THE NEWLY RELIGIOUS POPULIST RADICAL RIGHT OF CONTEMPORARY EUROPE?

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The Case of Germany and Hungary

By

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ABSTRACT

The claim that the backlash against Islam resulted in an enhanced usage of religious rhetoric by populist radical right parties became a truism in recent years. However, few works analyse systematically the phenomena and its implications. The present paper compares two cases to examine the effect of the 2015 European refugee crisis in this regard: the German AfD from Western Europe, and the Hungarian Jobbik from Eastern Europe. A content analysis of the official party literature, speeches, articles, and legislative initiatives is conducted to see what role religion plays in the ideology of these parties before and after the refugee crisis, and how these ideological standpoints translate into practice in terms of religion policies and relationships with the churches. Main findings include that while the refugee crisis had an impact on how these parties use religion in their rhetoric, it does not necessarily mean an enhanced usage. While there is some convergence among the parties, ultimately it is hard to speak about a straightforward relationship towards religion. However, whether religion is used more for defining the ingroup or more for constructing the other, seems to have important implications in terms of the religion policies of these parties. On the other hand, relationship with the churches for the most part seems to depend on to what extent these organizations hold similar positions regarding particular issues, however, these relationships could very well result in different preferred regulations in terms of church-state relationships.

i

T<small>ABLE OF CONTENTS</small>

INTRODUCTION

Donald Trump is president of the United States of America, the people of the United Kingdom voted for leaving the European Union by referendum, the populist radical right Party for Freedom (*Partij voor de Vrijheid*, PVV) came out as the second largest party in the latest Dutch parliamentary elections, and a populist radical right party – Alternative for Germany (*Alternative für Deutschland*, AfD) – after several regional successes passed the 5% threshold at the recent German federal elections. The list goes on. The strengthening of the populist radical right (PRR) is a puzzling phenomenon which grabbed the attention of many scholars and produced a remarkable and rapidly growing literature over the past few decades. However, while there are now more works on these parties than on all the other party families combined (Mudde 2016), there are some important aspects which remain unexplored in sufficient depth (Mudde 2007, 2016). One of these aspects is the relationship between PRR parties and religion (Marzouki et al. 2016, Montgomery and Winter 2015, Mudde 2007, 2016, Zúquete 2017).

Existing literature seems to agree on the concept that populist radical right parties in Europe first and foremost use religion – Christianity – not as a faith, but as a part of their identity, an instrument for distinguishing not just between "us" and "them", but between "good" and "evil" (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a, 2016b, Marzouki et al. 2016, Montgomery and Winter 2015, Pelinka 2015, Zúquete 2008, 2017). This distinguishing feature of religion can be very efficient and a number of PRR parties rely on it at least partially from the very beginning. Mass immigration from the Middle East and "the struggle against »Global Islam«" (Mudde 2016:12) enhanced the role of this narrative even further, and even once atheist or anti-clerical parties – like the Austrian FPÖ and the Dutch PVV – began to refer to the Christian roots and values of their own nation, or in a broader sense, Europe (Mudde, 2016). However, there are basically no systematic empirical studies to support this general observation, not to mention the lack of comparisons within this group of parties, which is generally limited among the researches about

1

PRR parties since most of the literature consists of single case studies (Mudde 2016). While recent works have made some progress in examining the relationship of religion and PRR parties in a more comprehensive way (see Marzouki et al. 2016, Montgomery and Winter 2016), we still do not have much knowledge about the extent or the depth of these changes. Is there a change? How much change? How deep a change? Do these parties see the role of religion in society differently with the enhanced emphasizing of these Christian/Judeo-Christian values? Does the religious framing of the ongoing refugee crisis translate into policies? How does the relationship with religious organizations affects these questions, and vice versa?

To examine these questions, this research uses as the main unit of analysis populist radical right parties of contemporary Europe. However, since even the appellation of the new far right – and how new it is – lacks consensus in the literature (Pelinka 2013:12-13), the here applied definition of PRR has to be clarified. Accepting Mudde's (2007) ladder of abstraction, here, populist radical right is defined with the conjunction of three core ideological features: nativism, populism, and authoritarianism (20-23). This definition is used relatively widely in the literature, and while it is better than the frequently applied categorization which mostly relies on impressions and general feelings, it is still often difficult to differentiate, especially in the growing number of borderline cases (Mudde 2016). Another problem of defining the population of PRR parties is the constant motion, the ever-changing size and relevance of these parties. Therefore, while the ideal case would be to include all relevant contemporary European PRR parties, resources for a large-N study are not the first obstacle in the way.

Since this research is mostly explanatory in nature – given the lack of information on the topic –, even if it would be possible to create a full list of European PRR parties, it seems more reasonable to narrow the scale. While there are several notable differences within the party family, and the ideal would be to include a wide variation of these parties, because these questions can be best investigated with qualitative methods, this paper will only examine and

compare two cases in detail: the Alternative for Germany (*Alternative für Deutschland*, AfD)[1] and the Movement for a Better Hungary (*Jobbik Magyarországért mozgalom*, Jobbik),[2] both of which fit the above definition to a sufficient extent. One restriction in the case selection is membership in the European Union, which has the practical benefit that the potential effect of being a member state of the EU is controlled for. Beside this, another important aspect is to compare cases from different regions of Europe in a more systematic way: one from Western and one from Eastern Europe, although given the small number of cases, the conclusions of the comparison are rather limited. To exclude too small and ephemeral parties, another criterion for case selection is the strictly defined successfulness of the party, which means present members in the legislature – either on national or state level. This restriction also ensures that enough data is available for the study of these questions, which is not necessarily guaranteed with smaller, less successful parties. However, governing PRR parties are also excluded from the case selection to ensure better comparability, as there are relatively few PRR parties in government. Nonetheless, even with these criteria there are a number of options to choose from. As literature is growing on the "civilizationist nationalist" PRR parties focusing on religion (Brubaker 2017a), the present paper focuses on a different approach: while both AfD and Jobbik target religious minorities, neither of them really uses the liberal kind of arguments common among the more established Western PRR parties. Additionally, this case selection also provides an opportunity to look at the election campaigns of the parties with only a little time delay, as in both countries national elections were held recently.

Once there is a set of parties to examine, the question of how to get the right data, who or what represents the party has to be addressed. On one hand, how to study the ideology and rhetoric of the PRR parties, on the other, how to measure and diagnose religion policies.

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[1] The name is a response to Angela Merkel, who in 2013, defended the German-led bailout of the Greek state with the claim, 'there is no alternative'.

[2] The name "Jobbik" is actually a pun: in Hungarian "jobb" not only means better, but right(-wing) as well.

3

Another potentially important factor in regard to this topic which needs to be addressed is the party's relationship with the various religious organizations (Marzouki et al. 2016). Are there situations when religious organizations and the PRR party are on the same side? Does the PRR party position itself against various religious organizations? Do these religious organizations distance themselves from the religiousness of the PRR party? Given the differences between these parties, and the nature of the above questions, the main method used in this paper to answer them is qualitative content analysis.

Because neither the ideology of the leadership, nor the membership or the electorate necessarily mirror the ideology represented by the party (Mudde 2007:36-38), and because of practical reasons (fluctuation, availability of information), the primary corpus for this analysis is the (official) party literature, legislative initiatives and official speeches made by the leading politicians of the parties. This is supplemented by the analysis of relevant articles and interviews. Because the number of the party manifestos and party programs are fairly limited, most of the available official party literature is included in the analysis. While this is not possible with the numerous speeches, articles, and legislative initiatives produced by and around Jobbik and AfD, as both parties changed a lot from their foundation, a number of these are examined starting from their foundation, 2003 and 2013, respectively.

As mentioned earlier, although the enhanced importance of religious rhetoric due to mass immigration among these parties is treated as a truism, there is not much systematic empirical evidence behind the statement. Because of this, a content analysis is conducted on a number of articles and speeches made by the politicians of these parties to detect how salient religious references and arguments are in them, along with how and with what intensity they frame the European refugee crisis in religious terms. Because knowledge about a specific frame by itself does not tell all, it is also important to examine the salience of the religious framing relative to other possible frames (Baumgartner et al. 2010), such as the position of the crisis as

an securitarian or economic issue. The framing of the refugee crisis is compared to the salience of the topic of religion before the 2015 refugee crisis. Additionally, the analysis also examines the party manifestos to see how and to what extent religious references are present in them and in what context religion appears, if it is mentioned at all. To examine the question how these parties see the role of religion in society, the legislative initiatives are analysed to see whether religion policies – and what kind of religion policies – are present in the agenda of these parties. Jonathan Fox (2016), for example, distinguished between three types of religion policies: supportive, regulatory, and discriminatory. And while the concrete categorization of the policies applied in his paper is debatable, this distinction gives a good start for analysing these above questions. For the sake of a more complete picture, the results are contrasted with the positions of the Christian Democratic parties of Germany and Hungary.

Given the exploratory nature of the study, only some expectations can be formulated about the findings, but not concrete hypotheses. The most important among these is indeed an enhanced usage of religion, coupled with an increase in discriminatory religion policies. On the other hand, relationships with the churches are expected to have an effect on religious support and regulation. All in all, while I do not expect a clear relationship between the usage of religious rhetoric and religion policies, I expect to find such patterns which can help to understand how PRR parties relate to and use religion. And while the conclusions from the study of these two cases in under no circumstances conclusive, I believe they will give a good base for further research on this topic, including more cases and using more clear-cut theories.

The paper consists of four major parts: the first chapter elaborates what can be found in the existing literature regarding these questions and what theoretical aspects are used for the argument presented here. The second chapter introduces the two cases discussed in this paper in more detail, providing some important background information on the political and religious environment in which the two parties exist. The last two chapters are dedicated to the empirical

analysis of the questions presented here and in the following sections: while the third chapter examines the ideology of AfD and Jobbik as it is presented in the official party literature and the speeches and writings of the leading politicians of the parties, the fourth chapter assesses the question how these ideological stances translate into practice, by examining their relationship with religious organizations and their religion policies. Finally, the fifth chapter states the main conclusions, along with prospects for further research.

Main findings include that while the refugee crisis had a significant impact on how these parties use religion in their rhetoric, it does not necessarily mean an enhanced usage: rather, what changes is the way in which they present their Christianity. As such, there is some convergence among the parties, but even with this convergence, there is no straightforward relationship towards religion in the case of these parties. However, based on the findings, whether religion is used more for defining the ingroup or more for constructing the other appears to have important implications in terms of the religion policies of these parties. On the other hand, relationship with the churches for the most part seems to depend on to what extent these organizations hold similar positions regarding particular issues, however, these relationships could very well result in different preferred regulations in terms of church-state relationships.

Chapter 1: RELIGION AND POPULIST RADICAL RIGHT: AN AMBIGUOUS RELATIONSHIP

Despite the numerous theories predicting the decline of religion, it still plays a significant role even in European politics, which is often described as the "closest thing to a godless civilization the world has ever known" (Lilla 2006). There are still many self-described religious actors, policies and policy proposals are often justified with at least partially religious arguments, and the proposals themselves often concern religions or religious denominations. Not to mention churches and religious organizations, many of which play important roles in social and political life. In this sense, secularism can be seen as an ideology competing with religion, rather than something that is above religion (Fox 2016). Populist radical right parties are no exception. Be they secular or religious – or somewhere in-between –, in most cases they do have opinions about these issues. Nonetheless, their relationship with religion – and how they see the role of religion in society – is a rather under researched topic.

1.1. DEFINING THE POPULIST RADICAL RIGHT

Before the examination can begin, the question of the definition of populist radical right parties – which is the main unit of analysis in this study – needs to be addressed in further detail. This is necessary because even the appellation of the phenomenon lacks consensus in the literature. This section will briefly address two competing, widely – but also sometimes simultaneously – used definitions: right-wing populism and populist radical right. The simultaneous usage of the two terms is possible because the first one is a wider, more loose term, therefore the second category can be seen as a more specific subgroup of right-wing populist parties, if one accepts both definitions. This is the case with a third possible approach to conceptualize these parties, which works with the term right-wing/far-right extremism or radicalism. With this term, populism is not a defining factor, and it serves as an umbrella term for populist and elitist or

anti-democratic far-right movements and parties alike. However, since this paper considers populism an important common feature of the herein discussed parties, this definition, while applicable, is much broader than the focus of this paper.

