

## MARITIME MISSIONS: RELIGION, ETHNOGRAPHY, AND EMPIRE IN THE LONG EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Conference at the GHI Washington, May 24-25, 2019. Conveners: Jenna M. Gibbs (GHI Washington/Florida International University) and Sünne Juterzenka (GHI Washington/Göttingen University). Participants: Markus Berger (University of Bamberg); Roberto Chauca (Latin American School of Social Sciences/FLASCO, Ecuador); Sarah Crabtree (San Francisco State University); Jean DeBernardi (University of Alberta); Renate Dürr (University of Tübingen); Manikarnika Dutta (University of Oxford); Elisabeth Engel (GHI Washington); Jake Griesel (University of Cambridge); Axel Jansen (GHI Washington); Jan C. Jansen (GHI Washington); Jordan Kellman (University of Louisiana, Lafayette); Ulrike Kirchberger (University of Kassel); Darin Lenz (Fresno Pacific University); Eva M. Mehl (University of North Carolina, Wilmington); Peter Hanns Reill (University of California, Los Angeles); Claudia Roesch (GHI Washington); Justine Walden (University of Toronto).

The first panel on “Culture and Communications in Catholic Missions” was chaired by Sünne Juterzenka. Renate Dürr delivered the first paper, “Emotions in Jesuit Ethnography.” By interpreting the letters of Jesuit missionaries with ethnographical content as personal accounts, Jesuit ethnography can be interpreted as an “emotional practice.” Jesuit accounts were key sources for European understandings of religion and civilization, and emotions were important during the early Enlightenment despite its discourse of rationality. Discussion included whether the emotion of “trust” was present in the sources as it is integral to community formation, a key topic in history of emotions scholarship. Viewing missions through the lens of emotions was discussed as an innovative contribution to the history of missions and ethnography. The second panelist was Eva Maria Mehl, who presented “Expanding Boundaries in the Catholic Spanish Empire: Spanish Augustinian Missionaries in China, 1680-1724.” Augustinian and other religious orders in the Spanish Empire had a significant role in the formation of long-distance networks, cultural encounters, and intellectual links along missionary pathways. From their base in Manila, Philippines, Spanish Augustinian missionaries established missions in southern China in the late 1680s and early 1700s. Missionaries’ testimonies reveal their adaptation to local circumstances and the role of the Philippines as a crossroads of communication between China and the rest of the Spanish empire.

The discussion centered on the Augustinian missionaries' cooperation with other religious orders, how they contacted and engaged with their potential converts, and the global nature of their outreach.

The second panel was "Global Pietist Missions," chaired by Claudia Roesch. The first speaker, Markus Berger, presented "The Globality of Providence. A German Minister in New York City and his Views on Mission, God's Kingdom on Earth, and the American Independence in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century." The German Lutheran pastor John Christopher Kunze (1744-1807) strove to create an imagined community of Evangelical and Pietist Christians in America and Europe. In 1770, the Glaucha Institutions near Halle, Germany, appointed Kunze to aid the Lutheran "patriarch" Henry Melchior Mühlenberg in establishing the Lutheran Church in North America. Kunze attempted to establish a mission among Native Americans, but after failing to get European Lutheran support he established ecumenical networks and allied with the Moravians. Discussion included questions about how Kunze took a transdenominational approach at a time when Lutheran Pietists were often in conflict with other denominations. Participants also discussed why Mühlenberg garners so much attention and Kunze so little, which Berger explained is due to the priority earlier research gave to prominent leaders of the Pietist movement. Discussion then turned to the transnational nature of Pietism. The second presenter was Jean DeBernardi, whose paper, "The Open Brethren Movement in London, China and Southeast Asia," explored the Pietist influence on the Evangelical wing of the Brethren movement known as the Open Brethren. In the 1830s, Brethren founder George Müller modeled his work in Bristol on that of the Francke Institute in Halle, Germany, and the London Open Brethren, who founded the Chinese Evangelisation Society in 1850, also looked to the Moravians' global missions. Karl Gützlaff (1803-1851), a key founder of the CES, trained at the Jänicke Institute in Berlin. DeBernardi analyzed early CES missionaries' evangelical strategies in light of these pietist influences. She introduced the concept of "ensampling," showing how Open Brethren missionaries drew on Old and New Testament ideas of discipleship and leadership by apostle's example. DeBernardi, an anthropologist, grounded her paper firmly in archival work. Her conceptual approach provoked a lively discussion of how "ensampling" could be used in mission studies, and of the differences between anthropological and historical analyses. Participants also discussed the Open Brethren's creations of Indian language dictionaries still in use (and available from online retailers) today.

