

## "Catholic Racism and its Viennese Opponents"

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### Introduction

On October 14, 1965 the bishops of the Second Vatican Council gathered to vote on a resolution about Catholic relations to the Jews. Among other things, they were called upon to consider the following propositions: that "Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God," that Christ's suffering and death "cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today," and that "God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers."<sup>1</sup> The vote in favor was so overwhelming – 1,937 bishops for and 153 against – that subsequent observers have regarded the outcome as almost necessary, and have failed to appreciate the magnitude of the shift. The bishops had undone centuries of theologically supported anti-Semitism, a tradition so massive that as recently as the 1950s Catholic schoolchildren were routinely taught that Jews were a "rejected" people, cursed for "all time."<sup>2</sup>

Those who have tried to explain the Church's sudden course change – like Michael Phayer or Robert Louis Wilken – focus on the role of the Holocaust in changing Catholic sentiments about Jews.<sup>3</sup> Yet in fact, the destruction of Europe's Jews had little immediate impact on official teaching. The Vatican under Pius XII considered its role during World War II impeccable and persecuted those few Catholics who explored ways of overcoming theologically grounded contempt for Jews – like the group around Gertrud Luckner in Freiburg. Nothing changed until John XXIII became Pope in 1958 and mandated a reappraisal of relations to other faiths.

Social scientists resist the idea that single persons might redirect the course of history, but in Catholic-Jewish relations the outstanding role of the new pope is undeniable. Still, he did not

work alone. When John XXIII decided to commission the statement that the bishops ultimately voted upon, he drew upon the expertise of Catholics who had been exploring pathways out of traditional anti-Semitism for decades – from a time when the Holocaust was imagined by no one. One was Monsignor John M. Oesterreicher of Seton Hall University in the United States. In the 1930s, then known as Johannes, he had invited Jews and Christians from across Europe to contribute new thinking on Jewish-Christian relations to his journal Die Erfüllung, published in Vienna. He was not alone. By 1935, a small cadre of anti-Nazi Catholics had converged upon the Austrian capital and was fitfully trying to formulate responses to the racist anti-Semitism flowing in from north of the border.

Michael Phayer has compared such Catholic opponents of anti-Semitism to "sixteenth century scientists who suspected that the sun did not revolve around the earth but could not explain heliocentrism."<sup>4</sup> How did the collaborators grouped around Oesterreicher succeed in breaking through the virtually impenetrable thicket and theological assumptions that governed Catholic thinking about Jews? My thesis is that the answer lies in the race question: specifically in the penetration of racism deep into Catholic thought during the 1930s. This racism caused influential Catholics in Central Europe to question the power of baptism to undo the allegedly inherited evils of the Jewish character. They in turn triggered the vigorous opposition of Oesterreicher and his friends, many of whom were of Jewish origin. Through intense confrontation with Catholic racism, Oesterreicher ultimately came to believe that such a thing as purely religious anti-Semitism could not exist; as a corollary he concluded – remarkably for a European writing in 1939 – that race itself did not exist.

In Central Europe, racism and anti-Semitism had become so inextricably connected that opposition to one necessitated opposition to the other. It is not a coincidence that in the final

draft of Vatican II's declaration on the Jews – which Oesterreicher helped draft – the condemnations of racism and anti-Semitism follow logically upon one another.

### Catholic Racism and the Historiography of Catholicism

In recent years, historians have written important and revealing studies of Catholic anti-Semitism. By now the failure of two popes to speak out in defense of Jews facing destruction has become well-established.<sup>5</sup> The failure of the Catholic Church in Central Europe to clearly condemn anti-Semitism in these years has also been well-documented.<sup>6</sup> But, with the exception of Daniel Goldhagen, authors stop short of accusing the Church of racism or of racist anti-Semitism. John Cornwell, among the severest critics of Pius XII, writes that the prejudices spread by the Jesuits' Italian language weekly *Civiltà Cattolica* "were hardly inimical to the racist theories that would culminate in the Nazis' furious assault upon European Jewry," but he does not countenance the entry of these racist theories into Catholic thought, and maintains a strict separation between "racist anti-Semitism and religious anti-Semitism."<sup>7</sup> Susan Zuccotti argues that while Pius XI failed to speak out on anti-Judaism, he did condemn racism.<sup>8</sup>

Supposedly, the church was the rare institution unafflicted by the modern disease of racism.<sup>9</sup> The best evidence for this view is the Church's age-old openness toward converts regardless of ethnicity. This stance was perhaps reinforced in the modern age by political opposition to racism as one among a host of dangerous "materialist" doctrines.<sup>10</sup>

Scholars who have written on racism in the Catholic Church tend to emphasize earlier episodes, especially the blood purity laws that restricted the access of Jewish converts to public office in 16th century Spain and 17th Century Rome. Yet these laws were revoked, and some

historians note that later racial anti-Semites did not cite them as precedent.<sup>11</sup> Other references to Catholic racism are sprinkled throughout a vast literature on Christianity and Anti-Semitism. In his Infected Christianity the Canadian author Alan Davies notes the widespread currency of "racist terminology" among French Catholics of the late 19th century, drawing particular attention to the activities of such nominal Catholics as Eduoard Drumont, who "stressed a qualitative difference between Christian Aryans and non-Christian Semites." The one case of a priest claiming that Jews could not be converted because of their racial traits was the cleric Ernest Jouin.<sup>12</sup>

In The Popes Against the Jews David Kertzer works his way through additional cases: of an archbishop in nineteenth century Moravia who was asked to resign because of his Jewish extraction; of an eighteenth century French priest's propagating images of "physically other" Jews, of a seventeenth century "notorious Jewish convert" employed at the Vatican who claimed that baptism could not cure Jews of their foul smell. He also notes that a cofounder of the Jesuits' Civilta Cattolica alleged the existence of a Jewish race in the 1880s. But these cases are scattered through time and space and one has to wonder at their significance. They also tend to fall within an earlier era, when the word "race" had a broader, less biologically tinged meaning. But given the "given the level of hostility against Jews inculcated by the Church" Kertzer does reasonably speculate that it "strained credulity to imagine that a people so demonic could be so easily changed, that the person who until yesterday was Jewish could today be one of us."<sup>13</sup>

For a variety of reasons, then, scholars have failed to ask how racism may have entered Catholic thought in the early decades of the twentieth century, when racial thought was at the height of its popular influence and scientific respectability.<sup>14</sup> In fact, influential Catholic thinkers in Central Europe of this period did teach beliefs grounded in a modern racist world view, specifically, that Jews were a biological as well as cultural/religious group, and that the

sacrament of baptism was powerless to alter their heretically determined being. In German-speaking Europe religious and racial anti-Semitism had grown together fatefully and inextricably.

If, for a moment, one sheds preconceptions about the supposed power of the holy sacraments for Catholics, the embrace of racism by Catholic thinkers hardly seems surprising. The Holy See, contrary to what is often written, never forbade racist thinking. It never issued explicit instructions on how race was to be understood – that after all was a question for sciences other than theology. In 1938 Pope Pius XI issued a set of instructions on the dangers of racism, and these are often cited. What is less often noted is that these instructions forbade "extreme racism," but not recognition of the existence of races, and of their value. Just as nations were thought of as an undeniable aspect of creation, and thus an undeniable part of God's plan for salvation, so were races.<sup>15</sup> As we shall see, there were those willing to deny the existence of "pure races," but overwhelmingly the popular and scientific discourses within the Central Europe of the time assumed the decisive force of race for shaping human history.<sup>16</sup>

In the 1930s to think of Jews as a racial group was a commonplace, and even Catholic opponents of Nazi anti-Semitism spoke of a Jewish race.<sup>17</sup> So did many Jews.<sup>18</sup> But some leading Catholic thinkers went further, claiming that Jews were not only essentially different from non-Jews, but also arguing that this difference made them threatening and – paradoxically – inferior. What made this Catholic racism especially confounding was that it supposedly recognized the supremacy of the spiritual while in fact developing teachings that espoused the existence of heritable traits among supposed racial groups, like the Jews, or the Germans. In a climate of increasing impatience with theological "dualism," Catholic thinkers fell prey to the idea that the spiritual and biological could be definitively linked. To them, alleged failings of the spirit among particular groups of people – for example the Jews' rejection of Christ – came to appear

historically indelible. Race became essential and mutable at the same time: a transgression today in the city of God could have fatal and long-lasting consequences in the city of man.

Catholic thinkers were especially prone to modern racism in German-speaking Central Europe, where they desperately sought cultural relevance beyond their ghetto.<sup>19</sup> For many of them, the scientific discovery of race seemed to reconcile spirit to matter, and Catholicism to the German nation. Of special interest was "blood" – a metaphor as resonant for the religious as it was for racists – which seemed figuratively and literally to unite the individual with the collective body [Volkskörper]. The rise and fall of communities bound in blood now permitted glimpses of God's will at work in history. Suddenly, theologians could abandon dusty tracts of learned speculation and go out and preach to the faithful with an unprecedented certainty on the subject of divine intention .

Leading minds of German theology were enthralled with the possibilities offered by a racist *Geschichtstheologie* [theology of history] and soon they were bolstering their scientific and national credentials with pronouncements on the divine favor enjoyed by the German Volk. Best known and most troubling is Karl Adam, professor in Tübingen, and a thoroughly modern, world-renowned interpreter of Catholicism – whose work is assigned in seminaries to this day.<sup>20</sup> As a staunch opponent of dualistic philosophy Adam emphasized the inviolability of human sensuality and thus the human side of Jesus Christ; in a 1935 lecture he proclaimed that the "man of the future" was "not the man who has renounced sensuous life, who has been divided and torn asunder by the disastrous opposition of body and spirit, of Bios and Logos, but the man who has been restored to inner unity and wholeness."<sup>21</sup> Like many of the generation of 1914 Adam was an enthusiast of "community," a concept which, when understood in modern racial terms, helped overcome the dichotomy of matter and spirit and the "disenchantment" of modernity.<sup>22</sup> Race and culture like body and spirit were inseparable and Christians were bound to venerate both.

Practically that meant that the German Volk incorporated the mystical body of Christ, and that Adolf Hitler must be recognized as the savior of the "diseased [German] national body," the man who could restore Germany's "blood unity" (Bluteinheit).<sup>23</sup> During World War II, Adam spoke of the need for Catholics to embrace German culture more fully: as his biographer Robert Krieg has written "according to Adam, since Catholicism respects every particular culture and expresses its universal truths in local forms, German Catholics should enter more fully into their nation's world view."<sup>24</sup>

His sort of racism did of course differ from that of Nazis and other racial anti-Semites for whom Jews could never, regardless of how many generations, lose their Jewishness. Yet the difference was more a matter of degree than of kind, because in the historical context of the 1930s his views encouraged precisely the kind of ghettoization that proved a necessary stage in the destruction of the Jews. Theologians like Adam blurred the boundaries between Nazism and Catholicism, making them invisible to many believers. They also intensified the common belief that Jews were fated to suffer – a belief that encouraged Christian passivity during the Holocaust.<sup>25</sup>

If Adam lent theological authority to scientific racism, there were also Catholic anthropologists and eugenicists willing to contribute cutting-edge scientific authority to Catholic racism. Two stand out in the Central Europe of the 1930s: Viennese professor of Anthropology Wilhelm Schmidt (1868-1954), and Berlin professor of eugenics Hermann Muckermann (1877-1962). Both were priests: Schmidt belonged to missionary order SVD [societas verbi divini], and Muckermann was a Jesuit.<sup>26</sup> They remind us of the influence that valued experts can wield in an organization like the Catholic Church, where scientists of note were few, especially among the clergy. As "scientific experts" they could bring racist thinking into the Church more stealthily and effectively than theologians who lacked the authority to speak on race as well as theology.

