

DOI: 10.14394/eidos.jpc.2022.0007

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## Kant, Anti-Supersessionism, and the Holocaust

### Abstract

It is common to accuse Christian supersessionism of responsibility for the Holocaust. This article qualifies this claim by arguing that the theological ideology that directly preceded and aided the Holocaust was unequivocally hostile to this traditional Christian doctrine. It is German neo-Marcionism – which deliberately fought against replacement theology – that provides a direct religious context for the Nazi solution to the Jewish question. Kant appears in this picture as the first modern German Christian who consistently pursued an anti-supersessionist agenda of “purifying” Christianity by radically severing it from its Jewish roots.

### Keywords:

supersessionism, replacement theology, Holocaust, Kant, Semler, Chamberlain, Christianity, Judaism, Nazism, Enlightenment, Marcionism

*I am not certain ordinary Germans would have participated so willingly and ruthlessly  
in the killing without what appeared to be religious sanction to do so*

Robert P. Ericksen

*We will not ... be capable of “thinking the Shoah,” albeit inadequately,  
if we divorce its genesis and its radical enormity from theological origins*

George Steiner

*Die deutsche Philosophie ist eine wichtige,  
das ganze Menschengeschlecht betreffende Angelegenheit*

Heinrich Heine

In this article,<sup>1</sup> I pursue three mutually intertwined ends. Firstly, I present Kant's rejection of any substantive affinity between Judaism and Christianity as largely unseen in the Enlightenment. Secondly, I trace outstandingly positive reception of Kant's de-Judaized notion of Christianity by Nazi and proto-Nazi thinkers, and, thirdly, I suggest that the claim directly linking supersessionism with the Holocaust needs to be qualified because what directly preceded the Shoah, and later accompanied it, was in fact a deliberate negation of the basic tenets of supersessionist Christianity. At the end, I reflect briefly on the conceptual issue behind the theological controversies I raise.<sup>2</sup>

The term "supersessionism" (or "replacement theology") refers to a core Christian belief that takes Christianity to be the Judaism fulfilled: the new and true Israel. Supersessionism sees the Old Testament as God's revelation to the chosen people which, when revealed, contained the promise of its future perfection in Christ. This is not a dogma of the Church (like the Trinity) but nevertheless captures some essential features of Christianity's self-understanding in relation to Judaism. As one helpful characterization has it, supersessionism is a "constellation of Christian affirmations" like the following: "the Church is the 'new (and, therefore, true) Israel,' Jesus Christ is the absolute fulfillment of all the Messianic prophecies, the new covenant has made (the people of) the old covenant obsolete, etc."<sup>3</sup> Another definition emphasizes supersessionist commitment to the original election of Israel; "God chose the Jewish People after the fall of Adam in order to prepare the world for the coming of Jesus Christ."<sup>4</sup> Basic elements of this teaching reappear in the *Nostra Aetate* in that it upholds the Christological reading of the Old Testament and asserts that the Church is now God's people – "the new Israel."<sup>5</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, another document from the Second Vatican Council, displays its supersessionism in its very title. In Isaiah 49:6 "*lumen gentium*" ("the light of/to the nations") are the Jews – in *Lumen Gentium* they are in this capacity substituted by Christians. The content of the document has obviously supersessionist features as well. For example, it says that God

Chose... Israel as a people unto Himself. With it He set up a covenant. Step by step He taught and prepared this people, making known in its history both Himself and the decree of His will and making it holy unto Himself. All these things, however, were done by way of preparation and as a figure of that new and perfect covenant, which was to be ratified in Christ, and of that fuller revelation which was to be given through the Word of God Himself made flesh.<sup>6</sup>

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1) This paper is a result of the research project No. 2020/37/N/HS1/02922 financed by the National Science Center, Poland.

2) I quote Kant's works in accordance with the *Akademie-Ausgabe* edition by abbreviation, volume and page(s). Each time I add a reference to the volume *Religion and Rational Theology* from the Cambridge edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant by Kant's name, publication year ("1996a" for the *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* ["RGV" for the German *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*]; and "1996b" for *The Conflict of the Faculties*) ["SF" for the German *Der Streit Der Fakultäten*]; and page(s). When an English quotation in the main text is referred to a German original (i.e. RGV or SF), it means that I translated it myself. The citations for 1996a and RGV will be made using in text parentheticals.

3) McGarry, "Emil Fackenheim and Christianity," 120.

4) Soulen, "The God of Israel," 1; cf. also *ibid.*, 26–32.

5) Pope Paul VI, "Nostra Aetate," paragraph 4. See a helpful compilation of commentaries in Tobias, "The Jewish Conscience of the Church," 233–38.

6) Pope Paul VI, "Lumen Gentium," paragraph 9.

Such “supersessionist” consciousness accompanied the apostles (Matthew and Paul – including the Epistle to the Hebrews traditionally attributed to the latter – are its best exponents), the early Church Fathers (notably Justin the Martyr, Tertullian of Carthage and Irenaeus of Lyon), and all mainstream Christianity (including the Protestant Reformers) until the religious collapse of the replacement theology in the Third Reich, of which Kant’s philosophy, as I shall argue, is an important precursor.

Before I continue, an important if somewhat technical, caveat must be added. Nowadays, the situation of Judaism *vis-à-vis* Christianity is explained more according to the Epistle to the Romans 9–11, where God’s covenant with the Jewish people seems to be upheld, than according to the Epistle to the Hebrews, where it seems to have been abrogated.<sup>7</sup> However, this distinction is irrelevant to my argument, just as it was irrelevant to the opponents of supersessionism I discuss in this article. When Thomas Morgan (see below) set out his theological agenda by asking “whether the ... Law of Moses ... was originally a divine Institution ... to be afterwards nullified, abolished, and set aside by another Revelation; or, whether it was originally a mere Piece of carnal, worldly Policy,”<sup>8</sup> he was oblivious to the question regarding Romans or Hebrews as a more appropriate basis for understanding Judaism’s role in sacred history (although he attacks the view closer to the Hebrews as being responsible for the “Judaization” of Christianity). The only thing he cares to reject is the idea of the original election of Israel and Christ as the Jewish Messiah latent in the Old Testament. This also applies to anti-Jewish Christians – Kant in particular – whom I will discuss. In short, the struggle is not between Hebrews-like and Romans-like narratives, but between Christianity as such and neo-Marcionism.

