

Ulrike Ehret

# CHURCH, NATION AND RACE

Catholics and antisemitism in Germany  
and England, 1918-45

## Die Parteien!

Die Parteien-Paar macht alles mit sich — hier die Parteien in Deutschland.

Spartakus-  
Sozi!

Unabhängige  
Sozi!

Mehrheits-  
Sozi!

Deutsch-  
demokratische  
Partei



Koh-  
Sorten

Christliche  
Volkspartei

Deutsche  
Volkspartei

Deutschnationale  
Volkspartei

Der Welt von 1918 ist noch  
nicht verlohren gegangen!

Wähle Deutscher! Deine Schicksalsstunde schlägt an



Für Kirche,  
Familie,  
Schule

Im Götze  
Luthers!  
Bismarck!  
Hindenburg!

## Church, nation and race



Manchester University Press



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Germany and England, 1918–1945

**Ulrike Ehret**

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## List of abbreviations

AKD	Association of German Catholics
BOD	Board of Deputies of British Jews
BUF	British Union of Fascists
BVP	Bavarian People's Party
CCIR	Catholic Council for International Relations
CCRGA	Catholic Committee for Refugees from Germany and Austria
CGI	Catholic Guild of Israel
CSG	Catholic Social Guild
CTS	Catholic Truth Society
CVP	Catholic People's Party
DDP	German Democratic Party
DNVP	German National People's Party
DVSTB	German National Defense and Combat League
GEC	Germany Emergency Committee
GH	<i>Gelben Hefte</i>
GKW	<i>G.K.'s Weekly</i>
ICPF	International Catholic Palestine Federation
JPAFA	Jewish People's Council against Fascism and Antisemitism
KPD	Communist Party Germany
LBIYB	Leo Baeck Institute Year Book
MdR/MdL	Member of the Reichstag/Landtag
MP	Member of Parliament
NCC	National Catholic Council (DNVP)
NCCTU	National Conference of Catholic Trade Unions
NSDAP	National Socialist German Workers' Party
NSDStB	National Socialist German Student Union

NW	The <i>New Witness</i>
PDC	Pro Deo Commission
SoS	Sword of the Spirit
SPD	Social Democratic Party Germany
TUC	Trades Union Congress
USPD	Independent Social Democratic Party Germany
ZdK	Central Committee of the Annual German Catholic Conference

# 1

## Introduction

Just in time for the millennial celebrations in 2000, Pope John Paul II received the document *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*, researched and written by the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews. Eleven years before, he had asked the Commission to establish the degree of the Church's responsibility for the Holocaust and indeed in the introduction of *We Remember* the Pope urges Catholics to take responsibility for sins committed in the past. This atonement was also to include expiation for persecution and discrimination against Jews until the late 1800s, when, according to the interpretation of the Vatican, Jew-hatred was still based on misinterpreted Christian teaching. According to the document, it was in those decades that modern antisemitism arose as a new form of Jew-hatred that was based on race theory and was therefore in its nature sociological and political rather than religious. This modern antisemitism was a belief system contrary to Church teaching and condemned by the Vatican on numerous occasions. The Commission concluded that Christians had been guilty of a long-standing anti-Judaism but not of modern antisemitism, which was ultimately solely responsible for the Holocaust.<sup>1</sup>

Though the Pope's words were carefully couched, *We Remember* met with a very mixed reception from the public. The conservative curia at the Vatican felt the document violated the Church's infallibility, while reform Catholics and many Protestants and Jews were disappointed about the missed opportunity to apologise for the Church's role in the persecution of the Jews. Christians of good will accepted the Pope's attempt to make amends – against the majority opinion of his curia.<sup>2</sup>

Such a distinction between Christian anti-Judaism and modern antisemitism might look like a minor semantic problem to outsiders,

but it has been the central problem in discussions on the relationship between Catholics and Jews. Whether one tries to understand Catholic attitudes towards biblical and modern Jews, or sees the Church as a bulwark against or an ally to fascism and National Socialism, one necessarily comes back to the question of the place of traditional (religious) antisemitism and modern (often racial) antisemitism in these worldviews.<sup>3</sup>

Anti-Jewish sentiments tend to be studied in a national setting or with an emphasis on the religious dimension, namely the tradition of Christian Jew-hatred. Yet in order to uncover the traditions and structures in German history that led to National Socialism and genocide, comparisons with European democracies like Britain have always been implicit in historical research but have hardly been undertaken systematically.<sup>4</sup> Without abusing British history as a simple positive foil to German history, *Church, Nation and Race* compares the worldviews and factors that promoted or indeed opposed antisemitism amongst Catholics in both societies. As a prequel to books on Hitler, fascism and genocide, it traces the sources of attraction or rejection of fascism and National Socialism and the role antisemitism played in this context. Particular emphasis is placed on the hypernationalism in Europe that was further inflamed by the widespread fear of Russian Bolshevism and of indigenous socialist movements.

Michael Mann has argued that liberal democracy in Europe was failed by undemocratic conservatives rather than weak liberalism.<sup>5</sup> Thus, Catholics as representatives of a measured, conservative tradition illustrate various important facets of the controversial debates on alternative modernities, the fascination with fascism, nationalism and antisemitism. The minority status of Catholics in itself adds another important reason to favour Catholic communities over a comparison of the majority Protestant communities. Notions of race were increasingly popular in defining a nation after the First World War. Yet religious identities were still strong in defining the Other and oneself. For example, the population exchange between Turkey and Greece at the end of their war in 1920 was based on the difference between Islam and orthodox Christianity. Every Muslim was assumed to settle in Turkey, even if he or she had lived on the Greek isles for generations. Sectarianism in Scotland against Catholics was still strong, and in everyday life the taunts of 'who killed Christ?' were a common repertoire to set off skirmishes between Christian and Jewish lads in Manchester streets. Religious identification was then particularly important for Catholics and Jews in both Britain and Germany where

they were minorities in nations that had historically understood themselves as Protestant nations. Finding themselves in a similar position, Catholics and Jews shared memories of recent discrimination and emancipation.<sup>6</sup> These experiences led to occasional political cooperation to protect common interests dear to religious minorities. In Germany, the Centre Party's principle of religious tolerance, for instance, was based on the awareness that any call to restrict the Jewish minority's freedom could provoke discrimination against the Catholic minority too. In the relationship between religion, nation and race it is then particularly interesting to see how the hypernationalism of the period affected the relationship between the two minorities. Was race seen as the determining characteristic that could overcome religious divides within a nation?<sup>7</sup>

Numerous events in the interwar years provoked anti-Jewish responses among Catholics: the revolutionary end of the war or financial scandals in Germany; Palestine and the Spanish Civil War in England. At the same time the rise of fascism and National Socialism gave Catholics the opportunity to respond to the antidemocratic and antisemitic waves these movements created in their wake. *Church, Nation and Race* is a history of Catholic worldviews, prejudices and politics told against the background of a Europe shaken by war and revolution and fascinated by the promises of new and old ideologies. With respect to conservative Catholicism this includes the early bridges built to the nationalist right out of fear of communism and for their traditional world and their inability to oppose the antisemitic right not only within their own ranks but on a national level. The comparison with the English Catholic Church, acting in a free (i.e., not totalitarian or occupied) society, offers the chance to contribute to the discussion about a 'silent Church' in the face of antisemitism and genocide. The end of the Second World War marks the end of this study in order to explain Catholic reactions to the persecution and murder of European Jews.

*Church, Nation and Race* argues that Catholic attitudes to Jews cannot be reduced to traditional religious prejudices as the Vatican's *We Remember* suggested. Catholics fully participated in the culture and public discourse of their nation, which meant that common modern antisemitic stereotypes were part of their interpretation of a 'Jewish question' too. Not even notions of Jews as a different race could be separated from a pure religious argument. Fear of communism and the health of the nation were important concerns to translate written antisemitism into political action (or hesitation in the response to the persecution of the Jews). The differences in form and success of

antisemitism lie then in the immediate political culture in which Catholics moved as well as the strength and density of a Catholic organisational infrastructure to multiply or counter antisemitism. These aspects, rather than religious faith or a liberal tradition, made up the national character of antisemitism.

## Sources

The book is based on a combination of primary sources including contemporary Catholic publications on the 'Jewish question' and archival documents of Catholic religious and secular life in Germany and England. The former include selected Catholic newspapers, journals and Catholic publications aimed at political education. The archival material is taken from diocesan archives, national and state archives, and private archives. I have also looked into non-Catholic sources in England for Jewish and Protestant responses to Catholic antisemitism and the communities' later cooperation against National Socialism and the persecution of the Jews. These include records of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Council for Christian and Jews, and Lambeth Palace Library.

The choice of primary sources was determined by their suitability and availability, geographic and methodological limitations. While the book refers to Catholics in Britain and Germany, the archival documents largely represent Catholics in England and the main Catholic regions in Germany. The history of Catholicism in Scotland, Wales and Ireland is based on existing literature for several reasons. The most important is that neither the Catholic bishops of England and Wales nor the community leaders, 'Old Catholics' who could trace their ancestors back to the English Reformation, were keen to express another national identity than 'Englishness'.<sup>8</sup> Scotland has been riddled with extreme sectarianism, nourished not by an Anglican Protestant identity that underwrote nationalism in England (and by projection in Britain) but by Episcopalian and Presbyterian Protestant fervour, often at odds with English Anglicanism.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, both the Jewish and Catholic communities were very small: only 2–3% of the population were Catholic, many of them Irish immigrants or their descendants. Furthermore, their clergy were organised independently from the hierarchy of England and Wales. The Scottish Catholic hierarchy was created in 1878, twenty-eight years after the restoration of the English hierarchy.<sup>10</sup>

Ireland achieved its independence from Great Britain in 1922 and, as in Scotland, Catholics were consequently cared for by a separate national, Irish hierarchy. The methodological concerns are deeper in this case. Ireland, unlike Germany and England, is predominantly Catholic. Moreover, Catholicity is an integral part of Irish national identity and nationalism and compares in this respect probably more easily with Poland.<sup>11</sup>

Irish Catholics in England are a trickier issue. Mass immigration of mainly unskilled Irish workers in the nineteenth century had helped to swell the number of Catholics to an extent the Church would not have achieved through conversions alone. Their presence has shaped the English Catholic Church and cannot therefore be easily ignored. Sheridan Gilley finds that Catholicism in England at that time was defined by two cultures. One was an aristocratic, convert and literary culture, and the other was an Irish proletarian culture. However, the number of Irish-born in England peaked in 1861 (602,000) and immigration fell considerably after that, so that Gilley observes for the 1920s: 'As the loyalty to Ireland faded, it was Catholicism that provided the social cement for a flourishing communal life.'<sup>12</sup> Recent literature on Irish ethnicity in context with racism and the formation of national identity, stresses that the Catholic Church in England and the British state were keen to denationalise the Irish. The Church achieved this through a specific mission to the Irish and Catholic schooling (separate from English Catholics) to turn them into loyal, law-abiding British citizens. What was left after the process of denationalisation was Catholicism. Mary Hickman argues that by the twentieth century the 'Irishness' was not lost but contained and rendered invisible, displayed only when socially appropriate.<sup>13</sup> Both Hickman and Fielding suggest that 'Irishness' had integrated into the broader culture of Catholic England without losing its 'private' identity and in the interwar period we are dealing more with second generation Irish who had grown up in a Catholic English environment. For this reason, the book has no specific chapter on Irish Catholics, though I comment on an Irish background where possible and appropriate.

In the case of Germany, Catholicism was mainly a phenomenon of the east (Silesia), south (Bavaria, Baden) and west (Rhineland, Westphalia) of the Republic. The majority of German Catholics, fourteen million, lived in Prussia under a distinctively Protestant government and civil service (78.2% were Protestant in 1910). The book cites primarily examples from Bavaria as the most Catholic of the German Länder (70.6% Catholics in 1910), which also bears the



dubious fame as the 'cradle' of National Socialism. Westphalia and the Rhineland (69% Catholic) are also key examples.<sup>14</sup> Both districts were part of Prussia and examples – unlike Bavaria – where the Catholic milieu (cohesion measured in Church attendance, Centre Party/BVP votes, membership in Catholic lay organisation, ultramontanism) was strongest.<sup>15</sup> Yet while the Rhineland was characterised by its working-class and lower-middle-class background, Westphalia was a heartland of the Catholic gentry (together with Silesia and Bavaria). Some examples are also taken from diaspora communities, i.e., Catholics living in a largely Protestant environment, including the capital Berlin. Only 10% of Berliners were Catholics in a young diocese (only established after the Prussian concordat was ratified in 1929). These choices were made to distinguish between Catholics as a majority and those living in a largely Protestant state, between Catholics from different social backgrounds, and between regions of diverging cultures (e.g., urban Berlin, rural Westphalia).

An important source of this study has been the Catholic print media as a public forum for editors and readers to discuss the 'Jewish question' amongst other topics of the time. For historians these texts have become a useful means to describe the nature and virulence of antisemitism in the media at a given time. They also reveal the kind and amount of information available to readers. Unlike academic journals, newspapers come closer to the 'ordinary reader' because of their higher circulation and affordable price. It is, however, difficult to read these discourses as a direct reflection of popular opinion in general. There remains a visible, if occasionally transparent, curtain between the two. How the readership received and reacted to this discourse is often a matter of speculation and more information from other sections of the Catholic communities is needed to come as close as possible to the elusive popular opinion of the 'ordinary Catholic'. With the National Socialist coordination of opposition newspapers and especially following the Amann laws in 1935 it becomes too complex for the purposes of this book to assess the editors' scope for free decisions.<sup>16</sup> The chronological comparison is for this reason distorted, as the analysis of German Catholic newspapers ends in April 1933 and not in 1939 as in the English case. After the Catholic Church had given up political Catholicism in the Concordat in July 1933, any public statement or action gradually became the sole responsibility of the bishops. The religious sphere had won over the political. The reasons for continuing the analysis of English Catholic newspapers up to 1939 are simple: first, to see how the events in Germany were discussed in England; and second, to probe

the dimensions of the ‘silence’ of the Catholic Church on antisemitic issues.

The archival material thus supplements the print media with examples on how the ‘Jewish question’ was debated in Catholic religious and secular life. The sources are chosen for their ability to depict and distribute this debate. They are, for example, pamphlets, election campaigns and publications of Catholic lay organisations and parties. The German federal and state archives’ collection of these party publications have been a useful means to see how the ‘Jewish question’ and the big ideologies of the day were presented to the electorate. Police reports and news of local administrations on the activities of extreme right- and left-wing organisations also comment on public responses to these groups. These give an indication of how the information provided ‘from the top’ was received by the population. Private letters addressed to the bishops are rare examples where opinions of ‘ordinary Catholics’ found a direct outlet. Of the numerous Catholic lay organisations in both countries, I have primarily focused on those who professed political, social or educational interests, as they were more likely to engage in and disseminate a discourse on the ‘Jewish question’, or respond to communism or fascism. In Germany’s case these include the publisher and political educator *Volksverein*, as the largest lay organisation and coordinator of the celebrated annual display of Catholicism at the *Katholikentage*. In England’s case, I have used sources of the educational society Catholic Social Guild and the publisher Catholic Truth Society. Both count among the larger and more prominent lay organisations.

While these sources are taken from a Catholic secular world, the diocesan archives provide ample material on the religious sphere. Pastoral letters, sermons, prayer books and sources on religious education bear the traces of the Church’s traditional religious anti-Judaism. The records of the Catholic Guild of Israel, an English Catholic mission to the Jews, turned out to be a rich source on precisely this issue. I am profoundly grateful to the Sisters of Sion, who not only granted me unrestrained access to the Guild’s archive but also were knowledgeable and kind guardians to the history of the Guild. In this same context, I have taken a closer look at the records of the Joseph Teusch Werk in Cologne that defended the Church against National Socialism’s anti-Catholic campaigns after 1935. Teusch’s publications have been cited by historians as an example of Catholic pro-Jewish sentiments, because they acknowledge and praise Christianity’s roots in Judaism. These sources allow an assessment of

the extent to which modern, secular antisemitism had found its way into the religious world.

The chosen sources also reveal information on Catholic reactions to antisemitism, National Socialism and fascism. The loudest expression of a dislike of Jewry and parliamentary democracy came from the Catholic conservative right in both communities. The records and publications of the *Rechtskatholiken* and the core Distributists around Gilbert Keith Chesterton describe their antisemitism on one hand and their links to mainstream or established Catholicism on the other. The material drawn from diocesan, state and private archives reconstructs established Catholicism's response and relation to the Catholic right.

The book is by no means exhaustive in its portrait of Catholic antisemitism in the interwar years and throughout the Second World War. The selection of the material was at times determined by the suitability and availability of sources. Physical destruction and limited access to some material posed a bigger problem. Wartime destruction and fires destroyed quite a number of diocesan records of Weimar Germany, as for instance those of Münster or Munich and Freising (although the documents of their bishops, von Galen and Faulhaber, survived and have been subsequently published). Other archives simply housed no relevant material for the interwar period. The Leeds diocesan archive is such an example. Although access to Catholic archives and their files was generally fairly unrestricted, I occasionally encountered closed doors. Some are generally not open to researchers, such as the Cardiff diocesan archive, and the archive of both the German and English bishops' conferences. I have likewise received negative responses from the Catholic Union of Britain to my enquiry for access to their documents. Others were just difficult to work with. I was, for instance, not allowed to use the archive's catalogue in the diocesan archive of Passau, and was thus only able to look at the few files the archivist was willing to release.

In every comparison a sensible balance of comparable material for each side is desirable in order to come to meaningful conclusions. The book is to a large extent based on German and English sources from similar institutional backgrounds, such as the Catholic media, records of the hierarchy and the most prolific Catholic educational publishers, as well as the organisations of the Catholic conservative right. At times, the selection of primary sources does not seem as even as comparative theory might demand, because Catholicism's infrastructure developed at different times, and at a different pace and with a different emphasis in both countries. The amount and quality of

sources consequently vary. For instance, while Catholic occupational associations have a long tradition in Germany, many similar societies were only set up in the 1920s and 1930s in England. Still, the Catholic anti-Jewish discourse is like a red thread running through the book. The fact that it was picked up by different institutions or social groups in one community is an essential part of any comparison where the contrasts are as important as the similarities.

## Definition of antisemitism

By the 1920s, public Jew-baiting had become less acceptable, even amongst antisemites. While it was less present in mainstream politics, antipathy or even discrimination against Jews was still part of British and German social life.<sup>17</sup> For instance, the Liberty Restoration League's honourable aim was to 'defend the Natural and Constitutional Rights of the Citizen'. But amongst themselves they agreed that the best method would be to rely 'on the good offices of Members and Peers ... for the propagation of its policy, and it is in Private Member Bills that the spearhead of its attack on Jewry may be looked for'.<sup>18</sup> As a result, researchers are often confronted with ambiguous statements on Jews or with a coded language.<sup>19</sup> Positivist research methods alone are consequently a blunt tool in this investigation as single public speeches or publications would rarely reveal antisemitism. To decode the language, historians need to be familiar with the discourse at the time, and ideally with the attitudes of the author and her/his audience.

Antisemitism is usually defined as hatred of Jews as Jews, as a belief system according to Helen Fein that was 'designed to distance, displace or destroy Jews as Jews and/or carries (some of) these consequences'.<sup>20</sup> With respect to Catholics as objects of this research, such a general definition of antisemitism needs further qualification. A distinction between traditional religious anti-Judaism and modern, secular antisemitism (which can include sociocultural, economic and racist stereotypes) remains quite essential in this context in order to detect the links between the religious and the modern, secular forms of Jew-hatred, which have been denied in the Vatican's *We Remember* and other Catholic publications.

The most notorious element has been racial antisemitism because of its direct responsibility for the Holocaust. In most societies, racial antisemitism was, however, outweighed by other – older – components of Jew-hatred. Religious prejudices were the most continuous factors in this melange, often used to justify secular antipathies

against Jews. Others were social and cultural prejudices. At times these grew out of real economic rivalry, but this accounts only for individual cases. The crisis of capitalism in the interwar years spiralled this traditional stereotype into the bogey of the malevolent Jewish financier and hardly resembled the realities of Jewish life. Cultural antisemitism in itself was composed of a wide range of sentiments, such as cultural pessimism, anti-alienism and anti-communism. It thrived on fears for the integrity of the national identity and the survival of a nation's Christian values. Here, the stereotype of the Jewish Bolshevik was particularly powerful at the time, because it was perceived to be the uttermost danger to the integrity of the Christian nation. It was the phantom of a Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy and the wish to preserve the Christian nation that were able to forge links between conservative Catholics and the radical right, fascism and National Socialism.

Thus, racial antisemitism alone is not the focus of this book. Such an emphasis has often been misleading if not self-serving in many studies on Catholics and antisemitism, as this tunnel vision tended to exempt Catholics from any responsibility for National Socialism and the Holocaust on the basis that the Church had always condemned racial idolatry. Still, race was 'en vogue' in the first half of the twentieth century. The idea that people – in particular Jews – belonged to different races and that nations were made up of different races was widely accepted at the time. The concept of race was, however, still very blurred and usually referred to Jews as a cultural people distinct from Britons or Germans, without necessarily applying a biological determinism. This does not mean that this definition of Jewry was less exclusive. The emphasis is consequently set on how existing antisemitism could accommodate National Socialist or fascist antisemitism in the rise of political fascism.<sup>21</sup>

The narrative of the book follows a chronological order. Yet it is not exhaustive in the description of antisemitic events, the depths of Jewish and Catholic lives or the details of political events. Some of its sections will seem too isolated and disconnected to be woven together in a comparison, as for example the chapter on Palestine in Britain and the Catholic parties in Germany. The book discusses those events, publications and groups that quite visible discussed a 'Jewish question'. Since antisemitism was a very national affair, its form dependent on national events and political culture, waves of antisemitism in Germany and Britain did not always coincide nor did they necessarily arise on the same themes. 'Palestine', for example, was a matter of British national and foreign policy and naturally

gained less attention in Germany and amongst German Catholics. The upheavals of the First World War and more so those of the socialist revolutions in 1918 and 1919 were much more important to Catholics in Germany at that time.

## **Antisemitism in Britain and Germany**

The comparison between antisemitism in Germany and Britain is essentially a comparison between two ‘Sonderwege’ in national histories. The ‘Sonderweg’ thesis that sought to explain Germany’s path to National Socialism and genocide is well known, not however the ‘Sonderweg’ of the history of Jews in Britain.<sup>22</sup> Todd Endelman describes the older historiography on British Jewry just as that when he summarises the accounts of the exceptional and peaceful experiences Jews had made in Britain since their re-admission by Oliver Cromwell in 1656.<sup>23</sup> The history of Jews in Britain seemed strangely uneventful: no sharp division within the community, no controversy between reform and orthodox Jewry and above all no antisemitism and persecution. Yes, antisemitism existed in these accounts as outdated but essentially harmless snobbery of the upper classes. Furthermore, antisemitism never gained access to British politics and parliament, neither the British Brothers League nor the various fascist parties after the First World War. The most successful history of Jewish emancipation in Europe was readily explained with the strengths of British liberalism, tolerance and fairness.<sup>24</sup> Even Oswald Mosley of the British Union of Fascists (BUF) made use of these national virtues when he explained that British fascists were certainly no antisemites. After all, antisemitism was un-British because it clashed with British fairness. Recent literature has revised this image to considerable extent. They do not challenge the view that Britain was more tolerant than Germany, Austria or Hungary. It is the claim of British liberalism that is put to the test in studies of popular antisemitism and its effects on the Jewish community and policy decisions of British government.<sup>25</sup>

The comparison with Britain has often been implicit in studies on German antisemitism. Two aspects are usually mentioned to explain the radicalism of German antisemitism after the First World War: the different path of Jewish emancipation and the relationship of Jews to the state. Emancipation in Germany was never finished and always remained conditional on the benevolence of non-Jews to grant equality. It has been argued that Jewish emancipation in Britain

focused on the bare details of its implementation (a process that ended within a few years) whereas emancipation in Germany took about 100 years, always inviting a new debate on the 'Jewish question'.<sup>26</sup> The role of the nation state is important in any history of antisemitism. It is the institution that grants and withdraws liberties and has the power to restrain antisemitic and antidemocratic forces. The natures of the German and British states were markedly different. Whereas British governments and administrations were more pragmatic and flexible in their accommodation of Jewish interests, Empire Germany was highly ideological in its wish to preserve a Christian German nation. Jews in Victorian Britain were accepted as citizens for centuries before the challenge of fascism and often lobbied successfully for amendments to legislation to see their interests represented. Empire Germany on the other hand had consistently and ideologically refused to admit Jews to higher civil service, officer ranks of the army and as judges or public prosecutors.<sup>27</sup> If we, however, consider changes over time to the emancipation process and the relationship of British Jews to the state, the British and German experiences have much more in common than previously assumed. Every new amendment to the Emancipation contract in following legislations on Sunday Trading, the National Insurance Act or denominational schools brought negotiations about particular concessions to religious practices of Jews. Chris Szejnmann argues that the Emancipation process was thus equally incomplete as it was in Germany.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, the Emancipation as such and the following legislations were accompanied by antisemitic stereotypes in the popular press that were much the same as elsewhere in Europe.<sup>29</sup> The relationship between Jews and the British state changed significantly after the First World War. If Victorian governments were still open to accommodate Jewish interests, governments between the wars were much less so. This was most obvious in British immigration policies. The 1919 Alien Act not only stipulated a stricter naturalisation process. Immigrants, in particular Eastern European and Russian Jews, were increasingly ethnicised and discriminated against. The bureaucracy, too, saw in the Jews more and more as foreigners rather than a religious minority. The London County Council, for example, gave preferential treatment to Britons when it awarded student stipends or allocated social housing in the early 1920s.<sup>30</sup>

Once we reach the period of the First World War, the differences between antisemitism in Germany and Britain shrink further. The most important development in antisemitism in both societies was the increasing ethnicising of the Jews and the common image of them

as foreigners rather than a religious minority. The 'Jewish question' re-emerged during the war on much the same controversies and about the same time – the question of whether Jews fulfilled their patriotic duties in the field or pocketed instead rich war gains. Prompted by campaigns of the radical right, this led the Prussian War Ministry to conduct the 1916 census of Jews serving in the army. In Britain, the sinking of the *Lusitania* by a German submarine in May 1915 ignited three days of rioting in London's East End, vandalising German-owned shops. The violence also hit German (and non-German) Jews because Jewish and German interests were deliberately conflated in the press at the time.<sup>31</sup> Two years later in June 1917 another mob ransacked the Jewish quarters of Leeds, vandalising houses and looting shops; in September Jews and non-Jews fought each other in pitched battles in Bethnal Green (London). The occasion was the refusal of Russian Jews to be conscripted into the British army. Popular violence broke out even though the government had already deported a few thousand Jews.<sup>32</sup> Towards the end of the war, the German government likewise initiated anti-Jewish measures when it closed the borders to Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe on the grounds that they posed a health threat.<sup>33</sup> The themes that provoked antisemitism were the same, yet Jews in Britain experienced violent antisemitism almost six years before assaults on Jews became regular news in Germany. Antisemitism increases in both societies after the war but feeds on very different concerns and takes different forms. The all-encompassing events that fuelled antisemitism in Germany were the end of the war and the socialist revolutions in 1918 and 1919. In Britain these were the conflicts surrounding the project to establish a Jewish national home in Palestine, as well as calls to end immigration. Against the background of rationing and bombing, antisemitism increases even further during the war. Jews were now seen primarily as unassimilable foreigners.<sup>34</sup> Antisemitism was expressed in different forms, loudest by the various fascist organisations and the popular right wing press. Social and occupational discrimination, and anti-Jewish slander, poisoned the social life between Jews and non-Jews. In Germany, antisemitism had finally made the shift from verbal to physical attacks on Jews. Peter Pulzer remarks that the growing strength of the radical antisemitic right would determine the future of German Jews.<sup>35</sup> Public discourse was awash with anti-Jewish stereotypes right up to Hitler's failed coup d'état in 1923. Occupational discrimination was, however, less common. On the contrary, the Weimar constitution and a fairly open society granted Jews their free choice in education and profession.



Inquiries into Catholic or Christian antisemitism have always been part of the broader investigation into the continuity of Jew-hatred and a Christian responsibility for Jewish persecutions.<sup>36</sup> Catholics and Jews did not necessarily make friends despite their shared experience as social outsiders, of religious persecution or indeed their proximity in working-class districts in Britain. Catholic response to Jews, anti-semitism, fascism was likewise not unanimous. Historiography records two different attitudes. Whereas Catholicism in Germany has long been seen as a bulwark against antisemitism and National Socialism, British Catholics are remembered for their enthusiasm for British fascism and amongst intellectuals for European fascism.

Over the last decades research into Catholic antisemitism has shown that anti-Jewish sentiments and rhetoric were dependent on the place of Catholics within national politics. In the case of Imperial Germany, Catholic antisemitism is best seen in the context of German nation-building, where Catholic antisemitism was part of the attempt to craft a cohesive cultural identity and political union among German Catholics in the face of a dominant Protestant (Prussian) national discourse.<sup>37</sup> Much of these pre-war conditions for a specific Catholic antisemitism were, however, gone with the establishment of the Weimar Republic when Germany was for the first time more German than Prussian. The Catholic feeling of inferiority, so prevalent in the first decades of Bismarck's Germany, now lacked all realistic foundations. Furthermore, the Catholic Centre Party was a continuous political force in Weimar Germany as it was part of every coalition government of Weimar Germany. At the same time, the cohesion of the political and social milieu of the Centre Party had grown weaker since the end of the *Kulturkampf* when more than 80% of eligible Catholics voted for their Centre Party. Fewer than 50% of Catholics cast their vote for the Centre Party in the 1920s, a quote that improved slightly in 1928 under the more conservative leadership of Ludwig Kaas.<sup>38</sup> Catholics like other Germans chose to support those parties that promised to represent their increasingly diverse interests beyond the limits of solely Catholic or ecclesiastic concerns. Despite the resurgence of antisemitism in Germany after the First World War little is known about Catholic attitude to Jews and antisemitism in Weimar Germany.<sup>39</sup> To some extent this field is still divided between Hermann Greive's view that Catholic antisemitism was a precursor to National Socialist antisemitism, and the defensive argument by Rudolf Lill where Catholicism is seen as a bastion against antisemitism because of the Church's steadfast condemnation of racism and National Socialism.<sup>40</sup> Greive supports his argument with the many

ideological links between Catholic theologians and intellectuals and National Socialism, racist notions taken for granted and the lack of a clear stance against antisemitism. While Greive focuses on the learned discourse within German Catholicism, Margaret Anderson considers that Jew-hatred in Catholic public discourse was actually less hostile and intense in the Weimar period than it was in Imperial Germany with its overt anti-Catholicism.<sup>41</sup> Anthony Kauders and Oded Heilbrunner have come closer to Catholic popular opinion and Catholic regional and local politics. Both convincingly show that immunity to or a propensity for Jew-hatred was not as easily linked to a Catholic milieu as Lill and Greive have argued. In the diverse and polarised world of Weimar politics, the propensity to anti-Jewish views and rhetoric depended not necessarily on Catholic dogma but on a person's commitment to a political and cultural milieu as well as on the general political infrastructure and culture of a region.<sup>42</sup>

Research on Catholics in England and antisemitism in the modern period has so far not attracted general attention. Single facets of Catholic antisemitism are well documented, such as the popularity of the British Union of Fascists amongst Catholics and their tendency to support Franco's nationalists in the Spanish Civil War. The antisemitism of *The Witness* publications by Hilaire Belloc and Cecil and Gilbert Keith Chesterton, or of the Catholic press in general, is usually mentioned in survey histories on antisemitism in Britain.<sup>43</sup> Belloc and the Chestertons were at the centre of Catholic intellectual life, and were passionately engaged in this debate at the time. They had promised to disclose the 'Jewish danger' threatening England, in many of their publications.<sup>44</sup> They were not alone in British literary circles. Anti-Jewish attitudes among British writers were fairly common at the time. Brian Cheyette has found that in the post-liberal age (1870–1940s) many well-known British writers had created an ambivalent image of 'the Jew', where 'the Jew' could be salvation and apocalypse at the same time. This 'semitic discourse' in British literature sought and fought for cultural values, but was at the same time often underpinned by a racial definition of 'the Jew'. Cheyette believed that the 'semitic discourses' of the writers he discussed (including amongst others Matthew Arnold, T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, George Bernard Shaw, Hilaire Belloc and G.K. Chesterton) resembled the antisemitism prevalent in Europe at the time.<sup>45</sup> An effort to look at the Catholic community in general in order to set these examples into a Catholic and national context has only recently been undertaken.<sup>46</sup>

The book argues that there was no universal Catholic antisemitism in Britain and Germany nor can Catholic views of Jews be reduced to a traditional religious prejudice. Religious arguments against Jews were never free of modern anti-Jewish images, including those that saw in Jews a racially different Other. The form and intensity of a Catholic discourse on the 'Jewish question' were dependent on the immediate political culture in which Catholics acted. Their anti-semitism was strongest whenever the revival of the nation was discussed or challenged. These were also occasions when writers would fall back on a racial definition of the Jews.

Catholics were far less obsessed with 'the Jew' than Arnold Leese was in Britain or Julius Streicher in Germany. Yet this does not mean that they were immune to antisemitism. Whenever prompted to comment on a 'Jewish question', their opinion on the place of Jews in the nation was not too different from that prevalent in general public discourse. The occasions that prompted a Catholic discussion of the 'Jewish question' made it 'Catholic' rather than the form and intensity of anti-Jewish comments. Finally, the book also shows how anti-Jewish attitudes or a particularly intense discussion of a 'Jewish question' at the time could influence Catholic behaviour, in particular in a reluctance to sympathise with the persecuted Jews.

## **The Catholic communities in Britain and Germany**

Catholics, the chosen subject for this book, invite comparability on a basic level – their faith. Of course, differences existed. The most striking is the percentage of Catholics in both countries. Whereas one third of the population in Weimar Germany was Catholic (21,172,087 Catholics in 1933, or 32.5%), Catholics in England and Wales accounted for less than 5% of the population (2,244,580 Catholics in 1932).<sup>47</sup> Secondly, there was a difference in the ethnic and social make-up of Catholics in England and Germany. Growing immigration from Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century meant that the Irish community in England soon represented the largest ethnic group among Catholics. The majority of Catholics in England belonged to the working and lower middle class and were city dwellers in London, Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow. German Catholics on the other hand were still close to traditional rural life, living in villages and small towns as farmers, craftsmen or small businessmen. The social background of the Catholic leadership was likewise markedly different. The most influential bishops in Germany

belonged either to the nobility or to the upper middle class, while their brethren in England came largely from a middle-class background.<sup>48</sup> This does not mean that English Catholicism was more egalitarian. Adrian Hastings, for instance, remarked that the hierarchy had very little contact with the 'ordinary' Catholic because of the strong class divide. That the bishops largely acted through the Catholic gentry on the political stage underlines this division further.<sup>49</sup>

English and German Catholicism hardly had a thriving cultural or intellectual exchange. Apart from personal contacts between individual bishops, the two communities took little notice of each other.<sup>50</sup> The English clergy had a closer relationship with French and Belgian Catholicism, where English Catholics had found refuge in times of persecution. Nevertheless, the model of continental political Catholicism with the emphasis on lay participation in numerous Catholic organisations did inspire the Catholic Social Guild in its own work, while Bishop Casartelli of Salford thought the continental model would offer a barrier against socialism in his diocese.<sup>51</sup>

As members of one Church, Catholics in both countries shared the same hierarchical structure, faith and rites. The centralisation and unification of the Catholic world Church developed consistently from the dogma of papal infallibility and reached a zenith in the publication of the *Codex Juris Canonici* in 1917. Similar to the modern civil law book, this book of law included a complete codification of existing Catholic canon law and was applied throughout the entire Church. The Church became one great legal entity, where all offices and rites have their own well-defined place and are secured by a specific jurisdiction. At the head of this Church stood the pope with all-encompassing supremacy.<sup>52</sup> In contrast, the authority of the local church was significantly weakened, not least because the right to appoint bishops was now reserved to the pope. The Code clearly aimed at further centralisation of power in the papacy, and at the standardisation and legalisation of the Church.<sup>53</sup> The hierarchical organisation of the Church in Germany and England was consequently largely identical in the timeframe of this book. The bishops have the command over their dioceses and are only responsible to the pope. They delegate pastoral and administrative duties to their priests, who represent and organise the Church on the ground without retaining any constitutional rights. The Archbishop of Westminster and the Cardinal Archbishop of Breslau (at the time) presided over the national conferences of the bishops, but had no authority over other bishops.<sup>54</sup>

The historical experience of the Church in Germany and England was, however, different and left its mark on the otherwise identical structure. The Catholic Church in the German Länder had experienced the secularisation of Church property in 1803, the reorganisation of German Länder under Napoleon and later Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* in the 1870s that disrupted the ecclesiastic structure temporarily. Apart from these disturbances, the Church rested on a strong and well-established hierarchy that remained loyal to Rome (especially during and after the *Kulturkampf*). The Catholic hierarchy in England, however, ceased to exist under Elizabeth I, when in 1559 the majority of the bishops refused to disavow the primacy of the pope. The ecclesiastical structure, from the parish to the bishoprics, was no longer Catholic. From then on until 1908, England was regarded and administered by Rome as missionary territory. The four Vicariates established by Rome in place of the hierarchy can only nominally be regarded as a hierarchical structure, as the Vicars Apostolic had no authority on the ground. The missionary clergy were members of religious orders and only answerable to their own superiors. Even the secular clergy had their own organisation that was largely independent from the bishops. Only after the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850 did the bishops gain the upper hand and bring the clergy under their control. Parishes were created even later, in 1918. At that time, almost seventy years after the restoration, the Catholic Church in England was still being built, new dioceses were created and others were split.<sup>55</sup> Compared to the hierarchy in Germany, the English ecclesiastical structure was young, still growing but far less rooted in the community in 1918. The pastoral care and coverage improved considerably over time, however. There were, for instance, in 1901 3,298 priests looking after around 1,500,000 Catholics. This number increased by 1940 to 5,652 priests who cared for approximately 2,500,000 people, or one priest for a congregation of 440.<sup>56</sup> In Germany, one priest looked after the spiritual care of almost three times as many faithful, 1,027 (1925). In the same year, the English and Welsh hierarchy had as many archbishoprics as Germany and only four suffragan sees fewer.<sup>57</sup>

As one consequence of the fairly recent re-establishment of the Catholic Church in England, Catholicism's political weight and social organisation differed immensely from that in Germany. Martin Conway speaks of a social Catholicism in England and a political Catholicism in Germany.<sup>58</sup> Catholics in Germany were politically represented by two parties: the Centre Party and the Bavarian

People's Party. They could also rely on a vast and dense network of Catholic organisations, catering for every age and profession. In England and Wales on the other hand, the organisational infrastructure was still in its infancy by the 1920s, seventy years after the re-establishment of the hierarchy. Most of the organisations were devotional and parochial in character rather than political, and only a handful gained national importance.<sup>59</sup> Professional organisations took off very slowly and there was no organisation by and for Catholic workers until 1935. Although there were two attempts to start a Catholic party, such a political presentation was never feasible considering the small numbers of Catholics, the British election system and anti-Catholic attitudes.<sup>60</sup>

In contrast to Germany, where the Catholic social milieu was welded to the Centre Party during the Bismarckian *Kulturkampf*, the Catholic community in England was quite diverse in its political tastes. While Catholic workers (largely from an Irish background) tended to vote for the Liberal Party (who had promised Irish Home Rule) and later for Labour, the hierarchy, clergy and the old influential Catholic families relied on the Conservatives to safeguard denominational schooling. Because of these political divisions, any direct political activity by the clergy often had contradictory or negative effects.<sup>61</sup> Considering these handicaps there remained two avenues for promoting Catholic interests in British national politics. First, there was the direct and personal way through Catholic membership of the two houses of parliament. A favourite negotiator for the hierarchy was for many years Lord Fitzalan and his Catholic Union of Great Britain.<sup>62</sup> Their main campaigning issue was the removal of remaining restrictions on the Catholic community. Drawn from the landed gentry and upper middle class and overwhelmingly Tory in its political orientation, the Union had little interest in workers' rights and was unremittingly antisocialist.<sup>63</sup> The second approach was to use the existing Catholic lay organisations as lobbying tools. The method was very effective on issues such as funding for Catholic schools or birth control.<sup>64</sup> Yet lobbying was generally counterproductive whenever the clergy or lay organisations tried to influence the Catholic vote directly. Catholics in the northern industrial dioceses, for instance, were particularly steadfast in their support for the Liberal and Labour Party, despite the clergy's recommendation of the Conservatives. Their obstinacy is understandable considering that ordinary Catholic interests were hardly represented by the Catholic Union nor by the hierarchy. Following these experiences, the bishops decided not to interfere

with the laity's political activities, as this would divide the community more than unite it.<sup>65</sup>

The first signs of a disintegration of the German Catholic milieu were visible shortly before the First World War and became more apparent during the Weimar period.<sup>66</sup> Although politically very successful (the Centre Party participated in every government), the milieu was gradually losing its cohesion, partly through increasing secularisation. This trend was compounded by internal conflicts (between its reformist left and conservative right wing) and the Centre Party's fading legitimacy in the eyes of Catholic voters towards the end of the 1920s. Its electoral base was gradually dwindling from 13.6% in 1920 to 11.2% in 1933, when only 40% of all Catholics (outside Bavaria) voted for the Centre Party. Detlev Peukert suggests that the Centre Party – like the liberal parties – was tainted precisely by its constant participation in Weimar governments.<sup>67</sup> However, the Catholic milieu had shown cracks even before the First World War, when Catholic workers began to vote for the SPD in the 1912 general election. The factors that had bound Catholics together, such as antagonism towards the Protestant state, latent discrimination and the feeling of inferiority, declined in importance in the Weimar Republic. Adam Stegerwald, a centre-right Centre Party politician and leader of the Christian Trade Union, felt in 1918 that the Centre Party would no longer be able to accommodate the manifold political currents among Catholics, whether liberal, right-wing or reactionary.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, the political field was no longer left to the Centre Party alone. The Bavarian Catholics seceded from the Centre Party in 1919 to form the Bavarian People's Party (BVP).<sup>69</sup> Adam Stegerwald's Christian-National People's Party tried to attract the support of Catholic intellectuals and nationally minded workers, but was never really successful. Further alternatives to the Centre Party were offered by the DNVP's National Catholic Council founded in 1920, or by the Christian Social Reich Party of Vitus Heller, which was the left-wing equivalent to Stegerwald and the *Rechtskatholiken*.<sup>70</sup> The Centre Party certainly remained the strongest Catholic political force. Apart from the BVP none of these small parties was successful at the ballot, and since the Centre Party and the BVP agreed to cooperate, the Centre Party did not need to fear Bavarian competition. Nevertheless, as Oded Heilbrunner asserts, these developments speak of an eagerness to leave the self-prescribed 'ghetto' and participate in general national political movements.<sup>71</sup>

Because of a lack of Catholic parties, English Catholicism has often been favourably compared to continental (especially Belgian and

German) Catholicism as being an 'open' instead of a 'closed' system, which meant that Catholics were encouraged to play a constructive part in liberal democratic politics alongside non-Catholics.<sup>72</sup> Edward Norman praised the 'English values' of the bishops – fair play, tolerance, freedom – that softened the harsher ultramontane ideals of the hierarchy. These idealised images of English Catholicism have been criticised by Mary Hickman, who has pointed out that there existed different conceptions of what English Catholicism was because of the community's social and ethnic differences. The Irish in England, for instance, responded more favourably to the clergy's ultramontanist, not just because of the 'ultramontane mission to the poor', but also 'championing [of] and fidelity to Roman authority was more acceptable to the Irish than aristocratic English Catholicism'.<sup>73</sup>

German historiography supported the image of a 'closed' Catholicism in Germany, though recent work has offered nuances to this traditional monolithic portrait of German Catholicism. However, the view of a fairly hermetic ultramontane subculture persists.<sup>74</sup> Aram Mattioli and Olaf Blaschke see the 'closed' Catholic milieu, based on a strong ultramontanist as the environment where antisemitism was a common part of Catholic culture.<sup>75</sup> The idea of an 'open' and 'closed' Catholicism is less useful for the period from 1918 to 1939. With the absence of persecution and options to engage with a wider German society, the Catholic bond gradually but notably lost its importance. Kester Aspden, too, has modified the open/closed model when he asserts that the politics of the English Catholic community should be understood 'as a product of the tensions between conflicting sets of demands, some drawing the Church away from, some pushing it towards the wider society' rather than as the result of specific national or religious characteristics.<sup>76</sup>

This is the background against which the discourse on the 'Jewish question' evolved, and the framework in which Catholic organisations and individuals acted. For instance, the lack of a well-organised network of social and political lay organisations in England allowed the eloquent and widely publicised Distributists and their antisemitism considerable space. In the case of Germany, the infighting of the Centre Party and the concern about the disintegration of the Catholic milieu paralysed an effective struggle against the antisemitism of the Catholic right and against National Socialism.

While the lay organisations in both countries differed in their organisational form, the national hierarchies and Catholic intellectuals shared two ideas. These were antisocialism and the tendency to retreat into spirituality, both of which were also advocated by the



Vatican.<sup>77</sup> The consequences were significant. For once, the cultivation of a 'red scare' and the rhetoric of a rebirth of the spiritual community and rejection of materialism resembled the discourse of the extreme right. On some occasions this shared worldview became a bridge-builder between conservative Catholics and the extreme right. Secondly, the hierarchies' disengagement from social and political questions weakened the moderate lay organisations and allowed a convergence on the right.

## **The Jewish communities in Britain and Germany**

A 'Jewish question' in Britain and Weimar Germany was never a question of the size of the Jewish community. In neither society did Jews make up more than 1% of the entire population. The two communities had more in common. Both were challenged yet profited from Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe, both experienced a successful embourgeoisement of the majority of their members as well as antisemitic slander and attacks – yet not at the same time and rarely with the same intensity. The Jewish community in Britain had been a negligible religious minority before mass immigration from Russia and Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth century. 20,000 Jews lived in Britain in 1830, and 65,000 in 1881, a decade after Jewish emancipation in Britain.<sup>78</sup> With mass immigration from Russia and Eastern Europe, the community grew exponentially. Eventually 300,000 Jews lived in Britain in 1914 and 335,000 when the First World War ended.<sup>79</sup> These newcomers as well the rise of a Jewish middle class significantly changed the demography and politics of the community at the beginning of the twentieth century, much more so than in Germany.

From the 1910 census the size of the Jewish community in Germany was in decline, a decline that would have been even sharper had it not been for Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe who had sustained the size of the community. Before the First World War 615,000 Jews lived in Germany and accounted for 0.95% of the German population. The only census of the Weimar period in 1925 recorded 564,000 Jews (0.9% of the entire population) and the June 1933 listed 499,682 Jews or 0.76% of the population of Hitler's Germany. The percentage of foreign Jews had risen between 1890 and 1925 from 22,000 (or 3.9% of the Jewish population) to 107,747 foreign Jews (19.1%). Almost half of them had Polish citizenship, 12% held an Austrian passport, 9% Soviet and 10% were

stateless. In June 1935 there were still 98,747 Eastern European Jews or 19.8% of the Jewish community in Germany. By that time the economic discrimination against Jews (which had set in as early as 1932 in Franconia) and the open persecution since Hitler's nomination as German Chancellor in January 1933 had reduced the Jewish community by 11%.<sup>80</sup> Many of them found refuge in Britain.<sup>81</sup>

The history of Jews both in Britain and in Germany is a story of economic success and social improvement. In the nineteenth century the Jewish community in Britain was divided into two distinct social groups. On one side there was a small, wealthy elite of great banking and brokerage families. They were well integrated into the political and social elite of the Empire, acted as government advisors and had gained peerages. Elected as representatives to the Board of Deputies of British Jews they promoted and defended Jewish interests in negotiations with British governments.<sup>82</sup> By the end of that century, however, their position was challenged by professional and mercantile families, by 'self-made' men such as Michael Marks, who had made his way from peddler to the co-founder of the retail stores of Marks & Spencer. This new middle class resented the unconditional assimilation of the old elite and urged to stress Jewish identity and education instead. Moreover, the traditional gentlemanly politeness in the face of antisemitism exasperated the new generation who actively worked against discrimination and anti-Jewish slander, by lobbying MPs, providing legal aid to Jewish immigrants who were refused entry at the ports or in a more strident, confident journalism of Jewish newspapers such as the *Jewish Chronicle* or *The Jewish Review*.<sup>83</sup> The contours of a British Jewish identity became all the more obvious when British Jews met Jewish refugees from Hitler Germany. Although sympathetic to their plight, British Jews felt that German Jews were more German than Jewish, 'too assimilated'.<sup>84</sup>

The lives of ordinary Jews was, however, markedly different. The majority of Jews in Britain were poor, immigrants from Eastern Europe and Russia living as street peddlers in immigrant quarters of Britain's industrial cities or ports such as London, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Glasgow. They found work in the old pre-industrial trades, predominantly clothing, footwear and furniture. It was the English-born children of these immigrants who enjoyed relative economic success before the First World War. English-educated, this second generation now sought employment as clerks, typists or shop assistants. A modest improvement of wages in the years between 1880 and 1890s even made the sweated labour of the old trades slightly more bearable. British Jews did well in education, too. In the

interwar years only about 24% of Jewish children went to grammar schools yet in secondary schools in Jewish districts up to 50% of the students were Jewish, as for example at Clapton County School. At British universities Jewish students made up 2% of students at Oxford and Cambridge, 4% at Manchester and 7% at Leeds University. The majority of them studied medicine. Legal studies were less popular, because few solicitors would take in Jews as clerks.<sup>85</sup> However, statistics of Jewish friendly societies show that still 50% of their young members were employed in the old trades in the 1930s. The *New Survey of London Life and Labour* found that the Jewish working-class community in the East End was slightly poorer than the non-Jewish population.<sup>86</sup> This was still a relative economic success since only seventeen years earlier 70% of them were working in this pre-industrial sector. The newly won mobility allowed Jewish families to move to leafier neighbourhoods near the 'first settlement'. Whereas about 60% of London Jews had lived in London's East End before the war, this number was now down to 30% in the 1930s. In the new middle-class neighbourhoods of Hackney, Stoke Newington and Golders Green, lower-middle-class Jewish families now outnumbered working-class families.<sup>87</sup> The embourgeoisement of British Jews occurred within a generation yet much later than that of German Jews, who in their majority had arrived in secure middle-class positions by the end of the First World War. In both cases Jewish embourgeoisement coincided with national crises of industrial depression, long-term unemployment, bad housing conditions and hostile antisemitic campaigns – yet in Germany this occurred about four decades earlier.<sup>88</sup>

German unification in 1871 had brought legal and political, yet not social, emancipation. As a result of industrialisation and despite the 'half-fulfilled promises' of emancipation, Jews in Germany had left the ghetto and had found their place within the German middle class, just like their eighteenth-century emancipators had hoped for.<sup>89</sup> By the time the German Empire collapsed in 1918 German Jews had not only won seven Nobel prizes but were also, on average, more affluent than the rest of the population.<sup>90</sup> For example, twice as many non-Jews compared to Jews were registered in the lowest tax classes in Hamburg and Breslau.<sup>91</sup> In Weimar Germany, Jews were at last able to realise the promises of nineteenth-century legal emancipation. Judaism as religion was now legally and fiscally on a par with the Christian churches. Yet more importantly, due to the commitment to Jewish emancipation of the German Democratic Party and the Social Democrats the republic offered Jews equal access to the army, civil

service and German academia, whose higher ranks had previously been closed to Jews.<sup>92</sup> As a result of this new openness the number of Jews who found a career within the civil service and academia rose by 30% to 12.5% of the Jewish population in 1933 compared to 8.4% of non-Jews. Still, most students strove for a career in the free professions as physicians, lawyers and solicitors.<sup>93</sup> The traditional presence of Jews in trade and commerce, however, did not change significantly from the nineteenth century. In 1933 61.3% of the Jewish population compared to 18.4% of the general population found their livelihood as independent businessmen and traders. While the non-Jewish population continued to work in agriculture (28.9%) and crafts (40.4%) in contrast to 1.7% and 23.2% of the Jewish population.<sup>94</sup> Compared to the Kaiserreich, Jews in Weimar Germany had lost much of their economic advantage (which was built on their early knowledge of modern capitalist economies) due to the growth of cooperatives in agriculture, trusts in industry, the decline of private banks and the expansion of state-controlled economic sectors. These economic structures worked against traditionally independent Jewish businesses that preferred to retain their independence, not least out of fear of antisemitism rather than being part of a large hierarchical and potentially anti-Jewish administration. In 1933 46% of the Jewish population in contrast to 16% of non-Jews had set up independent businesses; most Jews sought employment with Jewish companies and avoided non-Jewish businesses.<sup>95</sup>

Needless to say that the social lives of Jews and non-Jews in Germany remained separate because of the different economic worlds they occupied.<sup>96</sup> Yet while the largely Protestant middle class met Jews in the bourgeois world of clubs, voluntary associations, the universities and the platform of German elite culture, the worlds of Catholics and Jews could not have been more different. Catholics largely either lived in a rural and small town world marked by the pre-modern structures of agriculture, crafts and guilds, or experienced modern industry as manual labourers not as independent businessmen. Jews, on the other hand, lived to 70% in big cities. One third of all German Jews lived in Berlin alone.<sup>97</sup>

In contrast to Germany, the social space between Jews and non-Jews was less separated because their occupational structure and residence was not that different from that of non-Jews.<sup>98</sup> Catholics, Irish Catholics and Jews lived even closer together in the working-class districts of the 1930s. This was usually a mixed blessing. Research into antisemitism in Britain likes to stress that antisemitism was usually more prevalent in neighbouring districts of London's East End such as

Stoke Newington that now attracted the socially mobile Jewish families. The British Union of Fascists on the other hand profited from the popular antisemitism in the East End coupled with the hard social conditions of a working-class district in an economic depression.<sup>99</sup> Thomas Linehan has convincingly shown how Catholics, Irish Catholics, were among the staunchest supporters of the BUF in the East End. Like the Jewish community of the district, they too felt that the Labour Party did not consider their interest.<sup>100</sup> While working-class Jews in the East End consequently supported other left-wing organisations as well as the Communist Party of Great Britain, Irish Catholics filled the political vacuum with their support for the Fascists. Even without the presence of an antisemitic movement communal life in such working-class districts was hardly harmonious. Skirmishes and street battles between Jewish and Christian (usually mixed Catholic and Protestant) were quite common in Manchester and Salford in the interwar years. The taunt to set off these battles was often the cry of 'who killed Christ?'. In everyday life, the two communities, Catholics and Jews, tended to live parallel lives in their shared social space.<sup>101</sup>

The promises of the emancipation contract between Jews and non-Jews were fulfilled neither in Weimar Germany nor in Britain.<sup>102</sup> The legal restrictions that had still commanded the communities' economic and social life in the nineteenth century had been completely withdrawn. After decades of hard work and economic success Jews had moved from the fringes of German and British society to its centre. Jews participated on every level of national politics, and some, like Walter Rathenau, Herbert Samuel or Samuel Hoare, were appointed to ministerial posts. Yet in everyday life Jews and non-Jews tended to avoid contacts. Indeed social and occupational discrimination increased in Britain after the First World War and the two worlds drifted even further apart during the Second World War. Golf clubs and motoring associations introduced membership bans, and restaurants and hotels frankly advertised that they did not welcome Jews. It had become more difficult to get accepted by the most prestigious schools, and University College London operated an undeclared quota of Jewish admission.<sup>103</sup> British governments their administrations were now responsive to popular antisemitism. In the early 1920s, London's administration, the London County Council, employed only British citizens and housing allocations were equally given preferentially to Britons.<sup>104</sup> In response to a fierce anti-alien press campaign of right-wing newspapers in 1940, the government decided to intern all enemy aliens, the majority of whom were Jewish refugees from Nazism.<sup>105</sup> There had always been restrictions for Jews

in legal professions and medicine but occupational discrimination had now become more widespread.<sup>106</sup> In Weimar Germany occupational discrimination – which was the norm in Empire Germany – had almost ended, especially under democratic and liberal governments. Yet even though Jews lived now in a more open society, popular sentiment tended to exclude them from friendly societies, clubs and professional associations. The result was a renewed segregation of Jewish and non-Jewish societies but at the same time a revival of self-confident Jewish culture.<sup>107</sup>

## Notes

- 1 David Kertzer, *Unholy War. The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Antisemitism*, New York, 2001, pp. 3–4.
- 2 On the reactions to *We Remember* see Clemens Thomas, 'Kommentar zum Dokument "Wir erinnern uns"', *Freiburger Rundbriefe*, 5, (1998), 161–167; Michael Marrus, 'The Vatican on Racism and Antisemitism, 1938–39. A New Look at the Might-Have-Been', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 11 (1997), 378–395.
- 3 Wolfgang Benz; Werner Bergmann (eds), *Vorurteil und Völkermord. Entwicklungslinien des Antisemitismus*, Bonn, 1997, pp. 11–12.
- 4 For an example of an excellent comparison see Michael Brenner; Rainer Liedtke; David Rechter (eds), *Two Nations. British and German Jews in Comparative Perspective*, Tübingen, 1999.
- 5 Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy. Explaining Ethnic Cleansing*, Cambridge, 2005.
- 6 Rainer Liedtke; Stephan Wendehorst (eds), *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants. Minorities and the Nation State in Nineteenth Century Europe*, Manchester, 1999.
- 7 Helmut Walser Smith (ed.), *Protestants, Catholics and Jews in Germany 1800–1914*, Oxford, 2001; Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict. Culture, Ideology, Conflicts, 1870–1914*, Princeton, 1994; Peter Alter (ed.), *Die Konstruktion der Nation gegen die Juden*, Munich, 1999.
- 8 Mary Hickman, *Religion, Class and Identity. The State, the Catholic Church and the Education of the Irish in Britain*, Aldershot, 1995, pp. 98–100, 251–252.
- 9 Keith Robbins, 'Religion and Community in Scotland and Wales since 1800', in *A History of Religion in Britain. Practice and Belief from Pre-Roman Times to the Present*, ed. by Sheridan Gilley, Oxford, 1994, pp. 363–380, 364.

- 10 Callum G. Brown, *Religion and Society in Twentieth Century Britain*, Harlow, 2006; Callum Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730*, London/New York, 1987; Todd Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656 to 2000*, Berkeley/London, 2002, p. 12.
- 11 Sheridan Gilley, 'Catholicism in Ireland', in *The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe, 1750–2000*, ed. by Hugh McLeod, Werner Ustorf, Cambridge, 2003, pp. 99–112.
- 12 Sheridan Gilley, 'The Roman Catholic Church in England, 1780–1940', in *A History of Religion*, pp. 346–362, 356–361.
- 13 Hickman, *Religion, Class, Identity*, pp. 98–100, 251–52. Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity. Irish Catholics in England 1880–1939*, Buckingham, 1993, pp. 47–55.
- 14 Heinz Hürten, *Deutsche Katholiken 1918 bis 1945*, Paderborn, 1992, pp. 13–17.
- 15 Arbeitskreis für kirchliche Zeitgeschichte Münster, 'Katholiken zwischen Tradition und Moderne: Das katholische Milieu als Forschungsaufgabe', *Westfälische Zeitschrift*, 43 (1993), 588–654, pp. 364–372.
- 16 Catholic newspapers were not simply abolished or transformed into church news bulletins. Many Centre Party papers continued to publish news and comments up to 1939 and beyond (e.g., *Germania*, *Ausburger Postzeitung*), some adopted a pro-government line (e.g., *Der Feuerreiter*), and most dailies restricted themselves to news reports rather than comments. Walter Hannot, *Die Judenfrage in der katholischen Tagespresse Deutschlands und Österreichs 1923–1933*, Mainz, 1990, p. 129; Otto Roegele, 'Presse und Publizistik des deutschen Katholizismus 1803–1963', in *Der soziale und politische Katholizismus. Entwicklungslinien in Deutschland 1803–1963*, ed. by Anton Rauscher, 2 vols, Munich, 1981–82, II, 395–434, pp. 424–426.
- 17 Tony Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice. Antisemitism in British Society During the Second World War*, Manchester, 1989, p. 79.
- 18 Griffiths, Richard: *Patriotism Perverted: Captain Ramsay, the Right Club and English Antisemitism, 1939–40*, London, 1998, p. 59.
- 19 For coded languages see Ruth Wodak, 'Suppression of the Nazi Past, Coded Languages, and Discourse of Silence,' unpublished conference paper given at the German Historical Institute London, 27 March 2004. Thanks go to Mark Fenemore who alerted me to this paper.
- 20 On the problem of defining antisemitism see Kushner, *Persistence of Prejudice*, pp. 2–7; Helen Fein, 'Dimensions of Antisemitism: Attitudes, Collective Accusations, and Actions', in *The Persisting Question. Sociological Perspectives and Social Contexts of Modern Antisemitism*, ed. by Helen Fein, Berlin, 1987, pp. 67–86, 69.

- 21 Research usually emphasises that not racial antisemitism but cultural antisemitism was central to the NSDAP's election campaigns. Dana Arieli-Horowitz, 'The Jews as "Destroyer of Culture" in National Socialist Ideology', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 32 (1998), 51–67; Angelika Müller, 'Der jüdische Kapitalist als Drahtzieher und Hintermann. Zur anisemitischen Bildpolemik in den NS Wahlplakaten der Weimarer Republik, 1924–33', *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung*, 7 (1998), 175–207; Jürgen Matthäus, 'Antisemitic Symbolism in Early Nazi Germany, 1933–35', *LBIYB*, 45 (2000), 183–203. For Hitler's voters see Richard Hamilton, *Who Voted for Hitler?*, Princeton, 1982; Thomas Childers, *The Nazi Voter. The Social Foundations of Fascism in Germany 1919–1933*, Chapel Hill, 1983; Jürgen Falter, *Hitlers Wähler*, Munich, 1991. Looking at generations in Germany's body politic rather than exclusively at the social background see Richard Bessel, 'The Formation and Dissolution of a German National Electorate from the Kaiserreich to the Third Reich', in *Elections, Mass Politics and Social Change in Modern Germany*, ed. by Larry E. Jones; James Retallack, Cambridge, 1992, pp. 399–418.
- 22 Geoff Eley, 'The British Model and the German Road', in Geoff Eley, David Blackbourn, *The Peculiarities of German History. Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth Century Germany*, Oxford, 1984, pp. 18–155.
- 23 Endelman, *The Jews of Britain*, pp. 4–6. For another critical account see Chris Szejnmann, 'Grossbritannien', in *Handbuch des Antisemitismus. Judenfeindschaft in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. by Wolfgang Benz, vol. 1, pp. 127–132, 128, 130.
- 24 Endelman, *Jews of Britain*, p. 6.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Peter Pulzer, 'Emancipation and its Discontents. The German-Jewish Dilemma', Centre for German-Jewish Studies. Research Paper No 1, Summer 1997; Reinhard Rürup, *Emanzipation und Antisemitismus. Studien zur Judenfrage der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, Göttingen, 1975.
- 27 Edward Timms, 'The "Enemy within" and the "All-Purpose Foreigner". A Comment on Ritchie Robertson', in *Two Nations* ed. by Michael Brenner et al., pp. 443–449, 444; David Feldman, 'Jews and the state in Britain', in *Two Nations*, pp. 141–161, 153; Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Antisemitism in Germany and Austria*, Cambridge MA, 1988; Herbert A. Strauss, 'Great Britain – The Minor Key', in *Hostages of Modernisation, 1870–1933/39*, ed. by Herbert A. Strauss, 2 vols, Berlin, 1992–93, I, 289–293.
- 28 Szejnmann, 'Grossbritannien', p. 129.
- 29 Ibid.



- 30 Feldman, 'Jews and the state', pp. 158–159.
- 31 Endelman, *Jews of Britain*, p. 185.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Pulzer, 'Hope and fear', p. 273.
- 34 Endelman, *Jews of Britain*, pp. 223–224.
- 35 Pulzer, 'Hope and fear', p. 273. For a great review of the most recent literature and research on antisemitism in Germany see Lars Fischer, 'The Non-Jewish Question and other 'Jewish Questions' in Modern Germany (and Austria)', *Journal of Modern History*, 82 (December 2010), 876–901.
- 36 Very good on the roots of modern antisemitism is Fein, *Persisting Question*; Leonore Siegel Wenschkewitz (ed.), *Christlicher Antijudaismus und Antisemitismus*, Frankfurt, 1994; Johannes Heil, 'Antijudaismus und Antisemitismus. Begriffe als Bedeutungsträger', *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung*, 6 (1997), 92–114; Jonathan Sperber, 'Commentary on Christians and Antisemitism', *Central European History*, 27 (1994), 349–353.
- 37 Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict. Culture, Ideology, Conflicts, 1870–1914*, Princeton, 1994; Helmut Walser Smith, Chris Clark (eds), *Protestants, Catholics and Jews in Germany 1800–1914*, Oxford, 2001; David Blackbourn, 'Roman Catholicism, the Centre Party and Antisemitism in Imperial Germany', in *Hostages of Modernisation. Studies on Modern Antisemitism 1870–1933/39*, ed. by Herbert A. Strauss, 2 vols, Berlin, 1992–93, I, 107–128; Olaf Blaschke, *Katholizismus und Antisemitismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich*, Göttingen, 1997.
- 38 Larry E. Jones, 'Catholic Conservatives in the Weimar Republic: The Politics of the Rhenish-Westphalian Aristocracy, 1918–1933', *German History*, 18 (2000), 60–85, 221.
- 39 Helmut Berding, *Moderner Antisemitismus in Deutschland*, Frankfurt, 1988; Dirk Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität und Gewalt. Judenfeindschaft in der Weimarer Republik*, Bonn, 1999; Oded Heilbrunner, 'From Antisemitic Peripheries to Antisemitic Centres: The Place of Antisemitism in Modern German History', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35 (2000), 559–576.
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- 42 Anthony Kauders, *German Politics and the Jews. Düsseldorf and Nuremberg, 1910–1933*, Oxford, 1996; Oded Heilbrunner, 'The Role

- of Nazi Antisemitism in the Nazi Party's Activity and Propaganda. A Regional Historiographical Study', *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, 35 (1990), 397–439.
- 43 Kushner, *Persistence*, p. 79, p. 81; Colin Holmes, *Antisemitism in British Society 1876–1939*, London, 1979, p. 204; Geoffrey Field, 'Antisemitism with the Boots off', in *Hostages of Modernisation*, I, 294–325 (p. 298); David Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews. Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840–1914*, New Haven, 1994; Richard Griffiths, *Patriotism Perverted: Captain Ramsay, the Right Club and English Antisemitism, 1939–40*, London, 1998; Susanne Terwey, 'Kabale und Intrige zum Fin de Siècle. Deutsche Juden in britischen Phobien', *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte*, 26 (1997), 479–493.
  - 44 See, e.g., Cecil Chesterton, *The Party System*, London, 1911; Cecil Chesterton, *The Perils of Peace*, London, 1916.
  - 45 Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society. Racial Representations 1875–1945*, Cambridge, 1993, pp. 9, 273–274.
  - 46 Good examples so far are Kester Aspden, *Fortress Church. The English Roman Catholic Bishops and Politics, 1903–1963*, Leominster, 2002; Adrian Hastings, *A History of English Christianity 1920–1990*, London, 1991; Dennis Sewell, *Catholics. Britain's Largest Minority*, London, 2001.
  - 47 Hürten, *Deutsche Katholiken*, p. 559. The numbers for England and Wales are estimates, because the census in Britain no longer asked for denominations. The estimates were derived from the number of Catholics attending mass, Catholic marriages and baptisms, and Irish immigration, and were published in the *Catholic Directory* (in this case of 1933, pp. 579–580). John Hickey finds the *Directory's* estimates rather conservative and suggests a Catholic population of over five million in 1951. John Hickey, *Urban Catholics. Urban Catholicism in England and Wales from 1829 to the Present Day*, London, 1967, p. 12.
  - 48 Cardinal Bourne was, for instance, the son of a post office clerk in Clapham. Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 21. For the German bishops see Erwin Gatz (ed.), *Die Bischöfe der deutschsprachigen Länder, 1785/1803–1945. Ein biographisches Lexikon*, Berlin, 2001.
  - 49 Adrian Hastings, 'English Catholicism in the Late 1930s', in A. Hastings, *The Shaping of Prophecy*, London, 1995, pp. 69–83 (p. 70); Thomas Moloney, *Westminster, Whitehall and the Vatican. The Role of Cardinal Hinsley, 1935–1943*, Tunbridge Wells, 1985, pp. 26–27.
  - 50 However, the Catholic Social Guild invited Heinrich Brüning to its summer conference in 1933. Letter O'Hea to Bishop Williams, 2 March 1933. Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives (BAA), AP / S8 / 1.

- 51 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 32.
- 52 Klaus Scholder, *The Churches and the Third Reich. Preliminary History and the Time of Illusions 1918–1934*, 2 vols, London 1987–88, I, 52–53.
- 53 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 3.
- 54 Ibid., pp. 10–13. Hürten, *Deutsche Katholiken*, pp. 35–40.
- 55 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 10. Morgan Sweeney, ‘Diocesan Organisation and Administration’, in *The English Catholics 1850–1950*, ed. by George Beck, London, 1950, pp. 116–50. Gilley, ‘Roman Catholic Church in England’, pp. 346–362.
- 56 For numbers of priests see Gilley, ‘Roman Catholic Church in England’, p. 356. For the size of the Catholic population see Hickey, *Urban Catholics*, p. 12.
- 57 The result derives from the number of Catholics in the Reich (with the Saar) in 1925 (20, 785, 293) and the number of clergy (20,226). Hürten, *Deutsche Katholiken*, pp. 560–562.
- 58 Tom Buchanan, Martin Conway, *Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918–1965*, Oxford, 1996, p. 249. Edward Norman stressed another particularity of English Catholicism. He found that the leadership of the English Catholic Church remained profoundly patriotic despite the ultramontanistism of English Catholicism. Edward Norman, *Roman Catholicism in England from the Elizabethan Settlement to the Second Vatican Council*, Oxford, 1985, p. 116, as cited in Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 7; Christoph Kösters; Antonius Liedhegener, ‘Historische Milieus als Forschungsaufgabe. Zwischenbilanz und Perspektiven’, *Westfälische Forschungen*, 48 (1998), 1–12. For Britain see Hastings, *English Christianity*, London, 1986; Hickey, *Urban Catholics*, London, 1967; John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, 1570–1850*, London, 1979.
- 59 According to Hugh McLeod, the Catholic community in Britain developed a proliferation of parish-based organisations, loosely linked to a wider chain, whereas Catholic organisations in Continental Europe were centralised national federations. Hugh McLeod, ‘Building the “Catholic Ghetto”: Catholic Organisations 1870–1914’, in: *Voluntary Religion*, ed. by William J. Sheils, Diana Wood, Studies in Church History, 23 (1986), pp. 411–444, (pp. 416–417).
- 60 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 136, 161–164. On the problem of a Catholic party in England see Hastings, *English Christianity*, pp. 32, 165; Buchanan; Conway, *Political Catholicism*, pp. 250–253.
- 61 For example, in municipal elections in 1906, and a by-election in 1908 the Bishop of Leeds, William Gordon, urged his Catholics to vote against the Liberal candidates. Yet the Catholic vote in Yorkshire

- (mostly Irish) remained solidly Liberal. Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 28–29. Dermot Quinn, *Patronage and Piety. The Politics of English Roman Catholicism, 1850–1900*, London, 199; Josef L. Altholz, ‘The Political Behaviour of the English Catholics, 1850–1867’, *Journal of British Studies*, 4 (1964), 89–103; Philip J. Waller, *Democracy and Sectarianism: a Political and Social History of Liverpool 1868–1939*, Liverpool, 1981; Peter Doyle, ‘Religion, Politics and the Catholic Working Class’, *New Blackfriars*, 54 (1972), 218–225.
- 62 Catholic non-political lay organisation formed by the 15th Duke of Norfolk in 1871 to watch over Catholic interests in governmental action, proposed legislation or the activities of local authorities. Moloney, *Westminster*, p. 115.
  - 63 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 49.
  - 64 R.H. Butterworth, ‘The Structure and Organisation of Some Catholic Lay Organisations in Australia and Great Britain. A Comparative Study’, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1959.
  - 65 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 33–34.
  - 66 Oded Heilbrunner, *Die Achillesferse des deutschen Katholizismus*, Tel Aviv, 1998.
  - 67 Detlev Peukert, *Die Weimarer Republik*, Frankfurt, 1987, p. 158.
  - 68 Letter Stegerwald to Hans Becker, 22 November 1918. Bundesarchiv Berlin (BA), R8115I / 180 Zentrum.
  - 69 In its handbook *Die politischen Strömungen unter Katholiken* the Centre Party listed four Catholic parties and three political Catholic groups, but insisted that the majority of Catholics would still support the Centre Party and the Republic. Bundesarchiv Koblenz (BAK), ZSG 1 108/10 Deutsche Zentrumspartei. Einzelveröffentlichungen 1926–32.
  - 70 Born in Würzburg, formerly a farmer, became secretary of the *Volksverein* in 1911 where he had already published the newspaper *Das Neue Volk*. ‘Bericht über die christlich-soziale Reichspartei, 3 November 1926’, Archdiocesan Archive Freiburg (EAF), B2-29/29.
  - 71 Heilbrunner, *Achillesferse*, pp. 223–225.
  - 72 John H. Whyte, *Catholics in Western Democracies*, Dublin, 1981, pp. 7–8. Jeffrey von Arx, ‘Catholics and Politics’, in *From Without the Flaminian Gate*, ed. by Vincent Alan McClelland, Michael Hodgetts, London 1999, pp. 245–271.
  - 73 Hickman, *Religion*, p. 102.
  - 74 Most research used Rainer Lepsius’ work as a starting point. He has divided German society into four mostly antagonistic social milieus: a conservative, bourgeois/liberal, socialist and Catholic milieu. Rainer Lepsius, ‘Parteiensysteme und Sozialstruktur: Zum Problem der Demokratisierung der deutschen Gesellschaft’, in R. Lepsius,

- Demokratie in Deutschland. Soziologisch-historische Konstellationsanalysen. Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, Göttingen, 1993, pp. 25–51; Arbeitskreis für kirchliche Zeitgeschichte Münster, ‘Katholiken’, pp. 588–654. Most research focuses on the *Kaiserreich*, e.g., Thomas Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch. Deutschland 1870–1918*, Munich, 1988; Olaf Blaschke, Frank-Michael Kuhlmann (eds), *Religion im Kaiserreich: Milieus – Mentalitäten – Krisen*. Gütersloh, 1996.
- 75 Olaf Blaschke, ‘Die Anatomie des katholischen Antisemitismus. Eine Einladung zum internationalen Vergleich’, in *Katholischer Antisemitismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Ursachen und Traditionen im internationalen Vergleich*, ed. by O. Blaschke; Aram Mattioli, Zürich, 2000, pp. 3–54.
- 76 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 7.
- 77 Heinz Hürten, *Kleine Geschichte des deutschen Katholizismus 1800–1960*, Mainz, 1986, pp. 199–208; Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 146–195.
- 78 Szejnmann, ‘Grossbritannien’, p. 130.
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 Monica Richarz, *Jüdisches Leben in Deutschland. Selbstzeugnisse in Sozialgeschichte*, 3 vols, Stuttgart, III, 1979, 14–15.
- 81 Britain admitted about 11,000 refugees before the war and another 44,000 arrived between November 1938 and September 1939. In relation to its population size it thus allowed entry to the island to more refugees than the USA. Endelmann, *Jews of Britain*, p. 215.
- 82 Ibid., p. 193.
- 83 Ibid., p. 193–194.
- 84 Ibid., p. 216.
- 85 Ibid., p. 198.
- 86 Ibid., p. 205.
- 87 Ibid., pp. 196–197.
- 88 Ibid., p. 198.
- 89 Pulzer, ‘Hope and fear’, p. 271. About three quarters of German Jews were part of the urban and rural middle class. Richarz, *Jüdisches Leben*, vol. 2, 1979, p. 35.
- 90 Pulzer, ‘Hope and fear’, p. 271.
- 91 Richarz, *Jüdisches Leben*, vol. 2, 1979, p. 35.
- 92 Richarz, *Jüdisches Leben*, vol. 3, p. 13.
- 93 Ibid., p. 24.
- 94 Ibid., p. 19.
- 95 Ibid., p. 19.
- 96 Ibid., p. 23.
- 97 Ibid., p. 17.

- 98 Endelman, *Jews of Britain*, p. 199.
- 99 Szejnmann, 'Grossbritannien', p. 131.
- 100 Thomas Linehan, *East London for Mosley. The British Union of Fascists in East London and South West Essex, 1933–1940*, London, 1996.
- 101 I am grateful to Simon Mayer, who introduced me to his collection and interpretation of Catholic and Jewish memoirs.
- 102 Pulzer, 'Emancipation', p. 24.
- 103 Endelman, *Jews of Britain*, p. 199.
- 104 Feldman, 'Jews and the state', p. 158
- 105 Endelmann, *Jews of Britain*, p. 224.
- 106 Ibid., p. 199.
- 107 Pulzer, 'Hope and fear', p. 275. For the revival of Jewish culture see Michael Brenner, *Jüdische Kultur in der Weimarer Republik*, Munich, 2000.

## 2

### The 'Jewish question' in Catholic publications

Antisemitism in learned and popular literature is generally well documented.<sup>1</sup> Instead, the focus here will be on the 'Jewish question' as it was discussed in Catholic newspapers. It would be illusionary to hope to capture the mind of 'ordinary' Catholics through these. However, newspapers with their easy accessibility to a wider readership (cheap, high circulation media, available on street corners), bring the historian a step closer to the ordinary reader than an analysis of contemporary (academic) journals that were largely read by the learned middle class. They reveal change how Jews and the 'Jewish question' was presented to the public as well as how these images changed in form and intensity over time. The purpose here is to set the scene for the following chapters with an overview of how the 'Jewish question' and its 'solution' were defined, as well as the anti-semitic stereotypes prevalent in the publications of both Catholic communities. Important in this reconstruction of public discourse is not how often Jews were portrayed negatively but the immediate context of anti-Jewish comments and their form. Like Anthony Kauders in his book *German Politics and the Jews* the following description puts context before numbers, preferring qualitative analysis over bald quantitative statistics.<sup>2</sup>

#### England

Up to the beginning of the twentieth century Catholic media usually fulfilled one main task. They were primarily designed to supplement a national media which either ignored Catholic news, or stood for principles that ran contrary to the Church's mission and claim.

