

»Dear Reader, remember this«: Mission reports as paradigms for revival in Europe. The *Barmer Missionsblatt* and Basel *Evangelischer Heidenbote* in the 19th century*

Just tell me: If you, like them, floated on an ice sheet on the open sea, would you know the Bible as well as this just baptised heathen that so many verses and passages would come to your mind in order to comfort you, even if you have no Bible with you? Yes, would you be able to take comfort in your saviour as well? O, how these heathen humiliate us.¹

Thus ends the story of two newly converted Greenlanders who nearly died when the ice sheet they stood on broke away and floated into the sea. Indeed, their family and friends and the whole congregation had already given up hope when they unexpectedly returned after two weeks, having been miraculously saved. The Greenlanders then reported – and were quoted literally – how they had first been optimistic, then lost nearly all hope, but prayed to God, and were comforted by Bible verses which came to their minds. They recounted which Christian songs they sang, how they cried to God, and how God answered them by reminding them of comforting verses like »I am the good shepherd«.²

The story was, of course, an example of the success of mission. But it was also used as a paradigm to the German readers of the *Barmer Missionsblatt* where it was recounted in the second number of its first volume in 1826.³ The »dear readers« were addressed in nearly every volume and many of the stories the *Missionsblatt* told were applied to its readers' lives and were used to arouse them to become (even) more serious in this piety.

The missionary periodicals in the first half of the 19th century were not mere reports of what happened in the mission field, but always also sought to influence

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¹ *Barmer Missionsblatt* 1826, 2, 8: »Denn sag nur selbst: wenn du so, wie Jene, auf einem Eisfelde im offenen Meere schwämmst, würdest du wohl auch so mit der Bibel bekannt seyn, wie jener eben getaufte Heide, daß dir, ohne daß du die Bibel hättest, so viel Sprüche und Stellen zum Troste einflehen? Ja, solltest du wohl auch dich so deines Heilandes trösten können? O wie beschämen uns diese Heiden.«

² John 10:14.

³ Stories have always been part of the way religions guide their adherents in their life and worldview, cf. Hans Joas: *Glaube als Option. Zukunftsmöglichkeiten des Christentums*. Freiburg 2012, 150 et seq.

their European readers.⁴ Revival in Europe was one, albeit not the only goal of the reports. Furthermore, the periodicals did not all address their readers in such a direct and sometimes even obtrusive way as the *Missionsblatt*. The methods of the Basel *Evangelischer Heidenbote*, for instance, were much more sophisticated – but probably not less effective. The periodicals were simply written for different audiences.

In this contribution, I wish to ask how mission reports were used to encourage revival in Europe. In order to do so, I will first ask which different methods of addressing the readers were employed, then turn to the question regarding what were the formal contents of the appeals; in the third chapter I analyse which kind of revival the editors of the missionary periodicals sought to encourage, which theological system and which values they wished to convey.

The study draws on the *Barmer Missionsblatt*, published by the Rhenish Missionary Society from 1826, and on the *Evangelischer Heidenbote*, published by the Basel Mission from 1830. Both journals are analysed until 1850. They were both written for a German-speaking audience, but the Basel Mission had large supporting groups in several European countries. That is why I speak of »European« rather than »German« readers – thus following the custom of the journals which also used the term »European« much more often than »German« or »Swiss«.

The Basel Mission was founded in 1815.⁵ A mission seminary was established in 1816, and the main objective of the missionary society over the first ten years was to educate future missionaries who were sent out by other European societies, mainly, but not only the English Church Missionary Society. In 1821, Basel sent its first missionaries to Armenia, and in 1827 to West Africa. The mission to India followed in 1834. The Basel Mission was from its beginning an international missionary society. Not only Southern German and Swiss Pietists cooperated in this society, but they also had supporting groups in several European countries, from Scandinavia to Southern Europe.

⁴ I am concentrating here on periodicals of pietistic or evangelical missionary societies. Their main supporting groups were in Switzerland, Württemberg and the Rhine area. On this kind of Pietism in the 19th century cf. Hartmut Lehmann: *Pietismus und weltliche Ordnung in Württemberg. Vom 17. bis. 20. Jahrhundert*. Stuttgart 1969; Ulrike Gleixner: *Pietismus und Bürgertum. Eine historische Anthropologie der Frömmigkeit. Württemberg 17.–19. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen 2005; Andreas Gestrich: *Pietismus und ländliche Frömmigkeit in Württemberg im 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert*. In: *Ländliche Frömmigkeit. Konfessionskulturen und Lebenswelten 1500–1850*. Ed. by Norbert Haag [et al.]. Stuttgart 2002, 343–357; Martin Brecht: *Der württembergische Pietismus*. In: *Der Pietismus im achtzehnten Jahrhundert*. Ed. by Klaus Deppermann. Göttingen 1995, 225–296; and in general: *Geschichte des Pietismus*. Bd. 3: *Der Pietismus im neunzehnten und zwanzigsten Jahrhundert*. Ed. by Ulrich Gäbler. Göttingen 2000; *Geschichte des Pietismus*. Bd. 4: *Glaubenswelt und Lebenswelt*. Ed. by Hartmut Lehmann. Göttingen 2004.

