LUTHERAN AND CATHOLIC REUNIONISTS IN THE AGE OF BISMARCK

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Religious division has determined Germany's destiny. In the Middle Ages, it was the struggle between Emperor and Pope which doomed the Holy Roman Empire. During the Reformation, and the Thirty Years' War, it was Protestantism as well as the anti-Imperial diplomacy of the Pope and the French cardinals, which prevented the emergence of a national state and a centralized government. "From the split of the church dates all our misfortune," complained in 1846 the Lutheran historian Johann Friedrich Böhmer, editor of a major medieval source collection. "It is a pity that the nation in the heart of Europe was drawn away from its political profession by quarrels with the church, that the development of strong political institutions was interrupted, that they eroded under the acids of religious passion and negation, so that the German people finally got into a stage of the disease where they are either seized by violent fever, or rot in apathy and despair. All our inner ferment which soon will erupt in a revolutionary outburst, all our political impotence and lethargy were, in the final analysis, caused by the split of the church, which tore us apart, and which no one can bridge. Only a new St. Boniface who would restore ecclesiastical unity could help us." 2

On the popular level, the sigh for a new St. Boniface was echoed by the so-called 'prophecy of Lehnin." 3 The Vaticinium Lehninse was supposed to have been written by a 13th century friar of the monastery Lehnin in the March of Brandenburg. It was interpreted as foretelling the destiny of the Hohenzollern dynasty, and became a bestseller as well as a bone of scholarly contention in the 19th century. The last line of the Latin poem promised that after the extinction or conversion of the Hohenzollern "the flock would get a shepherd and Germany, a king." Et pastor gregem recipit, Germania regem. One presupposed the other.

German political and intellectual aspirations from the Reformation to the present could indeed be interpreted as a losing battle for une loi, une foi, et un Roi. The "Counter-Reformation," the policies of Emperors Ferdinand I, II, and III as well as Maximilian II, the campaigns of Charles V and Wallenstein were attempts to obtain political unity by recovering the religious one, or vice versa.

German philosophy was, as Joseph Görres wanted it to be, in a sense a secularized quest for the lost catholicity of the church. In con-

1. This essay has been presented as a lecture to the meeting of the Pacific Coast Branch of American Society of Church History on May 5, 1967 at the University of San Francisco.


contrast to English empiricism which was mainly concerned with theory of knowledge, German idealism from Leibniz to Schelling wanted to harmonize the "I" with the "All," the individual with the universal, and combine metaphysics, ontology, epistemology, and ethics within a consistent whole.

With the rise of modern paganism, it was Reason during the Enlightenment, and the Volksgeist in the Age of Romanticism which were considered common denominators and keys to unity. National Socialism, at last, tried to create ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer on the Procrustes' bed of blood and soil by cutting off the Hebrew-Christian roots, the suspected source of disunity.

The tours de force under neo-Paganism have obscured the uninterrupted drive towards unity along Lutheran-Catholic lines. The well-known projects of Rojas y Spinola, Leibniz, Bossuet and Molanus around 1700 were not the last ones. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, there was a rolling tide of books and brochures, pamphlets and periodicals, open letters and secret societies advocating the reunion of the churches. These efforts have been largely forgotten, because they were, like the previous ones, a never-ending series of failures, and historians do not like to "blow marches for the conquered and the slain." On both sides, most theologians considered "reunionism" an aberration from the established standards, only worthy of censure. Heirs of private papers are still reluctant to reveal the irenical relations of their forebears, because they do not want to see them post-humously portrayed as "cryptocatholics," "indifferentists," or "liberals." Finally, and this seems to have been the main deterrent to dealing comprehensively, and conclusively with the manifestations of German reunionism down through the ages, they were too numerous to be mentioned.

Just as it takes a speck of dust to form a raindrop from the moisture of the air, so it took points of crystallization to bring the scattered forces for reunion within the churches to the fore. One of these points of crystallization was the Erfurt Conference of 1860, the other the Ut-Omnes-Unum movement from 1862-1901.

The Erfurt Conference of 1860 came as suddenly and spontaneously as a pistol's shot, it was eine aus der Pistole geschossene Versammlung as one of the participants, Heinrich Leo, called it. The Conference had been convoked by Friedrich Michelis, a Catholic priest.

4. I have tried to trace the forerunners of 19th century reunionism in my forthcoming book, Katholische und lutherische Ireniker (Göttingen, 1968), chapters I & II, but my survey is by no means complete.

5. An eye-witness account of the Conference as well as a collection of "all sources which have become known" provided Ludwig Clarus (Wilhelm Volk), Die Zusammenkunft gläubiger Protestanten und Katholiken zu Erfurt im Herbst 1860 und deren Verlauf (Faderborn, 1867). Faszikel P/a of the Geriachisches Familienarchiv in the Seminar für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte, Erlangen, Kochstrasse 4, contains pertinent letters, newspaper clippings, and the printed manifesto, most of which material has been published by Professor Hans Joachim Schoeps in the Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte, Vol. V (1953), 135-159, as well as in the appendices of the 2nd (Honnef/Rhein, 1957) and 3rd editions (Berlin, 1964) of his book Das andere Preussen.
then stationed near the city of Münster, Westphalia. The thought to do something for the reunion of the churches occurred to him while reading the biography of Friedrich Perthes (1772-1843), a Protestant bookseller who had many Catholic friends, including Cardinal Clemens Maria Hofbauer, and published both Catholic and Protestant church histories. During the summer of 1860, Michelis invited prominent Catholics and Lutherans, many of whom he knew only from hearsay, or their publications, to a conference on reunion. He got many enthusiastic responses, but when he set a date, Michelis had the experience of the Lord of the Great Supper. Those who were called excused themselves.

Therefore, Michelis, on the evening of September 21, 1860 interrupted a journey to Prague, and surprised a friend of his, Wilhelm Volk of Erfurt, with the plan to hold a conference the next day in his hotel. Wilhelm Volk was a Prussian official, a convert from Lutheranism to Catholicism, and under the pen name of Ludwig Clarus, the author of at least 70 books. He edited a periodical, *Der Alte Fritz*, and was also chairman of the Catholic journeymen's home in Erfurt where the conference actually took place. On September 21, Count Caius zu Stolberg, son of a famous convert, arrived on short notice from Saxony. Stolberg brought along the president of the Saxon Upper House, a former minister of state, Baron von Friesen, one of whose ancestors had taken part in a conference on reunion with Bishop Rojas y Spinola, back in 1683. Two Westphalians, a Professor Evelt, and a judge by the name of Pahl who happened to be in Erfurt, were picked up from the street, so to speak, together with the Catholic military chaplain, a retired Protestant school principal, a board member of the Catholic journeymen's association, and the rector of a Catholic convent. All in all, there were two Lutheran laymen, three Catholic priests, and five Catholic laymen on the first day of the Conference.

The members drew up a declaration which explained it was the purpose of the meeting to express the desire for a *rapprochement* between Protestants and Catholics, that this was not done under the auspices of indifferentism, that inter-confessional co-operation was at this moment in the interest of the German nation, that anti-Christ was rearing his head, that the violation of the Papal states was robbery, that this meeting of minds was a pilot project for more to come, that all ecclesiastical and conservative forces should unite against the revolutionary foes of Christianity and pray for the unity of the church.