In Kant’s formulation, a supersessionist Christian is a “Jew whose Messiah has come.” Kant did not say that in a positive voice. On the contrary, his attitude toward this traditional Christian teaching was radically hostile. He claims that the Jewish character of the New Testament – which includes for him not only fragments such as Matthew 5:17–20 (RGV, 6: 160; Kant, 1996a: 182), but even the Pauline doctrine of the justification by faith alone (Kant, 1996b: 286) – has no substantial rationale, being merely a “procedure prudently followed by the first propagators of Christ’s doctrine to procure for its introduction among their people.” Subsequently, this “procedure” had been erroneously “taken to be a part of religion itself, valid for all times and all peoples, so that we ought to believe that *every Christian must be a Jew, whose Messiah has come*” (RGV 6: 166; Kant, 1996a: 186).<sup>9</sup> Kant firmly believed that if Christianity is to realize its moral substance invested in it by Christ (RGV 6: 158–163),<sup>10</sup> the “immoral” and hence “irreligious” Judaism with its arbitrary and transgressive God has to be entirely cleansed from Christianity’s midst.<sup>11</sup> If that happened, “nothing would ... be left over, except pure moral religion unencumbered by statutes” (Kant, 1996a: 187).<sup>12</sup> Accordingly, Kant “views the preservation of Jewish thought in Christianity as the original sin of Christian history.”<sup>13</sup> Restoration means for him rejecting supersessionism; a “weak point of the customary picture of Christianity” (as he called it in reaction to Moses Mendelssohn’s deployment of it as a sort of pro-Old Testament view to which Christians are committed (RGV 6: 166; Kant, 1996a: 186)). Kant attempts that by

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7) See Tobias, “The Jewish Conscience of the Church,” 253–56.

8) Morgan, “The Moral Philosopher,” 23.

9) Original emphasis.

10) See also RGV: 126–29; RGV 6: 167; and Kant, 1996a: 159–60.

11) Kant is careful to speak here of Judaism “in its purity,” for he is aware that in its historical development Judaism has adopted some moral elements from the outside, which however, “do not in any way belong to Judaism as such” (RGV 6: 125–27; Kant 1996a: 154–56).

12) Cf. also Kant 1996b: 276. I argue elsewhere that Kant identifies “pure moral religion” with Christianity at the state of its fulfillment. See Kozyra, “The Gospel of the New Principle,” forthcoming.

13) Saulen, “The God of Israel,” 66.

stating that there is no “essential connection” and no “unity of concepts” (RGV 6: 125; Kant, 1996a: 154) (neither moral nor religious or theological) between Judaism and Christianity and that the history of God’s people can start only with the religion of Jesus which constitutes “a total abandonment of Judaism” (RGV 6: 127; Kant, 1996a: 156). To this end Kant suggests a decanonization of the Old Testament (the sufficiently de-Judaized New Testament, on the other hand, must be kept “as the source of the Christian doctrine of faith” (RGV 6: 157; Kant, 1996a: 179)) when he says it is incoherent “to say that a Christian is not really bound by any law of Judaism [as Luther claimed – W.K.] yet must accept the entire holy book of this people on faith as divine revelation given to all human beings [as Luther claimed too – W.K.]” (RGV 6: 166; Kant, 1996a: 186). In Kant, the Jews ceased to be one’s God’s chosen people and Judaism ceased to bear any connection to and meaning for Christian religion except as its unmediated and inward antagonist.<sup>14</sup>

For theologians this can sound like the “arch-heretic” Marcion, who in the second century A.D. opted for the same thing: Christianity free from Judaism and the Jewish God. And indeed, Kant’s theology could be described as “naturalized Marcionism” (as some scholars noticed.<sup>15</sup>) Sebastian Moll helpfully remarks that “Marcion’s second God, the God of the New Testament, forms a clear antithesis to the Old Testament God, but *he did not in any way replace him*.”<sup>16</sup> Marcion rejected replacement theology of the apostles and the early Church; he rejected the sovereignty of the Jewish God and the placement of the Jewish people in the progressive history of revelation. So did Kant, whose “entirely new” (RGV 6: 127; Kant, 1996a: 156) (moral and good) principle on which Christianity is founded also “forms a clear antithesis” to Judaism neither “replacing” nor “fulfilling” it. It is therefore misleading to claim that Kant “reinforces”<sup>17</sup> theology of replacement or “exacerbates” it.<sup>18</sup> Nobody challenging (like Kant and Marcion) the cross-testamental identity of God and the substantial-cumulative connection between the Covenants can be called a “supersessionist” as both of these features make up the meaning of the concept (even if they do not exhaust it). It cannot be emphasized enough that Kant *deliberately* (arguing against Lessing<sup>19</sup>) launched his religious agenda in order to tackle the bundle of traditional Christian ideas later to be dubbed “supersessionist.” To suggest that a Christian *must not* be considered a “Jew whose Messiah has come” and that the sacred history *starts* with Christianity and its moral deity, as Kant does, is to *reject* supersessionism – not to “reinforce” or “exacerbate” it. Kendall Saulen – who makes otherwise many apt comments about Kant’s religious thought – misinterprets the data when he claims that Kant “sharpen[s] [the supersessionist] contrast [between Judaism and Christianity] to the point of antithesis.”<sup>20</sup> The supersessionist narrative was largely articulated (as Saulen himself admits<sup>21</sup>) as a response to the Gnostic attack on the Old Testament. To reject the Old Covenant in the name of “true Christianity” – and this is again what Kant does – is to side with Marcion against the Church Fathers,<sup>22</sup> not to “sharpen” their views in the direction of one of their biggest opponents!

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14) See a relevant discussion in Mack, “German Idealism and the Jew,” 31–41.

15) See for example Carter, “Race. A Theological Account,” 107; and Gunneweg, “Vom Verstehen des Alten Testaments,” 101–102.

16) Moll, “Marcion,” 3. Original emphasis.

17) Brumlik, “Deutscher Geist und Judenhass,” 46.

18) Saulen, “The God of Israel,” 19.

19) Cf. Kupś, “Filozofia religii Immanuela Kanta,” 307, 312. A throughout treatment of the differences between Kant and Lessing has recently become available in: Langtähler, “Kant – ein Kritiker Lessings?”

20) Saulen, “The God of Israel,” 58.

21) See *ibid.*, 41, 48.