The term right-wing populism has a similar problem, as it sees populism as the main, common feature of these parties. Authors using this term acknowledge that populism can take many forms, but the only narrowing definitional element is that these parties are on the right-wing of the political spectrum, mostly referring to these parties' exclusionary nature (Pelinka 2013, Rooduijn et al. 2014), as a differentiation from left-wing populism. While this rather loose definition has the advantage that it is capable of referring to a wide range of parties and it can overcome the problem of the many differences among countries, this feature is also its weakness, at least for the purposes of this paper. Because the term is so loose, it contains too many possible parties, and by itself it is not capable of addressing important differences within the category. Another issue with this approach is that while it does take the populism of these parties into consideration, it also seems to overemphasize the importance of it. Mudde and Kaltwasser (2011) – when comparing populism in Latin America and in Europe – show that populism, in the case of contemporary European parties, while important, is only secondary, at least compared to their Latin American counterparts.

The second – and here applied – definition is Mudde's (2007) ladder of abstraction, where populist radical right parties are defined with the conjunction of three core ideological features: nativism, populism, and authoritarianism, which addresses this problem. Although other definitions and terms are also possible – such as the aforementioned 'right-wing extremism' or 'extreme right' –, the term populist radical right is not just used relatively widely in the literature, but also provides relatively clear criteria for the categorization of the parties, making it adequate for empirical research. This is especially important since it is not uncommon for studies of this phenomenon to mostly rely on impressions and general feelings about the

parties in question. However, categorization is never an easy task, and subjectivity cannot be fully eliminated. This is true even more so with the growing number of borderline cases, while the questionable stability of these parties – their ever-changing size and relevance – further complicates the issue (Mudde 2016). Therefore, whereas with the first term the problem was its looseness, too strict definitions are no more useful.

In this definition, all three core ideological features are important, but they do have a specific internal hierarchy. Before continuing with the topic of this paper – PRR parties' relationship with religion –, a brief elaboration of these features is necessary for understanding the nature of the parties in question. The most important ideological feature in the case of this party family is nativism, and ideology based on the idea of the homogenous nation-state, combining both nationalism and xenophobia, where 'the nation' is threatened by outsiders and nonnative elements (Mudde 2007:22). It is important to note that the distinction between 'natives' and 'aliens' is primarily based on culture and ethnicity. While this kind of identity politics does originate from fascism, it provides a more sophisticated concept of national identity than just race, constructing a new type of racism, sometimes called new racism, Euro-racism or xeno-racism (Betz and Meret 2009:315-317, Delanty et al. 2011, Mudde and Kaltwasser 2011:16-17). The second feature is authoritarianism, which in this case refers to attitudes, "the belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely" (Mudde 2007:23). However, it is important to note that this does not necessarily mean an antidemocratic attitude, especially not with the third ideological feature of the party family, populism. Populism in this concept is seen as a thin-centred ideology, not just a mere political style, a view which does not enjoy consensus in the literature.[3] However, most definitions agree that populism divides society into two homogenous groups, one is the 'pure people' – in Taggart's (2000) term, the 'heartland' –, the other is the 'corrupt elite', where the

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[3] For a general overview about the different conceptualizations of populism, see for example Mudde and Kaltwasser (2012).

will of the people (*volonté general*) is more important than human rights or various constitutional guarantees (Ádám and Bozóki, 2016a, 2016b, Marzouki et al. 2016, Mudde 2007, Pelinka 2013, Rooduijn et al. 2014). Therefore, while the populist radical right can be illiberal, it is always democratic in the sense of majoritarian or plebiscitary direct democracy (Mudde 2007, Pelinka 2013).

Some authors emphasize the fact that for many populist actors, the enemy is often not just from 'above' – in the form of elites –, but also from 'below' or 'abroad' – in the form of ethnic, linguistic, religious or other minorities –, 'others', that are not constituting parts of 'the people' (Brubaker 2017b, Rooduijn 2014). However, this exclusionary people definition is not necessarily practiced by all populist movements and parties[4] – as many authors differentiate between left-wing and right-wing populism exactly based on this (Pelinka 2013, Mudde and Kaltwasser 2011, Rooduijn et al. 2014). Another problem with this approach is that it fails to clearly establish the source of the exclusiveness or inclusiveness of populist actors. And while the difference is not to be dismantled, it is hard to tell where exactly the boundaries are for this differentiation. The here applied definition of the party family – populist radical right – clarifies this duality very effectively. While anti-elitism is based on the populist feature of these parties, nativism explains the exclusionary definition of the 'people'. And while the concept of right-wing populism works under similar assumptions, it is less clear-cut on these matters, which can cause confusion: the exclusiveness is not because of the populism of these parties, but because of the 'right-wing', and especially the nativist orientation. This is a nuance which remains hidden in the broader 'right-wing populism' term, since it does not specify what 'right-wing' is exactly.

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[4] Even though 'people' is not a term which clarifies who the people are, therefore even in the case of left-wing populism there are some restrictions to it. As Canovan (1984) puts it, populism is always exclusionary and inclusionary to some extent (320). However, the xenophobic, hostile exclusion of specific groups by the populist radical right is essentially different from the restrictions made by other kinds of populist actors (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2011, Pelinka 2013).

1.2. DEFINING 'US' AND THE 'OTHERS'

Given the more elaborated definition, the details of the potential relationship of PRR parties with religion is in order. According to Marzouki et al. (2016), religion in the rhetoric of populist parties has two main notions: restoration and battle. While restoration refers to the importance of the particular native religious identity – as a set of traditions and symbols –, battle refers to the construction of the 'other', the enemies of 'the people'. Therefore, religion can be used both for defining 'us' and 'them', not necessarily simultaneously. Based on this, the usage of religion seems to be rather limited, as first and foremost it is used as a tool of identity politics. In contrast, Zúquete (2017) argues that religious populism is a specific subtype of populism, where overtly and covertly religious aspects of populism appear together: meaning that besides the politicization of religion, politics is also sacralised. While others argue the style of expression connected to populism itself "relies on passion, emotions, and religious worship" (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a:102), due to restrictions of space and the nature of the guiding questions of the inquire, the present paper focuses on only the first aspect in detail.

In terms of politicization of religion, besides constructing the 'other' – or others –, theoretically it is also possible to use religious references connected to populism more directly. However, generally this is not the case with European populist radical right parties. Identity does not play a prominent role when differentiating between 'elite' and 'people', mostly because the elite usually comes from the same cultural background as the majority (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2011:17). However, the construction of the 'other' is often connected with populism to some extent, by claiming that the elite represents and serves the interests of foreign or minority groups, instead of those of the people (Enyedi 2015, Mudde and Kaltwasser 2011).

The distinguishing feature of religion therefore can be very efficient and a number of PRR parties rely on it at least partially from the very beginning. Complemented by the potential usefulness of the churches' infrastructure (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a:102), especially when there

11

is a religiously definable 'other' – in the case of these parties most notably Judaism and Islam, but sometimes other Christian denominations as well[5] –, references to the importance of Christianity are not far to seek. Another issue which can further pressure these parties to emphasize and use references about Christian values – particularly in the process of opposing immigration –, is that previous research finds that symbolic issues – related to identities – are more important at the individual level than the role of economic interests, indicating that perceptions about cultural threat are also more important in regard to anti-immigrant sentiments (Inglehart and Norris 2016, Sides and Citrin 2007). And while immigration is a complex issue, and these results are not by any means decisive (Heath and Richards 2016), given the nativism of PRR parties it almost seems inevitable to refer to these religious differences at least to some extent.

However, the usage of religion by these parties in any way is far from evident. On one hand, PRR parties have a rather ambiguous relationship to the topic of religion, both empirically and theoretically. One example for this ambiguity is the well-documented "religion gap" in the electorate of these parties, which means that while many PRR parties see and frame themselves as the "defenders of Christendom", their voters are often the least religious ones (Montgomery and Winter 2015), even when they do promote conservative standpoints on family and social policy issues often associated with Christian-democratic parties. From a more theoretical aspect, there are at least two opposing views about the relationship between religion and populist radical right. While some scholars (such as Arzheimer and Carter 2009) highlight the more open and inclusive religious values such as tolerance, compassion and altruism, pointing out that these are the complete opposites of the values promoted by PRR parties, other authors emphasize how the so-called "closed belief systems" – which strongly correlate with both

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[5] One interesting example is the strong anti-Catholicism which started with the rise of the American 'Know-nothing' movement in the mid-1850s, and lasted until the early decades of the twentieth century and has interesting parallels with the anti-Muslim sentiments of today's Europe (Betz 2013:83-84).

ethnocentrism and authoritarianism – are linked to strong religiosity (Montgomery and Winter 2015:381-382). And while these arguments were made in the context of the electorate of these parties, it points out an important dissonance in regard to the relationship between religion and PRR parties. Another root for the ambivalence is that church leadership can be seen as part of the elite, what is more, an elite who often actively promotes tolerance, compassion and altruism (Marzouki et al. 2016). Because of these differences, and because anti-elitism is a core feature of populism, while a PRR party can be both religious and anti-clerical, the situation easily creates complications, at least from the perspective of the voters.

On the other hand, while mass immigration of Muslim minorities from the Middle East and the enhanced anti-Islam[6] sentiments in Europe offer a rather convenient opportunity for the usage of this distinguishing feature of religion, the tension can be framed either as a Christian-Islam opposition or as a secular-religious opposition (Kalyvas and van Kersbergen, 2010:203). And although the arguments can be mixed, for example by stating that Christian roots of the past were and are indispensable for today's secularism, here the point is that anti-Islam rhetoric does not necessarily mean that a PRR party has to promote Christian values, and if it does, they may be meaning something else when referring to those values. This is well illustrated by the fact that while the supposed differences between Christianity and Islam are often used as a justification for xenophobic and anti-Islamic statements, many PRR parties simultaneously adopted (semi-)progressive stances on various issues, such as women's rights, same sex marriage, or animals' rights (Betz and Meret 2009, Marzouki et al. 2016, Zúquete 2008), often resulting in a somewhat ambivalent mix of differing worldviews (Betz and Meret 2009, Marzouki et al. 2016).

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[6] Throughout this paper the term anti-Islam or anti-Muslim is used instead of Islamophobia, due to several problematic issues around the latter term. Firstly, however often used it is, it lacks consensus what Islamophobia means or what it refers to; secondly, its 'catch all' nature can be misleading because the term can subsume other forms of discrimination and because it does not differentiate between criticisms; thirdly, connected to the second problem, it has a firm moralistic dimension, insensitive to different degrees and motivations (Zúquete 2008:323-324).

However, as mentioned earlier, anti-Islam prejudices are not the only ones that can be framed religiously. Therefore, the situation is further complicated since in most cases, anti-Muslim prejudice and stereotypes exist alongside prejudices and stereotypes against other religious (minority) groups, in numerous possible combinations. Although in some cases anti-Semitic rhetoric seems to be replaced by anti-Islam rhetoric – for example in the UK and Germany –, in other cases the two exist together, either in some combination or alternately, in turns (Wodak 2013:25-26). More interestingly, the spread of anti-Islamic sentiments often went together with a turn towards a committed support towards the State of Israel, however honest these stances may be (Betz 2013:80-81). The spread of these two common enemies – Islamisation and globalization – seems to push the many kinds of PRR parties to the same direction. And while there are still many differences existing among these actors, this common and rather salient issue of anti-immigration and globalization may cause a long-term convergence among them (von Mering and Wyman McCarty 2013, Zúquete 2008).

Despite this trend, it is important to note that anti-Semitic views have not become completely absent among these parties. But because immigration for a long time was not a vivid issue in Eastern European countries, the corresponding literature often differentiates between East and West based on the differing proportions or importance of anti-Islam and anti-Semitic sentiments. While for Western European PRR parties the main enemy is Islam and the presumed threat of Islamisation, in the case Eastern European countries anti-Semitism, ethnic minorities and historical territorial issues are much more prominent (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a, Kersten and Hankel 2013). This is connected to another relevant difference, the communist past of Eastern Europe. The old nationalisms of the 19th century were themselves connected to anti-Semitism, and because both nationalism and religion were suppressed under the socialist-communist regimes of the region, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, religion played an important role in the rebuilding of national identity (Kersten and Hankel 2013:85). This seems

14

to suggest that religion in general is more important in defining 'us' for the PRR parties of Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, as the issue of immigration reached Eastern European countries with the 2015 refugee crisis, it is not unlikely that the presumed convergence of the European PRR parties will include the Eastern European PRR parties as well.

