A Liberalism Safe for Catholicism? Perspectives from The Review of Politics

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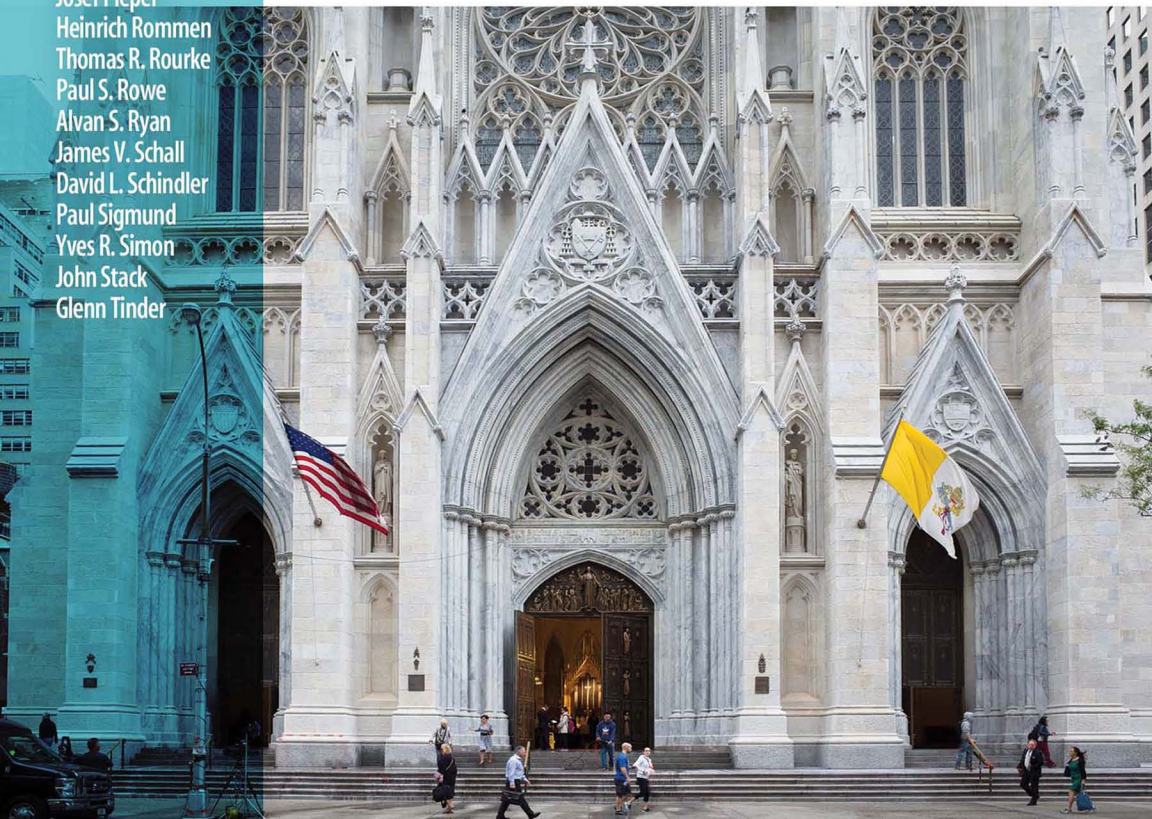

A LIBERALISM SAFE FOR CATHOLICISM?

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Introduction

The Review of Politics *and the Story of American Catholic Liberalism*

Daniel Philpott and Ryan T. Anderson

A fortnight of freedom! Such was the rallying cry of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2012 in warning American Catholics about growing threats to the freedom of the church. In their "Statement on Religious Liberty," the bishops pointed to a series of laws, administrative policies, and court decisions in recent years that, they urged, threatened the consciences of religious believers in the United States. They called for two weeks of reflection, education, prayer, and protest.[1]

To convey the bishops' views on what was in danger of being lost, the statement offered a history of what had been accomplished: a constructive partnership between the American Catholic Church and liberal institutions as set forth by the U.S. Constitution, most importantly, the First Amendment's provision for religious freedom. This partnership, the bishops argued, had allowed the church to flourish in the United States but was now fraught with tensions.

The pages of the *Review of Politics* since its founding in 1939 can be read as a chronicle of this partnership—its development, its heyday, its encounter of travails, its ongoing virtues, and its persistent flaws. Indeed, the partnership has been fraught with controversy over its true extent, its robustness, and its desirability. Many secular liberals and some Catholics insist that the bishops' narrative is roseate and that tensions alleged to be recent are in fact historically typical. Others side with the bishops' history of harmony.

If the American church was warm to the partnership, as the bishops suggest, the church in Rome was wary of it in the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth. Pope Gregory XVI had called liberty of conscience an "absurd and

erroneous proposition" in his encyclical of 1832, *Mirari Vos*. Pope Pius IX affirmed this condemnation in his 1864 encyclical, *Quanta Cura*, asserted the right of the state to punish those who violate church law, and in the renowned appendix of that encyclical, the Syllabus of Errors, condemned "progress, liberalism, and modern civilization." Pope Leo XIII endorsed both of his predecessors' condemnations of civil liberties.[2] In his 1895 encyclical addressed to the American church, *Longinqua Oceani*, Leo rhapsodized about the flourishing of the church on American shores but warned that the First Amendment's combination of religious freedom and nonestablishment was not to be considered universally valid; it was rather a compromise that the church should accept only where it must. The Vatican's wariness toward liberalism persisted into the early years of the publication of the *Review of Politics*.

Why did the Vatican find liberalism objectionable? First, popes, especially those of the nineteenth century, associated civil and political rights and democratic institutions with religious relativism—what Gregory XVI called "latitudinarianism" and "indifferentism." Second, the church in Rome saw itself directly attacked through the political enactment of this relativism in the French Revolution and in later regimes based on the Revolution's ideals in France, Italy, Mexico, and several other European and Latin American countries. Third, less defensively, the church sought to preserve a medieval model by which church and state upheld each other's prerogatives and worked together to promote a thoroughly Christian society, including through the state's enforcement of religious uniformity. Given Rome's views, American liberals and Protestants have not lacked grounds for their historic suspicion of American Catholics' professed friendliness to American liberal institutions.

For their part, voices in the liberal tradition have a long history of viewing the Catholic Church as liberty's archenemy, casting further doubt on claims of partnership. A strong current of thought in the West holds that liberal democracy could emerge only when politics was freed from traditional Christianity. This view is exemplified by contemporary thinkers such as John Rawls and Mark Lilla and lamented by Pierre Manent.[3] For Enlightenment thinkers, it was the Catholic Church in particular that posed problems for liberty. (Some, like John Locke, were favorable to Protestantism and its moral doctrines, whereas others, like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, wanted to replace Christianity altogether with a new civil religion.) They considered the Catholic Church an obstacle to political freedom on account of its hierarchical authority, its surfeit of supernatural doctrines, its opposition to free thought, its teaching that the state ought to enforce orthodoxy,

and its status as a foreign power that channeled popular loyalties away from the nation state. The Inquisition represented what the Catholic Church offered for politics.

In the United States, liberals and Protestants have taken up this critique of Catholicism at least since the days of the American Revolution. Thomas Jefferson quipped that "history, I believe, furnishes no example of a priest-ridden people maintaining a free civil government." Opposition to the church's role in public life runs through the history of the republic. It was expressed in the Blaine Amendments of the late nineteenth century, which denied public funding to Catholic schools, in the opposition to the presidential candidacies of Al Smith and John F. Kennedy, in the heated rhetoric of Paul Blanshard's 1949 book *American Freedom and Catholic Power*, and in numerous other episodes. Historian Arthur Schlesinger Sr. has called anti-Catholicism "the deepest-held bias in the history of the American people."[4]

A very different line of reasoning among Catholics also emerged from the battle royal between liberalism and Catholicism. It affirmed a partnership of the sort that the U.S. bishops described in their 2012 statement and that, as we shall see, was expressed vividly and repeatedly in the first two decades of the *Review of Politics*. Its proponents endorsed liberal democratic institutions, civil and political liberties, including religious freedom, and democratic elections. Differences among them existed, with some supporting civil and political liberties, for instance, while remaining wary of popular rule. What is most important about Catholic political liberals, though, is that the reasons they gave for their support were drawn from the Catholic tradition and consistent with the church's authoritative teachings. Unlike their secular counterparts, they did not endorse free institutions because they were skeptical of religious faith, suspicious of religious authority, or doubtful of any of the church's traditional theological claims. They were not appealing to autonomous reason in their arguments. That is to say, Catholic liberals were not liberal Catholics. This position—an endorsement of liberal rights and institutions from a traditional Catholic standpoint—we shall herein call "Catholic political liberalism."

The earliest strong articulators of Catholic political liberalism were found in France, chief among them the exuberant priest and writer Felicité de Lamennais. It was during the middle portion of Lamennais's career, from the mid-1820s to the early 1830s, that his thought fit the Catholic liberal description. Earlier he was a Catholic but not a liberal; subsequently, after papal demands for conformity, he was a liberal but not a professed Catholic. Although Lamennais allied

himself with "ultramontanists" of the time in supporting a bolstered papacy, he also urged that the church become independent of state authority so that it could bring about the moral and spiritual renewal that he thought France badly needed after the Revolution. Lamennais also opposed Gallicanism, a different form of close collaboration between state and church that elevated the state and eroded papal authority. Lamennais remained strongly loyal to the pope even as he became convinced, in the late 1820s, that the best guarantee of the Catholic Church's freedom and influence was through liberal politics: liberty of conscience for people of all religions, freedom of education, freedom of the press, freedom of association, universal suffrage, and a decentralization of the state.[5] Lamennais and his followers thus became "liberal ultramontanists," as political philosopher Emile Perreau-Saussine has termed them.[6] Sadly, Pope Gregory did not return Lamennais's support. In *Mirari Vos*, he condemned Lamennais's liberalism, and he demanded Lamennais's full agreement. Embittered, Lamennais left the church.

In France, Lamennais's followers included his colleagues Charles Montalembert and Henri-Dominique Lacordaire, as well as Bishop Felix Dupanloup. The political writings of their contemporary Alexis de Tocqueville, also a Catholic, contain many of the commitments of Catholic political liberalism. In the nineteenth century, Catholic political liberalism found allies across the English Channel in John Henry Newman and Lord John Acton; in Germany, it was articulated by Bishop Wilhelm von Ketteler; in the Netherlands, by Herman Schaepmann; and across Europe, by numerous lesser-known voices. In the early twentieth century, Fr. Luigi Sturzo, one of the founders of the Italian Christian Democratic Party, espoused Catholic political liberalism.

Critical for the story at hand, Catholic political liberalism also found strong expression in the United States. Charles Carroll, the only Catholic signer of the Declaration of Independence, can be viewed as an early Catholic political liberal. By the late nineteenth century, it was apparent that the Catholic Church was growing and flourishing in the United States with very little legal restriction. Despite the anti-Catholicism that pervaded the culture and shaped politics, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution blocked the kind of harsh restrictions on the church typical of liberal republican regimes elsewhere in the world. In 1887, Monsignor Denis O'Connell observed:

> Americans never suppressed a religious order, never confiscated a sou of church property, never suppressed the salary of a bishop, never sent a semi-

> narian into the army, never refused permission to open a Catholic university, never forbade anyone to become a religious, never forbade a meeting of bishops nor claimed a voice in naming them. In the United States the government of the Church is not carried on by the state over the heads of the bishops.[7]

Nineteenth-century intellectuals such as Orestes Brownson (whose perspective admittedly shifted over his career) articulated a Catholic basis for American institutions and made direct reference to Catholic liberals on the European continent. Importantly, American prelates, perhaps most prominently James Cardinal Gibbons, archbishop of Baltimore in the late nineteenth century, argued similarly. In the twentieth century, the French émigré Jacques Maritain drew from the Thomist tradition of natural law thought in formulating his defense of human rights and democratic institutions. The Jesuit theologian John Courtney Murray argued from the 1940s through the 1960s that the American Constitution could be defended on grounds of Catholic thought and that the church had good reason to "develop its doctrine" and embrace the First Amendment's guarantee of religious freedom.

Murray's arguments played a pivotal role in bringing about a momentous development—the embrace of what we have called Catholic political liberalism by the magisterium of the Catholic Church in Rome. Intimations of such an embrace had arisen sporadically in previous decades, for instance, in Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of 1891, which endorsed certain natural rights, as well as in Pope Pius XII's Christmas Address of 1944, which praised democracy. The embrace became far more thorough, however, at the Second Vatican Council of 1962–1965. Pope John XXIII's encyclical of 1963, *Pacem in Terris*, wholeheartedly endorsed human rights. Little noticed was the inclusion of one human right that the church had not officially proclaimed before—that of religious liberty. It took another document, *Dignitatis Humanae*, promulgated by the council on its penultimate day, December 7, 1965, to spell out the case in full for religious freedom, which it declared to be a human right. *Dignitatis Humanae*, the church's declaration on religious liberty, was the most important statement of Catholic political liberalism at the council, for it dramatically taught in favor of a right that the church had previously refrained from asserting.

Catholic political liberalism, as described above, involves support for liberal institutions on grounds consistent with traditional Catholic teaching, not on grounds of secular Enlightenment philosophy or religious relativism. The development of a rationale for religious freedom along these lines by the architects of

Dignitatis Humanae was critical for the development and passage of the declaration.The document was much debated, and it evolved through several versions. Bishops who stood by the arguments of the nineteenth-century popes that religious freedom would invite the kind of intellectual, moral, and political chaos provoked by the French Revolution were skeptical. They both shared the previous popes' views and worried that in endorsing religious liberty, the church would break continuity in its dogmatic teaching. Their skepticism was overcome only when the declaration's supporters developed arguments for religious freedom that swung free of Enlightenment relativism and avoided contradicting previous church teaching—indeed, that grew out of and developed previous church teaching. Critically, supporters insisted, the declaration would endorse not a right to error but rather the right of every person to search for and embrace religious truth without coercion. Such a basis for religious freedom was different from the arguments rejected by the nineteenth-century popes and was consistent with the Catholic tradition's long-standing stress on the centrality of conscience and freedom of the will in the act of faith.[8]

Over centuries, then, through a kind of Hegelian dialectic, a rapprochement between political liberalism and Catholicism came about. The Hegelian thesis was liberal rights and institutions, grounded in Enlightenment thought. The antithesis was the rejection of liberalism by the nineteenth-century magisterium. The synthesis was the political liberalism of Catholics who looked to their tradition for what they thought were older, better groundings for liberal rights and democratic institutions. The Catholic Church could still reject Enlightenment thought but also embrace liberal institutions, for distinctively Catholic reasons. Triumphing at the Second Vatican Council, this synthesis has been continued in subsequent magisterial teaching, which has affirmed religious liberty and liberal democratic institutions grounded in natural law and the dignity of the person created in the image of God. The United States played a critical role in paving the way for this synthesis by providing an environment where the church flourished under legally protected religious liberty, thus showing that such a combination was possible. This synthesis, as realized both in the Catholic Church in general and in the United States, is what the American Catholic bishops celebrated in their statement of 2012—and its unraveling is what they fretted about. In terms of this introductory essay, they saw a robust Catholic political liberalism being threatened by a liberalism that emphasized personal autonomy, religious skepticism, a rejection of natural law and its view of human nature, and a devaluation of religious liberty.

Again, the story of the rapprochement between liberalism and Catholicism—its rise and its subsequent tensions—can be found in the pages of the *Review of Politics*. The dramatis personae are some of the greatest Catholic political philosophers of the past century. The rest of this essay introduces the selections in this volume in subsections that deal with this theme in different ways.

Catholicism and Liberal Democracy

The original stance of the *Review of Politics* on the Catholic political liberal synthesis arose in large part from the émigré experience of its founding editor, Waldemar Gurian, and of several of its early authors, including Jacques Maritain, Heinrich Rommen, and Yves Simon. Having experienced European fascism firsthand, these intellectuals were convinced liberal democrats and wanted to find a Catholic foundation for their politics. They were also enthusiastic about the United States and its example of a religion-friendly democracy. From its founding up to the present, the *Review of Politics* has published articles stressing the complementarity of Catholicism and liberal democracy.

One of the earliest and most exemplary of these pieces is a 1945 essay on the English Catholic intellectual John Henry Newman, "The Development of Newman's Political Thought," by Alvan S. Ryan, then a young scholar of English literature who had just completed a dissertation on Newman. Ryan presents Newman as a Catholic political liberal. He shows that Newman admired French Catholic liberals such as Lamennais, Dupanloup, Montalembert, and Lacordaire, and he makes connections between Newman's thought and that of Jacques Maritain and Luigi Sturzo.

Like most Catholic political liberals, Ryan explains, Newman rejected "religious liberalism" root and branch, considering it one of his life's purposes to fight against it. In his politics, Newman was more open to the liberal state, although he wanted to keep it limited in its power. He was a Tory at heart, a Burkean who preferred to hold on to traditions and who harbored a skepticism of revolutionary democracy and the idea that power should reside in the people. Yet as England developed and expanded liberal democratic institutions in the nineteenth century, Newman thought that the church should also adapt.

While he was still an Anglican and a leader in the Oxford Movement during the 1830s, Newman opposed Erastianism, the state control of the Anglican Church that had arisen in the English Reformation. The most recent manifestation had been the state's imposition of liberal theology on the church.

