



# Clerical Fascism?

## A Controversial Concept and its Use

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Engels schrijven is niet schrijven zonder fouten, maar het is schrijven als kunst (om dat woord dan maar te gebruiken); iemand die werkelijk Engels schrijft, die moet kunnen schrijven, niet alleen wat hij wil, maar hij moet ook een bepaald eigen idioom schrijven. Ik nu, acht het uitgesloten dat men, in Nederland blijvend, een bepaald idioom zou kunnen leren schrijven.

(Willem Frederik Hermans aan Gerard Reve, 29 januari 1952)

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# Preface

*It is finished.* The long haul of five years education at Utrecht University's history department culminates into this thesis. During the course of this education I grew increasingly interested in political history. After some courses on ideologies and fascism, my focus became more specifically directed towards the overlap of fascism and conservatism. My thesis supervisor Frans Willem Lantink's knowledge on the subject of clerical fascism and his forwardness in helping me getting the contours of the subject clear was contagious, and thus inspired me to write this thesis. Clerical fascism fascinates me for more than one reason. The subject not only involves ideologies, but is also located at the intersection of fascism, conservatism and religion. This makes it a very interesting, politically controversial and sensitive subject. I have added a bibliographical essay that I have written for an earlier course as an appendix to this thesis. It covers the historiography of clerical fascism in countries that are not featured in this thesis.

First of all, I would like to thank Frans Willem Lantink, who was so kind to supervise my thesis, and without whose inspiration and guidance this thesis could not have been written. Furthermore, I want to thank Geraldien von Frijtag, who has been my tutor during my research master, for agreeing to be the second reader of this thesis. I would also like to thank my friends for distracting me on a daily basis. Without the coffee breaks at home and in the library, and without the entertainment they brought me in the evenings, the lonely process of writing this thesis would most likely have been unbearable. This is to *Cisco an' Sonny an' Leadbelly* too...

# Introduction

In 2008, the Italian football player Christian Abbiati declared in an interview with an Italian newspaper: 'Io non ho vergogna a manifestare la mia fede politica. Del fascismo condivido ideali come la Patria e i valori della religione cattolica'.<sup>1</sup> His description of Fascism<sup>2</sup> contrasts with what most people associate with the fascist ideology; political radicalism, ultra-nationalism, mass displays of power and persecutions. Although these were elements of Fascism, Abbiati's characterisation is not discordant with fascist reality; in many fascist movements, religion and the nation did play a major role. How could Christianity not have played a role in a mass movement in a country that was 99 percent Catholic and the seat of the Papacy?<sup>3</sup> Although Fascism is known for its initial anticlericalism and *futurismo*, Abbiati's 'moderate', conservative manifestation of Fascism was important in Mussolini's Italy, especially during what the famous Italian historian Renzo de Felice called the 'years of consensus' after the *conciliazione* with the Holy See in 1929.<sup>4</sup>

The combination of a native fascist movement or regime with the Christian Faith was not unique in Europe. In almost every country in Europe, from the religious Lapua movement in Finland in the early thirties, via the small Catholic Belgian Rexist Party to the 'Christian cult' of the Legion of the

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<sup>1</sup> 'I am not ashamed to proclaim my political beliefs. I share the ideals of fascism, such as the fatherland and the values of the Catholic religion' R.M., 'Abbiati: 'Sono un fascista'. Intervista nostalgica del portiere del Milan,' *La Stampa*, 26 September 2008 <http://www.lastampa.it/sport/cmsSezioni/calcio/200809articoli/16861girata.asp> (last accessed 12 June 2009)

<sup>2</sup> In this thesis 'fascism' is used for the generic ideology, as it was present in all European societies, whereas 'Fascism' is used for the Italian movement and regime.

<sup>3</sup> John Pollard, 'Clerical Fascism': Context, Overview and Conclusion,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 433-446, 444

<sup>4</sup> Renzo De Felice, *Mussolini il duce I: Gli anni del consenso, 1929-1936* (Torino, 1974)

Archangel Michael in Romania, fascism encountered Christianity.<sup>5</sup> This led to a not very surprising collaboration of Catholicism and moderate fascism in Spain, and to much more peculiar varieties – the most extreme being the *Deutsche Christen* movement in Germany, where radical Nazis doubted the canonicity of the Old Testament and the Jewishness of Jesus, and aimed to combine ‘neo-paganism’ with traditional Christian views. The interaction of fascism and the Christian Faith forms an interesting, but very controversial subject in Western historiography.

During the Interwar period fascism and religion became intertwined in many ways; when fascist movements adopted religious discourse and vice versa, when clergymen joined the fascist ranks, and when Churches had to deal with fascist regimes. Their relationship has been analysed, but the outcomes have differed greatly. Some authors deny the possibility of a close link between the two, while others see a ‘positive connection’ between some forms of Christianity and fascist politics.<sup>6</sup> Due to the religious nature of most Interwar European societies, fascist movements had to deal with religion and the Churches. Few fascist movements were fundamentally anti-Christian, and most at least accepted the Christian religion. In many cases the relation went even further – then religion was seen as an essential element of the national identity, and in every Christian denomination a form of a ‘composite, or syncretic, [Christian-fascist] *Weltanschauung*’ was reached at some point in time.<sup>7</sup>

Research into this subject has always been highly controversial, largely because of the political implications. The conservative, and often religious, interpretation of the subject has often been apologetic. Especially in the case of Catholic ‘fascist’ regimes like Spain or Austria Catholic

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<sup>5</sup> Ernst Nolte, *Die faschistischen Bewegungen. Die Krise des liberalen Systems und die Entwicklung der Faschismen* (München, 1966) 223, 238

<sup>6</sup> Martin Conway, 'Catholic Politics or Christian Democracy? The Evolution of Interwar Political Catholicism,' in: Wolfram Kaiser and Helmut Wohnout, eds., *Political Catholicism in Europe 1918-45* (London, 2004) 235-351, 246

<sup>7</sup> Matthew Feldman and Marius Turda, 'Clerical Fascism' in Interwar Europe: An Introduction,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 205-212, 207

historians have tended to focus on the functioning of the Church as a deterrent of radical fascism, and to deny the viability of the label 'fascist'. It is even relevant in modern day politics, for example in Austria, where the *Österreichische Volkspartei* is the direct successor of Engelbert Dollfuß' *Christlichsoziale Partei*. In Eastern Europe Church historians tend to pay more attention to the communist era, when the Church was a victim of the antireligious system. The same is true for the Spanish historiography – Catholic historians often focused on the Civil War in which the Church fell victim to anti-clerical terror.<sup>8</sup>

The opposed view is offered in left-wing historiography, which blames the Churches for enabling or supporting fascism. This was especially the case in Eastern European countries, where historiography was dominated by a Marxist antireligious interpretation.<sup>9</sup> This communist anti-clerical historiography justified measures against the national Churches.<sup>10</sup> Political, anti-clerical, motives are not only visible in communist circles. An infamous example is the 'moral analysis' of the Catholic Church's role in the Holocaust by Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, who is often accused of having an 'anti-Catholic agenda'.<sup>11</sup>

A less polemical, and more distanced analysis of the controversial subject of religion and fascism has lacked for decades. Most historians have ignored the subject. Even during the revival of the 'generic fascism'

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<sup>8</sup> Julio de la Cueva, 'Religious Persecution, Anticlerical Tradition and Revolution: On the Atrocities against the Clergy during the Spanish Civil War,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 33 (1998) 355-369, 355

<sup>9</sup> Good examples can be found in relation to the Croatian case, see: Mark Biondich, 'Radical Catholicism and Fascism in Croatia, 1918-1945,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 383-399, 397, but also in relation to Austria, Portugal and Spain in Roger Griffin, 'The 'Holy Storm': 'Clerical Fascism' through the Lens of Modernism,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 213-227, 214

<sup>10</sup> The anti-clerical view was dominant Communist countries, but also in Marxist publications in non-Communist societies, for example Klaus-Jörg Siegfried, *Klerikalfaschismus: zur Entstehung und sozialen Funktion des Dollfussregimes in Österreich: ein Beitrag zur Faschismuskussion* (Frankfurt am Main, 1979). See for examples the bibliographical essay on 'Clerical Fascism in Interwar Europe', which can be found in the appendix to this thesis.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *A Moral Reckoning: the Role of the Catholic Church in the Holocaust and its Unfulfilled Duty of Repair* (London, 2002). One of the critics was rabbi David G. Dalin, 'History as Bigotry. Daniel Goldhagen slanders the Catholic Church,' *The Weekly Standard*, 10 February 2003.



discussion from the nineties on little attention was paid to this connection of religion and fascism.<sup>12</sup> During this revival, religion was analysed mainly in relation to Emilio Gentile's 'political religion' concept.<sup>13</sup> In Gentile's view, the 'sacralisation of politics' provides a substitute for the functions of 'normal' religions – interpreting the meaning and finality of human existence.<sup>14</sup>

Gentile does not, however, assess the religious politics of many fascists and fascist movements in Europe. His 'substitution' of religion was in reality combined with movements that did not provide an alternative for religion, but instead tried to strengthen religion by collaborating with fascism and by adopting the fascist style. This lacuna has only recently been recognised and analysed, first by Roger Eatwell, who assessed the use of both political religion and clerical fascism in Romania, Germany and Italy in a 2003 article.<sup>15</sup> It was done more elaborately in a 2007 special edition of the journal *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, in which the editors and contributors hoped to create a new focus on the generic concept of clerical fascism by offering a conceptual framework and several case studies.<sup>16</sup> In the next chapter, I evaluate these studies more extensively.

In this thesis I want to take a closer look at use of the concept of clerical fascism in a twofold way; I will describe both the way it has been used in the past and the usefulness of the concept as a historian's tool. This concept has been used for decades to describe the relationship between Christianity and fascism from the start of this relation on, but is only 'tested' recently – but this 'testing' is not yet done satisfactorily and only constitutes, according

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<sup>12</sup> See for example Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (London, 1991) 5 where the author questions the relationship between fascism and conservatism, the radical right, totalitarianism, modernisation, nationalism, racism, socialism, capitalism and imperialism, but not between fascism and Christianity.

<sup>13</sup> Gentile elaborated the concept (in English translations) in the article Emilio Gentile, 'Fascism as Political Religion,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 25 (1990) 229-251 and later in the book Emilio Gentile, *The Sacralization of Politics in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge, 1996)

<sup>14</sup> Emilio Gentile, 'Political Religion: A Concept and its Critics - A Critical Survey,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 6 (2005) 19-32, 29

<sup>15</sup> Roger Eatwell, 'Reflections on Fascism and Religion,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 4 (2003) 145-166

<sup>16</sup> *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 203-450

to John Pollard, the *beginning* of the study of the phenomenon.<sup>17</sup> In this thesis I will analyse the different ways in which clerical fascism appeared in the past – I will argue that clerical fascism has many different appearances, that share enough common features to deserve to be analysed as a specific subcategory of fascism. I will investigate the phenomenon by analysing these common constituents and the internal differences of the several national ideologies. By describing the various manifestations of the phenomenon, I will explore the perimeters of clerical fascism – I will assess both movements that are hardly ‘Christian’ anymore, and movements that cannot be called ‘fascist’ without stirring controversy.

The relationship between Christianity and fascism is hard to assess, but it is very important. According to Gentile, the relationship constitutes either a politicisation of religion (the creation of an extremist political ideology out of clerical thought) or a sacralisation of politics (when fascism incorporates clerical values).<sup>18</sup> The two could become entwined, but never really synthesise or fuse, because their premises differ. Roger Griffin thinks the two could become fused in a ‘comparatively rare process’ of syncretisation and hybridisation.<sup>19</sup> The question is whether fascism was seen as merely acceptable by Christians, or as the only way to achieve a true salvation for the people. And was Christianity regarded as a useful partner, or as an essential element of national identity? Was, in short, the synthesis of religion and nation seen as the preferred way to regenerate the people and to solve all of its (spiritual) problems?

In this thesis I will focus on the problematic clerical fascist ideological morphology, although some space will be reserved for describing the historical circumstances and the clerical fascist praxis. In order to assess both the analytical quality of clerical fascism up until now and its future potential, I will write a *Begriffsgeschichte* of clerical fascism in the first chapter.

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<sup>17</sup> Pollard, 'Clerical Fascism', 444

<sup>18</sup> Emilio Gentile, *Politics as Religion* (Princeton, 2006)

<sup>19</sup> Griffin, 'Holy Storm', 217

The focus will be specifically on the ideas enabling a possible convergence of Christianity and fascism. Both traditions generally oppose 'modernity',<sup>20</sup> and the decadence and regression it allegedly produced during the nineteenth century. These problems led to a call for a spiritual regeneration, and both traditions offered ingredients for such a rebirth of society. The specific solutions could differ substantially, but showed considerable similarities too. I will analyse the ideas propagated in fascist circles, and the ideas articulated by Christians, both (high) clergymen and laymen. That is, however, not the only thing – I will analyse the history of these debates too, for both fascism and reactionary Christianity are incomprehensible without their nineteenth century roots.

The methodology of this thesis resembles Ernst Nolte's *Phänomenologie*: examining the details of the phenomenon, not trying to define the subject from the outside, but allowing it to 'speak for itself' and showing its self-image.<sup>21</sup> The focus of my research will be on the clerical fascist ideas. I have selected three themes that arguably constitute the core of clerical fascism.

The first theme I will investigate is *Church and state relations*, because these relations have played a predominant role in the traditional definitions of the concept of clerical fascism. In this thesis I will analyse both the practical relationship between the two and the theory that accompanied it. The imagined relationship in both future and past was of great importance in two ways; central to clerical fascism was a longing for harmonious cooperation, and the rejection of 'liberal' separation between Church and state was an important stimulus for strengthening the ties between the two.

The second theme is *identity*. Clerical fascists constructed an identity for the members of their society by associating nationalism with the national

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<sup>20</sup> Although Roger Griffin contends that there is a 'profound kinship (...) between modernism and fascism' (Roger Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism: The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler* (Basingstoke, 2007)) fascists often opposed everything they saw as fruits of modernism, a concept equated with the French Revolution, the Enlightenment, and 'Jewishness'.

<sup>21</sup> Ernst Nolte, *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche. Action Française. Italienischer Faschismus. Nationalsozialismus* (München and Zürich, 1963) 53

religion. This national identity was both inclusivist, because it (theoretically) incorporated all members of the *Volks*, and exclusivist, in its rejection of pluralism and the 'others'; adherents of another faith, inhabitants of certain regions and individuals of a different 'race'. The internal and external foe was clearly demarcated, and its identity was often used as the complete opposite of the 'good', national and religious identity. The internal enemies were not always Jewish, but could, depending on the character of the clerical fascist movement, be Muslim, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox or members of particular political movements.

The national identity was strengthened by Biblical notions of the people as the 'Chosen People', and the 'New Israel'. Although clerical fascists generally opposed the (degenerate) state of their society, they dreamed of a good future in which the nation's obligations towards God would be met. The past periods of national 'grandeur' served as inspiration for the 'good' states that would be restored in the 'Utopian' future society, and as legitimisation for the new regimes.

This restoration, or *regeneration* is the final theme I will discuss in this thesis. In the future clerical fascist Utopia, Christianity and nation would form a harmonious symbiosis. In order to achieve this, society had to be cleansed in various ways, ranging from indoctrinating the 'corrupted' people to the extermination of 'corrupting' individuals, Jews in most cases. In some cases, even the Bible and religion needed to be purified from 'foreign' influences. After this purification, society and economy would be organised in accordance with the national character. The future society would be organised on the basis of a 'third way' principle, often, especially in the Catholic countries, corporatist, but always essentially opposing 'foreign' socialism and democracy. In most cases it was, at least theoretically, anti-capitalist too. In praxis, however, anti-capitalism mainly served as a ground for anti-Semitism, but was not put in practice, and fascist societies remained essentially capitalist.

I investigate the phenomenon by analysing several cases of clerical fascism – both obvious and controversial examples. The more indisputable examples are found in Slovakia and Croatia. These countries are most often called clerical fascist. The disputed examples are found in Spain and Austria, because both regimes are often not considered to be truly fascist, and in Germany, because the religiosity of the German Christian movement is debatable. The Romanian case is controversial too, because of its curious religious form that makes its relation to clerical fascism ambiguous.

These cases are chosen to show a broad sample of clerical fascists. Of course, it is possible to make another selection out of the countless clerical fascist movements and regimes, but with this choice I am able to explore the phenomenon in its full breadth. I have opted for analysing both regimes and movements. There are considerable differences between the influence of the different regimes and movements – Franco's regime reigned for decades, the *Ständestaat* existed for just four years, the Croatian, Romanian and Slovakian movements were put into power with help of a foreign power, and the German movement was a faction within the German Church and was only unofficially associated with the Nazi movement.

The six examples cover the three major European Christian denominations; the German movement was (predominantly) Protestant, the Romanian movement was Orthodox and the four remaining samples were Catholic. These Christian branches all had varying theological dogmas regarding political concepts like authority, democracy and the nation. The Churches have their own institutional structures; the difference between the *catholic* Church of Rome, the independent Protestant Churches and the autocephalous Orthodox Churches is especially important regarding the attitude towards national movements and the idea of nationalism.

Due to my lack of knowledge of some of the original languages, I mainly base my thesis on secondary literature, and I only use original sources when possible. Out of these books and articles, I try to reconstruct the discourses of the movements and of the national Churches. In the final analysis I will

compare their ideological constructions to see if analogies justify the use of a concept specifically for this phenomenon. The comparative approach could become problematic, because the danger of generalisation and inexact comparison is always present.<sup>22</sup> The limited size of this thesis makes it even harder to assess important differences between the cases.

In the first chapter I will create the conceptual framework for the comparison. There I will discuss the definitions of concepts like fascism, conservatism and ideology, and the peculiarities of the Christian denominations involved. This part ends with a history of the concept clerical fascism and some reflections on religion and some important concepts. The second and largest part of my thesis contains the analysis of the clerical fascist cases. The cases are divided into three groups, categorised according to their religious and political views.

The first subcategory is called 'Extremist Heterodoxy'. This group is characterised by political radicalism and unorthodox theological views. The two movements that I have chosen are in some ways very different, but do resemble each other on important points. The first is the 'Positive Christian' current within Protestantism that strove for the synthesis of National Socialist political views with deviating theological views. The prime example of Positive Christianity is the German *Deutsche Christen* movement, a Church interest group that was an unofficial part of the larger Nazi movement. The second example is the mystical Orthodox Romanian Legionary Movement. This movement is a borderline case of clerical fascism because of its religious peculiarities.

The second manifestation of clerical fascism is the 'Radical Catholicism' of Ante Pavelić' *Ustaša* in Croatia and Andrej Hlinka's movement in Slovakia. In this group, ultranationalist and extremely violent radical fascism was combined with less deviating religious views. These cases have often been called clerical fascist because of the prominent collaboration of the clergy in the movements and regimes. The Croatian and Slovakian fascists differ from

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<sup>22</sup> György Ránki, 'Problems of Comparative History,' *Neohelicon* 2 (1974) 39-63; Michael O. Gately et al., 'Seventeenth-Century Peasant 'Furies': Some Problems of Comparative History,' *Past & Present* 51 (1971) 63-80, 63

the first groups in their more 'conventional' religiosity, and from the last group in their radicalism.

This last group is called 'National Catholicism'. This group consists of moderate fascists that served as a deterrent for radical fascism. Their religious views are traditional and reactionary. Important in their ideology is a return to Medieval and early modern periods of 'unity of Throne and Altar'. I have chosen Engelbert Dollfuß' Austrian *Ständestaat* and the Franco-regime in Spain as examples of National Catholicism.

In the conclusion I will compare the cases that are discussed in the second part. The conclusion consists of three elements. The first is a description of the phenomenon of clerical fascism, of both its similarities and its internal differences. The second element is the place of clerical fascism in a broader spectrum – how did it relate to other concepts in Interwar Europe? And finally, I will assess the utility of the concept and of the subgroups in analysing the intellectual history of Interwar Europe.

# I. A Conceptual Framework

In this chapter I try to define the concepts that figure prominently in this thesis. These concepts require some explanations, but I do not aim to provide a final, indisputable definition. Instead the analysis consists of a problematisation of the concepts and an analysis of relevant perspectives. The most important concept is, of course, clerical fascism. Therefore, this parts ends with a description of the concept's history and a discussion of its scholarly potential. After this I will discuss some general matters on religion and nationalism, anti-Semitism and state organisation. These relations are often very complicated, and it pays to say some general words on these issues before writing more specifically about them. The chapter starts with the most basic and most controversial of the questions presented here: *what is fascism?*

## **Fascism as a generic concept**

The concept of fascism is enigmatic and attempts to define it are invariably highly controversial. It has become a commonplace in contemporary historiography that, although the term is often used in the political arena, there is no accepted definition of fascism.<sup>23</sup> This led Jonah Goldberg to remark that 'everyone thinks he knows what fascism is, except for the people who study it'.<sup>24</sup> One of the problems regarding the impenetrable nature of fascism is its name. As the German journalist Fritz Schotthöfer

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<sup>23</sup> John K. Cox, 'Ante Pavelić and the Ustaša State in Croatia,' in: Bernd J. Fischer, ed., *Balkan Strongmen. Dictators and Authoritarian Rulers of South Eastern Europe* (London, 2007) 199-238, 206

<sup>24</sup> Jonah Goldberg, 'All About 'Fascism', ' *National Review*, 25 September 2006, 28-30, 28-29



wrote as early as 1924: 'Der Faschismus hat einen Namen, der an sich nichts sagt über den Geist und die Ziele der Bewegung. Ein fascio ist ein Verein, ein Bund, Faschisten sind Bündler und Faschismus wäre Bündlertum.'<sup>25</sup> Apart from the obscuring name, further complications for a clear understanding of fascism are the lack of an unambiguous political programme and the various national differentiations of 'generic fascism' – its extreme *nationalism* made the national varieties more dissimilar than other national varieties of ideologies. Michael Freeden tackles the problem of the allegedly irrational and inconsistent core of fascism, by pointing at the 'grim internal consistency' of the ideology 'once one passes through the looking-glass of their perverse world and proceeds to work from their fundamental assumptions', which is what I intend to do in order to *understand* clerical fascism.<sup>26</sup>

Added to the scholarly problems is the political controversy surrounding this term and its often pejorative use in the political arena as well as in academic articles. Ernst Nolte shows the politicisation of the concept of fascism even in academic circles in his article 'Vierzig Jahre Theorien über den Faschismus', where he differentiates between ideological interpretations of fascism – socialists, conservatives, communists, fascists and liberals all had their own theories of fascism.<sup>27</sup> This is, as I said in the introduction, important in understanding the historiography of clerical fascism, where left-wing historians and conservatives both have their own views on the topic.

The historiography of fascism is colossal. I shall not examine all the interpretations here, because that would not fit into one thesis, but only some influential points of view that I consider relevant in this thesis. Most importantly, I approach fascism as an ideology, and therefore most theorists

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<sup>25</sup> Cited in Wolfgang Wippermann, *Europäischer Faschismus im Vergleich (1922-1982)* (Frankfurt am Main, 1983) 12. Although this says *something* about fascism – especially about its paramilitary organisations – but it does not say much about the fascist ideology.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Freeden, *Ideology. A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2003) 55

<sup>27</sup> Ernst Nolte, 'Vierzig Jahre Theorien über den Faschismus,' in: Ernst Nolte, ed., *Theorien über den Faschismus* (Köln, 1967) 15-75, 15-17

in this chapter are intellectual historians.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, I compare different national varieties of fascism, for I am convinced that something like a 'generic' fascism did exist.

The father of non-Marxist scholarship on European fascism is the controversial German historian Ernst Nolte. Nolte links German Nazism, Italian Fascism and French Action Française using the method of phenomenology. Nolte was the first non-Marxist historian to recognise a 'generic' fascism. In his book about fascism in its 'epoch' Nolte defines fascism as '*Antimarxismus, der den Gegner durch die Ausbildung einer radikal entgegengesetzten und doch benachbarten Ideologie und die Anwendung von nahezu identischen und doch charakteristisch umgeprägten Methoden zu vernichten trachtet, stets aber im undurchbrechbaren Rahmen nationaler Selbstbehauptung.*'<sup>29</sup> In *Die faschistischen Bewegungen* he provides six fundamental features that constitute the 'fascist minimum': anti-Marxism, anti-liberalism, anti-conservatism, the leadership principle, a party army, and totalitarianism as its goal.<sup>30</sup> Nolte distinguishes between four types of fascism: *Präfaschismus*, *Frühfaschismus*, *Normalfaschismus* and *Radikalfaschismus*. Although his views are criticised, I think Nolte's importance lays, apart from his comparison of international fascism and his distinction of fascism in 'subcategories', in his more distanced, *wissenschaftliche* approach and his historicisation of fascism.

The comparative approach where Nazism is seen as part of a larger, continental, tradition was strongly influenced by Marxism.<sup>31</sup> From the mid-seventies on, scholarly attention shifted to particular fascist cases. In the nineties the interest in fascism as a 'generic' phenomenon revived. The major influence behind this revival was Roger Griffin's famous book *The Nature of*

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<sup>28</sup> This is, of course, not the only possible approach. Robert Paxton chooses a completely different approach, criticising most works on fascism, because they tend to ignore the difference between fascist doctrine and fascist action. Moreover, Paxton argues that there is no such thing as a fascist 'ism', a political movement with a doctrine. Robert O. Paxton, 'The Five Stages of Fascism,' *The Journal of Modern History* 70 (1998) 1-23, 4. Later, the author wrote his famous book where he elaborated on this thesis. Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (New York, 2004)

<sup>29</sup> Nolte, *Epoche* 51. Nolte's italics.

<sup>30</sup> Nolte, *Bewegungen* 315

<sup>31</sup> Paxton, 'Five Stages,' 1

*Fascism*. He defined the ideal type of fascism as ‘a *genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of populist ultranationalism*’.<sup>32</sup> This core myth was shared by all individual movements, but each had its own ‘fully independent mythology’, suited to the nation’s historical development and thereby making fascist movements differ substantially from one another.<sup>33</sup> Griffin’s hermeneutic work gave comparative research to this political ideology a new impulse. Another work that continues Nolte’s work is Stanley Payne, who gives a ‘shopping list’ of elements that together constitute a typological description of fascism.<sup>34</sup> For him, fascism is ‘a form of revolutionary ultranationalism for national rebirth that is based on a primarily vitalist philosophy, is structured on extreme elitism, mass mobilization, and the *Führerprinzip*, positively values violence as end as well as means and tends to normatize war and/or the military virtues’.<sup>35</sup>

Like the authors mentioned above, I consider fascism to be a generic phenomenon that existed in most European societies. The histories of the European fascist movements are intertwined, because of all the inter-fascist connections, the intellectual influence of foreign movements and the influence of major fascist countries in helping small fascist movements into power. Fascism is extremely ‘national’, but is, nevertheless, a reaction to international developments like the First World War and the economic depression, and to the internationalist Marxist movement. Even though I deem it important to analyse every fascist movement in the national traditions, it is just as important to see international similarities in this epoch-defining political movement.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Griffin, *Nature of Fascism* 26. Griffin’s italics. Griffin claims to be responsible for creating a ‘consensus’ of the definition of fascism, in Roger Griffin, ‘The Primacy of Culture: The Current Growth (or Manufacture) of Consensus within Fascist Studies,’ *Journal of Contemporary History* 37 (2002) 21-43

<sup>33</sup> Gary Love, ‘“What’s the Big Idea?”: Oswald Mosley, the British Union of Fascists and Generic Fascism,’ *Journal of Contemporary History* 42 (2007) 447-468, 448

<sup>34</sup> The term ‘shopping list’ is borrowed from Professor Martin Baumeister, who coined it during a lecture in München in 2008.

<sup>35</sup> Stanley Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (London, 1995) 7, 14

<sup>36</sup> The idea of an ‘fascist epoch’ in Interwar Europe is appealing to me, not only because I think no ‘genuine’ fascism survived the Second World War – it lost its influence within

The relationship between the national varieties of fascisms was not always easy. Fascism's founder Mussolini did not mean 'his' Fascism to be an export article.<sup>37</sup> This reluctance is understandable, for fascist movements saw their ideas as the ultimate expression of the national character, as opposed to all other nations and peoples. Ernst Nolte shows how the 'style' of fascism was widespread during the Interwar period – contemporary observers saw 'Militarismus und Nationalismus, Heroenkult und Byzantinismus' in Stalin's Soviet Union, and even Roosevelt's *New Deal* and his style of leadership had were influenced by fascism.<sup>38</sup> In the Netherlands the Protestant Prime Minister Hendrik Colijn was impressed by Mussolini's style.<sup>39</sup> So, even though the national expressions of fascism were not exportable, the style and content of fascism were present in most European societies.

When one accepts that the phenomenon generic fascism did exist during the Interwar period, the next question is which movements were part of this ultranationalist and regenerative political movement.<sup>40</sup> Some movements are included almost without exception, but especially the inclusion of more conservative regimes is invariably subject to strong debate. It is important to acknowledge that there is a difference between the two ideologies, because otherwise there is the danger of 'den terroristischen und tendenziell totalen Charakter von faschistischen Diktaturen zu verharmlosen und die

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the Spanish regime that itself survived the epoch – but also because, although fascism was never a political movement with an absolute majority, it was decisive for the structure and the contents of Interwar political debates in most European societies. Every movement had to deal with the 'new politics'. Even antifascism sometimes had fascist traits; mass mobilisation, coloured shirts and violence.

<sup>37</sup> Paxton, 'Five Stages,' 5. Luca de Caprariis, 'Fascism for Export'? The Rise and Eclipse of the Fasci Italiani all'Estero,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 35 (2000) 151-183 shows a more ambiguous relationship: Mussolini had indeed remarked that Fascism was not for export, but his policies were not always in line with that belief.

<sup>38</sup> Nolte, *Epoche* 30-31

<sup>39</sup> Eelke de Jong, 'Boerenprofeet Roskam: het nationaal-socialisme leeft!,' *Haagse Post* 17-08-1968

<sup>40</sup> An exception to the consensus is John Lukacs, 'The Universality of National Socialism (The Mistaken Category of 'Fascism'),' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 3 (2002) 107-121 who argues that fascism as a category is inaccurate – instead he believes that National Socialism is the umbrella concept for the dominant political form that eventually absorbed Italian Fascism.

antidemokratischen Züge von autoritären Diktaturen zu dämonisieren.<sup>41</sup> But because, as we have seen, the fascist 'style' was omnipresent, the demarcation between the two is complex. The similarities of the two ideologies make a distinction even more difficult. Therefore, a subcategorisation of fascism into radical and conservative fascism is desirable.

Conservatism and fascism are differentiated in several ways. The demarcation is problematic, because of the differences within movements.<sup>42</sup> Stanley Payne distinguishes fascism, the radical right and the conservative right.<sup>43</sup> In his categorisation the radical right differs from fascism because of its more right-wing political orientation. Martin Blinkhorn proposes another, rather dissatisfying, solution. He argues that a 'subjective' distinction is possible.<sup>44</sup> The subjective difference between the two lies in the more radical, revolutionary and, potentially, leftist character of fascism, and the anti-revolutionary, more right-wing nature of conservatism. As described above, both types were entangled during the 'fascist epoch'.

### **The existence of conservatism**

Conservatism is hard to define, for much of the same reasons as fascism.<sup>45</sup> The difficulty results from the conservative dismissal of rationality and its reluctance to theorise about society. The low level of philosophising that Martin Greiffenhagen observes in German conservatism is an essential

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<sup>41</sup> Wippermann, *Europäischer Faschismus* 13

<sup>42</sup> Armin Mohler, *Die konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918-1932: ein Handbuch* (revised edition; Darmstadt, 1972) 189 does separate a fascist movement and a non-fascist conservative revolution, but acknowledges the complexity and says that demarcation is difficult as a result of the borderlines meandering through all movements.

<sup>43</sup> Payne, *History of Fascism* 14-19

<sup>44</sup> Martin Blinkhorn, 'Introduction: Allies, Rivals or Antagonist? Fascists and Conservatives in Modern Europe,' in: Martin Blinkhorn, ed., *Fascists and Conservatives: the Radical Right and the Establishment in Twentieth-Century Europe* (London, 1990) 1-13, 1

<sup>45</sup> Conservatism differentiates from fascism in its chronology – it developed during the nineteenth century, whereas fascism did not exist before the turn of the century (conform Nolte's idea of the *Action Française* as the first 'fascist' movement).

element of conservatism.<sup>46</sup> In contrast to the liberal, ratio-centered theories, conservatism is based on 'instinctive' knowledge and 'natural' thought.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, conservatism is, just like fascism, different in each country, for '[d]as Conserviren ist eben bei jedem Volk ein anderes, wie jedes Volk selbst ein anderes ist', as the historian Heinrich Leo wrote in 1864.<sup>48</sup> I think, however, that even though conservatism is different in each country, some similarities do exist on the level of ideology.

Conservatives often claim that conservatism is not an ideology. Conservatives like Russell Kirk see their political views as 'the negation of ideology', and oppose the rationalism and utopianism of other ideologists to the superior 'common sense'.<sup>49</sup> Michael Freeden argues that conservatism *is* an ideology, because 'it too is a particular view of the political world and inevitably contains a series of concepts structured in a specific relationship'.<sup>50</sup> Their politics changed considerably over time – conservatives were paternalistic and interventionist in the nineteenth century, and changed to advocates of the free market and minimum state intervention in the late twentieth century. Freeden asserts that 'what seemed to be an opportunistic ideology was in fact a highly consistent one'.<sup>51</sup> Conservatism differs from other ideologies in not having counterparts for the liberal and socialist ideas on human nature, justice and the state. Instead of showing more or less stable continuity in politics, there is a common thread of another kind: 'an anxiety about change and the urge to distinguish between unnatural and *natural change*'.<sup>52</sup> Other parts of the conservative ideology are fear, reaction and the belief in 'human inertia'. The reactionary nature of conservatism only awakes the ideology when confronted with opposing ideologies, making

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<sup>46</sup> Martin Greiffenhagen, *Das Dilemma des Konservatismus in Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main, 1986) 13. Of course conservatism has its theorists, the most important being Edmund Burke and his influential anti-revolutionary *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790).

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem 62

<sup>48</sup> As cited in Ibidem 18

<sup>49</sup> Ted Honderich, *Conservatism* (Boulder, 1991) 18,21

<sup>50</sup> Freeden, *Ideology* 87

<sup>51</sup> Ibidem 90

<sup>52</sup> Ibidem 88

conservatives 'assemble a counter-set of conceptual configurations, directed against whatever is seen by conservatives as most threatening to the social order', and thereby making conservatism one of the most *flexible* ideologies. The reactionary core, however, did not change over time.

A major point of discussion in regard to conservatism is its relation to religion. Fascism is seen by some scholars as incompatible with religion (with which I, of course, do not agree), but conservatism is not. On the contrary – Andrew Heywood calls religion 'a valuable (perhaps essential) source of stability and social cohesion', and therefore of conservatism, and Freeden observes that religion is employed by many conservatives as 'a mainstay of the moral and political beliefs they espouse' and that the sanction of religion is used to impose political order.<sup>53</sup> From its conception until recent years, conservatives have debated about the function of religion in their movement.<sup>54</sup> For some, conservatism without a God is inconceivable, but what religion, and how it is experienced, seems of lesser importance. An interesting example of this 'social integrative' and 'institutional' notion of religion is the French Charles Maurras, who, being an agnostic himself, propagated the Catholic faith, to create an organic 'integralist' France.<sup>55</sup>

In general, conservatives see a strong connection between the state of affairs in society and the morality and religiosity of its people. Michael Freeden observes how orthodox believers, Christians, Jews and Muslims, tend to use the state as the political instrument of faith.<sup>56</sup> Important for this 'political theology' – interconnected politics and theology – is Carl Schmitt, who argued that important concepts of modern theory of state are secularised theological concepts, just like the nineteenth century Spanish

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<sup>53</sup> Andrew Heywood, *Political Ideologies. An Introduction* (third edition; Basingstoke, 2003) 297; Freeden, *Ideology* 88

<sup>54</sup> Barry Alan Shain, 'Varieties of Conservatism,' *Modern Age* 44 (2002) 48-50, 48 analyses the contemporary merging of conservatism and religion in the United states, and calls the question whether religious faith is a necessary ground for conservatism 'a perplexing conundrum at the heart of philosophical conservatism'.

<sup>55</sup> Greiffenhagen, *Dilemma* 103

<sup>56</sup> Freeden, *Ideology* 88. This contradicts the modern day conservative preference for a small state, but it is generally true that orthodox believers expect the state to intervene when it comes to moral issues.

conservative thinker Juan Donoso Cortés had said.<sup>57</sup> Conservatism is conceivable without religiosity, but in most cases, conservatives sympathise with religion and vice versa.

### **An analysable ideology**

The theme of ideology is another interesting but ill-defined concept. Ideology is a controversial subject too – it is often used as a derogatory term that suggests that ‘artificially constructed sets of ideas, somewhat removed from everyday life, are manipulated by the powers that be – and the powers that want to be’.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, it is often questioned whether conservatism and fascism are ideologies, which is an important issue for this thesis. Ideology is hard to define in one sentence, especially when one considers these anti-rational, anti-intellectual right-wing thought systems. These movements lack intellectual founders, guiding books and extensive theories, and thus do not have a canonical corpus which the scholar could analyse. In these cases, the material one examines is open to question – for is it a doctrine, or did action play a more crucial role?

