

CLASSES, ELITES AND PARTIES IN THE PERSPECTIVE
OF INTEGRAL HUMANISM

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Considering himself in the tradition of Aristotle and Aquinas, Maritain in his important treatise on social and political philosophy, Integral Humanism, in some ways seems closer to the approach of Aristotelian political science than he is to the political reflections of Thomas Aquinas. This is mainly because Maritain, like Aristotle, begins by discussing the actual state of affairs, marked by dangerous class conflict, racial enmity, divisions on the basis of ethnicity and interests, and then proceeds to offer proposals which will take society beyond the civil strife of the 1930s into a more fraternal association. If he does not offer the vision of a classless society -- for-class conflict is the central conflict examined in the treatise -- he does at least see the end of the social cleavage which has rent liberal society into antagonistic segments.

I say that Maritain seems closer to Aristotle, because Aquinas' letter to the King of Cyprus expresses nonnative counsel about an orderly and consensual polity, a hierarchical social configuration in which each will find his station and his duties.⁽¹⁾ As in the political

(1) This seems to be the clear implication of the passage in which the king "if it is a question of
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and legal portions of the theological works, St. Thomas rarely offers either a description of contemporary politics or much commentary on the direction of political change. If the ideal is not divorced from the real, it is nevertheless not presented as a prescription to settle some unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Some political writers, like Machiavelli and Marx, belong to a school of thought more attuned to what divides men than to what unites them. Aquinas, as later Comte, belongs to a school of thought more attuned to what unites men.⁽²⁾ Aquinas in the letter, we may say, places the emphasis on consensus as an end and expounds the agencies and means by which the common good will be achieved. And, I suppose, latter-day Thomists could continue that kind of emphasis, but even if that is the direction of research, one cannot ignore those factors which divide men and make consensus difficult, if not impossible. Maritain obviously does not believe that

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founding a city...will have to determine what site is to be assigned to the churches, the law courts, and the various trades. Furthermore, he will have to gather together the men, who must be apportioned suitable locations according to their respective occupations. Finally, he must provide for each one what is necessary for his particular condition and state constitutionem et statum in life; otherwise, the kingdom or city could never endure". Gerald B. Phelan (trans.) On Kingship, to the King of Cyprus (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1949) p. 57.

(2) I have adopted Raymond Aron's remarks on Machiavelli and Marx for my purposes. See Etudes politiques (Paris: Gallimard, 1972) p. 61.

divisions, whether based on race, on ethnicity, social status or interest, are insuperable obstacles to the philosophy of the common good.

On the other hand, Maritain is perhaps closer to Aquinas when he outlines the features, traits or notes of a new Christendom. For here he departs, it seems to me, from Aristotle's search for a middle way to overcome the democratic-oligarchical split (each offering a partially fallacious ideology), while Maritain, if I understand him correctly, seeks a settlement by replacement, the end of an order he judges to be finished, the vision of an order which will do for modern society what the medieval model achieved in its day.

So if Thomism, all too often, is characterized as an idealistic philosophy of consensus based on the pursuit of a common good and playing down, if not ignoring, social and political cleavages,⁽³⁾ one must then see Maritain's approach as a corrective to a legitimate, but one-sided emphasis on the concept of community. For he offers us an analysis of three main kinds of conflict characteristic of modern society: class conflict, opposition between the elites and the masses, and the contest of political parties for power. No one could reasonably accuse him of ignoring the frightful spectre

(3) It seems to me that this is the import of William T. Bluhm's account of Aquinas' political thought in Theories of the Political System (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1978) pp. 162-182. A similar view is expressed in William Ebenstein, Great Political Thinkers: Plato to the Present (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 4th edition, 1969) pp. 212-224.

of virulent race hatred, given his numerous references to the persecution of the Jews, but it is not one of his main preoccupations here.⁽⁴⁾

To begin with, Maritain focuses on the key factor of classes and class conflict as a salient feature of contemporary European society. In this, he is clearly in the line of Proudhon and Marx. But that does not mean that he opts for their revolutionary solution to the inexorable class war. It is his conviction that classes are real social entities with discernible characteristics and, accordingly, he attempts to sketch a portrait, so to speak, of the principal classes: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and, to a lesser extent, the peasantry.

It should be noted that this kind of class analysis, (socialist political sociology according to some commentators),⁽⁵⁾ is in marked contrast to the once

(4) See the chapter on "The Jewish Question" in Bernard Doering, Jacques Maritain and the French Catholic Intellectuals (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983) pp. 126-167.