The need for Catholic media was felt even more strongly in Britain, where Catholics felt themselves exposed to an anti-Catholic climate. This was a particular ambition of Hilaire Belloc and Cecil and G.K. Chesterton with their *Witness* publications. The antisemitism of these publications has not gone unmentioned in books on British antisemitism. In fact, in its ideological obsession, radicalism and racial undercurrents, its antisemitism counts among the precursors of (British) fascist antisemitism.<sup>3</sup> The Catholic context and the comparison with other papers of the Catholic community are naturally not central to such survey accounts. Without this context it is, however, more difficult to pin down the influence of Belloc and Chesterton within the Catholic community and thus the persuasiveness of their anti-Jewish attitudes. All *Witness* publications were underfunded and had low circulation rates. The more widely available weekly newspapers Catholics in England by 1918 were: *The Catholic Times* and *Catholic Opinion*, *The Catholic Herald*, *The Universe*, and *The Tablet*. From 1935 Catholics also read a newly launched paper, the *Catholic Worker*. In addition to these newspapers two religious orders, the Benedictines and the Jesuits, published *The Blackfriars* and *The Month* respectively. Both journals were devoted to theology, literary criticism and current affairs. The newspapers mentioned above and the publications of the Catholic Guild of Israel (CGI), a Catholic mission to the Jews, form the basis for the following analysis. The first two were chosen due to their influence and their large readership. *The Month* was picked out for its respectability and authority on cultural and theological themes among educated Catholic religious and lay people. Together with the work of the CGI, it illustrates how secular antisemitic prejudices found their place in a largely religious context. The middle-class papers *The Universe* and *The Tablet*, the *Witness* publications and the Benedictine journal, *The Blackfriars*, were consulted for specific key years to avoid distorting the analysis.<sup>4</sup>

*The Catholic Times*, subtitled *The Organ of the Catholic Body*, was established in 1876 by Msgr Nugent and was first edited by John Denvir.<sup>5</sup> Initially, it was mainly read in Liverpool and northern England, but gradually found its readers in London too. In 1920 *The Newspaper Press Directory* described the *Catholic Times* as an independent journal whose 'home and foreign news services are the best, while the ablest literary talent, at home and abroad, is secured to make the *Catholic Times* a good general and family paper'.<sup>6</sup> Its political outlook was conservative. Fr William Barry succeeded Msgr Nugent as the paper's owner and P.L. Beazley edited the



*Catholic Times* for the next twenty-seven years. After the First World War the paper's circulation began to decline and it was eventually bought by Fr Herbert Vaughan and became the organ of the Catholic Missionary Society. From 1933 to 1937 it was edited by Dr Bernard Grimley and was the only Catholic weekly with a priest as editor. Willing's Press Guide of 1935 estimated the paper's circulation at 37,000 copies per issue.<sup>7</sup>

The *Catholic Herald* was founded by Charles Diamond in 1884. Diamond was an outspoken Labour politician devoted to social reform whose invectives even landed him into prison. Before the publication of the *Catholic Worker*, the *Herald* was the only Catholic left-wing (yet still antisocialist) newspaper. The paper soon gained a large readership, particularly among the larger Catholic population in industrial centres. With Diamond's death in 1934, the *Catholic Herald* was acquired by a group of laymen who were keen to modernise the well-known paper. It was turned into a 'journal of opinion', reporting on world news from a Catholic view rather than remaining a paper on specifically Catholic news. The proprietors saw therein an opportunity to influence non-Catholics who were curious about Catholicism. From April 1936, under the editorship of Count Michael de la Bédoyère, the *Catholic Herald* was said to have around 100,000 readers every week and became 'an established Catholic force'.<sup>8</sup> Both the *Catholic Herald* and the *Catholic Times* were sympathetic towards European fascism and critical of Jews in European societies.

The *Catholic Worker* was first published in 1935. Its chief editor was Robert Patrick Walsh, a dedicated supporter of workers and trade unions. The monthly paper found its readership in the industrial cities of northern England and London. Within a year its net sales amounted to 19,000 copies and in 1937 it almost equalled the strength of the *Catholic Times* with 32,000 copies per edition. In its political editorship the paper condemned both socialism and fascism. A 'just wage', humane working conditions and a remedy for unrestrained capitalism were the *Catholic Worker's* main issues.<sup>9</sup> Among all the papers considered, the *Catholic Worker* was the only one that persistently warned against antisemitism and refrained from any anti-Jewish comments on its own pages.

The concern for social justice was shared by the journalistic enterprises of Hilaire Belloc, Cecil and Gilbert Keith Chesterton: *The Eye Witness*, *The New Witness* and *G.K.'s Weekly*. These differed considerably from mainstream Catholic newspapers. Firstly, these publications were particular platforms for the political views of

Hilaire Belloc and the Chestertons. Secondly, the antisemitism featured on their pages was more hostile. It had racial undercurrents and promoted a segregation of the Jews as solution to the 'Jewish problem' – a problem that was (for the *Witness* group) epitomised by the imaginary international Jewish financier or communist. However, besides comments on current affairs, the *Witness* publications also entertained with literary criticism, theological debates and short stories or poems by renowned Catholic writers such as Maurice Baring. They cannot easily be dismissed as renegade but insignificant fringe publications because of their intellectual appeal and the support of members of the hierarchy and Catholic lay organisations.<sup>10</sup> Archbishop Downey of Liverpool, for example, contributed various articles on religious questions, while Thomas Burns, union activist and a leading figure in the Catholic Federation, recommended the papers on numerous occasions to members of the Federation. *G.K.'s Weekly* was widely advertised as the mouthpiece of the Distributist movement. *The Month* applauded it as 'a valuable literary propaganda of the Catholic tradition' and was hoping it would spread G.K. Chesterton's views further.<sup>11</sup>

The following section summarises the interpretation of the 'Jewish question' as it was discussed in these newspapers. In a second step these images and arguments are set in their historical context to see what provoked a discussion of the 'Jewish question' and how it changed in form and intensity over time.

### *The 'Jewish question' and its 'solution'*

The 'Jewish question' was not an obsession of any of these newspapers as it was for anti-Semites such as Nesta Webster or Henry Hamilton Beamish. Although the 'Jewish question' in popular Catholic weeklies bore all the modern elements of the contemporary discussion, it was hardly a systematic discussion but an accumulation of ancient religious and modern antisemitic stereotypes. Still, traditional religious prejudices were still important in this discourse, particularly the antagonism between Christians and Jews. The question whether the Jews were defined by their faith or by their race remained on the other hand particularly nebulous. A more elaborate debate on these issues took only place on the pages of the *Witness* publications and the publications of the Catholic Guild of Israel. With the exception of the *Catholic Worker*, the discourse in all other Catholic newspapers examined was indeed aware of a 'Jewish question' and used the known, contemporary and modern arguments of

this debate. Three observations are important: first, a Catholic discourse of the 'Jewish question' was never restricted to theological or religious arguments; second, antisemitism was most radical and intense whenever writers were concerned about the condition of the British nation and British culture; third, an initially rather incoherent debate found its focus in the stereotype of the Jewish Bolshevik from the mid-1920s. This is important because a fear of communism would later on determine Catholic responses to the persecution of the Jews.

*The Month* and *The Blackfriars* were most likely to approach this 'question' from a predominantly theological angle. Most articles referred to the 'witness-people' theology in Catholic teaching, where the existence of the Jews – or Israel – served as confirmation of the Christian faith. In their dispersal and suffering after Christ's crucifixion, the Jews were witnesses to his divinity. Moreover, at the end of time their conversion to Christianity would fulfil old prophecies and attest to the truth of the Christian creed. For contemporary theologians the Jewish problem then consisted of the consciousness of the Jews' religious-metaphysical significance: 'Its path is marked by its inclusions in the spiritual destiny of the whole history of the world, at the heart of which it has its special calling: to be the people of God.'<sup>12</sup> To many theologians who worked actively towards the conversion of the Jews, antisemitism was a reaction to Israel's spiritual mission in the world:

The hatred of the Jews inspired, ultimately, by the fact that he bears witness to the absolute in a world which hates the absolute. The Jews, we learn in the scriptures, are a stiff-necked, and a stone-hearted people, but in those very faults there is a strength, ... which has enabled them through centuries of persecution, to cling to their faith and their worship ... To them we owe much of our liturgy, our religious poetry, our philosophy, the very idiom in which as Christians we enshrine our thought.<sup>13</sup>

Yet however sympathetic the religious interpretation of the 'Jewish question', it was not always free of secular negative stereotypes. Articles on the religious-metaphysical significance of the Jews to the Catholic faith still referred to the alleged usury and immorality of modern Jews.<sup>14</sup> *The Month* under the editorship of Joseph Keating, SJ, was specifically alert to the alleged link between Jewry and socialism. This assumption led him to approve of the antisemitic legislation in Admiral Nicholas Horthy's Hungary, when the majority of Catholic publications favoured stronger Catholic morals as 'solution'

rather than discrimination. In his article 'Catholic Prospects of Hungary', Keating described over several paragraphs how Catholics were 'under the financial domination of its million Jews', and pointed to the Jews' 'share in the Sarajevo murders, the notorious crimes and the treacheries ... during the war'. He concluded,

but the measure of political wisdom attained [meaning the majority of a Catholic party under Horthy] was shown in the passing of a law forbidding the universities to admit more than 12 percent of Jewish students! Not by raised tempers ... but by fostering Christian education, can the undue influence of the Hebrew be controlled.<sup>15</sup>

Most secular Catholic news publications did not deny the existence of a 'Jewish question' either. However, their concern was not Christianity as such but the preservation of Christian British rule. *The Universe*, for instance, defined it as a question of 'who is to govern and who is to be governed'.<sup>16</sup> Like many commentators, Charles Diamond of the *Catholic Herald* saw the roots of the 'Jewish question' in Jewish antagonism towards Christianity, dating back to the biblical days of the 'Scribes and Pharisees [who] committed the paramount crime of all time' – the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. According to Diamond, the crime was followed by the 'punishment of the race', namely dispersal and persecution.<sup>17</sup> But the 'Jewish question' was not simply a theological problem in such articles. It had a very modern and secular face. Modern developments, such as communism, revolutions and modern capitalism, were regarded as symptoms of this enmity. In Diamond's view the 'internationalism' of the Jews and their 'clannishness' turned the 'problem' eventually into a 'world question': 'For it is no national question. It is the question of a nation without a country, of a religion and a people anti-Christian in a fierce degree, spread among Christians everywhere, and belonging to another and a different civilisation.'<sup>18</sup>

The remedy for these 'problems', Diamond suggested, was to unite Christian forces in economics and politics, so that 'Christianity must rule the Jews, or the Jews will misrule and plunder the Christians'.<sup>19</sup> The call to strengthen Christian values in the modern age and the call to convert the Jews were the most common solutions offered in English Catholic newspapers. Writers also agreed that the 'Jewish question' was not a question of reversing emancipation.<sup>20</sup> A similar line was drawn whenever solutions would imply violence and vulgar hatred of the Jew as a Jew.

The *Witness* publications were all well aware of, if not obsessed by, a 'Jewish question'. The full aspects of the 'Jewish question' were rolled out as early as 1911, when it was essentially considered as a 'race problem'. These detailed articles mostly sprang from the pens of Belloc and Cecil Chesterton themselves. Therein they explained how the roots of the 'problem' lay in the Jews' hostility towards Christianity, already apparent in biblical times. In modern time this 'problem' had expanded into a Jewish-masonic conspiracy, so that Jewry had become a threat to Christian British and indeed European civilisation as such.<sup>21</sup> According to these publications, the alleged pernicious influence of the Jews on domestic politics and foreign affairs was the principal explanation for wars and crisis.<sup>22</sup> Although Belloc phrased his argument within the boundaries of a Christian-Jewish conflict, the main concern of such articles in the *Witness* press was for the British nation. Since Belloc and Cecil Chesterton saw the Jews as an irreversibly alien nation within the nation, it was impossible in their eyes to integrate them, as their emancipation had intended. Although conversion to Christianity was seen as the ultimate solution, Belloc and Chesterton suggested the Jews' segregation from Christian British society as a more imminent and political measure:

In other words, the solution of the Jewish Question is *Privilege*, in the old, strict sense of that word. A private law, that is, a special law, distinct from the common, whereby shall be regulated this particular case which is so distinct from every other problem European society has to meet.<sup>23</sup>

As a consequence of such a measure, Jews would have been registered and encouraged to live strictly within their own community. According to Belloc, this solution was necessary because 'it is not a question of religion, it is a question of race'.<sup>24</sup>

In the course of the 1920s and 1930s only a few authors reiterated Belloc's argument in Catholic publications. Yet it was consistently the desire to protect the British nation that led authors to see the Jews as racial adversaries. An interesting example is that of the Distributist Stanley B. James. Contrary to the contemporary widespread assumption that history and religious customs shape a people's character, James proclaimed that the Jews' race determined their faith:

Judaism for instance starts with certain racial characteristics and builds on them a religion calculated to meet their needs and to

exult their importance. It makes God, as was said, the servant instead of the Lord of a certain people. Catholicism on the other hand, draws its recruits from all quarters and out of this raw material supplied by the ethnological varieties to be found in the world, fashions without obliterating the natural differences therein expresses a new type ... It may be that, at some far off date, the final clash of warring elements in this world will come between those who represent the religion that is based on natural consanguinity and those whose religion has created between them a supernatural consanguinity. Catholic and Jew may yet prove to be the final, surviving protagonists in the struggle for the mastery of the world.<sup>25</sup>

Msgr Canon Jackman, former private secretary of Cardinal Bourne, also assumed that the 'otherness' of the Jews was determined by their race. In an article in October 1938, Canon Jackman reworked the ancient claim of a Jewish conspiracy against Christianity and found an explanation for this hostility in Jewish 'racialism':

Racialism has been condemned by the Church as incompatible with Christianity. But all heresies start from a certain amount of truth, and in this case, racialism was at the outset a system of protection for the race, which in Europe and in America, was being studiously undermined by the Jews and freemasons, a powerful combination ... This powerful combination set about its task by means of an immoral literature, in order to undermine the moral stamina of the race. This being accomplished, the next step is to set Christian nations by the ears, and make them go for each other's throat. That will eliminate the youth of those nations, leaving only elderly and C3 people to deal with. After that the combination thought it would be master of the situation to monopolise in its own hand power and wealth.<sup>26</sup>

At a time when the advantages and disadvantages of eugenics were widely discussed in the British public, the meaning and implications of 'race' gained more attention. In most Catholic publications examined here, the term 'race' was often used to describe the Jews as a nation, or as an ethnic group determined by their culture and history. The term was, however, always used to describe Jews as a separate entity. In the end, a combination between ethnic, religious and racial determinants defined 'the Jew' in the eyes of most Catholic authors. The majority of these references to 'race' were based on the

Lamarckian theory that social and cultural environments shape a people's hereditary physical and mental characteristics.<sup>27</sup> Like the authors of the *Witness* press, these examples from the popular press also saw the Jews as a separate and alien people, but their 'Jewish question' was not a 'racial question'. They consequently did not offer solutions to a 'racial question'. The remedies suggested here remained in the field of Christian religion (conversion) and Christian morals (strengthening of the same). Even the Catholic Guild of Israel (CGI), a Catholic mission to the Jews, tried to accommodate the novel race theory in its own way.<sup>28</sup> A biological determinism would, it was believed, suffocate the mission's attempts to convert Jews to Catholicism. At a symposium on the causes of antisemitism in Vauxhall in January 1926, Fr Day of the CGI pointed out that the old idea that the Jew by race must be a Jew by religion was out of touch with modern conditions, and, in fact, the time had come when two different terms were desirable to denote the Jew either racially or religiously. The terms 'Hebrew' and 'Jew' or 'Israelite' and 'Judaist' were suggested to meet the need.<sup>29</sup>

It is worthwhile devoting more thought to the Catholic Guild of Israel. In the period between 1924 and 1929, publications of this Catholic mission to the Jews contributed to a considerable extent to a sustained discussion of a 'Jewish question' in English Catholic newspapers.<sup>30</sup> The Guild's method also included more practical means such as preaching in churches, city halls and at street corners, particularly amongst the Jewish population of London's East End. Within a period of only four years, the Guild increased its presence in the streets of London from forty meetings in the first year (1920) to around 150 meetings in 1924, reaching between sixty and one hundred listeners each time, mostly from a working-class background.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, its use of racial images of Jews in a predominantly religious context (conversions) challenges the defensive claim that Catholic antagonism towards Jews was a form of religious anti-Judaism rather than of modern antisemitism, because Catholicism would always welcome Jewish conversions and therefore offer an escape from 'Jewishness'. The publications of the CGI in fact reflect the same antisemitic stereotypes popular at the time, such as the image of the 'Jewish financier' or 'Jewish' socialism, and the claim of an undue Jewish dominance in British society. The Dominican Bede Jarret, president of the CGI until his death in 1931, made it quite clear that conversions were not just an issue for the pious when he introduced the aims and purpose of the mission in various Catholic newspapers in 1921. In his account, an overwhelmingly negative Jewish influence lay at the roots of the social

problems of the time. By converting the Jews to Catholicism, the CGI consequently solved these social problems by defusing the danger Jews posed to Christian society. The theological meaning of Jewish conversion, namely the fulfilment of God's revelations, appeared almost as an afterthought:

I must admit that it came to me rather as a shock, a bewilderment, to find that Judaism could still be considered a religion at all. One had got to think of it almost entirely in terms of finance or of politics, or of arts, or perhaps of a wise sanitary code. English public life has also come under the influence, the steady increasing influence, of political Judaism. We see the signs of its dominance everywhere in all other countries as well as in our own. But here it holds many important positions in the government, it has 'cornered' India. And of course Palestine ... There is then no reason for wondering at the power the Jews wield today. The Jew finds himself in a civilisation which is based on capitalism, ... and money is his flair. Industrial labour has no interest for him, and agricultural labour even less. Therefore he will never go back to Palestine where the wealth is almost entirely in agriculture. Indeed, why should he worry over Palestine when he has the whole world at his feet. Yes the world is at his feet, for he controls the complete social scale, ruling at one end of it and revolting at the other. Indeed, he is by nature a revolutionary. Why? Chiefly because he is by nature religious, and every religion is a revolution. In Russia they have opposed the faith of Christendom, called it the opiate of the people, and are therefore in revolt. They have converted it to Judaism in England and therefore are in power. After all the Jew is nearly always a man of ideals, not wholly devoted to finance. He has shown himself a capable artist, a musician, a political leader, he has been a General in the British Army, a Lord Chief of Justice, a Prime Minister. Even were one to grant that the Jew may have often climbed to power through injustice one would only thereby give a stronger reason for visiting his need for our prayers and his capacity for conversion. We venture, therefore, to appeal to Catholics to interest themselves in the Jewish problem, to realise its importance to treat it sympathetically ... but only that no one should set an obstacle in the way of the return of Israel from its long captivity.<sup>32</sup>

As already mentioned, the CGI also took part in the then fashionable discussions surrounding race and race theory and Guild members



commented on the qualities and nature of the Jewish race on numerous occasions. A representative example is a newspaper article that gave the following reason why the Guild prayed for the conversion of Israel: 'For the Jews are more than a nation ... they are a race, they are the human race in type, by God's own selection and degree. He it was who hedged them around by the fence of the Law to keep them thus typical. This is why, apart from the grace of God, they are so typically bad.'<sup>33</sup>

'Race', as used by members of the CGI, did not include biological determinism. Yet it was still a determinism, defined by either God or ethnicity, and thus hardly reversible through emancipation or (paradoxically) through conversion. According to the Guild, this determinism would, however, not preclude Jewish conversion to Catholicism, because, as Vera Tefler (another Guild member) asserted, Jews could preserve their race while practising the Catholic faith: 'However much a Jew thinks he has cast off the race it will still be with him since man cannot alter his ethnological division.'<sup>34</sup>

The change to a racial definition of the Jews appears to be a self-defeating measure on the part of the Guild. The Guild had only seen frustratingly low numbers of conversions (about five per year). The explanation for this meagre success was seen on one hand in the racial character of the Jews that was difficult to assimilate. On the other hand, the Guild leadership assumed that Jews were reluctant to convert to Catholicism because they feared to lose all ties to their Jewish community while they might not be accepted in Christian society either. The Guild's emphasis on the unchangeable racial character of Jews confined 'Jewishness' to race and separated it from religious practice. This was to ensure converts that they need not cut their family ties, but could become Jewish Catholics.<sup>35</sup> The Guild certainly held the same secular anti-Jewish stereotypes prevalent at the time and accepted the existence of a 'Jewish question', but it was not motivated by hatred. Catholic conversion efforts were largely supported by religious orders (many female), the clergy and pious Catholics. Guild members would speak of their love for those who they regarded as God's chosen people. They were guided by a religious zeal and the positive image of the biblical Jews. In this mindset, modern Jews were often referred to as errant children who needed to be led back onto the right path. The Guild's language gradually lost its hostile edge and its members attempted to refrain from antisemitic statements in general. From 1932, the mission began to condemn antisemitism and the British Union of Fascists.<sup>36</sup> The response to National Socialist antisemitism and the persecution of the Jews was

likewise unequivocally negative. This is the Catholic anti-Judaism to which the Vatican's 'We Remember' referred and was certainly less hostile than that of the *Witness* publications. Nonetheless it should not be forgotten that it used the same secular antisemitic stereotypes and thereby confirmed and perpetuated these prejudices. The work of the CGI never managed to educate Catholics on the reality of modern Jewish life in Britain; instead it kept the 'Jewish question' with its religious and modern antisemitic stereotypes alive in Catholic public discourse.

Among the Catholic newspapers and periodicals in England there was one weekly that not only refrained from publishing antisemitic articles but also stood up against the antisemitic slander prevalent in the late 1930s. The *Catholic Worker* did not acknowledge the existence of a 'Jewish question'. Its articles maintained that Jews were not different from other British citizens and that allegations of a Jewish conspiracy or their strong hostility towards Christianity were nonsense. Although contributions to the *Catholic Worker* shared the theological definition of the Jews as a 'witness-people' who would ultimately convert to Christianity to prove Christian theology right, they strongly rejected the claim of the Jews' anti-Christian attitude. With this dismissal the *Catholic Worker* stood out from all other Catholic publications.<sup>37</sup> As the *Catholic Worker* did not see the existence of a 'Jewish question' there was no need to offer a 'solution', but only to emphasise the equality of Jews. In a Catholic conception of a state, according to the *Catholic Worker*, any minority had a right to 'develop their own culture, and the State has the duty to enable them to do so'. And with particular reference to the Jews it continued: 'There is a Catholic programme for the Jews. Then if a Jew breaks the law treat him as a law-breaker. But do not presume that a Jew must break the law. ... Strict laws regulating trade would safeguard this without the extreme measure of prohibiting immigration as Mosley suggests.'<sup>38</sup>

### ***Antisemitism over time***

It is instructive to look at the distribution of antisemitic articles in the papers over time, as it allows interpretations of the motive and purpose of these articles (see Figure 2.1).

Two observations can be made. Firstly, the intensity of antisemitic articles oscillates with peaks around 1923, 1933 and 1938–39.<sup>39</sup> This suggests that these antisemitic outbursts were motivated by particular events rather than being a constant Catholic obsession. Secondly, the

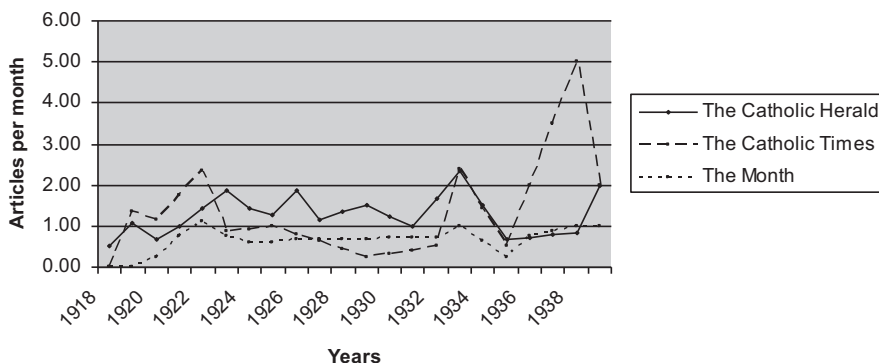


Figure 2.1 *Antisemitism in Catholic newspapers*

outburst in 1938–39 occurred anticyclically to the national concern with a ‘Jewish question’, when most broadsheet English newspapers made only moderate use of antisemitism.<sup>40</sup> On the other side, antisemitism in Catholic newspapers was comparatively restrained when the general public was overcome by ‘Jewish–Bolshevik’ scaremongering or by the phantom of Jewish world conspiracy. When in 1920 the *Morning Post* and *The Times* printed the ‘Protocols of the Elders of Zion’, stirring up a wave of antisemitic feelings over the following two years, the *Catholic Times* ignored it altogether and *The Month* maintained that the ‘Protocols’ were just ‘bogus documents’ which endangered religious peace.<sup>41</sup> Only Charles Diamond of the *Catholic Herald* commented on the ‘Protocols’ in a review article and admitted that the accusation of the ‘Protocols’ seemed deranged, but accepted its basic assumption, namely the struggle between Jewry and Christianity.<sup>42</sup>

The reason for this disparity becomes evident when looking at the occasions that triggered these antisemitic outbursts: they were most intense when Catholic interests collided with national British concerns. Tolerance and benevolence towards Jews ceased as soon as Catholic interests were thought to be violated. In the early 1920s antisemitism arose around topics such as Bolshevik Russia, the creation of a Jewish national home in Palestine, current affairs in Catholic countries such as France, Poland, Ireland or Italy, or the Jews’ conversion to Catholicism.<sup>43</sup> In the years between 1924 and 1929 it was mainly the Catholic mission to the Jews – the Catholic Guild of Israel – that kept the discussion on the ‘Jewish question’ alive.

Reports on communist Russia are examples of this defence mechanism. From 1921 onwards, Catholic newspapers highlighted the suppression of religion in Soviet Russia. The already latent equation

of Jews with Bolsheviks gradually became a constant rhetorical feature in articles on Russia and brought the intensity of antisemitic articles to an unprecedentedly high level with the execution of Bishop Budkiewicz in Moscow in 1923. Yet Bolshevik Russia had not always been such an emotional topic.

During the war and until the early 1920s antisemitism in Britain (coupled with anti-German sentiments) was widespread and at times violent. From 1917 the USA and Western Europe was swept by a 'red scare' that merged with the 'German menace' originating before the First World War. In Britain, anti-Bolshevism spread to various sections of society including political, military and diplomatic circles and the press. This anti-Bolshevism was closely linked with a preoccupation with an overrepresentation of Jews on the more extreme fringes of European socialism. The result was a reworking of the Jewish conspiracy myth, which was given a tremendous boost by the publication of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.<sup>44</sup> While the *Morning Post* and *The Times* exposed the alleged evil of Russian Bolshevism engineered by Jews, Catholic newspapers initially called for a more considered coverage. For example, Joseph Keating writing in *The Month*: 'Generalisation is largely an automatic function of the intellect: we think in classes and categories and, under the spur of fear, the unbalanced mind is apt to see Jews or Jesuits or Bolsheviks everywhere. The remedy is to go by evidence and to make sure that it is real.'<sup>45</sup>

Charles Diamond of the *Catholic Herald* likewise did not yet link Bolshevism with Jewish influence. He was more interested in disclosing 'conspiracies' closer to home: Jewish financiers together with 'Huns and Junkers' were perceived to be in an alliance to exploit the poor.<sup>46</sup> Diamond's real target was the 'establishment'. He initially supported Lenin as 'the greatest man', welcomed the land redistribution, and the attempt to educate the lower classes by providing cheap books and cultural events. He interpreted the anti-Bolshevik hysteria of the Tory press from a communist point of view as a ploy to distract public opinion from capitalist crimes:

Meantime the cry about the Jew is a last desperate resort of the Huns in the press, and in Parliament and elsewhere, to divert attention from their own crimes and to distract the public mind by dishonest irrelevancies ... We infinitely prefer to stand beside the revolutionary in his assaults upon the evils that obtain rather than on the platform with the authors and defenders of these infamies.<sup>47</sup>

However, this generous mood soon changed. By April 1921, the *Catholic Herald* was alarmed by antireligious measures in Russia and the continued suppression of the peasantry. This was also the moment when the paper discovered the 'Jewish Bolshevik' – a label that would from now on accompany almost every article on communist Russia:

[F]rom the upheaval of the war emerged the opportunity of the Communists to put their theories into practice on a huge scale. They have tried to do so. Now the theories are not really Russian. They are those of the German Jew, Karl Marx. The Bolshevik leaders are his disciples to some extent only, for they have had to abandon pure Marxism. Nor are all the theorists themselves Russians. Trotzky and a great many others are Jews ... Upon Russia and the Russian peasantry they have imposed their authority, having exterminated whole hecatombs of opponents – socialists, anarchists, capitalists, ruling classes, traders, and revolting peasantry also.<sup>48</sup>

As in 1919, there was an explosion of antisemitic articles in Catholic newspapers after Bishop Budkiewicz was imprisoned and executed in Moscow in spring 1923.<sup>49</sup> This came at a time when, according to Sharman Kadish, the myth of a Jewish conspiracy had moved to the extreme fringe of society due to the strength of the liberal tradition in Britain.<sup>50</sup> However, in 1923 even the more considerate *The Month* was enraged: '[I]n Soviet Russia Manning's prophecy has actually been realized. Antichrist, in the person of those apostate Jews, is already in power. Marx, another apostate Jew, is his evangelist and Christianity, especially the Catholicism of Rome is the object of bitterest hatred.'<sup>51</sup>

The *Blackfriars*, too, took the phrase that 'two out of three of Russia's leaders are Jews' as a fact and concluded: 'Evil is enthroned in Moscow.'<sup>52</sup>

### *Responses to Hitler's Germany*

Hitler's appointment as Reich Chancellor hardly created huge headlines in Catholic Britain. It was yet another new government of a German republic that had been struggling with the effects of a deep economic crisis since 1929. Only the April boycott of Jewish shops in Germany brought the first indignant protests. The Leeds Labour Party expressed its 'abhorrence at ... the persecution of Jews, Socialists and Communists'.<sup>53</sup> Even Belloc and G.K. Chesterton

joined the voices of protest, albeit with an ambiguous twist. In a booklet published in 1933 Chesterton wrote: 'To-day, although I still think there is a Jewish problem, and that what I understand by the expression "the Jewish spirit" is a spirit foreign in Western countries, I am appalled by the Hitlerite atrocities in Germany. I am quite ready to believe now that Belloc and myself will die defending the last Jew in Europe. Thus does history play ironical jokes upon us.'<sup>54</sup>

Until the boycott of Jewish businesses in April 1933, National Socialism had mostly been discussed in passing notes, which hardly mentioned its fierce antisemitism. After the boycott, Catholic newspapers frequently reported on the fate of the Jews in Germany and condemned the antisemitism displayed there:

The boycott and the measure associated with it have been openly directed against the Jews as a race, even against those Jews who have become Christian. Such an attitude is not only in acute conflict with all modern ideas of civilised government; it is a flagrant repudiation of the whole teaching of the New Testament.<sup>55</sup>

Nevertheless, in 1933 most articles in Catholic newspapers ended on the note that the Jews owed their treatment to their own misbehaviour. A journalist of *The Tablet* condemned the violence that accompanied the boycott of Jewish businesses in April. However, he also acknowledged that he could understand the Germans' reaction. They had the same problem: too many rich Jews. Only one objection was raised: Germany should respond to this problem with judicial measures such as a *numerus clausus* for Jews.<sup>56</sup>

Out of eighteen recorded articles on the Jews in Germany (in 1933) in the *Catholic Herald*, only seven wholly deplored their persecution (the majority were reports on the bishops' public denunciation of the Jewish persecution), and eleven ended on an antisemitic note, not dissimilar to that mentioned above. Out of twenty-one articles on Germany and the Jews in the *Catholic Times*, fourteen were antisemitic, only five spoke in favour of the Jews (these were mainly comments by readers), and two found equal arguments in favour of or against the Jews. To some extent this attitude can be seen as a continuation of the anti-German hostility and violence during the First World War that often targeted German Jews in particular.<sup>57</sup> The naivety with respect to the events and policies inside Hitler's Germany was not just a characteristic of Catholic newspapers. According to Richard Griffiths, the British media and therefore public opinion did not show any particular interests in German affairs until 1936

when German affairs became British foreign affairs after Hitler had occupied the Rhineland.<sup>58</sup>

There was, however, a distinct Catholic motive to this attitude. The perceived need to protect Catholic interests was expressed in some cases as an open antisemitism. The question arises as to what sort of Catholic interest there was to safeguard in Germany, a country where two thirds of the population were Protestants (better known to English Catholic readers as 'Prussians') and at a time when the Catholic Church was not yet oppressed. By 1933 several events had happened in the Catholic world that had created a sense of persecution in some Catholics' minds. News of religious persecution in Russia and Mexico and the revolution in Spain in 1932 had left the impression that Catholics suffered even crueller persecution than the Jews in Germany. Yet these events received far less news coverage than Jews in Nazi Germany – much to the annoyance of Catholics in Britain:

It is true, that Jews, especially the Masonic Jews ... are the bitter and persistent foes of the Catholic Church ... In Rome a notorious Jewish Freemason, Nathan, signalised his position as Mayor of the city by a most disgraceful and wanton insult to the Pope of the day. In Spain the recent revolution has had wholesale Jewish support, and Einstein, a Jewish agnostic, is to go to Madrid as Professor to replace and oppose Catholic influence ... Whenever it can do so, Jewry is the leading and bitter enemy of the Catholic Church ... But we would ask all fair minded men to contrast the callous silence or approval with which the world as a whole has looked on while ... tyrants have trampled upon and plundered Catholics, and the generous outbursts that have taken place against wicked, but far less atrocious attacks on Jews in Germany.<sup>59</sup>

In contrast to the *Catholic Herald*, where the silence of the British press towards the Catholic persecution was of central concern, the antisemitic articles of the *Catholic Times* continuously argued that the persecution of the Jews in Germany was justified, because they together with communism and freemasonry had caused today's international distress.<sup>60</sup> How unrelenting some authors of the *Catholic Times* could be in this matter is shown by an example published just after the boycott of Jewish businesses in Germany. Justifying their view against some readers' dismayed complaints, the editor answered:

What we have pointed out was that international Jewry, as exemplified in international Masonry was a heinous thing, and its stamping out in Germany could be not less beneficial than in Italy. With the persecution of individual law abiding and God-fearing Jews we can have no patience, but to a nationalistic thrust at an international force or 'ring' in Germany or elsewhere, we must adopt a different attitude.<sup>61</sup>

At the same time the papers were embroiled in a discussion on a Jewish-masonic conspiracy. This allegation was not new by 1933. In the papers under consideration it repeatedly appeared since 1926, intensified by 1932 and culminated in 1938. In the earlier years of 1926 and 1932, the notion of a Jewish conspiracy sprung from publications on freemasonry by two Irish priests, Fr Cahill and Fr Fahey.<sup>62</sup> In 1938 the *Catholic Times* printed long extracts of Fr Denis Fahey's book *The Mythical Body of Christ* and gave him considerable space to express his idea of a Judeo-masonic conspiracy.<sup>63</sup> To a number of Catholic writers, Fahey's theory seemed eventually confirmed by the creation of the Second Spanish Republic in 1931 and later in the Spanish Civil War. F.M. de Zulueta wrote in *The Month* of freemasonry as the secret agent of all European revolutions, funded 'from Moscow through the medium of Jewish financiers in America. The much-monied Israelite figured prominently in a body devoted to de-Christianising nations.'<sup>64</sup> *The Blackfriars* printed a plea for 'cleansing Spain of Freemasons and Jews' in order to create a new nation.<sup>65</sup>

By the time of *Kristallnacht* in November 1938 all the factors mentioned above had been repeated over and over again in the Catholic newspapers and had almost become common currency. In 1938/9 various incidents sharpened the tone in Catholic newspapers, resulting in another steep peak on the antisemitic-articles-per-month scale. These events were the Spanish Civil War (still), a Freethinkers' congress in London and *Kristallnacht* in Germany. The first, especially, was accompanied by numerous articles spreading a Jewish-masonic-Bolshevik conspiracy, such as the Distributist Gregory Macdonald's article after Franco's victory over the Republicans in 1939, where he claimed that Franco had won against the 'wandering Jews', the 'advances of the communist hordes ... That is the meaning of our victory. It is not over our brothers but a victory over the world, over the international forces, over Communism, Masonry.'<sup>66</sup>

*Kristallnacht* was a welcome opportunity for some to expound their antisemitic and pro-Nazi views, but the barbarism of the



November pogrom met with a clearer condemnation in Catholic newspapers.<sup>67</sup> Still, antisemitic articles outnumbered the columns written in sympathy for the Jews. *The Tablet*, the *Catholic Times* and the *Catholic Herald* did not change their view that the Jews brought their fate upon themselves, despite anger at the brutality of the pogrom: 'now in the case of Jewry there is no doubt of it being a hostile element to certain regimes. Jews unlike Catholics, have a loyalty to their own society which is more than spiritual or moral: it is racial and physical.'<sup>68</sup>

### *Positive articles on Jews*

Positive articles on Jews or Judaism were few and far between. They increased in numbers with the onset of the Jewish persecution in Germany from 1933, but still lagged behind the number of antisemitic articles. Again, these articles mostly had a defensive purpose by refuting accusations of intolerance and antisemitism levelled at the Catholic Church. Jews funding Catholic societies, Jews grateful for Catholic assistance, Jews praising Catholic bishops – all these themes found approval in Catholic papers. Similarly, any antisemitic remarks published in the Anglican *Church Times* were singled out for criticism, although the real aim here was to rebuke the Protestants.<sup>69</sup> Religious discrimination, an experience Catholics could relate to quite well, had been condemned by the Church for many years. Consequently, any form of religious discrimination against Jews was criticised by Catholic papers, too. In the case of the Liverpool magistrate who refused to issue a dancing licence to celebrate a Jewish wedding on a Sunday, the *Catholic Herald* maintained that despite the differences between Catholics and Jews such interference in religious traditions was 'outrageous'.<sup>70</sup>

Although the *Catholic Herald* had never really abandoned its view that Soviet Russia was ruled by 'a band of Jews', it still regretted religious persecution that also included Jews.<sup>71</sup> Catholic newspapers were generally firm that the rule of law also applied to Jews. With the exception of the Vilna pogrom in 1919 where they had only grudgingly criticised antisemitic violence, Catholic papers strongly condemned violent Jew-hatred as in the case of antisemitic disturbances in Dublin 1926: 'However unselfish the motive of the riots may have been they were a breach of law. It is just as wrong to force a moneylender off his books as of any other form of property ... Doubtless the Irish Government will deal sharply with the incident.'<sup>72</sup>

### *Responses to Catholic newspapers; Jews, Catholics*

The Jewish community did not leave these antisemitic outbursts without comment. Jewish newspapers such as the *Jewish Chronicle* or *Jewish World* were renowned for their effort in pointing out antisemitism in the national press and printing rejoinders that confronted myth with fact.<sup>73</sup> In the late 1930s the Jewish People's Council against Fascism and Antisemitism (JPAFA) would actively fight against fascism by means of public demonstrations and conferences in order to disrupt BUF meetings. The Board of Deputies of British Jews (BOD), on the other hand, called for a quieter and more considerate response to antisemitism in the form of lawsuits and appeals to Parliament. This was a matter on which the BOD, who mostly represented Jewish middle-class opinion in England, and the JPAFA, who appealed to working-class Jews of London's East End, could not agree upon. Records of the BOD shed some light on Jewish reactions to the antisemitism in Catholic newspapers. Due to their middle-class respectability, the BOD was the more likely addressee for members of the Catholic hierarchy in matters of Catholic-Jewish relations than the JPAFA, who were ignored because of their alleged communist links. Direct contacts between Catholic and Jewish communities were, however, rare. Archbishop Downey seems to have been the most accessible Catholic bishop.

The BOD set up a Defence Committee that monitored antisemitism in society and in print. The Committee's first reaction to the antisemitism in the *Catholic Herald* was letters to its editor, in which they refuted allegations that Jews were predominantly fraudsters, blasphemous enemies of the Church and Bolsheviks.<sup>74</sup> However, these letters had no effect on the *Catholic Herald's* portrait of the Jews. Most of these rejoinders were not published at all or they were used 'as peg on which to hang further arguments to the Jews'.<sup>75</sup> The following letter to the Board in 1932 from the *Catholic Herald* merely restated the prejudices to which the Board had objected:

Whatever may be the attitude of your Board towards the statements made in the article of the 14<sup>th</sup> instant ... it is unfortunately true and cannot be denied by any impartial authority that in France and indeed all over Europe the influence of Masonry and Jewish Masonry especially has been constantly exercised against the Catholic Church. Does your Board remember the famous dictum of Gambetta, that 'the day of the priest was over and the day of the Jew had come' and that under his direction nearly every

Prefect of France was of the Jewish persuasion? Unfortunately in connection with Revolution the percentage of Jews who have dominated the rule of the Soviets has been enormous. The suggestion that these have not been anti-religious does not admit of discussion. It is no pleasure to the editor to point out what are unfortunately manifest facts and he does not think that a merely religious or national prejudice should lead a representative body such as that for which you speak to make statements that are in the face of all evidence.<sup>76</sup>

Since most of the Committee's complaints to Catholic news editors went unheard, the BOD saw it necessary to bring the Catholic hierarchy's attention to the antisemitic outburst of Catholic newspapers.<sup>77</sup> Chief Rabbi Hertz was first asked in October 1929 to take up this task. Unfortunately, neither the records of the BOD nor the Westminster Diocesan Archive tell whether Hertz agreed or Cardinal Bourne received such a letter, and if so, how Bourne reacted. The documents are more conclusive for the years 1937/38, a time when the spectre of a Jewish-masonic-Bolshevik conspiracy was again conjured up by the publications of Fr Fahey in the *Catholic Times*. A year earlier, the BOD had already remarked on the harmful potential of Fahey's *The Mythical Body of Christ* that thrived to a great extent on vicious attacks on Jews. Fahey's book saw the Jews as prime movers of revolutions and accused them of founding the Soviet Republic and 'phoney' democracies in the West – systems which they allegedly exploited to their own advantage. Large parts of the book dealt with current politics in Ireland, first the alleged influence of masons and Jews, second that the Irish Republic Brotherhood was inspired by Jewish banks. The BOD was, however, more concerned about the approval the book gained from Catholic journals, bishops and the Irish hierarchy.<sup>78</sup> Neville Laski contacted Archbishop Downey of Liverpool regarding Fahey's influence among Catholics. Downey answered in June 1936: '[I] noted the passages marked by you. It seems to me quite uncritical, and I will write about it to the bishop who has given an "Imprimatur". I have never heard of the author or of the book before. I do not think the publication will carry much weight.'<sup>79</sup>

How mistaken Downey was about Fahey's influence is shown in Fahey's numerous articles in Catholic publications, particularly the *Catholic Times*, in 1938 and the favourable responses among the lower clergy. Again, the BOD asked the Catholic hierarchy to intervene with the *Catholic Times* in order to moderate the paper's antisemitism. Since the *Catholic Times* was owned by the Catholic

Missionary Society, the Catholic bishops were an obvious contact.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, after a complaint by the BOD, Cardinal Archbishop Hinsley of Westminster had reprimanded another paper of the Missionary Society, the *Catholic Gazette*, in February 1936 for its favourable views on the 'Protocols of Zion'.<sup>81</sup> In the matter of the *Catholic Times* in 1937 a letter of recommendation by Archbishop Downey eventually opened the doors to Cardinal Hinsley, but had only limited success in influencing the Catholic papers' attitude towards Jews.<sup>82</sup> The response of Cardinal Hinsley's private secretary Msgr Collings left some hope, when he assured the representatives of the BOD that the Cardinal 'has taken steps which he hopes will prove effective to modify the attitude of that paper in the way' the Board desired.<sup>83</sup> However, the delegation of the Board received by Collings left empty-handed.<sup>84</sup>

Complaints about the Catholic newspapers' journalistic practice rarely arose from the Catholic community. In a letter to Bishop Williams of Birmingham, Fr O'Hea of the Catholic Social Guild criticised the *Catholic Times* 'exalted nationalism' and the *Catholic Herald's* crude misinterpretations of Jewish life and its reluctance to print rejoinders. O'Hea insisted that these practices were no trivialities – quite contrary to Downey's dismissive remarks on the importance of such articles: 'The trouble is that one finds many Catholics, even undergraduates who believe that the Catholic weekly press is in some way official, and of course a journalist has to write in an authoritative tone ... Catholics have been constantly told that the Catholic press alone is reliable.'<sup>85</sup>

Catholic newspapers were not subject to the internal censorship by the Catholic hierarchy, which was imposed on all theological publications by Catholics. Since they were not the owners of these publications, apart from the *Catholic Times*, which was owned by the Catholic Missionary Society, it would have been unmerited interference on their part. Yet in the case of the *Catholic Times* the hierarchy as superior to the Catholic Missionary Society was indeed responsible for the content of this newspaper. The reason why Cardinal Hinsley did not react to the petition of the BOD in this instance is not clear from the sources. One reason might be, as Thomas Moloney suggests in a similar context, that Hinsley did not like to be enlisted for 'particularist courses'.<sup>86</sup> Yet it was not the case that Catholic lay media enterprises existed in isolation from the influence of the Catholic hierarchy. On the contrary, the editors of *The Tablet*, *The Universe*, and the *Catholic Times* were in regular and amicable contact with members of the hierarchy and their secretaries.<sup>87</sup> These

relations were used on other occasions to influence which news would not go to press. These were occasions unrelated to theological questions and therefore – if the bishops' words to the BOD were true – beyond their influence. A statement by Msgr Collings on the relationship between the press and the hierarchy is revealing:

I stated that the Cardinal had no central control over the press, but it was suggested to me that if His Eminence desired to do so it must surely be apparent to everybody that an intimation by him, or his brother Bishops that it was not their desire that certain matters should be referred to in the Catholic press, would be readily accepted by the owners of the papers.<sup>88</sup>

The bishops indeed exercised their influence on the Catholic press when it suited them. For instance, while in negotiations with the government about denominational schools, the bishops of England and Wales agreed at their annual general meeting to advise the Catholic press not to permit any correspondence on the education question.<sup>89</sup> In this case, the hierarchy could not have reacted through the official institutional procedures of ecclesiastical censure, but there were other paths open, which were indeed used when deemed necessary to safeguard Catholic interests.

## Germany

Catholic newspapers were mainly founded during the *Kulturkampf* in the last third of the nineteenth century, often under the clergy's leadership. They were amateurish but enthusiastic endeavours. The Catholic media experienced its apotheosis during the *Kulturkampf* and became an indispensable part of the Catholic milieu as it sought closer links to the Centre Party under the aegis of the *Augustinus Verein zur Pflege der katholischen Presse* (founded in 1878). This association aimed to improve and streamline Catholic press products. In 1931 the *Augustiner Verein* counted 575 Catholic newspapers, of which 434 declared their sympathies with one of the Catholic parties. Catholic newspapers were never, however, in legal terms party newspapers, but independent in both their organisation and funding.<sup>90</sup> They owed their survival to the efforts and donations of Catholic associations and personalities.

The newspapers had a distinctly regional character with low circulations (mostly between 5,000 and 10,000 and rarely more than

20,000).<sup>91</sup> Only four newspapers gained some national importance: *Germania* in Berlin, the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, the *Augsburger Postzeitung* and the *Rhein-Mainische Volkszeitung*. The bulk of Catholic newspapers, however, were hardly read outside their target group because they were designed to express a particular worldview (*Gesinnungspresse*).<sup>92</sup> Like other examples of their kind this press had a two-fold function: internally to create a homogenous community by repetition of common political and moral values, thus shaping opinion on current affairs; and externally to represent Catholic opinion to the outside world. In Weimar Germany, these functions presented the press with three specific tasks: first, a journalistic defence against anti-Catholic agitation; second, a further pulpit for the Church to fulfil its apostolate; and third, a propaganda and information tool for Catholic parties and associations. The Catholic press came highly recommended by the hierarchy. It was every Catholic family's moral duty to subscribe to at least one publication.<sup>93</sup>

At the beginning of the twentieth century German Catholics could choose from a myriad of Catholic publications in addition to the daily and weekly newspapers of political Catholicism. In their variety they could cater for almost any taste, age, gender or class. Folk calendars, magazines (e.g., *St. Konradskalender*; *Der Feuerreiter*; *Deutsche Hausschatz*), Sunday papers for the family (e.g., *Stadt Gottes*) and diocesan news bulletins aimed to educate the rural Catholic population.<sup>94</sup> Almost all of the professions were organised in associations and each published its own journal, be it for students, academics, civil servants, craftsman, farmers or workers. The educated Catholic middle class, lay and clergy, read the renowned academic periodicals like the Jesuits' *Stimmen der Zeit*; *Historisch-Politischen Blätter* (from 1924 continued as *Gelben Hefte*), *Historisches Jahrbuch* by the *Görresgesellschaft*, or Carl Muth's *Hochland*. Besides articles on theology, history or literature, these periodicals were also the discursive arena for Catholic scholars to discuss current societal trends.

Like other publishing houses, Catholic publications struggled to stay in print during the inflation and economic crisis of the Weimar Republic and some household names, such as *Katholik* and *Historisch-Politischen Blätter*, did not survive. Historians have detected a change in the discourse of Catholic publications in the Weimar period. Before the war their emphasis was clearly on Catholic defence and spiritual renewal. During the Republic, Catholics began to reflect on their own relationship to state and fatherland and their publications adopted the language of the prevailing nationalist zeitgeist. National-conservative Catholic authors declared their *Deutschtum*, called for a return to

'*völkisch* roots', and at times vilified Jews.<sup>95</sup> Under National Socialist rule, Catholic media were expected either to adopt the party political line or to seek the protection of the bishops and publish henceforth under the title 'Official Diocesan Bulletin' (*Amtliches Diözesanblatt*). These publications were protected by the Concordat, signed in 1933 with the Vatican, but had to make sure that they avoided conflict with the government.<sup>96</sup>

The 'Jewish question' in German Catholic publications has provoked lively interest among historians without coming to a consensus on the nature and popularity of this discourse.<sup>97</sup> Hermann Greive examined the academic and theoretical discourse among Catholic theologians and sociologists on the 'Jewish question', race theory and National Socialism.<sup>98</sup> He concluded that Catholic anti-semitism undeniably had mobilising potential against democracy and the socialist movement. His research also confirmed that the 'Jewish question' was not the core issue of Catholics. However, the overwhelmingly negative image of the Jews in Catholic writing led Greive to assume that the at times marginal importance of the 'Jewish question' was not a sign of sympathy towards the Jews. It was rather a behaviour guided by age-old prejudices.<sup>99</sup> Wolfgang Altmann, too, found considerable evidence of hostility towards Jews in Catholic academic periodicals and journals of the Weimar Republic. Contrasting this media with the absence of antisemitism in Catholic working-class media, he saw the roots for this antisemitism in the authors' conservative attitude of the *petit bourgeois*, not necessarily in the parameters of a Catholic religious world.<sup>100</sup> More recently, Walter Hannot examined the discussion of the 'Jewish question' in Catholic newspapers close to the Centre Party and Bavarian People's Party. He was thereby closing the gap between the academic discourse (covered in both Greive's and Altmann's research) and that of the popular press.<sup>101</sup> According to Hannot, antisemitism was not used to mobilise the Catholic population against Weimar democracy. Instead, the newspapers followed the policy of tolerance towards the Jews advocated by the Catholic parties, while at the same time emphasising the differences between Catholics and Jews. Antisemitism in German society was likewise tolerated, as long as it was not violent or racist. Hannot rejects Greive's assumption that Catholicism and National Socialism had some ideological commonalities which eventually led to a gradual rapprochement with National Socialism. On the contrary, Hannot argued, the Catholic newspapers (like the Catholic parties) had always warned against National Socialist racism and its exulted ideology and continuously reminded Catholics

that their Christian values were not compatible with those of National Socialism. Like Altmann, Hannot claims that Catholic anti-semitism depended on different local political circumstances and the diversity of Catholic milieus in Germany.<sup>102</sup>

The following newspaper analysis partly is based on existing empirical research, with some amendments that seek to draw more attention to the similarities between *völkisch* and Catholic discourse within and outside political Catholicism. Firstly, the emphasis should not be primarily on responses to National Socialist racial anti-semitism. Literature on Catholic antisemitism has at times underestimated the importance of cultural and economic prejudices against Jews. Of these, anti-communism and the stereotype of the Jewish Bolshevik were a common passion of Weimar Germany's centre-right parties and was probably one of the more compelling motives that could attract Catholics to Hitler's movement.<sup>103</sup> It is assumed here that these prejudices ostracised the Jews in Weimar Germany with the result that Hitler's later antisemitic propaganda did not necessarily seem outlandish. Another amendment lies in the choice of sources. Literature has often placed considerable emphasis on the importance of the *Germania* and the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, the Centre Party's flagship papers, and their tolerance towards Jews. During the Weimar period, however, both papers lost support among Catholic readers, who were instead buying their local Catholic paper.<sup>104</sup> I have consequently focused on regional papers in order to add to the existing analysis of the Catholic press in Germany. These include the *Märkische Volkszeitung*, a very popular Berlin paper with a circulation that surpassed that of the *Germania*,<sup>105</sup> the *Sonntagszeitung* and *Thüringer Volkswacht* in Erfurt which represent Catholic 'diaspora' regions, while Passau's *Donauzeitung* comes from a region where Catholicism was a majority culture. *Der Arbeiter* spoke for organised Catholic workers in south Germany.<sup>106</sup> The Catholic working class has so far been largely exempted from the charge of antisemitism, but there has been little systematic work on working-class media.<sup>107</sup> The non-centre, right-wing section of the Catholic milieu is represented by the *Gelben Hefte*, successor to the *Historisch-Politischen Blätter* and close to the conservative right around Martin Spahn. The journal was edited by Max Buchner, leader of the DNVP Catholics in Bavaria and history professor first at the University of Würzburg, then Munich. Like most publications of the *Rechtskatholiken* the journal accused political Catholicism of being a traitor to Catholic ideals in its co-operation with 'socialists and Jews', claiming that the Centre Party and the BVP could therefore



no longer claim a monopoly on the representation of Catholic political opinion in the Republic.<sup>108</sup> The *Gelben Hefte* was funded by members of the Catholic aristocracy, including Konstantin und Maria von Gebattel – the retired Bavarian General was the vice-president of the *völkisch* Pan-German League from 1914<sup>109</sup> – but also from Catholic politicians including Heinrich Held, a BVP member of the Bavarian Landtag and Prime Minister of Bavaria from 1924 to 1933.<sup>110</sup>

### *The 'Jewish question' and its 'solution'*

The discourse in Catholic newspapers on Jews and antisemitism was modern in its borrowing from the terminology of race science and in its use of antisemitic stereotypes, including that of 'Jewish Bolshevism'. Catholic newspapers would only occasionally refer to a theological context in their discussion of the 'Jewish question'. This stands in contrast to Catholic newspapers in England, where the religious dimensions of Christian–Jewish relations was a regular component in such discussions. Articles usually distinguished between the biblical 'Chosen People', 'post-biblical' Judaism and the 'irreligious' Jews. The latter were mostly perceived as personification of modern irreligion and materialism, whereas the biblical Jews were valued as part of the Christian heritage. In the case of English newspapers, biblical references were meant to offer an explanation for modern Jewry's alleged antagonism towards Christians. German Catholic newspapers conjured a similar link between biblical and modern times where references to the deeds and misdeeds of biblical Jews often served to explain the modern world and admonish readers to act according to Catholic values. For instance, when *Der Arbeiter* recounted the story of the golden calf and Moses' fury about Jews paying reverence to the golden statue, it was not just to remind readers of the scripture, but to refer to the modern world. It ended thus: 'This fury is as social fury every man's pride (*eine echte Männerzier*), if he challenges what the Messiah had once called so fittingly the 'mammon of injustice', [namely] ... atheistic capitalism. This atheistic capitalism has indeed been the deepest cause of world war and world revolution.'<sup>111</sup>

Much more common than religious references to Jews were complaints about their alleged negative influence in the contemporary secular world. The publications of political Catholicism examined here contain elements of antisemitism that could range from passing remarks to hateful polemic. The first extensive article of *Der Arbeiter*

on the 'Jewish question' in December 1918 is a representative example of the popular discussion in German Catholic newspapers. The article acknowledged that Jews had gained preferential positions in public life as a result of their emancipation, their diligence and 'other, less flattering characteristics'. It was also to the Jews' advantage that 'the Jewish financier Bleichröder' had arranged measures to stop Stöcker's 'good work'. This led the author to explain at length the Jews' role in capitalist society. 'The Jews are the fathers of modern capitalism' and 'mammonism', which he then underpins with Werner Sombart's statistics, who had spent considerable energy on proving the Jews' alleged economic dominance with the means of modern science.<sup>112</sup> In politics, the author had no doubts that Jews supported the 'social-democratic-revolutionary movement' and were 'at the front of all revolutions'. Moreover, they presided in European governments, even though they were aliens (*landfremd*). After linking the Jews with modern capitalism, social democracy and revolutions the author asked his readers to accept the principle of religious freedom – but: 'One still has to fight emphatically the usurious spirit of the profit-Jews (*Nurgeschäftsjuden*), the decomposing work of a certain Jewish literature (*jüdisches Literatentum*), the international fraternization- and revolution-Jews; even German-nationalist and righteous Jews do not object to this.'<sup>113</sup>

In many Catholic newspapers authors did not stop short of a general identification of modern capitalism with Jewry and used anti-semitism to criticise the excesses of this system. In a summary of Dr Sonnenschein's public talk on 'The European Present and Young Catholicism' the *Märkische Volkszeitung* agreed with Sonnenschein's juxtaposition of a responsible 'Catholic universalism' to 'proletarian socialism, freemasonry and Jewish capitalism'.<sup>114</sup>

While economic antisemitism was common to Catholic newspapers in England and Germany, cultural antisemitism was considerably more prevalent in German newspapers. The repertoire of cultural antisemitism targeted the excesses of the modern world and found its expression in a critique of materialism, immorality, excessive capitalism ('mammonism') and a general loss of culture. Literature and culture were generally criticised for their lack of Christian values and morals, but references to 'race' and 'Jewish' character ('Russian of Jewish blood'; 'Jewish spirituality')<sup>115</sup> again singled out the Jews more than any other group as promoters of un-Christian culture.<sup>116</sup> A good example of cultural antisemitism in a Centre Party paper is an article on Moses Mendelssohn, the eighteenth century intellectual. Mendelssohn, it was claimed, symbolised the 'problem' caused by Jewish activities in German literature:

[R]ace and faith mark his fate and his background. There are however many special shapes (*Sonderprägungen*): the more absolute Jews and those who are bound to a place and a time; the religious and the dissidents who are no longer touched in their lives (*Lebensordnung*) by the spirit of Judaism. Only those turn into literature-Jews filled with negative forces: the restless chaotic, decomposing, the cynical ironic ... Despite all this, the German Jew is since Moses Mendelssohn part of German cultural heritage. However – this remains often overlooked – not to the same extent.<sup>117</sup>

The most durable anti-Jewish theme in most Catholic papers – in England and Germany – was anti-Bolshevism. Ever since the end of the war and particularly the revolutions of 1918/19, the alleged link between Jews and socialist or Bolshevik movements evolved into a constant and deep anxiety. It stood at the centre of the ‘Jewish question’. In July 1919 the *Märkische Volkszeitung* printed an extensive article on the ‘Jewish problem’. It stated that the problem lay in the fact that ‘mainly semites create and support’ Bolshevism, a fact ‘verified’ by Bela Kun in Hungary and Jewish communists in Germany. While searching for a reason for this sympathy the article ran through popular arguments, such as the Jews’ profitable involvement in any revolution in history, their religion, their race or their experience of the ghetto. The article warned the Jews that their ‘aggression’ would ultimately generate a hostile reaction:

We simply want to draw attention to the consequences that will, yes have to, follow the usual course of history, once the world will have been cured from Bolshevism ... One can only advise the Jews to turn their backs on the Spartakists in time. Then ... one does not have to fear persecution of the Jews and pogroms. But if this continues in the same fashion, no one will be able to prevent what has to come.<sup>118</sup>

At that time the feeling that Jews led socialist unrest in postwar Germany was widely shared. Even the otherwise moderate *Kölner Volkszeitung* (it is known for its non-antisemitic attitude), felt uncomfortable with Kurt Eisner’s reign in Munich and agreed with the *Münchener Nachrichten* that no ‘Galician Jew’ could rule in Christian Bavaria.<sup>119</sup>

The Catholic Church at the time and Catholic historians since have asserted that conversion to Catholicism has been the Catholic

solution to a 'Jewish question'. This was still the case for Catholic publications in Britain but not for Germany. Many authors doubted either its effectiveness in altering a 'Jewish character' or the effectiveness of proselytising in the first place, because of the low success rates among Jews.<sup>120</sup> Palestine as a Jewish national home was occasionally also discussed as a 'solution' to the 'Jewish question'. Even though some authors worried that Palestine was too small to be a home to all Jews, it was seen as an acceptable way (in contrast to Catholic newspapers in England).<sup>121</sup> Yet the Catholic press rarely systematically thought through the details of the 'problem' and its possible 'solutions'. In most cases, newspaper articles referred to 'solutions' suggested by Catholic handbooks. Thus a colourful portrait of the 'Jewish problem' often ended with a request to Jews to 'restrain themselves' or to Catholics not to join an unjust (i.e. radical) antisemitism. The most widely proposed 'solution' was a vague appeal to return to a 'true Catholicism' that would solve the problems of modern society, including the 'corrosive' influence of the Jews.<sup>122</sup>

The periodical of the Catholic conservative right, the *Gelben Hefte*, shared the same antisemitic stereotypes with other Catholic newspapers where Jews usually represented the feared and hated communist, or the liberal who undermined German culture. But, like the *Witness* press in England, the *Gelben Hefte* consistently portrayed the 'Jewish question' as a race problem and the main threat to the revival of the German nation. In its hostility and radicalism it surpassed the antisemitism in the publications of political Catholicism. Contributors regularly adopted the terminology of race science and left no doubt that Jews belonged to a different race, determined by their blood.<sup>123</sup> This racial antisemitism in the *Gelben Hefte* was thus *völkisch* in character with considerable similarities to National Socialism antisemitic propaganda.<sup>124</sup> These similarities extended to the 'solution' of the 'Jewish question'. The *Gelben Hefte* presented the 'Jewish question' as an essential problem for the survival of the German nation. Contributors favoured discriminatory laws against Jews as a temporary 'solution', while the long-term 'solution' was the removal of Jews from the centres of German social, political and economic life. This stage, it was agreed, would automatically be achieved with the end of the democratic republic that favoured Jews over Germans. The return of the monarchy and a corporatist system, would assign the Jews their traditional place in a Christian state – on the periphery.<sup>125</sup> Thus, the main political aim of the *Rechtskatholiken*, the restoration of the German monarchy, also solved their 'Jewish problem'.

The Catholic newspapers close to political Catholicism, on the other hand, consistently rejected racial antisemitism (which was in their eyes the Jew-hatred of the *völkisch* movement and the NSDAP) for its violence and even more so because it substituted faith with race. Yet Jews were generally considered as a particular group (*Sondergruppe*), defined by their historical, ethnic and religious *Volksart*, into which they were born and educated. The term 'Jewish race' ascribed to the Jews certain characteristics they had inherited throughout their history and were now inscribed in their 'blood'. Race science was still in its infancy, and conflicting opinions existed about the extent to which human beings and whole peoples were shaped by their bloodline. Newspaper articles often reflected the ambiguity of this novel science. The article, 'Legend of Pure Blood', for example, refuted the notion that a *völkisch* or racial purity existed but asserted that the ruling European families had mainly sprung from the northern race. Only since the French Revolution had the Germanic people gradually lost their influence in history. The article continued:

Blood and racial blends increased closer to the present time. Since the beginning of the 18th century Russian and Jewish blood, that had not been present in earlier times, penetrates the west (*dringt überall ... nach dem Westen*) ... It would, however, be a mistake if one would conclude that the whole of Europe and even the noblest circles were an utter racial hotchpotch (*Blutsgemengsel*) ... Jews are exceptions in the genealogy of the upper classes and even more so among the lower aristocracy and peasantry. The basic stock is formed by the common people (*Bodenständige*).<sup>126</sup>

Catholic newspapers mostly relied on the work of Hermann Muckermann, who often contributed to this discourse with his own articles on race science and eugenics. His work is the best guide to understanding the racism implied in Catholic newspapers. Muckermann had left the Society of Jesus in 1926 to concentrate on his research and work as director of eugenics at the Kaiser-Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology in Berlin.<sup>127</sup> He thought that each race had its specific physical and mental abilities, but often refrained from classifying superior and inferior races. However, he believed that the purity of a race determined its depths and quality, its characteristic, so that purity was ultimately superior to mixed races. For this reason Muckermann was against mixed marriages and the 'influx of alien races'. The influence of these races in German youth education,

science and literature should remain limited. He also favoured sterilisation of alcoholics, criminals and the demented, which was unusual for a Catholic.<sup>128</sup> Apart from sterilisation, many of his ideas were taken up and perpetuated by other writers, including the glorification of the Nordic race.<sup>129</sup>

'Race', as it was used and discussed in Catholic newspapers, implied many factors that are usually attributed to *völkisch* racism: a suspicion of miscegenation, the biological determination of physical and mental characteristics and its subsequent influence on the 'value' of a race, and in Muckermann's case even the support of negative eugenic measures.<sup>130</sup> These thoughts were axioms fundamental to racial hygienicists of the day, for instance, Ernst Haeckel, but also Francis Galton. Hitler, too, incorporated elements of these theories into his racial worldview.<sup>131</sup> It is therefore not correct to assume that racism and race science was unequivocally rejected in Catholic public discourse. What was rejected was the *völkisch* concept of the supremacy of race over the human soul and eventually over God.<sup>132</sup>

### ***Antisemitism over time: the Bolshevik threat, 1919–23***

Catholics caught antisemitic fever in the years after the First World War just like the rest of the German population. From 1919 until well into 1924 articles on the Allies, the revolutions, profiteering or the communists often figured an unsympathetic and conniving Jew. Although most Catholic newspapers refrained from joining in the stab-in-the-back legend of the conservative right, their articles on the war and Versailles nevertheless alluded to a Jewish conspiracy against the national interest of Germany. For example, the organ of the South German Catholic Workers' Association made Karl Kautsky responsible for the ratification of the Versailles treaty, because 'no German and no German government could have signed a treaty containing such gruesome conditions.'<sup>133</sup> As late as February 1924 the *Bayerische Volkszeitung* published a series titled 'Judah or Rome'. The author, one K. Nickel, was convinced that war and revolution had made the 'Jewish question' an urgent matter. He saw a decisive struggle at play between hatred of God – in the form of the godless, revolutionary Jews and their devilish power – and adoration of God.<sup>134</sup>

During the 'quiet' years of slow economic and political stabilisation between 1924 and 1928 antisemitic statements in Catholic publications declined noticeably.<sup>135</sup> According to Hannot, the quantity of antisemitic articles in Catholic newspapers markedly declined after

1924 and was around 25% lower in the years 1929–33 compared with 1923–28.<sup>136</sup> This does not mean that Germans in general were less ‘Jew-conscious’. German-national, *völkisch* and increasingly National Socialist agitation kept the Jews in the public mind with allegations of sexual misconduct, ritual murder, and campaigns against Jewish ritual slaughter.<sup>137</sup> Unlike the national non-Catholic press, the papers of political Catholicism by and large rarely commented on these topics, apart from the comment that they were not in favour of Jews in general.<sup>138</sup> Only the financial scandal around Julius Barmat in 1925 enticed the *Der Arbeiter* into making anti-Jewish comments, emphasising that the interests of liberal capitalism and social democracy might serve the Jews but ran contrary to those of Catholic workers.<sup>139</sup> The right-wing press likewise exploited the involvement of the SPD in the Barmat and later in the Sklarek scandal in 1929 to ‘prove’ their thesis of a republican–social-democrat–Jewish conspiracy.<sup>140</sup>

Catholic newspapers had their own issues in those years outside national politics that stimulated antisemitic remarks. These were profoundly linked with Catholic interests abroad and the fear of Bolshevism. German condemnation of religious persecution in Russia, Mexico and Spain was very similar to the reactions of the English Catholic press. Mexico’s case had become acute in the second half of 1920s. Priests, religious and Catholic lay people were murdered. Since 1924, the Mexican government under president Elias Calles systematically persecuted the Catholic Church. The simple presence of a priest became a capital offence, forcing the Church underground and its priests to travel the country in disguise, saying mass in barns and stables.<sup>141</sup> Many popular Catholic publications, including pamphlets by the respected Catholic publisher *Görreshaus*, reported that the Mexican president Elias Calles was a Jew.<sup>142</sup> The Centre Party’s mouthpiece, the *Germania* in Berlin, on the other hand, printed Jewish rejoinders that denied the Jewish background of Calles.<sup>143</sup> Still, it is worth noticing that it was Calles’ name and not his revolution or his anticlerical policy that first prompted the idea that ‘Jewry’ was somehow to blame. This reflex was particularly popular in Bavarian and Hanover newspapers, which accused the Jews of a conspiracy with freemasons against the Catholic Church in Mexico.<sup>144</sup> Parallel to newspaper articles in English Catholic newspapers, the majority of Catholic newspapers deplored the fact that the non-Catholic press did not report on attacks on Catholics and argued that there was a ‘conspiracy of silence’ (the term was coined by Pius XI in his Christmas 1927 speech) by freemasons. They called on the ‘Jewish

press' to defend Catholic interests in the same way than Catholic papers had always deplored Jewish persecution.<sup>145</sup>

### ***Antisemitism in the face of National Socialism, 1923–34***

Of the examined newspapers, the *Der Arbeiter* was the first to criticise National Socialism in February 1921. The young movement was described as anti-Christian, violent with dictatorial ambitions and uninterested in workers' needs.<sup>146</sup> Most other Catholic newspapers awoke to the radicalism of the movement only after Hitler's misfired coup in November 1923 and the antisemitic violence that foreshadowed and accompanied it.<sup>147</sup> Compared to the reaction to the *Scheunenviertel* riots, Catholic newspapers now generally expressed disapproval of violence against Jews more clearly, though they still only condemned this particular form of Jew-hatred, and not antisemitism as such.<sup>148</sup>

Catholic double standards on the 'Jewish question' were displayed during the turmoil that arose around Cardinal Faulhaber, Archbishop of Munich-Freising, in November and December 1923. In a letter to the Foreign Minister Gustav Stresemann (German Peoples' Party) and in his sermons, Faulhaber had condemned the nationalists' attacks on Christians and Jews and the violent antisemitism of *völkisch* groups in the days before Hitler's coup.<sup>149</sup> For these statements Faulhaber was then paraded as a protector of the Jews by the *völkisch* and nationalist press. The Central Committee of Munich Catholics (*Zentralkomitee der Münchner Katholiken*) stood up in defence of Cardinal Faulhaber and asserted that the Cardinal had only condemned the *völkisch* threat to kill every Jew indiscriminately.<sup>150</sup> The Committee refuted violent and undifferentiated antisemitism in a well-organised press campaign, but emphasised that they had no intention of protecting those Jews who were guilty of inciting revolution or of profiteering: 'Surely, he [Faulhaber] never wanted to excuse those acts through which Jewish revolutionaries and usurers had sinned against the German people and its wellbeing (*Volkswohl*).'<sup>151</sup> 'The Cardinal has never received anything for his sermon ... from any Jew, neither for himself nor for the Church or charity.'<sup>152</sup>

The intention of these statements was clear. The Catholic Church would not condone violence against innocent Jews, but it tolerated the widespread cultural antisemitism. Above all many of these statements perpetuated racial vocabulary and *völkisch* thinking, particularly in their defamation of Eastern European Jews, who were described as 'poison to our people's soul' and as 'dangerous parasites'



(*Fremdkörper*) particularly when they did not respect the Christian and German nature of the state.<sup>153</sup> Interestingly, the campaign of the Central Committee targeted Ludendorff's anti-Catholic influence in the *völkisch Kampfbund* but not Hitler's. Unlike Ludendorff, who was accused of inciting another *Kulturkampf*, Cardinal Faulhaber saw in Hitler a man who aimed to rebuild the German *Volk* on the basis of its Christian Culture.<sup>154</sup> Cardinal Faulhaber himself had continuously warned against racial antisemitism, but was at the same time convinced that Bolshevism was a Jewish movement. The battle against the alleged corrosive influence of the Jews was, in his view, a central aspect of the Catholic mission.<sup>155</sup>

There have been numerous claims that political Catholicism was a true defender of Weimar democracy against the danger of National Socialism in the last three years of the Republic. The numerous reports on National Socialism in Catholic newspapers between 1930 and 1933 are usually seen as sign of Catholic concern about that movement.<sup>156</sup> However, a qualitative analysis of these articles casts doubt on this idea of a Catholic bastion against National Socialism. After the high tide in 1924, discussion of the National Socialist movement began again in 1929/30, in essence urging Catholics not to vote for NSDAP but for Catholic parties. The former anti-Nazi stand became more and more ambiguous from August 1929. Like the Centre Party leadership, political newspapers began to toy with the idea of a coalition with Hitler's movement. The *Junge Front*, for example, called for a coalition with the NSDAP after the November 1932 elections. It saw the danger rather in the current government, which would not undertake to 'liquidate the liberal capitalistic era'.<sup>157</sup> Several articles expressed the hope that the right would contribute precious forces that would cleanse the state 'from the mistakes of the liberalistic and exaggerated democracy'. *Der Arbeiter* likewise briefly supported a coalition with the NSDAP in September 1932, in order to spite Chancellor Franz von Papen.<sup>158</sup> Criticism of the National Socialist movement in the majority of Catholic newspapers was too often limited to its anti-Christian ideology while its antisemitism was of only secondary concern.<sup>159</sup> Similarly, Catholic papers underestimated the physical danger antisemitism posed to Jews in the years 1930/31. Antisemitic riots such as the one on Berlin's Kurfürstendamm in September 1931 were simply reported as a sign of an increasing 'decline of morality' (*Verwilderung der Sitten*).<sup>160</sup> Alongside the Centre Party's ambition to form a conservative-right coalition at this time, Catholic newspapers grew increasingly nationalistic, borrowing and exploiting *völkisch* vocabulary.<sup>161</sup> This

celebration of nationalism went hand in hand with praise for authoritarian leadership and hostile comments about the 'excessive parliamentarianism' of the Weimar Republic. In the election year of 1932 the papers emphasised the Centre's 'national efforts', expressing the hope for a 'national gathering' rooted in strong popular support that would soothe the fear of communism and at the same time prevent a right-wing coup.<sup>162</sup>

While the stance of the main Catholic newspapers against the NSDAP became more and more ambiguous, their hostility to communism and fear of a Bolshevik threat remained explicit. The NSDAP was portrayed as the lesser evil in comparison with Bolshevism, while Hitler was seen as a moderate partner compared to other figures of the NSDAP or DNVP. Catholic newspapers from the simple church news bulletin to the big dailies had their watchful gaze fixed on the socialist movements around the world. The godlessness of socialism and the advance of freethinkers in Germany, Russia, Mexico and Spain were lamented throughout 1931 and 1932.

Although the NSDAP and other *völkisch* groups now dominated the field of antisemitic insults in public, Catholic newspapers did not avoid derogatory remarks about Jews. Yet the manner in which antisemitism was used had changed. In 1932 the socialist movement was still equated with Jewish interest, but less often than in earlier years. The organ of the Catholic Workers' Association in southern Germany had moderated its antisocialist agitation in the face of a threateningly successful NSDAP. However, it could still define socialism as being 'infected by a Jewish spirit', that it was nothing but a 'nebulous delusion and wishful-thinking by a Jewish-Marxist world'.<sup>163</sup> A more subtle method of accomplishing this generalisation was 'Jewish' name-dropping, where the name became representative of the defects of complete professions.<sup>164</sup> Berlin's *Märkische Volkszeitung*, regularly used Jewish names when it discussed the communist movement, or bankruptcies, or fraud (e.g. when it reported on espionage by Rathenau's AEG or government monies for Mosse's publishing house).<sup>165</sup> Considering that the *völkisch* press ran extensive and explicit antisemitic articles on the same subjects it is difficult to imagine that these generalisations did not confirm the popular negative image of the Jews.

Anti-Jewish comments also became an instrument to ridicule the NSDAP's more extreme version of it. One example was the reaction to the strong support given to Hitler by the English press baron, Lord Rothermere. Headlines such as 'A Jew as Hitler's Protector' introduced articles that revealed the 'Jewish' aid given to Hitler and

ridiculed his allegedly double standards towards the 'Jewish question'.<sup>166</sup> Though these articles clearly had an ironic air, they are a weak proof for Catholic immunity against Jew-hatred or indeed against fascism.<sup>167</sup>

The *Gelben Hefte* did not share the self-restraint that the papers of political Catholicism tried to practise. Inaugurated in 1924, the *Hefte* publicised their Judeo-masonic-Bolshevik conspiracy at a time when antisemitism became less prominent in other papers. This went hand in hand with sustained criticism of the Weimar Republic and its democracy, at a time when the papers close to the Centre Party and the BVP had overcome their initial hostility to the Republic.<sup>168</sup>

## Summary and comparison

Discussions on Jews in German Catholic newspapers were considerably more 'racialised' and frequent than in England. In German Catholic publications, antisemitism can be found across the social scale from workers' unions to the educated middle class and aristocratic associations. In their own research, Greive and Altmann (like Nipperdey and Rürup in the Protestant case) identified a class distinction where they single out middle-class publications, especially the learned journals, as being particularly prone to antisemitism. However, geography and political persuasion seemed to be more decisive on the use of antisemitism in a newspaper.<sup>169</sup> Catholic newspapers in Bavaria, Upper Silesia and Westphalia continually printed more antisemitic articles than those in other German regions, especially the Rhineland. These regional differences even existed within one Catholic association, the Catholic Workers' Association. The publication of its south German branch, *Der Arbeiter*, was not free of antisemitism, compared to its west German branch, the *Westdeutsche Arbeiterzeitung* (WAZ). With an emphasis on the 'Jewish financier' rather than on the dangers to the German nation, *Der Arbeiter* differed from other Catholic publications mostly in its form of antisemitism and its less frequent use. These differences can be explained by the close association of *Der Arbeiter* to the BVP, whereas the *Westdeutsche Arbeiterzeitung* was the organ of the left-wing Rhenish Centre Party.<sup>170</sup> It is, therefore, not possible to attribute antisemitism clearly to a class structure or to the defence strategies of a Catholic diaspora. This attitude was more likely to be part of the political traditions of a particular region. From the mid-1920s, the main restraining force on newspapers was the Centre Party (far less so the

BVP), because of its competition with the parties on the far right. Publications to the right and left of political Catholicism were considerably more antisemitic. Particularly the press of the Catholic conservative right was in a different league with respect to its antisemitism and its contempt for the Weimar Republic. Hardly an issue of the *Gelben Hefte* was published without an anti-Jewish polemic on the health of the German nation. Within the Catholic community their antisemitism was *völkisch*, and closest to National Socialist Jew-hatred. The *Rechtscatholiken* were most active in Bavaria, Upper Silesia and Westphalia, contributing to the popular antisemitism of these regions.

