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Lithuanian Philosophy of Culture and the Concept of Integral Democracy

Abstract:

This paper aims to provide a comprehensive examination of the development of Lithuanian philosophical thought and philosophy of culture in Lithuania, focusing specifically on the concept of integral democracy. The emergence of Lithuanian philosophy in the Lithuanian language, which dates back to the early twentieth century, coincided with the formation of the modern Lithuanian state (1918–1940). During this period, cultural progress was emphasized alongside economic development, and the philosophy of culture became the dominant paradigm. The article posits integral democracy as a significant philosophical contribution from this era, initially developed by Stasys Šalkauskis and further elaborated by his students, Antanas Maceina and Juozas Girnius. It calls for democratizing cultural, social, and economic spheres, emphasizing personal freedom of conscience and cultural autonomy for various communities and groups with a multilayered democracy rooted in cultural, economic, and social autonomy, advocating for protecting individual and communal freedoms from state overreach.

Keywords:

integral democracy, Lithuanian philosophy, philosophy of culture, Stasys Šalkauskis

Introduction

Because of numerous reasons, the Lithuanian philosophical tradition in the Lithuanian language dates back only as far as the early twentieth century. In the newly established nation-state (1918–1940), culture was seen as one of the main issues – creating a modern country required not only economic but also cultural progress, catching up to more global tendencies and ideas, and establishing relevant institutions. So unsurprisingly, as a new tradition of academic philosophy formed in interwar Lithuania, philosophy of culture became the dominant paradigm.[1]

The newly established academia in Kaunas, first as the Higher Courses in 1921 and then as the University of Lithuania in 1922, became the center of scholarly inquiry, combining a rather diverse set of academics who previously studied or had taught in Russia and/or in Europe (the Swiss University of Fribourg being a notable place for young catholic intellectuals and clergymen studying already prior to Lithuania regaining its independence).[2] Lithuania attracted such philosophers as Vasily Seseman and Lev Karsavin to teach, sent aspiring students to study abroad, and tried to integrate into the European academic ecosystem of the time. The onslaught of World War II, two Soviet and one Nazi occupation disrupted this process. Those Lithuanian academics who did not stay to face Bolshevik repressions fled to the West. Although changed and fragmented some elements of the interwar intellectual tradition continued in exodus.

One can of course, ask the obvious question: has there been any noteworthy contribution in philosophical or political thought during the early part of the twentieth century to come out from Lithuania? In terms of global impact on philosophical discourse – no. Yet, some ideas are not a mere reception of Western or other discourses but could be considered as interesting and noteworthy contributions to philosophy and political thought. One possible candidate is the concept of integral democracy, which was developed by two generations of philosophers during the interwar period and later in the Lithuanian exodus after World War II. The main idea of this concept

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1) A somewhat fragmented, but analytic and insightful overview of philosophy in Lithuania is available for the English reading audience (see *Lithuanian Philosophy: Persons and Ideas*). In Polish, a small compendium of texts from interwar Lithuanian philosophers is also available (see Pecela, Plichta, and Szlachta, *Między światami*).

2) See Dementavičius et al., *Spiritual Children of Fribourg*.

of democracy is that parliamentary liberal democracy is not enough to have a fully functioning democratic society. Hence, a democratization of the cultural, social, economic, and other spheres is necessary. The core principle and criteria for politics is considered freedom of conscience for the individual person and communities. On the one hand, it reflected in the democratic crisis of the 1920s and 30s. On the other, it came as a reaction to totalitarianism. For philosophers, it could also be interesting in that it was rooted in philosophy of culture and personalistic ideas.

The term "integral democracy" was coined by Stasys Šalkauskis (1886–1941),[3] a philosopher of culture who was heavily influenced by the Russian thinker Vladimir Solovyov as well as neo-Thomistic doctrines and wrote extensively on the question of cultural synthesis between different civilizations. Yet Šalkauskis' writings on his political views were mostly sporadic and a more coherent doctrine of integral democracy was fully developed after the Second World War by his former students – most notably Antanas Maceina (1908–1987)[4] and Juozas Girnius (1915–1994), but also by a broader milieu of progressive Catholic intellectuals grouped around cultural journals *Židinys*, *Naujoji Romuva,* and later *Aidai*, and *Į laisvę*. So, the texts on integral democracy are spread out over a few decades – with the culmination being a joint declaration *Toward Integral Democracy* (*Į pilnutinę demokratiją*) published in 1958 (authored mainly by Maceina but published as a joint intellectual effort).[5]

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3)   The adjective "integral" (in Lithuanian – "pilnutinė" or "pilnutinis") used by Šalkauskis is a translation of the French term *integrale*. Already in 1922, Šalkauskis published "Guidelines for Integral Education," so it is only natural that this concept is later transferred to the political context in Šalkauskis' vision of the cultural education of society, nation, and man. For Šalkauskis, integrity meant a certain wholeness, coherency, and unity on a theoretical and practical level. It is also important to note that the search for integrity was quite common among Catholic intellectuals, as evidenced by Jacques Maritain's *Humanisme intégral*, published in 1946. In Lithuania, in 1937, a Catholic priest and intellectual Stasys Yla, under the pseudonym of Juozas Daulius, published a book entitled *Siauroji arba pilnutinė krikščionybė (Narrow or Integral Christianity)*, which also clearly reflected the influence of Christian personalism.

4)   Maceina is probably the most controversial philosopher due to his political involvement with the Lithuanian Activist Front (Lietuvos aktyvistų frontas) in 1940–1941 and this organization's role in the beginning of the Holocaust in Lithuania. The period of his interwar (early) writings, Maceina's intellectual transformations and exploration of radical left and radical right ideas have been researched by Vilius Kubekas, a critical reading and some comparisons to Romanian philosophy are presented by Leonidas Donskis, both are available in the English language (see Kubekas, *Catholicism in Crisis*; Donskis, *Loyalty, Dissent, and Betrayal*).

5)   All the relevant texts on integral democracy have been gathered in one Lithuanian volume (see *Lietuva, kurios nebuvo*).

