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Aphrahat on Celibacy

by Jacob Neusner

INTRODUCTION

The first great father of the Iranian church, Aphrahat, a monk of the rank of bishop at Mar Mattai, north of Nineveh, near the present-day Iraqi town of Mosul, wrote, in elegant, classic Syriac, twenty-three demonstrations. The first ten, composed in 336—7, present a systematic account of Christianity, addressed to his fellow-monks. The next thirteen, written in 344—5, deal with various pressing issues facing the Iranian church, which was severely persecuted because of its resistance to the war-taxes Shapur II levied to pay for his war with Christian Rome. Among these demonstrations, XI, XII, XIII, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX, and XXI, as well as parts of XXIII, deal with the Jewish critique of Christianity. Since the Iranian church included large numbers of converted Jews — in the first instance having been established in some measure by Jews¹ — the Jewish-Christian argument represented a primary concern for Aphrahat. He himself was a convert, probably born of Iranian parents, but obviously he had mastered both Scripture and Christian doctrine. The Jewish critique was re-enforced by peace and prosperity enjoyed by Jewry in a time of Christian suffering.² The relationship between the two communities was vigorous, intimate, and competitive.

What is striking is the utter absence of anti-Semitism from Aphrahat's thought. While much provoked, he exhibits scarcely a trace of the pervasive hatred of «the Jews» characteristic of the

¹ On Christianity in the Sasanian Empire and its relationships to Judaism, the following works by this writer contain bibliographies and summaries of the Talmudic and related evidence: *A History of the Jews in Babylonia*, I. *The Parthian Period* (Leiden, 1965), pp. 166—9; II. *The Early Sasanian Period* (Leiden, 1966), pp. 19—26, 72—91; III. *From Shapur I to Shapur II* (Leiden, 1968), pp. 9—16, 24—29, 354—358; IV. *The Age of Shapur II* (Leiden, 1969), pp. 20—26, 56—61; V. *Later Sasanian Times* (Leiden, 1969), pp. 6—8, 19—29, 43—4, 92—5, 119—122.

² Vol. IV, pp. 20—27, 35—36.

Greek-speaking churches of the Roman orient, indeed of his contemporary John Chrysostom. On the contrary, Aphrahat conducts the debate through penetrating criticism, never vilification. Though hard-pressed, he throughout maintains an attitude of respect. He must be regarded as the example of the shape Christianity might have taken had it been formed in the Semitic-Iranian Orient, a region quite free of the legacy of Greco-Roman anti-Semitism. In the Iranian empire, the Jewish-Christian argument was carried on heatedly, but entirely within reasonable limits, along exegetical-historical-lines, through generally rational and pointed discussion.³

W. Wright, *The Homilies of Aphraates, the Persian Sage. Edited from Syriac manuscripts of the Vth and VIth centuries in the British Museum, with an English translation. Vol. I: The Syrian Text* (London, 1969, no further volumes) was the first edition of the text. I followed *Aphraatis Sapientis Persae, Demonstrationes*, ed. Ioannes Parisot, *Patrologia Syriaca* I, i (Paris 1894) and I, ii (Paris 1907), and afterward compared my translation with the text of Wright. Among translations I consulted Parisot, and Georg Bert, *Aphrahat's des persischen Weisen Homilien, aus dem Syrischen übersetzt und erläutert* (Leipzig 1888). Demonstrations I, V, VI, VIII, X, XVII, XXI, and XXII were translated into English by John Gwynn, *Selections . . . from the Demonstrations of Aphrahat the Persian Sage*, in Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, eds., *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, second series*, XIII, Part ii, *Gregory the Great, Ephraim Syrus, Aphrahat* (repr., Grand Rapids, 1956), pp. 345—412.

I have signified page references in Parisot's text with square brackets [], in Wright's with parentheses ().