The third panel, “Slavery, Religion and Humanitarianism,” was chaired by Jan C. Jansen and began with Justine Walden’s paper, “Antagonists of Empire: Slavery, Profit, and Italian Capuchins in Congo, 1641-1686,” which explored the Capuchins’ critique of Congo slave-trading. The Capuchins were familiar with Mediterranean slavery and its concept of “just price.” In the Congo, slaves were sold into the Atlantic slave trade for beads and shells, which were important for currency, status, and adornment in Congo. The Capuchins believed this currency was worthless and that the Atlantic slave trade immorally dispensed with just price. They also rejected Atlantic slavery’s scale, and the extreme social distinctions and consumption that the Congo slave economy engendered. Discussion revolved around the Capuchins’ anti-slavery critique and Walden’s premise that they were “color blind.” Participants also discussed the Capuchins’ tolerance towards indigenous practices such as polygamy, and their flexible approach to indigenous converts’ spiritual beliefs. The second paper was Jake Griesel’s “Paving the Way for Dutch Colonial Missions: Jacobus Elisa Johannes Capitein (c. 1717-47) and His Defense of Slavery.” Capitein was an African-born Dutch Reformed minister and missionary taken into slavery by a Dutch colonist as a child and later taken to the Netherlands where he was emancipated and studied theology at the University of Leiden. Capitein returned to the Gold Coast as a missionary under the auspices of the Dutch West India Company. In his 1742 Leiden dissertation, he defended slavery as not in conflict with Christian liberty. Griesel explicated Capitein’s theological and juridical arguments in historical-intellectual context. At the time, there was a major Dutch theological debate between Cocceius, who defended slavery and whose supporters dominated the University of Leiden, and Voetius and his followers, who rejected slavery on the grounds of aversion to wealth and greed. Discussion centered around whether the arguments made in Capitein’s dissertation were genuine or if he assumed a pro-slavery stance to please the Leiden academic authorities. Griesel argued that Capitein’s views were sincerely grounded in written sources, coupled with lack of exposure to the brutality of slavery. He speculated that Capitein may have reconsidered when he came to the slave port of Elmina, which stimulated a discussion of sources: were there sources from Capitein’s Elmina years? When Griesel responded that the only extant source for Capitein is his dissertation, a methodological discussion ensued.

The fourth panel, “Theology and Ethnography,” was chaired by Peter Hanns Reill. Jordan Kellman presented “Franciscan Natural Theology

and the Early Eighteenth-Century Francophone New World Encounter.” He compared the Recollect missionary Louis Hennepin’s voyage on the Mississippi and his encounter with the Illinois in 1679-82, Minim Charles Plumier’s analysis of Caribbean flora in 1689-95, and Minim Louis Feuillée’s exploration of South America in 1703-17. The missionaries forged a tradition of Franciscan natural theology and monastic practices that structured each encounter. These practices, which uniquely resolved the tensions between wonder and disciplined observation and between European and native expertise, were critical to Early Modern Europeans’ understanding of natural systems and modern science. Participants further discussed the contributions of religion to Enlightenment thought. Kellman emphasized that the Franciscans’ practices were a form of Enlightenment observation and even aesthetics. The second panelist, Roberto Chauca, spoke on “Spanish Missionary Debates and the Transatlantic Configuration of Amazonian Ethnic Categories.” Volume one of Jesuit Lorenzo Hervás’s “Catalog of the Languages of the Known Nations” (1800) included a chapter on languages spoken throughout Western Amazonia. Hervás’ “Catalog” institutionalized the relationship between language and ethnic borders by adapting the work of his Jesuit peer, Juan de Velasco. Velasco’s “History of the Kingdom of Quito” (1789), written during a period of conflicts between friars and natives and among different religious orders, produced a conflicted Jesuit ethnographic discourse, as missionaries used ethnography as a language of authority and contention in Amazonia. The discussion focused on the plurality of peoples and languages in relation to Portuguese/Spanish imperial competition — reflected in competing Spanish, Portuguese, and indigenous place names — and on the taxonomy for languages/dialects that missionaries superimposed on a map.

