

G.A. Deissmann (1866-1937)
An analysis of an academic and theological outsider
in Wilhelmine and Weimar Germany
and his diverse, pioneering contributions

by

Albrecht Gerber

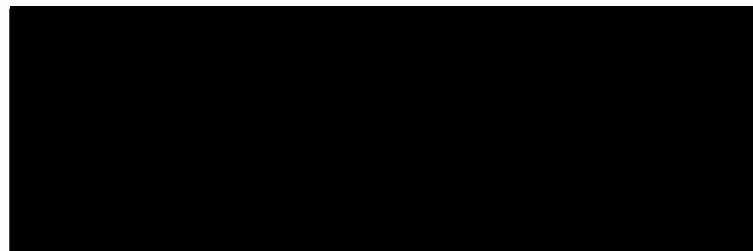
Submitted as a candidate in Greek
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Dedicated to
Gerhard Deissmann
and to my wife Marianne

Declaration of authorship

I, Albrecht Gerber, hereby declare that this dissertation is an original piece of research and firmly based on primary source material. It has never before been submitted either in part or whole to this or any other University for the purpose of a higher degree. All sources, both primary and secondary, are appropriately acknowledged, and to the best of my knowledge accurate. Except where otherwise stated, all conclusions are my own.



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8 January 2008

Abstract

Gustav Adolf Deissmann was a German theologian who gained international reputation during his lifetime for his pioneering contributions in the widely divergent fields of postclassical Greek philology, lexicography, the archaeological excavations of Ephesus, international conciliation and the ecumenical movement. He was the recipient of many national and international distinctions, including eight honorary doctorates from six different countries, and was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Yet until recent years this internationally influential academic has been almost completely overlooked by modern scholarship, and although an upsurge of interest in Deissmann has occurred during the past decade – driven primarily by research from German theological Faculties – this has tended to stereotype him far too narrowly as an ecumenist.

Until now, the lack of a broadly contextualised and balanced evaluation of Deissmann's life and work has had the effect of limiting or even distorting our views of some important aspects in the history of classical scholarship, the history of Germany's 20th century socio-religious development, the history of the archaeological excavation of Ephesus and in the history of the international ecumenical movement. However, this dissertation seeks to redress these deficiencies, by developing the central thesis that Deissmann has played a pivotal role in several wholly different fields of scholastic inquiry and that it is, therefore, high time that both the man himself and his extraordinary contributions be properly recognised.

The dissertation itself is constructed in three parts:

Part One demonstrates how Deissmann's innovative philological approach to the language of the NT has led to a rethinking among researchers of postclassical Greek, and shows that despite the loss of his almost completed NT lexicon, Deissmann's lexicographical contributions remain fundamental for the understanding of *koine* Greek.

Part Two makes the point that Deissmann's extraordinary interest in the archaeology of Ephesus is directly traceable to his philological study tour of the Middle East in 1906, and argues that were it not for his high international profile and energetic intervention

for the salvaging of the ancient city's archaeological remains, inestimable and irreversible historical losses would have been inevitable.

Part Three shows that even though Deissmann was one of the foremost supporters of Friedrich Naumann's social reforms, by 1933 he had become sceptical of German politics. This part further demonstrates that his *Evangelischer Wochenbrief* (with its English translation, *Protestant Weekly Letter*) was not written as war propaganda, but rather as an innovative forum for *Völkerverständigung*. It argues that, his subsequent leading role in the ecumenical movement notwithstanding, Deissmann was not a 'true' ecumenist, and establishes that his slide into obscurity was a combination of his own characteristics and external circumstances.

Part Four (not formally an element of 'the thesis') comprises a series of appendices transcripts or excerpts of documents which substantiate many of the statements made in the thesis itself.