An ideology is, according to Andrew Heywood, a ‘more or less coherent set of ideas, that provides the basis for political action’.<sup>59</sup> These ideologies offer a ‘world view’ on the existing order, a model of a desired future and an explanation how to get from the contemporary state of affairs to the aspired future. The ideology consists of interconnected ideas that deal with key concepts like freedom, history, human nature, equality, justice, morality, power, authority and religion.<sup>60</sup> Ernst Hanisch ascribes another function to a *Weltanschauung* - it constructs a collective identity.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> John P. McCormick, 'Review: Political Theory and Political Theology: The Second Wave of Carl Schmitt in English,' *Political Theory* 26 (1998) 830-854, 831, Greiffenhagen, *Dilemma* 94

<sup>58</sup> Freedden, *Ideology* 1

<sup>59</sup> Heywood, *Political Ideologies* 12

<sup>60</sup> This list I borrowed from Sudhir Hazareesingh, *From Subjects to Citizen. The Second Empire and the Emergence of Modern French Democracy* (Princeton, 1998) 18

<sup>61</sup> Ernst Hanisch, *Die Ideologie des Politischen Katholizismus in Österreich 1918-1938* (Vienna and Salzburg, 1977)1



Michael Freeden argues that ideologies are central to political life, and function as a 'wide-ranging structural arrangement that attributes meaning to a range of mutually defining political concepts'.<sup>62</sup> He borrows Ludwig Wittgenstein's concept of 'family resemblances' to describe the character of ideologies – the 'sets of features may be broadly similar without being identical in all respects'.<sup>63</sup> The arrangement of these features is like 'a set of modular units of furniture that can be assembled in many ways' – but some ways are too ridiculous to contemplate.<sup>64</sup> All ideologies begin with 'non-negotiable assumptions' from which logical conclusions can be drawn, and most of those assumptions can be given some justification.<sup>65</sup> Freeden identifies four 'Ps' of ideologies.<sup>66</sup> *Proximity* specifies that political concepts only make sense in relation to the surrounding concepts. *Priority* signifies that ideologies have 'core' and 'peripheral' concepts whose places can change over time. *Permeability* indicates that ideologies are not mutually exclusive, and not hermetically sealed, but instead 'they have porous boundaries and will frequently occupy overlapping space'. The last feature, *proportionality*, means the 'relative space within each ideology allotted to a particular theme, or cluster of concepts'. Freeden thus offers a new insight, in which ideologies are no longer judged on the presence or absence of ideas, but on their *location* in the ideology's morphology.

Freeden provides a thought-provoking programme for the student of ideologies. Instead of questioning the 'qualitative substance of the ideology, (...) its ethical stance or its intellectual weight', the student has to ask: '*What has to hold* in order for this utterance to make sense/be true/be right for its producers and consumers?'<sup>67</sup> The student has to *understand* the assumptions of the ideology before judging them. This requires a 'sympathetic, or at least impartial, reading of their words and phrases.'<sup>68</sup> That

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<sup>62</sup> Freeden, *Ideology* 3, 52

<sup>63</sup> Ibidem 43

<sup>64</sup> Ibidem 52

<sup>65</sup> Ibidem 56

<sup>66</sup> Ibidem 60-66

<sup>67</sup> Ibidem 71

<sup>68</sup> Ibidem 71

is an interesting and challenging method when one studies contemptible ideologies like fascism, but can be rewarding too, for it is the only way to understand fascism and the fascists.

When we consider an ideology as described above, a not clearly delimited *Weltanschauung* based on shared ideas, it is valid to say that conservatism and fascism are ideologies. Like conservatives, fascists did not consider their views an ideology. Adolf Hitler did not call his views an ideology, but a *Weltanschauung*, that incorporated an 'almost religious' set of attitudes.<sup>69</sup> This rejection of the intellect, however, was itself a conscious intellectual choice. Freeden convincingly shows how conservatism had a 'consistent' core.<sup>70</sup> This 'core' of clerical fascism is what I try to lay bare in this thesis.

## **Varieties of Christianity**

After fascism and conservatism, (political) Christianity is the third important 'partner' of clerical fascism. It is a heterogeneous religion encompassing different institutions, parties and dogmas, and both clerics and laymen. In this part I differentiate between the various forms of Christianity, especially regarding the organisational structures.

Important concepts are the Catholic Church and Political Catholicism. Both are strongly interconnected, but there is a major difference between the two. The former is a hierarchical structure consisting of members of the clergy. The latter is, according to Ernst Hanisch, 'alles, was sich im Brennpunkt dieser Kirche herumbewegt und sie als Bezugsrahmen anerkennt.'<sup>71</sup> This could be a democratic Christian Social party or an antidemocratic Catholic movement, but also Catholic individuals, groups or associations. Catholicism is, despite its universal pretensions, inherently pluralistic, even within the Catholic Church and Political Catholicism.

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<sup>69</sup> Heywood, *Political Ideologies* 217

<sup>70</sup> Freeden, *Ideology* 55

<sup>71</sup> Hanisch, *Die Ideologie des Politischen Katholizismus in Österreich* 1

The Eastern Orthodox Church is the other *catholic* Church that was separated from the Rome in 1054. The Church is theologically and sacramentally unified, but has geographical and national distinctions. These national churches are autocephalous and are headed by a Synod of independent bishops.<sup>72</sup> The Byzantine tradition traditionally held a strong notion of *symphonia*, of harmony between Church and state.<sup>73</sup> In the Eastern Christian world, therefore, the post-Ottoman nation-states often had an officially established Orthodox religion.<sup>74</sup>

Protestantism is the third Christian denomination that figures in this thesis. Although there are many Protestant denominations, they share important (institutional) features, for Protestantism does recognise a universal Christianity, but no universal Church institution. This results from Protestantism's central theological doctrines: the Bible as the sole source of the Truth and the direct relationship of Christians with God. In this thesis I do not distinguish between the various Protestant Churches.

An argument that is frequently brought forward against heterodox religious groups is that they are not 'true' believers. Especially religious traditionalists tend to adopt this *essentialist* view and exclude those who do not share certain beliefs or practises from the 'genuine' adherents of the faith.<sup>75</sup> In all Christian denominations, certain subgroups incline to exclude the others from the 'true' religion. The distinction between adherents of a 'normal' religion and people with heterodox views is highly problematic for a historian. The most extreme case, the *Deutsche Christen* are, for example, not considered good Christians by many of their fellow Christians, whereas they saw themselves as the practitioners of the only real faith. This is, essentially, a theological problem, which poses the historian with a problem; he cannot decide which Bible interpretation is 'correct'. In this thesis, I try to

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<sup>72</sup> Stella Alexander, 'Religion and National Identity in Yugoslavia,' in: Stuart Mews, ed., *Religion and National Identity* (Oxford, 1982) 591-607, 592

<sup>73</sup> Ernst Benz, *De Oosters-Orthodoxe kerk* (Utrecht, 1966) 173

<sup>74</sup> Aristotle Papanikolaou, 'Byzantium, Orthodoxy, and Democracy,' *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 71 (2003) 75-9884

<sup>75</sup> Victoria S. Harrison, 'The Pragmatics of Defining Religion in a Multi-Cultural World,' *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 59 (2006) 133-152, 147

show the tensions between the self-definition of the clerical fascists, the theological tradition and the opinions of their mainstream fellow Christians.

### **Religion and (fascist) politics**

According to Martin Conway the events during the Interwar Period make it plausible to 'to assert a positive connection between Catholicism and the politics of the anti-democratic right.'<sup>76</sup> The anti-democratic policies of European Catholic regimes were not *accidental*, but were a result of the Church's reluctance to accept democracy, with which it only came to a *modus vivendi*. The linking of religion and fascism is often done to 'damn by association', in earlier decades by Marxist historians, and more recently by Goldhagen.<sup>77</sup>

Ernst Nolte, on the other hand, denies this 'positive connection', and even asserts that: 'Der Katholizismus kann der Vater des Faschismus, aber niemals selbst faschistisch sein – was nicht ausschließt, daß ein einzelner Katholik aus voller Überzeugung Faschist sein mag. Es gibt daher keinen Klerikofaschismus, sondern allenfalls einen katholischen Pseudofaschismus.'<sup>78</sup> This vision on Interwar politics results from pro-Catholic wishful thinking, but it is not supported by empirical facts. It might be true that radical fascism and Catholicism did not converge, more moderate fascism and Catholicism teamed up in many occasions, for example in Spain and Austria. When a movement serves as a deterrent for radical fascism, this does not mean it could not be fascist itself, as we can see, for example, in Austria.

The Church's attitude towards the regimes was complicated by the different nature of their goals. The Church cared, theoretically, only about the transcendental (in praxis combined with more worldly concerns), as opposed

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<sup>76</sup> Conway, 'Catholic Politics or Christian Democracy?', 246

<sup>77</sup> Eatwell, 'Reflections,' 146; Goldhagen, *Moral Reckoning*.

<sup>78</sup> Nolte, *Bewegungen* 249

to the 'earthly' goals of the regime.<sup>79</sup> The politically 'pragmatic' Church gave support to the regime where it could deploy its apostolic activities. In this vein Pope Leo XIII had declared the neutrality of the Church regarding the different government types, for the Church's pastoral task was the most important factor.<sup>80</sup> In reality, however, the Church strongly rejected socialism, as the same Pope had shown in his encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, and had a preference for moderate right-wing regimes that was caused by similarities between the two *Weltanschauungen* and the idea that Christianity could benefit from such regimes. Conservative Catholics opposed most products of 'modernism' and had a link with right wing politicians in 'a common hatred for the eighteenth century Enlightenment [*sic*], the French Revolution and all that in the Church's opinion derived from it: democracy, liberalism and, of course, most urgently, 'godless communism'" as Hobsbawm analyses.<sup>81</sup> They thus were part of a broader anti-modernist movement.<sup>82</sup>

Christians, however, have been present in almost every political movement. During the Interwar period Christians supported the case of the Austrian regime, of Nazism, but also of democracy, socialism and pacifism. Some movements were more common ground for Christians, but all political ideologies that were not completely anti-religious did attract Christian following. In most Interwar European countries purely non-religious movements did not stand a chance, because of the religious nature of most societies.

Democracy was supported in broad Christian circles only after the Second World War, but Christian Democracy had commenced in the

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<sup>79</sup> Anthony Rhodes, *The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators, 1922-1945* (London, 1973) 353-354. The regimes did not only have 'earthly' interests, but declared to have transcendental goals too, especially in the conservative and clerical fascist cases.

<sup>80</sup> Maximilian Liebmann, 'Vom Ende des Ersten Weltkriegs bis zu Pius XII,' in: Jozef Lenzenweger, et al., eds., *Geschichte der katholischen Kirche* (third edition; Graz, 1995) 447-458, 456

<sup>81</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes. 1914-1991* (second edition; London, 2003) 114-115

<sup>82</sup> Wolfram Kaiser and Helmut Wonnout, 'Introduction,' in: Wolfram Kaiser and Helmut Wonnout, eds., *Political Catholicism in Europe 1918-45* (London, 2004) 1-6, 2

nineteenth century, when Christian movements became politicised.<sup>83</sup> The nineteenth century *Kulturkampf* had mobilised Catholic political action, with a broad variety of organisations. The most important had been the non-political Catholic Action, but in the years to come politicisation was inevitable, because of the growing importance of parliamentary democracy. This step was not taken by all Catholics. Pope Pius XI, for example, opposed Catholic participation in parliamentary politics, and thus advanced the case of the anti-democratic right. Before 1945 the Catholic opinion, for example, had been divided, and most Catholics only reluctantly accepted the idea of democracy.

### **Past and future use of clerical fascism**

The concept of clerical fascism has a long history. Ever since its early conception, just after the start of fascism, the term has been ambiguous. The term *clerico fascisti* was first coined by Luigi Sturzo, the leader of the Italian People's Party, in 1922.<sup>84</sup> Sturzo used the term to refer to clergymen who joined the Fascist ranks and advocated a synthesis of Catholicism and Fascism. This is the meaning that the concept still has in Italian historiography, a fact Roger Griffin applauds – he calls it a 'refreshingly tidy, specific, non-generic meaning'.<sup>85</sup>

The scope of clerical fascism soon broadened. The American J.J. Murphy wrote pamphlets on clerical fascism in Italy, Austria, Peronist Argentina and even the 'Japanese-Vatican Entente'.<sup>86</sup> The term thus came to

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<sup>83</sup> Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes* 115 says that only anti-fascism really legitimised Christian Democracy on a grand scale. It is, of course, true that some countries (Germany, The Netherlands) had known influential and successful Christian Democratic parties before the Second World War. It is equally true that democracy was and is not lauded by all Christians – democratic thought is, however, dominant in contemporary Western Christianity.

<sup>84</sup> Laqueur claims to have found it in use in 1922, where it referred to a group of Catholics advocating a synthesis of Catholicism and fascism. Walter Laqueur, *Fascism: Past, Present, Future* (New York, 1996) 147. Pollard, 'Clerical Fascism', 433 claims that the first person using it in 1922 was Luigi Sturzo. Neither of the two does refer to original sources.

<sup>85</sup> Griffin, 'Holy Storm', 214

<sup>86</sup> *Ibidem* 214

designate fascist regimes that were either Christian or supported by Christian clergy and laymen. Post-War historians, especially on the Left, have used the term to describe the Austrian, Spanish, Portuguese, Hungarian, Slovakian, Croatian and Romanian regimes.<sup>87</sup> Its use even broadened to post-War radical religious groups. Of the groups and people that are connected to this term are the Catholic 'Integralists' of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, the Protestant movement of *Christian Identity* and the political commentator Pat Buchanan in the United States.<sup>88</sup> Walter Laqueur applied the concept to radical Islam in Third World countries.<sup>89</sup> This reminds us of the President George W. Bush spoke about 'Islamic fascism' in the Middle East, indicating that Islam was not a religion, but a dangerous ideology.<sup>90</sup> In Holland, the politician Geert Wilders compared the Koran to Hitler's infamous *Mein Kampf*. In a Dutch newspaper he quoted the Italian anti-Islamic journalist Oriana Fallaci's *The Force of Reason*, who calls the Muslim religion 'Islamofascism'.<sup>91</sup>

From its conception on, clerical fascism was used most often as an abusive term by left-wing historians, but little has been done to test the 'feasibility' of Sturzo's concept.<sup>92</sup> Most use of it only 'blunted' the concept as an analytical tool.<sup>93</sup> Especially in Marxist historiography it has been used abundantly, for example in the context of Dollfuß' Austria, but also in Eastern Europe, where it was the standard interpretation during the communist regimes.<sup>94</sup> The left-wing use of the concept always went hand in hand with a very broad notion of fascism.

Until recently, the term was used by non-Marxist historians without a substantial theoretical backing. Nolte, for example, denied the term's

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<sup>87</sup> Ibidem 214, 215

<sup>88</sup> These examples are gathered by Griffin, mainly on Internet, in: Ibidem 215. A good example is the header 'Clerical Fascism' on <http://www.publiceye.org/frontpage/911/clerical-911.html> (last accessed 20 July 2009)

<sup>89</sup> See the chapter 'Postfascism' in Laqueur, *Fascism*

<sup>90</sup> Goldberg, 'All About 'Fascism'', 28

<sup>91</sup> Geert Wilders, 'Genoeg is genoeg: verbied de Koran', *De Volkskrant*, 8 August 2007; Oriana Fallaci, *The Force of Reason* (New York, 2006)

<sup>92</sup> Feldman and Turda, 'Clerical Fascism', 207

<sup>93</sup> Griffin, 'Holy Storm',

<sup>94</sup> Siegfried, *Klerikalfaschismus* is the most notable example for Austria.

relevance in relation to Dollfuß' Austrian regime without providing any context.<sup>95</sup> Nolte's text seems to be a reaction to the Marxist use of the term, but is no thorough reflection upon the actual subject. Ernst Hanisch calls 'Klerikofaschismus' a 'politischer Kampfbegriff, aber kein theoretisch reflektierter 'Typus', and therefore useless.<sup>96</sup> One of the exceptions is Hugh Trevor-Roper, who uses the term 'clerical conservatism' to refine the typology of fascism by contrasting it to 'dynamic' fascism.<sup>97</sup> During the 'revival' of generic fascism in the nineties the concept was largely ignored. The debate on religion and fascism often involved Gentile's concept of 'political religion', but the other side of the relation, clerical fascism was often neglected.<sup>98</sup>

Recently this has changed. The first to consider the concept as an analytical tool was Roger Eatwell in 2003. In his article, he analyses clerical fascism in the German, Italian and Romanian context. He concludes that of these three, only the Romanian Legionary Movement could satisfactorily be called clerical fascist, but not the 'clerical fellow travellers' or 'clerical opportunists' of the Italian and German regimes.<sup>99</sup> For Eatwell, clerical fascist movements propagate 'forms of fascism which sincerely and uniformly espoused religious views', and usually emerged in peasant-based societies, where, with an exception for the radical left, political parties without a religious basis did not stand a chance.<sup>100</sup> The Romanian Legionary Movement was, according to him, the 'best example of an overtly Christian fascism'.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Nolte, *Bewegungen* 249

<sup>96</sup> Ernst Hanisch, 'Der Politische Katholizismus als ideologischer Träger des 'Austrofaschismus'', in: Emmerich Tálos and Wolfgang Neugebauer, eds., *Austrofaschismus. Politik - Ökonomie - Kultur 1933-1938* (Vienna, 2005) 68-86, 68

<sup>97</sup> H.R. Trevor-Roper, 'The Phenomenon of Fascism,' in: S.J. Woolf, ed., *European Fascism* (London, 1968) 18-38, 25

<sup>98</sup> One wonders why scholars did not pay attention to this theme. I think the 'Marxist' and Church bashing tendencies in most literature on the subject shied away many scholars. Another cause could be the focus on fascism as political religion that 'rivalled' the clerical fascist analysis.

<sup>99</sup> Eatwell, 'Reflections,' 154

<sup>100</sup> Ibidem 153

<sup>101</sup> Ibidem 147



The major inquiry of the concept was done in a special edition of *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* in 2007. The edition starts with an introduction by Matthew Feldman and Marius Turda, followed by an article on clerical fascism by Roger Griffin and thirteen case studies of clerical fascism in Europe. The question that is posed in the introduction is to what extent interwar Christians saw national fascist movements as 'holy' redeemers of the nation or race, or at least, as Christian enough to do business with.<sup>102</sup> The editors consider the answering of this question essential, for not enough is done to test Sturzo's concept, while it is clear that a composite *Weltanschauung* was adopted by members of all the major Christian denominations.

The authors of the thirteen case studies approach the subject in various ways. Some write about regimes (Austria) that were not always fascist (Greece), other authors write about individual fascist clerics (England) or the attitude of Christians towards foreign fascism (Sweden). The quality is just as varying as the variety of approaches. The project is valuable because of the analysis of different appearances of clerical fascism, not only in three Christian denominations, but also various types of Christian-fascist relations. John Pollard states in his concluding article that these case studies only mark the *beginning* of the study of this phenomenon, but that this attempt already clearly shows the input of Christianity into European fascism.<sup>103</sup>

Roger Griffin writes in his article on the 'inflated' concept about the need to create a consensus as does exist of generic fascism through 'deflating' its broad meaning. According to his ideal-typical definition, clerical fascism 'should never be used to characterise a political movement or regime *in its entirety*, since it can at most be a faction within fascism, and may refer to no more than a highly personal and atypical [*sic*] response to it by an individual cleric.'<sup>104</sup> His 'deflated' ideal type is: '[t]he ideology and political praxis of clerics and theologians who *either* tactically support

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<sup>102</sup> Feldman and Turda, 'Clerical Fascism', 206

<sup>103</sup> Pollard, 'Clerical Fascism', 444

<sup>104</sup> Griffin, 'Holy Storm', 224. Other scholars have used clerical fascism for a regime in its entirety, for example in relation to Slovakia, Croatia and Romania.

fascism as a movement or regime while maintaining a critical distance from its totalising, revolutionary, and basically secular objectives, *or* integrate elements of fascist values and policies into the way they conceptualise their mission on earth as devout believers in a divinely ordained world. As such, clerical fascism can never be a movement in its own right with a clerical leadership, independent ideology, and autonomous organisational structure, though it may operate as a discrete faction or constituency within a fascist regime with which it enters a symbiotic relationship.<sup>105</sup>

Griffin does indeed deflate the concept. As a reaction to the broad (often Marxist) use of the term, he opts for a very restricted definition. I think, however, that Griffin overemphasises his deflation. His approach restricts the functionality of the concept. One could question whether an ‘independent’ clerical fascist ideology really is inconceivable. Convinced clerical fascists would definitely say this symbiosis is possible. Griffin only sees clerics and theologians as clerical fascists, which is in line with the literal meaning of the word, but ignores an important element – Christian laymen who propagated the same ideas on fascism. Griffin argues argument that the relation between religion and fascism, especially between Church and state is often tense, and most of the time they were outright rivals in the struggle for power and influence. This is an important feature of the relationship, but it does not mean that symbiosis is intrinsically impossible.

In this thesis, I will use clerical fascism in a broader sense – my definition will be closer to the highly controversial use as label for (parts of) movements and regimes. My research focuses mainly on ideas, and less on organisational and personal ties between Church and fascist organisations. For my research, I will use a working definition of the clerical fascist ideology – for me it was *an eclectic ideology that tried to combine religious and fascist views, in order to achieve a regeneration of the Volk and create an ultranationalist and religiously uniform society.*

### **Some comments on religion and nationalism**

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<sup>105</sup> Ibidem 217

One of the major themes in this research is the convergence of Christianity and (often radical) nationalism. This merging calls for some explanation, for Christianity is a universalistic, *catholic*, belief, and does at first sight not seem compatible with exclusivist nationalism.

The nation and nationalism, however, are 'Christian things' as Adrian Hastings shows.<sup>106</sup> Christianity shaped European nationalism from the Middle Ages onward in several ways. The Old Testament served as a mirror for the creation and imagination of a Christian nation, a 'New Israel', a 'Chosen People'.<sup>107</sup> Without this Biblical model of a nation, 'nation and nationalism, as we know them, could never have existed'.<sup>108</sup> This contrasts with the universalistic New Testament. This Biblical duality is always present in Christianity's political agenda.

The role of national Churches is, of course, different for Catholic, Protestant and Eastern Orthodox Christians. Where Protestantism did not recognise any supranational institutions, the autocephalous Orthodox Church did recognise some form, but tended to be nationalist.<sup>109</sup> The Catholic Church's attitude is more complicated - Juan J. Linz describes the relation of the Catholic Church with nationalism as a scale along which the opinions on nationalism are divided.<sup>110</sup> One side of the scale is the 'internationalist' vision of a world Church, a tradition that has no place for nationalist sentiment. On the other extreme is the perception of humanity as both religious and 'national.' During the interwar period the latter notion was not extraordinary and was present in the Catholic nationalist movements in Spain, Austria, Poland, Slovakia, Croatia and Flanders. In general, Hastings connects more universalist Catholic attitudes with ultramontanist and nationalist thought with Churches that are controlled by the national

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<sup>106</sup> Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood. Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Second; Cambridge, 1997) 186

<sup>107</sup> *Ibidem* 195

<sup>108</sup> *Ibidem* 4

<sup>109</sup> Michael Radu, 'The Burden of Eastern Orthodoxy,' *Orbis* 42 (1998) 283-299

<sup>110</sup> Juan J. Linz, 'Staat und Kirche in Spanien. Vom Bürgerkrieg bis zur Wiederkehr der Demokratie,' in: Martin Greschat, ed., *Christentum und Demokratie im 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1992) 60-88, 66

monarchy.<sup>111</sup> Christianity, thus, oscillated between the Old Testament tradition of the People of Israel and the New Testament tradition of Jesus' universalism.<sup>112</sup>

The other ways in which Christianity affected nationalism derive from the image of the 'Chosen People'. Christianity strengthened national identity by mythologising past threats to it, and by declaring national salvation to be at stake.<sup>113</sup> After this construction of the Christian history of the nation, this resulted in a 'claim to be a chosen people, a holy nation, with some special divine mission to fulfil'.<sup>114</sup> This was applied by many nations, hereby shaping, strengthening and sacralising their identity.

### **Some comments on economy and state organisation**

One of the similarities between the fascist and Christian thought is the general held view of the necessity of a 'Third Way' economical and political system that provided an alternative to both socialism and the liberal capitalist worldview. Especially Catholic social thought, influenced by both the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), favoured corporatism. Corporatism was based on the idea of subsidiarity, which implied that decisions were to be taken at the lowest level possible.<sup>115</sup> Corporatism fitted the 'Catholic sociology' that desires an organic and harmonious society, where mankind has a transcendental goal, to which economic and political differences are subordinated, and the fascist ideas about a united society.<sup>116</sup> This system was an alternative both for communism and liberal capitalism, although in praxis the former was more

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<sup>111</sup> Hastings, *Nationhood* 202-203

<sup>112</sup> Ibidem 203

<sup>113</sup> Ibidem 190

<sup>114</sup> Ibidem 196

<sup>115</sup> D.H. McIlroy, 'Subsidiarity and Sphere Sovereignty: Christian Reflections on the Size, Shape and Scope of Government,' *Journal of Church & State* 45 (2003) 739-763, 739

<sup>116</sup> Marcel Poorthuis and Theo Salemink, *Een donkere spiegel: Nederlandse katholieken over joden, 1870-2005: tussen antisemitisme en erkenning* (Nijmegen, 2006) 279

important than the latter. Mussolini, and other fascists, pleaded for such 'third way' corporatism too.<sup>117</sup>

In praxis, corporatism did not really function in fascist societies. The unclear and ambivalent nature of both fascist and Catholic corporatism, and their ambiguous implementation, complicate differentiation between the two, but on the other hand make them justifiable to both Catholics and fascists.<sup>118</sup> The aversion of the 'atomic' liberal-democratic society, which Pope Pius XI shared, was the reason why Catholics in many countries did not create a viable political party.<sup>119</sup> Antidemocratic right-wing politics were an attractive alternative for the democratic system, especially if the Church could gain more influence in state and society. The aversion of 'godless' communism was self-evident, for the Church would not be able to perform its pastoral tasks in a communist society.

Protestantism and Eastern Orthodoxy have no 'official' view on corporatism, and Protestantism has been notoriously linked to capitalism by Max Weber. Protestant focus has been more on individualism than on the social group, like Catholics traditionally do.<sup>120</sup> During the Interwar period groups of Protestants looked for alternative systems too, but without the abundant theorising of the Catholics.

### **Some comments on anti-Semitism**

A theme that needs some explanation before using it is the relation between Christianity and anti-Semitism. This theme is important because of Christianity's important role in the development of anti-Semitism, the importance of anti-Semitism for the political views of many Christians, but

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<sup>117</sup> Fascist' corporatism, as it was practised in for example Austria, was, according to the Marxist historian Klaus-Jörg Siegfried, not in agreement with the Catholic corporatism, for the social element was lacking. Siegfried, *Klerikalfaschismus* 62

<sup>118</sup> Freeden shows how this ambiguity is a necessary element of any ideology, because it is the way to provide 'one of the most valuable scarce resources of politics: public political backing'. Freeden, *Ideology* 57.

<sup>119</sup> As noted earlier, viable Catholic parties existed in Germany and the Netherlands, not coincidentally two countries with a Catholic *minority*.

<sup>120</sup> Heywood, *Political Ideologies* 89

most of all because of the extremely complex relationship between Christianity and anti-Semitism.

Anti-Semitism was present in most layers of European societies, and certainly not only in fascist and Christian circles. Traditionally strong influences on anti-Semitism were religious and socio-economical motives. Hannah Arendt distinguished between two forms of anti-Jewish thought; anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism. She defined anti-Judaism as 'against' or 'rivalling' Judaism in the Latin sense of 'anti', and anti-Semitism as a modern 'scientific' racist theory that promoted the view that Jews were *Untermenschen*.<sup>121</sup> Anti-Judaists were typically concerned with religious issues – the Jews were held responsible for the death of Christ.<sup>122</sup> The New Testament contains anti-Jewish texts, especially in the Gospels of Matthew and John.<sup>123</sup> The distinction, however, is too crude.

Peter Marendy argues that the distinction between the two is inaccurate, because the two forms were closely linked.<sup>124</sup> Marendy defines anti-Judaism in a more negative way than Arendt – it is a 'long-standing sentiment ... of mistrust and hostility held by Christians against Jews', because the Jews had rejected Jesus' teachings and were responsible for his crucifixion.<sup>125</sup> Anti-Semitism is an 'invention' of the German journalist Wilhelm Marr in the 1870s, meaning, in practice, an 'opposition or hatred of Jews and or Judaism'.<sup>126</sup> A distinction between 'traditional', religious and economical anti-Judaism and racial 'redemptive' anti-Semitism seems valid, but is at the same time problematic.<sup>127</sup> The first reason is the difficulty of demarcating the two varieties.<sup>128</sup> The second reason is the relation between them; according to Saul Friedländer, the fantastic apocalyptic universe of

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<sup>121</sup> Jean Bethke Elshtain, 'Anti-Semitism or anti-Judaism?,' *Christian Century* 121 (2004) 39

<sup>122</sup> Peter M. Marendy, 'Anti-Semitism, Christianity, and the Catholic Church: Origins, Consequences, and Responses,' *Journal of Church & State* 47 (2005) 289-307, 289

<sup>123</sup> Ibidem, 290

<sup>124</sup> Ibidem, 289

<sup>125</sup> Ibidem, 290

<sup>126</sup> Ibidem

<sup>127</sup> Saul Friedländer, *Nazi-Duitsland en de joden. Deel 1: de jaren van vervolging 1933-1939* (Utrecht, 1998) 111

<sup>128</sup> Pollard, 'Clerical Fascism', 437

Nazi anti-Semitism was inconceivable without the long Christian tradition of anti-Judaism and non-racial anti-Semitism.<sup>129</sup>

There are some differences between the types of anti-Semitism of the Christian denominations. Catholicism has nurtured a long-standing hatred of Jews from the classical Christian era until the condemnation of anti-Semitism at the Second Vatican Council.<sup>130</sup> Catholic anti-Semitism has tended to be religiously, instead of racially, motivated.<sup>131</sup> Protestants had a long anti-Semitic tradition starting with Martin Luther's 'Against the Jews and Their Lies' (1543),<sup>132</sup> and Protestants in Germany and Scandinavia were more inclined to adopt the Nazi's 'scientific' racial anti-Semitism.<sup>133</sup>

In the next chapters, I will assess clerical fascist cases according to Freeden's programme: a 'sympathetic' and impartial study of their ideology. I try to analyse the 'core' concepts and the (permeable) boundaries of the ideology to be able to describe the phenomenology of clerical fascism. This is highly complicated as a result of the characteristic of fascism that José Ortega y Gasset observed: 'Whichever way we approach fascism we find that it is simultaneously one thing and the contrary, it is A and not A.'<sup>134</sup> The cases in the next chapters will consequently frequently contradict each other. In essence, however, there is a 'core' that the examples share, which makes a comparison valid.

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<sup>129</sup> Friedländer, *Nazi-Duitsland* 106-109

<sup>130</sup> Marendy, 'Anti-Semitism,' 306. Even after Vatican II, certain traditionalist Catholic groups, like the Lefebvrian Society of Pius X, criticise the Vatican II for its renunciation of anti-Semitism. This spurred controversy in 2009, when one of the Lefebvrian bishops, Richard Williamson, even denied the Holocaust. Peter Manseau, 'Catholics & the Shoah,' *Commonweal* 136 (2009) 11-12

<sup>131</sup> Poorthuis and Saleminck, *Een donkere spiegel* 282

<sup>132</sup> Stephen W. Eldridge, 'Ideological Incompatibility: The Forced Fusion of Nazism and Protestant Theology and its Impact on Anti-Semitism in the Third Reich,' *International Social Science Review* 81 (2006) 151-165, 154-155

<sup>133</sup> Pollard, 'Clerical Fascism,' 438

<sup>134</sup> Cited in Ernesto Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory. Capitalism, Fascism, Populism* (London, 1977) 81

## II. 'Extremist Heterodoxy'

The first group of clerical fascists in this thesis consists of the most radical and most controversial examples. These clerical fascists combined extremist political views with a radical religious heterodoxy: an adaptation of the 'normal' religious theology and practice that some would call heretic.<sup>135</sup> The two examples I have chosen differ in many ways, but belong together because of this very element – their political and religious extremism that alienated both contemporary Christians and later observers.

The first example is the *Deutsche Christen* movement in Germany, a religious movement that was an expression of what the Nazis called 'Positive Christianity' – a religion that tried to combine Christianity with Nazism. The adjective 'positive' denotes a preference for the emphasis on 'positive', active elements in Christianity, like the image of Jesus as 'hero' fighting Judaism. The main controversy surrounding this group is its relation to Christianity – when does it stop being Christian, and start being paganist? The religious views of some of the *Deutsche Christen* could be considered an anti-Christian pseudoreligion.

The second example is the Romanian Legionary Movement, a peculiar fascist movement that combined (heterodox) Orthodox Christianity, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, nationalism, Leader worship, death cult and ritualistic acts of violence that provided the movement with a 'quasi-mystic tone rarely found in other fascisms'.<sup>136</sup> The Legionary Movement shared the ultranationalist palingenetic core with generic fascism and sensed an 'inner

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<sup>135</sup> I coined the group name, Extremist Heterodoxy, myself to denote both of these elements.

<sup>136</sup> Griffin, *Nature of Fascism* 139



kinship' with other fascist movements themselves.<sup>137</sup> The Romanian fascists are difficult to place in the clerical fascist spectrum – they resemble the Southeast European fascism of the *Ustaša* and Hlinka's party in the role the historical circumstances play and the strong links between Church and state. In their adaptation of 'normal' faith, they are similar to the *Deutsche Christen* – their extremism and heterodox religious views make the Legionaries an interesting example of this form of clerical fascism.

In this chapter, as in the next two chapters, I will focus on three main themes of clerical fascism. After a short description of both the *Deutsche Christen* movement and the Legion, I will analyse the relations between Church and state. The second part assesses clerical fascism and 'identity' – in which ways were the German and Romanian movements inclusivist and exclusivist, and how did they use the past to legitimise their views and create a true *Volk*? The third part explores the theme of 'regeneration', and analyses how the movements tried to regenerate religion and nation. Because the different nature of the movements – one was a Church movement, the other a political movement that was part of the war regime, one was Protestant, the other Orthodox – they are not comparable in every respect. I will nonetheless examine the two in one chapter, because they share one important feature; their extremist heterodoxy.

### **Positive Christianity in Germany**

The most extreme case of clerical fascism is the convergence of (mainly Protestant) Christianity and Nazism. The historical actors trying to forge such a symbiosis called their form of religion Positive Christianity. Paragraph 24 of the NSDAP's programme stated: 'Die Partei als solche vertritt den Standpunkt eines positiven Christentums, ohne sich konfessionell an ein bestimmtes Bekenntnis zu binden. Sie bekämpft den jüdisch-materialistischen Geist in und ausser uns und ist überzeugt, dass eine

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<sup>137</sup> Ibidem 139

dauernde Genesung unseres Volkes nur erfolgen kann von innen heraus auf der Grundlage: 'Gemeinnutz geht vor Eigennutz'.<sup>138</sup>

The main example of Positive Christianity is the German *Glaubensbewegung 'Deutsche Christen'*. The *Deutsche Christen* were not the only representative of Positive Christianity, but they were by far the most substantial. Another, relatively small example was the Dutch the 'Peasant Leader' Evert Jan Roskam, who propagated a radical 'blood-and-soil' variety of Positive Christianity.<sup>139</sup> In Sweden, some Protestant ministers formed the *Sveriges religiösa reformförbund* (Swedish Association for Religious Reform), that held views comparable to the German Christians.<sup>140</sup> Because the *Deutsche Christen* movement was the most influential and substantial example, I have chosen it as representative for Positive Christianity.

This German Christian movement was a collection of pressure groups within German Protestantism that shared a range of similar ideas. Its foremost mission was to bring about theological adjustment and political adaptation within the German Protestant Church.<sup>141</sup> Their goal was a 'completion of the Lutheran Reformation, which meant that the essential national and racial values needed to be preserved and defended'.<sup>142</sup>

The movement had originated from different *völkisch*-Christian movements during the Weimar years. In June 1932, the minister Joachim Hossenfelder from Berlin started the *Glaubensbewegung Deutsche Christen* as a national Protestant Church party. The *Deutsche Christen* did not succeed in conquering the Church, but was a successful newcomer.<sup>143</sup> The

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<sup>138</sup> W. Hofer, ed., *Der Nationalsozialismus. Dokumente 1933-1945* (Frankfurt am Main, 1957) 30

<sup>139</sup> A.A. de Jonge, *Crisis en critiek der democratie. Anti-democratische stromingen en de daarin levende denkbeelden over de staat in Nederland tussen de wereldoorlogen* (Assen, 1968) 222

<sup>140</sup> Lena Berggren, 'Completing the Lutheran Reformation: Ultra-nationalism, Christianity and the Possibility of 'Clerical Fascism' in Interwar Sweden,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 303-314, 308

<sup>141</sup> Ibidem 308. The German word *evangelisch* is translated in this thesis as 'Protestant'.

