From time to time, MODERN AGE will print articles by, and about, some of the principal social thinkers of our time. In early numbers, we shall include autobiographical essays by Wilhelm Roepke and Richard Weaver.

We commence with the Archduke Otto, head of the ancient house of Habsburg. Still young, and possessed of remarkable intelligence and courage, Otto von Habsburg, the Archduke of Austria, is a champion of international order, and of the rights of minorities. Forbidden to enter his own country, he lives in Bavaria. Recently he published an important book, which is discussed in this number of MODERN AGE by Dr. Frederick Wilhelmsen. Professor Wilhelmsen visited the Archduke before writing this article. The Archduke's own essay summarizes his social principles.

Otto von Habsburg knows Europe and the United States thoroughly. Since the Hungarian rising, he has been active on behalf of the refugees from ruined Hungary.

Otto von Habsburg
And The Future of Europe

FREDERICK D. WILHELMSEN

The Western armies marched into the chaos of Central Europe in 1945 and brought in their wake thousands of expatriates, men outlawed for years by the fiat of Nazi tyranny, men seeking once again a hearth and the promise of a fatherland. They were denied one young man because his birth was illustrious and his name feared in the councils of barbarism in all the East. Archduke Otto von Habsburg, son and heir of the last Austrian Emperor and Apostolic King of Hungary, was forced to leave the land of his birth.

Exiled from Austria, he has become the first citizen of Europe. The irony is one with the supra-national destiny of his house. To carry an inheritance often sanctified by the holy crown of Otto I; to re-
member a past whose glory is such that it might well choke away an understanding of the realities of the present; to live an exile within a twentieth century rooted in a past that has rejected both the reality and the conception of Christendom; to be the heir to such a tradition—this has not been an easy task. That Otto von Habsburg has shouldered his destiny both with dignity and intelligence is known throughout all the West. That he has accepted the burden of his past and the challenge of the present is recognized and respected by Europeans of sensibility and insight, regardless of political commitment or national allegiance. The Archduke addresses scholarly conferences with the authority of a trained political philosopher; he speaks fluently in half a dozen languages throughout the civilized and free world; he heads the Centro Europeo de Documentacion e Informacion whose annual conferences at the Escorial provide a clearing ground for Christian social and political thought; he is consulted by statesmen and academicians; quite literally he has made himself the first citizen of Europe. By a prince of the American Church he has been referred to privately as the first layman in the Catholic World.

Europe is now reading his third book, Social Order of Tomorrow. The Spanish edition (Economia y Sociedad en la Crisis del Sigo XX, Instituo Social Leon XIII, Madrid, 1957) can be bought in the book stalls of the railroad stations in Madrid and Barcelona; the German (Soziale Ordnung von Morgen, Verlag Herold, Wien und Múnchen, 1957) can be had anywhere in Austria and throughout Germany as well. The Archduke preaches a strange new optimism to a Europe from which hope has been banished for a decade. He speaks to the vacuum which is the European continent. Unless my American readers understand firmly that Europe today is a vacuum they will not understand the novelty and the appeal of this book by Archduke Otto.

It takes, I believe, an American fresh to this continent to appreciate fully the frightening nothingness of Europe. Dominated by cliques, anonymous and powerful in their anonymity, presenting to the public little more than lists of unknown candidates, the major parties of Europe are fossilized remnants of a nineteenth-century past, resurrected in a fit of reaction- ary absentmindedness by the allies after World War II. Dedicated to political and economic ideologies whose relevance died with the nineteenth century, the parties today fight enemies long dead and celebrate victories long past. Committed abstractly to the most rigid of ideologies, manipulated practically by the most cynical of politicians, they offer nothing to a youth who neither remember nor understand the barricades mounted by their fathers. On the Right there are the parties pledged to an economic liberalism fitted to the times of Louis Phillippe. On the left there are the Socialist parties of an old-fashioned Marxism; recoiling in horror from Soviet Imperialism, they can offer the electorate nothing better than the slogans of a class war rendered obsolete by the dawn of the atomic age. In the center stand the Christian Democrats; thrown up after the war to halt the tide of Marxism, composed of a weird mingling of contradictory groups, they have become defined by the very enemy they oppose. No one knows this better than the Christian Democrats who are at the top of their own parties. And all parties—black and red and grey—find themselves forced to play the weary game of compromise and trade, advance and retreat, the old chess that produced that absurd cooperation between Bavarian agrarians and liberals with Socialists against Christian Democrats, a comedy that ended only yesterday.

