

Putting New Questions to an Old Tradition: José Todolí Duque (1915 – 1999)

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1. A SHORT BIOGRAPHY .

José Todolí Duque was born in Sangüesa in the province of Navarre (Spain) on the 27th of May 1915. He received his secondary education at the College of the Dominican Fathers in Villava, Navarre, to then enter the Order of Preachers in Salamanca where he was ordained a priest. In the Dominican Faculty of San Esteban, he studied Philosophy and Theology, being ordained in 1938. He obtained his doctorate in Sacred Theology in 1941 at the International Pontifical “Angelicum” Athenaeum. Within the Order of Preachers, he attained the rank of Lector in Sacred Theology and that of Preacher General.

In 1945 he joined the “Luis Vives” Institute of Philosophy of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (C.S.I.C or Higher Council for Scientific Research.) as its Secretary. Here he was awarded a scholarship to continue his studies in the universities of Oxford, Lovaine, the Sorbonne and in the Walberberg Social Institute in Cologne (1945-47) under the direction of Professors W. David Ross, Jacques Leclercq, R. Le Senne and Welty. Then in 1953, he obtained the degree of Doctor in Philosophy at the University of Madrid¹, with the grade of Distinction and Prize for Excellence.

2. Professional activity.

He began his teaching career in the University of Madrid where he was a Senior Lecturer in Ethics and Sociology and Assistant Lecturer in The Philosophy of Religion (1947-1955), and then, by competitive exam, obtained the Chair of Ethics and Sociology at the University of Valencia. He transferred to the Complutense University of Madrid in 1966 as a full tenured Professor and Head of the Department of Ethics and Sociology, where he remained until he retired in 1985. He was also Professor Extraordinary of the Pontifical University of Salamanca (1949-1955) and of the “León XIII” Institute of Sociology, in which he taught the Social Doctrine of the Church; Chaplain and Secretary of the Courses in Humanities of the “Menéndez y Pelayo” International University in Santander (1959-1962); Director of the Philosophical Encounters in Alcalá, a national

¹ His doctoral thesis, the title of which is *Filosofía y Religión (Philosophy and Religion)*, was the first excellent result of his philosophical research, an ensemble of well elaborated material which formed the basis of his work *Filosofía de la Religión (The Philosophy of Religion)*. The thesis is dedicated to those who were “my masters in the arduous problems of Philosophy, with particular mention of Prof. Leopoldo Eulogio Palacios, who “was kind enough to direct this thesis, with the freedom, clarity and keenness of thought which I have often wished I had taken better advantage of”, and to Brother and Master Fr. Santiago Ramírez, who “as a true master illuminated many difficult moments”.

conference designed to train Secondary School teachers of Philosophy (1973-1979)²; and Chancellor of the Polytechnic of Córdoba (1969-1971).

Apart from his teaching and administrative duties, one should mention his interventions in international Philosophy Conferences in Barcelona, 1948; Mendoza (Argentina) 1949; Madrid 1950; Gallarte (Italy) 1951 and 1953; Bogotá 1959; Brussels 1960; Mexico 1963 and Cordoba (Spain) 1965. He was a course director in certain foreign organisms and institutions, amongst which one should mention *Five lessons on the human being* (the De Santis Chair, Naples, 1955); *Five lectures on political ethics* (UNESCO, 1960); several lectures on current affairs at the École des Hautes Études Diplomatiques, Paris 1962. He organised symposia and round tables on the occasion of the publication of the Papal Encyclicals, and activated the “Juan Pablo II” Chair at the Convent of Santo Domingo el Real.

Amongst the prizes and awards he won, one should at least mention the Honoris Causa Doctorate at the Universidad Argentina (1949); the Honoris Causa Doctorate at the Universidad Católica of Chile (August 1949); he became a member of the Royal Córdoba Academy of Science, Fine Arts and Noble Arts (November 1965); he won the Cerdá Reig Prize, awarded by the Provincial Deputation of Valencia (January 1996); commander of the Order of Cisneros of the Spanish State (1967), and was awarded the Medal of the Complutense University of Madrid in 1985.

3. Publications and references.

a) *Books: El Bien Común (The Common Good)*, “Luis Vives” Institute of Philosophy of the C.S.I.C., Madrid, 1953; *Principios Generales de Moral Profesional (General Principles of Professional Morality)*, Ed. By A.C.N.P., Madrid, 1954; *Moral, Economía y Humanismo (Morality, Economy and Humanism)*, “León XIII” Institute of Sociology, Madrid, 1955 (translated into Italian); *Filosofía del Trabajo (The Philosophy of Work)*, “León XIII” Institute of Sociology, Madrid, 1955; *Filosofía de la Religión (The Philosophy of Religion)*, Gredos, Madrid, 1955; *Diagnóstico de la juventud actual (Diagnosis of Today’s Youth)*, Editorial Universitaria, Valencia, 1961; *Convivir: Iniciación a la vida social (Co-existence: Initiation to social life)*, Rivadeneyra, Madrid, 1963; *Tú, con los demás (You, with the Rest)*, Doncel, Madrid, 1965; *La Ética de los Transplantes (The Ethics of Transplants)*, OPE, Villava, 1968.

b) *Books written in collaboration or directed by him: Nivel ético del profesional español (The Ethical Standard of the Spanish Professional)*, National Confederation of Savings Banks, Madrid, 1975; *Ética y Publicidad (Ethics and Advertising)*, National Institute of Advertising, Madrid, 1977; *La Filosofía en el BUP (Philosophy in the BUP(GSCE))*, Editorial Dorcas, CISER, Madrid, 1977; *Estudios sobre la Infancia (Studies in Childhood)*, Conversations in Toledo, Toledo, 1980; *La Sexualidad (Sexuality)*, Conversations in Toledo, Toledo, 1981; *Ética y Moral (Ethics and Morality)*, Ed. Anaya, Madrid, 1981.

c) *Articles published in Spanish and foreign reviews*, amongst which one should mention: “*Valor epistemológico de las Ciencias Morales*” (*The epistemological value of the Moral Sciences*), (Ciencia Tomista, 237, 1950); “*La persona desde el punto de vista*

