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VISION OF THE OTHER FOR CATHOLICS, CHRISTIANS AND NON-CHRISTIANS IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR (1936–1939)

At the begining of the twentieth century, since World War I, the perception of others had become especially antagonistic in the West.* The "other" was transformed into the enemy. Moreover, it was an enemy that needed to be destroyed, since ideological confrontation deteriorated very quickly into direct conflict: right-left, red-white, fascist-communist – these were some of the partners in the *danse macabre* that took place in Europe between the Wars. In Spain, this confrontation reached its climax in the civil war which started in 1936, although recent scholarship has pointed out that there had been a clear lead-up to the war in the decades before. Very quickly, the "other" became a threat to one's own survival. The concept of revenge permeated even the smallest pockets in which tolerance could resist.

Evidently, this binary perception extended beyond Europe. At the beginning of the 1930s, Brazilian feminist author María Lacerda wrote a short essay, *Clericalism and Fascism*[1], which put the Catholic papacy (Pedro) and Italian fascism (the new Caesar, the "Caesar of a tragic

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[1] María Lacerda de Moura (1887–1945). The Argentine edition, which we have used, is entitled *Clericalismo y Fascismo: Horda de Embrutecedores!*, Rosario, R.A.: Librería Ruiz, 1936, with a prologue by Juan Lazarte, translated by Clotilde Bula. Miriam Moreira Leite, has written a recent biography of the author: *Maria Lacerda de Moura: uma feminista utópica*, Editora Mulheres, Santa Cruz do Sul, RS: EDUNISC, 2005.

carnival"[2]), both in the same bag. The text opens with a review of Italian authors from between the Wars who extolled violence as beauty and who paved the way towards real violence ("of castor oil and tourniquet") of the Blackshirts: "Gabriele D'Annunzio, Giovanni Papini, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Luigi Pirandello, all imperialists, all neo-pagan priests and apostles, of the 'Roman God', and all Catholics... all instruments of overwhelming Jesuitism."[3] The roots of the clerical-fascist union were traced not only to the Lateran Pacts, but also to Pius XI's address to Benito Mussolini[4], when he did not denounce – the silence of Pius XII, *ante litteram* – the fascist violence of the preceding decade. Lacerda applied to him – and this is what is significant to me – all the stereotypes of anti-Semitic or anti-Masonic writing, though this time from the perspective of Anarchism and directed against Catholicism:

> The Church, accomplice to Duce's maneuvers (with the Black-Pope Tacchi-Venturi[5] behind the scenes, the Satanic soul of Catholicism), adapted itself, transformed itself, stretched itself for centuries to come, like an immense octopus squeezing mankind, destroying reason and stifling conscience, trying desperately to impose a medieval era upon the world.[6]

Throughout the Western world, the "other" – Jew, Catholic, Protestant, Fascist, Communist – became an enemy to eliminate. Lacerda presented the idea that "our strong and generous cry of 'Death to Fascism' is not violence: it is the 'ultimate resistance' of our consciousness against organized savagery"[7]. Violence during the years of the Spanish Republic (1931–1936) was, like the Fascist literature of the 1920s,

[2] *Ibid*., p. 10.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 74.

[4] In the encyclical *Non abbiamo bisgno*, of 29 June 1931. On the relation of Pius XI with fascism, see Emma Fattorini, *Hitler, Mussolini and the Vatican: Pope Pius XI and the Speech That was Never Made*, Cambridge: Polity, 2011.

[5] The Jesuit historian Pietro Tacchi Venturi (1861–1956), who served as an informal link between the Vatican and the Italian government during the years of fascism.

[6] María Lacerda de Moura, *op. cit*., p. 158.

[7] *Ibid*., p. 167.

appropriating political discourse: words became rhetorical weapons that opened the road to the use of real weapons[8]. It is in this verbally and physically violent environment that one must contextualize opinions about "others" in the religious world – Spanish and European – in the years of the Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939.

Amidst growing tensions at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Spanish Civil War was considered the climax of the European ideological conflict. It was a clash between two political configurations, the democratic vision and the totalitarian vision in its two guises, Fascist or Communist. Curiously, this distinction faded in Spain during the Civil War. Communist totalitarianism supported democratic principles while fascism became diluted in the militarism and Catholic traditionalism of the new Franco state. We could say that, in the republic camp, democracy masked a strong revolutionary process – anarchist and communist – and in the rebel camp, fascism – and its symbols – shrouded the reality of the return to a traditional society, closer to classical bourgeoisie, under the guise of a national-syndicalist revolution.

