

Bourgeois Social Reform and Empire: The Verein für Sozialpolitik and the Problem of Labor as a Global Issue, 1890-1924.

The middle class social reform movement of at the turn of the twentieth century was a global phenomenon. The globalization of European economies had far-reaching effects in shaping the “social question” and its relation to labour and class relations. This was a development that was recognized and studied by academics at the time. In fact, members of the German Verein für Sozialpolitik (Social Policy Association), including Max Weber, Gustav Schmoller, Lujo Brentano and Heinrich Herkner, all defined Germany’s global economic position in regards to her social policy, which in turn, they believed, was shaped by the issues of class and labour. In Herkner’s words, “the future belongs to the nation that has the best social relations among its citizens.” This recognition lead to a redoubled effort to diagnose the effects of industrialization on the working classes, particularly after 1890 when the Socialist Democratic Party became legalized. Aiming to determine ways to bring about social harmony, the Verein employed the tools of social science to shape a new unique bourgeois language of labour. Scholars have already showed the importance of the work of the Verein in establishing exploitive labour regimes across borders. However, much of the scholarship in this vein focuses on the period before 1890, when Germany’s colonial policy was in its infancy and before the Kaiser’s proclamation of a “New Course” in the nation’s domestic social policy. This essay focuses on the years between 1890 and 1924, when the Verein would subsidize dozens of academic studies on numerous nations in the attempt to gain a hold on the problem of “international Sozialpolitik.” It will show that this endeavour welded German middle class social reform and economic thought to colonialism and produced a unique discussion about labour on the global stage.

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Curriculum Vitae

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Education

- 2012-present** Ph.D. Candidate, History, University of Toronto, in progress
2010-12 M.A., History, University of Oregon
2003-8 B.A., History, Pennsylvania State University
 B.A., Philosophy, Pennsylvania State University

Honors, Grants and Fellowships (selected)

- 2015** German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) 10-Month Doctoral Grant for Research in Germany
2015 Central European History Society Research Grant
2014 School of Graduate Studies (SGS) Travel Grant, University of Toronto
2014 Joint Initiative in German and European Studies (JIGES), Research Grant
2013 Pre-Dissertation Research Award, Department of History, University of Toronto
2013 German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Intensive Language Grant
2012-present Chancellor Henry N.R. Jackman Junior Fellowship, University of Toronto
2012-present University of Toronto Fellowship
2010-12 Graduate Fellowship, History Department, University of Oregon

Conference Presentations (selected)

“The False ‘Triumph’ of the Verein für Sozialpolitik: German Economists between the State and the Transnational around the time of the First World War.” Paper presented at the (Un)making the Nation: A Collaborative Interdisciplinary Conference, Cambridge University, September 11, 2015.

“‘A Work of Most Sober Constraints’: Franz Böse and the Writing of the *Geschichte des Verein für Sozialpolitik*, 1936-39”. Paper presented at the Underhill Graduate Student Colloquium, Carleton University, March 5, 2015.

“Dispossessing Civil Society: The Verein für Sozialpolitik, Gleichschaltung and the End of Social Politics in Germany.” Paper presented at the University of Rochester, Department of History annual graduate conference, Rochester, February 28, 2015.

“Constellations of Crisis: History, Culture, and Society at the Crossroads of Modernity.” Paper presented at the University of Oregon, Department of Romance Languages annual graduate student conference, Eugene, November 19-20, 2010.