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Abbreviations

- AA* = *Archäologischer Anzeiger*
AAPS = *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*
ABD = *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vols., D.N. Freedman, ed., New York, 1992
AK = 'Amtskalender', i.e. Deissmann's cryptically written private diary consisting of 38 annual books. Beginning with Jan. 1899, they are complete until his death in 1937, although the book for 1902 is lost. The AK provides significant background material, but was clearly not intended to be read by outsiders, as the frequently messy entries, the enigmatic style, and idiosyncratic abbreviations show. It is held privately.
ALBl. = *Allgemeines Literaturblatt*
APF = *Archiv für Papyrusforschung*
AR = *Antiquitäten Rundschau*
ARW = *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*
AS = *Anatolian Studies*
ATLA = American Theological Library Association
BBKL = T. Bautz, ed., *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, 1-27, 1975-2007 (online databank) <http://www.bautz.de/bbkl/>
BDAG = F.W. Danker, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian Literature*, Chicago, 2000³ (1957)
 Berlin AA = Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Berlin
 Berlin BArch. = Bundesarchiv, Berlin
 Berlin UArch. = Humboldt Universitätsarchiv, Berlin
BGU = *Berliner Griechische Urkunden*
BJRL = *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*
BPW = *Berliner Philologische Wochenschrift*
BR = *Biblical Review: Interdenominational Quarterly*
BS = Deissmann, *Bible Studies: Contributions chiefly from papyri and inscriptions, to the history of language, the literature and the religion of Hellenistic Judaism and primitive Christianity*, A. Grieve, transl., Edinburgh, 1901 (this is a translation in one vol. of both *Bst.* and *NBst.*)
Bst. = Deissmann, *Bibelstudien: Beiträge, zumeist aus den Papyri und Inschriften, zur Geschichte der Sprache, des Schrifttums und der Religion des hellenistischen Judentums und des Urchristentums*, Marburg, 1895
CcW = *Chronik der Christlichen Welt*
ChHist. = *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture*
ChrW = *Die Christliche Welt*
Colloquium = *Colloquium; the Australian and New Zealand theological review*
Constr.Q = *The Constructive Quarterly*

- CUQ = *The Christian Union Quarterly*
 DAI = Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Berlin
 DBW = *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke*, 1-17, E. Bethge, et al., eds., Gütersloh, 1986-99
 DJZ = *Deutsche Juristen-Zeitung*
 DLZ = *Deutsche Literaturzeitung*
 EB = *Encyclopaedia Biblica: a critical dictionary of the literary, political and religious history, the archaeology, geography and natural history of the Bible*, 1-3, T.K. Cheyne/ J.S. Black, eds., London, 1899-1903
 En Chr. = Deissmann's Habilitationsschrift, *Die neutestamentliche Formel ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ untersucht*, Marburg, 1892
 ET = *The Expository Times*
 Ev.Th. = *Evangelische Theologie*
 Ev.Wbr. = *Evangelischer Wochenbrief*
 Exp. = *The Expositor*
 EZA = Evangelisches Zentralarchiv, Berlin
 FiE = *Forschungen in Ephesos*
 Forschungen = Deissmann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai; mit einem Verzeichnis der nichtislamischen Handschriften im Topkapu Serai zu Istanbul*, Berlin, 1933
 GAD = Gustav Adolf Deissmann (used only in footnotes, plate captions and Index of archival material cited)
 GGA = *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen*
 GStA = Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Preußischer Kulturbesitz 1598-1998, Berlin
 Haskell Lectures = Deissmann, *The New Testament in the light of modern research. The Haskell Lectures, 1929*, London, 1929
 Heidelberg Stdt.Arch. = Stadtarchive, Heidelberg
 Heidelberg UArch. = Universitätsarchiv, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg
 Heidelberg UBibl. = Universitätsbibliothek, Heidelberg
 Herborn Stdt.Arch. = Stadtarchive, Herborn
 Hessen EKZA = Zentralarchiv, Evangelische Kirche in Hessen und Nassau
 HJ = *Heidelberger Jahrbücher*
 IEph. = H. Wankel, ed., *Inscriptionen von Ephesos*, 1 a, 20, Bonn, 1979
 IMA = *Inscriptiones Maris Aegaei*
 IMW = *Internationale Monatsschrift für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Technik*
 IWW = *Internationale Wochenschrift für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Technik*
 JAC = *Journal of Ancient Civilisation*
 JCSoc. = *Journal of Classical Sociology*
 JR = *The Journal of Religion*
 JRH = *Journal of Religious History*
 Karlsruhe GArch. = Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe
 Koblenz BArch. = Bundesarchiv, Koblenz
 Kreuzzeitung = *Neue Preußische Zeitung*
 LAE = Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East; the New Testament illustrated by recently discovered texts of the Graeco-Roman world*, L.R.M. Strachan, transl. of 1st ed., London, 1910