After Newman became a Catholic, several themes in his thought bore a politically liberal stamp. First, he vigorously affirmed the basic rights of the person against the state. Second, he strongly valued the conscience of the individual, which he connected to the dignity of the person, and thought that everyone is called to form his conscience according to the truth. In his renowned *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, he wrote that "conscience has rights because it has duties." Thus, in the political and social sphere, Newman thought that the rights of conscience must be protected. In answer to William Gladstone's claim that Catholics could not be loyal citizens of a national liberal democracy, he argued that papal authority did not override conscience. Third, Newman had a strong appreciation for national and cultural traditions. He did not think that ultramontanism (the assertion of papal authority over and against national bishops and governments) or a politically established Catholic Church would serve England well. Instead, the Catholic Church in England should accept its pluralistic setting and seek to preserve its freedom.

Although Newman did not reject any of the church's teachings or its teaching authority, his politically liberal spirit is apparent in his reservations about certain papal actions. He affirmed the doctrine of papal infallibility, but he questioned the prudential wisdom of Pope Pius IX's reassertion of papal authority in the Syllabus of Errors, his declaration of papal infallibility at the First Vatican Council, and his adamant protest at the loss of the church's temporal power.

The first essay in this collection, "The End of Machiavellianism," is by Jacques Maritain, one of the most important Catholic philosophers of the twentieth century and one of Catholic political liberalism's most influential proponents. Maritain was a leader in the revival of Thomism in the twentieth century and drew from this foundation to ground human rights and democracy. In doing so, he helped pave the way for the acceptance of these concepts in magisterial teaching, particularly at the Second Vatican Council. True to the Catholic political liberal pattern, Maritain was deeply skeptical of Enlightenment philosophy and expressed strong reservations about the Rousseauian view of democracy. Instead, he believed that liberal democracy should be based on natural law and the concept of the common good as found in the Thomist tradition.

In this essay, which Maritain wrote during World War II and with an eye toward the war, these commitments are strongly reflected. Machiavelli was an important turning point in Western political thought, Maritain argues, insofar as he severed politics from morality, made the strength of the state the primary criterion for success in politics, and placed morality at the service of the state.

Machiavelli thus departed from the Western tradition that politics was answerable to morality. Over subsequent centuries, this fissure between morality and politics has widened. First came moderate Machiavellianism, the realpolitik of Cardinal Richelieu in the seventeenth century, which retained the common good as a moral goal but allowed the politician to depart from morality. Then, in the nineteenth century, came absolute Machiavellianism, for which power and success are the supreme moral criteria. This version, which is realized in ideologies of fascism and communism, led to the crisis that Maritain observes in this 1942 essay.

According to Maritain, Machiavellianism contains the seeds of its own demise. When justice, righteousness, and the common good are not the moral criteria for politics, then politics will collapse under the weight of its own evil. In calling for a politics governed by morality, Maritain did not reject the idea of the modern state or of a just war; he thought that the Second World War was certainly just. He viewed modern democracies based on freedom as the ground of hope for a politics based on law and right. By contrast, the totalitarianisms he observed around him were the products of Machiavellianism. As a Catholic political liberal, Maritain placed his hope in liberal institutions based in natural law and Christianity.

The rise of Catholic political liberalism is the central theme of the essay by political scientist Paul E. Sigmund, written more than four decades later, in 1987. He begins by exploring the "doctrinal neutrality" of the early church on forms of government. Because the church viewed itself as a spiritual community concerned with a kingdom not of this world, it was neutral between forms of government as long as they did not interfere with her mission and were responsive to and protective of the common good of citizens. During the Middle Ages, ambiguities arose, as some theologians and churchmen gave preference to monarchical forms of government, modeled on God's governance of the cosmos. To many, the advantages to the church of a throne-and-altar union were clear.

It was partly this theoretical legacy that made the church slow to embrace modern democracy, but Sigmund suggests that the lag had more to do with faulty liberal theories of man and state, along with violence propagated by liberals. As Sigmund notes, the "French Revolution swept away the privileges of the church, and forced its priests to swear to a *Civil Constitution of the Clergy*." If democracy meant, as the philosopher Denis Diderot once said, that "man will never be free till the last king is strangled with the entrails of the last priest," it would be hard for the church to embrace it. Sigmund walks readers through a

history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Catholic engagements with modernity, and the crucial role that the American Catholic experience played in showing an alternative way of coexisting with democracy. Of central importance in his history are several contributors to this volume, including Jacques Maritain and Yves Simon. As Sigmund puts it:

> Maritain was responsible for a new development in Catholic political thought that had been anticipated but never articulated in terms of the Catholic tradition by earlier French and Italian writers—the argument that democracy was not simply one of several forms of government, all of which were acceptable provided that they promoted "the common good," but was the one form that was most in keeping with the nature of man, and with Christian values. The traditional concern with justice had been expanded to give a religious justification for freedom, and the Christian belief in equality before God was now interpreted to include political and juridical equality as well.

Maritain's achievement in this respect lay in showing an alternative theoretical grounding for liberal institutions. As democracy became more appealing to Catholics in both theory and practice, they reevaluated its merits. Sigmund concludes that in the twentieth century the church came to support "democracy as morally superior and philosophically preferable" to all other forms of government.

In an essay published the following year, 1988, political scientist David C. Leege assumes the complementarity of Catholicism and liberal institutions and explores the behavior of Catholics within American democracy. His methods are empirical, including survey analysis.

Leege begins with a historical narrative of an evolution of American Catholics from being deferential to church authority and strongly affiliated with community to being much more independent in their voting and political behavior. The turning point was the election of President John F. Kennedy, who "proclaimed the political liberty of American Catholics." In contemporary America, Leege argues, Catholics are willing to take guidance from church authority, especially when the issues are complex, such as poverty and world peace, and when the spokesman is primarily the pope. When an issue is one that an American Catholic believes is within grasp, he or she is much more likely to label it a matter of individual conscience. Birth control, he argues, most fits this description, and women's rights, sex and violence on television, and racial integration come

next. Leege's findings suggest a movement among American Catholics away from Catholic political liberalism, as defined in this introduction, and toward a liberalism of autonomy and individualism—a movement predicted by Tocqueville in the nineteenth century.

Religious Liberty

Religious liberty is arguably the most important issue at stake in the development of Catholic political liberalism. The church's failure to endorse this principle over centuries provoked the greatest criticism by liberals around the world and by Protestants and others in the United States. The Second Vatican Council's embrace of this principle in *Dignitatis Humanae* is what has most enabled the church to support and promote liberal democracy around the world.[9]

Remarkably prescient in this regard is a 1950 essay, "Church and State," by political philosopher Heinrich Rommen, which presents a case for religious liberty fully grounded in Catholic thought and tradition. Although Rommen is not nearly as well known as Murray for his early defense of religious freedom, his essay arguably anticipates the arguments of *Dignitatis Humanae* at least as well as Murray's arguments did. This essay from the *Review of Politics* deserves to be far better known.

Like Maritain, Rommen was a European Catholic émigré. He had fled to the United States in 1938 from Nazi Germany, where for a short time he was imprisoned by the Gestapo. Rommen came to admire American institutions of governance and to defend them on Catholic grounds.

Like other Catholic political liberals, Rommen regards the modern state, rooted in Enlightenment secularism, as a threat to the church. He begins his essay by warning of a secularist outlook—what Pope Benedict XVI would later call "negative secularism"—that would privatize the church and sharply control it. He defends the Catholic Church and argues that its visible, public form requires legal protection. He links his arguments with Catholic liberals who thought along similar lines, including Newman, Ketteler, and Murray.

Yet Rommen's essay is primarily devoted to defending a modern political arrangement that involves the separation of church and state and guarantees religious freedom for everyone. Such an arrangement corresponds to what Benedict XVI calls "positive secularism." Echoing Murray's contemporary arguments, Rommen worries that the Catholic Church's failure to embrace religious freedom

alienates it from Protestants and erodes the church's credibility, and he calls for a decisive "renunciation of compulsion." Rommen rejects a view that had been espoused by the magisterium as the thesis/hypothesis doctrine, which he captures through a quotation ascribed—though wrongly, Rommen points out—to nineteenth-century French intellectual Louis Veuillot: "When you are the majority, we demand our liberty on the basis of your principles (the so-called Protestant principle or liberalist principle, of indifferentism). When we are the majority, we will refuse you your liberty on the basis of our principles." The church's thesis was that it ideally ought to enjoy established status and to deny religious liberty to others. Its hypothesis was that when it was in a minority or otherwise could not secure this status, it would demand religious liberty.

Rommen calls instead for religious liberty that is principled, not merely pragmatic—a right to be enjoyed by everyone, everywhere. He anticipates *Dignitatis Humanae* by defending individual religious freedom on the basis of conscience, the psychological conditions of embracing faith, and the contrariety of coercion to the gospel.

A famous contemporary of Rommen who is far more closely associated with *Dignitatis Humanae* is John Courtney Murray, S.J. Murray appears in the *Review of Politics* through a 1950 memorandum discovered by historian Joseph Komonchak and published in the *Review* in 1999, along with responses to Murray written by two of his contemporaries, Samuel Cardinal Stritch, archbishop of Chicago, and Fr. Francis J. Connell, dean of the School of Sacred Theology at the Catholic University of America. Murray wrote his memorandum for the use of Monsignor Giovanni Battista Montini of the Vatican Secretary of State, later to become Pope Paul VI, and it was distributed to the Holy Office at the Vatican and to the two American churchmen. In 1954 the Holy Office judged Murray's writings to contain serious errors and forbade him from writing on religious freedom. He regained the favor of the hierarchy when he was invited to the second session of the Second Vatican Council, where he contributed to the writing of *Dignitatis Humanae*.

Murray's memo and the two responses are a gold mine for understanding Murray's case for religious freedom and its differences from the prevailing views in the Vatican. Far from being a move toward secularism, Murray's argument in his memo is motivated by his worry about a growth in secularism in America, particularly through the doctrines of naturalism and positivism. He worried, too, about the totalitarian threat posed by Soviet and Chinese Communism. Murray hoped that the Catholic Church would respond to these threats by making com-

mon cause with American society and with Protestants in particular. This would benefit both the United States and the church, which, he thought, could evangelize more effectively if it could iron out its differences with the rest of America. The chief obstacle to this cooperation, in Murray's analysis, was the church's own doctrine of religious freedom, which ran contrary to the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and to the deeply held convictions of most Americans. Murray's intent, therefore, was to convince the church to embrace religious freedom and to find a genuinely Catholic foundation for the principle.

Echoing Catholic political liberalism, Murray stressed that the American experience of a secular state is very different from the European Jacobin one. Liberal institutions could be placed on a foundation distinct from that of the European Enlightenment. Murray also articulated a separate but related argument that came to fruition in the Second Vatican Council's seminal document, *Gaudium et Spes*—namely, that the differentiation in the roles and functions of church and state ought to be widened in the modern world. Properly configured, these roles and functions are complementary, compatible, and mutually under the law of God. Still, they are different, and they ought to be kept more separate and distinct than the church has allowed in the past. The state should concern itself with temporal matters, whose criterion is the natural law, and the church with spiritual matters, governable by divine law. The state, Murray argued, steps outside of its proper sphere when it suppresses religion by the force of law. Like Rommen, Murray called for an abandonment of the thesis/hypothesis doctrine and for a principled embrace of religious freedom.

Stritch and Connell each responded by defending the teaching of the church at that time. Attacks on the church in the modern world are nothing new, argued Stritch, and should not lead the church to change its doctrines. He quotes a statement of the thesis/hypothesis doctrine in Leo XIII's *Longinqua Oceani*, argues that the modern separation of church and state is not ideal even if it is necessary, and holds that the state should establish and uphold the rights of the church, including aspects of divine law. Connell agreed with Murray that the church in America was facing attacks but opposed the solution of making common cause with secular and Protestant America. While Catholics ought to be loyal American citizens, they should not compromise their claim to belong to the one true church. These responses to Murray found sympathy in the Vatican, which had not yet reached the stage at which it would develop its doctrine on religious freedom.

By the turn of the century, the debate over religious liberty and its relationship to Catholicism and liberalism in the United States had changed dramatically. A generation earlier, the church had adopted the liberal political principle of religious freedom but given it a Catholic foundation. Now, religious liberty was being threatened by a hostile secularism—much as the U.S. bishops would diagnose in 2012. Political scientists Gary D. Glenn and John Stack document and assess this new threat in an essay published in 2000, "Is American Democracy Safe for Catholicism?"

Glenn and Stack begin with a quotation from Murray, which can be paraphrased as follows: the pertinent question is not whether Catholicism is compatible with American democracy but whether American democracy is compatible with Catholicism. For a Catholic, in other words, the church's relationship with America must be judged by the criteria of the church. The authors document incompatibilities between American liberalism and Catholicism dating back to America's founding, but they also believe that before World War II there was room for pragmatic accommodation of the church under the rubric of a liberal constitution—what they call "civil liberty." The tensions became more ominous after World War II, however, when liberalism housed the concept of "civil liberties" in a doctrine of secularism, according to which religion should be privatized and subordinated to the individual conscience.

When such liberalism was deployed to interpret the Constitution, it amounted to an established relativism. Glenn and Stack trace the rise of this doctrine's influence from the Supreme Court's *Everson* and *McCollum* decisions of the late 1940s, through decisions on school prayer and abortion in the 1960s and 1970s, to cases on euthanasia. They also find the doctrine manifested in the thought and words of Catholic politicians such as John F. Kennedy and Mario Cuomo. In short, they find Catholic political liberalism challenged by secular liberalism.

In publishing Glenn and Stack's essay as part of a 2000 symposium on Christianity and Politics, the *Review of Politics* asked three commentators to respond to their argument. The critics recognize the problem that Glenn and Stack diagnose, and each takes up, in one way or another, the question whether the danger to Catholicism is different today than it has been in other times and places and even whether Catholics ought to expect a regime that comports with their convictions. Political scientist Clark Cochrane, for instance, argues that tensions between the teaching and doctrine of the church and certain American values are nothing new and are hardly surprising. Catholicism never was nor should be at home with America. In a similar spirit, political philosopher Glenn Tinder holds

that Christians should not have high expectations about any state and should be grateful that their freedom to worship is secure under democracy, in comparison to a totalitarian state. He also argues that Christianity upholds a certain doctrine of individualism that should not be shunned. Michael Novak also adopts a historical perspective in asking whether a regime has ever existed that was "safe" in every sense for Catholics. The world, the flesh, and the devil have posed threats to the church in every political setting. Still, the American experiment in ordered liberty has proved, from the perspective of history, to be a salubrious arrangement for the church. Novak worries that Glenn and Stack are too pessimistic; the liberal elite, he argues, is disappearing, and the American experiment is intact.

Glenn and Stack respond to their interlocutors by arguing that some regimes are more dangerous than others and that a particular kind of danger has now arisen because Catholics are denied the opportunity to act publicly on their ideas of the good. Catholicism is a holistic, engaged faith, not one that is limited to worship and private acts.

As the U.S. bishops' 2012 statement suggests, this debate has not died down. Religious liberty remains at the center of the question of Catholic liberalism in the United States.

Faith and Reason, Ancient and Modern

In a sense, contributions by Catholics to the development of political liberalism are not distinctively Catholic insights or contributions. Critiques of Enlightenment liberalism and the buttressing of liberal institutions on more solid philosophical foundations draw from common sources of human rationality, which are available to all. It is the church's commitment to reason that enables such contributions. On the other hand, it is precisely the church's openness to revelation and its theological insights into the human condition that have allowed it to see further than unaided human reason alone. All of the writers discussed above are asking what kind of philosophical and theological foundations political liberalism requires to flourish. All of them hold that Enlightenment liberalism is problematic, and, in a variety of different ways, all draw from the premodern philosophical and theological traditions of the church and bring them to bear on today's challenges.

James Schall echoes many of these themes in his essay "*Fides et Ratio*: Approaches to a Roman Catholic Political Philosophy." Schall, a Jesuit priest and

political philosopher, plumbs Pope John Paul II's 1998 encyclical letter *Fides et Ratio* for its political meaning. The encyclical itself dealt with the much broader crisis of rationality in metaphysics and ethics.

Schall places John Paul II in conversation with a range of political philosophers, including Leo Strauss in his famous essay "On the Mutual Influence of Theology and Philosophy." Whereas Strauss had argued that there was a fundamental disjunction between revelation and philosophy, Schall points out that the best Catholic thinking does not divide theology and philosophy quite so starkly. Although theology and philosophy are distinct disciplines, with their own starting points and subject matter, Schall insists that they "indicate different ways of seeking the truth, but they do not find different, unrelated truths." As a result, Catholics must be just as concerned with reason as they are with faith, and just as concerned with philosophy as with theology. Any authentically Catholic approach to seeking the truth needs to be concerned about the integrity of philosophy, for philosophy well done will point to the need for revelation and theology. Philosophy will lead people to seek answers to real questions that reason alone cannot adequately address. As Schall puts it, "Philosophy has to be proper philosophy to hear revelation. An inadequate philosophy is deaf to the voice of revelation. Revelation, rather frequently, has to defend philosophy itself from itself."

