

A Juxta Jotum Naturare Society or incomplete corporatism?¹

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ABSTRACT

This work analyses in a comparative perspective, the differences between catholic corporativism and state corporative experiences that marked the world scenario throughout the period of the two world wars, particularly in Portugal, Spain, and Italy. To realize this investigation a specific area of interest is defined in an attempt not to allow that the catholic corporativism be misinterpreted as state corporativism, although both of them have a strong discipline appeal. The conservative side assumed this appeal during the emergency of the social problem as a matter of work. It is of paramount importance to understand how the catholic corporativism was displayed in Brazil and which were its connections and divergences with the catholic corporativism present in Europe at the same time. It is necessary yet, to understand the discursive routes through which the Church built a totalitarian speech.

*“Catholic action is the most modern tactic of the Church to commence the conquest of the New Age. It is the organization of its militias, all focusing on the responsibility of its serious mission. It is also the use of extremely sensitive methods of social action, by direction infiltration everywhere, instead of an en masse attack and in line with the state and politics”.*²

This text is part of a research project carried out in recent years aimed at understanding the strategies used by the Catholic Church involving Social Catholicism in the search for new roles to exercise in contemporary capitalist society.

This search initially centered on the Church's social policy, on its principles and the dynamics of its relationship with the state, and most especially on the construction and exercise of a determined discourse on urban labor from the end of the nineteenth century, and how this discourse was expressed in Brazil between 1930 and 1964.

The focus was directed towards one of the various research possibilities presented by Social Catholicism, the *Círculos Operários Católicos* (Catholic Worker Circles), an experience embodied in the hierarchical Catholic form of intervening in the world of labor in Brazil between the 1930s and 1964.³

In this article we intend to show in a comparative perspective how Catholic corporatism, one of the principal characteristics of Social Catholicism, presented itself in Brazil and also to look at its convergences and divergences with the corporatism present in Portugal⁴, Spain⁵ and Italy in the 1930s and 1940s. Furthermore, it also has to be made clear that it was the encyclical *Quadragesimo anno*, promulgated on 15 March 1931 by Pius XI, whose papacy was between the two world wars, that introduced corporatism to the debate about Social Catholicism.

In this context, corporatism emerged as a response to the new unease of Catholics involved in social action, who saw it as a possibility for the Church to make itself present in the contemporary world. It required Catholics to concern themselves with the restoration of social order and its improvement in compliance with the Gospels.

This is what Pope Pius XI did, trying to find concrete solutions that could transcend the problem of the working class. He tried to move away from liberalism and collectivism, creating the core of solidarism, a philosophical school that strongly influenced the *Quadragesimo anno*. This encyclical adopted a different approach to the question of property from the encyclical *Rerum novarum*, by proposing a balance, with an individual and social dimension, between capital and labor.

The reading of the social question present in this pontifical text is also based on the vision that upon the fall of the *Ancien Regime* various institutional reforms were introduced that involved the state, associations and corporations, the model of competition and the market, causing old customs to decay. This resulted in the strengthening of egotism, responsible for all evil, since

*“In previous times there existed a social order which, although not perfect, nor complete in all its points, due to the circumstances and needs of the time, complied to a certain extent with the proper reasoning”.*⁶

Pius XI's papacy was concerned with the relationship between the state and the Church. This relationship was seen as irreplaceable in filling the vacuum existing in the relationship between individuals and the state. For the Church this relationship needed to be based on associations, irrespective of what they were.

In relation to associations, the encyclical assigned greater importance to those of a socio-economic type. In this way it moved away from classical trade unionism came close to corporatist unionism, emphasizing the common interest of workers and employers and making great efforts for society to be organized on the basis of other criteria, concerned with the harmonization of interests, also proposing that economic criteria be abandoned and substituted by social, with an emphasis on the professional activities that each person carried out and in which the interests of employers and workers coincided.