In Spain, as in the entire Western world, the combative vision one held of the other was dualist. Each group even defined themselves in terms of aggression. The republicans presented themselves as anti-fascists, a term which welcomed communists, socialists, anarchists or bourgeois democrats. The rebels considered themselves anti-Marxists from the start. In either case, both found their justification in being anti-"other".

We must now introduce religion into this dynamic of confrontation, which, in Spain, will be fundamentally Catholic.

The "Other" for Non-Christians

From a religious viewpoint, Spain during the war of 1936 – and in the preceding centuries – was essentially divided between Catholics and non-Catholics, given that other religious faiths were statistically less relevant. Logically, to the Catholic world, the concept of the

[8] This was summed up nicely in the title of the book dedicated to the process of verbal violence in the years before the war: Fernando del Rey, *Palabras como puños: La intransigencia política en la II República española*, Madrid: Tecnos, 2011.

"other" was not limited to one religious group. The others could be Communists – or the godless, the usual term – Jews, Protestants or Muslims. All these groups were actors in the war. By contrast, for the Anarchists, Communists and republican bourgeois, the "other" – from a religious stand-point – was limited to the Catholic Church. A radio conference held by José Ballester, former Primary Education Director, at the beginning of the war in Valencia made it very clear. It was called "The Church, our greatest enemy in the War"[9], and by the "Church" he meant Catholicism. His approach is useful in summarizing a large part of the republic's opinion of Catholics. First, he made a radical distinction between Christianity and the Church. Christianity – summarized in "the Gospel" – was presented as something noble, beautiful, idealistic, an egalitarian theory full of concern for the afflicted. But the Church had strayed far from the Christian ideal, despite those who remembered their obligation, because:

> to return to the Evangelical route requires that one live amongst the poor, give food to the hungry and water to the thirsty, console the sad and dress the naked. It involves living amongst pain, tears, injustice, poverty and misery, and requires one to help ease the pain, dry the tears, rectify these injustices, alleviate poverty and misery. To realise this mission, one needs to live in constant and intimate contact with the people that always smell of dirt, of misery and who were always down on their luck.[10]

In the republican imagination, the Catholic Church meant the hierarchy, the clergy, the religious orders – especially the hated Jesuits, "the genuine representation of reactionary Spain, black and intransigent"[11] – and the Catholic bourgeoisie. The "Evangelical" Catholics were spared, although it was clear that, once the war was won, there would be no place in the new society for the Church at all, though its existence wouldn't be expressly prohibited. In closing his

[9] José Ballester, *La Iglesia, nuestro mayor enemigo en la guerra*, Valencia: Radio Telégrafos Valencia, [1937].

[10] José Ballester, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.

radio conference, José Ballester described his hope for a world based on a happy naturalism[12], one where no church would be necessary.

> We welcome in the future an enormous and relentless task: to win the hearts and minds of our compatriots, hitherto anaesthetized by faith and religion, so that they may wake from the anesthesia and move towards a new religion of science, of art, of literature and contemplation and interpretation of Nature.[13]

An idyllic vision of the "other" – priests and nuns, as the average Catholic is no longer considered – was the approach of the Communist Party propaganda. In 1937, the Socorro Rojo[14] published a pamphlet called "*Religion and Fascism*", dedicated "to all those Christians and Catholics, our brothers, who have suffered harassment, persecution and death in the rebel zone of our beloved Spain, because of their faith and patriotic loyalty"[15]. In this case, the other is given a double interpretation, which the prologue by republican priest Juan García Morales elaborated very clearly. There were true and false Catholics. The true Catholics[16] sided with the Republic and the Republic respected them by not staining itself with their blood[17]. And a significant number of biographies were written about Catholic martyrs who died for the Republic – for example, the case of Basque priests executed by the military.

[12] In line with the Institución Libre de Enseñanza, founded in 1876 by professors who had split from the official university because they disagreed with official Catholicism, and directed initially by Francisco Giner de los Ríos, follower of German philosopher Karl Christian Friedrich Krause's ideas. It was the secular alternative to Catholic teaching until the Second Republic.

[13] José Ballester, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[14] The Comunist International Red Aid in Spain.

[15] *Religión y fascismo*, Comité Ejecutivo Nacional del Socorro Rojo de España, 1937.

[16] "The true Catholics, the Christians held in all Spain's heart, at whose vanguard marched the Catholic Nationalist Basques, have no choice other than to condemn the subversive movement, savage and barbaric, that has transformed the love for our country into a sea of blood" (*ibid.*, p. 5).

[17] "Our hands are clean of Christian blood" (*ibid.*, p. 6).

