

# **The Last of the Livingstones:**

H. Karl W. Kumm's  
Missiological Conception of Civilization

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## Introduction

This paper is the first of a four-fold series that aims to preserve part of the heritage of the Sudan United Mission (SUM), a very complicated nondenominational, interdenominational, inter-confessional and multinational Christian mission that was instrumental in establishing eight denominations in Nigeria. The marvel of this mission is that, despite its extremely complicated organization, it had a very simple and short constitution, no more than a page. It must have taken a constitutional genius to cobble together such a loose and yet tightly-knit co-operative with such a miniscule document. I believe it can be regarded as reflecting the *laissez faire* attitude towards government in general at the time.

This first document analyzes the theories and contributions of the SUM's founder, Dr. Herman Karl Wilhelm Kumm, a German turned British. The paper, a major research paper done for the Department of Missions at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, was completed in September, 1973. The second in the series is my *doctorandus* thesis,<sup>1</sup> *The Gospel of Liberation in a Colonial Context: A Partial and Introductory Case Study of the Sudan United Mission (1904-1918)*. Then comes my doctoral dissertation, *Missionary Messengers of Liberation in a Colonial Context: A Case Study of the Sudan United Mission*,<sup>2</sup> while the fourth, *Missions: Heralds of Capitalism or Christ?*, is a 220-page summary of the dissertation.<sup>3</sup>

This e-book version of *The Last of the Livingstones* is an edited version of the 1973 edition. The language has been cleaned up somewhat and a few insertions bring it

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1 This is to fulfill the requirements of the Dutch degree "*doctorandus*" or "*Drs.*," a level half-way between a masters degree and a doctorate. It was written for the Theological Faculty of the Vrije Universiteit or Free University in Amsterdam, unpublished, 1973.

2 Amsterdam Studies in Theology, Vol. 1. Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 1979 (530 pp.).

3 Ibadan: Daystar Press, 1984. For the updated e-book version go to Jan H Boer at <[www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)>, 2014. It may be considered a potential candidate for this Boeriana page of this website. Keep an eye out for it.

more up to date. Hence, you will find a few references to post-1973 developments and documents.

As you might expect, there is a bit of history behind this series. After I picked this subject, I sought the permission of the SUM, British Branch,<sup>4</sup> who also served as SUM International, to research their archives in London. They kindly consented on condition that I would not use archival materials to embarrass either the Mission itself or its missionaries. I readily agreed with every intention of sticking to this agreement and to this day I feel I have done so.

I shared copies of the *doctorandus* thesis with the Mission's headquarters in London as well as with a couple of retired missionaries. I visited Henry Farrant, who features heavily in this series as a prominent missionary statesman,<sup>5</sup> while he was well into his eighties. He was delighted with it and encouraged me to complete the work with a doctoral dissertation. In other words, I had his full blessing, even though he could tell from thesis that there would be serious critique of the Mission's stance, especially of its support of colonialism and the underlying dualism that so weakened the Mission's message. He was completely open to it.

When the dissertation was published in 1979 and a copy of it sent to the Mission, the General Secretary was most upset for, he charged, I had broken the agreement by publishing embarrassing materials from the archives. He felt, moreover, that I had seriously damaged the reputation of Kumm, the focus of this paper. I did not feel I had damaged Kumm's reputation, though I *was* critical. I personally had and retain great admiration for this missionary statesman and pioneer. Perhaps the difference between us can be explained by our respective cultures, with the British tending towards polite reticence and the Dutch (myself) being more frank and more free with public critique of friends. I do regret having disappointed him, for he was a fine specimen of an Evangelical missionary leader,

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4 The complicated branch structure of the SUM is explained in the texts of this series.

5 Boer, *Missionary Messengers...*, pp. 296-309, 402-410; *Missions...*, pp. 40-110 throughout.

though no theologian, whom I respected and personally liked. I have hosted him at least a couple of times in Jos after this episode.

To complete the story, allow me to quote myself:

What you write and publish can leave you vulnerable for years to come. My doctoral dissertation was published in 1979. Fifteen years later, October 1994, an Australian, Peter James Spartalis, wrote a book about the Sudan United Mission at their request with the title *Karl Kumm: Last of the Livingstones*, in which he attacked me for allegedly dishonouring the memory of Karl Kumm, the German founder of that mission. I wrote a rebuttal, in the form of a review that was published in the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*. I might not have bothered, except that a German publisher was planning to do a German edition in which my name would likely also be attacked. I did wish to protect my reputation as scholar and writer.

A humorous part of the story is that Spartalis asked me for permission to use this title, which was of my coinage. He liked the title; he just didn't like my book!<sup>6</sup>

I did appreciate the implied compliment! The title must be good if even "opponents" want to borrow it. I readily agreed to his request without giving him a hard time. I did specify that I wanted him to acknowledge the author of the title in his book. It is there; he honoured his commitment.

But what was the problem? Why the disagreement? The archives contained the Mission's private documents such as minutes and reports, but it also contained materials published by the Mission itself. In other words, materials and information it shared with the public, some of it during the early years. This consisted of both books and magazine articles. That factor had not been considered, but I felt free to use those materials, since they were by definition public, and therefore I did not feel this to constitute a betrayal. Those materials

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<sup>6</sup> Jan H. Boer & Frances A. Boer-Prins. *Every Square Inch—A Missionary Memoir: The Life and Mission of Jan & Frances Boer*. Volume 2, *Ministry in Nigeria (1966-1996)*, an e-book < [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com) >, 2014, p. 404

could have been located in some UK libraries or other missionary archives. *That* was the point of friction.

As to the condition of the SUM archives at the time, please read footnote 255 in the Bibliography of this document. Since then, the Mission assigned Spartalis to straighten out their archives both in London and Jos, so that they can now be studied in comfort. Though it was difficult for me to wade through the dusty and musty mess up in that attic, I honoured the cash-strapped Mission for keeping its focus on its central role, even if that meant neglecting another important but secondary concern. It had its strategic head screwed on right—in this respect.

I have one regret about *this* document. On page 27 there is reference to Kumm's rescuing a group of hungry Muslim pilgrims on their way to Mecca during his West-East exploratory trek across Africa by supplying them with the meat of big game he hunted for them. I failed to give proper recognition to this incident. He may have considered Islam as his prime enemy and reserved harsh words for it, but when he met needy adherents, he did not hesitate to supply their needs. He reserved compassion in his soul even for those who represent, in his own words, satan. Of course, one can hardly miss the evangelistic motivation for this act of generosity: exemplifying the compassion of his Saviour to this group of despisers. Nevertheless, there it was: He did it. I should have paid more attention to this incident and what it meant to him.

Well, so much for this introduction to an intriguing soul. Enjoy the read and gain some appreciation for the efforts and almost unimaginable hardships these early missionary pioneers endured. It may all have been enshrined in a framework of imperialism for which many dismiss it off hand. But it was also motivated by a heart burning with love for the Saviour of the world and compassion for a people judged to be lost in utter darkness. In spite of the negatives surrounding it all, even the most virulent African critics of the enterprise, as justified as their critique may be, must be counted among its beneficiaries.<sup>7</sup> It was the right moment in history, the *kairos*, for this most ambiguous human enterprise to introduce a new phase of African history.

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<sup>7</sup> J. Boer, 1979 and 1984. See the sections on nationalism.

## I. The Missionary Climate in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

I beg you to direct your attention to Africa; -- I know that in a few years I shall be cut off in that country, which is now open; do not let it be shut again! I go back to Africa to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity; do you carry out the work which I have begun. ***I leave it with you!***<sup>8</sup>

Thus ran the both famous and infamous charge David Livingstone, the famous pioneer British missionary to Africa, hurled at his audience while delivering his “Cambridge Lectures” in 1857. It was a challenge not easily suppressed in subsequent years and was to play an influential role right into the twentieth century, forging dreams in the bosoms of some generations of British Evangelicals, including those composing the SUM and her main founder, Dr. Herman Karl Wilhelm Kumm.

The basic assumption Livingstone and his audience shared was that of the so-called *Corpus Christianum* or Christendom. Without this common notion, in fact, his charge would have simply bounced off the walls of his auditorium. The term has reference to a situation in which the relationship between church, state, culture and society as a whole is seen as integral, each of these elements supporting the others, including the Christian religion. During most of the course of its fourteen-century history it was considered quite within the will of God to impose such a unity by force where it did not exist or was resisted. In the ninth century, for example, we find Charlemagne seeing to the conversion of my Saxon forefathers by slaughtering up to 4500 in one day.<sup>9</sup> Both the crusades and the

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8 W. Monk (ed.), *Dr. Livingstone's Cambridge Lectures*. Together with a Prefatory Letter by the Rev. Professor Sedgwick (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; London, 1860), p. 168, as quoted in J. Van Den Berg, “Een Open Pad voor Handel en Christendom: David Livingstone's inzichten betreffende de introductie van ‘Commerce’ en ‘Christianity’ in Africa” in A. Pos et al, *Christusprediking in de Wereld* (Kampen, J.H. Kok N.V., 1965), p. 66.

9 S. Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1964), p. 79.

struggles between the various popes, kings and emperors were expressions of the *Corpus Christianum* structure.

The *Corpus Christianum* can be traced from its beginning to the conversion of emperor Constantine and continued as an effective force in Western Europe till the French Revolution, which broke its back. Here, at any rate, is where Schoonhoven places its terminal point,<sup>10</sup> while Van Den Berg, as far as the British are concerned, points to 1689, the year of the “Glorious Revolution,” as the decisive breaking point.<sup>11</sup> During all these centuries, the *Corpus Christianum* defined the context within which the history of church and mission ran its course in western civilization.

Though both Schoonhoven and Van Den Berg recognize the death knell had been dealt to the *Corpus Christianum* as an effective reality in the West, both also posit its continuation as an ideal well beyond their respectively posited terminal points, though in modified versions. Schoonhoven demonstrates that Pietism and Methodism were protests against the *Corpus* notion by insisting that one becomes Christian through personal conversion, not simply by virtue of birth and baptism in a “Christian” nation. These movements, furthermore, no longer depended upon governments to enforce conversion. Nevertheless, as an ideal, the *Corpus gained* popularity during the nineteenth century when missions became an important factor in the extension of western culture beyond its borders. The latter was still regarded as basically Christian in missionary circles and as preparatory for the planting of the Seed. Indigenous cultures were undermined by the imposition of western equivalents in the firm hope that a Christian community could be built upon the ruins of the old. The result was expected to be a Christian world.<sup>12</sup>

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10 E. Jansen, “Corpus Christianum en zending,” in *Christusprediking*, p. 156.

11 J. Van Den Berg, *Constrained by Jesus’ Love: an Inquiry into the Motives of the Missionary Awakening in Great Britain in the Period between 1698 and 1815* (Kampen: J.H. Kok N.V., 1956), p. 32.

12 Schoonhoven, pp. 164-165.

Van Den Berg likewise sees a continuation of the *Corpus* ideal deep into the nineteenth century. Of Livingstone he writes that “to a certain extent we can say, that in his weaving together of national and spiritual interests he still stood under the –vanishing—influence of the idea of the corpus christianum.”<sup>13</sup> As further explanation of this phenomenon, Bavinck reminds us that “the scientific and technical development of the West during the nineteenth century bordered on the unbelievable.” Remembering that our present reservations with respect to these developments are hindsight based on subsequent experience, we ought not to be surprised to find Europeans, including missionaries, so enamored by these developments, that the missionary vocation became blurred and became for many the calling of the backward races into the light of western culture.<sup>14</sup>

Before Livingstone ever delivered his challenge at Cambridge, the famous Niger Expedition was inspired by this *Corpus* vision of “Bible and plough.” Since this expedition largely failed to accomplish its stated purposes due to the havoc caused by death and disease, it was not immediately repeated and could not sustain the enthusiasm that had given birth to it.<sup>15</sup> Yet the vision of Christ and civilization continued to inspire subsequent journeys into the hinterland of what is now known as Nigeria. Among those journeys was the so-called Sudan Party of 1890, dubbed “the misguided march to Kano” by Ayandele.<sup>16</sup> It was a journey undertaken by a group of missionaries under the leadership of Bishop Tugwell of the Church Mission Society (CMS) that met with “rousing welcome” from the

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13 *Constrained*, p. 171.

14 J.H. Bavinck, *An Introduction to the Science of Missions*; D.H. Freeman, trans. (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1961), p. 297.

15 This does not mean the expedition was a complete failure, for the reports of Crowther and Schon caused the C.M.S. to decide they were confronted with a divine call to minister to the tribes along the Niger River. F.D. Walker, *The Romance of the Black River* (London: C.M.S., 1930), p. 29

16 E.A. Ayandele, *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria, 1842-1914: a Political and Social Analysis* (London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd, 1966), p. vi.

common people in Kano,<sup>17</sup> but, unknown to the party,<sup>18</sup> almost culminated in their murder.

Other less known efforts were made to penetrate Northern Nigeria throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. Bowen, the pioneer missionary of the American Southern Baptist Mission sought to lay the foundation for missionary work in Ilorin. Crowther, through personal tact and patience, was allowed by various northern emirs to establish stations and place Bibles in certain strategic places. Wesleyans were interested in working in Chad and Borno.<sup>19</sup>

The excitement and the sense of expectation that led to such heroic and enthusiastic activities were not limited to missionary circles: they found their commercial parallel in the founding of the National African Company, later renamed the Royal Niger Company, in 1879. This company received a charter from the British Government that gave it sole “rights” to trading along the Niger River, north of the Delta area. In the political realm the same excitement found expression in the Berlin Conference of the mid-1880’s that formed the culmination of the “scramble for Africa.”

Ayandele reports that in C.M.S. circles a myth had gradually developed about the ease with which the peoples of Northern Nigeria, Pagan and Muslim alike, would be converted. He speaks of this myth as a possible explanation for what was an “amazing interest which the prospect of evangelization of the Sudan awakened in England.”<sup>20</sup> That this interest was truly “amazing” is supported by Gilhuis’ report concerning Lord Salisbury, who described “the amazement of his contemporaries at the sudden changes”<sup>21</sup> in Great Britain’s relationship to Africa by exclaiming, “I

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17 *Ibid.*, p. 131.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 135.

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118.

20 P. 120.

21 “de verbazing van zijn tijdgenoten over de plotselinge veranderingen” (trans. mine).

do not exactly know the cause of this sudden revolution. But there it is.”<sup>22</sup> One can point to various economic and political factors that encouraged this sudden interest, but, in view of subsequent events, a Christian can hardly fail to suspect that the element of the “fullness of time” or “*kairos*” also played a role in this sudden surge in interest, without lapsing into approval of the basic human impulses of colonialism.

These events, then, form the background to the person, organization, ideas and events to be discussed in this paper. It was an atmosphere of expectancy, of buoyant optimism regarding the progress of the Christianization of the world, not unrelated to the faith in continued evolution so characteristic of the period, an optimism shared by the very Evangelicals who would likely vehemently deny any relationship between their hopeful tactics and Charles Darwin.<sup>23</sup>

## II. Kumm: A Crusade in Superlatives

While the events described in the previous section were unfolding in both Africa and the United Kingdom, in far-off Germany H. Karl W. Kumm was born on October 19, 1874, at Osterode, Hannover Province. His was an insignificant birth with no indication that an international leader in missionary strategy was thus born. His father was an officer in the Regiment of the Guards and both his parents were deeply spiritual.<sup>24</sup> The Kumms were a traditional patriotic family, enamoured with the blind King George V of Hannover. However, after the Prussians subjugated Hannover, father Wilhelm, though submissive to the new regime,

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22 G.M.M. Gilhuis, *Crowther en de “Young Purifiers”*: enkele achtergronden van de crisis in de Niger Mission via een analyse van het optreden van de “Sudan Party” (unpublished doctorandus thesis for the Free Reformed University, Amsterdam, n.d.), p. 29.

23 Cf. J.E.L. Newbiggin, *The Relevance of Trinitarian Doctrine for Today’s Mission* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1963), p. 21, for brief comments on missions and belief in progress.

24 M.E. Tett, *The Road to Freedom: Sudan United Mission 1904-1968* (Sidcup: S.U.M., n.d.), p. 7

could no longer muster any enthusiasm for his country and its government,<sup>25</sup> a fact that no doubt helps explain his son's later naturalization to British citizenship and his enthusiastic espousal of the cause of the *British* empire and patriotism.<sup>26</sup>

I pass over Kumm's early years till his matriculation examination in 1894 at Osterode. After a compulsory year in the German army, he went to visit friends of his sister Pauline in Great Britain, where she had been a teacher prior to her mission career in China.<sup>27</sup> While in England, young Karl and his friend went to hear a certain Mr. Glenny<sup>28</sup> of the North Africa Mission. At that meeting the career of Kumm was determined for good. He forsook his previous ambition to become a journalist and author of books,<sup>29</sup> and made, instead "the double response of giving his heart to God, and his life to Africa."<sup>30</sup> Impetuous by nature, Kumm decided he must act upon his new calling that very moment – and left his studies for completion later. In due time, he attended universities at Heidelberg, Jena and Freiburg where he received his degree of Doctor of Philosophy,<sup>31</sup> having studied geography, geology, meteorology, political economy, astronomy, Semitic

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25 I.V. Cleverdon, *Pools on the Glowing Sand: The Story of Karl Kumm*. With a foreword by S.M. Zwemer (Melbourne: The Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 1936), p. 4. Zwemer's "Introduction" comprises Appendix I of this paper.