- Lambeth Libr. = Lambeth Palace Library, London
 LIMC = Ackermann, H.C./ Gisler, J.R., eds., *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, 8, Zürich, 1997
 LR = *Literarische Rundschau*
 LSJ = *A Greek-English lexicon*, H.G. Liddell/ R. Scott/ H.S. Jones, eds., Oxford, 1968⁹, with rev. suppl. 1996 (1843)
 LvO = Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten. Das Neue Testament und die neuentdeckten Texte der hellenistisch-römischen Welt*, Tübingen, 1908
 LvO² = 1909 edition of *LvO*, referred to by the publisher as ‘²/₃. Auflage’
 LvO⁴ = 1923 fourth and most popular edition of *LvO*
 Makk. 4 = Deissmann, ‘Das vierte Makkabäerbuch’, in *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testamentes*, 2, E. Kautzsch, ed., Tübingen, 1900, 149-77
 MAMA = *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiquae*, 1-8 Manchester, 9-10 London, 1928-1993
 Manchester UArch. = University Archive, Manchester
 Marburg St.Arch. = Hessisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg
 Marburg UBibl. = Universitätsbibliothek, Marburg
 MGWJ = *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*
 MHT = Moulton, et al., *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 1-4, Edinburgh, 1908-76
 München St.Bibl. = Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München
 NBst. = Deissmann, *Neue Bibelstudien. Sprachgeschichtliche Beiträge, zumeist aus den Papyri und Inschriften, zur Erklärung des Neuen Testaments*, Marburg, 1897
 NJA = *Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum*
 NovT = *Novum Testamentum*
 NT = New Testament
 ÖAI = Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut, Vienna
 ÖJh. = *Jahresheft des österreichischen archäologischen Institutes*
 OT = Old Testament
 Päd. Archiv = *Pädagogisches Archiv. Monatsschrift für Erziehung, Unterricht und Wissenschaft*
 Paulus = Deissmann, *Paulus. Eine kultur- und religionsgeschichtliche Skizze*, Tübingen, 1911
 PBl. = *Pastoralblätter für Predigt, Seelsorge und kirchliche Unterweisung*
 Philology = Deissmann, *The philology of the Greek bible: its present and its future*, London, 1908
 Pr.WL = *Protestant Weekly Letter*
 Psenosiris = Deissmann, *The epistle of Psenosiris. An original document from the Diocletian persecution (papyrus 713 Brit. Mus.)*, London, 1902
 Reichsbote = *Reichsbote, deutsche Wochenzeitung für Christentum und Volkstum*
 RETK = *Realenzyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, A. Hauck, ed., 1-22 (3rd edn.), Leipzig, 1896-1909

- Rockefeller FArch. = Rockefeller Family Archives, Record Group 2, Office of the Messrs Rockefeller, Cultural Interests Series
- RTP = *Review of Theology and Philosophy*
- SD = Deissmann, 'Adolf Deissmann', in E. Stange, ed., *Die Religionswissenschaft der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellungen*, Leipzig, 1925
- Selly Oak Lectures = Deissmann, *The religion of Jesus and the faith of Paul. The Selly Oak Lectures, 1923, on the communion of Jesus with God & the communion of Paul with Christ*, W.E. Wilson, transl., London, 1923
- Septuaginta-Papyri = Deissmann, ed., *Veröffentlichungen aus der Heidelberger Papyrus-Sammlung. I, Die Septuaginta-Papyri und andere altchristliche Texte*, Heidelberg, 1905
- SIG = *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*
- Spr. Erforschung = *Die sprachliche Erforschung der griechischen Bibel, ihr gegenwärtiger Stand und ihre Aufgaben. Vorträge der theologischen Konferenz zu Gießen, XII. Folge*, Giessen, 1898
- Tagesspiegel = *Der Tagesspiegel*
- ThB = *Theologische Blätter*
- ThPh. = *Theologie und Philosophie*
- ThR = *Theologische Rundschau*
- ThRev. = *Theologische Revue*
- TLZ = *Theologische Literaturzeitung*
- TLBl. = *Theologisches Literaturblatt*
- TRE = *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*
- Tübingen UArch. = Universitätsarchiv Tübingen
- Uppsala UBibl. = Universitetsbibliotek, Handskrifts- och Musikavdelningen, Uppsala
- VfZ = *Vierteljahrshäfte für Zeitgeschichte*
- Voss. Zeitung = *Vossische Zeitung*
- VT = *Vetus Testamentum*
- Wiss.Z.HU.Berlin = *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin: Philosophie – Wissenschaft – Geschichte. Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften*
- WKP = *Wochenschrift für klassische Philologie*
- Woodbrooke = Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, Birmingham
- Wooster = Wooster College (Special Collections)
- WUNT = *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament*
- ZAW = Zentrum für Altertumswissenschaften, Institut für Papyrologie, Heidelberg
- ZKG = *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*
- ZLB = Zentral- und Landesbibliothek, Historische Sondersammlungen, Berlin
- ZNThG = *Zeitschrift für neuere Theologiegeschichte*
- ZNW = *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*
- ZTK = *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*
- ZVS = *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung*