(5) For one view of this attitude, see Maurice Duverger's analysis of the causes of political antagonisms in The Study of Politics (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1972) pp. 109-111. The original title of the work was Sociologie politique. In contrast to Duverger, David Truman would probably deny that "liberal" political sociology is at issue rather than just empirical political analysis in the rejection of a Marxist or class analysis. "The evidence regarding individual differences steaming from multiple group memberships is of further importance in another connection. It challenges the Marxist assumption that class interests are primary and the more common assumption that occupational

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widely held group theory of politics in North America, which, in its extremest form, maintained that when one had understood the nature and function of groups in society, there was little more to be said. This liberal political sociology, or "interest-group liberalism"⁽⁶⁾, criticizes the paramount role assigned to socio-economic groups by socialist writers and tends to see social classes as constructions rather than significant and real social entities. Whether or not this is a defensible way of dealing with classes in North America, it would not seem appropriate when examining social conflict in Europe where durable class identities and relationships seem apparent. It is not that Maritain would deny any validity to a modified version of group theory (and he does have something to say about it in his little book on the United States⁽⁷⁾), but he would assert, against group theory, the primacy of class conflict in Europe generally, France in particular. Furthermore, unlike reductionist theories of politics which explain politics in terms of only one element, be it class conflict,

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group interests are always dominant". The Governmental Process (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951) p. 165.

(6) Theodore Lowi used the term in The End of Liberalism (New York: Norton, 1969).

(7) Discussing weak points in American democracy, Maritain notes that "certain sorts of invisible powers tend to develop behind the scenes", and "the problem has chronic symptoms, such as the impact exercised on public life by pressure groups and powerful semi-official organizations". Reflections on America (New York: Gordian Press, 1975) p. 171.

elite-mass differences, or political parties, Maritain combines the three considerations, but starting out with a class analysis.

In the nineteenth century, with the advent of an industrial and commercial world "society found itself divided into two classes: one which lives exclusively by its work, the other which lives (or rather, which lived) on the revenues of its capital-classes which no longer had between them any other economic relations than the wage-contract, work itself becoming thus a mere commodity".⁽⁸⁾ This is a description which coincides in all particulars with that of the Marxists: class conflict and labour as a commodity. However, Maritain does say that "the ideal mechanism of the capitalist system is not essentially evil and unjust as Marx held it to be"⁽⁹⁾, meaning by the ideal mechanism, "the contract of partnership with the remuneration of the capital involved that it implies".⁽¹⁰⁾

What is more original in Maritain's approach to the division between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is the attempt not just to canvass the capitalist roots of the bourgeois class, but to spell out what it stands for, what is its cultural expression.

In discussing classes, Maritain makes reference to German sociologists other than Marx: Werner Sombart with

(8) Jacques Maritain, Integral Humanism (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968) p. 113.

(9) Ibid., p. 114.

(10) Ibid., p. 114, no. 13.

his description of the bourgeoisie and Goetz Briefs with his analysis of the proletariat.⁽¹¹⁾ Sombart distinguished between the old bourgeoisie prior to the nineteenth century and the modern businessman. One may say that the old bourgeois was not yet liberated from certain traditional views about business conduct, while the modern businessman is a pure type, so to speak, unencumbered, uninhibited by any restraints of a moral or psychological kind. Sombart and Briefs, incidentally, both seem to use the ideal type analysis usually associated with the name of Max Weber. Max Scheler's writings on "the bourgeois ethos" are also worthy of consideration in the context.⁽¹²⁾

However, Maritain's own attempt to sketch the "countenance" of bourgeois man⁽¹³⁾ relies less on such psychological features as the non-erotic aspects of the businessman according to Sombart, or the search for security in Scheler's analysis, than on the fundamental philosophical orientation of the bourgeoisie which is pretty well identified with liberalism. However, in this

(11) Ibid., p. 78 (reference to Sombart); p. 202, n. 33 (reference to Briefs). Sombart's study of the bourgeoisie has been translated as The Quintessence of Capitalism: A Study of the History and Psychology of the Modern Business Man (New York: Howard Fertig, 1967).

(12) Maurice Dupuy has devoted a chapter to Scheler's research on the subject in La philosophie de Max Scheler (Paris: PUF, 1959), Volume 1, Chapter 2, pp. 155-195.

(13) Jacques Maritain, Integral Humanism, p. 92.

paper, an attempt will be made to try and disjoin as much as possible the delineation of the attributes of a class from the examination of the meaning given to liberalism in Integral Humanism. There are several reasons for this. First of all, the focus is on the protract of the bourgeoisie and, secondly, another paper is devoted to an examination and criticism of liberalism.