They were, to use a term coined by Ralph Jessen to describe professors with authority in political and scholarly spheres, "dual citizens."<sup>27</sup> As "Catholic" experts, each gave hundreds of talks and wrote dozens of articles for popular Catholic audiences over the many decades of their public lives.

Biographers agree on these figures' outstanding importance. Suzanne Marchand calls Schmidt a "Catholic scientific impresario."<sup>28</sup> Early in the century he set up the premier Central European anthropological journal Anthropos, and became confessor to the last Habsburg Emperor Charles. In the interwar years he founded a chair for Ethnology, and was placed at the head of the Institute for anthropology at Vienna University, where he developed the so-called Vienna School. He and his students controlled appointments in this discipline for decades. In 1923 he so impressed Pope Pius XI that the latter subsidized a museum of ethnology at the Vatican. Muckermann is regarded as decisive in acquainting Catholic opinion with "moderate eugenic thought," and possessed considerable influence in Catholic elites active in welfare policy, social work, and education.<sup>29</sup> From 1927 to 1933 he acted as director of the department of eugenics at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, human genetics and eugenics in Berlin.<sup>30</sup>

Among specialists, Schmidt is best known as an advocate of monogenesis, and for his insistence on an original act of revelation (Uroffenbarung). His early work focused on Africa, where he established racial hierarchy among groups studied, though he imagined a reciprocal relationship between environment and characteristics of human groups. Races arose in reaction to specific environmental conditions, but once they had emerged, he believed races possessed value, and he opposed racial mixing. Otherwise inferiority might be transmitted and races degenerate. Among the racial groups of Europe he thought the Germans were a master race (Herrenvolk). Regarding Jews, Schmidt wrote in 1934:



This kind of transgression [i.e.: the rejection of Christ] can by itself distort the being of a people; yet in the case of the Jewish people, the betrayal of its high calling has made this distortion go very deep: corruptio optimi pessima. In punishment this people, as Christ himself predicted, was driven out of its homeland. Almost two thousand years of distortion and uprooting of its essence has then had a secondary but real effect on its physical race. These racial effects...are not neutralized by baptism. For that, Jews will have to work hard on themselves. [Converted Jews] may therefore belong to our number, but not in the same way as our German racial comrades [deutsche Volksgenossen].<sup>31</sup>

Earlier that year, the German Austrian Anti-Semitic League expressed thanks to Schmidt for his view that baptism was powerless to undo Jewishness.<sup>32</sup> According to Schmidt, Jews and Germans had to be kept apart by means of "robust racial hygiene" in order to "isolate and expel harmful foreign bodies" from the German Volk.<sup>33</sup>

Like Schmidt, Muckermann was an enthusiast of the northern race, to which he attributed the "incomparable culture of old Greece." Anything of value in world history was credited Nordic influence.<sup>34</sup> If Italy had a renaissance that was because of the "blood of the Lombards." If Spain did not, that was because of the "modest Nordic influx."

For Muckermann blacks were an inferior race,<sup>35</sup> and Jews were a "racial mixture of Near Eastern and oriental genetic material," to which he ascribed "an ability to empathize with others at a spiritual [seelisch] level." This capacity explained Jews' great success in business, literature, acting, music, law, and medicine, esp. gynecology. Jews were especially adept at "steering human passions." Though he valued Jews' "sense for marriage and family," like Schmidt he opposed conjugal unions between Jews and Germans, because that would erode Germandom.<sup>36</sup>

In order to preserve the "untouched, elemental nature of the German people" he wanted to "push back racially foreign, particularly Jewish influence in the shaping of our culture."<sup>37</sup>

In fairness, it should be noted that both men opposed the sort of eugenics favored by Nazis. Though Muckermann advocated the reproduction of "productive [leistungsfähige]" human beings, he opposed so-called "negative eugenics": including abortion "for eugenic reasons,"<sup>38</sup> euthenasia<sup>39</sup>, and prohibitions on the marriage of the mentally retarded. He waffled on forcible sterilization, however, first rejecting it, then accepting it, then subordinating himself to church teaching, finally attempting a partial rehabilitation.<sup>40</sup> In 1935 he wrote that the best eugenics was not sterilization but rather: "eugenic upbringing and breeding [Erziehung] in families which are genetically sound."<sup>41</sup>

If racism inescapably shaped the minds of Catholic experts, it also helped inform the historical vision of the clergy, down to the local parishes throughout Germany and Austria. Even priests who supposedly figured in the front line of opposition to anti-Semitism in Austria before the Nazi invasion, like the Austro-Hungarian Jesuit Bela Bangha, SJ, spoke of the "congenital moral inferiority of Jews."<sup>42</sup> Georg Bichlmair, a Viennese Jesuit who was punished by the Nazis in 1939 for helping protect Jews, spoke earlier of the Jews' "evil genetic qualities."<sup>43</sup> And Prof. Alois Mager, who figured among the moderate voices in the Catholic milieu of Salzburg, spoke of the "racial peculiarity" of Jews, whose rejection of Christ helped create a "spiritual attitude of radical denial and subversion."<sup>44</sup>

For many years defenders of the Church lamented the disappearance of a "hidden encyclical" on racism commissioned by Pius XI, because of its supposedly unmistakable condemnation of racist anti-Semitism. Recent publication of this document reveals a different picture. A major author, the German expert on race questions, Gustav Gundlach SJ, fell into the thrall of racism as soon as he turned his mind to the Jewish question. For their part in Christ's

death, "Jewry" [das Judentum] "gambled away their exalted historical calling once and for all" and became separated by an "immovable boundary" from the rest of humanity. By turning "against their own blood" Jews had sacrificed their "communal life as a race."<sup>45</sup> Through the ages, the church acted correctly to enforce this "peculiar religious-social segregation," (eigenartige religiöse gesellschaftliche Besonderung) and the Jews served as a frightening reminder of what would happen to those who "abandoned the gift of the grace of true faith."<sup>46</sup>

### **Opponents of Nazism**

Central European Catholics who had occasion to think of Jews as a group in the racialized 1930s imagined them as a race. And those few who wanted to escape racist anti-Semitism confronted the almost impenetrable thicket of scientific and theological assumptions that has just been described. Yet a few Catholics did venture away from the assumptions of their day toward teachings that the Church now takes for granted: that Jews were not a "race" and that they were not cursed by God. If reasoned argument seemed powerless against the racist theology of the 1930s, what drove these Catholics in new directions?

The best explanations are biographical. The Catholics who opposed anti-Semitism with the greatest conviction were of Jewish origin. They stood horrified as they watched the Nazis erode their co-believers' faith in baptism – something that they had considered the bedrock of their new theological home. Since they could not speak out from Germany proper after 1933, voices of dissenters tended to emanate from German-speaking regions not under Nazi control, especially in Austria. From 1933/34 to 1938 two Catholics of Jewish origin edited journals opposing racist anti-Semitism in Vienna: philosopher Dietrich von Hildebrand, and the priest Johannes Oesterreicher. The former, a strong supporter of Dollfuss's anti-Nazi, anti-liberal, and

anti-socialist experiment, entitled his weekly Der Christliche Ständestaat; the latter, director of the Catholic "mission" to the Jews in Vienna (Opus St. Pauli), called his bi-monthly Die Erfüllung.<sup>47</sup> Another strongly anti-Nazi Catholic not of Jewish origin, the sociologist Ernst-Karl Winter, set up the Gsur-Verlag publishing house in which Jews as well as Jewish converts opposed racism and Anti-Semitism.<sup>48</sup>

Despite the hazards posed by Nazi spies in Vienna, these journals and Winter's Gsur-Verlag published articles and books up to March 1938. Their writings betray the tensions of the time: on the one hand a desire to reveal how little was known about race, on the other hesitancy to abandon the term; on the one hand a conviction that Jews should not be subjected to hateful generalizations, on the other, a seemingly inescapable assumption that the Jewish people had suffered historically for refusing the divine offer of salvation.

The most daring and original thinker among the Catholic anti-Nazis, Dietrich von Hildebrand had grown up in a mostly a-religious environment of the Florence and Munich households of the sculptor Adolf von Hildebrand.<sup>49</sup> He claimed to derive his political views from philosophical principles gained in studies with (the Jewish convert) Max Scheler, the most influential Catholic intellectual in Germany at the time.<sup>50</sup> Hildebrand to continued studies with Edmund Husserl, and was awarded the highest distinction [Prädikat opus eximium] for a dissertation on moral behavior.<sup>51</sup>

Scheler is given credit for originating the philosophical tendency known as personalism, first popular among "non-conformists" in France, and later transmitted to Poland, where it was embraced by Karol Wojtyła.<sup>52</sup> Above all, personalists rejected "collectivist" thought systems. "A person is not" wrote the leading French proponent Emmanuel Mounier, "one coefficient among others of a social arithmetic." Rather, a person was "a spiritual value... at the heart of all other human reality."<sup>53</sup> While personalism may seem hazy when evaluated for implications in the

realm of politics, what it meant for an anti-Nazi Catholic philosopher was clear: rejection of "materialism," emphasis on "spirit," and therefore relegation of "race" to a subordinate position in the human sciences. Hildebrand wrote that "racial characteristics cannot be shown to have any clear effects on the intellect..." Racism had become possible only because of the modern tendency to "to deny the spiritual/intellectual [geistig] essence of the person."<sup>54</sup> In his view "grace" was the decisive factor in the formation of human personality.

What was the relation between races and peoples? Which category was more substantial? Hildebrand wrote that national communities [Volksgemeinschaften] have "roots other than race."<sup>55</sup> In December 1933 his associate Ferdinand Frodl SJ agreed: "nothing can be said about the gifts possessed by varying races, because we know nothing at all about the extent to which biophysical racial characteristics relate to psychic peculiarities." For Frodl this uncertainty extended to the idea of "people." What for example bound together the Jews was unclear, and therefore the "Jewish question" remained open. In his lack of presumption Frodl differed radically from Wilhelm Schmidt. And he suffered for his engagement: in 1944 the Volksgerichtshof condemned him to three years imprisonment for attempting to smuggle information to a foreign country.<sup>56</sup>

For Frodl, the indistinctness of "race" and "people" suggested the untenability of general statements about the Jews. By contrast, Hildebrand was less willing to foresake generalizations and insisted on the reality of the Jewish people as a spiritual rather than a racial community: from biblical times to the present Jews had stood for humanity, as the "metaphysical people of all humanity" [metaphysisches Menschheitsvolk]. To be anti-Semitic was therefore to be a hater of humanity. Because the Jews represented all humans, Hildebrand drew the conclusion that any other group would have rejected Christ: "every other people would have mocked, stoned, and crucified Christ... whatever the Jews did to Christ, whether good or bad, was in fact the answer of

humanity."<sup>57</sup> His idea of the Jews' singular spiritual mission thus caused Hildebrand to undo a mainstay of Christian anti-Semitism. It also caused him to reject assimilation.

