THAT *ALL* MAY BE ONE? CHURCH UNITY, LUTHER MEMORY, AND IDEAS OF THE GERMAN NATION, 1817-1883

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ABSTRACT

The early nineteenth century was a period in which the German confessional divide increasingly became a national-political problem. After the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire (1806) and the Wars of Liberation (1813-1815), Germans became consumed with how to build a nation. Religion was still a salient manifestation of German identity and difference in the nineteenth century, and the confessional divide between Catholics and Protestants remained the most significant impediment to German national unity. Bridging the confessional divide was essential to realizing national unity, but one could only address the separation of the confessions by directly confronting, or at least thinking around, memories of Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation. This dissertation examines how proponents of church unity used and abused memories of Luther and the Reformation to imagine German confessional and national unity from 1817 through 1883. It employs the insights and methods of collective memory research to read the sermons and speeches, pamphlets and poems, histories and hagiographies produced by ecumenical clergy and laity to commemorate Luther and the Reformation, and to understand how efforts toward church unity informed contemporary ideas of German confessional and national identity and unity.

Histories of nineteenth-century German society, culture, and politics have been predicated on the ostensible strength of the confessional divide. This dissertation, however, looks at nineteenth-century German history, and the history of nineteenth-century German nationalism in particular, from an interconfessional

perspective—one that acknowledges the interaction and overlapping histories of German Catholics and Protestants rather than treating each group separately. Recent histories of the relationship between German religion and nationalism have considered how confessional alterity was used to construct confessionally and racially-exclusive ideas of the German nation. This dissertation complements those histories by revealing how notions of confessional unity, rather than difference, were employed in the construction of the German nation. As such, the history of ecumenism in nineteenth-century Germany represents an alternative history of German nationalism; one that imagined a German nation through a reunion of the separated confessions, rather than on the basis of iron and blood.

PROLOGUE: IN THE BEGINNING WAS LUTHER

The historian Thomas Nipperdey began his magisterial history of nineteenth-century Germany with the quip:

In the beginning was Napoleon.

By this, he meant that the paramount issues of nineteenth-century German history, those issues of national unity and diversity, German identity and difference, had their origins in the Napoleonic Wars, the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire, and the German Wars of Liberation.[1] *Pace* Thomas Nipperdey, but he could, and perhaps should have opened *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck, 1800-1866* with the observation that:

In the beginning was Luther.

Napoleon may have been the short-term cause of nineteenth-century Germany's political, social, and cultural situation. But contemporaries who sought to rebuild and (re)define Germany after Napoleon located the origins of so many of those contested issues of German unity and diversity, identity and difference with Martin Luther and the German Reformation. The effects of the schism between the churches, the politicization of the Reformation by secular princes, the separation of the confessions, and eventual process of confessionalization[2] were still manifest

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[1] Thomas Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck, 1800-1866* translated by Daniel Nolan (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 1; See also Tim Blanning, "Napoleon and German Identity" *History Today* 48, no. 4 (April 1998): 37-43.

[2] For two original and definitive expositions of the confessionalization thesis, see Wolfgang Reinhard, "Gegenreformation als Modernisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 68 (1977): 226-52 and Heinz Schilling, *Konfessionskonflikt und Staatsbildung: Eine Fallstudie iiber das Verhdltnis von religiosem und sozialem Wandel in der Frühneuzeit am Beispiel der Grafschaft Lippe* (Güttersloh: Mohn, 1981). For a comprehensive historiography of the confessionalization thesis up to 1989, see R. Po-Chia Hsia, *Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe,*

well into the nineteenth century, when the German national question came to the fore. Thus, the national question was inseparable from the German confessional question. And of course one could not address the confessional question, or how German Catholics and Protestants should best coexist and cooperate in a confessionally-divided Germany, without directly confronting, or at least thinking around, memories of Luther and the Reformation.

Nineteenth-century German nationalists routinely used confessional identity and difference to construct confessionally-exclusive notions of German national unity and identity. And historians have conducted a great deal of valuable research into this "confessionalization of the national idea". But if nationalists used confessional identity and difference to construct racially and confessionally-exclusive ideas of the German nation, how might have proponents of church unity imagined the German nation and German national identity?

Precious little research has been conducted on the relationship of ecumenism to nineteenth-century German nationalism. Nevertheless, nineteenth-century German proponents of church unity maintained that the national question could never be addressed, and Germany could never be properly unified, until the confessional divide between German Catholics and Protestants was overcome. Nineteenth-century German ecumenists' notions of confessional unity informed their ideas of German national unity and identity. In fact, confessional unity was a prerequisite of German national unity. Because German national disunity was a

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1550-1750 (London: Routledge, 1989). On the relationship of the confessionalization thesis to modern German history, see the April 2005 H-German Forum "Confessionalization," http://www.h-net.org/~german/discuss/Confessionalization/Confess_index.htm

byproduct of the Reformation separation of the confessions, to imagine a reunion of the separated confessions was to imagine a notion of German national unity. And Luther's memory was never far from the minds of those German Catholics and Protestants whose thoughts belabored the confessional divide and confessional reunion. Indeed, memories of Luther and the Reformation were standards by which orthodox and ecumenists, radicals and reactionaries, variously imagined national unity and diversity, German identity and difference. Their memories of Luther and the Reformation were pivotal to their notions of church unity, which informed their ideas of the German nation. Hence my interest in the seemingly incongruous triad of church unity, Luther memory, and ideas of the German nation.

This dissertation examines how nineteenth-century German proponents of church unity used and abused memories of Luther and the Reformation in order to imagine German national unity and identity from 1817 through 1883. After the Napoleonic Wars, the German Wars of Liberation, and the redrawing of the map of Europe at the 1815 Congress of Vienna, confessional and political boundaries no longer coincided.[3] This, coupled with the reconfessionalization of European Christianity,[4] and the emergence of the modern political nation-state, meant that from 1817 forward the *Konfessionalfrage* and the German Question would be inextricably linked. Even after German unification in 1871, and especially at the

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[3] Margaret Lavinia Anderson, "Living Apart and Together in Germany," in *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Germany, 1800-1914*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 320.

[4] Olaf Blaschke "Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?" *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 26 (2000): 38-75. See also Olaf Blaschke, ed. *Konfessionen im Konflikt : Deutschland zwischen 1800 und 1970: ein zweites konfessionelles Zeitalter* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002).

Luther anniversaries of 1883, memories of Luther and the Reformation would be invoked to imagine both inclusive and exclusive ideas of the German nation and German national identity. Thus the period from approximately 1817 through 1883 represents one in which ecumenists and orthodox, radicals and reactionaries variously appealed to memories of Luther and the Reformation to ground their distinct ideas of German confessional, and by extension, national unity and identity.

The 1817 Reformation anniversary and contemporaneous Prussian Union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches; the Vormärz period and 1848 revolutions; the reactionary-ecumenical 1860 Erfurt Conference; and the establishment of a kleindeutsch German Empire under Prussian hegemony, the Kulturkampf, and the 1883 Luther anniversary, were all pivotal events in the interrelated histories of German ecumenism, Luther and Reformation memory, and the construction of German national unity and identity. These episodes in German history are lenses through which we may view a panorama of debates about interconfessional relations and discover the significance of these debates for ideas of German confessional and national unity and identity. Each episode represents a site at which religion, memory, and political culture intersected and new ideas of German confessional and national unity were imagined. The primary sources that I have used to explore these intersecting sites of religion, memory, and political culture include sermons and speeches, histories and hagiographies, autobiographies, festival reports, letters, pamphlets, and periodicals. The majority of these sources were produced by clergy and laity popular consumption, though academic theologians and historians prepared others.

My analysis begins in 1817 in Prussia, where King Friedrich Wilhelm III had proposed a union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches to coincide with the tercentennial anniversaries of the Protestant Reformation. These anniversaries were ones in which Catholics, Reformed, Lutherans, and in some cases even Jews participated in the festivities together and sought to remake the memory of 31 October 1517 from one that marked the German confessional divide into one that evoked intra-Protestant and interconfessional unity. Orthodox Reformed and Lutherans, on the other hand, invoked confessionally exclusive, rather than ecumenical, memories of Luther and the Reformation to oppose the Prussian Union and the interconfessional commemoration of Luther's memory at the 1817 anniversaries. Although the Prussian Union ultimately survived, debates between ecumenists and orthodox were revived, and finally resolved, at the 1830 anniversaries of the Augsburg Confession, at which pro-union Protestants celebrated the Confession as a symbol of intra-Protestant unity as opposed to a strictly Lutheran profession of faith.

Although the ecumenical celebrants of these anniversaries did not espouse an explicitly political notion of German unity, they did propose a notion of being German, indeed, a notion of German unity that transcended the confessional divide. This is not an insignificant point—in both 1817 and 1830 confession was still the manifest expression of social difference in Germany. Thus imagining intra-Protestant and interconfessional unity was one way of imagining German national unity.

The second chapter examines the "revolutionary ecumenism" of two dissident religious communities, the Protestant Friends and the German Catholic Movement, during the Vormärz era and through the 1848 revolutions. Both groups severed ties with the mainstream Evangelical and Catholic Churches in order to realize German confessional and national unity. The Protestant Friends and German Catholic Movement invoked memories of Luther as a spiritual liberator and the Reformation as an instance of religious revolution in order to justify their subversion of the ecclesiastical and secular authorities that denied their constituents freedom of religion and hindered confessional unity.

The Protestant Friends and German Catholics espoused an ecumenical notion of German unity and identity that was inclusive of Catholics, Protestants, and in limited cases Jews. While contemporary German nationalists frantically debated how best to address the German Question, these dissident ecumenical groups proposed how to unify Germany in a manner that simultaneously addressed the *Konfessionalfrage* and the *Deutsche Frage* in such a way that accommodated each of the confessions.

The third chapter deals with the "reactionary ecumenism" of the Erfurt Conference, an assembly of archconservative and orthodox Catholics and Protestants who met in 1860 to discuss the possibility of a rapprochement between the confessions for the purpose of defending Christianity and Germany from atheism, liberalism, and revolution. Attendees and sympathizers of the Erfurt Conference, including its Catholic supporters, recalled Luther as a pious moral reformer of a corrupt medieval church who had forcefully eschewed sectarianism.

They absolved Luther of any guilt for the confessional divide—they blamed this on peasant revolutionaries, Anabaptists, other non-conforming clergy and congregations—and invoked Luther's memory to advocate obedience to legitimate political and ecclesiastical authorities and as a bulwark against revolution. The Erfurt Conference and its epigones imagined a nation in the confessionally-reunited subjects of a German Christian state to be led by a holy alliance of Austria and Prussia whose political authority derived from God. Their ecumenical dreams were deferred of course upon the outbreak the 1866 Austro-Prussian War.

The ecumenical movement persisted despite the lack of formal success. The final chapter examines the ecumenism of the Ut Omnes Unum circle, a group of German Catholics and Protestants who proposed a reunion of the separated churches in order to overcome Germany's persistent internal divide between the confessions and to address the increasing marginalization of German Catholics in Wilhelmine society from 1866 through 1883. Ut Omnes Unum recalled Luther as a schismatic who had caused the separation of the church, and by extension, the separation of the German nation. Even after Germany's political unification in 1871, the Reich remained internally divided between the confessions. The Kulturkampf sought to effect a cultural and confessional homogeneity throughout the German Empire, and celebrants of the 1883 Luther anniversaries conflated Protestantism with German national identity. According to members of the Ut Omnes Unum group, German national unity could only be realized when German Protestants returned to their "Mother Church," which Luther had splintered.

Ut Omnes Unum imagined a German nation in a reunion of the separated confessions and a return of German Protestants to the Catholic Church. Luther had caused a schism not only between the churches, but had also been responsible for the confessional divide that continued to separate German Catholics and Protestants even after Germany's political unification. Only through a reunion with German Catholics that they had abandoned over three hundred years ago, could unity be restored to the German nation. All at once, the ecumenism of Ut Omnes Unum represented an assertion of German Catholic identity, interconfessional opposition to the Kulturkampf, and an alternative to its homogenous and confessionally-exclusive vision of German national unity and identity.

The epilogue, which considers how the *Konfessionalfrage* was set aside upon the outbreak of World War I, reveals how German Catholics and Protestants effected a confessional truce to unite in defense of their fatherland. While the 1883 anniversaries had invoked confessionally-exclusive memories of Luther, the 1917 Reformation anniversaries were largely deconfessionalized national celebrations at which German Catholics and Protestants recalled Luther as a stoic German hero who had bravely endured great struggles and sacrifice on behalf of his faith and his fatherland, which wartime Germans were exhorted by their priests and pastors to mimic.

Nineteenth-century German ecumenism was not just a means to reunite the separated confessions; it was also a way of imagining German national unity. This accounts for why the ecumenical impulse continued to recur and garner popular support despite its lack of concrete success. Indeed, nineteenth-century German

ecumenism was most prevalent during those periods when the idea of the German nation and the meaning of German national identity were hotly contested and highly ambiguous. This impulse appeared in 1817, after the Wars of Liberation, when the meaning of the German nation was most uncertain. It emerged again during the Vormärz when popular frustration with secular and ecclesiastical authorities erupted into a revolution that sought to reimagine the German nation. It recurred in the 1860s, when atheism and liberalism were perceived to threaten traditional notions of German identity and unity. It emerged yet again after German unification, when minority religious communities were marginalized by the German state in order to realize cultural uniformity. The ecumenical efforts in each of these cases were differing reactions to the same root cause: the confessional divide and its hindrance of German national unity. Indeed, nineteenth-century German ecumenism represented an attempt to address the German confessional and national questions all at once; questions that nineteenth-century proponents of church unity saw as inextricably linked.

This dissertation is not, however, a comprehensive history of ecumenism in nineteenth-century Germany. I do not claim that the ecumenical Catholics and Protestants described herein are antecedents of the twentieth-century ecumenical movement, nor shall I argue that they were constituents of any unified, cohesive nineteenth-century German ecumenical movement. Moreover, it is not a history of Lutheranism or Lutheran theology in nineteenth-century Germany. Nor is it an inclusive study of the myriad of ways in which memories of Luther and the Reformation were used and abused in nineteenth-century Germany. This

dissertation will only consider how such memories colored nineteenth-century ecumenists' ideas of the German nation. Finally, it is not an exhaustive analysis of the relationship between the *Konfessionalfrage* and the German Question. The relationship of religion to German nationalism has been widely studied. On the other hand, the relationship of nineteenth-century ecumenism to ideas of German national identity and unity remains an understudied field. Indeed, an interconfessional history of nineteenth-century German nationalism has yet to be written. Accordingly, this dissertation is a history of how nineteenth-century proponents of church unity variously remembered Luther and the Reformation, and how those memories colored their distinctive ideas of the German nation. I envision it occupying a position within the historiographies of nineteenth-century ecumenism, German collective memories of Luther and Reformation, and the relationship of religion to German nationalism all at once.

Little has been written about the history of Christian ecumenism in nineteenth-century Germany. Partly because ecumenism in nineteenth-century Germany did not exist as a unified movement in the manner that the twentieth-century ecumenical movement did. And partly, or perhaps, primarily, because of the perceived strength of the nineteenth-century confessional divide. Unequivocal statements such as "an ecumenical movement never arose in German Protestantism" from esteemed historians the likes of Hajo Holborn do not inspire graduate students to subject themselves to extensive archival and library research

in the hopes of finding conflicting evidence.[5] *Pace* Hajo Holborn, but if a single, unitary ecumenical movement did not exist in nineteenth-century Germany, individual Protestant and Catholic ecumenists and their supporters surely did. Their lack of success in effecting a formal reunion of the separated churches worked to render these ecumenists invisible to twentieth-century historians—historians who had been conditioned to reduce piety to an epiphenomenon of contemporary social and political forces and who often regarded religion as an afterthought. Although these nineteenth-century German proponents of church unity may have been marginal and ultimately unsuccessful, they were not historically irrelevant.

The definitive history of ecumenism and the modern ecumenical movement is still Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill's *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*.[6] Because it is an international history of the ecumenical movement that aspires to breadth rather than depth, nineteenth-century German proponents of church unity are given short shrift. Manfred P. Fleischer has done a great deal to remedy the shortcomings of Rouse and Neill's book with his own history of ecumenism.[7] Written during the heyday of the twentieth-century ecumenical movement, it is a history of German irenicists and ecumenists from the Reformation through the early twentieth century, with an emphasis on nineteenth-century German proponents of church unity, whom Fleischer identified as the "forgotten

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[5] Hajo Holborn, *Germany and Europe: Historical Essays* (New York: Doubleday, 1970), 19.
[6] Rouse, Ruth and Stephen Charles Neill, eds. *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967).
[7] Manfred P. Fleischer, *Katholische und lutherische Ireniker: Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1968) and Manfred Fleischer, "Lutheran and Catholic Reunionists in the Age of Bismarck" *Church History* 38 no. 1 (March 1969): 43-66.

forerunners" of the worldwide ecumenical movement of the twentieth century. But neither Rouse and Neill, nor Fleischer considered the relationship of nineteenth-century German ecumenism to nineteenth-century German nationalism.

The theoretical framework for the memory angle of this dissertation owes its debts to Maurice Halbwachs' notion of collective memory and Pierre Nora's concept of sites of memory. Halbwachs distinguished between personal memories and collective memories, or those memories that we frame in terms of their relation to some group to which we belong.[8] Whereas one might assume that personal memories and collective memories oppose one another, Halbwachs noted that every personal memory must be mediated by some social or collective framework:

> [W]e often replace our remembrances within a space and time whose demarcations we share with others [and] situate them within dates that have meaning only in relation to a group to which we belong.[9]

Thus we remember the past through the context or viewpoint of the social groups to which we belong; this is our collective memory. According to Halbwachs, these collectives are "confined in space and time," that is, historical, and keep alive memories that are important to the collective.[10]

Collectives may include nations, cultures, locales, religious communities, and social organizations; essentially any social group that an individual identifies with. Collectives may also exist within collectives, such as the orthodox, liberal, and ecumenical religious collectives that existed within their wider churches in

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[8] Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, translated by Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 50.
[9] Ibid., 54.
[10] Ibid., 78.

nineteenth-century Germany. Collective memories and the shared commemoration of common sites of memory lend cohesion to and define a community.[11] Indeed, collectives construct their identities as distinct and cohesive groups by appealing to their shared memories of the past.[12] But memory can be selective. What a collective chooses to remember and forget defines that group's (collective) identity. Memory is selective in another way; it can be invoked to support a group's interests and ideologies. Memory is present-oriented and recall is context-dependent. That is, collective memory relates itself to contemporary events and situations, so that memories became meaningful within the context in which they are being recalled.[13]

Each collective that I consider in this dissertation—the ecumenical participants at the 1817 anniversaries, the revolutionary ecumenists of 1848, the reactionary ecumenists of the Erfurt Conference, and the Ut Omnes Unum circle—remembered Luther and the Reformation in such ways as to reinforce their own (inter)confessional identities and their distinctive notions of German confessional and national unity. Their collective memories of Luther and the Reformation were not always populated by specific references to Luther's works, teachings, or episodes from his life. They were also were informed by popular traditions, folk memories, and contemporary accounts of Luther and the Reformation, all of which were mediated by one's collective identities. These memories of Luther and the

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[11] Jan Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory: Ten Studies*, translated by Rodney Livingstone (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), 11.
[12] Jan Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 94 and Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity" *New German Critique* 65 (Spring-Summer 1995), 127.
[13] Assmann and Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," 130.

Reformation colored how nineteenth-century ecumenists imagined church unity and the German nation, and their ideas of church unity and the German nation colored the memories they invoked. Thus their collective memories and identities existed in a dialectic relationship, each mutually reinforcing one another.

The French historian Pierre Nora referred to those spaces around which a collective's memories and identities crystallize as sites of memory. According to Nora, a site of memory is:

> any significant entity, whether material or nonmaterial in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community.[14]

That is, *lieux de mémoire* are places, people, customs, objects, and ideas, including museums, archives, cemeteries, collections, festivals, anniversaries, treaties, depositions, monuments, sanctuaries, and private associations that have been invested with some pneumonic significance that intentionally evoke or trigger memories.[15] The purpose of these sites is to remind the community of the presence of its past: to stop time and thus stop forgetting and to buttress the collective memory and identity of a community.[16]

In nineteenth-century Germany, Luther and the Reformation were sites of memory that functioned as "foundational events, multifaceted usable historical realities and conflict-afflicted sites of memory".[17] In short, this dissertation asks how various communities of nineteenth-century German ecumenists interacted with

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[14] Pierre Nora, ed. *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past* translated by Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), xvii.
[15] Ibid., x and 6.
[16] Ibid., 7 and 15-16.
[17] Gérald Chaix "Die Reformation" translated by Reinhard Tiffert in Etienne François and Hagen Schluze, eds. *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte* Vol. 2, (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2001), 9 and 27.

Luther as a site of memory—including tangential memories such as the Reformation, the Augsburg Confession, the Thirty Years' War, and the German confessional divide—and how that interaction defined the ecumenists' notions of church unity and their ideas of the German nation.

Intellectual historians have explored how clerics and laity in nineteenth-century Germany interpreted Luther and the Reformation. E. W. Zeeden examined the varied and often conflicting interpretations and representations of Luther and the Reformation espoused by German Lutheran theologians, philosophers, and historians from 1546 to 1800, noting the tendency of these figures to see in Luther "the archetype of the religious aspirations dominant at the time".[18] Reading Halbwachs against Zeeden, we may claim that the tendency was actually to see in Luther the archetype of the religious aspirations of one's own particular theological, social, or political faction—that is, one's collective. Heinrich Bornkamm recounted Luther research by German Catholic and Protestant writers, philosophers, politicians, and historians from the late eighteenth through the early twentieth centuries. He noted that Luther and the Reformation were foundational events in modern German history, and that every revaluation of the two represented a reassessment of one's own relationship to, and understanding of, the present.[19] A.G. Dickens and John M. Tonkin considered how historians have variously interpreted and represented Luther and the Reformation from approximately 1600 to the

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[18] E.W. Zeeden, *The Legacy of Luther: Martin Luther and the Reformation in the estimation of the German Lutherans from Luther's death to the beginning of the age of Goethe* translated by Ruth Mary Bethell (London: Hollis and Carter, 1954), xiii.
[19] Heinrich Bornkamm, *Luther im Spiegel der deutschen Geistesgeschichte*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 13.

present.[20] But like Zeeden and Bornkamm, Dickens and Tonkin were concerned with the reception and representation of Luther and the Reformation by nineteenth-century German intellectuals. The popular reception and instrumentalization of memories of Luther and the Reformation to create meaning—specifically, to construct notions of confessional identity and difference and to image German national unity—were not considered by any of these authors. Those themes would be addressed by cultural historians of the collective memory of Luther and Reformation in nineteenth-century Germany.

In addition to German intellectual historians, cultural historians have analyzed the formation, use, and abuse of memories of Luther and the Reformation in nineteenth-century Germany. Stefan Laube and Karl-Heinz Fix asked how Luther had been staged (*Inszenierung*), remembered, and popularized in art, drama, memorials, and museums in Germany from the nineteenth century through the DDR.[21] Laube also authored a multifaceted history of the museumification of the Lutherhaus Wittenberg; a history that considered Luther's reception in Prussia and the politics of cultural resource management during the Wilhelmine era.[22] But Laube was mainly concerned with the material sites of Luther and Reformation memory. Another cultural historian of the collective memory of Luther and the Reformation, Kevin Cramer, relied more on textual forms of memory—particularly

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[20] A. G. Dickens and John M. Tonkin, *The Reformation in Historical Thought* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1985). For the dialectical relationship of professional history to individual and collective memories see Susan A. Crane, "Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory," *American Historical Review* 102, no. 5 (Dec. 1997): 1372-1385.
[21] Stefan Laube and Karl-Heinz Fix, eds., *Lutherinzenierung und Reformationserinnerung* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2002).
[22] Stefan Laube, *Das Lutherhause Wittenberg: Eine Museumgeschichte* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2003).

the myriad of histories produced by antiquarians, dilettantes, and professional historians on the Thirty Years' War. Cramer was especially interested in how Germans "refought the Thirty Years' War in the nineteenth century," using it as a pneumonic shorthand to reflect on the proper form of the German nation.[23] According to Cramer, memories of the war typically informed notions of German historical development, and consequently, ideas of how the contemporary German nation should be composed. And because memories of the Thirty Years' War were almost always defined along confessional lines, confessional identity and difference informed ideas of the German nation.[24] Thus both memories of the war and ideas of German national unity were "fundamentally shaped by [one's] confessional identity".[25] Cramer's research underscored the inextricable relationship between the confessional divide, memory, and the national question in nineteenth-century Germany, and was informed by a rich historiography of the relationship between religion and German nationalism.

The classic history of the relationship between religion and nineteenth-century German nationalism is Koppel S. Pinson's *Pietism as a Factor in the Rise of German Nationalism*.[26] In this 1934 work, Pinson considered how Pietist forms of devotion, such as the internalization and individualization of institutional religion, as well as Pietism's emotionalism and religious enthusiasm, lent themselves to early

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[23] Kevin Cramer, *The Thirty Years War and German Memory* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), ix and 2.
[24] Ibid., 3 and 5-6.
[25] Ibid., 13.
[26] Koppel S. Pinson, *Pietism as a Factor in the Rise of German Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934).

German nationalism. Pinson's study was a straightforward examination of the interaction of Christian piety and the politics of nationalism. But more sophisticated cultural histories of German religion and politics have appeared in the last twenty years.

Historians of the confessionalization of the national idea, or how German nationalists used confessional identity and difference to construct exclusive notions of German national unity, represent the most recent trend in the historiography German religion and nationalism. Wolfgang Altgeld has argued that religion was subjugated to the modern political idea of the nation by German nationalists, and especially by German nationalist theologians, in order to sacralize the idea of the nation.[27] This amalgamation of Protestant theology and German nationalism was used throughout the century and after German unification in 1871 to exclude German Catholics and German Jews as internal foreigners who existed outside of normative German society, politics, and culture. Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Dieter Langewiesche considered the relationship of religion to ideas of the German nation over *la longue durée*, from the early modern era through the First World War, scrutinizing discursive or rhetorical strategies for deifying or sacralizing the nation; how religious symbols, rituals, and material culture were nationalized; and the role of clerics, laity, and popular piety in giving ideas of the nation a confessional

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[27] Wolfgang Altgeld, *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum: über religiös begründete Gegensätze und nationalreligiöse Ideen in der Geschichte des deutschen Nationalismus* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 1992), 4. See also Wolfang Altgeld, "Religion, Denomination, and Nationalism in Nineteenth-century Germany," in *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Germany, 1800-1914*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford: Berg, 2001).

inflection.[28] Michael Geyer and Hartmut Lehmann examined the formation and development of the German nation within a mutliconfessional society. Their primary focus was the modern conflict between the political nation and religious communities, which in Germany was complicated even further by the deep divisions among Catholics, Protestants, and Jews.[29] Helmut Walser Smith considered how the German confessional divide informed German nationalism and the construction of German national identities from the *Reichsgründung* through the Great War. According to Smith, the confessional divide was essential to how Wilhelmine German Catholics and Protestants imagined the German nation and national identities.[30] Indeed, he argued that confessional tensions in nineteenth-century Germany reflected deep social and political conflicts between Catholics and Protestants and that confessional animosities "were not incidental to German nationalism but the thing itself".[31] But if this were the case, if the confessional divide remains the key to understanding nineteenth-century German nationalism, then it would seem to make contemporary proponents of church unity, whose ideas of the German nation included their confessional others, all the more noteworthy. Yet precious little research exists on the relationship between nineteenth-century German ecumenism and nationalism.

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[28] Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Dieter Langewiesche, eds. *Nation und Religion in der deutschen Geschichte* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus Verlag, 2001), 18-19.
[29] Michael Geyer, "Religion und Nation—Eine unbewältigte Geschichte," in Micheal Geyer and Hartmut Lehmann, eds. *Religion und Nation, Nation und Religion: Beiträge zu einer unbewältigten Geschichte* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2004), 23.
[30] Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 6.
[31] Ibid., 234.

Note that the historians recounted above focus on the role of confessional alterity in the formation of ideas of the nation and German national identities. The possibility of an interconfessional history of German nationalism is not considered by any of them. This omission is most likely a result of the ostensible strength of the nineteenth-century German confessional divide. Thomas Nipperdey himself remarked that the confessional divide and confessional tensions marked one of the most fundamental, vital facts of everyday life in nineteenth-century Germany.[32] But Oded Heilbronner and Helmut Walser Smith have recently challenged the idea that German Catholics, Protestants, and Jews lived in tense isolation from one another. Instead, these scholars underline the need for an interconfessional history of those overlapping, shared social and cultural spaces that Catholics, Protestants, and Jews occupied in nineteenth-century Germany.

Oded Heilbronner noted that until approximately twenty years ago, research on German Catholicism was conducted by a "German-Catholic research establishment" which was usually uncritical, confessional in its scholarly orientation, and lacking the rigor of contemporary social-scientific research methods. Accordingly, the historiography of nineteenth-century German Catholicism was confined to a methodological ghetto. Recently, scholars have begun to question this model. But, Heilbronner noted, while German and Anglo-American scholars had indeed liberated German Catholicism from its methodological ghetto, they had not dispensed with the assumption that nineteenth-century German

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[32] Thomas Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch: Deutschland 1870-1918* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1998), 155.

Catholicism was, alas, socially, economically, and intellectually backward—insulated from wider German culture and confined to a mental and socio-cultural ghetto. Accordingly, these contemporary scholars merely shuffled nineteenth-century German Catholicism from "ghetto to ghetto".[33]

Heilbronner proposed that historians emancipate German Catholics from their methodological and socio-cultural ghettos and setting them within overlapping contexts shared by Catholics, Protestants, and Jews.[34] He was mainly concerned with illustrating that the nineteenth-century German Catholic experience and the German Catholic milieu were not homogenous, and that the history of nineteenth-century German Catholicism could not be written if Catholics remained confined to methodological or socio-cultural ghettoes. Interconfessional conflict as well as coexistence had to be entertained by historians of nineteenth-century German religion.

Helmut Walser Smith enthusiastically picked up Heilbronner's line of thinking. Reacting strongly to the observation that "relations across religious groups…have remained largely outside the historian's purview," Smith aspired to an interconfessional, nay, triconfessional history of German society and culture that did not treat Catholics, Protestants, and Jews as rigidly-segregated groups existing in isolation, but instead as communities that engaged one another both in conflict and coexistence and whose interests and experiences often overlapped.[35] Both

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[33] Oded Heilbronner, "From Ghetto to Ghetto: The Place of German Catholic Society in Recent Historiography" *The Journal of Modern History* 72 (June 2000), 455-457.
[34] Ibid., 458-459.
[35] Smith, *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews*, 11.

Heilbronner's and Smith's histories are pioneering in the sense that they consider the interrelated histories of German Catholics, Protestants, and Jews in nineteenth-century Germany. And yet, still, neither addresses the relationship of interconfessionalism to German nationalism and ideas of the German nation. Indeed, historians of the confessionalization of the national idea have only considered how confessional alterity and antagonism contributed to ideas of the German nation. They have not asked how interconfessional cooperation and those efforts to overcome the intra-Protestant and interconfessional divides might have also colored ideas of the German nation and German national identity. This leaves open an historiographical niche—the "interconfessionalization," or "ecumenization" of the national idea—that I envision this dissertation fitting into.

Nineteenth-century German proponents of church unity represented a challenge to the notion that any idea of the German nation must be confessionally all or nothing, or that the German nation would be Catholic or it would be Protestant or it would be nothing. Because so much valuable scholarship has been produced on the relationship of confession and the German nation, or, the confessional history of German nationalism and the national idea, the question begged seems obvious: What is the interconfessional history of German nationalism and the national idea? What is the relationship of ecumenism to German national unity and identity?

Perhaps the nineteenth-century confessional divide is still considered so strong because twentieth-century historians have simply not considered the "ecumenization of the national idea," or how nineteenth-century proponents of church unity imagined the German nation. Indeed, in a recent essay, George S.

Williamson remarked that "[a]ny analysis of modern German religious history must start from the fact of Germany's confessional divide".[36] But we may ask: is it necessary that any analysis of modern German religious history must end there? Historians of Germany are naturally concerned with confessionalism because since the Reformation confession had served as the most salient expression of German social identity and difference. But that is precisely why the history of ecumenism in nineteenth-century Germany is noteworthy. It represents efforts to bridge the confessional and social divides that had for so long separated Germans. After all, to imagine a reunion of the separated confessions was to imagine a notion of German unity. Indeed, the history of ecumenism suggests that issues of paramount importance in nineteenth-century Germany, issues of unity and diversity, identity and difference, need not have been settled through conflict, or decided by iron and blood; they could also be resolved in an ecumenical manner: through dialogue, mutual understanding, and cooperation. A reunion of the separated confessions was intrinsic to how contemporary Germans imagined national unity. As such the history of ecumenism in nineteenth-century Germany represents an alternative, nay, aborted history of German unification. Although aborted, the efforts of nineteenth-century German ecumenists were neither a total failure nor historically inconsequential.

To be sure, these nineteenth-century ecumenists reunited neither the Catholic and Protestant Churches, nor the German nation. But they did initiate

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[36] George S. Williamson, "A Religious Sonderweg? Reflections on the Sacred and the Secular in the Historiography of Modern Germany" in *Church History* Vol. 75, No. 1 (March 2006), 142.

dialogues across the confessional divide that helped to foster interconfessional peace and a stronger sense of German unity. Their efforts toward realizing German solidarity and unity were surely more successful than those attempts to effect cultural and national unity, nay, homogeneity, through persecution and force. But their historical significance is not easily detectable if we look only for reunited churches and "ecumenical" forms of national unification. Indeed, ecumenism is never a zero-sum game. These ecumenists desired coexistence, mutual understanding, and cooperation between the confessions just as surely as they did a unified church. And in many more instances than historians have given them credit for, nineteenth-century proponents of church unity succeeded in forging, if not a reunion, at least rapprochement between German Catholics and Protestants.

Although it was a contested process, proponents of intra-Protestant church unity did in fact succeed in uniting the Reformed and Lutheran Churches in Prussia and in other German states. The irenical Catholics, Protestants, and Jews who celebrated the 1817 and 1830 Reformation anniversaries did not unify the churches, but they did foster a sense of German solidarity and unity that cut across the confessional divide during an era when the meaning of the German nation was highly contested and ambiguous. The Protestant Friends and German Catholics ultimately lost out to the orthodox and ultramontane parties of the Evangelical and Catholic Churches. But at the same time, they attracted tens of thousands of German Catholics and Protestants who were dedicated to realizing confessional, national, and gender harmony in a decade that was dominated by increasing confessional tensions and revolutionary upheaval. The participants of the 1860 Erfurt

Conference never did realize a Christian State of reunited German Catholics and Protestants. But they did underline the inextricable relationship between the confessional divide and notions of German unity, and perhaps more importantly, prompted irenical dialogues between influential Catholics and Protestants that would become a point of inspiration for proponents of confessional unity during the Kaiserreich. While they never convinced German Protestants to return to the "Mother Church," Ut Omnes Unum did in fact inspire mutual understanding and cooperation between German Catholics and Protestants during a Wilhelmine era in which Catholics were increasingly marginalized as enemies of the empire. Perhaps more importantly, they became the locus of conservative and Christian opposition to Bismarck and the Kulturkampf.

The notions of confessional and national unity espoused by nineteenth-century German ecumenists were no less laudable because they were never fully realized. They surely made a difference in the everyday lives of religious dissidents and minorities, persecuted religious communities and congregations, men and women in interconfessional relationships, the children of confessionally-mixed marriages, and all those Germans who either occupied the liminal spaces between the confessions or simply found themselves on the wrong side of the confessional divide in their respective regions. Their efforts to overcome the German confessional divide and to imagine a confessionally-inclusive German nation are no less impressive for their "failure," especially in light of the later sordid history of German nationalism. Moreover, their ecumenical efforts remind us of the complex role that notions of confessional identity and difference, unity, and diversity played

in contemporary German society and politics. Perhaps it might be useful to revisit the social and political histories of nineteenth-century Germany; histories that recount confessionally-isolated Catholic and Protestant social milieus, Catholic social, economic, and intellectual backwardness, the Kulturkampf and the homogeneity of the Center Party—indeed, histories predicated on confessional difference and on the ostensible strength of the confessional divide—in light of these irenical and ecumenical figures. Such works would represent a truly interconfessional history of those paramount issues in nineteenth-century Germany, issues of identity and difference, unity and diversity.

A Note on the Meaning and Use of the Term "Ecumenism":

The term ecumenism comes from the Greek *oikoumene*, meaning "universal," or "the entire world". The term was first used in its contemporary sense, to describe the desire for Christian unity, during the nineteenth century.[37] The terms irenic and irenical were also widely used during the nineteenth century. Irenicism refers to the desire for rapprochement, mutual understanding, and interconfessional peace between separated Christian confessions. It may or may not imply a desire for church unity. Ecumenism refers to the desire for all those ideas encapsulated by irenicism, but also for an eventual (re)union of separated churches and confessions, usually in a manner that accommodates the distinctive beliefs and practices of both. This does not necessarily entail a conversion of one church to another; it could also entail a broader understanding of the church universal that included (formerly) separated confessions. Needless to say, "ecumenism" did not mean the same thing to everyone who claimed to be an ecumenist.

In addition to *Ökumene*, nineteenth-century proponents of church unity in Germany variously used the terms *Annäherung*, *Einheitsbestrebung*, *Eintracht*, *Irenik*, *Unionsversuche*, *Vereinigung*, *Verständigung*, and *Wiedervereinigung* to refer to their causes. I tend to use "proponents of church unity" in place of ecumenism, in order to distinguish the former from the worldwide ecumenical movement of the twentieth century. But where their use is not infelicitous, I will use "ecumenism" and

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[37] William Adolf Visser 't Hooft, "The Word 'Ecumenical'—Its History and Use," in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, 2d ed., eds. Ruth Rouse and Stephan Charles Niell (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967), 735-737.

"ecumenical" to describe those campaigns for church unity in nineteenth-century Germany.

CHAPTER 1 - A LUTHER FOR EVERYONE: ECUMENISM AND ORHTHODOY AT THE 1817 AND 1830 REFORMATION ANNIVERSARIES

Anniversaries are moments at which memories are recollected, contested, and remade. Anniversaries focus the mind on the objects of their commemoration. But memory is historically conditioned. Memories of the past evoked by anniversaries are remembered in relation to contemporary concerns. The meaning of the memories and the anniversaries that commemorate them are remade in the process.[1]

On 27 September 1817 king Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia decreed that the Reformed and Lutheran Churches in his kingdom would be united into a single Evangelical Church. This "Prussian Union" would be inaugurated on the tercentennial of the Reformation, 31 October 1817, at the royal chapel in Potsdam. In their anniversary sermons and speeches, pamphlets and plays, histories and hagiographies, ecumenical and orthodox Reformed and Lutherans appealed to memories of Luther and the Reformation to position themselves vis-à-vis the Prussian Union. Supporters recalled an irenical Luther who had eschewed Protestant sectarianism. Opponents remembered a confessional and dogmatic Luther. Skeptics invoked memories of the Thirty Years' War, wondering if a compulsory union might rekindle confessional strife. Still others queried how theological and liturgical differences between Reformed and Lutherans would be

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[1] See Dieter Düding, Peter Friedemann, and Paul Münch, eds. *Öffentliche Festkultur: Politische Feste in Deutschland von der Aufklärung bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg* (Hamburg: Rowohl, 1988), Emil Brix and Hannes Stekl, eds. *Der Kampf um das Gedächtnis: Öffentliche Gedenktage in Mitteleuropa* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1997), and Jan Assman, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity" translated by John Czaplicka in *New German Critique* No. 65 (Spring-Summer 1995).

accommodated in a contemporary Evangelical Church when the sixteenth-century reformers themselves could not resolve such disagreements. Debates over the desirability and tenability of the Prussian Union remained unresolved during the early years of the Evangelical Church. They were replayed, and ultimately resolved, at the 1830 anniversaries of the Augsburg Confession. Although contested, the Prussian Union and the Evangelical Church would succeed in uniting the Reformed and Lutheran Churches in Prussia. In fact, similar unions would be established throughout Germany on the model of the Prussian Union. And instead of the confessionally-exclusive Lutheran affairs they had been in previous centuries, the Reformation anniversaries of 1817 and 1830 would become celebrations of intra-Protestant unity.

