

## X. The rejection of sacrifice, birth of monotheism and isolation of the Jews among nations.

“Therefore it is quite puzzling, in these circumstances, how the Prophets knew to grab superstitions and paganism by the horns and how they recognized in the sacrifice the root of pagan worship.”<sup>484</sup>

“One should begin to reflect over why and under which circumstances the Jewish people started so early to abandon the star deities and forbade the worship of images, despite the fact that it had lived through the same events as the other peoples and had started like them with an astral religion.”<sup>485</sup>

“Origin, cause and [earliest] justification of the [Jewish] prohibition of images are hard to figure out.”<sup>486</sup>

“How thou hast fallen from heaven, thou beautiful Morningstar! How thou wast thrown to earth, thou who felltest all peoples! Yet thou has thought in thy heart: ‘I will climb into the sky and establish my throne above the stars of gods;’”<sup>487</sup> These verses of Isaiah<sup>488</sup> are most often interpreted as an allegory of the defeat of Assyria in the late 7th century BC. Associations with the end of cosmic catastrophes are not allowed to blossom because the Darwinistic blunting of the material has been extraordinarily successful.

For this same axial age, one scholar notices also remarkable changes for Greece: “There came into being a new conception of heaven, which stressed symmetry and regularity in the natural processes.”<sup>489</sup> The feudalistic priest-kingship gave place to the *polis*, defined by property.<sup>490</sup> The disciples of Pythagoras (6th Cent. B.C.) turn against the bloody bull sacrifices, exposing themselves to persecution.<sup>491</sup> The emancipator

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<sup>484</sup> H. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums* (1919), Wiesbaden: Fourier, 1978, p. 199.

<sup>485</sup> I. Velikovsky, *Worlds in Collision* (1950)..

<sup>486</sup> W. H. Schmidt, «Gott II», in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Bd. XIII, Berlin und New York: de Gruyter, 1984, p. 613.

<sup>487</sup> *Isaiah 15*: 12 f.

<sup>488</sup> See also *Luke 10*:18 und fn. 641.

<sup>489</sup> S. C. Humphreys, «Dynamics of the Greek Breakthrough: the Dialogue Between Philosophy and Religion», in: S. N. Eisenstadt (ed.), *The Origins and Diversity of Axial Age Civilizations*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1986, p. 93.

<sup>490</sup> See in detail G. Heinsohn, *Privateigentum, Patriarchat, Geldwirtschaft. Eine sozialtheoretische Rekonstruktion zur Antike*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhr-kamp 1984 as well as G. Heinsohn, O. Steiger, *Eigentum, Zins und Geld: Ungelöste Rätsel der Wirtschaftswissenschaft*, Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1996, B: «Das Kapitel vom Eigentum».

<sup>491</sup> In Iamblichos, *De vita pythagorica* 255 we read: «Then the hidden hatred came to the fore and the people turned away from the pythagoreans.” Cf. also B. J. Peiser, *Das Dunkle Zeitalter Olympias: Kritische*

Pheredykes of Syros (5th century BC) too rejects the sacrificial cult and is punished for it with a lice disease by Apollo, according to legend.<sup>492</sup> Several centuries later, Theophrast teaches compassion with the animal victims of sacrifice and advises non-bloody offerings to the gods.<sup>493</sup>

Particularly enlightening must appear to us reports about the anti-sacrifice movement in Iron Age Rome. This struggle fails notoriously. Only in 97 B.C. does a decision of the Senate forbid sacrifice in general. This did not keep Emperor Augustus (31 B.C. to 14 A.D.) to have 300 people ritually slaughtered on the altar of the meanwhile deified Julius Caesar. The reintroduction of sacrifice by Emperor Nero (37-68 AD) after the sighting of a comet will interest us when it comes to the creation of the Christian religion by the apostle Paul (conversion around 30-40 A.D.; death between 64 and 67 A.D.). In early Iron Age Rome, not only the ritual spilling of blood is fought against, but, simultaneously, the erection of statues of the gods, which are understood at least intuitively as a result of the practice of sacrifice: “Numa [Pompilius; legendary second king of Rome from the late - therefore legendary - 7th Cent. B.C.] forbade the Romans to erect a human or animal-like image of a god. In fact, there did not exist among them in early times any painted or three-dimensional image of a god, yet during the first 170 years they have kept erecting temples and chapels, but they did not let fashion *any image of a god* because it was not permitted to imitate the higher in a lesser material, and it was not possible to grasp the more elevated in any other way than through the power of thought. In *sacrifices* too, Numa followed entirely the worshiping practices of the Pythagoreans, for *they were mostly un-bloody* and consisted of flour, wine offerings and the most simple things.”<sup>494</sup>

Farther to the East, for Indian historians, at the end of the global catastrophes, the “time of sacrifice” is replaced with the “time of conflict”<sup>495</sup>. Buddhism overcomes blood sacrifice entirely.<sup>496</sup>

In the Medo-Persian culture area, the concern is for the “participation in bovine

*Untersuchungen der historischen, archäologischen und naturgeschichtlichen Probleme der griechischen Achsenzeit am Beispiel der antiken Olympischen Spiele*, Frankfurt am Main et al.: Peter Lang, 1993, p. 244.

<sup>492</sup> Cf. W. Nestle, *Vom Mythos zum Logos: Die Selbstfindung des griechischen Denkens von Homer bis auf die Sophistik und Sokrates* (1941<sup>2</sup>), Stuttgart: Kröner, 1975, p. 79.

<sup>493</sup> See A. Schimmel, «Opfer. I. Religionsgeschichtlich», in: *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*, 3. fully revised new ed., vol. 4, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1966, Sp. 1640.

<sup>494</sup> Plutarch, *Numa* 8, my emphasis G H.

<sup>495</sup> G. B. Walker, *The Hindu World: An Encyclopedic Survey of Hinduism*, New York: Praeger, 1968.

<sup>496</sup> See a. o. A. Schimmel, «Opfer. I. Religionsgeschichtlich», in: *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*, 3. Fully revised new ed., vol. 4, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1966, Sp. 1641; P. Gerlitz, «Opfer: I. Religionsgeschichte», in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, vol. XXV, Berlin und New York: de Gruyter, 1995, p. 257.

sacrifice, which Zarathustra fights tirelessly.”<sup>497</sup> Agricultural gifts replace the bloody Indo-Iranian sacrifices.<sup>498</sup> On the fire altars, no flesh is consumed any longer. Instead, pure flames flare for their own sake.<sup>499</sup> Darius the Great (522-486 BC) demands from the Carthaginians whom he could well employ in a pending war against Egypt and to whom they have offered themselves as allies, to stop child sacrifice<sup>500</sup> to begin with,<sup>501</sup> in which he remains unsuccessful. Carthaginian child sacrifices continue until the final defeat against Rome in 146 B.C.

Like Numa Pompilius in Rome, the Iranian thinker Zarathustra joins his fight against sacrifice with a fight against statues of the gods,<sup>502</sup> He must also have had at least an inkling of the origin of the latter in the elevation of the corpses of those slaughtered.

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<sup>497</sup> Cf. H. Lommel, «Die Sonne das Schlechteste?», in: B. Schlerath (ed.), *Zarathustra*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970, p. 361.

<sup>498</sup> Cf. also R. Merkelbach, *Mithras*, Königstein/Ts.: Hain, 1984, p. 10f. («Zarathustra und das Stieropfer»).

<sup>499</sup> Cf. K. Rudolph, «Zarathustra - Priester und Prophet: Neue Aspekte der Zarathustra- bzw. Gatha-Forschung», in: B. Schlerath (ed.), *Zarathustra*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970, p. 293f.

<sup>500</sup> About the archaeological evidence from Carthage, where ca 20,000 urns containing carbonized remains of children up to three years of age have been found for the period 400 to 200 B.C. cf. L. E. Stager, «The Rite of Child Sacrifice at Carthage», in: J. G. Pedley (ed.), *New Light on Ancient Carthage: Papers of a Symposium by the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, the University of Michigan, Marking the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Museum*, Ann Arbor/Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1980, p. 1 ff.; cf. also S. Moscati, *Gli adoratori di Moloch: Indagine su un celebre rito cartaginese*, Milano: Jaca Books, 1991 as well as M. S. Bergmann, *In the Shadow of Moloch: The Sacrifice of Children and its Impact on Western Religions*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992.

<sup>501</sup> Pompeius Trogus, *Historiae Philippicae in Excerpts by Junianus Justinus*, 19: 1.

<sup>502</sup> Cf. G. Lanczkowski, «Bilder I», in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Berlin und New York: de Gruyter, vol. VI, 1980, p. 517.



Ill. 28: Carthaginian priest carrying a child to be sacrificed to Moloch. Redrawing of a stele of the 4th century B.C. from the Bardo Museum, by S. Bollenhagen.<sup>503</sup>

In China in the axial age “heavenly peace” is praised. In the religious field, a decisive change occurs “from the striving to please god and gods through sacrifice, without making morality a capital issue, to the belief that morally right actions as such are the key to survival and success on Earth.”<sup>504</sup> Sacrifice was not really overcome, but pushed back into a sphere now separated from the worldly domain. Nevertheless: “many “shamans, prophets and priest, who had been the ‘carriers’ of the holy traditions,

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<sup>503</sup> M. Elvin, «Hat es in China einen transzendentalen Durchbruch gegeben?» (1986), in: S. N. Eisenstadt (ed.), *Kulturen der Achsenzeit: Ihre Ursprünge und ihre Vielfalt. Part 2. Spätantike, Indien, China, Islam* (1986), Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987, p. 138.

<sup>504</sup> Cf. also G. C. Picard und C. Picard, *Carthage: A Survey of Punic History and Culture from its Birth to the Final Tragedy* (1968), London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1987, panel 25.

now... were forced to accept other occupations in society.”<sup>505</sup> In China it was well understood - for instance by Guan Ye Fu - that “it had been in times of despair” that “humans had taken on the role of shamans”<sup>506</sup> and that now new times had come. In these times of despair - according to modern terminology, the Bronze Ages - it also applies to China that “human sacrifices are practically the most remarkable feature through which the high cultural finds of the Shang differentiate themselves from those of the North Chinese Neolithic.”<sup>507</sup>

Historically of the utmost importance for the evolution of the West is the fight against sacrifice taking place in ancient Israel, leading to Jewish monotheism. Possibly, it turned out to be more radical than in other civilizations of the ancient Near East because the Jews, who had been moved to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, found themselves in a highly unusual situation. Yesterday, they were still acting in their homeland as priestly feudal lords, who - like most feudal lords - would have wanted to pursue in their own economic interest a temple culture which had become religiously dispensable. But already in this yesterday - after the centralizing of the cult in Jerusalem under King Josiah (conventionally 640-609 B.C.) - they could only avail themselves of a single temple which, moreover, had decidedly turned against sacrifice to cosmic bodies:

“And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Bethel.

And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven.”<sup>508</sup>

Even this last temple in Judah is finally destroyed by Emperor Nebuchadnezzar - conventionally dated in the 7th/6th Century B.C. So that, at first, there can exist for the Judaic exiles no other perspectives, except at best some hopes, to ever revert to a

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<sup>505</sup> Cho-Yun Hsu, «Historische Bedingungen für die Entstehung und Herauskristallisierung des konfuzianischen Systems», in: S. N. Eisenstadt (ed.), *Kulturen der Achsenzeit: Ihre Ursprünge und ihre Vielfalt. Part 2. Spätantike, Indien, China, Islam* (1986), Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987, p. 113.

<sup>506</sup> Cf. Cho-Yun Hsu, «Historische Bedingungen für die Entstehung und Herauskristallisierung des konfuzianischen Systems», in: S. N. Eisenstadt (ed.), *Kulturen der Achsenzeit: Ihre Ursprünge und ihre Vielfalt. Teil 2. Spätantike, Indien, China, Islam* (1986), Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987, p. 112.

<sup>507</sup> T.-T. Chang, *Der Kult der Shang-Dynastie im Spiegel der Orakelschriften: Eine paläographische Studie zur Religion im archaischen China*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1970, p. 73f.

<sup>508</sup> 2. Kings: 23: 4f.; cf. also 2. Chronicles 34: 1-7

priestly feudalism. In exile, Judah's aristocrats and religious experts find themselves suddenly deprived of their pious bondsmen. They now belong themselves to the ranks of the exploited, being put to the task of maintaining their sacrificial religious activities. Still, the elite of Judah remains in possession of its high learning and astral-religious expertise. This qualification allows it to defend itself against the wholesale dispensing of pious formulas and apocalyptic intimidations.<sup>509</sup>

It is certainly not by chance that Daniel is supposed to be the astronomer of the Babylonian court. The observation of heaven is in the end the science through which one assures oneself of the end of catastrophes. The observations of Mercury and Venus, which are central to the cult of sacrifice, induce the masterly achievements of the astronomy of antiquity. With the geometrically extraordinarily elegant demonstrations of the six-branched star (Mercury) and five branched star (Venus)<sup>510</sup> the long term period of these planets around the sun is demonstrated and mankind is relieved of its fear.

The pagan position in contrast, which is defined by its holding on to the planetary gods, wishes for the return of its gods and begins to use them for apocalyptic threats. After the final catastrophe between the Middle- and the Late Bronze Age one can read for instance, on liver models for divination excavated in Hazor: "Ishtar [Venus and consort of Baal/Mercury] will devour the land./ The gods of the city [could these be Venus and Mercury, now at peace, but evoked by the priests fearing for their material existence?] will come back."<sup>511</sup>

Academic astronomy has tried to explain the exhausted potential for catastrophe of the two legendary celestial bodies, by suggesting that Mercury might have been once a satellite of Venus.<sup>512</sup> In Greek myth it is said of the Mercury-equivalent Hephaistos, born of a Venus-equivalent virgin: "Hera has born this son out of herself, without siring by a man; the result was a disappointment, she threw him angrily from the heights of heaven. / He avenged himself by offering his mother a throne, which fettered her through a refined automatism."<sup>513</sup> This "fettering" in the Greek myth could

<sup>509</sup> About this development, see G. Heinsohn, *Was ist Antisemitismus? - Der Ursprung von Monotheismus und Judenhaß. - Warum Antizionismus?*, Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn Verlag/Reihe Scarabäus, 1988, p. 51 ff.

