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Letter from the Editors: March 2012

Dear Friends,

This issue of our quarterly journal marks the beginning of its third year in its new format. As an independent venture, not funded by anybody, our aim is to provide you, our readers, with evaluations of new publications in the field of contemporary church history, i.e. from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present. Our aim is to do this as soon after publication as possible in order to assist your teaching and research. Our team of a dozen editors is drawn from both Europe and North America. Our mandate is to be both ecumenical and international. Because most of us began with an interest in Germany, the affairs of the German churches are frequently examined. But, at least in some sense, this is not fortuitous. For the German churches, Catholic, Protestant and Free Churches, provided striking examples of the perils and dangers for Christian witness during Germany's subjection to two rival totalitarian systems in the past century. That is why we welcome our Berlin colleague, Manfred Gailus' review of Martin Greschat's survey of Protestantism in the Cold War, and Mark Ruff's comment on the recent article by Olaf Blaschke on the Roman Catholic Kommission für Zeitgeschichte (Commission for Contemporary History). At the same time we ask you to note the positive steps taken to improve Catholic-Jewish relations, as recorded in the collected speeches of Pope John Paul II. We also bring you notice of some other aspects of Vatican diplomacy.

To be sure, looking back over the past century must give us pause for reflection. Vigorous debates, often reflected in the books here reviewed, still rage about how far the obvious and disturbing decline in Christianity's support and credibility in Europe is the result of the churches' failures to live up to their professed moral standards, or to the repressive features of many political regimes. It is our hope that this journal will continue to keep you posted about these and other controversies in the field of contemporary church history.

We offer you our best wishes for this Lenten season.

On behalf of all of the *ACCH Quarterly* editors,

John S. Conway, University of British Columbia

Mark Edward Ruff, St. Louis University

Robert P. Ericksen, Pacific Lutheran University

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Review of Manfred Gailus and Armin Nolzen, eds.,*Zerstrittene "Volksgemeinschaft": Glaube, Konfession und Religion im Nationalsozialismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2011).

By Robert P. Ericksen, Pacific Lutheran University

"Woran glaubten die Menschen im 'Dritten Reich?'" Gailus and Nolzen open their book with this question, arguing that it has received surprisingly little attention within the massive historiography devoted to the Nazi period. This work represents an attempt to evaluate the state of current research on Protestants and Catholics in Nazi Germany. It also includes a chapter by Merit Petersen on two smaller groups, Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses; a chapter by Horst Junginger on German paganism (the German Faith Movement); and a chapter by Beth Griech-Polelle on National Socialism as a "political religion." Two themes emerge in this volume. One is a refutation of the postwar charge that the Nazi era represented a period of intense secularization. In fact, Gailus and Nolzen argue, the Nazi period was intensely religious. Along with the early postwar era, it marked a break in the twentieth-century secularization that preceded and followed this middle period of nearly three decades. Secondly, the editors argue for increased attention to religion under the Nazis, especially by scholars not defending a piece of the religious turf. Such work should acknowledge regional differences as well as the complex and overlapping varieties of religious faith to be found.

Olaf Blaschke's contribution picks up on an issue highlighted in Doris Bergen's *Twisted Cross* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), i.e., the importance of gender in understanding the pro-Nazi "German Christians." Blaschke begins with the nineteenth century, arguing that Protestants in Bismarck's Germany, epitomized by Heinrich von Treitschke, considered themselves the masculine Christians, with an emphasis on courage, strength, and the use of reason. Catholics were thought to be feminine, with more emotion, more sensitivity, and more resort to the superstitious side of religious belief (38). Protestants too, however, could be considered feminized, given the "soft" side of Christian beliefs and the percentage of women in the pews. By World War I, both religious faiths worked to "masculinize" their image and their message. Bergen points out the hyper-masculine nature of "German Christian" identity. Blaschke then describes "remasculination" efforts among Catholic theologians, including their hope to save piety from its soft, feminine image and remake it into an image of courage and strength. Blaschke argues throughout that these gender issues, largely ignored by historians, should have a

significant place in our understanding of religion in the modern world, especially in the hyper-masculine world espoused by Nazi ideology.

Manfred Gailus offers a chapter on Protestants in which the title, "Keine gute Performance," quite clearly indicates the message to be found. Noting that it took several decades for a critical and honest postwar assessment to develop, he describes the first generation to write the history with these words, "Die Erlebnisgeneration selbst erinnerte sich. Und natürlich legitimierte sie sich durch die Art ihrer Erinnerung" (98). Now we know better, in Gailus's view. "Gegen langlebige Widerstands- und Kirchenkampflegenden ist zu betonen: Es bedurfte 1933 überhaupt keines Zwangs, keines gewaltsamen Angriffs von aussen—der Protestantismus öffnete dem anschwellenden Nationalsozialismus bereitwillig, vielfach fasziniert seine Türen, um die 'Ideen von 1933' einströmen zu lassen" (102). As for the question of Christians and Jews, "Protestanten haben im Kontext der so genannten Judenfrage nicht nur nicht genug für die Verfolgten getan, sondern zu nicht geringen Teilen haben sie selbst aktiv verachtet, ausgegrenzt, denunziert, verfolgt. Protestantismugeschichte ist an dieser Stelle zu erheblichen Anteilen auch Täter- und Mittätergeschichte" (111). Gailus acknowledges many differences to be found throughout the regional churches in Germany. He encourages historians to fill in these regional gaps, and also to write biographies of the broad range of church figures still without serious historical treatment. He also notes that some of the intensified religious commitment in the period turned toward the political religion of Nazism, with its opposition to the Enlightenment, to the "ideas of 1789," and to the liberalism and democracy to be found in the West. He sees the Nazi period as intensely religious, but now with a three-part competition between Protestants, Catholics, and those who made a religion of National Socialism.

