THE NATURE OF FASCISM REVISITED

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For my son Filipe

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Corporatism put an indelible mark on the first decades of the 20th century, both as a set of institutions created by the forced integration of organized interests (mainly independent unions) in the state and as an organic-statist type of political representation alternative to liberal democracy.[1] Variants of corporatism inspired conservative, radical right, and fascist parties, not to mention the Roman Catholic Church and the third-way options of segments of the technocratic elites. It also inspired dictatorships – stretching from António de Oliveira Salazar's Portuguese New State through Benito Mussolini's Italy and Engelbert Dollfuss' Austria, right across to the new Baltic states – to create institutions to legitimate their regimes. The European variants spread throughout Latin America and Asia, particularly in Argentina, Brazil, and Turkey.[2]

When we look at 20th-century dictatorships we note a large degree of institutional variation. Parties, cabinets, parliaments, corporatist assemblies, juntas, and a whole set of parallel and auxiliary structures of domination, mobilization and control were symbols of the (often tense) diversity characterizing authoritarian regimes.[3] These authoritarian institutions, created in the

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1   Like Alfred Stepan and Juan Linz, we use this expression to refer to the 'vision of political community in which the component parts of society harmoniously combine... and also because of the assumption that such harmony requires power and the unity of civil society by the architectonic action of public authorities-hence organic-statism'. See A. Stepan, *The state and society: Peru in comparative perspective*, Princeton, NJ, 1978; J. J. Linz, *Totalitarian and authoritarian regimes*, Boulder, CO, 2000, pp. 215–7.

2   See P. H. Lewis, *Authoritarian regimes in Latin America: Dictators, despots, and tyrants*, Lanham, MD, 2006, pp. 129–54; D. Musiedlak, ed., *Les experiences corporatives dans l'aire latine*, Bern, 2010; T. Parla and A, Davison, *Corporatist ideology in Kemalist Turkey. Progress or order?*, Syracuse, NY, 2004.

3   A. Perlmutter, *Modern authoritarianism. A comparative institutional analysis*, New Haven, CT, 1981, p. 10.

political laboratory of interwar Europe, expanded across the globe after the end of the Second World War: particularly the personalization of leadership, the single-party and the organic-statist legislatures. Some contemporaries of fascism had already realized some of the institutions created by the interwar dictatorships could be durable. As the committed early 20th-century observer, Romanian academic and politically authoritarian Mihail Manoilescu, noted, 'of all the political and social creations of our century – which for the historian began in 1918 – there are two that have in a definitive way enriched humanity's patrimony... corporatism and the single party.'[4] Manoilescu dedicated a study to each of these political institutions without knowing in 1936 that some aspects of the former would be long-lasting and that the latter would become one of the most durable political instruments of dictatorships.[5]

Interwar dictatorships were personalized authoritarian regimes:[6] even those regimes that were institutionalized following military coups or military dictatorships gave rise to personalist regimes and attempts to create single or dominant regime parties.[7] However, autocrats need institutions and elites to exercise their rule and their role has often been underestimated as it has been taken as a given that decision-making power was centralized in the dictators.[8] To prevent the undermining of their legitimacy and the usurpation of their authority, dictators need to co-opt elites and to either create or adapt institutions to be the locus of the co-optation, negotiation, and (sometimes) decision-making: 'without institutions they cannot make policy concessions.'[9]

If the typical fascist regimes of Italy and Germany were based on a take-over of power by a party, many civilian and military rulers of interwar Europe did not have a 'ready-made organization upon which to rely.'[10] In order to counteract their precarious position, dictators tended to create regime parties.

4   M. Manoilescu, *Le parti unique: Institution politique des regimes nouveaux*, Paris, 1936, p. viii.

5   M. Manoilescu, *Le siècle du corporatisme*, Paris, 1934; Manoilescu, *Le parti unique*.

6   A. C. Pinto, R. Eatwell and S. U. Larsen, eds, *Charisma and fascism in interwar Europe*, London, 2007.

7   More than half of all 20th-century authoritarian regimes 'initiated by militaries, parties, or a combination of the two, had been partly or fully personalized within three years of the initial seizure of power'. See B. Geddes, 'Stages of development in authoritarian regimes', in V. Tismaneanu, M. M. Howard and R. Sil, eds, *World order after Leninism*, Seattle, WA, 2006, p. 164.

8   A. C. Pinto, ed., *Ruling elites and decision-making in fascist-era dictatorships*, New York, 2009.

9   Geddes, 'Stages of development', p. 185.

10   J. Ghandi, *Political institutions under dictatorship*, Cambridge, 2008, p. 29.

Some fascist movements emerged during the interwar period either as rivals to or unstable partners within the single- or dominant-government party, and often as inhibitors to their formation, making the institutionalization of the regimes more difficult for the dictatorial candidates. Interwar dictators also established controlled parliaments, corporatist assemblies, or other bureaucratic-authoritarian consultative bodies. Autocrats also need compliance and cooperation and, in some cases, 'nominally democratic institutions can help authoritarian rulers maintain coalitions and survive in power,'[11] and corporatist parliaments are legitimating institutions for dictatorships and are also sometimes the locus of that process.

In this chapter we will examine the role of corporatism as a political device against liberal democracy that permeated the political right during the first wave of democratization, and especially as a set of authoritarian institutions that spread across interwar Europe and which was an agent for the hybridization of the institutions of fascist-era dictatorships. Powerful processes of institutional transfers were a hallmark of interwar dictatorships, and we will argue corporatism was at the forefront of this process, both as a new form of organized interest representation and as an authoritarian alternative to parliamentary democracy.

Social and political corporatism during the first wave of democratization

Corporatism as an ideology and as a type of organized interest representation was initially promoted by the Roman Catholic Church from the late-19th through to the mid-20th century as a third way in opposition to socialism and liberal capitalism.[12] Much of the model predates the Papal encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* (1891), and was due to the romanticization of medieval Europe's feudal guilds by 19th-century conservatives who had become disenchanted with liberalism and fearful of socialism and democracy. However, 'the church's explicit endorsement surely moved corporatism from seminar rooms to presidential palaces,' especially after the publication of the encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931).[13]

Corporatism became a powerful ideological and institutional device against liberal democracy during the first half of the 20th century, but the

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11 Geddes, 'Stages of development', p. 164.

12 M. Conway, 'Catholic politics or Christian democracy? The evolution of interwar political Catholicism', in W. Kaiser and H. Wohnout, eds, *Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918–45*, vol. 1, London, 2004, pp. 235–51.

13 R. Morck and B. Yeung, 'Corporatism and the ghost of the third way', *Capitalism and Society* 5, no 3, 2010, p. 4.

neocorporatist practices of some democracies during its second half – not to speak of the more recent use of the word within the social sciences – demands a definition of the phenomenon being studied, and for the sake of conceptual clarity, to disentangle social from political corporatism:

> *Social corporatism* 'can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered, and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and support'.[14]

> *Political corporatism* can be defined as a system of political representation based in an organic-statist view of society in which its organic units (families, local powers, professional associations, and interest organizations and institutions) replace the individual-centered electoral model of representation and parliamentary legitimacy, becoming the primary and/or complementary legislative or advisory body of the ruler's executive.

A central ideal of corporatist thinkers was the organic nature of society in the political and economic sphere. This was based on a critique of what Ugo Spirito called the egotistical and individualist *homo economicus* of liberal capitalism, which was to be replaced by *homo corporativus*, which would be motivated by the national interest and common values and objectives.[15]

During the interwar period corporatism permeated the main political families of the conservative and authoritarian political right: from the Catholic parties and social Catholicism, to radical right royalists and fascists, not to speak of Durkheimian solidarist and supporters of technocratic governments.[16] Royalists, republicans, technocrats, fascists, and social Catholics shared a notable degree of common ground on views about democracy and representation and on the project of a functional representation as an alternative to liberal democracy, namely as constituencies of legislative chambers or councils, that were established in many authoritarian regimes during the

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14 P. C. Schmitter, 'Still the century of corporatism?', in F. B. Pike and T. Stritch, eds, *The new corporatism: Social-political structures in the Iberian world*, Notre Dame, IN, 1974, p. 94.

15 C. Bastien and J. L. Cardoso, 'From *homo economicus* to *homo corporativus*: A neglected critique of neo-classical economics', *The Journal of Social Economics* 36, 2007, pp. 118–27.

16 O. Dard, 'Le corporatisme entre traditionalistes et modenisateurs: Des groupements aux cercles du pouvoir', in Musiedlak, *Les experiences corporatives*, pp. 67–102.