The fierceness of anti-Jewish invectives in most Catholic newspapers in the early years of the Weimar Republic, the repeated allegation of Jewish dominance over finance and German culture but above all the vilification of the 'Jew-Bolshevik' bore a resemblance to *völkisch* and later National Socialist antisemitic campaigns. National Socialism could tap into a stream of antisemitic stereotypes that were popular and common since the First World War. Uwe Lohalm suggests that the antisemitic agitation and disturbances during the war and the early 1920s were mostly instigated by members of *völkisch* organisations, but it should be added that the newspapers of mainstream Catholicism played a vital role in fostering these sentiments in public discourse.<sup>171</sup> By the time Catholic newspapers decided to restrain their antisemitic vitriol in 1924, the stereotype of a malignant Jewish influence in German society and of Jewish Bolshevism had become popular knowledge on which Hitler and the NSDAP could grow on. The overview of the newspapers of political Catholicism in Germany supports the notion of a Catholic bulwark against National Socialism only to a very limited extent, as their articles on the struggle against socialism. They spent even less time acting as defenders of German Jews. Support for the Weimar democracy likewise was not as consequent outside the main Centre Party publications as usually assumed. Particularly papers close to the BVP, the Berlin *Märkische Volkszeitung* and the publications of the Catholic conservative right were very critical of democracy. Until the mid-1920s their articles discredited Weimar democracy by identifying the democratic and social democratic parties with Jewry. While this anti-democratic rhetoric ebbed away between 1924 and 1931 (even though it continued in the *Gelben Hefte*), it re-emerged in 1932 as a serious discussion about the advantages of an authoritarian government.

The characteristics of anti-Jewish prejudices in the English and German Catholic press were largely similar, especially in their

emphasis on 'Jewish Bolshevism'. The differences are few but significant. The discussion of the 'Jewish question' was considerably more 'modern' in the German Catholic press. Here, the religious framework was largely lost, whereas it was almost always present in discussions of the 'Jewish question' in English papers, including random derogatory portraits of the Talmudic Jew or accusations of blood libel. Such allegations were denounced as irrational nonsense by German Catholics. Yet even the *The Month* and *Blackfriars*, and the CGI, with their close association with religious orders and their theological learning, were not free of modern antisemitic stereotypes. Although they perceived the 'Jewish question' as a religious predicament and a 'problem' that was best 'solved' by conversion to Catholicism, they also regularly complained about the alleged secular symptoms of this 'question', such as the Jews' usury and their involvement in revolutionary movements.

Most literature on Catholic antisemitism asserts that racial antisemitism was firmly rejected by Catholics. This opposition is also reflected in the Catholic newspapers examined in this overview. However, criticism of National Socialist antisemitism as such and the decrease of antisemitic articles from 1924 onwards should not be read as a sign of Catholic support of Jews, not even of Catholic anti-antisemitism. Catholic authors condemned the Jew-hatred of National Socialists for its violence and supremacy of race, but not Jew-hatred as such. Race science was likewise not unequivocally rejected. Catholic publications participated in the contemporary discourse on 'race' and subsequently adopted its terminology and some of the fundamental axioms of race science. They deviated from the scientific and *völkisch* discourse, in that they almost never discussed the necessity to undertake eugenic measures to guarantee the health of the nation. Hermann Muckermann's support of sterilisation as a measure to prevent the 'reproduction' of the sick was more likely to be printed in learned periodicals (e.g., *Der Gral*) than in Catholic newspapers or handbooks.

'Race' in English Catholic newspapers likewise mirrored the general discussion on eugenics in Britain, albeit incompletely and selectively. Authors acknowledged the existence of Jews as a distinct national/racial group, defined by environmentally acquired characteristics. In most cases, this interpretation of Jewry existed alongside its religious definition as adherents of Judaism and rarely adopted the terminology of race science. The concept that Jews were primarily defined by their race was only advocated by a minority of Catholic writers. Eugenics as such was rejected across the examined publications.

The most striking difference between both discourses on the 'Jewish question' is their chronological divergence. While the numbers of antisemitic remarks declined in German Catholic publications from 1924, it was precisely in this period that the English Catholic media entered its most antisemitic phase with peaks in 1933 and 1938/9. There was an increase in both the frequency and radical character of antisemitic stereotypes. The decrease of antisemitic articles in Germany is largely the result of the political situation and the rise of the National Socialist movement. According to Dirk Walter, the democratic Weimar parties woke up to the dangers of antisemitism after Hitler's failed *Putsch* and the antisemitic riots in Berlin in winter 1923. They eventually became aware that this antisemitism also threatened to destroy the Republic. The democratic parties consequently refrained in their use of antisemitism. Since antisemitism was the essence of their new political competitor on the far right, the condemnation of antisemitism also aimed at this competition. Walter also suggests that antisemitism was generally no longer attractive in political campaigns.<sup>172</sup> It is not that English Catholicism was not challenged by fascist antisemitism in the 1930s, but rather that their press was not bound to a party political line that would have curbed antisemitic articles. Most Catholic newspapers were private enterprises, increasingly run by conservative editors. Obsessed by the threat of an encroaching communism their antisemitic articles largely sought to draw public attention to Catholic interests that, on the international stage at least, were felt to be under threat.

The Catholic hierarchy reacted in different ways to the growth of antisemitic sentiment. The German hierarchy was formally supposed to be politically impartial. However, most German bishops and clergy lent their support to the Catholic parties and their media, and never reprimanded their exploitation of antisemitism. In the case of the English newspapers, the hierarchy eventually used personal channels to restrain the editors' anti-Jewish reports. This happened only hesitantly and late (during the war after 1940 when it was not patriotic to indulge in the prejudice that had become fundamental policy of National Socialist Germany), while these same communication channels were quite consistently used when prominent Catholics flirted with socialism.<sup>173</sup> A more steadfast opponent than the hierarchy to antisemitism was the *Catholic Worker*. It is important to note that a paper that addressed the largest social group within English Catholicism did not perpetuate anti-Jewish prejudices and encouraged its readers to oppose antisemitism.

The discussions on a 'Jewish question' in Catholic newspapers illustrate the nature of anti-Jewish prejudices and times and occasions when the intensity of antisemitic articles was specifically high. The following chapters turn towards Catholic organisations and individuals in order to set the debate of a 'Jewish question' in its historical context.

## Notes

- 1 On antisemitism within German literature see Richie Robertson, *The 'Jewish Question' in German Literature 1749–1939. Emancipation and its Discontents*, Oxford, 1999. On Catholic writers: Kevin Morris, 'Fascism and British Catholic Writers, 1924–39. Part I', *The New Blackfriars*, 80 (1999), 32–45; Kevin Morris, 'Fascism and British Catholic Writers, 1924–39. Part II', *The New Blackfriars*, 80 (1999), 82–95.
- 2 Anthony Kauders, *German Politics and the Jews. Düsseldorf and Nuremberg, 1910–1933*, Oxford, 1996, pp. 4–5.
- 3 Kenneth Lunn, 'Political Antisemitism before 1914: Fascism's Heritage?', in Kenneth Lunn and Richard Thurlow (eds), *British Fascism. Essays on the Radical Right in Interwar Britain*, London, 1980, p. 31.
- 4 These key years are 1919, 1923, 1933 and 1938 in which the *Catholic Times* and *Catholic Herald* published numerous antisemitic articles.
- 5 George Beck (ed.): *The English Catholics, 1850–1950. Essays to Commemorate the Restoration of the Hierarchy of England and Wales*, London, 1950, pp. 508–509.
- 6 *The Newspaper Press Directory and Advertising Guild*, London, 1920.
- 7 *Willing's Press Guide and Advertiser's Directory and Handbook*, London, 1935.
- 8 Andrew Sharf claims that the *Catholic Herald* was out of tune with the opinion of the British Catholic community. Cited in Moloney, *Westminster*, p. 137. This might be true for the tastes of the bishops who were indeed often exasperated by the *Catholic Herald*. Yet its considerable readership and the support it found from Catholic intellectuals suggest that the newspaper found an echo in the community that should not be neglected, especially not in a chapter on Catholic public discourse. For the history and readership of the *Catholic Times* and the *Catholic Herald* see Beck, *English Catholics*, pp. 508–509. Both the *Catholic Times* and the *Herald* published local editions in

Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and other cities. They contained the same news as the London edition, but reported local events in a special column. Besides these local editions of the main newspapers there were also smaller local Catholic newspapers. They concentrated on the local news and parish events, often oblivious of world news.

- 9 *Catholic Worker*, June 1935, p. 2.
- 10 The circulation of most *Witness* publications was quite low (G.K.'s *Weekly*'s stood at around 8,000 copies); this however does not reflect the papers' popularity among the educated Catholic middle class.
- 11 *The Month*, September 1923, p. 314. *Ibid.*, February 1925, p. 175.
- 12 E. Lampert, 'The Paths of Israel', *The Blackfriars*, April 1942, pp. 143–147.
- 13 Gerald Vann, 'The Jews', *The Blackfriars*, June 1939, p. 417; 'Notes of the Week. Pray for the Jews', *Catholic Times*, 31 March 1939, p. 12.
- 14 Lampert, 'The Paths of Israel', pp. 143–147; Vann, 'The Jews', p. 417.
- 15 Joseph Keating, 'Catholic Prospects of Hungary', *The Month*, November 1923, pp. 440–441.
- 16 Canon William Barry, 'The Everlasting Jew', *The Universe*, 12 May 1922, p. 8. *The Universe* had a largely conservative middle-class readership. Its owners were equally conservative with the 15th Duke of Norfolk holding one of the largest stakes in the paper. From 1917, *The Universe* was managed by Sir Martin Melvin and edited by H.S. Dean. Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 48–49.
- 17 Diamond, 'The Jew and World Ferment', p. 6. For further examples see Harold D. Wilson, 'Socialism's Failure. Jews and the Christian Religion', *Catholic Times*, 20 September 1919, p. 7. For similar articles in the *Catholic Times* see Bede Jarrett, 'The Chosen People', 1 April 1922, p. 4; William Barry, 'Signs of the Times', 30 October 1920, p. 7; William Barry, 'Our Lady of Sion', 26 August 1922, p. 7; 'Did the Jews Kill Christ/The Jews Rejected Christ', 7 October 1938, p. 12. For the *Catholic Herald*, see the following articles: 'The Jews and our Blessed Lady', 2 August 1924, p. 6; 'Catholics and Jews', 9 May 1925, p. 8; 'A Catholic Opinion on Mission to the Jews', 7 January 1931, p. 4; Arnold Lunn condemned the 'Persecution of the Jews', 11 November 1938, p. 7. Lunn relativised most accusations against the Jews, but left the claim that they were hostile towards the Catholic Church uncontested. For *The Month* see 'The Catholic Guild of Israel', September 1921, pp. 194–197; 'The Conversion of the Jew', August 1924, p. 176.
- 18 For this and the following quotes see 'The Jewish Question', *Catholic Herald*, 13 September 1919, p. 6.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 6.



- 20 Barry, 'The Everlasting Jew', p. 8.
- 21 *New Witness* (NW), 30 April 1920, pp. 441–442.
- 22 *G.K.'s Weekly* (GKW), 31 October 1925, p. 2; Colin Holmes, *Antisemitism in British Society, 1876–1939*, London, 1979, p. 204.
- 23 NW, 26 October 1911, pp. 588–589.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Stanley B. James, 'The New Race', *The Month*, November 1925, pp. 400–401. Stanley B. James, 'World Citizenship. Nationalism and Racialism have Failed. Spiritual Unity in Temporal Diversity will Succeed', *Catholic Herald*, 2 January 1942, p. 6.
- 26 Msgr Canon Jackman, 'A Snare is Set to Lead the World in Ruin', *Catholic Times*, 21 October 1938, p. 15. Similarly see Shane Leslie, 'The Jews', *Catholic Times*, 29 April 1922, p. 10.
- 27 Michael Burleigh, Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State. Germany 1933–1945*, Cambridge, 1991, p. 32.
- 28 The Catholic Guild of Israel was founded as a branch of the Archconfraternity of Prayers for the Conversion of Israel in London in December 1917. The records of the mission cited in this book are with the Sisters of Sion, Notting Hill, London. Thereafter cited as CGI. CGI, Minute Book, I (1921–28). For the complete text of the constitution of the Catholic Guild of Israel see examples attached to Hewison's letter, 28 February 1920. AAW, Bo 5/62. The CGI soon received acknowledgement and support from the Vatican and the English Catholic hierarchy. Letter Cardinal Laurenti, Rome, to CGI, 25 June 1922. CGI, Correspondence. The majority of the Guild's members and associates were members of the clergy or religious orders. At the annual meeting of the Guild in 1927, the list of religious orders supporting the Archconfraternity throughout the world included Dominicans, Benedictines, Augustians, St Francis, Jesuits, Carmelites, Poor Clares, Sisters of St John the Baptist. Minutes Annual Meeting, 28 October 1927. CGI, Minute Book, I (1921–28). By the end of 1924 the Guild had expanded nationally and internationally, with members across Great Britain, in Chile, Barcelona, Madrid, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium and India. CGI Minutes Annual Meeting, 28 November 1924. In the case of India, the editor of the *Catholic Herald* in India thought it would be wise to convert Jews in India before the 'Jewish question' existed there. Report April 1925. CGI, Minute Book, I (1921–28).
- 29 'Causes of Antisemitism', *Catholic Herald*, 30 January 1926, p. 9; James W. Poynter, 'The Church and the Jews', *Catholic Times*, 31 March 1923, p. 10; Reginald Ginn, 'The Conversion of the Jew', *The Month*, August 1924, p. 174.

- 30 The CGI mainly published in following papers and journals: *The Rosary*, *Stella Maris*, *The Catholic Mission*, *Universe*, *Catholic Times*, *Irish Catholic*, *Catholic Herald*, *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, *The Annales of Holy Childhood*, *The Lamp*, *The Antidote*, *Truth*, *America*, *The Missionary*, Minutes Half Annual Meeting, 21 November 1921. CGI, Minute Book, I (1921–28). Its own literature was published by the Catholic Truth Society, including *The Journal of the Guild of Israel*, founded in 1917, and a small half-yearly newspaper launched in spring 1925 due to the increasing interest in its work. Report January–March 1925. CGI, Minute Book, I (1921–28).
- 31 A regular audience of between twenty and sixty listeners seems a realistic estimate, although the Guild's estimates were higher. According to its sources their speakers had an audience of around sixty and later between 150 and 300. General Meeting Report, 25 January 1922. On the numbers of talks given see Minutes Annual Meeting, 28 November 1924. Both in CGI, Minute Book, I (1921–28). On the large number of working-class Jews and non-Jews see the Guild's newsletter *Catholic Guild of Israel and the Arch-Confraternity of Prayer*, Summer 1933, p. 2.
- 32 The article was praised at the Half Annual Meeting, 27 November 1921 as 'The most important of these articles was that of our President the very Rev Fr Bede Jarrett, which took the first place in the September number of *The Month* and was re-edited by Canon Rothwell in the Manchester magazine *The Harvest*.' CGI, Minute Book, I (1921–28). For the complete text of the article see *The Month*, September 1921, pp. 193–197.
- 33 'Why We Pray for the Conversion of Israel?' Newscutting, April 1922. CGI, Miscellaneous Box; James W. Poynter, 'Some Jewish Views on Christianity', *The Month*, October 1921, p. 306; Vann, 'The Jews', p. 417.
- 34 Vera Tefler, 'Is the Jew an Anomaly?', *The Tablet*, 12 July 1924, p. 5. On the divine definition of race see CGI lecture given by the Guild associate, Brother G. Burns, SJ, to the novices, scholastic juniors and lay brothers of Manresa House, Roehampton, July 1922; CGI, Miscellaneous Box.
- 35 The CGI Report New Year 1934 announced new projects in the form of study circles to understand the Jewish mentality better and combat antisemitism more successfully. Minutes Annual Meeting, 24 October 1934 on the practical question of assimilation. Apparently, some conversion candidates said that they wanted to keep their family links and their 'Jewishness' and thus could not become Catholics. CGI, Minute Book, III (1933–39).

- 36 Minutes Annual Meeting, 24 October 1934. CGI, Minute Book, III (1933–39). Also Report April–June 1932 against National Socialist antisemitism. CGI, Minute Book, II (1928–32).
- 37 ‘Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews’, *Catholic Worker*, November 1938, p. 4.
- 38 All quotes taken from ‘Catholic Worker and Fascism’, *Catholic Worker*, February 1938, p. 7.
- 39 Besides the peak years when antisemitism was rampant, Catholic newspapers still published on average one antisemitic article per month every fourth issue. This amount could easily increase by 150% whenever Catholic interests were seen to be at risk. For the table on which the graph was built and an explanation on the method used see Appendix.
- 40 Andrew Sharf, *The British Press and the Jews under Nazi Rule*, Oxford, 1964, p. 42. See, however, Tony Kushner, who found that especially the Tory press and the tabloids continued their anti-Jewish comments during the war. He singles out *Truth*, the Rothermere and Beaverbrook press and on the left *The Forward* of the Independent Labour Party. Tony Kushner: *The Persistence of Prejudice. Antisemitism in British Society During the Second World War*, Manchester, 1989, pp. 79–84. Equally in Dan Stone, *Responses to Nazism in Britain, 1933–1939. Before War and Holocaust*, Houndmills/NY, 2003.
- 41 ‘Exit. “The Protocols”’, *The Month*, June 1935, p. 490. On the impact of the ‘Protocols’ on Jew-hatred, see Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide. The Myth of the Jewish World Conspiracy and the Protocols of Zion*, London, 1996.
- 42 Charles Diamond, *Catholic Herald*, 20 March 1920, p. 5. Three extensive articles on ‘Freemasonry’ and on ‘Jewry’ followed Diamond’s review article over the next three months – all of them not flattering to Jews. ‘Freemasonry’, *Catholic Herald*, 5 June 1920, p. 4; ‘Jewry’, *Catholic Herald*, 23/26 June 1920, pp. 4–11.
- 43 Diamond, ‘The Day of the Jews’, *Catholic Herald*, 15 March 1919, p. 5. For Ireland see ‘The Ulster Planter’, *Catholic Herald*, 31 May 1919, p. 7. For Poland see ‘Jewish Pogroms in Poland’, *Catholic Herald*, 5 July 1919, p. 7.
- 44 Gisela Lebzelter, *Political Antisemitism in England 1918–1939*, London, 1978, pp. 13–29.
- 45 Joseph Keating, ‘Topics of the Month. The Folly of Bigotry’, *The Month*, August 1921, p. 177. For the *Catholic Times* see Sidney Weir, ‘War with Russia?’, *Catholic Times*, 4 January 1919, p. 5.
- 46 For the effect of the Marconi affair see ‘Things to Remember’, *Catholic Herald*, 12 April 1919, p. 5; ‘How the Nation is Plundered’, *Catholic Herald*, 25 January 1919, p. 5.

- 47 Diamond, 'The Jew and World Ferment', p. 6. Diamond nevertheless considered the Jews as 'questionable allies' and had confirmed the *Morning Post's* prejudices against Jews in earlier articles. For pro-Lenin quotes see his articles 'The Bolsheviks', *Catholic Herald*, 8 March 1919, p. 4; 'Who are the Bolsheviks?', *Catholic Herald*, 15 March 1919, p. 8.
- 48 'A Prisoner of the Reds. Who is Who in Bolshevism', *Catholic Herald*, 7 May 1921, p. 10.
- 49 See 'The Bolshevik Blasphemers', *Catholic Herald*, 10 February 1923, p. 6. For later years see articles of the kind, 'At Last, or Jews as Criminals Unmentioned', *Catholic Herald*, 2 July 1927, p. 8; 'Russia and Christianity', *Catholic Times*, 30 September 1922, p. 6; 'Our Readers' View. The Jewish Influence in Bolshevism', *Catholic Times*, 10 February 1933, p. 12.
- 50 Sharman Kadish, 'Boche, Bolshie and the Jewish Bogey. The Russian Revolution and Press Antisemitism in Britain 1917–21', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 22 (1988), 24–39, p. 37.
- 51 Joseph Keating, 'Topics of the Month. Antichrist in Russia', *The Month*, June 1923, p. 552.
- 52 *The Blackfriars*, February 1925, p. 66.
- 53 City of Leeds Labour Minutes, West Yorkshire Archive, LP 4/10.
- 54 *The Voice of Britain. Churchmen, Statesmen, Publicists, Doctors, Scientists, Sportsmen on Hitlerism*, London, 1933. Besides Belloc and Chesterton, the booklet contained statements by the Anglican Bishops Lang, Temple, Bell, Methodist churchmen, and Archbishop Downey of Liverpool.
- 55 'In Germany', *The Universe*, 7 April 1933, p. 14.
- 56 *The Tablet*, 1 April 1933, p. 16. More explicit justification of National Socialist antisemitism, Charles Diamond, 'Hitlerism, Zionism, Nationalism', *Catholic Herald*, 13 May 1933, p. 13. This article was published in parts over two weeks. Despite its title, the article only briefly deplored the anti-Catholic and anti-Jewish politics of Germany and instead denounced Jewish influence in Palestine, and British politics.
- 57 Holmes, *Antisemitism*, pp. 137–205. After the war, Catholic newspapers still ran articles that took it as a fact that German Jews were spies and instigators of the war for their own profits. See for example Diamond, 'The Jew and the World Ferment', p. 6. 'Notes of the Week. Polish Bolshevism', *Catholic Times*, 15 February 1919, p. 6.
- 58 Richard Griffiths, *Fellow Travellers of the Right. British Enthusiasm for Nazi Germany, 1933–39*, London, 1980, p. 10.

- 59 'Jews and Catholics. Jewry a Bitter Enemy of the Church', *Catholic Herald*, 22 April 1933, p. 5.
- 60 'Notes of the Week. Herr Hitler and the Jews', *Catholic Times*, 31 March 1933, p. 10.
- 61 'Our Readers and the Jews', *Catholic Times*, 7 April 1933, p. 10.
- 62 Fr Fahey was a Holy Ghost priest and Professor of Philosophy and Church History at the Senior Scholasticate of the Irish Province of the Holy Ghost Fathers in the suburbs of Dublin. He was a prominent figure in Ireland and the USA (where he was in contact with the notorious antisemitic 'radio-priest' Fr Coughlin).
- 63 For a review of his books see *Catholic Times*, 23 September 1938, p. 8. For his own contributions see, e.g., *Catholic Times*, 28 October 1938, p. 11; 4 November 1938, p. 9. His thesis was thus: the divine programme had been proclaimed by Christ when he came to earth but was rejected by his own nation, the Jews. This incident became crucial to world history. In the thirteenth century Western Europe almost achieved the 'concrete realisation' of this programme – the medieval guild system which ensured that Christianity and citizenship were not separated in social life or education. From then on there was only 'steady decay', manifested in the Reformation, the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution. Fahey believed that communism was a revolt against God, that this threat against the Roman Catholic Church emanated from the organised forces of naturalism: in an invisible form by Satan and 'his fellow demons' and as a visible force by the Jews and freemasons.
- 64 'More Light on the Spanish Revolution', *The Month*, June 1932, p. 537.
- 65 H. Munoz, OP, 'Spain, To-day and To-morrow', *The Blackfriars*, October 1934, p. 659. During the Spanish Civil War, *The Blackfriars* kept however a neutral if not antifascist line. James Flint, OSB, "Must God go Fascist?". English Catholic Opinion and the Spanish Civil War', *Church History*, 56 (1987), 364–374, (p. 370). The theme of the conspiring Jew and mason in Spain was very common in the *Catholic Times* and to a lesser degree in the *Catholic Herald*. For examples see the *Catholic Times*, 12 May 1933, p. 10, 12; 28 October 1938, p. 11; *Catholic Herald*, 22 April 1933, p. 6; 13 May 1933, p. 4, p. 8; 18 November 1938, p. 2.
- 66 Gregory Macdonald, 'The Aftermath of Crisis', *Catholic Times*, 31 March 1939, pp. 7, 11.
- 67 'A Horror-Struck World. A Crime against Mankind', *The Month*, December 1938, pp. 481–482.
- 68 Michael de la Bédoyère, 'Ethics of Persecution', *Catholic Herald*, 25 November 1938, p. 8. De la Bédoyère became editor of the *Herald*

- in April 1936. Contrary to the article mentioned, Bédoyère had published a compassionate note on *Kristallnacht* two weeks earlier. *Catholic Herald*, 11 November 1938, p. 8. Douglas Jerrold, 'Playing with World Revolution', *Catholic Herald*, 2 December 1938, p. 2.
- 69 See, e.g., the *Catholic Times*, 15 April 1922, p. 5; or the *Catholic Herald*, 5 January 1924, p. 3. For a critique of the *Church Times* see 'Unsubstantiated Charge Against the Jews', *Catholic Times*, 19 May 1923, p. 9.
- 70 'Anti-Jewish Magistrates', *Catholic Herald*, 13 March 1926, p. 8. For a critic of racial and religious discrimination see William Barry, 'Are Catholics Aliens?', *Catholic Times*, 10 May 1919, p. 7. After Barry stated that neither Jew nor Catholic should be excluded from the League of Nations on grounds of religion, he then continues to stress Catholics' loyalty to their country in contrast to the fearful 'power concentrated in Hebrew international finance'. Defenders of religious freedom could rarely be equalised with philosemites.
- 71 'Down with the Synagogue', *Catholic Herald*, 16 February 1924, p. 6.
- 72 'Who Rules in Dublin?' *Catholic Herald*, 24 July 1926, p. 23.
- 73 Dean Rapp, 'The Jewish Response to G.K. Chesterton's Antisemitism, 1911–33', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 24 (1990), 75–86.
- 74 Letter Secretary of BOD to editor of the *Catholic Herald*, 12 July 1928. London Metropolitan Archive (LMA), BO4 CAR 11 Catholic Herald. Similar letters were sent to Charles Diamond since 1924. An additional concern were articles published by the *Catholic Times* that had printed age-old blood libel accusations in 1934. 'Firinne. The Murder of Pedro Arbues', *Catholic Times*, 9 November 1934.
- 75 Letter to Diamond, 8 February 1924. LMA, BO4 CAR 11. For letters being ignored see letter to The New Catholic Press editor, 14 June 1932. LMA, BO4 CAR 13 Correspondence with Catholic Newspapers; internal letter to Zaiman BOD on antisemitism in the *Catholic Times*, 16 January 1933. LMA, BO4 CAR 14 Correspondence with *Catholic Times*.
- 76 H. Botthill to the secretary of BOD, 11 June 1932. LMA, BO4 CAR 13.
- 77 Letter Sassoon to Rich, 6 July 1929. LMA, BO4 CAR 11.
- 78 The book had a prefatory letter by the Bishop of Waterford and bore the imprimatur – the all-clear-to-publish-stamp – of the Irish hierarchy. Letter of the secretary of the BOD to Rabbi Isaac Herzog, 24 April 1936. LMA, EO3 141 Antisemitic Propaganda and Organisations 1921–37.
- 79 Letter Downey to Laski, 1 June 1936. LMA, BO4 CAR 16 Catholics and Jews.

- 80 The Catholic Missionary Society was a congregation of secular priests who wanted to spread the Catholic faith among non-Catholics. The Society's constitution implicitly said that it is under direct control of the hierarchy. Archives of the Archdiocese of Westminster (AAW), Bo 1/27, 1904–34 Catholic Missionary Society.
- 81 Moloney, *Westminster*, p. 209.
- 82 Letter to Archbishop Downey, 24 December 1937. LMA, BO4 CAR 14. A letter of recommendation by Downey is again mentioned when Neville Laski asked Hinsley to join an intercession service against the Jewish persecution in Germany, letter Laski to Hinsley 22 June 1938. AAW, Hi 2/125, 1827–32/1936–39.
- 83 Letter Collings to Mr Kraft, 16 January 1938. LMA, BO4 CAR 14.
- 84 The delegation consisted of three persons, Mr Salomon, Dr Singer and Mrs Beer. Letter Salomon to N. Laski, 21 January 1938. LMA, BO4 CAR 14. Bertram B. Benas returned with a similar response by Archbishop Downey when they met to discuss the *Catholic Herald's* antisemitism in September 1940: 'Theologically it (*Catholic Herald*) kept correct and thus made it difficult to bring it directly under ecclesiastical censure, but ... that did not prevent expression of ecclesiastical disapproval and admonition from the right quarter and His Grace would take steps to see through that quarter that such a course would be taken.' LMA, BO4 CAR 11.
- 85 Letter O'Hea to Bishop Williams, 27 September 1938. BAA, AP/S8/CSG 13.
- 86 Thomas Moloney, *Westminster, Whitehall and the Vatican. The Role of Cardinal Hinsley, 1935–1943*, Tunbridge Wells, 1985, p. 206.
- 87 For examples see the files on *The Tablet* and *The City of London* in AAW, Bo 1/36; Bo 1/128.
- 88 Letter Collings to de Val, 15 November 1938, with respect to the case of Noyes' 'Voltaire'. AAW, Hi 2.
- 89 Minutes Bishops' meeting, 2 May 1935. AAW, Acta. Bishops 1930, V.
- 90 Walter Hannot, *Die Judenfrage in der katholischen Tagespresse Deutschlands und Österreichs 1923–1933*, Mainz, 1990, p. 21.
- 91 Due to their size and financial limits Catholic newspapers only employed a small number of correspondents and mostly published articles supplied by press agencies. The editors were mostly left unmentioned. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- 92 The term *Gesinnungspresse* describes the press of any ideological movement and includes communist and social democrat papers. On a brief history of the German Catholic press see Otto Roegele, 'Presse und Publizistik des deutschen Katholizismus 1803–1963', in *Der soziale und politische Katholizismus. Entwicklungslinien in Deutschland*

- 1803–1963, ed. by Anton Rauscher, 2 vols, Munich, 1981–82, II, 395–434, pp. 395–434; Michael Schmolke, *Die schlechte Presse. Katholiken und Publizistik zwischen 'Katholik' und 'Publik' 1821–1968*, Münster, 1971.
- 93 Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 19.
- 94 Urs Altermatt, *Katholizismus und Antisemitismus. Mentalitäten, Kontinuitäten, Ambivalenzen. Zur Kulturgeschichte der Schweiz*, Frauenfeld, 1999, pp. 273–301.
- 95 On the Centre's emphasis on 'national gathering' since November 1931 see Rudolf Morsey, 'Die deutsche Zentrumspartei', in *Das Ende der Parteien*, ed. by Rudolf Morsey; Erich Matthias, Düsseldorf, 1960, pp. 281–453, 301. On antisemitism see Karl Thieme, 'Deutsche Katholiken', in *Entscheidungsjahr 1932. Zur Judenfrage in der Endphase der Weimarer Republik*, ed. by Werner Mosse, Tübingen, 1965, p. 280.
- 96 Roegele, 'Presse und Publizistik', pp. 424–426.
- 97 Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie*, Heidelberg, 1969. Klaus Gotto, *Die Wochenzeitung Junge Front/Michael. Eine Studie zum katholischen Selbstverständnis und zum Verhalten der jungen Kirche gegenüber dem Nationalsozialismus*, Mainz, 1970. Dieter Weiss, 'Katholischer Konservatismus am Scheideweg – Die "Historisch-politischen Blätter" und die "Gelben Hefte"', in *Konservative Zeitschriften zwischen Kaiserreich und Diktatur. Fünf Fallstudien*, ed. by Hans-Christof Kraus, Berlin, 2003, pp. 97–115. Thanks go to Dieter Weiss for a copy of his article and information on further literature.
- 98 Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie*, pp. 11–13.
- 99 Ibid., pp. 222–226.
- 100 Wolfgang Altmann, *Die Judenfrage in evangelischen und katholischen Zeitschriften zwischen 1918 und 1933*, unpublished doctoral thesis, Munich, 1971, p. 420.
- 101 Hannot includes Bavarian papers with close links to the BVP, Rhenish newspapers that reflect the opinion of liberal Catholicism, smaller newspapers of the *Eifel* region with their large impoverished Catholic rural population, the *Germania* for Berlin with its 10% Catholics and Westphalian newspapers with a conservative nationalist attitude. Hannot, *Judenfrage*, Mainz, 1990.
- 102 Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 104, pp. 145–147.
- 103 A prominent example is Franz von Papen who (in his statement before the Nuremberg Court) admitted that he thought the NSDAP was the lesser evil to Bolshevism. Richard Overly, *Interrogations. The Nazi Elite in Allied Hands 1945*, Harmondsworth, 2001, p. 435. Also the negotiations between the Centre Party and the NSDAP as sign of



- the Centre's orientation to the right. Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik*, 4th edn, Villingen, 1964, p. 622. Detlef Junker is more cautious, suggesting that the Centre Party wanted to put von Papen under political pressure. Junker, *Die deutsche Zentrumspartei*, p. 19.
- 104 In 1927, subscriptions to the *Germania* amounted to 6,000, that of the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* to 16,000. Letter Dr Hohn to Caspar Gierse, 7 August 1927. BA, R8115I/184.
- 105 The *Germania* was eventually merged with the *Märkische Volkszeitung* on 31 December 1938. The circulation of the *Volkszeitung* ranged between 22,000 and 28,000. Its chief editor was in 1923 Josef Ritter, from 1930 and throughout the Third Reich Dr Lorenz Zach. *Sperlings Zeitschriften-Adressbuch*, ed. by Börsenverein der Deutschen Buchhändler, 50th edn, Leipzig, 1929. *Ibid.*, 61st edn, Leipzig, 1939. *Jahrbuch der Tagespresse. Deutsches Institute für Zeitungskunde*, 3 vols, Berlin (1928–30), Carl Duncker Verlag, III.
- 106 *Der Arbeiter* was the organ of the Catholic Workers' Association of Southern Germany, published between 1889 and 1934 with a circulation of 40,000 copies in 1925. Most of its articles on current affairs were written by the chief editor or the Association's president. Further contributions were written by representatives of the Christian Unions (Wilhelm Bosbach) or the West German workers' movement (Josef Joos, Otto Müller, Anton Retzbach, Josef Andre). It was briefly banned in March 1933. It merged with the journal *Ketteler-Feuer. Katholische Wochenschrift für das schaffende Volk in Stadt und Land* in 1935. Under National Socialist pressure the journal solely published religious, moral issues from then on. Dorit-Maria Krenn, *Christliche Arbeiterbewegung in Bayern vom Ersten Weltkrieg bis 1933*, Mainz, 1991, p. 120, p. 599. Dorit-Maria Krenn; Rudolf Letschert, *Solidarität. 100 Jahre Katholische Arbeitnehmerbewegung Süddeutschlands*, München, 1991, p. 11.
- 107 The *Westdeutsche Arbeiter Zeitung* was the other larger newspaper of the West German Catholic Workers' Association and rarely promoted antisemitism.
- 108 The *Gelben Hefte* (GH) was published in seventeen volumes from 1924 to 1941. Weiss, *Katholischer Konservatismus*, pp. 108–109. On the DNVP, Buchner and their attacks on the Centre Party see Peter Herde, 'Max Buchner (1881–1941) und die politische Stellung der Geschichtswissenschaft an der Universität Würzburg 1925–1945', in *Die Universität Würzburg in den Krisen der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Biographisch-systematische Studien zu ihrer Geschichte zwischen dem Ersten Weltkrieg und dem Neubeginn 1945*, ed. by Peter

Baumgart, Würzburg, 2002, pp. 183–251, (pp. 194–195). Herde cites in this respect Buchner in *GH*, 4 (1927–28), pp. 950–951; *GH*, 6 (1930), p. 483. The role of the *Gelben Hefte* in the *Rechtskatholiken's* aims is discussed in Chapter 4.

- 109 Berding, *Moderner Antisemitismus*, p. 174.
- 110 The founding capital was provided by Baron Fritz von Schell, Count Felix von Loë, Count Josef zu Stolberg-Stolberg, Baron von Lüninck, Baron Moreau. In their role as creditors, these nobles participated in the initial negotiation for the foundation of the *Gelben Hefte* (3 June 1924), where Max Buchner was elected as chief editor. BAK, N1088, 68. In the following years other nobles such as Mallinckrodt or the DNVP member of the Reichstag Paul Lejeune-Jung supported the *Hefte* financially. Letter Buchner to Mallinckrodt 6 June 1927. BAK, N1088, 19. Letter Lejeune-Jung to Buchner, 26 May 1924. BAK, N1088, 18. Adelgunde von Hohenzollern to Buchner, 27 June 1927. BAK, N1088, 12.
- 111 'Der Mannesborn', *Der Arbeiter*, 22 May 1919, p. 4.
- 112 Stefan Rohrbacher, 'Über das Fortwuchern von Stereotypvorstellungen in der Geschichtswissenschaft', in *Shylock? Zinsverbot und Geldverleih in jüdischen und christlichen Traditionen*, ed. by Johannes Heil, Bernd Wacker, Munich, 1997, pp. 235–253; Paul Mendes Flohr, 'Werner Sombart's The Jews and Modern Capitalism. An Analysis of its Ideological Premises', *LBIYB*, 21 (1976), 87–107.
- 113 'Zur Judenfrage', *Der Arbeiter*, 19 December 1918; 'Die Arbeiterschaft als Schutztruppe des Großkapitals', *Der Arbeiter*, 2 August 1919, p. 3: 'But let's not ignore that the majority of the social democratic leaders, agitators, journalists (*Zeitungsschreiber*) are closely linked with capital (*Grosskapital*) by blood, race and faith ... almost without fail Jews ...'
- 114 Dr Carl Sonnenschein spoke in his capacity as head of the *Sekretariat sozialer Studentenarbeit* in front of a committee of Catholic academics on 12 July 1920. Printed in *Märkische Volkszeitung*, 22 July 1920, p. 11. After his doctorate in theology and philosophy Sonnenschein (1876–1924) worked as a priest in Aachen and as a publicist for the *Volksverein*. He was politically active in the Berlin Centre Party and stood as its representative for the May 1928 Reichstag election. Sonnenschein is seen as defender of the Republic and supporter of interdenominational Christian workers' unions. *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, ed. by Walther Killy; Rudolf Vierhaus, 12 vols, Munich, 1995–2000, IX (1998), p. 374.
- 115 The author, Wilhelm Schulte, meant that they only represented 'city culture' – a culture deeply deplored by conservative Catholic thinkers. Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 206.

- 116 Hannot differs from this view by emphasising that un-Christian culture was criticised regardless whether it was produced by Jews or not. Still, it remains unclear why authors thought it was necessary to use the adjective 'Jewish'. Ibid., p. 208.
- 117 Cited in *ibid.*, p. 203.
- 118 'Das Judenproblem', *Märkische Volkszeitung*, 2 July 1919, p. 3.
- 119 'Fremdlinge in Bayern', *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, 20 January 1919, p. 2.
- 120 *Der Arbeiter*, 14 November 1922, p. 6.
- 121 Hannot, *Judenfrage*, pp. 122–125.
- 122 *Der Arbeiter*, 27 November 1919, p. 3. For an example of a clear rejection of Jew-hatred see *Thüringer Volkswacht*, 8 July 1922, p. 10.
- 123 On race see G. Lehmacher, SJ, in 1926, where he endorsed the superiority of the nordic people; also *GH*, 3 (1926), p. 820; Gebssattel's article in *GH*, 1 (1924), p. 409; Josef Hengesbach in *GH*, 5 (1929), pp. 229–230; and *GH*, 4 (1927–28), p. 902. All cited in Herde, 'Max Buchner', pp. 196–197. Interestingly, despite the 'modern' references to race theory, the religious framework of the 'Jewish question' was not lost. It mostly served to underline the 'natural', and 'eternal' (therefore unchangeable) antagonism between Jewry and Christendom (and therewith Germany). Buchner in *GH*, 5 (1929), pp. 189–190; *GH*, 7 (1930–1), pp. 90–91. Cited in Herde, 'Max Buchner', p. 196.
- 124 Weiss, 'Konservative Konservatismus', p. 113. On the similarities of *völkisch* and National Socialist antisemitism see Uwe Lohalm, 'Völkisch Origins of Early Nazism: Antisemitism in Culture and Politics', in *Hostages of Modernisation*, vol. I, 174–195 (pp. 190–192).
- 125 All cited in Herde, 'Max Buchner', p. 197.
- 126 'Die Legende vom reinen Blut', *Märkische Volkszeitung*, 8 September 1932, p. 4.
- 127 His work was recommended by Catholic newspapers and even church news bulletins (e.g., see the *Kirchenbote für Stadt und Bistum Osnabrück*, 29 August 1926; 15 February 1931). On Muckermann see Dagmar Grosch-Obenauer, *Hermann Muckermann und die Eugenik*, Mainz, 1996.
- 128 Hermann Muckermann, *Rassenforschung und Volk der Zukunft. Ein Beitrag zur Einführung in die Frage vom biologischen Werden der Menschheit*, Berlin, 1928, pp. 37–41.
- 129 For example: *Literarische Blätter der Kölnischen Volkszeitung*, 29 July 1926; *Danziger Landeszeitung*, 4 September 1929; *Hannoversche Volkszeitung*, 27 October 1928; *ibid.*, 21 June 1924; *Bamberger Volksblatt*, 27 March 1928; *Saarbrücker Landes-Zeitung*, 8 May 1933; Jews as *Fremdrassige* in *Danziger Landeszeitung*, 31 May 1933; and the definition of black people as the lowest race *Saarbrücker*

- Landes-Zeitung*, 7 July 1933; *Bayerische Volkszeitung*, 24 February 1923, 6 March 1924, 11 April 1928. Quoted in Hannot, *Judenfrage*, pp. 231–233.
- 130 Michael Burleigh; Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State. Germany 1933–1945*, Cambridge, 1991, p. 38.
  - 131 Hitler believed in the relative worth of human races and was anxious to prevent miscegenation as this would weaken a race. Hitler's obsession with the purity of a race was, however, not shared by mainstream scientists. Some of his measures to achieve a healthy race were equally part of the contemporary eugenicist literature and included negative eugenic measures such as sterilisation of the sick and demented, and positive measures like improved social care – though this would only be available for Hitler's 'Aryans'. Ibid., p. 38.
  - 132 Muckermann, *Rassenforschung*, pp. 32–33.
  - 133 *Der Arbeiter*, 20 September 1919, p. 3. In 1922 it found 'documentary proof' that Kurt Eisner was the very person who had drafted that despised treaty. *Der Arbeiter*, 16 May 1922, p. 4.
  - 134 Cited in Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 109.
  - 135 According to Hannot, the reports on Jews did not exceed two references per week and numbered on average one mention per week, which was still four times higher than the average mention in English Catholic newspapers. The *Bayerische Volkszeitung* in Nuremberg and the *Oberschlesische Kurier* printed the most articles on Jews. Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 93.
  - 136 Based on table in *ibid.*, pp. 320–321, the sum of antisemitic remarks from 1923 to 1928 was 72 compared to 51 in the following years up to 1933 (January–March). Hannot's quantitative analysis does not include articles that do not mention the word 'Jew/Jewish/antisemitism', even if they had a negative tendency in the eyes of contemporaries in a certain context.
  - 137 Dirk Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität und Gewalt. Judenfeindschaft in der Weimarer Republik*, Bonn, 1999, p. 252.
  - 138 Hannot, *Judenfrage*, pp. 138, 140.
  - 139 Throughout the year 1925 when the Barmat scandal came to light, *Der Arbeiter* published articles on 'usurious Eastern European Jews', on 'war profiteers' and the close cooperation of social democrats with Jewish financiers in the Barmat scandal. See, e.g., *Der Arbeiter*, 24 February 1925, p. 10; 7 February 1925, p. 10; 21 February 1925, p. 10; 28 February 1925, p. 4.
  - 140 The Barmat and, later in 1929, the Sklarek scandal did not only involve large-scale financial fraud (the garment merchants Max, Leo and Willy Sklarek, for example, cheated the town of Berlin out of ten million

marks), but also political favours and corruption of politicians across the political scale, including communists, social democrats and German nationalists. According to Horst Möller, these scandals brought the Republic's democracy and rule of law into disrepute, although these reports were crossly exaggerated. Horst Möller: *Weimar. Die unvollendete Demokratie*, 6th edn, Munich, 1997, p. 176. For the political instrumentalisation of the scandals see Stephan Malinowski, 'Politische Skandale als Zerrspiegel der Demokratie. Die Fälle Barmat und Sklarek im Kalkül der Weimarer Rechten', *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung*, 5 (1996), 46–65.

- 141 John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope*, Harmondsworth, 1999, p. 113.
- 142 Cited in Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 119.
- 143 Ibid., p. 119.
- 144 'Die Überjudung Mexikos', *Hannoversche Volkszeitung*, 3 April 1928; similar articles in *Bamberger Volksblatt*, 2 May 1924 by K. Rothmeier (BVP MP); *Bayerischer Kurier*, 1 May 1924; *Bayerische Volkszeitung*, 18 September 1925; all cited in Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 120.
- 145 As in *Dürener Zeitung*, 25 September 1928, cited in Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 117. In the case of Spain, even the otherwise apolitical church newsbulletins linked the revolutionary events in 1931 with Russian Bolshevism. ('Der spanische Stiefel. Moskauer Bolschewismus vor Spaniens Toren', *Kirchenbote für Stadt und Bistum Osnabrück*, 7 June 1931, p. 178.) The folk calendar *St Konradskalender* accused the 'Jewish press' of encouraging Catholic persecution in Spain. *St Konradskalender. Katholischer Volkskalender für die Erzdiözese Freiburg*, Karlsruhe, 1932, p. 94.
- 146 Krenn: *Christliche Arbeiterbewegung*, p. 293.
- 147 For criticism before the coup, see P.H. Pesch, SJ: 'Nationalismus und Christentum', *Sonntagszeitung Erfurt*, 27 May 1923, p. 3. For reaction to Hitler's coup, see 'Der 9. November in München', *Thüringer Volkswacht*, 13 November 1919, p. 1.
- 148 The author rejected the NSDAP's un-Christian and violent attitude but confirmed at the same time that 'we don't have any reason to defend the Jews'. 'Neue Tat-Menschen!', *Der Arbeiter*, 23 November 1922, p. 2. Similar: *Hannoversche Volkszeitung*, 18 January 1924, cited in Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 103.
- 149 The letter to Stresemann was thus cited in the *Donauzeitung*, 7 November 1923, p. 2: 'How can we reduce the hatred that is generally hurled at our Jewish co-citizens (*israelitischen Mitbürger*) and other groups in blind fury ... without any proven guilt.'
- 150 Derek Hastings convincingly argued that the NSDAP enjoyed considerable Catholic support in its early days in Bavaria. This support

evaporated after November 1923, because the NSDAP had adopted a hostile and violent anti-Catholic attitude under the influence of General Ludendorff that erupted after the failed Hitler *Putsch* in November 1923. Faulhaber was accused of orchestrating a Jewish–Catholic conspiracy against this *völkisch* uprising. Derek Hastings, 'How Catholic was the Early Nazi Movement? Religion, Race and Culture in Munich, 1919–1924', *Central European History*, 36 (2003), 383–433, pp. 422–424.

- 151 *Bayerischer Kurier*, 7 November 1923, cited in Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 105.
- 152 'Forderungen der Münchener Katholiken', *Bayerischer Kurier*, 12 December 1923, cited in Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 105.
- 153 *Augsburger Postzeitung*, 7 November 1923; *Bayerische Volkszeitung*, 17 November 1923, cited in Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 108.
- 154 Hastings, 'How Catholic', p. 425.
- 155 *Ibid.*, p. 413. Hastings refers to Faulhaber's speech at the 1922 *Katholikentag* in Munich where the Cardinal contrasted the negative influence of the 'Jewish press' with the nobility of 'Catholics of the racially pure sort' (*Katholiken reinrassiger Art*). *Ibid.*, p. 414, footnote 92. See also Michael Phayer, who does not think Faulhaber supported racial antisemitic sentiments. Faulhaber was more concerned about 'Jewish Bolshevism'. Phayer, *Catholic Church*, p. 15.
- 156 Hannot, *Judenfrage*, pp. 312–313.
- 157 *Junge Front*, 13 November 32, for this and the following quote see Gotto, *Junge Front*, p. 13.
- 158 Krenn, *Christliche Arbeiterbewegung*, p. 299.
- 159 Hannot, *Judenfrage*, pp. 126–128.
- 160 *Ibid.*, p. 142.
- 161 See here, e.g., Cardinal Faulhaber on immoral and indecent literature (*Schmutzliteratur*) cited in *Kirchenbote für Stadt und Bistum Osnabrück*, 25 August 1929, p. 268: 'We have protective laws for everything, but only insufficient legal protection against the contamination of German blood and German youth, against the contamination of holy sources of life. Who will fill our eyes with tears to bemoan day and night the vice that will bring down even the healthiest of all people.'
- 162 See, e.g., the *Märkische Volkszeitung* in Berlin emphasised the Centre Party's *Volkstum* and *Germanentum* in November 1932.
- 163 *Der Arbeiter*, 22 March 1932, p. 1. *Der Arbeiter* was quite adamant and clear in its condemnation of the right-wing parties and the NSDAP throughout the Weimar Republic. These were seen as vanguards of wealthy Prussian Junkers. National Socialist antisemitism was, however, only rarely mentioned and criticised.

- 164 The *Germania* welcomed the closure of a controversial modern art exhibition and pointed to the 'godless freethinkers of the Mosse- and Ullstein papers' who had always supported slander (*Schimpffreiheit*) against the Church. 'Verhinderte Kirchenhetze. Polizeiverbot einer kommunistischen "Kunstaussstellung"', *Germania*, 24 February 1930, p. 3.
- 165 On series of crimes committed by 'foreigners' see *Märkische Volkszeitung*, 1 November 1932, p. 7; 6 November 1932, p. 5.
- 166 'Ein Jude als Protektor Hitlers', *Deutsche Reichs-Zeitung*, 29 September 1930, p. 1. Similar articles in 3 October 1930; *Bayerischer Kurier*, 3 October 1930; *Augsburger Postzeitung*, 3 October 1930; all cited in Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 148.
- 167 As claimed by Hannot, *Judenfrage*, p. 147. Wolfgang Schieder: 'Fatal Attraction: The German Right and Italian Fascism', in *The Third Reich between Vision and Reality: New Perspectives on German History*, ed. by Hans Mommsen, Oxford, 2001, pp. 39–59, p. 52.
- 168 The *Gelben Hefte* showed sympathy for the fascist government in Italy and increasingly for Hitler's movement. On Mussolini see *GH*, 1 (1924–25), pp. 735–737; *GH*, 5 (1929), pp. 455–457, cited in Herde, 'Max Buchner', p. 197.
- 169 Unfortunately, regional differences could not be taken into account in the case of Catholic newspapers in England. The most widely read papers were national newspapers or periodicals, whose regional editions did not differ from the national paper apart from one page with local news.
- 170 Krenn confirms that the South German Workers' Association moved closer to the BVP in 1918/19. It contributed to the party's programme and solicited in its election campaigns. Krenn, *Christliche Arbeiterbewegung*, p. 299. A similar difference existed in England. Unlike the *Catholic Worker*, the *Catholic Federationist* (the newspaper of the north England Catholic Federation) reproduced the standard antisemitic stereotypes on its pages. This divergence can be explained with reference to the different political outlooks of the individual editor. Thomas Burns, the editor of the *Catholic Federationist*, a prominent trade unionist and secretary of the north England Catholic Federation, was fiercely antisocialist and conservative in his outlook. He enjoyed the support of Bishop Casartelli of Salford in his antisocialist publicist endeavours.
- 171 Uwe Lohalm, 'Völkisch Origins of Early Nazism: Antisemitism in Culture and Politics', in *Hostages of Modernisation, 1870–1933/39*, ed. by Herbert A. Strauss, 2 vols, Berlin, 1992–93, vol. I, 174–195, pp. 175–189.

- 172 Dirk Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität und Gewalt. Judenfeindschaft in der Weimarer Republik*, Bonn, 1999, pp. 250–251, p. 21.
- 173 Letter Hinsley to Fr McElliot (Gill's priest), 30 April 1937. AAW, Hi 2/55, 1930–40.



# 3

## New challenges and lasting legacies

### England

#### *Antisemitism and English Catholics, 1919–26*

Antisemitic images after the First World War most likely occurred in English Catholic discussions of modern capitalism and socialism, but were not limited to the pure economic and political aspects. ‘Materialism’ was often associated with a ‘Jewish spirit’ that pervaded national film, theatre and literature in the immediate post-war years.<sup>1</sup> Antisemitism was not limited to the pages of English Catholic newspapers at that time; it was also perceptible in discussions and communications of Catholic lay organisations such as the reformist Catholic Social Guild in Oxford and the conservative Catholic Federation in Salford. This early peak in anti-Jewish sentiments was to a considerable extent part of the general anti-Jewish attitude aroused by a ‘red scare’ after the war.<sup>2</sup> In his book *The Jews* (1922) Hilaire Belloc wrote on the ‘Jewish problem’ in general, but in particular about what he saw as the lethal threat of ‘Jewish Bolshevism’:

Bolshevism stated the Jewish problem with a violence and an insistence such that it could no longer be denied either by the blindest fanatic or the most resolute liar ... Henceforth it was to be discussed quite openly. Henceforth it could only become, more and more, the chief problem of politics and give rise to that menacing situation upon a solution of which depends the security of our future. For the Bolshevik movement, or rather explosion, was Jewish.<sup>3</sup>

At the time, the book indeed hit a nerve in the Bolshevik scare and received mostly favourable reviews, including from non-Catholic critics.<sup>4</sup> Belloc's reputation and his influence on other writers must not be underestimated. Richard Downey, Archbishop of Liverpool, described Hilaire Belloc as a 'brilliant conversationalist' of 'exuberant intellectual vitality'. Downey recounted how he had worked together with Belloc on issues of the *Catholic Gazette*, and occasionally the *Eye-Witness* and later the *New Witness*:

On his generation he has stamped two or three ideas which will remain. Time is making us realise their truth. They are the servile state, the damage of corruption in politics, and the role of the Catholic Church as the Mother of European civilisation. ... I hope that his books will be read and pondered for years to come for they are the writings of a great European, a great Christian and scholar.<sup>5</sup>

Some writers adopted individual aspects of Belloc's thoughts, while others identified widely with his worldview. Canon William Barry was one of those who agreed in many ways with Belloc. Barry grew up in London's East End as the son of Irish immigrants and later became Canon of St Chad's in Birmingham. He was a prolific writer on the arts and literature, and a frequent commentator on current affairs in the *Catholic Times* and in *The Universe*. Barry was not an outsider in the Catholic Church in England. He was respected by Cardinal Bourne and Archbishop McIntyre of Birmingham. Both of them were familiar with Barry's work for the Catholic media and encouraged his zealotry.<sup>6</sup>

Barry judged Belloc's *The Jews* to be 'the finest book of his [Belloc's] career', and agreed with him that the current Jewish predominance in English society 'is real and abounding in danger'. Acculturation, according to Barry, was not feasible because: 'the whole structure of our civilised world is Christian, not Jewish; and we have to defend it from ruin. That if we leave its defence in the hands of an Oriental race it will go down as the Roman did before it.'<sup>7</sup> Barry, like Belloc, saw rescue in the teachings of the Catholic Church and the segregation of Jews from Christians.<sup>8</sup>

Unlike German Catholicism, the community in England had no recourse to a Catholic party and social or professional Catholic associations were few and far between. The two organisations that fitted the German pattern closest were the Catholic Federation in Salford and the Catholic Social Guild in Oxford. Belloc's influence

and anti-Jewish rhetoric were perceptible in both organisations in the immediate post-war years, though more so in the Catholic Federation. Considering the growing numbers of Catholic working men attracted to socialist politics in the cities of Manchester, Salford, Liverpool, Belloc's staunch antisocialist views and his view of 'Jewish Bolshevism' chimed with the antisocialism of the Catholic Federation and its secretary Thomas Burns.<sup>9</sup> Here 'Jewish Bolshevism' became not just a matter of the written word in low circulation diocesan papers, but a matter of the spoken word. The Federation's conference in 1923, for example, discussed the antagonism of 'Jewish Marxism' and Catholicism: '[T]he bony skeleton that is left of German Protestant philosophy is joining hands with German Jewish Marxian Socialist philosophy to lay hands on the family of Christ. Nothing can save England than a strong combination of Christian forces.'<sup>10</sup>

Bishop Casartelli of Salford wholeheartedly supported Thomas Burns in the creation of the Catholic Federation and wrote regularly for its paper, the *Catholic Federationist*. The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia had crystallised Casartelli's darkest fears and became a continuous feature in his sermons and pastorals.<sup>11</sup> Troubled as Casartelli was by Russian Bolshevism and the growing attraction to socialism in his own diocese, Belloc's *The Jews* seemed like a revelation to him. He noted in his diary: 'have spent much time reading Belloc's wonderful book *The Jews* [Casartelli's emphasis]. He maintains that Bolshevism is essentially a Jewish movement.'<sup>12</sup>

The bishop hoped that the Federation would be able to block the inroads socialism had already made among Salford Catholics since 1906.<sup>13</sup> Not surprisingly, the diocesan publications in Salford, the *Catholic Federationist* and *The Harvest*, alluded in the early 1920s to the links between Jewry and Bolshevism.<sup>14</sup> Burns was, however, not universally supported by the English bishops. Cardinal Bourne, Bishop Keating of Liverpool and the Westminster branch of the Catholic Federation had fallen foul of Thomas Burns' acid antisocialist campaigns.<sup>15</sup>

The Catholic Social Guild on the other hand generally refrained from a simplistic, demonised picture of socialism. Save for a few authors, references to the alleged workings of Jews behind the socialist scene were non-existent in Guild publications.<sup>16</sup> However, the anticommunist hype in the early 1920s convinced a few authors of this otherwise liberal organisation that Jews wielded an insalient influence on British society.<sup>17</sup> One of them was Leslie Toke, a founding member of the Catholic Social Guild, teacher at the Guild's workers' college, chairman of its executive committee until 1938 and

an admirer of Belloc. Toke was a respected expert on economic and social questions.<sup>18</sup> As teacher, he encouraged his students to immerse themselves in Belloc's and Chesterton's Distributist theory.<sup>19</sup> Following a query from Fr Plater, the Guild's secretary, concerning the 'social question', Toke produced the essay 'The Social Unrest' for which he relied on Belloc's *The Servile State*, Chesterton's *The Party System* and *New Witness* publications.<sup>20</sup> Therein, he described British politics and economics as being ruled by a secretive set of people – amongst others, Jewish financiers.<sup>21</sup>

The secretary of the Guild, Fr Plater, used excerpts of Leslie Toke's essay to prepare notes for Cardinal Bourne's Lent Pastoral, *The Nation's Crisis* (1918). The pastoral assumed, as had Belloc and Toke, that Britain's political system had gradually evolved into a plutocracy, leaving the working class behind as slaves. But Toke's conspiratorial and anti-Jewish picture of British politics found no place in Bourne's pastoral.<sup>22</sup> Considering the generally moderate and progressive outlook of the Catholic Social Guild it seems remarkable that Leslie Toke and Fr Plater 'accepted a view of the Jew as a symbol of "acquisitive finance capitalism"'.<sup>23</sup> It appears less surprising in the context of the time and especially in connection with Leslie Toke's reading of Belloc.

The anti-Jewish rhetoric in British national media during the first years after the war also struck a chord with members even of politically moderate organisations such as the Catholic Social Guild. Yet an anti-Jewish rhetoric was much more sustainable in the industrialised north where Catholic authorities held strong anticommunist convictions and feared an imminent conversion of Catholic workers to socialist ideals. This was the case in Salford, where Bishop Casartelli placidly shared Belloc's view of a 'Jewish Bolshevik movement' and supported the Federation's secretary in his anticommunist and at times anti-Jewish crusade. However, compared with the more widespread Catholic antisemitism in Germany in the same period, such sentiments remained limited and were often restricted to a few authors. No public anti-Jewish statement by the English hierarchy is recorded; such comments were largely avoided, as the example of Bourne's pastoral, 'The Nation's Crisis', showed. Furthermore, it is not possible to speak of an institutionalised antisemitism, as the English Catholic organisational infrastructure was considerably weaker than in Germany and the absence of a Catholic party hampered a wide and systematic dissemination of antisemitism throughout the community. From the mid-1920s antisemitic statements were the domain either of G.K. Chesterton's Distributists or

the Catholic Guild of Israel (CGI). Outside these two circles anti-Jewish sentiments were less public in this period. Discussions on the validity of fascist movements on the continent revived the anti-communism and the fear of undue Jewish influence in Catholic discourse. The Spanish Civil War eventually radicalised these fears, which had become quite infectious. Even a mild-mannered man such as Fr Martindale of the CSG, who usually wrote on pious topics, was convinced of an 'unhealthy Jewish influence' at the time.<sup>24</sup> In 1937 he claimed at the Annual Meeting of the CGI that Jews were doing 'an exceedingly great deal of harm at present almost the whole world over, not only in the commercial world but very much indeed in the artistic world and in the political and moral worlds'.<sup>25</sup>

Anxieties of a growing Jewish influence and of a parallel decline of English (Christian) culture harboured anti-Jewish sentiments in Catholic publications and organisations. In those years, it was the debate about a national Jewish home in the British protectorate of Palestine that revived the notion of a 'Jewish question' – not just in Catholic discourse but across Britain. It is also the only occasion when the head of the Catholic hierarchy publicly warned against alleged pernicious Jewish influences.

### *Palestine*

The idea of a Jewish state in Palestine has been controversially discussed since the publication of Theodor Herzl's *Der Judenstaat* in 1896. The initially small Zionist movement often gained unlikely support from antisemites, who hoped to solve their 'Jewish question' by voluntary Jewish emigration to Palestine. People critical of the Zionists' vision often pointed at its impracticalities, particularly the size of Palestine and its predominantly agrarian economy. Urs Altermatt, who examined the attitude of Swiss Catholics towards Palestine, finds only a few genuinely supportive voices. Although he concedes that many objections were based on antisemitic prejudices, Altermatt suggests that the main concern of Catholics was motivated by religious sentiments and the wish to protect Christian sites in Palestine.<sup>26</sup> They were thus following papal religious reservations against Zionism. Surely, the religious dimension of this conflict never went unmentioned in sermons and proclamations of the English Catholic clergy, too. The Bishop of Brentwood, for instance, implored Catholics to pray for: 'the definite settlement of the Palestine controversy in accordance with our most sacred Catholic claims, it being contrary and intolerable to Christian sentiment that the holy country

... should be violated and contaminated and fall under the dominion of the enemies of His Cross.<sup>27</sup>

Yet a glance behind the official rhetoric and printed statements suggests that the concern for Christianity's holy sites was less about religious freedom than the fear of Jewish dominance and thus socialist influence in Palestine – as such a secular and political concern, not religious.

The Vatican's fears over the effects of a Jewish national home in Palestine can be summarised in a few sentences. The Holy See felt that the Zionists were granted a privileged status and preferential rights – a feeling that was partly reinforced by the appointment of Sir Herbert Samuel, an esteemed member of the Jewish establishment in Britain, as High Commissioner of Palestine in 1920. The Vatican furthermore feared that the extensive Catholic school system could be harmed by competition from well-funded British Protestant schools. These anxieties were further heightened when the Vatican was represented neither at the Peace Conference nor the League of Nations. This complicated the Vatican's attempt to represent its interests through diplomatic channels at the time when Europe's territorial rearrangements were discussed and nourished its feeling of inferiority.<sup>28</sup>

### English Catholics on Palestine

For some Catholics in Britain the Balfour Declaration and the British mandate over Palestine became a political problem and a question of national loyalty. Westminster House became the address for many Catholic officials seeking a channel to the British government. It was foremost Msgr Luigi Barlassina, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, who urged Cardinal Bourne on various occasions to intervene with the government for the benefit of Christian interests. Catholic newspaper soon took up an uncompromising anti-Zionist stand. For example, the *Catholic Herald* argued that the British government had been bought by 'Jewish money' and left Palestine to 'Jewish control' in the person of Sir Herbert Samuel as High Commissioner to the Holy Places.<sup>29</sup> More common was the fear of a Jewish dominance and therewith the spread of Bolshevism in Palestine. The *Catholic Herald* proclaimed the 'Titanic Race Struggle. Shall the Jew or the Arab Own the Holy Land?'<sup>30</sup> The article continued:

If the Zionists got their way in Palestine, they would do to the Arab and Christian population what the Bolsheviks have done to the people of Russia. That an Arab and Christian population of

some 800,000 people should be put and kept under the heel of an imported Jewish minority by British bayonets – a surely unparalleled atrocity!<sup>31</sup>

More moderate publications, such as *The Month*, *The Blackfriars* and *The Tablet* were similarly concerned with an alleged overwhelming Jewish power in the heart of Christian civilisation.<sup>32</sup> Donald Attwater, the editor of the *English Catholic Encyclopaedia* and another comparatively moderate voice, did not endorse the stereotype of Jewish dominance, but maintained that the Jews could not settle in Palestine, because their future state would not be religious, but materialistic and communist.<sup>33</sup> Hilaire Belloc dismissed Zionism, because it would still leave many Jews amidst Christian nations, leading to dual national allegiances and thus to even more prejudices against Jews. Belloc also disapproved of Britain being the protective power of the Jewish state. Once British sympathies were exhausted, the Jews would be defenceless against the hostile great powers.<sup>34</sup> Catholic popular opinion was very critical of a Jewish national home in Palestine, too. Mr Gurney, a member of the Catholic Guild of Israel, found the responses he received in discussions and lectures on Palestine ignorant and hostile.<sup>35</sup>

Catholic public opinion was thus in line with the Vatican's objections against the Balfour Declaration, but at odds with the policy of the national government. It was a conflict that fully emerged when Cardinal Bourne eventually spoke in favour of the government's Palestine policy in 1924 after he had warned against it on various occasions in previous years. The *Catholic Herald* subsequently accused Bourne of selling out to a British government that had never cared for Catholic interests.<sup>36</sup> What had happened?

### The English Catholic hierarchy and Palestine

On his Easter tour in 1919, Cardinal Bourne visited Jerusalem to see for himself how the Balfour declaration was implemented. Before his departure Bourne had met Pope Benedict XV, who was 'full of anxieties' on this matter.<sup>37</sup> On his return Bourne reported to the Vatican that he found the situation 'distinctly menacing', particularly the 'tendency of certain immigrant Jews to claim and assert a domination in no way in harmony with the Balfour declaration'.<sup>38</sup>

It has been suggested that Cardinal Bourne's visit to Palestine in 1919 had most influenced Pope Benedict XV's opinion on the situation in Palestine. Bourne was subsequently asked to safeguard Catholic interests before the British authorities. However, his visit

also served the interests of the British, who were eager to dispel the Vatican's fears of a British-ruled Palestine.<sup>39</sup> After Cardinal Bourne had left Jerusalem in January 1919, he was keen to defend Catholic and British interests against those of (as he saw it) Zionism. Letters and memoranda were continually crossing his desk.<sup>40</sup> One note – addressed to Lord Balfour and Lloyd George – spelled out Bourne's concerns on Zionism:

The Zionists here claim that the Jews are to have the domination of the Holy Land under a British protectorate; in other words, they are going to force their rule on an unwilling people of whom they form only 10%. They are already asserting themselves in every way, claiming official posts for their nominees, and generally interfering. This has resulted already in a great lessening of the welcome, which, at the outset, was given wholeheartedly to the British ... The Zionists too claimed that they had obtained the approval of the Holy City ... There is no foundation for this claim. The whole movement appears to be quite contrary to Christian sentiment and tradition. Let Jews live here by all means, if they like, and enjoy the same liberties as other people; but that they should ever again dominate and rule the country would be an outrage to Christianity and its Divine founder. It would mean, moreover, most certainly, the controlling influence of Jewish, which is German finance. Is this really what England desires after recent experiences?<sup>41</sup>

In February, Edmund Talbot presented the Prime Minister with the Cardinal's concerns about a threatening dominance of Zionists in Palestine. Talbot reported back that Lloyd George would 'keep Palestine' and had hoped English Catholics would greatly appreciate that (which Talbot answered in the affirmative). With regards to Zionism the Prime Minister had no intention of its being allowed to develop on the lines indicated and feared by Bourne. Though Lloyd George admitted that Balfour had been vague and probably more disposed towards Zionism than he had been.<sup>42</sup>

Meanwhile further memoranda and reports from Jerusalem were addressed to Westminster House, that all spoke of the disadvantaged position of Catholics compared to that of Protestants and Jews. The 'Jewish danger' was seen in the growing numbers of immigrants, Jewish purchase of land at a preferential interest rate and the opening of a university that would later on allow Jews to occupy the most prestigious posts.<sup>43</sup> Among the most prolific campaigners against



Zionism was the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, Luigi Barlassina. In his many letters to the Vatican (he was a close advisor to the Holy See<sup>44</sup>), the Catholic clergy and to the public, he made it quite clear that Zionism was a dangerous political movement aiming to oust Christians and Arabs from their Holy Places. These, so Barlassina claimed, were deprived of their sacred character and turned into

pleasure resorts with all the attractions of worldliness ... Yes! a great change has overtaken Palestine. It cannot escape the notice of the most casual observer. Unbecoming modes of dress; unseemly behaviour; amusements that offend against morals; the absence of restraint in many ways; objectionable cinema films etc inevitably tend to efface that noble aspect of morality, modesty, a lovable simplicity which was the notable characteristic of both Christian and Moslem women of Palestine ... it belongs to you beloved children in Christ ... to stand firm against the wave of a sensual, sceptic and disastrous modernism.<sup>45</sup>

According to Cardinal Bourne's biographer these petitions and memoranda convinced Bourne that the British policy in Palestine was misguided.<sup>46</sup> On various occasions over the following years, Bourne spoke out against the way the promised Jewish national home was realised in Palestine. In October 1920, the *Osservatore Romano* printed a quote by Cardinal Bourne in which he had warned against new immigrants to Palestine who were extremists, many of them Bolshevik Jews, who aimed to destroy the Christian sites.<sup>47</sup> At a reception of the Catholic Truth Society in Leicester in 1921, Bourne called the advance of Zionism in Palestine an 'outrage to Christianity'.<sup>48</sup> This met with consternation from the Jewish community. C. Convisser from the *Jewish Chronicle* responded:

it would have been more in keeping with your Eminence's high office if, instead of lending your great influence to an encouragement of a breach of faith and to what might be interpreted as a tacit approval of, if not an incitement for anti-Jewish excesses in certain circumstances, you had uttered some word breathing a compassion with and justice to an age-long persecuted people<sup>49</sup>

However, after his second visit to Jerusalem in 1924, Bourne changed his public stance towards the Jewish settlement in Palestine and praised the Jewish efforts to cultivate and modernise this stretch of

land – a comment that earned him the aforementioned rebuke by the *Catholic Herald*.<sup>50</sup> Privately, he noted: ‘Revisiting the same spots in 1924, any fair-minded observer will admit that the situation has greatly changed for the better. There is no longer the same universal insistence on an untenable domination on the part of the Zionist.’<sup>51</sup>

By 1925 Bourne and his bishops avoided any public statement on the situation in Palestine as did his successor, Cardinal Archbishop Arthur Hinsley. Against the background of increasing violent tensions between Arabs and Jews in Palestine, the Bishop of Jerusalem encouraged Cardinal Hinsley in 1937 to draw up a programme ‘lest these spiritual principles be subordinated to racial, national and economic demands’.<sup>52</sup> Hinsley replied: ‘I share your anxiety about the situation in the Holy Land. But the complications are so extraordinary that any public statement at present must be carefully considered for fear of adding to the confusion.’<sup>53</sup>

## Germany

In many histories of Weimar Germany the Centre Party is remembered as one of the liberal parties that held out against right-wing radicalism and antisemitism. Indeed, Centre Party members were not without reason seen as ‘Jew-friends’ by the radical right. From 1924 the party softened its antisemitic rhetoric in their major publications, and spoke out against antisemitism in parliament and in public. A small number of Centre Party politicians worked alongside Jews and democrats for the Association in Defence against Antisemitism.<sup>54</sup> The Berlin branch of the party eventually listed a converted Jew, Georg Kareski, as its candidate for the 1930 Reichstag elections.<sup>55</sup> Because of its defence of Jewish civic equality and religious freedom, Rudolf Lill describes the Centre Party together with the SPD as the strongest force against antisemitism in the *Kaiserreich* and Weimar Germany.<sup>56</sup> Lill is not unaware of economic and religious prejudices against Jews within the Centre Party, but tends to play down their importance in comparison with the Centre Party’s rejection of racial antisemitism. Yet looking at the Centre Party and antisemitism it is necessary to bear in mind three aspects. First, the term antisemitism at the time was almost exclusively restricted to the violent racial Jew-hatred of the radical right, whose philosophy also included a vehement anti-clericalism. Opposing *völkisch* antisemitism was therefore also a measure of self-defence. Second, the Centre Party’s traditional tolerance towards Jews was primarily part of their religious policy that

guaranteed religious freedom and said little about its tolerance of Jewish influence in German economy and society. Unlike Lill, Olaf Blaschke, David Blackbourn and Hermann Greive place far more emphasis on the obvious ambivalence of the party's attitude towards Jews and the political reasoning behind its anti-semitism. It was after all not wise for high-ranking representatives of one religious minority to call for legal restrictions to be placed on another religious minority.<sup>57</sup> Finally, the Centre Party's record in defence of German Jewry is commendable (though not outstanding), but it only set in after Hitler's failed coup in November 1923, when the Centre Party, like the SPD and the liberal parties, recognised *völkisch* antisemitism as a threat to the democratic political system. Immediately after the war, however, and up to 1924, Centre Party newspapers and election campaigns hardly defended German Jews against the wave of hostility they had to face after the war and revolutions. On the contrary Catholic publications, in particular in Bavaria, made Jews responsible for Germany's military defeat, international humiliation and socialist revolutions. More importantly, yet with exception of Rhenish Catholicism, many articles rejected the democratic Republic because it was associated with the 'Jewish' German Democratic Party and the social democrats. Antisemitism was almost always part of this anti-democratic agitation.

The experience of socialist revolutions at home still fresh in mind, the fear of Bolshevism loomed large during the first years of the Republic and with it the allegation that Jews in particular stood behind this revolutionary movement. Together with economic anti-semitism, the Jewish-Bolshevik stereotype was the most common anti-Jewish remark. The Bolshevik threat, according to the Catholic papers, was not contained in far-away Russia, but was closer to home in the form of the communist and social democrat parties in Germany. As shown before, the Centre Party and BVP papers defamed the communist party, the SPD and the democratic parties as 'Jewish', particularly in the weeks shortly before national or regional elections. This was not only a strategic use of antisemitism to gain more votes for the Christian parties, it had a clear anti-democratic stance where a republican state was denounced as a 'foreign' and 'Jewish' idea.<sup>58</sup> At the time, this rhetoric was employed by all newspapers examined, including that of the South Germany Catholic Workers' Association.<sup>59</sup> In the weeks before the January election in 1919 various Catholic newspapers, among them Berlin's *Märkische Volkszeitung* and Passau's *Donaupost*, declared that the Democratic Party was the party of the Jews and war profiteers.

The *Donauzeitung* urged Catholic craftsmen not to vote for the democratic parties:

The Democratic Party is essentially an invention of the Jewish race. This party strives together with the social democrats for a majority in the national assembly. The Jewish element dominates in both parties' leadership. German craftsmanship has to reject a party that constantly flirts with social democracy. German craftsmanship has to prove if it can hang to its old ideals: Christian principles (*Gesinnung*), German character (*Eigenart*), German morals and truthfulness; while rejecting international cosmopolitan currents.<sup>60</sup>

With the victory of the SPD and the democratic parties in the election, the *Märkische Volkszeitung* then urged its readers to fight against democracy (*bürgerliche Demokratie*) as such:

Our struggle is now foremost against the bourgeois democracy. It has gained 70 seats in the national assembly by gathering irreligious citizens in each constituency and pushed – although itself a tiny minority – one or two representatives forward. Here gather the same forces that incited the *Kulturkampf* in the 70s. United with the social democrats they will take up their old plans and prepare the way for freethinkers and an ideology without religion with 'legal means'.<sup>61</sup>

The reference to the *Kulturkampf* stood for the laic policies of Adolf Hoffmann of the Independent Socialists (USPD) that had incensed Church authorities and Christian voters alike. In the course of the November revolution in Berlin, Hoffmann was appointed to the Prussian Ministry for Cultural and Educational Affairs together with the Majority Socialist (MSPD) Konrad Haenisch. During his brief spell in the Ministry for Culture (from 12 November 1918 to early January 1919, six weeks in total), the notoriously anticlerical Hoffmann abolished religious instruction as a regular subject in most Prussian schools and planned for the complete separation of state and Church and therewith the elimination of state subsidies to the churches.<sup>62</sup> According to Klaus Scholder, this episode was enough to destroy the early prudent cooperation between the social democrats and the Churches even in later years. Moreover, it contributed substantially to driving Christian voters into the arms of the right-wing parties.<sup>63</sup>

The two prominent antisemitic acts during the first four years of the Republic – the Rathenau murder and the unrest in Berlin's *Scheunenviertel* – met with a mixed reaction from Catholic journalists.

Shock and disgust over Rathenau's murder filled their pages in 1922, followed by an unmistakable condemnation of violent antisemitism. Yet despite the disgust against murderous violence, the tenor implied all too often that Jews brought this hatred upon themselves. Even the lament about Rathenau's murder ended at times on an ambiguous note: 'some Jews have nurtured numerous enemies during the war and even more so during the revolutions'.<sup>64</sup> The argument was very similar in the case of the *Scheunenviertel* riots, just a few days before the Hitler *Putsch* in November 1923. In the course of these riots Jewish businesses were looted and a Berlin mob roamed the quarter, assaulting those who to them looked Jewish. Many papers condemned the pogrom-like violence yet were unanimous in assigning responsibility to 'profiteering Eastern European' Jews.<sup>65</sup>

The intensity of antisemitism in Catholic newspapers remained high until the failed Hitler *Putsch* in 1923. It was a rude awakening to the possibility of a revolution from the extreme right and the Catholic press reacted accordingly, toned down their antisemitic agitation and condemned the Hitler movement – apart from the *Gelben Hefte*, the journal of the Catholic right, which they had only just acquired in 1924. Yet for five years the majority of Catholic newspapers in Bavaria, Eastern Germany, Hesse and Westphalia had supplied their readers with an arsenal of antisemitic images that were well learned by the time the völkisch right had made these their own.

