

# *Contemporary Church History Quarterly*

## Volume 18, Number 4 (December 2012)

### Letter from the Editors: December 2012

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to relaunch our new-look journal this month, with a new WordPress platform and a new name: *Contemporary Church History Quarterly*. Both these changes come as a response to new developments in Internet technology, which have made possible this much more user-friendly format with several new features:

- **Complete Archive:** all *Association of Contemporary Church Historians Newsletters* (the monthly e-mail newsletters from John S. Conway) from 1995 to 2009, all issues of the *ACCH Quarterly* (March 2010 to September 2012) and all issues of the *Contemporary Church History Quarterly* (December 2012 onward) are available at this site. Just click on the "[Archive](#)" link at the top of the page to find the full list of back issues.
- **Fully Searchable:** all content from *Contemporary Church History Quarterly* (and its predecessor publications) is searchable both through the search engine on the right side of the page and through any Internet search engine (Google, Bing, etc.). All recent articles are also tagged, in order to optimize this searchability. Our previous web platform was not particularly searchable, and so we're delighted that more readers than ever will find their way to our reviews, articles, news and notes about modern German and European church history.
- **Read New Issues in a Single File:** Some of our users have asked if we could provide new issues of the *Contemporary Church History Quarterly* as a single file they could read in one sitting, or perhaps print out for themselves. We have incorporated this feature into our new site-- just click on "[Download Journal](#)" at the top of the page to go to a list of recent issues, each of which appears as a single pdf file.

In our quest to make the journal more user-friendly and easier to find on the Internet, we've also changed our name. *Contemporary Church History Quarterly* clearly describes what we do, and we think that will encourage those who find us through web searches to become regular readers. Subscribing is free, and instructions on how to do so are always visible on the bottom right hand side of the page.

I (Kyle Jantzen) would be remiss if I did not thank my colleagues Steve Morris, Mark Thompson, and Spenser Jones in the IT department at Ambrose University College for a great deal of technical help in the transition to our WordPress platform.



A wayside cross by a vineyard near Rüdesheim am Rhein, Hesse, symbolizing the protection of Jesus over the produce of the land.

The technical changes to our journal are matched by some exciting new developments on the editorial board. This month, we welcome two new editors to *Contemporary Church History*. Dr. Lauren N. Faulkner is Assistant Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. Her research centres on German Catholic clergy in World War Two. Dr. Kevin P. Spicer, C. S. C., is James J. Kenneally Distinguished Professor of History at Stonehill College in Massachusetts. His research revolves around Catholic clergy in the Third Reich, as well as Christian antisemitism and Christian-Jewish relations. Drs. Faulkner and Spicer join the rest of our fine editorial board: Dr. Victoria J. Barnett, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC, USA; Dr. Doris Bergen, University of Toronto, Canada; Dr. Suzanne Brown-Fleming, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC, USA; Dr. Andrew Chandler, University of Chichester, UK; Dr. John S. Conway, University of British Columbia, BC, Canada; Dr. Robert P. Ericksen, Pacific Lutheran University, WA, USA; Dr. Manfred Gailus, Technische Universität Berlin, Germany; Dr. Beth Griech-Polelle, Bowling Green State University, OH, USA; Dr. Matthew D. Hockenos, Skidmore College, NY, USA; Dr. Kyle Jantzen, Ambrose University College, AB, Canada (Managing Editor); Dr. Christopher J. Probst, Saint Louis University, MO, USA; Dr. Mark Edward Ruff, Saint Louis University, MO, USA; Dr. Steven Schroeder, University of the Fraser Valley, BC, Canada; and Dr. Heath Spencer, Seattle University, WA, USA.

As ever, we offer an interesting array of reviews and notes this issue, on Pope Pius XII, Bishop George Bell, Jewish Christians, German Free Churches, Religion in East Germany, and--roaming a little further afield--missionary work in the Middle East. We profile the research of a young Australian scholar, report

on three academic conferences, and note a new journal issue devoted to the theme of German expellees after the Second World War.

On behalf of my editorial colleagues, let me wish you a blessed Christmas season and much joy over the holidays,

Kyle Jantzen, Ambrose University College.

## ***Contemporary Church History Quarterly***

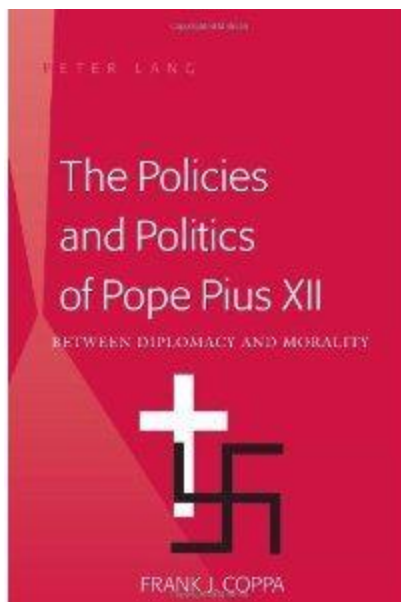
### **Volume 18, Number 4 (December 2012)**

#### **Review of Frank J. Coppa, *The Policies and Politics of Pope Pius XII: Between Diplomacy and Morality* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011).**

**By Suzanne Brown-Fleming, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum [1]**

##### *The Devil in the Documents*

“It may take years, perhaps decades, before the Pius War is brought to an end,” (176) Frank J. Coppa concludes in his recent book, *The Policies and Politics of Pope Pius XII: Between Diplomacy and Morality*. For this study, Coppa brings to bear new sources: chiefly, but not exclusively, the recently opened papers of the pontificate of Pope Pius XI (1922-1939), available in part at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. “This debate is bound to continue,” writes Coppa (146).



One of Coppa’s main arguments---and a great contribution toward moving the so-called Pius Wars forward---is to remind us that Eugenio Pacelli (Pope Pius XII, 1939-1958) was greatly influenced by his mentor, Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Gasparri (1914-1930), who championed “a diplomacy of accommodation and conciliation” (57). Pope Benedict XV (1914-1922), under the advice of Gasparri and then-Secretary of the Department of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs Pacelli, sought to play a role as a mediator during World War I, and thus declared himself “impartial without preconception or judgment.” While he hoped such an approach would earn him “the trust of both sides,” instead it “provoked suspicion” due to his “continual refusal to cite specific abuses and name the perpetrators” (60). Scholars who have followed the “Pius Wars” will experience a sense of déjà vu when reading Coppa’s fine analysis of this period. One 1916 pamphlet “denounced ‘The Silence of Benedict XV’ and claimed papal silence compromised the church and weakened the faith” (62). As Coppa observes, this

same critique was and is still today made with regard to Pacelli. Coppa argues that Pacelli's "impartiality" during World War II had important historical roots and precedents during World War I. One cannot fail to wonder why a policy of impartiality, which Coppa argues drew massive criticism during World War I, would be adopted as a viable model going forward.

Coppa rightly points to a factor often ignored in the heated exchanges about the 1933 concordat between the Vatican and Nazi Germany. The Vatican concluded concordats with "authoritarian, democratic, socialist and fascist regimes" alike (66). The Vatican's concordats with Austria (1934), Baden (1932), Bavaria (1924), Italy (1929), and Prussia (1929) are often mentioned in the secondary literature. Not mentioned frequently are the concordats with Czechoslovakia (1928), Latvia (1925), Lithuania (1927), Poland (1925), Portugal (1928), and Romania (1927). Pacelli never gave up his attachment to concordats and maintaining diplomatic relations with Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, to the point where he "ordered the Vatican printing house to destroy all evidence of [Pius XI's] papal speech [*Humani Generis Unitas*]" because he "feared it would widen the rift with Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany" (72) following the death of Pope Pius XI. This explosive memorandum of 15 February 1939 is reported to be in the newly opened Vatican Secret Archives material, but its precise location is not cited (72). In the end, Pacelli followed policies of "accommodation, appeasement, impartiality, and silence" (138), and when considered in the light of his experience during World War I, we should not be surprised, argues Coppa.

While Coppa does not place great emphasis on the point, he argues that Pacelli made "constant and negative" (40) references to Jews in 1918-1919 during his tenure as papal nuncio to Munich (1917-1920). To date, only two reports containing such references have been brought to light by scholars: Pacelli's 30 April 1919 reference to "grim Russian-Jewish-revolutionary tyranny" in describing the Second Soviet Republic in Bavaria (12 April-3 May 1919), cited by Hubert Wolf in his book *Pope and Devil: The Vatican's Archives and the Third Reich* (2010), and the much-discussed 18 April 1919 report about the Munich revolutionaries from Pacelli to Gasparri, which first appeared in Emma Fattorini's 1992 book *Germania e Santa Sede: La Nunziature di Pacelli tra la Grande Guerre e la Repubblica di Weimar* (later sensationalized by Cornwell's reference to it in his highly-critiqued 1999 book *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII*). Coppa cites one additional document from then-nuncio Pacelli to Gasparri, dated 15 November 1918, in which he described the Eisner government in Germany as "illegitimate" and "led by Jews, atheists, and racial Protestants" (40). Coppa indicates that he saw many more documents in which "Pacelli revealed a degree of anti-Judaism as well as anti-communism as he catalogued the Bolshevik-Jewish cooperation against the state, the social order, and the church" (39). Pacelli, writes Coppa, "almost always mentioned the Jewish background of the revolutionaries [when] cataloging their personal and political excesses" (39). This is a highly original contribution to what is often a predictable and polemical exchange regarding the person of Pacelli, and bears further study. An article giving a comprehensive analysis of Pacelli's reports during this compact period, and references to Jews therein, would be well worth pursuing.

The contested degree and significance of Pacelli's anti-Jewish sentiments brings to bear Coppa's effort to differentiate him from his predecessor, Achille Ratti (Pope Pius XI, 1922-1939). Coppa's admiration for Pope Pius XI comes through in his frequent references to Ratti, who in Coppa's view "early-on proved critical of anti-Semitism" (66). Coppa does not discuss evidence to the contrary during Ratti's appointment as nuncio to Poland, pointed out by David Kertzer in *The Popes Against the Jews: The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism* (2001). In fact, regarding Ratti's time as nuncio in

Poland, Coppa writes that “Ratti was shocked and scandalized by the pogroms unleashed against the Jews in Eastern Europe,” citing a secondary source work rather than primary source documentation. Nor does Coppa discuss the damning evidence uncovered by Hubert Wolf regarding the May 1928 commentary in *Civiltà Cattolica*, “Il pericolo Giudaico e gli ‘Amici d’Israele,” printed at the direct behest of Pope Pius XI and featuring adjectives like “presumptuous and powerful” and “danger[ous]” to describe Jews. Pius XI, we now know due to evidence brought forth by Wolf, explicitly supported the retention of “perfidious Jews” in the Good Friday liturgy (Wolf, *Pope and Devil*, 116, 121). Coppa discusses only the 1928 condemnation of anti-Semitism (67), which we know via Wolf can no longer be taken at face value.

Coppa argues that Pope Pius XI “sympathized with the Jews who were already persecuted by the Nazi state [in 1933] and responded positively to the appeals of Edith Stein and others to intervene on their behalf” (83). Here he refers to Edith Stein’s April 1933 letter to the pope, attached to a cover letter dated 12 April 1933 from Archabbot Raphael Walzer, O.S.B., of Beuron, Germany. Wolf reaches an entirely different conclusion regarding the episode of this letter. According to Wolf in *Pope and Devil*, Cardinal Pacelli presented her petition to the pope in a private audience on 20 April 1933. The heading above his six agenda items for that meeting reads “the archabbot of Beuron sends letters against the National Socialists.” There exists “no evidence in the archives of any other letters that Walzer might have sent,” and Pacelli did not note any instructions from the pope, meaning that Pacelli was given the latitude to respond as he saw fit on the pope’s behalf (Wolf, 188).