Preface

This thesis is submitted in the field of Greek; but it may broadly be considered as a *Forschungsgeschichte* topic, since by its nature it embraces aspects of 20th century German social, political and church history, and also certain features of New Testament studies, the ecumenical movement and of archaeological work in Turkey. I have made a conscious decision, therefore, to explain some features in each of these areas which may be deemed ‘elementary’ by specialists in these spheres, so that readers with a different disciplinary background have sufficient context for those aspects which may be less familiar to them.

Some material within this thesis draws on the following publications written by me:

- ‘Gustav Adolf Deissmann (1866-1937): trailblazer in biblical studies, in the archaeology of Ephesus, and in international reconciliation’, *Buried History, Journal of the Australian Institute of Archaeology*, 41, 2005, 29-42.
- ‘Gustav Adolf Deißmann, die Heidelberger Papyri und ein Durchbruch in griechischer Philologie’, *Proceedings of the 24th International Congress of Papyrology, Helsinki, 1-7 August, 2004*, 1, J. Frösén/ T. Purola/ E. Salmenkivi, eds., Helsinki, 2007, 369-83.
- ‘Gustav Adolf Deissmann (1866-1937) and the revival of archaeological excavations at Ephesus after the First World War’, *ÖJh.*, 75, 2006 [2007], 39-46.

Since this dissertation makes use of a wide range of German primary sources – some dating back to before the orthographical reforms of 1901, or even before 1880, when Konrad Duden (1829-1911) published his momentous German dictionary – irregular and occasionally idiosyncratic spelling and punctuation occurs in a number of citations. However, the convention adopted in this dissertation is to quote excerpts as accurately as possible in their original form (i.e. uncorrected). It is, therefore, not unusual to encounter certain words spelt variously, sometimes even within the same document or citation, particularly in respect to compounds. the ‘eszett’ (‘ß’) as opposed to the double sibilant ‘ss’, or the older ‘th’ as opposed to the newer ‘t’. Deissmann regularly signed his name with an ‘eszett’ (i.e. Deißmann), but in typed correspondence normally used the alternative ‘ss’; and, except for citations, this latter spelling is the one preferred in this work. On occasions where a word is either illegible, or missing because of document damage, this is normally signalled thus: ‘[.?. illegible]’.

Italics are used in the text to indicate published works, foreign words and – very occasionally – for emphasis, but within the footnotes are reserved only for published works.

I am grateful to the host of individuals and institutions who have provided me with kind assistance and encouragement in the research of this dissertation; they are acknowledged wherever appropriate in this thesis. I owe, however, a very special debt of gratitude to Dr. phil. Gerhard Deissmann and to his niece, Angelika Deissmann, for making me feel warmly welcome in their Bremen home on three extended occasions, and for giving me much background information, as well as unfettered access to their private family papers and other material. My research in Germany during 2002 and 2004 has been considerably facilitated by two generous grants from the University of New England through the Keith & Dorothy Mackay Postgraduate Travelling Scholarship (2002) and the Maiben Davies Postgraduate Scholarship in Classics (2004), for both of which I am much obliged. I also want to thank my two supervisors, Professor G.H.R. Horsley (UNE Armidale) and Professor John Moses (Canberra) for their wise and patient counsel, and Dr Manfred Kandler (Vienna), Dr Hartmut Ludwig (Berlin) and Dr Annette Gerlach and her staff at the Zentral- und Landesbibliothek in Berlin, for their frequent and much valued help. Finally, I pay tribute to my dear wife, Marianne, for without her unwavering support I could not have completed this work.