

Portugal and Romania

the Backwaters of Fascism

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Abstract

This MA thesis surveys several models of generic fascism and proposes a synthesis of them. It reflects on the possibilities of a performing research on interwar European fascisms framed by both theory and context, without letting none of the two take primacy. On the one hand one should not write historiography to prove a theory and organize facts in order to prove it; on the other hand, mere collections of facts lead to no knowledge.

Secondly, it looks at two peripheral cases of European fascism, Portugal and Romania, to understand the European dimension of fascism, how both cases can be interpreted making use of a generic fascist model, and assess the limitations of the model in face of national specificities derived from political tradition and circumstances of each country.

Third, it offers a re-interpretation of Salazar's regime as a borderline case inside generic fascism, situated between authoritarianism and fascism. For the period of 1933 to 1945, I argue that the fascist element prevailed. As for Romania, I question the classification of non-fascist based merely on its non-secular Christian ideology.

Fourth, the comparison between the countries show that they share a core of fascist elements, but each one has a different configuration and the relative value of each element inside its context also changes. That bears consequences for the European wide dimension of fascisms and for the theoretical model engaged to study the phenomenon.

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Introduction

The main objective of this MA thesis is to discuss the peripheral and under researched cases of political anti-modernism in the periphery of Europe, taking Portugal and Romania, in the interwar period, as case studies in a comparative approach. Both countries were, geographically and politically, secondary actors on the European stage, each at its own end of Europe.

Nowadays it seems improbable, if not unwise, to compare Portugal and Romania. The course taken by the two countries after World War II could not have been more dissimilar. Portugal joined the western alliance and it was governed by a non-democratic regime, whereas Romania came under the influence of the USSR and its inner political configuration was one styled out of the people's democracy. In the 1970s, while Portugal was progressing towards liberal representative democracy, and about to join the European Union, Romania was sliding down the pit towards a violent, authoritarian, and personal centered regime.

Phillippe Schmitter¹ has proposed a socio-economic approach. Using fourteen statistical indicators ranging from demography to infrastructure and education to economy, Schmitter concludes that Portugal and Romania were in similar situations circa 1930. The only area where the countries diverged significantly was in education: Romania presented an approximately three times higher rate of enrolment in institutions of formal education (primary, secondary schools, and universities). Schmitter's comparison, however, was not meant to be thorough. It aimed at framing in a broader context his discussion on corporatism and Mihail Manoilescu's contribution.

¹ Schmitter, Philippe C. "Reflections on Mihail Manoilescu and the National Consequences of Delayed Dependent Development on the Periphery of Western Europe," in: Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940: A Debate on Development in a European Nation* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1978), 117-173

Nevertheless, it leaves the hint that both countries were sufficiently alike, in structural terms, to allow a viable comparison.

On an anthropological approach one could cite the cultural link existing between the countries: the common Latin heritage. Although one should be careful when approaching the subject in this way, for it was a part of the Romanian fascist propaganda of the interwar period. Nevertheless, one can cite Mircea Eliade² as one of the most important voices defending the cultural unity of the Latin world, both around the Mediterranean Sea and across the Ocean to South America, in the timeframe in question. He praised the “unlimited assimilation capacity of the Latin character”³ and appealed to the Latin world to re-establish its golden age of mutual cultural curiosity and solidarity. Eliade’s words should be evaluated taking into account his historical context. He was writing as a foreign cultural propagandist in Portugal, gathering as much political support and sympathy possible for Romania, which by 1942 was losing its footing in the European geostrategic scene and desperately needed allies, especially among the similarly minded dictatorships of Europe. Nevertheless, his interpretation of a cultural unity around Latinity is not entirely devoid of sense. Beyond the simple similarities of peoples and spirit, the Latin world presents a remarkable coherence and mutual understanding that one does not encounter between north and south of Europe, or West and East. In fact, taking a macroscopic view, one can easily identify that Europe has civilizational borders, each encompassing multinational cultural units that stand as monuments of a time when the mental universe of the age was not bound by national states. Therefore, one can say that Latinity is a separate universe from the Anglo-Saxon, the German, the Scandinavian and Slavic worlds of Europe. In this sense,

² Also well known for being an anachronistic and anti-modern thinker with strong hints of fascism and racism.

³ Mircea Eliade. “Latina Giuta e Regina.” *Acção*, 5 Feb. 1942. P. 7. The original text reads: “(...) a capacidade de assimilação do génio latino (...) é ilimitada.”

there is a link between Portugal and Romania, the ineffable cultural link, shared alike with France, Spain and Italy. One should however grant that this link is not necessarily the strongest one nor guarantee any basis of comparison by itself. For the purpose of this thesis, it merely constitutes the general background of vague similarities serving as departure point.

Furthermore, using Latinity as a base of comparison stresses the importance that the cultural link had for the intellectuals whose work marked the ideological shaping of politics in Portugal and Romania. It is only useful that I acknowledge this, in order to better penetrate their doctrinal universe. However, I do recognize that Latinity is a political construction and I use it keeping that in mind.

The third basis of comparison is to be found in the nature of the interwar regimes of Portugal and Romania. António Costa Pinto has detected the similarities of political forms between the Iberian countries and the Eastern European States: “most dictatorships in this part of Europe, from the small Baltic states to the Balkans, had very similar characteristics. (...) These regimes will always remain closer to their counterparts at the other end of Europe and to Austria than to Nazism and Italian Fascism.”⁴ In the context of the international debate struggling to define and categorize countries according to a definition of generic fascism based on the dichotomy authoritarian-fascist, supplemented by the “totalitarianism” concept, bringing Portugal and Romania together under the same analytical framework provides valuable insight to enrich already existing historiographic interpretations of the political constellation of interwar Europe.

One should not engage, however, in a comparison exercise without making the differences explicit. Portugal’s position in the map of Europe awarded it with a

⁴ António C. Pinto. *Salazar’s Dictatorship and European Fascism: Problems of Interpretation. Social Science Monographs*. Boulder: Colombia University Press, 1995. P. 33.

comfortable geo-strategic position, where foreign threats were, throughout times, limited. In the interwar period, while the Nazi army overran the rest of Europe, the Iberian Peninsula maintained its independence. Romania's history, on the opposite, is rich with examples of territorial losses and gains and relations with aggressive neighbours. During World War II it found itself in the middle of the turmoil, a potential prey to stronger neighbours on both sides. The homogeneous ethnic composition of Portugal contrasted with that of Romania, where minorities, namely the Transylvanian Hungarians, the Roma population and the Germans, undermined the creation of a well-delimited Nation-State. In Portugal, the majority of the population has always been highly homogeneous in whatever way one considers it: ethnically, socially and economically. Even political divisions have been mild compared with other European states. The last Portuguese civil war was over by 1834.

The scope of the comparison is limited to ideological expressions of Portuguese and Romanian fascisms. That is, I am going to compare the ideological matrix of both countries in the interwar period, only accessorially addressing the real configuration of movements and regimes to complete and illustrate more thoroughly my argumentation. Consequently, the comparison to be undertaken will reflect the perceptions the actors had of themselves. This presents a limitation to my exercise in trying to define the countries according to one ideal type, since any conclusions I reach are only valid in the real of intellectual history. Nonetheless, they still carry relevance, for the ideas that the intellectuals defended contributed to the shaping of politics in a new key in their respective countries.

The research in generic fascism has focused in the creation of concepts and ideal types suitable to explain the European wide political vortex of the interwar period. The

shift to a new style of politics, politics in a new key as Carl Schorsk⁵ called them, has puzzled social scientists and the quest for a model that can encompass the richness of the phenomenon has sometimes neglected the idiosyncrasies of the national contexts. However, the European dimension of fascism makes it necessary to engage the phenomenon with a broad scope analysis and a solid theoretical framework. As Mosse noted, “Fascism lacked a common founder, but all over Europe it sprung out of a common set of problems and proposed a common solution to them.”⁶ The pre-eminent position of Germany and Italy within the interwar period has obscured the European wide importance of fascism and its presence in a majority of the continents countries.⁷

I am undertaking the task of rethinking the nature of the regimes of Portugal and Europe in the interwar period. Both countries have been tagged as authoritarian, with the exception of the short-lived period of the National Legionary State, from September 6, 1940 to January 23, 1941, in Romania. I am inquiring if both Portugal’s and Romania’s regimes amalgamated core values and features of a fascist and authoritarian matrix, thus re-allocating the debate about generic fascism to a broader overview of 20th century intellectual history, where political anti-modernism knew no boundaries. The consequence of this is that I will also question the accepted taxonomy in which Portugal and Romania have been slotted. The resistance to liberalism, democracy and individualism took inspiration from the left and right of the ideological spectrum. In the peripheral cases of Portugal and Romania that also meant that, the people who built and maintained the regimes took inspiration from diversified sources, sometimes even seemingly contradictory sources. It should be no surprise, then, that in the end of this

⁵ See chapter III, “Politics in a New Key: an Austrian Trio”, in: Carl E. Schorske. *Fin-de-siecle Vienna: politics and culture*. New York: Vintage Books, 1981.

⁶ George L. Mosse. “The Genesis of Fascism.” In *Fascism: an anthology*, edited by Nathanael Greene, 3-14. New York: Crowell, c1968. P. 4.

⁷ George L. Mosse. “The Genesis of Fascism.” In *Fascism: an anthology*, edited by Nathanael Greene, 3-14. New York: Crowell, c1968. P. 3.

exercise Portugal and Romania are placed at a historiographic entanglement, but hopefully not in a blind alley.

Nevertheless, the departure point for this thesis is a theoretical framework constructed with the help of Emilio Gentile, Ernst Nolte, George L. Mosse, Roger Griffin and Stanley G. Payne. My ideal type of generic fascism is a collection of features gathered from all these authors, constituting a list with the core elements of fascism. The list is intended to work as a step by step check list, constituting a simple way of operating the ideal type into an empirical analysis. The core of the list is inspired in Emilio Gentile's definitions of totalitarianism and fascism, supplemented by Roger Griffin's concept of palingenetic myth, Mosse's interpretation of fascism as a revolution and Payne's considerations about the value of a generic theory and its limitations. I will make this aspect of my thesis more explicit in the subchapter 'Generic Fascism', where I will map out the ideal type in detail.

To sum up, this MA thesis is going to discuss, in a comparative approach, selected areas of the Portuguese and Romanian interwar regimes, in order to single out their most important, empirically verifiable, characteristics. This will allow rethinking the place of Portugal and Romania in recent historiography and fuel the theoretical debate of regime classification and description in the interwar period.

Due to a question of time management and accuracy, it is not inside the scope of this thesis to undertake a global survey of events, facts and people. The comparative study that I set myself to do here is restricted to a core of most representative areas of values and politics inside the regimes. Therefore, this comparison groups together the two countries through three main discursive thematic issues: corporatism, fascist revolution and charismatic leadership (although other topics will be discussed) in order to create a scenario from which is possible to generalize and bring the present

discussion into the framework of European generic fascism. The underlying focus is, then, international fascism and not the description of two individual cases.

The thesis is structured into three main chapters. The first chapter draws the methodological approach where I define the historiographic basis of this research project. I make some brief remarks about the nature of history, in light of the post-modern challenge, and then define my methods for source analysis and the broader framework for comparative history. The second chapter deals with the definition of my ideal type and makes a previous survey of the facts relating to Portugal and Romania present in the secondary literature. At this stage I am going to formulate my hypothesis regarding the interpretation of both regimes in light of my ideal type and existing literature. The third chapter specifically analysis the source material on the Portuguese case, validating or denying my previously defined hypothesis. As I have no primary sources for Romania, the third chapter will overlook the testing of hypothesis for the Iron Guard, giving others the opportunity to proceed this line of research. The conclusion will finally open way for a direct comparison, from which is going to be possible to extrapolate to the wider discussion of European fascisms and theoretical taxonomies.

Methodological approach

Overview

The nature of the historian's work is predominantly empirical and practical. It engages him in data research and production, analysis and, maybe the most challenging part, writing down the results of his work. However, the nineteenth century paradigm that guides this simple conception of doing history has been challenged by the postmodernist tsunami that cut across all intellectual fields in the second part of the twentieth century. In light of this imposed intellectual necessity of justifying one's work, this chapter is going to establish an epistemological framework for my thesis. I am going to endeavour to establish operational concepts of historical fact, historical truth and the nature of narrative. After establishing these theoretical premises, I will have provided myself with the necessary tools and security to advance to primary source analysis and the formulation of viable hypothesis.

Secondly, this chapter also aims at discussing the implications, advantages, and limitations of my methods when dealing with sources. I have decided to approach my primary information using a combination of content analysis and discourse analysis. My choice is justified by the nature of the source material: journal articles from 1941 to 1945, written by the Salazar-regime committed Portuguese intelligentsia, addressing political ideology and polity issues. I seek to decode the meaning of the texts and identify the functions carried out by the written discourse in the arrangement of the ideological structure and nature of the Salazar regime in Portugal. The correlated exercise for Romania's Iron Guard movement in Romania is, however, limited to secondary sources. The conclusions of the analysis are going to be my main material to

discuss these two fascisms in light of the theories of generic fascism and, thus, approach the subject from a trans-national and comparative perspective.

The third and final aspect I shall address in this chapter is the comparative method. I have previously established the *why* in the introduction. Now, I am going to discuss the problems and advantages of using this method in historiography, underlining the relevance it carries for my hypothesis. Ultimately, it is my objective to demonstrate the viability of such comparison from a methodological point view.

Epistemological Outlook

The poststructuralist obsession with the role of language in the production of knowledge created an impossible situation for historians. The idea that language is the constitutive element of reality and “somehow anterior to the world it shapes”⁸ brought doubt over the very nature of the material historians work with.

Reality is a linguistically constructed artefact with no necessary connection with the outside world. Drawing from Saussure’s theory of the arbitrary connection between signifier and signified, poststructuralists claim that our knowledge and experience of reality is a random linguistic fabrication. In fact, we live in a cave of discourse, where meaning is derived from the internal relations of symbols with each other. There is no verifiable link with extra-linguistic phenomena and, therefore, we live in a world of shadows, which do not even qualify as poor representations of reality, considering that the creation of social systems is dependent on mysterious internal language rules.

Even though the deconstructionists, for instance, do not question the existence of the real, their resolute denial of the possibility to achieve even a minimum correspondence between the representation and the represented, amounts, in the end, to the denial of a material existence of anything outside the stringent discursive systems.

The main consequence of this positioning is that the *fact*, in social science, no longer exists and “text and context are collapsed into one broad vein of discursive production”⁹. The case for history is that the historiographic representations of the past are in no way different from fiction. The traditional causal relation established in history writing is relativized into a fictitious story telling procedure. Thus, social, economical, or political justifications for any particular phenomenon become impossible. History is

⁸ Gabrielle M. Spiegel. “History, Historicism, and the Social Logic of the Text in the Middle Ages.” *Speculum* 65, n.° 1 (Jan 1990): 59-86. P. 60.

⁹ Gabrielle M. Spiegel. “History, Historicism, and the Social Logic of the Text in the Middle Ages.” *Speculum* 65, n.° 1 (Jan 1990): 59-86. P. 68.

discourse. Furthermore, the historian projects his normativism into the interpretation of reality, perpetuating, or reflecting the relations of power to which he is subjected as a member of a particular social system. The historian is thus a voice of ideology and history an instrument of power.

Granted that “no reasonable historian today, or quite possibly ever, has claimed either that empiricism is a system that guarantees the objective discovery of truth, or that there can ever be a hermetic seal between knower and known”¹⁰. This being acknowledged, one should not immediately be forced to take a relativist position, denying altogether the scientific character of history. To sum up, both traditional objectivism and relativism are insufficient to explain the nature of historiography.

As a departure point for my thesis epistemological approach and methodology, I start by clearly stating the existence of an independent reality accessible to understanding and description by historical narrative. However, it is important to distinguish, with Chris Lorenz, between “the search for knowledge and the search for certainty”¹¹. In this way, history does not claim to be a discipline of certainty and absolute truth, but one of knowledge production.

Reality exists independently of our perceptions of it and the claims presented by historiography about knowledge refer to it in the framework of factual research. The essential element comes when the historian recognizes what is *actually true* is not what he writes. Nevertheless, historiography relates to reality using the medium of language.

Thus, it becomes necessary to develop a synthesis in order to understand the specific dual nature of historiography: the empirical dimension of research and the creative narrative story-writing. This new paradigm, echoed by Lorenz, is *internal*

¹⁰ Alun Munslow. *Deconstructing History*. London: Routledge, 1997. P. 82.

¹¹ Chris Lorenz. “Historical Knowledge and Historical Reality: A Plea for “Internal Realism”.” *History and Theory* XXXIII, n.º 3 (October 1994): 297-327. P. 306.

realism. The conceptual umbrella of internal realism departs from the evidence of the existence of multiple perspectives over the same phenomena, deriving from various interests and purposes underlying the description of reality. In fact, “all our knowledge of reality is mediated through language; this means reality for us is always reality within the framework of a certain description”¹². The narrative inevitably includes a normative element, in the sense that it is written from a perspective formatted by a system of moral norms. That is, the historian’s questions when approaching a problem largely depend of his cultural and linguistic universe.

Internal realism makes this dimension of history clear and explicit, while at the same time including it in the work of the historian. The value of each claim to truth can then be subjected to the test of other historians by engaging the hypothesis and confronting it with renewed and extra factual evidence.

Being warned against involuntary bias in his work, the cautious historian should, on his own initiative, make a fair use of information, i.e., he should collect and order facts in a comprehensive way to prevent selection of facts to suit one particular theory or view. He achieves this by the use of the deductive-inductive methodology. In the first place, the historian should formulate a hypothesis capable of explaining the set of facts he deals with. The core of the problem follows: after the theoretical framework is established, the historian should strive to test it empirically in light of the sources available. This should be an exercise undertaken with an open mind, in order to establish a viable and verifiable explanation of the phenomena. That is, the historian always refers his interpretation to the existing evidence.

His main instrument is the historical narrative, characterized by its unique nature. “The outcome of writing history, the rhetoric of history, is unmistakable different from

¹² Chris Lorenz. “Historical Knowledge and Historical Reality: A Plea for "Internal Realism".” *History and Theory* XXXIII, n.º 3 (October 1994): 297-327. P. 312.

the rhetoric of, say, physics or lyric poetry. (...) Historians are committed to writing in a different way, committed to a different rhetoric, from what science as exemplified by the physicists, or belles letters as exemplified by the poets, is committed to.”¹³ According to Hexter, what distinguishes the historiographic text is the permanent reference to the phenomenon under analysis by the use of source citations. It establishes the past as a reality, as an empirical fact, even though its interpretation can vary. The systematic recourse to sources helps the historian convey reality, thus implicitly establishing the text as a trustworthy representation of what happened, even though one should keep in mind the fallibility and potential bias of the historian.

For the purposes of my thesis, I shall use the traditional nineteenth century narrative structure, probably much to the dismay of Hayden White. Due to the limited time inherent to a one-year MA program, I am going to focus the bulk of my effort in the formulation of a viable hypothesis and subsequent testing with the available source material. I hope this does not imply that I cannot write a narrative capable of “revivify our sense of the past by making the familiar strange and the strange familiar”¹⁴. Nevertheless, my main goal is to write a piece that can resist the probing and inquiring of my fellow historians and provide a plausible description and explanation of two radical regimes in light of pre-existing theories of generic fascism. The aesthetics is secondary in the historiographic narrative.

I have established my methodological and epistemological outlook, while discussing its advantages and problems. I have defined a synthetic model of empirically orientated research that responds to the post-modern challenge. It does not claim to be a final solution, but it is the best solution for the purposes of my thesis. It draws on some

¹³ J. H. Hexter. “The Rhetoric of History.” *History and Theory* 6, n.º 1 (1967): 3-13. Pp 3-4.

¹⁴ Robert A. Rosenstone. “Introduction, Practice and Theory.” In *Experiments in rethinking history*, edited by Alun Munslow and Robert A. Rosenstone, 1-5. New York: Routledge, 2004. P. 2

of the criticism about the nature of reality and historical knowledge made by linguists in the sense that I recognize the basic layer of value projection that underlies historical narrative. Bearing that in mind, the definition of a hypothesis, its breaking down into operative categories and the test of reality afforded by the comparative approach gives me a satisfactory methodological framework.

Discourse and content analysis

I shall approach my sources with a preliminary content analysis in order to decode its content and bring to light its representational and propositional meaning. It is a primary and formal approach on the texts, whose function is to test my predetermined categories of analysis, those being corporatism, fascist revolution and leadership cult. In addition, I shall design a conceptual map encompassing the bulk of the texts, establishing the necessary north to proceed with the description of relations between meanings present in the discourse.