Coppa’s brief discussion of March-September 1933, which marked the Enabling Act, the repeal by the German bishops on the ban on Nazi party membership, the dissolution of the Center Party, and the signing of the concordat (83-86) requires sharper focus on chronology and the relationship between each of these distinct events. I disagree with Coppa’s interpretation of the importance and impact of the pope’s 4 April 1933 query (via Pacelli) to nuncio in Germany Cesare Orsenigo asking “how it would be possible to become involved in the desired direction” of “universal peace and love for all human beings” following the 1 April 1933 anti-Jewish boycott (87-88, 96). Coppa is much more convincing when discussing the last years of Ratti’s life, when available evidence indeed suggests a softening of those attitudes described by Kertzer and Wolf. One could argue that Ratti’s evolution, even revolution, from a man imbued with the anti-Jewish prejudices of his age to the man he became by 1938 makes him more, rather than less, impressive.

Poor editing makes this book frustrating for scholars to use as effectively as they might and does not do justice to Coppa’s research. For example, the endnotes are inconsistent from chapter to chapter. With respect to the materials from the Vatican Secret Archives congregation of extraordinary ecclesiastical affairs [Archivio della Sacra Congregazione per gli affari Ecclesiastici straordinari, or AA.EE.SS., cited as AAES in Coppa’s book], they are at times incomplete for scholars who wish to find the precise document cited. For example, endnote 34 in chapter one reads: “Pacelli to Gasparri, October 22, 1917, AAES, Bavaria, Germania, n.371,” without the position (posizione) or file (fascicolo) cited at all. This leaves those scholars who wish to look up the document for themselves within the massive AAES Bavaria sub-collection unable to do so efficiently. In other cases, the position and file are cited, alongside the memorandum number, but the date, author, and recipient are not identified (91, footnote 26). On at least three occasions, “Pope Pius” becomes “Pope Pus” (51, 65, 149). Whole paragraphs appear again, verbatim, in several parts of the book, for example, “The recent opening...as well as Germany” first appears on p.53 and then again on pages 70-71. The index also contains omissions.

The overall value of this book lies in its effort to move us away from polemics and toward examination of new sources. It is fitting that Coppa, the first recipient of the American Catholic Historical Association's Lifetime Distinguished Scholarship Award, be among the first to lead us through these new sources. Coppa is quite correct, I think, to ruefully acknowledge that new sources will not bring an immediate resolution. Coppa's book is replete with new documents that several scholars have just now begun to examine, and they are reaching very different conclusions. That is the practice of good history.

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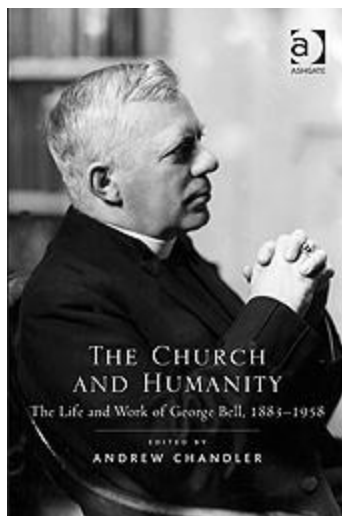
[1] The views as expressed are the author's alone and do not necessarily represent those of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum or any other organization.

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**Review of Andrew Chandler, ed., *The Church and Humanity: The life and work of George Bell, 1883-1958*. (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2012), xvi + 227 Pp., ISBN 978-14094-25564.**

**By John S. Conway, University of British Columbia**



George Bell, Bishop of Chichester on England's south coast from 1929 to 1958, has long enjoyed recognition as one of the outstanding figures in the Church of England during the first half of the last century. He championed consistently and relentlessly two major aspects of church life, namely the cause of church unity and the search for international peace and justice. Bell's achievement was to advocate these ideals with effectiveness and tenacity even against the vocal opposition of many of his episcopal colleagues, his laity, and the wider conservative public. The result was that in many cases he appeared a lonely contender for failed causes. But this corresponded with his style of leadership. He was not a team player, had no oratorical gifts, and was an ineffective chairman of committees. His strength was seen best in one-to-one conversations, and his persuasiveness in such encounters was enhanced by his genuine interest and humanity, as is well recorded in his extensive correspondence, fortunately now preserved in Lambeth Palace library. Above all, he set the sights for

Christian witness at the highest level, and tirelessly sought to challenge any lesser, more parochial views for both the church and the nation.

It is for these qualities that Bell will be remembered. To help this task, a memorial conference was held in 2008, on the fiftieth anniversary of his death. The result is this collection of essays in his honour, elegantly edited and introduced by Andrew, Chandler, the Director of the George Bell Institute in Chichester. Among the distinguished contributors is the present Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, whose penetrating tribute closes the volume. Also included are essays about various aspects of Bell's ministry.

Gerhard Besier of Dresden gives us an informative piece about Bell's efforts to promote the cause of church unity on the international level, in collaboration with Visser 't Hooft, the first General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. In the inter-war years, this mainly Protestant ecumenical movement owed much to Bell's careful but enthusiastic involvement, which pulled together the separate strands of Life and Work, along with Faith and Order. When the World Council was finally established in 1948, it was fitting that Bell should be Chairman of its Executive and later one of its Presidents.

These rise of Nazism to power in Germany and the attempts by one section of the German Protestant churches to oppose its ideological goals aroused Bell's close interest, and his efforts to support the Confessing Church's resistance to Nazism are touched on in several of these essays. Chandler himself contributes a chapter entitled "The Patronage of Resistance," outlining Bell's unwavering encouragement of "the other Germany" by drawing a clear distinction between the Nazi regime and the German people. To many people in Britain, especially during war-time, this seemed a perverse or at least naive view. Bell persevered, however, and was determined to create conditions after the war in which this "better" Germany could rise again. After his well-known meeting with Bonhoeffer in Sweden in 1942, Bell sought to get the British government's approval of some gesture of assistance to the German Resistance. This only earned him the scorn of the politicians who saw him as a "turbulent priest," out of touch with mainstream British opinion.

Even more controversial were Bell's outspoken protests in the House of Lords against the Royal Air Force's bombing of German cities and civilians. As some have supposed, this principled stance against his own government's policies led to his being passed over when the Archbishopric of Canterbury fell vacant in 1944. Less well known, but equally a part of Bell's humanitarian concerns, were his efforts on behalf of the German refugees in war-time Britain, as described by Charmian Brinson. In 1940 the British government ordered whole-scale internment of such refugees, even though many of them were Jews expelled by the Nazis who had sought refuge across the Channel. Nonetheless, many of them were deported to Canada and Australia on the flimsiest of pretexts. Bell spent much time in attempts to mitigate their position through his dedicated engagement, especially for the group of 37 "non-aryan" pastors from Germany whom he had personally sponsored to come to England in 1938-9. This was a noble if unpopular task, but Bell did not flinch from doing what he believed was his duty.

After Nazism was overthrown, Bell turned his energies to the reconstruction, reconciliation and hoped-for re-Christianization of Europe. Predictably, as Philip Coupland describes, he showed empathy for the German people, and resolved to do what he could to assist the churches there in rebuilding their devastated church life. He strenuously avoided any talk of collective guilt and was openly critical of aspects of the war crimes trials and the 'de-nazification' process. But in the view of Tom Lawson, in the only essay in the book critical of Bell's tactics, this was a moral blunder, since Bell became associated with the perpetrators of the most reprehensible crimes, for whom he pleaded leniency, allegedly in the interests of healing the war's wounds.

Certainly Bell was fully persuaded that Christian values would be vital in fashioning the new Europe. Hence he was all the more alarmed by the growing threat of Soviet Bolshevism. His remedy was for a federal United States of Europe, but the onset of the Cold War doomed such a prospect. The political division of Germany between the victors was a bitter blow. So too was the British Government's reluctance to seek a closer unity even in western Europe. On the other hand, as Dianne Kirby makes clear in her contribution on George Bell and the Cold War, Bell was a welcome ally for the British Foreign Office's propaganda campaigns. He exercised a moral influence through many circles of the establishment and kept at bay those who still believed in the good-heartedness of the Soviet Union. Seeking to combat Communism by the teaching of a better religion and a truer philosophy, Bell alerted people to the Communist threat and reinforced with religious arguments the level of popular anti-Communism. At the same time, though, Bell was appalled by the development of nuclear weapons, the use of which he considered incompatible with Christian international morality. The inherent contradictions in such views remained unresolved. So too the Cold War split rather than united Europe's churches. Bell's pastoral and political legacy is therefore a mixed one. Yet he remained a striking voice calling on the Church to rise above temporary loyalties or immediate interests, and instead to place the needs of suffering humanity in the forefront of Christian responsibility and obligation.

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**Review of Hildegard Frisius, Marianne Kälberer, Wolfgang G. Krogel, Gerlind Lachenicht, Frauke Lemmel, eds., *Evangelisch getauft – als Juden verfolgt. Spurensuche Berliner Kirchengemeinden* (Berlin: Wichern-Verlag, 2008), 452 Pp.**

**By Manfred Gailus, Technische Universität Berlin**



On November 20th 2002, a day of Prayer and Repentance, Bishop Wolfgang Huber, who was the Chairman of the Council of the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD) from 2003 to 2009, held a remarkably self-critical sermon in St. Paul's Church, Berlin-Zehlendorf, commemorating the fate of the non-aryan Christians during Third Reich. Rarely if ever had a leading representative of Germany's Protestant churches spoken out so clearly about what happened to the Christians of Jewish origin, or confessed the guilt of the churches and their fellow Christians. After this sermon, various groups in some 16 Berlin parishes started investigations to discover the identities of these former "baptized Jews", and formed a "working group" to discuss research problems and present their findings. Altogether, after a long-lasting and pain-staking research process, they identified some 300 former "non-aryan Christians" from their own Berlin parishes i.e. persons, who had been deported to the East during



the Second World War. Only eight of them survived.

This book describes how this research was undertaken, for instance the hard work of looking through thousands of pages of dusty old “Taufbücher” (baptism registers), and the results of this laudable research initiative from below. It is not an academic or scientific book in the strict sense. However, the initiative in itself and many of the results are more than respectable. Some of the researchers were able to reconstruct biographies about “non-aryan Christians” at full length – biographies that were often completely unknown and forgotten up to the present day. In some parishes, the identification of their deported former fellow Christians was the first step to the installation of commemorative plaques in the entrance halls of churches, or for the installation of the so called “Stolpersteine” (small metallic plaques in the pavement with biographical data) in front of their houses. In a lengthy article, Wolfgang G. Krogel repeats the earlier findings about the “Sippenforschungen” of the Berlin Nazi parson Karl Themel (“Kirchenbuchstelle Alt-Berlin – ein Hilfsorgan des NS-Staates”, pp. 297-361). The book also contains a list of 35 deported women and 53 deported men belonging to Protestant parishes in Berlin, as derived from the “Fremdstämmigen-Kartei” (Aliens’ Card-Index) produced by Themel in his “Kirchenbuchstelle Alt-Berlin” (pp. 366-373). In it, the information under the rubric “date and place of deportation” reads like this: Theresienstadt, Riga, Minsk, suicide Berlin, Auschwitz, Treblinka. Finally, the book reprints three outstanding documents: parts of the famous and courageous sermon by Helmut Gollwitzer, given on the day of Prayer and Repentance on November 16th 1938 in Berlin-Dahlem; the sermon of Johannes Hildebrandt in commemoration of the November 1938 pogrom, given at the Sophiengemeinde (then in East Berlin) in 1978; and, as already mentioned, the [2002 sermon by Wolfgang Huber in Berlin-Zehlendorf](#).

