

Jakob Wilhelm Hauer's New Religion and National Socialism

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Abstract

Jakob Wilhelm Hauer (1881-1962) was a missionary to India and, later, both a professor of religious studies at Tübingen and a founder of a new religion called the DGB.

According to Hauer, his movement was the essence of National Socialism. Because some contemporary scholars try, nevertheless, to separate Hauer's scholarship and the DGB from National Socialism, this paper reviews existing literature about the Hauer phenomenon. It does so in light of our research at the Federal Archives of Koblenz and Berlin. Then Hauer's personal development and determination to further Nazism are traced. Together the literature review and Hauer's view of religion show that his religious thought and his Nazi politics are inseparable.

Introduction

Jakob Wilhelm Hauer (1881-1962) was a missionary with the Basle Mission Society from 1900 to 1911. In 1911 he became a student at Oxford University and eventually an academic and founder of a new religion called the DGB (*Deutsche Glaubensbewegung*).¹ Among academics, Hauer is known primarily as having been a professor of religious studies² (*Religionswissenschaft, Religionsgeschichte*) and Indology (*Indologie*) at the University of Tübingen and, for a short time, at the University of Marburg. His real passion, however, was Indo-Germanic religion, with emphasis at least as much on the Hindu as on the Germanic part. His stated aim was for his religion to become the essence of National Socialism and the New German man especially as formed by the SS.

The parallel careers of being an academic and a founder of a new religion, took off in 1919 when he left the service of the church. At that time he turned his Bible Circle into a *Weltanschauung* (world-view) organization called *Bund der Kögenger*.³ Unsure whether it was philosophical or religious in nature, Hauer initially opted for the former and rooted the *Bund* in the German Youth Movement (*deutsche Jugendbewegung*) (Laqueur 1962:106; Neurohr 1956: 158; Stachura 1981: 82). In 1933, he brought together various *Bünde* (youth groups), Germanic and Nordic religions, and other groups like the *Freireligiöse* (free thinkers, free religious) under one umbrella known as the DGB⁴ or simply *Deutscher Glaube* (German Faith) after his flagship journal of that name.

As was popular in bohemian and *Bünde* circles from the turn of the century, Hauer had in common with all prominent National Socialists who emerged at that time

the notion that society was moved in new directions, not by political parties, but by leaders of genius (*Führer*) who knew how to propagate their inspired ideas (propaganda). Not surprisingly, and as Armin Mohler (1999:63-67) wrote about the Conservative Revolution, the *völkisch* (folkish), *bündisch* (youth group), and Nordic-religious social environments consisted of an interwoven network of personalities who were political activists, writers and/or managers of interpersonal and inter-group relations (Also Fritzsche 1999). Hauer was very much part of this social environment.

According to Stachura the “Bündische Youth was numerically the largest constituent of the Conservative Revolution” (1981: 50). The theoretical notion of “a ‘third force’ between socialism and old-fashioned nationalism” was inspired by the Bündisch group concept (Stachura 1981: 50) and by Moeller van den Bruck’s idea of the Bündisch Youth as a microcosm of the future Reich (ibid: 50). Indeed, the play with notions of *Gemeinde*, *Kameradschaft*, *Volksgemeinschaft*, *das Dritte Reich* and a “third force” had to do with the disintegration of the social and political fabric between 1928 and 1932 (Fritzsche 1999: 157), and with the popular mobilization of burghers into a “radical nationalist plurality” (ibid: 213). By taking notions of solidarity and a class-free society, on one hand, and “the chauvinism of the nation at war,” on the other, National Socialists “twisted together strands from the political Left and the political Right” that increasingly captured the imagination of Germans from all walks of life (ibid: 213). It should surprise no one that Hauer was among the twisters.

Hauer’s Bund differed from others in minor ways. Youth and Bünde movements were homoerotic and, while it is not much talked about in academic circles, homosexual experiences were accepted and often enough encouraged (Liebs 1976; Machtan 2001).

In the earlier years, Hauer's Bund seemed to share in the general sexual freedom that continued right through the Hitler era only Hauer's charismatic eros seemed to be heterosexually oriented so that he had a high percentage of women in his Bund. Infatuation with their leader was not unknown. What is also not unknown is that party members made fun of Hauer's predilections. For example, 24 October 1933 Studienrat Kloppe, editor of the journal *Wehrwolf* and Reichsführer of the fighting Bünde by that name, wrote Hauer congratulating him for having brought the various fighters for a German Faith under one movement. "I want to serve your cause," he wrote, and "I shall alert my old comrades and am convinced that you will soon win several thousand young, energetic and disciplined lads from all over the country as helpers" (Kloppe an Hauer 24.10.1933 N1131 57 BAK, Doc 63). Hauer enthusiastically welcomed Kloppe aboard, writing him that "a fighting spirit" is what was needed in their battle for state recognition (2.11.1933, N1131 57 BAK, Doc 62). Kloppe went to work but soon reported back that many of his comrades, "reported of difficulties that you have, including the influence on women, and so on" (13.11.1933 N1131 57 BAK, Doc 61).

We mention the homoeroticism of the Bünde and of National Socialism because Nanko (1998: 75) uses Hauer's interest in *Männerbünde* (1923:) arguing that Hauer, however, wanted a *Lebensbund*. This, so Nanko (ibid), differentiates Hauer from the general nationalistic and socialistic politics and places him within a small and distinct stream of völkisch ideologues that pursued ideas of matriarchy. What Nanko does not mention, however, is that Herman Wirth, one of these ideologues, was installed by Himmler as the first director of "Ahnenerbe," the SS research Institute, and that Bergmann (not mentioned by Nanko) was a hardline National Socialist and virulent anti-

Semite despite his fantasies about matriarchy. They all had in common a fanatical desire to destroy the Judeo-Christian tradition because it cramped the style of the new Germany they envisioned.

Mohler's focus on the CR also mystifies rather than clarifies the CR relationship to the völkisch phenomenon and National Socialism. Reflecting on his first publication about the Conservative Revolution (1950), Mohler reveals his biased perspective. First, he points out that he wrote the book to help the intellectual right in Germany who lost their voice after 1945 (1989b: 7). Second, he wanted to distinguish between the intellectually elite movement of the CR and the mass movement of the NS when, in fact, neither would have been possible without the other. Important for this paper is Mohler's point that, after 1918, the CR, also called *Deutsche Bewegung*, was inspired by the völkisch and youth movements (1989a: 32). Uncertain about the Bündisch phenomenon, he argued that it was a transitional phase for young conservative revolutionaries (1989b: 8; but see Haffner 2002: 65, 196, 207). Detailed biographical studies show, however, that the völkisch phenomenon, with or without a Bünde phase, was the place of transition to National Socialism. This is the case for Josef Goebbels (Reuth 1990: 81), for Heinrich Himmler and Gregor Straßer (Padfield 2001a: 38, 76), for Hess (Padfield 2001b: 14, 47), for Rudolf von Sebottendorf (Goodrick-Clarke 1992: 135), as much as for Hauer and his followers (Martin 1991: 16). After Hitler was freed from the Landsberg prison 20.12.1924, he asked one question of his largely völkisch followers. "Who shall be the political Führer?" (ibid). Those who answered Hitler became leaders of a new "fighting organization," the NSDAP, the rest became recruiters of followers that would sweep the party into power in 1933 (Hitler 1941: 575).

