

the Reich government in 1920 of a pamphlet with “new health-based guidelines for ‘proper’ marriage” (42), which was purely exhortatory, did not remotely compare with the interventionist legislation of the 1930s. The important continuities were those that undermined Nazi control: for example, in some places, mothers seeking support and advice often continued after 1933 to turn to church social or charitable organizations, in the face of exhortations to avail themselves of new Nazi kindergartens or rest homes. Where women expressed appreciation of Nazi facilities, this was explicitly appreciation of the practical help afforded. The accompanying ideological input was tolerated or endured, rather than imbibed. Church facilities did continue to exist because, especially in wartime, the Nazi regime’s provision was insufficient for women’s needs. In documenting these developments, Mouton provides a multifaceted picture that contrasts with the one-dimensional view so often presented of compliance and complicity with Nazi ventures.

There are some infelicities as well as errors and inconsistencies which should and could have been avoided by recourse to published work in this area. The law criminalizing abortion, which was modified in May 1926, was section 218 of the Criminal Code of 1871, not of the Civil Code of 1900 (45, 305). There is discussion of “marriage certificates” (53, 68), yet no mention of the Marriage Health Law of October 18, 1935, which brought these into effect—if, as it turned out, only in theory for the majority of Germans but highly damagingly for a minority. Again, the marriage loan program was introduced as part of the Law to Reduce Unemployment in June 1933, not in 1935 (56, 58). The Nazi women’s organization was Nationalsozialistische Frauenschaft, not “Nationalsozialistische Frauen Organization [*sic*]” (59). There are further errors in names beyond that.

These are, however, perhaps small blemishes on an analysis that demonstrates a considered and critical evaluation of primary and secondary sources and a judicious comparative treatment of the two historical periods involved. The individuals with whom Mouton is dealing were real people with habits, personal priorities, and motives that sometimes accorded with the aims of the regime in power and sometimes did not. The extent to which they did determined the degree of cooperation afforded to the regime. It is to Mouton’s credit that the subtleties and nuances necessarily involved in this are evident in her book.

JILL STEPHENSON

University of Edinburgh

Crucibles of Political Loyalty: Church Institutions and Electoral Continuity in Hungary. By *Jason Wittenberg*. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics.

Edited by *Margaret Levi*.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. xiv+293. \$80.00.

Die katholische Kirche in Ungarn, 1918–1939: Positionierung im politischen System und “Katholische Renaissance.” By *Norbert Spannberger*.

Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2006. Pp. 211. €35.00.

When the Soviet bloc collapsed in 1989, old political trends and rhetoric resurfaced in many countries across Eastern Europe. In Hungary, several political parties took the names of predecessors that had been ground down between 1945 and 1948 by Communist Party “salami tactics.” Once again, Hungarians could vote for an Inde-

pendent Smallholders' Party, for example. Hungarian politicians also embraced symbols and prominent figures from the pre-Communist, so-called Christian nationalist, era and declared their enthusiasm for the peculiar amalgam of religious and nationalist symbolism that had dominated political life in Hungary between the two world wars. Perhaps most significantly, regional voting patterns for rightist parties in elections held in 1945 and then after 1989 displayed an uncannily high degree of correlation and suggested that a broad section of Hungarian society supported the renewal of older political traditions. Despite decades of state-sponsored materialist ideology, Christian nationalism had once again returned to the Hungarian political scene. Why? And what does it mean for a history of religious life in Hungary?