The members of the Erfurt Conference were, as can be seen, arch-conservatives and legitimists. It was on September 7, two weeks before, that Garibaldi had dethroned the King of Naples. It was on September 18, three days before the Conference, that the troops of Cavour defeated a Papal army while marching through the Pope's
territory. It was only a year before that Napoleon and Sardinia had taken Lombardy from Austria while revolutionaries in Tuscany, Modena, Parma and the Romagna drove out the "legitimate" rulers. This will explain why the late supporters of the Metternich System at Erfurt expressly condemned Revolution, Bonapartism, and the "principle of nationality" in which they saw signs of anti-Christ. A few years later, they would feel the same about the Realpolitik of Bismarck.

On the second day, September 22, two Lutheran spokesmen, Heinrich Leo, Professor of History at Halle, and Karl Bindewald, from 1851 to 1858 the most influential counselor in the Prussian ministry for church affairs, health and education in Berlin, joined the Conference. Baron von Friesen had to leave because of other commitments. Another baron, from Westphalia, who happened to travel through Erfurt took his place. Thus on the second day, there were assembled three Lutheran laymen, three Catholic priests, and six Catholic laymen.

This forum found the declaration of the previous day too explicit, and condensed it. The revised version sounded more political, and more belligerent against Revolution and anti-Christendom. The next conference was to be held by the end of October in Magdeburg. Leo, its main author, was to have the manifesto printed, and send it to the participants for the winning of new members. Nothing more was to be said until the next meeting.

However, Michelis, on his way to Prague travelled with Leo from Erfurt to Halle. Leo had been seen with the Westphalian priest in his broad-rimmed hat and long cassock at the railroad station. There was a rumor in Halle that he had met, and was making common cause with the Jesuits. From now on, Leo had to be very careful, for to have dealings with Jesuits was at Halle, the mother city of the German Enlightenment, tantamount to high treason. Moreover, in Prague, at the meeting of Catholic clubs to which Michelis and perhaps one or two other members of the Erfurt Conference had been travelling the secret leaked out.

The Märkische Kirchenblatt in Berlin and the Giornale de Roma broke the sensational news:

A great number of Protestant and Catholic theologians met on August 21st and 22nd [sic!] in Erfurt in order to prepare a mass conversion of those Protestants who still hold on to a thread of faith, and who find Christian principles nowhere but in the catholic-apostolic-Roman religion. Among the Catholics at the assembly, one saw Count Cajus Zu Stolberg, and among the Protestants the famous Professor Leo from Halle whom our readers know as author of that excellent article which he wrote in support of the Pope. In the meantime, the Protestant press continues—that is, those papers which belong to so-called positive Protestantism which has not yet fallen prey to scepticism, and still confesses certain principles of the faith—this press continues to champion the cause of the Holy Father, because it sees in him the embodiment of religion, freedom, truth and justice.

6. Because Volk and Schoeps bring only German translations of the Giornale di Roma article of October 2, 1860, the pertinent passages of the original version, which ap
The Catholic journal “Sion” in Augsburg felt that the prophecy of Lehnin was about to be fulfilled,

The flock will receive its shepherd, and Germany, her king.

The extravagant claims of the Papal press threw the Erfurt Conference open to ridicule. The Kladderdatsch, Berlin’s equivalent of the British humor magazine Punch, brought on November 11 under the headline “Erfurt” the “fragment of a still unfinished tragi-comedy” called “Revenge for Canossa.” There, a great conference of German obscurantists was held in the Augustinian monastery where later Martin Luther was to live. To the right, you saw Weimar, the later seat of the Muses, the residence of Goethe and Schiller, to the left Wittenberg, in the background the Wartburg. The action took place around the year 1084. Mephisto presided over the plot. Leo, “the little night owl from Halle,” Dr. Chalybäus, “formerly a little Jew, now a great churchlight,” the Privy Councillor Rundschaute, the mendicant friars “Run-For-Booty” and “Will-Soon-Be-Robbing” figured as conspirators. Michael Aufklärücht and The People put an end to their subversive activity. For as soon as the scheming sons of darkness dropped the cue “mass conversion” Michael Aufklärücht and his children of light arose and drove them “far beyond Mecklenburg.” (The Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg stood in liberal terminology for backwardness and bigtory.) The implication of this happy ending was, however, that they soon would meet again. Therefore, eternal vigilance.

Alas, the indiscretion of the Catholic press brought about an intervention by the Prussian government. The Prince Regent of Prussia, soon to be King William I, had read in the Vatican newspaper that a mass conversion in his own country was at hand. He asked the Kultusminister who knew nothing about it. The Kultusminister, von Bethmann-Hollweg, asked the president of the police in Erfurt, who knew nothing about it. The chief of police asked the manager of the Catholic journeymen’s house who had been away, and knew nothing about it. Finally, an Erfurt policeman learned of the meeting in a backroom from the custodian. The police department sued Michelis and Volk for holding an unauthorized assembly. (The charges were soon to be dropped.) Leo was no longer allowed to examine future
In the meantime, the public debate in the Catholic and Protestant press went on. The conservative *Neue Preussische Zeitung*, popularly called *Kreuzzeitung*, ridiculed the report of the *Giornale di Roma*, in which the *Kreuzzeitung* had been honorably mentioned, a “soap bubble,” and demanded from its contributor, Heinrich Leo, a clarification of the story. The *Protestantische Kirchenseitung*, the voice of left-wing Protestantism, called the Erfurt Conference a Catholic plot, and declared the expectation of a mass conversion as “correct.” The harshest condemnation came from Mecklenburg, the territory which in liberal terminology was synonymous with backwardness and bigotry. The evangelical conscience did not allow a common defense with the Roman church of its highest goods, wrote the *Theologische Zeitsschrift* of Kliefoth and Dieckhoff in Schwerin. No tittle must be lost from Luther’s pious wish, *Deus vos inpleat odio Papae*. The “solidarity of conservative interests” which Bindewald advocated meant a betrayal of the faith. Brandenburg-Prussia had always been a hotbed of unionism the father of which was the Strassburg reformer Martin Bucer. In Brandenburg, they had even tried to re-unite with Rome, before they united with the Reformed. Therefore, not only unionism but the already existing union between Lutherans and Reformed in Prussia had to be fought, if the Evangelical Church was to be saved.

The spokesman of neo-Orthodox Lutheranism in Berlin, Professor Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg, who edited the *Evangelische Kirchenseitung*, was chided by the Mecklenburgers for not being able to free himself from the Reformed embrace. Hengstenberg in turn denounced his pro-Catholic friends Leo, Bindewald, and Ludwig von Gerlach for having supported the Erfurt Conference. So did, using much milder language, Friedrich Julius Stahl, the Dr. Chalybäus of *Kladderadatsch*. In an address before the Lutheran pastoral conference of May 1861 in Berlin, the last of his life, Stahl, the professor of international law, leader of the Conservative party, and highest of the high church men, questioned the legitimacy of the Papal states, because they were based on questionable claims.

It was Ludwig von Gerlach, Supreme Court Judge in Magdeburg (who had not been able to be in Erfurt because of the wedding of his nephew) who picked up the gauntlet, and defended the Erfurt Conference in all Protestant newspapers which had attacked it. He called the Erfurt Conference “a spiritual mustard seed, a living germ of the full unity of the church, and a glorious revelation of the future kingdom of God.” The *Historisch-politische Blätter*, the organ of ultramontane Roman Catholicism in Munich applauded von Gerlach as a “knight without fear and above reproach.” Father Adolph Kolp-
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ing, an effective social missionary who organized young Catholic artisans into journeymen's clubs and kept them loyal to the church, supported the Erfurt Conference in his popular Cologne newspaper. He was even willing to take Michelis' place as leading Catholic member of the conference. Der Katholik in Mainz, mouthpiece of the German Catholic hierarchy, endorsed Kolping's plan. The ultimate aim of Catholic action, however, was conversion rather than co-operation, and from that Protestants shied away after they had been alarmed by the liberal press.