22) Already, Justin decisively repudiated Marcionian tendencies (see Hayes, “Justin against Marcion”). Tertullian in turn wrote the *Adversus Marcionem* and later Irenaeus the *Adversus Haereses*, his epochal rejection of gnosis in general.

The detailed parallel between Kant and Marcion is not our concern here. It is more important to bring to light a circumstance that hitherto seems to have been overlooked. Namely, with an exception of an afore-mentioned Englishman Thomas Morgan (a “Marcion of his times”<sup>23</sup>), Kant’s denial of Judeo-Christianity was unmatched in its severity within the Enlightenment in general. Kant did not unreflectively assume his variety of anti-Judaism due to its supposed ubiquity among his German contemporaries, as it is sometimes suggested.<sup>24</sup> As I show elsewhere, people like Thomasius, Reimarus, Herder, Lessing, Michaelis, Hamann, Reinhold, Schiller (not to mention the multitude of theologians who were active at that time) believed in the substantive connection between the Testaments (either a moral-pedagogical one, like in Lessing, or strictly theological-prophetical, like in Hamann).<sup>25</sup> The only mainstream figure of the German Enlightenment who raised some doubts about the Old Testament’s “right” to be a Christian book was a Lutheran-pietist theologian Johann S. Semler. He was the first to support Marcion’s version of the Gospel of Luke that enabled such later happenings like Schelling’s doctoral dissertation on Marcion as the “improver” of the Pauline Letters. Nevertheless, even Semler was not as committed as Kant to the task of moralizing Christianity by severing it from its Jewish roots. He explicitly affirms divine provenance of the Psalms,<sup>26</sup> certain prophecies<sup>27</sup> (which Kant entirely politicizes<sup>28</sup>), and Abraham’s history<sup>29</sup> (which Kant takes as evidencing the un-Christian character of the Hebrew Bible<sup>30</sup>). Judaism was for Semler “a mixture [*Mischung*] of moral religion and politics.”<sup>31</sup> For Kant it instead amounted to no religion at all. At one point Semler even says that Jesus’s teaching “agrees with the fundamental principles and great intents [*Absichten*] of many great teachers of the Old Testament.”<sup>32</sup> Kant never presents the relationship between Judaism and Christianity in such favorable terms. It is therefore not quite like we read in an almost age-old book by Josef Bohatec<sup>33</sup> and today in Manfred Kuehn<sup>34</sup> (who draws at this point on Bohatec) where it is suggested that Kant copied his anti-Judaism from Semler. He rather intensified the Marcionist element that lurked in Semler to the level of a philosophical “system.”<sup>35</sup> David Nierenberg correctly points out that Kant’s “principal task” in his writings on religion was to de-Judaize Christianity.<sup>36</sup> To this, it should be added that Kant was

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23) Berg, “English Deism and Germany,” 48. For a comparison between Kant and Morgan see Kozyra, “The Gospel of the New Principle,” forthcoming.

24) Contemporarily for example in Pasternak, “Kant on Religion,” 198. Historically in Bohatec, “Die Religionsphilosophie Kants,” 467.

25) See Kozyra, “The Gospel of the New Principle,” forthcoming.

26) Semler, “Abhandlung,” 46.

27) *Ibid.*, 250; see also *ibid.*, 50.

28) SF 7: 80; Kant, 1996b: 297.

29) Semler, “Abhandlung,” 39.

30) SF 7: 63; Kant, 1996b: 283.

31) Semler, “Abhandlung,” 57–58.

32) *Ibid.*, 85. They displayed also a very different attitude towards the Edict of Wöllner. In *The Conflict of the Faculties* Kant describes Semler – who supported the edict – as an opportunistic “syncretic” who does not recognize the urgency of the need to purify Christianity (SF 7: 52; Kant 1996b: 274).

33) Bohatec, “Religionsphilosophie Kants,” 27; see also *ibid.*, 460–67.

34) See Kuehn, “Kant’s Jesus.”

35) Kant: “We cannot ... begin the universal history of the Church (inasmuch as this history is to constitute a system) anywhere but from the origin of Christianity, which, as a total abandonment of the Judaism in which it originated, grounded on an entirely new principle, effected a total revolution in doctrines of faith.” (RGV 6: 127; Kant, 1996a: 156).

36) Nierenberg, “Anti-Judaism,” 359. This was already noticed by Bruno Bauch who wrote in 1904: “Jedenfalls stellt sich aber für Kant so das Ziel der ‘Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft’ als das vom Judentum gereinigte Christentum dar” (Bauch, “Kant und Luther,” 185).



the most consistent and radical opponent of the Jewish religion for the sake of reinvigorating Christianity in the entire German *Aufklärung*.<sup>37</sup>

It is crucial to bear in mind that what I picture here is a differentiation in the degree of discrimination against the Jews. Many think today that already supersessionism is inappropriate as it sees Judaism as an “anachronism” in the Christian era (Hegel’s unwillingness to accept Jewish resistance to the supposed blessings of this Christian dialectic is a particularly vivid example of this<sup>38</sup>). But by annulling Judaism as the preparation of Christianity, Kant deprived the Jewish religion even of the status of anachronism as long as being an anachronism presupposes a state of bygone validity that Kant’s Judaism never enjoyed.<sup>39</sup> Rather than an anachronism, Judaism constituted for Kant an absolute and unmediated opposition against Christianity. In contrast, Christian supersessionism claims (at least in the version to which Kant was exposed) that Israel *was* God’s chosen but *is* no more as it failed to recognize its own Messiah prophesied in its Scriptures. A variant of this doctrine served in Augustine (and in Christianity as such) as a *raison d’être* for the *preservation* of the Jewish people. Until the Reformation and the Renaissance,

Christians understood the existence and survival of the Jews as meaningful and necessary. The key principles of Christian dogma with regard to the Jews were formulated in the fifth century by Augustine of Hippo. For Augustine, Jewish disbelief in the Messiah was foretold in Scripture and thus the Jews’ blindness to the meaning of their own sacred writings only confirmed these texts’ truth. God’s decision, Augustine argued, to disperse rather than exterminate “our enemies” the Jews both demonstrated divine mercy and marked the Jews with a unique theological significance as “witness” to the truth of Christianity<sup>40</sup>

Still in the Enlightenment, the Jewish philosopher – Moses Mendelssohn – would rebuke his Protestant polemic opponents by saying that *as Christians* they have to respect the Old Testament and the revelation that *their God* made to the Jewish people.<sup>41</sup> Martin Knutzen, a formative influence on Kant in Königsberg (but not religion-wise), would note that as once chosen people, the Jews stand solely under God’s judgment and so

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37) A fuller account of Kant’s position in the context of the German enlightenment can be found in Kozyra, “The Gospel of the New Principle,” forthcoming. It is interesting to note that Kant’s anti-Jewish thought did not prevent his philosophy from having a great impact on Jewish thinkers (such as Hermann Cohen, Isaac Breuer, or Moritz Lazarus), and the Jewish religion; Christoph Schulte even went so far as to say that Kant’s critical philosophy is the “godfather” of Reform Judaism. See Schulte, *Die jüdische Aufklärung*, 166.

