

Understanding German Catholics— the work of H.G. Barnes

Peter Hebblethwaite

*H.G. Barnes died twenty years ago this month,
on 8 April 1967.*

H.G. Barnes was baptised 'Harry' but usually known, in Oxford at least, as 'Roger'. To simplify, I will call him Barnes from now on. He spent many years teaching German language and literature at St Edmund Hall, Oxford, becoming a Fellow of the College in 1957. He was my tutor from 1955–58. Although we stayed in touch and indeed became friends, he rarely spoke about his past life—or if he did, I missed the significance of it. This article is about the unknown Barnes who worked for the BBC's German service during the war. At a time when the clichés of propaganda filled the air, Barnes insisted that German Catholicism was an important element in the national tradition, and therefore in the post-war reconstruction. He devoted his life to the teaching of German literature, but was always attentive to religious factors.

His main work as a literary critic was on Goethe's enigmatic novel, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*. In 1958 he was invited to address the *Tagung* of the newly revived Görresgesellschaft in Salzburg. The result was a paper on Catholic responses—mostly negative, it turned out—to Goethe's novel.¹ In *Modern Language Review* for 1963 he reviewed the *Jahrbuch* in which his Salzburg lecture had been published. He reported Romano Guardini's suggestion that had Rainer Maria Rilke ever completed *Kindheit*, an elegiac fragment, it would have surpassed the *Duineser Elegien*. (Barnes was surprised to find a priest and theologian who could also be a good literary critic.)

This was Barnes' world, his habitat. He welcomed the reappearance of the *Jahrbuch* because it provided a link with pre-Hitler Catholic Germany. Founded by Günther Müller in 1926, it was lost in the whirlwind of 1939. Its aim was to provide a forum for a 'Catholic' (i.e. Roman Catholic) approach to literary studies. However, Barnes was not anti-ecumenical and in 1963, with Vatican II just one year old, suggested that the *Jahrbuch* be opened to other Christians. But the point he had made in a lecture thirty years before remained valid. He invited his

hearers to realise what it meant for German Catholics that 'their national literature should breathe a spirit alien to their faith; Shakespeare is for us a Christian, if not a Catholic writer, whereas Lessing, Goethe and Schiller express ideals which German Catholics cannot share'.²

In January 1985 Annie Barnes entrusted me with unpublished documents—letters, memos, lecture notes—starting from the year 1930 when the newly married couple, he an Anglican, she a Swiss Protestant, were together received into the Roman Catholic Church. The date was December 17, 1930. The place was the *Stadtkirche* of Tübingen, where the University had both a Catholic and a Protestant Faculty of Theology since shortly after the Congress of Vienna. Barnes remained faithful to the sophisticated yet earthy version of Catholicism found in Tübingen in which, with hindsight, one could see many anticipations of the Second Vatican Council.

In Tübingen he came to know Professor Karl Adam, of peasant origins, who was a brilliant lecturer, a devoted priest and a wonderful human being. A recent article has suggested that he was one of the principal influences behind the Second Vatican Council.³ Adam's 1924 book, *Das Wesen des Katholizismus*, was translated as *The Spirit of Catholicism* in 1929.⁴ Annie Barnes recalls being asked by Karl Adam to explain to the Master of St Benet's Hall, Oxford, Dom Justin McCann, the translator, that 'the book was under false suspicion in Rome'. There was certainly suspicion in Rome, where it was withdrawn from circulation. The unsaleable copies found their way into the apartment of Giovanni Battista Montini, the future Pope Paul VI, who handed them out to trusty friends.⁵

Adam's book, consciously conceived of as a reply to Adolf von Harnack's *Essence of Christianity* (1904), continued the work of the 'Tübingen school' of theology whose most famous representative was Johann Adam Möhler, who flourished in the romantic period and saw the Church as *Gemeinschaft* or community rather than institution. In his 1934 Swansea lecture Barnes lamented that Möhler was practically unknown in Britain. Yet he had done for Germany what John Henry Newman had done for English Catholics: he brought them out of an intellectual ghetto, insisted on rigorous standards of honesty and scholarship, made the Fathers of the Church accessible, and yet did all this without ever forgetting that a theologian has to live out what he teaches.