To sum up, this is a remarkable book, which grew out of an initiative of engaged Berlin Protestants who are more or less hobby or half-professional historians, in order to give remembrance to their former non-aryan fellow Christians. However, the book is not yet the professional scholarly study on this issue that is so badly needed for the whole Berlin area. One has to remember the fact that Berlin housed not only the largest Jewish community in Germany during the 1930s, but was also the home of some 20-30 000 baptized Jews belonging to the Protestant churches, which to a large extent were governed at that time by the strongly antisemitic German Christians who betrayed and expelled their non-aryan fellow Christians. So, much more remains to be done, to bring to the present day and age this awful story so full of guilt and shame.

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**Review of Daniel Heinz, ed., *Freikirchen und Juden im Dritten Reich. Instrumentalisierte Heilsgeschichte, antisemitische Vorurteile und verdrängte Schuld. Kirche – Konfession – Religion*, 54 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), Pp. 344, ISBN: 9783899716900.**

**By Nicholas Railton, University of Ulster**

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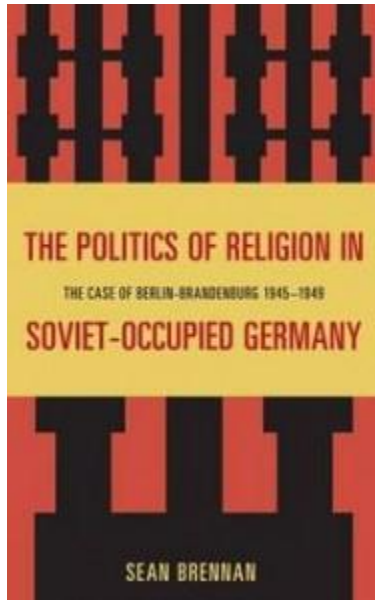
This volume of papers dealing with ten Free Church denominations in the so-called Third German Empire is an excellent study of key issues related to the themes of prejudice and guilt in Christians' dealings with Jews. Being denominations organised and financed independently of the state, the Free Churches were not faced with some of the pressures challenging larger mainstream denominations. No constitutional bar to Jews becoming pastors or members was imposed on their ranks, but this did not necessarily signify that Jewish Christians experienced solidarity and protection. Notices on the doors of Adventist churches, for example, told Jews that they were not permitted to enter. There were indeed righteous Gentiles who dissented from official or semi-official statements made by their ecclesiastical leaders and sought to alleviate the suffering of Jews and Jewish Christians. Yet too many representatives of Free Church organisations conformed to the spirit of the age. The authors of these studies weigh their former leaders in the balance and find them wanting. The book concludes with an appendix which primarily deals with a single pastor in Vienna. Graf-Stuhlhofer regurgitates his fanciful speculations about the Viennese Baptist whom he incongruously considers to have been the single most vocal public critic of the National Socialist regime (p. 311). He achieves this by reading political messages back into innocuous sermon notes, which form his primary source base. Graf-Stuhlhofer's feverish imagination transfigures Arnold Köster into a prophet of righteousness, standing out, Moses-like, against the diabolical forces of Nazism. This essay is certainly the weakest contribution to the volume. Whereas all the other chapters make an attempt to unearth the roots of prejudice and spiritual blindness, the appendix highlights a Free Churchman who, the reader is led to believe, was miraculously untouched by Austrian antisemitism. The author fails to explain how Köster could refer to Jews as 'hook-nosed creatures' (p. 326) and why he apparently believed that Germany was a divinely chosen rod to chastise Israel (p. 327). Throughout the volume, moreover, the issue of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* receives little treatment. We learn nothing about why some Free Churches took decades before issuing paper statements about the sins of their fathers. Yet, even with these defects, this volume is an important addition to the literature on antisemitism and the shoah and will hopefully encourage more research on how and why members of minority religious groups internalised antisemitic views. The purely typological reading of the prophetic books favoured by Köster and other Free Churchmen was, and is, an essential ingredient of all anti-Judaism. Given that Bishop Wenner (p. 7) and Professor Heinrichs (p. 29) both misquote the Bible one wonders whether Free Church leaders are, however, in a position to correct traditional ecclesiastical exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures. Yet Bonhoeffer's view is still valid today: only those who speak up for Jews (and the Jewish state) have a right to sing hymns or Gregorian chants.

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## **Review of Sean Brennan, *The Politics of Religion in Soviet-Occupied Germany: The Case of Berlin-Brandenburg, 1945-1949* (New York, NY: Lexington Books, 2011), 235 Pp.**

**By Beth A. Griech-Polelle, Bowling Green State University**



Brennan's book opens with the question, what was Soviet rule in Germany like? Or, more specifically, what was Soviet policy like with regards to religious issues in the hot spot of Berlin-Brandenburg in the immediate post-WWII environment? Through the examination of the SVAG (Soviet military administration in Germany) and the SED (the Socialist Unity Party of Germany), Brennan's work seeks to explain how Stalinist religious policies were devised and implemented within the Soviet-controlled zone of Germany. His work reveals the complex and often contradictory approaches that the SVAG and the SED leaders took towards religious policy issues and it contributes to a neglected area of research: that of the Soviet occupation zone, the Soviet's formation of religious policies, and the role of both the German Catholic and Protestant Churches in reacting to those policies. The Churches, for their part, worked to ensure the continued existence of religion in Germany, while the SVAG and SED leaders were never in doubt that their policies would end "outmoded" religious belief.

Chapter One offers a brief overview of the struggles of both the German Protestant and Catholic Churches under the Nazi dictatorship, documenting Nazi policies on the seizure of church property, youth groups, and charitable organizations. Brennan also shows how leaders in both Churches were divided as to how their organizations should respond to Nazi policies. Likewise, he addresses the mixed approaches of the Nazi regime towards the churches- from outright attempts to eradicate Church influence in Germany to more restrained attacks which sought to limit the Church's political and social role. In many respects, the SVAG and the SED would follow some of these same approaches in the aftermath of the war.

Perhaps the most divisive issue facing the churches in the Soviet zone in 1945 was the relationship with the Christian Democratic Union (CDU). To the SVAG and SED leadership, the churches, in league with the CDU, were a reactionary front whose sole purpose was to prevent the establishment of an anti-fascist German state. Chapters Two and Three examine the connections made between the CDU and the churches and how that relationship was perceived by the SVAG authorities. Colonel Sergei Tiul'panov, leader of the SVAG section that dealt with religious questions, Jakob Kaiser and Andreas Hermes, the two leaders of the CDU in the Soviet zone, all emerge as key players in these chapters. From 1945 through the fall elections of 1946, Tiul'panov expected (as did many others in the SVAG), that the SED would sweep the elections, and thus, the SVAG authorities primarily sought to limit the political role churches could play, and they waged a propaganda campaign against the CDU's idea of "Christian Socialism." Throughout the campaign season, SED leadership stressed through newspaper articles and speeches that the "true Christians" (p.35) would be supportive of an antifascist Germany while implying that voting for the CDU meant pursuing reactionary attitudes found in both the Protestant and Catholic Churches. The CDU, for its part, was particularly successful in stressing that the SED was an atheistic party which could never

represent religious Germans' concerns. When the votes were counted, the SED had not achieved a majority of votes. Despite the poor showing of the SED in the fall 1946 elections, Brennan's study of the SVAG and SED correspondence reveals that both the Soviets and their "German friends" were not afraid of the long term influence of the churches and the CDU. In effect, they believed that it was only a matter of time before the democratic transformation of the Soviet zone would go unchallenged.

Chapter Three documents the decline and fall of Jakob Kaiser and an independent CDU. For Tiul'panov, once Kaiser was removed from his leadership position in the CDU, this meant that reactionary clergy would no longer have a political ally. The breaking point that led to Kaiser's removal as leader of the CDU was the Volkscongress planned for December 1946. Kaiser publically and repeatedly denounced the congress while the SVAG and the SED attacked Kaiser for not supporting the meeting. Tiul'panov met with Kaiser, rebuked him for his "antidemocratic stance," and removed him from his leadership position. Kaiser was replaced by Otto Nuschke, who abandoned the CDU policy of "Christian Socialism," and understood that if the CDU was to continue to exist in the Soviet zone, it would have to follow the SED. At this point, church leaders such as Otto Dibelius and Cardinal Konrad von Preysing, began to speak out against the anti-religious policies developing in the Soviet zone. Both Preysing and Dibelius, from late 1947 through 1948, denounced what they perceived as the threat to their religious freedoms. Although Tiul'panov and other SVAG and SED authorities suspected that the forces of conservative reactionaries were working in league together, Brennan effectively demonstrates how church leaders preferred to work independently from CDU leaders when addressing religious issues with the Soviet zonal leaders.

Chapters Four through Six explore the issues of religious education in the school system, youth and women's organizations, and charitable church-run activities within the Soviet zone. With respect to the realm of education, the SVAG and SED leaders were absolutely determined to secularize the school system. Yet, from 1945 to 1949, one of the bitterest struggles in the Berlin-Brandenburg area, was over the issue of religion in the school system. The SVAG and SED authorities had determined that there would be no place in the school system for religion. Only dialectical materialism would be taught in the schools yet, because of complaints by men such as Dibelius and Preysing, an agreement was reached in 1946 regarding religion in the educational system. The compromise of 1946 allowed for religious educational courses to be taught in school buildings, after school hours, with churches having to provide the instructors (as well as pay for their salaries). In addition, the courses could not be required for students and parental permission was needed for students to attend the courses. Further additions to the compromise included proving that all of the religious teachers had never been members of the Nazi Party. As time progressed, more and more obstacles were placed in the way of the courses actually being taught, denying religious institutions the ability to offer religious education in the schools. To the SED leaders, the schools had to be completely secularized while to Church authorities, the roadblocks they encountered in the realm of religious education only confirmed in their minds that Nazism was being replaced by yet another totalitarian system.

In the area of youth and women's organizational activities, Soviet authorities assumed that antifascist groups such as the Free German Youth and the Democratic Women's Federation, would naturally attract a large following. SVAG and SED policies towards religious organizations increased in intensity over the years 1945-49. Escalating from propaganda attacks, to the banning of public meetings to finally arresting and imprisoning the leaders of religious youth and women's organizations, the SED and SVAG revealed their belief that any religious organization was an impediment to creating a democratic, antifascist

Germany modeled on the Soviet Union. Their goal was to render these religious organizations to the margins of German society while still promoting ideas of “religious freedom” in the zone.