⁵ On the history of the Basel Mission cf.: Wilhelm Schlatter: *Geschichte der Basler Mission 1815–1915*. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der ungedruckten Quellen. 4 vols. Basel 1916. Vol. 1: *Die Heimatgeschichte der Basler Mission*, relates the general developments in the Basel headquarters. Cf. also Paul Jenkins: *Kurze Geschichte der Basler Mission*. Basel 1989.

The Rhenish Missionary Society evolved from several supporting societies in 1828.⁶ In 1825, a mission seminary had already been inaugurated. Its initial aim was to educate young men who should later join the Basel seminary, but who were not well enough instructed to be accepted by Basel at once. However, they soon decided to establish a real mission seminary and educate missionaries. The first men were sent to South Africa in 1829.

Due to this history and the chronology of sending out missionaries and establishing mission periodicals, when the Basel *Evangelischer Heidenbote* was first issued, the Basel Mission could already publish reports by its own missionaries – that was, of course, what interested their readers and supporting groups most. The *Barmer Missionsblatt*, on the contrary, had already been published for some years when the first Rhenish missionaries sent back their reports. Therefore, the *Missionsblatt* at first published reports by other societies and thus was more general in its texts, and also included more anecdotes and edifying observations. Although it remained more edifying in tone than the *Heidenbote* at least until 1850, contents and style of the periodicals converged more and more when both periodicals began to report on their own missions.⁷

1 »Dear reader« – »those who« – »we«: Methods of addressing the readers

There were different methods of addressing the readers. The direct address was only the most obvious one, used mainly by the *Barmer Missionsblatt*. Besides that, the editor created a common »we« – he talked of »we European readers«, but also simply of »we« – and thus included his readers in his thoughts and sentiments.

A bit less direct, but still very obvious, were sentences like »those who can should give thanks.«⁸ Or: »The man who, like them, feels himself to be a sinner hungers for his word.«⁹ Thus, an even more general declaration than the reference to a community of missionary supporters was created and at the same time the reader was invited to include him- or herself in the group of rational, pious or simply good people, according to the stories that were commented upon.

Then, pious wishes were expressed by the editor: »O that all in and outside of Christianity would recognise him thus!«¹⁰ These wishes often followed general remarks about the value of true faith: »How uplifting is it, to have well founded

⁶ On the history of the Rhenish Missionary Society cf. Gustav Menzel: *Aus 150 Jahren Missionsgeschichte. Die Rheinische Mission*. Wuppertal 1978.

⁷ On Moravian missionary periodicals in the 19th century cf. Felicity Jenz: *Origins of Missionary Periodicals. Form and Function of Three Moravian Publications*. In: *JRH* 36, 2012, 234–255; *Missions and media: the politics of missionary periodicals in the long nineteenth century*. Ed. by Felicity Jenz and Hanna Acke. Stuttgart 2013.

⁸ *Barmer Missionsblatt* 1828, 16, 68.

⁹ *Barmer Missionsblatt* 1835, 22, 4.

¹⁰ *Barmer Missionsblatt* 1826, 13, 54: »O daß ihn doch alle in- und außerhalb der Christenheit also erkannten«.

hope in the merit of Jesus Christ in whose name alone in heaven and on earth we are blessed at the hour of death.«¹¹ These sentences expanded the horizon over the group of readers to include Christianity in general and even beyond. The readers could see themselves as belonging to the group of those who had already recognised these general truths. When a story ended with intercessory prayer, the readers could even feel themselves elevated over those they prayed for.

In 1834, the *Missionsblatt* became very forthright: »Practical application: Behave well!« This followed a story recounted by missionary Rhenius about an Indian woman who had converted to Christianity and remained steadfast in spite of all the difficulties she suffered and who even led a good, Christian life, for example, by earning her own bread, although she had lost her caste and her family and thus her means of living. Or, to give another example: »Practical application: come onto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest [...] my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.«¹² This comes after a short story about an Indian yogi who had been chastening himself for some time while his heart was, according to his own statement, still proud, jealous and deceitful. We can only guess if the readers of the *Missionsblatt* complained about this too direct and maybe also too short and technical application to their own life, in any case this method of address was soon abandoned again.

The prevalent method of the *Missionsblatt*, however, was to address the readers directly. This could be followed by a rhetorical question, a direct request to do something, a direct question, a wish, a praise of the readers, or other forms of affirmation. Sometimes, a subgroup of readers was directly addressed: the children. The *Missionsblatt* did not distinguish between articles for adult readers and those for children. This shows clearly that the *Missionsblatt* was published for a strata of readers who enjoyed reading simple stories in which they were drawn in by way of inclusion: »Well, dear reader, you would have liked to visit these two simple Christians in that village, too, would you not?«¹³ The readers obviously did not mind being addressed directly and told how to apply the moral of the story to their own life.

