

# Jan Koblížek

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**Jan Koblížek**

Palacký University in Olomouc, Czech Republic

## Evaluating Political Society in *Rerum Novarum* in the Context of Francisco Suárez's Social Doctrine and Its Development in *Gaudium et Spes*\*

**Abstract:** Drawing on an analysis of two well-known documents of the social teachings of the Church (*Rerum Novarum* and *Gaudium et Spes*), this paper aims to demonstrate a noticeable conceptual development of the notion of politics and political authority which occurred between the end of the nineteenth century and the Second Vatican Council. The criterion used in the analysis was Francisco Suárez's political writing of the Enlightenment period. It is argued that politics was defined not only in relation to natural familial community and to the separation of ecclesiastical and secular authority, but also in relation to the return to traditional Aristotelian and Thomistic notions.

**Keywords:** politics, authority, society, Second Vatican Council, patriarchalism, family, nature, war, law

The aim of this paper is to show that understanding of political power and its principles progressed significantly between *Rerum Novarum* and *Gaudium et Spes*. The benchmark for our reflections and analyses will be the Early Modern second-scholastic doctrine of political power, natural and positive human law, represented by Francisco Suárez. The doctrine will serve as a tool or a timeless formal criterion for the assessment of both the documents, and implicitly for the description of the history of political doctrine in Church documents, from

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Leo XIII until the Second Vatican Council. Thanks to the Suárez's doctrine we will see that the concept of political power not only fundamentally changed since the late nineteenth century, but with the last council it restores the second scholastic idea.

In general, initially Francisco Suárez and scholasticism had very little influence over the developments of social teachings of the Catholic Church, which emerged in the late nineteenth century with *Rerum Novarum*, an encyclical of Pope Leo XIII.<sup>1</sup>

This first social encyclical that Pope Leo XIII wrote in 1891 was intended as a critique of socialism and a defence of workers.<sup>2</sup> It defended the idea of private ownership and certain natural inequality among people, reflected on the economic and social level. The pope also fought for good social and working conditions for labor. While the Holy Father frequently refers to Thomas Aquinas, Aquinas himself did not directly focus on social affairs and political science. The only text of his that deals with this area is the slim and incomplete *De Regimine Principum*, along with several references, found especially in *Summa Theologica* (I–II, 90–109) in the passage on laws. The pope's text would certainly have gained much more from scholastic authors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as Francisco de Vitoria, Dominic de Soto, Juan de Mariana, and Francisco Suárez, who faithfully developed the Aristotelian-Thomist theology and specialized in political science, which was given a brand new perspective in their time. Perhaps due to the contemporary climate of the late nineteenth century, no accurate picture of either Thomas or other great scholastic authors was available.<sup>3</sup> This is not meant to be a critique of the deficiency in the first social encyclical of Leo XIII, only a simple statement of facts. Leo XIII himself revived the study of Thomism, and it is to his credit that today we are able to discuss political Thomist philosophy and theology in a great detail.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. René Brouillard, "Suárez. Théologie pratique. Influence," in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, XIV, Vol. 2, ed. Jean Michel Alfred Vacant and Eugène Mangenot (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1941), 2725–26. Suárez's influence was enormous outside the Catholic region in the area of law and philosophy. Cf. José Pereira, *Suárez between Scholasticism and Modernity* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2007), 179–90; Barbero Félix Rodríguez, "Suárezianismus," in *Mají jezuité vlastní morálku? Studie o Franciscu Suárezovi (1548–1617), právníkovi, filosofovi a teologovi*, ed. Michal Altrichter (Olomouc: Refugium, 2004), 27–39; Jan Koblížek, "O principech politické moci u Františka Suáreze. Suárežův pojem souhlasu v kontextu společensko-smluvních teorií 16–18. století" (PhD diss., Catholic Theological Faculty of Charles University in Prague, 2012), 159–61.