What does this mean—to defend philosophy itself from itself? A major thesis of *Fides et Ratio*, Schall argues, is that modern man has lost confidence in the ability of reason to discern truth. Skepticism has led not to man's liberation and flourishing but to his enslavement and debasement. In support, Schall quotes John Paul II: "At the deepest level, the autonomy which philosophy enjoys is rooted in the fact that reason is by its nature oriented to truth and is equipped moreover with the means necessary to arrive at truth." Certain strands of the later Enlightenment and postmodern era denied the existence of truth or questioned man's ability to discover it. Without a firm foundation in truth, however, little in political life—especially the protection of rights—can be secure for long. Only a political philosophy grounded in truth can provide a defense of a principled pluralism, one that can protect legitimate diversity and human rights and justice. Here, John Paul's thought, as conveyed by Schall, is linked to the pope's broader view of democracy, namely, that it can only be justified as a reflection and embodiment of truth and goodness and that it cannot be grounded on the idea that the popular vote determines truth and goodness. Here, too, John Paul II and Schall take their place in the tradition of Catholic political liberalism.

If the first step is defending philosophy from itself and restoring it to its ennobled position as capable of seeking—and attaining—truth, then the second step is for us to grasp that reason itself leads to a recognition of the need to take account of revelation. As Schall writes, "Political philosophy, for its part, cannot, without bad will, refuse to consider revelation's insight into political things when politics does not solve its own problems in its own terms about its own subject matter." This is true regardless of whether any given thinker accepts any given purported revelation to be truly revelatory. Part of a sound philosophy must include a willingness to consider what revelation has to say: "even the nonbeliever, genuinely aware of unanswered questions he shares with others, including believers, can appreciate that revelational arguments and positions can be seen as responses to genuine philosophic questions and enigmas. Even though such revelational responses can be rejected, it cannot be denied in some uncanny sense that they do present answers to philosophic questions as asked."

Schall concludes, as does John Paul II in *Fides and Ratio*, that both faith and reason are necessary for an adequate grasp of the fullness of truth, and that either in isolation can become dangerous and fanatical. Schall writes: "Reason and faith are everywhere directed at each other in such a way that they correct or better illuminate each other, without ceasing to be themselves. The biblical scholar who knows no philosophy is a dangerous man. The scientist who is unaware of the higher dimensions of philosophy locks himself into an autonomous ideology."

If the relation of faith and reason is one abiding theme in political philosophy, especially in Catholic contributions to political philosophy, so too is the relation of ancients and moderns. Is the concern for virtue in classical sources incompatible with the focus of Enlightenment and modern thinkers on rights? Was the natural law doctrine of the medieval schoolmen fundamentally rejected by Enlightenment thinkers in a way that renders modern political communities incapable of grasping natural law truths? Indeed, are modern political regimes that embrace liberal institutions and use the language of rights fundamentally flawed and hopelessly irredeemable? These are some of the debates that have animated Catholic contributions to political philosophy for the past several decades. And these themes come admirably to the fore in comparing Fr. Ernest Fortin's essay and the response by John Finnis, specially written for the current volume.[10]

Fortin's essay, "The New Rights Theory and the Natural Law," is a 1982 review of Finnis's influential 1980 book *Natural Law and Natural Rights*. Fortin argues that, for all of its undeniable merits, Finnis's book is fundamentally flawed because it attempts to reconcile two irreconcilable theories: that of natural law and

that of natural rights. Finnis shares a weakness, Fortin believes, with numerous modern Catholic thinkers in this respect. The reason these theories are irreconcilable, according to Fortin, is that natural law theory is based on ancient and medieval thinking, while the idea of natural rights is a creation of Enlightenment thought, which explicitly rejected the idea of natural law. Fortin thus suggests that Catholic political liberals, for example, Maritain, Simon, and Murray, followed by Richard John Neuhaus, George Weigel, Michael Novak, and in his own way John Finnis, have set themselves an impossible task.

Fortin illustrates the problem through debates over abortion. He asserts that the modern Catholic approach to condemning abortion is "by means of a distinctively new argument based on natural or human rights rather than on the natural law." Although the ultimate conclusion—no intentional killing of the unborn—may be the same, "the reasoning behind it is obviously different." Fortin explains: "The old argument was mainly concerned with what abortion does to the person who performs it or allows it to be performed; the new one, with what it does to the aborted fetus. One argument emphasizes duties; the other emphasizes rights." According to Fortin, this is not merely a matter of emphasis or rhetoric. It also raises a deeper question of "whether the two approaches are fully compatible with each other or whether at a deeper level the tension between them is not such as to caution against any hasty substitution of one for the other." Fortin faults Finnis for uncritically attempting to make them compatible and substitute one for the other.

The heart of Fortin's critique is that the doctrine of natural rights rests on a fundamentally different foundation than that of natural law. Whereas classical natural law theory viewed human beings as naturally social and political,

> the natural rights theory proceeds on the assumption that these same human beings exist first of all as complete and independent wholes, endowed with prepolitical rights for the protection of which they "enter" into a society that is entirely of their own making. All rules governing their relations with one another and all principles of justice are ultimately rooted in rights and derive their efficacy from them.

These Enlightenment liberal principles, Fortin argues, are based not on considerations of the good—of human flourishing in its various aspects—but on calculations of utility: "the products of a calculus of means to a desired end in which discursive reason is called upon to play the leading role." Fortin concludes

that it "would be surprising if, on the basis of such radically different premises, one were to come in all cases to identical or roughly similar results." So, while Fortin offers great praise for Finnis's work, he ultimately concludes that more work remains to be done if an attempted merger of natural *law* and natural *rights*, of ancient and modern political theory, is to be successful.

Finnis, in his essay for this volume, responds that Fortin fundamentally misread *Natural Law and Natural Rights*. His book was not an attempt to merge two opposing doctrines but rather a thoroughgoing critique of modern Enlightenment natural rights thinkers, such as Hobbes. Finnis argues that we should not jettison the concept of natural rights simply because Hobbesian natural rights theorists got them—and their foundations, scope, and justifications—wrong. The natural law tradition has its own theory of rights, a theory that the late scholastics had misunderstood and obscured. A central aim of *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (*NLNR*) was to set forth an understanding of natural law free from late scholastic distortions—distortions, Finnis argues, that have been carried over by Fortin and falsely attributed to Thomas Aquinas. As Finnis puts it:

> Anyone embarking on a project such as *NLNR* needed to investigate, as a top priority, whether Aquinas and Aristotle were guilty of the fallacies and elisions of neo-Thomism, and if they were not, whether a philosophically critical and free-standing exposition of the foundations of ethics and political philosophy would show that, in their main lines, Aquinas and Aristotle had *got there first*, so to speak, and can, now too, be philosophically helpful.

Finnis concludes that the theories of Aquinas and Aristotle, freed of later distortions, are not vulnerable to modernist attacks. Rather, both arrived at almost everything admirable in modern political theory before the moderns did—and with better theoretical foundations. With this argument, Finnis joins the tradition of Catholic political liberalism. He seeks to ground the central feature of modern liberal political institutions, namely, rights, on reasons that predate modernity.

Toward the start of his essay, "Grounding Human Rights in Natural Law," Finnis points out that when he wrote *NLNR* in 1980, he did not "envisage that scholars who thought of themselves as sensitive to 'the art of writing'"—including Fortin—"would turn out to be inattentive to the book's rhetorical and structural precautions for disarming or circumventing the hostility with which many modern readers approach anything associated by them with the

past, especially the past of Christianity." As he puts it, "these are the readers whom the book seeks to meet where they are." But, Finnis notes, "few indeed, however, were the reviewers who noticed, or made even the slightest allowance for, the book's genre, its rhetorical predicament, and its strategies, its 'art of writing.'"

This being said, rights, Finnis points out, are not the foundation of his argument. He notes that it is only in the eighth of thirteen chapters of his book that rights even enter his discussion. And they enter as conclusions—not, as with the modern rights theorists, as starting points. Rights are the conclusions of the entire theory of natural law that Finnis presents before discussing them. As Finnis explains, "they are shown to be simply the entailments of the virtue of justice, the correlatives of duties of justice—not as mere shadows of those duties but as, in a way, their point." But the logic of his argument was lost on readers: "I hoped that, for example, my giving common good and justice priority over rights would signal to thinkers interested in and aware of the tradition of political thought that the book and its author stood in opposition to some main prejudices of modernity." Finnis laments that this hope was disappointed.

Finnis does not reply directly to Fortin's illustration on abortion, but his response is clear: There has been no fundamental change in how Catholics think about abortion. The good of human life always drove the argument, and it was for that reason that people had a duty not to kill—because, conversely, unborn children had a right not to be killed. The killing of unborn children corrupted the character of the abortionist precisely because the unborn child's life was of intrinsic worth, and thus had a right to life that the abortionist had a duty to respect.

None of this is new, Finnis suggests: "For it is as true now as it was in Aristotle's time or Gaius's or Aquinas's or Pius VI's, Leo XIII's, or John XXIII's that the philosophically or theologically defensible doctrine of virtue *includes* a doctrine of justice that in turn, given the resources of modern European languages, can most authentically be set out in terms of rights (which entail their correlative duties)." As Finnis points out, "Justice *always* concerns what I owe *to another*—what that other has the right to, from, or as against me. Everything *NLNR* says about rights has as its basis the virtue of justice, which is why its chapter on justice (as Fortin fails to note) *precedes* the chapter on rights." Finnis concludes that "[Fortin] was fundamentally mistaken, I believe, in his tying of *rights* to *freedom*—worse, to Hobbesian freedom from duty—and fundamentally mistaken in contrasting respect for rights (and claims of rights) with virtue,

character-formation, the common good, and natural law (or natural *right*). One can, and every society and social, political, or moral theory should, marry both, for love." In other words, one can have both natural law and natural rights.

Finnis's essay contributes nicely to what Schall described as the Catholic contribution to political philosophy. Finnis lists some of his own conclusions:

> When writing *NLNR*, as now, I judged that the divine revelation constitutive of Christianity—the central form of which (as the book's index discreetly indicates) must be Catholicism—is the central event of human history and became the bearer of what is sound in the philosophical tradition of moral and political (and therefore legal) philosophy inaugurated, masterfully, by Plato and Aristotle. And I thought also that the moral and political philosophy shaped by Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Bentham, and their successors down to today is a series of blunders and oversights, partly but inadequately identified, and then inadequately resisted, by Kant and his successors, and partly prepared for by deficiencies in the (neo)scholasticism of Aquinas's sixteenth-century and later successors.

Finnis's overarching argument, then, is and was "to give an account of natural law that is philosophically sound, untouched by Humeian and all subsequent philosophical and cultural objections, and at the same time—to the extent permitted by philosophically critical criteria—is more authentically in line with St Thomas's thought than were his most influential sixteenth-century commentators and followers." For Finnis, the intellectual prejudices of his day, including a refusal to consider that Thomism might be true, shaped every step of his argument in trying to reach and persuade his readers.

Finnis, like Schall, also suggests that reason alone proves ultimately insufficient in dealing with ultimate issues:

> The real bearing of Christian revelation on these matters is richer and more extensive than any traditional concepts of the ultimate last things, proposing as it does, a kind of continuity—intelligible though entirely dependent on miraculous divine action, gratuitous but promised in revelation—between the building up of persons and their communities in morally good choices (and "works") and eternal life in the completed Kingdom. *NLNR* attempted no more than to open a pathway towards a point—call it a way-station—from which a reader might trek on, by another way and not without labor or grace,

> to the vantage point of true revelation, from which point concepts or realities such as the Kingdom of God and its completion and its conditions of citizenship can become visible, and enticing. A political theory worthy of the name of philosophy has to venture towards that way-station and be able to indicate how it can reasonably be judged to be only a way-station and starting point for something more and, in its own way, better.

Finnis's essay, in addition to being a careful response to the misreadings and thus misplaced criticisms of Fortin, is also a tour-de-force defense of his theory of natural law. Whereas Fr. Schall's essay can be profitably read as a response to the view that reason and revelation are incompatible, Finnis's essay can be read as a response to the view that ancient and modern thought on natural law and natural rights are incompatible.

The Common Good

A central idea in Catholic political liberalism is the common good. In the Catholic tradition, the common good is the justification for both political action and authority, and it forms the core of a distinctively Catholic justification for liberal institutions. The common good is the explicit focus of several essays in this volume. A 1960 essay by political philosopher Yves Simon, "Common Good and Common Action," seeks to refute misguided liberal theories that understand authority—be it familial, commercial, or political—as a result of deficiency. Simon responds to the argument that if people were perfectly virtuous, intelligent, and well-informed, there would be no need for the exercise of authority because everyone would recognize and do the right things, and thus authority exists only to make up for a defect.

According to Simon, this argument gets the idea of human good—the common good—wrong and thus fails to appreciate the essential role that authority *must* play in helping people realize common goods. Simon argues instead that "authority, in certain cases and domains, is made necessary not by human deficiencies but by the very nature of man and society." This is because the nature of man is to live in society and seek the common good—that is, the well-being of himself and his neighbors. But a virtuous person who is seeking to pursue the common good—even with perfect human knowledge—will not know how to act for the common good because of the inherit pluralism of human nature. Human

goodness is not monolithic, and expert knowledge—as those of a scientific bent might suppose—does not settle important choices. Genuine *choices* must be made, including choices of options that are all equally good but cannot be realized all at once. This reality gives rise to the need for authority: "The existence of a plurality of genuine means in the pursuit of the common good excludes unanimity as a sufficient method of steadily procuring unity of action."

Authority also may be necessary because of deficiencies in virtue or knowledge, but that should not hinder people from grasping the essence of authority: coordination in the service of common action in pursuit of the common good. Or, as Simon puts it, "*The most essential function of authority is the issuance and carrying out of rules expressing the requirements of the common good considered materially*" (emphasis in original). Simon is a crucial figure in twentieth-century Catholic thinking about politics because he helped provide a framework for thinking about political liberalism that was based not on skepticism about the human good, but on a principled pluralism of the human good that provides the justification for political authority.

Simon's ideas were taken up again in the pages of the *Review of Politics* more than three decades later in a 1996 debate between Thomas R. Rourke and Michael Novak. Novak is a prominent American Catholic neoconservative writer, famous for defending democratic capitalism. Rourke, a Catholic political scientist, argues in his essay "Michael Novak and Yves R. Simon on the Common Good and Capitalism" that Novak's account of the common good, inspired by faulty modernist liberal theories, is too thin. Simon, in contrast, offers a more authentic theory that captures the complexity of thinking about the common good. Novak's neoconservative preference for economic freedom, Rourke charges, also ignores essential aspects of the need for authority. Although, in a formal sense, a will open to the well-being of oneself and one's neighbors says something about the common good, Simon held that authority is required to help settle choices and direct that will toward the common good in a material sense as well—an idea, Rourke claims, that Novak rejects.

Rourke opens his essay by highlighting the historical tensions between Catholicism and political liberalism:

> The contradiction between the Catholic and liberal approaches to the organization of society has traditionally been perceived by both sides as fundamental. Catholic thought, grounded in Saint Thomas and expressed in numerous encyclicals, defined itself in opposition to liberalism on the

grounds that the latter rejected the Catholic concept of the common good in favor of a relatively unrestricted pursuit of individual goods.

Novak's work, Rourke suggests, has "attempted to close the gap" between Catholicism and liberalism. Simon, in contrast, criticized liberalism on Catholic grounds. The difference between the two approaches is best seen in their accounts of the common good.

Novak's emphasis on freedom and on the pluralism of a free people pursuing what they take to be the common good has limited the role that political authority should rightly play in fostering the common good. Rourke argues that Novak has reduced the common good to the collection of individual goods, with the state merely providing the rules of the road for each member of society to do as he or she pleases as long as others are not harmed. Novak thus uses the indeterminancy of the common good as the reason to *limit* political authority, rather than as its justifying point.

Novak's approach, Rourke concludes, leads him to an embrace of free markets as a means to the common good that is far too favorable: "The distancing of political authority from the realization of the common good materially considered largely determines Novak's approach to the economic system." This is problematic for Rourke because the common good is important and is the justifying point of political authority. The problem is that "Novak's new concept of the common good does not adequately address the problems of exclusion and isolation from the common good so prevalent in modern liberal societies." Rourke characterizes Novak's theory as a "partnership in mutual self-interest" and concludes, in objection, that "partnerships inherently exclude those who are not party to them."

In his response essay, "A 'Catholic Whig' Replies," Novak argues that Rourke has fundamentally misread him and therefore misevaluated his project for three reasons: "First, he interprets Catholic social doctrine as though it were the ideology of social democracy. Second, he cannot seem to understand other points of view. Third, he systematically misstates my views by reading into them secular liberal philosophical commitments that I have long written against." Novak argues that much hinges on the word "liberalism"—as in Rourke's statement, quoted above, that there is a contradiction between it and Catholicism. According to Novak, he is in a long line of Catholic thinkers who argue that secular liberal *philosophical* theories are not required to embrace liberal political institutions—precisely the Catholic political liberalism discussed here. Novak explains:

> The *institutions* that have been developed in countries sometimes described as liberal are one thing; *doctrines* put forth by liberal philosophers to defend them are another. Often, liberal institutions embody elements derived from the dynamism of earlier Jewish and Christian cultures. Thus, Jacques Maritain saw in democratic institutions under the rule of law, constituted by limited government, and protecting the rights of individuals and minorities, the slow working out in history of the yeast of the Gospels. Maritain and Simon taught two generations (including Paul VI) that, while liberal doctrines are insufficient to explain or to defend democratic institutions, the latter merit a profound philosophical and theological defense by Christian thinkers and activists. Even earlier, at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884, the U.S. Catholic bishops noted that, under Providence, the U.S. Founders had built "better than they knew."

