SENIOR THESIS

Name

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The Catholic Citizen

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The Problem with and Solution to the Liberal Quandary

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Introduction

“It is the mission of DeSales University to provide men and women with quality higher education according to the philosophy of Christian humanism as developed by Saint Francis de Sales and his spiritual heirs. The University imparts knowledge about, and develops talents for, personal, familial, and societal living. DeSales University enriches the human community and enhances the dignity of the individual through its educational endeavors. In its work, the University fosters a vital and respectful dialogue between Roman Catholic faith and human culture.”

This is the self-proclaimed mission statement of DeSales University. Given the nature of the statement and the situation of the university within modern Western Culture, it is, perhaps unwittingly, an assertion of monumental and peculiar philosophical, anthropological, and political significance. The statement boldly purports that a “dialogue between Roman Catholic faith and human culture” is “vital”. But, is it even possible?

The problems confronting modern human culture are countless and sinister. Enumerating them would be exhausting and insisting upon their existence is plainly unimaginative. However, tracing and isolating their theoretical causes is, possibly, more productive and, likely, more contentious. Qualifying them as issues addressable by Roman Catholic Faith is a daring commentary on the nature and purposes of persons and interpersonal organization. If faith, of any kind, has something practical and authoritative to contribute to culture, and if that contribution is to be something more than another relativized and tolerated viewpoint, then the persons constitutive of culture must be persons of a certain kind. These persons would have to be simultaneously beholden to univocal transcendental truths and to practical commonalities. They would have to be creatures in this world but of another. They would have to be beings of a kind that modernity has agreed we are not. We would have to be
children of a God and disciples of a Savior who have been forgotten and discarded, if not killed, by modernity.

This project will emphasize the significance of distinct anthropologies in Catholicism and post-Enlightenment Liberalism that give rise to equally distinct and, in fact, divergent practical arrangements. For any theory to be true about reality, there must be an assertion about the nature of the subject and his relationship to reality. This project will contrast Liberal and Catholic notions in this regard while tracing their implications. It will posit that problems necessarily arising from the fundamentally disintegrated Liberal notions of metaphysics, anthropology, and politics are redeemable in a realizable way by the balance of Catholic Orthodoxy. It will be argued that the Liberal disintegration is such that it simultaneously divorces man from metaphysics, and man from man. Liberalism cleaves the theoretical from the practical, faith from reason, and church from state with powerful implications throughout Western Culture. Among the most practical and most overarching these implications is the in the area of political organization, the practical association of men. Thus, the state and the citizen will be central to the focus of this project.

Finally, this project will argue that Liberal notions of the human subject reduce to a theoretical quandary in the disintegration of the human subject and to a practical catastrophe in the disintegration of the citizen and society. It will be argued that a Catholic notion of the human person, offers both a redemption to the citizen and to the state.

In a return to DeSales; prominently displayed on the University’s Center Valley campus, are three flags which fly on adjacent poles. One represents the state, another the nation, and
the third the Church. Any student could cast an absent-minded glance from his classroom window and see these flags. If the student was particularly introspective or particularly bored, the sight might give him pause. Recalling his government-subsidized, Catholic, ‘Liberal arts’, education, he might remember a political science class which traced the historically and fundamentally Liberal origins of his country. He might then remember a philosophy or theology class which insisted upon a decidedly illiberal notion of reality and truth. He would be justified in wondering whether he, his professors, and the institution which brought them together were all deluded, hypocritical, or otherwise schizophrenic. The alternative is a brazenly Catholic synthesis of the relationship of church and state, of theoretical and practical, and of faith and reason, that is largely lost or denied in society. Flying those flags is either a statement of radical integration or profound insanity. The Catholic citizen is either a madman or a prophet to society.

I. The State and Man – Politics and Anthropology

“Man is the measure of all things.”¹ This, the mantra of Protagoras, provided within the context of historical political theory seems to suggest the propriety of the quip as a general thematic statement for the discipline. Man has long and often been the measure and the basis for conceptions of the state as produced by theorists throughout time. It is perhaps the oldest and most time-honored project of the political philosopher to construct an anthropomorphic
state, a system of government analogous to the human self and serviceable to the needs arising from human nature.

The significance of this trend for our purposes is in the apparently fundamental relationship of the state to an anthropology. The state is the ultimate product of practical human association and is formed in conformity with a theory of the person. This theory will dictate the manner of governance and the theory of justice which rules the association. An exploration of the relationship of man to state is akin to an exploration of the relationship of man to man and nature and purposes of their organization. As such, it is a broadly consideration practical anthropology. Liberalism, it shall be argued, disintegrates traditional theories of practical anthropology; the relationship of man to state.

James Madison, one of the chief framers of the United States Constitution – and, thus government in its American form – famously observed: “What is government but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary.” ² A century later, the philosopher R.G. Collingwood remarked that “The history of political theory is…the history of different answers to…a problem more or less constantly changing, whose solution was changing with it.”³ Taken together, Madison’s quip appears to be an effort to locate the ever evolving problem of political theory within a consideration of human nature and its shortcomings. If this is accurate, as this paper will posit, the “constantly changing” problem in Collingwood’s account of the history of political theory is attributable to constantly changing interpretations of human nature and its problems.
The connection between theories of human nature and political theory is easily observable in the work of ancient theorists such as Aristotle as well as in that of medieval such as St. Augustine. The connection becomes more attenuated with the liberal twist of post-enlightenment thinkers from Hobbes onward. The connection is, nonetheless, still traceable and necessary.

Political theory prior to the enlightenment - from Aristotle to Cicero to Augustine and beyond – is generally characterized by the identification of some *summum bonum*, a highest good endemic to human nature and common to all persons. The problem which necessitates the state, therefore, is essentially the non-realization of this common good. Or, put more positively, the state is tasked with facilitating the common realization of common goods. The Enlightenment, in shining whatever light it did, cast a shadow over the concept of the *summum bonum*, introducing a skepticism to the notion that such higher goods could be universally identifiable. The Liberal response was to replace common goods with common liberties. It will be argued that the Liberal state is arranged through the social contract as an answer to problems confronting liberty and that liberty itself was arranged as an answer to a perceived problem confronting human nature, namely, a plurality of interests and an obfuscation of goods. This theory of the Liberal self and Liberal society entail a unique and flawed anthropology.

To understand the theoretical relationship of man to state, a brief historical of overview of salient theory seems useful and necessary.

Aristotle
Aristotle’s contribution to philosophy, political theory, and Western thought in general is so massive as to bely accurate qualification. Remnants of his political theory are still detectable in the most contemporary works on the same subject. As the personal tutor of Alexander the Great, his influence would have been quite literally widespread in his own time. His notion of the state was one rooted concretely in his notion of human nature and thus, for a variety of reasons, it is reasonable to begin this project with a consideration of his work.

The Nature of Man

In the Aristotelian conception, man, - and everything else for that matter – is defined by four causes, the material, formal, efficient and final. The material cause of man is quite literally that matter out of which he is composed. The formal is that shape, concept, or definition by which man is identified as such. Aristotle defined man as a “rational political animal”. Already it is obvious that Aristotle’s notion of politics and the state will be inextricably connected to his notion of man to the point that his theory of the state is more or less an extended theory of man. The efficient cause of man is that which brought him into being, most immediately, his parents. The last, and by some accounts most important cause in the Aristotelian notion, is the final cause. This is equitable to the end or purpose of man, the telos, in Aristotelian terms.

