

CHAPTER 3. CHRISTIANS VERSUS JEWS: From the Cain-Doctrine to the Holocaust.

On my first visit to Jerusalem, I walked up to the Mount of Olives. Somewhat apart stood a small monument dedicated to the Ascension of Jesus. When I entered the Chapel of the Ascension, owned by the Islamic Waqf of Jerusalem, the young local guard showed me the footprint of Jesus on the rock. The rock, he said, contains the right foot-print of Christ, the section of the rock bearing the left foot-print having been taken to the Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount in the Middle Ages. The guard explained that the footprints were made by Jesus as he ascended to Heaven. The Rock is venerated by the Christian faithful as the last point on earth touched by Jesus-Christ - quite a strong touch apparently as it left its imprint in solid rock!

Myth or Memory? We shall never know. The Ascension is recorded by Luke in his gospel (24, 50-53) and the Acts of the Apostles (1, 10-11). In his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul writes that Jesus appeared "last of all to him" on the road to Damascus – that is to say at least two years after the Ascension to Heaven.

Jerusalem was laid waste and the temple destroyed by the Romans in 66-70 C.E. and again in 135 C.E. "Holy places" were discovered in 326 C.E. by Queen Helena mother of Roman Emperor Constantine, when it was no longer forbidden to worship openly; and when the ruler needed new religious symbols to enhance his stature.

Ever since, memorials were constructed, destroyed and reconstructed many times over – reflecting the long history of conflicts between – and inside - Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Just as much, they reflect the vanity of all rulers irrespective of their religion. Jerusalem is the Capital of Memory, where everybody has a past and nobody allows anyone else a future. "The air over Jerusalem is saturated with prayers and dreams – It's hard to breath. Hatred is also a form of prayer, as is fear", wrote Amos Elon.¹

In any case, the memorial Chapel is an odd place. It is owned by those who don't believe in Christ's Resurrection and Ascension. It is located on the Mount of Olives, conquered and

¹ Amos Elon, *Jerusalem City of Mirrors*. Flamingo 1996. P. 62.

annexed by the State of Israel in 1967, following its victory over the armies of Jordan, Syria and Egypt in the third war for its survival (1947, 1956, 1967) – while its Jewish citizens are still waiting for the Coming of the Messiah.

In Jerusalem the possession of holy sites by representatives of a variety of Christian Churches and the Islam appears to be more important than the profession of one's faith. As such the holy sites reflect all four tragedies of religious division we shall reflect on in this chapter and the following ones..

When you descend from the Mount of Olives towards the old town of Jerusalem, you pass the place where Jesus is said to have shed tears over the city, and the garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed before being arrested. What is left of the Temple to the Jewish people is the Western Wall. On the Temple Mount, controlled by the Waqf, stand the Dome of the Rock and the AL Aqsa Mosque. Descending towards Golgotha (now inside the Old City) one reaches the oldest Christian Holy Place, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, built over the places where Jesus is said to have been crucified and buried. Inside, Catholic, Orthodox, Armenian and Ethiopian Christians continue to quarrel with each other over parts of the building; the key to its entrance is held by a Muslim family to keep the peace among them..

Jerusalem on earth is a symbol of the tragedy of perennial divisions and conflicts between the adherents to the faith in one God. The oldest one in the Common or Christian Era (C.E or A.D.) is the division between the Christians and the Hebrews or Jews. When Constantinople became the Capital of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, the first steps are taken towards the Great Schism between East and West, consummated in 1054. The third great division is the conflict within the Western world between the Latin Church and the Churches of the Reformation initiated with Marten Luther in 1517.

The three great divisions are still with us today and have been sources of violent conflict and cruel warfare throughout the centuries of the Christian or Common Era. These divisions are further fueled by conflicts between national churches in each of the many different Christian denominations and by doctrinal conflicts within each of them. Jesus' prayer "that all may be one"(John, 17, 21) is still to be answered.

In addition to these three divisions and directly related to them are the wars against European Christendom waged by the Islam and the modern political religions.

THE ORIGINAL TRAGEDY: CHRISTIANS versus JEWS.

"We are conscious today that many centuries of blindness have cloaked our eyes so that we can no longer see the beauty of thy chosen people, nor recognise in their faces the features of our privileged brethren. We realise that the mark of Cain stands upon our foreheads. Across the centuries our brother Abel has lain in blood which we drew, or shed tears which we caused by forgetting thy love." "Forgive us for the curse we falsely attached to their names as Jews. Forgive us for crucifying Thee a second time in their flesh." "For O Lord we know not what we did." Prayer of Pope John XXIII on 3 June 1963.

Pope Innocent III decreed (in 1215) as follows: *"As Cain was a wanderer and an outcast, not to be killed by anyone but marked with the sign of fear on his forehead, so the Jews . . . against whom the voice of the blood of Christ cries out . . . although they are not to be killed they must always be dispersed as wanderers upon the face of the earth."*

Does the mark of Cain stand upon our Christian foreheads, as is written in Pope John XXIII's prayer or on the forehead of every Jew as decreed by Pope Innocent III? It is a very painful question.

Holy Pope John XXIII brought the revolutionary Declaration *Nostra Aetate* proclaimed by Pope Paul VI on October 28, 1965, its 4th. Paragraph dealing with the relations with the Jews:

"4. As the sacred synod searches into the mystery of the Church, it remembers the bond that spiritually ties the people of the New Covenant to Abraham's stock.

Thus the Church of Christ acknowledges that, according to God's saving design, the beginnings of her faith and her election are found already among the Patriarchs, Moses and the prophets. She professes that all who believe in Christ-Abraham's sons according to faith -are included in the same Patriarch's call, and likewise that the salvation of the Church is mysteriously foreshadowed by the chosen people's exodus from the land of bondage. The Church, therefore, cannot forget that she received the revelation of the Old Testament through the people with whom God in His inexpressible mercy concluded the Ancient Covenant. Nor can she forget that she draws sustenance from the root of that well-cultivated olive tree onto which have been grafted the wild shoots, the Gentiles. Indeed, the

Church believes that by His cross Christ, Our Peace, reconciled Jews and Gentiles. making both one in Himself.

The Church keeps ever in mind the words of the Apostle about his kinsmen: "theirs is the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the law and the worship and the promises; theirs are the fathers and from them is the Christ according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:4-5), the Son of the Virgin Mary. She also recalls that the Apostles, the Church's main-stay and pillars, as well as most of the early disciples who proclaimed Christ's Gospel to the world, sprang from the Jewish people.

As Holy Scripture testifies, Jerusalem did not recognize the time of her visitation, nor did the Jews in large number, accept the Gospel; indeed not a few opposed its spreading. Nevertheless, God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers; He does not repent of the gifts He makes or of the calls He issues-such is the witness of the Apostle. In company with the Prophets and the same Apostle, the Church awaits that day, known to God alone, on which all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice and "serve him shoulder to shoulder" (Soph. 3:9).

Since the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews is thus so great, this sacred synod wants to foster and recommend that mutual understanding and respect which is the fruit, above all, of biblical and theological studies as well as of fraternal dialogues.

True, the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ; still, what happened in His passion cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures. All should see to it, then, that in catechetical work or in the preaching of the word of God they do not teach anything that does not conform to the truth of the Gospel and the spirit of Christ.

Furthermore, in her rejection of every persecution against any man, the Church, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel's spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone.

*Besides, as the Church has always held and holds now, Christ underwent His passion and death freely, because of the sins of men and out of infinite love, in order that all may reach salvation. It is, therefore, the burden of the Church's preaching to proclaim the cross of Christ as the sign of God's all-embracing love and as the fountain from which every grace flows."*²

The mark of Cain stands on our Christian foreheads indeed! And it needs a most profound rethinking of and repentance over the persecution of the Jews in Christian Europe from Emperor Constantine in the early fourth century up to and including Hitler's "Final Solution" of the Jewish question in the first half of the twentieth century, and the sad resurgence of anti-Semitism in our twenty-first century.

The Anti-Jewish Cain- Doctrine

We must painfully realize that the decree of Pope Innocent III, from which the above quotation was taken, was a mild variety of the prevailing Christian doctrine during all these centuries. Pope Innocent continued his decree as follows:

"Although Christian piety tolerates the Jews . . . whose own fault commits them to perpetual slavery . . . and allows them to continue with us (even though the Moors will not tolerate them), they must not be allowed to remain ungrateful to us in such a way as to repay us with contumely for favours and contempt for our familiarity. They are admitted to our familiarity only through our mercy; but they are to us dangerous as the insect in the apple, as the serpent in the breast * * * Since, therefore, they have already begun to gnaw like the rat, and to stink like the serpent, it is to our shame that the fire in our breast which is being eaten into by them, does not consume them * * * As they are reprobate slaves of the Lord, in whose death they evilly conspired (at least by the effect of the deed), let them acknowledge themselves as slaves of those whom the death of Christ has made free."³

² Nostra Aetate. Text as found on the Vatican Website.