To make this society possible, the *ordines* – orders or branches – had to be created in which *“men were classified not according to the category assigned to them in the labor market, but rather in accordance with the social function carried out by each”.*⁷

The project was based on organizing productive agents in colleges or corporations, with absolute freedom in relation to their foundation, operation and functioning, since they were associations of private law. One form of organizational action that sought to overcome the impasses of liberalism and socialism in relation to the class struggle, proposed a 'third way' based on the principle of harmony between classes. This proposal received a welcoming reception in light of the scenario of the crisis of capitalism and the rejection of socialism, which marked the period between the two world wars. It is in this context that we can understand the sympathy of Rome for Mussolini who between 1923 and 1926, with the Palazzo Chigi and Palazzo Vidoni Pacts in 1925, began to create the legal apparatus for fascist corporatism.⁸

In *Quadragesimo anno* there appears for the first time the demand for social justice – despite the frequent use previously made of the term – which sought to establish a legal and social order that could counter the liberal social project and which could guarantee an equitable distribution of income. The cumulative justice proposed by Leo XIII, which was limited to regulating individual relations without, however, dealing with the global phenomena of socio-economic life, was discarded.

Pius XI proposed something more radical: reform institutions as a priority element in the desire to restore social order through Christian moderation, which could establish a just balance between means and ends, subordinating all creative activity to the sole supreme end which is God – and charity, the necessary complement to moderation and justice, with the aim of uniting men and opening the way to hope. It created a method for reflection based on natural philosophy and a project to be executed by Catholic Action – an organization that personified a new form of being for the Church in society, through apostolic militancy.

Finally, Pius XI proposed some guiding principles for the restoration of society based on Christian charity and social justice, which were to be exercised through the mantle of corporatism. Nevertheless, it needs to be understood that Catholic corporatism should not be confused with state or *dirigiste* corporatism, despite the fact that both share a strong disciplinary appeal to conservative sectors where the emergence of the social question is fundamentally seen as a question of labor.

'Traditional' Corporatism .

According to Ludovico Incisa⁹, corporatism is a doctrine that proposes that the organization of the collectivity be based on the representative association of interests and professional activities based on corporations, which in turn are based on the organic solidarity of the resulting concrete interests and collaborations. According to Manoilescu¹⁰, the principal theoretician of corporatism, all societies were historically corporatist, except the democratic societies born in the nineteenth century, because the French Revolution destroyed the corporatist groups and reduced society to individuals.

The theoretical formulation of corporatism was based on the experience of the medieval Italian commune, which monopolized the right to professional trades and consequently to production, creating in this way obligatory channels of political representation. This system was based on the semi-sovereign autonomy of the different categories and the paternalistic relationships existing between masters and apprentices. This model presupposed traditional social relations.

Following the Industrial Revolution these relations declined. For industrialization to occur the previously hegemonic corporate models had to be ruptured, precisely because they were considered incompatible with technological innovations. The new forms of organization of work were now to be delineated in the conflict of interests and in the class struggle expressed by trade unionism.

In turn, corporatism was presented in opposition to the trade union model, and was seen as the manager of conflict created in industrialized or developing societies. The corporatist model defends collaboration between classes in relation to professional categories, because its *“interpretation of the social dialect is optimistic, while the premises on which the trade union model are based are conflictual”*.¹¹

As has already been stated, the corporatist model was presented politically as an alternative to the liberal democratic model, to the extent that it proposed an organic democracy where individuals are the bearers of precise and identifiable interests. In this dimension corporatism was taken to be the defender of the political and economic order and was thus more acceptable, since it could be an important factor in the concentration of the system and allied to the destruction of the forces opposed to this proposal, in other words the class and ideologically based forces.

However, the theorists of Catholic corporatism¹² were not unanimous in relation to this question, since a certain distrust of industrial society survived, as well as nostalgia in relation to:

“(...) a decentralized society, based on intermediate bodies, ranging from the family to local society and professional associations, which give individuals remedies for their solitude, assuring them in a pluralist scenario, within an equilibrium of powers and oppositions, a deeper sense of political participation”.¹³

We can therefore point to the existence of a corporatist or traditional ‘counter-revolution’, and a *dirigist* corporatism. Traditional or counter-revolutionary corporatism, as has already been suggested, arose out of the protest against the Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution and were inspired by the legitimizing fundamental principles of Catholics, who,

“(...) marginalized by political and economic modernization, tried to find through solidarity based articulations, union with all those excluded from the system: the subordinate categories. Anti-liberal, corporatism presented itself as the absolute contestator of the system, as an ideal restorer”.¹⁴

The theorists of this type of traditional corporatism wanted the organic and hierarchical reconstruction of society, which became a recurrent theme in Catholic social doctrine. This project

was present in the first pontifical documents concerned with the social problem. In 1878 in *Quod apostolici numeris* Leo XII made this wish evident when he stated that:

“(…) It has become opportune to favor artisan and worker societies which with the guidance of religion help their members to become content with their lot, to deservedly put up with fatigue and always to follow a quiet and tranquil life..”¹⁵

In the 1902 encyclical, *Rerum novarum*, the same Pope advocated the corporate model, but defined it in a less nostalgic form, stating that in the solution for the labor question workers and capitalists should cooperate. Furthermore, this cooperation should take place through “institutions structured to offer opportune assistance to the needy and to approximate and unite the two classes”.
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These reflections of Leo XIII became the subject of intense discussions within the Church in Congresses¹⁷ and study circles, with the fruits of these debates finally being systematized by the Catholic sociologist Guiseppe Toniolo.

