered on sweeping the house clean. Uerieta had
shown enthusiastic interest in sweeping but lacked the skill to do more than “move the dirt

around” until Mrs. Hahn instructed her. Uerieta said an African maid, not a German woman, should do such work and pleaded with Mrs. Hahn to let her stay with them to do domestic chores. Mrs. Hahn relented. Once in the missionary home, Uerieta developed a relationship with the missionary children, whose care Mrs. Hahn entrusted to her. Vedder focused on Uerieta’s affection for the newborn Traugott Hahn (b. 1848), who would later become a well-known pastor in Reval, Westphalia and was familiar to many in Vedder’s audience.

A dramatic tone developed as Vedder told of Uerieta’s progress toward the Christian faith. While in Stellenbosch, where the Hahns left her in 1853 during their first furlough, Uerieta encountered the saintly and elderly missionary Christiane Kähler, whom the Missionsfreunde also knew from missionary literature. Kähler awakened in Uerieta an interest in prayer. Uerieta then moved to Bethany to live with the missionaries Kreft. There during an evening prayer she became more fully “awakened” by observing the piety of Maria, the youngest Kreft daughter, who would die not long thereafter. Yet Uerieta was still unable to pray, Vedder stressed; she had only the desire to pray. When she requested baptism, Missionary Kreft hesitated, not wishing “to force her into anything.”

860 Ibid.
861 In Vedder’s clippings is a set of notes based on interaction between him and Traugott Hahn, in which the topic of Uerieta is listed as item 6; NNA, Holding 579, box 2.
862 Christiane Kähler, a widow six months after her arrival in South Africa, stayed to become “Schwester Kähler,” one of the first single, female missionaries of the Rhenish Mission; see Gustav Warneck, Christiane Kähler: Eine Diakonisin auf die Missionfelder (Barmen: Rheinische Mission, 1873); cf. “Die Geschichte vom kleinen Krüppel,” DKMF, no. 9 (1861).
In 1857 Uerieta returned to New Barmen to resume her duties in the Hahn home. According to Vedder, she asked for baptism on 15 April 1858, after Hahn’s mid-week sermon. Hahn warned her that conversion would place limits on future marriage prospects, presumably because he would have a say in whom she could marry, though Vedder was unclear on this point. Hahn gave her a week to think over her decision. During this week, her commitment was tested when a young man from South Africa arrived in the village and proposed marriage to Uerieta’s parents. Uerieta was interested, Vedder indicated, but just in time, Hahn discovered that the man was a thief on the run. The young man disappeared as suddenly as he had appeared, and Hahn baptized Uerieta on 25 July 1858. She took the Christian name Johanna Maria.

Seventy years earlier Hahn had told Uerieta’s story quite differently. Writing for a young audience in Germany, Hahn recounted how Uerieta would come around the mission station “often … to observe carefully” as Mrs. Hahn did her housework.865 One day she asked to help sweep. Mrs. Hahn questioned her to see if she understood how to do it, but Uerieta seized the broom, “made [the house] pretty and then put the broom away.”866 Mrs. Hahn was sufficiently impressed to ask Uerieta to live with them, but only after a discussion with her husband and Uerieta’s parents.867 Hahn also stressed Uerieta’s relationship to his older daughter, Margarita, who was lesser known than Traugott to those back home because she only visited Germany a few times.

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866 “Ja wohl, entgegnete sie; ging frisch daran und machte es ganz nett und stellte den Besen weg.” Ibid., 181-82

867 Ibid.
The primary innovation in Vedder’s account concerns the issue of African initiative. Vedder stressed Uerieta’s lack of skill while also highlighting her desire to learn. Mrs. Hahn had to show the African girl how to be productive. Hahn’s version stressed the opposite. From the start, he suggested, Uerieta was competent and did not lack initiative. Furthermore, in Vedder’s version, Uerieta persisted in gaining a place in the Hahn family, whereas Hahn noted that his wife, though hesitant, initiated the request for Uerieta to come into the home.

