**Goods and Groups: Thomistic Social Action and Metaphysics**

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Abstract (150 words):

Hans Bernhard Schmid has argued that contemporary theories of collective action and social metaphysics unnecessarily reject the concept of a “shared intentional state.” I will argue that three neo-Thomist philosophers, Jacques Maritain, Charles de Koninck, and Yves Simon, all seem to agree that the goals of certain kinds of collective agency cannot be analyzed merely in terms of intentional states of individuals. This was prompted by a controversy over the nature of the “common good,” in response to a perceived threat from “personalist” theories of political life. Common goods, as these three authors analyze them, ground our collective action in pursuit of certain kinds of goals which are immanent to social activity itself. Their analysis can support an alternate position to “intentional individualism”, providing an account of collective practical reasoning and social metaphysics based on shared intentional states, but without involving implausible “group minds.”

**Goods and Groups: Thomistic Social Action and Metaphysics**

Hans Bernhard Schmid and Annette Baier contend that most contemporary positions in analyzing collective intention are implicated in “intentional individualism.”[[1]](#footnote-1) Schmid has defined intentional individualism as: “Any interpretation of an individual’s behavior has to be given in terms of *individual* [intentional] states.”[[2]](#footnote-2) Both authors have argued that there are good reasons for thinking that collective action and our metaphysics of groups can only really be grounded in shared intentional states. Some twentieth-century Thomists have, I will argue, offered an analysis of what these “shared intentions” in group agency would look like.[[3]](#footnote-3) This was prompted by a controversy over the nature of the “common good,” in response to a perceived threat from more individualist (as opposed to communitarian) theories of political life. Three prominent neo-Thomist philosophers, Jacques Maritain, Charles de Koninck, and Yves Simon, all seem to agree that the goals of certain kinds of collective agency cannot be analyzed merely in terms of intentional states of individuals. Common goods, if truly “common” to all members of a group, are intended communally and not individually. This analysis seems to support the plausibility of an alternate position to “intentional individualism” in collective agency and social metaphysics.

The debate between the Thomist philosophers in question concerned, at least initially, the goal(s) of political society. All three – Maritain, de Koninck, and Simon – held that society, or political life generally speaking, exists to achieve some goal (its common good). The debate concerned specifically how we ought to construe that collective goal. Does political life exist to achieve the average maximal well-being of all individuals who compose society – something akin to maximizing “utility” in the group? This kind of position might be termed a “utilitarian” view of society, but was, given their philosophical commitments, unacceptable to any of the Thomists in this debate.[[4]](#footnote-4) Granting that societal well-being was not a matter of maximizing some standard of utility, a more difficult question for their classical Thomist position concerned how we should understand the role of individual persons in political life, given that European liberal politics was then emphasizing individual autonomy and freedom in the aftermath of the horrors of totalitarian government. Fundamentally, the Thomists were aligned with the classical intuition that society exists to “make men good” and promote virtue, but this position is perhaps intuitively more aligned to monarchical theories of government rather than democratic political life. This posed a problem in adapting the classical intuition to the modern situation.

Charles de Koninck started the discussion, initially attacking a position that society exists to achieve the good of every individual person in some “maximal” sense. This position was termed “personalism,” because it was influenced by a trend in philosophy to see individual “persons” as the primary ends of society. While all three seemingly agreed in rejecting the personalist position as presented by de Koninck, each offered distinct but complimentary accounts of communal life and action. While they often presented their views as commentaries on texts from Thomas Aquinas, I will instead highlight what I see as each of their distinct perspectives on the matter.

Charles de Koninck focused on the social aspects of human nature to argue that each human person can never be considered as a goal “in itself” apart from the way in which each person at least potentially functions in society. Personalism seems plausible because society cannot have, conceivably, the goal of anything other than achieving something for the individuals which compose it; it would be strange if our political life existed to benefit, for example, the paper on which our laws were written. But this does not necessitate that society only achieves *individual* goals. That perspective neglects that there really are both common goals of groups of individuals and the more basic fact that human beings are social animals.

If we think there are objective facts about what it means for human beings to live well (as de Koninck did and the Thomist tradition as a whole affirmed), and humans are social by nature, then there are some unique kinds of social goods. It seems obvious that human beings are, by nature, social animals; speech, sharing intentions, rational communications are natural human activities.[[5]](#footnote-5) Aquinas is fairly clear that social life is connatural to human beings, so that, even in a world without sin, there would be leadership and government.[[6]](#footnote-6) But, then, living well *together* is distinct from questions about individual well-being. Both Jacques Maritain and Yves Simon, consequently, had to clarify the nature of collective intention and action in a more general sense in order to adequately avoid the charge of being a “personalist.” Each had to base their analysis on some uniquely social goods in light of which individuals flourish socially rather than merely individually.