If Mohler does not want to discuss the fact that the CR was responsible for the success of National Socialism Neurohr (1956), who first wrote his manuscript in London in 1933, does. According to him, Mohler's definition of conservatism is untenable anyways because he excludes virtually all historical forms of conservatism except the one that has as its inner core the revolutionary idea of Nietzsche about the "eternal return" (Neurohr 1956: 11).

Neurohr describes National Socialism as a myth about the Third Reich that is a synthesis of several part myths (1956: 22). People like Oswald Spengler, Moeller van den Bruck, and intellectuals of the journal *Tat* (Deed) with their interlaced reading circles, became popular in the late twenties and early thirties. They inspired a whole generation of young Germans, including many Hauer followers. And this process of capturing the imagination of students and the general public was continued by SS-intellectuals like Hauer, Walther Wüst (1901-1993), Hans F. K. Günther (1891-1968), Werner Best (1903-1989), Gottlob Berger (1896-1975), other intellectuals like Ludwig Ferdinand Clauß (1892-1978), Ludwig Klages (1872-1956), founders of new religions like Ernst Bergmann (1881-1945) and Hermann Mandel (1882-1946) (See also Herbert 2001; Kater 2001; Stachura 1981). Ian Kershaw (1998: 132) put it simply. The blend of *völkisch* and mainstream nationalism became "a frontal ideological rejection of democracy and the Weimar state."

What is important about the above-mentioned equivocations is that they affect our research. The inevitable merging of the historical-philosophical, the political-ideological, and the moral dimensions that, according to Kershaw (1989: 3), are part of a historian's task of interpreting Nazism were also part of shaping it. Rather than

research social institutions as Lohalm suggests (1970: 108), researchers are better advised to follow the educational, philosophical, political, ideological and moral development of *völkisch* leaders.

Research of National Socialism, generally, and of the religious phenomena that furthered National Socialism, specifically, is counter-intuitive or counter-sociological. We cannot, as is usual, start with the study of organizations for the simple reason that what was stable and definable were persons and ideas. What was unstable, changeable, formed and reformed to accommodate individual willfulness and the whims of hard core Nazis, were organizations. As Kershaw (1998:403) pointed out quoting Hitler, “organization should be kept to a minimum since ‘a worldview (*Weltanschauung*) needs for its dissemination not civil servants but fanatical apostles’.” To Hitler, the Party’s ‘supreme and most sublime mission’ was “to provide for the expansion of the ‘idea’” (Kershaw 1998: 403). Likewise, Hauer saw the supreme mission of his organizational efforts to expand ‘the idea.’ Consequently, he adapted the organizational structure from Bund, to reading circle, to religious movement, to *Kameradschaft* as he saw fit or as opportunities dictated.

Hauer in the existing Literature

Hauer and his close SS-colleague Walther Wüst (1901-1993) were determined to make Religious Studies their instrument for the construction of a new Indo-Aryan-Germanic religion based on a racial foundation. Today some scholars are just as determined to sell Hauer’s work as “science” by downplaying his early affinity for *völkisch* thought and National Socialism.

The biography of Hauer by Margarete Dierks (1986) and a paper by Gregory D.

Alles (2003) based on Dierks, are good examples of this approach. Therefore, because Dierks is determined to rehabilitate Hauer, her readers must know something about her. Born 1914, Dierks officially left the evangelical-Lutheran church in 1932 and joined Mathilde Ludendorff's *Deutsche Gotterkenntnis* (the German way of knowing God). Like Hauer she inclined toward *völkisch* views, became a devoted National Socialist, and joined a radical new religion. After the war, Dierks was interned for two and one half years and denazified (*entnazifiziert*) in 1948.⁵ From 1951 to 1959, we find her again in Old and New Right circles in correspondence, for example, with Hans Grimm (1875-1959),⁶ in whose *Dichtertagungen* (semi-religious literary gatherings) she participated.⁷ She was also found in *Unitarier* (Unitarian) circles, one of the new religions that became popular in Germany after the war especially among surviving Nazis because it gave them an intellectual outlet. She wrote Hauer's biography in the spirit of appreciation for men like Hans Grimm and Hans Baumann (1914-1988), because they and their works were ostracized after 1945.⁸

To understand the limitation of Dierks' otherwise detailed work on Hauer, we have to know what she meant by the "science of history" as she described it in her 1939 Ph.D. dissertation on Prussian archconservatives and the Jewish problem (Dierks 1939). According to Dierks, German historiography had to fulfill two tasks: one, "the exact, imperturbable and merciless investigation of facts," and two, "the appraisal of historical processes and personalities in terms of their meaning for the rise and greatness of the empire, for the health and growth of the Volk, and for the purity in type of all German life" (1939: 7). In other words, Dierks practiced the scientific pursuit of history from a Nazi worldview perspective and for its benefit. She believed that doing so

created a *völkisch*, in the deepest sense, political deed that would have an effect on the future (Dierks 1939:7). What she did not do, however, is subject Hauer's life to a "merciless investigation of facts." His pettiness, spying, lack of truthfulness, his over-ambitiousness to make his political mark through religion, his radical destructiveness toward Christianity and things Jewish, all these qualities are omitted or glossed over in Dierks' work.

When she became interested in rehabilitating Hauer and other former Nazi scholars and writers after the war, she systematically played down what formerly she had played up, namely their National Socialistic affiliations (1986). With respect to Hauer, she downplayed important activities that particularly shaped his National Socialistic development, for example, his lively involvement with the *Bünde* and the Youth Movement. His *Köngener Bund*⁹ is mentioned, but in a work that overflows with Hauer's correspondence, his letters to some *Bünde* leaders and disagreements with Rudolf Otto, are conspicuous by their absence (Dierks 1986: 66, 160; Alles 2003).

While the works of Horst Junginger (1999), a scholar of *Religionswissenschaft* in Tübingen, and Hubert Cancik (1982), one of Junginger's mentors, are academic in a way that Dierks' work is not, their notion of scholarship means that they quarrel about concepts, attribute National Socialism to the failures of Christianity, and downplay the fact that the new religions of Weimar helped usher in National Socialism.

Horst Junginger's (1999) excellent study of the shift from a philological to a *völkisch* approach in religious studies highlights Hauer's academic career and contributions and shows how deeply his academic work was shaped by his religio-political ambitions. It also describes his National Socialist involvement, but largely

ignores his role in founding a new religion.¹⁰ Consequently, Junginger does not make room in his analysis for individuals in religious studies who far from being researching scientists, are in fact advocates or founders of new religions.