It is largely a quantitative analysis. It will allow me to understand the recurrent ideas and the place they take in the overall systemic ideology present in my source material. In addition to the conceptual map, I am also going to consider the formal aspects of text placement in the journal. Are the texts accompanied by images? How much space is devoted to a particular topic? Is it present in the first page or it takes a secondary role by appearing consistently in the last pages of the journal?

After drawing my road map with content analysis, I shall proceed to the second stage: discourse analysis. Discourse analysis has a broader scope: it is a qualitative method that transforms text into data. For the purposes of my dissertation, I will follow the definition of discourse put forward by Potter and Wetherell in 1987: all text is a medium of interaction and thus “all spoken and written forms of language use as social practice”¹⁵. Language is a social instrument; it is the center of social action. As such, discourse has a political function, it is intended to achieve something through the conveyance of meaning. It has a dialectical relation with power relations and social

¹⁵ Linda A. Wood, and Rolf O. Kroger. *Doing discourse analysis : methods for studying action in talk and text*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, c2000. P. 19.

processes¹⁶, providing me with a link to the *context* of the texts and its positioning in the political reality of the interwar period. “People use language in order to communicate ideas or beliefs (or to express emotion), and they do so as a part of more complex social events.”¹⁷

Simplistically, content analysis gives me a gateway into the ideas coded in the text, while discourse analysis is going to provide me with valuable insight into the circumstances surrounding the writing of the texts, their author’s intentions and political relevance of the pieces. Taking the example of the discourse historical method of Ruth Wodak I will seek to integrate, in a systematic fashion, all available background information in the analysis and interpretation of the multiple layers of the text. Its meaning cannot be fully understood without the non-textual information. I take the risk of entering a loophole by saying that I will gather the non-textual information from secondary textual sources. Nevertheless, I have established that historiographic texts do have a connection with material reality, therefore they have the essential ability to present the past in a non-fictional manner.

My sample is constituted approximately by 150 articles published in the journal *Acção*, from 1941 to 1945, of which I will select the number of available pieces on my issue approach. It is a sufficiently large sample to allow a representative survey of the recurrent ideas and self-interpretation of the regime in Portugal. In addition, the size of the sample constitutes a challenging empirical base, seeing that they encompass different authors and a period of 4 years, providing, apart from the core ideas, a number of deviant ideological solutions. That should provide me with a rich challenge in

¹⁶ Norman Fairclough, and Ruth Wodak. “Critical Discourse Analysis”. In: *Discourse as social interaction - Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, edited by Teun A. van Dijk, 258-284. London: SAGE, 1997. P. 273.

¹⁷ Teun A. van Dijk. “The Study of Discourse”. In: *Discourse as structure and process - Discourse Studies: a Multidisciplinary Introduction*, edited by Teun A. van Dijk, 1-34. London: SAGE, 1997. P. 2.

adapting and developing my hypothesis in order to explain the data present in the texts in a coherent and global way.

In terms of the possibilities of evaluating the results of discourse analysis undertaken on my thesis, my claim to an empirically based hypothesis, within a *internal realism* scheme, should lend itself to evaluation according to positivist criteria. As Taylor¹⁸ described it: 1) reliability: my results of the discourse analysis should be similar to the ones undertaken by any other historian departing from the same reference value system. 2) Validity: my scheme of generalization, with the help of theories of generic fascism, should be logically correct and 3) replicability: the original principle states that under the same circumstances, any other historian can reach similar conclusions to my own. However, given the natural variability in interpreting text, these criteria should be looked upon as the possibility to clearly trace back my methods of interpretation and understand why and how I reached my conclusions. The conclusions themselves will always be open to questioning.

Discourse and content analysis bring some particular challenges when it comes to dealing with the sources. They go back to the post modernist issue. I have deliberately taken on the assumption that text and context are different entities and that the former simultaneously reflects and acts over the later. They are therefore complementary entities. Both influence and build on each other. This is not, however, an intertextual position. It is the very common sense verification on how language is used for political and social action and how political and social phenomena influences the production of new text. So, as a part of my discourse analysis I will build a viable historical context from which the meanings of the text can be made explicit.

¹⁸ Norman Fairclough, and Ruth Wodak. "Critical Discourse Analysis". In: *Discourse as social interaction - Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, edited by Teun A. van Dijk, 258-284. London: SAGE, 1997.

Comparative History

March Bloch was the father of comparative history. He claimed that history has a relational nature: phenomena can only be fully understood through the relations established between them, relations that cross borders and spawn over time. Thus, the comparative method envisioned by Bloch addressed the problem of historical explanation.

Sewell claims Bloch's method had three main functions. The most important was to test hypothesis and assess the causal relations behind historic manifestations. By using the comparative method, the historian is able to reformulate his hypothesis until an accurate and convincing explanation is formulated, thus using a scientific experimental method in his research. "Whether employed by historians or by social scientists, the comparative method is an adaptation of experimental logic to investigations in which actual experimentation is impossible. The comparative method, like the experimental method, is means of systematically gathering evidence to test the validity of our explanations."¹⁹

The second function identified by Sewell in Bloch's proposition of comparative history is that of identifying the uniqueness of different societies. That is a consequence of the focus of comparative history in making clear the shared phenomena with other social systems. Whatever is to be found that is not shared, but is specific to one unit of comparison is then unique to it and can be used safely as a part of a hypothesis. This clear distinction between local and translocal phenomena and their mutual relations wards off the danger of historiographies enclosed in national contexts. As Chris Lorenz warns: "because his analysis sticks to the national framework, it creates the inevitable

¹⁹ William H. Sewell. "March Bloch and the Logic of Comparative History." *History and Theory* VI, nr. 2 (1967): 208-218. P. 209.

illusion that national problems must have national causes”²⁰. Sewell sees this dimension as a precious advantage of comparative history. The comparative framework detects flawed explanations that would be unassailable from a national or local point of view.²¹

The third function of comparative history is to formulate research problems. By bringing a certain issue into to the comparative scope one is faced with the challenge of dealing with a problem anew, thus requiring entirely different and innovative explications. Jürgen Kocka also mentions this feature of comparative history in his list of advantages. He claims that even a failed exercised in comparative history forces the formulation of new questions and future empirical research.²²

Miroslav Hroch, a leading scholar in the use of the comparative method in East Central Europe pointed out that “the comparative method is one of the most complex ways of doing historical work, and its uncontrolled application has led more than once to errors and misunderstandings.”²³ One of those dangerous is the blank use of the method, i.e., juxtaposing two units without real comparison. The usual problem with these parallel narratives is that they are missing a uniting hypothesis. The comparison depends on the power of a previously established hypothesis that is to be tested empirically through the comparative method.

In the case of my thesis, I am going to conduct a synchronic asymmetrical comparison. It is synchronic because it focuses on similar processes occurring simultaneously in two different, separated social units and asymmetrical because I will only use primary sources for the case of Portugal. For Romania I am going to rely on

²⁰ Chris Lorenz. “Comparative Historiography: Problems and Perspectives.” *History and Theory* XXXVIII, nr. 1 (February 1999): 25-39. P. 28.

²¹ William H. Sewell. “March Bloch and the Logic of Comparative History.” *History and Theory* VI, nr. 2 (1967): 208-218. P. 210.

²² Jürgen Kocka. “Asymmetrical Historical Comparison: The case of the German Sonderweg.” *History and Theory* XXXVIII, nr. 1 (February 1999): 40-50. P. 49.

²³ Miroslav Hroch. *Social preconditions of national revival in Europe: a comparative analysis of the social composition of patriotic groups among the smaller European nations*. Translated by Ben Fowkes. Cambridge, Cambridgeshire: Cambridge University Press, 1985. P. 18.

secondary literature. Engaging in asymmetrical comparisons holds the risk that the less developed unit of comparison be dealt in a superficial and selective way leading to distorted results.²⁴ However, having this in mind, I wish to present a picture of Romania as accurate as possible, instead of using it as a mere foil for the case of Portugal. I am interested in accomplishing a comparative *historiography* and not merely a comparative *perspective*.²⁵ In addition, Kocka defends asymmetrical comparisons even if they may produce faulty results. In his view, projects like dissertations are subjected to limited time periods. “Asymmetric comparison is often the only way to open oneself to comparison at all.”²⁶

Miroslav Hroch²⁷ sets forward for steps for the preparation of a comparative historical analysis:

- a) Precise definition of the subject of comparison.
- b) State the (multiple) aim
- c) A previous set of criteria for the comparison between objects should be laid down
- d) The comparative procedure should have a clear position in chronology.

Regarding the first step, one should start with an abstract definition of what a unit of comparison constitutes: “social systems, understood as social aggregates ranging all

²⁴ Jürgen Kocka. “Asymmetrical Historical Comparison: The case of the German Sonderweg.” *History and Theory* XXXVIII, nr. 1 (February 1999): 40-50. P. 49.

²⁵ Jürgen Kocka. “Asymmetrical Historical Comparison: The case of the German Sonderweg.” *History and Theory* XXXVIII, nr. 1 (February 1999): 40-50. P. 48-9.

²⁶ Jürgen Kocka. “Asymmetrical Historical Comparison: The case of the German Sonderweg.” *History and Theory* XXXVIII, nr. 1 (February 1999): 40-50. P. 49.

²⁷ Miroslav Hroch. *Social preconditions of national revival in Europe: a comparative analysis of the social composition of patriotic groups among the smaller European nations*. Translated by Ben Fowkes. Cambridge, Cambridgeshire: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

the way from a single family to the whole of human civilization.”²⁸ Hroch and Sewell agree that the minimum condition for a comparison is that objects share similar qualities. In my case, I am comparing two fascist avatars apparently unrelated. However, the generic theories of fascism have been applied to both countries separately and even though one should honestly recognize the differences between them, the core of the matter is that Portugal and Romania share more common characteristics in that period than, for instance, Portugal and the United Kingdom. What makes this comparison innovative is the fact that it takes to peripheral cases from opposite sides of Europe and looks at them in view of a pan-european perspective. My hypothesis is precisely this, to stress the European nature of a core number of fascist values, while at the same time showing that it assumed different features in different countries.

Specifically focusing on the object of comparison, I am going to break the discursive phenomena down in smaller units: fascist revolution, corporatism, leader’s cult, as noted above.

The second step is to state the aims of the comparison. These have been implicit throughout this paper. It starts with placing the particular phenomena of Portuguese and Romanian fascisms in the wider frame of interwar European politics and antimodernist reaction. Using ideal types and the generic fascism theories, I will not only define the nature of Portugal and Romania’s political discourse through empirically verifiable characteristics, but I will also establish to what degree they deviate from the central models presented by Italy and Germany.

Regarding step three, the previous definition of a set of criteria for the comparison, these will be established at a later stage, during the discourse analysis approach, when an overview of the complete material shall present the possibilities.

²⁸ William H. Sewell. “March Bloch and the Logic of Comparative History.” *History and Theory* VI, nr. 2 (1967): 208-218. P. 213.

Finally, the last step, make the period of the comparison explicit. The comparison will take a dual time reference. I am going to work within the period of 1927 to 1945, the first date the establishment of the Legion of the Archangel Michael and the second the end of Second World War and, simultaneously, the end of fascism as a political form in Europe.

The comparative history take on my research problem provides the essential empirical dimension to my thesis, as well as an element of innovation in the study of fascist history in Europe. The very nature of the method, depending heavily on a solid hypothesis and the existence of a theoretical model to direct research, an ideal type, supplies me with efficient tools to carry out a profitable, useful and scientifically valid study of the problem at hand.

Generic Fascism

The definition of fascism has been a problem that consistently haunts the historians of the interwar period. Part of the problem comes from the fact that fascists themselves usually did not go under the label of fascism, except in the case of Italy. A problem which is supplemented by “the great majority of the hundreds of authors of works on fascism or individual fascist movements (that) make little or no effort to define the term and simply assume that their readers will understand.”²⁹

Thus, it is necessary for any research on interwar European fascisms to establish a previous theoretical framework of analysis based on a clear definition of fascism, from which the formulation of a hypothesis is possible and its empirical verification a coherent and manageable project. The main advantage of establishing such clear definition is to facilitate the comparative study of Portugal and Romania. The comparison of such different phenomena in countries with its own idiosyncrasies creates the mute necessity of generalizing and working with ideal types.

Generic fascism is an abstract construction from empirically verified movements and regimes; such a type of formulation is intended to enumerate a number of core characteristics of fascism, but is not intended to ultimately define fascism. For all intents and purposes, generic fascism never existed in pure empirical form, because it is merely an analytical tool built from the theoretic refining of real events and facts. As Stanley G. Payne notes “no single movement of the group under observation would

²⁹ Stanley G. Payne. *A history of fascism, 1914-1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, c1995. P. 4.

necessarily be found to have announced a program or self-description couched in the exact terms of this definition”³⁰.

Payne presents a comprehensive critique of the most famous attempts at creating a generic model of fascism. He opposes the six point fascist minimum of Nolte: (1) antimarxism, (2) antiliberalism, (3) anticonservatism, (4) leadership, (5) party-army, (6) totalitarianism. According to Payne, this typology does not convey the positive content of fascism, thus neglecting a good portion of it. His argument is unchallengeable when one reads Nolte’s definition of fascism: “Fascism is anti-marxism which seeks to destroy the enemy by the evolvment of a radically opposed and yet related ideology and by the use of almost identical and yet typically modified methods, always, however, within the unyielding framework of national self-assertion and autonomy.”³¹

Fascism was not nihilistic; it was about the creation of a new man, a new culture orientated by the values of courage and dynamism. They rejected materialism, rationalism, egalitarianism but replaced with vitalism, idealism, and the preeminence of will. It fundamentally represented a reinterpretation of human nature, placing man beyond materialism (although in a distorted way), seeking transcendence, usually secular, but not exclusively. Their messianic vision is typical of revolutionary movements. Payne also points out one failure of Griffin’s definition: the palingenetic myth is present in non-fascist nationalist movements. So a more complex typology is needed in order to accurately distinguish the fascist palingenetic myth from a simply nationalist myth.

Payne’s own proposal defines fascim as a “form of revolutionary ultranationalism for national rebirth that is based on a primarily vitalist philosophy, is structured on

³⁰ Stanley G. Payne. *A history of fascism, 1914-1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, c1995. P. 4.

³¹ Ernst Nolte. “Fascism as characteristic of an era.” In *Fascism: an anthology*, edited by Nathanael Greene, 14-35. New York: Crowell, c1968. P. 34.

extreme elitism, mass mobilization, and the *Führerprinzip*, positively values violence as end as well as means and tends to normativize war and/or the military virtues.”³²

The interpretation of Mosse is still to be considered, who set out fascism as a revolution, which sought an end to the alienation of modernity. It was highly conservative, but revolutionary for it entailed a great emphasis on action, activism and movement, and where “the mystical side of the ideology dominated, the ‘magic’; a fascist revolution must recognize the ‘primacy of the spiritual’.”³³ Being conservative in character is not the same as being a conservative movement. Mosse makes the difference clear by defining political conservatism as those who wanted to maintain the status quo of privilege and looked back at the *ancient regime* for inspiration. As Paxton stresses out, the fascist revolution was to breed vitality into existing institutions and not radically change them. “Fascists wanted to revolutionize their national institutions in the sense that they wanted to pervade them with energy, unity, and willpower, but they never dreamed of abolishing property or social hierarchy.”³⁴ The conservatives, on the other hand, were not interested in the nation as an organic unity, but simply as a territorial unit. Man was to remain alienated for the preservation of the old elite’s position in society.

Mosse’s concept of revolution is strictly bound, nonetheless, to the cultural aspect of fascism and its ties with art, leading to an interpretation focused on the aesthetization of politics. In fact, Mosse considers both fascism and modernism in art as the same expression of revolt against modernity: “both the idea of fascism and expressionism share the urge to recapture the ‘whole man’ who seemed atomized and alienated by society, and both attempt to reassert individuality by looking inwards, towards instinct

³² Stanley G. Payne. *A history of fascism, 1914-1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, c1995. P. 14.

³³ George L. Mosse. “The Genesis of Fascism.” In *Fascism: an anthology*, edited by Nathanael Greene, 3-14. New York: Crowell, c1968. P. 10.

³⁴ Robert Paxton. *The anatomy of fascism*. London: Allen Lane, 2004. P. 142.

or the soul.”³⁵ The economic ideology of fascism is seen as non-revolutionary or even counter-revolutionary. Taking Mosse’s argument to its final consequences, Fascism was a modern bourgeois revolution, competing with the proletarian revolution: “The bourgeoisie could have a revolution as an outlet for their frustrations, and at the same time rest assured that order and property would be preserved.”³⁶

The vision of a classless society satisfied the middle classes more than the red alternative or the preservation of the typical liberal plutocracies of the late 19th century early 20th century. The revolutionary character of fascist governments left property, social and economic hierarchies largely untouched.³⁷ The social hierarchies were reinforced and intertwined with the economic elite. Once in power, the fascist movement was refrained to authoritarianism and state control over society. “Despite their frequent talk about revolution, fascists did not want a socioeconomic revolution. They wanted a ‘revolution of the soul’, and a revolution in the world power position of their people.”³⁸

Being confronted with competing models of generic fascism that do not necessarily combine with each other and none of which is consensual I am forced into forging my own model of generic fascism. On a first approach, one can see that all of the definitions of generic fascism have features in common; the difference lies in the emphasis they give on particular elements of the model. Griffin stresses the myth of rebirth of the nation; while Payne is focusing on the vitalist-action dimension of fascism. Nolte was particularly interested in the negative values of fascism as seen above and Mosse was mostly concerned with the cultural dimension of fascism.

³⁵ George L. Mosse. “The Genesis of Fascism.” In *Fascism: an anthology*, edited by Nathanael Greene, 3-14. New York: Crowell, c1968. P. 4.

³⁶ George L. Mosse. “The Genesis of Fascism.” In *Fascism: an anthology*, edited by Nathanael Greene, 3-14. New York: Crowell, c1968. P. 10.

³⁷ Robert Paxton. *The anatomy of fascism*. London: Allen Lane, 2004. P. 141.

³⁸ Robert Paxton. *The anatomy of fascism*. London: Allen Lane, 2004. P. 142.

My effort at building an appropriate ideal type does not stop at the enunciation of characteristics of a fascist type regime, movement, or politics. I am going to look at the features of fascism from a functionalist point a view, not restricting myself to simple check if they are present in the ideology or not. That is, for instance, the case of mass mobilization. Historiographic canon states that fascism was secular and undertook the sacralization of politics. I intend to show that mass mobilization was also achieved with other tools other than mass rallies and the cult of leadership, thus focusing on the function and effect, instead of the mere formal outlining of events. Portugal under Salazar did not know massive rallies, but can it be said that it engaged in mass mobilization? My answer is yes. However, that is to be treated in the next chapter.

What is important to stress is that one should not be too stringent when using a model of generic fascism or one takes the chance of performing an erroneous analysis. As Payne rightly explained: “When employing an inductive inventory of characteristics of generic fascism, one should understand that individual movements potentially possessed further beliefs, goals, and characteristics of major importance that did not necessarily contradict the common features but went beyond them.”³⁹ Furthermore, one should take into account the varieties of fascism that existed in interwar Europe. One single model can sometimes be misleading. Eugen Weber detected this when he characterized fascisms according to type: Italy was conservative and moderate, while Nazi Germany was of a more radical stock. Alan Cassels classified the southwest European fascisms as regressive, while the central European were mostly modernizing⁴⁰, thus introducing *nuances* into any possible model of generic fascism.

³⁹ Stanley G. Payne. *A history of fascism, 1914-1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, c1995. P. 465.

⁴⁰ Stanley G. Payne. *A history of fascism, 1914-1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, c1995. P. 469-70.

There is also the important distinction between fascist movement and fascist regime. They are dissimilar in nature and even ideology.

Payne claims that in order to conquer power fascist movements had to adjust and compromise, thus cleansing parts of the more typically radical fascist ideology. Therefore, “it is doubtful that fascism can be generically defined through a regime structure that was typically and fully fascist.”⁴¹ Other authors have noticed the same trend: “Composite makeup also means that fascist regimes have not been static.”⁴² Gentile claims that totalitarianism was an experience and not a regime.⁴³ The same can be said about fascism in general. It was always an experiment and it never succeeded in existing in its most pure theoretical forms. The main consequence of this, is that fascist ideology was not only philosophically fluid, but more importantly, functionally fluid; it adapted and changed according to national circumstances and events, thus making the ideal type definition of a generic fascism more complex.