Nor was Karl Adam an isolated figure. Romano Guardini had begun his theological career in Tübingen. There was Theodor Haecker, whom we will meet again. The Görresgesellschaft has already been mentioned. But Barnes attached equal importance to the review *Hochland*, which had been founded in 1903 by Karl Muth. In 1898 Muth (Barnes points out that his name meant 'courage') published a celebrated

pamphlet in which he declared that Catholic writers were not read because on the whole they had nothing worth saying. Muth wished to remedy that state of affairs. Opposition came from within the Church—this was the time of the ‘Modernist’ scare—but Muth weathered all these storms and the first world war so that by 1927 a reputable collection of essays hailed his contribution to the revival of Catholic literature in Germany. He was opposed within the Church, particularly from the religious orders.⁶

British Catholics were ignorant of all these developments. Barnes tried to act as an intermediary. The Irish peer, Lord Clonmore (later the Earl of Wicklow), went to Tübingen in 1933 to discuss future translations with Karl Adam. On May 18, 1933, Clonmore wrote to the Barnes in Berlin, where Roger was now *Lektor* for the summer term. ‘I have not yet read *Jesus Christus* (Adam’s latest book),’ he reported, ‘but hear it very well spoken of. You have heard that we have settled our negotiations and are publishing it?’ A postscript implored: ‘If you have time, do write a letter and tell me how things are in Germany—AT YOUR LEISURE! It is hard to get at the truth here’.

That was in May 1933. The ‘truth’ was that the Weimar Republic had collapsed, the Catholic *Zentrum* Party had been dissolved, and Hitler was firmly in power. The Reichstag fire had occurred on February 27, and confirming elections took place in March. If outside observers were puzzled as to what was happening in Nazi Germany, Barnes certainly was not. In autumn 1933 he became lecturer in German at Swansea University College with a salary of £300 per annum. A year later, on November 13, 1934, he gave the already mentioned lecturer on ‘German Catholicism and National Socialism’. What is remarkable about this paper is that Barnes straightaway denounced the anti-Christian nature of Nazi ideology. Few observers at that date saw the issues with such clarity. The crucial point is that Barnes’ denunciation is based on his familiarity with the German Catholic tradition he had come to know and love in Tübingen. This is a point of some historical importance, for German Catholics without exception are often believed to have welcomed Hitler with enthusiasm. From the outset, Barnes was lucid, firm and utterly rejecting.

Barnes’ starting-point was that Hitler had effectively duped English public opinion. Even the English Catholic press saw him as ‘a kind of saviour who had rescued Europe from Communism and stemmed the tide of godlessness which from Russia threatened to overflow Central Europe and engulf Christian religion and civilization.’ One of the major difficulties in countering this benevolent view of the Nazi movement was the Concordat signed with the Holy See in July 1933. Although signing a Concordat did not imply approval of the regime with which it was signed,⁷ that was in fact the popular conclusion. It silenced all doubts.

Barnes reports with a nice satirical touch the kind of conversation he must have heard so often in Germany: 'Ah, but you know, Hitler asked for a Concordat, he is himself a Catholic, moreover Goering's grandmother was a Catholic, while Goebbels enjoyed an excellent education at the expense of a well-known Catholic society. They can't be so bad as they are painted' (Swansea ms, p. 1a).

A more sophisticated defence of the Concordat came from a theologian, Fritz Hofmann, a student of Karl Adam and a friend of the Barnes, in a letter from Tübingen dated August 1, 1933.⁸

Since the Church can approve any legitimate form of state, it can negotiate with them about the affairs of its members. One cannot doubt that the *Reichskonkordat* guarantees to the Catholic Church rights and freedoms *vis à vis* the claims of the totalitarian state that are very great and far-reaching. The only question one has to ask is: why the hurry? Could not the Church, as is its custom, have waited? This objection would be justified, if the initiative had come from the Church and not, as in fact happened, from the other side. Had this outstretched hand been rejected, how could one have answered the objection that Rome was interfering in the internal political affairs of a foreign state?