Cancik's (1982) paper, from which Junginger took off, attempts to show that, despite their cooperation with National Socialism, *völkisch* groups, including Hauer's, were not the beginning of the Third Reich, but a sign of the end of the liberal Weimar Republic (Cancik 1982: 180). This statement is made despite Hauer's explicit obsession, not only to radically breakdown old forms, but to create new ones: a new *Bund*, a new *Gemeinde*, a new *Volk*, a new undemocratic Germanic state. Hauer's portrayal of himself as a conservative revolutionary, which, despite Mohler, was a code word for a National Socialist, is ignored.¹¹

Cancik makes his end-of-Weimar argument because he sees in Hauer's anti-colonialism, his sympathy for Gandhi and India's insurgent movement, among other things, the last vestiges of Weimar liberalism (Cancik 1982: 179). In the process, Cancik overlooks two attitudes shared by the Old and New Right to this day. First, he ignores Nazi empathy for underdogs precisely because they saw themselves as underdogs during the Versailles treaty era. Second, he fails to understand that it was precisely Hauer's and other Nazis' radical liberalism that led them to National Socialism (Salomon 1999:637).¹² More about this later, suffice it to say that Haffner reminds us that Hitler could as easily be ordered into the extreme left as its opposite. In fact, the traditional conservative opposition saw Hitler as standing left (Haffner 2001: 70).¹³

To buttress his argument, Cancik points out that the Hauer people were closer to the left Strasser-wing of National Socialism.¹⁴ Since that wing was squeezed out of the

party in 1930, he argues Hauer's followers had little in common with Hitler and were therefore unimportant to the future development of National Socialism and the Third Reich (Cancik 1982: 180). Countervailing factors are ignored,¹⁵ namely: that Hauer continued to have contact with Gregor Strasser whose differences with Hitler were not ideological,¹⁶ that Reventlow, Hauer's co-founder, promptly rejoined the Hitler circle after Otto and later Gregor Strasser's resignations, and that Hauer's "liberalism" was a convenient springboard from which to launch his right-wing religious radicalism. In Hauer's view one was "reactionary" or "radical" and the escape from the former to the latter was liberal theology. Thus, Liberalism broke up the ground enabling the emergence of radicalism.¹⁷

Hauer knew what he was talking about. He mentioned Johannes Ronge's story and the *Deutsch-Katholizismus Bewegung* (German-Catholic-Movement - DKB) in a letter to Werner Best.¹⁸ Around 1844, liberal citizens of both confessions promoted the DKB (Leesch 1938:1). Ronge a small town country boy, who at the university of Breslau learned to hate Catholicism but nevertheless studied theology, was the originator of the *Los-von-Rom* (Break-with-Rom) movement. Like Hauer later with his DGB, so Ronge originally attempted to unite the DKB with the *freien Protestanten* (free Protestants) who in 1858 became the *Bund freier religiöser Gemeinden Deutschlands* (League of Free Religious Communities in Germany - BFGD). The fusion failed, as did Ronge's movement. Nevertheless, Leesch saw in the DKB movement a sincere connection between *radical* political ideas with *radical* religious perspectives (Leesch 1938:3). This also applies to Hauer.

Interesting is Leesch's argument that the DKB grew out of a pre-critical rationalism of the popular enlightenment philosophy, not from the critical rationalism of Kant (1724-1804) (Leesch 1938: 39). Popular or vulgar rationalism assumed, for example, that the human being is by nature good. By contrast, Kant argued that within the human being, owing to his own fault, but simultaneously as inner necessity, rests a radical evil (Leesch 1938: 40).

Hauer mirrors the DKB in two ways. He recognized the power of liberalism to lead to radical politics. Unlike the DKB, he compounded his radical politics with vulgar Romanticism in common with such CR authorities as Paul de Lagarde (1827-1891), Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855-1927), L. F. Clauss (1892-1974), H.F.K. Günther (1891-1968), Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946), Herman Wirth (1885-1981), Gustav Neckel (1878-1940) and many others of this ilk.

According to Hauer, the *Deutsche Christen* (German Christians) practiced liberal theology.¹⁹ For example, responding to a report in which the Nazi Uniate Reichsbishop argued "that Christianity is not an outgrowth of *Judentum* (Jewishness) but originated from the constant battle with it, and for the first time since the emergence of Christianity has a Volk dared to declare war (*Kampf*) on Jews," Hauer replied as follows. "The thoughts that the Uniate Reichsbishop developed here are a typical result of liberal theology."²⁰ And against cardinal Faulhaber's New Year's sermon which rejected any racial connection to Faith and identified the assertions of *Deutsche Christen* and of Rosenberg's *Mythus* (1930) as "a new Germanic or Nordic Religion," Hauer answered. "Consciousness of the power of Blood that is the expression of the godly *Urwillen* (primordial Will) in us cannot be stopped by any human agitation."²¹

Junginger supports the claim that the DGB and other new religions of the time did not advance National Socialism with figures about the religious affiliation of SS officers. The number of SS officers who claimed to be *gottgläubig* (a general term used for *deutsch*, Nordic, or Germanic believers) rather than Christian is in dispute. Suffice it to say here that Herbert F. Ziegler (1989; 2001) claims that on the average 76% of the SS were *gottgläubig* (subject to new religious ideas), while Junginger (2001:30) claims 75% were Christian. Using the *SS-Führerpersonalakten* (personnel files of SS-leaders) in the federal archive of Berlin, this research confirms Ziegler's figures. It is the case, however, that some of those who were *gottgläubig* did not officially leave the church, although they expressed their hate of it in letters. Their not leaving was opportunistic. For example, they, or someone in the family, received an income from the church. What motivated them, however, were *deutsch-Germanic* ideas of Hauer and his associates.

Cancik's and Junginger's arguments that the DGB had little in common with Hitler and National Socialism, and did not further the latter, is belied by all of Hauer's efforts and thinking between 1933 and 1936. Thus he states, for example, on the 27.3.1936, "I myself am convinced that German Faith of necessity demands the National Socialistic worldview, that therefore every German Faithler must be a National Socialist ... Likewise, I am convinced that the National Socialistic worldview, when it is understood and lived in depth, leads to German Faith."²² But being Hauer, he added, "To say this publicly or to foreground it in our advertisements would be misguided and disastrous so long as National Socialism supports a 'positive Christianity' ... consequently I have forbidden ... that anyone say that National Socialism and Christianity are irreconcilable."²³

Nanko (1993: 273), who wrote his dissertation at the University of Tübingen in 1991 and then published it as a book, seems to recognize that the DGB and Hauer were determined to be in effect the essence (*Wesen*) of National Socialism. His book is a sociological and historical analysis of the organization of the DGB. He is sensitive to the internal rivalries and outside pressures and gives some statistics about socioeconomic background of its leaders and followers. Three economic groups were *not* found in the DGB. They were workers, the old bourgeoisie, and capitalists. (Nanko 1993: 292). By contrast, civil servants and the self-employed, the latter included many university students, made up most of the membership (38% civil servants, 44% self-employed, of the latter 10% were students). Employees represented about 20% of the membership and 16% of the leadership (Nanko 1993: 291). Civil servants were especially over-represented in the leadership.²⁴ In Hauer's *Führerrat* (Board), 69% were civil servants (teachers and professors), 16% were self-employed (lawyers, physicians, engineers, journalists, publishers and artists), and another 16% were white-collar workers. The self-employed made up 53% of the speakers (Nanko 1993: 290ff) and of these 80% did work that was somehow book centered (Nanko 1993: 293). Nanko concludes that DGB members and especially leaders were predominantly in disciplines and professions that were predisposed to be ideological (Nanko 1993: 298).²⁵ Leaders were primarily political activists and writers as well as managers of interpersonal or inter-group relations with a special talent, and importantly with the time and vested interest, for propagating their ideas widely. Their influence far exceeded memberships in groups, something toward which Hauer, and for that matter all *völkisch* writers, worked consciously and systematically from the beginning (Nanko 1993: 103-105).