The fifth panel, “American Maritime Expansion,” chaired by Jenna Gibbs, opened with Sarah Crabtree’s presentation, “Whaler, Traitor, Coward, Spy!: William Rotch, the Quaker Ethic & the Spirit of Capitalism.” Rotch, a member of the pacifist Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), built a whaling empire spanning the Atlantic, Pacific, and the Arctic Oceans, repeatedly relocating his operations from Nantucket to France to Britain to New Bedford. Rotch’s relationship between his religion and business was complicated, as his spiritual scruples collided with paying taxes to a non-pacifist nation-state, for which he was persecuted as disloyal. Rotch’s case exposed the dynamics between transnational religion and transnational capitalism. Quaker universalism sanctified capitalist ideology, normalizing and even

consecrating globalization. Discussion centered around the relationships of whaling to early capitalism and between Quaker beliefs and nationalism. It also touched on Quaker identity in relation to their perceived similarities with Jews. The second paper, Darin Lenz's "Immersed in Dependency: American Missionaries, Empires, and India in the 1830s," focused on three American missionary families based in Bombay. These families found their missions in India grueling and tragic; half their members died, and the survivors returned to the United States within four years. Their vulnerable circumstances led them to critique colonial culture, question their knowledge of the peoples they aimed to convert, and immerse themselves in layers of physical and political dependency. The discussion returned to questions of emotions in missionary sources. Participants were intrigued by how these American missionaries in India spoke differently in public than in private correspondence. The question was raised of how far missionaries can be understood as imperial agents given that they were vulnerable and critical of imperial authorities.

The last panel, "Missions and Philanthropy," was chaired by Elisabeth Engel. Ulrike Kirchberger gave the first paper, "'Footsoldiers of Globalization'? The Pupils of Eleazar Wheelock's 'Indian Charity School' in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World." A preacher of the Great Awakening, Wheelock founded a school for the co-education of European and Native American children in Lebanon (Connecticut) in the 1750s, aiming to convert Native American children and train them to be Protestant missionaries, schoolteachers, or assistants to European missionaries. Kirchberger examined the roles of students in transatlantic networks of Protestantism and in their ethnic communities at a time when Native American nativists and the prophets of the pan-Indian movement were ascendant on the East coast. She explored whether "native missionaries" were cultural interlocutors or were instead victims of European cultural expansionism whose identities were crushed between different cultures. Discussion included questions about the supposed cohesion of this group of 67 students from varying nations and whether the school was a model for later boarding schools that forcibly stripped Native American children of their language and culture. The second paper, presented by Manikarnika Dutta, "For the Benefit of 'these battered, shattered wrecks': A Global History of Sailors' Homes in the Nineteenth Century," explored how British clergy engaged in seamen's welfare. Seamen's chaplains preached temperance and righteousness, and sailors' homes throughout the empire provided lodging, food,

recreation, basic services, and religious guidance. The homes in South and East Asian port cities doubled as boarding houses for paying captains and seamen and free, temporary shelters for distressed seamen. The homes were intended, Dutta argued, to protect European seamen from racial debasement through contact with “Asiatics” through programs designed to instill imperial and Christian moral masculinity. The discussion hinged on the homes’ supervision of moral health versus the colonial authorities’ attention to sailors’ medical care, which segued to the conference’s concluding discussion of the intersections and dissonances between Evangelicalism and imperialism and between scientific and religious missions.

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