Novak then offers point-by-point responses to what he regards as misreadings by Rourke. This exchange is brought to a conclusion with a brief retort from Rourke.

The debate between Rourke and Novak is ultimately one about the nature of the distinctively political common good and the role of political authority in realizing common good writ large. Novak's theory, while he never quite states it in the following way, limits the role of the state precisely because it treats the political common good as itself limited in order to create space for other institutions to freely pursue their common goods. In talking about the common good, neither Rourke nor Novak fully accounts for the fact that there are many common goods of many societies. In order to achieve the common good of the society as a whole, it is crucial that political authority seek to promote the political common good, allowing other authorities the ability to promote their distinctive common goods.

The distinction between the political common good and the common good of other associations is also apparent when considering the common good of different *political* communities. What is the nature of the *international* political common good, for instance? What does it imply for international political authority? These questions are taken up by political philosopher William A. Barbieri, Jr., in his 2001 essay "Beyond the Nations: The Expansion of the Common Good in Catholic Social Thought." The concept of an international common good, as Barbieri defends it, overlaps strongly with liberal ideas and institutions, especially human rights, but is arguably thicker than that allowed by liberal philosophy. Barbieri traces the application of the concept of a common good to

the international realm in Catholic social thought, citing the work of several thinkers who appear in these pages, including Maritain, Simon, and Murray, as well as a succession of magisterial teachings, including *Mater et Magistra* (1961), *Pacem in Terris* (1963), *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), *Solicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987), and *Centesimus Annus* (1991). For Barbieri, Maritain is especially important given his enthusiasm for federalism at both the global and the European level.

Barbieri examines problems of scope, organization, and authority and argues that the idea of an international common good can be built around a discourse of rights and duties found in international human rights documents; the requirements of social agency for all persons; and the amelioration of conflict. What does he propose in terms of institutions? Shunning the idea of a single global government that would promulgate a particular tradition of thought, Barbieri appeals to the Catholic idea of subsidiarity, or respect for the local, in proposing a pluralism of polities and overlapping institutions.

What happens when the common good becomes privatized and thus is no longer truly common? Even worse, what happens when *good* becomes privatized? How can a community of people live together and flourish when they have no shared conception of human goodness? These have been central themes in Alasdair MacIntyre's critique of Enlightenment liberal moral philosophy, his defense of virtue ethics, and his proposal for a politics of local communities of virtue. These ideas are taken up by Thomas S. Hibbs in his 2004 essay, "MacIntyre, Aquinas, and Politics."

MacIntyre's thesis is that we can only understand what it is right to do in light of what is good for human beings to be. The moral principles, rules, and virtues that constitute a society's moral code only make sense in terms of the human goods they seek to protect and promote. But the characteristic move of liberal philosophy was to privatize the good and speak solely of "rights." Without being educated and habituated into a theory of the good, however, people will neither understand nor live out moral norms.

If modern liberal political societies are devoid of any shared, rationally justifiable conception of human good, then perhaps, MacIntyre proposes, smaller communities of virtue and shared human good are possible that can foster human flourishing in modernity. This is the famous appeal to a new St. Benedict made at the end of MacIntyre's *After Virtue*. Such solutions that ignore politics, however, are inadequate, according to Hibbs. Arguing from a Catholic liberal standpoint—one that seeks to ground liberal institutions in virtue and the common good—Hibbs suggests that in many of his writings MacIntyre plays down

politics in a distinctly un-Aristotelian, as well as un-Thomistic, fashion. As Hibbs puts it, "In his account of the virtues, MacIntyre regularly refers to Aristotle; yet MacIntyre almost wholly neglects Aristotle's politics, in spite of the fact that Aristotle offers a politics of the common good." Aristotle offered a rich analysis of types of political regimes, based on who ruled—the one, the few, or the many—and whether or not they ruled for the sake of a common good. What has MacIntyre offered instead? According to Hibbs, "he wants Aristotle's ethics without his politics, in spite of the fact that Aristotle presents them as complementary."

The heart of Hibbs's critique is that virtue theory cannot rest content as a virtue ethics. A virtue politics must also be developed, and thus no virtue theorist can ignore political theory or the political realities of modernity. Any adequate focus on the common good requires a focus on politics—on political forms and political authority—and not merely subpolitical groupings of virtue. And such a focus needs to be more capacious than MacIntyre's denunciation of modern democratic capitalism: "If Aristotle shares MacIntyre's exalted conception of politics as the pursuit of the common good of virtuous living, he appears more willing to countenance imperfect realizations, even distortions, of this ideal." Indeed, politics is, as the saying goes, the art of the possible.

This sort of careful prudential analysis is key for contemporary Catholic debates about government in the United States, for instance. As Hibbs notes: "The prudential assessment of what is given in actually existing regimes, of their complexities and internal conflicts, and of the forces that provide for their amelioration and longevity—these are the central preoccupations of Aristotle's politics. Yet these have little or no place in MacIntyre's political thought." This is sadly true of much contemporary criticism of American government and society from political philosophers. The need, as Hibbs points out, is to be attentive to various conflicts in less than ideal political realities:

> Yet, MacIntyre ignores regimes entirely, focusing instead on local communities, communities even smaller than that of the ancient *polis*. By contrast, Aristotle and Aquinas describe the political order as a "composite," a complex mixture not just of goods but of levels and parts. The defense of a mixed, constitutional regime requires careful analysis of conflicts of goods and interests and of the levels of participation and degrees of allegiance.

This attentiveness to the particularities of specific, concrete political communities reminds us that theoretical critiques alone will never provide remedies: "It

is certainly not the case that Aristotle or Aquinas thinks that the theoretical exposing of incoherence or contradiction in an existing regime will resolve anything at the level of practice. Nor do they suppose that the political theorist can operate as a social engineer." So while political theorists can point out a variety of ways in which any given political regime fails to be ideal—"exposing incoherence or contradiction"—this alone does not help political leaders or reformers in their work.

Liberalism and Virtue

It would not be suprising for a political theorist to point out that modern liberal democracy threatens certain virtues that are endemic to the human good and needed for a healthy polis. Two essays in this collection argue much along these lines. The first, from 1950, is by the German Catholic philosopher Josef Pieper, the second by contemporary political philosopher Carson Holloway. Although neither of them articulates precisely the thesis of Catholic political liberalism, each reasons in a similar spirit. Neither rejects modern liberal institutions, but each argues that these institutions are weakened, impoverished, and detrimental to human flourishing unless they are complemented by virtues that come from the ancients (for instance, Aristotle's focus on leisure) and Christianity (for instance, its focus on humility and magnanimity).

In his essay "The Social Meaning of Leisure in the Modern World," Pieper argues that modern society has eclipsed the importance of and opportunities for leisure. Not only have planned economies and totalitarian regimes so controlled people's lives that they have no time for leisure, and not only do certain expressions of modern capitalism leave wage earners with little time apart from work, but also liberal societies shape people so that they choose to leave no time for leisure and are instead preoccupied with busyness and productive activity. Pieper focuses on this spiritual form of poverty. He contrasts the *artes serviles*, which have value through serving other human goods, with the *artes liberales*, which have an intrinsic rather than instrumental value:

> [The liberal] arts and activities are internally legitimized *not* because they serve the necessities of life, or because of their contribution to the public need, or because of any usefulness; the liberal arts derive their character from

> this: they do *not* belong to the process of using and working; they have their dignity in themselves; they do not need to receive their *raison d'être* from their usefulness, from their relation to an aim outside themselves. The liberal arts signify the central sphere of culture—if one considers culture to be something which *exceeds* all that is merely useful or even necessary with regard to the immediate aims of practical life.

Leisure, then, is about cultivating the liberal arts: "Leisure is a certain condition of mind, a certain state of soul; leisure is not given merely with the external fact of spare time. Man has to become able to realize leisure in itself, to fill up the room which is no longer occupied by the process of work." It is with this analysis in mind that he defines *proletarian*: "A proletarian is one whose space of existence is completely filled up by being fettered to the process of working, because this space of existence of itself has become narrow by reason of an inner shrinkage, because man is no longer able to realize that there is possible a reasonable, sensible doing, which is *not* work and *not* just nothing else." Pieper does not limit his analysis to the so-called working class but extends it to all people in modern societies: "The psychic inner condition of proletarity is a very common fact—not at all limited to the sphere of what usually is called the proletariat. It is a very common fact that people simply do not know what to do in their spare time, what to do on Sunday: to do something which is *neither* simply rest *nor* simply entertainment, play, amusement." Pieper argues for a recovery of the liberal arts, of the forms of study and play that truly liberate the human spirit. Too much of modernity is focused merely on the servile, or useful, arts. As Pieper notes, "Leisure is the origin of culture (if we understand culture as all those values which exceed immediate need and utility)." The restoration of leisure to modern society is Pieper's defining ambition.

For political scientist Carson Holloway, magnanimity is the virtue of which modern society needs to be reminded. Though written in 1999, nearly fifty years after Pieper's essay, Holloway's essay "Christianity, Magnanimity, and Statesmanship" shares Pieper's concern for the virtues that modern societies—including liberal political orders—threaten and yet depend upon for their health. After a careful analysis of the Aristotelian and Christian understandings of magnanimity, Holloway applies it to the modern context. He argues "that in the modern world Christianity alone can make magnanimous statesmanship possible."

Holloway responds to the political theorist Larry Arnhart, who "contends that the lack of great statesmanship in the modern world is due to the 'political influence of Christianity,' which condemns the magnanimous man as 'too proud, too preoccupied with human glory, to be truly virtuous.'" Arnhart, according to Holloway, argues that "Christianity makes magnanimity impossible. The magnanimous man exalts himself, claiming for himself the greatest honors. In contrast, Christian morality appears as one of self-abasement rather than self-exaltation." In reality, Holloway argues, the opposite is the case: "I contend that Christianity is the cure for the abject vulgarity of democratic peoples and that the application of this cure requires magnanimous statesmanship. . . . Christianity provides the only hope in a democratic world that such statesmanship will be forthcoming, that those capable of it will enter political life." For the magnanimous Christian "may claim the honors those virtues merit, including great honors if one's virtues are great, so long as one recognizes that ultimately those virtues are from God and thus that ultimately those honors belong to Him."

Holloway echoes a theme of the founders of the United States and of Tocqueville: democracy needs magnanimous people—public-spirited and virtuous souls to stand against mob rule and help elevate politics to its higher ends. But where are such people to be found or formed? For Holloway, the answer is in "Christianity, which provides the magnanimous man with the motive he needs to lower himself by entering democratic politics. That motive is charity, or love of the people." Holloway's argument is that a liberal politics requires *pre*-political values—namely, virtues. And Christianity provides the best foundation for those virtues:

> The love that he owes his neighbor and the possibility of the great good that might be achieved through his statesmanship—the possibility that it might help some to avoid endless damnation and to achieve endless glory—provide the Christian great-souled man sufficient motive to endure the mortification he necessarily feels at lowering himself to participate in democratic politics.

Whereas some have argued that truly enlightened persons would avoid any participation in politics, Holloway suggests that Christianity can inspire them to subject themselves to the annoyances of political life in order to serve the common good, while also recognizing that their virtue is ultimately from God and for God. In arguing for the dependence of liberal institutions on Christianity, Holloway joins the tradition of Catholic political liberalism.

Radical Criticism

As we have seen, some Catholic intellectuals are skeptical of Catholic liberalism. They question its robustness and staying power. Glenn and Stack, for instance, see it sharply challenged by secular liberalism. They, like the U.S. bishops in their 2012 "Statement of Religious Liberty," believe that a robust Catholic liberal synthesis once existed but is now endangered.

Other skeptics take a far more radical position and question whether such a synthesis was a good idea in the first place. For them, liberalism fundamentally corrupts Catholicism. Free market capitalism shapes people in the direction of greed and exploitation and corrodes communal ties, family, and local ownership. Liberal political institutions shape people toward individualism and self-defining autonomy rather than toward virtue, faithfulness, and interdependence. Most of all, liberalism does little to mitigate and in its own way fosters militarism, wars, and other forms of violence. Whereas the Catholic political liberal tradition holds that liberal rights and institutions can be grounded on traditional Catholic principles and indeed that Catholicism offers a uniquely strong grounding for these rights and institutions, such critics hold that in becoming a partner to liberal institutions, Catholicism itself becomes reshaped—that is, secularized—by these institutions. Nor is it easy, they argue, to separate adherence to liberal institutions from adherence to secular Enlightenment philosophy, which is deeply inimical to Catholicism.

Protestant thinkers writing from the early 1970s, including the Mennonite pacifist theologian John Howard Yoder and one of his disciples, the theologian Stanley Hauerwas, have played a central role in developing and making prominent this type of critique regarding Christianity and liberalism. Hauerwas, in turn, influenced the thought of younger radical Catholics, including Michael J. Baxter and William T. Cavanaugh, two of whose essays are included here. Another important influence on Hauerwas and on his Catholic students was Alasdair MacIntyre, a strong critic of liberal modernity who himself became a Catholic in the early 1980s.

Though not of this intellectual lineage, theologian David L. Schindler shares many of these commitments. His intellectual provenance is the *Communio* school of theology, which was formed around the thought of theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar. One of its most prominent members was Joseph Ratzinger, who became Pope Benedict XVI. Schindler too is a strong critic of liberalism—both

liberal thought and liberal institutions, which he does not believe can be easily separated. He is particularly critical of John Courtney Murray, one of the pioneers of the Catholic liberal synthesis.

Schindler's signature book is *Heart of the World, Center of the Church: Ecclesiology, Liberalism, and Liberation*, appearing in 1996. In 1998 the *Review of Politics* published a symposium on the book, featuring a review by Baxter and responses to this review from Schindler and Michael Novak. In choosing Baxter, the *Review* awarded Schindler a sympathetic critic. Not only was Baxter a student of Hauerwas and a follower of MacIntyre and Yoder, but he was also shaped strongly by the Catholic Worker movement, whose founder, Dorothy Day, was an outspoken pacifist and critic of the American liberal state. Baxter begins his review with the assertion, "It is a commonplace among Catholic social ethicists in the United States that the Church has finally made its peace with liberalism in the post-conciliar era," and then makes it clear that "*Heart of the World, Center of the Church* challenges this account."

As Baxter explains, Schindler rejects models of church engagement with the world that mistakenly take on the terms of the world, understood as pre–Vatican II integralism, involving close partnership with the state; liberationism, which purports to replace unjust structures with a secularized vision of justice; and neoconservatism, which uncritically celebrates the free market and free political institutions. Schindler proposes instead to reason about the church and society through ecclesiology, namely, an "intrinsicist" vision through which the church shapes the world by being what it most truly is: Trinitarian life in communion. He views the fiat of Mary, through which she received God and brought him into the world, as the church's basic mode of being and acting.

Liberalism for Schindler is a threat to the church's authentic life and influence because it purports to be neutral with respect to conceptions of the good but in fact is not. Hence, it plays a "con game." In reality, liberalism creates a world built on self-interest, rights claims, and power that is detached from the work of grace through the church. Schindler pursues his critique of liberalism in the spheres of politics, economics, and the university. In all of these realms, he argues, liberalism purports to create an autonomous sphere that is delinked from the life of grace and prone to totalitarianism. Although liberals may not wish to admit it, they too espouse a theology—a view of the human person and of the human good in relationship to God—just as all ideologies do.

In the realm of politics, Schindler's critique of liberalism is a critique of Murray, which Baxter describes and extends in his review. Whereas Murray defended

liberalism as a neutral, nonideological structure in which the Catholic Church could operate freely, according to its commitments, Schindler argues that Murray ended up advancing a form of liberalism that entails a "subtle and irresistible secularism." Although thinkers such as Komonchak have sought to show that Murray's view has deep theological roots, in fact, according to Schindler, Murray leaves theology behind when he treats the public realm. Murray accepts a series of dualisms: the state should be kept separate from the church, the secular should be kept separate from the sacred, and nature should be kept separate from grace.

Baxter admires Schindler's efforts but closes his review by criticizing Schindler for failing to explain how his ethic applies to public institutions. How does Schindler avoid returning to the pre–Vatican II integralism of coercion without also falling into the dualisms ascribed to Murray? Schindler has all too little to say about any substantive area of politics that is constructive, Baxter charges. In his response essay, Schindler carefully addresses Baxter's criticisms, thus deepening the introduction to Schindler's thought that readers will acquire through Baxter's review. Although Schindler professes not to reject engagement with the state, his priorities are to identify, expose, and challenge the pervasive influence of liberalism on culture, the family, the economy, the university, and other spheres of life.

In Michael Novak's response to Baxter's review of Schindler, "Liberal Ideology, an Eternal No; Liberal Institutions, A Temporal Yes?," Novak comes to the defense of Murray against Schindler. Arguing squarely in the tradition of Catholic liberalism, Novak repeats the kind of argument he made against Rourke, described above—that is, he defends liberal institutions provisionally while rejecting liberal ideology. He argues that we should not interpret the United States and its founding in light of contemporary liberal philosophy, which is secular and individualistic, and that the American experiment is far more religious than Schindler allows, combining charity and prudence. Espousing quintessential Catholic liberalism, Novak appeals to the fact that "both Orestes Brownson and Alexis de Tocqueville held that one day Catholics might be the Americans best placed to offer a profound and coherent defense of the American achievement, and to prevent it from eroding, crumbling and losing its intellectual footing. Furthermore, Catholics might also supply (one day) a philosophical defense of the Constitution." Still, Catholics should not interpret the Constitution in an exclusively Catholic fashion or assert the Catholic faith as the basis of public discussion. Rather, they should look to their own tradition for resources, such

as the concept of natural law, that encourage debate across religious lines, an insight that Novak believes Murray understood.