For Palestine, Leopold Lucas, *Zur Geschichte der Juden im vierten Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1910) provides an admirable account of the Jews and the fourth-century church fathers in the Roman Orient, and other aspects of the Jewish-Christian argument of that period. For general history the best work is Michael Avi-Yonah, *Bimei, Roma uVizantion* (Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, 1952). For Babylonia this writer's *History of the Jews in Babylonia, III. From Shapur I to*

³ See especially A. Vööbus, «Aphrahat», *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 3, 1960, pp. 153—4 for an excellent summary.

Shapur II (Leiden, 1968), and IV. *The Age of Shapur II* (Leiden, 1969) are available. On the involvement of Jews in persecution of fourth-century Christians in Seleucia-Ctesiphon, I consulted the brilliant study of Gernot Wiessner, *Zur Märtyrerüberlieferung aus der Christenverfolgung Schapurs II* (Göttingen, 1967: *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. Philologisch-historische Klasse*, third series No. 67). Wiessner's data on Judaism derive mainly from Graetz, but his analysis of the pertinent martyrologies is sophisticated and persuasive.

The earliest work on Aphrahat and Judaism was S. Funk, *Die haggadischen Elemente in den Homilien des Aphraates des persischen Weisen* (Vienna, 1891), who gives fifteen instances in Genesis, eight in Exodus, two in Leviticus, three in Numbers, five in Deuteronomy, and six others, of Aphrahat's affinity to rabbinic materials. Parisot adds others (in his introduction, p. xlix—xl). Louis Ginzberg, «Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern und in der apokryphischen Literatur», *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 42, 1899 and his *Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern* (Amsterdam, 1899) contain some references to Aphrahat; Ginzberg's «Aphraates, the Persian Sage,» *Jewish Encyclopedia I*, pp. 633—4 competently summarizes points in common between Aphrahat and the rabbinical literature of various periods. His judgment (p. 655) is noteworthy: «Aphraates showed not the slightest traces of personal ill-feeling toward the Jews; and his calm, dispassionate tone proves that it was only his firm conviction of Christianity that caused him to assail Judaism.»

Frank Gavin's dissertation, *Aphrahat and the Jews* (Toronto, 1923), is the single most comprehensive account. Gavin comes to the topic of «the homilies of Aphrahat in relation to Jewish thought» after offering observations on the general character of the homilies, the origin of the Iranian church, the Jews under the Sasanians, and so forth. He treats as a common element «the same envisagement of religion,» then offers concrete instances of Aphrahat's dependence upon, or affiliation with, Jewish thought (pp. 37—72), namely his doctrines of creation, man, the soul, the fall, etc.; sin and the evil impulse, original sin; eschatology and chiliasm. He further discusses Aphrahat's and the *Didaché*, and Aphrahat's use of Scriptures. The

method is much the same as Ginzberg's and Funk's. Gavin briefly describes Aphrahat's viewpoint on a subject, then cites parallel sentiments drawn from various rabbinic sayings. The whole is arranged by theological topics rather than according to the order of Scriptures as in the cases of Funk and Ginzberg. Otherwise the works are identical in conception and method.

I. Ortiz de Urbina, «La controversia de Afraate coi Giudei», *Studia Missionalia* 3, 1947, pp. 85—106, summarizes, in précisform, Demonstrations XI, XII, XIII, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX, XXI, and XXIII. He notes that the chief concern is to protect the faith of simple Christians. His summaries are comprehensive. Further references to Aphrahat and the Jews and Judaism are found (among other places) in Labourt, *Le Christianisme dans l'empire perse* (Paris, 1904) pp. 39—41; Vööbus in *JACA*, pp. 153—4; Jean Juster, *Les juifs dans l'empire romain* (Paris, 1914), I, pp. 59—61; Stanley Kazan, «Isaac of Antioch's Homily against the Jews, Part Two», *Oriens Christianus* 46, 1962, 4th series No. 10, pp. 89—95; A. Lukyn Williams, *Adversus Judaeos. A Bird's-eye View of Christian Apologiae until the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1935), pp. 95—102, a rapid summary of the chief references to Jews and Judaism; James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue. A Study in the Origins of Antisemitism* (N. Y., 1961), pp. 117, 154, 276ff., who remarks that Aphrahat's tone «is amazingly reasonable;» George F. Moore, «Christian writers on Judaism,» *HTR* 14 1921, pp. 197—254; Isaac Broydé, «Polemics and Polemical Literature,» *JE* 10, 102—9; and elsewhere. None of these works does more than summarize or merely refer to a few salient points. P. Aug. Spijkerman, O. F. M. «Afrahat der persische Weise und der Antisionismus», *Studii Biblici Franciscani Liber Annuus* V, 1954—5, pp. 191—212, reviews Demonstration XIX, on the Jewish hope to be gathered together in the land of Israel in messianic times. He describes the contents but adds little to the critical analysis of either the text or the substance of the demonstration.