Chapter 2: INTRODUCING THE CASES

Before continuing with the empirical analysis, it is necessary to lay down some crucial background information regarding the here examined parties, along with the general political, socio-economic, and the religious environment in which they exist. Accordingly, the first part of this chapter presents the main features and fundamental differences and similarities of AfD and Jobbik, with an emphasis on their position within their respective political and socio-economic climate. The second part briefly evaluates the religious landscape of Germany and Hungary, without which issues of church-party relationships would be very difficult to assess.

2.1. THE POPULIST RADICAL RIGHT IN BREAKTHROUGH AND IN THE MAINSTREAM

In the history of European populist radical right parties, even with their ten years difference, both Jobbik and AfD are relatively new parties, founded in 2003 and 2013, respectively. However, they grow out of very different political environments: while AfD is the most successful PRR party in Germany, being the only such party which surpassed the 5% threshold of the Bundestag, Jobbik is the first largest opposition party of another – arguably – PRR party (Fidesz-KDNP) (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a, 2016b, Enyedi 2015, Mudde 2015).

AfD started as a single-issue Eurosceptic party in 2013 as an answer to the Euro crisis, which served as a 'window of opportunity'. Before that, populist radical right parties were unable to become a relevant political force in Germany (Decker 2008, 2017, Schellenberg 2013), a situation which changed significantly with the formation of the AfD. Being founded only three months before the federal elections, it just missed the 5% percent threshold of the federal legislative body. Today, AfD has members in 13 out of the 16 state parliaments, and it came out as the third largest party at the 2017 federal elections, gaining 13% percent of the votes and winning 94 seats in the Bundestag. With this two-digit result AfD had a major breakthrough in Germany that no other PRR could achieve earlier. Jobbik, on the other hand,

first won seats in the Hungarian national parliament in 2010, seven years after its foundation, which was part of a broader right-wing turn, as Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Alliance (*Fidesz – Magyar Polgári Szövetség,* Fidesz) and its satellite party – the otherwise practically nonexistent Christian Democratic People's Party (*Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt,* KDNP) – gained two-thirds of the parliamentary seats. This overwhelming result was – and still is – complemented with a greatly fragmented left as the other side of the opposition (Enyedi 2015:50). Since then, the balance of power has changed little, and Fidesz-KDNP is effectively working on keeping the situation and its power as such (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a, Debreczeni 2017). In April 2018, Fidesz-KDNP won in the general elections the third time in a row, each time winning enough seats in the parliament for a supermajority. As such, Viktor Orbán is the prime minister of Hungary for the fourth time. On the other hand, the centre-right Christian Democratic Union of Germany (*Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands*, CDU), together with its sister party, the Christian Social Union in Bavaria (*Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern*, CSU) is the leading group of a grand coalition with the Social Democratic Party of Germany (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands,* SPD) since the 2013 federal elections.[7] With the victory of CDU at the federal elections of 2017, Angela Merkel, the leader of said party, is for the fourth time the chancellor of Germany, and the grand coalition remains in power. Therefore, while the currently governing parties of both Germany and Hungary represent or claim to represent Christian values, the circumstances in which these parties operate are strikingly different: while AfD represents a breakthrough of PRR in Germany, Jobbik is essentially part of the political mainstream.

Nevertheless, there are some important common features in the ideology of Jobbik and AfD. One of these features is a more or less Eurosceptic stance, as they both advocate a Europe

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[7] Before that, a grand coalition between CDU/CSU and SPD governed between 2005 and 2009, whereas between 2009 and 2013, CDU/CSU governed with its traditional coalition partner, the Free Democratic Party (*Freie Demokratische Partei*, FDP).

of nations. However, their criticism towards the European Union comes from two rather different positions, not just in terms of their domestic political and economic situation (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a, 2016b, Grimm 2015, Kovács 2013), but also with regard to the broader perspective of European integration. As such, Germany may be the biggest winner of the integration process (Grimm 2015), but with the Euro crisis, AfD responded to a void in the German party system: it gained its success with an ordoliberal economic, Eurosceptic, and socially conservative program (Decker 2017). Opposed to this, Jobbik's criticisms of the European Union are not primarily economic, but they concern the issue of national sovereignty, and its economic stance differs greatly from the one held by the German PRR party. While AfD is (ordo)liberal in economic terms, Jobbik advocates a so-called 'eco-social national economy' characterized by a strong state and protectionism. Thus, while Jobbik and AfD are both right-wing in socio-cultural terms, economically Jobbik is on the left side of the spectrum, while AfD is on the right.

While both parties show the previously mentioned features of the populist radical right – nativism, authoritarianism, and populism –, as these features are not entirely exclusive in the parties' ideology, their PRR nature is often contested. In the case of AfD, this is due to a controversy between the populist radical right and market-oriented, more moderate wing of the party (Frazmann 2016), while regarding Jobbik, the main cause for this contestation is their more general strategy of moderation (Bíró-Nagy and Boros 2016), similar to the dedemonization (*dediabolisation*) of the French Front National. Indeed, in the initial period of AfD, the driving force behind its operation was the Euro crisis, but in recent years – with the arrival of the refugee crisis –, xenophobic motives in regard to anti-immigration became more important, and cultural issues started to dominate the communication of the party (Schmitt-Beck 2017). This shift from being the 'party of professors' became even more visible with the split of the moderate wing in July 2015. Since then, an alliance is forming between AfD and

18

the movement Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West (*Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes*, PEGIDA) (Grabow 2016), although there are still some tensions between AfD's less and more radical parts.[8] However, this is hardly a disproof for anything, as PRR parties always struggle with this problem to some extent. As for Jobbik, while it can be argued that the governing party, Fidesz-KDNP, at this point is further to the right than Jobbik, this does not mean that either of the two parties have lost their PRR nature – it is more about the normalization of the extreme rather than actual moderation. The "extreme centre" (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a:168) competes for radical votes. Nonetheless, Jobbik worked hard in the last few years to appear as a people's party, and it came a long way from being an openly anti-Semitic and anti-Roma party.

Jobbik grew out from a university youth organization close to the anti-Semitic Hungarian Justice and Life Party (*Magyar Élet és Igazság Pártja*, MIÉP) in the beginning of the 2000s (Krekó and Juhász 2017). It remained very radical in its tone, up until 2013, when Gábor Vona, the chairman of the party between 2006 and 2018, launched the so-called 'cuteness campaign' with the explicit goal to become a people's party. As such, regarding its official rhetoric, the party managed to tone down the most radical elements of their ideology. Before the 2018 elections, Jobbik prepared to become governing force, as the final step of the moderation process. However, as the party did not win the election, Vona resigned as chairman, bringing great uncertainty to the future of the party which relied on his leadership for a long time. While the new party leadership seem to be committed to the path laid down by Vona, the László Toroczkai led more radical wing of the party threatens to split.

Despite the differences between AfD and Jobbik and this generally converse movement of them concerning radicalization, an important similarity between the two parties is that they share a culturally conservative stand on family and social issues. This conservative stance is

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[8] See for example the resignation of the former party leader, Frauke Petry, right after the 2017 federal elections.

complemented with fact that both of these parties used religious rhetoric in various occasions, despite the circumstance that neither the German nor the Hungarian society is particularly religious (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a:107). In terms of the general differentiation between the anti-Semitic East and the anti-Islamic West, both AfD and Jobbik fit these categories relatively straightforwardly, even though it should not be forgotten that this distinction is ultimately relative. While in the case of the AfD, references to Christianity appear in relation to anti-Islam sentiments, for Jobbik, 'Christian' is generally understood as a euphemism for 'non-Jewish' (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a, 2016b, Kovács 2013). And while the structure of the two is said to be fairly similar (Kovács 2013:227), most of the studies examining the relationship between religion and PRR parties focus on the consequences of the anti-Muslim aspects of these parties, and rarely mention discrimination against other religious minorities (see for example Brubaker 2017a, Marzouki et al. 2016). However, it is important to note that despite the 'common enemy', AfD also differs from its more established Western European counterparts. As Brubaker (2017a) argues, contrary to other PRR parties, AfD does not really frame its anti-Muslim stances in liberal terms (1193).

2.2. RELIGIOUS FRAGMENTATION AND POLITICIZATION

The religious landscape is similar in Germany and Hungary in the sense that there is no single dominant denomination, and many religious traditions are present in these countries historically. In Germany, being the origin country of Protestantism, the Roman Catholic Church and the Evangelical churches (Evangelical Church in Germany, EKD)[9] are roughly equally important, although it varies from state to state which one of the two is more prevalent. Hungary, on the other hand, is characterized by the continuous historical relevance of three religious organizations: the Roman Catholic Church, the Reformed church, and the Lutheran

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[9] The EKD (*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*) is composed of twenty Lutheran, Reformed (Calvinist), and United regional churches (*Landeskirchen*) and entrusted with carrying out certain joint tasks of the otherwise independent member churches. https://www.ekd.de/en/EKD-98.htm

church, with the numerical and political prominence of the Catholic Church (Enyedi 2003:158). Additionally, the Jewish community and other minor Christian churches also have been influential over the years in both countries, while in Germany, the growing number of Muslim minority is an important development of the last decades. Today, the Muslim community is estimated to be over 5% of the population, making it the largest minority religion of Germany.

While the officially anticlerical and atheist communist regimes severed the historical relationship between church and state in East Germany and Hungary, the relationship could continue to develop organically in the Federal Republic of Germany. Nonetheless, churches were operational in a limited form and accompanied by the occasional smear campaigns of the state in the former two countries as well. In this environment, churches had an inherently oppositional role, which was especially important in the German Democratic Republic. With the decline of the religious importance of the churches, their political significance remained substantial, and in a sense, they were even more critical than their Western counterparts, where churches were traditionally government partners (Burgess 1990). Despite this trend, even the oppositional role meant some concessions with the state, and the ambiguous relationship with the regime became more problematic after transition, especially when some clerics were exposed as informants of the state. This was even more the case in Hungary, where churches – especially on the elite level – did not have a similarly strong oppositional role in political terms (Enyedi 2003:160). However, churches were not extensively called to account in either country.

With unification, the churches of East Germany were integrated into the already existing framework of West Germany, quickly adopting the legal framework as well. In Hungary, a new, generally liberal legal framework was accepted in 1989-90, with the rather permissive church act of 1990, which defined the criteria for registration in a minimum 100 members. Based on this law, with transition, more than a hundred churches were registered in Hungary, and every year a few new small churches were registered. Therefore, the act was often criticized for giving

space to the proliferation of the so called 'business churches', which have small memberships, but can receive generous direct and indirect benefits due to their recognition.

Today, as in all European countries, both the Hungarian and the German constitution guarantees the freedom of religion and states the principle of separation of church and state. Despite these generally accepted principles, actual church-state relationships differ greatly from country to country, and few European states follow complete separation in practice. Both Hungary and Germany follow a version of positive neutrality, characterized by a cooperation between churches and state on specific areas, accompanied by a certain hierarchy between religious communities based on their historical, cultural and social prevalence.

The 1949 German Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) incorporates those parts of the 1919 Weimar Constitution (*Weimarer Reichsverfassung*) which regulate the role of religion in public life (Minkenberg 2003:202). While the Basic Law contains a no-establishment cause, grants the autonomy of religious communities and protects against discrimination based on religion, it also contains religious imagery and establishes the areas of cooperation between church and state. For example, it grants the state protection of Sundays and religious holidays, and establishes religion as part of the curriculum in public schools. In addition, religious communities can be corporations under public law (*Körperschaften des öffentlichen Rechts*), which status entails a number of privileges, such as entitlement to levy taxes on the basis of the civil taxation lists. Religions not eligible for – or not interested in – the status can register as non-profit organizations.