The general assumptions that can be found in the whole integral democracy project are these: 1) personalism and the ideas of individual freedom and dignity that follow from it – connected, is also the idea of "non-worldview politics" (developed by Maceina and Girnius after 1944);[6] 2) the principle of subsidiarity, which is the source of both the fragmentation and limitation of the functions of the various state and social institutions and the corporatist economic and social vision of society; 3) a multilayered democracy where politics should be governed by democratic parliamentary principles, culture, and education by the principles of cultural autonomy for different religious, ideological, or ethnic groups, and the economic and social spheres – governed by corporatist principles (these are all seen as the fundamental spheres of societies social fabric); 4) the idea of the nation as a natural, historically formed cultural community or metacommunity of various smaller communities and groups.

Maceina himself identified three main sources of integral democracy: 1) the ideas on cultural autonomy for religious and other groups formulated by a Catholic priest and intellectual Pranciškus Būčys, geographer Kazys Pakštas, and Stasys Šalkauskis; 2) Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo anno* (1931), from which grew the idea of a broad economic and cultural corporatism; 3) John Locke's concept of democracy, most importantly the separation of branches of state power (parliament, government, court) from each other.[7] One other source can also be added – the influence of French Christian personalism, especially that of Jacques Maritain.

Integral democracy was not so much a project of political philosophy but a political project by philosophers of culture.[8] Šalkauskis and his students were by no means

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6) Word-view (the used Lithuanian term "pasaulėžiūra") being a translation of the German *Weltanschauung*. Girnius however did not do any further work on the integral democracy project outside his and Maceina's discourse on non-worldview politics, but they remained close in their views and values.

7) Maceina, "Medžiaga Juozo Brazaičio monografijai."

8) There is, of course, the question of the concept of culture. Culture is defined by Šalkauskis as a fundamental human activity: "a cultural act is a deliberate human action on some natural object in order to give it a form that corresponds to a higher idea" (Šalkauskis, "Kultūros Filosofijos esmė," 83). This description is also understood as explainable through the Aristotelian four causes. According to Šalkauskis, culture expresses an individual or society through external mediums and objects. The teleology of action is what defines the advancement of culture (e.g., material survival, the development and nurture of the human physical body, or also the aim for higher spiritual needs, etc.). Philosophy of culture is understood by Šalkauskis as a theoretical exploration of culture, its basis, and its furthest ends. However, he understood such a definition as a formality and, more broadly, saw philosophy of culture as a strand of practical philosophy that is yet to be

the only democrats in Lithuanian political debates, but they offered a rather specific concept of democracy. It was also a political project grounded in Catholic social ideas but rejecting and highly critical of clericalism and the use of politics to advance a religious agenda.

The concept of integral democracy, in some ways, resembles communitarian thought (especially that of Charles Taylor), in how it criticized liberalism, viewed social structures, and emphasized the importance of shared culture. It also resembles John Rawls's political liberalism in that it sought a formula of political neutrality that would be acceptable to all the different groups and individuals living in one state.

This paper presents the origins, context, and main principles of integral democracy. Focusing on the main ideas – the use of philosophical anthropology in connection to politics, democracy, and the understanding of the social fabric – the paper aims to reconstruct the idea rather than present a critical debate. The main sources used are relevant political texts by Šalkauskis, Maceina, and Girnius and the 1958 Declaration. This topic has already been studied in Lithuanian philosophical and historical discourse but is rarely presented to an international academic audience.

Key Context: Philosophy of Culture, Catholic Social Thought and Personalism

The intellectual sphere in interwar Lithuania was brimming with political and ideological debate; academics, in general, were quite involved in politics, yet political philosophy seemed largely absent from academic philosophical inquiry. Post-1926, Lithuania became an authoritarian state with Antanas Smetona (a translator of Plato, among other things) as an unelected president and the Lithuanian Nationalist Union as the *de facto* ruling party.[9] After the Second World War, those Lithuanian intellectuals who fled to the West reflected on past problems of the Lithuanian state, the

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fully developed (for a broader exploration of concepts of culture and philosophy of culture see, for example, Bursztyka, Kramer, Rychter, and Auxier, *Philosophy of Culture*; in this volume see especially the essay by Bursztyka, *Apophatic Philosophy of Culture*, whose first part provides quite extensive elaboration of traditional concepts of culture, and other two parts problematizes the very concept through philosophical lenses).

9)   For a more in-depth exploration of Antanas Smetona and his transition to a dictator see Eidintas, *Antanas Smetona*.

experiences of totalitarianism, and thought about possible future models for an independent and democratic Lithuania of the future. Integral democracy was conceived at a time of an almost global democratic crisis and was, at the same time, a reaction to both conservative clericalism and radical laicism espoused by some nationalist and political ideologues on the left.

Šalkauskis was the main and most influential philosopher of culture in interwar Lithuania. He saw the main political issues as cultural ones – for him, democracy was also a cultural project. He viewed nationalistic revival movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as movements toward democratization and emancipation. Creating a nation-state, according to Šalkauskis, requires creating a strong, vibrant, and rich national culture. National culture in his mind was both Herderian and Humboldtian – it is something that connects a certain group of people via shared history, language, traditions, and so forth, but also something that must be created, achieved, and perfected. According to Šalkauskis, any national culture should strive to achieve something that is universally valuable and relevant to humanity. What is national about it is that concrete cultural expressions give a specific shape or form to universal ideas (in Lithuania's case – through a synthesis of different cultures, it had to create a relevant modern culture of its own, combining the influences of neighboring cultures).[10]

Šalkauskis was also a devout catholic, but his philosophical exploration of culture was not really grounded in faith, although he used a lot of neo-Thomist and Aristotelian concepts. As John K. X. Knasas put it: "Šalkauskis thinking about culture involves no presuppositions about the divine ordering of things to the free and conscientious person. Rather, his thinking presupposes the understanding of the human as an intellector of being."[11] Culture is the realm of freedom, where the individual or a cultural community expresses their inner self and gives objective forms to subjective experiences, sentiments, but also universal meanings.

