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## **Fascism and Religion: The Metaxas Regime in Greece and the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation'. Some Theoretical Observations on 'Fascism', 'Political Religion' and 'Clerical Fascism'**

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The concept of 'clerical fascism' is both fiercely contested and theoretically elastic. Like the history of the term 'fascism' itself, 'clerical fascism' made its debut in 1920s Italy, and was used to describe the ideas and attitudes of a particular group within the Vatican clergy that sought an ideological and political rapprochement with Benito Mussolini's Fascist regime. '*Clerico-fascisti*' – as they were disparagingly called by their opponents – had been members of the Partito Popolare Italiano (PPI), who abandoned the party in the early to mid-1920s and became intermediaries between the fascist state and the church.<sup>1</sup> Yet the term soon acquired a more generic meaning, applicable to all members of the clergy who showed support for fascist movements and/or regimes across Europe. As a heuristic category, it has described a web of complex interactions, and convergences between fascist movements and religious (Christian) institutions or groups within them – a convergence made possible on the basis of shared ideological beliefs or political objectives. As an essentialist genus, it has been put forward as an adjunct to the broader definitional corpus of fascist ideology. Therefore, 'clerical fascism' touches upon the dialectics of religion and politics, of thought and action, of tradition and modernity.<sup>2</sup> As such, it is located in a rather fuzzy analytical territory, flanked by equally nebulous concepts such as 'religious politics', 'political religion', and so on.<sup>3</sup> As if this were not enough, 'clerical fascism' also crosses into the territory of 'generic' fascism itself – with its notorious conceptual, methodological and other ambiguities.<sup>4</sup>

The role of organised churches and their functionaries, of special bodies within churches or of individual clerical practitioners in politics, has always been a fascinating object of historical enquiry. Historically, European churches have spearheaded or stifled national liberation movements, and have actively engaged in or snubbed politics – particularly in the past two centuries of alleged secularisation and rationality. However, these churches have always been omnipresent in socio-political debates involving modernity and tradition, continuity and change – commenting, influencing and often acting.<sup>5</sup> The modern political sphere, with mass participation and civic institutions, was both an opportunity and a challenge for organised religion, particularly since politics was conceived as a rational, temporal, secular, plural and competitive environment of multiple

loyalties, in contrast to the notions of transcendental belief, spiritual salvation and unity associated with established religion, particularly the various Christian confessions.

Broadly speaking, when religious institutions entered the political sphere, they displayed an affinity for conservative, often reactionary, tradition-based political ideas.<sup>6</sup> They shied away from adopting radical – let alone revolutionary – movements and programmes. There were notable exceptions, of course. When certain bodies or individuals from within the church felt inclined to embrace radicalism and become politically active, they did so on the basis of an anti-modern backlash, harking back to deep-seated prejudices and stereotypes broadly compatible with traditional religious ideas (like ‘blood libel’ antisemitism). Virulently antisemitic clerics, such as the Lutheran pastor Adolf Stoecker in Germany, capitalised on the diffused prejudices against Jews in European society in order to gain access to wider sections of the population and to compete in the secularised domain of mass politics.<sup>7</sup>

Then, of course, there is the issue of nationalism. In southern, eastern and central Europe, national identity was often associated with religion – both positively (as a determinant of identity and community) and negatively (in fundamental opposition to ‘others’). Christian churches have historically played an important role in nationalist political movements, particularly against external foes, but also, at times, against internal ‘others’. To take an example, in the areas of the Ottoman Empire, the administrative system of *millet* unwittingly established the foundations of religious group identification that was converted into religion-based national identity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the wind of western modernity reached the southern periphery of Europe.<sup>8</sup> In this context, the role of organised religion may be viewed as revolutionary – one partly located in a secular terrain – in terms of an institution and world view well placed to spearhead the process of regeneration that has always underpinned national independence movements.<sup>9</sup>

We have already begun to discern some of the historical and ideological forces that shaped ‘clerical fascism’. National identities steeped in religious particularism, reaction to the effects of modernisation by retreating to old certainties, and perceptions of ‘crisis’ and ‘danger’ operant within an apocalyptic vision of salvation-through-rebirth were some of the major spheres of convergence between fascism and the church in interwar Europe. Yet is it possible to talk of a genuinely affective relationship between *religion* and *fascism*? The nature of fascism as a radical, holistic, palingenetic, hyper-nationalist and action-oriented ideology<sup>10</sup> – and as an aggressive, violent social movement with unmistakable tendencies towards the ‘charismatisation’ of its leader<sup>11</sup> – makes it sound more like a challenger to, rather than an ally of, organised religion.<sup>12</sup> Fascism’s totalitarian ambitions and attempts at constructing a new type of human being (‘new man’)<sup>13</sup> must have been sufficient evidence of its incompatibility with the church’s professed ethical values, traditions and social functions. In fact, the intellectual origins of Italian Fascism lay in decidedly revolutionary, anti-clerical values, not to mention the vehement rejection of anything rooted in tradition by certain *fascist della prima ora*, such as the Futurists.<sup>14</sup> The subsequent vote of confidence in Mussolini’s experiment by a group of so-called ‘clerical fascists’ inside the Catholic Church smacked of opportunism and tactical elasticity, focusing on common enemies rather than on shared values and goals. Consequently, ‘clerical fascists’ in Mussolini’s Italy were never strong enough to overcome an uneasy and largely contradictory

co-existence – not even after signing the Treaties of Reconciliation (Concordat) in 1929.<sup>15</sup>

This chapter proposes to approach the relation between interwar fascism and religion from two viewpoints. The first concerns fascism's own nature as an alleged *political religion*, by which we do not mean its efforts to supplant Christianity, but the transformation of political ideology into a holistic system of faith intolerant of any alternatives.<sup>16</sup> The second perspective pertains to the considerations and expectations that promoted a convergence between fascism, religion and organised churches – whether on the institutional or personal level. Whilst the first element may (at least by some) be viewed as a generic characteristic of fascism, the latter refers to a more specific set of ideological, political, social and institutional patterns of convivial interaction that nevertheless varied from country to country. It may suggest a fascist movement that embraced a given nation's established religion, a religious group that threw its weight behind a political movement, party or ideology (this was, in fact, the most common context for 'clerical fascism'), or an informal, *ad hoc* relation between European fascists and churches that provided mutual legitimacy and authority. One may also talk of *religious politics*, indicating the participation of religious institutions or individuals in the arena of modern mass politics (like Catholic Action), with an ambition to shape the political agenda and ensure (or even augment) the church's influence on society.