The final cause of man offers the greatest explanatory power for the necessity of the state. Aristotle envisioned the purpose of man as a the achievement of the highest good. This good generally consisted in the achievement of human flourishing or Eudaimonia, a virtuous completion of the various potentialities of the human person. The concept of the human good is explored extensively by Aristotle in his Nicomachean Ethics, but as it concerns this project, it
is only important to note the following feature of the good. That it is universal to all men, arrived at *a priori* to any consideration of particular man and his particular interests. It constitutes a *summum bonum*, a highest and common good. Noting this feature is monumentally important given that the hallmark of eventually forthcoming liberal philosophies will be the identification of the ends of man as plural or else ambiguous.

*The Problem*

It may be unique to the Aristotelian conception of man that the state is not strictly necessitated by some problem or shortcoming in human nature. It is rather, an identifying feature of man that he is political, or else inclined to political association. It is still possible, however, to frame the state as addressing a problem. Given that the end of man is the development of virtue - the righteous fulfillment of his various potencies - and given that this end is universally common to all men, the purpose of the state - in positive terms - is to facilitate the common development of virtue and the acquisition of the *summum bonum*. In the negative, the state is entrusted with combating the primary problem confronting human nature, namely vice, or the non-acquisition of the common good.

*The Nature of the State – the Polis*

Political Historian, Alan Ryan says of Aristotle’s polis:

“Almost at the beginning of his *Politics* Aristotle declares that man is a creature intended by nature to live in a polis...[and]...claims that all associations exist for a purpose and that, as the most inclusive association, the polis exists for the most inclusive purpose. It is the ultimate form of human organization and exists to satisfy the highest goals of social life.”
A theory of the state more endemically involved in the nature of man may be impossible to conceive.

Of the state, Aristotle observed, “It is evident that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal.” Thus the polis is created in extension to the nature of man. The state is defined by four causes in the same manner as man. The material cause of the state is man or the citizen, the formal is its constitution (politeia) as framed by man according to his needs, the efficient is man in the form of the ruler or the official, the final (its purpose) is to promote the flourishing of its citizens in realization of the sumnum bonum. According to Aristotle’s Politics “the city state comes into being for the sake of life but exists for the sake of the good life.”

The polis of Aristotle was more a theory of the state in general than it was a particular form of government. Particular forms would have been deemed acceptable by Aristotle in so far as they facilitated the ‘good life.’ The practical government type Aristotle most likely had in mind was the Greek city-state. In this form (qualified) citizens participated in direct democracy wherein they constituted both the subjects and objects of the polis in pursuit of their common goods.

For Aristotle the state arises as necessitated by the nature of man and thus, the state serves the person. The citizen is synonymous with the human person as the state and the person share the same ends.

St. Augustine
Among the most massive intellects of medieval philosophy stands St. Augustine of Hippo. The perceptibly secular, Alan Ryan, says of St. Augustine in his *History of Political Thought*, “Augustine’s importance to the subsequent history of Europe is impossible to exaggerate. His political theory...is pregnant with arguments that racked not only Christian Europe but the modern world.”

His “City of God”, a monolithic theo-philosophical accomplishment, is as rife with salient political theory as it is with the theological. Written almost concurrently with the fall of Rome in 410, the work attempted to assuage the shock and horror of contemporaries at the fall of the earth’s greatest state. Consistent with Aristotle, Augustine’s political theory will rely heavily upon his understanding of human nature and the universal existence of common ends for man. He will, however, move towards a more direct insistence in the existence of a problem with human nature which necessitates the state.

*The Nature of Man*

For the purposes of this project Augustine’s theory of the human person is more or less reducible to his famous characterization of human nature in the opening lines of his *Confessions*. That man is very much a creature of God, incomplete without a relationship to his creator. “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.”

This, in so many words, is Augustine’s anthropology.

*The Problem*

With these few words, St. Augustine prayerfully and poetically captures the great theological plight of man in search of his God. He also, perhaps unwittingly, articulates the most
consequential feature of his unique political theory; that the problem of man apart from God could be a political problem as much as a theological one.

That the state has a role in addressing this problem is an idea further and more directly developed by Augustine in his *City of God*. To demonstrate that this problem was a real, practical, and significant one for the state, Augustine offered the very visible fall of Rome as a case study.

Augustine’s method was to analyze what was missing from the Roman state by analyzing what was missing from Roman philosophy. Augustine particularly trained his crosshairs on one of Rome’s proudest sons and greatest political theorists, Cicero. In *De Republica*, Cicero insists upon a notion of the *res reublica* (the republic) which is contingent upon the *populous*, “a people whose common good is served by a republic practicing earthly justice. If there is no justice there is no *res populi*, and, therefore, no *res republica*.” 19 Accurate notions of both ‘justice’ and the ‘common good’ were available to the person by means of the rationality, man’s distinguishing feature. 20 This Ciceronian conception owes a clear philosophical heritage to Aristotelian notions of both the rationality of man and the existence of an identifiable *summum bonum*.

Far from rejecting Cicero’s definition of the true republic, Augustine whole-heartedly accepted it and set out to prove that what Rome lacked wasn’t a clear understanding of the republic but the republic itself as defined. In his own words, “I shall attempt to show that no such commonwealth ever existed, because true justice was never present in it”21 True ‘justice’ for Augustine involved obedient communion with God and was drawn from a theory of the
person in as real a way as was Aristotle’s notion of justice as virtuous fulfillment of the human person.\textsuperscript{22} After all, Augustine’s conception of the human person was one incomplete, “restless ‘til it rest in (Him).”\textsuperscript{23}

The Nature of the State – the City of God

The state, or perhaps more appropriately, the utopia, his thought developed was an ideal which belied practical realization but was, nonetheless, a reflection of his notion of the human subject. The state, for Augustine was as incomplete as the human person without the involvement of God. The relationships of the Citizens of the “City of God” would, therefore, be marked by the identifying feature of a proper relationship with the Creator, namely, love.\textsuperscript{24}

The City of God, therefore, is in many ways an updated version of Aristotle’s \textit{polis}, in that it is less of a theory on a particular structure of government and more a commentary on the nature and purpose of political association. Just as the \textit{polis} arose from the need to cultivate common virtues in the men pursuing common goods, the City of God arises from an updated need in which true virtue presupposes obedience to a true God and the ultimate good (the \textit{summum bonum, or eudaimonia}) constitutes a relationship of love with the true God. The City of God may, therefore, necessitate theocratic elements but is ultimately only identified by the success it achieves in promoting that common and universal end.

In the Augustinian conception, the state arises to address a problem confronting the nature of man, namely his separation from God. Thus, God creates Human nature which necessitates the state. The person is synonymous with the citizen in so far as state and person exist for the realization of the same goods.
Aristotelian and Augustinian conceptions of the state evidence the strong connection between theories of man and theories of society in classical thought. There are in no way the only theorists in antiquity to make such connections but serve to suitably introduce and substantiate the claim for political anthropology. What, precisely, occurs in the Liberal notion of Man to produce the Liberal notion of statehood is yet to be explored, along with the metaphysical assumptions latent in Liberal anthropology. For now it is enough to conclude a substantial relationship between Man and State as an extension of the practical orientation of man related to man.

