

Abstract of the Doctoral Dissertation

Cultural and Religious Significance of the Work and Thought of Heinrich Pesch SJ, 1854–1926. Jesuit Contribution to the Social Thought of the Church.

The dissertation deals with the scholarly legacy of Heinrich Pesch SJ in a broad cultural and religious context by taking into account the contribution of the Jesuits to the development of social thought of the Catholic Church. The subject of the analysis is the influence the ideas of Heinrich Pesch, and in particular his concept of Christian solidarism, exercised on the contemporary culture and social doctrine. To achieve the research goals, it was necessary to thoroughly reconstruct his ideas and assess them in the contemporary context.

The first introductory chapter outlines the evolution of the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church in economic matters in the periods preceding the emergence of solidarism. The analyzed historical context includes the Holy Scriptures, the teachings of the Church Fathers, the economic concepts of St. Thomas Aquinas and scholastics, the practice of the “pious banks” (*Montes Pietatis*), the Jesuit missions among the Guarani Indians, the activities of Bishop Ketteler and the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*.

The chapters two, three and four, were dedicated to the reconstruction and systematization of solidaristic ideas of Heinrich Pesch. The second chapter discusses the philosophical foundations of the system, its Christian character, anthropology, views on man's relationship to nature, the role of work. It also looks at the key social institutions, such as family, state and private property, which arise from natural law and serve as the pillars of social order. In addition, some other essential concepts such as solidarity, the organic-moral nature of society, and the principle of subsidiarity have also been analyzed.

Chapter three assesses solidarism as a proposition of an alternative economic system. It discusses the peschian economic concepts, such as the criterion of purpose of the national economy and the distinction between productive and unproductive competition. These key

ideas are interpreted in view of their relevance for the contemporary world. The fourth chapter examines cultural aspects in the work of Heinrich Pesch. It analyzes his original concept of culture and his unique interpretation of the interplay between economy and general culture. Also, the Pesch's views on demographic and racial issues, the state of science and the crisis of culture were examined from cultural perspective.

The last, fifth chapter, attempts by the means of comparative analysis to assess the impact solidaristic system had on the social teachings of the Catholic Church in the 20th and 21st centuries. To achieve this aim it analyzes from a solidaristic perspective a number of social encyclicals starting with *Quadragesimo anno*. Based on comparative analysis, the relationship between the ideas of Heinrich Pesch's disciples and their link to the solidaristic doctrine is also established. Pesch's contribution to theoretical economics are also examined, as well as the direct and indirect (through social teaching and corporatism) impact of solidarism on the contemporary socio-economic realities of Germany, Europe, and, albeit indirectly, of Poland.

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