leaders in England have chosen to pursue, and the promise is thus deceptive. The suggestion I have sought to sketch out in this article is that those two options are sufficiently important to be worth rendering explicit. Had some pair of alternatives along these lines been sketched out, an underlying tension between two facets of Archer's purpose in writing the book might have been confronted head-on. As it is, he presents the reader with what in the final pages comes close to a cry of despair about the Church's bland response to the reality of oppression. The long-term optimism without which the act of writing the book itself would not be meaningful is not expressed. Therein lies the indeterminacy which robs the argument of some of its force. The remedy surely is to acknowledge that while the promise of generating the sacred on a communal base can never be a realistic one, it is not a pure piece of collective self-deception either. Ambivalence between the two interpretative options is inevitable for a sociologist as acutely aware as Archer is of the unfulfilled and unfulfillable character of much of the rhetoric of renewal. But if one cannot opt unequivocally for one or other of the two overall interpretations, it can at any rate be shown that each has some force.

Two Churches : the significance of the political

Francis P. McHugh

There is a growing literature on the sociology of the Catholic Church which attempts to explain that institution's present condition in terms of tension between an official church and an unofficial one, both of which now exist inside what was once monolithic Catholicism. The work of Vallier on Latin American Catholicism and of Coleman on the Roman Catholic Church in Holland uses 'two-church' models, though their theoretical framework is integrationist, in a Durkheimian sense.[1] More explicitly, and on the specific issue of the respective roles of hierarchy and theologians, Dulles argues in the chapter, 'The two magisteria; an

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interim reflection' of his recent book on ecclesiology, that there is need for 'two kinds of teacher—the official teacher, whose task it is to establish the official doctrine of the Church; and the theologians, whose function is to investigate the questions about faith with the tools of scholarship'.[2] The law which should rule the relationship of these two elements is a dialectical one of 'relative autonomy within mutual acceptance'. (p. 127). Using the two-church model in a more general way, Peter McCaffery, in his excellent thesis, 'Catholic radicalism and counter-radicalism', has analysed one tension between official and unofficial mind-sets within Catholicism.[3] With the help of surveys of the literature, opinions and activities of ten groups in the Catholic Church in England and nine in Holland he probes the mediating role played by more or less loyal Catholic opinion in these national churches. He concludes that an unofficial presence has occupied a space inside the Church between the official Church and its external critics. From its position, the unofficial Church, in one form, can be seen pushing for changes of a more far-reaching kind in the post-Vatican II period; and, in another form, holding out for slower and more closely-controlled procedures. Lastly, in his recent work on the Catholic Church in England in the period since the Second Vatican Council, Anthony Archer has used the two-church model not only to provide the theme for the book, but also its title.[4]

The clue to the present condition of Catholicism in England, according to Archer, lies in the way the official Catholic Church—by which he means a new middle class form of religion appropriate to the powerful (p. vii)—has achieved domination over other opinion and interests in the Church. The word 'domination' is important: the sub-title of the book is, *A study in oppression*. Specifically, the interests which constitute official ascendancy in the Catholic Church in England are the hierarchy, along with its commissions, councils and committees (p. 248); the richer 'Old' Catholics, whose wealth and schooling put them in the ruling class (pp. 243; 249); and the new middle class who have found their way into positions of influence inside the Church bureaucracy (pp. 161; 249—251). The unofficial Church, never clearly defined, comprises reformers and ordinary membership (p. 240).

The prominence of the notion of class in this analysis raises the preliminary issue of what is to count as a sociology of Catholicism. The standard approach in the sociology of religion is to interpret tensions between official and unofficial elements, or between conservatives and progressives in the Catholic Church, in terms of rising standards of living, the influence of middle-class marriage converts and improved levels of education, which have influenced the emergence of a lay voice to challenge exclusive clerical control of theological thinking and ecclesiastical control of decision-making processes. While it cannot be

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denied that the use of such observable social contexts is part of the sociology of the contemporary Catholic Church in England it needs to be emphasised that this is only part of a more comprehensive sociology of Catholicism, which must give priority of consideration to the way in which, in the past, the authority-structure of the Catholic Church functioned as the sure and only guide to its members, religious and social beliefs. The tensions will then be seen as arising out of problems connected with the historically-rooted nature of human understanding. The sociology of Catholicism must be sensitive to the history of its own ideas and to the sociology of knowledge.[5]