Together their influence greatly exceeded that of German Christians and Confessionals combined.

Our disagreements with Nanko, like Junginger, a *Religionswissenschaftler* ("Scientist" of religion), and with the historian Burleigh (2000), are over their goal to remove discussions about the DGB from the *Kirchenkampf* (church struggle) literature (Scholder 1977, English 1988). Burleigh (2000: 257) argues that the church struggle belongs to a "discussion of resistance." I disagree. Since Nazis regarded Christianity as being "Jewish," the church struggle was a core element of the Nazi offensive to remove all traces of "Jewish" life from German society at the time. And this offensive was led not only by Rosenberg who had enormous influence over what was read by students and the German public, but by Hauer, Wüst, Berger, Best, and numerous other SS-intellectuals who were to become part of Himmler's *Ahnenerbe* (Ancestral Heritage) Research Institute.

The rivalries and religious variations between Goebbels, Rosenberg, Himmler and Hauer are often used to justify the idea that there was no consistent, religious-based National Socialistic ideology. This is wrong (Nasser 1987). True the variant core elements of Goebbels' religiosity consisted of Christological symbols and Vitalism, Rosenberg's of Nordic religion and mysticism, Himmler's and Hauer's of aspects of the Yogic and Germanic traditions. But in their awareness of living in a time of devastating crisis all shared a radical determination to destroy existing structures and traditions that they claimed were imposed by an alien enemy, the Jews. They also shared a desire to harness the mysterious depths of the German Volk's primeval power to build the Third Reich. Therefore it was necessary to destroy the Jewish Weltanschauung found in the

so-called Jewish faiths of Christianity, Marxism, Materialism, and economic Liberalism (Bärsch 1995: 80-83; Goodrick-Clarke 1998: 122).

Johannes von Leers (1902-1965) was an SS officer, briefly agrarian history professor at Jena, chief editor of the National Socialist journal *Wille und Weg* (The Will and Way), and a key figure on Hauer's *Führerrat* (Board) of the German Faith Movement. Leers' sole purpose was to ensure that high school and university students read pro-Nazi literature.²⁶ People like Walter Darré (1895-1953), Hans F. K. Günther (1891-1968), Ludwig Ferdinand Clauß (1892-1974), and numerous literary figures including Hans F. Blunck (1888-1961), Gustav Frenssen (1863-1945) and Hans Grimm (1875-1959), among many others, all were directly or indirectly connected to Hauer, Leers, and the SS. All were committed to anti-Semitic ideas and a determination to free Germany from the imperialism of Jewish-Christianity (Bramwell 1985: 33, 49). Together they harnessed enormous listening and reading audiences, addressing anywhere from a hundred to over twenty thousand people at any one time.²⁷ To minimize their combined and pro-active influence on the public to embrace National Socialism is absurd. As von Leers points out with Frenssen, their path to National Socialism went through the door of liberal theology.²⁸

One of the letters to von Leers shows both the large influence of Hauer-like ideas on young minds and the wild liberalism vis-à-vis theology. *Hilf mit* (Help along), a journal for youth published by the National Socialist-*Lehrerbund* (teacher association), reached approximately two million high school students. It carried a clear racially based National Socialistic message of blood and soil written so as to counter all Christian tendencies. Furthermore, it provided an information service for teachers that dealt with historical,

racial-political, and cultural-political questions in the National Socialistic sense. It was an effective tool against Christians in that it presented the church fathers as criminals and made the Nordic race central.²⁹

Given the above, Nanko's argument that, since Hitler's take-over, Hauer and those that joined his ambitions "accommodated themselves as was necessary" or reacted automatically to "pressure from outside" (Nanko 1993: 109, 111, 112), ignores Hauer's determined pro-active efforts to further National Socialism. Nanko also sidesteps questions of individual choice and moral responsibility (See Kershaw 2000: 262). Hauer developed in the *völkisch* and National Socialistic direction long before January 1933. And his increasingly intense dislike of the church was already apparent in 1919.

Following Buchheim (1953), who based his first post-war work of the DGB primarily on an interview with Hauer and his material, Nanko placed the blame for the "National Socialistic phase" of the DGB and for Hauer's forced resignation from it in 1935 on *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD) radicals. The SD was the Security branch of the SS. Himmler (1900-1945) was the head of the SS, Heydrich (1904-1942) of the SD. Radicals in the SD were intent on coordinating (*gleichschalten*) DGB and SS ideology (Nanko 1993: 281). Unfortunately, Nanko ignores important events that contradict his "phase" theory. First, July 1, 1935 Himmler founded the *Ahnenerbe* whose goal was to further the "science of *Geistesurgeschichte* (prehistory)" (Kater 2001:27). In order to succeed, *Ahnenerbe* needed to attract respected university scholars that would provide evidence for Himmler's theory that the world's great cultures originated in the North. Unfortunately, Hauer's publication, in 1934, of *Deutsche Gottschau*, a book that was

obviously ideological and unscholarly, put Hauer's usefulness to Himmler and Wüst into question. Wüst became leader of *Ahnenerbe* in 1936 specifically to save it from dilettantism (Kater 2001: 202). Hauer's book made him an ideological and organizational competitor rather than a loyal academic and his charisma irritated leaders of the NSDAP. Early 1936, therefore, Hauer was coerced to resign his leadership of the DGB, but he continued to perpetuate his German Faith both at the university and within informal reading circles.

The missiologist Werner Ustorf (2000:55-56), who also discusses Hauer, recognizes that the DGB was "critical of the churches and publicly claimed to be the religious soul of the Nazi party." Since Ustorf sees Hauer as having been a Christian missionary who did not "formally separate from the (Basle) Mission," he is inclined to agree with Cancik and Junginger on the matter of Hauer's sudden change from secular "liberalism" to National Socialism (Ustorf 2000: 67, 58). Worse still, according to Ustorf (2000:59) not only did Hauer not leave the mission, "but he remained a member of the church!"