The intellectual exercise of building and using an ideal type in this thesis is then well aware of its limitations. Nevertheless, it is precisely one my core research objectives to engage in a dialectical process involving the empirical and the theoretical. By creating a specific ideal type for this thesis (a particular to general construction based on previous literature) and then applying it to the cases of Romania and Portugal (a general to particular analysis), I am attempting to fine tune both the theory of generic fascism, as I define it, and the comprehension of reality that can be provided by them. The biggest risk of this free-floating approach is that my conclusions may, in the end, be too dubious. However, I believe that if I am successful in my task, then I will be able to

⁴¹ Stanley G. Payne. *A history of fascism, 1914-1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, c1995. P. 469-70.

⁴² Robert Paxton. *The anatomy of fascism*. London: Allen Lane, 2004. P. 120.

⁴³ Emilio Gentile. “Fascism, Totalitarianism and Political Religion: Definitions and Critical Reflections on Criticism of an Interpretation.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* V, nr. 3 (2004): 326–375. P. 352.

create a clearer image of generic fascism as a pan-European phenomenon in the interwar period, with its many nuances, using Portugal and Romania as case studies.

I have therefore chosen to base my model of European interwar fascism in Emilio Gentile's definition, although not exclusively. By breaking it down to important core features, presented in a list-type definition, in the style of Nolte's 6 points fascist minimum, I am going to complement it with notions derived from Griffin, Mosse, Payne, thus building a composite ideal type. The main advantage of this is that I offer myself a comprehensive, but not general model, which is easily applicable to reality and accurate. It is not going to be possible to cover all the points in my model for the comparative study of Portugal and Romania. Instead, I am going to focus on its core features in order to provide a meaningful argumentation within the limited space and time of a MA thesis.

Assuming that fascism constitutes one form of totalitarianism, it is logically necessary to start with the master concept of totalitarianism before moving on to fascism. The importance of totalitarianism is made evident by Paxton. He referred to the difficulty of distinguishing fascist from authoritarian regimes, because in the 1930's authoritarianism imitated features of fascism. The only real perceivable difference was that authoritarian regimes did not attempt to eliminate the private sphere, constituted by economic associations, church, family, local notables. Those were the main agents of social control, not the state and single party.⁴⁴ A vision supported by Mosse, who claimed that in fascist regimes "the distinction between private and public life was eradicated."⁴⁵ Emilio Gentile's proposal, a lengthy one, gives a comprehensive and

⁴⁴ Robert Paxton. *The anatomy of fascism*. London: Allen Lane, 2004. P. 217.

⁴⁵ George L. Mosse. *The fascist revolution: toward a general theory of fascism*. New York: H. Fertig, c1999. P. 5.

thorough enunciation of the core of totalitarianism. Totalitarianism is (all emphases added):

an experiment in political domination undertaken by a revolutionary movement, with an integralist conception of politics, that aspires toward a **monopoly of power** and that, after having secured power, whether by legal or illegal means, destroys or transforms the previous regime and constructs a **new State** based on a **single-party regime**, with the chief objective of **conquering society**; that is, it seeks the subordination, integration and homogenisation of the governed on the basis of the integral **politicisation of existence**, whether collective or individual, interpreted according to the categories, myths and values of a **palingenetic ideology**, institutionalised in the form of a **political religion**, that aims to shape the individual and the masses through an **anthropological revolution** in order to regenerate the human being and create the new man, who is dedicated in body and soul to the realisation of the revolutionary and imperialistic policies of the totalitarian party, whose ultimate goal is to create a **new civilisation** beyond the Nation-State.⁴⁶

The main points of Gentile's definition are: the conquest of a (1) monopoly of power, leading to the creation of a (2) new state based on (3) a single party regime, whose chief aim is to (4) conquer society by politicizing existence, strategically using (5) a palingenetic ideology manifested through political religion. The new regime claims to produce a (6) new man – anthropological revolution – that will ultimately change the nature of human political communities and create a (7) new civilization. We have now identified *seven structural characteristics* that identify a fascist regime, in the sense that is a historical avatar of totalitarianism. Nonetheless, it is important to stress the circumstantial characteristics of fascism. What is that makes fascism unique as a totalitarian doctrine?

⁴⁶ Emilio Gentile. "Fascism, Totalitarianism and Political Religion: Definitions and Critical Reflections on Criticism of an Interpretation." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* V, nr. 3 (2004): 326–375. Pp 327-8.

Gentile defines fascism in the following way (all emphases added):

Fascism is a modern political phenomenon, which is **nationalistic** and revolutionary, **anti-liberal** and **anti-Marxist**, organised in the form of a **militia party**, with a totalitarian conception of politics and the State, with an ideology based on myth; **virile and anti-hedonistic**, it is sacralised in a political religion affirming the absolute primacy of the nation understood as an **ethnically homogeneous organic community**, **hierarchically** organised into a **corporative State**, with a bellicose mission to achieve grandeur, power and conquest with the ultimate aim of creating a new order and a new civilisation.⁴⁷

There a number of characteristics in this definition that overlap the concept totalitarianism. However, for my purposes I am only interested in the circumstantial features of fascism. Therefore, I am neglecting the revolutionary nature of fascism, considering that the palingenetic process in totalitarianism already encompasses it. I am ignoring the ideology based on myth, as this is nothing more than the palingenetic ideology manifested through political religion. Finally, I am discarding “the ultimate aim of creating a new order and a new civilisation”. It is understood that that is the very nature of totalitarianism and would be redundant to restate it for fascism.

After identifying the expendable elements what is left to specifically characterize fascism as a historical phenomenon is: (1) nationalism, (2) anti-liberalism, (3) anti-communism, (4) anti-hedonistic, anti-materialistic or the primacy of spiritual life, (5) ethnicity as the basis of a homogenous community, (6) xenophobia, (7) organicism, (8) corporatism, (9) vertical organization of society (hierarchy), and (10) a bellicose mission, therefore meaning imperialism.

⁴⁷ Emilio Gentile. “Fascism, Totalitarianism and Political Religion: Definitions and Critical Reflections on Criticism of an Interpretation.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* V, nr. 3 (2004): 326–375. P 329.

According to the perspective followed so far in the definition of fascism, totalitarianism is not only an essential element of fascism but also its root. It should then not be considered shocking what I am about to do. Based on both definitions it is possible to elaborate a list of characteristics to be found in a fascist regime, thus schematically setting forward an ideal type of fascism that can be easily worked an applied in the scope of this thesis.

My proposed ideal type of fascism, underlying Gentile's definitions of fascism and totalitarianism, includes:

1. monopoly of power by an elite,
2. creation of a new state,
3. single party regime,
4. attempt to conquer society by fully politicizing existence,
5. palingenetic ideology manifested through political religion,
6. anthropological revolution,
7. new civilization,
8. nationalism,
9. anti-liberalism,
10. anti-communism,
11. primacy of spiritual life,
12. ethnicity as the basis of a homogenous community,
13. xenophobia,
14. organicism,
15. corporatism,
16. social and political hierarchy,
17. imperialism.

To this list, we can add further characteristics, not already mentioned, from other authors like Nolte, Mosse and Payne, thus building a comprehensive ideal type:

1. vitalism and activism
2. repression of freedom of press and propaganda,
3. mass support,
4. leader's cult,
5. syncretism (aesthetic and ideological),
6. anticonservatism,
7. party-army
8. positive connotation of violence and militarization of life
9. aesthetization of politics

This an extensive list of features. Yet, it is not complete; more elements can be added at any time. However, not all elements are of the same importance nor the classification of a regime or movement depends on it fulfilling every single condition. In fact, many elements are not exclusively fascist. It is their mixture, or the mixture of the majority of them that, in my opinion, can characterize a regime as fascist. But as an indicator, Emilio Gentile's definition, broken up in 17 points above, is the fascist minimum, the set of elements that distinguishes fascist ideology from others. It is to those that I will pay special attention, although I do not seek to analyze them all in my case studies. There I intend to speak in more detail of some, like corporatism, revolution, the new state, political religion, hierarchy, leadership, and the palingenetic myth, while addressing the rest as a support to the main argument or in reference to it.

Portugal

This sub-chapter aims to discuss the contribution of secondary literature to the analysis of the Salazar regime and its classification. It is intended to be a review of the most relevant contributions written about interwar Portugal; especially the period after Salazar joined the government. I am going to approach the problem from the viewpoint of generic fascism taxonomy, i.e., I will be looking at the way the most important international scholars, and some Portuguese authors, have interpreted and classified Salazar's New State. Furthermore, I am using this chapter to clarify Portugal's position in interwar radical politics according to my own interpretation. The context thus established is going to frame the chapter where I deal with the Portuguese source material from the period in question.

I am going to present criticism on all contributions and propose a different interpretation of events and facts about Salazar's rule. The core of my discussion is to show that it is possible, and even recommendable, to interpret the Salazar regime according to a fascist theoretical model. In my case, I have chosen to use the concept of generic fascism and making it empirically verifiable through the previous definition of an ideal type, which unites in a single explanation a number of features of fascism that can be found in the European interwar period.

Underlying this process is the dichotomy authoritarian vs. fascism regime. Portugal has traditionally been classified as authoritarian, but I am going to argue that it also demonstrated some important fascist elements, that, while not necessarily making it fascist, do not allow a simple classification as authoritarian. Portugal is a borderline case, where different stripes phenomena crisscross making it very difficult to achieve a historiographic consensus. As Enzo Collotti explained "the difficulties in making an

unequivocal classification of the Portuguese regime arise from the complexity of the ideological and institutional components and, moreover, its social characteristics.”⁴⁸

Traditionally, the New State has not qualified as fascist for both the theoreticians of generic fascist and the historiographers that conducted empirically orientated research. The number of authors willing to classify, with definite certainty, Salazar’s Estado Novo outside the fascist type, during its interwar period, grows as the field of research broadens and new researchers enter the scene. For instance, Paxton characterizes Portugal as an elite government with no public support: “The Estado Novo of Portugal differed from fascism even more profoundly than Franco’s Spain. Salazar was, in effect, the dictator of Portugal, but he preferred a passive public and a limited state where social power remained in the hands of the church, the army, and the big landowners.”⁴⁹ Payne, one scholar that as devoted unusual attention to the Portuguese case, summarizes the Salazar regime as an “authoritarian corporatist republic”⁵⁰ He inserts Portugal in the broader context of the authoritarian regimes of southern and eastern Europe, characterized as “a new phenomenon characteristic particularly of backward and underdeveloped countries of the European periphery”⁵¹. They were conservative regimes tied to traditional elites.

International consensus on the authoritarian-conservative vector can only be a secure indicator that indeed the New State was not a complete fascist state. Accepting this general assumption, this chapter does not endeavour to disprove forty years of research into the topic, but stress its shortcomings. It may be, that in the end, the New

⁴⁸ Enzo Collotti. *Fascismo, Fascismi*. Firenze: 1989, 118. Quoted in António Costa Pinto. *The Salazar “New State” and European Fascism – Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*. San Domenico: European University Institute, 1991, 36.

⁴⁹ Robert Paxton. *The anatomy of fascism*. London: Allen Lane, 2004.p. 217.

⁵⁰ Stanley G. Payne. *A history of fascism, 1914-1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, c1995. P. 143.

⁵¹ Stanley G. Payne. *A history of fascism, 1914-1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, c1995. P. 145.

State was just a too intricate mixture of elements from different sources to allow it to be categorised in a simple and direct way.

The initial research on the topic of fascism and totalitarianism, started on the 1960's, very simply did not even refer to the Portuguese case. The only exception was Ernst Nolte. Quintessentially, his opinion would set the tone for later scholars. Both Paxton's and Payne's, for instance, interpretations do not differ much from that of Nolte, they all agree with the lack of mobilization (the single mass party was a mockery and it did not even exist at the time of the coup in 1926), mention the conservative nature of the regime and its elitism. Or using Nolte's words: "Originally this (a popular movement and the single party) was also lacking in the Portugal of Salazar, and it has remained to this day an artificial structure. For at bottom the Estado Novo is simply a military dictatorship, which was lucky enough to find an outstanding civilian who simultaneously strengthened and transformed it. Both the state party of the União Nacional and corporatism were and still are merely the means of this strengthening and transformation; they have no independent origin or autonomous will."⁵² For most authors, it is impossible to speak of a fascist regime without mass support and the political channelling of that support to a mass party. Therefore, Salazar does not qualify as fascist.

Given that I have identified the current opinions about Portuguese New State I am now going to address here the main hinders that are commonly attributed to the regime: mass support, the single party issue, charismatic leadership. These items fall inside my ideal type of generic fascism, so it is useful to ponder their expression in Portugal. While pursuing these objectives the elitist structure of the New State will become clear,

⁵² Ernst Nolte. "Fascism as characteristic of an era." In *Fascism: an anthology*, edited by Nathanael Greene, 14-35. New York: Crowell, c1968. P. 27.

as a part of the previously defined ideal type. Furthermore, these are the main reasons by which most scholars deny Portugal was fascist. If I convincingly prove that all these elements existed in Portugal, then I will have questioned the basis of historiography on interwar Portugal, paving the way for the empirical testing of my ideal type through the use of primary sources and re-classification of the Portuguese regime.

Every major Portuguese and international research has agreed that the New State had no interest in mobilizing political crowds. On the contrary, Salazar instigated political apathy. The absence of any large and theatricalised meetings of support to the regime and the dictator certainly concur to the validity of the argument. However, the urban middle classes, the rural elites, and some of the intelligentsia coming from various sections of the political spectrum supported the Saviour of the Nation⁵³ and the bulk of his policies from the end of the 20's, throughout the 30's up to the Second World War. Salazar enjoyed an unrivalled prestige, even though contested by the small groups former republican elites, left wing resistance and sectarianism on the right, where one can include the Blue Shirts, the Nazi styled movement of Rolão Preto.

Salazar's prestige as statesman in the interwar period was founded in his austere, father-like figure that had successfully re-organised the state finances and stabilised the country. The immediate precedent period was characterized by intense political strife, reflected in the frequency high state officials were substituted. During the 16 years of the first republic, 1910 to 1926 the country saw seven different presidents, eight parliaments and the mind-boggling number of almost fifty governments, which, in average, translates into a new government every three months, though the government exchange cycle was not constant. The charisma of Salazar as a politician, and by consequence that of the regime, is indirectly shown by the scarce popular resonance of

⁵³ That was the epithet chosen by the State propaganda to refer to Salazar, in the Portuguese monarchical tradition of attributing a resounding cognomen to all its kings.

any oppositionist movement. The National-Syndicalist movement, the Blue Shirts, were even allowed to print their own media until they become declaredly anti-Salazar. However, the action of the political police and the censorship makes it difficult to assess to what extent the opposition movements could have gathered mass support.

Nevertheless, personal prestige is not the same as mass support to the regime or political mobilization. My argument is leading to a consideration of popular support concentrated in the figure of Salazar as the head of regime. What respect and support he received was also bestowed, consequently, on the regime he so tightly controlled. Secondly, the mass support functioned in a negative paradigm, as much as anything else under Salazar. It existed but it was not to be flamboyant like in Germany. This assumption makes sense only if one takes into consideration the organization of the state under Salazar.

He had a very personal role in the direction of the state after 1928, and, what is more relevant, he personally consolidated the elites around him after 1932. Two consequences can be drawn: the first is that he was in control of the regime down to its smallest detail. As Costa Pinto makes clear: “The extensive centralisation of decision-making within Salazar’s regime clearly justifies the use of the term ‘strong dictator’ to describe the manner in which Salazar exercised power. The main trait of Salazar’s governmental style was his almost obsessive concern for the minutiae. (...) Salazar also initially retained control of the more technical portfolios. Once elevated to the office of prime minister, his attention extended into practically every area of legislation, going far beyond the requirements for control that were common in other dictatorial political systems. The amount of information to which he had access was indeed impressive, and

extended far below that appropriate to the ministerial level.”⁵⁴ The political areas of the regime were not given the ministerial rank, but kept under the direct and personal supervision of Salazar. An argument supported by Meneses’ observation on the organization of the ministries: “by the end of the war there were, within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, no junior ministers, no secretary general, and no directors general: below Salazar there was a large administrative gap until the heads of service were reached.”⁵⁵

The second consequence is that by supplying the New State with elites forged by him, Salazar progressively eliminated the influence of church and army in the government, achieving proportionally more power. To oppose the traffic of political influences and caciquism of the old republic and of the military dictatorship, which could undermine his stance, he created a strong bureaucratic apparatus that dominated every single manifestation of life. It did so not by being efficient, but by being inefficient (once again the negative paradigm) and working as an obstacle to any private initiative or possible challenge to his power. In his analysis of the diplomatic correspondence of the Irish delegation in Lisbon, during the second world war, Meneses was able to present a vivid portrait of Portuguese bureaucracy: “Every question that arose was disputed by competing agencies, each proposing a different course of action ‘so that endless time is lost in conferences and arguments and nothing is done’.”⁵⁶

Stating it briefly, Salazar was in total control of the State apparatus, which in turn efficiently paralysed society and replaced the influence of Church and Army as political

⁵⁴ António Costa Pinto. “‘Chaos’ and ‘Order’: Preto, Salazar and Charismatic Appeal in Inter-war Portugal.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VII, nr. 2 (June 2006): 203–214. P. 211.

⁵⁵ Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses. “Investigating Portugal, Salazar, and the New State: the Work of the Irish Legation in Lisbon, 1942–1945.” *Contemporary European History* XI, nr. 3 (August 2002): 391–408. P. 397.

⁵⁶ Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses. “Investigating Portugal, Salazar, and the New State: the Work of the Irish Legation in Lisbon, 1942–1945.” *Contemporary European History* XI, nr. 3 (August 2002): 391–408. P. 401.

institutions. As a consequence, beyond the manipulation of the State, the argument of public support to Salazar's regime has to take into consideration that any public support was channeled to the figure of Salazar was also bestowed on the regime and its action, as stated before. Therefore, the highly prestigious place of Salazar in 1930's Portugal amounts to mass support. To prove this statement I am going now to show how the personality cult of Salazar existed and fulfilled simultaneously the leadership cult and the mass support to the regime.

The leadership cult was ritualized using catholic doctrine standards of public representation, which disciplined it to discrete levels and almost to the denial of itself. In fact, the Christian modesty professed by Salazar poured down to the State apparatus organized by him and to society itself. His words when taking the ministerial seat of state finances are well known. He declared that he only accepted the position out of the sense of duty for his fatherland, a remarkably curious statement from someone who would only leave his dictatorial post because of death. Salazar could have never incentivized a leader's cult like that of Germany. His education and beliefs were profoundly catholic and Spartan, almost in a Franciscan⁵⁷ way. Praise had to be moderated, but it never was refused. However the charismatic cult existed and had a function, that of political legitimization: "During Salazar's lengthy regime, he cultivated a 'charismatic' image, despite himself and despite his personality. During the 1930s he used all the methods possible to construct an image that would enable him to strengthen his position as dictator and encounter models of legitimation."⁵⁸

Salazar strove to build a charismatic alternative to liberal democracy, as there was no fascist movement. He successfully used the void in the right wing to add a new tool

⁵⁷ Religious order known for its vow of poverty

⁵⁸ António Costa Pinto. "'Chaos' and 'Order': Preto, Salazar and Charismatic Appeal in Inter-war Portugal." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VII, nr. 2 (June 2006): 203–214. P. 203.

to his political arsenal. What is more, Salazar took the care to formulate his charismatic leadership to the needs of mass politics, even though he did not chose the extravagant forms of Germany and Italy. As a professor, he felt more inclined to the intellectual and moral side of the cult.

In light of this, António Ferro published, in 1933, a collection of interviews made with Salazar, highly laudatory of the dictator and which Salazar himself prefaced. He ends the introduction to a book about himself with: “I apologize for having written this preamble. I am not embarrassed of having done so; it just stole me the time I needed for other matters.”⁵⁹ One can safely conclude that the leader’s cult was present in Salazar early on and tended to become more widespread with the progressive fascization begun in the years 1935-36 as a reaction to the forceful dissolution of the Blue Shirts and the Spanish Civil War. It was not a clear-cut cult and its workings were decisively influenced by the catholic doctrine, taking the shape of an almost actively pursued non-cult, living in the constant denial of itself, but resurging continuously. “The image Salazar cultivated was that of a reserved, puritanical and provincial dictator; it was an image that held sway until his death, and one that he never attempted to change.”⁶⁰

It is obvious that a serious dictatorship, sober, hard working, cannot spend its entire time indulging in narcissism, organizing rallies, parades, ceremonies of apotheosis. The man that isolates himself, heroically, in his office, facing his fatherland, in order to make its public treasury grow, to cut it with roads, to provide it with seaports, to crowd the seas, to curb unemployment, to renovate the state machine, to clean and air its cogwheels and pulleys, is in proper situation to receive gratitude, respect, faithful admiration, devotion from his compatriots. To stop his action, intimately connected to the rebirth of a fatherland, attempt to diminish his

⁵⁹ António Ferro. *Salazar*. 1933 ed. Lisbon: Edições do Tempo, 1978, 60.