There were also the old "others", the religious who had been recycled as guerilla priests – the militia – or nuns of the Socorro Rojo. It was clear where Christ was, and it wasn't in the Church. Christ was with the oppressed, those who fought for the Republic. The text includes a testimony of a young priest who remembers having lost faith in the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church, since it has been endorsing this shameful subversion and prostitution of religious values in Spain.

> I have been on the point of losing my most profound beliefs. The trench has saved me. I have returned here to find Christ. He, the great persecuted, mocked and betrayed, will be here, where I am, where he has always been: with the oppressed and dispossessed, with those who hunger and thirst for justice.[18]

Another priest, from Navarre, affirms having changed his "robes of a priest for those of the militia", in the name of justice. Nuns from the Orphan Asylum of San José, in Valencia, continued working in the same place, now named the Socorro Rojo's Children's Home, but their role was seen in a new light: "There, among others, is Sister Elena, now Comrade Elena, a quiet and thoughtful girl who works as a militant more in a humanitarian fashion, caring for the children housed there."[19]

There was, therefore, a Christian republic, an "other", that was tolerated. On the opposite side there was "treason, perjury, paganism, tyranny, cruelty, all that is essentially anti-Christian"[20]. The opposite side painted this "other", as is appropriate in a propaganda leaflet, with thick strokes to stimulate rejection. A chaplain from the Basque militia commented in an interview: "No, we are not armed. Carrying arms is not needed to serve God. It seems that on the other side there are priests firing rifles and machine guns. We, Basque priests, do not want to put ourselves against the people."[21] One nun recalled that "when a church takes up arms, it is no longer a Church of God". A Saint Sebastian pastor was certain that the others were "traitors and perjurers, vile murderers

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 23.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 30.

... Pharisees that Jesus, if he returned to the world again, would not cast from the church with whips, but with a kick"[22]. To summarize, as the well-known Catholic republican author José Bergamín said in an interview with a French journalist Louis-Martin Chauffier:[23]

> The people saw in the Official Spanish Church all the allies and friends of the oppressors of the people. Religion means money, domination, power, inhumanity, capitalism, fascism. [...] The union between the Church and fascism was clear: and this was most clearly seen when churches and monasteries were converted into strongholds and weapon depositories. It seems strange to me that the people's reaction wasn't more savage than it was.[24]

The "Other" for Catholics

Catholics obviously did not see things quite in the same way they were presented in republican propaganda. Cardinal Goma[25], Spanish

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 43. Realistically, this would be difficult. Virtually all priests and members of the religious order who could not escape were murdered in the Republic zone, and all churches were destroyed. Public worship was banned and religious life went underground. The murdered numbered: over 4000 priests (15% of the total), more than 2000 male members of the religious order (20% of the total) and more than 200 female members of the religious order (3%). Given that the persecution was only in the Republic zone, it is clear that globally many dioceses were absolutely devastated. In Madrid alone, almost 40% of priests were murdered. In other areas, such as Barbastro, up to 80%. Those not murdered had obviously managed to escape or hide. The most extensive work covering the persecution is that of Antonio Montero Moreno, *La persecución religiosa en España 1936–1939*, Madrid: La Editorial Católica, 1960, republished in 1998. Recent texts on this theme include Vicente Cárcel Ortí, *La persecución religiosa en España durante la Segunda República (1931–1939),* Madrid: Rialp, 1990, and Ángel David Martín Rubio, *La cruz, el perdón y la gloria: persecución religiosa en España durante la II República y la Guerra Civil*, Madrid: Ciudadela Libros, 2007, from a critical point of view. In English, a good summary is found in José M. Sánchez, *The Spanish Civil War as a religious tragedy*, Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987.

[25] Isidro Gomá y Tomás (1869–1949), Archbishop of Toledo (1933–1940) and unofficial representative of the Holy See before Franco in the initial months of the war (December 1936 to September 1937).

Church Primate, viewed the war as an ideological battle. Much like the Communist propaganda had put it, there were acceptable "others" – they were murdering priests and destroying temples, but they were still considered the Church's children. They were "rebel sons and degenerates who are orchestrating the ruin of Spain", but "doubly worthy of our paternal care for being so tremendously disgraced", Goma said in a response to the Archbishop of Catanzaro[26] who wrote to him – as did many Bishops around the world – after the publication of the Collective Letter of July 1937, explaining the meaning of the civil war. In this Collective Letter, which summarized the thoughts of the Spanish Catholic hierarchy about the "other", he wrote that it was a battle of civilizations, in which one of the groups – the Marxists – "sought the elimination of the Catholic religion in Spain"[27]. A further distinction could be made within this group. On one side, there were the children of the Church, the baptized Spaniards. It said at the end of the Collective Letter:

> Allow us one final declaration. God knows that we love and pardon with all our hearts those who, without knowing, have inflicted serious damage to the Church and to the Nation. They are our children. We invoke forgiveness, before God, our martyrs, the ten Bishops and the millions of priests and Catholics who have died [...].[28]

On the other side were the instigators of the crimes: the revolutionary "other", foreign, set against the Western Christian civilization, who triggered "the Communist revolution, allied to the Government armies, [that] were above all anti-divine"[29].