Protestants were not the only ones celebrating the contemporary Reformation anniversaries in a spirit of German unity. Across Germany, inspired by the Prussian king's ecumenical efforts and by their own desire to bridge the German confessional divide, irenical Catholics, Protestants, and in limited cases even Jews, enthusiastically participated in the Reformation anniversary festivals, calling for a cessation of religious antagonism, pleading for interconfessional coexistence and cooperation, and advocating church unity. Their participation in these festivals, and their invocation of irenical memories of Luther marked a shift in German collective memories of the Reformation. Instead of evoking the German confessional divide and painful memories of separation, these irenical Catholics, Protestants, and Jews refashioned memories of Luther and the Reformation into being symbolic of German interconfessional unity. And by imagining notions of German unity that cut across

the confessional divide—still the most salient manifestation of German identity and difference—these proponents of intra-Protestant and interconfessional unity also reflected on an idea of German national unity. Indeed, the 1817 and 1830 Reformation anniversaries anticipate how confessional identity and difference, unity and diversity, would be employed throughout in the century to imagine the German nation.

Historians of the anniversaries such as Lutz Winckler, Rainer Fuhrman, Max L. Baeumer, and Johannes Burkhardt have noted their ecumenical tendencies, but have variously recognized them as enlightened expressions of German liberalism, of bourgeois class formation, as susceptible to cynical political manipulation, and as early forms of German civil society and secular sociability.[2] But perhaps piety, not politics, inspired the ecumenical celebration of these anniversaries. Spiritual convictions contributed to the ecumenical celebration of the 1817 Reformation anniversaries. Indeed, these anniversaries should not be reduced to mere epiphenomena of contemporary social and political concerns. But at the same time, ecumenical piety did hold social and political implications for nineteenth-century Germany. The confessional question was inextricably linked to the German national question.

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[2] Lutz Winckler, *Martin Luther als Bürger und Patriot: Das Reformationsjubiläum von 1817 und der politische Protestantismus des Wartburgfestes* (Lübeck: Mathiesen, 1969); Rainer Fuhrman, "Das Reformationsjubiläum 1817: Martin Luther und die Reformation im Urteil der protestantischen Festpredigt des Jahres 1817" (PhD diss., Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, 1973), 19; Max L. Baeumer, "Lutherfeiern und ihre politische Manipulation," in Reinhold Grimm and Jost Hermand, eds. *Deutsche Feiern* (Wiesbaden: Athenaion, 1977); Johannes Burkhardt, "Reformations- und Lutherfeiern: Die Verbürgerlichung der reformatorischen Jubiläumskultur," in *Öffentliche Festkultur: Politische Feste in Deutschland von der Aufklärung bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. Dieter Düding, Peter Friedemann, and Paul Münch (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1988), 212-236.

The confessional divide became a national-political problem during the early nineteenth century.[3] In 1817 confession was still the most salient manifestation of German identity and difference. There was no unified German nation that contemporaries could identify themselves with. Even one's regional identity, whether Bavarian, Prussian, or Saxon, usually betrayed one's confession. Imagining a reunion of the separated confessions was perhaps the most obvious way to imagine German national solidarity and unity. So when German Catholics, Reformed, and Lutherans invoked Luther's memory, and used the occasion of the 1817 Reformation anniversaries to propose intra-Protestant and German interconfessional unity, they were imagining a notion of German unity through a reunion of the separated confessions. And their ecumenical efforts should be viewed against the backdrop of a confessional divide that had hindered German national unity for three hundred years.

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[3] Wolfgang Altgeld, *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum: über religiös begründete Gegensätze und nationalreligiöse Ideen in der Geschichte des deutschen Nationalismus* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 1992), 125-126.

The Ecclesiastical and Political Contexts of the 1817 Reformation Anniversary

Changing ecclesiastical and political conditions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries pointed to the viability of both intra-Protestant and interconfessional unity. By the early nineteenth century confessional relations had improved in Germany and Austria. Dogmatic differences between denominations were blunted by enlightened opposition to the religious enthusiasm of the previous century and by 150 years of respite from religious war.[4] From 1750 to 1790 the sense of Protestant solidarity waned and confessional tensions decreased as Roman Catholicism became less of a threat to Protestants and it became clear that no great power was any longer dedicated to abolishing any particular confession.[5] During the French Revolution, Protestant governments found an unlikely ally in the papacy to condemn the regicidal and republican French state. And during the Wars of Liberation, German Catholics and Protestants united in opposition to Napoleon.[6] Napoleon's dissolution of the German ecclesiastical states during the early nineteenth-century maintained the trend of increasing confessional integration even after the Wars of Liberation.

Subjective motives contributed to increasing confessional integration and cooperation in addition to structural factors. Susan A. Crane has noted the existence of a post-revolutionary renewal of piety among intellectuals in the figures of the

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[4] Nigel Aston, *Christianity and Revolutionary Europe c. 1750-1830* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002), 11-12 and 18-20 and Rudolf Vierhaus, *Germany in the Age of Absolutism* translated by Jonathan B. Knudsen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 63-64.
[5] Aston, *Christianity and Revolutionary Europe*, 12 and 19.
[6] Ibid., 198 and 207.

German Catholic theologian and mystic Franz von Baader (1765-1841), who proposed a "holy alliance" of Christian states and a reunion of the Roman and Orthodox Churches, and Ignaz Lindl (1774-1846), a south German Catholic priest who preached an apocalyptic and ecumenical message to Catholics and Protestants in Bavaria.[7] The figures of von Baader and Lindl, although marginal, reflected the desire among Romantic intellectuals for the renewal of a unified, pre-Reformation catholic Church.

Early nineteenth-century German Protestant clerics also expressed a desire for church unity. The Lutheran church historian Jacob Gottlieb Planck (1751-1833) advocated an unhurried, voluntary, and formal union of the Reformed and Lutheran churches that would reconcile what he saw as their minor external differences.[8] And in an 1812 pamphlet, Reformed theologian Friedrich Samuel Gottfried Sack (1738-1817), presiding cleric at young Friedrich Wilhelm III's confirmation, noted improving confessional relations as a sign that now was the appropriate time to attempt a reunion of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches.[9]

The Prussian annexation of Catholic Silesia in 1742 and the Bavarian acquisition of the heavily Protestant Palatinate in 1816 made these states confessionally heterogeneous. The annexation of regions heavily populated by

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[7] Susan Crane, "Holy Alliances: Creating Religious Communities after the Napoleonic Wars," in *Die Gegenwart Gottes in der modernen Gesellschaft: Transzendenz und Religiöse Vergemeinschaftung in Deutschland*, ed. Michael Geyer and Lucian Hölscher (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), 37-59.
[8] Jacob Gottlieb Planck, *Über die Trennung und Wiedervereinigung der getrennten christlichen Haupt-Partheyen* (Tübingen: Cotta, 1803).
[9] Friedrich Samuel Gottfried Sack, *Ueber die Vereinigung der beiden protestantischen Kirchenparteien in der Preußischen Monarchie* (Berlin: Friedrich Maurer, 1812).

confessional "Others" provided the state with a stake in maintaining and encouraging confessional peace. State officials in confessionally-heterogeneous regions encouraged confessional integration for the purpose of deemphasizing confessional difference and the social discord that sometimes resulted.[10]

It was within this context of increasing confessional integration and popular demands for interconfessional peace that Friedrich Wilhelm III called for a unification of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches in Prussia. The Prussian Union would be inaugurated on 31 October 1817 and celebrated at the Reformation anniversary festivals of the same weekend. The king proclaimed the Prussian Union on the occasion of the Reformation anniversary festival in order to legitimize the union by associating it with the memory of Luther, thus underlining the Evangelical Church's continuity with the Reformation. In order to establish a union of the Reformed and Lutheran churches on the occasion of an anniversary traditionally identified with Luther, Friedrich Wilhelm III and other pro-union figures would have to remake the memory of Luther from one that evoked the confessional divide to one that suggested intra-Protestant unity. This would prove to be a highly contested process. The king's proposal for a Prussian Union elicited both accolades and opposition that were articulated in the sermons, speeches, and pamphlets delivered and distributed at the Reformation anniversary festivals.

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[10] Lucian Hölscher, "The Religious Divide: Piety in Nineteenth-Century Germany," in *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Germany, 1800-1914*, ed. Helmut W. Smith (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 42.

The 1817 Reformation Anniversary Festivals

The memory of Luther and the Reformation had been commemorated at anniversary festivals throughout Germany every year since 1617. Moreover, individual states celebrated anniversaries to commemorate their state or ancestral rulers' adoption of Lutheranism or Calvinism, such as Brandenburg's adoption of Lutheranism in 1539 and Johann Sigismund's conversion to Calvinism in 1613.[11] Each Reformation anniversary reflected changes in how Luther was remembered. The 1617 anniversary was an orthodox affair. The 1717 Reformation anniversary was celebrated in the spirit of Pietism. And the 1817 Reformation anniversary was celebrated irenically, with German Catholics, Reformed, and in some cases even Jews attending and participating in the festivities for the first time.

The 1617 Reformation anniversary celebrations were celebrated like holy days, such as Christmas and Easter, rather than memorial days.[12] Throughout Lutheran Germany, these anniversaries were celebrated in the spirit of orthodoxy.[13] From approximately 1550 to 1700 Luther was the subject of dogmatic theology and confessional polemics, and contemporary representations of the reformer concentrated on his doctrine rather than his person.[14]

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[11] Burkhardt, "Reformations- und Lutherfeiern", 212.
[12] E.W. Zeeden, *The Legacy of Luther: Martin Luther and the Reformation in the estimation of the German Lutherans from Luther's death to the beginning of the age of Goethe* translated by Ruth Mary Bethell (London: Hollis and Carter, 1954), 36.
[13] Friedrich Loofs, "Die Jahrhundertfeier der Reformation an den Universitäten Wittenberg und Halle, 1617, 1717, und 1817" *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Kirchengeschichte in der Provinz Sachsen* Vol. 14 (1917), 66-67.
[14] Zeeden, *The Legacy of Luther*, xii.

The 1717 Reformation anniversary occurred within the context of Pietism.[15] Pietism was associated with a renewal of individual spirituality, and Luther's eighteenth-century biographers, increasingly laymen, emphasized the reformer's piety and personality.[16] Despite the different inflection of their commemoration, one orthodox and the other Pietist, the 1617 and 1717 Reformation anniversary celebrations were both strictly Lutheran affairs. Neither German Calvinists, Catholics, or Jews participated in either anniversary celebration.[17]

Two weeks before the official celebration of the 1817 Reformation anniversary, a group of students from the University of Jena assembled at the Wartburg Castle, where Friedrich the Wise (1463-1525) had given refuge to Luther after his excommunication from the Roman Catholic Church. These students celebrated the anniversaries of the Reformation and the Battle of Leipzig (16-19 October 1813), a decisive German victory in the Wars of Liberation against Napoleon. The participants included German student societies (*Burschenschaften*) from Jena and German liberals who demanded reform of the German colleges and student life, a constitution, and unification of the German states.[18]

Insofar as the participants of the Wartburgfest commemorated Luther and the Reformation, they politicized these memories. The Jena students advocated political liberation of the German states from their conservative princes just as Luther had freed Germany from the spiritual bondage of the Roman Catholic Church.

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[15] Loofs, "Die Jahrhundertfeier der Reformation", 66-67.
[16] Zeeden, *The Legacy of Luther*, xiii.
[17] Loofs, "Die Jahrhundertfeier der Reformation", 55-56.
[18] Winckler, *Martin Luther als Bürger und Patriot*, 12.

Luther was remembered as a German citizen and patriot who embodied the bourgeois characteristics of reason, virtue, and freedom.[19] The participants at the Wartburgfest and the coming Reformation anniversary used Luther in conflicting ways, but both reflected on a notion of being German. Both events reflected on German unity, but participants at the Wartburgfest were immediately concerned with political unity whereas the participants at the Reformation anniversaries were primarily concerned with intra-Protestant and interconfessional unity. But to propose a reunion of the separated confessions was to imagine a notion of German unity.

D.G. Kieser, a contemporary historian of the Wartburgfest, argued that the festival represented a mnemonic shift in the meaning of Luther and Reformation memory from spiritual to political emancipation.[20] Moreover, the twentieth-century historian Lutz Winckler referred to the religious sentiments expressed by participants at the Wartburgfest as "political Protestantism". But this festival did not merely represent a mnemonic shift from a spiritualized to politicized memory of Luther. Instead, it reflected a multiplication of the ways in which Luther's memory could be instrumentalized. Accordingly, historians who have concentrated on the socialization and politicization of Luther's memory have overlooked two salient points: that piety and politics could be mutually reinforcing motivations for the particular inflections of the 1817 Wartburg and Reformation anniversaries; and that not only politically-interested celebrants, but clerics and laity used and abused

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[19] Ibid., 17-18.
[20] D.G. Kieser, *Das Wartburgfest am 18. October 1817. In seiner Entstehung, Ausführung und Folgen* (Jena: Frommann, 1818).

Luther's memory in 1817 to position themselves in contemporary theological debates.

Friday 31 October 1817 marked the beginning of three days of festivities throughout Germany celebrating the memory of Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation. On Friday and Saturday the faithful attended afternoon church services that culminated in a high Sunday sermon. Between services one could observe processions of clergy, city officials, and military parades. Bells were rung, cannons fired, bands played religious songs, and the Lutheran hymn *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott* was universally sung. Coffee, cakes, pretzels, fruit, beer, and wine were served to local schoolchildren and orphans.[21] Churches were tidied, altars were decorated, chalices polished, and pulpits repaired. Alms were distributed to the poor and sick, social endowments were established, and Bibles were distributed to children.[22]

The jubilee services and celebrations were accompanied by a prolific cultural production that included sermons, speeches, hymns, histories, hagiographies, biographies, plays, poems, pamphlets, paintings, songs, sculpture, memorial stones, plaques, commemorative coins, and other assorted memorabilia. In addition to the media produced to commemorate the anniversaries, German Protestants made pilgrimages to physical sites of Reformation memory including Luther's cell at the

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[21] Georg Arndt, *Das Reformationsjubelfest in vergangenen Jahrhunderten* (Berlin: Evangelical Federation, 1917), 38.
[22] E. A. Clarus, *Erinnerung an die dritte Säcularfeier des Reformationsfestes in der evangelischen Stadtkirche zu Bamberg* (Bamberg: E. F. Kunz, 1817), 1-4, Gerhard Friederich, ed. *Chronik der dritten Jubelfeier der Reformation in Frankfurt am Main* (Frankfurt am Main: Sauerländer, 1817); and Arndt, *Das Reformationsjubelfest*, 27-44.

Augustinian monastery in Erfurt, the *Schlosskirche* in Wittenberg, the city of Worms, the Wartburg castle in Eisenach, and Luther's birthplace of Eisleben. Luther's ink spot was a popular attraction at the Wartburg. A portion of a coat and a cap that Luther wore as a young man were on display at the Saints Peter and Paul Church in Eisleben. Visitors to Luther's room in Eisleben collected splinters from his bed as relics. Handbooks of Luther artifacts and other Reformation bric-a-brac were prepared for visitors to these sites.[23]

The interest in these sites and in the collection of Luther mementos underlines a tradition of Protestant pilgrimages, devotion of distinctly Protestant relics, and a cult of Luther that imbued artifacts associated with the reformer with a commemorative, symbolic, and even thaumaturgic significance that recalled a pre-Reformation religious culture. Indeed, the nineteenth-century Evangelical historian Carl Wilhelm Hering noted the value of relics to Protestants as tangible reminders of holy people, places, and events, and as examples of virtue and piety.[24] In spite of his own protestation against the use of relics and the veneration of saints, Luther became the object of cult worship and sanctification. Memorabilia associated with the reformer would be collected and sacralized. This points to the existence of both a secular and sacralized cultural memory of Luther and the Reformation.[25] More

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[23] Friedrich Keyser, ed. *Reformations-Almanach für Luthers Verehrer auf das evangelische Jubeljahr 1817* (Erfurt: Keyser, 1817).
[24] Carl Wilhelm Hering, *Geschichte der kirchlichen Unionsversuche seit der Reformation bis auf unsere Zeit* (Leipzig: Friedrich Fleischer, 1836), 433.
[25] R. W. Scribner, "Incombustible Luther: The Image of the Reformer in Early Modern Germany," *Past and Present* 110 (Feb. 1986), 54. For the persistence of pre-Reformation sacramentalism within the Reformed and Lutheran Churches see also Robert W. Scribner, "The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the 'Disenchantment of the World,'" *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23, no. 3 (Winter 1993) and R. W. Scribner, "The Impact of the

importantly, it suggests that the memory of Luther had not yet been wholly secularized by the time of the 1817 Reformation anniversaries. Piety was still a factor in the celebration of the triennial of the Reformation. But while religious convictions remained the primary motivation behind the irenical celebration of the Reformation anniversaries, Luther memory and ecumenical piety could not be disentangled from contemporary social and political questions.

The Lutheran pastors Christian Schreiber and Valentin Karl Veillodter, editors of a contemporary report on the 1817 anniversary festivals, acknowledged these memorial sites and material culture as "living memories" of Luther and the Reformation.[26] We may read "living memory" to have a dual meaning. It may simply refer to the persistence of memories of the past into the present. But it may also refer to the contemporary making and remaking of memories of the past in order to shape the present.

The cultural production associated with the 1817 Reformation anniversaries, whose content was focused by Friedrich Wilhelm III's call for an ecclesiastical union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches, reveals how pro-union, anti-union, orthodox Lutheran, and ecumenical Catholic and Protestant Germans recollected and refashioned the meaning of the anniversaries. The Reformation anniversaries themselves were sites of memory at and around which the Prussian Union was debated and notions of intra-Protestant and interconfessional unity and identity

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Reformation on Daily Life," in *Religion and Culture in Germany (1400-1800)*, ed. Lyndal Roper (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

[26] Christian Schreiber, Valentin Karl Veillodter, and William Hennings, eds. *Allgemeine Chronik der dritten Jubel-Feier der deutschen evangelischen Kirche. Im Jahre 1817*, vol. 1, (Erfurt and Gotha: Hennings, 1819), viii.

contested and redefined. Pro-union pastors and theologians invoked irenical memories of Luther in their anniversary sermons and speeches in support of the Evangelical Union. Orthodox Lutherans and other detractors of the union delivered sermons and distributed pamphlets at the anniversaries, recalling an uncompromising and dogmatic Luther to express their opposition to the proposed Evangelical Church. And Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, and in limited cases, Jewish Germans overcame the confessional divide, if at least temporarily, through irenical participation in the anniversary festivals and common celebration of Luther's memory.

Luther Memory and Intra-Protestant Unity at the 1817 Reformation Anniversaries

The Prussian king Friedrich Wilhelm III (r. 1797-1840) was the most outspoken supporter of a union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches. Friedrich was a pious Calvinist monarch whose spirituality was influenced by Pietism. He desired to be known as a righteous ruler of a strong Christian state and believed that a strong and unified church was essential to the well-being of state and society. The king sought a unification of the separated Protestant Churches because he believed it would ensure the strength of the Prussian church and state by dissolving an internal divide that had traditionally separated his subjects and was becoming increasingly contentious. In fact, Friedrich had desired a union of the Prussian Reformed and Lutheran Churches since the 1790s. The king had envisioned that such a union might serve as the kernel for a German national church that would welcome other Protestant-state churches and even Catholic congregations.[27] Thus Friedrich imagined German unity through a reunion of Germany's separated confessions. As the 1817 anniversary approached, the king's ministers advised him to pursue a union of Reformed and Lutheran Churches, assuring him that it would broaden and strengthen the Prussian state church, that it would represent an enlightened form of religious tolerance, and that it might address the growing

[27] Lucian Hölscher, *Geschichte der protestantischen Frömmigkeit in Deutschland* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2005), 211.

problems of confessionally-mixed marriages and confessional discord in an increasingly confessionally-heterogeneous Prussian kingdom.[28]

On 27 September 1817 Friedrich issued an order summoning representatives of the Lutheran and Reformed churches into attendance at an intra-Protestant service and celebration of the Eucharist on 30 October in Berlin. This service had two purposes: to celebrate the memory of the Reformation and to inaugurate the Prussian Union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches into a unified Evangelical Church.[29] Friedrich's order and the proposed union elicited popular and clerical concerns that were expressed in a flood of sermons, speeches, and pamphlets delivered at Reformation anniversary festivals throughout Germany. The authors of these sermons and speeches, be they ecumenist or orthodox, consistently invoked memories of Luther and the Reformation to position themselves vis-à-vis the Prussian Union. Thus the 1817 Reformation anniversaries were sites of memory around which contemporary notions of intra-Protestant unity and identity were contested and remade.

Some of the literature produced on occasion of the Reformation anniversary was cautiously supportive of church unity, but at the same time expressed fears that a compulsory union would rekindle confessional strife between Reformed and Lutherans. The Saxon theologian Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider (1776-1848) perfectly illustrated this ambivalence. Bretschneider was a qualified supporter of the union

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[28] Walter H. Conser, Jr., *Church and Confession: Conservative Theologians in Germany, England, and America, 1815-1866* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 16-17.
[29] "Kabinettsordre Friedrich Wilhelm III. vom 27 September 1817" in Carl Immanuel Nitzsch, *Urkundenbuch der Evangelischen Union mit Erläuterungen* (Bonn: Adolph Marcus, 1853), 125.

but expressed concern that it could rekindle confessional strife. He believed theological differences between Reformed and Lutherans had to be settled before any union of the two churches could ultimately be successful. Bretschneider recalled the discord and violence resulting from the confessional divide, and argued that no one could guarantee that a contemporary union of the Reformed and Lutheran churches would not reawaken similar violence, as members of two theologically-distinct churches were compelled to profess a single faith.[30] In the end, Bretschneider was a cautious advocate of union, but only once the separated churches had settled their theological differences. His memories of the confessional discord resulting from the Reformation and the separation of the confessions were pivotal to his concerns about the contemporary union.

Like Bretschneider, skeptical pastors on both sides of the confessional divide wondered if theological and liturgical differences between Reformed and Lutherans could be resolved in a unified Evangelical Church. According to the French sociologist Daniele Hervieu-Leger, the liturgy is the symbolic evocation of religious memory.[31] And the center of the Christian liturgy is the celebration of the Eucharist, a memory rite that recalls the Last Supper and that is reenacted at every mass and service. Perhaps one of the most significant theological-liturgical differences between Reformed and Lutherans was the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Whereas Calvinists believed the Eucharist was symbolic of the body and blood of

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[30] Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider, *Aphorismen über die Union der beiden evanglischen Kirchen in Deutschland, ihre gemeinschaftliche Abendmahlsfeier, und den Unterschied ihrer Lehre* (Gotha: Justus Perthes, 1819), 19.
[31] Daniele Hervieu-Leger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 127.

Jesus and that His spirit was present in the host, Lutherans believed in the Real (physical) Presence of Christ in the host. Moreover, in their Communion rituals Reformed typically broke and distributed a simple loaf of bread and shared it among the congregation, whereas a Lutheran pastor would distribute wafers directly to the communicants. Ritual spaces differed in Reformed and Lutherans churches as well. Reformed churches generally included simple wooden altars or tables with no ornament except for a Bible placed upon them. The altars of Lutheran churches included candles, crucifixes, and were the spaces around which the Eucharistic celebration took place. The celebration of the Eucharist was a central element in Reformation anniversary services, but the king and his ministers had not yet defined the meaning of the Eucharist for the unified Evangelical Church.

Friedrich Wilhelm III proposed a shared celebration of the Eucharist between Reformed and Lutheran churchgoers at the services to inaugurate the Prussian Union. Sidestepping the potentially thorny issue of the Real Presence, each communicant would be allowed to interpret the meaning of the Eucharist for himself. Friedrich believed this shared celebration of Communion could have a unifying effect on his Reformed and Lutheran subjects. He identified the shared celebration of Communion as evidence of adoption of the Prussian Union; a performative act that denoted a congregation's membership in the new Evangelical Church. But by demanding an Evangelical, rather than Reformed or Lutheran, celebration of the Eucharist, the king risked altering the meaning of this liturgical rite and the confessionally-specific memories it evoked.

The king found additional support for the union from the Berlin Synod, the governing body of the Prussian Lutheran Church. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), presiding officer of the synod of Berlin and supporter of the Evangelical Union, published an official declaration on behalf of the synod that expressed support for the king's order of 27 September. The declaration acknowledged the Eucharist was a site of contestation between Reformed and Lutheran Christians during the 1817 debates about union. It suggested that a common celebration of Communion between Reformed and Lutheran congregations might assuage tensions between the confessions and serve as an example for other congregations. Indeed, the synod's declaration noted that throughout the early nineteenth-century, Reformed had attended Lutheran services and sermons, that Lutherans had their children baptized and catechized by Reformed pastors, and that Reformed and Lutheran clergy and laity had blessed interconfessional marriages. Schleiermacher and the synod envisioned the common celebration of Communion as a progression of these irenical practices and the consummating act of unification of the separated confessions.[32]

Although the Berlin Synod advocated a union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches, it condemned both fanaticism and indifference on the matter of the Prussian Union. The synod's goal was neither to foment theological strife nor to eliminate every distinction between the Reformed and Lutheran confessions, but

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[32] "Official Declaration of the Synod of Berlin Concerning the Celebration of Holy Communion which it will hold on 30 October 1817," in Iain G. Nicol, ed. *Friedrich Schleiermacher on Creeds, Confessions, and Church Union: That They May be One* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2004), 20.

instead to encourage an ecumenical celebration of the Eucharist that would facilitate unification. The synod advised prospective Evangelical congregations to acknowledge their principal points of agreement and to omit controversial points of disagreement from their discussions. These congregations should reflect on the words of Christ at the Last Supper rather than squabble over the different interpretations of those words offered by Reformed and Lutheran theologians over the years.[33]

Based on Friedrich's 27 September order, Reformed and Lutheran ministers met at the *Nikolaikirche* in Berlin and celebrated the anniversary of the Reformation on Saturday 30 October 1817 by taking Communion in common. The king attended the service but did not accept Communion, preferring to wait until the Sunday service to accept the sacrament. On the morning of Sunday 31 October 1817 the king introduced the first unified Evangelical Christian congregation at the royal chapel in Potsdam by announcing a union of the chapel's Reformed and Lutheran congregations. The Berlin Synod composed a tentative union liturgy for this service. The royal court was in attendance, along with sixty important Reformed and Lutheran ministers.[34] The king hoped that the unification of the Potsdam chapel would serve as an ecumenical model for all Protestant communities in Prussia. On the evening of Sunday 31 October Friedrich traveled from Potsdam to Wittenberg where he attended the festival service at the Wittenberg *Schloßkirche* where Luther

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[33] Ibid., 23.
[34] Conser, *Church and Confession*, 18.

had posted his Ninety Five Theses, and then the king attended the groundbreaking ceremonies of the city's new Luther memorial.[35]

Friedrich sought popular support for the union after formally establishing the Evangelical Church in Potsdam. In order to legitimize the new church, the king had identified himself and the proposed union with a longstanding Hohenzollern policy of religious toleration, and with a line of Prussian rulers who had persistently tried to unify the separated confessions:

> My enlightened ancestors, the elector Johann Sigismund, the elector Georg Wilhelm, the great elector Friedrich Wilhelm, King Friedrich I, and King Friedrich Wilhelm I, as the history of their reign and their lives prove, had already attempted with pious solemnity, to unite both separated Protestant churches, the Reformed and the Lutheran into an Evangelical-Christian Church in their lands.[36]

Johann Sigismund, (1572-1619) Elector of Brandenburg, had converted to Calvinism on 25 December 1613 but never insisted that his Lutheran subjects convert to Calvinism.[37] The "Great Elector" Friedrich Wilhelm (1620-1688) protected the religious freedom of his Catholic subjects. He had also invited French Protestants expelled by the 1685 revocation of the Edict of Nantes to resettle in Brandenburg-Prussia, retain their religious practices, and paid for their relocation. Over 100,000 French Protestants accepted his offer.[38] King Friedrich I (r. 1701-1713)

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[35] Klaus Wappler, "Reformationsjubiläum und Kirchenunion (1817)," in J.F. Gerhard Goeters and Rudolf Mau, eds. *Die Geschichte der Evangelischen Kirche der Union*, Vol. 1 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1992), 112-113.
[36] "Kabinettsordre Friedrich Wilhelm III. vom 27 September 1817" in Nitzsch, 125.
[37] For the confessional politics of Johann Sigismund's conversion, and the significance of his wife, Anna of Saxony's decision to remain Lutheran, see Bodo Nischan, *Prince, People, and Confession: The Second Reformation in Brandenburg* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994).
[38] Walter Grossmann, "Religious Toleration in Germany, 1648-1750," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 201 (1982): 124-125.

administered several churches at which both Lutherans and Reformed were appointed to preach. At the 1705 consecration of the French Cathedral in Berlin, Friedrich I had copies of the Augsburg Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism laid side by side on the altar as a symbol of Prussian confessional unity.[39] King Friedrich Wilhelm I (r. 1713-1740) saw little difference between the Reformed and Lutheran religions. In fact, he favored unification of the separated confessions and encouraged the construction of *Unionskirchen* for Reformed and Lutheran use. Friedrich Wilhelm believed that the two religions were the same and their differences nothing more than a theologian's squabble.[40] Friedrich Wilhelm III sought to position himself and ground his ecclesiastical policies within this Hohenzollern tradition of religious toleration and intra-Protestant irenicism.

Following this tradition, Friedrich Wilhelm III argued that the Reformed and Lutheran Churches were "two slightly divergent confessions" separated only by external differences and thus should be united.[41] The Prussian Union was in accordance with the ultimate purposes of Christian unity and corresponded with the original intentions of the reformers, who had not desired a separation of Protestantism into Lutheran and Reformed confessions. The king also claimed the union was enthusiastically demanded by his Reformed and Lutheran subjects.[42] Anticipating reservations about a state-sponsored, compulsory union of the

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[39] Andrew Landale Drumond, "Church and State in Protestant Germany before 1918: With Special Reference to Prussia," *Church History* 13, No. 3 (Sept., 1944): 213-214.
[40] Grossmann, "Religious Toleration", 126.
[41] K.R. Hagenbach, *History of the Church in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, translated by John F. Hurst (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1869), 350.
[42] "Kabinettsordre Friedrich Wilhelm III. vom 27 September 1817", Nitzsch, 126.

Reformed and Lutherans Churches, Friedrich argued that the union would not constitute a conversion of Reformed to Lutheranism or Lutherans to the Reformed Church, but a revitalized Evangelical Church in the spirit of the Reformation and the reformers. The union would not only revitalize German Protestantism but also contribute to the renewal of domestic piety and alleviate the social discord that accompanied the German confessional divide.[43]

The king strongly endorsed the Prussian Union, but it also enjoyed significant popular and clerical support. Entry into the union was optional for each congregation but by May 1825 almost seventy percent of Prussian congregations had adopted it. Some union congregations received copies of the Evangelical liturgy personally signed by the king that included his personal blessing. Others received silver medallions designed by the Prussian architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841), depicting a mother church embracing her two Protestant sons.[44] In the majority-Catholic states of the Rhineland and Westphalia relations between the minority populations of Reformed and Lutherans had grown increasingly closer. This contributed to the popularity of an Evangelical union in those regions.[45]
A pro-union community in the Rhenish Prussian city of Wuppertal expressed its support for the Evangelical Church in documents codifying the union. They imagined their congregation as an embodiment of Friedrich's promise that the

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[43] "Ibid., 125-126.
[44] Christopher Clark, "Confessional Policy and the Limits of State Action: Frederick William III and the Prussian Church Union 1817-1840," *The Historical Journal* 39, 4 (Dec., 1996): 989.
[45] Robert M. Bigler, *The Politics of German Protestantism: The Rise of the Protestant Church Elite in Prussia, 1815-1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 37.

union would not entail a conversion of Reformed to Lutheranism or Lutherans to Reformed. The Wuppertal community avowed union would not dilute the confessional identities of their Evangelical congregation. The symbolic books of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, the Augsburg Confession and the Lutheran and Heidelberg Catechisms, would retain their existence and value in their community insofar as they corresponded with each other. In cases where they did not correspond, the matter would be left to the conscience of the congregant.[46]

Advocates of union in regions outside Prussia used the occasion of the Reformation anniversary to call for a reunion of local Reformed and Lutheran congregations in their own communities. Supporters of union in Nassau did not wish to be known as Lutherans or Calvinists because the reformers did not want Protestant Christians to refer to themselves as separate denominations. The different names were a reflection of confessional separation and divide. Accordingly, advocates of union in Nassau desired the name of Evangelical Christian Church to underline their unity.[47] Indeed, the use of the word "evangelical" to describe the newly-unified congregations evoked memories of the Reformation. Ecumenists appropriated this designation, which Lutherans had originally used to refer to themselves, in order to underline the continuity of the contemporary unions with the Reformation. Reflecting its widespread popular support, the Nassau Union proposal was composed by a local synod and voted on by Protestant heads of

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[46] "Vereinigungsurkunde für die Gemeinde Unterbarmen vom J. 1822," in Nitzsch, 137.
[47] Schreiber, et al., *Allgemeine Chronik* vol. 1, 35.

household.[48] The Duke of Nassau officially proclaimed the union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches in his duchy on 31 October 1817.

In Frankfurt, Reformed pastors preached in Lutheran churches, and Lutheran pastors administered communion in Reformed churches in support of a union in that city.[49] Indeed, a local union effected in the Palatinate town of Bad Bergzabern claimed the new Evangelical Church recalled the congregations of the apostolic age and early Reformation, before confessional distinctions and denominational differences were established.[50] For this congregation, the union evoked memories of a pre-confessional period of Christianity and the early Reformation that were representative of the intra-Protestant unity realized in the Evangelical Church. The Berlin Synod's recommendation of an ecumenical celebration of the Eucharist was accompanied by Schleiermacher's own ecumenical memory of the Reformation. This memory acknowledged both Luther and Zwingli's contributions to German Protestantism. In his 1817 Reformation anniversary address to the University of Berlin, Schleiermacher had noted that at the anniversary festivals, Protestants celebrated the memory of that event that was common to both Luther and Zwingli: the restoration of the authority of Scripture, the recognition that faith alone could atone for man's sins, the defeat of superstition and ritualism, and the abolition of intermediaries between God and man.[51] Thus Schleiermacher invoked a

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[48] Clark, "Confessional Policy", 986.
[49] Friederich, *Chronik der dritten Jubelfeier*, 5.
[50] "Die Lokalunion in Bergzabern, 2 Dezember 1817" in Gerhard Ruhbach, ed., *Kirchenunionen im 19. Jahrhundert* (Guterslöh: Gerd Mohn, 1967), 45.
[51] Friedrich Schleiermacher, "Address Celebrating the Third Centennial of the Reformation of the Church by Luther at the University of Berlin held on 3 November 1817," in Nicol, 45.

Reformation history of shared traditions and trajectories rather than one of separation between the confessions. He sought to remake the confessional memory of the anniversary into one that evoked intra-Protestant unity in order to reconcile Reformed and Lutherans within the new Evangelical Church.

Whereas Schleiermacher and the Berlin Synod believed a common celebration of the Eucharist could help to overcome the differences between Reformed and Lutherans on the matter of the Real Presence, the pro-union Gießen pastor Georg Jakob Ludwig Reuß (b. 1760) argued those differences were trivial anyway:

> This party (later called the Reformed Church) only deviated on a single, completely insignificant and not at all essential point of faith from Luther's opinion, about which one could have easily agreed on later.[52]

Reuß argued that doctrinal differences between Reformed and Lutherans were insignificant. He downplayed those theological differences over the matter of the Real Presence that were defined at the 1529 Marburg Colloquy in his support for the 1817 Prussian Union.

With royal, ecclesiastical, and popular support, unions were ultimately realized and recognized by the state in Nassau (1817), Fulda (1818), the Rhineland-Palatinate (1818), Anhalt (1820), Baden (1821), Rhenish Hesse (1822), Hesse (1823), and Württemberg (1827). Unions were not effected in Bavaria, Saxony, Mecklenburg, or Hannover due to the negligible numbers of Reformed Christians in

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[52] Georg Jakob Ludwig Reuß, *Kurze Geschichte Dr. Martin Luther's und der Kirchen-Reformation* (Darmstadt, 1817), 28 cited in Fuhrman, 40-41.

those states, although individual Reformed and Lutheran congregations were free to unite themselves.

Although these state-sponsored unions enjoyed widespread popular support, a vocal minority of orthodox Lutherans protested the compulsory union of their church with the Reformed church. In anniversary sermons and speeches opposing the Prussian Union, orthodox Lutherans invoked memories of a dogmatic Luther to use as a foil against pro-union invocations of an irenical Luther. They were outraged that the 1817 Reformation anniversary would be used to inaugurate a union that would ostensibly weaken the Lutheran Church. They sought to maintain the confessionally-Lutheran character of this anniversary against attempts by pro-union pastors to remake it into an anniversary celebrating intra-Protestant unity. Opposition to union was most widespread and vociferous in northern and eastern Germany, where a strong tradition of orthodox Lutheranism persisted. Opposition lasted well into the 1840s in Holstein, Saxony, and Silesia.[53] But opponents of a union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches could be found throughout Germany.

The Kiel Lutheran pastor Claus Harms (1778-1855) was the most prominent and vociferous critic of a union of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches. Harms, whose admirers compared him to Luther for the passion of his evangelism[54], embodied orthodox Lutheran opposition to the Prussian Union. Harms argued that the proposed Evangelical Church neglected confessional dogmas and differences that the reformers themselves had defined. He invoked Reformation-era councils

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[53] Nicholas Hope, *German and Scandinavian Protestantism 1700 to 1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 442.
[54] Hagenbach, *History of the Church*, 347.

and confessional documents that had established these dogmas and differences to reclaim the memory of Luther from proponents of intra-Protestant unity.

On 31 October 1817 Harms published his own Ninety-Five Theses alongside Luther's originals to commemorate the original posting of Luther's Theses and to protest the Prussian Union. Harms claimed his theses were as necessary to the contemporary church as Luther's had been to the sixteenth-century church. Harms viewed his theses within a three-hundred year tradition of rousing and reforming Lutheran polemicists.[55] In his theses, an orthodox Lutheran rebuke to the Prussian Union, Harms condemned the errors, abuses, rationalism and indifference within the contemporary Lutheran Church and its plans for union.

Harms identified rationalism as the greatest threat to the contemporary Lutheran Church and argued that the Evangelical Church embodied this rationalism. He defined rationalism in three ways: as the replacement of revealed with natural religion, the de-emphasis of creeds and dogma, and the preponderance of enlightenment-inspired religious pluralism that dissolved distinctions between the confessions. The nineteenth century, crippled by rationalism and religious indifferentism that were embodied by the Prussian Union, was even more corrupt than the sixteenth century in which Luther had reformed the church. Thus the current threat to the Christianity in general, and the Lutheran Church in particular,

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[55] Claus Harms, *Briefe zu einer nähern Verstandigung über verschiedene meine Theses betreffende Puncte. Nebst Einem namhaften Briefe, an den Herrn Dr. Schleiermacher* (Kiel: Academische Buchhandlung, 1818), 8.

was as grave as it had been in Luther's day.[56] Rationalism had to be defeated in order for the Lutheran Church to survive.

Harms recognized supporters of the union as rationalists or indifferentists, unconcerned with the creeds, doctrines, and liturgical practices that Luther and the Lutheran Church had established in their statements of faith.[57] If these "enlightened" ecumenists failed to acknowledge Luther's definition of church dogma and his establishment of a distinct Lutheran confession, how could the Lutheran Church survive?[58] Harms prophesied the union's consequences for the church: In an Evangelical Church that de-emphasized creeds, doctrines, and liturgical practices, and adopted a theological pluralism in their place, congregants would lose not only their distinct confessional identities, but their faith as well. An indifference to dogma and confessional difference would eventually result in an indifference to religion. Harms expressed fear at the immanent loss of Lutheran tradition and memory that a union with the Reformed Church would necessarily entail. Doctrine and liturgy are parts of the collective memory of a church. An Evangelical Church whose paramount goal was rapprochement between the Reformed and Lutheran denominations could not be grounded in strong statements of Lutheran faith or in confessional memories of Luther and his Reformation. These confessional traditions and memories would

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[56] Ibid., 22-23.
[57] Ibid., 32.
[58] Claus Harms, ed. *Das sind die 95 theses oder Streitsätze Doktor Luthers, theuren Andenken* (Kiel: Academische Buchhandlung, 1817), 20.

be abandoned for a conciliatory faith that accommodated Reformed congregations for the sake of confessional peace.[59]

Harms was especially concerned with how the Evangelical Church would resolve the theological differences between Reformed and Lutherans on the Lord's Supper. He noted that if Christ's body and blood were conceived to be present in the bread and wine at the Marburg Colloquy in 1529, then they must remain so in 1817. One could not whimsically rewrite, and nineteenth-century Lutherans could not be expected to abandon, an essential doctrine that Luther himself had defined and defended. Indeed, the dispute over the Real Presence was the doctrine that caused the most disagreement between Luther and Zwingli. The common celebration of Communion between Reformed and Lutherans proposed by Friedrich Wilhelm III was impossible. It would entail turning one's back on the legacy of Luther and on the wise judgment of those Reformation-era councils at which Reformed and Lutherans had separated over the matter of the Real Presence.[60] Harms concluded his theses with a strong condemnation of this "forced marriage" of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches and implied that the ghost of Luther would haunt the Evangelical Church because it had forgotten its origins with the reformer.[61]

Harms' opposition to the Prussian Union, like Schleiermacher's support for it, underscored the relationship among memory, liturgy, and church unity at the 1817 Reformation anniversaries. Collective memories of Luther and the Reformation were pivotal to how both proponents and detractors of intra-Protestant unity

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[59] Ibid., 32.
[60] Ibid., 32.
[61] Ibid., 31.

positioned themselves in debates over the union. Although these debates cooled, they remained unresolved throughout the 1820s. They were rekindled at the 1830 anniversaries of the Augsburg Confession when the promise and peril of intra-Protestant unity again intersected with collective memories of Luther and the Reformation.