⁶⁰ António Costa Pinto, e Maria Inácia Rezola. “Political Catholicism, Crisis of Democracy and Salazar’s New State in Portugal.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 353–368. P. 358.

prestige, strikes me as a most grave mistake, irremediable, of calamitous consequences. (...) Let the dictator speak to the people and the people speak to him. Let the dictator and the people blend in such a way, that the people feels it is the dictator and the dictator feels he is the people...⁶¹

The role of the charismatic cult was the more vital in the 1930's when Salazar was attempting to permanently eliminate the political alternatives to liberalism: the church and the monarchists. "During the Republic's early years there were several attempts made to restore the monarchy, with the King in exile becoming an important symbol for a small but especially mobilised sector of political society. The Catholic Church, which was, throughout the early Republic, suffering from republican anticlericalism, also became a source of legitimation for authoritarian alternatives."⁶²

Having addressed the problem of charismatic leadership and mass support, it is now time to focus on the question of the single party. The thematic division of these three categories is however unclear. By analysing the single party issue, I am going to add to the previous arguments, specially the one relating to mass support in the New State, since they interplay. The single mass party was created in 1933 to fulfil the formal requirements of the Constitution that would baptize the state as "New State". The União Nacional (National Union) was a governmental party, created from above and, in the day-to-day political praxis, completely controlled by the government and specifically by Salazar. Its main function was to limit the formation of political blocs, suppress any inter group competition, thus maintaining an outward consensual image and, finally, ward off competing claims to power. Through fraudulent direct suffrage the members of the União Nacional were placed in the House of Deputies of the National

⁶¹ Speech pronounced by Salazar on 23 November 1932 during the ceremony of taking office of the first members of the National Union's ruling bodies. Quoted in: António Ferro. *Salazar*. 1933 ed. Lisbon: Edições do Tempo, 1978, 243.

⁶² António Costa Pinto. "'Chaos' and 'Order': Preto, Salazar and Charismatic Appeal in Inter-war Portugal." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VII, nr. 2 (June 2006): 203–214. P. 204.

Assembly. The first elections held aimed specifically at conquering legitimacy to the new organic form of the State, but did not represent any effort of mobilizing directly the masses⁶³. The turnout was irrelevant, as long as it could simply be claimed that the House of Deputies had been elected. The second house of the National Assembly, the Corporatist Chamber, designed to represent the elements of an organic society, had its members nominated by the Government, given the non-existence of corporations. The formal act was controlled by the corporatist council; however the council was made up of Salazar and his Ministers and Secretaries of State.

The situation thus presented supports the claims on the role of the single mass party and its constitutional headquarters, the National Assembly. “The ‘New State’ was never a ‘dual state’, divided between party and state, and Salazar governed over and with the administrative apparatus. This characteristic of the Portuguese regime separated it from the typical tension between party and state in Fascism.”⁶⁴ This view constitutes a positive and quasi-formal approach on the New State, which considers the static characteristics of the single party without looking at its meaning and function in the overall organisation of the society. As we have seen, the mobilizing feature or popular support was concentrated on the figure of Salazar. Consequently, this role became redundant for the National Union. The regime focused highly on Salazar’s grip on power. The party, as a projection of a movement was unnecessary. Manuel Lucena points out, much like Costa Pinto but with a radically different interpretation, that the single party did fulfil its mission by justifying the ban on other parties and reinforcing the regime’s tendencies⁶⁵.

⁶³ António Costa Pinto. *The Salazar “New State” and European Fascism – Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*. San Domenico: European University Institute, 1991, 69.

⁶⁴ António Costa Pinto. *The Salazar “New State” and European Fascism – Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*. San Domenico: European University Institute, 1991, 70.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 22

An argument that can be reinforced by Philippe Schmitter's theoretical conceptualization of the main characteristics of a corporatist system⁶⁶. Although, his enunciation was aimed at describing the economic system of corporatism, in the case of Portugal it provides a very appropriate framework to understand the role of the single party in Salazar's Portugal. In any case, the regime claimed itself as corporatist, so the logic underlying the principles of political organization had to be similar to the ones of economic organization. Furthermore, the houses of corporations and representatives were united in the single Assembleia Nacional (National Assembly), affording me with a solid base to extrapolate Schmitter's analysis. According to Schmitter the corporatist system is:

1. *Preemptive*, in the sense that establishes previous structures of interest representation to prevent spontaneous efforts
2. *Preventive*, meaning that it engages the members of the system in passive participation within its structures, preventing alternative uses of time. Therefore, it eliminates positive action.
3. *Defensive*, considering that associations act to defend rights granted from above instead of opening new projects and articulating new interests that might clash with the officially sanctioned paradigm.
4. *Compartmental*, as far as conflicts are encapsulated in non-interacting structures, the corporatist orders. All conflict is bureaucratized while simultaneously preventing any possibility of sector alliances or appeals to wider clienteles.

The single party instituted a preventive system of interest articulation. By establishing the representative system fully controlled by the single party, the New State assured that no other political force would have the formal claim to legitimacy,

⁶⁶ Schmitter, Philippe. "Reflections on Mihail Manoilescu and the National Consequences of Delayed Dependent Development on the Periphery of Western Europe." In *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940: A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, edited by Kenneth Jowitt, 117–173. Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1978.

effectively driving out any opposing force from within the center of power. In this sense, the single party, and the representation mechanism in general, were preemptive. As Lucena pointed out, it is a justification for the ban on other parties. Or, as Schmitter explained, the relevance of corporatism (single party for my interpretation) was in “what it surreptitiously and negatively prevented from happening.”⁶⁷ The defensive feature can also be traced in União Nacional. Its main goal was to develop a rhetoric of repetition and defense of the actions and plans of Salazar. It did not articulate new interests, merely underscored the officially sanctioned paradigm, providing an echo to the will and power of Salazar. Regarding the compartmental feature, it is harder to perceive its presence in the functional role of the União Nacional. However, one can look at the National Union as an expression of the larger project of increased bureaucratization of power and control over society. As for the preventive characteristic, one can say that the National Union eliminated all positive action inherent to a representative system. It is expected that a chamber of representatives is open to the opinions of its constituency. In the case of national representation in the New State, the National Union disregarded any outside input. It was constituted by a closed circle of local elites, which bowed to Salazar. That is the main difference of the National Union in relation to other single parties of the same period in Europe: its membership was not the petty bourgeoisie, but accomplished elites, which suits perfectly with the birth of the New State, blossomed from the military dictatorship, instead of street violence to assault power.

⁶⁷ Schmitter, Philippe. “Reflections on Mihail Manoilescu and the National Consequences of Delayed Dependent Development on the Periphery of Western Europe.” In *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940: A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, edited by Kenneth Jowitt, 117–173. Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1978. P. 150.

To sum up, the single party monopolized political-representational power, neutralized all factions, controlled the lower ranks of the administration⁶⁸, legitimized the regime through elections and stabilized it with a legal framework. Its features made it functionally fascist, but without a corresponding ideology. That was to be found elsewhere, in Salazar and the elite of intellectuals that he fostered around him, of which the newspaper *Acção* is a good example. Therefore, I cannot agree with Costa Pinto when he states that the National Union “unlike the fascist ones, neither reached power at all nor, once created, fulfilled functions of control and monopoly of access to power or mobilization of the masses which the fascists generally did.”⁶⁹

The National Union and the Constitution of 1933 also represented a synthesis of liberal and corporatist principles of representation. Salazar never dismantled completely the apparatus of political liberalism, perhaps to maintain legal order inside the state, to stabilize it instead of weakening it. This feature accentuates clearly the position of Portugal as a borderline case in European fascisms. Corporatism was an alternative to liberalism; to match them seems impossible. Nonetheless, the fact remains that the constitution thus established the formal organization of the New State. In practice, though, the corporatist institutions occupied a secondary place and its implementation stagnated in an early stage. By the 1940's it was obvious, even to the regime-men, like Marcello Caetano, that the corporatist revolution had problems. One can go as far as to say that the representative principle was sacred: “As we have already indicated, the electoral principle was maintained and religiously followed within the established time

⁶⁸ The central administration was controlled exclusively by Salazar.

⁶⁹ António Costa Pinto. *Salazar's Dictatorship and European Fascism: problems of interpretation*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995. P. 77.

limits.”⁷⁰ Of course, the outcome of elections was a mockery. Through either fraud or the withdrawal of the opposition candidates, the National Union won every election.

The state under Salazar was satisfied in building its foundations on a general, albeit mild, non-enthusiastic support. But this did not mean that, during its fascization period, the New State was a paralytic state, sieged in its palaces, disregarding the mass support aspect as most authors convey. It just sought it with different methods. The National Stadium of Jamor was built between 1939 and 1944, modelled in Berlin’s Olympic Stadium Nazi architecture. Its main function was to provide a grand theatre to play out the regime’s plans for education and sport, a stage for its channelling organizations to perform (FNAT⁷¹, MP⁷²) and a dignified space for mass rallies. These elements, the organizations and its rally ground, constitute clear steps on the build up of mass consent. They also hint at the consolidation of the leader’s cult referred above and the state’s appropriation of people’s time for its own interests.

Nevertheless, the most important instrument of mass support was the church. God was the New State’s indoctrination tool of excellence. There was a shared ideological core between the Church and the New State: both were anti-communist, anti-liberal, corporatist, defending values based on order, discipline and submission to authority. A relationship that was symbolized by the friendship between Salazar and Cardinal Cerejeira: “there were never any real frictions between him (Salazar) and the Cardinal.

⁷⁰ António Costa Pinto. *Salazar's Dictatorship and European Fascism: problems of interpretation*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995. P. 79.

⁷¹ Fundação Nacional para Alegria no Trabalho (National Foundation for Happiness in Work), was created in 1935 to provide workers with pastimes and affordable vacations, simultaneously indoctrinating them to the regime’s project of a regenerated man.

⁷² Mocidade Portuguesa (Portuguese Youth), modelled out of its Italian counterpart, was created in 1936 and its chief goals were to develop the leader’s cult and the military spirit to serve the New State.

Cerejeira apparently entrusted the ‘church’s cause’ to Salazar; he never renounced his proximity either to the regime or its leader: he defended both tenaciously.”⁷³

However, the Church was under strict control by the State and was only allowed to manoeuvre where its action would benefit the 1933 political *status quo*. There is even evidence that the church was trying to resist state control: “It was within these limits that the church attempted to secure its autonomy and win new spaces of influence”, writes Costa Pinto about the Portuguese Catholic Action, an organization founded in 1933 in order to regain the church’s influence and prestige.⁷⁴

The Concordat signed with the Vatican in 1940 was a mirror of the situation: a strict, republican separation of State and Church was maintained and no major privileges were granted to the Church. In Salazar’s class room, his picture and a crucifix were hanging above the blackboard. Salazar was the State (one more simple sign of charismatic leadership) and the crucifix, more than the religious value itself, represented the state’s spiritual power over the people. Salazar himself made this distinction implicitly when asked about the role of the Academic Centre in his rise and permanence in power: “The Catholics had no influence in the process that led me to the Government, just as they have been completely removed from all my political acts. (...) The National Union was created, precisely, to destroy the factionist spirit, be that wherever it may. The Catholics that wish to collaborate, through their patriotism, in the Nation’s political life know, therefore, the best route to follow...”⁷⁵

Therefore, it follows that the Church, due to the circumstance of an ideological consensus, was predisposed to serve the state’s purposes. “Cerejeira thus conjured an

⁷³ António Costa Pinto, and Maria Inácia Rezola. “Political Catholicism, Crisis of Democracy and Salazar’s New State in Portugal.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 353–368. P. 363.

⁷⁴ António Costa Pinto, and Maria Inácia Rezola. “Political Catholicism, Crisis of Democracy and Salazar’s New State in Portugal.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 353–368. P. 364.

⁷⁵ António Ferro. *Salazar*. 1933 ed. Lisbon: Edições do Tempo, 1978, 85.

image of Salazar Portugal as protector of the Catholic Church and one of which Salazar was to take full advantage.”⁷⁶ On the other hand, the state recognized in the church one of the most important and prestigious institutions of Portugal, whose manipulation could enhance the state’s power and centralizing drive. The possible conclusion, in view of the facts, is that the Holy Roman Catholic Church in Portugal was an element of the New State’s ideology (but not limited to it) and an instrument of power in the hands of Salazar. The separation of church and state is visible in the Concordat of 1940 and it even included elements of control over the religious apparatus. In light of this, can one say definitely that Catholicism was the brand of the Portuguese interwar regime? To do so, as many authors have done, is to lose track again of what was essential and merely superficial – the outward form of the regime.

The New State used the Church specifically as a tool for mobilization, turning it into a para-political institution. “The church also provided a model for mobilization, synchronizing the ‘renewal of religious practice’ and of popular ‘piétism’ with the new political power’s role of savior, an element which is sometimes underestimated. The religious cult of Fátima and the ‘parapolitical’ functions it fulfilled are the most obvious example.”⁷⁷ The exploitation of the Fatima miracle⁷⁸ as a mass phenomenon by the regime was obvious. The profane rallies it did not realized for strict political aims, were happening in Fátima, for religious purposes, but always associated with the State. Construction on the Basilica of Fátima begun in 1928 with public funding, coincidentally the same year Salazar took office as Finance Minister. Indirectly, the church acted as the propaganda vehicle of the ideology and mentality of the New State

⁷⁶ António Costa Pinto, and Maria Inácia Rezola. “Political Catholicism, Crisis of Democracy and Salazar’s New State in Portugal.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 353–368. P. 364.

⁷⁷ António Costa Pinto. *Salazar's Dictatorship and European Fascism: problems of interpretation*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995. P. 66.

⁷⁸ According to the Church, in 1917, the Virgin Mary appeared, over a burning tree, to three little shepherds and revealed them three secrets.

gaining support for its organic view of society and its policy. The core ideology shared between state and the church allowed the latter's apparatus to provide political socialization all over the country. "The Church, both through its influence within official institutions and by its powerful nucleus of autonomous institutions, was transformed into a powerful and complementary instrument of ideological socialisation. Nationalism and 'providence' both completed and introduced elements"⁷⁹ Therefore, one can say that the typical role of a mass party was performed by the church, while the single party itself performed the same functions in a negative way, as seen above. "Catholicism's influence also explains the weakness of both the União Nacional and the regime's paramilitary organisations."⁸⁰ The action of the two institutions combined provided Salazar with a powerful grip on the country and the enjoyment of mass support to his rule.

Establishing such a powerful link between the church and state makes it mandatory to reflect on Portugal as an expression of clerical fascism. There is no secure definition of clerical fascism present in historiographic literature, although some attempts have been made. Nevertheless, even those attempts are at best vague. In 2003, Eatwell published an article on clerical fascism, but the concept is deployed with no definition. The only hint one can take from the text is that clerical fascism corresponds to a syncretic process between fascist movements or regimes and the church. He then proceeds to historical examples of Italy, Germany and Romania to show that there was in fact a connection, albeit a mild one. The only generic conclusion that Eatwell draws

⁷⁹ Pinto, António Costa. "'Chaos' and 'Order': Preto, Salazar and Charismatic Appeal in Inter-war Portugal." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VII, nr. 2 (June 2006): 203–214. P. 212.

⁸⁰ António Costa Pinto, and Maria Inácia Rezola. "Political Catholicism, Crisis of Democracy and Salazar's New State in Portugal." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 353–368. P. 365.

is that clerical fascism emerged in “highly peasant based societies, where outside the radical left there was little scope for parties which were not overtly religious”⁸¹.

However, more recent studies on clerical fascism have undermined Eatwell’s interpretation. “Academic consideration of ‘political religions’, and particularly their relationship with Christianity, has led some commentators to argue for a Christian basis to fascist movements like German National Socialism.”⁸² Therefore, clerical fascism is not typical of backward societies, but a phenomenon that was widespread throughout interwar fascist Europe. The only safe assumption is to take clerical fascism as syncretism between state and church, in order to solve the crisis of modernity. The very same idea was stated in the introduction to the latest edition of the *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* journal: “It is precisely the degree of cross-over, or ‘hybridisation’, of these two ostensibly antagonistic faith systems – one long-established and monotheistic, the other secular and revolutionary – that ‘Clerical Fascism’ in Interwar Europe sets out to examine.”⁸³

Pollard elaborated on the concept more explicitly by identifying a common core of ideology: “If, as Griffin argues, fascism, as it emerged in the early 1920s, was a form of ‘palingenetic, populist, ultra-nationalism’, it is clear that Christians in the same period, and for some of the same reasons, were seeking a moral and spiritual rebirth of European society.”⁸⁴ In addition, he puts forward some key elements that characterize clerical fascisms as a widespread phenomenon in Europe. The first is the shared palingenetic myth, the second that both were anti-communist and anti-liberalism, third,

⁸¹Roger Eatwell. “Reflections on Fascism and Religion.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political* IV, nr. 3 (December 2003): 145 - 166. P. 153.

⁸²Matthew Feldman, and Marius Turda. “‘Clerical Fascism’ in Interwar Europe: An Introduction.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 205–212. P.206.

⁸³Matthew Feldman, and Marius Turda. “‘Clerical Fascism’ in Interwar Europe: An Introduction.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 205–212. P.206.

⁸⁴John Pollard. “‘Clerical Fascism’: Context, Overview and Conclusion.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 433–446. P. 435.

they were also ruralist, in the sense that clerical fascism sought to balance the relations between industrialization and the collapsing rural world by clearly siding with an idealized peasantry and, finally, corporatism. Corporatism, as defined by Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical on Catholic social doctrine, *Rerum Novarum* "which was a response both to industrialisation and the rise of a revolutionary Socialist working class movement in many parts of Europe."⁸⁵ Pollard does add another dimension, that of racism and anti-semitism. However, his argumentation is not convincing. Its essentials are the naturally anti-semitic nature of Christianity, a statement for which he provides historical examples of interwar Europe. However, that is not nearly enough to sustain such an idea. He would have to go into the doctrine of the faith of catholic, protestant and orthodox churches and cross-examine them with historical evidence for a larger period than he does in the article. Therefore, I am excluding that dimension. Nonetheless, his definition still provides a workable framework for clerical fascism.

One question must be asked: "to what extent did interwar Christians, especially clerics, see national fascism movements as more than revolutionary parties with secular goals, but as 'holy' redeemers of the nation or race; or at the very least, as Christian enough to do business with?"⁸⁶

In the case at hand, Salazar's Portugal, it seems clear that the regime qualifies as clerical fascist. The evidence brought above clearly make a case for Portugal. The corporatist inspiration of Salazar's New State comes from the catholic social doctrine, as Salazar was inspired ideologically by the Catholic Center. It is understood that the church in Portugal was also anti-liberalist, as a result of the strong anti-secular cleavage of the 1st republic and, furthermore, anti-communist. As to ruralism, it is commonly

⁸⁵ John Pollard. "'Clerical Fascism': Context, Overview and Conclusion." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 433–446. P. 437.

⁸⁶ Matthew Feldman, and Marius Turda. "'Clerical Fascism' in Interwar Europe: An Introduction." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 205–212. P. 206.

accepted that Salazar delayed the country's industrialization and one of the regime's favorite themes of propaganda was the idyllic life in the agricultural community, far apart from the degeneration of urban life. Finally, regarding the palingenetic myth of the catholic church in Portugal, it was one of rebirth of the spiritual man, that which had died with the advent of established liberalism and materialism in 1851 with the Regeneração (regeneration) regime. It was a constitutional monarchy distinguished by its stable liberal plutocracy and elite *rotativismo* (the same two groups alternated in power for 59 years). Pollard concludes by stating that "fascist movements and ideas offered the best political vehicle for the protection and promotion of religious interests and objectives, and a sense that those ideas were consonant with Christian ideals and practices."⁸⁷ A conclusion that is perfectly suited for the case of Portugal.

In light of the preceding considerations Portugal can be considered a clerical fascist regime. However, can it also qualify within the group of generic fascism? The review of literature that I have undertaken and some primary sources in this chapter have pointed that the three main reasons usually used to classify Portugal as authoritarian and not fascist have many problems. I have made a plausible case to show the existence of a leadership cult, mass mobilization and the existence of a single party outside the classical formulation. It was a functionalist approach that went beyond the simple statement of verifiable existing characteristics according to a predetermined catalogue. In light of the discussion on Portugal, only one issue remains to address, that of the totalitarian nature of the state. I am not going to devote much attention to it here, however, since totalitarianism is a broad range concept and I have broke it into smaller identifiable in my ideal type with which I am going to work later. It is nonetheless

⁸⁷ John Pollard. "Clerical Fascism': Context, Overview and Conclusion." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 433-446. P. 443.

necessary to address, since I am questioning the classification of Portugal as authoritarian as opposed to totalitarian, and, by extension, fascist.