Another, much more indirect method was used in the *Missionsblatt* too, but considerably more often in the *Evangelischer Heidenbote*. It consisted of recounting missionary sermons and, even more often, missionary disputes with people in the mission countries. The readers could thus learn what was expected of them, both in terms of belief and in terms of behaviour. Sometimes the exhortation of a converted person to his or her people was quoted; in this way, the person was

¹¹ Barmer *Missionsblatt* 1826, 13, 54: »Wie herzerhebend und tröstend ist aber dann in der Stunde des Todes eine wohlgegründete Hoffnung auf das Verdienst Jesu Christi, dessen Name es allein im Himmel und auf Erden ist, durch den wir selig werden!«

¹² Barmer *Missionsblatt* 1834, 13, 3 et seq.

¹³ Barmer *Missionsblatt* 1835, 4, 2: »Nicht wahr, lieber Leser, bei den zwei einfachen Christen in jenem Dorfe hättest du auch wohl mal einkehren mögen?«

also exhorting the readers of the periodicals. In these cases, the direct advice: »dear reader, listen to this,« seemed not to be necessary.

When readers were directly addressed in the *Heidenbote*, not personal repentance or individual conversion was the prevalent goal, but the creation of a world-wide community of believers.¹⁴ The readers were asked to include the missionaries and the people they worked for and lived with in their prayers. Many reports ended with the appeal for intercession. The community of believers was even more strengthened when the addressee of a letter printed in the *Heidenbote* was asked:

Did you not think of me – us in those days (22–24 Feb. [1840]) or rather in the nights in between? I remember that, in one of those nights, I [...] commended my dear ones to the Lord, one after the other, and then again asked him to prompt prayers of intercession at home.¹⁵

The conviction of the existence of the global community of believers – and the belief in the power of and direct answer to prayers by God – was so strong that the missionary was convinced that his friends at home felt his need for prayer and responded to it. And this conviction was even so strong that the editor of the *Heidenbote* printed this letter. In this way, the expression of the belief in the global community could lead to further strengthening of this community. As far as direct addresses are concerned, for the *Heidenbote* community seemed more important than (personal) revival – quite the opposite of the *Barmer Missionsblatt*. However, these were only gradual differences, for personal revival and community were most closely connected in Pietistic religiosity.

2 »Pray with us«: The contents of the appeals – pious attitudes and deeds

The most usual contents of the direct appeals in the periodicals were intercession, self-reflection, the demand that a new direction in life be taken, thanksgiving and mission itself. Their relation to revival and revitalisation will be analysed in this chapter.

Besides individual conversion, one of the most important and most often mentioned contents was intercession. Intercessory prayer did not only enhance the perception of a global community of believers by the readers but was also an important part of the new piety that was meant to be communicated in the periodicals. Pietistic devotion was a devotion deeply rooted in prayer. The believers were to be in constant communication with God. Regardless of whether one takes

¹⁴ Cf. on this theology e. g. Judith Becker: Die Heimat oder Europa. Perspektiven englisch- und deutschsprachiger Missionare aus den 1830er-Jahren. In: *Mission global. Eine Verflechtungsgeschichte seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*. Ed. by Rebekka Habermas and Richard Hölzl. Köln 2014, 215–240.

¹⁵ Evangelischer Heidenbote 1840, 68.

the letter quoted in the *Heidenbote* which we have just heard from – missionaries getting into a bad storm on their journey to India and suffering from sea sickness as well as from fear of death – or whether one takes the example I began with, the Greenlanders on their ice sheet in the middle of the ocean, it was prayer that saved their mental health during the time of trial, and it was God's answer to the prayers that saved their lives. Prayer was in the centre of most of the conversion stories and prayer was the outcome of conversion.

Still, the converted individual was never alone. He or she was at once accepted into the community of believers. And this community was based on, and found expression in intercessory prayer. What is more, during the process of conversion itself the individual was accompanied by the community and its intercession on his or her behalf. Even if we restrict ourselves to the European context, it still holds true that intercession was fundamental to Pietistic spirituality. When members of the community went abroad, it became the most important and strongest link between them. Relatives and friends of someone who was in India could not see or talk to him or her for years on end, but they all felt connected in prayer. Mutual intercession was to strengthen their faith and keep them well grounded in the community of true believers.

Then, the reports were also meant as incentives to self-reflection. This was done most obviously in the *Missionsblatt*, but is not less true for the *Heidenbote*. By telling the readers stories about converted (or non-converted) »heathen«, the editors attempted to lead them to reflect on their own life and behaviour. Facing the mirror of the mission reports, be it about missionaries or about missionized, the readers were called upon to reflect on their own conversion and ponder if they were already truly converted, if they showed enough devotion, if they were willing to sacrifice themselves to God.¹⁶ Because becoming a missionary was one of the highest expressions of devotion and surrender to God, missionaries were always seen admiringly by those who stayed at home as paragons of Christian commitment.