Even though the Centre Party was later a reliable defender of Weimar democracy (at least until Brüning's chancellorship), its leadership struggled to leave its traditional loyalty to German monarchs behind and embrace democratic values. This was particularly obvious in the negotiations to the new party programme (1918–20). The initiative for a new party programme emerged from Cologne and Berlin almost simultaneously in November 1918. Both largely conserved the principles of the old Centre Party and envisaged the new party as an interdenominational and democratic party. The main difference between the two lay in the proposed social and cultural policies, which were more progressive in character in the Cologne draft.<sup>66</sup> The Berlin draft programme was set up by Matthias Erzberger, then Centre Party representative in the provisional Reich government, Maximilian Pfeiffer, the General Secretary of the Berlin Centre Party, and the Catholic theologian and publicist Carl Sonnenschein. Pfeiffer claimed that it represented 'the spirit from which the [Centre Party] programme was born'.<sup>67</sup> Published in December 1918 under Pfeiffer's authorship, the Berlin draft was later

adopted by the Centre Party in Westphalia as a useful blueprint for a future party programme.<sup>68</sup> It reveals the author's prejudices against Jews as well as a fascination with German *Volkstum*:

German and Christian is the principle of our nature (*Wesen*). The Germanic tribes rose from the depths of centuries. From early times their tribe's characteristic merged with the Christian cultural element. This holy bond between Germandom and Christendom blessed the German people's wonderful gift throughout the centuries. Abandoning one or the other has brought danger again and again and has led us close to the abyss ... We ourselves will be healed through this German nature from morbid delusion (*krankhafter Verirrung*). We condemn and reject bringing in alien manners to our country's thinking, senses, striving, behaviour, into its civic and social life – may these alien manners come from the west or the east or from certain culturally decomposing elements of Jewry. We will not allow the core of German nature (*kernhaft deutsche Art*) to be falsified by 'new thoughts and ideals' of revolutionary governments of a Russian kind.<sup>69</sup>

Almost exactly two years later, a confidential first draft of the Centre Party's intended policies reflected the draft programme's *völkisch* concept of a German nation when it claimed that the nation's unity was based on a 'community of blood and common fate (*Blutsgemeinschaft und Schicksalsverbundenheit*) of the German tribes.'<sup>70</sup> The antisemitism of the earlier draft was, however, coded as anti-alienism when the 1920 draft suggested the immediate expulsion of 'alien revolutionaries'. Yet these Centre Party guidelines were drafted at the same time the DNVP and the *völkisch* right had whipped up a hostile campaign against Eastern European Jews.<sup>71</sup> Considering the contemporary context and recalling the tone of Pfeiffer's booklet it was not difficult to recognise that the term 'alien revolutionaries' most likely referred to Eastern European or Russian Jews.

These images did not remain buried in early draft versions of the Centre Party programme as the survey of Catholic public discourse had shown earlier. They also were stable elements in election campaigns of both Catholic parties up to 1924. Election posters, leaflets and pamphlets pictured the Jew as Bolshevik revolutionary, as traitor to the fatherland, as profiteer or immoral press baron undermining Christendom and Germandom. The two parties thus carried the hostility against Jews during the war into Germany's postwar

society. With the help of these media, antisemitism gained a new dynamic. Enriched with caricatures and bold layouts, their message was unambiguous and thanks to the format (leaflets, posters) more widely available. Antisemitism in these campaigns was often a means to discredit the political rivals of the Catholic parties by accusing them of Jewish support. The parties of the right were usually ridiculed by claims that – despite their own antisemitism – they still supported individual Jews whenever it suited their purposes. The ‘old enemies’, on the other hand, social democracy and liberalism (*Deutsche Demokratische Partei*), were often described as ‘Jewish’ parties:

Who is the German Democratic Party? It is the Mosse Party, the party of the Jewish-liberal *Berliner Tageblatt* that represents the interests of the stock market and capital (*Grosskapital*), but not the interests of the Christian people. It is the party whose press cheered when France’s atheistic rulers opened their struggle against the Christian Churches, and removed religion and the crucifixes from schools ... no vote for the anti-religious and anti-clerical social democracy, but equally no vote for the party of liberal Jewry – the German Democratic People’s Party.<sup>72</sup>

As in the case of Catholic print media, such attacks against Jews were most frequent in the years right after the war and the revolutions until 1923/24. At that time the public witnessed a re-emergence of *Radauantisemitismus* in the form of desecration of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues, which it rejected as disgraceful and uncivilised.<sup>73</sup>

The BVP is known as the more antisemitic of the two Catholic parties, whose rhetoric was hardly distinguishable from the antisemitic abuse of *völkisch* organisations. It is even better known for the leniency shown towards the *völkisch* movement that provided a safe haven for antidemocratic, antisemitic organisations during the Weimar Republic. A short version of the BVP programme summarised the party’s attitude towards Jews succinctly. The text confirmed that ‘the Bavarian People’s Party respects every honest Jew’:

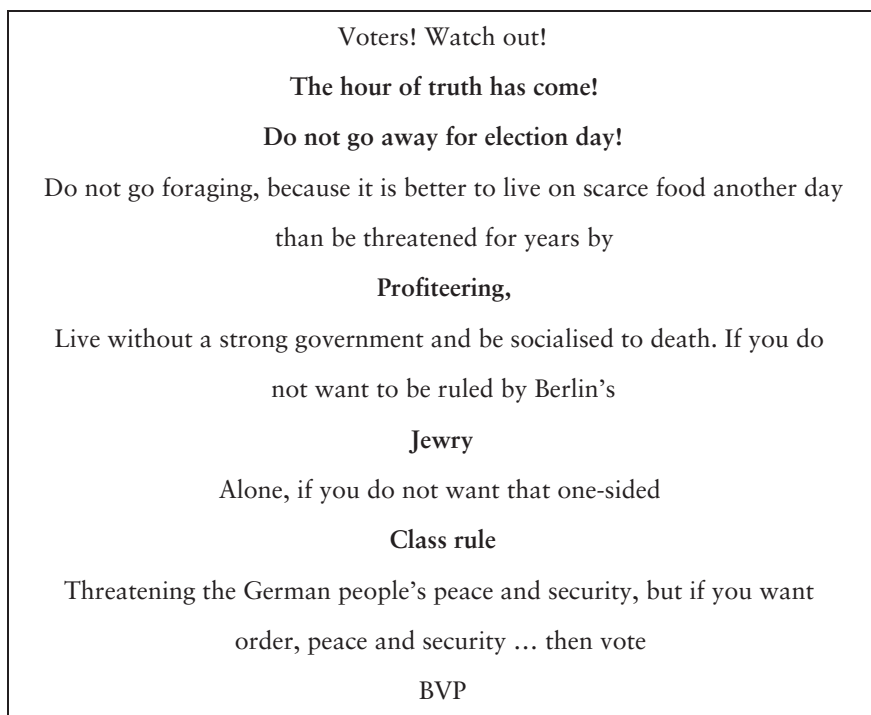
but we have to fight the numerous atheistic elements of a certain international Jewry of Eastern European colour, who have in a shameful manner influenced our economy during the war and have seized hold of the Reich’s government and that of single federal states through a military revolt ... No sensible Jew can expect that 65 million Germans and almost 7 million Bavarians were to be governed by these decomposing elements.<sup>74</sup>

These 'atheistic elements', according to the programme, were responsible for profiteering and betrayed the German army through revolution.<sup>75</sup>

The BVP was the strongest party in Bavaria after the elections to the Bavarian *Landtag* and national assembly in January 1919. It participated in every Bavarian government until its demise in 1933 and many of its policies showed more tolerance towards antisemitism than towards Jews. There was, for instance, the campaign against Eastern European Jews (*Ostjudenfrage*), culminating in their planned expulsion in 1923/24 and the leniency of the Bavarian administration towards violent attacks against Jews by Hitler's paramilitary Stormtroopers (*Sturmabteilung*, SA) in the month before the Hitler *Putsch* in November 1923.<sup>76</sup> Dirk Walter, who wrote about violent antisemitism in Weimar Germany, does not comment on how BVP newspapers covered the *Ostjudenfrage* in early 1920, but he stresses that papers like the *Bayerische Volkskurier* avoided antisemitic slander in the context of the anti-usury campaign of 1920.<sup>77</sup> Yet both anti-usury legislation and anti-alien debates were accompanied by the same hostile images of Jews in BVP election material. The party's election campaign for the Reichstag and *Landtag* elections in June 1920 is just one such example. In the course of the Kapp *Putsch* in March 1920, Georg Heim as BVP president had dissolved the Bavarian Weimar Coalition (SPD, DDP, BVP) almost *Putsch*-like, with the aid of paramilitary units. The following elections in June 1920 returned a conservative-right government of the BVP and its junior partner, the DNVP.<sup>78</sup> The layout of a flyer to these elections is reproduced in Figure 3.1; it was designed to bring the party's message across at first glance.

After electoral victory, the BVP nominated the deeply conservative Gustav von Kahr as minister president and interior minister of Bavaria, and transferred the government's executive powers almost exclusively into his hands in late September. Kahr's conservative-right government left considerable political influence to right-wing paramilitary groups which eventually culminated in Hitler's failed coup d'état. The *Putsch* was highly embarrassing for the Bavarian government who lost valuable political credibility as a result of it. It became clear that Georg Heim's uncompromising federalist and antirepublican policy ultimately proved unsuccessful. The BVP consequently moderated its federalism and monarchism in its new party programme in 1924 and vowed to rein in separatist and antisemitic tendencies.<sup>79</sup> Antisemitism occurred from then on less frequently and less explicitly in BVP publications, but the 1924 party programme,





**Figure 3.1** *BVP flyer for the Bavarian Landtag elections on 6 June 1920*<sup>80</sup>

for instance, still deplored the negative Jewish influence on German society.<sup>81</sup> Moreover, the party's attempt to limit the influence of the radical right and the use of antisemitism remained only half-hearted.

The political influence of antisemitic rhetoric within Bavarian conservative-right policies should not be underestimated. Dirk Walter, for instance, observes that antisemitic violence in Munich hardly provoked a debate as long as it did not overstep a certain limit (e.g., the desecration of Jewish cemeteries), whereas the far less violent anti-Jewish incidents in Berlin during summer and autumn 1919 led to public protests by the city's media and administration.<sup>82</sup> The explanation is not apathy of the population, but rather that the antisemitic rhetoric of the BVP and the *völkisch* groups affirmed the public's already existing prejudices against Jews. As a result, antisemitism had become common and ubiquitous in Bavaria, while it was still seen as a radical form of Jew-hatred in other parts of Germany. Moreover, BVP leniency towards the radicalism of *völkisch* organisations (and ultimately its junior partner the DNVP) allowed considerable scope for legal antisemitic action.

Both Catholic parties and their newspapers have to take the greatest responsibility for the renewed antisemitism after the war. At a time when the 'old' radical right (Pan-Germans, and other *völkisch* groups) was disorientated and regrouping, local Centre Parties (Prussia) and the BVP made antisemitic allegations in their publications, speeches and election campaigns. The National Socialists had neither invented the image of 'Jewish Bolshevism' nor did they hold a monopoly on it by autumn 1923 when they had reached wide popularity after campaigning almost exclusively against 'Jewish Marxism'. The continuous identification of Jews with immoral capitalism and irreligious Bolshevism during the first five years of the Weimar Republic was imprinted into public memory not by radical *völkisch* organisations on the political fringe, but by the *Volksparteien* of the conservative right on a mainstream political platform.

Within the spectrum of the conservatism, the antisemitism within the Centre Party and BVP was neither as hostile nor as coherent as that of the conservative-right, the DNVP and those Catholics who joined or sympathised with the German nationalists. Those cannot be written out of the history of political Catholicism as lesser Catholics as milieu by far not as monolithic as during *Kulturkampf*. Without the Catholic right it is impossible to understand the challenges the Centre Party had to face within its own milieu. Both were competitors in politics for the nationalist-minded Christians; antisemitism became the marker of who was the better patriot in the discourse between the two competitors.

## Notes

- 1 *The Harvest*, May 1923, p. 98. *Catholic Times*, 3 January 1920, p. 6; *Catholic Herald*, 24 July 1926, p. 8.
- 2 Geoffrey Field remarks that the image of the 'Jewish financier' was at the centre of anti-Jewish prejudices in England before the turn of the century. In the early twentieth century, however, animosities shifted to 'Jewish communism' and found their focus in the figure of the 'Jewish Bolshevik' after the Russian Revolution. Geoffrey Field, 'Antisemitism with the Boots off', in *Hostages of Modernisation, 1870–1933/39*, ed. by Herbert A Strauss, 2 vols, Berlin, 1992–93, I, 294–325, pp. 298, 300.
- 3 Hilaire Belloc, *The Jews*, London, 1922, pp. 45, 55.
- 4 Gisela Lebzelter, *Political Antisemitism in England 1918–1939*, London, 1978, pp. 17–21. Part of this positive response was that in the

eyes of many contemporaries the book denounced the insanity and falsehood of antisemitism, ridiculed the notion of a Jewish world conspiracy/revolution and paid tribute to the war efforts of British Jews. Compared to Beamish and Leese's rabid antisemitism, Belloc seemed to offer a 'reasoned political solution' – voluntary segregation. Reviews in *The Times*, 27 March 1922; *The Sunday Times*, 2 April 1922; *The Spectator*, 29 April 1922; or *The Observer* 16 April 1922. All cited in Charlotte Lea Klein, '50 Years ago Belloc's *The Jews* and Galsworthy's *Loyalties* Revealed. English Antisemitism in the 1920s', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 6 (1972), 23–29.

- 5 Richard Downey, 'Hilaire Belloc. An Appreciation', AAL Downey Collection Series 3 I, Sermons and Addresses.
- 6 Letter Barry to Archbishop McIntyre, 20 April 1923. BAA, McIntyre Papers, May–April 1923.
- 7 This and the previous quotes in Barry: 'The Everlasting Jew', *The Universe*, 12 May 1922, p. 8.
- 8 Barry, 'Sign of Times', *Catholic Times*, 20 November 1920, p. 7. See also Barry's book *The Coming of the Age of the Catholic Church. A Forecast*, London, 1929.
- 9 Burns proudly announced that he was cooperating with the 'New Witness League'. *Catholic Federationist*, April 1919, p. 3. Belloc was a frequent speaker on Federation conferences and the journal published extracts of his books as well as numerous articles by Belloc.
- 10 *Catholic Federationist*, December 1923, p. 5.
- 11 For Casartelli's pastorals and sermons see Salford Diocesan Archives (SDA), Acta Salfordiensia Episcopi Quarti 1916–18, 1919–21, 1922–25. Acta Casartelli.
- 12 Casartelli diary, entry 28 June 1922. SDA, Casartelli Papers.
- 13 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 120–121.
- 14 The underlying theme of both papers was communism's hostility towards Christianity. See, e.g., *The Harvest*, May 1923, p. 98.
- 15 Bourne was concerned that Burns' radicalism in Salford would undermine the hierarchy's attempts at reconciliation with the Labour Party's socialism after the First World War. Confidential letter, Bourne to Casartelli, 20 May 1919. SDA, Catholic Federation 182/73. Also cited in Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 141.
- 16 The Guild published the monthly *Social Democrat* and *Catholic Social Guild's Yearbook*. I have not come across antisemitic statements in these journals.
- 17 Apart from Toke, see, e.g., Canon Villiers (Birmingham), who was apparently taken in by the hypothesis that Bolshevism was a Jewish movement. BAA, AP/C23 Communism.

- 18 Letter Fr O'Hea to Rev P Louis Barde, Paris, 27 April 1925. CSG, E18.
- 19 Letter by J.B. Graham to Toke (n.d.). CSG, E18.
- 20 He gave credit to the authors in his chapter on capitalism, the House of Commons, p. 5. 'The Social Unrest', by Toke in letter to Plater, 27 October 1917. CSG, E11. At the same time he was also in correspondence with Belloc over matters of publishing, guild socialism and private property. CSG, C15.
- 21 'The Social Unrest', pp. 5, 11, 14.
- 22 Comments in Toke's 'The Social Unrest' and Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 126–128.
- 23 Ibid., p. 126.
- 24 In one of his rare anti-Jewish statements, Martindale saw most of the modern 'affected, snobbish, and cranky ... arts-world' under Jewish control. Fr Martindale, 'The Pestilent Word "Culture"', *Catholic Herald*, 17 August 1935, p. 4.
- 25 CGI annual meeting report, 25 October 1937, p. 5. Martindale was aware of his prejudices (he called himself 'not yet altogether regenerated'), emphasised that he was not speaking of *the Jews* but of Jews and would rather opt for greater compassion than segregation. Sisters of Sion, CGI Papers (CGI).
- 26 Urs Altermatt, *Katholizismus und Antisemitismus. Mentalitäten, Kontinuitäten, Ambivalenzen. Zur Kulturgeschichte der Schweiz*, Frauenfeld, 1999, p. 141.
- 27 Advent Pastoral Brentwood 1924, in Catholic Central Library, Pastoral boxes.
- 28 Ishaq Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism. Conflict in the Holy Land 1895–1925*, pp. 196–199.
- 29 'Pope Censored in Palestine ... Britain's Preferential Treatment of the Jews', *Catholic Herald*, 3 September 1921, p. 3. Also 'Catholics and Palestine. A Striking Endorsement', *Catholic Herald* 15 March 1924, p. 6. See also 'Mr Ramsay McDonald went to Palestine as a Jew envoy to investigate the matter and we will be glad to know that he was not "nobbled" by his employers, who ... astutely utilise Labour and Labour leaders and would buy them up if need be and if possible.' In 'The Palestine Infamy', *Catholic Herald*, 6 January 1923, p. 6. On Herbert Samuel see 'Palestine Mandate', *The Month*, August 1922, p. 168.
- 30 *Catholic Herald*, 24 September 1921, p. 1. The definition of the Jews as a race was often a welcomed argument against a Jewish state in Palestine. Since they were not a political people but a race and a Church they could not claim their own state. 'A Catholic View of Zionism', *Catholic Herald*, 15 October 1921, p. 3.

- 31 'The Palestine Infamy', *Catholic Herald*, 6 January 1923, p. 6. 'The Bolshevik Blasphemers', *Catholic Herald*, 10 February 1923, p. 6.
- 32 J. Keating, 'Palestine Mandate Approved', *The Month*, August 1922, p. 168. Also Rev Reginald Ginns, 'Lord Balfour and Palestine', *The Blackfriars*, May 1925, p. 284; *The Tablet*, 1938, pp. 131, 631. For Palestine as the heart of civilisation ('which, be it remembered, is Christian') see 'A Catholic View of Zionism', *Catholic Herald*, 15 October 1921, p. 3.
- 33 Donald Attwater, 'Religious Conditions in Palestine', *The Month*, October 1926, pp. 353–55.
- 34 Belloc, *The Jews*, pp. 235, 244.
- 35 CGI minute book 1925. The records of the Catholic Guild of Israel cited in this book are with the Sisters of Sion, Notting Hill, London. Thereafter cited as CGI.
- 36 'A Point of View', *Catholic Herald*, 5 April 1924, p. 6.
- 37 Cited in Rokach, *The Catholic Church*, p. 13.
- 38 Cited in Rokach, *The Catholic Church*, p. 13. Also: 'Cardinal Bourne's impressions of the Holy Land' (part of sermon delivered in 1925). AAW Bo5/62 Palestine 23.
- 39 *The Tablet* on the other hand saw in Bourne's visit a means to dispel rumours that the Vatican would support the creation of a Jewish state. Minerbi, *Vatican and Zionism*, pp. 29–30, 126–127.
- 40 Letter and memorandum to Bourne, 26 January 1919; memorandum was forwarded to Cardinal Gasparri and Lord Edmund Talbot on 29 January 1919. AAW 124/12 Bourne misc. Eastern Tour.
- 41 Letter Bourne to Balfour and Lloyd George, 25 January 1919, cited in Minerbi, *Vatican and Zionism*, p. 123.
- 42 Letter Edmund Talbot to Bourne, 24 February 1919. AAW 124/12 Bourne misc. Eastern Tour.
- 43 'Memorandum' (no date, but probably 1919). Also 'Memorandum of the Patriarch of Jerusalem'. AAW Bo1/93 Palestine 1919–25.
- 44 Altermatt, *Katholizismus*, p. 138. Rokach, *The Catholic Church*, p. 14.
- 45 Aloysius Barlassina. Miseratione Divina et Apostolicae Sedis Gratia. Patriarcha Hierosolymitanus ad Clerum et Populum, pp. 15–19. AAW Bo1/93 Palestine 1919–25.
- 46 Cited in Minerbi, *Vatican and Zionism*, p. 123.
- 47 Osservatore Romano, 9 October 1920. Cited in Minerbi, *Vatican and Zionism*, p. 143.
- 48 As cited in the *Leicester Mail*, 27 September 1921; *Catholic Herald*, 1 October 1921.
- 49 Letter C. Convisser to Bourne, 17 October 1921. AAW Bo5/62 Palestine 23.

- 50 'Catholics and Palestine', *Catholic Herald*, 15 March 1924, p. 6; 'A Point of View', *Catholic Herald*, 5 April 1924, p. 6.
- 51 'Cardinal Bourne's impressions of the Holy Land' (part of sermon delivered in 1925). AAW Bo5/62 Palestine.
- 52 Letter Francis bishop of Jerusalem to Hinsley, 5 November 1937. AAW Hi2/161 1929.
- 53 Letter Hinsley to bishop of Jerusalem, 7 November 1937. AAW Hi2/161 1929. For more see Thomas Moloney, *Westminster, Whitehall and the Vatican. The Role of Cardinal Hinsley, 1935–43*, Tunbridge Wells 1985, pp. 213–214.
- 54 Avraham Barkai, 'Wehr Dich!' *Der Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens, 1893–1938*, Munich, 2002. Arnold Paucker, *Der jüdische Abwehrkampf gegen Antisemitismus und Nationalsozialismus in den letzten Jahren der Weimarer Republik*, Hamburg, 1968.
- 55 On the Centre Party's anti-antisemitism in its parliamentary work see Uwe Mazura, *Zentrumspartei und Judenfrage 1870/71–1933. Verfassungsstaat und Minderheitenschutz*, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Zeitgeschichte, Reihe B, Mainz, 1994. For the Centre Party's work beyond parliament see Rudolf Lill, 'Die deutschen Katholiken und die Juden in der Zeit von 1850 bis zur Machtübernahme', in *Kirche und Synagoge. Handbuch zur Geschichte von Christen und Juden*, ed. by Karl Heinrich Rengstorff; Siegfried von Kortzfleisch, 2 vols, Stuttgart, 1968–70, II, 370–420, pp. 396–411. Helmut Berding, *Moderner Antisemitismus in Deutschland*, Frankfurt, 1988, p. 217.
- 56 Lill, 'Deutsche Katholiken', p. 398.
- 57 Hermann Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie. Katholizismus und Judentum in Deutschland und Österreich 1918–1933*, Heidelberg, 1969, p. 87. On the functions of Catholic defence of Jewish rights during the *Kaiserreich* see Olaf Blaschke, *Katholizismus und Antisemitismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich*, Göttingen, 1997, pp. 226–249.
- 58 *Der Arbeiter*, 31 October 1918, p. 2.
- 59 Krenn suggests that unlike the BVP and the Bavarian bishops, *Der Arbeiter* accepted the democratic and republican form of the constitution without reservations. However, considering the antisemitic mood at the time the label 'Jewish' could hardly have shone a positive light on democracy. Dorit-Maria Krenn, *Christliche Arbeiterbewegung in Bayern vom Ersten Weltkrieg bis 1933*, Mainz, 1991, pp. 232–234.
- 60 'Handwerk und demokratische Parteien', *Donauzeitung*, 4 January 1919, p. 6. 'Wahlbündnis', *Sonntagszeitung Erfurt*, 12 January 1919, p. 2.

- 61 *Märkische Volkszeitung*, 24 January 1919, p. 4. For the identification of Jews with the Democratic Party see the same paper on 17 January 1919 (two days before the election).
- 62 Klaus Scholder, *The Churches and the Third Reich. Preliminary History and the Time of Illusions 1918–1934*, 2 vols, I, London 1987–88, pp. 15–16.
- 63 Ibid., p. 16.
- 64 *Der Arbeiter*, 5 July 1922, pp. 2, 7; 12 July 1922, p. 3.
- 65 *Thüringer Volkswacht*, 7 November 1923, p. 5. Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität*, pp. 152–153.
- 66 Rudolf Morsey, *Die Deutsche Zentrumspartei 1918–1923*, Düsseldorf, 1966, p. 106.
- 67 Maximilian Pfeiffer, *Das neue Zentrum und die politische Neuordnung. Ein Programm*, Berlin, 1918. Pfeiffer was general secretary of the Centre Party in Berlin from November 1918 to 1920.
- 68 Morsey, *Zentrumspartei*, p. 106.
- 69 Pfeiffer, *Das neue Zentrum*, pp. 62–63. Greive suggests that such a *völkisch* outlook was not new to German Catholicism since the end of the war but increasingly became the basis for social and civic theories. Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie*, p. 100.
- 70 For this and the following quotes see ‘Streng vertraulich! Erster Entwurf der neuen Richtlinien der Zentrumspartei für die Kommissionsberatung am 15 December 1920’, BA, R8115 I/180 Zentrum.
- 71 Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität*, pp. 60–61.
- 72 Leaflet in support of the Prussian Centre Party, election to the 1919 National Assembly: ‘Christlich Männer! Christliche Frauen!’. It was issued by the *Christliche Volkspartei* the name under which the Centre Party contested this first election of the republic. GStA PK, XII, IV, Nr. 107. See also the Centre Party leaflet on the German Democratic Party ‘Voters in Prussia!’ Flyer of the Centre Party, election to the Prussian *Landtag*, 20 February 1921. GStA PK, XII, IV, Nr. 109.
- 73 Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität*, p. 21.
- 74 ‘Bayerisch Volkspartei und das Judentum’, in BVP leaflet ‘Was ist und was will die Bayerische Volkspartei?’, Munich, 1919. BAK, ZSG 1 8/3 Veröffentlichungen der BVP 1919–32.
- 75 Ibid.
- 76 Four hundred people were issued a deportation order in the time between October 1923 and February 1924. 90% of the deportees were Jews, the remaining 10% received the order for their involvement in socialist or (after the Hitler *Putsch*) National Socialist organisations. Most of those concerned could postpone deportation by resorting to legal action still open to them. Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität*, p. 77.

- 77 Walter also refers to the good relationship between Catholic and Jewish notables in Munich. Ibid., pp. 99, 102.
- 78 The SPD lost more than half their seats (27 down from 61) and remained from then on in opposition. The DNVP gained ten seats (from 9 to 19) and the BVP won the majority with 65 seats. Klaus Schönhoven, *Die Bayerische Volkspartei 1924–1932*, Düsseldorf, 1972, p. 39.
- 79 Schönhoven, *Bayerische Volkspartei*, p. 42.
- 80 BAK ZSG 1 8/2 Flugblätter 1919–33. Also BVP flyer ‘Der Bolschewismus’ (n.d., likely to be 1919/20): ‘These Bolsheviki, mostly men of Jewish decent and therefore without national consciousness’ had allegedly decomposed the army, bankrupted the economy while enriching themselves and installing a dictatorship. BAK, ZSG 1 8/2.
- 81 Lill, ‘Deutsche Katholiken’, p. 399.
- 82 Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität*, p. 102.



# 4

## The Catholic right, political Catholicism and radicalism

### The Catholic right in Germany

In 1920, Hermann Freiherr von Lüninck assessed the political landscape of the Weimar Republic in his 'Thoughts on Centre Party politics'.<sup>1</sup> He believed that large sections of the nobility, peasantry, academia and elements among the clergy felt alienated by the Centre Party's cooperation with social democracy. In order to create the envisioned Christian conservative party, Lüninck hoped to draw conservatives to the Centre Party, who might then be willing to set up a new party on the right of the centre. He hoped that this new party would then promote a policy based on a Christian state philosophy, which meant an organic organisation of society, divided into estates with the monarch heading the state. The protection of private ownership was asserted, while popular sovereignty and parliamentarianism were rejected.<sup>2</sup> The dream of such a conservative Christian party was soon abandoned after the failure of the Christian People's Party (CVP) in the February 1921 Prussian state election.<sup>3</sup> The Catholic right then placed their emphasis on a revival of Imperial *Sammlungspolitik* by devoting their efforts to political lobbying and to the education of the younger generation in a Christian-nationalist worldview, which they hoped would permeate all levels of German society.

The Catholic right – Catholics who sympathised or joined the German National People's Party (DNVP) – has been a stepchild of historical research into German conservatism and its relationship to National Socialism. Small in numbers and caught between the nationalist conservatism of the largely Protestant DNVP and the social conservatism of the Catholic Centre Party they hardly figure in the political histories of Imperial and Weimar Germany. Their benign

neglect in historiography ended with the renewed focus on the ideological roots of National Socialism in German history. Klaus Breuning and Horst Gründer, who provided an early overview of the Catholic right, their organisation, their worldview and publications concurred that the Catholic right was politically insignificant but important in its ability to bridge conservative views and those of the *völkisch* right.<sup>4</sup> While Breuning and Gründer acknowledge an affinity between the right's worldview and National Socialism, in particular in their desire to revive a German Reich, they are cautious to portray the Catholic right as precursor to National Socialism. They are equally careful to point out the difference between National Socialist antisemitism and that of the Catholic right. According to Breuning and Gründer, the Jew-hatred of the Catholic right was neither racist nor was it the driving force in their flirt with National Socialism.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, a closer look at the publications of the Catholic right has helped to revise these cautious suggestions. Christoph Hübner shows in his analysis of one of the right's main journal, the *Gelben Hefte*, that many Catholics of the right used hostile racial images of Jews in their writings and publications.<sup>6</sup> Larry E. Jones goes even further when he claims that the Catholic right not only helped to pave the way for Hitler, but that they did so out of conviction and not as part of a strategy of containment. Jones is one of the few historians who address the virulent antisemitism of influential individuals of the Catholic right as a factor in their attraction to National Socialism.<sup>7</sup> His studies on the Westphalian Catholic nobility and the Reich Catholic Committee of the DNVP combine the worldview of the Catholic right with their political history, institutional and personal affiliations in such a way that the relation between ideology and political commitment becomes more explicit than it has been suggested in the older literature on the Catholic right.<sup>8</sup>

In light of recent research, the chief significance of the Catholic right did not lie in their *Standespolitik* as nobles or in their party politics as members of the DNVP, but in their ability to create an alternative network for nationalist-minded Catholics who were likewise repelled by the anti-Catholicism of *völkisch* groups and the coalition between the Centre Party and the SPD. The mixture of nationalist pride and Catholic faith attracted those sections of the disintegrating Catholic milieu that ultimately proved least committed to democracy: Catholic nobles, academics, students and youth. Furthermore, considering that the future of the Weimar Republic depended on the decisions of a few 'undemocratic conservatives' (Michael Mann) in the years 1932 and 1933, among them fellow

travellers of the Catholic right, such as Franz von Papen, the DNVP's man within the Centre Party<sup>9</sup>, the worldview and antisemitism of the Catholic right remains important in any enquiry into the early acquiescence of Christian conservatives to the National Socialist regime.<sup>10</sup>

The antisemitism of the Catholic right was certainly the most virulent form of Jew-hatred amongst Catholics in Weimar Germany. In contrast to the traditional ambivalent Catholic attitude towards Jews (Christian charity and protection against allegedly malign Jewish influences), there was little ambivalence in the treatment of the 'Jewish question' by the Catholic right. National union and the reconciliation between the Christian confessions was their priority. Their conviction that Germany suffered under the contemporary, almost biblical, struggle between 'Christian' values and 'Jewish' influences left little scope for Christian charity against Jews. Like Blaschke's Catholic ultramontanes of the nineteenth century, these Catholic nationalists sought to defend and unify not Catholic and Church interests, but those of a Christian conservative nation.<sup>11</sup>

The Catholic right was united in its opposition to the newly founded democratic German republic and in its aim to forge a German national community (*Volksgemeinschaft*) based on a corporative organic society and crowned by a German monarch. Determined to fight anti-Christian influences in German society, in particular 'Marxism', the Catholic right chose their political opponents in social democracy and the Centre Party. The political centre of the Catholic right was the Reich Catholic Committee (NCC, *Reichskatholiken-Ausschuß der Deutschnationalen Volkspartei*) of the DNVP, established on 25 October 1920 by Baron Engelbert von Landsberg-Velen, descended from an old and distinguished Westphalian noble family.<sup>12</sup> He managed to gather other Catholics who had left the Centre Party after it had committed itself to the democratic republic and a coalition with the Social Democrats in 1919.<sup>13</sup> Well-known members of the NCC included the highly decorated artillery general Max von Gallwitz, the former mayor of Cologne and DNVP representative in the Prussian Landtag, Max Wallraf and the historian Martin Spahn.<sup>14</sup> Those national-conservative Catholics who were willing to commit themselves to another party saw the only meaningful alternative to pursue conservative and monarchist interests within the overwhelmingly Protestant DNVP. Others like the brothers Hermann and Ferdinand von Lüninck, who were reluctant to commit to a political party, turned towards voluntary professional and paramilitary associations such as the peasant leagues or the *Stahlhelm*.<sup>15</sup> They nevertheless assisted the NCC in election campaigns, supported its

publications and petitioned the Catholic bishops in favour of the NCC. It was the preferred political commitment of Catholic nobles of the right as it fitted both their dislike of parliamentary democracy and their understanding of the nobility's traditional paternalistic role in society. Thus the NCC might have delivered the organisational backbone to Catholic and national politics but it was not the only platform for the Catholic right. Following the conservative tradition of *Sammlungspolitik*, DNVP Catholics were keen to maintain a network of like-minded Christians that stretched across class and confessional divisions. This included links to the Catholic nobility as well as to the Christian trade unions, the Benedictine monastery of Maria Laach, whose members voted DNVP from 1924, the Young Conservatives around Heinrich von Gleichen and Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, as well as organisations of the *völkisch* right such as the *Stahlhelm* and the Jungdeutsche Orden.<sup>16</sup>

Although it is at times stressed that the Catholic right was a heterogeneous group, they are easily identifiable from their social background and regional origin. The majority of national conservative Catholics belonged to the social elites of Imperial and Weimar Germany, the nobility and the educated middle class. They were landowners, high-ranking civil servants and academics. Amongst them were a few entrepreneurs and members of the lower clergy but no workers. Geographically, the Reich Catholic Committee was represented in most regions of Germany but found its key support in the Catholic diaspora regions of Prussia, in particular in Westphalia, Berlin, Silesia but also in Catholic Bavaria.<sup>17</sup> The Catholic right appears heterogeneous because of its many political affiliation outside its political core of the NCC. Christoph Hübner further highlights the generational and ideological difference among national conservative Catholics. He distinguishes between 'old nationalists' (e.g., the brothers Ferdinand and Alfred von Landsberg, the chairman of the Bavarian branch of the NCC and editor of the *Gelben Hefte*, Max Buchner or the Breslau theology professor Kurt Ziesche) and 'new nationalists' such as the historian Martin Spahn, his student and 'representative of the front-generation',<sup>18</sup> Eduard Stadtler or the brothers Hermann and Ferdinand von Lüninck.<sup>19</sup> They subscribed to the same worldview that was defined by divine authority and natural law but they had different visions of how society ought to be governed. Yet Hübner rightly stresses that the 'old nationalist' dream of the restoration of a hereditary dynasty was ultimately reconcilable with the 'new nationalist' preference for a Führer figure as long as it remained on a theoretical level.<sup>20</sup>

The immediate aim of the Catholic right was to strengthen German Christian conservatism that was deeply divided after the war and had only recently found a new political centre in the DNVP.<sup>21</sup> Their previous political home, the Centre Party, had been a pillar of prewar conservatism but had 'betrayed' conservative ideals in the eyes of the Catholic right when it supported the democratic Republic. Worse still, it cooperated with the right's political and ideological opponents, the social democrats and liberals. The long-term aim of the Catholic right was to heal the historical confessional divide in Germany in order to forge a national community. Their dream was conditional on the end of the young democracy and a return to a monarchical or authoritarian political structure and conservative Christian values. The creation of the Reich Catholic Committee within the DNVP was the alternative option to the foundation of a completely new party and the preference of Baron Engelbert von Landsberg-Velen. Using this democratic front, the NCC set out to canvass DNVP votes among conservative Catholics who still supported the Centre Party and petitioned the Catholic bishops to support their political course. In matters of political day-to-day routine the NCC and its satellites supported DNVP policies.<sup>22</sup>

The NCC published two supraregional newspapers to advance their nationalist education and the recruitment for the DNVP amongst Catholics: the *Katholische Korrespondenzblatt* (1921–26; later continued as *Katholische Führerbriefe*) edited by Johannes Pritze and Paul Lejeune Jung, former Centre politician and now vice-chairman of the NCC<sup>23</sup>, and the *Gelben Hefte*, successor to the well-known learned Catholic journal, *Historisch-Politischen Blätter*, edited by Max Buchner.<sup>24</sup> Most of their own publications struggled financially and never reached a mass audience. However, one should not forget that their publications were directed at specific groups of readers, such as students, academics and DNVP members, to strengthen the national conservative network across the confessional divide.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, the Catholic right applied the conservative ideal of *Sammlungspolitik* to their publication activities. This meant that writers and publicists of the right had a range of media at their disposal that reached beyond the boundaries of DNVP party lines. Editors would reprint articles from other national conservative newspapers, e.g., the *Kreuzzeitung*, invite each other's contributions or refer an interesting article to a friend's newspaper.<sup>26</sup> Pritze in turn supported Eduard Stadtler's young conservative journal *Das Gewissen* and Martin Spahn's *Das Deutsche Volk*, sharing authors and mailing lists of subscribers to the *Korrespondenzblatt*.<sup>27</sup> Support

for the Catholic right and its publication also came from the right-wing of the Centre Party. Wilhelm Reinermann, secretary of the Association of Catholic Journeyman (*Kolpingsverein*) edited *Das Deutsche Volk* by 1933, and Heinz Brauweiler opened the pages of his *Düsseldorfer Tageblatt* to the work of the Catholic right.<sup>28</sup>

The NCC eventually broke apart in 1929 over the Prussian Landtag's vote on whether to accept the Prussian Concordat. The confessional divide could ultimately not be overcome. Alfred Hugenberg, chairman of the DNVP from 1928, had demanded absolute loyalty to the DNVP party line and its rejection of the Prussian Concordat. This blunt disregard of Catholic interests within the DNVP prompted most of the 'old nationalists' to resign from the NCC and later from the party itself. These included among others Engelbert von Landsberg, Paul Lejune Jung, Max Wallraf, Max Buchner, Kurt Ziesche and Max von Gallwitz.<sup>29</sup> For nationalist like Martin Spahn among the Catholic right, however, Hugenberg had proved leadership qualities and served the party's main aim of forging a united national conservative front.

### **Worldview**

National conservative Catholics were not 'lesser Catholics' as Centre Party publications tried to portray them. They were certainly not Centre Party Catholics, in fact their entire *raison d'être* was to oppose Centre Party policies and ideals. Yet this opposition to political Catholicism in Germany did not diminish their commitment to the Catholic faith or their loyalty to Rome as the spiritual and organisational centre of Catholicism. The Catholic right might no longer have been 'Catholic' in their politics but 'Catholic' was their religious commitment. Their worldview, too, was anchored in a religious framework and Catholic values and ideals.

Catholics of the right had conserved many characteristics of an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Catholic conservative worldview whose foundation was set by God's authority and the principles of natural law. According to these, mankind lived in a God-given order where everybody had a destined place in a corporative society. All secular authority was consequently solely derived from God and from historically grown structures not from human constructs and certainly not from popular sovereignty. Man's task was thus simply to maintain this divine order.<sup>30</sup> The ideal social polity in the eyes of the Catholic right was the pre-modern corporative order of small communities governed by the traditional elite of guild-masters,

aristocracy and the Church. The crowning temporal authority lay in a hereditary monarchy or a charismatic leader figure. In such a world, democracy was neither organic nor did it derive its authority from God. It was 'mechanistic' and man-made, women's suffrage was a 'Horrendum' that led 'to the decomposition of the Christian family' and the direct universal vote favoured the 'demagogue' over the conscientious citizen.<sup>31</sup> Like their ancestors, the Catholic right in Weimar Germany consequently fought what they perceived as the outgrowth of the 'ideas of 1789': 'materialist liberalism' and its modern version in socialism and democracy. Yet in contrast to nineteenth century ultramontane and integralist Catholics, they were klein-German nationalists. If the Catholic right in Weimar dreamt of a new Reich it was a version of the Second German Reich of Bismarck and Wilhelm II, not a Catholic Reich in a federation with the Habsburg Empire, which was to Max Buchner the 'grave of [their] national hopes'.<sup>32</sup>

Antisemitism was a central part of their worldview. Considering that the Catholic right encompassed people including ageing barons of the rural and industrial Catholic aristocracy, academics, higher civil servants, and 'young conservatives' such as Martin Spahn and Eduard Stadtler it is not surprising that they did not speak in one antisemitic voice. The anti-Jewish sentiments voiced at meetings or elaborated in publications of the Catholic right ranged from nineteenth-century Judeo-masonic conspiracy theories to racial characterisations of Jews. Count von der Recke, for instance, complained to Pritze that no-one took note of unspeakable 'Zustände' where the Foreign Secretary of Germany was married to a Jewish woman, Mussolini was not only a Freemason but had given away all influential positions to Jews, and the kings of Denmark and Sweden were Freemasons.<sup>33</sup> On other occasions Jews were denounced as powerful financiers who controlled world finance or as subversive communists who threatened the German nation and culture.<sup>34</sup> The minutes of the 1923 meeting of the Catholic Westphalian aristocracy illustrate nicely the breadth of anti-Jewish beliefs among the Catholic right ranging from a trust in the veracity of the 'Protocols of Zion' to a nationalist and exclusionary view that Jewry and Germandom were ultimately incompatible. After presentations on the theme of 'Volkstum, Jewry and Freemasonry', the minutes summarised the participants' view on the 'Jewish question' in three points. First, the accusations of the 'Protocols' were plausible because of their 'inner truth', their confirmation through recent events and the fact that Jews had sought to obstruct their distribution.<sup>35</sup> Second, the assimilation of Jewry and

Germandom along Anglo-Saxon lines was impossible, because the German nature (*‘die bodenständige, nationale, produktivarbeitende Einstellung’*) was intrinsically contrary to the ‘Jewish spirit’. Third, fighting Jewry did not contradict Catholic principles, on the contrary: ‘since Christ’s death the Jews are the rejected people, God’s scourge, the main representatives of materialism, decomposition, of anti-Christendom’. Two years later, Count Otto Westphalen spoke on national self-defence at another gathering of the Catholic nobility. His talk included similarly confused imaginations of a ‘Jewish question’.<sup>36</sup> Westphalen warned against the growing influence of Jews in Germany and urged the state to take measures against those ‘Fremdkörper’ who seek to destroy it: ‘I count amongst them “Fremdrassen” who refuse to assimilate, e.g., the Jews. The state has the right, with reservations, not to treat them as full citizens, to impose restrictions on their political rights, their freedom of residence, their choice of a profession, etc., just as the medieval state had done with the approval of the Church – I also count among them [Fremdkörper] those secret societies that the popes have always declared enemies of both the Church and the state. However, requirement for such a “Sonderbehandlung” of those “Fremdkörper” who are not willing to assimilate is that the state had not incorporated them violently and against their will.’<sup>37</sup> In an afterthought Westphalen also urged to protect the people against the influence of immoral modern fashion and dances.<sup>38</sup>

These confused projections of everything that seemed modern and uncontrollable onto ‘the Jews’ only to end the lament in a grandfatherly protest against modern dances had their roots in a recognisable worldview. If the foundation of the Catholic right’s worldview was a religiously heightened belief in Germandom, at its heart was the conviction that Germany found itself in a biblical struggle between good and evil, Christian values and materialism, between the old order and socialism. In most publications of the right these conflicts simply epitomised the struggle between Christianity and Jewry. For example, in one of the first meetings of the Westphalian Catholic aristocracy after the war, Baron Hermann zu Stolberg-Stolberg had elaborated the details of the struggle between Christendom and Jewry where the ‘unrelenting enemy of the Christian world spirit and ‘German nature and spirit’ was the ‘spirit of Jewry’.<sup>39</sup> Five years later, Max Buchner, editor of the *Gelben Hefte*, turned this Manichean outlook on the world into the heart of the journal’s programme. In the introduction to its first edition (1924), Buchner argued that the modern world was divided between the



‘Christian-patriotic battlefront’, the Catholic parties and a third ‘front, which was in political terms democracy and in spiritual terms mainly Jewry, liberalism and freemasonry’.<sup>40</sup> The urgent duty of conservative Christians was to ‘fight the notorious ills that have been established by Jewry since 1917 and have robbed our public life of our best values’.<sup>41</sup>

The Breslau professor in theology and, according to Breuning, ‘the most influential mind of the Catholic right’<sup>42</sup>, Kurt Ziesche, elaborated the importance of the Manichean struggle between Christianity and Jewry in his book *Das Königtum Christi in Europa*.<sup>43</sup> Published in 1926 with the Imprimatur of the diocese of Regensburg, the book amounted to an intellectual and political manifesto of the Catholic right. It was an attempt to position the Catholic right within the spectrum of Catholic and conservative politics in Weimar Germany beyond the Centre Party. Unlike other political manifestos, this was politics firmly rooted in a religious worldview. In Ziesche’s opinion, the forces of history were driven by the eternal and fundamental antagonism between ‘true Jewry’ and ‘true Christendom’, where one was to be the ‘ruin’ (Vernichtung) of the other.<sup>44</sup> In order to corroborate his claim, he explained how Jews from the time of the French Revolution had emerged as victors of this struggle and came to dominate science, politics, the economy, public opinion and ‘socialism as the this-worldly Jewish Messianism’ in their sole aim to drive mankind further away from God towards reason.<sup>45</sup> A ‘Christian European policy’, on the other hand, was to lead peoples back to spirituality (zum Jenseits zurück zu führen).<sup>46</sup> In Ziesche’s eyes, the key to confront the chaos and problems of modern society was to assure that Christendom would win over Jewry in this biblical struggle. He consequently called on all conservative Catholics to support the Catholic right in defence against the left-leaning Centre Party and the ‘Jewish influences’ at work within it.<sup>47</sup> Ziesche warned that a redeeming ‘Christian European policy’ was jeopardised if ‘at the centre of Europe, in Germany, Catholicism [was] contaminated by [the Centre Party’s] political ally, modern Jewry’.<sup>48</sup> Yet more importantly, in order to build such an effective Christian defence, Germany had to overcome the historical divide between its Christian denominations. The patriotic duty of all conservative Catholics was consequently to cooperate with Germany’s Protestants in the ‘Armageddon between Christendom and its determined world-enemy, Jewry’.<sup>49</sup> If they succeeded in building such a united Christian national front, Ziesche promised, this righteous coalition would rekindle a ‘Christian religious-moral revival’ that permeated ‘the

entire cultural and political life, jurisdiction, family, work, property, the press' to uncover everything 'Jewish'.<sup>50</sup>

Ziesche's political manifesto was clear. The place of the Catholic right was not with the 'Jewified' Centre Party but with the largely Protestant German National People's Party (DNVP): 'Catholics of the Right in Germany are *völkisch* ... The *völkisch* idea must not be neglected, even if its abuse can end in the surrogate religion of Nationalism.'<sup>51</sup> Ziesche was aware of the DNVP's deeply ingrained anti-Catholic sentiments and the small faction of radical anticlerics within the party. For the sake of a unified Christian front, Ziesche tolerated excessive nationalism but cautioned against any hope to establish a 'German religion' that claimed to be more German than a 'Jewified Christendom'. According to Ziesche, such '*völkisch* Christendom [was] purest Jewry of a kind that had for ever parted with the historical Jesus'.<sup>52</sup>

The Catholic right identified themselves with the *völkisch* right and their radical nationalism and exclusionary antisemitism as long as they refrained from anti-Catholic impulses. They shared the *völkisch* vision of a fundamental struggle between two warring worlds. This was not the racial struggle between Aryans and Jews that consumed Hitler and the core National Socialists, but a struggle that was anchored in a religious, even Catholic, worldview where the Church was the 'fundamental antithesis of Jewry'.<sup>53</sup>

The following discussions of the 'Jewish question' are taken from publications and correspondence of the Catholic right and show that little remained of the ambivalent religious dimension that characterised the position of the Centre Party and the Catholic Church. The antisemitism of the *völkisch* right, on the other hand, was not an embarrassment to be tolerated but essential in the attraction of the Catholic right to the *völkisch* movement. It was the *völkisch* movement not the Centre Party that promised to tackle one of their main anguishes – the 'Jewish question'. In the discourse of the Catholic right antisemitism had thus become the marker that sought to separate their nationalist and Catholic attitude from that of a lukewarm patriotism of the Centre.

### *The 'Jewish question' and antisemitism within the Catholic right*

The parentage of the DNVP as well as the commitment to Catholicism was visible in the programme of the Reich Catholic Committee. The programme, together with an introductory letter

signed by Baron Engelbert von Landsberg, was sent out to Papal Nuncio Eugenio Pacelli, and the German Catholic bishops. The documents underlined the right's rejection of the young Weimar democracy and championed the return to a monarchy and a corporate state on the lines defined by Pope Leo XIII.<sup>54</sup> The letter continued, that the

most important task of the present lies in the maintenance and revival of the Christian nationalist idea, particularly among the masses that have been seduced by socialism. This task determines at the same time our stance towards the Jewish question. While we acknowledge the law of Christian charity that excludes no-one, we are not prepared to concede to an alien and international people either secret nor public political influence that exceeds their numbers by far, that threatens our cultural identity and usually does not contribute to a Christian national education (*Volkserziehung*).<sup>55</sup>

The letter to Pacelli and the bishops highlights the importance of the 'Jewish question' to the policies of the Catholic right when it linked their long-term aim of national revival to an adequate treatment of the 'Jewish question'. At the same time, the NCC committed itself to the principle of Christian charity as long as it was not detrimental to the interests of the nation.

Religious references were ubiquitous in the discussions of the 'Jewish question' among the Catholic right. Amongst these, the claim of a Jewish deicide was the most common starting point for an 'explanation' why modern Jews had become the alleged source for liberalism, materialism and national decay.<sup>56</sup> Kurt Ziesche, for instance, explained in his *Königtum* that the modern struggle between Christianity and Jewry had begun with the Jews' rejection of Christ as messiah and their subsequent search for a 'secular Messianism'.<sup>57</sup> Papal announcements, in particular the antiliberal encyclical 'Libertas' by Leo XIII, were another convenient means to show Catholics that the highest authority of the Catholic Church had long warned of the malign influences of Jews and Freemasons.<sup>58</sup> The use of biblical anti-Jewish quotes, preferably by Christ, were an even better 'proof' that antisemitism was not a sin: 'Those Christians who enjoy warning their co-Christians of an allegedly mistaken "antisemitism" – to the quiet satisfaction of the Jews – will not wish to censor [Christ's] historical words and sharpest indictment against his own people.'<sup>59</sup>

True to the religious premises of their worldview and 'Jewish question', the 'solution' offered in the publications of the Catholic right was Christian, too.<sup>60</sup> The Christian 'solution' of a corporative state and organic society offered Christian control over culture, economy and government and ultimately over the feared 'Jewish influences' in these fields through (Christian) guilds and paternalist government.<sup>61</sup> Meanwhile, the individual Christian patriot could bar the advance of 'Jewish influences' as long as he remained 'steadfast in [his] German and Christian ways', lived a life in simplicity and austerity away from the 'services to mammon'.<sup>62</sup>

With the aid of these theological references, the publications of the Catholic right sought to enlist theological and ecclesiastical authority to their course, yet to what extent did the Catholic right receive ecclesiastical support? Throughout Weimar Germany, the chairman of the German bishops' conference, Cardinal Adolf Bertram of Breslau, resisted all attempts of the Catholic right to elicit public support of the German bishops for the right. The support the Catholic right received from the ecclesiastical structure was more indirect and local. Anti-Jewish publications by renowned Catholic journals such as the *Historisch-Politischen Blätter* or publishing houses such as the Bonifatius Druckerei in Paderborn were welcome sources of anti-Jewish quotes; better still if these publications bore the Imprimatur of the local bishop and thus the ecclesiastical approval to print. The *Katholische Korrespondenzblatt*, for example, quoted from the anti-Jewish publications of the nationalist priest Philipp Haeuser or Robert Klimsch's *Die Juden* (1920), which both had received the Imprimatur of the Bishop of Regensburg. For the *Korrespondenzblatt* this was another chance to show that Catholics ought to recognise the urgency of the 'Jewish question'.<sup>63</sup>

The Catholic right certainly knew their theology and the Church's view on antisemitism, yet how did they reconcile their antisemitism with their Catholic faith? Two articles in the *Katholische Korrespondenzblatt* illustrate the right's attitude to racial antisemitism and how this marked a true Christian nationalism. Both articles urge the reader to adopt a more resolute defence against 'Jewish influences' than the cautious tolerance that the left wing of the Centre Party asked of Catholics. In the summer of 1923, when rumour was ripe of a renewed attempt at a nationalist coup d'état, an event that most leading Catholics of the right wholeheartedly supported,<sup>64</sup> the *Korrespondenzblatt* expressed its sympathy with the *völkisch* right and in particular with the nationalists in Bavaria on a number of occasions.<sup>65</sup> At the same time, the number of anti-Jewish

statements in the paper increased as did the articles that discussed the 'Jewish question' in detail. Amongst these was a lengthy argument by a solicitor in Bonn, Felix Joseph Klein, in favour of a 'rational anti-semitism' that looked at the 'facts' of Jewish influence in Germany today. Klein did not reject what he called the 'healthy antisemitism' of the Catholic Church but wished for more 'man-like action' without descending into 'Radauantisemitismus'. His 'Jewish problem' was his belief that Jews would soon be the dominant people within Western nations because of their alleged higher birth rate. At the same time they remained a closed nation within other nations. 'We know that the Israeli people will have to fulfil a great mission at the end of all time ... but we do not have the right simply to await the end of the world and to twiddle our thumbs'. Quoting Philipp Haeusser, he ends by calling for the creation of Christian states that would grant Jews right of residence (*Gastrecht*) as long as they conformed to it.<sup>66</sup>

The second article was by Joseph Roth on 'Catholicism and the Jewish Question', which the *Korrespondenzblatt* published in three instalments. Roth of the Archdiocese of Munich-Freising later joined the regime's Church Ministry.<sup>67</sup> In great detail, Roth argued that Catholics could be antisemites without renouncing Catholic charity and universalism, because antisemitism was an act of self-defence. They should also begin to see Jews as an alien race whose characteristics were determined by race and blood, because only racial antisemitism had so far led the most effective struggle against Jewry. According to Roth, this neither contradicted Catholic charity and Catholicism's universalism that embraced all races. If a race stood for immorality as Jews did, it was Catholic duty to oppose this race.<sup>68</sup> At the same time, Catholics should not follow the Swastika and their mob law or publish 'petty tasteless anti-Semitic tracts'.<sup>69</sup> Roth ultimately preferred a 'religious policy' towards Jews that 'eliminated' (ausschalten) them from German public life, 'out of charity towards Jews, without any hatred, but out of love for Christian religion and morals'.<sup>70</sup>

Pritze, who edited the *Katholische Korrespondenzblatt* with Paul Lejeune Jung, sought to represent 'in politics the religious and cultural interests of German Catholicism through the [DNVP]'. In his eyes, nothing less than the fate of the fatherland was at stake. To save it, the division of the Christian confessions in politics had to be overcome in the face of 'victorious and largely anti-Christian Marxism' that threatened both confessions.<sup>71</sup> Pritze was consequently keen to keep the content and direction of the *Katholische Korrespondenzblatt* as close to the German nationalist view as possible. He commissioned

most of the contributions from other national conservative Catholics. If necessary, the topic as well as the political intention of the articles was often set out in advance by the editors.<sup>72</sup> Only if he was short of contributions or the chosen authors could not provide the requested articles did Pritze fall back on contributions sent in by readers.<sup>73</sup> The makers of the *Korrespondenzblatt* purposefully and carefully designed the content of the NCC newspaper in order to provide a compelling showcase for the aims and policies of the Catholic right. Opinions conflicting with their political line, for example from conservative but Centre Party Catholics, were published with a brief introduction by the editor clarifying their 'erroneous' ways.<sup>74</sup> Seen in this light, one must assume that the treatment of the 'Jewish question' by Klein and Roth had their purposeful place, too, in particular, since neither discussion of the 'Jewish question' or any other anti-Jewish remark in the paper needed a clarifying introduction by the editor. Roth's series in three parts shows that racial antisemitism was tolerated as long as it was not part of an anticlerical and anti-Catholic invective. The *Katholische Korrespondenzblatt* was not exceptional in its tolerance for antisemitism. Christoph Hübner has shown that an adoption of racial thought in the publications of the Catholic right was common in the right's other supra-regional journal, the *Gelben Hefte*. Hübner emphasises that the Catholic right subscribed to a *völkisch* nationalism based on Catholic creation thought but increasingly mixed with an ethnic, blood-based reception of nationalism that rejected the mixing of 'Jewish' and 'German' blood.<sup>75</sup>

Verbal and physical attacks on Jews noticeably increased in summer and autumn 1923 along with a more self-confident activism of the *völkisch* right and a wave of antisemitic news coverage. The wave broke in the abortive Hitler *Putsch* in November 1923 and subsided shortly thereafter when the democratic parties, including the Centre Party, moved to restrain the use of antisemitism on their platforms. The DNVP also muted antisemitism in its rhetoric in the campaign for the December 1924 Reichstag elections as it faced the prospect of entering national government. The party upheld this restraint as long as it was part of the national-conservative coalition governments, but returned to its open and radical antisemitism from 1932 now in competition with a more popular NSDAP. Yet their antisemitism was not a mere rhetorical ploy in their political game nor did it solely serve as a 'communicative bridge' to the *völkische* right, as Malinowski suggests in the case of the German nobility.<sup>76</sup> Most representatives of the conservative right subscribed to an antisemitism that hoped to diminish Jewish influence in Germany society.

Even Kuno Graf von Westarp, chairman of the DNVP from 1926 to 1928, who has been seen as an upright traditionalist among Weimar conservatives, found F.K. Günther's theses on Jews as an 'alien race' generally convincing.<sup>77</sup> The intensity of antisemitic comments in the publications of the Catholic right might have varied depending on contemporary events, yet antisemitism never vanished. Max Buchner inaugurated the right's new academic journal, the *Gelben Hefte*, in 1924, roughly at the same time that the DNVP party leaders moved to soften their party's public expressions of anti-Jewish hatred.<sup>78</sup>

The importance of the 'Jewish question' in their worldview as well as the fading of its religious content in favour of nationalist concerns is clearly expressed in samples of their correspondence. For example, in a letter to the editors of *Das Deutsche Volk*, the newspaper of the Catholic student union, *Ring deutscher Katholiken*, Martin Spahn emphasised the importance of antisemitism to the success of the German nationalist course and suggested the form and function the Ring's antisemitism should take:

I see the fight against the excessive domination of Jewry as one of our main objectives. We have to be antisemites, both as Christians and as Germans; it cannot be ignored that especially Jewry putrefies our religion and our patriotic ideals in every respect. We must, however, insist that the nature of today's antisemitism evolves into a more idealistic form. Today it is mainly based on race hatred and hostility. As long as it remains that way, it is something negative and cannot create positive values. We have to draw a sharp separation between the rabid *Hakenkreuzlertum* and have to develop our attitude towards Jewry into a positive Christianity and *Germanentum*.<sup>79</sup>

Only four months later, Spahn elaborated his idea of the 'Jewish question' in a correspondence with his former Jewish secretary, Susanne Thomas. Martin Spahn rejected therein the notion that the 'Jewish question' was a 'spiritual question', as suggested by his secretary. Instead he emphasised the distinct racial character Jewry had developed. Spahn felt that this character had become so strong that the relation between Jews and Germandom had become a question that demanded to be answered.<sup>80</sup> However, Spahn was not prepared to exclude all Jews from a German *Volksgemeinschaft*. Only Jews who 'cling to their race with all might' or those who were 'truly devoted to becoming part of the German people' were not part of a Jewish-German struggle.<sup>81</sup>

Around the same time, the 'old nationalist', Max Buchner wrote in the *Gelben Hefte* that the Catholic right ultimately rejected pogroms and violence against Jews. Yet no-one should forget that a small Jewish minority 'with their not quite harmless racial characteristics' could not be allowed to rule over Christians. Hence, one ought to strive to eliminate (Ausschaltung) Jews from public life.<sup>82</sup> Five years later Max Buchner declined the opportunity to speak against the anti-Jewish violence that he apparently deplored.<sup>83</sup> In his response to an invitation of the Association in Defence against Antisemitism (*Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus*) to speak at one of their public meetings in May 1930, Buchner explained that he declined the offer not because of an abstract opinion about Jewry, but because of the ongoing struggle against Jewish domination which robbed German public life of its most treasured values. This struggle, he believed, should be fought with fair means, not with rabid Jew-baiting. However, Buchner expressed his sympathy for the 'strong anti-Jewish wave that runs through the greater part of our people'. In Buchner's view the anti-Jewish measures of the past, as well as the current anti-semitic rhetoric and action, were justified and pardonable because these arose only out of self-defence.<sup>84</sup>

Neither Martin Spahn nor Max Buchner were marginal figures within the Catholic right. Martin Spahn (1875–1945), son of the respected former Centre Party chairman Peter Spahn, had been professor of modern history in Strasbourg before 1918, and a Centre Party politician before he joined the DNVP in 1921.<sup>85</sup> His political 'conversion' caused a great stir and gained the DNVP significant publicity and popularity among conservative Catholics, nobles, higher civil servants, and military circles, many of whom eventually followed Spahn's example.<sup>86</sup> With the DNVP, Spahn worked ceaselessly for a revival of nationalist conservative politics and became one of the most influential Catholics on the right under Alfred Hugenberg's chairmanship of the DNVP. He remained loyal to the deeply antidemocratic Alfred Hugenberg until he joined the NSDAP in June 1933. Hugenberg and the DNVP had become too weak in Spahn's eyes to conclude the conservative revolution he had hoped for.<sup>87</sup>

Max Buchner was chairman of the Bavarian NCC and editor of the right's journal, the *Gelben Hefte*, which succeeded the highly respected Catholic periodical *Historisch-Politischen Blätter*. Max Buchner's political career is representative of many conservative Germans in the Weimar Republic who travelled a trajectory from conservatism to the right. He had always been a monarchist and



sceptical of democracy, but the postwar revolutions and the establishment of a German democratic republic had intensified and radicalised his political consciousness, which from then on would permeate his thinking and his actions.<sup>88</sup> A historian by training, Buchner was full professor for medieval and Bavarian history at the University of Würzburg from 1926 and was made *Ordinarius* of the history department at the University of Munich in 1936.<sup>89</sup>

As mentioned before, the Catholic right sought their 'solution' to the 'Jewish question' in a Christian and nationalist education and the reconstruction of a German Christian social order. Their dream of a revival of a German Christian social order was not a self-indulgent escapism or cunning rhetoric to unite Germany's monarchists. Most national conservative Catholics dedicated their social and political activity to this vision. Ferdinand von Lüninck led the *Westfalenbund* and later the paramilitary, right-wing *Stahlhelm* in Westphalia after the two organisations merged in 1924. He also supported the nationalist attempts to overthrow the Republic by Wolfgang Kapp and General Walther von Lüttwitz in 1920 and Adolph Hitler in November 1923.<sup>90</sup> Against the background of a steady deterioration of the rural economy, Hermann von Lüninck aided Baron Clemens von Loë-Berghausen, president of the Rhenish Peasants' Union, to unite his organisation with the antisemitic National Rural League in 1929.<sup>91</sup> The *Politische Kolleg* of Martin Spahn did not only provide Catholic youths with a nationalist education but also functioned as an early form of the modern think-tank.<sup>92</sup> In its different workshops, experts developed foreign policy strategies, measures of national integration, and constitutional reforms with the aim to offer political alternatives that would eventually have led to a corporative state.<sup>93</sup> The nationalist education at the *Politische Kolleg* claimed to be from a conservative-nationalist point of view but was essentially *völkisch* with lectures on 'Race, People, State' by Count Erich von Reventlow, and courses on 'World Revolution and Völkisch Policy'. Since the 'Jewish question' was seen as one of the main obstacles to national regeneration within the German right, the *Kolleg* without fail informed its students about the 'Jewish Question in the Light of Racial Disintegration', based on the writings of racial antisemitism's forefathers: Lagarde, Langbehn, Chamberlain and Eugen Dühring.<sup>94</sup>

Indeed, for Ferdinand von Lüninck and a number of like-minded Catholics the gap between them and the NSDAP eventually closed in June 1931 when they openly identified with the aims of the Party in a letter sent to Bishop Kaspar Klein of Paderborn, a move not tolerated by the Catholic bishops.<sup>95</sup> It was not just Hitler's anti-Marxism and

nationalism that was so appealing to these nobles. They also accepted the argument for anti-Jewish measures as an alleged remedy for the nation's problems. Those who signed the letter in June 1931 called for explicit Catholic support of Hitler in order to defeat Marxism and stop the 'deterioration' of the German race: 'Likewise, the relentless fight against the unhealthy dominance of Jewry in our political, economic and cultural life is to be supported; because everywhere where the forces of decomposition rose in past and present, they are headed by the Jewish element, the "Element of Decomposition"'.<sup>96</sup>

The experiment of the Catholic right to rebuilt Christian conservatism together with the Protestant DNVP was already failing by the time Ferdinand von Lüninck turned towards National Socialism in 1931. The majority of the 'founding fathers' of the NCC had resigned, while the Committee itself, now led by Martin Spahn, became a passive part of the party. Supporting National Socialism seemed to be the most feasible way to forge a conservative-nationalist front to Ferdinand von Lüninck in 1931. Other Catholics of the right, including Martin Spahn, Eduard Stadtler, Hans Bernhard Gisevius and Edmund Forschbach, followed Lüninck's path two years later, after Hugenberg's DNVP had failed to impose its leadership on the *völkisch* coalition.<sup>97</sup> Ferdinand von Lüninck's support of National Socialism went beyond his 1931 call to support the NSDAP. As provincial president of Westphalia, he diligently implemented the 1933 Civil Service Law against those he had always perceived as usurpers of the German people: Centre Party Catholics, the political left as well as Jews. With a similar devotion to his administrative duties, Lüninck advanced the expropriation, the so-called Aryanisation, of Jewish wealth and assets.<sup>98</sup>

### ***Catholic responses to the Catholic right and its antisemitism***

The Reich Catholic Committee and its satellite organisations were determined to draw more people to their cause, but their direct political influence was very limited as long as Weimar Germany's governments remained democratic. For years, the *Gelben Hefte* struggled financially. Even after its finances were stable from 1932 onwards, the *Hefte*'s readership was fairly modest, never exceeding a circulation of 2,000.<sup>99</sup> Martin Spahn's attempt to advance nationalist education through the *Politische Kolleg* barely survived until 1933 on ever-diminishing resources.<sup>100</sup> And his *Ring deutscher Katholiken* had turned into yet another right-wing student organisation. The Catholic inroads the NCC hoped to carve into the DNVP remained mere faint

paths in 1931. Hübner suggests that 11.9% of DNVP members were Catholics and 8.6% of the Catholic electorate gave their vote to the DNVP.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, internal disputes with the DNVP leadership under Alfred Hugenberg left the NCC in a marginal position within the party from 1928.<sup>102</sup> The exodus of the main founding fathers of the NCC in reaction to the DNVP's rejection of the Prussian Concordat in 1929 was not only a sign of the Committee's political failure but also showed that the denominational divide within the party could ultimately not be overcome.<sup>103</sup>

However, since most organisations of the Catholic right deliberately focused their activities on the dissemination of a Christian-nationalist worldview and lobbying rather than on party politics, their success ought to be judged on their ability to attract Catholics to their ideas. The work of the Catholic right was encouraged by the explicit support of Abbot Ildefons Herwegen of Maria Laach, an invitation by Bishop Berning of Osnabrück, a promise to address their interests at the bishops' conference in Fulda and the sympathetic ear of *Generalvikar* Rosenberg in Paderborn who had expressed his 'complete sympathy for the struggle against Jewish influence which also affects the Centre press today ... In this struggle the JO [*Jungdeutsche Orden*] stands out bravely and openly and represents therein a great Christian interest in the tradition of many Christian-Catholic pioneers.'<sup>104</sup> By 1932 DNVP Catholics had at long last made first inroads into Catholic associations loyal to the Centre Party when they had been invited to organise their own workshops and speakers at the *Katholikentag*.<sup>105</sup>

The recruitment to the German-nationalist fold was particularly successful among Catholic academics and students.<sup>106</sup> In this respect, Catholics were no exception to the general trend. The popularity of nationalist thought and the considerable Catholic sympathies for the early National Socialist movement has been demonstrated cogently by Derek Hastings. This Catholic support for the early NSDAP reached a high point in 1923, but rapidly dissolved in early 1924 in response to the passionate anti-Catholicism of Erich Ludendorff and Alfred Rosenberg and the *völkisch* attacks on Cardinal Faulhaber after the failed Hitler *Putsch* in November 1923.<sup>107</sup> An attraction to nationalist organisations and parties remained, however, despite the rejection of the NSDAP. Hastings has found that Catholic defectors of the *völkisch* bloc hardly returned to the Catholic Bavarian People's Party but opted for the DNVP instead, not least because of the energetic campaign of its Catholic Committee.<sup>108</sup> These persisting sympathies for the conservative right were still lamented by the

*Volksverein*, a Catholic publishing house and umbrella organisation for the multitude of Catholic voluntary associations. During a conference in 1925 the Bavarian *Volksverein* recorded that the division between Catholics loyal to the Centre Party and those leaning towards nationalist organisations was particularly strong in Bavaria and hindered the *Volksverein*'s work.<sup>109</sup>

Indeed, throughout the Weimar Republic members of the Centre Party and its affiliated associations such as the *Volksverein* filed anxious reports on a Catholic public that seemed to move away from their traditional centre, in particular in those regions where the Catholic right was most active. For example, on the western borders of the Republic the *Stahlhelm Landesverband Westmark* was winning Catholic support for the *Stahlhelm*'s referendum on the dissolution of the Prussian Landtag in summer 1931 as reported by Dr Kohlen of the *Volksverein*.<sup>110</sup> The Catholic right, too, had campaigned in favour of the dissolution the Prussian Landtag because, as leaflets suggested, the parliament was believed to have a large Jewish influence.<sup>111</sup> Kohlen described the remarkable success of right-wing organisations in Catholic areas, noticeably around Trier and Koblenz, where support for the *Stahlhelm* had risen from 9,687 to over 140,000 votes. Breslau, Lower and Upper Silesia, the left-bank lower Rhine region and the Hunsrück were similarly reported to be receptive to *völkisch* propaganda. Kohlen did not see the reason for this rebellion in mere party-politicking by Centre Party voters, but thought that their alienation was more fundamental, that ordinary Catholics had refused their support for 'ideological reasons'.<sup>112</sup>

The opinion of ordinary Catholics, where documented, confirms the observations of the *Volksverein* mentioned before. In the critical years 1931/32, the Centre's previous collaboration with the SPD and the perceived threat of Bolshevism often convinced individual Catholics that their interests were best served by nationalist parties.<sup>113</sup> Again, the right's antisemitism was not just tolerated, it often seemed to have been part of their attraction – a good example is a Kiel factory director. Furious at the criticism of National Socialism by the local priest, he complained in April 1932 to Bishop Berning that 'Hindenburg was promoted by the anti-clerical Social Democracy, the Jews of the democratic parties whose ancestors had crucified Christ, and the Catholic Centre ... Hitler [on the other side] is the candidate of all national and truly social-minded Germans [including many loyal Catholics]'.<sup>114</sup>

Again and again it was the Catholic youth that troubled observers.<sup>115</sup> Former BVP councillor Messerschmidt of Bad Kissingen

reported that young Catholics were strongly attracted by the nationalist movement. He also suggested that the Centre Party and the Church should move closer to the National Socialist movement as soon as possible in order to be able to influence the cultural policies of the NSDAP.<sup>116</sup>

It has often been stated that by and large Catholics did not vote NSDAP. This is certainly correct on the level of Reichstag elections, but it fails to detect fluctuations in the Catholic electorate or its attraction to *völkisch* groups other than the NSDAP. In the heated atmosphere of 1931 and 1932, results of Landtag elections and referenda suggest that political allegiance became more and more polarised, even in Catholic regions. For instance, the successes of the DNVP and NSDAP in 1931 and 1932 in the Catholic town of Passau cast some doubt on the strength of the Catholic Bavarian People's Party (BVP), the sister party of the Centre Party. In their reports to the diocese, parish priests commented on the reading habits and political inclinations of their parishioners. They found that *völkisch* and socialist papers were widely read, although the BVP paper *Donauzeitung* was still a favourite among Catholics. In politics, Passau Catholics divided their vote almost equally between the NSDAP and BVP, while the Social Democrats and Communists were left far behind. The BVP was indeed often only marginally ahead of the NSDAP. A fair example here is Ilzstadt, where 232 people voted NSDAP, 235 BVP and only 87 and 79 voted SPD and KPD respectively.<sup>117</sup> In the parish of St Josef in Auerbach the BVP was even outnumbered by the NSDAP with 170 against 240 votes.<sup>118</sup>

The Catholic bishops and the representatives of political Catholicism were alarmed by the growing division of the Catholic electorate and were keen to examine the reasons behind the attraction to *völkisch* organisations. The structural shortcomings of political Catholicism were often criticised, including its lethargic political campaigns and its thin presence in rural areas, all of which compared unfavourably with the activism of *völkisch* organisations.<sup>119</sup>

The German bishops discussed the nature and popularity of *völkisch* antisemitism at their annual meeting in Fulda in 1924. They saw in it mostly a mere instrument to bridge the anticlerical element of the *völkisch* movement (as represented by Erich Ludendorff) with the nationalism of Catholic right. Cardinal Schulte of Cologne suggested that young Catholics were attracted to patriotic associations because of an urge for national unity, and the perceived problematic relationship between Catholicism and Germanism. Schulte explained this attraction by pointing out the overlap between

the aims of some patriotic associations (the *Jungdeutsche Orden*) and the papal encyclicals, and the endorsement these organisations received by Catholic priests.<sup>120</sup> The hierarchy decided that the best way to limit the appeal of patriotic organisations among young Catholics was to encourage Catholic teachers and youth organisations to adopt components of the right's nationalist propaganda in order to keep the Catholic youth within the Catholic milieu.<sup>121</sup> Such a marriage of nationalist fervour and Catholic values rarely amounted to a clear condemnation of antisemitism as such. An example of this approach is the booklet *Jungdeutscher Orden and Catholic Youth* (1924) by Kaplan Heinrich Thöne of Heiligenstadt, bearing the imprimatur of auxiliary bishop Deitmar, Berlin. The booklet was a considerate yet firm criticism of the *Orden*, and a commitment to the democratic Republic. Thöne began with praise for those aims shared by the *Orden* and Catholics: a strong, free and greater Germany and the creation of a true *Volksgemeinschaft*.<sup>122</sup> He then asserted, however, that Catholics could not be part of the *Orden* because of its anticlerical tendencies, *völkisch* nationalism and antisemitism.<sup>123</sup> Thöne's account of the *Orden's* antisemitism followed the same rhetorical structure, offering understanding that was then followed by a deconstruction of the *Orden's* arguments. However, in the end Thöne only rejected racial antisemitism. At the same time he gave credit to the widespread notion of dangerous Jewish dominance and Jewry's subversive powers:

We surely have to protect our German culture from the decomposing influence of materialistic Jewry. But the truth also demands the following remark: were there not as many Christian profiteers and usurers? ... And are there not noble and refined Jews in whom we recognise the best tradition of the chosen people?<sup>124</sup>

Nevertheless, the Catholic bishops subsequently and consistently criticised *völkisch* organisations. With their moral authority, German bishops stood firmly by their condemnation of patriotic associations (*vaterländische Verbände*) such as the *Stahlhelm* and the *Jungdeutsche Orden* until 1933.<sup>125</sup> This meant that the clergy and ordinary Catholics were not supposed to join either of these associations, nor the NSDAP. The bishops could also obstruct the political activity of the Catholic right by barring their diocesan priests from taking up political mandates for the DNVP.<sup>126</sup> Although episcopal warnings did not include the DNVP or its Catholic sections, the Catholic right was considerably irritated by the condemnation of vital

sections of their network, the *Stahlhelm* and the *Jungdeutsche Orden*.<sup>127</sup>

On a political level there was certainly no love lost between the Catholic right and the Centre Party, for after all they were political rivals. In the years before 1929 (after that date the Centre Party began to concentrate on its opposition to the NSDAP), Centre Party declarations left no doubt that Catholics were not to support the DNVP, because the nationalists placed Germandom before Christendom, and their Reich Catholic Committee, 'bound to Protestant structures', did not stand for Catholic interests.<sup>128</sup> The Centre Party's criticism of the racism and antisemitism of the *Jungdeutsche Orden* and the DNVP was sharp.<sup>129</sup> For example, the Stuttgart MdR Joseph Andre warned: 'Those who professionally preach racial hatred and widen the denominational rift of our people (*Volks*) are parasites of the German body politic (*Volkskörper*).'<sup>130</sup> However, consistent with the Centre Party's traditional policies on Jewry and Judaism, many of its publications on the extreme right interpreted *völkisch* antisemitism as an intrinsically 'religious question', and consequently primarily condemned its anticlericalism and *völkisch* attacks on the Catholic Church rather than on German Jews.<sup>131</sup>

The Bavarian People's Party (BVP) condemned *völkisch* antisemitism later than the Centre and with less fervour, which was scarcely surprising since the Bavarian DNVP, the *Bayerische Mittelpartei*, was the junior partner in every BVP government from the Bavarian Landtag election of June 1920 onwards. While the Centre Party and many Catholic newspapers from 1924 often refrained from direct accusations against Jews, BVP information material strengthened public belief in Jewish corruption and the collusion between social democrats and Jews. The BVP's attempt to tame the radical right in Bavarian politics after the Hitler *Putsch* was just as feeble. During the coalition negotiations between the BVP and DNVP in 1924, the BVP gave in to most demands of the German Nationalists. Among these was an invitation to the *völkisch* bloc (including the NSDAP) to take part in these negotiations, and the removal of the liberal and anti-*völkisch* Franz Schwyer from the Interior Ministry. At the same time, the DNVP remained in charge of the Ministry of Justice against the explicit disapproval of the BVP's liberal wing. Both parties eventually issued a statement (they could not settle their differences on detailed policies) in which they vowed to fight the revolution and all its consequences, and promised to govern according to patriotic (*vaterländisch*) principles.<sup>132</sup>

It is worthwhile recalling the *völkisch* and antisemitic character of the DNVP as it presented itself to the public in its election material. Therein the DNVP (like the BVP/Centre Party) would express its hope for an 'unconditional denominational peace' and stress the need for Germany's rebirth in a Christian spirit, and for a German culture and economy based on a 'true Christian-religious worldview'.<sup>133</sup> The party left no doubt that the opposite of the 'good Christian' was the 'Jew'. One flyer attacked the 'marxist-Jewish economic policy' and the 'fatal rule of Jewry in state, culture and economy'. It demanded an 'exclusively German leadership' and the 'elimination (*Ausschaltung*) of all foreign blood (*alles Fremdblütige*), especially Jewish'.<sup>134</sup>

## Conclusion

The reasons for the departure of the Catholic right away from their traditional conservative politics should not be sought in ideology alone. Like most antisemites, the Catholic right were losers of modernity, though not necessarily in terms of wealth.<sup>135</sup> The political changes in Germany did not affect their financial security nor did they have to fear for their professions. Amongst the most vocal of them were personalities of the economically successful Westphalian aristocracy, civil servants and academics.<sup>136</sup> The Catholic right, in particular the aristocracy, had lost out in social status and access to power. Furthermore, the fundamental changes to the political landscape in Germany after the First World War had left Catholic monarchists politically homeless. Their traditional 'home', the Centre Party, had committed itself to parliamentary democracy while the newly founded DNVP became the political home for the largely Prussian and Protestant conservatism of Imperial Germany. Yet any meaningful influence in parliamentary politics was unattainable without the support of a reasonably significant party. Therefore, the erstwhile more immediate social and political influence of members of the Catholic right was now more volatile as they had to respond to democratic impulses and processes. For example, the end of the war had severely disrupted the life of Martin Spahn, who had fled Strasbourg where he had held a professorship in history. He resigned from his professorship after the city's workers' and soldiers' council had proclaimed an independent republic of Alsace and Lorraine. Yet the dislocation of Spahn's life did not last for too long. Two years later he resumed his academic career with a professorship in Cologne, after a like-minded Catholic, Adam Stegerwald, had supported Spahn's case.



