

super Israel, which called upon its members to promote rapprochement with the Jews, while avoiding all offensive references and stressing the fact that the Jews continue to be the Chosen People. At the same time, however, the decree also proscribed antisemitism on the basis that it is contradictory to Christian doctrine.

Although Pius XI did not respond to a plea submitted to him in 1933 by a Catholic convert from Judaism, Edith *Stein, to issue an encyclical on the so-called Jewish problem, he condemned racism repeatedly. To a group of Belgian pilgrims, whom he received on Sept. 8, 1938, Pius XI declared: "It is not possible for Christians to take part in antisemitism. Spiritually we are Semites." His efforts to protect the Jews in Fascist Italy against antisemitic actions met with some success. He also helped immigrants and on Jan. 14, 1939, called upon the envoys accredited to the Holy See to provide as many immigration visas as possible "for the victims of racial persecution in Germany and Italy." It was during his pontificate that La *Civiltà Cattolica, a Jesuit organ which had previously been anti-Jewish, protested that the periodical had been misused by the Fascists.

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***PIUS XII** (1876–1958), pope from 1939. Born Eugenio Maria Giuseppe Giovanni Pacelli, in Rome, he entered the Secretariat of State in 1901, was professor of ecclesiastical diplomacy at the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy from 1909 to 1914, undersecretary of state in 1911, archbishop of Sardes and apostolic nuncio to the Bavarian court in Munich in 1917, and nuncio to Germany in 1920 but moving to Berlin only in 1925. In 1929 Pacelli concluded a concordat with the State of Prussia. He became cardinal in 1929 and secretary of state in 1930. Cardinal Pacelli was instrumental in negotiating the concordat between the Holy See and the Third Reich, which was signed on July 20, 1933, by him and Vice Chancellor von Papen. His ambivalent stance during the Nazi period subsequently gave rise to considerable controversy (much of it engendered by Rolf *Hochhuth's play *The Deputy*; for a full analysis see *Holocaust and the Christian Churches). On April 10, 1945, he received Moshe *Sharett, director of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, to discuss with him the "situation of the Jews in Europe and the future of the Jews in Palestine." His views on the situation in Erez Israel found expression in the encyclicals *Auspicia quaedam* (May 1, 1948), *In multiplicibus curis* (Oct. 24, 1948), and *In redemptoris nostri* (April 15, 1949), in which he recommended that Jerusalem should be internationalized. His attitude toward the State of Israel was reserved. On June 10, 1948, the Congregation of Rites ruled that the term *perfidii Judaei* in the Good Friday liturgy be translated into the vernacular as "unbelieving" and not as "faithless" as it had been hitherto.

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PIYYUT (Heb. פייט; plural: *piyyutim*; from the Greek ποιητής), a lyrical composition intended to embellish an obligatory prayer or any other religious ceremony, communal or private. In a wider sense, *piyyut* is the totality of compositions composed in various genres of Hebrew liturgical poetry from the first centuries of the Common Era until the beginning of the Haskalah. In ancient times, the *piyyutim* were intended to replace most of the set versions of prayer and to serve as substitutes. They ensured variety of the obligatory prayers, mainly on Sabbaths and festivals. In a later period, when the prayers became fixed, sections of *piyyut* were interspersed in certain places within the set pattern of the prayers. Naturally, most of the very extensive *piyyut* literature is devoted to the adornment of the major holy days. However, during the early Oriental (eastern) period of the history of the *piyyut*, liturgical compositions were also produced in great abundance for regular Sabbaths, for simple fast days, and even for weekdays. Obligatory prayers were also embellished with special sets of *piyyutim* for private occasions, such as weddings, circumcisions, and mourning. (See Table: *Piyyut*.)

The History of the Piyyut

Piyyut literature began in Erez Israel while the various versions of the obligatory prayers were crystallizing. Though the evidence from this period is limited, texts of ancient *piyyutim* are to be found scattered in talmudic sources, and *piyyutim* which apparently were composed during this period were absorbed into the established versions of the various rites of prayer. These ancient segments are recognizable by their lofty style and characteristic rhythm; they do not as yet use rhyme. The ancient compositions, known in part from the Cairo *Genizah* and in part from other sources, and similarly characterized by their style and rhythm, were also apparently composed during this period, which may be called "the period of the anonymous *piyyut*."

The earliest *paytan* known to us by name is *Yose b. Yose, who lived and worked in Erez Israel in approximately the sixth century or even earlier. His works still retain the above-mentioned characteristics of the form; they do not employ rhyme, even though something similar to rhyme can be seen in his *teki'ot*, where similar words are employed as line endings. With Yose b. Yose begins the period of the *paytanim* whose names are known; the period is represented by a group of important poets from Erez Israel, who all seem to have been functioning before Erez Israel was conquered by the Arabs (636 C.E.). The most important of these *paytanim* are *Yannai, *Simeon b. Megas, Eleazar b. *Kallir, *Haduta b. Abraham, Joshua ha-