II. God and Man – Theology and Philosophy

If Liberalism is to be identified as a disintegration of both the practical and metaphysical orientations of the human subject, some attention must also be paid to the metaphysical orientation; that is, the relationship of man to his maker and the natural order. Liberalism involves and, in fact, relies upon distinct assumptions about the relationship of man to the metaphysical or the lack thereof. These assumptions stand in sharp relief to traditional theory.

The departure of Liberalism in this regard is made especially clear with an exegesis of the simultaneously developing notions of theology and philosophy in traditional thought. Broadly considered, the unity or disparity between the understandings of these necessarily related studies captures the theoretical status of man to metaphysics in prevailing thought.
Etienne Gilson follows this development from ancient Greek thinkers through to contemporary philosophy in his book *God and Philosophy*. His analysis emphasizes the development of two related and inseparable trends. These trends are the evolving understandings of faith and reason or more specifically, theology and philosophy.25

A theme runs strong and true throughout Gilson's analysis and that is one of balance vs. imbalance and orthodoxy vs. disintegration in the simultaneously developed notions of philosophy and religion. Unsurprisingly, the analysis begins with the Greeks.

The development of Greek theology (correctly identified as mythology) predates even their philosophy and is chronicled and developed by epic poets such as Hesiod and Homer. They describe a pantheism of gods in the form of men. They are personal gods, bearing the attributes of men except that they are immortal and in control of the fates of the mortals. As Gilson defines them, the Greek "god to any living being, is any other living being whom he knows as lording it over his own life." These gods cannot accurately be identified as a metaphysic, however, as early Greek philosophies tended to divorce first principles from theology.

Greek philosophy is first treated by Gilson with an evaluation of the Monisms of Thales, Anaximenes, and their like. Thales' philosophy typified monism in his insistence upon a metaphysic comprised exclusively of a single first-principle; water. Everything, he claimed was reducible to this single element. And yet, he professed, at the same time, a mythological theology in which there were a pantheon. This divergence between philosophy and theology produces a contradiction whereby the gods defy their logical reduction to the-first principle, water, and remain the ruling causes over men.26

Subsequently, Plato would react strongly against the monists and the sophists who preceded him and took a dramatic step towards advancing an integrated theo/philo understanding. His
metaphysic involved forms, separate from material existence but granting it meaning and being. The highest of these forms was that of the Good by which all else was intelligible and from which morality was to be derived. This Good was somehow maintained as separate and even higher than the gods who were also answerable to it as a standard. However, Plato never directly disavowed a mythology. Plato, like all Greeks before him was uncomfortable with an arrangement of the natural order wherein the causes that governed it were impersonal and faceless. The divergence between his theology and his philosophy produces the famous Euthyphro paradox wherein Plato ultimately insists that the gods love the Good because it is Good, rendering them somehow subservient to it.28

Aristotle, would later manage, by Gilson’s estimate, the closest integration of a metaphysic with a theology available prior to Christianity. He revolutionized metaphysics with the claim that the forms where present in res (in things), within the material world and were accessible to the understanding of man via his rational apprehension of the objects of existence. This theory permitted Aristotle to provide the first account of causality wherein existence might precede essence and wherein the first principle of philosophy was a tenable first mover for the natural order. This marked the first time in history that such an integration of divinity and philosophy were ever seated in the same unified concept. He also developed a theory of ethics wherein the principles of morality were available to reason and made possible by the volitional activity thereby providing a sophisticated notion of free will. However close he got to achieving an integrated philo/theo understanding, he missed. The divergence, however narrow, resulted in failure to affirm the free-will and indeed the rationality of all humans. It also failed to explain the apparently paradoxical orientation of limited human freedom towards the infinite.29 Human freedom was thus impossible to satisfy in a theological scheme wherein the gods were either unsympathetic to human freedom or in direct competition with it and thus similarly finite. This seem to complicate the notion of the common good given the conflict that seems likely to result between individually unfulfillable freedoms.
Aristotle did produce a theory of the common good, but it was hardly common to all. Anyone foreign to Greece or without external reproductive genitalia was denied access to reason or its fruits and ruled exclusively by a duty to those with said prerequisites. Ultimately, the universality of his metaphysics failed to extend to his ethics.30

The early Church Fathers, despite the benefit of revelation, were slow to shake their Platonic sentiments. This is due in large part to the apparent amenability of Platonism - especially as modified by Plotinus - to Christian theology. The Good was easily renamed the One and the One was identifiable with God. But the One wasn’t in the world and while he may have started the world and visited it for a time, he couldn’t sustain it or provide it with a proper appreciation for the distinct but equally important and inseparable disciplines of philosophy and theology. He couldn’t provide balance to faith and reason or grant the material appropriate value in an exitus-reditus metaphysic which considered material reality to be a diminished reflection of divine realities. The God in this scheme could not be causally related to the world with existential priority. Plato had held a notion of cause in which essence preceded existence. The result was a concept of a first cause that is essentially related to its creation. The One, therefore, becomes product or a producer of particular essences. The resulting metaphysic either robs either the creature or the creator of his freedom, and in either case robs the creator of his ability to create, properly speaking. Augustine was unable to escape this trap in his metaphysics, yielding undesirable departures in his theology including a belief in predestination.31

The zenith of theo/philosophical integration was likely reached in the Middle Ages through work of Thomas Aquinas and the reintroduction of Aristotelian metaphysics to the western world. He managed a profound integration of Aristotelian causality with the Christian concept of a personal creator. The God of the Church’s philosophy finally matched its theology in that He was existentially prior to his creation and capable of acting in it but without contingency. The objects of creation were
filled with meaning and existence by their creator and, thereby, capable of impression upon the mind of the knower. An arrangement in which finite human freedom was fulfillable in congruence with divine and infinite freedom is thus conceivable. Aquinas’s work achieved a short-lived balance and thoroughgoing compatibility between professed theology and philosophy. Whatever balance he had achieved, was soon to be toppled by the violent disagreements of the reformation.\textsuperscript{32}

The disagreements of the reformation were vicious enough to tear the Church and the Nations of Europe asunder. It plunged the continent into a multi-decade period of bloodshed. The seemingly intractable disputes centered around religious turmoils that were precipitated by theological controversy and political posturing. The theological disagreements were ushered in by a period of philosophical timidity that followed Aquinas. Thinkers were shy of the notion that the God of Creation was accessible to human rationality. The tendency was a relapse towards the fideism of Augustine and earlier thinkers with similar results. Luther denied knowledge of God beyond the text of the Bible. Calvin denied the volition of man. Supposedly orthodox thought descended into mere, mechanistic, rehashings of Thomistic manuals that gradually tended towards rationalism. The balance had been lost and the practical consequences were tragic.\textsuperscript{33} This is the historical and theoretical context in which the Liberalism of the Enlightenment emerges.