<sup>2</sup> The introductory study for the last collected edition of social encyclicals and introductions to the individual encyclicals were written in Czech by Tomáš Halík. Cf. Tomáš Halík, "Sociální nauka katolické církve ve společensko-dějinném horizontu," in *Sociální encykliky (1891–1991)* (Praha: Zvon, 1996), 7–17.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Stanislav Sousedík, introduction to *Základy aristotelsko-tomistické filosofie*, by Joseph Gredt (Praha: Krystal OP, 2009), 15–27.

One of the basic ideas of the encyclical is that private ownership is part of human nature. It is a question of family life: children inherit what their parents have accumulated. The pope thus sees family as a basic and natural human society that precedes the state. That is why the state does not have the right to interfere with the family and substitute its function, as requested by the socialists. A doctrine built on the idea of human nature is highly logical, free of any major controversy. Yet, there is an inaccuracy that is worth mentioning. In paragraph 10, the pope discusses the relationship between the family and the state: “A family, no less than a State, is, [...], a true society, governed by an authority peculiar to itself, that is to say, by the authority of the father.”<sup>4</sup>

While no objections are raised against the claim that family is governed by the authority of the father, it is not acceptable that the state should be governed by the authority of the father. Perhaps all Leo XIII wanted to say was that the state depends upon on the family institution, which is governed by the authority of the father. In this sense we could perhaps argue that the state builds, or rather draws on this authority of fathers. If this, however, was understood as a reference to “patriarchalism,” which was nourished in the Middle Ages and early Modernism by various thinkers in an attempt to support the sovereign rule of monarchs, it needs to be rejected. An example of such a court philosopher was Sir Robert Filmer (1588–1653), whose work *Patriarcha* defends the idea that God gave Adam dominion over the whole earth, and this has been handed over to his first-born sons to this day. This theory served to defend the sovereignty of King James I of England. Filmer’s theory was rejected and criticized by the Enlightenment movement beginning in the sixteenth century, as evident from, for example, John Locke’s *First Treatise of Government* (Rousseau did not comment on the critique at all as he considered it closed)<sup>5</sup> as well as by late scholastic tradition, in particular the Spanish doctrine. Francisco Suárez is strongly opposed to the idea in his *De Legibus, Defensio Fidei*, and other writings.<sup>6</sup> This is why Sir Filmer, who is about thirty years younger, criticizes Suárez in *Patriarcha*, declaring him a freethinker of the sixteenth century. In other words, Leo XIII probably did not fully realize the implications of connecting the idea of the state with paternal authority. He had based his assumption on Thomas Aquinas, who saw a direct analogy between the family and the state. The pope thus did not fully reflect the later development of this political and legal theory, seeing that Leo XIII himself implicitly rejects patriarchalism, as in paragraph seven he affirms that God gave the earth to the entire humankind. Although the pope uses this second

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Lev XIII, “Rerum Novarum” 10, in *Sociální encykliky (1891–1991)* (Praha: Zvon, 1996), 30.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Du contrat social*, III, 6 (Paris: Flammarion, 2001), 113–15.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Jan Koblížek, *Pojem společenského souhlasu u Františka Suáreze. O principech politické moci* (Olomouc: Refugium, 2014), 73–5.

reference in a completely different context (i.e., in a debate with the Socialists), this is also an argument that Locke or Suárez use against the supporters of patriarchalism, who claimed that God gave dominion over the earth to Adam and his successors, that is, individuals. This brief excursion hopefully also shows that patriarchalism definitely cannot be confused with Catholicism or the medieval and early modern scholasticism.

Having covered the most important issues in the tenth paragraph of the encyclical, still other points remain to be analyzed in a greater detail. The pope continues: “Provided, therefore, the limits which are prescribed by the very purposes for which it exists be not transgressed, the family has at least equal rights with the State in the choice and pursuit of the things needful to its preservation and its just liberty. We say, “at least equal rights”; for, inasmuch as the domestic household is antecedent, as well in idea as in fact, to the gathering of men into a community, the family must necessarily have rights and duties which are prior to those of the community, and founded more immediately in nature.”<sup>7</sup>

