

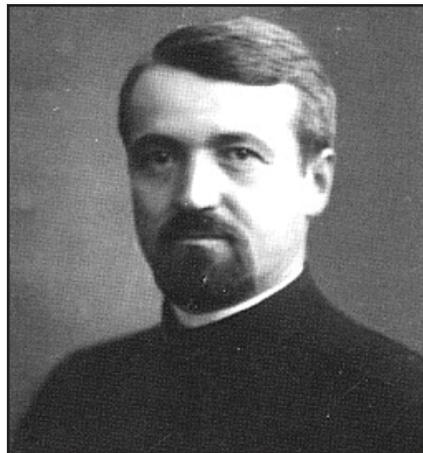
The
**Carl Beck
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Ethnotheology, and
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Abstract

Scholarship on Christian mysticism underwent a renaissance in Romania between 1920 and 1947, having a lasting impact on the way that Romanian theologians and scholars think about Romanian Orthodoxy Christianity in general, and mysticism in particular. Fascist and ultra-nationalist political and intellectual currents also exploded into the Romanian public sphere at this time. Many of the same people who were writing mystical theology were also involved with ultra-nationalist politics, either as distant sympathizers or as active participants. This paper situates the early work of the renowned theologian Dumitru Stăniloae within the context of mystical fascism, nationalist apologetics, and theological pedagogy in which it was originally produced. It shows how a new academic discipline formed within an increasingly extremist political climate by analyzing the writings of six key men whose work significantly shaped Romanian attitudes towards mysticism: Nae Ionescu, Mircea Eliade, Lucian Blaga, Nichifor Crainic, Ioan Gh. Savin, and Dumitru Stăniloae. The contributions of these thinkers to Romanian theology are not dismissed once their nationalism is noted, but they are contextualized in a way that allows twenty-first century thinkers to move beyond the limitations of these men and into fresh ways of thinking about the divine-human encounter.

Romanian scholarly reflection on Christian mysticism underwent a renaissance during the third, fourth, and fifth decades of the twentieth century and made a profound impact on Romanian Orthodox theology that has persisted to the present day. The most enduring of this work was done by the young Dumitru Stăniloae (1903–1993), who is generally considered to have been one of the most important Orthodox theologians of the twentieth century. Stăniloae’s thought is exceptional because of his way of thinking about the human person in relational terms that reflect the Trinity, his approach to knowledge that emphasizes the limits of reason without abandoning it, and his determination to escape from the scholasticism of his teachers to write a theology that deals with the most urgent problems of human existence as they were experienced in his day. Stăniloae’s long involvement in ecumenical discussions has also affected Orthodox theology generally, and his importance is rapidly being recognized by Western scholars.¹

Concurrent with the rebirth of mystical theology was the rise of fascism in Romania. As the power of ultranationalist ideologues increased, so too did the frequency of scholarly articles on mystical theology. Many of the same people who were writing mystical theology were also involved with ultranationalist politics, either as distant sympathizers or as active participants. This essay situates the early work of Dumitru Stăniloae within the context of mystical fascism, nationalist apologetics, and theological pedagogy in which it was originally produced. Furthermore, a fresh examination of this period lets us see how a “new” academic discipline developed in an extreme political climate. Catalyzed by the reorganization of theological education after 1918 and carried out by Western-influenced yet nationalist Romanian scholars, the twentieth century renaissance of mystical theology made significant contributions to both Orthodoxy and nationalism in Romania. This essay discusses six key men whose work significantly shaped Romanian attitudes toward mysticism: Nae Ionescu, Mircea Eliade, Lucian Blaga, Nichifor Crainic, Ioan Gh. Savin, and Dumitru Stăniloae. This diverse group of scholars all knew each other, but were often divided by political rivalries and personal animosities. Only Crainic, Savin, and Stăniloae were professional theologians, but all six shared a fascination with mysticism and a passion for Romanian nationalism.

In his influential *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (1944), the Russian émigré Vladimir Lossky (1903–1958) asserted that all Eastern Orthodox theology was mystical theology.² To a student studying theology in Romania during the early decades of the twentieth century, this statement would have seemed completely divorced from reality. Romanian theologians in the 1920s relied mainly on translations of Greek and Russian texts that reflected strong scholastic influences, as

well as German rationalist, theosophist, and positivist traditions, but largely ignored the patristic writings and the idea of a personal encounter with God, both of which are essential for properly understanding Orthodox mystical theology.³

Not only mystical theology, but theological education in general was underdeveloped in nineteenth-century Romania. The late nineteenth-century drive to modernize higher education in Romania concentrated primarily on medicine and law, with theology coming up slowly behind.⁴ At that time, the theological institute at Sibiu had only one theologian as part of its faculty; the rest were historians, journalists, naturalists, and agronomists. Priests were given a general education that was more practical than strictly theological. In the early twentieth century, subjects included hygiene, calligraphy, accountancy, psychology, Romanian literature, geometry, chemistry, botany, and gymnastics, among a smattering of courses in church music, canon law, church history, and exegesis. Most textbooks were either outdated or handwritten, although a handful of new textbooks were introduced after the turn of the century.⁵ Nichifor Crainic (1889–1972) lamented that while at seminary in Bucharest just prior to the First World War, “not even when the studies were directly related to the Book of books were we obliged to use it.”⁶

Twentieth-century sources bemoan the “decline” of mystical spirituality during the nineteenth century and look back to the Middle Ages as a golden age of Romanian mysticism. Secularizing measures undertaken in the Old Kingdom after unification in 1859 resulted in the closure of a number of monasteries and the decline of traditional monastic practices.⁷ Crainic maintained that interwar Romanian monasteries were in a “derelict state” of “disorientation or nonorientation.”⁸ His colleague Ioan Gh. Savin (1885–1973) complained that Romanian Orthodoxy “needs more *interiorisation*. And certainly, also a greater *precision*. We are faced with dogmas of faith that show a *horrible*, almost *offensive* ignorance. Because of this ignorance,” he warned, “we make compacts with those doctrines and associations that are the most irreconcilable with Christianity.”⁹ After the First World War, the high hopes of the Romanian Orthodox Church were crushed by the “shortages, dissatisfaction, difficulties, rivalries, intrigues and hostilities” that attended the massive reorganization which necessarily followed the incorporation of the faithful from the new territories.¹⁰ As part of this reorganization, however, a number of talented young theologians like Crainic, Savin, and Stăniloae began to study overseas, and when they came back they completely revolutionized Romanian theological academies.¹¹ Contemporaries claim that their teachings also created “a new model of the spiritual life in the monasteries, as well as in the spirits of the priests and lay people.”¹²

Despite their achievements, the scholars who introduced mystical theology to Romania suffered from working in a climate where there were few people who could offer critical correctives to their work. The religious philosopher Nae Ionescu (1890–1940) plagiarized many of his lectures, and misinterpreted key passages from the Church Fathers.¹³ The historian of religions Mircea Eliade (1907–1986) failed to distinguish between mysticism as experience and mysticism as political rhetoric. The poet-philosopher Lucian Blaga (1895–1961) abandoned the critical community and reinvented almost every one of his major terms to suit his own purposes. Crainic fell into heresy when he developed an ethnotheology that gave the nation soteriological qualities. Savin had to rely heavily on Crainic’s courses and on Stăniloae’s *Filocalia*, only one volume of which had been published when Savin began teaching mysticism in 1945. For his part, Stăniloae rarely undertook systematic analyses of the traditions from which he was drawing. In his discussions of Western theology in particular, he relied instead on generalizations, his own prejudices, and on quotations taken out of context.¹⁴ These failings will be evident in the following discussion of their work, but it must be remembered how innovative their scholarship was at the time.

In addition to their individual failings, all six scholars stumbled when confronted with the challenge of nationalism.¹⁵ Nationalism refers to the belief that nations exist, and that they are valid and meaningful collectivities deserving of one’s allegiance. A nation, according to a nationalist, is a community held together by ethnic ties, common languages, and a common history and culture. Nationalists often, though not always, associate their nations with geographically defined territories. Understood in this weak sense, nationalism is somewhat akin to patriotism, the difference being the uniquely modern conception of nationhood that is promoted by nationalists. Unlike older notions such as *patria*, kingdom, or country, nations are imagined as communities that exist regardless of whether they have formal statehood, and types of government are irrelevant compared to the importance of eternal, exclusive, collective identities.¹⁶ For a nationalist, the suggestion that nationalism is a modern invention often seems ridiculous, and it seems impossible to conceive of people who do not feel their national ties. “An anational sentiment,” Stăniloae argued in 1939, “does not exist.”¹⁷ Nations are supposed to be both ontologically given and ethically desirable. Nationalists conceive of nations as organic political communities, drawing on German idealist thinkers such as Kant, Fichte, and Hegel, who emphasized the potential of nations to shape individuals in the image of God through collective, rational, and cultural activity.¹⁸

Once one accepts that nations are helpful for the cultivation of the self, actively promoting nationalism is a logical next step. A stronger definition approaches na-

tionalism as a political program aimed at imposing a certain definition of nationality upon a population, or at defending the rights of people identified as members of the nation. This type of nationalism can be promoted by states or by social movements, and is generally directed against rival nationalisms or against a minority whom the nationalists wish to exclude from their nation.¹⁹ Neither of these definitions is mutually exclusive, and Rogers Brubaker combines them well when he argues that “nationalism is not a ‘force’ to be measured as resurgent or receding. It is a heterogeneous set of ‘nation’-oriented idioms, practices, and possibilities that are continuously available or ‘endemic’ in modern cultural and political life.”²⁰

The Orthodox theologian Mihail Neamțu has recently maintained that Eastern Orthodoxy is universal, and hence its concerns are “infinitely broader than any national or ethnic project.” It is also, he notes, “real, incarnated, and spread out in the world, against the fickleness of our human nature,” and for this reason, the Orthodox Church frequently struggles with problems of national identity. By calling itself “Romanian,” Neamțu argues, “the Romanian Orthodox Church . . . is laying claim to a perfect match between religious and national identity that is not borne out by real life.”²¹ Not every member of the Romanian church embraces that national identity, and Romanians also belong to a number of other churches. Calling the church “Romanian” might therefore seem somewhat ridiculous, were it not for the fact that a close relationship does exist between the church and the Romanian nation-state.

Eastern Orthodox churches are governed according to the notion of *autocephaly*, which literally means “self-headed” and refers to the independence of Orthodox churches within a given locality. Each church governs itself and need not submit itself to any other autocephalous church, but must join with the others, partaking in an ancient liturgical and doctrinal tradition that all share. Philip Walters writes that “autocephaly . . . affirms the integrity of each ‘local’ church community while asserting that each such community achieves its validation only within the Universal Church.”²² Autocephalous churches are not defined along national or ethnic lines, but are circumscribed territorially. The autocephalous Romanian Orthodox Church was formed in 1872, soon after the creation of the Romanian nation-state, and therefore its existence as an independent institution is heavily dependent upon Romanian nationalism. Most, if not all autocephalous churches face this problem, and it is considered heretical to define a church along ethnic lines.²³

Christians living in a time when nationalism was hegemonic often found it difficult to separate nationalism from their theology. In 1936 the Russian émigré theologian Mikhail Zyzykin (1880–1960) argued against what he saw as the danger-

ous tendencies of “exaggerated nationalism” to reduce autocephalous churches to the nation-states within which they had been formed. The power of nationalism in this period can be seen in the fact that even Zyzykin concluded that “the nation is not an obstacle to the development of humanity but a powerful stimulant which works in the intimate recesses of the soul; the nation is as indispensable for man as limbs are for the body; the life of the nation enriches humanity.”²⁴ If a thinker like Zyzykin, who was no friend of nationalist movements or of nationalizing states, could not overcome his belief in nations, it is no wonder that the theology of Romanian intellectuals who were deeply implicated in nationalist politics was rife with heresy.

Discussions about mysticism increased during debates among intellectuals regarding Romanian modernization. The sudden expansion of Romania’s borders that resulted from the post–World War I peace treaties occasioned something of a crisis for Romanian intellectuals and political leaders. The territory administered by the Romanian state expanded dramatically, incorporating sizable ethnic and religious minorities which had not hitherto been represented in the bureaucratic structure. Efforts to Romanianize the new minorities took place simultaneously with a new impetus for modernizing the country.²⁵ With change in the air, the Romanian intelligentsia became involved in bitter arguments. The “Orthodoxist” group argued that modernization needed to take into account Romania’s Orthodox spirituality and its peasant heritage, both of which promised a richer future than the secular, technological modernity that their opponents offered. Contrasting themselves with the “Europeanists,” intellectuals affiliated with the “traditionalist” school claimed that unlike that of their opponents, their philosophy was rooted in ancient Romanian rhythms of life. Anyone who rejected traditionalism was not just naïve, Orthodoxists claimed, they were un-Romanian. A diverse group of intellectuals held together by friendship ties and shared values, the Romanian variant of Orthodoxism championed the village, celebrated tradition, mysticism, and folklore. It was highly critical of secular modernity, which they characterized as culture without soul, dominated by *techne*, technology, freemasons, and Jews.²⁶ Of the six men with whom I am concerned here, only Crainic, Savin, and Stăniloae were Orthodoxists, but the debate over development that the Orthodoxists began dominated many discussions of mysticism throughout the interwar period.