Therefore, there were two clearly delineated sides. One consisted of the nationalists and, against them, stood the true "others" who

[26] Isidro Gomá to Giovanni Fiorentini, Archbishop of Catanzaro (Italy), 27 November 1937, in José Andrés-Gallego and Antón M. Pazos, *Archivo Gomá: Documentos de la Guerra Civil*, Madrid: CSIC, 2001–2010, 13 vols., vol. 8, p. 418.

[27] *Ibid*., vol. 6, p. 334.

[28] *Carta Colectiva de los Obispos españoles a los de todo el mundo con motivo de la guerra de España*, 1937-07-01, in: *ibid*., vol. 6, pp. 348–349.

[29] *Ibid*., vol. 6, p. 338. However, the document justifies this reality using documentation supposedly of Communist origin that today we know forms part of the anti-propaganda of the time.

were godless foreigners. Both groups represented two tendencies: the spiritual, on the side of the rebels, who came to the defense of order, social peace, traditional civilization and the country, and in large part to the defense of religion; and on the other side, the materialist, calling themselves Marxist, Communist or Anarchist, who wanted to replace the old Spanish civilization with the new 'civilization' of the Russian Soviets.[30] One should keep in mind that, within the general fratricidal character of the Spanish war, there was a sense in some regions that the enemy was in fact a brother, and this brotherhood could be perceived especially from a religious point of view. The clearest case was the clash between republican Basques and Navarrian Carlists in the north. Both areas were highly religious, with similar traditions, and both shared the Basque tongue. The conflict was so disconcerting that, when the war had barely begun, the Bishops of both dioceses[31] jointly declared it unacceptable that Catholics fight against Catholics and, even less, that they did so united with the anti-Christian Marxists:

> on the front lines they fought fiercely, and they killed each other, sons of our earth, of the same blood and race [Basque], with the same religious ideals, with an equal love of God, of Christ and their Church, who lived following the Law of Jesus Christ, but who killed each other over slight political differences. This is grave, but it is worse that they have found a common cause with acknowledged enemies of the Church and have fought alongside them against their enemies, who were their own brothers.[32]

Here, there was as much sense of fatherhood and brotherhood as of the "otherness" – even on the battlefield[33]. And in some cases,

[30] *Ibid*.

[31] Marcelino Olaechea, of Pamplona (Navarra), and Mateo Múgica, of Vitoria, Episcopal city of the Basque country.

[32] The *Instruction* was widespread in Basque country, by pamphlets launched from airplanes. The original version, which was written by Gomá, in Anastasio Granados, *El Cardenal Gomá. Primado de España*, Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1969, pp. 127–132. Date on p. 128.

[33] Something similar to what happened between Navarrese people and Basques occurred in the Catalan attempt to invade Mallorca (both countries were brothers in culture and language). The Bishop, on celebrating the invaders' retreat, lamented especially that the Catalans had behaved "with a cruelty that could never be explained,

they acted accordingly[34]. In the first weeks of the war, this attitude – especially on the rebel side – could be seen in the behavior of some priests towards their parishioners who belonged to the Popular Front parties, which meant they were ideologically the "others". In Galicia, where the military rebellion triumphed, the Army began executing leftist militants whom it deemed guilty of the revolution: radicals, separatists, Communists, Socialists or Anarchists – sometimes they were not even militants but objects of personal revenge. In these early days, a safeguard for survival was a "good Catholic" certificate that pastors gave to parishioners. As many pastors extended their favor to those who had been Communists or Anarchists in the previous months or years, the Archbishop of Santiago published a memorandum on 14 September 1936, instructing priests to "certify with conscience", meaning that they should not give Catholic endorsement to those who were not practicing Catholics[35].

Aside from the "other" who was like a brother or son gone astray, there was the radical enemy who had disowned the Spanish people. In the imagination of the Church hierarchy at the start of the war, this "other" was absolutely foreign to Spain and to Catholicism. He was a stranger, stateless and atheist:

> It was the Tatar soul, the genius of Communist internationalism that supplanted the Christian sentiment of a large part of our people and it launched itself with fury against the Spanish Catholic, who had to react, and the moment of conflict arrived between the two Spains, which is

an improper cruelty, not of brothers nor of civilized beings". A key text in understanding the viewpoint the hierarchy had of the war, as reflected in the ecclesiastic bulletins, Alfonso Álvarez Bolado, *Para ganar la guerra, para ganar la paz. Iglesia y guerra civil: 1936–1939*, Madrid: Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, 1995, p. 57.