Taken together, 'fascism-as-political religion' and 'religious politics-as-fascism' constitute two different manifestations of the *diffusion of the sacred* in the modern world.<sup>17</sup> Modernisation created choices, alternative loyalties, new possibilities – in other words, and at least in theory, a de-centring of the traditional world.<sup>18</sup> In so doing, modernisation entailed fundamental social change in calling for the restructuring of relations, behaviours and values in a society. Liberal-parliamentary politics, the rise of nationalism as a 'civic religion' (in the Mazzinian tradition), economic modernisation as industrialisation, secularisation – these were only the most visible and contested facets of modernisation in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Each of these, both individually and in combination destabilised traditional moral and social constants, often provoked psychological gaps, disorientation and a craving for a new, transcendental order.<sup>19</sup>

It would be misleading, however, to assume that these dramatic changes resulted in the 'death of the sacred', either transcendental or the metaphysical. For example, the advent of secularism might have affected the social standing of the church in many societies and seriously eroded the monopoly over salvation held for so many centuries by traditional religion; however, it did not entail the equivalent advance of reason and rationality. Friedrich Nietzsche's famous dictum, 'God is dead; God remains dead', referred to an irreparable erosion of religion's claim to be the exclusive source of morality and teleology in the nascent condition of modernity.<sup>20</sup> Interestingly, Nietzsche acknowledged that the idea of a godless world was difficult to believe in itself. For the partly emancipated, partly disoriented individuals produced by the modern era, the putative 'death of God' did not mean the death of faith and sacredness. Ironically, it unleashed previously unimaginable possibilities: for re-negotiating the meaning of salvation and regeneration; for exploring novel links between transcendence and immanence; and for shuttling between the transience of the individual and the intransience of the sacred. A spate of 'civic religions' did not simply take up the role previously performed by organised religion. They did not supplant ideas of

sacredness, but re-defined them in light of a dawning 'mass politics of immanence'. Modernity diffused the sacred into new sources, conferring upon secular entities (like the race or class) an 'aura' previously reserved for religion alone. Nation and, later, science were two very different examples of this sacralisation that simultaneously represented growing secularisation and widespread evidence that the popular need for the sacred (not necessarily or primarily in its traditional religious form) remained undiminished.<sup>21</sup> One might actually say that the diffusion of the sacred resulted in its greater proliferation, by accessing resources traditionally unavailable or unnecessary to the discourse of Christian salvation.<sup>22</sup>

'Clerical fascism' was the somewhat bizarre product and manifestation of the diffusion of the sacred in modern societies, as well as a symptom of the erratic and self-contradictory process of modernisation itself. It became possible on the basis of wider historical processes that had acquired new meanings in the context of modernisation: on the one hand, the politicisation of religion – in itself a very old process, but one that now forced churches to compete against secular institutions for power and influence; and on the other hand, the sacralisation of politics in terms of both substance and style. Taken together, the two processes underlined the heightened significance of the political as the domain through which power (even *total* power) and authority could be exercised. However, the contradictions inherent in these two processes are evident. As political religion is a genus of secular religion, it did not necessarily involve Christianity in institutional, cultural or ethical terms. In fact, fascism could be strongly anti-Christian, even bizarrely pagan or occult, as with the case of National Socialist elites Alfred Rosenberg and Heinrich Himmler.<sup>23</sup> Even when the fascist message of rebirth focused heavily on the religious (Christian) aspect of national identity, rational considerations and pragmatic calculations could also provide a motive (for example, appealing to 'traditional authority' in order to legitimize new forms of authority, such as the rational-legal or charismatic<sup>24</sup>); indeed, the same shadow of doubt lingered over the intentions of members of the organised church in supporting fascist parties. 'Clerical fascism' was one facet of the blurring distinction between the secular and the sacred in the modern world, for both politics and religion. This blurring had already been independently evident in the rise of religious politics (such as political Catholicism) and in the nationalism's ambition to perform the role of a primary repository of collective allegiance by 'sacralising' the nation. Yet the confluence between these two forms of 'religion' under the ideological and political auspices of a movement with distinct totalitarian ambitions was a momentous development that may tell us as much about diverse national permutations of 'fascism' as about the processes of modernisation and identity-building within each national society.

However, just as the absence or relative weakness of 'fascism' in particular interwar states is a revealing juxtaposition in the study of fascism *per se*,<sup>25</sup> studying the interaction between churches and radical politics where it *did not* produce a distinct basis for 'clerical fascism' may be a fruitful test of our heuristic hypotheses about 'fascism-as-political religion'. This article explores the relation between ideology, national identity and religion in the paligenetic discourse of the '4th of August' regime in Greece. Headed by the ex-general, a fervent pro-royalist politician, Ioannis Metaxas, this government was established through a 1936 *coup d'état* in direct collusion with the crown, and expired only with its figurehead's death in January 1941. Its last vestiges were crushed under the Nazi invasion and

occupation of Greece four months later. The paper explores the ideology of Metaxas's regime in relation to the 'myth' of the nation and the role of religion (in this case, Orthodox Christianity) as one of the two main pillars of Greek identity. It also analyses the features and limitations of Metaxas's 'fascist' ideological and political outlook, especially in the context of his efforts to 'fascistise' Greek society in the 1930s. This paper argues that, while it is still possible to talk about the regime as an experiment in 'fascistisation from above'<sup>26</sup> – based on a vision of national rebirth shot through with potent religious references – 'clerical fascism' (and even 'religious politics') was largely absent from the '4th of August' regime. This, however, should not distract from either the politicisation of religion under Metaxas's rule, or its crucial role in supplying 'traditional' legitimacy to an emerging scenario for political religion that was (unsuccessfully) incubated and cultivated during the five or so years of Metaxas's regime. If anything, the case of Metaxas's Greece serves as evidence of an alternative model of 'fascism-as-(aspiring) – political religion' to either that of National Socialist Germany or nation cases of 'clerical fascism'. The paper also investigates whether the absence of 'clerical fascism' in Metaxas's Greece was indicative of the peculiarities of the Greek national context, including the traditional role of the church in politics and society, in addition to examining the strength of populist politics and Metaxas's own brand of 'fascistisation'.

#### **The Case of Greece: Ioannis Metaxas, the '4th August' Regime and 'Fascism'**

The regime that came closest to being identified as 'fascist' in interwar Greece was that established by Ioannis Metaxas on 4 August 1936 (hence its official name). The existing literature on his personality, his ideas and his system of rule is rather limited, both in English and (surprisingly) in Greek. It is not coincidental that Greece is conspicuously absent from all but one of the comparative publications on fascism published before 1980.<sup>27</sup> In the last three decades the elaboration of the conceptual core of fascism by scholars such as Roger Griffin, Roger Eatwell, Stanley Payne, Martin Blinkhorn and Philip Morgan brought the Metaxas regime into the focus of comparative analysis. Yet this happened with a crucial caveat – most generic interpretations regard the case of interwar Greece as an incomplete exercise in mimetic 'fascistisation', one with a limited character and strong conservative–authoritarian tendencies – hence the terms 'authoritarian', 'abortive fascist' or 'para-fascist' applied to Metaxas's Greece.<sup>28</sup> With the exception of some Greek scholars who have not hesitated to analyse the regime as essentially fascist<sup>29</sup> (most of them inflecting a Marxist approach to the meaning of fascism *per se*<sup>30</sup>), the majority of the accounts tend to view the Metaxas regime as essentially authoritarian, autocratic and dictatorial, all in generally conservative terms.<sup>31</sup> While Thanos Veremis and David Close tend to emphasise the derivation of the regime and its leader from a conservative military tradition, Jon Kofas uses the terms 'monarcho-fascism of one man' and 'caesarism' to describe its oblique (but rather limited) similarities with the fascist paradigm as elsewhere in Europe.<sup>32</sup> Hagen Fleischer doubts the genuine 'fascist' origins of the Metaxist regime, analysing it as an old-style authoritarian dictatorship with a parallel attempt to emulate the 'fascist style' – 'fascist more in appearance than substance', as he put it.<sup>33</sup>