Orthodoxists were often ridiculed for being “mystics” or for “mysticizing” important social and philosophical issues. The sociologist and psychologist Mihail Ralea (1896–1964), wrote of them that they “confound the heart with the head,” and that their “troubled minds no longer perceive differences and nuances.”²⁷ In the midst of the name-calling, several Orthodoxists and other philosophers began trying

to define mysticism in a more academic sense. At first, mysticism was celebrated as a viable alternative to what was perceived to be the poverty of Western rationalism. “Irrationalism,” meaning the renunciation of the foundational quality of rationality for knowledge, gained currency in many European philosophical circles during the early twentieth century, when it was often seen as an antidote to nineteenth-century positivism, and rarely had nationalist connotations.²⁸ The first Romanian articles discussing the irrationality of mysticism appeared in 1921 in *Gândirea*, an eclectic journal formed by young intellectuals who were seeking to make a name for themselves by pioneering new literary and artistic styles. As a radical rejection of Westernization, Russian Slavophilism was an obvious choice, and several essays were published on this topic within *Gândirea*’s first three years.²⁹ Offended by what Orthodoxists saw as the “technologizing” of existence, non-Cartesian epistemologies were also very attractive. Nae Ionescu declared the first premises of an authentically Romanian philosophy to be a rejection of Descartes, and Crainic wrote in 1931 that Descartes’ doctrine was “the fount of those modern errors which have changed the world into hell.”³⁰

The most detailed early study of mystical experience came from the philosopher Constantin Rădulescu-Motru (1868–1957). In a short but seminal article, he defined the “mystical spirit” as “the spirit that finds the satisfaction of its religious searching in the provocation of ecstatic states, or in the fulfillment of unintelligible rites.” This made mystics by definition primitive and irrational. Driven by euphoric emotions and characterized by blind optimism, the mystical state was nonetheless an appealing one, so much so that it had become “commercialized.” Although the quintessential mystic in Rădulescu-Motru’s account was the “savage” experiencing conversion to Christianity for the first time, mystics could be found almost anywhere in modern society. “The mystic spirit,” he said, “can be rediscovered in religion, in art, in politics, in philosophy, even in the pure science of our days.” Whole nations could be said to pass through stages of mysticism, and he identified Bolshevik Russia as an example of a country currently experiencing a mystical state.³¹

Four influential and interconnected conceptions of mysticism emerged from these discussions. The first drew on romantic nationalism, emphasizing a mystical national community and its rootedness in the soil; the second explored the irrationality of mysticism as opposed to secular rationalism; and the third looked at the experiential side of mysticism from a comparative perspective. The fourth, political mysticism, involved the use of “mysticism” as a constant trope in the rhetoric of the extreme ultranationalist political parties that gained increasing popularity as the interwar period wore on. Each of these conceptions was a product of the sociopo-

litical conditions prevalent in Romania at the time. What emerges is a picture of a nascent discipline, learning rapidly from foreign scholarship and then using local concerns to produce original understandings of old themes.

The social context for these developments was a society undergoing rapid change, including industrialization, secularization, increasing literacy, new communication networks, land reform, unprecedented levels of political participation, and a nationalization of culture.³² In the midst of these changes, fascism became increasingly popular. Despite being a small and illegal fascist organization throughout much of the interwar period, the Legion of the Archangel Michael recorded electoral successes in every election it contested.³³ Its flamboyant style and the much publicized assassinations, trials, and street violence associated with the movement helped to give it a well-recognized public image. Most importantly for our purposes, this image was associated not just with anti-Semitism and violence, but also with the Legion's "mysticism." In fact, by the late 1930s, the term "mysticism" could not be used in public discourse without evoking fascist connotations in the minds of listeners.

The Legion of the Archangel Michael was founded in 1927 by Corneliu Zelea Codreanu (1899–1938) in an attempt by university students from the city of Iași to break away from other ultranationalist demagogues and to set out on their own.³⁴ Ion Moța, one of the Legion's leaders, stated from the outset, "We are not and have never in our lives been involved in politics We have a religion, we are slaves to a faith. We are consumed in its fire and are completely ruled by it, we serve it to our last breath."³⁵ They engaged in political campaigns, anti-Semitic violence, and political assassinations throughout the 1930s, and came to power for a brief period in 1940–1941. The "religion" they served was a variant of Romanian Orthodox Christianity tinged with frequent doses of antinomianism, anti-Semitism, nation-worship, and a cult of the dead.

In addition to its rhetoric, one early "vision" confirmed the Legion as a group characterized by mysticism. After seeking out an icon of the Archangel Michael, Codreanu and several others saw it suddenly displaying "an incomparable beauty." Codreanu wrote, "I felt bound to this icon with all my soul, and it gave me the impression that the Holy Archangel was alive"; once the Legion had been formally established, legionaries guarded the icon day and night, keeping a candle burning at all times.³⁶ They taught the importance of "taming the body," and promoted asceticism because "only in this way can one speak of rising to the heights bestowed by light and joy."³⁷ The Legion's publications repeatedly emphasized the spiritual sphere as political, and the political as spiritual. The legionary poet Dan Botta wrote that

“not everything which lies in our souls is at one with us [We must] know how to choose, how to separate. To know how, in particular, to put ourselves in accord with the soil, with the spirits of the dead, with the myriads who are in us.”³⁸

Only the spirits, accessed indirectly through commemoration rituals, and directly through death itself, truly knew life. The Legion’s victory would be achieved not by its living members, who were limited by their flesh, but by the spirits of the dead. Codreanu’s *Cărtecica șefului de cuib* (Little Book of the Nest Leader) stated that “the battle will be won by those who know how to attract through the spirit, from the heavens, the mysterious forces of the invisible world and assure themselves support from them. These mysterious forces are the spirits of the dead, the spirits of our ancestors.”³⁹

In short, the legionaries framed their political campaigns in religious terms and made constant references to “spirits,” “mysterious forces,” and to the dead. Violence and ostentatious behavior attracted a great deal of public attention to the Legion, and it was so much in the public eye that any use of one of its key slogans—such as “mystical”—would immediately remind people of the Legion and its politics. When French and Italian fascist writers discussed the Legion, the first thing that they always noted was the Legion’s mysticism.⁴⁰

In 1991, Roger Griffin defined European fascism as “A revolutionary form of nationalism, one that sets out to be a political, social and ethical revolution, welding the ‘people’ into a dynamic national community under new elites infused with heroic values. The core myth that inspires this project is that only a populist, trans-class movement of purifying, cathartic national rebirth (palingenesis) can stem the tide of decadence.”⁴¹ Griffin’s understanding of fascism as a revolutionary mythology helps clarify the relationship between religious symbolism and fascist politics. Almost everywhere in Europe, fascism attempted to abolish the “decadence” of the old order, to purify the nation-state of ethnically and ideologically impure members, and to create a “new man” together with a new national community. The teleology (one might even say eschatology) of the fascist myth clearly mirrors the Christian message of purification from sin, the defeat of God’s enemies, and being “born again” into the Kingdom of God. Blending the two stories together was not difficult to do, particularly if one believed that the Christian message was addressed to “nations” as well as to individuals. Furthermore, if one preached the Christian message while emphasizing humans’ responsibility for their own salvation and for realizing the Kingdom of God on earth, instead of stressing God’s role in saving lost sinners and the transfiguration of the world at the end of time, then the two stories could come to look remarkably similar.

One context in which legionary propaganda took place was in churches and theological colleges.⁴² A large number of priests were involved in the movement, and theological colleges were full of legionaries and their sympathizers.⁴³ The fact that the students who were learning about mysticism at seminary were the same legionaries who were proclaiming the “mystical rebirth of Romania” as part of their political program is significant. Their notions about mysticism were vague, unsystematic, and had little to do with the sophisticated ideas that their teachers were writing about, but the two undoubtedly had a symbiotic relationship. Legionary mysticism made books and courses on mystical theology popular with students, and once ultranationalism became popular, theologians writing about mysticism could do so confident that they were performing a patriotic act. A strong dose of romantic nationalism made sure that even without the Legion, nations and national cultures would feature heavily in discussions on mysticism. Furthermore, with no tradition of orthodox scholarship to direct research projects, it is clear why so many different opinions about it flourished during the interwar period.

Given that mysticism offered a means for romantic nationalists to commune with their nation, and that it was a slogan for the fascist Legion, it should come as no surprise that the men who most developed Romanian scholarly understandings of mysticism were the same professors who were teaching the many legionaries enrolled as students of theology. Not all were fascists themselves, but their sympathies for mystical theology resonated well with their romantic nationalism. All six of the men discussed below had ambiguous relationships to the Legion. Some, like Nae Ionescu and Nichifor Crainic, acted as mentors to the Legion at various times. Others, like Lucian Blaga and Dumitru Stăniloae, avoided directly engaging with the Legion as much as possible, all the while promoting forms of nationalism that resonated with its ideas.

Dumitru Stăniloae (1903–1993)

Dumitru Stăniloae maintained that his purpose in writing theology was to show the significance of Jesus Christ for resolving “the live problems of our day,” and it was in the process of exploring the problems of his day that he first developed the pillars of his later theology.⁴⁴ These included his understanding of the natural world as straining toward transcendence; his notion of purification as the elevation, not the nullification, of human nature (Rom. *fire*); and his conviction that human personhood, and hence salvation, was fundamentally relational and communitarian.

Although based first and foremost on a close reading of biblical and patristic texts, these ideas appealed to Stăniloae at least in part because they facilitated a celebration of the Romanian nation which he loved.

Like Savin, Stăniloae had no formal ties with the Legion of the Archangel Michael, but his journalism was nationalistic, and he was much more sympathetic toward the politics of the far right than toward that of the left.⁴⁵ When Crainic was arrested in December 1933 following the Legion's assassination of the Romanian prime minister, Ion Duca, Stăniloae published a glowing defense of the older man in the church newspaper that he edited, *Telegraful Român*. In reacting to the assassination, the paper blamed the "catastrophic influence [of secular democracy] on the soul of contemporary youth." Stăniloae urged the teaching of morality and religion in secondary schools in a way that managed to condemn Duca's murder without actually condemning the murderers themselves.⁴⁶

Stăniloae criticized the "exaggerated, exclusivist, aggressive, and fanatical" tendencies that he observed in interwar Romania. He found fault with Hitler and the Legion during the 1930s, and did not condone their violence.⁴⁷ But he did not advocate their exclusion from public life. After the Legion assassinated Prime Minister Armand Călinescu in 1939, Stăniloae called for increased "national solidarity" in this time of trial.

We have to remember that they are adolescent boys, without experience . . . , without the power to judge using their own knowledge and understanding of things, easily stirred up adolescents, who cannot be calm enough to judge moderately, and who are incapable of discovering and establishing nuances, but who see things in exaggerated proportions, fervently starting off in one direction or another, completely condemning or completely worshipping a person or a way of seeing things. So it is not surprising if some of them fall victim to the sinful atmosphere of blind and exaggerated criticism which continued until yesterday, and which may exist even today.⁴⁸

When they came to power, he accepted the victory of the Legion as a victory for Christ, and the armies of Hitler as God's soldiers on earth. During the Second World War, he described Antonescu as "the sword of Christianity" and spoke about the "transfiguration" of Romania.⁴⁹ His writings never contained the violent racism, incendiary politicizing, or totalitarian tendencies that were characteristic of Crainic during the 1930s. The fraternal yet critical attitude that Stăniloae took toward fascism suggests that he believed it contained something that could be used for good but needed to be guided upon the right path.

In addition to his journalism and teaching, Stăniloae began to translate the *Filocalia* (Philokalia) from the Greek during the Second World War. This was a collection of the writings of the Church Fathers on mysticism and spirituality which was to be one of the major accomplishments of his career.⁵⁰ Although he gave one of his students credit for introducing him to the *Filocalia*, Stăniloae had also seen old copies in Nichifor Crainic's house, and the latter exhibited a strong interest in this work.⁵¹ The *Filocalia* was important because it provided the classic texts in Romanian translation. Only when these texts were available could theologians begin to study mysticism in a scientific manner.