Whereas pro-union Evangelicals and orthodox Lutherans used the 1817 Reformation anniversaries to debate the meaning of intra-Protestant unity and identity, ecumenical Catholic and Protestant supporters of interconfessional unity used the anniversary festivals as an occasion to confront painful memories of Germany's confessional divide and to call for peace between, and a reunion of, the separated confessions. These early nineteenth-century ecumenists sought to refashion memories of Luther and the Reformation that evoked the German confessional divide by collectively participating in the anniversary festivals and using them as occasions to call for church unity.

Luther Memory and Interconfessional Unity at the 1817 and 1830 Reformation Anniversaries

German collective memories of Luther and the Reformation had traditionally been linked to painful memories of separation, religious war, and the confessional divide. By proposing solutions for overcoming this separation in anniversary sermons, speeches, and pamphlets, and by celebrating the anniversaries in common with Catholics, Reformed, Lutherans, and in limited cases, Jews, irenical participants in the 1817 Reformation anniversaries and 1830 anniversaries of the Augsburg Confession sought to refashion the hitherto confessionally-exclusive character of the anniversary festivals into celebrations of interconfessional unity. And while their desire for interconfessional peace and church unity were inspired by a sincere piety, by imagining a reunion of the separated confessions, the ecumenical celebrants of the 1817 and 1830 Reformation anniversaries proposed a basis for German national unity.

Instances of interconfessional participation in the 1817 Reformation anniversaries were not unprecedented. The editors of a general report on the 1817 Reformation anniversary festivals recognized the irenical celebration of St. Boniface in a September 1811 festival celebrating the memory of, and dedication of a new memorial to, Boniface in Altenberg as a preliminary celebration of the Jubelfest of 1817.[62] St Boniface (c.672-754) was the apostle of the Germans, a national-religious figure, and site of memory around which German Christians rallied and identified. He was a pre-Reformation, pre-confessional figure that recalled a Germany not yet

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[62] Schreiber, et al., *Allgemeine Chronik*, vol. 1, Appendix, 7.

separated by the confessional divide. Indeed, in 1919 Pope Benedict XV had invoked the memory of St Boniface as "the perfect herald and the model" of German religious unity and peace.[63] Thus it is no surprise that celebrations of Boniface's memory coincided with calls for confessional reunion.

The editors of the *Allgemeine Chronik* of the 1817 anniversaries acknowledged the interconfessional participation in the 1811 Boniface festival and contrasted it with the fanaticism and religious strife of previous centuries. They noted the unifying possibilities of the example of the 1811 festival for the three separated confessions—Catholics, Reformed, and Lutherans—appealing to what they must have hoped would become an ecumenical site of German memory:

> So ended this beautiful celebration, with so delicate a sensibility was it held, with such dignity was it executed. None of the audience remained cold to this rare scene, and everyone was steeped in deep, blissful emotion. It had probably deeply moved everyone who is reminded of those dark times, where blind fanaticism and terrible, bloody struggle for the cause of their faith, the various Christian confessions separated, and the first virtue of the Christian religion: "Love all people!" was destroyed and did not take root. It had probably deeply moved everyone to feel that after such sad memories, here three of these confessions, by the example of their priests, appearing united in fraternal love, saw how their hands were held peacefully together, as here, and on an altar and united together they prayed to God, showing how we as Christians, with all the variety of our external church customs, had only one head, one faith, and a shared commitment and a hope of a future life.[64]

The expressions of interconfessional peace and examples of interconfessional participation at the Boniface festival were recreated throughout Germany on the occasion of the 1817 Reformation anniversary festivals. But instead of St. Boniface, clerics and laity at the anniversaries appealed to memories of Luther and the

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[63] Benedict XV, *In Hac Tanta*, para. 4 (1919).
[64] Schreiber, et al., *Allgemeine Chronik*, vol. 1, Appendix, 9.

Reformation to variously call for interconfessional peace, to caution contemporary German Christians against a renewal of confessional strife, and to advocate a reunion of the churches.

Many of the sermons and speeches delivered at the 1817 anniversaries invoked memories of Luther and the Reformation to call for interconfessional peace and to explore the possibilities of church unity. In his Reformation sermon, Valentin Karl Veillodter (1769-1828), one of the editors of the *Allgemeine Chronik* and a Lutheran pastor in Nuremberg, preached that the anniversary was no occasion for bitter feelings between Lutherans, Reformed, or their Catholic brothers.[65] Instead, Veillodter suggested that his congregation act in the "spirit of brotherly concord" toward Catholics and Reformed during the Reformation anniversary.[66] Indeed, he reminded his congregation that during the Napoleonic Wars, members of the Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed churches had united in their love of the fatherland in order to oppose external threats to German freedom. Once again, at the 1817 Reformation anniversaries, they were united in their desire for interconfessional peace. Like their close alliances during the Wars of Liberation, Veillodter claimed that a union of the separated confessions would only serve to strengthen German unity and solidarity.[67]

The Bamberg Lutheran pastor Ernst Anton Clarus (1776-1848) began his Reformation sermon by explicitly stating that the Reformation anniversary was not

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[65] Valentin Karl Veillodter, *Zwei Predigten am dritten Säkularfeste der Reformation im Jahre 1817* (Nuremberg: Riegel and Wießner, 1817), 8.
[66] Ibid., 24.
[67] Ibid., 7-8.

a celebration of the confessional divide.[68] Clarus called on his congregation to give thanks to everyone who was united in attendance at the service and anniversary festival, without distinction of confession.[69] He then asked his congregation to recall the centuries of religious bigotry and violence that had plagued Germany, and contrasted these painful memories to the union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches in Prussia, which he believed represented a final nullification of the animosities between the Protestant denominations.[70] Clarus concluded his sermon by reminding the congregation that the Gospel bound them and German Catholics together as brothers. He enumerated the similarities between the Evangelical and Catholic Churches, including shared histories and shared traditions that might serve as a basis for rapprochement between and an ultimate reunion of, the separated confessions.[71] Clarus hoped that a reunion of the separated confessions could strengthen the German churches. But he also believed that by eliminating the confessional divide, a reunion of the churches would encourage feelings of unity and solidarity among German Christians throughout the fatherland.[72] For Clarus, proposing a reunion of the separated confessions was a way of imagining German national unity.

In nearby Erlangen, the Lutheran theologian Gottlieb Philipp Christian Kaiser (1781-1848) told his congregation that the Reformation was still in progress, that it must remain in progress, and that it would only be completed through a

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[68] Clarus, *Erinnerung*, 11.
[69] Ibid., 15.
[70] Ibid., 27.
[71] Ibid., 27-28.
[72] Ibid., 26-27.

reunification of all of the Christian confessions.[73] Kaiser contrasted the expressions of tolerance and cooperation between Catholics, Reformed, and Lutherans at the 1817 anniversary with the Lutheran exclusivity of the 1617 and 1717 anniversaries. According to Kaiser, the ecumenical celebration of the 1817 anniversary pointed to the hopeful prospects of a final reunion of the separated Christian confessions.[74] The ecumenical sermons of Veillodter, Clarus, and Kaiser were representative of the general Lutheran pro-union position.

Based on reports describing the irenical celebrations of the Reformation anniversary in Bamberg and other neighboring towns, the reception of the ecumenical sentiments of Veillodter, Clarus, and Kaiser's sermons was positive. Esteemed members of the Bamberg Catholic Church attended Reformation Sunday services at the local Evangelical church and participated in the festivities that followed. Catholic notables shared a common meal with local Evangelical clerics at the city museum.[75] The majority of participants in these irenical celebrations expressed the desire to commemorate their common celebration of the memories of Luther and the Reformation.[76] They sought to refashion the meaning of the anniversary from a confessionally-exclusive commemoration of the confessional divide into a celebration of German interconfessional unity. Irenical celebrations of the Reformation anniversary were reproduced further afield from those Bamberg.

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[73] Gottlieb Philipp Christian Kaiser, "Zwei Preidgten am Reformations-Jubelfeste 1817 in der Stadtkirche der evangelisch, lutherischen Neustadt zu Erlangen," in Christian Schreiber, et al., *Allgemeine Chronik* Vol. 2, 108 and 112.
[74] Ibid., 109.
[75] Clarus, *Erinnerung*, 5-6.
[76] Ibid., 6.

Lutheran, Reformed, and Catholic children attended catechism classes together in Gleusen.[77] Catholics and even some Jews attended the anniversary festivities in Mühlhausen and Trabelsdorf.[78] Also in Trabelsdorf, short books on Reformation history were donated to the poor and money was raised for German translations of the New Testament for Christian children and the Old Testament for Jewish children.[79] Confessionally-mixed families in Küps celebrated together. The Küps city pastor expressed hope that these celebrations, by their "concord, decency, and fraternal spirit," would leave an unforgettable joyful memory in his congregation of the interconfessional participation at the anniversary.[80]

German Catholics noted the ecumenical possibilities of the 1817 Reformation anniversary as well. Maximilian Prechtl (1757-1832), a Benedictine priest from Bavaria who had written several ecumenical treatises and histories, noted that the Reformation anniversary had aroused the piety of German Protestants, whom he called Catholics' "separated brothers".[81] Prechtl encouraged Catholics to use the occasion of the anniversary to review those tendencies that had contributed to the persistence of the confessional divide and to try to overcome them. The key to interconfessional peace was a confrontation with those painful memories of separation.[82] To this end, many German Catholics took a sympathetic view of the

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[77] Ibid., 36.
[78] Ibid., 51, 60-66.
[79] Ibid., 66.
[80] Ibid., 84.
[81] Maximilian Prechtl, *Seitenstück zur Weisheit Dr. Martin Luthers zum Jubeljahre der Lutherischen Reformation* (Sulzbach: J. C. Seidel, 1817), iii. See also Maximilian Prechtl, *Friedens-Benehmen zwischen Boussuet, Leibniz und Molanus* (1815) and *Friedensworte an die katholische und protestantische Kirche für ihre Wiedervereinigung* (1820).
[82] Ibid., vii-viii.

Reformation anniversary and became better acquainted with Luther, the Reformation, and their Protestant neighbors through the festival, according to an Evangelical historian of the 1817 anniversaries who had read widely among the festival reports, sermons, and speeches.[83] But, Prechtl argued, the celebrants must take care that the anniversary does not reawaken or strengthen old sectarian animosities.[84] Instead, he recommended that Catholics and Protestants celebrate the festival in the spirit of Christ. Through their irenical celebration an anniversary that had traditionally evoked the German confessional divide might become an anniversary of confessional reunion.[85]

The ecumenical hopes expressed by Veillodter, Clarus, Kaiser, and Prechtl were evident at anniversary festivals in Thuringia, where Reformed, Catholics, and a handful of Jews marched together in the festival processions. One Thuringian Jew who had marched in the procession and contributed to the festival's poor collection claimed he had done so because Luther's work had benefited the Jews and the Reformation had blessed every religion.[86]

Jewish participation in the Reformation anniversary festivals, although atypical, was all the more noteworthy given the anti-Semitic inflection of the Wartburgfest and the violent anti-Semitic Hep-Hep Riots that would sweep through Germany in 1819. The German students and liberals assembled at the Wartburgfest burned Jewish books that they deemed "anti-German" and anti-Semitic rhetoric

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[83] Arndt, *Das Reformationsjubelfest*, 28-29.
[84] Prechtl, *Seitenstück*, x.
[85] Ibid., xvi.
[86] Arndt, *Das Reformationsjubelfest*, 29.

could be heard. The chauvinistic participants of the Wartburgfest grounded their "political Protestantism" in politicized memories of Luther and the Reformation. But contemporary enlightened and Reform Jews regarded Luther as a reformer who had embodied religious toleration and emancipation.[87] In fact, Luther's anti-Jewish writings were completely unknown in early-nineteenth century Germany.[88] This made memories of Luther and the Reformation even more accessible to contemporary German Jews. None of the primary sources from 1817 that I have examined suggest that Jewish participants in the Reformation anniversary festivals were objects of proselytization. Instead, they were willing celebrants in those irenical commemorations of Luther and the Reformation that seemed to suggest a temporary dissolution of the German confessional divide.

Another Thuringian festivalgoer, a Lutheran from Erfurt, reported that the Catholic citizens of that city conducted themselves in a friendly and benevolent way; Catholics observed and even participated, but none had disrupted the festival.[89] Likewise, the Catholic inhabitants of Münster (Westphalia) participated in their town's Evangelical service and were pleased with the tolerance displayed by Protestants on the festival day. The same Catholics also attended speeches commemorating the 1648 Westphalian Peace—it had ended the Thirty Year's War

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[87] Christian Wiese, "Überwinder des Mittelalters? Ahnherr des Nationasozialismus? Zur Vielstimmigkeit und Tragik der jüdischen Lutherrezeption im wilhelmischen Deutschland und in der Weimarer Republik" in *Lutherinszenierung und Reformationserinnerung*, Stefan Laube and Karl-Heinz Fix, eds. (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2002), 169-171.
[88] Johannes Wallmann, "The Reception of Luther's Writings on the Jews from the Reformation to the End of the 19th Century" *Lutheran Quarterly* 1 (Spring 1987), 86-87.
[89] Arndt, *Das Reformationsjubelfest*, 38-39.

and established Catholic and Protestant equality before the law—and seemed to take no umbrage.[90]

The Thuringian Jew was not the only non-Protestant to acknowledge a debt to Luther. An anonymous Catholic writer in Erlangen used the occasion of the Reformation anniversary to praise Luther's contributions to German Catholicism and suggest the possibility for reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants. The writer argued that Luther had contributed a great deal to the promotion of theological studies among Catholic laypeople; that the Protestant Reformation had compelled the Catholic Church to reform itself; and that Protestant iconoclasm had contributed to the elimination of abuse of icons, relics, and other superstitions within Catholic churches.[91] The author acknowledged doctrinal differences between Catholics and Protestants but affirmed the merits of both, acknowledging Christ as the common source of their faith and the kingdom of heaven as the common goal of both confessions.[92]

Some of the sermons delivered at anniversary services that sought interconfessional peace between German Catholics and Protestants nevertheless stopped short of endorsing a reunion of the churches. The Munich Lutheran theologian Ludwig Friedrich von Schmidt (1764-1857) exemplified this position. Schmidt professed his wish that the 1817 Reformation anniversaries would not have been held. In his anniversary sermon Schmidt argued that the festivals might

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[90] Ibid., 38-39.
[91] An anonymous Catholic, *D. Martin Luthers Verdienste um die katholische Kirche in Teutschland* (Erlangen: 1818), 6-7.
[92] Ibid., 11.

reawaken the old hostilities between Catholics, Reformed, and Lutherans. Moreover, an anniversary festival should commemorate an institution or relationship, such as the founding of a state, the consecration of a church, or a marriage, not a religious-historical event such as the publication of Luther's Theses.[93] Schmidt believed that any celebration Reformation anniversary must be irreligious, because what he identified as the bitter consequences of the Reformation—the separation of the confessions, the Thirty Years' War, and subsequent outbreaks of hatred and religious persecution—should not be commemorated.[94] The anniversary should certainly not be used to introduce a compulsory union of the separated Protestant confessions. Although he was neither an ecumenist nor pro-union, Schmidt applauded efforts to secure peaceful coexistence between Catholics and Protestants and recognized the significance of Luther memory for interconfessional relations in general and church unity in particular. He recommended a proscription of those memories—neither forgetting nor transcending, but suspending them for the sake of confessional peace.

Like Schmidt, the Augsburg Lutheran pastor G.H. Kayser argued that the most appropriate way to celebrate the memories of Luther and the Reformation was in the spirit of unity with Catholics. But he stopped short of advocating reunion with Catholics. In fact Kayser explicitly opposed it. Nevertheless, Kayser minimized the differences between Catholics and Protestants and argued that the 1817 Reformation anniversary celebration should include them so long as they and others

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[93] L.F. Schmidt, *Zwey Predigten am Säkularfeste der Kirchenreformation* (Munich: J.G.J. Seybold, 1817), III.
[94] Ibid., IV-V.

did not attempt to unify that which lay separated according to God's will, the divide between Roman Catholic and Evangelical Christianity.[95] Schmidt and Kayser reflected the variety of positions on interconfessional relations that were expressed at the 1817 Reformation anniversaries. These included both ecumenical German Christians who sought a reunion of the separated confessions, as well as those irenical Catholics and Protestants who sincerely desired interconfessional peace and cooperation but stopped short of advocating church unity. And in nearly every case, these figures appealed to memories of Luther and the Reformation to locate themselves within the varied spectrum of debate on interconfessional relations. The irenical tendencies of Catholic, Reformed, and Lutheran celebrants of the 1817 Reformation anniversaries pointed to a notion of German unity that transcended the confessional divide. If the national question was inseparable from the confessional question in nineteenth-century Germany, by imagining a reunion of the separated confessions the ecumenical celebrants of the 1817 Reformation anniversaries were also reflecting on ideas of German national unity. Their notions of German unity presaged the increasingly explicit association of confessional identity and difference with ideas of German national unity.

The desire for interconfessional peace and interest in the possibility of church unity that was so prominent at the 1817 Reformation anniversaries persisted until the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession. Like the ecumenical celebrants of the 1817 anniversaries, irenical participants in the 1830

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[95] G.H. Kayser, *Wie feyern wir Luthern und die Reformation am Stiftungstage der letzern am Würdigsten?* (Augsburg: August Bäumer, 1817), 28-29.

anniversary festivals sought to refashion the formerly confessionally-exclusive commemoration of the Augsburg Confession into a site of memory that all Germans, regardless of confession, could celebrate. But with the rekindling of intra-Protestant debates over the legacy and future direction of the Prussian Union, the 1830 anniversaries of the Augsburg Confession were more confessional than irenical in character. Nevertheless, there were several examples of interconfessional participation by Catholics, Reformed, Lutherans, and Jews in the 1830 anniversaries of the Augsburg Confession.

Perhaps the most irenical celebrations of the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession occurred in Leipzig. The anniversary procession in Leipzig included a rabbi carrying the Torah, while Catholic clergy and the Greek archimandrite followed. They were joined by the Lutheran clergy and Reformed pastors carrying the New Testament. One observer remarked that God Himself must have shed a tear of joy that the honorable servants of their Father were unified by fraternal sentiments at these processions.[96] Indeed, the author of one general history of the 1830 anniversaries noted that friendly participation of Catholics and, to a lesser extent, Jews in the festivities was reported in locations throughout Germany.[97] A Leipzig Reformed preacher named Blaß delivered a sermon entitled "Inwiefern auch uns Reformierten das Andenken an die CA wichtig und ermunternd sein soll?" ("To What Extent should the Memory of the Confessio Augustana be

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[96] Alfred Galley, *Die Jahrhundertfeiern der Augsburgischen Konfession von 1630, 1730, und 1830: ein Gedenkblatt zur 400 jährigen Augustana-Feier von 1930* (Leipzig: Dörffling and Franke, 1930), 105.
[97] Ibid., 108.

Important and Inspirational to the Reformed?), in which he reminded his congregation of the current joy created by the reconciliation of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches. Blaß contrasted this joy with the unhappy former separation of the confessions. He hoped that in the future Catholics would offer his congregation a hand of peace and unity, and anticipated that the 1930 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession might be a celebration of reconciliation of all of the separated Christian churches.[98]

In nearby Eisleben, Catholics and Jews participated in the festivities with their Evangelical neighbors. The Catholic mayor of Eisleben commented that during the festivities, one saw no difference between the religions: Protestant, Catholic, and Jew all participated in the festivities.[99] And an Eisleben pastor named D. Hoppe, preaching from the Luther pulpit of the market church, recognized the third anniversary of the Augsburg Confession as an urgent call for the unification of the remaining separated Protestant communities.[100] The particular inflection of local commemorations of both the Reformation and the Augsburg Confession could be animated by local and regional religious concerns. For example, the irenical celebration of the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in Leipzig may be read as an attempt by the predominantly-Lutheran Saxons and their Catholic monarch to bridge the confessional divide in that kingdom.[101] But as Alon Confino

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[98] Ibid., 116-117.
[99] Ibid., 106.
[100] Ibid., 115.
[101] Wolfgang Flügel, "Reformationsgedenken im Zeichen des Vormärz—Die Konflikte um das Confessio Augustana-Jubiläum in Leipzig 1830" in Stefan Laube and Karl-Heinz Fix, eds.,

has revealed, the German nation was a local metaphor.[102] Nineteenth-century Germans imagined the nation as an extension of their locale. By proposing a rapprochement between the separated confessions in their own hometowns, and through their irenical participation in their local Reformation anniversary festivals, German Catholics, Protestants, and Jews imagined a German nation that was unencumbered by the confessional divide.

These interconfessional celebrations of the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession, albeit more muted than the irenical celebrations of the 1817 Reformation anniversary, nevertheless point to efforts to remake the memory of the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession from one that appealed only to Lutherans to one that all Christians, and even Jews, could celebrate. This common celebration of a holiday that could be shared by all Germans, regardless of confession, conferred a sense of national solidarity and unity among the celebrants. And like the irenicism that survived the 1817 Reformation anniversaries and persisted until 1830, those debates over intra-Protestant unity and identity that were touched off by the 1817 Prussian Union also survived, and were in fact rekindled, at the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession.

Lutherinszenierung und Reformationserinnerung (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2002), 129-130.

[102] Alon Confino, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871-1918* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1997). See also Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

1817 Redux: The 1830 Anniversaries of the Augsburg Confession and Intra-Protestant Unity

The concerns and criticisms expressed by participants in debates surrounding the establishment of the 1817 Prussian Union were revived at the 1830 tercentenary of the Augsburg Confession. A majority of the sermons and speeches produced to commemorate the 1830 anniversary shared a common theme: Friedrich Wilhelm III's order forcing Evangelical congregations to adopt an unpopular liturgy known as the Agenda. The king had first introduced the Agenda in 1822 to provide the new Evangelical congregations with a uniform liturgy. But this liturgy was unpopular, and because it was voluntary, rarely implemented. As such, Friedrich planned to use the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession to compel adoption of the liturgy for those congregations that had not yet assumed it. The king's order touched off a firestorm of theological debate that was played out at in the sermons, speeches, and literature produced to commemorate the 1830 anniversaries of the Augsburg Confession. Evangelical Protestants and orthodox Reformed and Lutherans variously invoked memories of Luther and the Reformation to revisit theological and liturgical questions still unresolved within the Evangelical Church, to advocate for the preservation of the intra-Protestant unity realized by the 1817 Prussian Union, and to protest the compulsory adoption of the liturgy.

Germans had celebrated the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession since 1630. These anniversaries had typically been theologically-contested sites of memory. A struggle for existence between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches typified the 1630 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession. The internecine Lutheran

feuds between orthodoxy and Pietism dominated the 1730 anniversary.[103] And a resurgent confessional Lutheranism, emerging from the establishment of Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg's orthodox journal, the *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung*, which bitterly opposed Protestant factionalism and the Agenda, characterized the 1830 anniversaries.

The 1830 anniversary festivals of the Augsburg Confession began on Friday 25 June and lasted until Sunday 27 June. A morning and an evening service were typically held on the each festival day. Sermons and speeches followed the services. Children's religious instruction was offered in the afternoons between services. Celebrants played drums, sounded horns and trumpets, rang bells, sang songs, and recited poems. Clerics, laypeople, civic authorities, and military officers made processions through cities to their churches. Dignitaries carried copies of the Bible and the Augsburg Confession and placed them together on the altars of the festival churches. Participants also celebrated by lighting candles and torches, setting off fireworks, and hanging banners—one banner in Eisleben included illustrations of Luther, Melanchthon, and Friedrich Wilhelm III and featured the signature "Long live Luther, Melanchthon, and the king!" Celebrants placed busts of Luther and Melanchthon on church altars and struck commemorative coins. Citizens held public banquets and collected alms and food to distribute to the poor.[104] The festivities commemorating the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession were not entirely unlike those that marked the 1817 Reformation anniversary. Like the Reformation

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[103] Galley, *Die Jahrhundertfeiern der Augsburgischen Konfession*, 124-125.
[104] Ibid., 103.

anniversaries of 1817, Luther's memory was used and abused in intra-Protestant debates over liturgy, memory, and church union at the 1830 anniversaries of the Augsburg Confession.

Perhaps the most contested issue at the 1830 anniversaries was Friedrich Wilhelm III's order that all Evangelical congregations must adopt the Agenda, a liturgy the king had prepared for the new Evangelical Church in 1822. For eight years adoption of the Agenda had been voluntary, but Friedrich planned to use the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession to make the liturgy compulsory in all Evangelical congregations. Friedrich's decision to use the tercentenary of the Augsburg Confession to force adoption the 1822 liturgy was significant because, according to the king, the Agenda would serve as the foundational document of the Evangelical Church just as the Augsburg Confession was the foundational document of the early Lutheran Church.

Friedrich was deeply involved in the composition of the Agenda, and had originally introduced it to bring order, uniformity, and stability to the new Evangelical Church. The king's biographer, Thomas Stamm-Kuhlmann, called the Agenda Friedrich's "hobbyhorse".[105] Indeed, Friedrich took a personal role in the composition of the Agenda by studying the Bible, Reformation-era liturgies, and the confessional statements of the Reformed and Lutheran faiths in depth. He carefully examined how Communion was distributed in Calvinist and Lutheran Churches and

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[105] Thomas Stamm-Kuhlmann, *König in Preußens großer Zeit: Friedrich Wilhelm III. der Melancholiker aud dem Thron* (Berlin: Siedler, 1992), 477.

personally composed prayers to be included in the liturgy.[106] Friedrich based most of the Agenda on Luther's 1523 *Formula missae* and 1526 *Deutsche Messe*.

The king was more concerned with consistency of ritual than he was of doctrine. The royal Agenda included detailed instructions relating to the design of altars, the manner of ecclesiastical dress, and the proper introduction of candles, images, and crucifixes inside of Evangelical Churches.[107] Altars would be decorated with a simple cloth, candles, a Bible, and a crucifix. The Agenda countenanced images, though only of the Last Supper and scenes from the New Testament. The liturgy would consist of prayers and a choral service led by the pastor who would face the altar rather than the congregation, and responses from the all-male choir. After leading the congregation in the recitation of the Apostle's Creed and in the singing of no more than three hymns, the pastor would begin his sermon, which would last no longer than a half hour, after which Communion would be served to the congregation.[108] Certain detailed characteristics of the liturgy—each church's need for a set number of crucifixes, detailed instructions on how to cross oneself, admonitions to kneel during the Eucharist, and the revocation of the Reformed prohibition on images—had earned the king accusations of crypto-Catholicism.[109]

Whereas the Prussian Union had enjoyed popular support throughout Prussia, the Agenda had not. Lutherans saw it as unresponsive to their confessional

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[106] Ibid., 481.
[107] Christopher Clark, "Confessional Policy", 986.
[108] *Kirchen-Agende für die Hof- und Domkirche in Berlin* 2nd ed. (Berlin: Dieterici, 1822).
[109] Rudolf Mohr, "Die Besonderheiten der 300-Jahrfeier der Confession Augustana im preußischen Rheinland," *Monatshefte für evangelischen Kirchengeschichte des Rheinlandes* 26 (1977): 140.

traditions. Reformed Christians considered it too Lutheran, even too Catholic in character. Other German Protestants who had strongly supported the Prussian Union, including Schleiermacher, and the Lutheran theologian and editor of the *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung*, E.W. Hengstenberg (1802-1869), saw it as an unwelcome intrusion by the state into religious affairs and quite possibly illegal according to the Prussian General Code.[110]

Friedrich had originally claimed adoption of the Agenda would be voluntary, but the Prussian government took measures to curtail opposition and enforce conformity to the new liturgy. In 1821 the Prussian government directed the church consistories to carefully examine prospective ministers so that preaching vacancies were only filled by candidates sympathetic to the union. Another edict followed that directed the replacement of the titles Lutheran and Reformed in church documents with the title Evangelical. These steps were ostensibly intended to mediate outward differences between the two churches.[111]

On 4 April 1830 Friedrich Wilhelm III called for services to commemorate the 300th tercentennial of the 1530 Augsburg Confession. He proposed that the liturgy of the Augsburg Confession anniversary service should follow the Agenda that he had drafted in 1822 as a compromise of Reformed and Lutheran liturgies.[112] In a

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[110] Iain G. Nicol, ed. *Reformed but ever Reforming: Sermons in Relation to the Celebration of the Handing over of the Augsburg Confession (1830)* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997), and Christopher Clark "Confessional Policy and the Limits of State Action," 990.
[111] Walter H. Conser, Jr., *Church and Confession: Conservative Theologians in Germany, England, and America, 1815-1866* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 22.
[112] Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia, Berlin, to Karl Freiherr vom Stein zum Altenstein, Berlin, 4 April 1830. "Cabinettesordre am dritten Secular-Festes der Augsburgischen Confession," in *Actenmässige Geschichte der neuesten Unternehmung einer Union zwischen der reformirten und lutherischen Kirche: vorzüglich durch gemeinschaftliche Agende in Deutschland und*

subsequent royal decree dated 30 April 1830 Friedrich noted that the reintroduction of the Agenda would contribute the fulfillment of the 1817 Prussian Union.[113] He especially encouraged the adoption of the liturgy in Silesia, where a handful of Old Lutheran congregations had still refused to adopt the Prussian Union and Agenda.[114] By celebrating the memory of the Augsburg Confession, a document he identified as an early confession of German Protestant belief and personally believed was consistent with the spirit of a united Evangelical Church, and introducing and enforcing the Agenda, a compromise of Reformed and Lutheran liturgical forms, the king believed he might reconcile the Evangelical congregations with the Silesian Lutheran congregations.

Friedrich identified the impending services to commemorate the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession with those 1817 services that had celebrated the 400th anniversary of the Reformation and the establishment of the Prussian Union.[115] He also associated the Agenda with the Augsburg Confession. The Agenda would serve as the cornerstone of the Evangelical Church just as the Augsburg Confession had for the early German Lutheran community. The Augsburg Confession had codified the Reformation Luther had begun in 1517, just as the Agenda had codified the union of Reformed and Lutheran Churches introduced in 1817. The anniversaries of the Reformation and the Augsburg Confession were traditionally confessionally-

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besonders in dem preussischen Staate. Vol 2, ed. Johann Gottfried Scheibel (Leipzig: Friedrich Fleischer, 1834), 33-36.

[113] Ibid., 31.

[114] Königliches Consistorium für Schlesien, "Erlaß vom 1 June 1830," in Scheibel, 276.

[115] "Cabinettesordre am dritten Secular-Festes der Augsburgischen Confession," in Scheibel, 34-35.

exclusive Lutheran affairs. But the king sought to refashion these anniversaries to evoke memories of intra-Protestant unity and identity that were realized by the Prussian Union.

In a letter to his culture minister Karl Freiherr vom Stein zum Altenstein (1770-1840), Friedrich Wilhelm III explicitly asked for advice on how best to associate the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession to memories of the 1817 Prussian Union so that it might bring the union closer to fulfillment:

> On account of this celebration yet to be decreed, I will expect your expert opinions; note however, that it appears to me, at this joyful event further steps may be taken to tie—by which the holy work of the Union, which for so long the voices of so many sympathizers rose, and which in the most important relationship was sufficiently prepared—it to the spirit of my edict from 27 September 1817, through which it can be led closer to consummation.[116]

Thus the king sought to underline the continuities of memory among the Augsburg Confession, the Agenda, Luther, and the Prussian Union in order to legitimize and strengthen the Evangelical Church.

The liturgy is a memory rite that recalls the religious past and makes it present through symbolic re-presentation.[117] Friedrich's efforts to reform the liturgy represented an attempt to reconstruct the past and revise the memory of German Protestantism. The Agenda connoted a reconstructed past and a revised memory of German Protestantism. It recalled relations between Reformed and Lutherans that were unified, pious, and ostensibly unconcerned with "external"

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[116] Ibid., 35.
[117] Henri Delacroix, *La Religion et la foi* (Paris: Alcan, 1922), 15-16 cited in Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, translated by Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 88.

confessional differences. And it sought to consummate the distinct memories and traditions—embodied by their liturgies—of the Reformed and Lutheran confessions into a single Evangelical Church. By introducing the Agenda at the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession, the king sought to revaluate the confessionally Lutheran meaning of the anniversary into one that celebrated the intra-Protestant unity embodied by the Evangelical Church.

Friedrich was the most notable champion of the Agenda, but it enjoyed some popular support. Two weeks ahead of the official celebrations of the Augsburg Confession, a group of pro-union pastors in Breslau published an open letter of friendly advice to their city. In it, they noted the harm and calamity of the disastrous separation between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches.[118] They believed the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession was a more appropriate time to realize the reunion of both confessions than the 1817 Reformation anniversary had been because it was at Augsburg in 1530 when the Zwinglians had disassociated themselves from the Lutherans.[119] Supporters imagined the anniversary of this establishment of theological difference between Reformed and Lutherans as the perfect opportunity for reunion. But a final intra-Protestant reunion was inhibited by unresolved theological and liturgical questions that were revisited by Evangelicals and orthodox at the 1830 anniversaries.

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[118] "Ein Wort brüderlicher Belehrung über die Vereinigung der reformirten und lutherischen Confessionen zu einer evangelischen einigen Kirche. An die evangelischen Gemeinden unserer Stadt. Breslau 11 Juni 1830," in Scheibel, 78.
[119] Ibid., 78-79.

The celebration of the Eucharist again became a point of contention between Evangelicals and orthodox Lutherans. The king recognized the celebration of the Eucharist as defined by the Agenda—the breaking and sharing of bread, which more closely approximated the Reformed celebration and distribution of the Eucharist than the Lutheran—to be a sign of a congregation's ascension to the union.[120] The issue of the Real Presence in the Eucharist was left to each communicant. But orthodox Lutherans regarded the use of this liturgy at services to commemorate the Augsburg Confession, a Lutheran confession of faith that affirms the Real Presence in the Eucharist, an affront to Lutheranism and the legitimate memory of the Augsburg Confession.

Even the pro-union Breslau pastors acknowledged that the Real Presence was a primary point of disagreement between the Reformed and Lutheran church fathers. As a model of ecumenical Eucharistic celebration for the nineteenth-century present, the pastors cited the common celebration of the Eucharist and the ultimate resolution of the doctrine of the Real Presence at the 1536 Wittenberg Concord between the irenically-minded Reformed theologians Martin Bucer and Wolfgang Capito, and Luther and his associate Philipp Melanchthon.[121] The signatories of the Breslau letter acceded to the king's wish to celebrate the festival service according

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[120] Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia, "Erlaß vom 30 April 1830," in *Quellen zur Entstehung und Entwicklung selbständiger evangelisch-lutherischer Kirchen in Deutschland*, ed. Manfred Roensch and Werner Klän (Peter Lang: Frankfurt am Main, 1987), 31.
[121] "Ein Wort," in Schiebel, 80.

to the royal Agenda and advised their parishioners to accept the union and Agenda in order to preserve the intra-Protestant unity realized by the Evangelical Church.[122]

Individual pastors also delivered sermons in support of union and Agenda. The Hanover pastor Ferdinand Läncher and Tübingen theologian J.E. Osiander embodied just this kind of support. Läncher claimed that German Evangelicals should celebrate the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession because by doing so they would imitate the pious lives of the reformers by living according to the Christian insights, virtues and hopes that were expressed in the Augsburg Confession.[123] Läncher explicitly acknowledged the importance of anniversary celebrations for preserving the memories of important and joyful events from the history of German Protestantism.[124] He strongly encouraged the celebration of the memory of the Augsburg Confession. Läncher reminded his congregations they celebrated the less important anniversaries of peace treaties, foundings, constitutions, coronations, birthdays, and marriages, that were not as significant as religious holidays and anniversaries for forming, preserving, and maintaining Evangelical confessional identities. Invoking the memory of the 1817 Reformation anniversary festivals, Läncher recalled that although they had led to some tension between German Catholics and Protestants, they strengthened Evangelical confessional awareness and identity through the sermons, speeches, and

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[122] Ibid., 81.
[123] Ferdinand Läncher, *Stimme eines Predigers in der evangelischen Kirche, beim Anfange des Jubeljahrs 1830. Sieben Predigten von Ferdinand Läncher* (Hanover: Helwing, 1830), v and 19.
[124] Ferdinand Läncher, *Zur Geschichte, Kritik, und Homiletik des im Königreich Hannover des 25sten und 27sten Junis 1830 gefeierten evangelischen Jubelfestes* (Hannover: Helwing, 1830), 19.

ceremonies that taught about Luther and the Reformation and taught German Protestants more about Catholics and themselves:

> Admittedly the anniversary of the Reformation begun in 1817 created some fermentation between Catholics and Protestants, but it has yielded some favorable results. At that time, we got to know the opposition party and ourselves better, became more independent in our relations to them, and have since then refined our insights of the divine Word and the Reformation.[125]

Läncher underlined the relationship between commemoration and the formation, preservation, and maintenance of confessional identity. The desired result of the commemoration of religious holidays and anniversaries was maintenance of confessional awareness and identity. In this case, the most appropriate form of commemoration of the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession was attendance at festival services in community with one's Protestant brothers.[126] He saw irenic participation in the anniversary services as a means to strengthen Evangelical identity and maintain intra-Protestant unity.

In a speech to commemorate the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in Maulbronn, the Lutheran theologian Johannes Ernst Osiander (1792-1870) waxed hagiographical about the reformer Philipp Melanchthon. Osiander cited Melanchthon's composition of the Augsburg Confession and the reformer's irenical tendencies as a model for interconfessional peace between Reformed and Lutherans in the nineteenth century. Osiander recognized Melanchthon as the founder of Evangelical Protestant theology and the Augsburg Confession as the

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[125] Ibid., 20.
[126] Läncher, *Stimme eines Predigers*, 7-8.

founding document of the same.[127] He compared Melanchthon's work and its importance to Luther's, noting that Melanchthon's work as a reformer, theologian, and founder of Protestant dogmatics was as important as Luther's Ninety Five Theses.[128] Osiander even claimed that Melanchthon's participation at the Diet of Augsburg was as heroic as Luther's stand at Worms.[129]

According to Osiander, Melanchthon was devoted to the union of the two separated Protestant churches and promoter of a constructive and unifying theology of peace rather than an unfruitful and divisive polemical theology.[130] Osiander affirmed the Evangelical Church at the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession by invoking Melanchthon as an example of how Reformed and Lutherans could overcome their differences and preserve the intra-Protestant unity realized by the 1817 Prussian Union. Like the 1817 Reformation anniversary, the memory and anniversary of the Augsburg Confession must lose its confessionally-Lutheran character and became associated with the intra-Protestant unity of the Evangelical Church.

Opponents of the Prussian Union and royal Agenda used the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession to rebuke the Evangelical Church and its liturgy and underline the impossibility of the intra-Protestant unity it sought to enforce. They did so by appealing to orthodox memories of the Augsburg Confession. The Kiel pastor and critic of the 1817 Prussian Union Claus Harms

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[127] J.E. Osiander, *Philipp Melanchthon. Rede zur Feier des dritten Jubelfestes der Augsburgischen Confession* (Stuttgart: F.C. Löflund and Son, 1830), iii-iv.
[128] Ibid., 17.
[129] Ibid., 24.
[130] Ibid., 26.

argued that the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession should celebrate and renew the memory of an orthodox Lutheranism that had been forgotten during the ecumenical celebration of the 1817 Reformation anniversary festivals. Harms, fiery as ever, believed that this anniversary should be marked by a reorientation of German Protestantism to Lutheran orthodoxy rather than a further winnowing of Lutheran confessional consciousness—a winnowing that he believed would only intensify if Friedrich's plans were realized.[131] Harms sought to protect the confessional character of the anniversary and the orthodox memories that it commemorated.