It proved more difficult for Spahn to gain a secure footing within the Centre Party after the war. Under the leadership of its left-leaning chairman, Matthias Erzberger, the party refused to run Spahn as its candidate in Reichstag elections. When he joined the DNVP in 1921, Spahn not only found a party whose aims corresponded with his worldview, he could also continue his political career as DNVP representative for the Reichstag from 1924. In addition, his new Reichstag mandate protected Spahn against a pending lawsuit by Cologne University for negligence of his professorial duties.<sup>137</sup>

The antisemitism expressed across the network of the Catholic right was an amalgam of Christian, cultural and Darwinian anti-Jewish sentiments and reflects their Catholic faith and their discontent with the political and economic changes in Germany. Those Catholics who had joined or sympathised with the DNVP also subscribed to the Party's *völkisch* and exclusionary antisemitism. Their antisemitism was more than a 'communicative bridge' across the denominational divide in order to form a Christian national front. It was a core element of their worldview that saw a fundamental struggle between Christian and Jewish forces at play in the modern world. Furthermore, to many Catholics, this belief was a guide in their political choices and activities. In their willingness to exclude Jews from German society, the antisemitism of the Catholic right was considerably more radical than the anti-Jewish sentiments expressed by the Centre Party or the German bishops. While the latter were still wary of excessive nationalism, the Catholic right lived to enhance nationalist sentiments among German Christians. In contrast to the older generation of national conservative Catholics, the nation was supreme in the eyes of the younger 'new nationalist' of the Catholic right. Everything else, including the interests of the Catholic Church, was subordinate to national union and valour. The radicalism of their antisemitism was ultimately a consequence of their nationalism that hoped for a rebirth of the German nation. Gazing through their nationalist lenses, they increasingly saw in Jews an alien people within the German nation that sought to disrupt Germany's national revival. Combined with their fervent nationalism, the Jew-hatred of the Catholic right consequently called for a more immediate solution of this ancient struggle in order to save the German nation. Their 'solutions' to a 'Jewish question' ultimately did not differ significantly from the measures of the medieval Catholic Church that sought to separate Jews from Christians. Yet postwar Germany was not medieval Europe and their 'solution' was not encouraged by the German hierarchy or the Centre Party, who accepted Jewish emancipation as a *fait accompli*. Within

the spectrum of German politics it was only the *völkisch* movement, the DNVP and ultimately the NSDAP that promised to deliver the hoped-for national union and an energetic approach to their 'Jewish question'.

## England: Distributism

The Distributist League was founded in September 1926 around Hilaire Belloc, Gilbert Keith Chesterton, and A.J. Pentty.<sup>138</sup> Against the background of the dislocation of the British economy after the First World War and the rapidly rising numbers of unemployed in the late 1920s, Distributism was part of a social theory that, like the related Social Credit Movement of C.H. Douglas, criticised conventional economic policy at the time and questioned the philosophical basis of government and society. While Douglas' Social Credit Movement argued for a managed currency and consumer credits to revitalise industry through growing consumer demand, Distributism sought a more radical remedy in the distribution of property in order to bring about a lasting change to society.<sup>139</sup> The Distributist ideal lay in a corporatist organisation of the economy and society.

Although the Distributist League and *G.K.'s Weekly* are seen today as organisations bordering on the extreme right, the Distributist League was initially close to the Labour Party and individual Distributists, unlike the *Rechtskatholiken*, were a very disparate group of people, often linked only through their enthusiasm for Chesterton's and Belloc's social theory. Many of them were arch-Liberals with a social conscience for whose taste the Fabians, as social reformers, were too socialist. They represented almost the entire range of the political spectrum, with the exception of communism. Utopian socialists like Eric Gill and the Labour politicians were part of this new movement, as well as the similarly utopian Franciscan Father McNabb and T.W.C. Curd, both of them active in Catholic lay organisations (the Catholic Guild of Israel and the Catholic Truth Society respectively). The movement was not exclusively Catholic, though, as Kester Aspden has remarked, a certain Catholicity came to dominate Distributist thought.<sup>140</sup> Yet like the *Rechtskatholiken*, the 'Chesterbelloc' group moved in a grey area between conservatism and fascism with contacts and interests in both camps. For example, Douglas Jerrold, a convert to Catholicism, a publicist and conservative politician, edited *The English Review* between 1930 and 1936 before he replaced Christopher Dawson at the *Dublin Review* and

assisted Michael de la Bédoyère at the *Catholic Herald* from 1938. Although Jerrold's initial political home was the Conservative Party, he also had contacts with numerous right-wing antisemitic organisations, among them the January Club, and later the Windsor Club.<sup>141</sup>

Arnold Lunn, a Methodist convert to Catholicism (1933) and writer, sat on the board of editors of the *Catholic Times*. He was also a member and vice-president of The Liberty Restoration League, whose president and other signatories were also members of the fascist organisation The Link. The League's aim was to oppose 'state despotism', and it hoped to further this through targeted lobbying: 'It is mainly ... on the good offices of Members and Peers that the League relies for the propagation of its policy, and it is in Private Member Bills that the spearhead of its attack on Jewry may be looked for.'<sup>142</sup> C. Featherstone Hammond, author of the Distributist League's *Handbook* and the expert on financial affairs for *G.K.'s Weekly*, was, according to the description of the files of the police Special Branch, 'an associate of Captain Archibald Ramsay of the pro-German, right-wing Right Club and a former assistant to Lt-Col Seton Hutchinson in the National Workers Party of Great Britain'. He was an official of the pressure group National Citizens' Union, whose first chairman was Colonel A.H. Lane of the deeply antisemitic Britons Society, a 'precursor of British racist fascism'.<sup>143</sup> Featherstone Hammond also attended secret meetings of prominent fascists and antisemites in autumn 1939 initiated by Oswald Mosley, Admiral Barry Domville, the founder of the fascist organisation The Link, and Captain Ramsay. The aim was to coordinate the activities of right-wing organisations in Britain, which they did not achieve.<sup>144</sup> Featherstone Hammond was eventually detained in summer 1940 under Defence Regulation 18B, the Emergency Powers Act promulgated on 1 September 1939. It allowed the authorities to detain those who were seen as a threat to the security of the state, mainly pro-German organisations, British fascists and enemy aliens.<sup>145</sup>

Christopher Hollis, 'a Francoist for the sake of religion',<sup>146</sup> moved in and out of C.H. Douglas' social credit movement and the Distributists. Both movements were known for their contempt for high finance, parliamentary politics and big business, which went increasingly hand in hand with antisemitic conspiracy theories.<sup>147</sup> Hollis was also on the board of directors of *The Tablet*. Like Arnold Lunn and Douglas Jerrold he was taken by Belloc's thesis of the 'servile state' and was convinced that only authoritarian moral and political standards and ultimately the Catholic Church could save a chaotic modern world.<sup>148</sup> Even Eric Gill with his socialist convictions

spoke as a member of the Peace Pledge Union on the same platform as known associates of the BUF.<sup>149</sup> He also owned 7% of *G.K.'s Weekly* and was the journal's art critic.<sup>150</sup>

*Rechtskatholiken* and the editors of *G.K.'s Weekly* had a considerable standing and influence in their communities, the former due to their status, the latter through their literary fame. Belloc and G.K. Chesterton were seen as the defenders of Catholic faith and values in increasingly secular times. They were renowned for their self-assured intellect and literary talent and had become the antidote to the alleged semiliterate Catholic ghetto in England. Arnold Lunn saw in Belloc the 'distinguished general' of the 'anti-posh army'.<sup>151</sup> To their critics, however, the pair became infamous for their open support of Italian and Spanish fascism and for their antisemitism. As in the case of the *Rechtskatholiken*, the main interest in Distributism lies in the group's worldview and antisemitism, its nature and motivation, and in the influence and effect, if exerted, on the wider Catholic community.

### ***The Distributist League: aims and organisation***

Our purpose is revolution. We do not want to tinker with the capitalist system, we want to destroy it. We are, in fact ... the only revolutionary body in England ... We do not propose to blow it [parliament] up with TNT, but with argument at first and then by means of co-operation of the weak versus the strong.<sup>152</sup>

With these challenging words, written in 1927, G.K. Chesterton announced Distributism's ultimate aim. In 1925 he had founded the paper *G.K.'s Weekly* – the heart of Distributism with the initial objective to teach the public Distributist ideals and lifestyle, hoping that this would gradually change public perception of politics and eventually revolutionise British society. Owing to Chesterton's literary contacts and the close relationship to A.R. Orage's *The New Age*, many contributors to *G.K.'s Weekly* were well-known writers like George Bernard Shaw, Compton Mackenzie, or H.G. Wells.<sup>153</sup>

The essence of Distributism was corporatism. It was argued that modern mass production should if possible be avoided or at least organised on a corporate basis with every worker having a stake in the business. Usury was to be outlawed.<sup>154</sup> There was a place for Jews in the cooperative state, as long as they were confined to their own guilds and societies.<sup>155</sup> Distributism stood for the individual's liberty from the state and the protection of private property. However, it also

paradoxically supported the confiscation of land (in order for it to be redistributed) and deplored the workers' alienation through exploitative employers. Distributists objected to eugenics for similar reasons. They interpreted it as another form of class war whereby the middle class regulated the lower classes by means of birth control and sterilisation.<sup>156</sup>

On 17 September 1926, Chesterton founded the Distributist League in order to put Distributist principles into action as the core of a possible party or pressure group. In reality, however, the existence of the League served a more mundane purpose: it paid for the publication of *G.K.'s Weekly*, which had got into financial difficulties soon after its foundation. Membership subscriptions, donations and other monies went almost entirely into securing the survival of the journal. While *G.K.'s Weekly* was the philosophical heart of Distributism, the geographical heart of the League was the Central Branch in London, where the core of the League met in a public house, the Devreux's, for talks, discussions, and drinks. The various secretaries of the League came overwhelmingly from a non-literary middle-class background. Many were businessmen, engineers or civil servants – only two were Catholic. At times G.K. Chesterton, president of the League, would join the meeting, cheered and revered by those present. Although some members of the League (particularly those active in the Land Movement) denounced the Central Branch as a mere drinking club, most Distributists agreed that these gatherings helped to crystallise and spread Distributist ideas, not least because of Chesterton's charisma and brilliant rhetoric. Public meetings and other public relations enterprises attracted enthusiastic crowds who came to hear the leaders of the movement, G.K. Chesterton and Belloc, speak. The Distributists were also visible in London's streets, demonstrating, for example, against the centralisation of London's transport, or backing the miners in the General Strike in 1926. Another way of promoting their aims was through parliamentary lobbying, as suggested by Belloc. For a few years, the League supported the Labour Party, seeing in it an ally in the fight against monopoly capital and for the rights of the working men. Henry Slesser, Labour MP since 1924, was a vocal representative of the League's principles in the House of Commons. The League's political ambitions remained, however, unfulfilled. From 1931, Arthur Currie and a considerable number of Distributists from the Land Movement were pushing for a Distributist Party.<sup>157</sup> This put the unity of the League under severe strain. By that time, Chesterton and the Central Branch were strongly opposed to Currie's plan of turning the League

into a political party and thus playing the parliamentary game they so despised.

Another Distributist offspring was the Catholic Land Movement, welcomed and supported by Chesterton.<sup>158</sup> This back-to-the-land movement set up small farms with their related secondary trades to create completely self-sufficient Catholic rural communities which would serve as a springboard for the emergence of an independent peasantry. This revival of English agriculture was to be the saviour of the nation, the saviour from national bankruptcy and immorality ('the service of God rather than the service of Mammon').<sup>159</sup> Behind the economic motives (the reduction of unemployment; economic self-sufficiency; the breaking up of monopolies) lay strong moral considerations.<sup>160</sup> The communities envisaged by the Catholic Land Movement embodied an ideal of a close-knit moral community in which religion and the Church still played a vital role.<sup>161</sup> The more important aim, however, was to stop the 'leakage' of young urban unemployed Catholics to socialist groups.<sup>162</sup>

The Catholic Land Movement won the hierarchy's warmest support, particularly for the moral considerations mentioned above.<sup>163</sup> The bishops presided over the Catholic Land Associations in their diocese. Their support usually entailed the promotion of the movement in public and the bishops' participation at conferences. However, support by the hierarchy did not include regular funding and money coming in from the bishops began to dry up from 1936 onwards.<sup>164</sup>

### *Distributist worldview: from democracy to fascism*

The ideological roots of Distributism go back to the *Witness* publications of Hilaire Belloc and the Chesterton brothers. In a letter to his mother on the occasion of his conversion to Catholicism, G.K. Chesterton mentioned that he intended continuing his brother Cecil's publicist work: 'I think, as Cecil did, that the fight for the family and the free citizen and everything decent must now be waged by one fighting form of Christianity.'<sup>165</sup>

The movement shared with the *Witness* publications three main objections to modern British society: the parliamentary system, monopoly capitalism and the credit system. The parliamentary system in Britain was, in the eyes of Distributists, no longer a democracy, but had degenerated into a plutocracy marred by corruption which largely operated to the advantage of the 'foreign financier'. The movement's criticism of capitalism deplored the exploitation of

employees and workers and feared the political influence of industrialists (and thereby the further destruction of English democracy). In a more metaphysical interpretation, modern capitalism was seen as advocate of materialism, inimical to the spiritual traditions of England. Distributists instead preferred a society in which everyone was an owner. This would secure the citizens' liberty and independence, and eventually foster a truly democratic society. Above all, Distributist reforms aimed to forestall Britain's slide into socialism.

The movement's nationalism has been easily forgotten by historians in favour of its antisocialism and anticapitalism. However, most statements and publications speak of a concern over English traditions. When H.E. Humphries declared in the *Distributist Handbook* that 'only the English can save the English' he referred to Distributism as salvation and to unwarranted foreign influence in British politics as the problem.<sup>166</sup> A return to 'Englishness' would stop society's decline into materialism and secularism. The rejuvenation of the peasantry (in the form of the Catholic Land Movement) as the source of a healthy population was essential to England's revival.<sup>167</sup> This longing for the nation's rebirth is not far from the *Rechtskatholiken's* *völkisch* outlook.

Despite the distaste for (what they described as) 'plutocracy', the Distributist League and *G.K.'s Weekly* did not turn to fascism straight away. For many years, members of the Distributist League had assured their support for democracy. Their definition of democracy, however, was broad and also considered an oligarchy in the form of a 'Directorate' as a democratic form of government as long as the representatives were democratically elected. However, by 1929, the leadership of the League had grown tired of parliamentary politics once it was clear how limited the League's political influence was.<sup>168</sup> Alternatives to parliamentarianism were sought. At first the advantages of a monarchy seemed appealing, but their preference for a traditional monarchy was gradually abandoned in favour of a 'popular monarchy' in the style of Mussolini.<sup>169</sup> In August 1935, Chesterton conceded that he personally was willing to look into fascism, whereas parliamentarianism was not worth looking into at all. He also observed that 'many' English fascists were Distributists, and 'some' were Catholics.<sup>170</sup>

Indeed, until Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia, the majority of Distributists were largely united in their respect for fascist Italy (apart from Slessor, Gill and McNabb, who never approved of Mussolini). However, Abyssinia split the Distributists into two factions. While many members of the League were appalled by Mussolini's attack

and denounced it as 'Prussian imperialism' by a 'Latin practitioner', people close to Belloc such as Douglas Jerrold and Gregory Macdonald welcomed the Abyssinian war. Caught in the middle, Chesterton tried to accommodate the two factions by criticising the war but not Mussolini's fascism.<sup>171</sup> One former Distributist, writing in 1954, recalled the mood within the movement during the Abyssinian war:

I can remember how shocked we all were by this. He [G.K. Chesterton] even made some half-hearted defence of Musso. on the score that Abyss. was being exploited by the capitalists, and that Musso was coming to her rescue. I agree with you that it was due to Italy being a Roman Catholic nation. I am not quite sure but I have an idea that the Pope blessed the enterprise. G.K. was far too logical in his orthodoxy to disapprove of anything of a moral nature which his infallible mentor had passed as being right.<sup>172</sup>

Abyssinia eventually split the Distributist League, silencing the moderate wing, while the opinions of G.K.'s *Weekly* triumphed in the paper, the League and the Land Movement. Support for Mussolini was only the overture to an increasingly pro-fascist and the more moderate members of the League eventually left after Chesterton's death in 1936.<sup>173</sup>

For the time being, fascist sympathies remained limited to an adulation of Mussolini as the one who had implemented Distributist ideals and revived Rome as the citadel of Christianity.<sup>174</sup> The home-grown fascism of the British Union of Fascists (BUF) and the Imperial Fascist League was still viewed with caution. Distributists were impressed by the BUF's activism and suggested that British fascists might come to see themselves as Distributists, but remained wary of the fascists' emphasis on total state power. Given their similar vision on corporatist economics, authoritarianism, antiparliamentarianism, and anticapitalism, there existed some common ground for friendly collaboration. Several representatives of the BUF and the Imperial Fascist League spoke at League meetings and contributed countless letters to 'The Cockpit', the opinion page of G.K.'s *Weekly*, in the late 1920s and early 1930s at a time when leading Distributists such as Arnold Lunn, Featherstone Hammond and Douglas Jerrold were members of pro-fascist and pro-Hitler organisations.<sup>175</sup>

Before the Spanish Civil War, National Socialism and Hitler's persecution of the Jews were also rejected by the majority of Distributists



for its totalitarian ambition. Chesterton and Belloc saw in the movement simple Prussianism without boundaries and sanity. In Chesterton's eyes, the difference between Hitler and a fascist leader was the National Socialists' obsession with race, whereas a fascist simply displayed an excessive devotion to his nation.<sup>176</sup>

All this changed with the Spanish Civil War, the catalyst of Catholic radicalism in England.<sup>177</sup> Many of the leading Distributists had been to Spain and had in some cases met with Franco. Belloc encountered Franco on the battlefield and would later praise him for instilling order, 'patriotism, the traditions of an independent peasantry and, more important than either, religion'; in short, Franco was 'the man who has saved us all'.<sup>178</sup> His thoughts were soon taken up by his fellow Distributists Douglas Jerrold ('the brains of the English Right', according to the artist Wyndham Lewis<sup>179</sup>), Arnold Lunn, Douglas Woodruff and the publisher Frank Sheed.<sup>180</sup> Arnold Lunn ardently supported the Francoist cause in his writings, because it was to him essentially a war between the Catholic and Communist cultures. Douglas Jerrold claimed that he, together with Luis Bidwell Bolin (one of the founders of the pro-Franco organisation Friends of Nationalist Spain), had enabled the Nationalist offensive against the Republicans by smuggling Franco, 'a supremely good man, a hero possibly: possibly a saint', out of the Canary Islands on a secret flight to start the military uprising from Morocco.<sup>181</sup>

In the eyes of right-wing Distributists, Spain had become the European battleground between socialism and European culture. As Spain was largely a Catholic country, this meant that the Republicans were not simply fighting Franco's Nationalists, but were persecuting and attacking Catholic culture and Catholic communities. Almost replicating the biblical antagonism between Judaism and Christianity, many comments on the Civil War identified the Republicans with international 'Jewish' socialism:

The French Revolution was founded by patriotism and property, the Spanish is founded on Jewish Communism which especially attacks those fundamental ideas of our Western Civilisation. What the two movements have in common is hostility to the Catholic Church, but in the French case that hostility came in from the side, it was incidental ... but the Communists' attack on the Church is its main activity. That is why it was a good strategy on the part of the Moscow Jews to attack Spain. I think they would have succeeded if it had not been for Franco forestalling them.<sup>182</sup>

On the basis of such a worldview, Franco, and indeed fascism in general, came to be seen as Christian Europe's only salvation from Russian Bolshevism. The pro-fascist outlook of *G.K.'s Weekly* deepened after Chesterton's death in 1936 and more so with the journal's relaunch as *Weekly Review* in 1938. By then Belloc had grown tired of the journal, although he continued to contribute an article for almost every issue. In a letter in September 1937 he wrote: 'I am glad I am no longer responsible for *G.K.'s Weekly*. I promised to write for them regularly, but it's a magnet for cranks, has no capital and can hardly survive.'<sup>183</sup> The journal now tended to promote an authoritarian policy for Britain and openly supported the political programme of the BUF and at times even Hitler. For example, in mid-1939, the *Review* opposed the looming war against Germany, alleging that Jewish financiers were forcing Germany into a world war in order to issue further usurious loans. The journal toned down its fascist bias after Britain had declared war on Germany, although its editors always insisted that British politicians had forced Mussolini into an alliance with Hitler. The *Weekly Review* supported the Allied war effort but consistently emphasised that the number one enemy was the Soviet Union and not Hitler's Germany.<sup>184</sup>

### *Antisemitism*

Belloc and G.K. Chesterton expressed their suspicion of 'undue' Jewish influences fairly openly in their publications. However, this sentiment was generally not as frankly expressed in the Distributist League and the Catholic Land Movement despite their indebtedness to 'Chesterbelloc' literature. Judging from the League's documents, neither the Distributist Handbook nor the League's conferences were especially driven by antisemitic zeal – at least not enough to be recorded in the meetings' minutes. The 'solution' of a 'Jewish question' was not written into the programme of the Distributist League, as it was into that of the *Rechtskatholiken*. Anti-Jewish remarks are often hidden within the text, just visible enough to be detected by the contemporary reader who was familiar with the anti-Jewish discourse of the time. When, for instance, Humphries complained about 'unjustified foreign dominance', he illustrated his concern using the German-born Jewish magnate Alfred Mond as example. Alfred Mond had often been the target of the Edwardian radical right that accused Jews of treasonable activities and manipulation of Lloyd George's government.<sup>185</sup> Humphries described how Mond dominated the English part of a German-English chemical combine, the ICI

(Imperial Chemical Industries) Trust, and suggested that this was bound to lead to disloyalty towards England, even more so in the case of war.<sup>186</sup> These arguments can be traced back to Belloc and Cecil Chesterton, who regularly questioned the loyalty of British Jews to the British crown during the First World War.<sup>187</sup>

Despite the lack of overt antisemitic statements, antisemitism was not just a minor subplot of Distributism. According to G.K. Chesterton all these things were of a piece: compassion for the poor and speaking openly about the alleged harmful influence of the Jews.<sup>188</sup> Almost unavoidably, society's re-education as offered by G.K.'s *Weekly* and the *Weekly Review* regularly addressed the alleged overwhelming influence of Jews in British politics, in world finance and in Europe's communist movements. On average, two anti-Jewish comments per issue hinted at the 'Jewish question'.<sup>189</sup> As late as March 1940, contributions to the *Weekly Review* remarked on thirteen occasions (to my knowledge) on the alleged negative Jewish influence in left-wing politics, the financial world and on Britain's Palestine policy.<sup>190</sup>

The negative stereotype of the Jews in Distributist publications echoed the more general prejudices in Britain about the Jews. However, in the intensity of antisemitic remarks and the tendency to invoke conspiracy theories, the Distributist publications were closer to the radical fringe. Their fear for Christian values and especially Catholic interests on the other hand lent their antisemitism a distinct character, as antisemitism was justified in defence of either national institutions or the interests of the Catholic Church and Christian values. The following paragraphs give a few illustrating examples.

Antisemitic articles were published mostly in G.K.'s *Weekly*'s column on international and financial affairs. On these pages the reader was, for instance, informed that Jews profited from the First World War by issuing usurious loans to the Allies and were able to influence the outcome of the Versailles peace negotiations.<sup>191</sup> Mostly written by Belloc, and later by Gregory Macdonald, these sections reflected Belloc's conviction that a secret clique of Jews, whom he called the 'Money Power', was preparing to take control over the world.<sup>192</sup> Other radical Distributists such as Douglas Jerrold, A.J. Penty and Gregory Macdonald often followed Belloc's interpretations in their own articles for G.K.'s *Weekly*. An elaborate explanation for Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia was offered by Macdonald and C. Featherstone Hammond (who otherwise mostly wrote on the 'international credit system'). They justified Italy's action by claiming it had been forced to conquer Abyssinia by 'Jewish Money Power',

meaning Wall Street. These conspirators aimed to monopolise the world's wealth, and an important step in this direction was to make the major European economies completely dependent on American finances. This was gained by extended loans to these countries only to force them eventually off the gold standard under the pressure of American moneylenders. Britain was one victim and Italy would be the next. In order to escape that financial siege, Italy had to look outside the dollar market and the capitalist oil monopoly for raw materials in Abyssinia.<sup>193</sup>

Antisemitic comments also appeared almost without fail in Belloc's articles written in defence of the Catholic Church or Catholic countries such as France or Poland. Antisemitic outbursts in Poland were largely excused by Belloc, because he thought it was simply defending itself against the influence of Polish or German Jews. Germany's post-war settlement was, on the other hand, engineered by French freemasons and the powers of international Jewish bankers. According to Belloc, these powers prevented the creation of Catholic states along the Danube and Rhine, and in their hatred of the Roman Church favoured instead the resurrection of anti-Catholic Prussia.<sup>194</sup>

The Catholic Land Movement was also concerned with the two extremes of excessive capitalism and socialism. Phrases such as the 'ravenous financier', the 'Blood Brothers' of 'joint stock companies and the Soviet committees'<sup>195</sup> or the 'BrYiddish Empire' demonstrate this.<sup>196</sup> An anti-Jewish sentiment mostly lay implicitly behind such phrases, but could also be more explicit at times. For instance, the journal of the Catholic Land Association, *Land for the People*, alleged in 1931 that British financial policy was dictated by 'foreign financiers' and condoned by 'patriotic Jews' to 'suit their own purses'.<sup>197</sup> Yet overall overt antisemitism was not expressed as frequently as in *G.K.'s Weekly*. How nationalism, pro-fascism and antisemitism could go hand in hand was demonstrated in a collection of articles that sought to explain the motives behind such a movement. It was prepared in summer 1933 and published in 1934 with a statement by Cardinal Secretary of State Eugenio Pacelli in which he expressed his wholehearted support for the Catholic Land Movement.<sup>198</sup> Several contributors expressed sympathy for current Italian and German economic and social policies, because they spelled the 'end of the commercialist era and necessitates a return in all countries to the principle of putting primary production back into its right place in the social organism'.<sup>199</sup> Rev. H.E.G. Rope maintained that the Catholic Land Movement was not arbitrary, 'but necessary, indeed a matter of life and death for England, for civilisation, for

humanity. ... Instead of Utopia we desire an English England ... As Christians our ideal is an England of free citizens, with owners and handicraftsmen forming the great bulk of the population, the former in a large majority, and no more of the trading element than is necessary to the nation's well-being.' Citing Fr Cahill's *Freemasonry and the Antichristian Movement* (1930) he warned against Jewish dominance as alleged in the 'Protocols of Zion':

This is not the place to discuss the authorship and date of the *Protocols*. It is enough that they agree with what is known from other sources as to Judeo-Masonic aims, and as a manifestation of those aims have been vindicated by events wherever the secret societies' power has been effective. We invite attention to these words: 'What we want is that industry should drain off from the land both labour and capital and by means of speculation transfer into our hands all the money of the world, and thereby throw all the *goyim* into the ranks of the proletariat.'<sup>200</sup>

The Spanish Civil War accelerated *G.K.'s Weekly's* embrace of fascism. The journal continued to laud Franco and Mussolini, ignored Hitler's excesses and highlighted instead what was considered to be the greatest danger: Bolshevism.<sup>201</sup> Its hostility towards Jews grew with the increasing dichotomy of its worldview, where socialism was the embodiment of evil and fascist dictators were celebrated as saviours. Up to the Spanish Civil War, Jews featured regularly as the influential and anti-Catholic financier. The stereotype of the 'Jewish Bolshevik' had been evoked by the editors of *G.K.'s Weekly* before the outbreak of the Civil War, but now received central attention. The journal consequently portrayed the conflict in Spain as a holy war between 'world finance; world Jewry ... world masonry ... world socialism' and Europe's basic cultural traditions.<sup>202</sup>

The antisemitism in *G.K.'s Weekly* was not a mere public relations strategy of a financially ailing weekly paper. There was instead a strong element of conviction to it, especially if one considers that those authors in Distributist publications who propagated the 'Jew-Bolshevik' or the 'Jewish financier' stereotype – Douglas Jerrold, Hilaire Belloc, H.E.G. Rope and Stanley B. James – did so in other publications and public forums too. Kester Aspden has pointed to the ideological dimension of English Catholics' antisocialism with its antisemitic undercurrent.<sup>203</sup> The assessment of the journal's antisemitism by Gregory Macdonald supports this interpretation. *G.K.'s Weekly's* former columnist on finance and Poland eventually

conceded in 1986 that the paper 'as a whole' had antisemitic and anti-American tones. These currents, Macdonald claimed in 1986, were 'a carry-over from the *New Witness*, Belloc and Titterton being from the earlier generation'.<sup>204</sup> Referring to his own earlier involvement with the *Weekly* he declared: 'No doubt I conducted all the unfortunate controversies in entirely the wrong way, but I thought and still think that there were certain Chestertonian principles to be upheld which were not entirely appreciated by others.'<sup>205</sup>

The most important component of the editors' antisemitism was their antisocialism (particularly apparent in their reaction to the Spanish Civil War). However, the preservation of Christian religious values, especially the defence of Catholicism, cannot be divorced from that. As shown before, most statements in support of Mussolini or Franco referred to the dictators' contributions to the restoration of the Church against anticlerical forces. Anti-Jewish invectives were usually followed by a reminder of the Jews' 'traditional hostility' towards Christianity. This axiom stayed with some authors until late in their lives. Gregory Macdonald, for instance, confessed in 1986 that: 'In the matter of the Jews I am not crazily ecumenical. The Synagogue has been jostling the Church since the days of Saul of Tarsus. But we are living in mysterious times. With the recovery of Jerusalem at the end of the Six Day War, and the increasing apostasy of the gentiles, we may see the recognition of the Messiah.'<sup>206</sup>

### ***Success and influence of Distributism***

Despite the ridiculing of the League by contemporaries as a 'Two Acres and a Cow' movement, the League struck a cord with middle-class professionals who feared for their incomes and status. League enthusiasts saw in Distributism an opportunity to steer clear from excessive capitalism (on which they blamed their misfortune) and socialism, which they feared.<sup>207</sup> By December 1926, Distributist branches had been established in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Chatham, Liverpool, Oxford, Glasgow and Edinburgh. Within the next few years the movement became well known beyond the boundaries of Great Britain, with branches in the USA, Australia, South Africa and Canada. The Land Movement on the other hand was truly popular with lower-middle and working-class Catholics in Britain, who responded enthusiastically to this new enterprise. There was a long waiting list of buyers for small plots of land just ten weeks after the Marydown Farm of T.W.C. Curd and Fr Dey was registered.

By 1934 there were six associations, among others in Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, and London.<sup>208</sup>

Like the *Rechtskatholiken*, the Distributists never managed to form a political party and consequently left no trace on Britain's political stage. The disputes surrounding the creation of a party, and even more so the fall-out over Mussolini's Abyssinian adventure, diminished the League's political impact further. Even Chesterton's aim to re-educate the British public through G.K.'s *Weekly* looks like a failure. The journal only sold 8,000 copies per issue and was constantly low in funds. As in the case of the *Rechtskatholiken*, however, Chesterton's success cannot be assessed by facts and figures alone. Chesterton and Belloc were the most influential Catholic intellectuals in the 1930s. In this role they were ideal 'multiplicators' and managed to attract many intellectuals and Catholic lay leaders to their cause. Distributism became so popular with Catholic intellectuals that Msgr Parkinson, founder of the Catholic Social Guild, complained to Fr O'Hea that the Distributists were draining the Guild of their most creative writers and thinkers.<sup>209</sup> In order to make themselves heard, 'Chesterbelloc' sympathisers could furthermore rely on the national Catholic newspapers. The main papers, *The Tablet*, *Catholic Herald*, the *Catholic Times*, and occasionally the Jesuits' *The Month*, regularly featured articles by Distributists and left some space for Distributist branch news. The *Catholic Times* opened its columns to the more radical Distributists, such as Gregory Macdonald, Arnold Lunn, H.E.G. Rope and Belloc himself. In 1926, the *Catholic Herald* published an article series by Belloc and G.K. Chesterton on capitalism, big business and Catholics, and in January 1939 the paper announced that Belloc and Douglas Jerrold would contribute weekly articles on Spain, Italy and Germany.<sup>210</sup> All of them also published in *The Universe*. Further, Lunn was at the time coediting *The Catholic Times*, Douglas Jerrold joined the *Catholic Herald* in 1938 while Michael de la Bédoyère, the *Herald's* editor, occasionally supported Jerrold's pro-fascist opinion in his paper.<sup>211</sup>

Apart from their journalistic work, Arnold Lunn, Douglas Jerrold and Hilaire Belloc were part of the wider Catholic community. Belloc had toured the country for years, giving talks on Distributism, capitalism or the Catholic Church in front of various Catholic lay organisations. T.W.C. Curd, another believer in Jewish conspiracy, was the organising secretary of the Catholic Truth Society (CTS), a member of the Knights of St Columba and head of the Marydown land association.

## Summary and comparison

The Distributists around *G.K.'s Weekly* shared with the *Rechtskatholiken* a fascination for fascism, particularly Mussolini's and Franco's, and a deep contempt for liberalism and parliamentary democracy. Of the two organisations the Distributists are the more unlikely fellow travellers of the right. Unlike the *Rechtskatholiken* they did not start their journey as monarchists and staunch opponents of parliamentary democracy. The leading Distributists began their political career within English Liberalism and syndicalism and their organisation retained many liberal objectives in its programme. Via a detour of failed political activity and disillusionment with parliamentary democracy, they nevertheless arrived at a similar fascination with fascism. The worldview of both groups radicalised at a point when they felt that Christian civilisation was under immediate threat from 'atheistic communism'. It was not just that their interpretation of a 'Jewish question' grew increasingly more fantastic, they also began to seek closer cooperation with the extreme right. *G.K.'s Weekly* reached this point in the late 1930s, triggered by the Spanish Civil War. Many *Rechtskatholiken* had made their peace with the extreme right a few years earlier. By 1931, Hitler held the promise of the long-hoped-for 'national government' that would suppress the extreme left (and SPD) and restore order on Germany's streets, which had descended into street battles between communists and Nazi militants.

There was a considerable congruity in the worldview of both groups: both cherished the corporatist organisation of past societies and idealised the rural community as the source of true Englishness or Germandom. Nationalism, antisocialism and antisemitism made up the kernel of their ideology and the main motives for their activities. In both cases, nationalism had as objective the protection of the national identity, particularly against communism and with that against Jewish influence. With respect to its antisemitism and the search for a spiritual rejuvenation of the English people through the Christian faith, Distributist nationalism was not dissimilar to the *völkisch* nationalism of the *Rechtskatholiken*. It was, however, strangely introspective in the way it rejected Britain's imperialism and celebrated instead 'true Englishness' in the figure of the 'pure peasant' untouched by industry and sprawling cities. Indeed, the nation for many of these Catholics was English rather than British. Britain, the Empire and international grandeur were effectively seen as one of the main factors that had corrupted 'Englishness'. The



*Rechtskatholiken*'s nationalism was not so localised. It was defying the nation's defeat in the last war and was planning for a glamorous new role for Germany in Central Europe. The national fervour of both groups coincided again in their conviction that the nation's demise was partly caused by undue Jewish influence on national affairs.

Apart from their anxiety about an alleged omnipresent Jewish influence, the Distributists shared more anti-Jewish phobias with the *Rechtskatholiken*. At the centre was in both cases the image of the 'Jewish Bolshevik'. Antisocialism and antisemitism became the most persuasive argument of the Catholic right for supporting right-wing extremism. In contrast to the *Rechtskatholiken*, the circle around G.K.'s *Weekly* fused the 'Jewish Bolshevik' stereotype with that of the 'Jewish financier', feeding on anti-establishment and anticapitalist sentiments of their circle. They also used religious anti-Jewish prejudices more frequently. In both groups, antisemitism had a markedly defensive character, defending both the nation as well as Christian/Catholic interest.

The social background of right-wing Catholic activists in England and Germany was markedly different. The inner circle of the *Rechtskatholiken* was largely made up of Catholic aristocrats, upper-middle-class Catholics and academics, while the leadership of Distributism came from a less prestigious social class. They had either an educated middle-class background and were journalists and writers, or were middle-class professionals or self-employed businessmen. There was a strikingly high number of converts to Catholicism among the Distributists, including most famously G.K. Chesterton himself, but Arnold Lunn, Douglas Jerrold and Gregory Macdonald had found their 'path to Rome' too. Adrian Hastings has pointed out that English Catholicism lacked an intellectual tradition before the arrival of the 'Chesterbelloc' circle in the 1920s and 1930s. There had always been remarkable individuals such as Cardinal Newman, William Tyrell, Fr Martin d'Arcy, or the neo-gothic architect Augustus Welby Pugin, but they left only a faint imprint on wider British cultural life. The wave of conversions to Catholicism in the 1920s brought a large number of highly educated Protestants into the community. In a way, these converts became the intellectual 'aristocrats' of English Catholicism, lending Distributism status through the esteem and recognition they still enjoyed in non-Catholic England.

The organisations of the *Rechtskatholiken* and Distributism worked with similar methods for the same aim: Christian national

re-education. But the response to such a vague objective came from different sectors in society. The promise of a reformed society attracted middle-class professionals and intellectuals to Distributism, while the Catholic Land Movement was popular with the clergy and Catholic workers. In Germany, the affiliated institutions of *Rechtskatholiken* were largely frequented by leaders of peasant, youth and student organisations.

If we ask who had the broader and more immediate effect on Catholic public discourse, the answer is the Distributists. Even though the link between the *Rechtskatholiken* and the DNVP and its infrastructure enabled them to build a broader network of organisations with a more direct political influence than did G.K. Chesterton (who relied solely on his journal and the land movements), the Distributists had a wide influence on Catholic public discourse from 1935, and especially during the Spanish Civil War. Together with numerous ecclesiastical antisocialist publications, they aimed to draw public attention to the threat from the left, while fascism was portrayed as a legitimate 'Catholic' form of government. Antisemitism was not just tolerated in this discourse, but was often present in the form of the 'Jewish-Bolshevik' stereotype. With the positive resonance of Distributist thought amongst Catholic intellectuals and writers, Chesterton had in a way sown the seeds of his aim to re-educate the British public. There is no doubt that not every Catholic in England supported the views of *G.K.'s Weekly*. Indeed, Catholic activists in the peace and labour movement challenged the pro-fascist outlook of the Catholic media and the bishops. However, they were not well organised enough to become a serious counterweight to the Catholic right. They certainly could not utilise an established and tightly woven party organisation in the way the Centre Party could.

The *Rechtskatholiken* did not achieve such a broad resonance in the public discourse of Weimar Germany. Their success lay rather in their lobby work, which opened the doors to institutions of political Catholicism. The invitation of the *Zentralkomitee* lent the DNVP Catholics the acknowledgement they had fought for. Moreover, this, together with the Centre Party's move towards the right from 1928, strengthened the conservative wing of political Catholicism and weakened the Centre Party's democratic left. The *Rechtskatholiken* saw their aim for a nationalist government eventually fulfilled in the presidential governments of von Papen, von Schleicher and Hitler.

The Distributists had the additional advantage that they encountered far less opposition than the *Rechtskatholiken*. The retreat of the

hierarchy from social issues was not simply a case of 'political neutrality', as regularly claimed by Cardinal Hinsley. The Distributist approach to the social question, with its decided antisocialism, was close to the heart of the hierarchy's worldview. *G.K.'s Weekly* and the Land Movement consequently received considerable clerical support. Furthermore, the bishops rejected political neutrality when they threw their weight behind a pro-Franco campaign during the Spanish Civil War, while at the same time silencing Franco critics. Compared with the Distributists, the *Rechtskatholiken* experienced far stiffer opposition from the bishops, many lay organisations and above all the Centre Party. The process of what Hürten terms '*Verkirklichung*' of German Catholicism, a philosophy that placed the religious community as an all-encompassing reality above the individual,<sup>212</sup> was considerably slower, because of the extensive network of lay organisations that remained committed to political activity. The bishops' care in not endorsing the *Rechtskatholiken* together with the Centre's defence against the Catholic right left no immediate void that could be filled by the *Rechtskatholiken*. Although the Centre Party (and more so the BVP) contributed to the rise of antisemitism after the First World War and never really refrained from its use throughout Weimar, *Rechtskatholiken* eventually only made their way into political Catholicism through the back door of the conservative leadership of the *Zentralkomitee*. Even though the structure of political Catholicism was willing and strong enough to confront political right-wing competitors, it engaged with the ideology of the right-wing – especially its antisemitism – only half-heartedly.

Catholicism was not as central to the lives of German *Rechtskatholiken* as it was to the leading Distributists. Still, all of them were devout Catholics, attending mass and participating in Catholic lay organisations. Like Belloc and Chesterton, the foundation of their worldview was the Christian nation. In their cooperation with the largely Protestant DNVP, the *Rechtskatholiken* – like the Distributists – stressed the necessity to overcome the denominational divide amongst Christians in order to unite and rejuvenate the nation. They did not uncompromisingly adhere to the primacy of the nation. The nation and Christian values (not necessarily the Church's interests) had to go together. Once it became clear that this was not the intention of the National Socialist regime, many *Rechtskatholiken* distanced themselves from the dictatorship, and some eventually joined the conservative resistance.<sup>213</sup>

Negative images of Jews remained an unflinching part of the public discourse in both Catholic communities. Until the mid-1920s, political

Catholicism in Germany had nourished antisemitic stereotypes that (apart from the racism) resembled the *völkisch* rhetoric of the radical right. Even as the Centre Party and the *Volksverein* began to publicly condemn *völkisch* antisemitism in the face of an increasingly popular NSDAP, their publications at times still upheld the claim of an undue Jewish dominance in German society, and the stereotype of the 'Jewish Bolshevik' retained a widespread currency. In England, antisemitism was most widespread and frequent in the late 1930s, when a focus on the advance of socialism during the Spanish Civil War blinded many to the persecution of the Jews in Germany. The tradition of modern antisemitism within German and English Catholicism and the inconsistent attempts to condemn Jew-hatred weakened the sensitivities of some Catholics to the antisemitism of the radical right. Such Jew-hatred was violent and racist but it nevertheless shared Catholic prejudices against 'Jewish' Bolshevism and finance. Moreover, the continuity of such sentiments affected Catholic sensitivity to the persecution of the Jews under National Socialism.<sup>214</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Horst Gründer, 'Rechtskatholizismus im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik unter der besonderen Berücksichtigung der Rheinlande und Westfalens', *Westfälische Zeitschrift*, 134 (1984), 107–155, 142. Hermann von Lüninck entered the Prussian civil service in 1918 and was appointed *Regierungsassessor* of the Prussian Ministry of the Interior. He left the Republic's civil service in 1923 and concentrated on agrarian associations instead. He was appointed Provincial President of the Rhineprovince in 1933 but resigned in 1935. Later in the Third Reich he joined the conservative resistance movement around Carl Gördeler for which he was imprisoned after the failed attempt on Hitler's life in July 1944. *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, ed. by Walther Killy, Rudolf Vierhaus, 12 vols, Munich, 1995–2000, XI (1995), pp. 519–20.
- 2 Hermann von Lüninck, 'Gedanken zur Zentrumspolitik', 20 June 1920. BAK, N1324, 93.
- 3 The Catholic People's Party (CVP) made its debut on 13 April 1920. It fielded its own candidates in the Cologne, Aachen, Koblenz and Trier districts for the following Reichstag election in June and received 65,000 votes (almost all at the expense of the Centre Party). After the dismal result of the Prussian state election a year later, the party gradually faded. Larry E. Jones, 'Catholic Conservatives in the Weimar

- Republic: The Politics of the Rhenish-Westphalian Aristocracy, 1918–1933’, *German History*, 18 (2000), 60–85, 64–65.
- 4 Gründer, ‘Rechtskatholizismus’, pp. 154–155. Klaus Breuning, *Die Vision des Reiches. Deutscher Katholizismus zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur, 1929–1934*, Munich 1969, pp. 107–155.
  - 5 Gründer, ‘Rechtskatholiken’, p. 153, on their antisemitism see p. 147. Breuning, *Vision*, pp. 99–113.
  - 6 Christoph Hübner, ‘National-konservatives Denken im deutschen Katholizismus der Weimarer Zeit: Die ‘Gelben Hefte’ 1924 bis 1933’, unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Erlangen, 2000.
  - 7 Larry E. Jones, ‘Catholic Conservatives in the Weimar Republic: The Politics of the Rhenish-Westphalian Aristocracy, 1918–1933’, *German History*, 18 (2000), 60–85.
  - 8 Larry E. Jones, ‘Catholics on the Right. The Reich Catholic Committee of the German National People’s Party 1920–1933’, *Historisches Jahrbuch*, 126 (2006), 221–267.
  - 9 Von Papen’s own description of his politics, Gründer, ‘Rechtskatholiken’, p. 150.
  - 10 Michael Mann, *Fascists*, New York, Cambridge 2004, p. 77. On Franz von Papen’s role within the Catholic right and German politics see Larry E. Jones, ‘Franz von Papen, the German Center Party, and the Failure of Catholic Conservatism in the Weimar Republic’, *Central European History*, 38 (2008), 191–217, and Jones, ‘Catholic Conservatives’, pp. 71–72.
  - 11 Blaschke, *Katholizismus*, p. 266.
  - 12 Jones, ‘Catholics’, p. 229.
  - 13 See the minutes of the NCC constituent meeting, 10 August 1920. Westfälisch-Lippischer Landwirtschaftsverband, Münster (WLIV), Akten RKA. Present were Baron Engelbert von Landsberg-Drensteinfurt; General von Gallwitz, MdR; Prof. Dr theol. W. Koch, priest of Binsdorf-Württemberg; pastor Thiel, Naumburg a. Bober; Dr Lejeune-Jung, Berlin; author Hans Berthold, Berlin Wilmersdorf; Baron von Schorlemer-Lieser; Professor Koch, Breslau (both not present but agreed to results) archivist Dr Pritze, Berlin, economist Weilnböck, MdR. Representing the party leadership were von Lindeiner, and Gräf-Anklam, MdL.
  - 14 Jones, ‘Catholics’, p. 240.
  - 15 Hübner, ‘Gelben Hefte’, pp. 13–14. Jones, ‘Catholic Conservatives’, p. 65.
  - 16 On the conservative revolution see Kurt Sontheimer, *Antidemokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik. Die politischen Ideen des deutschen Nationalismus zwischen 1918 und 1933*, Munich, 1962. Stefan Breuer, *Anatomie der Konservativen Revolution*, Darmstadt, 1993.

- 17 Jones, 'Catholics', p. 226.
- 18 *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 20 January 1923.
- 19 Hübner, 'Gelben Hefte', p. 19.
- 20 Ibid., p. 110.
- 21 On German conservatism and the radical right see Geoff Eley, *Reshaping the German Right. Radical Nationalism and Political Change after Bismarck*, London, 1980. Larry E. Jones, James Retallack (eds), *Between Reform, Reaction and Resistance. Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789–1945*, Oxford, 1993.
- 22 On the attempt of Baron Hermann von Lüninck to set up a new party, the short-lived Christian People's Party (*Christlich Volkspartei*) and the aims of the NCC see Jones, 'Catholics', pp. 227–228.
- 23 Jones, 'Catholics', p. 231.
- 24 I would like to thank Larry Jones for pointing me towards the diverse publications of the Catholic right. Buchner managed to elicit the approval of the Jesuit *Die Stimmen der Zeit*. BAK, N1088, 118. Peter Herde, 'Max Buchner (1881–1941) und die politische Stellung der Geschichtswissenschaft an der Universität Würzburg 1925–1945', in *Die Universität Würzburg in den Krisen der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Biographisch-systematische Studien zu ihrer Geschichte zwischen dem Ersten Weltkrieg und dem Neubeginn 1945*, ed. by Peter Baumgart, Würzburg, 2002, pp. 183–251 205–206. In addition to these journals there was the short-lived *Das Deutsche Volk* published by Martin Spahn and Heinrich Klinkenberg, financed by Ferdinand von Lüninck. Hübner, 'Gelben Hefte', 2000, p. 29.
- 25 See Pritze's statement on the activities and aims of the NCC and *Korrespondenzblatt*, 14 March 1923, in Bundesarchiv Berlin (BArch) R8005/482 *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*.
- 26 Letter Pritze to Klövekorn, Kaarst b/Neuss, 21 July 1925 in BArch R8005/482 *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, p. 22.
- 27 Letter Pritze to DNVP Kreisverein Brunzlau, 1 February 1926, BArch R8005/482 *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, p. 119.
- 28 On Reinermann see Wieland Vogel, *Katholische Kirche und Nationale Kampfverbände in der Weimarer Republik*, Mainz 1989, p. 145. On Brauweiler see Jones, 'Catholics', p. 227.
- 29 Jones, 'Catholics', pp. 252, 256.
- 30 For example, Hermann von Lüninck, 'Die katholische Staatsordnung', *Katholische Politik*, no 1, Cologne, March 1924, pp. 12–20, 16. A good summary of their worldview can be found in Hübner, 'Gelben Hefte', pp. 40–49.

- 31 Ferdinand von Lüninck, 'Praktische Möglichkeiten der Verwirklichung einer organischen Staats- und Gesellschaftsordnung unter den heutigen Rechts- und Wirtschaftsverhältnissen', *Katholische Politik*, no. 3, Cologne, January 1925, pp. 33–34.
- 32 Buchner quoted in Hübner, 'Gelben Hefte', p. 40.
- 33 Letter von der Recke, Kolberg, to Pritze, 27 April 1926, BArch, R8005/482 *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 153.
- 34 On Jews and finance see Ferdinand Lüninck, *Katholische Politik*, 1925, 39–40 and Ludwig von Gebssattel, *Gelben Hefte*, I, 1924/25, pp. 409–434, 417, quoted in Hübner, 'Gelben Hefte', pp. 98–99. On culture and communism see Max Buchner, *Gelben Hefte*, VII, 1930/31, 86–101, 97; von Stotzingen, *Gelben Hefte*, VI, 1929/30, 65–96, 67f, both quoted in Hübner, 'Gelben Hefte', 94; 76–77.
- 35 All the following quotes are taken from 'Bericht über den nationalpolitischen Kursus für den rheinisch-westfälischen katholischen Adel in Willibaldessen, 23–25. April 1923', Bundesarchiv Koblenz (BAK), N1324, 177. Also Jones: 'Catholic Conservatives', p. 68.
- 36 Otto von Westphalen, 'Die Aufgaben des Staates und die Grenzen der Staatsgewalt', *Katholische Politik*, no. 3, Cologne, January 1925, pp. 45–71, 45–47.
- 37 Ibid., pp. 56–57.
- 38 Ibid., p. 60.
- 39 Hermann zu Stolberg-Stolberg, 'Judengeist und Judenziele. Als Aufsatz aus einem im Verein katholischer Edelleute zu Münster i. W. am 22. August 1919' gehaltenen Vortrage ausgearbeitet, Bonifatius Druckerei in Paderborn, p. 14.
- 40 Buchner's inauguration speech celebrating the launch of the *Gelben Hefte* in June 1924. BAK, N1088, 128.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Breuning, *Vision*, p. 104.
- 43 Kurt Ziesche, *Das Königtum Christi in Europa*, Regensburg, 1926, Imprimatur, 9 July 1926.
- 44 Ziesche, *Königtum*, p. 14.
- 45 Ibid., pp. 4–5, 72.
- 46 Ibid., p. 15.
- 47 Ibid., p. 122.
- 48 Ibid., p. 13.
- 49 Ibid., p. 18.
- 50 Ibid., p. 21.
- 51 Ibid., pp. 58, 61.
- 52 Ibid., p. 11.
- 53 Ibid., p. 122.

- 54 Letter Reich Catholic Committee to Papal Nuncio (Eugenio Pacelli), (n/d, most likely August 1920). Archiv des Westfälisch-Lippischen Landwirtschaftsverbandes, Münster (WLV), Nachlass Schorlemer. Also mentioned in Jones, 'Catholics', p. 230.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 For example, Stolberg-Stolberg, 'Judengeist', p. 9.
- 57 Ziesche, *Königtum*, p. 3.
- 58 For example, Westphalen, 'Aufgaben', p. 55.
- 59 For example, 'Judenfrage', *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 17 February 1923.
- 60 Ziesche, *Königtum*, p. 75.
- 61 Minutes of the conference 'Bericht über den nationalpolitischen Kursus für den rheinisch-westfälischen katholischen Adel in Willibaldessen, 23–25. April 1923', BAK, N1324, 177.
- 62 Stolberg-Stolberg, 'Judengeist', p. 14.
- 63 For example, articles 'Etwas mehr Klarheit' and 'Solche Schriften gehören auf den Markt' in *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 27 January 1923; for the quote from the *Historisch Politischen Blätter* ('Beim entarteten Judentum herrschen statt Glaube, Hoffnung, Liebe – Unzucht, Hoffahrt, Mammon; Erotik, Genuss, Börse') see *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 28 April 1923.
- 64 Ferdinand von Lüninck led the Westphalian League (Westfalenbund) and later the Westphalian branch of the paramilitary, right-wing *Stahlhelm* after the two organisations merged in 1924. Martin Spahn, too, supported the nationalist attempts to overthrow the republic by Wolfgang Kapp and General Walther von Lüttwitz in 1920 and Adolf Hitler in November 1923. For further details, see Jones, 'Catholic Conservatives', pp. 143–144. On Spahn, see Gabriele Clemens, *Martin Spahn und der Rechtskatholizismus in der Weimarer Republik*, Mainz, 1983, pp. 161–162.
- 65 For example, see *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 19 May 1923 and 21 July 1923.
- 66 Felix Joseph Klein, 'Zur Judenfrage', *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 17 February 1923.
- 67 On Roth see Raimund Baumgärtner, 'Vom Kaplan zum Ministerialrat. Josef Roth – eine nationalsozialistische Karriere', in *Politik – Bildung – Religion. Hans Maier zum 50. Geburtstag*, ed. by Theo Stammen, et al., Paderborn, 1996, pp. 221–234. Heike Kreutzer, *Das Kirchenministerium im Gefüge der nationalsozialistischen Herrschaft*, Düsseldorf, 2000, pp. 161–182.
- 68 Joseph Roth, 'Katholizismus und Judenfrage', *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 28 April 1923.



- 69 'Katholizismus und Judenfrage' continued, *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 12 May 1923.
- 70 'Katholizismus und Judenfrage' continued, *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 5 May 1923.
- 71 Pritze summarising the achievements of the *Korrespondenzblatt* in the same, 7 April 1923.
- 72 For example, letter to Prof. Dr Otto Fischer, Breslau, 18 May 1926, BArch, R8005/482 *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 4.
- 73 Letter to Klövekorn, Kaarst b/Neuss, 21 July 1925, BArch, R8005/482 *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 22.
- 74 *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 24 March 1923.
- 75 Hübner, 'Gelben Hefte', pp. 51–52.
- 76 Stephan Malinowski, *Vom König zum Führer. Der deutsche Adel und National Sozialismus*, Frankfurt, 2004.
- 77 Stephan Malinowski, 'Kuno Graf von Westarp – ein missing link im preussischen Adel,' in "*Ich bin der letzte Preuße*": *Der politische Lebensweg des konservativen Politikers Kuno Graf von Westarp (1864–1945)*, ed. by Larry Eugene Jones, Wolfram Pyta, Cologne/Weimar/ Vienna, 2006, pp. 9–33, p. 18.
- 78 Hübner, *Gelben Hefte*, 54–56.
- 79 Letter Spahn to *Ring deutscher Katholiken*, 2 February 1925. BAK, N1324, 185.
- 80 Letter Spahn to Susanne Thomas, 13 June 1925. BAK, N1324, 115.
- 81 Ibid.
- 82 Buchner, *Gelben Hefte*, II, 1925/26, 332–371, 368, quoted in Hübner, 'Gelben Hefte', 116.
- 83 Buchner declined because he felt used by the Association as a negative target, and because his participation at such an event would lead to misunderstandings within the *völkisch* movement. Buchner to *Verein zur Abwehr*, 21 May 1930. For further correspondence between the Association and Buchner see BAK, N1088, 32.
- 84 Buchner to *Verein zur Abwehr*, 21 May 1930. BAK, N1088, 32.
- 85 Jones, 'Catholics', p. 235.
- 86 Clemens, *Martin Spahn*, pp. 172–173.
- 87 Jones, 'Catholics', p. 265.
- 88 His speech on the programme of the *Gelben Hefte's* at the foundation meeting on 3 June 1924. BAK, N1088, 128.
- 89 Buchner's academic posts were '*konkordatsgebunden*', meaning that the Bavarian ministry of education had to consult the local bishop (in Buchner's case Bishop Ehrenfried of Würzburg) on planned appointments. Bishop Ehrenfried vetoed Buchner's suggested appointment because of the historian's attacks on the Centre Party and

- BVP. The ensuing struggle between Ehrenfried and the then Bavarian DNVP/BVP government was only solved at the Vatican by nuncio Eugenio Pacelli. Herde, 'Max Buchner', pp. 204–207.
- 90 Clemens, *Martin Spahn*, pp. 161–162.
- 91 Jones, 'Catholic Conservatives', pp. 76–77.
- 92 Berthold Petzinna, 'Das Politische Kolleg. Konzept, Politik und Praxis einer konservativen Bildungsstätte in der Weimarer Republik', 102–119, 111.
- 93 Clemens, *Martin Spahn*, p. 81. Petzinna, 'Kolleg', p. 105.
- 94 Ulrike Ehret, 'Catholics and Antisemitism in Germany and England, 1918–1939', unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 2006.
- 95 The following quotes are taken from a letter to Bishop Klein, Paderborn, from Baron v. Elverfeldt, Count Wilhelm Droste zu Vischering, Barons v. Schorlemer-Overhagen, Reinhard v. Brenken, v. Fürstenberg- Körtlinghausen, v. Lüninck-Ostwig, 1 June 1931. In this letter they asked Bishop Klein to withdraw the hierarchy's ban on the *Stahlhelm* and the NSDAP and its support for the Centre Party. BAOS, 04-61-00-10/11. Jones, 'Catholic Conservatives', p. 79. The message was conveyed by Ildefons Herwegen in his meetings with the Catholic Rhenish nobility. His correspondence 24./30 September 1931. BAOS, 04-61-00-11. Clemens von Galen tried to defuse the crisis between the Catholic nobles and Archbishop Klein, but failed because of the nobles' persistence. Jones, 'Catholic Conservatives', p. 79.
- 96 Letter to Bishop Klein, Paderborn, from Baron v. Elverfeldt, and others, 1 June 1931. BAOS, 04-61-00-10/11.
- 97 Jones, 'Catholics', 265.
- 98 Karl Teppe, 'Ferdinand von Lüninck, 188–1944', Jürgen Aretz, Rudolf Morsey and Anton Rauscher, *Zeitgeschichte in Lebensbildern*, vol. 8, Aus dem deutschen Katholizismus des 19 und 20 Jahrhunderts, Mainz, Grünewald, 1997, pp. 41–53, 50–51.
- 99 Weiss, 'Katholischer Konservatismus', pp. 108–109.
- 100 It was still funded by Hugenberg, but also by Fritz Springoru and Ernst Brandi. Clemens, *Martin Spahn*, p. 168.
- 101 Hübner, 'Gelben Hefte', 20.
- 102 NCC relations with the party came under considerable strain during Hugenberg's leadership. Catholic interests, according to the Council, were generally insufficiently respected by the DNVP, as not enough Catholics were among the party's leadership, nor were adequate numbers of Catholic DNVP candidates running for elections. Minutes NCC Meeting 10 March 1929. BAK, N1324, 177. Gründer, 'Rechtskatholiken', p. 147. Jones, 'Catholics', p. 222.

- 103 Clemens, *Martin Spahn*, p. 177. Gründer, 'Rechtskatholiken', p. 146.
- 104 Letter von Lüninck to Buchner, 25 July 1931. BAK, N1088, 19. Letter Dr Möller to Martin Spahn, 14 November 1924. BAK, N1324, 177.
- 105 Six *Rechtskatholiken* were invited to the preparations of the *Katholikentag* to discuss civic topics and problems, among them Dr Doms, Ratibor; Dr Pietsch, Berlin; Dr Glasebock, Krefeld; a Mr Forschbach, attorney, Dortmund; Prince von Hohenzollern-Namedy; Baron von Lüninck, Bonn. The workshop was chaired by Emil Ritter. It was a partial victory as the speakers at the bigger public assemblies were still exclusively Centre or BVP and the Central Committee of the *Katholikentag* management showed likewise no *Rechtskatholiken* on its benches. *Katholische Führerbriefe*, 1 (September 1932), p. 6. Clemens, *Martin Spahn*, p. 173.
- 106 Clemens, *Martin Spahn*, p. 173. For numerous other letters complaining about the bishops' restrictive policy against patriotic associations see Erzbistumsarchiv Paderborn (EBAP), XVIII, 23 Vaterländische Verbände.
- 107 Hastings, 'How Catholic', pp. 401–431.
- 108 Ibid., p. 428, fn. 137.
- 109 Minutes meeting Bavarian *Volksverein*, 12 April 1925. BAArch R8115I/125, 232. The priest of the parish of St Paul in Passau found many NSDAP members in his parish, even in 'religious families' and his colleague at St Stephan's complained that National Socialism had a 'degenerating influence' on his pastoral work. For St Stephan see questionnaire 1931, for St Paul see questionnaire 1932. ABP, OA Deka Passau Stadt 9II, Seelsorgeberichte der Priester.
- 110 The *Stahlhelm Landesverband Westmark* was founded in summer 1930 to replace the dissolved *Stahlhelm Industriegebiet und Rheinland*. The decision to run a referendum on the dissolution of the Prussian Landtag was made by the *Stahlhelm* in October 1930, and officially applied for in February 1931. Joachim Tautz, *Militärische Jugendpolitik in der Weimarer Republik. Die Jugenorganisation des Stahlhelm, Bund der Frontsoldaten: Jungstahlhelm und Scharnhorst, Bund deutscher Jungmannen*, Regensburg, 1998, p. 422, fn. 225.
- 111 Leaflet 'Aufruf rechtsgerichteter Katholiken zum Volksbegehren: An die katholischen Deutschen in Preußen!' And Minutes Meeting, 16 March 1931. BAK, N1324, 177. Draft leaflet 'Osteraufruf', (n.d.). BAK, N1324, 177.
- 112 Letter Dr Kohlen to Josef Wrede, *Volksverein*, Berlin, 1 June 1931. BAArch R8115I/90 Volksverein. Tätigkeit Berlin.
- 113 For letters in support of the *Stahlhelm*, *Jungdeutsche Orden* and the *Rechtskatholiken* see EBAP, XVIII, 23 Vaterländische Verbände. Also,

- letter Kommerzienrat Carl Bödiker, Prussian *Generalkonsul*, Hamburg to Berning, 29 November 1932. BAOS, 04-61-00-7. Wilhelm Hübsch, Mühlheim-Ruhr, to Konrad Algermissen (*Volksverein*), 19 September 1931. StAMG, Nachlass Algermissen 15/7/1. The mayor of Renchen in Baden confessed that he had joined the NSDAP, despite being a devote Catholic, in order to fight communism more effectively. Letter Dr Rudolf Eglau to Archbishop Gröber, Freiburg, 14 July 1933. EAF, B2-48-5, 4. Others supported the NSDAP, hoping for a unification of the Christian Churches under Hitler, e.g., letter Alois Brücker, Köln-Stammheim, to Cologne Archdiocese, April 1933. EAK, Gen 22.12, 1.
- 114 Letter Dr Phil W. Rudolph, Kiel, to Bishop Berning, 14 April 1932. BAOS, 04-62-32.
- 115 Lecture Berning, 'Radikale Strömungen bei der studierenden Jugend', Fulda, 1931. BAOS, 04-61-00-11.
- 116 Messerschmidt, Hamburg, to secretariat Bishop Berning, (n.d.). BAOS, 04-61-00-7. Also Friedrich Muckermann's observation on young priests and farmers. Minutes meeting Ausschuss zur Bekämpfung des Bolschewismus (*Zentralkomitee d. Katholikentages*) at the *Deutsche Institut für Auslandskunde*, 2 November 1931. StAMG, Nachlass Algermissen 15/7/5. The attraction of National Socialism among young farmers was mentioned by Bavarian police reports. 'Auszug aus dem Halbmonatsbericht des Regierungs-Präsidiums von Oberbayern', 4 November 1931, Nr 2265. BayHStA, MInn 73734 Rechtsradikale Agitation der Bauernschaft.
- 117 Questionnaire 1931. The BVP's position was a little better in the parish of St Stephan: 974 BVP against 645 NSDAP and 93 DNVP, 89 KPD, 280 SPD. ABP, OA Deka Passau Stadt 9II.
- 118 In the following year, 1932, the BVP managed to regain their votes and left the NSDAP in second place by a margin of 26 votes (+116 votes for the BVP and +20 for the NSDAP). Questionnaire 1931 and 1932. Ibid.
- 119 Letter Wrede to Dr Kohlen, 18 June 1931. BArch R8115I / 90. 'Lehren aus der Reichstagswahl 1928 für die Zentrumsarbeit', 29 May 1928. StAMG, 15/2/115.
- 120 Bertram to bishops at Fulda conference, 24 January 1924. EAK, Gen 23.11, 2.
- 121 Quotes by Schulte in letter Bertram to bishops at Fulda conference, 24 January 1924. EAK, Gen 23.11, 2. The conference was called in in response to Hitler's failed *Putsch*. While the democratic parties woke up to the threat the *völkisch* movement posed to the Republic, the newly pronounced anticlericalism of the movement ended the hierarchy's indifference to *völkisch* organisations. On the good

- relations between the Bavarian hierarchy and the early *völkisch* movement see Hastings, 'How Catholic', pp. 383–433. In 1920, the Association of Catholic Clerks (*Verband katholischer kaufmännischer Vereine*) was still allowed to maintain its links to the *völkisch* and antisemitic German National Commercial Assistants' Association (*Verband Deutschnationaler Handlungsgehilfen*). Minutes of Diocesan Conference, Freiburg, 27–29 January 1920. EAF, B2-56/5. On the antisemitism of the Association see Berding, *Moderner Antisemitismus*, pp. 127–129.
- 122 Heinrich Thöne, *Jungdeutsche Orden und katholische Jugend*, Verlag der Scholle, Berlin Weißensee, 1924, p. 6.
- 123 Ibid., pp. 12–16.
- 124 Ibid., pp. 9–11.
- 125 Minutes of Diocesan Conference, Freiburg, 17–19 August 1932. EAF, B2-56/2. On the relationship between the hierarchy and the *Jungdeutsche Orden* see Vogel, *Nationale Kampfverbände*, p. 45.
- 126 See here Cardinal Bertram's objection to Ziesche and Wolff's mandate. Minutes NCC meeting, 10 March 1929. BAK, N1324, 177. Apparently, Bertram's resistance had not always been strong enough judging from the letter by Pater Kalthoff, Dortmund. In a letter to Spahn he remarked that Wolff and Ziesche were only able to follow their 'scandalous activities' thanks to Cardinal Bertram's kindness. Letter Kalthoff to Spahn, 1 December 1926. BAK, N1324, 177.
- 127 See, for example, Pritze's complaint about Cardinal Bertram to Count Praschma, Herischdorf, 14 Mai 1924, Bundesarchiv Berlin, R8005/482, *Katholisches Korrespondenzblatt*, 88.
- 128 Prof Grebe, 'Zentrum und die deutschen Katholiken. Flugschriften der Deutschen Zentrumspartei' (n.d.), 1924. GStA PK, XII Hauptabteilung, Zeitgeschichtliche Sammlung, III, Nr. 37.
- 129 'Redeskizze I', 1 August 1930. 'Gedanken für eine politische Rede', 1 January 1931. 'Der Nationalsozialismus. Entwicklung. Geisteshaltung und Ziele', 1931. 'Der Nationalsozialismus. Der Weg ins Chaos', 1931. BAK, ZSG 1 108/10.
- 130 Centre Party flyer 1924 'Sozialpolitik. Zentrumspartei und andere Parteien. 5. Die Deutschvölkischen' (by Joseph Andre, Stuttgart). GStA PK, XII, III, 37. Centre pamphlet on *Jungdeutsche Orden* 'The Centre criticises the occasionally alarmingly antisemitic attitude.' GStA PK, XII, III, 38.
- 131 Prof Grebe, 'Zentrum und die deutschen Katholiken', 1924. Georg Schreiber, (MdR, Münster): *Grundfragen der Zentrumspolitik. Ein politisches Handbuch in Frage und Antwort*, Berlin, 1924, p. 155, 176. GStA PK, XII, III, 38.

- 132 Schönhoven, *Bayerische Volkspartei*, pp. 100–105.
- 133 For this and the following quotes see the election poster of the *Bayerische Mittelpartei* for a *Landtag* election (n.d.) 'Bayerische Wähler und Wählerinnen! Volk und Staat sind in schwerer Not!', ABP, OA, 9181.
- 134 Flyer *Bayerische Mittelpartei* 'Positive deutschvölkische Arbeit' (n.d.). ABP, OA, 9181.
- 135 Peter Pulzer, *German Antisemitism Revisited*, Rome 1999, 18.
- 136 On the Westphalian nobility see Jones, 'Catholic Conservatives', pp. 61–62; for their loss of political power see Malinowski, *König zum Führer*, pp. 200–202 and on the Westphalian Catholic nobility, pp. 385–394.
- 137 Walter Ferber, 'Der Weg Martin Spahns. Zur Ideengeschichte des politischen Rechtskatholizismus', *Hochland*, 1970, pp. 218–229.
- 138 Jay Corrin, G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc. *The Battle Against Modernity*, London, 1981, p. 105. Kester Aspden, *Fortress Church. The English Roman Catholic Bishops and Politics, 1903–1963*, Leominster, 2002, p. 183.
- 139 Richard Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain. A History, 1918–1985*, Oxford, 1987, pp. 40–41.
- 140 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 183.
- 141 Richard Griffiths, *Patriotism Perverted: Captain Ramsay, the Right Club and English Antisemitism, 1939–40*, London, 1998, p. 133.
- 142 Ibid., pp. 59–60.
- 143 The Britons Society was established in 1918 by Henry Hamilton Beamish. More important than the small debating society was its publishing arm, the Britons Publishing Society, dedicated to printing antisemitic material and the distribution of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain*, pp. 24, 66–67.
- 144 Ibid, pp. 180–187.
- 145 Griffiths, *Patriotism Perverted*, pp. 64, 131, 221, 267. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain*, pp. 190–200.
- 146 Kevin Morris, 'Fascism and British Catholic Writers, 1924–39. Part II', *The New Blackfriar*, 80 (1999), 82–95, 86.
- 147 Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, pp. 162, 192. For Major Douglas' Social Credit movement see PRO HO 45/24966; especially the report sent to Sir John Goodwin, 18 December 1940 and an intercept from the Social Credit Co-ordinating Committee, also 1940. Both comment on the organisation's antisemitism and pro-fascist propaganda. For an account of Major Douglas see John Hughes, *Major Douglas. The Policy of a Philosophy*, Glasgow, 2002.
- 148 Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, pp. 164–165.

- 149 Griffiths, *Patriotism Perverted*, pp. 180, 42, 225, 178.
- 150 Dennis Sewell, *Catholics. Britain's Largest Minority*, London, 2001, pp. 62–65.
- 151 Arnold Lunn to Belloc, 22 November 1932. Boston College, Burns Library, Belloc Papers.
- 152 Chesterton, G.K.'s *Weekly* (GKW), 3 December 1927. Cited in Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, p. 110.
- 153 Ibid., p. 105.
- 154 Sewell, *Catholics*, p. 53. Hilaire Belloc, *Usury*, London, 1931.
- 155 NW, 26 October 1911, p. 589.
- 156 League pamphlet K.L. Kenrick, 'The War on the Weak. Some objections to Eugenic legislation', ca. 1930. CI, League Publications.
- 157 Minutes Central Branch Meeting, 30 October 1931; and Minutes Extraordinary Meeting of the Central Branch, 13 November 1931. A.M. Currie, strongly in favour of a Distributist Party, implied 'that politics was the best policy. The only way the ordinary Englishmen would take politics was in the traditional popular way.' CI, Minute Book. The League. Central Branch Committee London.
- 158 It was only open for Catholics. The reasons given for this restriction were (1) first duty to fellow Catholics; (2) the village communities would be centred around the Church; (3) 'the element of discipline necessary to its success can only be found in the common beliefs and loyalties of Catholics'. In 'A Catholic Farming Co-operative Movement For England', AAL Downey Collection Series 1, XI Societies, Land Movement.
- 159 Herbert Shove, *The Catholic Land Movement. Its Aims and Methods*, CTS Pamphlet, London, 1932, pp. 20–22.
- 160 Fr Vincent McNabb, *The Catholic Land Movement and its Motives*, CTS Pamphlet, London 1932, pp. 11, 13. Unemployment was particularly high in the north east and north west of England. For 1929, the year where the first Catholic Land Association was founded, the rates stood at 13.7% and 13.3% respectively. This regional unemployment rate rose during the early 1930s, reaching a peak in the north east in 1932 with 28.5% unemployment, in the north west in 1931 with 28.2%. Unemployment also rose in the Midlands in the early 1930s, reaching a peak in 1931 with 20.3%, while the rate in London was considerably lower, 5.6% in 1929 and 13.5% in 1931. Sean Glynn, Alan Booth, *Modern Britain. An Economic and Social History*, London 1996, p. 91.
- 161 H. Robbins, who managed the Catholic Land Association in Birmingham, also stressed the importance of the religious element in the movement. Religion would give those involved the consolation

- and strength to continue their work. More generally, however, religion was seen as a necessary foundation for 'complete and rounded communities'. H. Robbins, 'A Land Movement', *GKW*, 3 August 1933, pp. 349–51.
- 162 'A Catholic Farming Co-operative Movement for England' (n.d., but probably 1932), AAL Downey Collection Series 1, XI.
  - 163 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 184.
  - 164 Documents in BAA, AP/M18 Midland Catholic Land Association, and letter H.E.G. Rope to O'Brian Donaghue, 3 June 1937, CI, Miscellaneous Correspondence.
  - 165 Geoffrey Field, 'Antisemitism with the Boots off', in *Hostages of Modernisation, 1870–1933/39*, ed. by Herbert A. Strauss, 2 vols, Berlin, 1992–93, I, 294–325, p. 298. Letter G.K. Chesterton to his mother, (n.d.), CI, Letter from the British Library.
  - 166 H. E. Humphries, *Liberty and Property. An Introduction to Distributism*, London, 1928, p. 39.
  - 167 According to this, 'Englishness' was to be found in Shakespeare's England or in the ancient (corporate) organisation of the 'Hundreds'. 'Property and Freedom or Wealth and Slavery?' A paper given by Mr C O'Brian Donaghue to the Birmingham Social Credit Group at Queen's College, Birmingham, 8 November 1933. CI, Notes and Articles by CF O'Brian Donaghue. For G.K. Chesterton nationality and 'Englishness' was bound to one place. His quasi-religious definition of nationality also meant that Jews could never be English. Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society. Racial Representations 1875–1945*, Cambridge, 1993, pp. 184, 203.
  - 168 At the time, G.K. Chesterton was president of the League, part of the executive committee were Hilaire Belloc, W. Blackie, Alan Bland, Mrs Cecil Chesterton, Cedric Chivers, A.M. Currie, Mrs E. Gordon Dunham, Maurice Reckitt, W.R. Titterton, Captain H.S.D. Went. George Heseltine was secretary. CI, The League. Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, p. 122.
  - 169 *Ibid.*, p. 122.
  - 170 Cited in Morris, 'Catholic Writers I', p. 37.
  - 171 Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, p. 190. G.K. Chesterton's attitude towards Mussolini has been contested by historians ever since Maisie Ward's defence of her literary hero. Maisie Ward, *Gilbert Keith Chesterton*, Regensburg, 1956. Yet in the case of the Abyssinian war, both the articles of G.K.'s *Weekly* (which Chesterton still edited from his sick-bed) and the recollection of some Distributists suggest that he supported Mussolini's Ethiopian adventure.