Henkel argues that Stăniloae was first attracted to mystical theology as a reaction against Chrestos Androutsos' *Handbook of Dogmatics*. Stăniloae had studied Androutsos's theology while in Greece, and he translated the *Handbook* in 1930.⁵² It presents an approach known as manual theology, a manner of reasoning based on logic and textbook definitions. It is often highly scholastic and uses scriptural references to support its arguments rather than explaining the arguments being made by scripture. Ware maintains that Androutsos's was "a theology of the university lecture room, but not a *mystical* theology."⁵³ The early twentieth century witnessed a clear break with manual theology through the work of Catholic theologians like Hans von Balthasar and Karl Rahner, and in the Protestant turn toward Christian existentialism in the works of Emil Brunner, Karl Barth, and Paul Tillich.⁵⁴ Stăniloae was well aware of the broad trends in European Christianity. His 1931 book on *Catholicism de după război* (Postwar Catholicism) analyzed the changes that the Roman Catholic Church had undergone over the past ten years, and although it focused more on institutional and social changes than on theological trends, it reveals a solid knowledge of contemporary Catholicism.⁵⁵ Emil Brunner and Karl Barth visited Romania in 1935, and it is not unlikely that Stăniloae may have made their acquaintance then. He later acknowledged being profoundly influenced by Barth's *Commentary on Romans* (1922), which is often described as having been a "bombshell" in Protestant theology because of its innovative combination of modern biblical criticism with a stubborn belief in the irreplaceability of the historical, biblical revelation of Christ.⁵⁶ More importantly perhaps, the works of Nikolai Berdiaev (1874–1948) and Miguel de Unamuno (1864–1936) were very popular among Orthodoxists in interwar Romania. Both men promoted an existentialist theology in which they emphasized the mystery of God, his freedom from the rules of human logic, and the need for a personal relationship with Jesus.⁵⁷

Rather than turning to Western theologians, however, Stăniloae looked to the Church Fathers, in whose writings he found many of the same themes being empha-

sized by existentialist theologians in Western Europe. In the first decade after being awarded his doctorate, Stăniloae produced the twentieth century's first critical studies of St. Gregory Palamas (1296–1359).⁵⁸ These studies portray the human body as the place where God meets us and argue that God works through creation to bring us back to him. Palamas is most famous for his work on Hesychast prayer, in which, after meditative prayer, the Christian sometimes comes to see a divine light which is identified with the light that surrounded the transfigured Christ on Mount Tabor in the gospel accounts. Stăniloae's account of Palamas's writings emphasized the role of the body in prayer. Rather than seeking an ecstatic surpassing of the body, as Varlaam preached, Palamas argued that the breathing techniques and bodily sensations associated with Hesychast prayer were a valuable part of communion with God.⁵⁹

Writing about Stăniloae's later theology, Miller attests that "creation acts as the circumscribed glass through which the divine light may shine," and this helps explain why he valued "nature" and human "culture" so highly.⁶⁰ Stăniloae wrote that "nature indicates a theme, a spring, a cause beyond itself"; transcendence can be experienced, "only when we meet *the absolute in a concrete person*" and never just "in the world of the spirit."⁶¹ He emphasized the sanctity of space and cherished humans' ability to manifest the spirituality of their environment through creative activity.⁶² A Romanian peasant village, for example, represented "a model of community from the kingdom of heaven."⁶³ God reveals himself within culture, and therefore culture and the imagination are crucial parts of knowing God. With a romantic understanding of nationalism, it was a small step from celebrating culture to cherishing one's own nation. In a defense of the holiness of nationalism against the Legion's suggestions that nationalism is sinful, albeit necessary, Stăniloae reasoned that God does not tempt us to sin, yet he created nations as a means of revelation, so nationalism must be a good.⁶⁴

If "nature" is good, why then must it be purified by asceticism before one can be united with God? "Natural," for Stăniloae, refers to creation as it was before the Fall, that is, to that which is good in creation, and that which points us to God.⁶⁵ In his 1946–1947 course on mysticism and asceticism, Stăniloae taught that "abstinence is not a complete turning away from the world to search after God, but a turning away from a world that is crowded and degenerated by passions in order to find a transparent world, which itself becomes God's mirror and a stairway toward him."⁶⁶ In Stăniloae's reading of Palamas, union with God meant transcending (*depășirea*), but not negating material existence. "Certainly the body tries," he wrote, "through the fact that it shares a common center with our spiritual nature, to spiritualize itself,

to establish an accord with a higher order. But its nature suffers no change.” In fact, the flesh is *strengthened* by being purified.⁶⁷

Rather than dismissing nationalism as unhelpful, as many theologians would do today, Stăniloae distinguished two types of nationalism, one based on hate, the other on love, and believed that the latter was essential for salvation. “The affirmation of one’s own people [*neam*] does not *eo ipso* mean the negation of other peoples,” he argued. “It is true that this often happens, but that is a sinful addition to something that is essential to life.”⁶⁸ Once purified of sin, a national community becomes a path to God, not a hindrance to loving other people. Nations represented the material, really-existing communities in which humans lived, sinned, and were saved.

“The true ‘I’ does not live in isolation,” Stăniloae wrote, and this affirmation forms the basis of what Silviu Rogobete calls Stăniloae’s “ontology of love.”⁶⁹ Personhood, not Being, is the human *a priori* according to Stăniloae, and personhood is relational and historical as much as it is eschatological.⁷⁰ Transcendence comes not through surpassing being, but by overcoming the subject-object divide through love, and meeting “the absolute in a concrete person,” in the man Jesus Christ. Transcendence requires community, as does revelation: God reveals himself through his word, and “the word always presupposes two people.”⁷¹ He wrote in 1945, “repentance, and the rebirth that comes through it, is a mystery of the community, not of the individual.”⁷² For Stăniloae, a person’s characteristics are an essential part of what he or she is ontologically.⁷³ “The national quality of the human ‘I’ is not something accidental, superficial, aposterioric,” Stăniloae wrote, “but it forms part of his essential destiny, it includes itself by determining his image of eternity.” Every human—even Adam—has had a nation, because “a divine, eternal model is at work at the base of every national type.” Salvation does not come *through* the nation, but it does occur *in* the nation.⁷⁴

Stăniloae’s practice of collapsing nationality and religious belief into one category meant that the Uniate Church posed particular problems for his theology. It was established in Transylvania in 1716 as a part of a Habsburg attempt to gain control of the region. With a few important exceptions, most of the Orthodox liturgy, rites, and doctrines were maintained, but the Catholic pope was recognized as head of the church. Interwar Romanian theologians were far from sympathetic to the Uniate Church because it unsettled their theology of the nation.

In 1938 Crainic outlined what his ideal society might look like in his *Program of the Ethnocratic State*. The word “ethnocratic” had been coined by Crainic in 1932 and meant a system of government subordinated to the needs of one ethnic group.⁷⁵ Stăniloae supported the idea, explaining that “ethnocratic means that *the nation*

[*neam*] rules, and not someone else. *It* rules the land of the country, the industry, commerce, commercial functions, the administration of the state.”⁷⁶ According to Crainic, Romanians were intrinsically Orthodox, and so a Romanian ethnocratic state was simultaneously an Orthodox state. It was to be a state based on reforms: the spread of education, the opening of credit institutions, the “modernisation of housing,” and the prohibition of alcohol. As might be expected from a state based on “ethnocratic principles,” these reforms also extended to defining the population. Crainic proposed massive population transfers with Romania’s neighbors, expelling Jews and repatriating Romanians living outside the current borders. No minorities were to be tolerated because “they hold to their own peoples more than to ours,” and hence were irredentist. Minority religions were to be abolished. Uniates would be reincorporated into the Romanian Orthodox Church on the grounds that “in a practical sense [Uniates already] constitute part of the national church.”⁷⁷

Stăniloae agreed, portraying the breakaway of the Uniate Church from Romanian Orthodoxy as unsuccessful. They may have broken the administrative unity of the church, Stăniloae said, but they failed to “blatantly impose another faith onto the people.”⁷⁸ Thus, when the Romanian Communist Party officially abolished the Uniate church in 1948, Stăniloae approved, maintaining that the Uniate Church had actually always been Romanian *Orthodox* because they had kept the liturgy, and hence the faith, of the national church. Time did not change this attitude, and in 1973 he again argued that the Uniates had been “an attempt to dismantle the Romanian nation.”⁷⁹ Stăniloae’s ethnotheology was not abstract, but was formed in very concrete political circumstances, and he understood the practical implications of his arguments about metaphysical and theological questions. Even though he wrote very little about nationalism while the Romanian Communist Party was in power, this does not mean that his ideas had necessarily changed, as the example of the Uniate Church shows. Stăniloae’s political ideas were always rooted in his theological convictions, and viceversa.

A successful community, he believed, is a spiritual problem, not a practical one. Mysticism and politics are not separate categories: “Orthodox mysticism . . . does not demarcate between the visible and invisible parts of the church, between religiosocial man and religiomystical man.”⁸⁰ Stăniloae easily extended this principle to nations, and to good governance. The same principles of discipline and purification that led to a healthy spiritual life would lead to a strong nation. During the Second World War, he reminded his readers that “we feel intuitively that anarchy is sin, the ultimate form of sin, the state of extreme decadence, just as we feel that unity is an expression of virtue and a state of salvation.”⁸¹ A few years earlier he had as-

serted that strong government is a gift from God because it helps hold communities together.⁸² Furthermore, community is a spiritual good because salvation involves living with and loving our neighbors.

The notion that we are only fully human when we love one another in community was repeated by Stăniloae throughout his career and became the basis of extensive ecumenical work that he did during the 1960s and 1970s.⁸³ Given the fact that this idea led Stăniloae to promote international cooperation, it is ironic that when he began to express his ideas about love and community, he was thinking first and foremost about his nation. When he wrote about unity, it was to encourage Romania in its war against the Soviet Union and its allies. When he wrote about transcendence, it was to celebrate the potential that Romanian culture had as a means through which God could reveal himself. Stăniloae usually argued from scripture, from patristic writings, and from first principles, so the political context in which they were produced does not invalidate his ideas, but it does make it more difficult to separate his nationalism from his theology. Henkel notes how Stăniloae “completely abandons all the laws of argumentative logic” when he discusses nationalism, but this does not mean that his eulogies of the nation do not fit logically into the rest of his thought, a fact that Henkel appreciates well.⁸⁴

Nae Ionescu (1890–1940)

Nae Ionescu, a religious philosopher teaching at the University of Bucharest, mentored a number of leading legionaries, including the theologian Gheorghe Racoveanu (1900–1967), the “martyrs” Vasile Marin (1904–1937) and Ion Moța (1902–1937), and to a lesser extent, Codreanu himself. As a lecturer and the editor of the periodical *Cuvântul*, Ionescu also exercised an enormous influence over a whole generation of other young intellectuals who were not necessarily themselves legionaries.⁸⁵ Like Mussolini, Ionescu had been attracted to George Sorel’s anarchosyndicalism in the early 1920s, which emphasized the strategic use of violence and a mythology of revolutionary change through a unified, class-based movement. Ionescu quickly moved toward fascism late in the decade, transforming *Cuvântul* into a Legion publication just before legionaries assassinated Prime Minister Duca in December 1933.⁸⁶ His protégée Mircea Vulcănescu records that Ionescu kept a photo of Codreanu on him at all times. Even though he never formally submitted himself to the latter’s leadership, Ionescu served four prison terms for his involvement with the Legion.⁸⁷

According to Ionescu, “nothing exists in the universe except collectives; that which we call the individual is nothing but collective existence organized and unified in a particular manner.”⁸⁸ This emphasis on the communal nature of existence underlay his firm belief in the centrality of nations to the spiritual life. One example of Ionescu’s ethnocentric religious nationalism is found in his pronouncements equating Eastern Orthodoxy with Romanianness. Following the controversial concordat that the Romanian government had signed with the Vatican in July 1929, Ionescu engaged his Catholic counterpart at the University of Bucharest in a well-publicized debate over whether one could be both Catholic and Romanian.⁸⁹ Ionescu’s position was that Roman Catholics could be “good Romanians,” meaning good citizens, but they could not be “Romanians” proper.⁹⁰ Other Orthodoxists supported him. Stăniloae wrote that “enormous differences characterize [Catholicism and Orthodoxy] and so it is impossible to *really* replace one with the other without altering your spiritual being.”⁹¹ No Christian theologian could maintain that conversion is impossible, and faced with the example of the Uniate Church, Stăniloae granted the theoretical possibility that the Romanian people could become Catholics, but he emphasized that the transformation required would be so great that if this happened they would no longer be Romanians.