There was disparity also between Hahn’s and Vedder’s accounts of Uerieta’s conversion. Vedder idealized Uerieta’s experience in Bethany with the Kreft family, whereas according to Hahn, Uerieta admitted to clashing with Mrs. Kreft. Hahn called Uerieta troublesome, noting her “rude behavior,” “disobedience,” “idleness,” “stubborn character,” and “defiance,” all of which he concluded showed she was in need of “chastisement” (corporal punishment). Vedder did not delve into such matters. He also glossed over issues of marriage and sexuality that may have motivated Uerieta to convert. He opted instead for an affective exchange between Uerieta and the missionaries that focused on her awakening.

Hahn had expressed reservations about Uerieta’s readiness for conversion, but there was pressure on her for marriage which required Hahn to make his move to baptize her. When she requested baptism, he noted, “there is something that is not to my liking, but I cannot say what it is.” He added a remark about her relationship to a Herero man, and,

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without giving details, hoped “the incident with Kamuvandu does not recur.”

Kamuvandu was a member of Hahn’s community. Implicit in Hahn’s account was a concern about losing African girls associated with the mission station through marriage to men outside and thereby beyond the missionary’s reach. Uerieta seemed also to have been aware of this problem and took steps to avoid having to leave the station because of marriage. At the time of her decision to convert, two families of girls at the mission station had given them away in marriage; one of the girls, at the request of her mother, had been married to her stepfather. On the day that Hahn baptized Uerieta, he added a note in his journal that her parents were attempting to marry her to an older widower. None of these details appear in Vedder’s story, which sidesteps the cultural dilemma Uerieta was negotiating.

A further discrepancy between the narratives concerns Vedder’s claim about Uerieta’s progress in Christian piety and prayer. According to Vedder, Uerieta was willing but unable to pray until she submitted to catechism in preparation for baptism. In the

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870 Ibid.

871 Lau, Tagebücher, 981, 991.

872 Conflicts over courtship and sexuality abound in the texts during the 1850s in New Barmen. That Uerieta was involved in such affairs is evident when Hahn noted that she brought some of the marriages to his attention only two weeks after her request for conversion. One week after her confirmation to follow through on baptism she was courted by a man from South Africa whom Hahn discovered was baptized but already had a wife in South Africa and was on the run for having committed murder. This last detail, Vedder includes in his version. Lau, Tagebücher, 958-59, 972-74, 1082.

873 Ibid., 103.

874 These details may have been too cluttered for Vedder’s version, or it may be that the senior Uerieta had purged these aspects from her story when she told it Vedder. It could also be that Hahn misread the marriage issue and recorded them inaccurately in his journals. In any case, Vedder’s version removes complexity, if not ambiguity.
missionary literature and revivalist culture, prayer was often the telltale sign of piety. Hahn’s journal indicated that Uerieta had begun to pray “by heart” in 1853, while in Stellenbosch, and when she arrived in New Barmen four years later, Hahn observed that she “often prays.” Vedder, it appears, wanted to avoid the ambiguity implied by a long baptismal candidacy of fifteen months.

The meaning of these alterations and contradictions is related to Vedder’s message to his audience: he was writing for someone and not just about someone. He shaped Urieta’s story to illustrate a notion about “the African” that supported his apologetic for missionary work as an arm of German expansion. In 1936, the year of Uerieta’s death and publication of Vedder’s two-part biography of her, a newly rearmed Germany was steeped in “the race question.” As of March 1935, all German adult males were subject to conscription, though German Jewish men were excluded by a regulation two months later. The return of the Saar to Germany, the Nuremberg Laws, remilitarization of the Rhineland, Berlin Olympics, and Germany’s entry into the Spanish Civil War all occurred in 1935 and 1936. It was to the Germans who witnessed, participated in, and celebrated these events that Vedder addressed his narrative.

