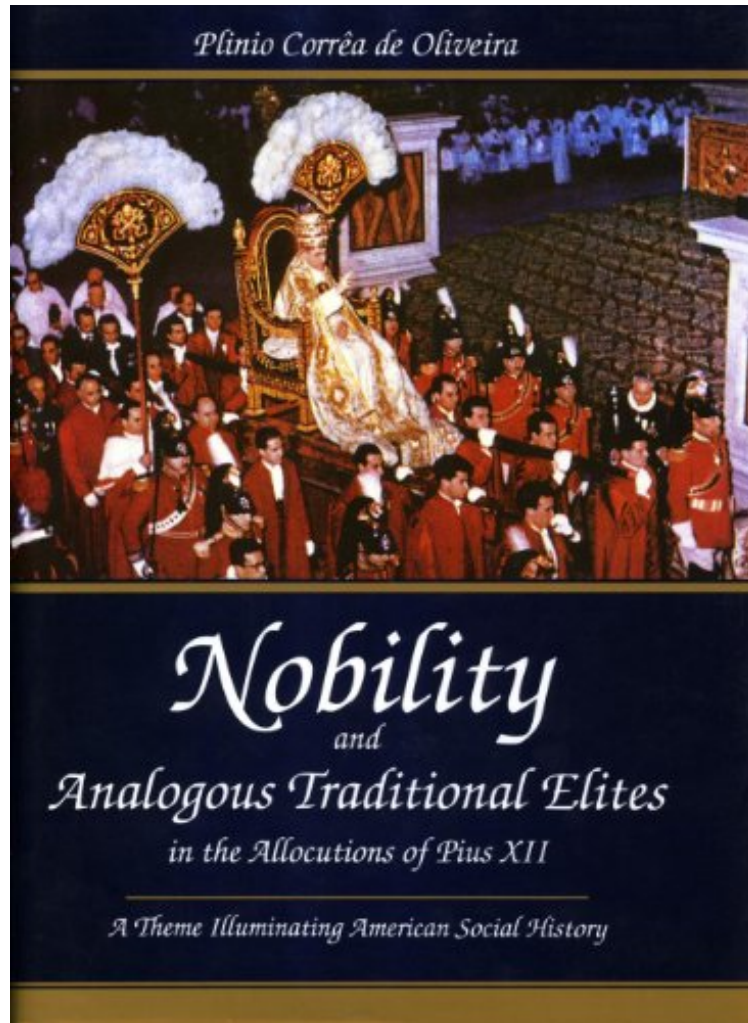


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# Nobility and Analogous Traditional Elites: A Theme Illuminating American Social History

*Plinio Correa de Oliveira*

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**Plinio Correa de Oliveira : Nobility and Analogous Traditional Elites: A Theme Illuminating American Social History** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Nobility and Analogous Traditional Elites: A Theme Illuminating American Social History:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A book to be read. A must !By Enrique Marchesi-HerceIn general, a great book. Some chapters are dedicated to the specific case of America, seen somehow in the distance to an European. Food for thought, however, when it comes to the crunch: The allocution on the matter of different popes of (relatively) recent times. An intellectual weapon to fight against the goddess of the 20th and 21st centuries: egalitarianism as well as a good argument in favour of an organic, structured society.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent textbook on leadership in societyBy helpGroundbreaking research and scholarship on a range of issues facing our current sociology. Generously illustrated and abundantly footnoted, this tome is an excellent teaching tool. Half the book is the application of the thesis of elitism in America, from the Thirteen Colonies to the present day. Delightful to find a history that is both erudite and interesting.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Elegant sophistryBy we-should-have-lunch-sometimes!While the existence of an authentic noble spirit is undeniable, I continue to not be able to wrap my head around the idea that a simple accident of birth in a propitious social class is the proper criterion to place an individual in a "noble" category. Why a sub-mediocre born-aristocrat should enjoy all the privileges that should be rightfully reserved to a natural aristocrat, is absolutely not evident. Even when elegantly conceived, the justification of parasitism for an exclusive class of individuals who simply happen to be born well, amounts to nothing but beautifully woven sophistry. A just society will aim towards encouraging good breeding and noble spirit for ALL of its individuals - all while respecting differentiation of skill and contribution. A just and humane society would also discourage, make it "prevent", unfortunate breeding. A society that emphasizes the nobility of a few in contrast with the socially engineered wretchedness of the many is simply the same pathetic and fallen human society that has never been able to rise above its immoral essence.Also, the attempt to hijack Christ was amusing, at best.

Since the eighteenth century, generations have been schooled in utopian principles proclaiming total equality as the guarantor of liberty and justice for all. The egalitarian myth of a classless society was proffered as the unquestionable path down which mankind must travel to reach perfect social harmony. This book does much to shatter these myths and provide a Catholic approach to the way society should be structured as seen by the Popes.

