

# Evangelical Reactions to the 1848 Revolution in Germany

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Interest in the role of religious forces within revolutionary movements has intensified since churches and churchmen helped contribute to the demise of communism in Poland and the German Democratic Republic.<sup>1</sup> Such openness amongst German Protestants to anti-government protests on the streets is a recent phenomenon in Germany and points to the theological shifts that have taken place in the country over the course of the last century and a half. For the studies to date on Protestant reactions to the 1848 revolution<sup>2</sup> have uncovered much evidence to support the view

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<sup>1</sup> The literature on this is vast. Readers are referred to the following works that focus on the GDR: Jörg Swoboda, *The revolution of the candles. Christians in the revolution of the German Democratic Republic*, Macon 1996; John P. Burgess, *The East German church and the end of communism*, New York–Oxford 1987; Arnd Brummer (ed.), *Vom Gebet zur Demo. 1989 – Die Friedliche Revolution begann in den Kirchen*, Frankfurt a. M. 2009; Christian Führer, *Und wir sind dabei gewesen. Die Revolution, die aus der Kirche kam*, Berlin 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Ernst Schubert's study of sermons delivered during the revolutionary period is still well worth reading: *Die evangelische Predigt im Revolutionsjahr 1848. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Predigt wie zum Problem der Zeitpredigt*, Gießen 1913. Two journals have dedicated whole issues to the topic of German Protestantism and the 1848 revolution: *Pietismus und Neuzeit. Ein Jahrbuch zur Geschichte des neueren Protestantismus* 5 (1979) and the *Zeitschrift für bayerische Kirchengeschichte* 62 (1993). The latter volume is a collection of papers delivered at a symposium in Schweinfurt in 1993. There are a number of regional studies related to the topic of this article: Tamara Citovics, *Zwei Geistliche in der Revolution von 1848/49: Kaplan Pfähler aus Tettngang und Pfarrer Uhlmann aus Kluftern, Friedrichshafen* 1985; Bernd Caesar, *Johann Baptist Uhlmann, Klufterner Pfarrer in den Revolutionsjahren 1848 und 1849*, Kluftern 1995; Ludger Syré, *Karl Mez (1808–1877). Fabrikant und Sozialpolitiker aus christlicher Verantwortung*, in: Gerhard Schwinge (ed.), *Protestantismus und Politik. Zum politischen Handeln evangelischer Männer und Frauen für Baden zwischen 1819 und 1933*, Karlsruhe 1996, 167–175; Bettina K. Dannenmann, *Die evangelische Landeskirche in Baden im Vormärz und während der Revolution 1848/49*, Frankfurt a. M. 1996; Stefan J. Dietrich, *Christentum und Revolution. Die christlichen Kirchen in Württemberg 1848–1852*, Paderborn et al. 1996; Paul Sauer, *Gottlieb Rau und die revolutionäre Erhebung in Württemberg im September 1848*, Stuttgart 1998; Klaus Schmidt, *Kanzel, Thron und Demokraten. Die Protestanten und die Revolution 1848/49 in der preußischen Rheinprovinz*, Cologne 1998; Sebastian Prüfer, *Reformierter zwischen Reaktion und Revolution. Der Königsberger Pfarrer Louis Detroit und Preußens Hugenotten im 19. Jahrhundert*, Bad Karlshafen–Bad Emden 1999; Thomas K. Kuhn, *Der Streit um die Zukunft. Religion und Revolution in Baden 1848/49*, in: *ZNThG/JHMTh* 7 (2000), 20–65. On pietism and the revolution of 1848/1849 one should consult Josef Moser, *Religion und sozialer Protest. Erweckungsbewegung und ländliche Unterschichten im Vormärz am Beispiel*

expressed shortly afterwards by the Jewish proselyte Friedrich Stahl that there were only two parties left in Germany – the party of revolution and the party supporting the alliance of throne and altar. In this scenario the orthodox evangelicals were at the time seen, as Hans Hugo von Kleist-Retzow said of the Pomeranian pietists, as having successfully rallied the forces loyal to the Prussian monarchy under Frederick William IV, a man who has himself been referred to as a “true believer in Christ on the throne of Prussia”.<sup>3</sup> William Graham, Irish Presbyterian missionary to the Jews at Bonn, put it like this: the “three Rs” – royalty, religion and respectability – joined hands, naturally enough, in a show of strength to smash the “fierce violence of a godless democracy”. Democrats had by their insolence and insubordination taught princes to fear God.<sup>4</sup>

### Evangelical Alliance

This study seeks to shed some new light on the role played in 1848 by evangelicals who were associated in some way with the Evangelical Alliance.<sup>5</sup> This organisation, which sought to institutionalise the unity of evangelicals all around the globe, but which immediately after its establishment in London in 1846 – the same year as the abortive church conference held in Berlin aimed to provide German Protestantism with a single unitary form – turned into a European organisation, a precursor of the modern ecumenical movement. Many of the men discussed in this essay travelled to England for the founding conference, not least because England, the home of the evangelical revival, was perceived as leading the way in the ongoing march of evangelicalism through the institutions and cultures of Europe. Eight were founder members of the Alliance: Eduard Kuntze, Leopold Schultze, Jakob Theodor Plitt,

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von Minden–Ravensberg, in: Heinrich Volkmann/Jürgen Bergmann (edd.), *Sozialer Protest. Studien zu traditioneller Resistenz und kollektiver Gewalt in Deutschland vom Vormärz bis zur Reichsgründung*, Opladen 1984, 304–324; Josef Mooser, *Kirche, Erweckungsbewegung und politischer Konservatismus in der Revolution 1848/49. Das Beispiel Westfalen in sozialgeschichtlicher Perspektive*, in: ZBKG 62 (1993), 98–115; Dieter Ising, *Eine „Weckstimme durch alle Völker“*. Die Revolution von 1848/1849 und die Anfänge der Inneren Mission in der Sicht Johann Christoph Blumhardts, in: PuN 24 (1998), 286–308; Albrecht Stammeler, *Die Brüdergemeine in Deutschland im Umfeld der politischen Krise von 1848*, in: *Unitas Fratrum* 48 (2001), 47–69; Jürgen Kampmann, *Die Minden–Ravensberger Erweckungsbewegung und die Revolution von 1848/49*, in: Christian Peters/Jürgen Kampmann (edd.), *Fides et pietas. Festschrift Martin Brecht zum 70. Geburtstag*, Münster 2003, 139–159; David L. Ellis, *A War of Words: The Prussian Awakened in the Revolution of 1848*, in: Lucian Hölscher/Michael Geyer (edd.), *Die Gegenwart Gottes in der modernen Gesellschaft. Transzendenz und religiöse Vergemeinschaftung in Deutschland*, Göttingen 2006, 86–111.

<sup>3</sup> William O. Shanahan, *German Protestants Face the Social Question*, vol. 1: *The Conservative Phase 1815–1871*, Notre Dame 1954, 192, 195; Erich Beyreuther, *Der Weg der Evangelischen Allianz in Deutschland*, Wuppertal 1969, 25.

<sup>4</sup> William Graham, *The Jordan and the Rhine; or, the East and the West. Being the Result of Five Years Residence in Syria and Five Years Residence in Germany*, London 1854, 522.

<sup>5</sup> Gerhard Lindemann's recent work covers the response of Evangelical Christendom, the press organ of the British Evangelical Alliance, but fails to discuss the reactions of German members of the organisation. Gerhard Lindemann, *Für Frömmigkeit in Freiheit. Die Geschichte der Evangelischen Allianz im Zeitalter des Liberalismus (1846–1879)*, Berlin 2011, 152–158.

August Gottreu Tholuck, Christian Gottlob Barth, Johann Gerhard Oncken, Wilhelm Hoffmann and Karl Reinthaler. Reinthaler, Hoffmann, Tholuck and Barth also signed the original invitation (15 July 1848) to gather for a conference in Wittenberg in September 1848 which was sent out by a Committee on which sat another co-founder of the Alliance, Jean Louis Bonnet, minister of the French Reformed Church at Frankfurt am Main. The presence of a number of high-profile evangelicals at the Kirchentag of 1848 signified a willingness to deliberate upon the widespread apostasy of the toiling masses, but not a readiness to call for a root and branch reform of an economic system whose values and effects undermined the religious foundations of society and church adherence. Other men discussed here were not founder members but did become associated with the Alliance movement during its early years. The Württemberg evangelical Sixt Carl Kapff had his prize-winning essay on the causes and results of the 1848 revolution<sup>6</sup> reprinted in the organ of the British Evangelical Alliance, *Evangelical Christendom*. In 1855 Kapff also gave the lecture on the religious state of Germany at the Paris Conference of the Alliance; this appeared the following year as a book. Friedrich Wilhelm Krummacher, whose devotional writings had already made him well-known throughout the English-speaking world, sent an address to the founding conference and became one of the German Alliance's most tireless workers in the 1850s. Theodor Fliedner had collected large sums of money in England since 1824 and his work with prisoners and the sick was much encouraged by the Alliance. His work was highlighted at the 1855 Alliance Conference at Paris. Christoph Hoffmann, younger brother of the above-named Wilhelm Hoffmann, was also present at the Paris conference as well as the great follow-on conference in Berlin in 1857. The Evangelical Alliance provided a forum for men of differing denominational and national backgrounds to meet and share their vision of a strong, united and truly catholic corpus evangelicorum, ready and able to meet the demands of the modern age.

Johann Hinrich Wichern (1808–1881) became a member of the Alliance before 1852, but he remained sceptical and lukewarm about the “English” organisation, the meetings of which he seems to have particularly disliked.<sup>7</sup> Its president, Sir Culling Eardley, nevertheless recognised the importance of Wichern's work for the world-wide church. Wichern – who admitted his own debt to English evangelicalism – had sought to respond to the effects of the industrial revolution in urban areas of Germany by setting up his *Rauhes Haus* in Hamburg in 1833. Charitable enterprises, organised with zeal and dedication, sought to alleviate the poverty and deprivation experienced by the most vulnerable sections of the population. *Evangelical Christendom* reported regularly and extensively on the work. Wichern's clarion call on

<sup>6</sup> Sixtus C. Kapff, *Die Revolution, ihre Ursachen, Folgen und Heilmittel*, Hamburg 1851.

<sup>7</sup> Martin Gerhardt, *Ein Jahrhundert Innere Mission. Die Geschichte des Central-Ausschusses für die Innere Mission der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche*. Tl. 1, Gütersloh 1948, 193. In August 1851 Wichern wrote to his wife from London, where he had attended a meeting of the Evangelical Alliance: „Im Allgemeinen scheinen die christlichen Engländer [...] Deutschland als ein mit Heidentum und Tyrannei bedecktes Land anzusehen, dem sie Freiheit und Evangelium zu bringen haben“, Martin Gerhardt, *Johann Hinrich Wichern. Ein Lebensbild*, Bd. II: *Höhe des Schaffens 1846–1857*, Hamburg 1928, 263.

22 September 1848 at Wittenberg for a fully-fledged Innere Mission financially supported by the German Protestant Churches is the best-known response to the social and political upheavals of that year. The opening lines of his 1848 article on the Communist threat –

“Communism – the very name has a similar effect as Medusa’s head. It spreads fear and the blood in the veins of bourgeois society is turned to stone. And quite rightly so.”<sup>8</sup>

– suggests reflection on the Communist Manifesto. His Wittenberg speech built on this reflection and provided an explicitly conservative reply to Wilhelm Marr, Heinrich Heine and Ludwig Feuerbach. It was a call to save the bourgeois world from the clutches of socialists and communists.