Hofmann came to stay with the Barnes in Oxford in 1938, by which time he had changed his mind about the *Reichskonkordat*.

Hofmann's professor, Karl Adam, was already in trouble, Barnes reports in his Swansea lecture:

At Stuttgart last year (1933) at a gathering at which Karl Adam spoke against the idea that Christianity had harmed the German race and sapped its virile strength, the meeting was attacked, and Adam suspended after organized rowdiness from the students. He is now effectively silenced (Swansea, ms. p. 11).

It is perhaps worth remarking that the *Deutsche Christen*, who held the views attacked, were not unimportant in the Protestant Theology Faculty of Tübingen. Gerhard Kittel, for example, an authority on the Jewish elements in the New Testament, put his expertise to work for *Forschungsabteilung Judenfrage*.⁹

Barnes sums up the pressures on German youth:

Boys not in Hitler youth organizations will find their careers imperilled: it is impossible to enter a University without a favourable report from one's youth leader, who may be one's junior or only a few years senior. A year at a labour camp or on the land is a necessary qualification for the professions. In this year he will be exposed to the pagan teaching of Rosenberg, the spiritual advisor of the SA whose book, *The*

Myth of the Twentieth Century, is on the Index of Forbidden Books.¹⁰ Catholic boys in a Protestant district are given no opportunity to hear Mass, but on the other hand receive daily instruction in neo-paganism (Swansea, ms, p. 11a).

The Swansea lecture makes it clear what 'totalitarian' already meant: there would be no independent or autonomous sector of Germany society, no movements other than Nazi movements, no thoughts other than Nazi thoughts. This was despite the fact that the Concordat had stipulated that all Catholic societies 'of a cultural and non-political nature' could continue. The difficulty lay in defining a 'non-political' movement. As Barnes wrote, going to the heart of the matter: 'The struggle is for the soul of German youth, there is not so much danger for adult Catholics; they are firm in their faith, if only from long-standing habit' (Swansea, ms. p. 10a).

How had Germany come to this pass? Barnes' explanation was that 'the belief in race and the worship of blood' were a compensation for defeat and the humiliation of the Treaty of Versailles. He called this 'inferiority complex', quite a modish term in 1934. On top of this, the Social Democratic Party had contributed to the confusion of German youth. Openly atheistic, it had encouraged its members to abandon their religious beliefs and practice. All this left a vacuum, which was filled by the ideology of race:

The highest human values can only be realized in the Germanic race, God is Germanic, Christ is Nordic, everything good in other religions has been borrowed from Nordic religion, from which the Jews borrowed their religious symbols (Swansea, ms. p. 11a).

But why should anyone have believed such ludicrous nonsense? Barnes adds to the humiliations of twentieth-century Germany another factor, which belongs to *Geistesgeschichte*, the intellectual history of Europe in the last three centuries:

The loyalties of youth are being deliberately attracted to beliefs which men such as Rosenberg cannot sincerely believe in. The crude transformation of Christian symbols to a Nordic sphere is designed to meet a demand for an heroic religion. The 'dumb lamb before the slaughterers' is abhorrent to the Nazi mind.

The deification of the race, for that is what the religion of race amounts to, may be termed the crazy development of the pagan humanism of the 18th and 19th centuries. Then man was the measure of all things, man's existence an end in itself, and not an opportunity to serve our Creator. 18th-century humanism was cosmopolitan, 20th-century Nazi humanism has put on the blinkers of race (Swansea, ms. p. 12).

In 1934 few leader writers had grasped the issues with such clarity. Ernest Oldmeadow of *The Tablet*, for example, continued to be impressed by the Concordat, Hitler's assurance about 'positive Christianity' and his habit of bringing 'God' into his perorations. If Barnes showed prescience, this was because he knew Germany first-hand.