Ironically, those who turned to scripture for ammunition against racism found an abundance of metaphors beloved by the racists – blood, seed, flesh, root, transplanting, grafting. And of course they also found abundant references to Israel and to the "Jews" as a people. Scripture thus afforded opponents of Nazism a chance to subvert racism in its own terms, and to overturn the second major component of Christian anti-Semitism: the notion that Jews had been cursed for killing Christ.

St. Paul in particular could be read as racist avant la lettre. In December 1933 Ferdinand Frodl turned Paul's proto-racist metaphors against Wilhelm Schmidt, who had used a public lecture to speak of the "perversion of the Jews' inner being... as result of the punishment [of killing and denying Christ." The "2,000 years have had a psychological effect on [Jews'] being, and... cannot be undone by baptism." Frodl argued that precisely the opposite was true. Comparing an olive tree to the people of God, Paul (Romans 11) likened Israel to the root: Jews were far better suited to Christianity – the "new" people of God – than any other people. Whereas Christians had to be grafted on as "wild branches," Jews would be "grafted onto their own olive tree."<sup>58</sup>

In a 1936 article entitled "Paul and his People," Johannes Oesterreicher likewise used Paul's proto-racism to turn the tables on Christian racists. Jews were the people "from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came," the people whom Paul called his "flesh." Since God does not "repent promises to His people," one could not say that Israel was "cast off." To the contrary, Paul insists, "all Israel will be saved."<sup>59</sup> Later, in his mature work, Oesterreicher, echoing Erich Voegelin, argued that anti-Semitic racism grew out of a kind of election envy. But at that time he was also arguing that races did not exist. One therefore sees him playing both ends of the racial argument

at various times: the inveterate opponent of racism was willing to adopt organic geneology when it served his purposes.

Publisher, sociologist, and politician Ernst Karl Winter, one of the most consistent anti-Nazis operating in Austria in this period, also crafted arguments against the racists in racist terms, though he drew more on his own speculations as a sociologist than on holy texts. On the one hand he claimed that the "cultural foundations" of the Austrian "space" had been laid by "prenordic...Dinarain, Alpine and Mediterranean" elements, remnants of which were still visible in the Austrian peasantry. The "Nordic invasion" had thrown Austrian culture back by a millennium. On the other hand he argued that the Austrian and Jewish peoples (Österreichertum und Judentum) shared a "special affinity," because of common racial origins. According to him, "Austrian rulers [Dynasten] were descended from Jewish kings." Furthermore, "Austrian culture of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was unthinkable without the positive role of Jews [Judentum]." Victor Adler, Emil Steinback, Hugo Hoffmannstal, Arthur Schnitzler, Adolf Sonnenthal and Joseph Kainz were all indelibly Austrian types [gehören unverlierbar dem österreichischen Menschentum an] <sup>60</sup>

Winter's reference to purported racial types shows the penetration of scientific categories into popular understanding. If the existence of race was taken for granted – at least at the level of original human races of prehistory – so were the words commonly used in racial textbooks to describe racial groups and subgroups. Where Catholic anti-Nazis generally parted company with Nazi racial science was in their unwillingness to accept clear links between racial and mental or spiritual types. They argued that while race was real, science had not fully exposed the relation between racial type and human character. At least not yet. But because of the underlying assumption of the power of race, a number of writers were tempted to speculate nonetheless: Science may as yet have failed to bring group traits into precise focus, but the broad outlines of

racial and national character were visible, and could be explained only through race or categories like race.

One such writer was Winter's collaborator Walter Berger, a convert from Judaism to Christianity who penned several articles and a book on the race question in the 1930s. How he became an "expert" on the matter is unclear: his doctorate seems to have been in philology, and after emigration he taught German literature in English public schools. Nevertheless, his 1936 book What is Race? was reviewed positively in Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Switzerland.<sup>61</sup> His thinking on race is remarkable for critical recognition of the term's limitations on the one hand, but stubborn insistence on maintaining its usage on the other. He wrote that "special original types" once existed – for example Nordic or Mediterranean races – but that these could not be grasped through scientific methods. Still, he was certain that one could "intuitively" perceive a relation between physical type and "spirit." For example, "something of the soul is related to the Nordic body type."<sup>62</sup> For him the most important collectivity was the Volk – a people with shared mentalities and modes of expression. In a given historical moment the unity possessed by a Volk overwhelmed the racial components that went into it: in effect, it began forming a new racial group. Thus people of "Dinarian" or "Ostisch" blood might come to share the "same Austrian gesture." (203) He used the word "artgleich" to describe this unity, a word that was also popular with biological anthropologists, and came to mean something like "of the same species."

In 1938, Berger fled Austria with his wife and two children and later entered service in the British army. In wartime correspondence with Ernst Karl Winter – an exile in New Jersey – Berger recalled his work on race as opposing Nazi ideology.<sup>63</sup> But despite – or perhaps because of – its subjective intent, this work serves to remind us of the difficulties of escaping the governing views of his era. Because of Berger's belief in the heritability of personal characteristics, he failed to break loose from the intellectual substratum of racism. In his writing



"Volk" acquires the characteristics of race, in a sense lending the Nazis' own confused understanding even greater force. The Nazi leadership, after all, never attempted an authoritative study of the racial composition of their own people: for all the talk of "Aryans," the real master people in Germany were the "Germans."<sup>64</sup> Berger even conjured the existence of a "people's type (Volkstyp)", which constituted the beginning to a "new kind of race." This "type" contained the odd mixture of the instinctual and scientific that was typical of the racist discourse of this period: the new Volkstyp is expressed "by a special something which one can see, especially when one is abroad."<sup>65</sup>

Berger's underlying racism becomes confoundingly apparent in his writings on Jews. In accordance with the findings of anthropological science Jews were not a race, Berger asserts, but then he quietly re-racializes them by averring that religion had kept Jews apart and united. Over centuries of isolation a "behavior pattern" emerged constituting a "Jewish way": "extreme intellectualism, an abnormally well developed sense for commerce, abnormal ambition, relativism." Jews' preexisting "genetic make-up" had been "highly cultivated" to produce characteristics that "would not disappear overnight," – even after baptism. (210) The Jews' "in-between state" (*Schwebezustand*) Berger criticized as "unhealthy, forever spawning to new catastrophes." (209)<sup>66</sup>

Having liberally indulged in generalizations that reveal the imprint of Christian anti-Semitism on the Jewish convert, Berger then told the reader what separated his approach from that of the Nazis: the "Jewish genetic make-up [*Erbmasse*] has its drawbacks, but not more than is the case with other peoples...in regard to inborn immaturity and sinfulness there is no 'better' or 'worse.'" Walter Berger showed that a mind opened to the basic category of "race" quickly filled with personal and public prejudices, even, paradoxically, while denying that races continue to exist. Racial thinking simply translated epistemic arrogance into the new categories, be they

people or nation. The word "ethnicity" did not belong to the common parlance of Central Europe. In Oesterreicher, pride in ancestry tended to overwhelm such triumphalism, and perhaps in his case was intensified by the guilt of convert.

Those rare theologians who refused to enter the terrain of racial science wound up at positions more congenial to our present temperament. In such cases, pre-modern sentiments translate more easily – if not directly – into our current sensibilities. An example is the French Franciscan B. Lacombe, who wrote on the Jewish question in Hildebrand's Christliche Ständestaat in 1936. In his view the "Jewish question...as a modern daily problem of politics, culture, and sociology...is exclusively a this-worldly concern...Therefore Catholic theology in the strict sense and the Jewish question of today have nothing to do with each other." Lacombe did not absolve himself of all concern for the matter: in fact he viewed the question as supremely ethical. The "Jewish question" belonged in the realm of moral theology, where one could find "binding Church decisions about anti-Semitism." Lacombe's conclusion was impatiently terse: "Anti-Semitism belongs in the confessional booth – that is its relation to theology."

Lacombe did not belabor scripture nor did he speculate on manifestations of God's will history: "to approach the Jewish question as 'punishment of God' is not some mystical way to gain a profound understanding of the 'problem,' but rather a shallow mystification of sins we ourselves have committed."<sup>67</sup> The very notion that there was a Jewish "problem" was itself an outgrowth of sinfulness,<sup>68</sup> of the "inadequacy of human nature." And the "blood and power, hatred and domination" to which anti-Semites appealed, were the "fruits from which one could recognize the weeds" out of which they drew inspiration. Race, whether or not it existed, should not divide people:

Politicians who imagine blood as some special nectar are the children of Mephistopheles. Christians love God too much to be afraid of any race, and the 'yellow peril' or the 'Jewish question' are problems of a humanity that is estranged from God... When they cease being brothers in God, humans become a danger for each other. Whites and Aryans are a terrible danger for other peoples, and in Japan and China the "Jewish question" translates into "hatred of foreigners" and "Boxer rebellion."

Lacombe used words like "Aryan" and "race" uncritically because his charge as theologian was not to deny or affirm the realities lying behind such words, but to make clear that whether or not they existed, the Church belonged on a different plane. Nothing could distract the believer from the sinfulness of hatred and fear.

Lacombe's refusal to engage "history" and "politics" did of course leave the door open to absolving the Church of fomenting Anti-Semitism.<sup>69</sup> This is a door that Dietrich von Hildebrand, a man similarly hostile to modern times, whose journal had translated Lacombe's essay, was eager to enter, as were his collaborators (including Jacques Maritain) in a composite essay published in New York in 1937. For them, anti-Semitism was exclusively an outcome of the secular modern age, and had no relation to Christian tradition or teaching. The authors leapt at the chance to use a critique of Anti-Semitism to emphasize their displeasure with the age in which they lived:

Secularism, however, can also bring about (indeed it has already done so) the most vehement attacks against the Jew. This must be the case whenever mankind is not considered as a unit conditioned by reason, but when reason, humanity and honor are tied up with a certain 'blood,' when race is something that belongs to humanity as a whole and a certain race

to a particularly high type of humans. In such views the Jews appear as representatives of an 'anti-race' i.e., they are the bearers of a blood composition which makes them the foes of true humanity, the destroyers of healthy and noble racial and national components with their dependent creations; taken in the widest sense, from politics to lyrics. Consequently, it is said, that they have to be placed under special laws which, according to these anti-Semites, will prevent the Jews from exercising their disintegrating and dissolving influence. (23)<sup>70</sup>

In defense of the authors one might say that the first step to overcoming tradition is to deny that tradition exists. And though potentially an apology for Christian anti-Semitism, this approach does provide a strong intellectual basis for opposing Christian racism. At this point in history scrutiny of Christian scripture for the seeds of Anti-Semitism was a rather new art.<sup>71</sup> In Central Europe, as a first step, those who sought to overcome Christian anti-Semitism denied that Christianity could be anti-Semitic.