³ The lists of papal bulls and decrees on the Jewish question can be found in Wikipedia and several other sites.

Pope Innocent's decree was not an exceptional statement at the time of the Crusades. In its "mild" variety it expressed the doctrine of the Catholic Church at least since the Church Fathers and the Church Councils at the time the Roman Empire became a Christian Empire in the fourth century. Two of the greatest Church Fathers – St. Augustine in the West and St. Chrysostom in the East clearly expressed this doctrine: Chrysostom in his eight Sermons in Antioch and St. Augustine in his tract against Faustus.

According to St. Augustine:

"11. Then God says to Cain: "Thou art cursed from the earth, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood at thy hand. For thou shalt till the earth, and it shall no longer yield unto thee its strength. A mourner and an abject shalt thou be on the earth." It is not, Cursed is the earth, but, Cursed art thou from the earth, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood at thy hand. So the unbelieving people of the Jews is cursed from the earth, that is, from the Church, which in the confession of sins has opened its mouth to receive the blood shed for the remission of sins by the hand of the people that would not be under grace, but under the law. And this murderer is cursed by the Church; that is, the Church admits and avows the curse pronounced by the apostle: "Whoever are of the works of the law are under the curse of the law."

12. "Groaning and trembling shalt thou be on the earth." Here no one can fail to see that in every land where the Jews are scattered they mourn for the loss of their kingdom, and are in terrified subjection to the immensely superior number of Christians. So Cain answered, and said: "My case is worse, if Thou drivest me out this day from the face of the earth, and from Thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a mourner and an outcast on the earth; and it shall be that every one that findeth me shall slay me." Here he groans indeed in terror, lest after losing his earthly possession he should suffer the death of the body. This he calls a worse case than that of the ground not yielding to him its strength, or than that of spiritual death. For his mind is carnal; for he thinks little of being hid from the face of God, that is, of being under the anger of God, were it not that he may be found and slain. This is the carnal mind that tills the ground, but does not obtain its strength. To be carnally minded is death; but he, in ignorance of this, mourns for the loss of his earthly possession, and is in terror of bodily death. But what does God reply? "Not so," He says; "but whosoever shall kill Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him

sevenfold." That is, It is not as thou sayest; not by bodily death shall the ungodly race of carnal Jews perish. For whoever destroys them in this way shall suffer sevenfold vengeance, that is, shall bring upon himself the sevenfold penalty under which the Jews lie for the crucifixion of Christ. So to the end of the seven days of time, the continued preservation of the Jews will be a proof to believing Christians of the subjection merited by those who, in the pride of their kingdom, put the Lord to death."⁴

In his sermons against the Jews, St. Chrysostom primarily expressed concern about his Christians in Antioch, who preferred the Synagogues to go to and the Jews to socialise with. Just to quote from one of his eight sermons against the Jews:

"You did slay Christ, you did lift violent hands against the Master, you did spill his precious blood. This is why you have no chance for atonement, excuse, or defence. In the old days your reckless deeds were aimed against his servants, against Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. Even if there was ungodliness in your acts then, your boldness had not yet dared the crowning crime. But now you have put all the sins of your fathers into the shade. Your mad rage against Christ, the Anointed One, left no way for anyone to surpass your sin. This is why the penalty you now pay is greater than that paid by your fathers. If this is not the reason for your present disgrace, why is it that God put up with you in the old days when you sacrificed your children to idols, but turns himself away from you now when you are not so bold as to commit such a crime? Is it not clear that you dared a deed much worse and much greater than any sacrifice of children or transgression of the Law when you slew Christ?"⁵

Their teaching and the Church's doctrine with respect to the Jews, can be summarized in three theses:

(1) **DEICIDE:** The Jews, forever are to be held guilty for the Crucifixion of Jesus; they are condemned to be wanderers but Christians are not allowed to kill them.

2) **APPROPRIATION:** After Jesus-Christ the Jewish people (as the chosen people) has ceased to exist; its place in salvation being taken by the (Christian) people of God. The Jewish

⁴ St. Augustin: *Reply To Faustus The Manichæan*, [Contra Faustum Manichæum]. A.D. 400. Translated By Rev. Richard Stothert, M.A., Bombay 155 Reply to Faustus the Manichæan. [Contra Faustum Manichæum.] a.d. 400. Chapter XII. P. 241ff.

⁵ From the *Eight Homilies Against the Jews*. Homily VI, p. 55. Wiki source, free online library.

Books of the Bible – now called the Old Testament – belong to the Christian Church. The old and the new testaments are to be understood and interpreted, as taught by the Magisterium of the Christian Church.

(3) **INDIVIDUAL CONVERSION.** The only way open to Jews is to convert and to be baptised into the Christian Church.

"Groaning and trembling shalt thou be on the earth." wrote St. Augustine and his prophesy came true. The Cain-Doctrine can be traced through the Ecumenical Church Councils, law-making, Papal Bulls and Church teaching throughout the sixteen centuries from Constantine to the papal revolution in 1959/1965. The Popes could be cruel or condescending, tormenting or tolerant, but always within the Cain-Doctrine of the Church and the Church Councils. Even Pope Gregory the Great acted and wrote mercifully, within the context of the Cain-doctrine. The Cain-doctrine turned Jews into divinely ordained pariah's, thus dehumanizing them to objects of vilification and hatred.

The Cain-doctrine of the Church also found its way into law, art and literature. The forever guilty Jew was blamed – and often condemned to death – for crimes he never committed. One well-known example can be found in the Prioress's Tale of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, where a Christian boy, walking through the nearby Jewish Ghetto, is killed for singing an anthem to the Holy Virgin:

In a great city of Asia amongst the Christian folk there was
a Jewry, sustained by a lord of that land for foul usury
and villainous lucre, hateful to Christ and his followers;
and men might ride or walk through the street,
for it was free and open at both ends.

A little child, as he came to and fro through the Jewry,
would sing full merrily, and cry evermore O alma redemptoris;
the sweetness of Christ's mother hath so pierced his heart,
that in prayer to her, he cannot stint singing by the way.

Our first foe, the serpent Satan , that in a Jew's heart
hath his wasp's nest, up-swelled and said: "O Hebrew people
is this, alas! a thing seemly to you, that such a boy shall walk
as he list in your despite and sing of such a theme, which is
against the reverence of your law?"

From thenceforth the Jews have conspired
to hunt this innocent out of this world.

Thereto they have paid an homicide that had a privy dwelling
in an alley; and as the child passed by, this cursed Jew seized
him and held him fast, and cut his throat and flung him into a pit

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All that night this poor widow awaited her little child, but
he came not; for which, as soon as it was day, with face pale
for dread and anxious disquietude, she hath sought him at school
and elsewhere, till finally she espied thus far that he was last seen
in the Jewry. With mother's pity pent in her breast, she goes as
it were half out of her mind to every place where by likelihood
she hath supposed her little child might be, and ever she cried
on Christ's mother meek and kind, and at last she came to seek
him among the cursed Jews.

She asked and prayed piteously of every Jew that dwelt
there to tell her if her child had passed by. They said "Nay;"
but after a little while, Jesu of his grace put it in her thought

to call aloud for her son in that place where he was cast beside
the way into a pit.

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This provost caused these Jews that wist of his murder to
be slain, and that anon, with torment and shameful death; he
would suffer no such cursedness. Evil shall have what evil
deserves, therefore he let them be drawn with wild horses and
after that he hanged them by law.⁶

Ritual murder of Christian children was a well-known, widespread, but unfounded charge at Jewish fellow-citizens, often followed by pogroms or condemnation and execution. Another widespread and unfounded charge was the cruelty and usury of Jewish money-lenders. It was **the** subject of Shakespeare's well-known play *The Merchant of Venice*, in which Shylock the Jew lends money to Antonio on cruel conditions:

This kindness will I show.
Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

In the fourth act, a mysterious female judge Portia is brought in, who allows Shylock to cut a pound of flesh from Antonio's breast, but without shedding a drop of blood; clearly an impossible task. Thereafter Shylock himself is severely punished:

Tarry, Jew:
The law hath yet another hold on you.

⁶ Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*. The Prioress's Tale. Excerpts from translation in Gutenberg Project.