Virtually all authors who have analyzed the ideas of integral democracy point to the significance of the social teaching of the Catholic Church and the papal encyc-

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10)   For his earliest book on cultural synthesis, see Šalkauskis, *Sur les confins*.
11)   Knasas, "Reflections on Šalkauskis' Philosophy," 8.

licals on these issues.[12] In 1931 (40 years after its original publication), Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* was published in Lithuanian. In the same year, Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* appeared, continuing and developing the ideas of *Rerum Novarum*. Encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Graves de Communi Re* (1901) sought to overcome the social challenges that had become particularly pronounced in the late nineteenth century with the Industrial Revolution and the emergence of capitalist society and to bring the Catholic laity back into the public sphere, and thus to defend the place of religion in the social sphere (*Graves de Communi* is also generally considered to be the encyclical that formally launched Christian democracy as a political movement).[13] Religion and clergy also played a significant role in Lithuania's becoming an independent state in 1918 and its political development.[14]

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12) See Dementavičius, *Tarp ūkininko ir piliečio*.

13) At the end of the nineteenth century, the Catholic Church had to take a serious look at new political phenomena: with the emergence of modern nation-states and the rise of new political ideologies, the development of modern political institutions, and new social problems, there was a need to interpret this new political reality. In many European countries, the relationship between the Catholic Church and the secular authorities was extremely strained. In Germany, the conflict known as the *Kulturkampf* was particularly bitter between 1871 and 1878, when the Prussian government of Otto von Bismarck confronted both the Holy See and local bishops and faithful over the place of Catholicism in the public life of the state; in the French Third Republic, the struggle for *laïcité* finally boiled over in December of 1905 with radical segregation of state and church influence on politics and education. The conflict between the secular authorities and the Church and the Holy See was also present in reunified Italy when the Piedmontese army occupied lands previously held by the Popes and expropriated ecclesiastical property, and Pius IX adopted the *Non expedit* clause in 1868, which excluded Catholics from Italian elections and political life. The principle of non-participation in Italian politics, which by then had already been subject to various exceptions and modifications, was finally abandoned only in 1918. The formal settlement of relations between the Holy See and the Vatican as a sovereign state and Italy itself took place in 1929. (Signor, *Scalabrini and Italian Migration*, 39–45; di Maio, "Crisis of the Liberal State," 1–122).

14) As contemporary scholars point out, it would be a mistake to describe the rise and development of national movements universally and exclusively as a conflict between secular nationalism and Christianity. This is particularly evident in the national movements of Central and Eastern Europe, where there was an incentive to use religion for political purposes, and much of the nationalism of the late nineteenth century also attempted to appeal to sacred symbols. Moreover, with the rise of national movements and the cultural strengthening of national identities, there were incentives within the Church to seek national forms of religion, and in many places the clergy were actively involved in national movements and the strengthening or creation of national identities (McLeod, "Christianity and Nationalism in Europe," 11. The tensions between religion and nationalism (through the distinction between nationalism and millenarianism) and the various connections (through nationalism's use of the religious movements of neo-traditionalism, reformism, and neoclassical assimilationism) are reviewed by the classic of nationalism studies (see Smith, *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*). For Lithuanian Church, society, and state interactions during the interwar years history see Streikus, *Religija ir visuomenė Nepriklausomoje Lietuvoje*.

However, Catholic intellectuals led by Šalkauskis drew quite different lessons from these texts than Lithuanian Christian Democrats and the clergymen who supported this political party. Instead of just political representation in political institutions and establishing their own worldview via democratic mechanisms, Šalkauskis thought that the approach should be more centered on individual and communal or group autonomy, freedom of conscience, and a general rejection of *Kulturkampf* methods in politics. For example, in the 1930s, there were serious disagreements over the legalization of civil marriage between more progressive Catholics and liberal laity on the side and clerical-conservative forces on the other: no such institution existed in interwar Lithuania, and the Catholic Church was opposed to the concept of marriage outside of religion and religious communities. People without religious beliefs had to perjure themselves to get wed, which by progressive Catholics was seen as an act against the freedom of conscience.

On the other side, Šalkauskis and his followers were also critical of the authoritarian regime of Smetona. But more generally saw other ideological groups guilty of the same intentions – using politics to enact one ideology or worldview on the whole of society through political coercion. The debates between these ideological groups continued in emigration after World War II in the Lithuanian diaspora.

Integral democracy largely echoes the ideological lineage of *Rerum Novarum*, with a suspicious view of liberalism, unfettered capitalism, and individualism; as well as socialism, statism, and collectivist ideologies. But the most important concept that was borrowed from papal encyclicals was subsidiarity. *Quadragesimo Anno* (paragraph no. 79) states:

> Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them.

What can be done by the individual should not be delegated to the community, what can be done by the community should not be delegated to the state. *Rerum Novarum*

also stresses that if, for example, a family is in trouble that it cannot cope with on its own, these boundaries can be crossed, and help must be given.

Rerum Novarum stresses that one of the worst things about modernity is that the individual is left alone against the state's power. In labor relations, societies, and trade unions there should be an intermediate element or community that helps regulate the relationship between employer and employee. However, the task of the corporate system is not simply to ensure social welfare or fair wages, but to maintain the structure of the social fabric in general.

Integral democracy envisages a social fabric structured very much in the same way: the individual – the family – communities – the wider society – the state. The principle of subsidiarity is applied here both in the vision of social policy (advocating a major redistribution of goods and corporatist cooperation in professional and social organizations), and in matters of culture, education, and religion (autonomy of religious, ethnic, and cultural communities, and entrusting them with the task of deciding their own major issues of educational, moral, and other goods). The community and the various gatherings are precisely what is needed as an additional layer to protect the individual from excessive state interference and control. An interesting innovation in the context of the ideas of integral democracy is that subsidiarity extends beyond socio-economic issues to include issues related to worldview and education. On the one hand, this is a natural link with the autonomy of cultural and worldview communities, and with a corporatist vision of the socio-economic order, while on the other hand, it allows for a coherent distancing from collectivism and statism (thus continuing the line of criticism of the papal encyclicals) whilst remaining critical of atomistic liberalism.