As a philosopher, Ionescu taught about the epistemological potential that mysticism had to offer. He had argued in a 1924–1925 course on the philosophy of religion that the religious act was always an intellectual act, and he believed that demonstrating non-Cartesian ways of knowing would be the first step in the development of an autochthonous Romanian philosophy.⁹² Ionescu saw mysticism as a way to “knowledge of the rapport between yourself and reality.” He identified two “roots” of metaphysics—logic and mysticism. Logic was good for reworking or specifying ideas, but insofar as it was scientific or technical it was limited to concrete things, and given that metaphysics was concerned with “ultimate realities,” logic was clearly insufficient. Mysticism was by definition concerned with “hidden things.”⁹³

Reality had been hidden by the Fall, and only mysticism offered a way forward. Commenting on Ionescu’s metaphysics, the philosopher Isabela Vasiliu-Scraba explains that “man is not capable of overcoming his misconceptions and his poverty through knowledge, because the process of knowing itself implies that, so long as man considers himself as the ultimate measure of existence, human reason establishes itself simultaneously as ‘law and judge.’”⁹⁴ Ionescu taught that to know the reality that exists beyond my own ego, I must move beyond myself and “live that universe outside myself.”⁹⁵ As a process of self-nullification, mysticism was the perfect means through which the subject could come to identify itself with the object

of knowledge. Asceticism is frequently coupled with mysticism in Orthodox theology, but it held only a minor place in Ionescu's system. According to him, the self needed to be overcome not physically but mentally, and contemplation was what characterized a mystic philosopher.⁹⁶

The motive force in Ionescu's conception of mysticism was love. "Love," he wrote, is "our preparation to receive something other than that which we ourselves are, our possibility, that is, to lose ourselves, to forget ourselves." It is important to note that this love was not love for the object itself, but for God. Outside reality can be fully known only when one first knows and loves God. Others should be loved through God, and not in or for themselves.⁹⁷ This philosophy of love had practical consequences. One of his students, the future sociologist Mircea Vulcănescu, described how in 1921, he and his colleagues were active members of the Romanian Christian Students Association, an Orthodox student group which held conferences on topics including mystical theology, but which was characterized by concerns for social justice shaped by Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7) and by the commandment to "love your neighbor" (Matt. 22:39).⁹⁸ Ionescu criticized this activist stance, arguing that if one could love God through mysticism, there was no need for social activism.⁹⁹ Influenced by Ionescu, Vulcănescu and his friends remained interested in social questions for most of the interwar period, but their interest quickly lost its activist, evangelical flavor.

Ionescu's use of sources when he discussed love is interesting, because at this point in his course he deviated from Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism* (1911) which he had followed almost verbatim up to this point.¹⁰⁰ Instead, he turned to St. Maximos the Confessor (c. 580–662), who taught that "when in the intensity of its love for God the intellect goes out of itself, then it has no sense of itself or of any created thing. For when it is illumined by the infinite light of God, it becomes insensible to everything made by Him."¹⁰¹ Taking this thought out of context, Ionescu stopped here and maintained that love which is centered on God excludes the possibility of loving anything or anyone else. Jesus, however, told his disciples that "if anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching" (John 14:23). Keeping this in mind, St. Maximos said in almost his very next breath that "he who does not love his neighbour fails to keep the commandment, and so cannot love the Lord."¹⁰² In taking only half of St. Maximos's idea, Ionescu proclaimed his orthodoxy by drawing on patristic sources, but he selected only those elements which reinforced his own schema. He could only get away with such intellectual dishonesty because Romanian theological education was so underdeveloped. Crainic later described Ionescu's lectures on love as the work of "an audacious beginner," and they would certainly have seemed so

by the 1930s, but Ionescu was a pioneer when he began these lectures in 1924, and no one could tell him that he was wrong.¹⁰³

Mircea Eliade (1907–1986)

One of Nae Ionescu's most successful students was the historian of religion Mircea Eliade, who was to have a long and illustrious career in Chicago after the Second World War. Eliade was best known during the interwar period for his leadership of a group of intellectuals known as the Young Generation.¹⁰⁴ Through this group, he hoped to transform society spiritually, providing new bases upon which Romanian culture and politics could be carried out. Eliade wrote of the Young Generation in 1927 that "in us, *the Spirit* is victorious . . . We want values to triumph that are born neither from political economy, nor from technical science, nor from parliamentarism. Pure, spiritual values, absurdly spiritual." He criticized older scholars such as Constantin Rădulescu-Motru and Mihai Ralea on the grounds that their writings on mysticism were the work of "dilettantes" who could not understand what they had never experienced.¹⁰⁵

Mysticism was a social, not an individual question for the young Eliade. During the late 1920s, he wrote extensively about mysticism in European culture, criticizing writers like Martin Luther, Søren Kierkegaard, and William Blake for the individualism of their spirituality and noting that their unstable mental worlds were a result of their inability to find mysticism in community.¹⁰⁶ By contrast, he celebrated the mysticism of the poet and future fascist intellectual Giovanni Papini. According to Eliade, what Papini found in the Catholic Church was "discipline and authority . . . a discipline which gives life to the soul, opens one to newer and larger visions, guides rightly, organizes and realizes the transformation of man's bestial nature that was preached by Christ."¹⁰⁷

Asceticism was also an important part of Eliade's mysticism, and was linked to "virility," a word that he unsuccessfully tried to turn into an analytical category describing a particular way of thinking and writing. Martin Luther's primary flaw, according to Eliade, was that "Luther was insufficiently *willing* to solve [his spiritual] crisis through asceticism."¹⁰⁸ Eliade himself dabbled in asceticism during his stay in India, but gave up after a one-night stand with a Finnish girl he met while he was attempting to become a hermit in the Himalayas.¹⁰⁹

In addition to their affiliation with Nae Ionescu's *Cuvântul*, Eliade and his friends met regularly as part of the Criterion group. According to Eliade, Criterion

evolved somewhat spontaneously out of frequent gatherings among friends who met to discuss philosophical, artistic, and political ideas then in vogue. They dealt with topics that ranged from psychoanalysis to communism, and eventually became fascinated by mysticism. It was these discussions that Eliade says inspired him to write *Maitreyi (Bengal Nights)*, a fictional, yet somewhat autobiographical novel about his fieldwork in India.¹¹⁰

Having traveled to Calcutta in 1927 to study Hinduism, Eliade fell in love with his mentor's sixteen year old daughter, Maitreyi. When the romance failed because of her father's opposition, Eliade returned to Romania and immortalized Maitreyi in a novel. In Eliade's telling, his entry into Calcutta was an entry into a strange "Indian dream." If India was exotic, Maitreyi was the personification of her country. Alain, Eliade's alter-ego in the novel, was not in love with her initially, but was "fascinated" and "bewitched by the mystery."¹¹¹ Like the primordial couple in the Christian tradition, Maitreyi is formed from dust, and she is a pantheist, believing that trees have souls.¹¹² One of the trademarks of primitive societies, according to the later Eliade, is their refusal to distinguish between secular and sacred, and Maitreyi's communion with the magical side of nature was one of her most attractive qualities for the young scholar.¹¹³ Describing Alain's first experience of kissing Maitreyi, Eliade writes:

An unknown beatitude flooded every particle of my being and enraptured my body; in that plenitude, I recognized my truest self. A wave of joy lifted me out of myself, without dividing or destroying me, or pushing me towards madness. Never had I lived so immediately in the present as I did during those few minutes, when I seemed to live outside of all time. That embrace was something more than love.¹¹⁴

An ecstatic, revelatory, ego-destroying experience, Eliade's description fit perfectly with the criteria for mystical experiences laid out in the most authoritative Western textbooks of the period.¹¹⁵ Repeatedly confronted with Maitreyi's superstitions, Eliade tells us that Alain had to overcome his own "rationality" in order to embrace her world, an action that he claims he could only do because of his love for her.¹¹⁶ Mysticism in Eliade's novel has less to do with epistemology than with ecstasy. It is an emotional experience that is possible for "civilized" people, but is dangerous in that it breaks down rational behavior. When read together with his earlier writings on mysticism, it becomes clear that the biggest problem with Alain's mystical experiences in India, from Eliade's perspective, was their individual nature. Mystical experiences in the novel take place in secret, in the forest or in caves,

and always without the knowledge of society. The trysts of Alain and Maitreyi are secret because they are forbidden, and once discovered they destroy the worlds of both protagonists.

Eliade's interest in the potential of mysticism for producing social change is what attracted him to the Legion of the Archangel Michael. His journalism made few direct references to fascist politics until two of the Legion's leaders, Ion Moța and Vasile Marin, died while fighting in the Spanish Civil War in 1936. "The voluntary deaths of Ion Moța and Vaile Marin have a mystical meaning," Eliade wrote, "a sacrifice for Christianity. A sacrifice which verifies the heroism and faith of an entire generation."¹¹⁷ In 1937, Eliade explained his enthusiasm for the Legion "I believe in this [Legionary] victory because, above all else, I believe in the victory of the Christian spirit. A movement based and nourished by Christian spirituality, a spiritual revolution that fights first and foremost against sin and unworthiness—is not a political movement. It is a Christian revolution . . . It will create a new man, corresponding to a new type of European life. The new man has never been born from a political movement—but always from a spiritual revolution, from a vast inner recreation."¹¹⁸

In Codreanu's Legion, Eliade found an expression of his oft-stated desire that mysticism should produce social change. No longer secret and sterile, like Alain's experiences with Maitreyi, nor based on a failure of the virile will, like Martin Luther's mystical experiences, the Legion's mysticism had the potential, Eliade believed, to change a country. How sorely disappointed he was in these hopes perhaps helps explain why after the Second World War he stubbornly refused to talk about his fascist past.¹¹⁹

Lucian Blaga (1865–1961)

While Nae Ionescu celebrated the epistemological possibilities of mysticism, and Mircea Eliade its potential for engendering social change, the poet-philosopher Lucian Blaga linked epistemology to artistic creation, and rooted all three—mysticism, knowledge, and art—in national culture and geographic space. A number of writers linked religion, nation, and artistic creation during the 1920s, but the idea received its fullest expression Blaga's 1935 essay on the "mioritic space."¹²⁰ One of the most famous Romanian folk ballads, the *Miorița* (The Little Ewe), is a story about shepherds, and although the events described in the narrative are somewhat dark, the setting is idyllic. The ballad's beginning, "Near a low foothill

/ At heaven's doorsill" (*Pe-un picior de plai / pe-o gură de rai*), equates the rolling meadows on which shepherds grazed their sheep with a gateway to heaven.¹²¹ The notion of a "mioritic space," as Blaga used it, referred to the "spiritual substratum" that underlay Romanian landscapes and popular culture. Blaga had earlier argued that architecture reflects a culture's search for mystical transcendence, but here he stated very clearly that "the spatial horizon of the subconscious is a deeper and more efficacious spiritual reality than a mere sentiment could ever be."¹²² According to Blaga, the physical space in which a poet found himself was also a spiritual space, and this multifaceted space was the decisive key for artistic creation. Blaga's world was as spiritual as it was material, so art that described a physical space must also reflect that space's spiritual reality. The spiritual is a mystery, however, and cannot be known through technical, rational means.

During the late 1930s, Lucian Blaga championed what he called "Luciferic knowledge," which "considers its object as split in *two*, into one part which *shows itself* and one part which *hides itself*." He called this a "crisis" in the object, in the sense that it becomes simply a sign showing a mystery that is essentially hidden." Having split the object of knowledge, it was only natural that he should also split the means of knowing. "Paradisical knowledge" was sufficient for those objects usually treated according to the rules of Cartesian logic, but as the "mystery" is consistently irrational, it must be accessed through other means.¹²³ These other means might involve Bergson's intuition, but more promising were Plotinus's ecstasies, because "in ecstasy the subject identifies itself with its object until all distinctions are annulled."¹²⁴ The beauty of mystical experience was that it allowed one access to what Blaga named the "Great Anonymous" (*Marele Anonym*). In Blaga's mind the Great Anonymous was "the central metaphysical principle"; personified, he was the possessor of all knowledge, both hidden and revealed, but he was not God, because Blaga wished to keep his concept vague. The word "God" had too rich a history.¹²⁵

Blaga's ideas about ecstasy as a way of generating knowledge were greeted warmly by many Orthodoxists, but they were harshly rejected by the rationalist philosopher Ion Petrovici. Himself an Orthodoxist, Petrovici gave the official response to Blaga's inaugural address at the Romanian Academy in 1937. Petrovici disliked the novelty of Blaga's ideas and his eagerness to abandon traditional philosophy for personal intuition.¹²⁶ Rebuffed by the logicians, Blaga responded by turning to a detailed analysis of the mystical experience.

Blaga wrote several studies of comparative mystical experiences during the early 1940s. The most controversial of these was *Religie și spirit* (Religion and

Spirit, 1942), which involved a comparative study of the major world religions from a philosophical—rather than a phenomenological—perspective. He concluded: “Religion remains in every case the attempt to universalize or to overcome oneself, this even in mystical forms or in states of ecstasy, when one has the impression of self-annihilation. In ecstasy one feels annihilated as an individual, as individuated, but has the sentiment that one obtains all of divine existence or the complete paradox of nothingness.”¹²⁷

In his study, Blaga drew upon Dionysius the Aeropagite, Kierkegaard, and Goethe as examples of different styles of mysticism. He claimed that “mysticism suffered under Dionysius an adaptation to Christian dogmas” and suggested that true mysticism could only be found outside the Church. Kierkegaard apparently demonstrated this rule, because his own experiences of God had placed him in opposition to his national church, making him “a flame without a hearth.” Finally, Goethe gave Blaga “thrill-mysticism” (*mistică-fior*), which sprang like a pagan deity from the nature that surrounded him. Goethe’s was “a specifically German spirit,” that established itself in the German countryside and culture, but outside established German religion.¹²⁸ Mysticism was the most important part of religion for Blaga, and religion for him had to do with nature and with artistic creation—not with sacred texts or organized churches.