Two new books join a small but growing literature on the place of religion in modern Hungarian history. In *Die katholische Kirche in Ungarn, 1918–1939*, Norbert Spannenberger reviews the alliance between the Catholic Church and Hungary's political establishment after World War I. To secure a stable conservative regime in a country rocked by defeat, two revolutions, and the loss of nearly two-thirds of its territory in postwar border revisions, leading figures like Prime Minister István Bethlen offered the Church a considerable amount of social and cultural power in return for loyalty. Catholic institutions enjoyed a prominent place within interwar Hungary's educational system, especially during the 1920s, when the remarkable reformer Count Kunó Klebelsberg led the Ministry of Religion and Education. Moreover, conservative opposition to any kind of land reform ensured that the Catholic Church could keep the vast latifundia from which it derived so much wealth. As Spannenberger clearly shows, this aspect of the church-state alliance also predisposed the episcopate to resist any movement for social reform that might come from within the Church. In a fine later chapter, the author also argues that Catholic leaders, eager to play their part in the alliance of church and state, promoted Hungarian nationalism vigorously and were thus deeply unsympathetic to any claims by the country's ethnic German minority (most of whom were Catholic) to cultural autonomy.

The alliance between conservative elites and the Catholic Church was a central element of interwar Christian nationalism in Hungary. In one chapter, Spannenberger sketches some of the more important aspects of the "sacralization of the nation" that this ideology entailed. Spannenberger describes the uneasy truce between Hungary's Catholic and Protestant Churches that made Christian nationalism possible. He also notes the importance of medieval history narratives for the construction of a distinctly Catholic Hungarian national identity, though his relatively brief discussion of this topic takes no notice of Árpád von Klimó's important 2003 book on confession and the politics of history.¹ Similarly, the author dispenses with the matter of antisemitism too easily. Though it was central to Christian nationalist ideology, he lamely argues that a lack of secondary literature made more detailed analysis of this important topic impossible. He does much better with the theme of church-state relations. His discussion of the tensions in the 1930s between the Catholic Church and Gyula Gömbös, the right-wing "race defender" who served as prime minister (1932–36) with (unfulfilled) dreams of transforming Hungary into a totalitarian state, is the best summary of this conflict to be found anywhere. Unfortunately, Spannenberger follows Hungarian church-state politics only until 1939. Catholic leaders, however, perceived a continuous single struggle to defend their religious prerogatives against the claims of a totalizing state. In their minds, this conflict linked the Gömbös years to their efforts to

¹ Árpád von Klimó, *Nation, Konfession, Geschichte: Zur nationalen Geschichtskultur Ungarns im europäischen Kontext (1860–1948)* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2003).

find acceptable anti-Jewish laws (1938–41) and, indeed, to their struggle after 1945 to defend the faith against a very different and far more hostile political power.

These caveats aside, Spannenberger provides a multifaceted and accessible account of the Catholic Church's place in interwar Hungary's political system. Memory of this Christian national alliance was powerful after 1989, when politicians and religious leaders alike deliberately invoked the interwar years as a time of exemplary nationalist sentiment. These invocations created an appearance of political continuity that observers in Hungary and outside it found arresting. But was this continuity only rhetorical?

Jason Wittenberg, author of the excellent book, *Crucibles of Political Loyalty*, comes to this problem as a political scientist interested in the topic of long-term electoral continuities. The preferences shared by voters in pre- and post-Communist Hungary (which he demonstrates superbly) are all the more puzzling, since the regime that ruled during the intervening forty-five years devoted all its considerable ideological and political energies to effacing old identities and creating a new society. After 1945, the Communist Party attacked the power of Hungary's Christian churches (and especially the larger Roman Catholic Church) by accusing religious leaders of preposterous crimes and imprisoning them, banning the Church's civic associations, creating a State Church Office to supervise all religious matters, promoting compliant clergy as "peace priests" who supported Communism, and, above all, asserting a monopoly over Hungary's educational system. Practicing Christians in Hungary long remembered this last ambition—the nationalization of all Hungarian schools and the elimination of compulsory religious instruction from the curriculum—as one of the most painful episodes in the Communist regime's open assault on religious life. In theory, parents could still enroll their children in religious instruction on a voluntary basis after 1948. In practice, party cadres placed innumerable obstacles in the paths of parents. They deliberately concealed times and places to enroll, intimidated parents who did want to enroll their children, and pressured religious superiors to transfer intransigent priests to other parishes. They also attempted to mobilize rural Hungarians for socialism by building culture houses, organizing sporting clubs and other associations, and promoting socialist materialism in schools and at work.