Charles de Koninck makes much of the fact that Aquinas follows Aristotle in (counter-intuitively) affirming that human society is naturally prior to individual human beings as a whole to a part.[[7]](#footnote-7) While individual people might exist before human society in time, every human being comes into existence as an inherently social animal, so that human society is essential to being human. Society is “naturally” prior to individuals just like human nature is logically prior to any individual human instance. Social well-being is not, however, contrary to the well-being of individual members. The common good of a group, as in the case of society as a whole, would require that there is some way in which the well-being of each member of the group is included under a higher perspective; achieving individual well-being happens in light of how this achieved by the group. The good of family life, for instance, is the well-being of each person in the family, but includes those people within a higher common goal of living together well.[[8]](#footnote-8) By contrast, if the well-being of the group somehow existed without reference to the well-being of the members, it would only accidentally achieve the well-being of any member, as it was essentially the well-being of no concrete member.

But, if de Koninck is right about the existence of distinct “collective” kinds of well-being which follow from the social nature of human beings, the implication is that social well-being can only be caused or exist in a uniquely social or collective way. Jacques Maritain noted this contrast between what we might call “public goods” and “common goods.” The former are goods that need distribution but are not themselves shared by all members of a group, but the latter are goods that can be enjoyed simultaneously by each member. There are public goods, for example, in bee hives (e.g., honey being parceled out to each member) so that each bee both contributes to the common task and receives some benefit from the collective activity of the hive. But a “common” good would be a uniquely social in a different way. While we need not get deeply involved in the psychological situation of bees, it would seem that the bees use social coordination to achieve their end but would not be affected if they could achieve the end without social interaction (e.g., with miniature mechanized help). Their coordination of tasks is not an end in itself, but a means to the production and rationing of honey. Further, the end is unsharable in a public goods scenario. The same amount of honey cannot be eaten by two bees simultaneously.

By contrast, Maritain thinks “common” goods are those that are uniquely social or communicative, even when they might involve an external task. Without such goods, it would be hard to say what constituted social well-being in a way that was uniquely social. Population health, for example, might require coordination among members and might only be maintained when everyone cooperates in achieving it, but is fundamentally only the health of each member. Public health is thus a public good, but not “common” or shared; there is not a separate ‘health of society’ over and above health of each member. However, common goods are distinctly “social goods” and only *exist* as “shared”: relationships between persons, truth, or friendship. In human society writ large, some uniquely social goods are rule of law, a civic conscience, traditions, justice, heroism, and culture. Maritain's language is that common goods are thus “immanent” rather than transitive products of social interaction – the process of their production has some non-instrumental value.[[9]](#footnote-9) While there may be some concrete task at issue (e.g., we paint the fence together or we fight for justice for John), in cases of social goods, there is always some *immanent* product integral to the activity being truly collective or social. Maritain thinks this implies common goods can only be achieved by rational agents who can communicate and engage in higher-level social relationships, but we might bracket whether some higher animals can engage in similar activities; it might be plausible that some can achieve truly non-instrumental social goods.

A corollary of Maritain's view is that one cannot be “mistaken” about achieving some kinds of common goods in collective action. Some common goods are either identical with or something closely connected to a relational or social activity (e.g., either be the activity itself or a disposition intimate to the activity, like “being in a relationship with...”). While illusions remain possible (of a sort), it would be unusual for someone to think he is enjoying family life or another type of common good and not actually be doing so. A radical mistake is not *really* possible. A person might have the odd false belief that she is living as a member of a family, for example, but she would not really be living “family life” at all if she were not actually a member of the social circle in question.[[10]](#footnote-10) Relational activity is built into the notion of these common goods; they “depend on the existence of more than one person to share them.”[[11]](#footnote-11) “Justice”, for example, would be inconceivable except as founded on relations between persons.[[12]](#footnote-12) Common goods of social life have “externalist” conditions because they are social activities and only exist with a minimum of at least two people.