The second editor of this book, Armin Nolzen, attempts in his chapter the sort of statistical analysis rarely undertaken. What percentage of Nazi leaders, functionaries, and party members belonged to the Protestant or Catholic Church? He notes the difficulty of finding statistics. For example, according to the "positive Christianity" espoused in the Party Program in 1920, no one would be expected to have a particular faith. Thus no questions about one's religious faith appeared on the membership application. A statistical record created in 1939, however, allowed party members to check a box for religion. This shows that 70 to 75 percent of party members checked either Protestant or Catholic, with 20-25 percent checking "gottglaubig." Protestants were over-represented in comparison to their numbers in a given region, Catholics were under-represented, and "gottgläubig" were over-represented by a factor of four to five (158-59). The latter figure reflects the attempt within the Nazi Party to discourage church membership, as well as to separate church and state. Despite this, however, up to three-quarters of party members retained contact with their church. Even in the Allgemeine SS, reputedly the most anti-Christian organization in Nazi Germany, of nearly 250,000 members in December 1938, 51 percent were Protestant and 23 percent were Catholic (171). These figures match other indicators to suggest that three of four people inside the Nazi movement resisted pressure to leave their church. Furthermore, during World War II the number of party members laid to rest in church burials increased (170). At the same time, the total number of party members incorporated more and more of the German population, increasing from 4.8 million in 1938 to over 9 million by May 1945 (156). Finally, as Nolzen argues, an enormous number of Germans belonged to one of the many supporting organizations of the Nazi

Party, if not to the Party itself. That figure was two-thirds of all Germans in May 1939, and Nolzen claims that it grew continually during six years of war (171). This leads to his conclusion: "Die meisten Deutschen konnten jedenfalls beides mit ihrem Gewissen vereinbaren: Ihren Glauben an den 'Führer' und den Nationalsozialismus sowie ihren Glauben an Gott und die Zugehörigket zu einer christlichen Kirche" (172).

This book includes much more of interest, including Kevin Spicer's assessment of the Catholic Church under Nazism and Matthew Hockenos's description of the churches after 1945. Many readers of this journal will be familiar with their books on these subjects. Beth Griech-Polelle gives a very useful overview and analysis of "political religion" and its place in the Nazi state. Dietmar Süss writes about religion on the home front during World War II, especially as the air war brought terror to those far behind the front lines. Dagmar Pöpping writes about the role of military chaplains, especially on the brutal eastern front from 1941-45. As a whole, the book highlights our present understanding of the role of religion in Nazi Germany and it calls upon scholars to work toward filling the gaps that remain. Gailus and Nolzen show that many varying claims were made upon "Volksgemeinschaft" in Nazi Germany. That complex story continues to unfold.

Tags: Armin Nolzen, Manfred Gailus, Robert P. Ericksen, Zerstrittene "Volksgemeinschaft"

Review of Martin Greschat, *Protestantismus im Kalten Krieg. Kirche, Politik und Gesellschaft im geteilten Deutschland 1945-1963* (Paderborn: Schöningh Verlag, 2010), 450 Pp., ISBN 978-3-506-76806-3.

By Manfred Gailus, Technische Universität, Berlin

This review was first published in theologie.geschichte – Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kulturgeschichte *(Universität Saarbrücken) Band 6 (2011). Translation courtesy of John S. Conway.*

This book is the first overview of the history of German Protestantism in the early post-1945 period up to the year 1963. (Why the author chose to end there is not explained). His study begins with a broad survey of international relations and personalities, such as the Great Power rivalries between the USA and the USSR, the Korean War, Stalin and his diplomacy, Konrad Adenauer and Walter Ulbricht. This makes for an extremely lengthy introduction of nearly two hundred pages before the main topic is reached. But the author sees these events, as described in his Chapter 1, as important historical preconditions for the division of Germany The second chapter describes the establishment of the two German states. On the one hand, West Germany adopted a course of integration with the West and of rearmament, despite much internal opposition. On the other hand, the German Democratic Republic under Ulbricht underwent a similar process of integration into the Soviet sphere of influence. The third chapter briefly describes the turbulent years of the 1950s with the Geneva Conference of 1955, the uprisings in the Soviet bloc in East Germany in 1953 and Hungary in 1956, the 20th Party Congress of the Soviet Communists in 1956,

Khruschchev's ultimatum over Berlin, and the Cuban crisis. Finally, in chapter 4, Greschat arrives at his main theme, namely the developments in the Protestant churches. He deals first with the situation in the German Democratic Republic, in a far too detailed and hence rather wearying fashion, in my view. He then turns to West Germany. Despite the fact that both Protestant communities were decisively in favour of upholding the notion of German national unity, they slowly drifted apart from one another. In the following chapter 5, developments in the life and witness of the Protestant churches in the 1950s are analyzed These years saw the erosion of the traditional pietistic forms of worship, heated theological debates over Rudolf Bultmann's "demythologizing" contentions, institutional innovations such as the Church Rallies, and the notable establishment of the Evangelical Academies, which did so much to foster the Protestant churches' life and their involvement in the wider international and ecumenical discourse of the World Council of Churches and similar bodies.

This is indeed a vast undertaking. The reader will undoubtedly gain much on these various topics. But there are problems. For one thing, the author gives us several chronological accounts, first for the international scene, then for the national political level, and thirdly for the churches' own historical developments—and in this case, twice over, one for the west, one for the east. This leads to numerous repetitions, to frequent recapitulations of items already covered ("as already mentioned"), or to redundant digressions.

Furthermore, the author does not tackle the problematical issue of how best such a history of recent German Protestantism should be written. Since 1945, despite the strong fixation on tradition, the evident trend has been to create a constellation of about two dozen separate provincial churches, each with its own theological, ecclesial and church-political character. Greschat's concentration on the top-level deliberations of the Evangelical Church leadership, and on the significant political disputes of two divergent groups, one around Ehlers, Dibelius and Lilje and the other around Niemoller, Heinemann and Gollwitzer, hardly does justice to the diversity of the situation. Another more serious defect is the astonishing decision to omit any discussion of Germany's recent past, which the historian Friedrich Meinecke so rightly called "The German Catastrophe". In fact, this was also the catastrophe of German Protestants who constituted a two-thirds majority in the "Third Reich". Greschat's discussion of the internal and highly divisive disputes in the post-war period are really inexplicable without reference to the Nazi period, or to the Church Struggle against Nazism. In this regard Matthew Hockenos' *A Church Divided. German Protestants confront the Nazi Past* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004) is a model study. Unfortunately Greschat doesn't even mention it.