Why did all this fail? To answer this question, Jason Wittenberg studied local-level struggles to resist the Communist regime in the 1950s and 1960s and to preserve church communities in villages across Hungary. He focused his impressive archival research on enrollment in voluntary religious instruction, which he argues can be taken in the Hungarian case—at least until the 1970s, when the Communist regime introduced church religious instruction—as an indicator of the general strength or weakness of church community as a whole. He examined conflicts around this issue primarily in two regions: historically Catholic Zala county in western Hungary and Hajdu-Bihar county in eastern Hungary, a traditional center of Hungarian Calvinism. Though he does not say so, these were areas with a long history of politically active clergy. Priests in western Transdanubian counties like Zala county were important actors in the origins of political Catholicism in Hungary in the 1890s; similarly, Calvinist clergy in eastern Hungary had a storied tradition of nationalist activism that spanned the nineteenth century. It is tempting to speculate that these historical memories helped to stiffen the resolve of their successors in the 1950s.

Wittenberg shows that parish priests and pastors of rural congregations fought hard to hold their faith communities together in the face of overwhelming state power, even when their ecclesiastical superiors became ever more dependent on the regime. Clergy encouraged parents to remain brave in the face of intimidation, using official Communist rhetoric about the individual's private freedom of conscience to convince them

that there was nothing wrong with sending their children for religious instruction. Priests also organized Bible readings and tried to attract children to religious instruction with games or activities like photography clubs, hikes, or outings. And they informed parents when and where to enroll their children, sometimes dashing from village to village on motorcycles with the latest information, which party cadres constantly changed in order to minimize turnout. Because of all this activity, Christian clergymen—Catholics had more success in the long term than Protestants—preserved an important site of social reproduction that could not be completely controlled by the Communists. These church communities, maintained under duress, became important transmitters of political values. According to Wittenberg, their endurance explains why regions that voted for rightist parties in 1945 did so again in 1990 (and 1994 and 1998) in overwhelming numbers. In a highly technical final chapter, the author quantifies the enduring affinity of those Hungarians who identify with church communities for rightist parties.

And yet it remains an interesting conundrum that the link between religion and rightist politics endured across the twentieth century, even as secularizing trends took root among believers. Throughout the twentieth century, rates of secularization and evidence of popular piety fluctuated in Hungary. During the interwar years, a favorable political climate fueled a renewal of Christianity (and especially Catholicism) in cultural life. In his appendix, Spannenberger gives photographic evidence of the processions that mobilized believers. He also discusses briefly an important (if ultimately politically ineffective) generation of young Catholic intellectuals who became prominent in the 1930s. Yet Spannenberger doubts that this amounted to a true “Catholic renaissance,” despite the declarations of contemporary Hungarian Catholics to the contrary (Spannenberger, 160). Ultimately, he argues that the institutional Church’s dependence on the state robbed Catholicism of the force it might have had to reform, and so to transform, Hungarian society. Instead, it became a secularized symbol of a stable political system. Looking at a later period, Wittenberg sees clear evidence of spreading secular attitudes, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, despite the best efforts of clergy to resist them. Enrollment in religious instruction dropped between 1960 and 1980, as did rates of church attendance, christenings, and church weddings. In sum, the churches were rapidly losing members after the early 1960s, a trend that was only partially offset in the late 1970s and early 1980s by the growth of oppositional religious revivalist groups like the underground Catholic “base communities” and the Calvinist Renewal Movement. Wittenberg cites one priest who remembered that in this period, “my predecessors created the religiosity; I only tried to preserve what was already there. Anything more was not possible” (Wittenberg, 183). By the 1970s, the Communists may have finally been succeeding in their goal to create a secularized society.