The young are bored and disgusted. This is perhaps the central fact in the European political scene in our time. Excepting only Adenauer, whose personality rises above the play of party politics, there is
neither person nor idea that grips the mind of Europe today.

Monarchism today is beginning to fill the vacuum, slowly, confidently, with a power born of experience and nurtured by the centuries. I refer neither to the nationalist monarchism of France and Italy, nor to the pleasant and patriarchal monarchism of Bavaria. I speak of the supra-national monarchical theory being built up today in Germany and Austria and throughout the Latin world, a theory simultaneously rejecting all forms of atavistic legitimism and appealing to the needs of the Europe of today. To the literature of this movement—the most impressive political literature of our generation, almost completely unknown to the contemporary American intellectual world—Archduke Otto has added his *Social Order of Tomorrow*.

The Archduke begins with a simple declaration of faith in human freedom; he rejects on principle every theory of historical determinism. From this hard core of affirmation flows his optimism, an optimism that has absorbed within itself the valid insights of European philosophical pessimism but which has escaped the paralysis of will often accompanying such a vision.

The modern world, according to Archduke Otto, has been created by two factors: the revolution effected by the machine and the failure to come to grips with that revolution. This failure the Archduke traces to the moral rot which has beset the West since the pagan reaction of the Renaissance. The old world whose industry and finance were governed by the rhythm of a landed economy was unable to cope with the new order burgeoning from the Industrial Revolution. An integration of old with new would have mitigated the harshness of life which is one with a non-technological society, but it would have retained the stability and order marking the older world. Misunderstood because no one was aware that a revolution was taking place; uncontrolled because no institution was at hand to guard the rights of old and new, the machine ripped up the ancient economy, simultaneously depressing the landed classes and creating the new class of proletarian workers. At first unconscious of its very existence as a class, the workers soon found themselves involved in a vicious class war whose consequences have harried the continent ever since. From above the old Liberalism preached an institutionalizing of the economic jungle; from below the workers produced the reaction of Marxism. The opposition between these forces was illusory; Marxism and Liberalism were brothers in that both were failures to come to grips with the meaning of the machine and the new social order created thereby.

Today the slogans of the old class war are losing their meaning. The American worker, fortunately spared the class war, is already a member of the middle classes. The European worker is well on his way to the same status. The discovery of atomic energy simply completes the obsolescence of the dogmas of the nineteenth century. Both old-fashioned Liberalism and Marxism, maintains the author, were systems based on the primacy of the production of products from an increasingly shrinking pile of materials. Both were economies of scarcity. Classical Liberalism promised a decent minimum to all, a minimum to filter down from above; classical Socialism promised a decent minimum through a redistribution of wealth. Both conceived wealth as theoretically static, a "pie" which could be shared by all; the opposition between the two systems simply centered around who would have the honor of cutting the pie. A sound economy, as the nineteenth century conceived it, was one with the rationalization of poverty. But these limits have been shattered by Hiroshima. The central economic question of the future will be the distribution of unlimited wealth, not its production. To say this is to assert that the center of the economic theory of tomorrow must be moral and not material. The material problem of produc-
tion is theoretically solved. The moral issue remains yet to be faced. The old dogmas placed industry and production at the heart of life; materialistic in intention and execution; incapable of understanding the spiritual dimensions of existence, they cannot cope with a world which has broken the narrow core of economic determinism by crashing through to the transcendent.

We stand on the threshold of a time wherein man must walk in prayer and shoulder with God Himself the very order of existence. We have become Titans, co-creators with the Lord. We have become men and must put aside the things of children.

A new proletariat is rising in our time. As the status of the worker continues to improve, that of the peasant and the middle classes declines. Incapable of competing with larger units, the peasant and the small business man, the craftsman and the trader cannot be helped by preaching them homilies on the value of asceticism and by feeding them subsidies. The latter at best are palliatives and at worst signs of a permanent disease in the body politic. Yet an arresting of the decline of the peasantry and the middle classes is absolutely imperative, according to the mind of Otto von Habsburg. Carefully pointing out that the American farmer is a business man seeking a yield from the soil, whereas the European peasant is a man for whom the land is a way of life, a style of being, the Archduke insists that the continued existence of the peasantry is crucial for a sane European economy, crucial for European sanity itself. The progressive agglutination of great masses within urban centers in a land area as small as western Europe is militarily indefensible and socially ruinous. The old dreams of a decentralization of industry, coupled with its use for the sake of a free peasantry is today a practical possibility due to the discovery of atomic energy. The atomic age, rather than delivering the final coup de grace to a declining peasantry, can—insists the Archduke—be the blessed means of its preservation and even enrichment.