Many sections of German Protestantism incurred a heavy burden of guilt for their highly regrettable behaviour during the Nazi period. But their stance is hardly mentioned in Greschat's 450 pages. Likewise, no attention is given to the process of de-nazification, or what in the church was the wholly inadequate process of "self-cleansing". Christian anti-Judaism or anti-Semitism or the Holocaust as such are not mentioned. And even the timorous Protestant attempts to begin to come to terms with a scholarly examination of the recent past, as in the Evangelical Association of Contemporary Church History after 1955, are not thoroughly discussed. The book by Bjorn Krondorfer, Katharina von Kellenbach and Norbert Reck, *Mit Blick auf die Täter. Fragen an die deutsche*

Theologie nach 1945(Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2006), with its pertinent and often biting criticisms is not taken into account.

The outbreak of the Korean War, or more widely the Cold War, appears to have engrossed the attitudes of most contemporary Germans, and thus covered over that unspeakable darkness which burdened them, and in some cases still does. And so, one might suggest, it was highly convenient that the Cold War diverted attention away from those other more fateful events, about which they were unwilling to speak. But are these considerations still valid for scholarly accounts today? It is incomprehensible why this book omits mentioning the widespread silence, or more particularly the active evasiveness, the frequently well-rehearsed tissue of lies or alibis, or the habit of sweeping such unwelcome matters under the carpet, as engaged in by many Protestants.

Of course there may have been numerous understandable reasons why contemporaries in the 1950s wanted to suppress their personal pasts. But to continue suppressing such lamentable episodes in the Protestant collective past seems wholly reprehensible. Any history of German Protestantism in the 1950s needs to be written, not from the perspective of "Korea", but from the viewpoint of the participants themselves. Herein lies what would appear to be an inexplicable omission in an otherwise significant study. As a first attempt to provide an overall account of post-war German Protestantism, this study needs to be substantially enhanced and improved.

Tags: Manfred Gailus, Martin Greschat, Protestantismus im Kalten Krieg

Review of Friedrich Winter, *Friedrich Schauer 1891-1958. Seelsorger – Bekenner – Christ im Widerstand*(Berlin: Wichern Verlag, 2011), 215 Pp., ISBN 978-3-85981-326-8.

By John S. Conway, University of British Columbia

Friedrich Schauer was one of the cohort of German Evangelical pastors caught up in the religious, political and military disasters which engulfed Germany in the first half of the twentieth century. This short sympathetic account, written by a former church leader in Berlin, successfully describes the conflicts of loyalties in which these pastors were embroiled, and which in many cases strikingly affected their careers. Schauer was not a leading figure, but, for that reason, his biography can be seen as typical of many of his colleagues.

He had just completed his training when the First World War broke out. Within weeks, he was badly wounded in battle and lost the sight of his left eye. Nevertheless he was able after the war to take up parish work, first in East Prussia and then in Pomerania. Due to his conservative background and his military training, he early on opposed the more radical wing of the so-called "German Christians" who called for the adoption of Nazi ideas and practices in the church. Consequently he was a strong supporter of doctrinal orthodoxy, as expressed in the famous Barmen Declaration of 1934. But later he was disillusioned by the rigid dogmatism of those who followed Niemoeller and

Bonhoeffer and refused any obedience to the established church authorities. Schauer wanted to maintain a more moderate position, rejecting extremism on either side. He became involved with the Brotherhood of Michael, a group of clergy who laid emphasis on a more liturgical church life, but avoided political engagement. One of the leading figures in this movement was Theodor Steltzer, who had been Schauer's commanding officer in the First World War, and was to become the same in the Second.

In 1939 Schauer was again called up as a transportation officer, and served under Steltzer first in France and then for more than four years in Norway. Here he was able to establish friendly relations with some Norwegian clerics and sought to mitigate the effects of the German occupation. At this point Steltzer became increasingly critical of the Nazi leadership, and indeed became associated with the Kreisau Circle led by Graf Helmuth von Moltke. But it is not clear to what extent Schauer shared these opinions.

Following the failure of the July 20, 1944 plot, Steltzer was arrested and arraigned for high treason. (Fortunately, he survived.) Schauer, still in Oslo, must have taken all steps to destroy any evidence of his real sympathies. Only one paper survives in which he outlined his views on the future of Europe and the role of the church, along the conservative even authoritarian lines adopted by the Brotherhood of Michael. Such a stance was enough for him to be ordered dismissed from military service. But at the beginning of April 1945, instead of returning to Germany in disgrace, he fled to Sweden and sought asylum there. Luckily his friends in ecumenical circles supported him there for eighteen months until he was finally allowed to rejoin his family in West Germany.

Schauer's post-war career was unpropitious. It seems his theological and political views found little favour in the reconstituted German Evangelical Church. Ill-health, caused by his war wounds and compounded by the loss of two of his sons on the Eastern Front in 1943, obliged him to take early retirement. He died shortly afterwards. This informative memoir is therefore rather a tragic story, but reflects the fateful experiences and the ambivalent stances of so many of these now forgotten pastors.

Tags: Friedrich Schauer, Friedrich Winter, John S. Conway

Review of S. J. D. Green, *The Passing of Protestant England: Secularisation and Social Change, c. 1920-1960*(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 333 Pp., ISBN 978-0-521-83977-8.

By Andrew Chandler, George Bell Institute, University of Chichester

Very possibly what has brought many historians to consider seriously twentieth century religion is not its significance in politics, intellectual and cultural life or social existence, but the idea of its decline and even extinction. At all events, secularisation has by now become an academic realm in its own right, with its prophetic presences, its own points of reference, its particular questions (and answers) and its earnest debates about conceptual approaches and forms of analysis. Every scholar of contemporary society knows that in a western European country the statistics of adherence have crumbled, values and attitudes have altered and church buildings have emptied, shut and disappeared. Something vast has occurred—and we remain caught up in it. Whatever it may be, the term 'secularisation' still does very adequately in framing it.

S. J. D.Dixonis based at that most privileged of Oxbridge bastions, All Soul's College. Certainly he works with a very well-stocked library on his doorstep: his references are copious at every turn and, although there is little archival research going on here, there is a committed and valuable exploration of published primary material. The book represents not so much a coherent argument as a succession of specific explorations of the waning of a Protestant inheritance, most of it effectively Victorian. It is a gathered contribution, a garnering of past articles published by earlier collections. But it professes an overall argument, too.

