

BUSINESS EDUCATION AT CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES THE SPANISH CASE

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For the last three years, approximately, the 'Forum for Reflection in Ethics and Values in the Spanish Enterprise' has been organised in Madrid, jointly by the Comillas Pontifical University and the Entre Culturas Foundation. The main aim of this forum is to promote in Spain a management style with sensitivity for ethical requirements. Members of that group are convinced of the need to follow this direction in order to progress towards a society that can be richer and more prosperous and, at the same time, fairer and more humane.

The first step towards this achievement was to hold a qualitative survey through six sessions, lasting two and a half hours each. Apart from the organisers, around 15 people, different each time, participated in every meeting, all of them being reputed and highly qualified professionals – CEO's of big companies, rectors of universities, journalists and members of the public administration-. After the discussions developed, the first consensus of opinions they reached could be summarised as follows: *'The ethical level of Spanish companies, as in other orders of our society, can be clearly improved. In order to increase the ethical quality in companies, in their opinion, the conjunction of three aspects would be required: 1)the necessity of leadership from top management; 2)a clear demand from society – i.e., clients, consumers, investors-; and 3)the inclusion of explicit ethical values to the expectations of the new generation of employees working for those companies'*.

Following on from this starting point, the next stage for the forum was a descriptive research to validate the current situation. In fact, what we wanted to obtain was a concrete idea of how Ethics and Values were being considered when managing Spanish companies. For that purpose, a survey was designed which finally produced interesting results (see Entre Culturas web site).

One of the main factors identified as possible driver for Ethics was the new generation of employees. A new sub-committee of the forum was created having the aim of studying whether these new generations had been exposed to formal reflections about the ethical dimension of management and enterprise through their formative process. Therefore, we considered important to investigate how Ethics was being taught at Universities and Business Schools, and that was the task undertaken by the Javier Benjumea (Focus-Abengoa) Chair of Ethics for Economics and Business of the

Comillas Pontifical University. This is the origin of this paper which is divided into three different parts.

The first one, presents the theoretical framework and reviews the reference literature; the second part describes the methodology followed for the investigation and the results achieved. The third part bears a more direct link to the Social Doctrine of the Church, including a proposal –especially for Catholic universities and business schools- to address Ethics within the fundamental principles of the Church’s thought regarding the *conception of the enterprise*: dignity of the person, sociability, common wealth, solidarity and subsidiarity. As will be seen, these coordinates make emerge a rich conception of enterprise that can be extremely profitable at any institution with a clear bet for teaching and training students in the moral dimension of the business activity.

I. General Theoretical Framework

1. The mission of University

Nowadays, the European Union is immersed in the construction of a new process called the European High Education Area. This would be a proper moment to wonder what is the university, its role and its mission (Ortega y Gasset, 1968).

From the medieval origins of the university institution to the present days there has been a wide reflection about this matter that is difficult to summarise in this paper without exceeding its limits and purpose. Nevertheless, there would be adequate to emphasize three key ideas to address the afterwards reflections.

Firstly, we must say that the university is, mainly, a privileged place where high education is undertaken, through teaching and investigation for creating science and new knowledge.

Secondly, this teaching process is made with the purpose of preparing professionals – engineers, doctors, lawyers, social workers, scientists, psychologists, economists, managers,...- for a complex World in which they will have to respond to the demands of the society, made through their clients. This will allow professionals to build up their life-style in an adequate manner and aligned to the possibilities of every moment and place.

Having said that, the search and transmission of specific technical knowledge for the *good* professional practice is not the unique objective of university. Furthermore, there should also be a contribution to the ‘cultural’ formation of students, understanding ‘culture’ (Ortega y Gasset, 1968; 29) as *the vital system of ideas* at each historic moment. Without this requirement there is a serious lack of formation and, simultaneously, a new potential barbarism: professionals would be wisest than ever and at the same time, most ignoramus than ever. Professionals incapable to define the last sense of life form clear and firm ideas; the deep reason for being of their professional activity; the ethical problems and the ethical dimension of the technical problems; and the meaning of things and social institutions.

Unfortunately, this triple university purpose is not always considered: *professional teaching, research and scientific creation, and the formation of the person through the culture*. Obviously, the most difficult part to be included seems to be the cultural-formative aspects of the process. At least, this is the main conclusion achieved attending the little emphasis made to documents that had a great impact on us, anticipating university strategies for the closest future (Bricall, 2000).

Despite of that, those universities that aim to achieve excellence or, at least, a sufficient level of quality, cannot leave to attend those three mentioned goals that are part of their intrinsic mission.

We cannot forget that university was defined during the celebrations of the 900th anniversary of the University of Bologna, the oldest in Europe, as ‘an autonomous institution at the heart of societies differently organized because of geography and historical heritage; it produces, examines, appraises and hands down culture by research and teaching. To meet the needs of the world around it, its research and teaching must be morally and intellectually independent of all political authority and intellectually independent of all political authority and economic power’ (the Magna Charta Universitatum, 1988). If this is true, generally speaking, for the whole university, when talking about the Catholic universities those generic aspirations should receive a clearer and cleaned orientation.

The Apostolic Constitution of the *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (John Paul II, 1990) highlights the aim of a Catholic university: to guarantee in an institutional way, a *Christian presence* in front of the great problems of society and culture. It is the place where researchers, looking for the truth, deeply study the reality applying the correspondent methodology of their academic disciplines. After that, they establish a dialog among the different disciplines in order to achieve a mutual enrichment.

This Apostolic Constitution indicates some concrete elements that define the adjective ‘Catholic’, applied to a university: the integration of knowledge, the dialog between faith and reason, the teologic perspective and the ethical preoccupation: *‘As knowledge should serve the human person, at the Catholic university the research must be developed bearing in mind the ethical and moral implications inherent to the methods and to their discoveries’* (John Paul II, 1990; n. 18, 12).

This description of the mission of the university, generally speaking, and for Catholic universities, particularly, will help us to understand the data obtained in our survey that will be explained afterwards. The reference to the ethical dimension has led our research and has helped us to give importance to the institutional context for the adequate interpretation of conclusions about the Business Ethics – BE – and the Corporate Social Responsibility – CSR – as academic disciplines.