What did this explosion of public opinion mean? The Volksblatt für Stadt und Land in Halle of which Heinrich Leo was a columnist summed it all up: Is it not strange that three Lutheran laymen meeting with four or five Catholics cause such a stir, arouse the hearts and minds of friend and foe in church and fatherland alike? Newspapers of all colors from the Kladderadatsch to the most serious church publications are filled with comments and concern. Isn't that exceedingly strange? There is only one possible explanation: The Erfurt Conference must have struck at the nerve center of a psychological complex whose manifestations increased the spiritual significance of the meeting in inverse proportion to the more than modest circumstances under which it actually took place.

As a cross section of the different moods and states of mind in regard to reunion, the Volksblatt für Stadt und Land brought a series of letters to the editor. There was the mournful voice of Protestant pietism which longed beyond Erfurt, beyond Rome, beyond Wittenberg, for Jerusalem which is above, and wanted to leave everything to the Lord.

There was the voice of a Lutheran pastor from the diaspora who recommended prayers, tears, and a study of Roman Catholicism as remedies against the schism. There was a letter from a Catholic seminary professor in Southern Germany under the title "St. Peter and St. Paul at the Ecumenical Council of Erfurt," who exposed the ideas of Schelling (later taken up by Soloiev), which were part of the expectations of the age.

There were excerpts from a letter by Ignaz von Dollinger, the Catholic church historian, who wanted to continue the good work, and said under the impact of Erfurt in a speech before the Congress of Catholic Scholars in Munich (1863): Should not German theology turn out to be the spear of Telephus, which first cut his wound and then cured it? German theologians have started the schism, kindled the fire of discord, and kept it burning by supplying the fuel of learned controversy. Germans entrenched the doctrines which destroyed Christian unity. Now, it ought to be their calling to lead the divided denominations toward reconciliation.

If German theologians provided the scholarly ramification for the split of Western Christendom, then the key figures of the Erfurt Conference tried to mend it on the basis of *Wissenschaft* and *Weltanschauung*, too. There was first of all Ludwig von Gerlach (1795-1877) whose political thoughts and deeds were motivated by a desire for Christian unity including the Eastern church.\(^9\) Besides being president of the court of appeals in Magdeburg, Gerlach figured as co-founder and contributor of the *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung*, the *Berliner Politische Wochenblatt*, a Lutheran-Catholic journal of the 1830’s, and the *Neue Preussische Zeitung*, called *Kreuzzeitung*, for which he wrote a column, “*Die Rundschau.*” He signed his political pamphlets *Vom Rundschauer der Kreuzzeitung*; that’s why he was caricatured by Kladderadatsch as *Geheimrat Rundschauer*, in the past tense. Gerlach was the “Cato of the Conservative Party,” a member of the Prussian Upper and Lower House, sponsor of Bismarck’s career as ambassador to the *Bundesrat* in Frankfurt, and godfather of his oldest son. Gerlach could have become minister of justice, foreign minister, and once even prime minister, but his conservative conscience would not tolerate any compromises.

Gerlach preached “politics out of faith.” Systematic theology was to govern political decisions. Under Frederick William IV, Ludwig exercised his main influence through his brother Leopold, the general-adjutant of the king. The Gerlach brothers kept Prussia out of the Crimean War, and favored the Treaty of Olmütz, that is, harmony with Austria. Ludwig believed that the Holy Alliance of Catholic Austria, Orthodox Russia, and Protestant Prussia had been the harbinger of a united Christendom, and an inkling of the glory of the future kingdom of God. Because Gerlach’s vision of Christian unity included the Eastern church, he never considered converting to Roman Catholicism, although his Catholic friends continuously exhorted him to do so. Gerlach foresaw the getting together of Western and Eastern Christianity. Although this event was still far beyond the year 1900, the course of history was going fast in that direction. How important for the enrichment of the ecumenical spirit the Eastern half of Christendom would be.\(^10\)

Gerlach’s reproach to Rome was that it could not distinguish between Law and Gospel. Haio Holborn, in his *History of Modern Germany*, charges that Hegel’s philosophy eliminated the natural law tradition from German Protestant thought, and made the state autonomous. If anything, Ludwig von Gerlach, whom Holborn calls one of “the leaders of Prussian reaction under Frederick William IV,” is the exception to this rule. Gerlach, the Prussian supreme court judge,

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9. An evaluation of (Ernst) Ludwig von Gerlach’s religious and political ideals is to be found in Hans Joachim Schoeps, *Das andere Preussen*, chapters I, II, and IV.
10. Cf. Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach, *Aufzeichnungen aus seinem Leben* (Schwerin, 1903), Vol. II, 177. This is only one of numerous sighs for a truly ecumenical church.
subordinated the state under the Ten Commandments. His conception of Law (das Recht) was, like Stahl's, squarely based on the Old Testament, not on Nature, or Aristotle. Gerlach advocated a theocracy where everything, the responsibility of the king, the relationship between church and state, foreign and domestic politics as well as civil rights, was based on divine ordinance. The Ten Commandments were to be served by the State; the coming kingdom of God, advanced by the Church. Both orders of creation had to work hand in hand.

In medieval history, Gerlach supported the Pope against the Emperor, because the latter had usurped the rights of the former. In his own day, Gerlach called for faithful co-operation between Prussia and Austria because it was based on “legitimacy,” international law, and furthered the cause of Christian unity as well as the coming of the kingdom of God. Without this dualism, Prussia and Austria would cease to be great powers, and Germany as well as Prussia and Austria might disappear from the map of Europe, Gerlach warned in a Rundschau celebrating the centenary of the Peace of Hubertusburg (1763). When Bismarck did not take his advice, Gerlach thought he had lost his faith, and was fallen out of grace. In 1866, Gerlach broke with Bismarck, the Kreuzzzeitung, and the Conservative Party. All three of his former protegées had left the path of righteousness, and embarked on the course of Bonapartism on which they would suffer the fate of Napoleon. Instead of trying to become a grande nation à la France, Germany ought to have concentrated on resolving her religious differences (die kirchlichen Gegensätze).

During the Kulturkampf, Gerlach became a Prussian Landtag, and German Reichstag member of the Catholic Center Party where he delivered his great speeches against Bismarck and for the rights of the church in all its branches. Bismarck, in reply, ridiculed Uncle Ludwig: “Now he has found his lonely pillar where he won't suffer the misfortune that anyone agrees with him.” “I have wanted nothing more than the unity of the church which was destroyed by the sin of man,” was Gerlach’s deathbed confession.

In a similar vein, Heinrich Leo (1799-1878) worked for the unity of the church. In the 19th century, he was as famous as Ranke. Leo did not found a historical school, because he conducted no seminars. However, he changed historiography by sweeping Aufklärung under the rug. By his unconventional views on Gustavus Adolphus, for example, whom Leo eyed as a Swedish imperialist, and not as the selfless

12. Quoted in Ut omnes unum, p. 372, by Julie von Massow to commemorate the fifth anniversary of his death (February 18, 1877).
13. On Leo’s religious, historical, and political views, see Hans Joachim Schoeps, Das andre Preussen, chapter III. A summary of Leo’s attitudes towards Lutheranism and Catholicism is to be found in Hans Joachim Schoeps, “Historische Werturteile bei Heinrich Leo” in Politische Ordnung und menschliche Existenz (München, 1962), pp. 497-524.
savior of German Protestantism, he encouraged Catholic historians like Janssen and Pastor to come into their own.