In contrast with the SVAG and SED policies to erode the power of youth and women’s religious organizations, Soviet policies toward charitable work of the Churches was quite different. In this area, the churches were left relatively free to engage in charitable activity although the SVAG did create an umbrella organization, Volkssolidarität, which was there to supposedly bring all charitable work into one, coordinated mass effort to bring relief. Brennan notes, however, that within the idea of charitable work, SVAG authorities had differing opinions. For example, in the realm of running orphanages, most SVAG leaders believed they could leave them in the hands of religious institutions while the issue of controlling hospitals elicited the exact opposite reaction from SVAG authorities, who imagined that church-run hospitals were using their powers to coerce their patients into accepting Western imperialism. Despite the takeover of church-run hospitals, the field of charitable relief was relatively free of the bitter conflict found in other church-state struggles in the Soviet zone.

Throughout all of the battles being waged over the churches’ rights to participate in the Soviet zone of control loomed the larger issue of religious freedom. This idea, that true religious freedom, could and would exist in a socialist society, was at the root of all of these fights. The SVAG and SED authorities engaged in a propaganda campaign which contrasted with the reality of their religious policies. Brennan demonstrates that this attempt to win over German support for a socialist society began long before the war’s end with various Communist Party conferences promising the promotion of religious freedom, however, the reality of the persecution of religion in Stalinist Russia, did much to dissuade Germans from truly believing in the truthfulness of the campaign. Within the Berlin-Brandenburg region of Soviet control, there was an attempt to drive a wedge between the “reactionary” Catholic Church and the “progressive” Protestant denominations, yet there is no evidence that reveals animosity between men such as Dibelius and Preysing. In the end, this religious freedom campaign was abandoned by the SVAG and the SED by 1948.

In the final chapter, Brennan examines why the Allied Religious Affairs Committee (ARAC) failed in its mission to provide a unified religious policy for the four occupation zones of Germany. In many respects ARAC’s inability to recommend a unified religious policy simply serves as a microcosm of the emerging Cold War with the Western Powers agreeing to one strategy while the Soviets pursue a different one. ARAC in particular developed the habit of sending two differing recommendations to higher occupation authorities except when it came to items such as endorsing supplying wine for church services. In most cases, ARAC leaders simply could not arrive at unanimous recommendations, thus revealing that even in the realm of religious issues, a single, unified policy for the divided German zones was impossible.

Brennan’s work is truly a wonderful addition to the field of church-state policy history. His work in Soviet, German, and U.S. archives makes this book a very strong examination of emerging Soviet policies in the earliest days of the Cold War. However, the book is rife with typographical and grammatical errors that often distract the reader from following the argument. For example, “This chapter examines how the experience of religious youth and women’s organizations and so to illuminate power realities in the Soviet zone of Germany,...” (p.102) or, “Much like the DFD or the antifascist women’s committees, the bulletin argued.” (p.110). In addition, simple mistakes such as misspelling author’s names Tischer on p.XXI for Tischner or Bishop August von Galen, omitting Clemens from the Bishop’s name, (p. 2), distract from the

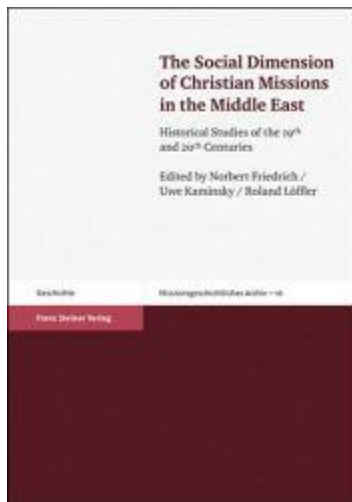
overall effectiveness of Brennan's persuasive argument. Overall, however, these are minor points that will not interfere with the fascinating study Brennan has produced.

## ***Contemporary Church History Quarterly***

**Volume 18, Number 4 (December 2012)**

**Review of Norbert Friedrich, Uwe Kaminsky, and Roland Löffler, eds., *The Social Dimension of Christian Missions in the Middle East. Historical studies of the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010), 252 Pp., ISBN 9783515096560.**

**By John S. Conway, University of British Columbia**



The Middle East was the birthplace of three of the world's great religions. The aura of their sacred traditions is lovingly maintained in holy sites throughout the region, which have been for centuries the sources of pilgrimages, but also of conflicts between the rival faiths. In the nineteenth century, the region became the object of ambitious attraction for numerous western European powers, for political, economic and military as well as religious reasons. One result was the establishment of new Christian missions, both Catholic and Protestant, home-based in England, Scotland, Germany, Italy, Austria, Spain and even the United States. Each sought to transplant their own concept of Christian mission to the local inhabitants, as well as catering for the ever-increasing number of tourist/pilgrims who expected to find support for their own pious endeavours in their own language. These large-scale enterprises are the subject of this valuable collection of essays, written by

an international and ecumenical cast of contributors. Originating from an international conference in Germany, and largely devoted to German missions, these papers have been excellently translated into English.

Roland Loeffler's introductory essay makes the point that the remarkable proliferation in the region of European missionary projects in the nineteenth century led to a crisis both on the ground and at home. Their original aim was to convert the Jews who lived there, especially in Palestine. They were almost all unsuccessful. But the fervent expectations of their home boards and the need to keep alive the interest of their supporters propelled them into areas of social work, such as schools and hospitals, whose results would be more promising. Thus the Syrian Orphanage was originally founded by Swabian Pietists, and the Jerusalem Verein by Prussian Calvinists. The Anglican bishop, Gobat, founded his school in Jerusalem for Arab children after his attempts to convert Jews had failed. The reports sent home about such activities stirred up the revival of biblical piety, and later on encouraged the growth of Holy Land tours. But the original ambitions for conversions were largely abandoned.

Recent scholarship agrees that it is crucial to take the missionary presence into account when analyzing the political developments and imperial dynamics of the nineteenth century Middle East. Several articles describe the often conflicting views of the missionaries and their rival forms of geopolitics. But the relative lack of success in gaining converts is reflected in the comparative scarcity of accounts by the recipients rather than by the missionaries themselves. This is in contrast to the numerous studies in other mission fields. Despite their disappointing record of conversions, most missionaries in the Middle East still regarded their social work as part of the progressive and emancipatory impact of colonial rule and Christian influence thereon. But in the twentieth century, this was to be challenged and eventually overthrown by two factors: the local populations' demands for freedom from imperial control, and, in Palestine, by the much more forceful introduction of Zionism. In his article, for instance, Michael Marten describes the experiences of the Scottish Missionary Hospital in Tiberias, which was fated to be replaced by the Israeli health service after 1948. But such displacements also marked the end of the specific expectations of those Christians who had hoped that the restoration of the Jews to their original homeland would be a precursor for their conversion to Christ, which in turn would itself be a precursor for Christ's eschatological return to earth.

In the post-colonial era of the later twentieth century, when white missionaries from Europe and North America were no longer desired, both the missionary societies and missionary history had to undergo challenging, even painful, readjustments. The result was a rapid diminution of ordained ministers being sent abroad and the dissolution of many of the colleges which had trained missionaries for service overseas. They were often replaced by secular aid workers, such as teachers or doctors, in the same social institutions, whose buildings stood, and still stand, all over the Middle East. But it was impressed on such recruits that they had to avoid the kind of paternalistic superiority feelings so often expressed by their missionary predecessors.

Particularly in the case of one sending country, Germany, and one recipient area, Palestine, these changes were very far-reaching, as described in several articles in this collection. On the one hand, many Germans after 1945 were obliged to come to terms with their nation's horrendous crimes against the Jewish people, and shortly thereafter with the establishment of the State of Israel. These developments gave rise to highly ambivalent reactions. One group of Protestants, well aware of German guilt, saw the need for repentance towards the Jews and the renunciation of all ideas of conversion or missions. Some regarded the return of Jews to their ancient homeland as fulfillment of biblical promises which Christians should welcome. In 1980, for example, a statement made by the Rhineland Synod of the German Evangelical Church declared that the establishment of the State of Israel was a sign of God's faithfulness towards his people, and called for a new beginning in Christian-Jewish relations with a commitment to reconciliation and healing. Another practical result was the establishment, under this group's auspices, of the Aktion Sühnezeichen, a kind of German Peace Corps, to undertake reconstruction work in Israel for Jewish survivors of the Holocaust.

Other Protestants however took a more traditional line, seeing the establishment of the new state as adding an unwelcome political complication to Christian-Jewish relations, or as a threat to their carefully-created communities in the Middle East. Certainly many of those engaged in medical or social work institutions now found themselves made redundant or limited solely to their Arab supporters. Such developments in turn led some of the younger church members to adopt a strong preference for the Palestinians displaced or evicted by Israeli policies. The resulting clash between the pro-Jewish, or philo-

semitic older generation whose memories of the Holocaust were still very relevant, and the younger opponents of what they perceive as Zionist oppression and aggrandizement, is still unresolved.

Very similar ambivalent considerations are to be found in Catholic ranks. The striking changes in Catholic doctrine adopted at the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s called for the abandonment of hostility towards the Jews who were now to be regarded as the Christians elder brothers in faith. These views were strongly supported over the following fifty years by such Popes as John Paul II, and had a notable effect on Catholic missionary institutions in the Middle East. For example, the highly-regarded Sisters of Zion, which had been founded a hundred years earlier by French priests for the conversion of the Jews in Jerusalem, now made a radical renunciation of any such intentions, much to the confusion of their mainly Arab congregations. It is only regrettable that none of the essays in this book touches on these later developments in Catholic missions.

We can be grateful to the contributors for their varied insights into the history of Christian missions in the Middle East. They will undoubtedly help us to understand the links between past and present, to see the theological impetus which undergirded these missions' endeavours, and to envisage the potential future that might have been and may yet be.

## ***Contemporary Church History Quarterly***

### **Volume 18, Number 4 (December 2012)**

**Review of Andrew White, *The Vicar of Baghdad: Fighting for Peace in the Middle East* (Oxford and Grand Rapids, MI: Monarch Books, 2009) 191 Pp., ISBN: 9781854248763.**

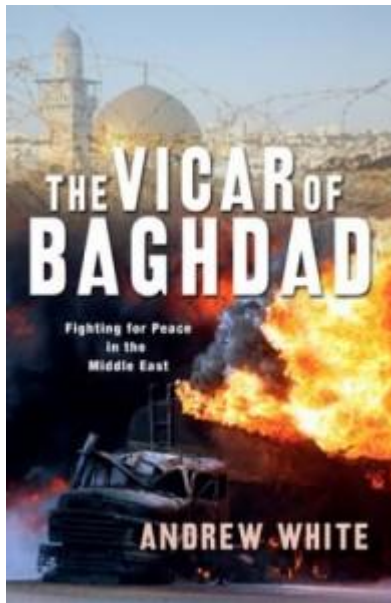
**By John S. Conway, University of British Columbia**

Andrew White is an Anglican priest who was posted in 2005 to St George's Parish in Baghdad, which must be physically the most dangerous, and possibly spiritually the most challenging of all Anglican parishes anywhere. This short and vivid autobiographical account of his ministry there is a witness to a costly Christian discipleship of notable significance, and throws light on a unique segment of contemporary church history.