At least two of Hauer's letters either contradict Ustorf's findings or expose Hauer as a liar. First, on 20.11.1933 Hauer wrote Hans Brenke, a medical doctor who joined the DGB while yet being a church member that he, that is Hauer, had formally left the church (*Kirchenaustritt*), an act that he now regarded as a duty. He did so in the "early fall (*Frühherbst*) before Hess' decree".³⁰ Second, there is Hauer's short exchange with Hartenstein, the Director of the Basler Mission. November 29 1933 Hartenstein, having learned of Hauer's Nazi activities, wrote Hauer that, "because your name is still mentioned in connection with the Basler Mission" in public discussions and newspapers,

“for example, the *Frankfurter Zeitung*,” he (Hartenstein) is forced to declare publicly “that the connection between your name and the evangelical *Missionswerk* is dissolved.”³¹

Hauer answered, “Any public explanation, that I no longer belong to the *Basler Mission*, is hardly necessary.”³² After all, he continued, “no one in Germany would still link me to the mission.” What he would prefer Hartenstein to do is simply remove his name from the list of the annual reports and thereby formally and entirely dissolve the connection.³³

Junginger (1999:120, ft.33) argues that a liberal-minded Hauer was in a transitional phase from Christianity to German Faith (*Deutscher Glaube*) and to National Socialism in the fall of 1933. He sees its confirmation in Hauer’s letter to his assistant and student, Herbert Grabert.

Our findings disagree with this late date of Hauer’s transition from Christianity to his new religion. Indeed, far from being critical of National Socialism, he embraced it. What Hauer wrote to one person was not necessarily the same as what he wrote to another. Furthermore, even Junginger’s evidence shows that Hauer was in transition around 1919 when, after his second theological examination, he left the service of the church in October of that year (Junginger 1999:54).³⁴ Telling too was Hauer’s answer to the Basler Mission’s question, whether Hauer, who had returned to Germany with a B.A. from Oxford, England, in 1914, could imagine himself serving in a British mission society. Hauer declined categorically and wrote: “I feel German (*deutsch*), more German (*deutscher*) than I ever felt before in my whole life ...” And while Hauer protested that his feeling German was not political but “love of my *Volk*,” political is precisely what it was (Junginger 1999: 54). Even when Hauer relativized his answer later, arguing that he might serve in a British mission provided he could pursue his

research interests (Junginger 1999: 54), this was not so much an indication of Hauer's still being Christian, as it was of his tendency to dissimulate. Hauer hedged his bets and, not infrequently, said one thing in one letter and, depending on circumstances, revealed something else in another. In 1935 when it was clear that the Nazis were there to stay, Hauer admitted in print that, "in reality he had never been a Christian" (Hauer 1935:10).

Due to personal taxation, one can only leave the Church officially. This legal step, similar to a divorce, had serious financial consequences. For this reason, perhaps, Hauer and many other non-Christians dabbled with Germanic faith long before they officially left the church. This phenomenon of being official Christians while in fact despising Christianity and practicing non-Christian faiths, has done the reputation of the German church untold harm.

An initial overview of Hauer's life according to Junginger, Cancik, Rennstich and Hauer himself

Hauer grew up in the small town of Ditzingen near Stuttgart. His father, who according to Hauer was a devout Christian, had a small plastering business in which Jakob Wilhelm and his brothers helped. The boy Hauer attended a village school but seemed to have received additional education from a local Protestant minister. Since there was no money to send Jakob Wilhelm to university, the local church helped him to receive his further education at the Basler mission from 1900 to 1907. Thus Hauer embarked on a mission career despite the fact that he had very little interest in Christianity other than to oppose it. Nevertheless, he was regarded to be intelligent, and while some of his teachers saw "no trace of a spiritual life" in him, they all hoped that his faith would

deepen and mature (Rennstich 1992:4). In his autobiographical sketches, Hauer described himself and his close friends at the mission to have been in a “struggle against all things narrow, including theology” (Hauer 1935:564). “We were soon regarded to be *Ketzer*, heretics, by our brothers,” reported Hauer (Hauer 1935: 564).

Four other things are worth mentioning about his Basler mission experience before 1905. First, instead of praying in the prayer nook, Hauer used it as a hiding place to read “forbidden” literature. The first book of this sort was Harnack’s *Wesen des Christentums* (Rennstich 1992:7).³⁵ While Nazis saw Harnack’s work as the triumph of a freer and livelier conception of theology that its enemies called “liberal theology,”³⁶ the mission regarded the book to be heretical. It denied the Godhead of Christ and was hostile toward theology that, according to Harnack, “smother(ed) the true element in religion” (Harnack 1901:43). To Harnack the “power of the personality” and religious “experience” were the motor behind religious breakthrough (Harnack 1901:48, 148). This is precisely the ground, namely liberal theology, in which Hauer’s philosophy of religion is rooted (Rennstich 1992:7).

Second, Hauer described that he and a close friend were powerfully attracted to the “struggle of social democracy” in Basel which attraction was soon lost, however, owing to a hollow but inflammatory speech given by a “fanatic looking” Jewish lawyer (Hauer 1935:564, 565). One cannot help but see here two latent tendencies, an interest in politics and, minimally, a mild form of anti-Semitism that would incline Hauer toward national, rather than international, Socialism. International Socialism, Marxism, and Communism were associated with Jews.

Third, Hauer mentioned that he was powerfully attracted by the figure of

Socrates, especially, by the fact that Socrates “obeyed his inner voice” (Hauer 1935 567). This love of Plato’s work and main character is confirmed by the correspondence from former English friends who addressed him as “My dear Plato” or “Beloved Plato.”³⁷ But while these friends exhorted Hauer to stay in the Christian fold, he asked himself, although retrospectively, how it was that the figure of Jesus never grasped him in the same way that the figure of Socrates did? (Hauer 1935:567). More importantly, however, Hauer’s historicism, the notion of his nation’s destiny as willed by fate and his belief that the *Ur-* or original of the perfect state is found in the distant past, has its roots in Plato.³⁸

Finally, Hauer wrote that his “encounter with Nietzsche” sealed his fate (Hauer 1935: 570). By “encounter” he meant having read some of Nietzsche’s poetry. The philosopher died in 1900 the year that Hauer entered the mission (Hauer 1935: 569). Nietzsche showed Hauer the importance of breaking through and affirmed his struggle of many years against religious convention (Hauer 1935: 570). It is an irony that this young man, who from all accounts could never abide Christianity, would later make the argument that his German Faith is a genuine extension of, and beyond, Christianity.

Despite the grave doubts of his teachers, Hauer was sent as a missionary to the South Indian District of Malabar where he acted as school principal from 1907 to 1911 and where he soon found influential benefactors (Junginger 1999:54; Rennstich 1992:4, 5). Given British policy in India that missionary teachers were to be university educated, Hauer was sent to Oxford in 1911 at the mission’s expense. Just before outbreak of the First World War in 1914, Hauer took his BA at Oxford and was promptly interned. With the promise that he would not take up arms, he was released and sent to Germany in

1915. In Tübingen he received his PhD in 1918 and his habilitation in 1920, both under the history of religions professor Richard Garbe (1857-1927) whose chair Hauer filled later.