20th century.[17] However, there were differences between the Catholic corporatist formulations of the late-19th century and the integral corporatist proposals of some fascist and radical right-wing parties. When we look at fascist party programs and segments of the radical right, like the Action Française-inspired movements, the portrait is even clearer, with many reinforcing integral corporatism vis-à-vis a social Catholicism. Although part of the same ideological magma, social and political corporatism did not necessarily follow the same path in 20th-century politics.

The historical experience with corporatism has not been confined to dictatorships, and in liberal democracies 'implicit tendencies toward corporatist structures developed both before and concurrently with the emergence of fascism.'[18] In fact, occupational representation was not limited to the world of dictatorships, with several democracies discovering complements to the typical parliamentary representation. Corporatist ideology was particularly strong in Ireland's 1937 constitution, for example, which called for the election of groups representing interests and services, while several other interwar bicameral democracies introduced corporatist representation to their upper chambers. [19]

Many ideologists of social corporatism – particularly within Catholic circles – advocated a societal corporatism without an omnipresent state, but the praxis of corporatist patterns of representation was mainly the result of an imposition by authoritarian political elites 'to civil society.'[20] Under interwar dictatorships corporatism became synonymous with the process of forced unification of organized interests into single units of employers and employees that were closely controlled by the state, and which eliminated their independence: especially that of trade unions. Social corporatism offered autocrats a formalized system of interest representation to manage labor relations, legitimizing the repression of free labor unionism by the cooptation of some of its segments through state-controlled unions, often with compulsory membership. Last but not least, corporatist arrangements also sought to 'allow the state, labor and business to express their interests and arrive at outcomes that are, first and foremost, satisfactory to the regime.'[21]

17 P. J. Williamson, *Corporatism in perspective*, London, 1989, p. 32.

18 L. Panitch, 'The development of corporatism in liberal democracies', *Comparative Political Studies* 10, no 1, 1977, p. 629.

19 K. Lowerstein, 'Occupational representation and the idea of an economic parliament', *Social Science*, October 1937, p. 426.

20 Stepan, *State and society*, p. 47.

21 W. Kim and J. Gandhi, 'Co-opting workers under dictatorship', *The Journal of Politics* 72, no 3, 2010, p. 648.

However, during this period corporatism was also (and in some cases mainly) used to refer to the comprehensive organization of political society beyond state-social groups relations seeking to replace liberal democracy with an anti-individualist system of representation.[22] In fact, in many cases the corporatist, or economic parliaments, either coexisted with and assisted parliaments or replaced them with a new legislature with consultative functions, and which provided the government with technical assistance. The most influential theorist of *Quadragesimo Anno*, the Jesuit Heirich Pesch, did mention the economic parliament as a central clearing house of his organic view, but he left its structure to the future.[23] With *Rerum Novarum*, the corporatism frame became clearer, with a corporatist reorganization of society associated with the strong anti-secular principals of parliamentary democracy held by Pope Pius XII. In 1937 Karl Loewenstein saw 'this romantic concept of organic representation,' in new legislatures trying to be a 'true mirror of the social forces of the nation and a genuine replica of its economic structure.'[24] However, the role of corporatist bodies within the dictatorships was certainly much less romantic.

George Valois, the syndicalist ideologist of Action Française and founder of one of the first French fascist movements, encapsulated the functions of corporatist legislatures when he proposed the replacement of parliament with general estates (*etats géneraux*). 'This body was not to be an assembly in which decisions were made based on majority votes or where the majority would be able to overwhelm the minority; rather, it was to be an assembly in which the corporations adjusted their interests in favor of the national interest.'[25]

In 1926, the Spanish general, Miguel Primo de Rivera, was not engaging in intellectual romanticism when he introduced corporatist principals in his dictatorship, proclaiming: 'The parliamentary system has failed and no-one is crazy enough to re-establish it in Spain. The government and the Patriotic Union call for the construction of a state based on a new structure. The first cell of the nation will be the municipality around which is the family with its old virtues and its modern concept of citizenship'.[26] In Austria in 1934,

22 D. A. Chalmers, 'Corporatism and comparative politics', in H. J. Wiarda, ed., *New directions in comparative politics*, Boulder, CO, 1991, p. 63.

23 P. Misner, 'Christian democratic social policy: Precedents for third-way thinking', in T. Kselman and J. A. Buttigieg, eds, *European Christian democracy: Historical legacies and comparative perspectives*, Notre Dame, IN, 2003, p. 77.

24 Loewenstein, 'Occupational representation', p. 423.

25 See A. Chatriot, 'Georges Valois: La representation professionelle et le syndicalisme', in O. Dard, ed., *Georges Valois: Intinéraire et receptions*, Berne, 2011, p. 65.

26 J. L. Gómez Navarro, *El regimen de Primo de Rivera*, Madrid, 1991, p. 267.

Table 7.1: Dictatorship and corporatism in Europe (1918–45)

	Regime	Type of party system	Social corporatism	Political corporatism
Austria	Dollfuss-Schuschnigg (1934–38)	Single	Strong	Strong
Bulgaria	Velcheg (1934)	No	Strong	Strong
	Royal dictatorship (1935–44)	Dominant	Weak	Weak
Estonia	Pats (1934–40)	Single	Strong	Medium
France	Vichy (1940–44)	No	Medium	Medium
Greece	Metaxas (1936–41)	No	Medium	Weak
Hungary	Horthy			
	Bethlen period	Dominant	Weak	Weak
	Gömbös (1932–35)	Single	Strong	Medium
Italy	Fascism (1922–43)	Single	Strong	Strong
Latvia	Ulmanis (1934–40)	No	Strong	Medium
Lithuania	Smetona (1926–40)	Dominant	Strong	Weak
Poland	Pilsudsky (1926–35)	Dominant	Weak	Strong
Portugal	Sidónio Pais (1917–18)	Dominant	Weak	Medium
	Salazar (1933–74)	Single	Strong	Medium
Romania	Royal (1937–40)	Single	Strong	Strong
	Antonescu (1940–44)	No*	Weak	Weak
Slovakia	Tiso (1940–44)	Single	Strong	Medium
Spain	Primo de Rivera (1923–31)	Dominant	Strong	Medium
	Francoism (1939–75)	Single	Strong	Strong

* After the dissolution of the Iron Guard

Chancellor Englebert Dollfuss reaffirmed the words of the Spanish general, words that many dictators were either thinking privately or repeating publicly: 'this parliament... will never, and must never, return again.'[27] From this perspective, corporatism was a powerful agent for the institutional hybridization of interwar dictatorships, largely surpassing the ground from which it sprang (see Table 7.1). [28]

27 H. Wohnout, 'Middle-class governmental party and secular arm of the Catholic Church: The Christian Socials in Austria', in Kaiser and Wohnout, *Political Catholicism*, p. 184.

28 The classification is based on the degree of adoption of institutions associated with social and political corporatism based on the constitutions and projects for constitutional reform, independently of their effective institutionalization, given that some regimes

Since representation was an essential element of modern political systems, authoritarian regimes tended to create political institutions in which the function of corporatism was to give legitimation to organic representation and to ensure the co-optation and control of sections of the elite and organized interests. 'Working out policy concessions requires an institutional setting: some forum to which access can be controlled, where demands can be revealed without appearing as acts of resistance, where compromises can be hammered out without undue public scrutiny, and where the resulting agreements can be dressed in a legalistic form and publicized as such.'[29] The tendency of interwar dictatorships towards the creation of organic legislatures should not be separated from the creation of regime parties – whether single or dominant – that provided legitimation for the abolition of political pluralism, forcing the authoritarian coalition to merge in a single or dominant party under personalized rule.

Another implicit goal of the adoption of corporatist representation, Max Weber noted, was to disenfranchise large sectors of society.[30] As Juan J. Linz notes: 'corporatism encourages the basic apoliticism of the population and transform issues into technical decisions and problems of administration.'[31] Institutionalized in the wake of polarized democratizations, interwar dictatorships tended to choose corporatism both as a process for the repression and co-optation of the labor movement, interest groups, and of elites through organic legislatures. It is from this perspective we revisit the processes of the institutional crafting of interwar European dictatorships, observing in particular the adoption of social and political corporatist institutions and regime parties.

were very short-lived. We did exclude the National Socialist Dictatorship from this table because even while it had some corporatist structures, we have doubts about its classification in this scale.

29 J. Gandhi and A. Przeworski, 'Authoritarian institutions and the survival of authocrats', *Comparative Political Studies* 40, no 11, 2007, p. 1282.