Few theologians found much that they liked in *Religie și spirit*, and it was described by an official church periodical, *Revista teologică*, as “a book that should never have been written.”¹²⁹ Among others, Stăniloae bitterly criticized Blaga for *Religie și spirit*, accusing him of eclectically choosing parts of religions while ignoring the whole. Instead of establishing himself upon religious truth, Blaga’s “completely arbitrary position” relied on human subjectivity, which could never produce certain knowledge. According to Stăniloae, mysticism only makes sense when grounded in the material realities of the human experience, and not as an intellectual or spiritual exercise. Mystical experience must be integrated into a larger theological framework that is based first and foremost on God’s revelation of himself in Jesus Christ.¹³⁰ However unusual Blaga’s ideas about mysticism were, they were ultimately crucial in forcing the theologians to articulate their own ideas more clearly and in encouraging them to ground their orthodoxy in something more than their own speculations.

Nichifor Crainic (1889–1972)

One of the leading Orthodoxists of the interwar period was Nichifor Crainic, a poet and theologian who discovered mystical theology in Vienna in 1921 through the works of the Russian symbolist poet Dmitri Merezhkovskii and the German poet Rainer Maria Rilke.¹³¹ Crainic was deeply immersed in German romanticism through the works of Richard Wagner and others, and later claimed that Christian mysticism was the basis of European romanticism.¹³² After the Indian mystic Rabindranath Tagore visited Bucharest in 1922, Crainic translated Tagore's book *Sādhana* (lit. Spiritual Practice), which argued for the wholeness and interconnectedness of all existence, taking a position that was too radically monist for Romanian Orthodoxy, but which resonated with the holistic approach to knowledge that was to become a trademark of Romanian mystical theology.¹³³ In the preface to another Romanian translation of Tagore's work, Crainic pointed to practical applications for mysticism in Tagore's call for world peace based on the end of egoism among nations and his concept of unity through love.¹³⁴

Crainic then wrote a seminal essay arguing that a spirituality akin to that of Parsifal, the compassionate and innocent hero of Wagner's opera, was the only solution to what Oswald Spengler had diagnosed as "the crisis of civilization." In Crainic's reading, Parsifal is "the naïve child of nature," and crucial to the argument is his assertion that "every culture stands in a deeply symbolic and almost mystical rapport with territory, with the space in which, through which, it wants to realize itself."¹³⁵ Personifying culture, and linking culture with territory, Crainic encouraged Romanians to think about their nation as a mystical entity, a place where spiritual values shine through the natural world. Mysticism, for him, was quintessentially Romanian because a mystical sensibility underscored Romanian peasant life.¹³⁶ Crainic's Jesus lived "among natural, simple people," and so when Crainic celebrated the incarnation, he was simultaneously celebrating the peasantry, and reminding his readers that it was to peasants that salvation had first come.¹³⁷

All Crainic's writing was thoroughly imbued with a vision of a world submersed in the divine. He defined mysticism as "the science of the deification of man," and it was first and foremost theandric, meaning that "it is composed of a divine element—the grace or the energy of the Holy Spirit—and a human element in its very best form."¹³⁸ The idea that mysticism is deification underpinned Crainic's whole approach. He contrasted this Orthodox definition of mysticism with that of a number of Western authors, all of whom—like Nae Ionescu and Lucian Blaga—only saw mysticism as "an experimental knowledge of God."¹³⁹ A mystical experience

does *not* technically produce knowledge, Crainic said, in that “a sensation without an object in the surrounding concrete world is, naturally, an absurdity,” but it does “categorically solidify” the Christian truth contained in the Scriptures. Mysticism is a meeting point where the concrete and transcendent worlds become conflated into one another, and the boundaries between the two are never clear.¹⁴⁰

Although he later denied it vehemently, at times during the 1930s, Crainic was at least as closely implicated in Legionary politics as Ionescu was. Crainic’s newspaper, *Calendarul*, publicly declared itself the mouthpiece for Legionary propaganda.¹⁴¹ He had run as a deputy for the Legion in 1932, had provided international connections for the Legion through his visit to Mussolini’s Italy in 1933, and had written the text for Codreanu’s first speech in Parliament.¹⁴² But Crainic quarreled with Codreanu in 1933 because Codreanu had preferred Ionescu to Crainic as a mentor.¹⁴³ Furious at Codreanu, Crainic bickered with him throughout the decade while at the same time supporting fascist causes whenever he could.¹⁴⁴ He was later appointed minister of propaganda as part of Ion Gigurtu’s anti-Semitic government in July 1940.¹⁴⁵ Under pressure from Hitler, Gigurtu was forced to cede a third of Romania’s territory to Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Soviet Union in August 1940. The regime lost legitimacy after this humiliation, and Crainic participated in a coup to bring Gen. Ion Antonescu to power together with the Legion of the Archangel Michael. Under the new regime, Crainic was made president of the radio broadcasting station, where he worked together with young legionaries to produce fascist propaganda.¹⁴⁶

Crainic’s Christianity was deeply infected by his ultranationalism because he refused to separate the sacred from the profane. He posited “an inextricable symbiosis of culture with religion, one being united with the other as form is united with substance” (*ca forma cu fondul*) and frequently confused Romanianness with Orthodoxy.¹⁴⁷ As discussed above, Orthodox churches are usually organized along territorial, not ethnic, lines. The only formal denunciation of “phyletism”—the heresy of “maintaining that ecclesiastical jurisdiction is determined ethnically rather than territorially”—had occurred in the self-interested condemnations of the Bulgarian church by the Greek patriarch in 1872.¹⁴⁸ This dispute was over jurisdictional rather than theological matters, and so Crainic and other Orthodoxists apparently felt they were able to ignore it regardless of the spiritual principles underpinning it.¹⁴⁹ “There is an organic connection between religion and nation,” Crainic said, the latter being natural and the former supernatural. “If indeed an antimony exists between them,” he argued, “then there existed an irresolvable antimony in the person of the Savior, which was at the same time natural and supernatural, both man and God.”¹⁵⁰ By talk-

ing about the nature of Christ, Crainic reminded his readers that all reality subsists within the divine, so it is unacceptable to break it up into binary categories.

Mysticism, in Crainic's treatment, had three stages: purification, illumination, and union. These three stages correspond with the three paths to God that Thomas Aquinas identified in the writings of pseudo-Dionysius.¹⁵¹ Despite the similarities between neo-Platonism and the writings of pseudo-Dionysius, Crainic was not particularly enamored of the former. He claimed that neo-Platonism was embraced by medieval Catholic mystics as a means of escaping from the "feminine mysticism" of Hildegard of Bingen and Elizabeth of Schönau. The mysticism of these women, Crainic taught, was "green and direct experience," and lacked proper theological elaboration. Meister Eckhart also drew on Dionysius, but quickly fell into pantheism, confusing the essence of God (*esse dei*) with essence itself (*esse commune*), and thereby equating God with everything that exists. Crainic admitted that "generally speaking, any mystical writer can be exposed to the suspicion of pantheism," but refused to say that all mystics are pantheists.¹⁵² There is a basic unity between God and creation—"Christianity does not consider humans as isolated from the world of creatures, just as it does not consider this world isolated from its Builder"—but the two should not be confused either.¹⁵³ Eckhart's disciples Heinrich Seuse, Johannes Tauler, and Jan van Ruysbroeck were held up as examples of mystics who by-passed heresy despite being influenced by Eckhart's pantheism.¹⁵⁴

As an alternative to the Western approach to uniting spirit and body, Crainic taught the "Prayer of the Heart" (Hesychast prayer), a method of prayer involving controlled breathing and attention to the body. By paying attention to the *method* with which one prays, the body can assist prayer. "The body becomes a medium, an instrument of the spirit," Crainic argued.¹⁵⁵ The "Jesus Prayer"—"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner"—provides the mantra for Hesychast prayer. Crainic liked the Jesus Prayer because, not being based on propositional knowledge, it would not lead believers into the errors of the Western mystics. "It does not have a simple symbolic significance," Crainic said, "but a supernatural power."¹⁵⁶

Implicit in Crainic's presentation of mysticism was the argument that the distinctively Eastern Orthodox approach (Hesychast prayer) is superior to the various Western paths to God, many of which ended in heresy. Of all the Church Fathers, pseudo-Dionysius was the one whom Crainic valued most, and the Dionysian system structured his whole course. In 1926, Crainic began experimenting with this new way of reading the Church Fathers. In giving such a pronounced importance to patristic writers such as pseudo-Dionysius, Crainic established the basis of what Florovskii

later called the “neo-Patristic synthesis,” which, according to Kallistos Ware, is characterized by a willingness to “treat the Fathers not merely as relics from the past, but as living witnesses and contemporaries.”¹⁵⁷ Stăniloae is often cited as being the first Orthodox theologian to write “neo-Patristic” theology, but he himself credited Crainic with first developing the approach.¹⁵⁸ Crainic was drawn to patristic sources in an attempt to avoid Western mysticism and to find an authentically “Oriental” spirituality. Ironically, it was Crainic’s prejudices that caused him to begin giving the Eastern Fathers the attention they deserved.

In Crainic’s thought, humans draw closer to God as they become more like God. The desire to become like God is born from an admiration for God, which in turn becomes a longing (*dor*) for God. The mystic then gets rid of worldly distractions through prayer and asceticism, is illuminated in the mind, and becomes united with God. The entire process is a result of divine grace. Putting aside worldly things through purification was important for Crainic, and purifying one’s instincts meant correcting them to make them more fully human, which involved “denying the world and oneself.” The emptying of the intelligence, the memory, and the will, is what Crainic called, after St. John of the Cross, “the dark night of the soul.” Self-discipline, prayer, and asceticism are thus the part that humans contribute to their own sanctification. Ecstasies are also accompanied by an impulse toward virtue, but in most cases these ecstasies are created by a lifestyle already oriented toward deification.¹⁵⁹

A result of the purifying of the mind, illumination involved drawing closer to God. An illuminated person does know God better, but in the biblical sense of knowing as experience, and not in the sense of knowing about something. Crainic believed that human knowledge was too limited to be able to speak intelligibly about God, as one might expect given his reliance upon Dionysius. Like the sixth century theologian, Crainic recognized both positive and negative theology but, unsatisfied with either, he then turned to ecstasy. Ecstasy shows the mystic that “God *is* and that *he is* higher than everything, higher than all affirmations and higher than all our negations. In other words: he exists *in an eminent sense*, or [is] ‘supraeminent,’ as Dionysius says.”¹⁶⁰

As we become like God, we are drawn closer to him and are united with him. Sometimes accompanied by “the Light of Tabor,” by ecstasy, or even by stigmata, union involves “living in God, experiencing him as living, unmediated and personal.”¹⁶¹ In order to determine whether a mystical experience produced by prayer is genuine, Crainic compared it with those described by Dionysius—“a passing over the sensible world, the intelligible world, and a leap of the soul into

the obscure zone of divine brightness where, through holy ignorance, he can know the essence of God.”¹⁶² But such experiences are not the only markers of mystical union: a theandric union occurs whenever Christ is manifested on earth. Liturgy, Crainic said, “follows the union with God by means of sensible forms.”¹⁶³ Crainic thus considered that the Eucharist and baptism were crucial to Christian mysticism, and Stăniloae noted that “the true mystical life is, according to Nichifor Crainic and the whole Orthodox tradition, participation in the liturgical life of the Church.”¹⁶⁴

A great deal of what Crainic wrote about mystical theology is considered normal in Eastern Orthodox theology today. Romanian theological scholarship was severely lacking in the early twentieth century, however, and were it not for Crainic’s work, heretical interpretations such as those of Nae Ionescu, Lucian Blaga, or the Legion of the Archangel Michael might have achieved hegemony in Romania. Despite the harm done by his ethnotheology and his romantic nationalism, Crainic’s achievement lay in the fact that he taught mostly orthodox Christian doctrine and in his ability to persuade his students that *his* interpretation of mysticism was the correct one. Notwithstanding his erudition, Crainic’s primary appeal to his students lay in his politics. Racist, anti-Semitic, ultranationalist, a one-time mentor to Codreanu, and an opponent of any form of “Westernization,” Crainic sat on the extreme right of the political spectrum. He was loved by his students because of his connections to the Legion,¹⁶⁵ and because he was an untiring publicist for fascist and Orthodoxist causes. Without the popularity that accompanied his failings, it is possible that many of Crainic’s most important contributions to Romanian thought might have gone unnoticed.