Among the most remarkable approaches of this sort was a short piece of the German theologian Annie G. Kraus – a convert to Catholicism who later worked with Karl Rahner – entitled "Religious Anti-Semitism," which appeared in *Der Christliche Ständestaat* in 1934. In a novel interpretation of tradition, she argued that Catholicism, unlike Protestantism, was and always had been "absolutely resistant" to anti-Semitism. Like Oesterreicher she viewed as mythical the idea of purely religious – or purely areligious – anti-Semitism. She wrote that the Nazis often claimed to be scientific while at the same time deriving legitimation from scripture. Unlike Protestantism Catholicism had refused to sanction the separation of the Old from the New Testament. Furthermore, Catholicism, with its focus on good works and belief in active charity, was less likely to tolerate anti-Semitic acts. Amazingly for the time, Kraus admitted the errors of the Church in the frequent overzealousness to convert: this practice violated the teaching of St.

Thomas Aquinas that one may not prematurely anticipate [vorgreifen] the will of the Almighty. Indeed forcible conversion was evidence of the converter's own lack of faith. She concludes with the extraordinary statement that the "Jews are the last hope of the world."<sup>72</sup>

The full text of Kraus's pioneering statement is contained in Oesterreicher's papers at the library of Seton Hall University: it seems to have been one of the few things he managed to salvage after his last-minute flight from Paris in June 1940. After the Gestapo had sought him there in vain – he had been broadcasting radio statements in German to the Wehrmacht condemning Nazi teachings – they then confiscated and destroyed stores of his own mature statement, the book Racisme--antisémitisme, antichristianisme, recently published in French from a German translation.

Oesterreicher had taken up residence in Paris after fleeing Austria in 1938. He had time to read and think systematically, and concluded that racism and anti-Semitism, were inseparable, one implied the other. For his book he pulled together the most radical strains from the French milieu, and combined them with all that he had learned from his base in Vienna in the previous decade. There he had culled perspectives from his birthplace in the Czech lands, but also cultivated contacts extending to Rome (the Dominican peace activist Franziskus Stratmann), Zurich (Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, Karl Thieme, Waldemar Gurian), Katowice (Eduard Pant), and Paris (Jacques Maritain). His book also integrated extensive – and for the time extraordinarily enlightened – statements of American bishops on race and anti-Semitism. As such it united the most progressive – if not modern – thinking in Catholicism of his day on the race question, and brought it to a synthesis.

After taking apart the contradictions of Nazi racism – for example, Hitler's confusing of species and race in Mein Kampf – ("can one enter into a discussion with such nonsense?"), he considers the "Negro," for racists obvious evidence of the substantial differences between races.

How was one to explain that the "intellectual niveau" of blacks has remained lower than that of whites? Drawing upon the American literature Oesterreicher concluded:

This has nothing to do with a consubstantial inferiority. Rather, in many cases the differing niveaus are a result of climatic conditions, in others, they result from the treatment that Negroes have endured from a social point of view...It would be false to act as if the civilization of white peoples is in every regard superior to that which Negroes would create if they lived in the similar geographic circumstances.

Years of study had taught Oesterreicher how few definitive answers anthropology could deliver. Civilizations differed: in some ways, some were superior, in other ways, they were inferior: "that is all that one can say. In reality, no race exists."<sup>73</sup> For the time, that was an extraordinary statement – whether from churchman, scientist, or layman.<sup>74</sup>

Like Hildebrandt, Oesterreicher emphasized the value of the individual person, something that was obliterated in racist thinking: "The fundamental error of racism consists in the fact that it considers humans only as elements of a race...[yet] a human is never an undifferentiated member of a group. [Actually] a human is always and above all an individual, he is a person."<sup>75</sup> Why did people succumb to this error? His basic answer was the sin of blasphemy: "The 'Aryan' man feels himself called to be the creator and master of the world which he imagines exists for his own glory...the racist folly is a rebellion against God who on Sinai gave...his commandments to the people of Israel and to all of humanity: 'I am the Lord your God. You will have not gods before Me...' [thus] the myth of superiority of the 'Aryan' race...in the end is a protest against the election of Israel."<sup>76</sup> In Oesterreicher's view, this rebellion necessarily led to hatred of Christ, both as Son of God and as Jew; the "world" was "scandalized" by the fact that "God became man

and our brother as member of the Jewish people, of God's people." Thus, all persecution of Jews "touches" Christ.<sup>77</sup>

Oesterreicher demonstrated in case after case how anti-Semites in the end turned their fury against the Catholic Church. Alfred Rosenberg said in 1938 that the Church was the most dangerous enemy of National Socialism.<sup>78</sup> He wrote that the redeemer's offering of his life for humanity was a "Semitic" doctrine. Faith in redemption was "Asiatic" or "Syrio-Judeo-alpine." Oesterreicher cited a case from Linz in 1933 in which Christ as a Jew was hanged on a swastika, as well as an incident from Cologne in 1934, in which "Die Like a Dog Christ!" [Christus verrecke] was written on Churches. There was another story from Germany in which a Catholic boy refused to genuflect before a crucifix, demanding: "first get rid of the Jew!"<sup>79</sup>

Oesterreicher refused to say which kind of hatred was primary: did Anti-Semites hate Jews because they hated God, and wished to defy Him in light of the favor willed upon the Jews; or did they hate God – Christ – because he was Jewish? For him, the two kinds of hatred were inseparable: "Hatred of Christ is the hidden source and the ultimate effect of hatred of Jews."<sup>80</sup> For Christians it was therefore an illusion to believe that anti-Semitism did not concern them. In fact, racist anti-Semitism was a basic test of politics and character: "tell me what you think of the myth of blood and of race, tell me your attitude toward Jews, and I will tell you who you are."<sup>81</sup> One ignored this matter at one's own peril; in private correspondence, Oesterreicher agonized at the silence of the Pope, and his attempts to "curry favor" with Hitler.<sup>82</sup>

### **Non-simultaneity**

A study of Catholic racism involves excursions to various planes of analysis, and they do not relate to each other according to any simple logic. Rather, they bring to mind Ernst Bloch's

notion of "non-simultaneous historical development" [Ungleichzeitigkeit]: the political does not match the scientific which does not match the theological. The most modern theologians and scientists became inveterate racists, while Nazism's most courageous opponents counted among their number monarchists and neo-scholastics. They unfolded campaigns for peace and against racism not from secure democracies, but from a place that had slid into authoritarianism and eschewed parliamentary rule. It called itself a Christian corporatist state, but is known to us as Austro-fascism. A former Jew worked tirelessly from the Capital of this "fascist" state to convert Jews to Catholicism – a deeply anti-Semitic enterprise – and thereby helped lead his Church away from poisonous theological images of the Jew it had espoused for centuries. That Vienna might have stirred revolutionary thinking in the Church seems almost inconceivable in the boundaries within which these matters are presently imagined: it was after all the birthplace of Lueger's Christian Socialism, the place whose diverse streams of contempt nurtured the delusions of Adolf Hitler.

What can be said about the theological formation of Nazism's Catholic opponents? How could theologically minded Catholics escape the tangle of heinous assumptions about Jews that were widespread in the 1930s? The first thing to note is that no relation existed between theological "modernity" and propensity to oppose racist anti-Semitism. More modern thinkers were not necessarily more tolerant. We saw above the intense desire for social and political relevance that took grip of German Catholics in the isolation of the Kulturkampf. After the lacerating traumas of World War I many German Catholics also wanted a Church that spoke directly to the concerns of the modern world. In "liturgical" as well as "youth" movements, they tried to "experience the reality of the church in a new way, a lived reality in which they took part." The great slogans of the time: "We are the Church" and the "Church is coming alive in our souls" reflect an insistence on palpable religiosity and a rejection of the dusty formalism and



rigorous theological truth statements that had alienated many Catholics of the prewar Church.<sup>83</sup> Precisely enthusiasts of the new "liturgical movement," with their skepticism of reason, were prepared to embrace the irrational, the vital, and the organic. Some, like Ildefons Herwegen, Karl Adam<sup>84</sup>, and Robert Grosche,<sup>85</sup> built bridges to the Nazis. But there were also left Catholic milieus in Germany, hopeful of a more democratic church, who stood in opposition to the Nazis. One charismatic thinker in this group even advocated tolerance toward Jews in a piece published in early 1933.<sup>86</sup>

After this date his and other voices were silenced in Germany, and open discussion among German Catholics moved southward to Dollfuss's Austria. Some of those who found their way to new positions on Jews did so from a neo-scholastic insistence upon the separateness of the supernatural and natural, and a refusal to entertain the speculations of *Geschichtstheologie* about God's place in nature. They resisted what Herbert Vorgrimler has described as characteristic of modern theology, namely a "stronger turn toward earthly reality"<sup>87</sup> This was most obviously true of Father Lacombe, but also of Dietrich von Hildebrand, for whom ethical norms overrode all temptations to fit himself into the spirit of a time. For him spirit was personal, and what he called "respect for the person" an absolute value. This contrasted to the demands of the liturgical movement that modern men surrender their individuality.<sup>88</sup> Yet as we have seen, some Viennese Anti-Nazis went beyond *Geschichtstheologie* to a positive assessment of Jews as a race that continued to enjoy divine favor, while at the same time calling themselves anti-racists. The best case is Johannes Oesterreicher. We seem to have a theological opportunism carried by an urgent desire to counter the Nazi ideology entering the Church.

Which strands of theological preference led to Vatican II? All did, but not in predictable combinations: both Oesterreicher and Karl Adam were invited to its deliberations, while Dietrich von Hildebrand felt deeply alienated. Yet his thought has not become irrelevant: the German

theologian Joseph Ratzinger, once an enthusiast of the Council and the Church as "people of God" and as Benedict XVI now a skeptic, has called Hildebrand "most prominent" among the Catholic intellectuals of our time.<sup>89</sup>

Perhaps it makes no sense to try to correlate political and theological preference.<sup>90</sup> Hildebrand's followers portray his opposition to National Socialism as a "strict consequence of his philosophy" – just as Heidegger's sympathy for National Socialism supposedly flowed logically from his philosophy. They trace Hildebrand's anti-Nazism to his "personalism" and consistent rejection of "any form of relativism and positivism."<sup>91</sup> One wonders, however, whether Hildebrand's opposition to Nazism and racism derived so completely from philosophical principles, and whether his personal history, in particular the cosmopolitan atmosphere of his father's home, might not constitute equally important background. Personalism, after all, far from insulated its Polish and French counterparts from anti-Semitism.<sup>92</sup>

Hildebrand's engagement was also personal: like many Catholics who became involved in Christian-Jewish affairs, he was of Jewish background. At the First Vatican Council in 1870 the brothers Lémann – Jews who had become Catholics and priests – presented a draft declaration on relations between Church and Jews stating that Jews "are always very dear to God because of their fathers and because Christ has issued from them according to the flesh." This was an initiative "without precedent."<sup>93</sup> A half century later, the Dutch nun and convert Maria Francesca (originally Sophie) Van Leer, formerly an anarchist, founded an initiative with two Dutch priests favoring greater understanding called "Amici Israel."<sup>94</sup> They demanded an end to calling Jews "deicidal," to targeting them for "conversion," – they preferred speaking of "return" – to proclaiming their "inconvertibility," and to speaking without respect for Jewish ritual; rather, they urged Catholics to underscore the special love of God for the people of Israel, and the permanence of this love -- "according to scripture." In the words of French scholar Menahem

Robert Macina, the association's ideas amounted to a "rupture with the spirit of the times,"<sup>95</sup> This initiative was closed by the Vatican in July 1928, for reasons that have yet to be disclosed.<sup>96</sup> At the time of suppression the association counted as members several thousand priests around the globe, including nineteen cardinals.