Harms recognized the Augsburg Confession as the foundational document of the Lutheran Church.[132] He argued that the Augsburg Confession was a wall between Lutherans and Catholics and a shield against other confessions, including Protestant heretics such as Arians, Samosatenes, Anabaptists, Pelagians, and other fanatics because the Augsburg Confession defined Lutheranism and clearly demarcated it from other faiths.[133] That Friedrich Wilhelm III would use the anniversary of the definitive Lutheran statement of faith to consummate a union of Reformed and Lutheran Churches outraged Harms and other confessional Lutherans.[134] Moreover, religious doctrine like that encapsulated in the Augsburg

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[131] Klaus Harms, *Predigt zur Jubelfeyer wegen der 1530 den 25sten Juni auf dem Reichstage zu Augsburg verlesenen und übergebenen Confession: gehalten am dritten Sonntag nach Trinitatis 1830* (Kiel: University Bookstore, 1830), 8.
[132] Ibid., 11.
[133] Ibid., 17.
[134] Ibid., 12.

Confession, is the collective memory of a church.[135] By abolishing the liturgy and doctrine of the Lutheran Church for the Evangelical, Harms feared the Prussian Union and Agenda would nullify the collective memories and identity of the Lutheran Church.

Harms even invoked memories of the 1731 Salzburg Transaction, when that city expelled all of its Protestants on 31 October, recalling the fidelity and courage of the city's Lutherans who sacrificed everything to retain their faith. Harms sought to strengthen the sense of Lutheran confessional identity and solidarity by appealing to memories of Lutheran persecution and called on Lutherans to remain constant in their faith despite the persistent threat of confessional dilution.[136] Incidentally, the Calvinist monarch Friedrich Wilhelm I had invited Lutheran refugees of the Salzburg Transaction to resettle in Prussia. Harms used memories of Luther, the Reformation, and the occasion of the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession to underline the perils of intra-Protestant unity embodied by the Prussian Union and Agenda.

Opposition to union and Agenda persisted longest in Silesia. Indeed, popular resistance to the union and Agenda was so fierce in Silesia that troops were necessary to restore public order.[137] Breslau was the center of Silesian orthodox Lutheran opposition, where two-thirds of the pastors of that city still had not

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[135] Halbwachs, 112.
[136] Harms, *Predigt zur Jubelfeyer*, 24. On the Salzburg Transaction see Mack Walker, *The Salzburg Transaction: Expulsion and Redemption in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992).
[137] Eric Dorn Brose, *German History 1789-1871: From the Holy Roman Empire to the Bismarckian Reich*, (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books), 126.

adopted the Agenda.[138] The Lutheran community at Breslau raised objections to the use of the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession to introduce the royal Agenda into Silesian churches that had not yet adopted it. In a series of appeals to the king, this community noted the dwindling attendance at services in the Breslau St. Elizabeth's Church since the Prussian Union was introduced in 1817. They feared the loss of their congregations, and the dilution of Lutheran confessional identity as a result of the union. They asked the king not to exacerbate these problems by demanding the congregations conform to a new Agenda that would further alienate confessional Lutherans from the Evangelical Church.[139] The Breslau Lutherans referred to themselves as "The Congregation of the Augsburg Confession". This underscored their fidelity to orthodox Lutheranism and its symbolic books.

The orthodox Lutheran theologian Johann Gottfried Scheibel (1783-1843) was the most prominent opponent of the Agenda in Silesia.[140] In works published on the occasion of the three-hundredth anniversary of Breslau's adoption of the Reformation, Scheibel argued that debates surrounding the introduction and enforcement of the Prussian Union and Agenda recalled the conflict between Zwingli and Luther over the Eucharist at the 1529 Marburg Colloquy. The 1817 union had reproduced the confessional strife between Reformed and Lutheran clergy that the

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[138] Deborah Lee Fleetham, "In the Shadow of Luther: The Reshaping of Protestantism in Berlin, 1817-1848," (PhD diss., University of Rochester, 2001), 51.
[139] "Dritte Bittschrift der lutherischen Gemeinde Breslau vom 30 August 1830," in Roensch and Klän, 50.
[140] Hope, *German and Scandinavian Protestantism*, 445.

1529 council had created.[141] Paradoxically, the current union of Reformed and Lutheran Christians represented a fundamental confessional separation. If debates over the nature of the Evangelical Church could engender such confessional discord, how could it be characterized as a union?

Scheibel recognized the 1830 anniversary of the Augsburg Confession as the newest attempt at a compulsory union between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches. He feared that the Agenda was the final, inevitable step toward the consummation of the Prussian Union, arguing that would move the church too far away from the early Lutheran liturgy and too closely approximated the Reformed service.[142] Indeed, Scheibel noted that since the Marburg Colloquy of 1529, Reformed theologians had sought to dissolve the Lutheran Church and lead it into error in the name of brotherly union.[143] Scheibel called the authors of the 1563 Heidelberg Catechism, the founding confessional document of the Zwinglian congregations that would become the German Reformed Church, "faithless, disloyal, and rebellious" Lutherans.[144] The Prussian Union and royal Agenda were simply the most recent instances of a continuing Reformed plan to surreptitiously convert Lutherans. Scheibel's indictment of the Agenda, and the union it consummated, was explicit. The intention of the Prussian Royal Agenda was to make Lutherans into Reformed Christians:

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[141] Johann Gottfried Scheibel, *Kurze Nachricht von der Feier der heiligen Abendmahls bei den verschiedenen Religions-Parteien* (Breslau, 1824) and *Über die Entstehung und Fortbildung der kirchlichen Verfassung und des Gottesdienstes in Breslau seit der Reformation* (Breslau, 1825) cited in Hope, 446.
[142] Scheibel, *Actenmässige Geschichte* Vol. 1, 83 and 89.
[143] Ibid., 83.
[144] Ibid., 36.

> Is it now then not apparent and above all else not a sublime contradiction that the main tendency of this Agenda is to introduce a union—and indeed, what every union attempt aims—to make the Lutherans Reformed?[145]

Scheibel argued that the Union and Agenda destroyed the Lutheran Church from the inside. He lamented that Reformed theologians who had been planning to convert Lutherans to the Reformed Church since Marburg had found recent developments especially appealing.[146]

In an 1834 history of the Prussian Union, Scheibel decried the use of the Reformation anniversary of 1817 as the occasion to realize a compulsory union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches. He complained that at the 1817 Reformation anniversary services, the union was consecrated with new prayers and new forms of worship that the Lutheran community was not informed of ahead of time and not allowed to question.[147] The celebration of the memory of Martin Luther was used as an occasion to affect a church union that would dilute Lutheran confessional identity and ultimately nullify the Lutheran Church.

For his bitter criticism of the Evangelical Church Scheibel was dismissed from his clerical and academic positions in 1832. He then relocated to Dresden. In 1836 the Dresden authorities banished him from the city for his biting sermons against the Union and Reformed Churches. Scheibel was formally banished from Saxony the following year. He moved to Nuremberg in 1839 and would befriend

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[145] Ibid., 117.
[146] Ibid., 13.
[147] Ibid., 14 and 56.

figures associated with the mid-century revival of Lutheranism and the emergence of high-church Lutheranism.[148]

The 1830 anniversaries of the Augsburg Confession represented a culmination of the debates over Protestant memory, liturgy, and unity that had begun at the 1817 Reformation anniversaries. Despite opposition, the pro-union and pro-Agenda factions won out. Luther's memory had been successfully refashioned as representative of the intra-Protestant unity embodied by the Evangelical Church. The Prussian Union had ostensibly created intra-Protestant unity between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches in the form of the Evangelical Church. But orthodox Reformed and Lutherans who resisted joining the Evangelical Church were ostracized by the Prussian church-state hierarchy. Indeed, there were harsh consequences for religious nonconformity and resistance to the Prussian state's exclusive notion of confessional unity. The most vociferous orthodox Lutheran critic of the Evangelical Church and Agenda, Gottfried Scheibel, was exiled from Prussia. Old Lutheran congregations that refused to abide by the Agenda emigrated after the Prussian ministry had hounded them for years.

The debates surrounding 1817 Prussian Union and 1830 anniversaries of the Augsburg Confession represent a prelude to how confessional identity and difference, unity and diversity, would be employed in order to construct both confessionally-inclusive and exclusive ideas of the German nation. And of course, those notions of German confessional identity and unity would also be informed by memories of Luther and the Reformation.

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[148] Hope, *German and Scandinavian Protestantism*, 447.

Conclusion

It is neither entirely unprecedented nor surprising that German Catholics, Protestants, and some Jews came together in 1817 and again in 1830 to participate in what Johannes Burkhardt describes as a German national *Volksfest*.[149] What is truly significant is that German Catholics, Protestants, and Jews came together to participate in a German national *Volksfest* that celebrated the memory of Martin Luther and the Reformation during an era in which the confessional divide was ostensibly strong.

Burkhardt has identified the expressions of intra-Protestant unity and examples of interconfessional participation at these festivals as instances of "enlightened urbanity" (*aufgeklärter Urbanität*), a secular, communal, and political rather than confessional celebration of the German collective memory of religion.[150] This explanation cannot be wholly discounted. The historians Lutz Winckler, Rainer Fuhrman, Max L. Baeumer, and Burkhardt himself, have recognized these anniversaries and festivals as enlightened expressions of nascent German liberalism, of bourgeois class formation, as susceptible to cynical political manipulation, and early forms of German civil society and secular sociability.[151] That is, as secularizations and politicizations of these festivals and memories.
But that is to omit as afterthought the sacred meaning these festivals and what they celebrated held for so many orthodox and unionist, clergy and laity. Indeed, no

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[149] Burkhardt, "Reformations- und Lutherfeiern", 222.
[150] Ibid., 222.
[151] See Winckler, *Martin Luther als Bürger und Patriot*, Fuhrman, "Das Reformationsjubiläum 1817", and Baeumer, "Lutherfeiern und ihre politische Manipulation".

anniversary celebrations of the Reformation or the Augsburg Confession had ever been held without an accompanying religious service.[152] We should view these anniversaries and the ecclesiastical debates that accompanied them not within narratives of secularization, politicization, or class formation. Instead they may be understood within a narrative of revived nineteenth-century piety—a revived piety Olaf Blaschke has recognized as a sign of second confessional era.[153]

Collective memories of Luther and the Reformation were important components of this revival. Contemporaries appealed to Reformation-era symbols and memories to both strengthen orthodoxy and to encourage ecumenism. Blaschke argues that this nineteenth-century revival occurred in a confessional manner: Friedrich Wilhelm III's compulsory union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches in Prussia, and his order forcing Evangelical congregations to adopt the 1822 Agenda touched off fiercely confessional polemics among pro-union Evangelicals, orthodox Lutherans, and Reformed Christians.

But my evidence suggests that this revival of nineteenth-century piety occurred, at least in part, in an ecumenical manner. The 1817 and 1830 Reformation anniversaries were sites of both intra-Protestant and interconfessional ecumenism. Motivated by popular piety rather than politics, we should not blithely dismiss these bona fide calls for Christian fraternity as mere epiphenomena of other social and

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[152] Michael Mitterauer, "Anniversarium und Jubiläum. Zur Entstehung und Entwicklung öffentlicher Gedenktage," in Brix and Stekl, eds., *Der Kampf um das Gedächtnis*, 82.
[153] Olaf Blaschke, "Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 26 (2000): 38-75.

cultural processes. Instead, they are corroborating evidence of the strength of nineteenth-century piety.

Gottfried Maron has argued Luther's place in church history belongs between the confessions and between the middles ages and modernity.[154] Confessionalization occurred shortly after Luther's death—but not during his lifetime. Thus we may recognize Luther as a pre-, or perhaps bi-confessional figure who saw his church as a unity—not a Roman, nor Nuremberger, nor Wittenberger Church, but a Christian Church to which all belonged—albeit deeply split.[155] Perhaps this accounts for why German Catholics, Reformed, and Lutherans could all participate in a festival that celebrated the memory of Martin Luther and the Reformation: because the meaning of the memory of Luther and the Reformation had become so malleable since the sixteenth century. Indeed, there was a veritable Luther for everyone in nineteenth-century Germany.[156] Franz Schnabel argued every era has a dispute over the authentic Luther. No era has known a unified, coherent image of Luther.[157] E.W. Zeeden noted the varying interpretations of Luther by lay and clerical factions since the Reformation.[158] But it may be more appropriate to say every group in every era has its own authentic Luther. This was

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[154] Gottfried Maron, "Luther zwischen den Konfessionen: die ökumenische Bedeutung Martin Luthers," in Jürgen Becker, ed. *Luthers bleibende Bedeutung* (Husum: Husum Publishing, 1983), 121.
[155] Ibid., 122.
[156] For Luther's place in nineteenth-century German memory see Hartmut Lehmann, "Martin Luther as a National Hero in the Nineteenth Century," in J.C. Eade, ed. *Romantic Nationalism in Europe* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1983). For his place in American memory see Hartmut Lehmann, *Martin Luther in the American Imagination* (Munich: W. Fink, 1988).
[157] Franz Schnabel, *Deutschlands geschichtliche Quellen und Darstellungen in der Neuzeit: Das Zeitalter der Reformation 1500-1550* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1931), 285.
[158] Zeeden, *The Legacy of Luther*.

surely true of the ecumenical and orthodox Lutherans, Reformed, Evangelicals, and Catholics who invoked wildly divergent memories of Luther and the Reformation to remake the meaning of the 1817 and 1830 Reformation anniversaries and negotiate the possibilities and peril of intra-Protestant and German interconfessional unity. And in the coming years, the relationship among confessional unity, Luther memory, and German national unity would become even more apparent.

CHAPTER 2 - A "MODERN SECESSION FROM POPERY": THE REVOLUTIONARY ECUMENISM OF THE PROTESTANT FRIENDS AND THE GERMAN-CATHOLIC MOVEMENT

In Vormärz Germany, religious dissent appeared on both sides of the confessional divide. On 29 June 1841 sixteen Lutheran clergymen met in Gnadau to discuss how to respond to the censure of the Magdeburg pastor Wilhelm Franz Sintenis. The Magdeburg Consistory had censured Sintenis for denying the divinity of Christ, although Sintenis had merely condemned Lutheran veneration of the crucifix as idolatrous. In protest of the Sintenis Affair, the sixteen clergymen, seeking greater autonomy for their congregations and independence from consistorial oversight, agreed to withdraw from the Saxon Lutheran Church. These sixteen clerics and their congregations, led by the Pömmelte pastor Leberecht Uhlich, collectively became known as the Protestant Friends.

On 1 October 1844 the Silesian Catholic priest Johannes Ronge published an open letter to Bishop Wilhelm Arnoldi of Trier. In his letter, Ronge decried recent pilgrimages to Trier cathedral and its exhibition of the Holy Coat as idolatrous, and personally attacked the bishop for encouraging superstition and fanaticism. For his insolence, Ronge was defrocked and excommunicated from the church, but he continued to preach and attracted thousands of supporters. His followers, and other congregations inspired by Ronge's teachings to withdraw from the Roman Catholic Church, became known as the German-Catholic movement.

The Protestant Friends and the German-Catholic movement were Vormärz religious communities that severed ties with the mainstream German Evangelical and Catholic churches in order to realize confessional, national, and gender

harmony by promoting religious freedom, interconfessional cooperation, and confessionally-mixed marriages. Their "modern secession from Popery" was informed by memories of Martin Luther as a revolutionary who had liberated Germany from the spiritual bondage of the papacy. Their nineteenth-century Reformation, led by the Protestant pastor Leberecht Uhlich and the defrocked Catholic chaplain Johannes Ronge, was directed against the governing hierarchy of the Evangelical Church and the ultramontane faction within the Roman Catholic Church. These dissident religious communities found extraordinary resonance across Vormärz Germany, attracting more than 100,000 men and women to their religious services, rallies, and social organizations. Because they shared the same goals of religious freedom and confessional unity, the Protestant Friends and German-Catholic movement maintained close ties and had informally cooperated since 1845. In 1850, both as a practical measure and a reaction to the failure of the 1848 revolutions to unify the German nation, the Protestant Friends and German Catholics united to form the Free Congregations.

Well before the confessional politics of the Center Party and before Bismarck's Kulturkampf had proposed notions of German unity that excluded the confessional "Other,"[1] the dissenting congregations introduced a notion of German unity that was inclusive of both Catholics and Protestants. If theology was ersatz

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[1] See Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984) and Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).

politics in Vormärz Germany[2], the Protestant Friends and German Catholics were proponents of a revolutionary ecumenism—a model of confessional unity dedicated to the establishment of a general Christian communion consisting of German Catholics and Protestants united in their subversion of ecclesiastical and secular authorities for the cause of freedom of religion and conscience.

Historians have predominately treated these congregations in two ways: as examples of Vormärz-era mass piety or as nascent German political movements. Catherine Prelinger recognized the appearance of the Protestant Friends and German-Catholic movement in the early 1840s as the moment at which liberal theology and radical piety descended from the theology faculties and became popular.[3] F.W. Graf and Jörn Brederlow have offered political interpretations of the dissenting congregations that set the Protestant Friends and German Catholics within the context of the evolution of German middle-class consciousness and liberal political factions; "democratic opposition in religious clothes," as historian Günter Kolbe described them.[4] And Dagmar Herzog has explored the relationship of Free Protestant and German Catholic religious and gender politics to Vormärz

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[2] Warren Breckman, *Marx, the Young Hegelians, and the Origins of Radical Social Theory: Dethroning the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 4-5.
[3] Catherine Magill Holden Prelinger, "A Decade of Dissent in Germany: An Historical Study of The Society of Protestant Friends and The German-catholic Church, 1840-1848" (PhD Dissertation, Yale University, 1954).
[4] Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, *Die Politisierung des religiösen Bewußtseins: Die bürgerlichen Religionsparteien im deutschen Vormärz. Das Beispiel des Deutschkatholizismus* (Friedrich Frommann: Stuttgart, 1978), Jörn Brederlow, *"Lichtfreunde" und "Freie Gemeinden": Religiöser Protest und Freiheitsbewegung im Vormärz und in der Revolution von 1848/1849* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1976), and Günter Kolbe "Demokratische opposition in Religiösem Gewande und Antikirchliche bewegeng im Königreich Sachsen" (PhD. Dissertation, University of Leipzig, 1964).

Badanese liberalism.[5] But none of these historians have explored how German collective memories of Luther and the Reformation informed the dissenting congregations' campaigns for gender, confessional, and national harmony. Nor have historians asked how the Protestant Friends' and German Catholics' revolutionary ecumenism—a reunion of German Catholics and Protestants united in opposition to ecclesiastical and secular authorities—translated into inclusive notions of German unity and identity.

This chapter proposes a synthesis of previous interpretations and argues that the Protestant Friends and German Catholics were spiritual and social revolutionaries whose campaigns were informed by memories of Luther as liberator of Germany from spiritual bondage and the Reformation era as one of revolution that was being replayed during the nineteenth century. At a time when so many Germans advocated nationalism as the only solution to Germany's problems, the dissenting congregations' revolutionary-ecumenical notions of German unity and identity proposed a means of unifying Germany that simultaneously addressed the social, political, and confessional divides that had resulted from the Reformation and Wars of Religion. And by rebelling against ecclesiastical and secular authorities who had consistently exploited the German confessional divide, the Protestant Friends and German Catholics imagined a nation that, rather than excluding either of the two confessions, encapsulated them both.

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[5] Dagmar Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion: Religious Politics in Pre-Revolutionary Baden* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

Memories of Luther were instrumental to how the Protestant Friends and German Catholics understood their relationship to ecclesiastical and secular authorities and how they imagined German unity and identity. This was not the ecumenical Luther invoked at the 1817 Reformation anniversaries, but rather a revolutionary Luther whose memory was recalled to justify defiance to the ecclesiastical and secular authorities that opposed freedom of religion and exploited the confessional divide between Catholics and Protestants. The dissenting congregations' Luther was never associated with orthodox dogma or doctrine, but with the possibility of spiritual and national emancipation.

The Protestant Friends and German Catholic movement identified themselves within a framework of Reformation memory, as latter-day reformers participating in a Reformation of the nineteenth-century. Not only did they identify their own efforts with those of the sixteenth-century reformers, but the dissenting congregations identified their persecution by ecclesiastical and secular authorities with memories of the persecution of heretics and heterodox before, during, and since the Reformation. Making the past present through memory, the Protestant Friends and German Catholics remembered Luther and the Reformation in terms of their own defiance against and struggles with ecclesiastical and secular authorities, which informed their contemporary notions of protest, reform, and unity. Although the Protestant Friends and German Catholics were ultimately unsuccessful in achieving so many of their religious and social goals, these dissenting congregations reflect the revolutionary-ecumenical hopes of the Vormärz and belie its conventional historiography as an era of heightening confessional tension and

increasing political reaction.

The Ecclesiastical Context of the Vormärz Era

Confessional relations devolved during the 1830s and 1840s throughout Germany, but especially in Prussia, the Rhineland, and Bavaria. A series of events contributed to these increasing confessional tensions. Friedrich Wilhelm III's persecution of the separatist Old Lutherans and their mass emigration from Germany in 1837 strained relations between orthodox Lutherans and Evangelical Protestants in Prussia. Catholic and Protestant relations in the Rhineland faltered during the "Cologne Troubles" of 1837, massive Catholic uprisings touched off by the Prussian government's arrest of a Catholic archbishop who had forbidden mixed marriages. The Bavarian Genuflection Edict of 1838, which stipulated that Protestant soldiers marching in state festival processions must kneel before the Eucharist, was met by raucous opposition by Protestant subjects of the Catholic kingdom of Bavaria. The resurgence of ultramontanism and commensurate fears about the increasing Roman influence in German ecclesiastical and social affairs created suspicion among orthodox Catholics, liberal Catholics, and Protestants. The ascendancy of the Romantic and Pietist Friedrich Wilhelm IV to the Prussian throne in 1840 was met with hopeful anticipation for reform. These hopes were frustrated when the king passed reactionary policies and partnered with ultramontane Catholics and orthodox Protestants to quash religious dissent and enforce strict obedience to the hierarchy of the Evangelical Church.

The Old Lutherans were a group of Prussian Lutheran congregations that had consistently refused to join the Evangelical Church or adopt its controversial 1822 liturgy. Friedrich Wilhelm III had marginalized Old Lutherans in eastern Prussia and

Silesia since 1817 because they had refused to join the Prussian Union. After 1830, when the king used the tercentenary of the Augsburg Confession to compel holdout congregations to adopt the 1822 liturgy, Old Lutheran clergy and laity who dissented were routinely defrocked and arrested. Friedrich's culture minister Karl von Altenstein even ordered the army into some of the most recalcitrant Old Lutheran parishes to enforce Prussian religious policies. On 2 September 1837 Friedrich Wilhelm III finally permitted the Old Lutherans to legally emigrate from Prussia. Thousands left for the United States and Australia, but intra-Protestant relations, especially between orthodox and Evangelical Protestants, remained tense.[6]

The Kölner Wirren, or "Cologne Troubles" were massive Catholic demonstrations against the Prussian government's 1837 arrest of Archbishop Clemens August von Droste-Vischering (1773-1845). 1825 and 1834 agreements between the Catholic Church and Prussian state stipulated that sons of confessionally-mixed marriages would be raised in the faith of the father and daughters in the faith of the mother. But Archbishop Droste-Vischering, invested in 1836, refused to honor these agreements because they contradicted the Catholic teaching that all children of mixed-marriages must all be raised as Catholics. The archbishop also forbade Catholic priests from performing mixed marriages unless the parents guaranteed that all of the children would be raised Catholic. For refusing to uphold the 1825 and 1834 agreements king Friedrich Wilhelm III had Droste-

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[6] Nicholas Hope, *German and Scandinavian Protestantism 1700 to 1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 446-447.

Vischering arrested. The arrest provoked a raucous Catholic reaction and heightened confessional tensions between Catholics and Protestants in Rhenish Prussia.[7]

In August 1838 king Ludwig I of Bavaria issued an edict that required both Catholic and Protestant soldiers to genuflect as the Eucharist passed their ranks during the festival of Corpus Christi and at all other religious processions. This edict provoked the so-called Kniebeugungsstreit, or "Kneeling Conflict". A Catholic monarch forcibly compelling his Protestant soldiers to show reverence to the sacrament scandalized the Bavarian Protestant clergy and laity. In 1844 a Lutheran minister named Wilhelm Redenbacher (1800-1876), who advised Protestant soldiers to disobey the order, was defrocked and jailed along with other critics of the edict. Although the king finally rescinded the edict in 1845 it contributed to increasing confessional tensions between Catholics and Protestants in Bavaria.[8]

The resurgence of ultramontanism within the German Catholic Church in the 1840s strained relations between orthodox Catholics and liberal Catholics and Protestants. During the 1840s ultramontane clerics were invested with the bishoprics of Mainz, Cologne, Munich and Breslau. These bishops demanded that priests be trained in closed Catholic seminaries rather than in the German universities and sought to organize the clergy into a strict and obedient hierarchy that deferred to Rome rather than independent-minded German bishops.[9] But

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[7] Thomas Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck, 1800-1866* translated by Daniel Nolan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 337-338.
[8] Hope, *German and Scandinavian Protestantism*, 449.
[9] Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck*, 362-363.

German Protestants had received Roman intervention into German political and ecclesiastical affairs with great suspicion since the Thirty Years War.[10] Thus the resurgence of ultramontanism heightened suspicions and tensions between German Catholics and Protestants.

The ascendance of Friedrich Wilhelm IV to the Prussian throne in 1840 added to increasing confessional tensions. The new king demanded the Evangelical clergy's fidelity to the Prussian state church and sought the cooperation of orthodox parties within the Catholic and Evangelical churches to counteract dissenting and revolutionary movements.[11] Friedrich's willingness to cooperate with ultramontane Catholics and orthodox Protestants strained relations both within and between the confessions and indirectly enabled the resurgence of ultramontanism within the Roman Catholic church in Germany.

The deteriorating social conditions of the "Hungry 40s", caused by widespread food shortages that were intensified by recession and a banking panic, heightened these tensions and exacerbated popular dissatisfaction with authorities.[12] The Protestant Friends and German-Catholic movement proposed a revolutionary solution to the increasing confessional tension, state deference to orthodox religious parties, and state persecution of religious nonconformists during the Vormärz by proposing a reunion of the separated confessions that would be

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[10] Eric Dorn Brose, *German History, 1789-1871: From the Holy Roman Empire to the Bismarckian Reich* (Providence, RI: Berghahn, 1997), 129.
[11] Robert M. Bigler, *The Politics of German Protestantism: The Rise of the Protestant Church Elite in Prussia, 1815-1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 193 and Hajo Halborn, *A History of Modern Germany, 1648-1840* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964), 508.
[12] Jonathan Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 109-112.

united in opposition to ecclesiastical and secular authorities that denied freedom of religion and conscience.

Two Revolutionary-Ecumenical Religious Communities of the Vormärz: the Protestant Friends and the German-Catholic Movement

The Protestants Friends and German-Catholic movement both emerged from perceived threats to the autonomy of local congregations. According to the Protestant Friends, consistorial interference into the affairs of local churches threatened the autonomy of individual Protestant congregations. For the German-Catholic movement, the 1844 Trier Pilgrimages, endorsed by conservative statesmen and ultramontane clerics, represented a threat to the autonomy of German Catholic bishops and congregations. The dissenting congregations' reactions to these events touched off a nineteenth-century Reformation, in which both the Protestant Friends and German Catholics invoked memories of a revolutionary Luther to agitate for freedom of religion from ecclesiastical and secular authorities and interconfessional cooperation between German Catholics and Protestants.

Johann Heinrich Bernhard Dräseke's handling of the 1840 Sintenis Affair touched off the religious dissent of the Protestant Friends. Since 1832 Bishop Dräeske (1774-1849) had served as superintendent of the Magdeburg Consistory, which governed the local Saxon church. But in 1840 he censured pastor W.F. Sintenis (1794-1859) for his heretical views regarding the Lutheran veneration of the crucifix. Fearing a popular backlash from the local churches, Dräeske decided to merely censure Sintenis for his heresy rather than remove him from his post. But this mild admonition by Dräeske and the consistory was no more acceptable to Sintenis' supporters than his removal. Indeed, for his censure of Sintenis, Dräseke

was widely accused of establishing a nineteenth-century Inquisition.[13] The censure of Sintenis precipitated the withdrawal first of Leberecht Uhlich (1799-1872), and then fifteen other Saxon pastors and their congregations from the Saxon Lutheran Church.

The sixteen dissenting pastors and their respective congregations maintained their independent characters but collectively became known as the Protestant Friends. Leberecht Uhlich had been dedicated to the maintenance of intra-Protestant unity and had grave reservations about formally splitting from the Saxon church to found the Protestant Friends. Nevertheless, Uhlich attended and endorsed a conference of the dissenting congregations held in Leipzig in May 1842 at which the Protestant Friends asserted their independence of the Saxon church and defined the shared tenets of their communion, which encouraged popular expressions of piety, the free interpretation of scripture, supported lay control of Protestant congregations, and independence from consistorial oversight.

Because they agitated for the independence of their congregations from court and consistory, the Protestant Friends were identified by the Prussian state as politically subversive. In August 1845 the Prussian government prohibited them from meeting publically on the grounds that the group sought to subvert the existing ecclesiastical and political order.[14] Despite their prohibition in Prussia, the Protestant Friends found supporters throughout Germany and were strongest in Saxony. Among the most notable Saxon congregations were those of the politically-

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[13] Bigler, *The Politics of German Protestantism*, 194-195.
[14] Ibid., 222.

active Gustav Adolf Wislicenus (1803-1875) in Halle; Eduard Baltzer (1814-1887), founder of the German vegetarian movement, in Nordhausen; and Leberecht Uhlich in Magdeburg.[15] There were approximately 70 congregations and 20,000 members of the Protestant Friends throughout Germany on the eve of the 1848 revolutions.

But religious dissent appeared on both sides of the confessional divide in pre-revolutionary Germany. The Catholic counterpart to the Protestant Friends was the German-Catholic movement.[16] The German-Catholic movement emerged as a result of the resurgence of ultramontanism and increasing Catholic orthodoxy that was evident at the August 1844 exhibition of the Holy Coat in Trier.[17] Bishop Wilhlem Arnoldi of Trier had promised to stage an exhibition of the Holy Coat since his consecration in 1842. The Holy Coat was a relic that had ostensibly been worn by Christ and housed at the cathedral in Trier since the fourth century. In consultation with Metternich, and with the cooperation of the Prussian government,

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[15] Lucian Hölscher, *Geschichte der protestantischen Frömmigkeit in Deutschland* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2005), 360.

[16] For the German-language literature on Ronge and the German Catholics, see Wolfgang Leesch, *Die Geschicte des Deutschkatholizismus in Schlesien (1844-1852), unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner politischen Haltung* (Breslau: Priebatsch, 1938), Günter Kolbe "Demokratische opposition in Religiösem Gewande und Antikirchliche bewegeng im Königreich Sachsen" (PhD. Dissertation, University of Leipzig, 1964), Jörn Brederlow, *"Lichtfreunde" und "Freie Gemeinden": Religiöser Protest und Freiheitsbewegung im Vormärz und in der Revolution von 1848/1849* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1976), Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, *Die Politisierung des religiösen Bewußtseins: Die bürgerlichen Religionsparteien im deutschen Vormärz. Das Beispiel des Deutschkatholizismus* (Friedrich Frommann: Stuttgart, 1978), Peter Bahn "Deutschkatholiken und Freireligiöse: Geschichte und Kultur einer religiös-weltanschaulichen Dissidentgruppe, dargestellt am Beispiel der Pfalz" (PhD Dissertation, University of Mainz, 1991), and Andreas Holzem *Kirchenreform und Sektenstiftung: Deutschkatholiken, Reformkatholiken und Ultramontane am Oberrhein 1844-1866* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1994).

[17] The definitive social history of the Trier pilgrimages is still Wolfgang Schieder's "Kirche und Revolution: Sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte der Trier Wallfahrt von 1844" *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 14 (1974), 419-454.

the exhibition of the coat began in August 1844.[18] Every day for weeks over one million pilgrims travelled from Germany, France, Belgium, and Holland to witness the relic. Rumors of miraculous cures of sick pilgrims spread throughout Germany. Indeed, a female relation of the archbishop at the center of the Cologne Troubles, Droste-Vischering, claimed to be cured of her disability as soon as she beheld the Holy Coat.[19]

Liberal Catholics received mass displays of piety like the pilgrimages to the Holy Coat with considerable suspicion. The Silesian Catholic chaplain Johannes Ronge (1813-1887) was particularly troubled by the pilgrimages. Accordingly, on 1 October 1844 Ronge published an open letter to Bishop Arnoldi of Trier decrying the exhibition of and pilgrimages to the Holy Coat as "festivals of idolatry and dishonorable spectacles of superstition and fanaticism," all of which Ronge believed were encouraged by the Roman hierarchy. Ronge had also claimed that Bishop Arnoldi offered indulgences to pilgrims who made contributions toward the repair of the local cathedral. For this offense Ronge identified Arnoldi as the "Tetzel of the nineteenth century" and admonished readers of the letter not to dishonor the good work of early modern reformers such as Jan Huss, Ulrich von Hutten, and Martin Luther by participating in the pilgrimages to or veneration of the Holy Coat.[20]

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[18] Jonathan Sperber, *Rhineland Radicals: The Democratic Movement and the Revolution of 1848-1849* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 126.
[19] Anonymous, *John Ronge, the Holy Coat of Treves, and the New German-Catholic Church* (New York: Harper, 1845), 18.
[20] Johannes Ronge, "Urteil eines katholischen Priesters über den Heiligen Rock zu Trier" (1 October 1844).

For his condemnation of the pilgrimage and his attacks on Arnoldi, Ronge was duly defrocked and excommunicated by the Catholic Church in December 1844. Despite his excommunication Ronge continued to preach, winning scores of supporters. Roman Catholic congregations in Leipzig, Dresden, Worms, and Breslau that were inspired by Ronge's letter severed themselves from the church and issued their own confessions of faith. In March 1845 a German Catholic council of 15 of these dissenting congregations met in Leipzig to declare themselves a German Catholic Church and define their shared beliefs, which Manfred P. Fleischer recognized as a "middle way between papacy and Protestantism".[21] The shared German Catholic beliefs defined at the Leipzig conference advocated episcopalism rather than ultramontanism, asserting independence from the Roman bishop "and his hangers on".[22] The German Catholics relied on liberal Protestant dogmatics and Protestant models of church administration to oppose the authority of the Catholic ecclesiastical hierarchy, especially the Roman pontiff's claim of primacy among the bishops. In addition, the Leipzig Conference advocated freedom of religion and conscience. It recognized Scripture as the basis of Christian faith and claimed the right to freely examine it according to their conscience. And the German-Catholic congregations assembled in Leipzig acknowledged two sacraments: baptism and the Lord's Supper, which they recognized as a commemorative, rather than literal, communion with Christ's body and blood. German-Catholic congregations were

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[21] Manfred P. Fleischer, *Katholische und lutherische Ireniker: Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1968), 119.
[22] Samuel Laing, *Notes on the Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Schism from the Church of Rome, called the German-Catholic Church* (London: Longman, 1846), 76.

governed and ministers chosen according to the vote of their members, including women. They sought the abolition of priestly celibacy, indulgences, auricular confession, and eschewed the use of sacramentals, relics, and icons.[23]

Although the German Catholic movement was immediately banned in Austria, Bavaria, and Hessen, liberal Prussian ministers, including the crown prince Wilhelm and the culture minister Eichhorn, initially welcomed it as a bulwark against the increasing power of the ultramontane movement. On the eve of the 1848 revolution the German Catholics could boast 259 congregations and approximately 70,000 followers, including tens of thousands of Protestants.[24]

According to Ronge and his supporters, the ostentatious display of and mass pilgrimages to the Holy Coat symbolized the Roman hierarchy's increasing control over the German Catholic clergy and laity and the consolidation of the ultramontane party within the church. Ronge identified the veneration of the coat and other relics as superstitions that represented the continuing mental and spiritual bondage of the German people by the Roman ecclesiastical hierarchy. He believed these abuses demanded Catholic attention and oversight; indeed, they demanded a new Reformation:

> In the sixteenth century, the exaction of absolution money hastened the advent of Protestantism, for which the people had been long prepared. In the nineteenth century, the idolatrous exhibition of the Holy Coat at Treves, was the immediate cause. The aim of the hierarchy was to show its victory over

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[23] Ibid., 76-96.
[24] Hölscher, *Geschichte der protestantischen Frömmigkeit*, 358-359.

> Protestantism in Germany, and to get money. The like consequences must follow in the nineteenth as in the sixteenth century.[25]

The sixteenth-century indulgence controversy and the nineteenth-century display of and pilgrimage to the Holy Coat of Trier were both tipping points for their respective reformations. Ronge recounted the origins and development of the German-Catholic movement, or the "modern secession from popery," in his 1852 history *The Reformation of the Nineteenth Century*. In it, Ronge imagined himself as a latter-day Luther, challenging the Roman hierarchy with the ultimate goal of emancipating the German people from their mental and spiritual bondage.[26]

The Protestant Friends and German Catholics both sought ecclesiastical independence from the orthodox parties in their respective churches. Emancipation from orthodoxy was a prerequisite for overcoming the bitterest consequence of the sixteenth-century Reformation: the confessional divide. Leberecht Uhlich noted that the proscription of presbyterian independence and religious freedom by ecclesiastical authorities created an environment in which powerful factions excluded weaker ones by defining them as heterodox. This of course led to "manifold schisms and disunions" within the church.[27] He also accused orthodox Protestants of working "like brothers, hand in hand" with the Pope and Jesuits against every instance of religious progress and reunification.[28]

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[25] Johannes Ronge, *The Reformation of the Nineteenth Century* Vol. 1 (London: E. Deutsch & Co, 1852), 8.
[26] Ibid., ix.
[27] Leberecht Uhlich, *The Protestant Friends: A Circular Addressed to Christians throughout Germany* translated by G.C. Hebbe (New York: Charles Müller, 1846).
[28] Gustav Tschirn, *Zur 60jährigen Geschichte der freireligiösen Bewegung* (Gottesberg: Hensels, 1904), 25.

The Protestant Friends invoked memories of Luther's rejection of the spiritual tutelage of the Catholic Church in order to justify their opposition to the consistorial control of the contemporary Evangelical Church over their own congregations.[29] In his 1845 Reformation sermon entitled "Hier stehe ich," Uhlich preached on Acts of the Apostles 4:13-21, in which Peter and John defy the Sanhedrin and continue to proselytize in Jesus' name. Uhlich identified this episode of biblical history with Luther's famous defiance of the Roman ecclesiastical hierarchy at the 1521 Diet of Worms, and with the dissenting congregation's defiance of the Magdeburg Consistory. He concluded the sermon, an act of open defiance against the established church's claims of control over individual congregations, by channeling Luther himself, exclaiming "Here I stand, I can do no other," to justify his congregation's opposition to the consistory.[30]

According to Johannes Ronge, orthodox parties on both sides of the confessional divide opposed reconciliation between German Catholics and Protestants despite the fact that the people longed for peace between the confessions. The Roman Catholic clergy and the orthodox Protestant party, both of whom demanded "a blindly obedient laity," could never allow for a reunification of Catholics and Protestants into independent and enlightened congregations because such a reunion would completely undermine their ecclesiastical and secular authority.[31] The German Catholic pastor Gustav von Struve (1805-1870) echoed Ronge's sentiment by protesting the ecclesiastical and secular authority of the

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[29] *Sonntags-Blätt* No. 62, 8 December 1850
[30] Leberecht Uhlich, *Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders* (Magdeburg: Creutz, 1845), 16.
[31] Ronge, *The Reformation* Vol. 1, 48.

orthodox parties. Struve, the son of a Bavarian diplomat to Russia, had variously worked as a journalist, dramatist, lawyer, politician, and German-Catholic pastor. He was a member of the Frankfurt Parliament, participated the 1848-1849 revolutions in Baden, and was eventually exiled to the United States for his revolutionary activity. According to Struve:

> The German-Catholics rise up against the stable nature and the rigid dogmatism of the Roman Catholic Church, the (Protestant) Friends of Light against biblical literalism, which is imposed on them by the state and the Pietists. The spirit should be free and rule over the dead letter of the Bible, Roman dogma, and the Protestant symbols.[32]

The German Catholics called on Catholics and Protestants alike to resist the dogmatism and literalism of the Roman hierarchy and Evangelical state churches. Indeed, Ronge identified the politicization of the sixteenth-century Reformation with contemporary Evangelical state churches. He noted that early modern Protestant secular rulers had usurped authority in matters of faith and that Luther had finally regretted that he had sought their help in stewarding the Reformation.[33] Indeed, Ronge identified contemporary Protestant princes as "the armed bishops and popes" of the nineteenth-century churches who suppressed religious minorities and inhibited religious progress and liberty just as the Reformation-era Catholic Church had done.[34]

The German Catholic jurist Friedrich Hecker (1811-1881) affirmed Ronge's contention that the paramount causes of German religious strife in general, and the

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[32] Gustav v. Struve, *Politisches Taschenbuch für das deutsche Volk* (Frankfurt a.M.: Rütten, 1846), 204.
[33] Ronge, *The Reformation*, Vol. 1, 6.
[34] Ibid., 6.