It would be too onerous a task to trace the origins of bourgeois humanism and its ideology. Maritain speaks of its roots in the Protestant Reformation and in the Enlightenment. He alludes to the debate (involving Weber, Tawney and others) as to the connection between Capitalism and Protestantism, but the more proximate origin is to be found in rationalism. Heir to rationalism and naturalism -- the bourgeois moment of our culture", "the moment of rationalist optimism"⁽¹⁴⁾ -- Its concept of reason is geometrical, not metaphysical. Hence its underlying idealism and nominalism. As to the religious question, bourgeois humanism is either dualistic, combining a Christian side for the inner life with a naturalist side for the world of action, or, and this seems to be its vector, moves towards, atheism, passing by the way station of deism on this road. And, in the final analysis, the second alternative is Maritain's conclusion, for he says that "there is nothing more bourgeois than individualistic and atheistic

(14) Ibid., 31.

humanism".⁽¹⁵⁾ So bourgeois ideology is clearly a form of anthropocentric humanism.

As to its anthropological implications, the individualism of bourgeois humanism is too well known to be a matter of much comment. The portrait of bourgeois man offered to us by Maritain depends no, little on the Rousseauvian contribution, that is, man's natural goodness. "This bourgeois man has denied all the evil and irrational in him".⁽¹⁶⁾ And, on the other hand, there is a kind of moral complacency, self-contentment along with the search for "a perfect security to be attained through the spirit of riches accumulating the good of the earth".⁽¹⁷⁾ For

bourgeois humanism rejects the ascetic principle, and claims to replace it by the technical or technological principle, since it lays claim to a peace without conflict, progressing infinitely in a perpetual harmony and satisfaction, in the likeness of non-existential man of rationalism.⁽¹⁸⁾

Then, as a consequence of its nominalism, bourgeois ideology is dominated by "the primacy of the sign: of

(15) Ibid., p. 68, n. 20. However, atheism appears to be more precisely "a product of bourgeois decadence", p. 65

(16) Ibid., p. 79.

(17) Ibid., p. 31.

(18) Ibid., p. 58.

opinion in political life, of money in life".⁽¹⁹⁾

Rationalism, nominalism, idealism, atheism and individualism these attributes of bourgeois ideology will affect the bourgeois attitude towards institutions, particularly those concerning education and the family. Who is not familiar with the bourgeois or individualistic conception of ownership, of capitalism and free enterprise? In regard to the notion of property itself, the classical notion of property (expressed by Aristotle, continued by Aquinas) consisted in a defence of private ownership combined with the idea of common use. The second part of this principle completely lost in the bourgeois era, what Maritain calls "the law of common use".⁽²⁰⁾ The bourgeois conception of the family, he says, is "solely or principally 'founded' on the material association of perishable economic interests".⁽²¹⁾ Finally, and here we draw out some of the implications of what Maritain says, in education an optimistic rationalism defends free thought which entails a neutralism in regard to religious and ethical values, for a religious or ethical education would be an invasion of personal autonomy. He castigates "bourgeois

(19) Ibid., p. 78.

(20) Ibid., p. 185.

(21) Ibid., p. 196.

free-thought" as "the most ridiculous thing in the world."⁽²²⁾

What is the conclusion of this portrait of the bourgeois? Not surprisingly it is an indictment. "It appears that this bourgeois type of humanity is seriously endangered and that its condemnation is deserved".⁽²³⁾ What is required, then, is to transform bourgeois man, all this on the underlying assumption of Integral Humanism, that capitalism is finished.

I noted that Maritain was indebted to the work of Werner Sombart, at least in part, for his portrait of bourgeois man. In equal measure, he is indebted to Goetz Briefs for his conception of the proletariat. First of all, he adopts Briefs' definition of a class:

I am taking this word in its strict and most exact sense, such as Briefs for example determines it in his studies on the industrial proletariat; "class" implies a permanent and hereditary condition; the proletarian being without means, and constrained to alienate his hard labor for a wage which is not sufficiently high to allow of any accumulation, it is inevitable, save in exceptional cases, that his condition should be transmitted to his descendants from generation to generation.⁽²⁴⁾

What is significant about this definition is the emphasis on inter-generational continuity. If one takes Marx's

(22) Ibid., p. 68, n. 20.

(23) Ibid., p. 92.