The other major articulation of radical Catholicism in the *Review of Politics* also takes the form of a review essay, though not a review of a single book but rather of an author's entire corpus. In 2009, political scientist Paul Rowe wrote an essay on the thought of Cavanaugh that the *Review* paired with a response by Cavanaugh. Like Baxter, Cavanaugh was a student of Hauerwas and was influenced by the Catholic Worker movement; he has also drawn from the Radical Orthodoxy movement in theology, associated with theologian John Milbank and others. Since the appearance in 1998 of Cavanaugh's first book, *Torture and Eucharist*, he has produced a succession of writings that offer a thorough and incisive critique of liberal thought, politics, economics, and culture.

As Rowe explains in his essay, Cavanaugh presents himself as a Christian theologian writing to other Christians out of concern that their loyalties have been redirected too far toward the modern liberal state and capitalist economy. A phrase that Cavanaugh uses for this redirection in other writings of his is "migration of the holy," which he borrows from the theologian Henri de Lubac's reflections on the evolving meaning of the Body of Christ in the Middle Ages. For Christians this transfer of loyalty, categories of thought, and social identification from the church to the state becomes idolatry. Cavanaugh, Rowe explains, holds that this shift in loyalties took place in early modern Europe, when, for modernist interpreters, the wars of religion of the 1500s and early 1600s yielded the secular modern state as a realm of truce. The lesson drawn from this history by Enlightenment liberals was that religion is inherently violent, while secularism brings peace and stability. In fact, Cavanaugh argues, these wars of religion were not really about religion but rather about the violence associated with the rise of modern state institutions and their usurpation of the church's power. Today, the church has been relegated to being one more actor in civil society, one of many lobbyists, and has been consigned to "spiritual" matters. The latter are subordinate to politics and economics, which are the affairs of the "body," the state. Such a critique of the dualism of the spiritual and the political echoes Baxter's and Schindler's critique of Murray.

Rowe's response is that Cavanaugh is too hard on the modern state. What Cavanaugh describes and criticizes, Rowe argues, is the early modern absolutist state, but this state has been improved upon by the modern liberal state, which is limited in its powers, is often committed to the welfare of its citizens, and, in some areas of the world, has constructed a zone of peace with other liberal states.

The modern liberal state, Rowe contends, is not merely a coercive apparatus but also promotes the common good. Cavanaugh fails to acknowledge that the modern liberal state allows substantial freedom for nonstate actors and their claims to legitimacy. Cavanaugh also overexalts the church without acknowledging its own tendencies to division, violence, and disrespect toward nonmembers.

Cavanaugh responds by reasserting his standpoint as a theologian writing for other Christians about the tendency to idolize the state. He stresses the violent character of the nation state and its tendency to occupy more and more of civil society's space. Rather than acquiesce in becoming one more political actor among many, the church should create alternative spheres to the state and become a community of witness. Cavanaugh claims that he does not directly, explicitly, and totally reject the modern liberal state. Still, his criticism of it is so strong, his sympathy so sparse and weak, and his proposals so directed away from the state that he can be placed among the radical critics of Catholic liberalism.

The debate over Catholic liberalism will not abate any time soon. The worries expressed by the United States bishops in 2012 have only deepened with the 2015 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that redefined marriage throughout the United States to eliminate the norm of sexual complementarity.[11] Not only does this decision render as the law of the land an understanding of marriage that contradicts the church's understanding based on both reason and revelation, but it will also likely lead to numerous legal challenges to religious liberty. Some Catholics will claim that this renewed and deepened tension between the church and the liberal state is an inevitable working out of liberalism, and that Catholics were naive ever to join with it as a partner. Others will say that the Catholic liberal synthesis remains defensible but is being challenged more sharply than ever by a rival secular liberalism. Still others may remain optimistic and confident that the Catholic liberal synthesis remains alive and well. Wherever one's sympathies lie, one can find the history and deep logic of this debate traced out in the essays that follow—and, if the past is prologue, in the pages of the *Review of Politics* in the years ahead.

Notes

1. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Ad Hoc Committee on Religious Liberty, "Our First, Most Cherished Liberty: A Statement on Religious Liberty," April 12, 2012. http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/our-first-most-cherished-liberty.cfm.

2. See Leo XIII's encyclicals *Immortale Dei* (1885) and *On the Nature of Human Liberty* (1888).

3. See John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), xxii–xxvii; John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 19–23; John Rawls, "On My Religion," in *A Brief Inquiry into the Meaning of Sin and Faith*, ed. Thomas Nagel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009); Mark Lilla, *The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics, and the Modern West* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 52–53, 73–74; and Pierre Manent, *An Intellectual History of Liberalism*, trans. Rebecca Balinski (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 115.

4. See Philip Jenkins, *The New Anti-Catholicism: The Last Acceptable Prejudice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

5. Bernard M. G. Reardon, *Liberalism and Tradition: Aspects of Catholic Thought in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 94–95.

6. Emile Perreau-Saussine, *Catholicism and Democracy: An Essay in the History of Political Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 57–58.

7. Quotation from Arline Boucher and John Tehan, *Prince of Democracy: James Cardinal Gibbons* (Garden City, NJ: Image, 1962), 158.

8. For an argument along these lines, see Martin Rhonheimer, "Benedict XVI's 'Hermeneutic of Reform' and Religious Freedom," *Nova et Vetera* 9, no. 4 (2011): 1029–54.

9. On this global promotion of democracy, see Daniel Philpott, "The Catholic Wave," *Journal of Democracy* 15, no. 2 (April 2004): 32–47.

10. The Finnis response, commissioned for this volume, did not appear in the *Review of Politics*, but a shorter version was published in the *American Journal of Jurisprudence* in 2015.

11. See Ryan T. Anderson, *Truth Overruled: The Future of Marriage and Religious Freedom* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2015).

Chapter 1

The End of Machiavellianism

Jacques Maritain

Jacques Maritain (1882–1973) was born in Paris and studied philosophy at the Sorbonne and the University of Heidelberg. His thinking was heavily influenced by his conversion to Catholicism. Before World War II, he moved to America, where he taught philosophy and Catholic theology at Columbia and Princeton and frequently lectured at other universities, such as the University of Chicago and the University of Notre Dame. Maritain understood himself to be a "critical realist," emphasizing metaphysics over epistemology and rejecting rationalist and positivist accounts of knowledge. As a so-called neo-Thomist, he argued against a rigid and unreflective understanding of scholasticism. But, like Aquinas, he maintained that reason and revelation are not fundamentally in opposition and that philosophy can demonstrate the truth of certain religious beliefs, for example, the existence of God. Maritain sought to ground human rights and duties in a conception of natural law that derived its purpose from the divine. At the same time, he held that Catholic teachings were fully compatible with science and democracy.

I

My purpose is to consider Machiavellianism.[1] Regarding Machiavelli himself, some preliminary observations seem necessary.

Innumerable studies, some of them very good, have been dedicated to Machiavelli. Jean Bodin, in the sixteenth century, criticized *The Prince* in a profound and wise manner. Later on Frederick the Great of Prussia was to write a refutation of Machiavelli in order to exercise his own hypocrisy in a hyper-Machiavellian fashion, and to shelter cynicism in virtue. During the nineteenth

century, the leaders of the bourgeoisie, for instance the French political writer Charles Benoist, were thoroughly, naively, and stupidly fascinated by the clever Florentine.

As regards modern scholarship, I should like to note that the best historical commentary on Machiavelli has been written by an American scholar, Professor Allan H. Gilbert.[2] As regards more popular presentations, a remarkable edition of *The Prince* and the *Discourses* was recently issued by the Modern Library.

Max Lerner, in the stimulating, yet somewhat ambiguous introduction he wrote for this edition of *The Prince* and *The Discourses*, rightly observes that Machiavelli was expressing the actual ethos of his time, and that "power politics existed before Machiavelli was ever heard of, it will exist long after his name is only a faint memory."[3] This is perfectly obvious. But what matters, in this connection, is just that Machiavelli *lifted into consciousness* this ethos of his time and this common practice of the power politicians of all times. Here we are confronted with the fundamental importance, which I have often emphasized, of the phenomenon of "prise de conscience," and with the risks of perversion which this phenomenon involves.

Before Machiavelli, princes and conquerors did not hesitate to apply on many occasions bad faith, perfidy, falsehood, cruelty, assassination, every kind of crime of which the flesh and blood man is capable, to the attainment of power and success and to the satisfaction of their greed and ambition. But in so doing they felt guilty, they had a bad conscience—to the extent that they had a conscience. Therefore a specific kind of unconscious and unhappy hypocrisy—that is, the shame of appearing to oneself such as one is—a certain amount of self restraint, and that deep and deeply human uneasiness which we experience in doing what we do not want to do and what is forbidden by a law that we know to be true, prevented the crimes in question from becoming a rule, and provided governed peoples with a limping accommodation between good and evil which, in broad outline, made their oppressed lives, after all, livable.

After Machiavelli, not only the princes and conquerors of the *cinquecento*, but the great leaders and makers of modern states and modern history, in employing injustice for establishing order, and every kind of useful evil for satisfying their will to power, will have a clear conscience and feel that they accomplish their duty as political heads. Suppose they are not merely skeptical in moral matters, and have some religious and ethical convictions in connection with man's personal behavior, then they will be obliged, in connection with the field of politics, to put aside these convictions, or to place them in a parenthesis, they will stoically im-

molate their personal morality on the altar of the political good. What was a simple matter of fact, with all the weaknesses and inconsistencies pertaining, even in the evil, to accidental and contingent things, has become, after Machiavelli, a matter of right, with all the firmness and steadiness proper to necessary things. A plain disregard of good and evil has been considered the rule, not of human morality—Machiavelli never pretended to be a moral philosopher—but of human politics.

For not only do we owe to Machiavelli our having become aware and conscious of the immorality displayed, in fact, by the mass of political men, but by the same stroke he taught us that this very immorality is the very law of politics. Here is that Machiavellian perversion of politics which was linked, in fact, with the Machiavellian "prise de conscience" of average political behavior in mankind. The historic responsibility of Machiavelli consists in having *accepted*, recognized, endorsed as a rule the fact of political immorality, and in having stated that good politics, politics conformable to its true nature and to its genuine aims, is by essence non-moral politics.

Machiavelli belongs to that series of minds, and some of them much greater than himself, which all through modern times have endeavored to unmask the human being. To have been the first in this lineage is the greatness of the narrow thinker eager to serve the Medici as well as the popular party in Florence, and deceived on both sides. Yet in unmasking the human being he maimed its very flesh, and wounded its eyes. To have thoroughly rejected ethics, metaphysics and theology from the realm of political knowledge and political prudence is his very own achievement, and it is also the most violent mutilation suffered by the human practical intellect and the organism of practical wisdom.

Radical pessimism regarding human nature is the basis of Machiavelli's thought. After having stated that "a prudent ruler ought not to keep faith when by so doing it would be against his interest, and when the reasons which made him bind himself no longer exist," he writes: "If men were all good, this precept would not be a good one; but *as they are bad*, and would not observe their faith with you, so you are not bound to keep faith with them." Machiavelli knows that they are bad. He does not know that this badness is not radical, that this leprosy cannot destroy man's original grandeur, that human nature remains good in its very essence and its root- tendencies, and that such a basic goodness joined to a swarming multiplication of particular evils is the very mystery and the very

motive of struggle and progression in mankind. Just as his horizon is merely terrestrial, just as his crude empiricism cancels for him the indirect ordainment of political life toward the life of souls and immortality, so his concept of man is merely animal, and his crude empiricism cancels for him the image of God in man—a cancellation which is the metaphysical root of every power politics and every political totalitarianism. As to their common and most frequent behavior, Machiavelli thinks, men are beasts, guided by covetousness and fear. But the prince is a man, that is, an animal of prey endowed with intelligence and calculation. In order to govern men, that is, to enjoy power, the prince must be taught by Chiron the centaur, and learn to become both a fox and a lion. Fear, animal fear, and animal prudence translated into human art and awareness, are accordingly the supreme rulers of the political realm.

Yet the pessimism of Machiavelli is extremely removed from any heroic pessimism. To the evil that he sees everywhere, or believes he sees everywhere, he gives his consent. He consents, he aspires to become a clearsighted composite of fox and lion. "For how we live," he says, "is so far removed from how we ought to live, that he who abandons what is done for what ought to be done, will rather learn to bring about his own ruin than his preservation." Therefore we have to abandon what *ought to be done* for *what is done*, and it is necessary for the prince, he also says, "to learn how not to be good, and to use this knowledge and not use it, according to the necessity of the case." And this is perfectly logical if the end of ends is only present success. Yet such an abandonment, such a resignation would be logical also, not only for political life, but for the entire field of human life. Descartes, in the provisory rules of morality which he gave himself in the *Discours de la* Méthode, made up his mind to imitate the actual customs and doings of his fellow-men, instead of practicing what they say we ought to do. He did not perceive that this was a good precept of immorality: for, as a matter of fact, men live more often by senses than by reason. It is easy to observe with Max Lerner that many Church princes, like the secular princes, and above all that Alexander VI whom Machiavelli gives often in example, were among the principal followers of Machiavelli's precepts. But never has any catechism taught that we must imitate the Church princes in our conduct, it is Christ that religion teaches us to imitate. The first step to be taken by everyone who wishes to act morally is to decide not to act according to the general customs and doings of his fellow men. This is a precept of the Gospel: "Do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not. . . ."[4]

The practical result of Machiavelli's teachings has been, for modern conscience, a profound split, an incurable division between politics and morality, and consequently an illusory but deadly antinomy between what they call *idealism* (wrongly confused with ethics) and what they call *realism* (wrongly confused with politics). Henceforth, as Max Lerner puts it, "the polar conflict between the ethical and the ruthlessly realistic." I shall come back to this point. For the present I wish to note two kinds of complications which arise in this connection in the case of Machiavelli himself.

The first complication comes from the fact that Machiavelli, like many great pessimists, had a somewhat rough and elementary idea of moral science, plainly disregarding its realist, experiential, and existential character, and lifting up to heaven, or rather up to the clouds, an altogether naive morality which obviously cannot be practiced by the sad yet really living and laboring inhabitants of this earth. The man of ethics appears to him as a feeble-minded and disarmed victim, occasionally noxious, of the beautiful rules of some Platonist and separate world of perfection. On the other hand, and because such a morality is essentially a self-satisfying show of pure and lofty shapes—that is, a dreamed-up compensation for our muddy state—Machiavelli constantly slips from the idea of well-doing to the idea of what men admire as well-doing, from moral virtue to appearing and apparent moral virtue: his virtue is a virtue of opinion, self-satisfaction and glory. Accordingly, what he calls vice and evil, and considers to be contrary to virtue and morality, may sometimes be only the authentically moral behavior of a just man engaged in the complexities of human life and of true ethics: for instance, justice itself may call for relentless energy—which is neither vengeance nor cruelty—against wicked and false-hearted enemies. Or the toleration of some existing evil—if there is no furthering of or cooperating with the same—may be required for avoiding a greater evil or for slowing down and progressively reducing this very evil. Or even dissimulation is not always bad faith or knavery. It would not be moral, but foolish, to open up one's heart and inner thoughts to whatsoever dull or mischievous fellow. Stupidity is never moral, it is a vice. No doubt it is difficult to mark exactly the limits between cunning and lying, and even some great saints of the Old Testament—I am thinking of Abraham—did not take great care of this distinction. This was a consequence of what may be called the twilight status of moral conscience in the dawn-ages of mankind.[5] Yet a certain amount of cunning, if it is intended to deceive evil-disposed persons,

must not be considered fox's wiles, but intellect's legitimate weapon. Oriental peoples know that very well, and even evangelical candor has to use the prudence of the serpent, as well as the simplicity of the dove (the dove tames the serpent, but the lion does not tame the fox). The question is to use such cunning without the smallest bit of falsehood or imposture: this is exactly the affair of intelligence; and the use of lying—namely the large-scale industrialisation of lying, of which contemporary dictatorships offer us the spectacle—appears from this point of view, not only as moral baseness, but also as vulgarity of mind and thorough degradation of intelligence.

The second complication arises from the fact that Machiavelli was a cynic operating on the given moral basis of civilized tradition, and whose cruel work of exposure took for granted the coherence and density of this deep-rooted tradition. Clear-sighted and intelligent as he was, he was perfectly aware of that fact; that is why he would pale at the sight of modern Machiavellianism. This commentator of Titus Livius was instructed by Latin tradition, he was a partaker as well as a squanderer of humanist learning, an inheritor as well as an opponent of the manifold treasure of knowledge prepared by Christian centuries, and degenerating in his day. He never negates the values of morality, he knows them and recognizes them as they have been established by ancient wisdom, he occasionally praises virtuous leaders (that is, whose virtues were made successful by circumstances), he knows that cruelty and faithlessness are shameful, he never calls evil good or good evil. He simply denies to moral values—and this is largely sufficient to corrupt politics—any application in the political field. He teaches his prince to be cruel and faithless, according to the case, that is, to be evil according to the case, and when he writes that the prince must learn how not to be good, he is perfectly aware that not to be good is to be bad. Hence his difference from many of his disciples, and the special savor, the special power of intellectual stimulation of his cynicism. But hence also his special sophistry, and the mantle of civilized intelligence with which he unintentionally covered and veiled for a time the deepest meaning, the wild meaning, of his message.