These general provisions are complemented with treaties between the state and the Holy See – concordats –, as well as with Protestant churches and umbrellas of Jewish organizations, which establish the legal framework of cooperation between religious bodies and the German state, both on federal and state level. In accordance with the Basic Law, the exact regulation of the specific issues – such as religious instruction and Sunday closure of business – are decided

22

on state level. The corporation under public law status is also granted by the German states. While the status is automatically granted to those churches that enjoyed the status in the past, other religious communities can apply for it. Criteria for acceptance concerns performance, size, and – according to a 2000 court decision – respect for the Basic Law, the fundamental rights of third parties protected by the state, and the liberal law of religious organizations. While the historical Christian churches of Germany generally face no problems in this regard, whether and what new religious organizations are accepted as corporations under public law varies from state to state (Gesley 2017). Another important issue concerns the legal status of Islamic religious organizations, as due to their lack of strong organizational hierarchy, they have difficulties meeting the criteria. So far, only one Islamic religious organization has been registered as a corporation under public law.[10]

A concordat was also accepted between the Holy See and the Hungarian state in 1997 (ratified in 1999), with a modification in 2013. While no similar treaty exists between the state and other churches, even with the generally liberal legal framework accepted during transition, in practice, the preferential treatment of Hungary's historical denominations prevailed, the extent depending very much so on the particular government (Enyedi 2003, Uitz 2012). The new Fundamental Law accepted in 2011 by the Fidesz-KDNP government not only incorporates religious imagery and references to the Christian heritage of Hungary, but – along with the new cardinal act on religious freedom and churches – contains substantial changes in the legislation of church-state relationships. To some extent, these changes reflect already existing trends regarding church-state relationships, and makes the above discussed differential treatment more apparent. However, the new church act also cut down the number of registered churches significantly, restricted the requirements for registration and placed the task into the

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[10] This organization is the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat it Germany, which was granted the status in 2013, in the state of Hesse. https://kultusministerium.hessen.de/ueber-uns/aufgaben-und-organisation/bekenntnisorientierter-islamischer-religionsunterricht

23

hands of the legislative body, which previously was the authority of the courts.[11] From over 200 registered churches, only fourteen remained recognized, while other religious communities have to re-register based on the new criteria. In addition to the 14 churches which did not have to go through the procedure, 18 additional religious organizations were accepted as churches later in 2012. Other religious organizations can operate as religious associations, enjoying full autonomy but lesser public support than their registered counterparts.

Besides the preferential treatment of the historical, larger religions in these countries, restrictions on minority religions are also important in assessing church-state relations. The most prominent target of these restrictions – both in Hungary and Germany – is the Church of Scientology. In Hungary, the government's national security office mentions religious movements dangerous to society in its annual reports from 1999. Although no names were mentioned, it is generally understood that they refer to the Church of Scientology and the Charismatic-Evangelical Faith Church (*Hit Gyülekezete*). While no legal action was taken based on these reports, the 2011 church act was formed in a way so Scientology could not become a recognized church. Interestingly, Faith Church was not just not a target of this restriction, it was one of the fourteen churches recognized automatically.

In Germany, due to historical reasons, newer minority religions are viewed with even more suspicion, even with hostility (Fox 2008, Hexham and Poewe 1999). The state monitors these organizations extensively, published several pamphlets about dangerous cults, and a number of major parties even banned Scientologists from being party members (Fox 2008, 2016). While there were calls to ban Scientology in Germany altogether, it did not come to that just yet. Nonetheless, scientology in Germany is viewed with great suspicion, and the government openly considers scientology to be a business organization, not a genuine religion. Other restrictions mostly concern Islamic religions, for example, most German states do not

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[11] For a more detailed assessment on the new church act and the controversies around it see for example Renáta Uitz (2012).

allow school teachers to wear headscarf in public schools. In 2017, wearing clothing that covers the face while working was banned for state workers and soldiers.

In summary, while there are several notable differences in church-state relations between Hungary and Germany, both countries follow a version of positive neutrality, where different religious organizations are treated differently in a fragmented religious environment. However, an important difference between the two countries is that in Hungary, this fragmentation is complemented by a heavy politicization of religious organizations. This is not true in the same manner to Germany, where while the Protestant and Catholic churches of Germany had close relationships with the Christian democratic party in the past, these ties loosened significantly over time.

Chapter 3: NATIONAL-CHRISTIAN IDENTITY AND VALUES: RELIGION IN THE IDEOLOGY OF THE PRR

Having provided some crucial background information on the here examined parties and the environment in which they operate, now it is time to analyse their relationship to religion in detail. The remaining sections present the three important aspects of the relationship between religion and PRR mentioned before: while the present chapter assesses how these parties use religion in their ideology as presented in manifestos, speeches, and articles, the next chapter evaluates how these ideological stances translate into practice in terms of their policies and their relationship with religious organizations and authorities. The results of the analysis are contrasted to Christian democratic parties for the sake of a more complete picture.

As stated before, religiosity can be used in two ways when it comes to the question of identity: it can either be a part of the definition of 'us' (restoration), or the definition of 'them' (battle); these two notions not necessarily excluding each other (Marzouki 2016). This chapter examines the questions whether AfD and Jobbik uses these notions at all, and if so, how these usages changed over time, especially given the 2015 European refugee crisis. Beside this, it is also important to look at how these religious elements mix with other concepts regarding religious questions inside these movements, such as anticlericalism, atheism, and paganism.

3.1. RESTORATION

Both AfD and Jobbik claim to advocate Christian values, and while this self-definition is clear, it is not something that is often or strongly emphasized. AfD does not even mention religion in their founding statement, nor is it something that is often explicitly stressed when they define the party's nature. Jobbik, on the other hand – relatively speaking –, is more pronounced when it comes to their Christianity – it is explicitly stated and elaborated in their founding statement: Jobbik is a "value-based, conservative, radical in their methods, national-Christian party"

(Jobbik 2003a). Furthermore, in line with previous findings, they claim that the morality of the nation is based on the teachings of Christ, and as such Christianity is inseparable from national identity (Jobbik 2003a). In line with this, usually when Jobbik speaks about its Christianity, the term used for self-description is often 'national-Christian', and if one part is abandoned from this identification, it is usually the latter, not the former.

Nonetheless, Jobbik started its career in 2003 with installing patriarchal crosses at various public areas throughout Hungary on the occasion of Advent to remind people that Christmas is a Christian holiday, where people should celebrate the birth of Christ, not consumerism (Jobbik 2003b). They continued this tradition over the years, and while it has not disappeared completely, the tone seems to be shifting: while Jobbik's various local cells continue to install patriarchal crosses around the country during Advent, these events remain at the local level. And while even at the first years of Jobbik, religious references are rather scarce in the official speeches and the party literature, when they are there, they often carry an important symbolic meaning.[12] The greeting used by Jobbik and Jobbik supporters – may God give a better future – provides a good example of this. This may seem strange concerning the fact that Jobbik voters – presenting the aforementioned religion gap – are the least religious among the Hungarian electorate (Ádám and Bozóki 2016:110-111, Juhász 2017:24), but these phrases and gestures serve more as signifiers of right-wing ideology, and rarely have any connection to the topics themselves.

Still, initially, Jobbik paid a great deal of attention to religious issues in its programs. This is the most evident in their 2010 election program, where they not only have a separate subchapter dedicated to the issue of religion, religious organizations and their role in society, but it is a reoccurring topic throughout the manifesto, complemented with a number of

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[12] Beside these, there are some common phrases with religious references, and the usage of them could be indicative, but as they are both relatively scarce and often used by non-religious people as well, they do not really have any particular significance.

proposals how they would like to enhance the influence of these (Christian) organizations when they are in parliament. They also justify, at least partially, some of their stances with religious claims – such as their pro-life stance regarding abortion – (Jobbik 2010:44, Jobbik 2014:29), and references to religion casually appear regarding several topics. Religion plays an especially important role in connecting Hungarians around the world, and especially the Hungarian minority of the neighbouring countries. The manifesto also includes a quote from the Bible, although it is more of a proverb than anything else. Nevertheless, in the document, Jobbik clearly defines itself as a national and Christian party, and explicitly calls for the replacement of the liberal understanding of human beings with a Christian one (Jobbik 2010:86).

However, even if Christianity is present in the rhetoric of Jobbik, it is often mixed with pre-Christian, pagan and tribal religious symbols. This pagan neo-Turanism is apparent even in the highest ranks of the party leadership, but interestingly enough, it does not necessary contradict the Christian elements, even though these pagan orientations are not shared by every member of the party. Rather, it is often emphasized that the Hungarian nation always was on the borderline between East and West, and it is more of an alloy of the two then either; the best of the two worlds. This duality, being simultaneously Eastern and Western, Christian and pagan is often and openly addressed in the speeches, articles and interviews of Vona, and it is even mentioned in the 2014 election program of the party (Jobbik 2014:64). Pagan and Christian symbols and references appear in the same texts – often in the same sentence – without any difficulties. This neo-pagan element also gives a powerful position from which the Western world can be criticized (Akcali and Korkut 2012, Kowalczyk 2017), not just because of its imperialism and multiculturalism, but because Hungary is often presented as the victim of Western policies. In this view, the most conspicuous case – the Treaty of Trianon and losing the vast majority of the previously Hungarian territories and its population with it – is only one in the row of injustices. This Turanian orientation also gives an alternative to the West, both in

terms of culture and economy (Vona 2013:105-106, 109, 115). However, these neo-pagan elements are not limited to the rhetoric of Jobbik in Hungarian politics, for example, Orbán also often uses similar elements in his speeches (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a, 2016b), although the official party literature of Fidesz-KDNP remains free of them. In contrast, the German neo-pagan Heathenry first and foremost builds on the elements of the Nordic myths and pagan religions (Bernauer 2006), and even if it is present among the supporters of the party, it hardly finds its way into the speeches and ideology of the party's leadership.

Although Vona often incorporates these pagan, ancient Hungarian elements into his speeches and writings, it is important to note that his views cannot be described with neither paganism nor pagan Christianity, even though these are also present in the party to some extent. For Vona, these ancient symbols are important because of his traditionalist views, based on the writings of René Guenon, Julius Evola, Tibor Baranyi and Ferenc Buji (Vona 2011:189-192). Within this traditionalist worldview, both the Turanian and the Christian tradition are crucial for an authentic Hungary. Vona describes traditionalism as an ancient, fundamental knowledge, which knowledge faded and continues to fade over time: humankind understands it to a lesser and lesser extent as time passes (Vona 2011:190). Therefore, traditionalism is posed against modernity (anti-traditionalism), and more specifically against globalism, neoliberalism, and consumerism.

It can be easily seen how these ideas fit into the overall ideology and rhetoric of Jobbik at least on practical (policy) grounds: but on a theoretical level, there are some important tensions between traditionalism and other ideologies present in the party,[13] and it also has important ramifications – as it will be more evident below – for the framing of the 2015 refugee

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[13] As Enyedi (2015) points out, this traditionalism could easily contradict both the nativism and the populism of these parties, as it has a kind of meta-nationalist worldview which also thinks positively about (transnational) monarchies and empires (57). For example, Vona states several times that he would prefer to have Hungary as a monarchy (Vona 2011:222, Vona 2013), but he also is also wary to point out that this preference of his is a private one.

crisis. From the viewpoint of traditionalism, the decline of the Western world started with humanism and the renaissance, continued with the enlightenment, and finally, the traditionalist states of Europe were ultimately defeated with the outcomes of the two world wars (Vona 2011:190, 2013:64-65). While during the middle ages, the Catholic Church was a stronghold of traditionalism, eventually it gave in to the changing trends: therefore, both the Catholic Church – and other religious organizations – and secularism can be criticized on these grounds. While Christianity also plays an important role in Vona's worldview,[14] it differs from what the Church advocates: "Christianity needs to be spiritualized" through Christian mysticism (Vona 2013:203). On the other hand, Vona also criticizes the church for not being national enough. It is also important to note that these traditionalist views of Vona are not apparent in the official party literature and speeches: Vona communicates quite differently depending on the forum and the audience, and his traditionalist ideas mostly remain on a theoretical level. This is one of the reasons why tensions between the otherwise quite differing ideologies within Jobbik were mostly avoided over the years. This is not to say that conflicts were or are absent: for one, the 'cuteness campaign' launched in 2013, aiming to moderate the party and make it more acceptable for the general population was a quite controversial move among members and supporters alike.

With this moderation, the usage of religious rhetoric and references to religious issues were also toned down, especially in the written materials of the party, partly with the hope to appeal to a broader section of the general electorate. However, the moderation did not happen overnight. While explicit quotes from the Bible disappeared from the 2014 program, it is not fundamentally different from what was presented to the public four years before. For example, while religion is mentioned fewer times and the overall tone seems to be somewhat less religious, certain paragraphs regarding religion are simply copied from the previous program,

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[14] He especially highlights the right-wing political Catholicism of the first half of the 20th century, represented by Ottokár Prohászka, Béla Bangha, and Cécile Tormay (Vona 2013:80).

and most of the related issues are left out only because the governing parties – Fidesz-KDNP – already implemented them, often with the support of Jobbik (Krekó and Juhász 2017).