Other Catholic philosophers are, of course, also relevant here. No doubt, the authors of the integral democracy concept were familiar with the French personalists.[15] It may be added that the influence of Christian personalism was only strengthened in the post-war period, with the appearance in 1947 of one of Jacques Maritain's more significant texts, *The Person and the Common Good* (*La Personne et le Bien Commun*),

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15) In the autumn of 1936, the philosophical journal *Esprit* published "Manifeste au service du personnalisme" by the editor Emmanuel Mounier. It was a succinct summary of ideas that had been in the making for at least a few years (see Mounier, "Manifeste au service du personnalisme").

which also discusses the distinction between the person and the individual, but also warns of a radical separation of the two.[16] The authors' ideas of integral democracy must be seen in this context – especially those of philosophical anthropology.

Bernard A. Gendreau, summarizing the Catholic personalist person-individual distinction, notes:

> Mounier joined Maritain in emphasizing the important distinction to be made between the individual and the person as aspects within the human being as indispensable means to promote a personalistic and communitarian alternative to collectivism and individualism. The alienating materialistic, self-centered, and negativistic tendency found in the individual living as part of the whole the society of individuals constitutes is contrasted to the humanizing, spiritualistic, creative and open tendency found in the person as a whole which develops as a center within the acting self and the dynamic community of persons. In Mounier the distinction is analyzed from an existential *praxis* stance rather than from a metaphysical objectivistic approach as in Maritain.[17]

In other words, for personalists, the "individual" is a materialist and reductionist concept that does not express human nature or define the relationship between the individual and the world.[18]

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16)   Maritain's influence can hardly be overestimated. After his death, Girnius reflected the extent of the French philosopher's ideas on Lithuanian Catholics:

"Maritain's influence was also great in Lithuania. He was often quoted by Šalkauskis in his university courses and articles. He was used by J. Grinius in his course on aesthetics and by A. Maceina in his course on philosophy of culture. Maritain's writings were popularised by Pr. Kuraitis. Maritain's social ideas awakened Catholics from their conservatism and influenced our young Catholic intellectuals in particular. The declaration "Towards the Creation of an Organic State" (1936, No. 8), published in *Naujoji Romuva* journal, was to a large extent based on Maritain's ideas. But it was also his own for Christian Democrats in general…. I myself am also indebted to Maritain. Although I have been critical of his concept of the nation, I regard his concept of the state as the authentic basis of democracy. I also drew on Maritain's ideas when I was considering the relationship between Christianity and liberalism." (Girnius, "Jacoues Maritainui mirus" [translated by the author])

17)   Gendreau, "Creation of French," 103.

18)   Mounier devotes a chapter in *Personalism* (1946) to his understanding of the history of the develop-

This dualistic anthropology was especially pronounced in Maceina's works – he saw the individual as being determined by laws of nature and necessity and the person (the intellectual-spiritual part of the human being) as free to determine himself. The importance of the personalist thesis was clearly declared and emphasized by the Lithuanian philosophers as early as the interwar period but became much more prominent after the war. In a short remark in a liberal-left newspaper published in 1939, Maceina stressed that:

> The human person is the highest and absolute value. It is an end in itself; it can never be a means to anything; it is the aim of universal life and the realization of universal tendencies to the highest degree. Therefore, in its relations with the whole of life and with all its spheres, the human personality reveals itself as a higher element. Nature, culture, and religion bow down to it. Even God Himself, as the absolute and complete Personality, honors the human personality and fully respects its freedom and its dispositions. The convictions of man's conscience are the supreme norm of his actions, making his life belong to him alone and to no one else. That is why the State is also subordinated to the human personality… . At the present time, the danger to human personality coming from the State is very great. In the East and the West, we see states where the human person is completely subjugated and despised.[19]

More generally, Christian personalist philosophy responded to the social, political, and cultural challenges that had already emerged in modern Western societies at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It drew its content from neo-Thomist philosophy and the social teaching of the Catholic Church, emphasizing the ideas of the dignity of the person and the self-realization of his or her freedom of worldview

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ment of the concept of the person. From his point of view, Christianity introduces the person (personality) as the center of the world (which he partly contrasts with the philosophy and worldviews of the ancient Greeks). However, the development of the personalist idea in philosophy is also important. As a kind of culmination and climax of this historical process, Mounier unassumingly sees the philosophy and views of the French Catholic personalists, which began to be expressed in *Esprit*.

19)   Maceina, "Tai, kas mus jungia," 37 [translated by the author].

and anticipating a number of the ideas of Vatican Council II (1962–1965). For example, both the personalists and Maceina, even before the Council, were very clearly in favor of implementing the principles of freedom of religion as a natural extension of respect for the person and his freedom. In an unpublished manuscript from 1960, Maceina argues that "the struggle should not be for the proclamation of Catholicism as the state religion, but for the freedom of the Church, both in the sphere of the individual and the community. The primacy of spiritual things, however, by no means implies power and privilege in the political sphere."[20] This is, of course, not only a protection of religious freedom for others and a critique of clericalism, but also a protection of the Church (both as an institution and as a spiritual community) from political interventions. In the project of integral democracy, this translates into an affirmation of both individual and communal freedom in religion, education, and culture.

The Personalistic Principle and "Non-Worldview" Politics

The 1958 Declaration emphasizes that the person is the foundation and center of the integral democracy political project: the person is not only the creator of values, not the possessor of values, but also a value in itself. It is precisely in the interests of the individual that communities and the state must serve. The concept of integral democracy articulates this through the contrast of political regimes:

> Totalitarianism subjugates the human person to something: nation or ideology, race or class, labor or capital. Whereas in democracy, the individual stands above all the elements of earthly life. The human person is the supreme value. Democracy recognizes and seeks to express this value in the state's life. Democracy is based on the primacy of the individual over the community.[21]

Personalism is seen as a counterweight to both the atomistic individualism of liberalism and the collectivism of communism and socialism.

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20) Maceina, "Valstybinė religija," 3 [translated by the author].
21) "Į pilnutinę demokratiją," 422 [translated by the author].