30 M. Weber, *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology*, Berkeley, CA, 1968, pp. 1, 298.

31 And 'those chambers are only components in their regimes... no legislature in an authoritarian regime has either the formal or de facto power to question the ultimate authority of a ruler or ruling group.' See J. J. Linz, 'Legislatures in organic-statist-authoritarian regimes: The case of Spain', in J. Smith and L. D. Musolf, eds, *Legislatures in development: Dynamics of change in new and old states*, Durham, NC, 1979, pp. 91, 95.

Interwar dictatorships and corporatist institutions

The primacy of Italian Fascism

In the celebrated *Futurist Manifesto* of 1918, Filippo Marinetti announced the 'transformation of parliament through the equitable participation of industrialists, farmers, engineers, and businessmen in the government of the country'.[32] However, even before their fusion with the Fascist Party, the nationalists of Enrico Corradini and Alfredo Rocco were the most systematic ideologists of integral corporatism and national syndicalism. For Rocco, this integral syndicalism represented both the integration into the state of organized interests and the elimination of parliament and senate in favor of bodies representing professions and other functional groups.[33] Rocco's statism was perhaps the most different from Catholic corporatism, since it was a strategy for the passive and subordinated integration of the masses into the state.

Many authors stress the primacy of institutional reform over the economic question in Italian Fascism. In the inaugural speech of the Fasci di Combattimento, Mussolini immediately referred to the need for the direct representation of interests, which was also noted in the Fascist Party's 1921 program.[34] Mussolini and the National Fascist Party (PNF – Partito Nazionale Fascista) had institutional reform and the elimination of liberal representation in mind ever since the March on Rome of 1922; however, the 'legal' nature of the Fascist seizure of power and the presence of a monarch who was heir of the liberal period ensured the process was slow and full of tension.

The Fascists' first concern was to secure political control of the parliament, which they quickly achieved, while eliminating its capacity for legislative initiative and declaring the independence of the executive and the head of government.[35] Following this, corporatist representation was an everpresent in the proposals for the abolition of a parliament that managed to continue existing – at least formally – for a few more years. In 1929 elections were replaced with plebiscites in which Italians could respond yes or no to a list of candidates chosen by the Fascist Grand Council from a list of names put forward by the PNF, the Fascist syndicates, and business organizations.

32 See A. Gagliardi, *Il corporativismo fascista*, Rome, 2010, p. 4.

33 A. J. de Grand, *The Italian National Association and the rise of Fascism in Italy*, Lincoln, NE, 1978, p. 100.

34 F. Perfetti, 'La discussione sul corporativismo in Italia', in Musiedlak, *Les experiences corporatives*, pp. 102–15; Gagliardi, *Il corporativismo fascista*.

35 D. Musiedlak, *Lo stato fascista e la sua classe politica, 1922–43*, Bologna, 2003; G. Adinolfi. 'Political elite and decision-making in Mussolini's Italy', in Pinto, *Ruling elites*.

In this way representation became organic, accompanied with the corporatization of interest organizations, as outlined in the 1927 Carta del Lavoro (Labor Charter), and the chamber dominated by the PNF. As a declaration of the principles of Fascist corporatism, the Carta fell short of the aspirations of Fascist syndicalism; however, it was the most influential document within those dictatorships that adopted social corporatism.[36]

In 1931 Mussolini called on the Fascist Grand Council to begin reforming parliament. The secretary of the PNF, Giovanni Giuriati, who was also president of parliament, was charged with the project. At the beginning of the 1930s the debate around corporatism and the reform of representation was a hot topic.[37] There were several options evident within the limited pluralism of the regime, with the former nationalist, Alfredo Rocco, calling for a model of corporatism that was restricted more to labor relations, while Giuseppe Bottai called for a more decentralized model without forgetting the manifest desire of the PNF to dominate the future chamber. Roberto Farinacci opposed the proposal to turn the National Council of Corporations into a corporatist chamber because he thought this would undermine the PNF. Giuriati finally proposed the establishment of a Fascist legislative assembly and the dissolution of the senate; however, Mussolini, possibly in order not to enter into conflict with the king, opposed the abolition of the upper house of the liberal era, which the PNF subsequently 'fascistized.'[38]

Another commission was then created by hierarchies of Fascism and jurists, supported by functionaries who studied the systems in Germany, Poland, Portugal, and Austria.[39] It was not until 1936 – 14 years after taking power – that Mussolini was finally able to announce the establishment of the Fascist and Corporatist Chamber (Camera dei Fasci e delle Corporazioni), and with it the corporatization of political representation. This chamber became the functional representation of the PNF's national council and National Council of Corporations, while members of the Fascist Grand Council became ex-officio members. A survey of its members in 1939 allows us to note a difficult balance between counselors of the PNF and the corporations, with the latter being – at least formally – dominant. In practice the situation was different, since the PNF was also represented within the corporatist

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36   D. D. Roberts, *The syndicalist tradition and Italian Fascism*, Chapell Hill, NC, 1979.

37   Perfetti, 'La discussion'.

38   P. Colombo, *La monarchia fascista, 1922-1940*, Bologna, 2010, p. 105.

39   M. di Napoli, M., 'The Italian Chamber of Fasci and Corporazioni: A substitute for parliament in a totalitarian regime', in W. Brauneder and E. Berger, eds, *Repräsentation in Föderalismus und Korporativismus*, Frankfurt am Main, 1998 p. 257.

structures.[40] Because he had to recognize all national counselors by decree, Mussolini had the last word.

While initially underestimated by many historians, the importance of the work carried out by the National Council of Corporations and later by the chamber, and its co-opting and negotiating functions, has been stressed both by contemporary observers and in some more recent historiography.[41] Organized in 12 standing committees, the meetings of which were not public, the chamber had very few legislative powers: in practice it was the cabinet that initiated legislation. Due to the variation in the leadership of PNF and corporations, the turnover of counselors was high. According to a report on the first three years of activity submitted to Mussolini by Grandi, ten days were enough to pass 80 per cent of the bills, with just 23 per cent amended.[42] Legislation was often discussed and amendments completed; however, as one student of the theme – citing Bottai – notes, this was clearly without 'exceeding the limits of a technical and conceptual critique,' and always within the regime's boundaries.[43]

Fascism and social Catholicism in the Iberian Peninsula

If we exclude the one-year presidentialist dictatorship of Sidónio Pais in Portugal (1918), the dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera in Spain (1923-30) was probably the first to replace parliamentarianism with a unicameral system based on corporatism and by the creation of the Patriotic Union (UP – Unión Patriotica), a regime party endowed with a well-defined political doctrine. While Sidónio Pais had earlier outlined a program for corporatist representation, the truth is that the Catalan general introduced a political formula for modern dictatorships in which corporatism was a central element of its legitimation. In September 1923, Miguel Primo de Rivera led a coup against the liberal regime, issuing a manifesto to the country in which he denounced social agitation, separatism, and clientelism. His imposition of order was justification for a transitional dictatorship; however, he held a plebiscite on a plan to change the constitutional order and institutionalize a new regime. This was quickly implemented through the creation of a party, the UP, which was controlled by the government, of a corporatist parliament

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40 Musiedlak, 'Le corporatisme dans la structure'; J.-Y. Dormagen, *Logiques du fascisme: L'état totalitaire en Italie*, Paris, 2008; Gagliardi, *Il corporativismo fascista*.

41 L. G. Field, *The syndical and corporative institutions of Italian Fascism*, New York, 1938; Di Napoli, 'The Italian chamber'.

42 Di Napoli, 'The Italian chamber', p. 261.

43 Musiedlak, 'Le corporatisme dans la structure', p. 151.

with limited powers and an attempt to integrate all organized interests into the state with the abolition of class-based unions.[44]

The fact the dictator was a soldier was no obstacle to the institutionalization of the regime, and Miguel Primo de Rivera's dictatorship was an illustration of 'the idea that the existence of a single national interest contained in military thinking coincides with the vision of the common good of the organic-statist model.'[45] The UP played the role of the regime party in Primo de Rivera's dictatorship, despite the regime's limited pluralism allowing other parties to exist legally, indicating that 'within the regime there is only one party.'[46] In fact, the UP represented the attempt to create a party from the top down. As it was mainly an instrument of the dictator and of the government, the UP was a weak single-party in terms of elite recruitment and as a decision-making center only exercised some functions at the local administration level.

A national consultative assembly was established in 1927 which, as its name suggests, collaborated rather than legislated. The National Consultative Assembly, the first corporatist chamber in interwar Europe, consisted of 400 representatives of the state, local authorities, the party, municipalities, and professional groups in a process controlled by the interior ministry. Even while participating in this corporatist assembly, some conservatives remained suspicious of its rubber-stamp functions. On the eve of the dictatorship's collapse in 1929, the project for the new constitution that would result in a dramatic increase in the executive's powers and the establishment of a single chamber, the members of which were to be nominated by the UP and elected by direct and corporatist suffrage in equal measure, was presented to the public.