\textbf{III. The Enlightenment and the Liberal Turn}

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy identifies the Enlightenment thus:

“The Enlightenment is the period in the history of western thought and culture, stretching roughly from the mid-decades of the seventeenth century through the eighteenth century, characterized by dramatic revolutions in science, philosophy, society and politics; these revolutions swept away the
medieval world-view and ushered in our modern western world. Enlightenment thought *culminates* historically in the political upheaval of the French Revolution, in which the traditional hierarchical political and social orders (the French monarchy, the privileges of the French nobility, the political power and authority of the Catholic Church) were violently destroyed and replaced by a political and social order informed by the Enlightenment ideals of freedom and equality for all, founded, ostensibly, upon principles of human reason.”

The enlightenment was a reaction to the religious wars and plethora of seemingly intractable religious disagreements which marked the century prior to its incidence. It was heralded as a salvation from mysticism and irrationality. Immanuel Kant declared it to be humanity’s release from a self-incurred immaturity. Whatever else it was, the Enlightenment was marked by a new interpretation of the role of the human person and of human nature in science, political theory, and all of philosophy. It was an interpretation marked by skepticism, a posture which cast a shadow over things previously held as certain.

As it confronts this project, it is contended that the Enlightenment – especially within the realm of liberal political theory - was an attempt solve what it saw as an endemic problem human nature, namely that the ends of man are plural and that theories rooted in these ends are irreconcilably in competition. This notion stands in direct contradiction to the tradition of practical anthropology and political theory which relied upon a *summun bonum* common to all man and arising from his nature. It would also entail a direct rejection of the meaningful connection of man to God the author of the Good and the ends of man.

If the chief problem in human nature was the lack of a common end, the solution posited by the enlightened theorist was the assumption of a common right, namely liberty. For
early liberalists this right still arose from a theory of the person but was held as the primary basis for justice ahead of other competing ends. For later liberalists such as Immanuel Kant, this right was held as prior in its justification to any consideration of man or his ends.36

The ‘liberal twist’ therefore represents a severance in the practical anthropology of man whereby his connection to fellow man is shorn and his compulsion for interpersonal association revolutionized. The state is no longer established to foster the cooperative achievement of common goods, but as a compromise between men held in opposition. The link between man and the state is attenuated in that it no longer arises directly from his nature but from a right conceived as common in spite of his nature. Whether the link between the citizen and the state in practical matters is similarly strained remains to be seen.

The Metaphysical presuppositions which enabled the enlightenment are traceable to the philosophical misgivings of one man, Renee Descartes.

The Metaphysics of Liberalism – Descartes and Kant

According to Gilson, the “epoch-making change...”at the beginning of the Enlightenment “...became apparent when, in the First Part of his Discourse upon Method, Descartes announced his decision ‘to seek no other knowledge than that which’ he ‘was able to find within’ himself ‘or else in the great book of the world.’”37 This statement sums up the contradiction that was Descartes; a simultaneous insistence on the validity of the bible on faith and the refusal to believe anything not available to his mind by pure rationalization. His Cogito ergo sum articulated a skepticism that the modern world has yet to shake. The notion that certain and universal truth is unattainable outside of oneself is a driving force behind contemporary
thought and a crucial precept to Liberal philosophy.\textsuperscript{38} It is a notion that makes any coincident theory of divinity or impossible or irrelevant.

Immanuel Kant would later refine the metaphysics of Liberalism in an outright rejection of Aristotelian and Thomistic philosophy. Kant vehemently denied that the objects of reality reveal anything of themselves to the knower. Instead, knowledge is achieved by the extension of rational forms present in the mind of the knower over the objects of existence. Common goods are absolutely unrecognizable and agreement of any kind was only possible through adherence to strictly rationalistic, \textit{a priori} precepts.\textsuperscript{39}

The concept of freedom that such a metaphysic dictates is monumentally important to note a criticism \textit{Liberal} philosophy. Hans Urs Von Balthasar can help digest this consideration. Balthasar, as summarized by Howsare’s \textit{Guide for the Perplexed}, touches on two dualities in human freedom: 1) the freedom of autonomous motion versus the freedom of consent. 2) The finitude of human freedom versus the apparently infinite orientation of this freedom.\textsuperscript{40} The shorn metaphysic of Liberalism entails an outright rejection of the possible fulfillment of the infinite orientation of human freedom. It also precludes a common orientation to human freedom resulting in a dominant emphasis of on a competitive notion of freedom as autonomy.

\textbf{The Politics of Liberalism – Social Contract Theory}

In lieu of available common truths, any community of persons that happens to arrange itself would have to do so with a different aim than the achievement of common goods. The state must be arranged under different circumstances than the traditional theories.
In the first two lines of his book, *Contract, Culture, and Citizenship*, political scientist, Mark Button observes, “Theories of the social contract are stories about the origins of life in political society. They are stories that recount how and for what purposes diverse people might have come to live together, and remain living together, in those uniquely unnatural arrangements we call states.”

The Social Contract was necessitated by the removal of the *summum bonum* as a means of bestowing legitimacy when a teleological concept was not available for such determinations. Given man’s plural ends and interests, what possible reason could he have for joining with his fellow man in political community? The answer is the Social Contract and the first (or at least most famous and early) theorist to give this answer was Thomas Hobbes.

Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes was and is a singularly monumental thinker in the area of political philosophy. According to Alan Ryan, “Thomas Hobbes is the greatest of British Political thinkers and the boldest, most exciting, and most compelling writer on politics in the English language.” John Rawls gushes similarly, “…in my own view and that of many others, Hobbes’s *Leviathan* is the single greatest work of political thought in the English language.” Why is it that these unfeeling and otherwise crustily aloof (as can be presumed by their disciplines) scholars are moved to school-girl-like flattery and hyperbole at the mention of a long-dead English theorist? Perhaps it is at the recognition of kindred spirit (indeed how pleasant the man was). Or perhaps, as is more likely, its is in appreciation for the massively influential contribution Hobbes leant to all of political philosophy in his early and thorough development
of “social contract theory”. He was not the first to reference the idea (indeed a few had explored the notion as early as Classical Greece) but no one within the field has been able to avoid referencing it since.

Whether or not Hobbes can be properly identified as a ‘liberal’ theorist has been debated. Indeed, many of the ultimate consequences of his theorizations are decidedly illiberal. However, social contract theory is necessarily woven into the development of liberal political philosophy. According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, the “Fundamental Liberal Principle” is that “freedom is normatively basic, and so the onus of justification is on those who would limit freedom, especially through coercive means. It follows from this that political authority and law must be justified, as they limit the liberty of citizens.” Such a principle would be as readily accepted by Hobbes as by Rawls and is the primary compulsion behind the development of social contract theory. For this reason, Hobbes might be thought of as at least a quasi-liberal theorist and perhaps an unwitting grandfather to the school of thought.

The feature of Hobbes’s theory which is of greatest interest to this project is his marked departure from the summum bonum of traditional anthropology and political theory. It is this departure which produces liberal tendencies in his thought and in the work of more staunchly identified liberals to come.