In 1935, a year before his Schwarze Johanna appeared, Vedder had published an essay titled, “Race, religion, and mission, according to our experience.” In it he argued that the primary difference between “races” was not physical but psychological: the crucial factor was

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875 Frömmigkeit was a common theme in stories about dying children whose piety was evident in prayer and other expressions of religious devotion. An example associated with Uerieta is Maria Kreft, whose death narrative preceded Uerieta’s conversion story in 1861 by just four months; G. Krönlein, “Maria Kreft (Bethanien, 4. März 1862),” DKMF, no. 8 (1862): 117-28.

876 Lau, Tagebücher, 969.
the “drive to live.” Vedder identified a number of drives he claimed had made the “blond and blue-eyed” race superior to others: *Forschungstrieb* (the drive to research), *Wissens- und Lernenstrieb* (the drive to know and to learn), *Mitteilungstrieb* (the drive to communicate information), mental or intellectual *Produktionstrieb* (the drive to produce), and *Metaphysicher Trieb* (a metaphysical drive that governed the entire thought and conduct of a people). The goal of missionaries was to awaken all these drives and restore full spiritual life (*Seelenleben*). “Drive,” he argued, would determine whether a people could prevent or reverse degeneration. The “blond and blue-eyed” people had distinguished themselves by possessing and cultivating superior drives, which gave them a superior civilization. Other races also had “drives,” though these might lie dormant and need awakening. A few races, Vedder added, possessed drives toward destruction, as was the case with “the Jews.”

The African “drive” was dormant, according to Vedder. Through ongoing encounters with developed races, the natural drives of the Africans would awaken, and in time they too could achieve their full human potential. He maintained that the “race

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877. The physical life, Vedder claimed, finds its source in “dem Impuls des Triebleben.” H. Vedder’s, *Rasse, Religion und Mission aus “Unsere Erfahrung,”* (Bielefeld: Anstalt Bethel, 1935), 19. Vedder’s essay cited race theorists von Luschan, Linnaeus, and Gobineau, which indicates that he wrote in the context of contemporary discussions of race; H. Vedder, *Rasse,* 7-18. He also knew the topic was sensitive and warned his readers to view the discussion on “race differences” as incomplete and something the *Missionsleute* needed to engage; Vedder, *Rasse,* 21.

878. Ibid., 19, 22.

879. Ibid.

880. Ibid., 19.

881. Notes in preparing the manuscript for *Das alte südwestafrika: Südwestafrikas Geschichte bis zum Tode Maharem 1890* (Berlin: Warneck, 1934), indicate that Veddere was exploring this idea of *Trieb,* charting how it might fit with the “races” he was familiar with. One of the notes refers briefly to Jews as no longer possessing a drive toward civilization.
science” of the 1930s had left out component he identified as crucial, namely, the duty of superior races to elevate the lower races:

The lower the peoples are, the greater is the obligation of privileged people to offer them a hand so that they too can develop as full human beings. In particular, the peoples that possess colonies should acknowledge this duty and fulfill it.882

Other mission leaders agreed that missionary work made its subjects “complete human beings” and that it would take more time to elevate the heathen. Johannes Warneck, Director of the Rhenish Mission, wrote that a long multi-generational process would be required before “they can enter into the fullness of [the Gospel’s] spiritual wealth.”883

Vedder’s 1935 discussion of race sheds light on the peculiarities in his 1936 depiction of Schwarze Johanna. She embodied the success of missions in bringing “race” work to completion. Missionaries had awakened in her a latent and natural drive for labor. They taught her to be productive and do more than “move the dirt around.” Living in close proximity with them gave her the language and domestic skills needed to develop as a civilized person and to civilize her people. As a result, she became ever more useful to the missionaries. When she converted, married a Christian, became a mother to seventeen children, joined her husband in mission work, and served the wider colonial communities, she became a matriarch of faith.

