

Article

Nation, Race, and Religious Identity in the Early Nazi Movement

Derek Hastings

Department of History, Oakland University, Rochester, MI 48309, USA; hastings@oakland.edu

Received: 15 September 2018; Accepted: 3 October 2018; Published: 7 October 2018



Abstract: This paper examines the dissemination of radical nationalist and racist ideas among Catholics within the early Nazi movement in Munich. While the relationship between the Nazi regime and the Catholic faith was often antagonistic after 1933, a close examination of the earliest years of the Nazi movement reveals a different picture. In the immediate aftermath of the First World War and within the specific context of Munich and its overwhelmingly Catholic environs, early Nazi activists attempted to resacralize political life, synthesizing radical *völkisch* nationalism with reformist, “modern” conceptions of Catholic faith and identity. In so doing, they often built on ideas that circulated in Catholic circles before the First World War, particularly within the Reform Catholic movement in Munich. By examining depictions of nation and race among three important Catholic groups—reform-oriented priests, publicists, and university students—this paper strives not only to shed light on the conditions under which the Nazi movement was able to survive its tumultuous infancy, but also to offer brief broader reflections on the interplay between nationalism, racism, and religious identity. The article ultimately suggests it was specifically the malleability and conceptual imprecision of those terms that often enhanced their ability to penetrate and circulate effectively within religious communities.

Keywords: Nazism; religion; nationalism; racism; Munich

1. Introduction

The relationship between religion, nationalism, and modernity has been the subject of a rich and varied literature (Hayes 1960; Greenfeld 1996; Hastings 1997; Barker 2009; Brubaker 2012). Whereas the classical studies of nationalism by Benedict Anderson (Anderson 1983) and Ernest Gellner (Gellner 1983) treated religious identity in the era of modern nation-states as an essentially premodern residual force, more recent studies have demonstrated the nuanced ways in which religious sentiments infused nationalist discourse throughout modern Europe and beyond (Greenfeld 1992; Llobera 1994; Lehmann and van der Veer 1999; Burleigh 2005; Burleigh 2007; Eastman 2012; Grigoriadis 2013; Hastings 2018; Yosmaoglu 2018). The explanatory power of the so-called secularization thesis, which held that traditional religious attachments typically give way in the face of the inexorable forces of modernity, has been seriously challenged, although certainly not erased (Bruce 2002).

The literature on the interplay between Nazism, with its putatively modern racialized conception of the nation, and religious communities in Germany, both Protestant and Catholic, has undergone a rapid expansion in recent years (Heilbrunner 1998; Steigmann-Gall 2003; Hesemann 2004; Spicer 2008; Jantzen 2008; Probst 2012; Ericksen 2012; Blaschke 2014; Faulkner Rossi 2015; Weikart 2016). An earlier interpretive trend that presented Nazism as a modern form of “political religion”—an ersatz worldview that stepped into the vacuum left by secularization to offer adherents meaning and a sense of cosmic orientation that was, ultimately, largely incompatible with traditional Christianity (Bry 1924; Voegelin 1939)—has also experienced a resurgence over the past two decades (Ley and Schoeps 1997; Bärsch 1998; Burleigh 2001; Rissmann 2001; Besier and Lübke 2005; Gentile 2006;

Maier 2007; Schreiber 2009; Wennberg 2014). A number of recent studies have also interpreted the irrational and supernatural elements of Nazi ideology as an essentially anti-Christian response to the “disenchantment” of modernity in a Weberian sense (Kurlander 2012; Kurlander 2015; Kurlander 2017) or as an attempt to elevate conceptions of race to a position of pseudo-divinity (Varshizky 2012; Koehne 2013; Koehne 2014).

The general outlines established in these works have provided a useful framework within which to approach the broader relationship between Nazism and religion. The present article, however, strives to operate on a more granular level, examining the interplay between conceptualizations of nation, race, and an avowedly modern form of Catholic religious identity within the specific context of the early Nazi movement, when that movement’s ideology was still fairly protean and its membership was limited largely to Munich and its overwhelmingly Catholic environs. While the Nazi-Catholic relationship was in many ways antagonistic after 1933, a close examination of the earliest years of the Nazi movement reveals a different picture, as will be seen below. In examining formulations of nation and race among reform-oriented Catholic priests, publicists, and students before and after the First World War, the article ultimately suggests that it was the malleability and conceptual imprecision of these formulations that often enhanced their ability to penetrate and circulate effectively within religious communities.

2. The Setting: Munich before and after the First World War

The Nazi Party was founded in Munich in January 1919 as the German Workers Party, before being rechristened the National Socialist German Workers Party (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, or NSDAP) in early 1920. At the time of the party’s founding, the population of Munich numbered over 600,000 and was more than 80 percent Catholic, as was the surrounding administrative district of Upper Bavaria.¹ The 1.1 million Catholics living within the Archdiocese of Munich–Freising, which largely coincided with the territory of Upper Bavaria, were served by approximately 1500 diocesan clergy who were themselves organized into 36 deaneries (*Dekanate*) encompassing more than 400 parishes.² One of the most reliable contemporary studies of religious practice, published in 1928 and based on communion statistics from each Catholic diocese in Germany, found that the level of religious practice in the Archdiocese of Munich–Freising was significantly higher than the average for other Catholic areas, surpassing even the numbers for Cologne, which was widely acclaimed for its leading role in Catholic organizational and religious life.³ The archdiocese supported a clerical seminary in the town of Freising, just north of Munich, but the official theological faculty was located at the University of Munich, as was the Georgianum, the residential college for candidates for the priesthood. Additionally, Benedictine monks from the city’s St. Boniface Abbey, as well as Franciscans from the St. Anna cloister, were energetic participants in public life in Munich. Catholic clergy, both secular and regular, were an unmistakable element within Munich’s visual landscape in the early twentieth century.

Yet the texture and contours of Munich Catholicism were not merely shaped by priests and monks. A diffuse smattering of Catholic lay organizations, ranging from workers’ groups to literature societies, was spread throughout the city. Among the most colorful and distinctive elements of Munich Catholicism were the rich array of Catholic student fraternities surrounding the university and technical college and the city’s energetic community of Catholic publicists, which was arguably the most influential of any Catholic city in central Europe. The former were organized into several overarching

¹ The population of Upper Bavaria was 89.8 percent Catholic in 1916 and 89 percent Catholic in 1925, whereas the population of Munich itself remained between 80 and 85 percent Catholic in those years; see Joachim Seiler, “Statistik des Erzbistums München und Freising in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts”, in (Schwaiger 1984, p. 287).

² See the yearly editions of the *Schematismus der Geistlichkeit für das Erzbistum München und Freising* between 1910 and 1920.