2.Recent literature review

There is a large tradition of articles and monographies about the teaching of BE and CSR in universities and business schools. The reference bibliography can be classified in three complementary categories depending on the different perspective adopted: to describe, to propose, to analyse (McDonal, 2004).

Some authors have an initial descriptive interest, investigating whether BE and/or CSR are being taught in their programs (for example, Bampton and Cowton, 2002; Barkhuysen and Rossouw, 2000; Bassiry, 1990; Mahoney, 1990). It is also our purpose. But other authors have studied the historic development of programs, also observing intercultural differences (Spence, 2000); or formats or contests studied (Hoffman and Moore, 1982; Matten and Moon, 2004).

Those addressing a prescriptive survey are more interested on pedagogical aspects of teaching (Brady, 1999; Hunt and Bullis, 1991). Some try to suggest indications for teachers of these subjects (Hosmer and Steneck, 1989).

Authors adopting an analytical focus have this fundamental preoccupation: will courses of BE and CSR finally change the prejudgements students have referred to business and companies? Can they transform their attitudes and values? (Loeb, 1991; Marnburg, 2003). What should be the objectives teaching BE and CSR (to develop the moral conscience, to recognise the ethical dimension of problems, to develop the thinking and critic-analytic skills, etc.)? This is a complex question which answer would contribute to clarify how could BE and CSR be introduced efficiently in the academic curriculum of business studies.

Our survey, as already mentioned, is included in the first group, the one for description investigation. We aim to have a clear idea of how BE and CSR are being currently taught in Spain. We have the intention of developing further research to have a more concrete vision of the reality, through a deeper knowledge of contents, methodology used, and impact of teaching above 'cultural' formation of students... Therefore, previous studies will inspire our surveys run in different contexts but with an easy application to the Spanish reality (Cowton and Macfarlane, 2002; Macfarlane and Spence, 2003; Matten and Moon, 2004; Moore, 2004). Nevertheless, as we consider the Spanish situation is still far from an ideal landscape, we are not considering the discussion about the most convenient way to teach BE and CSR: through an specific subject or a transversal integration throughout the curriculum? The latter seems to convince much more to most authors, without any doubt (McDonal, 2004; 374-375). But, in our opinion, to propose a realistic and successful transversal integration we defend a more pragmatic path that would start, at least, including a subject *ad hoc*.

II. Teaching BE and CSR in Spain

1. Introduction and framework to the Spanish case

The Spanish university landscape has experienced a profound process of change in terms of growth and diversification for the last three decades. Before the 80's, Spanish universities were totally state-owned, with the exception of the only four that were then called 'Universities of the Church'; i.e., University of Deusto, Comillas Pontifical University, Salamanca Pontifical University and University of Navarra.

Furthermore, out of the four mentioned universities the former three institutions were allowed to issue academic degrees only once their students have proved their proficiency through an exam of qualification. A tribunal appointed by the Education Ministry had to validate the qualification process. Only the University of Navarra was able to issue academic degrees directly; thus avoiding this compulsory final exam. There was a justification for this preferential treatment: a great percentage of teachers at University of Navarra were full professors that had taken leave from employment at public universities to teach in this particular private institution.

Things changed substantially with the modification of legislation in the 80's permitting the existence of private universities. The licence issued by the competent authorities was subject to specific requirements established by law. Since then, the number of state-owned universities also increased notably and these coexisted with private ones, in a scenario of decreasing student population.

Interestingly, students from Deusto, Comillas Pontifical and Salamanca Pontifical still have the requirement of the final exam in front of a tribunal appointed by the Ministry.

The three of them, plus the Navarra University, are officially amongst the ‘Universities of the Church’. All other universities that are not state-owned are considered ‘private universities’ and their students obtain their graduations automatically, without the obligation of taking a final exam.

Some of the new private universities created since then are classified as ‘Christian oriented’ institutions; others, as already mentioned, are named ‘Universities of the Church’ and we can even find a group of them considered as ‘Catholic’. The *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* and similar documents precisely define what should be understood under ‘Catholic University’ (Juan Pablo II, 1990; 28). The reason why we make such a detailed distinction in this paper is to give the reader a comprehensive idea of the high education situation in Spain. There is clearly a high degree of competition between this wide range of institutions trying to find differentiation factors to survive.

This differentiation process has dramatically increased lately as a consequence of the adjustments carried out for the European High Education Area starting in 2010. Competitiveness and innovation are always present when universities consider how to adapt programs to the new European requirements. Contents, methodologies and new curricular objectives need to be reviewed for all studies, but special focus is put on Business Administration degrees, due to the importance of business in our society.

These new demands and expectations are hard to align to the ideology-doctrinal specifications of ‘Catholic’ universities. Having that in mind, we consider that collaboration between those institutions sharing similar objectives and visions can help us reach excellence in our universities. That goal must be achieved not only through generic concern for ethics but also, and more specifically, applying an *ethical dimension to business affairs*. And more important, this implies to re-consider the role of business in society and advance towards the building of a new paradigm of companies that should be richer and more open, having these characteristics: a conception of a company in which stakeholders are identified and treated fairly; the compliance of legality and the intention of go further; the strategic and integral vision of the CSR; an open and transparent dialog among relevant representatives; a valuation not only of the economic results but also of environmental and social results; the search of a sustainable profitability; the attention to the Good Government; a goal of common wealth; a solid ethical dimension; considering the human being as the core of the business.

2. Our Research: Purpose

The aim of this part is to describe how business ethics and/or corporate social responsibility are nowadays being taught to executives and entrepreneurs at Spanish universities and business schools, based on a research held with a descriptive and objective vocation by the Javier Benjumea (Focus-Abengoa) Chair of Ethics for Business and Economics at Universidad Pontifical Comillas de Madrid.

We intend to analyse and describe the degree of implementation of these subjects in the most common academic itinerary followed by executives, i.e. under-graduate studies in Business Administration degrees and MBA courses within postgraduate studies.

Other works have similarly analysed the implementation of Business Ethics in Europe with different methodology and objectives, as the ‘EBEN survey of business ethics education in Europe’ (Remmé and Nijhof, 2007). It collects the responses of several European institutions invited to voluntarily participate in the research through the answer of a survey questionnaire about their academic programs.