<sup>510</sup> Cf. M. Knapp, *Pentagramma Veneria: Eine historisch-astronomische Studie zum Verständnis alter astronomischer Symbole und ihrer Anwendung*, Basel: Helbingund Lichtenhahn, 1934.

<sup>511</sup> Cf. G. W. Ahlström, *The History of Ancient Palestine from the Palaeolithic Period to Alexander's Conquest*, ed. by D. Edelman, with a contribution by G. O. Rollefson, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993, p. 257.

<sup>512</sup> Cf. p. ex. T. Van Flandern, R. S. Harrington, «A Dynamical Investigation of the Conjecture that Mercury is an Escaped Satellite of Venus», in: *Icarus*, vol. 28, 1976, S. 435ff. sowie G. R. Stewart, «A Violent Birth of Mercury?», in: *Nature*, vol. 335, 1988, p. 496f.

<sup>513</sup> Cf. W. Burkert, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, Stuttgart et al.: Kohlhammer, 1977, p. 260/212.

represent a cosmological explanation for the “heavenly peace” of the Chinese myth. There is also a legend of the Mercury-equivalent Zeus - comparable to the Germanic Mercury=Wotan, the etymological eponym of “god” as Zeus is for *deos* - which could belong to this complex. He is supposed to have “bound and hung Hera between heaven and earth, with an anvil on each foot”<sup>514</sup> so that she was no longer able to carry out any uncontrollable movement. Modern astronomy is puzzled by the fact that Mercury may have been involved in a catastrophic collision which exploded parts of its crust. Given its conventional age of 4.5 billion years and its only 523km thick mantle, it has not been convincingly explained up to now how its enormous iron core of 3832 km diameter can still be liquid through the effect of enormous heat, and has not cooled off long ago.<sup>515</sup>

The battle for monotheism - that is, the negation of the many astral deities - is carried on against all the gods in forms of celestial objects, to which belong the old “Yahweh and his Ashera,”<sup>516</sup> as well <sup>517</sup> as “Baal and Astarte,” “Mercury and Venus,” “Moses and Miriam”<sup>518</sup> and so many other divine marriages, god couples, divine siblings and mother-son god pairs.<sup>519</sup> This Old Israelitic Yahweh “gave... them commandments, which were not good, and laws, through which they could not have life, and let them become unclean through their sacrifices, as they put through the fire all of the first-born.”<sup>520</sup> Even in monotheistic Israel, renegades keep having to be reminded:

“And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, *even* all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.”

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<sup>514</sup> Cf. W. Burkert, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, Stuttgart et al.: Kohlhammer, 1977, p. 212.

<sup>515</sup> See R. Jeanloz, D. L. Mitchell, A. L. Sprague, I. de Pater, «Evidence for a Basalt-Free Surface on Mercury and Implications for Internal Heat», in: *Science*, vol. 268, 1995, p. 1455 ff.

<sup>516</sup> Cf. the more recent archaeological finds about the divine couple Yahweh and Ashera W. G. Dever, «Recent Archaeological Confirmation of the Cult of Ashera in Ancient Israel», in: *Hebrew Studies*, vol. 23, 1982, S. 37ff. As well as D. N. Freedman, «Yahwe of Samaria and his Asherah», in: *Biblical Archaeologist*, vol. 50, Nr. 4, 1987, p. 241 ff.

<sup>517</sup> Cf. to the general literature J. C. De Moor, *The Rise of Yahwism: The Roots of Israelite Monotheism*, Leuven: University Press/Uitgeverij Peeters, 1990, p. 11 (Fn 3).

<sup>518</sup> Cf. p. ex. A. Jeremias, *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients*, 4. fully revised new ed., Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1930, p. 416.

<sup>519</sup> Cf. Chapter III above.

<sup>520</sup> *Ezekiel* 20: 25-26; about child sacrifice among premonotheistic Israelites cf. also *2. Moses* 4: 24-36; *3. Moses* 18: 21; *5. Moses* 12: 31 u. 18: 10; *2. Kings* 16: 3 u. 23: 10; *Psalms* 106: 37-38; *Jeremiah* 7: 31.

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King Manasseh still

“... reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served them.

And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom:”  
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As with their Phoenician neighbors, the heavenly burning of a “child god” - redeeming Earth through his ‘death’ - is replayed in the earthly ritual.

The prohibition of images in the Ten Commandments is nothing else but the suppression of statues which represent celestial objects or earthly forces of nature:

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth:

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them:” 523

One strives now to get away from Yahweh, the celestial dueler. 524 His guise as a young bull<sup>525</sup> - now fought against as the pagan worship of a golden calf - appears unbecoming. Though his resemblance with Marduk is not forgotten:

“Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. *Art* thou not it that hath cut Rahab [the great snake of the Deluge], *and* wounded the dragon?”<sup>526</sup>

Onto the formerly mighty name of Yahweh is now grafted the past of a presently harmless and therefore powerless planet Mercury. A dying Dionysos is the ancient Israelitic Yahweh. His divine status decays because he belongs to the individual celestial objects who go to nought in monotheism:

“Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

<sup>521</sup> 5. *Moses* 4: 19; *Jeremiah* 8: 2.

<sup>522</sup> *Ezekiel* 20: 25-26; about child sacrifice among premonotheistic Israelites cf. also 2. *Moses* 4: 24-36; 3. *Moses* 18: 21; 5. *Moses* 12: 31 u. 18: 10; 2. *Kings* 16: 3 u. 23: 10; *Psalms* 106: 37-38; *Jeremiah* 7: 31. 2. *Kings* 21: 3-6.

<sup>523</sup> 5. *Moses* 5: 8 f.; cf. also 2. *Moses* 20: 4 f.

<sup>524</sup> Cf. in detail on all Bible references M. K. Wakeman, *God's Battle with the Monster: A Study in Biblical Imagery*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973, p. 56ff. As well as M. Landmann, *Das Tier in der jüdischen Weisung*, Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1959, p. 29.

<sup>525</sup> Cf. W. Beltz, *Gott und die Götter: Biblische Mythologie* (1975) München: dtv, 1980, p. 63.

<sup>526</sup> *Isaiah* 52: 9; cf. Similarly *Isaiah* 27: 1.



For the customs of the people *are* vain.”<sup>527</sup>

Because of its obsolete character, addressing the name of Yahweh=Mercury becomes taboo from the time of the Achaemenids,<sup>528</sup> that is, from the beginning of monotheism. To retain the name of the old deity always retains the risk that the sacrificial cults which glorify him, in which his “death” is replayed, might again come to life among the Jews: “It is said that pious awe moved them, not to call his name anymore; yet they would not have been able to give it up if their historical, national, and to them uniquely sacred god had still been truly alive.”<sup>529</sup> In contrast with the old-Israelitic Yahweh, the deity of Jewish monotheism remains without a name, which is why the Charismatics, seceding from the core of Judaism - such as Sabbatai Zvi in the 17th cent. - were driven to pick up again the pagan name. In monotheism, God is only “my Lord” (Adonai) or “The Name” (Ha Shem).

When regularity and peace obtain in heaven, begins the downfall of sacrifice. It has not yet, today, found its end. Jewish prophets can begin with the task of overcoming blood sacrifice because astronomical informations have convinced them of the end of catastrophes, as we can read from the monotheistic post-script to the Deluge of Noah:

“I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”<sup>530</sup>

This conviction is at the source of the anti-apocalyptic tradition of Judaism to this day. The illness-generating catastrophes are a thing of the past, which is also why the strong remedies are no longer needed.

Conscious of the present idolatric character of the “heavenly host,” the Prophets attack the old-Israelites, who like the other peoples want to carry on with sacrifices and Temple: “Hear, my people, let me speak;... Israel... I do not want to take oxen from thy house nor rams from thy stables... Doest thou believe that I want to eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of bucks? Give God thank and fill thy promises and call on me in

<sup>527</sup> *Jeremiah* 10: 2f.

<sup>528</sup> Cf. K. van der Toorn, «Yahwe», in: K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, P. W. van der Horst (ed.), *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (DDD), Leiden et al.: E. J. Brill, 1994, Sp. 1711.

<sup>529</sup> J. Wellhausen, «Israelitisch-Jüdische Religion», in: *Die christliche Religion mit Einschluß der Israelitisch-Jüdischen Religion*, Berlin und Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1906, p. 35.

<sup>530</sup> *I. Moses* 8:21 f.

distress, so that I will save you, and thou wilt praise me.”<sup>531</sup>

After the return from exile, the newly erected temple, defended by the priestly aristocracy and again appointed by the traditional peasant population, becomes an object of criticism, together with the sacrificers:

“Thus saith the LORD, The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my rest?

...

He that killeth an ox *is as if* he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, *as if* he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, *as if he offered* swine's blood; he that burneth incense, *as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations...

because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose *that* in which I delighted not.”

This passionate action does not miss its target. That the mighty words of the contempters of temple and sacrifice must at first accept a compromise, i.e. the persistence of the last temple in Jerusalem, does not diminish the trend-setting dynamics of this civilisatory impulse. Eduard Meyer, who between 1880 and 1930 did not have his equal as a scholar of Antiquity and who is on the record for very unjust comments about Judaism, let himself be carried to enthusiastic comment over this: “What Judaism offered to the unbeliever was indeed something absolutely unique. The very elements of the religion and the cult which everywhere else stood in the central focus, here had entirely fallen by the wayside: it knew neither temple, nor images of the gods, nor sacrifice... with the exception of the one only site... the temple of Jerusalem. ...Indeed [sacrificial service] found itself eliminated for most of Judaism. This is the reason why the Temple with all the details of the sacrificial ritual, produced such a mighty impression onto the Jews, when they came to Jerusalem... A cult without images of gods and without temples existed nowhere else in the civilized world.”<sup>532</sup> But even in their capital, the Jews who were still devoted to the Temple did not sacrifice personally: “To the daily sacrifice in Jerusalem stood opposed the fact that the *individual* now *ceased* to sacrifice.”<sup>533</sup> Even the ritual slaughterers of the last sacred spot in Jerusalem, who in this instance could precisely not be identical with the priests according to Levitical law, accomplished their acts in a very untypical manner, according to Theophrast. “Among the Syrians, the Jews do not slaughter the sacrificial animals for

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<sup>531</sup> *Psalm* 50: 7-15; also *Psalms* 40: 6-10 and 51: 17-19.

<sup>532</sup> E. Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums. Erster Band. Teil II: Die Entwicklung des Judentums und Jesus von Nazaret* [1923], Gütersloh o. J., p.26f.

<sup>533</sup> M. Weber, «Die Entstehung des jüdischen Pariavolkes» (1920), in: Idem: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie 111: Das antike Judentum*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1963, p. 375, emphasis in the original.

the consumption of the sacrificers, as we do, but they burn them by night with honey and wine.”<sup>534</sup>

As everything belongs to the monotheistic god, and he doesn't need to compete with other gods for respect and gifts, offerings of the old-Israelitic kind had become senseless. He does not need food. Appeasement, or even placating through impressive gifts, can be tried with a volcano or a celestial body threatening Earth, but towards one all-mighty, they acquire a character of foolishness and presumptuousness. The invisible Jewish god cannot be played by anyone - man or animal, the left-over of which - like hosts and blood-wine - can be distributed to the community for consumption. Therefore there occurs - next to the persistence of a separation between man and god - an evolution towards the use of the corpse as a burnt offering (*olah*=to rise) in its totality (*kalil*).

The Jews who do not return to Judah from Babylonian exile belong to the first monotheistic Jews who have nothing but their synagogues and offer the surrounding natives the spectacle of a life without sacrificial cult: “Apparently, every community assembled (*kinishtu* an Aramaic loan word in Babylonian; whence *kneset* in mishnah (ver.) Hebrew), and one may well conjecture that these houses of assembly became places of worship. Should this be the case, we have here the origins of the synagogue, which later became the center of the Jewish community.”<sup>535</sup> Long before the destruction of the Second Temple through Titus in 70 AD the “synagogal feast... [represented] an unavoidable destitution of sacrifice and priesthood.”<sup>536</sup>

Something entirely new enters as a result of the critic of sacrifice onto the stage of history: “a “compassionate god,”<sup>537</sup> one “who loved you,”<sup>538</sup> gains access to the center of post-catastrophic Israel. “Grace now goes before right,” and punishment “is now only for the individual sinners”<sup>539</sup> - not whole races of peoples. The mere projection of human excitement and anger onto the godhead yields to the concept of a highest of beings who is freed of them:

“...mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.

<sup>534</sup> E. Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums. Vol. 1 Part 11: Die Entwicklung des Judentums und Jesus von Nazaret* [1923], Gütersloh o. J., p. 28.

<sup>535</sup> H. Tadmor, «The Period of the First Temple, the Babylonian Exile and the Restoration», in: H. H. Ben-Sasson (ed.), *A History of the Jewish People* (1969), Cambridge/MA: Harvard University Press, 1976, p. 172.

<sup>536</sup> M. Weber, «Die Pharisäer» (1920), in: Idem: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie III: Das antike Judentum*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1963, p. 404.

<sup>537</sup> 5. *Moses* 4: 31.

<sup>538</sup> 5. *Moses* 7: 8.

<sup>539</sup> Cf. G. Braulik, «Das Deuteronomium und die Geburt des Monotheismus», in: E. Haag (Hg.), Gorr, *der einzige: Zur Entstehung des Monotheismus in Israel*, Freiburg et al.: Herder, 1985, p. 133 u. 134.

I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I *am* God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city [in wrath].”<sup>540</sup>

It goes without saying that this vision of god comes at a price. From the negation of blood sacrifice stems the goodness of the monotheistic deity. From the negation of the celestial object stems his almightiness. The concept of almightiness must enter into contradiction with the highly non-good reality, which a good god cannot possibly will. Much theology was born out of this contradiction. Humans must now positively bring into the world what before had only been formulated in a polemic against the old blood-gods and their worship.