<sup>142</sup> Ibidem, 308

<sup>143</sup> Klaus Scholder, *Die Kirchen und das Dritte Reich. Vorgeschichte und Zeit der Illusionen 1918-1934* (Frankfurt, 1980) 273

participation and the resistance this evoked politicised the Church.<sup>144</sup> The *Deutsche Christen* movement reached its peak just before the 'Sports Palace affair' in November 1933.<sup>145</sup> During a rally in the Sports Palace the key speaker Reinhold Krause, leader of the *Deutsche Christen* in Berlin, spoke openly about the issues dividing the movement: using 'abusive language', he attacked the Old Testament, the Apostle Paul and the symbol of the cross – components many Christians deemed essential elements of their faith.<sup>146</sup> This was followed by a period of fragmentation, after which the initial success was never regained again. The organisation of the German Christians was, like much of the NSDAP's early initiatives 'improvisiert aber zweckmäßig', and the movement never became an official element of the party.<sup>147</sup> The German Reichsbischof of the German Protestant Church, Ludwig Müller, was a moderate *Deutsche Christen*, and a leading person in the movement.<sup>148</sup> His function as Reichsbischof was not linked to the *Deutsche Christen*, although he became the 'patron' of the movement.<sup>149</sup>

The politicisation of the Church eventually led to a 'Church struggle' against a newly founded group, the *Bekennende Kirche*. This theological struggle made the NSDAP leadership lose interest in the *Deutsche Christen* project, although the German Christians unsuccessfully tried to revive this interest until the end of the Third Reich.<sup>150</sup> The other rival of Positive Christianity was the anti-Christian neo-paganist movement. The main ideologue of this movement was Alfred Rosenberg, whose *Der Mythos des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts* (1930) was according to Klaus Scholder a 'dezidiert antichristliches Buch' that could impossibly be synthesised with the Christian tradition – Rosenberg's 'religion of the blood' was itself a 'new'

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<sup>144</sup> Ibidem 273

<sup>145</sup> Doris L. Bergen, *Twisted Cross. The German Christian Movement in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill and London, 1996) 15

<sup>146</sup> Ibidem 17

<sup>147</sup> Scholder, *Die Kirchen* 261

<sup>148</sup> Richard Steigmann-Gall, *The Holy Reich. Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919-1945* (Cambridge, 2003) 159

<sup>149</sup> Ibidem 160

<sup>150</sup> Berggren, 'Completing,' 308

faith.<sup>151</sup> Richard Steigmann-Gall does not agree with Scholder on this subject – Rosenberg *did* in fact create a new faith, but it was not entirely anti-Christian, but a radical *revision*: some Christian elements could still be rescued from the ‘Judeo-Roman’ infection.<sup>152</sup> Erich Ludendorff was, unlike Rosenberg, completely anti-Christian. The struggle of the *Deutsche Christen* versus the neo-paganists was a fight over the religious direction of the NSDAP.<sup>153</sup>

### Religious ‘fascism’ in Romania

The Romanian movement differed in many respects from the *Deutsche Christen* movement. Instead of a party in Church politics in a radical Nazi society, the Legionary movement was a fascist organisation in a non-fascist society until it was placed into power with help from the Germans. The Legionary Movement was the only mass fascist party in an Orthodox country, and was interesting for its combination of *Vorfaschismus* and *Radikalfaschismus* in one movement.<sup>154</sup>

The First World War had played a pivotal role in the development of Romanian fascism – in another way than it had played in most other fascist movements, however. The Allies rewarded Romania with a considerable territorial expansion, so it came to incorporate various ‘new’ ethnic groups, most importantly Germans and Hungarians, in the new state. Although a large majority of the Romanians was Orthodox Christians in 1930, some Romanians perceived the ‘new’ minorities as a threat to Orthodox Christian Romania by some.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Scholder, *Die Kirchen* 240; Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 85

<sup>152</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 87, 95, 99

<sup>153</sup> Scholder, *Die Kirchen* 241

<sup>154</sup> Nolte, *Bewegungen* 226

<sup>155</sup> Constantin Iordachi, *Charisma, Politics and Violence: The Legion of the 'Archangel Michael' in Inter-War Romania* (Trondheim, 2004) 109

The predominantly agrarian Romanians suffered from a 'strong feeling of inferiority' after living in a semi-colonial state for a long time.<sup>156</sup> The Romanians inflated their national consciousness by emphasising their Latinity, Christianity and traditional, rural way of life.<sup>157</sup> These values were important for the movement founded and led by the charismatic Cornelius Zelea Codreanu.<sup>158</sup> His *Miscarea Legionara* (Legionary Movement) was known under various names; it was founded as the *Legiunea Arhanghelul Mihail* (Legion of the Archangel Michael) in 1927. In 1930 the *Garda de Fier* (Iron Guard) was formed as a paramilitary organisation, as many fascist movements in Europe. That name came to refer to the whole movement. In 1935 the official name was changed in *Totul pentru Tara* (Everything for the Country).

In 1933 Codreanu's movement was officially dissolved, but it continued to exist. In 1938 the government tried to repress the movement – 1200 of its members were arrested, and its leader was killed.<sup>159</sup> After Codreanu's death in 1938 the movement did not wither away. From then on it was led by Horia Sima, who collaborated with Antonescu in the Second World War National Legionary State. Antonescu and the Legionary Movement did not cooperate wholeheartedly, and the antagonism between the authoritarian Antonescu and the radical Legionaries deepened in 1940.<sup>160</sup> The Legionary movement was eliminated from the government after an abortive *Putsch* in early 1941.

The movement was in some respects more a religious movement than a political fascist party.<sup>161</sup> This is visible in the story of the foundation of the movements: Codreanu had a vision of the Archangel Michael, one of the

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<sup>156</sup> Z. Barbu, 'Rumania,' in: S.J. Woolf, ed., *European Fascism* (London, 1968) 146-166, 146

<sup>157</sup> Ibidem 147

<sup>158</sup> Stephen Fischer-Galati, 'Codreanu, Romanian National Traditions and Charisma,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 7 (2006) 245-250, 246

<sup>159</sup> Barbu, 'Rumania,' 160

<sup>160</sup> Larry L. Watts, *Romanian Cassandra. Ion Antonescu and the Struggle for Reform, 1916-1941* (New York, 1993) 283

<sup>161</sup> Valentin Sandulescu, 'Sacralised Politics in Action: the February 1937 Burial of the Romanian Legionary Leaders Ion Mota and Vasile Marin,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 259-269, 261

central iconographic symbols of Orthodox Christianity and the defender of good against evil.<sup>162</sup> This patron saint of the movement was a good symbol for Codreanu's ambitious claims – he claimed to eliminate social and political injustices and purify Romania. The Legion did not possess a detailed programme, because for them, the country did not lack programs, but *men*.<sup>163</sup> The main ingredients of the Legionary programme were: faith in God, faith in the Mission, love for each other and a love of songs.<sup>164</sup> The Legionaries combined general fascist characteristics with irrationalism, mysticism and Orthodoxy.<sup>165</sup>

The Legionary Movement's religious views were interesting, but are hard to define. The movement was overtly religious, and combined its Christianity with a deep sense of dedication and sacrifice.<sup>166</sup> The Legion's Christian anti-Communism did not drive it into reaction, but to a 'reformist populism' – the movement 'sought salvation in a change of heart as well as of economic conditions'.<sup>167</sup> Ernst Nolte calls the movement more religious than other fascisms, even questioning whether it was a fascist movement or a 'christliche Sekte' – which makes it an interesting case for this thesis. Furthermore, he doubts whether it was Christian at all, because in the Legion's mysticism not God, but the blood was central.<sup>168</sup> Constantin Iordachi says that Legionaries did not think their views were heretical, but thought they fully obeyed the Christian canons, but that in reality, their ideology was 'not only different from but even opposed to the official theology of the Church', and was therefore heretical.<sup>169</sup> The confusion is a result of the ambivalent nature of Legionary religious thought – it combined

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<sup>162</sup> Marius Turda, 'New Perspectives on Romanian Fascism: Themes and Options,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 6 (2005) 143-150, 144-145

<sup>163</sup> Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, 'The Legion of the Archangel Michael: Our Program (1927),' in: Eugen Weber, ed., *Varieties of Fascism. Doctrines of Revolution in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1964) 167-168, 167

<sup>164</sup> Barbu, 'Rumania,' 156

<sup>165</sup> Iordachi, *Charisma* 9; Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology & Antisemitism. The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s* (Oxford, 1991) 77

<sup>166</sup> Barbu, 'Rumania,' 157

<sup>167</sup> Eugen Weber, *Varieties of Fascism. Doctrines of Revolution in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1964) 165

<sup>168</sup> Nolte, *Bewegungen* 222, 224-225

<sup>169</sup> Iordachi, *Charisma* 116-117

Christian thought and symbols with mysticism, fascism and a profane death cult.<sup>170</sup>

The religious views of the Legion were not unique in their time. Constantin Iordachi mentions the 'magical-religious ambiance' of Interwar Romania, a religious current of which the Legion was a part.<sup>171</sup> This 'new' religion was characterised by 'calls for personal devotion, for a greater implication of the believers in the sacraments of the Church, for asceticism and sacrifice; greater emphasis on the religious rituals meant to unite participants, with hymn singing figuring prominently; and close links with the Orthodox Church'.<sup>172</sup> The relationship of the Orthodox Church with these movements was diverse – some 'sects' were part of the official Church, while others only received the support of individual members of the clergy.

## Church and state relations

The possibility of a synthesis between radical Nazism and Christianity has been questioned by popular opinion and older scholarship, which typically saw 'an explicit and persistent antagonism between the two systems of belief and practice'.<sup>173</sup> The church was seen as an institutional and ideological opponent of the regime. Literature on Christianity in the Third Reich covered the repression of the Churches and on the *Bekennende Kirche*.<sup>174</sup> There is, however, no evidence that the Nazis wanted an 'Endlösung der Kirchenfrage' and Nazi policies do not support the view of an explicit antagonism between Nazism and Christianity.<sup>175</sup> Scholars who intended to show the Nazis' hostile attitude towards the Church often used

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<sup>170</sup> J.J.J. Heystek, *De IJzeren Garde 1927-1938. Het legioen van de aartsengel Michael onder leiding van Corneliu Zelea Codreanu* (Houten, 1996) 154

<sup>171</sup> Iordachi, *Charisma* 104-105

<sup>172</sup> Ibidem 106

<sup>173</sup> Doris L. Bergen, 'Nazism and Christianity: Partners and Rivals? A Response to Richard Steigmann-Gall, *The Holy Reich. Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919-1945*,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 42 (2007) 25-33, 25

<sup>174</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 4

<sup>175</sup> Ibidem 188; Friedrich Zipfel, *Kirchenkampf in Deutschland 1933-1945. Religionsverfolgung und Selbstbehauptung der Kirchen in der nationalsozialistischen Zeit* (Berlin, 1965) 253

the fraudulent book on conversations with Adolf Hitler by Hermann Rauschning, in which Hitler is portrayed as extremely anti-Christian.<sup>176</sup> In recent years historians focus more on the affinities between the Christianity and Nazism, although, according to Doris Bergen, most 'hardhitting' accounts do still come from outsiders.<sup>177</sup>

As most European countries, early twentieth century German society was predominantly Christian; 95 percent of the Germans considered himself Christian during Hitler's reign.<sup>178</sup> Therefore, a certain overlap between Christians and Nazis cannot be seen as an anomaly.<sup>179</sup> The question is whether the pro-Christian Nazi rhetoric was a 'cynical ploy' to win religious support, or 'adhered to an inner logic', as Richard Steigmann-Gall claims.<sup>180</sup> In *Deutsche Christen* circles, the latter is certainly true.

Although the Nazis had called themselves 'protestantisch bestimmt' in the early years, they later downplayed denominational differences and proclaimed strict neutrality in Church affairs.<sup>181</sup> *Gauleiter* and *Deutsche Christen* Wilhelm Kube declared that 'National Socialism is religious but not confessional. The organizations within the Church must be banned, that means both the German Christians and the Confessing Front.'<sup>182</sup> Although Hitler allegedly favoured the *Deutsche Christen* movement ideologically, he opted for the 'wait-and-see' method he generally used in regard to internal conflicts when he dealt with the *Kirchenkampf* that was fought between the *Deutsche Christen* movement and the *Bekennende Kirche*.<sup>183</sup> His 'hands off' policy was clear in the labeling of the *Deutsche Christen* movement; Hitler vetoed the name *Evangelische Nationalsozialisten* because of its too

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<sup>176</sup> Hermann Rauschning, *Hitler Speaks. A Series of Political Conversations with Adolf Hitler on his Real Aims* (London, 1940). For example J.R.C. Wright, 'Above Parties': *The Political Attitudes of the German Protestant Church Leadership 1918-1933* (London, 1974) 149

<sup>177</sup> Bergen, 'Nazism,' 26-27

<sup>178</sup> Eldridge, 'Ideological Incompatibility,' 151

<sup>179</sup> Bergen, 'Nazism,' 28

<sup>180</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 14-15

<sup>181</sup> Wright, 'Above Parties' 81

<sup>182</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 179

<sup>183</sup> *Ibidem* 158, 165



'political' name.<sup>184</sup> From the regime's side, this meant that there was a separation of church and state.<sup>185</sup> That is an interesting fact, for, as we shall see later, the *Deutsche Christen* abhorred the idea of a separation of Church and state. The *Deutsche Christen* movement wanted close relations between Church and state, because these institutions were inextricably linked in their worldview.

In the Orthodox tradition the relationship between state and Church has always been close – in Romania the Church historically acted as a 'state-within-the-state', and in the Byzantine tradition religious and secular power were historically in the hands of one person.<sup>186</sup> In the traditional Orthodox view, God's Kingdom manifested itself in a Christian empire.<sup>187</sup> This often contributed to the participation of the Church in political absolutism based on Orthodoxy. In the Interwar period, the Romanian Church had conformed to the policies of established political parties and the parties they thought to be in ascendancy.<sup>188</sup> Combined with a denunciation of 'Jewish' internationalism and communism, this led to the 'implicit adhesion of Church and party in the anti-Semitic movement.'<sup>189</sup> Many Romanian clergymen became members and leaders of the Legionary Movement, leading to an 'informal alliance' between fascism and the Orthodox Church.<sup>190</sup>

In praxis, the relation between the two was ambivalent. The Orthodox Church wanted to defend their institutional privileges, and the Legion seemed to be a useful political ally, with its religious rhetoric and its display of religious symbols – Legionary ceremonies invariably involved Orthodox

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<sup>184</sup> Eldridge, 'Ideological Incompatibility,' 162; Wright, 'Above Parties' 92; Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 5

<sup>185</sup> John S. Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches 1933-45* (London, 1968) 54

<sup>186</sup> Iordachi, *Charisma* 107; Deno J. Geanakoplos, 'Church and State in the Byzantine Empire: A Reconstruction of the Problem of Caesaropapism,' *Church History* 34 (1965) 381-403, 381-382

<sup>187</sup> David T. Koyzis, 'Imaging God and His Kingdom: Eastern Orthodoxy's Iconic Political Ethic,' *Review of Politics* 55 (1993) 267-289, 267

<sup>188</sup> William O. Oldson, 'Alibi for Prejudice: Eastern Orthodoxy, the Holocaust, and Romanian Nationalism,' *East European Quarterly* 36 (2002) 301-311, 303

<sup>189</sup> Ibidem 303

<sup>190</sup> Ibidem 304-305

priests.<sup>191</sup> The relationship was unstable, with both periods of collaboration and conflict. Most importantly, the higher Orthodox hierarchy was worried by the active participation of the local Orthodox clergy in the Legion, for it could be harmful to Church interests on the long run. Codreanu objected the Church's reluctance to involve itself with the Legion, but, according to Constantin Iordachi, he knew there *were* substantive differences between the official Church theology and the Legionary ideology.<sup>192</sup> Like many other fascists, Codreanu occasionally criticised the Church's *institution*, but not its teachings and followers, a distinction that we see in Germany too.<sup>193</sup>

### ***Romanianism and Positive Christian identity***

German Positive Christianity was both inclusivist and exclusivist in nature, because it wanted to incorporate all 'true' Christians and every 'true' German, and at the same time excluded all who were no part of this privileged group. To really include all Germans the denominational separation that divided the German *Volks* had to be bridged.<sup>194</sup> This syncretism was already proclaimed in the 25-point programme of the National Socialists in 1920, and was motivated by negative and positive incentives.

The primary positive motivation was the idea of the nation that transcends all other divisions. In order to achieve a 'real' nation, a 'national religion' had to be established. This debate had originated in the time of the German unification, when the division between Catholics and Protestants was seen as the biggest stumbling block to national unity.<sup>195</sup> Joseph Goebbels formulated another motive for the creation of a symbiosis of the two forms of Christianity: 'Catholicism is music (feeling), Protestantism poetry (reason and personal responsibility). (...) Every great German is

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<sup>191</sup> Iordachi, *Charisma* 114

<sup>192</sup> Ibidem 115, 117. Codreanu solved this by proclaiming that there was an essential difference between the worldly and secular aims of the political Legion, and the spiritual goals of the clergy.

<sup>193</sup> Ibidem 117. This 'clerical fascist anti-clericalism' was not unusual during the Interwar period.

<sup>194</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 45

<sup>195</sup> Ibidem 52

Catholic in his feelings, Protestant in his actions.<sup>196</sup> The central question was not whether you were Catholic or Protestant, but 'do you believe in eternal Germany, and do you believe in the power that works through our Lord and Saviour.'<sup>197</sup>

In practice, however, the German Christian movement strongly favoured Protestantism, and anti-Catholicism was a motive for its 'syncreticism'. Most Nazis favoured the Protestant Church because of its supposed 'German' nature, whereas Catholicism was suspicious because of its 'ultramontanism'.<sup>198</sup> Many National Socialist 'Catholics' showed a tendency towards Protestant doctrines on ideological grounds.<sup>199</sup> Most Nazis rejected Catholic internationalism, and many Catholics rejected the National Socialist racialism. In order not to provoke the Christians too much, the Nazi regime distinguished between anti-clericalism, which they did propagate, and anti-Christianity, because, according to Hitler: 'Church and Christianity are not identical'.<sup>200</sup>

Understandably, the Catholic Church's relation with the regime was never enthusiastic, despite several points of ideological analogy.<sup>201</sup> The highpoint in the relationship was the *Reichskonkordat* of 1933, a treaty much desired by Hitler.<sup>202</sup> Hitler hoped to gain recognition and 'support' from Rome, while the Vatican aimed to strengthen the position of the Catholics

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<sup>196</sup> Ibidem 53-54

<sup>197</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 106

<sup>198</sup> Bergen, 'Nazism,' 31

<sup>199</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 11, 82. Many Nazis were 'Catholics' in name, and not so much in practice. This is because of the German system, where faith is an obligatory state affair and taxes and Church membership are interconnected. People normally do not unsubscribe from their Church, even when they are no regular Church attendants. In that sense Nazis like Hitler and Goebbels can be described as 'Catholics'. Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* xv.

<sup>200</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 21, 188, 61-62: Hitler's view on Catholicism is interesting, for he once proclaimed his adoration of Ritter von Schönerer's ruthless anti-Catholic *standpoints*, but for Karl Lueger's *style* – the former had a good analysis, but the latter was a tactician. Hitler needed a combination of the two, for although Schönerer's attacks on the Catholic Church were ideologically sound, it was political suicide. The Austrian thinkers served as Hitler's intellectual 'Vätergeneration'.

<sup>201</sup> Ibidem 154

<sup>202</sup> Scholder, *Die Kirchen* 482

and advance the interests of the Church in Germany.<sup>203</sup> The Concordat was a method for Hitler to force the Churches out of the field of politics, just like Mussolini had attempted with the Lateran Treaty of 1929. Violations of the Concordat's terms by the Nazis led to the papal encyclical *Mit brennender Sorgen* in 1937.

In the field of theology, inclusivism was to be achieved by anti-doctrinalism. Dissension within the new Christian movement was prevented by a refusal to systematically address the questions that had divided Christianity, for example the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and by refraining from theorising about the differences between Lutherans and Calvinists.<sup>204</sup> This 'pragmatic' anti-doctrinalism was combined with a general anti-intellectualism. As a result the German Christian theologians opposed theology, because not *theology* should not be central, but *faith*, as Martin Luther had said. Faith did not spring from religious academic discourse, which was too complicated, hollow and alien, but it 'grew out of life'.<sup>205</sup> Legalism and dogmatism were deemed 'Jewish', a label that was attributed to the members of the *Bekennende Kirche*.<sup>206</sup> The Reichsminister of Church Affairs Hanns Kerrl even legislated the anti-doctrinal position in 1935, when he banned the use of the word *Irrlehre* (heresy) for two years.<sup>207</sup> As a result of this 'general disregard for doctrine' no complete religious system was developed.<sup>208</sup> One could, consequently, not convert to Positive Christianity, which was a 'social and political worldview'.<sup>209</sup> It could, however, serve as the basis for the *Volkskirche* that the German Christians wanted to establish, whose core would not be 'affirmation of certain tenets of faith' but 'the insistence that adherence to particular religious beliefs played no role in determining membership in the spiritual community.'<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Ibidem

<sup>204</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 45-46

<sup>205</sup> Ibidem 173, 175

<sup>206</sup> Bergen, 'Nazism,' ; Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 32

<sup>207</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 47

<sup>208</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 84

<sup>209</sup> Ibidem

<sup>210</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 44

The Legionary Movement did not have to deal with one large *Romanian* religious minority in the way the Nazis had to deal with *German* Catholics. Orthodoxy was the main religion of the Romanians, while the other denominations were adhered to by minorities living in Romania.<sup>211</sup> This mixture led to religious and ethnic rivalries.<sup>212</sup> The Legionaries could, consequently, focus on the link between religion and nationalism in Romania, without the ambivalence regarding a minority like the Germans displayed towards the Catholics.<sup>213</sup>

This led to a 'Manie des Nationalismus' that became a main ingredient of Legionary ideology, but that was criticised in some Orthodox circles.<sup>214</sup> In Legionary thought, Orthodoxy was an 'Ausdruck der autochthonen Geistigkeit Rumäniens', that could not be separated from ethnical elements like soil, language and blood.<sup>215</sup> The most important ideologue of this *Romanianism*, Professor Nae Ionescu, created a doctrine of fundamental incompatibility between Orthodoxy and Western democracy, and of the uniqueness of the relationship between Orthodoxy and Romanian nationalism – to be Romanian meant to be Orthodox.<sup>216</sup> The alternatives, Catholicism and Protestantism, were products of the alien Western civilisation. The nationalist case was interwoven with the Church and clergy – a 'true priest' was a Legionary, and a Legionary was, naturally, 'the best son of the Church'.<sup>217</sup> Legionary thought, thus, legitimised the sacralisation of the nation and the state, and the nationalisation of Orthodox Christianity.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Heystek, *IJzeren Garde* 56

<sup>212</sup> Ruth M. Ediger, 'History of an Institution as a Factor for Predicting Church Institutional Behavior: The Cases of the Catholic Church in Poland, the Orthodox Church in Romania, and the Protestant Churches in East Germany,' *East European Quarterly* 39 (2005) 299-328306

<sup>213</sup> Armin Heinen, *Die Legion 'Erzengel Michael' in Rumänien. Soziale Bewegung und politische Organisation. Ein Beitrag zum Problem des internationalen Faschismus* (München, 1986) 138

<sup>214</sup> Alexandru Zub, 'Die rumänische Orthodoxie im ideen- und kulturgeschichtlichen Kontext der Zwischenkriegszeit,' in: Hans-Christian Maner and Martin Schulze Wessel, eds., *Religion im Nationalstaat zwischen den Weltkriegen 1918-1939. Polen - Tschechoslowakei - Ungarn - Rumänien* (Stuttgart, 2002) 179-188, 184

<sup>215</sup> Ibidem 186

<sup>216</sup> Fischer-Galati, 'Codreanu,' 247; Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology* 82

<sup>217</sup> Iordachi, *Charisma* 115

<sup>218</sup> Sandulescu, 'Sacralised Politics,' 259

The other characteristic of the Extremist Heterodox ideology was its exclusivism. The new German Church would be for *all* Germans, but the Church would be *only* for Germans too.<sup>219</sup> 'Non-Aryan' people consequently had no place in the German Church, and the same was true for people who were not considered to be 'true' Germans.<sup>220</sup> The *Deutsche Christen* movement shared many of its enemies with the Nazis. For many Christians, the Nazis' 'battles waged against Germany's enemies constituted a war in the name of Christianity.'<sup>221</sup> The people they fought, liberals, Marxists and Jews, were seen as threats to the moral and ethical beliefs of the German people. The enemy was used as an antithesis and a boundary. Anything that was not real Aryan was 'Jewish'; secularism, Marxism, capitalism and so on. The distinction between the Nazis' foes was blurred. Even opponents within the *Deutsche Christen* movement often accused one another of being influenced by the 'Jewish spirit'.<sup>222</sup> 'Jewishness' was thus used as the negation of 'Aryanism'.

In Romania too, the 'others', were perceived as enemies. In Romania, the internal foes were the 'new' Romanian minorities, combined with the typical enemies during the 'fascist epoch' – the freemasons, liberals, Jews and Bolsheviks.<sup>223</sup> The liberals were criticised for their 'pro-Jewish' policies, and were not considered 'national' and legitimate by the Legionaries.<sup>224</sup>

Like most contemporary religious and fascist movements, both movements rejected everything they considered 'modern' and a product of the Enlightenment. The Legionary instinctive mystic Orthodoxy and accent on traditional organic development and village life was the opposite of liberalist rationalism, positivist science and modern urban life.<sup>225</sup> Legionaries

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<sup>219</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 11

<sup>220</sup> This was a racist doctrine, but it was also directed against people that could racially be regarded 'German', but that were not considered 'true' Germans because of, for example, their political views.

<sup>221</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 261

<sup>222</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 32

<sup>223</sup> Iordachi, *Charisma* 109; Yeshayahu Jelínek, *The Parish Republic: Hlinka's Slovak People's Party 1939-1945* (Boulder, 1976)64; Nolte, *Bewegungen* 201

<sup>224</sup> Iordachi, *Charisma* 111; James Ramon Felak, 'At the Price of the Republic'. *Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, 1929-1938* (Pittsburgh, 1994)43-44

<sup>225</sup> Heystek, *IJzeren Garde* 140; Zub, 'Die rumänische Orthodoxie,' 186

were the 'archenemies' of secularisation, urbanisation and industrialisation.<sup>226</sup> These modern threats were, as elsewhere in Europe, equated with Judaism. According to Alexandru Zub, the nature of Romanian Orthodoxy changed during the Interwar period; it had been 'geistige und kulturelle Strömung', but it became a political movement that was often connected with extremist, xenophobe and autarchic views.<sup>227</sup>

Hastings shows how nationalism and Christianity are strongly interconnected. One of the central themes is the identification of the nation as a 'New Israel' and of the people of the nation as the 'Chosen People'. Theologically this goes back to the Augustinian idea of the Christians replacing the Jews as God's Chosen People (supersessionism).<sup>228</sup> During the nineteenth century the German pietist movement adhered to this view of a special covenant with God. This idea provided all political decisions and actions with a sacral aura, for it was all part of God's plan of salvation.<sup>229</sup> This worked out in various ways: history was seen as a series of punishments and rewards by God, and in actual politics hard measures were sanctioned as parts of God's plan.

The Chosen People had to revive the nation spiritually, and God had chosen the German people to 'inaugurate a new chapter in salvation history'.<sup>230</sup> This theological trend had started in the 1850's and culminated during the First World War into a 'war theology'.<sup>231</sup> The war was seen as a 'crusade' to punish the sinful enemy, and Christians were in the vanguard of nationalist agitation.<sup>232</sup> A similar idea had existed in relation to the war of 1870, where France was punished for the anti-Christian legacy of the French Revolution and their sinfulness.<sup>233</sup> The same happened after the defeat of

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<sup>226</sup> Barbu, 'Rumania,' 164

<sup>227</sup> Zub, 'Die rumänische Orthodoxie,' 186

<sup>228</sup> Eldridge, 'Ideological Incompatibility,' 153

<sup>229</sup> Hartmut Lehmann, 'Pietism and Nationalism: The Relationship between Protestant Revivalism and National Renewal in Nineteenth-Century Germany,' *Church History* 51 (1982) 39-53, 52

<sup>230</sup> John S. Conway, 'The Political Role of German Protestantism, 1870-1990,' *Journal of Church & State* 34 (1992) 819-842

<sup>231</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 15

<sup>232</sup> Ibidem 15

<sup>233</sup> Conway, 'Political Role,'

1918, which was not seen in military or socio-economic terms, but was analysed in Christian and moral terms as God's punishment.<sup>234</sup> This sacralisation of the German nation, in which political allegiance was transformed in religious obedience and political decisions into divine commands continued in the Weimar years and the Third Reich. It led *Deutsche Christen* to equate the followers of Christ with 'true' Germans, which in their view were the supporters of the NSDAP.<sup>235</sup>

### Historical legitimisation

In Germany, the years before the Third Reich had been a formative period for Positive Christianity. The Weimar republic was, in contrast to its predecessor, seen as 'Godless' by the German Christians.<sup>236</sup> The revolutions that had followed the First World War had destroyed the Christian *Kaiserreich* that was identified with the Protestant Church, and replaced it with a 'revolutionary' Social Democratic state where Church and State were separated.<sup>237</sup> The idea of religion as a private matter was undesirable for many Protestants because it was a 'thoroughly Marxist' concept.<sup>238</sup>

The ideal state for most German Protestants was authoritarian and Christian.<sup>239</sup> Such a state was presumed to have existed at some moment before 1848.<sup>240</sup> Although the realisation of this type of state ran counter to the trend of an independent church in a secular state, Protestants still hoped for its fulfilment at the end of the nineteenth century. The end of the German empire in November 1918 meant a definitive end to the period of 'Throne and Altar', which was replaced by an abhorred pluralist system.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 16

<sup>235</sup> Ibidem 24

<sup>236</sup> Ibidem 15

<sup>237</sup> Wright, 'Above Parties' 11

<sup>238</sup> Conway, *Nazi Persecution* 51; Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 10

<sup>239</sup> Conway, 'Political Role,'

<sup>240</sup> Wright, 'Above Parties' 146

<sup>241</sup> Conway, 'Political Role,'. For Catholics the *Kaiserreich* experience had been different, with a *Kulturkampf* to fight. Bergen, 'Nazism,' 33



The Romanian fascists harked back to the Medieval principalities that were seen as periods of grandeur and importance of 'Romania', and the (holy) Moldavian prince Stephen the Great that served as an example of a great Romanian leader.<sup>242</sup> Stephen and other Romanian princes played an important role in the life and rhetoric of Codreanu, who had daily conversations with the dead and holy, mostly with the Archangel Michael.<sup>243</sup> Codreanu saw himself as the 'executor' of the historic legacy of these famous champions of *Romanianism* and Orthodoxy.<sup>244</sup>

Parliamentary democracy's pluralism was despised by rightwing Christians. The anti-revolutionary, anti-socialist and anti-democratic sentiments led German Protestants to become the 'natural political allies' with the *Deutschnationale Volkspartei*, because 'Die Kirche ist politisch neutral – aber sie wählt deutsch national'.<sup>245</sup> Nationalism was a part of Protestant thought long before the Nazis' *Machtergreifung*, but it was taken to a higher level during the Nazi years. During the Weimar years it had taken a religious colouration.<sup>246</sup> In conservative circles inherently Christian and patriotic concerns became entangled, eventually blurring the line between worship of the nation and worship of God.<sup>247</sup>

The *Deutsche Christen*'s main influence was the reformer Martin Luther, who was central to the *Deutsche Christen* rhetoric and was firmly placed in the 'Nazi pantheon'.<sup>248</sup> Luther was seen as the 'first anti-Semite' because of the anti-Semitism in his works.<sup>249</sup> Most important was the treatise '*Von den Juden und ihren Lügen*' (1543) which contained the cry 'Let us drive [the Jews] out of the country for all time (...) away with them'. The

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<sup>242</sup> Heinen, *Legion* 137

<sup>243</sup> Ibidem 135

<sup>244</sup> Fischer-Galati, 'Codreanu,' 247

<sup>245</sup> Conway, 'Political Role,' ; Wright, 'Above Parties' 49

<sup>246</sup> Moritz Föllmer, 'The Problem of National Solidarity in Interwar Germany,' *German History* (2005) 202-231 202-203

<sup>247</sup> Robert P. Ericksen, *Theologians under Hitler. Gerhard Kittel, Paul Althaus and Emanuel Hirsch* (New Haven and London, 1985) 199; Eldridge, 'Ideological Incompatibility,' 151

<sup>248</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 55

<sup>249</sup> Ibidem 24

German Protestants embraced this rhetoric.<sup>250</sup> The other reformer, John Calvin, was mentioned less, but his work contained 'anti-Jewish religious disdain' too.<sup>251</sup>

In line with the goals of the Positive Christians, Luther's *Deushtum* was deemed most important.<sup>252</sup> Because of the anti-doctrinalism and in order not to alienate the Catholic Germans, his Reformation was not emphasised. For Protestants Luther had a positive connotation, as a nationalist and anti-Semitic hero, but for Catholics he was responsible for the Schism.<sup>253</sup> The 'German' Luther was used as an example for the Nazis; they fought in Luther's spirit and Hitler was portrayed as the modern day Luther, because both were 'son of our people'.<sup>254</sup>

Legionary thought was not unique, but was prepared by forerunners. For Codreanu, the use of these precursors had a great propagandistic impact.<sup>255</sup> Codreanu's views fitted in the general trend of appreciation for the traditional agrarian and Christian way of life that the Romanian intelligentsia adopted during the nineteenth century, as a way to distinguish from the more advanced West.<sup>256</sup> Various anti-Semitic populist movements came to dominate the Romanian cultural scene in the first decades of the twentieth century, of which Codreanu's was but one.

One man in particular had been a very importance influence on Codreanu and his Legionaries, professor Alexandru C. Cuza. He founded the anti-Semitic *Liga Apararii National Crestine* (League of National Christian Defense, 1923), of which Codreanu was an important member. In 1927 they broke over political priorities – Cuza was a member of the corrupt political establishment that Codreanu despised, and Codreanu focused more on

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<sup>250</sup> Eldridge, 'Ideological Incompatibility,' 155

<sup>251</sup> Ibidem 154

<sup>252</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 105

<sup>253</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 136

<sup>254</sup> Ibidem 1, 136

<sup>255</sup> Heinen, *Legion* 140; Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology* 186

<sup>256</sup> Barbu, 'Rumania,' 148

spiritual than on materialistic values.<sup>257</sup> It was after this break-up that Codreanu formed his own movement.

Romanian fascism was strongly anti-Western. Codreanu's antagonism towards the Western European civilisation was inspired by the Slavic *Narodnik* and Tolstoian ideas, and the Tsarist slogan: 'Autocracy, Orthodoxy, Nationality'.<sup>258</sup> Specifically Romanian influences were nineteenth century forerunners like the mystic nationalist poet Mihai Eminescu.<sup>259</sup> The main recent influence was the above-mentioned Professor Cuza, who influenced his and other student's anti-Semitism in the early twentieth century.

### **Regeneration of the Volk**

Just like 'normal' fascism was 'palingenetic' in its wish for a national rebirth, Positive Christians hoped to achieve a spiritual regeneration as a result of Nazism.<sup>260</sup> This interpretation differs from the traditional idea of Nazism as a nihilistic reaction to the 'death of God'. Steigmann-Gall calls the project of Positive Christianity a 'radicalized and singularly horrific attempt to preserve God *against* secularized society'.<sup>261</sup> The attempt to save Christianity was combined with visions of the Nazis as God-sent – the 'Messianic' Hitler was described by many churchmen as the 'divinely sent leader of the people', and he represented an 'earnest meeting between gospel and nation, Jesus Christ and the National Socialist movement'.<sup>262</sup> Hitler, and his movement, would purify the 'temple of the German *Volk*'.<sup>263</sup> This purification contained upholding a 'decent' conservative social morality by opposing 'alien' or 'Jewish' infiltration in society and by erasing pornographic influences.<sup>264</sup> The

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<sup>257</sup> Watts, *Romanian Cassandra* 132; Sandulescu, 'Sacralised Politics,' 260

<sup>258</sup> Weber, *Varieties of Fascism* 98; Fischer-Galati, 'Codreanu,' 246

<sup>259</sup> Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology* 90

<sup>260</sup> Griffin, *Nature of Fascism* 26

<sup>261</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 12

<sup>262</sup> Conway, *Nazi Persecution* 163; Susannah Heschel, 'Nazifying Christian Theology: Walter Grundmann and the Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Church Life,' *Church History* 63 (1994) 587-605, 601

<sup>263</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 259

<sup>264</sup> Conway, 'Political Role,'

idea of Nazism as a bulwark against anti-Christian forces was visible in Church attendance too: after the *Kirchenaustritt* during the Weimar years, this trend reversed from 1933 on, which makes Steigmann-Gall conclude that 'national renewal and religious renewal were believed to be deeply connected.'<sup>265</sup>

In order to achieve a spiritual regeneration, the *Deutsche Christen* wanted to purify the Church and the Christian religion. One of the aspects that needed to be eliminated was institutional Christianity. Christianity had to be freed from the institutional shackles, in order to be free and strong.<sup>266</sup> After this, the Church's attitude could change; it had been a 'feminine', weak Church, but the new Church had to be 'masculine' and aggressive.<sup>267</sup> This was above all seen in the militarisation of the Church – *Reichsbischof* Ludwig Müller was a former naval chaplain who wore a decorated uniform. During the First World War the Church had made a grave mistake by being the Church of the home front, but the new Church would be a 'Soldier's Church', whose members were 'storm troopers for Christ'.<sup>268</sup>

Regeneration was only possible when a national Church, a *Volkskirche* was created. A *Volkskirche* was a Church that was bound to a geographic region, its ruler, and its baptised population, and was based upon the concepts of 'race' and 'blood'.<sup>269</sup> Historically, the German Protestant Church had been a provincial Church; territorially divided and organisationally bound to the local governments.<sup>270</sup> The establishment of a *Volkskirche* would be 'completion of Luther's reformation', and would at the same time serve the totalitarian claims of the Nazi state.<sup>271</sup> Hence the Positive Christians' idea of a *Volkskirche* as the greatest gift they could give the Third Reich. The regime, however, thought differently and stuck to neutrality in Church matters.<sup>272</sup> The idea of a *Volkskirche* had existed for a considerable period in German circles;

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<sup>265</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 114

<sup>266</sup> Ibidem 21

<sup>267</sup> Eldridge, 'Ideological Incompatibility,' 158

<sup>268</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 61-66

<sup>269</sup> Ibidem 10, 7

<sup>270</sup> Ediger, 'History,' 311

<sup>271</sup> Conway, *Nazi Persecution* 53

<sup>272</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 10, 117

during the nineteenth century attempts to unify the Church had failed because of the different Protestant traditions. The roots of the idea were seen in pre-Boniface Germany that supposedly had its own *Volkskirche*.<sup>273</sup> The *Volkskirche* went one step further than the old state of Throne and Altar – in the new identification between Church and German nation the Church focused on the nation's fate instead of the individual soul's salvation.<sup>274</sup>

The Romanian movement pursued a moral regeneration of the nation in a Christian and mystical sense. The Romanian fascists saw it as their mission to 'reconcile' the country with God by fighting against the powers of Darkness.<sup>275</sup> This 'national rebirth' was described as a 'Christian revolution', that was not political, but *spiritual* and *Christian* in nature.<sup>276</sup> The 'revolution' was described in words and phrases with a Biblical resonance – as an 'ethnic resurrection', 'the triumph of Romanianism' and 'the people's transfiguration'.<sup>277</sup> This goal could only be achieved with a 'new generation' of 'uncorrupted' young people, and therefore an *omul nou* had to be created.<sup>278</sup> These 'new men' were, in Codreanu's words: 'The finest souls that our minds can conceive, the proudest, tallest, straightest, strongest, cleverest, cleanest, bravest and most working that our race can produce'.<sup>279</sup> The *omul nou* would go on a Christian crusade against 'democratic politics, Jewish or 'Jew-like' capitalism and heathen communism'.<sup>280</sup> The Legionary Movement resembled the *Deutsche Christen* movement in their mysticism and irrationalism, and in the depiction of the nation as a biological entity with a materialistic (body) and a spiritual (soul) side to it.<sup>281</sup>

When German society would be cleansed from 'alien' influences, it would be organised in accordance with the German *Volksgeist* both on an

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<sup>273</sup> Wright, 'Above Parties' 1,2; Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 106

<sup>274</sup> Conway, 'Political Role'

<sup>275</sup> Barbu, 'Rumania,' 157; Heystek, *IJzeren Garde* 142; Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology* 83

<sup>276</sup> Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology* 83-84

<sup>277</sup> Ibidem 93

<sup>278</sup> Heinen, *Legion* 135; Valentin Sandulescu, 'Fascism and Its Quest for the 'New Man': The Case of the Romanian Legionary Movement,' *Studia Hebraica* 4 (2004) 349-361, 350

<sup>279</sup> Codreanu, 'The Legion,' 168

<sup>280</sup> Fischer-Galati, 'Codreanu,' 245

<sup>281</sup> Heinen, *Legion* 136

economical and political level. The new German society was to be a *Volksgemeinschaft* organised according to an organic, harmonious and *völkisch* social ethic, forming an antithesis of the internationalist red, black and gold forces of Marxism, the Vatican and capitalism.<sup>282</sup> The anti-capitalism should not be taken at face value; a dichotomy was created between *schaffendes* and *raffendes* capitalism, between a 'third way', Germanic capitalism and 'Jewish mammonism', like many Christian movements had done before.<sup>283</sup> German style capitalism would hold 'public need before private greed.'<sup>284</sup>

In a similar vein, the Legion envisioned a new economical and political organisation in their future state. In the new world order, Romanian societies would be organised differently. The leading theoretician of practical authoritarian corporatism during the 1930s, Mihail Manoilescu, had much influence during the thirties, but had very little opportunity to implement his ideas in the Romanian society.<sup>285</sup> The Romanian fascists were anti-democratic and anti-capitalist, but, although they theoretically based their economic ideas on Medieval guilds, the Legionaries remained closely connected to the Romanian industrial elite.<sup>286</sup> This corporatism was popular in European right-wing circles, but its practical failure was all too common in Interwar Europe...