Hobbes thought of himself as the first to ever actually practice “political science”, a discipline he characterized as a systematic mode of inquiry distinct from the historical and rhetorical analyses provided by previous political theorists. This science of politics, Hobbes believed began with an in-depth treatment of human nature. As such, Hobbes’s method as
employed in the *Leviathan*, represents a compelling example of the ‘anthropomorphic’ method of state construction. According to Hobbes, “...we must know the nature of the parts to know the nature of the “artificial man” that we shall build.”

*The Nature of Man*

Hobbes despised Aristotle’s ethics and politics to such an extent that his political theory was a conscientious and explicit effort to eradicate the Aristotelian tradition from political thought. This apparent motivation lead political historian Alan Ryan to claim that the “Leviathan was intended to drive Aristotle from the terrain of political debate.” His most fundamental point of disagreement was over Aristotle’s teleological notion of human nature whereby human motivation is described as an impulsion to naturally determined ends. This idea was absurd to Hobbes given the overwhelmingly evident level of disagreement that existed regarding proper human ends and compulsions. Human motivation, instead, arose from the desires and aversions present within human nature prior to any selection of ends.

Hobbes’ unique anthropology will, thus, be responsible for producing a political theory in as real a way as was Aristotle’s but without any recourse to the *sumnum bonum*. This person according to Hobbes’ is a complex entity vested with sense, reason, desires and aversions. Primary among the desires of man is an interest in self-preservation and primary among his aversions is the fear of death. Humans are, therefore, compelled at their most basic level by the use of their reason to pursue successful living for the sake of self-preservation.

Introduce this self-interested sensory being into a state of nature, that is, the condition of man prior to and without any political or otherwise authoritative institutions, and Hobbes
maintains that the result will be his famous state of “war of all against all”\textsuperscript{54}. The reasons for the emergence of this state of mortal competition are endemic to Hobbes’s conception of the nature of man and to the “Nature” which they inhabit, scarce as it is in resources for survival.

Hobbes identifies several destabilizing features of human nature which are revealed within the state of nature. First, the psychological propensity of humans to place their own preservation and security ahead of others tends to compel them to advance these concerns in exclusion to the concerns of others. Second, the relative scarcity of resources necessary for advancing one’s security foments competition. Finally, humans are similar enough in ability and in vulnerability to be predisposed to fear and insecurity.\textsuperscript{55} This state of fear and competition, and the overriding interest in the preservation of life against the threat of mortal peril inevitably reduces to war without the controls of an authoritative body.

Hobbes thought it eminently understandable that highest evil is death even if the highest good is unknown.\textsuperscript{56} The fear of death as the universal ‘highest evil’ represents an almost total inversion of the Aristotlean notion of the \textit{summum bonum}.\textsuperscript{57} The compulsion for political association in the Hobbesian conception is thus the complete opposite, a mutual interest in the avoidance of being killed; the ‘\textit{summum malum}’.\textsuperscript{58}

\textit{The Problem – The Issue of Liberty}

In an interesting reversal to traditional theory, the problem necessitating the state is no longer a threat to a common good but a problem which is in itself common. Instead of promoting a common good the state will be tasked with avoiding a common ill, namely
annihilation at the hands of fellow man. Instead of a *summum bonum* Hobbes has in mind a *summum malum*.

Enter the notion of liberty. For later theorists, the singular liberty right will represent a solution to the problem of plural ends and the state will be a solution to problems confronting this unifying right. For Hobbes, the liberty right is a negatively conceived description of the problem as previously defined. Rawls identifies this particular notion as a “physical concept of absence of external impediments called by Hobbes *natural* liberty.” Thus, by the Hobbesian formulation, Liberty is no positive right arising from human nature as preferable over competing ends and rights, but is essentially a restating of man’s overriding interest in avoiding death, the *summum malum*, the ultimate external impediment. As conceived, Hobbes’s notion of ‘liberty’ will permit him greater leeway in the construction of a state with decidedly illiberal features: the *Leviathan*.

*The Nature of the State – the Leviathan*

The ultimate incentive for state formation and the establishment of governing authority is a commonly held interest in escaping certain death in the state of war. The mechanism by which this is accomplished is the Social Contract, a method by which persons with differing ends and interest are compelled to privilege the preservation of one interest. The social contract takes the form of a covenant which involves both the renunciation or transfer of right and the authorization of the sovereign power.” This sovereign is an artificial synthesis, an institution representative of its constituent parts (persons) and their mutual interest in
preservation. The sovereign is granted legitimacy through the maintenance of the social contract, not through the mode of the assumption of power.\textsuperscript{61}

The power exercised by the sovereign, Hobbes thought, ought to be absolute. This was necessitated by the troublesome nature of human persons and his tendency towards war. This was a tendency verified by Hobbes’ experience of the bloody English civil war.\textsuperscript{62} His \textit{Leviathan} was developed as a perceived solution to the inherent pugnacity of human nature. Sovereign power, he thought, ought to be exercised absolutely and obeyed absolutely in so far as such an arrangement made possible the provision of peace. The state, ought to be a ‘Leviathan’, the only institution powerful and stable enough to maintain the social covenant.

Thus for Hobbes, the state arises as a solution to a problem interchangeably identified with a negative conception of the ‘natural liberty’ right which in turn is necessitated by a problem in human nature. The state is therefore no longer directly derived from human nature but from right in spite of human nature. The bond between man and state and replaced with a prosthetic connection. The citizen is no longer synonymous with the person for the citizen only exists relative to the state after the synthesis of the social contract.

John Locke

As a contributor to the development of Western political thought, Locke was no less important than Hobbes. Locke’s theory may provide the clearest demonstration of the link between human nature, the liberty right, and the state in pre-Kantian Liberalism. It is a link more easily observable in Locke’s work than in Hobbes and as such, the treatment of Locke to follow is significantly briefer than the preceding account of Hobbes and his theory.
The major distinction between Locke and Hobbes lies in their varying notions of the Liberty right. The marked differences in their resulting theories on the state are a reflection of this distinction. Where Hobbes’s concept of liberty was essentially a negative notion of non-interference, Locke’s idea represents a positive moral right arising out of human nature.

Like Hobbes, Locke held a notion of the human nature which produced no common or unifying ends. He thought like Hobbes, that given the plurality of human ends and motivations, the state of nature would be a state of competition and disorder necessitating the ordering force of the state. Where he departs dramatically is in his theory of a positive liberty right and of natural law. Where Hobbes professed a notion of liberty as non-interference – or simply, an interest in avoiding external impediments, the greatest of which is death – Locke held that liberty was a more positive right arising from the nature of man as naturally free and equal. He defined liberty as man naturally existing in “a state of perfect freedom to order their actions...as they think fit...without asking leave, or depending on the Will of any other Man.” This is still clearly, however, a notion of freedom as autonomy.

That natural freedom and equality exist and, therefore, that there is a liberty right necessarily involved in human nature is guaranteed, according to Locke, by the natural law. This ‘natural law’ is composed of moral truths which apply universally to all people and which are universally accessible via reason alone. The natural law protects the natural rights foremost among which is liberty. This concept is then, foundational to the justification of the liberty right. Yet, according to Alex Tuckness of the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, “nowhere in any of his works does Locke make a full deduction of natural law from first premises.” In fact, Locke
is forced to admit in his *Second Treatise* that no one has ever worked out such principles from reason alone, compelling him to suggest that moral rights may be an innate idea and that the priority of liberty among them may be a statement of preference.\(^6\) Liberty in the Lockian conception is thus given a powerful position of preeminence in political theory, an equally strong and positive definition as a feature of human nature, but an ambiguous justification at best.