Leo had been converted by Ludwig von Gerlach from Protestant rationalism to orthodox Lutheranism. Leo, however, filled, as he said, the Augsburg Confession historically with the church of the first thousand years, and not anachronostically with undigestible Lutheran dogmatics. The Reformation was a blessing, but the churches of the Reformation, experiments that failed. In his *Universal History*, he advocated Catholic worship and transubstantiation which he considered the highlight of divine service. He was willing to pray for the Catholic Bishop of Paderborn as his spiritual leader, and said the Roman Church would be truly reformed as soon as the Pope moved out of Italy and surrounded himself in Switzerland with a college of English, French and German cardinals.

As he looked back on the Erfurt Conference, in a conversation with Lord Acton, and a few years later in a letter to Karl Georg Krafft, he stated that there were many orthodox Lutherans in 1860, who wanted independence of the crozier from the crown, apostolic succession for Lutheran bishops, the sacrifice of the mass, celibacy of the priesthood, and corporate reunion with Rome. There are at least three books by contemporary Lutherans, which support Leo's claims.\(^\text{14}\)

Leo's counterpart at Erfurt was Friedrich Michelis (1818-1886).\(^\text{15}\) Everyone in mid-19th century Catholic Germany knew the name Michelis. Friedrich's brother Eduard had been the martyr of the quarrel about mixed marriages between the King of Prussia and the Archbishop of Cologne from 1838-1841. Eduard Michelis was the chaplain of the Archbishop, and was considered the instigator of the whole affair. Eduard was imprisoned, and his health broke down. Later, he became a seminary professor in Luxembourg. Most people thought it was Eduard, not Friedrich, who had convened the Erfurt Conference. Friedrich, however, our Michelis, was a popular hero in his own right. Inspired by his elder brother, he became a popular speaker at Catholic assemblies and leader of pilgrimages, and was known to Protestant polemicists, such as Friedrich Nippold, as the crusading knight of ultramontanism. Later, after the first Vatican Council, he became with Döllinger the organizer of Old Catholicism, and was called “Döllinger’s rough shield-bearer Roland.” As a conservative politician, he served in the Prussian Lower House and the North German Diet clashing with the powers that be.

More noteworthy than his public record, however, is Michelis'
philosophical thought. He figures uniquely as a Platonist in 19th century philosophy, and found the key to human understanding in language. Language, according to Michelis, deals with the difference between person and thing, conscious and non-conscious being, mind and matter. This relationship reflects that between Creator and creation. The ancient, more inflected languages, like Greek and Gothic, were better able to convey spiritual meanings than the modern, uninflected materialistic ones. By a reform of linguistic instruction, Michelis promised to bring about a reconciliation between faith and knowledge as well as an understanding between the separated brethren. As odd as it may sound, in terms of semantics and epistomology, we must accord to Michelis a place halfway between Hamann and Heidegger.

Finally, to Wilhelm Volk, alias Ludwig Clarus. Volk worked himself in his books, which were for the most part introspective studies in religious psychology, like an archaeologist through all the layers of neo-humanism, rationalism, pietism, and orthodoxy under which the Lutheranism of the time of the Reformation was buried. He converted to Roman Catholicism, and engaged in fierce polemics with his former fellow Protestants. At last, he tried to reconcile all the discordant elements of his own life and soul by writing an eye witness account of the Erfurt Conference, and recommending it to be continued. He published this book in 1867, and died two years later.

In the meantime, one Lutheran and one Catholic theologian, both faintly connected with the University of Erlangen, had picked up the threads of Erfurt. Dean Wilhelm Dittmar (1801-1877) of Bayreuth, a friend of Richard Wagner whose second wife, Cosima, Dittmar converted from Catholicism to Lutheranism, published in 1863, anonymously, a book *Pax vobiscum!* partly inspired by Erfurt Conference. Dittmar wanted to free the effort of Erfurt from the shackles of Conservatism. Reunion should come within the context of a constitutional monarchy and national liberalism. Dittmar expected reunion from a liberal Pope, a democratic church council, and a movement of laymen. The popular press was to discuss and eventually resolve the dogmatic difficulties. Dittmar's book was widely hailed and condemned. The Erlangen Zeitschrift für Protestantismus und Kirche, of which Dittmar was a contributor, severely censured it. The reviewing priest was rebuked
in turn by the Historisch-politische Blätter in Munich. Later on, Ut Omnes Unum celebrated Dittmar as one of its forerunners, and revealed his identity.

The second bridge from Erfurt to Ut Omnes Unum was Karl Georg Krafft (1818-1898), the son of a Reformed pastor and professor who gave the impetus to the so-called Erlangen theology, a form of Luther-Renaissance in the 19th century. Krafft Jr. first studied theology in Erlangen and Bonn, then went to Rome (after his father had died) and became a Catholic priest. Back in Germany, he was given a benefice to work for reunion, and wrote for years on a “Sacred History from the Creation of the World to the Council of Trent.” His chance to do something for reunion came with the Erfurt Conference of which he learned only years after the event through Volk’s swan song. He entered into correspondence with the survivors of the Erfurt Conference, and tried to interest the German bishops’ conference in its continuation. Periodical articles and a series of pamphlets (1870-1874) were the results. At the general assembly of German Catholics in 1876 in Munich, he called for a journal dedicated to reunion, which actually came into being two years later, and of which Krafft became one of many contributors. Krafft felt that German unification was incomplete without a resolution of the religious differences. The “Lord had not been in the wind” of 1870-1871.

The title of the periodical Krafft had called for was “Ut omnes unum, That All May Be One, Journal of Correspondence for Understanding and Unification among Divided Christians.” This journal grew out of a worldwide movement the mother of which was Julie

18. For details of Krafft’s career, see the various editions of David Rosenthal’s Konver- titenbilder aus dem neunzehnten Jahrhundert (Regensburg, 1866 et sqq.). In the Augs- burg newspaper Sion, Krafft published “Gedanken eines Convertiten, angereg door Clarus’ letzte Schrift: Die Zusammenkunft glüübiger Protestantanten und Katholiken zu Erfurt” (September 2 & 5, 1868). On September 6, 1868, there appeared his article, “Haben in unserer Zeit irische Bestrebungen Aussicht auf Erfolg?”, in the Send- bote, another Augsburg newspaper. In Sion of January 20, 1869, Krafft reviewed Baumstark’s Gedanken eines Protestantanten über die päpstliche Einladung (to the Vati- can Council of 1870), which was also printed as a pamphlet, and translated into Dutch. A detailed plan for peace entitled “Zur Frage der Wiedervereinigung im Glauben” appeared in September 1869 in the Würzburg periodical Die katholische Bewegung in Deutschland. A booklet, Kirchliche Wiedervereinigung (Mainz, 1871) was followed by the pamphlets Zwölf Thesen behufs einer möglichen Wiedervereinigung in Deutschland, Zwölf weitere Thesen zur Herbeiführung einer wirklichen kirchlichen Wiedervereinigung, and Kurzer möglichst gründlicher Unterricht für Nichtkatholiken, welche aus eigenem Antriebe sich mit der katholischen Kirche wieder zu vereinigen wünschen, all of which appeared in Neuburg an der Donau, 1874. In 1872 and 1873, Krafft had published in Der Katholik the articles “Gegenwärtige Disposition des Protestan- tismus in Bezug auf irische Hoffnungen,” “Was bleibt fur kirchliche Wieder- vereinigung auf unserer Seite zu wünschen übrig?”, and Möglichkeit einer friedlichen Auslösung glüübiger Protestantanten mit der katholischen Kirche.” As contributor to Ut omnes unum, Krafft authored exegetical studies as well as an interpretation of the Vaticinium Lehninse. His articles, books, and pamphlets showed a familiarity with all previous irenic literature. Not mentioned in this bibliography, which should only serve as a sample of the public relations work of a reunionist, are the innumerable letters Krafft wrote to the German Catholic bishops and such Protestant lay theologians as Gerlach and Leo.
von Massow (1825-1901). The Massow family occupied high positions in the Prussian court and government. Massow’s salon in Berlin saw the Counts Stolberg, the Princes Reuss and Kolowrat, the Savigny family, the Gerlach brothers, Bismarck, Alexander von Humboldt and Robert Schumann among its regular guests. Julie von Massow’s choice of friends was determined by her religious proclivities. First a devout Lutheran, then a Catholic convert, she was well acquainted with Popes Pius IX and Leo XIII, Cardinal Hergenröther and Prelate Janssen, Prince-Bishop Kopp, Bishop Ketteler, and St. John Bosco. Julie von Massow and her husband, a member of the Prussian Upper House, a staunch partistan of Gerlach, Leo and Stahl and brother of the master of ceremonies at the royal court, started in 1862 the practice of praying the Psalter according to a fixed schedule, as in the Roman Breviary. Friends of the family did the same in their own homes. This practice was to establish a common bond between separated brethren. A young Greek by the name of Christofi Nikolau exported it to Greece; relations of Frau von Massow, to Sweden, a pastor of the Missouri Synod to the United States where the Luth erische Zeitschrift in Allentown, Pennsylvania, printed the weekly Psalmbundkalender. Besides the Psalmbund, Julie von Massow organized in 1878 a Gebetsverein, a prayer sodality which in addition to the recital of Psalms prayed daily Veni Creator Spiritus, Pater Noster, Ave Maria, and Gloria Patri with the intention that all may be one. At that time, a Catholic Petrusverein, parallel to which Karl Binde wald wanted to form a Paulusverein, as well as a Gebetsverein für Deutschland, and a Canisiusgebetsverein served the same purpose. As far as the Ave Maria is concerned, an otherwise quite liberal Lutheran theologian from the University of Halle had advocated its use according to the Book of Concord in 1863. The friends of Ut Omnes Unum were well aware of this.