Apart from Gavin, Funk, and Schwen, the only substantial and important studies are Gustav Richter, *Ueber die älteste Auseinandersetzung der syrischen Christen mit den Juden*, *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 35, 1936, pp. 101—114, and Marcel Simon, *Vetus Israel. Etude sur les*

relations entre chrétiens et juifs dans l'empire romain (135—425) (Paris, 1948), in particular pp. 369—379, 198—206. Simon refers to Aphrahat throughout. Of greatest interest, he places Aphrahat into the context of contemporary Christian-Jewish polemics, showing the relationship of his arguments to those of contemporaries. Simon's is the only really original and searching account of Aphrahat's place in Christian thinking on Judaism. Richter reviews some of the passages, concentrating on the meaning of QYM' in relationship to BRYT.

After a century of study, Aphrahat remains a figure of unusual interest. Much has been done, much remains to be done. Jewish elements in his thought have not yet been thoroughly investigated; comparisons between his exegesis of Scriptures and those of Talmudic rabbis have not been fully explicated, for the parallels which Funk, Ginzberg, and Gavin noted do not exhaust the illuminating studies to be made.

Since the issue of celibacy has once more come under discussion, the viewpoint of the Iranian Church, presented by its first great theologian, may prove of interest.

DEMONSTRATION XVIII

Against the Jews, and on virginity and sanctity

Summary: The Jews accuse Christians of unnatural living and violating God's will by refraining from marriage and procreation. But mere numbers avail nothing before God; rather obedience by a few is better. Virginity and sanctity were preferable even in ancient times. Moses refrained from marital life after he was called by God. The priests could marry only virgins. Joshua, Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah — none of them married. God made Ezekiel a widower. Marriage is good, but celibacy is better, for a celibate honors God with undivided love.

[817] (345) XVIII—1. I wish to instruct you, my beloved, also about this matter which distresses me, this holy covenant and virginity and sanctity in which we endure, for, because of their lasciviousness and the immodesty of their bodies, the Jewish people stumble therein.

They change and weaken the minds of those simple and ordinary folk who are attracted and captivated by their disturbing argument. They say, When God created Adam, he thus blessed him, saying to him, «Be fruitful and multiply. Give birth, and fill the earth» (Gen. 1:28). Also to Noah in the same way he said, «Be fruitful in the earth and procreate in it» (Gen. 9:7). He blessed Abraham, saying to him, «Look to the heavens and count the stars if you can.» He said to him, «Thus shall your seed be» (346) (Gen. 15:5). And to Israel [820] in the blessings, he said, «There will not be among you a barren male and a barren female» (Deut. 7:14). And again he said, «There shall not be a sterile person and a barren person in your land» (Ex. 23:26). In the blessing Isaac was given to Abraham, and Isaac prayed for Rebecca that she might give birth. He blessed Jacob that his seed might multiply. Hannah beseechingly asked for Samuel; numerous was the procreation of the barren through the promise, and all the righteous received seed and blessing.