### Bremen

Wichern had already read Friedrich Engels’ *Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England* and may well have met Friedrich Engels in the house of his “intimate friend”, Georg Gottfried Treviranus (1788–1868). From 1838 to 1841 Engels lived in the Treviranus home in Bremen, a town the “young German” called “the capital of North-German fundamentalism”.<sup>9</sup> Georg Treviranus and his colleague Friedrich Ludwig Mallet were the chief spokesmen of the Bremen pietists.<sup>10</sup> Treviranus, who was a founder member of the Alliance, and Mallet, who had been invited to attend but was unable to do so, became Foreign Corresponding Members. During Engels’ stay in the town the two ministers along with twenty other pastors issued a declaration expressing their undiminished support for all elements of traditional evangelical doctrines and protesting against all attempts to undermine their truth and validity.<sup>11</sup> Not that this impressed Engels, a former evangelical. He had little more than contempt for his landlord’s sentiments. Given Engels’ background this is perhaps rather surprising. The Engels family was rooted in the Wuppertal region – in Engels’ words “the Zion of the obscurantists”<sup>12</sup> – and had supported Fliedner’s Rhenish-Westphalian Prison Society for the Moral and Civic Improvement of

<sup>8</sup> „Kommunismus – der Name wirkt jetzt wie ein Medusenhaupt. Die Furcht geht vor ihm her und läßt das Blut in den Adern der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft erstarren. Und mit Recht“, see Johann Hinrich Wichern, *Kommunismus und die Hülfe gegen ihn*, in: Johann Hinrich Wichern, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, Bd. 1: *Schriften zur sozialen Frage*, ed. Karl Janssen, Gütersloh 1979, 89–110, here 89.

<sup>9</sup> Gerhardt, *Ein Jahrhundert Innere Mission* (cf fn. 7), 19; Karl Kupisch, *Recht und Unrecht der theologischen Kritik am Verein seit 1919*, in: *Die Innere Mission* 50 (1960), 249f.; Walter Schäfer, *Georg Gottfried Treviranus. Wicherns Freund. Beitrag zu einem Lebensbild aus der Erweckungszeit*, Verden 1963, 46, 52; Helmut Hirsch, *Friedrich Engels in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten*, Hamburg 1971, 14f.; *Morgenblatt für gebildete Leser*, 17 October 1840, in: *Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, Collected Works*, vol. II, London 1975, 126.

<sup>10</sup> Marx/Engels, *Collected Works* (cf fn. 9), 157. There are a good number of references to the Treviranus family and to Mallet’s Bremer Kirchenbote in the *Collected Works*.

<sup>11</sup> Karl Heinz Voigt, *Georg Gottfried Treviranus. Mitbegründer der Evangelischen Allianz in London*, in: *HosEc* 8 (1973), 69; *Bekenntnis bremischer Pastoren in Sachen der Wahrheit*, Bremen 1840.

<sup>12</sup> Marx/Engels, *Collected Works* (cf fn. 9), 7.

Prisoners as well as other missionary societies,<sup>13</sup> but Friedrich was in the process of turning from Christianity to Communism. Angered by what he saw as the greed and hard-heartedness of evangelical businessmen in his home region, Engels represented a younger generation who failed to see the Countenance Divine in the dark Satanic mills of the Wuppertal region. This ideological development does not seem to have interested Engels' landlord in the slightest. Not even Rhenish wines which the two men drank together in the Ratskeller in Bremen seem to have loosened Treviranus' tongue.

Treviranus was occupied during the revolutionary period with resisting the activities of a liberal theologian, Rev Rudolf Dulon. Dulon, referred to by Heinrich von Treitschke as "an apostle of extreme radicalism",<sup>14</sup> had been appointed to a parish in Bremen. He was one of the few clergymen who praised the revolution as a 'work of the Lord'. Democracy, he believed, was preparing the way for the Kingdom of God on earth. Such ideas were bound to awaken the ire of Treviranus, who continued this struggle at the Wittenberg Kirchentag. An attempt was made by a small minority of his hearers to persuade the Senate to remove Dulon. They claimed he directly opposed the essential doctrines of Christianity, denying the credibility and authority of the Scriptures and "scoffing at and deriding the truths therein contained". The attempt failed. Treviranus no doubt breathed a sigh of relief when finally in 1851 the Hanoverian General Jacobi was sent to Bremen as a Commissar. Although clearly acceptable to the vast majority of his parishioners, Dulon was removed from his post and imprisoned. The decision was justified by the University of Heidelberg as necessary to protect the congregation from his anti-Christian doctrines.<sup>15</sup>

Yet even Treviranus was affected by the new atmosphere in the north German republic. The revolution seems to have led Treviranus, who had until then, as his wife Mathilde wrote to Wichern in 1844/45, spent little time talking to the lodgers and servants, to seek to involve non-family members in the daily devotions.<sup>16</sup> As far as attendance at his church, St. Martin's, was concerned, the revolution undermined its strength. Church attendance dropped off noticeably after 1848, as did the number of communicants. Under his predecessor Gottfried Mencken there had been on average 200 communicants up to 1811. After his arrival in 1813 Treviranus attracted on average 445 communicants, but this number fell in the years after 1848 back to 200.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Christopher M. Clark, *The politics of conversion. Missionary Protestantism and the Jews of Prussia 1728-1941*, Oxford 1995, 104.

<sup>14</sup> Heinrich von Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte im neunzehnten Jahrhundert. Fünfter Theil: Bis zur März-Revolution*, Leipzig 1894, 360.

<sup>15</sup> *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* 28 Oct. 1848, 857; Fritz Fischer, *Der deutsche Protestantismus und die Politik im 19. Jahrhundert*, in: *HZ* 171 (1951), 473-518, here 486; Veit Valentin, *Geschichte der deutschen Revolution von 1848-49. Zweiter Band: Bis zum Ende der Volksbewegung von 1849*, repr. [1931], Aalen 1968, 389-390; *Evangelical Christendom*, 1851, 201-202.

<sup>16</sup> Walter Schäfer, *Georg Gottfried Treviranus* (cf fn. 9), 53.

<sup>17</sup> *Neue Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* 26 Dec. 1868, 826.

## Hamburg

In the other city-republic, the Freie Hansestadt Hamburg, worked another co-founder of the Evangelical Alliance, the Baptist Johann Gerhard Oncken, a man sent there originally by the London-based Continental Society for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge over the Continent of Europe. The revolutionary movement on the continent in 1848 began to change the socio-political context of the Baptist mission to Germany. All non-Lutherans, including Jews, rejoiced at the creeping emancipation movement. At a congregational meeting on 3 April 1848 the Baptists of Hamburg debated whether members should be free to parade the national colours of black, red and gold; the resolution was passed. In a letter dated 25 April 1848 to Simon Wilkin in England, published in the June 1848 issue of the "Baptist Magazine", Oncken spoke of liberty "descending like an angel of peace from heaven". He added: "True, the events are awful; awfully grand I would call them, at least as far as Germany and the Continent generally are concerned". Furthermore, "the cruel chains of spiritual oppression", borne for twenty-five years, had been broken and the "oppressor is oppressed as a just recompense". Guns and barricades had "knocked down a wretched system of tyranny", he told the same journal, and "delightful" meetings had taken place in Baptist chapels ever since.<sup>18</sup> In a letter from Hamburg dated 25 July 1848, Oncken wrote of "the great and glorious revolution through which we are passing". It had, he said, placed the Baptists – the "sect everywhere spoken against" – in a "new state of existence". "We can now move freely and fearlessly in every direction, circulate the Holy Scriptures among the adherents of Rome, supply the millions with tracts, and preach the blessed gospel in regions where Satan reigned in undisturbed repose".<sup>19</sup> The "first and the greatest result of our revolution", he wrote in a letter to Boston on 24 May 1849, was "the sentence of death passed on all State churches by the representatives of the nation".<sup>20</sup> "Civil and religious despotism, always linked together, must also fall together", he had exulted in July 1848. "Our great revolution" had, he hoped, put an end to all the "vexations" of the past and had indeed brought a great measure of religious liberty.<sup>21</sup> In the letter of 24 May 1849 written to the committee of the American Baptist Missionary Union in Boston Oncken reiterated the joy felt by members of the Free Church at experiencing God's "sentence of death on all State churches by the representatives of the nation". He could triumphantly tell his American brethren that "the Lord has turned our captivity; the fetters of civil and ecclesiastical despotism were broken".<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> The Baptist Magazine, May 1848, 292.

<sup>19</sup> The Baptist Missionary Magazine (Boston), Oct. 1848, 387.

<sup>20</sup> The Baptist Missionary Magazine (Boston), August 1849, 302.

<sup>21</sup> The Baptist Magazine, May 1848, 292.

<sup>22</sup> The Baptist Missionary Magazine (Boston), August 1849, 302.

## Baptist Responses

The Lord was seen to have smashed an evil system. In a remarkably symbolic moment the new place of Baptist worship in Neander Street in Berlin was “inaugurated under the cannonade of the 19 March”, when few other religious services were held.<sup>23</sup> Gottfried Wilhelm Lehmann, the pastor of the Baptist church in the capital, wrote to the General Secretary of the Baptist Union of America Missionary Board, Rev Solomon Peck: “On the 19th March, the day of our political emancipation we began the first service, when scarcely the smoke of the cannons was dissolved”. The political liberation was even seen as a clear answer to prayer. For five weeks before the events of 18/19 March 1848 the Baptists in Berlin had been holding prayer meetings every morning of the week to invoke the divine help. Lehmann told Peck: “the Lord has answered in his own peculiar way” (underlined in the original). He later wrote of 19 March as “the day when the victory of the people was completed”. On 26 March 1848 the first completely free meeting, i. e. one which had not been registered with the police, took place in the new chapel. His son, Rev Joseph Lehmann, who became a lecturer at the Baptist Seminary in Hamburg, spoke of how God had answered prayer “in a voice of thunder” in 1848.<sup>24</sup> He wrote in 1887:

“The revolution although by nature a godless action, from which the Baptist fellowship therefore most carefully kept well away, was nevertheless in the hand of God the means of putting to an end the police state of Prussia; it was the flood which brought destruction over the face of the earth, but which lifted the ark and brought it to rest again on a better earth”.<sup>25</sup>

In another piece of symbolism a Baptist leader whose family had deep roots in Lissa Jewry in West Prussia, Julius Köbner (1806–1884), published in 1848 his “Manifest des freien Urchristentums an das deutsche Volk”, calling for total separation of church and state and freedom for those with or without religion. Without specifically mentioning the Baptists, Köbner’s manifesto attacked the “distorted” and “lifeless” forms of Christianity that reigned supreme in Germany.<sup>26</sup>

Baptist leaders like the Jewish proselyte Köbner had nothing but contempt for the “political” sermons of a “fanatical and highly reactionary” tone which fellow believers in Berlin (Friedrich Wilhelm Krummacher is specifically mentioned) and Halle (Tholuck is presumably meant) dished up in churches in 1848. Blinded by their fear of a more democratic constitution Lutheran and Reformed brethren condemned the Frankfurt and Berlin parliaments and one unnamed “dear brother and divine” was even accused by nonconformists of identifying the kingdom of God with the

<sup>23</sup> The Baptist Magazine, September 1849, 564–565.

<sup>24</sup> Letter from Gottfried Wilhelm Lehmann (Berlin) to Solomon Peck (Boston), 4 April 1848 (American Baptist Archives Center, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania).

<sup>25</sup> Joseph Lehmann, Gottfried Wilhelm Lehmann. Gründer und erster Prediger der Baptisten-Gemeinde in Berlin, in seinem Leben und Wirken dargestellt von seinem Sohne, Hamburg 1887, 36: „Die Revolution, wiewohl ihrer Natur nach eine gottlose Handlung, von der sich daher auch die Gemeinde aufs sorgfältigste fernhielt, war doch in der Hand Gottes das Mittel gewesen, wodurch Er dem Polizeistaat Preußen ein Ende machte; sie war die Sündflut, die über die Welt verheerend erging, aber die Arche hob und auf eine bessere Erde hinübertrug“.