Never has it been rightly understood whence the Jewish commandments of love have originated. But the prophets always mention them in contrast with blood sacrifice.<sup>541</sup> “I have lust for love and not for sacrifice,”<sup>542</sup> thus poetizes Hosea, unexcelled, the whole program.

Isaiah proffers the same warning:

“Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear *them*.

And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge [for] the fatherless, plead for the widow.”<sup>543</sup>

Micha formulates it hardly differently:

“Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, *or* with ten thousands of rivers of

<sup>540</sup> *Hosea* 11: 8f.

<sup>541</sup> There, the prophets formulate considerations such as are also conveyed from papyri-texts from the New Kingdom of Egypt. In the “Advice to Merikares” (lines 128-129) it is written: «More loving acceptance will find the virtue of the righteous than the oxen of the sinner.” Cf. also M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature. Volume 1: The Old and Middle Kingdoms* (1973), Berkeley et al.: University of Chicago Press, 1975, p. 106.

<sup>542</sup> *Hosea* 6: 6. “O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness *is* as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. Therefore have I hewed *them* by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments *are as* the light *that* goeth forth. For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.”

<sup>543</sup> *Isaiah*: 13/15-17.

oil? shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression, the fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul?

He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"<sup>544</sup>

Also the social transformation of love - justice, therefore - is commanded in direct opposition to sacrifice:

"Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept *them*: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts.

Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.

But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."<sup>545</sup>

The universality of these commands are stressed by the same prophet in what is possibly the first rejection known to us of racial arrogance: "Are you children of Israel not equal to me to the Moors? Spoke the Lord. *Are* ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the LORD. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?"<sup>546</sup>

In the Law (the Thora) criticism of sacrifice is brought to its most overwhelming and in the same time most unaccessible expression:

"... thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD.

And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him.

*But* the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself."<sup>547</sup>

In what is probably the earliest historical formulation of a so-to speak internationalistic humanism, the concept "stranger" is chosen, because at this time the stranger to the tribe is equated to the enemy of the tribe. In the Roman empire by

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<sup>544</sup> *Micha* 6: 7-8.

<sup>545</sup> *Amos* 5: 24.

<sup>546</sup> *Amos* 9: 7.

<sup>547</sup> 3. *Moses* 19: 18 u. 33-34.

contrast, which had made men of a great number of tribes to equal citizens, this formulation becomes outdated. The stranger to the tribe can now be a Roman co-citizen and is therefore no longer an enemy as such. Therefore, in Roman times, the Christian version of the Jewish law replaces the term “stranger” with the term “enemy.” Moreover, vengeance-killing is to be overcome by the commandments of love just as was sacrifice, so that it said:

“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD.”<sup>548</sup>

The fact that the love of strangers appears as a Jewish creation gave birth early on to the envy of Christendom. So the Thora commandment from 3. *Moses* 19:34 (“You shall love him [the stranger] like yourself”) becomes falsified in the Christian Bible to a command of the hatred of enemies, in order to be able to preserve an antijudaic thrust:<sup>549</sup> “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies.”<sup>550</sup>

These clauses of love, justice and holiness of life as formulated by the prophets and the Torah will not be bettered even inside Judaism. So that the rabbinic teachers of the 1st Cent. B.C. can only add to the revolutionary ethic their famous short commentaries. For the benefit of enquiring pagans, for instance, Hillel of Judea paraphrases the law thus: “What you do not like, do not do it unto your neighbor.”<sup>551</sup> The Greeks of Egypt and of the rest of the world are told by *Philo of Alexandria*: “To make it short, the two primary elements of all the innumerable teachings about the relationship with god are piousness and holiness and about the relationship to men, the love of men and justice.”<sup>552</sup> And to racial arrogance it is opposed that all men are the children of Adam and that therefore no one can tell the other: “My father is greater than yours.”<sup>553</sup> The most important Jewish authors of the turn of the era “saw in the commandment of love the core significance of Judaism.”<sup>554</sup>

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<sup>548</sup> 3. *Moses* 19: 18.

<sup>549</sup> See M. Mieses, *Der Ursprung des Judenhasses*, Berlin und Wien: Benjamin Harz, 1923, p. 337.

<sup>550</sup> *Matthew* 5: 43 f.

<sup>551</sup> *Babylonian Talmud*, «Order of the Shabbath» 31a.

<sup>552</sup> Philo, *De specialibus legibus* II: 63.

<sup>553</sup> *Babylonian Talmud*, «Order of the Sanhedrin» 59b.

<sup>554</sup> D. Flusser, «A New Sensitivity in Judaism and the Christian Message», in: Idem, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity*, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1988, p. 121.

It is precisely because the Christians adopt the Jewish commandments of love<sup>555</sup> that it becomes so difficult for the Roman administration to differentiate between the two groups. The truly unusual aspect of Christianity is, to the outsiders, not its core of salvation in the blood sacrifice of Christ, for Romans cannot be impressed by sacrifices. They know them in almost endless variety from all over their cultural world. The commandments of love and justice by contrast must have looked exotic to them.

Richer even in consequences for the later history of humanity than these commandments, becomes the prohibition of killing. Pagan authors of antiquity have already reported about the comprehensive development of this prohibition in Jewish law. It even covers the protection of newborns, who in Greek and Roman circles can well be killed if the necessities of birth control and health issues warrant it. Around 300 B.C., the Greek philosopher Hecateus of Abdera is puzzled by the fact that Jews raise all their children.<sup>556</sup> The most important historian of Roman imperial times, Tacitus (*Historiae*) writes in the 1st Cent. A.D. about the Jews: "It is a deadly sin to kill an unwanted child."<sup>557</sup> Philo, the Jewish scholar from Alexandria, explains the correlation between this commandment and the love of the neighbor: "In the same time, a greater [injustice] is prohibited, the exposure of children - an iniquity which with many other peoples is a commonplace by reason of their native hatred of humanity... But what men must appear more as the enemies of humanity than the haters and ruthless enemies of their children? One would have to be a fool to believe that those will show themselves to be friendly towards strangers who have acted faithlessly towards those who are related to them. As killers and murderers of children, these give themselves clearly to be known, who themselves lay their hand on children, who smother and hamper the very breath of the children in a gross and abhorrent absence of feeling, and also those who throw them into a river or into the depth of the sea after they have weighted them with a heavy object to make sure that they will more rapidly drown. Others yet bring them into the desert, to leave them exposed - as they say, in the hope that they may be preserved, in reality, for the most horrendous perdition; for all man-eating animals can approach them without difficulty and rejoice themselves of the children, of the luscious meal, that their only caretakers, those whose utmost duty it is to preserve them, father and mother, are offering to the animals; and what is left over, the birds of prey pick clean, who then descend; - when they have not spotted them even before; for if they have come to their attention, the birds will fight with the animals on the ground for their whole body."<sup>558</sup>

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<sup>555</sup> See *Matthew* 19: 19 and 22: 39; *Luke* 10: 27 as well as *Romans* 13: 9.

<sup>556</sup> See M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume One: From Herodotus to Plutarch*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976, p. 29.

<sup>557</sup> Tacitus, *Historiae* V: 5; M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume Two: From Tacitus to Simplicius*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1980, p. 26

<sup>558</sup> Philo, *De specialibus legibus* III: 20.

Only in 318 A.D. under Constantine the Great does the prohibition of child killing become the law of the Roman Empire and has from then on never been deleted from the legal codes of the West - with one exception.<sup>559</sup>

This exception is constituted by the German dictatorship of 1933 to 1945 under Adolf Hitler. On December 4th, 1940, he has Eugen Stähle, who is responsible for the gassing establishment of Grafeneck in Württemberg, rebuking Reinhold Sautter, the High Counselor of the Church Counsel of Stuttgart, for having criticized in a private conversation “the killing of life unworthy of life,” with these words: “The Fifth Commandment: ‘Thou shalt not kill’ is not at all a command of God, but a Jewish invention.”<sup>560</sup> The only member of the Reich elite who dares to attack Hitler publicly sees it differently and knows that in defending the core of Jewish law, he is defending civilization itself. On August 3. 1941, the Catholic bishop Clemens August Count von Galen, who is personally a rightist-conservative of German-imperialistic opinions, preaches in Münster: “Never, under no circumstances is man permitted, outside of war and of righteous self-defense, to kill an innocent. Woe to humanity, woe to our German people, if the holy commandment of God: ‘Thou shalt not kill,’ which the Lord announced amid thunder and lightning on the Sinai, which God, our creator, has from the beginning graven into the conscience of man, is not only transgressed, but when its transgression is accepted and exercised without punishment.”<sup>561</sup>

For all the tendencies of Judaism, the most important decree of the Thora about the sanctity of life is the equation of life with the good:

“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”<sup>562</sup>

If one were to use psychoanalytical terminology, one would say that the prophets and the law demand of the Israelites the sublimation of the aggression which had until now been evacuated in blood sacrifice. Altruism, the care for others, can be born as a result of such a transformation. Where this noble attitude is exaggerated, or is exerted

<sup>559</sup> See G. Heinsohn, «Theorie des Tötungsverbotes und des Monotheismus bei den Israeliten sowie der Genese, der Durchsetzung und der welthistorischen Rolle der christlichen Familien- und Fortpflanzungsmoral» (hebr. 1977), in: J. Müller, B. Wassmann (Hg.), *L'invitation au voyage zu Alfred Sohn-Rethel* (Festschrift für Alfred Sohn-Rethel zum 80. Geburtstag), Bremen: Unibuchladen Wassmann, 1979, Beitrag Nr. 7; G. Heinsohn, R. Knieper, O. Steiger, *Men-schenproduktion: Allgemeine Bevölkerungstheorie der Neuzeit*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1979, p. 316ff.

<sup>560</sup> Cf. H. W. Schmuhl, *Rassenhygiene, Nationalsozialismus, Euthanasie: Von der Verhütung zur Vernichtung «lebensunwerten Lebens», 1890-1945* (1987), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1992, p. 321.

<sup>561</sup> Cf. H. Portmann, *Kardinal von Galen: Ein Gottesmann seiner Zeit - Mit einem Anhang: Die drei weltberühmten Predigten* (1948), Münster: Aschendorff, 1961, p. 357/361.

<sup>562</sup> 5. Moses 30: 15/19.



in a stifling way, one can still recognize the common enmity, from which it needed to be wrested, but there is no other way to achieve it. The creative impulse itself, which reveals its dubious origin in the feelings of provocation which one's fellow humans experience when they are confronted with it, must be understood as a transformation of aggression. In a no lesser extent do the overcoming of enigmas or the revelation of something ground-breakingly innovative present examples of sublimation, which must use archaic strivings if they want to reach their end of pure truth.

If one is not intent on avoiding the question, often felt to be highly embarrassing, as to why among exceptional feats of the mind, of altruism and of creativity Jews are represented fifty to one hundred times more often than would be expected from the proportion of the world population which they represent, one would have to answer: the blocking, from childhood on, of collectively accepted, religiously validated forms of the evacuation of aggression (such as sacrifice, etc.) and of the escape from guilt-feelings (such as confession, etc.) forces the Jewish offspring to a more individualized sublimation of the impulses of aggression, which it shares with any other offsprings. As it happens, it is the care for others, the search of truth and creative action which - added to more body-oriented self-control which is of greater importance in Eastern Buddhism - offer the three accepted transmutations of such impulses.<sup>563</sup>

If these channels of the sublimation of aggression appear commendable to us today, they do so only with the benefit of hindsight. The people advancing to the sacrifice, to whom the prophets want to forbid such holy-healing action, and in the place of which they thrive to impose the protection of life, love, and justice, can only react at first with helpless anger. For the people cannot automatically know how to deal with their excitement, which until now had been evacuated in such sensuous manner, and they must fear having to deal internally with this ill-making power.

During the time of the post-catastrophic, enlightening preaches of the prophets, one must suppose that the people, too, must then and there have acquired insight into the change of cosmic conditions. Modern theoreticians of Judaism who did not know about this heavenly background have had hunches about this: "It would also be unthinkable, from the psychological standpoint, that the prophets would have been able to agitate so intensely against sacrifice if they had not assumed that the people themselves had an intuition about the inadmissibility of sacrifice and its inadequation to the worship of the only god."<sup>564</sup>

What is said about the strivings of the ancient Israelites must be felt also by the rest of the world which is intent upon sacrifice and does not want to have this relieving pleasure spoiled for itself. It is therefore only rarely that admiration for Judaism is

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<sup>563</sup> See G. Heinsohn, «Jewish Ethics and Universal Values or: What is Judaism?», speech at the *International Conference Remembering for the Future II*, Berlin, 13.-17 März 1994.

<sup>564</sup> H. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums* (1919), Wiesbaden: Fourier, 1978, p. 394.

expressed. So does Theophrast call the Jews “a people of philosophers.”<sup>565</sup> Greece too, of course, has its philosophers and - with Heraclitus, Antisthenes or Xenophanes - monotheists who engage themselves against the representations of gods,<sup>566</sup> but the people live in the respect of the planets, to which they offer slaughters and burnt offerings. Because of the absence of cults to the heavenly bodies, the Alexandrian astronomer Claudius Ptolemaeus describes the Jews as being “god-free.”<sup>567</sup>

To the sublimation of the excitement spent up to then in sacrificial cults, belongs another Jewish invention which is not well understood - the systematic holding on to, and reading of history. It begins with the so-called Deuteronomistic author,<sup>568</sup> who covers the time from Moses to the end of both kingdoms, Juda and Israel. Historizing texts exist also in other cultures,<sup>569</sup> but they are not the foundation of any durable tradition - except for the cultured public of Ancient Greece. A lot of it has only been brought to light by modern excavations. With Judaism, in the contrary, “a people is born, which not only distinguishes itself through the highest consciousness of the past, but which also involves itself more passionately with history than probably any other people that has ever existed.”<sup>570</sup>

As much as the monotheistic authors may impress us as the pitiless chroniclers of religious delusions and evil deeds of their Israelitic ancestors, we must not judge them with the instruments of history writing that are valid today. They do not yet work by discriminating among sources, but as pioneers in the writing of a national history in an international context, they write-over and piece together in every which way texts that are already available to them. The verifications of the historic succession of facts created on paper through the succession of layers in archaeological digs will present a problem to be handled only by the far-off 19th century.

