

BEYOND EXPULSION

Religiously Moulded Patterns of Interpreting the Past During the First Ten Years
of the Sudeten German, Catholic “Ackermann-Gemeinde”

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The focal point of the present contribution is the first decade in the history of the Roman Catholic “Ackermann-Gemeinde”, which was founded towards the end of 1945 by Sudeten German expellees. The author is mainly concerned with the design of the socio-political program of the Ackermann-Gemeinde, which was based on religious imperatives, and its development until 1954. He asks whether and how much the interpretation of the past by Sudeten German organizations and their

scope of political action were interdependent. The founding members of the Ackermann-Gemeinde soon disassociated themselves from a position which focused on their own losses and showed a marked hostility towards their Czech former neighbors. In doing so, they met with disapproval by the majority of the Sudeten German “Landsmannschaft”. Within the Ackermann-Gemeinde, a discourse about the past and the present based on Christian, universal values evolved. It aims at reconciliation, not, however, at a thorough reappraisal on whether individual guilt may have been involved.