

cristianesimo nella storia

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The personal testimonies of part five round out the collection. Kasper notes Willebrands role in the achievement of agreement on Christological issues with Oriental Orthodox Christians and in the early reception of the Faith and Order convergence text, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. While recalling the Cardinal's personal warmth and friendship, Thomas Stransky fills in a number of important lacunae Willebrands diaries and agenda. Of particular interest is his account of the opposition to the presence of official ecumenical observers by the Coetus Internationalis Patrum; of Willebrands role in negotiating the release of, and leading to freedom Metropolitan Archbishop Joseph Slipyi of L'viv, Ukraine, after seventeen years in a Siberian gulag; and of Willebrands objection *in aula* to the use of the title of Mary as Mediator (Mediatrice) in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, as it might be juxtaposed with the unique mediation of Christ and create difficulties for Protestant Christians. This section closes with a brief contribution by Bishop Paul Werner Scheele who notes Willebrands links to the Johann-Adam-Möhler Institute in Paderborn and the spirit of hope that imbued all his efforts to promote dialogue in charity and in truth.

As with most collections, the quality of these contributions is not always equal. A particular challenge in any project of such an international character is in ensuring the consistency of translation. This is where readers may encounter occasional disappointments. As but one example, I mention the perplexing choice of the translator of Thönißen's chapter to render 'Dialog' as 'conversation' instead of the more natural 'dialogue', so widely accepted in English parlance within the context of ecumenical relations (118, note 2). Despite this unevenness, Denaux and De Mey have succeeded in bringing together some of the best scholars on the history of ecumenism and of the Second Vatican Council to paint a portrait of a quiet giant of the last century and take stock of his tremendous legacy. A number of these essays make important contributions to new knowledge or make it available to English language readers for the first time. This book should be on the shelf of all those engaged in the study of ecumenism, of Catholic-Jewish relations, and of the Second Vatican Council.

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E. Mazzini, *L'antiebraismo cattolico dopo la Shoah: Tradizioni e culture nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra (1945-1974)*, Roma, Viella, pp. 200.

Elena Mazzini's valuable and lucidly argued monograph charts the persistence of traditional Christian ideas about Jews in post-World War II Italian Catholicism. Her sources are printed materials like journals and encyclopedias, which she examines carefully for their overt and implicit implications. Her general conclusion is that Catholic writers used the end of fascism and war not to rethink traditional teachings on the Jews but as an opportunity to reaffirm the correctness of Christianity's certainties. The war itself was projected less as an act willed by human beings than as punishment of God upon modern societies.

Mazzini's first major source is the *Enciclopedia cattolica* (1948-1954), which she analyzes through several headings. The author of «racism», for instance, underscores the contrast between Catholicism and racism, and indeed projects racism as not only non-Catholic, but un-Italian. Christianity after all taught the equality of all in Christ. Fascist racism was derivative and so was its anti-Semitism. (In a sense, anti-Semitism becomes diluted in racism, and thus for Italians a non-issue). The author of «genocide» contends that wars of extermination were not a law of history; with the progress of Christian civilization had come a «refining of manners» (40). The history of the church as persecutor is thereby expunged. Under «Jews» we read about a people who used emancipation to promote religious and political values at odds with Christianity.

The entry on «anti-Semitism» evades questions of religious origins and transfers blame to racial science, which the author locates mostly in non-Catholic areas in the east of Europe, where a foreign theology corresponded with a particular and strange political order. The Church for its part had rejected racist anti-Semitism in 1928. The author treats anti-Judaic legislation as something imposed from without, and entirely foreign to Italian Catholic population. Racist propaganda, though printed in Italy by fascist dailies, supposedly did not cloud the Italian mind. In this way anti-Judaism is made doubly irrelevant to Italian Catholicism. Yet as Mazzini points out, the only thing the Church really protested was prohibitions on marriages of Jews who had become Christians.

Christianity did not permit the harming of any human, or persecuting en bloc any group. Still, Mazzini discovers, Catholic authors continued to maintain that justice required a «moderat difesa», thus propagating a caution practiced for centuries. This, in the view of the authors surveyed, had nothing to do with social anti-Semitism witnessed in the US or Poland where Jews, even those who had been baptized, were excluded from clubs or schools. Catholic practice was not racism but a way of protecting one's faith.

Still, for the authors of the *Enciclopedia cattolica*, there was an unresolved Jewish question. It was «to be hoped that the anti-Semitic hatred disappears», one wrote, but the only real solution would be in a triumph of Christian brotherhood, leading to an end of humiliations of Jews, in expectation of their conversion to Christ. All other solutions were insufficient. Mazzini concludes: here «Are summed up in a few lines the specific traits of a mindset steeped in ancient anti-Jewish topoi who continued to inhabit the imaginary Catholic to the fifties».

Mazzini's second chapter examines the Jesuit publication «Civiltà Cattolica», a leading voice of Italian Catholicism with the task of confronting lay tendencies and helping to revive Catholic culture. Here too we sense an absence of critical reflection among postwar Catholics. «Civiltà Cattolica» portrayed the papacy as having done everything in its power to obstruct the extermination of European Jewry. At the same time, writes Mazzini, «Civiltà Cattolica» «exhibited an eloquent vagueness in the formulation of judgments on the fascist regime» (63). It supposed a wall separating the «Church from the practices and culture of discrimination of Third Reich» and emphasized differences between Nazism and Fascism, directing attention away from the record of Italian fascism by focusing almost entirely upon the Nazi crimes in World War II.

«Civiltà Cattolica» excluded any reference, explicit or implicit, to the Shoah. If Mazzini had expanded her study to include other countries, such as Germany or

the US, she would have found the same situation, whether in liberal or conservative Catholic publications. But it is also true that the Holocaust in our current understanding, as a crime clearly separate from other Nazi events of mass murder, had yet to crystallize fully. «Civiltà Cattolica» continued to argue for Christian self-defense, though with attention to the dictates of «justice and caritas».