³ In 1924, a full 80 percent of Catholics in the Archdiocese of Munich–Freising were “religiously practicing”, compared to 76.8 percent in Cologne and only 53.6 percent among Catholics in Berlin; (Schauff 1928, p. 178). These numbers were part of a broader study by Johannes Stauff of Catholic electoral behavior in Germany. Schauff’s study has been praised by later scholars for its comprehensive nature and reliability; see e.g., (Sperber 1997, p. 16).

student fraternity federations, such as the Cartellverband (CV) and the Kartellverband (KV), as well as Rhaetia (a fraternity exclusively for Bavarian-born Catholics) and the Hochland-Verband (HV).⁴ With their distinctive uniforms and plumes, and with their archaic traditions that largely aped secular and Protestant-oriented fraternities, the CV was perhaps the most visible of these student groups both before and after the First World War.⁵ The Catholic publicistic community in Munich, for its part, included not only large daily newspapers like the *Bayerischer Kurier*, but also widely-read cultural journals like *Hochland* and the *Allgemeine Rundschau*, as well as devotional weeklies like the *Münchener Katholische Kirchenzeitung*. Importantly, while attitudes in Munich became increasingly radicalized in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, the parameters of postwar public discourse were influenced significantly by prewar developments, as will be seen below.

In comparison to other Catholic cities and regions in Germany, one striking feature of Munich and its environs—both before and after the First World War—was the tradition of open skepticism toward ultramontanism and its perceived offshoot, political Catholicism. Much of this skepticism found expression in a prewar movement known as Reform Catholicism, whose center of gravity within Germany was Munich.⁶ The phenomenon of ultramontanism itself had originally crystallized in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when Catholics across Europe began looking increasingly to the pope (who resided *ultra montes*, “over the mountains” to the south, in Rome) as the guarantor of church freedom against the modernizing incursions of state bureaucracies into religious affairs (Weiss 1978). By the early twentieth century, however, ultramontanism had come to be viewed by many Catholics, especially in Munich, as an increasingly obsessive and unhealthy devotion to the papacy (Schlossmacher 1991). While reform-oriented Catholics fully recognized the authority of the pope in religious and moral affairs, ultramontanism and the tradition of political Catholicism—embodied on the national level in the Center Party and, on the Bavarian level after the war, in the Bavarian People’s Party (BVP)—evoked serious concerns about the potentially detrimental effect of southern European influences on the national and political life of Germany. In contrast to the perceived evils of political Catholicism, which according to critics involved partisan horse-trading and the necessity of compromise with socialists, Jews, and other non-Catholic entities, reform-oriented Catholics proposed an allegedly more noble identity, labeled “religious” Catholicism.

In advocating a religiously-loyal Catholic identity that would nonetheless allow for full and energetic participation in the mainstream of German national life, Reform Catholic activists in Munich embraced increasingly radical visions of “nation” and “race”, acting in part as conduits for the transmission of *völkisch* and nationalistic ideas formulated largely by secular or Protestant-oriented figures from outside of Bavaria, often from northern Germany.⁷ The following section explores the powerful synthesis of nationalist and racist ideas that was developed initially among Reform Catholic clergy, publicists, and students in prewar Munich, which in turn influenced postwar *völkisch* discourses, including especially activists within the early Nazi movement.

3. The Synthesis: “Nation” and “Race” through a (Reform) Catholic Lens

The effective birthdate of the Reform Catholic movement in Munich was the 1900 founding of the *Katholischer Reformverein München* by the local priest Josef Müller, who drew into his organization a variety of reform-oriented clergy, publicists, and Catholic university students. Müller had actually coined the phrase “Reform Catholicism” two years earlier with the publication of a wide-ranging

⁴ On Catholic fraternities before the First World War see (Dowe 2006); on the Weimar era see (Roethler 2016).

⁵ Unlike secular and Protestant-oriented student organizations, such as the *Korps* and *Burschenschaften*, the students in the CV (as well as those in other Catholic student groups) did not engage in the ritualized dual known as the *Mensur*; see (Zwicker 2012).

⁶ The phenomenon of Reform Catholicism has received a fair amount of scholarly attention due to its connections with theological modernism and, eventually, to its contributions to the sweeping reforms of the Second Vatican Council; see (Schroeder 1969; Trippen 1977; Loom 1979; Weiss 1995; Arnold 2007).

⁷ The term *völkisch*, which connotes a radical nationalist and racist orientation, has no real equivalent in English and will be left in the German original throughout this article.

missive that posited a starkly nationalistic, non-ultramontane vision of Catholic identity as “the religion of the future for the educated of all confessions” (Müller 1898). Müller’s *Reformverein* also published the monthly journal *Renaissance* in an attempt to spread his nationalistic ideals among its readers. It was followed a few years later by the establishment of the *Krausgesellschaft*, which published its own cultural journal, *Das 20. Jahrhundert*, as a venue for an increasingly virulent form völkisch nationalism that was especially popular among Catholic students in Munich (Haustein 2001). On a broader level, the most influential Reform Catholic publication in Munich—and perhaps the leading Catholic cultural journal in the entire German-speaking world—was *Hochland*, which was founded by Carl Muth in 1903 (Dirsch 2003; Giacomini 2009). A somewhat more traditional journal, although still targeting an educated and reform-oriented readership, was the *Allgemeine Rundschau*, founded in Munich by Armin Kausen in 1904 (Mennekes 1972, pp. 15–17).

A central characteristic of the ideas on nation and race developed by Reform Catholic activists was their vagueness and malleability, which proved useful in attempting to appeal to Catholics who were often uncomfortable with the implications of radical nationalism and racial anti-Semitism, the latter of which denied the unity of humanity and the possibility of universal salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ. As early as 1902 Johannes Bumüller, priest and editor of *Das 20. Jahrhundert*, criticized the “senile Romanism” he perceived as underpinning both ultramontanism and political Catholicism, calling for the “supremacy of the German race (*Herrschaft der germanischen Rasse*) within the Catholic Church” and proclaiming that “the religion of a people (*Volk*) or of a race (*Rasse*) must stand and live in harmony with its culture or be cast off to the side. . . . The Catholic Church must now reckon above all with the principle of race and nationality (*Rassen-und Völkerprinzip*).”⁸ In referring specifically to race, religion, and the German Volk as conceptually distinct entities, Bumüller created the impression of clarity while establishing links with the growing body of völkisch ideas and literature growing rapidly elsewhere in Germany, particularly in non-Catholic areas (Puschner et al. 1999). Yet Bumüller and his Reform Catholic allies frequently subsumed such specificities beneath vague amalgamations, as when touting the virtues of a German-dominated “positive Christianity”,⁹ whose appeal among Catholics was enhanced by its lack of specificity. Importantly, to prevent being viewed merely as disloyal Catholics or closet Protestants, Bumüller and his fellow Reform Catholics insisted vehemently on remaining within the Catholic Church, vowing to fight for reform from within and criticizing the Old Catholic Church, which had broken away in the 1870s over the issue of papal infallibility, as a dangerous form of “heresy”.¹⁰ Around the same time the Reform Catholic priest Josef Müller introduced a striking new cover image for his journal *Renaissance*, which he claimed was taken explicitly from “ancient Aryan cultic legend”, featuring a muscular nude titan bearing a torch with an eternal flame illuminating the New Testament while the tablets of the Ten Commandments, representing the Old Testament, toppled out of view into the darkness of insignificance.¹¹ The image made no specific claim that the (Jewish) Old Testament was racially tainted; the effectiveness of the image lay rather in its suggestive nature. At the same time, however, Müller used the pages of *Renaissance* to publicize the works of radical anti-Semites, including the Catholic theologian August Rohling, perhaps best known for the infamous racist manifesto *Der Talmudjude*,¹² as well as north German racists like Theodor Fritsch, editor of the Leipzig-based völkisch journal *Hammer*.¹³ Müller’s mixture of racist, nationalist, and Catholic themes was striking in part because of its flexibility and elasticity.