Rome, February 10, 1993 Distinguished Professor, It was with keen interest that I read your work *Nobility and Analogous Traditional Elites in the Allocutions of Pius XII to the Roman Patriciate and Nobility*. The thought of the great Pope Pius XII, as one can see in the documents mentioned, remains entirely relevant, and you have taken the good initiative of presenting it to today's public along with opportune annotations. It is useful to remind people, as Paul VI himself did after the Second Vatican Council, that the teachings his predecessor addressed to the Roman Patriciate and Nobility continue to be fully valid. In the comments and documentation with which you facilitate a more complete understanding of the full range of Pius XII's magisterium, one can see great erudition and sureness of thought, justly highlighted by the well-known French historian Georges Bordonove in his foreword to [the French edition of] this work. I am certain that I am performing a good deed by recommending your book to all who wish to deepen their knowledge of the wise and enlightening teachings of Pius XII. Hoping your timely book will have a wide circulation, I send you cordial greetings. Silvio Card. Oddi --Silvio Cardinal OddiRome, February 13. 1993 Distinguished Professor, Your great renown and the words of praise and encouragement given for your work by the illustrious Fr. Victorino Rodriguez, O.P., generally considered one of the glories of contemporary theology, have led me to read with lively interest your book *Nobility and Analogous Traditional Elites in the Allocutions of Pius XII to the Roman Patriciate and Nobility*. When Pius XII gave the world the splendid series of fourteen allocutions to the Roman Patriciate and Nobility, there were many who saw them less as a theological, philosophical, and historical work regarding values destined to yet play a fundamental and timeless role, than as a nostalgic effusion of love for virtues, greatnesses, and glories that the world understood less and less. The most recent of the abovementioned allocutions was that of 1953. More than thirty years later, we can now see how wrong the people were. Indeed, Pius XII had seen the course of events correctly. Today, not only is the old hostility to the nobility gradually dying out, but there are prominent intellectuals emerging most everywhere who emphasize how detrimental is the loss of authentic elites with the concomitant vulgarization of the human type to culture and the lifestyle of contemporary society. This is why in many places we now see manifested an ardent aspiration for the restoration of influence of authentic elites over the multitudes, so that the latter may once again become in accordance with Pius XII's teachings peoples instead of nameless masses (cf. Christmas radio message of Holiness Pius XII, 1944). In this historical context. your work proves to be extraordinarily timely, since in echoing the magisterium of Pope Pius XII a commenting on it with such notable penetration and consistency makes an appeal to the nobility and the analogous elites to contribute, with more courage than ever before, toward the common spirit and temporal good of all nations. Indeed it falls to them, as that immortal Pope underscored to fulfill the precious mission of communicating by example, word, and action the treasure of religious and temporal truths of Christianity, the luminous torch of so many truths that societies can never forget without the risk of succumbing to the vortex of chaos and moral misery that threatens them. I therefore hope for the best of receptions for your book, to which you have devoted the vast resources of your intelligence and erudition. besides your unlimited love for the Church. May it please Divine Providence to grant it widespread circulation, so that both the preferential option for the no --Alfons M. Card. Stickler, S D BRome, February 13. 1993 Distinguished Professor, Your great renown and the words of praise and encouragement given for your work by the illustrious Fr. Victorino Rodriguez, O.P., generally considered one of the glories of contemporary theology, have led me to read with lively interest your book *Nobility and Analogous Traditional Elites in the Allocutions of Pius XII to the Roman*

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Vatican City, Feast of Saint Joseph, 1993 Most illustrious Professor, I thank you heartily for the kind gift of your work Nobility and Analogous Traditional Elites in the Allocutions of Pius XII to the Roman Patriciate and Nobility, sent to me in its Italian translation. It made a deep impression on me for several reasons: first of all, for its timeliness, in that it is the reaffirmation of the teachings of the great Pope Pius XII on the subject at a historico-cultural moment when ferocious hostility to the nobility, spread all over the world by the French Revolution, seems everywhere to be diminishing. Secondly, the work amid the universal decay of natural and, above all, Christian values will awaken in many hearts everywhere the desire to see nobiliary elites, who in past centuries played an important and often decisive role in upholding these values through their lives and actions, once again setting for humanity the examples it needs so urgently and supremely. A third reason derives from your observations-which seem to me extremely relevant-regarding the formation, alongside the nobilities and elites of blood, of nobilities and elites of spirit and mind that, by associating and organizing among the many existing noble souls, are assuming all over the world the roles of exemplars of and guides toward a natural and perennial order of things. This, whether to support the nobilities of blood still existent and now re-emerging, or to replace those no longer capable of efficaciously reacting to the manifest decadence of our days, as has happened in more than one instance. Using vast and solid documentation, you have done a fine analysis of the very complex sociopolitical reality of our day, and commenting with great logical rigor on the luminous teachings of Pius XII, you have shown how much he and his successors up to John Paul II continue to expect from the existing nobility and future analogous elites for the religious, moral. and cultural uplifting of the world. I therefore rejoice at this book, illustrious Professor, and wish it a broad circulation, so it may spark, sustain, and build a deep and vast sensitivity to this excellent tool for the re-creation of a sound natural ethics and a revived religious morality that may lead all humanity to that peace, prosperity and happiness that only authentic and genuine values can realize and guarantee. To these good wishes, add my fervent prayers to the Lord and to the Mother of the Church, that they may sustain you in the work which is both beneficent and painfully pressing in the times in which we live. Yours in Christ. Alfons M. Card. Stickler, S D B --Alfons M. Card. Stickler, S D B