Leo XIII had indicated two paths to the resolution of what Catholics called the ‘social question’. One possibility, closer to classical corporatism, was based on the association of employees and employers in the same category. Another possibility was the association of just employees or employers, which ended up prevailing due to the pressure of existing unionism. Nevertheless, the union of both became a target to be achieved through grass roots associations, such as Worker Circles. However, Catholics ended up accepting the existence of the class struggle as a fact, but that still maintained that it had to be subordinated to the common good.

Implicit in this acceptance of the trade union model is the recognition of the representative model and consequently of representative democracy. Since then the principle of union between classes has remained an important aspect in Catholic inspired movements and has been projected more in ideological and political action than in trade union or social. This inflection took place in the aftermath of the First World War when the Italian Popular Party began to demand the presence in the Chamber of Representatives of the so-called organized classes, which according to Catholics at the time maintained the class based character of trade unions. This orientation remained in the Catholic movement until the post-Second World War period.

However, despite being abandoned by the traditionalist and restorational wing of the Catholic movement, corporatism continued to be defended by the conservative wing, which incorporated monarchical sectors such as *Action Française*, Spanish Carlism (*Comúnion Tradionalista*), also being present in Salazarist conservatism and Franco’s Spain.

Catholic corporatism in a comparative perspective

In this paper we are interested in understanding how this conservative Catholicism was presented in Brazil and what were its convergences and divergences with European corporatism in the period in question.¹⁸

Nevertheless, corporatism, in contrast with pluralism, has been a recurrent explicative category in the historiography of Latin America in the 1930s and 1940s.¹⁹ The debate about the question has renewed itself around three different currents: politico-culturalist, societarian and structuralist.²⁰

I am most interested in the first approach, since I am concerned with the Catholic characteristics present in this corporatism, and more specifically in the politico-cultural sphere, in other words in the consideration of: SOMETHING MISSING

The main exponent of this approach is Howard Wiarda, for whom corporatism can be understood in two different ways. The first refers to the explicitly corporate regimes or social experiences in the 1930s and 1940s, defined by their system of authority and representation of interests, principally arising out of Catholic social thought, which advocated functional representation, the integration of work and capital, forming a chain of hierarchically ordered units and exercising the monopoly of harmony functionally guaranteed by the state.²¹

The second more wide-ranging approach represented a determined Ibero-Latin historical and cultural tradition, expressed in the dominant form of hierarchical, elitist, authoritarian, bureaucratic, patrimonial, Catholic and corporatist socio-political organization.²²

Wiarda wanted to explain, on the one hand, the ideology and the institutions whose appearance or persistence could be analyzed in different historical contexts and, on the other, “*the explanatory variable that corresponded to a determined organicist political and cultural tradition*”.²³

As we have seen this corporatism, historically analyzed, has to be taken as the expression of a historical tradition that goes back to Canon and Roman law, to the Thomist tradition, the system of guilds and professional associations and the patrimonial characteristics of the state in the sixteenth century. It emerged as a manner of dealing with the ‘social question’, which involved the absorption of workers from above, repeating a social model forged over a number of centuries by Ibero-American society.²⁴

For the authors who work with this perspective²⁵ what is most instigating is the fact that these tendencies have survived for so many centuries. They take the persistence of the corporatist model and structures as a demonstration of its infinite permeability as regards change and its immense capacity to adapt to modernity and to the industrialization of the twentieth century.

In relation to the theoretical objections²⁶ raised in relation to this approach matter, we believe that it can nevertheless highlight possibilities in relation to the analysis of Catholic corporatism which in general terms has been incorporated by the Brazilian state. We believe that the profound influence of Catholicism on our politico-cultural formation is informed by what historiography has consecrated as corporatism, and what Wiarda himself has highlighted to be an “*incomplete picture of corporatism*”.