It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly and directly too
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke.”⁷

Even more telling is the Legend of the Wandering Jew, written and told in several versions since the thirteenth century. According to the Legend, a Jew encountered Jesus on the way to the Cross and shouted with the rabble: “crucify him.” To whom Jesus replied: “I will stand here and rest, but thou shalt go on until the last day.”⁸

Popular hatred against the Jews blossomed in Christian Europe and increasingly so since the era of the Crusades in the 11th. Century. The “Holy Week” often saw widespread attacks against Jewish quarters all over Europe. The – unfounded – accusations of ritual murder of children, desecration of the host, secret nightly rites, blood libel and the poisoning of wells were the starting cries for murderous popular attacks. While the Church fuelled the hatred by its Cain-Doctrine, the Kings made them serfs. They were, sometimes but not very effectively, protected against popular outbreaks by royal troops, simply because financial support could be extracted from them for the many wars fought by the kings.

⁷ From the Fourth Act of *The Merchant of Venice*.

⁸ See e.g. Eugene Sue, *The Wandering Jew*. London-New York 1889. David Hoffman ed. *Legend of the Wandering Jew. Chronicles Selected from the originals of Cartaphilus*. London 1853.

On the year 1348, the year of the great plague, the pandemic of the black death, Barbara Tuchman, wrote:

“On charges that they were poisoning wells, with the intent ‘to kill and destroy the whole of Christendom and have lordship over all the world,’ the lynchings began in the spring of 1348 (in fact on Eastern Sunday) on the heels of the first plague deaths....Jews were dragged from their houses and thrown into bonfires. While divine punishment was accepted as the plague’s source, people in their misery still looked for a human agent on whom to vent the hostility that could not be vented on God. The Jew, as the eternal stranger, was the most obvious target....whom Christians for centuries had been taught to hate, who was regarded as imbued with unsleeping malevolence against all Christians. Living in a distinct group of his own kind in a particular street or quarter, he was also the most feasible target, with property to loot as a further inducement.”⁹

What happened to the Jews of Barcelona, is vividly described in *The Cathedral of the Sea*. It all began at Easter mass in 1367, following a cry “sacrilege! Heresy! The Devil’s work! Jews! The entire congregation rushed out to attack the Jewish quarter, barely protected by royal soldiers. While the black friars (Dominicans in the service of the Inquisition) pillaged the houses, the entire population of the Jewish quarter – some 6.000 souls – were locked up in the Synagogue without food or water. Arnau, the main character in the Novel, tried to negotiate a peaceful resolution. All he could achieve was their liberation against a huge sum to be paid to the Infante of the King and the burning at the stake of three prominent Jews. His concern for the Jews caused his incarceration in the dungeon under the Bishop’s palace, in preparation of his condemnation by the Inquisition. The Guild of the *bastaxos*, to which he had belonged since his 12th. Birthday, aroused the people of Barcelona and liberated him from the claws of the Inquisition. At least 2000 Jews had been killed. In 1391 the Barcelona Jewry was burnt down and completely destroyed by the people. Its habitants were put to death or forced to convert. The Jews did not return and in 1397 the King conceded Barcelona the right not to have a Jewry.¹⁰

⁹ Barbara Tuchman, *A Distant Mirror. The calamitous 14th. century*. New York 1978 at p. 109.

¹⁰ Ildefonso Falcones, *CATHEDRAL OF THE SEA*. (Translation Nick Caistor. Doubleday 2008.

A RADICAL BREAK

The word became flesh, he lived among us and we saw his glory, the glory that he has from the father as only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. ”(John 1, 15)

There is no doubt that the faith in the risen Jesus-Christ as expressed in the Prologue to the Gospel of St. John, constituted a radical break with the Jewish tradition. The Jewish faith of the Book relied on continuous study and discussion of the word of God as written in the books of the Bible. As the word had become flesh, the new faith constituted a call to follow Jesus. It gave rise to the development of “the doctrine of the person of Jesus in relation to the Father... studied largely on the basis of writings drafted against heresy, against Judaism, and against paganism.”¹¹ In this development the more fundamental conflict arose between the Hellenistic Jews and Hellenistic Jewish-Christians over the question of the continuity of Christianity with Judaism. After the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., that conflict marked the relations between Christians and Jews everywhere, wrote Pelikan. According to him: “Most of Christian doctrine developed in a Church uninformed by any knowledge of the original text of the Hebrew Bible.¹² De-Judaization of Christianity and the loss of contact with Jewish thought was the consequence. “ Whereas the twelve Apostles were Jews, none of the Church fathers were.

DISPERSED AND CONDEMNED

The destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. dispersed the Jewish people all over the Roman Empire and the world beyond. From the fourth century onwards, they were “made wanderers upon the face of the earth’ in the name of Christian doctrine, ... until the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948 and the re-unification of the City of Jerusalem in 1967. During this very long era, Jews were subject to vilification, humiliation, inquisition, injustice and worse.. ; a tradition, still not overcome as can be seen in such websites as “the Christian Solution” and Maurice Pinay’s blog.

¹¹ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*. Volume 1 in “The Christian Tradition. A History of the Development of Doctrine. University of Chicago Press 171. At p.11.

¹² Loc. Cit. at p. 21.

“Many centuries of blindness have cloaked our eyes so that we can no longer see the beauty of thy chosen people, nor recognise in their faces the features of our privileged brethren”.

How was it possible that the eyes in the Roman Catholic Church and in the Orthodox Churches had been cloaked with blindness for so many Centuries? Why have generations of Jews continued to be charged and killed for a crime – Deicide - they did not commit? Why did so many proclaim or believe that “the blood of Christ calls out against them”?

For many centuries Catholics prayed for the conversion of the “perfidious Jews” on Good Friday; so did Orthodox and Anglican Christians; clearly as history tells us, “hatred in the form of a prayer”. Very often the prayer acted as a call for pogroms and violent attacks on Jewish fellow citizens throughout Christian – Eastern and Western – Europe.¹³

Another part of the answer lies in the doctrine of appropriation¹⁴, by which it is taught that we, the Christian Church, have taken the place of the Jewish People as the “true Israel”. After

¹³ After the Second World War, the prayer was changed several times:

The form used before 1955 read as follows: “Let us pray also for the faithless Jews: that Almighty God may remove the veil from their hearts ; so that they too may acknowledge Jesus Christ our Lord. ('Amen' is not responded, nor is said 'Let us pray', or 'Let us kneel', or 'Arise', but immediately is said:) Almighty and eternal God, who dost not exclude from thy mercy even Jewish faithlessness: hear our prayers, which we offer for the blindness of that people; that acknowledging the light of thy Truth, which is Christ, they may be delivered from their darkness. Through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.”

Pope Pius XII instituted kneeling for this petition as at the other petitions of the litany, so that the prayer read:” Let us pray also for the faithless Jews: that almighty God may remove the veil from their hearts; so that they too may acknowledge Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us pray. Let us kneel. [pause for silent prayer] Arise. Almighty and eternal God, who dost not exclude from thy mercy even Jewish faithlessness: hear our prayers, which we offer for the blindness of that people; that acknowledging the light of thy Truth, which is Christ, they may be delivered from their darkness. Through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.”

, Pope John XXIII ordered that the word "faithless" (Latin: perfidis) be removed from the prayer for the conversion of the Jews, Accordingly, the prayer was revised to read: “Let us pray also for the Jews: that almighty God may remove the veil from their hearts; so that they too may acknowledge Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us pray. Let us kneel. Arise. Almighty and eternal God, who dost also not exclude from thy mercy the Jews: hear our prayers, which we offer for the blindness of that people; the light of thy Truth, which is Christ, they may be delivered from their darkness. Through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen

After the Second Vatican Council, the prayer was completely revised for the 1970 edition of the Roman Missal. “Let us pray for the Jewish people, the first to hear the word of God, that they may continue to grow in the love of his name and in faithfulness to his covenant. (Prayer in silence. Then the priest says:) Almighty and eternal God, long ago you gave your promise to Abraham and his posterity. Listen to your Church as we pray that the people you first made your own may arrive at the fullness of redemption. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Changes made by Pope benedict XVI,(not followed):

“Let us also pray for the Jews: That our God and Lord may illuminate their hearts, that they acknowledge Jesus Christ is the Savior of all men. (Let us pray. Kneel. Rise.) Almighty and eternal God, who want that all men be saved and come to the recognition of the truth, propitiously grant that even as the fullness of the peoples enters Thy Church, all Israel be saved. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.”

¹⁴ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition. A History of the Development of Doctrine. 1. The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*. Chicago 1971. P. 11 ff.

Jesus the Redeemer, the Jewish people have ceased to exist and the Jewish Scriptures, we now call the Old Testament, have been taken over as our own as Christians. They are no longer Your Jewish scriptures because the Jewish people according to Catholic and Orthodox doctrine no longer exists. Henceforward the Old and the New Testament are to be read and interpreted as determined by the Councils and the Magisterium of the Church. This doctrine of appropriation ignores the reality of (say) the Book of Psalms and rejects the interpretations of the Torah in the Mishna, the Talmud and the Midrash as evil. In all our Christian Churches as in all Jewish communities, the Psalms are the core of our daily prayers!