⁸ *Das 20. Jahrhundert* Nr 23 (1 June 1902).

⁹ Bumüller, “Aufruf zum Beitritt”, *Das 20. Jahrhundert* Nr 25 (24 June 1906).

¹⁰ “Das 20. Jahrhundert und der Altkatholizismus”, *Das 20. Jahrhundert* Nr 24 (7 June 1902).

¹¹ “Erklärung des Titelbildes”, *Renaissance* 3:4 (April 1902).

¹² Rohling contributed numerous articles to Müller’s journal in 1902 and 1903. On Rohling and *Der Talmudjude* more generally, see (Blaschke 1997, pp. 49–50).

¹³ Müller reprinted numerous anti-Semitic articles on racial hygiene and eugenics from Fritsch’s journal *Hammer*, including “Ein Zucht-Problem”, *Renaissance* 5:8 (August 1904) and “Abstammungslehre”, *Renaissance* 5:10 (October 1904).

This synthetic mixing also characterized the activism of Reform Catholic students and publicists. One of the central influences on Catholic students in Munich was Joseph Schnitzer, a theology professor and *Krausgesellschaft* member whose staunch nationalism and opposition to ultramontanism made him one of the best known Catholic intellectuals in Munich (Weitlauff 2010). One of his students, Leonhard Fendt, argued in *Das 20. Jahrhundert* for German racial and national supremacy in shaping the future of the Catholic Church: “The whole of Catholicism is more Roman today than ever. We are Germans . . . and it must be admitted from the bottom of our hearts that, if we were free to decide between Roman and German Catholicism, we Germans would be traitors to opt for the Roman type.” Yet rather than pushing these ideas further to argue for leaving the Catholic Church, Fendt pulled back, asking his readers: “Should we then become a new branch of Protestantism?” In answering his own question in the negative, Fendt proclaimed: “We would not be Christians if we wanted to abandon our Catholic brothers.”¹⁴ An unnamed publicist, writing on behalf of the *Krausgesellschaft*, argued not only that Germans had a special role to play in renewing the Catholic faith and making it better suited for survival in an era of modern science and scholarship, but that “the German race is destined to spread its hegemony across the entire earth, as a result of its higher intellectual ability.” The author went on to draw support for his argument mainly from the work of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, praising the “loftiness” of Chamberlain’s conception of Aryan racial identity while deliberately blunting its sharper edges in an attempt to appeal to more moderate Catholic readers who might be skeptical about the radicality of modern racial anti-Semitism: “What is pronounced in these words [of Chamberlain] should not be considered anti-Semitism. The Semitic spirit, however, which is characterized by the lack of individual creative power, is indeed the enemy of our own existence.”¹⁵ The journal *Hochland* not only published a lead article by Reform Catholic theologian Herman Schell praising the religious thought of Chamberlain and repackaging it slightly for a Catholic readership,¹⁶ but also publicized the work of the racial theorist Arthur de Gobineau, praising the “heroism of his view of life” and echoing Gobineau’s racist paradigm: “The white race, in comparison with the black and the yellow, is the only race truly equipped with the elevated qualities, with creative power and organizational capabilities. . . . In comparison, the other races are dull and wretched. Their ruler is the Aryan family [of races], whose crowning glory are the Germans.”¹⁷ At other times, however, the same journal pulled back from racial anti-Semitism and limited its attacks to the economic and cultural behavior of the Jews.

This emphasis on race, with all of its conceptual imprecision, often found clearer expression in Reform Catholic support for the perceived modernity of the emerging eugenics movement. Josef Müller was influenced deeply by the ideas of Max Gruber, a Munich pioneer of racial hygiene, citing Gruber to argue that “the breeding and maintenance of a healthy and noble race is incomparably more important than passing on of the highest cultural achievements, which will be nothing more than worthless rubble in the hands of degenerate offspring.”¹⁸ Echoing similar themes, a diatribe in the pages of *Hochland* sweepingly labeled the Jews “the ultimate carriers of the symptoms of degeneration of our times.”¹⁹ More radical still, August Hallermeyer, a leader within the *Krausgesellschaft*, warned that German “racial power” was being threatened by a “slow but certain degeneration” that would lead, if left unchecked, to “racial suicide”. His proposed solution called for state-sponsored “cultivation of the better racial elements”, combined with a policy of “demanding obligatory health certificates at the time of marriage. The foundations would thereby be laid for the mandatory sterilization of racially inferior elements.”²⁰ These discourses continued and intensified during the First World War.

¹⁴ Fendt, “Germanischer Katholizismus”, *Das 20. Jahrhundert* Nr 17 (28 April 1907).

¹⁵ “Arische Weltanschauung”, *Das 20. Jahrhundert* Nr 4 (28 January 1906).

¹⁶ Schell, “Worte Christi: Das Charakterbild Jesu nach Houston Stewart Chamberlain”, *Hochland* 2:7 (April 1905).

¹⁷ “Gobineaus Amadis”, *Hochland* 6:12 (September 1909); see also “Gobineau und die deutsche Kultur”, *Hochland* 8:4 (January 1911).

¹⁸ *Renaissance* 5:4 (April 1904).

¹⁹ “Zerfall des deutschen Judentums”, *Hochland* 11:11 (August 1914).

²⁰ Hallermeyer, “Das Problem der Entartung”, *Das Neue Jahrhundert* Nr 8 (22 February 1914).