Vedder had written more than a eulogy for Uerieta. He offered an argument for the missionary movement within the dominant racist ways of thinking. Using the popular


format of story telling, Vedder reiterated arguments from his other works, *Das alte Südafrika* (1934) and *Rasse, Religion und Mission aus “Unsere Erfahrung”* (1935). He dismissed the genocide of the Herero with the statement that “colonial wars are not uncommon” and blamed the conflict on a “people of nature” (*Naturvölker*) trying to prevent progress. \(^{884}\) How Uerieta experienced the genocide of the Herero was not mentioned. Instead Vedder boasted that Germans, especially missionaries, had rescued the “tribes” of Southwest Africa -- the Nama, Damra, Bergdamra, Herero, Ovambo, Tjimba, and Khoi-San -- from degenerating into violence, destruction, and self-annihilation. That argument appears vicious, cynical, or at best disingenuous in view of the atrocities Germans committed against the Herero and Nama. The denial implicit in it stands out against Vedder’s claim to be an authority on African “tribes,” having learned their languages and studied their culture, and it contrasts his direct experience of the events of 1904 to 1907 as a missionary in Southwest Africa.

Given an ability to tell stories, an audience prepared to listen, and a new political and ideological context at home, Vedder, like Drießler, framed missionary work in racial language. For Vedder, mission work was true “race work”: “Our work is rooted in people,” he wrote, adding “the mission is not indifferent about racial values.”\(^{885}\) Rather, he claimed,


missionaries had long “wrestled” for clarity on such questions. He bemoaned the exclusion of Christian, mission voices from the dialogue on race, even though it was they who knew best from long experience how to elevate the “spiritual life” of a people.

Vedder’s 1936 narrative was only one of his three versions of Schwarze Johanna. Each appeared shortly after a critical moment in missionary and German history. In 1922, missionaries had just succeeded in convincing the Allies that they were not associated with the crimes listed in the 1918 Blue Book, and Vedder was allowed to return to Southwest Africa to continue his missionary work. In 1936, missionaries wanted a part in the developing dialogue on race in Germany. And in 1949, when Vedder again presented Uerieta’s story, it was as a model for Africans living under the newly imposed rule of apartheid. The continuities over the course of Vedder’s career were particular to him yet emblematic of wider professional, political, and religious trends. During the first decades of the twentieth century, the Rhenish Mission’s efforts to stoke the home fires and gain

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886 “Sie selbst muß vor allen Dingen um Klarheit in den Aufgeworfenen Fragen ringen. Es handelt sich um ihre allereigenste Sache.” Ibid.


889 On Vedder’s political manoeuvring from 1945 until his appointment to the South African Senate as Senator for the Namibian People in 1949, having embraced Prime Minister D. F. Malan and the apartheid program, see Martin Eberhardt, Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und Apartheid: Die Deutsche Bevölkerungsgruppe Südwestafrikas, 1915-1965, (Berlin: Lit, 2007), 459-64; 493-497. On Vedder’s celebration of the apartheid system as the perfection of the old German race divisions, especially his praise of the reserve system, a system missionaries had advocated for since the late nineteenth century, which enabled whites to move unencumbered by blacks (“ihre Tagen beschließen ohne jemand lasting zu fallen”), see H. Vedder, Einführung in die Geschichte Südwestafrikas (Windhoek: Meinert, 1953), 101. On his appointment in 1949 to the South African Senate as Senator for the Namibian People, see J. Baumann, “Ein Lebensbild Dr. Vedders,” in W. Drascher and H. J. Rust, (eds.) Südwestafrika: Festschrift für Dr. h.c. Heinrich Vedder (Windhoek: S.W.A. Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft, 1961), 11-22.
legitimacy in Germany fueled the notion, long present within missionary culture, that extreme violence was a divinely sanctioned tool for chastising a degenerate people.
Rhenish missionaries saw great value in their work and their support networks. They interacted with the world outside to shape their own, expressing a vision for the world through stories and reports about people from afar. The missionary movement as a whole thereby became a vessel bearing cultural knowledge that connected Africans to Germans. Decades before mission societies in the Upper Rhineland and Westphalia ever sent a single German missionary to Africa, they were already sending Africans to Germany through stories. Through these lessons in piety and faith from afar, missionaries wed Germans to Africans, for they had learned from Johann Herder that they could win the soul of a people through cultural products, including stories.