It is indeed true that, compared with the paradigmatic models of fascist rule in Germany and Italy, the Metaxas regime lacked both a radical ideological profile



and a revolutionary dynamism that could distance it from the conventional authoritarian outlook of its elite sponsors. It is also the case that Metaxas was deprived of a movement-like reservoir of popular loyalty which would have, in theory, enabled him to force the pace of domestic consolidation and fascistisation of the state.<sup>34</sup> Unlike Mussolini and Hitler, he possessed neither the aura of a true charismatic leader (in spite of his meticulous efforts to inculcate a personal cult in the Greek population<sup>35</sup>) nor the determination to effect radical changes in Greek politics and society. Finally, his regime initially adopted a strictly neutral, equidistant foreign policy towards the two blocs, but subsequently opted for a careful pro-British stance – a decision that brought Italian aggression to Greece and engulfed the region in the Axis campaign of 1940–41.<sup>36</sup> Such observations sound perfectly valid, but they rest on a problematic heuristic dichotomy between ‘fascist’ and ‘authoritarian’, paying insufficient attention to the fact that all fascist *regimes* (as opposed to generally more radical *movements*) originated in a conventional political context and endeavoured (with varying degrees of success in each country) to recast dictatorship in a novel direction rather than refounding a new order through revolution. In this sense, the ‘regime-model’ of fascism should be analysed as an exploration of new forms of authoritarianism by re-defining the relation of its leadership with the traditional conservative elite groups (idiosyncratic in each country).<sup>37</sup> One further factor should not be overlooked: from the early 1930s onwards, the successful consolidation of fascism in Italy and Germany was a powerful incentive for many subsequent supporters of the authoritarian–dictatorial path to selectively emulate elements and structures of the two archetypal regimes. These two systems influenced the development of European radical politics in the 1930s in two ways. First, they found new disciples in many countries (hence the mushrooming of movements and parties bearing the words ‘fascist’ or ‘national socialist’ in their titles); and second, they impressed many of the politicians of the ‘old’ conservative right, prompting them to import selective ideological and organisational features from either Fascist Italy or Nazi Germany, or indeed both.

In many ways, Ioannis Metaxas was an extremely unlikely figure to inculcate fascist ideas and structures into Greek society. Born and brought up in a strictly conservative–military environment, Metaxas represented the aristocratic tradition in the Greek armed forces: staunchly royalist and anti-liberal; supporting the autonomous role of the army as guarantor of the internal stability of the state; and believing in the significance of prudently using military might to pursue the nationalist vision of the *Megali Idea* [Great Idea], an ambitious and expansionist vision. The Great Idea originated in the second half of the nineteenth century and envisioned the (re)creation of a large Greek empire in the eastern Mediterranean, the southern Balkans and the Black Sea.<sup>38</sup> Metaxas rose to prominence in the first two decades of the twentieth century, a period of great territorial expansion for Greece (union with Crete, and the acquisition of Macedonia and western Thrace during the two Balkan wars of 1912–13<sup>39</sup>). The painful memories of the humiliating defeat of the Greek army by the Ottoman forces in 1897 had, by then, given way to a furiously optimistic view of the country’s military capabilities, thus providing the frustrated *Megali Idea* with a new lease of life. As was common in the high ranks of the Greek military, Metaxas was fascinated by the iron discipline and prestige of Prussian militarism.<sup>40</sup> He was also a great admirer of the Wilhelminian authoritarian system of rule, which afforded the armed forces a significantly more pivotal political role than in the western democracies. His

instinctive loyalty to the crown and to traditional autocracy made him deeply distrustful of (if not overtly hostile to) the emergence of liberal and republican political ideologies in Greece, which came to be epitomised by the Cretan founder of the Liberal Party, Eleftherios Venizelos, in the second decade of the twentieth century.<sup>41</sup>

During World War One, Metaxas supported the monarchy wholeheartedly and, when King Constantine and Venizelos became locked in a bitter political struggle that caused a deep fracture in Greek society (*Ethnikos Dichasmos*, or the National Discord between 1915 and 1917), he was unwavering in his loyalty to the crown. Although a conservative nationalist by background, schooling and persuasion, he vehemently opposed Venizelos' plans to send an expeditionary force to Asia Minor on rational military and strategic grounds. Metaxas also played a crucial role in the restoration of the monarchy in 1920, after Venizelos surprisingly lost the elections and was once again marginalised when the crushing defeat of the Greek armed forces in Anatolia resulted, once again, in the abdication of the king and the collapse of the conservative government in 1922–3. After a period of reflection, he declared his support for the republican political system and set up a new party (*Eleftherofrones*, or Free Believers) as an oppositional force to the (Liberal) Party. His party, however, never succeeded in commanding such electoral loyalty that would have enabled him to join the mainstream of interwar Greek politics. As the legacy of the National Discord produced a bitter political rivalry between Venizelists and anti-Venizelists (now dominated by the Popular Party), Metaxas was both an identifiable figure within the latter camp and a peculiar outsider. He served occasionally as a minister in Popular Party cabinets after the anti-Venizelist electoral victory of 1933, but his extreme and vocal rejection of parliamentary rule and the liberal, constitutional order were unpalatable to the Popular Party's more moderate leadership. This, in hindsight, was a blessing in disguise: it established Metaxas as an alternative to the increasingly jaded Venizelist-anti-Venizelist rivalry. With the monarchy restored for the third time in 1935, the ex-general and disillusioned politician found a new access point into Greek politics. As electoral stalemate in early 1936 caused political instability and brought the two main parties close to a coalition government, the crown and Metaxas conspired to overthrow the democratic system and establish a dictatorship. His political comeback was spectacular: from the near-oblivion of parliamentary failure to the portfolio of the War Ministry, then to role of transitional Prime Minister, Metaxas turned his previous political failure into a virtue, resurfacing as an ostensibly independent 'Third Way'. Throughout June and July, he was carefully plotting his final step toward political supremacy, in close association with the king, who shared his anti-parliamentary, anti-liberal and anti-socialist views. The pretext for dictatorship – a general strike scheduled for 5 August 1936 and, more generally, the alleged 'threat of communism' – was hollow but, as in so many other parts of interwar Europe, this ultimately mattered very little.

### **The 'Third Hellenic Civilisation': National Identity, Religion and Church**

Metaxas was no 'fascist' by conviction or world view. His conservative background, his mainstream religiosity, his conventional anti-parliamentarian/anti-liberal/anti-communist outlook, his unreserved loyalty to the crown and his elite-driven (not popular) legitimacy smacked of an ordinary, patrician authori-



tarian. He was deeply impressed, however, by the fascist path to a new conception of politics and society, as well as by its commitment to the transgression of both liberal and old-fashioned conservative politics by its promise of spiritual regeneration, and by its experiments with novel forms for the social engineering of national life (youth organisations, corporatism, and so on).<sup>42</sup> All these prescriptions suited his vision of a post-Venizelist 'transformation' [*metavoli*] in Greek politics and society, as well as his personal aura as an 'outsider' intent upon inaugurating a new, more glorious chapter in Greek history. He showed particular interest in the constitutional and social experiments in Salazar's Portugal – particularly to the notion of the 'New State', which constituted one of the central ideological discourses for his own regime. The two official ideologues of the '4th of August', Georgios Mantzoufas and Nikolaos Koumaros, wrote extensively on the principles of Metaxas's *Neon Kratos* [the translation of 'New State' in Greek], which was also the name given to one of the regime's official periodicals.<sup>43</sup> Mantzoufas, in particular, produced a summary statement for the ideological orientation of the '4th of August', in which he identified the nation [both *ethnos* and *phyle*<sup>44</sup>], Christian-Orthodox religion and Greek culture as the founding principles of the 'national transformation' (regeneration) effected by the regime.<sup>45</sup> Metaxas now saw Greece aligned with the other ('totalitarian', in his own words) regimes (Germany, Italy, but also, interestingly, the Soviet Union) that opposed the democratic model. In his view, there was no other alternative in the highly polarised ideological-political landscape of interwar Europe. In the light of his well-documented disdain for democratic-liberal rule and his equally vehement rejection of socialism, this point should be understood as an indication of his growing affinity with the 'fascist' experiments originating in Rome and Berlin.