The previous reference to Dirk Matten and Jeremy Moon, also describes a survey made about teaching of CSR in Europe. This survey research was conducted by the International Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility, Nottingham University Business School. It was conducted in partnership with the European Academy of Business in Society (EABiS), the European Foundation for Management Development and the UN Global Compact. The main questions posed to be answered through the survey were: Is CSR taught to Business students, tomorrow's Business leaders and managers?; at what levels and in what sorts of courses is CSR taught?; What meanings are attached to CSR education?; is CSR teaching conducted with business and community partners?; what are the drivers for CSR teaching?; what teaching techniques are deployed?; on which themes does CSR research focus?; on which CSR themes do PhD students focus? (Matten and Moon, 2004; 325).

As explained before, the aim of this survey for the Spanish Case is, by the moment, further more modest, exclusively focused on the first question alluded: Is CSR –and BE- taught to Business students, tomorrow's Business leaders and managers? Our commitment is to advance in the future with this research, trying to find answer to all the other questions.

3. Outline

A company is currently regarded as an association of individuals with the purpose of contributing to the Common Good through the production of goods and services within a multiple relationships society. Hence, executive education should necessarily include disciplines related to decision-making in complex situations, as the consequences of business performance impact a wide range of people in one way or another.

This multi-stakeholder approach to companies, which is becoming more and more accepted at universities and business schools, has an old tradition in catholic education, as business ethics has always been compulsory in their academic curricula. Nevertheless, besides considering ethics as part of the professional philosophy for executives and entrepreneurs, many universities and business schools are also adding other strategic approaches with a wider scope that embraces tools and policies which aim to analyse and manage the impact companies have on society, promoting a more “socially responsible” behaviour.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) pretends to harmonise the interests of different stakeholders of the company from a ‘triple bottom line’ that includes an economic, environmental and social perspective. To reach that purpose it is essential to have a solid idea of the concept “company”, i.e. its (inter)relations and what its role is in society. That wide understanding should not be left to individual interpretation and must be formally presented to business people for reflection and discussion.

For that reason, as mentioned above, we have conducted a survey to know what executives and business managers are currently being taught at Spanish universities and business schools. We have monitored the presence of business ethics and CSR in the most common academic itineraries specifically oriented to train executives, excluding other high education programs that could also be attended by business professionals.

4. Methodology

This research piece has been carried out during March and April 2007 and is divided into two different sections:

- a) With regards to undergraduate studies, we have analysed the study plans of Business Administration degrees as published in the websites of the ninety-one universities, both private and state-owned, which are registered on the database of the Education and Science Ministry (ECM). A thorough search of every plan was carried out, looking for subjects related to corporate social responsibility, mainly identified under one of the following descriptors: ‘(business or entrepreneurial) ethics’, ‘sustainability’, ‘corporate citizenship’, ‘corporate governance’, ‘social responsibility’ or ‘deontology (professional ethics)’.

Although corporate social responsibility refers to economic, social and environmental objectives, in this paper we have focused our interest on the social area and not considered subjects related to the other two.

The universities included in the research are those listed in the ESM’s website. We have not examined foreign universities with presence in Spain.

Due to the difficulty that a detailed search of subjects of free election entails, given that not all the plans specify them, we have only considered core, required and elective subjects, which is relevant enough for our research.

- b) On the postgraduate section we faced greater difficulty trying to identify which plans should be analysed, as there is no official database containing all the MBA courses on offer. Only the ‘officially-recognized’ postgraduate courses are detailed in the ESM, while the ‘non-officially recognized’ postgraduate courses given by universities and business schools can only be found in rankings from several publications. We have chosen the “Guía de Escuelas de Negocios y Centros de Postgrado 2007-2008”, a guide produced by Gaceta Universitaria with the collaboration of Círculo Formación, who organizes the Postgraduate Courses Fair held every year in several Spanish cities.

There are many different kinds of programmes offered by the business schools, but only the most generalist ones have been selected for this work, as they are specifically oriented to train managers; i.e. MBA, Executive MBA and International MBA programmes.

As the database where the selection comes from is not official, we ran the risk of not including all of the possible programmes. What are mainly left out are expert and specialization programmes, as well as those that last less than 500 hours.

In spite of this clear set of criteria, we have observed that the attempt by universities and business schools to adapt to the EHEA reflects a very heterogeneous postgraduate landscape in Spain where official and own programmes coexist at universities and business schools. Official postgraduate studies started in May 2006 in Spain and only universities are allowed to offer them. This restriction forces business schools to sign agreements with universities supervised by their regional government. On the other hand, some schools have decided to acquire or create universities in order to easily absorb the ‘official’ category of their programmes and therefore increase their prestige to better compete with other European centres.

In any case, there is an evident gap between the postgraduate offer of Spanish universities, which is already adapted to the EHEA, and the undergraduate curriculum that still needs to be modified. The lack of coordination of these two legs of the academic curricula for executives demands an urgent and deep review that should be orchestrated by public authorities in the autonomous regions and the central government. Otherwise, by 2010 the shortcomings in Spanish executive training will be too important to be competitive in a global world.

5. Data Findings and Conclusions

The outcome assessment of the Study concludes, that business ethics and responsible behaviour are not being taught in depth in higher education, specially at undergraduate courses, where only 21% of the Spanish universities are including these subjects among Business Administration degrees. 63% of those offering these subjects are private universities, all of them catholic, because all catholic universities in Spain must include these subjects to be recognised as ‘Universities of the Church’ by the Spanish Episcopal Conference (eight of the twelve catholic universities in Spain have reached that distinction).

The landscape is more positive within postgraduate education, where 46% of the generalist programs analysed have at least one subject fulfilling any of the descriptors. Here catholic institutions offered only 18% of the 197 programs included in our selection, where 21% of the programs include no subjects related to ethics and CSR¹. On the other hand, considering only non-catholic centres, the percentage of programs without these subjects raises to 72%.

In summary, Spanish universities and business schools have a better track record in teaching business ethics and CSR compared to secular education. Nevertheless, this should not lead us into self-indulgence but be considered as a good starting point from which to progress towards the objectives of catholic universities proposed by the Catholic Social Thought.

As said before, the Catholic academic institutions can reach a rich inspiration for teaching BE and CSR from the fundamental principles of Social Catholic Thought – dignity of human being, sociability, Common Wealth, solidarity and subsidiary-. Besides, another source would be the rich tradition of reflections about the enterprise produced for the last 117 years. The third part of this paper will focus on that idea, inspired on previous studies (Fernández-Fernández, 1992).