The European middle classes face the same debasement as does the peasantry. Caught between big interests, the organized mass of labor, and an unhealthy concentration of finance hostile to the small merchant, the middle classes are being rapidly proletarianized. Proletarianization means radicalization. Radicalization means a Hitler. Poujadism, warns the Archduke, is a symptom that a new class war is in the offing unless a social order be erected guaranteeing to the small trader and merchant the opportunity to pursue in a modest and decent manner the free enterprise larger interests legitimately demand for themselves.

The careful reader of the Archduke's economic philosophy discovers everywhere a mind profoundly humane, thoroughly Christian, and annoyingly optimistic. Yet the Archduke attempts to meet squarely the objection of the pessimist: a decent exercise of the immense power of atomic energy; a decent economy in which that power is put to use for the common good; a decent future—these things depend on a decent political order. The Archduke is quite adamant on this point: economics are subordinated to politics and the end of politics is the commonweal, the securing of those human rights rooted in the nature of man as the image of God.

Most European states today, according to the author, are the spiritual descendents of the French Revolution, itself the logical consequence of the Renaissance. The fruits of the Renaissance were the royal absolutism of Bodin; the pagan humanism of Versailles (a court, says Christopher Dawson, wherein the chapel is so well hidden it is almost impossible to find); the spirit of Jean Jacques Rousseau. All were crowned politically by the Bastille and by Napoleon, by the violence of the first mob and the tyranny of the first soldier of the Revolution. The '48 was but a recrudescence of eighteenth century paganism. The essence of the Revolution is the denial of
man's relation to the Transcendent, the assertion of man as autonomous, himself the source of all rights. From this follows either the absolutism of parliament or the absolutism of the dictator. Totalitarianism is simply the logical consequence of the Revolution. The politics of the Revolution, therefore, are inevitably power politics, not social politics.

By "social politics" the Archduke means a polity whose goal is the watch over and defence of the natural rights of man. For him this is the essence of the state, the immediate source of its power, the reason for its being. A decent state must forever be a public Thing, the custodian of public rights, a public sacrifice to the sacredness of the human person.

The concept of the "modern state"—itself ironically dated—was born with the theory of "checks and balances" conceived by Montesquieu. (Here I find myself in disagreement with the Archduke: the theory in question has clear-cut antecedents in Polybius and finds its earliest expression in both Plato and Aristotle.) The state as conceived by the great Frenchman is composed of naked powers which can function for the sake of the common good only provided they are meshed into a unity which balances one power against the other. The powers in question are, of course, the legislative, executive, and judicial. But these "powers" are neither angels nor pure essences, says the Archduke. They do not function mechanically in an abstract void, but are exercised by men living within history, men with weaknesses and ambitions as have all men. The experience of the race is that one or another of the powers assumes precedence; more specifically, the experience of Europe since the Revolution is that one or another of the powers dwarfs the remaining two and thus produces the tyranny the theory is supposed to avoid. In European "democracies" the legislative branch of government swamps the executive and the judiciary: the result is the dictatorship of an assembly. In European authoritarian regimes the executive humbles legislature and judiciary: the result is the dictatorship of a person. What is extremely significant, in the opinion of Otto von Habsburg, is that the judicial branch of government is nowhere dominant in those contemporary nations suffering the inheritance of the Revolution. This fact is crucial to an understanding, not only of Soziale Ordnung von Morgen but of the whole philosophy of contemporary European monarchism. The novelty and challenge of this philosophy of government rests in its insistence on the primacy of the judiciary.

The Archduke refers to the Rechtstaat as the state of the future. There is no adequate English word for this term: call it "the state of right" if you will. It means a state conceiving its function as the preservation and guardianship of the natural rights of man. It presupposes an at least implicit agreement on the extent and structure of these rights. It rests, therefore, on an entire metaphysic prior in every way to the establishment of the state and to the exercise of its functions. It maintains, in short, that the European philosophical tradition has captured the truth about the being and destiny of man.

The theory of the Rechtstaat involves two dynamic powers and one defecting power, two innovating and one conserving. The executive and legislative exercise power, the one by initiating and the other by carrying out the law; the judicial guards the fundamental rights of the citizens and sets bounds to the power exercised by legislature and executive. At first glance this theory does not seem to differ from that of Montesquieu. In fact, however, it is cut away from the whole Revolutionary tradition in that it renders the judicial power absolutely independent of legislature and executive, completely free of elections and the vagaries of majority rule, totally transcending the bubbling and ephemeral fads of any moment or hour of history. The judicial power stands as the head of the state. Not a body of lawyers set up to interpret the minutiae of the law, the judicial
power rests in a person who is the watchdog of the rights of the citizenry. Today, argues Archduke Otto, the citizens have no public legal defence against the anonymous forces menacing them from every quarter. In an age increasingly dominated by economic, social, and political pressures whose power is often overwhelming, minorities and individuals have no place to turn to, no harbor wherein their rights might be sheltered from the storms without.