We do not, of course, intend to overanalyze the pope’s words or subject them to acerbic criticism. Yet it seems that the concepts of the family and the state are not fully aligned in this paragraph. The impression is almost of viewing two opponents. If each of these wholes has its “own purpose,” as the pope mentions, they need not vie for equal rights. We believe that the discourse should instead involve “different” rights. For example, an individual who defends his life, or the father of a family, are never entitled to kill or wage a war on anyone. The state, however, has this right! Consequently, the family and the state may never have “equal” rights. Although the family and the state are closely related, they represent two levels. The pope is certainly right in saying that the family precedes the state conceptually and historically, and that the rights and obligations of the family are more natural. Yet Aristotle and Thomas, whose tradition Leo XIII wishes to follow, view the state as natural and consider man a naturally “political” being. For them, it is only this civil state that is the full stature of man. This is *causa finalis* of human nature. This however means that in some respects the state precedes the family!<sup>8</sup> Therefore, claiming that the civil state or duties and rights should be less natural than the family state appears to be inaccurate in this case. Additionally, when discussing the relationship between the working class and the capitalist class in the state, the pope himself claims that these groups are balanced by nature itself.<sup>9</sup>

The passage in the tenth paragraph of *Rerum Novarum* should thus be supplemented by an explanation of the difference between the family and the state, which is what the pope might have had in mind. The state differs from the

<sup>7</sup> *Rerum Novarum*, n. 10.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Koblížek, *Pojem společenského souhlasu*, 27–35.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Rerum Novarum*, n. 15.

family in that, besides the natural character it entails, it also requires a certain legal act from those who wish to be part of the state body. Since the sixteenth century, many various authors thus speak of a “social contract.” In Scholasticism this was for example Francisco Suárez. However, already Aristotle in the first book of his *Politics* describes a legal act, claiming that political society exists for the sake of a “good life,” while the family serves to preserve the life of the human race.<sup>10</sup> This means that the state is obviously not as natural as the family, which is in this respect similar to any other species. In contrast, the state counts with the free will of people, and is made by these people. For scholastic authors, this human engagement and conduct is nothing artificial; they mention human nature, in which there is place for human reason. Scholasticism later promoted the distinction between *societas perfecta* “perfect society,” which is synonymous with the state, an independent body, and *societas imperfecta* “imperfect society,” which refers to the family, because it is not an independent and sovereign entity. We believe that Leo XIII wanted to highlight this very difference.

Despite challenging the text of the Holy Father to some degree, we need to underline that his concept of human nature is definitely a concept of social man. In the eleventh paragraph he refers to Thomas Aquinas, who goes as far as claiming that “children carry on, so to speak, and continue [the father’s] personality,”<sup>11</sup> and hence the family is the foundation of the state, and not human individuals as proposed by, for example, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean Jacques Rousseau.

Another important aspect is that Leo XIII supports the principle of natural inequality of all people and denies the idea of class struggle, preached by socialists. Concerning the first issue, Leo XIII encourages realism, saying that humans are naturally different: they have different talents, health, strength, etc., which also leads to differences in ownership.<sup>12</sup> Each person also has different needs of varied intensity, “appropriate to his situation.”<sup>13</sup> This inequality is not inherently bad—it is natural, and therefore the pope believes even civil society should accept it. This does not preclude people from enjoying the same dignity before God and themselves. This concept differs from, for example, Rousseau, who also admits that by nature, there are many differences among people.

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. Aristotelés, *Politika*, I, 2 (Praha: Petr Rezek, 2009), 38–40; Aristotle draws attention to this fundamental difference between the family and the state in Chapter 1, asserting a difference between the king, statesman, household manager, and master. This difference does not lie in quantity (i.e., ruling over a large or small number of people), but in quality. Cf. Carnes Lord, “Aristote,” in *Histoire de la philosophie politique*, ed. Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey (Paris: Quadrige/PUF, 1999), 148–49.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Aquinas, “Summa theologiae,” II–II, q. 10 and 12, in *Rerum Novarum*, n. 11.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Rerum Novarum*, n. 14.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Rerum Novarum*, n. 19.