White is clearly a man of extraordinary energy and perseverance, having a capacity for friendship with a remarkable range of Middle East religious leaders, who have assisted him in his self-appointed task of implementing a new climate for peace and reconciliation in this very troubled region. His interest in the Middle East began when he was still an ordinand at Ridley College, Cambridge, a conservative evangelical college. But he was encouraged to spend part of his final year of training in Jerusalem, studying both at the Hebrew University and at a yeshiva. At the same time he got to know several Islamic leaders in the city. While still a curate or junior vicar in south London, he managed to pay numerous visits back to the Holy Land, and even to report his findings to Pope John Paul II. In 1998 he was appointed Director of the International Centre for Reconciliation at Coventry Cathedral, and became involved in such episodes as the 39-day siege of the Church of the Holy Nativity in Bethlehem in 2002. The intensive negotiations



between the insurgents who had seized the church, the Christian authorities and the Israeli security forces, taught him many lessons about high-level diplomacy in extreme situations and the church's role in finding solutions. In 2005 he was posted to Baghdad. His church building, as the only Anglican parish in Iraq, had been built in the 1920s when the British Empire still ruled. But under Saddam Hussein it had been shut down. Anglicans were a vanishing breed. But White has successfully rebuilt a congregation of local people with evangelical-style services in Arabic and even Aramaic, though he requires the services of a translator for his sermons.



White's principal task, as his subtitle indicates, is to try and promote peace and reconciliation in the region, for which he obviously has a considerable flair. The politicians, generals and diplomats who have ruled Iraq since Saddam's overthrow have tended to discount or underestimate the importance of religion, but White firmly believes in its centrality, if any discussions with the main actors of Iraqi society are to be successful. In his view, an understanding of, and approach to, the leading figures in the religious sphere, including the militant Muslims, is a vital first step. These are the men who promote conflict in the belief that they are defending their holy traditions and culture. But White seeks to recruit the support of other religious leaders who recognize the need for a more peaceful future. He has therefore energetically sought to enlist the help of both Shia and Sunni clerics to support his Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East. He believes that religious extremists can only be approached by those who address them in religious language, so he has worked tirelessly to maintain communication between the various factions in

the religious establishment both in Iraq and outside in order to promote dialogue and find consensus. But he has no illusions that progress towards a peaceful resolution will be agonizingly slow in an area continually fuelled by religious antagonisms, and may even be overtaken by the forces of violence, as is obvious in Syria today. This is a highly dangerous ministry. White has to have a permanent bodyguard in a city where all foreigners are at risk. Front-line peacemaking can be immensely stressful. At one point in 2007 he was obliged to flee the country, but later was able to return to take up his mission again. Several of his colleagues have been captured and held to ransom. Some have never been seen again. So this account can only be an interim report on a brave attempt to overcome the mutual incomprehension between the Islamic world and the West, which White sees as one of humanity's biggest problems today.

## ***Contemporary Church History Quarterly***

**Volume 18, Number 4 (December 2012)**

### **New Research on Nazism and Christianity: Samuel Koehne**

**By Samuel Koehne, Deakin University**

*Sam Koehne is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Alfred Deakin Research Institute (Deakin University, Australia). He is working on the official Nazi positions on religion and on his first book, Nazi*

Germany as a Christian State: Liberal and Conservative Christian Responses from the Great War to the Nazi State.

I would like to outline my research in two fields, one being that of the Christian response to the rise of the Nazi Party and the other being my most recent research into the Nazis' official views on religion. The concern of my doctoral work was to ascertain how 'ordinary' Christian Germans of the Protestant tradition responded to the rise of the Nazis. It was a close study of two German Protestant communities (based near Stuttgart) from 1914-1939 to understand Christians' responses to the Nazis in the context of their experiences of the First World War and the Weimar Republic.

In this sense, it fits with the recent trend in scholarship (as in works like those of Manfred Gailus and Kyle Jantzen) towards examining the complex and heterogeneous nature of German Protestantism and the question of the particularity of response. My aim was to examine the response at a local community level and provide the contrast between theologically liberal and theologically conservative Christian communities. Given this, my central questions were threefold: How did Christians at opposite ends of the theological spectrum respond to National Socialism and the changes engendered by it when the Nazis came to power? Why did they respond as they did? What difference (if any) did their faith position make?

The two groups that were chosen as case-studies represented fairly neatly one of the major sections of society that were likely to vote for the Nazis: nationalist and politically conservative Protestants. However, they were also both 'free church' communities located near Stuttgart whose origins lay in Württemberg Pietism: the conservative Christian Brethren in Korntal (*Evangelische Brüdergemeinde Korntal*) and the liberal Christian Temple-Society in Degerloch (*Tempelgesellschaft*). The Temple-Society had actually split from the Brethren in the nineteenth century and established further communities in Russia and Palestine (under Turkish rule and the British Mandate).[1]

Such communities formed fixed points of reference for their members. As micro-societies that were already self-defined and focused inward, they constitute particularly interesting subjects in their responses to wider changes, especially as spheres of the public and private became blurred in the Third Reich. Their Christian faith was integral to their identity and their members' lives were dictated by religious belief, as they were meant to demonstrate an 'active' or lived Christianity in everyday life. This included a direct concern with politics, given a chiliastic focus on reading current events through a 'religious lens.'

Some of the most interesting discoveries were precisely how aware both communities were of the Nazi agenda before 1933, and how little this mattered in 1933 itself, which they tended to call a 'year of wonder.' There are some interesting links to recent work that has been reviewed in the *ACCH Quarterly*. By 1932 the perception of Nazism in both groups was very similar to that of the [Kulturkampf bulletin](#) during the Nazi regime itself (*ACCH Quarterly* Vol.16, no.4, December 2010): that Nazism was 'totalitarian...an ideologically conceived religion or substitute for religion' and fundamentally antisemitic.

Those living in Korntal were advised by 1930 that Nazism was built 'upon an anti-Christian glorification and absolutism of race,' that its ideology was inherently violent, revolutionary, and formed an 'ersatz religion.' One prominent Korntaler even called it a 'blasphemy' for the 'hate-filled' Nazis to claim they

adhered to 'positive Christianity.' The Templers reached similar conclusions by 1932: that the Nazis were fundamentally antisemitic and adhered to a racial ideology, that Nazism itself was a new faith, that Hitler sought to establish a dictatorship and was relying on mass-psychology and a time of crisis in order to rise to power. Yet both communities embraced the rise of a 'new Germany' under Hitler in 1933. Although they first believed they were supporting a DNVP-NSDAP coalition government, a fascination with Hitler quickly developed and he was described consistently as having been 'given by God.'

There is also a link to the recent work by [Robert P. Ericksen on the question of complicity](#) (*ACCH Quarterly* 18, no.2, June 2012). There were certainly instances of antisemitism in both groups, although the best characterization of the response to the Nazis' violence and antisemitism in 1933 itself was an 'active' passivity. The most enthusiastic support was for the perceived national and spiritual rebirth of Germany, a perspective deriving very much from pre-1933 experiences. From this initial enthusiasm, the two groups gradually moved in opposite directions, to a point where those in the Korntal Brethren were saying 'No' to the Nazi state at the same time that leading Templers were just as emphatically saying 'Yes.' Generally the dominant trends in the Temple-Society by 1939 were at least in line with the German Christian Movement although some leaders were going so far as to link the community to the neo-pagan German Faith Movement. The Brethren position became one of retreat in the face of what was increasingly seen to be an 'anti-Christian' state. The situation was complex, but these final positions were largely dictated by the theological stance of the two communities.

My most recent research has considered the question of the official Nazi position on religion. While there are many excellent studies regarding church responses to the Nazis, or leading Nazis' religious beliefs, there exists somewhat of a gap as to what the Nazis themselves chose to represent with respect to religion in their official publications. Given this, my current project is driven by the query: how did the Nazi Party present its official position on religion and what was promoted in those texts that were viewed (both within and outside the Nazi movement) as representing the official stance? This clearly carries the burden of ascertaining what was considered 'official.' A necessary second component of such research is to examine the reception of such official texts and how they were interpreted, though this will form the next stage of my work.

Given the very vigorous debates of recent years on the Nazi Program, especially Point 24 and 'positive Christianity,' the first stage of this research has been to consider the origins of the Nazi Program (undertaken through detailed research into the *Hauptarchiv der NSDAP*) as well as examining the two official commentaries (by Alfred Rosenberg in 1922 and Gottfried Feder in 1927) and Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. The commentaries have sometimes been overlooked, even though they were official statements and aimed to describe to both the Party faithful and a broader public what "Nazism" was (and was not). Though also clearly serving a promotional or propaganda purpose, these were statements that people at the time could turn to in understanding the Nazi Party.

The initial results of this research are that Point 24 appears to have been designed principally to serve an antisemitic function, illustrated by the fact that there is consistency from the first 'Foundational Principles' or *Grundsätze* of the German Workers' Party through the 25 Point Program of the National Socialist German Workers' Party to the commentaries and also *Mein Kampf* on this major point: religious teachings or doctrines (*Religionslehren, Glaubenslehren*) would be opposed if they failed to satisfy

German 'laws of morality and ethics,' (*Grundsätze*) or the 'ethical and moral feelings of the Germanic race' (Program).

There does not seem to have been any comprehensive sense to 'positive Christianity.' The first commentary certainly argued more in favor of the idea that both religion and class would act to splinter rather than cohere Nazism as a movement, which seems to have been maintained in official statements. For instance the 'Fundamental Regulations for the Re-Formation of the NSDAP' that were issued when the Nazi Party was formed again in 1925 stated: 'Religious or class conflicts will not be tolerated in the Movement.' This was reconfirmed at the Bamberg Conference of 1926, as reported in the *Völkischer Beobachter*: 'Religious problems have no role to play in the National Socialist Movement and are only suitable for undermining its political effectiveness. It is incumbent on every individual to sort out such problems for themselves.'<sup>[2]</sup> What this means is that when Rudolf Hess caused controversy in October of 1933 by arguing that the Nazi Party adhered to 'freedom of conscience' in religion, it was not a new concept.

What was essential (at least in official statements) was that religion meet racial requirements. The official position on religion was not principally about the form of faith, but the actual content of faith. Further research is required, yet this appears to help towards explaining the great disparity that was to be found amongst the Nazi leaders, from those advocating a 'Germanized' Christianity through to the 'pagans' or 'paganists.' Rosenberg's commentary was explicit that 'Morality is completely racially conditioned, and not abstract Catholic, Protestant or Muslim.' It has been fascinating to find (as indicated by Rosenberg's statement) that there was opposition to the notion of revealed religions in favor of the view that what was repugnant or acceptable in religious teaching would be 'revealed' through the response of one's moral conscience, itself supposedly conditioned by race.

To use the example of Christianity and such a conception of 'Germanic' morality: depending upon how one measured the cloth of religious belief against such a racial yardstick, it was possible to cut out sections (the Old Testament, parts of the New Testament), create a patchwork (joining fairy-tales or the Nordic sagas to the story of Christ), or throw it away and sew a new garment altogether (neo-paganism, German Faith). 'Germanizing and dejudaising' religious teachings was a major concern--as it was in movements amongst the German Christians (see the [reviews of Susannah Heschel's work](#) in *ACCH Quarterly* Vol.16, no.4, December 2010).

This perhaps takes us beyond current discussions, which have tended to focus on the promotion of 'German Christianity' or an 'Aryan' Christianity, or alternatively on the 'new faiths' of neo-pagan organizations, both of which topics have a number of studies examining such questions 'from below' or 'from above.' The official position may provide us with insight into what was meant to be common to all Nazis, regardless of the faith they professed.

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[1] Some of my previous research considered the internment of many members of the Temple-Society under the British Mandate of Palestine in WWII and their subsequent deportation to and internment in Australia. The major history is Paul Sauer, *The Holy Land Called: The Story of the Temple Society*, trans. Gunhild Henley (Melbourne: Temple Society Australia, 1991). I have dealt with the literature on the

Korntal Brethren at greater length in S.P. Koehne, "Pietism as Societal Solution: The Foundation of the Korntal Brethren," in *Pietism and Community in Europe and North America, 1650–1850*, ed. Jonathan Strom (Leiden and Boston: Brill Academic, 2010). The major history remains the account in Hartmut Lehmann, *Pietismus und weltliche Ordnung in Württemberg vom 17. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1969).