In Pietistic piety, self-reflection formed the basis of conversion. A truly pious person would think continuously about his or her spiritual life, about his or her condition in the eyes of God, and about what to do in order to improve oneself. The mission reports gave them instructions on how to conduct these reflections. One form of instruction consisted of direct questions following conversion reports, others were literal accounts of debates of the spiritual condition of a converting person, and others again gave hints as to the contents of Christian virtues and non-Christian vices which the person should look for in himself and then eradicate. The constant exposure to stories about converting or newly converted persons meant that readers were challenged to reflect on their own conversion constantly.

If they were already converted, a change of life had to follow the new condition. However, this was not a once-and-for-all 180-degree turn in one's system of values and behaviour, but it was rather, according to this Pietistic theology,

¹⁶ Cf. Barner *Missionsblatt* 1828, 16, 66.

constant sanctification, in many cases also constant progress in sanctification.¹⁷ Thus, mission reports aimed at helping their readers remain within the community of saints and lead a sanctified life. Stories about people who changed their lives after their conversion reminded them of the need to show signs of new life.

The first reaction after a successful conversion had to be thanksgiving to God. This, too, was mentioned again and again in the mission reports. However, in this case it was not only conversion for which the readers should be grateful, but also their pious and protected life itself. When they read about the dangers and problems under which the missionaries suffered and when they read about the, in their view, wrong convictions and the immoral life of non-Christian peoples, they were to thank God for their proper Christian, European life. The call to thanksgiving strengthened the sense of revival and of living the right kind of piety: »O that Occidental Christianity may recognise and thank their Lord for how faithfully and mercifully he has led them.«¹⁸ It also fostered a sense of European superiority – the sentence continued: »and some of them feel compelled to pray for the Christians in the Orient who now have to receive, from their brothers in the Occident, the light that once came from them.«¹⁹

As we have already seen, one of the highest expressions of devotion was becoming a missionary, for it meant preaching salvation at the risk of one's life. Those who stayed at home were constantly called on to support mission, if not by their own life, then at least by donations and, above all, through prayer. The reports demonstrated the need for mission as well as the success of mission in spreading revival over the world.

¹⁷ There is a tremendous amount of literature on conversion. An overview over the religious development on Christianity can be found in Art. »Bekehrung«. In TRE 5, 440–483. On Pietism cf. Markus Matthias: *Bekehrung und Wiedergeburt*. In: *Geschichte des Pietismus* [see note 4] 4, 49–79. Research on conversion has long been dominated by William James: *Die Vielfalt religiöser Erfahrung. Eine Studie über die menschliche Natur*. Frankfurt/Main, Leipzig 1997. For an overview over approaches with a theological perspective cf. Virgil Bailey Gillespie: *Religious Conversion and Personal Identity. How and Why People Change*. Birmingham 1979. Overviews over recent approaches can be found e. g. in Ulrike Popp-Baier: *Konversionsforschung als Thema gegenwärtiger Religionspsychologie*. In: *Konversion. Zur Aktualität eines Jahrhundertthemas. Für Walter Sparr zum 60. Geburtstag*, Ed. by Christian Henning and Erich Nestler. Frankfurt/Main 2002; Detlef Pollack: *Überlegungen zum Begriff und Phänomen der Konversion aus religionssoziologischer Perspektive*. In: *Konversion und Konfession in der Frühen Neuzeit*. Ed. by Ute Lotz-Heumann [et al.]. Gütersloh 2007, 33–55. There is a tendency to abandon the purely constructive approach that only analyses conversion narratives as means of communication. Also, the interpretation of conversion as an entire change of life-system and values has been dismissed by most authors. Cf. also Lewis R. Rambo: *Understanding Religious Conversion*. New Haven, London 1993. On conversion in the Basel Mission see Judith Becker: *Conversio im Wandel. Basler Missionare zwischen Europa und Südinien und die Ausbildung einer Kontaktreligiosität, 1834–1860*. Göttingen 2015. *Barmer Missionsblatt* 1826, 14, 60.

¹⁸ On the establishment of superiority by compassion cf. Jane Haggis and Margaret Allen: *Imperial Emotions. Affective Communities of Mission in British Protestant Women's Missionary Publications, c. 1880–1920*. In: *Journal of Social History* 41, 2008, 691–716; Sara Ahmed: *Collective Feelings. Or, The Impressions Left by Others*. In: *Theory, Culture & Society* 2004. DOI: 10.1177/0263276404042133 (Access Date: 11/12/2015).

3 »Can even a person like me become blessed?«: directions for revival in Europe – pious convictions and secular values

What was it that people should convert to? Which system of values and beliefs was transmitted in mission periodicals?²⁰

In order to offer some insight into the mental horizon of the Rhenish Missionary Society, I would like to recount some of the stories which appeared in the first year of the *Barmer Missionsblatt*, 1826. The journal begins in its first number with an article about the history of mission which ends with the wish: »O that this paper, too, may call out to everyone who reads it: ›Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD with slackness‹ (Jer 48:10). Therefore, pray and give and go out, that the word of the Lord be blessed.«²¹ The call for devotion towards the kingdom of God, with body, purse, and soul, is the motto ruling everything that follows. It will be interpreted in the numbers to come. But already the first number of the *Missionsblatt* emphasised that what was expected of a true Christian was a commitment of the whole person.