The most significant historical period for the understanding of contemporary English Catholicism runs from the 1850's to 1958, the period in which *die Piuspäpste* promoted the ideological homogeneity of Catholicism. An adequate sociology of how that ideology was sustained throughout a century, of the way, that is, in which the Catholic Church was able to remain unchanged throughout a period in which all other forms of social change were pervasive, would certainly illuminate the nature of change when it did, rather suddenly, affect the Church after 1958. Sociology would then be looking at a Catholic Church which

> until recent times ... supported itself with an impressively integrated system of ideas, legitimating its constitution and justifying its purpose. Its unity was forged by canon law, maintained by its theology and embedded in a culture of Catholicism. In particular the Church was fortified by the knowledge that it not only had the key to eternal life but the prescription that would cure society's ills.[6]

In other words the authority-structure of the Church provided the membership with universally valid knowledge not only about God but also about society and social relationships.

A comprehensive sociology of Catholicism, then, must include a consideration of the epistemological status of its social thought and teaching as well as a survey of the actual social involvement of the Church. In a sociological study of any Church tradition there is something to be said in favour of concentrating attention at that point where theological ideas and social interests must inevitably meet, that is, in connection with political and economic rationality. But this is particularly necessary in a sociological study of Catholic tradition of our period, seeing that Pope Leo XIII made a specific connection between theology and social thought, and gave the Church a political orientation that it had not known in modern times. As a first step on the road to his grand design of restoring European civilization, with the Catholic Church at its centre, he issued the encyclical *Aeterni Patris,* which is usually taken as the starting point of the Scholastic Revival. In reinstating Thomism as the 'best way of philosophising' (*optima ratio*

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philosophandi), Leo's purpose was that of unifying Catholic thinking through the education of seminarians and priests.[7] His next step was to restore Thomistic social theory, which he undertook in his 1891 encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*. The historically-rooted nature of Catholic thought, derived from a long-reflected theory of moral philosophy, the support of natural-law theory and a validating theology of revelation, includes, in our period, this significant political element. Even though it is true that 'most Catholics were not much interested in the political stance of the church and its apologists, and, in the parishes, the complexities of *Rerum Novarum* were largely reduced to the simple direction not to waste the employer's time or money',[8] the Church's social teaching was still an important part of its whole orientation and contributed to the 'objectivism' of pre-1958 Catholicism: the authority-structure of the Church supported its social role as much as its more purely theological one. As John XXIII was to write: 'The social doctrine which is taught by the Catholic Church is an essential part of the doctrine which deals with the life of man'.[9]

For the small number of Catholics who did take a serious interest in the Church's social teaching and in the social apostolate (and in England this meant largely the members of the Catholic Workers' College, or Plater College, as it came to be known after 1958, and of the Catholic Social Guild) the tensions which arose, and which led finally to the demise of the CSG, were epistemological, about church authority and social theory, rather than about organizational matters, as they seemed, on the surface, to be.

If the argument about the significance of the political element after Leo XIII is correct, then the period whose resistance to change needs to be understood, and which, once understood, may provide the clue to the nature of change at a later date, and to Catholicism's present dilemma, is 1878 to 1958, the accession of Leo XIII to the death of Pius XII, the last of the medieval-style popes, and himself a chief architect of the Lateran Treaty of 1929, which *de iure* got rid of the papal territories. In this way, any added significance which is given to the year 1958 will mean a corresponding reduction in the importance accorded to the influence of the Second Vatican Council. In practical terms, what this means is that explanations will appear in cognitive form rather than in terms of decentralization versus centralization, or democracy versus autocracy. If there are two Catholic Churches in tension in contemporary England, then they divide along the lines of those who still tend to inhabit a thought-world which resembles that of the Leonine period, and those who, influenced by secular modes of thinking, and particularly, perhaps, by sociology, live in a different thought-world. To illuminate this problem, it is necessary to accord more serious attention to three topics which Archer deals with all too briefly: *Aeterni Patris, Rerum Novarum*

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and the idea of the New Christendom.