Moreover, the writers of the Bible project their monotheistic god of love, justice and of the holiness of life onto the pre-monotheistic past, so that he must also stand for the well remembered evils of the heavenly gods, whose invalidation by natural history have made his own existence possible to begin with. So that many of the planetary gods

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<sup>565</sup> Cf. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume One: From Herodotus to Plutarch*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976, p. 10.

<sup>566</sup> Cf. J. Geffcken, «Der Bilderstreit des heidnischen Altertums», in: *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, Bd. 19, 1919, p. 286-289.

<sup>567</sup> Cf. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume Two: From Tacitus to Simplicius*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1980, p. 165; with a negative accentuation this comes to mean, of course, “godless.”

<sup>568</sup> Cf. to this p. ex. R. E. Friedmann, *Who Wrote the Bible?* (1987), New York et al.: Harper & Row, 1989, p. 104ff.

<sup>569</sup> Cf. H. Butterfield, *The Origins of History*, New York: Basic Books, 1981.

<sup>570</sup> H. Butterfield, *The Origins of History*, New York: Basic Books, 1981, p. 80f.

who are now demeaned into non-entities find themselves transformed into patriarchs, who therefore display almost thoroughly astral *as well as* human aspects.<sup>571</sup> In the same time, it is beyond doubt that human ancestors are enhanced with astral components - as for instance in the legend of the fight between David and Goliath - which carry over to the ever present legends of 'duels' between a larger and a smaller heavenly body.

Putting these components of biblical historiography aside, it is indeed the undisguisedness with which the archaic behavior of the old Israelites is handed down which can always be called to task as a standard of comparison for modern research. When military historians for instance assert that archaic war "was 'ecological' in its motivation and lead to a new repartition of the soil from the weak to the strong," for which purpose the means of the "eviction of the weaker" and "extermination"<sup>572</sup> were traditionally put to use, this can be verified in the behavior of the ancient Israelites<sup>573</sup> and their neighbors in the relevant epoch.

Antisemites almost never miss pointing to practices of the ancient Israelites<sup>574</sup> to justify the eradication of monotheistic Jews. Following this pattern, Willy Brandt could be denied the Nobel Prize retrospectively. After all, he belonged to the German people, the true face of which everybody could study in Adolf Hitler and Heinrich Himmler. Yet even such a comparison would be an infamy. For in antiquity, it is monotheistic Judaism which breaks with archaic behavior and, in so doing, plants the germ of civilization, while the antisemitic German dictatorship breaks with civilization in order to establish anew an archaic-genocidal order.<sup>575</sup>

The truly remarkable "obsession with history" which makes the monotheistic Jews turn into the "People of the Book," can now finally be explained. When the rituals, which were born as an unburdening and in the same time forcible replay of overwhelming impressions, fall victim to criticism and even to prohibition, then the material which was bottled up in the ceremonies can become accessible to the free constructions of the mind. Writing and the controlled ritual of learning and reading history now take the place of its ritual performing in dance. In the reading of history, an excited curiosity is elevated to historical conscientiousness, which in the absence of history would be mightily repressed into the domain of the ritual. But because

<sup>571</sup> See the still relevant A. Jeremias, *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients*, 4. fully revised edition, Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1930

<sup>572</sup> Cf. J. Keegan, *A History of Warfare*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993, p. 101, 387/29.

<sup>573</sup> See 5. *Moses* 6: 10-11 and 7: 16.

<sup>574</sup> See exemplarily the antisemitic chief ideologist of the German dictatorship T. Fritsch, *Handbuch der Judenfrage: Die wichtigsten Tatsachen zur Beurteilung des jüdischen Volkes*, Leipzig: Hammer Verlag, 1933, p. 116.

<sup>575</sup> See G. Heinsohn, *Warum Auschwitz? Hitlers Plan und die Ratlosigkeit der Nachwelt*, Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1995 as well as G. Heinsohn, «Auschwitz ohne Hitler?», in: *Lettre Internationale*, brochure 33, Summer 1996, p. 21ff. sowie G. Heinsohn, *Was wollte Hitler? Auschwitz und die Lehre von den drei Weltzeitaltern*, Bremen: Raphael-Lemkin-Institut für Xenophobie und Genozidforschung/Uni-Druck, 1996.

redemption may no longer be acquired through ritual, there results for Judaism “the mystery of redemption through memory.”

In order not to have to continually reenact the cosmic blows of the past in bloody intervals, the “place of gathering” (Hebraic “Beth Kneset,” Greek “Synagogue,” Yiddish “Schul”) is founded as a spiritual-historical place of labor. Scholars of the written word teach in these “first public schools of the world.”<sup>576</sup> The German Jew-baiter Arthur Schopenhauer quite rightfully reproaches this institution for not being, from its very purpose, a religious place, that is, a place of sacrifice, but instead, a scientific academy of real sciences.<sup>577</sup> To which one should add: with faculties of law, history and philology added. To these schools are attached teachers (rabbis) but no priests: “As an object of saintly or mystagogic veneration of the kind that appear in Christian or Asiatic manifestations, the rabbi did not come into consideration... The Jewish rabbi did not distribute sacraments of salvation, nor was he a charismatic helper in need. His religious property was ‘knowledge.’ But this was extraordinarily highly valued: in honor it has precedence over age and even over parents: ‘Knowledge goes above everything.’”<sup>578</sup> Even prayer is not constitutive of the synagogue-academy.

Because it rejected sacrifice and its later incarnation in the form of god-images, Judaism became the object of persecutions already in Babylon. The memory of this is retained in a legend of miraculous salvation from of a crematory oven into which the Jews have been thrown:

“Ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: And whoso falleth not down and worshipping shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. (...)

There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. (...)

Then these men were bound in their coats, their pants, and their hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.”<sup>579</sup>

In the Achaemenid empire, the assaults on Jewish monotheism take on considerable dimensions. As the largest empire ever in existence, it reaches from India

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<sup>576</sup> Cf. H. Schneider, *Kultur und Denken der Babylonier und Juden*, Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1910, p. 434.

<sup>577</sup> Cf. *Parerga und Paralipomena*, §§ 28,132.

<sup>578</sup> M. Weber, «Die Pharisäer» (1920), in: Idem: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie III: Das antike Judentum*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1963, p. 430.

<sup>579</sup> *Daniel*, 3: 5f./8/12/21.

to Egypt, and comprises practically the whole Jewish nation.

“And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus [Xerxes], There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws *are* diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it *is* not for the king's profit to suffer them. (...)”

Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that *were* over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and *to* every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.

And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, *even* upon the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month Adar, and *to take* the spoil of them for a prey.”<sup>580</sup>

When Alexander the Great conquers Persian Babylon, Jewish resistance against sacrificial cults continues unabated. The Jews of Babylon refuse to take part in the rebuilding of the temple court of Esagilla ordered by Alexander.<sup>581</sup>

Within Judaism the persecutions bring forth movements for the return to the planetary religion. So that Jeremiah sees himself addressing his criticisms to those who want back to sacrifice to celestial bodies and who agitate the people for this purpose:

“But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for *then* had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.

But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all *things*, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine.”<sup>582</sup>

During Hellenism, the conflicts between sacrificers and critics of sacrifice carried on:

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<sup>580</sup> *Esther* 3: 13.

<sup>581</sup> See E. Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums. Erster Band. Teil II: Die Entwicklung des Judentums und Jesus von Nazaret* [1923], Gütersloh, p.28.

<sup>582</sup> *Jeremiah* 44: 17 f.

“In these times godless people came to the fore in Israel; they persuaded many, saying: let us enter a pact with the pagans around us; for we have had a lot to suffer ever since the time that we have separated ourselves from the pagans.”<sup>583</sup> To these people the following is objected: “May god beware of this! It would not be good for us, to evade the law and justice of god. We do not want to accept the order of Antiochus and do not want to sacrifice and fall away from our law and enter a new path.”<sup>584</sup>

The only still existing “Jewish sacrificial cult disappeared with the destruction of the Temple”<sup>585</sup> after the taking of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D. There is now a people living all over the Mediterranean and Asia Minor which demonstrates to the other peoples *volens nolens* that life can be lead without blood sacrifices. This does not make it any easier for those Jews still living in the precinct of the Last Temple to give up animal sacrifice entirely. Clearly, they beseech their teachers (rabbis). These in turn react very similarly to the prophets before them. They command the transformation of the practice of sacrifice into “acts of love.” Jochanan ben Zakkai (also called *rabban*=our master) delivers a telling example. He survives the destruction of the temple, belongs therefore to the first generation of rabbis which is no longer in competition with priests: “Once, when Rabbi Jochanan ben Zakkai came from Jerusalem, Rabbi Jehoshua followed him and saw the temple in ruins. ‘Woe be to us,’ said Rabbi Jehoshua ‘that the spot where the injustices of Israel were being atoned for lies in ruins.’ - ‘My son,’ answered rabbi Jochanan ‘do not be sad. We have another kind of atonement, as effective as this one. And what does it consist of? In actions of love, as it is said in [*Hosea 6:6*] I want mercy, not sacrifice.”<sup>586</sup>

Immediate difficulties arise in understanding the ethic of love and justice when it becomes separated from the combat against blood sacrifice, even for an analyst of the rank of Max Weber. As a phenomenologist, Weber knows very well about the other “gods:” “They all had a habit of being very unethical. This transformation was therefore, as far as can be told, an intellectual property of the prophets.”<sup>587</sup> For the sociologist Weber it becomes immediately apparent that these intellectual leaders must play a clever hand in order not to lose influence over a badly battered people: “The meaning of all this is just: the *transfiguration of the pariah situation of the people* and

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<sup>583</sup> *1<sup>st</sup> Book of Maccabees*: 1: 12.

<sup>584</sup> *1<sup>st</sup> Book of Maccabees*: 2: 22.

<sup>585</sup> A. Schimmel, «*Opfer. I. Religionsgeschichtlich*», in: *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*, 3. Entirely revised new ed., vol. 4, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1966, Sp. 1641.

<sup>586</sup> *Awot be Rabi Natan*: 4,5. b

<sup>587</sup> M. Weber, «Die Entstehung des jüdischen Pariavolkes» (1920), in: Idem: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie III: Das antike Judentum*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1963, S. 391.

*patient persevering in the same.*”<sup>588</sup>

The enmity of the sacrificer provoked by Jewish criticism of sacrifice expresses itself already in antiquity through many reproaches. Then and again it is said that, because they deny the many gods, the Jews are “Atheists.”<sup>589</sup> If someone in Rome around the time of Christ wants to bring ruin on some compatriots, he needs only to reproach them of falling away from the planetary gods. Those thus accused of “atheism” find themselves then condemned by courts because “they have come close to the way of life of the Jews.”<sup>590</sup> Falvius Clemens, for instance - a nephew of the destroyer of the temple and Roman emperor Titus (69-79 AD) - after he converted to Judaism in 96 A.D. was “condemned to death as an atheist.”<sup>591</sup> “The general spreading of ‘antisemitism’ in antiquity is a fact,”<sup>592</sup> says also Max Weber. But as the reasons for the criticism of sacrifice remain dark to him, he cannot analyze the resentment of the sacrificers.

The Jews are regularly accused of “unsociability,”<sup>593</sup> even “inhumanity”<sup>594</sup> by the planet-worshippers and the sacrificers. It is precisely their rejection of these rituals which brings against them the earliest charge of a conspiracy against the whole world. It originates with Philostratus, who is around 200 A.D. the most popular pagan poet of Rome: “For a long time already the Jews have risen against not only the Romans but against all of humanity. They live in impenetrable isolation and deny the rest of the world their commensality. They exclude themselves from burnt offerings, prayers and sacrifices of gratitude. To us they appear more strange than Susa or Bactria or even far

<sup>588</sup> M. Weber, «Die Entstehung des jüdischen Pariavolkes» (1920), in: Idem: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie III: Das antike Judentum*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1963, p.392; cf. similarly M. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriß der verstehenden Soziologie* (1925, 1956<sup>4</sup>), student ed. ed. by v. J. Winkelmann, Köln und Berlin: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1964<sup>5</sup>, p. 386 ff.

<sup>589</sup> So Apollonius Molon; cf. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume One: From Herodotus to Plutarch*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976, p. 155.

<sup>590</sup> So Cassius Dio; cf. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume One: From Herodotus to Plutarch*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976, p. 380.

<sup>591</sup> Cf. J. Klausner, *Jesus von Nazareth: Seine Zeit, sein Lehren und seine Lehre*, Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1930, p. 38.

<sup>592</sup> M. Weber, «Die Pharisäer» (1920), in: Idem: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie III: Das antike Judentum*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1963, p. 434.

<sup>593</sup> So Hecataeus of Abdera; cf. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume One: From Herodotus to Plutarch*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976, p. 28.

<sup>594</sup> So besides Apollonius Molon especially Apion; cf. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume One: From Herodotus to Plutarch*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976, p. 411-414.

away India.”<sup>595</sup>

Between Susa and Bactria in Persia and Rome there is then a military enmity. The Jews on the other hand are inhabitants of the Roman empire. Their homeland Judaea is destroyed. They live scattered and are politically powerless. And yet a “whole humanity” can take offence at them. These whole of humanity carries on sacrifices. For this reason alone, Judaism must either attract doubt on itself, or on the whole of humanity.

It is not to be excluded that the reproaches of “unsociability” which are raised against the Jews by the pagans originate to a certain extent from the fact that in Judaism, with the disappearance of temples, the orgiastic rituals which were associated with them got lost as well. These were probably again a replay of anthropomorphized cosmic collisions (see chapter III above).