Green is cagey with his terms at the outset—he refuses to define 'religious phenomena', and accepts that his book is, 'unashamedly', a study of the specifics of denominational practice and popular belief (3). His chronological frame is chosen with a purpose and to effect: for some time scholars of secularisation have insisted that what happened after 1960 marked the crucial sea-change in the fortunes of public religion. He is firmly conscious of the difficulties in persisting in the idea of something distinctively 'English', but resolute in keeping out the Scots and the Welsh. Part I presents an 'outline of the problem' combining dense historiography with a bash at narrative; Part II picks up some case studies, inspecting the world of Dean Inge, the 'strange death of puritan England' and the 'discovery of a "post-Protestant" people' by Seebohm Rowntree; Part III adopts the pleasantly alliterative form of 'Resistance, revival and resignation', examining the church-state debates over the 1944 Education Act, asking if there really was much of a religious revival in the 1950s and then 'slouching towards a secular society' in the early 1960s. All of this is characterised by tremendous confidence, subtlety and fluency in the mobilization of terms and interpretive frameworks. Does the whole odyssey cohere? Just about, probably. Every reader will have their own questions. Is there too little sense of the deliberately constructed denominationalism on which so many Christians placed their hopes in this period? Very possibly. (Incidentally, principled Baptists might not much enjoy finding themselves a part of some conglomerate called here, a little casually, 'theBaptistChurch'.) Might far more be said about the fate of all kinds of Christian social and educational institutions in these years? Surely. Does Dean Inge really deserve so much house space? Could there have been more about someone like Ernest Barker who wrote so thoughtfully and extensively about comparable themes? It is too easy to regret what has been left to one side—and, perhaps, irrelevant, because much of the value of the book lies in its capacity to provoke the mind to think of other avenues.

A plaudit on the cover observes the author's pessimism while a second congratulates him for being so very 'sensible'. Green would surely know how to value both attributes. Almost at the last gasp he writes, 'Religion will

not disappear, not even inEngland. But the social significance of religion will go on declining.' (316) How we grasp quite what that leaves behind would make an interesting chapter in itself. At all events, it would take a rash scholar indeed to deny the force of such a judgement today.

Tags: Andrew Chandler, Passing of Protestant England, S. J. D. Green, Secularization

Review of Eugene J. Fisher and Leon Kleinicki, eds., *The Saint for Shalom: How Pope John Paul II Transformed Catholic-Jewish Relations: The Complete Texts 1979-2005*. A Publication of the Anti-Defamation League (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2011), 363 Pp., ISBN 0-8245-1544-7.

By John S. Conway, University of British Columbia

The striking changes in Christian-Jewish relations in recent years have been described as the most significant theological development of the past century. The abandonment of age-old Christian hostilities and prejudices and their replacement by a positive and productive dialogue between partners now marks the altered pattern of relationships. This unprecedented step has been most notably pursued by the Roman Catholic authorities, ever since the historic pronouncements of the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s. This new stance became consolidated as part of Catholic teaching and practice particularly during the lengthy 26-year reign of Pope John Paul II (1978-2005). It is therefore a welcome step that we now have in English translation a complete edition of the texts of this Pope's speeches and writings on the subject of Jews, Judaism and the State of Israel. (Previous but incomplete editions were issued in 1987 and 1995.)

As Eugene Fisher notes in his valuable introductory commentary, John Paul II's views on these topics were conditioned by two seminal events of the mid-twentieth century: the Nazi mass murder of millions of Jews and the subsequent re-establishment of the State of Israel. The theological repercussions of these developments for all Christians became a constantly repeated theme of the Pope's discourses. The re-creation of Israel in 1948 overthrew one of Christianity's oldest slanders against the Jews, namely that they were destined to be a wandering people, exiled from their Promised Land, because of their rejection and execution of their Messiah, Jesus. The theological shock of seeing a new and vibrant Jewish state resulted in a radically altered and much more positive view which John Paul embraced throughout his reign. This was a tangible sign of the wider positive relationship with the whole Jewish people throughout the world, based on the recognition that Jews and Christians were spiritual partners. This new stance excluded all previously-held notions of Christian triumphalism, which had for so long regarded Judaism and the Old Testament as being superseded by the more enlightened Christian witness. Instead John Paul repeatedly stressed the common bonds with "our dearly beloved elder brothers", as exemplified in his pilgrimage to Jerusalem

in 2000, his visit to the Jewish memorial at Yad Vashem, and his prayer at the Western Wall, which are here reported in full.

No less urgent was the Pope's repeated emphasis on the need to examine and rectify the calamitous indifference displayed by the Christian community when the Nazis attacked and persecuted the Jewish people. Having himself witnessed these crimes in his native Poland, John Paul could not fail to be aware of the vocal criticisms about the earlier silence of the churches and their leaders, including his own predecessors. He was therefore wholly convinced of the heavy burden of Christian guilt and of the need for gestures of repentance and solidarity. Vatican loyalties here competed with a genuine desire to express remorse and to build a new relationship through discussion and dialogue. These affirmations were to be matched by recurrent pronouncements about the need for Catholics to combat every vestige of anti-Semitism and to oppose all forms of racial intolerance. In Pope John Paul's view, the painful legacies of earlier centuries were to be replaced by a repeated stress on the common spiritual patrimony shared by Jews and Christians.

As the documents in this collection show, Pope John Paul II's striking and continued commitment to the cause of reconciliation has meant that these teachings have now become the new orthodoxy. It is indeed inconceivable that any future Catholic leaders could disavow John Paul's advocacy and tireless endeavours. He has thus earned the sobriquet "The Saint for Shalom".

Nevertheless, as Fisher admits, controversies still remain. Many Jews still have their doubts about the genuineness of this new Christian attitude after so many centuries of hostility and the world-wide phenomenon of religiously-based anti-Semitism. Many still voice criticisms about the policies of the war-time Pope Pius XII. The convoluted politics of the Middle East and the Pope's evident sympathy for the plight of Christian Palestinians still continue to muddy the waters of Christian-Jewish relations. Yet these documents provide the evidence for John Paul's courage in being the first Pope to profess his admiration for the Jewish people's valiant adherence to their faith, and to affirm energetically the common commitment of both Christians and Jews to pursue justice and peace in the world.