Notwithstanding, the Lockian mode of state construction proceeds as such: First there is the identification of a problem within human nature wherein ends and interests are plural and conflicting and no *summum bonum* is identifiable. As a solution, the liberty right is arrived at by reason (from whatever its source) as existing endemic to human nature, as foremost among the various rights, and is thus proffered as a unifying basis for justice. The state arises as a solution to the problem in the state of nature wherein the liberty of persons is threatened without the ruling order of government. The state is adopted through the mechanism of the social contract wherein persons of differing ends and interests elect to preserve a common right instead of a common good and agree to form the state to that end.

This is the most, properly speaking, liberal conception of the formula for state creation prior to Kant. It poses the priority of Liberty as a solution to the problem of plurality, which arises from human nature, and the state as a solution to the problems or threats confronting Liberty. The Republic, Locke’s favored form of government, will therefore be directly beholden to promoting the liberty right of its citizens. Among its identifying features will be separation of power and limited government. The end of government will always and everywhere be the
promotion of liberty. Why? Locke ultimately fails to provide an answer. Could the promotion of liberty ever actually entail a singular purpose given the competitive notion of freedom involved? It is equally unclear.

IV. Immanuel Kant, Deontological Liberalism, and the Liberal Transformation

Kant was fundamentally disturbed by the shaky foundations upon which Locke and other theorists left Liberalism. For him, not only was Liberty a privileged right in considerations of justice, it was the only right. As such, he endeavored to sever the justification of the liberty right from consideration of human nature entirely. He saw such considerations as necessarily fraught with contingency and unreliability. Where the foundations of liberty were contingent, he thought, they were also potentiality coercive, and, therefore, useless and self-contradictory.67

As a solution, he developed a ‘deontological’ notion of liberalism wherein the liberal right was not only prior to other considerations in its relative moral weight but in its derivation. It will be argued that this theory of the liberal right arose from a perceived problem with human nature and even while, perhaps, not justified relative to man, this theory – if it is to apply to humans - requires various assumptions about human nature. In addition, this analysis will attempt to show that besides producing a theory of justice and the proper ordering of the state, the deontological liberalism of Kant produces a kind of theory of the human person and, consequently, the citizen.

Deontological Liberalism
Enter at this point the work of famous Harvard professor and contemporary philosopher, Michael J. Sandel. His treatment of Kant’s liberalism—and later that of John Rawls— is comprehensive and amiable to the aim of this project. He identifies the core thesis of ‘deontological liberalism’ as best stated as follows:

“society, being composed of a plurality of persons, each with his own aims, interests, and conceptions of the good, is best arranged when it is governed by principles that do not themselves presuppose any particular conception of the good; what justifies these regulative principles above all is not that they maximize the social welfare or otherwise promote the good, but rather they conform to the concept of right, a moral category given prior to the good and independent of it. This is the liberalism of Kant and much of contemporary moral and political philosophy...”

The Idea that the governing principles of society ought not presuppose a conception of the good is not original to Kant, indeed, Hobbes had previously discarded the traditional *summum bonum* in dramatic fashion. Neither is the notion that the right ought to be the basis for such principles. Locke had made such a claim in his the development of his version of the liberal right and was thus, similarly deontological in a partial sense. What is massively unique to Kant’s “fully deontological” notion is the method by which the right is justified. According to Sandel, “On the full deontological view, the primacy of justice describes not only a moral priority but also a privileged form of justification; the right is prior to the good not only in that its claims take precedence, but also in that its principles are independently derived. The justification of the right stands apart, therefore, from both any concept of plural goods arising from human nature and from the human nature itself which produced these competing goods.
While Locke attempted to detach the liberty right from the contingencies of plural goods, he failed to detach it from the contingencies involved in a human nature which tended to produce competing rights even if the liberty right was foremost among these. The natural law isn’t much help either in justifying the priority of the liberty right by Kantian standards. Locke failed to produce any universal justification for the moral law leaving it open to the contingencies of particular interpretation. According to Kant, imposing one notion of the right above others where competing notions existed, was to create a coercion itself in contradiction to the liberty right. The Kantian perspective will, therefore, require a singular and reliable point of derivation.

“For Kant, the priority of right is derived entirely from the concept of freedom in the mutual external relationships of human beings...” This notion has nothing to do with the ends of produced by human nature or specifically with human nature itself. Freedom is, instead, an end in itself which all men ought to share as the ultimate and absolute duty in all relationships. This is a bare notion of freedom located within man prior to any consideration of its particular ends, its finitude, or its autonomy. It is conceived as fundamentally inhering within persons and common to them prior to any particular actualization. The liberty right is, therefore, internally justified, that is, derived a priori to external, empirical, factors.

But why should such right entail duty? Wherein lies the basis of a right, conceived apart from human ends and unconditioned even by human nature that is, nonetheless, powerful enough to place duties upon us? Kant remarked, “Duty! What origin is there worthy of thee,
and where is to be found the root of thy noble descent which proudly rejects all kinship with inclinations?”

The basis Kant offers is that which is the subject of practical reason. Here we encounter the difficulty of the deontologically conceived subject of Kant’s liberalism. On the one hand, Kant’s theory assumes that certain attributes are true of the nature of the ‘subject’ - human or not – of the liberal right. On the other hand, the liberal right seems to work in the opposite direction, creating a theory of the subject. Can this ‘subject’ function as the citizen of a state? Is it even, properly speaking, human?

_The Subject of Practical Reason_

What immediately follows is an account of the nature and attributes of the ‘subject’ necessarily assumed by Kant’s theory of the liberal right in order for the duty of such a right to apply. It is distinct from the discussion of the ‘Transcendental Subject’ which will follow later and which is offered as a commentary on the tendency of Kant’s deontological liberalism to actively create its own theory of the subject and or person.

This ‘subject’ is the subject, not the object of practical reason. It is a being with a capacity of rationality and also of an autonomous will. It is not an empirical end but rather the subject of all possible ends and the subject of the autonomous will. It is the rational being itself. It is a being free from the contingencies of ends and thus free in the truest sense to choose “unconditioned by the contingencies of circumstance” and un-coerced by them. The subject is identified not by the ends it chooses but by the capacity to choose them. Kant says of this subject, “It is nothing else than personality, i.e., the freedom and independence from the
mechanism of nature regarded as a capacity of a being which is subject to special laws (pure practical laws given by its own reason). This is the only bare boned conception of a being which could ever be potentially ‘free’ in the manner that Kant’s deontological liberalism insists upon.

It is unclear at this point whether this ‘subject’ can even be said to be specifically human. As defined, it is simply a rational being with a capacity for the free exercise of autonomous will. We can presume that Kant thought man to be such a being and thus these attributes can be thought to be a commentary of a sort on human nature. However, nothing in the definition of this being is specifically human in that it might be extended to cover the natures of gods, angels, demon, and aliens in so far as they possess rationality and the capacity of an autonomous will.