Yet others, with comparable first-hand knowledge of Germany, reached other conclusions or gave the Nazis 'the benefit of the doubt'. Barnes would be the first to admit that his negative judgement on the Nazis was a 'confessional' one, that is, that it was based on the Catholic culture, literary, philosophical and theological, that he had come to admire in Tübingen. He was confirmed with his wife by Bishop Sproll on December 8, 1931. Annie Barnes still remembers Fr Fritz Hofmann whispering their names to the Bishop (Henrice, Annie). It was in the (for him) newly discovered Catholic Church of Germany that he found his prophylactic against Hitler. The conclusion of his 1934 lecture has something of the enthusiasm and naïveté of the recent convert, but it is lucidly clear on the values that really count and traces them to their source. It also expresses a vision of a united Europe which would have to come once the demons of a crazed nationalism had been exorcized:

The Nazis want to make the German people supreme in Europe, to reunite all the German-speaking peoples into one great nation: this would mean the division of Switzerland, the inclusion of Austria, large portions of Czechoslovakia, of Poland, of France, Belgium, Holland and Denmark. In this nation a new Germanic culture should develop, free of all Roman admixture: the symbol of this culture would be Widuking, the heathen Saxon opponent of Charlemagne.

The Catholic solution is a European solution, a large federal European state, in which different races and nations would dwell together in harmony. The centre of this state would be Austria, with its age-long experience of living with other races. The federation of European peoples can only begin when suspicion has been allayed, not by conquest but by persuasion, and persuasion not from the concentration camp but from understanding. But the exalted idea of the German people at present being instilled into the Germans, would make co-operation impossible. German Catholics, as children of a universal Church, as members of the *corpus mysticum*, are both by belief and temperament peculiarly fitted to be the pioneers of such a new state, which would have as its ideal the *Civitas Dei*.¹¹

German Nazis know very well that in their Catholic countrymen they have the most determined opponents of

their religious and cultural aims. It is possible to dissolve a political party, to smash up trades unions, but one cannot break up a religion, which is an invisible community and escapes all measures of *Gleichshaltung*. The future of Christianity undoubtedly lies in Germany, lies with German Catholics. The German Catholics, particularly the humble parish priests and the layfolk, have already put up a splendid fight for their religion. Their position is unenviable as they have a Concordat with their persecutors, their hands are tied, they really stand like cattle in the shambles (Swansea, ms. p.13).

No doubt this phrase was chosen to express the level of helplessness that he believed was afflicting German Catholics. But considering the use of cattle trucks in the 'final solution', it may be considered prophetic.

There is a gap in the documentation until the war. But after two years in Swansea, the Barnes moved to Birmingham 1935—37, and then to 22 Warnborough Road, Oxford, which would be their home until 1961. Until Roger's death on April 8, 1967, they lived in a College flat in Crick Road.

The next document, undated but probably from 1941, is treasure trove for the historian. It is a memorandum, addressed to the head of the BBC German Service, Hugh Carleton-Greene, proposing a special twice-weekly broadcast for German-speaking Catholics. Since this proposal was adopted, since Barnes was responsible for it, and since it reminded those German Catholics who listened that they were not forgotten, it was the most important public act in Barnes' career. It was, moreover, a political act of the greatest significance, for it implied that distinctions could be drawn between Germans and Nazis. This was far from self-evident at the time. Making a distinction between Nazis and other Germans was also a necessary condition of rebuilding the country, after the war: for unless there were some Germans out there with whom the occupying forces could reasonably work, it was difficult to envisage a new and democratic Germany emerging from the ruins. The Barnes programme looked nostalgically to the past—its signature tune was Mozart's *Ave Verum*—but it also looked to the post-war future.

Barnes' memorandum on the need for a Catholic programme sets out from the observation that the BBC Overseas Service addressed certain categories of Germans for propaganda reasons. There were special programmes for 1) the workers, 2) the professional, intellectual and official classes, 3) German women, 4) German soldiers. Barnes suggests that most of this propaganda is a waste of time, since it is addressed to the wrong people.

I will summarize his thoughts on each group.