<sup>26</sup> The Baptist Magazine, September 1848, 551; Ruth Baresel, Julius Köbner. Sein Leben, Kassel 1930, 67f.

kingdom of Prussia. Baptists had no time for an alliance of reactionary politics and orthodox Christianity. The only worry Oncken had was that the Holy Alliance of Austrian and Russian autocrats would “direct their bayonets against Germany, in its present struggle for liberty”.<sup>27</sup>

Oncken believed that the huge additions to Baptist churches in the wake of the revolution were providential, proof that the events of 1848 were of divine origin. From January 1848 to May 1849 108 members were added to the Hamburg congregation and 57 to the Berlin congregation.<sup>28</sup> At Aalborg 70 were added in six months. Stettin gained 22 new adherents in 1848, Rummelsburg in Pomerania 53. Thirteen new colporteurs and missionaries, supported by the American Board of Missions, were employed within the twelve-month period to May 1849, of whom seven were members of the Hamburg congregation:

“We have seen the arm of the Lord made bare, for his time was come to favour his Zion – to gather in many of his chosen ones and to beautify his spiritual temple by adding to it many chosen, living stones”.<sup>29</sup>

The constitutions drawn up on 5 December 1848 and 31 January 1850 guaranteed Baptists and other independent religious groups freedom of religious belief and association – in the event, promises never kept by governments under the influence of orthodox-pietistic churchmen like the Gerlach brothers, Gerhard Friedrich Strauss, Theodor Kliefoth, Friedrich Julius Stahl and Ernst Hengstenberg. In Hamburg at least the authorities were encouraged to grant freedoms because the Baptist fellowship had had “a very beneficial impact on the lower classes”. Senator Nicolaus Binder had noted with satisfaction and not a little surprise that the Hamburg church had “kept away from all revolutionary activities” in 1848. From being a hostile enemy of the Baptists Binder was led by the 1848 revolution to becoming Oncken’s best friend amongst the senators. Oncken certainly claimed that “not a single member of the fellowship had joined the revolt”. Of all the religious groups in Hamburg at the time the Baptists were, in his opinion, the only one which remained aloof even though they, more than most, yearned for political and religious freedoms. “Christians are not allowed to revolt”, he wrote in his notes at the time. Those Jews and heathens and “every Tom, Dick and Harry” who had rebelled against the authorities – that-be, he called the “party of Satan”. Baptists had, admittedly, been granted the freedom by their elders to wear the colours of the revolution if they so wished and nobody had the right to judge them for doing so. This fellowship ruling, already alluded to, was fully in accord with the Baptist respect for the individual’s conscience. Oncken himself had not used the pulpit to preach political sermons and had even been a corporal in command of a local militia unit during the crisis.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> The Baptist Magazine, September 1849, 565.

<sup>28</sup> Joseph Lehmann, *Geschichte der deutschen Baptisten*. Zweiter Teil, Kassel 1912, 55; *Statistics of Baptist Churches in Prussia in the Year 1848* (Reel FM-88, American Baptist Archives Center, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania).

<sup>29</sup> The Baptist Missionary Magazine, August 1849, 303.

<sup>30</sup> „Als der politische Topf auch in Hamburg überkochte, als sich Juden und Heiden, Krethi und Plethi gegen die bestehende Obrigkeit auflehnten und dadurch zeigten, daß sie eine Partei des Satans seien, wurden alle Bande zerrissen und alle menschliche Ordnung mit Füßen getreten. Wir Baptisten



### An Irish Voice

A second missionary in Hamburg who rejoiced over the revolution was James Craig, born in County Derry, Ireland. Ordained and commissioned by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Craig had arrived in the city in 1845 as a missionary to the Jews. Like Oncken he too had initially used the facilities placed at his disposal by the minister of the English Reformed Church, which had been granted limited freedoms to assemble in 1818. The revolutionary movement also came to the aid of his missionary work.<sup>31</sup> Craig's preaching had till 1848 only been tolerated "merely by the remission of the authorities in the discharge of their duties". In a letter of 3 January 1848 Craig had described how the police had recently broken into a meeting of the Friends of Light which met in a street adjoining the road where Craig had gathered a small congregation. This was a body of "acknowledged atheists or infidels", Craig said, and their persecution – the police had arrested and imprisoned their leading members – was all the more surprising to Craig as he believed the Government had "strong sympathy" with this Free Church. Equally surprising to him was the fact that his meetings had not been raided: "It is the doing of the Lord, and wondrous in our eyes". The continual fear of being arrested and the administrative and bureaucratic difficulties which had stood in the way of the mission were suddenly broken away in the course of the revolution. Dr Craig was permitted for the first time in 1848 to conduct regular worship services in a suitable and "exceedingly convenient" public hall rented for that purpose. Many new opportunities they would not otherwise have enjoyed were given to the Irish missionary by the revolution. Attendance at the services improved. "Our missionaries", the editorial in the June 1848 issue of the *Missionary Herald* read, "enjoy the same privileges as members of the Established Church do". "The political commotions, instead of interfering with our work, are giving us many new opportunities we could not otherwise have enjoyed". God, by means of the revolution, was opening a door for the gospel on the continent. Craig's mission now seemed to enjoy a degree of influential support. Several powerful individuals, who had looked upon the mission with indifference or suspicion, began to attend his services and take a deep interest in the work. Rev William Hart, one of Craig's assistants, in a letter of 2 May 1848, now felt encouraged to ask the Mission directors in Belfast to seriously consider establishing an institution in which inquiring Jews might be given temporary employment while receiving religious instruction,

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waren damals die einzige unter den Religionsgemeinschaften, die sich von der Revolte fernhielt, obgleich wir auch nach Freiheit strebten, Christen dürfen eben nicht revoltieren [...] Inmitten des Aufruhrs, als alles kopfunter ging, da war ich Corporal unter der Bürgergarde. Der Umstand, daß die Obrigkeit ganz genau wußte, daß nicht ein einziges Mitglied der Gemeinde sich der Revolte angeschlossen hatte, führte dahin, daß Binder mein bester Freund im Senat wurde. Er hat wiederholt mit mir berathen“, Hans Luckey, Johann Gerhard Oncken und die Anfänge des deutschen Baptismus, Kassel 1934, 210.

<sup>31</sup> The *Missionary Herald* of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (hereinafter cited as MH) Feb. 1848, 529; July 1848, 567; Nov. 1848, 616f.; Dec. 1848, 620f.; June 1849, 668; Sixth Annual Report of the Assembly's Jewish Mission, presented to the Assembly at its meeting in July, 1848, MH August 1848, 580-583; Seventh Annual Report of the Assembly's Jewish Mission, July 1849, in MH August 1849, 703; Letter from John J. Given, MH Sept. 1848, 598f.

for the lawmakers of Hamburg, who would not have countenanced such an enterprise prior to 1848, were now far more flexible. No decision, however, was taken by the directors that year. Nor did the revolution open a way for Craig to take the gospel to the Jews of Russia, as the Mission Board's directors had initially hoped. The Irish Presbyterians felt it would be also unwise in 1848 to attempt to open a further mission station. The freedoms granted to Jews had namely undermined the willingness on the part of some families to send their children to the Mission Schools to receive a Christian education. On 8 June 1848 Craig wrote to Belfast saying that "we have made a beginning, and the girls school is already very promising; the boys school is likely to be large". Another colleague of Craig's, John J. Givan wrote on 1 August 1848 that attendance at the boys' school was fluctuating, while the girls' school was "on the increase". The experiment, aimed at attracting children away from the Jewish Free School, was admitted to be a failure by Craig on 8 May 1849, when he said that attendance at the two schools "did not warrant us in continuing the expense". "Opposition came in the way, and secret influences were against us" and his many visits to Jewish families proved to be in vain. Sporadic attacks were made on Craig's mission in the press. Craig seems to have believed Jews were mainly responsible. The Irish missionary wrote on 6 October 1848 that "the men who prepared the way for the present revolutions are well known to have been Jews" and that "the most influential men at the head of all the political movements in this land are Jews". "The men who are now striving", he said, "and in many cases successfully, to overthrow the last feelings of respect for the Bible and the morality of the Bible are Jews". After a missionary journey to Halberstadt in August 1848 he once again emphasised that "here, as usual, the Jews are guiding all political movements" and "they have the press in their hands". Such exaggerations, which no doubt reflected contemporary opinion not only in the press but also in the Christian circles which Craig frequented, helped to justify the presence of the Presbyterian mission station in Hamburg: "At no time, perhaps, has the importance of the Jewish Mission been so much felt as in this year of tumult". In spite of what was perceived to be some anti-Christian and anarchic excitement unleashed by the revolution, William Hart nevertheless expressed confidence on 6 October 1848 that "under the control of the Almighty and All-wise Ruler of nations, these political tempests will have the effect of purifying the political and social atmosphere, and teaching wholesome lessons to both rulers and ruled".

### Berlin

Eduard Kuntze (1799–1862) was another evangelical leader appalled not only by the ideological changes, but especially by the working-class responses to a developing capitalist economy. Kuntze, who had worked during 1826–29 as a minister at the German Lutheran Church of St. Mary's in London, was familiar with the early impact of the English industrial revolution. His time in London also gave him a far greater understanding and appreciation of the Baptist and Methodist movements than all of his fellow Prussian ministers. At a meeting in his parsonage in 1851, Kuntze arranged for a number of well-known Berlin church figures – Friedrich Wilhelm Krummacher,

Karl Immanuel Nitzsch, Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg,<sup>32</sup> Christian Ludwig Couard, Friedrich Strauß and Count von Schlippenbach – to talk to two English Baptists, John H. Hinton and Edward Steane, who were visiting Germany as representatives of the Evangelical Alliance ostensibly to inform themselves about the progress of the Innere Mission since 1848.<sup>33</sup> Like Kuntze, Hinton and Steane were founder members of the Alliance. Kuntze used the occasion to criticise the Baptists of Hamburg for the “bad part” they had played in the revolution of 1848 when, he claimed, they had not only taken sides with “the rebels against all authority, ecclesiastical and civil”, but also published pamphlets supporting the rebellion. Hinton and Steane were perplexed by Krummacher’s public assertions that the king of Prussia had not been bound by morality to keep his promise of giving his country a new constitution, for, in his view, that promise had been made under duress during the disturbances of 1848. They expressed understanding for Oncken’s joy at the prospect of civil and religious liberty being granted to himself and his Baptist brethren at a time when the Berlin clergy “supported an absolute despotism”.

In his account of the journey to the continent in 1851 Hinton refers to the Prussian king as “this imbecile monarch” who was “now coquetting with the Harlot of the Seven Hills, and indulging the dream of a legislative union between the Romish and the Protestant churches in his dominions”. If the religion of the ruling classes in Prussia appeared to the English Baptists to be too tolerant of Catholicism, the political character or, at least, political manipulation of the revival of evangelical religion within the Lutheran and Reformed Churches was also anathema to them. Evangelicalism in Prussia, in their view, had been taken hold of by politicians “as a prop for tottering thrones, and a barrier against threatening revolution”. If that *mésalliance* benefitted a despotic government, it would also be a “source of great mischief to religion”. Oncken was doing his German brethren a great service, they reported, in showing how “religion can be found in other company than that of absolutist politicians” and was “in harmony with other social institutions than a stern and crushing despotism”.

Foreigners seem to have had a far clearer understanding of these relationships.

Another observer of the work of the Kirchentag, the Scottish Seceder John Cairns (1818–1892) of Berwick, used the occasion of the September 1853 conference to criticise the political “fetters” and “Court influence” over the churches. The clergy, he said, and above all their superiors, were seen by the population to be instruments of the state. The Kirchentag had thus acquired “a Jesuitical look in the eyes of the revolutionary masses, which are totally alienated from Christianity”. In fact the whole church had long gained such a reputation. Since his first stay in Germany in 1843 (he had accepted an appointment as *locum tenens* in the English Independent Chapel in Hamburg) Cairns had criticised the connection between the reviving evangelistic endeavours and conservative politics. “The cause of true Christianity”, he wrote of German religion, “if it does not actually degrade itself by a secondary preaching of

<sup>32</sup> Hengstenberg interpreted the Gog and Magog prophecy in the book of Ezekiel as referring to the democrats of 1848. See Adolf Hausrath, *Richard Rothe und seine Freunde*. Zweiter Band, Berlin 1906, 184.

