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December

8th 2010

[On the possibility of monarchy and aristocracy today](#)

Bede

Posted under [Political Philosophy](#) [Edit This](#)

A [few thoughts on monarchy regarding the recent discussion](#), [started](#) by John Médaille's [two articles](#).

First, one must distinguish between monarchy and aristocracy, as the two were often in conflict. Lords and nobles often saw it in their interest to have a weak king. And while Aquinas may prescribe monarchy as the best form of government, Aristotle was more sober in his assessment of best forms of government. While some people (esp. those in the Middle East) might have temperaments more conducive to monarchy, other people, he felt, were better served by aristocracy / oligarchy or *politeia* / democracy. The best form of government was [relative](#) to various ethnicities and their ancestral and tribal histories.

Second, Red is [correct](#) that a people cannot select a new aristocracy *de novo*. The European aristocracy, as it evolved out of the Middle Ages, was a product of the [warrior caste](#). The early aristocracy ruled because they were able to rule. This authority in time became reflected in law. To bring about conditions for an aristocracy in the U.S. today, the U.S. would have to descend into complete chaos.

Third, regarding meritocracy, the ancient aristocracy was not opposed to meritocracy, but thought it was the epitome of merit. Echoing Nietzsche, *bonus* not only meant good, but also noble with its martial implications. Aristotle combined all these qualities, arguing that the moral were typically noble and even good looking. Both Plato and Aristotle were concerned with good breeding (eugenics), something which continues into the Middle Ages with *gentillesse* (refinement and courtesy resulting from good breeding).

There is some evidence that the nobles were the fittest. For instance, Gregory Cochran and Henry Harpending, in [The 10,000 Year Explosion](#) (pg. 104), write:

Gregory Clark, in *A Farewell to Alms*, shows that in medieval England the richest members of society had approximately twice the number of surviving offspring as the poorest. The bottom of society did not reproduce itself, with the result that, after a millennium or so, nearly everyone was descended from the wealthy classes.

Interestingly, although we are nearly all thus descendants of the Medieval upper classes, nearly the exact opposite phenomenon is occurring today: [Dysgenics / Idiocracy](#).

Finally, let's not forget that there was a racial element to aristocracy in Europe. "Blue bloods," as they were called in Southern Europe, were supposed to be fair skinned (of Germanic, or maybe Celtic, ancestry) so that one could see the blue veins through their pale skin (unlike the dusky skin of the Moors, etc.). Throughout Europe the aristocracy seems to have been fairer skinned than the lower classes, as noted by the "fair princess" of fairy tales. In other words, fair looks denoted an aristocratic or upper-class background. Swarthy looks denoted a lower-class background.

**Update:** Richard Spencer comments [here](#).



[5 Comments »](#)

## 5 Responses to "On the possibility of monarchy and aristocracy today"

1. *Weaver* on 08 Dec 2010 at 7:08 pm [# edit this](#)

Aristotle's where I take my definitions. Feudal leaders did rule by force, but I don't think Aristotle would have viewed them all as aristocrats necessarily – most as oligarchs, even though that's rule by the wealthy.

2. *Bede* on 08 Dec 2010 at 7:16 pm [# edit this](#)

I wasn't disagreeing with you but only expanding upon what you previously said.

3. *Sean Scallon* on 09 Dec 2010 at 7:04 pm [# edit this](#)

My thoughts on the matter at TAC:

<http://www.amconmag.com/blog/2010/12/09/democratic-aristocracy/>

4. [Wishing Prince William & Ms. Kate Middleton Success! | Conservative Heritage Times](#) on 29 Apr 2011 at 3:58 am [# edit this](#)

[...] the aristocracy may not be what it once was (see my thoughts on aristocracy), people of the European Diaspora generally are still fascinated by the idea of [...]

5. [Localism Limited by Political Correctness | Conservative Heritage Times](#) on 07 Jul 2011 at 4:38 pm [# edit this](#)

[...] year, John Médaille posted a dubious article at Front Porch Republic arguing for a strange, ahistorical marriage of monarchy and egalitarianism. (I commented here.) In the same vein, Jeremy Beer has posted a piece on the limits of localism [...]

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