Ironically, Pope Leo XIII granted all those Ut Omnes Unum friends who prayed the so-called rosary of reunion an indulgence. One wanted to heal the schism by the same means which had caused it. Leo XIII had received Julie von Massow in a special audience, bestowed his apostolic blessing on her association, and had a medal struck which showed the inscription Ut Omnes Unum on one side, and a likeness of St. Boniface with the legend ein Volk, ein Glaube on the other. “The common prayer that all be one has spread over all continents,” noted Julie von Massow who had to send her Psalmbund-

19. On Julie von Massow, see her biography by Sister Maria Bernardina, Julie v. Massow, geb. v. Behr, 2nd edition (Freiburg i. Br., 1912). This book based on Frau von Massow’s diaries, and memoirs of her friends contains the most complete picture of the Black Mondays. The personal data of the participants, and of the later contributors to Ut omnes unum, I collected from parish records, private archives, and contemporary reference works. Julie von Massow’s regular column in Ut omnes unum was edited in book form by Josef Beer (a priest who himself wrote under the name Irenicus), Dorotheen-Köblein von Julie von Massow, geb. v. Behr (Augsburg, 1896).
Kalender to Japan, to Brazil, to the Mauritius Islands, to Cameroon, to Tunis, to China. "It has become familiar to princes as well as to man and maidservants, it is being prayed in all nations and denominations by priests and laymen, it is probably the last bond which unites divided Christendom in a common effort, the prayer for reunion."

At the tomb of St. Boniface in Fulda, Julie von Massow endowed in 1883, two years before her conversion to Catholicism, a yearly mass to be offered *ad tollendum schisma*. This was to be the first of twelve endowments which would enable priests after the order of Melchisedek at all times and in all places to bring a bloodless sacrifice with the intention that the schism be taken away. In 1900, the eighteenth mass *ad tollendum schisma* was endowed in China.

Father Arnold Janssen, the founder of an order of missionaries in Steyl, as well as Father Franz August Münzenberger, the president of the Society of St. Boniface, had tried to establish such an endowment by intensive campaigning in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland a few years before. The Catholic priests had failed where a Lutheran laywoman succeeded. Again, it is questionable whether the schism can be healed by a usage of the mass which the Protestant reformers had rejected. But it must also be pointed out that the masses *ad tollendum schisma* were brought about by a Lutheran woman, and could only be established by strong Lutheran backing.

The third stage of the *Ut Omnes Unum* movement were the "black Mondays," the superlative of "blue Mondays," as their detractors called them. The "black Mondays" were an informal "assembly of notables" in the home of Julie von Massow in Dresden. They started in 1877 and ended in 1885 when Julie converted to Catholicism and gave up permanent residence in Dresden. The guests at the "black Mondays" were Lutheran and Catholic conservatives—clergymen, diplomats, politicians and publicists who vehemently opposed the policies of Bismarck, especially the *Kulturkampf*. There was the Bavarian ambassador to the court in Dresden, Baron Rudolf von Gasser, a harsh critic of Bavaria’s Bismarck-supporting minister of state, Johann von Lutz. Gasser would later represent Bavaria at St. Petersburg, Russia, his birth place. There was the former Saxon ambassador in Paris, Count Seebach, who had only recently converted to Roman Catholicism, and regretted that the week had only one Monday. There was a chamberlain of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, von Suckow, also a Catholic convert, concerned with building Catholic churches in Mecklenburg. There was the former commander of the late Prussian king’s bodyguard, Oldwig von Uechtritz-Steinkirch, who looked like, and was often mistaken for Frederick William IV.

It would seem that the aristocracy among the black-Monday-friends were all byvshie liudi, has-beens, as the Russians would say.  

However, most of them were journalistically quite active against Bismarck, and his then-followers, the National Liberals. Some of Bismarck’s most avid and acid critics belonged to the “black Mondays.” One of them was the Imperial Baron Friedrich Carl von Fechenbach, a political maverick, and tireless pamphleteer against the Chancellor whom he held responsible for the rise of Marxism. Another was the Baltic Baron Eduard von Ungern-Sternberg who together with Franz Fürchtegott Perrot attacked the economic policies of Bismarck. Von Ungern-Sternberg had been converted to Conservatism by Ludwig von Gerlach and Friedrich Julius Stahl, and edited at that time the anti-Bismarckian *Reichszeitung* in Dresden. A third comrade-in-arms against the founder of the Second Reich was Rochus von Rochow, scion of an old Brandenburg family, son-in-law of Count Cajus zu Stolberg. Von Rochow had converted to Roman Catholicism in 1852, and resigned from the Prussian army after the civil war with Austria (1866). From 1874-1877, he edited the *Katholische Volksblatt* in Dresden. Afterwards, he organized Catholic rallies as well as pilgrimages to Rome, and acted as advisor of Catholic prelates and politicians both in Germany and Rome. There was also the bookseller Eduard Bidder, a Catholic convert from the Baltic provinces, who had been sentenced to jail in libel suits for publishing a pamphlet on “Political Promoters and Corruption in Bismarck’s Germany” (1877) by Rudolph Meyer, leader of an “Anti-Chancellor-League,” and “Two Letters concerning the Jewish Question” (1881) by Hermann von Gauvain.