III. Social Catholic Thought and the idea of Enterprise

1. Introduction

The Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church has been shaped throughout more than a hundred years, stemming from the beginning preoccupation of the problems derived of what at the moment began to be known by the name of: *social issue*. The changing circumstances and the emergence of new situations impelled the magistrate (teachers and thinkers) to start progressively taking into consideration new aspects and problems,

¹ Curiously, we have observed that some business schools do not mention their actual catholic orientation at the institutional presentation on their web sites.

which until then had not required specific treatment. Such was the case of the elaboration of a doctrine regarding the enterprise or the outlining of its Christian vision.

In effect, in a process very similar to other traditions of thought, the Social Doctrine has only recently begun to focus its attention on the enterprise, as of the twentieth century. It could have not happened any other way. This proves, in the first place, the dynamic and historical character of that doctrinal *corpus*; on the other hand, it reflects the rising consciousness of the importance that the enterprise has acquired in our times, to the point of being considered one of the fundamental institutions to Culture and as a privileged instrument of change and progress facing the future of Humanity. Finally, it is a manifestation of the permanent openness of Doctrine to the contributions of the Social and Human Sciences.

Throughout this third part of this paper we will expose in a genetic-progressive matter the reflections of the magistrate regarding the enterprise, trying to offer a coherent image of the same, outlining various scattered observations and some more elaborate ones, seen in light of the principles and fundamental beliefs of the Social Doctrine of the Church, from the times of Leon XIII to the publication of *Centesimus Annus* in May 1991.

2. Historical-systematic development

From Leo XIII to Pius XI

The type of discourse used by Leo XIII, Saint Pius X or Benedict XV, counted, without a doubt, with the existence of “patrons” and the “rich”; it defined for them conducts of equality and justice, of liberalism, moderation and frugality; recommendations consonant with the paying of a just salary and the respect of the physical and spiritual integrity of the employees; abstention from fraud and abuse... Nevertheless, the preoccupation *ut sic* regarding the enterprise and the people who ran it, had not made an act of presence.

The tune of Pius XI reflections, have to still be inscribed in the general context of preoccupations with the “just salary”. In line with *Rerum Novarum*, he insists in the necessity of overcoming the one-sided view to the productive process: neither the capital, nor the work, isolated or faced together, explain this phenomenon. The pope will point out, next to the unjust monopolizing pretensions put forth by the capital, the necessity of taking into account from the point of view of the workers, the *situation* of the enterprise in the face of determining the just salary.

In the same place, we find the full moral requirement of responsibility in the part of the businessman, in the affairs concerning his technical knowledge and expertise in the distribution of benefits, when it reminds him not to reduce salaries appealing to the fact that profits and benefits are not what expected “when this is due to inability, unwillingness or abeyance towards technical and economic progress”. It also takes the time to criticize unjust demands imposed on the enterprise and concludes making an appeal for harmony in the worker-foreman relationship so that they can overcome their disagreements, pointing out that such an important task of overseeing this falls upon the state.

In tune with these changes since *Rerum Novarum*, we can see that even back in 1931 the Pope, in his message, was directly alluding to the enterprise and to the concrete demands that befell on the businessman.

The theme of the enterprise under the ruling guide of Pius XII

Pius XII, throughout allusions, radio broadcasts and letters, treats in different moments, themes that deal directly with the enterprise.

Instead of giving a systematic summary of the posture assumed by Pius XII at the face of this problem, it would be more fitting having in depth developments of the statements that were developed as a consequence of his proposals in such themes as *co-management*, the nationalization of the enterprise and the profile of the Christian businessman.

Firstly, he advises his intention of keeping within the guidelines of the magistrate of his predecessor, lamenting that some of the most useful suggestions made in *Quadragesimo Anno* had not been given consideration.

Secondly, the Pope exhibits a most judicious common sense in his constant appeals to the “realism” that most presides all actions and practices in any way related to the reform of the enterprise and the humanization of the economy. He also encourages the institutionalization of the new enterprise and the new Christian economic order, by steps, with open aims and without ever losing spirit.

Finally, he encourages the avoidance of assuming a *laissez-faire* posture, without falling in the trap of “planning” and inactivity; and the acceptance of state intervention as licit and desirable in important aspects regarding the life of the enterprise and its economic plan; such seems to be one of the basic arguments put forth by Pius XII.

A balance of those times: The letter from Montini to Siri

A good summary of the pontifical thought of the epoch regarding the enterprise is given to us, by someone, who years later would become Paul VI. In September 1952, the then “substitute” of the Secretary of State, G. B. Montini, sends a letter through the Pope to Monsignor Giuseppe Siri, archbishop of Genoa, for the occasion of the celebration in Turin of the XXV Social Week of Christian Italians. Let us pause briefly on this document (Gutiérrez, García, 1978; 183-187), so that we can highlight some of its most important aspects.

After recognizing the importance of the subject -*The enterprise in the modern economy*- and motivating those whose duty it is to preach the Christian message to accomplish justice and fraternity, it goes on to recall some Papal teachings, always inspired by the desire that economic life be based on the community and the individuals that belong to it. There are three aspects that according to Montini, need to be highlighted when referring to the enterprise environment: *the relation between the worker and the machine; the social-judicial position of the workers; and the relations between the enterprise and the state*. The three aspects had received close attention in the part of Pius XII.

No doubt exists that technical progress represents and accomplishment of the rational and innovative capacity of the human being, and that such progress has known great improvement, making possible at the same time greater economic production. This phenomenon also has its weak point though, it has promoted worker alienation. The significance of this is that we need to reconsider the problem not only so that we can grasp the possible negative impact of the incorporation of the mechanical process and

how it could contribute to the displacement of workers, but also, above all, to remedy the alienating situation derived from technology.

A second block of important points, from the standpoint of Montini, comes represented by the reflection that Pius XII makes about *the juridical nature of the enterprise* and the enterprise itself, in relation to its workers. Regarding the problem of *co-management*, the Pope warns of the danger that organizations governed from the margins of the company be the ones that end up running the company. Summing it up, then, he affirms that there are no reasons for demanding the right of co-management. Nevertheless, this does not impede in the *participation* of workers in the running of the company, promoted by the own businessman or even by state petition.

