"Founding a Heavenly Empire": Protestant Missionaries and German Colonialism, 1860-1919

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

URI
http://hdl.handle.net/1903/13643

Collections
History Theses and Dissertations
UMD Theses and Dissertations

The German colonial empire (German: Deutsches Kolonialreich) constituted the overseas colonies, dependencies and territories of Imperial Germany. The chancellor of this time period was Otto von Bismarck. Short-lived attempts of colonization by individual German states had occurred in preceding centuries, but crucial colonial efforts only began in 1884 with the Scramble for Africa. Claiming much of the left-over colonies that were yet unclaimed in the Scramble of Africa, Germany managed to build the third largest colonial empire after the British and the French, at the time.[2] Germany lost con Protestant missionaries (mainly from Great Britain and the United States) began entering East Asia after 1800 during the high tide of colonialism. Europeans and Americans used gunboat diplomacy to force the Japanese and Chinese to open their gates to trade. In a series of military defeats and unequal treaties beginning in 1842, Christian missionaries gained access to inland China. Both Protestants and Catholics proselytized a religious stew of Christianity and Western culture that most sophisticated Chinese found offensively alien. Consequently, most of the nineteenth-century converts in China