<sup>33</sup> John Howard Hinton, *Letters written during a Tour in Holland and North Germany in July and August 1851*, London 1851, 44f., 60–64, 125.

divine right, affords colour to the reproach that pietism, to gratify its own intolerance, is willing to become the slave of despotism".<sup>34</sup>

Kuntze politicised his sermons in 1848 in the interests of that despotism. One of Kuntze's conservative sermons preached that year is mentioned in a letter to Ludwig von Gerlach from his brother Friedrich on 29 March 1848: "Last Sunday Kuntze and Orth<sup>35</sup> are supposed to have spoken out with great hostility against the revolution; Kuntze said that whether or not one mourned the deaths of those killed one should always remember that they remained rebels. Orth read out the thirteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans and preached on it".<sup>36</sup> The leader of the Alliance in Berlin could not understand the dissatisfaction amongst the masses with the paternal efforts undertaken by pastors like himself and his predecessor at St. Elizabeth's, Otto von Gerlach, to alleviate their suffering. The revolution evoked in him a monarchical-patriotic response: he and his assistant in 1848, Pastor Gustav Eduard Meuß, patrolled the streets of their parish throughout the night of 18/19 March, encouraging his parishioners to "remain faithful to their royal family".<sup>37</sup> Later he would claim that if he had only had half a dozen courageous men at his side "not a single barricade would have been erected in the Voigtland parish". On 22 March, following a prayer meeting at seven in the morning, he and his assistant were later threatened with execution if they dared to pray for the Prince of Prussia again. On 30 March the flag of the revolution – black, red and gold in colour – was tied to the crosses on the roof of Kuntze's church as well as to his own house door. The hostility of the masses to Kuntze's politics found repeated expression in calls to burn down his house. However, Kuntze did not blame the poor for their own alienation from the two main pillars of Prussian society. In his speech at the Wittenberg Kirchentag in 1848, he aroused loud protests against his assertion that a "confederation of German churches" was not possible (in contrast to a union of individual believers) for the simple reason that ninety-nine per cent of the congregations in Germany had already "allied themselves with the Enemy". In the struggle to foster Protestant unity, Kuntze argued, the ecclesiastical generals in Germany had "no army" to lead into battle. This was, in his view, the fruit of industrialisation as well as of theological liberalism and rationalism within the churches.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Alexander R. MacEwen, *Life and letters of John Cairns*, London 1898, 158, 167, 373.

<sup>35</sup> Ernst Rudolph Orth, preacher at the Friedrichswerder Church in Berlin, was also Vice-President of the Berlin Committee of the Central Missionary Association for China.

<sup>36</sup> *Von der Revolution zum Norddeutschen Bund. Politik und Ideengut der preussischen Hochkonservativen 1848–1866*. Aus dem Nachlaß von Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach. 2. Tl.: Briefe, Denkschriften, Aufzeichnungen, ed. Hellmut Diwald, Göttingen 1970, 497.

<sup>37</sup> Eugen Bethke, *Hundert Jahre St. Elisabeth–Berlin 1835–1935. Bilder aus dem Wachsen und Werden einer evangelischen Kirchengemeinde der Großstadt*, herausgegeben vom Gemeindegemeinderat von St. Elisabeth, Berlin n.d. [1935], 27f.: Kuntze „ermunterte seine Leute, ihrem angesammlten Königshause die Treue zu halten“.

<sup>38</sup> Christian Friedrich Kling, *Die Verhandlungen der Wittenberger Versammlung für Gründung eines deutschen evangelischen Kirchenbundes im September 1848*, Berlin 1848, 14f.; Johann Hinrich Wichern, *Ausgewählte Schriften*. Bd. 1: *Schriften zur sozialen Frage*, ed. Karl Janssen, Gütersloh 1979, 116, 292 (cf. fn. 25); *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung*, 11 Oct. 1848, 806; 21 Oct. 1848, 839; *Evangelical Christendom*, 1848, 375; *Kurzgefaßte Geschichte des Methodismus von seinen Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. John L. Nuelsen/Theophil Mann/J.J. Sommer, Bremen 1920, 533.

His colleague and fellow worker in the cause of the Evangelical Alliance in Germany, Friedrich Wilhelm Krummacher (1796–1868), had immediately joined the “holy brethren” of the German Burschenschaft on arriving as a student at the University of Jena and given support to a German-Christian regeneration of the fatherland in the State, the Church, and the family.<sup>39</sup> Though longing for a united, free Germany his thoughts had always been far from overturning the throne of any of the German rulers. The “fatal” 18 March 1848, he writes in his autobiography, “brought a dark eclipse over our land” (Mond- und Geister-Verfinsterung). Yet God had sent the calamity upon Germany as a “merited judgement” (wohlverdientes Gericht). God had wished to “make us feel His chastening hand upon us, and at the same time to open up to our view the depths of moral and social ruin into which a great part of the ungrateful and reprobate people had fallen”. The “armed rabble” and “wild excited masses of the people” had dared to erect barricades under the reign of “the most amiable, benevolent, and most paternal of kings”: “My house was full of weeping and lamentation”. Pure and diabolical hatred seemed to Krummacher to be the only explanation for the attacks on the “faithful clergy” of the city. Lawlessness, frivolity and gross materialism replaced faith, piety, and respect for divine and human authority. His own name had on several occasions found a place on “insolent placards” posted at the corners of the streets and a daughter, who had sought to tear down such a poster, had been fined several groschens for the attempt. There followed, in Krummacher’s description, “nine long months of anarchy and terrorism”, during which aristocrats felt compelled to remove even their coats of arms from their carriage doors.<sup>40</sup>

The turmoil, however, ended and his family were “overpowered with joy when we saw the faithful soldiers busily engaged in removing the barricades”.<sup>41</sup> With few exceptions, the Berlin clergy took part in the funeral procession for the 183 victims to Friedrichshain cemetery and Krummacher confessed that he had allowed himself to be included in the proceedings by the example of the highest dignitaries of the Church and of the large majority of his brethren in office. The bishop and court preachers had marched at the head of the procession. The fact that several members of his own parish had fallen as “heroes of the barricades” would have normally prevented him from accompanying their remains to the grave. It later pained him that he had also been persuaded by several friends to abstain from using the

<sup>39</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Krummacher, *An Autobiography*. Edited by his daughter. Translated by Rev. M.G. Easton, A.M., Edinburgh 1869, 65-73, 183, 255-265; Friedrich Wilhelm Krummacher. *Eine Selbstbiographie*, Berlin 1869, 47f., 202-210.

<sup>40</sup> „Unsere Bestürzung war groß, aber größer noch unsere Trauer, daß solches dem leutseligsten, wohlwollendsten und väterlichst gesinnten aller Könige bereitet werden konnte! [...] Mein Haus war voll Weinens und Schluchzens. [...] endlich eine neunmonatliche Anarchie, vor deren Terrorismus die Aristokratie die Wappen von ihren Wagenschlägen löschte [...] Gott wollte uns seinen strafenden Arm empfinden lassen und zugleich die Verderbenstiefe uns enthüllen, in welche ein großer Theil unseres undankbaren und vom Glauben abgefallenen Volkes versunken sei [...]“, Krummacher, *Eine Selbstbiographie* (cf fn. 39), 204f.

<sup>41</sup> „Welche Freude übermannte uns, als wir da die treuen Soldaten emsig und lustig mit der Wegräumung der Barrikaden beschäftigt sahen“, Krummacher, *Eine Selbstbiographie* (cf fn. 39), 204.

accustomed prayers of intercession for each member of the royal family (named separately) in favour of a more summary prayer for "the King and the whole of his kingdom". Fear that special prayers on the Sunday after the insurrection for each and every member of the royal family might well lead to "a public manifestation of hatred on the part of those attending the church" won the day. Krummacher found it difficult to come to terms not only with his own cowardice during "those days of terror". The year of revolution turned out, in the providence of God, to be a year of salvation since it unveiled the "anti-Christianity growing up luxuriantly around us" in the "wounds and bruises and putrefying sores of society".<sup>42</sup> Such behaviour was unbecoming to "Germany, the Israel of the New Covenant times"<sup>43</sup> and seemed to go against the grain of the German character. He felt that Berliners lacked the courage and love of freedom necessary to make a revolution. Even the violent democrats "could not altogether conceal a certain love to their King; and when he rode through the city after the storm, many of them regarded themselves as fortunate in being permitted to touch his horse".<sup>44</sup> He never really accepted that Berliners could do such a thing as revolt against a pious monarch and his search for answers led him into the murky waters of a nationalist conspiracy theory. In his analysis of the 1848 revolution Krummacher became convinced that "the revolution would never have broken out among the people of Berlin, if they had not been prompted thereto by the swarms of foreign emissaries who had stealthily insinuated themselves amongst them, chief among whom the Poles are to be named". Krummacher's statements reveal the profound shock felt by the Berlin clergy on witnessing an attempt to change what they believed to be the divinely ordained order of society. The democratic masses seemed to bear the mark of the Beast on their foreheads as an eschatological struggle between the forces of good ("the brilliance of the court and of fashionable society") and the forces of evil ("plebeian plainness") was unfurling before their eyes.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> „Bei einer kirchlichen Conferenz nannte später einmal Jemand zu augenblicklicher Bestürzung Vieler auch das Jahr 48 ein Jahr des Heils; und es war's, insofern nämlich, als es Schäden und Fäulnisse aufdeckte, die alle Ahnung überstiegen. [...] und so geschah es, daß [...] unsere Unternehmungen gegen das um sich wuchernde Antichristenthum nicht ungesegnet blieben“, see Krummacher, *Eine Selbstbiographie* (cf fn. 39), 209f.

<sup>43</sup> „Deutschland das Israel der neuen Bundeszeit!“, see Krummacher, *Eine Selbstbiographie* (cf fn. 39), 141.

<sup>44</sup> „Selbst arge Demokraten konnten doch eine gewisse Liebe zu ihrem Könige nicht verleugnen, und als derselbe nach dem Sturm die Stadt durchtritt, haben Viele sich glücklich geschätzt, nur sein Pferd streicheln zu können“, Krummacher, *Eine Selbstbiographie* (cf fn. 39), 207.

<sup>45</sup> „Der Glanz des Hofes und der vornehmen Welt, der sonst darüber ausgebreitet lag, war gänzlich erloschen und hatte einer plebejischen Wirthschaft Platz gemacht“, see Krummacher, *Eine Selbstbiographie* (cf fn. 39), 208.

## Kaiserswerth

Elsewhere in Germany evangelicals were aghast at the insubordination of the masses. Theodor Fliedner (1800–1864), whose name, like that of Wichern, stands for an awakened Christian social conscience, had enjoyed for some time the royal patronage of the king of Prussia.<sup>46</sup> On 24 October 1833 the Prussian Crown Prince visited the nursing facilities set up by Fliedner in Kaiserswerth. On entering the town the entourage was welcomed to the sounds of *Heil unserm Kronprinz, Heil, Heil Friedrich Wilhelm, Heill!* This patriotic-monarchist song, especially composed by Fliedner to honour his monarch, gave expression to the spirit of strict authoritarianism which characterised not only Fliedner's establishments, but also other evangelical enterprises in Germany too: Wilhelm Hoffmann, director of the missionary seminary at Basle was, like Fliedner, hostile to the idea of rule by the majority. Fliedner's biographer goes as far as to say that he had no objections to military rule and control of politics. Royalty represented the extraordinary, the divine, and the presence of royals was always awaited with baited breath.

On 5 March 1848 Fliedner arrived at Ludwigswunsch in Silesia where he was welcomed by Graf Stolberg and his wife Charlotte. He inspected the quarters for orphan girls that had been established on the count's estate under the direction of deaconesses. Fliedner hoped to open a home there and returned home to Kaiserswerth with four girls "from well-bred families" who were to be educated at his own expense. On 12 March he met Wichern in Breslau who was also inspecting the living and working conditions in the area. The two men seem to have disagreed about solutions to the social crisis; Wichern certainly remained critical of the deaconesses experiment. Both men had long known, however, that human beings would not long tolerate such degrading circumstances. Fliedner arrived in Berlin on 14 March and wrote to his wife: "Pray for me. What difficult times are going to befall our German lands, Prussia and probably our own establishments! The saints will require much faith and patience".<sup>47</sup> The revolution against royal authority erupted the same day Fliedner arrived back in Kaiserswerth.