In 1843 the French convert Théodore Ratisbonne set up a congregation devoted to promoting further conversions: the order of Notre Dame de Sion. By the 1950s, several of its younger members had begun to devote energies to furthering understanding and friendship between Christians and Jews. Especially remarkable were the activities of the converts Geza Vermes, Paul Démann and Renée Bloch, who led a campaign from their Paris offices against Catholic textbooks teaching hatred of Jews.<sup>97</sup>

When in 1960 a Secretariat for Christian Unity was created during preparations for Vatican II, two of three priests taken on as advisors in Jewish-Christian affairs were of Jewish origin. One of them was John M. Oesterreicher, the other Gregory Baum, originally of Berlin. The Cardinal in charge of this section – August Bea – and the other priest – Leo Rudloff<sup>98</sup> – were also from German-speaking central Europe – not coincidentally, because it was from their homeland that the challenge of Catholic racism had emerged, and it was there that the urgency of a response was best understood. By 1965 they produced a document that removed from Church teaching anti-Jewish elements that had poisoned Catholic minds for centuries.

The role of former Jews in transforming Church teaching on Jews has not received scholarly attention, perhaps because efforts were often devoted to conversion, an enterprise hostile to Judaism.<sup>99</sup> Yet in the increasingly secular societies of early twentieth century Central Europe, this enterprise evolved in character. Force or threat of exclusion ceased to be options, and Catholics were forced to make a "positive" case to would-be converts. A prerequisite was

respect for the identity of those to be converted. Thus Oesterreicher devoted energies in his conversion mission of the 1930s to clearing away falsehoods about the Talmud or Jewish ritual.

A second factor that becomes apparent in the case of Oesterreicher is personal passion: passion of the convert, brought to white heat by hypocrisies among one's new brothers in faith. Oesterreicher became a man with a mission, and his mission was more to the Christians than to the Jews. His internal correspondence notes with bitterness that some thought him unworthy to dispense the sacraments: 'they would not receive the Eucharist from the hands of a Jew. Though outwardly disciplined and loyal to the Church throughout his long life, he also made clear his impatience with the silence of its leaders on the plight of the Jews.

### **Vienna, Europe, and Catholicism**

Like the Führer of the Third Reich, Oesterreicher had come to know racist anti-Semitism most directly on the streets of Vienna. More than personal biography was at stake in his extraordinary engagement in Christian-Jewish relations that spanned over sixty years. His perception was also the perception of a place where a number of became alarmed at the rising Nazi barbarism just over the border, and the infiltration of pro-Nazi sympathies into their own milieus.

Existing literature makes Vienna – the city of Lueger and other formative anti-Semites – seem an unlikely place for Catholics opposing racism. In a recent work sociologist Michael Mann studies Dollfuss's Austria as one of five cases of a successful fascist movement in power. Mark Mazower has described this Austria as a place of "violent anti-Semitism" that was "pursuing the goal of a Judenrein community."<sup>100</sup> It may therefore seem surprising that almost a million copies of a weekly combating Anti-Semitism were printed in Vienna in 1934 under the

direction of the remarkable Irene Harand, a Catholic who founded a "World League Against Racial Hatred and Human Need" in the Austrian capital.<sup>101</sup> Vienna was also a place with a diverse and vibrant Jewish press, where the anti-Nazi circles around Hildebrand and Oesterreicher could function freely and with official support, and where Ernst Karl Winter became a vice mayor. "Austro-fascism" did not merely tolerate, but encouraged the anti-Nazi response to emerge. Hildebrand and Harand made clear that the Christian corporatist state provided ideal working conditions; for them, Engelbert Dollfuss was not a fascist but a martyr for human rights – human rights that Weimar democracy had failed to protect.<sup>102</sup> These facts are obscured by Mazower's gloss on "Austrofascism" as "no less hostile to democracy and parliaments than was Nazism." In the view of many on the left and the non-Nazi right, "democracy and parliaments" had paved the way to Nazism.

In large measure Mazower is of course right. Dollfuss and his successors tolerated and often abetted a "quiet, creeping anti-Semitism."<sup>103</sup> Still, corporatist Austria was a place of contradiction, where a clear political ideology did not form. And contradiction produced change in Catholic thought on the race question – probably more than in any other place in Europe. If pro-Nazi sentiment and racism entered deeply into the Church, they also triggered a response that came from deep within the Church.<sup>104</sup> Catholic anti-Nazis in Austria confronted not only Nazis writing in and deforming their own language, but far more disturbingly, they confronted racism from within their own camp. Here we see the central dynamic of Catholic anti-racism: direct awareness that the evils of Nazi "barbarism" had entered deeply into the heart of their own faith. Catholicism was still one world: in his *Christliche Ständestaat* Hildebrand popularized the work of Karl Adam, while confrontation with precisely this work intensified the anti-racist commitment of Johannes Oesterreicher. In a letter of May 1939 to the theologian Karl Thieme he cited with bitter opprobrium words that Adam had published three years earlier: "our time goes

deeper than earlier times, because the unity of the nation is founded not only in the spirit, but also in the blood."<sup>105</sup>

The confrontation on race was therefore sharpest and most productive of change where it was both inner-German and inner-Catholic. Within those two spheres the knowledge both of the National Socialism and the implications of its beliefs was most direct; the unease over compromise on matters of race the most urgent. Catholics in other countries may have written that race was not determinative, not decisive, not the driving motor of history, but Johannes Oesterreicher wrote that it did not exist.

This perception was of course exceptional, and Oesterreicher knew well the racism that pervaded popular beliefs about history and religion. Precisely for that reason he viewed "religious anti-Semitism" as anachronistic. Because of the grip of racism on the popular imagination, Austrians who saw Jews as accursed could not help thinking that this had some imprint on their "racial" character as well. In Vienna, the mass acceptance of the reality of race had made an obvious fiction of "purely religious" anti-Semitism. It is not a coincidence that the Vatican II document Oesterreicher had a hand in drafting, *Nostra Aetate*, featured a condemnation of racism immediately after a condemnation of anti-Semitism. His confrontation with Nazified Catholics in 1930s Vienna taught him that the two were inseparable.

If in Austria "religious anti-Semitism" had become anachronistic, that was not true of regions further East: practically no Catholic response confronted the Anti-Semitism that plagued Poland in this period. At best, the Polish Cardinal-Primate Hlond warned his followers that they should not enact physical violence upon Jews. Even the most liberal Polish Catholic writers of the younger generation failed to ask the basic question: are Jews a problem? One sees in Poland the power of discourse in the Foucauldian sense: a veritable conspiracy of circumstance and structure limited Polish Catholics' abilities to think beyond given assumptions. The Jewish

people were a "foreign" body in a desperately poor would-be Polish nation state. The most "generous" Catholic writers imagined emigration.

Polish publications lacked the intensity of debate that characterized the German region. In a sense the Nazis had done German Christians a service by showing that traditional religious hatred which demonized the Jewish people as a whole logically led to discriminations that were de facto racist. Daniel Goldhagen cites a memorandum of a conversation of 1933 in which the Nazi representative to the Holy See congratulated the Church for the practice of the Jesuits – subordinated directly to the Pope – of excluding from their ranks baptized Jews, and the descendents of baptized Jews. At that point the Jesuits had gone further in their discrimination of Jews than had the Nazis. Goldhagen argues persuasively that this practice makes untenable claims for absolute separation of Catholic anti-Judaism and racist anti-Semitism.<sup>106</sup> In Poland, Catholics did not face an opponent who had indissolubly linked racism and hatred of Jews. Whether right or left-leaning, they argued that Catholics were free to engage in "Christian anti-Semitism" as a form of "self-defense." Racism was condemned as something un-Polish, distinctively Teutonic.<sup>107</sup> At the same time, Polish clerics employed references to Jews as "foreign elements" that were implicitly racist.<sup>108</sup> Doubts were expressed as to the powers of baptism to transform Jews – but no one felt called upon to challenge these doubts. Polish Catholics were not concerned about racism as a threat from within their own culture: Nazism was German and not Polish; therefore the engagement – for example on the racist legislation of Third Reich or the "Kirchenkampf" – displays a certain distance and failure to question underlying assumptions.

Until 1939, Polish anti-Semites' language ran parallel to – and occasionally almost coincided with<sup>109</sup> – that of the Nazis; thereafter, the two intersected and many Polish Catholics

were forced to see the racism implicit in their anti-Semitism. The Nazis had demonstrated to them on their own soil the logical implications of their own beliefs.

Similarly, Italian Catholics treated racism as something at odds with their national character, and not as a spur to reconsidering the socio-political consequences of anti-Semitism in the modern world.<sup>110</sup> From France we know of the role of Jacques Maritain in pushing forward the boundaries of Catholic thought toward people of other faiths. But despite strong interest in the subject before the war, it was not until after 1945 that Maritain broke cleanly from the most debilitating anti-Judaic stereotypes.<sup>111</sup> When French Catholics wrote on anti-Semitism or racism they tended to treat the two separately.<sup>112</sup> Their formulations fell short of those advanced in Vienna in the pages of Die Erfüllung or Der Christliche Ständestaat. Three of the major works published by French Catholics on the subject of racism – including Oesterreicher's – had been translated from the German.<sup>113</sup> Like Polish counterparts, French Catholics wrote without the urgency of those directly under the threat of Nazi rule – a threat felt so keenly by those working in Vienna and Zurich that they wondered where the Nazis were first likely to attack.