38) The best real example of the dialectical development as Hegel conceives it is the advent of Christ as the Messiah prophesied in Judaism. This change does not come from without – it comes from the most intimate midst of what is to be “superseded”; thus it constitutes the *self-fulfilment through self-abolishment* – the very core of Hegelian dialectics.

39) See Kozyra, “The Gospel of the New Principle,” forthcoming.

40) Sutcliffe, “Judaism and Enlightenment,” 23. Kant explicitly rejects this doctrine in *Religion* where he writes with dismay that the phenomenon of the dispersed survival of the Jews “strikes many as being so remarkable that, in their judgment, it certainly could not have been possible by nature but only as an extraordinary event designed for a divine purpose” and then he proceeds to provide a naturalistic explanation of it (RGV 6: 136; Kant 1996a: 163). A statement by Saulen (an opponent of supersessionism) also deserves to be quoted in this context:

Thus Christian theology preserved, in however backhanded a fashion, a limited theological rationale for the continued existence of the Jewish people. The rationale was not sufficient to spare the Jews from political and economic disenfranchisement after the political ascendancy of the Christian church, nor was it sufficient to spare them from murderous outbreaks of popular persecution and national expulsion. Nevertheless, it was sufficient to help spare the Jews from the programs of outright extermination that met adherents of pagan religion and to secure them a subordinate but viable niche in Christian culture. Though superseded in principle and besieged in fact, carnal Israel was permitted to exist within Christendom because of its incontrovertible connection to the God of Christian confession, the God of Israel. See Saulen, “The God of Israel,” 56.

41) Mendelssohn, “Jerusalem,” 87.

Christians must let them live.<sup>42</sup> Andreas Riem is particularly clear in his *Apologie für die unterdrückte Judenschaft in Deutschland* from 1798:

When it comes to the religious existence of the Jews, it cannot cross a Christian mind to hate, mock, and persecute the Jews because of their religion, which at the same time is the basis of their own [religion]; for the savior, Jesus was born a Jew and publicly proclaimed that [here comes Matt. 5:17–20]. Christians can mock the customs of their religion as little as they can mock their own faith, for they were introduced by the prophet (Moses) whom the whole Christianity glorifies and in whom it sees the God-appointed lawgiver ... The Jews remain, because of their religion, a dignified nation.<sup>43</sup>

However, Riem's was a swan song for the Lutheran ears. Kant was the first German Christian of notice – heavily, by the way, influenced by Lutheran pietism – to be entirely free from the “problem” Riem raised; he was no longer a potential addressee of his argument. He was no longer an addressee of the same kind of argument that Saul Ascher – a Jewish Enlightenment philosopher and an early critic of German nationalism – raised against Kant's anti-Jewish writings.<sup>44</sup> Kant learned his lesson from Mendelssohn's polemics with his supersessionist opponents. As he dropped supersessionism, his Christianity had no commitments left toward the Jewish religion and the Jewish people.<sup>45</sup> On the contrary, it harbored a deep resentment against it and convulsively tried to “purify” itself from its “Jewishness” in search of its moral core.

Kant's “Judaism is not a religion” (RGV 6: 125; Kant, 1996a: 154) dictum found its way to the writings of the early anti-Semites like Ernst T. v. Kortum<sup>46</sup> and Christian L. Paalzow<sup>47</sup> while Friedrich Bucholz in 1803 could already answer the question of “what Judaism and Christianity have in common” with “nothing, absolutely nothing.”<sup>48</sup> Then he moved on to insist that if one takes Judaism to be the “fundament” of Christianity they betray utter confusion for the edifying and spiritual Christianity is related to the inherently immoral Judaism “like Newtonian philosophy to the thirteenth and fourteenth-century astrology.”<sup>49</sup> The intent here is to persuade the reader as to the radical incommensurability between Judaism and Christianity that contradicts the notion of their traditionally supersessionist connection standing for cumulative progress, like the one from Newtonian mechanics to the Relativity Theory (to draw back on Bucholz's metaphor). While Bucholz was writing these words, “the greatest theologian of the nineteenth century” had already appeared on the intellectual scene. Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher – the founder of “liberal theology” and a renegade Calvinist<sup>50</sup> – was an avid reader of Kant's works on religion. Notwithstanding their otherwise different philosophical outlooks, concerning “freedom” from the (Judeo-Christian) tradition it guarantees,

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42) Knutzen, “Pschilosophischer Beweis,” 79.

43) Riem, “Apologie,” 7–8.

44) See Ascher, “Eisenmenger,” 64; see also *ibid.*, 74–76.

45) Karl L. Reinhold expresses the conviction of a Christian supersessionist debt to Judaism when he qualifies his argument for the Egyptian provenience of the “Hebrew mysteries” by noting: “Ich glaube der *Achtung die ich ... dem Mosaischen Gottesdienste schuldig bin*, keineswegs zu nahe zu treten, wenn ich es wage diesen Gottesdienst in seinem wesentlichen Bestandteilen eine getreue Kopie der geheimen Religion der Ägypter zu nennen” (emphasis added), See Reinhold, “Die Hebräischen Mysterien,” 37.

46) v. Kortum, “Über Judenthum,” 30–34

47) Paalzow, “Die Juden,” 20.

48) Bucholz, “Moses und Jesus,” 85.

49) *Ibid.*, 86.

50) See Beckmann, “Die fremde Wurzel,” 101–103.