Tags: Eugene J. Fisher, Israel, John Paul II, Leon Kleinicki, Saint for Shalom

Article Note: New Research on Cold War Catholicism

Karim Schelkens, "Vatican Diplomacy after the Cuban Missile Crisis: New Light on the Release of Josyf Slipyj,"*The Catholic Historical Review* 97, no. 4 (October 2011): 679-712.

Marie Gayte, "The Vatican and the Reagan Administration: A Cold War Alliance?" *The Catholic Historical Review* 97, no. 4 (October 2011): 713-736.

By William Doino Jr., Contributing Editor, *Inside the Vatican* magazine

Few conflicts have been more intense, or protracted, than the Roman Catholic Church's battle with Communism. Two years before Karl Marx published his *Communist Manifesto* (1848), Pope Pius IX referred to "that infamous doctrine of so-called Communism which is absolutely contrary to the Natural Law" and which "would utterly destroy the rights, property and possessions of all men."

That is still, essentially, the Church's teaching, though how it's been expressed and applied over the years has varied, depending on historical circumstances, and the approaches of different popes.

Two articles on what might be called "Cold War Catholicism"covering the immediate post-war era to the collapse of the Soviet Union have recently appeared in *The Catholic Historical Review* (October, 2011) and are worthy of note.

The first is "Vatican Diplomacy after the Cuban Missile Crisis: New Light on the Release of Josyf Slipyj," by Karim Schelkens, Secretary of the Center for the Study of Vatican II at the Catholic University of Leuven.

The author draws on notes, diaries and specialized archives to describe the dramatic events leading up to the February 1963 release of Josyf Slipyj, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic archbishop who had been imprisoned by the Soviet Communists for almost twenty years.

Schelkens helpfully provides the historical background. In communion with the Holy See since the Union of Brest in 1595-96, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) had long been in tension with the Russian Orthodox Church, especially after the Communists took power and made the latter a virtual instrument of the state. That conflict—held at bay during the Second World War, when a temporary unity prevailed against the Germans—re-emerged with a vengeance as the war came to a close. Schelkens writes:

On April 11, 1945, the Ukrainian Catholic bishops, including Slipyj, were arrested. Most of them were accused of collaboration with Nazi rule and sentenced to forced labor and exile. These draconic measures prompted a strong reaction from Pius XII, expressed in his encyclical Orientales Omnes of December 23, 1945. In it, the Vatican did not only condemn Communism but also openly and specifically attacked Moscow Patriarch Alexis. The situation worsened when on March 8-10, 1946, some 200 Greek Catholic priests were forced to revoke formally their Union

with Rome, declare the Brest Union annulled, and convert to Russian Orthodoxy in a sobor set up by the Kremlinall without any say from the Ukrainian Catholic bishops. These dramatic events set the tone for decades to come, and the UGCC would become a "Church of Silence."

The Church of "Silence" soon became a Church of Martyrs, as many Ukrainian Catholics who were interned by the Communists perished, if they were not tortured and killed beforehand. The full story of this brutal persecution has yet to be told, but to the extent it is remembered, Archbishop Slipyj is a large reason why.

Successor to the legendary Metropolitan Andrey Sheptystky, and a towering figure in his own right, Josyf Slipyj was the soul of the underground Ukrainian Catholic Church, even as he languished in the Siberian Gulag. News of his courageous witness spread, especially after his prison writings managed to circulate. But when the Communist authorities found out, they cracked down even harder, re-sentencing him again.

The death of Stalin in 1953 did not ease the lot of Slipyj or the suppressed UGCC; nor even did Soviet Premier Nikita Kruschkev's famous "de-Stalinization" speech of 1956. A fortuitous combination of events, however, led to Slipyj's release, and it is in recounting this that Schelken excels.

In October of 1962, Pope John XXIII, successor to Pius XII, opened the Second Vatican Council, and with it a new approach toward the world ("aggiornamento"). This included searching new avenues to ease the suffering of Christians under Communist rule, without withdrawing any of the Church's warnings about Marxist-Leninist ideology. The new approach was described by Msgr. Igino Cardinale, chief of protocol at the Secretariat of the Holy See, as being "ready to engage in relations with any state," as long as there was a reliable assurance that "freedom for the church and the sanctity of the moral and spiritual interests of its citizens" were respected. Given the deceptions and crimes of the Communists, that was asking a lot, but the Vatican was willing to take risks, in hopes of achieving a greater good.

It didn't take long to test the new policy. Just a few days after Vatican II opened, the Cuban Missile Crisis broke out and the mediation of the Church was sought. President Kennedy—pulling out all stops to avert a catastrophe—contacted his friend, the author Norman Cousins, who believed the greatest independent force in the world was the papacy. Cousins in turn reached out to his friend, Belgian priest Father Felix Morlion, O.P., who contacted the Holy See, and was assured of the Pope's willingness to help. The next day, October 24, 1962, John XXIII issued a dramatic appeal to the relevant leaders not to remain deaf to "the cry of humanity." On October 28, Khrushchev told President Kennedy that the missiles would be withdrawn. Many historians believe Pope John's public appeal provided Khrushchev with a face-saving way to change course, depicting himself as a savior of world peace, rather than an outfoxed aggressor who blinked. Kennedy explicitly thanked John XXIII for his help.

Many of these same players, as Schelkens reveals, also worked together to obtain the release of Archbishop Slipyj. Thanks to a private intervention by Fr. Morlion with Russian representatives, the indefatigable Cousins was able to interview Khrushchev directly, and serve as an intermediary for the Holy See on behalf of world peace, religious freedom, and Archbishop Slipyj. Dutch Monsignor Johannes Willebrands also took parallel measures with other key diplomatic and religious figures, and the Soviets were surprisingly—though note entirely—cooperative. By early 1963, a decision had been made to release Slipyj on the condition that he would remain in exile and that his freedom would not be exploited by the Church for "anti-Soviet" purposes. In fact, as Schelkens reveals, "the Soviets thought it crucial that it was not to be considered a rehabilitation…. The release was to be regarded as an amnesty and that Slipyj was still considered an enemy of the Soviet government." The Holy See agreed not to exploit the matter but made no promises about restricting its admonitions against Communism. Willebrands traveled to Russia to receive the Ukrainian archbishop and accompanied him back to Rome, where he was able to participate in the Council. Slipyj's long-won freedom was further complicated by the fact that Russian Orthodox observers had been invited to attend the Council, as an ecumenical gesture, and accepted. Their presence "deeply shocked" the Ukrainian diaspora bishops who thought that the Holy See had conceded far too much to prelates they considered accessories to the Soviet suppression of the UGCC. But in the large picture, and whatever internal debates remained, the Holy See believed that its strategy had succeeded in accomplishing its ecumenical and political goals, without sacrificing any of its genuine principles.