[34] José Andrés-Gallego has explored the idea of the "other" as a brother, and the protection of the enemy, in "La Guerra Civil como enfrentamiento entre cristianos", in: Antón M. Pazos, *Religiones y Guerra Civil Española: Gran Bretaña, Francia, España*, Santiago de Compostela: CSIC, 2011, pp. 117–147.

[35] Tomás Muniz de Pablos, "Más advertencias y disposiciones con motivo de las presentes circunstancias", in: *Boletín Oficial Eclesiástico del Arzobispado de Santiago*, Santiago de Compostela: Archidiócesis de Santiago de Compostela, 1936, pp. 249–253, cited in Alfonso Álvarez Bolado, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

> better described as two civilizations: that of Russia, which is no more than barbaric, and that of Christianity.[36]

Gomá, with fiery terminology, portrayed the war not so much as a civil war but as an international and ideological war. In this way, violence of religious hatred could be attributed to foreign elements, not to the Spanish.

Certainly, those who were killed were Spanish, but Gomá concluded that they were "others" so foreign that it was difficult to speak of them as Spanish or to speak of a civil war at all. In a piece about the causes of the war published at the end of 1936, Goma wrote:

> "Though it's true the fight is on the Spanish soil, red with the blood of brothers, it represents a theater of war in which the old Spain plays host to the storm unleashed upon it by this international barbarism called communism."[37]

Hence, finishing – and winning – the war relied upon expelling the "Tatar soul" from Spain. The Catholic hierarchy insisted on the duty of reconciliation among the Spanish people, who were to be reminded that they were brothers: brothers by faith[38] and brothers by country. Just as pastors had given false Catholicism certificates, the tonic of the Church hierarchy upon the arrival of peace was to welcome and pardon the "other" while inviting them, of course, to cease being the "other". The Bishop of Madrid recalled in 1939:

[36] Isidro Gomá, *El caso de España: Instrucción a sus diocesanos y respuesta a unas consultas sobre la guerra actual*, Pamplona: 1936, in: José Andrés-Gallego and Antón M. Pazos, *Archivo Gomá*, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 51.

[37] *Ibid*.

[38] It is unknown how many Spanish people in the twenties and thirties, at least among the members of socialist and anarchist workers' organizations, underwent "civil baptism". The presumption was that many, because many children of workers were baptized in the Catholic Church in the post-war, though many of them had been born during the Republic and the war. Social groups had probably adopted the social benchmark of getting baptized and being buried in sacred ground. In the years before the war there had been Socialist and Communist "baptisms", demonstrating the social roots of the rite, but there are no statistics around this phenomenon, which, had it continued, would have had an undoubtable effect on the history of the Church in the country.

> Those who pursued us, crazed by absurd sermons and troubled by Satanic hatred, are also our brothers and fellow countrymen. We overcome evil with good. We ask our Father to call His prodigal sons home, which they should never have left, and if on the open road you cross paths with them, welcome them with open arms, for the love of God and the love of Spain.[39]

The "Other" for Non-Catholic Christians

For the non-Catholic Christians of Spain, there were also two "others", depending on which group they identified themselves with. In general, the Catholic hierarchy lamented that those theoretically Christian "brothers" – English and American Protestants above all – did not understand the persecution suffered by the Spanish Church. Or, the Church expressed bewilderment at seeing that the Protestant world held a political rather than religious view, which led them to side with those who were the true enemies of Christ.

To a large extent this was true. The Protestant world, above all in Great Britain and the United States, understood the Spanish Civil War to be essentially religious but, instead of accepting it as a religious crusade, saw it in reverse: as a religious distortion[40]. Catholics were the "others" responsible for distorting not only the idea of the just war but the idea of Christianity itself. Protestant authors generally used the stereotypes of the Spanish Church to explain the Civil War: power, inquisition, wealth and oppression. Cambridge Professor Charles E. Raven identifies an exception to this stereotyping in the preface to his book *Christianity and Spain* as he highlights the importance and impartiality of the author in that:

[39] Letter of Bishop of Madrid-Alcalá dated 28 March 1939: Leopoldo Eijo Garay, "La hora presente: Carta pastoral", in: *Boletín Oficial del Obispado de Madrid-Alcalá,* 1.660 / 1 mayo, 1939, p. 18, quoted in: José Andrés-Gallego, "La Guerra Civil como enfrentamiento entre cristianos", in: *op. cit.*, p. 144.