Even in the Czech lands Catholics did not feel the threats of National Socialism as keenly as those in the German areas. In the years 1936 to 1939 the major Czech Catholic journal, Katolík, published but one piece on race. It was by Dr. Alfred Fuchs – a convert from Judaism.<sup>114</sup>

The Viennese specificity was also a matter of demography. Further East, Catholics interpreted the size of Jewish communities – in some urban settings one third the population – as ruling out compromise. The "Jewish problem" was thought to require a radical solution, and the consensus on this matter was so overwhelming that one can count alternative views on the fingers of one hand.<sup>115</sup> Further West and north (the Czech lands) Jewish communities were smaller and the Jewish question not as prominent in the consciousness of Catholics. If anti-Semitism has



social bases then it was bound to be more a factor in areas where Jews were more socially relevant. In that sense Vienna was a city of the center: where Jews were relevant enough to concern nationally minded Catholics, but not so numerous that there was practically no willingness to think of them as co-citizens.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

What lessons can one draw from this story of Catholic racism and its opponents? The first pertains to the Church itself. There was no such thing as "the Church;" the bishops and clergy as well as politically engaged Catholics spoke with many voices. In retrospect one might imagine that precisely questions of race would have been settled, but in fact that the institutional Church left huge spaces for Catholics to debate how they might discern divine will in history, whether through nation, race, or other categories. And they speculated with passion. Not only were there racists and anti-racists in the same church, but they could all cite the same Catholic authors to support their divergent views.<sup>116</sup> Diversity among Catholics of any given time is matched by change over time. Critics are perhaps taken by the institutional Church's own pretense of its representing unchanging wisdom. In the Jewish question one sees fantastic transformation within several decades.<sup>117</sup>

A further caveat is in order: namely that Church members felt free to ally with those outside the Church in pursuit of what they saw as the true faith. Oesterreicher and Hildebrand featured dozens of articles by Protestant, Jewish and non-affiliated writers in pursuit of their arguments. The de facto ecumenism of this period has not been remarked upon – almost certainly because according the magisterium it should not have existed. Again scholars who take the Vatican's word on the Church's substance risk missing important undercurrents of change.

Both anti-racists and racists belonged to a dynamic, changing Church that embodied tension and contradiction. What disturbed the former about the latter – and constituted racism's real challenge when it entered the Church – was the way it combined the authority of modern science with a sense of ultimate moral conviction.<sup>118</sup> Catholic racism was German national (anti-Roman), modern, appealed to subjective needs for community; provided the legitimacy of theological science; restored a lost feeling of certainty to morality, and recreated sense of wholeness: it was extremely dangerous because it offered apparently unimpeachable, scientific legitimation for anti-Semitism among those for whom religion remained important.<sup>119</sup>

The argument here is not that these anti-racist Catholics were numerous, representative, or even influential in their time. So-called bridge builders, like Josef Eberle, publisher of Schönere Zukunft in Vienna, were far more influential. But racism's opponents represented what theologian John Courtney Murray called the "growing end" of tradition; when one looks at the history of the Church in last half century, this was a strand in Catholic thinking that could stand the test of time.

Among the historian's challenges is to write of the limits of moral awareness in the past without seeming to judge or to excuse. There can be little doubt that "good-willed" or not, Catholics of the 1930s lived in an intellectual context which made certain trains of thought difficult to follow. Popular and scientific discourses suffocated questions about the reality of race: it seemed an inescapable fact of existence, like physical dimensions or mass. Scholarly studies have yet to approach a recreation of the popular consciousness of that time. We know that anthropologists in the Anglo-American world were moving away from biological to cultural concepts of community, but even a brief glance in the writing of the time from both sides of the Atlantic betrays a jumble of beliefs we would now consider incompatible; this was a moment between paradigms, for which – like Dollfuss's Catholic state – no sufficient description has been

found. For example, Berkeley anthropologist Robert Lowie placed Hermann Muckermann in the same camp as his Doktorvater Franz Boas,<sup>120</sup> while the American Jesuit John Lafarge – an opponent of racism who would later march with Martin Luther King, Jr. – cited Wilhelm Schmidt as an authority questioning the validity of the term race.<sup>121</sup>

The war, and the genocide of the Jews, created a new context in which biological racism became passé. In 1947 Muckermann was openly repudiating racism in what was becoming West Berlin, writing for example "there is no scientific foundation for saying that the Nordic race is God's highest revelation. Differences of race are only bodily. [Die Unterscheidungsmerkmale sind rein körperlicher Art]."<sup>122</sup> If earlier Muckermann had passionately opposed "racially mixed" marriages, now he tolerated them, and became a member of the "society for Christian-Jewish cooperation." He was now partly seeing something that was crystal clear to Johannes Oesterreicher before the first shot of war had been fired, and before the first transports of Jews had been taken to the death camps – transports that came to include his own mother and father.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> These words belong to part four of the Declaration on the Relations of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*), proclaimed by Pope Paul VI on October 28, 1965. For the full text see Arthur Gilbert, *The Vatican Council and the Jews* (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Co., 1968), 275-79.

<sup>2</sup> Gilbert, *The Vatican Council*, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust, 1930-1965* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), Robert Louis Wilken, "Something Greater than the Temple," in William R. Farmer, ed., *Anti-Judaism and the Gospels* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999), 176-202.

<sup>4</sup> Phayer, *Catholic Church*, 186.

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<sup>5</sup> Susan Zuccotti, Under his Very Windows: The Vatican and the Holocaust in Italy (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), John Cornwell, Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII (New York: Viking, 1999)

<sup>6</sup> See for example Hermann Greive, Theologie und Ideologie: Katholizismus und Judentum in Deutschland und Österreich 1918-1935 (Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1969), Beth A. Griech-Poelle, Bishop von Galen: German Catholicism and National Socialism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

<sup>7</sup> Cornwell, Hitler's Pope, 28.

<sup>8</sup> Zuccotti, Under his Very Windows, 21-23, 30, 33-35. I adopt George M. Fredrickson's understanding of race as "what happens when ethnicity is deemed essential or indelible and made hierarchical" and racism as involving the "assigning of fixed or permanent differences among human descent groups and using this attribution to justify their differential treatment." See his Racism: A Short History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 155-56. I use the word "racialism" to denote the more benign posture of belief in difference not involving advocacy of differential treatment.

<sup>9</sup> See for example the report "Text of Vatican Document on the Holocaust," New York Times, March 17, 1998, which assumes almost automatic resistance of church to doctrines of race.

<sup>10</sup> See the statements of Austrian bishop Gföllner, quoted in Bonaventura Hinwood, Race: The Reflections of a Theologian (Rome: Herder, 1964), 85.

<sup>11</sup> See the case of Marc Saperstein cited in James Carroll, Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews: A History (New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 2001), 381. Until 1946 the Jesuit order refused entrance of persons of Jewish descent into its ranks. The theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether called this practice the "ancestor of the Nazi Nuremberg laws." *Ibid.*, 382.

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<sup>12</sup> This book is Ernest Jouin, *La Judéo-Maçonnerie et l'Église Catholique* (Paris: Émile-Paul Frères, 1921) (p. 116), cited in Alan Davies, *Infected Christianity: A Study of Modern Racism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 142.

<sup>13</sup> David Kertzer, *The Popes Against the Jews* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2001), 211.

<sup>14</sup> Hermann Greive in his invaluable study of Catholic Anti-Semitism notes that at some points Catholic writers applied an implicit racism, but he does not envision the systematic entry of racism into Catholic thought. Theologie und Ideologie.

<sup>15</sup> The encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* (March 14, 1937) admits that race is a "basic value of the human community" with an "essential and honorable place within the wordly order." See Martin Rhonheimer, "Katholischer Antirassismus, kirchliche Selbstverteidigung und das Schicksal der Juden im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland," in Andreas Laun, ed., *Unterwegs nach Jerusalem: Die Kirche auf der Suche nach ihren jüdischen Wurzeln* (Eichstätt: Franz-Sales-Verlag, 2004), 30. According to the Instruction on the Errors of Racism of April 1938 (issued by Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities, of which Pius XI was prefect), it was still permissible to "conserve the vigor of the race and the purity of its blood within the limits of the moral order." The Instruction further did not rule out the possibility of a "limited and accidental gradation of races," or the belief that "racial factors have some influence upon intellectual and moral qualities." It also did not exclude "from the scope of education the cultivation of a balanced love of one's race as one among the many good things of creation." Hinwood, Race, 61-69.

<sup>16</sup> In the United States and Great Britain a battle was being waged between cultural (Boasian) and strict biological anthropologists, in which the former gained the upper hand during World War II. See Elazar Barkan: *The Retreat of Scientific Racism: Changing Concepts of Race in Britain and the United States between the World Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). For

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a fine contemporary survey of the anti-racist position see Ruth Benedict, *Race and Racism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1942)

<sup>17</sup> The Dominican peace activist Franziskus Stratmann wrote Cardinal Faulhaber in April 1933 to condemn the "blasphemy" of the Nazis' persecution of the Jews, noting that "Christ belongs to this race in all eternity." <http://dominikaner.orden.de/geschichte/ns/engelheckert.htm>. His friend Walter Dirks published a piece the following month in which he spoke of the "reality" of the Jewish "race." "Die Judenfrage als positive Aufgabe," in Walter Dirks, *Gegen die faschistische Koalition, Gesammelte Schriften, Vol. 2* (Zürich: Ammann Verlag, 1990), 502.

<sup>18</sup> On the period before the First World War, see John Efron, *Defenders of the Race: Jewish Doctors and Race Science in Fin-de-siecle Europe* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994).

<sup>19</sup> There was a concern among German Catholics of not being accused of harming German race: Munich's Michael Cardinal von Faulhaber for example "defended" Christianity against charges of being weak on the racial front, asking "what should one respond to the monstrous accusation that the Germanic race has been spoiled by Christianity, or that Christianity is not racially fit [artgemäss]?" *Klärung in der Judenfrage: Dokumente zusammengestellt von der Schriftleitung der Berichte zur Kultur- und Zeitgeschichte* (Vienna: Reinhold, 1934), 256.

<sup>20</sup> Other leading figures included Michael Schmaus and Joseph Lortz. Lucia Scherzberg, *Kirchenreform mit Hilfe des Nationalsozialismus: Karl Adam als kontextueller Theologe* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2001) 115. Yves Congars spoke of "Adam's understanding of the 'living tradition,' the vital dynamism in which the truths of divine revelation are continually being passed on, discovered anew, and realized more fully in the church's life." Cited in Robert Anthony Krieg, *Karl Adam: Catholicism in German Culture* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 52.

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<sup>21</sup> The lecture's title was "Jesus Christ and the Spirit of our Time." Cited in Krieg, Karl Adam, 131.

<sup>22</sup> Lucia Scherzberg writes that those who longed for Gemeinschaft were naturally attracted to discourse of race: race could "serve as supposedly objective scientific category as well as mythical guarantor of subjective identity." Kirchenreform, 116.

<sup>23</sup> Georg Denzler, "Antijudaismus und Antisemitismus in der Theologie unserer Jahrhunderts: Karl Adam, Michael Schmaus, und Anton Stonner," Facta Universitatis, Series Law and Politics, 1:1 (1997), 12.

<sup>24</sup> Krieg, Karl Adam, 133.

<sup>25</sup> The influential expert of exegesis in Salzburg, Prof. Dr. Josef Dillersberger (1897-1972), Doktorvater to bishops and archbishops, wrote in July 1936 that the persecution of Jews in Germany expressed the will of God. He concluded "who can argue with God?" [Wer darf rechten mit Gott?] Katholische Kirchenzeitung (Salzburg), 30 July 1936, 244ff., cited in Fellner (1979), 216-217. See also the judgment of Gustav Gundlach, SJ, that Israel was supposed to "point through its very being to the serious responsibility that lies in the gift of the grace of true faith." In other words, it was meant to deter Christians from betraying that faith. Anton Rauscher, ed., Wider den Rassismus: Entwurf einer nicht erschienenen Enzyklika (1938). Texte aus dem Nachlass von Gustav Gundlach SJ (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2001), 166.