- 172 John Cargill to Desmond, 8 June 1954. CI, The Chesterton Society from Rex Mawby. The retrospective account of former League members are often coloured by self-justification, adoration for Chesterton and laying blame at the feet of others. Heseltine, e.g., blamed 'Catholics eager to back Mussolini' and 'Catholics who had not enough to do' for the pro-fascist turn of the League.
- 173 Jay Corrin, *Catholic Intellectuals and the Challenge of Democracy*, Notre Dame, 2002, p. 218.
- 174 Corrin. *Chesterton and Belloc*, pp. 177–178.
- 175 A.K. Chesterton, G.K.'s second cousin, contributed a view articles to the *Weekly Review* in 1938/39; as did J.L. Benvenisti (author of *The Absent Minded Revolution*, 1937) with blatant appeals for fascism. A.K. Chesterton had been the editor of the BUF's chief propaganda journals, but had resigned from the party in March 1938 on the grounds that its support for Hitler's Germany was compromising British patriotism. Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, p. 192. On A.K. Chesterton's antisemitism see Richard Thurlow, 'Ideology of Obsession on the Model of A.K. Chesterton', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 8 (1974), 23–29.
- 176 Ibid., p. 185.
- 177 Adrian Hastings, 'English Catholicism in the Late 1930s', in Hastings, *The Shaping of Prophecy*, London, 1995, pp. 69–83, p. 78.
- 178 Robert Speaight, *The Life of Hilaire Belloc*, London, 1957, p. 464.
- 179 Cited in Morris, 'Catholic Writers II', p. 82.
- 180 A comment by James W. Poynter of the CGI in 1929 shows that Belloc had been influential for quite some time: 'What he says is repeated, as a tune is repeated on a gramophone, by a multitude of lesser writers, preachers in Roman Catholic pulpits, young women and young men on Catholic Evidence Guild platforms, and so on.' James W. Poynter, *Hilaire Belloc Keeps the Bridge. An Examination of his Defence of Roman Catholicism*, London, 1929.
- 181 The quote is Jerrold's. Morris, 'Catholic Writers II', p. 85. Corrin, *Catholic Intellectuals*, p. 324.
- 182 Belloc in reply to Lunn's letter from 21 May 1938 asking for Belloc's views on the French Revolution as he intended to write a book on communism. Burns Library, Belloc Papers.
- 183 Robert Speaight (ed.), *Letters from Hilaire Belloc*, London, 1958, p. 265. Apart from Belloc the new editorial board after Chesterton's death included Mrs Cecil Chesterton, T.S. Eliot and Reginald Jebb (Belloc's son-in-law), the latter two at least were non-Catholics.
- 184 Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, p. 192.
- 185 Mond was also an advisor of Lloyd George after the latter had become Prime Minister in 1916. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain*, pp. 14, 47.

- 186 Humphries, *Liberty*, p. 10. 'The Distributist Conference 1935. Preliminary Notice', CI, Distributist Conferences.
- 187 This was particularly apparent in their coverage of the Marconi scandal, where Mond was accused of pulling the strings behind Lloyd George. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain*, p. 68.
- 188 NW, 30 July 1920, p. 242.
- 189 Taken from a cross-section of together sixteen months of the years 1927, 1929, 1933, 1936; and eight months (25 issues) in the period of 1938–40, 1942.
- 190 WR, 7 March 1940, pp. 421–433, p. 431, p. 436. WR, 14 March 1940, pp. 439–440, p. 449–450. WR, 21 March 1940, p. 462. WR, 28 March 1940, pp. 5, 8–9, p. 11.
- 191 GKW, 31 October 1925, p. 3.
- 192 Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, p. 187.
- 193 GKW, 24 October 1935, p. 3; GKW, 17 October 1935, p. 3.
- 194 Belloc in GKW, 9 November 1929. Chesterton in GKW, 28 December 1929. Both in Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, pp. 175, 177.
- 195 Antisemitic remarks in the movement's journals, *Land for the People*, occurred at times, yet not as often as in *G.K.'s Weekly*. *Land for the People* was initially the mouthpiece of the Scottish Catholic Land Movement (first published in January 1930), but was soon adopted by all Catholic Land Associations. For examples in speeches see 'Report written by a Wood Worker [O'Brian Donaghue] on Westfield Training Farm on Distributism', and O'Brian Donaghue's correspondence. CI, Notes and Articles by C.F. O'Brian Donaghue.
- 196 H.E.G. Rope to O'Brian Donaghue, 3 June 1937. CI, Notes and Articles by C.F. O'Brian Donaghue.
- 197 *Land for the People*, October 1931, pp. 2–3.
- 198 *Flee to the Fields, The Faith and Works of the Catholic Land Movement. A Symposium*, London, 1934.
- 199 *Ibid.*, pp. 50–51.
- 200 *Ibid.*, pp. 195, 209.
- 201 Also Brian Cheyette who observed that Belloc's antisemitism became 'increasingly fantastic' with its new focus on the Spanish Civil War, Hitler's Germany and Palestine. Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew'*, p. 178. After 1936, Belloc began to describe Hitler as a manifestation of 'revived monarchialism': National Socialism was like Italian fascism, an authoritarian movement in defence of Europe's common culture against atheist Bolshevik revolution. Britain, according to *G.K.'s Weekly*, should consequently form an alliance with Hitler and Mussolini against Soviet Russia. GKW, 27 September 1936, p. 2.

- 202 Macdonald in *GKW*, 20 August 36, p. 5. See also the retrospective on the events of the Spanish Civil War and its press coverage in Britain in the March 1939 issues of the *Weekly Review*. Almost all comments on 'Jewish influence' refer to the Popular Fronts in Spain and France, on Russian influence, and on the British press.
- 203 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 213. On Belloc and Chesterton and the connection between pro-fascism and antisemitism see Sewell, *Catholics*, pp. 71–73.
- 204 Gregory Macdonald to Michael Sewell, 28 August 1986, CI, Letters from Gregory Macdonald. On Chesterton and fascism see special issue *Chesterton Review*, 25 (1999), no. 1 & 2.
- 205 Gregory Macdonald to J. Walsh, 17 December 1949. CI, Letters from Gregory Macdonald.
- 206 Gregory Macdonald to Michael Sewell, 28 August 1986. CI, Letters from Gregory Macdonald.
- 207 Duratt Bishop, Sevenacres to Strong, 28 August 1935. According to Arthur Currie, the League specifically tried to address a conservative middle-class audience with its programme. Currie to Heseltine, 14 May 1933. Both letters in CI, The Distributist League misc letters to the Hon Secretaries Heseltine & Mawby 1926–40.
- 208 The single Catholic land organisations were loosely joined together by the Catholic Land Federation with Rev Msgr Dey as chairman and Belloc's son-in-law Reginald Jebb as secretary. Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, p. 150.
- 209 The CSG, the most important agency of Catholic social thought up to the mid 1920s, was a persistent critic of Distributism, disagreeing with Belloc's concept of the 'servile state' and his attack on modern industrial society. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
- 210 Announced in *Catholic Herald*, 24 July 1926; the series was published in four parts. For their reports on fascist Europe see, e.g., *Catholic Herald*, 20 January 1939, p. 6.
- 211 Morris, 'Catholic Writers II', p. 88.
- 212 On the following references to *Verkirklichung* see Heinz Hürten, *Kleine Geschichte des deutschen Katholizismus 1800–1960*, Mainz, 1986, p. 188.
- 213 According to Hermann von Lüninck, ten members of the German Catholic aristocracy lost their lives as a consequence of their involvement in the attempt on Hitler's life in 1944. Among them was his brother Ferdinand who had served Hitler's government as provincial president of Westphalia until the beginning of 1938. Hermann von Lüninck resigned as the provincial president of the Rhineland at the end of 1934. Jones, 'Catholic Conservatives', p. 84; Gründer, 'Rechtskatholiken', p. 153.

- 214 On popular reactions see Otto Dov Kulka, 'Popular Christian Attitudes in the Third Reich to National Socialist Policies towards the Jews', in *Judaism and Christianity*, pp. 251–267. Donald Dietrich, 'Antisemitism and the Institutional Catholic Church', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 16 (2002), 415–426, p. 425.

# 5

## Responses to fascism

The failure of the Catholic Church to criticise the National Socialist regime for its discrimination against German Jews and eventually the persecution and murder of European Jewry has been attributed either to ideological affinities, in particular Catholic antisemitism and a fear of socialism, or structural restraints imposed by the dictatorial regimes in Europe.<sup>1</sup> In the case of Hitler's Germany, historians have also referred to the intransigence of the regime regarding one of the core elements of its ideology, or to the Concordat that excluded any direct political resistance on the part of the bishops.<sup>2</sup> Recent publications on the Catholic Church and the Third Reich neither downplay the role of antisemitism nor do they discard the Church's testing situation in dictatorial regimes and are thus able to reach beyond these previously irreconcilable positions.<sup>3</sup> Most studies acknowledge an ideological affinity between the Catholic Church and the fascist regimes in Europe, including Hitler's Germany. This is less seen in a common dislike of Jews than in a shared determination to fight the advance of socialism. Preoccupied with their fear of anticlerical socialism, in particular at the time of the Spanish Civil War (1936–39), the curia and bishops woke up too late to the totalitarian determination of the fascist regimes, their violence and their racism. With respect to the Church's potential to mobilise popular dissent, these studies also take into account the strained position of the German Catholic clergy in the Third Reich where they faced both a hostile regime and the erosion of the Catholic social and cultural milieu. This emasculated position, it is suggested, undermined any attempts at effective resistance.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the Vatican and the German bishops feared that any overt public criticism of the National Socialist government would endanger the existence of Catholic charitable organisations, including

those who cared for converted Jews, or in the language of the day, for 'non-Aryan' Catholics. While such a context makes the ambivalences in Catholic resistance methods more comprehensible, the question whether this ambivalence grew out of an ideological affinity to the new government, in particular out of Catholic anti-Jewish sentiments, often remains unanswered. Although the preoccupation with Catholic victimhood, real or dreaded, was the overwhelming reason why Catholic leaders acted late on the persecution of Europe's Jews, an ideological dimension cannot be divorced from this preoccupation. After all, the majority of Catholic publications had identified socialism with Jewish interests for many years. By the 1930s, the image of the 'Jewish Bolshevik' had become familiar as shorthand for an opponent who fought Christianity as institution, culture and religion. The tendency to view authoritarian and fascist governments as the lesser evil was not only due to the positive experiences the Church has made with the governments of Portugal, Italy and Austria, but also due to their shared view on how a traditional, Christian nation and society ought to be organised. This included a shared suspicion against a supposedly pernicious Jewish influence on the nation's culture and traditions.

There are ways to probe the motives behind cautious Catholic resistance. In the case of Germany, the emphasis on the Third Reich as a totalitarian regime all too conveniently downplays the possibilities of the Church to act in a society that was gradually transformed into a coordinated, repressive dictatorship, leaving considerable scope to act in the first two years of Hitler's government and still some opportunities until the outbreak of war. It would be instructive to take a closer look at Catholic responses to the early violence and discrimination against Jews in Germany. Some statements from among the Catholic bishops and lay leaders reflect such a suspicion against Jews. This is, however, an avenue that is not pursued here. Considering that the German bishops had relinquished possibilities for Catholic political resistance in the August 1933 Concordat with Hitler in exchange for religious and ecclesiastic liberty, one might argue they were more willing to defend their remaining religious space rather than interfere with secular politics such as the regime's antisemitic policies. Indeed, this was a common argument across the Catholic clerical and lay leadership for the silence of the Church on such matters. Was the Church then more willing to defend the Church's heritage in Judaism in the face of National Socialist anticlerical rhetoric and campaigns? A closer look at the Catholic defence against the anticlerical literature published by Alfred Rosenberg

shows that the urge to protect Catholic interests prevailed over a defence of the Jews. Furthermore, even on exclusively religious terrain, the defence literature still used anti-Jewish images to distance the Church from modern Jewry. Finally, the comparison with English Catholicism and its responses to Hitler's Germany is a simple way to see how Catholics far removed from any dictatorial restraints responded to the discrimination and persecution of Jews.

The comparison with democratic England shows clear similarities to the policies of the German bishops. The preoccupation with socialism among the English bishops, Catholic intellectuals and lay leaders was even starker and more persistent than in the case of German Catholicism. The Spanish Civil War and the violent attacks on Church institutions and personnel in its wake were the marked events that mobilised moral outrage of the leadership of English Catholicism and consequently dominated their public statements. Single bishops, in particular of the Midlands and northern England, condemned the persecution of Jews in Germany early on, yet it took the Archbishop of Westminster as head of the English hierarchy until 1939 to condemn fascism both in Germany and in Britain. It was not the political system, dictatorship or democracy that prevented the Catholic leadership to speak out against National Socialism and its policies in time but their preoccupation with Catholic victimhood in Germany, Spain, Mexico and the Soviet Union. The feeling of a worldwide persecution of Catholics (mostly at the hands of socialist governments, so they assumed) in England and the precarious situation of German Catholicism simply overshadowed their attention to the persecution of Jews in Germany. The Catholic hierarchies in both countries consequently woke up late to the plight of European Jews under National Socialist rule. By that time only democratic England welcomed public statements by Cardinal Arthur Hinsley whereas the German bishops had long missed the small windows for such opportunities that the evolving dictatorship had permitted in its early years.

### **The Church in Hitler's Germany: limits of Catholic religious tolerance**

In January 1934, Alfred Rosenberg was appointed the Führer's Delegate for the Entire Intellectual and Philosophical Education and Instruction of the National Socialist Party. Theoretically, this office granted Rosenberg the power to shape youth education as it was offered at training courses of party organisations according to the

worldview he had set out in his main ideological work *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* (1930). The Vatican promptly responded to this appointment by placing Rosenberg's *Myth of the Twentieth Century* on the index of forbidden books shortly after Pius XI had sent a *Promemoria* to Hitler in January 1934 protesting against the party's ambition to demand not just a total state, but absolute totality of its ideology.<sup>5</sup>

The argument between the Christian churches and Alfred Rosenberg, which evolved around Rosenberg's main ideological work *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, has traditionally been interpreted as a clash of two worldviews with both sides laying an absolute claim on the human mind.<sup>6</sup> The *Myth* described world history as nothing but the history of races. Rosenberg's 'myth of the blood' claimed superiority over 'the ancient sacraments', and declared Judaism and Christianity mortal enemies of the Teutonic soul. Rosenberg fantasised about a new 'Aryan', more masculine Christ, a 'slim, tall, blond' saviour of northern Europe. Led by such a figure, he proposed, Christianity could be reformed if it rid itself of its 'Judeo-Roman infections', which meant nothing less than the end of the Christian churches and the rejection of the Old Testament.<sup>7</sup> The argument between the Christian churches and Alfred Rosenberg was never just about his literary work. It was a sub-chapter of the Church struggle and the attempt of the Christian churches to fend off the anticlericalism and the totalitarian claims of the National Socialist state. Yet in the attempts to refute the allegations of a Jewish-Catholic complot – central to Rosenberg's ideology – the dispute between the regime and the Church also belongs to the history of Catholic attitudes to Judaism and the 'Jewish question'. Indeed, some historians saw the Church's defence against Rosenberg as an occasion where the Church spoke out in defence of the Jews.<sup>8</sup> It certainly never severed its historical ties with Judaism, unlike the majority of the Protestant churches which gradually and voluntarily 'Aryanised' their institutions and in the extreme case of the German Christians their doctrine. 'Judeo-Roman infections', i.e. the collusion between Jews and the Catholic Church against the interests of the German nation was a central and recurring argument in Rosenberg's talks and works as well as the anticlerical campaigns that flared up again from 1935. Coinciding with the regime's renewed antisemitic policies and its drive to coordinate Catholic youth organisations, the propaganda warned against the threat of a joint 'red' ('Jewish Bolshevism') and 'black' (Catholic Church) internationalism. This propaganda intensified when Hitler's Germany supported the Spanish nationalists of



Francisco Franco in their war against the elected republican government of Spain (1936–39). Paradoxically, Catholics were increasingly cast as ‘enemy number two’ next to ‘enemy number one’ – ‘international Jewry’ – even though many Catholics shared the regime’s view of the alleged danger of ‘Jewish Bolshevism’. At the same time, the bishops were under the impression that Catholics were leaving the Church either under pressure from or lured by National Socialism. In reality the numbers were modest and reached a peak with 108,000 secessions in 1937 – well under 1% of Germany’s Catholic population.<sup>9</sup> The German bishops thus felt that the defence against Rosenberg had to respond to radical nationalism, anticlericalism and antisemitism. Responses to Rosenberg and the anticlerical propaganda therefore not only had to justify the common heritage of Christianity and Judaism in the Old Testament and in Christ as a Jew. They also had to demonstrate Catholic past and ongoing commitment to the German cause. Catholic authors and Church institutions responded to these challenges with fairly systematic expositions on Catholicism’s relationship to Judaism and in passing comments on the ‘Jewish question’. The Catholic literature in defence against Rosenberg’s verbal and written attacks on the churches are therefore valuable sources for studying Catholic attitudes to Jews and Judaism at a time when open public debate on the ‘Jewish question’ had already ceased.

Two popular pamphlets, the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and the *Nathanaelfrage*, are a particularly valuable source for an enquiry into Catholic attitudes to Jews and Judaism during the Third Reich.<sup>10</sup> They are examples of the few systematic and yet popular expositions on Christianity’s relationship with Jews and Judaism, and National Socialist race ideology at a time when public debate on the ‘Jewish question’ had already ceased. Both publications were designed to reach a wide audience due to their simple language and low price, their door-to-door distribution and their use in religious instruction.<sup>11</sup> The *Kathechismuswahrheiten*, for instance, achieved a circulation of five to six million in 1937, which was ten times higher than the circulation of the learned anti-Rosenberg literature.<sup>12</sup> The two pamphlets were written and disseminated by the Defence Bureau against Anti-Christian Propaganda (*Abwehrstelle gegen die nationalsozialistische antichristliche Propaganda*) in Düsseldorf, an institution close to the German hierarchy and central to the Catholic publication campaign against Rosenberg. The Defence Bureau was set up by Cardinal Karl Joseph Schulte of Cologne in March 1934 and was managed by Vicar Josef Teusch.<sup>13</sup> It was Teusch’s office that first started the broader

defence work against Rosenberg. It was also the source of one of the best-known learned defence publications at the time, *Studies on The Myth of the Twentieth Century* (*Studien zum Mythos des XX. Jahrhunderts*).<sup>14</sup> Its publications were backed by Cardinal Schulte and the German bishops and had thus the consent of the highest level of the ecclesiastical leadership in Germany.<sup>15</sup> Because of their proximity to the German hierarchy, this popular literature was meant to provide a direct communication link from the hierarchy to ordinary Catholics, in particular to those Catholics who were wooed by both the Church and National Socialism – the youth. The *Katechismuswahrheiten* was primarily written for children, and the *Nathanaelfrage* addressed Catholic students and young adults.<sup>16</sup> Both booklets thus represent the views and values the leadership of the Catholic Church in Germany wanted to convey to their community (more so than the learned literature by Catholic theologians and writers, which also tends to reflect the authors' individual attitudes).

The historiography on the defence against Rosenberg has evolved along similar debates as have the discussions on the Catholic Church and its responses to the persecution of the Jews. Yet historians have seen these events more readily as an instance of resistance and to a lesser degree as an occasion where the Church spoke out in defence of the Jews.<sup>17</sup> The Protestant church historian Klaus Scholder, for instance, interpreted the defence as a passive refusal of the Christian churches to follow Hitler in his racial antisemitism. They might have clung to their transmitted creed, but in Scholder's eyes, this was enough to call the totality of the National Socialist worldview in question.<sup>18</sup> Otto Dov Kulka on the other hand was more critical in his assessment of the Christian churches. He felt that the churches mainly complained about Rosenberg and his neo-paganism. Their defence was a defence of the Old Testament and the biblical Jews, but did not expressly relate to Rosenberg's antisemitism or the persecution of the Jews.<sup>19</sup> Others are even more critical and conclude that, despite their opposition to National Socialism, Christian resisters transmitted concepts of Jews and Judaism that did little to ameliorate, and often exacerbated, the antisemitic climate in interwar Germany.<sup>20</sup>

The main purpose of the brochures was to explain the relationship between Christianity, specifically the Catholic Church, and Judaism. As popular and essentially theological texts they beg the question if the universal claim of the Catholic faith, its commands of love and charity and the ever-present option of converting from Judaism to Catholicism could indeed refute modern and racial antisemitism as often claimed by Catholic historiography.<sup>21</sup> The popular defence

literature does not unanimously support this positive assessment. Instead, literature perpetuated the popular idea of a supposed 'Jewish Marxism' and the Jew's undue and 'degenerating' influence on German Christian society at a time when the Catholic Church, Franco and Hitler were fighting the same enemy in the 'Jewish-Bolshevik'. The use of anti-Jewish images at a time when the racial segregation of Germany's Jews was already well under way raises the question of the motivation behind the publication of such literature. Did the authors and the bishops who supported this defence deliberately exploit these anti-Jewish images to strengthen their case with the average Catholic, as Stephen Haynes and Uriel Tal suggested in the case of the German Christians and Protestant churches?<sup>22</sup> To what extent were these images reflections of the enduring anti-Jewish prejudices within German Catholicism?

***Rosenberg, the Catholic Church and National Socialism: problems of the anti-Rosenberg defence***

Historians have often insisted that the churches fought a phantom in Rosenberg and his *Myth*, since neither the man nor the book was widely influential.<sup>23</sup> Despite Rosenberg's known opposition to the Christian churches, he had no authority to shape the Reich's church policy nor did he participate in the regime's political anticlerical measures.<sup>24</sup> Even when given political power (e.g., as Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories from 17 July 1941), Rosenberg was not the shrewd politician to prevail over his competitors (particularly Josef Goebbels, Heinrich Himmler or Reinhard Heydrich) within Hitler's leadership. Yet he was not simply 'almost Rosenberg' as his rival Goebbels sarcastically described Rosenberg as the man who 'almost managed to become a scholar, a journalist, a politician, but only almost'.<sup>25</sup> Ernst Piper forcefully argues that Rosenberg's influence on the ideological indoctrination of Germany's youth, army and regional political leadership should not be underestimated. Rosenberg remained at the centre of Hitler's circle of loyal followers, his position surpassed only by Himmler, Goebbels and Göring. More important, however, was his influence on National Socialist ideology and its anti-semitism.<sup>26</sup> In his position as guardian of National Socialist ideology he was on a par with Himmler and Goebbels – something that both Rosenberg's contemporaries as well as the judges at the Nuremberg Trials acknowledged.<sup>27</sup> Despite the lack of an institutional power base, Rosenberg's role as enforcer of National Socialist ideology was supported by Hermann Göring, Baldur von Schirach of the Hitler

Youth, and the majority of the regional party leadership (*Gauleiter*), particularly in Catholic regions.<sup>28</sup> The *Myth* remained on the reading list of National Socialist training courses and reports on these courses confirmed the use of antisemitic and anticlerical literature.<sup>29</sup> It was in his position as the Führer's Delegate over Ideological Education and Instruction that the churches feared Rosenberg's work most.<sup>30</sup> In addition, the timing of Rosenberg's elevation to the post of the party's chief ideologue was inopportune for the ongoing negotiation between the Reich, the bishops and the Vatican on the status and independence of Catholic lay organisations set out in the Reich Concordat.<sup>31</sup>

### *Intention and reality of ecclesiastic defence strategies*

Three months after Rosenberg's appointment as guardian over National Socialist ideology and education, the German bishops decided at the Fulda Bishops' Conference in June 1934 that they would confront Rosenberg's ideology in complaints to state representatives and address its fallacy in the distribution of anti-Rosenberg literature.<sup>32</sup> For the time being, the German bishops, like the Vatican, placed greater hope in the efficacy of a broad and intense educational campaign that highlighted Rosenberg's errors and explained the relationship between Christianity and Judaism.<sup>33</sup> Pastoral letters were to address the public and emphasise the necessity of Christian education, particularly among youth organisations. Sermons strongly condemned the anti-Christian ideology of Rosenberg and the advance of neo-heathendom in the years up to 1938. This education was to be supported by suitable pamphlets and lectures.

Historians usually describe the defence of the Christian churches against Rosenberg as successful small-scale resistance where they were able to voice their complaints against the regime's church policy and challenge single aspects of National Socialist ideology. It has been argued that the defence was successful, because the political leadership deliberately deflected the anger of the churches onto a minor personality in their midst – Rosenberg. Furthermore, Reichmann-Gall suggests, of the many clerical attacks on Rosenberg none was censored or banned by the National Socialist authorities.<sup>34</sup> Catholic defence literature was not officially outlawed nor was it systematically censored. After all, Hitler did not want to antagonise public opinion with all too overt anticlerical laws before and during the war. But the bishops and the clergy had to cope with considerable handicaps in their defence strategy, as the authorities found their own

subtle and arbitrary ways to cut off the communication channels of the Church. What remained of the Catholic press, largely religious publications and diocesan or parish-based news bulletins under the protection of the bishops, had to face increasing if arbitrary restrictions in the form of temporary bans, confiscation of the printed material or closure of print shops.<sup>35</sup> The hierarchy's struggle was ultimately with a National Socialist ideological reality where their own presence and teaching was crowded out of the public sphere, and where they feared to lose their influence on grass-roots level over their own communities.

Considering these gradual encroachments of the National Socialist state, the churches' struggle against Rosenberg did not take place in an unimpeded field even if largely ignored by the National Socialist leadership. The Catholic Church in Germany (like the Protestant churches) had to distribute its defence literature and engage with its community in an ever-contracting public zone – with the difficulties to be expected. The initially strong circulation of the defence literature, often in its ten thousands for single publications, had to be cut down on occasions to only a tenth of the original circulation because of interruptions of the printing process.<sup>36</sup> The Church managed to circumvent these obstacles with some success by producing shorter, more succinct popular versions of the defence literature and by finding new ways of distributing their communications. The production and dissemination of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and *Nathanaelfrage* are representative examples to the length the clergy had to go to protect their publications, often staying only a small step ahead of the authorities. Because of the anticipated censorship by the government, the *Katechismuswahrheiten*, for example, was distributed at church doors, and the *Nathanaelfrage* was sent to parish priests, who were instructed to hand out the booklet after mass inside the church to stave off confiscation as long as possible. This is in itself symbolic of how small the public space for Catholic publications had become, literally shrunken to the sanctity of the church building. Despite these precautions, a printed set of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* was confiscated at the print shop in Bad Godesberg in November 1936. In a letter to the Reich Ministry for Church Affairs, Teusch's office remained defiant, claiming that up to that point millions of booklets had already been distributed and that Catholics would be instructed according to its content even after its repression.<sup>37</sup> Yet half a year later, in March and May 1937, despite Goebbels' initial guarantee not to impede the distribution of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* the Gestapo seized further sets of prints in Breslau and Osnabrück on the grounds

that the pamphlets conflicted with National Socialist ideology and 'glorif[ied] the Jewish race'.<sup>38</sup> Following further complaints by Cardinal Bertram and Bishop Berning of Osnabrück, the Gestapo finally shut down the centre of the bishops' defence strategy, the Defence Bureau against Anti-Christian Propaganda, on 3 January 1938 and arrested its members.<sup>39</sup>

### *The motivation behind the popular literature*

Considering the declining circulation of the learned anti-Rosenberg literature from the mid-1930s, the bishops felt that the Church needed more popular defence literature to educate ordinary Catholics on the question of Christianity's Jewish roots. They hoped that this education would prevent more Catholics falling for National Socialist anticlerical claims. Together with the Archdiocese of Cologne, Josef Teusch created and distributed the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and the *Nathanaelfrage* that should serve as such a 'guard' against the 'propaganda of unbelief' among Catholics.<sup>40</sup> The aim of the bishops to awaken Catholics to the encroaching danger of what they saw as anti-Christian paganism, and to insulate them against the increasing anticlerical propaganda was exclaimed in a rousing paragraph of the *Katechismuswahrheiten*:

One seeks to transfer the aversion that has been shown towards the Jews for racial reasons onto Christ, because he had been born into their people (dem Fleische nach hervorgegangen). Preachers of a new anti-Christian worldview increasingly reveal themselves as glowing Christ-haters. Christ is about to be expelled from our fatherland. Christian men and women, the enemies of Christ have to be ruined by our loyalty to Christ! Avoid their company! Do not read their newspapers! ... Declare yourself a proud disciple of Christ!<sup>41</sup>

The primary aim of protecting Christian teaching is also apparent in the instructions given out by Teusch's office to parish priests on how to use the booklets in pastoral care and religious education. Two messages should receive central attention therein. First, there was only one true faith, Catholicism, and thus the erroneous writings of Rosenberg, Erich Ludendorff and the *Deutsche Glaubensbewegung* of Wilhelm Hauer (1881–1962; professor of religious studies in Marburg and Tübingen) had to be resisted. Second, Christianity was not a Jewish religion.

Teusch's work has been seen as an expression of sympathy for the Jews and has been credited as a courageous stand against the racist antisemitism of the regime.<sup>42</sup> There is no doubt that the Catholic anti-Rosenberg literature was meant to defend the Church and Christianity against the anticlerical campaigns of the regime, but to what extent did it criticise the regime's antisemitism and thus defend Germany's Jews? Writing in 1946, the Church historian Wilhelm Neuss, for example, recalled how he relished the opportunity to write against the 'inhumane rabid Jew-hatred of the [National Socialist] Party' in his contribution to the *Studies* – if only indirectly by unmasking the antisemitic fraudulent nonsense of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.<sup>43</sup>

Indeed, the Cologne diocese hoped that the *Nathanaelfrage* could encourage discussions with Catholics who were prejudiced on the question of how Christianity and Judaism relate to each other.<sup>44</sup> This was a particularly delicate task, according to vicar general Emmerich David (1882–1952) in Cologne, because it was entangled in a widespread mixture of prejudice, personal predispositions and polemics.<sup>45</sup> It is possible to read a desire into this statement to counter the indiscriminate antisemitism of the time, but David continued: the *Nathanaelfrage* would be particularly suited to disentangle this web of prejudices and polemics because it distinguished between the historical and causal relationship between Christianity and Judaism. According to David, this approach allowed highlighting the links between the two and to 'effectively invalidate the accusation of an inherent dependence of Christianity from Judaism'.<sup>46</sup> The reason for tackling this particular question was the assumption that some Catholics believed that 'antisemitism that does not lead to anti-Christianity means to bring [the nationalist revolution] to a halt half-way'.<sup>47</sup> The booklets meant to reject the kind of antisemitism that threatened the Church and the Christian faith, but not Jew-hatred in general. When the Gestapo took offence at the pro-Jewish quote 'for salvation is of the Jews' (Joh. 4:22), Cardinal Faulhaber gave to consider in a paper to his clergy that it was quite unclear if the *Katechismuswahrheiten* did render the actual meaning of the gospel in this context.<sup>48</sup> The two booklets primarily served to protect the (Jewish) roots of Christianity and thus Christianity and Catholic religious teaching itself not just in their wording but in the intention of their creators. Furthermore, the publication of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* was deliberately set at a time when Hitler had sought Catholic support in his fight against Bolshevism in Spain.

### *Christianity and Judaism in the Katechismuswahrheiten and Nathanaelfrage*

The argument of these brochures was in many ways modelled on the 1933 Advent sermons by Cardinal Michael Faulhaber, Archbishop of Munich and Freising. Faulhaber's sermons were the first instance where a member of the German hierarchy had taken up the struggle with Rosenberg's 'neo-paganism' in public. They were then the best-known defence of the Old Testament and explanation of the relationship between Judaism, Christianity and Germanism.<sup>49</sup> Faulhaber was well suited as advocate for the Old Testament as he had held a professorship in Old Testament exegesis at the University of Strassburg. In his scholarship, Faulhaber had also shown sympathy for Judaism. Like Cardinal Karl Schulte of Cologne and founder of the Defence Bureau in Düsseldorf, he supported the Jewish convert Sophie van Leer and *Amici Israel*, an organisation that worked towards a better understanding between Jews and Catholics in the hope to further Jewish conversion to Catholicism.<sup>50</sup>

Faulhaber displayed a more ambivalent attitude towards secular Jews and the 'Jewish question' which he had linked to the rise of Bolshevism in Europe.<sup>51</sup> In the introduction to the collected Advent sermons published in 1934, Faulhaber neither denied the Jewish origin of Jesus Christ nor did he completely divorce Christianity from its Jewish roots. Yet he distinguished between a God-fearing and cursed Jewish people who had crucified Christ. Faulhaber emphasised that he was only speaking of the 'Chosen People' in his sermons.<sup>52</sup> The sermons have since been celebrated as a critique of National Socialism and the anti-Jewish policy of the regime, which they are only to a limited extent. Faulhaber's criticism was largely aimed at the anticlericalism within National Socialism, the exultation of a national god and the regime's excessive racial hatred. At the same time, he insisted that the Church was not opposed to an 'honest race science' that did not incite hatred against other peoples or preach against Christianity.<sup>53</sup> Faulhaber's rejection of a national god and idolatry of race, the insistence on Christ's Jewish origin and the historical link between Judaism and Christianity were part of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and *Nathanaelfrage* as was the distinction between Jews as the 'chosen' and the 'cursed' people and an ambivalence towards race science. Yet there are differences in form and language between an archbishop's sermon and popular defence literature. The bishops sought an effective insulation against the encroachment of their community by National Socialist ideology.



Cardinal Schulte had a clear idea of how this should be achieved: 'one ought to deploy a better, a forceful, well-thought-through counter-propaganda ... If they constantly use the same catchy phrases to spread anti-Christian ideas, we, too, should not ignore the effect short, clear expressions of our Faith have on the psyche of our people.'<sup>54</sup>

The form of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* followed the question-answer pattern of a catechism, while its terminology reflected that of Rosenberg's *Myth*.<sup>55</sup> It focused on biblical phrases that spoke positively of ancient Jewry, e.g., of their status as God's chosen people or that salvation would come from the Jews. These and similar biblical quotes had been used for years by National Socialist propaganda to 'prove' on the one hand that Christianity was essentially Jewish. On the other hand, they also 'attested' the eternal 'satanic' character of the Jews using the very authority of Christianity, the Bible, as proof. The central purpose of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* was therefore to explain such phrases and to justify the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. Its main argument intended to instruct the reader that 'Christianity has never been a Jewish religion'.<sup>56</sup> It was a deliberate and intelligent fusion of Rosenberg's racial outlook and Catholic religious dogma: the faithful were called on to recognise Rosenberg's errors in his own terminology, while the choice of the catechism as the overarching framework made clear where the truth was to be found.

As popular literature the *Nathanaelfrage* and *Katechismuswahrheiten* had to spread the word, literally. Teusch's office did not design this literature in the pious but probably futile hope that Catholics would read and understand the information as intended by its authors. To ensure this, the popular literature had to achieve the transition from the written to the spoken word, for example, in sermons or discussions in the classroom or youth club. Looking at Teusch's detailed instructions one can assume that the negative images of the Jews were not lost in the transition to the spoken word. On the contrary, they most likely acquired a more populist and secular air. For example, when teachers were advised to lecture on the 'greatest sin of the Jewish people', Teusch suggested they should explain that the Jews rejected Christ because they expected him to liberate their people, to lead it to grandeur and wealth, to subjugate other peoples.<sup>57</sup>

The aim to explain the relationship between Christianity and Judaism was central to both booklets and both repeated the key argument again and again: Christianity and Judaism share a common historical background, but Christianity did not develop out of

Judaism. It was new and of divine origin. As in the learned literature and in Faulhaber's sermons, the argument was built on the distinction between biblical and modern Jewry:

It should be stressed from the beginning that in our religious education we do not refer to ... those often degenerate (*entartete*) Jews who today live dispersed all over the world, but to the Jews of the Old Union (*Alten Bundes*) who lived as a unified people in their own state in Palestine until they were expelled from their fatherland by the Romans in 70 AC. Not their race, but their religion is important in our explanation.<sup>58</sup>

Contrary to their claims, both publications were not consistent in their differentiation between a 'degenerate' modern Jewry and biblical Jews. Moreover, unlike Faulhaber in his 1933 Advent sermons, the booklets did comment on modern Jewry in a negative way.<sup>59</sup> The *Katechismuswahrheiten*, for example, conjured up a clear link between modern and ancient Jewry when it tried to diffuse the anticlerical claim of an alleged collusion between the Church and Jewry. It argued that Jewish hostility towards Christians pre-empted any collaboration between the two. The same hostility, the *Kathechismuswahrheiten* continued, could be witnessed in communist Russia: 'Wherever they [Jews] have gained power, they have oppressed Christianity as it happens today in Bolshevik Russia which is ruled by a great majority of godless Jews.'<sup>60</sup>

The pamphlet essentially insinuated a broad continuity of Jewish hostility, deducing the negative characteristics of modern Jewry from the biblical 'cursed' Jews that had allegedly remained unchanged throughout the centuries, and endorsed the Jewish-Bolshevik slogans of the National Socialist regime. 'Theologically sound' claims such as the deicide paradigm and the fall from the chosen to the cursed people often provided the link between the two. Only two months after the publication of the *Katechismuswahrheiten*, the bishops of the western dioceses decided to expand the anti-Bolshevism theme in an additional booklet.<sup>61</sup> Such an emphasis demonstrated the Church's traditional opposition to Bolshevism not only to challenge the allegations that Jews, Bolsheviks and Catholics (Jesuits) conspired against the German nation, but to demonstrate support for Hitler's assistance of General Franco and his nationalist, antirepublican course.

### *The relationship of Christians and Jews in a racialised discourse*

Writing on 'race' and 'race science', the *Nathanaelfrage* interpreted 'race' according to the evolutionary theory of the French naturalist Jean Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet Chevalier de Lamarck (1744–1829). In contrast to the biological determination of physical and mental characteristics in racial hygiene, Lamarckian thought found that racial characteristics were acquired through historical, social and religious traditions – an interpretation the Catholic Church had taken up since the late nineteenth century. Similar to the general announcements of the Church on race science, the *Nathanaelfrage* skirted the question whether National Socialist race policies were legitimate when it asserted that it was not the duty of the Church to educate the people in (race) hygiene, eugenics or biology. Nevertheless, pointing towards traditional methods of positive eugenics, the booklet added, the Church had contributed to the 'health of the peoples' blood' by, for example, promoting a way of 'breeding' (*Zucht*) that advanced the health of the nation by insisting on chastity and by providing a solid marital and family basis.<sup>62</sup> Writing on the learned defence literature, Hermann Greive had suggested that Catholic literature often asserted that race theory had its deserved place in scientific research in an attempt to negotiate between traditional Catholic values and *völkisch* racial thinking. In the end, however, the literature would always make clear that race theory would not refute Christian truth.<sup>63</sup> An example of such reasoning was the attempt of the *Nathanaelfrage* to marry the Church's principle on the equality of all races with the National Socialist idea of a fixed racial hierarchy. It ultimately did not challenge the presumed racial determinants of Jews. On the contrary, it endorsed these factors in its explanation of why the Church baptised Jews: 'Surely, the Church has never claimed that baptism changes the racial characteristics of a human being. The baptized Jew remains a Jew by race (*seiner Rasse nach*). However, the Church knows that every baptized man, may he come from any *Volk*, will become a new man, God's child, Christ's heir.'<sup>64</sup>

In its attempt to defend Christ's Jewishness in the face of anti-clerical calls for an 'Aryan' Christ, the *Nathanaelfrage* was at first adamant about the historical roots of Christianity in Judaism and clearly rejected the idea that Jesus was an Aryan:

Today, despite all Jew-hatred, the Church does in no way deny that she shares a historical background with the Jewish people in

the authors of the holy scriptures, the apostles, yes even in the person of Him ... The Catholic Church would no longer be the Catholic Church if she renounced what she has taught to this day simply because new spiritual currents have taken over power in the meantime.<sup>65</sup>

The *Nathanaelfrage* admonished that Christ might have been part of the Jewish people and a Jew through his birth and adherence to Jewish customs, but this would not mean he was racially a Jew. In fact, as the booklet continued, Christ became less and less 'Jewish'. Neither his manner (*Wesen*) was Jewish, nor his word and work, but divine. All his life he had stood against the Pharisees and the 'voice of [Israel's] blood and the longings of its national ambitions'.<sup>66</sup> The distinction between Christ and the Jewish people and therefore between Christians and Jews became more absolute in the *Nathanaelfrage* not least through the use of a more racialised language:

Christianity did not take its strength from the blood, strength, the manner, the character, the art, the achievements and the culture of the Jewish people. God himself gave Christianity life and *gestalt* and features, independent from the Jewish people, yes against the Jewish people. Those who will read this booklet honestly from cover to cover will be strengthened in this knowledge afresh: if I devote myself to the faith of Jesus Christ, I will not devote myself to the affairs of the Jewish people, but the affairs of God.<sup>67</sup>

Yet it was simply not possible to override the total antisemitic ideology of National Socialism with traditional arguments without running into irresolvable paradoxes. This is once more apparent in yet another attempt to explain Christ's Jewish origins without declaring him a 'racial' Jew. This was often only achieved by taking refuge in divine intervention and a diffuse adoption of race rhetoric. The *Nathanaelfrage*, for instance, maintained that Christ was part of the Jewish people in a legal sense because the Jew Joseph was his father:

Christ's blood-link with the Jewish people was formed through his birth by the virgin Mary, who was engaged to Joseph ... [But] everything that was rotten in the Jewish people's blood has not ... touched him ... A wall was erected in Mary [through the immaculate conception] against the unholy bloodstream of the Jewish people.<sup>68</sup>

Like the figure of the Jewish Bolshevik, race theory had been part of Catholic writing before race became state ideology from 1933 (although it was far less common than anti-Bolshevism). In his analysis of Catholic theological and academic literature, Hermann Greive came across Catholic theologians who had shown considerable affinity to *völkisch* racial thought in the interwar years.<sup>69</sup> Remarkable in the case of the *Nathanaelfrage* is, however, that this fusion of theology and *völkisch* thought had managed the transition from the small world of academic theology into popular literature that was directly authorised by the hierarchy. Compared to the *Katechismuswahrheiten*, the peculiarity of the *Nathanaelfrage* is even more striking. The main purpose of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* in 1936 was to explain the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. It emphasised the differences while at the same time confirming the shared historical roots. The *Nathanaelfrage* needed to clarify this relationship, too. Yet captured in a decidedly more racialised discourse, the distance between Christians and Jews had grown. Towards the end of the *Nathanaelfrage*, the booklet summarised the relationship between Christianity and Judaism in a way that had little in common with the initial purpose of the *Katechismuswahrheiten*: 'The root of [Judaism] is, as mentioned, blood and kind of the Jewish people; the root of Christianity is God.'<sup>70</sup>

The explanations offered by this popular defence literature on the relationship between Christianity and Judaism protected those Jewish traditions that were part of Christian history and faith, the Old Testament and with it ancient Jewry. At the same time, it consistently distanced the Catholic Church from modern Jewry as far as Catholic tradition allowed. This classic dichotomy of 'good' and 'bad' Jews was sustained because well-known prejudices associated with modern Jewry were not only left unchallenged, but were strengthened by repetition. Indeed, the then current Jew-hatred was only referred to in passing, but hardly criticised in this popular literature – with the exception of one passage in the *Nathanaelfrage*. This passage firmly rejected the National Socialist claim that even Christ was an anti-semite because he had seen in the Jews Satan's offsprings.<sup>71</sup> 'The Lord did not describe the Jews as Satan's children because they were Jews; he was only referring to those Jews who had sinned. His judgement thus refers not to racial interests but to moral conduct ... Where Jews have come to believe in him and his word, they shall become "his true disciples".'<sup>72</sup> Again, this passage distinguishes between 'good' and 'bad' Jews. Yet it is also an occasion where the *Nathanaelfrage*

criticised that form of Jew-hatred that essentially contradicted Christian teaching. The booklet confirmed and defended the Church's traditional admonition that Christians should not hate Jews per se nor for their religion; it also asserts the validity of Jewish conversions to Christianity, leaving no doubt that converted Jews would become true Christians.

It is questionable whether these writings were able to counter anti-semitism or foster solidarity with German Jews. They were more likely to increase the isolation of German Jewry. This isolation was acutely felt by German Jews as their non-Jewish neighbours and colleagues began to avoid such 'inopportune' contacts after 1933 even though the ghettoisation of the Jews was not yet decreed from 'above'.<sup>73</sup> By the time the *Katechismuswahrheiten* were published in 1936, the authorities had already reversed Jewish emancipation. The 7 April 1934 decree initiated the removal and exclusion of Jews, 'non-Aryans' and the political opposition from German civil service and professional life. Ghettoisation began in 1935 when Jews were increasingly denied access to public parks, beaches, theatres or restaurants. It was completed with the Nuremberg Laws in September 1935, which excluded Jews from German citizenship due to their 'race' and religion and cast them in a collective ghetto. By the time the *Nathanaelfrage* was published before the November pogrom in 1938, the isolation and persecution of German Jews was quite evident.<sup>74</sup>

### ***Responses to the Catholic defence literature***

The German bishops were without doubt deeply concerned about the use of Rosenberg's anticlerical ideology in the schooling and training of young Catholics. Yet even in 1938 their observations did not confirm the apocalyptic vision of deserted Church pews as predicted by Cardinal Bertram. Episcopal reports tend to describe a Catholic community where only a minority had turned their backs to Christianity.<sup>75</sup> With regard to religious education in secondary schools, Bishop von Galen of Münster, for example, informed his fellow bishops in August 1938 that only a small proportion of students had fallen head over heels for Rosenberg's ideas and renounced Christianity.<sup>76</sup> Coming from 'unbelieving' families and active in the Hitler Youth, these were too easily impressed by the party's youth literature and its teachers. However, von Galen continued, a majority remains sceptical about Rosenberg even if 'enthralled by modern ideas', 'they pose questions, often in more serious earnestness and without that often angry

opposition of previous years. Occasionally, they are even more amenable and open to reasonable debate and to the grandeur and immensity of Christian teaching.<sup>77</sup>

Yet is difficult to determine how the popular literature was received by the ordinary Catholic reader. There are only few such responses to the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and *Nathanaelfrage* in church archives. The search for this popular voice would certainly be worthwhile in order to find out whether the Catholic public understood the (to us very limited) criticism of the regime and its antisemitism in this literature. Judging from the responses collected by church and state archives it seems that neither the National Socialist authorities nor anti-Jewish Catholics were much impressed by the Catholic defence literature. The authorities had little patience with the churches' differentiation between ancient and modern, or religious and 'degenerate' Jews. Race theory and racial antisemitism were after all the core elements of National Socialist principles. They consequently saw the explanations of the anti-Rosenberg literature on the relationship between Christianity and Judaism as a challenge to this core. The censors in Rosenberg's office, for instance, criticised again and again the defence of the Old Testament as 'pro-Judaism'. One *Gau* press office, for example, complained that the *Kirchenzeitung* and priests in Bamberg continuously found excuses for the 'moral afflictions' of the 'Jewish church fathers' and portrayed the Jewish people as the chosen people. According to the press office, this 'pro-Judaism' was a slap in the face of every honourable German.<sup>78</sup> In another corner of the Reich the deputy *Gauleiter* of Schwäbisch Gmünd announced in a local newspaper in March 1935 that Rosenberg's work on religion might be his private opinion and not binding to *Volksgenossen*, but 'what he has said about *Volk* and race, race values and the race soul count as tenets of National Socialist thought. The attacks on race and blood on the parts of the denominations have to be reprimanded most strongly.'<sup>79</sup>

The few responses from Catholic citizens to the *Katechismuswahrheiten* that survived in the archives confirm, however, the bishops' observation that believing National Socialists made hardly faithful Catholics. The responses suggest that the defence literature could not reach those Catholics the bishops wanted to reach. Yet they show how the use of 'catchy phrases' at the right time had the desired effect. Even though the *Katechismuswahrheiten* did not refer to Spain at all, a Theo G. from Rosrath made the immediate association to the contemporary context. He was indignant that salvation should come from the Jews:

Our daily experience, our best teacher, tells us the opposite. The Jew is the leader of Bolshevism, he brings death, horror, desperation, etc. see Spain ... Have the Jews not themselves called out: Your blood may come over our children and us! ... If you [the Church] continue like this ... everyone who thinks he should stand up for you will say: this is a waste of time ... It is truly without value that you should give your support to the Hebrew.<sup>80</sup>

Religious prejudices against Jews had apparently not lost their credence even if religion itself did no longer command much authority in the lives of these Catholics. Neither has the more 'scientific' racial antisemitism of National Socialism managed to supersede these old prejudices, and certainly not the fear of the 'Jewish Bolshevik' so prevalent even in Weimar Germany.

## Conclusion

The popular Catholic defence against Rosenberg acknowledged the importance of ancient Jewry to Christian theology and their religious superiority to their heathen neighbours as they preserved monotheism and divine revelation. It also acknowledged the historical Jewish roots of Christianity and Christ's Jewish origin more readily and vehemently than most statements of the Lutheran Church.<sup>81</sup> Race, according to this defence literature, would never surpass divine Christian teaching.<sup>82</sup> Still, this did not amount to a rejection of Rosenberg's antisemitism nor the regime's antisemitic policies. Much less was it a defence of Germany's Jews. The images of Jews, particularly in the popular literature, were almost always negative. Even passages that criticised aspects of National Socialism, as for example the explanations on the advantages and disadvantages of race science, seem too subtle to break through the ambivalence of the argument. The Catholic defence literature was primarily meant as self-defence against an encroaching anticlerical National Socialist ideology as well as an attempt to bind Catholics to the community's traditional values and tear them away from 'neopaganism' and its antisemitism that undermined Christianity.

Further, the long tradition of Catholic anti-Jewish traditions is clearly visible in the popular defence literature. References to the Jews' deicide and their hostility to Christianity are part of a long Christian tradition and are neither particularly Catholic nor German. Likewise, the secular anti-Jewish stereotypes, the Jew as usurer and Bolshevik, had been part of Catholic (and Protestant) anti-Jewish



sentiments long before antisemitism became state ideology in Germany. Yet the defence against Rosenberg was likewise no Machiavellian attempt to capitalise on the National Socialist revolution to strengthen the churches' case with the average German.<sup>83</sup> Judging from the sources available, the bishops and authors of the two popular defence brochures did not primarily intend to use anti-Jewish stereotypes to meet the expectations of an antisemitic dictatorship and its public. Yet, it was no coincidence that the German bishops decided to publish the *Katechismuswahrheiten* at a time when Hitler had sought moral support of the Catholic Church in Germany's military assistance to General Franco. The 'catchy phrases' used only needed a few signals to connect to the contemporary antisemitic propaganda – if not always with the results intended as in the case of Theo G. In that sense, the Church remained true to its principles despite the pressures of a dictatorial regime: defending its Jewish heritage, refuting the 'Aryanisation' of Christ and protecting its Jewish converts – as well as giving Caesar what is Caesar's. The German bishops failed to see that in an age of race science their distinction between biblical and modern Jewry eventually meant leaving Jews to racial vilification and eventually persecution.

## The Catholic bishops in England and Hitler's Germany

There was no joint statement by the English hierarchy on the Jewish persecution in Germany – in contrast to their immediate response to Russian and Spanish communism.<sup>84</sup> The head of the hierarchy, Cardinal Bourne, showed no inclination to address the matter publicly. Asked by Lord Denbigh if he would attend a protest meeting in support of German Jews, Cardinal Bourne declined and let Lord Denbigh know that he did not wish Catholics to participate in these protests:

the German bishops are able and competent to act in the matter if they judge it opportune to do so and he [Cardinal Bourne] knows that English interference in the internal affairs of foreign countries is resented by Catholics of those countries. [Additionally], as long as he is aware, the Jews have not at any time raised any protest against the persecution of Catholics which has so recently taken place in Russia, Mexico, Spain.<sup>85</sup>

The Anglican Reverend James Parkes (1896–1981) had no illusions that an official condemnation of National Socialism could be expected from the Roman Catholic Church, now that the Church in Germany had made its peace with National Socialism. Supported by the then Anglican Bishop of Manchester, William Temple, Parkes had studied Christian–Jewish relations since the 1920s and eventually dedicated most of his time to the research of antisemitism and the possibilities to overcome this hostility.<sup>86</sup> Parkes had more faith in the leadership of the Anglican Church and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cosmo Lang. He consequently approached Lang and urged him to publicise his disapproval of the German government. But Lang likewise was hesitant and preferred to use informal diplomatic channels to voice his concern, not the public stage.<sup>87</sup>

The initiative remained with single Catholic bishops whereby the bishops of the Midlands and north England were more vocal in their condemnation of National Socialism and its antisemitism. Archbishop Downey of Liverpool spoke on numerous occasions against Hitler's regime and the persecution of the Jews. He condemned the latter at a protest meeting in Liverpool Central Hall in spring 1933 on the basis of:

broad religious principles which transcend all differences, we must protest against this persecution; this persecution of an ancient race which, through all its vicissitudes, amidst the welter of polytheism, kept intact the worship of one true God, and preserved monotheism upon the earth.<sup>88</sup>

The Catholic Bishops Henshaw of Salford and McNulty of Nottingham, likewise, joined protest meetings in their diocese against the persecution of Jews in 1933.<sup>89</sup> Against the silence of the Vatican and the German bishops, it was again Archbishop Downey who vehemently condemned the pogrom of *Kristallnacht* in November 1938 as a crime against humanity. He expressed his obligation to protest against such policies that threatened the heritage of civilisation.<sup>90</sup> Later in 1943, Bishop Marshall of Salford accepted the invitation to be a patron of the Manchester and Salford League to Combat Antisemitism.<sup>91</sup>

Other members of the hierarchy were too concerned about the impending communist wave hanging over Europe to recognise the criminal activities of Hitler's Germany.<sup>92</sup> At a protest meeting against the Jewish persecution in Germany in May 1933, Archbishop Williams of Birmingham denounced antisemitism as 'contrary to the

spirit and principles of the Christian faith', but if it were true that the Jews were communists as the Nazis claimed, then his sympathies were with the Nazis, though their methods were not wise.<sup>93</sup>

Even though the English bishops acted within a democratic society, their responses to Hitler's Germany did not differ significantly from those of the German hierarchy in the early 1930s. As universal community the bishops spoke in one voice for very much the same reasons: their antisocialism, the perception of Catholic victimhood and because Hitler's Germany rejected any interference in its internal affairs. The prevailing 'red scare' with its concomitant antisemitism was not conducive to creating an atmosphere of compassion for the victims of fascism and National Socialism. Anticlericalism in republican Spain and later the Spanish Civil War diverted the attention of most Catholic bishops further by focusing on the threat of advancing Bolshevik communism. Archbishop Amigo of Southwark, for instance, declined to participate in protest meetings because he felt that the Jews had failed to show any solidarity with Catholics whenever they were persecuted.<sup>94</sup> Even after the start of the war, Amigo could not really see the advantages of a war against Germany rather than against Soviet Russia. He proclaimed in his 1933 Advent pastoral letter:

We cannot but deplore that while our newspapers make much of Germany's wanton aggression against Poland, little is said about the outrages which have accompanied and accompany Russian occupation of Eastern Poland. We feel it is our duty ... to protest strenuously against the bloodthirsty sacrileges committed by the Bolsheviks. There is the terrible danger that Bolshevism may sweep civilisation before it, and what it failed to achieve in Spain may be successfully carried out in Germany itself and in other lands.<sup>95</sup>

Like Amigo, the majority of Catholic lay organisations in England were reluctant to participate in pro-Jewish protest meetings and concentrated instead on the communist threat. Barely a handful of lay organisations – the CSG, Young Christian Workers (YCW), and the Catholic Council for International Relations (CCIR) committed themselves to fight both communism and fascism.<sup>96</sup> And Catholic papers discussed fascism sympathetically and local Catholic newspapers looked favourably upon National Socialist arguments.<sup>97</sup>

Arthur Hinsley, Bourne's successor to the Westminster archbishopric, took more interest in international affairs than his predecessor. The Cardinal publicly condemned National Socialist

infringements on German Catholic youth organisations in August 1937 in a letter to *The Times*, for which he was promptly reprimanded by the German Charge d’Affaires of the German embassy.<sup>98</sup> Hinsley’s public and very explicit criticism of German church policy on a non-ecclesiastical platform was the exception rather than the rule. In the following years, Cardinal Hinsley avoided commenting on the situation of the Church in Germany in this manner. When he spoke of Catholic persecution he was referring to Catholics in republican Spain, Mexico or Soviet Russia – but not in Germany. Yet Hinsley was well aware of the beleaguered situation of the German Church in the late 1930s. He was in contact with Cardinals Bertram and Faulhaber, and expressed his concern for the safety of the Church in Germany in his letters to the German hierarchy.<sup>99</sup> Like the French bishops, the English Catholic hierarchy decided in 1937 not to criticise the persecution of the Church in Germany in public so as not to provoke further reprisals by the regime:

The statements of Germany’s political leadership have made it entirely clear that Christianity as such is considered to be an obstacle to the reconstruction of Germany and that they anticipate to get rid of it in one way or another. You have therefore warned your flock of further and more serious persecution ... We do not intend to nor do we have the desire to intrude upon the field of party politics, be it national or international.<sup>100</sup>

In May 1938 Hinsley refused episcopal support for a public conference on the persecution of the Christian churches for similar reasons. In his response to Hugh Cecil and Lord Noel-Buxton, he stressed that such a conference would expose the Catholic Church to the charge of undue political activity and would not help the Church’s negotiations with totalitarian states.<sup>101</sup> Similarly, there was no public denunciation of National Socialist antisemitism by Cardinal Hinsley until late in 1938. Until then Hinsley, like Bourne and Amigo, turned down requests for support on the grounds that Catholics were still waiting for a condemnation of the ongoing Catholic persecution by Jewish authorities.<sup>102</sup>

## **The hierarchy, fascism and Spain**

Franco’s photograph for a long time adorned the desk of Cardinal Hinsley. Grateful for the photograph, Hinsley wrote to Franco:

'I look upon you as the great defender of the true Spain, the country of Catholic principles where social justice and charity will be applied for the common good under a firm peace-loving government.'<sup>103</sup> The majority of the bishops were sympathetic to Mussolini (particularly since the Lateran Treaty in 1929) and Franco.<sup>104</sup> Bishop Casartelli in Salford, who was in Rome at the time of Mussolini's *Putsch*, admired the orderliness of the Blackshirts.<sup>105</sup> The propensity towards fascism among English Catholics referred mostly to the 'Latin' versions in Italy and later in Spain (rarely so to Portugal and Austria). Sympathies for Hitler's Germany were less ostensibly paraded. National Socialism in the eyes of most Catholics was pagan Prussianism, the old enemy in a new disguise.<sup>106</sup>

The boundaries were less clear-cut in the case of home-grown fascism in the form of the British Union of Fascists (BUF). For a long time the bishops neither endorsed nor condemned it – owing largely to the Church's principle of political neutrality, which allowed every Catholic to vote for a (non-socialist) party of his/her liking.<sup>107</sup> Hinsley's stance towards British fascism is best assessed from his answers to queries whether Catholics can be fascists. Again, he did not go as far as to condemn the BUF. Fascism was tolerated, wrote Hinsley in a letter in 1938, because of anticommunism, but Catholics had to reject fascism's totalitarianism and its Jew-baiting.<sup>108</sup> Hinsley also had a very specific reason to advise Catholics not to support fascism. He felt it was unpatriotic and did not further the cause of the Catholic Church in England.<sup>109</sup> A good example is Hinsley's letter to MGS Sewell, tertiary of the Order of St Dominic, Distributist and BUF sympathiser:

[N]o Catholic can give his loyalty and warship to the man-made god of exaggerated nationalism or racialism. Undoubtedly there is much in the social and economic system of Fascism which is sound and much good has been done in Italy by the present regime ... Truth is in the middle course, error in the extreme ... [Catholics] may belong to Sir Oswald Mosley's party so long as he does not adopt principles or measures which conflict with Catholic doctrines and Catholic disciplines ... [but] we dislike the label for ourselves here in England.<sup>110</sup>

Cardinal Hinsley eventually criticised fascism for its totalitarianism in a speech in Birmingham in January 1939. He warned the audience that totalitarianism contravened Catholic moral teaching and should not be supported by Catholics. The speech earned him considerable

criticism from Catholics who had already subscribed to fascism. Their argument in favour of fascism (sometimes including National Socialism) was often supported by antisemitic stereotypes, particularly that of the Jewish Bolshevik.<sup>111</sup> For example, a Mrs Munden blamed especially the German Jews for communism and the events in Spain and Russia. She also felt that the 'Jewish question' was essentially a racial question.<sup>112</sup>

In contrast to their sympathy for 'Latin' fascism and wavering response to the British Union of Fascists, the bishops of England and Wales were quick to condemn the 'attack on the Church of Spain' at the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and sent a message of sympathy to the Spanish hierarchy in October 1936.<sup>113</sup> A joint pastoral letter was published in December 1936 that warned of the 'Anti-God forces ... sapping and mining the foundations of society' and urged Catholics to unite 'in one solid compact line against the battalions of evil'.<sup>114</sup> Given that the Holy See had encouraged all Catholic hierarchies to see the Spanish Civil War 'as a struggle to the death between Christianity and godless communism', nobody was surprised by the English hierarchy's support for the Nationalists in Spain. Moloney suggests that Archbishop Hinsley tried to uphold the government's principle of non-intervention by giving support neither to pro-fascist nor to antifascist invitations.<sup>115</sup> Yet the activities of some members of the hierarchy, including Hinsley, underlined their pro-Franco leanings, making it difficult to speak of an attempt to find a 'Christian centre' in a balancing act between socialism and fascism.

The English bishops set aside a day of prayer against the 'menace of Communism' for 9 May 1937 and organised collections at church doors for a 'Christian army in Spain ... fighting anti-Christ'.<sup>116</sup> Aid for National Spain came also in a more official form, as the Bishops' Committee for the Relief of Spanish Distress. Although it promised humanitarian and medical help for 'the destitute children of Spain' in general, their bias towards Franco's supporters was clear.<sup>117</sup> In a description of its work the organisation declared that: 'Through this [medical] unit the Nationalist authorities in Spain are being given an example of English co-operation which is invaluable: Hitherto, those who are defending the Christian cause have had too many occasions to complain that the public expression of sympathy in England has been given to the Red forces. We claim that this organisation goes far to redress that unfortunate impression.'<sup>118</sup>

Whilst there is no doubt about the loyalty of the English Catholic hierarchy towards Franco's cause (with the exception of Bishop Brown), most bishops defended their attitude on the grounds that they

were protesting against the treatment of the Catholic Church by the Spanish government and the Republican forces. Archbishop Amigo of Southwark, however, argued a different line. Amigo was born in Gibraltar in May 1864 and spent his childhood there until he began his studies in England at the age of fourteen. He studied at St Edmund's, Ware, and worked as priest and teacher in London parishes and schools before his consecration as Bishop of Southwark in 1904.<sup>119</sup> Aspden has suggested that Amigo's familiarity with Catholic Spain made him feel the fate of the Church under the Second Republic (1931–33) more acutely, and strengthened his determined support for Nationalist Spain during the Civil War.<sup>120</sup> He corresponded with those who shared his views, in expression of mutual support. The tenor of these exchanges was that Franco's victory was a 'victory won for civilisation and Christianity throughout the world'.<sup>121</sup> Like most Francoists in Britain, Amigo's correspondents believed that if Spain should fall into the hands of communism, like Russia and the France of the Popular Front, Britain would be the next victim. Amigo received letters from the deputy editor of *The Morning Post*, a paper that regularly supplied its readers with Jewish-Bolshevik scare stories, Arthur Loveday, whose favourite topic was the alleged dominance of Jews in the press. Loveday also spoke at meetings of the right-wing racist Nordic League and was a member of Captain Ramsay's Right Club. Alfred Douglas was another correspondent of Amigo. Douglas was a member of various extremist groups, an antisemite, anticommunist homophobe, best known for his book *Plain English*.<sup>122</sup> There were also Captain Ramsay, Conservative MP for Peebles and president of the antisemitic, pro-Hitler Right Club, Douglas Jerrold and Arnold Lunn, who tried to canvass the archbishop's support for their right-wing organisations, The United Christian Front and Friends of National Spain.<sup>123</sup>

Amigo for his part stood by the policy of non-intervention and avoided any public support for these organisations.<sup>124</sup> Instead, he chose subtler forms of assistance. These would range from permitting his parish priests to announce forthcoming events of the Friends of National Spain to simple encouragement to them to continue their 'valuable work'.<sup>125</sup> When Amigo had to decline an invitation to a public meeting of the Friends of National Spain in March 1937, he assured the organisers that

if Franco had not courageously come forward, Spain would be a complete ruin by now. The enemies of religion, chiefly from Russia, have been undermining Catholic Spain for years ...

The Nationalists hope to put an end to this awful state of things, and there is peace for the Church and happiness for the people where Franco rules. We wish him a speedy and complete victory.<sup>126</sup>

One public meeting of the Friends of National Spain announced a meeting with Merry de Val<sup>127</sup> and Hilaire Belloc on the same platform as H.P. Croft and Lord Phillimore, well-known fellow travellers of the right with a poignant dislike of Jews.<sup>128</sup> On another occasion the Catholic community was represented by the lay president of the episcopally approved and endorsed Catholic Action, Dr W.J. O'Donovan.<sup>129</sup>

In their fight against the 'Red Menace to Christianity' these organisations stood for the Church's own interest in defying antireligious communism. Yet by 1939, Captain Ramsay, for example, was well known for his antisemitism and leniency towards National Socialist Germany, while his United Christian Front was unremittingly pro-Franco.<sup>130</sup> Ramsay also believed that the Second Spanish Republic was part of a sinister plot by world Jewry.<sup>131</sup> Arnold Lunn's involvement with the conservative right has already been mentioned. Many activists of the Friends of National Spain (like Lunn, Jerrold and Loveday) were anti-Jewish and showed a remarkable tolerance towards Hitler's Germany. One of its leading figures, H.W. Luttmann-Johnson, was an open apologist for Hitler and Franco. He was not discernibly antisemitic, but Luttmann-Johnson was untroubled by the antisemitism of the groups in which he was also prominent: the BUF, the January Club, the Windsor Club (where Douglas Jerrold was also a member), and the Right Club.<sup>132</sup> Neither apologies for Hitler nor tirades against Jews seemed to have bothered Amigo, Hinsley, Belloc and Merry de Val enough to make them disassociate themselves from these organisations.

### **Fighting communism: Catholics, the far-right and antisemitism**

The 25th Freethinkers' Congress in London in September 1938 was another occasion when the Catholic hierarchy accepted the support of personalities of the far right. In the words of the Home Secretary Samuel Hoare this gathering was judged to be harmless, just 'a joint committee of four British societies which have extended an invitation to the International Federation of Freethinkers to hold its quinquennial conference in London in September next, it being 50 years since a similar conference was held in this country.'<sup>133</sup>



However, to others the meeting was a smokescreen to hide more sinister communist activities. Captain Ramsay, for example, believed that the conference was organised by the 'League of the Militant Godless' which was based in Moscow and could thus be nothing less than a subversive communist plot to undermine democracy. Other Conservative MPs shared his concerns when he raised in the Commons the question of communist links and possible riots and disturbances accompanying such a conference.<sup>134</sup> The Distributists' *Weekly Review*, too, saw the Freethinkers' Congress as part of a worldwide anti-God movement engineered by Moscow and supported Ramsay's Aliens Restriction (Blasphemy) Bill.<sup>135</sup> This bill was designed 'to prevent the participation by aliens in assemblies for the purpose of propagating blasphemous or atheistic doctrines or in other activities calculated to interfere with the established religious institutions of Great Britain' with the real aim of prohibiting 'gatherings of Free Thinkers, Secularists, Rationalists, and Ethical Societies, which have a Communist origin, being attended by Communist aliens from other countries'.<sup>136</sup> At this point Ramsay was already well immersed in a Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy theory, interpreting the Russian and Spanish revolutions as Jewish plots. To his friends and supporters of the far-right (Admiral Barry Domville and Nesta Webster) there was also no doubt that the real targets of the bill were foreign Jews.<sup>137</sup> The bill was eventually passed on 28 June 1938 in its first reading by 165 to 134 votes.<sup>138</sup>

The vocal part of English Catholicism was also in no doubt that freethinkers were dangerous not only because they held deist or atheist views but because of communist influence – which was seen as being purely 'anti-God'.<sup>139</sup> Since the Russian Revolution the terms 'anti-God' and 'Godless' were regular attributes used by bishops and Catholic publications and organisations to refer to communism.<sup>140</sup>

In February 1938, Cardinal Hinsley had been deeply alarmed by the prospect of an 'anti-God' congress in London later that year. He enquired in Rome whether the link between the Freethinkers and Moscow was true. He subsequently received a response by a Fr Ledit, who wrote that he could prove that these contacts existed. Hinsley then gathered together his advisers and four editors of Catholic newspapers to deliberate on the problem. The conclusions from their discussions were firstly that the Freethinkers' Congress should not receive unnecessary publicity through extensive debates in Catholic newspapers on its worthiness. Secondly, it was not expected that government help was forthcoming. Advised by Mr Grant-Ferris, a

Catholic Conservative MP,<sup>141</sup> they concluded that the only option to 'clip the wings of the Anti-Gods' would be 'to put into stern force the Aliens' Act and stringent control of passports'.<sup>142</sup> Meanwhile, the committee suggested a letter of protest, signed by many sections of British society. And lastly, the Knights of St Columba and other Catholic organisations should 'keep watch and ward and privately work against the Congress'.<sup>143</sup>

In May 1938 T.W.C. Curd, organising secretary of the publishing house CTS and manager of the Marydown land association, attended a meeting of the Christian Defence Movement in the House of Commons together with most conservative Catholic MPs and some representatives of Catholic societies. The purpose was twofold: to find a common action against the Freethinkers' Congress and coordinate the activities of all anticommunist organisations in Britain. The result of their deliberations was an appeal to the Home Secretary to ban the congress on the basis that such a gathering would most likely lead to a breach of the peace. Curd admonished all Catholic societies concerned to give this resolution special consideration, since it was 'closely in accord with the wishes of the Hierarchy'.<sup>144</sup> Unlike in Germany, where Joseph Wirth had pushed through a presidential decree for the protection of religious organisations in September 1931, little was achieved by Catholic protests either in the Commons or outside. The British government did not move to ban the Freethinkers' Congress.

The Christian Defence Movement was host to figures of the extreme right and prone to antisemitism. Its president was the Earl of Glasgow, who had belonged to various right-wing groups, among others the British Fascisti in the 1920s and the BUF in the 1930s. The Movement was also closely linked to Ramsay's United Christian Front.<sup>145</sup> It is not surprising that Curd would feel comfortable in such company given his Judeo-Bolshevik obsession. For the hierarchy and Catholic MPs it remains to be said that antisemitism and extremist links did not compromise their hostility to the Congress.

The Catholic media as usual took a less subtle stance, as the report on the protest march in the *Catholic Times* exemplifies. London dioceses had organised a vast procession from Southwark to Westminster Cathedral 'For Peace and Faith', but above all in protest against the Freethinkers' Congress. According to the *Catholic Times*, 45,000 people attended the march and Archbishop Amigo was in their midst. The next day pictures from the procession adorned the front page of the *Catholic Times* with the following heading: 'They Marched "For Peace and Faith". For Two Hours They Passed:

And With Them Walked The Blind And Lame'. The following text then made clear what it was all about:

The Godless in London must have smiled sardonically when they opened their eyes and gazed out of their windows on Sunday morning before turning over for another 'forty winks'. Memoirs of their Jewish chairman's words [referring to Mr Chapman Cohen] at their recent congress must have floated momentarily into mind ... And it was the day of the silent march through London of the Catholic men in atonement for their [Freethinkers'] Congress.<sup>146</sup>

As a part of Catholic Action the Pro Deo Commission (PDC) set up in Liverpool in 1937 was to advise the Liverpool Archdiocesan Board of Catholics 'on matters concerning the Communist menace'.<sup>147</sup> Other responsibilities included keeping an eye on the political activities of 'suspect' Catholics, and stocking the libraries with politically acceptable books. The Liverpool PDC also cooperated with the BUF and Italian fascism. It approached the Italian Council and the Italian Information Bureau in London to 'secure the wider distribution of literature explaining the true nature of Fascism'.<sup>148</sup> Kester Aspden has explained the fascist sympathies of the Commission by a shared worldview, and in particular a belief in a Judeo-masonic conspiracy.<sup>149</sup>

Msr Thomas Adamson, Archbishop Downey's secretary, ran the daily business of the Commission. He and Fr Sheppard had already gathered a small group in September 1936 to discuss the 'strength and influence of Communism in the City [Liverpool] and Archdiocese'. They found the results disquieting, since communism seemed to have permeated the trade unions, council schools and even 'seduced Oxford Dons'. Even more disconcerting, in their view, was the observation that more and more young Catholics were drawn to communist ideas. According to the report of the discussion, traditional Catholic societies such as the Catholic Evidence Guild could no longer capture their audience, neither could anticommunist papal encyclicals. The Church desperately needed a new approach to public relations.<sup>150</sup> The antisocialist propaganda of the PDC, which started a year later in 1937, was to fulfil that need with what one of its collaborators, Fr James Ellison, called a 'modern' approach, 'as sensational ... as possible [that] hit [the reader] hard on the head, preferably with a bit of his own bread and butter'.<sup>151</sup>

Fr Ellison, a young priest in St Matthew Liverpool, not only created pamphlets for the Commission but also trained lecturers on

the topic of Spain and advised Msgr Adamson on the possible communist backgrounds of 'suspect' Catholics.<sup>152</sup> He was also a fervent believer in a Judeo-masonic conspiracy. In a letter to Msgr Adamson Ellison disclosed the extent of an alleged Jewish conspiracy against Catholicism and Western civilisation, without which the phenomenon communism could not be understood properly:

The modern socialist movement is in great part the work of the Jews: It was the Jews who imprinted on it the mark of their brain: it was equally the Jews who had a preponderant part in the government of the first socialist republics. Present day world-socialism forms the first stage in the accomplishment of the Mosaic teaching, the beginning of the future state of the world ... But in doing this, we must bear in mind this historic fact: that as a general rule, where Freemasonry is active, the Jew does not appear, for he does not care much to work openly.<sup>153</sup>

Ellison was promptly invited by Msgr Adamson to write a pamphlet on the Jewish-masonic conspiracy. He was advised not to 'bawl it from the Church-tops', but attack it indirectly 'without naming it'.<sup>154</sup> According to Kester Aspden, the pamphlet was eventually not published, as the archdiocesan censor Joseph Cartmell was worried about 'involving the Archbishop and through him the Church officially in what Catholic working men might regard as pro-Fascism'. He instead advised Mgr Adamson and Fr Sheppard of the PDC to confine their more explicitly 'political' material to the pages of the Catholic press, which they subsequently did.<sup>155</sup>

Much like those of German Catholicism, Catholic publications in England were largely focused on an effective defence against socialism, rather than any concern with domestic fascism. Apart from the *Catholic Worker*, the media remained silent on this issue, but was willing to exploit sources, however unreliable, to promote its anti-communism. The PDC, for instance, relied at times on rather dubious sources for its information, including the Information Distributing Bureau in London.<sup>156</sup> In its efforts to fight communism, the Bureau also peddled pro-Hitler literature such as John Baker White's *Dover-Nuremberg Return*.<sup>157</sup> The manager of the Bureau, a Lady Makins, had Cardinal Hinsley's approval for her anticommunist campaign, but was told not to run the Bureau as 'Catholic'. Hinsley was apparently not aware of the Bureau's full range of political activity. Upon hearing about the Bureau's crude and 'misleading' anticommunist leaflets, he asked Fr O'Hea of the CSG to rein in Lady Makins'

political activities ‘for which she has no countenance’ from him.<sup>158</sup> Catholics in Liverpool were likewise encouraged to rely on a right-wing publisher, the Right Book Club, and not on the ‘dangerous’ publications of the Left Book Club.<sup>159</sup> The Right Book Club was a publishing house under the patronage of T.P.H. Beamish with clear pro-fascist if not pro-Hitler and antisemitic tendencies. The Club advertised books on Spain, Germany, communism and the decline of Britain.

## Catholic intellectuals on European fascism

Frank Sheed (1897–1981), proprietor of the Catholic publishing house Sheed & Ward, remarked in his autobiography: ‘Like the majority of Catholics of the English tongue I wanted Franco to win. We did not know much about conditions in Spain, but as between people who murdered priests and nuns and people who didn’t, we preferred those who didn’t. It was practically a reflex reaction.’<sup>160</sup>

The historian and editor of the *Dublin Review*, Christopher Dawson (1889–1970), had also viewed fascism as a viable alternative to liberal democracy.<sup>161</sup> In his *Religion and the Modern State*, Dawson reasoned that fascism was closer to Catholicism than either socialism or democracy, though he also made clear that Mussolini’s Italy was unacceptable because it was too statist.<sup>162</sup> Catholic writers and intellectuals applauded fascism to varying degrees, including its elitism, corporatist economics, and on occasion even its brutality. Chesterton, for example, condoned Mussolini’s violence, because he felt there was no other way to deal with the ‘secrecy’ of his opponents.<sup>163</sup> The learned discourse among the English Catholic clergy also tended to idealise fascism. A well-known example is Ronald Knox, the most prominent clerical voice of his day and a friend of Belloc and Chesterton, who wrote on the Spanish Civil War in 1937: ‘Was General Franco justified in plunging his country into the certain horrors of Civil War to avoid the possible horrors of a Communist or an anarchist dictatorship? For myself I don’t think there is any doubt he was.’ However, three years later in his pamphlet *Nazi and Nazarene*, he criticised fascism in the form of National Socialism. Kevin Morris has suggested that Knox did not criticise National Socialism for what it was politically, but because it had infringed the rights of the Church, namely that it had mixed religion with politics.<sup>164</sup> As in the case of the editors of *G.K.’s Weekly*, the Spanish Civil War was to these Catholics ‘a crusade – God versus the devil’,

or 'a struggle between the creeds of Christ and Marx'. It was necessary to fight 'the anti-Christ' in Spain to prevent communism from overpowering Europe.<sup>165</sup> What vexed many Catholic intellectuals even more was that in their view no-one else seemed to see the danger, since much of the British public and the major newspapers were in favour of the Spanish Republicans. With the ongoing persecution of the Jews in Germany and eventually *Kristallnacht*, nobody seemed to heed what was clearly – to them – a persecution of Catholics.<sup>166</sup> Moreover, numerous ordinary Catholics sympathised with or joined socialist parties, which reinforced the perceived danger.