Specifically, this includes strength and other natural capacities of the body and intellect. However, for Rousseau, civil society should eliminate this inequality and establish legitimate and legal equality between all citizens. In this respect, civil society represents for Rousseau a certain negation of the natural condition. This is even more evident for example in Thomas Hobbes or even Immanuel Kant, where the natural state of man and the civil society stand in hostile opposition.<sup>14</sup> Clearly, Leo XIII here continues the Aristotelian tradition of politics as a positive and natural state. This is related to the idea of natural inequality, also developed by Aristotle in Book One of his *Politics*. Also, Suárez views civil society as a “natural moral organism.”

As mentioned above, the pope sees the inequality of people and of ownership as natural<sup>15</sup>; therefore he considers collaboration between social classes also natural. Leo XIII absolutely rejects the socialist idea of an ongoing hostility and struggle between classes. While the pope does not deny that the relationship between labor and capital is often tense, these tensions could be solved in the spirit of the Gospel. What matters is that both sides need each other, which is why collaboration needs to be a much stronger bond.<sup>16</sup>

In the next step of his solution of the social issue, Leo XIII discusses the role of the state. As the pope believes, the state refers primarily to actions taken by every human and to the common good.<sup>17</sup> It is important to bear in mind what this concept means for the Holy Father. In the first place, Leo XIII names moral rule, well-regulated family life and religion, followed by justice, the moderation, and fair imposing of public taxes, and concluding with the development of the arts and of trade and agriculture.<sup>18</sup> On the one hand, we need to appreciate the pope as a good shepherd concerned for humanity worldwide. On the other hand, another minor dispute should be raised. Is it truly the role of the state, that is, civil and civic rulers to ensure religion and morals? We can certainly wish that they as individuals were concerned, and were always an example of upstanding and moral citizens with high values. From Plato to Machiavelli, regents were to possess the virtue of justice and competence

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<sup>14</sup> Kant’s concept of human nature builds on Thomas Hobbes, defining the principle of human society as negative. According to Kant, humans are naturally hostile to each other, and, ultimately, so are states. The only solution is a treaty, the basis of law, which protects individuals or states against their neighbors. Kant’s elementary premise is that all people who could come into any type of interaction, need to belong to some civic establishment. The philosopher applies this to the three levels of relationship to public law: the Right of the State (*ius civitatis*), the Right of Nations (*ius gentium*), and Cosmopolitical Right (*ius cosmopoliticum*). Cf. Immanuel Kant, *K věčnému míru* (Praha: Oikoymenh, 1999), 15.

<sup>15</sup> According to the pope, this inequality should lead to the wealthier contributing more to the state coffers. Cf. *Rerum Novarum*, n. 27.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *Rerum Novarum*, nn. 15–17.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, n. 25.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, nn. 26, 29.

to rule. The question is what this entails. Should the monarch be moral and pious, in particular? We believe that a political career cannot be conditioned by concern for religious faith and morality, or that politicians should be obliged to be pious. The nature of state authority is focused exclusively on temporal and practical affairs of the state. Leo XIII discusses this in paragraph 33 of his encyclical, stating that state authority concerns the “protection of the bodily and external goods.” Specifically he states that it is necessary to protect workers and the poor from the recklessness of various blackmailers, usurers, and those who would abuse them for their profits and treat them as a mere commodity. Therefore, he then examines the important issue of a worker’s wages, encouraging them to be fair and adequate so that it would secure the worker and his family a dignified life.<sup>19</sup>

We cannot fully agree with paragraph 33, though, where the pope claims that the state is obliged to protect workers in spiritual matters. Instead of protecting religious freedom, the pope charges politicians with ensuring that religious and sacred commandments are observed. We cannot stress enough that we are not against the idea that state officials should be pious and moral and campaign for the freedom to live a religious life in private and in public; we simply believe that the nature of state authority is not related to the promotion of spiritual matters or religion, as Suárez agrees. The pope, of course, in our opinion rightly says that the ultimate goal for man cannot be found on this earth, that temporal life is but a journey and the means to eternal life. This is a theological discourse of a priest. Consulting the writings of Francisco Suárez, we find that he was very consistent in differentiating between temporal and spiritual authority.<sup>20</sup> In *De Legibus* he discusses whether a secular monarch should be religious and moral.<sup>21</sup> At his time, this was not solely an academic question, as was often the case in scholasticism, but a search for an answer to the Waldensians, John Wycliffe and Jan Hus, who professed that a ruler who is not religious or moral, is *de facto* not a monarch, and therefore does not need to be obeyed. Suárez maintains the opposite position: political power does not depend on any supernatural gifts, but is a necessary characteristic of any political body, just as any other human community, for example, family or marriage, is necessarily endowed with its authority and power. Those who head the state do not need to be religious or even moral to be recognized as the actual authorities. He illustrates his proposition with, for example, the fact that in his time, sometimes even those who could not use reason, such as children or temporarily the mentally challenged were appointed the rightful rulers. If reason is not required in a ruler, nor is, then, faith in God,