The names of Fechenbach, Perrot (Ungern-Sternberg’s friend), Meyer and Gauvain (Bidder’s authors) can be found in the annals of early anti-Semitism, a word which first appeared as a label for a political party in 1879. At a time when modern anti-Semitism “may have begun as a conservative religious and social force” and when the mood of the Catholic Center Party was supposed to have been “to beat Bismarckian Liberalism with the anti-Semitic stick,” the relations of Black Monday and *Ut Omnes Unum* friends to anti-Semitism were more than distant. Fechenbach was an auditor, not a mouthpiece of the Black Mondays, although he sporadically hosted the group after Frau von Massow had departed from Dresden. In 1880, Fechenbach founded the short-lived Catholic-Protestant “Social-Conservative Association,” campaigned for a seat in the Reichstag with anti-Semitic slogans, and was repudiated by the Catholic press. Later, he rejoined the Center Party, and spent the rest of his life, besides fighting Bismarck and suing the former Court Preacher Adolph Stöcker, with

collecting newspaper clippings on current events. He had run the gamut from National Liberalism to Catholic conservatism.

Such side issues must not detract us from the main business of the Black Mondays as well as Ut Omnes Unum, namely, dealing with the traditional problem of German Catholic-Protestant division, and its political consequences. The themes for the Monday meetings were prepared by Julie von Massow. Before supper, articles from the Catholic press—the Historisch-politische Blätter in Munich, The Germania in Berlin, Kolping’s Kölnische Volkszeitung, and the Augsburger Postzeitung—as well as from Liberal, or radical newspapers would be reviewed. Supper was served under the biblical motto, “Let righteous men sit around your table” so that the guests humorously called themselves in contrast to their detractors “men of righteousness.” Then toasts were exchanged; and common concerns about the Kulturkampf, discussed. The Catholic court preacher in Dresden, Hermann Potthoff, (1830-1888) and the retired Lutheran pastor Heinrich Ahrendts (1820-1897) usually acted as toastmasters and main speakers for their denominations.

There was the prominent figure of Ludwig Richter, Romantic painter and illustrator, an “Evangelical Catholic,” who could not always follow the discussion because of his hard hearing, but would not miss the fellowship. There was Carl Seltmann, (1842-1911) a priest from Silesia, then stationed in the March of Brandenburg, later editor of Ut Omnes Unum, and “by Papal and Imperial agreement” canon at the cathedral, and honorary professor at the University of Breslau. There was a priest from the Palatinate, Joseph Dell, (1831-1893) who tried to bring back Döllinger to the Roman obedience, and acted for a while as managing editor of Ut Omnes Unum. Dell was a familiar speaker at Catholic conventions. There was Dr. Maximilian Huttler from Augsburg, priest and publisher, who printed Julie von Massow’s devotional literature.

There were two recent converts whose “roads to Rome” had caused storms of applause and disapproval in the tense atmosphere of the Kulturkampf. Ferdinand von Kaphengst (1854-1902) from Wernigerode in the Harz mountains, like von Rochow and von Massow, a member of Prussia’s oldest nobility, had published I Turn Roman Catholic. Who Follows Me? Who Keeps Me Back? Questions Which Concern Both You, and the Nations.23 Dr. Otto Anger (1830-1897) from Eythra near Leipzig, a former official of state, wrote in 1884 in response to the Kulturkampf What Draws Us to Rome?, and in 1892, God’s Work on My Conscience.24 Anger had many friends in

the Catholic hierarchy the correspondence with whom was later published, and edited a Catholic periodical started by Court Preacher Potthoff. There was Baron Woldemar von Bock, (1816-1903), a judge from the Baltic states, residing in Quedlinburg, who wrote a series of books on German-Russian relations, and the ecclesiastical affairs of Protestantism. Von Bock, a Catholic, possibly a convert, later on published a “Frankfurt popular brochure” critical of Bismarck, which he originally had delivered as a public lecture before leading Catholics.

Besides Pastor Ahrendts and Frau von Massow who had not yet converted to Roman Catholicism, the Lutheran party was represented by the Saxon Superintendent Hermann Opitz (1828-1909), district of Dippoldiswalde. Opitz combined great learning with profound understanding of opposite views, as his Catholic friends testified. He, too, edited a periodical of his own, and authored many articles, books, and pamphlets advocating peace among nations and denominations.

Widespread as it was, the Black Monday circle had not only “corresponding members” who were kept abreast with the exchange of thought by personal letters, but fostered also branches in Munich and Berlin. In Munich, it was Emilie and Bettina von Ringeis, both well known as writers and daughters of a Bavarian scholar and statesman, who held similar soirées. In Berlin, it was Baroness von Buddenbrook who opened her house to the friends of Julie von Massow when she was visiting there. The political leader of German Catholicism, Ludwig Windthorst, said on such an occasion if Frau von Massow lived in Berlin, then her Mondays would become the center of the Center Party.

It was at the Black Mondays that Lutheran and Catholic intellectuals took up the challenge of Dittmar and Krafft to edit a monthly “for understanding and unification among divided Christians.” The contributors would be recruited from the attendants and “correspondents of the Black Mondays;” the readers, from the membership of the Psalmenbund and Gebetsverein. Because Ut Omnes Unum was published from 1879-1901 in Erfurt, it can be considered a continuation of the Conference of 1860. As a publishing venture, this paper was not without precedent. A periodical devoted to reunion had been started in 1782 by a Josephinist monk from Vienna, and the Lutheran historian Justus Möser of Osnabrück, and reached the number of 778 pages within half a year. Neither was the idea of a Protestant-Catholic society sponsoring a publication for reunion native to Dittmar and Krafft. The latest proposal in a long string of such plans had been made in 1828 by an anonymous Catholic contributor to Hesperus, an

25. The full title was Ut omnes unum, Auf dass Alle Eins seien. Correspondenzblatt zur Verständigung und Vereinigung unter den getrennten Christen. The only extant copies which cover the years 1880-1886 are in the Erbschöflische Akademische Bibliothek, Paderborn, West Germany. I have listed the main contributors as far as they could be identified as well as their major articles in Katholische und lutherische Ireniker (Göttingen, 1968), chapter VI.
“encyclopedic journal for educated readers,” published in Stuttgart. The writer in *Hesperus* had “Protestant Catholics” in mind, who wanted to make straight the path to reunion by restoring “pure Catholicism” which would be the common denominator of both parties.

When *Ut Omnes Unum* was published, the inter-confessional point of gravity had shifted. Under its auspices, “Catholic Protestants” were to be drawn into the orbit of Roman Catholicism. The editors, Seltmann and Dell, used the method of Exposition, a *methode de ré-union* which had been developed in the 17th century by François Veron, S. J., Bishop Bossuet, the Brothers de Walenburch, and others. This method consisted in explaining to Protestants patiently and persistently the true Catholic teachings, so that they would realize there was no reason for separation and that the Reformation had been a misunderstanding. This was done with special reference to the Augsburg Confession of 1530. Lutherans should return to the Catholic articles of this basic confession of their church, and disregard the Protestant ones, as many in the 19th century were doing. The Augsburg Confession needed completion by the fullness of the Catholic faith.

Along the lines of Exposition, Johannes Wächter, a priest from the diocese of Paderborn, wrote on the Sacrament of the Altar as *signum unionis, symbolum concordiae, and vinculum caritatis*. Father Augustin Pischel explained what the Catholic church did *not* teach. The former Lutheran pastor, Georg Gotthilf Evers, a convert, dealt with the allegedly mistaken notion of Justification by Faith. Dr. Anger compared the teachings on this point in Catholic and Lutheran catechisms. Father Hermann Dirichs from Torgau, Saxony, treated the veneration of saints on the basis of the Book of Tobit, the Gospel of Luke, and the *Theological System* of Leibniz. Dr. Ernst, a priest from Franconia, recalled Augustin’s concept of concupiscence, crucial to the Lutheran understanding of human nature, and pursued the related subjects of merits, the fall of man, and sin and sanctification. Thus the doctrines which separated Rome and Wittenberg were discussed over the years in serialized articles. Lutheran rebuttals appeared in a column called *Sprechsaal*.