Therefore, Metaxas's commitment to fascist values was perhaps circumscribed and instrumental, yet was no less significant in terms of re-structuring the domestic socio-political system. The founding and enthusiastic promotion of the National Youth Organisation [*Ethniki Organosis Neoleas*, or EON] by Metaxas made extensive use of the German and Italian experience with similar groups (*Hitlerjugend*, *Ballila* and so forth), relying heavily on ritualised indoctrination, strong propaganda and mass (forced) membership.<sup>46</sup> This was Metaxas's laboratory for a future Greek fascist generation and an army of followers that simply did not exist in the late 1930s; this was the crucial device for pursuing his experiment in 'fascism from above', and for laying the foundations for the future fascistisation of Greek society. The importance, symbolic and political, that the dictator attributed to this organisation is apparent in the highly emotive language with which he described his plans for 'my own EON ... my own child':<sup>47</sup>

You need to know that EON is a state institution, *my own creation, on which I have put my biggest hopes for the future of this country*. ... On this matter [EON], gentlemen, I am determined to act against any form of reaction.<sup>48</sup>

However, Metaxas and his regime's ideologues expended considerable intellectual energy in emphasising that the '4th of August regime' was a model rooted in Greek traditions and history – not an imitation of foreign ideas and practices.<sup>49</sup> Yet Metaxas's main concern was not simply to ape ideological and organisational elements from Nazism, Italian Fascism or Salazar's *Estado Novo*.<sup>50</sup> As a conservative nationalist, he wished to marry fascism's contemporary, totalitarian project

with the legacy of iron discipline found in ancient Sparta and in the profound religiosity of the Byzantine era.<sup>51</sup> The end result was intended to be an idiosyncratic regime-model which retained a nativist Greek character and founded its palingeneitic discourse on the need to revive the legacy of the country's historic past. He referred to this unique personal vision as the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' – following the ancient Greek and Byzantine empires – and concluded with this appeal:

Let not our [Greek] previous civilisations intimidate you ... You will perfect [the Hellenic Civilisation] ... And you, modern Greeks, do you not have the ambition to create your own civilisation derived from these two other civilisations [ancient and medieval Greek]? Do you not like such a supreme ideal and a paramount objective?<sup>52</sup>

The derivation of the title of this project from similar 'palingeneitic' visions of the Third Reich or Third Rome (all based on the revival of a glorious historic inheritance and national precedent) is striking.<sup>53</sup> However, the Third Hellenic Civilisation was also permeated by a host of particular autochthonous ideas, the most significant of which was the *Megali Idea*. Metaxas capitalised on the emotive power of this vision (which continued to exercise psychological influence on Greek identity in spite of the irreversible shattering of illusions after the 1922 defeat) in order to confer legitimacy upon his regime's slogan of the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' as the *new Megali Idea*. He described his vision of the Great Idea as 'the genuine formulation of the claim for the recreation of the Hellenic Empire, [whose] contemporary form is the idea of the Third Hellenic Civilisation.'<sup>54</sup>

The core of this vision was inhabited by a strong reverence for religion – Orthodox Christianity – and the historic legacies of the Byzantine empire. Metaxas celebrated the Orthodox Christian heritage of the modern Greek state – a legacy that suggested a cultural continuity from the medieval period to the twentieth century, but also helped modern Greek nationalism to reconstruct an idea of cultural specificity. He had repeatedly spoken about the centrality of the Orthodox religion for the spiritual regeneration of modern Greek society. He appealed to religion as a means for recapturing the ineliminable core of Greek identity after three decades of allegedly corrupting modernising experiments. He also subscribed to the notion that the 'resurrection' [*palingenesia*, literally 're-birth'] of Greece in the 1820s had become possible through the spiritual leadership of the Orthodox Church. Thus, he turned to Orthodoxy as both the figurative moral guardian of the 'Hellenic soul' [*elliniki psichi*] throughout the centuries, in addition to an institution capable of assisting his project of forging a new spiritual conscience amongst modern Greeks. Since his regime was meant to offer a genuinely Greek way to a novel form of organic and 'totalitarian' nationalism, he used the religious legacy of the Byzantine empire as the cornerstone for what he perceived to be a genuinely Greek cultural specificity and uniqueness:

Medieval [Byzantine] Greek civilisation was undoubtedly less impressive in terms of art and science when compared to ancient Greece. But it was infinitely superior in terms of religion, creating a religious ideal which consoled millions and millions of [Greek] people; and this ideal has kept and is still keeping us all together<sup>55</sup>

The conjunction of ‘nation’ [*ethnos/phili*], ‘fatherland’ [*patris*] and ‘religion’ [*thriskia*] formed the ideological nucleus of the 4th of August regime. Yet this was by no means an innovative platform for conceptualising modern Greek nationalism. The Greek Orthodox Church had indeed played a prominent role in the independence struggle of the 1820s against the Ottoman empire, especially since the latter’s system of *millet* had encouraged a sense of specific religious identity amongst its Christian inhabitants that strongly developed over the centuries. Immediately after the creation of an independent Greek state in 1832, the dual legacy of classical antiquity and Byzantine Orthodoxy competed for the re-framing of modern Greek national identity. This contest reflected the two main, formative influences on the re-awakening of Greek nationalism: one rooted in the ideals of Enlightenment, more modern and secular, highlighting the cultural and linguistic continuity between ancient and modern Greeks; the other identifying religion as the *differentia specifica* of Greek nationalism, connecting medieval and modern Hellenism in a narrative of historical continuity unbroken throughout the period of Ottoman rule, resurfacing in 1821 with the outbreak of the independence struggle. The two visions of the Greek nation’s heritage pointed to different narratives of historical continuity and bore different implications for the future of the nascent Greek nation-state: modernity vs tradition, west versus east, secular vs religious identity, and so on. Yet the expansive character of Greek nationalism from the 1850s onwards promoted a peculiar synthesis between the two visions into a narrative of millennia-long continuity. This composite vision came to be known as ‘Helleno-Christian civilisation’, and was articulated in the work of prominent nineteenth-century historians (such as Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos<sup>56</sup>), and gathered momentum in conjunction with the rise of the Great Idea in the twentieth century.<sup>57</sup>

Thus, the prominence of the religious element in Metaxas’s vision of a ‘Third Hellenic Civilisation’ was in no way original, let alone suggestive of any intention to re-fashion church–state relations. Its importance centred upon the determination to erase interwar changes that had occurred under Venizelos through a project of creating a ‘new man’. Apart from elevating Orthodoxy to a central element in his (and his regime’s) ideological discourse, Metaxas afforded the institutional Greek church a more important role in the education and moral guidance of the nation during the five years of the ‘4th of August’ regime. The church responded to this call with enthusiasm, seizing the opportunity to consolidate its social and political standing. This tendency – symbolically represented by the constitutional unity of church and state in the modern Greek state<sup>58</sup> – allowed the Greek Orthodox Church to play a disproportionately influential role in Greek politics and popular culture, one that outlived Metaxas’s dictatorship and remains evident today.<sup>59</sup>