In his subsequent attempt to rectify this notion of the liberal subject with the actual experience of man, Kant produces a theory of the subject which is more specifically human. It proceeds in the opposite direction of previous theories which produced a liberal right from human nature. Instead, Kant will invent a human nature from the liberty right.

*The Deontological Liberal Anthropology – The ‘Transcendental Subject’*

Sandel observes, “If the claim for the primacy of justice to succeed, if the right is to be prior to the good in the interlocking moral and foundational senses we have distinguished, then some version of the claim for the primacy of the subject must succeed as well.” He goes to say that this claim must be defended, it must be demonstrated that this subject, identified prior to
its ends, actually exists. For Kant’s theory to have any significance for us as humans, this subject must be shown to be man.

As proof of the existence of this deontological subject, Kant offers a transcendental argument from experience. It is transcendental in that it attempts to proceed from certain indispensable and universal features of our experience. In that it is an argument on the nature of experience, it is epistemological in its flavor. He argues that the subject cannot be understood as a being *qua* object of experience. Such a being would be externally defined and ‘radically situated’ meaning that his actions would be determined by the content of experience; the laws of nature, cause and effect, and the strictures of culture and condition. This ‘radical situation’ refers to the phenomenon wherein the subject, when externally justified, becomes defined by the objects of experience and thus, indistinguishable from it in so far as he loses his capacity for autonomous self-determination to it.

Given the undesirable consequences of this option, the opposite must be true, namely, that the subject must be regarded *qua* subject of experience. In this arrangement, the subject inhabits the intelligible world but is not determined by it. He maintains a distance between the objects of experience and himself and thus maintains his capacity of autonomy and, consequently, his liberty.

One of the main points of Mark Button’s *Contract, Culture, and Citizenship* is that the nature of liberal political theory is that it is ‘transformative’ meaning that its nature makes claims on the nature of man never simply the other way around. The claim that Kant is making on the nature of man is interesting. The theory of Man produced by his deontological
conception of liberty is necessarily transcendental. He is a subject held aloof from experience, desire, and ends. Sandel says:

“...there is (a) sense in which this liberalism does imply a certain theory of the person. It concerns not the object of human desires but the subject of desire, and how this subject is constituted. For justice (and liberty) to be primary, certain things must be true of us. We must be be creatures of a certain kind, related to human circumstance in a certain way. In particular, we must stand to our circumstance always at a certain distance...Only in this way can we view ourselves as subjects as well as objects of experience, as agents and not just instruments of the purpose we pursue. Deontological liberalism supposes that we can, indeed must, understand ourselves as independent in this sense.”

This understanding of the transcendental self is troubling on few fronts. For one, it seems to involve a circularity in reasoning. To insist that this is an accurate view of the person assumes that deontological liberalism is an accurate view of liberty and its situation relative to human nature and everything else. Given that Kant placed his determining ground in such a notion a notion as prior to all other ends and concerns, such a circularity should be expected. Liberty is, after all an end in itself. It is, in a certain sense, the new *summum bonum* and both sides (both man and state) of the previously employed state creation formula will be constructed relative to it. In this way the particularly bold and comprehensive nature of the deontological liberal claim is realized.

Furthermore, the epistemological implications in an natural arrangement wherein the objects of experience are mute and removed from the subject, seems to logically reduce to existentialism.

As it confronts the existence of the state, the transcendental subject is equally troublesome. Consider Kant’s version of the state creation formula: the liberty right is
the starting point. It is selected as primary given that it solves the problem of plurality of human ends. It also works the other way, producing a unique theory of the human person. Finally the state will arise as a solution to problems confronting the liberty right.

The mode of state creation will remain the social contract but it will be a purely abstracted idea of reason not an actual occurrence or agreement. As for what this state would look like is ambiguous. Kant expressed a preference for republican government, but whatever its particular political form, its task would be unique to Kant’s theory of liberty and the subject.

The state could presume to advance no ends save the liberty right itself. This end would be an end in itself prior even to the citizen. The citizen would be a transcendental subject removed from experience, ends, and consequently, the state or its ends.

The Liberal Quandry

Stated simply and succinctly, the liberal quandary is this; the Liberal state lacks a citizen. The entire Liberal proposition relies on single anthropological insight, that the goods of man are not common, are not shared, and are not certain. This anthropology requires a specific metaphysical theory and specific political arrangement. The logical extremes of both ends of the equation are explored with exacting rigor by Immanuel Kant and we need only take him at his word to expose the problem.
The metaphysic of a man in a world with no common truths must necessarily be one in which neither the natural order nor any object of experience reveals anything of itself to the subject. Indeed a fellow man could not actually reveal himself to the other without the impression of some objectivity upon the subject. Kant is emphatic in his metaphysics that this is impossible. The forms of existence are rationally contained, \textit{a priori} to experience in the mind of the subject. But Kant is painstakingly clear on another point, that the knower does not create the objects of existence through his own action. This is known as idealism, a notion that Kant outright rejected.

Norris Clarke, the Catholic metaphysician, artfully and tersely dispatches Kant’s position. If the objects of existence reveal nothing of their existence, and if we do not create them, then we cannot be assured of their existence.\textsuperscript{84} Knowledge, political association, and human interaction are all rendered impossible.

This is a fact that is born out in Kant’s Liberalized anthropology and political theory. The state arises in defense of a liberty right so pure as to transcend all human ends or concerns such that it is realizable only as a purely rationalistic concept and, therefore, not truly practicable. The subject of this state is equally transcendental, he is at once aloof from the objects of experience so as not to be impressed upon by them and is purely subjective so as not to place qualification on the liberty right. The citizen of the Liberal state properly realized is a manikin.

Practical problems
The practical problems produced by Liberalism are many and often appear to be held in paradoxical opposition. The Liberal state is at once marked by vicious capitalism and exploitation but, at the same prizes liberty, autonomy, and non-interference. It holds tolerance as a sacred virtue yet is overly litigious. It prizes the individual but despises difference. It professes ‘progress’ but relativizes everything in a rejection of actual, preferable, ends for progress. These apparently contradictions appear to have split along the same seem.

The metaphysical precepts that permit Liberalism are such that it shall be committed to contradiction. It embraces pluralism over objectivity so it must tolerate otherness for there is no standard by which to judge the other. It prizes individual right over interference because there is no mechanism to value the other. Ultimately, there is nothing within Liberalism which can distinguish the individual. It is a theory with an impoverished anthropology requiring the artificial assignation of personality through the process of contract. That is the ultimate function of the social contract, to synthetically distinguish theoretically indistinguishable actors. There is no actual impetus arising from nature of persons to participate in society. There is no qualitative difference between interests of individuals if they were to have them. The contract permits civil cooperation by setting boundaries between qualitatively indistinguishable actors but it lacks a reason for doing so beyond consequentialism. The failure of civil cooperation is obviously disastrous. This is an insight that prompted the Liberal experiment. The social contract purports to create a cooperation that was impossible in the pursuit of goods. The result is merely a social arrangement, which at best strives to attain a result that is amalgamatively similar to the ends which it forsook. The contract permits individuals to pretend that there are no objective goals to society and yet live together at the same time.
The contract also changes the notion of citizenship irreconcilably. The citizen is a person identified only in relation to the state. If the ends of the person are synonymous with the ends of the state the citizen is synonymous with the person, but if the state is derived from ends external to the person, then the ends of the citizen are also derived external to the person and they are no longer synonymous. Liberalism fundamentally alters the relationship of persons to society. It makes them post hoc determinations of the state based on arbitrarily chosen ends of the state. The citizen is only what he is contractually determined to be and his only recourse for ‘justice’ is a litigious quibble over the relative meaning the particular contract that rules him. Civil progress for the citizen will never be synonymous with human flourishing except by accident.