But you do a thing which was not commanded by God, for you have received a curse and have multiplied barrenness. You have prohibited procreation, the blessing of the righteous. You do not take wives, and you do not become wives for husbands. You hate procreation, a blessing given by God. Concerning these matters, my beloved, as best as I can, I shall instruct you.

XVIII—2. When God blessed Adam, he said to him, «Procreate and be fruitful on the earth (Gen. 1:28). For this reason he blessed them, so that the world might be filled by them, and from his children there should be fruit. But when they were numerous, they were corrupted and sinned, until, on account of their sins, they sickened and annoyed the spirit of their Creator, so that he said, «I regret that I made them» (Gen. 6:7). In a torrent of wrath and harsh judgment [821] he blotted them out with the water of the flood.

Now tell me, O debater of Israel, how did the blessing to Adam help? For they corrupted their way and were blotted out by the water of the flood. (347) They corrupted the nature of marriage and were

¹ Parisot reads *bmwldh*, in her generation; the variant, followed by Bert, is *bmwlkn^D*, promise. Parisot: *et sterilis [mulieris] proles generatione multiplicata est*. Bert: ... und es ward zahlreich die Nachkommenschaft der Unfruchtbaren durch die Verheissung ...

condemned, and the blessing was extinguished by their sins and iniquities. Noah with a small number, though not numerous, built the altar and aroused the compassion of the Holy One. Noah was better in his few numbers than the whole generation of destruction, and from him was founded a second world. Furthermore, Noah was blessed that his procreation should multiply, so that the world might be filled, and men might be numerous. But when they were numerous and strong, and multiplied in procreation, they transgressed against God, and all the peoples and the tongues who were of his seed worshipped idols. So they were reckoned before God as if they were nothing, like a drop from the bucket, like dust from the scales (Is. 40:15). Only the seed of the righteous lived and were delivered before God. What then did the blessing avail the ten generations who were before the flood? And what was the advantage of the Sodomites, whose lives were snuffed out by the fire and the sulphur, whose blessing was extinguished by their sins and iniquities? And what profit and advantage did the blessing provide for the six hundred thousand who went out of Egypt, who perished [824] in the dry wilderness, having angered the Holy One? And what advantage and profit were in the blessing of procreation for the unclean peoples whom Joshua destroyed? What was the advantage for Israel in the blessing that their seed should be multiplied like the stars, when war and the sword have finished them off?

XVIII—3. To God, one man who does his will is more trustworthy and distinguished before his majesty than thousands and tens of thousands of those who do evil. Noah was more remarkable and distinguished before God than the ten generations of destruction who preceded him. Abraham was reckoned before God (348) more than the ten generations that were before him; also he was more remarkable than those that were after him. Isaac and Jacob, children of the promise, were better and more remarkable before God than all of the Amorites among whom they dwelled. Joseph was reckoned before God more than the whole evil people of the house of Pharaoh. Moses, the great prophet that was in Israel, was better and more remarkable before God than the six hundred thousand whom he brought forth from Egypt, whose rebellion angered God so that they were unable to enter the Promised Land.

XVIII—4. I shall show you that virginity and sanctity were worth more before God among that people, that prior people [= Israel] [825], than much procreating, which profited naught. From the time that his master spoke with the man Moses, the great prophet, the leader of all Israel, he loved sanctity and served the Holy One. He held himself back from the world and from procreating, and abided by himself, so that he might please his master.