### **Cleansing Christianity**

Both movements adapted the tenets of their faith. Although both claimed to be antidoctrinal, the *Deutsche Christen*, being a theological faction within the Church, theorised more about these alterations of the orthodox doctrines. The Romanians, as I have described above, added an irrational mysticism to the Eastern Orthodox, and elements like the swastika, a death cult and the

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<sup>282</sup> Föllmer, 'Problem,' 203; Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 43

<sup>283</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 42, 47

<sup>284</sup> Ibidem 190

<sup>285</sup> Stanley Payne, *Fascism: Comparison and Definition* (Madison, 1980) 118

<sup>286</sup> Heinen, *Legion* 185; Heystek, *IJzeren Garde* 361

*pamântul stramosesc* – a little bag filled with the ‘holy soil’ of Romania that Legionary men carried.<sup>287</sup> These ideas did deviate from traditional Orthodoxy, but did in fact often occur in Interwar rural Romania.

In Germany, the nation’s fate was thought to be dependent on the Christian virtues of its people. The Nazi state showed its ‘practical Christian nature’ through a return to Christian morality.<sup>288</sup> The regeneration was not always this harmless, though. One of the main beliefs of the *Deutsche Christen* movement was the centrality of race and the need to preserve the German race from alien influences.

The theological logic behind this curious theory was the idea of a revelation of God outside the Scripture and Jesus, in nature and history.<sup>289</sup> This revelation in God’s creation made clear that *Homo sapiens* was divided in God-given races whose members all had their own physical and psychological features. Race, as an expression of God’s will, was *holy*.<sup>290</sup> The hierarchy was clear – the ‘Aryan’ race was created in the image of God, and its task was to be an example for the rest of the world.<sup>291</sup> The *Deutsche Christen* were not merely parroting the Nazis’ racial views. The movement’s own racialism was already present in the ten point plan they had published in 1932, of which the seventh point sounded: ‘We see in race, *Volkstum*, and nation laws of life that God has bequeathed and entrusted to us. It is God’s law that we concern ourselves with their preservation. Mixing of the races, therefore, is to be opposed’.<sup>292</sup>

Of course this racialism conflicted with Christianity’s universalist claims. However, Positive Christian theologians distinguished between a visible (earthly, racial and national) Church and an invisible (universal) Church.<sup>293</sup> The traditional universalist claims were rejected because ‘true Christian faith unfolds itself productively only within the given order of

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<sup>287</sup> Heystek, *IJzeren Garde* 154

<sup>288</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 125

<sup>289</sup> Eldridge, ‘Ideological Incompatibility,’ 159

<sup>290</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 11

<sup>291</sup> Conway, *Nazi Persecution* 146

<sup>292</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 23

<sup>293</sup> *Ibidem* 11

creation'.<sup>294</sup> Race consciousness had originated from missionaries who had adapted the Christian message for each *Volk*. In 1933 this culminated into the idea that no such thing as a *humanity* existed, but only German Christians, Chinese Christians, Jewish Christians, et cetera.<sup>295</sup> For Positive Christians sin and salvation were no longer central to Christianity, but rather struggle of the *Volk*.<sup>296</sup>

As a result, the confrontation of Judaism and Christianity became a racial struggle. A most typical example is the issue of converted and baptised Jews. Traditionally, baptism was viewed as 'an act of faith that made all Christians equal in the sight of God', but in *Deutsche Christen* circles baptism was not enough, because it did not make a Jewish person German – which was a huge break with the orthodox Christian tradition.<sup>297</sup> Many *Deutsche Christen* wanted a full implementation of the Aryan paragraph, which meant a separation of Aryan and non-Aryan parishes.<sup>298</sup>

The *Deutsche Christen* assumed the task to win the apocalyptic struggle against the enemy.<sup>299</sup> In this struggle a strong dualism was present – the 'storm troopers of Christ' were to fight the (Jewish) 'cosmic force of evil'.<sup>300</sup> As we have seen, distinction between the enemies was blurred by the Nazis, leading to a struggle to the bitter end of Christ versus Marx, good versus evil, God versus the devil.<sup>301</sup> In this binary opposition, the Jews, Marxist and liberals played the role of evil, a role that was exemplified in the revolutions after the First World War, which were revolution of the 'powers of darkness'.<sup>302</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> Ibidem 24

<sup>295</sup> Ibidem 29

<sup>296</sup> Ibidem 158

<sup>297</sup> Eldridge, 'Ideological Incompatibility,' 159; Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 22. This was, however, a fundamental illogic in the Nazi racial laws: Jewishness was seen as a biological fact, and therefore baptising was not an option. But the Jewish 'race' was decided by the *religion* of one's grandparents. Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 42

<sup>298</sup> Conway, *Nazi Persecution* 53

<sup>299</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 18

<sup>300</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 7; Conway, *Nazi Persecution* 146

<sup>301</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 13, 49

<sup>302</sup> Wright, 'Above Parties' 50



The Romanian regime collaborated with the Germans to achieve the *Endlösung* of the 'Jewish Question'. They depicted the world in dualistic terms – in their monomaniac 'Katastrophendenken' the Jews were described as a plague and a danger, and the struggle against them as a Holy War.<sup>303</sup> The Spanish civil war was seen in the same simplistic fashion; as confrontation between atheism and Christianity.<sup>304</sup> All 'arch-enemies of Romanianism', the Jews, 'Judaisers', and Communists, had to be exterminated.<sup>305</sup>

The Romanians, however, differed from the Germans on the issue of racism. In Romania, Nazi racial theory 'war den Legionären fremd', and although some attempted to formulate a 'scientific' racial theory, the core of Legionary anti-Semitism was not 'scientific' racism but remained more traditional form of xenophobia, motivated by cultural and economic grounds.<sup>306</sup> This was, like in most Christian circles, combined with traditional anti-Judaism. Religious, cultural and economic anti-Semitism was stronger than the racial variety in Romania.

Positive Christians opposed 'modernism', which was, in their view, everything that was related to the French revolution. Robert Ericksen sees the reaction of the rightwing theologians as a response to the 'crisis of modernity', that was a combination of the industrial and democratic revolution, but above all an intellectual crisis in which old truths were replaced with rational knowledge which led to a crisis of faith.<sup>307</sup> The reaction of 'anti-modern' Christianity was a rejection of rationalism and the other fruits of the Enlightenment, for, as Luther had declared, reason is 'the Devil's whore'.<sup>308</sup> Of course, modernism was equated with Jewishness.

On top of the racial struggle against alien influences came the struggle against the 'Jewish spirit' inside Christianity'.<sup>309</sup> The main theological

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<sup>303</sup> Nolte, *Bewegungen* 222, 224

<sup>304</sup> Sandulescu, 'Sacralised Politics,' 261

<sup>305</sup> Fischer-Galati, 'Codreanu,' 248

<sup>306</sup> Heinen, *Legion* 135; Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology* 93; Turda, 'New Perspectives,' 146

<sup>307</sup> Ericksen, *Theologians* 2,5

<sup>308</sup> Ibidem 199; Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 55

<sup>309</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 14

problem for the *Deutsche Christen* was the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. Whereas traditional theology saw Christianity as a continuation of Judaism, just like the New Testament was the continuation and fulfilment of the Old Testament, the *Deutsche Christen* disputed this idea by denying all ties between the two beliefs, and by proclaiming Christianity to be 'the unbridgeable religious opposition to Judaism'.<sup>310</sup>

The next step was an adaptation of the Bible in order to fit their beliefs. The first thing that was challenged was the canonicity of the Old Testament as Marcion, Cathari and, more recently, Adolf von Harnack had done before.<sup>311</sup> Some wanted to eliminate the whole Old Testament, for it was too materialistic and too un-German or Jewish.<sup>312</sup> For others, the discussions dealt with how much of the Old Testament should be retained. Some parts of the Old Testament were seen as the result of a 'cunning Jewish conspiracy', while some sections stemmed from the 'best Aryan tradition'.<sup>313</sup> On the whole, the 'canon of the blood' was seen as more important than the canonicity of the Bible. The parts of the Scripture that should be retained were the parts that affirmed *Deutsche Christen* movement's teachings: not the doctrinal Ten Commandments, but often the psalms, the poetic books and the prophets, who were, allegedly, 'downright antisemitic in their focus'.<sup>314</sup>

Christianity had propagated 'false teachings' involving the New Testament. The Church had taught a 'feminine' Jesus, whereas the real Jesus had been a masculine hero. This heroic Jesus was present in radical *Deutsche Christen* circles and their precursors. In a German publication in 1927 the author described Jesus as the 'transfiguration of the Siegfried idea' who could 'break the neck of the Jewish-Satanic snake with its iron fist'.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 21; Heschel, 'Nazifying Christian Theology,' 591

<sup>311</sup> Eldridge, 'Ideological Incompatibility,' 159; Richard Steigmann-Gall, 'The Nazis' 'Positive Christianity': a Variety of 'Clerical Fascism'?', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 315-327, 322

<sup>312</sup> Heschel, 'Nazifying Christian Theology,' 588; Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 20; Conway, *Nazi Persecution* 53

<sup>313</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 152-153

<sup>314</sup> Ibidem 145-146

<sup>315</sup> Ibidem 28

This 'Siegfried idea' is a reference to Richard Wagner's Germanic myths – some radical *Deutsche Christen* wanted to combine their Biblical beliefs with the 'fairy tales and myths of earlier times' – in this case legends of the nineteenth century.<sup>316</sup> These ideas were not widespread, and were too radical for most *Deutsche Christen*, but it is interesting because of its position on the borderline between paganism and Christianity. The appreciation of the *Deutsche Christen* for the Gospels was ambivalent – the 'anti-Jewishness' of Matthew and John was traditionally appreciated by Christian anti-Semites. Paul's Gospel, on the contrary, was blamed for its propagation of 'Jewish materialism'.<sup>317</sup>

One of the main points of debate was the 'Aryan' or 'Jewish' background of Jesus. At least theologically, Jesus was portrayed as anti-Jewish because of his 'attack' on Judaism. The Bible passage where Jesus throws the moneylenders out of the temple was seen as clear evidence of his anti-Jewish nature.<sup>318</sup> This led to the claim that Jesus was the 'first antisemite', the arch-anti-Semite and the 'greatest hater of Jews'.<sup>319</sup> Jesus' Jewish ancestry as described in the New Testament was ignored by the *Deutsche Christen*.<sup>320</sup>

Radical *Deutsche Christen* went one step further, and proclaimed that Jesus was 'a person of Aryan blood from a Viking clan'!<sup>321</sup> Jesus' personality was seen as evidence for this theory, for Jesus 'entire character and learning betrayed Germanic [sic] blood'.<sup>322</sup> Goebbels declared that 'Christ cannot have been a Jew. I do not need to prove this with science or scholarship. *It is so*'.<sup>323</sup> The self-evidence in Goebbels' statement is a good example of the circular reasoning and the poor theological support of the claims *Deutsche*

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<sup>316</sup> Ibidem 47

<sup>317</sup> Berggren, 'Completing,' 308

<sup>318</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 31. Matthew 21:12: 'And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, it is written, my house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.' The Bible, King James Version

<sup>319</sup> Ibidem 44; Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 143, 156

<sup>320</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 154

<sup>321</sup> Ibidem 255

<sup>322</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 322

<sup>323</sup> Ibidem 32. Emphasis added.

*Christen* made. The idea of Jesus as an Aryan eventually became a cornerstone belief of the *Deutsche Christen* movement. This idea was rooted in earlier thought; it had been propagated by Johann Gottlieb Fichte.<sup>324</sup>

Another area where Christianity had to be purged from Jewish influences was the liturgy. As a result of the exclusion of certain parts of the Bible, the same had to be done with prayers, hymns and rituals. Especially the use of Hebraic words in hymns was widespread. Words like 'hosanna' and 'hallelujah' were not to be used anymore, but this was not done systematically – a much-used hymn was Luther's *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*, which mentions the 'Lord Sabaoth'.<sup>325</sup>

The mixture of racial and theological anti-Semitism is typical for the *Deutsche Christen* worldview. This convergence is visible in the depiction of Jews as perpetrators of 'deicide' and as persecutors of Jesus and his followers 'with unreconcilable hatred'.<sup>326</sup> The Jew as a religious and racial enemy of both Christians and Aryans lent credence to the claims on their own Aryan-Christian nature.<sup>327</sup> In this way 'Jewishness' and 'Aryaness' were mirrored and strengthened each other.<sup>328</sup>

## Conclusion

The categorisation of the Extremist Heterodox movements is rather difficult because of the heterodoxy of their thought. The question whether these movements could still be called Christian is hard to answer – many contemporaries would deny this, just like the majority of later Christians. It is hard to appraise this heterodoxy – it is placed somewhere on the continuum between Christian and (non-Christian or anti-Christian) paganism. The 'paganism' of the *Deutsche Christen* was, in contrast to a small group of neo-pagans like Rosenberg and Ludendorff, at least quasi-Christian. For a

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<sup>324</sup> Eldridge, 'Ideological Incompatibility,' 159

<sup>325</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 165-166

<sup>326</sup> Eldridge, 'Ideological Incompatibility,' 153; Heschel, 'Nazifying Christian Theology,' 597

<sup>327</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 261; Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 43

<sup>328</sup> Steigmann-Gall, *Holy Reich* 29

historian, it is hard to judge whether these movements are Christian. It is, however, clearly visible how the movements used (or 'abused'?) the Christian tradition in order to combine it with their political views.

The movements' departure from the traditional Christian tradition is visible in their adaptation of the 'normal' canon and the alteration of their focus. In both traditions 'blood' became a central element, which is no coincidence, because it is central to the national fascist traditions too. The religion was modified in order to accord to the fascist creeds; Romanian and German Christians 'proved' the centrality of 'blood-and-soil', nationalism and irrationalism in their religions. Although both movements changed their faith significantly, the ways in which this was done varied. The Romanians added extra mystical elements to the faith, but the Germans elaborated on theological questions that had been central to Christianity for centuries – the canonicity of the Bible, the universalism of the Christian faith and the Jewish heritage of Christianity.

In the special edition of *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* on clerical fascism, Richard Steigmann-Gall covers the subject of Positive Christianity. He defines a clerical fascist as someone who did not only profess to be Christian, but as an individual and as a party member, took an active part in Church life and 'sought to bring the church in cooperation with the movement.'<sup>329</sup> He concludes that Nazis had its clerical fascist wing, although it would never have described itself in that way. The *Deutsche Christen* were, however, not an integral part of Nazi clerical fascism, for they were not a wing of the Nazi Party, but a faction within the Protestant Church.<sup>330</sup>

I fully agree with Steigmann-Gall that Nazism was not clerical fascist itself, but only incorporated a clerical fascist wing.<sup>331</sup> I do however not agree with his objection to include the *Deutsche Christen* movement in this wing because not all German Christians were members of the Nazi Party – one

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<sup>329</sup> Steigmann-Gall, 'Positive Christianity', 316

<sup>330</sup> Steigmann-Gall obscures matters even more by distinguishing between 'clerical fascists' and 'fascist clericals', not based on their thought, but on their organisational backgrounds.

<sup>331</sup> Steigmann-Gall, 'Positive Christianity', 325

does not have to be an official member of Church or party to be a Christian fascist. There are other objections to the inclusion of the Positive Christians in the larger group of clerical fascists – the most important being its radical adaptations of the orthodox Christian canon. The sometimes bizarre, and poorly supported, ideas about the Germanic nature of the Bible make us question whether they were still a part of Christianity.

Within Positive Christianity the ideas differed from more or less accepted ideas to 'heretic' views. Some of the ideas did fit in a longer tradition, for example the intention to create a *Volkskirche*, the centrality of race and nation, and even the ideas on an apocalyptic struggle against 'Jewishness'. The even more radical wing of Positive Christianity, the ones close to the neo-paganist views of Rosenberg and Ludendorff can hardly be considered Christian or clerical fascists. Positive Christian thought in general could, albeit with considerable difficulties, be seen as the most radical manifestation of clerical fascism.

Unlike the *Deutsche Christen*, the Romanian movement has often been called clerical fascist, for example in Eatwell's article. Valentin Sandulescu does not agree with the use of the term, because of its 'potentially restrictive character' in describing such a complicated phenomenon, and thus denies the value of the entire concept.<sup>332</sup> Sandulescu's argument does not convince me, for it does not acknowledge the value of the concept in the Romanian case, but of the concepts in its entirety.

Constantin Iordachi defines clerical fascism as fascism with 'overtly and sincerely religious character' – but points at the troubled alliance of fascism and Christianity in Romania, and argues that Legionary ideology could not be called clerical fascist.<sup>333</sup> This too is not a completely convincing argument – in none of the clerical fascist cases was the *de facto* relationship between Church and state smooth. He portrays of the Legion as essentially a secular political movement, although one that used religious rhetoric.<sup>334</sup> Here,

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<sup>332</sup> Sandulescu, 'Sacralised Politics,' 267

<sup>333</sup> Iordachi, *Charisma* 114

<sup>334</sup> *Ibidem* 106

too, his standards might be too high to really assess the subject: it is true that the Legion as a *political* movement had more secular goals than the Church, but that does not mean that the movement was not religious – their highly religious rhetoric indicates something else. Iordachi's argument that the Legion's theology was 'pseudoreligious' makes more sense, for, as Nolte said, God was not central to their beliefs. The combination of Orthodoxy and mysticism deviated from traditional Orthodoxy, but was customary in rural Romania.

The Extremist Heterodoxy was very radical, which might be the reason that it was not a widespread phenomenon in Interwar Europe. Positive Christianity was present in small Protestant circles in Europe – individuals like Evert Jan Roskam in the Netherlands, and individual ministers in Britain and Scandinavia. The Legionary movement was the only substantial fascist movement in an Orthodox country. The Serbian Orthodox *Zbor* movement, for example, was not only insubstantial in size, but was less extreme in its religious views. Extremist Heterodoxy was, thus, relatively rare in Interwar Europe. The 'Christian Identity' movement in the United States could, with reservations, be seen as a present-day manifestation of the phenomenon. Its combination of neo-Nazi white supremacism and Protestantism resembles the examples described above. This movement too is insignificant in size, and it seems that the heterodoxy fails to convince great numbers of people to abandon some of the traditional Christian ideas. As we shall see in the last chapter, a more moderate adaptation could be more effective in terms of followers and longevity of the regimes.

### III. 'Radical Catholicism'

The second group is called 'Radical Catholicism'.<sup>335</sup> The two movements I have chosen, the Croatian *Ustaša* and the *Slovenská ľudová strana* (SL'S) are often called clerical fascist in literature.<sup>336</sup> The movements resembled each other in several ways – not least because the movements influenced one another.<sup>337</sup> Both movements eventually gained power with foreign help and participated in extreme violence during the Second World War. Another feature they held in common was the organisational connections with Church institutions. This cooperation is the main reason why the movements have been deemed clerical fascist. The chapter starts with a short history of the fascist movements in the countries, followed by an analysis of the Radical Catholic ideology and praxis.

#### The Slovakian fascists

The most important historical event for the Slovak fascists and the Catholic clergy was the creation of the independent Slovak state. This state succeeded the Czechoslovakian state that had come after the Hungarian empire in the Bohemian, Moravian and Slovakian regions. The democratic sovereign state consisted of several ethnic groups – Czechs, Slovaks,

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<sup>335</sup> I have chosen this term to indicate the fascist's radicalism, especially in the (genocidal) policies, especially in opposition to the more moderate character of the last group, the National Catholics.

<sup>336</sup> Biondich, 'Radical Catholicism,' 383. For Slovakia, see, for example Hans Dress, *Slowakei und faschistische Neuordnung Europas 1939-1941* (Berlin, 1972) 5. Both are called clerical fascist in Laqueur, *Fascism* 5

<sup>337</sup> Yeshayahu Jelinek, 'Storm-Troopers in Slovakia: The Rodobrana and the Hlinka Guard,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 6 (1971) 97-119, 101-102; Jonathan Steinberg, 'The Roman Catholic Church and Genocide in Croatia, 1941-1945,' in: Diana Wood, ed., *Christianity and Judaism* (Oxford, 1992) 463-480, 464



Germans and Jews. The international crisis and the revisionist politics of Germany and Hungary led to an increasing pressure during the thirties. After the Munich Agreement of September 1938, Germany occupied Sudetenland, renamed the state in Czecho-Slovakia, and granted Slovakia more autonomy. In March 1939 the First Slovak Republic came into existence. It was allied to its creator, Nazi Germany, and became a puppet regime, helping the Germans by deporting most of its Jews. In 1944, a resistance movement launched the Slovak National Uprising, which resulted in a German occupation.

The creation of the Slovak state was deemed very important in rightwing Slovak circles, because of what they called the 'sacred right of self-determination'.<sup>338</sup> This is, however, debatable and some consider the Slovakian nation 'unhistorical'.<sup>339</sup> The Slovaks had not been independent since the eleventh century, but nevertheless considered themselves a 'nation'. One of the main differences with their Czech fellow countrymen was the role of Catholicism and the clergy in the societies. According to the nationalist Slovaks, the Czechs did not practice the 'pure, pious faith' like they did, but were infected by Hussitism.<sup>340</sup> The Czechs were more secularised, whereas the Slovaks were less 'contaminated' by modernity.<sup>341</sup> In Slovakia the clergy, who were the main activists for the nationalist movement, were respected as the 'leading intellectuals' in the predominantly rural society.<sup>342</sup> The Czech parts were, in general, more developed, and the Czechs were in control of the Czechoslovakian state affairs.

The Slovak clergy had held high expectations regarding the new Czechoslovak state.<sup>343</sup> The Church had hoped meet its usual goals: to increase its influence in the country and to improve its material conditions. But instead, the Czechoslovak republic modernised the country: the Prague

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<sup>338</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* iii

<sup>339</sup> See the evaluation of this controversial term in Walter Sperling, *Tschechoslowakei. Beiträge zur Landeskunde Ostmitteleuropas* (Stuttgart, 1981) 273

<sup>340</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 81

<sup>341</sup> Felak, 'At the Price' 21

<sup>342</sup> Ibidem 22

<sup>343</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 6

government planned a separation of Church and state.<sup>344</sup> The Catholic leadership was disappointed by this modernisation, and rejected the ideas of equality, emancipation and freedom of conscience. Combined with the preference of the government to rely on the Protestants, this led to rejection of the 'Czechoslovak idea' and Czechoslovak state in Slovak circles.<sup>345</sup>

In 1918, shortly after the proclamation of the Czechoslovak Republic, the Catholic priest Andrej Hlinka founded the Nationalist *Slovenská ľudová strana* (Slovak People's Party).<sup>346</sup> The autonomist party started as a reaction to the modernising attempts of the Czechoslovak government, and was an 'Interessenvertretung des slowakischen Katholizismus'.<sup>347</sup> This resulted in a strong participation of the Slovak clergy in the party and later in the regime.<sup>348</sup> In this case too, a rejection of 'modernisation' led to the convergence of right-wing politics and Christianity. The 'deeply Catholic Party', did not have an elaborate programme, because its founder and leader Hlinka did not possess a 'schöpferischen, kritischen Geist' and barely occupied himself with theoretical questions.<sup>349</sup>

Like many clerical fascist movements, for example in Spain and Austria, the party was not homogenous, but consisted broadly of two wings.<sup>350</sup> The moderates were clerical, conservative and, above all, Catholic. The pro-fascist radicals consisted of young intellectuals and the paramilitary *Rodobrana*, (after 1938: Hlinka Guard). The radicals pejoratively called the clerical wing 'political Catholicism'.<sup>351</sup> The ideology of the Party consequently

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<sup>344</sup> Felak, 'At the Price' 22

<sup>345</sup> Ibidem 39

<sup>346</sup> In 1925 the name was changed to *Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana* (Hlinka's Slovak People's Party) and in 1938 to *Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana – Strana slovenskej národnej jednoty* (Hlinka's Slovak People's Party – Party of Slovak National Unity). Its followers were nicknamed 'Ludaks'. Jelinek, 'Storm-Troopers,' 97

<sup>347</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic*, 7; Jörg K. Hoensch, *Die Slowakei und Hitlers Ostpolitik. Hlinkas Slowakische Volkspartei zwischen Autonomie und Separation* (Köln, 1965) 1

<sup>348</sup> Yeshayahu Jelínek, 'Clergy and Fascism: The Hlinka Party in Slovakia and the Croatian Ustasha Movement,' in: Stein Ugelvik Larsen, et al., eds., *Who were the Fascists. Social Roots of European Fascism* (Bergen, 1980) 367-378, 367

<sup>349</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic*, iv; Hoensch, *Slowakei* 4

<sup>350</sup> Hoensch, *Slowakei* 6

<sup>351</sup> Jelinek, 'Storm-Troopers,' 116-117

was an uneasy mixture of Catholic state and social theory and Nazism.<sup>352</sup> The international crisis had brought some support for the party, but the SL'S never obtained more than 32 percent of the votes, even though it claimed to represent all Slovaks.<sup>353</sup>

The Hlinka Party's heyday came when they ruled the country after the proclamation of the new state. Jozef Tiso, who had succeeded Andrej Hlinka when he died in 1938, became the *Vodca* (leader) and the first President of the Slovak state. Tiso was very interesting for the development of a clerical fascist state, for he was a priest that used to belong to the clerical wing, but converted to the Radical camp in 1939, becoming the 'personal link' between the two groups.<sup>354</sup> In the first year after the creation of the state the party factions fought over the control over state power. In the period 1942-1944 the clerical wing had the opportunity to realise their 'social utopias'. In the last years of the war the Germans took over control until Slovakia was liberated by the Soviet Army, and subsequently ceased to exist.<sup>355</sup>

As a result of its 'almost unconditional' Episcopal backing and the 'heavy Catholic imprint' of the party's ideology, the movement is often portrayed as clerical fascist.<sup>356</sup> Tiso's regime, which was called a *Schuschniggiade* in German documents, because of the similarities with the former Austrian regime, has been portrayed as 'Caesaropapism' too.<sup>357</sup> 'Caesaropapism' is a pejorative term meaning the concentration of complete civil as well as religious power in the hands of one person.<sup>358</sup> This term, thus, is not related to the ideological construction of the Slovaks, but to the institutional organisation of the state.

An important question in relation to clerical fascism, however, is whether the SL'S ideology was primarily Catholic or fascist. The clerical wing favoured the former, and the radicals the latter view.<sup>359</sup> Officially, the SL'S

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<sup>352</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 87

<sup>353</sup> Ibidem, 10; Jozef Lettrich, *History of Modern Slovakia* (New York, 1955) 71

<sup>354</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 18, 26

<sup>355</sup> Ibidem 133-134

<sup>356</sup> Ibidem 66; Jelínek, 'Clergy,' 374

<sup>357</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 36

<sup>358</sup> Geanakoplos, 'Church and State,' 381

<sup>359</sup> Felak, 'At the Price' 97

tried to avoid utterances and deeds incompatible with the Church's teaching and did not allow a conflict to exist between national and religious goals in the Slovak state.<sup>360</sup> But, as we shall see below, the Slovak state was heavily influenced by the Germans, introduced racial laws and collaborated in the German *Endlösung*. So, regardless of the internal differences and frictions, the Hlinka Party seems to be both a Catholic and a fascist movement, and therefore an example of clerical fascism.

### **The Croatian Ustaša movement**

Like the Slovaks, the Croats became part of a newly created state after the dissolving of the Habsburg Empire. In their case it was the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, from 1928 on called the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The Croats initially supported the new Kingdom, thinking it would be an equal union of states.<sup>361</sup> In reality, the new Kingdom favoured the Serbs and the Orthodox Church, although it recognised the rights of Croats and freedom of religion. In January 1929 King Alexander abolished the constitution, dissolved the National Assembly, banned political parties with a national, religious or regional focus, and founded the Yugoslav National Party. Political opponents were eliminated, and the Croat nationalist Ante Pavelić fled the country, only to return when Nazi Germany created a puppet state called the Independent State of Croatia after the surrender of the Yugoslav Army in April 1941. This state existed until May 1945, when Croatia became a part of the Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Croat Catholic nationalists were hostile towards the new Kingdom because of its Serbian and Orthodox bias.<sup>362</sup> The Yugoslav territory is historically divided between Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Islam, and the Yugoslav ideologues viewed the Catholic Church as alien and anti-Slavic,

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<sup>360</sup> Jelínek, 'Clergy,' 374

<sup>361</sup> Alexander, 'Religion and National Identity,' 599

<sup>362</sup> Mark Biondich, 'Controversies surrounding the Catholic Church in Wartime Croatia, 1941-45,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 7 (2006) 429-457, 434

and thus as opposed to Yugoslavia.<sup>363</sup> The Orthodox Church was deemed native and national, because of its autocephalous nature. The Catholic Croats consequently believed their interests were threatened by the inimical state, a feeling that grew during the thirties.<sup>364</sup>

In this anti-Yugoslav environment, Ante Pavelić founded the *Ustaša - Hrvatski Revolucionarni Pokret* (Ustaša - Croatian Revolutionary Movement) while in exile in 1929. This 'clandestine terrorist organisation' was insignificant before the war, but did manage to obtain some mass support when placed in power in the new State.<sup>365</sup> In the underground years Pavelić had called for 'national exclusiveness', that is the refusal to recognise people other than Croats by descent as having the right to live within Croatia, and had advocated the Croatian right to all territories that had belonged to Croatia or which had been inhabited by Croats in the past, and called for the unconditional rejection of any common state with other Yugoslav peoples.<sup>366</sup> Pavelić and his movement were strongly anti-Serbian from the very start.

The Ustaša movement formed a 'natural' alliance with the nationalist and authoritarian Catholic clergymen and clericalist, which resulted from a shared 'authoritarian, anti-Yugoslav, antidemocratic, anti-Freemason, and above all anti-Serbian, anti-Orthodox, and anti-Communist' worldview.<sup>367</sup> The Ustaša movement is often portrayed as Catholic, for example by Jonathan Steinberg, who called its ideology a combination of 'Catholic piety, Croatian nationalism and human bestiality' and an 'explosive unstable mixture' of religious and nationalist thought, and by Ladislaus Hory and Martin Broszat, who called it the 'Croat Catholic brand of Fascism'.<sup>368</sup> In Serbian nationalist

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<sup>363</sup> Alexander, 'Religion and National Identity,' 591. The parts that were influenced by the old Habsburg Empire (of which Croatia was the border) was predominantly Catholic, while the eastern part, influenced by the Ottoman Empire, was mainly Orthodox. The Moslems form another group, concentrated in Bosnia. Everywhere in Yugoslavia, however, minorities live within other groups.

<sup>364</sup> Ibidem 599

<sup>365</sup> Stanley G. Payne, 'The NDH State in Comparative Perspective,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 7 (2006) 409-415, 411

<sup>366</sup> Biondich, 'Controversies,' 225

<sup>367</sup> Jozo Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945. Occupation and Collaboration* (Stanford, 2001) 369

<sup>368</sup> Steinberg, 'Roman Catholic Church,' 464, 465; Martin Broszat and Ladislaus Hory, *Die kroatische Ustascha-Staat, 1941-1945* (Stuttgart, 1964) 72

historiography the Ustaša are portrayed as Catholic crusaders, which, of course, defamed both the Croats and the Catholic Church.<sup>369</sup>

Mark Biondich criticises this view, by not doubting the sincere religiosity, but the very presence of religion in their thought. According to him, religion 'did not factor prominently in the thinking of Croatian national ideologists', and neither did they 'employ it as a criterion in defining the nation'.<sup>370</sup> The collaboration of the clergy with the regime notwithstanding, Biondich does not regard Catholic piety or Catholic proselytism as ends in themselves, but sees it rather as a secular, nationalist movement attempting to mobilise Catholic support.<sup>371</sup> Jure Kristo defends the same views, calling the Ustaša an 'aberration in Croatian history' and saying that their thought had 'nothing in common' with Catholicism.<sup>372</sup>

Ernst Nolte chooses a different approach; he doubts the 'true' religious nature of Ustaša's 'Blut-und-Boden'-ideology and calls the religious views an 'anti-Christian Catholicism', for they were not Catholics in the normal sense, but merely saw it as a part of the Croat 'Nationalcharakter'.<sup>373</sup> According to him, a 'gläubiger, d.h. christlicher Katholik' could never be a fascist, and Ustaša fascism '[darf] nur unter großen Kautelen als katholischer Faschismus bezeichnet werden', he seems to regard the Ustaše as 'cultural Catholics'. I argue that although explicit and abundant religious rhetoric was often absent in Ustaša fascism, Catholicism played a major role in their actions and support. Therefore, the Ustaša constitutes an interesting example of clerical fascism.

### **The states and the Churches: reluctant cooperation**

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<sup>369</sup> Mark Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia: Reflections on the Ustaša Policy of Forced Religious Conversions, 1941-1942,' *The Slavonic and East European Review* 83 (2005) 71-116, 71

<sup>370</sup> Ibidem 75

<sup>371</sup> Ibidem 113; Biondich, 'Radical Catholicism,' 383

<sup>372</sup> Jure Kristo, 'The Catholic Church in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in the Face of Totalitarian Ideologies and Regimes,' in: Lieve Gevers and Jan Bank, eds., *Religion under Siege. The Roman Catholic Church in Occupied Europe (1939-1950)* (Leuven, 2008) 39-92, 41

<sup>373</sup> Nolte, *Bewegungen* 201-202

The relation between Church and state has traditionally been strong in Eastern Europe. In this tradition, Catholic Church leaders like the Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojzije Stepinac, and the Slovak Jozef Tiso were also political leaders in the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>374</sup> The difference being, that while Tiso was leader of the Hlinka Party, Stepinac only cooperated with the Ustaša to a certain degree. The strong links between Church and state contrasted with the 'modern' separation of Church and state.

The Churches' involvement with rightwing politics was boosted by the Churches' hope to benefit from the establishment of the new authoritarian regimes. In Slovakia the Church hoped for a reversal of the modern separation of Church and State that existed since the liberal legislation of 1894.<sup>375</sup> The Slovak clergy had more or less controlled national and political life during the nineteenth century, but its influence declined rapidly after 1918.<sup>376</sup> The Church hoped to reverse this trend and to advance its material position.<sup>377</sup> On a spiritual level, the Church was helped by a state that kept 'strict vigilance over the moral conduct of the population', and fought against abortion, pornography, blasphemy, freemasonry and communism.<sup>378</sup> Archbishop Stepinac praised the Ustaša movement for halting abortion ('practiced largely by Jewish and Serbian Orthodox physicians'), pornographic publications ('earlier promoted primarily by Jews and Serbs') and cursing.<sup>379</sup> Furthermore they had outlawed Freemasonry and communism (that had 'flourished' in the old Belgrade government), and they had advanced the education of the army in a Christian spirit, insisted on religious education and had provided material help for religious institutions. Stepinac proclaimed that the Church had 'reciprocated in kind', but in a later stage conflict broke out between the Church and state. Fear for the

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<sup>374</sup> David Martin, *On Secularization. Towards a Revised General Theory* (Aldershot, 2005) 83

<sup>375</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 80

<sup>376</sup> Owen V. Johnson, *Slovakia 1918-1938. Education and the Making of a Nation* (Boulder, 1985) 319

<sup>377</sup> Jelínek, 'Clergy,' 369, 372

<sup>378</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 80; Biondich, 'Controversies,' 449

<sup>379</sup> Tomasevich, *War* 372

alternative, a state run by either Chetniks or communists, resulted in a long term (reluctant) support by the Church.