According to Metaxas, church and state were united in a determination to safeguard the continuity of the nation from allegedly degenerative contemporary influences. He identified the triptych of liberalism–communism–secularism as the primary cause of national decline, and saw in religion an invaluable ally in his efforts to instill a new morality in the modern Greek nation. Apart from relying heavily on religious rituals and symbols in the everyday function of his regime, and apart from adopting the discourse of ‘Helleno-Orthodoxy’ as the crucial identifier of the Greek nation, Metaxas promoted an identification of religion and citizenship as national membership in education. Given that EON was by far his most radical experiment in terms of producing a ‘new man’, the organisation

functioned not simply as an ideological and political incubator for a new generation but also as a sponsor of the organic 'Helleno-Christian' collective conscience. Metaxas worked hard and with unwavering determination to establish EON as the only youth organisation in Greek society, with obligatory membership for all Greek *Orthodox* youth (thus, in principle, excluding members of ethnic and religious minorities) and of a clear totalitarian character. In his address to the first official EON local section in December 1937, the leader of the '4th of August' regime once again stated his passionate belief that 'national regeneration depended on the *preparation* of the *whole* young generation'.<sup>60</sup>

For different reasons, the king's entourage, church elites and the military leadership viewed this initiative with considerable scepticism. The plan entailed the forced dissolution of a number of prestigious, long-established groups, such as the Christian Brotherhoods (HAN, HEN), student organisations and the scout movement. Forcing the dissolution of the scouts, however, proved an extremely sensitive political issue. The heir to the throne, Prince Paul, had taken a strong personal interest in the scout organisation, acting as its honorary figurehead. The church felt very protective of its youth organisations and their autonomous educational activities. As for the armed forces, they feared a future exploitation of EON by Metaxas as the basis for a paramilitary organisation (like the *Hitlerjugend* in Nazi Germany). However exaggerated such fears appeared in the late 1930s or with the benefit of hindsight, they betrayed a justifiable unease with some of Metaxas's more radical and long-term goals. The initial disagreement with the Palace escalated into a real political battle for prestige and influence when Metaxas proceeded with his plans to abolish all other youth organisations, while simultaneously imposing the condition of obligatory EON membership for all children. Metaxas tried to allay fears by appointing Paul to the role of 'General Leader' for the EON, but the heir initially rejected the offer, remaining firm in his decision to support the autonomy of the scouts against the seemingly totalitarian features and ambitions of the new youth organisation.

Tensions with regard to EON continued unabated in 1938, with Prince Paul using every opportunity to deride the regime's plans for the new organisation. At the same time, opposition to EON and to Metaxas's authority also came from within the ranks of the government. The minister of education, Konstantinos Georgakopoulos, was known to have growing reservations about EON's all-embracing educational activities, that impinged upon state schools, religious education and even family jurisdiction. This, in combination with Georgakopoulos's close ties to the royal family, caused consternation to Metaxas, who feared that his minister was preparing measures to mitigate EON's influence in association with the crown.<sup>61</sup> The leader of the '4th of August' regime knew that a showdown with his minister could be interpreted as a challenge to the political leverage of the crown itself – and to the King, to whom Metaxas owed his spectacular political comeback in 1936. Therefore, he refrained from confronting his minister until autumn 1938, when Metaxas decided that the time was ripe to intervene, forcing Georgakopoulos to resign and taking over the Portfolio of Education himself. This was a turning point interpreted by the royalist establishment as evidence of Metaxas's unwavering position on the matter (another indication of EON's significance in the general's long-term plans for the 'transformation' of Greek society). In early December 1938, the two parts agreed on a compromise: the palace accepted the 'voluntary' dissolution of all traditional youth groups and acquiesced in Metaxas's desire to see Prince Paul as 'General

Leader' of EON (with the royal princesses leading the girls' equivalent organisations). This symbolic show of unity of purpose between the regime, the crown and the Orthodox Church came into effect on 9 December.<sup>62</sup> The agreement salvaged crown–regime relations, but did not totally mend the atmosphere of mutual suspicion that had been allowed to fester over the preceding 12 months.

There was a further, significant implication behind Georgakopoulos's dismissal. The day that Metaxas formally assumed the education portfolio himself, he described his decision as a gesture intended, 'to restore order in the church – order that has been disturbed by recent events. I intend to restore order [in the Holy Synod] in the most decisive way and with a view to ensuring that such events never occur again'.<sup>63</sup> This kind of tone with regard to religious affairs in general, and the church leadership in particular, was extraordinary by Metaxas's own standards of spiritual deference to the clergy and church. The 'events' he referred to concerned the election of a new leader for the Greek church. With the death of the incumbent Chrisostomos in April 1938, the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece chose Damaskinos to succeed him. Given the latter's alleged Venizelist sympathies and the regime's declared preference for another candidate (Chrisanthos), Metaxas decided to indirectly intervene and annul the election. By forcing a group of bishops within the Synod to challenge the result, the regime brought the matter to the highest court and, with the majority of judges on its side, overruled the decision. With a new law published in December 1938, Metaxas dissolved the existing Holy Synod and appointed a totally new one with clerics sympathetic to the '4th of August' regime. The result was that the new ecclesiastical body duly elected Chrisanthos as Archbishop of Athens.

The events of the autumn of 1938 sent out a powerful message to political and religious leaders alike, one wholly intended by Metaxas: his authority over political matters was exclusively his, and his determination to entrench it was unwavering, even when it came to political fellow travellers or institutions that he deeply respected. Indeed, Metaxas could not hide his enthusiasm with the resolution of both these issues (the EON and the church relations crisis). In his private diary he was ecstatic about having fended off challenges to his authority, and come out of these crises stronger than ever before.<sup>64</sup> He could now call the government 'his own', count on the full support of the church's Holy Synod, expect no further surprises from the crown, and devote much more energy to 'his EON'. For a politician that had been seen as an insignificant and fully replaceable 'puppet' of the palace, this decisive turn towards totalitarianism was no small achievement. Through the continuing 'charismatisation' of Metaxas in every possible activity, through the crushing of any form of opposition, the 'co-ordination' of the various institutions of state and society, and the increasing use of terror in the handling of internal affairs, the '4th of August' regime ceased to be a purely authoritarian experiment and made a crucial (if modest, by comparison with other regimes in Europe) step towards sacralisation and political totalitarianism.

### **Conclusions: the Metaxas Regime between 'Religious Politics' and 'Political Religion'**

Like almost everywhere else in interwar Europe, the fascist/para-fascist alternative emerged partly in the context of a widespread crisis of modernisation.