Schelken's article is complemented by another essay, "The Vatican and the Reagan Administration: A Cold War Alliance?" by Dr. Marie Gayte, professor of U.S. history at Université du Sud Toulon-Var in France. Here, she examines relations between the Holy See and the United States in the post-war era, culminating with the friendly and often productive but not always unified dealings with the Reagan administration.

At the end of World War II, Gayte relates, there was a convergence of interests between Pope Pius XII and President Harry Truman. The pontiff "well understood the intensity of suffering and persecution inflicted on Catholics under the Soviet regime," while the President "became convinced of the expansionist aspiration of Stalin's regime." Thus, in spite of certain reservations about dividing the world into two blocs, Pius XII "welcomed American aid to Turkey and Greece, as well as the Marshall Plan, granting numerous audiences to congressional representatives. According to J. Graham Parson, who was assistant to Myron Taylor, Truman's personal representative to Pius XII, 'it [was not] too far to go in saying that most probably all the top people in the Vatican saw the United States as the only possible salvation of the values which they fundamentally stood for."

But while Pius XII welcomed American support for shared interests, a careful reading of his pronouncements reveals an independent voice, one that could challenge the assumptions of America's policymakers. An example of this was Pius XII's strong warnings against the arms race, and the grave evils that would ensue should war break out between the two superpowers (a theme that would be developed and promulgated at Vatican II, after Pius XII's passing). Pius was a strenuous opponent of the Soviet empire, and thus longed for its ideological collapse; but he was not (as he has sometimes been portrayed) a reckless anti-Communist who believed in "brinksmanship."

Neither, for that matter, did his successors, John XXIII and Paul VI. As the international situation grew more intense—with nuclear arms proliferating and Cold War conflicts erupting in the Third World—both maintained that dialogue, rather than warfare, was the best means for obtaining a sound peace and social justice. What emerges clearly from Gayte's essay is the apprehension papal pronouncements like the encyclicals *Pacem in Terris* (John XXIII) and *Populorum Progressio* (Paul VI) caused a succession of American administrations. The tension reached its height during the Vietnam War, which the Holy See did not condemn outright but clearly wanted ended. "The United States,' writes Gayte, "seems to have been keen to avoid a Vatican portrayal of the United States as morally equivalent to the other belligerents, lest such a representation benefit its opponents in the war and its critics at home. This led to U.S. efforts to influence Vatican pronouncements on several occasions, something of which there is ample evidence in the archives of the Johnson and Nixon administrations."

When the Vietnam War finally did end, it was not on terms favorable to anyone—except, perhaps, the Communist despots who took over. Even those who strongly opposed the war, in conscience, and saw it as an immoral act of American imperialism, were forced to concede that America's opponents were hardly the meek, agrarian reformers depicted in some dubious quarters. They were, in fact, ruthless totalitarians who silenced their opponents, often by mass murder. The result was not peace with honor, but "peace with horror," as one author acidly remarked.

Communism's brutal record in Southeast Asia created a new sobriety within the Vatican, about the limits of the Christian-Marxist dialogue, and this, in turn, set the stage for the rise of Communism's ultimate spiritual nemesis, Pope John Paul II. Having lived in Poland under both the Nazis and Communists, he understood the totalitarian mind better than many world leaders, and demonstrated that knowledge in his successful combat with them. He was fortunate to have as an ally Ronald Reagan, whose conservative American presidency has grown more impressive (and popular) over the years. Gayte describes the many areas the two leaders saw eye to eye on—for example, the dangers of a Marxist-driven "liberation theology" and the naïvete of certain peace activists about unilateral disarmament. John Paul told Caspar Weinberger, Reagan's Secretary of Defense, "you know we are for peace, of course, but we are not for pacifists—unilateral pacifists. We know that is not the way to keep the peace." Such Christian realism was welcomed by the Reaganites.

At the same time, Gayte properly rejects the simplistic notion of a "holy alliance" conjured up by some journalists. Appreciative as he was toward President Reagan, John Paul II did not hesitate, anymore than previous popes, to distance himself from certain American attitudes and policies the Church found objectionable, particularly the frightful idea that a nuclear war could be fought and won. "Although the pope unambiguously opposed Communism," writes Gayte, "his pontificate also was one of continuity with his predecessors as far as defense of the third world, peace and social justice were concerned."

To the extent disagreements did arise, it was because of erroneous American ideas about the Holy See. To their credit, officials in the Reagan administration did eventually learn this, with one candidly admitting, "The Vatican has its own agenda which leads it to statements and actions not always compatible with our policies. …the Vatican's

activities are understandable and follow naturally from the position of the pope as the spiritual leader of the Catholic world. Automatic assumptions in Washington that the Vatican is always on our side are misplaced." That said, there can be no doubt that the relationship, at its best, did much to bring the Cold War to a largely positive conclusion, even as other dangers have arisen in its wake.

One principle that John Paul II and Ronald Reagan did share was a resounding belief in religious liberty, and the rights of individual conscience—attacks against which continue to arise. Today, as we witness the persecution of minorities in many regions of the world, and see attempts to intimidate religious leaders even in self-proclaimed "free" democracies, a renewed spiritual and political witness in defense of both is needed, now more than ever.

Tags: Cold War, Karim Schelkens, Marie Gayte, Roman Catholic, Vatican, William Doino Jr.

Book Note: A. D. McVay and L. Y. Luciuk, eds., *The Holy See and the Holodomor. Documents from the Vatican Secret Archives on the Great Famine of 1932-33 in Soviet Ukraine* (Toronto: University of Toronto and Kashtan Press, 2011), 99 Pp., ISBN 978-1-896354-37-8.