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, n. 34.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Koblížek, *Pojem společenského souhlasu*, 111–24.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Francisco Suárez, “Tractatus de legibus ac Deo legislatore in decem libros distributus,” III, 10, 1–2, in *Opera Omnia*, V (Paris: Vivès, 1856).

Suárez insists.<sup>22</sup> Another analysis of his also shows that state power is entirely of a temporal, laic, and public nature!

Connected with the above-mentioned problem that concerned the general welfare, political authorities and their relation to religion, is also paragraph 28 of *Rerum Novarum*: “As the power to rule comes from God, and is, as it were, a participation in His, the highest of all sovereignties, it should be exercised as the power of God is exercised—with a fatherly solicitude which not only guides the whole, but reaches also individuals.”<sup>23</sup>

The quote indicates that Leo XIII was inspired by Thomas Aquinas, who held that political power has its origin in God and that in his state every monarch is analogous to the Lord, who rules the world as a good father. At the same time, however, he ignores all the subsequent developments of the constitutional question, as was discussed at the beginning of this paper. The Holy Father is right in claiming that every power has its origin in God’s power. This view is supported by Suárez, who is closely following Thomas in this respect. However, there is something missing. Leo XIII overlooks an individual human will that shows through either a clear choice or at least tacit affirmation.

This inaccuracy relating to the establishment of political body and principles of political authority is also documented in the previous paragraph, where the Holy Father says: “The members of the working classes are citizens by nature and by the same right as the rich; they are real parts, living the life which makes up, through the family, the body of the commonwealth.”<sup>24</sup>

The pope’s words need to be once again contested from the professional perspective. As mentioned before, civil society develops upon a legal (i.e., positive) act made by humans.<sup>25</sup> Most often, it is a “social contract.” For this reason, one does not become a citizen based on natural law or a natural right. While it is true that earlier we demonstrated that the civil state is the fulfillment of human nature, but this natural aspect of civil society is not a natural aspect of a family, which would only grow greater. Citizenship thus has its motive not only in the sociability of man, which is an affair of his nature, but also in positive law! We believe that the Holy Father should have said that “by positive law, which develops natural law, such and such become citizens [...]”

In conclusion, the entire text of the encyclical shows Leo XIII speaking more from the position of a Christian pastor than from the position of a political theorist. After all, this is perfectly appropriate. The final words of the encyclical only attest to his position: “[...] and since religion alone, [...], can avail to destroy the evil at its root, all men should rest persuaded that main thing needful is to

<sup>22</sup> Suárez states that even King Saul did not cease to be king the moment he rebelled against the Lord. Neither did David cease to be king after having sinned.

<sup>23</sup> *Rerum Novarum*, n. 28.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 27.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Aristotelés, *Politika* I, 1 and 2, 37–41.

re-establish Christian morals, apart from which all the plans and devices of the wisest will prove of little avail.”<sup>26</sup>

Our evaluation of *Rerum Novarum* touched upon the definition of political society in relation to family, upon the principles of political authority—human nature created by God and human free will, and lastly, it discussed the relationship of secular and spiritual authority. We saw that, on the one hand, Leo XIII refers to the natural law and aims to follow Thomas Aquinas, and on the other, he is oblivious to the positive human right and its articulation with natural law. His thinking is more intuitive and in his conclusions the pope often finds himself in the position of a catechist and preacher. His distinction between family and political community is not very clear. In the relationship of secular and spiritual authority, the pope tends to subordinate secular authority to spiritual authority, and their mutual alignment is again unclear. The constitution of the Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, discusses similar issues. Continuing the concern for Christian community and well-being of the entire world, the constitution, however, brings a fundamental shift in the approach to politics. Firstly, the concepts are much more precisely defined, and secondly, the position of the Second Vatican Council is extremely close to the second-scholastic sophisticated understanding.