1) The workers. Barnes challenged the view that German

workers were notably dissatisfied. Hitler had abolished unemployment, and created a vast organization, *Kraft durch Freude*, which at least appeared to offer enough advantages—holidays, cars—to compensate for the loss of trades union activity and certain political freedoms. Moreover, the German workers could hardly be expected to believe that defeat would bring them rosier prospects than victory.

2) The professional, intellectual and official classes. As a group this class is intensely 'patriotic'. 'My experience of German universities convinces me that most German intellectuals support the Nazi regime and support the war-effort whole-heartedly. The position of lawyers, who form the main bulk of the official and professional classes, is undoubtedly much better than say in 1932'. Propaganda, therefore, would be uphill work.

3) German women. Barnes considered them to be the least likely to be suborned by propaganda. 'The attitude of German mothers whose sons fought in dangerous duels at universities sheds interesting light on their reactions to war. This attitude nullifies much of our propaganda ... German women are intensely patriotic and proud of their sons in war. Working-class women are equally imbued with patriotic sentiments.'

4) German soldiers. Since, at the time of writing, the *Wehrmacht* had chalked up an impressive number of victories and hardly sustained any defeats, and since the Nazi regime flattered and cultivated the *Wehrmacht*, the German troops were not likely to succumb easily to allied propaganda.

The question, therefore, was: how could this carapace of self-satisfaction be broken open? Was there any chink in the armour-plated complacency? Yes, Barnes argued, you must address German Catholics *qua* Catholics. But why should German Catholics be less 'patriotic'? First of all because they were not 'Prussians' and did not share in the Prussian idolatry of the state. Next, because a German victory would mean the triumph of neo-paganism, and Catholics 'could not welcome that unconditionally' (a donnish understatement). Again, Barnes believed that there must be some German Catholics gravely disturbed by the treatment meted out to Catholic Poland. 'German Catholics of the Centre Party', he writes, 'have always been *Polenfreundlich*.'¹²

But the principal argument Barnes adduced for targetting German Catholics was 'the remarkably liberal character of German Catholicism and its interest in social reform'. He goes on:

This distinguishes it from Spanish and French Catholicism and provides a bond of sympathy with England. German Catholics have not the same hostility to England as, say, French, Spanish and Italians might reasonably have. German priests have the greatest veneration for Newman and are generally favourably predisposed towards the English. Contacts between German and English Catholics have been close and varied since the last war. Newman, Francis Thompson, Belloc (for all his anti-German tendencies), Chesterton and Christopher Dawson are well-known in Germany. Many works by German Catholic authors have been translated into English and in particular German Catholic social doctrines have been 'received' by English Catholics.¹³

Perhaps the most important part of the memo is its conclusion. Propagandists who deceive themselves are of little use. Barnes knew that 'the majority of German Catholics will place their country before their religion'. However, there was an 'élite, a considerable minority, who would prefer to lose the war if it means the restoration of religious freedom'. So the Catholic majority can be 'made to feel uncomfortable if our propaganda is wisely conducted'.

The rest of the memorandum contains ideas for the proposed programmes. 'News' occupies pride of place. News from the Vatican was being suppressed or distorted in Germany. News of the persecution and resistance of Catholics in occupied countries would 'do much to cause and increase doubts in German Catholic minds'. News, too, about Germany itself, for 'many German Catholics are still ignorant of the scale and significance of the attacks on religion in Germany'.

Then, in 'Talks' the programmes would hammer away at our 'peace aims' and note the significance of the British Churches supporting Pope Pius XII's 'peace points'. Our 'new order' promised religious freedom and Barnes noted the stress in a recent Roosevelt declaration on 'Christian democracy'. Nazism appeared as a perversion of Christian ideals on the family, the position of women, *Blut und Boden*. There was much on the *Abendländische Völkergemeinschaft*—'nationalism reconciled with European "patriotism"'. But the key element on which the whole enterprise depended was the idea that German Catholicism was in some sense an alternative tradition:

By stressing the Catholic traditions of Germany and Austria, by showing how the roots of National Socialism lie in past Prussian policy, which German Catholics have consistently

resisted, we must revive in German Catholics a consciousness of their past, increase their pride in their religion, and thus strengthen their will to resist the present regime.