The next number with the story of the two Greenlanders already quoted above underlined the fact that the Bible was seen as the foundation of all Christian life. It equally emphasised the importance of knowing the Bible by heart. As a side effect, by using the Greenlanders as paradigms for true belief, it questioned European superiority – and induced the readers to exert themselves even more, if they did not want to be outdone by mere newly converted Greenlanders.

In the fourth number of the *Missionsblatt*, there was an anecdote about a missionary by the name of Janz in Africa who visited a man who did not want to listen to him. Janz said to him: »It is exactly you to whom I have to speak« and began preaching. Suddenly the man fled the room. When he returned, he asked: »Is there still hope for me? Can even a person like me become blessed?« and Janz

²⁰ On the definition of values cf. Hans Joas: *Die Entstehung der Werte*. Frankfurt/Main 1999; id.: *Braucht der Mensch Religion? Über Erfahrungen der Selbsttranszendenz*. Freiburg [et al.] 2004; Helmut Klages: *Die gegenwärtige Situation der Wert- und Wertwandelforschung – Probleme und Perspektiven*. In: *Werte und Wandel. Ergebnisse und Methoden einer Forschungstradition*. Ed. by idem [et al.]. Frankfurt/Main, New York 1992, 5–38; Clyde Kluckhohn: *Values and Value-Orientations in the Theory of Action*. In: *Toward a General Theory of Action*. Ed. by Talcott Parsons and Edward A. Shils. Cambridge/Mass. 1951, 388–433; Karl-Heinz Hillmann: *Wertewandel. Ursachen, Tendenzen, Folgen*. Würzburg 2003; cf. also Helmut Thome: *Wertewandel in Europa aus der Sicht der empirischen Sozialforschung*. In: *Die kulturellen Werte Europas*. Ed. by Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt. Frankfurt 2010, 386–443.

²¹ *Barmer Missionsblatt* 1826, 1, 4: »O, daß denn auch dieses Blatt einem jeden, der es liest, zurufe: *Verflucht ist, wer das Werk des Herrn läßig treibt!* (Jer. 48,10). Darum betet und gehet aus, daß das Wort des Herrn gepriesen werde, und alle Lande seiner Herrlichkeit voll werden, und zu uns und um uns und in uns komme sein Reich! Amen.« The translation of the English Standard Version seems to be closer to the German than the King James' Version.

began preaching of salvation. The editor then asked the reader whether he knew the feeling the African man had, or had not yet heard the word of the Gospel.²² The essential contents of the Christian faith: sin, damnation and justification, were depicted in this story. Having learnt about the necessity of wholehearted commitment and the fundamental importance of the Bible, the readers now were reminded of the most important contents of Christian faith.²³

The fifth and seventh numbers related the story of a student of theology who felt called upon to become a missionary to the Jews and who followed this vocation, overcoming much resistance.²⁴ A calling by God is to be obeyed – that was one point of the story. The other one was the conviction that the Jewish people should be at the centre of the missionary attention of Christians. And in case some reader thought that he or she had no vocation, the editor insisted that all Christians should be as zealous as this student.

There were two reasons for the emphasis on the necessity of mission to the Jews which were repeated regularly in the periodicals: a theological and a practical reason. Theologically, there was a big debate in Pietistic circles during these years concerning their historical consciousness.²⁵ They discussed if the Jews first had to be converted before the other peoples would follow, or if the Bible should be interpreted in a different way, making the »heathen« peoples the

²² Barner Missionsblatt 1826, 4, 15.

²³ Cf. e. g. Eberhard Jüngel: *Das Evangelium von der Rechtfertigung des Gottlosen als Zentrum des christlichen Glaubens. Eine theologische Studie in ökumenischer Absicht.* Tübingen 2006.

²⁴ Barner Missionsblatt 1826, 5, 17–20; 1826, 7, 25–28.