The personalist thesis, in which the human person is elevated, and cultural creation is linked above all to his self-expression and self-fulfillment, arises the principles of freedom of worldview, cultural autonomy, and freedom of education.[22]

Although the text *Toward Integral Democracy* is oriented toward the vision of the future of the Lithuanian nation-state, the text of the declaration does not start from a collective perspective or a common goal but from the smallest element – the individual and his or her freedom, as well as the threats to them. The authors of the Declaration associate the essential human freedom first and foremost with the freedoms of faith (religion and other similarly important beliefs) and culture (opportunity for creativity), as these are the content of the freedom of conscience: "When the state begins to order what should be done in culture and how it should be done, then all freedom of creation is lost, the individual becomes a tool of the state, a person who belongs to the state, not only as a labor force but also in spirit, as an expressor of the state's views."[23]

One of the key concepts in the 1958 declaration is non-worldview politics – a certain concept of value-free political neutrality. The separation between politics and worldview issues (especially religious and moral issues) is also the most debated and criticized idea in the project of full democracy and was highly criticized by Lithuanian Christian democrats and liberals alike.

The idea of non-worldview politics in integral democracy is based on the independence of culture from politics: "Culture is fundamentally linked to worldview, and the creation of culture belongs to the sphere of freedom of conscience. Conscience includes a person's beliefs, philosophy, and religion. Worldview is thus the content of conscience. Freedom of conscience, therefore, implies freedom of worldview."[24] A non-worldview type of politics would essentially manifest in placing as many cultural, religious, and moral issues as possible outside the realm of political decision-making, leaving these issues to individuals and communities (although this is

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22) "Į pilnutinę demokratiją," 424. Incidentally, Pranas Dielininkaitis's, also one of the interwar progressive young Catholics to follow in the ideas of Šalkauskis, 1933 thesis at the Sorbonne was devoted to freedom of education and schools, comparing France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and the Soviet Union (Dielininkaitis, "La liberté scolaire et l'État").

23) "Į pilnutinę demokratiją," 383 [translated by the author].

24) Ibid., 384 [translated by the author].

not a complete detachment from the state: in economic and social terms, the authors of the project of full democracy advocate for the redistribution of material goods and the economic support of the state for education and culture).

At the same time, non-worldly politics is directly linked to the personalistic attitudes of the authors. Maceina, in one of his post-war existentialist works, wrote that "Man cannot bear a meaningless life… . For whom we live, and what constitutes the meaning of our personal life, we can only answer with our deepest being, speaking with the voice of conscience."[25] So, freedom of conscience must also be valued if a human being is valued as a person and not just as a bodily entity. Maceina says, "To go against one's conscience is to go against oneself, to deny one's own being and to destroy it morally. The *denial of one's conscience is the denial of one's fundamental value and, simultaneously, the greatest moral decline.*"[26] To deny one's conscience is to depersonalize and dehumanize oneself. According to Maceina, conscience is a characteristic of the personality and, therefore, the basis of humanity, and worldview is the content of conscience.[27] The recognition of freedom of conscience (for oneself and others) is thus linked to the recognition of human dignity and its autonomy in creating a meaningful life.

A worldview can be derived from, or even identical to, religion or other belief systems (e.g., political ideology), but it is important to add that, according to Girnius, a person cannot be without a worldview because even the most banal primitive or least reflective attitude, such as *carpe diem,* is also a worldview.[28] A worldview is acquired in the family, at school, through participation in organizations, and self-development. It is an integral part of a person's life, significantly shaped by the environment in which he or she grows up, and then confirmed or rejected by the decision of the mature person.

Culture is where the individual and his freedom are manifested: his beliefs, thoughts, and spirit are objectified and take tangible form. According to Maceina,

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25)   Maceina, "Didysis inkvizitorius," 162–63 [translated by the author].

26)   Ibid., 160–61 [translated by the author].

27)   Maceina, "Politika ir pasaulėžiūra," 137.

28)   Girnius, "Pasaulėžiūra," 550–54.

internalized culture is essentially the content of a worldview.[29] The fundamental quality of man is creativity, which is the basis of freedom: "*Man's becoming is creativity... . The spirit is created out of nothingness. It has the power to create itself... . Only the concept of creation in the inner becoming of the spirit rescues man from the trap of determinism and defends him as a free moral being... . Man is the creator not only of the world but also of himself.*"[30] The person exists insofar as they create, and the total cessation of creation means the end of human existence. This is why culture and creativity are so strongly emphasized in non-worldview politics: freedom of conscience is impossible without freedom in the cultural sphere.

For the authors of integral democracy, natural societal pluralism does not seem to be an intrinsic value but rather an inevitable fact of life – which is precisely why they look for non-relativist arguments for pluralism in politics and culture. The personalist approach is also important in terms of emphasis. For the authors of non-worldview politics, the pursuit of truth cannot be achieved through coercion or political-legal means, and the affirmation of freedom of conscience is not an acknowledgment of relativism or an affirmation of it at the level of the state.

Critics have accused the idea of non-worldview politics of "indifference to truth" and more generally questioned how it is possible to insist on putting certain issues beyond politics and whether this would not also be acting against conscience or a division of man, that is, one must act one way in the personal sphere and then abstain from personal beliefs in politics. This conflict was also clearly reflected by Girnius: "In what sense can non-worldview politics be reconciled in the same person with his personal worldview? How can the same person have a worldview at one moment in his cultural life and at another moment in his political life cease to have a worldview?"[31] Girnius's answer (concentrating his theses): 1) it is impossible not to have a world-view; 2) the idea of a non-worldview politics does not itself stem from neutrality (or indifference), but from a certain worldview (Girnius thinks that one can even find arguments for this from several different humanistic worldviews). According to Girnius, a non-worldview policy in the work of a particular politician can be based on what he

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29)   Maceina, "Politika ir pasaulėžiūra," 133.

30)   Ibid., 148–49 [translated by the author].

31)   Girnius, "Nepasaulėžiūrinė politika," 301 [translated by the author].

calls an idealistic attitude ("service to the nation" and the "common good of society") and on an attitude of tolerance:

> To be a *tolerant* politician is to be guided by the principle of the human being (but not the one-minded one), or the principle of the personal worth of the human being (but not by the partisan worth of the human being) – to judge people not by how much they are one's own, but by how much they are objectively worthy of being seen as human beings. Having lost this disposition, every party, even if formally democratic, inevitably turns into a self-interested clique whose main aim, instead of the good of the people, is to win the helm of power.[32]

Girnius also returns to the idea of tolerance and agreement with liberals on the common ground of humanism in his text "Liberalism and Christianity," addressed: coercion does not persuade, but rather makes a person hypocritical.[33] This idea of non-worldview politics should be established by creating a constitutional institute of cultural autonomy for religious, ethnic, and similar groups (first of all through a state-subsidized but not state-controlled education system).