The third element to complete the picture comes in Yves Simon's *Philosophy of Democratic Government*. de Koninck provided the thought that human beings are social in essence, implying that there are distinct aspects of social well-being which are “common goods”; Maritain argued that common goods are either social activities or “immanent” products of social activities; and Yves Simon contributes to this discussion by highlighting elements of the practical reasoning proper to groups. He distinguishesbetween "partnerships" and social groups (“societies” in Simon's terminology) on the basis of different intentional relationships to the goods intended by each member. Partnerships are contractual agreements to achieve some aim together, but entail no truly joint agency, given that there is no deep commonality or sociality. Each member is merely achieving their own individual good by reference to the intentions of the others (Searle's example of selfish businessmen who think their own individual pursuit of money will benefit society comes to mind[[13]](#footnote-13)). Simon gives an example of a moneylender and handicrafts man, where the one loans money to the other for the purposes of business. They are engaged only in a contractual relationship seeking their individual private goals, even if coordinated.[[14]](#footnote-14) These groups would seem to be constituted by jointly intending public goods, at most, and not common goods.

A social group (a society) is constituted, for Simon, when each member jointly intends a distinct kind of goal: they seek to achieve some truly “common” good. This is apparent when three conditions are fulfilled: "...some transitive actions are traceable not to any particular individual but to the team,”[[15]](#footnote-15) "the transitive actions of a community are prepared and intrinsically conditioned by immanent actions of knowledge and desire in which members commune," and "communion-causing communications" aim to produce in the members a similar set of cognitions and emotions.[[16]](#footnote-16) Some of his examples are a football team, a team of workers, and an army. There is a collective intention in any of these cases because they are essentially social activities. They require a shared intention among all members. The reason the team needs communication is because part of the goal of the activity is “team-building.” The goal sought is at least partly the process itself. A game is another similar case: playing the game is as much a part of the goal as winning might be. Without this notion of a common good intended by each, one would destroy the critical feature of true sociality and commonality in shared intentions.[[17]](#footnote-17)

As Simon sees it, common goods are “causal” for the formation of groups because they provides the basic aim and reason that this set of people are coordinating their actions. This contrasts subtly with John Finnis, for example, who sees the common good as “the factor or set of factors which, as considerations in someone's practical reasoning, would make sense or give reason for his collaboration with others….”[[18]](#footnote-18) Instead, Simon thinks a group does not exist to the extent that they *lack* one and the same goal or intentional attitude toward it. Members do not merely coordinate inter-locking personal goals.[[19]](#footnote-19) There are parallels to this in contemporary theory of collective agency. Raimo Tuomela has analyzed how groups act on reasons – “we-reasons” or “we-goals” – which differ formally from the kinds of reasons for my private action – “I-reasons/goals.”[[20]](#footnote-20) We can act in pursuit of our private goals “together”, but it is not a “we-goal” that we pursue, even if the individual goals are the same. “We-goals” of the right type seem to be central to a group's formation and persistence, giving the reason for collective action. Similarly, Philip Pettit has argued that a “discursive dilemma” (aggregating judgments in collective cases can result in contradictions) requires that there is a separate kind of rational unity among social groups; there is a different perspective on what it means to achieve unity, who decides, etc. so that individuals in group situations are “forced to collectivize reason.”[[21]](#footnote-21)

Simon seems to hold that this requires a shared intentional state, differing in this respect from many contemporary authors. Thomas Aquinas claims that a group can have “here and now” one and the same intentional goal (as armies have one goal).[[22]](#footnote-22) Following this insight, Simon affirms that a group can have the same goal because there is communication which facilitates a collective intention. In the army and football team there is a constant interchange of signs and symbols to help everyone in the group be "on the same page" with their goals and purposes. Partnerships, as Simon notes, only need to share information relative to planning for the achievement of their individual goals (even if inter-dependent). It is a mark of weakness in a community (such as a poorly disciplined army) when its members do not clearly understand the common goal or desire it strongly; their possession of the group intention is “qualitatively” weaker and can even lead to dissolution of the group when it passes a minimum threshold.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Simon's goal was to affirm the “natural” character of authority in groups. Authority is not an imposition of outside force to maintain order, merely mitigating or coordinating personal goals of each member in a group, but instead is required to facilitate the very process of collective practical reasoning. Simon argued that common goods thus *necessitate* authority structures. His thought experiment is that we have a perfectly united group who share the same pro-attitudes toward their collective action; they all intend to act together for the good of the state, for example. They have perfect common knowledge of each others' beliefs and understand what is required for human society to flourish in general. But all of this will *not* lead to unanimous decision to act. Simon contends that there is no possibility of a purely rationally convincing reason to act in one way rather than another. There is no absolutely “best” possible course of action rationally apparent to each member.[[24]](#footnote-24) Because there is no individual rational means to decide how to act, there needs to be some agreed upon collective authority which “breaks the tie.” Every case of collective action properly so called requires an authority because there needs to be a shared intentional state – a shared conception and intention of the goal.[[25]](#footnote-25) Even in cases of unanimity where no overt authority structure is present,[[26]](#footnote-26) the implicit authority is the norms of the community – it is inherent in the context of the activity. We do not need an umpire for a game of “pick-up” baseball, because common knowledge of the activity's performance normativity acts as an authority structure to help guide collective intention. Acceptance of certain authoritative norms for decision making (that govern the collective action) follow from the common good intended; a conception of the group goal entails norms. Becoming part of an army involves a “public” conception (perhaps minimal) of how to act as a member. Rather than a problem for individual autonomy, this is required for agency in large groups; it facilitates (without subsuming) the participants' agency.[[27]](#footnote-27)