In Croatia and Slovakia the recently won independence and the 'liberation' from the Church-hostile states was an important factor that led to the participation of the clergy in the movements and regimes. In some cases, the participation even included killing.<sup>380</sup> The relationship, however, was ambivalent everywhere. In Croatia, the Archbishop Stepinac is the most controversial Church leader. At Pavelić's return in 1941, the Church leader gave his blessing, but in the years to come, his attitude was ambivalent – he strongly supported the new, Catholic state, but opposed some of the regime's brutalities.<sup>381</sup> Stepinac protested in private and in sermons against these brutalities, especially when they concerned (newly converted) Catholics.<sup>382</sup>

The Slovak states' relations with Church and religion were close, but were far from unproblematic. In theory the relation was harmonious, as it was influenced by Othmar Spann, Ignaz Seipel and Kurt Schuschnigg, and the Austrian state served as an example of a state where the Church held supremacy over secular life.<sup>383</sup> A *de jure* separation of Church and regime existed, but the Church had much *de facto* influence as a result of the mixing of personnel. However, the Church was not supreme over the state, and it was not its servant, but its 'spiritual leader', whose orders served as the state's 'guide'.<sup>384</sup> In reality, the Church acted as a rival power, and the symbiosis did not work in society either; many Catholics opposed the regime's brutalities, and some Nazi-minded clerics were forced to leave priesthood.<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>380</sup> Biondich, 'Controversies,' 430

<sup>381</sup> Cox, 'Ante Pavelić,' 215; Sabrina P. Ramet, 'The NDH - An Introduction,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 7 (2006) 399-408, 400

<sup>382</sup> Alexander, 'Religion and National Identity,' 601

<sup>383</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 51-52. This was, as we shall see in the next chapter, an exaggeration of the Austrian situation: in reality, tensions existed between state and Church power.

<sup>384</sup> *Ibidem* 80-81

<sup>385</sup> *Ibidem* 52, 137



A comparable *de facto* relationship existed in Croatia – there, too, it always remained partial and incomplete.<sup>386</sup> There was friction between state and Church, especially on the subject of education, censorship, Catholic lay organisations, authority on the issue of conversions and discrimination against *converted* Jews.<sup>387</sup> A genuine politico-religious symbiosis was never achieved.<sup>388</sup> As with Croatia, the Vatican was reluctant to accept Tiso's regime and to sign a concordat. In both countries, the relation thus remained informal, unlike in the Italian case.<sup>389</sup> In Italy, the same issues played a role between the Catholic Church and the Fascist state, but these were arranged with the Lateran Treaty of 1929.<sup>390</sup> The Vatican did not officially recognise the new states or sign concordats with them, because it was the Holy See's practice not to recognise states established during wartime.<sup>391</sup> The countries were unofficially represented in the Vatican.

### **Eastern European fascism and identity**

State and Church were linked in Slovakia and Croatia, and so were the notions of religion and nationalism.<sup>392</sup> In accordance with Adrian Hastings' theory on the Christian roots of nationalism, the Radical Catholics thought nationalism and Catholicism did not contradict each other, because both were God's creation.<sup>393</sup> Catholicism was seen as an 'almost biological national characteristic' of the Slovaks, and as the essential national mark of distinction and identification.<sup>394</sup> An attack on one was also considered an attack on the other. In the SL'S programme of 1929 it was proclaimed that '[t]he Slovak way of life is built on Christian ethics, hence there can be no

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<sup>386</sup> Payne, 'NDH State,' 412

<sup>387</sup> Jelínek, 'Clergy,' 372

<sup>388</sup> Payne, 'NDH State,' 412; Steinberg, 'Roman Catholic Church,' 474

<sup>389</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 49; Jelínek, 'Clergy,' 369

<sup>390</sup> Philip Morgan, *Italian Fascism, 1915-1945* (second edition; Basingstoke, 2004) 113

<sup>391</sup> Tomasevich, *War* 371. The Vatican was generally reluctant to sign treaties with similar regimes, and it even took more than a decade before the first concordat with Franco's Spain was signed.

<sup>392</sup> Heinen, *Legion* 138

<sup>393</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 81

<sup>394</sup> *Ibidem* 65, 80-81

Slovak way of life without Christian ethics, nor are Christian ethics conceivable without the Slovak way of life'.<sup>395</sup>

The Croatian case is more complicated. The primarily Catholic Ustaše were often extremely anti-Serbian, but were much more ambivalent regarding the Muslim population. The fundamental goal of the Croatian fascists was the formation of a state with one nationality (Croatian) and two religions (Catholicism and Islam), hence the outlawing of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies.<sup>396</sup> The Ustaša leadership frequently tried to incorporate the Islamic Croats by describing them as the 'the flower of the Croatian nation', Bosnia as the 'heart of Croatia', and by calling the Croatian soldiers 'Catholic and Muslim'.<sup>397</sup> Pavelić wanted to be the 'unifier of the Croatian nation'. The Serbians were, according to some, Croats gone wrong – they were of the Croat 'race', but had adopted the wrong religion in past centuries.<sup>398</sup> For other Ustaše, the Serbs were 'Vlachs', and had never been Croats.<sup>399</sup> Ustaša anti-Serbianism thus oscillated between exclusivism and assimilationism – the exclusivism, where Orthodox Serbs were not regarded as Croats and their existence was denied, was the stronger current within the Ustaša.<sup>400</sup> The assimilationist view was held by the Minister of Justice and Religion Mirko Puk, who denied that religion served as a criterion for Croatdom – Great Croatia consisted of Catholics, Muslims and Orthodox Christians.<sup>401</sup> In reality, however, the policies were often pro-Catholic, and the Serbians were forcefully converted, deported or murdered. Pro-Catholicism resulted from the identification of Croatdom and Catholicism, which was strengthened with the title of *Antemurale Christianitatis* (Ramparts of Christendom) that the Pope had given the Croats, a people living at the

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<sup>395</sup> Felak, 'At the Price' 49

<sup>396</sup> Tomasevich, *War* 380

<sup>397</sup> Ivo Goldstein, 'Ante Pavelić, Charisma and National Mission in Wartime Croatia,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 7 (2006) 225-234, 230

<sup>398</sup> The Croatian fascists, in general, did not have an elaborate racial theory, as I show in this chapter.

<sup>399</sup> Biondich, 'Religion and Nation,' 78

<sup>400</sup> *Ibidem* 77-78

<sup>401</sup> *Ibidem* 77

geographical border between Catholicism and Orthodoxy.<sup>402</sup>

Both movements agitated against internal enemies they feared would destroy the union of nation and religion, and thereby, eventually, the people. Like most contemporary religious and fascist movements, they rejected everything they considered 'modern' and a product of the Enlightenment. The Croats substituted 'Enlightened' rationalism and liberalism with their own irrationalism and illiberalism.<sup>403</sup> The fascists had inherited different enemies from the past; the Slovaks opposed the Hungarians and the Czechs, and the Croats above all the Serbians.<sup>404</sup> In addition, they despised the usual groups – the freemasons, liberals, Jews and 'Bolshevists'.<sup>405</sup> The equation of the Slovak nation with Catholicism led to the opinion that a Jew could at best be a 'Slovak-speaking member of the Jewish nation', and in Croatia they were seen as aliens, and the source of the abhorred Communism, Freemasonry, abortion and irreverence.<sup>406</sup> Jews could, consequently, not be true Croats.

The Slovakian and Croatian regimes were allied to Germany, and existed by the grace of Nazi Germany. The countries adopted the German racial laws and theories in the first months of their existence.<sup>407</sup> In Slovakia, the Church could not oppose 'legal actions of the government while it is taking steps to eradicate the evil influence of the Jews', because they still did not acknowledge the Messiah, whom they had even killed, because they were still hostile towards Christianity.<sup>408</sup> From 1938 on, the racial approach towards the 'Jewish problem' became official, and baptising Jews was no longer enough to solve it.<sup>409</sup>

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<sup>402</sup> Steinberg, 'Roman Catholic Church,' 477

<sup>403</sup> Ramet, 'NDH,' 404

<sup>404</sup> Iordachi, *Charisma* 109; Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 64

<sup>405</sup> Nolte, *Bewegungen* 201

<sup>406</sup> Felak, 'At the Price' 45; Steinberg, 'Roman Catholic Church,' 466

<sup>407</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 87; Payne, 'NDH State,' 413

<sup>408</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 76

<sup>409</sup> *Ibidem* 88

The Croatians never worked out a *coherent* race theory.<sup>410</sup> In April 1941 they adopted racial laws proclaiming that a Croatian citizen was one of 'Aryan origin, who by his actions has shown that he has not worked against the liberating tendencies of the Croatian people and who is prepared to serve readily and faithfully the Croatian people and the Independent State of Croatia'.<sup>411</sup> As a result, not only other ethnic groups, but also Croats who did not agree with the Ustaše were denied citizenship. The attitude towards Serbians was ambivalent – for some (forced!) conversion made Serbians 'fellow Croats', but for others conversion to Catholicism was not a solution – Serbians would always remain racially Serbian.<sup>412</sup> The Ustaša stance on minorities changed in 1941 from exclusivist to assimilationist, although the method of assimilation – forced conversion – was 'the most malignant version possible'.<sup>413</sup> As in other fascist movements, racial theory was combined with religious, cultural and economic anti-Semitism, which had a stronger base in the societies.

### **'Historical' legitimisation**

The use of the past is interesting in the two cases – Croatia memorised its past, but Slovakia did not have so much as a 'Slovakian' past. In Croatia, 'Medieval Croatia' served as an example.<sup>414</sup> The idea of Croatia as *Antemurale Christianitatis* was connected to the claimed 'unbroken link' with the papacy from the year 879 on, when prince Branimir had received a letter from the pope acknowledging his rule.<sup>415</sup> The ideas on Croat national rights and Catholicism's role in Croatia derived from the nineteenth century bishops Vrhovac of Zagreb and Strossmayer of Djakovo.<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>410</sup> That is to say, some attempted to create a racial theory, but there was considerable ambivalence in the movement's theory and policies. One could argue that fascist never worked out a consistent race theory, but the German case is far more elaborate.

<sup>411</sup> Tomasevich, *War* 384

<sup>412</sup> Biondich, 'Religion and Nation,' 78, 89, 103

<sup>413</sup> *Ibidem* 112

<sup>414</sup> Cox, 'Ante Pavelić,' 209

<sup>415</sup> Alexander, 'Religion and National Identity,' 596

<sup>416</sup> *Ibidem* 597

The Slovakian nationalists had a very peculiar problem – they did not have a political history, and therefore could not legitimise their regime and state by pointing to prominent individuals and events connected specifically with the Slovaks.<sup>417</sup> The Slovak fascists had to invent their own version of Slovak history. One way to justify the new state was by elevating the nation's importance above the state's, and by assigning the nation a 'moral personality' with a historic purpose – in the Slovakian case political autonomy.<sup>418</sup> All Slavs that had lived in the end of the first millennium were now baptised 'Slovaks', and the Moravian Empire became the 'Slovak Empire', which made the Slovaks the inheritors of the oldest empire and the 'Kulturträger' of the Slavic people.<sup>419</sup>

In Croatia the main influences were the nineteenth century 'Father of the Homeland' Ante Starcević, who laid the foundations for Croatian unity and independence, and the creator of the Croatian language, Ljudevit Gaj.<sup>420</sup> Since the conception of Croat nationalism, the nationalists held an ambivalent attitude regarding religion as a criterion of nationality – most of them refused to identify their religion with the nation.<sup>421</sup> The Slovak party had, as a result of the lack of Slovakian history and the lack of an intellectual tradition very few precursors, but legitimised their regime by their opposition to the previous regime.<sup>422</sup>

## National regeneration

The two regimes differed in their regenerative projects too. The Slovak's 'Christian-Social Program' aimed to create a 'new Slovak man', spur a new spirit in the economy and social life and build a modern state of a new type with the aim of 'a new Slovakia in a new Europe'.<sup>423</sup> The 'new man' would be

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<sup>417</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 81

<sup>418</sup> Felak, 'At the Price' 42

<sup>419</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 82

<sup>420</sup> Cox, 'Ante Pavelić,' 207; Steinberg, 'Roman Catholic Church,' 479

<sup>421</sup> Biondich, 'Controversies,' 431

<sup>422</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 135

<sup>423</sup> *Ibidem* 101

created through education, and this new education would be the basis for the 'moral development' of the nation.<sup>424</sup> In this, they resembled the other clerical fascist movements, for example the Romanian Legionary Movement. And, like those movements, they lacked a detailed programme, and discussed the core of its politics in vague terms only.<sup>425</sup> This vagueness partly resulted from the fact that the movements lacked intellectuals, and resorted to the clergy for intellectual support.<sup>426</sup> The Croatian propaganda differed from this type of programme – there was an absence of abundant rhetoric about a Christian moral regeneration, although Ustaša politics concerned moral issues. The main attraction for Catholics lay in the regime's opposition to the previous pro-Orthodox regime and in the practical politics, for 'how could a Croatian priest, a man concerned for the future of his people, condemn a state which had not only outlawed abortion but introduced the death penalty for those daring to practice it?'<sup>427</sup>

There was a difference in the depiction of the regimes and their leaders – in contrast to Hlinka, Pavelić proclaimed to be a 'good Catholic', but did not describe himself as God-sent.<sup>428</sup> The conception of the Croatian state was depicted as a result of the 'Providence of God', and as the greatest gift God could have given for the Croats' faithfulness to the Church.<sup>429</sup> Meanwhile, in Slovakia, Hlinka considered himself to a 'Werkzeug und Beauftragter Gottes', who was destined to create the Slovak nation.<sup>430</sup> The Slovakian fascists had a strong sense of mission; they tried to fulfil the 'vocation' of the Slovak nation and state, which was to serve as an exemplary state.<sup>431</sup>

This goal could only be achieved when the 'Powers of Darkness' were defeated. The representatives of these 'powers of Darkness' were in both countries the Jews. The regimes cooperated with the Germans to achieve

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<sup>424</sup> Felak, 'At the Price' 48-49

<sup>425</sup> Jelinek, 'Storm-Troopers,' 97.

<sup>426</sup> Tomasevich, *War* 370.

<sup>427</sup> Steinberg, 'Roman Catholic Church,' 479

<sup>428</sup> Kristo, 'Catholic Church,' 59

<sup>429</sup> Goldstein, 'Ante Pavelić,' 232

<sup>430</sup> Hoensch, *Slowakei* 6

<sup>431</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 81, 82

the *Endlösung* of the 'Jewish Question'. There are some differentiations between the ways the regimes tried to cleanse their societies from 'alien' and 'corrupting' influences.

In Slovakia and Croatia, the newly created governments immediately adopted anti-Jewish racial legislation.<sup>432</sup> In Slovakia, the 1941 legislation 'surpassed the Nuremberg laws in severity', and it was the first of Germany's satellite states to deport its Jewish population, this, according to German sources, without any outside pressure.<sup>433</sup> Unlike their Croat counterparts, the Slovak clergy did not participate directly in the bloodshed, but 'they let the state take care of that'.<sup>434</sup> Anti-Semitic views were widespread in Slovakia, and the state introduced anti-Jewish legislation from 1939 on.<sup>435</sup>

In Croatia, an extra target existed of the 'elimination' of the entire Serbian population.<sup>436</sup> This elimination was to be done by the infamous unwritten plan to kill one-third of the Serbs, deport another third and force the remaining Serbs to convert to Roman Catholicism.<sup>437</sup> The Ustaša genocide was directed against Serbs, Croat political opponents, Bosnian Muslims, Jews, Montenegrins, Slovenes and Roma and aimed to achieve the Ustaša's final goal: an ethnically pure Croatian territory.<sup>438</sup> The extremely controversial participation of Croatian clerics in mass murder and forced conversion made Croatia during the war, in the words of Nolte, 'zu einer riesigen Taufkirche und zugleich zu einem gigantischen Schlachthaus'.<sup>439</sup> The Croatian clergy participated in what Steinberg called 'repression and terrorism without a parallel in the history of south-eastern Europe'.<sup>440</sup> The

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<sup>432</sup> Yehoshua R. Büchler, 'First in the Vale of Affliction: Slovakian Jewish Women in Auschwitz, 1942,' *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 10 (1996) 299-325, 299

<sup>433</sup> Janice Broun, 'Monsignor Jozef Tiso,' *Commonweal* 117 (1990) 676-678, 677. Büchler, 'First in the Vale,' 299-303

<sup>434</sup> István Deák, *Essays on Hitler's Europe* (Lincoln, 2001) 21-22

<sup>435</sup> See Ivan Kamenec, *On the Trail of Tragedy: the Holocaust in Slovakia* (Bratislava, 2007)

<sup>436</sup> Cox, 'Ante Pavelić,' 224

<sup>437</sup> Ivo Goldstein, *Croatia. A History* (London, 1999) 137

<sup>438</sup> Paxton, *Anatomy* 113-114; Ivo Goldstein, 'The Independent State of Croatia in 1941: On the Road to Catastrophe,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 7 (2006) 417-427, 417, 419

<sup>439</sup> Nolte, *Bewegungen* 202-203

<sup>440</sup> Jonathan Steinberg, *All or Nothing. The Axis and the Holocaust, 1941-1943* (London, 1990) 39

participating clergymen justified their actions openly; a Croat priest declared that he previously worked with a prayer book, but that now it was time for the revolver, while a colleague of his wrote in a newspaper that it was no longer a sin to kill seven-year olds.<sup>441</sup>

### Thinking about 'Third Way' politics

The Eastern European fascists propagated a political and economical 'Third Way' too. As elsewhere, the Catholics elaborated their alternative model much more than Protestant and Orthodox Christians. Both fascist movements envisioned the state as a 'corporate Catholic state' based on a 'new economic system'.<sup>442</sup> The contemporary influences were the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* and the states of António de Oliveira Salazar and Kurt Schuschnigg.<sup>443</sup> Other influences were neo-Thomism and the *Orbis Christianitus* of the Middle Ages, when a man's place in society was determined by his vocation.<sup>444</sup> A slogan incorporating the harmonious spirit of Catholic and fascist corporatism was 'Common Good Before Selfishness'.<sup>445</sup> In Croatia a beginning was made of a corporative economic system, but it was never developed, and the corporative parliament was prepared, but never introduced.<sup>446</sup> Corporatism only really existed in propaganda, and was presented as a good system and an opposite of extreme, 'Jewish' capitalism. In practice, it functioned as a justification of the dictatorship of the wealthy against the poor.<sup>447</sup> This, however, was a frequently occurring phenomenon in Catholic countries.

### Conclusion

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<sup>441</sup> J. Michael Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust, 1930-1965* (Bloomington, 2000) 34-35

<sup>442</sup> Jelínek, 'Storm-Troopers,' 115; Cox, 'Ante Pavelić,' 210

<sup>443</sup> Felak, 'At the Price' 52; Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 47

<sup>444</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 83

<sup>445</sup> Ibidem 119

<sup>446</sup> Payne, 'NDH State,' 413

<sup>447</sup> Jelínek, *Parish Republic* 119



It is easy to see why the two regimes have so often been portrayed as clerical fascist – in both regimes the clergy played an important, albeit different, role. This participation is, however, in itself not enough to include the regimes as a subcategory of clerical fascism. The two examples share enough morphological commonalities to consider them a common group. Both movements, however, have a different place at the group's continuum.

In general, the clergy's relation to the regime was ambivalent. An important reason for collaboration was the rejection of the previous regimes, and the idea that the Church would benefit from the new 'nation-state'. Another incentive was a general fear for the alternatives – either a return to the previous regimes or, as many feared, the establishment of an anti-clerical communist state. Other motives were the concern of the regimes with regulating public morality and supporting the Churches on a materialist level.

The two regimes have more in common. Both were heavily influenced by foreign powers (Germany and Italy), which had consequences for their politics and ideologies. Their views were a mixture of native nationalist traditions, Italian Fascism, German National Socialism and Catholic clerical authoritarianism.<sup>448</sup> Both regimes were put into power with foreign help, making them 'puppet regimes' that could rule the countries without a strong support in their own societies.<sup>449</sup> Both regimes introduced racial legislation that was inspired by the German Nuremberg Laws, and both regimes collaborated in the German extermination programme by deporting 'their' Jews to German camps.

The Radical Catholic group borders to the Extremist Heterodoxy of the second chapter and the National Catholicism of the next chapter. Within the group there are several similarities, as listed above, but considerable differences too. Within the continuum of Radical Catholicism, the Slovakian regime is the more moderate example, whereas the Croatians are more radical in most respects, and are closer to the Romanian and German examples. The first manifestation difference is the role of Catholicism – in

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<sup>448</sup> Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *Hitler's New Disorder. The Second World War in Yugoslavia* (London, 2008) 25

<sup>449</sup> Tomasevich, *War* 402; Broun, 'Monsignor,' 677

Slovakia the regime was lead by priests, whereas the Croatian movement merely cooperated with the Catholics, being, conform Nolte's analysis, 'anti-Christian Catholics' themselves.

Ustaša ideology deviated from most of its clerical fascist brothers on a small, but important, element: for them, the Croat identity was not equated with their religion, but included the Muslim population too. This could be explained by their prioritising of anti-Serbianism, and by the fact that Catholicism had not played a major role in the Croatian nationalist movement – their Habsburgian suppressors had been Catholic too.<sup>450</sup>

Both regimes participated in the German genocidal policies, although the Croatians had their own additional ethnic cleansing programme. A difference was the clerical participation in these programmes – in Croatia some clergymen did participate in the 'slaughter house', but in Slovakia the clergy was 'only' indirectly complicit in the deportations of Jews from Slovakia. There is no absolute distinction between the two cases, for neither did the Slovakian clergy oppose these policies, nor did the entire Croatian clergy support the genocide.<sup>451</sup> A typical feature of the Radical Catholic movements was the difference in the collaboration of the clergy. In general, the local clergy was more inclined to support the regime than the higher clergy and the Vatican. The National Catholic movements generally held better relations with Rome.

The Radical Catholic type thus ranges from the more moderate Slovakian 'Schuschniggade' to the anti-Christian Catholics of the Ustaša movement. Another Catholic fascist movement that fits the category is Ferenc Szálasi's Arrow Cross Party and its *Hungarist* ideology. Arrow Cross ideology was a combination of ultra-nationalism, radical Catholicism, ruralism, anti-capitalism, anti-Communism, and militant anti-Semitism. When Szálasi became the *de facto* Prime Minister during the last months of the Second World War, he immediately introduced genocidal policies in Hungary. Most right wing Catholic movements, however, were more

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<sup>450</sup> Hastings, *Nationhood* 137

<sup>451</sup> Laqueur, *Fascism* 44

moderate than these examples. These more moderate, and more often occurring, movements are described as a separate category in the next chapter on National Catholicism.

## IV. 'National Catholicism'

The last group in this thesis is 'National Catholicism'.<sup>452</sup> In this ideology religion and nationalism are strongly interwoven. As we have seen in the last chapter, this was not extraordinary in the Catholic (literally *universal*) circles. National Catholicism is interesting for its 'moderate' character – the ideology is overtly religious, but only 'moderately' fascist. Especially the disputable 'fascist' nature of the regimes makes National Catholicism a controversial subject in historiography, for many scholars do not consider the regimes or their National Catholic ideology fascist.<sup>453</sup> In Extremist Heterodox and Radical Catholic cases, debates concerned the 'religiosity' of the fascist movements, but in these cases the debates tend to focus on the 'fascist' element.

The examples that I have chosen here are the Spanish Franco-regime (1939-1975) and the Austrian *Ständestaat* (1934-1938). Both regimes are often called fascist, and both were connected to the two main varieties of fascism in Europe, the German National Socialists and the Italian Fascists, although the relations were often antagonistic and changed over time. A complication for the comparison is of a chronological nature – the Spanish regime established itself around the moment that the Austrian regime was

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<sup>452</sup> The term National Catholicism is, as is described below, a term originally connected to the Spanish regime, but was used in a larger context too, for example in Izabella Main, 'Kirche, Zivilgesellschaft und 'Nationalkatholizismus' im kommunistischen Polen,' in: Friedrich Wilhelm Graf and Klaus Große Kracht, eds., *Religion und Gesellschaft. Europa im 20. Jahrhundert* (Köln, 2007) 269-285

<sup>453</sup> Stanley Payne, for example, calls the Falangist movement fascist, but not the regime in its entirety. (Stanley Payne, *The Franco Regime, 1936-1975* (Madison, 1987). The Austrian case stirs controversy in historiography too, see Emmerich Tálos, 'Das austrofaschistische Herrschaftssystem,' in: Emmerich Tálos and Wolfgang Neugebauer, eds., *Austrofaschismus. Politik – Ökonomie – Kultur 1933-1938* (Vienna, 2005) 394-420, 416

replaced by a National Socialist regime, and lasted until 1975, whereas the Austrian *Ständestaat* existed for a mere four years.

The discussion about Dollfuß', Schuschnigg's and Franco's regimes is highly controversial, both in the national historiographies and in public opinion. In both areas the debates are political, and the evaluation of the relationship is deeply influenced by the political and religious background of the scholar.<sup>454</sup> Distanced scholarship is complicated by the connections of the movements with parties in the post-fascist period, in the Austrian case the perpetuation of the *Christlichsoziale Partei* in the post-war *Österreichische Volkspartei*, which led to a taboo on the topic of *Austrofaschismus* that lasted until the sixties.<sup>455</sup> 'Austro-fascism' still is a very sensitive subject in Austria. The sensitivities surrounding this term cause the same polemics as the term clerical fascism.

The two regimes are compared in other texts, but often in a very limited way.<sup>456</sup> The most notable comparison is done in the canonical text of Juan Linz, 'An authoritarian regime: Spain', where he sees both regimes as examples of authoritarian regimes. Authoritarian regimes differ from both democratic and totalitarian regimes. He characterises authoritarian regimes as 'political systems with limited, not responsible political pluralism; without elaborate and guiding ideology but with distinctive mentalities; without intensive or extensive political mobilization, except some points in their development; and in which a leader or occasionally a small group exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones.'<sup>457</sup>

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<sup>454</sup> Ernst Hanisch, *1890-1990: Der lange Schatten des Staates: österreichische Gesellschaftsgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 1994) 310

<sup>455</sup> Tim Kirk, 'Fascism and Austrofaschismus,' in: Günter Bischof, et al., eds., *The Dollfuß/Schuschnigg Era in Austria. A Reassessment* (New Brunswick and London, 2003) 10-31, 11; Emmerich Tálos and Wolfgang Neugebauer, 'Vorwort,' in: Emmerich Tálos and Wolfgang Neugebauer, eds., *Austrofaschismus. Politik – Ökonomie – Kultur 1933-1938* (Vienna, 2005) 1-2, 1

<sup>456</sup> For example in Gerhard Botz, 'Faschismus und der 'Ständestaat' vor und nach dem 12. Februar,' in: Gerhard Botz, ed., *Krisenzonen einer Demokratie: Gewalt, Streik und Konfliktunterdrückung in Österreich seit 1918* (Frankfurt am Main, 1987) 211-236 where Austria is compared to the authoritarian regimes in Portugal, Greece and Spain.

<sup>457</sup> The article first appeared in 1964, and was reprinted in Juan J. Linz, 'An Authoritarian Regime: Spain,' in: Stanley G. Payne, ed., *Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century Spain* (New York and London, 1976) 160-207, 165

For him, one of the main differences is the strong presence of Catholic thought in the regime's ideologies. Ernst Hanisch compares both 'autoritär-halbfaschistischen' regimes on the basis of their past. Both were former 'crusader' countries that were inspired by the militant counter-reformational tradition, whose political culture was deeply influenced by this past – an idealised past in which both countries were grand and the societies were devoutly Catholic.<sup>458</sup>

### **The Spanish dictatorship**

A major inspiration for General Francisco Franco y Bahamonde's dictatorship was the authoritarian dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera (1923-1930), which was followed by a republic and the civil war. Fear for revolution and the suspicion that a liberal state would not be able to prevent this revolution had ended the constitutional regime that preceded Primo de Rivera. The new dictator's authoritarian policies were outlined in the slogan of his *Unión Patriótica Española*: 'monarchy, religion, authority'.<sup>459</sup> The Church supported the transformation to the new regime and called the *coup d'état* a 'work of Divine Providence', and the support for the regime a 'duty of patriotism'.<sup>460</sup> This support partly resulted from the expectation that Primo de Rivera would serve the interests of the Church better than the liberal prime ministers and that he would help to recatholicise Spain. Primo de Rivera obliged the Church with 'extravagant displays of religious sentiment', but disappointed the Church's high hopes on both 'earthly' and 'heavenly' matters.<sup>461</sup> Spanish Catholicism was during the Primo de Rivera regime, according to Shlomo Ben-Ami, 'a clear anticipation of National-Catholicism under Francoism'.<sup>462</sup>

After its break down the Second Spanish Republic was formed. In this constitutional system, the largest Catholic political organisation was José

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<sup>458</sup> Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' 75

<sup>459</sup> William J. Callahan, *The Catholic Church in Spain. 1875-1998* (Washington, 2000) 154

<sup>460</sup> Ibidem 151-152

<sup>461</sup> Ibidem 153, 155, 156

<sup>462</sup> Shlomo Ben-Ami, *Fascism from Above. The Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera in Spain, 1923-1930* (Oxford, 1983) 102

María Gil-Robles y Quiñones' *Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas* (CEDA), a confederation of parties ranging from the moderate to the radical right, which achieved considerable successes in the elections. Its aim was to carry out a 'true and deep revolution with the cross in the hand.'<sup>463</sup> The party was, however, far from satisfied with the constitutional Republic, but took part in it out of a 'taktische Notwendigkeit'.<sup>464</sup> The CEDA took an *accidental* position, being indifferent to the form of government, deeming the state's 'concept of the nature and purposes of human society' *essential*.<sup>465</sup> In practice most members of the CEDA had a preference for a corporate 'New State' that would defend the Church and the bourgeois conservative order.<sup>466</sup> The CEDA was dissolved in 1937, for Spain's new leader Franco did not permit rivalling right-wing parties to exist. Many of its members joined Franco's ranks, thereby influencing the 'political family' of Francoism. Within the CEDA itself, the radical wings were forerunners of Franco's National Catholicism, and could themselves be seen as supporters of this ideology too.

Franco became the dictator and Head of State of Spain during the Civil War. This *Guerra Civil* was important for the development of National Catholicism because of the anticlericalist violence that made the Church choose for the nationalist side.<sup>467</sup> A long history of Spanish anticlericalism culminated in the murder of clergymen and destroying Church property. Spain's most extreme anticlericalism was found in anarchosyndicalist circles. For anarchosyndicalists, the clergy was the 'most insidious aspect of the existing [capitalist] structure, legitimating it and providing motivation and inspiration', and that is why the attacking the Church held a great practical and symbolical value.<sup>468</sup> The anticlericalism and the subsequent strong

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<sup>463</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 306

<sup>464</sup> Walther Bernecker, 'Von der Unabhängigkeit bis heute,' in: Walther Bernecker and Horst Pietschmann, eds., *Geschichte Spaniens. Von der Frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart* (Stuttgart, 2005) 239-478, 345

<sup>465</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 311

<sup>466</sup> Ibidem ; Bernecker, 'Geschichte Spaniens,' 345

<sup>467</sup> Cueva, 'Religious Persecution,'

<sup>468</sup> Stanley Payne, *Spanish Catholicism. An Historical Overview* (Madison, 1984) 150.

The killing was mostly done in the first weeks of the war. The amounts are enormous;

Catholic reaction is seen by some as the reason for the outbreak of the civil war, but that is, according to Stanley Payne, an exaggeration, because it was combined with political and economical factors too.<sup>469</sup>

Throughout the Second World War, Spain was sympathetic to the Axis Powers, which it provided with material, economic and military assistance but remained non-belligerent. Franco was the regent of the restored *Reino de España* from 1947 until his death in 1975. The Spanish regime was divided during Franco's reign: the 'political families' of the regime were the Falangists, the military, monarchists, Carlists and the 'political Catholics' of the former CEDA party.<sup>470</sup> Political ideas within the regime diverged considerably, most significantly between conservative Catholics and radical Falangists. Religiously, the group ranged from non-religious and anticlerical Falangists to Jesuit-educated Catholic activists.<sup>471</sup> The latter feared 'paganist' fascist influence, while the former were uncomfortable with the idea of more influence from the Holy See. Contemporary observers and historians both use the term National Catholicism, or *nacionalcatolicismo*, to describe the close ideological ties binding the Franco regime and the Catholic Church. National Catholicism created the 'most remarkable traditionalist restoration in religion and culture witnessed in any twentieth-century European country.'<sup>472</sup>

Franco would, according to Stanley Payne, have settled for a regime like Dollfuß', but developed a more forceful, categorical and mobilised new regime during the extreme revolutionary *Guerra Civil*.<sup>473</sup> After the civil war, his regime resembled Italian style Fascism more than the Austrian example. In the long run, however, his 'fascist' regime was the longest-living of all fascist

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thirteen bishops, 4184 diocesan priests, 2365 monk and 283 nuns were killed. Frances Lannon, *Privilege, Persecution, and Prophecy. The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875-1975* (Oxford, 1987) 201

<sup>469</sup> Payne, *Spanish Catholicism* 151

<sup>470</sup> Stanley Payne, 'Franco, the Spanish Falange and the Institutionalisation of Mission,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 7 (2006) 191-201, 197

<sup>471</sup> Linz, 'Staat und Kirche,' 62

<sup>472</sup> Payne, *Spanish Catholicism* 171

<sup>473</sup> Payne, 'Institutionalisation of Mission,' 196



regimes.<sup>474</sup> Payne thinks this was possible because it became the 'least fascist' state when the balance of power within the regime changed – moderate, Catholic forces defeated the fascist faction after the Second World War. From the second half of the fifties on, the Opus Dei became a strong force in Franco's regime.<sup>475</sup> For some, Opus Dei's involvement changed the nature of Franco's regime, because 'Under Franco the *clerical fascism of Opus Dei* won out over the true fascism of the Falange'.<sup>476</sup>

### **The Austrian *Ständestaat***

The end of the First World War was a great rupture in Austrian history; the old Empire was broken into pieces, and the 'modern' state of Austria, largely consisting of German speaking people, was created. Most Austrians wanted to join the German state, but the Allies had forbidden this in the Versailles Treaty. This *Anschlußverbot* left the 'left-over' state struggling with a lack of an 'Austrian' identity amongst its citizens, and searching for a *raison d'être*.<sup>477</sup> The old discussion about Austria's destination was revived – on the one hand the protagonists of a Danube federation, and on the other hand the supporters of the *Anschluß*.<sup>478</sup>

This *Anschlußverbot* played an important role in Austrian clerical fascism and its eventual failure. Another factor was the struggle between anticlerical, but not antireligious, social democrats on the one hand and the largely antidemocratic Catholic right in the years following the First World War. These tensions, combined with an economic crisis and an unstable political system, led to what is called the February Uprising or the

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<sup>474</sup> Ibidem 199

<sup>475</sup> Payne, *Spanish Catholicism* 189; Griffin, 'Holy Storm', 124

<sup>476</sup> Jesus Ynfante, the author of the critical *Founding Saint of Opus Dei* (2000), cited in Griffin, 'Holy Storm', 214. Emphasis added.