Continuing to alternate between clarity and malleability, Catholic activists within the early Nazi movement built upon prewar discourses to construct a sort of vocabulary with which to attempt to appeal to disillusioned and radicalized Catholics in Munich in the war's chaotic aftermath.²¹

The Nazi movement, for its part, was born and raised in the atmosphere of extreme crisis that engulfed Munich after the First World War (Franz-Willing 1962; Evans 2005). The revolution that unseated the Wittelsbach monarchy in November 1918 was succeeded the following spring by two ultimately unsuccessful attempts to establish a Soviet-style dictatorship in the Bavarian capital (Mitchell 1965). The brief but violent Soviet experiment, in which Russian Jewish intellectuals played an important part, further radicalized anti-Semitic attitudes among Munich's population. Within this atmosphere, early Nazi activists drew heavily on prewar Reform Catholic ideas in attempting to build a political base for the young NSDAP in a predominantly Catholic environment. A central figure in this endeavor was the Catholic publicist Franz Schröngamer, whose activism had begun within the Reform Catholic movement when he was a student in Munich in 1904 under the tutelage of Josef Müller. Schröngamer added the Nordic suffix "Heimdal" to his name on the eve of World War I, demonstrating in part the continued influence of Müller's murky Nordic-Aryan obsession.

In a series of bombastic publications between 1918 and the early 1920s, Schröngamer built explicitly on prewar Reform Catholic images of race and nationality, alternating between radical clarity and conceptual slipperiness. In a 1918 missive he condemned the Jews as "hereditarily tainted" and advocated a sweeping state-sponsored eugenic program: "Race equals purity. . . . In this sense racial and hereditary cultivation must be practiced in the coming Germanic *Reich*. A goal-oriented racial community (*Volksgemeinschaft*) cannot do without determined leadership, and this includes the expulsion of all racial forces that work against the German essence" (Schröngamer-Heimdal 1918, pp. 262–3). In writing for the *Allgemeine Rundschau*, Schröngamer called Munich Catholics to join in the "final struggle (*Endkampf*) between two world forces, between Christ and the Antichrist, between the eternal German and the eternal Jew."²² He also called in 1919 for the battle against the Jews to be waged in apocalyptic terms: "The salvation of the world can only come through the extermination (*Vernichtung*) of the world poison whose destructive capacities we recognize in the intellectual foundations of Jewry" (Schröngamer-Heimdal 1919, p. 6). The appearance of clarity is created by the use of radical terms like "extermination", while the impact of that term was blunted by limiting its application to the "intellectual foundations" of Jewry. Importantly, at that time Schröngamer was emerging as the most prolific writer in the pages of the *Beobachter*, the völkisch paper that served as an unofficial mouthpiece for the young Nazi movement before being officially acquired by the NSDAP in 1920. In publishing a sermon to prepare for the coming of Advent in 1919, entitled "Awake You Sleepers! A Call to Return to the Living God," Schröngamer was careful to clothe his radical nationalism and virulent racial hatred with the mantle of Christian charity.²³ Schröngamer officially joined the fledgling Nazi Party in February 1920, when it was still called the German Workers Party and its membership numbered barely more than two hundred.

As a student within the prewar Reform Catholic movement, Schröngamer had been a member of the Catholic fraternity *Rhaetia*, and he continued to be involved in the life of the organization after the war as an alumnus. Among his younger fraternity brothers who became involved in the early Nazi movement was Josef Roth, who studied theology at the university after the war. Writing in 1919 in the pages of the *Beobachter*, Roth called for the "healthy student body" to join in the battle against the Jews and to "cultivate the honor of the nation and the völkisch mentality."²⁴ Drawing on prewar Reform Catholic themes, Roth also argued that "Catholicism is the born enemy of Jewry," proclaiming: "The individual German Catholic must, as a German, recognize and fight against Jewry as a foreign race

²¹ On the broader influence of prewar tropes on the early Nazi movement, see esp. (Hastings 2010, pp. 30–32).

²² Schröngamer-Heimdal, "Weltensturz", *Allgemeine Rundschau* Nr 34 (23 August 1919).

²³ Schröngamer-Heimdal, "Ihr Schläfer, erwacht! Ein Heimruf zum lebendigen Gott", *Beobachter* Nr 63 (19 November 1919).

²⁴ Roth, "An die Münchener Studentenschaft", *Beobachter* Nr 28 (19 June 1919).

(*fremde Rasse*), as the enemy of the German culture and nation. . . . The Jewish race cannot be allowed to merge with the German race. It must therefore be expelled (*ausgestossen*)."²⁵ Alfred Miller, one of Roth's fellow students who was a member of the Catholic fraternity *Hochland-Verband*, was also active in the early Nazi movement—especially in the pages of the *Beobachter*, where he published multiple dozens of articles in the early 1920s. As a devoted student of the aforementioned Reform Catholic professor Joseph Schnitzer, Miller claimed to write on behalf of "we national-oriented Catholics for whom nationalism is the driving force behind true religiosity,"²⁶ frequently evoking in his other publications the mixture of themes that had circulated within prewar Reform Catholicism.

The fledgling Catholic-Nazi synthesis that developed in Munich in the early 1920s also benefitted from embodiment in physical form. One of the more notable examples was offered by Albert Leo Schlageter, who was a member of the *Cartellverband* (CV) fraternity, whose headquarters were in Munich, and who joined the NSDAP in 1922 (Zwicker 2006; Roethlisberger 2017). In May 1923, Schlageter, who had traveled to western Germany to oppose the French and Belgian occupation of the Ruhr region, was arrested by the French for terrorist activity and executed by firing squad near Düsseldorf. While Schlageter was mourned and celebrated as a hero by nationalists throughout Germany more generally, the Nazi leadership in Munich decided to make Schlageter into the public face of an ambitious party membership drive that targeted Catholic students in Munich in particular (Hastings 2003). For several months in the summer of 1923 Schlageter became one of the most visible symbols of the party itself, portrayed as the physical incarnation of a harmonious synthesis of nationalist virtue, racial purity, and Catholic identity.²⁷ This image was both tangible, focused as it was on a single individual, yet malleable. The CV fraternity dedicated the summer 1923 issue of its official journal *Academia*, also published in Munich, to the veneration of Schlageter, mixing together religious, nationalistic, and blood-based imagery: "Who was it that with resolution stared death directly in the eye? / Who placed his faith in the German Fatherland and in the Lord on High? / Who, as a holy champion, surrounded by strangers, was willing to die? / CV! He was blood of your blood! Vengeance for Schlageter is our cry!"²⁸ Perhaps the most striking component of the cult surrounding Schlageter was the Catholic memorial mass staged by the Nazi Party at Munich's St. Boniface Abbey and presided over by Abbot Alban Schachleiter in June 1923.²⁹ The ceremony was attended by a broad cross-section of Munich Catholics, including especially Schlageter's CV fraternity brothers, and was seen as a major success for the NSDAP. Row after row of colorful Nazi flags were marched through the entrance of the abbey, where Abbot Schachleiter consecrated each one with holy water, creating a visual union of the most sacred of Catholic and Nazi emblems. The event was carefully choreographed to synchronize the presentation of Nazi flags and the liturgical elements of Schachleiter's funeral mass, foreshadowing the secularized ritualism of the later Nazi rallies in Nuremberg: "The flag-bearers stood at attention on both sides of the altar for the duration of the mass. . . . During the transubstantiation the flags and standards were lowered on both sides of the altar in obedience to the words of the priest." Schachleiter's eulogy praised Schlageter not only as a Catholic with a "firm and unwavering faith in God," but also as a "martyr for the German cause."³⁰ The pro-Nazi priest Philipp Haeuser also celebrated Schlageter as an exemplar of the harmonious synthesis of the racist nationalism of the Nazis and the nobility of Catholic ideals.³¹

²⁵ Roth, "Über die Stellung der Katholiken zur völkischen Wiedergeburt", *Beobachter* Nr 33 (6 August 1919).