Meanwhile, the then newly founded AfD and the speeches made by its politicians were heavily dominated by economic issues – especially regarding the Euro-crisis –, in which religion and Christianity were not particularly often used elements. In these initial years, the Christian nature of AfD was mostly confined to their conservative stances regarding the issues of abortion, euthanasia, marriage, gender relations, and family policy in general. It is indicative, however, that while these stances are also apparent in the official party literature, these issues are first and foremost advocated by the Christian association within AfD (*Christen in der AfD*, ChrAfD), founded shortly after AfD was established. As already noted, these socially conservative stances are shared by Jobbik. For example, one of the recurring topics of Jobbik is the annual Pride parade, and how this event, aiming to enhance the visibility of LGBTQ people, is not just against the good taste of every moral person, but actively harmful to religious communities and people, with 'Jesus had 2 dads' signs and LGBTQ activist dressed as priests, disgracing religious symbols. These concerns did not change fundamentally with the 2015 refugee crisis, and religiosity continues to be an important justification for these socially conservative stances, even though Jobbik, preparing to govern, left out the most controversial issues from its 2018 manifesto.[15]

However, the refugee crisis had a substantial impact on how these parties present their Christianity in another way, although not necessarily immediately, and not quite in the same way. In the case of Jobbik, an immediate and strong reaction to the refugee crisis came at the local level, as it can be seen in the activities of the local cell of Jobbik in Szeged. Here, before the Christmas of 2015, the installation of the aforementioned Advent crosses gained a new level

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[15] However, it is important to note that these conservative social stances can also be supported on non-religious grounds, and accordingly, a number of party members do not think of their respective party as a particularly Christian one.

of meaning: now they were standing for the 1000-year-old Christian Hungary against the hordes of the culturally and religiosity different refugees coming to Europe. Just before that, in August, the same cell went to the border with a banner saying that "The Christian civilization begins here." In this rhetoric, the country of Saint Stephen once again is the bastion protecting the Christian Europe. However, this initial – and locally initiated – upheaval was not reflected in the official rhetoric of Jobbik. In a sense, the emphasis on Christianity even seems to be fading: almost 15 years after the founding document, in a programmatic statement made by Jobbik in the July of 2017, religion is only mentioned once, connected to the issue of migration, multiculturalism, and the notion of European identity. It is worth to mention that the preservation of tradition and culture means the preservation of the tradition and culture of the continent, not just of Hungary's. While Jobbik still emphasizes the rejection of the multiculturalism of the West, it also wants to preserve the "original, Christian values of the continent" (Jobbik 2017). In other words, how Christianity is presented in the official party literature changed substantially: now the focus is on a looser concept of cultural identity, as part of a broader European tradition of which 'Christian moral tradition' is only one aspect.

While in the 2014 election program of Jobbik the word 'Christian' was mentioned 11 separate times in various subchapters, four years later, in the 2018 program it is only mentioned once, referring to 'Christian morality' as one of the three pillars of European tradition (Jobbik 2018). Similarly, while previously Jobbik always had a separate subchapter discussing religious organizations, in 2018 it is merged with the section about cultural politics. While religion's importance in preserving and creating the national community and cooperation with the churches on various issues are still present, the overall tone is much more neutral. The phrase 'For a better future' – referencing the aforementioned greeting commonly used by Jobbik and Jobbik sympathizers (May God give a better future) – has disappeared, along with other religious phrases and references. The policies which were partially justified with religious

arguments are also left out from the program, and where they previously talked about national and Christian values, now they only talk about the former. However, despite the changing tone, Christianity remains an important signifier of morality, not just against the ethnic threat from the East, but the threat of moral decline from the West.

These statements about Christianity as the basis of our common European and national identity closely resemble AfD's current stance on the issue – however, this usage was not immediate. The issue of religion, and the emphasis on the Christianity of the AfD, Germany and Europe came to the forefront only after the crisis eased somewhat, with the EU-Turkey refugee deal – an agreement vehemently opposed by AfD – accepted in the March of 2016. It was only after this that the party's official rhetoric started to shift from the issues of security and the economic consequences of mass migration to issues of identity and religion. Since then, references to the Christian heritage of Germany and Europe are more and more common in the rhetoric of AfD. However, even with this enhanced usage, in their election program of 2017 mentions of this Christian identity are limited. It only appears in relation to immigration and cultural politics: as the basis of Western culture and as one of the three sources of the German predominant culture (*Leitkultur*), along with the "scientific and humanistic heritage" rooted in the Renaissance period and the Age of Enlightenment and Roman law as the basis of the German constitutional state (AfD 2017:46). Accordingly, AfD often refers to the Judeo-Christian roots of German culture, rather than simply to Christianity. In this usage, similarly to the rhetoric of other, more established PRR parties of the West, Christian heritage also means secularism and the general principle of separation of church and state. However, Christianity's importance is still emphasized nationally, and similarly to Jobbik, AfD not just condemns multi-culturalism, but continue to advocate its socially conservative policy stances.

To summarize, how religiosity is used in the rhetoric of these parties to define the ingroup changed dramatically over time, where local and national communication show

significant differences. However, the official communication of AfD and Jobbik, presented in their nationally distributed pamphlets, manifestos and programs, is more similar than ever: while Christianity still serves as a justification on morally divining questions, in a somewhat contradictory manner it is also reduced to a vouge signifier of the Christian traditions and culture of the nation, with a strong opposition to multiculturalism. In this way, the Christianity of these parties is not a main defining identity for either of them. Nonetheless, Jobbik started with a stronger self-identification with regard to religion, and this still shows. As Jobbik gradually moved more to the centre, references to Christianity became less apparent – although they did not disappear completely – in the official communication of the party. Today, the Christianity of these parties is generally framed in broader terms, although it is still more important as a national, rather than a European feature.

3.2. BATTLE

If the religious elements are often subtle and secondary in the self-definition of these parties, when it comes to defining the others, it is even less prominent, especially in the official party literature. Nevertheless, during the initial years of Jobbik, up until 2013, the two main groups – besides the national and the international elite – attacked in the rhetoric of Jobbik were Roma on the one hand, and Jews on the other. The anti-Semitism of the Hungarian far right, of course, was not a new thing (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a, Krékó and Juhász 2017). However, openly speaking about the Roma-issue and breaking this taboo of Hungarian politics was a main contributor to Jobbik's success (Krekó and Juhász 2017). Jobbik successfully brought the Roma-issue into the public sphere and essentially 'monopolized' it. This breakthrough was partially possible because all mainstream parties openly agreed that Jobbik was asking the right questions, even if they did so in the wrong way (Krekó and Juhász 2017). This 'wrong way' was first and foremost the issue of the so called 'Gypsy-crime', complemented with arguments about the low birthrate on the part of the Hungarian population and the high birthrate on the

part of the Roma population often phrased as 'livelihood childbearing', meaning that someone is having children only in hope of social aid and benefits, and otherwise they cannot and do not want to actually take care of these children, which in turn also reproduces and contributes to the issue of 'Roma-crime'. While migration was already a topic in some of the speeches and articles, the real issue along these lines was the emigration of Hungarians, further escalating the already rapid shift of the ethnic balance, which they claim could eventually even lead to civil war.

While it was already mentioned that Jobbik's Christianity is often understood in opposition to Judaism, religion is also connected to the topic of the Roma-issue. On the one hand, Jobbik expects the churches to help to put an end to the Roma-question, helping with guidance, housing, and integration. On the other hand, Vona also critiques the Hungarian religious organizations – especially the Catholic Church –, because they did not do these things earlier. He highlights the 'high spirituality' of Roma people, and partly blames the Catholic Church because they did not capitalize on this – positive – characteristic of the Roma. Instead, they let the Faith Church – described as a "Zionist sect, working on the destruction of the Hungarian spirit" (Vona 2013:204) – to gain popularity among Roma people (Vona 2011:162). In this way, anti-Semitism and anti-Roma attitudes are connected in a very effective conspiracy theory, where the real enemy is the (international) Jewish community, and the Roma only serves as a pawn in their hands to eventually destroy the Hungarian nation (Krekó and Juhász 2017). This hostility against the Faith Church is even present in the 2014 manifesto of the party, condemning the decision of Fidesz to treat the Faith Church on par with the historical churches of Hungary (Jobbik 2014:64).

However, while the Jewish is indeed a religiously defined other, it is somewhat an oversimplification to disregard Jobbik's Christianity as a euphemism for 'non-Jewish', as it is often done by scholars analyzing the situation (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a, 2016b, Kovács 2013).

35

This can be seen not only in their election programs, but also in the wide variety of instances when Jobbik relies on religious rhetoric and justification. As can be seen in section 3.1., while anti-Semitism provides an additional reason for the usage of Christianity, religion is also important as a signifier for the anti-communism and the general right-wing ideology of the party. Another important feature of the Jewish-Christian opposition lies in the aforementioned traditionalism of Vona and other intellectuals close to Jobbik: international Judaism is not really another genuine religion, but exactly the opposite of that, a representative of everything that is wrong with modernity, globalization, and consumerism.

Of course, Jobbik always rejected the accusations of anti-Semitism and anti-Roma attitudes: Jobbik might be speaking harshly about the Roma-issue and the actions of Israel, but it is because they are talking about real problems instead of trying to be politically correct. What they advocate is not discrimination, but precisely equal treatment for everybody, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, or sex – or so they claim. In this rhetoric, they often turn these accusations upside down, and say systematic racism exists against Hungarian – not against Jewish or Roma – people, both outside the country – against the Hungarian minorities living in the neighboring states –, but also against the Hungarian majority inside the country through affirmative action and double standards (Vona 2013:55-56, 58-59, 159).[16] With the process of the dedemonization, Jobbik aimed to get rid of these impressions more actively. Several radical politicians were removed from their leading positions during the process, aiming to tone done anti-Semitic and anti-Roma statements made by the party officials.[17] And while the 'cuteness campaign' does have some success, this shift mainly concerns the rhetoric, not the substance: the anti-Semitic and anti-Roma stances did not entirely disappear from the party, mainly

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[16] Nevertheless, it tells a lot that in 2012, when Csanád Szegedi – one of the leading figures of Jobbik – gained knowledge about his Jewish ancestry, he left the party. While this decision was voluntarily, in an interview in February of 2013, Vona told that in a similar situation, he would resign from his position as the leader of Jobbik (Vona 2013:81).
[17] A Hungarian overview about the anti-Semitic and anti-Roma statements by Jobbik officials is available at http://24.hu/belfold/2011/07/26/igy_ciganyozik_zsidozik_jobbik/.

appearing on the local level of organization (Bíró-Nagy and Boros 2016, Juhász 2017). Besides this, the task of keeping the more extremist voters of the party falls on the mediums close to Jobbik, although many of their extremist voters are dissatisfied with this solution.[18]

While Jobbik became more moderate in its tone in the last few years, AfD is currently moving to an opposite direction. Originally presenting mainly an economic critique of the governing party, with the refugee crisis, its main platform became the issue of immigration. Contrary to the practices of Jobbik, in the rhetoric of the AfD, the religious differences between Germany and the majority of the refugees are often and vehemently emphasized. In the recent election campaign, several billboards were dedicated to this issue, concerning, among others, burkas and halal food. Some leading politicians of the party – such as Beatrix von Storch and Alexander Gauland – even went as far to state that Islam in itself is not a religion, but a political ideology, non-compatible with the German Basic Law. These arguments, however, are more than slurs: it follows the logic of Germany's history of monitoring 'unconstitutional' religious movements and sects, and has important implications regarding the legal status and rights of Islamic religious organizations.

These arguments came to the forefront of AfD's communication in 2016, when AfD started to frame the issue of immigration in more cultural, and by extension, more religious terms. Before that, economic and securitarian considerations dominated the framing of the refugee crisis. In this rhetoric, the lack of integration was first and foremost an economic problem, concerning unemployment, social security, and the sheer number of extra people present in the system. Today, AfD campaigns with explicit anti-Islam messages, and while economic and security considerations have not disappeared from the rhetoric of the party, they are often presented as a consequence of cultural and religious differences. This is especially true for security issues, from religiously motivated terrorism to sexual assaults. The problem is

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[18] Recently, new far right movements formed with the goal of presenting the values that neither Jobbik nor Fidesz seems to undertake anymore (Fábián 2017).

not with immigration as such, but the immigration of the culturally different. This stance is well exemplified with AfD's emphasis on the protection of Christian and Jewish asylum-seekers.