Exposition was not the only method of reunion employed by Catholic contributors. Julie von Massow, before and after her conversion, advocated liturgical incorporation. Protestants should pray themselves into the Catholic church by taking part in her devotional life. This motion was seconded by Archpriest Isidor Barndt (1816-1891) from Silesia. Barndt, a poet and world traveler, noticed that Protestantism had revived pilgrimages (to Wittenberg and Wartburg), the veneration of saints (Luther, Calvin, Zwingli), and relics (Luther’s inkspot, Schiller’s hairlock, Goethe’s bootjack) as well as mother’s and memorial days. Protestants should return from these copies of the Catholic cultus to the original faith.
Adolph Röttcher (1829-1896), a priest from Westphalia, called for a common effort to overcome the split of the past. Röttcher had written books on Luther's dogmatics, and the blessings of the Reformation. In 1885, he published a “Frankfurt popular brochure” on the attempts to reunite Catholics and Protestants in Germany. Röttcher saw in *Ut Omnes Unum* of which he was a member the latest sign of hope, and recommended historical research in the vein of Lutherans and Catholics like Karl Menzel, Leo, Gförer, Böhmer, Klopp, and Janssen to correct the misconceptions about the causes of the schism. If modern mobility changed the boundaries between the two denominations, and undermined their traditional strongholds, it also brought them closer together, and destroyed inherited prejudices. Peaceful competition in pastoral care and home missions, and an alliance against secularism ought to be the order of the day. In regard to actual reunion, Röttcher advocated the 17th century methods of Suspension and Accommodation. Rome should suspend certain points of controversy, and accommodate defensible Lutheran practices to facilitate the return.

Ferdinand von Kaphengst had no patience with gentle persuasion and the emotional acclimatization of Protestants to Roman Catholicism. He demanded an immediate decision between belief, or unbelief. If truth was one, it could not be found on both sides. Where salvation was at stake, procrastination meant playing with fire. As a convert, Kaphengst knew only the way he himself had gone, and could not envision any compromise.

Equally insistent on unconditional surrender was August Rohling (1839-1931) in his *Catechism of the Nineteenth Century for Jews and Protestants, Which Catholics May Read, Too* (1877). Rohling had been a Catholic seminary professor in Münster, Westphalia, and Milwaukee, U. S. A., before he was appointed to the chair of Semitic Languages at the University of Prague. His *Talmud Jew* (1871) was exposed as a forgery by Lutheran Hebrew scholars in a Viennese court while it played a sinister role in the campaign against Dreyfus in France. Rohling gave a brief guest performance in the first volumes of *Ut Omnes Unum* championing Papal infallibility. Later, his *State of the Future* (1898) appeared on the Index. Rohling, however, declared the decree a falsehood, and was finally forced into retirement by the Catholic authorities. His fleeting shadow on the pages of *Ut Omnes Unum* shows that even such a militant who was as anti-Protestant as he was anti-Jewish, felt himself drawn to the instrument of irenicism.

26. *Unionssuche zwischen Katholiken und Protestanten Deutschlands* (Frankfurt, 1885). The *Frankfurter zeitgemässe Broschüren* were a series of booklets edited by a group of Catholic scholars and prelates, among them the bishop of Mainz, Paul Leopold Haffner. 27. *Katechismus des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts für Juden und Protestanten, den auch Katholiken lesen dürfen* (Mainz, 1877).
The Lutheran contributors—there were only one, or two Reformed ones—generally wanted a friendly “conversation over the fence,” peaceful co-existence, political co-operation, and mutual recognition. An anonymous pastor who, as the editors acknowledged, spoke for many of his fellow clergymen expressed the ideal of parity with a parable by Jung-Stilling. Christendom was an army which shared the same supreme commander (Christ), the same fatherland (heaven), the same banner (Christ’s cross), the same battlefield (the world), the same enemies (devil, flesh, sin, unbelief, lust), the same battlecry (Apostles’ Creed), and the same weapons (means of grace). The different denominations correspond to divisions which distinguished themselves by various arms and colors. They would fight separately until V-Day when Christ was to unite all, and promote them to glory.

The Hessian Oberpfarrer Dr. theol. Georg Christian Dieffenbach (1822-1901), friend of both Ludwig von Gerlach and Julie von Massow, and leader of the Lutheran liturgical renewal in the 19th century, called Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism “sister churches” and branches of the one catholic and apostolic church. His theory was, of course, rejected by the Catholic editors who insisted true unity could only be found on the basis of obedience to Rome, and acceptance of the councils of Trent and Vatican I.

There were three Lutheran divines who in varying degrees approached the problem of reunion by proposing definite steps. The first was Pastor Ahrendts, the Lutheran spokesman at the Black Mondays, a disciple of Ludwig von Gerlach. Ahrendts compared the controversies which had divided Western Christendom to a family quarrel in the course of which one branch of the family left in anger, and settled overseas. After generations, a descendant studied the issues which had caused the schism and was surprised to find that the reasons for the separation were not solely the fault of the other party, as his own tradition would have it. Many misunderstandings could be traced to the passions of the moment. An exchange of views and visits between the separated brethren ended the state of cold war. Should the family from overseas now return at once to the “old country”? By no means, because in all those centuries, it had driven deep roots, and widely spread its branches in the new world. A “sudden transplantation” of a firmly established tradition into the soil of the other would be against nature. Nevertheless, there ought to be a new era of good feeling, a sense of togetherness, mutual recognition and edification, and sympathy instead of hostility.

At a pastoral conference in the Province of Saxony (1864) as well as in “Twenty Theses” (1882) published in Germania, the leading German Catholic newspaper, Ahrendts had advocated papal primacy and episcopal polity for Lutherans. In his 8th thesis, he stated that the 19th century Lutheran understanding of justification by faith
had come very close to the definitions of the Council of Trent. Ahrendts recalled that in his youth it had been a criminal offense to speak of German unification, and yet, this had come about during his lifetime. Why should not his children (most of whom, together with Mrs. Ahrendts, became Roman Catholic) live to see the unification of the church, the sole source of peace?

A systematic theology of peace was presented by Lic. Dr. Hermann Hasse (1811-1892). Hasse, like Opitz, a Saxon district dean, had written several works in church history, and crowned his literary achievements with his “Ground Rules of Irenicism” which in 1879/80 appeared in *Ut omnes unum*, and were published as a booklet in 1882. Hasse felt that Christianity had reached a point where it had to find internal peace in order to survive. Since the Thirty Years’ War, the indifference of the state towards the various denominations had grown into hostility of the world against Christianity as a whole. Faced with this development, Christians had to close ranks. With a profusion of biblical proof-texts, Hasse tried to make the obvious point that the purpose of Christ’s coming was to bring peace, that the common bond of his body was to be peace, and that the earmark of its members was to have peace.

Hasse, however, did not want to have his plea for peace confused with an impatient call to reunion. Reunion belonged to the “last things,” as Luther circumscribed eschatology, or the Age of St. John for which Hasse wanted to prepare the way. Hasse was also against doing away with denominational differences. He who wants to cast all confessions into the same mold was like him who tries to cut all trees to the same size. Different denominations constitute the church as all types of trees form a forest. Those who could not see this were unable to see the forest because of the trees, as the saying goes.