Democracy: Political, Social, and Economic

What concept of democracy does the project of integral democracy propose? Immediately after the war, Maceina's and Girnius' reflections on non-worldview politics stressed that the state should be neutral on all major worldview and religious issues, engaged in an apologia for a democratic and pluralistic society:

> The essence of democracy lies in the primacy of the individual over the collective. The content of democracy consists of those fundamental individual freedoms that are expressed in the name of the freedoms of conscience, belief, speech, education, and organization. Wherever and

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32) Ibid., 302 [translated by the author].
33) See Girnius, "Liberalizmas ir krikščionybė."

to the extent that these freedoms are fulfilled, the state is democratic. Where these freedoms are absent, democracy may assume whatever name it wishes, and it will not be democracy.[34]

The series of texts on non-worldview politics presents the state and political life in a very pessimistic way – there is always the potential for politics to turn into a sphere of violence and coercion, where different groups struggle for dominance and where the winners impose their own values and beliefs on the rest of society. Girnius and Maceina conclude that it is best to draw clear lines where the competencies of the state and political institutions end. Politics is an empty space for them, secondary to cultural and social life.

In this case, one can also point to the post-war studies of the existential philosophy of Maceina and Girnius (although they did not consider themselves existentialists and were particularly skeptical of Sartre and of the currents of atheistic existentialism in general), because the project of a non-worldview politics was being developed at the same time as Maceina was writing his famous trilogy *Cor Inquietum*[35] and while Girnius drafting his Heideggerian work *The Problem of Man in the Age of Technology*. It is no coincidence that conscience was one of the most important concepts of non-worldview politics. In 1946, Maceina wrote: "the question of the meaning of life – the meaning of my *personal* life – is already a profound question of conscience."[36]

The existential and political dimensions are linked in the sense that the questions of personal meaning and conscience, according to Girnius, cannot be resolved or eliminated by political means.[37] Therefore, they both consistently advocate the primacy of culture over politics. Maceina even focuses on this, linking the personalist approach to politics to both the religious and the existential problem of meaning: "If there is nothing, if there is neither God nor the immortality of the soul, then any higher human endeavor has no meaning at all. Why bother people with freedom of

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34) Maceina, "Politika ir pasaulėžiūra," 262 [translated by the author].
35) One of the parts was published in German – see Maceina, *Das Geheimnis der Bosheit*.
36) Maceina, "Didysis inkvizitorius," 162–63 [translated by the author].
37) Girnius, *Žmogaus problema technikos amžiuje*, 132–64.

conscience, self-determination, unforced faith, when instead it is better to give them bread, to appease their conscience with authority, and to allow them to sin."[38]

It is also significant where *Toward Integral Democracy* begins – the first theme is about democracy, culture, and education, as well as a critique of totalitarianism (or totalism):

> In a democracy, the primacy of the individual, which in this context is usually called freedom of conscience, is most necessary in the sphere of culture and religion, more than in any other sphere of human life. Totalitarianism is not only terrible because it denies political freedoms and rights or because it subordinates man to the economic and technical process. Above all, totalitarianism is especially terrible because it forces the individual to adopt views, systems, even artistic styles that are alien to him. Totalitarianism tells creators what must be created and how. In totalitarianism, the views and attitudes of those in power are not only a negative measure for creation, which must not be crossed, but also a positive norm, which the creator must affirm, clarify, and disseminate through his works… . When the state begins to prescribe what and how things are to be done in culture, all freedom of creation is lost, and the individual becomes a tool of the state, belonging to the state not only as a labor force but also in spirit… . Democracy, although it does not grant absolute freedom to the individual in his manifestation, empowers the individual to decide freely and to create and act based on that decision. Democracy requires that the state neither decide nor prescribe the content of cultural life.[39]

This critique of totalitarianism through the question of creative freedom may seem strange to the contemporary reader, but it is fundamentally linked to the anthropological vision of the person-individual. Alongside cultural democracy, the need for democratic representation of interests in politics and the socio-economic sphere

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38)   Maceina, "Didysis inkvizitorius," 96 [translated by the author].

39)   "Į pilnutinę demokratiją," 383 [translated by the author].

has also been raised as a necessary but insufficient condition for achieving genuine democracy. It should be stressed that the authors, as convinced Catholics, are also aware of the need to respect the freedom of conscience of other faiths, of agnostics, and of atheists and to set limits to their ideological and value claims.

The need to protect minorities in a democratic state is emphasized:

> The distinction between majority and minority in a democracy is relative. The duties and rights of both the majority and the minority are [essentially] the same. Šalkauskis has rightly observed that … neither the majority nor the minority can determine state life in an exclusivist manner, i.e., monopolize the prerogatives of power for their own benefit. The democratic order requires precisely that the benefits of the majority should be offset by the legitimate interests of the minority in a spirit of general solidarity.[40]

This, of course, is nothing original in democratic theories. Still, there is a difference in how the state itself is understood and why the majority does not have the overall legitimacy and power in the state. In his 1946 text "The Meaning of the Democratic State" Maceina, rejecting the theory of the social contract, takes the position that, although the state is an artificial human creation (historically, the state is a relatively recent phenomenon), it is the democratic state that corresponds to the nature of human beings and that it rightly complements the social institutions that are older than the state (the family, the family unit, the community, the nation):

> What, then, is a democratic state with its own ideas and practices? Compared to totalitarianism, democracy is the restoration of the original meaning of a real state… . Totalitarianism has drowned the individual, the family and the nation in state presence. These primordial foundations of the human community have lost their presence, their value, and their meaning. Democracy comes precisely to correct this error and to undo this perversion. Its role, then, is twofold: a negative one, to remove the crown

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40)   Ibid., 416.

of sovereignty from the state and return it to the rank of an instrument of service, and a positive one, to give value and nobility to the life of man as a person, as a family, and as a nation, by raising him to the rank of an end in itself. Totalitarianism had exchanged the means for the end… . That is why the democratic state has never been, and can never be, the dominant one. It is servile by definition. It is the unfolding of that primordial help to the individual and the family so that they may fulfill the earthly tasks assigned to them by nature itself in society, in the economy, in education, in science, in the arts, in religion, and, in general, in all of culture.[41]

So democracy is not even understood as a political principle (rather as an idea that transcends politics), and it is therefore proposed to break down the democratic reconciliation of interests into several parts: 1) cultural freedom (or cultural autonomy), where people and their communities act without coercion by the state (but with the material support of the state); 2) the reconciliation of economic and social interests on democratic principles (they are advocating a kind of corporatism); 3) democratic parliamentary politics.

