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Recent Developments in Jewish–Christian Relations

### **Speech of Cardinal Walter Kasper at Liverpool Hope University, UK**

It gives me great pleasure to be here at this University and to be able to share some thoughts with you on recent developments and the future of relations between Christianity, especially the Catholic Church, and the Jewish community. Although I am by no means an expert and my scholarly knowledge on these issues is more than limited, I am most grateful for your invitation and I am nonetheless glad of the opportunity to speak on this theme, which has become an essential part of my life and my daily work since taking over the presidency eleven years ago of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews.

It was not an easy decision for me as a German to accept this duty when the late Pope John Paul II called me to take over this office. I was 12 years old when the Second World War ended and Germany and the whole of mankind was confronted with and ashamed by the unprecedented and unimaginable crime of the Holocaust; as Germans we stood not only physically but also morally in ruins. But then my Jewish friends made it rather easy for me to exercise this new duty; there was never even the least indication of reservation from their side about my provenance, which was for me a positive sign and an encouragement that even after a sad history a new beginning can be possible.

In what follows I would like to present first an overview of the development of our dialogues; in the second and third parts I will highlight some principal theological questions.

I.

As everybody knows the history of Jewish–Christian relations is complex and difficult, going back to the beginnings of the Church in the first century AD. The early Christian community in Jerusalem still took part in the prayers in the Temple and was highly esteemed; in fact, the apostle Paul in his missionary trips always went first to the synagogues and only after to the pagans. But the rift between Jews and Christians and the schism between Jews and the one Church of Jews and Gentiles had already arisen in the first century, especially after the destruction of the second Temple by the Romans in the year 70. This history has also seen positive times, such as when bishops took Jews under their protection against pogroms by mobs, but there have been dark times that have been especially imprinted upon the collective Jewish consciousness.

Such theologically founded anti–Judaism and such pogroms are to be distinguished from the primitive racial anti–Semitism which developed in the 19th century, leading to the Nazi ideology and culminating in the brutal – historically without comparison – crimes of the Shoah, the state-sponsored organized murder of approximately six million European Jews, which is the absolute low point in this history. The Holocaust cannot be attributed to Christianity as such, since it also had clear anti–Christian features. However, centuries–old Christian theological anti–Judaism contributed as well, encouraging a widespread antipathy for Jews, so that ideologically and racially motivated anti–Semitism could prevail

in this terrible way, and the resistance against the outrageous inhuman brutality did not achieve the breadth and clarity that one should have expected.

Unfortunately, it required the unprecedented crime of the Shoah for a fundamental rethinking to come about. This happened after 1945 in all the mainline churches. On the Catholic side the declaration of Vatican II, *Nostra aetate*, was the decisive turning point. Pope John XXIII can be considered to be the spiritual father of this declaration. As nuncio in Istanbul he had actively intervened to save many Jewish lives, and at the beginning of his Pontificate, after an historical visit of the distinguished Jewish scholar Jules Isaak, he asked the German cardinal Augustine Bea, also a renowned Biblical scholar, to prepare a Conciliar declaration on this issue, which was proclaimed after controversial discussions during the last session of the Council in 1965 by Pope Paul VI. It is – as Pope Benedict XVI made absolutely clear once again during his visit to the Roman synagogue on January 17, 2010 – irrevocable. It is irreversible because of the plain fact that the decisive theological arguments of the declaration *Nostra aetate* are firmly established in two higher-ranking Conciliar constitutions, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Nos. 6, 9, 16) and the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Nos. 3, 14).

Two statements are of special importance in this groundbreaking declaration *Nostra aetate*. Fundamental is the recognition of the Jewish roots of Christianity and its Jewish heritage. The Council recalls the affirmations of Saint Paul: “They are Israelites, and to them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law. The worship and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race according to the flesh, is the Christ (Rom 9:4–5) the son of the virgin Mary.” The Council was mindful that Mary was a Jewish woman and all the apostles were Jews. Based on these common roots and common heritage, as Pope John Paul II said during his visit to the Roman synagogue on April 13, 1986, Judaism is not external but internal to Christianity; Christianity is in a unique relationship with it. This overrode the old anti-Judaism. Pope Pius XI had already reflected that spiritually all Christians are Semites.