Finally, the "*grammar of power*" and the recipes of success written by Machiavelli are the work of a pure artist, and of a pure artist of that Italian Renaissance where the great heritage of the antique and Christian mind, falling in jeopardy, blossomed into the most beautiful, delightful, and poisonous flowers. What makes the study of Machiavelli extremely instructive for a philosopher, is the fact that

nowhere is it possible to find a more purely artistic conception of politics.[6] And here is his chief philosophical fault, if it is true that politics belongs to the field of the "praktikon" (to do), not of the "poietikon" (to make), and is by essence a branch—the principal branch, according to Aristotle—of ethics. Politics is distinct from individual ethics as a branch from another branch on the same tree, it is a special and specific part of ethics, and it carries within itself an enormous amount of art and technique. It is organically, vitally and intrinsically subordinated to the molding intelligence, and imagination is much greater in political than in individual or even familial ethics. But all this amount of art and technique is organically vitally and intrinsically subordinated to the ethical energies which constitute politics, that is to say, art is there in no manner autonomous, art is there embodied in and encompassed with and lifted up by ethics, as the physico-chemical activities in our body are insubstantiated in our living substance and superelevated by our vital energies. When these merely physico-chemical activities are liberated and become autonomous, there is no longer a living organism, but a corpse. Thus, merely artistic politics, liberated from ethics, that is, from the practical knowledge of man, from the science of human acts, from truly human finalities and truly human doings, is a corpse of political wisdom and political prudence.

Indeed, Machiavelli's very own genius has been to disentangle as perfectly as possible all the content of art carried along by politics from the ethical substance thereof. His position therefore is that of a separate artistic spirit contemplating from without the vast matter of human affairs, with all the ethical cargo, all the intercrossings of good and evil they involve, and to teach his disciple how to conquer and maintain power in handling this matter as a sculptor handles clay or marble. Ethics is here present, but in the matter to be shaped and dominated. We understand from this point of view how *The Prince* as well as *The Discourses* are rich in true observations and sometimes in true precepts, but perceived and stated in a false light and in a reversed or perverted perspective. For Machiavelli makes use of good as well as of evil, and is ready to succeed with virtue as well as with vice. That specific concept of *virtù*, that is, of brilliant, well-balanced and skilled strength, which was at the core of the morality of his time, as an aesthetic and artistic transposition of the Aristotelian concept of virtue, is always present in his work.[7] He knows that no political achievement is lasting if the prince has not the friendship of the people, but it is not the good of the people, it is only the power of the prince which matters to him in this truth perversely taught. *The Discourses*[8] eloquently emphasize the fundamental importance of religion in the

state, but the truth or falsity of any religion whatsoever is here perfectly immaterial, even religion is offered as the best means of cheating the people, and what Machiavelli teaches is "the use of a national religion for state purposes," by virtue of "its power as a myth in unifying the masses and cementing their morale"[9]: a perversion of religion which is surely worse and more atheistic than crude atheism—and the devastating effects of which the world may see and enjoy in the totalitarian plagues of today.

Here we are confronted with the paradox and the internal principle of instability of Machiavelli's Machiavellianism. It essentially supposes the complete eradication of moral values in the brain of the political artist as such, yet at the same time it also supposes the actual existence and actual vitality of moral values and moral beliefs in all others, in all the human matter that the prince is to handle and dominate. But it is impossible that the use of a supramoral, that is, a thoroughly immoral art of politics should not produce a progressive lowering and degeneration of moral values and moral beliefs in the common human life, a progressive disintegration of the inherited stock of stable structures and customs linked with these beliefs, and finally a progressive corruption of the ethical and social matter itself with which this supramoral politics deals. Thus, such an art wears away and destroys its very matter, and, by the same token, will degenerate itself. Hence Machiavelli could only have rare authentic disciples; during the classical centuries of Henry VIII and Elizabeth, Mazarin and Richelieu, Frederick, Catherine of Russia and Talleyrand, the latter was perhaps the only perfect pupil of Machiavelli; finally Machiavelli's teachings, which imply an essentially rational and well-measured, that is, an artistic use of evil, were to give place to that use of every kind of seemingly useful evil by great irrational and demonic forces and by an intelligence no longer artistic but vulgar and brutal and wild, and to that immersion of the rulers as well as of the ruled in a rotted ethics, calling good evil and evil good, which constitute the common Machiavellianism of today.

II

But so much for Machiavelli. It is this common Machiavellianism that I wish now to consider. In so doing, I should like briefly to touch the three following points: first, the notion of common good and the factual triumph of Machiavellianism; second, the crucial conflict which here constitutes the main problem, and the resolution thereof; third, the roots and the more subtle implications of this reso-

lution, which concern the specific structure of politics in its relationship with morality.

Now for my first point. For Machiavelli the end of politics is power's conquest and maintenance, which is a work of art to be performed. On the contrary, according to the nature of things, the end of politics is the common good of a united people; which end is essentially something concretely human, therefore something ethical. This common good consists of the good life—that is, a life conformable to the essential exigencies and the essential dignity of human nature, a life both morally straight and happy—of the social whole as such, of the gathered multitude, in such a way that the increasing treasure and heritage of communicable good things involved in this good life of the whole be in some way spilled over and redistributed to each individual part of the community. This common good is at once material, intellectual, and moral, and principally moral, as man himself is; it is a common good of human persons. Therefore, it is not only something useful, an ensemble of advantages and profits, it is essentially something good in itself—what the Ancients termed *bonum honestum*. Justice and civic friendship are its cement. Bad faith, perfidy, lying, cruelty, assassination, and all other procedures of this kind which may occasionally appear *useful* to the power of the ruling clique or to the prosperity of the state, are in themselves—insofar as political deeds, that is, deeds involving in some degree the common conduct—injurious to the common good and tend by themselves toward its corruption. Finally, because good life on earth is not the absolute ultimate end of man, and because the human person has a destiny superior to time, political common good involves an intrinsic though indirect reference to the absolutely ultimate end of the human members of society, which is eternal life, in such a way that the political community should temporally, and from below, help each human person in his human task of conquering his final freedom and fulfilling his final destiny.

Such is the basic political concept which Machiavellianism broke down and destroyed. If the aim of politics is common good, peace—a constructive peace struggling through time toward man's emancipation from any form of enslavement—is the health of the state; and the organs of justice, above all of distributive justice, are the chief power in the state. If the aim of politics is power, war is the health of the state, as Machiavelli put it, and military strength is the chief power in the state. If the aim of politics is common good, the ruler, having to take care of the temporal end of a community of human persons, and having to avoid in this task any lack of clear-sightedness and any slip of will, must learn

to be, as St. Thomas taught, a man good in every respect, *bonus vir simpliciter*. If the aim of politics is power, the ruler must learn not to be good, as Machiavelli said.

The great rulers of modern times have well understood and conscientiously learned this lesson. Lord Acton was right in stating that "the authentic interpreter of Machiavelli is the whole of later history."[10] We have to distinguish, however, two kinds of common Machiavellianism. There was a kind of more or less attenuated, dignified, conservative Machiavellianism, using injustice within "reasonable" limits, if I may put it so. In the minds of its followers, what is called *Realpolitik* was obfuscated and more or less paralyzed, either by a personal pattern of moral scruples and moral rules, which they owed to the common heritage of our civilization, or by traditions of diplomatic good form and respectability, or even, in certain instances, by lack of imagination, of boldness, and of inclination to take risks. If I try to characterize more precisely these moderate Machiavellians, I should say that they preserved in some way, or believed they preserved, regarding the *end* of politics, the concept of common good—they were unfaithful to their master in this regard; and that they frankly used Machiavellianism regarding the means of procuring this common good. Such an unnatural split and disproportion between means and ends was, moreover, inevitably to lead to a perversion of the idea of common good itself, which became more and more a set of material advantages and profits for the state, or territorial conquests, or prestige and glory. The greatest representative of moderate Machiavellianism was, in my opinion, Richelieu. Bismarck was a transition from this first form of Machiavellianism to the second one, of which I shall now speak.

This second form of Machiavellianism is absolute Machiavellianism. It was intellectually prepared, during the nineteenth century, by the Positivist trend of mind, which considered politics to be, not a mere art, but a mere natural science, like astronomy or chemistry, and a mere application of so-called "scientific laws" to the struggle for life of human societies—a concept much less intelligent and still more inhuman than that of Machiavelli himself. Absolute Machiavellianism was also and principally prepared by the Romanticist German philosophy of Fichte and Hegel. It is well known that Fichte made an analysis of Machiavelli part of his *Address to the German Nation*: as to the Hegelian cult of the state, it is a metaphysical sublimation of Machiavelli's principles. Now the turn has been completed, ethics itself has been swallowed up into the political denial of ethics, power and success have become supreme moral criteria, "the course of world history stands apart from virtue, blame and justice," as Hegel put it, and

at the same time "human history," he also said, "is God's judgment." Machiavellianism is no longer politics, it is metaphysics, it is a religion, a prophetical and mystical enthusiasm.

It sufficed for such an enthusiasm to enter into some desperados who were empty, as it were, of the usual characters of rational personality, but open to the great collective forces of instinct, resentment, and tellurian inspiration; it sufficed for such leaders to give a full practical significance to the old infernal discovery of the endless reserves of evil when thoroughly accepted and utilized, and of the seemingly infinite power of that which negates, of the dissolving forces and of the corruption of human consciences—in order for absolute Machiavellianism to arise in the world, and in order for the unmasking Centaur to be unmasked in its turn.[11] Here we are confronted with that impetuous, irrational, revolutionary, wild, and demoniacal Machiavellianism, for which *boundless* injustice, *boundless* violence, *boundless* lying and immorality, are normal political means, and which draws from this very boundlessness of evil an abominable strength. And we may experience what kind of common good a power which knows perfectly how not to be good, and whose hypocrisy is a conscious and happy, ostentatious and gloriously promulgated hypocrisy, and whose cruelty wants to destroy souls as well as bodies, and whose lying is a thorough perversion of the very function of language, what kind of common good such a power is able to bring to mankind. Absolute Machiavellianism causes politics to be the art of bringing about the misfortune of men.

That's how it is. But absolute Machiavellianism succeeds, does it not? At least it has succeeded for many years. How could it not succeed, when everything has been sacrificed to the aim of success? Here is the ordeal and the scandal of contemporary conscience. Moreover it would be astonishing if a timid and limited Machiavellianism were not overcome and thrown away by a boundless and cynical Machiavellianism, stopping at nothing. If there is an answer to the deadly question which we are asked by the Sphinx of history, it can only lie in a thorough reversal of a century-old political thought. In the meantime, the peoples which stand against absolute Machiavellianism will be able to stop its triumphs and to overcome its standard-bearers only in wasting and sacrificing in this struggle their blood and their wealth and their dearest treasures of peaceful civilization, and in turning against this Machiavellianism its own material weapon, material techniques and gigantic means of destruction. But will they be obliged, in order to conquer it and to maintain themselves, to adopt not only its material weapons, but also its own spirit and philosophy? Will they yield to the temptation of losing for the sake of life their very reason for living and existing?

III

Here we arrive at the crucial conflict which I intend to discuss as my second point.

Confronted with any temptation of Machiavellianism, that is, of gaining success and power by means of evil, moral conscience answers and cannot keep from answering, just as when it is tempted by any profitable fault: it is never allowed to do evil for any good whatsoever. And Christian conscience in this case is strengthened by the very word of the Gospel. When the devil tempted Jesus by showing him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and telling him: "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me," Jesus answered, "Get thee hence, Satan. For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."[12]

Such is the answer that the human person, looking up to his own destiny as a person, to his immortal soul, his ultimate end and everlasting life, to his God, gives to politics when politics offers him the kingdoms of the world at the price of his soul. This answer, and the personage to whom it was given, show us the root significance of politics making itself absolutely autonomous, and claiming to be man's absolutely ultimate end. It shows us the transcendent meaning of the pagan empire, and of any paganized empire, and of any self-styled holy empire if its Caesar—be he a Christian emperor or a socialist dictator, or any kind of Great Inquisitor in the sense of Dostoyevsky's famous legend—wills to settle and manage on earth the final kingdom of God or the final kingdom of man, which is the same final kingdom. "Get thee hence, Satan," answers Christ. State and politics, when truly separated from ethics are the realm of those demoniacal principalities which St. Paul spoke of. The pagan empire is the empire of man making himself God, the diametrical opposite of the kingdom of redemptive incarnation.

Yet the answer we are considering does not solve our conflict. On the contrary, it increases this conflict, it widens the tear to the infinite, it clamps down on the Machiavellian temptation without appeasing the anguish and scandal of our intellect. For it is an answer given by personal ethics to a question asked by political ethics; it transcends the question, as the person, with regard to his eternal destiny, transcends the state; it cuts short the question, it does not resolve it. Obviously no assertion of the individual ethics of the person, as absolutely true, absolutely decisive as it may be, can constitute a sufficiently adequate and rele-

vant answer to a problem stated by the ethics of the state. Exactly because it is a transcendent answer, it is not a proper one. Machiavellianism succeeds, does it not? Absolute Machiavellianism triumphs on earth, as our eyes have seen it for years. Is morality willing, is Christianity willing, is God willing that, of necessity, all our freedoms be conquered, our civilization destroyed, the very hope annihilated of seeing a little justice and brotherly amity raise our earthly life—willing that, of necessity, our lives be enslaved, our temples and institutions broken down, our brethren persecuted and crushed, our children corrupted, our very souls and intelligence delivered over to perversion by the great imperial standard-bearers of Machiavellianism, because of the very fact that we adhere to justice and refuse the devil, while they dare to use injustice and evil and accede to the devil up to the end?

It is the true goal of the *person* which is eternal, not that of the *state*. If a man suffers martyrdom and enters paradise, his own soul enjoys bliss. But suppose all the citizens of a tributary state of some Nero suffer martyrdom and enter paradise, it is not the soul of this state which will enjoy bliss; moreover, this state no longer exists. The state has no immortal soul, nor has a nation, unless perhaps as concerns a merely spiritual survival of its common moral heritage in the memory of men or in the virtues of the immortal souls which animated its members long ago, at the time when it existed. It is a joke to console Frenchmen and ask them to accept the destruction or the enslavement of France in speaking to them of *la France éternelle*. The soul of a nation is not immortal. The direct and specifying end, the common good of a nation is something temporal and terrestrial, something which can and should be superelevated by Gospel virtues in its own order, but whose own order is natural, not supernatural, and belongs to the realm of time. Therefore the very existence, temporal and terrestrial, the very improvement, temporal and terrestrial, the very prosperity of a nation, and that amount of happiness and glory which arises from the crises themselves and from the ordeals of history, really and essentially pertain to the common good of this nation.

No doubt—to imagine a thoroughly extreme example—a nation or a state could and should accept destruction, as did the legion of Mauritius, if its citizens were summoned to choose between martyrdom and apostasy; but such a case would not be a political case, it would be a case of sacrifice of political life itself to divine life, and a witnessing, in some way miraculous, of the superiority of the order of grace over the order of nature. But in political life itself, in the order of nature, in the framework of the temporal laws of human existence, is it not

impossible that the first of the normal means of providing the common good of a state, that is, justice and political morality, should lead to the ruin and disaster of this state? Is it not impossible that the first of the means of corrupting the common good of a state, that is, injustice and political treachery, should lead to the triumph and prosperity of this state?

Yes, this is impossible.

Yet Machiavellianism succeeds in political history? Evil succeeds?

What is then the answer?

The answer is that evil *does not* succeed. In reality Machiavellianism does not succeed. To destroy is not to succeed. Machiavellianism succeeds in bringing about the misfortune of man, which is the exact opposite of any genuinely political end. More or less bad Machiavellians have succeeded for centuries against other more or less bad Machiavellians, this is mere exchange of counterfeit coin. Absolute Machiavellianism succeeds against moderate or weak Machiavellianism, this also is normal. But if absolute Machiavellianism were to succeed absolutely and definitely in the world, this would simply mean that political life would have disappeared from the face of the earth, giving place to an entanglement and commixture of the life of the animals and the slaves, and of the life of the saints.

But in saying that evil and injustice do not succeed in politics, I mean a more profound philosophical truth. The endless reserves of evil, the seemingly infinite power of evil of which I spoke a moment ago, are only, in reality, the power of corruption—the squandering and dissipation of the substance and energy of Being and of Good. Such a power destroys itself in destroying that good which is its subject. The inner dialectic of the successes of evil condemn them not to be lasting. The true philosophical answer consists therefore in taking into account the dimension of time, the duration proper to the historical turns of nations and states, which considerably exceeds the duration of a man's life. According to this *political duration* of vital maturations and fructifications, I do not say that a just politics will, even in a distant future, always actually succeed, nor that Machiavellianism will, even in a distant future, always actually fail. For, with nations and states and civilizations we are in the order of nature, where mortality is natural and where life and death depend on physical as well as moral causes. I say that justice works through its own causality toward welfare and success in the future, as a healthy sap works toward the perfect fruit, and that Machiavellianism

works through its own causality for ruin and bankruptcy, as poison in the sap works for the illness and death of the tree.