The BBC had at its disposal a good intelligence service. The full text of two sermons delivered by Bishop Clemens August Graf in Münster (July 13 and July 20th, 1941), both vigorous protests about the closure of religious houses, seem to have reached him soon enough to be effectively used. But such news was rare. In his memorandum he remarks that 'we can in good faith say what German bishops may *think*, but cannot as good Germans decently *say* while their country is at war'.

The text of only one of Barnes' talks survives. Dated August 4, 1945, so after the war in Europe was at an end, it is no doubt representative of the dozens of others that he wrote for his twice-weekly broadcasts. It is a commemoration of Theodor Haecker, who was believed to have died. Barnes explained that only a few weeks before, Haecker's son, Johannes, had stood at this same microphone and described his father's 'spiritual resistance against the National Socialist heresy'. Haecker had a combination of qualities which appealed to Barnes. He was self-educated, and began his working life as an apprentice in a textile mill in Esslingen. His reading of John Henry Newman and Søren Kierkegaard brought him into the Catholic Church in 1921. The Christian roots of Europe and the West were the great theme of his writings. For him Europe began with Virgil and his *anima naturaliter Christiana*. Barnes praises Haecker for 'his intellectual acuteness, his fearless criticism of intellectual fads, his prophetic sweep and poetic (*dichterische*) power'.

Barnes goes on to say Haecker's role in German society was one of destroying cherished idols. He lists some of them:

He mercilessly opposed the cult of a Stefan George. Nor did he much like Thomas Mann. The philosopher Max Scheler, on whom so many German Catholics pinned such extravagant hopes, he unmasked as a pantheist and he called pantheism 'the German heresy'. Who does not recall the terms in which Haecker lashed the Faustian phrase: *Im Anfang war die Tat*? Haecker also courageously attacked the influence of Martin Heidegger. For in Germany it takes real courage to challenge the reputations of established great men.

That may seem to present Haecker as the disgruntled inquisitor of German intellectual life, a crabbed old censor, but it is true that Scheler, for example, declared himself a Buddhist and began disturbingly to talk about 'the group-mind' and the 'group-soul': death carried him away in 1928 before the Nazis could exploit these themes.¹⁴ And there have been plenty of subsequent attacks on Heidegger, not just for his association with the Nazis but because his style is 'symptomatic of a general pseudo-

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profundity and archaism that infected the German language from Herder to Hitler'.¹⁵

In any case, recent events had tragically and apocalyptically demonstrated that the thoughts people have affect the way they behave. Invitations to irrationalism—that is what in effect Faust's 'In the beginning was the deed!' is—end up in highly irrational consequences. Barnes pictured Haecker as 'a great doctor, who lays bare the spiritual and moral remedies by which a sick West can be restored to health'.

Barnes was naturally anxious to return to Germany as soon as possible after the end of the war to meet old friends and the listeners to his programmes. By a process that the surviving documents do not explain, he wangled a visit to Germany as 'special correspondent' for *The Catholic Herald*. Five articles appeared anonymously between October 5 and November 9 1945. No doubt it was his skills as a German-speaker and BBC experience that got him the assignment.

But one could not visit defeated Germany except in battledress, so the unwarlike Barnes was given the rank of captain and travelled extensively in the British zone. He also had a pass for the American zone (but not the Russian zone, as *The Catholic Herald* suggested). He talked at length with five bishops, including von Galen, the 'lion of Münster', intellectuals, peasants, housewives and workers.

As he sped along the *Autobahn* in his chauffeur-driven jeep, he overtook trudging refugees carrying forlorn suitcases. The lucky ones pushed prams or trucks with their remaining belongings. The luckier still had a horse-drawn cart. Desolation and despair were on all sides. He wrote: 'There are few German families today in which at least one member is not missing. The father or perhaps two sons may be prisoners of war in Russia, or the children may have been evacuated to a 'safe area' somewhere in Eastern Germany or Czechoslovakia. They are now behind the iron curtain which separates Eastern Europe from the West' (*The Catholic Herald*, October 5, 1945). Except in the country, where people were plumper and more prosperous than in England, there was starvation, and Barnes wondered how they would get through the winter, in 'rat-ridden cellars, evil-smelling air-raid shelters or the downstairs rooms of a damaged house which will offer no protection against cold and wet' (*ibid*). He was haunted by 'the curious yellow pallor, the dark-ringed eyes and the skinny legs of the children in these doomed cities'—destroyed from 60 to 90 per cent.