As I have mentioned before the only real perceivable difference between fascist and authoritarian regimes was the scope of the attack on the private sphere, constituted by economic associations, church, family, local notables. These are perceived as the main agents of social control in an authoritarian regime, not the state and single party. The borderline case of Portugal shines through when considering the dichotomy from this perspective. I have shown how the state, the single party and the controlled church were used as instruments of social control. The family, even though it was a favorite topic of Salazar, was under the strict guidance of the state, through the manipulation of the church. Local notables had no autonomy; they were simultaneously under the influence of both the single party, who commanded the regional levels of administration or the State, that imposed strict guidance in the upper, centralized levels of civil service. The economic associations of corporatism did not exist. In addition, when they did exist, like the national unions, were, again, at arm's reach of Salazar to dispose of as he saw fit.

From this perspective, the existence of a private sphere, that distinguishes an authoritarian state, was feeble in Portugal. It did exist, but it was under attack and it was never allowed a broad scope of action. In fact, private sphere in Portugal was reduced to family life indoors, which was controlled by the state enforced paradigm in any case. Even the act of going to a coffee house and discuss politics was a danger. Salazar never intended to create a totalitarian state as he himself said: "The limits within we, the Government, intend to work are established by the fundamental principles of the Portuguese New State. Our laws are less stricter, our ways are less policed, and the

state, this one, is the less absolute and we have not proclaimed it omnipotent.”⁸⁸ Nevertheless, the ideological and political development of the regime took that way, albeit never to its full consequences. “Salazarism officially instituted an ‘organic’ vision of society, and deployed all the ideological and social instruments of administrative, corporative, educational and propagandistic control – as well as the elite, the state and the church – to make that vision a reality.”⁸⁹

I call this system of efficiently selective ideological and spiritual control: a orientated totalitarianism. By this concept I mean a totalitarianism never recognized by the regime as such, a practical totalitarianism present in the control of everyday life, restricting people’s actions, eliminating other options. It fulfilled the missions of totalitarianism with one difference. The teleology behind it was never as strong as in other European states. Even though there was a palingenetic myth, the arrival of a new man, totalitarianism was not a tool for the engagement of ideology with reality, but a tool for total control and power monopoly. As such, one could also call it incomplete totalitarianism, since it is missing the aura of ideology. However, it had results. Salazar’s ability as a political leader was much more efficient than the Italian experiments in totalitarianism and even Nazi Germany. After all, there was a military attempt at Hitler’s life during the course of the war, while Salazar was never seriously threatened by his own elites – administrative, military or political - whether that be symbolically or physically. The events of the civil war in Spain did more to frighten the New State than any of its internal dissent, which was tightly controlled. In the end, Salazar’s regime outlived any of its ideological counterparts in Europe, because the

⁸⁸ António Ferro. *Salazar*. 1933 ed. Lisbon: Edições do Tempo, 1978, 114-115.

⁸⁹ António Costa Pinto, and Maria Inácia Rezola. “Political Catholicism, Crisis of Democracy and Salazar’s New State in Portugal.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 353–368. P. 366.

state mingled and controlled every section of social and political life, i.e., it acted in a totalitarian way.

It is useful to enter here with the problem of mass repression. Political repression in Portugal was efficient. One of the main reasons was the *a priori* ideological apparatus of control. The church and state propaganda together were extremely efficient in keeping a low-educated, not civically conscious population within the defined limits. The only opposition came from the former republican elites, the communists and the right-wing radical movements, as those of Rolão Preto. This allowed that Portugal “consistently displayed a high degree of rationality in the area of internal security. For many years, an extremely efficient undercover police apparatus kept down opposition without resorting to total repression: over four decades, political murders committed in metropolitan Portugal amounted to less than 500. However, opposition forces remained continually diffuse and inactive in a country where, after the first few years, the governing elite was not popular, to say the least.”⁹⁰

The methods of the political police PVDE (Police for Vigilance and State Defence) were summary in dealing with any discontentment. Torture was routine procedure and approved by Salazar himself. “Salazar made a habit of receiving the director of the PIDE (PVDE changed name to PIDE – International Police for State Defence – in 1945) and his reports in person, right up until the close of his 36 year premiership in 1968.”⁹¹ By the end of the 1930’s it had infiltrated most areas of national life. Its national network of spies and informers operated in every public place, namely coffee houses, railways, post office, factories, offices, hospitals, universities, etc.

⁹⁰ Tom Gallagher. “Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal.” *Journal of Contemporary History* XIV, nr. 3 (July 1979): 385-402. P. 385.

⁹¹ Tom Gallagher. “Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal.” *Journal of Contemporary History* XIV, nr. 3 (July 1979): 385-402. P. 387.

Gallagher estimates as much as 20.000 people constituted the list of informers and spies, one in every 400 Portuguese.⁹² Even the church was involved in the security mechanism. “In large parts of the countryside, it also acted as a part of the regime’s security network with provincial clergy doubling as agents of social conformity and political vigilance.”⁹³

The main target of PVDE was the communist resistance, as it was not only the ideological enemy *par excellence* but also the more entrenched opposition force. “Communist resistance was more sustained, created greater headaches for the regime, and compelled it to develop and expand its coercive apparatus more than it might otherwise have done.”⁹⁴ “Most of the important (communist) party cadres were run to ground (...) The record shows that it (PVDE) was hyper-efficient in this regard. By the coup of 25 April 1974, the then twenty-two-strong PCP (Portuguese Communist Party) central committee had served a total of 308 years in salazarist gaols, an average of fourteen years per individual.”⁹⁵ In comparison, the former republican elites conformed more easily in playing by the regime rules, while the National Syndicalists of Rolão Preto broke apart from the inside when half the movement was absorbed by the New State.

Sections of the army not affiliated with Salazar also had sporadic outbursts of resistance, but its repression was left to the military institution, keeping a high degree of authority and autonomy.⁹⁶ The Portuguese Legion had been designed as a praetorian

⁹² Tom Gallagher. “Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal.” *Journal of Contemporary History* XIV, nr. 3 (July 1979): 385-402. P. 387.

⁹³ Tom Gallagher. “Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal.” *Journal of Contemporary History* XIV, nr. 3 (July 1979): 385-402. P. 397.

⁹⁴ Tom Gallagher. “Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal.” *Journal of Contemporary History* XIV, nr. 3 (July 1979): 385-402. P. 391.

⁹⁵ Tom Gallagher. “Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal.” *Journal of Contemporary History* XIV, nr. 3 (July 1979): 385-402. P. 393.

⁹⁶ Tom Gallagher. “Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal.” *Journal of Contemporary History* XIV, nr. 3 (July 1979): 385-402. P. 394.

guard of the regime, in the form of armed militia, recruiting only proven loyal personal, like retired army officers or the most proactive loyalists still in active duty. But they never played any significant role given the army's self-containing ability. Salazar always managed to keep the bulk of the armed forces under his control. The punishment to military dissenters varied according to circumstances. It was common for them to serve a short period of detention and afterwards dismissed. However, in the case of Humberto Delgado, who openly challenged the regime in 1958's presidential elections, political assassination was employed. "His later assassination demonstrates the regime's preparedness to use more draconian measures against even a senior opponent if all else failed."⁹⁷

What characterized terror under Salazar was its preference for an "optimum of terror rather than a crude maximum level (...). Repression was selective, discreet, and accurate."⁹⁸ Without terrorizing the general population, the well established PVDE kept dissent levels to a minimum and paralyzed elite opposition to its minimal expression, eliminating any threats to the regime.

The repressive measures of the New State are in line with its orientated totalitarianism, both complementing each other in the comprehension of the regime's nature. It has become necessary now to define clearly what regime I am talking about. During the regime's lifetime different cycles become evident. In each one it adjusted in order to survive internal and external conditionings. The late years of the 1920's constituted the period of basic state rearrangement after the coup. The main aim of the military and their supporting conservative right wing colligation in 1926 was to stabilize institutional politics and revert the modernization program started by the first republic

⁹⁷ Tom Gallagher. "Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal." *Journal of Contemporary History* XIV, nr. 3 (July 1979): 385-402. P. 395.

⁹⁸ Tom Gallagher. "Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal." *Journal of Contemporary History* XIV, nr. 3 (July 1979): 385-402. Pp. 399-400.

that antagonized such large portions of Portuguese society, predominantly agrarian and catholic, with some strong tendencies towards a monarchic revival. Salazar's draft of the 1933 constitution, however, was a step forward in his desire for modern political forms (not to be confused with modern society or economy), namely a centralized state with a powerful apparatus controlling all the main sectors of the perceived organic society.

Furthermore, this thesis does not cover the entire life span of the regime but only a small portion of it, making it absolutely essential to divide it into periods. The time span in question here is one where indeed it came close to fascism, if not downright fascist, that ended with the Second World War. 1945 onwards was a period of hasten de-fascization. The victory of the allies and the imperative of survival changed the core and face of the regime drastically. After the Second World War the political basis shifted on to the people's unwillingness and inability to resist the regime.

This all amounts to my argument that the temporal divide of the regime in phases is essential. Particularly the phase between 1933 and the end of the Second World War, when Salazar conquered all the major opposition groups, not without a considerable amount of violence by the political police, and conquered simultaneously the informal category of uncontested *Chefe* (*Il Duce*), although the preferred epithet in media and propaganda was that of the Nation's Saviour. 1933 is the year the new constitution was approved and the New State was created (partially) under the principles of corporatism. The years ensuing saw an increasing fascization of the regime, especially after 1936, with the beginning of the Spanish civil war. Costa Pinto also recognize a new level of fascistization by 1936: "a stage of political development going beyond the traditionalistic, conventionally authoritarian, Christian corporatist policy which was perhaps the initial 'plan' of the regime, and which is the dominant international

stereotype.”⁹⁹ Therefore, for the purposes of my thesis I am taking the time frame 1933 to 1945 as the golden age of the regime, where it actively pursued a fascist organic structure.

To finish this chapter I am now going to perform a short survey on some aspects of the New State that conform as fascist elements, in order to further my arguments about the borderline hypothesis but also to prepare a more specific analysis prone to empirical verification in the chapter dealing with source material.

Roger Griffin has become one of the most known voices in the definition of a model of generic fascism. His conception is centred on the palingenetic myth, the myth of rebirth of the nation. Associated with the palingenesis comes the idea of fascism as a revolution. The revolutionary element, for him, refers to the anti-conservative nature of fascism, in the sense that it seeks to the total transformation of the *status quo* through a palingenetic process. Griffin understands the palingenetic as a “myth of death and rebirth”¹⁰⁰ of the national community. He implies that the violence feature exhibited by all fascist movements was interpreted by them as the necessary solution to kill a decaying society in order to open place for a regenerated national (and ultra-nationalistic) community. All movements and regimes to which this feature is missing are grouped by Griffin in the category of abortive fascisms, whether they be para-fascism or proto-fascism. The case of Portugal presents itself quite simply to Griffin as a para-fascist case study, to the extent that it was its main purpose to maintain a set of traditional values, reactionary and conservative in nature. This is why I have not included Griffin in the previous survey of opinions about Portugal; he initiated a new line of research, which stresses different elements that a fascist state should have.

⁹⁹ António Costa Pinto. *Salazar's Dictatorship and European Fascism: problems of interpretation*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995. P. 47.

¹⁰⁰ Roger Griffin. *The Nature of Fascism*. London: Pinter Publishers, 1991, 141.

The integration of fascist features, “mimetic trappings”¹⁰¹ as Griffin calls them, serve as instruments of mass manipulation and legitimization procurement. He defines the ideology of the New State as political Catholicism in its variant of Integralismo Lusitano (Portuguese Integralism). He then proceeds his deduction by showing that Salazarismo crushed the true fascists, the Blue Shirts, whose main features are given by Griffin as an example of a concrete palingenetic myth: (1) regeneration of the family life as the basis of society, (2) hierarchic and organic state syndicalism to heal the class divisions, (3) revitalization of colonial and military tradition, (4) Risorgimento based on economic strength, heroic will and national solidarity.

Regarding the specific case of Portugal, Griffin’s view points, just as before, can be partially, if not completely, refuted using his own terminology. It is important to note that Griffin confuses the role of Integralismo Lusitano in Portuguese New State. Unlike suggested, Integralismo opposed the New State and it did not inspire Salazar. Integralismo was born under the first republic as a monarchic, catholic, municipalist (in the monarchic tradition of local autonomies) and highly nationalist movement. It was behind two attempts to restore the monarchy in Portugal before the 1926 coup. Rolão Preto, the leader of the Blue Shirts, was influenced by Integralismo and not Salazar. Preto was the secretary of the official journal of Integralismo, the *Alma Portuguesa* (Portuguese Soul). The movement played a role in the reactionary coup of 1926, as many other right wing forces, and one of its major influences was the social doctrine of the Catholic Church. Its main dispute with New State was of a practical order: its exclusion of the political arena with the 1933 constitution. That led to a contestation of Salazar’s corporatist policy and the establishment of the National Syndicalism Movement as a Nazi styled political entity.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 137.

Salazar's political engagement started in Coimbra when he joined the Centro Académico da Democracia Cristã (Academic Centre of Christian Democracy) and was inspired by the encyclicals of the Pope Leo XIII. From them he took inspiration for corporatism, anti-communism, anti-liberalism. The Academic Centre became well known for producing some of the most notable intellectuals that opposed and fought Integralismo Lusitano. Given the fluid nature of Integralismo Lusitano it is not advisable to generalise, but one can say that it was more catholic conservative-radical than the Academic Centre, which is reinforced by its participation in the coup of 1926. Rolão Preto only begun his hardcore fascization when he was blocked out of power and Germany was rising in Europe. "The Church and the Centro Católico thus constituted a powerful obstacle to the 'fascistisation' of academic and intellectual elites, occupying a key political space in the anti-democratic reaction."¹⁰² The Academic Centre envisioned a much more global and comprehensive interpretation of Portugal's situation and what should be done. Ideas that if were not revolutionary, at least, bordered revolution in the face of Portuguese political liberal traditions.

Taking the listing Griffin provided us of the Blue Shirts and Rolão Preto's intentions we can see that Salazarismo in 1933 already expressed some of those concerns. The regeneration of the family as a basis of the social life was one of the most important struts of New State's ideology. Its motto, repeated during many years, God - Fatherland - Family is a graphic demonstration of it. In the unitary organic conception of society, crossed with the indispensable hierarchical structure, family was the basic unit of the New State's body. It was on the basis of the family that an individual *Ego* and other social relations were built, submerging any consideration of individuality.

¹⁰² António Costa Pinto, and Maria Inácia Rezola. "Political Catholicism, Crisis of Democracy and Salazar's New State in Portugal." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 353–368. P. 357.

Even the *pater familias*, the chief that commanded the household, was subservient of the higher idea of organic idea of family and should conform his behaviour by it. Women's role was strictly dependent on the male figure and children were to find in home the proper discipline and guidance. The family was the first instance of the New State's social and political values reproduction. It also meant the praise of "private life" as opposed to public life. In the context of Salazarismo that means the absolute annihilation of the human private sphere as it was reduced to its most basic feature, the life within the family unit. Everything else was barred.

The way the State penetrated families was through the values of the sacralised value of fatherland. Fatherland meant that everything in society was enslaved to the superior idea of an organic nation. It was a living being that need to be preserved at all costs, if need be at the cost of some of its constituent parts. Functionally, then, the family was the elementary unit of society, but, as the whole is more than just the simple sum of its parts, the family was subdued to the Nation, the Fatherland. More practically, it was under the control of the instrument of preservation of the nation: the New State.

The final feature I wish to analyse in depth of Griffin's definition of generic fascism is the revolutionary character of the regime. The official discourse declared the 1926 coup and the ensuing constitution of 1933 as the beginning of the revolution that would invert the Portuguese modern decay. Salazar spoke of a new man, the man with a new mentality, brave, productive, active, as opposed to what he felt was the typical degeneration of the Portuguese race. The re-education was to be realized through the Church propaganda, the educational system and the fascist institutions created, like the Portuguese Legion (anti-communist militia deployed in Spain), the Portuguese Youth and FNAT, already mentioned. The new man should reflect the virtuous qualities of the organic nation and work in order to make it grow in material and spiritual richness.

Regarding education “the ‘Lesson of Salazar’ included in schoolbooks of the 1930s provided a picture of Salazarism’s ‘new man’. This new man lived in the country, was respectful, obedient, and God-fearing. He was happy with his place in society and in the nation; proud of his country’s past, as represented by the medieval castle; and he took care of his wife and children. Other components could be added to this ‘ideal’ man, with a more mobilisational appeal being directed toward the young and those in the militia.”¹⁰³

Just like Rolão Preto and his project for the colonies in the context of the national rebirth so Salazar viewed the colonies in a similar way. Portuguese fascism never had the impulse to expansionism precisely because it already possessed enough dominions where the new man could be seen in action. Moreover, its military inclination was visible only when the colonial empire was threatened, even though that happened outside this thesis period, when Portugal embarked in a suicidal colonial war that lasted 13 years. The only substantial difference of Salazar towards Rolão Preto is that the latter preferred an organic-syndicalism, while the former applied the organic-corporatist (but it never worked in reality, the State controlled the economy directly without ownership of the productive means).

The revolutionary spirit of changing the weakened liberal man to a strong, organic-nationalist man, inspired in the mythical founding people of Portugal - the Lusitanos (who had resisted roman occupation) – was given a modernist face with the Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional (National Secretariat of Propaganda). António Ferro was the director, a declared admirer of Italian fascism and futurism that even went as far as to write an article called *Gabrielle D’Annunzio and Me*. He was the main responsible for the ‘spirit policy’ of the New State until the end of Second World War.

¹⁰³ António Costa Pinto. “‘Chaos’ and ‘Order’: Preto, Salazar and Charismatic Appeal in Inter-war Portugal.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VII, nr. 2 (June 2006): 203–214. P. 212.

He reinvented the pool of past myths through a mask of modernity, by recruiting intellectuals and artists that had been the figureheads of the visual arts modernist movement during the first years of the republic. “The SPN, which was paraded as the great ‘nationalistic’ institution of the 1930s, perhaps represented the most consistent effort at the ‘reinvention of tradition’ and the construction of the cult of the dictator by any official governmental organisation.(...) SPN organised large demonstrations in which the masses could participate, and which would appeal to their sense of the aesthetic.”¹⁰⁴ Ferro and his Secretariat modernized the political discourse of the regime, which, together with the undergoing transformations of the 1930’s, gave a clear fascist intonation to Portuguese politics.

In conclusion, I have questioned the reasons why Portugal has been traditionally considered an authoritarian conservative regime, while simultaneously introducing arguments that define and defend my hypothesis about the nature of the regime. Clearly stating it: the Salazar regime, as a borderline case in the discussion of interwar European fascisms, from 1930 to 1945 had clear traces of fascism and its internal logic was one approaching totalitarianism. As an example of the fascist features is the syncretism between state and church. The later provided ideological inspiration and a tool for social control, as well as performing the parapolitical functions of mass mobilization and political socialization. The single party, even though inoperative in its positive form, performed everything that could be expected from a single party in a functionalist view. Salazar also fed a cult around his political persona, as the source of order and the only one capable of leading the nation into the future. A future involving a revolution in the anthropology of man and of the nation itself. The least one can

¹⁰⁴ António Costa Pinto. “‘Chaos’ and ‘Order’: Preto, Salazar and Charismatic Appeal in Inter-war Portugal.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VII, nr. 2 (June 2006): 203–214. P. 212.

conclude from this is that Portugal, as a borderline case in interwar fascisms, presents a complicated case with elements that can qualify it as either fascist or conservative-authoritarian. Unquestionable, is the classification of Portugal as a clerical fascist unit in interwar Europe. According to the definitions presented Portugal qualifies as one of the best examples of the intimate relationship between state and church in the study of clerical fascism. It was a connection not limited to ideology or the outspoken support of some members of the clergy to the regime, but a wholesale cooperation in several layers of social and political life. In light of this, the following subchapter of source analysis will present further arguments and historical evidence on the nature of the regime.

In addition, the current chapter has also brought to light the limitations of working with a definition of generic fascism. Ultimately, it can be a vague and fruitless exercise and recalls historians to the need of working more with context and not trying to force multiple realities into a single, usually simplified, theoretical construction. I expect that my dialectical exercise of deconstructing others' generic fascism theories and building my own in reference to the borderline cases of Portugal and Romania better the historiographic understanding of interwar fascism as a pan-European phenomenon.