Some of the institutional traces of this early dictatorial experiment in the Iberian Peninsula were also present in Portugal, which experienced one of the longest dictatorships of the 20th century, and which until the end claimed a corporatist legitimacy.[47] On 28 May 1926 a military coup put an end to Portugal's parliamentary republic. Between the end of the republic and the institutionalization of Salazar's New State there were seven unstable years of

44   M. A. Perfecto, 'Influências ideológicas no projecto de corporativismo político-social da ditadura de Primo de Rivera (1923–1930)', *Penélope* 5, 1991, pp. 99-108; 'La droite radicale espagnole et la pensée antiliberale française durant le premier tiers du XX siècle', in Dard, *Georges Valois*, pp. 99–108.

45   Gómez Navarro, *El regimen de Primo de Rivera*, p. 86.

46   Ibid, p. 207.

47   M. Lucena, *A evolução do sistema corporativo português*, vol. 1: *O Salazarismo*, Lisbon, 1976.

military dictatorship; however, it is worth citing the project for a new constitution that the leader of the military uprising, General Manuel de Oliveira Gomes da Costa, presented to the first government of the dictatorship just one month after the coup: 'A new constitution based on the following principles: national representation by direct delegation from the municipalities, the economic unions, and the educational and spiritual bodies, with the absolute exclusion of individualist suffrage and the consequent party representation.'[48]

Other projects were discussed during the years that followed, but this example demonstrates the importance of corporatist alternatives in Portuguese anti-democratic elite political culture. In fact, in 1918, during the brief dictatorship of Sidónio Pais, a parliament controlled by a dominant party formed by the government coexisted with a senate with corporatist representation; however, it lasted only briefly.

The first political institution to be created by the dictatorship was the single party, the National Union (UN – União Nacional). Created by Salazar in 1930, this accompanied the dissolution of political parties – including the Catholic Party, of which Salazar had been a leading member. The impetus for its formation came from Salazar and the government, with decisive aid from the state apparatus, especially the interior ministry and its local delegations. Both in the UN's manifesto and in Salazar's inaugural speech to the party in 1930, the future dictator's intention was already clear as he announced the 'creation of the social and corporatist state that would closely follow the natural constitution of society.'[49]

The foundation stone of social corporatism in Portugal was contained in the 1933 National Labor Statute (ETN – Estatuto do Trabalho Nacional). As a declaration of corporatist principals the ETN owed a great deal to Italian Fascism's labor charter, although tempered by the ideals of social Catholicism.[50] With the ETN approved unions were the first sector to be affected, and subsequent legislation foresaw a long series of intermediate bodies that would lead to the constitution of the corporations.[51] Social corporatism was strongly institutionalized in the Portuguese case, with agencies to encompass virtually all social groups and professions, but, until the 1950s, when the corporations were finally created, a sizeable part of the representation of the

48 A. Madureira, *O 28 de maio: Elementos para a sua compreensão*, Lisbon, 1978, p. 243.

49 A. de O. Salazar, *Discursos e notas politicos*, vol. 1, Coimbra, 1934, p. 87.

50 F. Patriarca, *A questão social no salazarismo, 1933–47*, Lisbon, 1995.

51 P. C. Schmitter, *Portugal: Do autoritarismo à democracia*, Lisbon, 1999; H. J. Wiarda, *Corporatism and development: The Portuguese experience*, Amherst, MA, 1977.

organic elements of the nation was chosen by the corporatist council, made up by Salazar and ministers connected with the sector.

The development of Salazar's constitutional project at the beginning of the 1930s and the institutions defined by him were symptomatic of the role of the various conservative currents supporting the dictatorship and the role of the military. The first project called for a corporatist system for the election of both the president and parliament; however, between this and the project presented to the public in 1932 many changes were introduced by Salazar and his council of notables.[52] In the 1932 project there was a legislature of 90 deputies, half elected by direct suffrage and half by corporatist suffrage. This project was strongly criticized by some republican military officials as well as by the Integralists and by Francisco Rolão Preto's fascists, while the Church was more concerned with the absence of God in the constitution.[53] Republican military officials criticized the corporatization of representation, while the fascists and the Integralists believed the constitution had given up too much ground to republican liberalism.

The final version approved by Salazar and submitted to a plebiscite was a compromise. Portugal became 'a unitary and corporatist republic,' but the president and the National Assembly were elected through direct – not corporatist – suffrage. In fact, the constitution opted for a single chamber, with a national assembly occupied exclusively by deputies selected by the single party and elected by direct suffrage; however, it also created a consultative corporatist chamber composed of functional representatives. The National Assembly had few powers before an executive free of parliamentary ties; however, the corporatist chamber was to be an auxiliary and consultative body. The Portuguese corporatist chamber, which consisted of 109 procurators and whose meetings were held in private, remained a consultative body for both the government and the National Assembly.

The longevity of the Portuguese regime and some research into Salazar's corporatist chamber allows us to reach some conclusions (which, unfortunately, cannot be generalized given the absence of comparative data) about functional representation. Despite the great majority of procurators in the chamber representing functional interests, a small group of administrative interests were nominated by the corporatist council that was led by the dictator and which constituted the chamber's elite.[54] In practice, these political

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52   A. Araújo, *A lei de Salazar*, Lisbon, 2007; N. Estevão, 'A câmara corporativa no Estado Novo: Composição, funcionamento e influência', doctoral dissertation, Instituto de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa, 2009.

53   A. C. Pinto, *The Blue Shirts. Portuguese fascism in interwar Europe*, New York, 2000.

54   J. M. T. Castilho, *Os procuradores à câmara corporativa, 1935–74*, Lisbon, 2010.

procurators, making up an average of 15 per cent of all procurators, controlled the chamber.

An analysis of a large number of the corporatist chamber's advisory opinions during the first decade of its operation allows us to conclude that its function within the framework of the dictator's consultation system, 'permitted it a first hearing of the impact of public policies and to make suggestions about the implications of the measures to be adopted.'[55] Finally, it also underlined its subordinate character compared to the National Assembly, given that its advisory opinions were not necessarily taken into account during debates there.[56] However, it is worth stressing that the National Assembly was also given a subordinate role as an adviser on legislation and was 'closely integrated' with the executive and subservient to it in a regime, not of separation of powers but of 'organic unity.'[57]

While during their long existence Salazar's regime and Francoism converged as forms of authoritarianism, their markedly different origins were evident, as they were from the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. Ironically, one of the leading figures behind Spanish corporatism was the Catalan, Eduardo Aunós, who was an inspiration for the two corporatist parliaments and institutions in Spanish dictatorships. Aunós' background was one of liberal conservative elitism: he served as minister of labor in the Primo de Rivera regime, as a consultant to the Falange and then as editor of *Fuero del Trabajo* (Labor Charter) and as minister of justice under Franco. However, this apparent continuity between some of the figures and institutions of 20th-century Spanish authoritarianism cannot hide the fact the origins and original configuration of Francoism had little in common with the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, with that of Salazar in Portugal, or indeed with any of the central and eastern European dictatorships.

The product of a bloody civil war, the main characteristic of the first years of the Franco regime was its radical break with democracy and the fact it was inspired by the dynamics of fascism to a much greater degree. As Stanley G. Payne notes, during the early years of Francoism 'the nominal structure of the Franco regime was the most purely arbitrary of the world.'[58] Officially announcing a totalitarian model following the creation of a single-party formed through the forced unification of groups that had supported him during the civil war, the FET-JONS, under Falange leadership – even if placed under

55   Estevão, 'A câmara corporativa'.

56   Castilho, *Os procuradores*.

57   Wiarda, *Corporatism and development*, p. 101.

58   S. G. Payne, *The Franco regime, 1936–75*, Madison, WI, 1987, p. 323.

Franco's authority – not only managed to create a party apparatus and ancillary organizations that were much more powerful, but its access to segments of the new political system was comparable with the PNF in Mussolini's Italy.[59]

Social corporatism was an essential component of Francoism and its institutions, which began to be sketched out in Nationalist-controlled areas during the civil war, where tensions existed between the FET's national syndicalist model and those of groups closer to conservative Catholics. Not all of these conflicts were doctrinal in nature; some were expressions of the fears within FET that its role in the creation of the new corporatist structure would be reduced. However, these fears were not confirmed, as both the 1938 Fuero del Trabajo and the definition of the institutional structure of the Francoist labor organization gave the Falange a central role.[60] In 1940, when the Law of Syndical Union required most workers, technicians, and employers to join one of the 27 multi-function, vertical, and sectoral syndicates, the process was controlled both at the state and party level by the Falangists.[61] Despite the fascist rhetoric accompanying the creation of the corporatist system being powerful, with the removal in 1941 of Salvador Merino, the FET's director of syndicates, the party's influence was to diminish and, more significantly, the original concept of vertical syndicates was to be replaced, with employers and workers being represented in separate sections.