It was clearly Leo XIII's dream that the *philosophia perennis* of Thomas Aquinas would provide the speculative power of integration which he claimed for it in *Aeterni Patris*. A century of experience, however, has shown that Thomism has not been able to inspire a unified philosophy relevant to the needs of the modern world. In fact, after going through a number of stages under the guidance of Rousselot, and then later of Maritain and Gilson, Thomism ended up in a philosophical pluralism among twentieth-century followers of the Angelic Doctor. From the early sixties onwards it had diminishing influence and was treated dismissively by amateur philosophers, especially after *Humanae Vitae*. In its most recent phase, under the influence of Lonergan and Rahner, Thomism has maintained its prominence by shifting its ground from philosophy to theology. It would be mistaken, however, to underestimate the influence of Thomism on seminarians and priests, and on many Catholics engaged in Catholic Action and in the lay apostolate in the period preceding Vatican II. Even if they did not understand the significance of the philosophy of knowledge, man and being proposed by all the great Thomistic thinkers, members of the Catholic Social Guild and Plater College treated the system as sacred. It was part of their practical epistemologies. Its significance in Catholic social teaching was certainly invoked and respected, as any reading of the literature and minutes of the CSG and Plater College shows. *Aeterni Patris* was the beginning of a remarkable intellectual development in the Catholic Church, and it was an important element in the solidity of pre-1958 Catholicism. Reaction against Thomism explains some aspects in the division of the Church, though the division would be seen not to coincide with the class division that is popular in much of the sociological literature. If it is true, as is suggested here, that the revival of Thomism is an important part of any adequate theory of what made Catholicism impervious to change for so long, then it also becomes part of the discussion of pressures for change, and it becomes a matter for judgement whether or not it merits more serious attention than it receives in Catholic education programmes. Thomism may not have become a single system used by Catholic philosophers, but it has retrieved a vigorous and relevant resource for contemporary Catholic theology.

Of *Rerum Novarum* a recent work has claimed that,

> It was the centre piece of a political strategy intended to bring about the restoration of a Christian social order, and organic, hierarchic society united by common values and common faith under the temporal kingship of secular rulers and under the ultimate authority of the Pope.[10]

Leo's social encyclical, no less than his earlier one on Thomistic philosophy, seized the mind of the official Church, as well as of those

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who became particularly involved with the Church's social role, and in this way it became part of the unified Catholic force. At the time of its issue Scott Holland said of *Rerum Novarum* that it was 'the voice of some old-world life, faint and ghostly, speaking in some antique tongue of things long ago', a view that is developed at some length in Chapter 4 of Archer's book; but this is a superficial reading, based, one suspects, on a quite unworthy translation of the Latin text. In English this encyclical is variously referred to as 'The condition of the working class', or 'The workers' charter', whereas, in fact, the title means 'About revolution'. It is clear that Leo is writing about three revolutions: the liberal-capitalist revolution, which has taken place with all its evil consequences; the socialist revolution, by then under way, which Leo attacked, not surprisingly, for its materialist foundation; and the Christian revolution which has not got under way, but which the encyclical is written to promote. To write off the encyclical as an irrelevant attempt to restore medieval corporatism is to ignore paragraph 1, in which Leo looks to 'equity and the facts of the case' for a remedy. To accuse Leo of liberalism and of confusing his message with libertarian language is to have missed Leo's opposition to philosophical Liberalism, 'at the very root (of which) is an erroneous affirmation of the autonomy of the individual in his activity, his motivation and the exercise of his liberty'.[11] The language is read as libertarian only because careless translators did not render such terms as *locupletes* and *proletarii* as 'wealthy owners of the means of production' and 'the unpropertied workers' respectively. *Locupletes* is used in eleven paragraphs and in seven of these it is in juxtaposition to *proletarii*. The class dimension of this analysis cannot escape notice.[12] If these points were appreciated, Archer could scarcely have written,

> The church did offer an alternative social teaching, but this was largely unknown and scarcely plausible, for modern society was accepted by nearly everyone of whatever class, including the clergy. The official church was talking to itself, it was engaged in social analysis, but in a peculiar language of its own, and its operations were effectively confined to the sacred.[13]

There are elements of truth in this, as there are also in what Archer has to say about the Catholic Church's opposition to socialism at that time; but even a society accepted by everyone could benefit from criticism in the form of St Thomas's theory of exchange and distributive justice, which is at the heart of this encyclical.

