

this stand is Scotus's necessary coupling (in the Platonic tradition) of perfection and positive unity: if an ontological PERFECTION, be it a metaphysical grade of the essence of Socrates or an attribute of God, were not to have a degree of positive UNITY within its essence, then that perfection would simply not be in the essence. Consequently, the fullness and integrity of the essence would be destroyed. These formalities, it is asserted, are actually distinct from each other as metaphysical perfections, because each of them in itself has a "positive unity less than numeric" (*In 7 Meta.* 19.5). This position in metaphysics closely parallels the doctrine of the plurality of forms in the philosophy of nature (see FORMS, UNICITY AND PLURALITY OF).

Thomists distinguish between the substance, as it were, of a unit, or something positive on the part of an entity that is one, and something negative on the part of the formal element that unity adds to the entity, i.e., the negation of division (*De ver.* 1.1). Now there may be many ways of negating division without there corresponding to each such negation a positive entitative unit (*In 1 sent.* 19.4.1 ad 2; 24.1.3; ST 1a, 11.1 ad 2; John of St. Thomas, *Ars logica* 2.3.3). Hence there does not have to correspond to each of the mind's units of thought, or intentions—formed as they are implicitly or explicitly by negation of division (i.e., by abstraction or by precision)—something positively one in the nature of the thing.

Among Scotus's most able early disciples, Francis of Meyronnes elaborated the theory still further and extended its application, whereas WILLIAM OF ALNWICK rejected it in its radical testing ground, the realm of the divine ideas. Many modern Scotists tend to accommodate the actual formal distinction to the virtual distinction.

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[J. J. GLANVILLE]

DISTRIBUTISM

The theory that personal freedom belongs to man by his nature and that this freedom, especially in the political and economic fields, can be safeguarded only if there is widespread personal ownership of all forms of property, particularly of productive property. In this form distributism has special links with Catholic social thought, and in the main, its principal English adherents were Catholics, although it was supported also by a few non-Catholics headed by A. J. Penty. As an organized force it was represented by the Distributist League under G. C. Heseltine. In the U.S., non-Catholics such as Herbert Agar, Ralph Borsodi, and O. E. Baker were its best-known advocates. Among American Catholics, distributist ideas had only limited influence within other movements such as the CATHOLIC WORKER and the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

The main objects of the distributist attack were large concentrations of wealth; capitalism, which was seen as the rule of the moneylender; and industrialism, seen as the rule of the machine. To combat these evils, the distributists urged the revival of small-scale family farming, small units in trade and industry, and the encouragement of the craftsman. They attracted many who were shocked by the mass unemployment of the 1920s and 1930s, alarmed at the growth of monopoly, or fearful of the de-personalizing influence of the modern factory.

The origins of the movement were varied. In order of time, the first proponent was Hilaire BELLOC, who held that modern politics were of their nature corrupt and that modern political practice would lead inevitably to the "servile state." In such a state peoples' lives would be controlled by a clique of wealthy men. Belloc held that industrial capitalism was a direct product of the Protestant revolt and could be defeated by Catholic principles linked with the agrarian way of life. G. K. CHESTERTON's writings introduced these ideas to a large number of readers. The emphasis on the importance of the person and of the small unit is found throughout his works. His own contribution was an attack on the materialism of the 19th century. Eric GILL brought to the movement a hatred of mass production and a love for the craftsman who could

develop his personality through his work. Under his influence there were founded communities of craftsmen and farmers, which in time either failed or adopted modern methods. Only one group, a farming group at Laxton, survived World War II. Vincent MCNABB, OP, emphasized the social evil of poverty and the love of ordinary people. His solution was to take the poor out of the slums and give them the opportunity of a full life on the land, thus using untilled acres to solve the problems of unemployment, overcrowded cities, and slum life.

In addition to the practical aspect of the movement represented by the communities of craftsmen, a back-to-the-land movement was launched by the debate over distributism. In the 1930s this was a much needed movement, although it was unfortunate that it was a return to primitive agriculture. Of those who went back to the land, few survived for long, and most of those who did developed into modern farmers using the very techniques so often attacked by the agricultural wing of the distributists. The distributists attacked many real evils and played a part in making public opinion aware of the need for social reform. But it must be recorded, too, that their distrust of central government and their hatred of party politics diverted part of a generation of intelligent people into a dream-world and kept them out of politics and government. Moreover, distributism presented an interpretation of Catholic social doctrine that was alien to the outlook of the times and became a barrier between the faith and the masses. It could be argued that the British Catholic community has only begun to free itself from restrictions imposed by the brilliant work of Chesterton and Belloc.

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[R. P. WALSH]

DITCHLING, GUILD OF ST. JOSEPH AND ST. DOMINIC

The Guild of St. Joseph and St. Dominic Ditchling was comprised of a group of professional artists and craftsmen who left London between 1912 and 1914 to start fresh in Ditchling, an Old World village ten miles north of Brighton, Sussex. They attempted to counteract what they considered the dehumanizing influence of industrialism. Led by the sculptor Eric Gill, who had become a Catholic earlier; the poet-handprinter Hilary

Pepler, who was guided to Catholicism by Vincent MCNABB, OP; and the calligrapher Edward Johnston, who remained an Anglican and later withdrew from Ditchling. The community was organized under the rules of the Dominican Third Order and of the guild of craftsmen they had formulated. A farm was bought, and in one field a chapel, where the Dominican Little Office was sung daily, and workshops, where sculptor, woodcarver, weaver, carpenter, printer, silversmith, and others plied their crafts, were built. Each family remained independent and had its own house, but the craftsmen assisted each other in their work. Ideally they were to be self-sustaining and independent of the industrial world, but in effect they depended largely on selling their work to those who could afford hand-made goods. Their economic resources became confused, and in 1924, when Gill decided, against McNabb's advice, to depart for Wales with half the community, misunderstanding inevitably arose. A few years later, when Pepler partially mechanized St. Dominic's Press and took on a non-Catholic apprentice, he was expelled from the guild, though he remained on the Common and on friendly terms with the members.

At its height the guild's membership included David Jones, Desmond Chute, Valentine Kilbride, Dunstan Pruden, and Philip Haggren—all well-known artists. Ditchling was visited by BELLOC, CHESTERTON, and other leading Catholic thinkers who together with the members articulated the social principles of THOMAS AQUINAS, LEO XIII, Maritain, and others, and made Ditchling an important center of Catholic social theory and practice for several decades. The guild was disbanded in 1989.

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[C. PEPLER]

DIVES IN MISERICORDIA

Pope John Paul II's second encyclical was issued November 30, 1980. *Dives in misericordia* (DM), "Rich in Mercy," is properly read as a continuation of the first encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis* (RH). While RH is devoted to Jesus Christ as the one who "fully reveals man to himself," DM turns to Christ as the one who makes known the Father, who reveals to humans "the countenance of the 'Father of mercies and God of all comfort'" (DM 1). Christ is at once the New Adam and the icon of the Father, fully human and fully divine. The perspectives of "anthropocentrism" and "theocentrism" are not at all antithetical; rather, "the Church, following Christ, seeks to link them up in human history, in a deep and or-