As we can see, the semantic development of the term, from *co-management* to *participation* is very significant. Years later, the doctrine of the Council will insist on this point, making it very clear that worker participation in the running of the enterprise is important. The statement, furthermore, is evidently Pius XII, when he points out with energy the fact that the enterprise is a *community of interests* (workers and businessmen) and that, consequently, it would be unjust to hinder the participation of the workers in the it everyday running.

From another point of view, the calls for the humanization of the relations between managers and workers are recurring points in the pastoral message of Pius XII, as illustrated by Montini. Christian Fraternity should inspire personal relationships inside of the enterprise; from this solidarity the foundation of a new just economic order should be derived, capable of producing beneficial effects that go beyond of being a simple means at the service of production.

The last point emphasized by Montini in the letter that we have been discussing is the relation between the enterprise and the state. We have previously referred to this when we maintained that Pius XII distanced himself from extreme liberalism as well as from liberty impeding state intervention.

The enterprise in *Mater et Magistra*

Within the third year of his pontificate, in May 1961, John XXIII publishes *Mater et Magistra*: (John XXIII, 1963) a new encyclical in which he will highlight certain aspects referring to the subject that we are discussing.

Firstly, the Pope continues the known theme of the relation between private initiative and state intervention within the economic sphere. He upholds the thesis of *subsidiary*, at the same time recognizing the growing role that, at the moment, the state is taking to fulfil the demands of *common good*. In this sense, he legitimates the existence of *public enterprises*, with the condition of respecting at the same time liberty and private initiative.

The second relevant aspect of the encyclical has to be situated as a reaffirmation of the *participation* of workers in the enterprising and economic life. The necessity for equality and justice appeal to such a *participation*, without which the economic system would be profoundly inhuman and unjust.

Guided precisely by this desire to humanize the economic structures and placing himself in the same lines as Pius XII, the Pope understands that *certain forms of enterprise organization* are better suited to reach such goal. Consequently, he calls for the encouragement and support, within the obligations of common good and technical

viability, *companies that promote craftsmanship*, those with a *cooperative structure*, and with very special character, *agriculture companies*. The role of the State would be to promote these institutions; encourage them with adequate political-social measures, which contribute to elevate the quality of life of its members; facilitate the instruction of new production techniques and stimulate initiatives within these lines.

Two last aspects that merit mentioning in relation with the theme of the enterprise: On the one hand we could call it *concertation*; on the other, the preoccupation for the *control* of the executive action.

The macroeconomic aspects of the economy are the setting where the life of the individual enterprises is developed. Consequently, the Pope states that it is necessary to define from a public point of view the great guidelines for the diverse sectors of economic life. Now then, the state and international organisms must take into account the businessmen and the syndicates that represent the workers. Fortunately, the time where these institutions clashed violently has passed, and they have turned into adequate means for *collaboration*.

As for the role of directing action, the message is clear: technical and professional, the management of the enterprise (after the separation of the figures of the owner and the director), their technical competence and the harmony of their actions with the common good should be closely watched.

Paul VI, his speech to businessmen and the teachings of the Council

One truly exemplary exhibit in respect to the posture assumed by the magistrate towards the enterprise is offered by Paul VI in June 1964 in a speech he gave to businessmen and catholic leaders of the U.C.I.D. (Woot, 1970).

The Pope begins praising the figure of the businessman, as an agent that collects and coordinates capital and work, gathers technical and commercial knowledge, to satisfy the need of goods and services, and creates wealth and work positions. Nevertheless, in accord with the injustices manifested, the Pope asks himself, with brief questions: “Who would dare to uphold that the sociological phenomenon derived from the modern work organization is one of perfection, balance and tranquillity?” “Is it not precisely the contrary?” And being even more explicit: “Your enterprises, marvellous fruit of your hard work, are they not motives of loathing and quarrels? The mechanical and bureaucratic structures function perfectly, but the human structures still do not...*Some deep vice, some radical insufficiency must be present within the system...*” (De Woot, 1970; 330).

What is this deep vice, this radical insufficiency within the capitalist enterprise? Paul VI answers fearlessly: The social-economic system derived from the manchesterian liberalism, which has to be replaced by another, more just model of enterprise and economy.

The magistrate of the church once again deals with the theme of the enterprise during the Council, in the Pastoral Constitution about the church in today’s modern world: *Gaudium et Spes* (Council Vatican II, 1968).

The conciliate fathers put emphasis once again in the human aspect of the productive process. Assuming as a firm premise the increase of production to satisfy the needs of the human race, it calls for the exhortation of technical progress, innovation and the creation of new enterprises. It emphasizes, nevertheless, the final objective of the

economic life: this should not only be driven towards the increase of stock value, the achievement of maximum value, or the monopoly of power. Its final objective should be the benefit of mankind. This is why it is stated: “degrading labour conditions, that reduce the operator to a mere instrument of wealth collection...are nefarious in themselves, degrade human civilization, dishonours more its authors than its victims and are totally contrary to the honour owed to the creator” (Council Vatican II, 1965; n° 27).

Evidently, there is a request that the economic development process not be left in the hands of a blind mechanism, but exactly the contrary, that it be submitted to a series of human decrees. Only then, after the introduction of reforms and coordinating public and private initiatives, the injustices and inequalities observed nowadays will be mitigated.

In this context, the council once again insists on the necessity of strengthening and dignifying the *agricultural enterprise*, as on the benefits of the distribution of properties that are insufficiently cultivated.

When discussing aspects that, explicitly or implicitly, refer to the enterprise another element could also be pointed out: a new insistence on the theme of remuneration; he recognition of the legitimacy of the right to strike as a *last resort* (Council Vatican II, 1968; n° 69); the moral right to intervene (Council Vatican II, 1968; n° 70); and the bet in favour of the workers participation in the life of the enterprise, as a mean of avoiding the alienation from work. In essence, they reiterate familiar concepts: “In economic enterprises, it is the people who are associated, that is to say, free and autonomous men, created in the image of God. Therefore, taking into account the functions of each one, owners, managers, technicians, workers and salvaging the necessary unity in matters of direction, active participation of all in the business affairs should be sought” (Council Vatican II, 1968; n° 68).