*Gaudium et Spes* comments on political society and authority primarily in paragraphs 73 to 76, but paragraphs 77 to 90 are likewise related to politics, mentioning peace, war, and international community. As pointed out earlier in the text, unlike *Rerum Novarum*, the constitution offers a concept that is very similar to the doctrine of Suárez. This similarity is evident already from the general statement at the end of paragraph 73, which says that the political community has a nature and objectives, and that it includes public authority that must be exercised properly and has its limits. In particular, paragraph 74 exemplifies this Aristotelian-Thomist doctrine of political power. The constitution provides an excellent link between two aspects of human society, studied by Second Scholasticism. Firstly, it is the idea of natural human sociability, whose final cause lies in the political community. This statement is found already in Aristotle’s *Politics*, as stated above. No individual or family are able to live alone a fulfilled human life and achieve human happiness, as it is related to the common good. These require a broader political community that makes life easier and adds other qualities, for example education and science.<sup>27</sup> It is important that people, despite being different, are not made up of a sum of individuals, an “aggregate” or a random group; instead they naturally form a community referred to as “commune.” By nature, this commune requires an

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<sup>26</sup> *Rerum Novarum*, n. 45.

<sup>27</sup> Cf., for example, Thomas Aquinas, “De Regimine Principum,” I, 1, in *Texty k studiu dějin středověké filosofie*, ed. Stanislav Sousedík (Praha: Karolinum, 1994), 27–29.

authority to manage, direct, and protect the entire commune and to care for the common good.<sup>28</sup>

Another principle of human society is a specific human will of all those who wish to be part or are part of this political community, and who accept their share. This is a positive legal aspect of human society. As evident earlier, *Rerum Novarum* did not manage to view this aspect adequately. Specific human will is important for the selection of a particular political authority at all levels. *Gaudium et Spes* 74 formulates this doctrine of synergy of the above aspects as follows: “It is clear, therefore, that the political community and public authority are founded on human nature and hence belong to the order designed by God, even though the choice of a political regime and the appointment of rulers are left to the free will of Citizen.”

As indicated earlier in the text, Francisco Suárez understands the act of human will as a second principle of political authority (in addition to the principle of human nature), that is, human choice is reflected in the choice of a ruler and government as *causa efficiens*.

We must not overlook the fact that this very position, maintained by both Suárez and the Second Vatican Council, is in clear opposition to the liberal concept of human society (Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau), which views man as an unsocial individual, and thus human society as unnatural. Based on this concept, human society is merely a product of the human mind, denial of human nature, and hence authority in such society has only a positive-legal basis. Its principle is only a momentary agreement of individuals. Defending the natural law position, *Gaudium et Spes* refers to Paul the Apostle in Rom 13:1–5. In our opinion, this reference, however, came only later to support the original synthesis of Aristotle’s idea about the natural human society and the early modern doctrine of the social contract. Although this synthesis is implicitly present already in Aristotle’s writings,<sup>29</sup> it is particularly widely used by Francisco Suárez (*De Legibus, Defensio Fidei*) and other writers of the second scholastics such as Dominic de Soto (*De Justitia et Jure*) or Juan de Mariana (*De Rege*). Thanks to this synthesis of Aristotle’s thinking and modern concepts of the social contract, the Spanish Scholastics were able to open Christian thinking to new challenges of liberal and democratic societies, while anchoring the whole doctrine in traditional metaphysics and natural law.

Based on the above, Natural Law and a reference to God the lawgiver become an internal definition of positive political authority exercised by representatives elected by the people. As *Gaudium et Spes* states, their service is “necessary”<sup>30</sup> and these people are essential to human society. They are to be

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Koblížek, *Pojem společenského souhlasu*, 75–76.