What in modernity is referred to as temple prostitution, started most probably with enactments of “holy matrimony”<sup>596</sup> between the Queen of Heaven and her phallic counterpart - like Tammuz and Ishtar, Marduk and Sarpanitu or Dumuzi and Inana. In this cosmic happening - at least in some parts of the ancient world - a heavenly loss of a tail is interpreted as castration, that is, a human act has been projected onto nature. Representations of ornated, bare female bodies have been preserved, under whose wide-spread thighs “ a severed, erect phallus with testicles”<sup>597</sup> is shown.<sup>598</sup>

In monotheism, ecstatic bloody practices are eliminated:

“The were also male temple prostitutes in the land; and they did all the horrors of the heathens, which the Lord had scattered before Israel. He threw the temple prostitutes out of the land and removed all the idols which his fathers had put up.”<sup>599</sup>

Some representations from the Greek cultural sphere show clearly the act of holy matrimony connected with Hermes (equivalent for Mercury, Baal, etc) whose phallic representation is often combined with an altar. He seems like a blue-print to the goddesses-players in scenes of holy matrimony who are also represented.

Yet it is not a Jewish enmity of sensuality as such which brings about the rejection of holy coitus. It opposes itself to the drifting towards pagan cults which reenact the fate of deified heavenly objects and therefore can never belong together with an almighty, eternal and invisible god: “Besides this... there is no objection against

<sup>595</sup> Cf. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume One: From Herodotus to Plutarch*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976, p. 341.

<sup>596</sup> Cf. J. Renger, «Heilige Hochzeit. A. Philologisch», in: *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*, vol. 4, Berlin und New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972-75, p. 251 ff.

<sup>597</sup> J. S. Cooper, «Heilige Hochzeit. B. Archäologisch», in: *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*, vol. 4, Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972-75, p. 263.

<sup>598</sup> Cf. Illustration 15 above.

<sup>599</sup> 1 *Kings* 14: 24/15: 12.



sexual intercourse and against the pleasure with women. The unselfconscious openness to the world: that the ancient Israelitic warrior should be given time 'to take pleasure with his wife' was also valid for the Talmudic Jew. The ruthless combat against "prostitution"- that next to murder and idolatry is presented as the third greatest sin - stems from the old priestly combat against the Baal-orgiasts."<sup>600</sup>

As the holy matrimony is "closer to sacrifice than to pleasure,"<sup>601</sup> it must encounter monotheistic opposition, which brings us back to the core elements of Judaism. It is only because the basic monotheistic attitude of sacrifice-criticism - born of an anti-apocalyptic vision - has not been formulated sharply enough, or was even taken for "sheer unfathomable," and a "miracle,"<sup>602</sup> that the well-known central tenets of Judaism have remained mysterious to his day: (1) *the invisibility of god*, (2) *the sanctity of the Sabbath*, (3) *the circumcision of the sons on the 8. day* and (4) *the general prohibition of the killing of children*, i.e. the erection of the ethic of the holiness of life. If one confronts the monotheistic rejecters of sacrifice with their adversaries who are still thinking in old-Israelitic ways, these elements can be recognized without much effort as compromises.

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<sup>600</sup> Cf. Illustration 15 above. M. Weber, «Die Pharisäer» (1920), in: Idem: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie III: Das antike Judentum*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1963, p.419f.

<sup>601</sup> Cf. W. Burkert, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, Stuttgart etal.: Kohlhammer, 1977, p. 177.

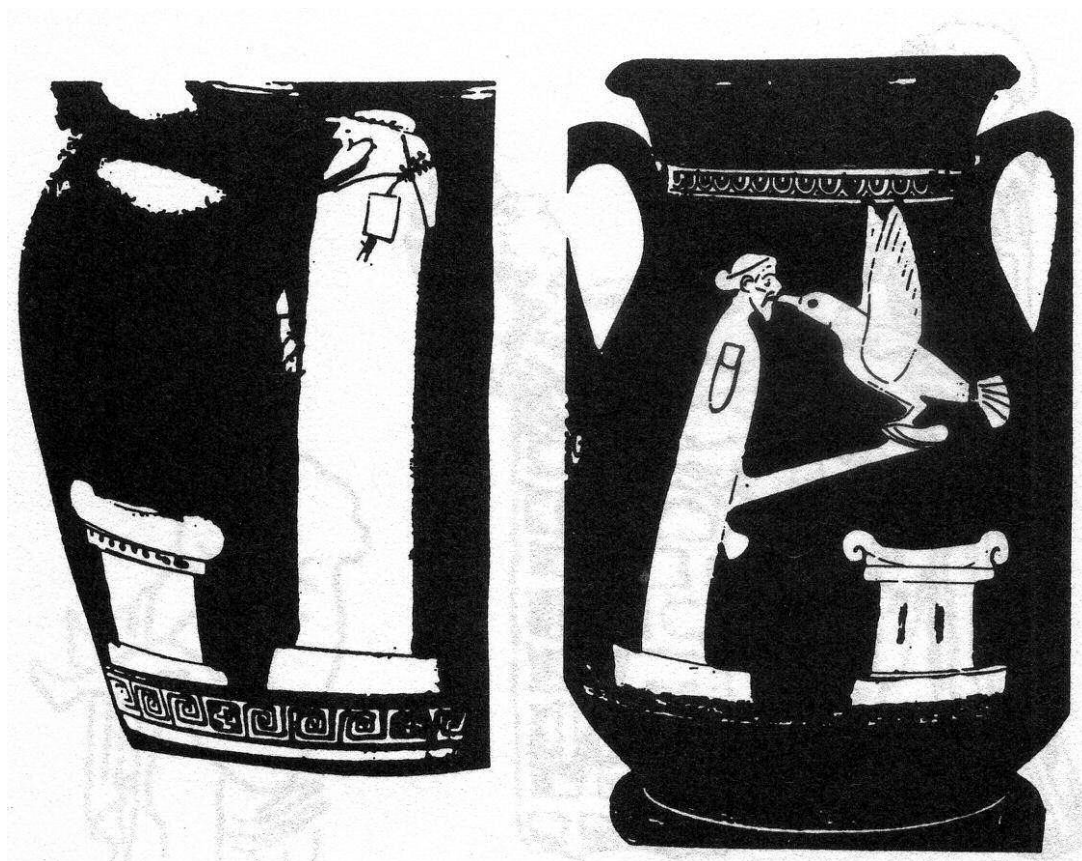
<sup>602</sup> Both from H. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums* (1919), Wiesbaden: Founer, 1978, p. 199, 200.



Ill. 29: Left: *Holy Matrimony*, where the actress of the goddess rests on a masoned altar (lead relief from the Ishtar temple of Assur).<sup>603</sup> Right: *Holy Matrimony* from Hellenistic times (Samos, 2 cent B.C.).<sup>604</sup>

<sup>603</sup> Adapted from J. Black, A. Green, *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia: An Illustrated Dictionary*, London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1992, p. 152; for a description of similar representations cf. J. S. Cooper, «Heilige Hochzeit. B. Archäologisch», in: *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*, vol. 4, Berlin und New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972-75, p. 264.

<sup>604</sup> Adapted from C. Johns, *Sex or Symbol: Erotic Images of Greece and Rome* (1982), London: British Museum Press, 1989, p. 40.



Ill 30: Left: phallic Hermes-statue with pillow altar (red figured amphora by the Nikon-painter from the 5th cent. B.C).<sup>605</sup> Right: phallic Hermes-statue before an altar in which the figure of the bird seems to convey a cosmic connotation, in a whimsical or trivializing fashion.<sup>606</sup>

(1) the *Invisible god* grows out of the struggle between traditionalists with astronomically expert scholars of post-catastrophic times. They oppose sacrifices to the erratic heavenly objects of the past, by proving the secure orbits of Venus and Mercury. As the old Yahweh cult had been a cult of Mercury, the six branched star, the astronomical symbol of the orbit of the admittedly extraordinarily battered planet which nevertheless was now moving regularly close to the sun, became the signature of the scientific fraction. Its representatives cannot help themselves but to talk about a power

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<sup>605</sup> Adapted from C. Johns, *Sex or Symbol: Erotic Images of Greece and Rome* (1982), London: British Museum Press, 1989, p. 81.

<sup>606</sup> Adapted from C. Johns, *Sex or Symbol: Erotic Images of Greece and Rome* (1982), London: British Museum Press, 1989, p. 149.

that is superior to all the powers in heaven - today terms like gravitation or interstellar electric discharges would preferably be employed - which are almighty, yet not to be seen or to be apprehended and therefore cannot be housed in a temple.<sup>607</sup> The fact that despite all this, next to the many thousand temples of the pagan worshipers of planets - in monotheism the mere hosts of the Lord - a Jewish, even still half-ancient Israelitic - Temple is built in Jerusalem, can be explained by the feudalistic interests of those returning from Babylon. They know well that the peasants left-behind (in the double meaning of the expression) will pay tribute to a deity, and only then to priests - but will not do so to mere worldly overlords. This functionalising of a pre-exilic institution was viewed with hostility by the synagogue and when the temple finally disappeared from history, the synagogue could proceed unfazed as a truly new thing in the history of the world. Whoever wants to seduce the Jews back into paganism attracts them with the perspective of a new Temple. It is desired as a symbol of the missing political home place, but evokes the danger of the return of animal sacrifice. Roman emperor Flavius Claudius Julianus (361-363 A.D.) offers the most famous example of such a two-pronged attack onto the monotheism of the synagogues. From several sources we know that "the emperor wanted to convert the Jews to paganism through the building of a temple."<sup>608</sup>

(2) The most important prohibitions of the *Sabbath* - no slaughtering,<sup>609</sup> no lighting of fire,<sup>610</sup> no cooking, no moving out of sight of home,<sup>611</sup> are directed precisely against the activities of the suppressed day of sacrifice. On these days, one left the settlements, in order to go on the heights to sanctify the victim to be slaughtered, to erect the burnt offering altar and to cook or burn the victim thereof: "High on the mountains they sacrifice and on the hills they raise smoke."<sup>612</sup> At the beginning of the monotheistic revolution, the prohibition of sacrifice can only be pursued consequently if the old day of blood sacrifice becomes the new, the Sabbath, strongly tabooed in its original function. To the common Jew, slaughtering - as the decisive act of blood sacrifice - is totally forbidden. It can only be performed by a butcher, who is closely watched by

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<sup>607</sup> See p. ex. *Isaiah* 66: 1-2.

<sup>608</sup> L. Lucas, *Zur Geschichte der Juden im vierten Jahrhundert: Der Kampf zwischen Christentum und Judentum*, Hildesheim et al.: Georg Olms, 1985, p. 81.

<sup>609</sup> 2. *Moses* 16: 23.

<sup>610</sup> 2. *Moses* 35: 3.

<sup>611</sup> 2. *Moses* 16: 29.

<sup>612</sup> *Hosea* 4: 13.

rabbinic instances. The study of religion still puzzles why<sup>613</sup> the Sabbath has remained originally (until the Mishnah around 200 A.D.) without any positive instructions as to the making up of its components, that is, that it remained limited to prohibitions. From the sight developed here, the bundle of negations for the Sabbath derives simply from the fact that, behind its institution, stands the struggle against blood sacrifice, which is why its commands must consist of prohibitions, but *must not* comprise instructions by its very nature.

(3) The eighth day of life<sup>614</sup> of children sacrificed among the ancient Israelites-Phoenicians<sup>615</sup> makes a reappearance in the *circumcision* of all sons, as well as in the rites of the last temple as the slaughtering day for sacrificial lambs and kids, which must remain under their mother for seven days, before their blood may be spilled.<sup>616</sup> In the disputes between partisans and opponents of child sacrifice there is consequently, too, a search for compromise. As in child sacrifice, according to the views presented here, the “death” of a “celestial child” is reenacted, which through its fall brings about heavenly peace, renouncing this ritual, which was probably also carried on in late Minoan Crete,<sup>617</sup> must have appeared difficult. It goes without saying that the child sacrifices of Roman times, that is, the late child sacrifices of the Carthaginian-Phoenicians, had lost a lot of the heavenly play component and taken on the character of the supremely valuable gift, according to the principle of *do ut des* (I give so that you may give) which now was meant to attract help from a heavenly deity. It is onto this propitiatory gift-character that the dominant literature on sacrifice concentrates itself almost exclusively.

In the legend of the binding of Issac (Akedah), the Bible authors thematize the transition from the god demanding the sacrifice of the son to the son-sparing god, whose adept Abraham is also viewed according to some tradition as the inventor of circumcision.<sup>618</sup>

In the legend of Zippora, circumcision as a compromise for sacrifice becomes apparent, too. She circumcises her child in order to prevent the killing of her husband

<sup>613</sup> See exemplarily J. Z. Smith et al. (ed.), *The Harper Collins Dictionary of Religion*, San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1995, keyword «Sabbath», p. 940.

<sup>614</sup> I. *Moses* 17: 10-14.

<sup>615</sup> See P. Mosca, *Child Sacrifice in Canaanite and Israelite Religion*, Cambridge/ Mass: Harvard University, Dissertation, 1975.

<sup>616</sup> 2. *Moses* 22: 28ff.

<sup>617</sup> Cf. S. M. Wall, J. H. Musgrave, P. M. Warren, «Human Bones from a Late Minoan 1B House at Knossos», in: *Annual of the British School of Archaeology at Athens*, vol. 81, 1986, p. 333 ff.

<sup>618</sup> 1. *Moses* 17: 10-12.

Moses (Egyptian for divine, i.e. heavenly child), whose life is endangered in a religious - that is to say, sacrificial - duel:

“And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him [Moses], and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast *it* at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband *art* thou to me.”<sup>619</sup>

In this passage - forever puzzling researchers - there could also have leaked the ubiquitous story of the Queen of Heaven who, in a cosmic copulation, deprives her young celestial body-god of his penis-tail.

In the Hebrew material, both sides of the revolutionary struggle - continuator of sacrifice and rejecter of sacrifice - are conjoined in the figure of Abraham. He obeys only to a god who at first asks for sacrifice, then grants preservation. Historically, the reference can be to a single man, but not to a single god. Revolutionaries, as is well known, need to be present always in both stages of a historic overthrow. Yesterday, they performed sacrifice in cosmic body games. After the dawning of heavenly peace, the heavenly bodies are reduced to “nobodies,”<sup>620</sup> the invisible-almighty god is conceived and one must fight against blood sacrifice. The monotheistic redactors of the Bible project the new and only god back onto the old heavenly monsters. This obscures the historic progress, but makes sense psychologically up to a point, as it gives expression to the ambivalence present in all father-son relationships, made of jealousy and love.