(24) Ibid., p. 202, n. 33.

notion of class as depending upon ownership of the means of production or non-ownership and wage-work, one has an abstract relationship without immediate generational reference. Recent Marxist critics of the adequacy of Marx's definition have corrected this shortcoming by integrating hereditary condition into the formulation.⁽²⁵⁾ However, Briefs, who was not a Marxist, had already done that. It could be that there is an asymmetry in Maritain's treatment of the two classes, for he does not offer us a comparable portrait of proletarian man, but rather speaks of the historical mission of the proletariat, an assertion which turns out to be one of the most controversial in the book. After having observed that the proletariat for Marx is the mediator of the redemption by which "social man, at the end of this development, will be absolute master of history and the universe",⁽²⁶⁾ Maritain praises Marxism for its desire to emancipate the proletariat, but he taxes it with messianism. What is to be gained, a well, by the socialization of the entire human being.⁽²⁷⁾ Yet there is "a growth in awareness of an offended and humiliated human dignity, and the growth in awareness of a

(25) A good example is the following: "Thus we can come to a generalization of the notion of classes. The concept is based, finally, on two factors: the collective inequality of social conditions and the hereditary transmission of privileges". Maurice Duverger, op. cit., p. 140.

(26) Jacques Maritain, Integral Humanism, p. 51. (27) Ibid., p. 82.

historical mission".⁽²⁸⁾ It is "the bearer of fresh moral reserves which assign to it a mission in regard to the new world...a mission of liberation".⁽²⁹⁾ But the historical role is not fulfilled by exacerbating class conflict through class warfare. Maritain condemns that "secessionist conception which refuses to recognize for itself a common good with the opposite class".⁽³⁰⁾ This seems to call for class collaboration which is clearly inimical to orthodox Marxism.

Initially, before canvassing the criticism of the notion that the proletariat has a historic mission, one should perhaps ask whether the bourgeoisie might not have had such a mission. This apparently Maritain, in contrast to Marx, would deny. For Marx and Engels paid a notable tribute to the bourgeoisie for its role in revolutionizing the means of production, even while condemning it as exploitative. Maritain's wartime writings on politics refer often to a French mission. Nations have missions in the providential scheme. The proletariat has one as well. The problem Maritain has is that while assigning a historical role to the proletariat, he nevertheless denies that it is the role assigned to it by the Marxists. What then is this role? Perhaps that the working class should furnish the "sociological base" in the transformation of the

(28) Ibid., p. 231.

(29) Ibid., p. 235.

(30) Ibid., p. 232, n. 7.

capitalist system.⁽³¹⁾ By this I think he means to furnish the cadre of a new elite.

An early critic of Integral Humanism characterized Maritain as a "Marxist-Christian" for his views on capitalism class conflict and the proletariat.⁽³²⁾ A more serious attack surfaced much later at a time when there was much controversy over the Progressive Christians in France. In a work entitled, De l'actualite historique, Gaston Fessard devoted several pages to a critique of Integral Humanism, particularly the passage on the historic role of the proletariat. He says, "in the same chapter, I mentioned various other pages of the same book to try and show to what extent the lack of historical reflection in traditional Thomism favoured the development of Progressivism among Christians and contributed to the failure of the work priest experiment. It was not without some hesitation, nor without fear of any kind, that I decided to write and publish those pages which risked upsetting many even in Rome. The criticisms I brought against Integral Humanism are of the mildest kind".⁽³³⁾ Fessard goes on to say "that he had the most cordial sympathy for the book and for its author".⁽³⁴⁾

(31) Ibid., p. 236.

(32) Louis Salleron made the accusation in a review of Humanisme intégral in La Revue Hebdomadaire. Bernard Doering, op. cit., p. 82.

(33) Fessard's remarks appear in Henri de Lubac (ed.), Gabriel Marcel-Gaston Fessard, Correspondance (1934-1972) (Paris: Beauchesne, 1985) p. 424.

(34) Ibid.

Maritain answered by saying that he did situate problems in a historical perspective and that he saw no connection between his work and the actions of the Progressive Christians. In short, he denied the charges. Well, the Progressive Christians merit little more than a footnote now, but the theology of liberation in some of its manifestations has become a target of comparable prominence at the present time.⁽³⁵⁾

When the poor or the needy are spoken of in Matthew XXVI, "it is not a social class that is designated...".⁽³⁶⁾ The famous preferential option for the poor, then, cannot mean that the lower class alone should be the object of the Church's solicitude. Of course, the physical needs of human beings cannot be neglected on the assumption that the Church's mission is spiritual, and the dedication of religious orders within the Church to doing what we might now call social work is a testament to the understanding of the Church's ministry as concern for the whole man. Thus one can respect those who serve the poor in places like Latin America without

(35) In the United States, the Maryknolls and their publishing house, Orbis Books, have made certain theology of liberation works available in English, including one by Gustavo Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation (1973) and several works by Leonardo Boff, such as Jesus Christ Liberator: A Critical Christology for Our Times (1978) and The Lord's Prayer: the Prayer of Integral Liberation (1983). For Gaston Fessard's views on the subject, consult Chrétiens marxistes et théologie de la libération (Paris: Lethielleux, 1978).