As a consequence, surviving Jews must convert or wander and die, and the Talmud can only be the work of Satan. Not Jesus Christ Himself, but Christian doctrine as it developed since Emperor Constantine and the Church Councils, convoked to define true doctrine as against Jews, Samaritans, heretics and pagans, became the foundation from which hatred for the Jews, and the persecution of Jews emerged and developed until our present days. The true doctrine's principal issue was the proper definition of Jesus-Christ, God-man, one nature, Messiah as promised in the Jewish scriptures.

The Jewish Rabbi's, who in Palestine and Babylonia, composed the Talmud, were inspired by the opposite belief: detailed rules and customs are required to prepare for the coming of the Messiah. They can be drafted only through serious study, argument and counterargument, and dialogue.

UNFINISHED

God's kingdom, as I quoted Guardini¹⁵, did not come as it was meant to. Its acceptance or rejection .. depended on the response of the individual or group in every period of world history. One might understand why Jesus was not recognized as the Messiah by all the Jews living at the time, because He did not come as they had been foretold. Under Roman occupation, Jesus did not liberate them as had been their expectation. He was crucified by the Romans as thousands of other Jews were after Him.

In : 'The Sacrifice of Isaac: A Survivor's Story', Elie Wiesel wrote on the role played by this story as interpreted by the Christian Churches:

¹⁵ Chapter 2, supra.

“the threat hanging over Isaac is seen as a prefiguration of the crucifixion. Except that on Mount Moriah the act was not consummated: the father did not abandon his son. Such is the distance between Moriah and Golgotha. In Jewish tradition man cannot use death as a means of glorifying God. Every man is an end unto himself, a living eternity; no man has the right to sacrifice another, not even to God... For the Jew, all truth must spring from life, never from death. To us, crucifixion represents not a step forward but a step backward: at the top of Moriah, the living remains alive, thus marking the end of an era of ritual murder. To invoke the *Akeda* is tantamount to calling for mercy – whereas from the beginning Golgotha has served as pretext for countless massacres of sons and fathers cut down together by sword and fire in the name of a word that considered itself as synonymous with love.”¹⁶

Therefore, and certainly after the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. faithful Jews could and ought to have been accepted as fellow believers. Their Messiah and Christ’s Second Coming might have united them in diversity. Why did it not happen until Pope John XXIII in the Twentieth century? Is it because Constantine’s Christian Empire politically intervened? Such it did, but as an argument for sixteen centuries of persecution it cannot satisfy. The deeper answer must be sought in the way in which the call to follow Jesus was turned into a political doctrine to be imposed and accepted as the only truth.

According to Friedrich Heer, Christianity today can be compared to an uprooted tree or forest from the soil it comes from. He wrote his book to redeem Christian guilt for what Adolf Hitler and the Nazi’s did to the Jews in the Holocaust.¹⁷ The long tradition of anti-Jewish Christian doctrine has been a breeding ground for hatred, humiliation, persecution and crimes, including the Holocaust during the Second World War. Pope John XXIII and the Vatican Council convoked by Him, tried to redeem a very old and persistent Christian guilt, so far with partial success.

The Story of (another) Saul who became Paul.

¹⁶ In *Messengers of God*, p. 90-91. Akeda stands for “Binding” of Isaac.

¹⁷ Friedrich Heer, *Gottes Erste Liebe. Die Juden im Spannungsfeld der Geschichte*. Ulstein 1986. English translation: *God’s First Love. Christians and Jews Over Two Thousand Years*. London 1999.

Saul, son of Salomon grew up in the Jewish Community of Troyes in France, to which the generation of his grandfather had escaped following the pogrom in Blois in which his great grandfather had been killed at the age of 18. Saul did not want to become a scribe as family tradition prescribed, but became a banker. In this capacity he met a lovely young Christian lady, Mathilde. She asked him to hide two books of Aristotle, at the time forbidden to Christians. Thereafter she took him to her brother, a Benedictine Abbot. Saul and Mathilde fell in love and married in the Latin Church after Saul was baptized and became Paul. It was the year 1214 C.E. His family, except his youngest brother, broke off all contact. At the time of the Fourth Lateran Council, he joined his brother in law, the Abbot, to Rome. It was the Council in which it was decided that Jews should bear a round or circular yellow badge, to more clearly separate them from the Christians. In Troyes the badge came only twenty years later, after Paul and Mathilde had died from an epidemic disease. Their son Mathieu, married and with three children, was employed as a scribe in the Episcopal office. He was quite upset by the way Christians treated the Jews. In discussions he used to quote St. Augustine that “the Jews hold the Book from which the Christians drew their faith”. To which his opponents replied: “The Jews have abandoned the Book for the Talmud; we Christians now are the Book’s sole heirs”. His bishop often warned him to be careful, because the Dominican monks are persecuting heretics and Jews. To alleviate his suffering, the Bishop sent him on a mission to Paris to deliver a document. While in Paris, he heard that King Louis IX had ordered (in 1242 C.E.) to requisition all copies of the Talmud – “writings of the devil” - and burn them. So it happened in a large public manifestation, where he met a Jewish scribe from his town Troyes – in tears. Back home, after several discussion with his Bishop and a long night of prayer, he appeared in office with the circular yellow badge on his dress, in solidarity with the Jews he had encountered in Paris. Shortly thereafter he was arrested by Dominican monks on the charge of revolt and conspiracy against our holy mother the Church. When asked who among the Jews had instigated him to wear the Badge, he answered: “Jesus of Nazareth!” That is blasphemy, his interrogators answered, and they decided to torture him until he would give the names of his Jewish conspirators. He died during torture.¹⁸

The story is part of a family history that runs from Abraham, fleeing the burning Temple of Jerusalem in the year 70 C.E. until Marek Halter, the author who was born in Warsaw, survived the Holocaust and lives in France. It is a history of wandering Jews, who in great majority kept the faith and remained part of the Jewish Community dispersed and spread over

¹⁸ The story is from: Marek Halter, *La Mémoire d'Abraham*. Paris 1983.

many countries. Condemned to be “dispersed as wanderers” in Christian Europe, many always found another local Jewish community to which they could go.

The charge of conspiracy in the story above was without foundation. The charge – together with many others – has led to many executions - hanging, decapitating or burning at the stake - throughout European history.

Wanderers

The original Abraham, ancestor of the Jewish people “appears to have come from the city of Ur in Southern Mesopotamia. He left the sedentary world of Ur – the first civilization created by man – and became a wanderer.”¹⁹ He followed the arch of the fertile crescent in that part of the Middle East to end up in Canaan, sometime between 2000 and 1900 B. C. E. according to the Bible and (modern) Archeology. Before the beginning of the Common Era, Jews had wandered through the civilizations of Egypt, Babylonia, and Grece (Hellenism). The period of a united Israel was a very short period. King David united the kingdom. It fell apart shortly after death of his son, king Solomon.

THE STORY OF THE JEWS IN EUROPE.

There are many stories of Jews in Europe, some of them going back to the Babylonian exile in the fifth century B.C, most of them since the destruction of Jerusalem in the years 66-70 C.E.

The stories vary by country and era, but they are all part of the “Jewish problem”. As Elie Wiesel wrote:

“To prepare “solutions” to the “Jewish problem”, the first step was to divorce the Jew from mankind. The process is not new; it has endured for some two thousand years. We hear again and again, in explanation of outrages rife in many places, that there are the Jews and there are the others; the Jews are never entirely innocent, nor are the others ever entirely guilty. Object and non-subject of history,

¹⁹ Writes Chaim Potok in the opening chapter of *Wanderings, A History of the Jews*. Paperback 1980..

the Jew has been at the mercy of a society in which persecuting him first and murdering him later has at times led to sainthood or power.²⁰

Wherever they went, wherever they fled, they were and remained distinct communities, characterized by their strong faith:

‘That the Lord is our God, the Lord alone. Therefore, you shall love the Lord, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength.’ (Deut. 6).

Their strong faith in One God certainly has been a major reason for the survival and growth of the Jewish people, dispersed, persecuted, expelled or humiliated as they were all over Europe. In many ways the Jews kept and developed their faith parallel often to such developments among the Christians.

Soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, rabbis and scribes met to carefully write down the oral Tora (the *Mishna*), explain the Tora (in the *Talmud*), and give interpretations (*Midrash*).

It was the same era in which the Christians wrote the books of their “New Testament” and the Apostolic and Church Fathers developed Christian doctrine.