<sup>29</sup> Aristotelés, *Politika* I, 2, 38–40.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 75, in *Dokumenty II. vatikánského koncilu* (Praha: Zvon, 1995), 249–50.

a “moral force,”<sup>31</sup> and people are bound in conscience to obey. However, this applies only if these political authorities faithfully perform their service by striving for the common good and respecting the natural law, and thus the law of God. The moment they fail this service, *Gaudium et Spes* (74) explicitly offers the option of legitimate resistance and civil disobedience, leaning on the natural law and the Gospel. At the same time, *Gaudium et Spes* encourages citizens to carefully discern what serves the common good in an unjust regime and what is worthy of respect, and what they need to confront. Paragraph 75 calls on honourable politicians to oppose the arbitrariness of an individual or a party with their “moral integrity and deliberateness.” This is related to Suárez’s question whether the mere fact that people live and work under an oppressive regime, also implies their collaboration with the regime.<sup>32</sup> Suárez disagrees. Society as a natural body is able, even through a despotic regime to ‘generate’ and exercise authority as its natural and necessary characteristic. For this reason, citizens are obliged to distinguish what is harmful and what is not in the dictatorship, and obey laws governing everyday social life, such as transportation, trade, distribution of bread, etc.

An important passage of the encyclical is paragraph 76, which addresses the relationship of the political community and the Church. Consistent with Suárez’s concept,<sup>33</sup> the state and the Church, and the political and spiritual authorities are clearly distinguished. This was not quite the case with *Rerum Novarum*. In *Gaudium et Spes*, the two levels are independent and autonomous. Both should work together and strive for the good of humankind. A similar idea, even if only outlined, of the two authorities, had been proposed by Thomas Aquinas.<sup>34</sup> The position of having the two spheres—politics and spiritual authority—separated is characterized by the rejection of patriarchalism and refusal to condition secular political government by its affiliation to the Church (Suárez, Vitoria). The refusal to merge the secular authority with the spiritual one, however, does not prevent GS 76 from saying that the Church is competent for freedom, to freely preach evangelism and pass her judgement on public affairs, including their moral evaluation. This view resembles what Suárez referred to as the “indirect power of the Church.”<sup>35</sup>

*Gaudium et Spes* (77–90) examines the problem of war and peace and the international community. These issues had been highly topical since the sixteenth

<sup>31</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, n. 74, 248.

<sup>32</sup> Suárez, *De Legibus* III, 10, 8–9.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 11, 5; Francisco Suárez, “Defensio fidei catholicae et apostolicae adversus anglicanae sectae errores cum responsione ad apologiam pro juramento fidelitatis, et praefationem monitoriam Serenissimi Jacobi Magnae Britanniae Regis,” III, 3, 13, in *Opera Omnia*, XXIV (Paris: Vivès, 1861).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Aquinas, *De Regimine Principum*, I, 15–16.

<sup>35</sup> Suárez, *De Legibus* III, 6, 6.

century, the time when most European countries fought for sovereignty and independence against papal or imperial power. Another major issue at this time was the colonial rule and the legal nature of new nations and their leaders on the discovered continents. Again, *Gaudium et Spes* adopts a stance similar to that of the sixteenth century Scholastics (Vitoria, Suárez, Mariana, Soto). Firstly, *Gaudium et Spes* mentions pluralism and diversity within human society.<sup>36</sup> This involves different views as well as various faiths and traditions. Therefore it is impossible to build a political society on a single opinion, morality, or even one religion, as was the custom at least seemingly until the discovery of America; Europe was seen as a single monolith united under the rule of the pope. The only common platform could be (over the last half millennium) the reference to human nature, as upheld by Suárez, other scholastics, and *Gaudium et Spes*. Just as human nature and the natural law are decisive for national politics so are they for international politics. Both the sources (Spanish scholasticism and *Gaudium et Spes*), nevertheless, make a clear distinction between these two levels. While the state is sovereign, and thus de facto the supreme political unit, the international community has a lower ontological status and lacks true political authority.<sup>37</sup> This deficiency of international politics is also reflected in the latest papal encyclical *Laudato Si'*.<sup>38</sup>