²⁵ On the historical consciousness of these mission societies cf. Judith Becker: *Die Christianisierung fremder Völker – ein Zeichen für die nahende Endzeit?* In: *Die Begegnung mit Fremden und das Geschichtsbewusstsein.* Ed. by idem and Bettina Braun. Göttingen 2012, 183–204; id.: *Zukunftserwartungen und Missionsimpetus bei Missionsgesellschaften in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts.* In: *Geschichtsbewusstsein und Zukunftserwartung in Pietismus und Erweckungsbewegung.* Ed. by Wolfgang Breul and Jan Carsten Schnurr. Göttingen 2013, 244–270. Cf. also Kerstin Arnborst-Weihs and Judith Becker: *Wertewandel und Geschichtsbewusstsein – Überlegungen zur historischen Untersuchung einer Wechselbeziehung.* In: *Jahrbuch für Europäische Geschichte* 12, 2011, 153–178. On historical consciousness and historiography in these religious groups cf. Jan Carsten Schnurr: *Weltreiche und Wahrheitszeugen. Geschichtsbilder der protestantischen Erweckungsbewegung in Deutschland 1815–1848.* Göttingen 2011; id.: *Geschichtsdeutung im Zeichen des Reiches Gottes. Historiographie- und begriffsgeschichtliche Anmerkungen zur Geschichtsliteratur der protestantischen Erweckungsbewegung im Vormärz.* In: *HZ* 291, 2010, 353–383; Martin H. Jung: *1836 – Wiederkunft Christi oder Beginn des Millenniums? Zur Eschatologie J. A. Bengels und seiner Schüler.* In: *Nachfolger Visionärinnen Kirchenkritiker. Theologie- und frömmigkeitgeschichtliche Studien zum Pietismus.* Ed. by idem. Leipzig 2003, 93–116; Martin Brecht: *Chiliasmus in Württemberg im 17. Jahrhundert.* In: *PuN* 14, 1988, 25–49; Hartmut Lehmann: *Endzeiterwartung und Erlösungshoffnung im württembergischen Pietismus.* In: *Fortschrittsglaube und Zukunftspessimismus.* Ed. by Haus der Geschichte Baden-Württemberg in Verbindung mit der Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart. Tübingen 2000, 25–45. Cf. also Lucian Hölscher: *Weltgericht oder Revolution. Protestantische und sozialistische Zukunftsvorstellungen im deutschen Kaiserreich.* Stuttgart 1989.

first converts and the Jews following.²⁶ Generally speaking, in these early years most people tended to emphasise the necessity of evangelising the Jews. When Jewish people proved to be less amenable to Christian mission than expected, the mission groups decided to concentrate most of their efforts on »heathen« or Muslim people – they usually made this distinction – and hoped that the Jews would follow the lead of the others. All these arguments were founded upon the Bible, of course. It was just a question of which biblical verses to rely on most.

The practical reason was that Jews could be found in Europe. Anyone could become a missionary. People who knew Jews had the duty to talk to them about God and to try to evangelise them, others could become missionaries without learning complicated languages and with much less risk to their health. Besides the theological conviction of the importance of evangelising the Jews, this article underlines again the commitment and devotion demanded by all Christians.

The following numbers of the *Missionsblatt* turned to mission in Africa and Asia. They report stories from missionaries of other societies – the Rhenish Missionary Society had not yet begun to send out missionaries itself. It had begun as society that supported other missions and then founded a mission school of its own in 1825. Its first aim was to prepare young, not well educated men for mission.

In these first articles, the readers were introduced to the countries, the missionary activities, problems, challenges and hopes of the mission. They were regularly asked to pray earnestly for the mission. A report on Sierra Leone closed with the remark that the missionaries there »have a double right to our intercession, that the Lord may save their health, or that he may give a triple measure of blessing to their short work«.²⁷ This brief remark demonstrated that what counted most was the outcome of mission work, not the loss of life. For the goal of world evangelisation everybody had to give his utmost, and an early death in Africa was to be accepted as a demonstration of real Christian devotion.

When these foundations of Christian life – devotion, knowledge of the Bible, the doctrine of justification, the need for mission (also as an expression of

²⁶ On the issue of conversion of the Jews cf. e. g. Heinrich Richter unter Mitarb. v. Wilhelm Richter: Richter's Bibelwerk. Erklärte Haus-Bibel oder Auslegung der ganzen heiligen Schrift alten und neuen Testaments. 6 Vols. Barmen, Schwelm 1834–1840, Vol. III, 469 or vol. IV, 286 passim. This popular Bible interpretation had emerged from the Rhenish mission seminary in Barmen; cf. also Johannes Wallmann: Der alte und der neue Bund. Zur Haltung des Pietismus gegenüber den Juden. In: Geschichte des Pietismus [see note 4] 4, 143–165. On millenarism cf. Michael Kannenberg: Verschleierte Uhrtafeln. Endzeiterwartungen im württembergischen Pietismus zwischen 1818 und 1848. Göttingen 2007; Hartmut Lehmann: Pietistic Millenarianism in Late Eighteenth-Century Germany. In: Religion and Religiosität in der Neuzeit. Historische Beiträge. Ed. by Manfred Jakobowski-Tiessen and Otto Ulbricht. Göttingen 1996, 158–166; Andreas Gestrich: »Am letzten Tag schon fertig sein«. Die Endzeiterwartungen der schwäbischen Pietisten. In: Konfession als Lebenskonflikt. Studien zum württembergischen Pietismus im 19. Jahrhundert und die Familientragödie des Johannes Benedikt Stanger. Ed. by Ulrich Herrmann and Karin Priem. Weinheim, München 2001, 93–126.

²⁷ Barmer Missionsblatt 1826, 11, 44: »Diese [Missionare, d. Vfn.] aber haben doppelten Anspruch auf unsere Fürbitte, daß der Herr ihre Gesundheit erhalte, oder ein dreifaches Maaß des Segens auf ihre kurze Arbeit lege!«

devotion) were laid, the *Missionsblatt* turned to values that were simultaneously secular and endowed with a deeply Christian meaning.²⁸ At the same time, of course, the topics already mentioned were repeated every now and then. I will therefore from this point onwards only refer to those articles in which a new aspect of Christian faith was presented.