Jews in Europe lived and migrated as persecuted minorities. They tried to stay together around a synagogue in order to protect each other, often but not always separated from other human communities. As with other people, they knew poverty, decent living, prominence or wealth. Spread over many countries, they developed supreme networks of contacts. Some were prominent in trade and banking – like the Rothschilds – , in the medical profession, or in science and art – Einstein, Halevy or Mendelsohn. As people with a strong faith and a clear identity, they often did better than others; they financed the wars of Kings and Emperors and their doctors healed their children.

Fleeing from persecution in one place, they could migrate to other Jewish communities elsewhere. Jews had their golden age in Spain and Portugal in the early Middle Ages until their expulsion in the Fifteenth Century. They were welcome in the Northern Netherlands since the sixteenth century. They could live peacefully for many centuries in the Kingdom of Poland until the partition of Poland in 1792 and again for a brief period after the First World War in the Polish republic.

²⁰ Elie Wiesel, *‘Zionism and Racism. In A Jew Today*. New York 1978, p.41.

The often parallel developments in Jewish and Christian communities also showed through the ages, from writing down the Lord's teaching in the early centuries to nationalism and secularization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. European Jews substantially contributed to the development of European civilization, whether in music or medicine, art and architecture or science and learning.²¹

MEASURES AGAINST THE JEWS IN EUROPE.

It is important to keep in mind that the great variety of measures taken against Jewish citizens at different times and in different places can be understood only in the context of the anti-Jewish Cain-Doctrine as developed and formulated since the Fourth Century. According to the Cain-Doctrine every Jew was guilty by birth. As a consequence wickedness was presumed. Throughout these centuries therefore, a great variety of measures continued to be invented to restrict and control the Jews and keep them separate from Christians. The presumed wickedness of the Jews produced hateful and humiliating official texts and practices for instance with respect to the *Oath More Judico* and the designation of Jewish law as *superstitio Judaica* (*Jewish superstition*). Even such a merciful and holy Pope as Gregory the Great used this term *superstition* when referring to Jewish Law, in his correspondence with bishops.

Among the measures imposed upon them were special badges, dresses and headwear; special higher taxes and forced remittance of debts to Christians; the banning, confiscation and burning of Jewish Holy Books; expulsion from territories – e.g. from England, France, Spain, Portugal and the Papal territories; forced living in Ghetto's – in the Papal States even until Italian unification in 1870. The story in my first chapter of the Grand Inquisitor was not just fiction. The Inquisition had special interest in converted Jews who allegedly continued

²¹ Among the best books on the Jews in European history are: Simon Schama, *The Story of the Jews*. In two volumes. 2014 and 2017. Eva Hoffmann, *Shetl*. Vintage 1999. Chaim Potok, *Wanderings*. Fawcett crest 1980.

secretly to practice their Jewish faith; they could be denounced anonymously, as was Mathieu in the story I told above..

The official presumption of wickedness, had many consequences in daily life. We already referred to the Good Friday Prayer, that easily led to violent outbursts, pogroms and killing sprays, in France as much as in Russia and other European countries. The Good Friday prayer in the Orthodox Churches (still alive) was even more hateful than the Catholic one. We all know how deeply liturgy can enter our hearts and minds. It survived the centuries, also after the French Revolution and in the secular age. The Dreyfuss affair in France at the end of the nineteenth century, showed how much the presumption of wickedness was alive in the French Republic of Freedom, Fraternity and Equality.

Making Laws Against the Jews.

The Law of the Roman Republic was tolerant towards religious minorities, accepting their religion as licit and accepting also substantial legal autonomy as for instance with respect to Jewish Law.

Roman Law, after the Roman Empire was declared to be a Christian Empire, began to discriminate against the Jews from the fourth through seventh or eighth centuries. The Theodosian Code and the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* of Emperor Justinian issued specific prohibitions against Jews, Samaritans, heretics and heathens.

With respect to the Jews, Emperors had continuously to keep a balance between theological doctrine, political expediency and enforceability. The same applied to the Emperors, Czars, Popes, Patriarchs, Bishops, Kings, Queens, Princes and lower authorities. Church Councils on all levels promoted the application of the Cain-Doctrine, the Rulers looked at political expediency and personal profit. Enforceability was a problem everywhere.

The story of the **Jewry Oath** as told by Amnon Linder is a very telling example how Christian Europe handled its Jewish minorities throughout the centuries.²² The Oath was an ancient institution in the law of Israel and also found its way into Christian Europe. From the fifth century onwards Jews were required to take an oath so formulated as to be binding upon them under Jewish Law, unkindly referred to as *superstitio Judaica*. Oath taking was

²² Amnon Linder, The Jewry Oath in Christian Europe. In the excellent volume: *Jews in Early Christian Law: Byzantium and the Latin West, 6th.-11th century*. Edited by John Tolan, Nicholas de Lange, Laurence Foschia, Capucine Nemo-Pekelman. Brepols Turnhout 2014.

necessary for a variety of purposes, like appearing in Court, confirming transactions and accepting public functions. Jewry Oaths were dealt with in many law books and statutes from the sevenths through the nineteenth centuries. They had two components: a solemn invocation of God with the hand on the Torah, and curses or self-maledictions to discourage perjury. Oath taking confirmed a legal commitment and was a public ritual. The self-maledictions and the rituals imposed upon the Jewish party gave ample opportunity for humiliations, degradations and insults. Jews were ridiculed in the rituals and their curses would include the core of the Cain-doctrine, suggesting that the Jewish party would by definition commit perjury. The Cain-doctrine permeated the approach to the Jewish minorities in prayer, in law and in many other discriminatory and humiliating measures.

A REVOLUTION IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH?

“How absurd it is to make today’s Jews responsible for the crucifixion of Christ, is something everyone will understand who has even an iota of intelligence or conscience” wrote Irene Harand, a Viennese practicing Catholic in 1937.

To which John Connelly answered: “Yet in the Catholic Camp those considered most intelligent thought precisely that.”²³ And unfortunately even today too many Catholic and other Christians are still taught the Cain-Doctrine, despite the Revolution of 1965 when *Nostra Aetate* was formally proclaimed. A careful reading of the text (reprinted above) makes quite clear that the three theses of the Cain-Doctrine summarized above, have been rejected.

As Connelly explained in his outstanding book, the revolution was not made from the inside of the Church, although we rightly associate the revolution with Holy Pope John XXIII; confirmed in his last prayer we copied earlier in this chapter. Pope John and the Vatican Council acted on the initiative of a number of persons converted from Judaism to the Catholic Church; persons who at the same time came to their initiative on the basis of an ongoing dialogue with fellow Jews as Martin Buber.²⁴

²³ John Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother. The Revolution in Catholic teaching on the Jews. 1933-1965*. Harvard University Press 2012. On p. 141/142.

²⁴ Most prominent among them was John M. Oesterreicher. See e.g. his: *The Rediscovery of Judaism: A Re-examination of the Conciliar Statement on the Jews*. The Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies. 1971. In: Seton Hall University eRepository@Seton Hall.

The post-Conciliar Church – Holy Pope John-Paul II – has taken up the challenge of the Revolution with conviction and commitment as can be followed through the new institutions for Catholic-Jewish dialogue and the record of publications.²⁵

The Catholic Church after her revolution is faced with two major problems. The first one concerns the relationship between the “Anti-Judaism” of the past and the Anti-Semitism of the present since the 19th. Century. The second one concerns the question, who is to be held responsible for the Anti-Judaism in the Christian Churches.²⁶

On the first, the answer in the document “We Remember” is that modern anti-Semitism that led to the Holocaust/Shoa, is not related to the religious Anti-Judaism of the Church, but to nineteenth century nationalism. On the second, the documents insist that the “erroneous and unjust interpretations of certain texts in the New Testament regarding the Jewish people” did not come from the Church as such, but from unidentified Christian circles.

The two arguments are rightly challenged by David Kertzer, and I quote:

“This argument, sadly, is not the product of a Church that wants to confront its history. If Jews acquired equal rights in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it was only over the angry, loud, and indeed indignant protests of the Vatican and the Church. And if Jews in the nineteenth century began to be accused of exerting a disproportionate and dangerous influence, and if a form of anti-Judaism "that was essentially more sociological and political than religious" was taking shape, this was in no small part due to the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church itself.

As this book will show, the distinction made in the report between "anti-Judaism" -- of which some unnamed and misinformed Christians were unfortunately guilty in the past -- and "anti-Semitism," which led to the horrors of the Holocaust, will simply not survive historical scrutiny.