Fliedner had long since metamorphosed from a Nassauer into a Prussian and, although by no means surprised, was nevertheless shaken to the core by the "humiliation suffered by his royal lord". He could only perceive the demonic, anti-Christian forces at work against which he had prophesied for many years. On 21 May 1848 he travelled to England one more time to collect money in London, Manchester and Liverpool. He seems to have been particularly piqued by the contemptuous manner in which his English hosts spoke of the Prussian monarch's weakness during the March days. Fliedner was given a cool reception. Even his good friend Christian Carl Josias Bunsen, the Prussian envoy to London, seemed nervous, surly and aloof. If

<sup>46</sup> Martin Gerhardt, *Theodor Fliedner. Ein Lebensbild*, Bd. 2, Düsseldorf–Kaiserswerth 1937, 106 (fn.), 260–275; Joachim Cochlovius, *Bekenntnis und Einheit der Kirche im deutschen Protestantismus 1840–1850*, Gütersloh 1980, 279f.

<sup>47</sup> „Betet für mich. Welch eine schwere Zeit bricht herein über unser Deutschland, Preußen, wohl auch über unsere Anstalten! Da ist Glaube und Geduld der Heiligen Not“, see Gerhardt, *Theodor Fliedner* (cf fn. 46), 260.

the unrest of 1848 encouraged Carl Bunsen to become more Whiggish than the Whigs, it made the Rhineland *Fliedner* more Prussian than the Prussians.

Concerned about the fate of the divided Protestant churches in Germany *Fliedner* was one of those who signed the invitation to clergymen to appear in Wittenberg on 21 September 1848. His wife's illness prevented him from actually attending the gathering. The discussions did not lead to any questioning of what all the clergymen held dear, but to a rather self-righteous defence of the old order. *Fliedner's* own sermons in September that year gave expression to similar sentiments. He spoke on 24 September of the "fruits of the flesh" that had grown in France since the February Revolution, how all talk of freedom, equality and brotherhood had been shown to be a lie. He referred to the "beautiful promises" made in the Frankfurt National Assembly while deliberations were drowned in "squabbling and discord" and "the rabble had proceeded to carry out cowardly murders". Of the National Assembly members *Fliedner* found similar words of judgement: "These people are governed by the flesh, not by the Spirit, not by Christ". He attacked suggestions that the schools be made independent of the churches so that democrats could "teach the children to be heathens". That was the reason, he said, that Jews were now being employed as headmasters of Christian grammar schools. Religious groups were being made equal before the law so that "any open profession of Christ and His Word is decried as pietistic machinations (*Pietisterei*) or Protestant Jesuitism".<sup>48</sup> The radicals and democrats were deceiving the people and running up debts with their dissoluteness.

That the luxury and materialism of the ruling classes at a time of bitter poverty for the majority of the population might have fuelled anger and led to the eruption does not seem to have been a consideration for *Fliedner*. On 6 October 1848 the king and his wife gave *Fliedner* an audience which lasted over one and a half hours. Though full of gloomy expectations as to the future of his country, the monarch still seemed to be at ease and full of faith in God's Providence. The meeting in Berlin left deep impressions of royal piety on the man from the Rhineland. He called on his employees and family members to pray for the monarch and his counsellors for they, indeed the whole of Berlin and Prussia, were sitting on "a volcano".<sup>49</sup>

### Baden

On 13 April 1848 the volcano erupted in Baden when Hecker led a brief uprising against an authoritarian government in the Grand Duchy. Pastors became a favourite target for the attacks of the democrats for most continued to pray faithfully for the Grand Duke and his whole family in spite of the revolution and new republic. In

<sup>48</sup> „Das Fleisch regiert diese Leute, nicht der Geist, nicht Christus. Darum wollen sie die christlichen Schulen von der christlichen Kirche losreißen, damit die Kinder [...] als Heiden auferzogen werden, weil der Glaube an Christus nicht nötig sei. Darum werden jetzt Juden als Direktoren von christlichen Gymnasien eingesetzt. [...] jedes offene Reden für Christus und sein Wort wird für *Pietisterei*, für protestantische *Jesuitisterei* erklärt“, see Gerhardt, Theodor *Fliedner* (cf fn. 46), 269f.

<sup>49</sup> „Er steht allerdings auf einem Vulkan, und Berlin und Preußen mit“, see Gerhardt, Theodor *Fliedner* (cf fn. 46), 271.



Munzingen the congregation stamped with its feet, whistled and jeered when the pastor chose as his text "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's". In another church "Hecker hoch, sein Name schalle durch das ganze deutsche Land" was sung as soon as the pastor called for a hymn. Even the mention of the Grand Duke during services often led to disturbances.

Many years later Adolf Hausrath argued that nothing of a supposed pietist zeal to support the throne could be proven either before or during the revolution in Baden; there had been no public pronouncements against the revolution, he claimed. On the contrary, he noted that the most well-known pietist families in Stuttgart, Heidelberg and Freiburg were "tinged with sympathy for the reds" and even had family members who were openly radicals.<sup>50</sup> Wilhelm Stern, the pietist director of the teacher training establishment in Karlsruhe, seems to have had no scruples about swearing allegiance to the new provisional government in May 1849 and one ecclesiastical newspaper drew attention on 4 January 1850 to the relatively large number of students at the seminary who had "fanned the flames of revolution".<sup>51</sup> Certainly, there was much grass-roots support among pietists for the goals of the revolution. Hausrath was, however, overstating his case. There were no doubt generational differences that split even pietist families and it is equally certain that the insurgents viewed the church apparatus in Baden as an arm of government. During this time several Protestant clergymen were arrested, however, and Heidelberg Prison was renamed the "Pfarrhaus" because during the revolution it became the new home to seven clerics.<sup>52</sup> One of the men who were arrested and imprisoned for three days at Lahr was Carl Daniel Justus Rein (1800–1865), pastor at Nonnenweier.<sup>53</sup> He was accused of speaking disdainfully of the new provisional government and corresponding with the Grand Duke Leopold; the second charge he denied. For a man who insisted his family and servants pray daily for the Grand Duke, his patron and their families, the revolution was seen as an unmitigated disaster for his country, an expression of the spirit of the age in which "people could think about God without fearing Him, about Christ without loving Him, about the world without loathing it and about hell without dreading it".<sup>54</sup> The attacks on pietists (Rein felt they were the special targets of the revolution) revealed the anti-Christian spirit of the time. The arrival of the troops at Offenburg commanded by the Prince of Prussia and his adjutant von Savigny was heralded as a divine intervention. In response to Savigny's comment that the pastors in the province must have completely neglected their professions for matters to have

<sup>50</sup> „Vor und während der Revolution hatte man von besonderem Eifer der Pietisten, den Thron zu stützen, nicht das Mindeste wahrgenommen. Gerade die bekanntesten süddeutschen Pietistenfamilien in Stuttgart, Heidelberg, Freiburg waren röhlich angehaucht und zählten offene Radicale zu ihren Mitgliedern“, Hausrath, Richard Rothe und seine Freunde (cf fn. 32), 201.

<sup>51</sup> Hausrath, Richard Rothe und seine Freunde (cf fn. 32), 201f.

<sup>52</sup> Hermann Rückleben, *Theologischer Rationalismus und kirchlicher Protest in Baden 1843–1849*, in: PuN 5 (1980), 76f; Hausrath, Richard Rothe und seine Freunde (cf fn. 32), 145.

<sup>53</sup> W.G.W. Brandt, Carl Daniel Justus Rein, Pfarrer zu Nonnenweier. Erinnerungen und Fragmente, Gotha 1867, 88–95.

<sup>54</sup> „Der Geist unserer Zeit ist so: Man kann an Gott denken ohne Ehrfurcht, an Christum ohne Liebe, an die Welt ohne Abscheu, an die Hölle ohne Grauen“, see Brandt, Carl Daniel Justus Rein (cf fn. 53), 91.

deteriorated so far, Freiherr Böcklin von Böcklinsau, patron of the parish of Nonnenweier, singled out Rein as proof that pastors had done their duty. Böcklin had Rein collected by a carriage and brought to the Prince that same day. Rein's biographer notes that in their conversation Rein had calmly interpreted the events of that year as a fulfilment of the prophecies of the second chapter of the Book of Daniel and that worse things were bound to happen in accordance with chapter three of the Second Letter of Timothy. In his understanding of the divine eschatological plan Rein believed that Prussia, precisely because it was not one of the ten kingdoms foreseen by the prophet Daniel as developing out of the Roman Empire, still had a glorious future in God's plan for the world. Prussia would soon extend its borders right up to the edges of the old Roman Empire. The country was on God's side. Rein blessed the Prince before leaving: "The great man was visibly moved".

Jakob Theodor Plitt (1815–1886), co-founder of the Evangelical Alliance, was not one of the inmates at Heidelberg Prison though he had made no secret of his loyalty to the old regime.<sup>55</sup> Nor was Karl Mann (1806–1869), with whom Plitt wrote the official German report on the founding conferences of the Alliance in Liverpool and London. Mann and his fellow helpers were, however, driven out of the Kinderbewahranstalt in Leutesheim. "The evil spirit" (W.G.W. Brandt) that controlled whole areas of the countryside in 1848/49 put an end to Mann's services for the children who had to be evacuated to Langenwinkel, near Nonnenweier, in the middle of the revolutionary unrest. Two other well-known evangelicals – Karl Friedrich Ledderhose and Aloys Henhöfer – were also forced to flee their parishes and go to Württemberg.

### Württemberg

The conservatism and eschatology of another pastor, Christian Barth (1799–1862), prevented him from expecting any positive changes in the Württemberg polity to result from revolution.<sup>56</sup> Rumours that the French had moved 1,600 troops to Nagold or that Gernsbach had been burnt to the ground led to intense preparations in Calw that the Man of Sin was about to appear. The "evil spirits" of rebellion and hostility to throne and altar, to Church and faith, spread horror in evangelical minds. Word that a "pyramid of the skulls of aristocrats, pietists and parsons" was to be erected in the region poured oil on to the fire.<sup>57</sup> Valuables were buried, cases packed. Refugees

<sup>55</sup> On Plitt and the revolution see Nicholas M. Railton, *Pietismus und Revolution. Der badische Pfarrer Jakob Theodor Plitt (1815–1886) und seine Beziehung nach England*, Heidelberg 2012.

<sup>56</sup> Karl Werner, *Christian Gottlob Barth. Doktor der Theologie, nach seinem Leben und Wirken gezeichnet*, Bd. 3, Calw–Stuttgart 1869, 189f., 194–197, 407ff.; Gottlieb Weitbrecht, *Dr. Christian Gottlob Barth nach seinem Leben und Wirken geschildert*, Stuttgart 1875, 58ff., 106–112; Gerhard Schäfer, *Die evangelische Kirche in Württemberg und die Revolution 1848/49*, in: *PuN* 5 (1980), 39–65.

<sup>57</sup> „Ein böser Geist des Umsturzes, der Feindschaft gegen Thron, Altar, Kirche, Glauben ging damals auch durch das Württemberger Land [...] In Calw hatte die Demokratie einen starken Anhang, und das berühmte Wort von der „Schädelpyramide aus den Köpfen der Aristokraten, Pietisten und Pfaffen“ konnte auch an der Nagold gehört werden“, see Weitbrecht, *Dr. Christian Gottlob Barth* (cf fn. 56), 109.

arriving from Baden increased fears. Barth had the financial assets of the publishing enterprise and the missionary society put into safekeeping. Insurgents and politicians from the National Assembly passed through the town of Calw where Barth had set up his publishing business. In 1849 there was an enthusiastic demonstration of the populace of Calw in favour of the revolution in Baden. The democratic movement had considerable support in the town and at one time citizens sought to have a corporal from Baden, who had sought refuge in the town, put on trial for opening fire on citizens in that state.