Ioan Gh. Savin (1885–1973)

Another important expositor of Christian mysticism in interwar Romania was the theologian Ioan Gh. Savin, who had taught alongside Crainic at Chişinău and had collaborated with him on the ultranationalist newspaper *Calendărul*. Interested in the political implications of theology, Savin worked as inspector general for the Ministry of Cults and Arts between 1920 and 1927, and was undersecretary of state in the Ministry of Education for several months under Octavian Goga’s anti-Semitic government in 1937–1938. He delivered an Orthodoxist critique of what he saw as the degeneration of his country in several books, including *Creştinism și comunism* (Christianity and Communism, 1938) and *Creştinismul și gândirea contemporană* (Christianity and Contemporary Thought, 1940). Savin edited the fascist periodical

Cuvântul under Goga, in addition to his usual editorial work at *Fântâna Darurilor*, a more moderate theological journal from Bucharest.¹⁶⁶ Savin objected to priests who had become involved in party politics in the past on the grounds that “their politics was stupid, based on personal or party interests, and this was detestable.” Political issues that did not flow from “the altar” had no part in the church, Savin argued. Nonetheless, he maintained, “priests must energetically intervene through their words to guide the votes of the masses toward those parties which will guarantee the essential interests of the country of the Orthodox Church.”¹⁶⁷

According to his nephew, Savin’s greatest passion was teaching, and this is the spirit that permeated his courses on mysticism.¹⁶⁸ These courses, taught at the Theology Faculty in Bucharest from 1945 to 1947, should be seen as an attempt to overcome the popular ignorance of Orthodox theology, which was shared by his students as much as by the general population. Although they did contain some very original interpretations, much of the material in these courses was derivative. He acknowledged relying on Crainic for his interpretation of Eckhart and drew heavily on the first volume of Stăniloae’s *Filocalia*.¹⁶⁹

In their courses, Nae Ionescu and Crainic had given syntheses of mystical theology that resonated well with their own philosophical systems. Being first and foremost a teacher, Savin tried to explain the central doctrines of the most important mystics—both Eastern and Western—in order to give his students access to the sources. Aside from some brief introductory lectures, the majority of both courses was dedicated to short biographical treatments of key Christian mystics, quoting extensively from their work and highlighting their major contributions to mystical theology. When he dealt with Francis of Assisi, whose biography constituted almost two-thirds of Savin’s course on Western mysticism, Savin spent almost no time discussing doctrine or analyzing his mystical experiences. Instead, he focused on the saint’s life, arguing that “his *life* is almost all of *his opus*.”¹⁷⁰

The originality of Savin’s work lay in his interpretation of mysticism as a theory of knowledge. Savin had studied epistemology and logic in Germany under Wilhelm Windelband and Emil Lask, and these disciplines inspired some of his most important works.¹⁷¹ In a 1935 article, he said that “to live with God” meant “to know him and to do his will,” such that epistemology—in an existentialist sense—was inseparable from Christian living.¹⁷² Jürgen Henkel explains Savin’s epistemology thus: “Ioan Gh. Savin situates mysticism among the gnoseologic interests of man, into which he introduces a sort of religious *a priori*. This *a priori* desires a knowledge beyond rational reflection. As, even pushed to the maximum, human powers and efforts do

not suffice for obtaining this metarational knowledge, there is need of divine grace, given as a gift of God in order to effectively realize this knowledge.”¹⁷³

Knowledge, in his case, is not power. It is not gained by human powers, nor does it give one power over anything. It is, in Savin’s words, “the transfiguration of the intellect.” One cannot know God as a subject knows an object, but one must know him “face to face.” Such knowledge, he says, involves “leaving the human self in order to rise, to align oneself with God; . . . this is immediate, intuitive, experimental knowledge.”¹⁷⁴ Created in the image of God, the soul (*sufflet*) contains infinite possibilities for knowing within itself. Under normal circumstances, complete knowledge is too much for us to bear, which is why mystics sometimes exhibit symptoms of insanity. Our intelligence acts as a valve that allows “as much as is needed and useful” to flow from the “immense ocean” of our soul. The soul has different functions or, according to Teresa of Avila, different stages. Mysticism is a process of moving beyond the “inferior” functions required by everyday life to a more immediate knowledge of God.¹⁷⁵

Savin too reveled in showing the superiority of Eastern Orthodoxy to Western theology. He criticized the Catholic theologian Jacques Maritain (1882–1973), who had defined mysticism as “the science of the experimental knowledge of God, in his essence and in his intimate life.”¹⁷⁶ Maritain, Savin noted, “reduces mysticism to the act of knowing, keeping silent about that of living and neglecting the effects of union.”¹⁷⁷ Although he dwelt at length on the ascetic efforts of certain saints, Savin recognized that asceticism was not the be all and end all of mysticism. This was precisely because of the importance of grace. Grace meant that mystical experiences came from God, and not from the efforts of the believer. Savin explicitly rejected the “Western” approach of distinguishing between asceticism and mysticism. Asceticism and mysticism are mutually reinforcing, and one cannot properly exist without the other. But as with knowledge, both are completely dependent upon God’s free revelation of himself through grace.¹⁷⁸

Although he drew strongly on Crainic for his information, Savin presented an alternative reading of Christian mysticism. He too considered that communion with God was the key element in mysticism, but unlike Crainic, he did not emphasize union with God as a major theme. Savin believed that knowledge had ethical consequences, such that no one could be a mystic without changing the way that s/he lived. This ethical, activist emphasis resonated strongly with the Legion’s rhetoric about changing one’s behavior to create a “new man,” but the Legion was a memory by the time that Savin began his courses in 1945. The period from 1945 to 1947, when Savin was teaching mystical theology, was dominated by the transformation of

Romania into a socialist republic. The Communist government also tried to create a “new man,” but not through the type of mystical, spiritual transformation that Savin was speaking about. His message of individual transformation through mysticism was actually quite subversive by 1945. Some of the legionaries who survived the war joined Rugul Aprins (The Burning Bush), a group led by Daniil Sandu Tudor which focused on studying Romanian culture, spirituality, and practicing Hesychast prayer. Tudor’s theology of mysticism was based upon Crainic’s and Savin’s work, and benefited from occasional lectures by Dumitru Stăniloae.¹⁷⁹ Those who joined the movement were told that the Legion’s doctrine was wrong and were encouraged to renounce their pasts and enter monasteries.¹⁸⁰ Rugul Aprins was proscribed by the Romanian Communist Party in the 1950s, and many of its sympathizers were arrested, including Savin and Stăniloae.

Conclusion

Christian theology conceives of the church in the world as paradoxically being both the body of Christ and a human institution vulnerable to all the weaknesses of sinful human nature. Even while the church aims for purity, it still lives with the foibles that corrupt any human community. One of the most pervasive foibles of the early twentieth century was nationalism. Nationalism was a given in many Romanian intellectual circles during the interwar period, and not least amongst theologians. Religious thinkers who avoided this pitfall, like Gala Galaction (1879–1961) and Nicolae Steinhardt (1912–1989), were the exception, not the rule. It is therefore only to be expected that nationalist ideology would have appeared in theological writings. In fact, not only did nationalism appear in scholarly works on mysticism, but it was nationalism that first inspired theologians to take mysticism seriously.

The study of Christian mysticism became popular from the 1920s onward because it allowed nationalists to emphasize the unique “spiritual” characteristics of their culture. It would, they hoped, provide an authentically Romanian way of knowing and free them from the rigidities of Western logic, manual theology, and modernity. Some believed that mysticism would release the creative spirit and revitalize Romanian art and literature. For some it was a way to be “spiritual” outside the walls of the Orthodox Church, while for others it was proof that the established church had the only true spirituality. The nascent state of scholarly study on mysticism in the 1920s meant that for a while, any and every interpretation could be valid.

As a relatively “new” scholarly discipline in Romania, theology was particularly sensitive to the preoccupations of the surrounding culture. The mystical theologies of churchmen like Crainic, Savin, and Stăniloae were produced in conversation with ideas about mysticism then being promoted by more speculative writers like Ionescu, Eliade, and Blaga. The success of the theologians in defining orthodoxy against heterodoxy lay in their more careful use of classical texts, their dominance of key institutional positions, and their solidarity in supporting a theandric, social, and regenerative understanding of mysticism against the more heterodox ideas of their interlocutors. Even though all six of the men discussed here were nationalists, nationalism also contributed to the victory of orthodoxy by legitimizing it in the eyes of theological students and priests, many of whom were committed nationalists.

Christian ideas about the importance of community, self-discipline, purification, and the centrality of one church did mirror many themes emphasized by European fascist movements, particularly Codreanu’s Legion of the Archangel Michael. Both Christianity and fascism opposed communism and corruption, and both were about renewal, albeit by using different methods. Celebrating the nation in a theological treatise is not the same as physically attacking Jews, but the former helped justify the latter. That not all the theologians shared the Legion’s commitment to violence and its cult of the dead did not prevent young legionaries from listening to what their teachers had to say, particularly because those professors either actively supported the Legion or at least did not openly condemn it.

Mysticism is about humans meeting God, so in the process of investigating this phenomenon, theologians also had to define what they thought about God, human personhood, knowledge, revelation, community, the church, and ethics. The works of Crainic, Savin, and Stăniloae are important because in articulating their mystical theologies, these men also laid out what Romanian Orthodox Christians had to believe about most aspects of the faith. Identifying nationalism in interwar Romanian mystical theology does not mean that what those thinkers wrote was *a priori* incorrect. Much that was valuable was thought and written at times when fascists were in power, just as intelligent men and women have worked under and supported other hateful regimes. Critiquing nationalist theology is important insofar as it allows us to move beyond the mistakes of the past. Robert Kreig’s examination of German Catholic theology during the interwar period asks, “How did it come about that three groundbreaking theological books of the 1920s and 1930s were tainted by anti-Judaism?” Kreig identifies a number of theological failings in each of the major works that he studies and ends by noting that “the four theological factors that contributed to the anti-Jewish bias in Catholic views of Jesus and Judaism

in the early twentieth century no longer have the backing of the Church's official teachings."¹⁸¹ In Romania, however, the church has not condemned the mistakes of the past. Parts of the interwar nationalist agenda remain and can be seen in Romanian Orthodox theology both under communism and after.¹⁸²

An uncritical reception of Stăniloae's thought, including his theology of the nation, underpins most new Romanian theology, which is problematic given that Stăniloae himself did not move beyond his interwar nationalism.¹⁸³ Stăniloae's 1992 book *Reflecții despre spiritualitatea poporului român* (Reflections on the Spirituality of the Romanian People), for example, resurrects many of the nationalist themes found in his interwar works. Here he celebrates the "communal" culture of the Romanian village as authentically Christian, contrasting it with the pagan individualism of the West, and describes Romanian folklore as "a retelling of the gospel truths."¹⁸⁴ His voice is not alone. Archimandrite Cleopa and other Influential Orthodox writers still abuse the Uniate Church as a heretical and subversive attack on Romanian Orthodoxy.¹⁸⁵ Recent books such as Răzvan Codrescu's *Fiecare în rândul cetii sale* (Each in His Own Castle) present some of Stăniloae's most nationalist articles alongside those of Crainic and of Codrescu himself, emphasizing the importance of understanding "the ontological state and mystical dimension of ethnic or national identities."¹⁸⁶

Recognizing and confronting the nationalist tendencies in Romanian theology is the only way to move beyond them and to appreciate the strengths of Orthodox thought without falling victim to its mistakes. Mihail Neamțu notes that Stăniloae's lasting heritage is "not his nationalism, . . . but his truly inspired and creative reading of the Scriptures and of the Church Fathers."¹⁸⁷ A similar argument could also be made about the works of Blaga, Eliade, and Savin. These men all made significant contributions to contemporary Orthodox thought, and their mistakes need to be rejected lest the positive aspects of their heritage be diminished.

Notes

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4. Alex Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture: Literacy and the Development of National Identity* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2006), 143–157.

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6. Nichifor Crainic, *Zile albe—zile negre: Memorii*, vol. 1, (Bucharest: Casa Editorială "Gândirea," 1991), 46.

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9. His italics. Ioan Gh. Savin, *Iconoclasti și apostoli contemporani* (Bucharest: Editura Anastasia, 1995), 18.

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14. Silviu Rogobete, *O ontologie a iubirii: Subiect și Realitate Personală supremă în gândirea părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae* (Bucharest: Editura Polirom, 2006), 154; Jürgen Henkel, *Îndumnezeire și etică a iubirii în opera părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae*, trans. Ioan I. Ica Jr., 2d ed. (Sibiu: Editura Deisis, 2006), 51, 93.
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18. See Pheng Cheah, *Spectral Nationality: Passages of Freedom from Kant to Postcolonial Literatures of Liberation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).
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22. Philip Walters, "Notes on Autocephaly and Phyletism," *Religion, State and Society* 30/4 (2002): 357.
23. *Ibid.*, 360–361.
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31. Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, “Sufletul mistic,” *Gândirea* 6/ 4–5 (1926): 145–152.
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35. Ion Moța, *Pămîntul strămoșesc*, 1 Aug, 1927, reprinted in Ioan Scurtu et al., eds., *Ideologie și formațiuni de dreapta în România*, vol. 2 (Bucharest: Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2000), 53.
36. Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, *Pentru legionari* (Bucharest: Editura Scara, 1999), 138, 231.