Thirty Years War in particular, were the misuse of state power vis-à-vis religion and the orthodox parties' insistence that they were completely and exclusively right.[35] According to Hecker, a Badenese revolutionary who would be exiled to the United States and serve on behalf of the Union in the American Civil War, the political manipulation of the sixteenth-century Reformation was being replayed in the nineteenth century with ultramontane intervention into German episcopal politics and the Prussian court's meddling into the affairs of Evangelical congregations. Such intervention could only strain relations between clergy and laity, orthodox and liberal, church and state.[36]

Members of the dissenting congregations worried that a triumphant and interventionist papacy would completely abolish Protestantism in Germany. The Prussian court of Friedrich Wilhelm IV, with its deference to ultramontane Catholics and orthodox Protestants in opposition to progressive religious communities, served as "evidence" of this plan. According to the dissenting congregations, only they could prevent the abolition of German Protestantism by completing the sixteenth-century Reformation and uniting the separated confessions.[37] The nineteenth-century Reformation would realize freedom of religion and

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[35] Friedrich Hecker, *Die staatsrechtlichen Verhältnisse der Deutschkatholiken mit besonderem Hinblick auf Baden* (Heidelberg: Julius Groos, 1845), 10 and 25.
[36] For the lives and careers of exiled German revolutionaries such as Struve and Hecker in America, see Carl Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution: The German Forty-Eighters in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1952).
[37] Ronge, *The Reformation*, Vol. 1, 38.

consciousness, annul ecclesiastical hierarchies, and do so as a unified German Christian Church that included Catholics and Protestants.[38]

In their efforts to effect a nineteenth-century Reformation, the Protestant Friends invoked doctrines of Protestant liberty to justify their demands for religious freedom and opposition to the state church hierarchies. The Protestant Friends framed their participation in a nineteenth-century Reformation and their opposition to and persecution by spiritual and secular authorities within a schema of memory that recalled Luther's opposition to the early modern papacy.[39] Uhlich underlined this point by exclaiming:

> It is, therefore, not to be tolerated, that any person, be it a temporal or spiritual lord, shall stand up and issue his mandate, and endeavor to enforce it, saying: "Ye, people of the nineteenth century, must hold yourselves implicitly bound by the forms and ordinances of the sixteenth century, must adopt the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession, the primitive conception of Martin Luther, (justification by faith alone, &c.) without change or limitation"! It is the privilege and the duty of every Christian to think for himself, to examine the records and traditions of by-gone ages for himself, to search the scriptures, and to embrace the Christian system from a free and unbiased conviction. […] But since in this our day many persons, some of whom occupy stations of great power and influence, strive to introduce the universal authority of the old statutes and customs of Christianity, we enter our *protest* against it, this being our right as Protestants, and our duty as Christians. We pledge ourselves to that Protestant liberty which Luther defended by his undaunted courage, which Jesus Christ has purchased for us with is blood.[40]

Thus Luther was not significant for his theology or the doctrines and dogmas he defined; his memory was significant to the Protestant Friends as a revolutionary symbol of defiance of the secular and spiritual authorities who abused Luther's

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[38] Johannes Ronge, *Rede, gehalten am 23. September 1845 in der Münsterkirche zu Ulm* (Ulm: Ernst Nübling, 1845), 8.
[39] Uhlich, *The Protestant Friends*.
[40] Ibid.

memory by invoking it to bolster their own authority. Luther did not represent adherence to intractable dogma or unreflective deference to spiritual authority but the revolutionary possibility of spiritual emancipation. The sixteenth-century Reformation was not about a redefinition of doctrine or a revaluation of theology; it was about the radical assertion and defense of spiritual freedom. This is what the Reformation represented to the dissenting congregations. And it was this radical memory of Luther that informed the nineteenth-century Reformation. Indeed, undue deference to Luther himself or the Lutheran doctrine could threaten this radical notion of Protestant liberty. Uhlich and the Protestant Friends rejected the sentiment that they should defer to the letter of some sixteenth-century doctrine simply because it originated with Luther. Such a sentiment would contradict the Protestant liberty that Luther had won through the Reformation.

The Protestant Friends appealed to the German Evangelical clergy to join them to defend the legacy of the Reformation—namely the free investigation of divine truths of Christianity against the compulsory dogmas of an authoritarian church—and for recognition of their dissenting congregations. They promised the Protestant clergy that if they preached the true Christianity of tolerance and love their churches would fill up, their congregations would become the vanguard of Protestantism, and they would be carrying on the spirit of the Reformation.[41]

The Protestant Friends and German Catholics identified their prohibition and persecution by secular and ecclesiastical authorities with memories of the

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[41] "Offener Brief an die protestantische Geistlichkeit Deutschlands," *Zeitung für freie Gemeinden. Materialien zur Geschichte und Fortbildung der freien Gemeinden*, Vol. II, no 2, (28 March 1851), 32-34.

persecution of sixteenth-century Protestant minorities. The memory of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre was particularly evocative for them. The relationship of the Free Congregations' campaign for religious freedom to St Bartholomew's Day was underlined by Eduard Duller (1809-1853), who reminded his readers that the paramount cause of the massacre was religious enthusiasm and hatred and that only freedom of religion could inspire the mutual respect and tolerance necessary for overcoming such violence.[42] Duller, a German-Catholic pastor in Mainz, drew parallels between the censorship and confiscation of vernacular Bible translations and Protestant literature during the 1520s with the 1845 prohibition of the Protestant Friends' meetings and persecution in Prussia. Indeed, Duller believed that the Prussian prohibition of the Protestant Friends presaged the extermination (*Vernichtung*) of their own communion.[43] The dissenting congregations' fears of persecution reveal how deeply invested they were in the memory of Luther and the Reformation. They identified not only with the persecution of sixteenth-century heretics and heterodox but also the challenge such groups posed for religious orthodoxy. Their fears of persecution were not entirely without cause. German Catholics were prohibited from meeting in Austria, Bavaria, and Hessen from their inception. Prussia, initially hospitable to the anti-ultramontane proclivities of the German Catholics, would soon persecute them. In 1845 the Magdeburg Consistory recommended the removal of Leberecht Uhlich from his pastoral office for leading bible studies that the local police had identified as "subversive". An 1847 Prussian

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[42] *Der fränkische Morgenbote. Zeitschrift zur Förderung der neuen Reformation* No 24, (11 September 1851).
[43] *Der fränkische Morgenbote* No 23, 4 September 1851.

law expelled dissenting congregations from the state church, identified them as political clubs, levied heavy fines on them, and then prohibited them as popular assemblies subversive of public order. As a result, Ronge was arrested and jailed for merely celebrating the German Catholic mass.[44]

The ideals of Protestant liberty and freedom of religion and consciousness that the dissenting congregations were persecuted for were not merely ends, but means to promote the ultimate goals of religion: to unite all men and all confessions in love and inspire them with mutual regard for each others' ideas.[45] To this end, the Protestant Friends and German Catholics had informally cooperated and maintained close relations since 1845. But at a May 1850 conference held in Leipzig that was attended by representatives of thirty congregations of the Protestant Friends and representatives of approximately one hundred congregations of German Catholics, a majority of the attending parties elected to unite to form the Free Congregations. Not every congregation accepted the union of the Protestant Friends and German Catholics. A handful of Saxon German Catholic congregations rejected the union on the grounds that it might threaten the autonomy of their German Catholic congregations. But a majority of congregations countenanced the alliance.[46] This union may be understood as both a practical measure that could help realize the goals of two like-minded associations, and as a reaction to the failure of the 1848 revolutions to unify Germany. Both groups were committed to a liberal Christianity,

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[44] Bigler, *The Politics of German Protestantism*, 222 and Ronge, *The Reformation of the Nineteenth Century* Vol. 1, 38-39.
[45] Uhlich, *The Protestant Friends*.
[46] Tschirn, *Zur 60jährigen Geschichte der freireligiösen Bewegung*, 53-54.

decried every hierarchical and dogmatic restriction on religious freedom and self-determination, and saw Christian sentiments actualized not in confessions of faith but in thoroughgoing social and political engagement.[47] More importantly, they sought to unify the separated confessions and proposed notions of German unity and identity that included both German Catholics, Protestants, and in some limited cases, Jews.

[47] Hölscher, *Geschichte der protestantischen Frömmigkeit*, 360.

The Free Congregations and German Unity

The Free Congregations advocated interconfessional peace and cooperation between German Catholics and Protestants in order to heal the most bitter wound of the Reformation: the German confessional divide. Johannes Ronge ultimately desired a unification of German Catholics and Protestants into a general Christian Church. Indeed, the German Catholic historian Georg Gervinus (1805-1871) recognized confessional unity to be "the very essence" of German Catholicism.[48] The Protestant Friends likewise sought to improve relations with Catholics and encouraged intra-Protestant unity among the sects and parties of the Evangelical Church. The dissenting congregations also acknowledged similarities among German Catholicism, the Protestant Friends, and Reform Judaism as potential bases for cooperation among German Catholics, Protestants, and Jews. And the Free Congregations' vision of confessional unity would facilitate German national unity.

Ronge claimed that the German people shared his desire for interconfessional unity. He pleaded that religion, which ought to be an institution that unites, should no longer be a cause of separation between German citizens. He implored his readers to go to their clergymen and pastors and announce that they would no longer be disunited from their countrymen: German Catholics and Protestants were fellow Christians and citizens.[49] As such there was no legitimate basis for the persistence of the confessional divide. It was only maintained by

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[48] G.G. Gervinus, *The Mission of the German Catholics* (London: Chapman, 1846), 33.
[49] Johannes Ronge, *An meine Glaubensgenossen und Mitbürger* (Altenburg: 1845), 4.

ecclesiastical and secular authorities to preserve the control of ultramontane Catholics and orthodox Protestants over the laity of their respective churches.

German liberals and republicans received the emergence of the dissenting congregations and their opposition to ecclesiastical authorities with excitement and great expectations. Liberals referred to Leberecht Uhlich as "the Saxon O'Connell," identifying him with the Irish nationalist and champion of Catholic emancipation Daniel O'Connell.[50] The radical jurist and philosopher Arnold Ruge (1802-1880), a compatriot of Marx, Engels, and the other "Left Hegelians," opined that the Protestant Friends' campaigns for religious freedom and dedication to maintaining a lay-governed "people's church," which he identified as a continuation and renewal of the German Reformation, would be more effective at realizing the 1848 revolutionaries' aspiration of German national unity than the revolutionaries themselves.[51] The historian Georg Gervinus and liberal politician Robert Blum, members of German Catholic congregations in Heidelberg and Leipzig, respectively, and elected deputies to the 1848 Frankfurt Parliament, hoped that the dissenting congregations could reconcile the separated confessions into a national church that would serve as a basis for German national unity.[52] German liberals and republicans who were sympathetic to what the dissenting congregations stood for must have also been impressed by their popular appeal.

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[50] Bigler, *The Politics of German Protestantism*, 197 and 205.
[51] Arnold Ruge, *Hallische Jahrbücher* 1838, cited in Bigler, *The Politics of German Protestantism*, 211. For the Left Hegelians, see John Edward Toews, *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805-1841* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
[52] Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck*, 364.

During a missionary tour throughout Germany in 1845, Ronge delivered a series of wildly popular sermons, speeches, and letters—typically in Evangelical Churches—to thousands of supporters and interested Roman Catholics and Protestants. He attracted "thousands upon thousands" for an event in Frankfurt a.M., 13,000 for a service in Offenbach, 15,000 for a speech in Ulm, and 30,000 in Königsberg.[53] In his sermons and speeches, Ronge announced that now was the time for German Catholics and Protestants to reach out to each other; that every sign of the times clearly pointed toward the possibility of a reunion of the separated German states into a unified nation and the separated confessions into a general Christian Church.[54] To this end, he invoked the memory of the early Reformation, a pre-confessional era that had eschewed sectarianism and envisioned the Christian Church as a single body of believers. This, claimed Ronge, was precisely the kind of church the reformers had originally sought to establish before secular rulers had cynically politicized the Reformation, and the kind of national unity that Germany deserved.[55]

The German Catholics' vision of unity was inclusive. Informally attending or even joining a German Catholic congregation was voluntary and did not entail compulsory conversion or professions of dogma. Interested parties could come and go from the congregations as they pleased. This notion of unity entailed a unity in diversity; a unity among a multiplicity of religious forms without the yoke of a

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[53] Tschirn, *Zur 60jährigen Geschichte der freireligiösen Bewegung*, 21-25.
[54] Ronge, *Rede zu Ulm*, 4.
[55] Ibid., 7.

binding uniformity.[56] This German Catholic notion of unity in diversity (*Einheit in die Mannigfaltigkeit*) entailed an acceptance and celebration of difference without any threat of coercion or compulsion to revise one's beliefs.[57] Such inclusive notions of unity made it easy for Roman Catholics and Protestants to freely join German Catholic congregations. A group of Protestants from the Lower Saxon town of Oldenburgh left their Evangelical churches and joined the local German Catholic congregation because, according to them, Luther himself had never intended to abandon the Catholic Church altogether but only to reform its false doctrines. For them, the nineteenth-century German Catholic congregations were closer in spirit to Luther's model of a reformed catholic church than either nineteenth-century Roman Catholicism or Evangelical Protestantism.[58]

The Protestant Friends and German Catholics not only sought to unite Catholics and Protestants, but encouraged rapprochement among the various Protestant sects as well. The various Protestant sects and Protestant free churches (churches independent from, yet recognized by, the state churches) would be unable to inspire the piety and enthusiasm necessary to be socially or nationally effective if they remained separated.[59] Accordingly, the Protestant Friends worked with mainstream Protestant associations such as the Gustav-Adolf Verein to encourage tolerance and unity among the separated Protestant denominations. An early

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[56] Johannes, *Die Neue Reformation oder die deutsch-katholische Bewegung* (Leipzig: Naumburg, 1845), 6.
[57] Ferdinand Kampe, *Geschichte der religiösen Bewegung der neuern Zeit. Vierter Band: Geschichte des Deutschkatholicismus und freien Protestantismus in Deutschland und Nordamerika von 1848-1858* (Leipzig: Franz Wagner, 1860), 44 and 53.
[58] A. Andresen, *Luther Revived: or, a Short Account of Johannes Ronge, the Bold Reformer of the Catholic Church in Germany* (London: Chapman, 1845), 33.
[59] Ronge, *The Reformation* Vol. 1, viii.

twentieth-century historian of the Protestant Friends who was sympathetic to the Free Religious movement compared Uhlich's reforming efforts with those of Philip Melanchthon; even after the sixteenth-century break with the papacy, Melanchthon and other irenical reformers sought rapprochement with Catholics. After withdrawing his congregation from the Saxon state church, Uhlich sought to maintain ties with mainstream Protestants and establish new ones with German Catholics.[60] At a fall 1843 meeting of the Protestant Friends, the participants attempted to define the basic tenets of Protestantism in such a way as to appeal to a wider number of Evangelicals.[61] They longed for a Protestant church that could accommodate a plurality of differing conceptions of faith.[62]

The dissenting congregations' intra-Protestant and interconfessional ecumenism extended, in limited cases, to Jews. Two contested features of the concept "nation" in the German Revolution of 1848 were whether the nation was predominately Catholic or Protestant and whether Jews could be citizens.[63] The dissenting congregations eschewed confessional notions of the nation and argued that the "German nation" must be inclusive of Catholics and Protestants. But some members of the Free Congregations explored and promoted unity with members of the Reform Jewish communities. One such figure was Carl Scholl (1807-1863), minister of Mannheim's German Catholic congregation. Scholl, a theologian, playwright, and revolutionary who had dabbled in pantheism and Left Hegelianism

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[60] Tschirn, *Zur 60jährigen Geschichte der freireligiösen Bewegung*, 30.
[61] Prelinger, "A Decade of Dissent", 75.
[62] Brederlow, *"Lichtfreunde" und "Freie Gemeinden*," 27.
[63] Matthew Levinger, *Enlightened Nationalism: The Transformation of Prussian Political Culture, 1806-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 224.

as a youth and advocated a "religion of humanity" during his later years, professed that he became a German Catholic because in the movement he recognized "not only the basis of a unification of Catholicism and Protestantism, but also the possibility of a union of Protestantism and reformed Judaism".[64] In addition to Scholl's group of supporters in Mannheim, the local Hamburg Free Congregation included several Jews. And in 1847 the Königsberg congregation held its services—no other venue could be found—at the local synagogue with the blessing of the Jewish community. In 1857 an Offenbach German Catholic minister stood in for a local rabbi at a Jewish funeral.[65]

Jews were invited to attend, and several joined, congregations of the Protestant Friends and German Catholics in Frankfurt. Michael A. Meyer has identified a relationship—in the form of shared interests and agendas—among the Protestant Friends, German Catholics, and the Reformed Jewish community in Frankfurt.[66] Leberecht Uhlich identified his position as minister and pastoral duties with those of the local Magdeburg reform rabbi.[67] Scholl himself noted the similarities between liberal Protestantism and Reform Judaism. He even imagined a unification of the two groups on this basis and frequently spoke of Jesus as an enlightened Jewish reformer.[68] Like Scholl, most German liberals supported Jewish

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[64] Carl Scholl, *Drei Vorträge gehalten vor der deutschkatholischen Gemeinde Mannheim, zugleich also Rechtfertigung meines Anschlusses* (Darmstadt: Pabst, 1846), 27.
[65] Hermann Greive, "Religious Dissent and Tolerance in the 1840s," in Werner E. Mosse, ed. *Revolution and Evolution: 1848 in German-Jewish History* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1981), 345-346.
[66] Michael A. Meyer "Alienated Intellectuals in the Camp of Religious Reform: The Frankfurt Reformfreunde, 1842-1845," *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 6, (1981): 83-86.
[67] Ibid., 85.
[68] Ibid., 84.

emancipation. But German liberal support for Jewish emancipation was usually motivated by the liberals' desire to position themselves against German conservatives rather than pure altruism.[69] Indeed, several federal states passed laws granting Jews full civic rights at the very outset of the March revolutions. But while German liberals countenanced emancipation, a religious union with the Jews remained another matter.

Scholl's notion of a union of Protestants and reformed Jews did not receive widespread support among German Jews, or German Christians. Indeed, the Jewish response to the dissenting congregations was divided. While contemporary Jewish radicals were sympathetic to revolutionary Christian communities, most German Jews remained at arms length from the Protestant Friends and German Catholics. The moderate Jewish reform rabbi Ludwig Philippson (1811-1889) epitomized this suspicion, rejecting the dissenting congregations' dismissal of dogma and revelation for a religion of humanity, and their notions that Christianity was a religion that had "evolved" beyond Judaism, as antithetical to the Jewish religion.[70] Nor were Scholl's views on Jewish-Christian ecumenism typical among the dissenting congregations, and he ultimately left the Mannheim German Catholic congregation because of what he saw as its deficiency of rationalism in theology and insufficient radicalism in politics.[71] Nevertheless, only one month after the Frankfurt Parliament had convened, participants at June-August 1848 meetings in Frankfurt that included a

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[69] On the "Problematics of Philosemitism" see Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion*, 111-139
[70] Michael A. Meyer, et al., *German-Jewish History in Modern Times: Emancipation and Acculturation, 1780-1871* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 197.
[71] Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion*, 123.

German Catholic preacher, a Protestant pastor, a Roman Catholic priest, and several Jewish rabbis, discussed how to cultivate a notion of German unity that was inclusive of the groups represented.[72]

The Revolutions of 1848 failed to unify the German nation. The Protestant Friends and German-Catholic movement responded to this failure by uniting their movements in 1850 to form the Free Congregations. Congregations of the Protestant Friends and German Catholics that chose to remain independent nevertheless informally cooperated with the Free Congregations, which continued to agitate for freedom of religion and conscience and to advocate reunion between German Catholics and Protestants into the Wilhelmine Era.

The 1860 consecration of a German Catholic Church in Mannheim reveals how the Free Congregations' ecumenical tendencies worked in practice. The new church was consecrated on Sunday 24 June; this was both the feast day of John the Baptist and the 330th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession. The plaque above the door to the new church read "We all believe in one God and this love unites us all," and spoke to the ecumenical attitude of the congregation.[73] Sympathetic guests from nearby communities, including clergy and laity, attended the event. The city of Mannheim sent an ambassador from the local council, as did the Evangelical community and the Jews, who sent two rabbis. After a short opening poem the congregation began to enthusiastically sing Luther's "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott,"

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[72] Kampe,, *Geschichte der religiösen Bewegung der neuern Zeit* Vol. 4, 8.
[73] *Die Einweihung der neuernbauten Gemeindehalle der Deutschkatholiken in Mannheim, Sonntag den 24. Juni 1860* (Mannheim: J. Schneider, 1860), 3.

a traditionally Protestant hymn.[74] In his sermon the preacher reminded his congregation that Protestants are the German Catholics' ancestors and that they must continue to work toward actualizing the principles of the Reformation. He noted these Reformation principles were similar to the mission of the German Catholics, namely to support the freedom and progress of religion, and peace and reconciliation between faith and science, between the separated confessions, and between state and church.[75]

The Free Congregations' campaigns for religious freedom and interconfessional peace were not without their detractors. Church officials accused them of heresy and state officials believed that they were politically subversive. Perhaps the most prominent criticism of the Free Congregations accused them of being thinly-veiled political organizations with no sincere interest in religion.[76] To be sure, the Free Congregations were politically interested and some were politically active, especially G.A. Wislicenus' congregation in Halle and Robert Blum's in Leipzig. Leberecht Uhlich was suspicious of the sincerity of "liberals and literati," men like Wislicenus and Blum, who had joined the ranks of the Protestant Friends. Uhlich clashed with Wislicenus over radicalism of the Halle congregation, and Blum was arrested and executed for participating in the 1848 revolutions in Vienna.[77] But as Catherine Prelinger noted, the dissenting congregations represented "both something more and something less than a prelude to the

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[74] Ibid., 6.
[75] Ibid., 12-13.
[76] Friedrich Ferdinand Kampe, *Das Wesen des Deutschkatholicismus, mit besonder Rücksicht auf sein Verhältnis zur Politik* (Tübingen: Fues, 1850), 2.
[77] Bigler, *The Politics of German Protestantism*, 219-220.

revolution"; their desire to overcome the confessional divide and their notion of interconfessional unity may have been motivated by spiritual convictions, but they also held social and political implications, notably for notions of German unity.[78]

The Free Congregations imagined a unified German nation whose foundation was confessional unity among Catholics and Protestants. Indeed, Ronge recognized the German Question as a byproduct of the Reformation and Wars of Religion. The Reformation and the Thirty Years War had left Germany spiritual and politically disunited.[79] This was a confessional notion of German unity that set aside the question of the political composition of the nation as a kleindeutschland or großdeutschland. German liberals preferred a kleindeutsch solution to the German question, but Ronge considered both Austria's close ties to the papacy and the Prussian king's leadership of the Evangelical Church a threat to the survival of the nineteenth-century Reformation. He was wary of the prospect of either Austria or Prussia taking a prominent role in Germany national unification.[80] The dissenting congregations also set aside questions of whether Germany should become a constitutional monarchy or a republic so long as the new government afforded German citizens freedom of religion and conscience. Only if freedom of religion and consciousness were recognized could Germany enjoy interconfessional peace. And religious freedom and interconfessional peace were prerequisites for German national freedom and unity. In fact a religious reformation must precede any social and political revolution dedicated to *Einheit* or *Freiheit*; interconfessional

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[78] Prelinger, "A Decade of Dissent", i.
[79] Johannes Ronge, *Religion und Politik* (Frankfurt a.M., 1850) reprinted in Graf, 354.
[80] Ronge, *The Reformation* Vol. 1, 38.

reconciliation was a prerequisite for the success of any social and political revolutions. If German Catholics and Protestants remained separated opponents of confessional unity, ultramontane Catholics and orthodox Protestants would surely exploit this confessional divide for their own ecclesiastical and political ends.[81] Ronge underlined this point by exclaiming, "political liberty cannot be realized till the tyranny of Popery is broken to pieces".[82] Indeed, Ronge reminded his supporters that hostilities arising from the confessional divide between German Catholics and Protestants resulted in the Thirty Years War, which "destroyed the unity and political power of Germany". Thus the Protestant Friends and German-Catholic movement sought to reclaim German confessional and national unity and popular political power by reuniting the separated confessions.[83]

The German Catholic priest Gustav von Struve succinctly explicated the relationship of religious freedom, confessional unity, and political unification. Struve noted his fears of a rigid ecclesiastical hierarchy sponsored or recognized by the state. He maintained that the one thing more dangerous than the police state was the priest state—it was something against which all friends of the fatherland should unite because there was no more dangerous revolutionary than the theocrat, who desires to control worldly relations by appealing to a higher world order and nurturing superstition and fanaticism in the laity. The theocrat violently defies kings, constitutions, laws, and the civil order and peace in the name of religion. Of course when Struve and other members of Free Congregations spoke of "theocrats"

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[81] Ronge, *An meine Glaubensgenossen und Mitbürger*, 11.
[82] Ronge, *The Reformation* Vol. 1, 58.
[83] Ibid., 6.

they were referring to the orthodox Protestants, ultramontane Catholics, and the ecclesiastical hierarchies of those respective churches. Struve warned of impending outbreaks of fanaticism and recommended a union in political relations between "the better liberals and royalists" alongside a union of "the better among us of all religious faiths" in order to defend against threats of religious fanaticism, proscriptions to religious freedom, and the persistence of the confessional divide. [84] Thus Struve, the German Catholics, and the Protestant Friends recognized the absolute need for interconfessional peace and cooperation for a unified German nation.

The German Catholic historian Gervinus acknowledged that a "solid and enduring" German nation could only be grounded in interconfessional cooperation between Catholics and Protestants.[85] Gervinus was well known throughout Germany as a member of the infamous "Göttingen Seven," a group of academics that had been dismissed from the University of Göttingen in 1837 for refusing to profess an oath of loyalty to the new king of Hanover. According to Gervinus, the German confessional divide had "rent in pieces the whole structure of [German] civilization.[86] And so long as ecclesiastical separation persists in Germany, so too would national division.[87] He argued that the reconciliation of the separated churches "united in the spirit of toleration and love" represented the greatest wish that any German citizen could imagine. Echoing Protestant doubts about Roman

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[84] Struve, *Politisches Taschenbuch*, 75-76.
[85] Gervinus, *The Mission of the German Catholics*, 24.
[86] Ibid., 35.
[87] Ibid., 37-38.

intervention into German confessional or civil affairs, Gervinus warned that Catholic ultramontanism would obstruct every attempt for confessional or political union.[88] Ronge called on patriotic German Catholics and Protestants to join together with him out of love for the German people and the fatherland to form a German people's church composed German Catholics, Protestants, and Jews that would promote German national unity in this age of confessional discord and religious hatred and bickering.[89] A full three years before the March revolutions of 1848, when politically-minded Germans first began to take seriously the possibility of a unified German nation, Ronge had noted that every sign of the times—from new railroads connecting distant cities to the Zollverein customs union—pointed to the imminence of confessional and national unity.[90]

The Free Congregations regarded political models of German national unity that did not address the confessional divide as insufficient. German humanists, politicians, and socialists shared the common agenda of national unification but lacked unity among themselves and took different routes to achieve their goals. Religion was the most effective means of uniting disparate groups and their agendas because only religion could address the whole being of man rather than merely one aspect of man's existence—such as his intellectual, social, or political existence. Only religion, and the Free Religious movements in particular, could bring harmony to these differences, because they arose from the deepest needs of the era—namely the

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[88] Ibid., 37.
[89] Johannes Ronge, *Ein Wort der Verständigung über die deutsche Volkskirche als die höhere nationale Einheit von Protestantismus und Katholizismus* (Stuttgart: Sonnewald, 1845), 4.
[90] Ronge, *Rede zu Ulm*, 4.

needs for freedom of conscience and German unity—and because inclusion and unity were at the foundation of their confession. These inclusive notions of German unity and identity were predicated on the need to overcome the confessional divide that resulted from the Reformation. Repairing this divide according to the revolutionary-ecumenical model of the German Catholics and Free Protestants, they believed, was the most effective means of unifying the German nation.[91]

[91] *Zeiting für freie Gemeinden*, no. 1 (4 January 1850).

Marriage as a Model for Unity: the German Catholics, Women, and Mixed Marriages

As a central component of their campaigns for confessional harmony, the Free Congregations demanded the emancipation of women and advocated harmony and equality between the sexes. Appealing to Lutheran notions of marriage and domesticity, the dissenting congregations argued that marriage, and especially mixed marriages, could uniquely contribute to healing the confessional divide by serving as a model domestic relationship, a model that could be applied to society.

The Protestant Friends and German Catholics consciously sought to include women in the communal life and administration of their congregations. German Catholics recommended that female congregants enjoy the same rights and privileges as their male counterparts. Accordingly, German Catholic women served on congregational governing bodies such as councils and synods. They founded charitable associations dedicated to education, social work, and philanthropy.[92] Approximately 40% of the members of the dissenting congregations were women and by 1845 there were 30 women's societies associated with the Free Congregations.[93] The free-religious women's associations were themselves interconfessional and included women associated with the Protestant Friends, German-Catholic women, and other liberal (*freisinnig*) Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish women who were sympathetic to the religious-opposition movements but

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[92] Ronge, *The Reformation* Vol. 1, 90.
[93] Sylvia Paletschek, "Religiöse Emanzipation und Frauenemanzipation: Was bedeutet Religionskritik Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts für Frauen?" *Sozialwissenschaftliche Information* 18, no. 4 (1989), 3.

had not broken with their old churches.[94] The women's societies associated with the Free Congregations later became the basis for the women's emancipation movement in Germany.[95]

Ronge had always envisioned "the righteous and independent participation" of women in the German-Catholic movement. He faulted the revolutions of 1848 for forgetting and failing to respect "the rights of one half of mankind—the rights of the female sex".[96] Indeed, he even faulted the sixteenth-century Reformation for not actively including women.[97] Thus the sixteenth-century Reformation remained incomplete not only because it resulted in a separation of the confessions but also, according to Ronge, because it excluded women from participation in its struggle for spiritual emancipation. The nineteenth-century Reformation would consummate the Reformation of the sixteenth not only by ensuring spiritual freedom and reuniting the confessions, but also by including women in its movement. Indeed, women were integral to the nineteenth-century Reformation and its campaign for interconfessional peace because, according to Ronge, women uniquely possessed "the power of unity, love, and reconciliation".[98]

The German Catholics campaigned for women's emancipation and included women in the administration of the German Catholic congregations. But German-Catholic conceptions of emancipation and femininity were ambiguous. They

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[94] Sylvia Paletschek, *Frauen und Dissens: Frauen im Deutschkatholizismus und in den freien Gemeinden 1841-1852* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 194.
[95] See Catherine M. Prelinger, *Charity, Challenge, and Change: Religious Dimensions of the Mid-Nineteenth-Century Women's Movement in Germany* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1987).
[96] Ronge, *The Reformation* Vol. 1, 90.
[97] Ronge, *The Reformation* Vol. 1, 89.
[98] Ronge, *The Reformation* Vol. 2, 92.

demanded greater rights for women within marriage and increased participation for women within their congregations and the social sphere.[99] But these demands were grounded in traditional notions of the feminine as wife, mother, caretaker, and pacifier.[100] On the one hand, Ronge discouraged women from remaining narrowly focused on their families; instead they must also participate in the life of the community. Women must also turn to that larger community—the nation—and work to arouse and strengthen that national spirit for the well-being and salvation of Germany.[101] But at the same time, Ronge espoused a notion of the feminine that compelled him to believe that women were easily susceptible to manipulation by unscrupulous Catholic priests. He credited his own popular appeal and charisma for the female interest and participation in German Catholic congregations, and for "awakening consciousness and religious enthusiasm in the female heart, to act with righteous impulse and free will for the Reformation and for humanity".[102] Women's emancipation, it seemed, turned on a dialectic of empowerment and fragility. It represented an empowerment of women, but within traditional feminine roles. Women appeared in significant numbers at Ronge's mass religious services and rallies.[103] This religious sphere was an accepted realm of the public sphere for women. And they participated in this realm in specifically feminine ways: participating in and making arrangements for religious services and at rallies, and

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[99] Heinrich Thiel, *Der Inhalt des Deutsch-Katholizismus: den denkenden Deutsch-Katholiken gewidmet* (Dessau: Neubürger, 1846), 68-69.
[100] Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion*, 86.
[101] Ronge, *Rede zu Ulm*, 12.
[102] Ronge, *The Reformation* Vol. 1, 90.
[103] Ibid., 48.

receiving and presenting visitors with gifts. But they also participated in the religious sphere in ways that had traditionally been the reserve of men: they gave speeches, proposed and gave toasts, collected signatures, and signed petitions.[104] Based on the theories of the education reformer Friedrich Fröbel (1782-1852), German Catholic women introduced some of the first kindergartens—feminized and deconfessionalized spaces for the education of young children—to Germany.[105] Women associated with the Protestants Friends also participated in the spiritual and social life of their congregations. Sixty Magdeburg women drafted a petition against the impending removal of Leberecht Uhlich from his office for conducting bible studies that the police had forbidden as "popular assemblies". In this fall 1845 petition the women expressed their solidarity and agreement with Uhlich and urged the consistory not to remove him.[106]

The dialectic of women's empowerment and fragility at play within the dissenting congregations was resolved in the German Catholics' concept of marriage as a domestic model for the just organization of society. This was a model of unity within unity, a model of national and confessional harmony within the matrimonial union. And it was in this conception of marriage that the relationship among women's powers of unity, love, and reconciliation were manifest.

The German Catholics appealed to Luther's concept of marriage and domesticity to agitate for the acceptance and recognition of confessionally-mixed marriages. Whereas the medieval church had lauded celibacy and recognized

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[104] Ibid., 52.
[105] Prelinger, *Charity, Challenge, and Change*, ix.
[106] Paletscheck, *Frauen und Dissens*, 36.

marriage as an unhappy state that was preferable only to fornication, Luther praised marriage and domestic life as virtuous. He supported clerical marriage, condemned the practice of oblation, and advocated the abolition of convents—all practices that separated women from their families. The German Catholics argued that Luther's notions of marriage and domesticity were divinely-founded and could serve as bases for a just organization of society and ensure women's rights.[107] Indeed, through love-based marriages:

> The ties of union and brotherly love will be more closely united between community and family; and moreover, the community will prove a moral power, to prevent compulsory marriage, and watch over the equal rights of the female sex.[108]

Love-based marriages would serve as the domestic model of the social community. The community would in turn protect this notion of marriage and in so doing ensure the rights of women—who could best exercise these rights within marriage and a supportive community. Mixed marriages between Catholics and Protestants were especially useful domestic models of social community because such unions cut across the confessional divide. Apropos, many of the men and women who joined German Catholic congregations came from confessionally-mixed marriages.[109]

The German Catholics considered mixed marriages especially helpful not only for uniting community and family but also for solving so many of Germany's social problems that proceeded from the confessional divide. In 1847 an anonymous

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[107] Ronge, *The Reformation* Vol. 2, 88.
[108] Ibid., 68.
[109] Alexandra Lotz, "*Die Erlösung des weiblichen Geschlechts*: Frauen in deutschkatholischen Gemeinden," in *Schimpfende Weiber und patriotische Jungfrau: Frauen im Vormärz und in der Revolution 1848/1849*, ed. Carola Lipp (Moos: Elster, 1986), 232.

pamphlet, *Der Streit über Gemischte Ehen und das Kirchenhoheitsrecht im Großherzogthum Baden*, appeared that supported the dissenting congregations' goal of advocating confessional harmony—and thus improving Germany—through mixed marriage. Among other things, the pamphlet advocated mixed marriage and even implied that the acceptance and recognition of mixed marriages might be a panacea to all of nineteenth-century Germany's social, religious, and political problems. Indeed, the author(s) identified the problem of mixed marriages the most pressing ecclesiastical question of the present era and believed it was as important as the national question—a byproduct of the confessional divide that was caused by the Reformation.[110]

The author(s) noted that the Reformation put German Catholics and Protestants into separate antagonistic camps and severed the Christian bonds that Germans had shared before the Reformation. The confessional divide has turned Germans against each other in hostility over and over.[111] But, the authors claimed, after centuries of religious strife German Catholics and Protestants were finally beginning to recognize that only interconfessional coexistence and cooperation could rescue Germany from further violence.[112] They rejected as unworkable the Catholic Church's instructions for mixed marriage, especially those prescribed in Pius VIII's March 5, 1830 breviary to the bishops of the lower Rhine that refused to recognize the marriages of confessionally-mixed couples who refused to promise to

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[110] Anonymous, *Der Streit über Gemischte Ehen und das Kirchenhoheitsrecht im Großherzogthum Baden* (Karlsruhe: G. Braun, 1847), xvi.
[111] Ibid., xv.
[112] Ibid., ix.

raise all of their children Catholic.[113] These instructions contributed to the increasing confessional tensions of the Cologne Troubles. Moreover, they would inhibit mixed marriages and spiritual reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants and ultimately German national unity.

The author(s) noted the relationship between spiritual cooperation and German national unity by arguing that the reconciling power of marriage had not only contributed to a strengthening bond of unity between the different confessions in Germany; but also helped to overcome:

> the damaging mutual prejudices, antipathies and hesitations, interwoven [in] the physical and spiritual interests of families of different confessions and therefore [mixed marriages] like almost no other thing worked toward the inner unity and strengthening of the life of the state and the life of the Volk.[114]

Thus mixed marriages could heal divisions between the confessions but also in German social and political life. Indeed, previous efforts at union failed partly because they did not address the confessional divide in the domestic sphere; that is, they sought to unify the separated confessions from the outside in rather than the inside out—which mixed marriages could uniquely achieve.[115]

The "marriage question" had serious implications for public and private life in nineteenth-century Germany. Every mixed marriage effected a micro-union of the separated confessions in the domestic sphere. And by healing the confessional divide in the domestic sphere, one marriage at a time, the confessions became more closely united in the social and national spheres. Thus women's emancipation and

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[113] Ibid., xxvii
[114] Ibid., xvii. Also cited in Dagmar Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion*, 47.
[115] Ibid., xi.

the recognition and acceptance of mixed marriages were integral to the success of the nineteenth-century Reformation.

Conclusion

In their campaigns in support of a revolutionary ecumenism, the Protestant Friends and German Catholics invoked memories of Luther to justify ecclesiastical and civil disobedience and to ground the nineteenth-century Reformation—a reformation that aimed to win religious freedom for German dissenters, emancipation for German women, reunify the separated confessions, and unite German Catholics, Protestants, and Jews into a single nation.

The dissenting congregations' notions of German unity and identity were predicated on the repair of Germany's confessional divide. Their notions of German unity and identity did not turn on the inclusion or exclusion of Prussia and Austria from the German nation, nor on the adoption of a constitutional monarchy versus a republic. These were contested features of the "nation" debated by German liberals and republicans. The dissenting congregations set aside these political questions. Their popular and revolutionary-ecumenical notions of German unity and identity were grounded in, and would only be strengthened by, a reunification of the separated confessions. As a byproduct of the Reformation, the dissenting congregations understood the German Question in confessional terms rather than the liberals' and republicans' political terms.

As such, the dissenting congregations' notions of German unity and identity cannot be neatly categorized with liberal or conservative, confessionally-Catholic or Protestant notions of German unity and identity. Jonathan Sperber has recognized confessionally-exclusive notions of German unity espoused by German Catholics and Protestants at celebrations of national unity during the 1848 revolutions, noting

that "[r]epresentations of national unity could affirm or reject either of the two Christian confessions".[116] But in the case of the revolutionary ecumenism of the Protestant Friends and German Catholics, representations of national unity could, rather than exclude either of the two confessions, encapsulate them both. Their memories of Luther as a religious revolutionary and the sixteenth-century Reformation as an unfinished process of spiritual emancipation to be fulfilled by realizing independence from ecclesiastical hierarchies and through a reunification of the separated confessions grounded the dissenting congregations' ecumenical notions of unity and identity.

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[116] Jonathan Sperber, "Festivals of National Unity in the German Revolution of 1848-1849" *Past and Present*, No. 136, (Aug., 1992): 137.