Now, what is the illusion proper to Machiavellianism? It is the illusion *of immediate success*. The duration of the life of a man, or rather the duration of the activity of the prince, of the political man, circumscribes the maximum length of time required by what I call *immediate success*, for immediate success is a success that our eyes may see. But what we are speaking of, what Machiavelli is speaking of, in saying that evil and injustice succeed in politics, is in reality *immediate success*, as I have defined it. Now immediate success is success for a man, it is not success for a state or a nation. It may be—it is, in the case of Machiavellian successes considered as to their inner causal law, a disaster according to the duration proper to state-vicissitudes and nation-vicissitudes. It is with regard to immediate success that evil and injustice enjoy a seemingly infinite power: a power which can be met and overcome only by a heroic tension of the antagonistic powers. But the more dreadful in intensity such a power of evil appears, the weaker in historic duration are the internal improvements, and the vigor of life, which have been gained by a state using this power.

As I have already put it in other studies, the good in which the state's justice bears fruit, the misfortune in which the state's injustice bears fruit, have nothing to do with the immediate and visible results; historic *duration* must be taken into account; the temporal good in which the state's justice fructifies, the temporal evil in which its iniquity bears its fruit, may be and are in fact quite different from the immediate results which the human mind might have expected and which the human eyes contemplate. It is as easy to disentangle these remote causations as to tell at a river's mouth which waters come from which glaciers and which tributaries. The achievements of the great Machiavellians seem durable to us, because our scale of duration-measurements is an exceedingly small one, with regard to the time proper to nations and human communities. We do not understand the fair play of God, who gives those who have freely chosen injustice the time to exhaust the benefits of it and the fullness of its energies. When disaster comes to these victors the eyes of the righteous who cried against them to God will have long putrefied under the earth, and men will not know the distant source of the catastrophe.

Thus it is true that politics being something intrinsically moral, the first political condition of good politics is that it be just. And it is true at the same time that justice and virtue do not, as a rule, lead us to success in this world. But the antinomy is solved, because on the one hand success in politics is not material

power nor material wealth nor world-domination, but the achievement of the common good, with the conditions of material prosperity which it involves. And because, on the other hand, these very conditions of material prosperity, as terrible as the ordeals may be which the requirements of justice impose on a people, are not and cannot be put in jeopardy or to destruction by the use of justice itself, if historical duration is taken into account and if the specific effect of this use of justice is considered in itself, apart from the effect of the other factors at play.

I do not mean that God recompenses the just peoples by the blessings of military triumphs, territorial aggrandizements, accumulation of wealth, or infinite profit in business: such values are but secondary, sometimes even injurious to the political common good. Moreover, if it is true that the political life of peoples may be enveloped in its own order by Christian influences, it may be that a Christian nation has to undergo in a measure the very law of evangelical trials, and to pay for a certain abundance of spiritual or cultural improvements at the price of certain weaknesses and infirmities in worldly values. Such was the case of Italy in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Never did Italy know a more splendid civilization, than in those times when the power of the Popes brought her, as Machiavelli points out, weakness and pain regarding her political unity. Nor do I mean that a state using political justice is by this fact alone protected against ruin or destruction. What I mean is that in such a misfortune the very cause of ruin or destruction is never the use of justice. What I mean is that the very order of nature and of natural laws in moral matters, which is the natural justice of God, makes justice and political righteousness work towards fructifying, in the long run, as regards their own law of action, into an improvement of the true common good and the real values of civilization. Such was the case for the policy of St. Louis, although he was beaten in all his enterprises of crusade. Political injustices, on the other hand, political treacheries, political greed, selfishness or cowardice, exploitation of the poor and the weak, intoxication with power or glory or self-interest—or that kind of political cleverness which consists, as a professor in international policy told me candidly some years ago, in using flattery and leniency toward our enemy, because he is an enemy, and therefore is to be feared, and in forsaking our friend, because he is a friend, and therefore is not to be feared—or that kind of political firmness which consists in denouncing some predatory state which is attacking a weak nation, and in selling weapons and supplies to the same aggressor, because business must keep going—all this is always dearly paid for in the end. Wars, even just wars which must be waged

against iniquitous aggressors, are often the payment thus exacted from a civilization.[13] Then war must be waged with unshaken resolution. But victory will be fruitful only on the condition of casting away the wrongdoings of the past, and of decidedly converting oneself toward justice and political righteousness.

The more I think of these things, the more I am convinced that the observations I proposed a moment ago on the dimension of time are the core of the question. To be lasting is an essential characteristic of the common good. A forester who would seek immediate visible success in planting plenty of big old trees in his forest, instead of preparing young saplings, would use a foolish forester policy. Machiavelli's prince is a bad political man, he perverts politics, because his chief aim is his own personal power and the satisfaction of his own personal ambition. But, in a much more profound and radical sense, the ruler who sacrifices everything to the desire of his own eyes to see the triumph of his policy is a bad ruler and perverts politics, even if he lacks personal ambition and loves his country disinterestedly: because he measures the time of maturation of the political good according to the short years of his own personal time of activity.

As regards the great representatives of contemporary Machiavellianism, with their mad lust for personal power, nothing is more instructive in this connection than the ferocious impatience of their general policy. They apply the law of war, which requires a series of immediate striking successes, but which is a supreme and abnormal crisis in the life of human societies, to the very development of the normal life of the state. In so doing, they appear, not as empire-builders, but as mere squanderers of the heritage of their nations.

Yet a fructification which will come into existence in a distant future but which we do not see, is for us as immaterial as a fructification which would never exist on earth. To act with justice, without picking any fruit of justice, but only fruits of bitterness and sorrow and defeat, is difficult for a man. It is still more difficult for a man of politics, even for a just and wise one—who works at an earthly work that is the most arduous and the highest among temporal works—the common good of the multitude—and whose failures are the failures of an entire people and of a dear country. He must live on hope. Is it possible to live on hope without living on faith? Is it possible to rely on the unseen without relying on faith?

I do not believe that men in politics can escape the temptation of Machiavellianism, if they do not believe that there exists a supreme government of the

universe, which is, properly speaking, divine, for God—the head of the cosmos—is also the head of this particular order which is that of ethics. [They also cannot avoid this temptation][14] if they do not entrust the providence of God, by faith, with the care of all that supra-empirical, dark and mysterious disentanglement of the fructifications of good and evil which no human eye can perceive—thus closing their eyes, by faith, as regards the factual achievements in the distant future, while they open their eyes and display, by knowledge and prudence, more watchfulness than any fox or lion, as regards the preparations of these achievements and the seeds to be presently put into the earth.

A merely natural political morality is not enough to provide us with the means of putting its own rules into practice. Moral conscience does not suffice, if it is not at the same time religious conscience. What is able to face Machiavellianism, moderate Machiavellianism and absolute Machiavellianism, is not merely natural, as it were, just politics, it is Christian politics. For, in the existential context of the life of mankind, politics, because it belongs by its very essence to the ethical realm, demands consequently to be helped and strengthened, in order not to deviate and in order to attain a sufficiently perfect point of maturation, by everything man receives, in his social life itself, from religious belief and from the word of God working within him. This is what the authors of the Declaration of Independence and of the Constitution of this country understood and expressed in a form adapted to the philosophy of their time, and what makes their accomplishment so outstanding to the mind of everyone who believes Christianity to be efficacious not only for heaven but also for earth: among modern states, there is one state to whose political instinct and understanding Machiavellianism is basically repugnant, this one is the United States. Christian politics is neither theocratic nor clerical, nor yet a politics of pseudo-evangelical weakness and nonresistance to evil, but a genuinely political politics, ever aware that it is situated in the order of nature and must put into practice natural virtues; that it must be armed with real and concrete justice, with force, perspicacity and prudence; a politics which would hold the sword that is the attribute of the state, but which would also realize that peace is the work not only of justice but of love, and that love is also an essential part of political virtue. For it is never excess of love that fools political men, but without love and generosity there is regularly blindness and miscalculation. Such a politics would be mindful of the eternal destiny of man and of the truths of the Gospel, knowing in its proper order—in a measure adapted to its temporal ends—something of the spirits of love, and of forgiveness.

IV

We arrive now at the third consideration I indicated at the beginning, in which I should like to make clearer certain particular points concerning the relationship between politics and morality.

As I have previously pointed out, political reality, though principally moral, is by essence both moral and physical, as man himself, but in a different manner from man, because it does not have any substantial immortal soul. Societies are like ever-growing organisms, immense and long-living trees, or coral-flowers, which would lead at the same time a moral and human life. And in the order to which they belong, which is that of Time and Becoming, death is natural; human communities, nations, states and civilizations naturally die, and die for all time, as would these morally-living coral-flowers of which I just spoke. Their birth, growth and decay, their health, their diseases, their death, depend on basic physical conditions, in which the specific qualities of moral behavior are intermingled and play an essential part, but which are more primitive than these qualities. Similarly, imprudence or intemperance may hasten the death of a man, self-control may defer this death, yet in any case this man will die.

Justice and moral virtues do not prevent the natural laws of senescence of human societies. They do not prevent physical catastrophes from destroying them. In what sense are they the chief forces of the preservation and duration of societies? In the sense that they compose the very soul of society, its internal and spiritual force of life. Such a force does not secure immortality to the society, no more than my immortal soul protects me from death. Such a force is not an immortal entelechy, because it is not substantial; yet, insofar as it is spiritual, it is by itself indestructible. Corrupt this force, and an internal principle of death is introduced into the core of the society. Maintain and improve this force, and the internal principle of life is strengthened in the society. Suppose a human community is hammered, crushed, overwhelmed by some natural calamity or some powerful enemy: as long as it still exists—if it preserves within itself justice and civic friendship and faith, there is actual hope of resurging within itself, there is a force within itself which tends by itself to make it live and get the upper hand and avail itself of disaster; because no hammer can destroy this immaterial force. If a human community loses these virtues, its internal principle of life is invaded by death.

What therefore must be said, is that justice and righteousness *tend by themselves* to the preservation of states, and to that real *success* at long range of which I spoke a moment ago. And that injustice and evil *tend by themselves* to the destruction of states, and to that real *failure* at long range of which I also spoke.

Such is the law of the fructification of human actions which is inscribed in the nature of things and which is but the natural justice of God in human history.

But if the normal fruit of success and prosperity called for by political justice and wisdom does not come into actual existence because the tree is too old or because some storm has broken its branches; or if the normal fruit of failure and destruction, called for by political wickedness and madness, does not come into actual existence because the physical conditions in the sap or in the environment have counterbalanced the internal principle of death—such an accident does not suppress that regularity inherent in the law which I emphasized in the previous part of this essay, and only bears witness to the fact that nations and civilizations are naturally mortal. As I pointed out some moments ago, justice may sometimes, even in a distant future, not actually succeed in preserving a state from ruin and destruction. But justice tends by itself to this preservation; and it is not by virtue of justice, it is by virtue of physical conditions counterbalancing from without the very effects of justice that misfortune will then occur. Machiavellianism and political perversion may sometimes, even in a distant future, not actually break, they may triumph decisively over weak and innocent peoples. But they tend by themselves to self destruction; and it is not by virtue of Machiavellianism and political perversion, it is by virtue of other conditions counterbalancing from without the very effects of these, that success will then occur.

If a weak state is surrounded and threatened by Machiavellian enemies, it must desperately increase its physical power, but also its moral virtues. Suppose it delivers its own soul to Machiavellianism—then it only adds a principle of death to its already existing weaknesses. If a civilization grown old and naturally bound to die, as the Roman Empire was at the time of St. Augustine, if a political state artificially and violently built up, and naturally bound to fail, as was the German Reich of Bismarck and Wilhelm, wished none the less to escape either death or failure by letting loose evil and perversion, then it would only poison centuries and prepare for itself a historical hell worse than death.

It seems not irrelevant to add the two following observations. First: innumerable are, in the history of mankind, the cases where the strong have triumphed over the weak; yet this was not always a triumph of strength over right, for most often right's sanctity was as immaterial to the conquered weak as it was to the

conquering strong. Greece was conquered by Rome (and was to conquer intellectually Roman civilization): at that time Greece had lost its political soul.

Second: As to the lasting or seemingly lasting triumphs of political injustice over innocent people, they also are not rare, at least at first glance. They concern most often, however, the enslavement, sometimes the destruction, of populations or human groups not yet arrived at a truly political status by nations enjoying this very status—of such a fact the most striking instance is to be found in the history of modern colonization. But it seems that in proportion as peoples arrive at a truly political status, and really constitute a *civitas*, a political house and community, in this proportion the immaterial internal force which abides in them and is made up of long-lived justice and love and moral energies, and of deep-rooted memories, and of a specific spiritual heritage, becomes a more and more *formed* and cohesive soul; and in this very proportion this soul takes precedence over the merely physical conditions of existence and tends to render such peoples unconquerable. If they are conquered and oppressed, they remain alive and keep on struggling under oppression. Then an instinct of prophecy develops among them, as in Poland at the time of Mickiewicz,[15] and their hopes naturally lift up toward the supernatural example of any historical perennity in the midst of oppression, the example of the house of Israel, whose internal immaterial force and principle of communion is of a supra-political and supra-temporal order.

Yet a final question arises now, which is of a rather metaphysical nature. I have said that the natural laws, according to which political justice fructifies by itself into the good and the preservation of a given human community, evil and political injustice into its destruction, are to be identified with the natural justice of God in human history. But is not an essential tendency only connoted here? Did I not emphasize the fact that even at long range such normal fructifications may fail, that the fruit of evil for the unjust state, the fruit of good for the just one, may be marred, because of the physical factors and particularly because of the physical laws of senescence and death which interfere here with the moral factors? If this is the case, where is the natural justice of God? Justice does not deal with tendencies, as essential as they may be, whose factual result may fail to appear, it deals with sanctions which never fail.

The question we are facing here transcends the field of moral philosophy and historical experience, and deals with the knowledge we are able to stammer of the divine government of created things. The first answer which comes to the

mind of a Christian metaphysician consists in affirming a priori that the natural fructifications of good and evil never fail, the fruit of justice and the fruit of injustice are never marred: which seems self-evident, since the justice of God cannot be deceived. Because states and nations have no immortal destiny, not only must the sanctions deserved by their deeds reach men within time and upon the earth, but they must do so in an absolutely infallible manner.

In considering the problem more attentively, I believe, however, that this answer results from a kind of undue reverberation of considerations pertaining to theology upon metaphysical matters, which causes things which belong to time and history to be endowed with that absolute firmness which is proper to things relating to eternity.

It is perfectly true that God's justice cannot fail as regards the immortal destiny of each human person, which is accomplished in fact, according to Christianity's teachings, in the supernatural order. Yet it would be too hasty a procedure simply to conceive the divine justice which rules the historical fate of human societies, according to the pattern of that divine justice which rules the supra-historical destiny of the human person. In these two cases justice applies to its subject-matter in an analogical fashion. The supra-historical justice cannot fail, because it reaches moral agents—the human persons—who attain their final state, above time. But the historical justice, dealing with human societies, reaches moral agents who do not attain any final state: there is no final sanction for them, sanctions are spread out for them all along time, and intermingled at each moment with their continuing and changing activity; often the fruit of ancient injustice starts up into existence at the very moment when a revival of justice occurs in a given society. Moreover, and by the same token, it appears that these sanctions *in the making* do not enjoy that absolute necessity which is linked with the immutability of some ultimate, eternal accomplishment. What seemed to us, a moment ago, to be self-evident, is not self-evident. It is possible that in the case of human societies the natural fructifications of good and evil be sometimes marred. The sanctions deserved by the deeds of nations and states must reach men within time and upon the earth, yet it is not necessary that they do so in a manner absolutely infallible and always realized.

Consider the civilization of the peoples which lived on legendary Atlantis. The good and bad political deeds of these peoples tended by themselves to bear fruit and to engender their natural sanctions. Yes, but when Atlantis was engulfed by the Ocean, all these fruits to come were cancelled from being as well as the peoples and the civilization from which they were to spring forth. The natural justice

of God, as regards human societies, that is, moral agents immerged in time, may fail just as nature may fail in its physical fructifications. Because this natural historical justice of God is nothing else than nature itself in its not physical, but moral fructifications. God's justice is at work in time and history, it reigns only in heaven and in hell. The concept of perfect and infallible retribution for human deeds, with its absolute adamantine strength, is a religious concept relating to the eternal destiny of human persons; it is not the ethical-philosophical concept which has to be shaped relating to the destiny of human communities in time and history.

Such is the answer which appears to me the true answer to be made to the question we are considering. But we must immediately add that these failures of historical justice are to occur in the fewest number of cases, just as do the failures of nature in the physical order, because they are accidents, in which the very laws of essences do not reach their own effect. There is, indeed, in nature an immense squandering of seeds in order that a few may have the chance of springing up, and still fewer the chance of bearing fruit. Even if the failures of natural historical justice were *abnormities as regards individual accomplishment*, as frequent as the failures of so many wasted seeds, the truth that I am pointing out throughout this essay would none the less remain unshaken: namely, that justice tends by itself toward the welfare and survival of the community, injustice toward its damage and dissolution, and that any long-range success of Machiavellianism is never due to Machiavellianism itself, but to other historical factors at play. Yet the abnormities which really occur *ut in paucioribus* in physical nature are *abnormities as regards specific accomplishment*—as is the production of something deviating from the very essence of the species, the production of "freaks." And it is with such physical abnormities as regards specific accomplishment that the failures of the natural fructifications of good and evil, the failures in the accomplishment of the specific laws of moral essences, must rather be compared. We must therefore emphasize more strongly than ever the fact—which I have already stressed in a previous section—that the sanctions of historical justice fail much more rarely than our short-sighted experience might induce us to believe.