Under Ramón Serrano Suñer's leadership, in 1940 FET's political committee outlined the first project of constitutional laws, which also anticipated the establishment of a corporatist parliament. A total of 20 of the draft's 37 articles were devoted to it. As Stanley G. Payne notes, Serrano Suñer backed a 'more fully fascist political system than Franco was willing to permit.'[62] The most controversial proposal contained in this project was the institutionalization of FET's political committee as a collegiate coordination body between the state and the movement: a kind of Francoist version of Mussolini's Fascist Grand Council. Conservatives viewed this body as the interjection of the party in the state, and Franco dismissed it.[63]

Franco's decision to create a corporatist parliament in 1942 was an important step in the consolidation of his regime – particularly given the tide

59 M. Jerez Mir, 'Executive, single party and ministers in Franco's regime, 1936–45', in Pinto, *Ruling elites*.

60 S. G. Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, Madison, WI, 2000.

61 F. B. Garcia, *El sindicalismo vertical: Burocracia, control laboral y representación de interesses en la España franquista (1936–51)*, Madrid, 2010.

62 Payne, *The Franco regime*, p. 285.

63 Ibid., p. 260.

of the Second World War was turning against fascism – and the chief institutional innovation of this phase of redefinition of legitimacy. Religion and organic-statist views of state-society relations did play a central role.[64] The Spanish Christian roots, the exceptional historical position of the Caudillo, and representation of the people through a system of organic democracy, were to be the main elements of consolidated Francoism's legitimacy after the era of fascism.[65]

The Spanish corporatist parliament, the Cortes, was established as an instrument of collaboration with Franco. According the law governing it this new legislature was to serve 'for the expression of contrasting opinions within the unity of the regime.' Franco, the head of state, would continue as 'the supreme power and to dictate legal norms,' but Cortes would represent 'a valuable instrument of collaboration in that task.'[66] The first Cortes consisted of around 423 procurators, made up of 126 members of the single party's national council, 141 from the syndical organization, 50 designated by the Caudillo, and the remainder representatives of the municipalities, political families and associations of liberal professions, etc.[67] Cabinet ministers and the head of the judiciary were also members.[68] The large majority of procurators were public servants; consequently, the weight of the bureaucracy within it was very significant.[69] The only change in the composition of the Cortes, was the introduction in 1967 of 108 family representatives, formally elected through a restricted electoral system. Needless to say, the cabinet was responsible to the head of state and Cortes was designed to advise and to deliberate upon proposed laws coming from the government. To avoid the creation of informal factions within the Cortes, its president, who selected the heads of commissions, was nominated by Franco. Few institutional changes took place during the dictatorship's *long durée*.

Dollfuss' Austria

The brief institutionalization of Englebert Dollfuss' dictatorship in Austria was the most complete expression of an attempt at the authoritarian fusion of

64 Linz, 'Organic-statist-authoritarian'.

65 R. Gunther, *Public policy in a no-party state*, Berkeley, CA, 1980, p. 36.

66 Gómez Navarro, *Primo de Rivera*, p. 2.

67 B. Diaz-Nosty, *Las cortes de Franco*, Barcelona, 1972.

68 A. G. Morales, *Autoritarismo y control parlamentário en las cortes de Franco*, Murcia, 1977.

69 R. B. Martinez, *Poder de la burocracia y cortes franquistas, 1943–71*, Madrid, 1978.

social and political corporatism under the hegemony of conservative Catholicism. In Austria, corporatism was a dream shared by fascists, Heimwehren, and Catholics.[70] However, the domination of its institutionalization by political Catholicism was obvious. From the beginning of the 1920s the Social Christian Party advanced proposals for the partial corporatization of political representation and, by the beginning of the following decade, under the leadership of Ignaz Seipel, the Social Christians moved away from democracy. This social Christian leader was one of the most important supporters of the corporatist option as the true democracy in Austria.[71]

In 1929 the Social Christians repeated some of their 1919 proposals for a corporatist upper chamber, a proposal that was rejected by the Socialists. However, when Dollfuss suspended the constitution, dissolved parliament, banned the political parties, and began governing with emergency powers, the transition to authoritarianism was enabled through the institutionalization of corporatist representation formalized in the 1934 constitution. In this context, the influence the Heimwehr fascists had on the corporatist option cannot be underestimated, since it coincided with the time they had their greatest political influence within the new regime. As they were closer to the Italian fascist model and to Othmar Span, they had been proposing projects for the corporatization of the political system since 1930.

The 1934 constitution established a period of transition, and when Hitler invaded Austria in 1938 a large part of the corporatization process was still only on paper. According to the new constitution, the duumvirate of the president and the chancellor gave powers to the latter. In electoral terms, the organic vote was established and the legislature replaced by four advisory bodies representing the state, culture, the economy, and the regions. These advisory bodies sent delegates to the federal diet of 59 members. The corporatist bodies had only one more delegate than the others within the federal diet; however, we should not forget that as elsewhere, with the absence of organized corporations these bodies were composed of members appointed by the president and the chancellor, since only two of the seven professional corporations had been created by 1938. The Social Christians were dominant in many of these advisory bodies, although during the first two years of

70   P. Pasteur, '"Austrofascisme" ou regime autoritaire corporatiste Chrétien?', in C. Horel, T. Sandu and F. Taubert, eds, *La périphérie du fascisme: Le cas de l'Europe central entre les deux guerres*, Paris, 2006, pp. 111–22; *Les états autoritaires en Europe, 1919–45*, Paris, 2007, p. 120.

71   K. von Klemperer, *Ignaz Seipel: Christian statesman in a time of crises*, Princeton, NJ, 1971, p. 247.

the regime the Heimwehr had more places within them than their electoral strength in the old parliament of the democratic period.[72]

The government had a great deal of autonomy in relation to these advisory bodies, which had only limited and partial veto powers that could be circumvented by the executive. The subjection of the legislative branch to the authoritarian executive left little room for the expression of opinion on public policy not sanctioned by the executive.[73] In fact, between 1938 and the end of the regime following the Nazi invasion, 69.31 per cent of the legislation was adopted directly by the council of ministers.[74]

A central element in the institutionalization of the new regime was the creation of a single political movement, the Fatherland Front (VF – Vaterländische Front), in 1933, from where segments of the old Social Christian party and the Heimwehr were channeled from above. Dollfuss created this organization as a political tool that was highly centralized and which was completely obedient to its creator; however, it has been noted that the VF 'remained a bureaucratic organizational shell with no dynamic development or significance of its own.'[75] Dollfuss' successor, Kurt Schuschnigg, was able to reduce the influence of the Heimwehr and forced it to partially unite within the VF, but the life of this outline of a single-party was very brief.

The challenges of corporatism in the competitive authoritarianisms of central and eastern Europe

Some interwar regimes were 'able to work within a formal parliamentary framework with a dominant government party that obtained a majority through corrupt electoral practices, co-optation of some political elites and outlawing or harassing those that oppose them, and by tolerating a weak and tamed opposition.'[76] While the form of government divided conservatives and the radical right, as Andrew Janos correctly notes, these regimes incorporated significant compromises that even led to the establishment of

72   P. Pasteur, *Les états autoritaires en Europe, 1919–45*, Paris, 2007, p. 160.

73   A. Diamant, *Austrian Catholics and the First Republic: Democracy and the social order, 1918–34*, Princeton, NJ, 1960, p. 269.

74   H. Wohnout, 'A chancellorial dictatorship with a "corporative" pretext: The Austrian constitution between 1934 and 1938', in G. Bishof, A. Pelinka and A. Lassner, eds, *The Dollfuss/Schuschnigg era in Austria: A reassessment*, New Brunswick, NJ, 2003, p. 151.

75   Ibid, p. 156.

76   Linz, 'Organic-statist-authoritarian', p. 92.

poorly-institutionalized regimes.[77] Interwar Hungary and Poland are the closest examples of this.