This same problem appears in contemporary theories of collective agency. Caroline Arruda argues that current construals of the “common knowledge” conditions in theories of collective intentionality make the mistake of “over-rationalizing”. Both members need to understand the other as having justifying reasons for acting as they do. This is because the parties to a collective act cannot individually seem to settle the decision to act, so they both need to perceive a common reason which incites collective action.[[28]](#footnote-28) But this present the same problem Simon highlighted: there is no rationally compelling option or reason that would command assent from all parties (independent of some norm, like Simon's authority).

Thus, as Arruda points out, some theories of collective agency might have difficulty explaining how we actually settle on intending to “take the next step” in joint activity. Michael Bratman, for instance, arguably runs into this problem. If our intentions are perfectly egalitarian in Bratman's preferred “modest sociality” cases, then we each intend to do *J* only if the other so intends, and by means of the others' intention. But I cannot unilaterally decide that we *will J,* and I cannot “jointly” decide it without you, and neither can you without me.[[29]](#footnote-29) The question of assymetric collective intention is not brought up by Bratman, but would be interesting in the context of this problem. Similarly, Margaret Gilbert has been critiqued that joint commitments seems to require some kind of communication of “joint readiness” to act and a tacit agreement to act prior to the action itself. But, naturally, “if individuals already have to be jointly committed in some way in order to enter into a joint commitment, however, either a vicious circle or an infinite regress seems to ensue.”[[30]](#footnote-30)

If Simon is correct, we have a picture of how this happens. There are some external norms that are the basis for developing a collective intention from the individual goals or intentions of each member. The structure is not just instrumental, but constitutive of the common good intended by each.[[31]](#footnote-31) Authoritative structures, norms, or standards of action are, at least in part,“constitutive” of the group goal and how the group achieves it because it would not be a *group* goal if we did not conceive of our project in the same way. They thus help facilitate a shared intention. Public goods problems, for instance, do not just require public knowledge of the intentions of others, but the knowledge of certain collective judgments and norms in order for us to facilitate collective action and decision-making.[[32]](#footnote-32)

This is because collective action requires not just having the same intended task in mind, or a commitment to the other members, but also an expectation that other people sharing the same goal will pursue a similar course of action.[[33]](#footnote-33) As Schmid notes: “just as the relation of individual agents to themselves cannot be limited to cognitive expectations, the relations *between* agents acting in pursuit of shared goals have to include a normative element, too. They have to expect each other to choose the suitable means *normatively.*”[[34]](#footnote-34) Simon's intuition that authority and collective intention facilitates individual agency is reinforced by Schmid’s argument that acting on the intentions or even pro-attitudes of others is normal, and not an exception. We *often* act on the pro-attitudes of others (empathetic action, courtesy in opening doors, etc.), as opposed to our entire agency revolving around only our own pro-attitudes.[[35]](#footnote-35) There are thus some clear parallels between the Thomist position of Simon and contemporary positions like Schmid which reject intentional individualism.