(36) Jacques Maritain, Integral Humanism, p. 110.

accepting a reading of the Gospel which politicizes, if not Marxifies, the mission of the Church. Maritain's agreement with certain elements of Marx's analysis should not obscure the fact that non-Marxists have also agreed with certain aspects of it and, in fact, Proudhon had analyzed the phenomenon of class-conflict before Marx; nor should one ignore the fact that Maritain rejects what Marx considered to be his own contribution to class analysis: the dictatorship of the proletariat and the advent of a classless society.

No doubt Maritain does foresee the end of the class conflict characteristic of capitalist society. He looks forward to a time when that conflict will be transcended, but the end of this kind of social conflict does not mean the end of any form of social stratification. As Maritain says, "this society without bourgeoisie and without proletariat would not be a society without internal structure and without organic differentiations or inequalities".⁽³⁷⁾ Thus there is no evidence that Maritain had in mind a classless society if by that one means a non-stratified society. Beyond castes, orders, and the classes of modern industrial society, new forms of social differentiation will appear.

Of course, one kind of inequality in a future follows, the second instance of significant social divisions. To begin with, we must distinguish between the question of authority and that of leadership, two

(37) Ibid., p. 202.

concepts that have sometimes been confused.⁽³⁸⁾ Granted that authority is conferred "in virtue of a certain consensus", the ruler being the vicar of the multitude, and that consequently "the leader is simply a companion who has the right to command others",⁽³⁹⁾ who should one look to for leadership in contemporary society? Or, stating the case somewhat differently, what are the criteria of leadership and who will constitute the new elite that Maritain seeks? In this regard, he is fond of the expression "the vocation of leadership" adopted from the Webbs.⁽⁴⁰⁾

In the classical tradition, the prince is "a virtuous man in every sense of the word",⁽⁴¹⁾ by which I take him to mean possessed not only of the moral virtues, but also of appropriate intellectual virtues (knowledge and art or technique). The aristocratic tendency of classical thought favoured outstanding citizens, while Maritain looks to, "the enlightened political elements" in contemporary society.⁽⁴²⁾ So it is not primarily the quest for an outstanding individual which is at stake,

(38) Bertrand de Jouvenel seems to have done this in his book, Sovereignty, according to Carl Friedrich in a review in The American Political Science Review, Vol. LIII, March 1959, p. 1983.

(39) Jacques Maritain, Integral Humanism, p. 200. I have changed "head" to leader as a more appropriate rendering of the French.

(40) Ibid., p. 169.

(41) Ibid., p. 217.

(42) Ibid., p. 169, also p. 256, pp. 258-259.

but the identification of a group. In our time, and particularly in France, there has been an elite which may speak of "a shift in the elite", as De Jouvenel does,⁽⁴³⁾ or the more widely used expression of Pareto, the circulation of the elites. For Pareto, as an elite theorist, a revolution is defined as an occurrence in which there is such a circulation of the elites, a replacement of one dominant group by another (e.g. military men being replaced by industrialists).

The plight of France, even prior to the outbreak of war in 1939, and the tragic defeat of 1940, clearly indicated the failure of the governing elite. So it is significant that Maritain already attributes failure to it at the time of Integral Humanism, that is, in the early 30s. Having criticized the bourgeois elite, and hardly less critical of socialist leaders, Maritain looks primarily to the working class as providing the "sociological base" for an enlightened elite.⁽⁴⁴⁾ The importance of elites is stressed when Maritain argues that there are really only a small number capable of guiding the masses. This seems to be an earlier version of what he will later call "shock minorities" in Man and the State.

(43) Bertrand de Jouvenel, Du principat et autres réflexions politiques (Paris: Hachette, 1972) p. 148.

(44) Jacques Maritain, Integral Humanism, p. 236.