² Manuel Sánchez Cuesta, *Cursos de Alcalá* in Revista de Bachillerato, Cuaderno Monográfico no. 4, Madrid, October - December 1979.

metafísico” (*The person from the metaphysical point of view*) (Revista de Psicología General y Aplicada, 1953); “*La persona humana en su aspecto moral*” (*The moral aspect of the human being*), (in the 1st. Spanish Week of Philosophy, Madrid, 1954); “*Filosofía del derecho de Gentes*” (*The Philosophy of People’s Law*), (Acts of the Brussels International Congress, 1953); “*La esencia de lo social*” (*The essence of the social*), (Yearbook of the “Francisco de Vitoria” Association, T. 12, 1958 - 1059). He also wrote prologues and introductions to many books, as well as promoting many important translations.

d) *References*: J. Todolí’s name appears in twentieth-century books on philosophy. J. Ferrater Mora in his *Diccionario de Filosofía*³ lists the item “Todolí, J.” referring him to the term “Work”, and he also appears under the term “Religion”. After his death in Madrid on the 17th of March 1999 at the age of 83, the staff of the department prepared a book in his honour entitled *Ética y Sociología. Estudios en memoria del profesor José Todolí Duque, O.P.*⁴, to which friends, colleagues and collaborators of the Spanish university all contributed. Other references will appear below.

4. The philosophical study of religion.

The posing of such complex matters as those entailed in the discipline of *The Philosophy of Religion*⁵ was quite a novelty. What had hitherto been written in Spanish on the philosophy of religion was scant or practically non-existent, and moreover of questionable value. Todolí was a pioneer in this field of knowledge and Luis Farré considers this work of Todolí’s, together with Fulton J. Sheen’s, to be prototypes of the Roman Catholic model of creating the philosophy of religion⁶. This discourse had been excluded from university ambits and, if it was the object of attention, posed the difficulty of the disparity in perspectives, not to mention the particular heterodoxy with which the contents of this discipline had been treated in modern culture and which obliged one to make a complex choice: either to ignore the supposed solutions offered and repeat an apologetic discourse or choose the complicated path of elaborating a critical review of former approaches, from the principles of perennial philosophy. The author opts for this latter, more fertile choice, albeit one both risky and difficult, “*for only through it can what there is of pure fascination in modernity be overcome and whatever authenticity there may be in it be integrated in the original synthesis entailed in the application of principles to new phenomena*”⁷.

Filosofía de la Religión is a highly valuable contribution to the Spanish cultural scene. Formally, the book is structured in five chapters, divided into articles, preceded by a prologue and followed by appendices, in which the choice, extensive bibliography on the

³ José Ferrater Mora, *Diccionario de Filosofía (Dictionary of Philosophy)*, Ariel Referencia, Barcelona 1994, Vol. IV.

⁴ Luis Méndez Francisco (coord.), *Ética y Sociología. Estudios en memoria del profesor José Todolí Duque, O.P. (Ethics and Sociology. Studies in memory of Professor José Todolí Duque, O.P.)*, Publication Service of the Complutense university of Madrid - Editorial San Esteban, Salamanca, 2000, pp. 797.

⁵ José Todolí, O.P., *Filosofía de la Religión*, Editorial Gredos, Madrid (Spain), 1955, pp. 570. This work is quoted in J. Ferrater Mora’s *Diccionario de Filosofía*, under the term “Religion”.

⁶ Luis Farré, *Filosofía de la Religión*, Editorial Losada, Buenos Aires, 1969, p. 128.

⁷ J. Herrero, *Comentario a la “Filosofía de la Religión”*, in Rev. de Filosofía, no. 52, Year XIV, Madrid 1955, p. 593.

philosophy of religion is of note. The phenomenon of religion can be researched from different perspectives. The author states which is his philosophical orientation of the subject: “*Philosophy stems from a phenomenological fact, but does not stop there in mere description or mere unveiling and purification of this fact, but penetrates within it, penetrates its very essence and discovers the intimate mystery of its being*”⁸. This approach to the phenomenon of religion from the historical perspective is doubly advantageous: on the one hand it reveals the many, varied aspects of the subject and on the other, offers the opportunity to learn the different solutions put forward. The research is limited to the most outstanding contributions of modern and contemporary philosophy. It traces the historical course of the philosophy of religion from its initial moments of confusion and obscurity, but also of great distrust from Catholic orthodoxy. It gives preference to Kantian theses and modernist thought, vigorously arguing against agnostic proposals as a prior requisite for a rational analysis of the subject, which is the basis of the work itself, because “*through agnosticism, modernist doctrine defends our incapacity to know anything but pure phenomena, without thus being able to surpass them to reach through to a prime cause*”⁹.

He begins with the usual conception of the religious phenomenon as an ensemble of actions which men carry out with the intention of relating to a transcendental being, the being that is beyond the conditions of life of mortal beings. This is not the Absolute as defined by metaphysics, but an elementary phenomenon in which both primitive cave man - if there was a phenomenon of religion then - and the greatest mystics of the Christian faith coincide, however different the manifestations of the religious phenomenon may be in the different peoples, cultures and spaces in which men have recreated their experiences. The conceptual sequencing of the book can be described as follows:

a) *The Phenomenon of religion*. The author identifies the essential characteristics of the phenomenon of religion - transcendence, reality and holiness - through an analysis of one of its most typical expressions: sacrifice. From transcendence, “*the object of religious experience seems absolutely different, absolutely separate from man and from things*”. The feature of reality presents God or the gods “*as a living, personal reality*”. Through holiness “*God or the gods manifest themselves as the uncontaminated . . . the most characteristic feature of God as a term of the religious act is precisely holiness*”¹⁰. The subjective element of the religious phenomenon manifests itself in sacrifice in four different ways: as a *feeling of dependency*, for one’s main intent in prayer is to invoke the favour of the divinity; sacrifice entails a clear *feeling of hope*; thirdly, there emerges a *sense of the justice and holiness* of the being to whom sacrifices are offered, for otherwise one would not be afraid of offending it. Lastly, there is a *sense of one’s own responsibility* as regards the dictates of conscience. These feelings are also to be discovered through the analysis of another typically religious act: prayer¹¹.