Similarly, the issue of just war, addressed by *Gaudium et Spes*,<sup>39</sup> also builds on scholastic doctrine. The doctrine allows war under precisely defined conditions: declaration by a lawful public authority, a just cause, and observation of rules adopted by the warring parties.<sup>40</sup> *Gaudium et Spes* made a significant progress in this respect. Paragraphs (80–82)—referring to the speeches and radio messages of Pius XII and *Pacem in Terris* by John XXIII—encourages absolute prohibition of wars. Not because it would disagree with the above principles, but because of today's technical sophistication, as the warring parties possess weapons of mass destruction that could destroy everything. The victory of either party would have fatal consequences for all.

We could continue commenting on *Gaudium et Spes* but the brief outline of issues related to political life hopefully shows that the wording of *Gaudium et Spes* (74–76, 77–90) is accurate and faithful to the view of politics of the Second Scholasticism, as is evident from the comparison with Francisco Suárez. Above all, this involves the definition of the political community compared with the family, and the clear delineation between political and spiritual authorities. If we realize the differences observed between *Rerum Novarum* and Suárez, we

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, nn. 73, 84, 85, 90.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, n. 82; Suárez, *De Legibus* II, 17–20; III, 2, 6; Francisco Suárez, “De caritate,” *disputatio* 13, in *Opera Omnia*, XII (Paris: Vivès, 1858).

<sup>38</sup> Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 164–75 (Praha: Paulínky, 2015), 105–111.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 79.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Suárez, *De caritate*, 13, 2.

also note an important shift in the perspective on politics and social life that the Church made between the late nineteenth century and the Second Vatican Council. A seemingly surprising conclusion that is explained following a thorough analysis is that in terms of assessing politics, the Church is much more conservative at the Second Vatican Council compared with the time of the first social encyclical.

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Jan Koblížek

Évaluation de la politique sociale  
dans *Rerum Novarum* à la lumière  
de l'enseignement social  
de Francisco Suárez et son développement  
dans *Gaudium et Spes*

Résumé

En s'appuyant sur l'analyse des deux documents connus concernant l'enseignement social de l'Église (*Rerum Novarum* et *Gaudium et Spes*), on a essayé de présenter dans l'article l'évolution conceptuelle patente de la compréhension de la politique et du pouvoir politique qui s'est produite entre la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle et le Concile Vatican II. L'enseignement sur la politique de Francisco Suárez, auteur de l'époque des Lumières, nous a servi de critère dans notre étude. Nous y constatons que l'on a eu affaire à la définition de la politique envers la communauté familiale naturelle et à la séparation des pouvoirs ecclésiastique (spirituel) et laïc, mais également au retour aux notions aristotéliciennes et thomistes traditionnelles.

Mots clés: politique, pouvoir, société, Concile Vatican II, patriarcat, famille, nature, guerre, droit

Jan Koblížek

Valutazione sulla problematica  
della politica della società nella *Rerum Novarum* alla luce  
dell'insegnamento sociale  
di Francisco Suarez e il suo sviluppo  
nella *Gaudium et Spes*

Sommario

Nello studio presentato, sulla base dell'analisi di due documenti noti dell'insegnamento sociale della Chiesa (*Rerum Novarum* e *Gaudium et Spes*) si è cercato di indicare lo sviluppo concettuale visibile della concezione di politica e di potere politico che ebbe luogo tra la fine del XIX secolo e il Concilio Vaticano II. Come criterio abbiamo usato l'insegnamento sulla politica di Francisco Suarez, autore del periodo dell'Illuminismo. Constatiamo che ebbero luogo non solo la definizione della politica rispetto alla società naturale familiare e la separazione del potere ecclesiastico (spirituale) e laico, ma anche il ritorno alle concezioni aristotelico-tomiste tradizionali.

Parole chiave: politica, potere, società, Concilio Vaticano II, patriarcalismo, famiglia, natura, guerra, diritto