Missionaries saw their efforts “out there” (draußen) as a work “at home” (daheim). They feared that the German church might lose its religious moorings, its Volksgeist, threatened by secularists, rationalists, and Catholics, a list that grew during the nineteenth century to include socialists, communists, and Jews. After World War I, problems at home seemed pressing, but for missionaries and their supporters it was not a matter of giving up the mission to fix first their own house. Had not God condemned Jews for building homes while the temple and walls of Jerusalem lay in ruins? Instead, they argued, working “out there” would help repair the church and society “at home.”
Historians who explore continuities between the nineteenth century and National Socialism often focus on transnational, imperial, and colonial connections. The history of the Rhenish Mission contributes to this discussion as a long thread among strands of continuity, which historical developments disrupted but did not break. My study of the missionary movement during the century from 1829 to 1936 shows threads of continuity in German history by linking a series of eras and developments that appear to stand in isolation from one another. The French Revolution did not mark an abrupt transformation of Europe from Christian to secular. Indeed, the history of the Rhenish Mission shows the continued importance of organized religion and institutional Christianity. Neither revolution, unification, colonialism, genocide, nor world war marked an abrupt break with the past, though each occasion required an adjustment. Mission history shows how religion linked the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial contexts and placed Africa in a close relationship with the metropole, even as that relationship evolved. I have also identified a reciprocal link between religion and war: in one direction, wars shaped religious sensibilities and priorities; in the other, religious practices and convictions legitimated, supported, facilitated, and on occasion challenged the conduct of warfare. Although I did not find a straight line between German colonialism, colonial violence, and Nazi racism, I have shown that significant cultural and religious practices connected them.

Missionaries in Southwest Africa were bearers of these continuities and links. They were not peripheral to developments in Germany, even though scholars sometimes relegate them to voyeuristic colonial roles. Missionaries claimed to have a distinct relationship with Africans that was different from that of adventurers, traders, and settlers. Indeed they did. They translated their relationship with Africans to Germans through stories with reflexive qualities, thereby linking Germany and Africa. Through their stories, missionaries further
linked Pietism, awakening, and revivalism to overseas efforts, which also connected intellectual currents in German philosophy, theology, and nascent forms of geography and anthropology to grassroots religious practices in Germany.

This reciprocal process -- and especially the missionaries' role in it -- had high stakes. These stakes became evident after the establishment of the German colony in Southwest Africa and especially during the war and genocide there. I have shown how missionaries took part in preparing the way for the German killing of Herero and Nama. First they legitimatized the killing as if it were divine punishment. Then, in 1905, they added deeds to their words by utilizing their knowledge of the Herero and their claim of credibility to lure survivors in the desert to collection stations. From there, missionaries transported survivors to concentration camps where many more died. Back home the reflexive nature of missionary stories proved to be a liability in a climate where missionaries were not willing to be seen as criticizing other Germans. They then dropped that side of their narrative equation and assumed the peacemaker's role in Southwest Africa as mediators and experts during the most intense killings of the Herero and Nama.

The history of the Rhenish Mission was not one of shining success, and success did not come easily in the field. When the Herero-German War erupted, the missionaries faced pressing questions at home about their failure out there. Contrary to their claims, they had not tamed the “wild” African, even after six decades of labor. With a twist of irony, the early twentieth century began with a struggle for the Rhenish Mission to convince Germans of its legitimacy, even as the Herero and Nama saw no other recourse for survival but to embrace Christianity.

Yet the Rhenish Mission did not lose face at home during the Herero genocide. Rather it emerged from the carnage of 1904-1907 in a remarkably strong position. Pointing
to their sudden success, evident by a wave of African conversions, missionaries convinced supporters to increase funding to expand the mission work in Southwest Africa. This process tied the Rhenish Mission, its missionaries, and its network ever more closely to the German empire, and as a result, its future development was also linked to the empire.

