

Preface

This project was originally planned as an extension of my earlier history of the German Center party, to validate its conclusions by exploring the similar histories of the Dutch and Swiss Catholic parties.¹ Very early in my research, however, I discovered that the prototype of a Catholic party was to be found not in any of these countries but in Belgium, and I eventually expanded the study to include not only the Belgian party but also the Christian Social party of Austria.²

There have naturally been other comparative treatments of "Christian democracy," "Christian socialism," and Catholic political parties, but none to this date has duplicated the material in this volume. In English, Michael Fogarty's *Christian Democracy in Western Europe*, besides being outdated, defines "Christian Democracy" very broadly, as more social action than politics; only twenty-four pages are devoted to political parties. Hans Meier's excellent *Revolution and Church* is largely concerned with France and its failure to develop a Christian Democratic party, and, like Fogarty, Maier is more concerned with social action than with politics. R. E. M. Irving's book *The Christian Democratic Parties of Western Europe* has a very good description of Catholic parties in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and France in the post-World War II period, but his section on historical background is a brief twenty-eight pages covering only Germany, Italy and France. John H. Whyte's *Catholics in Western Democracies* is a useful but very brief overview; he takes only 130 pages to cover thirteen different countries, including the "Anglo-American world."³

In French, Jean-Marie Mayeur's *Des partis catholiques à la démocratie chrétienne xix^e-xx^e siècles* is rich in insight and is perhaps the best and most inclusive treatment, covering in 240 pages France, Italy, Spain, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Luxembourg as well as the five countries in this study. However, in his effort to be inclusive, Mayeur, as he himself points out, finds it difficult to make meaningful generalizations or comparisons.⁴

Two works in German, one from the 1960's and one more recent, are less useful than they first appear because they are both edited collections of articles written by different authors, each of whom has a distinct definition of what constitutes a Christian or Christian Democratic party (some, like the author of the chapter on Belgium and the Netherlands in *Christliche Demokratie in Europa*, even deny that the term applies to their subjects at all).⁵ With such diverse treatment, few comparisons are possible.

While historians have been reluctant to make comparisons and have tended to concentrate on the larger nations, political scientists and sociologists have

shown a great deal of interest in what they call the "smaller democracies" of western and central Europe. In the 1960's, especially, there was an outpouring of scholarly books and articles examining what were seen as patterns of political behavior unique to "small democracies," patterns variously described as the "politics of accommodation," "segmented pluralism," "consociational politics," where democracy seemed to function successfully even when a country's population was segregated into separate ethnic or confessional or ideological compartments. One of the most influential and seminal works of this school of thought was Arend Lijphart's *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands*, in which he described the four Dutch "pillars" of Catholic, Protestant, liberal and socialist communities.⁶ Social scientists have published a great number of studies comparing several countries thought to exhibit this kind of "segmented pluralism."⁷ Others give more attention to national history and have concentrated on the country most familiar to them.⁸ So far as any general theories of consociation or accommodation are concerned, however, events of the 1970's and 1980's have already disproved them, since almost all of the countries have abandoned their pluralism and harmony in favor of adversarial politics or have even abandoned their social segmentation, as the social scientists themselves have acknowledged.⁹

Two recently published works also deserve mention here. Noel Cary's *The Path to Christian Democracy* deals only with the case of Germany, but has an excellent analysis of the whole concept of Christian Democracy and the difficulties of reconciling different interpretations of the term. In *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe*, by Stathis N. Kalyvas, the author, a political scientist, compares the origins and development of confessional parties in Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium and Italy, with a chapter on the non-formation of such a party in France. Kalyvas' intention is to obtain a general theory of party formation and political identity; his conclusions are interesting and provocative, but he does not provide a narrative history of the parties.¹⁰

Throughout the many years it has taken to complete this project, I have been assisted and encouraged by many people. Special recognition and thanks are owed to four successive chairmen of the history department at Georgia State University: Joseph O. Baylen, Melvin W. Ecke, Gary M. Fink and Timothy J. Crimmins, all of whom were unfailingly generous and helpful, and to the indefatigable staff of the university's interlibrary loan office. Finally, I have received much encouragement and many helpful suggestions from Roger Chickering, editor of this series.