So the second important statement of the Council concerns the condemnation of anti-Semitism. In the declaration, the Church deplors “all outbreaks of hatred, persecution, displays of anti-Semitism that have been directed at any time and by anyone against the Jews.” Both statements have been explicitly confirmed by Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI several times, particularly during their visits to the Roman synagogue and to Auschwitz, among other occasions. The impressive and moving *mea culpa* celebration on the first Sunday of Lent in the 2000 Jubilee Year, which implied among others the relationship with the Jewish people, is well known.

The Council’s statement has not remained a dead letter: since then many decisive things have happened in order to translate the declaration into life and into reality. Above all, the visits of Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI to the Roman synagogue and to the Holy Land, and likewise the visits to Rome by high-level Jewish delegations, have eloquently expressed the newly-grown relationship and have strengthened it further. Thus, mutual estrangement has been reduced, and trust, cooperation and friendship have been built. Furthermore, the recognition of the State of Israel by the Holy See and the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1993 were only possible on the basis of *Nostra aetate*.

In 1974, Pope Paul VI established the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews with the task of promoting relations and cooperation with Jews, a special entity which is part of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity within the Roman Curia. In this

context I would like to underline two points. Firstly, this Commission is not part of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, but of the Council for ecumenical, i.e., inter-Christian dialogue, because our relationship with Judaism is different by its very nature to all other interreligious relations. Secondly, we are responsible for religious relations, whereas the political relations with the State of Israel are under the responsibility of the Secretariat of State, with which we stand in close cooperation.

Through the International Catholic Jewish Liaison Committee (ICJLC) the Commission conducts regular international dialogues with the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), a consortium of a number of major Jewish organizations. The Commission has published important documents for the understanding and application of *Nostra aetate* (Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing *Nostra aetate* [1974], and Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism [1985], as well as concerning the Shoah (*We Remember* [1998]). In addition, since 2003 the Commission has conducted in an extremely warm and friendly atmosphere a fruitful dialogue with the Chief Rabbinate in Jerusalem.

Furthermore, in all concerned bishops' conferences there are committees and dialogues on the national level and fruitful cooperation has grown in the field of theology and in many other areas. "Weeks of brotherhood," *Nostra aetate* anniversaries, etc., seek to keep alive the concern of reconciliation and dialogue with Judaism in a broader public sphere. The documents on this subject published up until the year 2000 fill two thick volumes totalling about 1800 pages.<sup>1</sup> It is virtually impossible to keep track of the extensive number of publications in book form and in individual articles, as well as in the form of essay collections. Thus, treatises *Pro Judaeis* have replaced the old *Adversus Judaeos* tractates. This all shows that a fundamentally different situation has emerged.

The first priority in these national and international dialogues was coming to grips with the past and the re-establishment of confidence. Particularly in the education of young generations the remembering of what was will remain an important task as a warning for the future. Beyond this, our Jewish friends encouraged us not only to look backwards but also forwards with a view to building a better future for our children and the children of our children. So since the ICJLC meeting in Buenos Aires (2004) on the topic "Tzedeq and Tzedaqah – Justice and Charity," attention is now more focused on our common responsibility for the present and for the future. This is a matter of working together in order to build a world in which such terrible events as the Shoah are no longer possible. Subsequent meetings in Cape Town (2006) and in Budapest (2008) were organised in this perspective.

Of course, after such a long history of estrangement and in view of the remaining fundamental differences between Judaism and Christianity, it was inevitable that misunderstandings and controversies would arise and continue to arise. They included, among other things, the newly formulated intercession for the extraordinary rite of the Good Friday liturgy, the assessment of the attitude of Pope Pius XII to the Shoah during the Second World War, and the question of the mission to the Jews. Seeking the best interests of both parties, correspondence and conversations on the official level have relatively rapidly clarified and settled to some extent the occasionally heated controversies, due to the confidence that had grown in the meantime. Nonetheless, in the public realm these questions are still present and cause not a few and sometimes polemical debates.