At the same time, it constituted a partial rejection of the experience of modernity, and a partial attempt to re-align modernity with notions of national specificity. A discussion of modernisation in the Greek context provides invaluable insight into the limited (but not absent) ideological and political 'space' for fascism in inter-war Greece.<sup>65</sup> Stein Larsen has recently located the historic lacuna for the rise of fascism in a disequilibrium between the processes of political liberalisation and social modernisation.<sup>66</sup> Under the leadership of Venizelos, Greece became part of a liberal and modernising political experiment but remained rather peripheral to this development. Liberalisation was piecemeal and stifled by the continuity of traditional sources of authority. This created a contentious and highly contested socio-political experiment considered by many (amongst which was Metaxas himself) as not just detrimental or alien to Greek society but also eminently reversible. Modernisation, on the other hand, did proceed but in a rather haphazard fashion, allowing for the diffusion of the sacred beyond the traditional core of Christianity – yet not proceeding far and fast enough to facilitate its fundamental re-alignment with new sources of legitimacy. The myth of the Greek *ethnos* remained firmly rooted in conventional notions of historic continuity, cultural and/or religious specificity and tradition. Still, the sacralisation of the nation witnessed under the short-lived rule of Metaxas's '4th of August' regime was broadly in line with ideological developments in the 'authoritarian half' of the continent (central-southern-eastern Europe).<sup>67</sup> However, unlike in countries such as Slovakia and Croatia, the political role of the established church in Greece had long been firmly embedded in the normative functioning of society; thus, it could not function as a harbinger of a different, radicalised vision of nation-statism. A further peculiarity of the Greek interwar context derived from the experience of the 1922 'disaster' [*katastrofi*] in Asia Minor, and the collapse of the 'Great Idea' vision for territorial irredentism. This was traumatic for the Greek collective consciousness, refocusing the ambitions of Greek nationalism and re-directing the regenerative project inward.<sup>68</sup> This was a defeat that was blamed on the country, not on others. In this respect, it stifled any potential for a revolutionary brand of populist nationalism and thus reduced the political 'space' for a radical fascist alternative in the 1920s and 1930s. Situated in a vortex of seemingly irreversible national defeat, incomplete modernisation and uneven liberalisation, 1930s Greece was both receptive to 'fascistisation' and inhospitable to a genuine fascist 'political religion'. Metaxas's primary 'fascist' initiative (the creation of EON and its transformation into a vessel of 'totalitarian' education for Greek youth) was both a declaration of his latent fascist leanings and an admission of defeat – fascism in Greece had to await the production of a new 'engineered' generation in order to challenge the certainties of the past and the tentative changes in the present that Metaxas himself ever dared to attack. However, this prospect never materialised – war and his death in January 1941 halted the process, shifting the focus to different, more pressing considerations and steering Greek politics into the uncharted terrain of military occupation and civil war.

Religion was a central facet in Metaxas's regenerative project. However, this was a notion of religion heavily dependent on restoring and continuing the established church's role in Greek society instead of an attempt to found a new 'political religion' or introduce 'religious politics' at the heart of his regime. The leader of the '4th of August' regime invoked the familiar notion of 'Helleno-Christian' identity as the defining element of his 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' and the pillar for national rebirth. By conceiving the Greek 'nation' as a community with a



uniqueness both cultural (ancient and medieval civilisations in the Greek lands) and religious (eastern Orthodoxy and Byzantium), he sought to foster a renewed unity between nationalism and Orthodoxy, between nation and church, between secular politics and traditional religiosity. In this respect, the nationalism of the Metaxas regime was indeed a 'sacralised' entity – not as a novel doctrine that would supplant established religion, but as the product of a harmonious syncretism, ideological porosity and mutual legitimisation. This fusion had already been a dominant paradigm in Greek nationalism since the previous century; yet Metaxas brought it to centre-stage, stubbornly and in a way that was intent upon re-defining the context of modernisation in Greece, erasing many changes effected in the preceding two decades under the leadership of Venizelos' Liberals.

Metaxas himself attempted to locate his regime in an overlapping area between the 'traditional authority' of established entities (nation, religion and church) and a novel layer of personal 'charismatisation' (the cult of leader or *archigos*) for an emerging ethos of totalitarian penetration into Greek society. His reliance on the spiritual value of Orthodoxy as a critical determinant of Greek national identity seriously qualified the totalitarian nature of his political project. At the same time, he neither altered the role of the established church in Greek politics nor created new opportunities for the latter's involvement in political life. Metaxas subscribed to a political vision that fulfilled the existing aspirations of the church and asserted his supreme authority against the religious or monarchical establishment only in a handful of instances. As a result, the traditional authority of the church was partly eroded but never seriously or systematically antagonised. Even if Metaxas's regime can be described in 'fascist' terms (and this remains a highly contested point for many), it does not fit the standard model of either 'clerical fascism' or 'political religion'. Instead, the alignment of 'nation' and politics with the established (Christian Orthodox) 'religion' amounted to a 'sacralisation' of the nation that was congruous with Orthodoxy and the official church. The 'diffusion of the sacred' – the fundamental mechanism for constructing a 'political religion' – was evident in the ways in which Metaxas spoke about the Greek *ethnos* and the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation'. Still, this resulted from a harmonious fusion of civic and established religious concepts, not from a fundamentally new relation between the two.

## Notes

1. John N Molony, *The Emergence of Political Catholicism in Italy: Partito popolare, 1919–1926* (London: Croom Helm, 1977); Richard Webster, *The Cross and the Fasces: Christian Democracy and Fascism in Italy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960); Bartolo Gariglio, *Cattolici democratici e clerico-fascisti: il mondo cattolico torinese alla prova del fascismo, 1922–27* (Bologna: Mulino, 1976); and John Pollard, "Conservative Catholics and Italian Fascism: the Clerico-Fascists", in Martin Blinkhorn, ed., *Fascists and Conservatives* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), pp.31–49.
2. Martin Conway, *Catholic Politics in Europe, 1918–1945* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp.16ff; and Tom Buchanan, Martin Conway, eds, *Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918–1965* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).
3. Roger Eatwell, "Reflections on Fascism and Political Religion", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 4/3 (2003), pp.145–66.
4. Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (London: Routledge, 1993).
5. For example, Michael Burleigh, *Earthly Powers: the clash of religion and politics in Europe from the French Revolution to the Great War* (New York: Harper Collins, 2005); and Jay P Corrin, *Catholic Intellectuals and the Challenge of Democracy* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002).

