

little save that they marked pinnacles in human destruction and clearly indicated man's ineptness to solve his problems meaningfully. World War I was of a smaller scope than its successor and found nations that were supposedly Christian locked in arms. World War II took on the aspect of a holy crusade in the face of the totalitarian atrocities. But the role of the church in warfare was not clearly defined in either conflict. Passivists and activists opposed one another and in many cases nationalism was a stronger force than the absolutes of the Biblical revelation.

The Totalitarian States

Totalitarianism is the idea of a government of a highly centralized sort that admits no alternative political opinions within its area. It may be dictatorial, and often is, but does not have to be..a ruling junta could have the same effect. The idea is not new in our period but it certainly saw some of its strongest expressions in this age.

--National Socialism expressed itself in the Fascist movements in Germany and Italy. I will note something of the church reaction to these in later notes. But the idea was for a total management of life and culture with a supremacy ideal.

--Socialism on a more general line can be seen in the Spanish revolution of Franco. The degree of totalitarianism was not so pronounced although the ideals worked under the surface.

--Communism of the sort of expression of Marx that existed in the Soviet Union and later in China purported to be the opposite of fascism and on paper that is right but in practice both are totalitarian and very little different in expression.

Developments on the lines of these states are then also found in Africa (the emerging nations), Asia and South America. They often present themselves as an alternative to a system which may already be poor and to those who are desperate, any change may seem like one for the better.