The order in which these values were introduced seemed less deliberate and therefore less significant than the order in which the theological system was presented. However, the degree of insistence on the values and the different way of applying them to the readers' life is indicative of their importance.

In number 15 of 1826, India was called »the country of the sagacious heathen«. ²⁹ However, they were then compared to the wise Greek who nevertheless did not know the Christian God and their worldly knowledge was juxtaposed with real, true knowledge, which was Christian knowledge. The Rhenish Missionary Society like the Basel Mission favoured nobleness of heart (*Herzensbildung*) as opposed to secular knowledge and education. Therefore, the readers were told to pray for the enlightenment and renewal for the Indians. It is important to note that knowledge, apart from »Christian knowledge«, that is knowledge of the Bible and of justification, was not demanded in these Pietistic groups.

In the same number, another article on India called for more missionaries and described them (as they often did) as »faithful workers«. ³⁰ And indeed, faithfulness was one of the most important values of the mission. One month later, India again was in the focus of an article. This time, the *Missionsblatt* related »atrocities of heathenism« ³¹ in India: mothers feeding their children to crocodiles, children burying their mothers alive in a sati ceremony. The editor reminded his readers that the biblical commandment was to believe in Jesus and to love one other, and concluded: »May the Lord give us obedience and willingness to do this!« ³² All three substantives referred to important Pietistic values: love, obedience, and willingness, which was a form of devotion.

In order to learn to withstand the attacks by non-revived people in Europe, the readers were told stories about newly converted people, particularly in India, where the attacks on converts were more intense than in other countries – or at the very least depicted as worse in the missionary periodicals. The converts served as paradigms for someone truly converted, and for what was truly a Christian life. European Christians were to follow their example. In many cases, a competition of sorts was created as well: Should those non-European former heathen really surpass Europeans in being Christian? The ambition of the readers was meant to be spurred by these stories. However, in other cases, the editors of the period-

²⁸ On values in these mission societies cf. Judith Becker: »Gehet hin in alle Welt ...« Sendungsbewusstsein in der evangelischen Missionsbewegung der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts. In: *EvTh* 72, 2012, 2, 134–154.

²⁹ *Barner Missionsblatt* 1826, 15, 61.

³⁰ *Barner Missionsblatt* 1826, 15, 64.

³¹ *Barner Missionsblatt* 1826, 17, 69.

³² *Barner Missionsblatt* 1826, 17, 71: »Dazu gebe uns der Herr Gehorsam und Willigkeit!«

cals sincerely reported on the superiorities of non-Europeans over Europeans. There was no simple dichotomy between Europeans and non-Europeans in these reports.³³ In a third kind of comparison, Europeans and non-Europeans were presented as equal: »We, who are called Christians, should not assume the heart of a Pharisee that proudly thinks it is not like those heathen into the heathen world. They are rather the most faithful and the most honest mirror of our own hearts.«³⁴

Other important values were zeal and diligence, humility and patience, freedom and civilisation, but those can mainly be attributed to the already mentioned values of devotion, love, obedience to God's commandments (and in consequence to superiors, particularly religious superiors). Some of them were mainly demonstrated by reports on the missionaries, others by reports on the missionised, but they could always be found in both groups.

The end of a long article on *The victory of the Lord in Otaheite*³⁵ (Tahiti) in the last number of 1826, an article which described 19 years of missionary efforts in Tahiti which had been of no avail and the sudden conversion of the people, drew the conclusion:

Dear reader, how long has it taken you before the word became alive in you, before you left the idols in your heart, for instance love of vanity, of lust, of drink, of money or the idols conceit and self-righteousness and converted with your whole heart to the living God and to your saviour Jesus Christ? – Or has this not yet happened? – Alas, who knows with how many tears and prayers your father and your mother, your relatives, your preacher have been waiting for the time, and have maybe been waiting for more than 19 years! – Do you not soon want to give the celebration of joy to you and your pious friends and the angels in heaven? (Luc. 16).³⁶

³³ A postcolonial analysis of these periodicals could be highly interesting. As it is not in the focus of this paper, short references have to suffice. Most important are, as a matter of course, the newer postcolonial approaches that underline the significance of living together in a narrow community (»contact zone« or »third space«): Mary Louise Pratt: *Imperial Eyes. Studies in Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London, New York 1992; Homi K. Bhabha: *The location of culture*. London, New York 1994. Also, studies that relate to the concept of New Imperial History can give important insights, cf. e. g. Jeffrey Cox: *Imperial fault lines. Christianity and colonial power in India, 1818–1940*. Stanford 2002; or Catherine Hall: *Civilising Subjects. Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830–1867*. Oxford 2002. On mission and nationalism cf. e. g. Brian Stanley: *The Bible and the flag. Protestant missions and British imperialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*. Leicester 1990; Andrew Porter: *Religion versus empire? British protestant missionaries and overseas expansion, 1700–1914*. Manchester [et al.] 2004; Thorsten Altena: »Ein Häuflein Christen mitten in der Heidenwelt des dunklen Erdteils«. *Zum Selbst- und Fremdverständnis protestantischer Missionare im kolonialen Afrika 1884–1918*. Münster 2003.