The notion that the Church fostered only negative "religious" views of the Jews, and not negative images of their harmful social, economic, cultural, and political effects -- the latter identified with modern anti-Semitism -- is clearly belied by the

²⁵ In particular: Commission for religious relations with the Jews: *The Gifts and the Calling of God are Irrevocable*. A Reflection... on the occasion of the 50th. Anniversary of Nostra Aetate. 10 December 2015

²⁶ Cf. *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoa*. Document of the Commission for religious relations with the Jews. 16 March 1998.

historical record. As modern anti-Semitic movements took shape at the end of the nineteenth century, the Church was a major player in them, constantly warning people of the rising "Jewish peril." What, after all, were the major tenets of this modern anti-Semitic movement if not such warnings as these: Jews are trying to take over the world; Jews have already spread their voracious tentacles around the nerve centres of Austria, Germany, France, Hungary, Poland, and Italy; Jews are rapacious and merciless, seeking at all costs to get their hands on all the world's gold, having no concern for the number of Christians they ruin in the process; Jews are unpatriotic, a foreign body ever threatening the well-being of the people among whom they live; special laws are needed to protect society, restricting the Jews rights and isolating them. Every single one of these elements of modern anti-Semitism was not only embraced by the Church but actively promulgated by official and unofficial Church organs.

The Commission's neat distinction between anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism was not new to the 1998 document. In the wake of the Second World War, scholars and theologians close to the Church began to look for a way to defend the Church from the charge of having helped lay the groundwork for the Holocaust. The anti-Semitism vs. anti-Judaism distinction soon became an article of faith that relieved the Church of any responsibility for what happened. Before long, millions of people came to assume its historical reality."²⁷

Kertzer's challenge finds support from an unexpected source, the tolerant Dutch. In 1858, the Catholic Church was re-established in the Netherlands. In its first Pastoral Council of 1865, the Church re-affirmed the Catholic doctrine against the Jews by its strict prohibition for Catholics to socialise with the Jews.²⁸ His challenge also finds support in John Connelly's book, where he writes: "Clearly the Holocaust was unthinkable without the ancient Christian legacy of deicide as well as the related idea that Jews were cut off from divine grace, destined to wander the earth until they turned to Christ."

The Cain-Doctrine for many centuries was part and parcel of the prayers, the teaching, the lore, the policy and the practice of the Christian churches at least until Holy Pope John

²⁷ David I. Kertzer, *The Popes Against the Jews. The Vatican's Role in the rise of modern anti-semitism*. Vintage eBooks. The quotes are copied from his article in the New York Times. Archives 2001.

²⁸ Marcel Poorthuis en Theo Salemink, *Een Donkere Spiegel*. Valkhof pers 2006.

XXIII and the Declaration *Nostra Aetate*.. It still is responsible for the deeply held presumption of Jewish wickedness among the Christian faithful and today's secularists. The doctrine, since the nineteenth century, easily merged into racial anti-Semitism, as has been made all too clear by Kertzer and John Connelly²⁹.

There still is another reason why the distinction between Anti-Judaism and Anti-Semitism is a false argument, namely in the treatment of Jews converted to the Christian faith. According to official doctrine Jews could avoid persecution or expulsion by personal conversion. Still, converted Jews were not trusted, many of them were brought before the inquisition on the basis of (as usual) anonymous allegations, or persecuted otherwise..

It needs acceptance of error and sin, and repentance on all levels from the Holy See, the Ecumenical and the Autocephalous Patriarchates of the Eastern Churches (and other Christian Churches) down to the simplest believer. The Cain-Doctrine is a reminder that the doctrines formulated under political leadership of Emperors and Popes can and did err as they did with respect to the Jewish people. Where doctrines about the faith in Jesus Christ intervene, often in conflict with others - referred to as heathens, heretics, Samaritans or Jews – the faithful are bound to be spiritually poisoned and to split and divide. The division between Christians and Jews originated in the same political context of Constantine's Christian Empire as the later schism between East and West in the Christian Church.

What can be learned from the long and sad history of the Cain-Doctrine is threefold.

The **first** one is that the effort to formulate doctrine, always as against others, is by nature a political exercise in the garb of theology. For Emperor Constantine the Great, the (first) Council of Nicea had a clear political purpose. He had little patience with theological niceties, but was determined to put an end to the (Arian) controversy. He therefore played a prominent part in the debates at the Ecumenical Council of Nicea (325 CE) for the purpose of maintaining unity in his Christian Empire.³⁰ The often quoted principle: *Cuius Regio Eius Religio* goes back at least to Emperor Constantine and is at the origin of all religious divisions dealt with in this chapters and the next ones. Being so, it is important to realize that the principle is meant to operate top-down but never bottom-up!

²⁹ Cf. note 16 above. *Op.cit.* p. 9.

³⁰ Cf. John Julius Norwich, *A Short History of Byzantium*.. Viking 1997.

The **second** one is the danger of being locked up in one's own formulated truth. The long and sad story of the persecution of the Jews in Christian Europe allows for no other conclusion than that the Cain-Doctrine is fundamentally wrong. It is the claim to the truth by which the centuries of blindness, Pope John XXIII referred to in his prayer, could occur. It was by the same claim that "those considered most intelligent" in the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, failed to understand the absurdity of making Jews throughout 20 centuries responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus under Roman occupation in the year 33. *Nostra Aetate* teaches us all that this second danger can be avoided only through interreligious dialogue, an open mind, the spirit of reconciliation and the virtue of humility, to begin with.

AMPLE ROOM FOR EVIL

The **third** and by far the worst one is the extent to which Europe's civilization at large, has been deeply poisoned by the Cain-doctrine. I begin with a simple example. When I was a little boy in a Catholic family in the Netherlands during the Second World War, I met only other Catholic boys. Contact with Protestants was to be avoided; with Jews it was forbidden by the Church. In the post-war years, we learned about occupation, starvation, liberation and recovery. It took almost twenty years before a real discussion began on anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, and much longer before it became a major, popular issue.

Another most painful example concerns the fate of the baptized Jews in the Netherlands during the German occupation. From the beginning of the occupation, the Dutch Christian Churches tried to protect their baptized Jews from deportation. The Catholic Archbishop, Jan de Jong of Utrecht wanted a more principled approach, namely a condemnation of the deportation of all Jews, catholic or not. Not all bishops and other Christian leaders supported him. The Nazi's used this difference of approach to sow division among them. While suggesting willingness not to deport baptized Jews, they raided two abbeys on 2 August 1942. Two nuns and three Trappist monks were arrested, apparently with no resistance from their superiors, and deported to Auschwitz, where they were gassed on 9 August,³¹.. One of them, Edith Stein, baptized as Teresa Benedicta of the Cross was later made a Saint and co-patroness of Europe by Pope John-Paul II.

³¹ Peter Steffen & Hans Evers, *Scheuren in het Kleed. Het Joods-Katholieke Gezin Lööb*. Valkhof Pers 2009

Facing Evil: Amnesia, Collaboration, Cowardice, Indifference and Paralysis

On January 27, 1945 the German extermination Camp Auschwitz was liberated by the Soviet Army. In 2020 the place of hell was commemorated in an impressive ceremony to which the Polish President had invited world leaders and the still living survivors. It was an impressive ceremony, broadcasted by many TV networks in Europe.

The theme was: NEVER AGAIN. Auschwitz stands as a symbol for Hitler's "Final Solution" of the Jewish problem, by which the Nazi's between 1939 and 1945 massacred 6 million Jews; over 1 million of them in Auschwitz. Most of the others were killed where they lived, by special German SS units – the so called *Einsatzgruppen* - moving East following the troops of the invasion of Poland in 1939 and the German operation Barbarossa against the Soviet Union in 1941.

The massacres of the Jews of Europe, from Hitler's coming to power in 1933 until the final defeat of Nazi-Germany in May 1945, raise many troubling questions. Much has been written about the Holocaust. Some survivors wrote shortly after the war; among them Primo Levi and Eddy de Wind in "*Eindstation Auschwitz*", first published in 1946, but hardly known or read until 2020, or Elie Wiesel, who devoted his life to trying to understand. Many survivors could not write about the hell they had gone through. A few turned their suffering into a service for others, like Victor Frankl and Edith Eger. Anne Frank had written a diary, found and published after the war. Some, who were born after the Second World War took it up, as Geraldine Schwarz, but also Heather Morris with her two shocking stories of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*, and *Cilka's Journey*.

I belong to the generation who discovered much later, but ever since, keep trying to understand; an unending effort. For this final paragraph, I refer to the variety of approaches and select Primo Levi and some of the most recent publications in the year 2020 of remembrance.

Geraldine Schwarz in her recently published and translated book, *THOSE WHO FORGET*, writes about what she discovered about her grandfather's collaboration with the Nazi's and focusses on the great majority of the German people, who had not killed anyone, had not done anything to oppose the massacres and sometimes acted to take advantage of it.