[2] Translations from Detlef Mühlberger, *Hitler's Voice: The Völkischer Beobachter, 1920–1933*, vol. 1: Organisation & Development of the Nazi Party (Oxford: P. Lang, 2004), 125, 149.

## ***Contemporary Church History Quarterly***

### **Volume 18, Number 4 (December 2012)**

## **Conference Report: Holocaust Scholarship: Personal Trajectories, Professional Interpretations, Capetown, South Africa, 20-22 August 2012**

**By Doris Bergen, University of Toronto**

This conference, sponsored by the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies and Research at the University of Cape Town in association with the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation, revolved around the theme, “personal trajectories, professional interpretations.” In keeping with this, the organizers – Susannah Heschel, Michael Marrus, Milton Shain, and Christopher Browning – invited participants to reflect on connections between their life experience and their scholarship. Each of the sixteen speakers tackled this challenge in a different way. The result was an intense and stimulating three days with a surprising number of presentations that addressed religion, specifically Christianity and Judaism. My report focuses on those parts of the conference most relevant to contemporary church history.

Robert Ericksen spoke most directly to the history of Christianity, in a paper titled “Pastors and Professors: Assessing Complicity and Unfolding Complexity.” Ericksen asked whether the churches and universities as a whole were complicit in Nazi crimes. “Yes,” he answered. Their praise for Hitler was genuine, he maintained; their lack of resistance was evidence of overall support; and they played a significant role by granting the regime a kind of public permission for its existence and its actions. Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s family never went to church, Ericksen noted, so “he didn’t catch that virus.” Ericksen’s presentation was not as personal as many of the others, although he began by presenting some formative moments, among them an hour-long conversation in 1989 with Emanuel Hirsch’s son. The topic: had Hirsch senior been a Nazi?

My paper was on “Protestants, Catholics, Mennonites, and Jews: Identities and Institutions in Holocaust Studies.” I used my research on the Volksdeutschen and the Wehrmacht chaplains to argue for the importance of ambiguous categories and institutional dynamics. Most relevant for our context, I analyzed how the chaplaincy served to legitimate the German war of annihilation. Rather than the familiar notions of “silent bystanders,” I showed Christians as participants – sometimes willing, sometimes reluctant – in the destruction of Jewish lives. I did not attribute these insights to the fact I am a “Mennonite farm girl

from Saskatchewan” (as I was once introduced at a conference), but I did learn something about how religious institutions function from a decade at Notre Dame.

Karl Schleunes’s presentation, “Wrestling with the Holocaust,” looked back to publication in 1970 of *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz*. Often described as a foundational “functionalist” work, Schleunes’s original edition did not even include the word “Holocaust.” But it did inspire him to contemplate teaching a course on the subject, which he began to do in 1988, under the heading, “Holocaust: History and Meaning.” His religious upbringing, Schleunes told us, played a key role. He grew up a German Protestant in small-town Wisconsin, where he heard echoes of the Nazi era. The gospel accounts of the crucifixion – “May his blood be upon us and our children” – the myth of Jews as Christ-killers – these notions were deeply embedded in Christianity, Schleunes said, not only in Luther’s “On the Jews and Their Lies,” but in the American Bible belt. When he tried to answer the question, “Why the Jews?,” he found the only way to do so was to begin with Christianity, a painful confrontation for many of his students.

But if Christian anti-Judaism were so crucial, asked Steven Aschheim, why did the Holocaust occur only in the 1940s? You can’t have continuity and uniqueness at the same time, he insisted. In his presentation, “Autobiography, Experience, and the Writing of History,” Aschheim emphasized the “massively transgressive nature of the Shoah.” It is not so much Judaism as “Jewishness” that interests him, he said, and the Germans who appealed most to him – Marx, Freud, Einstein, Kafka – were makers of modern universal thought whom he long didn’t even know were Jewish. Instead they embodied a humanizing impulse. Aschheim, influenced by his childhood in South Africa and disillusioned with what he called the naïve Zionism of his youth, is currently writing a book on the political economy of empathy.

Antony Polonsky, who grew up just a few blocks from Aschheim, titled his talk, “From Johannesburg to Warsaw: How I Came to Write a Three-Volume History of the Jews of Poland and Russia.” Polonsky turned not to Zionism but to Communism, and he too grew disillusioned. In 1967-68 he identified with Polish students’ calls for democratic reform, and it pained him when the ANC supported the Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia. Solidarity friends encouraged him to contact Jews in Poland, and in the 1980s he got involved in efforts to bridge the division between Jewish and Polish histories. His goal: to produce and foster scholarship that was neither sentimental nor negative.

David Cesarani gave one of the most personal presentations, under the tantalizing title, “Tony Judt and Me: Autobiographical Reflections on Writing History, the Holocaust, and Hairdressing.” Highlighting parallels between his youth and Judt’s, Cesarani offered a glimpse into what it meant to grow up Jewish in Britain, where immigrants from many parts of the world crossed paths and where class, accent, and district of origin obstructed mobility. (Judt’s mother Stella grew up in a working-class district speaking Cockney; she was “very discreet about her Jewishness.”)

In “Holocaust and Comparative History” Steve Katz took a different approach and brought in his personal details as jokes. (While at Cambridge Katz played cricket for his College, which made him “wicket keeper for Jesus.”) Katz’s main point was about the Holocaust’s singularity. With regard to the structure of mass murder, he contended, the Holocaust is distinct. In every other case, a central idea causes the violence but also limits it. Katz offered the example of the witch craze, which he described as rooted in Christian misogyny. But the Church found a way to domesticate the threat of women’s sexuality and offered not only Eve the seductress but also the Virgin Mary. The same is true of Christian antisemitism, Katz

maintained: the Church did not murder the Jewish people; the Christian vision of Jews was dialectical. No comparable dialectic operated in the Shoah, Katz argued. For Hitler the Jewish issue was central, so every time there was a choice between the racially genocidal program and other options, the racially genocidal program won out.

In her paper, “From Lucy Dawidowicz to Timothy Snyder: Holocaust Studies Viewed from the Perspective of Jewish Studies,” Susannah Heschel provided a challenging and deeply humane perspective. She grew up among German Jewish refugees, and half her family are Hasidic rebbes. Yet her father’s friends included Christian theologians too, she noted, and he showed no bitterness or resentment. For him religion was the most important factor against racism and war. Heschel discovered the problems in Christian theology as a college student when she read Bultmann, she recalled. Protestant theologians were fascinated by racial theory and considered it modern and scientific. After the war the German Christians melted into the wider culture, and Christianity became a cover for old ideas – that the Jewish god was a violent god who commanded Jews to kill non-Jews; that Nazi obedience to authority came from Judaism.

Meanwhile, Heschel indicated, the field has its problems: Holocaust courses attract some people looking for an emotional experience, and instrumentalization of the Holocaust has become a “nightmare.” Where Dawidowicz promoted a sense of Jewish pride in being victims, Snyder’s book has a quality of resentment, and his explicit descriptions of horrors rob people of their humanity. For her part, Susannah said, she is returning to the sensibilities of her childhood. She misses the gentleness, piety, and holiness of the Hasidic rebbes and seeks to regain a sense of disbelief. At the same time, she concluded, yearning for religion cannot substitute for the hard work of democratic politics.

For those of us who were in South Africa for the first time, one of the most stimulating parts of the conference was the panel on “Nazism and Holocaust: Intersections with South African Experience.” Though religion was not a main focus, it came up here, too. According to David Welch, there is little evidence that Nazism had a direct influence on apartheid ideas. Certainly all of the rightist organizations were antisemitic, he observes, and the Afrikaans churches did not try to stop the Nazi virus from spreading in their communities. Still, apart from a few dissident clergy, they rejected the notion of a Nazi-style dictatorship. Milton Shain agreed that membership in South African Fascist groups was small but noted their high visibility. They exerted pressure against Jewish refugees from Germany and fueled wider attacks on Jews as promoters of miscegenation and enemies of the Afrikaner nation. When a ship with 500 Jewish refugees arrived in 1936, professors at Stellenbosch University led a protest.

An important intervention regarding Christianity came from a member of the audience, the freelance writer Claudia Braude. What about the discourse of forgiveness, she wanted to know. Hadn’t it been invoked in South Africa by people responsible for all manner of crimes, from corruption to murder, to push the burden of “reconciliation” onto the shoulders of those already victimized? In South Africa, Braude maintained, a Christian “template of forgiveness” has reinforced a culture of impunity.

## ***Contemporary Church History Quarterly***

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## **Conference Report: *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* Meeting, Emden, Germany, November 8-10, 2012**

**By Robert P. Ericksen, Pacific Lutheran University**

On November 8-10, 2012, a conference took place under the title, "'Befreier der Deutschen Seele:' Politische Inszenierung und Instrumentalisierung von Reformationsjubiläen im 20. Jahrhundert." Several preliminaries are important. First of all, this conference served as the annual meeting of the journal, *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte*, and the papers will be published next year in the journal. Andrea Strübind, a Protestant professor of church history at Oldenburg, served as a prime organizer and will edit the subsequent volume. Johanna Rahner, a professor at the Institute for Catholic Theology at the University of Kassel, co-hosted this event, bringing a strong Catholic presence to this very Protestant topic of Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation. Finally, this conference took place in a delightful setting of historical significance. Emden, a medieval town in the northwest corner of Germany, was home to a significant Reformed presence in the 16th century. Thus we were able to meet in the Johannes a Lasco Library, an institution of 160,000 volumes, including many books from Erasmus's library, a Bible signed by Martin Luther as a gift to one of his sons, and a letter from Jean Calvin to the congregation in Emden.

The conference itself focused on celebrations of Martin Luther's birthday and/or the Reformation. Three speakers looked back to the 19th century. Ralf Hennings and Hans-Georg Ulrichs compared anniversaries of the Reformation celebrated in 1817 and 1917, in Oldenburg and Heideberg respectively. Frederic Hartweg spoke on the 200th anniversary of the Edict of Nantes in 1885. It was celebrated quietly in France by small groups of Huguenots, frightened by the possibility of Catholic backlash, even though Michelet, for example, called Huguenots "the best French citizens." Bismarck also praised Huguenots and Berlin celebrated the Edict of Nantes openly in 1885. By then a mythology of Huguenots gloriously escaping France to become good Prussians had veiled a harsher history of refugee status in previous times.

The rest of the conference focused on the 20th century, plus the 500th anniversary of the Reformation forthcoming in 2017. One theme emerged in the opening lecture, given by Professor Wolfgang Thönissen of Paderborn (just before he had to leave for Rome to fulfill his role as an ex officio member of the Vatican Council). Thönissen argued that Catholics in the twentieth century have begun to see the work of Martin Luther much less in terms of a "split" in the church and much more in terms of "reform." Vatican II, for example, looked to Luther as it worked toward reforms of its own. John Paul II and Benedict XVI both studied Luther. Catholics began to focus on things like the Augsburg Confession and the doctrine of justification by faith. Thönissen argued that Catholics and Protestants can and should celebrate the "catholicity" they hold in common: 1) Salvation by faith, 2) a church standing under the Word of God, and 3) a church requiring a certain "Ordnung." With these things in common, both Catholics and Protestants can celebrate Luther in 2017.