Source Analysis

Overview

This chapter aims bringing evidence to support my hypothesis about Portugal: the Salazar regime, as a borderline case in the discussion of interwar European fascisms, from 1930 to 1945, has clear traces of fascism and its internal logic was one approaching totalitarianism. By using the weekly newspaper *Acção*, I am going to look at the discourse of a group of intellectuals committed to the regime. Salazar's centralization of power means that, in the end, he was the only one with the ability to promote a specific idea as regime ideology. However, the opinions of these intellectuals reflect to a great extent the acceptable and exemplary opinions. To some extents, these are the man responsible for the doctrine of Estado Novo. Their writings filled the ideological void that the distance pose of Salazar left open. Salazar wanted to be man of action and few words, in line with his promoted image of tireless worker, of bee-queen in the hive. These men are also part of the new elites created by Salazar after 1933, that assisted him in the gradual build up of the New State until 1945. My point is that this extraction of the intelligentsia present in *Acção*, a pro-regime and fascist newspaper, represented accurately the ideological status quo of the country.

Being an exercise of discourse analysis there is a limit to what purposes I can use this source for. It is unlikely that any generalization on the nature or development of the regime can be properly justified by the ideological perceptions of it present in the texts. Therefore, I am limiting the empirical application of my ideal type to its ideological features alone, leaving aside considerations of other kind. As the most important ideological areas to be verified I have chosen the palingenetic myth (revolution towards new civilization) and its associated new anthropology of man devoted to spirit instead

of the material, social and political hierarchy (leadership cult), corporatism, and syncretism (with the church).

By focusing on these areas I will prove the presence of important core features of generic fascism in Salazar's Portugal. Starting with the palingenetic myth, I will provide discourse evidence that the Portuguese fascists were concerned with the regeneration of the fatherland and the creation of a revitalized man. I will show the existence of the leader's cult, supplying evidence for the argument in the previous chapter. Syncretism will be seen in the ideological contribution of the church or articles about religious themes and it will also provide colorful insight to the parapolitical functions of the church in Portugal. I will group nationalism, anti-communism and vitalism-activism under one single heading. These themes do not advance the testing of my ideal type or my arguments, but they can provide a look into the specificities of the New State and thus provide a local nuance over the generic theoretical model.

Leadership

The most striking feature of leadership and charisma formation in the portuguese fascists' ideology is its abstract nature. In all of the articles surveyed, there was only a limited number of sentences that can be said to appeal to charisma and straightforward praise. Furthermore, when there is praise it is exclusively based in the abilities of Salazar: his artisanship as political leader, his talent as minister, his brightness as intellectual. There is no show, no spectacle, as that given so generously by Codreanu in every small village, with white horses, prayers and mystical procedures.

If not with naturally flowing charisma, what was the legitimating source of leadership in interwar Portugal? Much in the tradition, but positively, of Robert Michels, the fascists resolutely defended that no organization could live without a

leadership. “There is no organization without leaders. Only disorganization.”¹⁰⁵ A good organization is reduced leadership and, leadership, in turn, means unity around one single man. The same idea is continuously restated: “Organization presupposes order and the existence of discipline, of a chain of responsibilities and duties, of a hierarchy. Organization presupposes leaders.”¹⁰⁶

The extrapolation is immediately made to the State. The state must be organized according to a strict political hierarchy, the only sound basis for a nation to prosper. Much in the way an army works, the state should have complete unity of objectives and one collective will, represented by one single man, the Leader. These seem to be interpreted as the structural conditions of social aggregates.

Unexpectedly, even a parallel is drawn between individualism, capitalism, laicism and fascism. Fascism is praised as a theory of action, the engine of social transformation that introduced solidarity, work ethic and friendship among people. However, action is not enough. There is an appeal to reflection and knowledge. It is expected from the leader to be a man of thought and not only action. A conception certainly different from any other fascist or para-fascist regime in Europe. In addition, the leader (Salazar is always on the background of these definitions) was seen as a man capable of self-sacrifice, guided by intelligence, will, balance, bravery and good sense.

Not only the leader should blend action with mind. That was to be the path for the elite of the regime. The Mocidade Portuguesa (Portuguese Youth) was the channeling organization expected to educate the new elite. In an article by Avillez, dated from August 1942, he claims that the Mocidade Portuguesa is the future of the Portuguese

¹⁰⁵ “Não há organização sem chefes. Desorganização sim.” Luiz Avillez. “Considerações sôbre o problema dos chefes.” *Acção*, 20 de August de 1942: 3.

¹⁰⁶ “Organização – seja ela qual for – pressupõe ordem e, ora pois, a existência de uma disciplina, de uma escala de responsabilidades e deveres, de uma hierarquia. Organização pressupõe chefes.” Eduardo Freitas da Costa. “Nós, o chefe.” *Acção*, 15 de January de 1942: 1.

youth in general. They were the ones to set an example and receiving an education that would prepare them to take up leadership positions.

Manuel Múrias transformed the national elections of 1942 to the National Assembly, to which the single party was running alone, in a plebiscite of Salazar's policy. The article is an exercise of charismatic leadership construction: "The Nation spoke and, once again, acclaimed Salazar by rallying around him, so that it be known within and outside the borders that the Portuguese people, united around its *Chefe* (Duce, Führer), has not lost hope in the revolution and wants it to extend to its logic and final limits."¹⁰⁷ He then proceeds to praise the plebiscite as the triumph of the honest working man over the malcontents who plot against the state, a long expression, by which he means the opposition.

The shaping of the charismatic cult by catholic doctrine standards of public representation, which disciplined it to discrete levels and almost to the denial of itself. Praise had to be moderated, but it never was refused. The leadership cult was an actively pursued *non-cult*, living in the constant denial of itself, but resurging continuously. The primary sources confirm my initial perspective: "Let us trust in Salazar and follow him, bearing in mind his outstanding sacrifice and his anguish greater than anybody else's. (...) Portugal has found its destiny: - we shall not lose it again."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ "A Nação pronunciou-se e, uma vez mais, aclamou Salazar cercado-o, para que se saiba dentro e fora das fronteiras que o povo português, unido em volta do seu Chefe, não perdeu a esperança na Revolução e quer que ela se prolongue até aos limites lógicos e derradeiros." Manuel Múrias. "O Plebiscito de uma política." *Acção*, 5 de November de 1942: 1.

¹⁰⁸ "Confiemos em Salazar e sigamo-lo, lembrados do seu espantoso sacrifício, e das suas angústias maiores do que as de mais ninguém. Portugal encontrou o seu destino: - não voltaremos a perdê-lo." Manuel Múrias. "Portugal encontrou o seu destino." *Acção*, 12 de November de 1942: 1.

Corporatism

The corporatist regime envisioned by the Portuguese intelligentsia was built in accord to one of the fundamental features of the ideal type of generic fascism I have set to frame my thesis project: anti-communism. Nevertheless, on a wider analysis it also conforms with the general anti-modernist reaction that refused economical liberalism. In fact, the project of corporatism aimed at healing the social divide between classes, putting in its place a conception of social organicism, where each part of society closely depending on the whole. It was the best system, in the sense that it adjusted the political with the social sphere creating more justice.¹⁰⁹

It is so that Marcelo Caetano, Salazar's dauphin that would take the dictator seat after Salazar's death, stated that individual initiative and private property are perfectly legitimate forms of socio-economic organization. However, these rights "shall not be exercised solely in the private interest of its holders"¹¹⁰. He further elaborates by stating that "in the basis of the system there is the idea that private interests are to be respected insofar as they do not harm the common good; on the contrary, they should benefit it"¹¹¹.

The true nature of corporatism was to be tested in its application. Caetano was undaunted by considerations of real politik. He stated that the system inbuilt controls should not be handed by the state, in clear opposition to Salazar's project for corporatism: a tool of control over the economy. These controls were legal rules, but they should be defined and enforced by the corporations, paving way for a self-management of economic activity.

¹⁰⁹ Padre Manuel Rocha. "Corporativismo Antigo." *Acção*, 10 de December de 1942: 1 & 4.

¹¹⁰ "Mas os poderes que daí resultam não serão exercidos apenas no interesse particular do seu titular." Marcelo Caetano. "Corporativismo não é estatismo." *Acção*, 27 de Novembro de 1941: 1&4.

¹¹¹ "Há, pois, na base do sistema a ideia de que os interesses particulares são respeitáveis na medida em que não prejudiquem, antes favoreçam, o bem comum ." Marcelo Caetano. "Corporativismo não é estatismo." *Acção*, 27 de Novembro de 1941: 1&4.

Caetano looked at the corporations as social organisms. They had the function of disciplining economic activity independently, but their scope was broader. They were to stand as the fundamental larger social groupings that organized society in order to reduce the role played by the state. An over active state role leads, according to Caetano, to the growth of bureaucracy and the decrease of administrative efficiency. Moreover, looking at the Portuguese experience, Caetano knew that if the state was to become the broker of corporatism that would lead to idleness and mental subservience in the people, as well as foster the old Portuguese habits of arbitrary administration, with a delusion of high self importance. “The state’s control of the attributions that belong to the corporations is the most important threat to the system.”¹¹² But that was precisely what happened, with Salazar controlling every aspect of the corporatist mechanism.

The state should be refrained to supervision and coordination roles within the corporations, using its agents, while allowing scope of free action. Caetano only accepted a transition period when the state may run the corporative system and the corporations, while it is not able to function autonomously.

The justification of corporatism was made beyond the contemporary conditions of the time. That is, anti-communism and anti-capitalism were only a part of the reasons. Caetano, in a very organicist point, claims that the natural organization of Portuguese economy matches the nature of corporatism. Tradition is not to be fought. A mere historical adjustment has to be done to fit corporatism with the traditional economic structures.

The idea of looking back to the past for inspiration was not unique to Caetano. Rocha defended the example of medieval corporatism and went as far as to cite Saint

¹¹² “A absorção pelo Estado das atribuições que devem caber às corporações é o maior perigo de desvio do sistema.” Marcelo Caetano. “Corporativismo não é estatismo.” *Acção*, 27 de Novembro de 1941: 1&4.

Thomas Aquinas to derive the principle of fairness of the salary, attacking the bourgeoisie exploitation of the workers. However, he strongly opposes any state subsidies to the indigent, for work is the duty of any honorable man. In his own words: “Our corporatism must draw on the experience of ancient corporatism. Mostly, one should illuminate our revolution with the corporatist doctrine of the great thinkers that inspired the corporatist organization of the golden centuries.”¹¹³

The final goal of corporatism was a “strong state, protector of the weak and able to subdue the powerful, a great dispenser of justice.”¹¹⁴ Corporatism was a new moral and mental attitude towards social and economic problems.¹¹⁵

The final balance of corporatism was not as positive as the doctrinaires seem to show in their optimism. The corporations were never created and the state effectively controlled the whole system, thus controlling the economy without the need to own the production means. The most indulgent interpretation would place Portuguese corporatism as never passing the transition phase; a more realistic one, would point to Portuguese corporatism as a mask, one more tool for the total control of the country by Salazar, a step in the way of totalitarianism.

Revolution

The rhetoric of the fascist revolution in Portugal is not coherent at all. The ideas present in *Acção*, are proportionally different to the number of authors writing about it.

¹¹³ “Tem que ser norma do nosso corporativismo contar com a experiência do corporativismo antigo. Sobretudo: iluminar a nossa revolução com a doutrina corporativa dos grandes pensadores que inspiraram a organização corporativa dos séculos áureos.” Padre Manuel Rocha. “Corporativismo.” *Acção*, 24 de December de 1942.

¹¹⁴ “Estado forte, protector dos fracos e domador dos poderosos, grande dispensador de justiça.” Marcelo Caetano. “Corporativismo não é estatismo.” *Acção*, 27 de Novembro de 1941: 1&4.

¹¹⁵ Pereira, Marques. ““Problemas da revolução corporativa”.” *Acção*, 9 de April de 1942: 6.

The only common point is the agreement on the necessity of regeneration, based on the failure of Portugal as a power and as a state since the 18th century.

Costa, using the prevailing biological metaphor, says that the country was ill. The national organism is in decay and the collective and individual energies are dull. Furthermore, the modern man's spirit is overrun with materialistic, low concerns. Man needs new spiritual heights, man needs love. The revolution is seen as an opportunity for redemption, for a Risorgimento of man. However, for the revolution ever to become real it is necessary that a messianic spirit invades the soul of man and gives him a purpose and a mission, one that requires spirit of sacrifice.¹¹⁶

From this description one can easily identify the elements of a palingenetic myth, namely the focus on the spiritual dimension of man, the collective anthropology of the revolution and the redemption-rebirth dualism. It is, however, presented in a vague and undefined way.

The essence of the Portuguese palingenetic myth, as with other fascisms, can be found on its resolute denial of materiality and the modern life style associated with it. Spiritualism may have been a theoretical conviction, but it also served practical motives. It is from the point of view of the spiritual revolution that the neo-realist literature is attacked. This type of literature played an important role in denouncing the social injustices of the political and economical order of Salazar's Portugal. Claiming for a revolution then might not have been so much about actually producing one, but simply to build an ideology to fight off all other ideologies. This is particularly accentuated by the fascist claim to truth. Salazar did not necessarily wished a revolution, but as a realist, he could well have been interested in the doctrine of revolution as ideology in a way that allowed him to legitimize attacks on political

¹¹⁶ Eduardo Freitas da Costa. "Viver a revolução." *Acção*, 21 de Maio de 1942.

competition, specially the left wing utopian ideologies. “That literature makes a sad spectacle. All in all, after destroying the grains of that so called intellectualism and humanity all that remains is Marxism, pure Marxism”¹¹⁷.

There are also visions of the revolution in a more clearly national package. Gonçalves looks at the 19th century Portuguese history as a time of liberal and demagogical voracity that destroyed the nation. “The stale state of the politics of mutual benefit, the dissolving literature, the social degeneration, the hierarchic subversion, dragging everything and everyone in the tides of passion and impulse, seemed to have broken the national consciousness for the ambitious projects of the future.”¹¹⁸ The only way to recover the national consciousness was to incentive a cult of the fatherland, because the revolution is national. Not only nationalistic, but national. Foreign paradigms should be discarded and wild theories forgotten.

The eight centuries of Portuguese history give the national revolution its own mystique: nothing more is needed than to organize the revolution into a state and government shaped out of the traditional organic forms of the nation. “The political theory of the revolution thus headed towards the cult and praise of history – the master of life.”¹¹⁹ Even though this author is conservative in the inspiration for the revolution he agrees in the fundamental point: a state that gives preference to the dignity of man, of family and fatherland, of spiritual truths over the material world. The solution was, of course, already visible. Salazar’s regime was one where the ethic state had prevailed, where the common good, over the individual, was the main concern. More particularly,

¹¹⁷ “Triste espectáculo o de essa literatura. No fim de contas, tudo isso bem pensado e remoído, triturados os grãos de pretenso intelectualismo e humanidade que andam à superfície – fica apenas marxismo – puro marxismo.” Martins da Cruz,. “Nem só de pão vive o homem.” *Acção*, 26 de Novembro de 1942.

¹¹⁸ “O ambiente morno da política de compadrios, da literatura dissolvente, da degeneração social, da subversão hierárquica, arrastando, tudo e todos ao sabor das paixões ou dos impulsos, parecia ter quebrado a própria consciência nacional para os altos empreendimentos do futuro.” Henriques Gonçalves. “Para teoria política da revolução.” *Acção*, 5 de Agosto de 1943: 5.

¹¹⁹ “A teoria política da revolução encaminhava-se assim para o culto e exaltação da história – mestra da vida.” Henriques Gonçalves. “Para teoria política da revolução.” *Acção*, 5 de Agosto de 1943: 5.

the revolution required the elimination of political parties and the establishment of a strong authority. The specific signs devised by Gonçalves indicating that Portugal was indeed implementing a revolution were the fascist constitution of 1933 and the colonial act, which institutionalized racism in the colonies.

The conception of national revolution knew more bizarre forms however. Inspired by the Catholic church, Dias started his analysis, in an article dated from 1943, with a survey of the contemporary world. He believed that modernity could not be altogether rejected, but that Catholicism should re-shape it. He was looking for a new cultural synthesis and quite enthusiastically claimed that the world would be what one would make of it¹²⁰. As he saw it, the world was witnessing a war of mystiques. The communist, the pagan (fascist-nazi) and the Christian. For him only the true mystique could win, that of Christianity, the only one with sufficient and real vitality. “The modern man is about to listen to the word of God.”¹²¹

There was also a royalist trend, that defended a very specific type of democracy: the latin and Portuguese democracy. One that had been tested throughout Portuguese history and that was characterized by the following features: having a king, being socially concerned and Christian. This extravagant form of democracy would have a single party and would restore the type of government that was structurally national, i.e., a dynasty ruling with and for the people.¹²²

Marcelo Caetano was quoted in an anonymous piece, 1943, as the major representative of the revolutionary spirit¹²³, making my point about the connection between corporatism and revolution. Even though, corporatism never is associated to

¹²⁰ J. S. da Silva Dias. “Espada de Fogo.” *Acção*, 1 de July de 1943: 1.

¹²¹ “O homem moderno está prestes a escutar a palavra de deus.” J. S. da Silva Dias. “Espada de Fogo.” *Acção*, 1 de July de 1943: 1.

¹²² Ulisses. “Eu também sou um democrata.” *Acção*, 24 de June de 1943: 1.

¹²³ Anonymus. “Revolução, espírito revolucionário.” *Acção*, 16 de December de 1943: 1&6.

the palingenetic myth in generic fascism, it is always seen as the condition to improve the possibilities of the future of Portugal in the analyzed articles. There is no palingenetic myth without corporatism. In my opinion, this reflects the long-standing tradition of Portuguese politics to reduce political issues to questions of state finance and economic development.

According to Marcelo Caetano the revolution was made to replace the selfishness by the collective interest and to tame the ideas of profit and material satisfaction. One could frame this in the wider ideology of poverty and modesty of Salazar's state. "The true revolution consists in replacing an old spirit, sterile, by the new spirit capable of blossoming into beneficial results for the nation."¹²⁴ In any case, "The doctrine of the national revolution, by the vigor of its political, moral and social principles, has imposed itself in the more important cultural centers of the world."¹²⁵

What I wish to stress for the revolutionary myth of Portuguese fascism is its variability and different sources of inspiration. Sometimes it shows up as very close to the ideal type of generic fascism, but more frequently, it exhibits very specific characteristics produced by Portuguese modern politics from the 19th century on. Its historicism, its Catholicism, blended with a type of conservative high-intellectualism points to the diversity of the myth. That in turn, leads me to conclude that Portugal never defined or announced clearly its palingenetic myth. It was mostly instrumental, ideological, with no real impact in every day political activity and future plans for the country, which undermines my reading of Salazar's regime as fascist.

¹²⁴ "A verdadeira revolução consiste em substituir um espírito velho, já infecundo, pelo espírito novo capaz de se desentranhar em resultados benéficos para a nação." Anonymus. "Revolução, espírito revolucionário." *Acção*, 16 de December de 1943: 1&6.

¹²⁵ "A doutrina da Revolução Nacional, pelo vigor e pela seriedade dos seus fundamentos políticos, morais e sociais, impôs-se nos mais elevados centros de cultura do mundo." Manuel Múrias. "O Plebiscito de uma política." *Acção*, 5 de November de 1942: 1.

Conclusions

The New State, unlike Romania, based its revolutionary theory on a rational approach. All the texts had in common the attempt to explain rationally the need of a revolution and the revolution itself, while at the same time recognizing that its success was not entirely self-evident. Some even present a lucid analysis of fascism as seen in Germany or Italy, while proposing a unique form for Portugal.

As a consequence of this rationalism, which does not mean that the train-thought of the authors was logically correct, but simply that they sought to justify their political formulas to withstand the individual's critical capacity, the revolutionary theory of Portuguese fascists is usually addressed according to verifiable parameters. These usually tend to be of economic and social nature. The number of articles devoted to the salary problem, to the state's budget, to the economy and the social question are revealing. Knowing this, it is then not surprising that most articles about the revolution, that according to the people writing in *Acção* was started in 1928 and given a boost with the 1933 constitution, replace the topic of a new man with corporatism. The new man theme is present, but is given relatively low importance in the concern scale of the *Acção* writers. They were nationalist to such an extent that the problem of the new man seemed redundant: Portugal was the greatest country on earth; naturally, its man were also near to perfection. Paradoxically, these same articles always invoke the greater goal of the revolution: to transcend the material world. It is thus that the ideology of Portuguese fascism lives on the limb between spiritual claims and material concerns. I believe, however, that the situation did not present any contradiction to the people of the time.