Primo Levi survived Auschwitz and saw it as his task to analyze and explain what happened and why. In his last book, *THE DROWNED AND THE SAVED*, he explored the grey zone of those prisoners of the German Extermination Camps, who survived, who cooperated, who carried out the orders and who were employed as slaves in the companies that producing the gas and the other instruments to kill. All survivors of the Holocaust record how the extermination and concentration camps lowered respectable German officers, average soldiers, Kapos and medical doctors to perpetrators of murder and torture, worse than beasts – without understanding why. How could so many persons living in a land formed by centuries of Christian education sink so low?

Edith Eger wrote *THE CHOICE*, published in 2017. It took her many years before she could write about her experiences in Auschwitz and her escape from death. Impressed by the writings of Victor Frankl, she decided to devote her life to heal others as a psychologist. Her book is a moving and impressive account of her human capacity to survive and to heal from unspeakable evil, heal others and radiate joy.

Laurence Rees spent twenty five years to meet survivors and perpetrators of the Holocaust and combined their witnesses with the academic research in his book: *THE HOLOCAUST. A NEW HISTORY*, published in 2017.

Again others, like Walter Laqueur in *THE TERRIBLE SECRET*, and Martin Gilbert in *AUSCHWITZ AND THE ALLIES*, analyze why the Allies failed to deal with the “Final Solution” as the major problem in the war against Hitler Germany.

Elie Wiesel, whom I quoted already in this chapter, published his first book *NUIT*, (*NIGHT*) in 1958:

“Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed. Never shall I forget that smoke. Never shall I forget the little faces of the children, whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky. Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever.”

Questions on why so many looked away, partly covered by Geraldine Schwarz are the most difficult to answer. Primo Levi mentions them in the Chapter *Shame*: “they are those who faced by the crime of others or their own, turn their backs so as not to see it and not feel touched by it: this is what the majority of Germans did during the twelve Hitlerian years,

deluding themselves that not seeing was a way of not knowing, and that not knowing relieved them of their share of complicity or connivance”.³² They were the guilty ones – by voluntary omission, cover up or criminal acts - who did not talk. Very few of them were prosecuted and they were protected by family, friends or neighbors. Geraldine Schwarz wrote about them, because she felt guilty about her grandfather and had the moral courage to inquire and publish.

A deeper and hardly ever mentioned cause for people “turning their backs and not feeling touched”, is that their inner thoughts had been poisoned by the Cain-Doctrine, transmitted and taught during their Christian upbringing. Traces of that poison can even be found in the way the allied powers dealt with the problem during the war. Lack of genuine concern, if not indifference about their fellow-Jews with the German people gave Hitler and the Nazi’s the free hand to organize the Final Solution until the very end. For the allies it was no priority issue. The degradation (*Entwürdigung*) of the Jews through the Cain-Doctrine facilitated their degradation and the Final Solution by the Nazi’s.

This was the case in particular with the German Catholic Church. Hierarchy and the faithful went along with the racial theories of the Nazi Party. There was no protest against the Nuremberg Laws in 1935 or the *Kristallnacht* in 1938 and no protest even against the announcement and the initiation of the Final Solution of the Jewish problem. There were no admonitions or measures against Catholics serving in the army or the SS. The best one could find was a careful and unsuccessful effort by the bishops to protect converted Catholic Jewish citizens in their flock, against deportation, in line with the general approach of the Catholic Church to give first priority to protecting her own faithful. This conclusion is confirmed by Laurence Rees, where he refers to the successful protest of Bishop von Galen against the T4 action, the program for the euthanasia killings of handicapped people:

“It is significant that something similar was not attempted [...] over the treatment of the Jews. Underlying anti-Semitism among much of the population was not the only reason for this lack of action. Protests also did not occur because the Catholic Church in Germany had distanced itself from the persecution of the Jews, fearing the consequences for the church itself of protesting [...] Hitler knew that many of

³² On p. 65. Primo Levi, *THE DROWNED AND THE SAVED*. Abacus 1988. Translated from the Italian. Geraldine Schwarz, *Les Amnésiques*. Flammarion 2017. English translation “Those Who Forget. Simon&Schuster 2020. Walter Laqueur, *THE TERRIBLE SECRET*. Boston 1980 (third edition). Martin Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*. London 1981.

his supporters were Christians and that without their support his ambitions would be damaged.”³³

At least three other considerations could be added in the case of the German Catholic Church. The Catholic Church supported Hitler in his ant-communist policy;

In war, with also Catholic soldiers in battle – it had to support the national cause. After all, nationalism, as we shall discuss in Chapter VI, was since the Nineteenth Century Europe’s dominant political religion.

The third consideration concerns the policy of Pope Pius XII and the Holy See. In their refusal to protest, the Church had the Holy See on their side. Pope Pius XII, the diplomat and spiritual leader faced two dilemma’s, the first between the principle of neutrality in war and the call for moral leadership when faced with evil done to human persons. Neutrality meant no condemnation of any of the warring parties. Moral leadership brought another dilemma between clearly speaking out on evil, and keeping silent to protect the faithful belonging to the Church. The Pope opted for the latter also – so the argument - to be able to give as much assistance as possible to the victims of Nazi Germany. Nevertheless, questions remain with respect to the Pope’s silence, that even the documents of the State Secretariat published since 1964 cannot answer.³⁴ Among them are the deportation of Jews from Slovakia, at the time its president was a Catholic priest; the deportation of the Jews of Rome; and the deportation of Hungarian Jews, where the Pope indeed helped convince - by diplomatic dispatch – Admiral Horthy to discontinue the deportations, as he did in July 1944 after 430.000 of them had already been deported to Auschwitz. Thereafter, nevertheless, Eichmann (still in Budapest) found the “solution” to have them deported directly to the Reich; if they could not be transported, they could walk. By November 1944 27,000 Hungarian Jews were on their appalling march to the remaining death- and concentration camps³⁵.

Neutrality in the Second World War was an impossibility. The Second World War began with the conclusion of the Nazi-Soviet Treaty of Non-Aggression in 1939 and became world war with the Japanese attack on Pearl-Harbor and the Grand-Alliance of 1941 between the United States of America, Great Britain and the Soviet Union. The Grand Alliance, wrote Norman Davies:

³³ P. 214/215.

³⁴ Cf. Pierre Blet s.j., *Pie XII et la Seconde Guerre mondiale d’après les archives du Vatican*. Perrin 1997.

³⁵ Op. cit. at p. 409.

“was every bit as shocking as that of the Nazi-Soviet partnership two years earlier. Every principle of the Anglo-Saxon democracies was contradicted by the Soviet system. Nor was it just a matter of forgetting Stalin’s past crimes. The Western leaders had to close their minds to the fact that Stalin continued to kill perhaps a million of his own people every year throughout the war. But Stalin was weak and Hitler was strong, Stalin had to be helped. By Stalin’s standards, the Western democracies were every bit as nauseating and ‘anti-socialist’ as the Führer. But with the Wehrmacht at the gates of Moscow, the helping hand of the West had to be accepted; ideological niceties did not enter the reckoning. Though the anti-Nazi alliance was to be wrapped in the verbiage of freedom, democracy, and justice, the Big Three were bound together by cynical convenience.”³⁶

Pope Pius XII had no good argument for neutrality. He was clearly anti-Communist and was shocked by the Nazi-Soviet partnership, more than by Hitler’s Operation Barbarossa. He was no great friend of liberal democracy and must have felt completely lost when the Grand Alliance between the Soviets and the two Western democracies was concluded. In addition the Pope had a problem, similar to that of the Western Allies. Hitler’s racial war, developing into a war of extermination and the Holocaust was unthinkable to any decent human mind.

WAR OF EXTERMINATION AND THE HOLOCAUST

The totalitarian nature of the Nazi Regime in which all power was invested from above, made any control or resistance from below almost impossible. The order of evil from above paralyzed people and the Catholic Church in particular, infected as it was by the Cain-Doctrine:³⁷ paralysis in addition to degradation, collaboration, cowardice, amnesia and indifference.

From above in Nazi-Germany ruled Adolf Hitler, an Austrian Corporal in the Great or First World War, who managed by violence and hatred to climb all the way up to become *Reichskanzler* of Germany in 1933. From the outset ‘the Jew’ was his first adversary. The overriding aim of his government was the uncompromising removal of the Jews altogether,

³⁶ From his *Europe, A History*. PIMLICO, 1997 as quoted in my *Western Cooperation*, p. 71/72.

³⁷ Cf. Guenter Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi-Germany*. New York 1964. Also: John Connelly, *op.cit.*

from Germany and any other European country. For him Jews and Bolsheviks were undistinguishable. Jews, Slavs and Romas were all *Untermenschen*, sub humans to be exterminated for the protection and domination of the pure Aryan Race.