The author approaches the etimological environment of religion following Saint Thomas, who shows his preference for Lactantius’s interpretation (!*Hoc vinculo pietatis obstricti Deo et religati sumus, unde et ipsa religio nomen accepit, non ut Cicero interpretatus est a relegando, sed a religando*” in *Divinae Institutiones*, bk.IV,c.28) because it facilitates the placing of religious discourse within philosophical and

⁸ José Todolí, *Filosofía de la Religión*, p.9.

⁹ Ibidem, p. 156.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 188-190.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 190-194.

metaphysical coordinates by explicitly marking out the three moments of religation: before it existed in itself, the world existed in the mind of God; through creation, the universe is distanced from God in accordance with its essence; and thirdly, the rational being thus distanced re-creates through religion a new conscious, voluntary and free bond which expresses his acknowledgement of God as the principle on which he depends. “*This is where the return, the religation, lies*”.

b) *The basis of religation*. Here, the essential dimensions of religation are discussed: the ontological, the axiological and the dynamic. The *ontological dimension of religation* is erected on the obvious principle of the limitation of things “*We have, God is*” that is “*man, and like him and more than him, all beings around him towards whom his spirit is open, are not the being but have being. Existence in them is revealed as a donation from a higher source*”. In his argumentative discourse, the author refers to different ways of participating in being, in emanation and creative evolution, although he maintains that our implantation in existence is the effect of “*the transcendental, intelligent and personal cause given to beings by the Being through creation*”¹². From the concept of creation as “*an act through which the “Ipsum esse subsistens” freely creates all existing things out of nothingness*”, the author infers that the presence and action of God in things endows being and permanence in being, that is, not only the *esse* but also permanence in the *esse* which he terms “*to be being*”. Thus, religious religation is of an entitative nature, for we are religated insofar as we are, our inmost nature is an essential dependency. When he develops the *axiological foundation of religation*, Todolí recalls that Saint Augustine appealed to the valuable aspect of things for the study of religion or religation. His approach begins with the idea of religion as a perfection of human nature, as a value, and he concludes his argument by presenting it as “*a true value, as a natural value that is rooted in the very entrails of our rational nature, not only as our religation in being, and in our permanence in being, but as a value, a property of man, who is endowed with a spiritual soul through an act that pertains and is exclusive to God, and together with this is also endowed with intelligence to know Him and a will to love Him, that is, with religiosity. This only occurs and can only occur in rational, volitive man. And it occurs in all men and in all latitudes*”¹³. This discourse presents religion as a property of man endowed with a spirit, with a will projected to love, and with an intelligence that aspires to knowledge. Moreover, the idea of a *dynamic dimension to religation* serves to show that the action of being is intimately determined by the efficiency of the prime cause.

It is based on an elementary principle, the intervention of God in things, which in no way impairs the operation of things in themselves. Todolí develops two fundamental aspects of this thesis: the action of God on what is created, and divine action on the rational creature, following the doctrine elaborated on the nature of this action by Saint Thomas in his *Summa contra Gentes* and in *De Potentia*. As for the action of God on things created, the author maintains that the intervention of God on the action of the creature does not by any means impede such action, and infers the supreme dominion of God over all things, as far as their being, value and operation are concerned. And if the philosophical study of the creature shows it to be ontologically, axiologically and dynamically religated to the Being, to the Value and to the Cause, “we may understand that the very essence of things consists of being referred to Transcendence; this reference takes on a consciousness of itself in man

¹² Ibidem, p. 213.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 246-247.

and, therefore, the cosmos culminates in him insofar as the spirit returns to the Creator its creature, and directs it freely and voluntarily towards Him”¹⁴. He solves the problem posed by human liberty in divine action on the rational creature in accordance with Doctor Angélico’s doctrine (I, q.106, a 2) “*as natural action follows nature and the nature of each being is given only by God, it follows that only God can directly and immediately move and change the will (...); our religation with God not only extends to our whole being, to our conservation in being, to all that there is in us of value or perfection, but within this dynamic order also spreads to all our actions, even the free ones, precisely because it causes in us the same liberty, for the reason of liberty does not exclude the reason of the prime cause, but the reason of coercion*”¹⁵

c) *The noetics of religation.* In this chapter, Todolí carries out dense, remarkably extensive and undeniably original research in order to offer a reasoned explanation of how we become conscious of this religation, which is specified in its dimensions of rational knowledge, wilful experience and instinctive experience of the divine. Man, on account of his condition as a rational, conscious being, is the only one who is able to know and recognise this religation and, consequently, if the seat of religion is placed specifically in man, then the scholar must take him into account in order to study the rational knowledge of God and the awareness of his religation to Him.

With regard to his treatment of the *wilful experience of the divine*, he begins his argument with the innate natural love”*of those obscure natural tendencies, of those experiences in whose entrails we find as a correlative of the same to God the only possible explanation and justification of His existence, in the same way as when we study our religation with God, from the point of view of intelligence, we also encounter God as a correlative of our insatiable aspiration to truth*”. Some call this experience the “*wilful experience of God*”¹⁶. The third point is devoted to the *instinctive experience of the divine*, from the point of view of human sensibility. Todolí attempts to show the influence of the instincts on religiosity. There is no specifically religious instinct, but it can be said that the instincts intervene in various ways in religion: “*if it is true that the search for God by the instincts is always a reflection of selfishness, it is also true that it has a strong influence on and value for religion in its lower stages*”¹⁷.

d) *Religion as virtue.* If in previous chapters the author discussed the basis of the phenomenon of religion, within a triple religation of man and of his awareness of this religation, he now attempts to recreate what man’s attitude to this awareness might be. From this perspective, religion is treated as a virtue, the intrinsic object of which is given by reverence, which although it is included in fear, it is also true that it surpasses fear through the aspect of attraction implied in the love and filial dependency ascribed to reverence. Thus understood, religion is a moral virtue which is part of justice. Todolí takes the reason for this from Saint Thomas: “*Quia vero justitia ad alterum est, ut ex supradictis patet, omnes virtutes quae ad alterum sunt possunt ratione convenientiae justitiae annecti*” (II-II, q.80,a, unique). The basis for this springs from the essential nucleus of justice, which lies in giving unto each his deserts, ever tending to absolute equality. To define religion as a virtue, *the object of which is to render due worship unto God*, means

¹⁴ J. Herrero, op. Cit. P. 594.