Developing A German Faith

Hauer's inaugural lecture, 28.4.1921, was on the topic of "The Idea of Development in the History of Religion" (Junginger 1999:55). He traced the development of the discipline through Lessing, Herder, Schleiermacher and the philosophers of German Idealism, which, significantly, he considered a religion. This lecture was an important signpost as was his 1923 book, *Die Religionen* (Religions). It was the first hint of Hauer's effort to trace *that* lineage of thought going back to medieval mystics like Eckhart that would later come to be known as *Deutscher Glaube* (German Faith).

When, therefore, in 1940 Hauer argued that "Jewish-Christianity" had to make room for the truly German faith which consisted of a line of "Indo-Germanic *Führergestalten*" and their specific (*arteigene*)³⁹ Indo-Germanic views that originated in the ancient Aryan world and flowed unerringly into National Socialism (Junginger 1999:148), he was not saying anything that he had not already expressed in the twenties (Hauer 1923:12). What he did do, because it was now public knowledge that Hitler had given up the idea of a "positive Christianity," was to say brashly what formerly he had said cautiously. The increasing brashness of his work is already explicit in his 1934 publication, *Deutsche Gottschau* (The German Way of Knowing God).

Furthermore, given the increased importance of the concept of race since the mid thirties, his notion of a German Faith based on "Germanic" *Führergestalten* allowed him to make the link simultaneously to the race principle, to the ancestor principle

(*Ahnenprinzip*), and to a specific (namely Germanic) *Ur*-culture.

Like the Marburg theologian Rudolf Otto (1869-1947), with whom Hauer was friendly, Hauer saw the living essence of religion to be religious experiences and a sense of the Holy, (*das Numen*) (Grabert 1932:60; 1936; Hauer 1923:vii, 2). To grasp it, the method of intuition was used (Hauer 1923:344; Junginger 1999:57). Intuition was not original with Hauer. As Albert Speer told his American interrogator Captain Oleg Hoeffding, “The word ‘intuition’ was altogether in great vogue with us” (on 19 October 1945, quoted in Overy 2001:218-9). Even scholars like the anthropologist Leo Frobenius (1873-1938), converted from the “mechanical” culture circle approach to the idea of cultures as living organisms, with individual souls, the essence of which had to be intuited. Instead of philological analyses of texts, Hauer put into the foreground the ecstatic side of religious experience (Hauer 1923:344, 166) and worked with these in terms of the *völkisch* discourse.⁴⁰

Besides the Germanic aspect of his religion and the importance of religious experiences, Hauer added Buddhist and Hindu ideas (1922, 1932, 1934). His interpretation of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, for example, influenced Himmler and the SS. Indeed, Himmler defended his lethal decisions and his detachment from their consequences with just those Buddhist and Hindu ideas (especially the words spoken by Lord Krishna to the warrior Arjuna) that Hauer popularized (See Padfield 1990: 91-93, 403; Hauer 1923:419-420; 1932; 1934).

Hauer’s 1934 publication lays out systematically the justification for doing the deed that a man is called to do by fate even if that deed is steeped in guilt (Hauer 1934: 60-61). Hauer calls such a deed the “*angeborene Pflicht*” (innate or hereditary duty) and

there can be little doubt that Himmler saw his destruction of the Jews in that light (Padfield 1990: 402-403). According to Hauer, Krishna taught Arjuna that the “hereditary duty” has to be done even when it is interlocked with a repulsive fate (*Schicksal*) and with guilt (Hauer 1934: 61). In Indo-Aryan times, so Hauer (1934:62), this “innate duty” was equated with the duty that belonged to the caste to which a human being belonged (1934: 26). For Himmler that caste was the SS. As Padfield (1990: 402) writes:

While there were many paths to perfection, in essence they involved a man doing his caste duty in a disinterested passionless way, dedicating it only to God. And here, perhaps, is the key to the picture of Himmler, by nature a squeamish man, forcing himself silently to watch an extermination at Auschwitz. Performance of duty detached from passion was indeed what he continually sought from his staff at the deaths camps.

Hauer discussed his Hinduistic leanings with others before 1934. For example, already April 5, 1930, Hauer wrote the Director of the *Basler Mission*, Hartenstein, that it was “the Apologia of Socrates that influenced my inner life in the Basel Mission. It was also nature. And when I worked in India, I realized what a strong attraction the *Bhagavad-Gita*⁴¹ had for me...”⁴²

Hauer’s Deceit

As noted above, we differ with Junginger over the issue of Hauer’s affiliation with National Socialism. According to Junginger (1999), Hauer joined Rosenberg’s *Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur* in May 1933, and the *Hitlerjugend* in December 1933 (Junginger 1999: 128). In 1934 he was persuaded by Himmler and Heydrich to join the SS (*Schutzstaffel*) and SD (*Sicherheitsdienst*), and in 1937 he joined the NSDAP

(*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei*). This is accurate as far as it goes. But there is more. Even if Hauer was not committed to National Socialism since the 1920s, as we think he was, his correspondence up to 1937 sat on a lie. He always wrote his followers that he was not a member of the Party, implying, and sometimes stating outright, that he was not a National Socialist. Publicly, he sold himself as a liberal who was open to all religious and political persuasions. Behind the scenes he worked against “Jewish-Christianity” and for National Socialism with deadly seriousness.⁴³ With the exception of fellow SS officers, none of the people with whom Hauer corresponded were told that he was a member of the SS and SD and that he could, and would, spy on them. The most famous example was Martin Buber who, probably not knowing that Hauer had spied on him (Junginger 1999:137), wrote him a generous letter of reference (a *Persilschein*) that helped Hauer get off easily during his denazification hearing.

The consequences of this inseparable union between poetics and politics with which Hauer worked were horrendous. Hauer’s research ceased to sit on empirical evidence. He used his SS friends to discriminate against any scholar who had less than a clear National Socialist worldview. To Jews he spoke with a forked tongue. On the one hand, he claimed that he and they shared a common bond in the sphere of religion. On the other, he wished that they be excluded from German public life.⁴⁴ At his moment of greatest triumph in 1933, when he headed the ADGB (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Glaubensbewegung*), he accepted without hesitation the Aryan paragraph (*Arierparagraphen*) for the ADGB, thus excluding Jews automatically. One of Hauer’s students, Paul Zapp, when he faced his trial for his active role in the murder of 13,000 persons in the Ukraine (Junginger 1999:137, 139, 185, 214), claimed that he had

committed them in accordance with Hauer's philosophy (Hakl 2001). Almost the same could be said of Himmler.

Hauer's letters to various people and vice versa before 1933 were not predominantly ones between Hauer and other scholars, although he was then a very energetic academic eager to make his mark.⁴⁵ Rather, they were between Hauer and leaders of various *Bünde*, as well as his followers and helpers in the *Köngener Bund* and the readers and contributors of his journal called *Kommende Gemeinde* (The Coming Community). Here he revealed himself to be, as said, a type of nineteen twenties German guru, that is a *Führer*. By the American Scott-Craig and the Englishman Davies (1937:8), Hauer was seen as a "prophet and leader" of a "Neo-Pagan religion."