²⁶ Miller, "Friedensbund deutscher Katholiken", *Völkischer Beobachter* Nr 10 (4 February 1920).

²⁷ At the time of Schlageter's death, Nazi leaders in Munich had been consciously searching for a way to make this kind of a powerful religio-political appeal; see (Hanfstaengl 1970, pp. 108–10).

²⁸ Joseph Weiss, "Albert Leo Schlageter", *Academia* 36 (1 August 1923).

²⁹ Schachleiter was himself an alumnus of the CV fraternity; on his life and career, see (Engelhard 1941; Bleistein 1995).

³⁰ See the account in *Völkischer Beobachter* Nr 113 (12 June 1923).

³¹ "Aus der Bewegung", *Völkischer Beobachter* Nr 121 (21 June 1923). For an insightful overview of Haeuser's career see Kevin Spicer, "Working for the Führer: Father Dr. Philipp Haeuser and the Third Reich", in (Spicer 2008, pp. 105–20).

While Abbot Schachleiter and Philipp Haeuser had only limited connections with the prewar Reform Catholic movement, several other priests who emerged in the early 1920s as spokesmen on behalf of the NSDAP had more explicit Reform Catholic ties, such as Christian Huber and Anton Fischer. Lorenz Pieper, who spoke at dozens of Nazi propaganda meetings in and around Munich the summer of 1923—typically clad in clerical garb—had been present at the birth of the Reform Catholic movement in Munich more than twenty years earlier.³² In one of his standard pro-Nazi stump speeches, Pieper appealed to Catholics to join in the Nazi revival of the German race and nation: “Beneath religion comes the elevated ideal of Fatherland, which means the unity of all German comrades of blood, fate, and *Volk*. God himself created the separate races according to blood, essence, and nature, and he desires that what he created should remain pure. We must attack anything that damages our racial unity. For that reason the racial standpoint of National Socialism corresponds completely with Christianity. It is therefore in the spirit of Christ that we must proceed against the Jews.”³³ The precise nature of such terms as “Fatherland”, “blood”, “race”, and “Volk” was left unexamined in favor of an emotional appeal for God-ordained action against the Jews. Josef Roth, who as a theology student had been a member of the *Hochland-Verband* fraternity, increased his pro-Nazi activism after being ordained a priest in 1922. In a series of articles in the *Beobachter* in the summer of 1923, Roth attempted to clarify the concept of “race” from a Catholic perspective, in the interest of demonstrating the compatibility between Nazi racial anti-Semitism and Catholic faith and morality. Defining race as “the totality of internal and external characteristics that binds one person to another as a result of the homogeneity of blood,” Roth then reverted to the vague blending of ideas under a moralistic veneer: “Certainly the Catholic Church stands above races and nations, but the Catholic idea stands first and foremost against immorality; and when immorality and race combine, then the Catholic idea stands against that race, no longer above the races. An anti-Semitism conceived on this basis is not only allowed for the Christian, but rather obligatory.” Roth closed on a much clearer note: “The Jewish race must be eliminated from public life”.³⁴ Roth further clarified the radical implications of racial anti-Semitism in the second installment of the article series: “If, in such a course of action against the Jews as a race, even individual good and harmless Jews, in whom the hereditary immorality is only latent, have to suffer along with the guilty, even that is no transgression against Christian charity—especially as long as the Catholic Church acknowledges the moral justification of war, for example, in which many more ‘innocents’ are forced to suffer along with the ‘guilty’.”³⁵ After the completion of the article series, Roth’s words found such resonance that the articles were combined, expanded slightly, and published by the Nazis’ official publishing house as an NSDAP propagandistic pamphlet that was circulated widely. As the fall of 1923 approached, Roth’s visibility within the Nazi movement continued to increase. In September he traveled with the local Nazi delegation from Munich to Nuremberg to attend the large *Deutscher Tag* rally organized by a broad coalition of völkisch groups. Roth played a central role in this event, which was attended by thousands and covered extensively in the press, by presiding over a militaristic Catholic mass and delivering an impassioned field sermon to the assembled ranks of Nazis.³⁶

The Nazi movement changed significantly as a result of the events of the fall of 1923. On 8–9 November, the NSDAP led an attempt to seize power by force in Bavaria, with the ultimate goal of staging a march on Berlin to topple the democratic government there and to establish a national dictatorship in the place of the hated republican system. This endeavor, known as the Beerhall Putsch,

³² Pieper had also been a member of the CV as a student. After completing his doctorate at the University of Munich in 1903, Pieper spent much of his career in northwestern Germany before returning to Munich to campaign on behalf of the NSDAP in 1923; see (Tröster 1993).

³³ Report in *Völkischer Beobachter* Nr 170 (24 August 1923).

³⁴ Roth, “Katholizismus und Judentum I”, *Völkischer Beobachter* Nr 108 (6 June 1923).

³⁵ Roth, “Katholizismus und Judentum II”, *Völkischer Beobachter* Nr 109 (7 June 1923).

³⁶ See “Fahneneid der Wehrbereiten”, *Bayern und Reich* Nr 32 (8 September 1923); also the official event program, “Deutscher Tag in Nürnberg”, *NSDAP Hauptarchiv*, R65, fol. 1481.

was a dismal failure, resulting in a shootout that claimed the lives of sixteen Nazis and four Munich police officers ([Gordon 1972](#)). Hitler and the other ringleaders were arrested and placed on trial, and the NSDAP was declared illegal and disbanded. While Hitler was in jail, the former Nazi movement was convulsed by a wave of anti-Catholic venom, with the failure of the Putsch being blamed by many of the Nazis' anti-Catholic allies on the overly Catholic orientation of the movement. The result was that many of the Catholics who had joined the NSDAP over the previous few years were driven out of the party, and the nascent Catholic-Nazi synthesis represented by Albert Leo Schlageter began to crumble.³⁷ When the Nazi Party was refounded in February 1925, some two months after Hitler's release from prison, its religious identity was substantially different. Unable to recapture the elements of Catholic support it had earlier enjoyed in Munich, the party increasingly fashioned its ideology into a secular form of political religiosity. This political faith continued to emphasize salvation through blood—but it was the racially pure blood of the Beerhall Putsch “martyrs” that was venerated, rather than the blood of Jesus. By the time Hitler came to power in 1933, many of the liturgical trappings of the movement's earlier history remained—as seen, for example, in the Nuremberg rallies—but the previous mixture of nationalism, racism, and Catholic religious identity had become an increasingly distant and obscure memory.