But show me: What do you say, O wise debater of the people? From the time that God spoke with Moses did he perform the duties natural to marriage? And if you bring against us a lying argument, I shall not be tricked by your provocation, for you want to render the Holy One unclean on account of your licentiousness. If he had carried out the duties of marriage, he would not have been able to serve the majesty of his master, as Israel was unable to receive the word of the Holy One, the living words which the Holy One spoke with Moses on the mountain, until he had sanctified (349) the people for three days. Then Holy One spoke with them. He said to Moses, «Go down to the people and sanctify them for three days» (Ex. 19:10). Thus Moses openly declared to them, «You should not draw near to a woman» (Ex. 19:15). When they had been sanctified these three days, then, on the third day, the Holy One revealed himself in powerful radiance, in great glory, with a mighty noise, [828] with frightful sound, with a loud trumpet, with great thunder, and with brilliant lightening. The mountains trembled. The hills were moved. The sun and the moon changed from its [their] course. Moses went up to Mount Sinai, arose on the cloud, and received the commandments. Moses saw the glorious splendor, was made to tremble, and was frightened. Trembling gripped him, for he saw the *Shekhinah* of the Most High, which drew near to the mountain, the great power of the throne of God, to which the myriads and thousands minister, covering their faces from its glorious splendor. They run and swiftly fly with their wings, call, sanctify, and exalt his majesty. Alert and ready, swiftly running, beautiful, lovely, worthy, desirable, they run, sanctifying and completing his commandment, going up and coming down in the air, like swift flashes of lightning.

XVIII—5. Moses was speaking and God was answering him with a voice. Israel stood on that day in fear, trembling, and dread. They

fell on their faces, for they were not able to bear [it], and said to Moses, (350) «Let not God speak with us so, that we may not die» (Ex. 20:19). O stubborn man, who is vexed by these things and stumbles!² If the people of Israel, with whom God spoke only one hour, [829] were unable to hear the voice of God until they had sanctified themselves three days, even though they did not go up to the mountain and did not go on the dense cloud, how was it possible for the man Moses, the prophet, the clear eye of the entire people, who was standing all the time before God, speaking with him mouth to mouth, to be married? And if God spoke with Israel, that had sanctified itself for only three days, how much better and more beloved are those who through all their days are sanctified, alert, prepared, and standing before God! Should God not all the more love them and his spirit dwell among them, as he said, «I shall dwell among them and I shall walk among them» (Lev. 26:12). Isaiah said, «Upon whom shall I look and with whom shall I dwell, if not with the peaceful and the humble [man] who fears my word» (Is. 66:2).

XVIII—6. I shall show you that virginity is more desirable and beloved before God. The Holy One commanded the priests, the children of Aaron, who serve before him, that not one of them should marry a woman who was a widow, divorced, or unclean through prostitution, but he should marry a virgin of his people, one who was not made unclean by another man. So you see that a widow is more unclean than a virgin. [832] If marriage were better than virginity and sanctity, why was it necessary (351) for him to admonish Israel that they sanctify [themselves] those three days and then he would speak with them? And why was it necessary that the priests marry a virgin and not draw near to a widow or a divorcée? And why did Moses sanctify and restrain himself from women for forty years, so that he did not have other children beside Gershon and Eliezer?

It furthermore seems to me that it would have been better if Zimri had not been born on account of his licentiousness, for in one hour twenty-four thousand of Israel fell. Also [it would have been better] had Achar not been formed in the belly of his mother, who made

² Parisot: O [homo] indocillis, qui contra ista contendis, et scandalizaris! Bert: O du Unverständiger, der du hierin Schwierigkeiten findest und Anstoss daran nimmst!

an anathema of the camp of Israel. Eli should have abided in his sanctity and not fathered Hophni and Phineas, who troubled the priesthood and behaved avariciously. And why for Samuel were sons necessary, who did not keep the law and did not walk in his ways? There are many like these, for whom it would have been better had they not procreated, indeed had they not been born!

XVIII—7. Moses loved sanctity and was beloved before the Holy One, who showed him his glory. Joshua the son of Nun loved virginity and dwelt in the tabernacle, the place [833] in which the Holy One was served. Elijah was distinguished by virginity and dwelt in the wilderness, in mountains and caves. The Holy One brought him to the place of the sanctities, a place in which those who love filth have no authority. Elisha remained single and chaste. He did astounding works of power through the hand of God.

