"'The Jewish Question' and National Socialist Antisemitism," *Catholic Civilization* [*Civiltà Cattolica*], October 20, 1934, vol. 4, page 126

If contradiction is a reliable indicator of error – as we have often had occasion to note, and most recently again in relation to Luther and Lutheranism – then it is no less an indicator when there is exaggeration of that part or at least semblance which it retains of the truth. And it is in fact easiest to make exaggerations or falsifications of truth in the speculative order, as it is very easy to move or slide from one extreme to another . . .

Of this equally old and new truth, we find today a fresh example in Germany, in a current of the Nazi movement, a naturalistic and neo-pagan current, as was also demonstrated with too sad evidence (*cf.* *Catholic Civilization*, 1934, vol. I, p. 238 (“Antichristian Racial Myth”); p.374 (“Defense of Christian Race and Ethics”), etc. It has gone from an openly declared and Masonic "semitism" to a more rowdy and extreme "antisemitism," thus also ineffective as to just and equitable restrictions on Jewish predominance or arrogance in all parts and levels of social life, which was a result of the old liberalism, connected with certain Protestant sects, to the detriment of the Catholic religion. It has gone, that is, from one extreme to another, and with equal offense to truth and to justice, as well as open violation of the most [p.127] essential precepts of Christian equity and charity. And the exaggeration or imbalance becomes all the more intolerable to the extent the dubious zeal of the Nazi antisemites vaunts and opposes its own excesses to the moderation of the Catholic Church, of the Roman Pontiff in particular, and of the hierarchy and its unity. And it so opposes with such boldness as to outdo the most excessive calumnies and defamations against the Church itself and against Catholics, progressing then from words to deeds consistent with the words, that is, to the most unjust and violent persecutions toward Catholics, both people and hierarchy, including also bloody deeds - like those of last June 30th - which the history of modern civilization will record with horror.

II.

The absurdity of such calumnies, moreover, had already been prefigured by old Ludendorf, exasperated by the defeat and the spectacle of the subsequent disintegration of his country: as he dreamed of striking a blow at all the ills brought on by the Masons, whom the Protestants had so cherished, and by the Jews, and even also by the Jesuits, all supposedly working together, each with the others. But the nice little find that consoled him in his distress was not even his own invention: it was rather the dream of a certain G. zur Beek, who, publishing "The Secrets of the Elders of Zion" to many curious and helpful notices, mixed exaggerations and incredible absurdities, with defamations of Catholics and Popes, but above all Jesuits. As to the latter, a whole chapter poured forth the most ridiculous legends, told with all the presumption and condescension of the scholar, starting with the most far-fetched imaginings: that "the Jesuits have made a truce with the Jews," and then also with the Masons, their natural allies: that they wanted to negotiate with them to make better profits, and then divide the universal sovereignty, notwithstanding that they rule the world: that with such plans they would form "a great Catholic [p.128] central power comprising Rhineland-Westphalia, Bavaria, Austria and Poland," and dismembering Italy in the process. All of this was written by the erudite German in 1919, purporting to presage the future! But the prophet is only as credible as history bears him out; and he presumed to accredit his inventions with a long and fantastical enumeration of Popes “of Jewish ancestry,” including of course the so-called Popessa Joan and then, without a shadow of proof, “Innocent II, Anacletus II, Callixtus III, Alexander VI, Clement VIII, Paul V and Pius IX; and then a series of Archbishops and Cardinals who were likewise “Jews,” including “the famous Cardinal Antonelli, Cardinals Henry Newman, originally Neumann, Mariano Rampolla, Netto of Lisbon, originally Solomon Netter.” . . .

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[p.129] These accusations are made in a publication that is distributed in Germany in the hundreds of thousands - the *Handbook of the Jewish Question* - edited by Theodore Fritsch

. . .

[p.130] the publication speaks of a league against Judah and Rome

There is a chapter in the *Handbook* by an Alberto Kunkel, which studies the question of the ancestral origin of the Jewish people

. . .

[p.131] the *Handbook* speaks of "the Popes of Rome, who give a Christian label to their ambition to rule the world!”

The *Handbook* refuses to affirm the Judaic nature of our savior Jesus Christ . . .

. . .

[p.132] . . .

The heretical sense of Protestant antisemitism is confirmed again in the subsequent historical turns in which it encountered Judaism in the medieval and modern eras, whether that of the ghetto - the Ghetto Era as it is called - or in our days, particularly with reference to the Jews in the German countries, under the Hapsburgs in Austria no less than under the Hollenzollerns in Prussia and the rest of the German empire. And if it is possible to recognize truly with the author and deplore the progress of "Judaizing," as it is called, then it is not only in Berlin but in many other cities around Germany, as in France and Poland, as well as all Europe. But Protestant unbelief does not see, or does not want to see, that this "Judaizing" was in fact one of the triumphs of the Protestant revolution and of the unbelief disseminated through Europe, with the original foundation and then the total predominance of Masonry, which was so favored by Protestantism, as previously noted. . . . but the incoherence and contradictions and absurd conclusions of the author's study . . . "And under all international organizational questions stand two powers: Rome and Judah," exclaims our astute German, without needing any proof. So, the phenomenon of "Rome and Judaism" can be seen in all Christian civilization and is found in struggle, naturally, with the German people; a perennial struggle that is the history of two thousand years leading to the last world war, which represents: The Highpoint of this Struggle. "We have lost!" - so concludes tragically - Rome and Judah are the principal victors in the world war and revolution: our defeat signified the victory of the world domination of Rome and Judah (p. 108-109).