Furthermore, the significance of this question for Catholicism and for the constitution of the legal and political apparatus that disciplined the world of labor in Brazil also needs to be specified.

However, Catholic corporatism is extremely multifaceted. As a rule we can classify it as being counter-revolutionary or traditional, because it was reborn in reaction to the economic and political consequences of the Industrial Revolution, but it was not transformed into a protest against the entire system that was created.²⁷ It was a movement that proposed the organic and hierarchical restoration of society, as a counterpoint to industrialism.²⁸

It was the political expression of a doctrinal proposal where the organization of society was to be based on the representative association of interests and professional activities. Through the basic solidarity on which this organization was built it would be possible to construct elements that could harmonize this society.

Catholics had been spreading this proposal, i.e., the organic reconstruction of society, since 1878, when Leo XIII stated in the Encyclical *Quod apostolici muneris*:

“(…) *It has become opportune to favor artisan and worker societies which, with the guidance of religion, help their members to become content with their lot, to deservedly put up with fatigue and always to follow a quiet and tranquil life* ”.²⁹

After the reflux of the traditionalist and restorational line of the Catholic movement, these corporatist ideas were maintained by the legitimist conservatives involved in pro-monarchy political struggles, such as Carlism in Spain, *Action Française*, Portugal in the times of Salazar³⁰ and Spain under Franco.

In Spain the term corporation was not used, but the principle of mixed unions was accepted (present in Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*); in Portugal corporatism functioned in the context of anti-industrial policy. However, in these two countries once industrial development policies were implemented corporatism was gradually fragmented.³¹

For Phillipe Schmitter,³² the Portuguese *Estado Novo* was a laboratory of corporatist experience, both as the invention of an imaginary form of legitimating the national re-foundation and as a way of integrating the working classes under the dictatorship. This experience became even more

significant to the extent that it pointed to paths other than the Italian experience involving the radicalization of fascism, or the German one with National Socialism.

The Portuguese case was exemplary for the conservative Catholic right and for the *Maurrasianos* from the inter-war period. For these sectors it represented the possibility of the construction of a third way, a project embraced by Catholics since the end of the nineteenth century. For the author in question Portuguese corporatism was a part of the ‘nostalgic modernity’ anchored on the values of a past considered to be modern.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to distinguish Catholic corporatism from *dirigist* (state) corporatism, which was put into practice in fascist corporatism. This distinction is in the ethical perspective of the former: ‘the supremacy of love and the common good over private interests’, in other words on a moral based on a concept of justice, charity and the common good. While for the latter, the interests that should prevail were those of the nation, where social problems are generated above all by the need for the implementation of wealth and national production and not its distribution.³³

Also in relation to the analysis of the Portuguese case, Maria Inácia Rezola has stated:

*“(...) that the Catholic worker movement in that country was born at the beginning of the 1930s in a period of the institutionalization of the Estado Novo and the establishment of a new scenario of relations between the latter and the Church, with the emergence within the latter of elements that were socially motivated and concerned with the constitution of worker organizations, in accordance with the social encyclicals of Leo XII, Rerum Novarum (1891), and Pius XI, Quadragesimo Anno (1931) and Divino Redemptori (1937)”.*³⁴

The author continues, stating that these

*“(...) papal documents considered trade union action to be necessary for the defense of the legitimate economic rights of workers and the improvement of the social order, although Catholic trade unionism was just one means for the organization of society according to the corporate Christian model, an alternative to liberal individualism and socialist collectivism”.*³⁵

Despite the compromise existing between state and Church following the enactment of the National Labor Code, part of the Portuguese clergy were critical of what was understood as the coercion of associative liberties through state corporatism. As an alternative they proposed Christian corporatism. Among those who protested was the priest Boaventura de Almeida, the national director of *Ação Católica*, an organization aimed at training Catholic laypersons, who in 1935 would form the National Catholic Union, the embryo of the Catholic Worker’s League and the Economic and Social Secretariat, dedicated to the critical education of Catholics in relation to state corporatism.³⁶

The demands of these Catholics were:

- 1- The end of material misery, through the sharing of wealth and the rejection of both the class struggle and free competition;
- 2- End of social misery with social respect for workers by employers and the state;
- 3- End of intellectual misery with compulsory education and the prohibition of child labor;
- 4- End of moral misery through the re-Christianization of the working class and by making labor dignified.