The stabilization of Hungary following the successful counter-revolution gave rise to a hybrid regime under the paternal but firm leadership of Admiral Miklós Horthy; however, it was under the premiership of Count Stephen Bethlen in 1921 that the new regime was consolidated. Bethlen, as with so many European conservative leaders, believed democracy was 'suitable only for rich, well-structured and highly-cultured countries,' which was not true of Hungary in the 1920s. Hungary needed to be somewhere 'between unbridled freedom and unrestrained dictatorship.'[78] He carried out a program of electoral reform that reconciled a reduction in the electorate with a clientelist open vote in the rural districts, while retaining the secret ballot in the major cities.

The second step was the creation of a government party that would ensure, through political pressure and clientelistic procedures, its domination of the system. This was achieved with the creation of the Unity Party (EP – Egységes Párt), which from 1922 won successive semi-competitive elections during the Bethlen era.[79] To the EP-dominated house of representatives was joined an upper house that was restored in 1925 along corporatist lines, with representatives of the three religious denominations, 36 professional and economic chambers, 76 representatives of the counties and municipalities, 48 life members appointed by Horthy, and 38 aristocrats.

When in 1932 Horthy reluctantly appointed Gyula Gömbös prime minister, despite the fragmentation of the Hungarian extreme right, the regime began to move to the right. Gömbös had been the leader of a right-wing paramilitary association and was a close associate of Horthy, who nevertheless mitigated the most radical parts of the former's strategy. He reorganized the EP, renamed it the Party of National Unity (NEP – Nemzeti Egység Pártja), gave it more responsibilities in respect of extra-electoral political mobilization, provided it with a small paramilitary section, and turned its attention to mass mobilization. Gömbös also planned a system of compulsory organized interest representation based on vertical corporatism inspired by the Italian labor charter, with several professional chambers in which representatives of both employers and employees would handle labor issues. He attempted to suppress the bicameral parliament (through the creation of a council of state

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77   A. Janos, *East central Europe in the modern world*, Stanford, CA, 2000.

78   A. Janos, *The politics of backwardness in Hungary, 1825–1945*, Princeton, NJ, 1982, p. 210.

79   W. M. Batkay, *Authoritarian politics in a transitional state: Istvan Bethlen and the Unified Party in Hungary, 1919–26*, New York, 1982.

to replace the senate) and presented plans for the creation of a new parliament consisting of elected representatives and delegates from the municipalities, state departments, and professional corporations.[80] In 1935, plans for the institutionalization of a single-party dictatorship were announced to Goering; however, Gömbös died the following year, and with him his plans, which had in any event been blocked for some time when the corporatist system was taken off the agenda and the reorganization of the party suspended.[81] Some of the party's organizations were dismantled, and it was restored to its 'original condition of an electoral machine based on the local bureaucracy.'[82]

Somehow anticipating the academic discussion on hybrid or semi-democratic regimes that was to take place at the beginning of the 21st century, in 1972 one historian of Poland defined the interwar Polish regime as a 'semi-constitutional guided democracy.'[83] In fact, when Józef Piłsudski led the coup d'état that overthrew Poland's parliamentary democracy in 1926, it did not lead to a rapid transition to dictatorship. With his origins in democratic nationalism, which was very different from the counter-revolutionary origins of the Hungarian leading elite at the same time, some of the dilemmas in classifying Piłsudski's regime do not differ greatly from those of Bethlem's Hungary. The concentration of power, the creation of a coalition party, the Non-partisan Bloc for Co-operation with the Government (BBWR – Bezpartyjny Blok Współpracy z Rządem), to support the general in parliament and, finally, the presentation of a new constitution and of a more coherent dominant party were the marks of his governance.[84]

While Piłsudski had many powers, parliament – despite having been diminished and controlled – continued to be a problem for the president, given

80 I. T. Berend, *Decades of crises: Central and eastern Europe before World War Two*, Berkeley, CA, 1998; J. Vonyó, 'Tentative de l'organization totale de la société hongroise sous le gouvernement de Gyula Gömbös', in Horel, Sandu, and Taubert, *La périphérie*, p. 59; M. Ormos, *Hungary between the wars*, New York, 2008, pp. 254–58.

81 I. Romsics, *István Bethlen: A great conservative statesman of Hungary*, New York, 1995, p. 335.

82 Janos, *Politics of backwardness*, p. 290.

83 A. Polonsky, *Politics of independent Poland, 1921–39: The crisis of constitutional government*, Oxford, 1972, p. vii; S. Levitsky and L. A. Way, *Competitive authoritarianism: Hybrid regimes after the Cold War*, New York, 2010.

84 The predominance of Roman Catholicism in Poland did not give rise to strong Catholic parties, and although the detailed model of a corporatist system that made provision for setting a new vertical power system at whose head would be a corporatist national chamber was part of the small Christian Democratic Party's program, this did not influence Piłsudski's institutional reform. See L. Kuk, 'A powerful Catholic Church, unstable state and authoritarian political regime: The Christian Democratic Party in Poland', in Kaiser and Wohnout, *Political catholicism*, p. 157.

that it still represented a very significant degree of pluralism. In 1935 a new constitution attempted to limit much that was already the functional praxis of the regime. The executive was made responsible to the president rather than parliament, with article two stating the president was responsible only 'to God and history' for the fortune of the state.[85] The constitution provided for a bicameral system; however, the amount of legislation that could be decided by decree was increased. The decisive break with liberal parliamentarism was nevertheless adopted by the electoral laws defining the legislature's composition. The innovation was in the definition of the electorate, which remained individual and direct, although candidates were to be nominated organically.

The parliament (Sejm) had 209 deputies, with the country divided into 104 two-member constituencies in which the candidates were selected by local commissions led by a president nominated by the government and comprising of delegates from local government, corporations, the chambers of commerce, industry and agriculture, the liberal professions, and trade unions. The scope of manipulation by the government was impressive and a homogeneous and obedient Sejm was assured. The upper house was later reduced to 96 members, with one-third appointed by the president and two-thirds by electoral councils elected by similar organic institutions.[86] Opposition parties reacted by boycotting the elections.

Pilsudski died in 1935 and Poland remained a dictatorless dictatorship led by his closest military associates, although with increased factionalism. The regime's institutional fragility following the dissolution of the BBWR led in 1936 to the creation of the Camp of National Unity (OZON – Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego), a regime party that was better structured and more powerful than its predecessor, and which was more of a single-party. Adam Koc, a young Pilsudski follower, endowed the party with a youth section that he wanted to offer to the fascist Falanga, which had a more clerical and corporatist political program. Koc also proposed the liquidation of the trade union movement and the establishment of a system of corporations on the fascist model as part of OZON's program; however, this option was far from consolidated when Poland was invaded and occupied in 1939.[87]

85   E. D. Wynot Jr., *Polish politics in transition: The Camp of National Unity and the struggle for power, 1935–39*, New York, 1974, p. 24.

86   The general electorate could send a delegate to these electoral commissions only with 500 notarised signatures, which was a worthless procedure. See Polonsky, *Independent Poland*, p. 397; Wynot, *Polish politics in transition*, p. 26.

87   Polonsky, *Independent Poland*, p. 430.

In the case of Romania, the short dictatorial experiment did not lead to a consolidated regime, but the clear goal was to institutionalize a single-party regime. When on 10 February 1938 King Carol II suspended the constitution and inaugurated a period of royal dictatorship, his first steps were to abolish the political parties, create a single party – the Front of National Rebirth (FRN – Frontul Renasterü Nationale) – and hold a plebiscite on a new corporatist constitution. All of this took place in the same year. The fascists of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu's Iron Guard, the Legion of the Archangel Michael, did not respond to the royal coup d'état, and initially accepted the Legion's dissolution.[88] The royal dictatorship sought to steal some of the Iron Guard's ideological appeal, adopting the propaganda of 'organic nationalism, family, church, and the gospel of work.'[89]

According the constitution, the new parliament was selected according to the sectoral categories of agriculture, industry, commerce, the professions, and the intelligentsia. Ministers were chosen by the king and were responsible only to him, while legislative initiative was transferred from parliament to the king. Manoilescu, the theoretician of corporatism, was an eminent strategist of the royal dictatorship's economic policy. Following the execution of Codreanu and other fascist leaders, and coming under Nazi pressure to integrate them into the regime, King Carol II reorganized his single-party, renaming it the Party of the Nation (PN – Partidul Natiunii), which incorporated the remaining fascists and to which membership was compulsory for all public and corporatist office holders. Corporatism was a minor ideological component for Codreanu's Iron Guard, despite Manoilescu's attempts to develop it.[90] As the legionary leader Ion Mota stated, corporatism 'is entirely colorless from a folk point of view.'[91]