The idea of integral democracy is paradoxically connected to drawing the boundaries of democratic political choice. Of course, the most problematic point is that the criteria are not entirely clear, some issues are understood as purely cultural, economic, or political, and finally, the question of the separation of these spheres is political in nature.

According to the Declaration of 1958, it is not enough to grant formal political and civil rights, but it is necessary to provide the social conditions for people to exercise and enjoy them. The principle of private property, the freedom to work or set up a business are also emphasized, but it is also argued that when democracy is not only political (formally granting equal rights to all), but also social (providing the real conditions for a dignified life), only then can it be considered a true – and indeed complete or integral – democracy.

Thus, integral democracy also advocates for strong redistribution and social orientation. It acknowledges the principle of private property but, at the same time, argues that surpluses more than human needs should be redistributed. The 1958 Declaration

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41)   Maceina, "Demokratinės valstybės prasmė," 286 [translated by the author].

states: "Of course, mathematical equality in the distribution of the country's economic goods can never be achieved. But relative equality must be sought. Social democracy must enable every decent, normal person to enjoy the economic goods of the country at least to the extent that he can develop his talents, maintain and educate his family, and satisfy his own and his family's cultural needs."[42] In other words, economic and social policy goals should be the self-realization of individuals, families, and communities.

Maceina formulated:

> As long as democracy is incomplete, it is false. Equality of political rights has no meaning if a man cannot own property in practice, cannot manage his work according to human standards, cannot educate and train his children according to his convictions, cannot publicly profess his views and live according to them… . From the fundamental priority of the human person, from his undeniable and irreducible worth, there arises the spontaneous demand to extend democracy to all areas of life as a concrete form of this priority. Democracy must be not only political but also cultural and social.[43]

The concept of integral democracy emphasizes that social protection is also important for maintaining the overall political structure of a democratic society:

> In order that the general principle of democracy may be fulfilled in man's relations with the economy, and that the individual may have priority in the economy without becoming an instrument for the economy, there is a need for an organization of the economy which, on the one hand, protects the individual from enslavement to the economy, and on the other hand, protects the economy itself from the loose, arbitrary private initiative, driven by the mere predatory desire for profit, and also protects private initiative from the enslavement of bureaucratic statism.[44]

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42) "Į pilnutinę demokratiją," 391 [translated by the author].
43) Maceina, "Socialinė demokratija," 163 [translated by the author].
44) "Į pilnutinę demokratiją," 394[translated by the author].

There is nothing particularly original here – in the post-war period, Catholics in other countries also discussed applying corporatist principles to forming a new type of democratic state.[45]

Community, National, and International Sovereignty

Communality is one of the central themes in integral democracy. This comes from a specific understanding of societal structure and how it should ideally interact with political institutions. The influence of Šalkauskis is particularly evident in the understanding of the different spheres of life and their governance principles. Already in 1926, Šalkauskis formulated his vision political-institutional vision based on subsidiarity and cultural autonomy:

> The political sphere: the individual – the political party – the central government of the state; the economic-social sphere: the individual – the professional organization – the economic chamber of the state; the cultural spiritual sphere: the individual – the cultural autonomous community – the high council of culture; and the territorial sphere: the individual – the provincial government – the central government of the state.[46]

Communality is also linked to what can be called the pursuit of positive freedom. According to Maceina, a true "democratic state serves and helps not the individual, understood in isolation, but the human being, living in natural communities that are the family and the nation. The democratic state does not take man into its care directly, but only through the primordial communities in which man is inscribed by his very nature."[47] The state and politics, as has already been said, are perceived as secondary to the rest of social and cultural life, but while the community is perceived

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45) However, Marco Zaganella points out that in Italy, for example, the ideas of Catholic corporatism were not very popular and were more confined to intellectual circles, as they were often associated with fascist ideology (Zaganella, "Democratic Corporatism," 433–34).

46) Šalkauskis, "Momento reikalai ir principų reikalavimai," 57 [translated by the author].

47) Maceina, "Demokratinės valstybės prasmė," 287 [translated by the author].

as essential to human existence, it is also from a personalist point of view, secondary to the individual:

> Community is only a condition for a person's life. It can never become the goal of the person, and the person is only a means to it. If a person often sacrifices a great deal to the community of his own free will, he does so not by renouncing his person, but by emphasizing it. One must not sacrifice to the community the things that relate to the person's essence, such as conscience, convictions, truth, morals.
> On the other hand, community – familial, professional, religious – is not something that happens by chance but is a pursuit of man's very nature. Man, by his very essence, is destined to be together with others. And this presence manifests itself in communal forms. Being together does not destroy a person but perfects him and brings out his social side. The full development of the person is possible only in the community. Democracy, therefore, takes the individual not as a detached, solitary person, but as a person who lives in a community, who strives for the common good and is responsible for his or her own field of activity.[48]

From the point of view of integral democracy, then, man is (to paraphrase Aristotle) a social animal, but not to be understood as a node of all social or material relations and conditions, which can be or should be subordinated to the needs of the collective. In this sense, the authors of integral democracy are closer to the communitarians; following the personalists, they see the individual in relation to a more complex social structure and reality than the liberal dichotomy of the individual-state suggests.