¹⁵ José Todolí, *Filosofía de la Religión*, p. 272-273.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 338-339.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 397.

that man owes special honour to God and is therefore obliged to render it unto Him. The virtue of religion poses no special difficulty as regards this debt, in which our condition sets us face to face with the divinity, although in this case, justice can never be perfect given that “*man can never offer God as much as he has received from Him, moreover because all he possesses, neither is all he can offer his own, but belongs to Him who at each moment grants it to him*”¹⁸. As regards the subject of the virtue of religion, only rational creatures can have religion, for only they can attain awareness of their religion with the Supreme Being and be conscious of their duty to render worship unto Him. Following in the footsteps of Doctor Angélico (II-II, q.83, a. 3, ad 1), the author states that the seat of the virtue of religion lies in the will, which in the same way as justice becomes “*prompta voluntas*” to give each what is his, the will is urged to render due worship unto God. Bearing in mind that the will governs the other powers as it is informed by religion, it will guide man’s activity towards the Divinity.

5. Labour and Rationality

In 1954, José Todolí published a small, solid book containing a deep philosophical reflection about labour and related circumstances¹⁹. This work stands out because of the clearness of its exposition, the solidity of its argument and the certainty of a coherent thinking, in agreement with the Church social doctrine. Among the foremost issues of this research are the nature, the definition and the division of labour, the duty and the right to labour and the subjective, economic and remunerating effects of labour.

A complete analysis of all these matters exceeds the goal of this paper, i.e. contributions made by José Todolí Duque O.P to social ethics. Therefore, I am going to focus this brief exposition onto three questions: the features or characteristics of labour, its classification and the duty and the right to labour. These are essential aspects, interpreted as a threshold clarifying the nature of this reality, which in every day life appears in various different forms and with problematic implications. Nowadays, the prejudices about the nature of intellectual labour are not so spread out as to require emphasizing the differences between manual and intellectual work. Consequently, once identified the features defining manual labour, transformation, utility and obligation, it seems legitimate to extend to every kind of labour the argumentation built up to found these features, since these belong to the proper nature of the subject, labour.

Transformation means the modification caused in the object by means of the activity that men apply in labour, and is understood as an essential element therein. Such working activity is *essentially useful*; without this feature even the most onerous activities are not considered as “work”. Hence we can infer two kinds of *utility*: “*that one included within labour’s own nature, usually called production and that utility which, though not being intrinsically included within, can be useful for the users, due to external circumstances, as is the case in sports*”²⁰. The third feature, *duty*, can be of several orders: *natural duty* inasmuch as labour is essential to living and *moral duty* when labour is imposed by an obligation or as a response to an explicit or implicit contract that mankind has with society in order to co-operate towards a common benefit.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 443.

¹⁹ José Todolí, O.P., *Filosofía del Trabajo*, Instituto Social León XIII, Madrid 1954.

²⁰ José Todolí, O.P., *Filosofía del trabajo*, p.11

The penal qualification applied to labour acquires several meanings given that at times labour becomes an actual need. In that event the effort required to achieve a goal is implied. In most cases, labour is identified with the efforts required to subsist. Such meaning is interwoven in the same terminology of labour, (in vulgar Latin *tripaliare*), in reference to a kind of tripod where horses were bounded in order to be horse-shoed. “*Labour had thus the sense of a torture rack to which man was tied up by the demands of living*”. Consequently, labour presents a double penalty: “*the necessity implied in its goal and the effort demanded by the matter upon which effort is applied*”²¹. From these two features we can also infer the value of labour that, “*on the part of the working subject, it is effort, tension of the being and this makes it vigorously personal and strictly qualifying; on the part of the object, it creates utility, thus acquiring a social value*”²². In the case of the more intellectual labour, the productive effort demands a more intense rational activity and the transformation is not projected into an external object but into the subject itself, making it richer and grander by knowledge and practices. A big effort is required. In intellectual work, duty and utility “*appear with the same intensity as in manual labour, since without duty neither the engineer nor the physician nor the architect would do their job (...) and without one’s own utility or somebody else’s it becomes impossible or absurd. Being a less material work does not mean it is less work and even not work at all*”²³ Following the essential characteristics or features of labour, the author approaches a definition of labour as “*the useful and dutiful human activity*” or in a more precise way as “*the human activity applied onto a determined object, useful and required*”²⁴

In view of preceding typologies, Todolí develops and bases his own classification of labour, according with its essential dimension, to refer subsequently to other divisions closer to nowadays working situation. The essential division is to be made by taking into consideration the most immediate and essential criterion, which is the “*determination of the various kinds of objects towards which human activity can be directed*”. In order to be also completed, this essential division has to cover any kind of labour and consequently and a second criterion is to set “*the various kinds of working groups to which the different types of work give rise.*”²⁵

According to the first criterion is the Aristotelian division, brought up by Saint Thomas in his commentary to the first book of Politics. Starting from the principle that “*the different ways of appropriating the necessary things, in particular food, determines the different kinds of work*”, this criterion reaches the well-known, and so often repeated, classification of the types of work according to those who get food as is found in nature and those who prepare it. Todolí explores and briefly comments his own typology of work, similar to the classic one but more complete: jobs orientated to *simple harvesting*, because hardly any industry is involved, as it is said by Saint Thomas, “*non laborant sed adquirunt cibum*” (hunting, fishing and shepherding). The *civilizing works* are constituted by a sort of *activities*, more propitious to the progress of human civilization and they require an actual presence of intelligence and a more extensive permanence in work. This category would be integrated by *economic works*, which tend in the short term to the acquisition of material

²¹ José Todolí, O.P., *Filosofía del trabajo*, p. 17

²² Borne E. & Henry F., *Le travel et l’homme*, Paris 1937, p.135.

²³ José Todolí, O.P., *Filosofía del trabajo*, p.22.

²⁴ José Todolí, O.P., *Filosofía del trabajo*, p.24.