37. Valantin Săndulescu, “‘Taming the Body,’ Preliminary Considerations Regarding the Legionary Work Camps System (1933–1937),” *Historical Yearbook* 5 (2008):85ff.; Ernest Bernea, “O tendință a vremii: Asceza” *Cuvântul*, 2 March 1938, 1.
38. Dan Botta, “Pentru cultul morții,” 28 May 1936, reprinted in Scurtu et. al., *Ideologie*, vol. 4, 187.
39. Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, “Cărțecica șefului de cuib: Manual al Gărzii de Fier,” *Obiectiv legionar: Revista mișcării legionare* 1/4 (2003): 23.
40. Paul Guiraud, P., *Codrănuș et la Garde de Fer* (Paris: Francisme, 1940); Julius Evola, *Naționalism și asceza: Reflecții asupra fenomenului legionar*, trans. F. Dumitrescu (Alba Iulia and Paris: Fronde, 1998).
41. Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1991), xi.
42. Mirel Bănică, *Biserica Ortodoxă Română: Stat și societate în anii ’30* (Bucharest: Editura Polirom, 2007), 206.
43. Radu Ioanid, “The Sacralised Politics of the Romanian Iron Guard,” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 5/3 (2004): 435–439; Crainic, *Zile albe*, 283.
44. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Iisus Hristos sau restaurarea omului*, 2d ed. (Craiova: Editura Omniscope, 1993), 8.
45. Costion Nicolescu, *Teologul în cetate: Părintele Stăniloae și aria politicii* (Bucharest: Editura Christiana, 2003). A number of Stăniloae’s nationalist articles are collected in Constantin Schifirneț, ed., *Filosofie și națiune* (Bucharest: Editura Elion, 2004).
46. Quotation from Hans-Christian Maner, “Aspects of Modernisation and the Orthodox Church in Romania,” in *Romania and Europe: Modernisation as Temptation, Modernisation as Threat*, ed. Bogdan Murgescu (Sibiu: German-Romanian Academy, 1999), 77. See also Dumitru Stăniloae, “Un atlet al naționalismului creștin,” *Telegraful român* 82/14 (1934): 1, and “Religia și filosofia în școală secundară,” *Telegraful român*, 82/7 (1934): 1, both reprinted in Schifirneț, ed., *Națiune și creștinism*, 25–29.
47. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Să fim exaltați?” *Telegraful român*, 60–62 (5 Oct 1932): 1, quoted in Nicolescu, *Teologul*, 14; Dumitru Stăniloae, “Elemente de morală creștină,” *Telegraful Român* 86/5 (1938): 1–2 and “Solidaritatea națională,” *Telegraful român* 87/40 (1939): 1, both reprinted in Schifirneț, *Națiune și creștinism*. 52–59, 96–98; Nicolescu, *Teologul*, 40.
48. Stăniloae, “Solidaritate națională.”

49. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Restaurarea românismului în destinul sau istoric,” *Telegraful român* 88/39 (1940): 1, reprinted in Schifirnet, *Națiune și creștinism*, 114–117; “Biserica Ortodoxa a Transilvaniei,” *Gândirea* 22/5 (1943): 241–248, and “Biserica românească,” *Telegraful român* 90/10–11 (1942): 1, both reprinted in Schifirnet, *Națiune și creștinism*, 140–148, 154–163; “A început lupta împotriva bolșevismului,” *Telegraful român*, 27–29 (June 1941): 1, quoted in Nicolescu, *Teologul*, 84; “Țara,” *Luceaful* 1/3 (1941): 127.
50. Maciej Bielawski, “Dumitru Stăniloae and His Philokalia,” in Lucian Turcescu, ed., *Dumitru Stăniloae: Tradition and Modernity in Theology* (Oxford, Center for Romanian Studies, 2002), 25–52; André Scrima, “Renașterea filocalică în ortodoxia românească,” in Baconsky and Tătaru-Cazaban, *Dumitru Stăniloae*, 51–76.
51. Henkel, *Îndumnezire*, 55; Stăniloae, *Iisus Hristos*, 39, n.2.
52. Henkel, *Îndumnezire*, 55; Charles Miller, *The Gift of the World: An Introduction to the Theology of Dumitru Stăniloae* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 16.
53. Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, UK: Penguin Books, 1983), 148.
54. George Pattison, *Anxious Angels: A Retrospective View of Religious Existentialism* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999).
55. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Catolicism de după război* (Sibiu: Tiparul Tipografiei Arhiepiscopale, 1931).
56. Gálfy Zoltán, “O vizită a lui Karl Barth în România,” in Antonie Plămădeală ed., *Persoană și comuniune: Prinos de cinstire Părintelui Profesor Academician Dumitru Stăniloae la împlinirea vârstei de 90 de ani* (Sibiu: Editura Arhiepiscopiei ortodoxe Sibiu, 1993), 285–289; Miller, *Gift of the World*, 14; Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olsen, *Twentieth Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 66–68.
57. Mihai Ralea, “Cazul lui Unumano,” *Viața românească* 16/3, (1924): 447–448; Nichifor Crainic, *Nostalgia paradisului*, Magda Ursache and Petru Ursache eds. (Iași: Editura Moldova, 1994) 79ff; Viorel Marineasa, *Tradiție supralicitată, modernitate diortosită: Publicistica lui Nichifor Crainic și a lui Nae Ionescu, la o nouă citire* (Timișoara: Universitate de Vest, 2004) 41 – 49; Pattison, *Anxious Angels*, 170–222.
58. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Calea spre lumina Dumnezeiasca la Sf Grigorie Palama,” *Anurarul VI al Academiei teologice “Andreiane”* (1930): 55–72; “Doua tratate Al Sfantului Grigorie Palama,” *Anurarul VI al Academiei teologice “Andreiane”* (1933); *Viața și învățătura sfântului Grigorie Palama: Cu Patru Tratate Traduse*, 2d ed. (Bucharest: Editura Scripta, 1993).
59. Stăniloae, *Viața și învățătura*, 47–53.

60. Miller, *Gift of the World*, 29.
61. Stăniloae, *Iisus Hristos*, 15, 49, 58.
62. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Creștinism și națiune,” in *Ortodoxie și românism*, 53.
63. Henkel, *Îndumnezire*, 284.
64. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Incercare despre teofanii,” and “Naționalismul sub aspect moral,” in Stăniloae, *Ortodoxie și românism*, 192ff., 166.
65. Rogobete, *O ontologie a iubirii*, 205.
66. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Ascetica și mistica bisericii ortodoxe* (Bucharest: Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 2002). Stăniloae’s 1946–1947 course on mysticism and asceticism was never published as such, but it was the basis for a monograph on mysticism and asceticism that has been republished several times, most recently in 2002. Here I assume that the spirit of the 2002 text, if not its words, is consistent with Stăniloae’s early courses. See Henkel, *Îndumnezire*, 63–77, for a discussion of the various early editions of this work.
67. Stăniloae, *Iisus Hristos*, 116; *Ascetica și mistica*, 193.
68. Stăniloae, “Naționalismul sub aspect moral,” 157.
69. Stăniloae, *Iisus Hristos*, 23; Rogobete, *O ontologie a iubirii*, 142.
70. Ibid., 50, 53; Stăniloae, *Iisus Hristos*, 119.
71. Stăniloae, *Iisus Hristos*, 58, 73–74, 81.
72. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Căință și înviere sufletească,” *Revista teologică* 35/1–2 (1945): 19.
73. Sandu Frunză, *O antropologie mistică: Introducere în gândirea Părintelui Stăniloae* (Craiova: Editura Omniscop, 1996), 87.
74. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Ortodoxie și națiune,” *Gândirea* 14/2 (1935): 76–84; “Scurtă interpretare teologică a națiunii,” in *Ortodoxie și românism*, 40; “Naționalismul sub aspect moral,” 173f.
75. Crainic, *Programul statului etnocratic* (Bucharest: Tipografia Ziarului “Universul,” 1938), 5.
76. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Ortodoxie și etnocrație,” *Telegraful român* 86/24 (1938): 1, reprinted in Schifirneț, *Națiune și creștinism*, 61–64.
77. Crainic, *Programul statului etnocratic*, passim.

78. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Biserica ortodoxă a Transilvaniei,” in Schifirneț, *Națiune și creștinism*, 157; “Liturghia și unitatea religioasă a poporului român,” *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* 74/10–11 (1956): 1078–1087; reprinted in Schifirneț, *Națiune și creștinism*, 187–197.
79. Mihail Neamțu, “Between the Gospel and the Nation: Dumitru Stăniloae’s Ethno-theology,” *Arhaevs* 10 (2006): 27.
80. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Între ortodoxie și catolicism,” *Telegraful român* 78/88 (1930): 1–2, reprinted in Schifirneț, *Națiune și creștinism*, 18–23.
81. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Unitate în noi și între noi,” *Telegraful Român* 91/47 (1943): 1.
82. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Cele două împărății,” *Gândirea* 16/1 (1936): 26–35.
83. Lucian Turcescu, “Eucharistic Ecclesiology or Open Sobornicity?” in Lucian Turcescu, ed., *Dumitru Stăniloae: Tradition and Modernity in Theology* (Oxford: Center for Romanian Studies, 2002), 83–103.
84. Henkel, *Îndumnezire*, 385.
85. On the relationship between Ionescu and the Legion, see Marineasa, *Tradiție supralicitata, modernitate diortosită*, 202; Constantin Papanace, “Cuvânt introductiv,” in Fr. Ștefan Palaghiiță, *Garda de Fier spre reinvierea României* (Bucharest: Editura Roza Vânturilor, 1993), 341–349. On Ionescu’s enormous influence over the “young generation,” see Mircea Eliade, “Un cuvânt al editorului,” in Nae Ionescu, *Roza vânturilor* (Bucharest: Editura Roza Vânturilor, 1990), 421–444; Mihail Sebastian, *Cum am devenit hooligan* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2006), 48–55; Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine, *Filozofie și naționalism: Paradoxul Noica*, trans. Emanoil Marcu (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1998), 231–245.
86. Marineasa, *Tradiție supralicitată*, 186f.
87. Mircea Vulcănescu, *Nae Ionescu așa cum l-am cunoscut* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992), 92–93; Claudio Mutti, *Penele Arhanghelului: Intelectualii români și Garda de fier*, trans. Florin Dumitrescu (Bucharest: Anastasia, 1997), 48–51.
88. Nae Ionescu, “Eroarea filantropică,” *Cuvântul* Oct 15, 1931, reprinted in Ionescu, *Roza vânturilor*, 282–283.
89. Aurelia and Marcel Știrban, *Din istoria bisericii române unite de la 1918 la 1941* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Muzeului Satmarean, 2005), 182. On the Romanian Orthodox Church’s official response to the Concordat, see Mircea Păcurariu, *Istoria bisericii ortodoxe române* (Sibiu: Patriarhul Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1973), 345–347.
90. Nae Ionescu, “A fi bun român,” *Cuvântul*, 1930, reprinted in Ionescu, *Roza vânturilor*, 194–198. On this debate, see Marineasa, *Tradiție supralicitată*, 152–153, Zigu Ornea, *Anii treizeci:*

Extrema dreapta românească (Bucharest: Editura Fundatiei Culturale Române, 1995), 91–94.

91. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Între ortodoxie și catolicism,” 21.

92. Nae Ionescu, *Curs de filosofie de religiei, 1924–1925* (Bucharest: Editura Eminescu, 1998), 47; Ionescu, “Filosofia românească,” 31.

93. Nae Ionescu, *Curs de metafizica: Teoria cunoștinței metafizice, 1928–1930*, Marin Diaconu ed. (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1991), 11, 9, 26, 50. Ionescu explains that “Philologically, the word ‘mystic’ appears to have a connection with the word ‘unknown,’ because it has at its root a Greek word which means ‘hidden’; it therefore follows that mysticism would be the knowledge of hidden things.” *Ibid.*, 115.

94. Isabela Vasiliu-Scraba, *Metafizica lui Nae Ionescu, în unica și în dubla ei înfățișare* (Slobozia: Editura Star Tipp, 2000), 25.

95. Ionescu, *Curs de metafizica*, 106.

96. *Ibid.*, 128, 133.

97. *Ibid.*, 43, 124–128.

98. Vulcănescu, *Nae Ionescu*, 42–44.

99. Ionescu, *Curs de filosofie de religiei*, 26–28. Cf. Ionescu, *Curs de metafizica*, 123–129.

100. Petreu, “Istoria unui plagiat,” 16–17; Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man’s Spiritual Consciousness* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1911).

101. St. Maximos the Confessor, “First Century on Love,” 10, 16, in G. E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware, trans. and eds., *The Philokalia*, vol. 2, London: Faber & Faber, 1981), 54.

102. *Ibid.*

103. Crainic quoted in Marineasa, *Tradiție supralicită*, 18.

104. Mihail Vulcănescu, “*Tânăra generație*”: *Crize vechi în haine noi. Cine sînt și ce vor tinerii români?* (Bucharest: Compania, 2004). Other notable protégées of Nae Ionescu who wrote on mysticism during this period include Emil Cioran and Petre Țuțea.

105. Mircea Eliade, “Linii de orientare,” *Cuvântul*, 3/857 (1927): 1–2, reprinted in Eliade, *Profetism românesc*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Editura “Roza Vânturilor,” 1990), 19–22; Eliade, “Diletantism în jurul misticismului,” *Cuvântul* 4/1004 (1928): 3–4, reprinted in Eliade, *Virilitate și asceză: Scrieri de tinerețe, 1928* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2008), 46–50.