In contrast, Jobbik still frames the issue – on the national and official level – mostly as a security problem, and to a lesser extent as an economic problem. A good example of this is Jobbik's opposition to the so called 'settlement bond program' or 'settlement bond business', from which Jobbik's recurring slogan "Neither poor, nor rich migrants are needed in Hungary" came from: Jobbik opposes every kind of immigration. The main argument regarding this issue was not about differences of culture or religion, it was about avoiding terrorism. The charge was that while Fidesz-KNDP claims to oppose immigration, it would allow anyone – even terrorists – to come into the country if it gets money from it. And although preserving the cultural identity of Europe is also in the picture, in the official party material Jobbik consequently refers to migrants, never to Muslims as such.[19]

Of course, AfD also states that the problem is not with 'normal' Muslim people who are already living in Germany and obey the laws of the state, but those newcomers who do not wish to comply with the customs and ideals of the culturally Christian German state. However, this does not stop the party from continuing an explicitly anti-Islam billboard campaign. And while the Christian identity of Germany is only mentioned a few times in the 2018 election program, there is an entire section detailing the problems with Islam, with a long list on how their religious practices and activities should be limited. In this rhetoric, the problem is not just an issue of immigration, but an issue with Islam – in the words of AfD, "Islam does not belong to Germany" (AfD 2017:48). As it was the case with the Euro-crisis, the slogan is directly in opposition to the more open approach of of Angela Merkel's CDU.[20]

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[19] Even such extreme right websites as Kuruc.info, which created sections dedicated to 'Gypsy criminality' and 'Jewish criminality' does not call the section dedicated to 'Immigrant criminality' 'Muslim criminality' or something explicitly religiously framed category, although specific issues and cases occasionally are framed as such.

[20] However, during the 2018 campaign, CDU/CSU did not have a clear program regarding immigration, and AfD's strong stance on the issue could appear as a clear alternative to this uncertainty.

This anti-Islam element is not expressed in Jobbik's official rhetoric, even though it is an opinion present in the party, but not shared by everybody. This relative openness to Islam is partly connected to the aforementioned traditionalism of Vona, who sees the Islamic world as the "last bastion of traditionalism", where transcendent and ferial are still fused (Vona 2011:190). However, he stresses that despite this sympathy, he is against the Islamization of Europe, which he sees as dangerous and fatal to the continent. Already in 2011, he sees immigration as one of the most pressing issues of Europe: even if anti-traditionalism in Europe is thriving, it is Europe's tradition that should be preserved, not replaced by another – in this case Muslim – tradition (Vona 2011:191). Even after the start of the refugee crisis, Vona stresses that while Hungary belongs to the Hungarians, and Hungary is a Christian country, the problem with immigration is not a religious one. He also often stresses that between states, Hungary still needs a good relationship with the Islamic world. As the Muslim world represents traditionalism against the anti-traditionalism of the United States and Israel, he sees these Eastern countries more as an ally than the latter two. However, this is not the only reason for good relationships: the view is also reinforced by the common ancestral Turanian heritage. Even after the refugee crisis, Vona often finishes his bigger speeches with a reference to this tie. However, after 2015, these views became more problematic, which is also reflected in the 2018 election program of Jobbik: the reference to the Turanian origins of Hungarians is left out of the text, as well as the Middle Eastern countries with regard to the 'Eastern opening', which now only mentions the Balkan countries, China, and Russia, along with a need for a closer cooperation with the Visegrád countries. Nonetheless, these previously more openly advocated views now are actively used against the party and Vona.[21]

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[21] In the beginning of 2018, a video footage of Vona was circulated throughout portals close to Fidesz, where he says in Turkish "We are the antecedents of Attila, whose principle is the truth, boldly opposing evil, not afraid of anything, only from God", using the word 'Allah' when referring to God (Kereki 2018). The goal, of course, was to discredit Jobbik in its opposition to immigration, and put the party 'in bed with enemy'.

Another connected issue is that while for other PRR parties the immigration of Muslim minorities and rising anti-Muslim sentiments resulted in an explicit support of Israel, this is not true for Jobbik. However, the often and strong criticism of Israel, previously a main characteristic of Jobbik, also faded away, and in the last two years, Gábor Vona and Ádám Mirkóczi, the spokesperson of the party, sent a letter to the leader of the Unified Hungarian Jewish Congregation, Slomó Köves, wishing a happy Hanukah. Something that was almost unthinkable before, other than some kind of joke. However, this gesture is at least as much the result of the gradual moderation in the tone of the party than the result of the current political situation regarding the refugee crisis and its aftermath.

AfD, on the other hand, follows the example set by other Western PRR parties, and generally supports the Jewish state. A common argument made by AfD and AfD politicians against Muslims is especially that they are anti-Semitic: presenting a security threat not just to the Christian majority, but to the Jewish community as well. This is especially apparent in their adamant protection of Christian and Jewish immigrants, who, at the refugee camps, are seen to be especially vulnerable to the hostilities of the Muslim majority of the immigrants. These arguments, although in a limited form, occasionally also appear in the communication of Fidesz-KDNP, even though, similarly to Jobbik, the continue to frame the issue in more securitarian and ethnic, rather than cultural terms. However, given Orbán's strong anti-immigration stance and his criticism towards the EU, AfD speak very highly of him.

However, despite the more unequivocal stance on Islam by AfD, they also have their tensions related to this issue, as can be seen with the resignation of the former party leader, Frauke Petry, after the 2017 federal elections. Similarly, when Björn Höcke condemned the Holocaust memorial and called for a '180-degree turn' in regard to remembering the past, the speech caused serious debates even inside the party. However, as it seems, these issues are mostly related to the question of tone, not necessarily the ideas themselves. For example, when

Alexander Gauland, the deputy leader of AfD, claimed that German people should be proud of their soldiers who served in the two world wars, the more moderate leading figure of AfD, Alice Weidel defended this statement with the argument that while the wording might not have been the most fortunate, the sentiments behind it are the right ones.

3.3. United by the common enemy?

While there are still several important differences between AfD and Jobbik, it can be concluded that both of them rely on a religious rhetoric in two ways: on one hand, religion serves as a tool to construct both 'us' and the 'other', on the other hand, the religious definition of the ingroup also serves to support their socially conservative stances with regard to various moral issues related to faith. In this way, the Christianity of these parties are of secondary importance. However, an important difference between the two parties is that for Jobbik, religiosity is more important for the definition of 'us', while for AfD it is more relevant in constructing the 'other'.

This was true even before Jobbik's 'cuteness campaign' started in 2013, partly because of the communist past of the country – in line with the expectations based on the literature –, and partly because the religiously constructed 'other' – the Jewry – is not necessarily condemned because of its religiosity, but more because of the lack of it. In this view, Christianity as a part of national identity gains its especial importance as the anti-thesis of globalization and (neo)liberalism. As such, Jobbik's religiosity is also a useful signifier of Jobbik's anti-Western attitude. In contrast, before 2015, AfD used its religiosity mostly in relation to their aforementioned conservative social stances, and Christianity gained more relevance only with the start of the 2015 refugee crisis. While Islam is also often accused with not being a genuine religion, the problem here is not their liberalism, but especially their conflict with the liberal values of Germany. As such, the relevance of Christianity in this regard is mostly confined to the Christian heritage of Germany, and not emphasized if not needed to. On

the other hand, religion plays a crucial role in the definition of the 'other', namely the mostly Muslim immigrants arriving to Germany.

These differences are evident in the framing of the refugee crisis and its aftermath: while both parties rely on cultural, securitarian, and economic arguments in their opposition to open borders, in the case of Jobbik, securitarian and economic arguments are in overwhelming majority. In contrast, after 2016, a certain hierarchy is forming among these issues in the arguments of AfD: the main problem is the cultural and religious difference, and economic and security issues are the consequences of the cultural difference. The differences are well illustrated by the fact that while Jobbik refuses to accept any immigrants, AfD often puts a special emphasis on the protection of both Christian and Jewish immigrants.

Given that despite this, AfD still uses a more nationalistic notion of Christianity also serving to justify socially conservative policy stances, Brubaker (2017a) is right that AfD somewhat differs from the 'civilizationist nationalist' PRR parties of the West. However, by this hierarchy of the arguments, AfD moves closer to its Western counterparts. The main difference is not in the securitarian framing of the issue of immigration, but that AfD continues to advocate its socially conservative stances.

On the other hand, Jobbik toned down its religiosity, and it did not start to consequently frame immigration in cultural/religious terms. While this rhetoric can be found on the local level and advocated by some politicians of Jobbik, it does not seem to gain salience on the official level of the communication of the party. The reasons for this are many-folded: it ranges from the traditionalist elements through the Turanian orientation present in the party, to the general aim to moderate the party, combined with the growing radicalism of the governing Fidesz-KDNP, where Jobbik, being unable to dictate the tone is much like a follower. While Jobbik lost its charismatic leader with the resignation of Vona, which could eventually bring

42

changes in this matter, for now, Jobbik's leadership seems to be committed to the path laid down by Gábor Vona.

Nonetheless, despite these substantially different approaches of Jobbik and AfD, in a sense, the two parties are closer to each other than ever: while AfD enhanced, Jobbik toned down its Christianity. Today, both parties use it in their written programs firstly as a general reference to the European heritage, and even more so as a part of their own national heritage. In this way, the twin evils of Islamization and globalization did bring closer the two parties, but it seems for now, there is a limit to this trend, and despite their similar stances on various issues, their relationship is not close. On one hand, AfD praises Orbán for his strong take on the issue, coupled with his criticism towards the European Union. On the other hand, paradoxically, the convergence of Jobbik and AfD happens while the two parties essentially move to different directions, which also limits 'uniformization'.

Ultimately, in terms of the importance of religion in these parties' ideology, the lack of a straightforward secular-religious opposition is the most striking characteristic. As most parties usually, both Jobbik and AfD has a very heterogenous membership: even with strong leadership, as was the case with Vona, a wide variety of ideological standpoints is present within the party. As such, religious references, for the most part, mean different things to each group, and it is best to leave these references open to interpretation. This limits the extent to which Christianity can be emphasized. While Jobbik decided to tone down this emphasis even more so during its journey to become a people's party, for AfD, an explicitly Christian association within the party (ChrAfD) advocates the religious image of the party.

Chapter 4: DEFENDERS OF CHRISTENDOM AND MORALITY: PRR AND RELIGION IN PRACTICE

This chapter assess the questions how the above discussed usage of religion translates into the actual practice of these parties, and whether the changes in how they use religion also bring change in how they see religion's role in society. While the first subsection focuses on the relationship between the mainline churches and these parties, the second subsection discusses religion policies of AfD and Jobbik by the analysis of their legislative initiatives and policy proposals.

4.1. CHURCHES: FRIENDS OR FOES?

Despite the above discussed ambiguities in the relationship of religion and these parties, it is generally the case that as both Jobbik and AfD stand for socially conservative policies regarding family, abortion, and euthanasia, and they advocate a culturally Christian Europe and nation. As such, they might very well consider the mainline Christian churches to be their natural allies in their quest of saving Europe/the nation. And while most of the time, churches are not open to this cooperation, there are nonetheless important personal links between churches and the respective parties, which links often cause notable controversies inside these religious communities. The present section examines Jobbik's and AfD's relationship with these religious organizations.

In line with their at least partially religious ideology, many of the leading politicians of these parties are active believers, and some of them were or still are connected in some way to a religious organization. Vona himself is a Roman Catholic, and for a brief period of time, he even considered the possibility to become a priest (Vona 2011:15). While he eventually did not pursue this career choice, his interest in Christian philosophy remained, and for a short time he studied to be a religion teacher at the Catholic University. Later he even lived at the attic of a

Franciscan parish. During his years as a university student, he was actively involved in the university's Catholic Society, which was one of the main organizations from which Jobbik eventually grew out. The party also has a cabinet responsible for church affairs, led by Ádám Mirkóczi. In the case of AfD, the somewhat separate ChrAfD provides a forum for explicitly Christian topics. In their manifesto, they emphasize the role of Christianity in Europe and call for the strengthening of denominational religious education. Besides this, they have a strong position on abortion, euthanasia, family and marriage, home education, and they also tackle the situation of Christians in Muslim countries, the conflict with Islam within Germany, Turkey's EU membership, and the protection of the Christian creed. While their influence within the party is limited, in 2017, three of their members gained seats in the Bundestag, including Beatrix von Storch, who is also the deputy spokesperson of the party.