[40] A critical summary of the opinions published in the Protestant press about the Spanish Civil War in: C. Crivelli, "I Protestanti e l'attuale conflitto spagnolo", in: *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 2097 (1937 / IV), pp. 210–224. The author is a Jesuit expert in the contemporary evolution of the reformed denominations and sects.

> he draws attention to essential facts to which most of the propagandists on both sides are blind, which the British public generally ignores, and which can never be omitted if the present conflict is to be seen in perspective and in its true colours.[41]

But according to Professor Raven, the book is especially valuable because it proves the historical guilt of the Catholic Church in Spain and the impossibility that Christ was on the side of Franco[42]. The "other", from the Anglican point of view, was not so much the Communists or the revolutionaries as the Catholic hierarchy. And it considered religious persecution, such as murdering of bishops and priests or destruction of churches, to be a constant in Spanish history:

> Those who see in the anti-clericalism of today the 'red hand of Moscow' and the teaching of Karl Marx can never have read a Spanish history. The scenes we have witnessed are the result of factors deep in the pages of history, and form only the latest, if worst, examples of a process which has gone on continuously for a hundred years.[43]

Certainly, the author acknowledges the thousands of priests killed, and accepts that the Spanish situation could be compared with the Russian or French revolutions. Even so, he understood that, through persecution, one was freeing oneself from a hateful oppression. The "others" should not be defended:

> When hearkening to the plea that the Church is only fighting for its life, one must remember that in that case its 'life' involved the denial of education, social services and even a reasonable standard of life for the majority of her children in God, that to save her life the Church has

[41] Charles E. Raven, in Henry Brinton, *Christianity and Spain*, with a Preface by Revd. Canon Charles E. Raven, Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, London: United Editorial, [1937], p. 3.

[42] "In particular his book is valuable because, writing as a convinced and enthusiastic Christian, he shows how impossible it is to accept the claim, put forward by champions of the 'United Christian Front', that General Franco's cause is the cause of Christ, that a Church whose past record and present policy are here set out deserves our unquestioning support, and that the future of Christianity will be advanced if that Church is restored to power as an instrument of fascist domination" (*ibid*).

[43] *Ibid*., p. 17.

> blasted the lives of a whole generation. And all this is for the institution whose founder said: "He who would save his life shall lose it".[44]

When Spanish bishops, largely to counter the viewpoints in the Catholic world which we have just seen published the above-mentioned Collective Letter in 1937, responses from the Protestant side further reinforced the rejection of this "other", presented as Christian. On 4 October 1937, the *New York Times* published a reply[45] to the Spanish bishops. It appeared as an "open letter" to the Catholic hierarchy, signed by 150 Protestants and later released in the form of a prospectus[46] along with other documents which surfaced in the heat of the controversy. The Open Letter made it clear that the struggle in Spain was between fascism and democracy and that the position of the Catholic Church clashed head-on with the American democratic tradition[47]. And, of course, attacks on people and sacred buildings had to connect them with the Spanish anti-clerical tradition, a logical continuation for a Church that had always clashed with the people:

> However deplorable such incidents may be, it is difficult to accept the hierarchy's contention that the Popular Front Government was, or is, responsible. It is well known that for centuries the Spanish people have identified the hierarchy with the privileged classes. […] In the light of this background of anti-clerical hostility, extending back over more than a century, the pastoral Letter seems most inadequate when it attempts to picture the present hostility against the Church as a recent importation.[48]

[44] *Ibid*., p. 35.

[45] The Collective Letter of the Spanish Bishops to the world, 1 July 1937, explaining their version of the civil war. It had a great effect on propaganda. Extensive correspondence by the Bishops regarding the letter is found in José Andrés-Gallego and Antón M. Pazos, *Archivo Gomá*, *op. cit.*

[46] *American Democracy vs. the Spanish Hierarchy*, New York: Spanish Information Bureau [1937].

[47] "Certainly the hierarchy can hardly expect to gain sympathy here either for itself or for the Catholic religion with a declaration that treats with contempt principles that are the precious heritage of the American people" (*ibid*., p. 13).

[48] *Ibid*., p. 12.