Finally, though none of the three Thomists gives much specificity to the question of the ontology of groups, Yves Simon gives hints to how we might construe it. As we saw, he seems to think a true social group is nothing other than a certain shared “common life of desire and action” – it is a shared activity, according to certain norms of behavior and a shared conception of what the activity entails. This is conceived as existing on the basis of the intentional state shared among the members – that is the whole reason Simon emphasized “communication” as the basis for the persistence of a social group. The group's existence seems to supervene upon the intentional state. Further, the shared intention itself is part of the very social character of the activity, just as the dispositions or relations involved constitute its sociality. While one can share a conception of the activity without engaging in it, one cannot seem to have the intention for collective agency without being part of it and vice-versa. My intention to be friends with someone is part of what it means to be their friend and engage in relationship with them. This seems to be the implication of Maritain's insistence on the “immanent” nature of social relationships. The intention itself is part of what it means to engage in the right kind of social activity that constitutes pursuit/enjoyment of a “common” good. Our jointly intending to be part of the book club is essential to pursuit and enjoyment of our love of reading together. Contemporary social metaphysicans might fear that a shared intentional state would require a group mind, which, as many authors point out, seems metaphysically excessive or “spooky.”[[36]](#footnote-36) The Thomists are in agreement with many contemporary metaphysicians that individual persons are the only things that really exist as substances in a group; there is no group mind or will in anything more than a figurative sense in purely human societies. They did not seem to think that a shared intentional state required a “group mind,” but do affirm that “common goods” can only exist as shared.[[37]](#footnote-37) There is, however, an analogy from Thomas Aquinas' writings on our relationship with God that seems to constitute a distinct kind of ontological state, shared among individuals. In discussing how God dwells in the hearts and minds of believers (the “divine indwelling.”), Thomas notes that this is possible because there are unique ways that human beings can have God present to them. Beyond “spatial” presence, which would be impossible, human beings can know and love God, and thus have God present as the object of their knowing and loving.[[38]](#footnote-38) Love, in particular, has a unique relationship because the person loved is somehow in the lover. This is because love involves something akin to intentional states. The union between lover and beloved is not a product or result aside from the activity of loving the other person; instead “love itself is [the] union or bond.”[[39]](#footnote-39)

Friendship, of which the virtue of love of God (*caritas*)is an instance,[[40]](#footnote-40) is founded on a commonality intrinsic to both parties in the relations between them; “if there were no communication, it would not be possible to be friends.”[[41]](#footnote-41) But, similarly, there is only one intentional state among all believers who truly love God, which unites them as the Church.[[42]](#footnote-42) The shared intentional state required to pursue or enjoy any common good is a species of friendship and so follows the same pattern. Thus, these groups have the very unity of their activity as part what they intend in acting together. The life of the community itselfis constituted by our collective intentionality, and it forms the goal of the political life for Aquinas.[[43]](#footnote-43) Groups come into existence on the basis of common goods intended through collective action, and they exist insofar as the group shares an intentional state of the sort that intends a common good among its members. Like a “friendship,” a social group exists in the relations between individuals, and so involves supervenient and emergent properties which, however, do not exist merely internally in one of the members. Without requiring a group mind, the Thomist philosophers seem to point the way toward a promising account of the metaphysics of groups which is perhaps more robust than some contemporary theories.

If we find plausible the criticism of “intentional individualism” in contemporary theories of collective intention, there are resources in the Thomist tradition for supporting the idea of a shared intentional state. This tradition also enunciates how such an intentional state structures our collective practical reasoning and that it need not require a ‘group mind.’ The distinctive Thomist perspective which begins with the analysis of uniquely social goods – “common goods” – can help clarify what it means for us to act and live together.