In 1940, King Carol II went into exile, leaving his son to preside over a duumvirate constituted by General Antonescu and the Iron Guard, now led by Horia Sima. During the short time the Iron Guard was the single-party of the National Legionary State, no initiatives for corporatist reorganization came forward. When Antonescu withdrew the Legion from government, the

88 I. Tiu, *The Legionary movement after Corneliu Codrianu*, New York, 2009.

89 J. Rothschild, *East central Europe between the two world wars*, Seattle, WA, 1974, p. 311.

90 Z. Ornea, *The Romanian extreme right: The 1930s*, New York, 1999, pp. 244–64.

91 H. L. Roberts, *Rumania: Political problems of an agrarian state*, New Haven, CT, 1951, p. 231.

regime that remained took on the appearance of a military dictatorship with a plebiscistarian tone.[92]

While Antonescu's pro-Nazi dictatorship proved to be poorly institution-alized after the elimination of the Iron Guard fascists, the same cannot be said of Catholic Slovakia. When the Slovak state was created as a German protectorate in 1939, the expanded heir of Andrej Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (HSLS – Hlinkova Slovenská Ľudová Strana) became the single-party led by his successor and vice-chairman, the Catholic priest Jozef Tiso, under the motto: 'One God, one people, one party.'[93] However, despite being the guide of the dictatorship and of the single party, Tiso always had to share power with Vojtech Tuka, who was more radical and had been appointed prime minister, and whom the Germans wished to retain.

The 1939 constitution proclaimed Slovakia a Catholic state in which 'the nation participates in power through the HSLS,' and in fact the single-party took control of parliament.[94] The newly-created state council developed into a corporatist upper house to advise Tiso, who had in the meanwhile become president. Members of this privy council included the prime minister, the president of parliament, and members nominated by Tiso, the single-party, and each corporation, Moreover, and similarly to Mussolini's Fascist Grand Council, this council chose the candidates for parliament.[95] As Tiso noted in 1930, the nation was an organic whole, and the creation of a corporatist system called Christian solidarism was designed.[96]

All Slovaks were obliged to join one of four corporations that replaced the unions, and the political cadres within these corporations had to be members of the single party.[97] The new constitution, inspired by Salazar's Portugal and Dollfuss' Austria, sought to conciliate liberal parliamentarism with corporat-ism and within the single-party, the Party of National Unity (SSNJ – Strana

92 D. Deletant, *Hitler's forgotten ally: Ion Antunescu and his regime, Romania, 1940–44*, London, 2006.

93 J. K. Hoensch, ed., *Catholics, the state, and the European radical right, 1919–45*, New York, 1987, p. 174.

94 A. Soubigou, 'Le "clerico-fascisme" slovaque fut-il une religion politique?' in T. Sandu, ed., *Vers un profil convergent des fascismes? 'Nouveaux consensus' et religion politique en Europe central*, Paris, 2010, p. 79.

95 Hoensch, *Catholics*, p. 180; D. Poli and S. Salmi, 'Lo stato corporativo: Una comparazi-one fra i casi italiano, portoghese e slovaco', in M. Pasetti, ed., *Progetti corporativi tra le due guerre mondiali*, Rome, 2006, pp. 165–86.

96 N. Nedelsky, 'The wartime Slovak state: A case study on the relationship between eth-nic nationalism and authoritarian patterns of governance', *Nations and Nationalisms* 7, no 2, 2001, p. 222.

97 Soubogou, 'Clerico-fascisme', p. 76.

Slovenskej Národnej Jednoty), the pro-corporatist clerical faction was the most important.[98] The regime's brief existence, Tuka's more radical faction, and the influence of Nazi Germany and of the German minority prevented the rapid evolution towards a corporatist and organic system.

In south-eastern Europe corporatism also made a brief appearance in Bulgaria and in Metaxas's Greece. In Bulgaria, following Colonel Damian Velchev's 1934 coup d'état, both parliament and the political parties were dissolved with the proposal to institute corporatist representation through the creation of seven corporations (estates) that were to provide the basis for the election of three-quarters of the members of the new parliament.[99] Plans for a single party were blocked by the king. Feeling his position threatened, King Boris assumed full power, inaugurating a period of royal dictatorship the following year, with a controlled parliament and electoral laws that were carefully constructed to ensure government control of the chamber.[100]

The 4th of August regime in Greece was established in the wake of a coup d'état led by the prime minister, Ioannis Metaxas, who was head of a small conservative, anti-parliamentary, and royalist party. Metaxas did not create a single party following the dissolution of parliament and the political parties, as this would have been difficult for the king to accept; however, he did place great hope in the creation of an official youth organization, the National Youth Organization (EON – Ethnikí Orgánosis Neoléas), which was inspired by the fascist model. A few weeks after the 1936 coup, Metaxas' program was clear, with its 14th point indicating 'the remodeling of society by easy stages on a corporatist national basis so that a truly national representation may emerge'.[101] In fact, the regime embarked on a program of 'horizontal' restructuring of economic and labor relations in a pattern that revealed the influence of the Italian Fascist and Portuguese Salazarist experiments with corporatism, with this latter being particularly evident in his plans for constitutional revision.[102] The plans became more concrete in the political arena when Metaxas designed a new system of national delegation supported by two bodies: the Great Council of National Labor and the Assembly of the

98   Y. Jelinek, *The parish republic: Hlinka's Slovak People's Party*, New York, 1976, pp. 47-51; Poli and Salmi, 'Lo Stato corporativo', p. 173.

99   R. J. Crampton, *A concise history of Bulgaria*, Cambridge, 2005, p. 159.

100 Ibid., p. 162.

101 J. Kofas, *Authoritarianism in Greece: The Metaxas regime*, New York, 1983, p. 65.

102 A. Kallis, 'Neither fascist nor authoritarian: The 4th of August regime in Greece (1936–41) and the dynamics of fascistisation in 1930s Europe', *East Central Europe* 37, 2010, pp. 303–30.

Professions.[103] According to several sources, the king's strong opposition to corporatist representation led to the postponement of the project.

Corporatism and the presidential dictatorships of the Baltic countries

The construction of personalized authoritarian regimes in the young Baltic countries was rapid. In 1926 a military coup d'état in Lithuania brought Antanas Smetona to power, while in 1934 an almost syncretic series of coups led to the institutionalization of presidentialist dictatorships in Estonia and Latvia, which were only brought to an end with the Soviet invasion of 1940. The most elaborate attempt to institutionalize corporatist regimes in the region took place under Päts in Estonia and Karlis Ulmanis in Latvia.

Despite the influence of the Catholic Church and a generous concordat in Lithuania, the swift concentration of power to President Smetona caused a number of conflicts between the now dominant party, the Tautininkai, and the Christian Democrats, which had initially been involved in the pro-authoritarian coalition. By the end of the 1930s this party had a youth wing and a militia. Parliament eventually became a consultative body only, and the president elected by extraordinary representatives of the nation selected by the dominant party; however, despite this, pressures for the official party to have a more active role were not supported by the president.[104]

Corporatist economic bodies were established during the 1930s, but it was the opposition Christian Democrats who explicitly advanced the idea for the creation of an organic state against Smetona.[105] The strategy for controlling parliament involved an electoral process in which the candidates were selected by the municipalities and not the political parties that had in the meanwhile been dissolved. The dominant party obtained an overwhelming majority in the parliament that had mere consultative powers. With Smetona being glorified as the leader of the people, Lithuania became the first authoritarian single-party state of the Baltic countries.[106]

103 C. Sarandis, 'The ideology and character of the Metaxas regime', in R. Highan and T. Veremis, eds, *Aspects of Greece: The Metaxas dictatorship*, Athens, 1993, p. 156; S. V. Papacosma, 'Ioannis Metaxas and the "Fourth of August" dictatorship', in F. Bernd, ed., *Balkan strongman: Dictators and authoritarian rulers of south-east Europe*, London, 2006, p. 187.

104 A. Eidintas, 'The presidential republic', in A. Eidintas, V. Zalys and A. E. Senn, eds, *Lithuania in European politics: The years of the First Republic, 1918–40*, Vilnius, 1997, pp. 111–37.

105 Ibid., p. 121.

106 G. Von Rauch, *The Baltic states: The years of independence, 1917–40*, New York, 1995, p. 164.

After the silencing of parliament following the 1934 coup d'état in Estonia, in 1935 Konstantin Päts dissolved the political parties and sought to create a single party, the Fatherland League, to support the president. This party was not so very different in its origins and initial functions from those of its peers, such as the UN in Salazar's Portugal. Organization by occupational groups was promoted as an alternative to parties and parliamentarism, since corporatist organizations 'had been a pet concept of Päts' for quite some time.'[107] Between 1934 and 1938 the regime created 15 professional chambers, representatives of which would later be assigned seats in the upper house of the national assembly. In 1935 a transitional institution to advise the government was also created, with 15 members elected by the occupational chambers and ten appointed by the president. The political system was not made wholly corporatist with the 1938 constitution that created a bicameral system, with a chamber of representatives of 80 directly-elected deputies and a corporatist upper house of 40 members representing administrative departments, professional bodies, and ecclesiastical and secular organizations.