Here a new observation seems to me particularly noticeable. These sanctions, which have been deserved by the deeds of the social or political whole, must not necessarily reverberate on this political whole as such, on the state itself in its existence and power. They may concern the common cultural condition of men considered apart from the actual framework of this whole, yet in some kind of

solidarity with the latter: because the political whole is not a substantial or personal subject, but a community of human persons, and a community related to other communities through vital exchanges. Thus, during the life of a state the fruit of its just or perverted deeds may appear only in some particular improvement or plague of its internal strata; but still more, when a state, a nation, a civilization dies, it is normal that the fructifications of good and evil which its deeds had prepared pass over—in the cultural order and as regards such or such a feature of the common social or cultural status—to its remnants, to the scattered human elements which had been contained in its unity and to their descendants, or to the human communities which are its successors and inheritors.

Then a state or a civilization dissolves, but its good or bad works continue to bear fruit, not strictly political (for the word political, in its strictest sense, connotes the common life of a given state), yet political in a broader and still genuine sense, which relates to the cultural life and to the common cultural heritage of mankind. For there exists a genuine temporal community of mankind—a deep intersolidarity, from generation to generation, linking together the peoples of the earth—a common heritage and a common fate, which does not concern the building of a particular *civil society*, but of a *civilization*, not the prince, but the culture, not the perfect *civitas* in the Aristotelian sense, but that kind of *civitas*, in the Augustinian sense, which is imperfect and incomplete, made up of a fluid network of human communications, and more existential than formally organized, but all the more real and living and basically important. To ignore this non-political *civitas humani generis* is to atomize the basis of political reality, to fail in the very roots of political philosophy, as well as to disregard the progressive trend which naturally tends toward a more organic international structure of peoples.

Thus another fundamental consideration must be added to that of *historic duration*, which I emphasized some time ago: namely the consideration of the *human extension*, down through generations, of the fructifications of political deeds. Then we see in a complete manner the law which binds Machiavellianism to failure, as a rule and as regards the essential tendencies inscribed in nature. If, even at long range, political justice and political injustice do not ever fructify into the political success or disaster of the state itself which has practiced them, they may still produce their fruit according to the laws of human solidarity. By the same stroke we perceive Machiavellianism's mischievousness, weakness and absurdity in their full implications. It is not only for particular states that it prepares misfortune and scourges—first the victims of Machiavellian states, then

the Machiavellian states themselves—it is also for the human race in general. It burdens mankind with an ever-growing burden of evil, unhappiness and disaster. By its own weight and its own internal law it brings about failure, not only with reference to given nations, but with reference to our common kind, with reference to the root community of nations. Just as every other sort of selfishness, this divinized selfishness is essentially blind.

To sum up all that I have stated, I would say first: It suffices to be just in order to gain eternal life; this does not suffice in order to gain battles or immediate political successes.

Second: In order to gain battles or immediate political successes, it is not necessary to be just, it may occasionally be more advantageous to be unjust.

Third: It is necessary, although it is not sufficient, to be just, in order to procure and further the political common good, and the lasting welfare of earthly communities.

The considerations I have developed in my essay are founded on the basic fact that politics is a branch of ethics but a branch specifically distinct from the other branches of the same generic stock. One decisive sign of this specificity of political ethics in contradistinction to personal ethics is that earthly communities are mortal as regards their very being and belong entirely to time. Another sign is that political virtues tend to a relatively ultimate end which is the earthly common good, and are only indirectly related to the absolutely ultimate end of man. Hence many features of political ethics which I can only allude to here, and which secure its truly realist quality; in such a way that many rules of political life, which the pessimists of Machiavellianism usurp to the benefit of immorality, like the political toleration of certain evils and the recognition of the *fait accompli* (the so-called "statute of limitations") which permits the retention of long ago ill-gotten gains, because new human ties and vital relationships have infused them with new-born rights, are in reality ethically grounded; and in such a way that political ethics is able to absorb and digest all the elements of truth contained in Machiavelli, namely, to the extent that power and immediate success are part of politics, but a subordinate part, not the principal part.

May I repeat that a certain hypermoralism, causing political ethics to be something impracticable and merely ideal, is as contrary to this very ethics as Machiavellianism is, and finally plays the game of Machiavellianism, as conscientious objectors play the game of the conquerors. The purity of means consists

in not using means morally bad in themselves, it does not consist in refusing pharisaically any exterior contact with the mud of human life, and it does not consist in waiting for a morally aseptic world before consenting to work in the world, nor does it consist in waiting, before saving one's neighbor, who is drowning, to become a saint, so as to escape any risk of false pride in such a generous act.

If this were the time to present a complete analysis of the particular causes of lasting success and welfare in politics, I should add two observations here. First: While political justice—which is destroyed both by the perversion, that is, by Machiavellianism, and by the distraction of ethics, that is, by hypermoralism—is the prime spiritual condition of lasting success and welfare for a nation as well as for a civilization, the prime *material* condition of this lasting success and welfare is on the one hand that heritage of accepted and unquestionable structures, fixed customs and deep-rooted common feelings which bring into social life itself something of the determined physical data of nature,[16] and of the vital unconscious strength proper to vegetative organisms; and on the other hand that common inherited experience and that set of moral and intellectual instincts which constitute a kind of empirical practical wisdom, much deeper and denser and much nearer the hidden complex dynamism of human life than any artificial construction of reason. And both this somewhat physical heritage and this inherited practical wisdom are intrinsically and essentially bound to and dependent upon moral and religious beliefs. As regards political ethics and political common good, the preservation of these common structures of life and of this common moral dynamism is more fundamental than any particular action of the prince, however serious and decisive this may be in itself. And the workings of such a vast, deep-seated physical-moral energy are more basic and more important to the life of human societies than particular political good or bad calculations. They are for states the prime cause of historic success and welfare. The Roman Empire did not succeed by virtue of the stains, injustices, and cruelties, which were intermingled in its policy, but by virtue of this internal physical-moral strength.

Now, and this is my second observation: what is in itself, even in the order of material causality, primarily and basically destructive of lasting historic success and welfare for a nation as well as for a civilization, is that which is destructive of the common stock and heritage I just described: that is, Machiavellianism on the one hand and hypermoralism on the other. Both destroy, as do gnawing worms, the inner social and ethical living substance upon which depends any lasting

success and welfare, of the commonwealth, as well as that political justice which constitutes the moral righteousness, the chief moral virtue and the very "soul" of human societies.

Thus the split, the deadly division created between ethics and politics both by Machiavellians and by hypermoralists is overcome. Because politics is essentially ethical, and because ethics is essentially realistic, not in the sense of any *Realpolitik*, but in the sense of a real common good.

I am aware that if this antinomy which has been the scourge of modern history, is to be practically, not only theoretically, overcome, it will be only on condition that a kind of revolution take place in our conscience. Machiavelli has made us conscious of what is in fact the average behavior of politics in mankind. In this he was right. It is a natural incline that the man who endeavors to overcome dissociation, the man of unity, has to climb up again. But inclines are made to be climbed. As Bergson pointed out, a genuine democracy, by the very fact that it proceeds from an evangelical motive power, works against the grain of nature and therefore needs some heroical inspiration.

With whatever deficiencies human weakness may encumber the practical issue, the fact remains, in any case, that such an effort must be made, and the knowledge of what is true in these matters is of first and foremost importance. To keep Machiavelli's awareness, with reference to the factual conduct of most of the princes, and to know that this conduct is bad politics, and to clear our conscience from Machiavelli's rules, precepts and philosophy—this is the very end of Machiavellianism.

Here I emphasize anew what I pointed out at the beginning of this essay. Machiavellianism does not consist of this unhappy lot of particular evil and unjust political deeds which are taking place in fact by virtue of human weakness or wickedness. Machiavellianism is a philosophy of politics, stating that by rights good politics is supra-moral or immoral politics and by essence must make use of evil. What I have discussed is this political philosophy. There will be no end to the occurrence of misdeeds and mistakes as long as humanity endures. To Machiavellianism there can and must be an end.

Let us conclude. Machiavellianism is an illusion, because it rests upon the power of evil, and because, metaphysically, evil as such has no power as a cause of being; practically, evil has no power as a cause of any lasting achievement. As to moral entities like peoples, states, and nations, which do not have any supratemporal destiny, it is within time that their deeds are sanctioned, it is upon earth that the entire charge of failure and nothingness with which is charged

every evil action committed by the whole or by its heads, will normally be exhausted. This is a natural, a somewhat physical law in the moral order, although thwarted in some cases by the interference of the manifold other factors at play in human history: as a rule Machiavellianism and political injustice, if they gain immediate success, lead states and nations to misfortune or catastrophe in the long run; in cases where they seem to succeed even in the long run, this is not by virtue of evil and political injustice, but by virtue of some inner principle of misfortune already binding their victim to submission, even if the latter did not have to face such iniquitous enemies. Either the victims of power politics are primitive tribes which had been in a state of inexistence as to political life and therefore as to political justice: and their unjustly-suffered misfortune, which cries out against heaven and makes God's justice more implacable with regard to the personal destiny of their executioners, does not reverberate upon the unjustly conquering state unless in the form of some hidden and insidious, not openly political, self-poisoning process. Or else the victims of power politics are states and nations which were already condemned to death or enslavement by the natural laws of senescence of human societies or by their own internal corruption. And here also the very effect of the injustice which has been used against them is to introduce a hidden principle of self-destruction into the inner substance of their conquerors.

In truth the dialectic of injustice is unconquerable. Machiavellianism devours itself. Common Machiavellianism has devoured and annihilated Machiavelli's Machiavellianism; absolute Machiavellianism devours and annihilates moderate Machiavellianism. Weak or attenuated Machiavellianism is fatally destined to be vanquished by absolute and virulent Machiavellianism.

If some day absolute Machiavellianism triumphs over mankind, this will only be because all kinds of accepted iniquity, moral weakness, and consent to evil, operating within a degenerating civilization, will previously have corrupted it, and prepared ready-made slaves for the lawless man. But if for the time being absolute Machiavellianism is to be crushed, and I hope so, it will only be because what remains of Christian civilization will have been able to oppose it with the principle of political justice integrally recognized, and to proclaim to the world the very end of Machiavellianism.

There is only one determining principle before which the principle of Machiavellianism finds itself spiritually reduced to impotence: that is the principle of real and absolutely unwavering political justice, as St. Louis understood it. Men

will have to spring up to array against the knighthood of human degradation the true knighthood of justice.

The justice of which I speak is not an unarmed justice. It uses force when force is necessary. I believe in the effectiveness of the methods of Gandhi, but I think that they are suitable only in certain limited fields of political activity. Especially in the case of war, other means must be used. And when one considers the course of the wars waged by total Machiavellianism, one can but wonder to what extent aggressors, who respect nothing, force the rest of mankind to have recourse to the terrible law of just reprisals, or to put aside momentarily, if a superior concept of justice necessitates our doing so, certain juridical rules which the barbarous action of the adversary has rendered inefficacious in justice.

But the more forceful and even horrible the means required by justice, the more perfect should be the men who use them. The world requires, for the affirmation to the end, and the application without fear, of the terrible powers of justice, men truly resolved to suffer everything for justice, truly understanding the part to be played by the State as judge, the part which according to the great theologian Francisco de Vitoria, belligerent States assume in the absence of any international entity endowed with universal jurisdiction. Men truly certain of preserving within themselves, in the midst of the scourges of the Apocalypse, a flame of love stronger than death.

In his introduction to Machiavelli, Max Lerner emphasizes the dilemma which democracies are now confronted with. This dilemma seems to me perfectly clear: Either to perish by continuing to accept, more or less willingly, the principle of Machiavellianism, or to regenerate by consciously and decidedly rejecting this principle. For what we call democracy or the commonwealth of free men is by definition a political regime of men the spiritual basis of which is uniquely and exclusively law and right. Such a regime is by essence opposed to Machiavellianism and incompatible with it. Totalitarianism lives by Machiavellianism, freedom dies by it. The only Machiavellianism of which any democracy as such is capable is the attenuated and weak Machiavellianism. Facing absolute Machiavellianism, the democratic state inheritors of the *ancien régime* and of its old Machiavellian policy will therefore keep on using weak Machiavellianism and be destroyed from without, or they will decide to have recourse to absolute Machiavellianism, which is only possible with totalitarian rule and totalitarian spirit; and thus they will destroy themselves from within. They will survive and take the upper hand only on condition that they break with every kind of Machiavellianism.

The end of Machiavellianism, that is the aim, that is the moral revolution to which, in the depth of human history, amidst savage wars which must be waged with inflexible determination, free men are now summoned.

Notes

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1. This lecture was delivered in an abbreviated form at the symposium on "The Place of Ethics in Social Science," held in connection with the 50th Anniversary celebration at the University of Chicago, September 26th, 1941. John U. Nef chaired the session, which included three other speakers, the university's president, R. M. Hutchins, R. H. Tawney, and C. H. McIlwain.

2. See Allan H. Gilbert, *Machiavelli's* Prince *and Its Forerunners*: The Prince *as a Typical Book* De Regimine Principum (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1938). I think that Professor Gilbert is right in locating the *Prince* in the series of the classical treatises *De Regimine Principum*. Yet the *Prince* marks the end of this series, not only because of the political changes in society, but because its inspiration utterly reverses and corrupts the medieval notion of government. It is a typical book *De Regimine Principum*, but which typically puts the series of these books to death.

3. Max Lerner, Introduction to *The Prince and the Discourses* by Niccolò Machiavelli (New York: Modern Library, 1950), xxi and xlii.

4. Matt. 23:3.

5. Cf. Raïssa Maritain, "Histoire d'Abraham ou la Sainteté dans l'etat de nature," *Nova et Vetera*, no. 3 (1935).

6. "In these things lie the true originality of Machiavelli; all may be summed up in his conviction that government is an independent art in an imperfect world." Gilbert, *Machiavelli's* Prince *and Its Forerunners*, 235.

7. According to a very just remark by Friedrich Meinecke, the two concepts of *fortune* and *necessity* complete the trilogy of the leading ideas of Machiavelli: *virtù, fortuna, necessitá*. Cf. Meinecke, *Die Idee der Staatsräson* (Munich and Berlin: Oldenbourg, 1924), chapter 1.

8. Some authors magnify the divergences between *The Prince* and the *Discourses*. In my opinion these divergences, which are real, relate above all to the literary genus of the two works, and remain quite secondary. The *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius* owed it to their own rhetorical and academic mood as well as to Roman antiquity to emphasize the republican spirit and some classical aspects of political virtue. In reality neither this virtue (in the sense of the Ancients) nor this spirit ever mattered to Machiavelli, and his own personal inspiration, his quite amoral art of using *virtù* to master for-

tune by means of occasion and necessity, are as recognizable in the *Discourses* as in *The Prince*.

9. Lerner, Introduction, xxxvii.

10. [Acton's quote is to be found in *The History of Freedom, and Other Essays*, ed. John Neville Figgis and Reginald Vere Laurence (London: Macmillan and Co., 1922). Ed.]

11. "Hitler told me he had read and reread the *Prince* of the Great Florentine. To his mind, this book is indispensable to every political man. For a long time it did not leave Hitler's side. The reading of these unequalled pages, he said, was like a cleansing of the mind. It had disencumbered him from plenty of false ideas and prejudices. It is only after having read the *Prince* that Hitler understood what politics truly is." Hermann Rauschning, *Hitler m'a dit* (Paris: Coopération, 1939). [In 1985, Rudolf Haenel, a Swiss schoolteacher, demonstrated that Rauschning's book was merely a compendium of others' accounts and not to be taken seriously. See *Der Spiegel* 37 (1985): 92–99. However, Maritain's point seems perfectly defensible. Ed.]

12. Matt. 4:10.

13. What Sir Norman Angell said in Boston in April, 1941, is true for all contemporary democracies. "If we applied," he said with great force,

> ten years ago resolutely the policy of aiding the victim of aggression to defend himself, we should not now be at war at all.
>
> It is a simple truth to say that because we in Britain were deaf to the cries rising from the homes of China smashed by the invader, we now have to witness the ruthless destruction by invaders of ancient English shrines.
>
> Because we would not listen to the cries of Chinese children massacred by the invader we have now, overnight, to listen to the cries of English children, victims of that same invader's ally.
>
> Because we were indifferent when Italian submarines sank the ships of republican Spain we must now listen to the cries of children from the torpedoed refugee ship going down in the tempest 600 miles from land.

But the remote responsibilities thus alluded to by Sir Norman Angell go back much farther than ten years. Western civilization is now paying a bill prepared by the faults of all modern history. [Angell, an economist and Member of the British Parliament, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1933. Ed.]

14. [A. James McAdams added these six words to make the sentence comprehensible. Ed.]

15. [Adam Mickiewicz was a Polish romantic poet and playwright who protested against Russian control of Poland and was arrested and exiled in 1823. Ed.]

16. See my "The Political Ideas of Pascal," in *Ransoming the Time* (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1941).