26 He carried the Union Jack on his trans-Africa exploration. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

28 Maxwell reports that the name was J.J. Edwards but his "apparently" indicates an element of doubt. Cf. J.L. Maxwell, *Half a Century of Grace: A Jubilee History of the Sudan United Mission* (London: S.U.M., n.d.). p. 21.

29 Cleverdon, pp. 6, 17. Cleverdon reports a humorous incident of Kumm's childhood. One day he wrote in his notebook at school: "Works by H.K.W. Kumm ---leaving plenty of space for the titles of these unbegotten children of his mind." Though this evoked a storm of teasing on the part of both teachers and fellow pupils, it did not extinguish the literary ambition. Cleverdon also refers to brief mission activity on the part of Kumm in the Rocky Mountains at the age of twenty-eight, but no further references to this episode have been uncovered in my search. Consequently I do not know what to make of this information. Cf. p. 19.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

languages, philosophy and a minimal of medicine in order to be able to cope with African diseases.<sup>32</sup>

In the meantime, in response to his new calling, Kumm went to Egypt to study Arabic in order to work among Muslims for the North Africa Mission.<sup>33</sup> His Egyptian career was marked not only by hard work, but there was also romance involved that culminated in his marriage to Lucy, the sprightly, energetic, poetic daughter to Dr. Grattan Guinness, a recognized evangelical leader in Great Britain who had for some years experienced a burden for the evangelization of the Sudan.<sup>34</sup> Guinness had been publishing a monthly periodical entitled, "The Sudan and the Regions Beyond," for the purpose of stirring up evangelical interest in the region then closed to mission activities.<sup>35</sup> No doubt, he had a large hand in diverting Kumm's interests from North Africa to the Sudan. Kumm's interest in the region quickly grew till one can truly describe it as an obsession. He had visions of Islam anticipating Christ in the area and of numberless Pagan tribes switching

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32 H.K.W. Kumm, *Khont-Hon-Nofer: the Lands of Ethiopia* (London and Edinburgh: Marshall Brothers Ltd., 1910), p. 21. Kumm explains the meaning of this unlikely title: The lands south of Egypt are known "by the general name 'Ta-Khont' which means the land of Khont. The name of Khont-Hon-Nofer includes all the countries of the African Continent." The source of Kumm's information is H. Brugsch-Bey, *A History of Egypt under the Pharaohs*, I, 329. This information is all found in Kumm's *From Hausaland to Egypt through the Sudan* (London: Constable and Co. Ltd., 1910), p. 235.

33 Maxwell, p. 24.

34 "Sudan" refers not exclusively to that political entity in East Africa known by that name presently, but to the broad belt between the Sahara and South Africa from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, a huge area constantly described in the S.U.M.'s promotional literature as "a country larger than the whole of Europe, minus Russia, with from fifty to eighty million people" that are "waiting to be evangelized." H.K.W. Kumm, *The Sudan: A Short Compendium of Facts and Figures about the Land of Darkness* (London: Marshall Brothers Ltd., 1907), p. 63. Cf. Appendix II. A promotion pamphlet explains the name "Sudan" as Arabic for "'Land of the Blacks.' It witnesses that the land of the Negro has become Arab." The pamphlet is inserted in between the minutes of the first meeting of the mission's council. Cf. S.P.M. minutes for Nov. 13, 1902.

35 "The S.U.M.: Its Origin and Development," *LB*, LVI (Sept/Oct., 1960), 378. Cf. also Cleverdon, pp. 27-28. Though Guinness' efforts date back to 1889, Kumm dates his interest in the Sudan to 1898, two years before his marriage to Lucy. *From Hausaland*, p. 4.

allegiance to the prophet of Arabia.<sup>36</sup> He carried with him a photograph of a Bischarin that haunted and refused to release him:

Only a dark-eyed Bischarin, an untaught desert ranger, lithe, sinewy, half savage, proud, bold, free. With his wild crop of matted hair done in the style of the Sphinx and the old Pharaohs, gripping his well-worn stick in both his hands, he sits there leaning forward, searching us with unfathomable issues, sunk in a deeper silence, hanging on his relation to us, this hour, this day.

We cannot escape those eyes. Walk away, they follow. Meet them, they are watching you. Turn from them, they watch you still. Ignore them, neglect them, busy yourself with other things – still their haunting question pursues.

As we look, we seem to see in and through that photograph the dark-skinned peoples of the whole Sudan. The eyes that look at us from that one silent face are eyes innumerable, hopeless eyes of slaves; anguished eyes of tortured women; keen eyes of clever traders and the proud glance of chieftains; others dull, bewildered, shadowed by life's miseries, unlit by any of heaven's rays. The face with its grave question stood for the face of thousands – faces of slave drivers, of fanatic Imans, rich Emirs, lazy princes, half-starved naked Nile savages, wild Dinkas, Shillooks, Nuers, and a hundred other tribes. Their lands came up before the mind, stretching from Abyssinia across to the Atlantic – free kingdoms, ancient empires, cities and schools and mosques, forts, caravan routes, rivers, mountains, lakes, empty wadies, desert and green oases, palm-fringed villages and wells. Like a dream they swept before us.

The vast Sudan – 3000 miles across ... 100 lands, 100 languages, all, all non-Christian to this hour ....<sup>37</sup>

With this haunting vision goading him on, Kumm returned to his native Germany to present the challenge of the Sudan to German Christians, especially among students. Before long the Sudan Pioneer Mission (SPM) was launched with its office at Eisenach. However, Kumm could not agree with the direction the mission

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36 Cleverdon, pp. 19-20.

37 L. Kumm, "Introduction," *The Sudan*, pp. 6-8. The description is Mrs. Kumm's, not her husband's, even though it was Kumm himself who felt haunted. I quote at length to show the intensity with which the Kumms experienced their early burden for the Sudan. The statement also portrays lack of detailed knowledge of the area. *Only* a hundred languages?! Cf. also Cleverdon, pp. 20-21.

was taking and thus severed his connection. The Kumms subsequently went to England to join Guinness in his campaign to awaken British Evangelicals.<sup>38</sup>

The joint efforts of Guinness and the Kumms soon resulted in a committee that recorded its first meeting on November 13, 1902. The name chosen for the effort was identical to Kumm's original mission in Germany: Soudan Pioneer Mission, "Soudan" being a then-current variation of "Sudan."<sup>39</sup> In 1904, the name was changed to Sudan United Mission, the name retained till this day.<sup>40</sup>

At the initial meeting in 1902, the committee resolved that the "primary object should be the evangelization of the peoples of Adamawa and the region known as the Upper Benue."<sup>41</sup> Adamawa was a German colonial territory that has later been divided by the Nigerian-Cameroon border, while the Upper Benue is an area including large tracts of the present Benue, Taraba, Plateau and other north-western states of Nigeria as well as parts of northern Cameroon. Actually, however, the aim was simultaneously more limited and more extensive. It was more extensive in the sense that from the beginning the aim covered the *entire* Sudan. Various sources make this clear, including a document submitted to the Free Church Council in the UK in order to persuade them to consider the Sudan as

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38 Maxwell, p. 24. Maxwell adds the information that the German Sudan Pioneer Mission was later transferred to Switzerland, renamed "Swiss Mission among Mohammedans," and, at the time of Maxwell's writing, was still active on a small scale in medical work.

39 Meeting of November 13, 1902.

40 SUM 1, June 17, 1904. The reasons for the change were two-fold. (1) "Pioneer" could not be a permanent feature of the name; (2) the mission was not the first in the Sudan; the C.M.S. had preceded it and was thus the real pioneer. "This day" refers to the year of the original writing of this thesis, 1973. Over the years since then, the complicated structure of the SUM slowly dissolved as the Nigerian churches took over the functions of the various branches of the Mission. Finally, as stated in the Introduction, in 2014, the last branch, the Christian Reformed Church branch, abandoned the name as outdated, but retained the acronym. Today "SUM" stands for "Service United Mission," a rather clumsy name that allows the mission to retain its popular identity in the country. It refers only to the Christian Reformed Church branch, which is the only branch still using the acronym. In distinction from the other branches that have only one Nigerian church partner, the CRC branch has several such partners and thus feels the need for continued separate mission existence.

41 SPM, *loc. Cit.*

their missionary responsibility.<sup>42</sup> The paper speaks of the entire Sudan, not merely its western extremity. Kumm, in connection with the original party sent out by the S.U.M. in 1904, describes the mission's aim as covering the whole Sudan.<sup>43</sup> One could adduce further mission literature to support the assertion that the S.U.M. was concerned with the entire Sudan from the very start.

The mission was also more limited in its goal from the beginning than one might assume from the original statement of aims. The statement refers to "the peoples" of the area, but in fact the strategy immediately called for concentration on Animists, not on Muslims. In a previously-cited promotion pamphlet inserted upon the heels of the first meeting of the SPM, the concern is exclusively with the "host of heathen nations."<sup>44</sup> The brochure "Facts about the Sudan" similarly speaks of the need that Christianity be brought to the Pagan peoples before they transfer their allegiance to Islam.<sup>45</sup>

This strategic aim of "beating Islam to the draw" finds clearer *minuted* expression in 1909, when the mission launches the Sudan United Mission Forward Movement with as object the evangelization of native tribes in the Sudan not already captured by Islam. The "Forward Movement" appeals to the public for support and men to plant 50 stations, manned by at least 150 missionaries, along the border line Islam-Paganism, the border being approximately along the sixth to the eighth degrees latitude from the Niger to the Nile,<sup>46</sup> the very route taken by Kumm during his trans-Africa expedition.

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42 "Facts about the Sudan," SPM, December 29, 1903.

43 *From Hausaland*, p. 5.

44 SPM, November 13, 1902.

45 Cf. also *From Hausaland*, p. 5.

46 SUM 2, p. 249.

As to organization, the S.P.M. decided from the beginning that it be interdenominational in character,<sup>47</sup> which goal the mission has consistently pursued throughout its history. In time, the mission became an exceedingly complex organization that was not only interdenominational, but also nondenominational, inter-confessional and international. The original committee held ideas and ideology typical of mainline Evangelicalism throughout western culture. There were no doctrinal or ideological reasons they should organize a new body to respond to the challenge of the Sudan. The first few years of the committee's activities were mainly characterized by encouraging existing Non-Conformist<sup>48</sup> churches in Great Britain to become involved. The pamphlet "Facts about the Sudan" witnesses to this strong desire for existing bodies to take the responsibility. Kumm reports that, having proposed to the Wesleyan Missionary Society that they take up the work, he was told that the mission was sympathetic to the urgency of the situation, but its previous commitments prevented it from responding positively to the new frontier.<sup>49</sup> This reaction was typical of that of all the other Non-Conformist bodies: deep and sympathetic interest, but prevented because of other commitments.<sup>50</sup> These efforts were continued till about the end of 1905 and then dropped.

These efforts to involve others were not restricted to the British Isles. Rowland V. Bingham of Toronto was rewarded for his three attempts to reach the Sudan by being able to plant a station at Patigi, Northern Nigeria, in 1902, for the African

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47 SPM, *loc. cit.*

48 The Anglican Church was not appealed to because they were already involved in the Sudan, not because of any disagreements regarding doctrine or ideology.

49 SPM, December 22, 1903.

50 SUM 3 is a monument to the strenuous efforts in this matter. The mission also wrote an open letter "to all Christians" for this purpose (SUM 2, p. 93).

Evangelistic Mission,<sup>51</sup> presently known as the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM),<sup>52</sup> with its headquarters in the New World. Close contacts were established between Bingham and the S.U.M. and for a brief while he was recognized as the secretary for the Canadian and American branch of the S.U.M.<sup>53</sup> and it appeared that complete amalgamation would take place. However, incompatibility led to the decision for each to go its separate way, cooperating where possible.<sup>54</sup> The minutes of the S.U.M. betray their earnest desire to join with Bingham's organization.

The contact in North America was established by Kumm during his trip to that continent in 1905 for that very purpose. Later, Kumm visited a number of other countries for the same reason. The results were branches of the S.U.M. in South Africa,<sup>55</sup> Australia and New Zealand (1911) and Denmark (1912).

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51 Cf. E. Rubingh, *Sons of Tiv: a Study of the Rise of the Church among the Tiv of Central Nigeria* (Grand Rapids: Baker Bookhouse, 1969), p. 51.

52 The term "presently" refers to 1973, the year this thesis was written. Like the SUM and before the SUM, this mission has since then also changed its name for the same reason, while also keeping the acronym, which now stands for "Service in Mission."

53 R.V. Bingham, "The Canadian Branch of the S.U.M.," *LB*, II, November, p. 201.

54 SUM 2, pp. 138-139. Subsequent decades have witnessed renewed efforts at amalgamation between S.U.M. and the S.I.M. at the instigation of Bingham. Friendly and cooperative as relations have continued to be, unity has appeared impossible. Though Bingham himself continued these efforts, it is a matter of history that the S.I.M. as a whole has tended to separatism. The reason may well have to be sought in its constituency rather than its missionaries. A narrower theological base and lack of toleration in practical behavior lie at the bottom of this trend to separatism.

55 The South African branch is reported to predate Kumm's trip to that country. Tett reports that a friend of the S.U.M. in Great Britain had sent a tract by the mission to Dr. Fallon of Cape Town. The effect of that tract was the organization of a South African chapter. The next year, 1907, Kumm went to stimulate further efforts (p. 29). Later on, Norway (1922), Canada (1924) and Switzerland (1950) also had branches, but these were not related to Kumm's efforts, with the possible exception of that of Canada ("The S.U.M.: Its Origin and Development," *LB*, LVI, Sept./Oct., 84). Subsequently another North American branch was formed when the Christian Reformed Church joined the effort as a denominational chapter in 1940. The South African branch in its early years split into two bodies, the one, of interdenominational composition, remained an integral member of the S.U.M., while the other became the denominational outreach of the Dutch Reformed Church without official ties with the S.U.M. During the 1960's, this body handed its work over to the Christian Reformed branch of the S.U.M., by which transition the great Tiv church came within the orbit of the S.U.M. once again. Cf. Rubingh, pp. 95-96. The Canadian branch has recently severed its relationship with the S.U.M because of the ecumenical relations of certain branches, while the

The point at issue in relating the above data is to demonstrate the wide Evangelical base from which the S.U.M. drew. It was in no way a narrowly exclusive group but it shared all the dominant notions, theological as well as ideological, of that wide intercontinental constituency. It is true that the various branches were autonomous, confined to separate spheres of operation by comity agreements, but such was not the original intention of Kumm and his contemporaries. It was with regret that the mission moved into the direction of separate spheres. The suggestion came from the missionaries on the field and the Executive Committee at home<sup>56</sup> did not feel free to overrule it. While the Committee submitted to the pressure from the missionaries, it also sent them a letter, chiding them that “no necessity for the division of Nationality would have arisen if the whole circumstances had been prayerfully considered, and laid before those in the Homeland who are responsible for the constitution of the Mission.”<sup>57</sup> The Committee would have preferred to indiscriminately mix the missionaries as far as denomination, branch and nationality were concerned. “We cannot afford,” the letter continues, “to divide our forces in face of a common foe ..., but we can so adapt our organization to meet the peculiar needs or temperaments of the various forces of our united band.” Within the S.U.M., then, there were differences, but these were not considered basic as far as Kumm and the other leaders of the mission were concerned. They certainly were not ideological or doctrinal. In these the S.U.M. was at one with the Evangelical world.

Neither the existence of the S.U.M. as a separate mission body nor the distinctions within the mission were due to any basic disagreements with the notions dominant in the Evangelical community of Kumm’s day. One could point to other evidence proving this matter. There is the fact that the S.U.M. as an organization was always

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Australian/New Zealand branch merged with the British branch upon the former’s eviction from the country known as Sudan during the 1960’s.

<sup>56</sup> *i.e.* Great Britain.