Schleiermacher's claim that the content of the Christian religion has to be decided by *Gefühle* is like Kant's insistence that it has to be decided by *Vernunft*. At the end of the day, they both opted for the eradication of Judaism from Christianity as a result of their hermeneutical approaches.<sup>51</sup> Schleiermacher in fact began to systematically realize Kant's hope expressed in the *Religion* (RGV 6: 167; Kant, 1996a: 187) that the Jewish scriptures be treated as merely historical documents with no religious value for Christians. Accordingly, he says in 1830 referring to the Marcionite heritage:

To the dogmatic adoption of the Old Testament we owe ... an appalling amount of evil in our theology. And if Marcion had been understood correctly and had not been obscured, our doctrine of God would have remained much purer. I consider it necessary to say this in the strongest possible terms, and for me it is a matter of conscience.<sup>52</sup>

Schleiermacher's theology instilled a deep antipathy to Judaism among German intellectuals<sup>53</sup> and made room for further developments.<sup>54</sup> The climax of liberal theology and the normalization of anti-supersessionist Marcionism within Lutheranism came with Adolf v. Harnack, an admirer of Kant. Harnack's speech held in 1924 in the Königsberg Cathedral on Kant's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday began like this (and true it was):

We gathered to celebrate the tombstone. But the man, whose tombstone it is, lives among us today like no other philosopher, and he lives on not only in his own science, but by us Germans, he is alive in all sciences as well.<sup>55</sup>

*Marcion, das Evangelium vom fremden Gott* – Harnack's magnum opus – presented Marcion as a religious hero who fought for Christianity's autonomy – its freedom from the God of the Old Testament.<sup>56</sup> Luther's Reformation was driven by a noble (Marcionian) intention but, Harnack argues, the *Zeitgeist* of the time could not conceive of the absolute severance of the Testaments that Harnack now forcefully proposes.

In this way we have come closer to the National Socialist thought. Richard Steigmann-Gall in his work *The Holy Reich* demonstrates the extent of the Nazis' fascination with and focus on Christianity, challenging views that would minimize the Nazis' positive engagement with radically de-Judaized though Christian religiosity. It remains true, however, that the strategy of earlier anti-Semitic publications was based on the idea that the Jewish problem was not related to religion and that those who thought otherwise typified a kind of "false consciousness" (this is where Hannah Arendt's seminal discussion of the subject found its inspiration). People like Eugen Dhüring, Wilhelm Marr, and Paul de Lagarde were anxious to show – to varying degrees and with varying reservations (Lagarde, for example, after dropping "Christianity," still wanted to retain "the Gospel") – that Christianity must be discarded as a disguised branch of Jewish power politics.

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51) Klaus Beckmann suggests Kant as a source for Schleiermacher's views on the relationship between Judaism and Christianity, in *ibid.*, 43, and 51.

52) Quoted in: Beckmann, "Die fremde Wurzel," 16.

53) See Beckmann, "Die fremde Wurzel," 133.

54) Beckmann: "Einige Jahrzehnte nach Schleiermachers Tod fand seine Verbindung von theologischer Kanonkritik und kirchlichem Anspruch auf 'Zeitgemäßheit' im Kontext der liberalen Theologie breite Zustimmung. Als namhaftester Fürsprecher der von Schleiermacher vertretenen Abwertung des A[ltes] T[estaments] ist Adolf von Harnack ... in die Theologiegeschichte eingegangen." Beckmann, "Die fremde Wurzel," 133.

55) Harnack, "Immanuel Kant," 3.

56) See Harnack, "Marcion," for example 22–24.



Wilhelm Marr – “the patriarch of anti-Semitism” – wanted to de-Christianize the Jewish problem so much that he insisted on Roman responsibility for the killing of Jesus and otherwise reasonably claimed that the Jews in Matthew 25:27 had simply behaved as any other mob would behave under similar circumstances.<sup>57</sup> Marr did so not despite, but because of his anti-Semitism; he understood (as did Lagarde and Dhüring) that connection to Christianity is ultimately protective of the Jews. As Dhüring, for whom Christianity was a mere “neo-Hebraism,” pointed out, “a Christian, if he knows himself, cannot be a committed anti-Semite.”<sup>58</sup> An associate of Lagarde, Adolf Reinecke, generalized the problem by declaring that “Christianity is the greatest protector of Jewry, and as long as the former persist[s,] the latter has nothing to fear.”<sup>59</sup> Later German anti-Jewish thinkers agreed, but instead of abandoning Christianity for its Jewishness they sought to “purify” it from Judaism by making the supersessionist narrative a contingent and eliminable feature of Christian religiosity. In this context, Steigmann-Gall rightly says that “the idea of expunging the Old Testament from Christianity was not simply a Nazification of Christianity. No one less than Adolf von Harnack ... he adds – had conceived such an idea when the Nazi movement was still to be born.”<sup>60</sup> However, he does not trace the modern German history of this idea far enough; for, to paraphrase Steigmann-Gall, no one less than Kant conceived this idea when Harnack was still long to be born. Harnack was not ready to exchange his republicanism for national socialism embraced by his close friend, Huston Steward Chamberlain whose literary work he nevertheless held in high esteem.<sup>61</sup> Among others, it was Kant<sup>62</sup> who made Chamberlain a Germanophile. Laudatory references to Kant – including his anti-supersessionist philosophy of religion – permeate his work. Monumental *Immanuel Kant* is the best example of it. There Chamberlain follows Kant in rejecting Jewish Jehovah which “till this day poisons” Christianity.<sup>63</sup> In his flagship *The Foundations Of Nineteenth Century Kant* is praised for reproaching “the Christian Churches for making all men Jews, by representing the importance of Christ as lying in this, that He was the historically expected Jewish Messiah.”<sup>64</sup> In turn, in *Mensch und Gott*, Chamberlain thanks Kant for “making us aware” that Judaism is not a religion at all,<sup>65</sup> and invoking Kant’s authority, he attacks (as Kant did too (RGV 6: 160; Kant 1996a, 182)) the scriptural heart of supersessionism: Matthew 5:17–20<sup>66</sup> where Jesus says he did not come to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them. Similarly, drawing on Christ in Matthew, Paul the apostle catechized the Romans (3:31): “Do we ... make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.” Jesus is the fullness of the Law (*telos nomu*) and Christianity is the fullness of Judaism. In other words, Christianity is *true* Judaism (“we are the true circumcision”; Philippians 3:3). This is the core of the Christian “supersession” of Judaism. Contrary to this, the basic idea of the anti-supersessionist agenda of Kant and his followers like Chamberlain renders Christ destroying – not fulfilling – the law and the prophets. It says that Jesus came from without (from “Greek

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57) Marr, “Der Sieg des Judentums,” 8. Ironically, the same argument was used by Jan Woleński against Mel Gibson’s depiction of the Jews in the *Passion of the Christ*; see Woleński, “O ‘Pasji’ Gibsona,” 112.