Mussolini himself, presenting to the National Council of Corporations the regulations of corporations in 1933, emphasized this characteristic:

*“(...) as an instrument which under the aegis of the state makes real the integral, organic and unitary discipline of the productive forces, with the aim of the development of wealth, political power and the welfare of the Italian people”.*³⁷

Fascist corporatism thus presented itself as the result of the reconciliation of corporatism with industrialization, where the unification and organization of the productive forces needed to be guaranteed.³⁸

Michael Hall, analyzing the differences between the Brazilian and Italian corporatist experience, stated that Italian corporatism expressed the anxieties and resentments of the petite bourgeoisie and emerged from the struggles between the various factions of the same regime, i.e. between former revolutionary trade unionists led by Edmondo Rossoni, who played an important role in the establishment of fascist trade unions.³⁹ Hall also states that:

*wide scale violence practically eliminated the socialist and Catholic trade unions. Rossano demanded the creation of integrated unions that would include workers and employers in the same corporate entity”.*⁴⁰

The *Carta del Lavoro*, published in 1927, was just a declaration of principles rather than a labor code, as in the Portuguese, Spanish and Brazilian cases. It is a contradictory document, with thirty articles impregnated by Catholic social doctrine.⁴¹ Despite the doctrinaire presence of social Catholicism, it needs to be emphasized that in reality it was the fascist party who generally controlled the system, which in turn exercised legal functions in relation to the world of labor.

As a result it can be inferred that one cannot talk about corporatist Catholic systems fully implemented in Spain and in Portugal. Furthermore, what was implemented in Italy has to be classified under a non-Catholic perspective.

Conclusion

According to Luiz Werneck Vianna, corporatism in Brazil was a response to social pressures without, however, being the only possible solution for the resolution of these conflicts. It represented a condemnation of governmental participation in the productive system as a means of resolving the economic crisis. Its characteristics resulted from its adaptation to the revolutionary ideology and was specifically aimed at the conflicts generated by the urban industrial sector, with control over the working class seen as being capable of destabilizing social harmony.⁴²

For Brazilian Catholics, the inheritors of the strikingly traditionalist traits of Social Catholicism, the word ‘corporation’ contained a significant ideological content, since it referred to the historical experience of the medieval corporation destroyed in the eighteenth century, “*after having provided for around five centuries the essential solution for the economic problem*”.⁴³

Nevertheless, even lamenting the fall of that society and wanting to restore organized professions, it was not intended that this model be fully implemented, since this corporate system had been “*drowned in the implacable waves of the French Revolution*”.⁴⁴

The role that the Church proposed to play in Brazilian society at this time, through Catholic Action and the Catholic Workers Circles, and in harmony with the state, was that of an agent that stimulated an integrated social project based on the idea of the ‘organization of classes’:

“(...) its primary purpose is the defense of classes and their members, it can in second place aim at the provision of services of mutualism and cooperativism and even social assistance. To the principles of one’s own effort and solidarity is added justice to be defined in the labor life”.⁴⁵

It was these ‘secondary’ traits, such as social assistance, mutualism and cooperativism, that marked Catholic Action. However, the role of implementing social and social insurance legislation could not be absolutely ignored, since the project appeared to express in all its principles and objectives the desire to forge a corporatist culture, both in the sphere of the organization of classes and in the creation of a legal body aimed at resolving the so-called ‘social question’.

It idealized the construction of a society through professional associations (trade unions and corporations) that would be capable of aggregating all the workers in the same category, aiming above all at meeting the interests of members in relation to the same profession: “*for workers: wages, working hours, conditions of hygiene and treatment, the guarantee of work, accident insurance*”.⁴⁶

In Brazil in the 1930s and 1940s Catholic forces, joined together in the magazine *Ordem*, and operating through Catholic Actions institutions, especially the Worker Circles, worked with the perspective of constructing a triumphal Catholicism that intended to dominate the fields of

education, politics and even the economy. Its project aimed to construct a Neo-Christianity, in other words to establish a new hegemony in Brazilian society through the relationship of Church and state.