The impressive integration of Catholicism in the period from Leo XIII to the death of Pius XII was forged out of the systematization of philosophy and political theory, and incorporated into an ambitious and practical strategy of restoring Christendom. If by that term is meant 'a

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society configured to a Christian mould', then Constantinianism or medieval corporatism are only two examples, and not the ones (as Archer stresses on p. 8) which Leo sought to restore. The New Christendom, the ideas of which Maritain later developed in detail, was guided by a political theology for a profane order whose social ethics and Christian politics were designed to establish and direct a state of Christian inspiration. The work of building the New Christendom was to be committed to lay people, who would be trained and given sound spiritual formation in the official Catholic Action movement, founded in 1886. In its heyday in the 1920's and 1930's, Catholic Action in England did imbue the Catholic Social Guild and the Catholic Young Men's Society with ambitions for a New Christendom.[14] To a considerable extent the inspiration for these ideas came from the priests, for, as von Aretin points out, lay organizations proliferated under Leo XIII, and came increasingly under clerical control.

The drift of the argument so far is that the coherence and effectiveness of Leo's strategy meant that Catholicism in the pre-1958 Church were affected by a 'total institutionalization' mentality, which disposed them to relate every topic to their Catholicism. For example, when the Primrose League was formed in 1883, with the forces of democratic centralism and Anglican reaction to the public appearance of rationalism behind the League, that much-neglected 'socialist bishop' of Nottingham, Edward Gilpin Bagshawe, was suspicious of it. Although the League had an element of Christian co-operation in it, Bishop Bagshawe, in 1886, issued a circular forbidding Catholics to join it on account of the danger of indifferentism. Catholicism was a form of saturation, not to be diluted by commingling even with other Christians who were not of the one true fold. Even the Old Catholics were attempting to penetrate society and were not waiting 'for the time when the Church would be truly reconciled with the establishment', for in the early years of Leo's papacy they set up the Catholic Union to brief Christians in the Lords and Commons on legislation that was before parliament, in order that Christian values might be defended.

Throughout a period, then, from 1891 to 1958 there was universal and official consensus in the Catholic Church about the sources, nature, function and validity of so-called 'Catholic social doctrine', and also about the strategy for penetrating society, namely that it was the task of the laity in the Church. During the early years of this period, the two most prominent institutions of the Catholic Social Movement in England were the Catholic Social Guild (CSG) and the Catholic Workers' College (CWC), both of which had been inspired by *Rerum Novarum*. The former was established in 1909 to 'develop among members a sound knowledge of Catholic social principles and teaching and their application to current social problems in public and private life', and 'to

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create a wider interest in social questions and to secure co-operation in promoting social reform on Catholic lines'. As part of its work the CSG, in 1921, established the CWC with the aim of promoting working-class education inspired by Catholic social theory. Three features of the CSG philosophy and activity contributed much to the internal coherence and stability of the movement, only to become a source of crisis by the end of the 1950's.

The first of these was the Church's attitude to socialism, which had been set by the condemnation of Marxian socialism in *Rerum Novarum*. After the establishment of the Welfare State, a split was to develop along ideological lines. The second feature was the Guild's appropriation of the duty of Catholic Action. Cardinal Hinsley, who succeeded Bourne in 1934, was an active supporter of the Guild, and recommended it to play a full part in the great national programme of Catholic Action. When serious division of opinion threatened the Guild in the mid-1950's, Archbishop Grimshaw secured the appointment of Father Henry Waterhouse as Director of the Guild and Principal of Plater College, because his 'special qualification is knowing Catholic Action inside out (and he) ... is considered in England to be one of the authorities on what Catholic Action is'. This was in 1958. At the AGM that year, Fr Waterhouse reminded the Guild that it should be 'truly an instrument of the Hierarchy in the social apostolate'; and two years later he was to offer 'Nil sine Episcopo' as a motto to the CSG.