II.

Before coming to the fundamental theological question let me make some brief comments on the alleged silence of Pope Pius XII. I repeat: These are only brief comments; I am not an expert in this matter and do not intend to offer an exhaustive analysis or answer. Many questions are still open and need further research.

Pius XII was Pope (1938–58) during one of the most difficult times of the papacy during the Second World War while Rome was under the heel of Mussolini and later occupied by Germany. The contemporary assessment of his Pontificate during the Second World War was rather positive. In his Christmas radio message of 1942 the Pope was very clear and the Nazis understood very well what he wanted to say. The New York Times, which is not known as a church-oriented newspaper, had already in 1941 published an editorial where it spoke of the Pope as the only voice in the silence and in the dark with the courage to raise his voice. After the deportation of more than 1000 Jews from Rome (only 15 survived) in October 1943 he ordered a general Church asylum in all convents and ecclesiastical houses, including the Vatican and Castel Gandolfo. According to authoritative estimates, about 4500 Jews were hidden.

After the death of the Pope the then minister for foreign affairs and then Prime Minister of the State of Israel Golda Meir thanked the Pope with warm words for what he had done in dark times for the Jewish people. In a similar way, the then Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem Herzog also praised the Pope for what he did. These are only some witnesses of high-ranking and well-informed persons who were well aware of what had happened, and who can be called witnesses of the time.

With Hochhut's fictional play *The Deputy* (1963) the perception changed radically. Since then the reproach of silence about the extermination of the Jews has become widely spread. Hochhut was not an historian and today there is evidence that he was dependent on communist sources.<sup>2</sup> One of the first to defend Pius XII was Joseph Lichten, a Polish Jewish diplomat who later, as director of the International Affairs Department of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, played a distinguished role in interfaith-dialogue. The serious recent historical research is differentiated. There are still today Jews who defend Pius XII,<sup>3</sup> and on the other side there are Catholic authors who are critical about his attitude.<sup>4</sup> So there is no clear frontline between Jews and Catholics,<sup>5</sup> though the majority of Jews, especially in Israel, are still critical. Whether this is partly due to a lack of information about more recent historical research work, I would like to leave open.

The main problem is access to the sources. The request for the opening of the Vatican archives is a legitimate request. Since 2003 access has been available up until the end of the Pontificate of Pius XI in 1939, a period in which the future Pius XII was Secretary of State. The material which is already accessible now proves that Pius XII was at no time Hitler's Pope (so John Cornwell, 1999); on the contrary, he was the closest cooperater of Pope Pius XI in the publication of the encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* ("It is with deep anxiety") (1937), which was a fervent condemnation of Nazi race ideology. The Archives are now working under intense pressure on the project to prepare access to the Pontificate of Pius XII, but the registration and preparation of millions of documents in a due professional way needs time and will be completed in about five or six years, after which general access for scholars will be granted. For it is our belief that we have nothing to hide and that we do not need to fear the truth.

Eleven volumes with documents of the Holy See have already been made public<sup>6</sup> and recently many other sources have become available.<sup>7</sup> But knowing the facts is one aspect, for history is not only a question of facts, but also of the historical interpretation of facts, in

this case facts which happened more than half a century ago in a context which is not only politically but also mentally radically different from ours, and only difficult to understand for a generation which can call itself fortunate not to have undergone a similar experience.

The fundamental question is the debate between those who would have preferred a more prophetic statement and those who agree with the Pope's attitude of prudent judgement. Pius XII was not a man of prophetic gestures; he was a diplomat and decided not to be silent but to be moderated in his public statements because he knew that stronger words would improve absolutely nothing; on the contrary, they would provoke brutal revenge and worsen the situation. Therefore he decided not so much to act through words but to help practically as much he could. In this way alone in Rome he saved thousands of Jewish lives.

This was a decision of conscience in an extreme historical situation, which has to be pondered regarding the then given situation, the then available information and the then given possibilities and not from the insights and possibilities of today. This point is important for the question of an eventual beatification.<sup>8</sup> In the case that it proceeds, it will not be an historical assessment but a spiritual discernment, whether this Pope in his situation followed his personal conscience and did the will of God as he understood it in his situation. So an eventual beatification would not preclude further historical research and interpretation nor would it exclude the assessment that other people with a different character may have come to different conclusions and may have acted in a different way.

I repeat, I am not an historian; I presume that the controversy about the interpretation will go on and that the historical question will remain an open question with different interpretations, even after the opening of the archives and perhaps the discussion will be open till the end of times. For who can dare to say the last word about such an outrageous event as the Holocaust? The only adequate answer can be shame and repentance, that Catholics did not react more forcefully, and then metanoia, i.e., a new thinking and a new behaviour today in order to build up new relations with the Jewish people.

The Declaration of our Commission We Remember. A Reflection on the Shoah of 16 March 1998 concludes: "We pray that our sorrow for the tragedy which the Jewish people has suffered in our century will lead to a new relationship with the Jewish people. We wish to turn awareness of past sins into a firm resolve to build a new future in which there will be no more anti-Judaism among Christians or anti-Christian sentiment among Jews, but rather a shared mutual respect, as befits those who adore the one Creator and Lord and have a common father in faith, Abraham... To remember this terrible experience is to become fully conscious of the salutary warning it entails: the spoiled seeds of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism must never again be allowed to take root in any human heart."

### III.

This brings me now to the fundamental problems between Judaism and Christianity which transcend the issues of the day, and to the different positions that are fundamental for both communities. This involves especially such key issues as the Christian confession of Jesus as the Christ (i.e., the Messiah) and the Son of God, which is directly related to the Trinitarian understanding of biblical monotheism, the universal salvific significance of Jesus and other similar questions.

Of course, there can be no question of dissolving the deep-seated differences on these issues in favor of some sort of syncretism, or of relativizing them. Most definitely, this discussion does not involve any covert proselytism. Rather, the basis for dialogue must be

the realization that Jews and Christians differ on these issues and must respect and appreciate each other in their otherness. But precisely for the sake of mutual respect and appreciation, in the newly generated climate of trust it must be a primary goal to actively reduce old misunderstandings and develop possible approaches to understanding each other's position.

An initial commendable attempt, albeit one that was discussed critically from various sides, was made by Jewish scholars with "Dabru Emet: To Speak the Truth" (2000). Subsequently, at the suggestion of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, an informally convened international group of Christian theologians began meeting in 2006; individual Jewish specialists and friends were invited to participate as critical observers. Their work studied the specific question of how to relate the universal saving significance of Jesus Christ to Israel's ongoing covenantal life with God. Our Pontifical Commission encouraged this conversation, and it was kept informed about its progress. To my great joy, the working group will shortly be able to set forth its results. Whoever peruses the contributions collected in this volume will quickly recognize that this conversation is by no means completed. We stand only at the beginning of a new beginning. Many exegetical, historical, and systematic questions are still open, and presumably there will always be such questions. There will also always be different positions on all of these questions. Thus, there is to date no conclusive theory that is more or less generally accepted about the relationship of Judaism and Christianity, if ever there will be.

From my point of view, though, there are already today a few trajectories that can be drawn out, without any claim to comprehensiveness. I will limit myself to four points, which I can only present in this context in broad strokes. All of these points are developed out of a Christian perspective and are not made with the expectation that our Jewish conversation partners can agree to all of them.