Hitler's war of extermination was directed against all of them. The war began with the invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939. The so called *Einsatzgruppen* followed the advancing German armies and started murdering Poles. "Up to 6 million people living in Poland – at least half of them Jews – lost their lives. The vast majority of these people did not die in battle but as a result of a deliberate policy of starvation, deportation and murder."³⁸ Initially this war of extermination was fought together with the Soviet Union, whose invasion started on 17 September. Katyn stood for the deliberate murder of Polish leaders and intellectuals on Stalin's order.

The next phase in the war of extermination came when Hitler's armies, launched the invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941. Again and more of them, *Einsatzgruppen* followed the advancing armies to murder as many Slavs and Jews as possible. And not them alone. Special units of the Order Police, the Waffen SS and the Wehrmacht were also involved in the cleansing actions behind the frontlines. For Hitler "having decided to invade he felt now spiritually free." His 'spiritual' freedom manifested itself in his desire to wage a war without rules and without compassion for the defeated." And "at the epicenter of the Nazi's hatred, lay, as always, the Jews."³⁹

Among them were the 34.000 Jews killed in Kiev, dumped in Babi-Yar.⁴⁰ On 29 September 1941, ten days after the Germans conquered Kiev, all Jews of the city were killed.⁴¹

First the Germans and thereafter the Russians did everything to erase traces of the killings.

"No monument stands over Babi Yar.

A steep cliff only, like the rudest headstone.

I am afraid.

Today, I am as old

³⁹ Op.cit at p. 205

⁴⁰ A. Anatoli (Kuznetsov), *BABI YAR. A document in the form of a novel*. Translated by David Floyd. New York 1970.

⁴¹ Timothy Snyder, *BLOODLANDS. Europe between Hitler and Stalin*. P. 202ff. Basic Books 2010. Before the end of 1941, more than 50.000 Jews had been killed East of the line established in the Non-Agression Pact of 1939.

As the entire Jewish race itself.

I see myself an ancient Israelite.

I wander o'er the roads of ancient Egypt

And here, upon the cross, I perish, tortured

And even now, I bear the marks of nails.

It seems to me that Dreyfus is myself.

The Philistines betrayed me – and now judge.

I'm in a cage. Surrounded and trapped,

I'm persecuted, spat on, slandered, and

The dainty dollies in their Brussels frills

Squeal, as they stab umbrellas at my face.

I see myself a boy in Belostok

Blood spills, and runs upon the floors,

The chiefs of bar and pub rage unimpeded

And reek of vodka and of onion, half and half.

I'm thrown back by a boot, I have no strength left,

In vain I beg the rabble of pogrom,

To jeers of "Kill the Jews, and save our Russia!"

My mother's being beaten by a clerk.

O, Russia of my heart, I know that you

Are international, by inner nature.

But often those whose hands are steeped in filth

Abused your purest name, in name of hatred.

I know the kindness of my native land.

How vile, that without the slightest quiver
The anti-Semites have proclaimed themselves

The “Union of the Russian People!”

It seems to me that I am Anna Frank,
Transparent, as the thinnest branch in April,
And I’m in love, and have no need of phrases,
But only that we gaze into each other’s eyes.

How little one can see, or even sense!

Leaves are forbidden, so is sky,
But much is still allowed – very gently
In darkened rooms each other to embrace.

-“They come!”

-“No, fear not – those are sounds

Of spring itself.

She’s coming soon. Quickly, your lips!”

-“They break the door!”

-“No, river ice is breaking...”

Wild grasses rustle over Babi Yar,
The trees look sternly, as if passing judgement.
Here, silently, all screams, and, hat in hand,
I feel my hair changing shade to gray.
And I myself, like one long soundless scream
Above the thousands of thousands interred,
I’m every old man executed here,

As I am every child murdered here.
No fiber of my body will forget this.
May “Internationale” thunder and ring
When, for all time, is buried and forgotten
The last of anti-Semites on this earth.
There is no Jewish blood that’s blood of mine,
But, hated with a passion that’s corrosive
Am I by anti-Semites like a Jew.
And that is why I call myself a Russian!⁴²

Babi Yar was just one killing ground on the Eastward moving war-front. The German murder brigades did not only kill Jews, but also other Soviet citizens either as bolshevists or subhuman Slaves, some 4.1 million of them in the German-occupied territories.

Also, it should not be forgotten that the majority of Soviet prisoners of war (3.3 million out of 5.7) perished in German captivity and deliberately so.

Murder to the End

After the first German defeat at the battle of Stalingrad, Poland became the epi-center of the “Final Solution” of the Jewish problem. Between March 1942 and November 1943, almost 1.7 million people had been murdered, most of them in one of the three death camps Belzec, Sobibór and Treblinka. By December 1943 all these camps had been destroyed and vanished. Auschwitz now remained as the central extermination camp of the Holocaust.

When Soviet troops liberated Auschwitz on 27 January 1945, only the sick and the dying had been left by the SS murderers. The others – between 113,000 and 230,000 - were forced on the winter roads to walk to camps in Germany and Austria. On these ‘**death marches**’ more

⁴² **BABI YAR** By Yevgeni Yevtushenko. Translated by Benjamin Okopnik, 10/96. **NOTES:** Alfred Dreyfus was a French officer, unfairly dismissed from service in 1894 due to trumped-up charges prompted by anti-Semitism. Belostok was the site of the first and most violent pogroms, the Russian version of Kristallnacht. “Internationale” was the Soviet national anthem.

than one in three died by exhaustion, or were shot. Among the survivors were Edith Eger and her sister Magda. More dead than alive, they had finally arrived at Mauthausen, one of the very worst camps in the German Nazi-camp system.

“My sister is dying slowly of starvation; my sister holds food in her hand. She clutches the tin the way she clutches her hair once, trying to hold on to herself. An unopenable can of fish is the most human part of her now. We are the dead and the near dead. I can’t tell which I am...Cries break me out of a sleep that resembles death. I wait for the promised explosion, for the promised heat. I keep my eyes closed and wait to burn. But there is no explosion. There is no flame. I open my eyes, and I can see jeeps rolling slowly in through the pine forest.... Someone is singing “When the Saints Go Marching in”. But as they happen, I have no idea what they mean....I see an American handing cigarettes to inmates, who are so hungry they eat them, paper and all. I watch from a tangle of [dead] bodies. I can’t tell which legs are my legs. “Are there any living here?” the Americans call in German. “Raise your hand if you are alive.” I try to move my fingers to signal that I am alive. *Here I am*, I want to call. *I am here*. I have no voice. He scours the bodies. His eyes pass over me without recognition. He holds a piece of dirty cloth to his face. “Raise your hand if you can hear me”, he says. *You’ll never go out of here alive*, they’ve said: the kapo who ripped out my earrings, the SS officer with the tattoo gun who didn’t want to waste ink, the foreman in the thread factory, the SS who shot us down on the long, long march. This is how it feels for them to be right.

The soldier shouts something in English. Someone outside my field of vision yells back. They are leaving.

And then a patch of light explodes on the ground. Here’s a fire. At last. I am surprised that it makes no noise. The soldiers turn... There is no fire. The gleam of light isn’t fire at all. It is the sun colliding with Magda’s sardine can! Whether on purpose or by accident, she has arrested the soldiers’ attention with a tin of fish. They are returning. We have one more chance. If I can dance in my mind, I can make my body seen. I close my eyes and concentrate, raising my hands above my head in an imaginary arabesque. I hear the soldiers yell again, one to the other. One is very close to me. I keep my eyes locked shut and continue my dance. I imagine that I am dancing with him. That he lifts me over his head like Romeo

did in the barracks with Mengele. That there is love and it springs out of war. That there is death and always, always its opposite.

And now I can feel my hand. I know it is my hand because the soldier is touching it. I open my eyes. I see his wide, dark hand circles my fingers....And Magda? Has she been discovered too?He lifts me now and deposits me on the ground, on my back, at a slight distance from the dead bodies. I can see the sky in pieces between the treetops. I feel the humid air on my face, the damp of muddy grass beneath me. I let my mind rest in sensation... I remember Magda's story about my birth. "You helped me," my mother cried to her mother....And now Magda is besides me in the grass. She holds her can of sardines. We have survived the final selection. We are alive. We are together. We are free."⁴³

"The Holocaust is the most infamous crime in the history of the world...the word reflects the fact that the extermination of the Jews was a crime of singular horror in the history of the human race...and I believe it is still important to understand how and why this crime happened. For the history tells us, perhaps more than any other, just what our species can do."⁴⁴

How and why could this most infamous crime happen in Christian Europe? Why was it in Christian Europe that the most violent, the most inhuman and the most destructive political religions could emerge, rule and wage the most devastating total wars in history?

⁴³ Edith Eger, *The Choice*. Rider 2017. At the end of Chapter 6. To choose a blade of Grass.

⁴⁴ Laurence Rees, op. Cit. At p. XV, 426, 429.