Yet in the end, the fact remains that without the Catholic-oriented appeal that coalesced in the early 1920s—which itself was built in many ways on the murky discursive legacy of the prewar Reform Catholic movement—the young NSDAP may well have been unable to survive its tumultuous infancy.

4. The Stakes: Brief Reflections on Nation, Race, and Religion

In light of the aforementioned findings regarding Munich before and after the First World War, a few concluding observations are in order.

First, the case of Munich reveals the potential for geographic variation in the level of success with which nationalist and racist ideas are able to penetrate religious communities. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Protestant and Catholic conceptions of nation and nationalism differed greatly throughout Germany ([Altgeld 1992](#); [Smith 1995](#); [Cramer 2007](#)). Since the era of the Kulturkampf, Catholics in Protestant-dominated areas of Germany—such as the Rhineland under Prussian control—tended to evince a sort of bunker mentality, often retreating into their own confessionally exclusive organizations, embracing emotive forms of ultramontane piety, and exhibiting strong electoral support for the Catholic Center Party. This stance brought with it at least a partial rejection of the conception of “nation” on which the Kaiserreich was founded in 1871 ([Weber 1992](#)). Similarly, traditional Catholic approaches to the concept of race, as peddled by influential theorists like Gobineau and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, were often oppositional (but see also [Connelly 2007](#); [Spicer 2008](#)). While mundane and typically unspoken forms of everyday racism were widespread in many Catholic areas, official church teaching on the unity of mankind and the eligibility of all races for salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ often hindered the spread of more radical forms of “modern” anti-Semitism among Catholics in nineteenth-century Germany ([Blaschke 1997](#)). In Munich, however, where Catholics were not besieged under Prussian domination but rather flourished under the (relatively) benevolent rule of the Catholic Wittelsbach monarchy, the perceived need for a Rhenish-style bunker mentality was largely obviated. As a result, openness toward non-Catholic ideas—including radical nationalism and racism—was much more pronounced in Munich than elsewhere in Germany. Related trends may be seen to varying degrees elsewhere in Catholic Europe, ranging from the tradition of Catholic anticlericalism in France ([Zeldin 1970](#)) and Italy ([Borutta 2011](#)) to the Catholic anti-Semitism of the Christian Social movement in Austria ([Boyer 1995](#); [Boyer 2009](#)).

³⁷ At its pre-Putsch peak, the NSDAP membership numbered some 55,000 which, in aggregate terms, was less than five percent of the population of Upper Bavaria; see ([Hastings 2003](#)).

Additionally, while the Nazi exclusivistic obsession with nation and race must ultimately be seen as incompatible with the universalistic nature of Catholic soteriology, the fact that Nazi ideas within the early movement were protean and elastic allowed Catholic Nazis a measure of flexibility in confronting doctrinally-problematic elements of Nazi ideology. This was certainly the case with several of Schröngamer's publications that denied the Jewish identity of Jesus.³⁸ In the years after the Putsch and the refounding of the party, when full-blown Nazi racial anti-Semitism crystallized in undeniable ways, that flexibility largely disappeared. There were still, to be sure, Germans who continued to see themselves as good Catholics and good Nazis, but the relationship was much more problematic than in the early 1920s. Additionally, in periods of apocalyptic crisis, such as Munich in the aftermath of the First World War, discrepancies between official church teaching and radical racist and nationalist thought can be elided if intellectual and theological "cover" is provided by influential clergy and publicists. When the relationship between Catholicism and Nazism was made not only plausible, but also tangible, by the activism of these figures, it became much easier for individual Catholics to harmonize (or at least appear to harmonize) their Catholic faith with Nazi conceptions of nation and race.

Finally, the spread of radical racism and nationalism seems to have been aided, rather than stunted, by conceptual messiness and imprecision, both within the prewar Reform Catholic movement and the postwar Nazi movement. On a broader level, it may be worth noting that of the more energetic debates in recent Nazi historiography has revolved centrally around the relationship of "nation" and "race" to the somewhat problematic idea of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, which is said to have provided much of the underpinning of Nazi society between 1933 and 1945 (Welch 2004; Stephenson 2008; Kühne 2010; Wildt 2012; Kershaw 2014; Pine 2017). While the debate has been fueled in part by the difficulty of rendering the term *Volksgemeinschaft* into English—it has been translated alternately as "national community", "racial community", or merely "people's community"—scholars have argued on a deeper level not only about the specific contours of that exclusivistic notion of belonging and togetherness but also over whether and to what extent it ever existed in reality (Steber and Gotto 2014). Importantly, the vagueness and imprecision of the *Volksgemeinschaft* ideal applies not only to recent scholarly debates but was also central to the ways in which race and nation were perceived by contemporaries during the Third Reich (Nolzen 2017). Within the early Nazi movement even Hitler, who remained largely neutral and disengaged on issues of religion, resorted to the vague mixing of religious, racial, and nationalist imagery. In an impassioned speech from April 1922 Hitler proclaimed that "my Christian sentiment points me toward my Lord and Savior as a warrior," and pitched his anti-Semitic obsessions not in racial but religious terms: "In boundless love as a Christian and as a man I read through the passage which tells us how the Lord at last rose up and seized the whip to drive out of the Temple the brood of vipers and serpents. With deepest emotion I recognize today, after two thousand years, his monumental struggle against the Jewish poison, and I am moved most powerfully by the fact that it was for this that he had to shed his blood on the cross."³⁹ Overall, by maintaining a degree of flexibility and elasticity, shifting between religious and racial justifications for anti-Semitism, the early Nazi movement managed to broaden its appeal to Catholics in Munich.

5. Conclusions

The computer scientist Kees van Deemter has argued recently for the "virtue of vagueness" in opening new ideational vistas and spurring novel modes of scientific thinking (van Deemter 2010). Perhaps something similar can be said for the formulation and transmission of the ideas discussed in this article. Ultimately, it seems that fungibility and conceptual slipperiness functioned

³⁸ See the 5-part article series Schröngamer published under the pseudonym Widar Wälsung, "War Jesus ein Jude? Eine deutsche Antwort," *Völkischer Beobachter* Nrs 16–20 (25 February–10 March 1920).