For this the creation of ‘corporatist bodies’ was seen as a necessity arising out of human nature:

“(...) built on professional bodies, human society finds itself in a state of natural structure. Built on opposing classes, it finds itself in a violent, instable and doubtful state”.⁴⁷

For Catholics the natural state of human society is based on professional bodies, like the organs of civil society where social conflicts are ordered and disciplined, because the principle of union that links the different members of the same profession is found in the production of goods and the provision of services, fruits of their common activities.⁴⁸

This union would come about due to the common interests developed by the professions where the fulfilling of reciprocal duties and rights would aim at the common good of the profession and society. The coordination of these movements would be the responsibility of an authority from the actual profession in question. This person would be responsible for providing regulations and administrating the profession’s services. Above this authority would be social justice, which in turn would require an inter-professional organization to be established at the regional, national and even international levels. On the other hand,

“(...) the professional organization has to relieve the state of the numerous tasks that it is currently burdened with, but without absorbing or weakening it, but to the contrary improving and strengthening it”.⁴⁹

From this perspective the organized professional bodies prioritize the agglomeration of similar bodies and create at least two federations: one for manual trades and one for white collar professions. They bring together corporations and federations under a supreme professional authority; they integrate this supreme authority in the statutes of the nation and in this way achieve the culminating point to which the corporatist organization aims at to fulfill its role.⁵⁰

The proposal involved a verticalized, and not very pluralist professional organization since the centrality exists precisely in the principle of federalization. On the other hand, it also added:

“(...) the corporatist organization is not in itself linked in any way to the government or a specific state. To the contrary, in the political order the various forms of government are legitimate once they contribute to the common good, while in the same way in the professional organization the forms of corporatist organization are in identical conditions left to the preference of the interested parties themselves”.⁵¹

The Church recognized the possibility of the multiple forms of corporatist organization, because its fundamentals lie not in the structure, but in the way of dealing with the principal tasks that have to be carried out, with the main one being related to the professional formation of its members and it does not essentially depend on the state for this. The corporatist organization is also responsible for guaranteeing employers and employees freedom of speech, as well as each party being allowed to make decisions separately in order to safeguard legitimate interests and prevent the abuses that the superiority of one party could cause to the other.⁵²

The expectation of Catholics was that the corporatist organization of all professional bodies based on its principles would create diverging interests in relation to the common good, because they would be institutions based on the principles of social justice, where each group would exercise a subsidiary role, and where the activities of those at “*a lower level*” would not be interfered with.

Based on the assumption that ‘*natural law*’ requires that the resources of the earth “*be transformed by labor into capital that can be put at the disposition of human needs in an ordered fashion*”, Catholics organized a Decalogue where each item of modern economic life was analyzed and defined from the point of view of justice and Christian charity.

They defended the principle of private property; the right to inheritance strictly related to the right to property; the nationalization of companies; collective bargaining agreements, where employee and employee unions would establish permanent ties; the co-management of companies; the strike, which had to be arbitrated by justice, the minimum wage, family bonuses and social insurance. In short they fully defended the Collective Labor Agreement.

The fact that the National Confederation of Christian Workers published the Social Code in 1942 is suggestive, as this was the year when the state consolidated the labor legislation and organized the labor court. In this the unions of professional associations structured in a corporatist manner were emphasized. The profession covered all those who cooperated in it, whether they were employees or employers, due to the social policy of taking great care in the reconstitution of professional bodies, with the aim of regrouping men according to their activities and not according to the place they occupied in the labor market.⁵³

The identification of Catholic corporatism with the various types of state corporatisms in the 1930s can also be analyzed from thesis defended by Romano in which the state and Church identify each other in the search for a disciplinary action in relation to the labor market.⁵⁴ This common desire meant that the interests of each converged against lay democracy and against the worker movements that were not under the control of one of the other, which leads us to what Gomes drew attention to in his analysis of the contribution of Oliveira Vianna and Alceu Amoroso Lima in the construction of Catholic corporatism, as the result of the action of these two institutions, i.e., the

Church operating as a true spiritualization of class relations and the state imposing itself through the supervision and coordination of these relations.⁵⁵

Romano, basically wrapping up the question, in analyzing the process the Church went through in overcoming the corporatist discourse, or at least the corporatism identified with totalitarian regimes, draws attention to:

“(…) *the extreme abstraction of its political principles, united to the power to project concrete figures in the unity of consciences, allowed Catholicism not to become disorientated in circumstantial commitments. Rather, to the contrary it was concerned with the long time, through education and mass culture, of installing itself in the ‘conscience of the People’*”.⁵⁶

This capacity enabled the Church to survive without any harm those corporatist regimes which it had so fulsomely praised. Its enormous political plasticity in relation to institutions permitted the construction of a new discourse, reestablishing the difference between essence and existence, between authority in itself and as it appears, where the vertical control of society is the good and desirable purpose, while totalitarianism had to be denied.⁵⁷

In general terms this is the sketch of what we can call a preliminary discussion of Catholic corporatism and how through these traits the Church established its relations with the state and with urban workers in the 1930s and 1940s. We believe that these are questions that are very relevant for Brazilian historiographical production, since the incorporation of elements of Catholic culture in our politico-cultural formation has become ever more evident.