<sup>57</sup> SUM 2, p. 210.

actively supporting the Keswick movement: Kumm himself spoke at its conventions.<sup>58</sup> The fact of the S.U.M.'s unreserved sharing of Evangelical assumptions is significant for our purpose in trying to understand the mission's and, more particularly, Kumm's concept of civilization. Kumm, according to Zwemer, was the very personification of the mission ideals of his time.<sup>59</sup>

Not only was Kumm a welcome and popular ecclesiastical figure: in the political world he had many important contacts as well. At the colonial level in relation to Northern Nigeria, Kumm had amicable contacts with Wallace, the Deputy High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria<sup>60</sup> as well as with Sir Frederick Lugard, the High Commissioner himself, who "gave a cordial reception to Dr. Kumm," while Temple, the British Resident of Bauchi Province, actually lived with Kumm while the latter was studying Hausa at Tripoli. Both German and British officials at their respective Colonial Offices cooperated with Kumm by giving him letters of introduction to their field personnel for the purposes of his trans-Africa expedition.<sup>61</sup> The elite could be seen among his audiences and personal acquaintances, including the mayors of Melbourne and Sidney and even the Governor<sup>62</sup> and the Prime Minister.<sup>63</sup> In South Africa, likewise, Kumm had cordial relations with General Smuts and General De

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58 Cleverdon, p. 36. Maxwell thought of the Keswick Conventions as centres of power. Cf. Diaries of the Rev. J. Lowry Maxwell (Oxford: Rhodes House Library, MSS. Afr. S. 1112 (1), p. 56.) Cf. also, e.g. "Men's Camp at Keswick," *LB*, XXVI, 227.

59 Vii.

60 Kumm, "First Glimpse of the Niger," *LB*, I, August, 13.

61 "A Telegram from Africa," *LB*, I, November, 4-5.

62 "News from Dr. Kumm," *LB*, VIII, February, 28-29.

63 Cleverdon, p. 111.

Wet,<sup>64</sup> while he had luncheon with the Governor of Tasmania.<sup>65</sup> At the Paris Peace Conference after World War I, Kumm was requested to draw maps of African territories.<sup>66</sup>

In addition to these political celebrities, Kumm through the years developed many relations with prominent people from all walks of life and he was member of a “number of geographical and scientific organizations.”<sup>67</sup> Upon his death, letters arrived from all over the world – “letters from presidents of Universities, from Professors, from Chambers of Commerce, from Missionaries, from the Royal Geographical Society ... -- all uniting in sympathy, in praise and in appreciation.”<sup>68</sup>

From all these data it is clear that Kumm and the S.U.M. – for one can hardly separate the two during the early years of the mission – were not known as rebellious revolutionaries. These types of relationships are reserved only for those who *share* the ambitions of the great and mighty. Kumm himself expressed this happy coincidence of interest and enthusiasm with respect to Australia. “There is not the slightest doubt,” he writes, “that my arrival in Australia was at a most auspicious time. After seven years of exceptional prosperity, with the enthusiasm of youth for imperial and world-wide affairs ....”<sup>69</sup> That this imperial excitement was not limited to a few specialists, politicians or business folk is clear from a perusal of an entire volume of the collection of Lugard Papers containing nothing but newspaper clippings,<sup>70</sup> indicating wide-spread popular participation and interest in imperial affairs.

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<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.

<sup>66</sup> “Dr. H. Karl W. Kumm,” *LB*, XXVI, November/December, 105.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Cleverdon, pp. 185-186.

<sup>69</sup> SUM 4, p. 66.

In short, Kumm and the S.U.M. were in tune with their age. This *partially* accounts for Kumm's success in arousing a wide constituency to the needs of the Sudan. It also serves to underscore the fact that we do not have to expect revolutionary notions or novel ideology. The pre-World War I optimism, the hope of progressive peace and justice in the world, the high estimate of Western culture and the "white man's burden" – all these the S.U.M. shared with its contemporaries; all these, together with the spiritual fervor and moralism common to heirs of the nineteenth century revivals, form the basis of the S.U.M.'s program and concepts. It is important to realize these affinities, for many concepts with which both Kumm and the S.U.M. operated from the beginning are not defined. They did not feel the need to define their concepts for they were dealing with concepts common to their time and, therefore, rarely challenged. It was the "common sense" of the day.

Another approach to understanding Kumm's concept of civilization is via an analysis of his personality, one that is comparatively uncomplicated. His writings regarding Africa reveal as much of Kumm as about Africa. Though I have made grateful use of all available biographical materials on Kumm, without belittling their value, I had come to conclusions regarding our hero's personality identical to the descriptions his biographers have left us. He was that obvious and straight forward.

Samuel Zwemer describes Kumm as an "intrepid adventurer," a "bold missionary explorer," one attracted by the unknown, difficulties and obstacles<sup>71</sup>-- and so he was *par excellence*. Previous to his taking the S.U.M.'s original party to Wase, Northern Nigeria in 1904, thus prior to reaching the age of thirty, Kumm had already spent two and a half years in Egypt, from where he made occasional excursions into the desert; twice he found himself in Nubia and once in Tripoli in order to study the Hausa language. From Tripoli also he ventured into nearly unknown places, while he traversed Tunis and Algiers as well.<sup>72</sup> These were all merely preparatory journeys for

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70 MSS. Brit. Emp. S. 60, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

71 Cf. Appendix I.

72 Kumm, *Khont*, p.22.

travels much more extensive undertaken in his capacity as General Secretary of the S.U.M. In 1904, he led the first S.U.M. party to its first location in Northern Nigeria and engaged in extensive side tours during that jaunt. He undertook an explorer's journey across Africa from the Niger to the Nile that took the major share of a year, but without any European companions.<sup>73</sup> On another trip, beginning with South Africa, Kumm traversed much of East Africa as well. These journeys, it must be remembered, were undertaken when traveling facilities in Africa were most primitive. For promotion purposes Kumm visited Canada, the United States of America, where he later lived and died, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania and Denmark. The dizzying schedule he kept is well illustrated in a letter he wrote to the Executive Committee of the S.U.M., written the very day of his return from a trip to North America, where he had held promotional meetings throughout the eastern half of the continent. Though he complained of "feeling exceedingly tired," he intended to spend a mere forty-eight hours in Great Britain in order to "catch a glimpse of my boys" in Switzerland. He planned to spend about a week with them, after which he hoped to attend a meeting in London. From there he was to sail for South Africa, "where a heavy campaign awaits me."<sup>74</sup> Kumm closed this letter by a discussion of the possibility of his making his exploration across the Sudan. The energy and restlessness betrayed in this letter is nothing short of amazing, especially when one remembers the fact that those were pre-airplane days. The very act of recording such self-inflicted torture tends to exhaust one!<sup>75</sup>

Kumm, according to his main biographer, tended to be ruled by heart rather than head.<sup>76</sup> This impression is confirmed by others as well as by a reading of his own publications. He was poetic, instinctive, intense, explosive, forceful, given to

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<sup>73</sup> Kumm, *From Hausaland*, p. 5. This book is the result of that journey.

<sup>74</sup> Cleverdon reports that he made 90 public addresses in a period of 2 months. *Cf.* p. 99.

<sup>75</sup> SUM 7, p. 87.

<sup>76</sup> Cleverdon, p. 128.

superlative exaggerations and snap judgments. Observe his style, his poetry, the love of alliteration, the flair for drama and the force of his prose:

White gleams the snow in the valley. Great giants of the Alps rear their hoary heads to heaven around us. Dark pine woods creep through “alm” and crag and cliff up to their shoulders, while herdsmen’s huts lie sheltering in their shadows.

Pale dawns the day over the Bernese Oberland, when from a chalet here in Adelboden my thoughts turn from this heart of Europe to the heart of the Dark Continent, the Sudan; the land of the mysterious Mountains of the Moon; the land beyond which the sources of the Nile were hidden for ages in darkness, the unsolved mysteries of Lake Chad and the famous City of the Middle Ages, Timbuktu – the throbbing heart of Africa.

In 1885, when Chinese Gordon was killed at Khartum, the whole of the civilized world sorrowed for a great, good man, who had given all his life for the sons of slaves, for the men of the midnight and the daughters of darkness; and when, 13 years later, Kitchener fought in a mighty slaughter of the Dervishes of Omdurman, the eyes of Europe and America were again fixed on those regions.<sup>77</sup>

All Kumm’s writings display these qualities, all designed to haunt his constituency, purposed to prevent them from failing to respond to the challenge Kumm hurled at them. Whenever he presented the Christian needs of the Sudan, whether in writing or orally, he captivated, he excited,<sup>78</sup> but he also exaggerated and made assertions that could not stand under calm scrutiny. Africa, Kumm reminds us, gave

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<sup>77</sup> *From Hausaland*, p. 1.

<sup>78</sup> Cleverdon reports contradictory evaluations of Kumm’s writings.; One praises them as “strong and moving,” while another deplores the “ponderous style.” One attributes a “dashing pen” to Kumm, whereas another describes his style as “dull.” Apparently, Kumm did not consider himself a writer of note. He is to have expressed a desire for a more facile pen: “I seem to handle a broomstick as I try to put my thoughts into permanent form .... Cf. p. 168.

an asylum to the infant Christ, Africa gave the Cross bearer to Christ, the Martyr and the Saviour.

While Europe, in that great tragedy, Europe that rules the world today, supplied the relentless, cynical, but cowardly judge; Asia, the stage, the scene, and the traitor; Africa came to the help of the Outcast, and bore His Cross. Shall not Africa be rewarded for this?<sup>79</sup>

Poetic and romantic such notions; they served to set his audience on edge and, undoubtedly, fired the imagination of his empire-drunk contemporaries, but one can nevertheless rationally analyse such statements only as shaky at best.

The evidence that Kumm overpowered his audiences with his fiery and forceful imagination is substantial. One missionary on furlough confessed that Kumm could evoke a financial response in one meeting that would take him “months to even approximate.”<sup>80</sup> A delegate to the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910 related that he

recalls the tense atmosphere, as that man spoke, fresh from his long lonely trek across Africa; recalls the striking figure, the noble bearing, and the great audience hanging on his words, as he went on, relentlessly pronouncing those tribal names – “with unhurrying chase and unperturbed pace” – till black faces seem to throng the hall, mutely beseeching. The newspapers averred that whatever of the Conference passed into oblivion, that speech would never be forgotten.<sup>81</sup>

A review in *The Christian* describes the deep pathos in Kumm’s voice as he challenged an audience with the needs of the Sudan and even Kumm himself

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<sup>79</sup> *Khont*, p. 160.

<sup>80</sup> Cleverdon, p. 150.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92. That Kumm was indeed speaker at the Edinburgh Conference is borne out by Report of Commission VII, *Missions and Government* (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier; also New York, Chicago, Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company, n.d.), p. 78.

trembled as he unburdened himself.<sup>82</sup> In support of all this, Cleverdon assures us that Kumm could “hold his audience in the hollow of his hand and turn it whither he would.” He was successful especially in student meetings.<sup>83</sup> Zwemer concludes his “Introduction” by confiding that one of Kumm’s supreme gifts was to win others for the Gospel, for “God used his glowing speech, his vivid imagination, his ringing convictions, his sweeping generalizations as a trumpet-call to service on the platforms of many a missionary gathering.”<sup>84</sup>

As to his snap judgments, we lack no evidence of these either. During his tour of investigation in the Bauchi area of Northern Nigeria, Kumm spent a mere two days in the provincial capital, but that was sufficient for him to claim “a fair insight into the political relationship between the half-dozen white men, and the Mohammadan Emir of Bauchi.”<sup>85</sup> How much of a snap judgment this “fair insight” was can only be appreciated by those who have some experience with the perplexities of African political life. Maxwell, the only member of the original S.U.M. party to remain in Nigeria for many years, once exploded in his diaries at this tendency of Kumm to quickly assume expertise. The initial missionaries sent out by the South African branch of the S.U.M. had settled in an area that proved less suitable than an alternative location among the great Tiv tribe. Maxwell had been instrumental in persuading them to move to this more preferable vicinity, but subsequently he received a letter from the General Secretary of the South African branch requesting him to prevent any further such “precipitant” moves. Maxwell had grounds to believe that Kumm had influenced the South African leaders on this matter. He exploded, “Oh, Doctor K., I’ll have to give my friends in England some of my past experience out here, and I fear I shall be misunderstood, but how long are *you* to be allowed to be an authority of any degree on Northern

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82 n.n., “The Pagan Peoples of the Sudan,” *The Christian*, April 27, 1911.

83 Pp. 78, 36.

84 Appendix I.

85 Kumm, *The Sudan*, p.103.

Nigeria and its strategy? May I state quite baldly the total extent of Doctor's travel out here ...." Then follows a detailed account of Kumm's travels in Nigeria and the number of days he spent at each location. He continues: "Mark these on a map, and see quickly how much knowledge of the country at first hand he would get from them. Note that he travelled through, not stopping much to stay and learn of the nature of the places. Note also that he has to speak through an interpreter." He almost bitterly asks: "Wherein does his knowledge of the situation lie that then enables him so categorically to condemn the united judgment of Guinter,<sup>86</sup> the South Africans and myself?"<sup>87</sup> The full force of this explosion is understood only when it is realized that Maxwell was not basically a jealous person and that he hardly ever in his diaries wrote critically or negatively of his colleagues.

Snap judgments result in rash action. At one time Kumm suddenly threatened to resign as General Secretary of the S.U.M. "unless radical changes are made."<sup>88</sup> However, nothing further is ever heard of any radical changes; neither did Kumm resign his position. At another time, Kumm attempted suddenly to dissolve the American branch, thus causing "uneasiness and a sense of insecurity."<sup>89</sup>

Being a man of superlatives, Kumm loved displays of strength and spectacularity; mediocrity and quiet scenes had only secondary attraction for him. His books are replete with tales of his hunting activities that often concerned large game. Simply shooting defenseless animals for the sake of sport was against his nature and, consequently, he considered it wrong. On the other hand, there was a justified kind of hunting, that of "the sportsman-like pitting of the brawn and brain of the hunter against the brawn and brain of the hunted. With lion and elephant,

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86 Guinter was a fellow missionary, an American.

87 *Diaries*, (5), pp. 4-5.

88 SUM 2, p. 293.

89 SUM 6, letter by Gen. Sec. of the S.U.M. to MacClelland, Honorary Secretary of the American branch, June 7, 1927. Inserted between pp. 55 and 56. Unfortunately, the archives of the British branch contain no information as to the reason for such unexpected action.

leopard and bear, the fight is quite fair. There are men-eating lions, and there are lion-eating men.”<sup>90</sup> His hunting philosophy is indicative of an aspect of his character that led him almost instinctively to entertain an extremely paternalistic attitude towards the weak in Africa and of his almost unlimited appreciation of the strength of European nations. Another example of Kumm’s preference for strength was the disappointment he experienced upon his initial sighting of the S.U.M.’s Lucy Memorial Freed Slaves’ Home at Rumaisha: “My first impression was that a much more imposing site might have been chosen. There is no bold bluff, no palm grove, no rocky eminence – nothing but a gentle slope upwards from the river and then, 500 yards inland, a grass-grown elevation of about 80 feet above the level of the river.”<sup>91</sup> To be sure, he soon readjusts his disappointment and does find another quiet beauty in the site, but that does not cancel his initial response that was so instinctly true to his character.

Cleverdon tells us of a “battered scrap of paper” that Kumm carried with him during his trans-Sudan exploration, on which he had in his own handwriting recorded these words of Carlyle:

It is not to taste sweet things, but to do noble and true things and vindicate to himself under God’s Heaven, as a God-made man, the poorest son of Adam dimly longs. Show him the way of doing that and the dullest day-drudge kindles into a hero.

Difficulty, abnegation, martyrdom, death – are the allurements that act on the heart of man.<sup>92</sup>

Shown the way, “the dullest day-drudge kindles into a hero.” From his autobiographical materials it is plain that Kumm hardly considered himself as the “dullest day-drudge,” but he did certainly aspire to hero status. Having said this,

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<sup>90</sup> *Khont*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>91</sup> *From Hausaland*, p. 10.

<sup>92</sup> P. 165.

one must immediately add that Kumm's life must not be understood as one grand self-assertion, a "Kumm-centric" affair. Within a vision of the Kingdom of God in relation to the Sudan, Kumm pursued his goals with a determination and energy few can muster. In this divinely-imposed career he aspired to greatness by force of inclinations that were his birthright. To Kumm, the Sudan was the theatre of a great battle between two rival faiths – Islam and Christianity – and in this divine battle he was determined to win his medal.<sup>93</sup>

It is in this battle that Kumm regarded himself as a hero, not merely as a hard worker, but as an effective leader of men, as a pioneer in the extension of God's Kingdom and western civilization, and as a strategist. With characteristic self-assurance, but without offensive pride, he describes his own leadership qualifications that enabled him to command obedience from his men during his trans-Africa trek. Apart from punctuality, which he was never able to secure "from the native of Central Africa," he never lacked "simple respect and obedience" among his train.<sup>94</sup> Kumm does not hesitate to include himself in the class of pioneers of civilization.<sup>95</sup> The book purporting to relay the results of his trans-Sudan exploration, *From Hausaland to Egypt*, opens with an introductory chapter which in effect places him in a continuous line of pioneers and explorers that begins with Livingstone, Stanley and "Chinese" Gordon,<sup>96</sup> a place that he does not illegitimately usurp. By means of the *via negativa* Kumm places himself in this august company of explorers. Reflecting on his exploratory trek across the Sudan, Kumm writes: "As an exception to the usual run of trans-Africa exploring expeditions I neither experienced heart-stirring excitement in traversing the unknown, nor can I refer to the proverbially cool, stoical meeting with the first

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93 I like to think of this modest paper as representing a (minor) medal for this heroic man of God.