By John S. Conway, University of British Columbia

In 1933-1934 the Soviet government embarked on a ruthless programme of collectivization of the Ukrainian peasantry, confiscation of much of their harvests to feed urban workers, and sales of grain abroad to gain hard currency with which to pay for the ambitious industrialization projects. The result was widespread famine and starvation amongst the Ukrainian villagers. Several million victims died—at a conservative estimate—in what is now commonly known as the Holodomor. There were even reports of cannibalism. Despite Soviet denials and censorship, news of the increasing rural destitution and hunger leaked out. Appeals for help were sent to various western agencies, including the Vatican. The Pontifical Commission Pro Russia, under its president Bishop d'Herbigny, obtained permission from the Pope Pius XI to use the Vatican's newspapers to publish the appalling sufferings of the Ukrainians. But d'Herbigny's subsequent campaign to have the Vatican sponsor a famine relief mission was never approved. The Secretariat of State, under Cardinal Pacelli—the later Pope Pius XII—turned down the suggestion on prudential grounds. The Vatican had no official contacts with the Soviet regime. Since the latter refused to acknowledge the disaster, any attempt to intervene with a relief mission would only be rebuffed and might have punitive consequences for the few Catholics in the area. Discretion was called for, all the more since the Vatican had no means of ensuring that any relief it might offer would in fact reach the famine's victims. In addition, caution dictated that the Vatican would be wiser not to take any lead, though limited financial assistance could be offered through indirect channels.

The background for this abortive effort is given in the sixty brief documents from the Vatican's files printed here, excellently translated into English, and by the valuable introduction and afterword provided by the Ukrainian Canadian editors. In their view, the Vatican's stance was strongly influenced by the rise of the Nazis to power in Germany in early 1933, whose anti-Soviet propaganda took every advantage of the famine to condemn Stalin and the Communist policies of repression. But Pacelli's priorities at that moment were to secure the Nazi government's agreement to a Reich Concordat, finally concluded in July 1933. Any steps which appeared to be assisting the Soviet Union or its peoples might therefore have fateful consequences. This stance naturally disappointed all those who expected the Vatican to live up to its moral professions to help humanity in crisis. The resulting paralysis and lack of action set a precedent for the even more agonizing dilemmas which the Vatican had to face in the course of the Second World War a few years later. It was an unenviable position, easily criticized in retrospect, but far less easily managed at the time.

Tags: A. D. McVay, Holodomor, Holy See and the Holodomor, John S. Conway, L. Y. Luciuk

Article Note: Olaf Blaschke, "Geschichtsdeutung und Vergangenheitspolitik. Die Kommission für Zeitgeschichte und das Netzwerk kirchenloyaler Katholizismusforscher, 1945-2000," in Thomas Pittrof and Walter Schmitz, eds., *Freie Anerkennung übergeschichtlicher Bindungen. Katholische Geschichtswahrnehmung im deutschsprachigen Raum des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Freiburg: Rombach Verlag, 2009), 479-521.

By Mark Edward Ruff, Saint Louis University

In this massive forty-two page article, the German historian, Olaf Blaschke, sets his sights on the Kommission für Zeitgeschichte (Commission for Contemporary History). This Roman Catholic historical association founded in the fall of 1962 and now based in Bonn is perhaps best known in historical circles for having produced the so-called "Blue Series," more than 175 documentary volumes and monographs on the history of German Catholicism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It has served as a nexus for historical research, bringing together historians for research on many projects including many pertaining to the history of the Roman Catholic Church during the Nazi era. The Commission has also emerged as a public relations outpost, dispatching its team of historical experts or the names of trusted colleagues to the press when pressing questions about the church's past arrived in the headlines.

For Blaschke, the Commission provides the ideal example of a network that for decades succeeded in determining how the church's past would be viewed. Or in his words, this is the account of "how a well positioned group stabilized a social network of support and succeeded in establishing hegemony over a specific discourse and

partially maintaining this until today." Its approach, he argues, was "apologetic." By this term, Blaschke means that the historians writing about the church's past during these terrible years tended to underscore the church's positive achievements rather than to focus on its failings, omissions and missteps. They were also more likely to underscore resistance rather than collaboration and to put the church on the side of the victims and martyrs rather than the oppressors. And hence his goal: reconstructing the inner workings of the network at the heart of the Commission.

This task leads him to pore over lists of the Commission's board members put together by one of the Commission's founders, Rudolf Morsey, in 2004. Blaschke draws three diagrams for the intervals 1965-1976, 1977-1988, and 1989-2000, showing the frequency with which network members thanked each other in the introductions and forewords to their works. He notes constants and changes over nearly fifty years. The proportion of churchmen and politicians shrank over the decades, while the ranks of professional academics, mostly but not exclusively historians, accordingly rose. Two founders remained fixtures: the historians Konrad Repgen and Rudolf Morsey, who helped direct the institute itself and oversaw many of its publications. Other men played central roles: Dieter Albrecht, Ludwig Volk, SJ, Klaus Gotto and Ulrich von Hehl. Blaschke hones in on the network's mechanisms of exclusion. The board was the terrain of men. Only one woman took part (whom he does not name), and her role was peripheral. Voices particularly critical of the church's past were not permitted entry. Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde, whose critical article about German Catholicism in 1933 published in *Hochland* sparked something of a firestorm, was not invited to a conference held in Würzburg in May 1961 that provided momentum for the Commission's founding. Indeed, he did not receive an acknowledgment of thanks in a volume from the Blue Series until 1998.

Written from the hand of an outsider, Blaschke's analysis represents an admirable first stab into the mechanics of this network, even if an aggrieved tone reveals something of the author's motives. Blaschke correctly anchors the founding of this network in the political and ideological currents of the 1950s—in the spat over the validity of the Reichskonkordat which culminated in a widely-publicized and massive hearing before Germany's Constitutional Court in June, 1956, into the rediscovery of the Nazi past from the second half of the 1950s and in attempts to overcome educational deficits amongst German Catholics.