Notes

¹ A naturally just society, an expression used by René Fulop Miler. *Leão XIII e o nosso tempo. Potência da Igreja. Poder do mundo*. 2nd ed. Porto Alegre, 1941.

² LIMA, Alceu Amoroso. *Pesten aetatis nostrae laicismum* (1932). In: *Pela Ação Católica*. Rio de Janeiro. Biblioteca Anchieta, 1935. p. 162. Emphasis added.

³ SOUSA, Jessie Jane Vieira de Sousa. *Círculos Operários. Igreja Católica e o mundo do trabalho no Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora da UFR, 2002.

⁴ VOLOVITH, Marie-Chistine. *O le mouvement catholique au Portugal à la fin de la Monarchie Constitutionnelle (1891-1913)*. Paris: Sorbonne Nouvelle (Paris III), Doctoral Thesis, 1983; *O fascismo em Portugal*, Proceedings of a Colloquium held in the Faculty of

Letters of Lisbon in March 1980; *a Regra do Jogo (Biblioteca de História)*, 1982; SALAZAR, Oliveira. *Como se levanta um Estado*. Lisboa: Golden Books, 1977; FERRO, Antônio. Salazar, *Le Portugal et son chef (précédé d'une note sur l'idée de dictature pour Paul Valéry)*. Paris: Grasset, 1934; *Cartilha Corporativa*, Lisboa, Edições da União Nacional, no. 7. Aniversário de publicação do Estatuto do Trabalho Nacional; LUCENA, Manuel de. *A evolução do sistema corporativo português*. Lisboa: Perspectivas e Realidades, 1986.

⁵ CASTILLO, Juan José. *El sindicalismo amarillo en España: aportación al estudio del catolicismo social Español (1912-1923)*. Madrid: Edicusa Editorial, 1977. (Cuadernos para el dialogo).

⁶ - PIUS XI, Pope. *Quadragesimo anno - Sobre a restauração e aperfeiçoamento da ordem social*. Juiz de Fora: Lar Católico, 1944.

⁷ Ibid., p. 83.

⁸ Mussolini came to power in 1922 and bit by bit introduced the corporatist system: in 1926 only fascist unions were legally recognized; in 1927 he promulgated the *Carta del Lavoro*; in 1928 the Chamber of Deputies was transformed into the Chamber of Corporations.

⁹ INCISA, Ludovico. In: *Dicionário de política*. Bobbio, Norberto; Nicola Matteuci and Giofranco Pasquino. Translated by Carmem C. Varriale (et al). 7th ed. Brasília, DF: UNB, 1995, p. 286-291.

¹⁰ MONOILESCO, Mihail. *O século do corporativismo*. Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1938.

¹¹ INCISA, Ludovico, op. cit, p. 287.

¹² Including Ozanam, Lê Play, De Mun, La Tour du Pin, Hittze, and Father Luigi Tparelli d' Azeglio, amongst others.

¹³ INCISA, Ludovico, op. cit, p. 289.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 288.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Such as Vicenza held in 1892.

¹⁸ Corporatism has been a central component in different authoritarian and fascist regimes, especially in Latin countries. As a practice or ideology it has been analyzed as an essential element in the debate about the nature of these regimes, both in Europe and in Latin America. In

relation to this question, see: O'DONELL, Guillermo. *O corporativismo e a questão do Estado*. DCP. Belo Horizonte, 1076 (3).

¹⁹ Hobsbawn, analyzing Vargas and Perón in relation to European fascism, stated that while fascism destroyed worker movements, Latin American leaders inspired them. See, HOBSBAWN, Eric. *A era dos extremos*. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1997.

²⁰ ARAÚJO, Ângela M. and TAPIA, Jorge R. B. Corporativismo e neo-corporativismo: o exame de duas trajetórias. *BIB*, Rio de Janeiro, n. 32, Second semester of 1991. p. 3-130.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ This conception has been accused of building a culturalist trap around which Ibero-American societies are tied to a societal corporatism, which makes it impossible for them to forge a cultural pluralist policy.