94 *Khont*, p. 21.

95 *From Hausaland*, p. 65.

96 pp. 1-5.

civilized man, after coming out of the unexplored.”<sup>97</sup> Anyone familiar with the story of Stanley’s meeting Dr. Livingstone cannot fail to notice the relationship Kumm is suggesting by this negation.

At least one newspaper agreed with Kumm’s estimate of himself. One reported Kumm’s return from his exploration under the title “Niger to Nile,” with no less than three sub-titles, one of which was “Remarkable Narrative.” It describes the journey as “one of the most interesting and important journeys undertaken of late years, and one which will occupy a high place in the annals of African explorers.” The report speaks of experiences that recall “in many particulars the journeys of Stanley and the earliest pioneers.”<sup>98</sup>

Kumm’s aspiration to pioneer status and to that of the dominant leader meant he was at his happiest and feeling the most virile in situations where he emerged dominant. His account of the sickness that overcame his colleagues on the original S.U.M. party is a clear demonstration of the subconscious delight he found in such situations where he was called upon to protect his charges and nurse them back to health. True, healing came after Kumm resorted to his knees and gave God due credit, while he claimed none for himself. Nevertheless, it is clear from his own description of the incident that he relished his role in the episode.<sup>99</sup> During his exploratory journey across the Sudan, Kumm happened upon a company of starving Muslims on their way to Mecca. His compassionate rescue of this group is a further evidence of the delight he experienced in supplying their needs, primarily by hunting big game such as hippopotami.<sup>100</sup>

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97 *From Hausaland*, p. 203. He may not have experienced “heart-stirring excitement,” but he most certainly did undergo blood-curling and hair-raising experiences.

98 *Daily Telegraph*, December 30, 1909.

99 *The Sudan*, pp. 86-87.

100 *From Hausaland*, p. 147.

The point at issue is further demonstrated by watching Kumm in situations where he was not the dominant figure, where he was not able to persuade others or where he was no leader. We have already read of his threat to resign as General Secretary of the S.U.M. if certain radical changes were not implemented.<sup>101</sup> Towards the closing years of his life, Kumm proposed an ambitious medical training program for Northern Nigeria, but when the S.U.M. leadership implied that his plans were premature,<sup>102</sup> and Kumm began to realize that even his wife was not convinced, he responded by deciding that perhaps his career was finished,<sup>103</sup> a wise, but nevertheless negative decision. In 1924, two years prior to his retirement for health reasons,<sup>104</sup> Kumm paid a final visit to Northern Nigeria. Maxwell publicly comments on this visit: "One can imagine what he thought and felt as he sat there and watched the functioning of the organism for whose birth he had been so largely responsible. No need for him to plan and think for its field development now; it was of age to plan and think for itself."<sup>105</sup> No one could imagine Kumm's deepest emotions better than Maxwell whose association with the S.U.M. was almost as long as Kumm's. Maxwell wisely and kindly refrained from indicating publicly what he imagined Kumm's thoughts to be, but in his diary he clearly reveals his suspicions:

Poor Doctor, he has found his visit to the field a disappointment. He is no longer in vital touch with the Mission. Many of the staff he had never seen, most of the stations were new to him. He has no leadership as far as the work is concerned; others occupy the leader's place, both spiritually and

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101 *Supra*, p. 25.

102 SUM 5, pp. 168, 171-172.

103 Cleverdon, p. 164.

104 *Ibid.*, p. 174.

105 *Half a Century*, p. 140.

executively and in actual qualification by experience. So he is more or less “out of it” and that is a very unpleasant position for any of us.<sup>106</sup>

The point, I believe, is abundantly clear. Kumm relished the dominant role and aimed for pioneer status. Whenever situations arose that did not further these, he tended to react negatively, an assertion that is merely the obverse of the previous sentence. When, at a later stage in this paper, I discuss Kumm’s descriptions of African situations, the reader will do well to remember this aspect of Kumm’s personality. In his virile descriptions of African culture and in his forceful calls to action, Kumm – perhaps subconsciously – was playing the role of pioneer and of a dominant saviour of Africa. Here he experienced relish and delight.

Another prominent aspect of Kumm’s character was imagination. It was this characteristic that enabled him to captivate his audiences. This characteristic, combined with a largeness of vision that could not settle for anything small or mediocre, found its expression not only in his writings and speeches, but also in his plans. The very notion of the S.U.M. with its world-wide branches and denominational as well as nondenominational affiliates was in itself already the product of large imagination. The same could be said for the goal of the mission: the evangelization of all Sudanese Animist tribes. Whereas lesser men would be satisfied with an initial few stations and from there on carefully budget for slow expanse, in 1909, under the guidance of Kumm, the S.U.M. launched its “Forward Movement” and appealed to the public for nothing less than 50 stations and 150 missionaries!<sup>107</sup>

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106 (18), p. 13. This quotation contains an echo of previous claims that Kumm tended too readily to assume expertise where Maxwell denied the legitimacy of the claim (*Supra*, p. 25). Though Kumm continued in an active capacity with the S.U.M., since World War I he lived in the United States and had become General Secretary to the American branch. The reason for this move was due to objections arising from the British constituency of the S.U.M. to having a born German – though naturalized Britain – in such prominent association with the mission (SUM 4, p. 272), and because of a general “germophobia” in Great Britain (Cleverdon, ch. 14). This move is the reason Kumm was no longer acquainted with many of the British missionaries. That Kumm valued his earlier personal acquaintance with S.U.M. missionaries is clear from an address he gave, in the course of which he spoke of the vast geographical size of the Sudan “with anything from 50 to 100 million people in it and was ten years ago without a missionary. Today there are in that country, all told, about 70 missionaries, and I have the pleasure of knowing nearly all of them.” Cf. “Address by Dr. Kumm,” *LB*, VI, January, 12-13.

107 SUM 2, p. 294.

A second grandiose scheme was Kumm's educational plan accepted by the Executive Committee.<sup>108</sup> The plan included three levels of education: elementary, secondary and a "rudimentary University" with four faculties: science, arts, medicine and theology.<sup>109</sup> The Mission never acted upon it. It appears that Kumm persuaded the Executive Committee of the S.U.M. of its necessity, but it did not really fit into their evangelical mode of thought. Though the original inspiration may have been the fact of Fourah Bay College at Sierra Leone and the experiment of the Uganda Princes' School,<sup>110</sup> it nevertheless required a rich imagination to propose such an ambitious scheme at a time when, except for some inmates of the Lucy Memorial Freed Slaves' Home, the mission had not yet baptized even her first convert and the total Protestant church membership in Nigeria in 1910 numbered about 10,000, over ninety per cent of which lived in the south.<sup>111</sup>

The last indication of Kumm's vivid imagination dates from his closing years – a medical research station and a medical school in Nigeria. Kumm had already exacted promise of support up to a million dollars from the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research and several evangelical medical men were ready to volunteer their services, including one of Kumm's sons.<sup>112</sup> By this time – 1923 – Kumm was in America and his spell on the British branch had long been broken. Consequently, he was not able to persuade them to accept this plan. The point at issue here, however, is clear: Kumm continued to have an imaginative approach to missions till the end. Up to the present, I am not aware that the S.U.M. or any

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108 *Ibid.*, p. 291.

109 *Cf.* Appendix III for the exact plan.

110 SUM 2, p. 284 and *LB*, VII, February, 31-32.

111 J.B. Grimley and G.E. Robinson, *Church Growth in Central and Southern Nigeria* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1966), p. 317.

112 SUM 5, pp. 168, 171.

other mission operating in the Sudan has matched even half of Kumm's imagination in these various areas.<sup>113</sup>

Another dominant character trait of Kumm is his native optimism. His writings are basically one grand optimistic assertion that his mission will be successful. If temporary obstacles prevent immediate success, that would only increase his determination bolstered by that unfaltering optimism of his. During the early years of his second marriage he wrote to his wife: "By nature I am a most optimistic person and so far from discouraging my optimism, I cultivate it – for in optimism, I see one of the strongest roots of success,"<sup>114</sup> a precursor to "the power of positive thinking!" In this respect, too, Kumm was at one with the spirit of his day. "If we make adequate use of the Livingstone Centenary," he exudes, "we shall build and build and build ... I am telling the people we must aim at sending the Gospel next year to all the tribes of Africa who have not yet heard of Jesus."<sup>115</sup> Kumm surpassed the optimism of his age that led evangelicals to aim at the evangelization of the world in a generation: for Africa, at least, he thought in terms of a year or so!

It has almost become a truism to say that World War I undermined western convictions as to the superiority of western culture. We have already seen, though only in a footnote,<sup>116</sup> that Kumm's career was particularly affected by this war in that he was forced to move to the United States of America. Though he retained a vital relationship with the S.U.M. as the General Secretary of the American branch, his relationship was never again to be as dominating as in the pre-war period. The result was that even Kumm's optimism began to waver. Cleverdon

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113 Though the SUM never took steps towards a university, The Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN), the denomination established by the British Branch, in 2004, celebrating a century of mission in Nigeria, announced plans to establish Karl Kumm University. Bulus Gambo, "Dr. Karl Kumm: The Man and His Vision." *The Light Bearer*, Feb/2004, p. 27.

114 Cleverdon, p. 135.

115 *Ibid.*

116 *Cf.* fn. 82.

informs us that “Dr. Kumm was never quite the same after the war – never the same unqualified optimist.”<sup>117</sup> This bit of information serves to indicate that even Kumm was no superhuman rock of strength and thus brings him down to the level of most of us, plebeians. It serves, in addition, to further our thesis that Kumm was wholly a child of his day, also in the post-war decrease of his optimism.

A man, it is frequently asserted, is known by who his enemies are. Similarly, a man’s heroes are indicative of his personality and ideals. So it is with Dr. Kumm. Among his heroes was one whose basic motivations were so different from Kumm’s, if not actually contrary, that a child of the seventies can only regard the two as unlikely bedfellows. I refer to Cecil J. Rhodes, the man who is described as “the greatest Empire Builder” who has “added three-quarters of a million square miles to the British Empire.”<sup>118</sup> On the one hand, it is understandable that Kumm had respect for Rhodes, because Rhodes, who was the very personification of the British South Africa Company in the same way that Kumm was of the S.U.M., seemed on the surface to favour the cause of missions. Groves has recorded several cases for us in which Rhodes generously aided various missionary endeavours, especially by means of land grants. Furthermore, Rhodes removed restrictions placed on missions prior to the company’s regime and offered the Wesleyan Methodists one hundred pounds annually towards the support of a missionary. He once met with General Booth of the Salvation Army and offered him “whatever extent of land you may require.” Booth initially requested a “mere” six thousand acres in a fertile district. Rhodes awarded no less than twenty-four thousand acres to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, including “some of the highest and most healthful sites in all Gazaland.” In Rhodesia he offered a total of three hundred twenty-five thousand acres to various missions!<sup>119</sup>

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117 P. 149.

118 Ms. on permanent display in the Grey Gallery, Rhodes House Library, Oxford. This exhibition includes a lock of hair of the subject!

119 C.P. Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in Africa* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), I, pp. 98-104.

The same Rhodes, who once publicly referred to the Church of England as “my own church,” was nevertheless not the “mission-minded” imperialist these generous gifts would seem to indicate. W.T. Stead had “intimate contact” with our hero and he claimed that Rhodes “was an agnostic, a Darwinian rather than a Christian, with a belief in a fifty-fifty chance that there was a God of the universe ...” Booth recognized his sub-Christian motivations. “I wanted the country for the people,” he wrote, “and he wanted the people for the country. So far we were one, perhaps not much further ...”<sup>120</sup> This estimation conforms to Rhodes’ own confession that “the highest object has been to me the greatness of my country,” while in his personal life he had found his basic inspiration from the odes of Horace.<sup>121</sup>

Rhodes’ “mission-mindedness” then was that of the typical colonials who supported missions for purposes of their own and who would, should common interests revert to cross-purposes, not hesitate to oppose missionaries. At least one such case is known in Rhodes’ relations to the London Missionary Society. When this mission supported the efforts of Khama, the famous chief of the Ngwatos, to escape falling into the hands of the British South Africa Company and, instead, to come under the direct protection of the British government, Rhodes placed his power, wealth and influence at the disposal of the political opponent of Sir Albert Spicer, treasurer of the mission, in order to oust him from Parliament.<sup>122</sup>

Yet this was the Rhodes whose “career and his personality always fascinated Dr. Kumm,” according to Cleverdon. Kumm once occupied Rhodes’ apartment in a Kimberley hotel where “an old intimate of Rhodes talked to him from the early

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120 *Ibid.*, p. 100. Cf. also R. Oliver, *The Missionary Factor in East Africa*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Longman, 1965), p. 124. Here it is recorded also that Rhodes sought the extension of British rule for purely commercial purposes.

121 Permanent display, *loc. cit.*

122 Groves, p. 105. Cf. also S. Neill, *Colonialism and Christian Missions* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1966), p. 134, where the author refers to this incident as pettiness on the part of Rhodes.

hours of the evening till the early hours of the morning ....” The notes Kumm took of this conversation are, unfortunately, not included in Cleverdon’s narrative.<sup>123</sup>

Full explanation of Kumm’s attitude towards Rhodes would require an account of the former’s idea of colonialism, a subject that would take us too far afield and which is reserved for my upcoming thesis.<sup>124</sup> Suffice it to state, on basis of research done for that thesis, that Kumm’s admiration for Rhodes was based upon an inadequate understanding of the deepest nature of colonialism, a misunderstanding he shared with most of his fellow missionaries. It is also a further indication of lack of clear and consistent thinking on the part of Kumm, a characteristic one might justifiably expect from one of Kumm’s nature as it has been described in previous pages.

Another object of Kumm’s admiration was not a person but a people – South African Europeans. He confessed to a Boer audience in Capetown “how much I had admired their enterprise from childhood and that the future of Africa depended very largely on what they, the white south Africans, ... would make of it.”<sup>125</sup> This was no mere promotional gimmick on Kumm’s part: the sentiment here expressed fully coincided with the S.U.M.’s early hopes for beneficial effects of white settlement in Africa.<sup>126</sup>

Kumm’s greatest hero, less surprisingly, was Livingstone. He reserved many honorary titles for his famous predecessor. “Prince of missionaries in the south,” Kumm calls him,<sup>127</sup> while elsewhere he describes him as “a strong man and true,”

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123 pp. 98-99.

124 Boer, 1979, Chapter 4; 1984, pp. 35-40.

125 Cleverdon, p. 100.

126 For this, too, see Boer, 1979.

127 *The Sudan*, p. 117,

whose “natives loved him.”<sup>128</sup> Kumm dedicated his *From Hausaland to Egypt* “To the Prince of Missionary Explorers, David Livingstone,” a fitting tribute from a man who aspired to membership in that same class of missionary explorers. Kumm was the originator of a plan to celebrate a Livingstone Centenary.<sup>129</sup> In the context of planning for this centenary, the S.U.M. authorized an open letter for the purpose of seeking funds for the celebration. Though the author of the letter is not indicated, both Kumm’s position as General Secretary and the fact that the entire plan originated with him favours a “Kummanian” authorship. Even more, the exuberant style with its profusion of superlatives is so typical of Kumm that one may reasonably accept his authorship of the document. In this letter, Livingstone is referred to as “saint, physician, explorer, missionary, pathfinder for men, and pioneer for God – ‘the John the Baptist of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.’”<sup>130</sup> Cleverdon summarized Kumm’s feelings this way:

More and more he had absorbed the spirit of David Livingstone, and he longed and prayed that in the year which celebrated the Centenary of his hero’s birth, there should be inaugurated such a forward movement in missionary enterprise that Christianity should sweep the continent for which Livingstone gave his life.<sup>131</sup>

Kumm did not suggest the Livingstone Centennial as a mere promotion stunt so much as once again to awaken men to Livingstone’s charge with which this paper begins and to act upon the missionary-explorer’s ideals.

This brief discussion of Kumm’s heroes, culminating in Livingstone, brings us full-circle back to the Introduction of this paper and connects Kumm with the dreams and aspirations of his day, especially those of his evangelical contemporaries. An

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128 *Khont*, p. 194.