[p.133] . . . this incites hatreds among so many millions of souls of the worst sort . . . fanatics and imposters seeking the salvation of the fatherland. . . . as Bismarck (in 189) . . . Policy of the Middle Way - and according to Wolf, the greater . . . of the immense German . . . not to value Rome for avoiding the danger of Judaism and Marxism, nor of Jews and Masons to conquer the danger of Rome." (p. 109) . . .

This, according to him, is the only renewal that can save them. And for this nonetheless it is "the example of Jesus and of Luther," in accordance with which they intend to "liberate the religion of Jesus" from what makes for the German people a mixture, the "amalgam of Rome and Judah." This is the struggle against Rome, which is against Catholics and all Christian civilization, palliated by a clumsy pretext of a mixture, or alliance, with Judah, that is with Judaism its irreconcilable enemy. Only this struggle, so to speak, "only a radical revolution will bring help: a return that is to the way of Luther, of the Hohenzollerns and of Bismarck, without which there is no thought of true progress"... With that we are well advised of their true intent, and the meaning of what is promised.

[p.134] But hope smiles on them: that the enemies themselves, the Jews and the Romans, will help them: because, Jews and Romans, like Latins and Slavs, do not know how to preserve the extent of their good fortune, and "by abusing their own strength, pursuing impossible goals, they precipitate themselves into the abyss." And this will be, he concludes, a nice "irony of history." Such is the curious historical pragmatism, or strange philosophy of two new adversaries of Rome and of Christian civilization! The conclusion of this rationale is meant to be the proposal of a renewed persecution - a renewal of the old Lutheran and Bismarckian culture war - against the Catholic Church.

The matter of these aberrations exhausts historians, not least theorists; the expositors, we say, of the doctrine of Judaism. And here in the next chapter, one of the most temerarious of even the undersigning "pastors," the Protestant Pastor Falck, involves the most absolute condemnation of Judaism and the entire Old Testament Bible, and that of a collection of texts interpreted according to rationalist criticism, with an exegesis of scorn, as with the old incredulity of the French Encyclopedists and German Enlightenment. Thus, as a necessary prerequisite, the good Protestant "pastor" rejects as not only incorrect but also totally unfaithful - absolutely useless - the translation of the Bible of their so vaunted Luther . . .

. . . that Yahweh, the God of the Jews, is unjust, is vindictive and cruel . . . in sum is a popular divinity solely and totally created by the Jews. With similar impudence . . .

[p.135] . . . that suppose that such opinions or rather formal oaths of our Protestant antisemites.

. . .

On the other hand, with a more serious appearance and with a foundation of truth, the study follows Jewish doctrine concerning the Talmud, the Jewish Kabbala, ritual murder, and other similar questions, debated and debatable, pertaining to the Jews subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem, when they ceased to be the chosen people, and the religion of Moses became that of the Talmud. In this sense we can see the reasonableness of the author's statement that "the Jewish question in our times is no longer a religious controversy." But the argument treated here by a Protestant scholar with such superficiality and passion, which would require many reservations, was rather well, fully, and serenely studied and discussed by Catholic authors, including modern ones, of whom we would like to name two who have written with a particular competence in history and doctrine: Bonsirven and Vincent. In the works of the first the reader will find, in addition to a good orientation on the history of Judaism, an excellent summary of its essence and its own doctrine, inasmuch as it is at the same time a nation and a religion, but a nation and religion in a form all its own. In the works [p.136] of the second - who has drawn much from the first, and rightly so - in addition to the most strictly expositive part on rabbinic literature, on Jewish doctrine and morals, will be found also concise historical information on the destruction of Jerusalem and . . . and on Jewish autonomy giving rise to the great Talmudic schools, which fostered the rabbinic tradition and the decline of Judaism, then faded with modernism and contemporary liberalism into complete unbelief, as for instance that of the recently deceased Solomon Reinach and such other Jewish scholars.

The Catholic authors do not conceal the irreparable rift that runs between Jewish thought and Christian thought; they show it and document it as a historical fact, with serene impartiality, but altogether without the hostility of a preconceived polemic, which is rather the custom and method of the partisan antisemites such as the Nazis of our "*Handbook*."

We do not deny at all that these also appear excusable, and perhaps even worthy of commendation, if their political opposition were contained within the limits of a tolerable resistance to the intrigues of the Jewish parties and organizations: on which another long chapter of the Handbook covers much important information, albeit not all of it proven and accurate. It calls attention to the various associations of the Jews in different countries, notably that in France of the famous Alliance Israélite Universelle, founded in Paris in 1860 by a lawyer, Crémieux, with a second branch in England, formed in London in 1870, the "Anglo Jewish Association"; but especially the many Jewish associations of Germany, and the last known attempt of "Zionism," much favored by Dr. Herzl and the famous Lord Balfour: as it seems to us and has been reaffirmed by our journal (CC 1922, vol II, p.299; III, 116ff; 1924, IV, p482ff), signals a very bad policy [*pessima politica*] as well as an anti-Christian and anti-Catholic initiative, and prepares turbulent days in Palestine by its initiation of Jewish colonization. And all this information certainly confirms the existence and the seriousness of the "Jewish danger."