(4) The *prohibition of child killing*, which already in antiquity caused astonishment, could also be owed to the resistance against those who were still striving for child sacrifices. In order not to allow the old blood sacrifice to be continued under the guise of normal infanticide for the sake of birth control, child sacrifice too fell victim to the most severe prohibition.

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<sup>619</sup> 2. *Moses* 4: 24-26.

<sup>620</sup> *Jeremiah* 10: 2 f.

## XI. The son-sacrificing god of the Christians against the son-sparing god of Abraham.

“Probably it would be just as naive to expect from the social sciences an answer to the question: ‘why the Jews?’  
than from medical science an efficient remedy against a cold.”<sup>625</sup>

In the end, the most durable adversary of Judaism developed right in its shadow. When Paul turns against the religion of his fathers, he justify this step expressly with a shocking heavenly event. It throws him right back to the worship of the “heavenly host,” which Judaism was supposed to have stopped fearing.

“At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me,

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.”<sup>626</sup>

Through his experience of Damascus, Paulinism returns on an elementary plane to ancient Israelitism, and must now throw the gauntlet to Jewish monotheism. The Roman contemporary of Paul, Nero, reverts to human sacrifices after the sighting of a comet. He finds back at once to the bloody remedy, the historical origins of which - according to the thesis presented here - were occasioned by natural catastrophes of immeasurably greater dimensions.

It is of course tempting to identify the comet which occasioned the human sacrifices by Nero with the apparition of Damascus -“and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven.”<sup>627</sup>

The cosmic event itself does not seem in any way unbelievable. For instance, on February 1st, 1994, a meteorite of ca 15m diameter exploded in the atmosphere above the Marshall Islands. With the energy of one million tons of explosive, “it created a ball of fire which eye witnesses describe as more brilliant than the sun.”<sup>628</sup> Events à la Damascus must not be dismissed as delusions. They inspire Paul to interpret the death of Jesus as a human sacrifice, the victim of which continues to exist as a celestial

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<sup>625</sup> H. M. Broder, *Der ewige Antisemit*, Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1986, p. 214.

<sup>626</sup> *Apostles* 26: 13 f. /19; cf. similarly *Apostles* 22: 6.

<sup>627</sup> *Apostles* 9: 3

<sup>628</sup> W. J. Board, «Earth Is Target for Space Rocks at Higher Rate than Thought», in: *The New York Times /The Science Times*, 6. January 1997.

divinity. The much puzzled-over declaration of the apostle in his dispute with the Jews: “I appeal my case to the Emperor [Nero]”<sup>629</sup> may appear in a new light in this context. Nero and Paul may have been subjected to an identical religious impulse. The Roman prefect Festus, for one, is impressed and orders his trial moved from Jerusalem to Rome:

“Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go.”<sup>630</sup>

A well-known biography of Paul describes the violent commotion effected on Paul by the heavenly light, thrice referred to in the *Acts of the Apostles*, with remarkable intuition as “a direct contact with the deity.”<sup>631</sup>

Jesus in the guise of a frightening light from heaven extraordinarily impresses early Christianity. In the *Pistis Sophia* - a Coptic text from the 4th or 5th century A.D. - this prolongation of Bronze Age astral religion becomes particularly evident. On his ascension into the world of aeons, the figure of Christ speaks thus: “The light, which attached itself to me during the twelve aeons, was eight thousand and seven hundred myriad times more intense than that which had attached itself to me on Earth when I was among you. So it happened that, when all those who inhabited the twelve aeons saw the great light which was about me, they entered into a tumultuous agitation and ran hither and thither among the aeons, all across each other’s way; and all the aeons and all the heavens and the entire heavenly order moved against each other because of the great fear which seized them, because they could not recognize the mystery which was taking place. And Damascus, the great tyrant, and all the tyrants in all the aeons started to go to war in vain against the light, and they did not know against what they were going to war, because they could not see anything besides the all-dominating, all-engulfing light. And it happened, as they were conducting war against the light, that they were all together bereft of their force and they fell down through the aeons and were like those dwelling on earth, dead and without breath.”<sup>632</sup>

A traditional *Jeho-va* rises anew with the heavenly warrior *Jeho-shua* (Jesus).<sup>633</sup> In his guise, the dying redeemer makes a new apparition. With great regularity, his holy blood sacrifice is celebrated. From his flesh and blood, salvation and resurrection

<sup>629</sup> *Apostles* 25: 11.

<sup>630</sup> *Apostles* 25: 11.

<sup>631</sup> M. Grant, *Paulus: Apostel der Völker* (1976), Bergisch-Gladbach: Gustav Lübbe Verlag, 1978, p. 158.

<sup>632</sup> Cit. H. Leisegang, *Die Gnosis* (1924), Stuttgart: Kröner, 1985, p. 375 f.

<sup>633</sup> The return of the old planetary god Yahweh in the mythical-cosmic aspect of the figure of Jesus has long been noticed. Cf. p. ex. W. B. Smith, *Der vorchristliche Jesus nebst weiteren Vorstudien zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Urchristentums*, Gießen: Alfred Töpelmann, 1906, p. 49f.



blossom for the faithful. He must endlessly dissolve, so that the faithful may live:

“Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.”<sup>634</sup>

The son-sparing god of Abraham - symbol of the overcoming of sacrifice by monotheistic Judaism - undergoes through the son-sacrificing god of the Christians a partial resurrection of his old-Israelitic nature, which had been repressed for half a millenium but had never been quite erased. What had been for Judaism a period which had reached its end through the Deluge, becomes in Christianity the belief in an inevitable apocalyptic future, lasting until the beginning of eternity. Once more, a catastrophic planetary god instills fear. “The bright and morning star”<sup>635</sup> acquires once more, this time as “Christ Victorious,” a central position in religious faith as a monster crushing humanity: “His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.”<sup>636</sup>

To the side of the monotheistic god of the Jewish commandments of life, love and justice, there steps now the much older bringer of destruction and terror.

And yet, more is happening at this point than the mere return to life of a tradition. A troubled and unsettling movement is brought into motion, which from now on will roll through history. For apocalyptic Christianity displays, in contrast with old-Israelitism, a striking difference. In the pre-monotheistic Bronze Age, all people lived through a phase of violent natural catastrophes. Humans are not apocalyptic who evoke catastrophes or call them up hysterically. Something really happened to them, of a most overwhelming nature.

The old-Israelites responded therefore through their religion to horrendous, entirely justified panic produced by natural experiences. The Jewish monotheists believe that the time of the great catastrophes has ended, as is apparent from their

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<sup>634</sup> *Gospel of John* 6: 53—58.

<sup>635</sup> *Revelation of John* 22: 16.

<sup>636</sup> *Revelation of John* 19: 11-15.

optimistic addendum to the Noah story. Therefore, while the old-Israelites fashion their terrifying god in imitation of the surrounding reality of a not all at all loving nature, in Christianity, out of the once real threats, one is fashioned which is drilled into the heads - beginning in childhood - in the form of a revelation. To the figure of Jesus is assigned the following threat: “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken./And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilence; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.”<sup>637</sup>

Now, it is not to be excluded that around the beginning of our era - and then again a few decades later at the time of Paul - “signs from heaven” were truly visible, and that comets or meteorite showers created particularly striking displays. At that same time, we must add, the Talmudic rabbis also speculated “whether the flood of fire prophesied in the old legends would occur or not; those who disputed it based their argumentation on the divine promises in *Genesis*, that the Deluge would not be repeated. Those who defended the opposite opinion, brought forth that the Deluge itself might not recur, but a flood of fire could come instead, which brought onto them the accusation of interpreting the word of the Lord in a petty way.”<sup>638</sup>

In comparison to the all-encompassing destructions of the Bronze Age, there reigned at the beginning of our era, as well as today, a “heavenly peace.” For many centuries, humanity has been able to breathe freely. The Christian Lord with his “sharp sword” can therefore only impose himself as long as he can intimidate humanity to the end of days with the terrors of the past projected into the future.<sup>639</sup> Boulanger already understood this: “The fear of the early humans may have been rightly and well grounded, and at the very least excusable; the fear of the following generations was stupid, unreasonable, and dangerous to the peace and constitution of society. We are still trembling from the consequences of the Deluge and, without our knowing it, tradition engraves in us the fears and apocalyptic ideas of our ancestors: fear is planted forth from one generation to the next, and the experience of centuries may weaken it, but will never eradicate it: children will forever fear, what brought fear to their parents.”<sup>640</sup>

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<sup>637</sup> Mark 13: 24-25 / Luke 21: 11; cf. similarly *Revelation of John* 6: 12.

<sup>638</sup> I. Velikovsky, *Worlds in Collision* (1950).

<sup>639</sup> See on the subject of historical reconstruction and the ever repeated anchoring of apocalyptic fear in the psyche: G. Heinsohn, C. Marx, *Kollektive Verdrängung und die zwanghafte Wiederholung des Menschenopfers / Collective Amnesia and the Compulsive Repetition of Human Sacrifice*, Basel: P. A. F. Verlag, 1984 sowie N. Cohn, *Cosmos, Chaos and the World to Come: The Ancient Roots of Apocalyptic Faith*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993.

<sup>640</sup> N.-A. Boulanger, *Das durch seine Gebräuche aufgedeckte Altertum: Oder Kritische Untersuchung der vornehmsten Meynungen, Ceremonien und Einrichtungen der verschiedenen Völker des Erdbodens in Religiöns- und bürgerlichen* (1766), Greifswald: Anton Ferdinand Rösens Buchhandlung, 1767, p. 274/ 565f.

In the sentence attributed to Jesus: I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”<sup>641</sup> we find an obvious repetition of: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!”<sup>642</sup>

Yet, in the Christian Bible, this statement is used to deny the end of the great catastrophes. Where Isaiah strives to reassure, frightful cosmic cataclysms are here threatened practically for to-morrow: “To take on and interpret history in the light of apocalyptic traditions is one of the essential elements in the faith and theology of ancient Christianity, as well as of the early churches.”<sup>643</sup> They bring Christians at once in “open enmity with the synagogue.”<sup>644</sup> For the prevailing views of Pharisaic Judaism of this time make it in no way ready to listen in “acutely messianic” expectation to a “tiding of the coming of the kingdom of God.”<sup>645</sup> The Rabbis discuss the prevailing situation of heaven and do not deny visible signs. But they arrive at the conclusion that the dangers are exaggerated. They are compelled to criticize human sacrifice *à la* Nero or the praying to the heavenly host *à la* Paul as a relapse into paganism. Their cosmic optimism has not been found at fault to this day.

Which does not mean that cosmic catastrophes must be excluded for all times. In chapter V. we have seen systematic searches being conducted in astrophysics for killer-comets, and research and reflection about how to counter them. This behavior is quite rational. It comes easier today than in technologically more backward times: “For the first time, living beings have developed to the point where they can wrest their fate away from the celestial bodies... They have acquired the capability to foresee their annihilation, as well as the power to put an end to this cycle of destruction and creation.”<sup>646</sup> This appraisal would still prove too optimistic in the case of a cosmic hit for the day after tomorrow. Still, its basic thrust is that there is no hope coming from blood sacrifices and arms raised in prayer. Apocalypticists differentiate themselves from asteroid observers in that they do not gaze into telescopes but into Bronze Age derived texts and then come up with sacrificial solutions. They fear imaginary catastrophes whereas astrophysicists bring the fear in focus through their research and

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<sup>641</sup> Luke 10: 18.

<sup>642</sup> Isaiah 14: 12.

<sup>643</sup> G. Kretschmar, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Die Geschichte ihrer Auslegung im 1. Jahrtausend*, Stuttgart: Calwer, 1985, p. 9.

<sup>644</sup> A. Strobel, «Apokalypse des Johannes», in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, vol. III, Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1978, p. 187

<sup>645</sup> Cf. J. Mayer, K. Schubert, *Die Qumran Essener*, Munich/Basel: Ernst Reinhard (UTB), 1982, p.38.

<sup>646</sup> T. Gehreis, «Collisions with Comets and Asteroids: The Chances of a Celestial Body Colliding with the Earth Are Small, But the Consequences Would Be Catastrophic», in *Scientific American*, Nr. 3, 1996, p. 34/39.

put it into a rational context, which calls up fight or flight responses, but in no case sacrificial ones;<sup>647</sup> we are not surprised, therefore, that in addition to their anti-apocalyptic orientations, the rabbis of the time of Jesus and Paul also cultivate criticism against the temple and sacrificial practices. The Pharisees - literally: dissidenters - strive for a Judaism which can do without the old-Israelitic relic of the last temple still standing in Jerusalem.<sup>648</sup>

But the living man Jesus, the young carpenter, who without “many crowns” is given as a kind of warm lining to the Lord with the “iron rod” - what is his position? We know almost nothing about him. Yet he seems to come to the fore as a fervent, on occasion even bigoted - maybe even as an antiroman nationalistic - defender of Jewish law, of which he is quite aware that it finds in the commandments of love its most challenging demands. After all, renouncing certain categories of food must appear easy in comparison with loving humanity. The arrogant-domineering manner he displays towards his mother and siblings<sup>649</sup> as well as his beating up on the small tradesmen in the temple precinct<sup>650</sup> bear witness moreover to an irascible character.

In the *Gospel of the Nazarene* or “*of the Jews*,” which found entrance in part and with significant changes into the later *Gospel of Matthew*, the radical Jesus shines through most impressively: “One of the two rich men spoke to him: ‘Master, what shall I do in order to live?’ He said to him: ‘Man, fulfill the law and the prophets.’ The other answered: ‘That’s what I have done.’ He said to him: ‘Go and sell everything that you possess and distribute it among the poor, then come and follow me.’ But then the rich man began to scratch his head for he did not like [what he heard]. And the Lord spoke to him: ‘How can you say, I have fulfilled the law and the prophets? *For it is said in the law: Love thy neighbor as thyself*; yet see, many of your brothers, sons of Abraham, are stuck in filth and die of hunger - and your house is full of goods, and nothing comes out of it to go to them!’ And he turned himself away and said to Simon, his disciple, who sat next to him: ‘Simon, son of Jona, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man into the kingdom of heaven’”<sup>651</sup>

When the Christian redactors took on the story of the rich young man, they mutilated, i.e. dejudaized the - possibly original Jesuanic form - by shortening the passage: “*For it is written in the Law: ‘love thy neighbor like thyself*” to: “thou must

<sup>647</sup> Cf. in detail G. Heinsohn, «Imaginary and Expected Catastrophes: Apocalyptic Desire and Scientific Prognosis», in: *Chronology and Catastrophism Review*, vol. XVII, 1995 Special Issue «*Cosmic Catastrophism*», 1996, S. 22ff.