1. Annette Baier, “Doing Things With Others: The Mental Commons,” in Commonality and Particularity in Ethics, eds. L. Alanen, S. Heinämaa, and T. Wallgren,  (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 15–44; Hans Bernhard Schmid*, Wir-Intentionalität. Kritik des ontologischen Individualismus und Rekonstruktion der Gemeinschaft (*Freiburg: Alber, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Hans Bernard Schmid, "Plural Action,"in *Philosophy of the Social Sciences,* Vol. 30, No. 1 (Mar. 2008)*:* 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. I bracket the question whether St. Thomas Aquinas himself affirms something akin to “shared intentional states.” I will only address interpretation of the position of the aforementioned later Thomist philosophers. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Leslie Armour, "Charles de Koninck, the Common Good, and the Human Environment," in *Laval theologique et philosophique,* Vol. 43, No. 1 (1987): 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Politicorum,* 36-38. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* [ST] I, q. 96, a. 4, resp. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Politicorum,* 38-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Charles de Koninck, *The Primacy of the Common Good,* in *The Writings of Charles de Koninck,* vol. 2, ed. and trans. Ralph McInerny (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Jacques Maritain, *The Person and the Common Good,* trans. J. Fitzgerald(Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press. 1966),49-53. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. This has some parallel to how Meijers responds to Searle's “internalism” along the lines of saying a collective intention or action requires the existence of other agents. He critiques Bratman on that count as well. cf., Anthonie Meijers, "Can Collective Intentions be Individualized?" in *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology,* Vol. 62, No. 1 (Jan. 2003): 179. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Maritain views social goods as common because they only exist *as shared*; this is a distinction which de Koninck might not share. But this insight is at least valid for *social* common goods of the kinds relevant to group action. In fact, all of those related to collective action in social life (like the good of political flourishing) seem to be such that they are *per se* communicable but also don't exist apart from the communication which makes them possible. cf., de Koninck, 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. ST II-II, q. 58, a. 2. See also Sullivan, 927. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. c.f., John Searle, “Collective Intentions and Actions,” in *Intentions in Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990), 401-415. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Yves R. Simon, "The Volition of the Common Good," in *Philosophy of Democratic Government* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993), accessed November 10, 2015, https://www3.nd.edu/~maritain/jmc/etext/pdg-1d.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. de Koninck, *The Primacy of the Common Good,* 105. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. John Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980),154-155. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Simon, “Volition of the Common Good,” Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Raimo Tuomela, “Collective Intentionality and Group Reasons” in *Concepts of Sharedness: Essays on Collective Intentionality,* ed. H. Schmid (2008), 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Philip Pettit, A Theory of Freedom: From the Psychology to the Politics of Agency, New York: Oxford University Press. 2001, 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Metaphysicae,* Bk. VIII, lect. 7, n. 1303. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. There are minimal conditions for what it means to share the same intention, which entail some common understanding of the common good or goal, but Simon implies this would permit variation in our understanding of that content. It would take more work but, for example, we can both intend the same joint action without having exactly the same conception of what the act entails, like we can intend to play football together despite you being a pro and myself a novice with correspondingly different conceptions of the sport. But we both need to know the meaning of “to play football,” at minimum. Similarly, we commonly use terms indicating that, while having the same intention, one person might be “more committed” to the group intention than others. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Simon, “Authority as Cause of United Action,” in *Philosophy of Democratic Government*, fn. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Schmid, “Plural Action,” 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Ibid., 45. We might also note the ways in which individual sub-goals can be validly derived from group goals: Wilfrid Sellars, "Imperatives, intentions, and the logic of 'ought'" in *Morality and the Language of Conduct,* G. Nakhnikian and H.-N. Castaneda, eds. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press: 1963); *Science and Metaphysics*; "On reasoning about values,”: 81-101. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Caroline Arruda, “Shared Intention and Reasons for Action,” in *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* Vol. 45, No. 6 (2015): 612. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Ibid., 603-623. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Hans Bernard Schmid and David Schweikard, "Collective Intentionality, " in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2013 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2013/entries/collectiveintentionality/. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Mark Murphy, “Consent, Custom, and the Common Good in Aquinas' Account of Political Authority,” in *The Review of Politics* Vol. 59, No. 2 (Spring 1997): 340. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Naturally, what we need are *signs* of those judgments. Kai Spiekerman, "Translucency, assortation, and information pooling," in *Politics, Philosophy, and Economics,* Vol. 6, No. 3 (2007): 285-306, esp. 301-303. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Hans Bernhard Schmid, *Plural Action* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2009)*,* 243. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Schmid, “Plural Action,” 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. c.f., John Searle, “Social ontology and the philosophy of society” in *Analyse & Kritik* 20 (1998): 150; Raimo Tuomela, *The importance of us: A study of basic social notions* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), ix; 5; 353; 367. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. The only exception is noteworthy: Jacques Maritain claimed that the Church is a special group which possesses a group personality *above that of the human members* because it is constituted by God. It is a unique instance of a “group mind.” The Church can have a corporate or group personality, as opposed to other collectives, only because God sustains her with a special kind of intentionality. Thus the Holy Spirit, which causes the life of grace, is both a person in His own right and causes the identical intentional state in each member by indwelling (i.e., love of God). It seems appropriately spooky to concede this unique role of group mind to the Holy Ghost. cf., *On the Church of Christ,* trans. J. Evans(Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1973), III. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. ST I, a. 43, a. 3, resp. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. ST II-II, q. 28, a. 1, resp. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. ST II-II, q. 23, a. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Ethicorum,* bk. VIII, lec. 9. […si nulla esset communicatio non posset esse amicitia.] [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum,* art. 9. [“...ex unitate caritatis, quia omnes connectuntur in amore Dei, et ad invicem in amore mutuo….”] [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Clarke Cochran, “Yves Simon and 'The Common Good,” in *Ethics* 88, 3 (1978): 237. cf., Murphy, 237. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)