Blaschke's foray into the politics of history nonetheless has to rely predominantly on published sources. He repeatedly turns to Rudolf Morsey's insider account of the Commission's founding, the forwards to the volumes in the Blue Series and other retrospective glimpses offered by Commission members. More meticulous archival research into his topic, however, makes clear that the Commission, all outward appearances notwithstanding, was actually less homogeneous and united than portrayed here. Strategies and tactics varied. Personalities clashed. As Blaschke himself observes, founding members like Morsey and Repgen had to fight their own battles of sorts against the politicians of past and present like Heinrich Krone of the CDU in their effort to bring "truth to light." Volk's papers in the Jesuit Archives in Munich leave little doubt that his connections to the other Commission members were less substantial than a reading of acknowledgments might reveal. Though a tireless researcher, the more solitary Volk moved in intellectual and social circles that did not always overlap with those of other prominent members of this network.

Its many noteworthy volumes notwithstanding, the Commission also did not succeed in painting the definite discourse on the church's role in the Third Reich—neither in the academy nor in the mainstream press. In the sweeping surveys of the Third Reich, its research was often eclipsed by the findings of church critics, its documentary editions less frequently consulted. Against the critical writings of the Hochhuths, Cornwalls and Lewys, its fervent protests had a lesser impact, undoubtedly because the mechanisms of the international press rarely intersected with this network formally anchored in the church. The mainstream news media, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon world, tended to bypass the findings of the Commission and to give print and air time instead to the exposes of church critics. Language was one obvious barrier. The works of the Commission have not been translated into English. But the Commission's dense monograph and documentary editions have proven nearly impossible to distill into easily digestible nuggets. In hindsight, the outcome of battles between critical sound-bytes and dense works of scholarship was never in dispute.

Further limiting the Commission's impact on the mainstream historical profession was the fact that its members were exclusively Roman Catholic. Most of its authors sought to write "objective" history in a Rankean sense by letting the sources speak for themselves in a strict reconstruction of the past. To no great surprise, the Commission's publications were not absorbed into the great initial waves of social and cultural history that began sweeping through the German historical landscapes in the 1970s and 1990s respectively. By the 1990s, however, social history became part of the Commission's corpus of literature, as evidenced by volumes produced by Antonius Liedhegener on Protestants and Catholics in Bochum and Münster or by Christoph Kösters on youth organizations in the 1920s and 1930s. These volumes, along with others from the 1990s and 2000s, were heavily informed by the model of the "Catholic milieu." Inspired by the work of the sociologist, M. Rainer Lepsius, this model was first used by historians to explain the history of the German Empire (1871-1914). But only in 2006 did the Commission publish its first volume of cultural history, an account of Catholic students in the postwar era by Christian Schmidtmann.

These volumes notwithstanding, many of the earlier volumes of the Commission, particularly those pertaining to the late Weimar and National Socialist eras were most likely to be cited by fellow network members. But this was true, as Blaschke notes, of the other side as well. Operating with an equal degree of methodological insularity, the advocates of social and cultural history emerging from bastions like Bielefeld preferred the output of their friends, colleagues and mentors as models of inspiration and citation. Blaschke's essay thus opens the door for an analysis of the mechanics behind other historical networks including the Bielefelders or the Protestant Commission for the History of the Church Struggle during the Nazi Era. Were they also male-dominated? Did they foster ties to politicians and the media? And was their work an offshoot of larger ideological and political struggles?

Blaschke ultimately paints a picture of a parallel universe, even while acknowledging that the bunker mentality of the past is history. New networks like the Schwerter Arbeitskreis für Katholizismusforschung, he points out, have emerged to supplant the Commission's research monopoly, and leaders of the Commission have joined in the discussions that they have launched. Blaschke is right in calling for those in the field to bury the hatchets from the past. The battles from the 1950s through the 1990s need to be historicized and given their proper place in history.

But will the ongoing controversies over the Roman Catholic past and the divergent moral lessons so many have drawn from these harrowing years allow this to happen?

Tags: Freie Anerkennung übergeschichtlicher Bindungen, Geschichtsdeutung und Vergangenheitspolitik, Kommission für Zeitgeschichte, Mark Edward Ruff, Olaf Blaschke

Journal Issue Note: *Crisis and Credibility in the Jewish-Christian World: Remembering Franklin Littel. The Fortieth Annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches.* Special issue of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 46, no. 4 (Fall 2011).

By John S. Conway, University of British Columbia

The newest issue of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* is devoted to a single theme: "Crisis and Credibility in the Jewish-Christian World" and is a much deserved tribute to the late Professor Franklin H. Littell (1917-2009). Littel spent his whole career as an academic and a Methodist preacher in overcoming the obstacles and prejudices connected with Christian relations to Judaism. From the time he first went to Germany in 1939, Littell became concerned with the tragedy which befell the Jewish people and the failure of the churches to take a stand against it. This issue of the journal includes numerous articles presented at the 40th Annual Scholars Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches, held in 2010. This annual event was started by Littell and Hubert Locke in 1970 as a means of bringing together Jewish and Christian scholars from North America, with occasional guests from Europe. Over the years, these conferences have been enormously productive in overcoming the barriers to inter-religious dialogue, and have particularly contributed to the joint study of the significance of the Holocaust. It was Littell's conviction that the Holocaust was a Christian tragedy too, and that the theological implications for Christian churches needed to be explored in depth. He would surely have been very pleased with the articles in this commemorative issue, since they amply fulfill his high hopes. Yet Littell was always aware that more remained to be done. The first group of essays in this journal issue is therefore rightly entitled "The Unfinished Agenda" and looks to the tasks ahead.

Particularly interesting are such contributions as those by our co-editors, Kyle Jantzen (co-written with Jonathan Durance) and Suzanne Brown-Fleming, analyzing Christian responses to the initial stages of the Holocaust after the Kristallnacht pogrom of November 1938. Equally interesting are the papers describing Littell's valiant efforts in the aftermath to erect warning signals which would alert men and women of good will to the danger of potential genocidal situations. The final section includes personal reminiscences by Littell's friends, joining in a heartfelt tribute to a Christian leader whose call for respect and understanding of Judaism will undoubtedly be remembered in both church and academy in the years ahead.

Tags: Crisis and Credibility in the Jewish-Christian World, Franklin Littel, John S. Conway, Journal of Ecumenical Studies,Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches