

(136) ASPECTS OF ANTI-SEMITISM

JEWES AND CHRISTIANS

A first version.

1. ANTI-SEMITISM

Jews always has been the privileged scapegoats of Christian churches and communities, of Christians generally. Of course during the ages these churches and communities had other scapegoats as well, but the scapegoating of the Jews is persistent, with, time and again, horrible and in the end nearly apocalyptic consequences. What lies behind this horrible behaviour of people who called (and call) themselves Christians, who often belonged (and belong) to the "enlightened classes", to the leaders of the ecclesiastical and civil communities, a behaviour which, be it generally in less obvious forms, in fact goes on until the present times?

Of course there are many rationalisations, that Jew sacrifice children, that they have the economic power at the cost of the "Christians", that they have no morals, and so on, but finally they all are secondary. The very fact that the Jews are Jews, so akin to Christians, must finally be at the origin of the Christian tendency to scapegoat and persecute Jews.

I try to mention some of the aspects of anti-Semitism which seem to me foundational for the whole phenomenon. They may look medieval, archaic. They might be forgotten or even hardly ever or never mentioned. They are buried under powerful rationalisations. Nevertheless I assume that these aspects finally are behind all the scapegoating and persecution of the Jews, with their so horrible consequences.

1. Jews and Christians come from the same root. They have the same father, whom they both accept as their God. They are twins. They rival with each other and hate each other as twins so often do. They Christians are in a deep sense adopted sons. They even only are adopted because the Jews in the end agreed that they were adopted. They have to be grateful to the Jews because of this adoption, which makes them dependent on the Jews and which deepens again their hatred of the rival.

2. Jesus was a Jew. Anti-Semites time and again tried to show that he was not or at least not wholly. It only shows how they hate it, that he is fact is a Jew, that he of whom they are

thus dependent in order to live, belongs to the brother-enemy, is one of them. They again feel humiliated and they revenge it on the brother-enemy. Because Jesus was a Jew, they never can get rid of this brother-enemy and thus they try again and again to destroy (or to convert) him/them.

3. Christians know, or pretend, that the difference between Jews and them is, that they, the Christians, believe in Jesus, in Christ, whom the Jews reject as the Messiah. In a sense they cannot understand this rejection. Christ is for them the guarantee of a possibility to live and, in the end, of "heaven". They too are sure that not believing in Christ means hell, eternal torture. So not believing not only means to reject the real possibilities of life, it further has frightful eternal consequences.

The very fact of course is, that Christians all too often don't believe either in Jesus. It even belongs to the structure of faith, that you don't "have it", as you can have religious certainties, that is always given. But apart from that, very often Christians chose and choose religion instead of faith, violence instead of peace, hatred instead of love. They often did and do it with a bad conscience and they often live(d), even continually, in big fears, but that does not prevent them to fall, time and again, back into religion and its consequences. The Jews have, in the eyes of the Christians, none of all this. They make, in a sense, life very easy for themselves, by doing without this blessing and frightening Jesus.

Consequently Christians are deeply insecure opposite of Jews. The Jews make the hypocrisy of the Christians, the make-belief of their faith clear. They even envy the Jews, because they don't have these difficulties. They hate themselves because of all that, they cannot live with the self-hate, and thus they scapegoat the Jews. They try to kill them, because as long as they are there, Christians never can forget their own unbelieving.

The fact that the Jews are in a deep sense in the same predicament, switching between faith and religion themselves, often consumed by self-hate themselves, only makes things worse. The Christians don't recognise it and in the same time scapegoat them again for it. It makes Jews and Christians again more deeply really twins.

4. As long as Christians are able to be anti-Semitic, they very clearly are not with Jesus, with Christ, who was not in the mimesis of desire, in rivalry, in the games of the scapegoating, who came to deliver from that slavery. As long as and when Christians are anti-Semitic, they are in some kind of fascination with Jesus, adoring and hating him in the same time. The adoration is up-front, making out of Jesus something of a religious deity. The hate is hidden. The hate, the responsibility for the hate, is put upon the scapegoats, the Jews. The Christian hate is ascribed to them and consequently they are persecuted.

In fact this mechanism makes the Christians responsible for the hate, which eventually is in the Jews against Jesus, making him in the end responsible for the persecution. Not only because the Christians pretend that they persecute the Jews because of they killed Jesus (which in fact historically is a misunderstanding, because it was done by all the existing authorities), because they hated Jesus, but too because the Jews are in the mimesis with the enormous "mass" of the Christians, wishing them to hate Jesus vicariously for them, to take the hating of Jesus by the Christians upon them.

2. JEWS AND CHRISTIANS.

There clearly is no way out of all this without becoming honest, without Christians beginning to recognize their responsibility, for their own hate, their own lack of belief and for the consequences of both. As long as they are closed up in their self-righteousness, in their hypocrisy, in which they scapegoat Jews, they are far away from Jesus, from Christ, to whom they pretend to belong.

In fact the Christians are constantly joining in with the Jews, who they themselves were victims of the mimetic mass-movements, when they cried: Crucify him! Crucify him! We are, as Christians, exactly the same as the Jews were and we desire time and again that troublesome man, this Jesus, to be scapegoated, to be brought out of the way. He blocks the ways we wish to go and threatens us with hell...

Only if we accept this belonging to them, to the Jews, we can really have the Old Testament as our book as well as theirs. As long as we reject them, do not recognize them as our brothers, who gave us the possibility to partake in the reality of Jesus, we simply are robbers, trying to take away from the Jews what clearly belongs to them, the Tenach.

It is clear that till the cross and the resurrection, whatever exactly happened and whatever is exactly might mean, there is no difference between Jews and Christians. Jews were and are intrigued and eventually fascinated by this very special Jew, as Christians are. The difference is that some of those who partook in what happened recognised a new meaning in what was happening on the cross. They recognised that on and through the cross finally a new way was opened to God, who really IS, and so to life. They had to be convinced and they were. This is the Christian Easter. Why they and not everybody took or got the new way, why many persisted in the old one, out of which the new one grew, and which in the end might have the same goal, we probably will never know or understand. Anyway, since then there was a new possibility to be freed from the circles of violence and revenge, even if the Christians from the very beginning played the old power games as if nothing had happened at all. Nevertheless they never could forget Easter, as Jews, in all their undoings, never could forget Pascha.

What happened clearly had to do with suffering. As long as Jesus only was a very special man, living totally in Scriptures, saying very remarkable things, healing people, he finally could not be recognised as the man he, anyway for the old Christian community, really was. Only by dying suffering, by suffering freely, giving up his life to God, to JHWH, not condemning his persecutors, but praying for them because they did not know what they were doing, he became for some who had already an inkling as long as he lived, recognisable and was in fact recognised by them. Millions of Jews suffered and died under the hands of Christians, giving up their lives, suffering, to JHWH, many, however destroyed, praying for their persecutors, as Jesus did. They very clearly are nearer to Jesus than all the Christians, dying peacefully in their beds, together.

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