6. Martin Blinkhorn, "Introduction: Allies, Rivals or Antagonists? Fascists and conservatives in modern Europe", in Blinkhorn (note 1), p.4.
7. Jeremy D A Telman, "Adolf Stoecker: Anti-Semite with a Christian mission", *Jewish History*, 9/2 (1995), pp.93–112; and Paul Mendes-Flohr, Reinharz Jehuda, eds, *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp.340ff.
8. Thomas Lundén, "Language, ethnicity and boundary changes in 20th century Europe", in *Border Changes in 20th Century Europe: International Conference in Honor of the 85th Anniversary of the Tartu Peace Treaty* (Tartu, Estonia: Centre for the Study of Soviet History, University History Museum, University of Tartu); Cathie Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans: Nationalism and the Destruction of Tradition* (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp.10–15. For the importance of religion in the Balkan modern setting (particularly in reference to the rise of nationalism), see Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), and "The Balkans: From Discovery to Invention", *Slavic Review*, 53/2 (1994), pp.453–82; and Dusan I Bjelic, Obrad Savic, eds, *Balkan as a Metaphor: Between Globalisation and Fragmentation* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002).
9. Thanos Veremis, John Koliopoulos, "The evolving context of the Greek nation", in Theodore A Couloumbis, Theodore Kariotis, Fotini Bellou, eds, *Greece in the Twentieth Century* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), pp.13–28, here pp.13–5; and Ioannis Konidaris, "The Legal Parameters of Church and State Relations in Greece", in *ibid.*, pp.223–35, here pp.224–5.
10. Griffin (note 4), Ch. 5; Roger Griffin, "The palingenetic core of generic fascist ideology", in Alessandro Campi, ed., *Che cos'è il fascismo? Interpretazioni e prospettive di ricerca* (Rome: Ideazione editrice, 2003), pp.97–122.
11. Roger Eatwell, "On Defining the 'Fascist Minimum': The Centrality of Ideology", *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 1/3 (1996), pp.303–19; Roger Eatwell, "The concept and theory of charismatic leadership", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 7/2 (2006), pp.141–56; Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism: Comparison and Definition* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980), pp.6ff; Aristotle Kallis, "Fascism, 'Charisma' and 'Charismatisation': Weber's Model of 'Charismatic Domination' and Interwar European Fascism", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 7/1 (2006), pp.25–43; and Blinkhorn (note 6).
12. See, for example, Constantin Ioardachi, *Charisma, Politics and Violence: The Legion of the 'Archangel Michael' in Inter-war Romania* (Trondheim: Trondheim Studies on East European Cultures & Societies, 2004).
13. Carl J Friedrich, Zbigniew K Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (New York: Praeger, 1965), pp.15–26.
14. Emilio Gentile, "Il Futurismo e la politica dal nazionalismo modernista al fascismo (1909–1920)", and Niccolò Zapponi, "Futurismo e fascismo", in Renzo De Felice, ed., *Futurismo: Cultura e politica* (Turin: Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 1988), pp.105–60 and pp.161–76 respectively.
15. Rolando Sarti, "Italian fascism: radical politics and conservative goals", in Blinkhorn (note 1), pp.14–30; John Pollard, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism, 1929–1932: A Study in Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); and Pollard (note 1).
16. Emilio Gentile, "Fascism as Political Religion", *Journal of Contemporary History*, 25/2–3 (1990), pp.229–251; his "The Sacralization of Politics: Definition, Interpretations and Reflections on the Question of Secular Religion and Totalitarianism", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 1/1 (2000), pp.18–55; and "Political Religion: A Concept and its Critics – A Critical Survey", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 6/1 (2005), pp.19–32.
17. Renato Moro, "Religion and Politics in the Time of Secularisation: The sacralisation of politics and politicisation of religion", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 6/1 (2005), pp.71–86; see also Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" [1936], in Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (London: Fontana Press, 1992), pp.211–44.
18. Roger Griffin, "Tunnel Visions and Mysterious Trees: Modernist Projects of National and Racial Regeneration, 1880–1939", in Marius Turda, Paul Weindling, eds, *'Blood and Homeland': Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe, 1900–1940* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006).
19. Detlev J K Peukert, "The Genesis of the 'Final Solution' from the Spirit of Science", in Thomas Childers, Jane Caplan, eds, *Reevaluating the Third Reich* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1994), pp.234–52, here pp.238 and 40.
20. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), section 125.
21. On this function of science, see Detlev Peukert, "The Genesis of the 'Final Solution' from the Spirit of Science," in Childers, Caplan (note 19), pp.234–52.

22. Richard Steigmann-Gall, "Nazism and the revival of political religion theory", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 5/3 (2005), 376–96.
23. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and Their Influence on Nazi Ideology, The Ariosophists of Austria and Germany, 1890–1935* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1992).
24. See Kallis (note 11), pp.25–43.
25. Many major studies of generic fascism incorporate analyses of 'para-fascist', 'abortive' and authoritarian interwar regimes: see, for example, Griffin (note 4).
26. Aristotle Kallis, "'Fascism', 'Para-fascism' and 'Fascistization': On the Similarities of Three Conceptual Categories", *European History Quarterly*, 33/2 (2003), pp.219–50; and "The 'Regime-Model' of Fascism: A Typology", *European History Quarterly*, 30/1 (2000), pp.77–104.
27. Eugen Weber, *Varieties of Fascism* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964); Hans Rogger, Eugen Weber, eds, *The European Right* (Berkeley: University of Californian Press, 1966); Francis L. Carsten, *The Rise of Fascism* (London: Methuen, 1967); George L. Mosse, ed., *International Fascism: New Thoughts and New Approaches* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1979); Walter Laqueur, ed., *Fascism: A Reader's Guide – Analyses, Interpretations, Bibliography* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979). None of these works cover Greece (and the Metaxas regime) in relation to the emergence of interwar fascism. By contrast, the volume edited by Stein Ugelvik Larsen, Bernt Hagtvet and Jan Petter Myklebust, eds, *Who Were the Fascists? Social Roots of European Fascism* (Bergen: Universitetsforlaget, 1980) features the contribution of Yannis Andricopoulos, "The Power Base of Greek Authoritarianism", pp.568–84
28. David Close, "Conservatism, authoritarianism and fascism in Greece, 1915–45", in Blinkhorn (note 1), pp.205ff; Stanley Payne, *History of Fascism, 1914–1945* (London: UCL Press, 1995), pp.317–20. For the notion of 'fascistisation', see Aristotle Kallis, "'Fascism'" (note 26), pp.219–50.
29. Spiros Linardatos (*4h Avgoustou* [4th of August] [Athens: Themelio, 1996]) and Nikos Psiroukis (*O fasismos ke I Tetarti Avgoustou* [Fascism and the 4th of August regime] [Athens: Epikerotita, 1977]) approach the issue from a traditionally left-wing/Marxist perspective, and use the term 'fascism' in a fairly general, unsophisticated way. Andricopoulos ("The Powerbase of Greek Authoritarianism", in Larsen, Hagtvet, Myklebust (note 27), pp.200–17, and *I Rizis tou Ellinikou Fasismou*, [Athens: n.p., 1977]) employs a more elaborate paradigm and detects 'fascist' elements in the regime, but also in the Greek intellectual tradition of the 1930s.
30. Psiroukis (note 29) and Linardatos (note 29).
31. P J Vatikiotis, *Popular Autocracy in Greece, 1936–1941: A Political Biography of General Ioannis Metaxas* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), pp.188ff; and his "Metaxas – The Man", in Robin Higham, Thanos Veremis, eds, *Aspects of Greece, 1936–1940: The Metaxas Dictatorship* (Athens: ELIAMEP, 1993); C. M. Woodhouse, *Modern Greece: A short history* (London: Faber and Faber, 1984), pp.231ff.
32. Veremis (note 31); David Close, "The Power-Base of the Metaxas Dictatorship", in Higham, Veremis (note 31); Jon Kofas, *Authoritarianism in Greece: the Metaxas Regime* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), pp.53f, 206. On "caesarism" and its relation to fascism in general, see Paul M Hayes, "The Triumph of Caesarism: Fascism and Nazism", in Paul Hayes, ed., *Themes in Modern European History, 1890–1945* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp.174–204.
33. Hagen Fleischer, "Authoritarian rule in Greece (1936–1974) and its heritage", in Jerzy W Borejsza, Klaus Ziemer, eds, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes in Europe: Legacies and Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), pp.237–75, here pp.238–9.
34. Nikos Alivizatos, *I politiki thesmi se krisi (1922–1974): Opsis tis ellinikis empirias* [Political institutions in crisis, 1922–1974. Aspects of the Greek experience] (Athens: Themelio, 1986). Generally, the 1930s did not witness the rise of a truly populist (and popular) 'fascist' movement in Greece. The only possible exception was the organisation "'Ethniki Enosis Ellas'" (National Union – Greece), better known by its acronym EEE. See Giorgos Margaritis, "Ellinikos antisimitismos: mia periigisi, 1821, 1890, 1931", in *O Ellinikos Evraismos*, Conference Proceedings (3/4 April 1998) (Athens: Poreia and Etaireia Spoudon Neollinikou Politismou kai Genikis Paideias, 1999), pp.15–31, especially pp.18–21; George T Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Conditions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922–1936* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp.252, 255–9. During the period of Nazi occupation (1941–44), Greece witnessed both a genuine collaborationist regime (Tsolakoglou, Rallis, Logothetopoulos) and the formation of a 'National Socialist' movement.
35. Both Vatikiotis and Woodhouse are rather more positively inclined towards Metaxas's political qualities – see Woodhouse (note 31), pp.234–7; Vatikiotis (note 31), p.215.
36. K. Svolopoulos, *I Elliniki Exoteriki Politiki, 1900–1945* (Athens; Estia, 1992), pp.256ff; Vatikiotis (note 31), pp.189–90; Woodhouse (note 31) pp.233f; Kofas (note 32), pp.168–204.
37. Payne (note 28), pp.467–70; Kallis, "The regime-model" (note 26), pp.77–104.