<sup>26</sup> Muckermann left the order in 1927, but remained a priest.

<sup>27</sup> Ralph Jessen, Akademische Elite und kommunistische Diktatur (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1999)

<sup>28</sup> "Priests among the Pygmies: Wilhelm Schmidt and the Counter-Reformation in Austrian Ethnology," H. Glenn Penny and Matti Bunzl, eds. Worldly Provincialism: German

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Anthropology in the Age of Empire. Social History, Popular Culture, and Politics in Germany Series (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003).

<sup>29</sup> Among his important contacts were Catholic politicians such as the Prussian welfare minister Heinrich Hirtseifer and the Bavarian Minister President Heinrich Held. Michael Schwartz, "Konfessionelle Milieus und Weimarer Eugenik," Historische Zeitschrift 261:2 (October 1995), 420, 422.

<sup>30</sup> He was fired by the Nazis for "deficient volkisch attitude [mangelnde völkische Einstellung]." Anahid S. Rickmann, "Rassenpflege im völkischen Staat": Vom Verhältnis der Rassenhygiene zur nationalsozialistischen Politik (PhD Diss: Bonn, 2002), 68. His opponents viewed him as "unscientific," and his eugenics as "watered down" by Catholicism. Schwartz, "Konfessionelle Milieus," 422.

<sup>31</sup> Cited in Edouard Conte, "Völkerkunde und Faschismus? Fragen an ein vernachlässigtes Kapitel deutsch-österreichischer Wissenschaftsgeschichte," in Friedrich Stadler, ed., Kontinuität und Bruch 1938--1945--1955. Beiträge zur österreichischen Kultur- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte (Vienna, Munich: Jugend und Volk, 1988), 240.

<sup>32</sup> His speech was given on 10 December 1933 at the Katholische Führertagung. See Wiener Neueste Nachrichten 12 December 1933; Der Stürmer (Vienna), 27 January 1934.

<sup>33</sup> In 1927 Schmidt argued that in modern industrial towns a leading stratum had emerged that was not drawn from the people, and was "nothing more than an amalgam of the destructive products of the decadent bourgeois urban intelligentsia, in which Jewish forces are strongly represented." Cited in Conte, Völkerkunde, 239.

<sup>34</sup> From: Rassenforschung und Volk der Zukunft (Berlin, 1928), 18-19 cited in Dagmar Grosch-Obenauer, Hermann Muckermann und die Eugenik (PhD Diss. Mainz, 1986), 25.

<sup>35</sup> "Ewiges Gesetz" (1957), cited in Grosch-Obenauer, Hermann Muckermann, 30.



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<sup>36</sup> He also objected to Jewish immigration into Germany. Grosch-Obenauer, Hermann Muckermann, 32.

<sup>37</sup> For a contrasting assessment of Muckermann, claiming among other things that he was a "non-racist eugenicist," see Donald J. Dietrich, "Catholic Eugenics in Germany, 1920-1945: Hermann Muckermann, S.J. and Joseph Mayer, Journal of Church and State, vol. 34 (1992), 575-600 (here: 581).

<sup>38</sup> Here he was in keeping with the papal encyclical *Casti Connubi*, according to which abortion was to be rejected even when the mother's life was in danger. The operational principle here was "natural law," that is, the woman's "natural" function of giving birth. Those who died could be expected reward in the afterlife. Grosch-Obenauer, Hermann Muckermann, 45. Muckermann's opposition to the abortion of "life unworthy of life" separated him from the vast majority of German eugenicists. Rickmann, *Rassenpflege*, 266, fn. 306.

<sup>39</sup> Rickmann, *Rassenpflege*, 261.

<sup>40</sup> Initially he rejected such measures as an "intrusive act of violence" [Gewalteingriff], but in 1929 changed his mind, impressed by the "increasing neediness [Fürsorgebedürftigkeit] of the people, and the increased accuracy of genetic prognoses." Schwartz, *Konfessionelle Milieus*, 423. When he changed his mind in 1931, he did so out of loyalty to the Holy See. On his support for forcible sterilization see Rickmann, *Rassenpflege*, 34, 48. Muckermann made his renewed reservations known at lectures given in 1932. Muckermann's "zig-zagging" exposed him to criticism of openly nationalist circles, who then took a role in unseating him the following year. His ambivalent position is reflected in quiet approval of the Nazis' law on the "prevention of genetically damaged offspring" of 14 July 1933. Grosch-Obenauer, Hermann Muckermann, 49-50.

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<sup>41</sup> Cited in Kurt Nowak, "Euthanasie" und Sterilisierung im "Dritten Reich". Die Konfrontation der evangelischen und katholischen Kirche mit dem "Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses" und der "Euthanasie"-Aktion. (Halle: VEB Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1977), 111.

<sup>42</sup> Sylvia Maderegger, Die Juden im österreichischen Ständestaat 1934-1938 (Vienna: Geyer, 1973), 132.

<sup>43</sup> His punishment consisted in being forcibly transferred ["gauversetzt"] to Beuthen, on the Polish border. Erika Weinzierl, "Österreichische Katholiken und die Juden," in Erika Weinzierl, Ecclesia Semper Reformanda: Beiträge zur österreichischen Kirchengeschichte im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert (Vienna, Salzburg: Geyer-Edition, 1985), 360-61.

<sup>44</sup> Mager also believed that there was some truth to the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. Günter Fellner, Antisemitismus in Salzburg 1918-1938 (Vienna, Salzburg: Geyer, 1979), 218-20.

<sup>45</sup> Rauscher, Wider den Rassismus, 161-62.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 166.

<sup>47</sup> Jews who wrote for the Christliche Ständestaat included Oscar Bam, Stefan Possony, Hans Kandler, Friedrich Wiesner, Viktor Frankl, Egon Wellesz, Willi Reich, Felix Gilbert, Walter Mehring, and Joseph Roth; Catholics who had converted from Judaism included Otto Maria Karpfen, Arthur Ernst Rutra, and Aurel Kolnai. Rudolf Ebneith, Die österreichische Wochenzeitschrift "Der Christliche Ständestaat," (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald Verlag, 1976), 186; Dietrich von Hildebrand, Memoiren und Aufsätze gegen den Nationalsozialismus, 1933-1938, , Ernst Wenisch, ed., (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1994), 77, 99, 361.

<sup>48</sup> He published the works of Zyrill Fischer, Die Hakenkreuzler (1932), Albert Ganzert [Awrum Halbert], Die Grenze. Ein Schicksal aus 600.000. (Bühnenstück, 1936), Peter Drucker, Die Judenfrage in Deutschland. (1936), Walter Mehring, Müller. Chronik einer deutschen Sippe.

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Roman.(1935), Walter Berger, Was ist Rasse? Versuch einer Abgrenzung ihrer Wirksamkeit im seelischen Bereich.Mit Berücksichtigung des jüdischen Rassenproblems. (1936) Mehring's biting satire led to official protests of German representative Franz von Papen to the Austrian Government.

<sup>49</sup> Hildebrand senior was Protestant but his mother was Jewish – something apparently unknown to Adolf Hitler, who called him the finest German sculptor of the nineteenth century.

<sup>50</sup> On Scheler's influence in German Catholicism see Heinrich Lutz, Demokratie im Zwielficht. Der Weg der deutschen Katoliken aus dem Kaiserreich in die Republik 1914-1925 (Munich: Kösel, 1963), 22-42.

<sup>51</sup> "Die Träger des Sittlichen innerhalb der Handlung" (Göttingen, 1913).

<sup>52</sup> "Personalism" has proved resistant to definition. The French non-conformist L'Ordre Nouveau reduced its meaning to "the primacy of man over society." John Hellman, The Communitarian Third Way: Alexandre Marc's Ordre Nouveau, 1930-2000 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 42. For Hildebrand personalism meant that he reacted allergically against all talk of collectivism.

<sup>53</sup> "Manifeste au service du Personnalisme," *Esprit* 5:49 (1 October 1936), 82.

<sup>54</sup> Hildebrand, *Memoiren*, 323, 349.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 350.

<sup>56</sup> "Nazibazillus im Taufbecken?" *Der Christliche Ständestaat*, Nr. 3, (17 December 1933), 23.

Frodl (b. 1886) was professor of moral theology in Klagenfurt, and after 1936 Director of Typographie at the Papal university Gregoriana, *Ibid.*,58, 72.

<sup>57</sup> Cited in Maderegger, Die Juden, 145.

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<sup>58</sup> "Der Nazi-Bazillus im Taufbecken," Der Christliche Ständestaat, 17 December 1933, 23; On the authorship of this piece: Ebneith, *Österreichische Wochenzeitschrift*, 185.

<sup>59</sup> Romans, 9:3; 11:14, 26. J. Oesterreicher, "Paulus und sein Volk," *Die Erfüllung*, April 1936, 7-17.

<sup>60</sup> *Wiener Politische Blätter*, 24 May 1936, 198-199.

<sup>61</sup> For example: *Basler Nationalzeitung*, *Innsbrucker Nachrichten*, *Neues Wiener Abendblatt*, *Prager Tageblatt*, *Die Nation* (Bern), *Gleichheit* (Prague), *Wiener Zeitung*, *Deutsche Presse* (Prague), *Seele Regensburg*. Correspondence Winter-Berger, *Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes* [DÖW], 15060/5. The book was published in Winter's Gsur publishing house.

<sup>62</sup> "dem nordischen Körperbau einerseits, dem ostischen andererseits ganz sicher, irgend etwas seelisches zugeordnet." 202.

<sup>63</sup> See his letters to Ernst Karl Winter, DÖW 15060/5.

<sup>64</sup> The Nazis refused to specify what percentages of "Nordic" blood went into the various German "tribes." Cornelia Essner, "Im 'Irrgarten der Rassenlogik' oder nordische Rassenlehre und national Fragen (1919-1935)," *Historische Mitteilungen* 7:1 (1994), 80-101. The only group defined racially by law – and defined out of the German people – were the Jews, for whom ultimately the Nazis relied upon a religious understanding. All attempts to identify some racial characteristic clearly separating Jews and German of course failed.

<sup>65</sup> *Wiener Politische Blätter*, 24 May 1936, 203.

<sup>66</sup> In his book, Berger dwells upon positive Jewish characteristics: "disdainfulness of murder and blood, spiritual gentleness, a sense of justice." He also warns against generalizations. *Was ist Rasse*, 37.

<sup>67</sup> *Der christliche Ständestaat*, Nr. 19, 10 May 1936, 441-42.

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<sup>68</sup> "sie [Die Judenfrage ]implicite als bestehend anerkennen, was eben ihre Sünde ist..." Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> At most he says that Christians as well as Jews have made the "Jewish question" a "problem."  
Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Hildebrand used the issue of Jew-hatred to develop his critique of the modern world, writing:  
"The same liberalism that brought Jews the freedom they longed for, was also the father of  
nationalism, which placed the Jewish question onto a purely natural plane and looked upon Jews  
as a body that was foreign to the nation and race." Memoiren, 348.