Corporatism was given a social-organic role beyond a mere system of economic organization of the nation. Considering the organic nature of society and corporatism,

the economic system actually fitted in the greater scheme of things as a piece of the collective soul, as far as it allowed the nation to live and prosper. Ultimately, it makes sense. By going beyond the small mentality of liberal economy of the globalized contemporary world, one can see that for these fascists corporatism was a way of healing the divides of capitalism and provide a place under the sunshine for everyone. I.e., corporatism shows up with the contour of a utopia: it offers a solution for the present and, simultaneously, the vision of a perfect society, at least in the view of conservative intellectuals as those who wrote in *Acção*.

Needless to say that the revolution was to be conducted by an elite, a new aristocracy. In this respect, Portugal and Romania, and maybe every other country under fascist influence, are quite alike. The regimes aimed at mass support, but were hostile to the people as a whole. The outcome of the negotiation between elitism and populism in Portugal favored the elitist camp. There was no attempt to please the crowds. On the contrary, it was expected that the crowds displayed unconditional submission without receiving anything in return. It was a one-way input flow. In this sense, one can say that Portugal was more authoritarian than fascist, reinforcing the borderline conception of the nature of the regime. Nonetheless, this a weak argument in light of the methodology defined beforehand. It has only marginal relevance.

In conclusion, after reviewing the secondary literature and supplementing their analysis with primary sources, I have established the dubious position of interwar Portugal in the debate over generic fascism. By taking a functionalist approach, I have subverted the most important interpretations of Salazar's New State and provided empirical proof of the regime's self-image and ideology that confirm my hypothesis to some extent. The only safe conclusion, however, is that Portugal gathered

characteristics of both an authoritarian and fascist matrices and that further research into the life of the regime is needed.

Romania

The goal of this chapter is to map the features of the political discourse of the Legion of Archangel Michael and identify the specificities of the movement, in a similar exercise to that undertaken in the chapter about Portugal. Nonetheless, I am not discussing the nature of the movement to the depth of what was done about Portugal. For a comparative history, this chapter comes out short and is not nearly enough. Its main merit is to open the door for future research and suggest an option for the comparative study of fascism: that of taking cases studies that have not been fully researched in light of each other. Others will learn with my mistakes and surely engage on a more balanced comparative analysis.

It is not possible to proceed to the historiography of the Legion of the Archangel Michael without devoting some attention to the problem of political religion. So far I have eluded the deployment of the concept, especially in the review of literature concerning generic fascism. While this chapter it is not the place to elaborate on the polemics involving the concept, namely the difference between political religion and civil religion or the heuristic value of political religion and its application problems, a small reflection about it will, however, help to set a departure point to understand the ideological syncretism of The Legion of Archangel Michael. In my view, political religion is essential to understand Romanian fascism¹²⁶. The Legion stands out by the syncretic nature of its palingenetic myth. Unlike every other known Fascism, the Legion chose to sacralize not a pagan entity or a secular entity, but the Romanian Orthodox Church itself. More accurately, they did not sacralized the already sacred, they re-sacralized by the means of politicizing religious discourse, namely connecting Christian

¹²⁶ I am using *fascism* as it is consensual that the Legion qualifies as such in the eyes of most scholars.

mythology with the concept of Romanian Nation. In this respect, one can say that the mythical core of the Legion does not fulfill the requirements of a veritable political religion. As Gentile wrote, political religion is “a type of religion which sacralises an ideology, a movement, or a political regime through the **deification of a secular entity** transfigured into myth, considering it the primary and indisputable source of the meaning and the ultimate aim of human existence on earth.”¹²⁷

The core of the Legion’s myth was not secular, which, on first sight, disqualifies it as a political religion. In simplistic terms, in political religions the state (or/and a movement) replaces the church, thus creating a pagan worship of the state and of a new set of idols and ideas. Cattaruzza summarized it as the state’s takeover of “the typical functions of the Christian religions in order to dethrone the Churches as authorities of mediation between the inner and the transcendent worlds and to exercise complete control over man, including his spiritual life.”¹²⁸

My proposition towards political religion, bearing in mind the Romanian case, is that we abandon the restrictiveness of the deification of a secular entity. As it is implied in Cattaruzza’s analysis, the important aspect of political religions is the movement’s new spiritual functions, taking the place of the church as the main spiritual drive and control mechanism of transcendence in society. The Legion appropriated the sacred rites and imagery of the Romanian Orthodox church to build its political image, instead of building its own universe. Furthermore, there is evidence that the sections of the church collaborated in this process, as they saw in the Legion a potential ally to defend its

¹²⁷ Emilio Gentile. “Fascism, Totalitarianism and Political Religion: Definitions and Critical Reflections on Criticism of an Interpretation.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* V, nr. 3 (2004): 326–375. P. 328.

¹²⁸ Marina Cattaruzza. “Introduction to the special issue of ‘Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions’: Political Religions as a Characteristic of the 20th Century.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VI, nr. 1 (June 2005): 1-18. P. 5.

interests at a time when the Romanian Orthodox Church was in crisis.¹²⁹ Regardless of the mixture and source of the palingenetic myth, it still is a political religion in its functions. In addition, if we consider the syncretic nature of fascist ideologies, it is only natural that such an amalgamation has taken place, no matter how strange it might seem. Thus, my leap with the concept of political religions is nothing more than a broadening of its scope to a functionalist interpretation. I did not change the meaning of the concept; all remains intact. Nevertheless, in the face of historical evidence one can see that the model of political religion can describe the Iron Guard accurately even though the source of inspiration is different from the usual case studies of Germany and Italy. The claim that Romanian fascism was “unlike that of western European fascists”, because it “was essentially one of ‘political evangelism,’ a religious revival or, rather, a revivalist movement aimed at the attainment of a new moral, Christian Romania”¹³⁰ does not make much sense. Political religion as described above can explain with detail and accuracy the Christian mysticism of the Guard. Disregarding the Guard’s fascism solely on the base of its Christian matrix is overlooking the broader panorama. Just as one considers the Legion as political religion, one can also regard it as clerical fascism.

As explained above, clerical fascism is defined through a syncretism between state and church, in order to solve the crisis of modernity. That syncretism, in its ideological aspect, relates to a shared palingenetic myth, involving anti-communism and anti-liberalism; proposing an alternative model of ruralism and corporatism as the best outcome for a society in crisis. As Eatwell sharply noticed: “elements within the Orthodox Church were attracted to the reformist plans of the Guard, which included forging a form of local peasant democracy and national corporatism, seeing these as

¹²⁹ Constantin Iordachi. *Charisma, politics and violence: the Legion of the "Archangel Michael" in inter-war Romania*. Trondheim: Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2004. P. 114.

¹³⁰ Stephen Fischer-Galati. “Codreanu, Romanian National Traditions and Charisma.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VII, nr. 2 (June 2006): 245–250. P. 245.

safeguards against the promises of the Left”¹³¹. The crossboundary mysticism of The Legion was a sustained attempt at adjusting and appropriating Orthodox Christian ideology into a political instrument; its innovative character goes beyond the simple assimilation of religious doctrine.¹³² “Legionary mysticism took on an Orthodox shading. (...) The Legionary movement willingly inserted strong elements of the Orthodox Christianity into its political doctrine.”¹³³ It also provided a clear political methodology. The propaganda performed by legionnaires took the outward shape of sacred rites, while building content that divinized nationalism and identified the nation with a divine and martyred entity, much in the likes of Jesus. To a certain extent, it becomes difficult to distinguish Codreanu, the Leader, from the nation itself. A confusion that was cultivated and blended with the charisma politics of the Guard. I will come back to the problem of charismatic leadership later.

The role of the church was not limited to ideology, but extended to active cooperation with political groupings. In fact, The Legion was not the only movement to engage the church in its political praxis. The precedent had been established by Cuza in the 19th century. “Cuza nationalized the land controlled by foreign monasteries and stopped the transfer of funds abroad, improved the educational standards of the clergy, made Romanian the liturgical language, and pledged state financial support for Church activities and clergy salaries. At the same time, he also brought the Orthodox Church under regular government control. The Orthodox Church effectively became a state

¹³¹Roger Eatwell. “Reflections on Fascism and Religion.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political* IV, nr. 3 (December 2003): 145 - 166. P. 154.

¹³² Radu Ioanid. “The sacralised politics of the Romanian Iron Guard.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* V, nr. 3 (2004): 419–453. P. 439.

¹³³ Radu Ioanid. “The sacralised politics of the Romanian Iron Guard.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* V, nr. 3 (2004): 419–453. P. 435.

institution.”¹³⁴ The Legion used the clergy politically as well. For the elections of 1937 it presented 33 priests as candidates out of a total of 103¹³⁵.

I have dismissed Pollard’s proposed dimension of racism and anti-semitism in clerical fascism based on his weak justification of it as a general feature of clerical fascism. However, it is obvious that in the case of Romania racist feelings were essential to The Legion, although its explanations lie outside Pollard’s generalizing idea and should, instead, be found on the problems of national development within Romania. These problems can be summarized with the structure of Romanian society in the interwar period.

The social structure of Romania was highly polarized. The creation of greater Romania brought the state into a crisis of implementation of the state apparatus. Territorial expansion meant the need for local elite integration and negotiation of conflicts arising from that. The ethnic diversity created by the enlargement of the state crossed with the administrative problems, giving birth to sharp divisions within the country. As it stood, some of the minorities were better off than ethnical Romanians, as is the case of Germans and Hungarians. In the eyes of the legionnaires, the situation boiled down to a class of foreign landowners that exploited the native Romanian population. What is interesting is that the Legion directed so much of its propaganda to the urban petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia, using the peasant Romanians as instruments in the political show off. “Aware of the difficulty of securing political support from the peasantry, Codreanu and his lieutenants focused on securing converts among Romania’s urban youth, urban intellectuals, and nationalist politicians.”¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Umut Korkut. “Nationalism versus Internationalism: The Roles of Political and Cultural Elites in Interwar and Communist Romania.” *Nationalities Papers* XXXIV, nr. 2 (May 2006): 131-155. P. 137.

¹³⁵ Radu Ioanid. “The sacralised politics of the Romanian Iron Guard.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* V, nr. 3 (2004): 419-453. P. 436.

¹³⁶ Stephen Fischer-Galati. “Codreanu, Romanian National Traditions and Charisma.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VII, nr. 2 (June 2006): 245-250. P. 247.

Weber identified the social basis of the Guard being the “salaried employees, professionals and members of that 'new middle class'”¹³⁷, while the members of the Guard were a collection of déclassés, lumpenproletariat, unsuccessful students, white-collar workers that felt threatened by the perceived foreign elites that dominated property in the country.

The problem arises now: what label to apply to the Iron Guard? That of clerical fascism or political religion? Both models present advantages in furthering the understanding of the Legion of Archangel Michael. While the approach of clerical fascism stresses the relations between the movement and the church, political religion approach brings to light the fascinating process by which legionnaires built their doctrine borrowing from Orthodoxy to blend with nationalism and not merely mimicking it. Political religion also stresses more the ritualistic politics of the legion. Therefore, the models can be use to complement each other; each offering an insight on the Legion’s political nature and discourse.

The main characteristics that would single out the Legion of Archangel Michael, from the moment of its formation until its destruction by Antonescu, were already visible in the early twenties in the political activity of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. As a student in Jassy Law School he distinguished himself for the anti-worker activities, namely breaking strikes, pro-Christian promotion and anti-Semitic agitation. He quickly became a leader in the student’s movement. In 1922, he founded the Christian Student’s Association and started displaying his political talent. Instead of the bread and butter claims of the students of the period, Codreanu managed to implement a new discourse,

¹³⁷ Eugen Weber. “The Men of the Archangel.” *Journal of Contemporary History* I, nr. 1 (1966): 101-126.

based on blurred, general claims that could be heard by everyone in the country. He delocalized claims from students to the national context.

In this incipient stage, it was already obvious the tendency to mysticism, by conveying the message that the students were not interested in material problems; that they were fighting for the good of the country and for the awakening of the national soul. At this stage, Codreanu actually recognized that most students were unfamiliar with the Jewish question¹³⁸, which makes clear the origin of the strong anti-Semitism in interwar Romania: social construction through political discourse. The causes for anti-Semitism have been attributed to social-economic reasons¹³⁹, but that seems secondary to me. Not only it is a dated explanation, for it relies on the Marxist paradigm, but also the general conditions of economic crisis and social conflict were ripe for any variety of xenophobia. Why did it affect the Jewish population harder than the Hungarian or German, for instance? The political construction of anti-Semitism is a much more direct and clear explanation for the phenomenon then. In any case, it is not the aim of this chapter to discuss the origin of anti-Semitism, but simply to confirm that it existed and framing it within the Legion's discourse.

The legion was a product of its time, integrated in the wider European tendencies but also a child of nineteenth century Romanian politics. "The Legionary movement was one of the manifestations assumed in interwar Romania by the older conflict between nativism and Europeanism, between traditionalism and modernism."¹⁴⁰ The movements characterized by nationalism, anti-europeanism, anti-democracy, and xenophobia had been visible before. The tradition was set by the Junimea Association,

¹³⁸ Marta Petreu. *An infamous past: E.M. Cioran and the rise of fascism in Romania*. Translated by Bogdan Aldea. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2005. P. 26.

¹³⁹ Ranu Ioanid. *The sword of the archangel: fascist ideology in Romania*. Traduzido por Peter Heinegg. Boulder, Colorado: East European Monographs, 1990.

¹⁴⁰ Marta Petreu. *An infamous past: E.M. Cioran and the rise of fascism in Romania*. Translated by Bogdan Aldea. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2005. P. 54.

of which Eminescu was a part. The association criticized the European model of development as “a fateful deviation from the principles of organic social development that had led to a ‘paralyzing antinomy’ between the form and substance of Romania’s institutions.”¹⁴¹ The traditionalism of medieval nostalgia displayed by Eminescu were taken up by Cuza and by the transylvanian ideologist A. C. Popovici. Eugen Weber gives us insight about this medievalism: “Codreanu was interested in the peculiar historical survival of the Razasi - free villages whose inhabitants traced their descent from a common free (noble) ancestor and claimed a customary freedom to run their own affairs through a council of village elders. (...) These were marked by a highly integrated society, collective organization, and a long tradition of struggle.”¹⁴² Codreanu’s movement was inspired in predominantly East European Orthodox neo-feudal societies. “The essence of Legionary ideology is very close to that of the anti-western Russian Slavophiles and, politically, to the Tsarist slogan, ‘Autocracy, Orthodoxy, Nationality’.”¹⁴³ It was a Christian nationalist populism.

At this point, one can ask to what extent the Romanian Iron Guard was not a reactionary movement, instead of a revolutionary one, in light of a palingenesis theory. There is enough evidence to support the second possibility. While the Romanian fascists tended to be crude around the edges, they were not backward peasants. They had a consistent, albeit vague, spiritual and political revolutionary discourse.

The Legion of the Archangel Michael was founded in June 1927 by Codreanu, Ion Moța, Ilie Gârneață, Corneliu Georgescu and Radu Mironovici. The ideological program was mostly outlined by Codreanu and later developed by Vasile Marin. I use

¹⁴¹ Keith Hitchins. “Romania.” *The American Historical Review* XCVII, nr. 4 (October 1992): 1064-1083. P. 1072.

¹⁴² Weber, Eugen. “The Men of the Archangel.” *Journal of Contemporary History* I, nr. 1 (1966): 101-126. P. 111.

¹⁴³ Stephen Fischer-Galati. “Codreanu, Romanian National Traditions and Charisma.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* VII, nr. 2 (June 2006): 245-250. P. 246.

the word outlined, because the Legion never had a clear-cut program; its ideologists kept true to themselves and always preferred an articulation of interests and ideas marked by vagueness and resounding value proclamations. There was no complete program, only the intention to achieve force in order to implement reform.¹⁴⁴ The movement was based on irrationality and spontaneity. Adhesion and action were only justified by faith and feeling. As Gentile rightly points out “A political system (or movement) based on irrationalism almost inevitably reduces political participation, both individual and collective, to a mass spectacle.(...) Symbols, rites, mass ceremonies and the mythic consecration of ordinary acts of social life - by all these means the capacity of the individual to choose and to be critical is destroyed”¹⁴⁵. This has two major consequences: the aesthetization of politics and its reduction to a show and the alienation of individuality. People are no longer valued in themselves but according to what they are part of: a nation, a race, a corporation. The cult of irrationality and political faith opposed to standard political belief. The Legion did not have an ideology, it was in possession of the truth, it possessed a dogma beyond all factionism. In light of which all enemies could be destroyed.

What exactly did Nation mean? The clues left by Codreanu suggest that he thought of the nation as the collective of people, dead, living or yet unborn, sharing the Romanian language and ethnicity.¹⁴⁶ It is a notion that removes the nation from time and gives it a perennial character, a destiny, and a specific national consciousness. This superior entity, without which the individual was nothing, could be reached through prayer. The fact that the Legion was based on such grounds of faith and mysticism leads

¹⁴⁴ Constantin Iordachi. *Charisma, politics and violence: the Legion of the "Archangel Michael" in inter-war Romania*. Trondheim: Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2004. P. 49.

¹⁴⁵ Emilio Gentile. “Fascism, Totalitarianism and Political Religion: Definitions and Critical Reflections on Criticism of an Interpretation.” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* V, nr. 3 (2004): 326–375. P. 339-40.

¹⁴⁶ Marta Petreu. *An infamous past: E.M. Cioran and the rise of fascism in Romania*. Translated by Bogdan Aldea. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2005. P. 33.

us to the self-constructed image, carbon copied of the Christian mythology, of the legionnaires as missionaries that through prayer and self-sacrifice, contributed to the resurrection of the Nation. The men of the Legion were the sons of a spiritual school, a newborn aristocracy of virtue and pureness.

Vasile Martin, influenced by Spengler's organicism, completed the notion of an ethnic state. According to him, the state is an entity closely related to its territory, to a race and a distinct culture. The main goal should be to establish a nation-state, in order to protect the nation and open way for it to flourish. The opposition between national and foreign in the Legion's ideas was constant. Being a Romanian was defined as: "a Orthodox Christian, natively Romanian - speaking, and ethnically Romanian."¹⁴⁷ The foreign elements corresponded to a black hole of degeneration, or using the organicist image, a cancer eating the body of the nation. "In the eyes of Iron Guards ideologists, the solution of all social problems entailed the elimination of the Jews and, in general, of all 'foreign elements'."¹⁴⁸ There were even voices claiming for Jewish extermination and eugenics projects.¹⁴⁹ Marin voiced his concerns about the foreign substance undermining organic Romania when he analyzed the democratic state. It was nothing but an import from France that would not fit the Romanian character. Consequently, a revolution was needed in order to guarantee the rebirth of the nation.

Unlike the old man and the old elites, the new man should be a man of action: the voluntary labor camps helped to spread the prestige of the Legion and inculcate the values of discipline, industry and heroicism in the young legionnaires. But they also needed to have purity of soul, dedication and creativeness, bravery and firsthand

¹⁴⁷ Umut Korkut. "Nationalism versus Internationalism: The Roles of Political and Cultural Elites in Interwar and Communist Romania." *Nationalities Papers* XXXIV, nr. 2 (May 2006): 131-155. P. 131.

¹⁴⁸ Radu Ioanid. "The sacralised politics of the Romanian Iron Guard." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* V, nr. 3 (2004): 419-453. P. 427.

¹⁴⁹ Radu Ioanid. "The sacralised politics of the Romanian Iron Guard." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* V, nr. 3 (2004): 419-453. P. 428.

knowledge of the hardships of life that threatened the nation, he should have faith in God, love in his heart and be poor, for a legionnaire is unconcerned with materiality; all his soul focuses on the rebirth of the nation. The elements leading back to Christian mythology are once again prevalent: the praise of poverty, the fight against evil, the self-sacrifice, the purity of soul are all elements of the Christian doctrine that were subverted by the Iron Guard to worship one pagan-sacred abstract entity: the nation. It is unclear where the nation stops and God starts. Sometimes one is led to believe that they are the same thing. By worshiping the nation one pays tribute to God.

The darkest side of the Legion's paligenetic myth was its conception of death. The legionnaire was always ready to kill or die. The rebirth of Romania was dependent on the new man. If one had to die, self-sacrifice would purge him of sin. Theoretically, the justification for this close relationship with the Grim Reaper was the detachment legionnaires were expected to have from mundane concerns and self-interest. In the end, they were martyrs of the nation, whose sacrifice would contribute to the rebirth of Romania. As Petreu explains "the Legionnaires suggestively portrayed themselves as apostles of the nation and of Christianity, willing to die for their nation just as Jesus had died in order to redeem mankind"¹⁵⁰. In a closer look, however, legionnaires "were willing to assassinate their political enemies at the risk of their own life"¹⁵¹, amounting to nothing more than an ideology of murder, where the excuse of being victims of persecution by the democratic state gave them moral *carte blanche* to constitute death squads¹⁵².