<sup>648</sup> See p. ex. D. Flusser, «No Temple in the City», in: Idem, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity*, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1988, p. 454-465.

<sup>649</sup> *Mark* 3: 31 ff. And 6: 3 ff.

<sup>650</sup> See a. o. *Gospel of John* 2:15.

<sup>651</sup> Cf. E. Hennecke, W. Schneemelcher, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung*. I. Vol: *Evangelien*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., 1968, p. 97, my emphasis.

love they neighbor like thyself”<sup>652</sup> and in so doing defraud Jewish law of its priority.

It was probably the man Jesus who, as a radical interpreter of the law, impressed the “Christian Jews” (historically more correctly named “Jesus-Jews,” as Christian then did not yet exist), who had already disappeared by the 4th century A.D. These Jews, passed down as Nazarenes or Ebionites, made a name for themselves through their radical refusal of sacrifice, in the tradition of the prophets, and therefore their enmity towards the priesthood. They are our most important witnesses for the anti-sacrificial attitude of the man Jesus himself, whom after all Paulism alone, through its Damascus experience, transformed into a sacrificed redeptor god, endowed with a new priesthood, today drawing a following of one and a half billion people. The second offshoot of Judaism, too, who in the meantime has grown to a billion devotees, Islam, lives in sacrificial expectation of the great Misfortune, which must bring eternal salvation: “The message of world judgement at the end of time with its requittal for good and evil deeds of men was the primary concern of the Prophet, to which chronologically speaking the exigence of exclusive monotheism adjoined itself only in second place.”<sup>653</sup>

*Attitudes towards astrophysics and apocalyptic catastrophes inducing sacrifice at the beginning of our era.*

*Jewish sects like  
Essenes, annihilated  
around 70AD by the  
Romans*

*Pharisees as the core  
of today's modern  
Judaism of ca  
15Million*

*Jesus-Jews as  
Nazarenes or  
Ebionites, who  
disappear around  
450AD*

*Christians/Paulists  
win around 70AD  
against the Jesus-  
Jews and grow  
through missions to  
the pagans to today  
1.5 billion*

Apocalyptists and  
purifiers, not  
abolishers of the  
Temple

Anti-apocalyptists  
with synagogue and  
law and a history of  
opposition to  
sacrificial temples

Antirromans who do  
not believe in Jesus  
as a sacrificed  
heavenly god, but see  
in him a  
revolutionary

Apocalyptists who  
reenact symbolically  
the bloody sacrifice  
of Christ in church  
temples.

Christianity fascinates humanity through a sacrificial faith which it combines with commandments of charity. The love-commanding side of Christianity represents its Judaic nucleus, whereas its apocalyptic side is antijudaic; the apocalyptic, which in Judaism is pushed back to the sectarian fringe, which one might call the old-Israelitic fringe, is pushed in Christianity to the center of the *Weltanschauung*. Yet, the Jesus

<sup>652</sup> *Gospel of Matthew* 19: 19.

<sup>653</sup> G. Lanczkowski, «Apokalyptik/Apokalypsen I», in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Berlin und New York: de Gruyter, vol. III, 1978, p. 190.

figure as apocalyptic educator meets in his pupils a thriving, which is felt as a relief, to focus on emotions hard to describe and express. They consist of the least controllable excitement and anguish of a whole life. They build themselves up in the pre-linguistic phase of childhood and even earlier, in uterine life. Frightening impressions strike the human then in its most helpless and yet already fully receptive, sentient stage. For the duration of a lifetime, this freely floating *angst* keeps searching for an acceptable motive which will allow it to focus itself, and finally manage to translate into targeted defense. It searches for a language which is yet unengaged, does not look foolish but is adequate to the enormosity of the anguish. If the right word does not come up, little progress is made. To say: "What a volcano!" would in many situations in which even this word would be excessive, call for a puzzled knitting of the brows. "What a disaster!" by contrast is much more acceptable, yet it means nothing less than the "fall of a star."

The language of disaster is present in almost all early great literatures of humanity which treat of theomachies as the fighting heavenly bodies in the Bronze Age which intervened destructively, suddenly and deeply in the thrivings of men. It is this language, stemming back to the times of catastrophes and perfectly adequate in those times, which can impose a threatening direction to comparatively trivial crises in the present. This opportunity is gladly taken up. But the price to pay for this is an exorbitant over-dimensioning, which profits to the expression of fear. It is the inadequacy of the evaluation of danger which can induce overreactions in its subduing.

A harmless variant of faith into cosmic influences on Earth is brought of course by astrology. It preserves in a crazy way the memory of those times when truly terrifying events came from heaven, or when one could make out once more with relief that the danger had passed. It is quite fitting therefore that the great teachers of Judaism, such as Rabbi Jochanan, Rabbi Judah and Rav should have insisted that "there is no constellation for Israel." In the Midrash *l. Moses* 15:5 ("Look towards heaven and count the stars: canst thou count them?") is interpreted as God saying to Abraham: "You are a prophet, not an astrologer."<sup>654</sup> All the cosmic bodies were under the domination of the Almighty. To direct oneself according to them would have meant to sever oneself from him.

When now certain human groups are brought in a causal relationship with fears overblown to celestial-catastrophic dimensions, they can fall victim to persecution and sacrificing. It is the grossly over-dimensioning of fears which makes humans capable of collective salvation actions of monstrous proportions. It may be that it was precisely the anti-apocalyptic attitude of Judaism that contributed to its demonization. Those who do not fear the heavenly host might well be of an equal power. To a Christian-educated Hitler in any case, things have occasionally appeared in just such a way: the Jew - he murmurs in his apocalyptic side - follows "his fateful path so long, until another force

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<sup>654</sup> Cf. a. o. R. J. Z. Werblowsky, G. Wigoder (Hg.), *The Encyclopedia of the Jewish Religion*, New York et al.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966, p. 46.

opposes him, and in a mighty struggle throws this heaven-climber back to Lucifer.”<sup>655</sup>

The synagogue cannot accept either the apocalyptic danger under the impression of which sacrifice appears as a way of salvation. This is where we find the core of the enmity between Church and synagogue. Whenever a real debate arises between these two sides, this core is very quickly touched upon. For instance, Moses Mendelssohn writes in 1769 in answer to the criticism of Jews made by Johann Kaspar Lavater to the Duke of Braunschweig, who encouraged him to reconciliation with the protestant pastor, that “his reason balks at the mysterious teachings of Christianity and prevents him to believe in an original sin; that an innocent can take upon himself the sin of one guilty is in contradiction with godly justice.”<sup>656</sup>

After the destruction of the Jews through the antisemitic German dictatorship, a new dialogue was taken up here and there in the 1950s. Bultmann’s master pupil Hans Conzelmann became its dominant figure on the protestant side. Without “the belief in the death of Jesus as the act of redemption,” he concludes in 1981, “it is more honest to close the Christian shop altogether.”<sup>657</sup> The opinion of Jewish prophets, that nothing can be gained through the sacrifice of another, and the Christian conviction that through such sacrifice alone salvation can be attained, appears once more irreconcilable. Christianity adheres “at the core of its message to the idea of sacrifice.”<sup>658</sup>

To demand, against such background, of monotheistic Jews to accept Christianity would mean to force them back some distance into their own old-Israelitic, catastrophic-sacrificial past. Yet there seems to be no end to attempts by Christianity to bring back Jews to old-Israelitism: “Both the sacrificial representations of natural religions *as well as the sacrificial nature of the Old Testament* find their fulfillment in the sacrifice of Jesus-Christ on the cross, through the sacramental actualisation of which the transmutation into the New Being occurs. The Eucharistic meal [the absorbing of flesh and blood] is therefore central to all the actions of the Church.”<sup>659</sup>

On the other hand, to ask of Christians to concentrate exclusively onto the

<sup>655</sup> A. Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (1925/27), einbändige Volksausgabe, München: Franz Eher Nachfolger, 1930, p. 751.

<sup>656</sup> Citation L. Poliakov, *Geschichte des Antisemitismus*. Vol V: *Die Aufklärung und ihre judenfeindliche Tendenz*, Worms: Georg Heinz, 1983, p. 192.

<sup>657</sup> H. Conzelmann, *Heiden-Juden—Christen: Auseinandersetzungen in der Literatur der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr 1981, p. 4.

<sup>658</sup> So Dieter Henrich in «Diskussion» to F.-X. Kaufmann, «Macht Zivilisation das Opfer überflüssig?», in: R. Schenk (Hg.), *Zur Theorie des Opfers: Ein interdisziplinäres Gespräch*, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstadt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1995, p. 190.

<sup>659</sup> H. Bürkle, «Die religionsphänomenologische Sicht des Opfers und ihre theologische Relevanz», in: R. Schenk (ed.), *Zur Theorie des Opfers: Ein interdisziplinäres Gespräch*, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstadt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1995, p. 153.

Jewish commandments of love and justice would deprive them of the essential - the still half totemic<sup>660</sup> absorption of the flesh and blood of their sacrificed Lord.

In its own way, pharisaic Judaism belongs to the redemption-skeptical *Weltanschauungen*. Therefore it is often considered a nuisance by movements geared at salvation - be they religious or secular. In their search for scapegoats, these movements often fall back on Judaism foremost, because it provides a rapid evacuation of excitement by means of the old-Israelitic use of scapegoats - or their worldly equivalents such as "capitalists," "meat-eaters," "patriarchs," "destroyers of nature," etc.<sup>661</sup> The epoch-making exigence of monotheism not to externalize negative excitement in sacred expression but to transmutate it into love and justice cannot be adopted.

Judaism constantly loses to salvation movements such of its members who cannot live without a promise of salvation. These losses of course stem from the fact that, in Judaism, an idea was made into a people to which one belongs through ones parents, who cannot impart the refusal of sacrifice in heritage, only give it in example. In the same time, the survival of Judaism despite all persecutions confirms the experience that assimilation does not take place, when those to be convinced have to make a spiritual step backwards, when those who want assimilation to occur can impress more with might and number than with intellectual superiority.

Just as the refusal of sacrifice reveals itself as the core idea of Judaism, despite the fact that it is exposed to attacks and must enter into compromises, redemption through the blood-sacrifice of Jesus-Christ as the core-idea of Christianity remains what is most essential for the Christian faith - notwithstanding its many facets, and the fact that some truly believe that they are absorbing the flesh and blood of Christ, and others believe that they are eating and drinking it in a more metaphorical sense. How much this return to sacrifice is experienced as problematic even in Christianity, how much therefore some of the Jewish overcoming of sacrifice needs to be held on to, is at its most visible in the *Letter to the Hebrews* of the Christian Bible: "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin."

(Or, in *God's Word* translation 1995: "When sins are forgiven, there is no longer any need to sacrifice for sins."<sup>662</sup>

<sup>660</sup> In the 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. A.D. Greek circles were convinced that intake by Christians of the bread-flesh and wine-blood of their Master was tantamount to a Thyestian meal. Ataeus of Mycene had slaughtered the sons of his borther Thyestes and presented them to him at a banquet. Cf. A. Henrichs, «Human Sacrifice in Greek Religion», in: J. Rudhardt, O. Reverdin (ed.), *Le Sacrifice dans L'Antiquité*, Geneve: Vandoeuvres, Fondation Hardt Pour l'Etude de L'Antiquité Classique, Entretiens, Tome XXVII, 1981, p. 226.

<sup>661</sup> See M. Brumlik, «Die Angst vor dem Vater: Judenfeindliche Tendenzen im Umkreis neuer sozialer Bewegungen», in: A. Silbermann, J. H. Schoeps (ed.) *Antisemitismus nach dem Holocaust: Bestandsaufnahme und Erscheinungsformen in deutschsprachigen Ländern*, Köln: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1986, p. 133ff.

<sup>662</sup> *Epistle to the Hebrews* 10: 14,18.



Here Paul is writing to Jews and pays regard to their mentality. In letters to the heathen pagans, by contrast, he addresses their final victorious desire: “And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.”<sup>663</sup>

Not to participate in the presence of sacrificers in their excited behavior has forever been deemed dangerous, and brings us onto one path of the hatred of Jews. Could it be that this hatred is nothing else, at its religious core, but the persecution of those rejecting sacrifice and redemption by the sacrificers themselves? That one must beware of these was already pointed at by the Greek *Epicurus* - himself an eminent criticizers of sacrifice: “It is mere play-acting if an Epicurean prays and throws himself on the ground without an inward need, simply out of fear from the people; and the words which he then speaks are foreign to his philosophy. When he sacrifices, he stands next to the sacrificing priest as he would to a butcher, and after the sacrifice he goes away with the words of Menander: ‘I have sacrificed to gods who are of no concern to me.’ For thus must one, according to Epicurus, disguise oneself, not resenting people’s *pleasure*, and not exposing oneself to hatred by deprecating a behavior which brings *enjoyment* to others.”<sup>664</sup>

In Judaism, this philosophical criticism of sacrifice has radicalized itself. It includes also its stone variant, the god-image. Popular legends about the patriarch Abraham extol this now and again: “Then Abraham said to Tharah, his father....: what help and advantages come to us from these idols which you honor and in front of which you prostrate? For there is no spirit in them, they are but mute and stupid... They are the work of hands, you carry them on your shoulders.”<sup>665</sup>

The father - just like Epicurus - warns his son of the dangers to which a rejecter of statues must be prepared and of which even to this day a rejecter of crucifixes<sup>666</sup> must be aware: “I know this too, my son; but what shall I do with the people who have forced me to serve before them? If I tell them the truth, they will kill me. For their souls obey to them, in worshipping and praising them, so be silent, my son, so that they will not kill you.”<sup>667</sup>

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<sup>663</sup> *Epistle to the Ephesians* 5:2.