129 SUM 4, p. 90.

130 *Ibid.*, pp. 161-162.

131 pp. 120-121.

attempt has been made to demonstrate that Kumm was fully a child of his age and that this was partly responsible for his success in arousing the evangelical community to the needs of the Sudan. He did not goad to revolutionary action or thought patterns, but played on existing sympathies and prevalent attitudes. Finally, I have tried to indicate certain aspects of Kumm's personality, not because one could simply deduce his theories from knowing his environment and his personality, but simply because his rather uncomplicated character does shed helpful light on his career and his utterances. Such a discussion, brief as it is, helps one appreciate the virile, grandiose, exuberant and, often, exaggerated forms of expression so rampant in all of Kumm's writings and doings. Kumm could not conceal himself. In spite of the fact that he thought of himself as a strong, masculine he-man, Cleverdon could rightfully state that "there was always something child-like in Karl Kumm."<sup>132</sup> He wrote books about other peoples and nations, but in the process he wrote a book about himself to be read by anyone who cares.

### **Postscript: The Fifth Great Awakening**

In the course of writing this paper I chanced upon an article by J. Edwin Orr that adds an interesting dimension to the context in which Kumm spent himself. The article is found in *Calvinist Contact*, an ethnic Dutch-Canadian Christian weekly<sup>133</sup> and is written with a view to "Key 73", a current intensive evangelistic campaign in North America. I am including large sections of this article as Appendix 4 because of the light it sheds on the evangelical climate of Kumm's day and because of the unfamiliarity beclouding this so-called Fifth Great Awakening. The importance of this article for our purpose is that it provides us with additional insight into the reasons for Kumm's amazing success in rallying such a widespread evangelical

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132 P. 136.

133 July 9-16, 1973.

community to his cause. The atmosphere of a revival would greatly aid him in his designs in that his concern would find ready soil.<sup>134</sup>

## II. **The Corpus Christianum: A Gobbler**

In our introductory chapter a few lines were devoted to a description of the *Corpus Christianum* notion as it operated in western civilization. It was noted that Van Den Berg describes Livingstone, Kumm's hero, as still standing in the "vanishing" tradition of the *Corpus*. I do not quarrel with the adjective "vanishing" in this context, but Kumm still stood foursquare in this tradition, though to the best of my knowledge, he never used the term "*Corpus Christianum*" and might even have repudiated the notion that he operated with it. Speaking of the "three Protestant Christian nations, Britain, Germany, and the United States" and their power in the world, Kumm asserts that "we became, through the Bible and Christianity, what we are."<sup>135</sup> Whereas today many might respond to such a claim by rejecting the source of such "greatness," Kumm, convinced as he was of the superiority of these notions, was hereby giving grateful recognition to this source.

Kumm time and again expresses himself in the above terms. The fundamental principles on which the British Empire is built, according to him, are those of the Bible and faith in Christ.<sup>136</sup> Constructions such as "Christian government," "Christian Europe," "Christian nations" are everywhere interspersed in his writings.<sup>137</sup> Northern Nigeria needs the rudiments of education based on "Christian European principles."<sup>138</sup> In his *From Hausaland to Egypt* Kumm speaks of the need

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134 Nevertheless, this matter is appended to the present chapter as a postscript rather than integrated into the main text. If the facts are as here presented by Orr, then it is indeed curious that it should have been so overlooked by historians. On the other hand, the credentials of the author as reproduced in Appendix IV are highly respectable and forbid one to simply ignore the evidence.

135 *Khont*, p. 7.

136 *Ibid.*, p. 230.

137 *Ibid.*, pp. 109, 121, 209.

138 *The Sudan*, p. 105.

to “uphold the integrity and humanity of ideals of which the Christian civilized nations of Europe are so justly proud.”<sup>139</sup> At the opening of the Lucy Memorial Freed Slaves’ Home at Rumaisha in 1909, a key was presented to His Excellency Sir Percy Girouard, His Majesty’s High Commissioner for Northern Nigeria, that was the very embodiment of the *Corpus* ideal – and intended that way. Referred to as a “symbolic key,” it is described as follows:

On the right is the Union Jack – ever the emblem of social and political freedom; on the left the Royal Standard, representing the head of our great free Empire; while both these rest on the Holy Bible, the foundation to all our greatness. The Key itself represents the opening of the door into this dark land, the last and largest British Protectorate – only a few years ago cursed with slave raiding, cannibalism, and all manner of cruelties, now brought to a state of comparative peace and quiet.<sup>140</sup>

With such a tremendous heritage as foundation of western and, especially, British culture, one should not be surprised at the high claims Kumm makes for that culture. He speaks of “a high state of civilization,” of a “civilized commonwealth commanding the respect of the world,”<sup>141</sup> and, consequently, of the responsibility that ensues when a nation is as “richly endowed as we are with the blessings of the true gospel and of the highest civilisation ....”<sup>142</sup> What especially characterizes this high civilization is liberty and justice, terms that re-occur constantly in Kumm’s writings in relation to civilization. Great Britain outshines all other nations in that

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139 P. 65.

140 *LB*, V, April, insert between pp. 84-85. Though documentary proof is lacking that Kumm is the designer of this key, his position in the S.U.M. and the piling up of so many symbols in so small an object as a key is highly characteristic of Kumm’s intensity and would point to him as the likely architect.

141 *Khont*, p. 8.

142 *LB*, IX, March, insert between pp. 50-51.

“justice, truthfulness, honesty and liberty are valued more highly in Britain than in any other state on earth ....”!<sup>143</sup>

It is at points such as this that the reader must remember various aspects of Kumm’s personality, such as his tendency to rashness and quick judgment, to irrationality, as much as the ideology of his age. The need to remember this combination of contemporary ideology and character is further illustrated in an article Kumm published, “The Kingdoms of This World,” where he counts seven major empires in world history, the last of which, Great Britain of course, is “utterly different” from the others. In his elaboration of this thesis he stops short just of identifying this empire with the “millennial Empire” when “the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ.”<sup>144</sup>

On the basis of the foregoing, Kumm feels fully justified in his concern for the honour of “civilized countries”;<sup>145</sup> on this basis, too, one can understand the S.U.M.’s appeal for more recruits “to save Great Britain from disgrace,” the disgrace being the danger that “millions of British subjects are going over to Mohammedanism.”<sup>146</sup> There is a crisis situation in Northern Nigeria, for a decision is being shaped there between the cross and the crescent. Should this decision turn out to be in favor of the crescent, it would be a disgrace to Christians of Great Britain who have done next to nothing in the area since it has been “ours.”<sup>147</sup> In an open letter to all Christians, the mission submits that “it would be a national disgrace to allow these tribes, who number at least ten million, and who are now British subjects, to pass under the rule of the false Prophet, when they are waiting

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<sup>143</sup> *Khont*, p. 15.

<sup>144</sup> *LB*, IV, February, 44-46.

<sup>145</sup> *LB*, VI, May, 110.

<sup>146</sup> *LB*, II, February, advertisement on inside of back cover.

<sup>147</sup> “Rising in Sokoto,” *LB*, II, March, 26.

to be won for Christ.”<sup>148</sup> He can justifiably speak with admiration – not unmixed with self-admiration – of explorers, soldiers, officials, missionaries and others who have fallen man after man in “carrying forward the flag of European civilisation” in Africa.<sup>149</sup>

If one can speak of Christian nations and people, then one can also speak of non-Christian races. So, indeed Kumm does and he places them in juxtaposition with the Christian European nations.<sup>150</sup> The difference between these two types of races does not inhere in any natural hierarchy of superiority and inferiority, but it is due solely to the influence of the Gospel upon the West. In a letter to the staff in Nigeria, Kumm exhorts them to be patient and not to expect the would-be converts to approximate the high moral standards of European Christians. The staff must

bear in mind that the character of the African cannot be compared with the character of the European, which, other things being equal, has the moral backing of some forty or fifty generations of forefathers controlled by laws more or less Christian in character.

The African must therefore not be expected, even after conversion, to show us the same results that we should rightly expect in Europe. Patience is needed with them, and much patience ....<sup>151</sup>

The above theme is not incidental to Kumm’s scheme of things: it plays a central role in his writings and strategy. There is no cause for pride, for the Gospel is a gift. Many years ago in West Central Europe there was also a race without a

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148 SUM 2, p. 93. Dated January 2, 1906.

149 *From Hausaland*, p. 2. Kumm himself did literally carry the British flag on his trans-Africa safari, according to Cleverdon, p. 137.

150 Khont, p. 217.

151 SUM 2, p. 301. Kumm’s authorship is established at *Ibid.*, p. 305.

history<sup>152</sup> that became “the material out of which Christianity formed the world Empires of the Teuton and Anglo-Saxon races.” They became great *after* and *because* they became Christians. The *Bible* made them what they are.<sup>153</sup>

This admiration for western culture, so difficult for our present generation to understand or appreciate, is only marginally tempered by Kumm. Despite its greatness, modern civilization produces evils as well. Kumm relates the story of a Chinese who had stayed some sixteen years in Great Britain and arrived at the conclusion that “Christianity is a sham;” his traditional faith had been undermined, while modernity had robbed Christianity from any appeal it might have had for him. Cries Kumm: “We are taking away the gods they have and our gifts we bestow upon them are drink, civilisation void of religion, opium and maxim guns. God have pity on us as a people.”<sup>154</sup> One time Kumm found himself at a conference featuring two female musicians with hair fixed in the latest style, “their faces enameled and their songs the song of houris,” and --- *erotica*: just to bring Kumm up to date – with “their skirts up to show their knees.” He explodes, “This certainly is Rome, Rome decadent with a vengeance.” This is found in a letter to this wife in which he playfully warns her that he will return to Africa for good if her daughter turns out in such fashion.<sup>155</sup> European civilization is God’s gift, but without *moral* restraint it becomes “like a two-edged dagger in the hands of an infant.”<sup>156</sup>

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152 The implication is, of course, that the Black man did not have a history, as was indeed affirmed to be the case by W.T. Balmer in “West Africa under Modern European Rule,” *LB*, VIII, October, 158. The Negro’s history, asserts Balmer generously, lies in the future, a history for which Europeans have to prepare him.

153 *Khont*, p. 8.

154 *Ibid.*, pp. 210-211.

155 Cleverdon, p. 154.

156 *Khont*, p. 209.

We have here stumbled upon a tendency that Kumm shared with much of the evangelical community, namely the tendency to attribute a central function to morality, to almost absolutize the moral aspect of reality, to reduce the difference between Christian and non-Christian behavior to a moral difference. European civilization is admirable, but it needs *moral* restraint to make it so. African Christians should not be expected to approximate the level of their European brothers, for the latter are heirs to many generations of *moral* backing.<sup>157</sup> Africa's plight is the fact that it wanders in *moral* midnight; she is hence in need of Christ and Christian *moral* restraint.<sup>158</sup> Education for Northern Nigeria must aim at "mental and *moral* elevation,"<sup>159</sup> which can best be provided by the church, for she is the "source of the *moral* life of this world."<sup>160</sup>

Almost unnoticeably we have slipped into Kumm's evaluation of African cultures. In his work as public relations man on a world-wide scale for the S.U.M.,<sup>161</sup> Kumm had vested interests in presenting the contrasts between European and African cultures as strikingly as possible. Here his natural love for hyperboles and superlatives, his vividness, forcefulness and imagination all come to his aid in producing the most virile descriptions of the negative aspects of African life. Here his tendency to make snap judgments and to quickly assume expertise are in no way qualified by his one-time admission of limited insight into African civilization. In these descriptions Kumm reveals himself as much as he reveals Africa. Here one meets Kumm himself.

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157 *Supra*, fn. 125.

158 *Khont*, p. 210. *Cf.* also a promotional pamphlet inserted in SPM after the first meeting of November 13, 1902. Finally, *cf. The Sudan*, p. 60.

159 *The Sudan*, p. 105. Italics mine.

160 "From South Africa," *LB*, III, August/September, 204. I expect to expand on this matter further in a forthcoming paper on the S.U.M. and colonialism.

161 Kumm was actually General Secretary, but he spent little time in his office and preferred to leave much of this work to a fellow officer, Bailey, while Kumm engaged in extensive globetrotting in order to arouse a wide community to the needs of the Sudan.

Basically, Kumm believed in a common humanity. We have already seen that the difference between Africans and Europeans is caused by the Gospel. Basically and potentially they are identical in worth and ability. Africans, we are told, “are our brothers and sisters in common humanity. They are one with us in sin and ruin, let them be one with us in the knowledge of salvation.”<sup>162</sup> However low Africans may have fallen, “they are members of the human family, there is a spark divine ...”<sup>163</sup> In the same breath Kumm can compare the African to an animal and to assert a divine element in him: “How near akin to beasts of prey! Yet even in the lowest of the low, as they are members of the human family, there is the spark divine, the feeling after God, the possibility of the higher life.”<sup>164</sup>

As a result of such a “high” view of his black brothers, Kumm could be extremely generous in his estimation of them. In book-learning, he affirms, the African child surpasses the white child in quickness of acquisition up to the age of ten, but, unfortunately, falls behind during his teens.<sup>165</sup> Against those who think the African incapable of the highest development, our author “ventures to suggest that all the rudimentary elements that made the Anglo-Saxon race what it is today are found in the negro, and qualities even beyond those of our forefathers”!<sup>166</sup> Indeed, the supreme compliment! At the conclusion of a discussion on Negro characteristics, Kumm reminds us that Tacitus, in his “Germania,” describes the Germans as “lazy, happy-go-lucky, easy-living people, who lay all day on their bare skins” –just like the Negro!<sup>167</sup>

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162 *The Sudan*. P. 60.

163 *Khont*, p. 105.

164 *Ibid.*, pp. 105-106. Kumm’s writings are marred by *frequently* comparing Africans to animals.

165 *Ibid.*, p. 150.

166 *Ibid.*, p. 12.

167 *Ibid.*, p. 151.

Kumm has more compliments in store, compliments that touch upon “many excellent qualities of heart and mind,” that include docility, faithfulness as well as “many ‘feminine’ characteristics.”<sup>168</sup> Even though it is unfortunately true that the Negro is “vain, self-indulgent, demonstrative, and theatrical,” Kumm good-heartedly attributes to him “a good heart.” “As long as Africans are well fed they are good-tempered and willing.”<sup>169</sup> One can basically expect such judgment from one who increasingly absorbed Livingstone’s soul,<sup>170</sup> for the latter is also said to have reached the conclusion that “after all the negro is no better and no worse than the rest of the sons of men.”<sup>171</sup>

Kumm provides us with many positive descriptions of Africans. He finds the Negro to possess stamina and vitality. He is unsurpassed as an agriculturalist, possesses remarkable dexterity in handicrafts, has great endurance and is capable of any amount of work – as a *free* man, not as a slave.<sup>172</sup> We learn from Kumm that the Tiv<sup>173</sup> are “a noble, free-born tribe, capable of great development.”<sup>174</sup> Of the Kirdi people we hear they are “excellent agriculturalists,” while physically they are attractively “strong, muscular people, with well-shaped bodies.” Even their

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168 *Ibid.*, p. 149.

169 *From Hausaland*, p. 100.

170 *Supra*, p. 28.

171 *Khont, loc. cit.* Kumm drew much of this material from A. Silva White: *Development in Africa*, p. 87. Though the last two paragraphs could be taken as haughty hindsight sarcasm, they are meant to add a touch of light-hearted humour designed precisely to avoid sarcasm.

172 *Ibid.*, pp. 150-151.

173 Kumm always refers to this tribe as “Munchi,” a name this tribe strongly resents and which, out of respect for their sensitivity, I will avoid except in quotations.

174 *From Hausaland*, p. 42.

nakedness is regarded as a plus because of their beauty and high morals.<sup>175</sup> One could produce an extended list of the positive virtues of Africa, its people and culture.

Nevertheless, in spite of such positive statements, Kumm is at his “Kummet” when reporting on the negative modalities of African life. As light, justice and liberties are key concepts used to describe European civilization, so is especially darkness the key concept used to describe the essence of Africa. The term is embedded in the title of one of his books, *The Sudan: a Short Compendium of Facts and Figures about the Land of Darkness*. In this book he tells us that “there is a land in this wonderful world, called ‘The Land of Darkness;’ ... dark are the bodies of the people who live there, darker are their minds, and darker still their souls, -- the great Land of Darkness.”<sup>176</sup> That Kumm is quite serious about this evaluation is demonstrated by his repetition of this sentiment in *Khont-Hon-Nofer* in a slight variation: “Dark as their bodies are their minds, and darker still the souls of the sons and daughters of the Dark Continent.”<sup>177</sup> In a promotion pamphlet already referred to several times, the public is informed about the “heritage of a host of heathen nations” that have been left “all these ages to the reign of unmixed darkness and unmitigated depravity.”<sup>178</sup> They are ignorant; they wander in moral twilight; they “know not what they do.”<sup>179</sup> Heathen folk live in darkness and ignorance.<sup>180</sup> Africa is the “darkest region of the earth,”<sup>181</sup> where one

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175 *Ibid.*, pp. 103-105.