<sup>71</sup> See the pioneering studies of James Parkes, The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue: A Study in the Origins of Anti-Semitism (London: The Soncino Press, 1934); Conrad Henry Moehlman, The Christian-Jewish Tragedy: A Study in Religious Prejudice (Rochester, NY: Leo Hart, 1933).

<sup>72</sup> A.G. Kraus, Der Christliche Ständestaat, 8 April 1934, "Der religiöse Antisemitismus"

<sup>73</sup> Racisme, 41.

<sup>74</sup> On the struggle against scientific racism in the US and Great Britain see Barkan, The Retreat of Scientific Racism.

<sup>75</sup> Racisme, 43.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 131-33.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>79</sup> The more common Nazi invective was "Juda verrecke!" Ibid., 136-37, 139.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 135

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 23

<sup>82</sup> See his letter to Karl Thieme, 4 May 1939 in Institut für Zeitgeschichte (Munich), ED 163/60.

In his book he also wrote that "One is disturbed by the silence of so many Germans and Austrians

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who should speak out." Racisme, 98. Oesterreicher behaved loyally in public, however: many years later, when the Hochhuth play The Deputy caused a scandal and a sensation, he defended the Pope's wartime record.

<sup>83</sup> Klaus Schatz, *Zwischen Säkularisation und Zweitem Vatikanum. Der Weg des deutschen Katholizismus im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Josef Knecht, 1986), 214.

<sup>84</sup> On Adam's appeal to those interested in Jesus Christ as a "living person," see Krieg, Karl Adam, 81-82.

<sup>85</sup> Schatz, *Zwischen Säkularisation*, 218, 253.

<sup>86</sup> Dirks, *Die Judenfrage*. I am grateful to Gregory Baum for this reference.

<sup>87</sup> Karl Rahner, *Faith in a Wintry Season*, Paul Imhof and Hubert Biallowons, eds., Harvey D. Egan, transl., (New York: Crossroads, 1990), 50.

<sup>88</sup> Schatz, *Zwischen Säkularisation*, 216.

<sup>89</sup> Pius XII called Hildebrand a "twentieth century doctor of the Church."

<http://www.hildebrandlegacy.org/>

<sup>90</sup> This is the finding of French scholars who have tried to detect a relationship between adherence to the ideas of Karl Barth and anti-fascism in the 1930s; G. Casalis remarks that "the question of coherence between theology and politics is – in that epoch – the affair of a minority." Xavier de Montclos, et al, eds., *Eglises et chrétiens dans la II guerre mondiale: la France*, Vol. 2 (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1982), 69

<sup>91</sup> Josef Seifert, "Personalistische Philosophie und Widerstand," in Josef Seifert, ed., Dietrich von Hildebrands Kampf gegen den Nationalsozialismus (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1998), 108.

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<sup>92</sup> On France see John Hellman, The Communitarian Third Way: Alexandre Marc and Ordre Nouveau 1930-2000 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002)

<sup>93</sup> As a petition it was signed by 508 of 1,087 bishops in attendance; the petition was withdrawn to prevent greater support of this than of the draft on papal infallibility, which had reached 510 signatures. René Laurentin, L'église et les juifs a Vatican II (Casterman, 1967), 43-44.

<sup>94</sup> The priests were the Crutched Friar Anton Van Asseldonk and the Franciscan Laetus Himmelreich)

<sup>95</sup> This from their brochure Pax super Israel. See Macina's "Amis d'Israël : un 'nouveau regard' en avance sur son temps" at

<http://www.chretiens-et-juifs.org/article.php?voir%5B%5D=134&voir%5B%5D=2378> (15

February 2003) Macina takes the citation from Georges Passelcq, Bernard Suchecky,

L'encyclique cachée de Pie XI. Une occasion manquée de l'Église face à l'antisémitisme, La

Découverte, Paris, 1994, pp. 140-144. See also: M.R. MACINA, "Amis d'Israël : Une initiative prématurée mais instructive," Sens (Bulletin de l'Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne de France), no. 228,

May 1998, 242-246.

<sup>96</sup> The materials on this decision remain inaccessible to historians. Mancina, "Amis"

<sup>97</sup> Among their publications was La Catéchèse chrétienne et le peuple de la Bible. See the discussion in Geza Vermes, Providential Accidents: An Autobiography (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999), 100-03. See also the interview of Vermes on Austrian Radio National, 28 August 1999 at <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/relig/spirit/stories/s47729.htm>. (18 April 2005). Bloch died tragically in 1955, while Vermes and Demann both subsequently left the Church.

<sup>98</sup> John Hammond, A Benedictine Legacy of Peace

<sup>99</sup> The role of former Jews at Vatican II was, however, noticed by the media. See for example

"How the Jews Changed Catholic Thinking," Look, January 25, 1966.

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<sup>100</sup> Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century (New York: Knopf, 1999), 31.

<sup>101</sup> The exact number of copies of Harand's weekly Gerechtigkeit printed in 1934 was 946,700. The following year Harand published her rebuttal of Hitler's Mein Kampf entitled: Sein Kampf. Antwort an Hitler (Vienna, 1935). See the excellent new history: Christian Klösch, Kurt Scharr, and Erika Weinzierl, "Gegen Rassenhass und Menschennot": Irene Harand – Leben und Werk einer ungewöhnlichen Widerstandskämpferin (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2004), 126 and passim.

<sup>102</sup> Internal correspondence shows, however, that the Fatherland Front looked upon the activities of Irene Harand with suspicion. See Klösch, Scharr, and Weinzierl, Gegen Rassenhass, 98-99.

<sup>103</sup> This included anti-Semitic remarks from members of the government, in Christian Social publications, dismissals targeting Jewish physicians (as "socialists"), removing of Jews from positions in the civil service, teaching, removing of Jews from the executive committee of the bar association, and refusal to admit them to the higher echelons of the Fatherland Front. Bruce F. Pauley, From Prejudice to Persecution: A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 268-273.

<sup>104</sup> Perhaps the best gauge of this unfinished, unformed character of the Church itself was the meandering language of Cardinal Innitzer, who supported the work of Hildebrand, Oesterreicher, and Harand, but also sought good terms with Catholic nationalists, and ultimately with Adolf Hitler.

<sup>105</sup> Letter of 4 May 1939, IfZG,

<sup>106</sup> See his A Moral Reckoning: The Role of the Catholic Church in the Holocaust and Its Unfulfilled Duty of Repair (New York: Knopf, 2002), 155.

<sup>107</sup> Father Kosibowicz, SJ, wrote in 1934 that Germans were naturally more "ruthless" and of a "more rigid intellectual structure" than the Poles. Ute Caumanns, Die polnischen Jesuiten, der Przegląd Powszechny und der politische Katholizismus in der Zweiten Republik: ein Beitrag zur



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Geschichte der katholischen Presse Polens zwischen den Weltkriegen (1918-1939) (Dortmund: Forschungsstelle Ostmitteleuropa, 1996), 267.

<sup>108</sup> Anna Landau-Czajka describes the Polish Catholic engagement with racism as "superficial." See her: "The Image of the Jew in the Catholic Press during the Second Republic," Polin, vol. 8 (1994), 146-75. For cases of implicit and more than implicit racism in the Jesuit press, see Caumanns, Die polnischen Jesuiten, 261-62.

<sup>109</sup> For example in 1938 the Jesuit Father Kruszynski wrote that: "One must fight the Jews as swindlers, purveyors of immorality and members of the Internationale, but not as persons." Caumanns, Die polnischen Jesuiten, 267.

<sup>110</sup> On the relative weakness of racial anti-Semitism in Italy see William I. Brustein, Roots of Hate: Anti-Semitism in Europe before the Holocaust (Cambridge, 2003), 162-74.

<sup>111</sup> In an essay written in 1937, and published in English translation in 1941, Maritain wrote: "One day Israel stumbled and was caught in a trap; it stumbled against God...it did not know what it was doing; but its leaders knew that they were making their choice against God. In one of those acts of free will which involve the destiny of the whole community, the priests of Israel...chose the world, and to that choice the whole people was henceforth bound...a crime of clerical misfeasance, unequalled prototype of all similar crimes." Ransoming the Time (London: Bles, 1944), 133. See also the contributions to Robert Royal, ed., Jacques Maritain and the Jews (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

<sup>112</sup> Paul Claudel, et al, Les Juifs (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1937), Pierre Charles SJ et al, Racisme et Catholicisme (Paris: Casterman, 1939); Msgr. Bressolles et al, Racisme et Christianisme (Paris: Flammarion, 1939).

<sup>113</sup> John M. Oesterreicher, Racisme--antisémitisme, antichristianisme, (New York, N.Y., Éditions de la Maison française, inc., 1943) (orig: Paris, 1940); L'Eglise catholique et la question

juive, trad. de l'allemand par Arnold Mendel (Paris: Editions Denoel, 1938); Lucien Valdor (Pierre Lorson), Le Chrétien devant le Racisme (Paris: Alsatia, 1939).

<sup>114</sup> "Rasa a Náboženství," Katolík 1:10 (1936), 76; 1:11 (1936), 84-86. On Fuchs see Jiří Hanuš, Tradice českého katolicismu ve 20. Století (Brno: CDK, 2005), 61.

<sup>115</sup> The two prominent Polish Catholics who came out in print for tolerance of Jews as fellow Polish citizens were the Wilno law professor Marian Zdziechowski and the Wilno student activist Henryk Dembiński. The charismatic and courageous Dembiński later became a Communist, and hoped to marry Catholicism and Marxism. He was executed by the Germans in 1941. See Leon Brodowski, Henryk Dembiński: Człowiek dialogu (Warsaw, Krakow: PWN, 1988).

<sup>116</sup> For example: both the Antisemitenbund and John Lafarge cite and use Schmidt.

<sup>117</sup> For an argument that change has been the norm of Church history over the last half century, see Gregory Baum, Amazing Church: A Catholic Theologian Remembers a Half-Century of Change (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005).

<sup>118</sup> Scherzberg, Kirchenreform, 116.

<sup>119</sup> Here I would revise Oesterreicher, who said that modern racism was not entirely new, but had predecessors: "ce qui, chez lui, est nouveau, c'est la puissance de mensonge de l'appareil pseudo-scientifique et la volonté absolue de destruction." Racisme, 49 It was not the combination of lie and science that was the problem, but rather the combination of belief and science.

<sup>120</sup> In Suzanne Marchand's account Schmidt was representative of an anti-Darwinian trend, a proponent of so-called Kulturkreislehre. In 1937 the Viennese born Lowie claimed that Schmidt's work was really not so different from the culture area theory of Boas and his followers. Marchand, "Priests," 305. Lowie was a cultural diffusionist, who argued that cultures borrowed and lent cultural traits. Like Schmidt he opposed cultural evolutionism.

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<sup>121</sup> Reichspost author Dr. Alexander Novotny (22 January 1934), cited Schmidt as example of the "historical method" that has done so much to criticize the "dominant Rassenlehre"

<sup>122</sup> Grosch-Obenauer, Hermann Muckermann, 30.

<sup>123</sup> In his study of racism Oesterreicher wrote with enthusiasm about the mixing of people of different backgrounds: "A mélange enlarges the realm of the possible...and permits innumerable new combinations." *Racisme*, 45. .