While it is not a particularly common phenomenon – partly due to the churches' internal regulations on the matter –, but a few members of AfD and Jobbik held position previously in a religious organization, and a number of them worked and still works actively in their religious communities. For example, Tibor Bana, a Jobbik MP in the last two terms, holds office in the parish of Szenttgothárd. Marc Bernhard, Wilhelm von Gottberg, and Martin Erwin Renner, AfD MPs, were also parish council members for years before joining AfD. However, religious leaders outside the party supporting Jobbik or AfD are even more important. The most prominent example is Loránt Hegedűs, a Calvinist pastor, whose wife – Lorántné Hegedűs – is also a Jobbik MP. Hegedűs was previously the vice-chairman of MIÉP, and after its dissolution, while did not officially joined Jobbik, became an outspoken supporter of the party. His father, Bishop Hegedűs, also had a good relationship with MIÉP. These close relationships with the extreme right led to serious tensions within the Reformed church, even after 2002, when the national synod of the Hungarian Calvinist church forbade the possibility for pastors to become party members (Enyedi 2003:164, Zubor 2014). Eventually, they came to an agreement, and

45

Hegedűs junior, while still participates in various events close to Jobbik, now is less outspoken in this regard. In addition, several clerics from various Christian denominations supported Jobbik in one or more events, such as the aforementioned installation of the crosses.

However, generally, church leaderships try to distance themselves from Jobbik, and not particularly happy about the approach of the party. This is even more so the case in Germany, where church leadership often and harshly criticizes AfD, particularly for its stances on immigration. Among others, Cardinal Reinhard Marx, the chairman of the German Bishops' Conference is a prominent example in this regard, as he firmly ruled out the possibility for any cooperation between AfD and the Catholic bishops. Most Christian churches even refrain from public discussion with representatives of AfD. In response, the party condemns these clerics for being unchristian, and they are deeply offended by the various accusations of racism, xenophobia, and Nazism. While starting from 2017, this strong separation lifted somewhat and a dialogue between churches and AfD could take place in some – limited - form, both the churches and the AfD remain quite critical towards each other. One of the most pressing points of disagreement is immigration, where AfD also often critiques the churches for not protecting Christian refugees and interest. Another import issue is the churches' hostility towards AfD. AfD, dismissing CDU/CSU, claims they are the only political force in Germany which genuinely represents Christian values. As such, they condemn these organizations for not appreciating their true allies. Alice Weidel even went as far in a response to these criticisms to claim that German churches today are as politicized as they were in during the Third Reich. On the other hand, AfD is ready to quote religious authorities when they happen to hold similar positions.

In comparison, in Hungary, while relationships are not good between the churches and Jobbik, the conflicts occur on different fronts. One important issue is that the vast majority of Hungary's historical churches implicitly or explicitly supports the similarly anti-immigrant

Fidesz-KDNP. As such, both Fidesz's and Jobbik's pro-in-virto-fertilisation stance caused more tension with the Catholic Church than their closed borders program, or in the case of Jobbik, even their anti-Semitism. While this does not mean that there are no critical voices within the churches, they generally refrain from getting involved in the issue (Enyedi 2003:165-166). In this context, the main criticism from the part of Jobbik towards the churches – and especially the Catholic Church – is that they not conservative or national enough. However, the anti-communist of Jobbik is also a possible point of conflict, as they frequently call for making the list of state informants public, which would involve a number of clerics, exposing their cooperation with the communist regime.

The churches' relationship with Fidesz-KDNP also means that even if Jobbik could convince the churches about its moderation, actual cooperation between churches and Jobbik – at least in opposition – remains problematic. Since its right-wing turn, Fidesz is the most preferred party by Christian churches (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a:111, Enyedi 2003): while KDNP brought its strong ties to the Catholic Church, Fidesz itself is the strongest among the mainstream protestant churches, especially the Calvinist. Orbán himself is a Calvinist, and not just frequently uses religious rhetoric, but made numerous gestures towards these churches even before Fidesz-KDNP's overwhelming win in 2010. Today, in exchange for a sense of legitimacy, these churches receive generous benefits, especially in the field of education (Ádám and Bozóki 2016a, 2016b, Debreczeni 2017). For example, with the nationalization of Hungarian public schools a number of these institutions became denominational schools (Debrecezni 2017:183), and the minister of Human Resources in the last one and a half term, Zoltán Balog, was a Calvinist pastor before his political carrier. On the other hand, Merkel's CDU, while its manifestos, among other things, contain numerous references to the Christian understanding of man, the Christian heritage and origin of Germany, emphasizes traditional family values and the churches' role in the education of society, the party also governs in a

47

grand coalition with SPD for the third time, and made the legalization of same-sex marriage in Germany possible.

Against this background, while both Jobbik and AfD accuses their respective governing parties with not being genuinely religious, they have very different responses to the situation in terms of church-state relations. While Jobbik also criticizes churches, its main concern is not necessarily about the churches closeness of politics. Compared to this, while the politicization of churches is far stronger in Hungary than Germany, it is the AfD which calls for a greater distance between churches and state. As they see it, the main reason for the churches dismissal of AfD is the excessive politicization of them. As such, a greater distance from the state would allow for a greater freedom of though and speech.

Nonetheless, while most – if not all – religious organizations try to distance themselves from these parties, this is certainly not true the other way around, and it is not necessarily the case with individual clergymen either. In Hungary, where churches are highly politicized and have a strong nationalist tradition, Jobbik – with more or less success – would like to build on this tradition. While their attempt is not met with unconditional support from the part of the churches and criticism exists both ways around, Jobbik generally seeks out cooperation with the mainline churches. Conversely, in Germany, where there is a stronger liberal tradition within the churches, while AfD would like to have the support of these churches, they think this could be achieved with the greater independence of churches from politics. Generally, the actual relationships, for the most part, seem to depend on the one hand the ideological alignment of the churches, and on the other hand, particular issues. However, the relationships based on these ideological issues very well could manifest themselves on the policy level.

4.2. RELIGION POLICIES

This section gives a general overview of the polices proposed and advocated by AfD and Jobbik, by analysing their legislative initiatives to see whether religion policies – and what kind of religion policies – are present in the agenda of these parties. Jonathan Fox (2016), for example, distinguishes between three types of religion policies: supportive, regulatory, and discriminatory. Following Fox's categorization, religious support includes measures that show support for one particular denomination or religious tradition, as well as support for religions in general. Among others, such measures include the legislation of religious precepts (automatic recognition of religious marriage, bans on homosexuality, abortion, closure or other restrictions of business on religious holidays), the various forms of funding for religious, bans on blasphemy against majority or minority religions, and religious education in schools (Fox 2016:162). On the other hand, while both religious regulation and discrimination means restrictions on religion and religious practices, the main difference between the two is that while regulation usually concerns all religions, discriminatory policies only apply to specific – usually minority – denominations. These restrictions may concern religion's political role, religious institutions, and religious practices, among other types of rules and regulations (Fox 2016:163-164). It is important to note that this differentiation between the three types of policies are somewhat arbitrary, given that overwhelming support for one denomination by itself means disadvantage for other, minority religions. Another problem might be that a neutral wording of a policy does not mean neutral effect, or even that discrimination against a particular religion was not intended. In the case of PRR parties, this latter issue might be an even more prevalent problem, and the policy proposals and stances of AfD and Jobbik also confirm this. For this reason, while there is an important difference between religious regulation and discrimination, in the present paper the two are discussed together.

49

Before presenting the exact policies, however, some general observations are in order. The first and most important among these is that the actual policies of Jobbik and AfD concerning religion are not at all that common. For example, out of the 392 (237 + 155) independent and numerous additional modificatory initiatives from the two parliamentary terms of Jobbik, only a handful concern religion directly. This is true even more so to AfD, for at least two reasons outside of the question of their religiosity: on the one hand, AfD is only present in a few state parliaments since 2014 (namely, Brandenburg and Saxony), with its main breakthrough coming only in 2015-2016, and gaining seats in Bundestag only in the second half of 2017. This already gives a rather limited time period to examine, where the number of legislative initiatives, religious and non-religious alike, are generally few. This is complemented with the fact that in Hungary, the making of the new constitution generated an environment for the 2010-2014 parliamentary term in which rewriting already established general principles was feasible and on the agenda to begin with. On the other hand, Germany, as it is usually with the case in Western democracies (Fox 2008, 2016), has a set and rather stable system for regulating religious questions, which does not exactly encourage grandiose reforms. Despite this important difference, certain religion policies are on the agenda of both of these parties – mainly concerning the legislation of religious precepts, funding, and restrictions and regulations regarding religious practices and institutions. In the following, these policies are presented in detail, contrasting them to the positions and policies of the governing Christian democratic parties to provide context.

4.2.1. Religious support

While neither Jobbik nor AfD proposes actual bans on homosexuality, they both promote the concept of traditional family, which does affect issues related to homosexuality on the policy level. For example, in its 2010 electoral program, Jobbik proposed to eliminate the institution of registered partnership with the aim to restore the respect of marriage, a promise left out from

later manifestos. Jobbik also proposed that religious marriages should automatically be recognized by the state in the case of the presence of an appropriate government official. While this proposal was followed by a draft law in 2011, it was rejected by the parliament, even though Fidesz had a similar proposal in 2001. By 2018, it was dropped out from Jobbik's election program as well. Limitations on the Pride parade – as mentioned already – are also a recurring topic of Jobbik, arguing that while it is harmful to every decent person, it especially harms religious people. While these limitations vary from banning the event altogether to the limitation of the right of assembly with the aim to protect religious freedom, only the latter proposal was presented in parliament by the Jobbik faction. However, László Toroczkai, the mayor of Ásotthalom and a representative of the more radical wing of Jobbik, successfully passed a municipal decree in 2016 banning propaganda depicting marriage anything else than partnership between a man and a woman. Similarly, while AfD even has a leading politician – Alice Weidel – belonging to a sexual minority, according to its promoted traditional family values, the party stood up against bringing more teaching about homosexuality into school and daycare curriculums on several occasions, and vehemently opposed the decision legalizing same sex marriage in Germany, as well as the possibly of adoption for these couples. The issue of same sex relationships is often connected to the topic of 'gender mainstreaming'. For example, the decisions regarding school curriculums are also supported by LGBT members of AfD to prevent the 'early sexualization' of children. Connected to this, both Jobbik and AfD opposes the teaching of gender studies programs at universities, claiming that it is not just against traditional family values, but that it is an ideology without any scientific merit or basis, thus harmful and not worthy of such status. However, despite the fact that AfD emphasizes its commitment beside the traditional family, so far, they did not present draft laws addressing this issue on federal level.

The same goes for abortion, where the existing law in Germany is relatively strict to begin with. Nevertheless, AfD actively advocates the respect for life, starting with the embryo, where the primary goal of abortion counseling should be the protection of the unborn life. Similarly, in Jobbik's election manifestos, until 2018, permissive abortion laws were always opposed. In 2011, Jobbik proposed a draft amending the law about the protection of fetal life with the goal to implement their more conservative approach. While Fidesz-KDNP opened this question with the new Fundamental Law, explicitly stating that life begins from conception, Jobbik's proposal was rejected by the governing parties, and by 2018, it is left out from the election manifesto of Jobbik as well. This points to an interesting relationship with the respective governing parties. While both CDU/CSU and Fidesz-KDNP – as Christian conservative parties – generally hold similar positions than AfD and Jobbik on these moral issues, and as such somewhat eroding the pressure to address these questions on legislative level, both parties in opposition argue that the governing parties do not do enough on this matter. With passing the law about the legalization of same sex marriage[22] and with the decision to leave out – for the first time – the issue of abortion from the CDU election manifesto, AfD claims that they are the only party left in Germany genuinely representing these conservative values. On the other hand, while Fidesz-KDNP often implements their own version of Jobbik's proposals, when they do not, Jobbik can argue – even with their moderation – that Fidesz-KDNP can make these conservative policies a reality, but they choose not to, making the authenticity of their conservative stances questionable.

On the other hand, when they do implement such policies, Jobbik can claim that even from opposition, they are the ones who actually govern. The implementation of religious education gives an example for this scenario, which was a prevalent topic in the 2010 election manifesto of Jobbik, followed by a policy proposal in 2010. While Jobbik's proposal did not

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[22] Even though the majority of the CDU/CSU faction – including Merkel –, voted against the law, they made the vote possible and allowed for conscious voting, thus, as AfD sees, essentially betraying their stances.

52

even make it to the general debate, Fidesz-KDNP implemented their own version of it in 2011, making religious education compulsory with the possibility to study ethics instead. Jobbik also argued for the closure of business on Sunday, both in its electoral programs and in a draft law in 2010, but since the policy was implemented then later canceled by Fidesz-KDNP due to the massive unpopularity of the decision, Jobbik also has a more complicated stance on the issue, and the party no longer advocates it. Compared to this, both religious education and Sunday closure exists in some form in most German states, with the exact regulation varying from state to state. Consequently, these issues are not addressed on the federal level by AfD, and not particularly prevalent on state level either.