<sup>477</sup> Laura S. Gellott, *The Catholic Church and the Authoritarian Regime in Austria, 1933-1938* (New York and London, 1987) 3

<sup>478</sup> The same topic was discussed in the nineteenth century, when the *großdeutsche* solution was propagated by Schönerer's circle of *Burschenschaften* and *Turnvereine*. F.L. Carsten, *Fascist Movements in Austria: from Schönerer to Hitler* (London, 1977) 328

Österreichischer Bürgerkrieg in 1934.<sup>479</sup> Reacting to this uprising, Christian Social *Bundeskanzler* Engelbert Dollfuß suspended the Austrian Parliament (an act he euphemistically called a 'Selbstausschaltung') and built his Christian *Ständestaat*.<sup>480</sup>

The Austrian *Ständestaat* existed a mere four years, until the *Anschluß* with Germany in 1938. Dollfuß tried to create a viable alternative for democracy, a specific Austrian system of *Austrofaschismus*. Dollfuß was succeeded by Kurt Schuschnigg after his assassination by National Socialists in July 1934. The regime dealt with a deeply divided society. The *Ständestaat*'s leaders were members of the 'austrofascist' *Vaterländische Front*, and encountered rivals on two sides; on the left side the Social Democrats and on the far right the pro-German Austrian National Socialists. Within the regime there were many tensions too, the most significant being those between the proto-fascist *Heimwehr* and the Catholics of the former *Christlichsoziale Partei*.<sup>481</sup> The regime thus never achieved unity, but remained a reluctant 'alliance between clerical fascism and *Heimwehr* fascism'.<sup>482</sup>

The *Christlichsoziale Partei* (CSP) was founded in 1893 by the nationalist and anti-Semite Karl Lueger. This Catholic party became the most influential movement to participate in the Austrian authoritarian regime. The relation of the CSP to democracy was ambivalent, and changed over time.<sup>483</sup> The idea of the democratic system as an outdated phenomenon gained strength in the CSP and made its participation in the unitary organisation

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<sup>479</sup> Ibidem 279-287, 296, 306

<sup>480</sup> Emmerich Tálos and Walter Manoschek, 'Zum Konstituierungsprozeß des Austrofaschismus,' in: Emmerich Tálos and Wolfgang Neugebauer, eds., *Austrofaschismus. Politik – Ökonomie – Kultur 1933-1938* (Vienna, 2005) 6-27, 17

<sup>481</sup> Hanisch, 1890-1990 317; Carsten, *Fascist Movements* 279

<sup>482</sup> In the words of the Austrian Social Democrat Otto Bauer, as quoted in Kirk, 'Fascism,' 22

<sup>483</sup> It is sometimes said that the CSP was a precursor of later democratic thought (Anton Staudinger, 'Austria' – The Ideology of Austrofascism,' in: Kenneth Segar and John Warren, eds., *Austria in the Thirties: Culture and Politics* (Riverside, 1991) 1-24, 1) but it was only after 1938 and after the horrible events of the Second World War that fascism was seen as a threat, and that most Catholics wholeheartedly supported democracy (Kaiser and Wohnout, 'Introduction,' 5; Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' 83-84)

*Väterlandische Front* possible.<sup>484</sup> The Catholics lost their belief in democracy when the CSP lost dominance in the parliament in the late thirties.<sup>485</sup> Internally, there were some differences in opinion. The *Arbeiterbewegung* was the most democratic part of the Austrian regime, and even played an oppositional role to the regime<sup>486</sup> Ernst Hanisch observes that Political Catholicism in general adapted to the political *status quo*.<sup>487</sup>

In Austria the *Anschluß* forcefully ended the regime, which had never generated real mass support for its idea of a separate Austria. The propagated 'Austria'-ideology had received much attention from the regime, but proved to be a failure in the end – the ideas constituted an 'untaugliche Abgrenzungs- und Stabilisierungsideologie'.<sup>488</sup> Not only was it not successful, but it 'could not hope to succeed,' according to Anton Staudinger.<sup>489</sup> The major problems were its too 'intellectual' content, and the ambivalence regarding Germany – they wanted to form a union with Germany, but it was not the popular *Anschluß* version.<sup>490</sup>

## The regimes and the Churches

A very important element of Spanish and Austrian clerical fascism is the relation between Church and state. The attitude of the Church towards both regimes is similar in many ways. After periods of conflict over privileges and influence in society the Church had high hopes regarding the new regimes. The Church hoped to solve the problems with the government, especially regarding the fields where state and Church had clashed for centuries; matrimony, Church possessions and the appointment of bishops. The regimes hoped to gain the Church's support. In theory, a flawless harmony

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<sup>484</sup> Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' 74

<sup>485</sup> Staudinger, 'Austria', 2; Kirk, 'Fascism,' 18

<sup>486</sup> Anton Pelinka, 'Christliche Arbeiterbewegung und Austrofaschismus,' in: Emmerich Tálos and Wolfgang Neugebauer, eds., *Austrofaschismus. Politik – Ökonomie – Kultur 1933-1938* (Vienna, 2005) 88-99, 90, 93

<sup>487</sup> Hanisch, *Die Ideologie des Politischen Katholizismus in Österreich* 35

<sup>488</sup> Staudinger, 'Austria', 20, 36; Tálos, 'Herrschaftssystem,' 412

<sup>489</sup> Staudinger, 'Austria', 19

<sup>490</sup> Ibidem 49

existed between the two 'perfect societies' – Church and State. The former was the supreme authority on religious issues, the spiritual, while the state was supreme on the worldly issues, the temporal.<sup>491</sup> If there happened to be a 'mixed question', the state and the church were to resolve the question in harmony. In praxis, this harmony was not achieved.

Both the regimes and the Church could gain by a closer relationship. For the regime, the most important incentive was the Church's support and blessing of their regime, which 'sacralised' the regime and helped create a basis for Francoism and 'austrofascism'. A Church-friendly authoritarian regime was expected to treat the Church more favourably than the 'left-wing' and liberal regimes that had preceded it – those regimes typically favoured a pluralistic society with a separation of Church and State. In the Spanish case, the violent episode of the *Guerra Civil* was an example of how a hostile state would treat the Church. In the new regimes, the Church hoped to benefit on a spiritual level by re-Christianising society, but, equally important, on a materialistic level too; for example by obtaining financial privileges, and a state-sponsored renovation of its property.<sup>492</sup> The Vatican hoped to secure its privileges with a Concordat after the *Ausschaltung* of the Social Democrats.<sup>493</sup> The Concordat of 1934 partly settled these issues.<sup>494</sup>

In both Spain and in Austria, the regime and the Church kept struggling over the old issues, even after signing the Concordats. Church and regime competed over power in the fields of Christian education, wedding policy, the assignment of bishops, and more 'earthly', i.e. financial, matters. In post-War Spain, social politics became an issue too, especially after the Second Vatican Council.<sup>495</sup> These issues were broadly the same as they had been in the nineteenth century. It was similar to contemporary discussion everywhere in Europe too, most importantly in Italy, where the

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<sup>491</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 384

<sup>492</sup> Payne, *Spanish Catholicism* ; Payne, *Franco Regime* 368

<sup>493</sup> Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' 73

<sup>494</sup> Liebmann, 'Vom Ende,' 449

<sup>495</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 407

Lateran Treaty had solved the same issues, and in Slovakia and Croatia, where no such Concordat was signed.<sup>496</sup>

The Catholic Church and the Vatican were reluctant to involve in politics, and declared that the concordats, like the one with Austria, were meant to secure its rights and freedom, but were not a 'Bestätigung oder Anerkennung einer bestimmten Strömung von politischen Lehren und Ansichten.'<sup>497</sup> Pope Pius XII declared the neutrality of the Church regarding the different government types, for the Church's pastoral task was most important.<sup>498</sup> In the Spanish case, the Vatican was not inclined to identify itself strongly with the authoritarian regime, because of the international opinion on Franco's regime. Even though many Catholics felt sympathetic towards the Spanish regime, the Vatican confined itself to a *convenio* in 1941 resolving some difficulties in Church-state relations, but did not go so far as to issue a concordat that was desired by the regime.<sup>499</sup> After the World War, even the worldwide Catholic opinion was not unanimously in favour of the authoritarian regime.<sup>500</sup> In 1953 the Vatican finally signed a concordat in which, like in the Lateran Treaty, both partners haggled to increase their position, with the Church granting the 'royal patronage' to Franco in return for a more privileged position. This concordat was seen as a triumph for both Franco and the Church, and the Spanish *Caudillo* emphasised the cooperation of the two 'perfect societies' as a highpoint of National Catholicism.<sup>501</sup>

The rivalries between the regime and the Church persisted, and the harmonious National Catholic government turned out to be mere propaganda. Mary Nash acknowledges the tensions between the two pillars of the Spanish system, but maintains that 'collaboration between both led to the effective consolidation of National Catholicism as the backbone of the

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<sup>496</sup> Morgan, *Italian Fascism* 131

<sup>497</sup> Liebmann, 'Vom Ende,' 451

<sup>498</sup> Ibidem 456

<sup>499</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 387

<sup>500</sup> Ibidem 387

<sup>501</sup> Ibidem 410

Franco regime'.<sup>502</sup> At the same time, it is clear that Franco treated the Church as one of the competing factions in his system, and that he was concerned with the internal balance of power.

Eventually, the relationship ended in disappointment in both societies. The participation of the Austrian Church in the experiment resulted in what Ernst Hanisch called a 'Verlust an seelsorglich-religiöser Glaubwürdigkeit' and a loss of trust between the Church and the regime.<sup>503</sup> In Spain something similar happened, especially when the Catholic religion was 'modernised' in the Second Vatican Council. Eventually, the 'konservative katholisch-klerikale Experiment' had failed and had proven to be an archaic remnant in a changed society.<sup>504</sup> Ironically, the original strength of the regime, the close relationship with the Church, turned into its Achilles heel over the years, when the Church criticised the regime, and moreover, played a major role in enabling all kinds of resistance in the sixties.<sup>505</sup>

National Catholic ideas had been strong in the Catholic orthodoxy in the first half of the twentieth century. In the late twenties, Cardinal Reig of Toledo tried to deny centuries of modernisation in his struggle for 'total ecclesiastical control' of civil and cultural life.<sup>506</sup> In the 'integrist' circles, Catholics opposed *any* inhibition on the Church's sway over human life.<sup>507</sup> These ideas became more widespread as a result of the atrocities during the civil war. For the Spanish Church, it was relatively easy to choose a side in the conflict – Spanish Catholics saw a battle of *good* versus *evil*, and Franco's cause was seen as the Catholics' cause. This caused Spanish bishops to hold masses for the insurgents. Although there was some opposition, very few Spanish Catholics disagreed with this.<sup>508</sup> The Vatican, however, did not see the conflict in such a simplistic way.

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<sup>502</sup> Mary Nash, 'Towards a New Moral Order: National Catholicism, Culture and Gender,' in: José Álvarez Junco and Adrian Shubert, eds., *Spanish History since 1808* (London, 2000) 289-300, 291

<sup>503</sup> Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' 83

<sup>504</sup> Linz, 'Staat und Kirche,' 70; Callahan, *Catholic Church* 383

<sup>505</sup> Linz, 'Staat und Kirche,' 71, 77

<sup>506</sup> Lannon, *Privilege* 171

<sup>507</sup> *Ibidem* 172

<sup>508</sup> *Ibidem* 209-214

The Catholic dictatorship forged ideological unity in the Catholic front because it had slain the enemies of the Church. Christian Democracy was no part of this unity, because it was associated with the 'other' front in the *Guerra Civil*. This changed in the period after the Second World War. Over the course of three decades, Catholic opinion became pluralistic, eventually leading to opposition to the regime. Religion lost its position as the 'almost infallible guide to political allegiance' it once had been.<sup>509</sup> Already in the 1950s some bishops started to feel dissatisfaction with the National Catholic partners. The new generation Spanish clergymen increasingly had an uneasy feeling about the social policy of the regime; the Church, in theory, supported the poor and the needy, but the Spanish Church favoured a regime that protected the interests of the rich.<sup>510</sup> The dissatisfaction resulted not only from changing international and national conditions, but also from an alteration of the role of the *Guerra Civil* in Spanish society. Enthusiasm for National Catholicism and Franco's regime began to wane because the young clergy was untouched by the 'crusading militancy' of the clergy that had experienced the Civil War.<sup>511</sup> Religious indifference and social injustice could, two decades after the Civil War, no longer be blamed on socialist and anarchist influences or on 'divisive party politics', but now led to the necessity of reform in the Catholic Church and Catholic state.<sup>512</sup>

In the years to come, the opposition only grew. In many Catholic circles, dissatisfaction led to a rejection of authoritarian politics, and to the growing acceptance of democracy in Spanish Catholic circles. Only the ranks of reactionary groups like Opus Dei were not involved in the democratisation after Franco's death.<sup>513</sup> The Second Vatican Council thus turned the Church into a 'Church of the oppressed', even more so when the clergy started supporting regional autonomist movements.<sup>514</sup> According to

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<sup>509</sup> Ibidem 256

<sup>510</sup> Sebastian Balfour, 'The *desarollo* Years, 1955-1975,' in: José Alvarez and Adrian Shubert, eds., *Spanish History since 1808* (London, 2000) 277-288, 283

<sup>511</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 470

<sup>512</sup> Lannon, *Privilege* 246

<sup>513</sup> Ibidem 230

<sup>514</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 432-438. The reactionary Catholicism of groups like *Opus Dei* continued to exist in Spain, but it lost influence.

Juan J. Linz, the identification with the Church eventually played a major role in the downfall of the regime, because of the impossibility of totalitarianism based on religious thought.<sup>515</sup> The Roman Catholic Church remains an autonomous institution that could change its political ethics and thereby become its former ally's enemy.<sup>516</sup>

### **National Catholicism and identity**

The core belief of clerical fascism is the convergence of nationalism and religion. In the Spanish and Austrian cases this led to a National Catholic ideologies, both saw Catholicism as the essence of the Spanish and Austrian nation. Religion was not seen as a private matter, as the Social Democrats and liberals proclaimed it, but 'Religion ist Staatssache!', because "die ganze Gesetzgebung hat kein Fundament ohne den heiligen und gerechten Gott, der am Berg Sinai unter Donner und Blitz seine Zehn Gebote als Grundgesetz für die Menschheit gegeben hat", as Adam Heftner, the Bishop of Gurk, asserted.<sup>517</sup> The entanglement of religion and state was proclaimed in the constitution of the *Ständestaat* too. In the secular constitution of 1920, the sovereignty of the people was declared, but the constitution of 1934 started with the words: 'Im Namen Gottes, des Allmächtigen, von dem alles Recht ausgeht, erhält das österreichische Volk für seinen christlich, deutschen Bundesstaat auf ständischer Grundlage diese Verfassung'.<sup>518</sup> A year earlier, Dollfuß had proclaimed: 'Ja, wir wollen einen christlich-deutschen Staat in unserer Heimat errichten!'<sup>519</sup> In Spain too, the nation was seen as inextricably entangled with Catholicism. Franco stated in 1946: 'the

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<sup>515</sup> Juan J. Linz, 'Totalitarianism and Authoritarianism. My Recollections on the Development of Comparative Politics,' in: Alfons Söllner, ed., *Totalitarismus. Eine Ideengeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1997) 141-157, 147

<sup>516</sup> Linz, 'Staat und Kirche,' 72. Linz also addresses the issue of Roman Catholic independence in his seminal work on authoritarian regimes, where he questions the possibility of a regime basing total power on an 'ideology' whose interpreters are ultimately outside its control. Linz, 'Authoritarian Regime,' 185

<sup>517</sup> Hanisch, *Die Ideologie des Politischen Katholizismus in Österreich* 21

<sup>518</sup> Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' 77

<sup>519</sup> *Ibidem* 76



perfect state is for us the Catholic state'.<sup>520</sup> Catholicism in Spain was seen as 'fundamental to every aspect in national life', especially by clergy and people affiliated with the regime, mainly during the first two decades of Franco's reign.<sup>521</sup>

This 'marriage' of religion and politics was a main ingredient in the ideologies of the regimes and in their propaganda.<sup>522</sup> In Austria the official ideology, the *Österreich-Ideologie*, was the vessel used for the justification of the Austrian state, and was propagated by the regime. The problem of Austrian identity was urgent, because most 'Austrians' did not identify with the new state. This considerably weakened the position of the 'austrofascists' vis-à-vis the Germany-orientated Austrian Nazis. Catholicism played a pivotal role in the creation of an Austrian identity, and was opposed to National Socialist Protestantism and 'neo-paganism'.

This National Catholicism was the dominant view on nationality and Catholicism in Austria during the Interwar period, but was not shared by all Austrian Catholics. The Austrian publicist Alfred Missong wrote in the journal *Der Christliche Ständestaat* in 1934 about the 'actual theme' of National Catholicism, a 'sinnwidrige Verknüpfung von Katholizismus und nationaler Verkrampfung' that he observed in the *Abendland*.<sup>523</sup> He propagated a Catholic cosmopolitanism, for Catholicism meant 'eine geistige Welt, der keinerlei Schranken klassenmäßiger, sprachlicher oder rassischer Art kennt' but, instead, an 'übernatürliche Einheit des Menschengeschlechtes in Christus'.<sup>524</sup>

In Spain the *nacionalcatolicismo* was one of the most important ideological ingredients of Franco's regime.<sup>525</sup> Essential to this ideology was

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<sup>520</sup> Payne, *Franco Regime* 368

<sup>521</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 481

<sup>522</sup> Linz, 'Staat und Kirche,' 68

<sup>523</sup> Alfred Missong wrote this article under a pseudonym. Hugo Diwald, 'Nationaler Katholizismus. Kritische Betrachtungen zu einem leider aktuellen Thema,' in: Alfred Missong, ed., *Christentum und Politik in Österreich. Ausgewählte Schriften 1924-1950. Herausgegeben von Alfred Missong jun. in Verbindung mit Cornelia Hoffmann und Gerald Stourzh* (Vienna, 2006) 120-126, 122

<sup>524</sup> Ibidem 121; 120

<sup>525</sup> The origins of the term *nacionalcatolicismo* are disputed; Juan González-Anleo argues that the term emerged in its fully developed form in José Pemartín's *¿Qué es lo*

the connection between Spanish identity and Catholicism. It served, according to Mary Nash as the 'unchanging foundation of the political order reigning between 1939 and 1975'.<sup>526</sup> Aurora Morcillo agrees with her, and says that *nacionalcatolicismo*'s chameleon-like quality was the reason why Franco could reign for such a long time.<sup>527</sup> Other scholars argue that National Catholicism indeed solidified the regime's position in society at some points in time, but see many tensions that are inherent to this type of civil-ecclesiastical relations and even see an important role for National Catholicism in the eventual break down of the regime.<sup>528</sup>

This notion of a unity of Catholicism and nationalism had more effects. Catholicism became 'a condition for Spanish life sine qua non' and all non-Catholic manifestations were considered expressions of 'anti-Spanishness'.<sup>529</sup> In Austria the Catholic identity demarcated true 'Austrians' from the regime's main opponents: the 'neo-pagan' National Socialists and the 'anti-clerical' Social Democrats. The Austrian state was opposed to the centralised German state, because a 'true German' state would be organised as an organic cooperation of different *Stämme* and *Länder*, in other words: the Austrian state.<sup>530</sup> Germany was 'Prussian' and Protestant and would make Austrians its serfs in case of an *Anschluss*.

The internal opposition was seen as anti-Christian and anti-national. The Spanish pro-Franco archbishop Enrique Pla y Deniel spoke in favour of a Christian civilisation, which he opposed to anarchism and 'dissolvent' communism and the left-wing Spaniards 'without God and against God, and

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nuevo? from 1938 (Juan González-Anleo, *Catolicismo nacional: nostalgia y crisis* (Madrid, 1975)101-104). Stanley Payne points to the emerging of Spanish National Catholicism as a much-used concept during the sixties, when the opponents of Franco's regime used it to mimic the regime's slogan of *nacional sindicalismo*. (Payne, *Franco Regime* 368)

<sup>526</sup> Nash, 'Towards,' 289

<sup>527</sup> Aurora G. Morcillo, *True Catholic Womanhood. Gender Ideology in Franco's Spain* (DeKalb, 2000) 30

<sup>528</sup> For example the analysis of Linz, 'Totalitarianism,' 146, who problematises the concept, but still advocates the use of it.

<sup>529</sup> Cathelijne de Busser, 'Church-State Relations in Spain: Variations on a National-Catholic Theme?,' *Geojournal* 67 (2006) 283-294, 286

<sup>530</sup> Staudinger, 'Austria,' 14

without fatherland' – this idea was understandable, given the history of excessive anticlerical violence of the Spanish anarchists.<sup>531</sup> Cardinal Isidro Goma y Tomas had called the *Guerra Civil* a struggle of a 'Christian and Spanish spirit against another spirit'.<sup>532</sup> The doctrine was based upon exclusion of groups and individuals that were not seen as 'true' Spanish citizens.<sup>533</sup> National Catholicism was used as a weapon in the battle against separatist movements.<sup>534</sup> The Austrian regime was anti-pluralistic too, knowing only one Austria – 'das katholische Österreich!'<sup>535</sup> The controversial Cardinal Theodor Innitzer spoke of the *Bürgerkrieg* of February 1934 as the moment that 'das Unheil von der Altären abgewehrt wurde', because the Social Democrats were the 'antichrist'.<sup>536</sup> The real Austrian *Weltanschauung* was anti-democratic, anti-socialist, anti-Semitic, *völkisch*, and Catholic.<sup>537</sup>

Both countries lacked an elaborate racial theory. *Franquismo's* notion of race referred to a language, culture or national group, but was not biological or eugenist, and did not refer to a distinct biogenetic entity.<sup>538</sup> The *Ständestaat's* relation to anti-Semitism was ambivalent. The Austrian Jews theoretically enjoyed equal rights, but in praxis a form of 'Tatantisemitismus' (for example unofficial boycotts) prevailed. In Austrian Catholic circles, traditional Christian anti-Judaistic prejudices were 'common sense'.<sup>539</sup> Scholars often distinguish between acceptable (traditional) and unacceptable (racial) anti-Semitism in Catholic circles.<sup>540</sup> Most Catholics opposed racial anti-Semitism. Bishop Johannes Gföllner of Linz wrote in a *Hirtenbrief* in 1933 about the National Socialist racialism that was utterly incompatible with

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<sup>531</sup> Payne, *Spanish Catholicism* 173

<sup>532</sup> Ibidem 173

<sup>533</sup> Nash, 'Towards,' 294

<sup>534</sup> See for example Brinkman's chapter on Catalan Catholicism and National Catholicism in Sören Brinkman, *Katalonien und der Spanische Bürgerkrieg. Geschichte und Erinnerung* (Berlin, 2007)

<sup>535</sup> Hanisch, *Die Ideologie des Politischen Katholizismus in Österreich* 35

<sup>536</sup> Liebmann, 'Vom Ende,' 452; Hanisch, *1890-1990* 293-294

<sup>537</sup> Staudinger, 'Austria,' 1

<sup>538</sup> Stanley Payne, *Franco and Hitler. Spain, Germany and World War II* (New Haven, 2008) 213; Nash, 'Towards,' 294

<sup>539</sup> Angelika Königseder, 'Antisemitismus 1933-1938,' in: Emmerich Tálos and Wolfgang Neugebauer, eds., *Austrofaschismus. Politik – Ökonomie – Kultur 1933-1938* (Vienna, 2005) 54-67, 58

<sup>540</sup> Poorthuis and Saleminck, *Een donkere spiegel* 282

Christianity, but in the same letter endorsed the Christian fight against corrupting influence of the 'entartete Judentum' on Austrian culture.<sup>541</sup> This traditional anti-Semitism had played a major role in Austrian Christian politics, but anti-Semitism was less pronounced than it had been in the periods before and after the *Ständestaat*.<sup>542</sup>

### Historical legitimisation of the regimes

The *Ideenstreit* in right-wing Austria, with an antidemocratic front that was divided in a catholic, Austria-centred movement and a Germany-centred, more radical movement is also found in the second half of the nineteenth century. Georg Ritter Von Schönerer was the protagonist of the latter movement, and was focused more and more on Germany's 'progress and efficiency', as opposed to Austria's *Schlamperei*.<sup>543</sup> This even led Schönerer to become Protestant, and to start the anti-Catholic *Los von Rom*-movement.<sup>544</sup> With this anti-Catholic propaganda he alienated most of his initial followers. The other, more moderate view was propagated by Schönerer's Catholic rival Karl Lueger. Due to his Catholicism, Lueger had a greater following within the largely Catholic Austrian population.<sup>545</sup>

More recent influences were Austrian Catholic politicians and theorists. A main influence was the intellectual Othmar Spann, a theorist of a National Catholic society, based on a harmonious corporatism without political parties, for democracy was not truly 'German'.<sup>546</sup> Spann's 'romantic' social philosophy influenced the authoritarian corporate state and European fascism.<sup>547</sup> Corporatism was further influenced by Karl von Vogelsang and

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<sup>541</sup> Königseder, 'Antisemitismus,' 58

<sup>542</sup> Ibidem 54. Austrian anti-Semitism had been strong in the second half of the nineteenth century, especially in the nationalist circles of Lueger and Von Schönerer.

<sup>543</sup> Carsten, *Fascist Movements* 12

<sup>544</sup> Michael Wladika, *Hitlers Vätergeneration. Die Ursprünge des Nationalsozialismus in der k.u.k. Monarchie* (Vienna, 2005) 448, 428-451

<sup>545</sup> Ibidem 231

<sup>546</sup> Kirk, 'Fascism,' 16; Carsten, *Fascist Movements* 168-170

<sup>547</sup> Staudinger, 'Austria,' 5

the *Qaudragesimo Anno*.<sup>548</sup> Another influence was the *Bundeskanzler* Seipel who propagated a 'true democracy', instead of the 'atomic' parliamentary democracy.<sup>549</sup> This democracy consisted of an 'objektiv richtige Politik' with a Leader.<sup>550</sup> Or, as it was said by the conservative Catholic journalist Joseph Eberle, 'man müsse die Stimmen wägen, nicht zählen.'<sup>551</sup> Influential Catholic groups were the *volksdeutscher Arbeitskreis österreichischer Katholiken* and the *Christliche Arbeiterbewegung* that developed a CSP program that was anti-parliamentarist, anti-liberal, anti-capitalist, militantly anti-marxist, *agrarromantisch* and *großstadfeindlich*.

The ideas of *nacionalcatolicismo* were not new in Spain, but after an existence of over a century, they 'took on a sharper edge' as a result of the historical circumstances.<sup>552</sup> The form that was reached after the Civil War originated from traditional, 'integrist' Catholic ideas that culminated in the ultra reactionary papal document *Syllabus Errorum* (1864), Spanish 'regenerationism', authoritarian monarchism and from indigenous Spanish counterrevolutionary thought.<sup>553</sup> One of the influences was the early nineteenth century philosopher Juan Donoso Cortés, whose antirevolutionary and anti-liberal thought inspired the *Acción Española*.<sup>554</sup> Another influential thinker was Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, who provided a 'brilliant intellectual justification' for linking Spanish nationalism and Catholicism in his book on the history of Spanish heresy, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles* (1880-1882).<sup>555</sup> Menéndez y Pelayo's book was the culmination of a new conservative nationalist rhetoric that used Catholicism as the foundation of

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<sup>548</sup> Helmut Wohnout, 'Middle-class Governmental Party and Secular Arm of the Catholic Church: The Christian Socials in Austria,' in: Wolfram Kaiser and Helmut Wohnout, eds., *Political Catholicism in Europe 1918-45. Volume 1* (London, 2004) 172-194, 183

<sup>549</sup> Staudinger, 'Austria', 6

<sup>550</sup> Kirk, 'Fascism', 17

<sup>551</sup> Hanisch, *Die Ideologie des Politischen Katholizismus in Österreich* 10

<sup>552</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 383

<sup>553</sup> Nash, 'Towards,' 291; Michael Richards, 'Constructing the Nationalist State: Self-Sufficiency and Regeneration in the Early Franco Years,' in: Clare Mar-Molinero and Angel Smith, eds., *Nationalism and the Nation in the Iberian Peninsula. Competing and Conflicting Identities* (Oxford, 1996) 149-167, 151

<sup>554</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 32, 220, 316-7

<sup>555</sup> *Ibidem* 32

Spanish nationality and as the legitimisation of the monarchy.<sup>556</sup> Spain was a nation because of its Catholic nature, for 'without a common God (...) how can a People be great and strong?'<sup>557</sup> More recent influences were the above-mentioned dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and the rightwing CEDA party.

The Austrian past played a major role in the regime's rhetoric. The Austrians spoke of a restoration of the 'Holy Empire', that was to be done in an autonomous Austrian state, but that no such thing existed in Austrian mentality. A historical example was found in the medieval system of *Stand* instead of class.<sup>558</sup> This 'harmonious' society had functioned from the tenth until the eighteenth century, when it increasingly became perverted by 'foreign' influences. This new pluralist society was contrasted by the 'highpoint' of German culture that had existed during the Middle Ages. Another example was found in the Catholic Counterreformation, as opposed to the humanistic *Aufklärung*.<sup>559</sup> A third example was the victorious battle against the Turks after the Battle of Vienna in 1683.<sup>560</sup>

The country's past was glorified and used as an example in Franco's Spain. Ménéndez y Pelayo had accused eighteenth century bureaucrats and thinkers of undermining Church and religion, and thus of ending the 'most glorious epoch' in Spanish, a process that was carried further by liberalism.<sup>561</sup> The historic period of grandeur during the alliance of Throne and Altar in the sixteenth and seventeenth century and the defence against the threats of the Islam and Protestantism during that period served as an example of a just, Christian Spain.<sup>562</sup> Franco based his type of government

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<sup>556</sup> José Álvarez Junco, 'The Nation-Building Process in Nineteenth-Century Spain,' in: Clare Mar-Molinero and Angel Smith, eds., *Nationalism and the Nation in the Iberian Peninsula. Competing and Conflicting Identities* (Oxford, 1996) 89-106, 101

<sup>557</sup> Ibidem 102

<sup>558</sup> Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' 81-82

<sup>559</sup> Hanisch, 1890-1990 289

<sup>560</sup> Tálos, 'Herrschaftssystem,' 401

<sup>561</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 32

<sup>562</sup> Nash, 'Towards,' 289

upon these sixteenth century Catholic monarchiv ideals.<sup>563</sup> The preservation of the early modern Spanish essence became the *raison d'être* of Franco's Spain.<sup>564</sup> In using historical figures, for example the (Italian!) Christopher Columbus, as illustrations of Spain's past and as precursors of Franco, the Franco regime 'appropriated time itself in acknowledging no distinctions between past, present and future.'<sup>565</sup>

### **National Catholic regeneration**

National Catholicism's convergence of nation and religion had more consequences. What was good for one, was beneficial for both, but when one suffered, both were endangered. Secularisation was therefore not only a danger for the Church, but for the nation too.<sup>566</sup> Restoration of the Church's authority consequently meant a regeneration of society, and both goals were pursued simultaneously.

The *Wiedergeburt* of Austrian society meant a recatholisation of both the state and bureaucracy and the people's daily life.<sup>567</sup> The 'reine Lehre' of the Catholic Church was in danger and had to be purified, which meant that the influence of Bolshevism and Jews had to be eliminated.<sup>568</sup> The attempts 'die Gesellschaft wieder zu verchristlichen, (...) das Reich Christi und das Königtum Christi wieder aufzurichten' by purging Austrian culture from foreign influences failed, and in from 1936 the clergy complained about the persistence of inappropriate dancing in the *Ständestaat*, and about the continuing presence of 'Negerkultur'.<sup>569</sup>

In Spain, the 'new moral order' was to be created as the opposite of the old democratic order. The latter had been a system of 'political and

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<sup>563</sup> Morcillo, *True Catholic Womanhood* 28

<sup>564</sup> Ibidem 31

<sup>565</sup> Richards, 'Constructing,' 152

<sup>566</sup> Linz, 'Staat und Kirche,' 66

<sup>567</sup> Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' 77

<sup>568</sup> Hanisch, *Die Ideologie des Politischen Katholizismus in Österreich* 1

<sup>569</sup> Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' 72; Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' ; Hanisch, *Die Ideologie des Politischen Katholizismus in Österreich* 25; Hanisch, 1890-1990 314

cultural decadence', but the former would be made Christian through a recatholisation.<sup>570</sup> Especially during the fifties a period of evangelisation and 'resacralisation' took place, and the Church became a main advisor of the regime, a position it had not occupied for over a century. This 'Ehe von Religion und Politik' resulted in a restoration of the presence of religion in society, most importantly in the fields of education, culture and public morality, because 'it does not suffice for us that a people be Christian in order to fulfil the moral precepts of this order: laws are necessary to maintain its principles and correct abuses', as Franco stated in 1946.<sup>571</sup> The forties and fifties marked an offensive against modern phenomena like dancing, and against perverting influences, for example from American cinema. These reforms were, according to Juan Linz, no restoration of the pre-Republic situation, and they were not conservative either. What it embodied was a reaction on the Republic's secularisation and the persecutions during the Civil War that was 'durch und durch reaktionär'.<sup>572</sup>

The National Catholics perceived their societies as 'chosen' by God too. Callahan calls the Spanish form of Catholicism a 'civic religion identifying Spain and Spaniards as a providential nation and chosen people in the biblical sense'.<sup>573</sup> This was combined with an idea of mission. Austria should, according to its leaders, assume leadership over Central Europe and the *Ostmark* and foster 'deutsche Volkstum' at home and abroad.<sup>574</sup> This would encompass a Christian regeneration of the German lands, and was possible only under strong leadership of Austria. Without this Catholic Austria was, according to Schuschnigg in 1933, 'die Erfüllung der Sendung des deutschen Volkes im christlichen Abendland, die Wiedergeburt des wahren

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<sup>570</sup> Nash, 'Towards,' 289

<sup>571</sup> Linz, 'Staat und Kirche,' 68. Henry Kamen, however, describes the process of recatholisation as a 'myth' that was based upon the myth of Christian Spain its 'imaginary fifteenth century regime'. Henry Kamen, *Imagining Spain. Historical Myth & National Identity* (New Haven and London, 2008) 94-95; William J. Callahan, 'The Evangelization of Franco's 'New Spain', ' *Church History* 56 (1987) 491-503, 496; Payne, *Franco Regime* 368

<sup>572</sup> Linz, 'Staat und Kirche,' 61

<sup>573</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 481

<sup>574</sup> Staudinger, 'Austria,' 16



Heiligen Reiches und damit die Befriedung des aus tausend Wunden blutenden Mitteleuropas nicht möglich.<sup>575</sup>

The regimes and the leaders were occasionally portrayed as God-sent. Dollfuß was seen as the fulfiller of the *Christkönigsidee* – the theocratic ‘Vorstellung vom Reich Gottes im kleinen Österreich’ – that was present in the Catholic circles during the twenties.<sup>576</sup> Especially after Dollfuß’ passing a death cult was initiated by Innitzer, and the late chancellor was portrayed as ‘Heldenkanzler – Märtyrer für Österreich – Heiliger’, altars in his honour were created in Churches and families placed his portrait in their *Herrgottswinkel*.<sup>577</sup> The ‘Christian-Catholic’ martyr Dollfuß had given his blood for Austria.<sup>578</sup> Franco too was seen as a God-sent saviour of the Spanish faith and nation.<sup>579</sup> This was especially the case during the Civil War that became a religious struggle after the persecution of the clergy was followed by a ‘crusade’ from the nationalist side.<sup>580</sup> The nationalist victory created a ‘providential’ opportunity for the Church to advance its interests.<sup>581</sup> In Austria ‘der liebe Gott’ provided the Austrians with a last chance to save the country through the *Parlementsaußschaltung*.<sup>582</sup>

The cleansing of society took a moderate form in the Austrian and Spanish societies. In Austria the struggle against the ‘heritage’ of what was generically called the French Revolution was called a ‘Kreuzzug’, and a ‘Gegenreformation’.<sup>583</sup> This heritage consisted of a liberal, pluralistic society, with ‘degenerative’ constitutional politics.<sup>584</sup> The liberal ‘Enlightenment’ was a foreign infection that had poisoned society in the nineteenth century, causing moral and religious decline.<sup>585</sup> This foreign influence was equalled with

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<sup>575</sup> Hanisch, ‘Der Politische Katholizismus als ideologischer Träger des ‘Austrofaschismus’’ 35

<sup>576</sup> Hanisch, ‘Politische Katholizismus,’ 72-73, 78

<sup>577</sup> Ibidem 78

<sup>578</sup> Liebmann, ‘Vom Ende,’ 452

<sup>579</sup> Callahan, *Catholic Church* 382, 386, 396

<sup>580</sup> Cueva, ‘Religious Persecution,’ 359

<sup>581</sup> Callahan, ‘Evangelization,’ 496

<sup>582</sup> Hanisch, ‘Politische Katholizismus,’ 73

<sup>583</sup> Ibidem

<sup>584</sup> Richards, ‘Constructing,’ 153; Nash, ‘Towards,’ 292

<sup>585</sup> Raymond Carr, ‘Liberalism and Reaction, 1833-1931,’ in: Raymond Carr, ed., *Spain. A History* (second edition; Oxford, 2001) 205-242, 232; Richards, ‘Constructing,’ 153

Bolshevism, Social Democracy, and, of course, the Jews.<sup>586</sup> Socialism was seen as the modern anti-Christ.<sup>587</sup> The solution to these problems was found in the conversion of the people to the 'true faith'. Repression in Austria was directed against left-wing and right-wing opponents of the *Ständestaat*, but was qualitatively and quantitatively different from the Nazi repressions.<sup>588</sup>

### Theorising a 'Third Way'

The repressive measures taken by the government were not discussed extensively in Christian circles. That was different for the political and economical reforms the Catholic fascists wanted to implement. Many Catholics believed that democracy was an outdated system that was incapable to handle the enormous crisis presented to them in the thirties.<sup>589</sup> Catholics rejected capitalism, at least in theory, because it destroyed the 'harmonious' society.<sup>590</sup> In addition, Catholic sociology abhorred the 'atomic' pluralism of the 'alien' modern society, and propagated a harmonious society.<sup>591</sup> A good society was a holistic entity, where pluralism was structurally ignored. The Catholic nation would have an 'Einheit von Thron und Altar'.<sup>592</sup> The corporatist society would be based on the Austrian *Volk* – a 'spiritual community (...) with a peculiar historical destiny, culture, and religious outlook, but then also a community by the fact of blood and ancestry'.<sup>593</sup> This corporatism was based upon the Middle Ages, which was seen as the highpoint of German *Kultur*.<sup>594</sup>

This 'fascist' corporatism was, according to the Marxist historian Klaus-Jörg Siegfried, not in agreement with the Catholic corporatism, for the

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<sup>586</sup> Hanisch, *Die Ideologie des Politischen Katholizismus in Österreich* 1

<sup>587</sup> Ibidem 18

<sup>588</sup> Wolfgang Neugebauer, 'Repressionsapparat und -maßnahmen 1933-1938,' in: Emmerich Tálos and Wolfgang Neugebauer, eds., *Austrofaschismus. Politik - Ökonomie - Kultur 1933-1938* (Vienna, 2005) 298-319, 317. This qualitative difference is present in most European countries, most notably the in Italy.

<sup>589</sup> Hanisch, *1890-1990* 300

<sup>590</sup> Gellott, *Catholic Church* 395

<sup>591</sup> Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' 82

<sup>592</sup> Hanisch, *Die Ideologie des Politischen Katholizismus in Österreich* 35

<sup>593</sup> Staudinger, 'Austria,' 6

<sup>594</sup> Hanisch, 'Politische Katholizismus,' 81

social element of the Papal encyclicals was lacking fascist corporatism.<sup>595</sup> In Austria corporatism was not implemented according to the Catholic theory, because the voluntary character and the real influence lacked.<sup>596</sup> Stanley Payne observes the same discrepancy in Spain. Catholic corporatism was 'bottom up' and decentralised, whereas the twentieth century corporative ideas were statist and centralist.<sup>597</sup> For means of propaganda, this corporatism proved to be successful exactly as a result of that ambivalent nature; the policies found support of both Catholics and fascists and the regimes could justify their system to both the Vatican and fascist regimes. As in most 'corporatist' societies, for example in Salazar's Portuguese corporatism that was essentially a combination of private ownership and extensive state regulation, corporatism was more theory than practice. In practice, it was a capitalist economy with some powerless corporate representatives.