Explanations for this trend abound. In the rural counties where Wittenberg did his research, the land collectivization drives of the 1960s were the most significant social event of the twentieth century. The nationalization of land uprooted communities and created space for new (and state-sponsored) forms of social life. With all due caution, Wittenberg suggests that the erosion of church communities and land collectivization, contemporaneous events in Hungary, may be interrelated. But it is also worth noting that the 1960s were a pivotal decade in the history of secularization across Europe, both East and West. Hungary may not have experienced such a precipitous decline in religiosity as Great Britain did; and it saw an increase after 1989 in the number of people who declared themselves to be religious. But this has not made it a bastion of faith like Poland. Drawing on research done in other countries, one could speculate that

the spread of consumerism (of the peculiar state-socialist kind) or a generational shift and the rise of a new youth culture that reached, at least in part, to the villages of Zala or Hajdu-Bihar counties may have also played a role in the decline of religiosity in Hungary.

We learn from these two books that religion can transmit secular political values, even as religiosity itself fluctuates or declines. But how exactly does it do this? Is Christianity enjoying a secularized half-life in post-Communist societies like Hungary? Or is it being transformed in ways that are not yet fully understood? Far from settling the matter, these books raise important questions about the function of religion in the modern world. Pursuing the answers will make the history of religion in Eastern Europe an exciting issue for many years to come.

PAUL HANEBRINK

Rutgers University–New Brunswick

Prague in Black: Nazi Rule and Czech Nationalism. By *Chad Bryant*.
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007. Pp. xviii+378. \$49.95.

Chad Bryant's illuminating book seeks to trace "the origins, implementation, and ultimate effects of two grandiose, violent attempts at nation-making in western Czechoslovakia" (2), namely, the Nazi program of "Germanization" in the Second World War and the postwar expulsion of the Sudeten German minority. Arguing the importance of the regional background to these events, he also successfully demonstrates their linkage with Nazi nationality policy in occupied Poland and with the Holocaust. Records of the Office of the Reich Protector of Bohemia-Moravia, local administrative and Nazi party organs, and Czech noncommunist and communist resistance, combined with extensive secondary literature, enable a skillful depiction of tragedy, building on burgeoning research in ethnic cleansing and related matters in post-1945 east-central Europe by scholars like Eagle Glassheim, Phillip Ther, Ana Siljak, Alfred Rieber, and Benjamin Frommer.

Bryant shows the jurisdictional jungle enmeshing Protectorate, security, and party organs and Hermann Göring's economic empire, and revealingly lays bare the resentments of Protectorate Sudeten Germans, passed over for top jobs by contemptuous Reich Germans, depleted by military obligations from which Czechs were exempt, and hostile to plans to make up to half the latter Germans. Constant shifts and arbitrary local variations in nationality policy (registration of would-be Germans, racial screening, mixed marriage regulation; above all, failure to define German-ness) exposed the looseness of the project before economic and military necessity suspended it in early 1943; ideologues came to believe the best German "blood" was in their Czech intelligentsia opponents rather than opportunist, sometimes criminal recruits, or Sudeten Germans. The wide consensus on antisemitism did not exist in Nazi thinking on the Slavs, Bryant concludes. He shows, indeed, the strengthening of Czech solidarity in the early, surprisingly mild months of occupation, a reversion, he argues, to nineteenth-century patterns whereby Czechs had defined their nationality by "acting Czech" in cultural terms. But Reinhard Heydrich's ruthless rule ended this possibility, increasing tension between an exiled government calling for more resistance and a weakened resistance. The upshot was a Czechness defined by hatred of Germans rather than Masarykian humanism, so that with Edvard Beneš's blessing the whittling down of categories of Germans who would be allowed to stay in postwar Czechoslovakia bore structural resemblance to the tightening of the Nazi noose around Jewish *Misch-*