The Enterprise and the Businessman according to John Paul II

Under the pontificate of John Paul II , the church, with insistence, will put into manifest the deep preoccupation it feels towards socio-economic problems, with an ample sense and, concretely, with a series of *explicit* considerations that will appear to help us outline the resulting image of the enterprise and the businessman.

****Laborem Exercens***

In the same line of the *deep vice*, with the *radical insufficiency* of the system that Paul VI condemned, John Paul II recognizes that: “there is something that does not work on the most relevant and critical points of the social landscape” (John Paul II, 1981; 53). Moved by this idea, he will take advantage of the commemoration of the 90th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* to unveil his new encyclical of social character: *Laborem Exercens*.

This encyclical realizes an anthropological and theological systematization of *work*, which considers the most important piece of all social issue and of Christian Social Thought (John Paul II, 1981; 11) since the times of Leo XIII. He insists in the necessity of overcoming the division Capital/Work and the right interpretation of the *right to private property*.

As we all know, the proposal reiterated by the Church points to the “*co-property of the means of work*, to the participation of the workers in business affairs and on the benefits of the enterprise, to the so called *stockholder* of work and the similar... A possible road to reach these goals could be associating, however possible, work to the property of capital and give life to a rich chain of intermediary bodies” (John Paul II, 1981; 42-43).

With this background, he will dedicate chapter IV of the encyclical to the theme of *Rights of workers*, going into the details regarding deontology and enterprising obligations.

Before going into detail about the relation between the worker and the businessman, John Paul II introduces an important distinction: the *indirect businessman* and the *direct businessman* (John Paul II, 1981; 53-54). Each one of them will have characteristic responsibilities in front of the workforce.

The indirect businessman is included in what involves workers, institutions, collective contracts and the state, he is who supervises the socioeconomic system and determines and conditions the relation between the direct businessman and the worker. The task of the indirect businessman is, thus, (the state above all) to elaborate *labour politics* that are ethically correct, that respect the rights of workers and that contribute to a true national and international progress. Within the same lines, it should act in a positive way helping to eradicate the *social calamity* known as unemployment; and, in another case, he is obligated to “render subsidies in favour of the unemployed”. To achieve this, it must justly and rationally *coordinate* economic life (John Paul II, 1981; 47-53), without falling into the excesses of centralized planning, an inhibitor of personal initiatives.

The role of the direct businessman and the fundamental aspect of it is *the just remuneration of work*. The Pope understands that such remuneration, nowadays, is very far away from being morally correct, being how it is, and the finishing stone for valuing the karats of justice in an economic system. A just salary, has to be understood as “one that is sufficient to fund and maintain with dignity a family and ensure the future”. Such *family salary* could be tagged along with social with social measures, emanating from the indirect businessman, such as family subsidies, or aid to mothers that dedicate themselves exclusively to raising and caring for their families.

In line with these considerations, the Pope lobbies for the respect of the special nature of the work realized by females and for the obligation of making it possible for handicapped people to work. Also in the chapter he includes the problem of agricultural work, so importantly developed in the pontifical doctrine.

***Sollicitudo Rei Socialis**

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the publication of *Populorum Progresio*, John Paul II published a new encyclical of social content: *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (John Paul II, 1988). We could probably explain the quintessence of the message in the following terms: by *peace not being reachable without justice*, as Paul VI stated, today we need to add: neither peace nor justice are possible at the margins of *solidarity*.

As we can see, the objective of the encyclical is much more comprehensive than a mere reflection on the enterprise, although, it is possible to pick out some passages that point directly to the topic at hand.

The first term goes on to point out the clear way in which the Pope lobbies for the right to *free economic initiative*. An important chapter, that coincides with the Christian vision of the enterprise and its *ethos*, it could be placed by the explicit censure it accomplishes in the face of institutional entities that are directly responsible for many of the injustices observed in the international scene. On the one hand, he refers again, in the line of *Laborem Exercens*, to the injustice of labour relations (sub-employment, unemployment, lack of dignified housing); on the other hand, he calls attention to the immoralities that go together with the world of high finance, which are greatly responsible for the debt accumulated by impoverished countries and concludes calling for the *reform* of the unjust structures that impede the development of countries on the road of development.

At the root of these injustices, the ones involved in macroeconomic disorder and enterprising immorality, there is but one cause: selfishness. “*The drive to only get profits*, on the one hand; *thirst for power*, on the other, with the only aim being, to impose on others their will. We could add to each one of these attitudes, to characterize them even better, the expression *at any price*” (John Paul II, 1988; 67). In other words, we find ourselves facing the generalization of human attitudes, with all its possible consequences.

Facing businessmen

One of the moments in which John Paul’s II thoughts become more explicit to our theme is when he addresses the businessmen directly. In the case of many speeches, for example, during March 22, 1982 in Milan; in Barcelona November 7 of the same year, directed at workers and businessmen; in Buenos Aires in April 11, 1987 or in Durango Mexico May 9, 1990. The main idea becomes clear in words like these, pronounced in Montjuich (Cuadrón, 1990): “When we reflect about the Christian conception of the enterprise, I would like to remind all, that over its technical and economic aspects, in which all of you are masters, there is one that goes much deeper: the one of its moral dimension...Also, the enterprise is for the service of man, man is not the servant of the enterprise”.

The Christian businessman must fight, above all, for justice and the common good. His responsibilities basically revolve around three coordinates: “the *people* that for the enterprise, *society* and the *environment*. The Businessman should make conscience that he is “a craftsman of a more just, pacific and fraternal society” (Cuadrón, 1990).

The responsibility towards people and society is founded on already known motives: consideration of human labour as something superior and qualitatively different to pure merchandise; creation of work positions; the issue of just salaries; the orientation of social progress towards the common good; the turning of the enterprise into a factor of authentic growth for society; have an amplitude of aims to be able to go beyond the national perspective in the economic projection.

The ecological preoccupation, for its part, being a problem that affects humanity in its whole, must be dealt with changing the methods of exploitation of resources. Without a doubt, this represents a great challenge to the creativity and responsibility of businessmen.