176 P. 15.

177 P. 156.

178 SPM, *loc.cit.*

179 *Ibid.*

180 *The Sudan*, p. 133.

181 *Ibid.*

encounters the “lowest of the low.”<sup>182</sup> Regarding certain southern tribes Kumm speaks of their “unspeakable degradation,” which he illustrates with examples that are credible enough. One is tempted to quote Kumm at length in order to relay adequately the vehemence of these descriptions – and his obvious relish in painting these dark scenes. He describes the burial customs of a certain tribe that staked live men and women to the ground when the chief had died. But even worse, in Kumm’s mind, was the “rampant immorality of these people. One cannot go into details, and the curtain of reticence must be closely drawn over this most loathsome sin. I can only say that they were absolutely without the faintest regard for the Seventh Commandment, except in so far as they can use the marriage bond for pecuniary purposes.”<sup>183</sup> Kumm pictures the King of the Gazum people sitting in front of him on the ground, the ruler of a people accustomed to eating their elderly folk. They are described as “the very lowest of the low, the most degraded of humanity.”<sup>184</sup>

Kumm tended to distinguish between the darkness of Paganism and that of Islam. The previous descriptions refer primarily, though not exclusively, to Pagans who are basically portrayed as being the objects of darkness, victims caught in these terrible situations. His descriptions of Muslims and their religion is even less complimentary, because they are treated more as subjects of darkness, of perpetrators of evil, as being actively engaged in demonizing Africa. Though, as we shall see, Kumm classifies the Muslim cultures in Africa as having higher degrees of civilization than Paganism, they also excel the latter in works of evil.

Whereas Pagans are often portrayed as being open to the total influence of the *Corpus Christianum* and, hence, as actually inviting the mission to send teachers,<sup>185</sup>

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182 *Khont*, p. 105.

183 *The Sudan*, pp. 79-80.

184 *Ibid.*, p. 208.

185 Evidence for such invitations will be unveiled in my forthcoming dissertation on the S.U.M. and colonialism.

Islam is depicted as opposed to all progress, as the greatest “promoter of barbarisms in Africa,” the “greatest enemy to European culture in Africa,” the most serious danger for the future development of that continent.” Religious intolerance, brutality, fanaticism, unbridled covetousness, lying and deception are all characteristic of Muslims.<sup>186</sup> Cleverdon quotes Kumm as stating that “wherever Mohammedanism has gone, lying and stealing and sexual diseases have spread, until certain pagan places which were clean fifteen years ago, have become syphilitic cesspools.”<sup>187</sup>

Kumm singles out especially two groups that are particularly vulnerable to the worst in Islam: women and slaves. In Paganism women enjoy comparative freedom,<sup>188</sup> but in Islam they “become slaves and worse than slaves.” They become mere chattels to whom the husband is at liberty to do as he pleases; he may punish them “by beating, stoning, or imprisonment till death.”<sup>189</sup> Kumm relays for us the story of a lady missionary in Egypt who was told by Muslim women that the Gospel is not for them, for “there is no ... Paradise for us. We are like cattle; when we die, we are gone. We have no souls.”<sup>190</sup>

With respect to slaving activities at the turn of our century, Islam, of course, emerges as *the* villain. It is this wide-spread activity that becomes the S.U.M.’s

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186 *Khont*, pp. 228-229.

187 P. 161.

188 *The Sudan*, p. 137 and *Khont*, p. 12.

189 *The Sudan*, *loc. cit.* It is interesting to observe that Maxwell, the only member of the original S.U.M. party to remain many years in Nigeria, came to the opposite conclusion regarding the status of women in Paganism and Islam: he considers the Pagan woman “much more of a chattel.” Cf. *Nigeria: the Land, the People and Christian Progress* (London: World Dominion Press, n.d.), p. 75. Though no year of publication is given, the book must have been written during the latter half of the 1920’s, for those were the years Maxwell resided in Donga, Northern Nigeria. In his “Foreword” to the book, McLeish introduces the writer as “Mr. J.L. Maxwell, of Donga, Northern Nigeria.” This means Maxwell had been observing the situation for more than 20 years.

190 *The Sudan*, p. 141.

main justification for favouring the British colonizing efforts in Northern Nigeria and for Kumm's appeals to European nations to intervene in the resulting waste of human life.<sup>191</sup> It has already been shown how Kumm was gripped and haunted by that picture of a Bischarin with his piercing eyes staring at Kumm.<sup>192</sup> In a chapter entitled "The Open Sore of Africa," in imitation of his hero, Kumm writes of the "Via Dolorosa of the Negro," a slave route from the Sudan to North Africa:

Southward sweeps the plain, away to the horizon. Scores of narrow tracks, as broad as a camel's foot, sometimes fifty to a hundred and fifty parallel, run through it side by side: the old caravan route to the Sudan. A caravan route only? More than a caravan route – one of the main slave tracks from the land of the blacks to the North. *The Via Dolorosa of the Negro*. Do you see these narrow paths through sand and rock? They have been worn by naked feet. Countless summer suns have burnt these bare mountain roads since first the black man was driven past here, whom from the earliest dawn of time has borne the curse of Ham. That rocky path was not worked out by bare feet in 100 years. Many a century must have gone by to create it. Millenniums have seen its use and abuse.<sup>193</sup>

Kumm searches for means to express his strongest condemnation of Islam; none is really strong enough to suit him. "Mohammedanism, with its avowed acceptance, practice, and teaching of slavery, is, on that account alone, one of the most wicked if not *the* most wicked religion on the face of God's earth. Martin Luther was not far wrong when he called Mohamet "the first-born son of Satan."<sup>194</sup> A few months

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191 Cf. my upcoming thesis on the subject. Cf. also e.g. Kumm, "Present Day Slave Traffic in Africa," *LB*, VI, May, 120.

192 *Supra*, p. 14.

193 *The Sudan*, p. 127.

194 "The Open Sore of Africa," *LB*, II, August/September, 161. It must be understood that Kumm did not experience hatred for Muslims themselves. Remember the report of his rescuing that group of starving pilgrims. This story is found woven through chapters XII-XVI of *From Hausaland*.

later another installment of the same chapter from *The Sudan* appears in the S.U.M.'s monthly with similar vehemence: "Thousands of such caravans had left the Sudan for their dread march across the deserts, with none but God to witness the nameless unutterable sufferings of the way. Thousands upon thousands of defenceless women and girls had been among the victims of the march, with none but God to notice their agonies and shame."<sup>195</sup> For a final evaluation of tropical Africa in general, the following quotation is expressive, also in the optimism as to the future:

Evil dreams have made Africa's sleep unhappy and restless. The curse of Ham has been its woe, and for centuries and millenniums it has been in the grip of demons. Chains have bound it. Chains of superstition and idolatry, chains of mental ignorance and physical slavery; but the spell has been broken, and in our days the giant is lifting himself from the ground, and in his half-sleep is looking around questioningly.

Africa is today standing before the crossways, with a bent to follow the white man's path, if only the guides can be secured to him.<sup>196</sup>

We have, it appears, arrived at an antithetical situation of black and white, the colours referring primarily not to skin but to light and darkness that respectively characterize Western and African civilizations. Is Kumm then of the opinion that Africa lacks civilization totally? Or that the West has monopoly on this gift of God?

It is in the attempt to answer this question that one is especially inhibited by the colour of Kumm's person and his supreme gift of non-objectivity. One finds a number of strands in his use of the term "civilization" that form determined barriers to coherent definition. The concept of "civilization" was an important tool for Kumm, operating as he did within a constituency that still instinctively and unreflectingly thought in terms of *Corpus Christianum*, but that experienced no need to carefully analyze the term. Kumm was above all a missionary, not a

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<sup>195</sup> "The Open Sore of Africa," *LB*, III, January, 8.

<sup>196</sup> "The Outlook," *LB*, IV, June, 122-123.

scholar; to be sure, a missionary of scholarly and scientific achievements,<sup>197</sup> but foremost a missionary obsessed with the needs of the Sudan. An obsessed person seldom stops to analyze his basic concepts. Both the concept of “civilization” and that of “*Corpus Christianum*” were tools he used, the first consciously, the second unconsciously, in alerting a wide community to a challenge. Definitions were not called for in that task. We can thus make certain statements on Kumm’s concept of civilization, but a coherent definition is beyond the range of possibilities.

The record has it that Kumm does actually apply the term “civilization” to indigenous Africa. Kumm once made a statement that he probably did not regard as being of particular importance in understanding him: he describes the Muslims of Adamawa and of Northern Nigeria as “intelligent and half-civilised.”<sup>198</sup> This term “half-civilised” must be seen in relation to European civilization, in comparison to which the high Muslim culture found among these people is placed in its proper cosmopolitan perspective. Anything that is said superlatively about African civilization must be placed in the relativizing framework of this description. He can speak of tribes that are “very low in the scale of civilisation” and of those that are “quite high,” the former of which include cannibals.<sup>199</sup> In typical “Kummese,” i.e. in typical superlatives, Kumm speaks of “the most civilized and the most degraded of the dark-coloured peoples of the Dark Continent,<sup>200</sup> but, remember, this is a relative gradation valid only within the “Dark Continent.” The Musgun people are attributed “a comparatively high native civilisation,”<sup>201</sup> but the emphasis must fall on “comparatively.” In comparison to surrounding African peoples, they have

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197 His relations with various geographical societies, his being requested to draw maps of Africa for post-World War I conference in Paris, and Cleverdon’s story of his death are all indications of Kumm’s successes in these areas.

198 *From Hausaland*, p. 86.

199 “Address by Dr. Kumm,” *LB*, VI, January, 13.

200 *The Sudan*, p. 20.

201 *From Hausaland*, p. 256.

reached a high stage of development; in comparison to European civilization they would be mere savages. The people of India and Northern Nigeria possess a “high indigenous civilisation if compared with the tribes and nations which surround them,”<sup>202</sup> but compared to Europe they would possess little light or truth. That such statements must always be placed in this restrictive framework is incontestably clear also from Kumm’s more global descriptions of African culture.<sup>203</sup> In contrast to European civilization, even “the most civilized” is at best only “half-civilized.”

The Sudan is a region where three branches of the human family meet, namely the Semitic, the Hamitic and the Bantu.<sup>204</sup> Kumm arranges these three according to their “relative state of civilisation” so that the Semitic appear at the top, succeeded by the Hamitic and Bantu people in that order. The most civilized, the Semites, include “various tribes of the Arab nation” found in the east. These are well dressed, well armed and enjoy a considerable prestige. All speak Arabic, while about one per cent or less can read and write. With respect to armaments, they “usually” carry rifles and pistols, but spears, swords and daggers are also found among them. They excel as horse riders. Religiously, they adhere to Islam.

The second family, the Hamites, include tribes from both west and east Africa. They follow close upon the heels of the first race and are described as being “dressed in cotton garments; they work in leather and iron, keep large herds of cattle, camels, horses, sheep and goats, and are many of them masters of the Arabic language ...” Religious affiliation is Islam. This group also owns rifles, but only a few; they thus rely more heavily on spears, bows and arrows, swords and daggers. The rifles they do have are “mostly of an antiquated pattern.” In this class also belong the Fulani/Hausa civilization of Northern Nigeria of which Kumm

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202 *The Sudan*, p. 105.

203 *Supra*, pp. 43-47.

204 The discussion of these three branches is mostly based on Chapter XVIII of *From Hausaland*, pp. 244-257, a chapter entitled “On the Anthropology of the Sudan Tribes” and that includes 6 pages of facial silhouettes of various African peoples and lists of tribes inhabiting the Sudan.

speaks in highest terms. When our forefathers knew only bow and arrow, these folk already had a type of gun.<sup>205</sup> They are not the only Africans to be literate and to have their own literature, but since the others that have reached that stage employ languages “not purely African” – Ethiopic, Noptic, Arabic – Hausa becomes in fact the “only African language with its own literature.” These people can, furthermore, boast of native schools, a “rudimentary university” at Katsena and books on a host of subjects, including law, history and theology.<sup>206</sup>

The Bantu, the lowest in terms of civilization, are composed of “a multitude of tribes and nations” that live mostly south of the other two groups. Within this family Kumm detects various levels of civilization, ranging “from the lowest type of naked cannibal savages to tribes such as the Musgun, the Munchis ... which latter enjoy a comparatively high indigenous civilisation.” With the exception of a few individuals, the Bantus own no guns. The more civilized among them have considerable farm stock. Regardless of these comparative differences, in another context Kumm describes these Pagan tribes as being without exception in a low state of civilization, “many of them unreached by Arab and Hausa influence, and of course altogether outside the realm of European trade.”<sup>207</sup>

At this point it must be observed that there emerge two conflicting *emphases* in Kumm’s use of the term “civilization.” When he describes European civilization, the emphasis falls on peace, justice, liberty – the very ones lacking in the Muslim community according to his own testimony. We have seen the virile language Kumm employs to describe the injustice and the horrors emanating from Islam, the “slave-raiding, bribery, abuse, and mutilation, all the indescribable, unchallenged horrors of Fulani rule,”<sup>208</sup> the very horrors that Lugard is said to have

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205 That this information raises questions about the other data regarding availability of guns is not something an impetuous Kumm would be quick to notice.

206 *The Sudan*, p. 20.

207 *Ibid*, p. 39.

208 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

replaced with the “new reign of peace and freedom,” “the new kingdom of righteousness.”<sup>209</sup> Yet Kumm classifies these much-denounced peoples as possessing comparatively the highest civilization. The Pagan cultures are denounced for all types of barbaric practices, but they are never accused of the degree of injustice perpetrated by their Muslim neighbours. In fact, with respect to women, they are said to have attained a higher degree of justice and liberty, but they still end up as the least civilized!

Kumm’s classification of superior and inferior civilization in Africa is based on achievements in technology and education: the superior civilizations surpass the others in their tools, weapons, types of animals and education. To be sure, western civilization is superior in these aspects as well, but Kumm does not emphasize these when he speaks of the superiority of western civilization in comparison to its African counterpart. The conflict here mentioned is thus not absolute, but relative, and hence we speak of conflicting *emphases*.

Compared to Europe, then, Africa is hardly civilized. It is suddenly awaking and “the dawn of the morning of civilisation is breaking over their lands.”<sup>210</sup> Also in comparison to Oriental peoples, Africans are “only in the initial stages of civilisation,” for they lack “reading, writing, geography and scientific knowledge.”<sup>211</sup> However, as an agriculturalist, the Negro is supposed to be “unsurpassed.” In this respect he is more efficient than “the weaker Coolie or the more intelligent Chinaman.”<sup>212</sup>

The question must now be faced as to the type of civilization Kumm and his mission would establish in Africa. The answer to this question is by no means clear. One finds strong insistence that bringing Christian civilization does not mean

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209 *Ibid.*, p. 57.

210 *Ibid.*, 204

211 *Khont*, p. 169.

212 *Ibid.*, p. 150.

to Europeanize the African. Both Kumm and the S.U.M. strongly resist this as a goal. In connection with the Lucy Memorial Freed Slaves' Home this resistance becomes a "main principle." Europeanizing the inmates of the home is to be avoided at all cost, for they are to be prepared to enter naturally into the interests and life of the community as useful Christian citizens.<sup>213</sup> It was a constant source of irritation to Maxwell that the two first Nigerians baptized by the S.U.M. were too Europeanized. "They are natives," he insists, "and must conform to rules of native conduct in all points that do not contravene Christian principle."<sup>214</sup> Kumm likewise elevates avoidance of denationalization as "a most important point in the policy of missionary enterprise in Africa." The veneer of western culture tends to weaken a tribe's strength and stamina and to separate them from others. Where clothes are worn, the people should be discouraged from adopting European styles. European handicrafts ought not to be introduced, but the African should be taught to improve his own methods. Examples would be that his cast-iron tools could be improved for the same work by making them out of steel or the simple traditional weaving apparatus might be developed into a larger time-saving hand-loom. Neither would it be helpful to suddenly introduce modern methods of sowing or harvesting, for the conditions are not ripe for such methods. Finally, the African should be taught in one of the main African languages, and not in English, for "there are several most virile languages in Africa" suitable for training the Negro for "a responsible and respected position in the council of nations ...."<sup>215</sup>

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213 SUM 8, Report for 1911.

214 *Diary* (5), p. 92. Numerous other entries to this effect are found in these diaries.