¹⁵⁰ Marta Petreu. *An infamous past: E.M. Cioran and the rise of fascism in Romania*. Translated by Bogdan Aldea. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2005. P. 43.

¹⁵¹ Marta Petreu. *An infamous past: E.M. Cioran and the rise of fascism in Romania*. Translated by Bogdan Aldea. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2005. P. 42.

¹⁵² The first dates from 1933 when the Student's Congress had a meeting in Târgu-Mureș.

The death of Moța was paradigmatic. He died in the front line of the Spanish civil war, perceived as the fight of Christianity against atheism and communism. It was a good against evil fight. “Before leaving Romania, he (Moța) left a testament and several other letters that justify both his act and reveal a belief in his impending death for the defense of the church.”¹⁵³ Moța’s and Marin’s funeral was one of the best examples of the sacralization of politics. The train that carried their bodies paraded throughout the historical provinces of Romania, greeted with enthusiasm in every stop. “The Mota and Marin funeral is a vital moment in the history between Romania’s most important fascist movement and the clergy of the Romanian Orthodox Church. It is the moment when, using the emotions produced by the death of Mota and Marin in public opinion, the church came out in an impressive display of support for the Iron Guard. (...) This clerical display of support is all the more significant when one takes into account that state authorities were not at all content with the current situation.”¹⁵⁴ Their deaths symbolized the core of the Legion’s ideology: self-sacrifice for a spiritual cause and for the nation.

The nation should be constituted into an ethnic state, where there would be one single consensual leader, one that represented the will of the Nation. A single party made up of the mystical elite educated by the legion seconded the leader. “The Legion was originally designed as an alternative elite organization, and not as a mass political party.”¹⁵⁵ But in 1929, the goal changed. The legion had to appeal to the masses through electoral marches. In 1932 the legion got 2.37 % of votes and 5 mandates in the

¹⁵³ 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* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 259–269. P. 262.

¹⁵⁴ 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* VIII, nr. 2 (June 2007): 259–269. P. 267.

¹⁵⁵ Constantin Iordachi. *Charisma, politics and violence: the Legion of the "Archangel Michael" in inter-war Romania*. Trondheim: Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2004. P. 54

parliament. It shifted its gravity center from the countryside to Bucharest. In the elections of December 1937 it became the third largest party.¹⁵⁶ A paradoxical performance when democracy was hated, because it casts out the true elite of the country, as the early Legion claimed. It is not surprising though; after all, the Legion was a relative failure in terms of mass support until the end of the 1930's, as seen in the poor electoral performances until then¹⁵⁷. Codreanu also felt that the crowd was unreliable, unfit to control the destinies of the Nation.

The command of the state was to be the responsibility of the new aristocracy. The contemporary democratic elite was seen by Codreanu as traitor, for it worked with the financial Jewish and international conspiracy of oppression and exploitation. Vasile Martin added that the artificial imposition of a democratic model inhibited the creation of a true national culture and openly defended a totalitarian system. Society should be dominated by a spirit of community, subjected to the guidance of one leader and his elite. Furthermore, the organization of the nation into a state would eliminate all conflict by installing corporatism. The organic solidarity meant the end of all individual, group, and class conflicts.

It is thus that we can make another conclusion about the Legion: its elitism. The Iron Guard looked at itself as the chivalry of gone times, due to their ascetic profile, carelessly serving the state and the community. It is, then, no surprise that it had a paramilitary character and an internal organization based on strict discipline and hierarchy. Total submission was owed to the superiors. The same principle applied outside the Legion in the relationship established between the new aristocracy and the

¹⁵⁶ Eugen Weber. "The Men of the Archangel." *Journal of Contemporary History* I, nr. 1 (1966): 101-126. P. 102.

¹⁵⁷ Eugen Weber. "The Men of the Archangel." *Journal of Contemporary History* I, nr. 1 (1966): 101-126.

masses: “In refusing the masses ‘any dynamic role’, Marin was giving free sway to the legionnaires’ desire to reduce them to mere tools to be manipulated.”¹⁵⁸

Furthermore, the Legion’s structure was completely dominated by the charismatic leadership of Codreanu. Iordachi gives an account of the main features of the cult of the leader within the Legion: “Starting in 1933, the intellectuals enrolled in the Legion developed Codreanu’s charisma into a highly polished and effective propaganda machine. (...) He (also) attached his charisma to a particular set of values, putting forward a code of conduct leading to salvation. Third, Codreanu claimed a natural charisma, based on emotions. (...) Fourth, Codreanu was celebrated as a predestined revolutionary leader and was represented in view of the local panoply of heroic figures as the end result of a teleological line of Romanian historical development. (...) Fifth, Legionary propaganda emphasized Codreanu’s exceptional personal gifts, such as his physical appearance and power of attraction.”¹⁵⁹ The messianic figure of Codreanu was thus the main mobilizer of political faith for the Legion.

Internally, the legion was divided in nests. The nest was organized around one local strong charismatic man and each nest could range between 3 to 13 elements. The promotion of people inside of the organization was submitted only to principles of charismatic leadership. It was believed that the natural leaders would emerge. Codreanu limited himself to confirming names instead of appointing them.¹⁶⁰ The nest was commanded by six golden rules: discipline, work, silence (action and no words), education, mutual aid and honor. A group of nests could be united in a legionary family. The membership was determined by age and sex, more than by socio-economic

¹⁵⁸ Radu Ioanid. *The sword of the archangel: fascist ideology in Romania*. Translated by Peter Heinegg. Boulder, Colorado: East European Monographs, 1990. P. 134.

¹⁵⁹ Constantin Iordachi. *Charisma, politics and violence: the Legion of the "Archangel Michael" in inter-war Romania*. Trondheim: Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2004. P. 74-5.

¹⁶⁰ Nicholas M. Nagy-Talavera. *The Green Shirts and the others: a history of Fascism in Hungary and Rumania*. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1970. P. 272.

status¹⁶¹. In fact, “In 1940, 21.2 per cent of them (legionnaires) were under twenty-five, nearly 40 per cent under thirty – a factor which brings out their marginality.”¹⁶² Apart from age and sex, prior political activism was an impediment on joining the Legion. Codreanu insisted on the non-party nature of the Legion and refused to accept any former members of political organizations. This is also true for the Legions ideology: it was not perceived as such, but as the truth. It was beyond mere politics of left or right, a self-conception that heightened the already mythical and divine mission of the Iron Guard. This mysticism and irrationality were reflected on the initiation rituals: “Initiation into the ranks of the Legion was as dramatic as possible. It took place at night to the accompaniment of songs, torches and oaths, preferably in the middle of a forest or the ruin of a castle.”¹⁶³

I finish this survey of the Legion’s main characteristics by making a brief stop in imperialism and anti-Semitism. Romanian interwar patriotism was characterized by its aggressiveness, its focus on ethnicity, its belief in a transcendental organicism, through which the nation gains and preserves a physical and biological patrimony. In this context, imperialism is born as an excess of vitality of the Romanian people, much in the same logic of the Nazi *Lebensraum*. Incidentally, it was together with Germany that Romania launched its imperial war against Russia. The very nature of Romania’s nationalism also had implications in the mass dimension of its xenophobia, especially anti-Semitism. We have already established that the origin of anti-Semitism owes a great deal to the political agitation. The nature of Romanian nationalism as described

¹⁶¹ Nicholas M. Nagy-Talavera. *The Green Shirts and the others: a history of Fascism in Hungary and Rumania*. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1970.

¹⁶² Eugen Weber. “The Men of the Archangel.” *Journal of Contemporary History* I, nr. 1 (1966): 101-126. P. 109.

¹⁶³ Nicholas M. Nagy-Talavera. *The Green Shirts and the others: a history of Fascism in Hungary and Rumania*. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1970. P. 273.

above seems to prove the importance of ideology and discourse build up in the creation of foreign enemies within the nation.

The Legion started to pick up wider public support in the mid 1930's when a group of distinguished intellectuals, among who Mircea Eliade was included, openly supported the Iron Guard and even contributed to the elaboration of some ideological aspects, in the movement's official press. "The infusion of young intellectuals strengthened considerably the Legion's public image and political visibility."¹⁶⁴ As a common rule, most intellectuals praised the spiritualism of the legion and its didactical character. That would prove essential, because the comparable political competition of the Legion lacked a dimension of spirituality and could not vent people's anguish as efficiently as the Iron Guard. The Christian mysticism of the legionnaires was incentivized by Eliade, whose interest in religion guided him in the restatement of the doctrine of sacrifice and the new man.

Support for the Iron Guard did not exclusively come from the intelligentsia. Liberal democratic regimes incentivized some fascist traits to fight off communism. "It was among the ranks of bourgeois politicians – for whom power was only an end in itself – that Romanian fascism found its protectors."¹⁶⁵ King Carol II is the best example. The king and other politicians tolerated the Legion, "to the point where even assassins got light sentences"¹⁶⁶. King Carol II played with the Guard until the moment he felt threatened. "The role of Carol II can never be omitted, although he brutally

¹⁶⁴ Constantin Iordachi. *Charisma, politics and violence: the Legion of the "Archangel Michael" in inter-war Romania*. Trondheim: Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2004. P. 60.

¹⁶⁵ Radu Ioanid. *The sword of the archangel: fascist ideology in Romania*. Translated by Peter Heinegg. Boulder, Colorado: East European Monographs, 1990. P. 41.

¹⁶⁶ Radu Ioanid. *The sword of the archangel: fascist ideology in Romania*. Translated by Peter Heinegg. Boulder, Colorado: East European Monographs, 1990. P. 42.

suppressed the Legion as soon as it became clear that he could not make it subordinate to himself.”¹⁶⁷ The same can be said about General Antonescu.

The Iron Guard aimed undoubtedly at monopolizing political power. They attempted to create a new elite, which would allow one to assume that ultimately, had the Iron Guard been fully successful, they would have replaced the old regime down to the last person. The single party regime was a fact under Antonescu’s period of government. Regarding the attempt to conquer society by fully politicizing existence, one can also find this feature in the sacralization of politics undertaken by the Legion. Its myth of rebirth of the Romanian nation, inspired and copied out of Christianity (syncretism), constitutes the core of its palingenetic ideology leading to a spiritual and political revolution. The revolution is to be guided by the prophets of the new age, the new man, pure, honest, bearer of a new ethos. It is obvious that the leaders of the Iron Guard saw a new civilization lying ahead. Codreanu’s fascination with the Razasi shows that there was an utopia underlying the action of the men of the legion; granted that it was a devious and ill sketched new civilization; coherent, at least, in the things that denied and opposed.

It almost goes without saying that Romania’s Iron Guard was nationalist in a radical way and that it led to xenophobia, anti-Semitism and imperialism. Shared and homogeneous ethnicity was the base of the projected Legionary State that would work under the operative principle of national solidarity and the individual’s submission to the collective, which embodied the nation. Economically, this would be achieved through the implementation of corporatism and the suppression of class conflict. The state and the nation were to be shaped by a strict hierarchy commanded by the supreme leader, assisted by an elite of chosen and enlightened ones. Nonetheless, the leader was

¹⁶⁷ Radu Ioanid. *The sword of the archangel: fascist ideology in Romania*. Translated by Peter Heinegg. Boulder, Colorado: East European Monographs, 1990. P. 43.

in contact with the nation's will, spontaneously expressing it. There is no need for a rational explanation, as the legionnaires theory is based on faith. This engenders a natural connection with the people that implicitly and at all times express their consent to the leader's actions. There was no need for freedom of press when the National-Legionary State was declared and, therefore, it was abolished. Finally, the Iron Guard strongly opposed liberalism, both politically and economically, but it also nourished hatred feelings towards liberalism archenemy: communism. The Legionnaires doctrine gave primacy to the spiritual dimension of life and resolutely denied materialism.

Conclusion

Having surveyed generic fascism and looked into the two case studies of Portugal and Romania is now the time to undertake the comparison between the two cases and assess the impact they have on historiography of fascism based on the theoretical models of generic fascism. Before proceeding, it is necessary to reflect on the subject of comparison. While much of this thesis pondered the Portuguese case alternatively between political discourse and known facts of an established regime, the study of Romania was restricted to study of the Legion of Archangel Michael ideological configuration as a political movement that sought to achieve power. Although it did achieve it for a brief period, I have not taken into consideration, and kept the analysis strictly to its ideological features. Therefore, I am comparing a regime with a movement. That poses some insurmountable problems of viability of the comparison. Is it possible to compare an institutionalized regime, in control of the political arena, with a movement that merely was aspiring at reaching that same position?

In order to make such a comparison viable and fruitful, I restricted the scope of the comparison to the discourse of both cases, using a generic fascism model. This approach has however one main advantage. It allows discussing two cases of peripheral fascism in light of a European wider phenomenon of politics in a new key, while allowing space to identify the specific features of each case rising from the political traditions of each country and their unique circumstances of context in the interwar period.

Starting with the similarities of both case studies one finds the role the church played in inspiring the ideology and contributing to the political tactics of the authors of

political anti-modernism in Portugal and Romania. From the point of view of clerical fascism, Portugal and Romania come across remarkably similar.

As we have seen, the church and the catholic ethos in Portugal served para-political functions and were subordinated to the secular power of the state. Salazar instrumentalized the church to serve purposes of political socialization, social control and dissent repression. Salazar and his elite also took inspiration from Catholic doctrine to inspire the corporatist principle and structure the relationship between the masses and the ruling group, while the church hierarchy offered itself to the State. The previous regime's anticlericalism made the church apparatus more than willing to cooperate, even at the cost of submission, to a secular state. The deal was not entirely negative for the church. The symbiosis with the new state afforded it with the possibility to reassert itself, even though under tight control and subject to manipulation.

The Romanian Iron Guard, on the other hand, distinguished itself with a much more complex and challenging syncretism between Christian orthodoxy and political ideology. The religious ethos was integrated in the political rites and ideology of the Legion, using a mysticism to bridge the gap between its elitist and messianic organization and the mass of the Romanian peasantry, the intelligentsia and the petty bourgeoisie. The support afforded by section of the orthodox clergy increased even more the appeal of the Legion. The religious-political axis acted as a charmer; in the case of Portugal, the same alliance, aimed not to charm, but control and maintain the status quo. The difference in function is due to the different situation. Salazar was in power; Codreanu aspired to reach power.

The charismatic leadership played differently. Codreanu presents a perfect example of the cult of the leader. He embodied a sacred political teleology, that of the salvation of the Romanian nation, benefiting from great personal gifts like his natural

power of attraction and a backbone of intellectual who refined his image and deepened his spiritual dimension. Salazar also benefited from an elite of intellectuals, who continually supplied him praise, insisting the Chefe was the only one capable of leading Portugal. However, Salazar was a man of a self-made charisma. Just like he controlled the state, he controlled the image he projected to the outside of his office. Not indulging on mass adulation of his person, his political cult was refrained by his intellectual and catholic moral profile. The Church backed him fully and Sunday mass performed better in spreading the image of Salazar as pater familias of the nation than any other propaganda, who, in any case, was directed mostly to the urban classes. The leadership cult of Codreanu was inspired in the Nazi model and essentially secular, despite the sacred character of the ideology. Salazar's cult, on the other hand, was essentially driven by Catholic norms of representation, namely the iconography of saints, while the regime was declaredly secular and the influence of Catholicism was restricted the moral aspect of existence, that, nevertheless, Salazar also controlled.

Regarding the connection of the leadership cult with the harvest of mass support, both case studies also perform differently. The Legion followed the generic fascist model to the letter, and was in line with the paradigm set by the major fascist governments. From a small movement it grew into an organization of mass appeal, using a broad-formatted articulation of interests, mixed with violent tactics in its assault to power. Salazar, having institutionalized his government, needed not to have recourse of the same tactics. The gathering of mass support was not as vital as for the Legion, given that the state was under the bureaucratic control of Salazar. Thus, the New State allocated to the church the responsibility of mobilizing people's consent.

Both Salazar's regime and the Legionnaire movement were elitist in their self-conceptions. The Legion saw itself as the training ground for a new breed of men, a new

aristocracy that would lead Romania into the painful process of rebirth. They were attributed special characteristics like bravery, selfishness, alienation from material concerns and other related values of Christian extraction. The New State's elitism, however, was of a different nature. Salazar's elite was bureaucratic and in direct dependence to him. The myth of the new man did not intersect with elite, but was placed in the youth organization Mocidade Portuguesa. Salazar's elitism was one in the most traditional sense: a closed group of people who control power, access to it and the ideology that governs the use of such power.

The palingenetic myth, the core of fascist ideology, was also present in both case studies. Once again, Romania proves to be more clear than Portugal. The Legion easily fulfils the requirements of generic fascism. It is a myth of rebirth of the nation through the self-sacrifice of the elite. The new man to be born in the future regenerated Romania will be ridden of the degeneration of foreign influence. In the case of Romania, that means an order without intrusive political forms and foreign minorities undermining the pureness of ethnic Romanians. The political and economic project involves a return to the pure forms inherent to Romanian character: a peasant society based in communal villages, where the conception of profit is replaced by solidarity. The Portuguese myth is more complex. There was no single formulation of what it could be, except that it would transcend liberalism and refused communism altogether. The discussion about the revolution occurred in the present tense. The revolution was discussed as being happening since the constitution of 1933, that introduced corporatism. In this sense, there is no utopian formulation about it. All the discussion was aimed at questioning the problems that the ongoing revolution faced. In the eyes of the elite of Salazar, the revolution was a reality, it was happening. Of course, the degree of self-delusion ran high, but it is undeniable that there was a discourse about a palingenetic process.

It is hard to evaluate to what extent the Iron Guard nourished totalitarian goals. However, the intended revolution in the anthropology of man and the shaping of a new country indicate that, had the movement been successful it would be willing to follow the footsteps of the Nazi project. Codreanu's work camps are a safe indicator of that. They aimed at controlling the minds of the participants while employing their time in socially useful work. Salazar had no defined teleology of totalitarianism and even refused any attempts at totalitarianism. Nevertheless, as I have shown above, the way the New state was institutionalized and worked amounted to totalitarian practices, even though without an ideological purpose to it. Totalitarianism in Salazar's Portugal was one created for practical purposes of control. The private sphere was reduced to family life, but even that under the premises of an imposed ethos by the state and endorsed by the Catholic Church.

Finally, a general observation about the nature of discourse of Salazar's regime and the Legion of Archangel Michael. Salazar's intelligentsia tried to rationally justify the form and content of the New State, providing rational argumentation supporting their viewpoints. The Legion, however, adopted a model of political faith and the denial of ideology. The Legion was the guardian of the truth and all that was needed was the adhesion by faith. In this sense, the New State never abandoned the principles of rationality and consent of a liberal political system, even though it perverted them to the extent that they lost all significance.

All that I have established so far indicates that the Legion was a fascist movement under any side one looks at it. Its distinguishing character was the synthesis between orthodox faith and political antimodernism in a mystical discourse aimed at the renovation of the nation and of the Romanian people. Portugal's case is far more complex. It is not fascist. It is not authoritarian. It is a borderline situation, also

characterized by a synthesis. Nevertheless, a synthesis of political forms. Fascist, conservative and authoritarian, all of them interplaying and dominating the regime in turns. The period of 1933 to 1945 is a period when the fascist element clearly dominated conservative and the authoritarian traits. After the second world war, the process of deconstructing fascism led to an authoritarian state striving to survive in a quickly shifting international scenario.

The fact that Portugal and Romania share the above mentioned discursive characteristics of generic fascism proves the European wide dimension of fascism in interwar Europe. The variations identified in each of those characteristics also brings to light the importance of the national context, circumstances and political traditions in the shaping of local fascisms. Applying a one single, strict model of generic fascism will overlook these differences and fail to account for them, failing at the attempt of creating the most holistic historiographic portrait possible of the phenomena. The use of generic fascism must entail a constant negotiation between context, facts and theory, in order to provide a comprehensive and minimally biased explanation of history. Theory is essential to make sense of what really happened; history without theory is just a collection of meaningless facts. And theory without history is a normative project to reshape perceptions and serve hidden agendas or perform low quality historiography. If not both.

I wish to conclude with an appeal to the pursuit of comparative history of interwar Europe. It is my hope that this thesis may provide a challenge to others; that it might inspire further research into both Portugal and Romania and the problem of politics in a new key as a European wide phenomenon. I am not convinced my arguments are final or perfect. It is in their flaws that others should find the inspiration and drive to write increasingly better historiographic pieces about the subject.

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