CHAPTER 3 - THE ECUMENIZATION OF THE NATIONAL IDEA: LUTHER MEMORY, THE GERMAN NATION, AND THE REACTIONARY ECUMENISM OF THE 1860 ERFURT CONFERENCE

On 21 and 22 September 1860 nine conservative Catholics and four orthodox Lutherans met in Erfurt to discuss the possibility of rapprochement between the separated confessions and to address the German Question in a way that was inclusive of both Catholics and Protestants. They had been invited to Erfurt by the Westphalian Catholic priest Friedrich Michelis, who convened the conference in reaction to increasing revolutionary activity throughout Europe and the growing prominence of the German national question. The conference attendees and its sympathizers, who included Michelis himself, the Catholic theologian Ignaz von Döllinger, the Lutheran historian Heinrich Leo, and the Prussian jurist Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach, among others, envisioned church unity as an association of pious German Catholics and Protestants united to defend Germany against atheism, liberalism, and revolution. They imagined a nation in the confessionally-reunited subjects of a German Christian state to be led by a holy alliance of Austria and Prussia whose political authority derived from God. And their memories of Luther and the Reformation were essential to how supporters of the Erfurt Conference understood the contemporary confessional divide and the possibility of confessional and German national unity.

Historians have studied the "confessionalization of the national idea," or, how nationalists used confessional identity and difference to construct exclusive notions of German national unity and identity. Wolfgang Altgeld explored how German nationalists and especially German nationalist theologians conflated Protestant

theology and German nationalism to exclude German Catholics and German Jews as internal foreigners who existed outside of normative German society, politics, and culture.[1] Joel F. Harrington and Helmut Walser Smith have considered how German civil society and the German nation were constructed along confessional lines. According to Harrington and Smith, the confessional divide was essential to how Wilhelmine German Catholics and Protestants imagined the German nation and national identities.[2] Keith H. Pickus examined the histories of nineteenth-century Germany's "native born strangers," German Jews and German Catholics, and how German nationalists exploited Germany's confessional divide to use "a range of outsiders, or others" to construct both racially and confessionally-exclusive ideas of the German nation and German national identity.[3] But the participants and sympathizers of the Erfurt Conference suggest an alternative history of the confessionalization of the national idea and German national unification. Indeed, these reactionary ecumenists—who sought a reunion of Catholics and Protestants in order to defend Christianity and Germany from atheism, nationalism, and revolution—grounded their notions of German unity on this confessional reunion.

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[1] Wolfgang Altgeld, *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum: über religiös begründete Gegensätze und nationalreligiöse Ideen in der Geschichte des deutschen Nationalismus* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 1992).

[2] Joel F. Harrington and Helmut Walser Smith "Confessionalization, Community, and State Building in Germany, 1555-1870" *The Journal of Modern History* 69, no. 1 (March 1997): 77-101 and Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[3] Keith H. Pickus "Native Born Strangers: Jews, Catholics and the German Nation" in Micheal Geyer and Hartmut Lehmann, eds. *Religion und Nation, Nation und Religion: Beiträge zu einer unbewältigten Geschichte* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2004).

As such, they represent the "ecumenization" of the national idea, or an interconfessional history of German nationalism.

Besides those scholars who have explored the relationship between religion and German nationalism, the historians Hans Joachim Schoeps and Manfred P. Fleischer have examined the Erfurt Conference directly. Schoeps has studied the Erfurt Conference as an episode in the life of the Prussian jurist Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach. According to Schoeps, Gerlach and the Erfurt Conference were representative of old-conservative opposition to the militarist and nationalist policies of Bismarck. Both Gerlach and the Erfurt Conference embodied *das andere Prueßen*, a Prussia not consumed by militarism or nationalism.[4] Manfred P. Fleischer set the Erfurt Conference within a long history of German ecumenism ranging from the sixteenth to the twentieth century.[5] Fleischer argued that the conference participants envisioned a reunion of German Catholics and Protestants as a means to safeguard Germany against atheism and revolution. But he was unconcerned with how the German collective memory of religion in general, and memories of Luther and the Reformation, in particular, animated this reactionary ecumenism. Nor did Fleischer explore the relationship among ecumenism, memory, and German national unity that my reading of the evidence seeks to restore.

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[4] Hans Joachim Schoeps, *Das Andere Preussen: Konservative Gestalten und Probleme im Zeitalter Friedrich Wilhelms IV.*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Haude & Spener, 1964). Schoeps reprinted the manifestoes and correspondence associated with the Erfurt Conference in the appendix of the third edition of *Das Andere Pruessen* and in Hans Joachim Schoeps, "Die Erfurter Konferenz von 1860 (Zur Geschichte des katholisch-protestantischen Gesprächs)" *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 4 (1953): 135-159.

[5] Manfred P. Fleischer, *Katholische und lutherische Ireniker: Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1968) and Manfred Fleischer, "Lutheran and Catholic Reunionists in the Age of Bismarck" *Church History* 38 no. 1 (March 1969): 43-66.

The reactionary ecumenists' memories of Luther and the Reformation colored how they approached and negotiated the German confessional divide. And their understanding of confessional separation and unity informed how they positioned themselves vis-à-vis the German Question. Their memories of Luther and the Reformation thus bisected their religion and their politics. Accordingly, my study of how these figures used and abused Luther's memory to support their ecumenical campaigns, to ground their reactionary politics, and to imagine German national unity, will complement the historiography of the confessionalization of the national idea, as well as Schoeps and Fleischer's histories of the Erfurt Conference.

The Context and Reception of the Erfurt Conference

The Erfurt Conference occurred within the context of increasing revolutionary activity throughout Europe. Revolutionary outbursts in Italy and the successes of the Risorgimento stoked fears of encroaching atheism, liberalism, and revolution that mid nineteenth-century European conservatives had decried since 1848. In 1859, Napoleon III, whom arch-conservatives regarded as a usurper of the legitimate French monarchy, allied with Piedmont-Sardinia against Austria. This alliance eventually contributed to the Italian subjugation of Austrian Lombardy and its annexation into a unified Italian nation. Revolutionary insurrections in Sicily in 1860 precipitated its conquest by Garibaldi and the Redshirts and their subsequent assault on the Kingdom of Naples, a further step in the process of Italian unification. For conservatives like those who would assemble at Erfurt, perhaps the most compelling evidence of the spread of atheism, liberalism, and revolution was the assault on the Papal States by Cavour's armies. Revealing concerns about threats to religious identity beyond the German states, the Erfurt Conference manifesto would describe this "violation" of the Papal States by Italian nationalists as a "shocking, galling injustice".[6] The subsequent unification of Italy under nationalist and revolutionary precepts confirmed European reactionaries' fears of the encroachment of atheism, liberalism, and revolution into European society and politics.

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[6] Ludwig Clarus (aka Wilhem Volk) *Die Zusammenkunft gläubiger Protestanten und Katholiken zu Erfurt im Herbste 1860 und deren Verlauf. Eine auf eigene Theilnahme und sämmtliche bekannt gewordene Quellen gegründete Darstellung und Mahnung zur Fortsetzung des Werkes* (Paderborn: Junsermann, 1867), 10-12.

In response to these revolutionary developments, Friedrich Michelis (1815-1886), a Roman Catholic priest and theologian from Münster, convoked the Erfurt Conference. The interconfessional character of the Protestant Awakening and a recent biography of the German publisher Friedrich Perthes (1772-1843) had inspired Michelis to call for an interconfessional meeting of conservative German Catholics and Protestants.[7] Leaders of the German Awakening Movement, including Nikolaus von Zinzendorf, Johann M. Sailer, and Gottfried Thomasius, had de-emphasized confessional difference for the possibility of a pan-Christian spiritual renewal. Friedrich Perthes was an irenical German Protestant who had maintained a long correspondence with several pious Catholics. He defended Catholicism from its liberal Protestant critics and argued that disbelief was a greater threat to Christianity than orthodox Catholicism or Protestantism.[8]

Inspired by the examples of the Awakening Movement and the person of Friedrich Perthes, Michelis wrote to several prominent Catholics and Protestants, including the Prussian jurist Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach (1795-1877), the Protestant historian Heinrich Leo (1799-1878), and the conservative politician and Lutheran convert from Judaism, Friedrich Julius Stahl (1802-1861), inviting them to meet, share ideas, and form a common front against revolution and atheism.[9] All three men belonged to a Prussian conservative party centered around the conservative

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[7] Willi Belz, *Friedrich Michelis und seine Bestreitung der Neuscholastik in der Polemik gegen Joseph Kleutgen* (E.J. Brill: Leiden, 1978), 25.
[8] Clemens Theodor Perthes, *Life and Times of Friedrich Perthes: Patriot and Man of Business* (London: William P. Nimmo, 1858), 396-397.
[9] Clarus, *Die Zusammenkunft*, 6.

newspaper *Kreuzzeitung* that had emerged from orthodox Lutheran opposition to the 1848 revolutions.[10] Their reactionary bona fides were beyond question. Unfortunately for Michelis, only one of these pious arch-conservatives would actually attend the Erfurt Conference. Ludwig von Gerlach, who on his deathbed would profess that he had wanted nothing more than to witness a reunion of the separated confessions[11], could not attend on account of the marriage of his nephew and instead sent his well wishes. Heinrich Leo accepted the invitation and arrived on the second day. And although he strongly supported the cause of German conservatives such as Gerlach and Leo, and usually deemphasized confessional differences between pious Catholics and Protestants, Friedrich Julius Stahl declined the invitation. However strongly Stahl opposed atheism and revolution, he argued that a reunion of the separated confessions was neither a desirable nor a necessary prerequisite for conservative Catholics and Protestants to work toward their shared political interests.[12]

When word of the conference leaked to the confessional press, it was met with mixed reaction. The Catholic press celebrated it as an opportunity, not for authentic reunion, but as one that could bring German Protestants back to Rome.[13] The Protestant press was less enthused. The *Protestantische Kirchenzeitung*, a left-wing Protestant paper, identified the conference as a Catholic plot to convert

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[10] Marjorie Lamberti "Lutheran Orthodoxy and the Beginning of Conservative Party Organization in Prussia" *Church History* 37 No. 4 (Dec., 1968): 452-453.
[11] *Ut Omnes Unum* no. 3 (1 December 1879).
[12] Clarus, *Die Zusammenkunft*, 63.
[13] Fleischer, *Katholische und lutherische Ireniker*, 135-136.

German Protestants.[14] The conservative Protestant *Kreuzzeitung* acknowledged the German confessional divide as lamentable and recognized that religious separation was the cause of German national disunity. But, it maintained, the cure for the German confessional and national divide should not be purchased at the price of Protestant freedom. Moreover, as it existed in 1860, the Roman Catholic Church could offer no asylum to an Evangelical.[15]

Michelis received some affirmative replies to his invitations besides Heinrich Leo's, but when the conference finally convened on 21 September 1860, only two Lutherans and eight Catholics (three priests and five laymen) were in attendance. In addition to Michelis, the prominent attendees included Wilhelm Volk, a Prussian bureaucrat and Catholic convert who produced a history of the Erfurt Conference under the pseudonym Ludwig Clarus, and the Catholic Saxon nobleman Count Cajus zu Stolberg, who was happy to attend any meeting at which friendly Protestants were willing to recognize the assault on the Papal States as an egregious affront to ecclesiastical and political order.[16] On the second day of the conference Heinrich Leo arrived with Karl Bindewald, a Protestant lawyer in the Prussian ministry of culture who had been won to the cause of the Erfurt Conference by the Berlin High-Church Lutheran pastor Friedrich Wilhelm Schulze.[17]

In consultation with the other attendees, Michelis prepared a manifesto for the conference. The manifesto emphasized that the attendees did not seek a reunion

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[14] Ibid., 146.
[15] Clarus, *Die Zusammenkunft*, 32.
[16] Ibid., 17.
[17] Fleischer, *Katholische und lutherische Ireniker*, 141.

of the separated confessions on account of any sense of religious indifferentism, but instead from the conviction that the separation of the churches was a truly lamentable condition. Moreover, the attendees felt compelled by the German people, whom they identified as essentially conservative and Christian, to work toward a rapprochement of German Catholics and Protestants for the cause of a single and undivided fatherland.[18] The attendees acknowledged that a German nation might be politically unified without a reunion of the separated confessions. But, they argued, a German nation so united would remain incomplete, fragile, and susceptible to that unholy trinity of atheism, liberalism, and revolution. Thus confessional reunion was a prerequisite of German national unity.

Heinrich Leo produced an addendum to Michelis' manifesto that further underlined the relationship of confessional reunion to reactionary politics. He identified the paramount threats to the German fatherland as revolution and atheism, embodied in the recent assault on the Papal States by the Risorgimento. That the Papal States, whose sovereignty, Leo argued, was older and more indisputable than any European states, could be so violated was proof of the increasing threat of encroaching revolution. Only a unified front of pious German Catholics and Protestants could check the spread of revolution and atheism.[19] A reunion of the separated churches was in the best interests of the German fatherland.

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[18] Clarus, *Die Zusammenkunft*, 10-12.
[19] Ibid., 14-15.

Leo envisioned the Erfurt Conference not only as a renewal of the Christian church through a reunion of the separated confessions, but also as a renewal of German conservatism. He maintained that since 1848, German conservatism had attracted too many nefarious characters to its party. Far too many opportunists, Bonapartists, and realpolitiker had joined the conservative cause. A renewed conservatism would proceed from an ecclesiastical basis and divest these profane members from its ranks. And the most effective conservative party was one that was composed of a union of pious Catholics and Protestants working together to defend Germany from revolution and atheism.[20]

The manifesto and Leo's addendum reflected the reactionary-ecumenical tendencies of the Erfurt Conference attendees and its sympathizers. Their paramount goals were to defend Christianity and Germany from atheism and revolution by reuniting the separated confessions. A reunion of Catholics and Protestants along these lines would also strengthen the German fatherland and serve as the basis for their großdeutsch vision of German national unity.

After the conference had disbanded, its attendees and sympathizers continued to discuss the possibility of confessional reunion, their shared opposition to atheism and revolution, and how to properly address the German Question. In their diaries, letters, journals, and monographs they imagined confessional unity in a reunion of pious Catholics and Protestants united in opposition to atheism and revolution. They considered Catholicism and Protestantism as two complementary

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[20] Heinrich Leo to Philipp von Nathusius (Erfurt 24 Sept. 1860) reprinted in Schoeps, *Das Andere Preussen*, 322-323.

constituents of a single, yet separated, catholic Christian church. Piety, opposition to revolution and atheism, and commitment to a unified German fatherland would define this reunion of German Catholics and Protestants. And like the irenical celebrants of the 1817 and 1830 Reformation anniversaries, and the revolutionary ecumenists of the Vormärz and 1848, the reactionary ecumenists of the Erfurt Conference would appeal to memories of Luther and the Reformation to explicate their notions of confessional and national unity.

The Reactionary-Ecumenical Notion of Church Unity

Since the sixteenth century, Luther and the Reformation had existed as contested sites of memory that functioned as a kind of pneumonic shorthand for the German confessional divide.[21] As such, the participants and sympathizers of the Erfurt Conference could not entertain any ideas of confessional reunion without first addressing memories of Luther and the Reformation. Instead of recognizing Luther and the Reformation as the primary causes of the contemporary confessional divide, the reactionary ecumenists of the Erfurt Conference remembered Luther as a pre-confessional moral reformer who had eschewed sectarianism and had sought to avoid a separation of the church. The Reformation represented an historically-necessary correction of the abuses and corruption of the medieval Catholic Church from within the church itself. The schisms that ultimately resulted from the Reformation were never intended to be permanent, nor were they essential to Luther's proposed reforms. As such, the nineteenth-century German Catholic and Evangelical Churches were primed for reunion.

Supporters of the Erfurt Conference argued that the Reformation represented a renewal and purification of the medieval church and a blessing to Catholicism. The Catholic historian and theologian Ignaz von Döllinger (1799-1890), who was one of the earliest advocates of the Erfurt Conference, recalled a Luther who had served as the touchstone of reform of a Roman Catholic Church that

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[21] Gérald Chaix "Die Reformation" translated by Reinhard Tiffert in Etienne François and Hagen Schluze, eds. *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte* Vol. 2, (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2001).

refused to acknowledge or reform its abuses.[22] He reaffirmed this sentiment in 1872 lectures in which he argued that the Reformation represented a "great purification and renewal of the church," but that it could have been accomplished without the schisms that had ultimately resulted.[23] Ludwig von Gerlach, who did not attend, but nevertheless defended the Erfurt Conference in the conservative Protestant press, recognized the Reformation as the most magnificent flower of the medieval Catholic Church.[24] He reminded his readers that the Reformation was a necessary correction of abuses—namely, the increasing licentiousness and corruption of the papacy and ecclesiastical hierarchy—within the medieval church. Gerlach noted that the Reformation had also benefited Catholicism because it had compelled the church to reform its abuses and that non-partisan Catholics recognized its blessings.[25] He countenanced the sixteenth-century Reformation as a shaking up of ecclesiastical authority in its own era, and even postulated the need for a contemporary reactionary-ecumenical Counter-Reformation as an answer to secularizing trends of the nineteenth century.[26]

The reactionary ecumenists maintained that the German confessional divide was an accidental, rather than essential, result of the Reformation. Indeed, the Reformation was supposed to be a temporary and provisional state of affairs until

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[22] A.G. Dickens and John M. Tonkin with Kenneth Powell, *The Reformation in Historical Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 183.
[23] Ignaz von Döllinger, *Lectures on the Reunion of the Churches* translated by Henry Nutcombe Oxenham (New York: Dodd and Mead, 1872), 14.
[24] Ludwig von Gerlach "Die Evangelische-katholische Zusammenkunft in Erfurt" *Volksblatt für Stadt und Land* 18, no. 16 (Feb. 1861) reprinted in Schoeps, *Das Andere Preussen*, 346.
[25] Ibid., 346-347.
[26] Hans-Christof Kraus *Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach: Politisches Denken und Handeln eines preussischen Altkonservativen* Vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 230.

the church had been reformed of its abuses. According to Döllinger, the early reformers had never intended permanent separation from the Roman Catholic and Protestant denominations.[27] He regarded the possibility of a reunion of the separated confessions as "a most salutary circumstance," which would repair the confessional divide and whose effects would touch German religion, politics, and society.[28] Heinrich Leo elucidated Döllinger's notion of the accidental nature of the German confessional divide by drawing parallels between Luther and the medieval reforming pontiff Gregory VII.[29] Both Luther and Gregory's reforms were necessary, and ultimately benefited the church, but were wildly unpopular and fiercely opposed by contemporaries. Any disruptions or schisms within the church that had resulted from Luther and Gregory's proposed reforms had to be considered incidental to their campaigns. Besides, argued Wilhelm Volk, Luther had no idea that he might be teaching some schismatic heresy—he believed that he was teaching a purified Catholic doctrine. Indeed, Volk noted, contemporary Lutheran doctrine contained vestiges of Catholicism, and in any case, enlightened and free-religious types even identified Lutheranism as a kind of incomplete or partial Catholicism.[30] The theological proximity of Catholicism and Lutheranism suggested a basis for reunion between the two confessions. The reactionary ecumenists located the basis

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[27] Döllinger, *Lectures*, 74-75.
[28] Ignaz von Döllinger, *The Church and the Churches; or the Papacy and the Temporal Power. An Historical and Political Review* translated by William Bernard MacCabe (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1862), 12.
[29] Heinrich Leo to Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach (1 July 1852) reprinted in Jakob von Gerlach, ed. *Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach: Aufzeichnungen aus seinem Leben und Wirken, 1795-1877*. Vol. 2 (Schwerin: Bahn, 1903). 151-152.
[30] Clarus, *Die Zusammenkunft*, 132-133.

for this theological proximity between Catholics and Lutherans in the Augsburg Confession.

Advocates of the Erfurt Conference program proposed that the Augsburg Confession could serve as the theological foundation for their reactionary-ecumenical church. Gerlach noted that despite the differences between Catholics and Protestants, both confessions had always professed the same fundamental doctrines, as defined by the Apostle's Creed and the first 21 articles of the Augsburg Confession.[31] According to Döllinger, the Augsburg Confession constituted "the fundamental creed of the Reformation," and denoted a common symbol and a shared faith between Catholics and Protestants.[32] Wilhelm Volk recalled the goodwill displayed by both Catholics and Protestants at the 1530 Diet of Augsburg as a model for contemporary irenicism.[33] Catholics and Protestants had met in Augsburg at the behest of Charles V in order to identify their common beliefs and to elucidate the differences that existed between them. And while the Catholic Church issued a confutation of the Augsburg Confession, it affirmed many of the articles defined in the Augsburg Confession, including those addressing the Trinity, original sin, the episcopal office, baptism, the Real Presence in the Eucharist, and the freedom of the will. So for Volk and other proponents of the Erfurt program, the Augsburg Confession might be read as an irenical, rather than polemical, profession of faith.

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[31] Gerlach "Die Evangelische-katholische Zusammenkunft in Erfurt," reprinted in Schoeps, *Das Andere Preussen*, 348.
[32] Döllinger, *The Church and the Churches*, 14 and *Lectures*, 75-76.
[33] Clarus, *Die Zusammenkunft*, 132.

The reactionary ecumenists recalled the early Reformation era (1517-1520) as a reformed, yet pre-confessional, catholic Christian community that could serve as the model for their contemporary ecumenical church. Heinrich Leo was a proponent of a pre-confessional Lutheran Church that he imagined was represented by the Augsburg Confession. According to Leo, this post-Reformation, yet pre-confessional, conception of the church was embodied by the Augsburg Confession recalled the early Apostolic Church. The Augsburg Confession recognized bishoprics, the sacraments, and possessed a liturgy close to that of the old Apostolic Church. Its confessors stood so close to Catholicism that the move toward total reconciliation would be extremely small. Indeed, the Augsburg Confession evoked a Lutheranism that more closely approximated the Apostolic Church and the contemporary Catholic Church than it did later developments of the Reformation.[34]

The Augsburg Confession not only represented the theological basis for a reunion of pious Catholics and Protestants, but also suggested the existence of a single Christian Church, albeit split. According to Döllinger, the separation of the confessions was artificial and would only last until the churches had resolved their differences, when they would reunite into a catholic Christian church:

> The idea of two rival Churches in Germany arrayed in permanent hostility against each other shocked the [sixteenth-century] mind. All diets and religious conferences of the day were conducted on the assumption that the adherents of the new and the old religion were still members of one universal Church, and that a common understanding could and ought to be arrived at, and communion of worship restored.[35]

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[34] Heinrich Leo, *Lehrbuch der Universalgeschichte* Vol. 3 (Halle: Eduard Anton, 1853), 300.
[35] Döllinger, *Lectures*, 74.

Despite the persistence of the confessional divide, the separated churches remained constituents of a single catholic Christian church. Heinrich Leo further endorsed this idea. According to Leo, the Lutheran Church, despite the separation of the confessions, remained part of the universal (catholic) church, which encompassed the entire Christian world. Both churches were "sick" since their separation from one another, and the only "cure" was mutual cooperation and rapprochement.[36] Indeed, full catholicity could not be found in any of the separated parts of the church, but only in the reactionary-ecumenical church envisioned by the proponents of the Erfurt Conference. Likewise, a German nation could never be fully unified under the auspices of Austria or Prussia alone, but only in a großdeutsch state that encapsulated them both.

The separation of the confessions had hindered Luther's original program of renewal and reform of the sixteenth-century church. The Counter-Reformation and the Council of Trent had later taken up this process of renewal, but the final reformation of the church could only occur in a reunion between Catholics and Protestants. Despite his Protestantism, Heinrich Leo had a favorable perception of the Counter-Reformation and the Council of Trent. The council had addressed a significant number of Luther's and other Protestant reformer's criticisms of the Catholic Church. Indeed, Leo argued that the nineteenth-century Catholic Church had undergone a long process of purification that had begun with Trent, and that if the sixteenth-century church had been what it is today, Luther would have never

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[36] Heinrich Leo cited in Schoeps, *Das Andere Pruessen*, 201.

asserted his opposition to the church so energetically.[37] The memory of Trent represented a basis for reunion for the separated confessions, especially for those Lutherans who remained separated from the Catholic Church because of its historic abuses. Döllinger agreed with Leo's assessment of the Council of Trent and claimed that this irenical sentiment would be the one that reconciled the churches and unified Germany.[38]

To realize this notion of confessional unity, the supporters of the Erfurt Conference program appealed to memories of the early Reformation and invoked a Luther who demanded a reform of the abuses within the church, who eschewed sectarianism, and had never desired a schism. They espoused an ecumenical memory of the Augsburg Confession as an ecumenical profession of faith that recalled the Apostolic Church and underlined the shared beliefs between Catholics and Lutherans. They recalled a Reformation before the separation of the confessions, before its politicization by secular princes, and in short, before confessionalization. These memories of Luther and the Reformation informed their notions of church unity. And their plans for overcoming the confessional divide and reuniting the separated confessions informed how they thought about German national unity.

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[37] Heinrich Leo, *Neue Preußische Zeitung* (27 September 1861), cited in Döllinger, *The Church and the Churches*, 16.
[38] Döllinger, *The Church and the Churches*, 16.

Confessional Reunion and German National Unity

The reactionary ecumenists explicitly underlined the relationship between confessional reunion and German national unity. It was impossible to unite Germany politically without also addressing the German confessional divide. Friedrich Michelis noted that the separation of the church often manifested itself in the consciousness of the German nation.[39] The German Question was, at its root, an ecclesiastical question and historical byproduct of the Reformation separation of Christianity and the confessionalization of the denominations. Wilhelm Volk claimed that the Erfurt Conference and the 1867 publication of his history of the conference represented the fulfillment of his obligation toward realizing the aspirations for national unification by pursuing a reunion of the separated confessions.[40] Döllinger argued that German unification "requires an ecclesiastical union of all its tribes as the completion, fulfillment, and crowning of the edifice".[41] Heinrich Leo recognized the connection between confessional and German national unity, exclaiming that the history of Germany since the Reformation taught that whoever desired a strong and unified German empire must first reestablish a mighty and unified German Church. According to Leo, in order to establish a single and unified German state, one must first establish a single and unified German church.[42]

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[39] Friedrich Michelis, *Augsburger Postzeitung 1861, No. 92-111* reprinted in Schoeps, *Das Andere Pruessen*, 336.
[40] Clarus, *Die Zusammenkunft*, 4.
[41] Döllinger, *Lectures*, 161.
[42] Carolyn Rebecca Henderson, "Heinrich Leo: A Study in German Conservatism" (PhD diss., The University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1977), 242.

Wilhelm Volk noted that the current revolutionary era revealed the need for the establishment of a strong, unified German fatherland. But as the Erfurt Conference suggested, the need for religious reunion was also felt. Volk maintained that the coincidence of the national question and the confessional question was not accidental. These questions had been inextricably linked since the Reformation. And although the era demanded the establishment of German political unity, it would be disastrous for Germany if its statesmen, motivated by some misguided patriotism, would realize only the unity of the nation without also effecting a reunion of the confessions.[43]

Although the reactionary ecumenists eschewed nationalism as a liberal ideology, they did not remain mute on what defined a nation. The conference participants and their supporters imagined a German nation in the confessionally-reunited subjects of a German Christian state to be led by a holy alliance of Austria and Prussia whose political authority derived from God. Conservatives rejected nationalism as a liberal ideology because it threatened the ostensibly legitimate authority of monarchs and historical states. States were products of the monarchs that ruled over them.[44] Nations—communities with shared languages, ethnicities, and cultures—may exist within states, but they could not represent the foundation of political authority.[45] Heinrich Leo argued that Germany's existence had depended on the church, and since the Reformation separation of the confessions, there had

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[43] Clarus, *Die Zusammenkunft*, 85-86.
[44] Thomas Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck, 1800-1866* translated by Daniel Nolan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 279.
[45] Manfred P. Fleischer, "*Deus Praesens in Jure*: The Politics of Ludwig von Gerlach" *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 39 (1987), 15.

been a Catholic and a Protestant Germany. However, Leo maintained, the memory of a confessionally-unified Germany persisted. If this memory could be realized in the nineteenth century with a confessionally-reunited church, it would provide Germany with the foundation for its political unity.[46]

The reactionary ecumenists recognized the 1815 Holy Alliance as an ecclesiastical-political model for a confessionally-unified German Christian state that included Prussia and Austria. Ludwig von Gerlach reminded his readers that nineteenth-century European Catholics and Protestants had shared the same struggles, victories, and defeats before the revolutionary crimes of Napoleon. In reaction to those crimes, the Russian czar, Holy Roman emperor, and Prussian king had formed a holy alliance to provide a common defense of Europe from revolution and atheism.[47] Gerlach sought the revival of such an alliance for the common defense of Christianity and Christian states from atheism and revolution. He recognized an "eternal element" of the Holy Alliance that must be revived.[48] Gerlach lauded its ideal, an alliance of the faithful, without distinction of confession, into an association for the protection of Christian Europe from atheism and revolution. And in particular, he imagined the Holy Alliance as a model for an ecumenical ecclesiastical-political organization.

Gerlach's fond memories of the Holy Alliance informed how he imagined the proper composition of the German state. Gerlach noted that the state precedes the

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[46] Henderson, "Heinrich Leo," 180-181.
[47] Gerlach "Die Evangelische-katholische Zusammenkunft in Erfurt," reprinted in Schoeps, *Das Andere Preussen*, 347.
[48] Jakob von Gerlach, *Aufzeichnungen*, 151.

nation. States are not a product of ethnic, confessional, linguistic, cultural, or popular solidarity among a people (i.e., how nineteenth-century nationalists defined a nation), but instead represent the kingdom of God's law within humanity. The medieval Reich had more closely resembled this kingdom because it included many nations within itself and acknowledged its political authority derived from its status as the embodiment of God's law on Earth—not from popular solidarity among a people. Accordingly, Gerlach lauded Austria and the Habsburg monarchy, not the least because Austria remained a "multiethnic state" (*Vielvölkerstaat*) that included many nations. According to this model he saw Prussia similarly, not as a nation, but as a stately collection of historical regions, old and new provincial fragments of the old German Reich, for which the provincial corporate relations (*Provinzialständverhältnis*) were alone natural.[49] Accordingly, he resisted nationalist conceptions of German unity for a notion of German unity in which corporate relations were maintained, the confessions were united in a catholic Christian Church, and Austria and Prussia were constituent nations of a single Christian state and aligned in a holy alliance whose authority derived form God.

The German Christian state that Gerlach and other supporters of the Erfurt Conference program envisioned would necessarily exclude Jews, deists, and non-believers from its constituency. Instead, political rights in the Christian state would be reserved for members of the confessionally-reunited Christian church. Allowing Jews, deists, and non-believers to participate in the civil society of a German Christian state whose purpose was to realize Christian values and defend Christian

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[49] Schoeps, *Das Andere Preussen*, 64.

institutions would in effect, lead to a dechristianization of a state whose very reason for being was predicated on defending the Volk from atheism and revolution.[50] This was of course antithetical to those conservatives, like the attendees and sympathizers of the Erfurt Conference, who identified the paramount threats to the German fatherland as the infiltration of atheism, liberalism, and revolution into the German polity and society. Proving that every notion of inclusion and unity comes at the cost of some minority group losing out, Wilhelmine Protestant nationalists and anti-Semites would later employ the notion of the Christian state to marginalize not only German Jews, but also liberals and German Catholics from the German nation.[51]

The outbreak of the Austro-Prussian war discouraged the reactionary ecumenists' aspirations for a confessionally-reunited großdeutsch empire. Indeed, in a 21 July 1866 diary entry, Gerlach claimed to recognize a religious element to the war. He did not want Germany to be overwhelmed by the Prussian-Protestant-Freemasonic (i.e., liberal Protestant) faction, nor did he want Germany to become un-Catholic (*unrömisch*). Accordingly, he opposed kleindeutsch conceptions of German unification. According to Gerlach, that dualism of Protestantism and Catholicism was essential to Germany.[52] Such dualism was lost in a Prussian-dominated German empire that excluded Catholic Austria.

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[50] Christopher Clark, "The 'Christian' State and the 'Jewish Citizen' in Nineteenth-Century Prusssia," in *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Germany, 1800-1914*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 79-81.
[51] Uriel Tal, *Christians and Jews in Germany: Religion Politics, and Ideology in the Second Reich, 1870-1914* translated by Noah Jonathan Jacobs (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), 137.
[52] Ludwig von Gerlach "Tagebuch 21 Juli 1866," reprinted in Hellmut Diwald, ed. *Von der Revolution zum Norddeutschen Bund: Politik und Ideengut der preußischen*

Friedrich Michelis also affirmed the need for a reunion of Catholics and Protestants to bring a peaceful balance between Austria and Prussia. Austria was heir to the imperial idea, inheritor of the legacy of the Holy Roman Empire, and confessionally Catholic, while Prussia was the carrier of the idea of the Reformation and Protestant. According to Michelis, Prussia was a state in which the Protestant church and its continuous Reformation profoundly influenced the national consciousness. Michelis recognized Prussia's most important task as the strengthening of its national-ecclesiastical consciousness and realization of a großdeutsch empire that included Catholic Austria.[53] But he remained ambivalent about the idea of a unification of Germany under a kleindeutsch model of Prussian leadership. Michelis was overjoyed over the emergence of a German Empire, but lamented the ultimate separation of Austria from Germany that the empire entailed.[54] Other reactionary ecumenists were equally ambivalent. Leo imagined a großdeutsch German state composed of Austria and Prussia until Prussia's victory in the Six Weeks War settled the großdeutsch vs. kleindeutsch debate. Ludwig von Gerlach famously opposed German unification and severed his relationship with Bismarck. He would eventually become a member of the Reichstag with the Catholic Center Party, continuing to work for reconciliation between pious Catholics and Protestants.

Hochkonservativen. Aus dem Nachlaß von Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach Vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 482.

[53] Friedrich Michelis, *Preußens Beruf für Deutschland und die Weltgeschichte* (Paderborn, 1863), 13 and 20, cited in Belz, *Friedrich Michelis*, 37.

[54] Belz, *Friedrich Michelis*, 38.

The confessional divide was an essential component to the solution of the German Question. But instead of defining a nation and a national identity in a way that excluded Catholics, advocates of the Erfurt Conference imagined that a reunion of separated Catholics and Protestants could serve as the basis for German national unification that included both Austria and Prussia. Their notions of church unity colored how they imagined a unified German nation. And both their ecumenism and their nationalism were informed by their use and abuse of memories of Luther and the Reformation.

The Reactionary-Ecumenical Reclamation of Luther Memory

Supporters of the Erfurt Conference used and abused Luther's memory in their crusades against atheism and revolution and in their campaigns for confessional and political unity. Reactionary ecumenists praised Luther's reform of the abuses within the Catholic Church while absolving him of guilt for the German confessional divide. They invoked fond memories of a pre-confessional Reformation upon which to ground their notions of an Evangelical catholic Church. And they deployed memories of Luther to discourage revolution and to advocate obedience to legitimate political and ecclesiastical sovereigns.

Like other nineteenth-century conservatives, the Erfurt Conference recalled Luther's fierce opposition to the Peasant's War and emphasized his views on political obedience in order to justify the authority of established powers and to discourage political dissent. By variously appealing to Luther's *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* (1520), *On Worldly Authority* (1523), and *Against the Murderous, Robbing Hordes of Peasants* (1525), they affirmed Luther's teaching that secular authority derived from God and that one offended God when one offends his divinely-ordained surrogates on Earth.[55]

Despite their frequent invocation of the Lutheran tradition to legitimize ecclesiastical and secular authority, German conservatives faced some difficulty in appropriating Luther's memory in nineteenth-century Germany. One the one hand,

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[55] Doron Avraham, "The Social and Religious Meaning of Nationalism: The Case of Prussian Conservatism, 1815-1871" *European History Quarterly* no. 38, 2008, 537; Hartmut Lehmann, "Martin Luther as a National Hero in the Nineteenth Century" in *Romantic Nationalism in Europe* edited by J.C. Eade (Canberra: Australian National University, 1983), 183; Uriel Tal, *Christians and Jews in Germany*, 121-122.

it was necessary to confront orthodox Catholic allegations of an identification of Reformation and revolution, and on the other hand it was necessary to distance oneself from the liberal Protestant interpretation of the Reformation as a religious-political emancipation movement.[56] They resolved this by recognizing Luther exclusively as a moral reformer of the church whose shaking up of ecclesiastical hierarchies was justified, and attributing later Reformation-era developments that had challenged the established secular and ecclesiastical authorities as incidental to Luther's reform program.

Ludwig von Gerlach derided conservative Catholics' association of Luther and the Reformation with revolution as erroneous. Even one of the Catholic attendees of the Erfurt Conference, Count Stolberg, had espoused this memory of Luther as fomenter of revolution. But, Gerlach argued by invoking Luther's *To the German Nobility*, there were limited cases in which the pious Christian subject—though not the political revolutionary—could legitimately demand a corrupt church answer for its abuses According to Gerlach, this represented the extent of Luther's defiance of secular and ecclesiastical authorities. Besides, the conservative Catholic memory of Luther as revolutionary would inhibit the progress of fellow reactionary ecumenists against atheists and bona fide revolutionaries. In this case Luther's memory became a contested site between conservative reunionists whose shared goal was to impede revolution.[57]

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[56] Kraus, *Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach*, Vol. 1, 230.
[57] Ludwig von Gerlach to Adolf von Thadden (Berlin 14 Jan. 1851) reprinted in Diwald, *Von der Revolution* Vol. 2, 733.

Reactionary ecumenists also deployed Luther's memory to refute memories of Luther and the Reformation espoused by German liberals, nationalists, and revolutionaries. Throughout the Vormärz and 1848, nationalists and radicals had invoked memories of Luther as a revolutionary figure who had emancipated Germany from its oppressive foreign yoke.[58] But Friedrich Michelis recognized Luther's significance not in any struggle for emancipation, but in the reformer's demand for a moral renewal of the church. Thus Michelis expressly disassociated Luther's memory from rebellion against ecclesiastical and secular authority. He claimed that Luther's memory had in fact been usurped by nationalists and revolutionaries, who had misinterpreted Luther's legitimate protest against a corrupt papacy and an immoral church hierarchy as a license for rebellion against divinely-ordered institutions of ecclesiastical and secular authority.[59] German liberals, nationalists, and revolutionaries abused this memory of Luther and the Reformation to ground their struggles for emancipation and to justify their enlightened, democratic, and heretical ideas that, reactionary ecumenists argued, would dissolve every divine institution. Although these revolutionary developments may have proceeded from the Reformation, Michelis argued that they should not be attributed to Luther.

Like Michelis, Heinrich Leo maintained a favorable view of Luther and what they both conceived as a "pure" and pre-confessional Reformation. But Leo argued

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[58] See Chaix "Die Reformation," 17-18; Lehmann, "Martin Luther as National Hero", 182; and the preceding chapter of this manuscript.
[59] Michelis, *Augsburger Postzeitung 1861, No. 92-111* reprinted in Schoeps, *Das Andere Preussen*, 335-336.

that the epigones of the Reformation—peasant revolutionaries, Anabaptists, other non-conforming clergy and congregations, and even Jean Calvin himself—were the most vile of rabble.[60] Indeed, Leo recognized Calvin's teachings on democratic ecclesiastical organization as the "source and origin of every later disruptive revolutionary event in Europe".[61] Ignaz von Döllinger also expressed distrust for Reformed Christians. Döllinger identified the Reformed religion as foreign to Germany, "artificially fostered by the princes and generally only endured under compulsion".[62] On these grounds Leo recommended the exclusion of French Reformed from future meetings of the Erfurt Conference. He suggested that the next conference should include Catholics, Lutherans, and German Reformed (Zwinglians) as historical participants at the Diet of Augsburg and historical constituents of the now-defunct Holy Roman Empire. But French Reformed, Anabaptists, and other non-conforming denominations would not be invited nor would they be permitted to attend future conference of reactionary ecumenists.[63] Huguenots, Anabaptists, and other religious non-conformists were excluded from the reactionary ecumenists' notions of confessional unity just as German Jews and non-believers were excluded from their ideas of the German Christian state.

Memories of the Reformation as a renewal of the church and of Luther as the legitimate initiator of that reform allowed the supporters of the Erfurt Conference to reclaim Luther's memory from German liberals, nationalists, and revolutionaries

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[60] Heinrich Leo to Ludwig v. Gerlach (3 Jan. 1853) reprinted in Diwald, *Von der Revolution* Vol. 2, 832.
[61] Leo, *Lehrbuch*, Vol. 3, 308.
[62] Döllinger, *Lectures*, 63.
[63] Leo to Nathusius (Erfurt 24 Sept. 1860) reprinted in Schoeps, *Das Andere Preussen*, 323.

who had invoked memories of the Reformation as a period of social and spiritual emancipation and from confessional Catholics who identified Luther with revolution. This repossession of memory was crucial for a reactionary-ecumenical faction that had to reconcile Luther's memory to orthodox Catholics, pious Evangelicals, Austrian proponents of a großdeutsch empire, and Prussian particularists in order to realize their own vision of German confessional and national unity.