He could not say everything in *The Catholic Herald* (though he had surprising freedom). Privately he reported the heartbreak of meeting in ruined Wiesbaden the parents of one of his oldest German friends. They were starving. With the connivance of his American driver Barnes returned to the NAAFI, where they both stuffed their pockets with doughnuts and drove back to the old couple, who wept at this kindness.

His action was strictly speaking illegal: the occupiers were not supposed to feed the defeated.

The Catholic Herald of October 12, 1945, in which his second article appeared, also reported the visit of Bernard Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster, to Münster, Munich and Berlin. The need to get beyond vindictiveness and revenge became part of Catholic policy. Barnes legitimated it in his final two articles. He had met Bishop Preysing of Berlin, 'who was an assiduous listener to the BBC during the war, particularly when Churchill's speeches were being broadcast' (*The Catholic Herald*, October 26, 1945). Barnes quoted this, he explained, 'to indicate how closely the German bishops identified themselves with our nobler aspirations before Casablanca and Teheran' (*ibid*). This was an allusion to the allied insistence on 'unconditional surrender'. It meant no peace feelers would be taken seriously and, consequently, that the German 'resistance movement' had nothing to work with. It could not hope to succeed, but at least it would stake out a claim for moral integrity.¹⁶

This was the theme of Barnes' final article in *The Catholic Herald*, headlined 'Witnesses to Catholic Resistance in Germany' (November 2, 1945). Though his readers could not have made the link (since the articles were anonymous), Barnes was able to contemplate with gloomy satisfaction the results of his own work at the BBC. For the 'three curates' of Osnabrück, Eduard Müller, Johannes Prassek, and Herman Lange, were all executed on November 11, 1943, in Hamburg: 'Their crime consisted of distributing the sermons of Bishop Galen and listening to the BBC'. Barnes had somehow got hold of and printed Müller's moving last letter of thanks to his Bishop, who had appealed in vain for his release.

There is an epilogue to this story. The contacts re-established in September 1945 were kept up. The historian Reinhold Schneider, for example, gratefully received food parcels from the Barnes and replied with signed copies of his books printed on emergency paper. In the summer of 1949 Barnes gave lectures on English Catholicism in Cologne, Stuttgart, Wiesbaden and Munich.

After his lecture tour Barnes wrote another article—his last—in *The Catholic Herald*. By now he could sign it H.G. Barnes (September 9, 1949). Its gist was a report of an interview with Dr Konrad Adenauer, who sought reconciliation with France, rejected a Christian Democrat coalition with the Socialists, advocated not only German but European federalism, and refused to recognise the Oder-Neiss line as a final frontier. These were important political points. But Barnes captured Adenauer's deepest feelings in the following remark: 'If people regard Germany as a powerful wild animal, then surely it is better to tame her than to shut her up in a cage, which will only make her worse'.

There spoke the voice of the German Catholic humanism Barnes had learned to love in Tübingen in the 1930s and to which he always remained faithful. On its reality and existence depended the future of Germany.