From the Author Preferential option for the nobility. At first glance this expression may startle readers familiar with the more common phrase often used Pope John Paul II: "preferential option for the poor." Nevertheless, what inspires this book is precisely a preferential option for the nobility. The objection may be raised that, ex natura rerum, at least a noble is wealthy, well-connected, and socially prominent. Accordingly, he possesses manifold means to deliver himself from any situation of penury into which he may fall. The preferential option already exercised on his behalf by Providence gives him everything he would need to rise again. The case of a poor man is precisely the opposite. He has no social standing and no useful connections, and he often lacks the means to remedy his privations. Therefore, a preferential option to help him take care of his basic necessities may be mandated by justice. In this light, a preferential option for the nobility seems almost an affront to the poor. In reality, however, the antithesis between the nobility and the poor is becoming an anachronism, since poverty besets an ever larger number of nobles, as Pope Pius XII observes in his allocutions to the Roman Patriciate and Nobility. Moreover, the situation of an impoverished noble is more poignant than that of a poor man in the street. The poor man, by his very wretchedness, can and should awaken his neighbor's sense of justice as well as his generosity. The nobleman, on the other hand, by virtue of his nobility, has reasons to avoid requesting aid. He even prefers to conceal his name and origins when he can

no longer conceal his poverty. This is what the expressive language of old termed "nobility in embarrassed circumstances." Efforts to relieve the distress of such nobles--and of all impoverished people regardless of their social status--merited the encomium of the ancients. Christian charity discovered a thousand ingenious ways to alleviate the plight of impoverished nobles without compromising their dignity.[1] However, the materially destitute are not alone in deserving a preferential option. Such an option should also benefit people in positions that entail particularly arduous duties whose fulfillment edifies the social body and whose neglect scandalizes it. Members of the contemporary nobility are often in this category, as the present work will show.[2] The preferential option for the nobility and the preferential option for the poor are by no means mutually exclusive. Nor are they in opposition to one another. Pope John Paul II reminds us: "Yes, the Church takes upon herself the preferential option for the poor. It is, to be sure, an option of preference and not, therefore, an exclusive or excluding option, since the message of salvation is destined for all." [3] Indeed, these options are complementary ways of manifesting the justice and charity that go hand in hand in the service of the same Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the model both for the nobles and the poor, as the Roman Pontiffs emphatically proclaim.[4] May these words serve as clarification for those who, motivated by the spirit of class struggle--at present in evident decline--cling to the discarded notion that constant conflict between the nobility and the poor is inevitable. This false concept led many to interpret the preferential option of John Paul II as an exclusive preference. Such a passionate and factional interpretation lacks all objectivity. One's preferences may fall simultaneously on several objects with differing degrees of intensity. A preference for one in no sense demands the exclusion of the others. [1] See Documents III. [2] See Chapter I, 1 and 3; Chapter II, 1; Chapter IV, 9 and 10; and Chapter VII, 8. [3] "Ad Patres Cardinales et Curiae Pontificalisque Domus Prelatos, imminente Nativitate Domini coram admissos," December 21, 1984, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1985)*, Vol. 77, no. 5, p. 511. [4] See Chapter IV, 8; Chapter V, 6; and Documents IV. From the Inside Flap Nobility and Analogous Traditional Elites in the Allocutions of Pius XII, by the illustrious Brazilian philosopher and author Prof. Plinio Corra de Oliveira, is being published simultaneously in the United States, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. Many people, influenced by the worn-out egalitarian ideas of the French Revolution, view the nobility as a meaningless, even if beautiful, remnant of bygone days. Such was not the perspective of Pope Pius XII. In his powerful and moving addresses to the patricians and nobles of Rome, he describes the nobility's important role in contemporary society. He explains its mission of leadership, which it cannot shirk even when deprived of wealth. Many nations--including ours--proscribe the creation of a titled nobility. Nonetheless, they have traditional, aristocratic elites. These analogous elites are also called to guide society and to assume responsibilities for the common good. America's history--past and present--reflects the way these elites meet their responsibilities. When they fail, other "elites" assume the guiding role. the cultural revolution undermining our nation today is a prime example of the destructive paths along which these antithetical elites can lead us. To counteract them, we can do no better than apply the principles taught by Pius XII as expounded and illustrated by Prof. Plinio Corra de Oliveira with well-marshalled arguments and numerous historical examples in this forceful and seminal work.