38. Regretably, there are very few Metaxas biographies available. The work of D. Kallonas, *Ioannis Metaxas* (Athens: n.p., 1938), was published during the dictatorship and is by no means the kind of publication that can fill in this bibliographical gap. For a recent biography in English, see Vatikiotis (note 31) – which contains a lot of interesting information on Metaxas's upbringing and background (esp. pp.12–50). On the *Megali Idea*, see Michael L Smith, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor, 1919–1922* (London: Allen Lane, 1973), pp.62ff.
39. For the Balkans Wars, see Ernst Christian Helmreich, *The Diplomacy of the Balkan Wars 1912–1939* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938); and Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), Vol. I, pp.335ff.
40. Vatikiotis (note 31), pp.68–100.
41. His views on all of these issues are eloquently recorded in his diaries: See Ioannis Metaxas, *To Prosopiko tou Imerologio, 3 Vols. [His Personal Diary]* (Athens: Gkovostis, 1952) [henceforward cited as Diaries]. On Venizelos and the 'modernisation' of early-twentieth-century Greece, see George Mavrogordatos, Christos Hadjiiosif, eds, *Venizelismos ke astikos eksinchronismos [Venizelism and Bourgeois Modernisation]* (Iraklio: Crete University Editions, 1988).
42. G. Souroulis, *O Ethnikos Logos tis 4 Avgoustou [The Nationalist Discourse of the 4th of August regime]*, (unpublished MA dissertation, University of Crete, 2001), available at: [dlib.lib.uoc.gr/Dienst/Repository/2.0/Body/ucr.history.msc/2001souroulis/doc](http://dlib.lib.uoc.gr/Dienst/Repository/2.0/Body/ucr.history.msc/2001souroulis/doc) (last accessed 3 March 2007).
43. Nikolaos Koumaros, Georgios Mantzoufas, "E themeliodis arxhe tou Neou Kratous" ["The founding constitutional principles of the New State"], *To Neon Kratos*, 11 (1938), pp.761–818. For further information on the journal *Neon Kratos*, see Georgios Kokkinos, *I Fasizousa ideologia stin Ellada: I Periptosi tou periodikou 'Neon Kratos' (1937–1941) [The Fascistic Ideology in Greece: the case of the journal 'Neon Kratos']* (Athens: Papazisis, 1989).
44. On the notion of *phyle*, see Sevasti Trumbeta, "Anthropological Discourses and Eugenics Interwar Greece", in Turda, Weindling (note 18).
45. Mantzoufas, "Ideologia ke katefthisis is to Neon Kratos", *To Neon Kratos*, 16 (1938), pp.1325–39; and Constantine Sarandis, "The Ideology and Character of the Metaxas Regime", in Higham, Veremis (note 31), pp.147–77.
46. On EON, see Eleni Machaira, *I Neolea tis Tetartis Avgoustou [The youth organisation of the 4th of August regime]* (Athens: Historic Archive of Greek Youth, 1987); Kofas (note 32), pp.83–97; Vatikiotis (note 31), pp.185, 187–8; Alkis Rigos, *Ta Krisima Chronia 1935–1941, 2 Vols [The Crucial Years 1935–1941]* (Athens: Papazisis Publications, 1997); Linardatos (note 29), pp.151–203.
47. Greek National Archives, Metaxas Archive (henceforward GNA/MA), 119/003 (Address to members of the academic community, 12.11.1940).
48. Alexis Dimaras, *I Metarrithmisi pou den egine [The Reform that Never Took Place]* (Athens: Ermis, 1971), pp.189–90; and Linardatos (note 29), pp.161ff, emphasis added.
49. Ioannis Metaxas, *Logoi ke Skepseis, 1936–1941* (Athens: Gkovostis, 1969), Vol. I, Speech at Komotini, 7.10.1936, pp.53–5.
50. For the *Estado Novo* in Portugal, see Antonio Costa Pinto, *Salazar's Dictatorship and European Fascism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).
51. Speeches (note 49), p.126; Mantzoufas (note 45), pp.1338–9; and Souroulis (note 42), pp.63–6.
52. Quoted in Linardatos (note 29), p.55.
53. For Mussolini's discourse on the 'Third Rome' see, Knox Macgregor, "Conquest, Foreign and Domestic, in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany", *Journal of Modern History*, 56/1 (1984), pp.7–57 – now revised and reprinted in his *Common Destiny: Dictatorship, Foreign Policy, and War in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp.53–112; Aristotle Kallis, *Fascist Ideology: Territory and Expansionism in Italy and Germany, 1922–1945* (London: Routledge, 2000), Ch. 2; Augusto Simonini, *Il linguaggio di Mussolini* (Milan: Bompiani, 1978), pp.96–9.
54. Quoted in Linardatos (note 29), pp.88–90.
55. Speeches (note 49), Speech at the University of Athens, 20.11.1937.
56. Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos, *Histoire de la Civilization Hellénique* (Paris: Hachette, 1878).
57. Veremis (note 31), pp.15ff.
58. See Nikos Mouzelis, *Modern Greece: Facets of Underdevelopment* (London: Macmillan, 1978), passim; Konidaris (note 9).
59. *ibid.*, pp.224–5, 228–9.
60. Speeches (note 49), Address to the members of the EON Athens section, 31.12.193, pp.312–13; *Ibid.*, Speech to EON members, 29.12.1938, pp.435–7.
61. Diaries (note 41), 9.2.1938 and 16.4.1938.

62. On these events, see Kofas (note 32), Chs. 4–6; Linardatos (note 29), pp.157ff; Grigorios Dafnis, *I Ellas metaxi dio polemon 1923–1940* [Greece between Two World Wars] (Athens: Kaktos, 1997), Vol. II, pp.453–6.
63. Speeches (note 41), Speech upon assumption of the Education/Religious Affair portfolio, 29.11.1938, pp.425–6.
64. Diaries (note 41), 15.12.1938.
65. Juan Linz, “Political Space and Fascism as Late-Comer”, in Larsen, Hagtvet, Myklebust (note 27), pp.153–89.
66. Stein Larsen, “Was there fascism outside Europe?”, in Stein Larsen, ed., *Fascism Outside Europe* (Boulder: Social Science Monographs, 2001).
67. Michael Mann, *Fascists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
68. Speeches (note 49), Speech at 11th Thessaoliniki Exhibition, 6.9.1936, pp.35–6: ‘our new civilisation ... will not be concerned with extension but with intensity, not with the acquisition of territory but with the strength of our spirit’.