American Protestants accepted the Communist or Anarchist propaganda spread about priests and monks portrayed as the "other", radical enemy of the people, not only for constantly siding with bourgeois power, but, from July 1936, for fighting directly against the people with weapons in hand. In a propaganda pamphlet published in Buenos Aires about how the military coup had played out in different regions of Spain, priests were portrayed as weapon-wielding fighters. Frederica Montseny, Anarchist Minister[49], wrote that in Barcelona:

> The churches and monasteries attacked, and the people spontaneously turned all their anger against them [...]. The Falange, the Carlist, had sought refuge there [in the monasteries] and started a fire, together with the monks, against the masses. The ancient hatred, the fury of the multitudes against the Church, increased a hundredfold, stirring energy. The fire spread from one building to another while the friars escaped through the sewers and underground tunnels.[50]

This image of the religious orders firing upon the people was obviously a piece of Popular Front propaganda, but it was a very widespread viewpoint – even accepted by pro-Franco foreigners[51] – and served as justification for the destruction of churches. It originated in Barcelona, when a group of soldiers barricaded themselves in the convent of the Carmelites and, from there, tried to defend themselves against the resistance. But what is interesting to see is the construction of the "other" as a stereotype that was not only negative but also allowed for the justification of the destruction of that "other". A reply to the *New York Times* Open Letter called the Popular Front "a governmental regime

[49] Between November 1936 and May 1937, she was the first female Minister in Spain.

[50] Federica Montseny, "19 July, Catalonia", in: AA. VV., *Como se enfrentó al fascismo en toda España*, Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Servicio de Propaganda España, 1938, pp. 10–11.

[51] "The French vice-admiral H. Jouber", in: *La guerra d' Espagne el le catholicisme: Réponse a M. Jacques Maritain,* Paris: S.G.I.E., 1937, accepted this legend, however naive (p. 11), see Gonzalo Redondo, *Historia de la Iglesia en España*, vol. II: *1936–1939*, Madrid: Rialp, 1993, p. 21, note 14.

that has carried on a ruthless[52] persecution of the Christian religion"[53]. Catholics who signed the reply accused the editor of the Open Letter of being "guilty of a hiss of hate against Catholicism". American Catholics judged the Protestant view of Catholics as prejudiced. Moreover, the Catholic reply argued that the Spanish war was not primarily religious but civil, a fight between those who wanted to impose Communism and those that rejected it. Catholics concluded that Protestants should see Communists as the "other", not the Catholic hierarchy, and emphasized that Catholics were persecuted Christians to whom other Christians should show solidarity.

The majority of Protestants did not see it that way, of course[54]. Even people as even-handed as the Director of the Spanish Quaker Mission – who impartially assisted to the needs of both sides during the war – hinted at the shadow of anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish prejudice in the story of his mission:

> The first day in Spain[55] is full of unforgettable scenes. I felt that I had witnessed the death of a rich culture when I saw the people who defended their freedom so jealously and fled from the horrors of a civil war only to be followed by a totalitarian state. Everything that had been achieved since the Inquisition seemed to evaporate before my eyes.[56]

[52] The systematic nature of the persecution, beyond the excesses of uncontrolled groups in the early days, is highlighted in the recent investigation by Julius Ruiz, *El Terror Rojo: Madrid 1936*, [Madrid]: Espasa, [2012].

[53] Francis Talbot, *Catholic Reply to Open Letter of 150 Protestant Signatories on Spain*, (ser. *Clarifying Spanish Civil War collection*), New York: Catholic Mind, 1937. It is divided in two parts. The first pages are a reply to the letter published in the *New York Times*, and are signed by many representative Catholics. The second part is a piece written by the Jesuit Francis Talbot clarifying some points of the letter and claiming that "the writer of the *Open Letter* and the nucleus responsible for its publication are guilty of a hiss of hate against Catholicism" (p. 21).

[54] Nor many of the Catholics who visited the region. It could be said that the idea of the "other" was so marked that each person who visited the area reinforced their own convictions.

[55] In 1939, in the republican Catalonia but about to be conquered by Franco troops.

[56] Howard E. Kershner, *La labor asistencial de los cuáqueros durante la guerra civil española y la posguerra*: *España y Francia 1939–1941*, foreword by Pedro Bermejo

Visiting Catholics also held the view that the Catholicism of Franco's Spain was a distortion of religion, as illustrated in the account of German Prince Loewenstein's visit to Republican Spain. Upon finding himself among Basque Catholic soldiers, he expressed his appreciation of being a Catholic, because siding with the Republic had proved "to many non-Catholic Spanish Republicans that the Church and Democracy are closely connected by their very nature and that only a misconception of Christian ideals can bring the Church into line with Fascism".[57]

To conclude, foreign Protestants had two points of view about the religious situation during the war. The first is exemplified by the French Pastor Jules Jézéquel's visit to Spain in 1937 as vice president of the pacifist organization *Rassemblement universel pour la paix*[58], who was shown the normality of Protestant worship in the Republican zone. Interestingly, although the first building set on fire in Barcelona was an evangelical chapel[59], Protestant worship went largely uninterrupted during the war. Pastor Jézéquel, who carried out religious functions in different Spanish cities, noted the contrast of the freedom of Protestant worship and the absence of open Catholic churches. As a pacifist, he was very balanced in his views, but nevertheless raised questions about the responsibilities of the Church during the persecution:

Marín, Ambassador of Spain, Madrid: Siddharth Mehta Ediciones, 2011, p. 54. First edition in English: *Quaker service in modern war*, New York: Prentice Hall, [1950].