<sup>664</sup> *Fragment* 42, my emphasis.

<sup>665</sup> *Book of Jubilees* (probably 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. B.C.), cited in E. Kautzsch (ed.), *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments*, vol. 2, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1900, p. 61 f.

<sup>666</sup> The Catholic Archbishop of Munich and Freising, Cardinal Friedrich Wetter, fulminates on Sept. 23, 1995 in front of 25,000 people in Munich against a judgement of the German Constitutional Court according to which crucifixes may be hung in churches and in private as well as in Church facilities, but not in state schools. This decision - he announces - has «unleashed a wave of outrage which is unique in the history of the Federal Republic» (cf. *Kurier am Sonntag*, Bremen, 24. 9. 1995, p. 1).

<sup>667</sup> *Book of Jubilees* (probably 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. B.C.), cited in E. Kautzsch (ed.), *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments*, vol. 2, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1900, p. 61 f.

In popular legends, those so driven by their “souls” try themselves at such killings which - as in the book of *Daniel* - are miraculously prevented: “So Nimrod has Abraham thrown bound up into a burning oven; but only his fetters burn, Abraham remains unhurt. So Nimrod orders the building of a huge pyre. In the delusion to be pleasant to God, all the inhabitants, women and children, carry together the wood. As soon as the pyre is lit, no one can stand in the proximity, so that it becomes impossible to lay Abraham onto the pyre. Then Iblis [Satan, the Morningstar] builds a catapult, with the help of which Abraham is thrown onto the pyre.”<sup>668</sup>

Already the hatred against the Jews in antiquity begins in an anger of the sacrificers against the criticizers of sacrifice. They are said to “have raised themselves up against all of humanity. They exclude themselves from the burning sacrifice, prayers and sacrifices of thanksgiving.”<sup>669</sup> But the reason for the hatred remains obscure if, like *Epicurus*, one discerns only enjoyment (*Epicurus*) or pleasure in “that in which I delighted not”<sup>670</sup> in the bloody ritual. The sacrificer becomes a persecutor only through his shame, not to be able to do without the sacrifice. This shame is fed by the feeling of guilt which is present even in the case of collective - and therefore at first glance authorized - holy killing. The fear of retribution creates an inner doubt about the sacrificial action, which needs to be suppressed if the economic balance of the ritual is to remain positive. This suppression of one’s own doubts is easier, though, when *everybody* takes part in the killing and nobody can point at the guilt because he did not share in it. This reminds one of the drunk, who experience the sober as a living reproach and a party-pooper - or also of the fascists, who feel troubled by democrats.

Just as the drunk may suspect the sober not to be as self-controlled as they appear to be and, on occasions when they are not observed, to probably indulge in worse things as they themselves do, the rejecters of sacrifices have time and gain been accused of being the worst sacrificers of all. Already in the 1st century B.C., the Greek historian Apollonius Molon vents his anger about the statue-less and sacrifice-less Jews by fantasizing that they keep in the Temple in Jerusalem a golden asses’ head, to which every year, after suitable force-feeding, a Greek youth is sacrificed.<sup>671</sup> In the 1st century A.D., Apion<sup>672</sup> spreads this slander. At the same time, Damocritus offers the variant

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<sup>668</sup> Cited in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 1, Berlin: Eschkol A.-G., 1928, Sp. 396; cf. In detail L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews. Vol. I: Bible Times and Characters from the Creation to Jacob* (1937), Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968, p. 197ff.

<sup>669</sup> Cf. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume One: From Herodotus to Plutarch*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976, p. 341.

<sup>670</sup> *Isaiah* 66: 1-4.

<sup>671</sup> See M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume One: From Herodotus to Plutarch*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976, p. 153.

<sup>672</sup> See M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Volume One: From Herodotus to Plutarch*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976, p. 410 u. 411.

that the Jews capture a stranger every seven years and sacrifice him to the ass by cutting his flesh into many small morsels.<sup>673</sup>

Christians give vent to their anger especially on Good Friday, when they celebrate the crucifixion of Jesus. The Jews do not only exclude themselves from these celebrations. Onto them is additionally projected the sacrificial aggression, so that the Christians draw exclusively salvation from this bloody act, while the feeling of guilt arising from it is entirely assigned to the sacrifice-criticizing Jews. In 387 A.D., the father of the Church, John Chrysostomos, finds for this comfortable distribution of guilt and release of excitement between the antisacrificial Jews and the sacrifice-centered Christians the following formulation: "How canst thou cultivate community bonds with those who have spilled the blood of Christ and then, without a feeling of terror take part in the precious blood in communion?"<sup>674</sup> To avoid such accusations, the Jewish side now and then tries to adapt itself. When for instance American Reform Judaism called the synagogue "Temple" in imitation of the old place of sacrifice, in order to diminish the difference with Christian churches and their altars, it becomes once more apparent how much prudence must be shown in order not to offend the sacrificers.

In the innumerable accusations that Jews slaughtered Christian children, that they would be, therefore, the worst sacrificers, the pagan tradition of a Molon is perpetuated. Certain places of these alleged ritual murders<sup>675</sup> have become centers of pilgrimages like some particularly effective crucifixes. Chapels and places of worship are dedicated to these supposed victims. With every additional accusation of the Jews of some religiously construed blood act since the "murder of God,"<sup>676</sup> Christians gain an increment in salvation. In the Middle Ages alone, some 150 prosecutions against Jews for ritual murders have been documented.<sup>677</sup>

The slur that Jews defile hosts (lat. *Hostia*=sacrifice of expiation) or oblations (lat. *Oblata*=offered items), which the Christians worship as the flesh of Christ and consume at communion, also expresses the uneasiness of the sacrificers about their central religious act. From the beginning therefore, any knitting of brow by a Jew at

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<sup>673</sup> See V. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (1959), New York: Atheneum/A Temple Book, 1982, p. 366.

<sup>674</sup> Cited in M. Simon, *Veras Israel*, Paris: E. de Boccard, 1948, p. 164.

<sup>675</sup> See J. Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews: The Medieval Conception of the Jew and its Relation to Modern Anti-Semitism*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943, p. 124 ff.

<sup>676</sup> On the earliest elaboration by Christian theology of the Jewish God-murder, which divides up sacrificial guilt and benefit between sacrifice-critical Judaism and sacrifice-centered Christianity, by Bishop Melitto of Sardes (2<sup>nd</sup> cent. A.D.) cf. E. Werner, «Melitto of Sardes, the First Poet of Deicide», in: *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Bd. XXXVII, 1966, p. 191 ff.

<sup>677</sup> See L. Poliakov, *Geschichte des Antisemitismus*. Vol I: Von der Antike bis zu den Kreuzzügen, Worms: Georg Heinz, 1977, p. 54.

words such as: “Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life”<sup>678</sup> brought on the danger of persecution. Already in the 5th century A.D., synagogues were set on fire - for instance in Ravenna, the capital of emperor Theodoric the Great - because Jews were said to have mocked the Last Supper.<sup>679</sup> Until the end of the Middle-Ages, more than 100 cases of the so-called defiling of hosts have been documented.<sup>680</sup> We have already seen how in ancient Egypt, humans who were condemned as profanators of the sacrifice were condemned to play the holy-healing heavenly power to be killed - Seth or Apophis<sup>681</sup> - in the next installment of the ritual.

Therefore, religious hatred of Jews would prove to be the persecution of people who, through mere non participation in the ritual destined to evacuate excitement, give raise to doubts about this ritual, as well as to the fear of retribution, which then spoil its psychic healing pleasure.

From this, one might acquire a psychological interpretation of the antisemitic slogan: “the Jews are to blame for everything.” They would be guilty of calling up the feeling of guilt, because they do not participate in a rapid sacrificial relief, and therefore contribute in thrusting it back into the aroused. They no longer evacuate rapidly their movements of hatred ritually and collectively, but use them for the edification of a moral conscience with the help of which they learn to control themselves. Friedrich Nietzsche - without any understanding of the Jewish criticism of sacrifice, but with the help of genius and popular period color - divined the transformation of aggression at work in Judaism: “Out of the stem of this tree... of Jewish hatred - of the deepest and most sublime hatred, creator of Ideals, revolutionizer of values, such as nothing comparable has ever existed on earth - something just as incomparable has grown, a *new love*, the deepest and most sublime of all forms of love - and out of which other stem could it ever have shot?”<sup>682</sup> Nietzsche deepens this discovery through a foreboding of that which psychoanalysis will a little later call the sublimation of archaic urges, when he describes the Jews “as the moral genius among all peoples” because they “*have despised man himself* more deeply than any other

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<sup>678</sup> *Gospel of John* 6: 54.

<sup>679</sup> See J. Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue: A Study in the Origins of Antisemitism* (1934), New York: Atheneum. A Temple Book, 1981, p. 207.

<sup>680</sup> See P. Browe, «Die Hostienschändungen der Juden im Mittelalter», *Römische Quartalsschrift*, vol. XXXIV, 1926, p. 169ff.

<sup>681</sup> Cf. H. Willems, «Crime, Cult and Capital Punishment (Mo'alla Inscription 8)», in: *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Bd. 76, 1990, p. 27ff.

<sup>682</sup> F. Nietzsche, «Zur Genealogie der Moral» (1887), in: Idem, *Werke*, ed. by K. Schlechta, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1966, vol. 2, p. 780, emphasis in original.

people.”<sup>683</sup>

As a rightist-Nietzschean, Adolf Hitler endeavored to turn back the revolution from archaic Israelitism to the love ethic of Judaism by annihilating Judaism: “Our revolution is not merely a social and political one. We are standing before *a tremendous overthrow of moral concepts* and of the spiritual orientation of man. With our movement only, the *time of the middle, the Middle-Ages*, have come to an end. We put an end to the mistaken ways of humanity. *The tables from Mount Sinai have lost their validity. Moral conscience is a Jewish invention.*”<sup>684</sup>

The fact that Jews try to live without sacrifice opens the perspective that possibly all humans may be able to do so and therefore, in this facet of their soul which finds distress in sacrifice, they possess a weighty ally. Overcoming the ritual, or aggression against the Jews becomes an alternative of heavy consequences.

But it is stated nowhere that the Christians must forever adhere to the belief in the blood-sacrifice of Jesus as a an act of redemption, or the Jews hold on to circumcision as a sign of their belonging to their people. In the middle of the 19th century, Reform Judaism had already engaged in activity in this direction. In practice, it then returned to a solidarity with the Orthodox who, in the context of attacks from all parts onto the whole of Judaism, would have felt as a betrayal in the darkest hour that which would have become the next logical step in the development of the rejection of sacrifice. The once mighty progress, leading from sacrifice to circumcision on the eighth day, would have found its accomplishment in the renouncement of the ritual elements in circumcision. In the exceptional case of a male convert, reform Judaism

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<sup>683</sup> F. Nietzsche, «Die fröhliche Wissenschaft» (1882), in: Idem, *Werke*, ed. by K. Schlechta, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1966, Zweiter Band, p. 136, emphasis in original.

<sup>684</sup> H. Rauschning, *Gespräche mit Hitler* (1939'), Wien: Europaverlag 1988, p. 189/ 210, my emphasis. Cf. Hitler's motive for war against Judaism G. Heinsohn, *Warum Auschwitz? Hitlers Plan und die Ratlosigkeit der Nachwelt*, Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1995 sowie G. Heinsohn, «Auschwitz ohne Hitler?», in: *lettre International*, brochure 33, Summer 1996, p. 21 ff.

The authenticity of the statements by Hitler in Hermann Rauschning's records has moved historians to take pronounced positions *pro* and *contra* which have by no means been resolved yet. Established historical writing defends the basic substantiality of his reports about Hitler's statements (cf. Th. Schieder *Hermann Rauschnings «Gespräche mit Hitler» als Geschichtsquelle*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag sowie M. Broszat, «Enthüllung? Die Rauschning-Kontroverse» [1985], in: Idem, *Nach Hitler. Der schwierige Umgang mit unserer Vergangenheit* [1986], München: dtv, 1988, S. 249ff.). Dissenting authors, particularly in the rightist camp, dismiss Rauschning as a valid source entirely (cf. W. Hänel, *Hermann Rauschnings «Gespräche mit Hitler» - Eine Geschichtsfälschung*, Ingolstadt: Veröffentlichungen der Zeitgeschichtlichen Forschungsstelle Ingolstadt, 1980 as well as F. Tobias, «Auch Fälschungen haben lange Beine. Des Senatspräsidenten Rauschnings <Gespräche mit Hitler>» [1988], in H. Corino [ed.], *Gefälscht! Betrug in Literatur, Kunst, Musik, Wissenschaft und Politik*, Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn, 1990, p. 91ff.). Some authors do not quote Rauschning at all, while most of them refer to him *cum grano salis*. The fact that Rauschning did not provide any stenographic records of his one to three encounters with Hitler and that his text contains also interpretations of Hitler's thinking is not denied by anyone of the parties to the controversy. If one wants to reject Rauschning's reporting of Hitler's thoughts about the formation of moral conscience by Judaism as a valid source, one has to surmise that Rauschning himself was the creator of these considerations

even to this day may renounce circumcision.<sup>685</sup> Prayers and rituals who call for the reerection of the temple and therefore the reinstatement of sacrifice have been entirely removed from the religious ritual of Reform Judaism.

A movement in Christianity comparable to Reform Judaism, who would renounce Jesus' sacrificial death as a redemptory act, seems in our view still to be lacking. And yet this remarkable sacrificial compromise may not have been necessarily made for all eternity. Maybe that one day the prophetic: "for I desired mercy, and not sacrifice"<sup>686</sup> will suffice as a *Credo* for all the children of Abraham.

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<sup>685</sup> See M. Joseph, «Circumcision» (1941), in: *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, New York: Universal Jewish Encyclopedia Inc., 1948, vol. 3, p. 216.

<sup>686</sup> *Hosea* 6: 6.