The monarchist Barth sympathised, too, with his neighbours in Baden, but not in the same way. At Easter he decided not to attend a missionary event in Königsfeld after hearing of the revolt in Paris. In the middle of summer, however, he attended festivals in Basle, Beuggen and Wiesloch, near Heidelberg, where both the Protestant and Catholic churches were opened to accommodate the numbers who wished to hear the talks. The annual conference in Beuggen initially had to be postponed because insurgents were active in the region. Barth was preoccupied with the exigencies facing his fellow ministers, particularly those who had refused to swear allegiance to the new authorities and had decided to flee their country. A battalion of the 4th Regiment restored the authority of the government in Calw and calmed pietist worries that the end was nigh. Barth rejoiced when Prussian troops crushed the democratic revolution.

Wars and rumours of wars reminded him of the approaching end of time. At the end of August 1848 Barth wrote down his views on the turn of events. Developments had caught him by surprise. In line with traditional interpretations of prophecy Barth saw revolution as an initial fulfilment of the evils talked about by Christ in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. "In my opinion", he wrote, "we are now living in the middle of verse 7 in Matthew Chapter 24". More worrying for him than a separation of church and school – which he also opposed, together with 24,000 believers in Baden and Württemberg – was the belief that the "man of sin" was soon to appear to "unite all nations". All true believers would have to face persecution. Together with Wilhelm Hoffmann, Barth expected the "spirit of the age" to be pointing, not to a free church but an outlawed church. The Frankfurt Parliament, even if it were meeting in a house of God, could not be relied upon to give God the glory: "Those days are over", Barth commented. He felt confirmed in his views when that parliament refused to accept the bishop of Münster's motion that it open its sessions with a time of prayer. He was convinced, moreover, that it was a "vain hope" to expect the Church, as then ordered, to revive in such troubled times. Those who called for free churches to be established were, he said, "deceiving themselves". Political turmoil in Germany, which he too saw as originating in France, would not leave believers the time to set up new ecclesiastical structures. He called on true believers to keep "their lamps burning brightly". The day when the invisible church would be clearly distinct from the visible was soon coming. The goal of Christians should be to save as many individuals as possible, for the whole of society was no longer to be cured. The night of darkness was approaching and believers had to work as long as it was day. Politics was not the work to be done by Christians. "We should remain passive now, not active, as long as we are not called upon by virtue of our office to make a public confession and testify to our faith". As a direct result of this

interpretation of the signs of the time Barth said he did not expect much to come of the Wittenberg conference which he had helped to initiate and, taking the advice of Wilhelm Hofacker, had his name deleted from the list of prospective participants.<sup>58</sup>

Though appalled by the sight of revolutionaries Barth nevertheless later came to support the national goals of the revolution. In April 1859 he exhorted German youth to “remain German in character” and “stay united, as hard as steel and iron”.<sup>59</sup> He published patriotic-militaristic poems calling on Germany to arise. In 1860 he called out:

Deutschland, Deutschland wache auf,  
Schlag an deines Schildes Knauf!  
Auf! und halt dein Schwert parat,  
Wo sich ein Verräter naht!  
Nimm dein Kleinod wohl in Acht,  
Blick umher und halte Wacht,  
Wehre dich; laß nie dir rauben  
Deinen Rhein und deinen Glauben.<sup>60</sup>

In 1848, however, Barth was in no mood for such nationalistic sentimentalities. 1848 was not only about national unification, but civil and political liberties and such concepts were still largely lacking from the Biblical world-view of Württemberg pietism.

A central role in organising millennialist feeling in the middle of the nineteenth century was played by another Württemberger, Gottlob Christoph Jonathan Hoffmann (1815–1885).<sup>61</sup> A deep longing for apocalyptic change shaped the Hoffmann family in particular. His brother, Wilhelm, worked for renewal of German Protestantism. Christoph Hoffmann eventually gave up the hope that the Evangelische Kirche could be reformed from within. Christoph Hoffmann grew up in Korntal. It was here that his world view was formed. Pastor Johann Jakob Friederich (1759–1827) of Korntal had written *Glaubens- und Hoffnungsblick des Volkes*

<sup>58</sup> „Ich halte es für eine eitle Hoffnung, wenn man in unsern Tagen ein Wiederaufblühen der Kirche erwartet, oder sich etwa mit dem Neubau einer freien Kirche Illusionen macht, denn nach dem ganzen Geist der Zeit erwarte ich zwar mit dem lieben Hoffmann in Basel eine freie Kirche, aber eine vogelfreie. [...] Nach meiner Ansicht stehen wir jetzt in Matth. 24 in der Mitte des 7. Verses, wobei ich freilich voraussetze, was ich zu erweisen zu können glaube, daß das ganze Kapitel von der letzten Zeit und gar nicht von der Zerstörung Jerusalems handelt. [...] Wir sollten uns, dünkt mich, jetzt passiv, nicht aktiv verhalten, so lange uns nicht von Amtswegen ein Zeugniß und Bekenntniß abgefordert wird“, Werner, Christian Gottlob Barth (cf fn. 56), 189.

<sup>59</sup> „Im April-Heft [der „Jugend-Blätter“] 1859 findet sich eine Ermahnung an’s deutsche Volk und an die deutsche Jugend, fest wie Stahl und Eisen zusammenzuhalt“, see Werner, Christian Gottlob Barth (cf fn. 56), 408.

<sup>60</sup> Werner, Christian Gottlob Barth (cf fn. 56), 408.

<sup>61</sup> Christoph Hoffmann, *Mein Weg nach Jerusalem. Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben*, Erster Theil, Jerusalem 1881, Zweiter Theil, Jerusalem 1884; Friedrich Lange, *Geschichte des Tempels, Jerusalem 1899*; Paul Sauer, *Uns rief das Heilige Land. Die Tempelgesellschaft im Wandel der Zeit*, Stuttgart 1985. See also Gerhard Schäfer, *Die evangelische Kirche in Württemberg* (cf fn. 56), 53, 55f, 64; Walter Delius, *Die evangelische Kirche und die Revolution 1848*, Berlin 1948, 45.

Gottes in which Jerusalem and Palestine were described as the future centre of Christian worship and the kingdom of God on earth. As a child he read “with delight” Stilling’s *Chrysaon*, which impressed upon him the joys of Christ’s millennial rule. His father soon taught him the eschatological interpretations of Revelation which the founder of Württemberg pietism, J.A. Bengel, had worked out. He was acquainted with the pietist separatists who emigrated to Russia in 1827 looking for refuge from the Antichrist.

Christoph, like his older brother Wilhelm, studied at the Tübingen Stift. His brother and Sixt Karl Kapff (1851–1879) were the only pietists among the tutors (*Repetenten*) at the seminary in the mid-twenties. One of Wilhelm’s contemporaries was David Friedrich Strauß (1808–1874), also a tutor at the seminary, who was to play a role in Christoph’s own life. Of the 140 students at the time only about 20 to 25 were known to be pietists, but they evangelised regularly. The conversion of Hermann Mögling (1811–1881), a future co-founder of the Alliance, caused a great stir in the seminary for Hermann was as infamous for the practical jokes he played on people as was his brother, Theodor Mögling (1814–1867), who later played a significant role in the revolution in Baden in 1849. After finishing his studies Christoph Hoffmann became a teacher, initially in the boys school in the Korntal colony, then in Stetten and later in the Ludwigsburg institution called the Salon which included pupils from England.

Hoffmann won great influence over Württemberg pietism through his journal *Süddeutsche Warte* (established in 1845), where he developed his eschatological ideas and his hopes for an evangelical union. The revolution proved to be a catalyst of change in his thinking. He changed from being a supporter of the state church to a champion of religious liberty. Initially, however, the revolution was perceived to be a catastrophe that suggested the end-times had truly begun.<sup>62</sup> On hearing of the flight of Louis Philippe and the fall of Metternich his mind was tormented by the victory of a party which he considered to be disastrous, politically as well as religiously, for Germany. The king’s proclamation of freedom of the press on 1 March 1848 and the forced resignation of Johannes von Schlayer’s government, replaced by liberals under the headship of Friedrich von Römer (1794–1864), were welcomed by an editor like Hoffmann, even though he could not accept that these necessary changes had to be brought about in a revolutionary manner. He too wished to see Germany united politically and the powers of the police curtailed, but as yet he had not abandoned the “childish” principle held dear by most of his friends that kings and princes and dukes had a divine right to govern. The *Süddeutsche Warte* expressed loyalty to its monarch and Fatherland. The fears that the French would soon cross the Rhine nourished the widespread pietist sentiment – conditioned by the writings of Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687–1752) – that the rule of Antichrist was about to begin. It took some

<sup>62</sup> “Zunächst aber lebten auch in mir und meinen Freunden die apokalyptischen Weissagungen vom Reiche des Thieres und die Warnungen der Apostel vor dem Antichristenthume [...] jetzt stärker wieder auf, und da solche Ideen seit der Zeit des Prälaten Bengel die Seele des württembergischen Pietismus gebildet hatten und erst seit 1836 ihren Boden verloren hatten, so erwachte bei Vielen die eine Zeit lang beiseite gelegte Ueberzeugung jetzt mit neuer Kraft”, see Hoffmann, *Mein Weg nach Jerusalem* 2. Theil (cf fn. 61), 202.

time before pietists like Hoffmann realised the liberals and democrats were far from hostile, but rather indifferent to religious professions of faith.

For a while Christoph Hoffmann hoped to achieve German unity through political action. In an astonishing moment of symbolism in 1848 the man described often as a “pietist fanatic” stood against and defeated (mainly due to the preponderance of rural votes in his favour) the rationalist theologian David F. Strauß in the Ludwigsburg election of 1848. The press had favoured Strauß and the clergy, opposed to both candidates, generally remained aloof from the election campaign. Hoffmann was elected by a majority of 2,500 votes to the Frankfurt Parliament. On 30 April black ribbons and weeping willows were left at the well in Ludwigsburg and draped over public buildings; funeral music was played at various times of the day from the church tower. Hoffmann received anonymous death threats<sup>63</sup> and there were rumours that his educational establishment would be raided.

On 18 May Hoffmann entered St. Paul’s Church in Frankfurt where the meetings of the Parliament took place. Now that the revolution had achieved one of its goals Hoffmann felt free to adorn his hat with its colours, even though he was well aware that other pietists would interpret such an action as opportunism and accepting the mark of the Beast. As a parliamentarian he put forward a proposal to abolish all oaths in the political realm. He called for the separation of Church and State while upholding the right of the Church to control or supervise the education of children. He wanted the Bible to remain the main object of the educational process in schools. 300,000 signatures of people were gathered who opposed the secularisation of schools. Of these Hoffmann put before the Parliament a form (published by the *Warte* in July 1848) with over 24,000 signatures from Württemberg and Baden alone. Sixt Carl Kapff of Herrenberg criticised this initiative of Hoffmann’s and had his response published in the neutral *Merkur* rather than in the *Warte* itself. Kapff seems to have persuaded many pietists in his own parish not to sign the petition – a “declaration of war”, in Hoffmann’s opinion – because the situation in Germany could not be painted in the dark colours preferred by Hoffmann. In particular, Kapff believed the Church had nothing to fear from the new political situation. Another pietist leader, Burk in Bottwar, expressed displeasure with Hoffmann’s emphatic support for a future in which the Church was free from the trammels of the State. Such inter-pietist rivalries in Württemberg, all the more surprising in that Burk had initially supported Hoffmann’s election and Kapff had been pastor at the Korntal community, were an impediment to attempts to come to terms with constitutional democracy.

Though desiring changes in the social and political realm, Hoffmann remained throughout this parliamentary interlude in his career a staunch conservative. He felt, like his brother Wilhelm, that constitutional, representative government was an English concept alien to the German character. Such a borrowed system had an innate tendency towards republicanism and could not possibly unite the disparate German interests – something the Hoffmann brothers longed to bring about. The working class unrest in Frankfurt on 16–19 September 1848 during the debates on

<sup>63</sup> Hoffmann, *Mein Weg nach Jerusalem* 2. Theil (cf fn. 61), 225.

education and the murder of two members of the parliament, Prince Felix von Lichnowsky and Hans Adolf Erdmann von Auerswald, led to him questioning the whole democratic process. Hoffmann welcomed the show of Prussian and Austrian military might. A few months later, in March 1849, Christoph Hoffmann decided to give up his seat in the Frankfurt Parliament.