Conclusion

In the end, the outbreak of the Austro-Prussian war would deter the reactionary ecumenists' aspirations for a confessionally-reunited großdeutsch empire. Nevertheless, the influence of the Erfurt Conference had exceeded its numbers. The ultramontane Catholic press considered this tiny assembly of pious German Catholics and Protestants so compelling that its example might inspire Protestants to return to their Catholic "Mother Church" en masse. The Evangelical press ascribed a similar importance to the Erfurt Conference, so much so that an alarmed Prince-Regent Wilhelm and culture minister Bethmann-Hollweg feared a mass conversion of German Protestants to Catholicism.[64]

After all, the attendees and supporters of the Erfurt Conference were prominent figures: until their falling out, Gerlach had the ears of both Friedrich Wilhelm III and Bismarck. Proving that he was not beneath contempt, Bismarck attacked Gerlach as a "fanatic in politics and religion".[65] Heinrich Leo was a widely-read church historian. Ignaz von Döllinger was a well-known Catholic theologian whose fame only increased when he joined the dissident Old Catholic congregations in protest of the doctrine of papal infallibility. Perhaps the strongest reception of the Erfurt Conference came after the establishment of the German Empire, when the ecumenical epigones of the 1860 conference would become the center of

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[64] Fleischer, "Lutheran and Catholic Reunionists," 46-47.
[65] Otto von Bismarck, *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman* Vol. 2 translated by A. J. Butler (New York: Harper, 1899), 305.

conservative and Catholic opposition to Bismarck and the Kulturkampf.[66] But the real significance of the Erfurt Conference is this: amidst fierce debates over the proper way to unify the German nation, the conference underlined deeply-held concerns over the implications of any Germany, be it klein or groß, that was to be unified against the confessional divide.

The confessionalization of the national idea lent itself to confessionally and racially-exclusive notions of German national unity. Liberal Protestants and kleindeutsch nationalists espoused a notion of German national unity that elevated Prussia, excluded Austria, and imagined Catholics as internal foreigners and enemies of the German nation.[67] As such, ultramontane and conservative Catholics were forced to negotiate multiple loyalties—a church and a papacy they revered, an Austria they recognized as the standard of Christian-Germanic society, and after 1871, a German nation with which they strongly identified themselves as loyal citizens despite their persecutions in the Kulturkampf.[68] These exclusive notions of German national unity and identity were predicated on confessional alterity. The German nation imagined by the Erfurt Conference was predicated on confessional unity.

But even the deconfessionalization, or perhaps ecumenization, of the national idea espoused by reactionary ecumenists lent itself to a kind of exclusivity

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[66] See Hans-Joachim Schoeps, "CDU vor 75 Jahren. Die sozialpolitischen Bestrebungen des Reichsfreiherrn Friedrich Carl von Fechenbach (1836 bis 1907)" *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 9 (1957): 267 and the proceeding chapter of this manuscript.
[67] Pickus, "Native Born Strangers," 146.
[68] Smith, *German Nationalism*, 237-238 and George G. Windell, *The Catholics and German Unity, 1866-1871* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954), 7-8.

within unity. Indeed, their notions of inclusion excluded others. But this was also the case in 1817 and 1830, when celebrants of the Reformation anniversaries constructed notions of intra-Protestant unity that excluded orthodox Reformed and Lutherans, and again during the 1840s, when the Free Congregations imagined a reunited German Christian church that excluded the Evangelical hierarchy and ultramontane Catholics. For although the participants and sympathizers of the Erfurt Conference proposed an ecumenical notion of German unity that included Catholics and (most) Protestants, others remained outside the realm of what it meant to be "German": Reformed Christians, German Jews, and non-believers.

Historians of the confessionalization of the national idea have added layers of complexity to the history and historiography of German national unification by exploring how ultramontane and liberal Catholics, orthodox and cultural Protestants, variously imagined German unity and identity through acts of inclusion and exclusion of confessional, ethnic, and racial "Others". But ecumenists, be they radical or reactionary, enlightened or orthodox, also imagined German confessional unity and separation, and German national unity and separation in wildly different ways, including their confessional "Others," but excluding their intellectual, ideological, racial or cultural "Others". This accounts for the interrogative, rather than hortatory inflection of the title of this manuscript: That *All* May be One?

Divisions between the confessions and internal divisions within the confessions contributed to how German Catholics and Protestants variously conceived of the German nation. Such internal divisions existed amongst nineteenth-century German ecumenists as well. Thus the history of the

ecumenization of the national idea, rife with its own internal divisions, may also add a heuristic complexity to the history and historiography of German national unification.

CHAPTER 4 - THAT ALL MAY BE ONE? THE UT OMNES UNUM GROUP, CHURCH UNITY, GERMAN NATIONAL IDENTITY, AND THE LUTHER ANNIVERSARIES OF 1883

In 1862 the Pomeranian noblewoman Julie von Massow (1824-1901) established a modest devotional society consisting of irenical German Catholics and Protestants whose purpose was to pray for a reunion of the separated confessions. By the early 1870s she had begun to host regular meetings of conservative and ecumenical German Catholics and Protestants at her home in Dresden. The attendees of these meetings constituted a group that became the center of conservative Christian opposition to the Kulturkampf. In 1879 attendees of these meetings established the ecumenical journal *Ut Omnes Unum* to promote understanding and unity between the separated confessions and to encourage notions of German national unity and identity that were inclusive of both German Catholics and Protestants.

Despite its external unification in 1871, Germany remained internally separated. The confessional divide remained the manifest expression of social, cultural, and political difference in Wilhelmine Germany. The establishment of a kleindeutsch German Empire under Prussian-Protestant hegemony, the anti-Catholic policies of the Kulturkampf legislation, and the conflation of Protestantism with German national identity at the 1883 Luther anniversaries all facilitated the marginalization of German Catholics from Wilhelmine society, culture, and politics. While many German Catholics reacted to this marginalization by withdrawing into confessionally-segregated milieus such as social organizations, devotional societies, and the political Catholicism of the Center Party, the Catholic-dominated Ut Omnes

Unum group contested this marginalization and proposed a means of overcoming Germany's internal divide by reuniting the separated confessions.[1] All at once, the ecumenism of Ut Omnes Unum represented an assertion of German Catholic identity, opposition to the Kulturkampf, and an alternative to its homogenous and confessionally-exclusive vision of German national unity and identity. Indeed, the ecumenism of the Ut Omnes Unum group points to the possibility of an interconfessional, rather than confessionally-exclusive, history of the political culture of German nationalism and national identity in early Wilhelmine Germany. Ut Omnes Unum represented an interconfessional religious community that neither withdrew entirely into the Catholic milieu, nor abandoned their confessional identities. Indeed, the Ut Omnes Unum circle maintained that German unity could never fully be realized until the confessional question was properly addressed; until both confessions were recognized as integral parts of the German nation. And their memories of Luther and the Reformation informed their approach to interconfessional relations.

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[1] For the concept of the Catholic milieu, see M. Rainer Lepsius, "Parteiensystem und Sozialstrukture: zum Problem der Demokritasierung der deutschen Gesellschaft," in *Wirtschaft, Geschichte und Wirtschaftsgeschichte: Festschrift zum 65. Geburtstag von Friedrich Lütge*, ed. Wilhelm Abel et al. (Stuttgart: G. Fischer, 1966), 371-393; For the social, religious, and political reactions of German Catholics to the establishment of the German Empire see George G. Windell, *The Catholics and German Unity, 1866-1871* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954); Margaret Lavinia Anderson, *Windthorst: A Political Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981); Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984); Thomas Mergel, *Zwischen Klasse und Konfession: Katholisches Biirgertum im Rheinland 1794-1914* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1994); and Thomas Mergel, "Ultramontanism, Liberalism, Moderation: Political Mentalities and Political Behavior of the German Catholic *Biirgertum,* 1848-1914," *Central European History* 29 (1996): 151-74.

Ut Omnes Unum recalled Luther as a schismatic who had caused the separation of the church, and by extension, the separation of the German nation. The effects of this separation were evident in the internal division of the German nation, which persisted even after its political unification in 1871. Indeed, Luther had splintered a German Christian church that St. Boniface (c. 672-754) had established and that had become the basis for the German nation state. After all, the archbishopric of Mainz that St. Boniface founded became the center of an East Franconian kingdom that became an early constituent of the German nation. The ecumenism of the Ut Omnes Unum group represented a means of reuniting separated German Catholics and Protestants and restoring the unity of a German nation that had been split by Luther's Reformation.

But such a reunification could occur only when German Protestants returned to the "Mother Church" that Luther had splintered. The Ut Omnes Unum group imagined national unity in the reunion of the separated confessions and the return of German Protestants to the Catholic Church. Because Luther had caused a schism not only between the churches, but also one that continued to separate Catholics and Protestants even after Germany's political unification, only through a return to the Catholic Church that they had abandoned over three hundred years ago could German Protestants restore unity to Christianity and to the German nation.

The Catholic "Mother Church" that Ut Omnes Unum proposed German Protestants return to was one that, they stressed, had recognized the Augsburg Confession as almost entirely consistent with Catholicism and one that had been reformed by the Council of Trent. This was consistent with the kind of "evangelical catholicity"

espoused by supporters of the Erfurt Conference such as Friedrich Michealis, Heinrich Leo, and Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach. But to be sure, the ecumenism espoused by the Catholic members of the Ut Omnes Unum circle entailed a reunion of German Protestants with them. This kind of "proselytizing ecumenism" surely represented a defensive reaction of German Catholics to their own marginalization, exclusion, and identification as enemies of, and internal foreigners within, the new German Reich.

Indeed, the most notable instance of the symbolic marginalization of German Catholics in Wilhelmine Germany came at the 1883 Luther anniversaries. These anniversaries, which Thomas A. Brady identified as a "belated birthday party for the new German Reich,"[2] were sites of memory at which Protestantism was explicitly conflated with German national identity. The Ut Omnes Unum circle reacted by acknowledging Luther's contributions to German culture but proposed ways in which German Protestants might celebrate the anniversaries without exciting confessional tensions and widening the confessional divide. They also proposed replacing Luther with St. Boniface as an interconfessional symbol of German unity and identity. Luther was a German national hero to Protestants, but St. Boniface had been an interconfessional symbol of German Christian unity and identity that all Christians could appeal to.

To be sure, German Catholics had accepted the new Reich from the beginning. Catholics recognized the legitimate authority of the emperor and

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[2] Thomas A. Brady, Jr. "The Protestant Reformation in German History," Occasional Paper no. 22 of the German Historical Institute (September 1998), 15.

acknowledged their national and patriotic obligations. They did not rebel against the kleindeutsch organization of the Reich, nor did they question their own identity as constituents of the new empire or the German nation. But they did appeal to different experiences and memories than their Protestant counterparts to imagine German national identity.[3] Thus after 1871 Catholics, and especially those ecumenical Catholics that dominated the Ut Omnes Unum circle, were not interested in proposing alternative ideas of the political composition of the German state; only an alternative to those ideas of the German nation that conflated Protestantism with German national identity, and that were embodied by the events of 1866, 1871, and 1883.

Manfred P. Fleischer is the only historian who has examined the Ut Omnes Unum group in detail.[4] Like his study of the 1860 Erfurt Conference though, Fleischer sets the circle within a history of Christian ecumenism in Germany ranging from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. He represents Ut Omnes Unum as "forgotten forerunners" of the twentieth-century ecumenical movement and underlines the group's ties to the Hochkirchliche Vereinigung (1918), the Una Sancta Brotherhood (1938), Die Sammlung (1954), and the League for Evangelical and Catholic Reunion (1960).[5] But more importantly, Fleischer does not recognize the ecumenism of Ut Omnes Unum as a reaction to German unification, the

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[3] Thomas Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch: Deutschland 1870-1918* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1998), 49; and Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 237-238

[4] Manfred P. Fleischer, *Katholische und lutherische Ireniker: Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1968) and Manfred Fleischer, "Lutheran and Catholic Reunionists in the Age of Bismarck" *Church History* 38 no. 1 (March 1969): 43-66.

[5] Fleischer, "Lutheran and Catholic Reunionists," 66.

Kulturkampf, or to the 1883 Luther anniversaries. Nor does he address the relationship among Ut Omnes Unum's ecumenism, the collective memory of religion, or notions of German confessional unity and national identity that my own reading of the evidence seeks to reconstruct.

The Confessional and National Contexts of Early Wilhelmine Germany

The proselytizing ecumenism of the Ut Omnes Unum circle represented a reaction to the increasing conflation of Protestantism with German national identity that began in 1866 and culminated in the Luther anniversaries of 1883. In July 1866 Prussia won a decisive victory against Austria at the battle of Königrätz, effectively ending the Austro-Prussian war and putting to rest any doubts of Prussia's hegemony over German-speaking Europe. Prussia's victory precipitated the dissolution of the German Confederation, an alliance of states that included Austria and had held Germany together since the Congress of Vienna. In its place, an alliance of overwhelmingly Protestant northern German states dominated by Prussia and excluding Austria and the southern German states of Baden, Bavaria, Hesse, and Württemberg was established in 1867. This North German Confederation would become an early constituent of the German Empire that was established in 1871.

Königrätz and the dissolution of the German Confederation were charged with confessional implications. German nationalists bragged that Königrätz represented a confessional victory for Protestantism over Catholicism and that it represented a kind of redemption for Protestant Germany's terrible losses in the Thirty Years War.[6] Moreover, the dissolution of the German Confederation meant that ecclesiastical policies would be set by each individual state rather than the Bund, which had successfully kept the confessional peace during an era of

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[6] Anthony J. Steinhoff, "Christianity and the Creation of Germany," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: World Christianities, c. 1815-1914*, eds. Sheridan Gilley and Brian Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 293; and Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch*, 92.

increasing confessional integration. Fearing the constituent states of the overwhelmingly Protestant North German Confederation would restrict the rights of German Catholics, Catholic politicians requested that religious freedom be included in the new constitution of the confederation. But Protestant liberals in the North German parliament vetoed this request and pointed to it as an act of Catholic disloyalty to the nation.[7]

The Franco-Prussian War and the eventual unification of Germany only served to exacerbate confessional tensions. During the war, German Protestant sermons, whose themes were frequently anti-Catholic, referred to German Protestants as God's chose people and the French (read: Catholics) as deserving of defeat and humiliation.[8] After unification kleindeutsch German liberals and cultural Protestants further conflated Protestant culture and the German national idea, two groups who according to Wolfgang Altgeld, were "determined to achieve a truly German religious ethos, morality, culture and politics, precisely by excluding anything Catholic".[9] Thus Catholicism had become a foil to authentic "Germanness" during the early Kaiserreich.

After 1871 the German Question essentially became moot. But what it meant to be German remained far from clear. Although Germany had been politically unified, the meanings of German national unity and identity remained divided along

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[7] Steinhoff, "Christianity and the Creation of Germany," 293.
[8] Hartmut Lehmann, "The Germans as Chosen People: Old Testament Themes in German Nationalism" *German Studies Review* 14, no. 2 (May 1991): 261 and 265.
[9] Wolfgang Altgeld, "German Catholics," in *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews, and Protestants: Minorities and the Nation State in nineteenth-century Europe*, eds. Rainer Liedtke and Stephan Wendehorst (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 114.

confessional lines. The German nationalist historian Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-1896) regarded the Franco-Prussian war as a victory for Protestantism. The Prussian court pastor Adolf Stoecker (1835-1909) recognized the new Kaiserreich as a Protestant empire, and claimed to see God's hand at work both in 1517 and in 1871.[10] The *Neue Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* triumphantly proclaimed that the epoch of German history that had begun in October 1517 had come to a God-ordained resolution with the establishment of the Kaiserreich.[11] Even after Sedan, Protestant pastors and German nationalists both spoke of the need for final victory of Germany over France, one which would only to be achieved with the subjection of German Catholics, who represented the "inner Paris," and the "France within Germany".[12] Thus Catholics became Germany's internal confessional "other".

Throughout the Wilhelmine era, Cultural Protestants, liberal nationalists, and Protestant Germany in general would identify Protestantism with German national identity.[13] Protestant pastors celebrated the emperor's birthday and the anniversary of the Battle of Sedan as religious holidays.[14] German Catholics, on the other hand, did not participate in these festivals.[15] Because the German nation remained divided along confessional lines, the precise meaning of German national unity and identity

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[10] Kurt Nowak, *Geschichte des Christentums in Deutschland : Religion, Politik und Gesellschaft vom Ende der Aufklärung bis zur Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1995), 158.
[11] NEKZ (7 January 1871), 1 cited in Günter Brakelmann, "Der Krieg 1870/1871 und die Reichsgründung im Urteil des Protestantismus," in *Kirche zwischen Krieg und Frieden: Studien zur Geschichte des deutschen Protestantismus*, eds. Wolfgang Huber and Johannes Schwerdtfeger (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, 1976), 303.
[12] Brakelmann, "Der Krieg 1870/1871," 310-311.
[13] Friedrich Wilhelm Graf "Protestantische Theologie in der Gesellschaft des Kaiserreichs," in *Profile des neutzeithlichen Protestantismus: Kaiserreich*, ed. Friedrich Wilhelm Graf (Güttersloh: G. Mohn, 1992), 12-13.
[14] Steinhoff, "Christianity and the Creation of Germany," 298.
[15] Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch*, 49.

remained contested. The Kulturkampf represented one way of addressing the unresolved Konfessionalfrage. The ecumenism of the Ut Omnes Unum circle would represent another.

The Kulturkampf was precipitated by two main factors: the proclamation of papal infallibility as a dogma of the Catholic Church at the Vatican Council (1869-1870) and the growing influence of the Catholic Center Party in the Reichstag, owing to its electoral successes of 1871. Protestant liberals feared that on account of the newly-proclaimed dogma, German Catholics' political loyalty would be directed to Rome rather than the capital of the new nation in Berlin. Bismarck supported the Kulturkampf legislation because of the growing influence of the Catholic Center Party in the Reichstag. He strongly opposed a confessional party whose loyalties to the German nation were ostensibly in question.[16] Invoking the pre-Reformation German collective memory of religion, Bismarck vowed that Germany would never again go to Canossa; that Germany's leaders would never again submit to Roman authority. Cultural Protestants associated Protestantism with science, Bildung, progress, and freedom and Catholicism with backwardness and insularity.[17] Thus German liberals envisioned the Kulturkampf as a true "cultural struggle" for German Protestant progress against Catholic backwardness.[18]

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[16] Gordon A. Craig, *Germany, 1866-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 71.
[17] Michael B. Gross, "Kulturkampf and Unification: German Liberalism and the War against the Jesuits" *Central European History* 30, no. 4 (1997), 546; see also Michael B. Gross, *The War against Catholicism: Liberalism and the anti-Catholic Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004).
[18] David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 261-262.

Regardless of its motivation, the Kulturkampf legislation was intended to compel integration of Catholics into normative (read: Protestant) German society and culture through policies that included the dissolution of the Catholic office at the Prussian Culture Ministry, the closure of seminaries and assumption of clerical training by the German state, the abolition of religious orders (most famously the Jesuits), the prohibition of Catholic religious education in state schools, the compulsory introduction of civil marriage, the confiscation of church property, and the arrest and exile of thousands of Catholic clergy who had opposed these policies. In fact, the Kulturkampf legislation represented an internal war waged by the state against enemies of the Reich (Reichsfeinde), as German Catholics were known, to maintain the unity of the young German nation and to protect its very existence. Indeed, one twentieth-century historian identified the Kulturkampf as a war of annihilation (Vernichtungskrieg) against the Catholic Church and German Catholics.[19] But even without engaging in such hyperbole, we may all acknowledge that instead of closing the confessional divide between German Catholics and Protestants, the Kulturkampf deepened it, as German Catholic distrust of their government increased, and many German Catholics to withdraw into confessionally-isolated milieus.

The 1883 anniversaries of Luther's birth date represented the culmination of this gradual process of the Protestant confessionalization of the German national idea. Luther's memory was politicized at the 1883 anniversaries and the reformer

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[19] Herbert Lepper, "Widerstand gegen die Staatsgewalt," in *Lebensraum Bistum Aachen: Tradition—Aktualitat—Zukunft*, ed. Philipp Boonen, (Aachen: Einhard, 1982), cited in Gross, "Kulturkampf and Unification," 546.

was remembered as a distinctly Protestant German national hero. Encouraged by Protestant clergy, cultural Protestants, and liberal German nationalists, celebrants at the 1883 festivals used and abused Luther's memory to construct a confessionally-exclusive (read: Protestant) idea of the German nation and German national identity that further marginalized German Catholics.

The Ut Omnes Unum group contested this conflation of Protestantism with German national identity. They recalled Luther and the Reformation as causes of contemporary German confessional and national discord and thus sought to reunify Christianity and the German nation by encouraging German Protestants to return to their Catholic "Mother Church" and by replacing Luther with St. Boniface as a symbol of German national identity. Only by first proposing a solution to the confessional question could the German national question be authentically addressed.

"In Necessariis Unitas, in Dubiis Libertas, in Omnibus Caritas": the Confessional Divide, Ecumenism, and German National (Dis)Unity

Despite its external unification in 1871, Germany still remained internally divided between Catholics and Protestants. The Ut Omnes Unum circle recognized Luther as the author of this confessional, and by extension, national fissure and proposed a means to reunite both the confessions and the German nation all at once by inviting German Protestants to return to the Catholic Church. The proselytizing ecumenism of Ut Omnes Unum suggested an ecumenical notion of German unity and identity that was not split down confessional lines, but was instead predicated on a (re)united German Christian church that had originally been fractured by Luther's Reformation.

The Ut Omnes Unum circle had its origins in Lutheran devotional societies established by the Pomeranian noblewoman Julie von Massow. Catholics and Protestants, including Erfurt Conference attendees and sympathizers Caius zu Stolberg and Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach were frequent attendees at gatherings of the these devotional societies. In the early 1870s Massow began to host regular meetings of conservative and ecumenical Catholics and Protestants at her home in Dresden. The attendees of these meetings included Catholic and Protestant epigones and admirers of Erfurt Conference contemporaries Friedrich Julius Stahl, Caius zu Stolberg, Heinrich Leo, and Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach. This Dresden circle became the center of conservative opposition to Bismarck and the Kulturkampf. Indeed, the leader of the Center Party, Ludwig Windthorst (1812-1891), had remarked that if Massow's salon were in Berlin rather than Dresden, it would be "the center of the

Center Party".[20] In 1879, members of Massow's Dresden circle established the journal *Ut Omnes Unum*, dedicated to "understanding and union" between the separated confessions. The participants and sympathizers of Massow's Dresden salon, and the old members of her Psalmenbund and Gebetsverein devotional societies would constitute the journal's target audience.[21]

The driving force behind the establishment of the journal was the Reformed layman turned Catholic priest Karl Georg Krafft (1818-1898). Before joining Massow's Dresden circle, Krafft had initiated correspondence with attendees and sympathizers of the Erfurt Conference upon reading Ludwig Clarus' 1867 history of the Erfurt Conference. Krafft hoped to revive the conference and produced articles and pamphlets to this end. In 1876 he appealed to irenical Catholics and Protestants to found a journal dedicated to realizing a reunion of the separated confessions. His proposed title for the journal, *Ut Omnes Unum* (John 17:21), would be formally established in Erfurt three years later and Krafft would become a regular contributor.[22]

Other frequent contributors included Julie von Massow herself and Carl Seltmann (1842-1911), a Silesian Catholic priest who served as the first editor of Ut Omnes Unum, and Heinrich Ahrendts (1820-1897), a Lutheran pastor who usually spoke on behalf of the Protestant denomination at Massow's Dresden salon, and was a later contributor to Ut Omnes Unum. Like Julie von Massow, Ahrendts later converted to Catholicism. Another contributor was Hermann Opitz (1828-1909), a

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[20] Fleischer, *Katholische und lutherische Ireniker*, 198.
[21] Ibid., 192-194.
[22] Ibid., 160-161 and 164.

Lutheran from Saxony who published his own ecumenical treatises and was a staunch opponent of the Evangelische Bund, a Protestant-nationalist group dedicated to pursuing the anti-Catholic policies of the Kulturkampf after they had been officially abandoned. Another Saxon Lutheran, Hermann Hasse (1811-1892), who was contemporaneously working on a *Grundlinien christliker Irenik* (1882), also became a contributor to Ut Omnes Unum. The Westphalian Catholic priest Adolf Röttscher (1829-1896) contributed articles and published his own ecumenical monographs. Despite the varied experiences and opinions of the irenical Catholic and Protestant clergy and laymen who made up the contributors to Ut Omnes Unum, all agreed that a reunion of the separated confessions was a prerequisite for any authentic form of German national unity.[23]

In one of the journal's first articles, an anonymous contributor identified the separation of the confessions as a perpetual sin of Christianity that demanded absolution. This sin was especially lamentable for the German nation, for the confessional divided had hindered German national unity for so long. Indeed, the author claimed, despite the political unification of Germany in 1871, the German people remained divided. Accordingly, it was a holy obligation of every earnest German Christian, and of all true German patriots, as well as the Catholic and Protestant clergy, and German princes and statesmen, to work toward the proper resolution of the Konfessionalfrage. Nothing was more important than realizing a reunion of the separated confessions—not only for the sake of confessional and

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[23] Ibid., 209-235.

national unity, but for the general welfare of the German people and for the sake peace throughout the German Empire.[24]

Ut Omnes Unum never tired of reminding its readers that the German confessional divide had inhibited German national unity for over three hundred years. After 1871 Germany was of course outwardly united, but internally a crack still ran through it that Luther's Reformation had first forged.[25] Rather than reuniting German Catholics and Protestants, the unification of Germany under Protestant auspices served to drive the confessions further apart. Wilhelmine German society, culture, and identity were normatively Protestant. The Kulturkampf further marginalized German Catholics, in fact widening the confessional divide. According to the Ut Omnes Unum group, under these circumstances, Germany could in no way be considered united. Indeed, the only legitimate model of German unity was one that addressed the confessional divide between Catholics and Protestants. German national unity could only be realized through a reunion of the separated confessions.

Adolf Röttscher underscored this point and reminded his readers that Luther and the Reformation had strengthened the centrifugal forces already at work in sixteenth-century Germany.[26] Indeed, he noted that since the early sixteenth century all right-thinking Germans had recognized and lamented the religious separation of Germany as a great national evil. Citing the Thirty Years War as the

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[24] UOU 1 (December 1879), 34-36.
[25] UOU 54 (1 March 1884), 659.
[26] Adolf Röttscher, *Unionsversuche zwischen Katholiken und Protestanten Deutschlands* (Frankfurt a.M.: Foesser, 1885), 1.

paramount example, Röttscher reminded his readers that foreign powers had long exploited the German confessional divide in order to render Germany weak and powerless. But it was only through a reunion of the separated confessions that those forces that had historically divided Germans could be overcome and a proper unification of Germany be realized.[27]

Ut Omnes Unum editor Carl Seltmann regarded the confessional divide as a "lamentable misfortune of our fatherland and our people".[28] Like Röttscher, he had special disdain for those Germans who used the confessional divide to further their own selfish agendas. Clearly referring to Bismarck, German liberal nationalists, and Cultural Protestants who had encouraged a confessionally-Protestant notion of German unity and identity, and supported the marginalization and exclusion of Catholics from German civil and political life, Seltmann promised woe to those who exploited the confessional divide. Indeed, such figures were traitors (Verräter) to the fatherland and the cause of German unity.[29]

Seltmann also bemoaned the personal and social effects of the German confessional divide. It appeared as a "great monstrosity and a vile abomination" to Seltmann that those who bore the same Christian name were divided into antagonistic parties merely by their different confessions of faith. And that in private and in public these separated parties faced one another with such hostility

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[27] Ibid., 1.
[28] Carl Seltmann, *Zur Wiedervereinigung der getrennten Christen, zunächst in deutschen Landen* (Breslau: Aderholz, 1903), 391.
[29] Ibid., 391.

with respect both to trifling matters and to issues of great national importance.[30] Thus confessional separation held more than mere ecclesiastical consequences. This was a divide that had cut deeply into the hearts of pious Germans of both confessions and German society and culture for over three hundred years. The political unification of Germany, especially a process of unification that had identified Catholics as enemies of the empire and potential traitors to Germany whose true loyalties lay with Rome, could not address the depth of this centuries-long separation. Only a reunion of the separated confessions could do that. But the anti-Catholic policies of the Kulturkampf made such a reunion seem even less viable. The Kulturkampf represented one answer to the Konfessionalfrage and the related question of what kind of Christian nation the newly-unified Germany would be. The ecumenism of the Ut Omnes Unum circle represented another. The Kulturkampf legislation proposed to solve the confessional question through the exclusion of Catholics from normative German society and culture;[31] the Ut Omnes Unum group through the reunion of German Catholics and Protestants.

The Ut Omnes Unum group served as the center of conservative Catholic and Protestant opposition to the Kulturkampf. Heinrich Ahrendts recalled the meetings of the Ut Omnes Unum circle in Julie von Massow's Dresden home as:

> [a]n assembly of like-minded and similarly-disposed people, all focused on a single objective: right and justice, truth and freedom for church and society. All in conscious opposition against the destructive tendencies and rapacious

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[30] Ibid., iii.
[31] Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 14 and 20.

> policies, which under the name 'Kulturkampf' has been so disastrous for our beloved fatherland.[32]

All parties agreed that Bismarck had used unification and the Kulturkampf as a carrot and stick in order to procure even more political power for himself. The Kulturkampf, like other encroachments of the state unto the prerogatives of the churches, had sought to enforce confessional and national homogeneity through the marginalization and exclusion of Catholics. But in fact it represented as a great a threat to German confessional and national unity as any policy.[33] Even the ultramontane *Historisch-Politische Blätter*, no organ of ecumenism, lauded the Ut Omnes Unum group for tirelessly working to restore unity and brotherhood to a German nation that had been divided for so long, and that had been further torn apart by the anti-Catholic policies of the Kulturkampf.[34]

A reunion of German Catholics and Protestants was not only necessary for spiritual reasons; it was necessary for restoring a unity to the fatherland that had been a broken by Luther and the Reformation. The German confessional, and by extension, national divide was only widened by the events of German unification, the Kulturkampf, and the 1883 Luther anniversaries, all of which connoted confessionally-Protestant notions of German unity and identity. The unification of Germany remained incomplete without a reunion of the separated confessions. The Ut Omnes Unum circle imagined church unity in German Protestants' return to the Catholic "Mother Church" that had been splintered by Luther and the

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[32] Heinrich Ahrendts quoted in Maria Bernardina, *Julie von Massow, geborene von Behr: Ein konvertitenbild aus dem 19. Jahrhundert* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1902), 191.
[33] Hermann Hasse, *Grundlinien christliker Irenik: Aufruf und Beitrag zum Frieden unter den christlichen Confessionen und Nationen* (Leipzig: Johannes Lehmann, 1882), 13.
[34] HPB 119 (1883), 494.

Reformation. They remembered Luther as a schismatic and the Reformation as the primary cause of the German confessional divide. Their memories of Luther and the Reformation stand in contrast to those espoused by the attendees and sympathizers of the 1860 Erfurt Conference. Supporters of the Erfurt Conference recalled Luther as a moral reformer of a corrupt Catholic Church that he had no original intention of withdrawing from. They regarded the separation of the confessions as accidental, rather than essential, to Luther's campaign against the abuses of the sixteenth-century church.

On the other hand, the Ut Omnes Unum group explicitly identified the Reformation as the cause of the German confessional divide and Luther as a spiritual revolutionary who had in fact planned to establish his own church. Luther had succeeded in striking a mortal wound to the unity of the German church and consequently, the German nation.[35] The "Wittenberg Reformation" was a failure not only in an ecclesiastical respect because it had split the church into two antagonistic denominations, but in a national respect as well because it had split the German nation.[36] These confessional and national fissures were made manifest by the Thirty-Years War, when foreign powers exploited the separation of the confessions in order to further divide and weaken Germany.[37] Bismarck, the cultural Protestants, and liberal nationalists were doing precisely the same thing—

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[35] Röttscher, *Unionsversuche*, 2 and Heinrich Ahrendts cited in Bernardina, *Julie von Massow*, 188-190.
[36] Karl Georg Krafft, *Zwölf Thesen behufs einer möglichen Kirchlichen Wiedervereinigung in Deutschland* (Neuburg a.D.: August Prechter, 1874), 6.
[37] Röttscher, *Unionsversuche*, 1.

exploiting the German confessional divide—but this time using it against their fellow Germans.

These memories of Luther as schismatic and the Reformation as the primary cause of German disunity implied that the only means of overcoming the confessional divide and restoring unity to Germany was for German Protestants to return to the church that Luther had splintered and that they had remained estranged from for over 350 years. Thus Ut Omnes Unum envisioned church unity as a return of German Protestants back into the womb of the Catholic "Mother Church" that Luther had originally fractured.[38] To be sure, the ecumenism of the Ut Omnes Unum group did not represent a cynical attempt to surreptitiously convert German Protestants to Catholicism. Despite the confessional schism caused by Luther's Reformation, according to Ut Omnes Unum, the Catholic Church had reformed itself, corrected many of the abuses that Luther had decried, and was ready to receive its separated brothers back into its fold in a way that accommodated both German Catholics and Protestants

In reaching out to German Protestants, Catholic members of the Ut Omnes Unum circle sought to explain Catholic theology and practice in such a way that it minimized the differences between Catholicism and Protestantism. They appealed to the Augsburg Confession as an ecumenical document that could point to shared beliefs, rather than a strict profession of faith that drew lines between Catholics and Lutherans. Indeed, the Ut Omnes Unum group underscored those articles of the Augsburg Confession that had always been accepted by the Catholic Church. For

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[38] Röttscher, *Unionsversuche*, 2 and Bernardina, *Julie von Massow*, 274.

those articles that the Catholic Church had not affirmed, mutual understanding and a respectful attempt at a resolution of differences would have to suffice. Points of extreme controversy between Catholics and Protestants would be set aside. Those ecumenical Protestants who participated in this dialogue would never be held to recent dogmas such as the Immaculate Conception of Mary (1854) and the Infallibility of the Pope (1870), which the Augsburg Confession had never addressed.

Ut Omnes Unum imagined a German Protestant return to a Catholic Church that affirmed most of the articles of the Augsburg Confession and that had reformed itself at the Council of Trent. Indeed, claimed Pastor Ahrendts, even orthodox Protestants such as Heinrich Leo, Friedrich Julius Stahl, Wilhelm Löhe, August Vilmar, and Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach—some of whom advocated reunion between German Catholics and Protestants at the 1860 Erfurt Conference—expressed a desire for the renewal of such a German evangelical-catholic Church.[39]

Ut Omnes Unum argued that the Catholic Church had addressed nearly all of the sixteenth-century reformers' complaints at the Council of Trent and was thus sufficiently prepared to receive its Protestant brothers back into the flock.[40] In fact, the only legitimate reformation of the Christian church would be one that encapsulated all of Christianity. Thus Hermann Opitz advocated a return to the reforming principles of the Reformation. According to Opitz, the Reformation remained unfinished, and reform could only be fulfilled through a reunion of

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[39] Ahrendts quoted in Bernardina, *Julie von Massow*, 188-190.
[40] UOU (1 March 1880), 66.

Catholics, Orthodox Christians, and Protestants. For Opitz, reformation entailed renewal and reunion rather than confessional discord. And the site of memory around which Opitz imagined this unified renewal could be realized was the 1530 Augsburg Confession, originally drafted by Melanchthon to prevent schism among Lutherans themselves.

Opitz recognized the Augsburg Confession as a profession of faith almost wholly consistent with Catholicism and as a possible foundation of irenical dialogue.[41] Opitz noted Charles V's irenical motives for calling the Diet of Augsburg: to provide a forum for Catholics and Evangelicals to elucidate their beliefs and to ultimately restore peace and unity to the church and the Reich. Opitz recommended that ecumenical Catholics carefully examine the Augsburg Confession to familiarize themselves with the faith of their Evangelical brothers.[42] In a May 1882 article Opitz advocated reading the Augsburg Confession alongside the opinions and decrees of the Council of Trent in order to point out where the Tridentine church had addressed "the main impulses of Luther's Reformation," and where ecumenical dialogue and a resolution of differences between Catholics and Protestants were still necessary.[43] Opitz imagined that after the successful completion of such a dialogue the abuses and corruption within the church that the reformers had decried would be resolved and there would no longer be any legitimate reason for Protestants to resist reuniting with the Catholic Church.

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[41] UOU (1 December 1900), 3320-3321.
[42] Ibid., 3320-3321.
[43] UOU (1 May 1882), 393.

Likewise, Carl Seltmann recognized the Augsburg Confession as the profession of faith that nearly every Evangelical theologian affirmed, and thus must be addressed by ecumenical Catholics with great care.[44] Because it was a profession of faith that was not entirely inconsistent with Catholicism, it could serve as a basis for ecumenical dialogue between German Catholics and Protestants. Seltmann specifically invoked Article VII of the Augsburg Confession on the unity of the church, noting that the church constituted the congregation of faithful, and that the only requisites for church unity were that the Gospel be preached and the sacraments be administered. Otherwise, it was not necessary for true unity that identical ceremonies be used and identical doctrines be professed in each congregation. To this end Seltmann reminded his readers of St. Augustine's ecumenical dictum: in necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas.[45] Indeed, Seltmann argued, that in "necessary things" the Roman Confutation (1530) affirmed many articles of the Augsburg Confession, including those articles addressing the Trinity, original sin, the episcopal office, baptism, the Real Presence in the Eucharist, and the freedom of the will. In those "disputed things," Seltmann was optimistic that German Catholics and Protestants could peacefully resolve their differences through dialogue.[46] And in all other matters where agreement was not essential or could not be reached, Catholics and Protestants would display charity and love toward one another. Recent dogmas proclaimed by the Roman Catholic Church, such as the Immaculate Conception of Mary and Papal Infallibility, were not

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[44] Seltmann, *Zur Wiedervereinigung*, iv.
[45] Ibid., 96-97.
[46] Ibid., 389.

encapsulated in the Augsburg Confession and therefore should not be articles of faith that prospective Protestant ecumenists should be compelled to profess in order to enter dialogue with ecumenical Catholics or even return to the Catholic Church.[47]

Despite the confessional divide, Carl Seltmann argued that Catholics and Protestants remained members of "sister-churches" whose first cause of their contemporary separation lie in the distant past. The nineteenth-century German confessional divide was inherited, but the original cause of that divide, the abuses and depravity of the church that Luther had decried, had been addressed at Trent. Contemporary Germans only remained separated because their ancestors were separated.[48] But German Catholics and Protestants were both still Christians, thus united. And what united them as Christians was greater than what divided them as Catholics and Protestants. What stood between nineteenth-century German Catholics and Protestants was not a principal separation, but only a temporal one.[49] Thus faithful members of both churches should welcome reunion. Indeed, both churches had extorted a mutual and salutary influence upon one another since the Reformation. Both had cared for the poor and sick, undertaken missionary work, educated young people, and had historically united to protect Germany and

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[47] Ibid., v and 390. For a history of Roman Catholic reactions to the Augsburg Confession, see Avery Dulles, "The Catholicity of the Augsburg Confession" *The Journal of Religion* 63, No. 4 (Oct. 1983), 337-354; Robert Kress, "The Roman Catholic Reception of the Augsburg Confession" *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 11, No. 3 (Jun, 1980), 115-128 and Lewis Spitz, ""The Augsburg Confession: 450 Years of History" *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 11, No. 3 (Jun. 1980), 3-9.

[48] Ibid., 2-3.

[49] Hermann Opitz, *Ein Wort zum Frieden in dem confessionellen Kampf der Gegenwart* (Frankfurt a.M.: Foesser, 1884), 11.

Christianity from revolution and atheism.[50] So long as Catholics envisioned a union that accommodated Protestants and took account of their legitimate wishes and carefully considered their objections and concerns, Protestants should welcome a reunion with their separated Catholic brothers.[51]

This idea of a confessionally-reunited catholic Germany represented an alternative to the normative Protestant notion of German national unity and identity articulated by Cultural Protestants and liberal nationalists and embodied by Königrätz, Germany's kleindeutsch unification, and the Kulturkampf. German Protestants sought to politicize Luther's memory in order to imagine a culturally unified, though confessionally-exclusive, German nation, whereas Ut Omnes Unum sought to reconfessionalize the reformer's memory in order to underline the separation between the confessions and remind its readers that Germany would remain internally divided until there was a rapprochement between the faiths and German Catholics were acknowledged as constituents of the German nation. Yet another site at which Protestantism was conflated with German national identity was the 1883 Luther anniversary. Here Ut Omnes Unum would reiterate their ecumenical notions of German confessional and national unity.