58) Quoted in Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus, “Antisemiten-Spiegel,” 279.

59) Quoted in *ibid.*, 286.

60) Steigmann-Gall, “The Holy Reich,” 27.

61) *Ibid.*, 39–41.

62) “Musterbeispiel des Deutschen Weltweisen,” according to Chamberlain, “Deutsches Wesen,” 8.

63) Chamberlain, “Immanuel Kant,” 854–55.

64) Chamberlain, “Foundations,” 483.

65) Chamberlain, “Mensch und Gott,” 116. There we read: “Wie Kant uns vorhin aufmerksam machte, und wie man von jedem zuständigen Gelehrten erfahren kann, ist das sogenannte jüdische Gesetz eine Sammlung von rein formalen, äußerlichen, mechanischen und haarsträubend willkürlichen Geboten, ohne einen Funken seelischen Lebens, also ohne alle eigentliche Religion.”

66) Chamberlain, “Mensch und Gott,” 112–17.

wisdom,” according to Kant (RGV 6: 79–80, 128; Kant 1996a: 119, 156)) to combat Judaism, not from within to complete (or “establish”) it.<sup>67</sup> Similar corruption took place in Poland where a German-educated historian and philologist of the *interbellum* period Tadeusz Zieliński decreed Plato and Socrates instead of Isaiah and Jeremiah to be “the real Old Testament of Christianity.” A fact that Roman Brandstaetter bitterly lamented in the introduction to his translation of the Gospel of Matthew.

Back to Germany. Bruno Bauch was an important neo-Kantian philosopher and a supporter of the NSDAP. In *Luther und Kant* he too praises Kant’s rejection of the Jewish God and with him calls for the ultimate “liberation” (*Befreiung*) of Christianity from Judaism whereby the former’s hitherto suppressed morality is to come forth. Bauch explains that Luther had made an important step toward this “great cause” (*großes Ziel*). However, he adds referencing Harnack, the time Luther lived in was not ripe for the radicality with which only Kant broke the unity of the sacred history. For Bauch, Kant completes Luther’s commission by rejecting any kind of substantive connection between Judaism and Christianity.<sup>68</sup> What amounts to curiosity here (though still an instructive one), is a book by Hugo Bund entitled *Kant als Philosoph des Katholizismus* (in Bund’s mouth it is an offense). This work is a polemical reaction to Bauch’s attempt at joining Luther and Kant together. What element of Kant’s religious outlook seems to Bund the least Catholic and thus the most difficult to struggle with in order to substantiate his thesis? It is Kant’s rejection of supersessionism; as Bund writes, Kant’s is “the rejection of Judaism as the stage in God’s salvation plan [*die Verwerfung des Judentums als Faktors im Heilsplane Gottes*]<sup>69</sup> – a patently “un-Roman” thing to do.

Around the beginning of the third decade of the twentieth-century supersessionism experienced three subsequent blows. *Der falsche Gott* by a popular writer Theodor Fritsch (author of the notorious *Antisemiten-Katechismus*), *Die Grosse Täuschung* (the “deception” being the Christian character of the Jewish God) by a renewed Assyriologist Friedrich Delitzsch, and *Die Deutsche Heiland* by the co-founder of the *Deutsche Christen*,<sup>70</sup> and a later member of the NSDAP Friedrich Andersen were published. Andersen posits that if the Christian God is lovable and good, then the “angry,” “biased,” “unjust,” and “terrifying” God of the Hebrew Bible cannot be the same as the Christian God.<sup>71</sup> In a manner strongly reminiscent of Kant, he recalls with dismay the bad times of protestant theology when a “smart Jew” (*schlaue Jude*)<sup>72</sup> Mendelssohn was able to invoke the “so-called” (supersessionist) *Heilsgeschichte*<sup>73</sup> to prevent his Christian interlocutors from nullifying the Old Testament.<sup>74</sup> Lessing also gets castigated for his bold recognition of Christianity’s Jewish roots.<sup>75</sup> Kant

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67) Conceptually speaking. Because Kant did not claim Jesus’s Arian decent which was the second – next to the rejection of supersessionism – tenet of Nazi Christianity.

68) Bauch, “Luther und Kant,” 181–82.

69) Bund, “Kant,” 182–85.

70) *Deutsche Christen* (1932–1945) formed a significant party within German Protestantism; see Heschel, “The Arian Jesus,” 3. As Robert Ericksen notes: “Deutsche Christen found it difficult and very embarrassing to have to acknowledge the thoroughly Jewish roots of their religious faith. It also created cognitive dissonance for them when they tried to understand the Jewish origins of Christianity in the light of their thoroughgoing commitment to Nazi ideology, including its hatred of Jewish blood, any time and any place,” see Ericksen, “Complicity in the Holocaust,” 27.

71) Andersen, “Die Deutsche Heiland,” 59–61.

72) Kant writes that Mendelssohn “auf sehr geschickte Art” deploys the supersessionist notion of Christianity in order to counter protestant critiques of Judaism (RGV 6: 166; Kant 1996a, 186).

73) For Andersen “Heilsgeschichte” means “Weissagung und Erfüllung” schema, see Andersen, “Die Deutsche Heiland,” 46.

74) *Ibid.*, 31.

