Andrew M. YuenGert
Catholic Social Teaching in Practice. Exploring Practical Wisdom and the Virtues Tradition

Thorough the publication of Catholic Social Teaching in Practice. Exploring Practical Wisdom and the Virtues Tradition, Andrew M. Yuengert, from Malibu University, fulfills the list of the works signed by him (containing titles like Inhabiting the Land: The Case for the Right to Migrate, 2004 and "Roman Catholic Economics", in Paul Oslington (ed), The Oxford Handbook of Christianity and Economics, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 153-176, but also several other titles spread in different journals all around the world) with a new valuable contribution on the understanding of a complex and interesting topic for the contemporary society.

Segmented into six big parts, the research deals with the relationships between the principles and the practical wisdom in Catholic Social Teaching (p. 1-30), the virtue of practical wisdom (p. 31-65), the prudence and its meaning according to the documents released by the Catholic Church (p. 66-100), the practical personalism and laity (p. 101-141), the lay formation in practical wisdom (p. 142-178), the dialogue between Catholic Social Teaching and Economics Missing virtue (p. 179-216), the political disagreements between Bishop and Laity (p. 253-295) and the way how the Catholic Social teaching can be make practically (p. 296-311).

As Yuengert underlines in the foreword of his demarche (p. IX-XVI), his attempt was to bring into a closer conversation the neo-Aristotelian virtues with the principles of the Catholic Social Teaching. He does not attempt to replace the principles with the virtues because they can not replace each other, but to show how the virtues can be used in the application of a certain principles, to be valorised in a pragmatic way. Therefore, the aim of his work was to translate in the practical life the general principles, and to provide an analysis with practical and pragmatic relevance. To show what to do in a simple, clear and classical way, on the basis of some theoretical virtues that can look too general for a reader that it is not familiarized with it.

Aspects like the practical wisdom that constitutes the topic of the second chapter (p. 31-65) are discussed both based on the opinions of thinkers like Aquinas or Saint John Paul the Second and on the entire tradition of the Catholic Church, but also in
relationship with the contemporary realities. Andrew M. Yuengert understands that between human soul, virtue and happiness there is a complex relationship (p. 33-37) that should be put into work in order to overcome challenges from the field. Moreover, after showing how Aquinas defines virtues, and presenting their meaning according to the Christian morals (p. 37-38) he insists on the fact that the moral virtue is practical (p. 37-39) and sees its implementation in the ordinary life in the form of practical wisdom (p. 40-43). Elements like rational or rational will, or categories like intellectual virtues, previously presented by thinkers from the Eastern space like the aforementioned author of *Summa Theologica*, but also in the ancient Greek philosophy by thinkers like Aristotle are brought into debate and read thorough the lens of the contemporary realities. The same is done for the aspects related with the human act and its structure (p. 43-45), the technical reason (p. 45-48), contingency (p. 48-51), means and ends (p. 51-53), practical wisdom seen both as an intellectual and a moral virtue (p. 53-54), connaturalty (p. 54-57), need for grace (p. 59-63), prudence and its translations into the social encyclical letters (p. 90-99), or other Catholic documents (p. 99-100).

Missiological aspects are also emphasized (p. 101-111) in a dissertation meant to speak about of the role of laity in the development of the social life of the Church. Practical personalism (p. 111-116), the way how practical wisdom can reinforce it (p. 116-117) in a context of the discover of the unique vocation of each person (p. 121-124), or the way how CST can be used in the process of reconciling societies (p. 129-139) are also presented in a practical way.

Offering an interesting lecture with multiple applicability for the secular society, Andrew M. Yuengert’s book represents for sure a work that should be read both by theologians, historians, sociologists, philosophers or other scholars interested in the way how the relationship between Christian principles and contemporary life can be developed and transformed in a tool for the improvement of people’s life with the help of religion. In the same time, it represents an important work with interdisciplinary values that offers practical solutions and translates in a contemporary language principles that are rather theological.

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