The valid insight of Liberalism was that theological disputes yield societal upheavals. The false conclusion or *ignoratio elenchi* was that social arrangements ought to be separated from theology an metaphysics. If theological disputes necessarily lead to social disputes, the valid inference is that there is a necessary connection between metaphysical conceptions and practical political arrangements. In a sense, Liberalism provides a controlled experiment by which to demonstrate this necessity. All that Liberalism succeeded in doing was replacing a universal metaphysic with plural relativism and the religion with Liberal arbitrariness. The religious wars of old were only replaced by the Liberal wars of today.

**The solution**

The quandary, as explored at length above, is multifaceted. It involves a multi layered failure on the part of Liberalism, first, to properly appreciate man, and, subsequently, to
appreciate his practical and metaphysical orientations. The solution, if indeed there is one, must be appreciative and corrective of all of these areas. It must both manage to mend them individually and then to demonstrate their compatibility. Given the necessary connection from metaphysic to man to state and society that has been argued for, the ultimate solution will be one marked by a distinctive integrity all the way through.

Eden – The Original Original Position

Given that the Liberal man is popularly examined in the context of ‘original positions’ it might be useful to isolate a rectified view of man from a rectified view of the position. Fortunately, little original creativity is required of me here.

Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground." God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth. "God also said: "See, I give you every seed-bearing plant all over the earth and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit on it to be your food; and to all the animals of the land, all the birds of the air, and all the living creatures that crawl on the ground, I give all the green plants for food." And so it happened. God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good. Evening came, and morning followed--the sixth day.85

This is, quite basically, an articulation of the equivalent original position professed by the Church. Framing the Liberal issue in contrast to the Genesis story serves to elucidate Liberalism for what it is. Liberalism, with its fundamental assertions regarding the obfuscation of goods, and the selfish depravity of man has suffered from a mislocation of the original
position. The Genesis story doesn’t end with the except above. In fact, its account of the fall and the subsequent state of man would hardly resist Hobbesian descriptors of ‘brutish nastiness’.

Therein lies the key to understanding Liberalism. It may very well be an accurate and complete theory of man in his fallen state. It is an exhaustive and descriptive account of the logical implications pursuant to man’s separation from his creator. It fails as normative theory, however, because it has precluded the norm.

Liberalism seems to forget or rule out that there is a state prior to the fall. In other words, the Original Sin is not unequivocally original and thus there is prior position in which man was once fulfilled. It is this position which ought to influence the consideration practical institutions in accord with the nature and purposes of human interaction.

Can there be a return to this position? Can creation be returned to fulfillment? If the answer is yes as the Church would contend, then Liberalism is a philosophy and an anthropology in need of a redemption.

A Redeemed Anthropology

It has been argued that the flaws of Liberal metaphysics and politics flow from flaws in its respective anthropology. If this anthropology is one of the fallen man, as suggested above, then the anthropological error of Liberalism is in a preclusion of the redemption of man. Metaphysically, the logical extension is a preclusion of a meaningful natural order or universal objectivity. Practically, it will result in the preclusion of recognizable goods or ends for man
resulting in the impossible realization of social structures that can actually be said to better men in an essential way.

Catholic anthropology rescues the lot of man by the doctrine of redemption and is, by the same doctrine, able to rescue the lot of society. The model for pre-fall or redeemed man is not Adam but Christ. It might be said, that Liberalism relies upon an anthropology of Adam while Catholicism an anthropology in Christ. As such, Christological concerns become illuminative.

Christ is God made man and is, in his person, possessive of two full and non-contradicting natures; that of God and that of Man. Therefore, his person provides simultaneous models for the fulfillment of man and for the arrangement of the metaphysical order. In a high Christology (Christ as God), Christ models the fulfillment of the metaphysical orientation of man. In a low Christology (Christ as Man), He models the fulfillment of the practical orientation of man. Thus, in so far, as He offers redemption to the entirety of creation, Christ is the key to understanding properly ordered community.

This notion is observed in Balthasar’s application of Christology to human freedom. Christ simultaneously carries the finite freedom of man and the infinite of the divine. In his obedience to the Father, he simultaneously reveals the fulfillment of consent and the fulfillment of the infinite orientation of the autonomous movement of freedom. This fulfillment is the only arrangement in which the particular, finite, freedom is capable of realization satisfaction without absorption or loss of identity. It is also the only arrangement which permits a fulfilled and directed cooperation between individual’s freedoms. This is the
element lacking from Liberal theory and, as such, indicates the orthodox insistence on consent over contract.

Integration in Christocentrism

As argued previously, a valid theory of man, metaphysic, or politic will be distinguished by the hallmark of integrity among the three. This must be the case given the necessary interrelation of the three fields. Liberalism, we have seen, fails to achieve such integrity. Catholicism (as a creed and as a philosophy – it is both), it is proposed, is anointed with such a distinguishing mark. This integrity is revealed and contained in the person of Christ who models the relationship of Metaphysic to Man in his very personhood.

A single and uniform understanding of God and man in Christ is thus applicable with clarifying power up and down the natural order. This has been demonstrated with regards to human freedom. In no other scheme is there a discoverable integrity between notions of human freedom, society, and God.

Catholic Church and State

All that remains to be substantiated is that the above integrity can be extended to the relationship of the Church to society. In that relationship, will the obligation of the Catholic citizen be understandable.

An authoritative voice on the relationship of Christ’s church to the state is offered by the Second Vatican Council’s dictate, *Gaudium et Spes*. The document at once diagnosis the noted imbalances of modernity, “At length there develops an imbalance between specialized
human activity and a comprehensive view of reality” and then proceeds to posit a solution, “...under the light of Christ, the image of the unseen God, the firstborn of every creature, the council wishes to speak to all men in order to shed light on the mystery of man and to cooperate in finding the solution to the outstanding problems of our time.”88

The document goes on to assert that, given the fundamental nature of man, the issues of society are inevitably matters of religious significance.

In conclusion, the Catholic Church and its doctrine is the sole tabernacle for the full integration of thought on man, God, and society. Properly ordered social structures will, therefore, bear the mark of Catholic orthodoxy in a way that sacrifices nothing of the theoretical to the practical. The arrangement is such that the true ideal in practical outcomes flows from properly understood fundamentals.

Active participation of the citizen in society is required by the virtue of the common goal which directs his own course and that of society in common. The best citizen, the most properly aimed and directed member of society will thus be the Catholic citizen. In him lies the potential recognition of integrated fulfillment as it existed in Christ who redeems him and redeems his state.
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