In one of his comments, the Pope alludes to very a difficult subject, which is “your own responsibility towards yourselves and your families”. The practical materialism that develops hand in hand with business life, poses a great temptation. It is the “drive for

profits at any price”, of *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, the one that leads to neglecting his own family and the disregarding his kid’s education, which brings about matrimonial crisis. “The Family”, the Pope says, “claims more than the elevated level of life that you can give it; it demands your presence, your affection, your sincere interest as a husband and father, or as a wife and mother” (Cuadrón 1990) .

The “Economy of Enterprise”: The papal message at the edge of the twenty-first century

In May 1, 1991, John Paul II Signs *Centesimus Annus*, (John Paul II, 1991) a new social encyclical commemorating the hundred year anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*. From the point of view that we have been having the last couple of pages, it can be said that never had the magistrate been pronounced with such clarity, regarding the theory of the enterprise.

There are at least two keys that explain this circumstance. Firstly, without a doubt, there is the fact that the principles from which the Social Catholic Thought understands the enterprise phenomena were firmly backed.

Secondly, the transcendental *new things* that had occurred, one after the other, in “real socialist” countries during 1989. These demanded that the Church take a firm posture in respect to the two big economic models, until then set against each other: the liberal-capitalist and the planner-collectivist, inspired by Marxism.

Many are the aspects that would need to be highlighted in this encyclical. To contribute to the presentation of the Christian image of the enterprise and of the economy of the enterprise, we would need to refer, firstly, to the counter-position capitalism-consumerism. Secondly, the theme of the market and state intervention. Finally, the enterprise and the economy of the enterprise as the support of the authentic democracy and the road towards a more humane world.

We will concentrate on this last aspect, which could be considered as a true synthesis of the *philosophy of the enterprise*, seen in light of Catholic Social Doctrine. The central nucleus of this speech is exposed in nº 32 of *Centesimus Annus*, and it will be completed in the indications and developments found on numbers 33, 35, 36, 42, 46 and 48. All these epigraphs are also inserted, in a very significant manner, on chapter IV: *Private property and the universal destination of goods*.

What does John Paul II understand as “the enterprise”?

Given that this is the starting point of all previous considerations about all consequent considerations about the enterprise, it would be convenient to fully grasp the following definition: “The enterprise cannot be only considered as a “society of capitals”; it is at the same time a “society of people”, which is formed in a diverse manner and with specific responsibilities those who contribute the necessary capital for its activity and those who collaborate with their labour” (John Paul II, 1991; 82-83). Unquestionably, the enterprise sinks its roots in the *freedom* of the people and in the own value of *man*, capable of achieving “social work”; that is, work *with* and *for* the other men (John Paul II, 1991; 66-67).

The enterprise is also a contemporary expression of private property; that is; *property of the knowledge, of the technique, and of the wisdom*. Since, also, on top of them rests

the wealth of industrialized nations, the Church does not doubt in proposing as an alternative to the socialist system and to the dehumanizing version of capitalism, “*a society based on free work, on the enterprise and on participation*” (John Paul II, 1991; 71).

¿What is the final purpose of the enterprise?

Going to the heart of the question, the reason for being of the enterprise is no other than *satisfying necessities*, since he who produces something, does it “so that others can enjoy it after having paid a just price established by free accord, after free negotiation” (John Paul II, 1991; 66). Nevertheless, from a more ample point of view, the final purpose of the enterprise is, above all, “*the existence itself of the enterprise as a community of men... n service of society as a whole*” (John Paul II, 1991; 71). This stated, an index of the good progression of the enterprise will be the *acquisition of benefits*. However, this is not the only one, and should not be pursued at any price. In this line of thought we read: “It is possible that the economic balances are correct and, at the same time men, who constitute the most valuable assets of the enterprise, are humiliated and offended in their dignity. Besides being morally inadmissible, this can only have bad repercussions for the future, even for the economic efficiency of the enterprise” (John Paul II, 1991; 71).

Defined, then, the enterprise as a productive unit that has people and capital involved, and as an institution that, as with a vocation of lasting throughout time, orients itself at satisfying needs through the production of goods and services, achieving then economic benefits through these activities, the encyclical points out a fundamental element in the life of the enterprise: *the role of the businessman and the directing process*. In effect, to make an enterprise work there is a need for a series of *capacities* and the competent development of a series of *functions*, commonly analyzed and described in texts dealing with the use of the science of *Management*: planning, organization, motivation, communication, control, etc.

The nucleus of the central paragraph of nº 32 of the Encyclical precisely point towards this very theme of the technical competence inside the enterprise. Firstly, the Pope restates of the necessary “capacity of knowing the necessities of other men”; but not less relevant than the fact of highlighting the enterprising opportunities is knowing how to organize the productive factors in order to satisfy such necessities, therefore generating wealth.

The directing work of the enterprise is a special way of human work, that must be looked at “positively and with attention”, whenever the economic liberty of the person in the economic field is manifested in it. This work has a series of *virtues and skills* in which the Pope explicitly insists: discipline, creativity, capacity of initiative and the undertaking spirit, “the diligence, the hard work, the prudence to assume reasonable risks, the dependability and the loyalty in interpersonal relations, resolution when facing decisions that are difficult and painful, yet necessary for the common work of the enterprise and for facing the eventual reversals of fortune” (John Paul II, 1991; 67).

Nowadays, then, the decisive factor in production will not be the earth or the capital, it will be *man*, human work; and in a special manner *the knowledge*, “that is manifested through scientific wisdom, and in its capacity of soldiery organization, as being able to predict and satisfy the necessities of society” (John Paul II, 1991; 67).

If this is the case, then we should work towards getting all the countries to join, in a humane and effective manner, into the system of the enterprise, helping those in earlier stages of development by making knowledge available that would enable them to compete with possibilities of success in an international context. The Pope states: “It is necessary that the stronger nations know how to offer the weaker ones opportunities to break into the international life; and that the weaker ones know how to accept these opportunities, making the necessary sacrifices and efforts, assuring political and economical stability, having the right perspectives for the future, the full development of all the capacities that their workers have, the shaping of businessmen that are efficient and consistent with their responsibilities” (John Paul II, 1991; 72).

The stance assumed by the Church regarding a society based on free work, the enterprise and participation, is clear. In all, it demands the removal of all within the system that does not lead to the full humanization of life for all the people. Based on this, we have to understand a series of dispersed considerations throughout the encyclical that, from another point of view, suggest which are the immediate *challenges* that the economy of the enterprise present.