106. See various articles in Eliade, *Virilitate și asceză*, 68–72, 109–115, 201–203.
107. Mircea Eliade, “Mistica lui Papini,” *Cuvântul* 4/661, 16 Jan. 1927, 1–2.
108. Mircea Eliade, “Tâlcuri noi lui Martin Luther,” *Gândirea* 4/4 (1928): 182–184, reprinted in Eliade, *Virilitate și asceză*, 109–115.
109. Mircea Eliade, *Bengal Nights*, trans. Catherine Spencer (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1993), 171. Cf. Mircea Eliade, *Într-o mănăstire din Himalaya* (Bucharest: Mihai Dascal Editor, 1998).
110. Mircea Eliade, *Memorii, 1907–1960* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2003), 230–241.
111. Eliade, *Bengal Nights*, 40.
112. *Ibid.*, 34.
113. See Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, trans. William R. Inge (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954), 3–6.
114. Eliade, *Bengal Nights*, 84, cf. 97.
115. Underhill, *Mysticism*, 6–9.
116. Eliade, *Bengal Nights*, 107, 160.
117. Mircea Eliade, “Ion Moța și Vasile Marin,” *Vremea* 10/472 (1937): 3, reprinted in Eliade, *Textele “Legionare” și despre “Românism”* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 2001), 36–38.
118. Mircea Eliade, “De ce cred în biruința Mișcării Legionare?” *Buna Vestire* 1/244 (1937): 1–2; reprinted in Eliade, *Textele*, 63–66. Eliade later denied having written this article, although he did not protest when it appeared under his signature at the time. Regardless of whether these words were written by Eliade, or simply in his name, they nonetheless succinctly sum up the attitudes expressed by Eliade in a number of articles from this period. On the debate over the authorship of this article, see Mircea Handoca, “Cuvânt înainte,” in *ibid.*, 29; Traian Vedinaș, *Bătăliile mistagogului: Mircea Eliade și politicile anilor '30*. (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Grinta, 2008), 168–170.
119. For a good treatment of Eliade’s fascism, and of his later attitudes toward it, see Florin Țurcanu, *Mircea Eliade: Prisonierul istoriei*, trans. Monica Anghel and Dragoș Dodu (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2005), 315–321, 333–354.
120. See, for example, Radu Dragnea, “Spiritul românesc creator,” *Gândirea* 7/5 (1927): 161–169.

121. *Miorița*, in the version collected by Vasile Alecsandri, <http://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Miori%C5%A3a>; trans. W. D. Snodgrass, <http://spiritromanesc.go.ro/Miorita%20-eng.html>. Both accessed 11/27/2008.
122. Lucian Blaga “Spațiul mioritic,” *Gândirea* 14/5 (1935): 229. Cf. Lucian Blaga, “Fragment despre Agia Sofia,” *Gândirea* 13/6 (1934): 215–219.
123. Lucian Blaga, *Cunoașterea luciferică* (Bucharest: Editura Humanitas, 2003), 23, 31, 204–208.
124. Lucian Blaga, *Opere: Trilogia cunoașterii* (Bucharest: Editura Minerva, 1983), 115.
125. Lucian Blaga, *Opere: Trilogia Valorilor* (Bucharest: Editura Minerva, 1987), 449, 541.
126. Ion Petrovici, “Răspunsul,” in Lucian Blaga, *Elogiul satului românesc* (Bucharest: Academia Română discursuri de recepție, 1937), 20. Blaga’s supporters included Nichifor Crainic, “Câteva notițe despre Lucian Blaga,” *Gândirea* 13/8 (1934): 350; and Septimiu Bucur, “Lucian Blaga: Artă și valoare,” *Gândirea* 6 (1939): 343.
127. Blaga, *Religie și spirit*, in *Trilogia Valorilor*, 481.
128. *Ibid.*, 432, 456, 458–466.
129. G. Marcu, “O cartea care nu trebuia scrisă: “Religie și spirit” de Dl. Lucian Blaga,” *Revista teologica* 32/5–6 (1942): 296–298.
130. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Poziția D-Lui Lucian Blaga față de creștinism și ortodoxie* (Bucharest: Editura Paideia, 1997), 71–88, 13, 37, 52, 70.
131. Crainic, *Zile albe*, 151ff; Letter from Nichifor Crainic to Lucian Blaga, Vienna, 12 Jan. 1921, *Manuscriptum* 26/1–4 (1995): 102.
132. Irina Livezeanu, “After the Great Union: Generational Tensions, Intellectuals, Modernism, and Ethnicity in Interwar Romania,” in *Nation and National Ideology: Past, Present and Prospects*, Irina Vianovski-Mihai, ed. (Bucharest: New Europe College, 2001), 119; Nichifor Crainic, *Sfințenia—Împlinirea umanului (Curs de teologie mistică)* (Iași: Editura Trinitas, 1935), 164.
133. Rabindranath Tagore, *Sădhană: Calea desăvârșirii*, trans. Nichifor Crainic (Bucharest: Editura Stress, 1922).
134. Nichifor Crainic, “Prefața,” in Rabindranath Tagore, *Naționalismul*, trans. Alexandru Busuioceanu (Bucharest: Cultura Națională, 1922), 9–10.

135. Nichifor Crainic, "Parsifal," *Gândirea* 3/ 8–10 (1924), reprinted in Crainic, *Puncte cardinale în haos*, Magda Ursache and Petru Ursache, eds. (Iași: Editura Timpul, 1996), 70–80.
136. Crainic, *Sfințenia*, 156–162; Crainic, "Vizita la Maglavit," *Gândirea* 15/1 (1936): 1–11.
137. Nichifor Crainic, "Isus în țara mea," *Gândirea* 2/11–12 (1922): 117
138. Crainic, *Sfințenia*, 14; Nichifor Crainic, "Misificarea românismului," *Gândirea* 16/7 (1936): 360–362.
139. Crainic, *Sfințenia*, 12–14; Crainic, "Curs de mistică germană," *Astra* 1/4 (1998): 76. The Western authors (mostly Catholic) with whom Crainic was polemicizing were Joseph de Guibert, Garrigon-Lagrange, Heinrich Denifle, Martin Grabmann, L. Lercher, I. Zahn, E. Krebs, Jacques Maritain, Joseph Bernhart, Otto Karrer, Henri Delacroix, Walter Lehmann, Herman Büttner, Rudolf Otto, and, interestingly, Alfred Rosenberg.
140. Crainic, *Sfințenia*, 18, 103, 47, 72.
141. Nichifor Crainic, "Vrem ieftenirea vieții!" *Calendarul* 1/4 (28 Jan. 1932): 1.
142. Heinen, *Legiunea*, 224; Crainic, *Zile albe*, 233, 245; Ornea, *Anii treizeci*,: 42.
143. Crainic, *Zile albe*, 251.
144. Letter from Blaga to Vasile Băncilă, 23 Mar. 1937, in Dora Mezdrea, *Vasile Băncilă, Lucian Blaga: Corespondență* (Bucharest: Editura Muzeul Literaturii Române, 2001), 53. Cf. Crainic's frequent contributions to *Sfarmă Piatra*.
145. Crainic, *Zile albe*, 314ff.
146. Hitchens, *Rumania*, 447–453; Crainic, *Zile albe*, 228f.
147. Crainic, *Nostalgia*, 11. Collections of Crainic's journalism and essays on the conflation of race and religion can be found in Nichifor Crainic, *Lupte pentru spiritul meu: Germania și Italia în scrisul meu de la 1932 încoace* (Bucharest, 1941); Nichifor Crainic, *Ortodoxie și etnocrație* (Bucharest: Editura Cugetarea, 1937). A good history of Crainic's involvement in Romanian politics is scattered throughout Ornea, *Anii treizeci*, and Zigu Ornea, *Tradiționalism și modernitate în deceniul al treilea* (Bucharest: Editura Eminescu, 1980).
148. Walters, "Notes on Autocephaly and Phyletism," 357–364.
149. The possibility that their thought was tainted by phyletism was never addressed in Orthodoxist writings.
150. Crainic, *Dostoievski*, 210.

151. Crainic, *Sfințenia*, 81.
152. Nichifor Crainic, “Curs de mistică germană,” *Astra* 1/4 (1998): 77, *Astra* 2/4 (1999): 73, *Astra* 3/6 (2000): 85.
153. Crainic, *Sfințenia*, 164.
154. Nichifor Crainic, “Curs de mistică germană,” *Astra*, 2/11 (1999): 81, *Astra*, 3/5 (2000): 74, *Astra*, 3/7 (2000): 67.
155. Crainic, *Sfințenia*, 133.
156. Nichifor Crainic, “Rugaciunea lui Iisus,” *Gândirea* 17/5 (1938): 218. On the Prayer of the Heart and the Jesus Prayer, cf. Crainic, *Sfințenia*, 127–155.
157. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 212.
158. Dumitru Stăniloae, “Opera teologică a lui Nichifor Crainic,” *Gândirea* 14/4 (1940): 268. On Stăniloae’s use of the Church Fathers, see Andrew Louth, “The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology of Dumitru Stăniloae,” in Lucian Turcescu ed., *Dumitru Stăniloae: Tradition and Modernity in Theology* (Oxford: Center for Romanian Studies, 2002), 53–70.
159. Crainic, *Sfințenia*, 15–16, 30, 85–99, 127, 202, 204, 216.
160. *Ibid.*, 52–53, 102–109, 63.
161. *Ibid.*, 110, 172, 204.
162. Nichifor Crainic, “Curs de mistică germană,” *Astra* 2/6 (1999): 65.
163. Crainic, *Sfințenia*, 75, 80, 111–115.
164. Stăniloae, “Opera teologică a lui Nichifor Crainic,” 272.
165. Crainic, *Zile albe*, 283.
166. Biographical details are from Mircea Păcurariu, *Dictionarul teologilor români* (Bucharest: Univers Enciclopedia, 1996) 427; Antonie Plămădeală, “Cuvânt Înainte,” in *Mistica și ascetica ortodoxă*, Ioan Gh. Savin ed. (Sibiu: Tiparul Tipografiei Eparhiale, 1996); Aurel Savin, “Notă bio-bibliografică,” in Ioan Gh. Savin, *Iconoclasti și apostoli contemporani* (Bucharest: Editura Anastasia, 1995), 9–13.
167. Ioan Gh. Savin, “Preoțimea și actualele alegeri,” *Viitorul* 12–13 (June 1932), quoted in Bănică, *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, 155.

168. Savin, “Notă bio-bibliografică,” 12.
169. Ioan Gh. Savin, *Mistica și ascetica ortodoxa* (Sibiu: Tiparul Tipografiei Eparhiale, 1996), 78–79; Savin, *Mistica apuseană* (Sibiu: Tiparul Tipografiei Eparhiale, 1996), 145.
170. Savin, *Mistica apuseană*, 38. His italics.
171. Savin, “Notă bio-bibliografică,” 12.
172. Ioan Gh. Savin, “Dumnezeu și conașterea lui,” *Fântâna Darurilor* 7/3–4 (1935): 71.
173. Henkel, *Îndumnezeire*, 40.
174. Savin, *Mistica și ascetica ortodoxa*, 23–24.
175. Ibid. 57, 66–68, 120; Savin, *Mistica apuseană*, 35.
176. Quoted in Savin, *Mistica și ascetica ortodoxa*, 43. For a similiar Orthodoxist critique of Maritain’s definition, see Crainic, *Sfințenia*, 14.
177. Savin, *Mistica și ascetica ortodoxa*, 44–45.
178. Ibid., 50, 51.
179. Constantin Jinga, *Ieroschimonahul Daniil Sandu Tudor: Omul și opera* (Bucharest: Editura Christiana, 2005), 67–142, 219–220.
180. George Enache, *Ortodoxie și putere politică în România contemporană* (Bucharest: Nemira, 2005), 390–392, 437–438.
181. Robert Kreig, “German Catholic Views of Jesus and Judaism, 1918–1945,” in Kevin P. Spicer ed., *Antisemitism, Christian Ambivalence, and the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 68, 72.
182. Olivier Gillet, *Religie și naționalism: Ideologia Bisericii Ortodoxe Române sub regimul comunist* (Bucharest: Compania, 2001); Lucian Turcescu and Livinia Stan, *Religion and Politics in Post-Communist Romania* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Some reasons for the church’s refusal to investigate the past can be found in Ion Bria, *Teologia ortodoxă în România contemporană* (Iași: Trinitas, 2003), 66–72.
183. Neamțu, “Between the Gospel and the Nation,” 17; Bria, *Teologia ortodoxă*, 52.
184. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Reflecții despre spiritualitatea poporului roman* (Bucharest: Editura Elion, 2004), 135.

185. Arhimandrit Ilie Cleopa, *Călăuză în credința ortodoxă* (Chișinău: Editura Episcopiei Romanului, 2003), 33–42.

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187. Neamțu, “Between the Gospel and the Nation,” 46.

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