## Conclusion

National Catholicism has been equated to clerical fascism. Linz observes how the National Catholic and 'mimetic' fascist movements in Portugal, Austria and Spain were called 'clerico-fascist'.<sup>598</sup> Some currents within the Spanish regime have been called clerical fascist, because of the close links between Church and state institutions and the alliance between the Vatican and the centralised Spanish nation-state.<sup>599</sup> In Austria, the (not coincidentally

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<sup>595</sup> Siegfried, *Klerikalfaschismus* 62

<sup>596</sup> Jill Lewis, 'Conservatives and Fascists in Austria, 1918-34,' in: Martin Blinkhorn, ed., *Fascists and Conservatives: the Radical Right and the Establishment in Twentieth-Century Europe* (London, 1990) 98-117, 106

<sup>597</sup> Payne, *Spanish Catholicism* 162

<sup>598</sup> Juan J. Linz, *Fascism, Breakdown of Democracy, Authoritarian and Totalitarian Regimes: Coincidences and Distinctions* (Madrid, 2002) 26

<sup>599</sup> Opus Dei's influence has been called thus, see above, and Franco's brother in law Ramón Serrano Suñer has been deemed clerical fascist. Stanley Payne, *Fascism in Spain, 1923-1977* (Madison, 1999) 275; Gunther Dietz, 'Invisibilizing or Ethnicizing Religious Diversity? The Transition of Religious Education Towards Pluralism in Contemporary Spain,' in: Robert Jackson, ed., *Religion and Education in Europe. Developments, Contexts and Debates* (Münster, 2007) 103-132106, for example S.

Marxist) historian Siegfried even wrote a book on Dollfuß' *Klerikalfaschismus*.<sup>600</sup> There are several objections to using the clerical fascist label in relation to National Catholicism. Payne does not think the term useful in any context, because it is only used in a pejorative sense by the Left.<sup>601</sup> Laura Gellott rebukes the term because although Dollfuß and Schuschnigg were sincere, practicing Catholics, they were in no real sense clericals.<sup>602</sup>

A more important objection to the use of the term is the problematic relation of these movements with fascism. Both regimes were heavily influenced by fascism, but both movements incorporated antifascist currents, which, in the Spanish case, eventually even prevailed over the fascist forces. The movements have other, very strong, influences too. Both were formed by nineteenth century conservative thinkers, and by individuals Armin Mohler incorporated in the *Konservative Revolution*, most notably Othmar Spann. National Catholicism seems to be a more fitting and less controversial term to describe these movements.

An important feature of National Catholicism is the regimes' relation with the Catholic Church. In theory this relation was harmonious, but in praxis the relationship was often tense and the interests conflicting – which is not to say that there was no National Catholicism. Both regimes proclaimed the union of religion and nation, and excluded the 'others', fearing 'alien' influences would corrupt their society. The kind of regeneration both sought after was a restoration of the union of 'Throne and Altar' that supposedly had existed in the glorious past centuries. Of course, the regimes differed – Spain considerably changed over time, and the relation of Franco to fascism inevitably altered after the Second World War, but the tendency to see the Catholic, monarchic and traditional Spain as the best kind of fascism was strong.<sup>603</sup> In both regimes the clerical fascism came from a long, reactionary native tradition that radicalised during the 'fascist epoch'.

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Giner and S. Sarasa, 'Religión y modernidad en España,' in: R. Díaz Salazar and S. Giner, eds., *Religión y sociedad en España* (Madrid, 1993) 51-91

<sup>600</sup> Siegfried, *Klerikalfaschismus*

<sup>601</sup> Payne, *Fascism in Spain* 275

<sup>602</sup> Gellott, *Catholic Church* 16-17

<sup>603</sup> Ismael Saz Campos, 'Fascism, Fascistization and Developmentalism in Franco's Dictatorship,' *Social History* 29 (2004) 342-357, 349

Outside the 'fascist epoch', these movements would not have taken this form. The core of their thought, however, was conceivable both before and after this epoch.

National Catholicism was a more widespread phenomenon than the groups in the two chapters above. More or less unproblematic cases are found in Belgium (the Rexist movement) and in Portugal (Salazar's *Estado Novo*) and in the French collaborating Vichy regime. Some Italian Fascists could be incorporated, especially during the 'years of consensus', although one must not forget that Mussolini started out as a convinced anticlericalist. A very interesting case would be Maurras' 'anti-Christian Catholicism', especially because of the influence he had in Europe and because of the importance of his *Action Française* on the development of European fascism, conform Nolte's *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche*. The reactionary National Catholicism did not completely wither away after the 'fascist epoch'. Both Salazar and Franco reigned for a considerable period after the Second World War, but the National Catholic ideology lived on in other circles as well. A well-known example is the Lefebvrian *Fraternitas Sacerdotalis Sancti Pii X*. In 2008, one of its members, bishop Richard Williamson, denied Auschwitz' gass chambers in a controversial interview with Swedish television. The Society's reactionary and anti-semitic ideas have a considerable overlap with the National Catholics.

# Conclusion

In the previous chapters I have shown how clerical fascism is a twofold phenomenon; the six movements show striking similarities, but at the same time, the three groups are distinct. Although Michael Freeden showed that ideologies are not closed systems with clear boundaries but rather variable thought systems with permeable boundaries, we can distinguish the ideology by using his methodology that recognises ‘family resemblances’. Freeden’s method helps to analyse the plethora of clerical fascist varieties. With his notion of ideologies, contradictions within the thought systems are no longer problematic for understanding the phenomenon. While there are differences resulting from distinct cultural, historical and geopolitical national circumstances – for example the movements’ religious preferences, the role of the Church in society and the role the clerical fascists envisioned for their country in Europe – the core of the ideology consists of a set of similarities.

The three themes that I have analysed in the preceding chapters show elements that constitute the core of clerical fascism. An element traditionally linked to clerical fascism is the relationship between *Church and state*. Opponents of the use of clerical fascism often refer to the flaws in the Church and state cooperation, while many propagators of the term see this cooperation as the defining element.

The way the relationship was envisioned by the clerical fascists is strikingly similar. All clerical fascists rejected the modern idea of a separation of Church and state and propagate the creation of a symbiosis between the two. In reality, however, the relations were far from smooth. In general, the Church, especially the Catholic Church, and state disputed over three general areas – the recognition of the Church’s special position and privileges, financial support of the Church and influence over individual and

family life in society.<sup>604</sup> The Vatican negotiated with several regimes over concordats, with varying success. Germany, Austria and Spain eventually succeeded, but Slovakia and Croatia were never recognised by the Holy See. The regimes hoped to benefit from this haggling over influence and money, for they hoped to strengthen their movement with the Church's support.

The cooperation between the two was always strained – even after the signing of the concordats tensions persisted. These tensions were caused by the different goals of Church and state – the Church could be engaged in worldly affairs via politics, but always had a metaphysical objective too, while religious political movements had secular goals. These fundamentally clashing interests account for the antagonism between the two. This friction, however, is no reason to dismiss the concept of clerical fascism, for the intentions behind the cooperation, and the propaganda surrounding it, are typical for the clerical fascist ideology. It does, however, put the ambitious claims about a 'marriage of Throne and Altar' in perspective.

The second theme I analysed is *identity*. The core of clerical fascism is the convergence of the religious and national identity and the symbiosis of their interests. Adrian Hastings has shown the Christian roots of nationalism. His observation that nationalism and Christianity were more than compatible is validated in Interwar clerical fascist circles. The nation was constructed after the Biblical model and, being God's creation, it was therefore seen as a legitimate doctrine, in some cases even as *sacred*. In clerical fascist ultranationalism, the 'native' religion and the nation were inextricably linked, eventually leading to the blurring of the worship of God and nation.<sup>605</sup> The fate of both was linked too, which resulted from the substitution of a concern with the salvation of the individual's soul with a preoccupation for the *nation's* soul in theology.<sup>606</sup> The *Volk* – the people in the German,

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<sup>604</sup> Edd Doerr, 'Vatican Interests versus the Public Interest,' *Humanist* 53 (1993) 33-37, 33

<sup>605</sup> Ericksen, *Theologians* 199

<sup>606</sup> For example Heinen, *Legion* 138 and Conway, 'Political Role,'

metaphysical sense – was depicted as an entity that possessed a body and a soul.<sup>607</sup>

The clerical fascist concern with the nation's fate had consequences for the way society was envisioned – in order to save the nation, all members of society had to be good Christians. They, therefore, had to adhere to the only true religion. This anti-pluralism was *essential* for clerical fascism, because both Christians and fascists possessed metaphysical knowledge of the one and only Truth. Other points of view were not only wrong, but dangerous, because they threatened the *Volk*. The foes of the *Volk* were typically associated with satanic forces and the distinctions between the different types were blurred – most often, they were regarded as either 'Jewish' or influenced by 'Jewishness'. Even more importantly, the image of the enemies functioned as the antithesis of their self-image, and thus helped to shape that image.

The clerical fascist self-image was strengthened even further through references to national intellectual precursors and debates. The clerical fascists appropriated 'time itself', as Michael Richards observed in relation to Franco's rhetoric.<sup>608</sup> This appropriation consisted of the use of idealised historical periods as legitimisation and inspiration for the movements. In some cases, most notably in Slovakia, the past was not only idealised, but also 'invented'. In all countries, the (recent) 'liberal' past was used as a frightening example of what the future could bring.

The last common characteristic is the shared concern with a religious *regeneration* of the nation. Clerical fascist palingenesis was concerned with a *religious* regeneration of the nation. God had provided an opportunity to revive the nation with help of its God-sent leader and his movement. In the new society, a 'new man' would live in a society that was in accordance with the national character. This meant a 'third way' in the economical and political organisation, as an alternative to both liberalism and socialism. Corporatism was influenced by Papal encyclicals and fascist theory.

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<sup>607</sup> Heinen, *Legion* 136

<sup>608</sup> Richards, 'Constructing,' 152



Although Catholic movements often theorised about the subject, the economical corporatist 'third way' was not genuinely introduced in any of the countries. Many movements had a sense of mission – in some cases this meant the converting of national minorities, or of other countries, as in the Austrian case, whose clerical fascists envisioned the Austrians as the natural leaders of Central Europe.

The rebirth of the nation was only possible after a thorough purification of society. This cleansing took various forms and had different levels of intensity. The moderate manifestations were the implementation of moralistic policies and clerical fascist education and indoctrination of the people. The regimes tried to regulate cultural expressions and popular activities like dancing in order to eradicate their 'perverting' influence. Unchristian activities, like abortion and divorce, were forbidden for the same reasons. The cleansing went even further when people were forced to convert to the 'right' Christian denomination, as was done on a large scale in Croatia. In its worst manifestation, it became *ethnic* cleansing.

Clerical fascist theology shows much variety. One constant was the rejection of the universalism of some Christian traditions. Clerical fascists invariably synthesised their religion and nationalism. Another constant is the adherence to older, reactionary theological currents. On the other hand, there were major differences in the deviation from mainstream interpretations. In the moderate cases, like in Austria and Spain, clerical fascist theology was merely a change of emphasis. The clerical fascists propagated the reactionary, nationalist form of Catholicism, as it was professed by nineteenth century thinkers like Menéndez y Pelayo, and disregarded more modern, progressive forms. In Romania, an extreme form of mysticism was added to Orthodoxy, transforming it into a kind of 'sect', worshipping God and the Romanian 'blood'. This mysticism was not unique in rural Romania, but could still be considered unorthodox. The most extreme example of purifying and adapting traditional Christianity was Positive Christianity. Although many of its ideas had historical roots in German theology, the synthesis created by the *Deutsche Christen* took them

to a whole new level. In the end, their views deviated from what most Christians consider as Christian values.

The three groups differ from each other in various ways. The differences appear on several levels – in some cases they differ merely in their emphasis, in other cases movements lack some of the features or possess additional characteristics.

The Extremist Heterodox movements are different from the other groups in their religious ideas and practices. They share the inclusivist and exclusivist character of the other movements, and the efforts to achieve regeneration. The movements were more radical in most respects, but the marking characteristic is the adaptation of the 'orthodox' faith. The other clerical fascists adhered to radical reactionary currents of their faith, but the Extremist Heterodox added elements that had an, often more or less obscure, theological history, but that departed from traditional Christianity. Typical fascist elements like 'blood-and-soil' ideology and racial theory were synthesised with Christianity, in a way that it often resembled neo-paganist quasi-Christianity.

The second group was very much formed by the historical circumstances. In a turbulent time, national independence was an important incentive for a Catholic-fascist symbiosis in Eastern Europe. The anti-communism and nationalism made the (lower) clergy participate in the Radical Catholic regimes' policies, while the higher clergy was more reluctant to cooperate with the fascists. The foreign influences dictated some of their policies, to a greater extent than both the Extremist Heterodox and the National Catholic movements. These features distinguish the former from the latter. The Radical Catholics differed from the National Catholics in one more important element – the involvement in genocidal policies and the collaboration of the clergy with these policies.

The National Catholics border to the Radical Catholic group but is different because of its significantly more moderate character. The frequently occurring reactionary Catholic political current propagated a conservative

ideology that was heavily influenced by fascism during its 'epoch'. Other important influences were nineteenth century conservatives and the thinkers of the 'conservative revolution'. Most ideas of National Catholicism were abandoned after the defeat of fascism and after the Second Vatican Council, but the ideas were widespread in Catholic circles until the Second World War.

In the first part of this conclusion I described the phenomenon of clerical fascism. I have shown the shared ideas that constitute the core of this phenomenon. Clerical fascism does, however, relate to many other movements of which they borrow both styles and ideas. This partly results from the permeable boundaries of ideologies that make clerical fascist thought and style overlap with other ideologies. Therefore, neither the presence nor the absence of ideas is most important, but the *arrangement* of the ideas. Another cause is the irrationalism and its obscurantist language of clerical fascism. This creates, according to Freeden, a necessary ambiguity in the ideology that enables the movements to appeal to more people.<sup>609</sup>

Clerical fascism partly overlaps with generic fascism. The clerical fascist manifestations are connected to different varieties of fascism – Positive Christianity is linked to Nazism, whereas National Catholicism is linked to a far more moderate 'fascism'. In general, clerical fascism is found in almost all fascist currents, except for the anti-religious and neo-paganist circles.

Clerical fascism was part of a greater 'anti-modern' movement that also incorporated fascism and conservatism. Sometime during the nineteenth century, the moment varying in each country, modern times had come to Europe. This led to a 'crisis of modernity' that consisted of an industrial revolution with enormous socio-economic consequences, a democratic revolution bringing a pluralistic system and an intellectual crisis. For Christians, it was ultimately a 'crisis of faith'.<sup>610</sup> The crisis produced

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<sup>609</sup> Freeden, *Ideology* 57

<sup>610</sup> Ericksen, *Theologians* 2,5

feelings of estrangement and endangerment, especially for those groups that lost influence. A good example was the Slovak clergy, who historically had held a leading intellectual position in their society but lost influence in the early twentieth century.<sup>611</sup>

The anxiety that modernity's changes brought to many members of the European societies was the same that Michael Freeden sees at the core of conservatism. Freeden shows how conservatives always react to the movement they perceive as the greatest threat to society *at that time* by 'assembl[ing] a counter-set of conceptual configurations, directed against whatever is seen by conservatives as most threatening to the social order.'<sup>612</sup> For clerical fascists, the major threat was posed by socialism, and the 'counter-set' was constructed in accordance with fascist ideas – socialism's main enemy. Of course, these fascist 'conceptual configurations' were in themselves innovative and 'modern', but they were often legitimised as if they were in accordance with the national character and traditions, and, therefore, they were not new. In the same way that fascism is inconceivable without parliamentary democracy, clerical fascism is not conceivable with the modernity of liberalism and socialism. In this sense, clerical fascism was reactive, but Christianity did function as a catalyst of fascism too.<sup>613</sup> Especially Christianity's role in legitimising ultranationalism stimulated fascist thought.

Clerical fascism was partly located at the moderate perimeter of fascism. Especially in regard to the third category, National Catholicism, it is questionable whether these movements were truly fascist, or merely mimicked the fascist style, without sincerely following fascist ideology. In this, they resembled many contemporary conservatives, especially those that were considered to be part of the 'conservative revolution'. Both Radical Catholicism and National Catholicism were influenced by theorists whom Mohler reckons part of this 'revolution', most notably the Austrian Catholic thinker Othmar Spann. The intellectual heritage of nineteenth century

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<sup>611</sup> Felak, *'At the Price'* 22

<sup>612</sup> Freeden, *Ideology* 89

<sup>613</sup> Bergen, *Twisted Cross* 9-10

conservatism was a major influence on both clerical fascism and the 'conservative revolution'.

A last political group that clerical fascism bordered to was Political Catholicism and its Protestant and Eastern-Orthodox equivalents. These movements came into existence in the late nineteenth century, especially after *Rerum Novarum*, and were of a great influence for the later clerical fascists, for example in Austria. Clerical fascism's relation to religion is complex – critics of the concept have pointed to the mimicry that clerical fascist movements displayed. In regard to both fascism and religion, it is debatable whether the clerical fascist movements sincerely propagated these views, or merely copied its style, but not its content. There is always a tension in clerical fascism with the 'pure' varieties, because one of the two seems to be subordinate to the other – hence the 'Christian sect' in Romania and the 'anti-Christian Catholicism' in Croatia. In Nolte's view, Catholicism and fascism are ultimately incompatible, as he states that Catholicism could not be fascist, but only the 'father' of fascism.<sup>614</sup> For these critics, clerical fascism is either Christian pseudo-fascism or pseudo-Christian fascism. I do not agree with this view of the two thought systems as incompatible, just like I do not agree with the Marxist interpretation of the convergence of religion and fascism as more or less inevitable. The relationship did exist, but always remained tense.

I do agree with Roger Griffin's claim that the concept clerical fascism needs to be deflated. The general, insubstantial Marxist use serves no other goal than to incriminate conservative and religious movements. I do, however, defend a broader use of the concept than Griffin does.

At first sight, clerical fascism is in many ways very similar to 'normal' fascism. The most important feature is palingenetic ultranationalism, conform Griffin's definition of generic fascism. Clerical fascism's radical anti-Marxism is consistent with Nolte's famous definition of fascism and was connected to various forms of anti-Semitism. Even the differences between the clerical

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<sup>614</sup> Nolte, *Bewegungen* 249

fascist movements resemble the various manifestations of generic fascism – from moderate, almost conservative movements to radical, extremely racist ones. As within generic fascism, the constituents of clerical fascism often clashed, despite their desire for a harmonious society and movement. What makes clerical fascism unique, however, was the adding of an extra component – a Christian ‘style’.

The clashes between Church and state often resulted in a rejection of the use of the term; Valentin Sandulescu, for example, deems the concept ‘potentially restrictive’, because of the complexity of the actual relationship between religion and fascism.<sup>615</sup> The clerical fascist theorists had propagated a harmonious relationship between the two. Church and state had clashed over influence for ages, but now there was a discrepancy between the utopian theory and the tense praxis. Both sides, however, tried to gain something by forming an alliance, an alliance that was not always ‘amiable’, but that was nevertheless proclaimed to be so in the propaganda.<sup>616</sup>

When we agree with Sandulescu’s views, clerical fascism as a concept does not provide a valuable addition to the historian’s toolbox. I think, however, that it is useful and valid to describe the phenomenon we have seen in Interwar Europe as a distinctive ideological movement. The label we give it is a point of debate. ‘Clerical’ derives from the Greek *kleros*, which was used in the Old Testament to describe the ‘inheritance of those who have nothing but their faith in the Lord’.<sup>617</sup> ‘Cleric’ still has this religious meaning and now signifies a priest or religious leader. The literal meaning of clerical fascism focuses attention on the participation of the clergy in fascist movements, but that is not the essence of clerical fascism, as I have shown in this thesis.

The solution is to be found in an alternative usage of the word. In the context of twentieth century Catholicism, ‘clericalism’ was used as a

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<sup>615</sup> Sandulescu, ‘Sacralised Politics,’ 267

<sup>616</sup> Feldman and Turda, ‘Clerical Fascism’, 211. The same is often true in generic fascism – despite all the theories about harmony, blind obedience and an omniscient leader, in most movements ideological factions fought internal battles over influence.

<sup>617</sup> Griffin, ‘Holy Storm’, 216

pejorative term for Political Catholicism by its contemporary opponents.<sup>618</sup> Clerical fascism is to be understood in these terms – as a combination of certain elements of the Political Catholic (or political movements of the other Christian denominations) traditions with fascist thought and style. This meaning of ‘clericalism’ leaves room for the occasional ‘anti-clericalism’ of the clerical fascist movements – the opposition of Church *institutions* or the teachings of the Church, but not the Christians that adhered to the ‘true’ faith.

Clerical fascism was, in the words of Aristotle Kallis, ‘the somewhat bizarre product and manifestation of the sacred in modern societies’.<sup>619</sup> One wonders, however, whether it was bizarre in its time. Most Europeans were Christians during the ‘fascist epoch’. Fascism was an ideology that proposed some solutions that overlapped with the ideas of the Christians, and although many Christians saw the dangers of fascist thought, it was acceptable to numerous Christians. Some even went further, in which cases Christianity functioned as catalyst for fascism.

Griffin’s ‘deflated’ clerical fascism does not convince me when we observe the situation of the Interwar period. Clerical fascism is useful in a broader sense than Griffin proposes, as I have argued, clerical fascism shows enough family resemblances to consider it a separate ideology. It was a subcategory of the generic fascist ideology that incorporated movements and regimes of different nature, sharing a will to create a synthesis of their religion and fascism, in order to regenerate society. As with generic fascism, it makes sense to share all movements under one umbrella term, but it is more precise to make a distinction between National Socialism and Fascism. The same is true of clerical fascism; because of the controversy surrounding the concept, and because of the substantial internal differences, it is helpful to distinguish between the three subtypes. Using them leads to a less controversial, and

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<sup>618</sup> For example in Croatia, conform Biondich, ‘Radical Catholicism,’ 383

<sup>619</sup> Aristotle A. Kallis, ‘Fascism and Religion: The Metaxas Regime in Greece and the ‘Third Hellenic Civilisation’. Some Theoretical Observations on ‘Fascism’, ‘Political Religion’ and ‘Clerical Fascism’, ‘*Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 229-246, 232

more precise description. For an even better understanding of the phenomenon, more research has to be done, because, as John Pollard already said, we are still at the *beginning* of understanding the relation between fascism and Christianity in Interwar Europe.



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# Appendix

## **Bibliographical essay: *Clerical fascism in Interwar Europe***

This bibliography gives an overview of the literature on clerical fascism in Interwar Europe. I will present the most important and most controversial books in order to give an outline of the national and international historiographic debates on the subject of religion and fascism. This *bibliographie raisonnée* resembles Armin Mohler's bibliographical project on the 'conservative revolution' in *Die konservative Revolution in Deutschland, 1918-1932: Grundriss ihrer Weltanschauungen* (Stuttgart, 1950). This project differs from Mohler's in its focus on secondary literature and in its form – it has a more narrative structure in which the books are contextualised. As a result it is possible to present a better description of the different national debates and of the historiographic currents of the past decades.

In this bibliography I will analyse the state of the art in the research on religion and fascism in various European countries. I chose for this approach because it enables me to discuss the national historiographies. The main differences between the European countries were the distinct manifestations of fascism, of Christianity and of Church and state relations. In this essay, the focus will be on two elements. The first element is the 'fascism' of the country and the discussion on the movements that represented fascism in these countries – some were indisputably fascist, whereas other movements and regimes only maintained a (often uncomfortable) relation to the radical fascist movements. The second feature is Christianity. Various elements of Christianity will be analysed – the relation between Church and state, the attitude of the Church and its followers towards the fascist movements and the 'religiosity' of the fascist ideology.

For this bibliography, I have deliberately chosen not to include non-European countries, nor movements and regimes that did not originate during the Interwar period. Furthermore, I have chosen not to include all European countries, but only those that were most relevant to show the breadth of clerical fascism in Europe. The amount of literature is not equal for all the countries. I have included works in languages I do not speak, in order to show the national debates. This, of course, creates some practical difficulties.

Other difficulties are the 'political' historiographies in many countries. Especially in former authoritarian or totalitarian regimes, like the Eastern European communist countries or the 'fascist' regimes on the Iberian Peninsula, national historiography has often been biased. The official historical works are often valuable for their factual content, but not for the analysis. An extra problem is the inaccessibility of most archives in these countries. As a consequence, I do not claim to give a complete overview of the existing bibliography, but I try to give an outline of the available literature on the basis books, articles and international digital catalogues that were available to me.

The cases chosen here all represent important examples of clerical fascism but I have excluded the six examples that appear in my thesis. The countries are categorised on religion. The first are 'Catholic' countries, countries where other Christian denominations do not play a significant role. In the other countries, there was a relevant group of Protestant or Eastern Orthodox Christians within the fascist movement.

## **Italy**

Italy is, with Germany, the least controversial example of a fascist regime. Mussolini's movement is a paradigm of fascism – Italy was the birthplace of the concept of 'fascism', and was the first country where fascists came into power. There is an almost infinite amount of studies written on the subject of Italian Fascism. A historiographic overview is given by G. Candeloro, *Storia*

*dell'Italia moderna* part 8-10 (Milan, 1978-1984), G. Quazza, e.a., *Storiografia e fascismo* (Milan, 1985) and the book edited by Angelo Boca, Massimo Legnani and Mario G. Rossi, *Il regime fascista: storia e storiografia* (Rome, 1995). The famous Italian scholar Renzo De Felice gives an overview of primary texts in *Autobiografia del fascismo: Antologia di testi fascisti 1919-1945* (Bergamo, 1978). De Felice played a dominant role in the Italian historiography from 1960 until 1990, see Danilo Breschi, 'Recent Italian Historiography on Italian Fascism,' *Telos* (2006), 15-44.

A detailed English monograph on Fascism is Philip Morgan, *Italian fascism, 1915-1945* (second edition; Basingstoke, 2004). De Felice's student Emilio Gentile wrote *Le origini dell'ideologia fascista (1918-1925)* (Bologna, 1996) on the early years and the origins of the Fascist ideology. On the Fascist regime, he wrote *La via italiana al totalitarismo: il partito e lo Stato nel regime fascista* (Rome, 1995). Recent works on the same subject are Patrizia Dogliani, *L'Italia fascista, 1922-1940* (Milan, 1999), Salvatore Lupo, *Il fascismo: la politica in un regime totalitario* (Rome, 2005) and Jean-Yves Dormagen, *Logiques du fascisme: l'état totalitaire en Italie* (Paris, 2008). A comparative approach is chosen in Charles F. Delzell, *Mediterranean fascism, 1919-1945* (New York, 1970), Paul H. Lewis, *Latin fascist elites: the Mussolini, Franco, and Salazar regimes* (Westport, 2002) and Richard Bessel, *Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany: comparisons and contrasts* (Cambridge, 1996).

Benito Mussolini was the subject of many biographies. The most important (unfinished) project was De Felice, *Mussolini* (Torino, 1965-1992). De Felice's project was heavily criticised, see MacGregor Knox, 'In the Duce's Defense', *Times Literary Supplement*, 26 February 1999, 3-4. Another criticaster, Denis Mack Smith, criticised De Felice's portrayal of Mussolini as a 'strong' dictator (see ('Mussolini: reservations about Renzo De Felice's biography', *Modern Italy* 5 (2000) 193-210), and wrote *Mussolini. A biography* (London, 1981), in which he portrayed Mussolini as an improvising, weak Duce. R.J.B. Bosworth's recent biography, *Mussolini* (London, 2002) portrays the Italian Leader as a smart, but shallow opportunist.

The relation of the Fascists with the Catholic Church and the Catholics is much studied. Both groups often had clashing interests, but sometimes strove for the same ideal of a 'Catholic' Italy. Despite the troubles between the two interest groups, it came to neither a smooth collaboration nor a definitive breach. The Italian Political Catholic tradition is the subject of Tiziana di Maio, 'Between the Crisis of the Liberal State, Fascism and a Democratic Perspective: The Popular Party in Italy', in Wolfram Kaiser and Helmut Wohnout, *Political catholicism in Europe 1918-45* (London, 2004) 136-149. The *Partito Popolare Italiano*, forbidden in 1926, was a progressive Catholic party. Don Luigi Sturzo, the man who coined the term *clerico-fascisti*, was its leader. The other manifestation of Catholicism in Italian society was the *Azione Cattolica*, a non-political, and therefore not outlawed, organisation, see S. Rogari, 'Azione Cattolica e fascismo' *Nuova Antologia* 533 (1978). J. Dagnino describes the role of the intellectuals of Catholic Action in 'Catholic Modernities in Fascist Italy: the Intellectuals of Azione Cattolica,' *Totalitarian movements and political religions* 8 (2007), 329-341.

The Italian Catholic clergy's attitude is often analysed. For the Catholic laymen who were attracted to Fascism, see Roland Sarti, 'Conservative Catholics and Italian Fascism: The Clerico-Fascists', in Martin Blinkhorn, *Fascists and conservatives: the radical right and the establishment in twentieth-century Europe* (London, 1990) 31-49. The philo-fascist clergy is subject of P. Ranfagni, *Clerico-Fascisti: Le riviste dell'Università Cattolica negli anni del Regime* (Florence, 1975). The Catholic opposition is analysed in Richard J. Wolff, *Between Pope and Duce: catholic students in fascist Italy* (New York, 1990), who describes a group of young Italians that was, despite Mussolini's attempts to fascistise society, reluctant to collaborate with the regime. Daniele Menozzi wrote *Stampa cattolica e regime fascista* (Bologna, 2003) about the role of the Catholic press.

The Italian Church was not an ideological unity during the Interwar period. R.A. Webster describes the internal divisions in *The Cross and the Fasces* (Stanford, 1960), just like Giovanni Bosco Naitza and Giampaolo Pisu, *I Cattolici e la vita pubblica in Italia (1919-1943)* (Florence, 1977) and,

more recently, Guido Zagheni, *La croce e il fascio: i cattolici italiani e la dittatura* (Milan, 2006).

The Church and state relations were constantly strained in Italy. The highpoint of the relationship was the Lateran Treaty of 1929, followed by a period of struggle over the practical implementation of the treaty. John F. Pollard describes these years in *The Vatican and Italian fascism, 1929-1932: a study in conflict* (Cambridge, 1985) and D. Sorrentino, *La Conciliazione e il 'fascismo cattolico'* (Brescia, 1980) writes about the *Conciliazione*. The immediate post-1918 period is described in Stephan Kuss, *Römische Kurie, italienischer Staat und faschistische Bewegung: der Vatikan und Italien in der Zeit nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg bis zur totalitären Wende des Mussolini-Regimes (1919 - 1925)* (Frankfurt am Main, 1994). Arturo Carlo Jemolo, *Church and state in Italy, 1850-1950* (Oxford, 1960), Giovanni Miccoli, *Kirche und Faschismus in Italien: das Problem einer Allianz* (Wiesbaden, 1977) and Francesco Malgeri, *Stato e Chiesa in Italia: dal fascismo alla Repubblica: aspetti, problemi, documenti* (Rome, 1976) describe the problematic collaboration of Church and regime. Primary sources regarding this subject can be found in P. Scoppola, *La Chiesa e il fascismo* (Bari, 1971).

A last interesting subject is the aesthetics of Fascism. Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi analyses the Fascist aesthetics in *Fascist spectacle: the aesthetics of power in Mussolini's Italy* (Berkeley, 1997). A year before, *The Journal of Contemporary History* 31 (1996) devoted a special edition to the phenomenon. Emilio Gentile analysed the Fascist aesthetics in *The sacralization of politics in fascist Italy* (London, 1996), especially focusing on the Christian symbolism and the Fascist 'political religion'.

## **France**

In contrast to Italy, the French fascist movement was fragmented and did not come into power without external support. The extreme right wing in France was a collection of small movements, *ligues d'extrême droite*. These *ligues* are described in the book *Histoire de l'extrême droite en France* (Paris,

1993), edited by Michel Winock. Roger Austin analyses the French conservatives in 'The Conservative Right and the Far Right in France: the Search for Power, 1934-44', in Martin Blinkhorn, *Fascists and conservatives: the radical right and the establishment in twentieth-century Europe* (London, 1990) 176-199, just like Klaus Jürgen Müller, 'Die französische Rechte und der Faschismus in Frankreich 1924-32', in: Fritz Fischer, Dirk Stegmann, Bernd-Jürgen Wendt and Peter-Christian Witt, *Industrielle Gesellschaft und politisches System: Beiträge zur politischen Sozialgeschichte* (Bonn, 1978).

In the traditional view of French fascism is seen as an unsuccessful imported product. Since the seventies, a new generation of historians protested this image, and showed how French fascism had French roots. The most important historian to do so was Zeev Sternhell in his books *La droite révolutionnaire 1885-1914 les origines françaises du fascisme* (Paris, 1978), *Maurice Barrès et le nationalisme français* (Paris, 1972) and *Ni droite, ni gauche l'idéologie fasciste en France* (Paris, 1983). The same view is defended by Robert Soucy, *French fascism: the first wave, 1924-1933* (London, 1986) and *French fascism: the second wave, 1933-1939* (London, 1995), and by Richard Grenier, 'Fascism à la Française,' *National review* 49 (1997), 46-49. This thesis encountered fierce resistance, for example by René Rémond, *Les Droites en France* (Paris, 1982), who calls French fascism an import product and Serge Bernstein, 'La France allergique au fascisme', *Vingtième siècle: revue d'histoire* 2 (1984) 84-94.

The oldest and most influential extreme right wing party was *l'Action Française*, which was created as a reaction to the left wing agitation in the Dreyfus Affair. The monarchist, anti-parliamentary and anti-revolutionary writer Charles Maurras was the movement's most important ideologue. A recent biography is Bruno Goyet, *Charles Maurras* (Paris, 2000). Stéphane Giocanti analyses Maurras' thought in *Charles Maurras: le chaos et l'ordre* (Paris, 2006). He shows Maurras' wide-ranging influence in Europe, on leaders like Marshal Pétain, the Belgian King Albert I, Charles de Gaulle, Francisco Franco and Antonio Salazar. Ernst Nolte, *Der Faschismus in Seiner Epoche: Die Action Française; Der Italienische Faschismus; Der*



*Nationalsozialismus* (München, 1963), Colette Capitan-Peter *Charles Maurras et l'ideologie d 'action Française* (Paris, 1972), Eugen Weber, *Action française. Royalism and reaction in twentieth-century France* (Stanford, 1962) and Edward Robert Tannenbaum, *The Action Française: die-hard reactionaries in twentieth-century France* (New York, 1962) write about the ideology of the *Action Française*. The ideological precursors are described in Victor Nguyen, *Aux origines de l'Action française : intelligence et politique vers 1900* (Paris, 1991).

Maurras' influence in Catholic France is complicated; an agnostic himself, he saw the Catholic faith as an important stabilising social element in society. He was popular in Catholic circles, but Catholic membership of his movement was nevertheless prohibited by Pope Pius XI. Pius XII changed this decision during the Spanish civil war. Jacques Prévotat writes about this complicated relationship in *Les catholiques et l'Action française: histoire d'une condamnation 1899-1939* (Paris, 2001). Michael Sutton, *Nationalism, positivism and Catholicism: the politics of Charles Maurras and French Catholics, 1890-1914* (Cambridge, 1982) focuses on the movement's first years in clarifying the Catholic support of Maurras' thought.

A second important extreme-right leader was Georges Valois, who had been an influential member of the *Action Française* until he broke with Maurras in 1925. In the same year, he constituted the overtly fascist *Faisceau*. Jules Levey, 'Georges Valois and the Faisceau: The Making and Breaking of a Fascist,' *French historical studies* 8 (1973), 279-304 deemed Valois the first French fascist. A good biography in which his ambivalence towards fascism and left wing politics is clearly shown is Allen Douglas, *From fascism to libertarian communism: Georges Valois against the Third Republic* (Oxford, 1992). More recently, Yves Guchet wrote *Georges Valois: l'Action française, le Faisceau, la République syndicale* (Paris, 2001).

The third important French fascist is François de la Rocque, the leader of the radical *Croix de Feu* (1930-1936) and the more moderate *Parti Social Française* (1936-1940). La Rocque's thought was anti-democratic, corporatist and Christian-social, but it is questionable whether he was a

fascist. Sternhell and Soucy consider him to be so, the latter in 'French Fascism and the Croix de Feu: A Dissenting Interpretation,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 26 (1991) 159-188 and W.D. Irvine in 'Fascism in France and the Strange Case of the Croix de Feu,' *Journal of modern history* 63 (1991) 271-295. K. Passmore is more ambivalent in 'Boy scouting for grown-ups? Paramilitarism in the Croix de Feu and the Parti Social Francais,' *French historical studies* 19 (1995) 527-557, where he deems the *ligue* fascist, but not the *parti*. Jacques Nobécourt, *Le Colonel de La Rocque, 1885-1946, ou les pièges du nationalisme chrétien* (Paris, 1996) portrays him as a precursor of Charles de Gaulles. La Rocque's role in the Vichy regime is described by Sean Kennedy, 'Accompanying the marshall: La Rocque and the Parti Social Français under Vichy,' *French history* 15 (2001), 186-213.

Another interesting French political phenomenon was Marshal Pétain's Catholic corporatist Vichy regime. The central debate is about the fascist or authoritarian nature of the regime. Philippe Burrin questions the possibility of authentic fascism in the context of a collaborating regime in an occupied country in his *La Dérive fasciste: Doriot, Déat, Bergery: 1933-1945* (Paris, 1986). Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order 1940-1944* (New York, 1972) describes the Vichy regime from German sources. Julian Jackson accessed French archives, and paints a nuanced image of Vichy's complicated ideological structure in *The Dark Years, 1940-1944* (New York, 2001). Michèle Cointet-Labrousse, *Vichy et le fascisme les hommes, les structures et les pouvoirs* (Bruxelles, 1987) deems the Vichy regime fascist.