³⁴ *Barmer Missionsblatt* 1826, 24, 100.

³⁵ Beginning and first mention of the title: *Barmer Missionsblatt* 1826, 24, 97.

³⁶ *Barmer Missionsblatt* 1826, 26, 111: »Lieber Leser, wie lange hat es bei dir gewährt, ehe das Wort in dir lebendig wurde, ehe du die Götzen in deinem Herzen, z. B. die Liebe zur Eitelkeit, zur Wollust, zum Trunk, zum Geld, oder die Götzen Eigenliebe und Eigengerechtigkeit verlassen und dich von ganzem Herzen zu dem lebendigen Gotte und zu deinem Heilande Jesu Christo bekehrt hast? – Oder ist das noch nicht geschehen? – Ach, wer weiß, mit wie vielen Thränen und Gebeten dein Vater und deine Mutter, deine Verwandte, dein Prediger auf diese Zeit wartet, und schon vielleicht länger als 19 Jahre wartete! – Willst du dann noch nicht bald dir und deinen frommen Freunden und den Engeln im Himmel das Freudenfest bereiten? (Luc. 16.)« – Luc 16 does not refer to the heavenly celebration. Maybe the editor wanted to refer to the story of parable of the prodigal son Luc 15 or to the parable of the great banquet Luc 14 (and, even better matching the sense of the story, Matth 22).

This can be read as a conclusion to the whole volume of the *Missionsblatt*: The result of the years of reading missionary reports was to be the personal conversion of the reader. – The actual »closing words«³⁷ underlined this again: The periodical was not written in order to assuage the curiosity of the readers or to provide a pastime on long winter evenings, but was meant to kindle love for the kingdom of God and then to lead the readers to commit themselves to the spread of his kingdom in prayer, in donations, and in deeds. Personal conversion and the revival of the whole world were to go hand in hand.

4 Conclusion

To foster a revival among their European readers was one of the explicit goals of Pietistic missionary periodicals. The *Barmer Missionsblatt* did this most explicitly, but the other journals pursued the same objective. Reports from missions were used to this aim, both by showing the readers paradigms of »real Christian« belief and behaviour (or the reverse) and by speaking to them by quoting from missionary sermons and debates or by using excerpts from letters or statements by newly converted persons.

The *Barmer Missionsblatt* expressly called upon its readers to commit themselves to specific pious attitudes and actions, above all intercessory prayer, but also self-reflection, the assumption of a new direction in life, the giving of thanks and, of course, the support of mission and carrying out evangelisation themselves. All these attitudes and actions were at the same time fundamental to Pietistic life, which was meant to be a constant revival and renewal lived in a group of pious persons, following the conversion of the individual.

The Basel *Evangelischer Heidenbote* was more indirect in its means, but in general pursued the same goals. When it addressed its readers directly, the community of believers was often in the focus, an approach which underlined the worldwide connection of »true Christians« as well as their revival on a world-wide scale.

By means of mission reports, pious convictions, religious and secular values were conveyed to the readers, who then knew what they were meant to believe, and how they were meant to behave, and how they were to deal with one another. The commitment of the whole person was demanded of all true believers, the Bible was to be the foundation of their piety and beliefs, and the justification of the sinner the central message. Readers were reminded of this again and again and, in the case of the *Missionsblatt*, they were asked whether they had truly already converted to this kind of Christianity, whether they really felt in their hearts that they belonged to the truly converted, and whether they had experienced all that was necessary for a true revival.

³⁷ Barmer Missionsblatt 1826, 26, 112.

If they had done so, a certain behaviour had to ensue inevitably. A conversion without this accompanying behaviour was not possible. It could not be a true conversion. Therefore, the periodicals also conveyed the values that were to accompany the conversion. They were religiously grounded, but also found expression in the life in the world, as a model to the world and to other people who were not yet converted. The missionaries and some of the missionised were used as paradigms for the European converted as well, because, under adverse circumstances, they displayed the values and behaviour in a way that constituted an even more evident and compelling revival than life in Europe.

Of course I do not want to argue that revival in Europe was the only or even the main objective of missionary periodicals. But it was one of the principal objectives, in the case of the early *Barmer Missionsblatt* very obviously so. When the missionary societies sent out missionaries of their own, reports from their own mission fields filled many pages and passages in which readers were addressed directly became rarer. The objective itself, revival in Europe, however, was not abandoned. As a side effect, the European sense of superiority towards other nations was undermined when newly converted non-Europeans were presented as models for European readers. The ultimate goal of the periodicals, and this is true for all periodicals I have studied, was conversion and revival in the whole world.