In Latvia, Karlis Ulmanis, leader of the main right-wing Agrarian Union, declared a state of siege after several attempts to revise the constitution to limit parliamentary power. Parliament was eventually dissolved, along with the political parties – including his own; however, unlike his Baltic neighbors, Ulmanis did not create an official political party. Nevertheless, mobilization of the members of the previous party elite was significant. Ulmanis initially ruled via the government, and once the presidential mandate was over he combined the office of the prime minister with that of the president.

The institutionalization of corporatism in Latvia was the most complete of all of the Baltic States and historians have debated the external influences on it: including the Italian and the Austrian.[108] A total of six corporations were created between 1934 and 1938, and the old associative and syndical structures were abolished, with the corporatist chambers being placed under the control of the respective ministries that nominated a large number of their members. The regime also created a National Economic Council and a National Cultural Council to supervise the activities of the different chambers. While some observers have noted the fact Ulmanis wished to create a corporatist parliament, replacing for good the 'plenary meeting of political parties', this never saw the light of day.[109]

107 A. Kasekamp, *The radical right in interwar Estonia*, London, 2007, p. 121.

108 A. Plakans, *The Latvians: A short history*, Stanford, CA, 1995.

109 Von Rauch, *The Baltic states*; Pasteur, *Les états autoritaires*, p. 166.

Concluding remarks

Corporatism has frequently – and legitimately – been associated with the Catholic political culture of the beginning of the 20th century, even although fascism had also codified it as an authoritarian alternative to liberal democracy. Although it had a presence in the institutions of some democratic regimes, it is only in dictatorships that a serious effort was made to organize political regimes according to corporatist ideology.[110] The success of this hybridization effect in European authoritarian political institutions during the first half of the 20th century is a good illustration of how the codification of corporatist institutions became generalized. These experiences not only illustrated the pragmatic adoption of authoritarian institutions in interwar Europe, they also illustrate their use by dictators with no link to the cultural background of the Catholic or fascist corporatism of southern Europe, which suggests it was, in fact, a general trend during the interwar period. While there was some variation, the ideology of a single national interest, typical of the apoliticism of military thinking and of anti-democratic conservative elites was very compatible with the 'organic-statist' core of corporatist representation.[111]

Institutional transfer was a hallmark of interwar dictatorships, but the influences were differentiated. In the case of social corporatism it is clear that the influence of Italian Fascism plays a central role. In its apparent totalitarianism, the first principle of Italian Fascism's Labor Charter was replicated across interwar European dictatorships: 'The Italian nation... is a moral, political, and economic union that is globally realized in the fascist state.' The interwar projects for the introduction of authoritarian constitutions and labor charters, albeit in less statist versions, generally began with the organic principle. Social corporatism as a form of state-led forced integration of interest groups in para-state structures and of the decapitation of autonomous union movements largely transcends the interwar period; however, the process of political engineering through which these dictatorships provided a channel for complex interest groups structure co-optation and its legitimizing discourse became a blueprint of the 1930s.

The comparative analysis of the labor charters or equivalent legislation of these regimes demonstrates the role-model function of the Italian Fascist Labor Charter in 11 dictatorships, the national adaptations of which were an expression of the original coalition that formatted them (see Table 7.1). Thus in the Portuguese New State, in Dollfuss' Austria, in Tizo's Slovakia, and even in Spain under Franco, political Catholicism has a greater presence than, for example, it had in Vichy France or in eastern Europe. However,

110 Linz, *Totalitarian and authoritarian regimes*, p. 214.

111 Stepan, *State and society*.

this mark is already a determinant in the design of a common heritage for the creation of structures of interest intermediation, for the dissolution of independent unions and the establishment of state-led bargaining structures created to defend the regime. Even when such institutions remain on paper, as in the case of Greece under Metaxas or in Velchev's Bulgaria, the outlines are very similar.

Despite the primacy of social corporatism, the constitution of an organic political representation as an alternative to parliamentary democracy also plays a central role in the hybridization processes of the institutional development of interwar dictatorships, transcending, and in many cases incorporating, historical fascism (see Table 7.1). However, Mussolini's Italy has a much more limited role in the spread of corporatist legislatures: as we saw above, a comparative analysis of the constitutions and processes of institutional reform show that Portugal under Salazar and Austria under Dollfuss had a more important role. Moreover, Italian Fascism was undergoing institutional reform right up until the end of the 1930s with the creation of the Fascist and Corporatist Chamber. We should not underestimate these authoritarian constitutions since they serve to consolidate autocratic coalitions in power. Uncertainty is very great at the beginning of a new authoritarian regime and constitutions represent 'one key mechanism through which political actors other than the dictator can codify their right and interests'.[112] At the same time, the power of parties and legislatures is often designed by the constitutions, making the boundaries of the ruling group less fluid.

The diversity of legislatures designed by authoritarian constitutions suggests the domination of mixed systems of single- or dominant-party legislatures with corporatist chambers. Very few dictators in interwar Europe had, at the outset, the concentration of power that General Franco had in 1939, and the majority of them had great difficulty with the institutional design of their regimes and had to accommodate the more prominent members of the coalitions that brought them to power in their new institutions. The 'institutionalized interaction between the dictator and his allies results in greater transparency among them, and by virtue of their formal structure, institutions provide a publicly observable signal of the dictator's commitment to power-sharing.'[113] Nevertheless, however appealing the principle of corporatist representation may have been for authoritarian rulers, the creation of corporatist legislatures was much more difficult to implement in several dictatorships, even when it had been part of the dictators' program. In some

112 M. Albertus and V. Menaldo, 'Dictators as founding fathers? The role of constitutions under autocracy', available online at ssrn.com/abstract=1794281 (accessed 8 August 2012).

113 M. W. Svolik, *The politics of authoritarian rule*, New York, 2012.

countries, such as in Greece and Bulgaria, it was blocked by monarchs who feared losing their power, while in others, such as in Horthy's Hungary, it was paternalistic rulers or, as in Portugal, it was the initial compromise with segments of conservative liberal parties that led to the institutionalization of bicameral systems with a corporatist chamber and a parliament controlled by the dominant or single party.

Finally, let us not forget the importance of regime parties. Very few interwar European dictatorships existed without a single- or dominant-party, and the relationship between dictators and their parties, particularly in those that existed prior to the seizure of power, is certainly more complex than the rigid versions of the fascism versus-authoritarian dichotomy suggest. The inherent dilemma in the transformation of the single-party as the dictatorship's ruling institution into the leader's instrument for rule also challenges rigid dichotomies.[114] A regime's decision to create a political party should not be conflated as a transition to party-based rule,[115] and in reality the single-party was not the regime's ruling institution in the majority of interwar dictatorships: rather, it was one among several.[116]

Some of the more 'essentialist' interpretations of fascism encountered very significant differences between interwar dictatorship regime parties (fascist, non-fascist), but the tendency to create these suggest they fulfilled some important common functions, such as being an instrument of the leader, as a means of elite co-optation and of preventing factionalism or as a means of ensuring a political monopoly on elite recruitment and to balance threats from such institutions as the military. Regardless of their origins (whether pre-dating the dictatorship or being created from above following the breakdown of the previous regime) or their nature (whether they are mass or elite parties) they perform similar roles in the new political system, both as single- or dominant-parties in the legislatures, providing an institutionalized interaction between the dictator and his allies, and the political control of corporatist institutions in the majority of interwar dictatorships.

The diffusion of political and social corporatism, which with the single-party are hallmarks of the institutional transfers among European dictatorships, challenges some rigid dichotomous interpretations of interwar fascism.[117] The success and expansion of organic-statist regimes with

114 P. Brooker, *Twentieth-century dictatorships: The ideological one-party states*, New York, 1995, pp. 9–10.

115 N. Ezrow and E. Frantz, *Dictators and dictatorships: Understanding authoritarian regimes and their leaders*, London, 2011, p. 7.

116 Pinto, *Ruling elites*.

117 A. C. Pinto, ed., *Rethinking the nature of fascism*, London, 2011.

single- or dominant-parties in the world of dictatorships of the second half of the 20th century might bury some of them.