It is theoretically possible that the European Rechtstaat of the future be Republican in form. The monarchy, insists the scion of Habsburg, rests on the symbolic act of coronation, an act assuming an at least implicit sacral view of society. The increasing secularization of the West is the most powerful argument against the insaturation of monarchy in the Europe of tomorrow. Against this argument leans the whole tradition of European Christendom, a permanent ferment in the corporate body of a Europe admittedly but half-Christian. Furthermore, the head of state in a Republic is elected. He is dependent on the power of money and mass organizations for the position he achieves. He lacks that absolute independence that the Rechtstaat theory insists is necessary for the supreme judge of the land. Here we reach the deepest meaning of the old formula, "King by the Grace of God." Deposed by the absolutism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the formula in its venerable medieval sense pointed to the transcendence of the rights of man; they were grounded not in this or that group, not by the grace of this or that man, but solely by God Himself. The King was there in his realm to stand guard over this transcendence.

Finally, the Rechtstaat is no enemy of the principle of democracy. Dedicated to restoring the parties to the people themselves, Otto von Habsburg insists that every man have the right to vote for a person, that the present European system of lists of candidates perpetuates the power of small cliques of professional politicians and robs the electorate of that choice between persons without which democracy is a fraud. The theory of the monarchy of tomorrow is filled out by speculations on the desirability of an appointed upper house representing the leading spiritual, intellectual, and economic interests in the nation. Neither the old absolutism of the Enlightenment nor the liberal monarchy of the nineteenth century, the monarchy of tomorrow is something new, new in the paradoxical sense in which Europe is always new: perpetually changing, this continent remains forever itself. The theory in question, medieval in its origins, has been called forth by the new age yet to come.

The closing pages of Soziale Ordnung von Morgen return to a theme Archduke Otto has pursued for years and with which he is today identified, both by the traditions of his House and by the force of his personality: European Federation. A federation of nations will be but a mockery if it is forever subsidized by the United States; it must stand rather as a third force in the world of tomorrow, the ally of America against the East, an ally independent and self-supporting. This federation, composed of republics and monarchies alike, will not emerge from the speculations of Strasbourg. Excessively legalistic in approach; lacking in any sense of the great European traditions of the past; totally devoid of that symbolic magic without which greatness is impossible; identified with dying parties and decayed ideologies—Strasbourg has not captured the imagination of Europe. The only federation feasible for the continent today is one respecting differences within unity, a federation which would be in truth a gathering of fatherlands. In an earlier book Archduke Otto wrote "that the European senses instinctively that variety is the best defence of freedom." This eagerness to let each place be itself, to permit every nation to eat and drink of its own inheritance fills all monarchical speculation in Central Europe today. This rich multiplicity can be unified only by that which created it in
ages past: the sense of Europe as the realm of Christ. Otto of Austria-Hungary appeals to the Crown of the Holy Roman Empire as the living symbol of the pledged dedication of Europe to the service of Christ. He appeals to the crown as to a reality and as to a promise.

American academicians are inclined to dismiss such speculations as unreal and romantic. I warn them that their judgments are obsolete. They are unaware of the ferment beginning to fill the European heartland today, beginning to fill the vacuum of the continent. The night of the nineteenth century is past. It is already the dawn.

In conclusion I can only remind my readers that we men of the Christian West incarnate our traditions in living symbols because we are the people who have affirmed the world as the love of God. And thus we have been wont from the earliest days to seek the divine in groves and temples and—until we knew the One True God of Bethlehem—our gods were of the household and the fields. As with our religious traditions, so with our political: we incarnated them in boundaries which have been intensely sacred to us. We fenced Christendom round with a hedge of swords which were crosses. Within we built cities centered—as the royal philosopher once wrote—“by cathedrals, not prisons or banks.” So too our western genius for reality saw to it that our freedoms were prolonged in time as well as space. We raised up kings out of the dust of the dark ages and finally that Empire which knit together once again our inheritance from antiquity and the awesome burden we received from the Gospel.

Go as I did to the Schatzkammer in the Hofburg in Vienna. Spend an hour before the Holy Crown of Otto I. Meditate carefully upon what you see: it is Europe itself.