1848 was a watershed for the editorial staff of the *Süddeutsche Warte*. Hoffmann saw that the Christian State in Germany was but an empty shell, that the Protestant Church was “a corpse without life, dressed up in pious phraseology”. The Christian State and the Christian Church would simply crumble and fall as soon as all outward supports were taken away.<sup>64</sup> Disappointed, moreover, by the compromises politicians made in Frankfurt, Christoph left politics the following year and turned to apocalypticism. This is precisely the step his father had taken decades previously when he had decided to establish the Korntal community. From now on the Church took on the garb of the modern Babylon and Palestine metamorphosed into the country where God had predestined to plant a pure form of Christian communal life, a “Sammlung des Volkes Gottes”. Undergirding the endeavour was a belief that that the German nation had a divine calling to complete the work of restoration on earth; the whole world would be saved by this German intervention.<sup>65</sup> In 1854 he and his adherents, particularly the Ludwigsburg businessman and ex-revolutionary Georg David Hardegg (1812–1879) – he had spent many years in prison for political activities in 1830–1831 – called a meeting of the “Society for the bringing together of God’s people in Jerusalem” or the “Friends of Jerusalem”. The experiment eventually led the group to emigrate to Palestine to start a new society based on Christian freedom and Christian brotherhood. He lacked the support of other influential pietists – Christian Barth, Sixt Carl Kapff, Samuel Gobat and Christoph Blumhardt all attacked the project – and his public meetings to publicise the plan, held, for example, during the international conferences of the Evangelical Alliance in Paris (1855) and Berlin (1857), failed to evoke much response in Germany at least.

One of Hoffmann’s life-long opponents was Sixt Carl Kapff, like Hoffmann one of the few pietists who actually became heavily involved in the political struggles of the revolutionary years.<sup>66</sup> He failed to win the election in Herrenberg, Horb and Nagold for the prize of representing the constituency in the Frankfurt Parliament. A Preachers Conference in Stuttgart on 9 July 1849 later called on Kapff to stand for election in Leonberg to the constituent Provincial Assembly in Württemberg. He was duly elected to represent the constituency. Initially Kapff too found himself attracted to

<sup>64</sup> „Das Jahr 1848 war übrigens für die Warteschreiber selbst eine Zeit der Entscheidung. Es hatte sich gezeigt, daß der christliche Staat nur ein Schein war, und auch vor diesem Jahr nicht existiert hatte; es hatte sich gezeigt, daß das Christentum der Kirche nur ein mit frommen Redensarten aufgeputzter Leichnam ohne Leben ist, der keinen anderen Bestand hat, als die Macht der Gewohnheit, und der deshalb widerstandslos zusammenbricht, sobald er seine äußeren Stützen verliert“, Friedrich Lange, *Geschichte des Tempels* (cf fn. 61), 3.

<sup>65</sup> Paul Sauer, *Uns rief das Heilige Land* (cf fn. 61), 23.

<sup>66</sup> Sixtus C. Kapff, *The Revolution: Its Causes, Results, and Remedies. A Prize essay*, Published by the Central Committee for the Inner Mission of the German Protestant Church, in: *Evangelical Christendom*, 1851, 234–236; Article on Sixt Carl Kapff (1805–1879), in: *ADB 15* (1882), 99–102; Gerhard Schäfer, *Die evangelische Kirche in Württemberg* (cf fn. 56), 51 ff., 60–65.

certain aspects of the revolution, but became its avowed enemy. Kapff spoke openly of his hostility to freedom of the press, to freedom of movement and to the right to engage in any business. Freedom could only be experienced by those who controlled themselves. Only piety provided a basis for welfare. Only an absolute monarchy truly represented Christ's rule on earth and people, in his view, would only be happy if ruled by a monarch. He had already outlined this strictly conservative ideology in the "Ansprache evangelischer geistlicher Württembergs an das Volk" from March 1849. His words clearly carried weight, not only with his own pietist community, and it has been argued, with some justification, that he had largely contributed to keeping Württemberg out of the Baden revolution.<sup>67</sup> Aware of the deplorable social evils in his country, he interpreted the revolutions of 1848–1849 as God's judgement on a backsliding and sinful people. His prize-winning essay of 1851 began by comparing the revolution of 1848 with the earthquake of 1755 which ruined Lisbon and then proceeded to describe how one emperor, six kings and six other potentates had lost their crowns within the space of six months. A number of causes of the revolution are listed. The first was widespread poverty, intensified by poor harvests between 1840 and 1847 and the increase in population. Two hundred thousand people in Berlin alone were said to be living from hand to mouth. In Elberfeld 8,000 labourers were out of work. In Vienna 150,000 out of 380,000 people were without property and 15,000 survived by begging. Great distress had been caused in eastern Prussia by floods and in Silesia by epidemics. In one state alone there had been 6,000 bankruptcies in a single year. All measures required to combat unemployment and extravagance had been neglected by municipal authorities. Thousands were ready to support any revolt that promised even momentary relief. Secondly, in contrast to the class of labourers who "had nothing more than their hands to help them", Kapff refers to the thirst for profit and the passion for all kinds of luxuries among the rich. Their indifference to the sufferings of their poor neighbours and their neglect of the responsibilities which God attached to the ownership of property had exasperated the masses against them. The rich had "done nothing to arrest the disorganisation which was going on" and had "contributed largely to it themselves". Those who had tried to alleviate suffering had gone about the task in the wrong way and had done more harm than good. The revolution brought to them a deserved "hour of retribution". Thirdly, Kapff refers to the important role played by the 60,000 German mechanics and labourers who lived in Paris and had imbibed socialist and communist principles spread there. Through them "the vices and infidelity of the French capital were diffused throughout Germany" and the rebellious spirit and inflammatory appeals of socialists had led the masses to throw off "all restraints of law and order". In addition, he blames the ignorance of the leaders of the democratic movement. Driven by their passions and folly, men "without a single accurate idea either of law or government had set about remodelling the whole structure of society and so thrown everything into chaos and confusion". The spirit of education in Germany was partly guilty for this state of affairs. All avenues of learning had become infected with "wild speculations" and "extravagant theories". Thousands of students were leaving German

<sup>67</sup> Gerhard Schäfer, *Die evangelische Kirche in Württemberg* (cf fn. 56), 60.



universities “totally unfurnished with any principle for the right guidance of heart and life”. Fourthly, the prevailing immorality, the prevalence of drinking and the passion for gambling had ruined innumerable families and so contributed to the revolutionary mania. There were, he reported, 14,000 people in the houses of correction in Prussia alone. In Augsburg one in three children was illegitimate, in Leipzig one in four and in Berlin, Lübeck and Hamburg the figure was one in five. A large percentage of civil servants and trades people spent their Sundays in taverns and alehouses and there they learned “the infidelity and the contempt of sacred things entertained by the higher classes throughout the country”. Fifthly, even those who emphasised the importance of morality and respectability lacked religion and faith in God. People had as much regard for their superiors as the latter displayed towards Heaven. Government officials had experienced in 1848 the fulfilment of the warning: “They that despise, shall be lightly esteemed”. Subordination to authority for its own sake and for the sake of God had thus been destroyed. The ultimate outcome of this process, the hatred of the very name of God, had been reached by 1848. Kapff quoted from Heinrich Heine’s *Die schlesischen Weber* (1844), claiming it was a specimen of the “frightful impiety” into which communists had plunged themselves. The appearance of such poems reflected a revolution in thinking about life on earth. For pietists they heralded the coming of the Antichrist.

Christoph Hoffmann’s older brother Wilhelm, like most of the pietists of Württemberg, was appalled that eschatology could be taken to such extremes, and as far as the *Sammlung des Volkes Gottes* in Palestine was concerned, he was “totally certain” that emigration would lead to misery and destitution for the families involved. The idea that believers should choose to leave Germany for ever was anathema for a man who saw his nation as “the people of God under the New Testament” and, more than other nations, “the people of the Bible”.<sup>68</sup> His brother’s call for a separation of Church and State, in the interests of both, was for him an attack on the religious underpinnings of the German monarchies. Since the 1830s Wilhelm Hoffmann had been sceptical about the purported socio-political advantages of a constitutional, representative system of government. He did not accept that the English parliamentary system or the French cameral system could be transposed successfully onto the German situation. Such a change would, in his view, lead inexorably to a republic being established in Germany. Constitutionalism was for him something contrary to Germanic ideas and character. Wilhelm Hoffmann championed a patriarchal-aristocratic form of government and he managed the missionary seminary at Basle accordingly. Though a conservative in essence and in favour of a social order based on privilege, Hoffmann was far from championing an absolute, unlimited power of the monarchy. Yet the experience of the revolutionary years, particularly in Baden, a state which had had for some time a written constitution, confirmed him in his belief that a political democracy rooted in the

<sup>68</sup> „Auf Grund dieses lebendigeren und darum freieren Verständnisses der heiligen Schrift gerade in der deutschen Theologie hielt er das deutsche evangelische Volk für berufen, „das Bibelvolk“ zu sein, oder, wie er es kühn ausdrückte, „das Volk Gottes im Neuen Bunde“ [...]“, Carl Hoffmann, *Leben und Wirken des Dr. Ludwig Friedrich Wilhelm Hoffmann*, Bd. 2, Berlin 1880, 98.

principles of equality and freedom was simply “un-German”.<sup>69</sup> In 1868 he wrote of how the Church had resisted the revolutionary movement of 1848, seeing in that movement’s most noticeable leaders an attempt to undermine the very religious basis, and not merely the form or constitution of the Church.<sup>70</sup> Pastors had, in his experience, sought to protect their flocks from the excitement of those years. As a friend of many of the leading spokesmen of the conservative party, he initially welcomed that party’s embrace of the Church as an ally in the counter-revolution. After 1848 he noted how Church-State relations became much warmer than they had been. Yet the revolution also had a catalytic impact on his thinking, as it did on his brother’s, for the attempt in 1848 to dissolve centuries-old ties with the political order in Germany made clergymen from different denominational backgrounds look for ways of drawing closer to one another and bringing about more unity amongst the Christian churches. While somewhat softening denominational rivalries and hostilities, it also led Hoffmann to see the need to put some more distance between Church and State, two entities that had become ‘essentially fused’ over the course of time. A *Scheidung ohne Trennung* had become important for the sake of the kingdom of God in Germany.

### Thuringia

A number of the founders of the Alliance had impeccable royalist credentials. Karl Reinthaler, who had always been a fervent adherent of monarchy, wrote and published in that year patriotic songs and royalist tracts expressing sympathy and admiration for the Prussian royal family.<sup>71</sup> Bible verses (2 Pet. ii. 10, 19; Jude 11) were used as weapons in this campaign to warn his political opponents of the judgement coming upon them for their rebellion against authority and for following “the way of Cain”. In a tireless and idiosyncratic campaign he distributed these publications himself and spoke at numerous gatherings all over the country. On more than one occasion stones were thrown at him, yet he continually sought to channel the political movement into calmer waters. A religious interpretation was given to the colours of the democratic movement – from the night of sin through the blood of Christ to the glorious freedom of the children of God<sup>72</sup> – as Reinthaler proclaimed the need for the

<sup>69</sup> Hoffmann, *Leben und Wirken* (cf fn. 68), 166.

<sup>70</sup> Wilhelm Hoffmann, *Deutschland Einst und Jetzt im Lichte des Reiches Gottes*, Berlin 1868, 321; Hoffmann, *Leben und Wirken* (cf fn. 68), 161f.

<sup>71</sup> *Neue Evangelische Kirchenzeitung*, 26 September 1863, 613; Friedrich Zange, *Karl Christian Wilhelm Reinthaler und das Thüringische Rettungshauswesen. Denkschrift der Thüringer Konferenz für Innere Mission zum Gedächtnis des hundertjährigen Geburtstages K. Reinthalers 22 August 1894*, Erfurt 1894; Katharina Trutz, *Karl Christian Wilhelm Reinthaler*, in: *Mitteldeutsche Lebensbilder IV.*, Magdeburg 1929, 229-241; Paul Reinthaler, *Karl Reinthaler. Königl. Rektor des Martinusstiftes in Erfurt und seine Familie. Aus dessen Aufzeichnungen und nach eigener Erinnerung dargestellt*, Hamburg 1897.