In his assessment of the Catholic media and their position on Spain and fascism, James Flint could only single out *The Sower* and *The Blackfriars* as critics of fascism.<sup>167</sup> Most Catholic newspapers and journals were pro-Franco and gave fascism the benefit of the doubt, at times spicing their articles with antisemitic remarks (of the Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy kind). This was true not only for the popular weeklies such as the *Catholic Herald* and the *Catholic Times* (as shown in Chapter 1), but also for the renowned Jesuit journal *The Month* as well as *The Tablet*, the Catholic middle-classes' favourite read.<sup>168</sup> Not surprisingly many of the regular authors on Spanish issues were Distributists. Douglas Woodruff, editor of *The Tablet* since 1936, and Christopher Hollis, on *The Tablet's* board of directors, looked favourably upon Distributism, Franco and Mussolini. *The Tablet* argued its case in favour of fascism. In July 1938, it published the antisemitic pro-Franco poem 'A Legionary Speaks' by Roy Campbell.<sup>169</sup> Woodruff also contracted Belloc, Gertrude Godden, Arnold Lunn and Douglas Jerrold as correspondents for *The Tablet's* reports from Spain's Civil War.<sup>170</sup> Consequently, reporting was often in favour of Franco, Mussolini, or the Portuguese dictator Salazar. *The Tablet* also advocated the adoption of an authoritarian corporatist state system in Britain and supported Belloc in his vision of restoring a strong monarchy.<sup>171</sup>

Edward Norman's opinion that English Catholics were too English to be supportive of fascism has been shown by later historians to be over-optimistic.<sup>172</sup> Pro-fascist sympathies reached considerably beyond the literary world of the 'Chesterbelloc' groups. The sympathies of the English hierarchy, clergy, and the Catholic press (with the exception of *The Sower*, *The Blackfriars* and *The Catholic Worker*) for Mussolini, Salazar, Franco, the Austrian leader Engelbert Dollfuss and occasionally for Hitler gradually emerged.<sup>173</sup> As in British society in general, support for Franco's campaign in Spain was particularly strong among conservative and/or middle/upper-class Catholics. Catholic aristocrats

did not hesitate to speak out on the Spanish Civil War but refrained from any active involvement such as sponsoring or joining relief funds for political reasons. This would have contradicted the non-intervention policy of the British government. The Earl of Iddesleigh much regretted this decision as his 'sympathies (were), of course, with Franco'.<sup>174</sup>

The attraction of fascism amongst the Catholic intellectuals, and the hierarchy, has been well researched and remains undisputed, unlike the question of how widespread pro-fascist attitudes were amongst the Catholic working class. Adrian Hastings has referred to the strong class divide between a small Catholic upper-class elite and a large working class with Irish connections.<sup>175</sup> It seems therefore quite unlikely that the pro-fascist discourse of the educated Catholic elite was able to bridge this gap. Indeed, the extent to which Catholic intellectuals could influence their fellow Catholics has been called into question in the work of James Flint and Kester Aspden. The latter has suggested that their influence is debatable since lay Catholics seemed to show only limited interest in the hierarchy's fervent anticommunist propaganda. A poorly attended lecture by Douglas Jerrold on communism and Spain in Liverpool in 1938, among other incidents, supports this interpretation.<sup>176</sup> Both Flint and Aspden have unearthed Catholic voices critical of their leadership's pro-fascist line. These voices were still a minority but a 'less negligible one than is usually thought'.<sup>177</sup> Among the clergy this included Bishop Brown, Auxiliary Bishop of Amigo in Southwark, F.H. Drinkwater and his educational journal *The Sower*, Fr O'Hea of the Catholic Social Guild, and the Dominicans and their journal *The Blackfriars* for their effort to maintain a neutral position.<sup>178</sup> Many Catholic critics of the hierarchy's pro-Franco attitude were involved in social-democratic, Labour or pacifist organisations (as for example, Pax, or the League of Nations, or the Catholic Council for International Relations). The signatories of a memorandum in February 1938 who protested against the bombing of civilian targets by Franco's forces illustrate this quite well. Among them were Fr Gosling of *The Sower*, Virginia Mary Crawford of the CSG, the Labour MP David Adams, Eric Gill, Joseph Clayton, a Fabian, and Conrad Bonacina, the Distributists' research officer.<sup>179</sup>

The Catholic working class in particular has been regarded by historians as antifascist.<sup>180</sup> Indeed, these 'ordinary Catholics' seemed to cause considerable concern to those fearful of a 'red menace'. In 1936, Bernard Wall, co-founder of *The Catholic Worker*, assured Fr

Alfonso de Zulueta (curate at Spanish Place) that he would use all his influence to keep *The Catholic Worker* away from 'liberal tendencies over Spain ... This I feel is important because, as you know, by far the majority of working class men and women, as distinct from their Catholic leaders, are pro-Caballero.'<sup>181</sup>

A further indication of the anti-Franco attitude of many ordinary Catholics was the response of Fr Gosling to Cardinal Hinsley's speech in Birmingham in January 1939:

We know from letters we receive that English Catholics, particularly in the North and from among the middle and working classes, are profoundly disturbed by the attempts that are being constantly made to identify the Catholic Church with the Fascist cause ... This is doing untold harm; it is alienating the sympathies of our fellow-countrymen, and it is distressing earnest Catholics, who, up to the time of your Birmingham speech, were unable to point to any authoritative denial of the false suggestions.<sup>182</sup>

The voices of the intellectuals were certainly amplified not only by their fame and literary skill but also by the space granted to them in Catholic newspapers. More crucial, however, were the attempts of the hierarchy to stifle critics of Franco, which gave the Francoists uncontested public space. Sir Walter Citrine, General Secretary of the TUC, for example, received a letter from Hinsley in December 1936 in which the archbishop complained about the pro-Republican pamphlets issued by the National Council of Labour. Hinsley admitted to faults on both sides but saw the anti-Franco campaign as an attack upon the 'Catholic Church, its Head and the hierarchy of Spain'. Such a pamphlet, Hinsley continued, could only result in the alienation of Catholics in England from the Labour Party.<sup>183</sup> Eric Gill experienced a similar rebuke from Hinsley when he asked the archbishop to condemn alleged Nationalist atrocities. Gill was reminded that the Church in England identified itself with the Nationalists, but 'the comparison of the conditions prevailing in Government and Nationalist Spain is more than sufficient excuse for the present attitude of many Catholics in this country.'<sup>184</sup> The aforementioned memorandum of February 1938 was also rejected by the Cardinal because it showed in his opinion 'both lack of discrimination and judgement and lack of loyalty and credulity given to Red propaganda'.<sup>185</sup> Hinsley's response to O'Hanlon, another signatory of the memorandum, was clearest in its support for Nationalist Spain. In it



Hinsley rejected O'Hanlon's accusation that the Church had sided with Franco, but continued by adding that the facts would speak against the Republicans: 'In National Spain are law, order, security of life and freedom of worship. In Government Spain tens of thousands of innocent people were murdered without any form of trial.'<sup>186</sup>

Stifled by the English hierarchy and with little media support, apart from an educational journal like *The Sower*, or the Dominicans' *The Blackfriars*, it is not surprising that anti-Franco sentiments were drowned out in public discourse by prominent and eloquent pro-Franco voices.

The information available to the Catholic public is another factor that must be taken into account when assessing Catholic views of the events surrounding the Spanish Civil War. Most information available on socialism and fascism was very similar, regardless of whether one read *G.K.'s Weekly*, the *Catholic Herald*, information leaflets of the Pro Deo Commission or the publications of the Catholic Truth Society, whose ultimate aim was to warn against the influences of socialism. Catholic information centres and publishing houses close to the hierarchy employed a similar reading of foreign and domestic politics as that offered by Catholic intellectuals.

The imbalance between accounts of communism and fascism was not confined to fringe organisations. It could also be found in the larger and well-known publishing houses of English Catholicism, among them Sheed & Ward and The Catholic Truth Society. Sheed & Ward was the private enterprise of Frank Sheed and his wife Maisie Ward, operating largely independent of the hierarchy.<sup>187</sup> Both also organised the Catholic Evidence Guild, a society to propagate the Catholic faith.<sup>188</sup> Frank Sheed and Maisie Ward were firm supporters of Mussolini and Franco and even suggested the Catholic Evidence Guild should align itself with fascism.<sup>189</sup> Sheed & Ward introduced the work of the conservative German Catholics Karl Adam and Carl Schmitt to their readership.<sup>190</sup> *Fascism and Providence* by J.K. Heydon was also published by Frank Sheed in 1937. Heydon insisted therein that fascism 'is of Catholic origin and no English Catholic has a right to condemn the Nazis. Catholics who do may be found to be fighting against God.'<sup>191</sup> Thomas Burns joined Sheed & Ward and the CEG and became an important Catholic publisher, editing many Catholic fellow travellers of the right, including G.K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc, Roy Campbell, Arnold Lunn, and Christopher Hollis. Yet Sheed & Ward also introduced the French neo-Thomist Jacques Maritain to their readers. Maritain was later acclaimed for his criticism of fascism and National Socialism.<sup>192</sup>

The Catholic Truth Society (CTS), the Catholic publisher that probably came closest to the notion of an ecclesiastical publishing house, had increased the numbers of its antisocialist pamphlets in the 1930s.<sup>193</sup> In their annual report for the year 1937 the CTS noted with satisfaction the great demand for pamphlets on communism, but pamphlets on the dangers of fascism did not feature.<sup>194</sup> In 1938, the Executive Committee of the CTS agreed that they would not publish pamphlets hostile to fascism as this would be viewed as an attack on the BUF and as such as a political statement.<sup>195</sup> If interested in fascism or National Socialism it was possible to borrow Hitler's *Mein Kampf* from the CTS Liverpool library, which was among the most frequently borrowed books in spring 1939<sup>196</sup>, while *Communism and Socialism* by Arnold Lunn was recommended 'for all those who overemphasise the dangers of nazism to socialism'.<sup>197</sup>

Recommended reading on socialism often left no doubt about its alleged Jewish roots. The review of Robert Sencourt's *Spain's Ordeal* reminded the reader that

unless Bolshevism is nipped in the bud immediately it is bound to spread, in one form or another, over Europe and the whole world, as it is organised and run by Jews, who have no nationality and whose aim and object is to destroy for their own ends the existing order of things ... The book is in the very first rank and should be read by all.<sup>198</sup>

A classic of the CTS, *The Church and Socialism* by Hilaire Belloc, was kept permanently in print and by 1933 it was one of the most popular books in the library of the Catholic Guild of Israel in east London.<sup>199</sup> The edition of 1931 blamed 'certain Jewish conspirators' for the Russian Revolution in 1917 and 'the same alien clique' for Soviet terror and the spread of communism in the West.<sup>200</sup>

To some extent, the attitude of the CTS towards socialism reflected Vatican policy at the time, though there still remained some room for argument as the Catholic conflicts over the Spanish Civil War indicated.<sup>201</sup> However, at the very beginning of the year 1939 Cardinal Hinsley had condemned both communism and fascism/National Socialism. Why then did the CTS choose to sympathise with the extreme right? The strongest indicator of the pro-fascist inclination of the CTS lies in the person of the organising secretary, T.W.C. Curd. Curd had already professed his belief in a Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy in Catholic newspapers. In April 1933, for instance, he composed a letter to the editor of the *Catholic Times* in response to a discussion

on the persecution of the Jews in Germany. Curd insisted that 'to say that there is no Jewish international force ... in face of the Jewish international financial ring simply will not do'. He continued to explain that this dominance was the reason why Hitler wanted to get rid of the Jews, and that the Jews ultimately had to blame themselves for their persecution.<sup>202</sup> Besides the institutionalised refusal to criticise fascism, it is also noteworthy that Hilaire Belloc was a constant feature in the booklist of the CTS as a regular commentator in their journals. Curd's fellow Distributists, Douglas Jerrold, Arnold Lunn, and the BUF member Benvenuti all received a good press from the CTS.<sup>203</sup>

## Conclusion

The support of vocal Catholics in England for Franco and Mussolini has not gone unnoticed by historians, who have offered various explanations for these sympathies. Adrian Hastings has ascribed this propensity towards fascism down to Catholic antisocialism, plus a 'natural sympathy for Catholic southern Europeans', and 'decades of Bellocian indoctrination'.<sup>204</sup> Contemporaries likewise tended to attribute Catholic sympathies for fascism to a Catholic mentality. George Heseltine, a long-term activist and publicist for the Distributist League, judged that Catholics at *G.K.'s Weekly* were eager to turn it into a Catholic paper and push the League towards a pro-fascist line in the mid-1930s.<sup>205</sup> The contemporary scholar E. Watkin saw in Catholic attraction to fascism a revolt against reason, 'because Catholics [in their marginal position in English society] have been frightened away from reason by the enmity of Rationalists'. Fascism on the other hand seemed to defend Catholic interests.<sup>206</sup> Catholic support (especially among Distributists) for Franco during the Spanish Civil War showed every sign of such a Catholic defensive reaction, especially since the Protestant majority seemed to care neither for Catholic interests in revolutionary Mexico or Soviet Russia, nor for the anticlericalism of the Spanish Republicans. Flint's analysis of Catholic public opinion on the Spanish Civil War is more differentiated, as he also found voices that criticised the common support for Franco. Flint saw in this rift within the English Catholic community a manifestation of two schools of thought. The apologists for fascism were mainly devoted to preserving freedom of religion and the Church, whereas Catholics critical of fascism were concerned about social justice and democratic rights.<sup>207</sup>

To explain Catholic support of fascism with a certain Catholic mentality appears to be most appropriate in the case of the leadership of the Distributist League. It is, however, necessary to differentiate between Distributism as an organisation and the motivation of the individuals who supported it. Unlike the back-to-the-land movement, Distributism was not an exclusively Catholic movement. Among the leaders of the League were high Anglicans, Scottish Presbyterians or agnostics, and only two of the numerous secretaries of the Central Branch in London were Catholic. The League as such was meant to transcend denominational borders to pool the strength of like-minded individuals in the search for a new social order. The authors of *G.K.'s Weekly* did not stand alone with their critique of liberal democracy and cultural pessimism nor was it specifically Catholic.<sup>208</sup> When Chesterton set up the journal he consciously kept it free from any denominational commitments. The values proposed by the *Weekly*, as Chesterton wrote to a friend in 1924, were supposed to speak for themselves:

I do not mean it should be stamped with Catholicism, or only because it is commonsense; so that many would have accepted the commonsense before they even knew it was Catholicism. But there is nobody to say a single word for the family, or the true case for property, or the proper understanding of the religious peasantries, while the whole Press is full of every sort of sophistry to smooth the way for divorce, of birth-control, of mere state expedience and all the rest.<sup>209</sup>

On an individual level, however, the connection between Catholicism and fascism is clearer. The editors of *G.K.'s Weekly*, Hilaire Belloc, G.K. Chesterton, Gregory and Edward Macdonald, decided on the paper's direction, and all of them (apart from Belloc) were converts to Catholicism whose Catholic faith was the centre of their lives.<sup>210</sup> This was particularly the case in G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc's philosophy of life. On the occasion of Chesterton's conversion in 1922, Belloc wrote to his old friend:

The Catholic Church is the exponent of Reality. It is true. Its doctrines in matters large and small are statements of what is ... My conclusion – and that of all men who have ever once seen it – is the Faith: Corporate, organised, a personality, teaching. A thing, not a theory ... The Catholic Church is the natural home of the human spirit. The odd perspective picture of life which looks like

a meaningless puzzle at first, seen from that one standpoint takes a complete order and meaning, like the skull in the pictures of the Ambassadors.<sup>211</sup>

Catholicism had become the guiding principle in these men's lives because it was able to give order and meaning to an increasingly secular and diverse world. 'Latin' fascism appeared to be the means to solve pressing social problems while still safeguarding Christian values. Catholicism was therefore not so much the motivation behind their flirtation with fascism, but a refuge, offering one part of their solution to society's problems.

Apart from a philosophical explanation there is also a structural explanation why English Catholic literati were particularly susceptible to fascism. This may not lie in their tendency to think and question, as Kevin Morris has suggested, but in the information channels available and supported by Catholic organisations, which did not challenge their pro-fascist views. Finally, the institutional Church helped to confirm Catholics in their pro-fascist attitude by what it did and did not say.

## Notes

- 1 John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope*, Harmondsworth, 1999; Daniel J. Goldhagen, *A Moral Reckoning*, New York, 2002. For a very positive account of Pius XII see Anthony Rhodes, *The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators, 1922–1945*, New York, 1973. For a more balanced account see Michael Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust, 1930–1965*, Bloomington, 2000, and on acts of resistance Michael Phayer; Eva Fleischner (eds), *Cries in the Night. Women who Challenged the Holocaust*, Kansas City, 1997. For a detailed view and discussion of how deep ideological affinities between Catholicism and National Socialism could run see Kevin Spicer, *Hitler's Priests. Catholic Clergy and National Socialism*, DeKalb, 2008.
- 2 On Catholic antisemitism see Beth Griech-Polelle, *Bishop von Galen. German Catholicism and National Socialism*, New Haven 2002, pp. 52–53; Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope*, pp. 121–123; David Kertzer, *Unholy War. The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Antisemitism*, London, 2002, pp. 264–293. For literature that takes the structural restrictions of a dictatorship into account see Phayer, *Catholic Church*, 2000; Klaus Scholder, 'Political Resistance or Self-Assertion as a Problem for Church Governments', in essays by Klaus Scholder, *A Requiem for Hitler and*

- other New Perspectives on the German Church Struggle*, London, 1989, pp. 130–39, 131. In defence of the Church's strategy in Germany see Burkhard van Schewick, 'Katholische Kirche und nationalsozialistische Rassenpolitik', in *Die Katholiken und das Dritte Reich*, ed. by Klaus Gotto, Konrad Repgen, 2nd edn, Mainz, 1989, pp. 101–122, 120.
- 3 Donald Dietrich, 'Antisemitism and the Institutional Church', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 16 (2002), 415–426, 425; Phayer, *Catholic Church*, pp. 222–225.
  - 4 Michael O'Sullivan, 'An eroding milieu? Catholic youth, Church authority, and popular behaviour in northwest Germany during the Third Reich, 1933–1938', *Catholic Historical Review*, 90 (2004), 236–259, 258; Thomas Breuer, *Verordneter Wandel? Der Widerstreit zwischen nationalsozialistischem Herrschaftsanspruch und traditionaler Lebenswelt im Erzbistum Bamberg*, Mainz, 1992.
  - 5 Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf*, pp. 190–191.
  - 6 Gerhard Besier, *Der Heilige Stuhl und Hitler-Deutschland. Die Faszination des Totalitären*, Munich, 2004, p. 313.
  - 7 Quotes taken from Richard Steigmann-Gall, 'Rethinking Nazism and Religion: How Anti-Christian were the "Pagans"?', *Central European History*, 36 (2003), 75–105, pp. 88–89. Steigmann-Gall argues that Rosenberg was not anti-Christian, but anticlerical. He aimed not for an abolition of Christianity but wanted a radical version of Protestant Christianity (pp. 90–91). On a brief summary of the *Myth* and its origins see Reinhard Bollmus, *Das Amt Rosenberg und seine Gegner. Studien zum Machtkampf im Nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem*, Stuttgart, 1970, pp. 17–25.
  - 8 August Recker, 'Wem wollt ihr glauben?' *Bischof Berning im Dritten Reich*, Paderborn, 1998, p. 250; and Wilhelm Damberg, 'Katholizismus und Antisemitismus in Westfalen. Ein Desiderat', in *Die Verdrängung und Vernichtung der Juden in Westfalen*, ed. by Arno Herzig, Karl Treppe, Andreas Determann, Münster, 1994, pp. 44–61, 58.
  - 9 Ludwig Volk, 'Die Fuldaer Bischofskonferenz von Hitlers Machtergreifung bis zur Enzyklika "Mit brennender Sorge"', *Stimmen der Zeit*, 183 (1969), 10–31, 23.
  - 10 Karl Schwarzmann, *Die Nathanaelfrage unserer Tage*, Imprimatur Cologne 4 June 1938. The title refers to Nathanael's response to Philippos' news that he had met Christ: 'Can anything good come from Palestine?' EAK, Gen II 8.4, 1a.
  - 11 Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf*, p. 161.
  - 12 Report on *Katechismuswahrheiten*, EAK, Gen 22.13, 4. Greive set the circulation at seven million prints. Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie*, p. 200. The most widely distributed work, *Studies on The Myth of the*

- Twentieth Century*, reached a print of approximately 220,000 in 1934. Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf*, p. 195.
- 13 Ludwig Volk, Bernhard Stasiewski (eds), *Akten deutscher Bischöfe über die Lage der Kirche 1933–1945*, Mainz, 1968–85, 6 vols, I, p. 611. Baumgärtner suggests that a disappointing interview with Hitler on 7 February 1934, in which Schulte had protested against attacks on Church institutions and in particular against Rosenberg's influence on schooling, had convinced Schulte to expand his defence tactics beyond the protests voiced in pastoral letters and learned books. The bureau gathered anticlerical propaganda and devised defence literature accordingly, printed and distributed it. Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf*, pp. 149, 154.
  - 14 Ibid., pp. 155.
  - 15 EAK Gen 22.13, 4.
  - 16 Leaflet 'Die Verwertung der Katechismuswahrheiten', and letter Cologne *Generalvikariat*, September 1936, both in EAK, Gen 22.13, 4.
  - 17 Archdiocesan Archive Cologne (EAK), Josef Teusch Werke, *Katechismuswahrheiten*. Recker, *Berning im Dritten Reich*, p. 250. For a very critical account see Stephen Haynes, 'Who Needs Enemies? Jews and Judaism in Anti-Nazi Religious Discourse', *Church History*, 71 (2002), 341–369.
  - 18 Klaus Scholder, 'Judaism and Christianity in the Ideology and Politics of National Socialism', in Otto Dov Kulka, Paul Mendes-Flohr (eds), *Judaism and Christianity under the Impact of National Socialism*, Jerusalem, 1987, pp. 183–195, 193.
  - 19 Otto Dov Kulka, 'Popular Christian Attitudes in the Third Reich to National Socialist Policies towards the Jews', in Kulka, Mendes-Flohr, *Judaism and Christianity*, pp. 251–267, 255; Uriel Tal, 'Aspects of Consecration of Politics in the Nazi Era', in Kulka, Mendes-Flohr, *Judaism and Christianity*, pp. 63–95, 83. Referring to the Protestant churches see Uriel Tal, 'On Modern Lutheranism and the Jews', *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, London, 1985, pp. 203–213.
  - 20 Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie*, p. 193. Haynes, 'Enemies', p. 341. Doris Bergen, 'Catholics, Protestants, and Christian Antisemitism in Nazi Germany', *Central European History*, 27 (1994), 329–348, 329.
  - 21 Wolfgang Altgeld, 'Katholizismus und Antisemitismus. Kommentar', in *Zeitgeschichtliche Katholizismusforschung. Tatsachen, Deutungen, Fragen. Eine Zwischenbilanz*, ed. by Karl-Joseph Hummerl, Paderborn/Muenchen/Wien/Zuerich, 2004, pp. 49–55.
  - 22 Haynes, 'Enemies', pp. 341–369; Tal, 'Modern Lutheranism', pp. 203–213.

- 23 Rosenberg's institutional power was weak. His office was small with a minuscule budget and its mission to shape education and worldview within the Reich was severely hampered by intraparty competition. His main literary work, the *Myth of the Twentieth Century*, achieved a circulation of 1,030,000 in 1942, yet Rosenberg's work failed to influence contemporary scientific literature as well as the worldview of the regime's leadership. Hitler, weary of Rosenberg's pseudo-religious visions, never publicly endorsed the *Myth* as National Socialism's ideological handbook. Generally on Rosenberg's institutional weakness within the power structure of the regime see Bollmus, *Amt Rosenberg*, pp. 26, 114, 124–140; Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf*, p. 82; Steigmann-Gall, 'Rethinking', pp. 81, 86; Tal, 'Consecration', p. 83.
- 24 Bollmus, *Amt Rosenberg*, pp. 113–118.
- 25 As quoted in Robert Wistrich, *Who's Who in Nazi Germany*, London, 1995, p. 211.
- 26 Ernst Piper, *Alfred Rosenberg. Hitlers Chefideologe*, Munich, 2005, pp. 15–17. Regarding Rosenberg's key role in the implementation of antisemitism in National Socialist ideology see also Max Weinreich, *Hitler's Professors. The Part of Scholarship in Germany's Crimes against the Jewish People*, NA New Haven and London, 1999. Jan Björn Potthast, *Das jüdische Zentralmuseum der SS in Prag. Gegnerforschung und Völkermord im Nationalsozialismus*, Frankfurt, 2002. Quoted in Piper, *Rosenberg*, p. 12.
- 27 Piper, *Rosenberg*, pp. 11–13.
- 28 Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf*, pp. 124–127. Göring supported Rosenberg's project of a *Hohe Schule*, a university solely devoted to teach National Socialist ideology, with 1.5 million Reich Marks per year. Nevertheless, the great breakthrough for Rosenberg's office was only achieved from 1941, when its public presence in ideological training increased significantly. In early 1943, after Stalingrad, Rosenberg was eventually given the task to provide training for army officers. Bollmus, *Amt Rosenberg*, pp. 130, 134–140.
- 29 EAK Gen 22.3b, 1.
- 30 Wolfgang Dierker has recently offered a convincing account of the intense anticlericalism of the SS and Sicherheitsdienst SD both in its organisational as well as ideological form and impact. Wolfgang Dierker, 'Himmlers Glaubenskrieger. Der Sicherheitsdienst des SS, seine Religionspolitik und die 'Politische Religion' des Nationalsozialismus', *Historisches Jahrbuch*, 122 (2002), 321–344.
- 31 Volk, 'Machtergreifung', p. 19.
- 32 Conference notes, 5–7 June 1934, Fulda, as cited in Stasiewski, *Akten Bischöfe*, pp. 695, 701. For a detailed account of the diplomatic



- exchanges between the Church hierarchy and the government see Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf*.
- 33 On the Vatican's strategy against Rosenberg see Dominik Burkhard, *Häresie und Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts. Rosenbergs nationalsozialistische Weltanschauung vor dem Tribunal der Römischen Inquisition*, Paderborn, 2005.
  - 34 He refers to the 20 July 1935 Heydrich memorandum. Reichmann-Gall, 'Rethinking', p. 92. Tal, 'Consecration', p. 83.
  - 35 Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf*, p. 195.
  - 36 Letter by Archdiocese Munich-Freising reporting that the second edition of August Pieper's *Ludendorff und die Heilige Schrift* has to be reduced to 2,000 issues after an impressive first print run of 50,000. A third edition was uncertain. 5 January 1937, Munich to all other dioceses. EAK Gen 22.13, 3.
  - 37 Letter to Reich Ministry of Church Affairs, 23 November 1936, EAK Gen 22.13, 4.
  - 38 Letter Bertram to Kerrl (Minister of Church Affairs) and Geheime Staatspolizeiamt, 20 March 1937. Ludwig Volk, *Akten deutscher Bischöfe über die Lage der Kirche 1933–45*, IV (1936–39), Mainz, 1981, pp. 184–186. Letter Berning to Goebbels, 3 September 1937. Volk, *Akten Bischöfe IV*, p. 345.
  - 39 Ibid., footnote 8, 425.
  - 40 'Die Verwertung der *Katechismuswahrheiten*', in EAK Gen 22.13, 4. Josef Teusch had written both booklets, although the *Nathanaelfrage* appeared under the pseudonym of Karl Schwarzmann. Ulrich von Hehl, *Katholische Kirche und Nationalsozialismus im Erzbistum Köln 1933–1945*, Mainz, 1977, p. 254.
  - 41 *Katechismuswahrheiten*, p. 14. This as well as all the subsequent quotes taken from the two booklets or the German language literature are the author's translations.
  - 42 Introduction to EAK file Josef Teusch Werke. Recker, *Berning im Dritten Reich*, p. 250. The biographer of Cardinal Clemens von Galen, Jürgen Korupka, recently referred to the *Nathanaelfrage* as one of those publications with which von Galen intended to counter antisemitism. <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=1099>. Hermann Greive briefly comments on the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and remarked that it stressed the Jews' collective guilt in the crucifixion of Christ. Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie*, pp. 200–201.
  - 43 Wilhelm Neuss, *Kampf gegen den Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts. Ein Gedenkblatt an Clemens August Kardinal Graf Galen*, Köln, 1947, pp. 15–16.

- 44 Letter *Generalvikariat* Cologne to all parishes, 18 June 1938. EAK, Gen II 8.4, 1a.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 *Nathanaelfrage*, p. 3.
- 48 Ludwig Volk (ed.), *Akten Kardinal Michael von Faulhabers, 1917–1945*, II (1935–1945), Mainz, 1978, p. 429.
- 49 Catholic newspapers in England portrayed Faulhaber's sermons and speeches on National Socialism as examples of Catholic opposition to the regime, e.g., *Catholic Times*, 1 February 1935; 11 January 1938.
- 50 Amici Israel was not a mere mission to the Jews. Together with its supporters amongst the Catholic bishops and curia they (unsuccessfully) petitioned the Vatican to rid the Good Friday prayers off its anti-Jewish text. Hubert Wolf, "Pro perfidies Judaeis". Die "Amici Israel" und ihr Antrag auf eine Reform der Karfreitagsürbitte für die Juden (1928). Oder: Bemerkungen zum Thema katholische Kirche und Antisemitismus', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 279 (2004), 611–58, 621.
- 51 Phayer, *Catholic Church*, pp. 15–17.
- 52 Michael Faulhaber, *Judentum, Christentum, Germanentum. Adventspredigten*, Munich, 1934, pp. 10–11.
- 53 Faulhaber, *Adventspredigten*, p. 116. Also quoted in Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie*, p. 203. Greive however did not refer to the restrictions Faulhaber placed on race science and saw in this sermon an uncritical endorsement of race science.
- 54 'Verwertung der *Katechismuswahrheiten*' in letter Schulte to Bertram, 15 September 1936. Volk, *Akten Bischöfe IV*, pp. 50–51.
- 55 'Beibrief zu den *Katechismuswahrheiten*', 15 September 1936. EAK, Gen 22.13, 4.
- 56 This phrase was either in bold print or followed by 'memorise'. See copy of *Katechismuswahrheiten*, EAK, Gen 22.12 v.1, and pamphlet Josef Teusch, 'Predigten zu den *Katechismuswahrheiten*', published by Bischöfliche Hauptarbeitsstelle Düsseldorf (no date).
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 *Katechismuswahrheiten*, p. 9.
- 59 Ibid., p. 12.
- 60 Ibid., p. 13.
- 61 Protocol of the bishops' conference of the Western dioceses at Kevelaer, 9–10 November 1936. Volk, *Akten Bischöfe IV*, pp. 35–42, p. 40.
- 62 *Nathanaelfrage*, p. 25.
- 63 Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie*, p. 133.
- 64 *Nathanaelfrage*, p. 24. EAK, Gen II 8.4, 1a.

- 65 *Nathanaelfrage*, p. 5.
- 66 Ibid., pp. 15–16.
- 67 Ibid., p. 4.
- 68 Ibid., pp. 5–6, 15–16. EAK, Gen II 8.4, 1a. Archbishop Gröber of Freiburg picked up this argument when he explained how Christ was linked to the Jewish people. The link, according to Gröber, existed in his mother and before the law, but as he had no worldly father he was essentially of supernatural origin. Gröber's Lent pastoral letter, 8 February 1939, in *Anzeigblatt für die Erzdiözese Freiburg*, February 1939.
- 69 For example the well-known theologian Karl Adam, 'Deutsche Volkstum und katholisches Christentum', *Theologische Quartalschrift*, CXIV, 1933, quoted in Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie*, p. 180. On Karl Adam see Robert Krieg, *Catholic Theologians in Nazi Germany*, New York and London, 2004, pp. 83–107,
- 70 *Nathanaelfrage*, p. 21.
- 71 *Der Stürmer*, March 1936.
- 72 *Nathanaelfrage*, p. 11.
- 73 For a good summary of the growing social isolation of German Jews from Weimar to National Socialist Germany, and the anti-Jewish measures emanating from popular ambitions, see Frank Bajohr, 'Vom antijüdischen Konsens zum schlechten Gewissen. Die deutsche Gesellschaft und die Judenverfolgung 1933–1945', in Frank Bajohr, Dieter Pohl, *Der Holocaust als offenes Geheimnis. Die Deutschen, die NS-Führung und die Alliierten*, Munich, 2006.
- 74 Bernd Wendt, *Deutschland 1933–1945. Das 'Dritte Reich'. Handbuch zur Geschichte*, Hanover, 1995, pp. 160–179.
- 75 On a good and innovative account of the stability of the Catholic milieu in the 1940s see Michael O'Sullivan, 'An eroding milieu? Catholic youth, Church authority, and popular behaviour in northwest Germany during the Third Reich, 1933–1938', *Catholic Historical Review*, 90 (2004), 236–259. Using reports of local parishes, O'Sullivan shows that the regime was seriously eating into the Catholic milieu, persuading mostly young men, especially those from a family background where Catholic life was not practised; while young women were more likely to stay faithful to the Church.
- 76 Report Bishop von Galen regarding religious education at secondary schools, 18 August 1938. Volk, *Akten Bischöfe IV*, pp. 511–515.
- 77 Ibid., pp. 511–512.
- 78 Letter Gau Press Office to *Landesstelle Ostmark* of the Reich Ministry for Education and Propaganda Bayreuth, 19 February 1937. BA NS15/737 Censorship of confessional journals.

- 79 Printed in *Stuttgarter Nationalsozialistischer Kurier*, 28 March 1935. Rosenberg's office had this announcement distributed through its press agency. BA NS15/145a.
- 80 Letter Theo Gunnemann, Rosrath, 2 December 1936, to *Generalvikariat* Cologne. For responses to the *Katechismuswahrheiten* see EAK, Gen 22.13, 4.
- 81 The discussion about the 'Aryan' origin of Christ primarily ensued within the Protestant churches. The Synod of the Prussian Church introduced an 'Aryan' paragraph that excluded 'racial' Jews from membership, as early as 5 September 1933. Scholder, 'Judaism and Christianity', p. 191.
- 82 According to Dov Kulka Catholic priests also practised what they preached and continued to support Jews who converted to Christianity and to baptise Jews although this was forbidden. Otto Dov Kulka, 'Popular Christian Attitudes in the Third Reich to National Socialist Policies towards the Jews', in *Judaism and Christianity under the Impact of National Socialism*, ed. by Otto Dov Kulka; Paul Mendes Flohr, Jerusalem, 1987, pp. 251–267, 255.
- 83 Haynes, 'Enemies', pp. 343, 346.
- 84 On Westminster's responses to National Socialism see Thomas Moloney, *Westminster, Whitehall and the Vatican. The Role of Cardinal Hinsley, 1935–1943*, Tunbridge Wells, 1985, p. 222; Kester Aspden, *Fortress Church. The English Roman Catholic Bishops and Politics, 1903–1963*, Leominster, 2002, p. 215.
- 85 Private Secretary to Lord Denbigh, 31 March 1933. AAW, Hi 2/125. Cardinal Hinsley's letter to Cardinal Faulhaber, 19 October 1937. AAW, Hi 2/84, 1937–40. Hinsley expressed his concern about the anti-clerical policies of the National Socialist regime, but assured Faulhaber that the English hierarchy had no intention to interfere in party politics, neither national nor international.
- 86 Tony Kushner, 'James Parkes, The Jews, and Conversionism: A Model for Multi-Cultural Britain?', in *Christianity and Judaism*, ed. by William J. Shields, Diana Wood, Studies in Church History, Oxford, 1992, XXIX, pp. 451–461.
- 87 Letter Parkes to Lang, 9 June 1933. LL, Lang, vol. 38, 18/19.
- 88 Downey spoke to the Liverpool University Jewish Society on 19 March 1933, followed by other addresses in front of Jewish societies and a meeting with Chief Rabbi Hertz; again against National Socialist Jewish persecution at the Anglo-Palestinian dinner at the Mayfair Hotel in London, 21 October 1935. Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 214.
- 89 E.g., at the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, April 1933. Ibid., p. 215. For a detailed account on public denunciations of Jewish persecution by the

- Christian Churches see Richard Gutteridge, 'Some Christian Responses in Britain to the Jewish Catastrophe, 1933–1945', in *Remembering for the Future: Jews and Christians During and After the Holocaust*, ed. by Yehuda Bauer, et al., Oxford, 1989, pp. 352–362.
- 90 Richard Gutteridge, 'The Churches and the Jews in England, 1933–1945', in *Judaism and Christianity*, pp. 353–372, p. 365. Other European bishops likewise condemned *Kristallnacht*, e.g., the Cardinals Schuster in Milan, Van Roey of Belgium, Verdier of Paris, and the Patriarch of Lisbon. Phayer, *Catholic Church*, p. 4.
  - 91 Letter Marshall to Marcus Shloimovitz, 15 May 43. SDA, 204/344. The Manchester and Salford League to Combat Antisemitism was formerly named League of Jewish Defence. Marshall was not patron for long. He was soon told by the Council of Manchester and Salford Jews that the League had not been given sanction by the Council, which is the representative organisation of the Jewish community. Marshall resigned from the League.
  - 92 This was starkly represented in pastoral letters, the majority of which warned solely against communism throughout the 1930s. This ended with the outbreak of war when the bishops condemned the exaggerated German nationalism and the threat to the German Churches. Catholic Central Library, Pastoral boxes.
  - 93 Williams at an inter-church meeting in Birmingham in May 1933, printed in *The Universe*, 20 May 1933. Cited in Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 215.
  - 94 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 215.
  - 95 Amigo's 1939 Advent Pastoral in Catholic Central Library, Pastoral box.
  - 96 On YCW and CSG see Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 204. The CCIR had sent a concerned letter through Hinsley to Cardinal Pacelli about the Italian offensive against Ethiopia and the Pope's silence. Letter CCIR to Cardinal Secretary of State, signed by Edward Myers, VLP Fowke, 22 September 1935. AAW, Hi 2/26 CCIR 1930–39.
  - 97 LMA, Board of Deputies of British Jews, BO4.
  - 98 Hinsley's sermon at St Edward the Confessor, Golders Green, 13 October 1935. AAW, Hi 2/177. Hinsley disapproved of the suppression of the Catholic *Bündische* Youth Movement in Germany. Wörmann, German Charge d'Affaires, Deutsche Botschaft lectured Hinsley, that the movement was not on trial for its contacts to young people in other countries, but for its communist character. Letter Wörmann to Hinsley, 24 August 1937. AAW, Hi 2/84.
  - 99 Letter Hinsley to Bertram, 13 December 1935. Stasiewski, *Akten Bischöfe III*, 164. Also Hinsley to Faulhaber and the German

- episcopate, 19 October 1937. AAW, Hi 2/84. Volk, *Akten Kardinal Faulhabers*, II, 414–416.
- 100 Letter Hinsley to Cardinal Faulhaber, 19 October 1937. AAW, Hi 2/84. For the decision of the French bishops to refrain from public statements see letter Pacelli to Faulhaber, 15 November 1937. Volk, *Akten Kardinal Faulhabers*, II, 416–417.
  - 101 Letter Hugh Cecil to Hinsley, 10 May 1938; and Hinsley's response in his letter, 12 May 1938. AAW, Hi 2/84.
  - 102 Cardinal Hinsley's response, 22 February 1938, to the request of Agudas Israel World Organisation, H.A. Goodman, to join the protest against the persecution of Jews in Romania. Other pleas included United Appeal for Jews in Poland and Other Parts of Eastern Europe, The Friendly Discussion Circle for Jews & Christians, The British Committee of the World Congress against Antisemitism and Racism. AAW, Hi 2/125. Jewish aid groups received numerous such replies from Catholics not just in England, but from the USA or Belgium, who felt that the Jews were responsible for Catholic persecution in Mexico and Spain. BOD secretary to Morris Waldmann, American Jewish Committee, 27 April 1934. Jewish organisations soon saw themselves obliged to raise sharp protests against the public oppression of religious institutions in order to expect sympathies from Christians and Catholics. Circular letter of Jewish Central Information Office, Amsterdam, 23 March 1936. All in LMA, BO4 CAR 16.
  - 103 Morris, 'Catholic Writers II', p. 83. Moloney mentions that Hinsley was personally pro-Franco. Moloney, *Westminster*, p. 71.
  - 104 Ibid, p. 50. One should not overemphasise Hinsley's criticism of Mussolini as remarkable in its defiance of Rome. It was very much in line with Pius XI's encyclical *Catholic Action* in which he accused Italian fascism of state idolatry and violation of the Lateran Treaty. The encyclical was published four years before Hinsley's critical words.
  - 105 For Casartelli's appraisal see his diary. SDA, Casartelli Papers. Also his comment 'The Bishop's Message', *Catholic Federationist*, February 1923, p. 1.
  - 106 This distaste should not be interpreted as a consistent public campaign against National Socialism. Events in Germany were for a long time ignored. Especially during the Spanish Civil War contemporary sympathies were with Franco and not with Germany's Jews. Hastings, *The Shaping of Prophecy*, p. 78. Also Merry de Val's 'letter' to Roosevelt in the pro-Nationalist journal *Spain* who found 'the renewal of Jew-baiting, all small if deplorable things compared to the happenings in Spain'. *Spain*, 18 November 1938, p. 5. AAS, Spanish Civil War Records.

- 107 Letter Clement Bruning to Hinsley, 17 November 1936 (response Private Secretary, 21 November 1936). AAW, Hi 2/76 Fascism 1936–39.
- 108 Hinsley to Harold Brinjes, 15 March 1938. Brinjes was worried about the BUF's recruiting success among his Knights of St Columba colleagues. AAW, Hi 2/76 Fascism 1936–39.
- 109 Hinsley to Fr Gosling (The Sower), 4 February 1939. AAW, Hi 2/76 Fascism 1936–39.
- 110 Letter Hinsley to Sewell, 4 February 1939. AAW, Hi 2/76 Fascism 1936–39.
- 111 The Cardinal's secretary tried to assuage such complaints, stressing that Hinsley was only referring to fascism's totalitarianism, not any party in particular nor the ideology in general. Letters and responses Mrs Munden to Hinsley, 5 February 1939; Mrs Hudson, 5 February 1939; G Stannard, 5 February 1939. All in AAW, Hi 2/76 Fascism 1936–39.
- 112 Letter Mrs Munden to Hinsley, 5 February 1939. AAW, Hi 2/76 Fascism 1936–39.
- 113 Minutes Bishops' meeting, 20 October 1936. AAW, Acta Bishops 1930–38, V, 24.
- 114 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 207.
- 115 Moloney, *Westminster*, pp. 64–65. He recalled General Eoin O'Duffy (the fascist-style leader of the Irish Blueshirts) approaching Hinsley to sanction appeals in the English Catholic press in support for his military campaign alongside Franco; and Eric Gill's suggestion the hierarchy should openly protest against the Nationalist open bombing of towns.
- 116 Letter Ernest Lashmar to Amigo, 6 September 1936. AAS, Amigo Papers, Spanish Civil War.
- 117 Tom Buchanan found that humanitarian help for the Nationalists was provided 'almost exclusively' by the Catholic Church. Tom Buchanan, *Britain and the Spanish Civil War*, Cambridge, 1997, pp. 118–119.
- 118 Letter Miss Dorothea Borton, Bishop's Committee for the Relief of Spanish Distress, to Amigo 22 October 1936. Report on fund raising. The Committee had begun work in September 1936 and had raised £8,800 at the time of Miss Borton's letter. The report of April 1938 claimed that the Committee had managed to raise £10,800 since 1936. Most of the money went into mobile medical care for their 'fight against Bolshevism, the enemy of Christ and of the whole civilised world'. Letter Cecil Pereira, chairman of the executive committee, to Amigo, 25 April 1938. AAS, Amigo Papers, Spanish Civil War.
- 119 Michael Clifton, *Amigo. Friend of the Poor. The Bishop of Southwark 1904–1949*, Leominster, 1987, pp. 3–5.

- 120 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 209–10. Clifton, *Amigo*, p. 65.
- 121 Letter Alba to Amigo, 4 March 1939. Or Arthur Loveday to Amigo, 15 January 1937, who saw the Civil War as a 'struggle between the creeds of Christ and Marx'. AAS, Amigo Papers, Spanish Civil War.
- 122 Letter deputy editor to Amigo, 15 January 1937; Arthur Loveday to Amigo, 15 January 1937; letter Alfred Douglas to Amigo, 31 January 1939. AAS, Amigo Papers, Spanish Civil War.
- 123 Letters A. Ramsay to Amigo, 18 September 1937 and 2 October 1937. AAS, Amigo Papers, Spanish Civil War.
- 124 After the Civil War had ended and the Friends of National Spain regrouped as Friends of Spain, Hinsley agreed to be vice-president of the new Friends. The post was also offered to and accepted by Amigo. D. Jerrold to Amigo, 6 July 1939. AAS, Amigo Papers, Spanish Civil War. Clifton, *Amigo*, p. 147.
- 125 Moral to Amigo, 11 February 1938. AAS, Amigo Papers, Spanish Civil War.
- 126 Letter Amigo to Eugene Egan, March 1937. AAS, Amigo Papers, Spanish Civil War.
- 127 Merry De Val was the nationalist press officer at Burgos and the nephew of Cardinal Raffael Merry de Val, formerly Secretary of State for Pius X. Sewell, *Catholics*, p. 78.
- 128 Leaflet 'Anglo-Spanish Friendship' Friends of National Spain meeting, 29 March 1939. AAS, Amigo Papers, Spanish Civil War. On H.P. Croft and Lord Phillimore (who was also regularly corresponding with Belloc) see Richard Griffiths, *Patriotism Perverted: Captain Ramsay, the Right Club and English Antisemitism, 1939–40*, London, 1998, pp. 79, 221.
- 129 Amigo to Eugene Egan, March 1937. AAS, Amigo Papers, Spanish Civil War.
- 130 Griffiths pinpoints Ramsay's first antisemitic public speech as the one printed in the *Arbroath Herald*, 14 January 1938. Thus, whenever Ramsay was speaking of 'communist aliens' or 'international money power' after January 1938, one can assume that he was referring to Jews, as he did in that speech. Griffiths, *Patriotism Perverted*, pp. 82, 85. The United Christian Front employed the same coded language and it was not long before Archbishop Temple publicly warned to get involved with the Front (because of its pro-Franco line). Apart from the usual upper-middle-class support, the Front was popular with representatives of numerous Christian churches, among them the Anglican Dean Inge of St Paul's London. Griffiths, *Patriotism Perverted*, p. 79.
- 131 *Ibid.*, pp. 95, 97, 278.
- 132 *Ibid.*, p. 133.



- 133 Ibid., p. 80.
- 134 Ibid., p. 80.
- 135 Jay Corrin, *G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc. The Battle Against Modernity*, London, 1981, p. 196.
- 136 Griffiths, *Patriotism Perverted*, pp. 80–81.
- 137 Ibid., pp. 82–85.
- 138 Ibid., pp. 80–81.
- 139 ‘The Godless Congress’, by PDC Liverpool (without date). AAL, Downey Collection Series 1, VI.
- 140 As mentioned in various pastorals, e.g., Salford Lent Pastoral 1932, see most newspaper articles on communism, Russia, etc. Rev. George J. MacGillivray’s book *Anti-God Front of Bolshevism*. (London, 1930) was in high demand by visitors to the CGI Library in London’s East End. *CGI Newsletter*, Spring 1933, p. 4. Apart from the CGI, it was the PDC, the Knights of St Columba, the Society of St Vincent de Paul and the League of Mary that warned against ‘anti-God’ movements. BAA, AP/S16 Society of St Vincent de Paul SVP 1927–81.
- 141 Sir Robert Grant Ferris, later Lord Harvington, pro-Franco and chamberlain to Pius XII and John XXIII. Sewell, *Catholics*, p. 195.
- 142 Reported in Hinsley’s letter to Downey, 26 February 1938. AAL, Downey Collection Series 1, VI.
- 143 Ibid.
- 144 On the Christian Defence Movement meeting see confidential report ‘The Proposed Anti-God Congress’ by T.W.C. Curd, 5 May 1938. The Archdiocese Liverpool eventually sent out a circular letter to the Deanery Ecclesiastical Assistants asking them to send a protest letter to the Home Secretary signed by religious, civic and public bodies. Any unnecessary publicity should be avoided, as should any obvious connection to the Catholic hierarchy (the letter should be sent in by the local mayor). Circular letter signed by Adamson, Downey’s secretary, 26 May 1938. AAL, Downey Collection Series 1, VI.
- 145 Griffiths, *Patriotism Perverted*, p. 60.
- 146 *Catholic Times*, 23 September 1938, p. 2.
- 147 The records of the Board of Deputies of British Jews suggest that the Pro Deo Commission had its origin with the Vatican and was led by Bishop Noll of Indiana, USA. Protestants were invited to join the Commission. LMA, BO4 CAR16. PDC also existed in Germany. Konrad Algermissen, who had worked for the *Volksverein*’s anti-socialist information bureau before 1933, later on joined the PDC in Germany.
- 148 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 213.
- 149 Ibid, p. 213.

- 150 Meeting notes, 10 September 1936. Other participants were Rev. G. Rimmer; a student from Upholland; Mr Whitehead; J. Campbell; W. Waldron (General Secretary CYMS); J. Kelly (retired Detective Sergeant); Cyril Clancy. AAL, Downey Collection Series 1, VI Godless Congress.
- 151 Fr Ellison to Msgr Adamson, 4 January 1938. Cited in Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 212.
- 152 On his role with PDC see Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 212. For his advice on alleged communist allegiances see his letter to Msgr Adamson 20 March 1938. AAL, Downey Collection Series 1, VI.
- 153 As he mentioned himself, Ellison was influenced by the writings of Fr Cahill, Fr Fahey, Msgr Jouin, Nesta Webster. He assured Adamson that neither of these personalities had 'bees in their bonnets', characterising himself as 'the least rabid & mildest man' not suffering from 'phobias and such like'. 'To My Mind' by Fr Ellison, enclosed in letter to Msgr Adamson, 4 March 1938. AAL, Downey Collection Series 1, VI.
- 154 For Adamson's invitation see Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 213. For the quotes see Ellison's letter to Msgr Adamson, 10 March 1938. AAL, Downey Collection Series 1, VI.
- 155 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 214.
- 156 Request for information in AAL, Downey Papers, Godless Congress 32/1.
- 157 Leaflet Information Distribution Bureau. CSG, J15 Economic League. For John Baker White see Richard Griffiths, *Fellow Travellers of the Right. British Enthusiasm for Nazi Germany, 1933–39*, London, 1980, pp. 268–70.
- 158 Letters O'Hea to Private Secretary of Cardinal Hinsley, 20 July 1937; Private Secretary to O'Hea, 21 July 1937. CSG, E9 Cardinal Hinsley 1929–41.
- 159 It was Thomas Burns who had approached Fr O'Hea of the CSG regarding the Right Book Club, who then unwittingly recommended it to Bishop Williams of Birmingham. Letter O'Hea to Williams, 24 December 1937. BAA, AP/S8/1. On the Left Book Club see John Lewis, *The Left Book Club. A Historical Record*, London, 1970.
- 160 Frank Sheed, *The Church and I*, New York, 1974, p. 199; cited in Flint, 'Must God go Fascist?', p. 368. Sheed was born in Australia, where he studied law, before he settled in London in the early 1920s. He set up Sheed & Ward together with his wife Mary Ward in 1927. Six years later they opened an office in New York. Sheed & Ward is seen as the publishing house that had the 'best Catholic writers in Britain' on its list. J. Gillow, *Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics*, London, 1971, p. 688.

- 161 Jay Corrin, *Catholic Intellectuals and the Challenge of Democracy*, Notre Dame, 2002, pp. 181–182. Dawson converted to Catholicism in 1914.
- 162 Morris, 'Catholic Writers I', p. 42. Mathew Grimley, 'Christopher Dawson and Christian Critics of Democracy', unpublished seminar paper, Oxford, 2002, p. 6. Grimley also cautions us not to label converts like Dawson as 'Catholic writers'. In his opinion this term is too narrow and does not take into account their cultural and theological (mostly Anglican) influences before their conversion (p. 2).
- 163 Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, pp. 177–178.
- 164 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 218. Both quotes by Knox in Morris, 'Catholic Writers II', p. 84.
- 165 Stated in letters to Archbishop Amigo of Southwark. Archives of the Archdiocese of Southwark (AAS), Spanish Civil War Records.
- 166 According to Belloc, it was necessary 'to emphasise the magnitude of Franco and the main causes of his success; that is, to point out what our deplorable native press cannot understand'. Letter by Belloc to Woodruff, March 1938, Burns Library, Belloc Papers.
- 167 Flint, 'Must God go Fascist?', p. 368.
- 168 *The Month*, e.g., wrote that the Republicans represented 'the imported Communism of Slav and Jew' whose object it was to overthrow Catholic religion. *The Month*, August 1936, pp. 437–445. See also Preston, who gives considerable weight to *The Tablet's* influence, the conservative papers and the Right Book Club on the pro-Franco view of the middle classes. Cited in Morris, 'Catholic Writers II', p. 87.
- 169 *The Tablet*, 15 July 1938, as cited in *ibid.*, p. 69. Also Flint, 'Must God go Fascist?', p. 371.
- 170 Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, p. 192. Letter by Belloc to Woodruff, March 1938, Burns Library, Belloc Papers. On Gertrude Godden see her books on communism in Spain and Britain: *Conflict in Spain, 1920–1937. A Documented Record*, London, 1937; and *Communist Attack on the People of Great Britain*, 2nd edn, London, 1938.
- 171 Corrin, *Chesterton and Belloc*, p. 192.
- 172 Edward Norman, *Roman Catholicism in England*, Oxford, 1983, p. 119 as quoted in Morris, 'Catholic Writers I', p. 40.
- 173 Adrian Hastings, 'English Catholicism in the Late 1930s', in A. Hastings, *The Shaping of Prophecy*, London, 1995, pp. 69–83, pp. 77–79. Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 205, 239.
- 174 One such fund was, e.g., the Universe Fund for Spain by Sir Martin Melvin, a Catholic industrialist, and proprietor of *The Universe*, and enthusiast for the Catholic Land Movement. Moloney, *Westminster*, p. 68. He also mentions Lord Rankeillour and Arthur Hope.

- 175 Hastings, *English Christianity*, p. 70.
- 176 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 223, 218.
- 177 Flint, 'Must God go Fascist?', pp. 364–375. Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 218.
- 178 For Bishop Brown, F. H. Drinkwater and lay initiatives critical of the loud pro-fascist voices see Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 218–224.
- 179 The memorandum stated: 'The Catholic Church in this country has made the cause of the Insurgents its own, and authorities of the Church have identified the cause of the Insurgents with the cause of Christ. We respectfully submit that a grave responsibility rests on the authority of the Church to ensure that the methods employed by the Insurgents do not outrage the teaching of Christ. As Catholics ... we urge you to take such action as may be appropriate with a view to the immediate cessation of such offences, and with the object of securing the observance of Catholic moral principles by those who claim to fight in the name of the Church.' AAL, Downey Collection 1, VI Diocesan Administration/Communism. Also in Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 222.
- 180 Hastings, *English Christianity*, p. 70. Edward Norman, *Roman Catholicism*, p. 119; cited in Morris, 'Catholic Writers I', p. 40. Flint, 'Must God go Fascist?', p. 373. Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 223, 218.
- 181 Letter Wall to Alfonso, undated but mid-October 1936. As cited in Moloney, *Westminster*, p. 65.
- 182 Letter Gosling to Hinsley, 3 February 1939, AAW, Hi 2/76, as cited in *ibid.*, pp. 60–61.
- 183 Hinsley was referring to the pamphlet 'The Drama of Spain' which he found to be generally inaccurate and prejudiced. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
- 184 Letter Hinsley to Gill, 29 August 1936, in Robert Speaight, *The Life of Eric Gill*, New York, 1966, p. 274; as cited in Flint, 'Must God go Fascist?', p. 370.
- 185 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 222.
- 186 Letter Hinsley to O'Hanlon in response to his protest letter, 23 February 1938. AAS, Amigo Papers. Spanish Civil War.
- 187 Dennis Sewell accredited Sheed & Ward with successfully broadening and deepening the English Catholic literary revival. Sewell, *Catholics*, p. 71.
- 188 At times the Catholic Evidence Guild (that was also training the Catholic Guild of Israel's public speakers) warned of the dangers of socialism linking the Jews and communists. CEG leaflet against communism in AAW, Hi 2, 1930–40. The Guild's propaganda work against communism was under the auspices of the Bishop of Leeds.
- 189 Hastings, 'English Catholicism', p. 76.

- 190 For information on the Catholic theologian Karl Adam see Greive: *Theologie und Ideologie*, pp. 178–180. Adam supported Hitler's government and its antisemitic policies in his writings. He saw the Jews as racially alien to the Aryan race and opposed any *Blutvermischung*. In his eyes, National Socialist antisemitism did not just target Jews but Bolshevism and was thus a 'dutiful act of Christian Germanic self-defence' (Ibid, p. 180). Carl Schmitt's active support for National Socialism and Hitler are well known; for his antisemitism see Raphael Gross, *Carl Schmitt und die Juden. Eine deutsche Rechtslehre*, Frankfurt, 2000.
- 191 Morris, 'Catholic Writers II', p. 89.
- 192 Sewell, *Catholics*, p. 71. On the Sheeds see Wilfrid Sheed, *Frank and Maisie. A Memoir with Parents*, London, 1986.
- 193 Herbert Vaughan, the later Cardinal, felt the need for a society that spread the knowledge of the Catholic faith and helped 'non-Catholics back to the Faith'. The Catholic Truth Society was eventually founded by a group of priests and laymen in London 1884. Herbert Vaughan became its first president, and all his successors to the See of Westminster accepted the CTS presidency. SDA, 181/50, Catholic Truth Society.
- 194 The demand was credited to the Spanish conflict. 'CTS Annual Report 1937', p. 85. Aspden claims 200,000 printed pamphlets for September 1937. Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 211.
- 195 Cited in Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 216.
- 196 The other two most popular books were Foss; Gerahty: Spanish Arena; Msgr Knox, Let Dons Delight. *Catholic Truth*, 1939 (May–June), p. 71.
- 197 'Catholic Book Notes', *Catholic Truth*, 1939 (November–December), p. 191.
- 198 'Catholic Book Notes', *Catholic Truth*, 1937 (September–October), p. 172.
- 199 CGI Newsletter, Spring 1933, p. 16.
- 200 Hilaire Belloc, *The Church and Socialism*, CTS Pamphlet, London, 1931, pp. 15–16.
- 201 David Kertzer, *Unholy War. The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Antisemitism*, New York, 2001, pp. 14–15. Also Aspden, who points to the strikingly stronger emphasis on the anti-socialist encyclical *Divini Redemptoris* (published only days after *Mit Brennender Sorge*) to that on the anti-fascist encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge*. Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 215–216.
- 202 'The Persecution of the Jews', *Catholic Times*, 28 April 1933, p. 6.
- 203 'Catholic Book Notes', *Catholic Truth*, 1938 (January–February), p. 34. 'Catholic Book Notes', *Catholic Truth*, 1939 (May–June), p. 82.

- 204 Moloney on the other hand stresses that Cardinal Hinsley's attitude towards fascism was not driven by 'reactionary ultramontanist' but by a desire to maintain a 'Christian centre'. Moloney, *Westminster*, p. 62. Also Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 9.
- 205 Lecture on Distributism by G.C. Heseltine at the Chesterton Centenary Conference 1974. Heseltine's comment needs to be modified, though, as it was made in hindsight and glazes over his own commitment to Distributism. CI, Essays by George C. Heseltine; and The Chesterton Society from Rex Mawby.
- 206 Morris, 'Catholic Writers I', pp. 38–41, 90.
- 207 Flint, 'Must God go Fascist?', p. 374.
- 208 The search for an alternative to liberal democracy was quite a staple theme for Anglicans and non-religious writers as well. Grimley, 'Dawson', pp. 4, 16–17.
- 209 G.K. Chesterton to Maurice Baring, 2 July 1924. CI, Letters from the British Library.
- 210 Articles with contradicting opinions were sometimes simply excluded as in the case of Archie Curry. As recorded by Heseltine in his lecture at the Chesterton Centenary Conference 1974. Also Gregory Macdonald's own recollection in his letter to Michael Sewell, 22 August 1986. All in CI, Essays by George C. Heseltine; and Letters from Gregory Macdonald to Fr Brocard Sewell, 1986–87.
- 211 Letter Belloc to G.K. Chesterton, 1 August 1922. CI, Letters from the British Library.

# 6

## Waking up to the persecution of the Jews

### **Germany: aid for Jewish converts**

After the implementation of the Nuremberg Race Laws, it had become obvious that the regime was aiming for a racial solution to its 'Jewish question'. Parallel to an increased drive to encourage Jewish emigration, the regime introduced policies that led first to a racial segregation of the Jewish population based on the Nuremberg Laws in September 1935, and after a range of discriminatory measures to the compulsory wearing of the Star of David in September 1941. The actual physical removal of German Jews and other 'non-Aryans' from German society began with the first deportations in October 1940. Against the background of these ever-radicalising antisemitic policies it became increasingly difficult for the German Catholic hierarchy to retain their neutral position on the 'Jewish question', especially since racial discrimination was a principle the Vatican and the bishops had always rejected in their public statements. Moreover, tens of thousands of 'non-Aryan' Catholics would fall victim to these policies as a result of the Nuremberg Laws, leading to further isolation and victimisation of Jews and 'non-Aryan' Catholics.<sup>1</sup> The laws left Jewish converts with a stifling feeling of insecurity.<sup>2</sup> In rural areas help could not always be expected from their chosen Catholic community, or from the local priest who seemed to ignore them or regard them as second-rate Catholics – sometimes out of fear of reprisals.

As Catholics, these Jewish converts stood under the protection of the Catholic bishops. The racial solution of the regime to the 'Jewish question' essentially cut across the neat separation of the religious sphere from the political sphere attempted in the Concordat. The

treatment of 'non-Aryan' Catholics necessarily became a contentious subject between the state and the Church. The ever-increasing radicalisation of antisemitic policies also affected the Church directly. The ambition to erase all Jewish influence from German society increased anticlerical attacks defaming the Church for its Jewish roots. Yet the German bishops refrained from an open criticism of the National Socialist regime for many years. The following pages describe the initiatives taken by the episcopate in preparing public protests against the anticlericalism of the regime and eventually the persecution of the Jews, as well as the practical aid offered to 'non-Aryan' Christians by Catholic organisations. The motivation behind most of these initiatives, their implementation or failure, often show a preoccupation with the embattled situation of the Church and the limits set by the Concordat to a more public Catholic resistance. The bishops' strategic deliberations are placed side by side with their responses to the persecution of the Jews in order to learn how these events challenged their anti-Jewish attitudes. As already mentioned, some historians have attributed the silence of the German hierarchy to a dislike of Jews, though this causality has remained suggestive at times. The reactions to the persecution of the Jews are, however, a testament of the continuously negative image of the Jews despite the horror expressed by the bishops over the deportation of 'non-Aryans'.

Public protests against antisemitic measures by the hierarchy were ostensibly absent at the time. Yet in the case of 'non-Aryan' Catholics this silence did not imply that the bishops and Catholic organisations passively stood by. Individual bishops assisted 'non-Aryan' Catholics in particular cases in finding new work or financial assistance.<sup>3</sup> Existing Catholic charitable organisations, like the *Caritas*, cared for Catholics who found themselves persecuted for their links to political Catholicism or their Jewish background. It provided financial assistance and helped those driven into unemployment to find work. The *Caritas* worked closely with the *St Raphaelsverein*, a Catholic organisation that assisted Catholics in their wish to emigrate since 1871.<sup>4</sup> Out of this cooperation grew the *Hilfsausschuss für katholische Nichtarier* (Relief Committee for non-Aryan Catholics) in 1935 that coordinated the aid efforts, encouraged monasteries to employ young 'non-Aryan' Catholics, and generally assisted those willing to emigrate by obtaining passports, visas, and providing retraining for prospective émigrés. The report for 1938/39 of the *Hilfsausschuss* accounted for 830 people who had been taken to safe places. Two hundred women were able to emigrate to England, while a further two hundred persons were liberated from concentration camps and



were helped to emigrate to Holland.<sup>5</sup> Although the *Hilfsausschuss* disregarded race (as defined by the National Socialist regime) in its aid provision, it is interesting to note that it could not escape the pervasive race science at the time and intentionally or unintentionally worked according to a racial rationale. In a discussion on possible host countries for 'non-Aryan' Catholics at the founding session of the *Hilfsausschuss*, Bishop Berning gave to consider that '[it] might be useless to accommodate them in older settlements, where aryan Catholics live and where disputes over racial questions might disturb a peaceful development'.<sup>6</sup> Such a rationale was indeed not unique to Catholic German aid organisations. In fact, the British government encountered similar arguments from a number of British colonies when it sought to find Jewish settlements in South America, Africa or Australasia.<sup>7</sup>

Unlike the leaders of the German Evangelical Church, the Catholic bishops actively engaged with the aid efforts for 'non-Aryan' Catholics.<sup>8</sup> New antisemitic laws were answered with renewed aid efforts as in the case of the *Hilfsausschuss* that was created in the wake of the Nuremberg Laws in 1935. Attempts of the regime to stifle Catholic work for 'non-Aryans' was met with determined perseverance by the bishops and Catholic organisations. When changes to tax laws in 1938 forced the *Caritas* to end its financial support for 'non-Aryan' Catholic émigrés, its work was taken over by the *Raphaelsverein* and strengthened through a newly founded aid organisation, the Special Relief of the Diocese of Berlin (*Hilfswerk beim bischöflichen Ordinariat Berlin*). The creation of the *Hilfswerk* was initiated by Bishop Wienken, the episcopal representative to the government, Bishop Preysing of Berlin, and Bishop Berning of Osnabrück. Michael Phayer has suggested that the *Hilfswerk* was a conscious response to help 'non-Aryan' Catholics after *Kristallnacht*.<sup>9</sup> Although the *Hilfswerk* worked subsidiary to the *Raphaelsverein*, it was under the direct control of the Bishop of Berlin, Konrad von Preysing, an arrangement which gave it the best possible protection from state interference.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, while the *Raphaelsverein* was forcibly dissolved on 25 June 1941, the *Hilfswerk* could continue its work for 'non-Aryan' Catholics and Jews.<sup>11</sup>

The *Hilfswerk* was managed by Canon Bernhard Lichtenberg, who had continuously given his support to 'non-Aryan' Catholics and Jews. After his arrest on 23 October 1941 'on account of hostile activity against the state', Margarete Sommer, a social worker with the *Caritas*, filled his position. Together with the *Raphaelsverein*, the *Hilfswerk* had primarily assisted 'non-Aryan' Catholics in their

efforts to emigrate. At times they also cooperated with the Protestant organisation for 'non-Aryan' Christians, *Büro Pfarrer Grüber*, the Quaker Society of Friends, and the Reich Association of Jews.<sup>12</sup> In the years from 1934 to 1939, the organisations received over 100,000 applications for aid, but only managed to assist 12,000 to emigrate, largely because it was increasingly difficult to obtain the relevant papers, such as passports from the German authorities and visas from the host countries.<sup>13</sup> Initially the *Hilfswerk* was primarily created for 'non-Aryan' Catholics, which was not unusual, since every religious community had traditionally cared for their own destitute members.<sup>14</sup> The *Raphaelsverein* and the *Hilfswerk*, however, also assisted non-Christian Jews. In 1939 and 1940 almost half of those aided were non-Christian Jews, as were 20% of those who emigrated through these organisations.<sup>15</sup> After emigration was prohibited from 23 October 1941, the work of the *Hilfswerk* necessarily had to change in character. Margarete Sommer on one hand dedicated her work to help those facing deportation by offering spiritual and material help. At a time when German society was increasingly atomised as a result of the regime's joint measures of propaganda and terror, the *Hilfswerk* in Berlin promised to look after the property of the deportees until their return and distributed circular letters to parish members with the names of those who were deported so that they could send on parcels of food and goods.<sup>16</sup> More importantly, Margarete Sommer, together with the support of Bishops Preysing and Berning, attempted to influence the German bishops to protest against National Socialist antisemitic measures. Through contacts to resistance groups and leaks by Hans Globke, Bernhard Loesener, and SS Officer Kurt Gerstein, Sommer had gathered information on the murders in the ghettos and camps in the east by summer 1942, which were duly passed on to Cardinal Bertram and the bishops' conference.<sup>17</sup>

### **The persecution of Jews and the failure of the German hierarchy to speak out**

Cardinal Bertram and the episcopal leadership in the narrower sense were determined to avoid any threat to the Church's pastoral care by provoking the regime.<sup>18</sup> The response of Cardinal Bertram to the Star of David decree (1 September 1941) illustrates this cautious approach well. The decree forced Jews and 'non-Aryans' to clearly mark their clothing with a Star of David, which inevitably led to a segregation of

the Jewish population. Bertram generally objected to a physical segregation of Jewish converts and 'Aryan' Catholics within church buildings, and to the introduction of separate masses for 'non-Aryans'. In his pastoral guidelines, however, he advised Catholic priests that they should consider the advantages of holding separate masses, if the presence of 'non-Aryans' caused 'incredible difficulties', such as an ostentatious absence of civil servants and party members.<sup>19</sup>

This changed four years later. Encouraged by the success of Bishop von Galen's public condemnation of the euthanasia programme, Preysing, Gröber, and Berning prepared a pastoral letter in defence of human rights in late August 1941. This time their proposal to publish their concerns found broad support among the bishops, who were deeply disquieted about the murder of the mentally ill, the persecution of the Catholic Church in Poland and the occupied territories, and the increasing attacks on religious orders. Discontent among the Catholic population about the silence of the bishops in the face of National Socialist oppression might have been another reason to encourage the bishops to this.<sup>20</sup> Apart from the criticism of the persecution of the Jews, the letter was the boldest criticism the bishops had drafted so far. It contained complaints about the violation of basic human rights, such as the protection of property, personal freedom and the right to live.<sup>21</sup> Although the letter was supported by two thirds of the German bishops, it was never published in that form. Its publication was first postponed in November 1941 because Cardinal Bertram planned to join the Protestant churches in a last (and unsuccessful) attempt to persuade the government to end the persecution of the churches. When the publication of the pastoral letter was discussed again in February 1942, Cardinal Bertram could still not agree to publish it. Once the planned cooperation between the Churches unravelled, Bertram probably felt that a public protest by the Catholic bishops alone would have little effect. This has also been suggested by Klaus Scholder, who has assumed that Bertram preferred the diplomatic path because the Cardinal was convinced that anti-clerical policies went against Hitler's will and that, for this reason, Hitler could be persuaded to end the persecution of the Church.<sup>22</sup>

Drafted in summer 1941 several months after the first deportations of Jews and other 'non-Aryans', the blocked pastoral letter of autumn 1941 did not once refer to the persecution of the Jews. Yet at the same time the bishops were witnessing these radical antisemitic measures of the regime and neither condoned nor excused them. Indeed, their correspondence conveys their genuine horror at the deportation of Jews and Jewish converts alike. Still, underneath this

shock their attitude towards 'the Jew' remained ambivalent, while the despair of 'non-Aryan' Catholics deeply affected them. Cardinal Faulhaber, who had supported the publication of the 1941 pastoral letter, expressed his anger about the brutal deportation of 'non-Aryans' from Munich in a letter to Cardinal Bertram in November 1941. He felt that these actions sullied the honour of Germany in history, because these 'non-Aryan' Catholics were innocent as individuals because they were 'born into a race which was cursed'.<sup>23</sup> Archbishop Gröber was equally shocked at the brutalised solution of the 'Jewish question'. He had tried to intervene with the administration on behalf of 'non-Aryan' Catholics during the deportation of Baden's Jews in October 1941. Having been unable to save Catholics from deportation, Gröber wrote to the bishops of Toulouse and Lyon (the deportees were interned near Toulouse), asking if they could not look after Catholics arriving in camps. At the same time the papal nuncio, Cesare Orsenigo, was asked to deliver Gröber's letters to Rome, urging the pope to act.<sup>24</sup> Gröber confided to Bishop Wienken in Berlin:

The deportation of Jews and Jewish Christians proceeds in a manner that appals every human sensation. Eighty Jews were accommodated in Hannover's morgues, in Berlin the passports of Jewish Christians were taken away. I am not a friend of Jews, but I experience this as a German disgrace in the way Christian human beings were treated. If you have the possibility to undertake anything in this matter – I don't know. If possible, I ask you to.<sup>25</sup>

The bishops had tried to sound out possibilities to intervene in favour of 'non-Aryan' Christians in complaints to the authorities.<sup>26</sup> According to Bernhard van Schewick, Bertram dispatched four complaints about the deportation of 'non-Aryan' Catholics to various offices, including the Reich Security Main Office (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*) in 1942 and 1943.<sup>27</sup> True to his determination to work within the confines of the Concordat, Bertram emphasised an ecclesiastical issue, in this case the sanctity of marriage that was threatened by plans to forcibly dissolve the marriages between Jews and Christians. This was followed by a reminder that such rights were guaranteed by the Concordat. Bertram finally acknowledged that he, too, saw the danger to German culture posed by the 'overgrowth of Jewish influence', but, he continued, according to natural law one has to honour the human rights of other races too.<sup>28</sup>

The persecution of the Jews was discussed at the bishops' conference in 1942, but the disgust of the bishops at the antisemitic measures was again not translated into public protest. The conference decided against a public condemnation of the persecution of the Jews in favour of small successes, including the protection of Jews clandestinely.<sup>29</sup> Cardinal Bertram felt there was no point in fighting the 'fundamental principle of [National Socialist] ideology' with Christian and legal arguments. Instead, the bishops should concentrate on ecclesiastical issues and broader concerns such as the violation of human rights.<sup>30</sup> Despite the genuine horror some bishops had expressed over the deportation of the Jews, the majority of the bishops had eventually given up on the Jews. The inhumanity of their physical and very visible persecution was intolerable to the bishops because it defied human rights and the German culture they had taken pride in. Yet judged on the basis of Gröber's and Faulhaber's comments it also seems as if the persecution of the Jews was almost accepted as part of their fate, which they, according to Christian teaching, had brought upon themselves. Finally, Cardinal Bertram's comment on an alleged dangerous Jewish influence in his complaints to the authorities in 1943 is difficult to grasp, given that by that time the hierarchy knew about the murders in concentration camps and ghettos. The comment was certainly part of the diplomatic discourse the bishops had adopted in their negotiations with the authorities. In the expectation to draw benevolent attention to their requests, the diplomatic discourse had deliberately mixed criticism of with consent to National Socialist policies. As Gerhard Besier has pointed out this did not necessarily mean that the bishops' approval should merely be interpreted as strategic necessity. After all, such strategies could only be successful if the argument was at least in parts credible and therefore convincing.<sup>31</sup> In this light, Bertram's comment in 1943 on undue Jewish influence acknowledged the regime's antisemitic phobia to the extent the bishops had always viewed the 'Jewish question'. But as he reminded the authorities that human rights of other races had to be honoured he made it quite clear that the then current antisemitic measures were unlawful. The subclause on an allegedly dangerous Jewish influence essentially reflects the antisemitic discourse of the interwar years and is a reminder that German Catholic bishops shared the then common socioeconomic prejudices, but not an antisemitism that defied human rights.

News of the deportation and later of the murders in the ghettos in the east led individual bishops to re-assess the options for an episcopal public protest in the following year. By spring 1943, Bishop

Preysing, together with Bishop Berning, Cardinal Faulhaber, and Bishop Dietz of Fulda, discussed a proposal for a strong, explicit and public criticism of Hitler. Their point of departure was the fate of Christian Jews threatened by deportation, but the statement, Preysing insisted, 'must go clearly beyond that to include the atrocities against Jews in general'.<sup>32</sup> Margarete Sommer of the *Hilfswerk*, a Catholic relief organisation for 'non-Aryan' Catholics, prepared the proposal 'Draft for a Petition Favouring the Jews' on behalf of the bishops' conference in August 1943. Referring to the persecution of both Jews and 'non-Aryan' Christians, Preysing implored his fellow bishops to act, otherwise they would all 'stand guilty before God and man if [they were] silent'.<sup>33</sup> The draft was not to be published as a joint statement by the German bishops, largely out of a concern to protect the Catholic Church in Germany. Instead, the hierarchy published the November 1942 statement again, which was vaguer in tone and only spoke of 'other races' that should be treated humanely. Bertram remained an accommodationist and Sommer's draft was bound to provoke the regime. The Cardinal feared that such a step would weaken the position of the hierarchy to intercede with the government regarding the great number of imprisoned Catholic priests. Other bishops, for example Archbishop Gröber, felt that the Church was bound by the Concordat to restrict its activities to Church-related affairs. As the bishops could not agree on an approach, they eventually opted for the path of least resistance.<sup>34</sup> However, individual bishops, like Preysing and Frings in Cologne, were not content with another cautious public statement and condemned National Socialist antisemitic measures more explicitly in their sermons. Bishop Preysing also urged the papal nuncio and Pius XII himself to exert their influence on Cardinal Bertram in favour of a joint pro-Jewish statement – to no avail. Orsenigo reminded Preysing that 'charity is well and good but the greatest charity is not to make problems for the Church'.<sup>35</sup>

It is remarkable that the blocked pastoral letter of autumn 1941 against the regime's anticlerical policy and disregard for human rights was supported by most German bishops, but that this near unanimity was gone two years later when a similar appeal would also have condemned the treatment of the Jews. A few observations stand out in this sequence of events. It is misleading to speak of the silence of the bishops as they spoke out against the regime's anticlerical and inhumane policies on various occasions. Furthermore, Catholic organisations under the protection of the bishops offered assistance to 'non-Aryan' Christians and (to a lesser degree) Jews, which was as

such a defiance of racial antisemitism. Although the plan to jointly condemn the persecution of the Jews failed, bishops such as Preysing and Frings did not remain silent on this matter either. Preysing, opposed to the regime from the start, had urged the bishops to publicise their criticism as early as 1933, and at the opportune moment after the seemingly successful anti-euthanasia campaign in autumn 1941 he was even able to move a majority of the bishops to abandon their cautious diplomatic strategy. Unlike bishops who shut out information on the 'final solution', as for example Gröber or Bertram, Preysing (one might add Berning and Faulhaber) had no doubt that common humanity obliged the episcopate to condemn the murder of the Jews publicly.<sup>36</sup> Cardinal Bertram, on the other hand, was of an older generation, marked by the *Kulturkampf* and the inclination to prove Catholic loyalty to the German state, never lost his faith in Hitler's leadership and consequently trusted the bureaucratic, law-abiding path of protest more than an appeal to a public he deeply distrusted. Although the relevance of the individual in these single initiatives is noticeable – especially in the case of Preysing – an ultimate feeling of irrelevance in the face of the arbitrary terror of the regime is all too obvious in Bertram's decisions of the 1940s. This experience was not to be underestimated during the war. Although the regime apparently hesitated to touch the bishops, it found an easier and more vulnerable target in the lower clergy and religious orders.<sup>37</sup>

The structural limitations placed upon the bishops' decisions by a totalitarian regime grew tighter over the years and overshadowed their actions and inactions, especially in the 1940s. By the time the hierarchy eventually awoke to the brutal consequences of National Socialist antisemitism the opportunities for public protests or effective interventions had become too risky in the eyes of the Church leadership. Other factors such as the Concordat, patriotism and some ideological overlap with National Socialism, especially in the fear of Bolshevism, contributed to the acquiescence of the Church in the early years of the Third Reich and inhibited any significant resistance in later years.<sup>38</sup> Anti-Jewish attitudes, in a traditional form as religious anti-Judaism and the more modern form of economic and cultural antisemitism, also played a role in the inactivity of the German bishops. This was particularly apparent in their response to the boycott of Jewish businesses in April 1933 and the horror expressed at the deportation of Jews and 'non-Aryan' Christians in autumn 1941 both revealed a deeply ambiguous image of Jewry shaped by Christian theology and personal prejudices. On the other

hand, it also showed that the bishop perceived the Jews as part of a common humanity whose basic rights were not to be infringed. The bishops did not share the eliminatory, racist antisemitism of the regime, but their sensitivity towards the regime's early antisemitic measures had been low, and it can be assumed that their own antipathy coupled with a Catholic group rationale aided this insensitivity. The influence of a theology that saw in Jewry a people cursed by God for its deicide should likewise not be underestimated in an explanation for the bishops' responses to the persecution of the Jews. Especially in the 1940s it appears as if the bishops had given up on the Jews, not just because they thought it was too dangerous to condemn their persecution, but because their suffering was seen as the manifestation of their eternal fate. The Church leadership in Germany generally failed to see that Christian anti-Judaism and cultural antisemitism could no longer be treated as separate from National Socialist racial antisemitism once the latter had become state ideology – the initiative of Bishops Preysing and Berning in favour of a public condemnation of the persecution of the Jews in 1943 was the exception. The reference to an alleged negative Jewish influence by Cardinal Bertram in 1943 is one example of this rationale; the defence against Rosenberg's claim of a conspiracy between 'Rome and Judah' against National Socialist Germany is another. Chronologically, the defence against *völkisch* anti-Catholicism falls between the bishops' response to the 1933 boycott and the preparations for an episcopal public protest described above. It shows how an essentially theological discourse continued to harbour antisemitism.