Hauer and others used terms like *Führer* and *Heil* before Hitler came to power. Hauer's followers then, particularly young women, even dreamt about him, much like followers of Reverend Moon dreamt about the latter in the nineteen seventies and eighties (Hexham and Poewe 1986). From the perspective of Hauer's followers, it was fate (*Schicksal*) that had them meet their *Führer*, that is, their intellectual and spiritual guide.⁴⁶ In short, Hauer was a leader of men and women, including, for a short while, Marianne Weber, Max Weber's wife, who looked to him for religious, philosophical, and political, in the sense of *weltanschauliche* guidance.

Hauer saw the nineteen twenties as a time of struggle (*Kampf*) among diverse world-views and religions.⁴⁷ The aim was to bring Christianity and the church into decline. It was a time of a new conception of god, not as one grasped by thought, but as the reality of inner experience.

Conclusion

Jakob Wilhelm Hauer and other founders of *deutsch*-Germanic religions at that time deliberately created a faith based on *völkische* experiences, bits and pieces of the Yogic tradition, pre-Christian Germanic beliefs, and German philosophical idealism. The Indo-Germanic or Indo-Aryan myth guaranteed not only internal coherence, but it convinced Hauer that his German Faith was the essence of National Socialism and National Socialism was the essence of his religion. His conception had no place for Jews.

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Endnotes

¹ According to Hexham and Poewe (1986:xi, 1997) new religions are based on a framework that consists of primal experiences, new mythologies, and aspects of the great Yogic and Abrahamic traditions. Hauer's DGB falls within this framework although the Abrahamic tradition is violently opposed at the same time that he sees his religion as having emerged from it. Mathilde Ludendorff, founder of *Gotterkenntnis* and a major competitor in the religious-philosophical market place of Weimar, attacked the Yogic elements in Hauer's religion (Ludendorff 1933:50-54). The concept "new religion" is sociological in nature and is here used independently of whether or not Hauer liked it. At times he denied having founded a religion, at other times he did not.

² German scholars prefer to call their discipline "science of religion" and "history of religion" instead of "religious studies"; this because the latter gives no hint of the methods used by scholars in their research of religion.

³ *Köngener* comes from the name of the castle *Köngen* by the Neckar River where the *Bund* was founded. Even as professor, Hauer was a cult figure. His followers called him

Chancellor (*Kanzler*) and addressed him with the informal *Du*. Also in the 1920s, words like *Heil* and *Führer* were used in the Hauer correspondence.

⁴ The organization was first known as *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutsche Glaubensbewegung* (Working Community of the DGB). A year later, 1934, it became simply the DGB.

⁵ See *Darmstädter Echo*, Tuesday, 15 August 2000, p. 14.

⁶ Hans Grimm (1875-1959) was a German nationalist and a one-time businessman in South Africa and Namibia who became a best-selling author during the Nazi era first with his South African novels (1913) and later with the political novel *Volk ohne Raum* (A People Without Space) (1926). The book title became a Nazi slogan and paperback versions were sent to frontline soldiers. Throughout the Nazi era Grimm organized Conferences for Poets and Writers (*Dichtertagungen*). These conferences took on special meaning after the war because they gave the Old Right a voice and a means of transforming itself into the New Right (see Poewe 1999).

⁷ A: Grimm, Briefe von Grimm an Dierks 1951 – 1959, *Deutsches Literaturarchiv* (DLA), Marbach bei Stuttgart. (Archival research included further the Bundesarchiv Koblenz BAK, Bundesarchiv Berlin BB, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek Leipzig, Staatsbibliothek Berlin).

⁸ Hans Baumann (1914-1988) was a German author of children and youth literature, a dramatist, and a songwriter whose songs became popular with the Hitler Youth to which he belonged. After the war he became embroiled in a controversy when one of his dramas, deliberately submitted under a pseudonym, won a prize that he had to forfeit upon revelation of his Nazi past. With his mention, Dierks intends to underline the point that past Nazi affiliation must be kept separate from authors' works. Some think Baumann distanced himself from National Socialism upon return from Russian imprisonment; others see Nazism encoded in some of his children's books.

⁹ *Köngener* Youth Group is named after the place of meeting, the *Köngen* Castle by the Neckar River.

¹⁰ There are two PhD theses about Hauer, one in Hebrew by Shaul Baumann, the other in Japanese by Hiroshi Kubota (personal communication, Shaul Baumann 16.11.1999). These scholars look at Hauer in relationship to the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutsche Glaubensbewegung* (ADGB) that he co-founded with Graf Ernst zu Reventlow in the thirties.

¹¹ Hauer to Mande 25.2.1931 N1131 13 Doc 205, Bundesarchiv Koblenz, BAK.

¹² Intellectual Nazis associate liberal and liberal theology with radical break-through and

thus German but called “liberal” by its enemies. Other Nazis, however, associate liberalism with mercenary individualism and the ideas of the French Revolution. Then it becomes part of four major foreign ideas from which “Germany” supposedly suffered: 1. Christianity, 2. French liberalism, 3. Jewish liberalism (Weimar), and 4. Communism. The *völkisch* writer Frenssen, and not just he, called these Semitic, Roman, French, American, and Russian ideas, foreign and therefore a danger to the German *Volksseele* (1938: 232-234).

¹³ It is not too farfetched to hypothesize that the radical liberal forces of a moribund democracy, which is what Weimar was, were as ready and willing to produce an authoritarian dictatorship, one that would restore pride and undo humiliation, as was the radical right (See Gregor 2000: 5). One is reminded of Russia’s Vladimir Zhirinowsky, among others (ibid: 114).

¹⁴ Otto Strasser (1897-1974), German politician, once a member of the SPD, he became a member of the NSDAP in 1925 and led the *Kampf-Verlag*, a small publishing firm founded by his brother, Gregor Strasser (1892-1934). Otto favored unions with Russia and other peoples. After a furor with Hitler he left the NSDAP and formed the *Schwarze Front*. He lived in exile in Canada from 1941 to 1955. Gregor who had distanced himself from Otto became the *Reichsorganisationsleiter* of the NSDAP (national organizing leader of the NSDAP). He fell out with Hitler in 1932 over Schleicher’s invitation to make Gregor Strasser Vice-Chancellor in Schleicher’s cabinet. Gregor resigned all his party offices, withdrew to run his pharmacy, but was murdered during the *Röhm Putsch* in 1934.

¹⁵ See the very different view of Scholder (1988:453, 488, 526) who acknowledges the DGB’s growth, its attraction of important Nazi officials and especially Nazi youths, and its serious rivalry with the *Deutsche Christen*. “The training leader of the National Socialist German Student Union, Dr. von Leers, was a member of the *Führerrat* of Hauer’s DGB,” among others (Scholder 1988: 526).

¹⁶ Kershaw 1998:397; Hauer to Zapp, 26.6.1933, Doc. 223, N1131 16, BAK. See also Kater 2001: 17; Reuth 2000.