In the 1960s the state of affairs changed for reasons that are well known: the Eichmann trial, the inauguration of Vatican II, the challenge of Rolf Hochhuth. «The work had the merit», Mazzini writes of Hochhuth, «of criticizing a certain paradigm if not exculpatory then less uncritical regarding Vatican policy toward Nazism». «Civiltà Cattolica» reacted defensively, reaffirming the «absolutely crucial role played by the Holy See in helping many persecuted Jews ... ». Even in this decade of change, «Civiltà Cattolica» featured traditional stereotypes in defiance of the theological revolution of Vatican II.

If the 'old' anti-Judaic consensus was so widespread, how was that revolution possible? What Mazzini's early chapters show is that the Vatican II declaration *Nostra Aetate* represented an act out of keeping with the trends of the time. Mazzini calls it a «breakthrough, offering for the first time a plot of dialogue free from worries about conversion». Though her evidentiary base could be expanded, one senses that even the Council fathers – like Cardinal Augustin Bea – failed to comprehend the Council's own implications.

Mazzini's survey of journals that appeared during and after the Council confirms her doubts of whether a single text could correct age-old stereotypes. «Civiltà Cattolica» had little interest in the subject and made mostly indirect references to the new cultural and religious sensitivities which *Nostra Aetate* promoted. As late as 1975 the Jesuit journal was describing Pius XII as if he done nothing other than protect Jews in the Shoah. The right wing, anti-conciliar «Renovatio» printed the critical ideas of the convert Denise Judant who claimed that Christianity must discriminate between the Jewish people and the Jewish religion in its present position. That Judaism continued to exist as a separate religion after the coming of Christ was in her view a problem.

«Renovatio» adopted a critical stance toward Catholics who appeared eager to be accepted by Judaism and worried that recognition of the value of Judaism and its role in the history of salvation after Christ would erode the Catholic Church's sense of uniqueness. Judant did not wonder how to correct anti-Judaic positions still found in catechisms. She and others who wrote for «Renovatio» were not interested in dialogue or the ecumenical spirit, but had deep concerns about recognizing the State of Israel because of supposed threats to Christian positions in the Holy Land. Similar findings emerge from Mazzini's analysis of the journal of *Opus Dei*.

In an international perspective Mazzini's findings make eminent sense. After all, one could not expect proponents of anti-Judaism to vanish into thin air with the conclusion of the Council in 1965. Yet one might equally be surprised by the great number of bishops who supported the change at Vatican II, given that they had been socialized and trained in anti-Judaic thought. (The final vote on *Nostra Aetate* was 2,221 vs. 88). A survey by Mazzini of Jewish reactions confirms theological movement among Christian thinkers. Still, Mazzini's notes of caution are justified. *Nostra Aetate* did not cause a rethinking of the relation between Hitler's racism and Christianity, at least not

in its immediate context. The German theologian Karl Thieme (d. 1963) seemed an outlier with his view that Christians must purify their faith from prejudices and clichés.

It would have been interesting to see Mazzini extend her analysis beyond Italy and beyond her time period. After all, Italy was known as a homeland of recalcitrant bishops during the Council; the theological breakthroughs tended to come from the countries further north. The theologians involved in drafting *Nostra Aetate* were mostly German or German-trained. Most of the theological discussion between Christians and Jews occurred in the United States, and Northern Europe. However, the skeptical views that she reads from the 1960s have a firm basis. The Church bears a legacy of anti-Judaism that is centuries old, and which, despite conciliar statements, has never been confronted or revised. One merely need consult countless commentaries upon the gospels produced before 1964 to see the point. Many, of course, are still used in theological raining, with no warnings from the official church.

Mazzini's work also makes one wonder about the elite basis of the Christian struggle against anti-Judaism. She prints a five-year retrospective of *Nostra Aetate* by the historian and activist Augusto Segre lamenting that the encounter between Judaism and Christianity tended to be limited to intellectuals, while the mass of the faithful had no part in this spiritual and intellectual ferment. That is a fact true to this day; the practitioners of dialogue tend to be small groups of theological experts.

That may be too gloomy an assessment, however. There is movement in Christian-Jewish relations within civil society, involving a range of activities unplanned and largely unknown. There are intermarriages and friendships in workplace and in neighborhoods with little concern for religion or ethnicity. It is here perhaps where anti-Judaism dies. Still, as Mazzini shows, the Church's history features much ignorance and neglect, as well as a mass of unfronted assumptions. Above all she points to a tradition of considering immutability not only a virtue but the essence of Catholicism. Until that changes, an unexplored past waits to reassert itself precisely in the terms she details in journals like «Renovatio».

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M. Signifredi, *Giovanni Paolo II e la fine del comunismo. La transizione in Polonia (1978-1989)*, prefazione di Andrea Riccardi, Milano, Guerini e Associati, 2013, pp. 495.

Al centro dello studio di Massimiliano Signifredi sono l'accurata ricostruzione di un decennio cruciale per la Polonia, quello dal 1978 al 1989, e il ruolo giocato da Giovanni Paolo II nella delicata transizione dal regime comunista alla democrazia.

Grazie alla padronanza della lingua polacca, l'autore si è potuto avvalere di documenti di prima mano provenienti dagli archivi polacchi e della ricca bibliografia – tra cui molte fonti memorialistiche – apparsa in questi ultimi anni in Polonia.

Articolato in tre parti (*La sfida di Wojtyła*, *La crisi polacca* e *La lunga transizione*), di tre capitoli ciascuna, il volume mette in risalto tutta la specificità del caso polacco