The American Historical Review

81. 1976, H. 4, S. 880f.

KLAUS J. BADE. *Friedrich Fabri und der Imperialismus in der Bismarckzeit: Revolution—Depression—Expansion.* (Beiträge zur Kolonial- und Überseegeschichte, volume 13.) Freiburg: Atlantis. 1975. Pp. 579. DM 42.

Friedrich Fabri belonged to that remarkable group of secular evangelists who during the 1870s and 1880s helped convert Europe to the new gospel of colonialism. Some of them were explorers who returned from distant lands with stirring tales of the wealth and glory to be won beyond the ocean. Others were politicians seeking to gain or retain power on a platform of overseas expansion. Still others were jingo publicists who taught a doctrine of national greatness built on the conquest of dark races in far-off continents. Fabri himself was a member of the theological contingent of imperialism. A clergyman and the son of a clergyman, he started his public career as the administrator of a missionary society in the Rhineland. Disturbed by what appeared to him to be the spread of materialism among the lower classes, he began to see the specter of class conflict looming over the horizon. But might not the diversion of national energies to the task of colonial expansion alleviate this domestic discontent? His *Bedarf Deutchland der Colonien?*, like Seeley's *Expansion of England* and Leroy-Beaulieu's *De la colonisation chez les peuples modernes*, helped prepare the way for the last feverish crusade of the white man to subjugate the world.

Fabri has now found a serious scholarly biographer in Klaus J. Bade, who deals in minute detail with Fabri's life from the early days in the mission house in Barmen to the period of national prominence when he was one of the leaders of the colonial movement. The author, accepting the recent thesis of Hans-Ulrich Wehler, believes that German imperialism was the product of internal tensions which state and society sought to externalize through the acquisition of overseas possessions. The depression of the 1870s and the growth of radicalism persuaded the ruling classes that only success abroad could divert public attention from mounting discord at home. Fabri, of course, like most ideologues of expansionism, never admitted to others or to himself that he was merely trying to palliate the domestic crisis of a nation torn between authoritarian traditions and democratic aspirations. To him the establishment of colonies was motivated by the same selfless concern for the welfare of man as his own early interest in the poor and exploited textile workers of the Wupper Valley. The objective of imperialism, he argued, should be the "education of the native for labor," the improvement of his material condition, and the elevation of his spiritual outlook. Without realizing it, he provided a mantle of idealism for a policy of ruthless oppression.

Bade pursues the career of his protagonist through all its winding byways. Although from

time to time he links Fabri to the broad currents of German political and social life, his emphasis rests largely on the man and his activities. The scholarship is beyond reproach, at least in the technical sense; how can anyone quarrel with a work in which some 150 pages of notes and 40 of bibliography buttress a text of 360 pages? The research that has gone into the making of this book—unpublished sources, newspapers, journals, minutes and countless secondary works—is prodigious. But does Fabri deserve all this labor of love? Perhaps it is unchivalrous even to ask the question. Those who are very much interested in his life can now turn to a biography that will satisfy the most voracious appetite. Those, on the other hand, who care less about him than about the movement he represented will find occasional insight and illumination, even if they do not follow in all its intricacies the career of the Rhenish clergyman who became an apostle of imperialism.

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