### England: Hinsley's turn

From spring 1938 onwards, Hinsley abandoned his non-interference strategy with regards to Hitler Germany and the persecution of Jews and Catholics. Both Vatican and national policies were partly responsible for this activism. The refugee movement, in particular, provided an impetus to act for Cardinal Hinsley. In a letter to Fr O'Hea of the Catholic Social Guild, the Cardinal referred to the Pope's increasing concern over the condition of Catholics in Germany. Hinsley felt that Catholics in England should contribute to the care for German refugees in England.<sup>39</sup> *Kristallnacht* in November 1938 without doubt strengthened the determination of the Christian Churches in Britain not to remain silent 'in the face of the excesses of hatred'.<sup>40</sup>



The Cardinal eventually publicly condemned communism, fascism and National Socialism in a speech in Birmingham in December 1938. He also committed himself to several ecumenical projects in protest against Hitler's Germany, which involved cooperation with Jewish groups. One of the biggest events Hinsley attended in person was the protest meeting against antisemitism and the persecution of the Jews at Royal Albert Hall in December 1938.<sup>41</sup> Hinsley believed that an English Roman Catholic should be patriotic and free of fascist leanings, a belief that was reflected in his speech at the Royal Albert Hall that was uncompromising in its condemnation of all oppression.<sup>42</sup> From the beginning of the war Hinsley's sermons and proclamations against fascism and National Socialism grew more passionate. He spoke out against the dangers for Christianity and against racial hubris.<sup>43</sup> His efforts earned him Winston Churchill's praise, when the latter claimed that he was one of only two men Churchill could trust to 'speak to the nation on the aims of this country at war'.<sup>44</sup>

The war against Germany made it quite clear where Hinsley's loyalties stood. The Cardinal was now engaged in numerous protest activities and encouraged his colleagues to do the same. Apart from public meetings, there were radio talks and letters published in *The Times* and other newspapers in protest against racism and discrimination. It is remarkable that all these efforts were interdenominational, including Jewish, Protestant and Catholic representatives.<sup>45</sup> Cooperation between the Christian denominations and certainly between Catholic and Jewish representatives had so far been very scarce. In 1940 Hinsley also strongly supported the interdenominational organisation against racism and fascism – the Sword of the Spirit (SoS) – and a Catholic aid organisation for 'non-Aryan' Catholic refugees, which is discussed further below.<sup>46</sup>

Of symbolic importance among Hinsley's ecumenical work was his support of the Council of Christians and Jews that was founded in March 1942 by Rev. James Parkes and his close ally William Simpson, secretary of the Christian Council for Refugees, with the support of the Anglican Archbishops of Canterbury and York. The Council was devoted to fighting antisemitism and all forms of religious and racial persecution, and aimed to improve Christian-Jewish relations.<sup>47</sup> Cardinal Hinsley and the Archbishop of Canterbury were joint presidents of the Council. The Roman Catholic representative in the Executive Committee was A.C.F. Beales of the Sword of the Spirit, and Bishop Mathew represented Cardinal Hinsley in case the Cardinal could not attend the meetings.<sup>48</sup> Bishop Mathew was one of the few

bishops, together with Archbishop Downey, who tried to establish a respectful and workable relationship between the Catholic and Jewish community with the explicit support of Cardinal Hinsley.<sup>49</sup>

## England, Catholics and 'non-Aryan' refugees

Forced emigration was the National Socialist 'solution' to their 'Jewish question' until it was prohibited by the regime in October 1941 and replaced by the deportation of European Jewry. As Hitler was not to be persuaded to abandon his policy of forced emigration, the international community reluctantly became involved in coping with the consequences of Germany's antisemitism as they tried to accommodate Jewish refugees throughout the world. The economic recession and an anti-immigration, if not antisemitic, attitude in many countries influenced immigration policies of the respective governments to the effect that they welcomed fewer and fewer refugees. Most of the international conferences called to discuss the refugee problem consequently ended without firm commitments.<sup>50</sup>

The numbers of immigrants arriving in Britain from Germany and Austria rose constantly over the years from 1933 and was at its highest shortly before the outbreak of war in 1939. By then an estimated 360,000 Jews had left Germany and Austria, about 60,000 to 70,000 of whom were admitted to Great Britain.<sup>51</sup> Britain had continuously tightened its immigration laws in succeeding Aliens Acts since the turn of the century.<sup>52</sup> Bernard Wasserstein asserts that there was a considerable degree of public sympathy in Britain for the persecuted Jews. This sentiment was, however, carried by a definite undercurrent of antagonism within the British administration and public opinion.<sup>53</sup> Tony Kushner quotes a 1940 survey where nearly half of the people questioned believed that the Jews were an oppressed people, but only 18% of these thought they deserved sympathy.<sup>54</sup> A concern about higher levels of unemployment and the costs of a more generous immigration policy were widely voiced. The popular press fuelled this antagonism with stories about allegedly rampant Jewish profiteering and black marketeering.<sup>55</sup> According to Kushner, this negative public opinion changed in 1942–43 to a more generous attitude towards the persecuted Jews. A Mass Observation poll from February 1943 recorded that 78% of the sample approved of the government assisting any Jews who could get away from National Socialist persecution, yet fewer than 10% thought that these refugees should be allowed to stay indefinitely.<sup>56</sup>

The formalities immigrants had to comply with reflected the early public concern over immigration. To be able to stay in Britain in the 1930s, an immigrant had to provide a letter of reference by a guarantor, proof of possible employment in Britain and have his/her 'entry-money' ready. Britain's prewar immigration policy was relatively generous towards Jewish refugees compared to other countries. The verdict for the war period and immediate postwar years has been far less flattering.<sup>57</sup> Bernard Wasserstein finds little to commend apart from a 'few flashes of humanity by individuals'.<sup>58</sup> Britain had severely restricted Jewish immigration to Palestine since the Arab–Palestinian revolt in 1937 and more so since the 1939 White Paper on Jewish immigration to Palestine. The purpose of this policy was to pacify a region that was of strategic importance to the trade routes and the defence of the British Empire. The British governments did not retreat from the White Paper during the war, even though they were witnessing a refugee crisis quite different from any other before. And it was not just Palestine where Jewish refugees were not welcome. Likewise, admission of Jewish refugees from German-occupied Europe to Britain was very restricted as was their settlement within the Empire. The admission of only one to two thousand Jewish refugees per year to Britain compares rather unfavourably to the 300,000 Dutch and Belgian refugees (both Jewish and non-Jewish) admitted in early 1940.<sup>59</sup> On top of a very restrictive immigration policy, the principle of total warfare against the Axis power at the same time prevented any large-scale relief sent to Jews in occupied Europe.<sup>60</sup>

Against the background of a restrictive immigration policy, the burden of caring for refugees was to a large extent carried by voluntary organisations. Pamela Shatzkes mentions that the generous welcome of German Jewish refugees before the outbreak of the war was only possible because representative leaders of the Anglo-Jewish community had promised that the expenses for these refugees would be paid for by the Jewish community.<sup>61</sup> In autumn 1939 the British government eventually granted funds to private relief organisations to cover their administrative expenses.<sup>62</sup> Numerous Jewish and Christian organisations were already working hard to accommodate the increasing numbers of refugees by the time the CCRGA was founded.<sup>63</sup> By 1936, the two largest and most effective Jewish aid organisations in Britain were the Jewish Refugee Committee founded by Otto Schiff in 1933 and the Council for German Jewry.<sup>64</sup> Among the non-Jewish aid organisations historians have noted the dedicated work of the Academic Assistance Council for refugee scholars

(founded by Sir William Beveridge, then Director of the London School of Economics), the Christian Council for Refugees (founded by the Methodist minister Henry Carter) and above all the relief work of the English Quakers through their German Emergency Committee (GEC).<sup>65</sup> The GEC was founded in April 1933 by the Executive Committee of the Society of Friends in response to the boycott of Jewish businesses in Germany. The assistance it offered was principally open to everyone, though it was felt that most aid should go to baptised Jews and political refugees. There was little awareness in Britain of the situation of baptised Jews, as refugee work was largely conceived of in purely Jewish terms. As a result, Jewish converts tended to fall through the nets of the existing aid organisations.<sup>66</sup> The GEC was among the largest and most active Christian relief organisations. In Britain, the GEC negotiated with the Ministry of Labour and Home Office for work permits for refugees, but it also had caseworkers in Germany, cooperated in the rescue of Jewish children in the *Kindertransport* project, and tirelessly campaigned in numerous appeals for public attention to refugee relief work. By the end of the war, the GEC had dealt with 22,000 families and individuals who had asked for help.<sup>67</sup>

Catholic aid to German refugees was subject to and limited by Westminster's non-interference policy. The first initiative to assist German refugees came therefore from two lay organisations, rather than from the Catholic hierarchy itself.<sup>68</sup> A well-organised but short-lived attempt to take care of German refugees was undertaken by the Catholic Council for International Relations (CCIR). The Council had to close their doors again in April 1936 due to lack of funds. The ultimate cause for this premature end, however, was Hinsley's cautious policy. With an eye on the difficult situation of the Church in Germany at the time, Hinsley admonished the CCIR 'not to appeal publicly for funds'. Such an appeal could be interpreted as Catholic criticism of the National Socialist regime for which the German Church would eventually be held accountable.<sup>69</sup> Apart from the CCIR, the Catholic Guild for Israel (CGI) was also actively supporting refugees from early on. The Guild had persuaded religious orders to offer 'non-Aryan' Catholic refugees temporary shelter and hospitality in their hostels. A Jewish Catholic Refugee Fund was set up, which was fed by regular fundraising campaigns.<sup>70</sup> The CGI and CCIR pooled their resources in November 1935, but were not able to prevent the closure of their aid organisation five months later.<sup>71</sup>

### *Catholic Committee for Refugees from Germany and Austria*

In early 1938, Cardinal Hinsley relaxed his non-intervention policy to allow Catholic relief work for 'non-Aryan' Christian refugees from Germany and Austria. He envisaged a centralised, efficient Catholic aid organisation and in February 1938 consulted his fellow bishops on the ways and means to achieve this.<sup>72</sup> It was one of his first endeavours in his efforts to face up to Hitler's Germany and its racism, and predates his cooperation with Jewish institutions. Hinsley explained his motive in breaking with his neutral position on Germany to Fr O'Hea of the Catholic Social Guild in February 1938: 'The condition of our fellow Catholics in Germany has been for a long time a matter of concern to the Holy Father and the reasons for his concern have increased in the last few months ... [I also] feel that here in England the burden must not be carried alone by our non-Catholic brethren.'<sup>73</sup>

The newly inaugurated CCRGA held its first meeting on 22 March 1938. Fr O'Hea had followed the invitation of Cardinal Hinsley to take part in this new Catholic relief organisation. Together with John Eppstein and Bishop Mathew (the latter two became members of the executive committee), Hinsley had chosen open and liberal-minded Catholics for the Catholic Committee. O'Hea and Bishop Mathew also represented the Cardinal on the Christian Organisations Committee of the League of Nations, and Eppstein had been a member of the League of Nations Executive and private secretary of Lord Robert Cecil.<sup>74</sup> All members of the hierarchy had accepted the vice-presidency of the Committee, while Hinsley became its president.<sup>75</sup> The bishops, together with prominent laymen, such as Viscount Fitzalan and Lord Rankeillour, lent their names and efforts to the fundraising campaigns of the Committee.<sup>76</sup> Rev Joseph Geraerts, as chairman of the executive committee, oversaw the distribution of aid and reported back to Cardinal Hinsley on the successes and shortcomings of the Committee's relief work. Fr Edward Quinn, secretary of the Committee, also assisted the refugees on the ground in their spiritual and material needs.<sup>77</sup> By December 1938 the Committee had received 1,425 applications for assistance, mostly from Austrian 'non-Aryan' Catholics, or Catholics married to Jews. The forms of assistance the CCRGA decided to offer included advice on conditions of admission to Great Britain, finding employment and schooling for the children, and providing small subsistence grants. Since the Committee only had a 'trivial amount of money' at their disposal, the actual aid work was essentially provided by volunteers

of various Catholic lay organisations.<sup>78</sup> The CCIR, for example, took care of administrative matters and schooling for the children. St Mary's Convent in Ascot circulated letters and literature on the refugee situation and the Society of St Vincent de Paul raised money and goods for 'non-Aryan' Catholic refugees.<sup>79</sup>

It became very clear in 1938 that German antisemitic legislation had led to a systematic persecution and subsequently growing wave of emigration that surpassed previous periods of Jewish persecution. After the *Anschluss* of Austria in March 1938, the thorough and tireless work of Adolf Eichmann, who was in charge of the Office for Jewish Emigration in Vienna since August, forced approximately 150,000 Jews to leave Austria in less than eighteen months.<sup>80</sup> *Kristallnacht* in November swelled the numbers of Jewish emigrants even further. At the same time, the international community proved to be very reluctant in admitting more refugees to their shores.<sup>81</sup> As a result of German forced emigration and the meagre governmental aid granted to refugees, the funds of private relief organisations in Britain were painfully stretched. It was inevitable that they needed to coordinate their efforts to raise more money in public appeals and to increase their bargaining weight in negotiations for governmental support. Jewish relief work was coordinated in the Council for German Jewry since 1936, the GEC pooled its efforts in the Christian Council for Refugees from Germany and Central Europe in October 1938, and by February 1939 the principal refugee organisations in London – apart from the CCRGA – established their headquarters in Bloomsbury House.

The former Palace Hotel in Bloomsbury Street became the nerve centre for negotiations with the government, for the general administration of refugee casework, and for the organisation of fundraising and public appeals.<sup>82</sup> The latter was also combined in the Lord Baldwin Fund, launched by the former prime minister in December 1938. It managed to raise £523,000 by July 1939.<sup>83</sup>

Earlier in August 1938 Geraerts and Eppstein of the CCRGA had turned down the suggestion of close Christian cooperation brought forward by the Quakers and the Anglican Bishop Bell of Chichester. They argued that Catholic aid organisations were not in the position to share their very limited funds. Instead they hoped to establish a Catholic Central Secretariat in London to organise the emigration of 'non-Aryan' Catholics to South America.<sup>84</sup> At the launch of the Lord Baldwin Fund, the CCRGA was again urged to participate in joint relief efforts, because the Jewish community could and should not carry this burden alone.<sup>85</sup> This time the invitation was not left

unanswered. A few days later, Cardinal Hinsley and the general committee of the CCRGA agreed to participate in the national appeal of the Lord Baldwin Fund.<sup>86</sup>

The self-imposed outsider position of the CCRGA eventually came to an end when Cardinal Hinsley took up negotiations with the GEC in June 1939. Hinsley intended to submit the care for adult refugees to the experienced personnel of the Quaker relief organisation. The Society of Friends had taken care of 'non-Aryan' Catholics before the CCRGA was established and continued to do so because the CCRGA was financially not able to support all Catholic cases.<sup>87</sup> The cooperation of the Society of Friends with the *Raphaelsverein* in Germany might have been another reason that persuaded the Cardinal to leave Catholic relief work to the Quakers. Hinsley was familiar with the work of the *Raphaelsverein* through Cardinal Faulhaber. At a meeting in Rome in February 1939, the German Cardinal had asked Hinsley and Cardinal Leme of Rio de Janeiro to assist the *Raphaelsverein* by trying to secure more entry visa for 'non-Aryan' Christians.<sup>88</sup> Hinsley hoped that a closer coordination of Christian relief work would prevent unnecessary duplication of effort, as the government as well as aid groups in Germany had to deal with only one committee for 'non-Aryan' Christian refugees. An important consideration of Hinsley was of a financial nature: an appeal for funds would be far more effective if issued by a single large, well-known organisation.<sup>89</sup> A final agreement between the GEC and the CCRGA was reached in August 1939. The GEC took over 300 Catholic cases, and the CCRGA promised to raise £2,000 to pay into the funds of the GEC.<sup>90</sup> By then, the CCRGA had assisted about 1,400 people. Although the GEC was now responsible for 'non-Aryan' Catholic adult refugees, Cardinal Hinsley did not lose touch with the Society of Friends and continually affirmed Catholic cooperation where it was needed.<sup>91</sup> The CCRGA meanwhile continued its work caring now for immigrant children and members of religious orders who left Germany due to the growing attacks on Catholic institutions by the National Socialist regime.<sup>92</sup>

## England: public responses to Jewish refugees

Throughout its existence, the CCRGA had considerable difficulties in raising enough money for 'non-Aryan' German and Austrian Catholics. Bishop Williams of Birmingham complained to his parish priests about the dismal results of collections in summer 1938:

Unfortunately the response to the Cardinals appeal has been tragically inadequate. The Catholic Committee has not had money enough to relieve Catholic refugees, and many of the Catholic cases have to be dealt with the Society of Friends. It is sad to think that our fellow citizens who are non-Catholics have been more ready than we are to come to the aid of the German refugees.<sup>93</sup>

Bishop Williams had shown some understanding for the anticommunism in National Socialist antisemitism in 1933, but in 1938 he actively supported the relief work for 'non-Aryan' Christians. He reminded his community that it had been possible to collect £1,200 two years ago to aid Catholics in South Wales. He was adamant that a similar result should be possible in order to assist the 'non-Aryan' Catholics the hierarchy expected. Williams also reminded his flock of the successful fundraising efforts by Jewish organisations.<sup>94</sup> Only after this prompting did the amount collected almost equal the donations that were given earlier for Welsh Catholics.<sup>95</sup>

The Church of England had a very similar experience in its effort to mobilise funds for 'non-Aryan' Christians. The National Christian Appeal for Refugees was wound up in 1937 for lack of financial resources. Although Bishop Bell of Chichester immediately replaced the organisation with the Church of England Committee for 'non-Aryan' Christians, he still found the Christian response woefully small in 1938.<sup>96</sup> It was also Bishop Bell who initiated the foundation of the interdenominational Christian Council for Refugees from Germany in November 1938. This organisation was to fare better financially, mainly because the Church Assembly recommended an allocation of £50,000 from its central funds, so that action could be taken speedily.<sup>97</sup>

The launch of the Lord Baldwin Fund and its national appeal for victims of Hitler's Germany, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, also set off a discussion about Jewish immigration in the British media.<sup>98</sup> In their majority, newspaper columns viewed it with concern, if not with decidedly antisemitic prejudices as in the case of conservative papers.<sup>99</sup> Catholic public opinion did not differ significantly from this general discourse. The pragmatic approach of Cardinal Hinsley that only a centralised, well-funded organisation like the Lord Baldwin Fund would be able to provide for the ever-growing numbers of refugees did not convince Catholics who remained reserved towards the aims of the Fund. Even the bishops, who were suspicious of the national and secular character of the Fund, had to be persuaded to offer Catholic cooperation in its national appeal.<sup>100</sup>



The wording of the numerous passionate appeals by Cardinal Hinsley in favour of the Fund indirectly hint at the widespread public reservation that the money raised would largely and undeservedly benefit Jews. The appeals centred around three arguments. The first was a reminder of the papal approval of the Baldwin Fund and the admonition not to indulge in antisemitism: 'The Holy Father has laid down for us our attitude towards all those who are suffering through the application of the Aryan Laws ... It is not possible for Christians to take part in antisemitism.'<sup>101</sup>

Secondly, the appeals emphasised the generosity of the Jewish community, not just towards the persecuted Jews, but also towards Christian refugees.<sup>102</sup> Thirdly, Hinsley had to remind his bishops and priests again and again that 'the majority of the victims who are Jewish by race and Christians by faith, are Catholics'.<sup>103</sup>

Even before the launch of the Lord Baldwin Fund, Archbishop Amigo in Southwark only gave his full support to a proposed Catholic refugee relief organisation after he was explicitly reminded that many of the afflicted were Catholics:

I asked his Grace the Archbishop [Amigo] this morning what was his attitude towards the refugee children from Germany and he replied ... that he would have nothing to do with them. When pointed out that there might be some Catholics among them, he said, that of course we should have to do all we could for Catholic children. This is the Archbishop's policy as far as I could judge.<sup>104</sup>

Responses addressed to the bishops suggest that some Catholics were concerned that their money should go to Catholics. Some displayed a blatant dislike of Jews. For example, Fr John Power, parish priest at Our Lady of the Rosary in Saltley, wrote in response to the episcopal call for donations to the CCRGA: 'I hope however, that the poisonous Jews get none of that collexion [sic] and that this really is devoted to the Catholic victims of the 'Straffe' [sic]'.<sup>105</sup>

Rev. O'Hea of the CSG gave a candid response when Cardinal Hinsley asked how welcome 'non-Aryan' Catholic refugees would be in Oxford:

I may add that I have reports, possibly exaggerated of an apparent reluctance of Catholics to respond to appeals for refugees, either because they fear the appeals may arouse animosity in Germany, or because they are not entirely out of sympathy with the German attitude, or because they fear that some of the money contributed

by Catholics may go to help the needs of the people who are not Catholic.<sup>106</sup>

The indifference if not hostility encountered by Hinsley in his fundraising mission is hardly surprising in the light of the public discourse in Catholic newspapers at the time. The *Catholic Times*, for instance, warned that Jewish refugees were alien to the spirit of a Christian country, whose laws and customs they may well exploit for profit, if they did not intend to join forces with anti-Christian Bolshevism.<sup>107</sup> A focus on the Spanish Civil War and the threat of communism, and the renewed debate on a 'Jewish question' as response to events in Germany, led to an increase in antisemitic articles in 1938, where most of them blamed the Jews for their own persecution. The appeal of the bishops for financial assistance of relief organisations, however, often remained buried beneath other news or criticised in editorial columns. The editor of the *Catholic Herald*, for instance, commented on one of these advertisements that any financial aid should go first to destitute British Catholics, of whom there were, after all, plenty.<sup>108</sup> The common attitude was to offer support for Catholics, but not for Jews as such. With a largely unhelpful Catholic media, and reluctant fellow bishops, Hinsley's aim to awaken the public to the needs of the refugees was bound to be arduous. In a way, Hinsley had to struggle with the consequences of the hierarchy's previous tolerance of antisemitism in the community.

In England, there was only a brief period in which a more compassionate Catholic approach to the 'Jewish question' flourished. Old prejudices resurfaced after the war.<sup>109</sup> Despite the goodwill of Bishop Mathew, Cardinal Hinsley and others, the Sword of the Spirit never really blossomed and never gained the support of the other bishops. It eventually failed over the doctrine that the Catholic faith was the only true religion that eventually severely hampered ecumenical work of the Christian churches. Catholic participation in the Council of Christians and Jews was patchy from the start. Neither Beales nor Mathew attended the meetings of the Executive Committee regularly. Beales even published a pamphlet with anti-Jewish allegations after the war, which greatly upset the Council.<sup>110</sup> The Catholic role in this interdenominational project was equally short-lived. The Vatican had issued a monitum in June 1948 that Catholics might only take part as observers in such projects – and then only Catholics who were not well known in the Catholic world. Archbishop Downey consequently ended his personal cooperation with the *Liverpool Council of Christians and Jews* in December 1951. The Holy Office's official

bone of contention was not antisemitic; it objected to the Council's intercultural education that aimed to promote 'tolerance and perfect equality amongst religious professions' – which went against the Church's claim to exclusivity.<sup>111</sup> Some Catholics, however, had their own reasons for ceasing cooperation with Christian–Jewish organisations. Msgr Adamson of the Liverpool Pro Deo Commission, for instance, could not overcome his suspicion of undue Jewish dominance or neglect of Christian issues. He consequently asked for Archbishop Downey's approval to resign from the Executive Committee of the Liverpool branch of the Council.<sup>112</sup>

### Summary and comparison

Catholic cooperation with Jewish organisations conveyed the symbolic message that the English Catholic hierarchy stood by the Jewish community in times of persecution. Historians likewise have not doubted the sincerity and clarity of the condemnation of antisemitism by the English Catholic hierarchy.<sup>113</sup> Judged on the basis of Cardinal Hinsley's actions during the war this assessment is certainly justified. It should, however, be remembered that public condemnation of antisemitism, the relief efforts for 'non-Aryan' Catholic refugees, and the cooperation with Jewish organisations only really set in at the end of 1938. Prior, Hinsley and other bishops often turned down Jewish requests for Catholic support with the explanation that the Jews had not stood up for Catholics whenever they had been persecuted. There was no joint declaration against the persecution of the Jews by the English bishops, but there was likewise no joint silence. If Hinsley felt it was inopportune to support particularist causes in his position as representative of the English Catholic community, other bishops needed not to.<sup>114</sup> It was therefore very much in the hands of individual bishops to decide how intense their protest should be. Downey and Mathew were very clear in their rejection of German antisemitic policies from the start and actively worked towards a better understanding between Jews and Christians. Bishop Williams of Birmingham, on the other hand, was willing to consider the idea that Hitler might have legitimate reasons for his action.<sup>115</sup> The majority, however, and this includes Cardinal Hinsley, spoke out in protest against any form of persecution, not always referring specifically to the Jews.<sup>116</sup> In this respect their pronouncements were not unlike the pastoral announcements of the German bishops. Yet the often cautious and generally very individual response

of the English bishops has rarely been interpreted as a sign of antisemitic sentiments. According to Moloney, the 'peculiar flavour' of Cardinal Hinsley's responses to antisemitism and fascism derived from his general refusal to ignore differences between the communities, while being able to transcend these differences by appealing to greater humanity. Moloney does not ignore a possible influence of Hinsley's personal sentiments towards Jews on his activity: 'Hinsley was too honest, possibly too undiplomatic, to claim any specious sympathy with the Jews and he retained to his death the alienation from pure Zionism.'<sup>117</sup> Only Kester Aspden has lately pointed to the ideological link between antisocialism and antisemitism in the worldview of many Catholics, including that of single bishops. He has asserted that the idea of Jewish support for communism was fairly commonplace and could influence cautious Catholic responses to the persecution of the Jews, as in the case of Archbishop Williams.<sup>118</sup> The same could be said of Archbishop Amigo of Southwark. Although no such comments are recorded by Amigo, one might assume that his neglect of the persecution of the Jews was not just motivated by a 'group rationale', according to which threats to the Catholic Church (e.g., in Spain) took precedence. His correspondence with figures of the right, such as Captain Archibald Ramsay or Douglas Jerrold, and the support expressed for their endeavours to assist Nationalist Spain, suggests a broader identification with their cause and certainly a toleration of their antisemitism. Yet the persuasiveness of a Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy did not automatically lead to antisemitic statements or neglect of the persecution of the Jews. The Pro Deo Commission in Liverpool actively nurtured (although it would not publish) Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy theories. Yet Archbishop Downey had not displayed any signs of antisemitism throughout his career despite his strong anticommunism. Instead, he was very vocal in his condemnation of National Socialist antisemitism from 1933.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, Bishop Williams' suspicion about the Jews did not prevent him from supporting Catholic relief work for 'non-Aryan' refugees from Hitler's Germany. In the case of Cardinal Hinsley's response to the persecution of the Jews, Moloney is certainly correct to mention both Hinsley's personal attitudes towards Jews and the political limitations as representative of the Catholic hierarchy of England and Wales. Before 1938, Hinsley clearly had different preferences. There was his admiration for General Franco and sympathy for Nationalist Spain during the Spanish Civil War, which was shared by most bishops in the years from 1936 to 1938. The oppression of the Catholic Church and its

priests in Mexico, Russia and Germany overshadowed, in Hinsley's eyes, the persecution of the Jews. Yet the need to care for 'non-Aryan' Christian refugees from Germany, encouraged by the Vatican, the brutality of *Kristallnacht*, and more importantly the pending war with Germany, were the last straws that eventually convinced Hinsley to condemn antisemitism and fascism in public. Earlier incidents, such as the encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* and the growing sympathy among Catholics in England for fascism, likewise pressed the need for a clear episcopal statement on fascism, National Socialism and antisemitism. Hinsley's efforts to aid Jewish refugees, and to improve the relationship between the Christian churches and Jews (often against the opposition of his bishops) do not suggest deep-seated antisemitism.

Anti-Jewish sentiments were more common in Catholic public reactions to the prospect of a growing Jewish immigration to Britain than in episcopal statements. While Tony Kushner has stressed the negative effects this popular antisemitism had on the immigration policy of British governments, Bernard Wasserstein and Pamela Shatzkes have doubted such a causality. Wasserstein has made a convincing case in arguing that British officials had more pressing objectives to follow, such as maintaining the Empire and fighting a war against Germany, than to follow the whims of public opinion. However, this does not completely leave antisemitism out of the equation. In the case of the CCRGA the long-tolerated antisemitism in Catholic public discourse eventually displayed practical ramifications, as Catholics were only reluctantly willing to fund this organisation. Anti-Jewish sentiments were often the source for this reluctance.

There are a number of similarities in the Catholic responses to the Jewish persecution in England when compared to the responses in Germany. There was the long silence on the antisemitic measures of National Socialist Germany at the highest levels of the national hierarchies. Cardinal Hinsley refrained from any public criticism of the German government until 1937, even though he did not have to face a regime with totalitarian ambitions at home. Nevertheless, acquiescence in the face of Hitler's government was practised by both the English and the French Church leadership in order to protect the Catholic Church in Germany and the Vatican's negotiations with the totalitarian regimes in Europe. As in Germany, such a non-interference policy consequently also meant a neutral position on Jewish discrimination and persecution. A striking similarity in this context is the 'tu quoque'<sup>120</sup> explanation given for this neutrality pointing to the

silence of the Jewish communities in the case of Catholic persecution. This opens the question of what role anti-Jewish sentiments played in the behaviour of the Catholic hierarchies. Again, there were considerable parallels. Prejudices against Jews, not just of a religious nature, but also in the form of economic and cultural antisemitism, the suspicion of a link between Jewry and Bolshevism, were partly responsible for the cautious action undertaken by some bishops in England as well as the ambivalent responses by German bishops. A Catholic group rationale and a preoccupation with anti-Catholicism in Russia, Mexico and Republican Spain were further reasons for the initial insensitivity towards the persecution of the Jews. The English Catholic bishops eventually had to deal with the fruit of long-standing anti-Jewish sentiments among Catholics. Hinsley encountered such attitudes in the growing sympathy for fascism amongst Catholics in England as well as in the reluctant charity shown towards 'non-Aryan' Catholic and Jewish refugees. However, antisemitism was not the *ultima ratio* of the higher clergy in both countries, nor was it of an eliminatory nature, as the scale and brutality of this persecution eventually opened the eyes of the Church leadership in England and Germany. The fundamental difference between both Churches was that only the episcopal leadership in England openly condemned the persecution of the Jews. Moreover, Hinsley extended Catholic cooperation with Jewish and Christian organisations beyond the relief work for 'non-Aryan' refugees and sincerely supported Catholic efforts to improve Christian-Jewish relations.

The limitations imposed by the presence of a dictatorship on the actions of individual German bishops become particularly clear in the absence of similar public condemnations in Germany. Individual Catholic bishops in England had criticised the antisemitic measures in Germany five years before Cardinal Hinsley did without being reprimanded by Hinsley, the Vatican or the British government. They were therefore able to represent a Catholic voice in the general protestations against Hitler's Germany at the time. In Germany, such individual initiatives were rarely (and late) seen through. The bishops felt the need to act unanimously as Catholic hierarchy against the regime and ideally in conjunction with the Protestant churches. Even Bishop Preysing, an outspoken and courageous advocate for episcopal public protests against the regime and its persecution of the Jews, continuously sought the backing of all German bishops until 1943. Cardinal Hinsley himself is a good example of the relevance of individuals in historic events. More worldly, informal and passionate than his predecessor Bourne, he had become an outspoken, patriotic

voice of English Catholicism against fascism and all persecution during the war. In these few years, the Catholic Church in England had opened itself to first ecumenical projects with other Christian groups and the Jewish community. Most of these tender beginnings were reversed under Hinsley's successor Cardinal Heenan. The impetus of the individual is considerably more limited under a dictatorship. Nevertheless one wonders how the German bishops would have responded to the persecution of the Jews had not Cardinal Bertram led the hierarchy but Bishop Preysing.

## Notes

- 1 Wolfgang Benz estimates that in 1933 about 120,000 Christian Jews lived in the Reich; 90,000 of these were Protestants and about 26,000 were Catholic. Contemporary estimates were higher, ranging from 200,000 to 500,000 'non-Aryans'. Benz, 'Judenchristen', p. 313. The German bishops expected to care for 150,000 to 200,000 'non-Aryan' Catholics. Burkhard van Schewick, 'Katholische Kirche und nationalsozialistische Rassenpolitik', in *Die Katholiken und das Dritte Reich*, ed. by Klaus Gotto, Konrad Repgen, 2nd edn, Mainz, 1989, pp. 101–122, 110. Michael Phayer, 'Questions about Catholic Resistance', *Church History*, 70 (2001), 328–344, 335.
- 2 See among others the anonymous letter of four 'non-Aryan' Catholics to Archbishop Gröber, 18 November 1937. They urged their bishop to declare publicly that the Church did not distinguish between 'Aryan' and 'non-Aryan' Catholics. EAF, B2-28/12.
- 3 For personal efforts see Gröber's help to find employment for Max Hecht, and visas to Buenos Aires for Mr and Mrs Rosenfeld. EAF, B2-28/12.
- 4 The *Raphaelsverein* had its main seat in Hamburg with further branches in Bremen and Freiburg, and seventy counselling centres throughout Germany. Van Schewick, 'Katholische Kirche und Rassenpolitik', pp. 110–111. On the *Raphaelsverein* see Lutz-Eugen Reutter, *Katholische Kirche als Fluchthelfer. Die Betreuung von Auswanderern durch den St Raphaelsverein*, Recklinghausen, 1971.
- 5 Minutes of the Plenary Conference of the German Bishops in Fulda, 17–19 August 1938. EAF, B2-28/12. The *Hilfssausschuss* was funded through donations and offertories from Catholics, but a considerable amount of the money needed was provided by the Reich Association of Jews. 1938 Report of the *Hilfssausschuss*. ABP, Juden, Nichtarier; also report in EAF, B2/NS-51.

- 6 Minutes of the Founding Session of the *Hilfsausschuss für katholische Nichtarier*, Berlin, 22 March 1935. EAF, B2/NS-51.
- 7 Bernard Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe 1939–1945*, 2nd edn, London, 1999, pp. 25, 35.
- 8 The German Evangelical Church encouraged ‘non-Aryan’ Protestants to organise their own associations that were from the start under the control of the Gestapo and without institutional ecclesiastical support helpless against the National Socialist regime. The last organisation, *Büro Pfarrer Grüber*, was closed after the arrest of Pfarrer Grüber in 1940. The German Evangelical Church eventually capitulated in the face of the regime’s antisemitic policies in 1941 when it advised its ‘non-Aryan’ members to distance themselves from the Church, because, it argued, the Church could not withstand the popular sentiment of racial awareness. Benz, ‘Judenchristen’, pp. 308–317. Ursula Büttner, *Die verlassenen Kinder der Kirche. Der Umgang mit Christen jüdischer Herkunft im Dritten Reich*, Göttingen, 1998.
- 9 According to the books of the *Hilfswerk* it was able to assist about 2,500 persons in the years 1938–45. Jana Leichsenring, ‘Katholiken in der Rosenstrasse: Das “Hilfswerk beim Bischöflichen Ordinariat Berlin” und die “Mischehen”’, *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 52 (2004), 37–50, 42. Phayer, ‘Catholic Resistance Circles’, p. 216.
- 10 Similar organisations existed in Breslau, Oppeln, Cologne, Frankfurt Main, Munich. Benz, ‘Judenchristen’, p. 315.
- 11 Van Schewick, ‘Katholische Kirche und Rassenpolitik’, p. 110. Leichsenring, ‘Rosenstrasse’, p. 41.
- 12 Leichsenring, ‘Rosenstrasse’, p. 39.
- 13 During the period of maximum emigration the *Raphaelsverein* spent RM 560,000 on emigration efforts. Phayer, ‘Catholic Resistance Circles’, pp. 219–220.
- 14 Ibid., p. 219.
- 15 Ibid., p. 219.
- 16 Ibid., p. 220.
- 17 She and Bishop Preysing were in contact with the conservative Kreisauer Circle, the Munich Jesuits around Fr Alfred Delp. Ibid., pp. 220–222.
- 18 The leadership included nuncio Cesare Orsenigo, Bishop Berning and Bishop Wienken. Influential were Archbishop Gröber, Bishop von Galen, Archbishop Schulte of Cologne and Cardinal Faulhaber. With reservations the last two supported Cardinal Bertram in his cautious approach. Klaus Scholder, ‘A Requiem for Hitler. Cardinal Bertram, Hitler and the German Episcopate in the Third Reich’, in *A Requiem for Hitler and other New Perspectives on the German Church*



- Struggle*, essays by Klaus Scholder, London, 1989, pp. 157–167, 161. Konrad Repgen, ‘German Catholicism and the Jews: 1933–1945’, in *Judaism and Christianity under the Impact of National Socialism*, ed. by Otto Dov Kulka; Paul Mendes Flohr, Jerusalem, 1987, pp. 197–226, 221.
- 19 Statement of Bertram in response to the police decree of 1 September 1941 with respect to the Star of David, September 1941. See also letter Berning, 27 October 1941. Berning reported he had not witnessed any difficulties, but feared that ‘non-Aryan’ Catholics no longer came to mass. ABP, Juden, Nichtarier.
  - 20 Faulhaber to Bertram, 13 November 1941, AEB, Rep 1, no. 14, 71; or Gröber to Orsenigo, 5 November 1940. EAF, B2-28/12.
  - 21 Two-thirds of the German bishops agreed to publish the November draft of the 1941 pastoral letter. Scholder, ‘Requiem’, pp. 162–163.
  - 22 Scholder, ‘Requiem’, p. 164. Repgen, ‘German Catholicism’, pp. 222–223.
  - 23 Faulhaber to Bertram, 13 November 1941. AEB, Rep. 1, no. 14, 71.
  - 24 See the various letters and petitions in EAF, B2-28/12.
  - 25 Gröber to Wienken, 31 October 1941. EAF, B2-28/12.
  - 26 Van Schewick, ‘Katholische Kirche und Rassenpolitik’, p. 116. For example, Archbishop Gröber’s efforts to find out where Gertrude Luckner – his manager for the welfare of ‘non-Aryan’ Catholics in Freiburg – had been taken to after a Gestapo raid. The Gestapo said it was not allowed to divulge such information and referred to higher authorities, while the local administration and Berlin responded that it was the local Gestapo and Gauleiter who were responsible for the execution of deportations. Liberating Gertrude Luckner from the concentration camp she had been taken to was similarly frustrated by a stalling administration. Gröber’s correspondence in EAF, B2-28/12. For further examples see EAK, Gen II 8.4, 1a Nichtarier.
  - 27 Van Schewick, ‘Katholische Kirche und Rassenpolitik’, p. 117.
  - 28 Bertram to Thierack, Frick, Muhs, 11 October 1942, as quoted in Leichsenring: ‘Rosenstrasse’, p. 42.
  - 29 Phayer, ‘Resistance’, pp. 331–332.
  - 30 Van Schewick, ‘Katholische Kirche und Rassenpolitik’, p. 117. Cardinal Faulhaber likewise remarked that there was little choice since those who carried out the policy had completely absorbed the ‘racial principle’. Faulhaber to Bertram, 13 November 1941. AEB, Rep. 1, no. 14, 71.
  - 31 Gerhard Besier specifically referred to the bishops’ support for Hitler’s intervention in the Spanish Civil War, which was consistent with their long-standing anticommunism. Gerhard Besier, ‘Anti-Bolshevism and

- Antisemitism. The Catholic Church in Germany and National Socialist Ideology 1936–37', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 43 (1992), 447–456.
- 32 Phayer, 'Resistance', p. 332. Bishop Berning knew about deaths in concentration camps from February 1942: 'Many shot. There seems to be the plan to eradicate Jewry completely. What can be done? Can the bishops read a public condemnation of these events from the pulpit?' BAOS, 03-17-72-72, 25; quoted in Recker, *Berning im Dritten Reich*, p. 335.
  - 33 Phayer, 'Resistance', p. 224.
  - 34 Ibid., pp. 224–228.
  - 35 Ibid., p. 224.
  - 36 On how much the bishops wanted and could know see Scholder, 'Requiem', p. 119; Repgen, 'German Catholicism', pp. 224–225. Michael Phayer has stressed that the Vatican had kept more detailed information on the extent of the genocide and the gas chambers from the German bishops. Michael Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust*, Bloomington, 2000, p. 77.
  - 37 Only 9.78% of concentration camp inmates were members of the higher clergy, while about 35% of secular priests (those not organised in a religious order) had been subject to the regime's penal system. Ulrich von Hehl, *Priester unter Hitlers Terror. Eine biographische und statistische Erhebung. Im Auftrag der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz unter Mitwirkung der Diözesanarchive*, Mainz, 1984, p. 74. Beth Griech-Polelle, *Bishop von Galen. German Catholicism and National Socialism*, New Haven, 2002, p. 63, pp. 88–89.
  - 38 Phayer, *Catholic Church*, p. 68.
  - 39 Hinsley to O'Hea, 26 February 1938. CSG, E9 Cardinal Hinsley 1929–41.
  - 40 Richard Gutteridge, 'Some Christian Responses in Britain to the Jewish Catastrophe, 1933–1945', in *Remembering for the Future: Jews and Christians During and After the Holocaust*, ed. by Yehuda Bauer, et al., Oxford, 1989, pp. 352–362, 355.
  - 41 A similar demonstration was organised by the BOD again in October 1942 with Bishop Mathew as Catholic representative. Letter by S. Brodetsky, president of BOD, to Downey, 9 October 1942. AAL, Downey Collection Series 1 X, Diocesan Administration. Problems & Complaints, Jews 44/1.
  - 42 Gutteridge, 'Some Christian Responses', p. 356.
  - 43 For Hinsley's wartime sermons, speeches or articles see, e.g., his letter to *The Times* in 21 May 1940. AAW, Bo 1/159 Hinsley Speeches. NCWC News service, George Barnard, London correspondent. Or in

- his speech to explain the aims of the Sword of the Spirit movement: 'The Massacre of the Innocents.' Both in AAW, Hi 2/177.
- 44 The other man Churchill thought of was himself. Quote in Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 197. Goebbels' propaganda ministry also noticed Hinsley's patriotic support for the British government and used the Cardinal's example to remind the German bishops of their patriotic duty to Germany. Report by August Klinks, Benedictine priest, on a meeting at the Ministry for Propaganda, 12 September 1940, to which representatives of the Catholic Church were summoned. Goebbels apparently followed the meeting from a distance. Stasiewski, *Akten Bischöfe V*, 1940–42 (1983), pp. 184–186.
  - 45 An example of such an ecumenical declaration against racism was the letter published in *The Times* on 21 December 1940. It was later agreed to make the script known throughout the world in order to encourage the churches in the occupied countries in their resistance against the National Socialist Germany. It was also hoped for them to be able to respond and agree to those principles in public, which 'might be of considerable importance'. LL, Lang vol. 84 3b/19, 252. It seemed, however, that such boundless efforts had their limits. In the case of Cardinal Hinsley in the perceived disloyalty to the British prime minister. A follow-up letter for Christmas 1941 remained unpublished as Hinsley refused to sign the drafted letter because he saw therein a criticism of the Prime Minister and his war efforts. Report by William Temple to Cosmo Lang, 21 November 1941. LL, Lang vol. 84. Although this letter failed to be published on the national level, a similar statement was drawn up in Liverpool on the initiative of the Anglican Bishop and was finally published in the *Liverpool Post*, 16 April 1941. Letter O'Hea to Msgr Adamson, 4 June 1941. AAL, Peace 71/1.
  - 46 On the Sword of the Spirit see Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 234–255. Stuart Mews, 'The Sword of the Spirit: A Catholic Cultural Crusade of 1940', in *The Church and War*, ed. by William J. Sheils, Diana Wood, Studies in Church History, XX, Oxford, 1983, pp. 409–431.
  - 47 Other leading Catholic members of the Council included the Conservative MP Sir Patrick Hannon, Sir Desmond Morton, Lord Perth, Frank Pakenham, Michael Derrick as assistant editor of *The Tablet*, the Jesuits Frs John Murray and Maurice Bevenot, Thomas Fitzgerald, priest in Stepney. Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 245, p. 269. For a history of the Council see Marcus Braybrooke, *Children of One God: A History of the Council of Christians and Jews*, London, 1991.
  - 48 CCJ Executive Committee Minutes, First Meeting, 20 March 1942. Parkes Library, Southampton, Parkes Papers, MS65 2/1.

- 49 On David Mathew's involvement in Catholic-Jewish cooperations see Aspden, *Fortress Church*, pp. 235–236, 242.
- 50 Francis Nicosia, *The Third Reich and the Palestine Question*, Austin, 1985, pp. 157–158.
- 51 Bernard Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe 193–1945*, 2nd edn, London, 1999, p. 6.
- 52 The 1905 Alien Act was itself drafted with the purpose to regulate the immigration of Eastern European and Russian Jews. Even though neither the wording of Alien Act was antisemitic, nor was it only enforced against Jews, the anti-Jewish motif in its drafting remains. David Feldman, 'The Importance of Being English. Jewish Immigration and the Decay of Liberal England', in *Metropolis London. Histories*, ed. by David Feldman, Gareth Jones, London, 1989, pp. 56–85.
- 53 Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe*, pp. 10–33.
- 54 Tony Kushner, 'Ambivalence or Antisemitism? Christian Attitudes and Responses in Britain to the Crisis of European Jewry during the Second World War', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 5 (1990), 175–189, p. 181.
- 55 See, e.g., *Evening Standard*, 8 July 1938; *The Times*, 25 August 1939. According to Mass Observation surveys, the negative feelings towards Jews were only replaced by a feeling of shame and greater ambivalence by 1943. Tony Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice. Antisemitism in British Society During the Second World War*, Manchester, 1989, pp. 88–89, 98.
- 56 Kushner, 'Ambivalence', p. 181.
- 57 Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe*, London, 1999. Pamela Shatzkes, *Holocaust and Rescue. Impotent or Indifferent? Anglo-Jewry 1938–1945*, Basingstoke, 2002.
- 58 Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe*, p. 311.
- 59 *Ibid.*, pp. 319, 35.
- 60 *Ibid.*, p. 318.
- 61 Between 1933 and 1939 the Anglo-Jewish community raised £3 million for the aid of these refugees. Shatzkes on the achievements (and failures) of Anglo-Jewry with respect to governmental immigration policy. Shatzkes, *Holocaust and Rescue*, pp. 5, 26. Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe*, p. 9.
- 62 Shatzkes mentions that governmental support was only coming forward after the relief organisations threatened that refugees would otherwise have to fall back onto the National Assistance Board. The Central Committee for Refugees was the newly founded organisation to administer these funds. Gerhard Hirschfeld, "A High Tradition of Eagerness..." British Non-Jewish Organisations in Support of

- Refugees', in *Second Chance. Two Centuries of German Speaking Jews in the United Kingdom*, ed. by Werner Mosse, Tübingen, 1991, pp. 500–611 (p. 608). Shatzkes, *Holocaust and Rescue*, p. 232.
- 63 Hirschfeld, 'British Non-Jewish Organisations', p. 600.
- 64 Otto Schiff's organisation worked closely together with the British administration and focused less on public appeals. The Council for German Jewry (founded in 1936) represented the relief efforts of the American, British and other Jewish communities. It incorporated the Central British Fund for German Jewry that had managed to raise £250,000 in 1933 alone. The Council for German Jewry hoped to fund the settlement of young adults in Palestine. For an overview of Jewish organisations see Shatzkes, *Holocaust and Rescue*, pp. 25–45. Ronald Stent, 'Jewish Relief Organisations', in *Second Chance. Two Centuries of German Speaking Jews in the United Kingdom*, ed. by Werner Mosse, Tübingen, 1991, pp. 579–599.
- 65 By 1939 the nondenominational organisation Movement for the Care of Children from Germany, or *Kindertransport*, had managed to bring 10,000 children to Britain, 90% of whom were Jewish. Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe*, p. 9. For the work of the Academic Assistance Council and German Emergency Committee see Hirschfeld, 'British Non-Jewish Organisations', pp. 500–611. On the Christian churches in Britain see Gutteridge, 'The Churches and the Jews in England', pp. 353–372. Andrew Chandler, 'A Question of Fundamental Principles. The Church of England and the Jews of Germany 1933–1937', *LBIYB*, 38 (1993), 221–261. For the Quaker relief work in general see Lawrence Darton, *An Account of the work of the Friends Committee for Refugees and Aliens. First Known as the German Emergency Committee of the Society of Friends, 1933–50*, London, 1954.
- 66 Gutteridge, 'Some Christian Responses', p. 355.
- 67 Hirschfeld, 'British Non-Jewish Organisations', pp. 606–608.
- 68 Help was sometimes offered to individuals. See correspondence Collings to Dr Jungmann 16 February 1938. AAW, Hi 2/84. Others wrote to a priest they once knew in England to ask for their support. Eric Peri to Fr Lopez, 7 April 1936. BAA, Fr Lopez Foreign Letter – Refugees.
- 69 Minutes of the CCIR, 23 May 1937. AAW, Hi 2/84.
- 70 Magazine, Spring 1935. CGI, Miscellaneous Box.
- 71 Minutes Annual Meeting, 5 November 35. CGI, Minute Book, III (1933–39).
- 72 Circular letter Hinsley to his bishops, 24 February 1938. AAW, Hi 2/84.

- 73 Hinsley to O’Hea, 26 February 1938. CSG, E9 Cardinal Hinsley 1929–41.
- 74 On John Eppstein see Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 207.
- 75 The prominent laymen Viscount Fitzalan and Lord Tyrell were its chairmen. Rev. Joseph Geraerts was chairman of the executive committee, with the Earl of Iddesleigh as vice-chairman. The executive committee consisted of inter alia Bishop Mathew, Lord Rankeillour, Sir Martin Melvin, Mr Grant Ferris, MP, and Douglas Woodruff, the editor of *The Tablet*. Minutes Meeting Catholic Committee for Refugees from Germany, 22 March 1938. AAW, Hi 2/84.
- 76 Hinsley’s circular letter, 2 September 1938, where he urged every parish to contribute generously to the funds of the Committee. AAW, Hi 2/84.
- 77 Minutes Meeting Catholic Committee for Refugees from Germany, 22 March 1938. AAW, Hi 2/84.
- 78 Ibid.
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 Robert Wistrich, *Who’s Who in Nazi Germany*, London, 1995, p. 50.
- 81 On the Evian Conference in July 1938 and the Bermuda Conference in 1943 see Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe*, pp. 7–8.
- 82 The GEC moved into Bloomsbury House in February 1939 with by then eighty caseworkers and almost 14,000 case files. It worked alongside more than twelve Jewish and non-Jewish refugee committees. Hirschfeld, ‘British Non-Jewish Organisations’, p. 608. Gutteridge, ‘Churches and Jews in England’, p. 362.
- 83 Shatzkes, *Holocaust and Rescue*, p. 253.
- 84 Report from the intergovernmental refugee conference in London by Dom Odo of Württemberg, 30 August 1938. AAW, Hi 2/84.
- 85 Letter Philip Bosworth to Rev. Geraerts, 14 December 1938. AAW, Hi 2/84.
- 86 The Lord Baldwin Fund had received the support and approval of Pius XI, apparently through the intervention of Cardinal Hinsley. Minutes of General Committee Meeting, Catholic Committee for Refugees from Germany, 19 December 1938. AAW, Hi 2/84. Hinsley also agreed to be represented on the Allocation Committee of the Lord Baldwin Fund. Letter Hinsley to Lord Rankeillour, 3 January 1939. AAW, Hi 2/84.
- 87 Leaflet ‘Catholic Committee for German Refugees’, 13 December 38. BAA, AP/R5 Refugees.
- 88 Minutes Bavarian Bishops’ Conference, 28–29 March 1939, p. 625. Volk, *Akten Kardinal Faulhabers*, II, 616–625. On cooperation between the *Raphaelsverein* and the Society of Friends see Leichsenring, ‘Rosenstrasse’, p. 39.

- 89 Minutes GEC Meeting, 27 June 1939. Society of Friends, FCRA/3.
- 90 Cardinal Hinsley nominated two Catholics to join the GEC, Margarete Beer and Fr Quinn as assistant secretary. Fr Quinn was essentially responsible for the spiritual welfare and the conduct of relations with Catholic bodies abroad. Minutes GEC Meeting, 3 October 1939. Society of Friends, FCRA/3.
- 91 Hinsley to Herbert Rowntree, 25 October 1939, asserting his cooperation to help Polish refugees. AAW, Bo 1/103. See also correspondence between Hinsley and Fr Quinn regarding 3,000 visas to Brazil for 'non-Aryan' Catholics. AAW, Hi 2/84.
- 92 Meeting Report, 26 August 1939. AAW, 1/11b.
- 93 Leaflet 'Catholic Committee for German Refugees', 13 December 1938. BAA, AP/R5 Refugees.
- 94 Williams wrote that they had been able to collect £565,000 in the last two months. The money raised by the 330,000-strong Jewish community in Britain was indeed impressive. Between 1933 and 1939 they managed to raise £3 million. Shatzkes, *Holocaust and Rescue*, p. 232. According to Richard Gutteridge one fifth of the money raised by the Jewish community was spent on Christians. Gutteridge, 'Some Christian Responses', p. 359.
- 95 In order to achieve a better result, collections were to take place during mass and priests should send their best collectors around their parishes for private donations. Williams himself started the fund with £100. The collection eventually brought together £1,121. Leaflet 'Catholic Committee for German Refugees', 13 December 1938. BAA, AP/R5 Refugees.
- 96 Gutteridge, 'Some Christian Responses', p. 355.
- 97 Ibid., p. 356.
- 98 Shatzkes, *Holocaust and Rescue*, p. 66.
- 99 Shatzkes thinks that the discussion was largely concerned about looming unemployment. However, there were quite a number of articles that were more concerned about the presence of Jews in England than just unemployment as such. Kushner's differentiation between liberal and conservative newspapers is useful in this case. The former displayed mostly sympathy with the persecuted Jews, while the latter (high Tory, Rothermere, Beaverbrook press) tended to fall back on anti-Jewish generalisations. Shatzkes, *Holocaust and Rescue*, p. 66. Kushner, *Persistence of Prejudice*, pp. 79–84.
- 100 Moloney, *Westminster*, p. 216.
- 101 Drafted letter by Hinsley, 8 January 1939. AAW, Hi 2/84.
- 102 Minutes General Committee Meeting, 19 December 1938. 'Statement of the Refugee Problem Today', AAW, Hi 2/84.

- 103 Easter 1939, leaflet from the Catholic Committee for Refugees signed by Hinsley. AAS, War Papers. See also the leaflet 'The Refugees. The plain facts', Society of Friends, FCRA 24/8. The emphasis on the Fund's aid for Christians was also made in a letter to *The Times*, 15 January 1939, which was signed by the Cardinal of Westminster, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Moderator of the Federal Council of the Free Churches of England, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland. They also stated that they wholeheartedly supported the Baldwin Fund, 'because the Churches thought it was time they played their part in relieving this great human suffering'.
- 104 Letter to Dr Calvin by Amigo's secretary, 3 December 1938. AAS, German Refugees. Clifton has suggested that Amigo was cautious about accepting refugees because Basque Catholic refugee children, who had come to Britain in 1937, were used as 'political pawns' in the Spanish Civil War. Clifton, *Amigo*, p. 150. The source as such makes no reference to this experience. It does, however, record Amigo's scepticism that there would be enough funding for refugees.
- 105 John Power to Williams, 9 January 1939. BAA, AP/R5 Refugees.
- 106 Rev. O'Hea to Hinsley, 15 December 1938. CSG, E9 Cardinal Hinsley 1929-41.
- 107 *Catholic Times*, 15 July 1938, as quoted in Gutteridge, 'Churches and Jews in England', p. 354.
- 108 *Catholic Herald*, 10 February 1939, p. 8.
- 109 Downey's refusal to contribute an article to the *Jewish Gazette* for the reason that the Jewish community had not protested against the arrest of Cardinal Mindszenty, of Hungary. Letter secretary Downey to Markin, 21 January 49. In AAL Downey Collection Series 1 X. Diocesan Administration. Problems & Complaints Jews 44/1.
- 110 See Parkes' review in *Jewish Chronicle*, 7 December 1945. In Parkes Papers Southampton, M560 17/37 Special Subjects.
- 111 Letter secretary of Apostolic Delegation, David Cashman to Downey, 16 November 50. In AAL Downey Collection Series 1 X. Diocesan Administration. Problems & Complaints Jews 44/1.
- 112 Letter Adamson to Downey, 31 January 49. In AAL Downey Collection Series 1 X. Diocesan Administration. Problems & Complaints Jews 44/1. Adamson had commissioned the antisemitic pamphlet for the PDC written by Fr Ellison.
- 113 Tony Kushner acknowledges that Cardinal Hinsley unambiguously spoke against the persecution of the Jews. Kushner, 'James Parkes', p. 456. Gutteridge, 'Some Christian Responses', pp. 352-362.



- 114 Moloney has suggested that Hinsley refrained from supporting smaller Jewish organisations, because he did not like to be enlisted for 'particularist' causes. Moloney, *Westminster*, p. 206.
- 115 Quoted in Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 215. Williams is also quoted in the *Catholic Times*, 19 May 1933, p. 1.
- 116 John Heenan, *Cardinal Hinsley*, London, 1944, p. 221.
- 117 Moloney, *Westminster*, p. 222.
- 118 Aspden, *Fortress Church*, p. 215.
- 119 Ibid., pp. 214–215.
- 120 Moloney, *Westminster*, p. 205.

# 7

## Conclusion

Despite Catholic claims to universality, Catholic communities have never been interchangeable nor have they been monolithic. The example of the Catholic right showed that Catholicism as such was certainly not a bulwark against antisemitism or indeed fascism. On the other hand, the example of the *Catholic Worker* newspaper in England has proven that religious anti-Jewish teachings do not automatically foster antisemitic sentiments in an entire community. The absence or virulence of antisemitism was only indirectly determined by religious faith or nationality. Much more important for the formation of antisemitism was the general public discourse of a society and political socialisation. The broadly similar antisemitic prejudices of Catholics to that of German or English society in general are the most obvious illustration of this point. An individual's 'cultural code', then, determined the degree of antisemitism within their worldview, exemplified by the upper/middle-class *Rechtskatholik* from a nationalist milieu at one end of the spectrum and the working-class Catholic from a Labour milieu on the other.

### **The nature of antisemitism**

Disregarding the racist extreme right for the time being, the composition of Catholic prejudices against Jews was very similar in both communities and to that of society as a whole. Of the four stereotypes that make up modern antisemitism (religious, economic, racial, cultural) it was the image of the 'Jewish Bolshevik' that drove and at times dominated Catholic hostility towards Jews. Older stereotypes did not vanish. Economic prejudices, for instance, flared

up immediately after the First World War together with allegations of profiteering, or later in response to financial scandals in Weimar Germany. Yet the 'Jewish financier' never sustained the mobilising power enjoyed by the image of the 'Jewish Bolshevik'.

Religious anti-Judaism survived into the age of racial antisemitism and cannot be divorced from modern antisemitism, as the Vatican has suggested in *We Remember*. References to Christian scripture still served to justify secular Jew-hatred. The observation of *We Remember* that the Catholic Church had always rejected discrimination on a racial basis cannot be refuted. However, the claim that Catholics completely rejected race science is too optimistic. Both communities adopted a racial rhetoric where 'race' was defined as the sum of a people's history, culture and religion. Though 'race' was rarely understood in a biological sense, the cultural definition had its own (often seen as insurmountable) determinism, when Jews were described as a distinct and separate race, difficult to assimilate. However, race was generally of secondary importance to the Catholic image of the Jews. It was used to explain social and cultural differences, but did not justify discrimination or persecution in itself.

The Catholic right in Germany and the Distributists around Hilaire Belloc and G.K. Chesterton were the prism of antisemitism, where Jew-hatred took its most coherent, modern and hostile form. Their worldview was based on a rejection of parliamentarianism and modern capitalism, the ideal of a corporate society and a veneration of the monarchy (or a controlled dictatorship in the form of Mussolini's Italy). Antisemitism was a companion of this worldview, in particular the figure of the 'Jewish Bolshevik'. Coupled with the alleged conspiratorial power of 'Jewish finance', these two forces then embodied a fundamental threat to the wealth of the Christian German or English nation in this worldview. The antisemitism of the Catholic right and its antiparliamentarianism fed on each other, as both groups believed that the current national political system in Germany and Britain would further advance the influence of the Jews either through democratic mass politics in the Weimar Republic, or through the alleged secret party funds and 'gentlemen's agreements' in British politics.

There were differences in the nature and scope of the right's worldview in Germany and Britain despite this ideological convergence. While the majority of the *Rechtskatholiken* hoped for a restoration of the monarchy and aristocracy, Distributism was less reactionary and proposed social and political reforms. Antisemitism

was a core element in the worldview of the majority of the *Rechtskatholiken*, whereas in Britain this can only be said to be the case for the authors of *G.K.'s Weekly* or of single individuals in the Catholic Land Movement. The Distributists' antisemitism was nourished by strong anti-establishment sentiments, while that of the *Rechtskatholiken* (being part of the old establishment themselves) was thoroughly *völkisch*. *Rechtskatholiken* did not fear 'the Jew' amongst their peers, but the alleged Jewish influence from below (and from abroad).

The antisemitism of these relatively homogeneous ideological constituencies varied only slightly. The divergence of English Catholics' antisemitism from that of their German coreligionists was more visible among the general Catholic public. The differences lay not so much in the anti-Jewish images themselves, but in the emphasis that was placed on each stereotype, and the overall organisation of antisemitic prejudices. As a result, the nature of Catholic antisemitism in Germany was more secular, more nationalist and more systematic. Essentially, the antisemitism of German Catholics resembled more a modern ideology both in content and in its systematic formulation. Moreover, it was able to permeate a far broader section of Catholic society. Compared with Germany, Catholic antisemitism in England often had a discernible premodern element in it. From an examination of the use of religious and racial antisemitic stereotypes, where the latter usually signifies more modern forms of Jew-hatred, it is clear that the religious foundation was more important in England. This could be seen in the fact that missionary work among the Jews was warmly supported by lay Catholics in England. The diametrically opposed attitude to eugenics in both communities is another sign of the relative modernity of German Catholicism. German Catholics such as Hermann Muckermann engaged with modern science and supported positive eugenics. They remained within the boundaries of the Church's teaching that race had no supremacy over the soul, but did endorse racial hierarchy. Even though eugenics was popular in British society as a whole, Catholics (including the Distributists) almost unanimously rejected it as idolatry of the race or unacceptable social engineering.

Nationalism was a constituent part of the right's antisemitism, both in Germany and in England. Individual Distributists did not differ too much in their hostility towards the Jews from the *völkisch* antisemitism of the *Rechtskatholiken*. The cause of their anxiety was primarily the 'Jewish Bolshevik', because atheism (or the Jews' alleged hostility to Christianity) and anticapitalism threatened the

very foundations of the Christian nation. However, the specific nationalist motive in cultural antisemitism found less resonance outside the 'Chesterbelloc' circle in England, in marked contrast to Catholics in Germany. A concern about the decline of German Christian culture was common among the episcopate. Conservative Catholicism was marked by scepticism towards modernity from the Syllabus of Errors onwards, but the threat of Bolshevik revolution swelled this cultural pessimism.

Following the pattern of public antisemitic outburst, the findings show that in the case of England antisemitism erupted mainly over issues of Catholic interest, such as the persecution of Catholic bishops in Soviet Russia, a Jewish state in Palestine, or anticlerical governments in Mexico and Spain. The furore over the Spanish Civil War climaxed in 1938 and inspired most antisemitic comments at the time. In Germany, on the other hand, antisemitic reactions were often based on a fear for the nation, regardless of specific Catholic interests.

Finally, the image of the Jews among German Catholics was systematised to a higher degree. Catholic publications adopted a two-fold antisemitism as a common formula when commenting on 'Jews' or the 'Jewish question'. The distinction between the 'good' religious Jews and the 'immoral' liberal Jews allowed a Christian defence against the influence of the latter, but prohibited an undifferentiated discrimination against all Jews. English Catholicism did not create a uniform answer to a 'Jewish question'. The responses depended much more on an individual's personal concerns. This could take the form of the hostile nationalism of *G.K.'s Weekly*, or the zeal of the Catholic Guild of Israel to convert as many Jews as possible, or the popular tendency to equate Jews with communists. In their content, these answers to a 'Jewish question' might not have differed significantly from those given by German Catholics, but they lacked the cohesion of a set formula. Outside the 'Chesterbelloc' circle, anti-semitism was not ideologised to the same degree as in German Catholicism.

Even comparing the most antisemitic sections of the two communities, the Catholic right, the *Rechtskatholiken* were more systematically organised than their English counterparts. Links to and cooperation with far-right, pro-fascist groups were, for instance, almost institutionalised in the *Rechtskatholiken's* support for the *Stahlhelm* and the DNVP. In England, such contacts were only cultivated on the basis of individual Distributists' membership in such groups.

## The distribution of antisemitism

The most prolific promoters of antisemitism in both communities were those on the Catholic right fringe, the *Rechtskatholiken* and Distributists respectively. Their organisational structure focused on re-education, i.e., a media presence and active lobbying, rather than on party politics. *Rechtskatholiken* were largely members of the Catholic nobility, upper-middle class civil servants and academics. Antisemitism also found eager listeners among German Catholic students, academics and the lower middle class and did not differ, therefore, from German society as such. Distributists found their supporters among Catholic writers, the educated middle class and the self-employed. The clergy, too, were prone to anti-Jewish attitudes. From the sources available it seems that Catholic working-class organisations of both communities were least likely to engage in antisemitic abuse. However, compared with the clear condemnation of antisemitism by the Young Christian Workers, their counterparts in Germany were more ambivalent in their public rejection of antisemitism.

There was a curious and counterintuitive development in Catholic England, which also constitutes the most striking difference between the two cases. Until 1933 there were similar patterns of antisemitic outburst in both communities, although their intensity was considerably greater in German Catholic publications. Yet in 1938/39, at the height of Jewish persecution in prewar Germany, antisemitism in Catholic England was more widespread than at any time in the period concerned by the book. German Catholicism on the other hand gradually had reduced its public attacks on Jews from as early as 1924. The first wave of antisemitism in response to Russian Bolshevism, the war and the revolutions in Germany affected most sections of Catholic society in both countries. The Catholic press was the prime outlet for anti-Jewish sentiments. Apart from the press, antisemitism was also evident in England among the conservative Catholic Trade Union under Thomas Burns and members of the clergy, though it was rarely found within the Catholic Social Guild or the publications of the Young Christian Workers. In Germany, by contrast, antisemitism could be found across all sections of Catholicism, from the Catholic Workers' Association in southern Germany (in moderation), academic and student organisations, the educated middle classes, influential members of the hierarchy, the Catholic parties and the *Rechtskatholiken*.

Then, in the late 1930s, the balance shifted and antisemitism seemed to be more acute among Catholics in England than in

Germany. The newspapers were full of hostile articles against Jews, Catholic publishing houses took a pro-fascist stance and more bishops began to sympathise with 'Latin' fascism and sometimes anti-Jewish sentiments. This picture is, however, distorted. It was a result of the fact that the most vocal sections of intellectual English Catholicism had thrown their weight behind fascism between 1936 and 1938. The confrontation with communism and fascism split public opinion. The pro-fascist antisemitic wave was largely ridden by the 'Chesterbelloc' circle and the remnants of Distributism because of their personal ties spanning the extreme right, Catholic lay organisations and newspaper editorial boards. Their popularity among the Catholic middle class and the discontented lower-middle class led to a considerable decline of Catholic Social Guild audience and as a result the antifascist (and moderately antisocialist) opposition was rendered impotent.

In stark contrast to this development, antisemitism noticeably receded in the German Catholic press from the mid-1920s and political Catholicism began to confront National Socialism by 1930. Catholic Workers' Associations and the Christian Unions were now the least likely to publicise antisemitic views. It was in fact in Germany where Catholicism undertook the stronger efforts to contain the right. Political Catholicism was assisted to some extent by the bishops, who issued warnings for Catholics to join paramilitary organisations, such as the *Jungdeutsche Orden* and the *Stahlhelm* in the mid-1920s and condemned Catholic membership of the NSDAP after 1931. No such attempts to contain the Catholic right were made by Catholics on the other side of the channel, nor was there a clear public ecclesiastical condemnation of home-grown fascism, with the result that many Catholics joined the British Union of Fascists. Unlike the situation in Germany, the Catholic right, especially the editors of *G.K.'s Weekly*, was supported and recommended by members of the hierarchy, clergy and Catholic newspapers. Contacts and collaboration with pro-fascist organisations were tolerated by the hierarchy as a joint defence effort against communism.

This was not how the story ended. Antisemitism was eventually more openly and more vehemently condemned by English ecclesiastic leaders from the end of 1938. The relative modernity and scope of anti-Jewish sentiments among German Catholics was partly the result of the long public debate on the 'Jewish question' in Germany. While Catholic publications referred to Jews mostly in a religious context until the early nineteenth century, their interpretation of the 'Jewish question' grew more secular and modern throughout this debate. By

the 1920s, when German Catholicism was eager to leave its ghetto, antisemitism was no longer seen just as a defence of Catholic interests (as it had been during the *Kulturkampf*), but of national interests. In addition, the existence of two Catholic parties and a tightly woven net of Catholic organisations aided the dissemination of antisemitism – be it from the population to the Catholic leadership or vice versa. The effectiveness of this network was particularly apparent in the early antisemitic wave after the war, for which the Catholic parties have to take considerable responsibility. They continued and popularised the antisemitism of the nationalist right of Imperial Germany, which was weakened by the disarray of these groups immediately after the war.

That the answer of English Catholicism to the ‘Jewish question’ was less systematic was due to its thinly developed and more recent organisational structure. English Catholicism was even in its most fundamental organisational structure – the hierarchy – still very young. There was no Catholic political party and a network of social or political organisations was only just developing. The Church had concentrated on building churches and schools and recruiting priests, and had encouraged the creation of pious rather than political lay organisations. Before the existence of the ‘Chesterbelloc’ circle in the 1920s and 1930s, Catholic thinkers outside the walls of the churches or the universities were few and far between. The postwar years were therefore the time when the first intense Catholic discussion of the ‘Jewish question’ outside theology took place. Hence, the interpretation of the ‘Jewish question’ was less likely to settle on a common formula like ‘two-fold antisemitism’ in German Catholicism.

The different responses to the antisemitism of the radical right were the result of differences in Catholic organisation: political Catholicism in Germany’s case and social Catholicism in England’s case. Since the national hierarchies had begun to retreat from social and political issues (apart from the education question) into a spiritual realm in the late 1920s, the task of representing Catholics on a secular platform fell to lay organisations. With its well-organised political arm in the Centre Party and BVP, German Catholicism was much better equipped to stand its ground in secular affairs than English Catholicism. The vacuum left by the hierarchy in England on the other hand was filled by Distributism. As a social movement – if not simply a journalistic enterprise – it was much less restricted in its use of antisemitism than a political party, which had to act with one eye on its electorate and the other on its political competitors. A political party can function as potential amplifier of antisemitism



(as was indeed the case for the Centre and BVP in the early years of the Weimar Republic), but in England's case it was more the absence of a political structure, and the late formation of a Catholic workers' organisation, that left anticommunist and anti-Jewish voices uncontested on a public platform in 1938.

The Centre Party still dominated Catholic public discourse. Their ambiguous answer to the 'Jewish question' had an important conciliatory character, expressed in the hope that Jews would eventually assimilate and that Catholics would prove patient while the process of assimilation was completed (such a tone was absent from interpretations of the 'Jewish question' by the Catholic right and even the BVP). However, the problem of an ambiguous attitude towards Jews became eventually obvious in the failure to denounce antisemitism clearly. Political Catholicism challenged the right on a political platform, but it was no challenge to the right's ideological antisemitism, precisely because its answer to the 'Jewish question' remained too ambiguous. The long history of the discourse, its standardised form and the widespread use created a pattern that was difficult to escape.

## **Antisemitism and Catholic relations with the right**

Antisemitism ebbed away in German Catholic public discourse in the later 1920s partly because anti-Jewish propaganda had become the domain of political Catholicism's political opponents, the DNVP and NSDAP. The Vatican's tolerance of Hitler's government after the Concordat in 1933 was an important factor in the German hierarchy's early acquiescence in the regime and Cardinal Bourne's and Cardinal Hinsley's silence about Hitler's government and its antisemitic policies. Finally, a minority position of Catholic communities and the memory of anti-Catholic discrimination inevitably affected Catholic responses to national politics. The war between both countries gave Hinsley the opportunity to express English Catholicism's loyalty to Britain, while the conflict complicated the situation for the German bishops, as any criticism of the regime would necessarily be interpreted as defeatist and give rise to anti-Catholic campaigns.

All these factors constituted the framework which limited or supported Catholic activities against Jew-hatred and cannot, therefore, be disregarded. However, frameworks are only man-made. Catholic intellectuals, the bishops, religious communities, and the Catholic youth movements yearned for a spiritual rebirth of Germany and celebrated a spiritual/religious community. They

connected with the Catholic right on this level (quite literally, as many had personal contacts with the nationalist right). Indeed in both communities, the Catholic right received considerable support from Catholic leadership. The English hierarchy supported Ramsay's Anti Alien Bill or the right-wing aid group Friends for National Spain, while the *Rechtskatholiken* were eventually invited onto the stage of mainstream German Catholicism, i.e., to the *Volksverein* and the *Katholikentag* in 1932. In both cases, antisemitism was a constituent part of the right's worldview, which requires some explanation of the role it played in attracting Catholic support or enthusiasm.

In his study on British fellow travellers of fascism and National Socialism, Richard Griffiths has already stressed that antisemitism was – in the worst cases – a central motive for joining the nationalist right. At the very least, according to Griffiths, antisemitism was not a deterrent against many fellow travellers lending their support to pro-fascist groups. The Catholic communities in both countries were no exception to Griffiths' observation. Antisemitism played an important role in the worldview and indeed in the activities of the Catholic right. Contacts with the nationalist right often included the search for a 'solution' to the 'Jewish question', with which they identified or did not reject. Fellow travellers of the Catholic right welcomed the determination of the nationalist right to deal with communism and the ambition to respiritualise the all-too-materialist modern world. On many occasions it is not possible to trace the fellow travellers' cooperation or tolerance back to antisemitic motivation. Clearly, however, Jew-hatred was not dishonourable an activity enough to deter them in their support. This gave the Catholic right additional credibility and exposure, and at the same time weakened Catholic organisations that were committed to tolerance and democracy. Fellow travellers might not have incited an anti-Jewish atmosphere with their own words, but their activities nevertheless indirectly perpetuated antisemitism in the public sphere. Moreover, in the time of a racist dictatorship and Jewish persecution, merely written or verbal antisemitism (in contrast to open violence or discrimination) present in the Catholic public discourse had quite physical consequences for the persecuted Jews, as material aid was only reluctantly given by Catholics in Germany and England.

Historiography on Catholic antisemitism has taken considerable care to distinguish anti-Judaism from modern antisemitism, acknowledging a religious hostility towards Jews, but rejecting a racial determination of the Jews. It has been obvious throughout this book that religious and modern anti-Jewish prejudices cannot be cleanly

separated from each other, and neither were religious and racial concepts of the Jews an irreconcilable paradox. The Catholic defence against Rosenberg, for instance, made clear that religious teaching did not necessarily transfer respect for ancient Jewry to modern Jewry. The formula of a 'two-fold antisemitism' separated modern Jewry from the more positive image of the Chosen People in the Old Testament and left it to the racial policies of the National Socialist state. In England, too, the Catholic Guild of Israel employed modern antisemitic arguments for their cause, and (as with the defence against Rosenberg) blurred the boundary between race and religion. Religious anti-Judaism was not a barrier to modern antisemitism at all. Rather, it formed the basis on which to build modern prejudices. Of all stereotypes, the religious one has been the most enduring. It persisted in the face of Jewish persecution (for example in the comments expressed by German bishops on the deportation of the Jews) and still served as an explanation for the Holocaust after the war, when mass murder was interpreted as the result of God's curse on the Chosen People.

This continuity of traditional anti-Jewish sentiments should not obscure the relevance of the allegations of Jewish Bolshevism or financial dominance that lent antisemitism a new urgency in the interwar years. Against the background of Catholic antisocialism, these stereotypes helped to convince a far broader section of German and English Catholic society of the reality of a 'Jewish danger' than had been the case before. All these prejudices did not just ostracise 'the Jew', but they also proved to be bridge-builders between the radical right and the Catholic right and eventually conservative Catholicism.

# Appendix

**Table 1** *Articles containing an anti-Jewish mention*

Year	Articles per month		
	<i>Catholic Herald</i>	<i>Catholic Times</i>	<i>The Month</i>
1918	0.50	0.00	0.00
1919	1.08	1.33	0.00
1920	0.67	1.17	0.25
1921	1.00	1.75	0.75
1922	1.43	2.33	1.13
1923	1.88	0.86	0.75
1924	1.44	0.93	0.60
1925	1.29	1.00	0.60
1926	1.86	0.81	0.67
1927	1.17	0.63	0.67
1928	1.33	0.44	0.68
1929	1.50	0.25	0.69
1930	1.25	0.33	0.70
1931	1.00	0.42	0.71
1932	1.66	0.50	0.71
1933	2.33	2.38	1.00
1934	1.50	1.44	0.63
1935	0.67	0.50	0.25
1936	0.72	2.00	0.75
1937	0.78	3.50	0.88
1938	0.83	5.00	1.00
1939	2.00	2.00	1.00

The numbers per year are derived from the number of articles per year divided by the months examined (e.g., *Catholic Herald* 1929: nine articles in six months).

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