<sup>72</sup> „Das „Schwarz-Rot-Gold“, in dem die politischen Bestrebungen damals ihr Symbol fanden, deutete er einfach so: Aus der Nacht der Sünde durch das Blut Christi zur herrlichen Freiheit der Kinder Gottes“, see Paul Reinthaler, *Karl Reinthaler* (cf fn. 71), 61.

nation to first experience a moral and religious rebirth as the only sure foundation for any attempt to unify the German provinces.

The failed attempt to solve the German Question in 1850 also impacted Reinthaler's work as a pioneer of the Innere Mission in Germany. The various charitable and educational establishments which he directed in the Martinsstift, opened in November 1821, were partially closed down in the spring of 1850 to provide rooms for the Erfurt Parliament of the German Union, which held its sessions in the renovated Augustinerkirche. Reinthaler's patriotic sentiments and convictions led him to joyfully vacate his own lodgings as a freewill offering to his Fatherland. He reissued a patriotic liturgy (*Einig und frei in dem Herrn*) for the occasion.

### Halle

Many evangelicals associated or even identified theological rationalism with the areligious and antireligious aspects of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution and saw the 1848 disturbances as the legitimate child of that stream of thought. At Halle University, Julius Müller, a vocal opponent of liberalism and with an aversion to modern forms of constitutionalism, worried that a Landeskirche in the hands of a government minister under the influence of a democratically elected parliament could be allied against the monarch he loved and respected.<sup>73</sup> Separation of the Church from an atheistic state was preferable. At Wittenberg in September he expressed such views and championed the freedom of the Church to administer itself. Though filled with the foreboding of expressions of the national will on ecclesiastical affairs, Müller's personality prevented him from actually becoming involved in politics in that year. His biographer, Leopold Schultze (1827–1893), a founder member of the Alliance, was "nauseated" the whole summer of 1848 by the "coarse" and "cowardly" nature of the democratic rioters. The pious patriot was angered by the wavering, irresolute attitude shown by the government's troops.<sup>74</sup>

Schultze had been taken to London for the founding of the Alliance by Müller's colleague at Halle, August Tholuck (1799–1877), who wrote and privately published sermons against the revolution in that town.<sup>75</sup> Tholuck had started preaching against the "ideas of 1789" after the February revolution in Paris. He recognised the just claims and indeed the "divine intention" of the movement while decrying and condemning the "dark paths" taken by it. Changes might be necessary, he argued, but would become a curse not a blessing if they were bought with blood. The revolution had "unfurled its red flag", unleashing the "powers of hell" to make the nations drunk with the "dangerous enthusiasm for freedom". Anarchy was threat-

<sup>73</sup> Leopold Schultze, *D. Julius Müller. Mitteilungen aus seinem Leben*, Bremen 1879, 54f.

<sup>74</sup> „Im März 1848 kamen dann andere Eindrücke über den frommen und vaterländisch gesinnten Jüngling. Er sah den Aufruhr. Und den Sommer über ekelte ihn die Wüstheit und zugleich die Feigheit der Demokratie an. Das Schwanken des Regiments bereitete ihm Schmerzen“, see Wilhelm Baur, *Lebensbild des weiland ersten Generalsuperintendenten der Provinz Sachsen D. theol. Leopold Schultze*, Magdeburg 1894, 12.

<sup>75</sup> Dr. Tholuck, *Probable Influence of the Revolutions upon Ecclesiastical Affairs*, in: *Evangelical Christendom*, 1848, 158f.

ening to shake society to its core. Tholuck was one of those who publicly resisted the wave of “wild, selfish passions” unleashed by the excitement. “Public meetings have become their worship services and the State is the idol before which they bow their knee”, he wrote. He asked what the pious king and noble aristocrats had done to deserve such ingratitude and provided the answer himself: the rich had neglected the poor; the wealthy had clung on to their assets and not shared them. In his diary he wrote on 24 March 1848: “Berlin is in open revolution; the King has granted everything”. When the citizenry of Halle called on the king on 10 March to grant freedom of religion and speech, equality before the law, a wider franchise and German unity, Tholuck’s sermons (*Predigten über die neuesten Zeitbewegungen*) are said to have helped to keep the town calm.<sup>76</sup> For him numbers did not signify any right: “The king’s name is more than 40,000 signatures”. The rule of the “coarse” masses filled Tholuck with fear and trepidation.

The majority of the 700 students at Halle took no part in the action, a reflection of the impact, perhaps, of Tholuck’s work among them. Nevertheless, three students (Pösche, Ehrlich and Kaulfuß), one probationer (Weißgerber) and a wine-dealer (Rowald) organised public meetings calling for thorough-going changes.<sup>77</sup> The development of the movement in Halle reflected how far the neo-pietists had distanced themselves from the mass of the people. Tholuck himself was singled out for punishment by a crowd of journeymen. His home was to be attacked on 20 March and the chief of the constabulary requested Tholuck and his family to leave the town for their own safety. “My greatest apprehension had been the loss of my library”, he wrote on 8 April 1848 to Evangelical Christendom. In the event, no such attack took place. Soldiers had stamped out meetings of the “agitators” and “insurrectionists”.

Once news of the events in Berlin had reached the country regions, peasants joined forces, wrote Tholuck on 8 April, with “the lower classes of the smaller cities” to attack not only government buildings and the castles of noblemen but also the homes of pietists, including the castle of “that excellent Christian”, the Silesian Prince von Schönburg. Fears abounded. He believed that a republic (called for by some of the Halle students) would soon legislate for a separation of church and state with all the financial insecurities that would likely bring for professors of theology as well as clergymen. The prospect of democratically elected synods filled with laymen whose views might be rationalistic or even pantheistic arose in his mind. Evangelical professors and pastors might be forced to resign. Marriage would become a completely private affair. Incest and adultery could be removed as crimes from the statute books. There were no more than 8,000 evangelical laymen in Saxony, Tholuck reported, and these could not by themselves financially support a theological faculty; lecturers in divinity could well be forced to emigrate. Nor did the 15 July 1848 “appeal to all friends of the Protestant Church” to assemble in Wittenberg inspire in him any more confidence. He saw it as a utopian attempt to resurrect the corpus evangelicorum and he was noticeably absent from the first three Kirchentage. In

<sup>76</sup> Leopold Witte, *Das Leben D. Friedrich August Gotttreu Tholuck’s*, vol. II, Bielefeld–Leipzig 1886, 446.

<sup>77</sup> Witte, *Das Leben Tholuck’s* (cf fn. 76), 439.

contrast to Wichern and Kapff, he remained pessimistic about the prospects of the Kirchentag actually producing enough balm to heal the wounds in the German body politic that the revolution of 1848 had opened up.<sup>78</sup>

### Conclusion

This essay has drawn attention to the variety of responses by evangelicals to revolutionary unrest in a number of German states. Two (Wichern and Kapff) were particularly aware of the socio-economic causes of revolutionary sentiments, but even their response was limited to a call for more personal and charitable action to counteract the deleterious effects of industrialisation in Germany. Two (Barth and Tholuck) were doubtful of the benefits and even antagonistic to the programmes developed by the Kirchentag. A restructuring of the ecclesiastical apparatus or a confederation of the different denominations seemed to them to be too little, too late. Two (Christoph Hoffmann and Kapff) joined in the political struggles as members of parliament, yet they did not see eye to eye on particular policies, nor did they draw similar conclusions from the few steps taken by the March governments. Another two (Barth and Müller) remained deliberately inactive. Most of the pietists studied here sought to interpret events in the light of God's Word and, in particular, in the light of prophecy. Bible verses were juxtaposed with tenets of conservative ideology. The revolution was damned as a great sin against God and his authorities on earth; that the song "Jesus, meine Zuversicht" had become the 'hymn of the revolution', in Berlin at least, made no difference to the pietist interpretation. The personal attacks on a number of them were proof to them – not that they needed proof – that anti-Christian forces were at work in the movement for greater freedoms. The socio-political order was generally seen as being sanctioned by the Divine Being, even if the disorganising and destructive effects of the capitalist system of economy developing around them were acknowledged as requiring radical treatment. The use of troops to put an end to rioting and restore the law and order of the princes and dukes was welcomed by pietists around the country. Another co-founder of the Alliance, Johann Ludwig König, the chaplain at the large garrison in Mainz, thanked the Prussian and Austrian troops at the funeral service on 25 May 1848 for punishing the "crime" and "outrage" in that town three days earlier.<sup>79</sup> While König was willing to blame soldiers for causing bitterness by mocking and scornful comments made by some prior to the disturbances (without realising, perhaps, that it was drunken soldiers who had first attacked and wounded citizens on 21 May), he nevertheless sided with the Prussian forces in their test of strength with the armed defenders of the new freedoms in Mainz, the Bürgerwehr. König's support for the forced disarming of the citizens' army in order to prevent, as he put it, "unspeakable evil" occurring, revealed his

<sup>78</sup> Witte, *Das Leben Tholuck's* (cf fn. 76), 447.

<sup>79</sup> Johann Ludwig König, *Rede an den Gräbern der am 21. Mai 1848 von bewaffneten Bürgern getödteten vier Preußischen Soldaten, gehalten bei deren feierlichen Bestattung den 25. dess. M. u. J. [Mainz 1848]*. On the troubles at Mainz in May 1848, see Valentin, *Geschichte der deutschen Revolution* (cf fn. 15), Bd. 2, 18ff.

patriotic regard for the “dear king” of Prussia and the political system he represented. König made no mention of the three citizens of Mainz who had been killed or of the ten who had been wounded.

Democracy and constitutionalism, accepted by some as being in conformity with Christianity (Craig and Oncken), were rejected as “un-German” by others (Wilhelm Hoffmann). Only dissident evangelists like the Baptist Johann Oncken and James Craig of the Irish Presbyterian Mission to the Jews could see the pro-active hand of God at work in the middle of the events. The revolution was, for them, not merely being permitted by God as a punishment for all kinds of social infidelities but, rather, willed by God to facilitate the spread of freedom for the gospel. Their response was essentially one of optimism. Elsewhere, however, a pessimistic apocalypticism and a premillennialist understanding of eschatology shaped opinions, most noticeably in Baden and Württemberg. Here the signs were interpreted as signalling the end of an historical epoch. The evangelical responses to the revolutionary political demands, in particular to the demand to end the state-Church link, were therefore anything but uniform. Moreover, the revolution led to even its most determined enemies rethinking aspects of the Church-State relationship and fostered a mood amenable to a closer union of the provincial churches and denominations.

### Abstract

At a time of growing interest in the relationship between religion and politics this essay focuses on the responses of a number of high-profile evangelicals to the revolutionary events of 1848. Most of the figures discussed here were key actors in the Revival and were all linked with the pan-denominational Evangelical Alliance, established in London in 1846. The views and attitudes of German Lutherans and Reformed pastors as well as Irish and British Free Church clergy are considered in a comparative manner, revealing significant regional and theological differences of opinion and approach.

Seit geraumer Zeit ist ein zunehmendes Interesse zum Verhältnis von Religion und Politik zu konstatieren. Dieser Aufsatz rückt vor diesem Hintergrund die Reaktionen bekannter Evangelikaler zum revolutionären Geschehen von 1848 in den Mittelpunkt seiner Analyse. Die meisten der behandelten Personen waren nicht nur Schlüsselfiguren in der Erweckungsbewegung, sondern auch alle mit der überkonfessionellen „Evangelical Alliance“, die 1846 in London gegründet worden war, verbunden. Die Positionen und Meinungen der deutschen Lutheraner und Reformierten sind ebenso wie die Ansichten mancher irischer und britischer Freikirchler und Pastoren der „British Free Churches“ im Fokus des vergleichenden Ansatzes. Durch ihn können signifikante regionale und theologische Unterschiede in den Ansichten und Zugriffen der Figuren offen gelegt werden.