1. In the past Israel was often collectively described as an accursed people cast off by God. This position since *Nostra aetate* is totally overcome. According to Saint Paul Israel is the divinely chosen and beloved people of the covenant, which was never revoked or terminated (Rom 9:4; 11:29). That is why it cannot be said that the covenant with Israel has been replaced by the New Covenant. The New Covenant for Christians is not the replacement (substitution), but the fulfilment of the Old Covenant. Both stand with each other in a relationship of promise or anticipation, and fulfilment. This relationship must be understood in the context of the whole history of the covenant. The whole history of God with his people takes place in a sequence of various covenants with Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Ezra; in the end, the prophet Jeremiah promises a new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31). Each of these covenants takes up the previous covenant and at the same time reinterprets it anew. Thus for us the New Covenant is the final reinterpretation promised by the prophets of the Old Covenant. It is the definitive yes and amen to all of God's promises (2 Cor 1:20), but not their suspension or abolition.

The problem is not only the relationship of the Old and New Covenant, but the different problem of the relationship of the church and post-biblical Rabbinic and Talmudic Judaism, which arose only after the destruction of the Second Temple in AD 70. The canons and structures of both were formed in parallel. Therefore the New Testament can give us no clear and above all no uniform answer to this question.

After the destruction of the Second Temple, a Rabbinic Jewish and a Christian interpretation of the Old Testament developed in parallel and in interaction, both based on their respective religious presuppositions. The document of the Pontifical Biblical

Commission, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible* (2001), however, explicitly notes that both are possible interpretations of the Old Testament text (§22). In this regard, the statement of *Nostra aetate* receives its full weight, that the Jews, according to the testimony of the Apostle, “are still beloved of God for their fathers’ sake, for his gifts of grace are irrevocable.” So our Christian relationship to the Jews is for us – as Pope John Paul II put it on his visit to the Synagogue of Rome in 1986 – not only an external reality but belongs in a certain sense to the inner reality of our religion. We share a important common heritage. The Jews are “our elder brothers in the faith of Abraham”.

Between Judaism and Christianity, therefore, there is a differentiation that is neither simply a parallel co-existence, nor an opposition. Rather, Paul has shown in his insights concerning salvation-history in Romans 9–11 that the two are dialectically related to each other in their difference. This relationship can hardly be reduced to a formula or a catchy phrase. It is, as Paul says, ultimately a mystery (Rom 11:33–36). If one wishes, one can try to describe this mystery in a similar way to the formula of the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) and define the relationship of both with a double negation: without confusion and without separation.

Perhaps more helpful than a conceptual clarification is the image that Paul uses in the Letter to the Romans for the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. He speaks of the root of Israel into which the wild branches of the Gentiles have been implanted (Rom 11:16–20). This image, going back to the prophet Isaiah (Is 11:1), expresses the sense of distinction within unity in two ways. On the one hand, it is said that the engrafted wild branches have not grown from the rootstock itself and cannot be derived from it. The grafting is something new: it is God’s own irreducible act. The church is thus not simply a branch, a fruit or an offshoot of Israel. On the other hand, the church must draw its vigor and strength from the rootstock of Israel. If the engrafted branches are cut off from the root, they become withered, weak and eventually die. Thus, cutting itself off from its Jewish roots for centuries weakened the church, a weakness that became evident in the altogether too feeble resistance against the persecution of Jews.

But the reverse is also true. Without the engrafted branches the root remains unfruitful. The engrafted branches give the root stock new vitality and fertility. Thus the church has spread universally among the nations the monotheism of Israel and the Ten Commandments as the core of the Mosaic law, and has thereby contributed to the fact that the promise given to Abraham that he would be a blessing to all nations (Gen. 12:3; 18:18, etc.) has come true. Israel without the church is in danger of becoming too particularistic and reclusive, while the church without Israel, as the example of Marcionism makes clear, is in danger of losing its historical grounding and becoming ahistorical and Gnostic. Judaism and Christianity need each other and therefore are dependent on each other. A true ecumenism without Israel is not possible.

2. A well thought-out determination of the relationship of Israel and the Church is fundamental to answering the highly controversial question of Christian mission among the Jews. This is for Jews a very delicate and sensitive question, because it implies for them the existence of Israel itself. But the question is delicate also for Christians, because the universal salvific significance of Jesus Christ and the universal mission of the church are fundamental for Christian belief. Also Paul on his missionary journeys went always first (Rom 1:16) to the Jews in the synagogue, and only after he met opposition, did he turn to the Gentiles. So as Christians we cannot deny the universality of Christian mission to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But we can and we must recognize that this universality can and must be applied in different ways to pagans and to Jews. Because

Jews are not pagans, they believe in the one God and have therefore not to turn from false and dead idols to the true and living God (1 Th 1:9). This means that the command for mission is as valid for Jews as for pagans but it must be put into effect differently among Jews with respect to pagans.