³⁹ "Versammlung im Bürgerbräukeller", *Völkischer Beobachter* Nr 30 (15 April 1922).

not as a shortcoming but rather as an advantage, helping facilitate the interpenetration of racism and nationalism within a temporally and geographically bounded religious community.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflicts of interest.

References

- Altgeld, Wolfgang. 1992. *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum: Über Religiös Begründete Gegensätze und Nationalreligiöse Ideen in der Geschichte des Deutschen Nationalismus*. Mainz: Grünewald.
- Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Arnold, Claus. 2007. *Kleine Geschichte des Modernismus*. Freiburg: Herder.
- Bärsch, Claus-Ekkehard. 1998. *Die politische Religion des Nationalsozialismus*. Munich: Fink.
- Barker, Philip. 2009. *Religious Nationalism in Modern Europe: If God Be for Us*. New York: Routledge.
- Besier, Gerhard, and Hermann Lübke, eds. 2005. *Politische Religion und Religionspolitik: Zwischen Totalitarismus und Bürgerfreiheit*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Blaschke, Olaf. 1997. *Katholizismus und Anti-Semitismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Blaschke, Olaf. 2014. *Die Kirchen und der Nationalsozialismus*. Stuttgart: Reclam.
- Bleistein, Roman. 1995. Abt Alban Schachleiter OSB: Zwischen Kirchentreue und Hitlerkult. *Historisches Jahrbuch* 115: 170–87.
- Borutta, Manuel. 2011. *Antikatholizismus: Deutschland und Italien im Zeitalter der Kulturkämpfe*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Boyer, John W. 1995. *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna: Christian Socialism in Power, 1897–1918*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Boyer, John W. 2009. *Karl Lueger (1844–1910): Christlichsoziale Politik als Beruf*. Vienna: Böhlau.
- Brubaker, Rogers. 2012. Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches. *Nations and Nationalism* 18: 2–20. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Bruce, Steve. 2002. *God Is Dead: Secularization in the West*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Bry, Carl Christian. 1924. *Verknappte Religionen*. Stuttgart: Perthes.
- Burleigh, Michael. 2001. *The Third Reich*. London: Hill & Wang.
- Burleigh, Michael. 2005. *Earthly Powers: The Clash of Religion and Politics in Europe from the French Revolution to the Great War*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Burleigh, Michael. 2007. *Sacred Causes: The Clash of Religion and Politics from the Great War to the War on Terror*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Connolly, John. 2007. Catholic Racism and Its Opponents. *Journal of Modern History* 79: 813–47. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Cramer, Kevin. 2007. *The Thirty Years' War and German Memory in the Nineteenth Century*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Dirsch, Felix. 2003. Das 'Hochland': Eine katholisch-konservative Zeitschrift zwischen Literatur und Politik 1903–1941. In *Konservative Zeitschriften Zwischen Kaiserreich und Diktatur*. Edited by Hans-Christof Kraus. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot.
- Dowe, Christopher. 2006. *Auch Bildungsbürger: Katholische Studierende und Akademiker im Kaiserreich*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Eastman, Scott. 2012. *Preaching Nationalism across the Hispanic Atlantic*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Engelhard, Gildis. 1941. *Abt Schachleiter: Der deutsche Kämpfer*. Munich: Selbstverlag.
- Ericksen, Robert. 2012. *Complicity in the Holocaust: Churches and Universities in the Third Reich*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Evans, Richard. 2005. *The Coming of the Third Reich*. New York: Penguin.
- Faulkner Rossi, Lauren. 2015. *Wehrmacht Priests: Catholicism and the Nazi War of Annihilation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Franz-Willing, Georg. 1962. *Die Hitlerbewegung: Der Ursprung 1919–1922*. Hamburg: Schenck.
- Gellner, Ernest. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Gentile, Emilio. 2006. *Politics as Religion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Giacomin, Maria Cristina. 2009. *Zwischen Katholischem Milieu und Nation: Literatur und Literatur-Kritik im Hochland 1903–1918*. Paderborn: Schöningh.
- Gordon, Harold. 1972. *Hitler and the Beer Hall Putsch*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Greenfeld, Liah. 1992. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Greenfeld, Liah. 1996. The Modern Religion? *Critical Review* 10: 169–91. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Grigoriadis, Ioannis. 2013. *Instilling Religion in Greek and Turkish Nationalism: A Sacred Synthesis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hanfstaengl, Ernst. 1970. *Zwischen Weissem und Braunem Haus: Memoiren eines politischen Aussenseiters*. Munich: Piper.
- Hastings, Adrian. 1997. *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion, and Nationalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hastings, Derek. 2003. How ‘Catholic’ Was the Early Nazi Movement? Religion, Race, and Culture in Munich, 1919–1924. *Central European History* 36: 383–433. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Hastings, Derek. 2010. *Catholicism and the Roots of Nazism: Religious Identity and National Socialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hastings, Derek. 2018. *Nationalism in Modern Europe: Politics, Identity, and Belonging since the French Revolution*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Haustein, Jörg. 2001. *Liberal-Katholische Publistik im Späten Kaiserreich: Das Neue Jahrhundert und die Krausgesellschaft*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Hayes, Carlton. 1960. *Nationalism: A Religion*. New York: Macmillan.
- Heilbrunner, Oded. 1998. *Catholicism, Political Culture, and the Countryside: A Social History of the Nazi Party in South Germany*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Hesemann, Michael. 2004. *Hitlers Religion: Die Fatale Heilslehre des Nationalsozialismus*. Munich: Pattloch.
- Jantzen, Eric. 2008. *Faith and Fatherland: Parish Politics in Hitler’s Germany*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Kershaw, Ian. 2014. *Volksgemeinschaft: Potential and Limitations of the Concept*. Edited by Martina Steber and Bernhard Gotto. Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online.