We have mentioned the *generalization* of this economic *model* in Third World countries: now let us look at some more.

Within the same line of thought is the urgent need to solve the problem of the *debt of the poor countries* (John Paul II, 1991; 61) and not lowering our guard in our efforts of continuous *professional education*, as an authentic shield in front of the pockets of alienation and misery that compose the *Fourth World*.

More to the point and concrete: the enterprises are not being asked to produce quantity, on the contrary, they are being asked to give *quality* to the goods and services that they offer. This leads us to the environmental problem.

The Pope considers the *ecological problem* as a grave matter that humanity is currently facing and that demands, from all of us, responsibility and diligence in our actions. For the enterprises, this responsibility requires *a moral imperative and new criterion* that must be pondered facing the optimization and improvement of the productive process.

Another aspect that is implied, in line with the universal destiny of goods, and corresponds to the enterprises, is *investments*. The Pope states: “the option of intervention, in one productive sector or another, is always a *moral and cultural option*” (John Paul II, 1991; 74). Let us not forget, as we will read ahead, that “property is morally justified, when it believes, in the correct ways and circumstances, work opportunities and human growth for all” (John Paul II, 1991; 84).

We could continue reinforcing the ideas of the enterprise. Let us make, though, one last observation directly in line with the *legitimacy of the pursuit of benefits*. We commented that this is *one* of the indexes of the good progress of the enterprise as an institution that favours productivity, efficiency, personal development and the common good. We do not have to give so much significance to the pursuit of benefits to the point of making it the absolute goal of the enterprise. This would represent misinterpreting the specific aim of the institution. *A fortiori*, in a way, we can talk about the “enterprise to refer to the ones that use inappropriate means to acquire wealth and easy benefits, base on illegal activities” (John Paul II, 1991; 90).

It is important to point out how between the sources of wealth and easy benefits lays a domain of *purely speculative activities*. These do not generate any real wealth and they can even be obstacles to development and economic order (John Paul II, 1991; 90).

It is pertinent to restate this Papal affirmation, every time that some of our more proficient, contemporary theorists of Management Science affirm the same.

3. Conclusive Remarks

After this journey through some of the fundamental points of the Social Catholic Thought regarding the theme of the enterprise and the businessman, we proceed to with an attempt to offer in a synthesized way some of the elements that to our understanding stand out with major emphasis and recurrence throughout the discursive process derived from the Papal magistrate throughout the last century. The highlighted points and the detail can vary or be more or less explicitly stated; with all, the source of the issue is the same.

The *Businessperson* that denotes Social Catholic Thought should respond to the following traits: he must be *competent* and be endowed with a *multiform intellectual talent* that permits him to be an *instrument of progress and social peace*. Diligence, hard work, prudence, loyalty, resolution of enthusiasm, enterprising spirit, veracity, firmness, initiative, amplitude of views, preoccupation for the common good, and solidarity should be the dominant notes of his character. His function would be, firstly, aimed at the *creation of wealth* and of work position, through *investment* and *adequate administration* of the productive units. Nevertheless, the demands are not reduced to this aspect of productivity and profitability. He is *also responsible* for the climate and the *human structure of the enterprise* and of its adequate relations with its *environment*.

The *enterprise* represents Social Catholic Thought should be encompass the following characteristics: *profitable*, both technically and economically, it should create wealth; ethically *just*; *involved* socially; and most importantly, *humane*, worthy of the men that compose it, direct it and orient it as a social institution.

The Church does not forget the *economic aspect* of the enterprise when it lobbies for its structural reform. Before, on the contrary, it recognizes and legitimizes the economic finality of the enterprise, as a producer of goods and services. What is questionable is the *use of the benefits*, which should be oriented towards the *common good*, not to satisfy personal and selfish interests. Within this line goes the need that an enterprise be a morally just institution.

The disputed issue, as we all know, was the *participation* of labour within the enterprise. This is one of the most referred to chapters in relation with the structural reform of the enterprise. The problem of *co-management*, so alive in the times of Pius XII, is well defined after *Mater et Magistra* and the Vatican Council II. Beyond interpretations found, it could be said that nowadays the participation of the administration of the enterprise responds to the state of generalized opinion and to the degree of social political development of the western societies that claim not only political-formal democracy, but real economic democracy, as well.

The humanist essence of the Christianity is evident in a singular manner in his consideration of the enterprise. Above all, it should be humanly dignified; that is, respectful of the men that make it up and relate to it. In this sense, we could say that the strong point of the consideration of human work as related to enterprising activities, on the part of the Church, moves within the same lines with some of the latest reflections of the work and management sciences. Undeniably, at the root of all “enterprise economy”, there is a conception of what is human, a certain implicit anthropology that will condition the theoretical body and the beliefs of the praxis: the objectives and the

content of the reflections related to human work in the enterprising context (Melé, 1990).

The *Taylorist* model is based in the mechanic consideration of man, manageable and controllable with simple monetary stimulation. Such a conception of human work was criticized, for being reductionist, from multiple paradigms (one of them, the one from Catholic Social Thought), when considering the worker and work as a group of “realizing” activities, without the smallest margin of free will. From such a perspective we do not realize that all forms of human work constitute an action in which shaping, creating and forming activities occur.

The ecclesiastical insistence in the “humanization”, in the “participation” of the worker in the process of management of the enterprise, on the other hand, goes way beyond what in its day supposed the “human relations” movement in the *scientific management*. Man must occupy the *centre* of the generating process; the enterprise is conceived as an institution in which groups of people work; the joint action must fundament itself in a normative-ethical base, with aims of realizing the objectives of the organization (*conditio sine qua non* of its viability) and the human development of all those who participate.

At this point it is when we observe more solidly the unification of the reflections of the magistrate with the thesis of the “*coalition*” model, present in the actual science of the directing process, founded in the image of the social-scientific man. For this type of discourse (and it is again highlighted the parallelism with the Christian vision of the enterprise), human work is considered as an action that goes together with the creative, shaping and forming activities. Human work is expanded and understood has human behaviour at the work post.

To sum up, the calling for the quest of a *humanly dignified* enterprise, founded and present on Social Doctrine, from the demand of humanism tied to the Christian message, does not absolutely result, incompatible with the thesis of the “height of the times”. It looks like it is maintained, from strictly technical statements, derived from the directing sciences.

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