²⁵ José Todolí, O.P., *Filosofía del trabajo*, p. 29-30

goods (extraction and production activities, as well as transport and commercial ones), *organizing works* encompassing to a large extent the activities related to public services, and thirdly *moral works* or the set of activities directly orientated towards “*the perfection of our own personality – e.g. education- and those that introduce the person into social life*”- e.g., salaried work expressed in a free, standard contract, through which activity is performed in exchange of a retribution. Finally, *intellectual works* are a last kind of work whose proper aim is the development of intelligence, the pursuit of truth, the creation and elaboration of science and the management or government of human activity²⁶. These works correspond to the kind of specific activities nowadays called knowledge society and identified by Daniel Bell as the activities of the quinary sector: investigation, politics, health, etc.²⁷

Another aspect, to which the author gives a decisive importance, if considering the serious and conclusive arguments offered, is the right to work. When treating this question, three dimensions are discussed: the duty of work, the right to work and who is entitled to this right. As for the first question, i.e. the duty of work, reasoning develops in a three-folded level: ontological, ecological and moral. In the first level labour is viewed as the primary obligation, since it is identified with the need to assist to the own perfection, in order to develop human potential, “*in order to reach the plenitude itself of one’s being*”. The task starts out from the initial poverty situation in which man comes into being “*tanquam tabula rasa in qua nihil est depictum*”, until the perfection of economical, moral and intellectual perfection that man is capable of accomplishing.

The second reasoning, the duty of filling one’s life, constitutes, in my opinion, a most interesting argument of ecological kind, though the author does not use this term. As the last and most excellent link in the chain of living beings, man combines the beauty and the greatness of all living creatures preceding him in the evolutionary sequence. On the other hand, over the human being falls the unavoidable duty of recreating life with the greatest plenitude of beauty, perfection and excellence man is capable of, in accordance to the extraordinary heritage received. Only by means of this full recreation of life that man can do, the preceding, more imperfect beings will be rewarded, but with a potential perfection made real by human beings. The third reasoning refers to the need mankind has of rewarding society for the immense opportunities puts at its disposal. “*Nobody fails to understand the unfairness of social parasitism, the fact that someone might take advantage of social welfare without contributing*”. This social duty of working is clearly stated in the Human Rights Universal Declaration, in the constitutions of the most advanced nations and in the Catholic Church’s social doctrine²⁸.

According to the foundations of the personal duty of working, imposed by nature and echoed by the most diverse national legislations, “*it corresponds and follows the natural right of each individual to get from work the means to provide to one’s own life and to the life of one’s children: so lofty is ordained the empire of nature towards the conservation of mankind*”²⁹ Consequently the existence of this natural right can be established, for the same reasons aforementioned. Now, in the case of economical work this natural right can be

²⁶ José Todolí, O.P., *Filosofía del trabajo*, p.34-48

²⁷ Daniel Bell, *Reflexiones al final de una era*, Claves, nº68, December 1996, p.6.

²⁸ José Todolí O.P., *Filosofía del trabajo*, p.51-57

²⁹ Pio XII, *Discurso de conmemoración del 50 aniversario de la Encíclica Rerum Novarum*, nº II.

stated not because its inner consistency but because it is based upon the right to living, since for most human beings work provides for their lives.

As regards the determination concerning onto whom falls the right to work ,i.e., “*who has the duty corresponding to this individual right?*” Todolí offers a suggestive answer in correspondence with the tradition of the Church’s social doctrine: “*firstly this duty falls on property, but not as something liable to distribution, but as source of possibilities to use work and to favour social welfare (...)secondly it falls on the state (...)which is commissioned to look after the common wealth, getting its benefits distributed among all members of the community, not because of distributive justice, measured by the value or efficiency of each individual contribution, but according to social justice, which looks at community life and at the task imposed upon each one of the citizens*”³⁰.

The study of labour from a theological perspective allows a new insight into its nature. Mankind, through rational activity and free from work, joins, as second cause, to the great task of completing his own perfection and the perfection of things made, completing the proper work of creation, being thus “*labour a continuation of the work of creation and man is its fulfiller*”. A second theological aspect of labour focuses on the study of profession and professional vocation, through which Providence prepares us for carrying out our destiny through work. “*Our destiny is forged among the things, by labour. But not in a disperse labour, since our life has a final destination, our way towards this destination has a road too: our profession*”. Lastly, the social value of labour in the supernatural order offers to the author the opportunity to defend labour as a source of every perfection: “*All the process from the pure possibility, so worthy and lofty as we want to suppose it to be, when man is born, up to the perfection of one’s personality such as one creates it, taking always into account God’s assistance, results from man’s labour. One sanctify oneself in one’s job with things, in one’s daily work*”³¹

With these notes about the interesting book *Filosofía del trabajo*, I have attempted not so much to make a summary, though brief in its contents, as to unveil some of the aspects that seem more interesting to me as well as more able to stimulate the reading of the book, so successful when published.

6. Towards a humanistic concept of the common good.

Fifty years have gone by since the publication of “*El Bien Común*” (*The Common Good*)³², but the work has lost none of its freshness. In our times of economic globalization, when states and nations are trying out new modes of organisation, a reflection on the common good cannot be ignored. It is a matter of inevitable repercussion on political practice, its doctrinal solution taking on greater transcendence as it affects relationships between the state and the human being. Questions concerning the “end” of politics and the “means” to achieve it, are fundamental and are approached by Todolí with “Cartesian clarity”. These matters have never been definitively solved and in them, philosophy, by orienting their ultimate basis, now takes on an undeniable social relevance.

After the long sojourn of the most violent catastrophes and the different totalitarianisms in the old Europe of the 20th century, current man seems to be awakening

³⁰ José Todolí, O.P., *Filosofía del trabajo*, p.66.

³¹ José Todolí, O.P., *Filosofía del trabajo*, p.77- 93.

³² José Todolí, *El Bien Común*, “Luis Vives” Institute of Philosophy, Madrid, 1951.

from his long dreams of misguided emancipation, generated on the strength of diverse rationalist and irrationalist philosophies, which act as a pretext to deny the dignity of the human being, to disintegrate his morality, to devalue man in himself and to enthrone class, race, the State and at times, Society in their place. Todolí puts forward the need for the return of man, giving priority to the nature and dignity of the human being and then to the nature and supremacy of the common good in society. It is indispensable to correctly think out the relationships between these complex realities, in order to achieve an authentic legitimation of the relationships between the individual and the State, in the purest style of the old European Christian tradition, in the firm conviction that the truth never expires, neither is it corrupted by time. Contingent situations may change, but not the nature of things.