Notes

1. Ellen L. Evans, *The German Center Party, 1870-1933: A Study in Political Catholicism* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981); *ibid.*, "Catholic Political Movements in Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands: Notes for a Comparative Approach," *Central European History*, XVII (June/Sept. 1984), 91-119.

2. Luxembourg's *Rechtspartei*, now Christian Social party, would fit appropriately in the study, but there is not sufficient material available.
3. Michael P. Fogarty, *Christian Democracy in Western Europe 1820–1953* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1957). Hans Meier, *Revolution and Church: the Early History of Christian Democracy 1789–1901* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1969). R. E. M. Irving, *The Christian Democratic Parties of Western Europe* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1979). John H. Whyte, *Catholics in Western Democracies: A Study in Political Behaviour* (New York: St. Martin's, 1981). Two recently published works, *Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918–1965* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), edited by Tom Buchanan and Martin Conway, a collection of essays by different authors, covering nine countries; and *Catholic Politics in Europe, 1918–1945* (London: Routledge, 1997) by Martin Conway, offer brief but thoughtful and perceptive treatments of their respective time periods.
4. Jean-Marie Mayeur, *Des partis catholiques à la démocratie chrétienne xix^e–xx^e siècles* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1980), 149; 238–9.
5. Heinz Hürten, ed., *Christliche Parteien in Europa* (Osnabrück: A. Fromm, 1964). Winfried Becker and Rudolf Morsey, eds., *Christliche Demokratie in Europa: Grundlagen und Entwicklungen seit dem 19. Jahrhundert* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1988). A. F. Manning in *ibid.*, 100–106.
6. Arend Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).
7. Some book-length studies are: Erik Allardt and Yrjö Littunen, eds., *Cleavages, Ideologies and Party Systems* (Helsinki: Abotidnings Aktubolag, 1964). Robert A. Dahl, ed., *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966). Hans Daalder, ed., *Party Systems in Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium* (London: Pinter, 1987). Gerhard Lehmbuch, *Proporzdemokratie: Politisches System und politische Kultur in der Schweiz und in Österreich* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1967). Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, eds., *Party Systems and Voter Alignments* (New York: The Free Press, 1968). Kenneth D. McRae, *Conflict and Compromise in Multilingual Societies* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1983). McRae, ed., *Consociational Democracy: Political Accommodation and Segmented Societies* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974). Eric A. Nordlinger, *Conflict Resolution in Divided Societies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972). Articles on similar subjects are too numerous to list.
8. On the Netherlands, in addition to several works by Lijphart: Hans Daalder, "The Netherlands: Opposition in a Segmented Society," in Dahl, *Political Oppositions*. Lee E. Dutter, "The Netherlands as a Plural Society," *Comparative Political Studies* 10 (Jan. 1978). On Switzerland: Wolf Linder, *Swiss Democracy: Possible Solutions to Conflict in Multicultural Societies* (New York: St. Martin's, 1994). Carol L. Schmid, *Conflict and Consensus in Switzerland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981). Jürg Steiner, *Amicable Agreement versus Majority Rule: Conflict Resolution in Switzerland* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1974). Leslie Lipson, "Le système des partis politiques en Suisse," *Revue Française de Science Politique* 6 (Oct.–Dec. 1956). William R. Keech, "Linguistic Diversity and Political Conflict: Some Observations Based on Four Swiss Cantons," *Comparative Politics* 4 (Apr. 1972). David Earle Bohn, "Consociational Democracy and the Case of Switzerland," *Journal of Politics* 42 (Feb. 1980). On Belgium: Lijphart, ed., *Conflict and Coexistence in Belgium: the Dynamics of a Culturally Divided Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981). Val Lorwin, "Linguistic Pluralism and Political Tension in Modern Belgium," *Canadian Journal of History* 5 (March, 1970). D. W. Urwin, "Social Cleavages and Political Parties in Belgium: Problems of Institutionalization," *Political Studies* 18 (3, 1970).
9. For example, an entire issue of *West European Politics* (12, Jan. 1989) was devoted to the subject of "depillarization" in the Netherlands.

10. Noel D. Cary, *The Path to Christian Democracy: German Catholics and the Party System from Windthorst to Adenauer* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996). Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996). The title of an older work on Italy, *The Cross and the Fasces: Christian Democracy and Fascism in Italy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1960) by Richard A. Webster, is echoed in the title for this book.