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[50] UOU (1 August 1880), 147.
[51] Röttscher, *Unionsversuche*, 39.

"Triumph und Trauer": Ut Omnes Unum and the Luther Anniversaries of 1883

While Protestant Germany triumphantly celebrated the memory of Luther as a Protestant-German national hero, and German Catholics abstained form the festivities and mourned the 1883 anniversary as a day of sorrows, the ecumenical Ut Omnes Unum circle both expressed solidarity with German Catholics and proposed ways in which German Protestants might celebrate the anniversaries without exciting confessional tensions and widening the confessional divide. Orthodox Lutherans and Cultural Protestants celebrated the memory of Luther at the 1883 anniversaries both as a Protestant confessional and German national hero. Orthodox remembered Luther as father of the Evangelical Church, herald of a pure Lutheran confession, the new patron saint of Germany, and even as a thirteenth apostle.[52]

The nationalist memory of Luther invoked at the anniversaries was decidedly more prominent than the confessional memory. Luther was triumphantly celebrated as the quintessential German man, liberator of the German conscience, author of every significant German intellectual and social achievement, and no less than the creator of a new ideal of humanity and initiator of modernity. German liberals invoked a Luther who was a hero of freedom, and idol of progress, an intellectual hero of enlightenment, and a fighter against clerical tutelage.[53] He was held in the same esteem as the German national heroes Arminius and Bismarck.[54] Indeed,

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[52] Hans-Volker Herntrich, "Ein deutsch-nationaler Freiheitsheld: Wie Martin Luther vor hundert Jahren gefeiert wurde" *Lutherische Monatshefte* no. 21 (1982), 275.
[53] Ibid., 275.
[54] In addition to Martin Luther, nineteenth-century Protestant nationalists had also recognized the Swedish solider-king and martyr of the Battle of Lützen, Gustavus Adolphus (1594-1632), as a German-Protestant national hero. See Kevin Cramer, "The Cult of

Luther was recounted as the very embodiment of Germanness and as a foil against every foreign (read: Catholic) influence. In short, Luther's memory was "nationalized" at the 1883 anniversaries and Luther and Protestantism were conflated with German national identity.

The politicization of Luther's memory at the 1883 anniversaries owes to several factors. By 1883 the Kulturkampf was winding down to an unsatisfactory end for German liberals and Cultural Protestants. This, along with the appearance of fierce Catholic polemics, such as *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters* (1878-1894), the Catholic historian Johannes Janssens' confessional history of the Reformation, precipitated the call from Protestants for a "defensive war" against Catholicism. The anniversaries in general, and the politicization of Luther's memory in particular, represented a way to revitalize the dying causes of Cultural Protestants and German liberals; a way of renewing the process of marginalization and exclusion of German Catholics that the Kulturkampf was ultimately unsuccessful at realizing.[55]

As opposed to German Protestants, contemporary German Catholics remembered a Luther who had disrupted the cultural vitality of the late middle ages

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Gustavus Adolphus: Protestant Identity and German Nationalism," in *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Germany, 1800-1914*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 97-120; and Kevin Cramer, *The Thirty Years War and German Memory* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2007); For other nineteenth-century German national symbols see George L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through he Third Reich* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1975).

[55] Gottfried Maron, "1883—1917—1933—1983: Jubiläen eines Jahrhundert," in *Die ganze Christenheit auf Erden: Martin Luther und seine ökumenische Bedeutung*, eds. Gerhard Müller and Gottfried Seebaß (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 190.

and as a schismatic who had destroyed German confessional and national unity.[56] The ultramontane faction within the Catholic Church considered the 1883 Luther anniversaries as a continuation of the policies of the Kulturkampf and as a call to arms against German Catholicism.[57] This sentiment was widely shared by German Catholics, who regarded the events surrounding 10-11 November as a "day of sorrows" and a "day of mourning".[58]

The Ut Omnes Unum group exhibited a dual response to these festivals. One the one hand, the group's Catholic members reacted like most confessional Catholics to the festivities; they saw the political-nationalist celebration of Luther's memory and the confessional divide as a sorrowful day; hostile to them both as German citizens and as German Catholics. But Ut Omnes Unum included ecumenical German Catholics. Instead of merely attacking the anniversaries as inherently hostile to German Catholics—although some members the group did pursue this line of criticism—Ut Omnes Unum would suggest ways in which Luther's memory could be commemorated, and how the anniversaries could be celebrated, without alienating Catholics and deepening the confessional and national divides. They would also propose an alternative national hero as a foil to the Protestants' Luther. Whereas German Protestants found a symbol of German national unity and identity in Luther

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[56] Hartmut Lehmann, "Das Lutherjubiläum 1883," in *Luthers bleibende Bedeutung*, ed. Jürgen Becker (Husum: Husum Druck- und Verlagsgruppe, 1983), 110.
[57] HPB 119 (1883), 488.
[58] AELKZ (1883), 1090 cited in Hans Düfel, "Das Lutherjubiläum 1883: Ein Beitrag zum Luther- und Reformationsverständnis des 19. Jahrhunderts, seiner geistesgeschichtlichen, theologischen und politischen Voraussetzungen, unter besonder Berücksichtigung des Nationalismus" *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 95, no. 1 (1984), 77-78.

at the 1883 anniversaries, the Ut Omnes Unum circle proposed an interconfessional symbol of the German nation in St. Boniface.

The German Evangelical press strongly affirmed the memory of Luther as a German-Protestant national hero. The conservative *Neue preußische Zeitung* (aka *Kreuzzeitung*) noted the popularity (*Volkstümlichkeit*) and the national-political inflection of the festivals.[59] Another article from the *Kreuzzeitung* remembered Luther as a pious and noble German national hero, the founder of a new German language, archetype of German domestic life, the first German man, and a "German man without equal," suggesting all the while that German Catholics remained somehow excluded from Luther's cultural beneficence to Germany.[60]

The liberal-Protestant *Protestantische Kirchenzeitung für das evangelische Deutschland* underlined the confessionally-exclusive character of the festivals and of the memories of Luther invoked. The Luther anniversaries would be celebrated by fellow Evangelicals throughout the German fatherland with the purpose of strengthening German Protestant confessional consciousness and solidarity as a defense against Roman tendencies to interfere in German affairs and Catholic inclinations to convert German Protestants.[61] Indeed, the journal claimed that the strength of Rome had always been based on Germany's fragmentation and weakness.[62]

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[59] NPZ no. 256 (2 November 1883).
[60] NPZ no. 263 (10 November 1883).
[61] PK no. 21 (23 May 1883), 471 and no. 26 (27 June 1883), 582-583.
[62] PK no. 47 (21 November 1883), 1060.

The *Protestantische Kirchenzeitung* also lauded Luther for arousing national pride, of which the most recent fruit was the new German Reich. Luther was the greatest representative of German Protestantism and the German nation. He standardized and perfected the German language through his translation of the Bible, invented the genre of German literature, and was the benefactor of intellectual Protestantism and its tenets of freedom of conscience and research, which benefited German scholarship.[63] Not only was Luther a German national hero in the eyes of the *Protestantische Kirchenzeitung*, but he was the author of every significant intellectual and cultural development in German history since the sixteenth century. Modern German society and culture were thus normatively Lutheran.

Perhaps the most belligerent anti-Catholic expression of a political-national memory of Luther came from the Prussian nationalist historian Heinrich von Treitschke. In his 1883 essay "Luther and the German Nation," Treitschke maintained that the Luther anniversaries were for German Protestants only, and that German Catholics had no place there.[64] Indeed, he derided Catholics as foreign to German society and claimed to pity them for being unable to comprehend Luther's significance for, and contributions to, the German nation.[65] German Catholics, Treitschke argued, were unable to resign themselves to the fact that Luther had left his mark on nearly every aspect of German state and society, on the

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[63] PK no. 29 (18 July 1883), 642.
[64] Heinrich von Treitschke, "Luther und die deutsche Nation" *Preußische Jahrbücher* 52 (1883), 470.
[65] Ibid., 470.

German domestic sphere, on the German language, and on knowledge. German Catholics simply could not share this sense of German-Protestant national identity and were decidedly non-German. Like the Jews, who Treitschke would later infamously lament as Germany's "misfortune," German Catholics remained fundamentally alien to Germany.

Treitschke also remembered Luther as the first champion of German national identity and solidarity. It was he who had initially stirred the feelings of German national pride and had liberated Germany from the yoke of an oppressive foreign influence. The kleindeutsch unification of the German nation in 1871 had been the ultimate realization of this act. Indeed, Treitschke even claimed that Luther's "political" liberation of German Christianity from Roman hegemony represented a more powerful and enduring act than his Reformation of the church.[66] Thus the origins of German nationalism and the contemporary German nation lie with the Protestant Reformation and with Luther. German history began with Luther, and the establishment of a Protestant-kleindeutsch empire represented the culmination of the Reformation.

If Luther's greatest accomplishment was the emancipation of German Christians from Rome and the establishment of an Evangelical Church, and if Luther was the German man par excellence, then how could German Catholics identify themselves with the German nation? Surely some of the memories of Luther invoked at the 1883 anniversaries would be confessional and hostile toward Catholics. But the Ut Omnes Unum group was especially grieved by the conflation of

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[66] Ibid., 475.

Luther's memory with the German nation, or the conflation of Protestantism with German national identity. Like the kleindeutsch unification of Germany in 1871 and the Kulturkampf, contemporary German Catholics complained that the 1883 Luther anniversaries would be used to further marginalize them from the social and civic life of the German nation. They worried that the anniversaries could be used to revive the Kulturkampf and construct a notion of German unity that demanded Evangelical confessional homogeneity and a notion of German identity that was normatively Protestant and that necessarily excluded Catholics.

German Catholics could not celebrate the memory of Luther as a German national hero because Königrätz, German unification, the Kulturkampf, and the recent anniversaries suggested that they were not constituents of the new German nation. How could they honor the hero of a nation of which they were considered foreigners and enemies? Nor could they honor Luther as a moral reformer of the church; Luther was in fact the author of an act that had split the church and led to a confessional divide that had persisted for over 350 years and had contributed to German national discord. But the members of Ut Omnes Unum consisted of ecumenical Catholics and Protestants. How did they react to the association of Luther and the German nation at the 1883 anniversaries? In fact, they variously attacked the festivals as inherently hostile to German Catholicism, expressed concern that the anniversaries would inhibit church unity, offered proposals for an irenical celebration of Luther's memory that German Catholics could also celebrate, and proposed an alternative German confessional-national symbol in place of Luther.

Above all, the Ut Omnes Unum circle contested the instrumentalization of Luther's memory for nationalist purposes. They opposed the conflation of Protestantism and Luther memory with German national identity and they were also concerned with how Luther memory would be used to inflame religious passions and prejudices against German Catholics and thus hinder their efforts to overcome the confessional divide. A Catholic contributor to the journal objected to the celebration of the anniversary because it evoked confessional memories rather than ecumenical ones. The author also suggested that the festivals encouraged hatred toward Rome and that festival sermons revived painful memories of the struggle between the confessions during the Reformation.[67] He maintained that old and tired prejudices and accusations against the Catholic Church, the Pope, indulgences, idolatry, Mary, the saints, and relics, were revived in the sermons delivered at the Luther festivals. But these old prejudices had been refuted a thousand times by the church and by friendly Protestants; more importantly, they served to further widen the divide between the confessions.[68] One commentator even wondered why confessional Lutherans wouldn't wait until 1917 to celebrate the proper Reformation anniversary (the 1883 anniversaries were the first celebration of Luther's birth date) or wait until the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 1930. Surely it was because they knew that the schism between the churches would be lifted by then, due to the efforts of ecumenical Catholics and Protestants. According to this contributor, German Protestants celebrated the

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[67] UOU no. 53 (1 Feb. 1884), 645.
[68] Ibid., 646

anniversary of Luther's birth date in 1883 in order to underscore their difference with German Catholics and to widen the confessional divide.[69]

Another polemical commentator suggested that the celebrations had their origins, at least to some extent, in an effort to obscure the failure of the Kulturkampf to effectively nullify Catholic participation in German social and political life. But at the same time, organizers of the anniversaries saw the devotion and fidelity that the Catholic people showed toward their church throughout the Kulturkampf, and sought to reawaken such piety in German Protestants, whose faith had been reduced to cultural platitudes.[70] This observation underscored the Ut Omnes Unum group's campaign not only against the conflation of Protestantism with German national identity, but also the secularizing tendencies of modern culture that German Catholics, and the irenical Protestants who supported Ut Omnes Unum, opposed.

Despite their polemics, Ut Omnes Unum conceded that it was only natural for Protestants to celebrate the founder of their religion, but opined that the anniversaries must be celebrated within certain bounds and should not develop into bitter polemics between Catholics and Protestants. Of course the 1883 Luther anniversaries would be a Protestant celebration of German national pride. But surely one could express love for the German fatherland without showing resentment or hostility toward Catholics.[71]

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[69] UOU no. 48 (1 September 1883), 583.
[70] UOU no. 53 (1 Feb. 1884), 645.
[71] UOU no. 45 (1 June 1883), 547.

According to the Ut Omnes Unum circle, memories of Luther's contribution to German culture were acceptable. But the group sought to proscribe nationalist memories of Luther that were exclusive to German Protestants and marginalized German Catholics. The journal recognized that Luther was one of the most influential men in German history, from his standardization of the German language to the development of the German hymn. He did many praiseworthy and commendable things for Germany. But was also guilty of gross errors for which his memory should not be celebrated.[72] Indeed, Luther's indiscretions had led to the separation of the churches and the German nation. And both of these acts had left devastating wars and suffering in their wake. But German Protestants had only too gladly forgotten these painful memories of the consequences of Luther's Reformation. These difficult memories were surely not celebrated at the 1883 Luther anniversaries. But such memories had to be confronted by German Catholics and Protestants before they could celebrate Luther's memory together, before ecumenical dialogue between them could begin, before the confessional divide could be healed, and before the German nation could be truly reunited.[73]

Reacting to the selective remembering and forgetting of Luther memory at the anniversaries, several of Ut Omnes Unum's contributors wondered which Luther was actually being celebrated—was the true, historical Luther, or a confessional idealization of Luther being remembered by German Protestants? Indeed, the reformer had been the subject of so much confessional propaganda, including both

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[72] Ibid., 547.
[73] UOU no. 53 (1 Feb. 1884), 646.

Catholic libels and Protestant hagiographies that one wondered who or what was being commemorated.[74] Amidst the confusion, an Evangelical associate of Julie von Massow suggested how the coming Luther anniversaries should be celebrated and how they might contribute to rapprochement between the confessions. He proposed that irenical Catholics and Protestants could use the 1883 festivals as an occasion to review the histories of Luther, the Reformation, and Counter-Reformation and sort out the historical strengths and weaknesses, and the persistent positive and negative influences, of their respective churches in order to move beyond polemics and into more fruitful dialogue.[75]

The memory of St. Boniface, apostle to the Germans, also became a contested site of memory between German Protestants and the Ut Omnes Unum circle at the 1883 Luther anniversaries. For the organ of confessional Lutheranism, the *Neue Evangelische Kirchenzeitung*, the 1883 Luther anniversaries had evoked memories of St Boniface, and Luther's relationship to Boniface. According to the *Neue Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* St. Boniface had brought Christianity to Germany, but Luther had reformed it. Boniface had planted the cross in the German ground, but Luther planted it in the German heart. While Boniface had been patron saint of the medieval Reich, Luther would be patron saint of the second German Empire, a Protestant empire.[76] But whereas the celebrants of the 1883 anniversaries found a Protestant-German national hero in Luther, who had inherited the mantle of Apostle

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[74] UOU no. 48 (1 September 1883), 583 and UOU no. 54 (1 March 1884), 658.
[75] Julie von Massow, *Dorotheen-Körblein: Beiträge zur Reunionsfrage a. d. Zeitschrift 'Ut omnes Unum' mit Erlaubnis der Verfasserin*, ed. Josef Beer (Augsburg: Huttler, 1896), 156-157.
[76] NEK no. 39 (29 September 1883), 621.

of the Germans from Boniface, members of the Ut Omnes Unum circle found in the memory of Boniface the possibility of an interconfessional German national hero. The Ut Omnes Unum group appealed to memories of Boniface as a national-ecumenical symbol of a united German Christianity and confessionally-united German nation. Carl Seltmann recalled that when he stopped to pray at the tomb of St Boniface in Fulda, he thought immediately of the German confessional divide. So long as Germany remained divided, Boniface could not rest peacefully.[77] Julie von Massow recognized the tomb of St Boniface as a site of memory around which both German Catholics and Protestants could agitate and pray for the reunion of the separated confessions.[78]

In fact, one month before the start of the 1883 Luther anniversaries Massow travelled to Fulda to pray at the grave of St Boniface for an end to the confessional separation that had divided German Christianity and the German nation since the sixteenth century.[79] The preparations being made for the Luther anniversary in Dresden tore at her heart. She decided to leave the city on the occasion of the festivals and undertook a pilgrimage to Bohemia where she withdrew and prayed to the Blessed Virgin a full two years before her conversion to Catholicism. Massow's 10 November 1883 diary entry reveals that she had looked on the "Luther con" (*Lutherschwindel*) of the Dresden Luther anniversaries with great discomfort. While most of Protestant Germany celebrated the schism of the church and the separation of the confessions, Massow would instead reverently and fervently pray for the ideal

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[77] Seltmann, *Zur Wiedervereingigung*, 391.
[78] Massow, *Dorotheen-Körblein*, 160-162.
[79] Bernardina, *Julie von Massow*, 203.

that she believed St. Boniface represented: ut omnes unum sint, that all may be one.[80] Indeed, in 1883 she endowed a mass at the tomb of St. Boniface ad tollendum schism: to lift the schism between the churches. German Catholics and Protestants participated in these masses and so united, she argued, would contribute to the dissolution of that "lamentable, sinful, and fearfully unnatural separation" between the confessions that had also contributed to the disunity of the German nation.[81] For Massow and the Ut Omnes Unum circle, the memory of St Boniface evoked German confessional and national unity in a way that confessionally-exclusive invocations of Luther's memory never could. And indeed, Julie von Massow's tireless efforts to reunite the churches did not go unacknowledged. Pope Leo XIII lauded Massow and Ut Omnes Unum for their ecumenism, going so far as to have a commemorative medallion struck with the inscription "Ut Omnes Unum" on one side and an engraving of St. Boniface with the words "One Nation, One Faith" on the other.[82]

In the minds of so many German Catholics, the 1883 Luther anniversaries represented yet another attack on their identity as Germans citizens and renewed questions about their loyalty to the German nation. As a Protestant-national celebration of Luther's memory and a belated birthday for the German Reich, the

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[80] Ibid., 203-204.
[81] Ibid., 204.
[82] Fleischer, "Lutheran and Catholic Reunionists," 55. Incidentally, in a 1919 encyclical to the archbishops of Germany entitled *In Hac Tanta*, Pope Benedict XV would also invoke the memory of St Boniface as "the perfect herald and the model" of German religious unity and peace. For other instances of the German Catholic veneration of St. Boniface in mid nineteenth-century Germany, see Sigfried Weichlein, "Die Bonifatiustradition und die Rekonfessionalisierung des deutschen Katholizismus zur Mitte des 19. Jahrunderts," in *Religionskrieg in der Moderne? Renaissance und Rückgang des Konfessionalismus von 1800 bis heute*, Olaf Blaschke, ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001).

anniversary excluded Catholics as the German nation's internal foreigners. But Ut Omnes Unum challenged the conflation of Protestantism with German national identity and proposed ways that Luther's memory could be celebrated irenically, as well as suggesting an interconfessional symbol of Germany. The existence of a Catholic-dominated social and religious organization, who together with like-minded German Protestants actively contested the marginalization of German Catholics, points to the group's historical significance.

Conclusion

The existence of a Catholic-led ecumenical circle that included Catholics, Reformed, and Lutherans, that actively opposed the conflation of Protestantism with German national identity and the resulting marginalization of German Catholics, that fiercely attacked the anti-Catholic policies of the Kulturkampf, and that advocated rapprochement with German Protestants and an ultimate reunion with the Evangelical Church undermines the notion of a rigidly-segregated German Catholic ghetto or milieu. Instead, Ut Omnes Unum suggests the possibility of an interconfessional history of early Wilhelmine society, politics, and religion.

The German sociologist M. Rainer Lepsius first proposed the idea of the Catholic milieu, a German Catholic social environment or subculture that formed as a reaction to the increasing power of anti-clerical German liberals and the resulting marginalization of Catholics from nineteenth-century German society.[83] Politically, this milieu manifested itself in the Zentrumspartei. The social and cultural reaction to the anti-Catholic policies of the early Wilhelmine era was manifest in the growth of Catholic social organizations and the increasing numbers of Catholic devotional societies and female piety. Indeed, political Catholicism, social and religious associations (*Vereins*- or *Verbandskatholizismus*), and the Catholic press become the main repositories of the Catholic milieu, serving to reinforce Catholic identity and difference by and encouraging a shared and cohesive Catholic worldview.

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[83] Lepsius, "Parteiensystem und Sozialstrukture"; For a theoretical reassessment of the Catholic milieu see Johannes Horstmann and Antonius Liedhegener, eds. *Konfession, Milieu, Moderne: Konzeptionelle Positionen und Kontroversen zur Geschichte von Katholizismus und Kirche im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Schwerte: Katholische Akademie Schwerte, 2001).

Lepsius' theory of the milieu represented a step forward for research into Wilhelmine religion by acknowledging the social and cultural factors contributing to Catholic social and political behaviors, rather that reducing those behaviors to class. But the deficiency in his notion of a confessional milieu lay in the assumption that Protestants, Catholics, and Jews lived in isolation from one another in hermetically-sealed and segregated confessional "ghettos". This consignment of German Catholics to a confessional milieu had the effect segregating them from the rest of nineteenth-century German history, reducing the histories of nineteenth-century German Catholicism to narratives of politicization or emancipation from this confessional ghetto.[84] Thus, the concept of the rigidly-demarcated confessional milieu perpetuated the perceived isolation of Catholics from wider nineteenth-century German culture.

But the Ut Omnes Unum group did not withdraw into a confessionally-segregated or socially-isolated German Catholic ghetto. Instead they recruited irenical German Catholics and Protestants into an association that together actively opposed the marginalization of German Catholics from German society, invoked memories of Luther and the Reformation to imagine notions of German confessional and national unity, proposed solutions to issues of unity and identity that had plagued Germany since Luther, and served as the center of conservative German Catholic and Protestant opposition to Bismarck, cultural Protestantism, and liberal nationalism during the early Wilhelmine era. Indeed, this circle points to the

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[84] Oded Heilbronner, "From Ghetto to Ghetto: The Place of German Catholic Society in Recent Historiography" in *The Journal of Modern History* 72 (June 2000), 458-459.

possibility of a revaluation of the history of early Wilhelmine society, culture, and politics from an interconfessional historical perspective; one that transcends the notion of an isolated and confessionally-segregated German Catholic milieu.

EPILOGUE: THE GREAT WAR AND THE PRECLUSION OF THE KONFESSIONALFRAGE

The German confessional divide still existed at the outbreak of World War I. Nevertheless, German Catholics had been, for the most part, assimilated into normative German society and culture. The outbreak of war in August 1914 meant that German Catholics would become even more closely united with German Protestants, as the pressures of war compelled confessional others to unite in common defense of their fatherland. But this instance of Catholic-Protestant interconfessional coexistence and cooperation would not be confessional in nature. Instead, the confessional question would be set aside in the interests of German national solidarity and unity. And like the Reformation anniversaries of 1817, when German Catholics and Protestants united in defense of Germany against external threats and celebrated an ecumenical memory of Luther, German Catholics and Protestants would come together at the 1917 Reformation anniversaries to remember Luther as a German national hero who had stoically endured struggles and sacrifice on behalf of the fatherland and the Volk. Princes, pastors, and professors all called on German Catholics and Protestants to unite not for the sake of church unity, but in common defense of the fatherland. This represented an idea of the German nation that included both Catholics and Protestants, but not one that acknowledged the need for reunification of the separated confessions into an ecumenical church as a prerequisite for national unity. Rather than being resolved, the confessional question was set aside at the 1917 Reformation anniversaries.

The history of German Catholicism from 1871 through 1914 is a history of persecution coupled with gradual integration. Alongside the Kulturkampf and other

instances of blatant anti-Catholic sentiment, there was evidence of a gradual acceptance of Catholics into German society. German Catholics and Protestants worked together to offer social services at the local level. Catholic missionaries proselytized with Protestants in Germany's colonies. And irenical Catholics and Protestants worked together to help realize interconfessional peace.[1] The increasing participation and prominence of German Catholics and the Catholic Center Party in German civic life seemed to render moot the charge that German Catholics were disloyal citizens and congenital enemies of the empire. Indeed, the Center Party had become one of most powerful parties in Germany. Like the Zentrum itself, Catholic social organizations and trade unions become increasingly interdenominational.[2] Thus by 1914 German Catholics had been (re)integrated into a normative German society that was no longer overwhelmingly liberal, nor belligerently anti-Catholic.[3] The wartime preclusion of the confessional question and the aconfessional nationalization of Luther's memory at the 1917 Reformation anniversaries would only serve accelerate this process of Catholic integration into German society and culture.

One event in particular presaged the wartime preclusion of the confessional question. In an excited speech delivered on 1 August 1914 to Berliners gathered outside Charlottenberg Palace to mark Germany's declaration of war on Russia,

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[1] Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1866-1918, Erster Band: Arbeitswelt und Bürgergeist* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1990), 456-457.
[2] Margaret Lavinia Anderson, "Interdenominationalism, Clericalism, Pluralism: The *Zentrumsstreit* and the Dilemma of Catholicism in Wilhelmine Germany" *Central European History* 21 no. 4 (Dec., 1998), 350-378.
[3] Thomas Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch: Deutschland 1870-1918* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1998), 50.

Emperor Wilhelm I exhorted those assembled to unite in defense of the fatherland without distinction of race, or religion.[4] The emperor claimed that he recognized no distinct parties, classes, races, or religions—only Germans. On 2 August an interconfessional service was held outside Reichstag at the foot of the Bismarck monument at which thousands of German Catholics and Protestants attended.[5] German Christians could now all claim to be German citizens. Thus in a single move did the king parry the confessional question, which proponents of church unity had so fiercely aspired to overcome during the previous century. The emperor recognized all Germans, without distinction of race or religion, as constituents of the German nation. Confession no longer automatically included or precluded one from membership and participation in the German nation. This "deconfessionalization of the national idea" was also apparent at the 1917 Reformation anniversaries, at which Luther was recalled as a German national hero who had endured great struggles and sacrifice on behalf of the German Volk. This aconfessional memory of Luther, which both German Catholics and Protestants could identify with and rally around as a national hero, suggested that the confessional question and the national question, at least among the Christian confessions, had finally been decoupled.

The most prominent theme of the 1917 Reformation anniversaries was the war. From the beginning of the war, German political parties and trade unions had

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[4] *Verhandlungen des Reichstags* 1 (4 August 1914), 1-2 cited in Anthony J. Steinhoff, "Christianity and the Creation of Germany," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: World Christianities, c. 1815-1914*, eds. Sheridan Gilley and Brian Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 300.

[5] Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1989), 61-62.

agreed to a Burgfrieden; a temporary "truce within the castle walls" amongst themselves in order to keep the peace, support the government, and serve as a show of solidarity to the German people.[6] Likewise, the 1917 Reformation anniversaries represented a kind of confessional Burgfrieden between German Catholics and Protestants.[7] Both confessions acknowledged a common cause: the defense of their shared German fatherland and culture. Celebrants of the 1917 anniversaries invoked Luther as the herald of the German fatherland and a German culture under attack by a world of uncivilized enemies.

Luther was also invoked as a national hero who had demonstrated unconditional fidelity to, and endured great sacrifice for, the German fatherland. His life showed tenacity, toughness, and perseverance. And according to the celebrants of the 1917 Reformation anniversaries, such fidelity, sacrifice, and perseverance were desperately needed in their own dark times.[8] In their anniversary sermons and speeches, Protestant pastors and professors recalled Luther as a man of iron with a stone heart[9]; a stoic who had heroically endured great sacrifices for a better Germany, just as contemporary Germans must remain stoic in the face of their

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[6] Gottfried Maron, "Luther 1917: Beobachtungen zur Literatur des 400. Reformationsjubiläums" *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 93 (1982), 191-192.
[7] Martin Greschat regarded the 1917 Reformation anniversaries as examples of a "questionable symbiosis of politics and theology". As if the Reformation anniversaries of 1817, 1830, and 1883 were *not* sites of memory at which religion, theology, and political culture intersected! Martin Greschat, "Reformationsjubiläum 1917, Exempel einer fragwürdigen Symbiose von Politik und Theologie" *Wissenschaft und Praxis in Kirche und Gesellschaft* 61 (1972): 419-429.
[8] Gottfried Maron, "Luther 1917," 192.
[9] Max L. Baeumer, "Lutherfeiern und ihre politische Manipulation," in Reinhold Grimm and Jost Hermand, eds. *Deutsche Feiern* (Wiesbaden: Athenaion, 1977), 56.

wartime hardships.[10] And they invoked memories of Luther's stand at Worms, and his confinement of the Wartburg Castle, to remind their congregants of the reformer's courage and resolve. The Halle theologian D.A. Lang asked his congregation to remember Luther at Worms, where the reformer courageously stood against Pope and council, emperor and princes. Lang exhorted his congregation to remember Luther's courage at Worms and his resolve during internment in the Wartburg Castle, in order to steel themselves against the harsh wartime conditions that they were experiencing.[11] The *Protestantische Monatsschrift* echoed this sentiment and added that at Worms Luther had stood against the Pope and emperor on behalf of the German spirit. The journal lauded contemporary German Catholics and Protestants for standing, like Luther had almost four hundred years prior, against the entire world on behalf of the German spirit and the German fatherland.[12] The *Monatschrift* also recalled the 1817 Reformation anniversaries, reminding its readers that Catholics, Reformed, and Lutherans had celebrated together peacefully, and proposed that the 1917 anniversary be celebrated in the same irenical manner for the sake of national solidarity.[13]

In addition to reminding their congregants of Luther's stoic endurance of hardships, Protestant pastors and professors exhorted their congregations and listeners toward solidarity and unity with their German Catholic brothers. The Lutheran church historian Friedrich Loofs (1858-1928) called for a 1917

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[10] Karl Schwarzlose, *Zum 400jährigen Gedächtnis der Reformation: Drei Predigten* (Frankfurt a.M.: Knauer, 1917), 20-21.
[11] D.A. Lang, *Die Reformation: Festschrift zum 31. Oktober 1917* (Detmold: Meyer, 1917), 18.
[12] PM 21 (1917), 71-72.
[13] Ibid., 74-75.

Reformation anniversary without polemics, one that did not alienate or antagonize German Catholics, who, Loofs noted "had remained our comrades throughout this long war".[14] The Berlin theologian Adolf Deißmann (1866-1937) received and published letters in the *Evangelische Wochenbriefe* from his students and associates on the front who called for interconfessional cooperation between German Catholics and Protestants. One June 1917 letter from an officer on the Western Front noted that there was no confessional animosity or discord among the soldiers, and argued that it was imperative that any remaining confessional tensions in Germany be set aside for the success of the German war effort.[15] Another June 1917 letter from a Dresden army chaplain echoed this sentiment. Indeed, the chaplain recognized the coming Reformation anniversaries as an opportunity for rapprochement and understanding between German Catholics and Protestants for the sake of national unity.[16] Deißmann himself regarded these attempts at confessional reconciliation for the sake of national solidarity and unity during the war as the German people's holiest cause.[17]

In his anniversary speech the Saxon historian Erich Marks acknowledged that the 1883 Luther anniversaries had in fact, taken a belligerent position against Catholics and that the separation between the confessions remained palpable. Nevertheless, Catholics and Protestants in Germany stood for and with one another

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[14] Friedrich Loofs, "Die Jahrhundertfeier der Reformation an den Universitäten Wittenberg und Halle, 1617, 1717, und 1817" *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Kirchengeschichte in der Provinz Sachsen* 14 (1917), 68.
[15] Adolf Deißmann, *Evangelische Wochenbriefe* no. 25/26 (1917) cited in Günter Brakelmann, ed. *Der deutsche Protestantismus im Epochenjahr 1917* (Wittenberg: Luther-Verlag, 1974), 247.
[16] Ibid., 246.
[17] Ibid., 249.

during the war. Marks expressed hope that such solidarity would persist well into the century.[18] Thus the 1917 Reformation anniversary would represent the point at which Luther became a national symbol, a site of national memory for the entire German world, not only for the German-Protestant world.[19] Indeed, other sites of memory associated with Luther had already become both deconfessionalized and nationalized. Luther's famous hymn, Ein' feste Burg, had already been a kind of interconfessional German national anthem. Thus the authors of a popular Hannover anniversary pamphlet cheerfully noted that both Catholic and Protestant German soldiers sang "A Mighty Fortress is our God" as they conquered Antwerp, while the stunned Belgian citizens listened in amazement.[20]

In addition to individual pastors and professors, the Evangelical press recognized the need for solidarity with German Catholics. In their issue to mark the 1917 Reformation anniversaries, the *Preußische Kirchenzeitung* reminded its readers that unity was strength, and that this notion of unity necessarily entailed solidarity and unity with German Catholics. The journal underlined the main imperative of the current wartime-Reformation anniversary: unity with fellow Germans against the shared enemies of the fatherland.[21] The *Deutsch-Evangelische Korrespondenz* demanded of its readers that any remaining confessional animosities be put to rest before the forthcoming 1917 anniversary. Nothing should be done

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[18] Erich Marks, *Luther und Deutschland. Eine Reformationsrede im Kriegsjahr 1917* (Leipzig: Meyer, 1917), 36.
[19] Ibid., 1-2.
[20] Martin Peters and Karl Henninger, *Hannoversches Reformationsbüchlein: Festgabe zum vierhundertjährigen Gedenktage der Reformation. 31 Oktober 1917* (Hannover: Spoonholtz, 1917), 7.
[21] PK 13 no. 41/42 (14 October 1917), 323.

that could result in the accusation that the anniversary festivals had disturbed the peace, solidarity, and unity between the denominations that the war circumstances had engendered.[22] For their part, German Catholics resolved to observe a "dignified reticence" toward any polemical tracts that might be produced at the 1917 anniversaries in the interests of internal peace.[23]

Of course, Luther's memory would continue to be used, abused, and manipulated throughout the twentieth century, as it had been during the nineteenth. Memories of Luther and the Reformation were variously invoked during the Weimar period, during the Hitlerzeit by the Nazis, by the two Germanies against one another, and proceeding German reunification.[24] But the formerly strong relationship of the confessional question to the German question seemed to recede. The Great War demanded that German Catholics, Protestants, and Jews set aside this question to defend the fatherland in common. Thus by 1917 confession had ceased to be the main determinant of German national identity. And German Catholics and Protestants all found a common German hero in the deconfessionalized national memory of Luther.

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[22] DEK 13 (30 March 1916).
[23] Hartmann Grisar, "Die Literatur des Lutherjubiläums 1917, ein Bild des heutigen Protestantismus," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 42 (1918), 810.
[24] For the use and abuse of Luther's memory during the Weimar period, Hilterzeit, and in the DDR and BRD see, inter alia, Gérald Chaix "Die Reformation" translated by Reinhard Tiffert in Etienne François and Hagen Schluze, eds. *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte* Vol. 2, (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2001); Heiko Obermann, "The Nationalist Conscription of Martin Luther," in *The Impact of the Reformation: Essays* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdman's Co., 1994), 69-78; Horst Zilleßen, ed. Volk*, Nation, Vaterland: Der deutsche Protestantismus und der Nationalismus* (Gütersloh: G. Mohn, 1970); and Max L. Baeumer, "Lutherfeiern und ihre politische Manipulation," in Reinhold Grimm and Jost Hermand, eds. *Deutsche Feiern* (Wiesbaden: Athenaion, 1977).

While the relationship between the confessional question and the German national question grew more muted, Catholic and Protestant efforts toward realizing church unity persisted into the twentieth century. The worldwide ecumenical movement of the mid-twentieth century emerged from the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century missionary movement rather than the efforts of ecumenists recounted here. But like the modern ecumenical movement, the measure of success of nineteenth-century proponents of church unity should not be limited to the number of churches and confessions that they had helped to unite. Instead, their efforts should be measured according to how well they contributed to interconfessional dialogue, understanding, cooperation, and peaceful coexistence. Using that metric, nineteenth-century proponents of church unity were surely more successful than we have given them credit for.

Historians have tended to overlook these ecumenists for various reasons. Recall that Hajo Holborn claimed that they didn't even exist. When we have noted their existence, we've assumed that their efforts could not possibly succeed because of the strength of the German confessional divide. Indeed, we still predicate our histories of nineteenth-century German society and politics on the ostensible strength of this divide. While they may have been marginal, these nineteenth-century proponents of church unity were not complete failures, nor were they historically irrelevant. In fact, their significance has been underestimated because historians have looked for unified churches rather than increasing confessional integration and cooperation to define their success.

The reception of the ecumenical impulse at the 1817 Reformation anniversaries was generally positive. A union of the Reformed and Lutheran churches was effected in Prussia and other German states with popular, clerical, and state support. Although the king's liturgy was unpopular, the Evangelical Church won out. And Catholics, Protestants, and Jews celebrated an irenical memory of Luther and the Reformation for the first time. If confessional tensions again flared in the 1830s, they were diffused during the Vormärz and revolutionary periods when German Catholics and Protestants united by the tens of thousands to express common frustration with their respective church hierarchies and in support of Leberecht Uhlich's and Johannes Ronge's visions of German confessional, national, and gender unity. Except for the ultramontane and orthodox wings of the Catholic and Protestant churches, the reception of these dissenting congregations was overwhelmingly positive. To be sure, they did not formally unite the Catholic and Protestant churches in Germany. But Uhlich, Ronge, and their sympathizers played an enormous role in making religious dissenters, persecuted congregations, men and women in interconfessional relationships, and the children of confessionally-mixed marriages feel like they were part of a German nation that was not divided by confession. The same may be said for the 1860 Erfurt Conference. The participants of the Erfurt Conference never did realize a Christian State of pious German Catholics and Protestants whose authority derived from God. But amidst debates over a kleindeutsch versus großdeutsch notion of German unity, the conference did successfully express the deeply-held concern that any notion of German unity that did not take the confessional divide into account was necessarily incomplete. The

Erfurt Conference also initiated irenical dialogues between influential German Catholics and Protestants that inspired the next generation of ecumenists, the least of which was the Ut Omnes Unum group. Although Ut Omnes Unum never convinced German Protestants to return to their Catholic "Mother Church" en masse, they did create a space for both the affirmation of German Catholic identity and for interconfessional dialogue and cooperation during a period in which German Catholics were increasingly persecuted. Their efforts toward church unity and to realize a notion of German identity and unity that was inclusive of Catholics as well as Protestants were lauded by no less than Windthorst and Pope Leo XIII.

Although they never realized a formal union of the separated confessions or the German nation, these figures point to interconfessional history of German nationalism that has so far been an afterthought of nineteenth-century German history. Indeed, their efforts represent one of the unacknowledged ways that nineteenth-century German nationalism played out on the ground; not through the marginalization and exclusion of difference, but also by imagining unity across internal divides. Would that the course of German nationalism and national unification had taken the path suggested by these nineteenth-century proponents of church unity. The history of the twentieth-century Germany might have looked quite different.

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ADB *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*

BBKL *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*

DEK *Deutsch-Evangelische Korrespondenz*

DfM *Der fränkische Morgenbote. Zeitschrift zur Förderung der neuen Reformation*

DZ *Deutscher Zuschauer*

EKL *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon*

ELC *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*

HPB *Historisch-Politische Blätter*

KL *Kirchenlexicon oder Encyklopädie der katholischen Theologie und ihrer Hülfswissenschaften*

LThK *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*

NCE *New Catholic Encyclopedia*

NEK *Neue Evangelische Kirchenzeitung*

NpZ *Neue preußische Zeitung* (aka Kreuzzeitung)

NSH *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*

PK *Protestantische Kirchenzeitung für das evangelische Deutschland*

PreK *Preußische Kirchenzeitung*

PM *Protestantische Monatschrift*

RGG *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*

SB *Sonntags-Blätt*

SR *Sociale Republik*

TRE *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*

UOU *Ut omnes unum: auf daβ Alle Eins seien. Correspondenzblatt zur Verständigung und Vereinigung unter den getrennten Christen, herausgegeben von Carl Setlmann (Erfurt 1879-1901).*

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