This difference has not always been observed, and unfortunately there has been a history of forced conversions of Jews. In principle, though, and especially today the church takes this difference into account. In contrast to some fundamentalist evangelical movements which undertake missionary work, the Catholic Church sponsors no specific institutional missionary work aimed at Jews. This is more than a mere fact; it is an important ecclesial reality. This does not mean that the church and Christians should behave passively in the meantime and simply sit on their hands. The exclusion of a targeted institutional mission does not prohibit, but rather implies that Christians and the church are generally required to give Jews witness to their faith in Jesus Christ now. Such Christian witness will be, especially after the Shoah, discreet and humble, must avoid any appearance of triumphalism, and show respect and esteem for the conviction of the Jewish partner. Humility admittedly should not be mistaken for sycophancy or even cowardice. To be a witness (martyr), according to the Scriptures, is no small thing and should be done with candor.

It should not be ruled out that some Jews, such as Edith Stein, may convert to Jesus Christ just as in reverse there are Christians who turn to the Jewish faith. However, these are personal decisions of conscience, which must be respected by both sides, but for neither side are they a strategic goal. The salvation of all Israel is according to Saint Paul left to God alone at the end of time (Rom 11:26 ff). In this sense the Pontifical Biblical Commission says: "Jewish messianic expectation is not in vain"; at the end of time both Jews and Christians will recognize the "One who is to come," the eschatological messiah [PBC 2001, §21].

3. The common heritage of Jews and Christians includes the joint vocation to a common witness to the one God and his commandments, which as a source orientation is of special urgency for our modern society. This important point was highlighted by Pope Benedict XVI on his visit to the Roman Synagogue. This includes the unmasking and prophetic criticism of the new false gods and idols of our time, and a shared commitment to human dignity, to justice and peace in the world, to the dignity and worth of the family, and to the integrity of creation. Not least, Jews and Christians can together give witness to the dialogue, cooperation and reconciliation that are possible even after a difficult and complex history. Likewise, they can stand together for teshuvah, i.e., for repentance and reconciliation. Moreover, with the celebration of the Sabbath or Sunday, they perform an indispensable service for the freedom of people: they are showing that in this world there should be a sacred time dedicated to God and that being human should not be reduced to labor, economics, business and pleasure.

Above all, Jews and Christians look to the future: they give witness together – in the midst of the many dilemmas and instances of hopelessness in the world – to the hope for the perfect justice and the universal shalom that God alone will usher in at the end of time. Thus they contribute to build a just and humanitarian world in which such a terrible event as the Shoah cannot be repeated.

That the dialogue in the not-too-distant future may also help to promote the peace process in the Middle East itself is, unfortunately, thus far an unfulfilled wish of all parties. The solution of these political problems is not within the responsibility and the competence

of our Commission; the way in which we can contribute to this urgent political and human problem is to prepare and to foster a mentality that would enable a reasonable approach to these questions. We can give witness that even after a difficult and complex history, reconciliation can be possible.

Let me therefore conclude: No one could have foreseen 45 years ago where we are today in the relationship between Jews and Christians. We have advanced further than we could have imagined back then. But today we also see more clearly that the road to each other and with each other is not complete and still has a long way to go. Nostra aetate is far from being a finished agenda. It is my hope that telling the story of where we stand today will encourage us to continue on the path for the good of the whole of humanity and of peace (shalom) in the world.