The most obliging Lutheran reunionist was Superintendent Hermann Opitz. Opitz spread his idea in a periodical of his own, the *Freimuth*, as well as pamphlets, books and articles. In the issues of *Ut omnes unum* from November 1881 to August 1882, he made a motion towards reunion almost every month. Opitz explained that the Lutheran and Catholic conceptions of justification were but two sides of the same coin. The Sacrament of the Altar could be understood as a eucharistic sacrifice. The offices of pope and bishop might be traced to directives of Jesus and the apostles. Apostolic succession guaranteed the unity and continuity of the church. The priests were called to administer the means of grace, and lead the laity to God through Christ.

Reunion was to be reached by returning to the Reformation which remained unfinished. His generation was called to complete the work of reform in unity, not in separation, Opitz enjoined. This was the

intention of the reformers. The prevention of schism, and the maintenance of unity had been the purpose of the Augsburg Confession. Even the Smalkald Articles contained points still open for discussion. Lutheran theologians should beware of using the confession as bulwarks against the other church. Let us read together the Augsburg, and see whether the demands of the reformers were justified. Let us compare them with the decrees of the Council of Trent, and find out how far they have been met. Taking both sides into account, let us compose a common creed. This would be the logical conclusion of the Reformation, for from the beginning, it aimed at reconciliation.

Opitz published a *summa* of his mediation theology as a “Frankfurt popular brochure” which from 1890-1896 went through four editions. He issued a “Call to Overcome the Schism” in the periodical *Der Katholik*, which also appeared as a pamphlet (1897). He was not only an irenicist, but also, like Hasse, a pacifist. In *Against War, for Peace* (1898), Opitz advocated disarmament, and German fraternisation with France. Opitz is unique among Lutheran irenicists, because he did not mind the Council of Trent, maintained the relatively high position of *Superintendent* against all attacks, and did not change his mind when he was disappointed. In his swan song, *Confessions of a Good Conscience* (1903), he recommended his creed to both Lutherans and Catholics for an appraisal of their own beliefs. Opitz’s confession of faith had included all that which was good, true, and essential in the universal church. With Luther, he had honored the catholic church as the original one, and lamented its division. In his search for unity, he had felt himself in accord with the Augsburg Confession. He had fought against the presumption that *rapprochement* with Rome was bound to lead to moral and intellectual backwardness. He declared himself against the *Evangelische Bund* (an alliance founded in 1886, which wanted to continue the *Kulturkampf* after the governments had made peace with the Catholic church). He called the campaign against the Jesuits the shame of his century. He confessed that he was closer to faithful Catholics than to apostate Protestants. To give up the hope for reunion meant to him the denial of Christ.

The Evangelical Catholicism of Ahrendts and Opitz, however, did not satisfy their Roman friends. Both were rebuked for stopping half-way. It must be noted here that Ahrendts and Opitz represented the *Via media* within German Protestantism. Rooted in Erasmus, Melanchthon, Bucer, Witzel, and Cassander, this tradition was carried on by Calixt, Leibniz, Molanus, and Fabricius, to name only the heads

of this school of thought. Many of its members were willing to accept papal supremacy, episcopal polity, apostolic succession, private confession, transubstantiation, veneration of the saints, and the authority of the fathers and councils as interpreters of Holy Scripture while rejecting unconditional surrender to the Curia.

For six years, the Papalists and the Evangelical Catholics expressed their opinions side by side. Then, the conversion of Julie von Massow (1885) who had been a living symbol of how one could combine the best of two worlds, and the censure of several Lutheran articles by Father Dell who was managing editor from 1886-1891 caused the desertion of most Lutheran contributors. Julie von Massow tried to provide a new rallying point for her estranged friends by founding the *Friedensblätter* (1886), but could not regain her following. For years, *Ut omnes unum* and the *Friedensblätter* competed with each other. Around 1900, the former merged with the latter which continued to exist under the editorship of two Silesian priests, Bernhard Strehler and Hermann Hoffman, until the First World War. Carl Seltmann summed up his *Ut omnes unum* experiences and expectations in two books which appeared 1903 and 1906. The *Psalmenbund* and *Gebetsverein* affiliated themselves with the Archbrotherhood of Our Lady of Sorrows on the Campo Santo Teutonico in Rome. Thus they lived on in a group which was organized in 1450, and has been practicing the prayer for reunion since the time of the Reformation.

The Sisyphus labor of reunionism was revived by the 400th anniversary of the Reformation. In 1917, a Lutheran pamphlet in Leipzig repeated the appeals of Seltmann's last books. Two different sets of 95 theses called for a return to true catholicity as well as for national and religious unity. Between 1917 and 1967, Germany gave

32. Professor Herman Hoffmann, born 1878, ordained 1902, taught religion at the Matthias-Gymnasium in Breslau, and edited the *Friedensblätter* (1906-1909), *Heliand* (1909-1914), *Sobiétas* (1920-1927), and *Selserorge* (1923). He was a leading member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the *Katholischer Deutscher Friedensbund*, the World Alliance for Peace through Religion, and the *Una-Sancta-Brotherhood*. At a meeting at Nyborg, Denmark, in 1923, he advocated, together with the French Reformed pastor Marc Bogner, a reconciliation between France and Germany. In recognition of these activities as well as his scholarly publications in the field of church history, Hoffmann was awarded in 1958 an honorary Doctor of Theology degree by the University of Würzburg. Residing today in Leipzig, he is the last living link between the reunion movements of the 19th and 20th centuries. On Bernhard Strehler (1872-1945), see Johannes Kaps, *Vom Leben und Sterben schlesischer Priester* (München 1950-1954), pp. 89-91.

33. Zur Wiedervereinigung der getrennten Christen (Breslau, 1903), and *Kritiken und Neues zur Wiedervereinigung* (Breslau, 1906).


35. In October 1917, the Lutheran pastor Heinrich Hansen at Kropp near Schleswig published 95 "*Spiesse und Nadel, d. i. Streitsätze wider die Irrnisse und Wirnisse unserer Zeit*" in German and Latin, which called the reformation a deformation, and insisted on a return to true catholicity. Hansen's *Stimuli et olavi* started a high church movement (*Hochkirchliche Vereinigung*) which led to the first dialogue between Lutherans and Roman Catholics in Berlin, Pentecost 1934. — On the other hand, there appeared on the Reformation Festival of 1917, 95 *Leitsätze* which pleaded for a *Deutschchristentum auf rein evangelischer Grundlage*. In the thought trail of these theses, a series of associations were founded which wanted a united German church seeking God the Germanic way, and venerating Jesus as an Aryan hero. The *Deutsche Christen* were only one group among many, most of whom were suppressed by National Socialism which would not tolerate any similar ideology.
birth to the *Una Sancta* Brotherhood (1938) of which Hermann Hoffmann was one of the pioneers, the *Sammlung* (1954), and the League for Evangelical and Catholic Reunion (1960). These movements parallel in many ways their forgotten forerunners in the 19th century.

The eternal recurrence of Lutheran and Catholic reunionism in Germany shows that the catholic conviction the church ought to be one has not been destroyed by the break between Wittenberg and Rome. “Jerusalem was built as a place where one should come together . . . Mend Thou the walls of Jerusalem, O Lord,” prays at present the League for Evangelical and Catholic Reunion, according to Psalms 122, 3 and 51, 20. The divided church has become for Christianity what the destroyed temple was for Judaism. Just as in Israel where the once religious task of rebuilding the temple has become a secular one, so in Germany reunification has turned into a political problem, today as it was a hundred years ago. Could it be that, as Ludwig von Gerlach was convinced, “die politischen Krisen im letzten kirchliche Krisen sind”?  

36. Ludwig von Gerlach in a letter of December 13, 1868, to Adolf von Thadden-Trieglaff, to be found in the Gerlachsches Familienarchiv Faszikel BB/C.