If hope rests on the working class as a source of new leadership, what role, if any, will be played by members of the bourgeoisie and, more importantly, what role does he attribute to intellectuals? In fact, Maritain looks forward to a collaboration between the new working-class elites and the intellectuals in the task of social reconstruction.⁽⁴⁵⁾ However, since a distance, even a gap, is bound to develop between the ruling elite and the masses, Maritain emphasizes the importance of a close relationship between them. If a leader is "a companion who has the right to command others", the relationship between leaders and followers must remain close because otherwise the leaders will cease to think of themselves as companions and become simply superiors. It is a close connection because the leader must know the people, consult the people, not lose touch with the people, and perhaps in the bitter aftermath of electoral defeat, the democratic politician will realize that he has failed in this regard.⁽⁴⁶⁾ This relationship is

(45) Ibid., p. 271. Later on, Maritain, after a severe condemnation of "the so-called élite of informed and competent and rich and highborn and highly cultivated or highly cunning persons who have cut themselves off from the people, and whose political imbecility, baseness of soul, and corruption are today astounding the world", looks to a new leadership make up of "the working and peasant elite, together with the elements of the former leading classes which have decided to work with the people". Christianity and Democracy (London: Geoffrey Bles, The Centenary Press, 1945), p. 52.

(46) The recent mea culpa of Robert Bourassa is

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elaborated in the short essay, "To Exist with the People",⁽⁴⁷⁾ which appeared the year after Integral Humanism did. To exist with the people and to suffer along with them means more than acting on their behalf. At this point, Maritain attempts to define what is meant by "the people". It may be the entire political multitude as in the classic formulation cited earlier, or it may refer to the inferior layers of society (the populace), or to the working classes. Marxists tend to identify the people with a class, the proletariat. This is what may be called the homogeneous masses. It seems clear that here, and elsewhere, the term the people for Maritain must be construed in a broader sense, as referring to the common people, the simple people, the ordinary people, or the common man. This is what may be called the heterogeneous masses. Maritain considers it particularly important for Catholic organizations "to exist with the people" for the working class and others were alienated from the Church in the nineteenth century. He observes that Mussolini "has ceased to exist with the people",⁽⁴⁸⁾ while the strength of the socialists and the

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interesting in this regard. "On a toujours la tentation de restreindre ses contacts avec la base ou avec la population: c'est un danger. J'ai fait un conseil général il y a deux semaines et j'ai bien l'intention de garder le contact avec la population". Le Devoir, March 22, 1986.

(47) Jacques Maritain, "To Exist with the People", The Range of Reason (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952) pp. 121-128.

communists has been that they do exist with the people. Maritain's wartime writings tend to elaborate on his notion of the people as well as on the nature of the new elites.⁽⁴⁹⁾ It becomes a major preoccupation with him.

So inevitably one must distinguish between leaders and followers, between elites and masses, but the danger will be that of a separation between them and the trend toward a bond of simple domination. If Maritain has made much of the need for new elites as a priority to the task of social renovation, it does not mean that he ignores the need for new-modeled institutions and, among them, new political formations.

Up to now, Maritain has spoken of the need for political formations which may mean certain groups which provides the cadres for a new elite or, more precisely, refer to political parties. This provides a transition to the third important kind of political division, that into political parties and the domain of party-competition. One must say that Maritain is ambivalent about political parties and their activities. He is critical of partyocracy, or what he will later call "the hegemony of parties".⁽⁵⁰⁾ Yet he recognizes the need for freedom of association, including the freedom to organize political formations.

(49) I have already mentioned Christianity and Democracy in this regard. Maritain has much to say about the question in France, My Country, Through the Disaster (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942) pp. 3-13, pp. 15-29.

(50) Jacques Maritain, Christianity and Democracy, p. 48.

underlying this ambivalence is the conviction that the party in power, controlling both the legislature and the executive, which should rule for the whole, the common good, often does not do so. Hence, his remark about "the very possibility of using power to satisfy coalitions of interests and of cupidities" which he would like to see disappear.⁽⁵¹⁾ This criticism tells against the notion of the political party as primarily involved in the interest-aggregation business. On the other hand, freedom to form political organizations and to compete with other political organizations in presenting one's ideas and pursuing one's goals seems a normal manifestation of democratic freedom. The solution is not to do away with political parties, as some would propose to do,⁽⁵²⁾ but to reduce to a considerable degree the existing partyocracy.

When Maritain refers to political parties in Integral Humanism, it is mainly in the context of Christian action. While rejecting a denominational party, he is not adverse to a party of Christian inspiration. Since the distinction is rather a fine one, and since one would like to reach some conclusion as to how Maritain might have viewed the emergence of Christian Democratic Parties (in France, Germany, Italy and elsewhere) after the Second World War, two statements by Maritain have to be compared.

(51) Jacques Maritain, Integral Humanism, p. 171.

(52) In this regard, see Yves Simon "Thomism and Democracy", in Lyman Bryson and Louis Finkelstein (eds.)