While these issues do have a religious angle to them, and many of them are explicitly supported by religious arguments, an important aspect of them is that they are not only religious, or better yet, moral issues, but explicitly national issues. This is especially evident in the case of abortion, where liberal laws are seen to be problematic not only in moral, but also in practical terms, by actively contributing to the erosion of the nation. Note that the two lines of arguments can work separately, but ultimately, they support the same solution: fewer – or preferably no – abortions. Another example where this entanglement of national and moral arguments often present is the question of funds. While AfD had no policy proposal so far regarding this issue on federal level, Jobbik had several proposals over the years amending the budget law calling for more funds for various religious issues, mostly for restoration of church buildings and religious events. These proposals, however, usually are not justified with religious arguments. The concern in these cases is mostly national unity, and the erosion of buildings with historical and cultural importance. It is very telling that the targets of these proposals are often religious communities in the Hungarian populated territories of the neighbouring countries. Jobbik also had a proposal in 2010 to have the Hungarian Credo[23] hang on the wall in every public education

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[23] The Hungarian Credo (*Magyar Hiszekegy*) is a direct response to the Trianon treaty, and its massage concerns the territorial and national unity of Hungary.

institution. This is a very typical policy in the sense that while it is a prayer, it is a heavily national prayer, and its importance, as emphasized in the justification of the proposal, is in the need to strengthen national unity and pupils' national consciousness.

Nonetheless, Jobbik also had proposals regarding the entanglement of government and religious institutions, where cooperation with religious organizations potentially can mean more than nation building. In its 2010 and 2014 election programs Jobbik proposed to have a minister without portfolio whose task would be to ensure the presence of issues concerning religious organizations at the government level, and make communication easier between government and religious communities. In its 2010 program, Jobbik also proposed to establish a second chamber of the parliament, where among other non-partisan actors, church representatives would also have seats. In addition, Jobbik – in line with their preferential treatment – calls for signing 'Vatican treaty-type' documents with the other historical churches of Hungary, along with guaranteeing their secure financing.

As Jobbik did not became a governing force, we cannot know whether these promises would have been fulfilled, and by 2018, these proposals were dropped from the election manifesto. The only remaining issue in this regard is the reform of the church act. In 2010, the aim was to make recognition stricter to stop the proliferation of the so called 'business churches', while after the implementation of Fidesz's 2011 Church Act, the aim was to replace the current solution where recognition of churches is in the competence of the legislative body. While in the election programs, it is not discussed what alternative is preferred, in 2011, Jobbik proposed an amendment to the draft law on churches, calling for the establishment of a Hungarian religious advisory body (*Magyar Vallásügyi Tanácsadó Testület*) composed of the delegates of the established churches, the delegates of the parliamentary parties, as well as a delegate of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The recognition of new churches would have

been the task of this body. However, the proposal was dismissed, and it is unclear whether Jobbik still advocates this solution.

As it can be seen above, there are a number of religion policies of AfD and Jobbik supporting religion, and more precisely, certain religious traditions. For the here examined parties, religious support first and foremost concerns the legislation of religious precepts, sometimes explicitly justified on religious grounds. Nonetheless, these policies concerning moral questions are not just religious, but also national issues. In the case of Jobbik, it is even more evident in their proposals concerning religious funding, which mostly concerns the question of national identity. As such, the importance of religion remains symbolical. However, Jobbik also had proposals in the past – mostly in the 2010-2014 parliamentary term – which point to enhanced cooperation between church and state. This is not true for AfD, where outside the legislation of religious precepts, policies in support for religion are generally not on the agenda of the party.

4.2.2. *Religious regulation and discrimination*

While there is a wide variety of possibilities for religious regulation (see Fox 2016) – whether it concerns all, or just minority religions (discrimination) –, both for Jobbik and AfD, these policies mostly concern the regulation of religious practices and institutions, and to a lesser extent the registration of minority religious organizations.

One of the most typical policies in this regard is about wearing religious symbols and clothing. In May 2016, AfD adopted an explicitly anti-Islam manifesto, which was also their election manifesto for the 2017 federal elections. In the document, AfD calls for a ban on full-body veiling in public spaces and in public service (AfD 2016:35-36, 2017:49). While a law banning full-body veiling can be worded without the mention of any specific religion, the proposal is part of the chapter "Islam and its Tense Relationship with our Value System" (AfD 2017:47-49), which clearly indicates the reason for the restriction. Besides banning the burqa

and the niqab in public spaces, the manifesto also advocates a ban on headscarf for public servants, and for teachers and students alike in public schools (AfD 2017:49). While the manifesto points to the French model in this regard, there is no indication that every religious symbol and clothing item would be the subject of the law. The acceptance of the platform was followed by draft laws by the AfD factions in several state parliaments. The justification of these draft laws, although not exactly uniform, mostly follows the one presented in the manifesto, claiming that full body vailing hinders cultural integration. The manifesto also contains plans to place restrictions on religious institutions, as AfD would not allow the foreign financing of mosques, and would place a ban on the building of minarets and muezzins as "symbol[s] of Islamic supremacy" (AfD 2017:49).

In line with the fact that Jobbik does not frame the refugee crisis in cultural terms in its official rhetoric, there were no attempts to implement similar policies on the national level. Nonetheless, Toroczkai, along with the ban on propagating same sex marriage, also introduced a ban on the wearing of burqa, niqab, and burkini. While the municipal decree was found to be unconstitutional by the Hungarian constitutional court in late 2016, since then, Toroczkai attempted to pass the decree again, now with a more neutral wording, again to be found unconstitutional by the court. In addition, the original 2016 decree banned muezzins, and in 2017, Toroczkai also proposed a decree banning the construction of mosques. While all of these policies were implemented, they were all repealed by the constitutional court of Hungary. What is even more important – from the viewpoint of the present paper – is that while these policies are not present on the national level and in the official communication of the party, the party did not openly condemn the content of the decrees either. However, with the resignation of Vona after the 2018 elections, this reserved standpoint of the official party communication causes more tensions than ever, and the more radical wing of Jobbik, led by Toroczkai, threatens to split.

Despite the current inner conflicts of Jobbik, it is worth to note that these different approaches very well could at least partially be the result of the different national context. While Hungary remains to be a transit country, Germany is oftentimes the destination of migration. Consequently, the proportion of Muslims was not only higher to begin with, but it also grows considerably. Therefore, in Hungary, questions concerning the religious practice of Muslims are simply not that salient, especially compared to Germany, where even without AfD, the coexistence of different religions is a pressing issue. For example, while the legal status of various minority religions is also debated in Hungary and questioned by Jobbik, they have more problem with the aforementioned Faith Church and the advantages they receive than with Muslim minorities. On the other hand, the legal status of Islamic religious organizations is a concern for the growing Muslim minority as well, and critical voices come from various directions. Against this background, AfD opposes vehemently to grant public body status for Islamic organizations, as they argue that Islam – being a political ideology – is unconstitutional and does not meet the criteria. AfD would also abolish theological chairs for Islam studies at German universities and transfer these positions to the faculty of nondenominational religious studies (AfD 2017:49). In addition, AfD would only allow Imams to preach in German, and with the authorization of the government (AfD 2017:48). While there are a number of restrictions concerning other minority religions in Germany, with the monitoring and harassment of various sects, AfD does not seem to be concerned with this issue, and most of their religion policies focus explicitly – or sometimes implicitly – on Islamic religious organizations.

Even before 2016, some regulatory religion policies can be found on the agenda of AfD on state level. However, these were not about religious discrimination. In 2015, a proposal of the AfD faction in the Hamburg state parliament would have regulated school kitchens in a way that different types of meals can be prepared in the same room, thereby ensuring that religious

57

diets are not forced on anybody. Since then, the focus shifted, and AfD wants to ban the halal and kosher slaughtering of animals (even with short term electro-stunning) for the sake of animal protection. This is again an issue not pursued by Jobbik, even thought they had several proposals in the last few years with the aim to severe punishment for animal cruelty.

In summary, discriminatory religion policies are far more prevalent in the case of these parties than regulatory ones, although policies aimed at Islamic religious organizations sometimes formulated in a neutral way. In other cases, general regulation of religion is not on the agenda of neither Jobbik, nor AfD, and overall, both parties appear to accept the main principles of the current legal framework of church-state relationships in their country. However, an important difference is that while Jobbik does have some discriminatory religion policies, they are on the local level, not reinforced – although also not openly condemned – by the party. In the case of AfD, however, these discriminatory policies are wholeheartedly embraced and initiated by the official party communication. This is not to say AfD lacks conflict in this regard, but nonetheless, this is the official direction taken by the party. In the case of Jobbik, it is the other way around: while the official communication tries to avoid explicitly anti-Islam messages, the sentiment is clearly present in the party, causing considerable tensions.

Chapter 5: CONCLUSIONS

The present paper examined the relationship between religion and populist radical right parties in opposition, with the analysis of two European cases: the *German Alternative für Deutschland* and the *Hungarian Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom*. The main questions analysed include how these parties politicize religion, how they see the role of religion in society, and how these aspects are affected by the 2015 refugee crisis and its aftermath. Additionally, these parties' relationship with the mainline churches were also examined.

While one of the main expectations was an enhanced religious rhetoric of these parties, this is only partially true. While the refugee crisis had a significant impact on how these parties use religion in their rhetoric, it does not necessarily mean an enhanced usage: rather, what changes is the way in which they present their Christianity. As such, today, both Jobbik and AfD uses religious rhetoric – at least while defining the ingroup – in rather vague, cultural terms, most referring to the Christian heritage of the nation, and to a lesser extent, Europe. Meanwhile, while these vague terms are similar to the rhetoric of other Western PRR parties, both Jobbik and AfD remained fairly conservative in socio-cultural terms. However, there are some important differences between the two parties. One of them is that Jobbik uses religiosity more for restoration (defining 'us'), while AfD uses it more for battle (defining 'them').

This is not just because Jobbik toned down its anti-Semitic rhetoric while still not framing the issue of immigration in cultural terms. Even before, when the party was more profoundly anti-Semitic, religion was more in contrast with secularism, (neo-)liberalism, and globalization. As such, it played an important role regarding the unity and preservation of the nation. And while the ideal about the homogeneity of the nation is indeed connected to hostility against various minorities, it is not only that. While Jobbik, preparing to govern toned down altogether these issues in its rhetoric, some aspects of it still show: historical churches are still important in their manifesto regarding the protection and preservation of Hungarian minorities,

59

and some issues of church-state relationship are also included. Compared to this, AfD only mentions Christianity in their manifesto a handful of times, while they dedicate a whole subsection to problems concerning Islam in Germany, explicitly framing the issue in religious and cultural terms. While other arguments, concerning security and economy are still present in their rhetoric, there is a certain hierarchy among them, where these other issues are mostly the consequence of the cultural differences.

Meanwhile, even with these general observations, the relationship between religion and these parties are not straightforward, as many competing worldviews are present within these parties. Nonetheless, these general trends are reflected in the official party literature, and they also appear to have important ramifications in policy terms, at least in the case of the here examined parties. While due to their conservative social stances, both Jobbik and AfD promote issues connected to legislation of religious precepts on policy level, such as abortion and issues around homosexuality, these are not just religious, but national issues as well. This can be seen with a number of other policies in support of religion. However, there were some religion policies of Jobbik, particularly before 2014, which point to a somewhat enhanced cooperation between church and state. In contrast, religious discrimination and regulation are more prevalent in the case of AfD, mainly concerning the religious practices of Muslims. These findings imply that if a party uses religious rhetoric more for restoration, one can expect more policies supporting religion. In contrast, where religion is used more in terms of battle, policies regarding religious discrimination will be more numerous.

This distinction, however, does not seem to affect relationships with the churches very strongly, and for the most part, it seems to depend on to what extent these organizations hold similar positions in terms of ideology and particular issues. Nonetheless, these relationships could very well result in different preferred regulations in terms of church-state relationships,

which – to some extent – is also reflected in the here examined legislative initiatives, although not particularly strongly.

While there is no straightforward relationship between these parties and religion, and the analysis of only two cases cannot yield definitive answers, the paper revealed some important patterns, which could provide a fair basis for further research. One such aspect is that while the religiosity of PRR parties is widely regarded as instrumental, in what way it is instrumental can have important implications in terms of the regulation of policy, as well as on how these parties generally perceive the role of religion in society. At the same time, despite the 'uniformization' of PRR parties due to the twin evils of globalization and Islamisation, particular features specific to a country – for example in terms of religious landscape –, also influence these issues immensely. Nonetheless, for more conclusive results comparative analysis with the inclusion of a more diverse set of cases is needed, for which I believe, the present paper provides an important first step.

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