As against the predominant systems of capitalism and Marxist materialism (the fall of the wall of Berlin was not yet in sight), the author advocates Christian Humanism - the socio-political thinking inspired by the social doctrine of the Church, initially expressed in Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical "*Rerum Novarum*", "*the principles of which, taken from the New Testament, from natural law and from Saint Thomas's broad conceptions, are in accord with neither system but at all times endeavour to safeguard the dignity of the Person on the one hand and the rights of Society and the State on the other*"³³. At the outset, his doctrinal framework has an elementary contents, "*neither society nor individuals are realities made up of just pure matter or pure spirit, neither can they be reduced to a purely sensitive or purely spiritual knowledge*"³⁴. As regards his procedure, he follows the Artotelian-Thomist pattern of abstraction. The starting point should be the being, the concrete instance, the person, society, the common good, to then abstract by using the basic principles of reason.

a) *The nature and dignity of the Person.* In his conceptualisation of man, Todolí attempts to overcome ancient and modern dualisms by returning to the more classical, profound thinking of Saint Thomas, in which man is a horizon where the spiritual and the material meet and become defined as a unitary whole: "*We therefore possess a single, one and only, spiritual and profound, centre, incarnate in matter, or a spiritualised matter, the "I", the human person, which is the principle of being and the operation of same, which will not permit any ontological distinction between individual and person in its substantial unity*"³⁵. Thus, the error of materialism and the idealisms of all times are overcome. In fact, man should be taken as a unitary whole endowed with an ensemble of properties. On account of methodological demands, the author reduces the dimensions of the person to three basic ones: the person is free, perfectly sui juris, and has a being and operation that are independent, whilst other beings, "*rather than moving, are moved*"; the person also appears as "*a subject of rights and duties*", that is, "*one who enjoys the power to do certain things and leave others aside, which in themselves are indifferent*". The human person, although free, "*is essentially dependent*" and "*must abide by the laws of nature*", and is therefore the subject of merit and demerit and hence of reward and punishment. From the global perspective, he defines the human person "*as a subsisting individual substance endowed with consciousness and self-control who, through knowledge of truth and love of*

³³ José Todolí, *El Bien Común*, Madrid, 1951, p.10.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, op. Cit., p.19.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p.31.

good, tends towards his own perfection in intimate union with the Absolute Being”³⁶.

Man thus understood is not a Leibnitzian monad enclosed within himself, but open to the exterior, organising himself within three types of relationships: of subordination to God (man is a divine creature and tends towards God who is his prime and final cause); of superposition over inferior beings (the goods of the world are not sought for in themselves, but as instruments to attain man’s goal); and of social cooperation with other men to attain certain goals (the common good)³⁷.

b) Society and the supremacy of the common good. Within the relationship of social cooperation for the attaining of certain goals, Todolí marks out two types of society: the perfect society (which cares for the individual’s overall good), and the imperfect one (partial goods). Perfect societies are the Civil Society (the State) and the Religious Society (Church), which care for two different types of values: those which concern man’s relationship with divine transcendence and those which concern his relationship with his fellows. The aim of the Civil Society is the common good (material), that is, social justice among men, whilst the aim of the Religious Society is the private, transcendental good (spiritual), to which all men tend individually. The two types of aims or goods are not opposed to each other but subordinate to and cooperate with each other - with their own means and organisation - in the fulfilment of the destiny of man. Consequently, only the superiority of the common good over the private good is relative, for the rights of society may clash in a first limitation in the rights of the human person³⁸. For there to exist a society, there must be unity amongst its members with a view to a certain goal; in order for the goal to become a common goal, there must be an ideal able to engender an awareness of the “we”; two other elements are also required: authority to preserve the unity and organisation to carry out the ideal of the common good. For Todolí, the basis of society, that which gives it unity and consequently constitutes society “*is common consent on a common ideal*”.

Yet, what does this common ideal, this common good, consist of? The author puts forward two prior assumptions: the common good is formally different to the private good on account of its volume or extension, it corresponds to a different reality, and the sum of the goods possessed by the individuals who make up this society is also different, for it is of a different nature. He takes the second requisite from Saint Thomas (II-II, q 64, a.2) and points out that “all members of a society become part of the common good as part of a whole”, although in order to avoid confusions, the author recalls that only the person is substantial, whereas “the whole”, society, is not a substantial whole but a relationship of order in which each unit has its own being, its own dignity, but adds an order to its ontic reality in relation to others³⁹. On the strength of these conditions, Todolí formulates the contents of the common good in Merkelbach’s terms: “*The common good is temporal common happiness, that is, the perfect sufficiency of life, duly subordinate to eternal bliss, human good living or the harmonious plenitude of human goods, human goods in their plenitude and, according to the proportion needed by human nature, the perfect good that*

³⁶ Ibidem, p. 42.

³⁷ Ibidem, p.32.

³⁸ C. Láscaris Comneno, *Comentario sobre El Bien común*, in Rev. de Filosofía, no. 40, “Luis Vives” Institute of Philosophy, Madrid, 1952, year XI, p. 369.

³⁹ José Todolí, *El Bien Común*, p. 57-77.x

can be attained in this world”⁴⁰.

c) *Individual and State*. Within the framework of the fulfilment of the common good, the relationships between the individual and the State should be guided by the forementioned principles, and are shaped by the application of same. If the aim of the State is to attain social justice, the means to achieve this is the law, positive law and, consequently, the relationships between individual and State are determined by the law. As for the limits of the State, Todolí posits not only those imposed by law, but also those offered by the human person (Saint Thomas, I, Polit., lec. I) insofar as man is the depository of unrenounceable values and rights. The State has a sphere of competence which is its own and which entails economic or material security and values, whereas other spheres of values such as religious, moral or cultural values are values of the spirit and as far as they are concerned, the task of the State must be indirect and mediate, for they surpass its natural function of operation. In order for man to fulfil himself, the State must at times make sure that a series of conditions are favoured to make the attainment of religious, moral and cultural values accessible, and if necessary, defend them without this implying a direct intervention in same⁴¹. This approach, at the beginning of the 21st. Century, is quite acceptable to man, but during the fifties in the 20th. Century, in the midst of collective intoxication, it was unintelligible to many and perhaps even suspect.