In the Lithuanian diaspora, the idea of the state as the nation's home was particularly sensitive: "The rise and consolidation of the idea of the sovereignty of the nation in the law is a consistent corollary of the concept of the human person being invaluable…. National belonging in itself brings people together in a single national community, which organically strives for its own independence, which is only practically possible

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48) "Į pilnutinę demokratiją," 423 [translated by the author].

with the creation of its own state."[49] Nations and national cultures are something that emerges "organically" and the nation-state is then something that compliments or event completes this development through political self-determination. Girnius, in his book *Nation and National Loyalty* (1961), also develops this argument of an organic symbiosis between the nation and the nation-state and even polemicizes with Maritain, who saw in the nation-state the dangers of fascism and anti-democratic reaction (in some respects, Maritain's ideas were seen by Girnius as an apologetic of the imperialism and colonialism of the major powers and nations). Girnius sums up: "the freedom of a nation is its state independence."[50]

However, this rather contrasts with another element: in texts on integral democracy, the state and politics as a process are viewed with fundamental suspicion. The principles of cultural autonomy and freedom of creation, the goal of the "rule of law," and the state subordination to the human person would suggest a different kind of patriotism than that of collectivist nationalism, but how this nation-state paradigm combines with the elements of more constitutional patriotism is left unanswered or rather unaddressed. Yet this suspicion of the state can also be linked to the general tradition of thinking, started by Šalkauskis, in which political thinking or political problems are overshadowed by the field of culture and its affairs – in Šalkauskis's view, Lithuania's major political and even geopolitical challenges (the existence between East and West) are of a cultural nature, and should be interpreted through the prism of cultural issues.

So on a grand scale, they see nationalities as big cultural communities bound together by shared history, traditions, and/or a common language, but they do not limit the democratic project only to a national-cultural one. Although integral democracy was primarily focused on the framework of the nation-state, it also was envisaged that, once Lithuania became independent, to survive and to provide for the interests and welfare of its citizens, it would have had to join with other states to form a supranational entity (a "superstate"), and that such an entity would also have had to be governed on democratic grounds and share not only economic resources but would commonly address social issues. The first such natural union is envisaged as a federation of the Baltic States. As early as 1955, an article by Jonas Grinius enti-

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49) Ibid., 408 [translated by the author].

50) Girnius, "Tauta ir tautinė ištikimybė," 27 [translated by the author].

tled "Lithuania in a Federated Europe" proposed a Western European Federation as a political superstate community with a federal parliament and executive government as a future model for the continent:

> Although this community would initially include Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland, France, Germany, and Italy, it would constitute such a great force with its industry that the Iberian and Scandinavian States would begin to join this community spontaneously. Thus, the liberated peoples of Central Europe and the Baltic States should also be included in this community of Western European peoples because Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have felt themselves part of the Western world since the conversion to Christianity.[51]

Maceina stresses that this creation of supranational formations must not lead to the abandonment of national culture or a turn toward total cosmopolitanism. Rather, he sees it as an extension of the hierarchical chain of the individual-family--community-nation-state-superstate-humanity: "The love of nation is the basis of the love of humanity, just as the love of self is the basis of the love of neighbor." One can also see the influence of Catholic universalism. Returning to the issue of the synthesis of culture, Maceina noted: "The principles of diversity and unity are the basic features of all European life. Nationality and Europeanity are the forces that have shaped the history and culture of our continent and will continue to do so in the future."[52] A democratic polity, therefore, should lead to a democratic cooperation of democratic countries and nations. Such is the idealistic project of integral democracy.

Conclusions

The Lithuanian philosophical tradition, particularly the concept of integral democracy, emerged during a pivotal period of nation-building at the start of the twentieth century but was also further developed by Lithuanian political exiles after World War II. It

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51)   Grinius, "Lietuva federacinėje Europoje," 12 [translated by the author].

52)   Maceina, "Baltų emigracijos europinis uždavinys," 44 [translated by the author].

could be viewed as, if not distinctive, at least interesting contributions to political thought, integrating influences from philosophy of culture, Christian personalist ideas on anthropology, and Catholic social teachings. Philosophers like Stasys Šalkauskis posited that cultural issues are fundamentally intertwined with political concerns. A political theory should address the need to nurture culture in a state and protect existing cultural communities from political interference and coercion. Šalkauskis and his students emphasized that a genuine democracy necessitates not only a cultural synthesis but also the autonomy of cultures in a state, linking national identity to cultural development and personal as well as communal freedoms and liberties. This approach balances individual dignity with communal responsibilities, advocating for a corporatist economic structure while rejecting both extreme individualism and collectivism. These are the main issues for the concept of integral democracy.

The idea of integral democracy challenges the sufficiency of parliamentary liberal democracy, advocating for a holistic approach that includes the democratization of cultural, social, and economic spheres through a subsidiary model of autonomy and representation. Central to this concept of democracy are the principles of subsidiarity and non-worldview politics, which promote individual and communal autonomy from the state. Authors of this project – especially Antanas Maceina – view belonging to a community as a fundamental human need, but do not see collective political institutions as being able to address existential issues and issues pertaining to the development and expressions of the human person. Rather the opposite, even a democratic state and its potential interventions into personal life, matters of religion, morality, and culture through political decision-making are seen as threats to the idea of personal integrity.

This paper left out the concrete constitutional structure envisaged by the authors of integral democracy (it was not a work of political theory per se). However, the idea of viewing democracy not only through the lens of political institutions but also by adding layers of economic and cultural democratic and pluralistic understanding could be relevant in today's discussions of the future of democracy. Thus, integral democracy's emphasis on the cultural and social dimensions of democracy remains pertinent in contemporary discourse. Its critique of totalitarianism and advocacy for cultural autonomy could provide valuable insights into current democratic theory, especially in multicultural and pluralistic societies, which discuss social cohesion and

the importance of culture to the political project of the modern state. Integral democracy posits that a broad and multifaceted approach to democracy on social, cultural, economic, and political issues is a more sustainable view in keeping political institutions and ideological groups in check. To achieve this, it defends the need to see society not only as a sum of individuals but as a complex social structure where the person is at the center and forms and participates in various communities.

Further scholarly exploration of integral democracy could deepen understanding of its practical and theoretical implications. Comparative studies with other communitarian and personalist political philosophies may reveal broader relevance and potential adaptations in diverse socio-political contexts. Studying democratic theories in times of challenges to democracies by authoritarian and totalitarian ideologies is a necessary act of self-reflection, and our histories of philosophy could provide the intellectual resources for this discussion on a conceptual level.

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