Virtually all French fascist movements were 'Catholic' or attracted Catholics. The Catholic opponent of religious anti-democratic thought was the *Parti Démocrate Populaire*, see Jean-Claude Delbreil, 'Christian Democracy and Centrism: The Popular Democratic Party in France', in Wolfram Kaiser and Helmut Wohnout, *Political catholicism in Europe 1918-45* (London, 2004) 116-135. Philippe Chenaux describes in *Entre Maurras et Maritain: une génération intellectuelle catholique (1920-1930)* (Paris, 1999) the debate on democracy in French intellectual circles. The anti-modernism

and religious character of French fascism is the focus of Gilbert Merlio, 'Die Konfrontation der französischen Kultur mit totalitären Ideologien und die Rolle von Laizismus und Religion', in: Gerhard Besier and Hermann Lübke, eds., *Politische Religion und Religionspolitik. Zwischen Totalitarismus und Bürgerfreiheit* (Göttingen, 2005) 111-132.

## Portugal

After the failure of the democratic First Republic, Portugal was a dictatorship from 1926 until 1933. From that year on, the *Ditadura Nacional* was followed by the corporatist *Estado Novo* under António de Oliveira Salazar. Salazar's state existed until 1974, six years after his death. The state resembled the Austrian and the Spanish regimes – like those countries, Portugal was an authoritarian state, influenced by Maurassian thought. Its 'fascist' nature is, like in the other cases, the central point of debate.

Like in Austria and Spain, the heterogeneous nature of the regime complicates assessing this problem. The supporting groups of Salazar's regime were a combination of conservative Catholic and extreme right wing parties. A rivalling group was the National Syndicalists, who were overtly fascist, but more a rival to the regime. Tom Gallagher writes on the mutual relationships in his article 'Conservatism, dictatorship and fascism in Portugal, 1914-45', in: Martin Blinkhorn, *Fascists and conservatives: the radical right and the establishment in twentieth-century Europe* (London, 1990) 157-175. João Medina analyses Salazar's attitude towards the National Syndicalists in *Salazar e os Fascistas: Salazarismo e Nacional Sindicalismo. A História de um Conflito (1932-1935)* (Lisbon, 1977). The most radical fascist movement in Portugal was the paramilitary *Legião Portuguesa*, see *Legião Portuguesa: força repressiva do fascismo* (Lisbon, 1975) and Luís Nuno Rodrigues, *A Legião Portuguesa: a milícia do Estado Novo (1936-1944)* (Lisbon, 1996). Salazar's has been the subject of several biographies. Sympathising portraits were Franco Nogueira, *Salazar* (Coimbra, 1977) and Hugh Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal* (London, 1970). Pedro

Ramos de Almeida, *Salazar: biografia da Ditadura* (Lisbon, 1999) is more critical.

The *Estado Novo* is deemed fascist by some historians, for example in Fernando Rosas' books *O Estado Novo (1926-1974)* (Lisbon, 1994), *Portugal e o Estado Novo* (Lisbon, 1992) and, with José Maria Brandão de Brito, in *Dicionário de história do Estado Novo* (Lisbon, 1996) and in Manuel de Lucena, *A evolução do systema corporativo português* (Lisbon, 1976). Although nobody denies a certain affinity of the *Estado Novo*, many scholars deny the existence of real Portuguese fascisme, see Aristotle A. Kallis in *The fascism reader* and António Costa Pinto, *O Salazarismo e o fascisme europeu: Problemas de interpretação nas ciencias sociais* (Lisbon, 1982). The latter calls the regime a conservative authoritarian regime, in which the Catholic Church played an important role. In 'Political Catholicism, Crisis of Democracy and Salazar's New State in Portugal,' *Totalitarian movements and political religions* 8 (2007), 353-368, Pinto and M.I. Rezola see the Catholic Church as an important factor in defascistising Portugal. Pinto describes Catholic anti-democratic movement in *Os camisas azuis. Ideologia, elites e movimentos fascistas em Portugal, 1914-1945* (Lisbon, 1994). His vision is shared by Manuel Braga da Cruz, author of *As origens da Democracia Cristã em Portugal e o Salazarismo* (Lisbon, 1980) and *Monárquicos e Republicanos no Estado Novo* (Lisbon, 1986) and by T. Gallagher, *Portugal: A Twentieth-Century Interpretation* (Manchester 1983), the latter comparing the *Estado Novo* with the Third World dictatorship of Nasser in Egypt.

Portuguese corporatism was highly regarded in European Catholic circles. Its historical roots are described in H.J. Wiarda, *Corporatism and Development: The Portuguese Experience* (Lisbon, 1977). Its actual functioning is analysed by Manuel Braga da Cruz, *O partido e o estado no salazarismo* (Lisbon, 1988) and M. De Lucena, *A evolução do sistema corporativo português* (Lisbon 1976).

The regime's relation with the Catholic Church is described in Manuel Braga de Cruz, *O Estado Novo e a Igreja Católica* (Lisbon, 1998), who

describes the relationship as either clerical fascist or National Catholic. Arnaldo Madureira, *A Igreja Católica na origem do Estado Novo* (Lisbon, 2006), Valentim Alexandre, *O roubo das almas: Salazar, a igreja e os totalitarismos (1930-1939)* (Lisbon, 2006) and Ludwig Renard, *Salazar, Kirche und Staat in Portugal* (Essen, 1968) assesses different aspects of the relation between the Catholic Church and the *Estado Novo*. Salazar's relation with the Vatican is described in Bruno Cardoso Reis, *Salazar e o Vaticano* (Lisbon, 2006).

## Poland

Poland was a dictatorship under the authoritarian leader Jozef Pilsudski after the First World War. Poland did not become fascist, even though there was a mixture of anti-Semitism, nationalism and Catholicism that led to fascist regimes in many countries. This makes Poland an interesting case.

The main study of Polish history in English is Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland* (Oxford, 1981). An older history of Poland is H. Roos, *Geschichte der polnischen Nation 1916-1960* (Stuttgart, 1964). In Polish, the most notable works are Jerzy Topolski, *Polska dwudziestego wieku 1914 – 1994* (Poznań, 1994), H. Zielinski, *Historia Polski 1914-1939* (Wroclaw, 1985) and W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski, 1914-2004* (Warsaw, 2004).

Pilsudski's seizure of power is described in Joseph Rothschild, 'The Ideological, Political, and Economic Background of Pilsudski's Coup D' Etat of 1926', *Political Science Quarterly* 78 (1963) 224-244. E.D. Wynot, *Polish Politics in Transition. The Camp of National Unity and the Struggle of Power 1935-1939* (Athens, 1974) describes the period after the leader's death. Jolanta Polakowska-Kujawa, *Nacjonalizm oraz konflikty etniczno-narodowe* (Warsaw, 1999) writes on the subject of Polish nationalism. In Peter F. Sugar's edited book, *Native Fascism in the Successor States, 1918-1945* (Santa Barbara, 1971), H. Wereszycki, 'Fascism and Poland' (85-91) and P.S. Wandycz, 'Fascism in Poland' (92-98) are notable articles.

The Pilsudski biographies range from very critical communist books to Polish nationalist 'hagiographies'. An example of the first works is Andrzej Garlicki's biography, that was published in English as *Józef Pilsudski. 1867-1935* (Aldershot, 1995). Waclaw Jedrzejewicz, *Józef Pilsudski 1867-1935: Zyciorys* (London, 1982) is an example of a nationalist interpretation. Pilsudski's regime is deemed fascist in Marxist circles, but according to Robert Pearce, 'Józef Klemens Pilsudski', *History Review* 46 (2003) 19-22, this is not justified. A useful overview of the state of the art of research into the subject, see Heidi Hein-Kircher, *Der Pilsudski-Kult und seine Bedeutung für den polnischen Staat 1926-1939* (Marburg, 2002).

Although Pilsudski was not very religious himself, Catholicism was very important in his politics. The Church's position is described in the book *Nation-Church-Culture. Essays on Polish History* (Dublin, 1990), edited by A. Chruszczewski, and in J. Kloczowski, *A history of Polish Christianity* (Cambridge, 2002). In Polish Jerzy Kloczowski, ed, *Chrzegcijanstwo w Polsce. Zarys przemian (966-1979)* (Dublin, 1992) and *Kosciol katolicki w swiecie i w Polsce. Szkice historyczne* (Katowice, 1985) cover the same subject. Bogumil Grott analyses the relationship between right wing politics and religion in Poland in 'Polnische Parteien und nationalistische Gruppen in ihrem Verhältnis zur katholischen Kirche und zu deren Lehre vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg', *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 45 (1996) 72-88. Ute Caumanns, *Die polnischen Jesuiten, der Przegląd Powszechny und der politische Katholizismus in der Zweiten Republik* (Dortmund 1996) analyses the attitude of the Polish Catholics towards the authoritarian regime.

## **Ireland**

For Ireland, the Interwar period started with a revolution and a civil war. Even though Ireland was politically unstable, fascism did not achieve much. The only 'fascist' movement was the *Lucht na Léine Gorma*, the 'Blueshirts', that eventually merged with the *Fine Gael*, and existed for a mere three years.

This movement is interesting for its 'continental' influences and its Catholicism.

Traditionally, the *Blueshirts* are seen as a fascist movement, conform Maurice Manning, *The Blueshirts* (Dublin, 1970), Joseph Lee, *Ireland 1912-85. Politics and Society* (Cambridge, 1989) and Dermot Keogh, *Ireland and Europe, 1919-1948* (Dublin, 1988). Mike Cronin questions this interpretation in 'The Blueshirt Movement: Ireland's fascists?', *Journal of Contemporary History* 30 (1994) 311-332, where he eventually concludes that they were 'potentially para-fascist'. Cronin shows the discrepancy between the leader and Mussolini enthusiast Eoin O'Duffy (Fearghal McGarry, *Eoin O'Duffy: A Self-Made Hero* (Oxford, 2005)) and his followers in *The Blueshirts and Irish Politics* (Dublin, 1997). The Blueshirt supporters are analysed in his article 'The socio-economic background and membership of the Blueshirt movement, 1932-5', *Irish Historical Studies* 29 (1994) 234-249.

The Irish society was largely Catholic, and therefore the relationship between the movement and the Vatican is interesting. Dermot Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican: The Politics and Diplomacy of Church State Relations, 1922-60* (Cork, 1995) and Patrick Murray, *Oracles of God: The Roman Catholic Church and Irish Politics, 1922-37* (Dublin, 2000) show the importance of Catholic support for Irish political movements. The fascists looked for that support too, as Cronin shows in "Putting New Wine into Old Bottles": The Irish Right and the Embrace of European Social Thinking in Early 1930s', *European History Quarterly* 27 (1993) and 'Catholicising Fascism, Fascistising Catholicism? The Blueshirts and the Jesuits in 1930s Ireland', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 401-411. The fascists tried to gain support by adapting Catholic ideas, for example on corporatism, see Eugene Broderick, 'The corporate policy of Fine Gael, 1934', *Irish Historical Studies* 39 (1994) 88-99.

## **Hungary**

The Hungarian Kingdom had, according to Stanley Payne, 'the largest assortment per capita of fascist-type, semi-fascist, or right radical movements' (*A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (London, 1995), 267). The Hungarian post-1918 situation was unfavourable in most Christians' eyes – Hungary lost territory and was ruled by Béla Kun's communist regime. His anti-clericalism led to collaboration of the clergy with the fascists. The right-wing front was fragmented, which resulted from the lack of religious unity.

Miklós Horthy led the authoritarian Kingdom of Hungary after Kun's downfall. Hungary was tied to the Axis powers, especially under prime minister Gömbös. Nándor F. Dreisziger provides an overview of the historiography on Horthy in 'Miklós Horthy and the Second World War: Some Historiographical Perspectives,' in N.F. Dreisziger, ed., *Regent Miklós Horthy, István Horthy and the Second World War* (Toronto, 1996) 6-9. In the Hungarian historiography there is a clear division between communist scholarship and post-communists studies.

Examples of the former are István Kerekes, *Horthy „keresztény és nemzeti” Magyarországa* (Budapest, 1961), István Pintér, *Ki volt Horthy Miklós (életrajz)* (Budapest, 1968), Miklós Szinai, *Szucs László: Horthy Miklós titkos iratai* (Budapest, 1962) and Zoltán Vas, *Horthy* (Budapest, 1977). After 1989 the negative communist interpretation was contested. In the new books, his fight against communism was valued differently, for example in Horthy Péter Gosztonyi, *A kormányzó, Horthy Miklós* (Budapest, 1992) and Thomas Sakmyster, *Hungary's Admiral on Horseback: Miklós Horthy 1918–1944* (New York, 1994). More recently Gábor Bencsik, *Horthy Miklós (a kormányzó és kora)* (Budapest, 2003), Imre Bokor, *Vitéz nagybányai Horthy* (Budapest, 2002) and Gábor Koltay, *Horthy, a kormányzó* (Szabad, 2007) were published.

One of the precursors of the fascist movements is the Christian-social party, whose history is described in Jeno Gergely, *Keresztényszocializmus Magyarországon, 1903-1923* (Budapest, 1977). For the history of the fascist parties in Hungary, see C.A. Macartney, *October Fifteenth: A History of Modern Hungary, 1939-1945* (Edinburgh, 1957). A Marxist interpretation is



found in Miklos Lackó, *Nyilasok, nemzetiszocialisták, 1935-1944* (Budapest, 1966). Lackó describes the National Socialists, and Nikolas M. Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others: A History of Fascism in Hungary and Rumania* (Stanford, 1970) a broader variety of right wing movements. Miklós Lackó, 'The Social Roots of Hungarian Fascism' and Györgi Ranki, 'The Fascist Vote in Budapest in 1939' analyse the following of the fascist in Stein Ugelvik Larsen, Gerhard Botz and Bernt Hagtvet, *Who were the fascists? social roots of European fascism* (Bergen, 1980). In 1944 the *nyilasok* (Arrow Cross) of the Catholic Ferenc Szálasi came into power with help from the Germans. This movement is studied in Margit Szöllösi-Janze, *Die Pfeilkreuzlerbewegung in Ungarn: Historischer Context, Entwicklung und Herrschaft* (München, 1989).

The Church and state relations are analysed in Péter László, 'Church-State Relations and civil Society in Hungary: a Historical Perspective', *Hungarian Studies* 10 (1994) 1-31 and Jeno Gergely, 'Adatok a magyarországi katolicizmus helyzetéről a két világháború között', *Levéltári Szemle* 3 (1996) 615-638. Gabriel Adriányi, *Fünzig Jahre ungarischer Kirchengeschichte 1895-1945* (Mainz, 1974) is a general Hungarian Church history of the period. Jeno Gergely, 'Adatok a magyarországi katolicizmus helyzetéről a két világháború között', *Levéltári Szemle* 3 (1996) 615-638 specifically studies the Catholic Church in Hungary. Jeno Gergely, *A katolikus egyházi elit Magyarországon, 1919-1945* (Budapest, 1999) and Béla Bodó, 'Do not Lead us into (Fascist) Temptation': The Catholic Church in Interwar Hungary,' *Totalitarian movements and political religions* 8 (2007), 413-431 describe the divided Catholic Church and clergy during the Interwar period, whereas Csaba Fazekas, 'Collaborating with Horthy: Political Catholicism and Christian Political Organizations in Hungary', in Kaiser, *Political Catholicism in Europe*, 195-216 analyses the history of Political Catholicism. István Mészáros and Jusstinián Serédi, *Prímások, pártok, politikusok, 1944-1945: adalékok a Magyar Katolikus Egyház XX. századi történetéhez* (Budapest, 2005) describes the Church's attitude during Szalasi's reign from 1944 on.

## Serbia

In the Serbian part of the *Kraljevina Jugoslavija*, the *Zbor* movement of Dimitrije Ljotic was the prime example of a symbiosis of religious and ultranationalist thought. The Orthodox fundamentalist Ljotic was inspired by Mussolini and Hitler. The *Zbor* was repressed by the King, as is described in Brigit Farley, 'Aleksandar Karadjordjevic and the Royal Dictatorship in Yugoslavia', in Bernd J. Fischer, *Balkan Strongmen. Dictators and Authoritarian Rulers of South Eastern Europe* (London, 2007) 51-86, J.B. Hoptner, *Yugoslavia in Crisis, 1934-1941* (New York, 1962) and Vasa Kazimirovic, *Srbija i Jugoslavija 1914-1945* (Kragujevac, 1995).

As in all post-communist countries, there is a large amount of hardly useful literature. Most communist research focused on Tito's partisans, and the other parties were often qualified as 'fascists'. Even King Alexander was called a 'monarcho-fascist'. These fascists were, as opposed to the communists, not Yugoslav. Examples are Todor Kuljic, 'Srpski fašizam i sociologija', *Sociološki pregled* 2 (1974) 241-256, Branislav Gligorić, 'Jugoslovenstvo između dva svetska rata', *Jugoslovenski istorijski casopis* 1 (1986) 72-87 and Mladen Stefanovic, *Zbor Dimitrija Ljotica, 1934-1945* (Belgrade, 1984). All these works emphasise the influence of the foreign fascist movements like the German Nazis.

The post-communist historiography is highly political too, leaving even less valuable studies. Post-communist works are Nebojša Popov, 'Srpski populizam: od marginalne do dominantne pojave' *Vreme, Beograd* 35 (1993) 3-34 and Dragan Subotic, *Zatomljena Misao: O politickim idejama Dimitrija Ljotica* (Belgrade, 1994). Roger Griffin deems the *Zbor* non-fascist in his *Fascism* (Oxford, 1995).

The same lack of valuable literature is noticeable on the subject of Eastern Orthodoxy Church history in Serbia. Sabrina Ramet wrote a monograph on politics and religion in Yugoslavia, *Balkan Babel: Politics, Culture, and Religion in Yugoslavia* (Boulder, 1992). Pedro Ramet edited a

book on the same subject, *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, 1988). Maria Falina's article 'Between 'Clerical Fascisms' and Political Orthodoxy: Orthodox Christianity and Nationalism in Interwar Serbia', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 247-258 treats the relationship between the *Zbor* and political Orthodoxy.

## Greece

Greece was ruled by Ioannis Metaxas' 4<sup>th</sup> of August Regime between 1935 and 1941. The first serious studies of this regime are John Koliopoulos, *Greece and the British Connection, 1935-1941* (Oxford, 1977) and Jon V. Kofas, *Authoritarianism in Greece: The Metaxas Regime* (Boulder, 1983). A general history of Greece during the Interwar period is Griogrios Dafnis, *Ellas metaxi dio polemon* (Athens, 1955), and M. Mazower analyses the economical situation in that period in *Greece and the Inter-War Economic Crisis* (Oxford, 1991).

An important document is Metaxas' diary that is accompanied with original documents, see Ioannis Metaxas, *To Prosopiko tou Imerologio* (Athens, 1952). Metaxas early years are covered by Joachim G. Joachim, *Ioannis Metaxas: the Formative Years, 1871-1922* (Mannheim, 2000). P.J. Vatikiotis, *Popular Autocracy in Greece 1936-41: a Political Biography of General Ioannis Metaxas* (London, 1998) is a biography of Metaxas during his reign. S. Victor Papcosma portrays Metaxas' leadership in 'Ioannis Metaxas and the 'Fourth of August' Dictatorship in Greece', in Bernd Fischer, *Balkan Strongmen: Dictators and Authoritarian Rulers of South Eastern Europe* (London, 2007) 165-198. The conservative regime is analysed in H. Cliadakis, 'Le régime de Metaxas et la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale', *Revue d'Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale* 107 (1977) 19-38, David Close, 'Conservatism, authoritarianism and fascism in Greece, 1915-45', in Martin Blinkhorn, *Fascists and conservatives: the radical right and the establishment in twentieth-century Europe* (London, 1990) 200-217 and Robin Higham and

Veremis Thanos, *The Metaxas dictatorship. Aspects of Greece 1936 – 1940* (Athens, 1993).

The question of its 'fascist' nature is central to the debate about Metaxas' regime too. The Marxist historians Spyros Linardatos, *I 4<sup>e</sup> augoustou* (Athens, 1966), Nikos Psiroukis, *O fasismos ke i 4<sup>e</sup> augoustou* (Athens, 1974) and Heinz Reichter, *Griechenland zwischen Revolution und Konterrevolution, 1936-1946* (Frankfurt am Main, 1973) deemed Metaxas' regime fascist. A more interesting analysis is Yannis Andricopoulos, *I Rizes tou Ellinikou Fasismou* (Athens, 1977) who points a certain fascist elements in Metaxas' regime. Most historians do not hold the Metaxas regime to be fascist, although he did incorporate some fascist treats. This vision is propagated by Richard Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece* (Cambridge, 1979), Christopher M. Woodhouse, *Modern Greece: a Short History* (London, 1977), Mogens Pelt, 'The Establishment and Development of the Metaxas Dictatorship in the Context of Fascism and Nazism, 1936-41', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 2 (2001) 143-172 and Andreas Markessinis, *La Grecia Fascista* (2007). Giorgos Margaritis wrote about the most radical fascist movement in Greece, the *Ethniki Enosis Ellas* in 'Ellinikos antisimitismos: mia periigisi, 1821, 1890, 1931', in *O Ellinkios Evraismos* (Athens 1999).

Metaxas focused on typical conservative values like the fatherland, loyalty, family and religion. Ioannis Konidaris assesses the relation between Church and state in 'The Legal Parameters of Church and State Relations in Greece', in: T.A. Couloumbis, T. Kariotis, F. Bellou, eds., *Greece in the Twentieth Century* (London, 2004) 223-235. Aristotle Kallis writes on Metaxas and clerical fascism in his article 'Fascism and Religion: The Metaxas Regime in Greece and the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation'. Some Theoretical Observations on 'Fascism', 'Political Religion'; and 'Clerical Fascism', *Totalitarian movements and political religions* 8 (2007), 229-246.

## **The Low Countries**

The (Catholic) religious-fascist movements of the Low Countries were connected in many cases. Some nationalist groups in the southern provinces of the Netherlands and in Belgium envisioned the territory as one nation. The fascists did not come into power independently, but only after the German invasion. The reigning political movements were thus collaborating with the German occupying forces.

The Dutch extreme right was dominated by the NSB whose thought is analysed in Ronald Havenaar, *De NSB tussen nationalisme en 'volkse' solidariteit: de vooroorlogse ideologie van de Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging in Nederland* (The Hague, 1983). The other anti-democratic parties are the subject of A.A. de Jonge, *Crisis en critiek der democratie. Anti-democratische stromingen en de daarin levende denkbeelden over de staat in Nederland tussen de wereldoorlogen* (Assen, 1968). The main study on the Netherlands during the Second World War is Loe de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de tweede wereldoorlog* (The Hague, 1969-1994).

The Catholic Church's role during the war is heavily criticised, especially by left-wing historians. L.J. Rogier, coauthor of the *Geschiedenis van de kerk* (Hilversum, 1962), emphasises the similarities between Catholic and fascist thought in 'Het fascisme als goddelijke voorzienigheid', *Vrij Nederland* (19 and 26 November 1977). Theodorus A.M. Salemink's Marxist analysis *Krisis en konfessie, ideologie in katholiek Nederland 1917-1933* (Zeist, 1980) resembles Rogier's view.

The Dutch Catholic fascists were represented in the NSB and in their own small parties. L.M.H. Joosten, *Katholieken en fascisme in Nederland 1920-1940* (second edition; Utrecht, 1982) describes the history of the main Catholic fascist organisations, the *Zwart Front* and the *Verdinaso*. Hans Schippers, *Zwart en Nationaal Front: Latijns georiënteerd rechts-radicalisme in Nederland (1922-1946)* (second edition; Amsterdam, 1986) studies the former movement. The fascist priest Lutkie, who was closely related to these movements, is the subject of Nelleke Huisman, *Wouter Lutkie: een katholiek priester als prediker van het fascisme* (Amsterdam, 1981).

J.M. Snoek, *De Nederlandse kerken en de joden 1940-1945: de protesten bij Seyss-Inquart: hulp aan joodse onderduikers: de motieven voor hulpverlening* (Kampen, 1990) creates a more nuanced picture of the Churches' attitudes. Studies on Dutch Catholicism and the Jews are Marcel Poorthuis and Theo Salemink, *Een donkere spiegel: Nederlandse katholieken over joden, 1870-2005: tussen antisemitisme en erkenning* (Nijmegen, 2006) and Ton H.M. van Schaik, *Vertrouwde vreemden: betrekkingen tussen katholieken en joden in Nederland 1930-1990* (Baarn, 1992). Joop Wekking, *Untersuchungen zur Rezeption der nationalsozialistischen Weltanschauung in den konfessionellen Periodika der Niederlande 1933-1940: ein Beitrag zur komparatistischen Imagologie* (Amsterdam, 1990) covers the reception of the National Socialist *Weltanschauung* in Catholic and Protestant circles in the Netherlands.

Dutch Protestantism was less centralised, and therefore more complicated to assess. For certain Protestant denominations, the membership of the NSB was prohibited from 1936 on. Ger van Roon, *Protestants Nederland en Duitsland, 1933-1941* (Utrecht, 1973) analyses the Protestant reception of National Socialism. The policy of the Protestant Churches is described in A.A. Bekker, '"Het Joodse probleem": een onderzoek naar het gedrag van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland ten aanzien van de jodenvervolgung 1933-1945' (thesis; Rotterdam, 1987).

The most interesting Belgian movement was Rexism. The prime study of Rexism before the Second World War is Jean-Michel Étienne, *Le mouvement rexiste jusqu'en 1940* (Paris, 1968). Like Stanley Payne, Étienne does not consider the Rexist movement fascist. The Rexist war years are covered in Martin Conway, *Collaboration in Belgium: Léon Degrelle and the Rexist movement, 1940-1944* (London, 1993). The Belgian geographical situation makes the case extraordinary. The differences between the Flemish and the Walloon parts of Belgium are assessed by William Brustein, 'The Political Geography of Belgian Fascism: The Case of Rexism,' *American sociological review* 53 (1988), 69-80.

Ronald Henry Chertok, *Belgian fascism* (Ann Arbor, 1975) is the broadest study of Belgian fascism. Another article on the subject is L. Schepens 'Fascists and Nationalists in Belgium, 1919-1940', Stein Ugelvik Larsen, Gerhard Botz and Bernt Hagtvet, eds, *Who were the fascists? social roots of European fascism* (Bergen, 1980) 501-516. The Flemish nationalist movement was led by Staf De Clercq, whose biography is written by Bruno De Wever, *Staf De Clercq* (Brussels, 1989). This movement's rival, the pro-German DeVlag movement, is described in Frank Seberecht, *Geschiedenis van de DeVlag: van cultuurbeweging tot politieke partij, 1935-1945* (Gent, 1991).

Belgian Catholicism is analysed by Griet Van Haver, who chooses a similar point of view as Joosten and Rogier in her book *Onmacht der verdeelden: katolieken in Vlaanderen tussen democratie en fascisme 1929-1940* (Berchem, 1983) by pointing to the similarities between Catholic and fascist thought. The Walloon Catholics and fascists are described in Francis Balace, *Fascisme et catholicisme politique dans la Belgique francophone de l'entre-deux guerres* (Leuven, 1979). Martin Conway criticises this view in 'Building the Christian City: Catholics and Politics in Inter-War Francophone Belgium,' *Past and present* 128 (1990), 117-151, because he sees the Catholic intellectuals as followers of a specific Catholic tradition that was different from liberalism, socialism *and* fascism.

## **The United Kingdom**

The most important British fascist movement was Oswald Mosley's *British Union of Fascists*. Even though the BUF never achieved success, there is an enormous amount of literature written about the movement and its leader. The most detailed biography is Robert Skidelsky, *Oswald Mosley* (London, 1975). Other biographies are D.S. Lewis *Illusions of Grandeur: Mosley, Fascism and British Society, 1931-1981* (Manchester, 1987) and the recently published, highly critical Stephen Dorril, *Blackshirt: Sir Oswald Mosley and British Fascism* (London, 2006). Mosley is interesting, because he

propagated his views after the war too, and because of his autobiography *My Life* (London, 1968).

Arnd Bauerkämper wrote the history of the British right wing movements in *Die 'radikale Rechte' in Grossbritannien: nationalistische, antisemitische und faschistische Bewegungen vom späten 19. Jahrhundert bis 1945* (Göttingen, 1991). Other studies on the same subject are C. Cross, *The Fascists in Britain* (New York, 1963), R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain: A History, 1918-1985* (Oxford, 1987) and Thomas P. Linehan, *British fascism, 1918-39: Parties, Ideology and Culture* (Manchester, 2000). Martin Pugh, *Hurrah for the Blackshirts! Fascists and Fascism in Britain between the Wars* (London, 2006) criticises the traditional view that fascism had no potential in Britain. G.C. Webber, 'Patterns of Membership and Support for the British Union of Fascists', *Journal of Contemporary History* 19 (1984) 575-606 analyses the profile of the BUF's followers. The British movement was not very popular outside England, as Henry Maitles 'Blackshirts across the Border: The British Union of Fascists in Scotland', *The Scottish Historical Review* LXXXII (2003) 92-100 observes.

S. Cullen, 'The Development of the Ideas and Policy of the British Union of Fascists, 1932-1940', *Journal of Contemporary History* 22 (1987) 115-136 assesses BUF thought. Gary Love analyses the 'Britishness' of their fascist ideas in "What's the Big Idea?": Oswald Mosley, the British Union of Fascists and Generic Fascism', *Journal of Contemporary History* 42 (2007) 447-468. W.F. Mandle, *Anti-Semitism and the British Union of Fascists* (London, 1968) and L.P. Carpenter, 'Corporatism in Britain, 1930-45', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 11 (1976) treat specific elements of BUF ideology. Oswald Mosley's own books, of which *The Greater Britain* (1932), *Fascism: 100 questions asked and answered* (1936) and *Tomorrow We Live* (1938) are the most important, are useful to evaluate BUF's ideology.

The British Union of Fascists was a non-religious movement, but certain individual clergymen joined the BUF. This development was described during the thirties in Newman Watts *Fascism in the English Church* (London, 1938). A recent article on the same subject is Thomas Linehan, "On



the Side of Christ': Fascist Clerics in 1930s Britain', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 287-301.

## **Scandinavia**

Denmark, Sweden and Norway were very similar in their relation to fascism during the Interwar period. The fascist parties had electoral success in none of the countries. Another resemblance is the Protestant nature of the societies. These similarities are the reason for Ulf Lindström, *Fascism in Scandinavia 1920-40* (Stockholm, 1985) and Stein Ugelvik Larsen, 'Conservatives and fascist in the Nordic countries: Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland, 1918-45', in Martin Blinkhorn, *Fascists and conservatives: the radical right and the establishment in twentieth-century Europe* (London, 1990) 240-263 to study the countries as a group. Lindström tries to account for the failure of fascism in Scandinavia. Larsen analyses the 'fascist' nature of the different movements. Larsen and Ingun Montgomery edited the book *Kirken, Krisen og Krigen* (Bergen, 1982), where the Churches' reaction to the crisis and the war is analysed. The Interwar crisis is the subject of S. Nilsson, K.-G. Hildebrand and B. Øhngren, *Kriser och Krispolitik i Norden under mellankrigstiden* (Uppsala, 1974).

The most important Scandinavian fascist party was the Norwegian *Fører* Vidkun Quisling's *Nasjonal Samling*. Quisling collaborated with the Germans after the occupation of Norway. The *Nasjonal Samling*'s history is described in O. Brevig, 'Fra parti til sekt' (Oslo, 1969). The *Fører*'s life is described in O.K. Hoidal, *Quisling: A Study in Treason* (Oslo, 1989), especially the political element of it. F. Dahl wrote a more personal biography in two parts; *Vidkun Quisling: En Fører Blir Til* (Oslo, 1991) and *Vidkun Quisling: En Fører For Fall* (Oslo, 1992).

R. Andersen wrote a history of Denmark during the thirties, *Danmark i 30'rne. En historisk mosaik* (Copenhagen, 1968). Denmark did not have a successful fascist party either, but the *Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Arbejderparti* was the only party to get some seats in parliament. The

movement's early years are described in S. Eigaard, *Denmarks National Socialistiske Parti 1930-34* (Odense, 1981), while the longer history of the party is found in M. Djursaa, *NSAP. Danske nazister 1930-1945* (Copenhagen, 1981). The NSAP's following is researched in H. Poulsen and M. Djursaa, 'Social Basis of Nazism in Denmark: The DNSAP', in Stein Ugelvik Larsen, Gerhard Botz and Bernt Hagtvet, *Who were the fascists? social roots of European fascism* (Bergen, 1980) 702-714 and Djursaa, 'Who Were the Danish Nazis?', in R. Mann, *Die Nationalsozialisten* (Stuttgart, 1980), 137-154.

In the traditional view, fascism in Sweden is seen as an 'alien' ideology. Historical accounts of Swedish fascism therefore largely ignored the ideology, but covered the organisational aspects of Swedish fascism. Examples of this approach are Eric Wärenstams *Sveriges Nationelle Ungdomsförbund och Högern 1928-1934* (Stockholm, 1965) and *Fascismen och nazismen i Sverige 1920-1940: studier i den svenska nationalsocialismens, fascismens och antisemitismens organisationer, ideologier och propaganda under mellankrigsåren* (Stockholm, 1970). This image changed during the nineties. Lena Berggren uses Griffin's theory on fascism in her *Nationell upplysning: Drag i den svenska antisemitismens idéhistoria* (Stockholm, 1999) and 'Swedish Fascism: Why Bother?', *Journal of Contemporary History* 37 (2002) 158-181. She concludes that a Swedish form of fascism did exist, and that the lack of a successful fascist movement was the result of external factors. The same analysis is presented in Håkan Blomqvist, *Gåtan Nils Flyg och nazismen* (Stockholm, 1999) and Sverker Oredsson, *Lunds universitet under andra världskriget. Motsättningar debatter och hjälpinsatser* (Lund, 1996).

The history of the Swedish Churches during the Interwar period is described by Lars Gunnarsson, *Kyrkan, nazisme och demokratin: Åsiktsbildning kring svensk kyrklighet 1919-1945* (Stockholm, 1995). The small *Kyrkliga Folkpartiet* is an interesting political movement. This Christian and ultrareactionary pro-German antisemite party is the subject of Heléne Lööw, 'The Social Structure of a Small Right-Wing Religious Party in Western

Sweden: Kyrkliga Folkpartiet in the 1930s', in Magnus Mörner and Thommy Svensson, eds., *Classes, Strata and Elites: Essays on Social Stratification in Nordic and Third World History* (Gothenburg, 1988). Lena Berggren describes the party's clerical fascism in 'Completing the Lutheran Reformation: Ultra-nationalism, Christianity and the Possibility of 'Clerical Fascism' in Interwar Sweden' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007) 303-314. Martin Lind, *Kristendom och nazism: Frågan om kristendom och nazism belyst av olika ställningstaganden i Tyskland och Sverige 1933-1945* (Lund, 1975) describes the relation between Christianity and fascism in Germany and Sweden. Gunnar Appelqvist, *Luthersk samverkan i nazismens skugga; Sverige och Lutherakademien i Sondershausen 1932-1945* (Uppsala, 1993) and Anders Jarlert, *Judisk 'ras' som äktenskapshinder i Sverige: Effekten av Nürnberglagarna i Svenska kyrkans statliga funktion som lysningsförrättare 1935-1945* (Malmö, 2006) describe the Churches' infamous collaboration with the German Nazis.

## Finland

The Finnish Lapua movement is an example of a strongly anti-communist rural peasant movement. According to Nolte, nowhere played 'das religiöse und christliche Empfinden eine so beherrschende Rolle' (*Die faschistischen Bewegungen*, 238). The movement was founded in 1929 in the city of Lapua, and, after a failed coup d'état in 1932 succeeded by the *Isänmaallinen Kansanliike* (IKL).

The Finnish history is described by E. Jutikkala and K. Pirinen, *Geschichte Finlands* (Stuttgart 1976), J.H. Wuorinen, *A History of Finland* (London, 1965) and Heikki Ylikangas, *Suomen historian solmukohdat* (Helsinki, 2007). For the modern political history, see Osmo Jussila, Seppo Hentilä and Jukka Nevakivi, *Suomen poliittinen historia 1809–2006* (Helsinki, 2006) and David Kirby, *Finland in the 20th Century* (Minneapolis, 1979). Kirby wrote a political history of Finland and the Finnish historiography in *A Concise History of Finland* (New York, 2006). The Finnish extreme right is

analysed in A.F. Upton, 'Finland', in: S.J. Woolf, ed., *Fascism in Europe* (London, 1981), J. Kalela, 'Right-wing radicalism in Finland during the interwar period', *Scandinavian Journal of History* 1 (1976) and G. Djupsund and L. Karvonen, *Fascismen i Finland. Høgerextremismens frankering hos valjarkåren 1929-1939* (Åbo, 1984).

The Lapua movement and the IKL are described in Marvin Rintala, *Three Generations: The Extreme Right Wing in Finnish Politics* (Bloomington, 1962). For the movement's ideology, see Pertti Ahonen, 'Domestic Turmoil and Diplomatic Isolation: The Lapua Movement in Finnish Foreign Policy, 1929-1932', *East European Quarterly* 26 (1992) 499-523, M. Rintala, 'An Image of European Politics. The People's Patriotic Movement', *Journal of Central European Affairs* 21 (1963), 308-316 and Juha Siltala, *Lapuan liike ja kyyditykset: 1930* (Keuruu, 1985). The relation of the extreme right movements with the Finnish intellectuals is analysed in Lauri Hyvämäki, 'Kummunisminvastaisen lainsäädännön synty', in Päiviä Tommila, ed., *Kaksi vuosikymmentä Suomen sisäpolitiikkaa, 1919-1939* (Porvoo, 1964). The ever diminishing followers are the subject of R. Alapuro, 'Mass Support for Fascism in Finland', and R.E. Heinonen, 'From People's Movement to Minor Party: The People's Patriotic Movement (IKL) in Finland 1932-1944' in Stein Ugelvik Larsen, Gerhard Botz and Bernt Hagtvet, *Who were the fascists? social roots of European fascism* (Bergen, 1980) 678-686, 687-701.