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Firstly, the notion of a Catholic party like the German Centrum is rejected in Integral Humanism as it was in Freedom in the Modern World.

The passing "unwept and unhonoured" of the German Centre Party is sufficient to show to those who had not already realized it the essential drawback of such a hybrid conception which belongs to a past century.⁽⁵³⁾

The German Centre Party was set up to oppose Bismarck's Kulturkampf. Maritain castigates it for its "political materialization of religious energies",⁽⁵⁴⁾ in Integral Humanism.

A denominational party would compromise Catholicism or Christianity by confusing the spiritual and the temporal orders. Furthermore "there is obviously no reason why Catholics should be concentrated in one political party".⁽⁵⁵⁾ He believes "that there should be a majority of Catholics in all the decent political parties -- assuming always that modern States will continue to allow the normal rule of plurality of political parties and political bodies within their

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Science, Philosophy and Religion, Second Symposium (New York: Harper, 1942) pp. 258-260.

(53) Jacques Maritain, Freedom and the Modern World (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1936) p. 149.

(54) Jacques Maritain, Integral Humanism, p. 301.

(55) Jacques Maritain, Freedom in the Modern World, p. 150.

territory".⁽⁵⁶⁾ So he envisions a party "which will not seek to group Catholics together as such or all Catholics but only some Catholics having such a conception as we have given of a historical ideal to be pursued and the means to be employed in its pursuit".⁽⁵⁷⁾ Furthermore, such a party will be neither exclusively Catholic nor exclusively Christian. I would draw the conclusion from this that Maritain would reject the idea of the Christian Democratic Party insofar as it would approach being identified as a denominational party, as is the case in Italy, or because it is the only party of Christian inspiration and thus tends to be considered as in some sense denominational. The first arguments bear on the danger of confusion the spiritual and the temporal orders; the second bears on the pluralist bent of Maritain's remarks.

There were a number of striking historical reasons why Maritain was sensitive to what we might call the pathology of party divisions. If France no doubt was uppermost in his mind, in light of the fact that Maritain first presented Integral Humanism to an audience at Santander in Spain several years before the outbreak of the Civil War, his reflections on Spain are relevant to understanding the pathology of party government, or the partisan state, which prompted Maritain to offer constitutional proposals to guard against it. Spain had become disastrously divided. "Its government was

(56) Ibid.

(57) Ibid.

therefore a party government, which often neglected common interests of those whose who were intimidating them".⁽⁵⁸⁾ When partisanship means the control of the government by a faction which then uses its power not to heal serious social wounds, not to reconcile opposing factions, but to pursue the aims of one, it raises crucial questions about democratic legitimacy. What is the essence of electoral democracy, if it is not that those elected by some, a majority or even a minority, will govern for all in view of the common interest? If electoral victory is taken as a warrant to ignore those who voted for the opposition, then democracy becomes ethnically unjustifiable. The electorate as a whole has elected a majority (or a minority) government and an opposition. Both are expressions of the democratic vote. We are back to the Aristotelian conception that good governments are good primarily because they pursue the common good, and bad ones are primarily bad because they do not. But perhaps enough has been said about the pathology of party government. What is to be done about it?

In his response, Maritain assumes the role of the Aristotelian political philosopher who, though not himself a legislator, gives advice to the legislators on constitutional matters. What he has to say is undoubtedly addressed to a French audience and is of particular interest in view of French constitutional

(58) Alfred Mendizabal, The Martyrdom of Spain: Origins of a Civil War (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938) p. 271.

history. Conservative critics of both the Third and Fourth Republics bemoaned the absence of a strong executive in those constitutions. Unfortunately, there was a strong suspicion, and often more than that, about their preferences for "the man on horseback", the strong leader, doing away with parliament. The problem for Maritain was to insure a strong executive, while preserving the legislature as a forum in which party competition would continue to operate. In fact, Maritain distinguished three levels: consultative, legislative and executive. The first is not a kind of political power. In a democratic regime, the two functions, legislative and executive, belong to two neatly, clearly differentiated powers. Different functions mean different organs. Thus, it is a confusion of functions, to regard the executive as just an organ of execution, as was the case with Locke and Rousseau. If Maritain does perpetuate a distinction of Rousseau between laws and decrees, he also argues that one should leave a very large scope for decrees".⁽⁵⁹⁾ So 'a representative regime soundly conceived, in which the executive would be rendered sufficiently independent of the deliberative assemblies"⁽⁶⁰⁾ would necessitate a change from the practice current in parliamentary democracy in which the legislature constitutes or establishes the executive. On the contrary, "power would be constituted by a

(59) Jacques Maritain, Principes d'une politique humaniste (New York: Editions De La Maison Francaise, 1944) p. 87.