Additional Catholic speakers all followed variations on this theme. For example, Professor Barbara Henze from Freiburg spoke on "Die Katholische Entdeckung Luthers im Kontext des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils." After Vatican II, in 1967, Freiburg hosted a conference on Luther. Speakers at this conference compared what Luther wanted with what Vatican II wanted. One participant even suggested that Luther finally achieved his goals at Vatican II, both in taking Scripture seriously and making the church



accessible, as well as in certain reforms of monastic orders. Professor Johanna Rahner continued this theme, describing developments among Catholic theologians since Vatican II. In particular, she noted the Augsburg Confession as a statement now widely accepted among Catholics, and she pointed toward an increasingly ecumenical rather than a confessional hermeneutic of the Reformation. This approach stresses complementary rather than contradictory elements in the Catholic-Protestant relationship and it accepts a plural rather than a narrowly confessional ecclesiology.

This optimistic presentation on Catholics and the Reformation raised several questions during discussion. For example, each of the Catholic presenters mentioned the work of Joseph Lortz and his twentieth-century reassessment of Luther, though mostly in passing and without going into his Nazi enthusiasm. It was then acknowledged that his appreciation of Luther might have been rooted at least somewhat in his out-sized enthusiasm for the German *Volk* movement. One speaker also acknowledged that she does not assign Lortz, but has her students read Protestant studies of the Reformer instead. Another issue involved the present place of Vatican II and its advocates in today's Catholic church. The optimistically ecumenical views presented here do come up against a conservative backlash against Vatican II, in Germany as elsewhere, so that the issues are not entirely decided. However, a broad stream of appreciation for Martin Luther certainly marked the Catholic Church in the twentieth century.

A second major theme at this conference involved attention paid to Luther celebrations outside Germany. Keith Robbins, speaking on British reactions to the Reformation Jubilee of 1917, noted that a warm and collegial reaction to German celebrations could hardly be expected in that fourth year of The Great War. In that sense, his assigned topic provided almost no content. He did describe, however, close ties and cordial relations in the decade preceding World War I. A delegation of 120 Germans visited England in 1908, for example. In 1909, a British group--funded by Quakers--visited Germany and was received by the Kaiser in Berlin. In June 1914, Oxford awarded seven honorary degrees, five of them to Germans. At that time, it would not have been difficult to imagine British participation in a great Reformation Jubilee in 1917. At the outbreak of war in August, however, theologians and historians began to sharpen their sense of difference rather than commonality. Soon they were making their own hard-edged contributions to the national sense of what was wrong with the other side.

Anders Jarlert also noted, as had Keith Robbins, that his look at Reformation jubilees in Sweden during the twentieth century produced little of note. Swedes simply did not celebrate anniversaries of 1483 or 1517, as did Germans. Rather, Jarlert described a "Swedish Sonderweg." During the 19th century, religious celebrations became bound up with Swedish nationalism. By the 20th century, this meant, for example, a 1941 celebration of the 400th anniversary of the first Swedish Bible, or a 1943 celebration of the Uppsala Synod of 1543. In the overall cause of national unity, a presence of Baptists and of Catholics in Sweden also complicated matters, so that the Lutheran presence became downplayed and compartmentalized.

My responsibility at this conference was to report on American reactions to the German celebration of Luther's 450th birthday in November 1933. I too discovered very little to report, although Lutherans in the United States organized celebrations of their own, in some cases with thousands of participants. I broadened my approach by analyzing the response of half a dozen church newspapers to events in Germany throughout 1933. Most Lutheran weeklies, whether German, Norwegian, or Swedish in their ethnic background, indicated some attraction to Adolf Hitler and support for the changes he introduced in Germany. They liked Hitler's attack on Bolsheviks and his campaign against vice. They often criticized the

"secular press" in the United States, for its alleged exaggeration of the harshness of Nazi mistreatment of Jews. One column in the *Lutheran Herald* of the Norwegian Lutheran Church even exhibited its antisemitism, trying to explain the difference between "Kikes," which it described as undesirable East-European Jews likely to be Bolsheviks, and "white Jews," seen as more acceptable. (This did draw some critical reader response.) All of these papers, however (with the frequent exception of the *Lutheran Witness* of the Missouri Synod), expressed concern about political interference in the churches and criticized the excesses of the *Deutsche Christen*. I also read the more center-left *Christian Century*. In this publication, skepticism and criticism were handed out in larger portions. For example, Reinhold Niebuhr, reporting in August 1933 on his recent visit to Germany, wrote, "Evidences multiply that the German nazi effort to extirpate the Jews in Germany is proceeding with unexampled and primitive ferocity" (see "The Germans Must Be Told," *Christian Century*, 9 Aug. 1933, 1014-15). He then described in detail the mistreatment of Jews, including arrests, torture, and beatings to death, asserting that only a "national neurosis" in Germany could cause Germans to complain that such reports were merely Jewish "atrocious propaganda."

A final theme at this conference dealt with anticipation of the forthcoming 500th anniversary of the Reformation to be celebrated in 2017. Gerhard Besier placed this in the larger context of the instrumentalization of Luther. This mythology involved both nationalism and anti-Catholicism in some of its nineteenth-century manifestations, a fierce nationalism during World War I, and then a search for a new Luther myth after 1989. Besier suggested that the 2017 celebration could allow for a significant reworking and search into this tradition. Instead, however, he noted that the "Luther Decade" is now treated in FAZ on the business page. It seems to be a time for the selling of souvenirs and the sort of economic opportunities associated with hosting the Olympic Games or a World Cup. He also noted that Luther statues now available in souvenir shops have printed on the bottom, "Hier stehe ich. Ich kann nicht anders." This is both an accurate physical statement for the object in question and, presumably, more of an ironic joke than a serious reflection on the Luther quotation.

Hartmut Lehmann also placed the present "Luther Decade" in historical context. He began by noting controversy over whether Luther actually nailed the 95 Theses to the church door in Wittenberg, or whether he merely sent them around to a few friends. We have the former story from Melancthon, but no eyewitnesses or contemporary testimony. Luther with a hammer is a heroic figure and a builder of the Lutheran church. In the alternative image he is a reformer within the church. This works best for ecumenical purposes, including a friendlier conversation with Catholics. What about the full range of Luther, however, including his attacks on the Pope, on Erasmus, on peasants, and on Jews? Some see Luther leading to the Enlightenment, to democracy, and to pluralism. Lehmann is skeptical, arguing that we need to view him in his own time and in his full complications. If we focus instead on the Reformation rather than Luther, we still have difficult questions. Why did Luther's followers quarrel right after his death? Why did they turn quickly toward orthodoxy, rather than a further exploration of reform? Why have Lutherans in Germany twice been ready to accept dictatorship? Why have Lutherans elsewhere, in the United States and Australia, for example, also quarreled with each other? A careful look at these issues could be a part of the Luther Decade, but it would fit less comfortably into the plans already in place. Finally, Lehmann in an afterword suggested that historians in 2017 may actually give little attention to the Luther Jubilee. In recent years, an interpretation has developed that gives the year 1517 merely one place among many in the fifteenth and sixteenth-century Renaissance that pointed toward the modern world.

This tightly-knit conference produced much to consider for those interested in contemporary church history. It seems likely that the KZG volume which prints the papers in 2013 will be worthy of attention.

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### **Conference Report: Lessons and Legacies Conference on the Holocaust: “The Holocaust Today: New Directions in Research and Teaching,” November 1-4, 2012, Northwestern University.**

**By Lauren Faulkner, University of Notre Dame**

Professor Emeritus Jacques Kornberg, from the University of Toronto, began his introduction to the panel on the German Protestant churches with the following observation: “I have been studying the Catholic Church in Germany for a long time. I’m happy to say, the Protestant churches were worse.” Kornberg drew a laugh from the sizeable audience, but it would be one of the very few moments of levity for the two panels of the conference devoted to investigating the German churches during the Third Reich.

Sponsored by the Holocaust Educational Foundation and Northwestern University, Lessons and Legacies continues to be a major conference for Holocaust scholars in North America and Europe. This year’s theme emphasized new research and teaching methods, and the scholars giving papers on the German churches set out to emphasize this in their investigations.

The panel chaired by Kornberg consisted of Robert Ericksen from Pacific Lutheran University, Christopher Probst from Saint Louis University, and Gilya Gerda Schmidt from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Ericksen’s paper, entitled “Antisemitism Under the Faulty Gaze of Early Postwar Germans,” took the case study of Klaus-Wilhelm Rath, professor of economics at the University of Göttingen, to complicate the current understanding of the denazification process. Using the example of Rath, who was part of the “terror group” of pro-Nazi academics at Göttingen, Ericksen outlines the process: an initial charge by the Allies led to relatively severe penalties, followed by years of appeals and a gradual softening of the penalties. Rath was dismissed summarily from his position in 1945. He lost his first appeal; second and third appeals led to his classification as a category III offender (assigned to those who had enthusiastically supported the regime). He appealed one final time, in 1950, sensing the change in mood towards denazification in West Germany, and taking advantage of the fact that denazification proceedings were now controlled by Germans. The final appeal resulted in a category IV classification, as a so-called *Mitläufer*, or “fellow traveler” of the regime. Rath was not satisfied – he wanted a full exoneration – but the change in status meant that he was no longer deemed an antisemitic agitator. This for a professor whose 1944 publications included a book depicting the Jews as responsible for the manipulation of the economy aimed at world domination, and who was designated in 1944 by the Nazi regime as one of the most important Nazi professors at Göttingen!

Like Ericksen, Probst presented material that comes in part from his recently published book on the demonization of Jews in Nazi Germany. Unlike Ericksen, whose focus is on members of the higher levels

of the academy, Probst is interested in lower-level clergy in rural areas. In “German Protestant Attitudes Towards Jews and Judaism in Württemberg,” he explores the changes in antisemitism exhibited by Protestant pastors from the end of the Weimar Republic to the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany. This snapshot across the conventional time periods is useful in presenting threads of continuity that otherwise are more difficult to follow. Probst shows that distinctions between religious and racial antisemitism are important insofar as the former identified Jews as a religious “other” capable of redemption through conversion, while the latter employed racial or biological language to describe an irredeemable, immutable “other.” The problem he underscores in his paper is that the Lutheran pastors he examines in and around Stuttgart used both modes of expression in their discussions of Jews before, during, and after the Third Reich. These same men, who used antisemitic tropes in their lectures and sermons, ultimately became part of a “rectory chain” that hid some seventeen Jews in their parsonages between 1943 and 1945. One of his subjects, the Heimsheim pastor Heinrich Fausel, delivered a lecture on “the Jewish question” in 1934. Seeking to distance himself from biological and racial notions of Jewishness, he borrowed liberally from the Bible and the writings of Martin Luther to emphasize the failings of Jews across centuries. At the same time, he insisted that the rejection of Christ was the pivotal moment for the Jews as a *Volk*, and that the German *Volk* must defend itself against the “terrifying foreign invasion” that began in the nineteenth century, with the emancipation of the Jews. By 1943, Fausel was hiding Jews in his home. There is no evidence to indicate that he changed his mind about them, leading Probst to argue that people often behave in ways that contradict their own beliefs, and that German pastors during the Nazi period are no exception.