215 *Khont*, pp. 194-197. Regardless of the strong objections to Europeanizing, the meal schedule for the children at the Freed Slaves' Home was set at 8 A.M., 12 Noon and 5:30 P.M. -- a schedule very European, unlike anything found in traditional Northern Nigeria. The boys and girls were all encouraged to have their own farms by having the Home buy from them, a practice that would be quite unthinkable under indigenous circumstances. Cf. the report for 1911, SUM 8. There were however measures taken that indicate serious struggle with the problem of helping the inmates develop an indigenous lifestyle. The "native assistants" were to wear traditional dress (SUM 8, p. 31). Industrial training at the Home included the making of grass matting, weaving, rope-making and building native huts (*Ibid.*, report for 1911). Maxwell, some 40 years later, confides that the final result was disappointing, for the children had become Europeanized after all. They personally profited from their stay at the Home, but few became the light bearers in their communities the S.U.M. had hoped (*Half a Century*, p. 148).

The important question here is the *reason* for Kumm's opposition to Europeanizing "the natives." Kumm has never attempted to give a systematic account of his theories on this or any other affairs. It is clear, however, that his opposition is not based on any deprecation of western civilization or on a *principial* rejection of a genuine imitation of it on the African continent. Kumm contrasts the old and the new Khartum and he rejoices in the new that has become a beautiful city, approached by railway, containing schools and colleges in which the habits and thoughts of the population "are rapidly changing." His description sounds suspiciously like that of a Europeanizing city.<sup>216</sup> It does not appear that Kumm would object to Europeanizing if it could be carried out successfully. The problem is that it is impossible or dangerous or pedagogically incorrect. The tribe is weakened; the individual becomes estranged. "Suddenly" to introduce European methods would not be helpful in agriculture for the conditions are not yet ripe. Preference for African languages in education is based on three considerations that have no relation at all to any *intrinsic* worth such languages might have: (a) the English language would make much "objectionable and harmful" literature available; (b) English is not likely ever to dominate Africa absolutely; (c) the English learned is usually of inferior standard.<sup>217</sup> The idea that Central Africa can be developed on European lines is "wrong in principle," neither because the European way is not desirable for Africa, nor because Africa has a culture of inherent worth, but because "the negroes are not a full-grown nation; they are children, and as children they must be treated."<sup>218</sup> We have a principial objection then, a pedagogical principle: the *pedagogical* time is not yet. The objections of Kumm to Europeanizing are purely practical; they do not arise from any positive evaluation of African culture.

The above analysis of Kumm's thought is supported by his "defense" of Africans against racists who claim that the African is *per se* incapable of establishing a high

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216 "The Outlook," *LB*, VI, May, 111.

217 *Khont*, pp. 195-197.

218 "Education Methods," *LB*, VII, February, 34. This argument is also found in *Khont*, p. 95.

civilization. He counters that “careful investigation” has demonstrated that Africans can indeed attain to “a civilization such as the Indo-Germanic races have evolved.” However, this process is not to be rushed: it will take generations before they grow up.<sup>219</sup> They are presently “only in the initial stages of civilization,”<sup>220</sup> at “the dawn of the morning of civilisation,”<sup>221</sup> but, Kumm hopes, eventually they will “occupy a responsible and respected position in the council of the nations, the parliament of mankind.”<sup>222</sup> When that stage has been arrived at, Kumm envisions, Africa will be blessed under the extension of the current version of the *Corpus Christianum*, characterized by peace, justice, increased wealth and health, modern education and technology – all stamped with a Christian morality.

If Kumm’s mission is not to Europeanize, then what concretely does it mean to introduce Christian civilization in Africa? What, if anything, of European culture is useful for mission purposes? How is African civilization to be treated? We are dealing, of course, with a most basic question all thoughtful missionaries face daily. Maxwell is aware of the difficulty of the problem and gives cautious warnings to tread carefully by giving some concrete examples of what to a missionary may initially appear to be a desirable and harmless improvement in habit. He reminds his readers that the missionary must not “civilise, much less to Europeanise,” but to evangelize. He has a favorite expression: “The soul of all culture is the culture of the soul.” All true life and progress, he asserts, must come from within.<sup>223</sup> As true as such statements may be, they give no concrete answer to the question at hand. We indeed look in vain if we expect a concrete answer in either Maxwell or in Kumm. It is probable that a concrete answer *cannot* be given,

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219 *Khont*, pp. 9-10.

220 *Ibid.*, p. 169.

221 *The Sudan*, p. 204.

222 *Khont*, p. 197..

223 *Half a Century*, pp. 151-152.

at least not by a missionary, but that it has to be developed by the indigenous convert in daily confrontation with and involvement in his own culture. We are left only with the possibility of drawing certain inferences from suggestions and statements Kumm made that have indirect bearing on our present interest.

From the very start, industrial work was to be an integrated aspect of the S.U.M.'s program. Upon return from the initial scouting party in 1904, Kumm was to report to the council on, among other matters, the possibilities for industrial work.<sup>224</sup> We have already learned of the strictures Kumm places on such work for practical pedagogical reasons. In an interview in Capetown, Kumm approvingly stresses the contemporary developments of missions in the direction of increased emphasis on industrial work, teaching of trades and occupations, instruction in sanitation, prevention and cure of disease and "generally speaking the inculcation of civilising influences, from the practical standpoint, in every form."<sup>225</sup> Kumm is hopeful with respect to the economic future of the Sudan and as such welcomes the railway construction which will aid the cotton and rubber growers.<sup>226</sup> Kumm is in favour of plantation work, though he questions the propriety of a mission engaging in such a "secular" enterprise.<sup>227</sup> While discussing his hopes for the development of the political economy of the *Hausa* people,<sup>228</sup> he speaks of the import and export industries for the sake of which certain native crafts, such as spinning, weaving and dying, might more profitably be discontinued in order that those engaged in these trades can be employed for cultivation of raw cotton.<sup>229</sup>

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224 "An Expedition of Investigation," *LB*, I, November, 3

225 "The Outlook," *LB*, VII, September, 147.

226 "The Outlook," *LB*, VI, May, 110-111.

227 "Statement of Position of the Sudan United Mission,": SUM 2, p. 284.

228 I italicize "Hausa" to emphasize that Kumm is thinking about their profit, not that of England.

229 *The Sudan*, p. 171. The negative impact of such a move was not recognized by Kumm. The question was dealt with more fully in my forthcoming thesis on the S.U.M. and colonialism. See *Missionary Liberation*, p. 135. The point at issue here is that Kumm regards industrial and agricultural developments important for the country and for

It is especially in the field of education that it becomes difficult to fully understand Kumm. We have already noted his aversion to Europeanizing Africans and his rejection of English as the educational medium. Nevertheless, Kumm persuaded the S.U.M. to adopt an educational plan that is total in its impact.<sup>230</sup> It needs little argument that the totality of this program would lead to much wider Europeanizing than Kumm and his colleagues envisioned at that time. It would be inevitable that the projected “rudimentary university” with its four faculties would cover the entire range of human life and would undermine many traditional African institutions and customs, though not necessarily the values beneath these phenomena.<sup>231</sup> Did Kumm really expect to use no English in the projected university? Did he really think its graduates would continue to prostrate themselves in the dirt before some obscure little village chief as some tribes demand? Everything Kumm proposes regarding education at lower levels and all his objections to Europeanization contradict the very notion of the type of university he would favour. One possible avenue of harmonizing the idea of such a university with Kumm’s opposition to Europeanization may be found in a previously defended notion that it was only for practical and pedagogical reasons that he opposed Europeanization, but that, when the time should be ripe, he would favour a high degree of Europeanization. At such a time his university scheme would be appropriate. A forceful argument against seeking a rational solution along this avenue is the simple fact that there is no record of any such discussion. It is more likely that we must understand this early scheme as a product typical of the imaginative and rash Kumm. One gets the impression that Kumm, with his powers of persuasion and oratory, was able to convince the council of this entire educational scheme without anyone recognizing the full potential impact of the plan or of its basic contradiction to the mission’s firm rejection of Europeanizing. The scheme and its adoption by the council is fully

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the mission.

230 The plan is reproduced in Appendix III.

231 Discussions on African socialism, democracy and negritude, the result of modern education, all emphasize the durability of African traditional values and their usefulness to modern Africa.

“Kumm” with the entire combination of characteristics as he is portrayed in chapter two of this paper – imaginative, visionary, bold, rash, irrational, persuasive—and contradictory.

That the solution to the mystery of the educational scheme is to be sought in this vein is further supported by the fact that, though officially adopted, the scheme is never again referred to in minutes or any other surviving literature. It was never officially dropped, but never became operative either. It was silently replaced in 1921 by another, more modest, scheme without a single reference even to Kumm’s plan. A conference was held by S.U.M. missionaries in Wukari at which “it was felt that the time was ripe for a more definitely formulated scheme than had hitherto been possible”<sup>232</sup>—as if no one had ever heard of the previous plan! Apparently Bristow, the S.U.M.’s educational pioneer, was similarly ignorant of Kumm’s early scheme. He bemoans the fact that missions in Northern Nigeria have been so reluctant to embark on a good educational program, for he finds the Christian community ill prepared to provide political leaders.<sup>233</sup>

One could theoretically argue that Kumm’s later scheme for medical training was really an attempt at concretizing his plans of 1910, but I have not been able to locate one single reference that would relate the two plans. There is a much greater likelihood that this later plan was at least partially inspired by one of Kumm’s sons, Henry, who became a leading researcher in tropical disease<sup>234</sup> and who in that capacity spent time in Nigeria.<sup>235</sup>

We have arrived at the point where we can summarize our findings regarding Kumm’s conception of civilization. We have noted various strands that occasionally stand in a relationship of tension to each other. It is possible,

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232 “Christian Education in Northern Nigeria,” *LB*, XIX, May/June, 38.

233 W.M. Bristow, “New Constitution for Nigeria,” *LB*, XLVII, July/September, 71.

234 Cleverdon, p. 152.

235 *LB*, XXVI, November/December, 106.

therefore, to posit a number of affirmations that in their totality summarize Kumm's concept, but without attempting a full reconciliation, for that would require a procrustean bed.

(1) European civilization is based on Scripture and faith in Christ. Yet it can be thought of separate from Christianity. Christianity provides the morality on which this civilization is based and without which it demonizes itself as well as the peoples entrusted to the care of this civilization.

(2) The superiority of European civilization consists of various factors such as technology and education, but it is concentrated in its conception of peace and justice.

(3) The difference between Europe and Africa is not inherent in any racial factors, but in the degree of influence Scripture has had in the respective civilizations. As the Gospel takes deeper root in Africa, these differences will gradually be eliminated. Kumm is paternalistic, not racist.

(4) It is possible to speak of high and low civilizations in Africa, but these are such in relation to each other only. Compared with Great Britain, even the highest of African civilizations is merely semi-civilized. Though British civilization is characterized especially by peace and justice, the criteria for high and low in the African context become education, literacy and technology. Those classified as having a low degree of civilization have actually achieved a greater degree of justice and peace amongst themselves.

(5) Though Kumm opposed Europeanization and sought to have Africans remain Africans as he knew them, the total impact of his proposals for mission could only serve to produce a people who, if not wholly European, would no longer be wholly African in Kumm's terms either.

(6) The eventual goal is to move Africa from the dawn of civilization to its highest forms with a Christian morality, an extension of the *Corpus Christianum* in its contemporary sense. This is considered possible because of the power of the Gospel.

(7) Kumm failed to define the concept of civilization, but in general it can be said that he shared the ideology of his fellow evangelicals.

### **Postscript: World Missionary Conference, 1910**

Though we have constantly referred to Kumm as member of the evangelical branch of Christianity, in this postscript I wish also to indicate that the concepts with which he operated were shared by a constituency much wider than the evangelical. His basic ideas were shared also by the participants of the World Mission Conference of Edinburgh in 1910. Van Den Berg, we have noticed, speaks of Livingstone as standing in the vanishing tradition of the *Corpus Christianum*. Vanishing it was, but members of that famous Edinburgh conference still operated with it, almost as much as Kumm.

To be sure, there were differences, but these were usually differences in detail or of emphasis, not of basic views. One difference certainly was that the reports of the conference betray a greater sensitivity and awareness of the tension between the ideal of the *Corpus Christianum* and the non-Christian behavior of European peoples and governments.<sup>236</sup> There was also less of an appreciation of the value of local languages in favour of the languages of the colonizing powers.<sup>237</sup> These differences are partially to be explained by the fact that Kumm's concern was basically limited to one geographical unit, large though it was, whereas the conference had global interests with representatives from every continent.

Nevertheless, speeches delivered at the conference were basically in agreement with Kummanian ideology. We find delegates presenting speeches on "The Duty of Christian Nations"<sup>238</sup> and on "The Contribution of non-Christian Races to the

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<sup>236</sup> Cf., e.g., World Missionary Conference, 1910, *Report of Commission VII: Missions and Governments* (Edinburgh and London" Oliphant, Anderson & Terrier, n.d.), p. 115 and IX: *The History and Records of the Conference together with Addresses Delivered at the Evening Meetings*, p. 277.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, p. 94.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, pp. 272-282.

Body of Christ.”<sup>239</sup> There is mention of “relations of civilised governments with non-Christian peoples,” meaning respectively Europe and America on the one hand with Africa and Asia on the other.<sup>240</sup> Volume I of the Edinburgh series is entitled *Carrying the Gospel to All the non-Christian World*. The Table of Contents of this volume is a clear demonstration of *Corpus* ideology: the entire non-western world is surveyed, including Latin America, but in the west only non-whites and Jews become foci of reports. In these same reports we meet distinctions identical to Kumm’s regarding high and low civilizations in the order of West, Orient and Africa.<sup>241</sup> Animists are here, too, described as being grossly materialistic and corrupt in their natural state, as having “gone furthest and sunk lowest in the downward course of degradation.”<sup>242</sup> Here also one is warned of the danger of spreading western civilization without the balming effects of the Gospel.<sup>243</sup> Speakers at this conference also posit a close connection between western civilization and peace.<sup>244</sup> Like Kumm, speakers here denounce the tendency to denationalize African Christians.<sup>245</sup> Kumm’s recipe for the success of the missionary enterprise is similar to that of the delegates to this conference: industry,<sup>246</sup>

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239 *Ibid.*, pp. 283-288.

240 *Ibid.*, V: *The Training of Teachers*, p. 5.

241 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

242 *Ibid.*, IX, pp. 266, 271.

243 *Ibid.*, pp. 276-277 and V, p. 9.

244 *Ibid.*, VII, p. 90.

245 *Ibid.*, p. 94.

246 *Ibid.*, IX, p. 269.

industrial training, reading and writing,<sup>247</sup> education and general development<sup>248</sup> are all to play their part. Finally, Kumm's hope for an eventual great brotherhood of all races in Christ finds its expression here also.<sup>249</sup>

#### IV. Hesitant Hindsight

This paper is an attempt at an analysis of the views of a man wondrously used by God in a historic mission that has had and continues to have no negligible influence in various parts of the Sudan, especially in its more western extremity, Northern Nigeria. Though Kumm died a mere eight years before I was born, I have been particularly struck in this study by the vast differences between the time Kumm was at the zenith of his influence and the year of this paper: 1973. One finds himself in a world of assumptions regarding both Africa and the West that have been almost reversed in the intervening years. A historical analysis of events a century or more removed can be calmly engaged in and calm judgment becomes possible. The issues in this paper, on the contrary, are beclouded with emotional reactions against these very issues; I am only too aware of my own personal reactions in these matters, reactions not always objective. For this reason, our conclusion will consist of no penetrating judgment: we shall have to be content with a few somewhat superficial concluding remarks.

Furthermore, judging Kumm's theories and work would be judging a man for his personality. Though no man's career can ever be wholly separated from his personality, few there are amongst leaders of men whose personalities are so obviously determinative of their careers as was the case with Karl Kumm; few whose personality is so transparently but unintentionally revealed in his life's work; few leaders whose personalities are basically so uncomplicated and obvious

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<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 270.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, p. 119.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, p. 271.

as Kumm's. Through a mere reading of Kumm's available writings I reached conclusions with respect to his personality that quite coincided with biographical materials provided by those who knew him personally. Criticism of Kumm is, one must realize, criticism of a man who, in the context of the Kingdom of God, was ready to challenge the Christian world with the needs of Africa as he saw them, of a man who did not spare himself any efforts or hardships in the pursuit of this task. One can criticize such a one – and, in another context, an attempt will be made – but then we must remember that a more collected and rational person would not have been capable of Kumm's vision and drive. It was that kind of person who could arouse Christian audiences the world over and stimulate men and women to spend themselves for tasks that took a good deal more physical punishment than we can even imagine today.<sup>250</sup> Hence, we can after all conclude that Kumm, in spite of his shortcomings, was the proper man for his particular task. In fact, I believe that precisely these very shortcomings were needed for that work and that are, paradoxically, turning out to be his strength, a monument to which is the S.U.M. and many resultant churches with their schools, hospitals and other forms of witness throughout the cities, towns and villages of the Sudan. For this reason one must heartily concur with the title of Tett's first chapter, "God Prepares His Man."<sup>251</sup>

Nevertheless, it is possible to make a remark or two concerning certain striking elements in the vision we have tried to unfold and which inescapably contain an evaluational element. The first striking impression one receives of Kumm's universe – and that of his age – is his high appreciation for the accomplishments of western culture. Actually, one cannot even speak of real accomplishments on the part of the west, for this whole civilization was considered informed by Scripture and shaped by the Spirit of Christ. It was nothing less than a divine gift. In an era of spiritual masochism in the West, it is difficult for a Caucasian who is as much a child of his time as Kumm was to appreciate this uncritical evaluation of

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<sup>250</sup> I refer to *physical* punishment, for it can be argued that in our day the psychological beating a missionary must absorb is more severe than in Kumm's days.

<sup>251</sup> Pp. 7-11.

that culture. It was an evaluation not totally blind to the degradation of that culture, but that did not appear to recognize sufficiently the *depth* of that degradation, the *structural* forms in which that degradation had become institutionalized and the factors inherent in that culture that were bound to push it in the direction most of us now bemoan. The evangelical prescription of Kumm for the social evils of the day was a Christian morality, based on an *individualistic* conception of sin.

The correlate to such an uncritically high evaluation of European culture is Kumm's exceedingly low appreciation of African culture. The underlying ideology was stimulated by the fact that Kumm was basically a public relations man: he had to arouse and stimulate large communities to action. For this reason he appealed to both the pride and pity of his constituency by emphasizing the negative aspects of Africa. That this was indeed a factor is borne out by the difference in tone between his *From Hausaland to Egypt*, designed to approximate a more objective report of a scientific explorer, and his other writings directed more to missionary circles. A third factor at play, I am convinced on basis of personal experience, was a natural tendency to evaluate another culture in terms of one's own and which usually results in a negative evaluation of the other. I have personally spent extended periods of time in five different cultural units and have observed within myself a process beginning with at least a partial rejection of the new in favour of the more familiar one, but invariably ending in an increasingly positive view of the new, based on deeper insight in indigenous categories discovered experientially. Extended contact with a civilization is a *sine qua non* for a more than superficial appreciation. Kumm was a peripatetic person, traveling hither and yon, often claiming an expertise he could not possibly possess and against which his colleague Maxwell more than once fulminated. He never remained anywhere in Africa long enough to experience a local situation in all its strange complexities. He only saw the surface of things, a surface so unfamiliar and based on such completely different values that he could hardly be expected to have much sympathy for such unfamiliar life styles, or to recognize the human values hidden under not-so-hygienic conditions.

In summary, Kumm operated with an almost naïve appreciation for western culture, failing to recognize the demonic in its institutions, while in Africa he recognized little but the power of unclean spirits and powers, as if the Clean Spirit was wholly absent from that continent. This attitude was fed not by Scripture, but by current ideology.

## Appendices

### 1. S. M. Zwemer: Introduction to *Pools on the Glowing Sand*<sup>252</sup>

The subject of this interesting biographical tribute belongs to the goodly fellowship of missionary pioneers in the period that preceded the Edinburgh Conference and in a day when the unoccupied areas of the world held the attention and gripped the heart of the Church more than they do at present. Dr. Karl Kumm personified the idea of missionary expansion and grew eloquent when he spoke of the regions beyond the present achievements of the church.

He had the qualifications and limitations of the explorer-class to which he belonged and who by vision, faith, prayer and dauntless effort extended the bounds of Christian empire. He himself tells us that as a boy in the Harz mountains of Hanover he had three ambitions: "To ride well on horseback, swim well and shoot well." History and mathematics were his favorite subjects at school, but natural history was his delight. His forest-born physique neither malaria nor dysentery were able to break down on his long journeys in Central Africa. He had a natural gift for languages and most of all these qualities of adventure and of leadership that enabled him to persuade others to follow the trails he had blazed.

His own books of travel, especially *From Hausaland to Egypt* and *The Lands of Ethiopia* reveal the intrepid adventurer and the bold missionary explorer. Although of German birth and education, he became almost British and American through long residence and marriage, for Dr. Kumm was essentially an

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<sup>252</sup> Pp. vii-ix.

international. As the author of this life sketch points out he was cosmopolitan and super-national in his devotion to world-peace and by his life-long contacts with missionaries from many lands and in the border-marches of Africa.

Once captivated by the idea of winning the vast and then yet unoccupied Sudan for Christ, it became a spiritual obsession. Those who heard him pray at the Edinburgh World Conference for these vast provinces – laying all the detail of their geographical areas, their spiritual destitution and the urgency of the hour before the Throne – can never forget the reality of such pleading. The unknown always attracted him. Obstacles allured him. Difficulties only knit his moral fibre and strengthened his life purpose. Ceaseless in advocating the establishment of stations across the whole vast Sudan from the Niger to the Nile, he founded missions, started prayer-groups and wrote many books and magazine articles. Sometimes the chosen policy of diffusion and the lack of due concentration gave cause for criticism or awakened doubts as to the wisdom of some of his plans. Of course they were not faultless nor was he; and he himself was well aware of these limitations. Nevertheless, his faith and zeal triumphed. He saw the reward of his toil. Others have entered into his labours and the Sudan United Mission is his enduring monument, worthy of all his efforts.

“And the world has its heroes of lace and gold braid,  
That are honoured and wined for the waste they have made;  
But the world little knows of the debt that it owes  
To the Hower, the Blazer of Trails.”

In reading the brief story of this life with its hopes deferred, and plans frustrated, with its domestic anxieties and felicities, its constant agonies of separation and loneliness, one is also reminded of the words of Dr. P.T. Forsyth: “The missionary suffers from a strange, inverted homesickness, so that he longs for another land and loves another people more than his own.” It is this constant tension, this agony of love that adds to the glory of the task and the joy of the crown; even though it is at times misunderstood.

When I was asked to write a foreword to the story of this life, I tried to recall when and where I had first met Dr. Kumm. We were first drawn into friendship some twenty-five years ago by our mutual recognition of Islam, whether passive or militant, as the standing menace to missions in pagan Africa. He realized the strength of this religion and understood the strategy of forestalling its entrance into Central Africa. In our correspondence and on the rare occasions when I heard him speak or when our tracks crossed in Egypt, Great Britain and America, this was the burden we shared mutually. He had clear vision of the importance of North Africa and its great hinterland – the battlefield of rival faiths. His gifts as a scholar, geographer and missionary leader are evident as one reads these pages, but the supreme gift was his desire to tell the Old Story to those who had never heard it and win others to do it also. God used his glowing speech, his vivid imagination, his ringing convictions, his sweeping generalizations as a trumpet-call to service on the platforms of many a missionary gathering. He knew how to enlist recruits. May this book contribute to the same end and so help forward the evangelization of all Africa.

Princeton, New Jersey

July 22, 1936

## **2. Kumm: Education Scheme<sup>253</sup>**

### A. Elementary Education

- (a) Village schools (at every mission station, personal and village boys are taught to read and write.)
- (b) Freed Slaves' Home (170 boys and girls are mentally and industrially trained at Rumasha.)
- (c) A school for the sons of Chiefs on the lines of the Princes' School at Uganda.

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<sup>253</sup> Kumm, *Khont*, pp. 190-191. Reproduced in *LB*, VII, February, 31-32.

B. Secondary Education

(a) Seminary for the training of teachers

(b) Technical Institution

1. Handicrafts

2. Agricultural or horticultural

c. The former Institutions should lead in time to the establishment of a rudimentary University at which the following four faculties should be represented: --

1. Science

2. Arts

3. Medicine

4. Theology

**3. J. Edwin Orr: The Great Awakening that History Forgot<sup>254</sup>**

Distinguished historians, both liberal and conservative, have been speculating on whether Key 73 will provide a “Third” Great Awakening in North America. While supporting the general hope, I am appalled by the ignorance of past awakenings suggested by the numeration.

The First Great Awakening began in 1725 in the American Colonies and became transatlantic, the Second in 1791 in Britain, affecting the United States, other parts of Europe, South India and South Africa. The Third Great Awakening began

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<sup>254</sup> *Calvinist-Contact*, July 9/16, 1973. Orr is introduced in this article as “an Irish-born speaker and writer, and for 40 years an evangelist and university lecturer, earned doctorates from leading universities in Africa, America, Asia and Europe, including the University of Oxford (D. Phil.) and U.C.L.A. (Ed. D.). Since 1966, he has been a member of the faculty of the School of World Mission at the Fuller Theological Seminary. His newest book is *The Flaming Tongue*, a description of the worldwide awakening of the first decade of the present [20<sup>th</sup>] century, published by Moody Press. Orr has completed an account of the 1958-1959 Awakening and is writing the story of the Awakenings of the early nineteenth century, besides five volumes dealing with the mission fields.”

in the United States about 1820 and affected Europe, India, South Africa and the South Sea Islands. The Fourth Great Awakening began in the United States about 1820 and affected Europe, India, South Africa and the South Sea Islands. The Fourth Great Awakening began in the United States in 1858, spread to the United Kingdom, adding a million members to the Churches in either country and affected the other continents, continuing effective for forty years. The Fifth Great Awakening began in 1900, peaked in Wales in 1904, affected every state and territory in the United States in 1905-1906, and made an impact upon Christian communities on all continents.

The story of the Welsh Revival is astounding. It began with meetings of less than a score of intercessors, but when it burst its bounds the churches of Wales were crowded for more than two years. A hundred thousand outsiders were converted and added to the churches, the vast majority remaining true to the end. Drunkenness was immediately cut in half, and many taverns went bankrupt. Crime was so diminished that judges were presented with white gloves signifying that there were no cases of murder, assault, rape or robbery or the like to consider. The police became unemployed in many districts. "Strikes" broke out in the coal mines, not due to unpleasantness between management and workers, but because so many foul-mouthed miners became converted and stopped using foul language that the horses that hauled the coal trucks in the mines could no longer understand what was being said to them, and transportation ground to a halt.

The Archbishop of Canterbury called for a nationwide day of prayer. Thirty English bishops declared for the Revival after one of their number, deeply moved, told of confirming 950 new converts in a country parish church. The Revival swept Scotland and Ireland. Under Albert Lunde, also a friend of the researcher in later years, a movement began in Norway described by Bishop Berggrav as the greatest revival of his experience. It affected Sweden, Finland, and Denmark, Lutherans there saying that it was the greatest movement of the Spirit since the Vikings were evangelized. It broke out in Germany, France and other countries of Europe, marked by prayer and confession.

When news of the awakening reached the United States, huge conferences of ministers gathered in New York and Chicago and other cities to discuss what to do when the Awakening began. Soon the Methodists in Philadelphia had 6,101 new converts in trial membership; the ministers of Atlantic City claimed that only fifty adults remained professedly unconverted in a population of 60,000. Churches in New York City took in hundreds on a single Sunday – in one instance, 364 were received into membership, 286 new converts, 217 adults, 134 men, 60 heads of families.

The 1905 Awakening rolled through the South like a tidal wave, packing churches for prayer and confession, adding hundreds to membership rolls – First Baptist in Paducah added a thousand in a couple of months and the old pastor died of overwork. Believers' baptism among the Southern Baptists rose twenty-five percent in one year. Other denominations shared equally in the Awakening.

In the Middle West, churches were suddenly inundated by great crowds of seekers. The “greatest revivals in their history” were reported by Methodists in town after town; the Baptists and others gained likewise. Everyone was so busy in Chicago that the pastors decided to hold their own meetings and help one another deal with the influx. Every store and factory closed in Burlington, Iowa, to permit employees to attend services of intercession and dedication. The mayor of Denver declared a day of prayer: by 10 a.m., churches were filled; at 11:30, almost every store closed; 12,000 attended prayer meetings in downtown theatres and halls; every school closed; the Colorado Legislature closed. The impact was felt for a year.

In the West, great demonstrations marched through the streets of Los Angeles. United meetings attracted attendance of 180,000. The Grand Opera House was filled at midnight with drunks and prostitutes seeking salvation. For three hours a day, business was practically suspended in Portland, Oregon, bank presidents and bootblacks attending prayer meetings while two hundred department stores by agreement closed from 11 till 2.

Canada was moved from Newfoundland to British Columbia. There were awakenings in New Zealand and Australia and South Africa. Phenomenal

movements began in India, where untiring crowds participated in meetings lasting five or ten hours daily. Much the same happened in China, unwilling people sometimes fleeing town to escape conviction. In Korea, 79,221 converts were added to the churches and became 300,000 in a few years. Japan experienced revival also. Awakenings were manifest all over Africa, marked by simultaneous audible prayer, confession and conversion. Movements in Brazil, Chile and Mexico set the pace for the vast increase of evangelical profession in Latin America. There was not a country in the world where an evangelical cause existed that did not experience the awakening. Of course, in those days, the historic Protestant denominations were very largely evangelical in doctrine. ....

In Great Britain, the Free Churches gained ten per cent in membership, as did the Church of England in communicants. Two million were added to the American Churches, 870,389 new communicants in 1906 alone. The Churches of South Africa gained twenty-five per cent. It was a time of expansion in Australia and New Zealand. European denominations increased remarkably. Christians in India grew 70 per cent, 16 times as fast as Hindus. In China, Protestant communicants and community doubled. In Korea, membership quadrupled. In Japan, membership doubled. In Indonesia, 100,000 in 1903 became 300,000 in 10 years, and in a subsequent movement of phenomenal power, the number of believers in one little island (Nias) surpassed that latter figure. Protestant communicants in Africa doubled in the decade. ....

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Rhodes House Library, Oxford. Permanent display of manuscripts on and by Cecil Rhodes in Grey Gallery.

Sudan United Mission.<sup>255</sup> 75 Grandville Road, Sidcup, Kent, England.

\_\_\_\_\_. SPM – Minute Book No. 1 of the Soudan Pioneer Mission. This unit contains minutes from November, 1902 till June, 1904.

\_\_\_\_\_. SUM 1 – This refers to minutes of the English Council, one of the regional councils of the British branch. These minutes are found in the same binding as SPM.

\_\_\_\_\_. SUM 2 – Minute Book No. 2, containing minutes from July, 1904 till August, 1911.

\_\_\_\_\_. SUM 3 – Minute Book No. 6, containing minutes of the London Council from November, 1904 till April, 1906.

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255 The archives of the S.U.M. are, unfortunately, in the worst confusion one can imagine. Anyone wishing to trace my steps or to check the accuracy of my handling of the materials would have to change into an old pair of trousers and T-shirt and carefully search through a completely unorganized and dusty pile of documents literally dumped in the corner of the attic of the headquarters of the S.U.M. During World War II the mission was bombed and burned out of its former headquarters and had to hastily rescue whatever of its archives it was able. In the succeeding confusion it appears that the rescued documents were simply dumped in the attic of the new building with the probable intention to re-organize them in good time. However, a trend was set and it has subsequently become a tradition to store all later documents in the same way and place. Though much valuable materials were lost during the holocaust, the S.U.M. managed either to rescue or to collect from elsewhere a complete set of minutes. Few letters have been preserved. The mission has sought to remain faithful to the basic ingredients of Kumm's vision. As the founder looked neither left nor right, but steadily kept his eyes on the central focus, so does the S.U.M. continue in this tradition of single-mindedness by spending its hard-gained money on the actual work for which the mission was organized and by lavishing as little as possible on overhead. The result is that the archives have never received high priority – for better and for worse.

As the result of the situation as described, I have arranged the documents in an artificial way that has no correspondence whatever in fact. The abbreviations in the footnotes refer to minutes and other documents that are bound, fortunately, but that are stored in a very unordered manner.

\_\_\_\_\_. SUM 4 – Minute Book No. 3, containing minutes of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors, beginning with September, 1911 and ending with April, 1918.

\_\_\_\_\_. SUM 5 – Minute Book No. 4, containing minutes similar to above from May, 1918 to July, 1925.

\_\_\_\_\_. SUM 6 – Minute Book No. 5, same as above from September, 1925 till sometime, 1933.

\_\_\_\_\_. SUM 7 – Letter Book containing copies of letters from the General Secretary to missionaries in Nigeria as well as parties in the U.K., from December, 1906 to June, 1916.

\_\_\_\_\_. SUM 8 – Lucy Memorial Freed Slaves' Home Minute Book. This contains minutes and reports from 1908 till 1911.

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\_\_\_\_\_. Report of Commission VII: *Missions and Government*.

\_\_\_\_\_. Report of Commission IX: *The History and Records of the Conference together with Addresses Delivered at the Evening Meetings*.

## Abbreviations

C.M.S. – Church Missionary Society

LB ----- *Lightbearer*

S.I.M. – Sudan Interior Mission

S.P.M. – Sudan Pioneer Mission

S.U.M.—Sudan United Mission