

RACE AND SPACE: THE RADICAL NATIONALISM OF THE PAN-GERMAN
LEAGUE

by

JENNIFER ADELE SCHWARTZBERG

(Under the Direction of John H. Morrow)

ABSTRACT

The Pan-German League's push for colonial expansion was based on two ideas: race and space. These concepts emerge as the critical ideological values linking German ethnic superiority with *Lebensraum* to support a new greater German empire that stretched across Europe and Africa. In turn, these values of race and space, as articulated in the Pan-German League's weekly journal, the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, found expression in a discourse of radical nationalism. The Pan-German League was committed to a racially and ethnically exclusive German *Volk*, which could only be achieved through the conquest of neighboring European territories and colonial lands, especially in Africa. A racial vision of true Germans was thus ideologically combined with a vision of a global spatial reordering.

INDEX WORDS: Pan-Germanism, social Darwinism, German colonialism, Alldeutscher Verband, Alldeutsche Blätter, Pan-German League

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JENNIFER ADELE SCHWARTZBERG

BA, Louisiana State University, 2005

MA, University of Georgia, 2007

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JENNIFER ADELE SCHWARTZBERG

Major Professor: John H. Morrow

Committee: Miranda Pollard
John Short

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
July 2010

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my grandparents, Lorelei Cazaubon and Betty and Harvey Schwartzberg. They have taught me the value of perseverance and the importance of unconditional love.

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Chapter 1: *Heraus gegeben vom Alldeutschen Verbands*

The pages of the *Alldeutsche Blätter* (*The Pan-German Leaves*) are filled with headlines about Germany's place on the international stage: every issue of the journal contains articles about potential expansionist efforts into Brazil, Morocco, or Samoa, worried letters that warn against threats to Germany from England, Russia, and Austria-Hungary, and editorials that urge readers to preserve their sense of *Deutschtum*, or "Germanness," at all costs. For the readers of the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, most of whom were members of its publishing organization, the *Alldeutscher Verband*, or Pan-German League, these threats were ominous and real. Since German unification in 1871 failed to bring about their sought after *Großdeutschland*, the Pan-Germans remained on the offensive, hoping to rally widespread support for a united kingdom of ethnic Germans.

"We [the German people] want territory, and not merely colonies," wrote Ernst Hasse, the first chairman of the Pan-German League, in 1908. "We want territory," he continued, "even if it be inhabited by foreigners, that we may mark out its future in accordance with our needs."¹ An article published in 1919 in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, entitled "Should we reclaim our colonies?" presented another

¹ Ernst Hasse, *Weltpolitik, Imperialismus und Kolonialpolitik* (Munich: 1908), as cited in Charles Andler, *Pan-Germanism: Its Plans for German Expansion in the World* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1915), 28.

view of German colonialism: "The German people have the obligation to nourish their own culture, but not the culture of another people. Also, because culture is not absolute, but a function of race, it is absolutely impossible to transmit one's own culture to such distantly racially related peoples, such as the inhabitants of the tropics."² These two statements - Hasse's insistence on the need for colonialism as a way to accommodate ethnic Germans and the *Alldeutsche Blätter's* assertion that the German culture stood fundamentally higher in respect to that of colonized people - represent the two prongs of the Pan-German League's colonial ideology.

Pan-Germanism, in its most basic sense, was a movement to unite ethnic Germans within a greater Germany. The Pan-German movement began to gain popularity, along with German nationalism, in the late part of the 19th century, after German unification.³ The Pan-Germans' radical brand of conservative, populist nationalism stood in stark opposition to the government's liberal nationalist stance.⁴ The advocates of a *Großdeutschland* did not simply disappear after 1871, but continued within organizations such as the Pan-German League. The League's ideology revolved around the advocacy of a greater German empire that could unite all ethnic Germans and revive and sustain *Deutschtum* -

² „Sollen wir unserer Kolonien zurückfordern?“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 15 February, 1919.

³ Friedrich Foerster, "PanGermanism," in *European Ideologies*, ed. Felix Gross (New York: F. Hubner, 1948) 746.

⁴ Geoff Eley, *From Unification to Nazism* (Massachusetts: Allen & Unwin, Inc., 1986) 80.

that is, “Germanness” with regard to language, culture, and tradition.⁵

The Pan-German League’s roots took shape in an 1886 meeting of the *Allgemeiner deutscher Kongress zur Förderung überseeischer Interessen Deutschlands* (General German Congress for the promotion of the interests of Germany overseas), in which Carl Peters, the preeminent German explorer of Africa, called together several German societies that took an interest in colonial expansion. This cooperative ultimately failed, however, due to the inability of the different organizations to agree on their ultimate aims and strategies.⁶ Peters, therefore, in 1890 founded the *Allgemeiner deutscher Verband*, the direct predecessor of the *Alldeutscher Verband* (Pan-German League), in order to rally support for a more aggressive policy of colonial expansion. Peters and other pro-expansionist Germans were particularly spurred to action by the Anglo-German treaty of July 1890, in which Germany agreed to recognize British protectorates in Zanzibar.⁷

The Pan-German League was founded on a stance of aggressive colonial expansion, and the issue remained a central focus throughout their existence until the group was dissolved in 1939.⁸ Whereas the earlier years of the League’s expansionist stance promoted a somewhat peaceful annexation of new territories, during and after the First World War emphasis shifted to regaining their former colonies, often promoting the use of force.

⁵ Austin Harrison, *The Pan-Germanic Doctrine* (New York: Harper, 1904) vii.

⁶ Mildred Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League, 1890-1914* (New York: Columbia University, 1924) 20, 22, 25; Roger Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German : A Cultural Study of the Pan-German League, 1886-1914* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1984) 25.

⁷ Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 26.

⁸ Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 6.

Their promotion of and justification for German expansion rested upon two concepts: the inherent racial superiority of ethnic Germans over non-German native populations and the need for an expanded German territory which could accommodate a growing number of ethnic Germans, both on the continent and overseas. Other reasons, such as economic growth (the search for and acquisition of raw materials and new markets) and national defense (gaining border territories) factored into the League's ideology, but were secondary justifications for colonialism.

The Pan-German League's stated goals make evident the primacy of colonialism within their ideology. These goals include "quicken[ing] the patriotic self-consciousness of Germans" by awakening and fostering the "sense of racial and cultural kinship of all sections of the German people."⁹ Furthermore, the League urged its members to aid in sustaining the struggle in support of *Deutschtum* worldwide, promoting an active policy of furthering the colonial movement, supporting German interests domestically and abroad, and "embracing and uniting" all Germans on the globe. An addendum to these objectives explains that a "conscious, active ethnographic policy must be pursued to suppress the enemies of *Deutschtum* within the German boundaries," in order to attain the Pan-German League's ultimate goal of a greater German Empire, of which the German people "must become the real ruler."¹⁰ The Pan-

⁹ Harrison, *The Pan-Germanic Doctrine*, 28 and Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 95.

¹⁰ Harrison, *The PanGermanic Doctrine*, 28.

Germans believed that ethnic Germans, because of their hereditary superiority, had a responsibility as a “world power” to hold sway over less developed nations.¹¹

The Pan-German League’s official membership circular asserts that the German people have grown apathetic towards a “marked national feeling,” and that the majority of Germans are indifferent and disinterested in supporting the interests of *Deutschtum*. The pamphlet warns that while Germans spend their time and energy on economic interests and social questions, other nations “defend energetically the holy possessions of their race.” Furthermore, the League proclaims, Germany’s development did not end in 1871: “We ought not to forget that beyond the boundary-lines compassed by the black, white, and red flag thousands of Germans reside; that the German nation is justified and in duty bound, no less than other nations, to take its share as a dominant power in the history of the whole world; and that, in our progress towards the position of a world power, we only took the first step when the German Empire was founded.”¹²

The membership of the Pan-German League was composed mostly of middle-class men who lived in urban areas. The majority of these men worked as teachers, civil servants, doctors, or lawyers, but the League also counted among

¹¹ David Starr Jordan, “The Ways of PanGermany,” *The Scientific Monthly* (January 1917) 29.

¹² Harrison, *The Pan-Germanic Doctrine*, 27.

their members a large numbers of University professors and scientists.¹³ One journalist who visited a local meeting of the *Alldeutscher Verband* was surprised to see that leading bankers, industrialists, and prominent delegates from all over the world were present, representing the “elite of far-flung German power.”¹⁴ In 1903, forty-one members of the Reichstag held membership in the Pan-German League.¹⁵ The Pan-Germans were overwhelmingly highly educated, well traveled, and if not wealthy, at least financially comfortable.¹⁶

Studies of the Pan-German League prior to World War II often described the group as a harmless group of idiot schoolboys or an “insignificant bunch of fanatics.”¹⁷ However, German historiography since 1945 has tended to portray Pan-Germanism, and the Pan-German League in particular, as malicious, foreboding precursors to National Socialism. For instance, Roland G. Usher’s pronouncement in 1913 that Pan-Germanism is “merely [German] self-preservation” contrasts starkly with Friedrich Foerster’s assertion in 1948 that the Pan-German form of German nationalism is “the mouth...[of] the legendary serpent whose poison-swollen mouth produced a new head for every one destroyed.”¹⁸ David Starr Jordan relates that, in 1917, the majority of the world viewed the League as “a mere handful of theorists” and “extremist dreamers of world power, hardly to be taken seriously.” Jordan himself, however, cautions

¹³ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 103; Andler, *PanGermanism*, 29.