(352) Jeremiah furthermore said, «I do not love the birthday of a man» (Jer. 17:16). Furthermore, his Lord commanded him, saying to him, «You will not take for yourself a wife, nor will you have sons and daughters» (Jer. 16:2). The Jews respond concerning this matter, that he commanded Jeremiah not to take a wife and not to have sons and daughters in this place. On this account the Lord commanded concerning sons and daughters that would be born in this place, because they would suffer a lingering death through famine. On this account he said to him not to take a wife. O men who lack intelligence! O, you who hold this opinion! The one who gave Jeremiah a good standing in the eyes of the king of Babylonia, also, if he had fathered any sons, would have saved them from the sword and the famine.

Also his master did Ezekiel good and took away from him the delight of his eyes in a sudden plague. He took and threw off from him the injurious yoke.

But show me, O teacher! concerning Joshua [836] the son of Nun, that he took a wife and gave birth to sons! And persuade me also concerning Elijah and Elisha, his disciple: what house was their possession in this world? For lo in the wilderness, in mountains and caves, they dwelt in want and in persecution. With none of them was there a wife. They were served by their disciples. And see that when Gahazi, the disciple of Elisha, was perturbed concerning this

world and desired possessions, a wife, and sons, Elisha said to him, «At this time will you acquire possessions, (353) vineyards and olive trees? Because you have done this thing the leprosy of Naaman will clothe Gahazi and all of his descendents forever» (II Kings 5:26—7).

Now if you can bring me proof from Scripture concerning any one of these I shall accept it from you. But I shall not listen to anything you have made up in your mind and spoken, for you want to render holiness unclean through your lying proof.

XVIII—8. Far be it from us that we should attribute anything shameful to marriage, which God has placed in the world, for thus it is written, «God saw all that he had made, and it was very good» (Gen. 1:31). But there are some things which are better than others. God created heaven and earth, and they are good, but the heaven is better than the earth. He created darkness and light, and light is much better [837] and more distinguished than darkness. He created night and day. Day is much better and more distinguished than night. He created the sun and the moon. The sun is much better and more distinguished than the moon. He created the stars of the heaven, and one star is much better and more distinguished than another star in its light. He created Adam and Eve, and Adam is much better and more distinguished than Eve. He created marriage, worldly procreation, and it is very good; but virginity is more excellent than it.

XVIII—9. When the earth was virgin, it was not rendered unclean, but after rain fell on it, it brought forth thorns. Adam in his virginity was beloved and good. After he gave birth to Eve, he erred and transgressed the commandment. The sons of Seth in their virginity were worthy, but when (354) they became mixed up with the daughters of Cain, they were blotted out with the water of the flood. Samson was excellent in his Naziriteship and in his virginity, but by his licentiousness he destroyed his Naziriteship. David was beloved in his youth, but in his desire for Bathsheba, he transgressed the law and violated three commandments of the ten: Thou shalt not covet, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery. Amnon was excellent in his virginity, [840] but by reason of his unclean lust for his sister, Absalom killed him. Solomon was worthy and beautiful in his virginity, but in his old age, through his desire for women, his heart turned away from God.

XVIII—10. We have heard in the law, «A man should leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh» (Gen. 2:24). In truth this prophecy is great and honorable. Why does one who takes a wife abandon his father and his mother? This is the explanation: When a man has not yet taken a wife, he loves and honors God, his father and his mother, [namely] those things which are mentioned above, and his mind is captivated by this world. His mind, heart, and thought are turned aside from God to the world. He adores and loves it as a man adores the wife of his youth, and separate is his love [for her] from that for his father and his mother.

XVIII—11. And it says, «The two of them should be one flesh» (Gen. 2:24). And this is true, for just as a man and woman become one flesh and one mind, and (355) his mind and thought separate from his father and his mother, so also a man [841] who has not yet taken a wife, but remains solitary, is in one spirit and one thought with his father.