²⁶ These objections are based on the following questions: 1- How can the existence of such different patterns of representation in Scandinavia, the Mediterranean region, in Asia, in the Middle East and the Latin countries be explained? 2- How can the lack of corporatism in Latin countries with a Catholic tradition be explained, such as the case of Colombia? 3- Cultural continuity becomes a fragile explanation when it is sought to understand the new forms of corporatism that actually exist, the so-called neo-corporatisms; 4- Finally, the uncritical acceptance of a 'third way' development project without incurring the risk of taking ideological discourse as the truth.

In relation to Latin America, see: STEPEN, A. *Estado, corporativismo e autoritarismo*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1980 / O'DONNELL, Guillermo. *Acerca del 'corporativismo' y la question del Estado*. Buenos Aires: Documento Cedeg e Clasco. no. 2, 1982.

²⁷ INCISA, Ludovico. In: *Dicionário de política*. Organized by Norberto Bobbio. Translated by Carmem C. Varriale et al. 7th ed. Brasília, DF: UNB, 1995.

²⁸ The thought of Ozanam, Le Play, De Mun, La Tour du Pin, Keteller and other well known social Catholics at the end of the nineteenth century.

²⁹ INCISA, Ludovico. op. cit. p. 288.

³⁰ REZOLA, Maria Inácia. *O sindicalismo católico no Estado Novo. 1931-1948*. Lisboa: Editorial Estampa, 1999.

³¹ MARTINHO, Francisco Carlos Palomanes. *A bem da nação. O sindicalismo português entre a tradição e a modernidade (1933-1940)*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira/ FAPERJ, 2002.

³² SCHMITTER, Philippe C. *Portugal. Do autoritarismo à democracia*. Lisboa: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, 200.

³³ Based on the ideas of Alfredo Rocco.

³⁴ INCISA, op. cit, p. 45.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ The voice of this movement was the newspaper *O Trabalhador*, edited by Abel Varzim.

³⁷ INCISA, Ludovico. op. cit. p. 290.

³⁸ For a more precise analysis, see: <http://art.supereva.it/oriadelduce/corporatism.htm>.

³⁹ Hal, Michael “Corporatism e fascismo - as origens das leis trabalhistas brasileiras”. In: ARAÚJO, Maria Carneiro (org.). *Do corporatism ao neo-liberalismo*. São Paulo: Editorial Boitempo, 2004, p. 13-28.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 21.

⁴¹ For a critical readings, see SCHWARZENBERG, Cláudio. *El sindicalismo fascista*. Milan: Mursia, 1971.

⁴² VIANNA, Luiz Werneck. *Liberalismo e sindicato no Brasil*. 2. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1978. (Coleção Estudos Brasileiros). This author analyzed the state that emerged from 1930 as being the ‘state of compromise’.

⁴³ LUSTOSA, Eduardo M. O corporativismo (1). Sua missão - suas realizações - suas esperanças. *A Ordem*, ano XVIII, v. 19, p. 89-106, Jan.- June 1937.

⁴⁴ The words of Leo XIII. *Idem*, p. 89.

⁴⁵ BRENTANO, Leopoldo Padre. *O clero e a ação social*. Rio de Janeiro: CNCO, 1942. p.70-71. Edition commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Quadragéssimo Anno*. Cited in ROMANO, Roberto. *Igreja contra Estado*. São Paulo: Ed. Kairós, 1979, p. 12.

⁵⁴ ROMANO, Roberto. *Igreja contra Estado*, op.cit, p. 152.

⁵⁵ GOMES, Ângela Castro. *Burguesia e trabalho. Política e legislação ação social no Brasil. 1919-1937*. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Campus, 1979, p. 209.

⁵⁶ ROMANO, Roberto. *Igreja contra Estado* op. cit. p. 152. “By corporations the Church understands all of privately legally constructed society and the usefulness of this is proven “ (...) *by history and reason*”, since “ 1- *It is a historic and indisputable fact that our ancestors experienced for a long time the beneficial influence of the corporations and that the great cause of current unease is the suppression of these corporations by the French Revolution; 2- It is a law of nature frequently remembered in the holy books that men obtain precious advantages*

through their union: 'the brother is similar to a fortified city'. In modern terms we say: union brings strength".

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 153.

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