Schmidt’s essay, “The Dilemma of being a Good Neighbor and a Good Citizen in the Protestant Village of Süssen,” based on research for her book about rural Judaism during the Holocaust, asks the same probing questions that anchor Probst’s study. Süssen was (and continues to be) a small town not far from Stuttgart. Her subjects are civil servants, in this case the mayor, Fritz Saalmüller, and the town’s pastor, Martin Pfeleiderer. Both had deep associations with Lutheranism in the area, and both were early Nazi enthusiasts. Pfeleiderer later changed his mind and left both the Nazi Party in 1936, claiming he had been ignorant of the “true” ideology at play. He did not, however, mention the Jews of Süssen, who were deported and killed. Saalmüller, who became mayor in 1933, did not share Pfeleiderer’s change of heart, and as mayor he was definitively antisemitic, enforcing the regime’s policies that forced Süssen’s Jews to sell their property before they were deported. Like the pastor, he was conscripted into the Wehrmacht upon the outbreak of war in 1939, but served for its duration. In 1944, he was ordered by a superior to shoot an American POW, which he did; in 1946, it was for this crime that he was arrested and sentenced to life in prison. Petitions for clemency came from all corners on his behalf, including from the bishop of Württemberg, who described Saalmüller as a “good, upstanding Christian” and loyal to his community. No mention was made of his dealings with the Langs and Ottenheimers, the Jewish families in Süssen who had been killed in the East. The postwar mayor of Süssen, August Eisele, was also not interested in pursuing these matters, and in fact for thirty years (!) suppressed Jewish reparations files submitted to him by three children of the deported Jewish families who had survived the Holocaust.

The panel analyzing the Catholic Church in Germany also treated antisemitism as its main focus. Panel members included Beth Griech-Poelle of Bowling Green State University, as chair; Martin Menke of Rivier College; Martina Cucchiara from Bluffton University; Kevin Spicer from Stonehill College; and commentator Suzanne Brown-Fleming, from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Like those who presented on Protestantism, these scholars aimed to complicate traditional notions of Catholic

antisemitism and the ways it manifested itself during the Third Reich. The panelists limited their explorations to the pre-1939 period.

Menke's paper, "German Catholicism and Nazi Racism, 1933," highlighted a pressing question iterated recently by Thomas Brechenmacher: where is the agency in the Catholic Church in twentieth century Germany, particularly where antisemitism is concerned? Menke considered multiple answers: the individual bishops, the bishops as a whole, the Center Party leaders, and German Catholic laity. Although he did not tender an explicit answer to this thorny question, his paper made clear that he judged all parties at least partly responsible. He related what historians now commonly accept: following the examples of their Catholic bishops, Catholics in Germany rejected Nazi racism – understood distinctly here from antisemitism – as an intrinsically un-Christian ideology. On this ground, the episcopate condemned the Nazi movement as a whole. Antisemitism, however, was a different matter: In fact, the only public figure to denounce racism *and* antisemitism officially was Cardinal Theodor Innitzer of Austria, who stressed *Nächstenliebe* vis-à-vis the Jews. (Innitzer was an active proponent of the Austrian fascist government of Dollfuß and Schuschnigg; he also endorsed the 1938 Anschluss, signing a declaration with an approving "Heil Hitler!".) Menke is particularly hard, and justifiably so, on the bishops. They stated frequently, both during and after the Third Reich, that their priority was to defend the Church. Properly understood, this should have extended to a condemnation of any immoral action undertaken by the state. The bishops did not do this for several reasons: the Nazis did not take over the state until 1933; by that time, communism was accepted as the greater evil to be combatted; and finally, the Church treated Nazism as it did any other heresy, calling for a slow, unhurried examination. However, by the end of March 1933, when Hitler consolidated his hold on power, the bishops were ready to cooperate with his government, and set an example that permitted the acceleration of latent antisemitism among the Catholic populace.

Cucchiara's work on Catholic nuns in Nazi Germany introduces women agents to a scene that frequently focuses on men as the exclusive subjects. In "Jewish Girls in Catholic Schools in Nazi Germany," she studies the German-based School Sisters of Notre Dame, whose motherhouse was located in Munich until the 1950s. Their behavior between 1933 and 1938 complicates the conventional understanding of Catholic nuns as rescuers and convents as good hiding places for Jews. Cucchiara finds that convent-run schools were spaces of fusion, in which Catholicism and Nazism co-existed with the full knowledge, even open support, of the nuns. Jewish girls did experience more safety hidden in convents in comparison to other hiding places they may have discovered, but this does not follow, she argues, that Nazism failed to penetrate. The nuns in question worked to preserve their classrooms as distinctly Catholic spaces in the Third Reich. However, preservation often occurred with the least difficulty through integration with the state. As a result, they worked hard to highlight the positive, good works of Hitler and his regime, and emphasized continuity and sacrifice, bringing the regime more closely in line with their own religion. Cucchiara reports that Jewish girls remembered later that there was a remarkable absence of antisemitism exhibited by their religious caretakers, but this does not mean that the convents were hotbeds of anti-Nazi activity. Cucchiara concludes by urging historians to avoid imposing a false separation of religion, as represented by Church members and leaders, and Nazi Germany, and to treat witnesses who testify to this separation with care.

Kevin Spicer's paper, "The German Catholic Church and the 'Judenfrage' in Weimar Germany" rounded out the panel, concerned explicitly with the connection between religious and racial antisemitism during

the Weimar era. He identifies the dual pillars of the “Jewish question” for Catholics at that time: the theological pillar, identifying conversion as a possible remedy, and the societal pillar, lamenting and fearing the influence of Jews on German-Christian culture and society. During the years of the republic, a third pillar evolved, identifying Jews as a racial and biological enemy, though many Catholics continued to adhere to the more traditional, culture- and social-based aversion to Jews. Spicer’s most intriguing revelations involve Augustin Bea, the provincial superior of the Jesuits in Germany from 1921 to 1924. Bea was convinced that antisemitism was inextricably linked to anti-Catholicism; occasionally using anti-Jewish and antisemitic language, he and others defended Jews insofar as they, like Catholics, were a persecuted religious minority in Germany, and that the problem could be better solved by working with, not against, them. Otherwise, they would continue to pose a distinct potential danger to future German prosperity. His role in the production of *Nostra Aetate* at Vatican II, and his work to bring Jews and Christians into greater and more open dialogue in the post-Holocaust world, present Bea as a staunch opponent of discrimination and prejudice and a champion of ecumenism (unusual for a Catholic). However, in the early 1920s in Germany, Bea had not yet found this orientation.

It was fitting that Suzanne Brown-Fleming began her comments with *Nostra Aetate*, that great and necessary Church document promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1965 as part of Vatican II. Its importance to the post-Holocaust Church is undeniable, but Brown-Fleming adeptly highlighted the individuals presented by the panel, who in the 1920s and 1930s were still mired in anti-Jewish, antisemitic ways of thinking, but who nonetheless began to grope toward reforming their interactions with their Jewish neighbours. Although Menke, Cucchiara and Spicer present historical figures who found ways to accommodate a regime that ultimately tried to solve the “Jewish problem” by physically exterminating them, the Catholic bishops, the School Sisters, and Bea never condoned the extreme racial rhetoric of Nazism. She concluded by citing one of the most significant questions that calls for further investigation, that could easily be applied to the Protestant context as well: why did some Catholics resist and other did not, and of those who resisted, what prompted them to do so?

By way of concluding this report, I want to relate an unexpected occurrence that unfolded outside of the two panels devoted to the study of the German churches, that nevertheless has a direct bearing on scholars of the German churches. Immediately preceding the panel on German Catholicism was a workshop on new cultural approaches to the Holocaust. The afternoon workshop, featuring Doris Bergen, Alon Confino, Mark Roseman, and Amos Goldberg, attracted a large audience and engendered a lively discussion, following remarks that concentrated on the role of agency and that called for the decentering of “race” from the story of the Holocaust. Religion, Christianity specifically, was identified as an element that needed to be reinserted vigorously into the narrative to make the Holocaust imaginable and representable. In the Q&A, Alan Steinweis questioned the presentation of this as innovative and “new”, pointing to Bergen and several others in the audience, including Kevin Spicer, Robert Ericksen, and Dagmar Herzog, who have contributed substantial and acclaimed works on the role of religion and the Christian churches in the Holocaust. As a spectator who had listened closely to the remarks, I found myself in agreement with Steinweis: surely those of us who work on the German churches did not produce our work in a vacuum? Hasn’t the field of modern German history been moving for a while now towards the full integration of religious history into its narratives? The workshop is perhaps a good reminder that this integration has not yet been achieved, and that studies of the German churches, both Protestant and Catholic, must continue to present themselves as vital to the study of German society and culture as a whole, and not simply as “church history” or “religious history,” in order to explain as accurately as

possible how attitudes about “otherness” can lead to persecution and genocide. In Nazi Germany, racism and Social Darwinism is part of this, but Christian belief that for centuries had depicted the Jews as “other” is just as culpable. In the wake of the turbulent exchange, as the scholars for the panel on German Catholicism settled into their seats and awaited their audience, Kevin Spicer summarized it best: “Our colleagues who don’t normally deal with the churches are discovering religion, and we’re all very excited about that.”

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**Journal Issue: *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte*, Volume 25, no. 1 (2012) "Expellees and the Church--A New Debate?"**

**By John S. Conway, University of British Columbia**

The latest issue of *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte/Contemporary Church History*, Volume 25, number 1, 2012, in which all the articles except one are in German, is entitled “Expellees and the Church – a new Debate?” In fact, the material covered deals only with one area, the territory of the re-constituted post-war Poland, and only one short time period, namely 1945-1949. At the Yalta Conference, Stalin insisted that the frontiers of Poland, both east and west, should be redrawn a hundred miles or more to the west. This settlement gave to Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine large areas formerly Polish, while in the west the border was fixed at the Oder-Neisse rivers, so that in turn most of Silesia and Pomerania became part of the new Poland. The inhabitants were not consulted. In the east, many Polish residents faced compulsory Russification, or feared living under continuing Stalinist dictatorship, so were expelled more or less involuntarily to central or western Poland. In the west, the German residents, approximately two million in all, were expelled, and sent westwards to German-held territory, then still under Allied military occupation. They were to be joined by another approximately two million Sudetenlanders from the Czech Republic, which was a deliberate if harsh move to prevent the possibility of a repetition of the 1938 disruptions. In all these cases, the victims sought the help of the churches, particularly the Catholic Church, to relieve their sufferings, or if possible to reverse the political decisions imposed on them. How the churches, both Polish and German, responded to these appeals is the subject of the two major contributions to this issue, one by Piotr Madajczyk on the Polish Catholic Church and the expellees from eastern Poland, and the other by Robert Zurek on the German Catholic bishops’ declarations about the compulsory expulsions of the Germans and the fateful changes in the German-Polish frontier.

The only contribution in English is by Ainslie Hepburn, of Brighton, Sussex, who provides a heart-warming description of the work for peace and reconciliation of a German-Jewish refugee, Herbert Sulzbach. He had fled to England in the 1930s but was later employed as an Interpreter Officer at a PoW camp in north England after 1945, where senior German officers were given a re-education course before they could be repatriated. His services would seem to have been wholly beneficial and much appreciated. But the argument would have been strengthened if the author had made some comparisons to similar re-education efforts, as, for instance, those at Norton Camp in Nottinghamshire, about which Jurgen Moltmann wrote so positively in his autobiography, *A Broad Place*.