¹⁴ Foerster, *European Ideologies*, 761.

¹⁵ Harrison, *The PanGermanic Doctrine*, 31.

¹⁶ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 104-5.

¹⁷ Harrison, *The PanGermanic Doctrine*, 29; Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 218.

¹⁸ Roland G. Usher, *Pan-Germanism* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1913) 232; Foerster 762.

that the Pan-German League's ideology acts as a conspiracy against the freedom of the German people, whose main goal is to exchange liberty for security.¹⁹

However, as Roger Chickering points out, the Pan-German League was an object of intense controversy long before the National Socialists appropriated many of the same arguments and demands.²⁰ From the beginning of the group's existence their xenophobia, radical demands, and extreme nationalism relegated them to a more marginal position in politics and society and placed them in a middle of an international debate over the merits and detriments of German nationalism. The London *Times* branded the League the "*enfant terrible* of German chauvinism" in an 1899 article and French journalists accused the League of controlling the major political parties in Germany, with full backing from the German government.²¹ Historian David Starr Jordan labeled the League as "ambitious, ruthless, [and] scornful of public opinion," in a 1917 article.²²

Thus, the main historiographical debate about the Pan-German League, which began to garner interest in the first decade of the 20th century, focused on whether the League was, as Theodore Mommsen called them, a group of "national fools," or a legitimate organization that could influence the great public and government policy.²³ After 1945, however, the way that many scholars viewed the League's impact on larger society changed: instead of falling in line

¹⁹ Jordan, "The Ways of PanGermany," 33, 35.

²⁰ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 1.

²¹ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 2.

²² Jordan, "The Ways of PanGermany," 27.

²³ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 2-3.

with earlier historians who portrayed the Pan-German League as an insignificant group of extremists, scholars began to villify the League as a group of “extraordinarily skilled propagandists” who successfully swayed large portions of the German population with their rhetoric.²⁴

Few scholars have addressed what Roger Chickering, in his 1984 book *We Men Who Feel Most German*, termed the “enigma” of the Pan-German League.²⁵ The majority of studies on the League have focused on its activities, membership, and political ties, instead of its ideological structure. Scholars have yet to produce an extensive analysis of the Pan-German League’s plan of radical nationalism, particularly with regard to its promotion of colonialism. Chickering’s own in-depth study of the Pan-German League only marginally references their advocacy of colonial expansion, and only with regard to the group’s progressively strained relationship with the German government.²⁶

Several early texts, such as Austin Harrison’s *The Pan-German Doctrine* (1904) and Charles Andler’s *PanGermanism* (1915) address the League’s absolute insistence on colonial expansion by drawing upon the writings and speeches of League members. Harrison labels the group as “mere prophets today,” who may soon become the leaders of a “great national movement of union.”²⁷ Although Harrison seems to admire the lofty goals of the League, he also includes a

²⁴ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 8.

²⁵ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 2.

²⁶ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 33-40.

²⁷ Harrison, *The Pan-Germanic Doctrine*, 23.

lengthy comparison of what he sees as the “rational imperialism of modern Germany” as compared with the Pan-German League’s “intensely national” colonial stance.²⁸ Andler’s text, which analyzes various speeches and writings of League members, demonstrates the vehement and racial nature of the Pan-German League’s call for German expansion. The group’s plan for expansion on the continent bears a particular focus in this text, such as Ernest Hasse’s assertion that the League should “obviously seize every opportunity of re-uniting the German Empire” of ethnic Germans.²⁹

Otto Bonhard’s *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, published in 1920 as an official history of the League, was the first to provide a thorough chronology of the founding and history (through to 1920) of the Pan-German League. Including insight into the League’s official positions on German foreign policy, colonial policy, and the Pan-German “mind,” Bonhard’s study investigated links between German scholarship, philosophy, the State, and spirituality. As the League officially sanctioned Bonhard’s text, it provides, through literature that the group was often hesitant to offer to outsiders, a concise and comprehensive look at the official stances of the Pan-Germans. At the same time, precisely because Bonhard was writing under the auspices of the League itself, as the editor of the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, nonetheless, he does not provide any critical examination of the Pan-German League’s policies or ideologies. Chickering labels Bonhard’s text

²⁸ Harrison, *The Pan-Germanic Doctrine*, 49-50.

²⁹ Ernest Hasse, *Deutsch Grenzpolitik*, 53, as cited in Andler, *Pan-Germanism*, 28.

as the first in a line of “German-national” historiographic texts, which is written as a defense of the Pan-German League’s racial rhetoric and push for expansion.³⁰

Mildred Wertheimer’s 1924 dissertation, the first scholarly study of the Pan-German League, provides an analysis of the League’s structure and the composition of its membership, but only briefly touches on the Pan-Germans’ ideology, as her access to sources was quite limited. Wertheimer relates that, when she contacted the League’s main office in Berlin to request material on the group’s history, she received a response that read in part: “The *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes* by Lieutenant Colonel Bonhard is the best source from which you can learn the incontestable history of our League. I do not believe that you will find it necessary to compile such a history after you have read the aforementioned work.”³¹ Therefore, although Wertheimer strives to present a thorough analytical study of the Pan-German League’s history and significance, she was obviously hindered by a lack of sources.

Regardless, she does manage to produce an insightful and comprehensive analysis of their membership, activities, and history based on the limited sources to which she gained access. Although Wertheimer describes the members of the League as insignificant and fanatical, she does caution that their “distinctly bad” and “aggressively egotistical” stance on German expansion could have dire

³⁰ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 5 and Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 126.

³¹ Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 125-126.

consequences for other European countries.³² Wertheimer asserts that the League's literature and activities served to awaken Germans to an "understanding of their inherent greatness" and make them "sensitive to the slightest, even to an imaginary, reproach to their national honor." The desire for expansion was a natural one, according to Wertheimer, as additional territory would serve as a "natural outlet" for German "enthusiasm, feeling[s] of patriotism, [and] nationalism."³³ Ultimately, Wertheimer asserts that the League may be regarded as a "direct outgrowth of the desire in Germany for colonial expansion," but neglects to more fully analyze the underpinnings of their push for colonialism.³⁴

Chickering focuses his own research on a cultural analysis of members' activity within the Pan-German League, whom he terms "the most active and radical" of all the major patriotic movements.³⁵ Culture, in Chickering's perspective, is the "symbolic organization of social experience," and therefore the symbolic dimension of the League's activity holds the key to the groups' significance.³⁶ By examining the social psychological and cultural anthropological underpinnings of the League members' activities, Chickering presents a vivid inquiry into the intellect behind the Pan-German League's ideology and actions.

³² Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 186, 218.

³³ Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 120.

³⁴ Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 20.

³⁵ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, ix.

³⁶ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 16, 17.

However, Chickering asserted that, although the Pan-German League has been “one of the most intensively studied phenomena” in modern German history, crucial aspects of the group still remained an “enigma.” The reason for the League’s enigmatic status, according to Chickering, was the lack of attention that scholars had paid to the appeal of the League’s radical nationalism in Imperial Germany.³⁷ In particular, Chickering claimed that historians had wholly neglected the response of ordinary Germans to the League’s programs. Consequently, Chickering’s own work addressed the German public’s relationship to the Pan-German League’s ideology and cultural symbolism.

Arguably, however, *We Men Who Feel Most German* does not adequately pursue what Chickering identified as German “radical nationalism” with regard to the League’s stance on colonialism. This is a curious omission given the popularity of the concept of national identity and the idea of a *Großdeutschland* following German unification in 1871. The Pan-German League participated in this widespread public discourse on nationalism by advocating German expansion. Whereas Chickering approaches the issue from a standpoint of social psychology and cultural anthropology, my analysis of the League’s nationalism will stem directly from their own sources. By examining the League’s newspaper and its official histories, I will evaluate the ways in which the group used ideas of race and space to promote German colonialism.

The Pan-German League often employed the issue of race within the

³⁷ Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 2.

context of their support for colonialism, particularly as a means of justifying German expansion. Praising ethnic Germans for their innate superiority while simultaneously denouncing the hereditary inferiority of other “races” allowed the Pan-Germans to rationalize their enthusiasm for German control of native populations. The pseudo-science of Social Darwinism played a large part in this racial ideology. Ernst Hackel, a founding member of the Pan-German League, was a German scientist and proponent of evolutionary theory whose publications about race and expansion found widespread support not only from League members but also at large in German society during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.³⁸ Hackel worked as a liaison between the elite scientific community and the “ordinary men” of the Pan-German League, and played an instrumental role in creating the social Darwinist and racial elements of the League’s program. Through his affiliation with the League, Hackel lent an air of scientific credibility to the group’s racial ideology that, because of the widespread popularity of his own writing, resonated deeply through German society.³⁹

In the Pan-German League’s view, innate and fundamental differences between races created a hierarchy and necessitated German control over “lesser” people, which in turn mandated German expansion. Therefore, race and

³⁸ Otto Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes* (Leipzig: Theodor Weichel, 1920) 184.

³⁹ Daniel Gasman, *The Scientific Origins of National Socialism: Social Darwinism in Ernst Hackel and the German Monist League* (New York: American Elsevier Inc, 1971), 129.

expansion were inseparable, particularly with regard to colonialism. One editorial in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* avowed that “our colonial policy must remain [grounded] in racial politics,” as it would be the only way to “preserve the dignity of our nation” while simultaneously accomplishing moral education and elevation of natives.⁴⁰ In this way, race and expansion were inextricably bound together – German colonialism was necessitated through German obligation to expand both in order to provide for themselves and for the betterment of indigenous populations.

Lebensraum, the concept of expanded living space for the German population, served as a second ideological justification for the Pan-German League’s colonialism. Because the League supported the idea of a “greater Germany” through the unification of all ethnic Germans, the need for a greater amount of territory both on the continent and overseas was a constant concern. The drive behind the League’s expansionism primarily focused on establishing political and cultural control over native populations, but economic interests played a secondary role in their view. One editorial in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* proclaimed that the Pan-Germans “demand elbow room...space to increase our power, space to rule.”⁴¹ The ultimate goal of the League’s expansionist aspirations was to achieve a “true *Nationalstaat*,” wherein ethnic Germans would

⁴⁰ „Was errettet uns aus der Kolonial-müdigkeit?“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 13 February, 1904.

⁴¹ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 1913.

dominate all other ethnic minorities.⁴²

But in its most basic sense, the Pan-German League's push for expansion was rooted simply in race and space. "The ultimate and loftiest aim," reads one of the League's pamphlets, "of the Pan-German League...is to unite all of the countries of Central Europe...into a Great German Federation."⁴³ The Pan-German League was simultaneously committed to a racially and ethnically exclusive German *Volk* and engaged in advocating the need for a concomitant growth of Germany itself. This Greater Germany would be achieved through the conquest of neighboring European territories and colonial lands, especially in Africa. A racial vision of true Germans was thus ideologically combined with a vision of a global spatial reordering. In this way, the concepts of race and space work together to form the Pan-German League's stance on colonialism.

This study of the Pan-German League's radical nationalism focuses on their advocacy of colonial expansion. I will address the ways in which the League used the broad concepts of race and space to promote colonialism by analyzing material and using examples from the *Alldeutsche Blätter* and Otto Bonhard's *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*. Chapter 2 addresses the Pan-German League's advocacy of a greater Germany, a *Großdeutschland*, the ideological ways in which they promoted this concept, and their reasoning behind this promotion. This chapter further analyzes the League's enthusiasm for expansion by

⁴² Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 100.

⁴³ *Deutschvölkischer Katechismus, Alldeutscher Verband* (Berlin, 1914), as cited in Coole and Potter, *Thus Speaks Germany*, 242.

examining the idea of *lebensraum*, living space, and the manner in which the group's literature encouraged enthusiasm for expansion. In Chapter 3 my examination of the Pan-German League's texts shifts to their racial ideology by investigating the ways in which the group utilized their *Rassenstandpunkt*, racial standpoint, to garner support for expansion. The fourth chapter of this thesis focuses on the Pan-German League's concept of *Deutschtum*, the all-important, all-encompassing concept of German culture, language, and tradition, and its central position within expansionist ideology. Within this text, I hope to synthesize these dual ideas of race and space in order to demonstrate how the Pan-German League's particular brand of radical nationalism acted as such a persuasive and pervasive force in late 19th and early 20th century German society.

Chapter 2: *Großdeutschland* and *Lebensraum*

A 1903 article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* entitled “Our People’s Path to Greatness” proclaimed that it was a natural desire for Pan-Germans to want to fill the world with their progeny. The author envisioned a “future ideal Pan-Germany for our brothers in the misty distance,” in which ethnic Germans would live in a settlement with ample room for expansion.⁴⁴ This image of a greater German empire served as a constant theme throughout the Pan-German push for expansion. The members of the League advocated expansion in order to accommodate all ethnic Germans both during and after Germany’s actual involvement in colonialism. For example, even in 1919 an editorial in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* called for new territories in which Germany could settle its “surplus population” without overcrowding the present country.⁴⁵ The League asserted in 1903 that one of the major tasks “upon which the future of our State depends,” is the “development and population of our colonies.”⁴⁶

The Pan-German League combined the ideas of a *Großdeutschland* (“Greater Germany”) and *Lebensraum* (living space) in their advocacy of expansion. To members of the League, the *Kleindeutsch* option that the German government had

⁴⁴ „Der Weg zur Größe unseres Volkes,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 31 October, 1903.

⁴⁵ „Sollen wir unsere Kolonien zurückfordern?” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 15 February, 1919.

⁴⁶ „Der Alldeutsche Verband und die Beseidlung Deutsch-Südwest-Afrikas,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 31 January, 1903.

decided upon in 1871 was an obstacle to their goals. One article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* asserted that the course of German history “can not possibly be held at the standstill of 1871,” but that if the advocates of a *Großdeutschland* persevered, their aspirations could become a reality.⁴⁷ To create their vision of a *Großdeutschland*, the League aspired to unite all ethnic Germans into a single kingdom. Heinrich Claß asserted that the Pan-German League’s most pressing task was to bring together “the greatest possible number of Germans in closed settlement areas in Central Europe, [and] to persuade the foreigners to migrate to avoid immigration and national hazards.”⁴⁸ To do this, however, Germany would have to greatly expand its present size. Moreover, because the population of ethnic Germans would surely continue to grow, the empire would have to acquire even more land in order to secure *Lebensraum* for the expanding population.

The German people wanted nothing more, according to the League, than to provide sufficient space to accommodate their rapidly growing population. In doing so, however, they would have to establish a *Mitteleuropäische* federation of states, led by the “heart and soul” of the “German element.”⁴⁹ This idea of a rapidly growing, ever expanding population of Germans was echoed by Heinrich Claß in a 1913 speech to the general committee of the Pan-German League in Munich: “Our rapidly increasing nation must assert its right to exist. It must look out for fresh lands...The German Empire must look far ahead in

⁴⁷ „Großdeutschland,“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 8 September, 1895.

⁴⁸ “Die Zukunft des deutschen Volkstums,“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 22 December, 1906.

⁴⁹ „Sollen wir unsere Kolonien zurückfordern?“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 15 February, 1919.

safeguarding its future, and the only way to do this is the resolute adoption of an active policy [of expansion].”⁵⁰

This idea of the “safety” of future generations of Germans was a common theme in advocating expansion. At a meeting of the local Pan-German League branch in Halle, one member asserted that “Our future is to be safeguarded only by the acquisition of colonies of our own.”⁵¹ Furthermore, the Pan-Germans acknowledged that coercion of native populations would be a necessary action in order to settle ethnic Germans in new territories.⁵² This plan, to create a greater German empire by conquering neighboring lands such as Austria, Lithuania, and Poland, and consequently segregating native populations and importing German settlers, would stand as the heritage of “pure Germanism.”⁵³

The Pan-German League asserted that the development of the ultimate German state could not conclude before “all Germans citizens have come to cohabitate in a common nation again.”⁵⁴ The League’s vision of a *Großdeutschland* consisted of the unification of all Germans in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Slavic lands, and other parts of Europe, as well as expatriate Germans living in the United States. Moreover, the League advocated the commitment of all Germans, scattered over the globe, to “secure the Germanic race” by means of

⁵⁰ Wallace Notestein and Elmer E. Stoll, eds., *Conquest and Kultur: Aims of the Germans in their own words* (Washington, D.C.: The Committee on Public Information, 1917), 98.

⁵¹ Notestein and Stoll, *Conquest and Kultur*, 28.

⁵² Andler, *PanGermanism*, 25.

⁵³ Andler, *PanGermanism*, 24.

⁵⁴ „Großdeutschland,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 8 September, 1895.

gaining territory.⁵⁵ The Pan-German League saw their wish for expansion as a “natural desire,” and asserted that an “extension of the Reich” was a conceivable and imminent concept.⁵⁶

One article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* advertised a self-produced “Pan-German Atlas” for sale that displayed the desired *Großdeutschland* and a call to join the League. The article encouraged members to buy multiple copies of the atlas, claiming that if each member ensured that the “small and inexpensive atlas” finds a home in all public libraries and could be “procured as a teaching tool for German language and history classes in all German schools,” then members who are teachers would “gain special merit” for attempting to spread Pan-German ideas among German youth.⁵⁷

Another article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, “The Way to the Greatness of our People,” bemoaned the situation of Germans living within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The author claimed that the welfare of ethnic Germans living in Austria-Hungary had been “systematically pushed to the wall and sacrificed to the demands” of the Magyar and Czech populations.⁵⁸ With the ultimate goal of a *Großdeutschland* in mind, the author warned that war might be necessary to free these Germans from their Austrian oppressors and unite them with their ethnic brothers. This war, asserted the article, would strengthen “*Deutschvölkische* hearts

⁵⁵ „Der Alldeutsche Verband und die Auslandspresse,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 22 October, 1899.

⁵⁶ „Der Weg zur Größe unseres Volkes,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 31 Oktober, 1903.

⁵⁷ „Ein Alldeutscher Atlas,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 4 February, 1900.

⁵⁸ „Der Weg zur Größe unseres Volkes,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 31 Oktober, 1903.

and minds in the Empire” in the “hope that one day [Germans] who have the will and the courage to make a reality” the unification and expansion of the German Reich.⁵⁹

An 1894 article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, “A German Word on South Africa,” praised German expatriates for publicly “keep[ing] a warm heart” and a “keen understanding” of the “task that the German people are still invoked to solve.” This task, according to the article, was the establishment of a true Reich that encompassed all ethnic Germans. One threat to this goal, the author asserted, was the aspiration of the English and Slavs to establish a “world monarchy,” which would inevitably result in a “gigantic struggle for world domination.” The Pan-German goal of a unified *Großdeutschland* did not necessitate the same kind of international impact because they focused solely on providing sufficient space to accommodate its rapidly growing population.⁶⁰

Otto Bonhard explained that the Pan-Germans’ desire for a *Großdeutschland* originated both from “aspirations of ethnic unity” as well as an attempt to accommodate the rapidly growing German population. Bonhard described the evolution of the Pan-German League’s ideology of expansion as “just one more step” in the development of a greater German Reich. The author commented that “stages of racial development” coincided with the movement

⁵⁹ „Der Weg zur Größe unseres Volkes,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 31 Oktober, 1903.

⁶⁰ “Ein deutsches Wort aus Südafrika,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 17 June, 1894.

from a *Kleindeutsch* to *Großdeutsch* ideology.⁶¹ Heinrich Claß proclaimed at a meeting of the General Committee of the Pan-German League in 1913 that “our rapidly increasing nation must assert its right to exist,” by looking out for “fresh lands” for German expansion. In the same speech, Claß declared his hope that the armed forces of Germany will made be of great use, in case “jealous rivals or neighbors should oppose our national needs” of expansion.⁶²

Although the connection between colonial expansion and economic productivity was not a commonly made connection in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, some articles did address this issue. But even when League members wrote about the economic impact of colonialism, race and space played an even greater part in their argument, as demonstrated in “Colonial Issues,” an article published in 1896. At this time, products produced in German colonies, such as coffee, cocoa, and tobacco, were available in considerable quantities in German markets, and at prices competitive to those goods produced by other nations’ colonial empires. League members, however, were adamant that German patronage of colonial goods was a “truly patriotic” endeavor, one that would not only make Germany less dependent on foreign countries, but also recycle “German money” back into the national economy. Thus, the Pan-German League was able to

⁶¹ Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 128.

⁶² Notestein and Stoll, *Conquest and Kultur*, 98.

portray the economics of colonialism as just another facet of their nationalistic ideology.⁶³

As the Germans lost control of their former colonies during the course and aftermath of the First World War, articles began to appear in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* which addressed what the Pan-German League's course of action on this topic should be. "Should We Reclaim our Colonies?" published in 1919, asserted that those Germans who had dedicated many years of their lives to establishing and sustaining Germany's colonies should not settle for the current situation, but should push the German government to regain complete control over the country's former colonies. The article called upon "every intelligent patriot and every conscientious colonial official" who "holds the moral strength to persevere" in this matter, and outlined their reasons for this stance. The first several points relied on each nation's "natural right to...vitality," its skills relevant to the "undeveloped countries of the world," and the obligation to do what is in the best interest of its population. The article also argued that Germans' unique racial point of view compelled them to continue active involvement in colonial expansion. The author's final point, however, simply stated that "Maintaining world peace is better served if you give the German people their way."⁶⁴

⁶³ „Koloniales,“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 20 September, 1896.

⁶⁴ „Sollen wir unsere Kolonien zurückfordern?“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 15 February, 1919.

The issue of expansion and colonial settlement was of such importance to the Pan-German League that it usually took a primary position within the organization's activities and printed texts. Otto Bonhard, in his 1920 history of the League, urged readers to join their fellow League members in temporarily diverting all of their attention and resources to complete the task of reacquiring Germany's colonies.⁶⁵ But even more important, in Bonhard's eyes, than regaining the nation's lost colonies was the attempt to unify the Germans into a "powerful state system." This goal, however, could not be established under what Bonhard termed the "so-called 'small German' state solution" that the nation had adopted in 1871.⁶⁶ Bonhard acknowledged that German unification was the "first, hardest and most crucial step towards the fulfillment" of the Pan-German League's desire for a *Großdeutschland*, but that the fulfillment of the League's goals were not yet realized.⁶⁷

An 1895 article simply titled "*Großdeutschland*" claimed that the German government had banned the League's advocacy of a greater German Reich since 1871, but was beginning to relax this regulation. This "revived idea" had been, according to the League, the "property of our ancestors...for centuries," and had to be asserted.⁶⁸ Otto Bonhard described the relationship between *kleindeutsch* and *Großdeutsch* advocates not as a hostile one, but rather as "more sharply

⁶⁵ Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 112.

⁶⁶ Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 128.

⁶⁷ Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 129.

⁶⁸ "Großdeutschland," *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 8 September, 1895.

defined, successive stages of the same thought." Moreover, Bonhard asserted that even in 1920, the "sharp differences that separated" earlier *Kleindeutsch* and *Großdeutsch* advocates were blurred, and both were more willing to work together for a greater good.⁶⁹ German expansion and further unification was necessary for the "glorious and happy future" that the Pan-German League desired.⁷⁰

In 1895, looking back to the unification of 1871, the Pan-Germans believed that the task that they began more than 20 years earlier would eventually be completed by their sons and grandsons. These men of future generations would be "intimately connected" with their "comrades in race and language, [and] culture and history."⁷¹ The League praised Germans who have "opened the way across the seas" and enabled the German flag to "wave over the shores of the kingdom," but belabored the fact that a real *Großdeutschland* with adequate *Lebensraum* was not yet a reality. The men of the League described a kingdom that would include all of the Germanic tribes in the south and north, east and west, united in a broad alliance to preserve and sustain true German culture. "This," wrote the League, "is the Pan-Germany which we desire, and here lies the task of youth...May the victor be crowned in honor, even if his hair will have been turned gray in the struggle!"⁷²

⁶⁹ Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 175.

⁷⁰ "Großdeutschland," *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 8 September, 1895.

⁷¹ "1870-1895," *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 21 July, 1895.

⁷² "1870-1895," *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 21 July, 1895.

The League's push for expansion was firmly rooted in the group's particular brand of radical nationalistic ideology. Mildred Wertheimer identified the Pan-Germans' intensified nationalism as "both the cause and the effect of a spirit of imperialism," as these two ideologies, when paired, worked to strengthen each other. The League's "frenzied nationalism," which they used to "awaken public opinion to the past, present and potential greatness of the German Empire," was based just as much on the perceived need for *Lebensraum*, living space, as on the belief in German racial superiority.⁷³

⁷³ Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 20.

Chapter 3: *Rassenstandpunkt*

The Pan-German League's viewpoint on race (*rassenstandpunkt*) acted as a primary driving force for their colonial views. Otto Bonhard asserted that the "race question" was one of the "linchpins" of the Pan-German League's development, and the League's "stance on this serious issue must be made known."⁷⁴ The League's reliance on "scientific" means of delineating races and racial hierarchy as a way of justifying expansion and resettlement of indigenous populations evidences the influence of social Darwinism on their ideology. The League's vitriolic discourse spared no group – the French, British, Poles, Jews, Slavs, and Catholics all frequently found themselves victims of the Pan-German League's vitriolic discourse. The concept that racial distinctions were a product of inherent and hereditary scientific processes also led pan-Germans to claim that ethnic Germans' inborn traits delineated them as a superior racial class.

The League's *Rassenstandpunkt* was firmly rooted in Ernst Haeckel's interpretation of Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory. Haeckel's absorption of Darwinian theory was so far reaching that he applied these theories to literally every aspect of human existence – his writing was based on the assumption that

⁷⁴ Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 97.

Darwin's theories provided the exclusive foundation for all sociological, religious, political, and philosophical thought.⁷⁵ This, combined with Hackel's certainty of Germany's absolute superiority over all other nations, brought many of his fellow Pan-German Leaguers to see him as a "prophet of the national and racial regeneration of Germany."⁷⁶ Not only did Hackel believe in Germany's racial superiority, he also strongly promoted the idea of German domination and expansion to the detriment of other, less developed nations.⁷⁷

The ideal that all men were essentially equal drew vigorous opposition from Hackel and the members of the Pan-German League, based on their belief that hereditary characteristics, both physical and intellectual, innately passed from one generation to the next within each racial group. These inborn differences, which resulted in fundamental and significant distinctions between different races of people, heavily influenced the League's developmental and social theories.⁷⁸ Hackel and the Pan-German League stressed this inequality by emphasizing differences in perceived cultural achievements and supposed innate biological, intellectual, and moral traits.⁷⁹ The League argued against what they termed the "reckless talk of university humanity" based on their opinion that different factions of the human race were inherently unequal. German culture, when compared with French, English, or Jewish culture, stood much higher in

⁷⁵ Gasman, *Scientific Origins*, 17.

⁷⁶ Gasman, *Scientific Origins*, 16.

⁷⁷ Gasman, *Scientific Origins*, 4.

⁷⁸ Gasman, *Scientific Origins*, 39.

⁷⁹ Gasman, *Scientific Origins*, 108-9.

quality and value.⁸⁰ Based on this outlook, Hackel viewed the German people as sharing an “organic racial unity” that resulted in both extreme nationalistic sentiments and radical xenophobic beliefs.⁸¹

Pan-German League members frequently echoed these views on race in editorials and articles in the *Alldeutsche Blatter* and in other forums. League members spoke bluntly about the function of race within Germany’s imperial actions: Slavs, Africans, and Jews were frequent targets of racial criticism and were seen as inferior populations that Germans should have control over. Although the Pan-Germans as a whole did not go as far as Ernst Hackel in advocating eugenics and sterilization as a means to control the populations of less desirable races such as Africans and Jews, the League did promote the concept of depriving indigenous populations of land and resources as a means to control their population growth.⁸² Their belief in the hereditary ethnic superiority of Germans, combined with the innate inferiority of other populations, particularly Jews, led the Pan-Germans to advocate colonialism as a way to control these less desirable groups of people.

This hierarchical view of racial categories stemmed from a pseudo-scientific interpretation of Darwin’s theory of evolution which the Pan-German League’s ideologues liberally and aggressively applied to the League’s view of ethnic

⁸⁰ „Volkisches Wissen,“ *Alldeutsche Blatter*, 27 July, 1918.

⁸¹ Gasman, *Scientific Origins*, 42.

⁸² Gasman, *The Scientific Origins of National Socialism*, 157; Weikart, Richard. “Darwinism and Death: Devaluing Human Life in Germany 1859-1920” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 63 (2002) 327.

divisions. This radical social Darwinist theory dictated that physical, intellectual, and cultural characteristics were intrinsically rooted in racial heredity: members of the Pan-German League saw Slavs as possessors of a fundamentally degenerate character and Jews as greedy and materialistic by nature. Ethnic Germans, by contrast, possessed the highest, purest form of intellect and culture, and, as a result, were obligated to share it with the rest of the world.

Häckel's Biogenetic Law, which he first postulated in 1866, and which remained popular among biological researchers until the 1930's, gave supporters of scientific racism, such as the Pan-German League, a "scientific" basis for their racial ideology, which particularly heightened the group's appeal among educated Germans.⁸³ This theory rested on the idea that "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny" - that is to say that, during the course of an embryo's development, it must repeat (in an abbreviated form) the biological development of its ancestors.⁸⁴ Therefore, Häckel surmised, each organism, as it develops its form, retraces the historical progress of its ancestors and carries on inherited racial characteristics and tendencies. Häckel emphasized the application of this idea of inherited essential traits and characteristics to human social structures and ethnic groups by categorizing races according to, as he saw it, their level of evolutionary progression.⁸⁵ An 1899 review of Dr. Guntram Schulheiß's

⁸³ Gasman, *Scientific Origins*, 129.

⁸⁴ Gasman, *Scientific Origins*, 10.

⁸⁵ Daniel Gasman, *Häckel's Monism and the Birth of Fascist Ideology* (Washington, D.C.: Peter Lang Publishing, 1998), 20.

pamphlet “Germany’s Conflicts in the Past and Present” revealed how the Pan-German Leaguers used Hackel’s theory for their own means: the article praises the author for illustrating the clear differences between races as a result of “varying influences” during the course of evolution as a means of deepening the scientific understanding of German racial history.⁸⁶

Many pro-expansionist articles in the *Alldeutsche Blatter* justified their stance with an extrapolation of the idea that each race of humans has been assigned a particular place in the world – the Germans maintain a dominant position due to their innate characteristics, whereas populations such as Slavs and Jews, because of their hereditary weaknesses, should act in deference to more highly evolved races. Similarly, Hackel insisted in his own writing that nations were representative of either higher or lower racial groups, and that Germans were the most evolved race, had “deviated furthest from the common primary form of ape-like men,” and therefore were able to “outstrip all other branches in the career of civilization.”⁸⁷

According to Hackel, the “natural histor[ical] divisions of the human race” manifest themselves physically through differences in skulls, brains, and body shapes, as well as differences in skin color and “very unequal height and

⁸⁶ *Deutscher Volksschlag in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart von Dr. Guntram Schulheiß in “Neue deutschvolkische Flugschriften”, Alldeutsche Blatter, 12 November, 1899.*

⁸⁷ Ernst Hackel, *The History of Creation, or, The Development of the Earth and its Inhabitants by the Action of Natural Causes: A Popular Exposition of the Doctrine of Evolution in General and of that of Darwin, Goethe, and Lamarck in Particular*, trans. E. Ray Lankester (New York: D. Appleton, 1913), 279.

talent.”⁸⁸ Different races have taken their turn as contending world powers, but for the last several thousand years the entire “culture of mankind” has depended wholly on the determination and success of the Aryan race. The scientific and artistic spirit of the German-speaking world has become obligated to lead and nurture the culture of the entire world because of their innate racial superiority, in much the same way that the ancient Greeks and Romans spread their culture and knowledge throughout the world.⁸⁹

However, even the Germans and other pure white races are not immune from the threat of inferior racial influence. The Pan-German League admitted that the “so-called ‘white’ race is by no means uniform, but divided by hair and eye color as well as the skull shape into...intellectually unequal” racial categories.⁹⁰ This racial mixing produced “peculiarities in stature, head shape, hair color, and other things within our nation.”⁹¹ The League placed the blame for these disparities on the fact that none of the present-day population may “boast of unmixed race,” due to the “surging back and forth of war” which led to a “thorough mixing of blood.”⁹² Although the Pan-Germans acquiesced that they were unable to repair the physical results of their “racially mixed” bloodlines, an article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* assured readers that if ethnic Germans “strive for an intellectual and spiritual pattern that embodies the best of our people,” it will

⁸⁸ “Europäische Menschenrassen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 18 January 1919.

⁸⁹ “Die Zukunft des Deutschtums in Amerika,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 21 February 1903.

⁹⁰ “Europäische Menschenrassen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 18 January, 1919.

⁹¹ “Völkisches Wissen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 27 July, 1918.

⁹² “Völkisches Wissen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 27 July, 1918.

more than compensate for the impurities of German blood. Furthermore, the article confidently states that the “damaged blood” currently circulating within ethnic Germans will be fully wiped out within the next few generations, and the full physical greatness of the German race will be restored.⁹³

In stark contrast to the portrayal of ethnic Germans as an innately superior population, Pan-German ideology emphasized the hereditary inadequacies of other people. This worldview perceives other nations and populations as savage, childlike, and lacking education and culture. The English, for example, are depicted as ruthless, unscrupulous, and selfish.⁹⁴ The Pan-German League characterized the Slavs as “one of the oldest...mixed degenerate cultures” presently in the world. The Slavic national character is one of deterioration and corruption, according to Pan-German thought.⁹⁵ As harsh as these condemnations were, the Pan-Germans still held the British and Slavic peoples in much higher regard than African or native American populations.

Therefore, members of the Pan-German League were particularly concerned about relationships between German colonists abroad and native people. One article, entitled “Racial ruination in German Southwest Africa,” published in 1902, asserts that maintaining the “purity of blood” of the German “breed” is a “higher duty of national self-respect” than any other for German colonists. Using the many differences between the “rotten mongrels” of South

⁹³ “Völkisches Wissen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 27 July, 1918.

⁹⁴ “Eine Stärke des Deutschtums,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 12 January, 1901.

⁹⁵ “Alldeutschtum und Allgermanism II,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 12 April 1902.

America and the “thriving Germanic peoples,” the author asserts that the latter’s purity of blood and strong racial consciousness obligates them to reform and rule less advanced populations.⁹⁶

The anonymous author urges concern among all Germans about the increasing rates of intermarriage between male colonists and indigenous women, which undermines the Pan-German League’s efforts to preserve the “strong racial consciousness” of ethnic Germans everywhere. It is the Germans’ duty to assure that the races peacefully coexist, with the “white ruling class...dominating the colored natives and caring for [their] welfare.” This racial hierarchy stems from the German “obligatory consciousness of...racial pride,” demonstrated by the “German national sentiment” on the “problems of mixing alien races” in the colonies. “It is always gratifying, indeed,” writes the author, “to see this demonstration of the racial feeling of the Germans.”⁹⁷ The “racial feeling” of German colonists appears even more clearly when directed towards the products of marriages between German males and indigenous females.

The “illegitimate half-breeds” which these marriages produced threaten, according to the article, the “self-preservation...of the thriving German colonial peoples.” The population of these “hybrids” continued to grow alarmingly quickly, and the Pan-German League called upon German colonists to take

⁹⁶ „Der Rassenverderb in Deutsch-Südwestafrika,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 20 December, 1902.

⁹⁷ „Das Rassenproblem in Deutsch-Südwestafrika,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 31 March, 1906.

measures to ensure ethnic German dominance in Southwest Africa.⁹⁸ A 1906 article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, “The Racial Problem in German Southwest Africa,” reports “good news about the emerging racial consciousness” among German colonists: churches and schools in Windhoek, Namibia have “taken the decision not to allow half-white children in kindergarten” there. Furthermore, German colonists married to non-whites are prohibited from joining the Athletic Club or the Farmers’ Association in Windhoek.⁹⁹

By painting indigenous peoples not only as inferior, but also as a threat to the German race, the League garnered support for the establishment of colonies and rule over native populations. By advocating the idea of a “deep, unbridgeable social and political divide” that separates the “privileged white race from the colored people,” the Pan-German League made race a central issue for German colonialism. The League cautioned against “blurring...the dividing lines” between the races, particularly through intermarriage and the resulting children.¹⁰⁰

Häckel, in his own writing on race and expansion, expressed the urgency of Germany’s racial issues, wherein white Europeans must take immediate and drastic steps to protect themselves, their society, and their future generations.¹⁰¹ Expelling or subduing non-Germans would build a strong, united, and

⁹⁸ „Der Rassenverderb in Deutsch-Südwestafrika,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 20 December, 1902.

⁹⁹ „Das Rassenproblem in Deutsch-Südwestafrika,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 31 March, 1906.

¹⁰⁰ „Das Rassenproblem in Deutsch-Südwestafrika,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 31 March, 1906.

¹⁰¹ Gasman, *Häckel’s Monism*, 30-32.

biologically superior nation that could engage in empire building on a grand scale and progressively subdue the “less endowed, backward nations and races of the world” for Germany’s benefit.¹⁰² More highly developed races, such as ethnic Germans, would eventually be forced to expand out of necessity, and almost always at the expense of “the lower, more backward, and smallest groups.”¹⁰³

Although the Pan-German League advocated a consolidation and expansion of their own ethnic group, they vehemently spoke out against other groups with similar goals. A 1901 article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* reviewed a pamphlet written by a League member that vehemently opposed ethnic unification movements promoted by the English, the Slavs, and the Italians, even as it acknowledged the identical ideology behind these movements and pan-Germanism. Each of these groups stands against the “particularism of the unitary state” and in favor of ethnic unification and expansion to create a powerful ethnic community that could protect its inhabitants’ interests on the world stage.¹⁰⁴

The Pan-Germans particularly spoke out against Pan-Slavism. The author of the pamphlet asserts that the ultimate goal of the Pan-Slavs is that the “effete, immoral influence of Western Europe should be warded off, pent up, [and]

¹⁰² Gasman, *Scientific Origins*, 126.

¹⁰³ Hackel, *The History of Creation*, 271.

¹⁰⁴ “All-Angelsachsentum, All-Slawentum, All-Deuschtum, All-Romanentum von Dr. Albrecht Wirth,” *Alldeutsche Blatter*, 16 March 1901.

destroyed” in order to create a true Slavic nation. The first victims of the Pan-Slav movement were the Lithuanians, according to the pamphlet, who were “swallowed up” by the Slavs in their voracious efforts to create an ethnically clean community.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, the Pan-German League took great care to stress the differences they perceived between pan-Slavism and pan-Germanism: the “broad, lofty goals” of Pan-Germanism stood far superior to pan-Slavism’s objectives in addition to the fact that the Germans had a “special advantage over other breeds.”¹⁰⁶ In light of the perceived threats of other pan-ethnic movements, the Pan-Germans conclude, their mission to create a Großdeutschland to protect the ethnic heritage of Germans seems even more valid.

Pan-German attacks on racial inferiority also often focused on European Jews, particularly painting German Jews as outsiders who posed an obstacle to the League’s goals of expansion and domination. The Jewish question, particularly its solution, was inextricably tied to the future of the German people: the Jewish question had to be resolved before the Pan-German League’s goal of rebuilding of the German nation could begin. The Pan-Germans saw Jews as behind the scenes “wire-pullers” who had distorted the “essence of democracy” and “the beauty and truth of the democratic idea.” The detrimental effects of the Jewish population on the whole of German society was so fundamentally problematic that the League deemed the “race question” one of their ideological

¹⁰⁵ “All-Angelsachsentum, All-Slawentum, All-Deuschtum, All-Romanentum von Dr. Albrecht Wirth,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 16 March 1901.

¹⁰⁶ Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 228.

linchpins.¹⁰⁷

For the Pan-German League, nationality did not apply to Jews – the “race” of German (or any other) Jews was simply Jewish. Heinrich Claß, who served as the League’s chairman from 1908 until 1939, asserted in his autobiography that “Jews are a race” and therefore inherently separate from ethnic Germans, even those who have converted to Christianity, and that their descendants still belong to the “inferior race” of Judaism.¹⁰⁸ One article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* even labels the relationship of the Germans to the Jews as *Gegenrasse* – opposing races.¹⁰⁹ The League’s stated goal, transformation of Germany into a true *Nationalstaat* in which racial minorities would be segregated and deprived of basic rights, served as their solution to the “Jewish question.”¹¹⁰

One particularly vehement opinion piece in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* proclaimed the “absolute unreliability of the ‘German’ Jews” in times of national security. The article, which questioned whether German Jews living in the Sudetenland should be given legal status as German or Czech citizens, cautioned Pan-Germans on the dangers of affiliating themselves with “left-wing parties and friends and the vassals of Judaism.”¹¹¹ These people, according to the author, had made a “full transition” from the “German into the Czech camp,” and

¹⁰⁷ Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 96, 97.

¹⁰⁸ Heinrich Claß, *Wenn ich der Kaiser wäre* (Leipzig, 1914), as cited in W.W. Coole and M.F. Potter, eds., *Thus Speaks Germany* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1941), 224.

¹⁰⁹ „Europäische Menschenrassen,“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 18 January, 1919.

¹¹⁰ Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 100.

¹¹¹ „Die österreichischen Juden,“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 26 July, 1919.

therefore the Pan-Germans should not view these Jews as “fellow compatriots.”

The arguments that this article’s author uses to demonstrate the inborn, hereditary nature of race illustrate the Pan-German League’s use of Häckel’s pseudo-scientific social Darwinism.

Articles in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* about Jews often focused on issues of materialism and greed, leading one author to proclaim that “Jewish materialism has taken over the world!” Even the German people could potentially “succumb to the Jewish spirit,” the article cautioned. But because Germans ultimately realized that “all of the power and all of the goods cannot satisfy the greed of the will,” the superior race was able to escape the clutches of Jewish materialism, and remain true to *Deutschtum*.¹¹² Ernst Häckel theorized that what he saw as the “decadence and morbidity” of the Jewish race, which he termed the “great symbol of man’s rebellion against nature,” represented a clear threat to the healthy existence of *Deutschtum*.¹¹³ Only the renunciation of the “will of the deceptive allurements of this life” could free the Jews from their destiny of eternal suffering, according to the Pan-Germans.¹¹⁴

Furthermore, the *Alldeutsche Blätter* claims that Jews’ hereditary traits included a lower birth surplus, a lower marriage rate, and a greater population drain from German cities than any other ethnic group. As a result, the Pan-German League proposed to prohibit further immigration of Jews into Germany,

¹¹² „Der Sieg des Judentums,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 5 July, 1919.

¹¹³ Gasman, *Häckel’s Monism*, 25.

¹¹⁴ „Der Sieg des Judentums,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 5 July, 1919.

even for those Jews who “really want to ‘be German.’”¹¹⁵ Anti-Semitism, in Häckel’s view, was not a religious issue, but a racial and national problem that, unless the Jewish population was segregated or eliminated, would begin to influence ethnic Germans.¹¹⁶

Otto Bonhard, a member of the League who composed an official history of the group, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, in 1920, defended the League’s racial standpoint by questioning “what is national consciousness in the broadest sense other than the historically developed understanding of all citizens in the most essential questions of their own general existence?” Thus, he asserts, the “story of racism, together with the history of German thought” and the “scientific substantiation of these internal connections” provides the basis for the Pan-German League’s ideology of race and humanity.¹¹⁷ The “scientific substantiation” that the League utilized to prove the inferiority of other races also solidified the superior position of Germans within racial hierarchy. The proper utilization of this position, according to the League, was to conquer their obligatory task: the education of mankind and the attempted betterment of all other races.

One *Alldeutsche Blätter* article, which details “The Strength of *Deutschtum*,” heralds that “as the ancient Germans once rejuvenated the world with their blood, so it is up to us, as their genuine offspring, to do the same with

¹¹⁵ „Die Zukunft des deutschen Volkstums,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 22 December, 1906.

¹¹⁶ Gasman, *Scientific Origins*, 158.

¹¹⁷ Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 182-3.

our spirit, ennobling truth and loyalty.”¹¹⁸ The Pan-Germans treated this concept of *Deutschtum*, an all-encompassing concept of German culture, language, and tradition, as a sacred object that must be preserved and sustained at all costs. The influence of inferior races threatened this goal, but the League held the preservation of *Deutschtum* as their highest goal.

¹¹⁸ “Eine Stärke des Deutschtums,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 12 January, 1901.

Chapter 4: *Deutschtum*

The Pan-German League's racial ideology, particularly as it pertained to their own racial identity, hinged on one concept: *Deutschtum*. This term, which the Pan-German League purposefully kept vague and general, broadly encompasses German literature, language, culture, and tradition. Since the Pan-Germans viewed culture as "inextricably tied to race," for them the triumph of *Deutschtum* symbolized the "natural result of the impoverishment of the less worthy races controlled by the master races, an infinitely superior mixture of peoples." In their view, Germans, unlike other peoples, were a "carrier of a new culture," who paid heed to their ancestors by "taking up the old to create the new."¹¹⁹ For the Pan-German League, the preservation and expansion of German art and culture were the keys to sustaining and perpetuating *Deutschtum* throughout the Reich.

A 1918 article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* entitled "National Information," expressed the League's goal for *Deutschtum* as follows: "The Pan-German League strives for revival of German national consciousness, particularly arousing and maintaining the awareness of racial and cultural unity of all parts of the German

¹¹⁹ "Alldeutschtum und Allgermanentum I," *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 5 April, 1902.

people."¹²⁰ The League saw preservation of their “most eminent *Deutschtum*” as the single most important goal for colonial expansion. They advocated suppression of any outside influence in the creation of political and national institutions of culture, of which the “best parts” depended on the “indigenous blood” of the Germans in order to succeed.¹²¹ German language, culture, and tradition stood in a position of superiority to every other ethnicity, and so it was the duty of the Pan-Germans to eliminate any outside influence that could tarnish the purity of *Deutschtum*.

According to the Pan-German League, knowledge of the innate differences between races was vital in understanding the German role in expansion and leadership. “Knowledge is power!” proclaimed one article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, “Power that will enable us to wield weapons against un-German nature.”¹²² Articles detailing the threat of “un-German nature” that could contaminate the ethnic German population and illustrations of the cultural gap between Germans and non-Germans were frequent themes in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*. For instance, one article proclaiming the uniqueness and supremacy of ethnic Germans asserted that “the Aryan race is virtually the sole beneficiary of personal honor,” because indigenous populations confused and distorted the idea of honor. Only Germans, the “truly magnificent breed of people,” could be

¹²⁰ “Völkisches Wissen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 27 July, 1918.

¹²¹ „Europäische Menschenrassen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 18 January, 1919.

¹²² „Europäische Menschenrassen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 18 January, 1919.

trusted to spread and perpetuate a true culture, that of *Deutschtum*.¹²³

Another editorial in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* asserted that the entire “culture of mankind” depended largely on the German race, as it was the strongest, most intelligent, and most able to create lasting cultural institutions. The author further proclaimed that ethnic Germans were “indebted to all humanity and its future intellectual culture,” and urged his readers to “contribute with all of [their] might” to the goal of establishing Germany as a recognized world power.¹²⁴

Nationalism rested at the center of all facets of Pan-German ideology, and the concept of *Deutschtum* was no exception. The League’s motto, “*Gedenke, daß du ein Deutscher bist!*” - Remember that you are a German! - was frequently used within their writing as a means to create strong nationalist feelings among their readers. Likewise, the League’s mission statement portrayed the group’s emphasis on national identity: “The Pan-German League strives for revival of German national consciousness, particularly arousing and maintaining the awareness of racial and cultural unity of all parts of the German people.”¹²⁵ The *Alldeutsche Blätter*’s portrayal of the Germanic character as the “heart and soul of the human race,” which “has refreshed and newly strengthened all the nations of

¹²³ „Europäische Menschenrassen,“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 18 January, 1919.

¹²⁴ „Die Zukunft des Deutschtums in Amerika,“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 21 February, 1903.

¹²⁵ Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 95.

Europe with his blood” gave its readers an image of the ideal German against whom they should measure their own beliefs and actions.¹²⁶

The Pan-Germans promoted identity as a German above all other affiliations, as the idea of “world citizenship” and universal equality had a negative significance within their ideology. Because of their views on race and society, any philosophy that promoted universal equality opposed Pan-German beliefs. Instead, the League’s conception of “German identity,” as related in an article entitled “The National Character of Germans,” was based on a “humane, liberal, democratic, cosmopolitan, gracious, and freedom-loving” persona. As a result of this particular national character, however, other nations, particularly European countries and the United States, banded together against Germany on charges of “antisocial roughness and intolerant Puritanism,” which they termed “German chauvinism.”¹²⁷

What the Pan-Germans saw as a natural pride in country and culture, other nations usually regarded as aggressive, potentially dangerous self-aggrandizement. The Pan-German League responded to these accusations with characteristic vehemence, asserting that the very attributes other countries condemned only represented German promotion of national spirit. The *Alldeutsche Blätter* advised League members to dismiss this ridicule by “immature fanatics,” and instead focus on the positive aspects of this

¹²⁶ „Völkisches Wissen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 27 July, 1918.

¹²⁷ „Der Nationalcharakter der Deutschen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 28 January, 1894; „Deutscher Chauvinismus,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 13 May, 1894.

chauvinistic movement, which corresponded to the “dignity and power of the kingdom” that is active across Germany.¹²⁸

In “The Way Towards Unification of our People,” published in 1903 in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, the League argued that their nationalist aspirations and involvement were identical to those of Anglo-Saxons, but that the English had more popular support, and therefore their movement was more widely acknowledged.¹²⁹ The article asserts that a *Deutschvolkische* feeling, an emotion of pride and support for German unity and *Deutschtum*, “does not exist in the overwhelming majority of Germans,” and so inhibits the spread of enthusiasm for German nationalism.

The League, in their own defense, asserted that this kind of nationalism, supported by xenophobia, racial theory, and desire for power, was not confined to their own ideology, but was a widespread phenomenon.¹³⁰ In response to the accusations, members of the Pan-German League struck back with similar allegations. One author alleged that England, not Germany, was the nation most bent on gaining as much territory as possible. In the 1894 article “*Deutscher ‘Chauvinismus’*”, a League member charges that “if Mars were found to be habitable, the British House of Commons would immediately ask what the

¹²⁸ „Deutscher Chauvinismus,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 13 May, 1894.

¹²⁹ “Der Weg zur Größe unseres Volkes,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 31 October, 1903.

¹³⁰ „Deutscher Chauvinismus,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 13 May, 1894.

government could do to safeguard the legitimate interests Britain held in this celestial body.”¹³¹

The members of the Pan-German League saw their role in promoting *Deutschtum* as a central one: the League describes itself not only as a “defender of national honor,” but also as a “national motor” for sustaining German culture and heritage. By allowing individuals to gain a deeper insight into the political process and the development of a Greater Germany, the League and the *Alldeutsche Blätter* did their part to sustain and promote *Deutschtum*.¹³² A 1901 article entitled “One Strength of the Germans” demonstrates this positive reinforcement. The article’s author asserted that there was one attribute innate to ethnic Germans above all other nations: loyalty. The author further claimed that “everyone is who is well versed in our history from the onset of the first Germanic tribes to the present” felt justified in this statement. The German reputation for loyalty was akin to a commodity, according to the author, whose authenticity and value was firmly established and bargained for.¹³³

The Pan-Germans viewed nationality not as an inherent attribute, like race, but instead as an outcome of race – the product of a common language and cultural history. One article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, “Aims of a Greater Germany,” asserted that it was the duty of the German people to “soak up these

¹³¹ „Deutscher Chauvinismus,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 13 May, 1894.

¹³² „Der Alldeutsche Verband und seine Bedeutung für das Deutschtum im Auslande,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 16 June, 1895.

¹³³ “Eine Stärke des Deutschtums,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 12 January, 1901.

inferior races," which are "effeminate and morbidly cosmopolitan."¹³⁴ The author pondered the question of why only the German nation seemed to be "burdened with the task" of forcibly coercing "French-speaking, thinking and feeling" people to be "good Germans." Ethnic French were not the only targets of this article – the Pan-Germans should "exclude foreign nationalities" that do not benefit greater Germany, such as wiping out the influence of Poles, Romanians, Croats, and Serbs from Austria.¹³⁵ "*Deutschland den Deutschen!*" – Germany for Germans! This was the Pan-German League's rallying cry against all forces that attempted to inhibit their racial development and against all contaminating elements that could potentially harm the preservation of *Deutschtum*.¹³⁶

Heinrich Claß, the president of the Pan-German League, expounded upon these ideas in a December 1906 editorial in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, "The Future of the German Race." Claß asserted that Germany's continued existence depended on the maintenance of *Deutschtum* – the nation's "physical and moral health, valor...race, culture, education and organization."¹³⁷ Acknowledging that the British and Russian empires far exceeded Germany in terms of population, Claß argued that the superiority of German ethnicity placed Germany first among the cultures of "all the great nations of European races." This comparison was far more important than that of population, according to Claß, because greater

¹³⁴ „Großdeutsche Ziele," *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 6 October, 1895.

¹³⁵ „Großdeutsche Ziele," *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 6 October, 1895.

¹³⁶ Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 75.

¹³⁷ "Die Zukunft des deutschen Volkstums," *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 22 December 1906.

attention to culture and tradition, rather than population, would become increasingly common in the coming years.¹³⁸

The Pan-Germans prided themselves on what they saw as the rationality and logic of their chauvinistic mindset. In one 1906 article, the League congratulated itself on how their views had “penetrated gradually into the consciousness of the cleverer circles of the German people.”¹³⁹ To support this assertion, the author claimed that millions of German citizens consistently profess Pan-German ideas and millions of others think “*Alldeutsch*,” most without even recognizing their ideology affiliation to Pan-German thought. The author declared that many of these people claim to be against Pan-German ideology, and when presented with a pamphlet that acknowledged the similarities between their professed beliefs and those of the League, they were surprised and “sometimes downright upset.”¹⁴⁰

One example that the author gave to illustrate this point was an article published by Dr. Richard Bahr. This article, entitled “National and Nation,” was published in a journal called *Der Türmer* (The Watchman) in early 1906. In the introduction to his text, Bahr identified his sympathies as strongly anti-Pan German. However, when the author related his views, they shared more than a passing resemblance to the League’s ideologies. Bahr’s views include the concept that “foreign” ethnic Germans living outside of the Reich should still be

¹³⁸ “Die Zukunft des deutschen Volkstums,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 22 December 1906.

¹³⁹ “In eigener Sache,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 10 March, 1906.

¹⁴⁰ “In eigener Sache,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 10 March, 1906.

considered German, and should be treated well and cared for by the German government just like any other German citizens. Moreover, Bahr advocated securing diplomatic relations with “relocated German nationals” as a security measure against other ethnic populations, namely Italians and Slavs.¹⁴¹ By outlining Bahr’s ideology, then systematically illustrating the similarities of each part to Pan-German beliefs, the League presented a convincing example of the widespread acceptance of their racial views.

An 1899 article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, “The Death of Popular Nationalism,” berated Germans who attempted to become “world citizens,” instead of retaining primary allegiance to Germany. In this view, even using non-German words in conversation was the first step to becoming a “foreign man.”¹⁴² The author went on to bemoan the “sunset of the German language,” as he felt that the German people did not accordingly appreciate and sustain the value of their language. Dramatically, he cites German author Sebastian Frank’s appraisal of the situation of German culture: “The pomp of the German nation is in rags and tatters, his native tongue stammers, that I might even apply for a foreigner!”¹⁴³ Without national pride, how can Germany ever hope to lead the nationalist struggle, questions the author. The answer is *Deutschtum*. “Deepen[ing] the bed of our character,” rejuvenating the mother tongue, and

¹⁴¹ “In eigener Sache,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 10 March, 1906.

¹⁴² “Volkstümliche Erstorbenheit,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 19 November, 1899.

¹⁴³ “Volkstümliche Erstorbenheit,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 19 November, 1899.

“entering into the folk soul itself,” is the answer to Germany’s lagging sense of national pride and cultural deficiencies.¹⁴⁴

In comparison to other pan-ethnic movements, the members of the Pan-German League envisioned themselves as more timid and modest. The Pan-Germans did not “strive for world domination or the destruction of other nations,” but only for the “cultural affiliation” of all citizens of the German Empire.¹⁴⁵ A review of a new Pan-German text, *Pan-Anglo-Saxonism, Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism, [and] Pan-Italianism*, in a 1901 article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, described the plight of ethnic Germans living outside of the nation. The author portrayed these ethnic Germans, living in Switzerland, America, South Africa, Australia, and elsewhere, as helpless expatriates who were surrounded and overwhelmed by native foreign cultures instead of their rightful inheritance of German culture. The author of this piece urged his readers to help shield their oppressed countrymen and to “prevent [their] absorption” into different nations. To conclude, the author admits that the goals of pan-Germanism are far from simple: “One cannot control race, but only bring people together in cultural cohesion.”¹⁴⁶

As a result of their involvement in the First World War, one 1917 article in the *Alldeutsch Blätter* argues, the German people will, in the future, “have to

¹⁴⁴ “Volkstümliche Erstorbenheit,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 19 November, 1899.

¹⁴⁵ “All-Angelsachsentum, All-Slawentum, All-Deuschtum, All-Romanentum von Dr. Albrecht Wirth,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 16 March, 1901.

¹⁴⁶ “All-Angelsachsentum, All-Slawentum, All-Deuschtum, All-Romanentum von Dr. Albrecht Wirth,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 16 March, 1901.

strive to be better understood by friend and foe.” The author then intimated that the nation’s involvement in the war fell directly upon gross misunderstanding and miscommunication. As an example, the author offered the “bridges of mutual understanding and sympathy” that have already been and continue to be built between Germany and Turkey. The press often portrayed this connection as isolated and irrelevant, but the author argued that these facts throw light upon the wartime situation, and particularly Germany’s position within it.¹⁴⁷

The key to producing culture worthy of being incorporated into *Deutschtum* is to suppress the non-Germanic elements that have inadvertently been absorbed into the German bloodstream. By promoting the Aryan and Germanic qualities inherent in ethnic Germans, public institutions could “evolve freely from the Germanic qualities” while escaping the negative effects that would surely accompany developments based on inferior components of German heritage. By isolating and encouraging Germanic qualities, political and national institutions, language, law, art, design, [and] all the other branches” of German culture would correspond to the “best parts of our indigenous blood.” Even seemingly insignificant areas, according to the Pan-German League, should be treated with this awareness of Germanic qualities in order to give them a “yardstick for the assessment and evaluation” of *Deutschtum*.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ “Völkerpsychologisches,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 28 April, 1917.

¹⁴⁸ “Völkisches Wissen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 27 July, 1918.

Because the Pan-German League viewed German and non-German culture as fundamentally disparate, the League focused on the differences that achieve this discrepancy. One article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* proclaims that the knowledge of the cause of German uniqueness is a power – “power that will enable us to wield the weapons against the reckless talk of universal humanity!”¹⁴⁹ The Pan-German League asserted that in particular areas of *Deutschtum* other nations have achieved excellent results, but no other culture, argued the League, approached the uniqueness and high standards of German national culture. The English, the French, and the Jews were specifically named as cultures that had contributed to the best of their abilities, but had not “unfold[ed] from the native plants of the German people” and so are inherently degenerate.¹⁵⁰

The Pan-German League even reached out to expatriates living in the United States to admonish them on the topic of *Deutschtum*. The League saw the goal of preserving and furthering *Deutschtum* abroad as fundamentally important for the future of German culture in future generations. They advised Germans in the United States to begin publishing their own poetry and philosophy journals, increase their notoriety and performance at American

¹⁴⁹ “Völkisches Wissen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 27 July, 1918.

¹⁵⁰ “Völkisches Wissen,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 27 July, 1918.

universities and colleges, and to participate more fully in American artistic and scientific communities.¹⁵¹

Otto Bonhard argued that the vast majority of Germans living abroad were driven there by “bitter distress from their home country,” whether the reasons were economic, political, or religious. This fact, asserted Bonhard, demonstrated that it was not the worst of the population who left their homeland, and that others will probably follow in the future. This created a state of urgency, continues Bonhard, in which it is imperative for those Germans still living in the Reich to ensure that their former countrymen do not lose their nationality.¹⁵²

An important part of this process, according to Bonhard, was the preservation of the German language in expatriate communities. “The tremendous importance of language for the preservation of the ethnic community is well known,” the author asserted. Germans living outside the Reich had become “estranged from their people,” mainly through abandonment of their native language. Conversely, Bonhard continues, large areas of former non-Germans have become assimilated into the ethnic German population mainly due to their adoption of the German language.¹⁵³ On the point of German expatriates living in Czechoslovakia and preferring to speak Czech rather than

¹⁵¹ “Die Zukunft des Deutschtums in Amerika,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 21 February, 1903.

¹⁵² Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 51.

¹⁵³ Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, 71-2

German, one Pan-German League member wrote in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*:

“When will we finally learn self-esteem?”¹⁵⁴

In a 1902 article in the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, the League declared that “where...the ancient has fallen, new culture blossoms,” citing the Renaissance in Italy, the age of discovery in Spain, and the Enlightenment in France.¹⁵⁵

Germanic blood, according to the League, was responsible for the production of these great cultural achievements, while the blood of “inferior lower classes decreases the energy of the people and laid waste their creative assets.” A consensus, the author argued, about the “German culture ideal” existed in the minds of most Germans, built on the historical foundations of past German achievements.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ “Tschechisch und Deutsch,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 3 February, 1895.

¹⁵⁵ “Alldeutschtum und Allgermanentum I,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 5 April, 1902.

¹⁵⁶ “Alldeutschtum und Allgermanentum I,” *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 5 April, 1902.

Chapter 5: *Gedenke, daß du ein Deutscher bist!*

The Pan-German League endured a relatively short existence – 54 years in name, but less in reality due to the National Socialists’ stringent rules on political organizations. However, the League managed to create an enduring legacy during this time. Their brand of radical nationalism, rooted in racial theory, cultural self-absorption, and land-hungry expansionism, drew international attention and many of their ideas found widespread support in Germany.

The Pan-German League often found no favor in the eyes of non-German such as David Starr Jordan, who described the group’s ideas as “sordid and medieval,” and the members themselves as betrayers of Germany.¹⁵⁷ However, many of the League’s ideas became popular within areas heavily populated by ethnic Germans, particularly due to the group’s nationalistic rhetoric. Local branches of the Pan-German League were established across much of Germany and Austria, and subscribers to the *Alldeutsche Blätter* were even more numerous and widespread.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ Jordan, *The Ways of PanGermany*, 40.

¹⁵⁸ Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League*, 67-69, Andler, *PanGermanism*, 29.

For the League, colonialism itself served as a stimulus for nationalism and Germanic national pride.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, through its ideology of expansion, the Pan-German League was able to incorporate both racial and expansionist rhetoric. For the League, colonial policy had to remain rooted in racial discourse for the sake of preserving the dignity of the German nation and aiding in the “moral elevation” of native populations.¹⁶⁰ Within this framework, members of the Pan-German League were able to concurrently celebrate their own hereditary supremacy and articulate the innate inferiority of non-German populations.

Ultimately, the Pan-Germans’ colonial ideology allowed them to tie the concepts of race and expansion together in an effective and persuasive way. The “true *Nationalstaat*” that the Pan-German League desired required both the unification of ethnic Germans into a *Großdeutschland* and the expansion of the German nation at the expense of local populations. According to their views, German colonialism was not merely an option but an obligation – both for future generations of Germans and for the betterment of indigenous peoples. Thus, the Pan-German League’s motto, “*Gedenke, daß du ein Deutscher bist!*” urged its members to remember not only their own German heritage, but also the obligations that heritage entailed.

¹⁵⁹ Gasman, *Scientific Origins*, 129.

¹⁶⁰ „Was errettet uns aus der Kolonial-müdigkeit?“ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 13 February, 1904.

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