(60) Jacques Maritain, Integral Humanism, p. 171.

legislature directly emanating from the political thought and will of their citizens, and by an executive branch which, also issuing from the people but in such a way as to be independent of the parties, would be free of any other preoccupation than that of the common good".⁽⁶¹⁾ Party involvement in legislative deliberations, an executive independent of the parliament and, in a sense, serving a more transcendent goal, are not all of these characteristics of the Gaullist regime, if not in the finished form of the Constitution of the Fifth Republic which contained articles that De Gaulle did not favour, but characteristics found in the important Bayeux Speech of 1946? To mention but two passages, firstly concerning the executive power:

The Executive power should not emanate from the Parliament. Otherwise the cohesion and authority of the government would suffer, the balance between the two powers vitiated, and the members of the Executive would be merely agents of the political parties.⁽⁶²⁾

Secondly, the President of the Republic would embody "the Executive power above political parties".⁽⁶³⁾

You might wonder if I am suggesting that Maritain was a Gaullist avant la lettre (a proto-Gaullist). No

(61) Ibid., p. 175.

(62) Roy C. Macridis, "France", in Roy C. Macridis and Robert E. Ward (eds.) Modern Political Systems: Europe (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Second Edition, 1968) p. 253.

(63) Ibid.

doubt both Maritain and De Gaulle shared a common perspective about the shortcomings of parliamentary democracy in France. I am not arguing, incidentally, that Maritain's plan for constitutional reform and the Constitution of the Fifth Republic are close on specific points. After all a constitution is not a design of a theoretician or theoreticians put into practice, but -- as we know so well in Canada -- a political process and so a compromise. (It is clear that De Gaulle was not completely satisfied with it and proposed important amendments to it, particularly concerning the manner in which the President was to be chosen). Nor did Maritain foresee the problem of what is now called la cohabitation, although that problem or possibility is as endemic to his conception as it is to the Constitution of the Fifth Republic. Two problems which preoccupied Maritain, therefore, remain contentious for France in the 80s. 1) whether parliament is to be based on proportional representation (la proportionnelle) or not, and Maritain appears to reject proportional representation,⁽⁶⁴⁾ and 2) the relationship between the President and the Premier when they belong to different and ideologically opposed parties. For neither design eliminates the important role played by political parties which they tended or intended to diminish, though each succeeds in limiting the power of parliament while expanding appreciably the powers of the executive. I might note that one notion central to Gaullism, the role

(64) Jacques Maritain, Principes d'une politique, humaniste, p. 91.

of the exceptional man, is foreign to Maritain's conception⁽⁶⁵⁾ and it is noteworthy that both Maritain and De Gaulle in a curious way were populists at a time when "populist democracy" was no longer the fashion.

What I do maintain is the notable similarity between the main features of Maritain's constitution and the proposals first articulated at Bayeux. Since Maritain had pointed out the weakness of the Free French programme from a political point of view to the General in several long letters he sent him during the war, more precisely the failure to develop a plan for social reconstruction,⁽⁶⁶⁾ it is obvious that he was not influenced by De Gaulle or his entourage at that time. But, then, was the movement in the other direction? It is a fascinating question because De Gaulle was acquainted with Maritain's work and respected him as a teacher (a handwritten letter salutes Maritain as cher maitre). However, we don't know what works of Maritain he was acquainted with. If he did know the annex to Principes d'une politique humaniste, or even the passages in Integral Humanism, we might conclude to a probable

(65) "And yet after all, our surest hope is not to be placed in one man, but rather in the people of our nation". Jacques Maritain, Christianity and Democracy, p. 87. What a contrast between this statement and the political hagiography of De Gaulle by François Mauriac, DE GAULLE (Paris: B. Grasset, 1964).

(66) René Mougel of the Centre d'Études Jacques et Raïssa Maritain at Kolbsheim was kind enough to show me the wartime correspondence which has not yet been published.

influence. In the absence of any such link, or any other relevant testimony, we are not justified in attributing any influence to Maritain. This suggests the value of an investigation into the theoretical or ideological influences which transformed Gaullism from being a rallying point for French resistance into being a constitutional option which, after many years in the political desert, finally had its opportunity in the political turmoil of 1958.

Yet even if there is no evidence to speak of direct influence, the coincidence of the two projects is worthy of our attention. For surely Maritain must be at least assured a place among the intellectual precursors of the Fifth Republic, no matter how greatly the functioning of that system may have differed from his hopes.