During World War I, when Germany lost its colonies, the missionaries in the field and their society back home faced an enormous logistical and financial crisis. Indeed, if ever the thread of continuity in Rhenish Mission history seemed about to snap, it was between 1916 and 1919. The mission society tried to direct its energies toward recovery, but the financial debt, the disconnection between the field and Barmen, the death of twenty-eight missionary candidates, and the general malaise of military defeat had left the Rhenish Mission adrift.

Still from the outset of the Weimar period, the mission society found new sources of renewal by uniting national restoration and missionary efforts at home. They redeployed deported missionaries to a new “mission field”: soldiers who returned from the front at the end of the war and formed militia units (Freikorps) in the Upper Rhineland and Westphalia. These soldiers, the mission society believed, would be a bastion against a new threat of revolution in the post-war chaos. The Rhenish Mission also restored key leaders to the field, notably Heinrich Vedder, who demonstrated his commitment to missions by creating, collecting, and disseminating a vast amount of literature for Germans at home as well as in the former colony.

The longing for recovery in the 1920s made Hitler and his promise for German renewal all the more attractive in 1933. Key mission leaders at home and in the field looked for common ground with National Socialism. Although leading Nazis did not reciprocate their enthusiasm, spokespersons for the mission linked German violence in Southwest
Africa to the Nazi era through their notions of race. They offered their mission work to the Nazi revolution in 1933-36 in the form of racialized narratives that juxtaposed German superiority with a German duty to elevate inferior people, thereby articulating mission ideology with the vocabulary of race.

The history of the Rhenish Mission does not end in 1936. The German colonial empire lasted only three decades, whereas the Rhenish Mission has a long history in Southwest Africa. Four decades ahead of German colonialists, its missionaries crossed the Orange River where the mission remains active. Indeed the mission society continued beyond the collapse of the Nazi state and the divided Germany, through the apartheid era in South Africa, and into the present. Today, the United Evangelical Mission (*Vereinte Evangelische Mission*), its name after the 1971 union with the Bethel Mission which was active in East Africa, still functions as a bridge between Namibia and Germany and between the past and present.

In 2004, the Namibian people got the German government to acknowledge the crime of genocide a century earlier.890 They were supported by the United Evangelical Mission, whose chairman at that time was none other than the Namibian Lutheran Bishop Zephania Kameeta, a Herero. Although Germans today maintain an interest in Namibia through tourism and investment, the German government has resisted all calls for compensation to the Namibian people, promising instead to maintain financial aid.891 Only recently, in 2011, did representatives of German museums agree to return the skulls of twenty Herero and Nama who were killed in the war and genocide -- four women, fifteen


men, and a boy. German scientists had stolen these human remains and brought them back to Germany.\textsuperscript{892} The skulls were handed over with considerable reluctance. In the process, the Germans in charge managed to insult the Namibian party that came to Germany with Bishop Kameeta to collect their ancestors’ bones, a further reminder that the past is still present.\textsuperscript{893}

\textsuperscript{892} The estimated number of skulls taken is approximately 300; David Knight, “There was Injustice: Skulls of Colonial Victims returned to Namibia,” \textit{Der Spiegel} (27 Sep. 2011), retrieved from \url{http://www.spiegel.de}.

\textsuperscript{893} Magreth Nunuhe, “Namibia: Germans ‘incited’ Skulls Delegation,” \textit{All Africa} (14 Dec. 2011), retrieved from \url{http://allafrica.com}. 
FIGURES

Figure 1: An Armed Herero

894 An armed Herero; DKMF, no. 4 (1904):55.

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Figure 2: A Herero Warrior and His Weapon

895 A Herero warrior and his weapon (kirri); DKMF, no. 7 (1905):107.
Figure 3: The Copula in the Berliner Dom

Figure 4: A Bergdamra Boy

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897 A Bergdamra boy, Cover of Der kleine Missionsfreund, DKMF no. 8 (1855).
Figure 5: Hereroland

Figure 6: Johanna Gertze (Uerieta Kazahendike)\textsuperscript{899}

\textsuperscript{899} Johanna Gertze (Uerieta Kazahendike); A. Kuhlmann, \textit{Auf Adlers Flügeln} (1911), 23.
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