75) *Ibid.*, 33, 69.

instead is lionized for noticing the “irreligiosity” of Judaism<sup>76</sup> and claiming that the “Jewishness” in the New Testament is not due to the theological necessity, but is only a “prudent procedure” whose sole purpose was to popularize Jesus’s message among his Jewish audience.<sup>77</sup> Like Chamberlain, Andersen invokes Kant’s statement that if Christians are to morally flourish, they have to stop thinking of themselves as the “Jews whose Messiah has come.” Supersessionism, for Andersen, has for centuries been eroding Christianity, and only now – as he notes pointing to Harnack’s reinvigoration of the legacy of Marcion<sup>78</sup> – something begins to change.<sup>79</sup> Hitler’s,<sup>80</sup> Goebbels’s,<sup>81</sup> and Rosenberg’s hatred toward traditional Judeo-Christianity is also clearly visible. The last one asserts in the introduction to the third edition of *The Myth of the 20th Century* that he does not plan to reintroduce the “cult of Wotan” and opts instead for a Christianity based solely on the love of Christ, without the “desert demon” of the “so-called” Old Testament<sup>82</sup> – an endeavor, as Rosenberg notices, already prefigured by a “Greek” Marcion. Christian rejection of the Jewish God and the Jewish Bible gained such notoriety that it was put forward as the common ground for the evangelical Church in Germany in the *Godesberger Erklärung* issued by the Nazi Government. The point “b” of this document insists that Christianity is neither a continuation (*Weiterführung*) nor a completion (*Vollendung*) of the Jewish religion (i.e. there is no “essential connection” between them, as Kant would say); on the contrary, it forms “an unbridgeable religious opposition to Judaism.”<sup>83</sup> The core element of Kant’s anti-supersessionist philosophy thus became officially sanctioned by the Nazi state. Nazi anti-supersessionism acquired its final institutional shape in the form of the *Deutsche Christen* Institute for the Study and Elimination of Jewish Influence on German Church Life (De-Judaization Institute in short). Its director, Walter Grundmann, stated clearly what it takes to resist the Jews. Echoing earlier anti-Semitic publications (however, unlike them, aiming at de-Judaized *Christianity*) he said publicly that “our *Volk* is in a struggle with satanic powers of world Judaism, but cannot fight against the Jews and open its heart to the king of the Jews.”<sup>84</sup> The supersessionist notion of Jesus as the *Jewish Messiah* is depicted here as preventing the German people from embracing their struggle against “word Judaism” to the full. The institute started working on the systematic and throughout intellectual de-Judaization of Christianity in the year 1939. At the same time, Wehrmacht troops – among whom the newly funded Institute distributed its de-Judaized Bible<sup>85</sup> – started the Second World War which was soon to include the systematic and throughout physical de-Judaization of Europe.<sup>86</sup> Two years before, the Catholic Church published the encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* which addressed the demise of the Old Testament in Germany. After quoting the Letter to the Hebrews, the relevant paragraph continues:

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76) Ibid., 131.

77) Ibid., 48.

78) Ibid., 63.

79) Ibid., 135.

80) Steigmann-Gall, “The Holy Reich,” 37. Cf. also fragments from *Mein Kampf* quoted in: Jackson “Mordechai Will Not Bow Down,” 35–36.

81) Ibid., 31–32.

82) Rosenberg, “Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts,” 294.

83) See Heschel, “The Arian Jesus,” 81.

84) See *ibid.*, 103. At another occasion he claimed that the “Jewish influence in all areas of German life has to be exposed and broken, indeed also in the religious-ecclesiastical realm,” see also *ibid.*, 92.

85) Ericksen, “Complicity in the Holocaust,” 123; cf. Heschel, “The Arian Jesus,” 107.

86) Cf. *ibid.*, 16.

*The sacred books of the Old Testament are exclusively the word of God, and constitute a substantial part of his revelation; they are penetrated by a subdued light, harmonizing with the slow development of revelation, the dawn of the bright day of the redemption. As should be expected in historical and didactic books, they reflect in many particulars the imperfection, the weakness and sinfulness of man. But side by side with innumerable touches of greatness and nobleness, they also record the story of the chosen people, bearers of the Revelation and the Promise, repeatedly straying from God and turning to the world. Eyes not blinded by prejudice or passion will see in this prevarication, as reported by the Biblical history, the luminous splendour of the divine light revealing the saving plan which finally triumphs over every fault and sin. It is precisely in the twilight of this background that one perceives the striking perspective of the divine tutorship of salvation, as it warms, admonishes, strikes, raises and beautifies its elect. Nothing but ignorance and pride could blind one to the treasures hoarded in the Old Testament. Whoever wishes to see banished from church and school the Biblical history and the wise doctrines of the Old Testament, blasphemes the name of God, blasphemes the Almighty's plan of salvation, and makes limited and narrow human thought the judge of God's designs over the history of the world.*<sup>87</sup>

The resolute “supersessionism” of the Vatican led Chamberlain to assert the incurable “Semitism” of the Catholic faith.<sup>88</sup> He was obviously right; as Pius XI stated on another occasion, “the Catholic Church especially condemns hatred against the people elected by God, a hatred that today is vulgarly called ‘antisemitism’... antisemitism is a hateful movement, with which we Christians must have nothing to do... spiritually, we are all Semites.”<sup>89</sup> According to the Englishman, only Protestantism carried the hope of “Occidentalizing” Christianity.<sup>90</sup> At a 1940 conference on “Catholicism and the Jewish Question” organized by the De-Judaization Institute, one of the speakers expressed Chamberlain’s concern more fully, saying: “the Catholic Church will never come to a clear and determined struggle against Judaism and will never become an ally in the national ideological struggle because it would have to give up its own mission and its own spiritual substance.”<sup>91</sup> As we have seen, Grundmann and earlier folkish writers insisted, in a similar vein, that the idea of Jesus as the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament would make the German people incapable of adopting all the measures necessary to ultimately solve the Jewish problem. Nazi theologians had a related difficulty with Paul. Although he provides the biblical basis for the reformist teachings of Luther, so admired by many pro-Christian Nazi activists and thinkers, his passionate drive to present Christianity as true *Judaism* spills out of the pages of his epistles (that is why Paul de Lagarde called him “a Pharisee from head to toe”<sup>92</sup>). Thus, the authors of *Die Botschaft Gottes* – that was the name of the Aryan bible published by the Institute – drastically truncated Paul’s letters (hiding his Jewish ancestry as well), leaving only the most anti-Jewish passages, accompanied by similar statements excised from the Fourth Gospel (the “formidable phrase”<sup>93</sup> according to

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87) Pope Pius XI, “Mit brennender Sorge,” paragraphs 15–16. Emphasis added.

88) Heschel, “The Arian Jesus,” 42.

89) Quoted in Tobias, “Jewish Conscience of the Church,” 172.

90) Heschel, “The Arian Jesus,” 42.

91) *Ibid.*, 136.

92) See Heschel, “The Arian Jesus,” 42.

93) See Bloy, “Salvation Through the Jews,” 15. Bloy’s controversial book delivers an affectionate discussion of the relation between Judaism and Christianity. It treats the Church’s ability to “diffuse joy” as essentially dependent on the Jewish “consent,” see *ibid.*, 61. The book ends with the following exhortation: “For the SALVATION of the world is nailed onto Me, ISRAEL, and it is from Me that

which “salvation is through the Jews” (John 4:22) was ignored by Grundman, allegedly as a later, “Jewish” interpolation<sup>94</sup>).