Economic values are the ambit of competence which pertains to the State, although this does not mean that the action of the State is reduced to the merely economic. It is the right and duty of the State to achieve social justice, that is, to guarantee a minimum of security for peaceful co-existence and for the economic welfare of all citizens by means of positive law and coercion. This means ensuring the freedom of citizens, for “*he is not free whose arms are unbound, but he who lives in such conditions as to be the slave to nothing. And poverty is slavery (...). The person’s dignity demands the intervention of the State to free him from this triple bondage of ignorance, vice and poverty*”⁴². R. Larrañeta makes similar statements when he says that the growth of social inequalities narrows the spaces of liberty and means that such a community “*has not reached its peak of liberty, is not altogether free*”⁴³.

Todolí ends his dense work by offering a sort of political programme which the perfect State should follow in the search for and defence of the common good, valid both then and now in the so-called age of economic globalization: “*The State should watch over the working conditions of same, respect for the dignity of the person, salaries, social justice by both workers and employers so that, if justice reigns, peace may reign everywhere in the peace, security and wealth that make up the material common good, which in turn prepares the common good in all orders. It should favour private enterprise, small industries which both protect the small company owner and favour work for all. The agricultural small-holding. Agricultural initiatives. It should organise, wherever they are missing, those industries which favour the economic welfare of both individuals and the nation. Above all, it must work for both capital and companies to contribute to the common good, thus being*

⁴⁰ Merkelbach, *Summa Theologiae Moralis*, vol. II, nos. 265.

⁴¹ José Todolí, op. Cit., p. 107-115.

⁴² José Todolí, *El Bien Común*, p. 116.

⁴³ Rafael Larrañeta, *Tras la justicia. Introducción a una filosofía política*, San Esteban - Edibesa, Salamanca 1999, p. 146.

the true architectural mind of the country that, without intervening in or disrupting things in themselves, orders all of them to fit its own aims, defends them and supports them by daily contributing to improving them to their greater prosperity”⁴⁴.

One can say of this work of Todolí’s that it is a valuable contribution to centering the question of the common good, whereas he avoids the extremes of either individualism or collectivism. It offers a brilliant, orderly and Cartesian philosophical reflection, faithful to Catholic social doctrine and does not confuse man’s ultimate goal with the fulfilment of his temporal, immediate good.

7. Other doctrinal matters of a moral order.

Certain matters of a moral, theoretical or practical order are mentioned below, whereas others of equal interest are omitted, such as *El Mal Moral (Moral Evil)*, *Ética de la investigación científica (The Ethics of Scientific Research)*, *Palabras mágicas (Magic Words)*, in which, in the light of the teachings of John Paul II’s Encyclical *Solicitudo rei socialis*, Todolí re-interprets the key words *development*, *solidarity*, *conversion* and *communion*, and an extensive chapter on *The moral dimension of man* which is part of the book *La Filosofía en el BUP*, in which, as J. Cordero⁴⁵ has quite rightly pointed out, his approach to the authentic contents of morality attains a singular depth. I merely intend to mention certain landmarks in the fertile and varied work of Todolí, as a master of healthy Catholic doctrine, to which he always lent his talents - which were many - and his efforts - which always reached beyond his own possibilities.

a) An approach to the ethics of transplants. Throughout five dense chapters, Todolí re-elaborates some of the most important moral aspects entailed in medical transplant operations⁴⁶, shedding light on the application of moral principles to transplant operations, to the extent that the scientific data of the time allowed. During the sixties, transplants were a novelty that had not been solved in the moral ambit (two prestigious authors on moral knowledge, A. Peinador and B. Häring maintained opposing views), and this meant a veritable challenge to experts in this field. The book begins with a description of certain essential principles: as far as the phenomenon of grafts and transplants in themselves is concerned: morality “*has encountered no problem*”; man is not the master of his life, “*not even the administrator of same*”; the author has no doubt that the surgeon, in his specific activity “*must defend life wherever it may be and to the very end*”; not only with respect to his deontological codes, but rather for reasons of a theological order, “*the value of an instant of life in man, from the point of view of his future salvation*” is incalculable; finally, it should be borne in mind that the human being alone is part of society “*both in a functional sense and in that of finality*”; consequently, “*society has no right over the life of the individual*”⁴⁷. With respect to the transplanting from one living human being to another of those organs which are paired in our organism, Todolí, puts forward what in the sixties was a very modern thesis: “*In my opinion, it is not only a sign that one possesses exceptional sentiments, but even in certain circumstances could be considered as something*

⁴⁴ José Todolí, *El Bien Común*, p. 127.

⁴⁵ J. Cordero, *Ética y Sociedad*, Editorial San Esteban, Salamanca 1981, p. 68.

⁴⁶ José Todolí, *Ética de los transplantes*, Editorial OPE, Villava, Pamplona, España, 1968.

⁴⁷ José Todolí, *La ética de los transplantes*, p. 16-21.

objectively normal, that a person should, for serious reasons, sacrifice an organ which is not indispensably vital to him”⁴⁸.

His reflection is carried out in the light of the principle of an action with a double effect: the intention in the transplant is good and praiseworthy (it saves the life of a sick person). The removal of the organ to be transplanted from the donor is not essentially bad and consequently, if there is sufficient reason, the donation can become a good, and even heroic, action: *“the removal of the organ is not morally bad except when it is not justified, for there are occasions when it is, on account of the principle of the whole, as in the case of the amputation of a leg because of gangrene”*⁴⁹. The good end is pursued not through a moral evil but through a praiseworthy act. It is not a case of a double moral action, but of a morally unique action.