- 1 'Goethe's "Wahlverwandschaften" vor der Katholischen Kritik', in
2 *Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch* 1960, pp. 53—65.
- 3 Manuscript of a lecture on 'German Catholicism and National Socialism', read
4 before the Catholic Society of Swansea University College, 13 November 1934, p. 4.
5 Henceforward referred to as 'Swansea ms.'
- 6 'Karl Adam and the Council' by John E. Thiel, *The Month*, November 1984, pp.
7 378—381.
- 8 Sheed & Ward, Unicorn Books.
- 9 This is a well-authenticated story. It is found in 'Les Sources Françaises de G.B.
10 Montini' by Jacques Prévotat, in *Paul VI et la Modernité dans l'Eglise*, Ecole
11 Française de Rome, 1984, p. 119. In my forthcoming biography of Paul VI I will
12 show the influence of Karl Adam's work on his first encyclical, *Ecclesiam Suam*.
13 Swansea ms., p. 8a.
- 14 See Stewart A Stechlin, *Weimar and the Vatican 1919—1933*, Princeton University
15 Press, 1983. He argues that the negotiations for partial concordats had been going
16 on with the Weimar regime and that, therefore, there was nothing unusual about the
conclusion of the *Reichskonkordat*.
- 17 Hofmann was later the author of *Der Kirchenbegriff des heiligen Augustinus*,
18 became an expert or *peritus* at the Second Vatican Council, and died in 1977. Barnes
19 was delighted to meet him again in Wuzerberg after the war.
- 20 Kittel's sad fate has been studied in Robert P. Eriksen, *Theologians under Hitler*,
21 Yale University Press, 1985. However, it should be added that the Barnes knew that
22 most Swabians were sound anti-Nazi Protestants, and later they came to admire the
Confessing Church and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The German resistance movement was
23 a school of ecumenism.
- 24 Barnes, a scrupulous convert, took the Index very seriously, and carefully preserved
25 his 1931 dispensation from the Bishop of Rottenberg. Dr Johannes Baptist Sproll
26 was the first German Bishop to speak out clearly against the Nazis.
- 27 This vocabulary is interesting. The *corpus mysticum* or mystical body as an
28 expression of the deepest nature of the Church had been developed by Karl Adam,
29 among others. It could be seen as a response to the false collectivism advocated by
30 the Nazis. It stressed that Christian salvation, according to St Paul, is not an
31 individual matter. We are 'co-redeemed'. This had liturgical and possibly political
32 consequences. *Civitas dei* was another image of the Church, this time borrowed
33 from St Augustine; 1930, the year of Barnes' conversion, was the 1500th anniversary
34 of Augustine's death. There was a burst of Augustinian scholarship, typified by the
35 collective work *A Monument to Saint Augustine*, published by Sheed & Ward in
36 1930. Of course, what Barnes wrote in 1934 looks *simpliste* with hindsight and he
later had a much less rosy view of German Catholics.
- 37 Barnes was not guessing about this. By 1943 he was joined at the BBC by Hans
38 Meier-Hultschin, a Silesian journalist who fled to Poland in 1933, where he founded
39 and edited a paper, *Der Deutsche in Polen*, which lasted until September 1939. After
40 the war Meier-Hultschin was press officer for the Land in Düsseldorf. He died 18
41 October 1958.
- 42 The general truth of Barnes' remark was proved in September 1946, when *Herder*
43 *Korrespondenz* began life. It was headed by a text from John Henry Newman and
44 ended with a quotation from Fr Vincent McNabb's last sermon in June 1943. And it
45 came from Freiburg-in-Bresgau—the French zone!
- 46 On Scheler, see Max Scheler, *Problems of a Sociology of Knowledge*, translated by
47 Manfred S. Frings, introduction by Kenneth W. Stikkers. Routledge & Kegan Paul,
48 1980. One of the Catholics who 'pinned such extravagant hopes on Scheler' was
49 Karol Wojtyła, the future Pope John Paul II, who wrote his thesis on him. See my
50 'Husserl, Scheler and Wojtyła, a Tale of Three Philosophers' in *The Heythrop*
51 *Journal*, September 1986, pp. 441—445.
- 52 The phrase comes from George Steiner, *Heidegger*, Fontana Modern Masters, 1978,
53 p. 16. He does not agree with this judgment, which he attributes to T.W. Adorno in
54 his *Jargon der Eigentlichkeit*, 1964.
- 55 Cf. Peter Hoffmann, 'Peace through Coup d'Etat: The Foreign Contacts of the
56 German Resistance 1933—1944' in *Central European History*, Volume XIX,
Number 1, March 1986, pp. 3—44.