XVIII—12. I have written to you, my beloved, concerning virginity and sanctity, because I have heard from a Jewish man who shamed one of our brethren, the children of our church, saying to him, «You are unclean, for you do not take wives. But we are holy and excellent, who procreate and increase seed in the world.» On this account, lo, I have written you this argument.

But concerning virginity and sanctity I have written to you above, and have instructed you in the Demonstration on the Children of the Covenant, how worthy and desirable is virginity, even when a man accomplishes it in necessity. Just as our Lord said, «Not every man but he to whom it is given is able to accomplish it» (Matthew 19:11). The apostle said, «On account of necessity which is in the world, it is good for a man that he remain as he is» (I Cor. 7:26). For this portion there is a great reward, because in our freedom we accomplish it, but not in bondage or compelled by the commandment, for we are not bound under the law. Its model and its image we have found in the Scripture. We have seen that this likeness of the watchers which are in heaven [= angels] is found with reference to the victorious [martyrs], and on earth it is acquired as a gift. This (356) is a possession which, if a man loses it, [844] will not be found

[again], nor can a man acquire it with money. No one who has it and loses it again finds it. No one who does not have it and runs will overtake it.

My beloved, love this gift for which there is no equivalent in this world. With this matter which I have written to you respond to the Jews who in their licentiousness do not grasp the power of virginity and sanctity.

The demonstration of virginity and sanctity is completed.

Rezensionen

I. A. HELLWING, *Der konfessionelle Antisemitismus im 19. Jahrhundert in Oesterreich*. Herausgegeben vom Institut für kirchliche Zeitgeschichte, Salzburg. Herder, Wien–Freiburg–Basel, 1972. 311 S.; ö. S. 168.–; DM 27.–; Paperback.

Der 1935 in der Bukowina geborene und jetzt in Israel lebende Vf. promovierte 1967 in Wien bei Prof. Schubert mit einer Vorstudie zur vorliegenden Arbeit, die in Parallele gesetzt werden muss mit dem Buch von H. Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie. Katholizismus und Judentum in Deutschland und Oesterreich 1918–1935* (siehe JUDAICA, Jahrgang 36, 1970, S. 12ff.). Auch H. hellt ein Kapitel der Geschichte des Verhältnisses der katholischen Kirche zum Judentum auf, das in seinen Einzelheiten viel zu wenig bekannt ist, und das den Schlüssel zum Verständnis vieler Phänomene der jüngsten Vergangenheit liefert, die oft, von ihrem Hintergrund losgelöst, unverständlich bleiben. H.'s Verdienst ist es, diesen Hintergrund in aller historischer Objektivität ungeschminkt aufzuzeigen.

Auch in Oesterreich war das 19. Jahrhundert die Zeit der progressiven Emanzipation des jüdischen Bevölkerungsteiles, und seiner Eingliederung in eine pluralistische, nicht mehr ausschliesslich konfessionell bestimmte Gesellschaft. Doch bleibt, wie es angesichts einer langen Vorgeschichte gar nicht anders sein kann, der Einfluss konfessioneller Motivierungen auch dann noch sehr stark. (Wir ziehen es vor, in diesem Zusammenhang das Wort «religiös» zu vermeiden.) Da man die Entwicklung in Oesterreich nicht von den Verhältnissen in Deutschland isolieren kann, behandelt der Vf. in zwei aufeinanderfolgenden Kapiteln die Entwicklung des modernen Antisemitismus – der Begriff entsteht zu dieser Zeit – in diesen beiden Ländern, und analysiert dann das Gemeinsame und das Trennende im deutschen und österreichischen Bereich.

In Oesterreich tritt dieser, ursächlich grossteils wirtschaftlich motivierte, dann aber bald auch «ideologisch» untermauerte Antisemitismus, in zwei Erscheinungsformen zutage: der christlich-soziale Antisemitismus des Wiener Bürgermeisters Karl Lueger, und der «grossdeutsche» Antisemitismus der Kreise um Georg Ritter v. Schönerer.