- Koehne, Samuel. 2013. Reassessing the ‘Holy Reich’: Leading Nazis’ Views on Confession, Community, and ‘Jewish’ Materialism. *Journal of Contemporary History* 48: 423–45. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Koehne, Samuel. 2014. The Racial Yardstick: ‘Ethnotheism’ and Official Nazi Views on Religion. *German Studies Review* 37: 575–96. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Kühne, Thomas. 2010. *Belonging and Genocide: Hitler’s Community, 1918–1945*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Kurlander, Eric. 2012. Hitler’s Monsters: The Occult Roots of Nazism and the Emergence of the Nazi Supernatural Imaginary. *German History* 30: 528–49. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Kurlander, Eric. 2015. The Nazi Magician’s Controversy: Enlightenment, ‘Border Science’ and Occultism in the Third Reich. *Central European History* 48: 498–522. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Kurlander, Eric. 2017. *Hitler’s Monsters: A Supernatural History of the Third Reich*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Lehmann, Hartmut, and Peter van der Veer. 1999. *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Ley, Michael, and Julius Schoeps, eds. 1997. *Der Nationalsozialismus als Politische Religion*. Mainz: Philo.
- Llobera, Josep. 1994. *The God of Modernity: The Development of Nationalism in Western Europe*. Oxford: Berg.
- Loome, Thomas. 1979. *Liberal Catholicism, Reform Catholicism, Modernism*. Mainz: Grünewald.
- Maier, Hans. 2007. Political Religion: A Concept and Its Limitations. *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8: 5–16. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Mennekes, Friedhelm. 1972. *Die Republik als Herausforderung: Konservatives Denken in Bayern Zwischen Weimarer Republik und Antidemokratischer Reaktion*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot.
- Mitchell, Allan. 1965. *Revolution in Bavaria, 1918–1919*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Müller, Josef. 1898. *Der Reformkatholizismus: Die Religion der Zukunft für die Gebildeten aller Bekenntnisse*. Würzburg: Göbel.
- Nolzen, Armin. 2017. Organizing the ‘People’s Community’: The NSDAP and the Ethnic Germans in Nazi-Occupied Territories. *Journal of Genocide Research* 19: 170–90. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Pine, Lisa. 2017. *Hitler’s National Community*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Probst, Christopher. 2012. *Demonizing the Jews: Luther and the Protestant Church in Nazi Germany*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Puschner, Uwe, Walter Schmitz, and Justus H. Ulbricht. 1999. *Handbuch zur völkischen Bewegung*. Munich: Saur.
- Rissmann, Michael. 2001. *Hitlers Gott: Vorsehungsglaube und Sendungsbewusstsein des Deutschen Diktators*. Munich: Pendo.
- Roethler, Jeremy. 2016. *Germany's Catholic Fraternities and the Weimar Republic*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, New York: Peter Lang.
- Roethler, Jeremy. 2017. Albert Leo Schlageter: First Soldier of the Third Reich or Catholic War Hero? *Catholic Historical Review* 103: 698–724. [CrossRef]
- Schauff, Johannes. 1928. *Die Deutschen Katholiken und die Zentrumsparlei*. Cologne: Bachem.
- Schlossmacher, Norbert. 1991. Antiumontanismus im Wilhelminischen Deutschland: Ein Versuch. In *Deutscher Katholizismus im Umbruch zur Moderne*. Edited by Wilfried Loth. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
- Schreiber, Jürgen. 2009. *Politische Religion: Geschichtswissenschaftliche Perspektiven*. Marburg: Tectum.
- Schroeder, Oskar. 1969. *Aufbruch und Missverständnis: Zur Geschichte der reformkatholischen Bewegung*. Graz: Styria.
- Schröngamer-Heimdal, Franz. 1918. *Das kommende Reich*. Augsburg: Haas & Grabherr.
- Schröngamer-Heimdal, Franz. 1919. *Judas, der Weltfeind*. Munich: Deutscher Volksverlag.
- Schwaiger, Georg. 1984. *Das Erzbistum München und Freising in der Zeit der Nationalsozialistischen Herrschaft*. Munich: Schnell & Steiner.
- Smith, Helmut Walser. 1995. *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870–1914*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Sperber, Jonathan. 1997. *The Kaiser's Voters: Electors and Elections in Imperial Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Spicer, Kevin, ed. 2008. *Anti-Semitism, Christian Ambivalence, and the Holocaust*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Spicer, Kevin. 2008. *Hitler's Priests: Catholic Clergy and National Socialism*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press.
- Steber, Martina, and Bernhard Gotto. 2014. *Visions of Community in Nazi Germany: Social Engineering and Private Lives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Steigmann-Gall, Richard. 2003. *The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stephenson, Jill. 2008. Inclusion: Building the National Community in Propaganda and Practice. In *Nazi Germany*. Edited by Jane Caplan. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Trippen, Norbert. 1977. *Theologie und Lehramt im Konflikt*. Freiburg: Herder.
- Tröster, Werner. 1993. Die besondere Eigenart des Herrn Dr. Pieper! Dr. Lorenz Pieper, Priester der Erzdiözese Paderborn, Mitglied der NSDAP Nr. 9740. In *Das Erzbistum Paderborn in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus*. Edited by Ulrich Wagener. Paderborn: Bonifatius.
- van Deetmer, Kees. 2010. *Not Exactly: In Praise of Vagueness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Varshizky, Amit. 2012. Alfred Rosenberg: The Nazi Weltanschauung as Modern Gnosis. *Politics, Religion & Ideology* 13: 311–31.
- Voegelin, Eric. 1939. *Die politischen Religionen*. Stockholm: Fischer.
- Weber, Christoph. 1992. 'Eine starke, Enggeschlossene Phalanx': Der politische Katholizismus in der Erste Deutsche Reichstagswahl 1871. Essen: Klartext.
- Weikart, Richard. 2016. *Hitler's Religion*. Chicago: Regenery.
- Weiss, Otto. 1978. Der Ultramontanismus: Grundlagen, Vorgeschichte, Struktur. *Zeitschrift für Bayerische Landesgeschichte* 41: 821–78.
- Weiss, Otto. 1995. *Der Modernismus in Deutschland: Ein Beitrag zur Theologiegeschichte*. Regensburg: Pustet.
- Weitlauff, Manfred. 2010. *Der Fall des Augsburger Diözesanpriesters und Münchener Theologieprofessors Joseph Schnitzer (1859–1939)*. Augsburg: Verein für Augsburger Bistumsgeschichte.
- Welch, David. 2004. Nazi Propaganda and the Volksgemeinschaft: Constructing a People's Community. *Journal of Contemporary History* 39: 213–38. [CrossRef]
- Wennberg, Rebecca. 2014. Beyond Confession? 'Political Religion' and Ideological Incorrectness in the Study of Nazism. *Religion Compass* 8: 148–58. [CrossRef]
- Wildt, Michael. 2012. *Hitler's Volksgemeinschaft and the Dynamics of Racial Exclusion*. New York: Berghahn.
- Yosmaoglu, Ipek. 2018. *Blood Ties: Religion, Violence, and the Politics of Nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878–1908*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

- Zeldin, Theodore. 1970. *Conflicts in French Society: Anticlericalism, Education, and Morals in the Nineteenth Century*. London: Allen & Unwyn.
- Zwicker, Lisa. 2012. *Dueling Students: Conflict, Masculinity, and Politics in German Universities, 1890–1914*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Zwicker, Stefan. 2006. *Nationale Märtyrer: Albert Leo Schlageter und Julius Fucik*. Paderborn: Schöningh.



© 2018 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).