One often lumps together the “sins of the Nazis and supersessionism”<sup>95</sup> and sees the Holocaust as a “consequence”<sup>96</sup> of replacement theology, as most recently T.P. Jackson in *Mordecai Would Not Bow Down. Anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, and Christian Supersessionism* did. It is difficult to deny that supersessionism may have contributed to the Nazi atrocities in the long run. Nevertheless, it must be strongly emphasized that the theological ideology that immediately preceded and accompanied the Holocaust was a deliberate negation of supersessionism, which German neo-Marcionists from Kant to the German Christians unanimously regarded as an ideological enemy.<sup>97</sup> As Cardinal Lustiger born in a Jewish home in Bedzin noted in an interview, “Hitler’s antisemitism had roots in the antisemitism of the Enlightenment and not in Christian antisemitism ... [it was a] refusal of Jews’ divine election, a hate for their religious singularity.”<sup>98</sup> It should be clear by now that this is more than just a pious orthodox wish. Kant (even if not the Enlightenment as such) corroborates this claim by writing – once again making it clear that the particularistic nature of Judaism makes it incapable of carrying the revelation later realized in Christianity – that:

Far from establishing an age suited to the achievement of the church universal ... Judaism rather excluded the whole human race from its communion, a people especially chosen by Jehovah<sup>99</sup> for himself, hostile to all other peoples and hence treated with hostility by all of them. (RGV 6: 127; Kant, 1996a: 155)

Kant and his anti-supersessionist successors returned to the House of Jacob its sacred books, but at the same time removed the rationale for its existence in the Christian world, while leaving intact the negative affectations of Christians toward Jews and molding their tradition into the moral opposite of their own. Eventually the Jews ceased to be subject to the judgment of the Judeo-Christian God and became totally exposed to the accumulated might of German resentment. This is far from blaming Kant or Schleiermacher for the Holocaust, but it should make it more intelligible by showing how firmly rooted in German culture (and less so in traditionally Christian culture) were some of the ideas that assisted it.

I will end by identifying the real problem lurking in the above. The question of the Old Testament as an integral part of the Christian revelation is repeatedly judged to be the most important theological issue. For brevity’s sake, the problem might be reduced to the question of God’s responsibility for evil. I do not mean

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*it must ‘descend,’”* see *ibid.*, 103.

94) Heschel, “The Arian Jesus,” 106.

95) Jackson, “Mordechai Will Not Bow Down,” 22.

96) McGarry, “Emil Fackenheim and Christianity,” 122.

97) Traditionally the supersessionist approach among the German theologians of the Nazi period actually tends to correlate with (though only relative) opposition to Nazism. Confessing Church and Dietrich Bonhoeffer are the best examples thereof, but also two from three “theologians under Hitler” treated in the book by Robert Eriksen – Paul Althaus and Gerhard Kittel are cases in point (even if, again, to a very limited extent). The third of them, Emmanuel Hirsch, was the most sympathetic to the Nazi policies and also the least supersessionist among them, cf. Eriksen, “Theologians under Hitler.” I therefore propose a hypothesis that people like Bonhoeffer were opposing the Nazis not *despite* of their supersessionism (as Rosemary Ruether seems to imply in her seminal: *Faith and Fratricide*, 224) but *because* of it.

98) I quote after: Schoeman, “Salvation is from the Jews,” 250.

99) Saulen aptly notes that by calling the God of the Hebrew Bible “Jehovah,” Kant wants to identify him as radically different from the Christian deity, see Saulen, “The God of Israel,” 64.



theodicy, for theodicy arises only after the question of God's exclusive goodness – his lack of responsibility for evil – has been answered in the positive. It is indeed easy to advertise Marcionism by saying that God who helps Joshua to wipe out the people of Jericho (Kant in this context invokes the Binding of Isaac) cannot be identical to the God of Jesus who teaches to turn the other cheek. Marcion in fact answered the question *unde malum* by taking the God of the Old Testament as its source.<sup>100</sup> He subsequently opposed to him the good and loving deity of Jesus. Did he have to reason this dualism out from the textual contrasts like the one I suggested above? No. In fact, in the Hebrew Bible God says in the clear voice: "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things" (Isaiah 45:7). And so for Marcion the problem was solved; there exists an antithetical relation between the evil God of the Jews and the good God of Jesus. In this way, however, monotheism vanishes. Under the influence of Rudolf Otto, who strongly opposed Kant's identification of holiness with morality, Paul Volz argued in 1924 that "the demonical" in God comes inevitably together with his uniqueness.<sup>101</sup> Amidst the staunch enemies of "Jewish" Christianity, he insisted that the importance of monotheistic Christian God who revealed himself in the Old Testament to his elect resides in the default affirmation of the entire reality he necessities. Hebrew monotheism received a philosophical expression in the *Ethics*, "the five books of Spinoza," which describe – like "five books of Moses" – a space opened by God where people can *live* as people. Life must be lived and cognition must be exercised in order in which the *Ethics* and the *Pentateuch* (which Spinoza highly valued) are written. Spinoza is least philosophical and most religious exactly when he castigates Descartes for reaching God *sub specie cogito*.<sup>102</sup> If you start with the *cogito* or, for that matter in Plato's cave, you run the risk that the outcome of your search will be tainted by what you experienced on the path that led you to it, and so you may be inclined to "make limited and narrow human thought the judge of God's designs over the history of the world." The whole reality, and here I think the pope would agree with Spinoza, must be brought under one God and approached *sub specie Dei*. Otherwise, we are left with what meets the eye and that is *tension*; the theory of which is *dualism*: two gods (or principles, or classes, or races) fighting for dominion. Their struggle is no longer divinely contained and therefore nothing prevents it from becoming insanely absolute. When the Nazis demonstratively burned looted copies of the Old Testament, they did not do so from "supersessionist" motives; they were not "reinforcing" the traditional Christian self-understanding as the new and true Israel. On the contrary, it was an expression of their fierce rejection of the sacred history uniting Jews and Christians under one God.

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100) See Moll, "Marcion," 61.

101) Volz, "Das dämonische in Jahwe," 32.

102) Spinoza, "Ethics," 455.

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