¹⁷ For the relationship between liberalism and National Socialism that Haffner argues is a “radical nihilism that equally denies all values be they capitalistic, a matter of civil rights, or proletarian...” see Sebastian Haffner *Germany: Jekyll & Hyde, 1939 – Deutschland von innen betrachtet*. München: Knauer, 2001:195-214).

¹⁸ Hauer to Best 9.3.1934 N1131 66 BAK, Doc 52.

¹⁹ The German Christians were the radical branch of Christianity. Many rejected the Old Testament, Paul’s Gospel, and so on, because they were Jewish. Their aim was to unite Christianity with National Socialism turning it into a “positive Christianity” as per

Article 24 of the NSDAP Party Program. While the German Christians became a popular phenomenon in the 1930's the idea is older. Ernst Mortiz Arndt talked about *deutsches Christentum und eine deutsche Kirche* (German Church) in 1815. The prophet of German Faith is Paul de Lagarde (Wodanskult) and later Arthur Bonus (Meyer 1915: 182-184).

²⁰ Hauer *Aus der Front der Gegner und Kompromissler*, 1.10.1934, Berlin. N1131, 63, Doc 105, BAK.

²¹ Hauer *Aus der Front der Gegner und Kompromissler*, 1.10.1934, Berlin. Doc 106, BAK.

²² Hauer *Aus der Front der Gegner und Kompromissler*, 1.10.1934, Berlin. 27.3.1936, N1131 62 BAK, Doc 128.

²³ Hauer *Aus der Front der Gegner und Kompromissler*, 1.10.1934, Berlin. 27.3.1936, N1131 62 BAK, Doc 128.

²⁴ Albert Speer (1969: 39; 1970: 25) too mentioned the co-operative role of the civil servants who simply carried on under Hitler and in a sense helped him succeed.

²⁵ Nanko (1993) looked at 545 DGB-members (between 1933-35) for whom he could find relevant data.

²⁶ See the von Leers' files, N2168, 2, 3, 25 in Bundesarchiv Berlin (BB).

²⁷ Reventlow, the editor of *Reichswart*, mentioned that about 2 ½ million people declared themselves to be followers in 1935. In that year too, the movement referred to itself as a "movement of millions" (*Millionenbewegung*) (Bartsch 1938:68). A large membership increase occurred after the Sport Palace meeting in Berlin April 26 1935. Because the crowd crushed the Sport Palace even after its 20,000 seats were filled, it had to be closed by the police. Apparently vigorous propaganda preceded the meeting with as many as 90 talks per month being given all over Germany (p.68).

²⁸ Von Leers N2168, 9, "Gustav Frenssen wird 75 Jahre alt." Bundesarchiv Berlin (BB), also von Leers about Hölderlin and others (ibid).

²⁹ Letter dated 13.01.1937 from *SS Obersturmführer* to *Brigadeführer*, in von Leers files N2168, 2, Bundesarchiv Berlin (BB).

³⁰ 20.11.1933, N1131 56 Doc.106 Bundesarchiv Koblenz (BAK).

³¹ N1131 55, Doc. 30, BAK.

³² 19.12.1933 N1131 55, Doc. 29, BAK.

³³ 19.12.1933 N1131 55, Doc. 29 BAK.

³⁴ According to Hermann Werner (1986) who quotes Uwe Dietrich Adam (1977), Hauer left the service of the church in 1921 after his habilitation. He formally resigned his Church membership in or after 1933 (Werner 1986:200). Archival evidence shows the process as beginning in 1919. Hauer's dislike of Christianity intensified over the years, but it was in his vested interest to let this be known selectively and cautiously. After all, as professor in, or associated with, theological departments the church sanctioned his holding a respectable university position, one he did not want to put at risk. This risk disappeared with Nazi takeover in January of 1933.

³⁵ Translated by Thomas Bailey Saunders as "What is Christianity?" 1901, London: Williams and Norgate. He also read Scheiermacher and Albrecht Ritschl.

³⁶ Von Leers, 1938, *Gustav Frenssen wird 75 Jahre alt*. In von Leers' files N2168, 9, Bundesarchiv Berlin.

³⁷ Macalpine to Hauer 21.10.1923, 23.3.1924, illegible signature to Hauer 10.8.1921, N1131, 8, BAK. Correspondence in this file dealt primarily with the cruelty of Versailles, worthless money, the German youth movement as a turning away from militarism, and common memories.

³⁸ On Plato's Theory of Forms or Ideas see Popper (1963:20-31).

³⁹ A Nazi term used for anything that in terms of its form, appearance, or content could be German in accordance with the usage of those days, even if its origins were foreign.

⁴⁰ More than Frobenius, Hauer is interested in the notion of *Völkerwanderungen* that he relates to prehistorical *Indogermanen* (Indo-Germanics) (1923: 165-167). Hauer attempts to answer the question whether there is a historical-genetic connection between the oldest Stone Age cultures of Europe and the lowest ranks of cultures of other parts of the world? (p. 164). He works with the analogy of a living tree so that the "deep levels of religious life," its roots, are uniform across all humanity. Only the highest ranks of development branch out, far above their roots, with specific characteristics represented by different races and cultures (p. 162).

⁴¹ Bhagavad-Gita is Hindu scripture. Literally translated "The Song of the Lord," it is probably the most popular book of Hindu scripture in the West. For many modern Hindus it represents the essence of their religion, with its message that there are many ways to salvation. The Buddhist scholar Edward Conze and others, but not Hauer, have argued that the devotional tone of the Gita reflects the influence of Christianity and that it was probably written to counter Christian teaching.

⁴² See letter 5.4.1930, N1131 31, BAK, Doc 41.

⁴³ For a similar “camouflaged” approach see Herwig's study (1999) of the geopolitician, Karl Haushofer. The latter similarly worked for the Nazis and, specifically, with Heß behind the scenes.

⁴⁴ In a letter to Buber, for example, Hauer wrote “... for us, the Jewish question is a problem, for surely one cannot disagree with the fact that for example especially Jews have had a bad influence on our theater and literature. Or do you think I am wrong? (Hauer to Buber 18.10.1932, N1131 13, BAK Doc. 15). He makes stronger comments to Werner Best, “That cleansing the German *Volk* of Jewish elements, especially in the leading classes, was necessary forced itself upon me from year to year through my observations of academic life and of different German universities, especially, also through my observations within literature, art, and so on. I therefore made a firm effort at this university and tried already in 1929 to prevent that a professor who was a baptized Christian, but was of Jewish descent, come here” (Hauer to Best 9.3.34 N1131 66, Doc. 55 BAK).

⁴⁵ He also helped students interested in topics related to his. For example, writing a student Emil Blum, 20.12.1930, he suggested that Blum read his work *Die Religionen*, but also Frazer, Wilhelm Wundt, Theodor Preuss, Pater Wilhelm Schmidt, Söderblom and Levy-Bruhl. (Letter 20.12.1930, N1131, 124, Doc 350, BAK).

⁴⁶ See letters in N1131, Band 10, BAK.

⁴⁷ Letter 1.11.1928, N1131, Bd.38, BAK.