1 See Rolf Rendtorff and Hans Hermann Henrix, eds., *Die Kirchen und das Judentum. Volume I: Dokumente von 1945 bis 1985* (Paderborn/Gütersloh: Bonifatius/Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2001), comprising 746 pp; and Hans Hermann Henrix and Wolfgang Kraus, eds., *Die Kirchen und das Judentum. Volume II. Dokumente von 1986 bis 2000* (Paderborn/Gütersloh: Bonifatius/Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2001), comprising 1036 pp.

2 Former Securitate General Ion Mihai Pacepa has stated that Hochhuth's play and numerous publications attacking Pius XII as allegedly having been a Nazi sympathizer were fabrications of the KGB and Eastern bloc Marxist secret services leading a campaign to discredit the moral authority of the Church and Christianity in the West. Pacepa also claims that he was involved in contacting East bloc agents close to the Vatican in order to fabricate the story to be used for the attack against the wartime pope. An article in *La Civiltà Cattolica* in March 2009 indicated that the accusations that Hochhuth's play made widely known originated not among Jews but in the Communist bloc. It was Moscow Radio, on 2 June 1945, that first directed against Pius XII the accusation of refusing to speak out against the exterminations in Nazi concentration camps. It was also the first to call him "Hitler's Pope". Cf. Giovanni Sale, *Il Novecento tra genocidi, paure e speranze*, Jaca Book, Milan 2006, p. 214, quoted in: *La Civiltà Cattolica* 2009 I 540. It was a surprise that Hochhuth in March 2005 in an interview defended the British publicist David Irving who as Holocaust denier was several times condemned (Munich 1993, London 2000, Vienna 2006) and who in Germany is not permitted to immigrate.

3 Pinchas Lapide, *Three Popes and the Jews*, 1967; Rabbi David Dalin, *The Myth of Hitler's Pope*, argues that critics of Pius are liberal Catholics and ex-Catholics who "exploit the tragedy of the Jewish people during the Holocaust to foster their own political agenda of forcing changes on the Catholic Church today" and that Pius XII was actually responsible for saving the lives of many thousands of Jews. The Pave the Way Foundation and its founder Gary Krupp released 2,300 pages of documents dating from 1940 to 1945 that according to their claim will show that Pius XII "worked diligently to save Jews from Nazi tyranny". On 17 September 2009, the Pave the Way Foundation nominated Pius XII to be listed as Righteous Among the Nations at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial. The foundation's efforts produced 3,000 new original documents and photos on the life of Pius XII and his work to save Jews during World War II.

4 More recent publications: K. Kühlwein, *Warum der Papst schwieg. Pius XII und der Holocaust*, Düsseldorf 2008; H. Wolf, *Papst und Teufel. Die Archive des Vatikan und das Dritte Reich*, München 2009 ; R. Rychlak, *Hitler, the War, and the Pope*, 2000.

5 The International Catholic–Jewish Historical Commission, appointed by the Holy See’s Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews in 1999, could not come to a common answer.

6 Pierre Blet, Robert A. Graham, Angelo Martini, Burkhard Schneider, *Actes et documents du Saint–Siège relatifs à la seconde Guerre Mondiale*, Vatican, 1965–1983; Hubert Gruber (ed), *Katholische Kirche und Nationalsozialismus 1933–1945. Ein Bericht in Quellen*, Paderborn 2005.

7 New documents have recently come to light due to Bill Clinton’s 1997 executive order declassifying wartime and post–war documents, many of which are currently at the US National Archives and Holocaust Memorial Museum, including diplomatic correspondence, American espionage, and even decryptions of German communications. New documents that been released include those by the Argentine government and the British Foreign Office, and the diary of Bishop Joseph Patrick Hurley; in particular, these documents reveal new information about Pius XII’s actions regarding the Ustaše regime, the genocides in Poland, the finances of the wartime church, the deportation of the Roman Jews, and the post–war “ratlines” for Nazis and fascists fleeing Europe.

8 Pope Paul VI opened the process of beatification in 1965. The Congregation for Causes of Saints decided in May 2007 for the heroic grade of virtues. Pope Benedict XVI defended his predecessor on the 50th anniversary of his death on 9 October 2008. On 19 December 2009 he acknowledged the heroic grade of virtues.