The third feature was a lack of contact with other Christian bodies who were deeply involved in economic, political and social issues. This, one suspects, was a natural consequence of the Roman Catholic Church's confidence in the efficacy of its own social message. It is clear that the tension was over the 'objectivism' of *Piuspäpste* Catholicism, and one may detect here the beginnings of 'two churches', which are still present in contemporary English Catholicism, though they are not the same churches as those described by Archer. The most obvious consequence of objectivism was clerical dominance. At the 1958 AGM referred to above, Fr Waterhouse went to great lengths to explain that a priest cannot take instructions from the laity and that 'the channel of authority by which he is governed will never be via laymen, even in a group which has a mandate from the bishop'. In answer to a direct question, the Director said that he could allow no lay control over priests in the Guild. Professor Fogarty then resigned. In an apologia on 'The future constitution of the CSG', Fogarty perceptively concluded that,

> Priests can and must lay down directives within which the lay element is to work; but if priests, with their superior status and authority, sit down themselves in the seats of the Executive and take part directly in the decisions by which these directives are carried out, responsibility at once becomes

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confused, and the incentive for the lay element to use their full judgement and ability is greatly weakened.[16]

A review of the evidence relating to the Catholic Social Guild and Plater College would support the view that one was witnessing in 1958 the emergence of 'another church', peopled by Catholics who were beginning to inhabit another thought-world. The evidence relating to the Action in Work section of the Family and Social Action movement, to *Slant,* Christian Order and the short-lived Christians for Social Justice points in the same direction. The clearest evidence of all comes from the Laity Commission, which developed from discussions of priest-lay relations in its first phase (1967—1971) to more systematic consultation, organization and consensus in phase two (1972—1976), and then progressed in the third and final phase of its life to a body which viewed its theological voice as legitimated, and even began to take theological initiatives. This church is still struggling for identity.

The account of the collapse after 1958 of old-style 'objectivist' Catholicism offered here as an alternative to Archer's version of the Catholic Church as a middle-class sect in collusion with the Establishment in a politics of privilege, highlights three connected issues.

Firstly, it illuminates the way in which the challenge to the rigified position of Catholicism in the post-Leonine period led not only to the rejection of the ambitions enshrined in the New Christendom ethos, but also of values which had been strengths of Catholicism. 'Objectivism' as used here refers to the extreme intellectual assent, backed by its authority-structure, which the Church required from its adherents. The reaction to the pressure of this moral totality took the form, especially in the sixties, of a facile acceptance of 'secular' society and of new modes of thinking bereft of a set of values which might have been opposed to the attack from contemporary consumerism and materialism. Hegel's fragment on the spirit of Christianity, in which he unfolds the dialectic of moral life and how it is challenged, might bring more enlightenment than standard class analysis.

This mention of a possible theoretical resource leads to the second issue, which is the definition of the 'sociology of religion', which Archer touches on towards the end of his book, pp. 256—257. 'Religion', he writes, 'belongs not to the public world but to the personal, (and) can be the vehicle for preserving a vision of human responsibility and development as against the prevailing ideology that apparently overwhelms it'. And again, 'This is what religion has to offer in a society where its place, and that a rather private place, has been allocated in the realm of thought...' To proceed in this direction ignores all that Troeltsch wrote about the sociological foundations of Christian social thought and of the Catholic Church's distinctive apprehension of this aspect of its work in the world. There is a great risk for the Catholic

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Church in not giving sufficient consideration to important aspects of its own tradition. In the whole matter of social thought and action, the Church has shown a strange reluctance to commit resources, of men and money, to this kind of research, though a Christian Social Ethics Research Centre has been established for the past two years at St John's Seminary, Wonersh, sponsored by the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.

The third issue is that references to the rich resources of Catholic tradition must not encourage triumphalism. The future of religion requires consideration of our present world and its probable development in the next decade and a half. Empirically based studies suggest findings which are staggering, and the language available to Christian ethics seems scarcely capable of encompassing the task. Sociology's task of examining the relationship of theological and social thinking is more daunting than it is usually set out.

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