[57] Prince Hubertus Friedrich of Loewenstein, *A Catholic in Republican Spain*, London: Victor Gollancz, 1937, p. 79.

[58] Global pacifist association created in September 1936 from numerous national and international political organizations. Various groups played a key role, from liberals to communists, but dropped out after the Soviet-German pact. It could be considered "finalement plus à l'image de l'élite politique et sociale du Front populaire, et de ses divisions de plus en plus importantes, que du seul Parti communiste", see Rachel Mazuy, "Le Rassemblement Universel pour la Paix (1931–1939): une organisation de masse?", in: *Materiaux pour l'histoire de notre temps*, 1993, vol. 30, pp. 40–44, quoted after p. 44.

[59] "The first religious building set on fire, possibly unintentionally, was the Protestant Evangelical chapel situated in 'calle Internacional', numbers 24–26, with schools attached", see Gonzalo Redondo, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

> Je certifie, – he said in a farewell speech, – pour l'avoir vu de mes propres yeux, je le répète, que, par exemple, le culte protestant est célébré ouvertement, publiquement, dans l'Espagne républicaine. […] Par contre, il est vrai que le culte catholique n'a pas été célébré publiquement. A qui en incombe la responsabilité? Est-ce que, en grande partie, elle ne correspond pas à l'Eglise? Sur ce point, il serait intéressant d'ouvrir un large débat. Pour des raisons que tout le monde comprendra, je ne veux point l'entreprendre.[60]

A similar approach appears in a report of the British interreligious committee – which included two Catholics – who visited Spain at the beginning of the war, invited by the Republican government. The record of this visit, published in London in 1937, and cited by the name that appears first in the list of authors – the Dean of Canterbury – was discussed widely in propaganda and civil war disputes. Again, inquisitorial Spain appears in this viewpoint, in this case to explain why the Basques sided with the Republic. An interview with Minister Manuel de Irujo[61] confirmed "what the delegation had already discovered in Bilbao – that the Basque Church was never subjected to the Inquisition, and consequently has never been affected by the political tendencies of the rest of the Church in Spain".[62]

Although "the delegation in making its Report had no desire to issue what may in any sense be described as partisan propaganda", when the report did broach the religious question (which was the true purpose of the report), the delegation had no problem in confirming that "probably no less than ninety per cent of the clergy was implicated in the rebellion, and, even if sufficient numbers of them could be found

[60] Claudio Gutiérrez Marín and Louis G. Reynaud, *Le Pasteur J. Jézéquel visite l'Espagne républicaine*, Barcelona: Forja, 1938, p. 25. The author is a Spanish Protestant who recorded, on the date indicated, a radio broadcast by Jules Jézéquel.

[61] Manuel de Irujo, Minister representing the Basque Nationalist Party. He was Minister between September 1936 and August 1938. He was Minister throughout the different governments during these years, except between May and December of 1937, when he was Minister of Justice. He attempted, without success, to normalize the Catholic cult in the Republic zone.

[62] *Report of a Recent Religious Delegation to Spain, April 1937,* eds. The Dean of Canterbury [et. al.], London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1937.

and could be induced to return to their parishes, there would be a considerable danger of the churches under their influence becoming once again the centers of disloyal intrigue"[63]. Despite the delegation's explicit declaration of neutrality, they accepted, without an overly critical spirit, the explanation that the authorities had given as to why the Catholic churches remained closed in the Republican territory. The "other" Catholic – in this case, the clergy – was seen not only as inquisitorial but as a born conspirator, radically opposed to freedom of conscience and, consequently, to the entire democratic regime. As Prince Loewenstein suggested, the Spanish Church was contrary even to Catholicism. The "other" Catholic, in Spain, ended up being a "unicum" hardly accepted by anybody, whether Catholic or Protestant, revolutionary or democrat. It was the "other" in an absolute sense, anachronistic, a historical relic that had survived inexplicably, but which was radically incompatible with the present time.

[63] *Ibid.*, pp. 30–32.