In the case of heart transplants (the 2nd. Of January, 1967, Dr. Christian Barnard carried out the first heart transplant in Cape City, South Africa, and this book was published on the 23rd. of April 1968), Todolí gives a prior detailed descriptive study to then consider the matter from the perspective of the sick donor for whom all hope is lost and that of the clinically dead donor. Morality responds negatively to the possibilities of transplants in these situations, because the donor is really alive. On the other hand, in situations in which the donor is mechanically maintained alive or in that of a dead person whose heart can be re-animated, *“morality leaves the way open to this type of operations”*. This poses two problems from the point of view of the receptor, *“that of the risk entailed in the operation and the moral certainty of success that both receptor and surgeon should feel”*. As for the risks entailed, scientific theory and practice are achieving satisfactory results in certain cases. Thirty years after that 2nd. of January 1967, the life of transplant patients has been prolonged by up to tens of years. With regard to the other problem, that of the moral certainty of the receptor and the surgeon, there are doubtless many uncertainties and insecurities, but when *“it is morally certain that if it is not done, the death of the patient is even more certain”*⁵⁰, it would seem that there is no moral obstacle to the operation.

b) Moral consciousness and the science of sociology. Three aspects are the object of rigorous reflection in the lecture delivered by Todolí in the “John Paul II Chair” on moral consciousness in the light of the assumptions of scientific sociology⁵¹, upon the occasion of a seminar on religious practice in Spain. In the first place, Todolí vigorously argues against the positivist sociological approach that reduces moral consciousness to a mere *“social pressure”* or *“collective consciousness”* (E. Durkheim), for this doctrine *“condemns the individual to a repulsive conformism”*, and contradicts empirical evidence of the existence of rebels and reformers who *“break with the course of history and society”* and whose presence would not be possible if one accepts the Durkheimian sociological approach. It is likewise questionable, under sociological assumptions, that society is shaped *“through the heroes which it itself creates”*, or the geniuses who, independently of society, are the protagonists of social action. He concludes his argument by saying that *“moral ideas are*

⁴⁸ Ibidem, p. 33-34.

⁴⁹ Ibidem, p. 41.

⁵⁰ Ibidem, p. 70-77.

⁵¹ José Todolí Duque, O.P., “Sociología y moral” (“Sociology and Morality”), in *Sociología de la Religión y Estructura Social de España*, in the Institute of Applied Sociology, Madrid, Spain, 1971, p. 201-214.

not created by society but its customs and habits are the right means for them to either develop or fade and die.” By formulating a positive argument, Todolí places the origin of moral consciousness in human nature. By necessary logical implication, certain tendencies are imposed more out of need in the ambit of liberty, in which “*the original tendencies do not show how to be but how one should be, in order to enlighten behaviour*”, that is, the most original root of moral consciousness does not lie in society but in “*those quasi-innate judgements, whose practical reason are held as experiences rather than logical formulations*”. Todolí explicitly acknowledges social pressure, although he gives it a different nuance with respect to the individual who is able to withstand it in accordance with the development of his personality, thus opening up possibilities for the hero and reformer, to make change and social order compatible⁵². He rejects that sociological reductionism whose aim is to base moral consciousness on one single factor - this moreover of an exogenous nature - such as social pressure. Consciousness is shaped and its contents nurtured by diverse heterogeneous elements, some of them endogenous “*natural principles or the individual’s biological disposition*”, and other obviously exogenous elements absorbed from the family and social, economic and working, cultural and political environments, in which the individual is imbricated throughout his life.

c) *A diagnosis of faith and morality.* In this article, Professor Todolí starts with the situation of religious and moral crisis⁵³ that affected Spanish society in the seventies. He elaborates his analysis on the strength of the data given by the science of empirical sociology, capable of researching and diagnosing Spanish society with sufficient methodological rigour. In his attempt, Todolí explores the deeper strata that transcend sociological analysis to mark out a set of tendencies and thus make the situation more intelligible. Coinciding closely with the speech delivered by the Cardinal Primate of Spain at the closing ceremony of the Week of Theology held in Toledo in 1971, Todolí marks out “*confusionism*” as the prime cause for the general moral scepticism and loss of faith. The origin of such confusionism lies in the conversion of over-interest in novelty in as criterion of truth. “*Precipitation*” is to be added to this attitude, this being a mortal enemy of prudence, for it not only aspires to renewing everything, but everything at once without taking into account the wise principle that *time takes its revenge on those who fail to count upon it*. Todolí perceives a third cause for the crisis in morality and faith in “*activism*”, defined as frenetic, compulsive activity that questions both the contemplative life, which is of such importance to the life of the Church, insofar as it implies an evasion from our own intimacy, and man’s fear of encountering himself. He also calls into question misguided interpretations of liberty, liberty as a synonym of lawlessness, the power to abide by or not abide by the law, a liberty which means doing good or evil, or liberty as a liberation from external coercion, and other absurdities. He concludes that liberty in man must be understood as “*a capacity possessed by man, as against other beings, to consciously and responsibly fulfil his own destiny*”. What is most important and urgent for Todolí is to recover the ultimate meaning or *raison d’être* of human existence.

To conclude this brief introduction, I would like to point out that much more could be said about the author’s philosophical and ethical works. However, one should recall that

⁵² Ibidem, p. 207, 208.

⁵³ José Todolí Duque, *Diagnóstico sobre la fe y la moral*, in Cuadernos de Realidades Sociales, no. 2, Madrid 1973, p. 105-121.

Todolí experienced his vocation as a priest riskily within the ambit of the university at such a delicate moment in the political transition of Spain. By respecting other options, he always defended his basic right to practise as a Catholic intellectual. His passion was the search for truth both in his research and in his teaching activity. In his brilliant sermons in the numerous teaching centres in which he preached, he assumed that “*one should always spread truth and this must be done with enthusiasm*”⁵⁴. He was a born teacher who was always greatly preoccupied with his students, an excellent master and a true example to those who decided to devote their lives to teaching and research⁵⁵. Noone could question his constant readiness to attend to his students, colleagues and the university itself. He was a man who never complained either of his progressive loss of sight or of the isolation to which he was at times unjustly submitted, nor even of his last, long illness. He was a good, wise man who, within his own possibilities, always tried to do good to all those who approached him, not only those who he knew would be grateful to him, but also to those who would sooner or later forget him.

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⁵⁴ Manuel Santos Sánchez, “El dominico Fray José Todolí Duque” in *Ética y Sociología*, p. 13.

⁵⁵ José T. Raga, “Fray José Todolí, un año después”, in *Ética y Sociología*, p.21.