of either gender), there is no reason to have women in the military. Trying to continue to "balance’ the interests of military effectiveness and opportunities for women, is a compromise and a sure sacrifice of national security to an unworthy end" (p. 350). Actually, I wonder if even this seemingly very conservative position is not a bit generous. Female physicians and nurses working with the military should perhaps be civilians or be part of organizations such as the Red Cross and should be deployed well behind the battle lines during wartime. Otherwise, many of the very problems that Mitchell points to currently will be present, but on a smaller scale. Maybe public policy could be changed to allow that those in such roles could receive military-caliber pay and benefits.

Mitchell’s book is top-notch policy analysis and a good example of empirical social science in the best sense. While philosophical reflection could have added more to the book, the author—who is not a philosophy professor but a former military man, solid researcher, and public-spirited citizen--nevertheless provides a commonsensical approach to his subject that, even if inadvertently, betrays a sound philosophical perspective. This is probably the best available book-length critique of the unisex American military.

-Stephen M. Krason
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Together with Etienne Gilson, Jacques Maritain was a central figure in the twentieth century revival of Thomism. With his brilliant studies in subjects ranging from metaphysics to art, he attempted to recover for a contemporary audience the philosophical and theological wealth of the Thomistic tradition. Active in the controversies of his day, Maritain took a singular interest in political philosophy, publishing a series of important works in the field. Now Fr. James Schall, perhaps our most gifted Catholic political theorist, provides this clear and comprehensive introduction to the political writings of the French philosopher.

For Schall, any serious study of Maritain must begin with his critique of Machiavelli. Since the core of Machiavellianism was its separation of politics from ethics, the "criterion of rule" for the prince did not consist in any objective standard of right, but rather in those policies that could help one achieve "success in remaining in power." Remarkably, Maritain did not fault Machiavelli for his realism, but for his blindness to the full "complexity" of human action. The devotion to a "non-moral politics" arose from a "simplification" of morality that neglected the "real drama of political life."
This is not to suggest that Maritain tolerated the principle of *raison d’etat*. On the contrary, he always tried to steer a middle course between Machiavellian cynicism and the "hypermoralism" of those who would seek to have their politics completely free of "the impurities of human history." Statesmanship, he remarked, required "brains and strength" as well as "justice": "stupidity is never moral; it is a vice."

Maritain, however, recognized that the modern conception of democracy was heir to a Machiavellian revolution that made politics "autonomous," rejected any consideration of higher things, and turned political theory into an "ersatz metaphysics." Modern philosophers embraced an "anthropocentric humanism" where "man himself" became the "center of man." Confronted with this challenge, Maritain did not slip into any nostalgia for the past. Democracy could be a just regime, he argued, so long as it was grounded upon a humanism that incorporated a "Christian conception of man." Fr. Schall illustrates how Maritain accepted the modern form of liberal democracy without necessarily supporting its theoretical underpinnings. He suggests, for example, that Maritain sought to bridge the theoretical gulf between the medieval conception of natural law and the idea of modern natural rights in one "consistent understanding." He clearly rejected the modern claim that rights were grounded upon the subjective will, but, unlike other Catholic theorists, he admitted the rhetorical (and political) necessity of employing modern terminology "as a basis of common public discourse." By including in his "extensive list of rights" a detailed record of "the duties of others," he hoped to introduce within modernity a sense of the older tradition. Schall himself confesses that Maritain ultimately "lost the battle," though he defends this reworked version of the natural law as "coherent and consistent."

Perhaps Fr. Schall is at his best when describing Maritain’s treatment of the philosophic life and its relation to revelation. Examining the history of Western thought, Maritain recognized the deep and enduring disagreements among philosophers, but saw such division as an essential "sign of the human search for something worthy for its own sake." He was not a "pure philosopher," however, but one who engaged in rational discourse within the context of revelation. A disciple of the Thomist position that "grace perfects nature," he maintained that the health of philosophy, its vitality, finally depended upon its openness to biblical sources. To the philosopher, revelation could not "substitute for everything"; but, properly received, its graceful light helped illumine the finite intellect of man so as to "strengthen and improve philosophy’s vision."

Maritain’s use of revelation is especially striking when Schall turns to his study of love and to his profound reflections on "The Mystery of Israel." Justice may be a necessary requirement of political life, but "the highest things" occur within the realm of love. The truly "healthy society," Maritain noted,
was "a web of true friendships." Turning towards the idea of love late in his career, he acknowledged that its highest manifestation, self-sacrificing caritas, was not explicable within the natural order alone. If human "love and friendship are reflections of God’s love and friendship," the final word on this question must be sought in revelation’s witness to "the inner life of God and of God’s relations to human persons through the Incarnation."

Similarly, he recognized that the problem of the Jews could not be "adequately . . . explained . . . by any purely human reflection." He defended the Church’s teaching on this complex issue: "no actual Jew" was "responsible for the legal killing of Christ"; Christ’s death was "caused by the sins . . . of all of us." Thus, anti-Semitism, in whatever form, was anti-Christian, and "those who blamed someone else for Christ’s death" were actually "seeking an alibi for their innermost sense of guilt." Yet Israel’s rejection of Christ placed the Jews together in a "kind of corpus mysticum." This fundamental act did not involve their denial of "Yahweh’s original selection," a promise that remains open to them, but their rejection of "a certain unanticipated way" God’s plan was to be carried out in history. To account for the mystery of Israel, its persistence through time, Maritain suggested that while the Church continued to work for the "supratemporal saving of the world," Israel acted as "the earthly leavening of the world." Schall notes that Maritain’s interpretation here served a purpose within his political thought as a whole: inasmuch as its presence "irritates" and thus unsettles the world, Israel reminds humanity that "a complete or reasonably happy life is (not) enough."

Though I do not have space to catalog the many outstanding features of this work, I must add that Fr. Schall writes in a clear, vigorous prose, accessible to general as well as advanced readers. And while he does not agree with all of his master’s opinions (his chapter on "The Possibility of a World Common Good" is a case in point), he demonstrates that Maritain remains a significant philosophical figure, one who demands that an honest reading of political things first conform to a correct understanding of "what is." Doubtless, it was Maritain’s Thomism, his insistence upon the importance of both reason and revelation, which accounted for his early recognition among Christian political theorists. Fr. Schall’s fine introduction assures us that this reputation was not ill founded.

-William Haggerty

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