

BOOK REVIEW
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND GOD.
The Role of Enterprise in the Thought of
Jesús Huerta de Soto and its Contribution
to the Social Doctrine of the Church,
Unión Editorial, Madrid 2026, 269 pp.
by Paulo Jorge Vieira Carvalho Oliveira

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In the following paragraphs, we shall summarise the doctoral thesis in Moral Theology on justice and the Social Doctrine of the Church, written by Professor Paulo Jorge Vieira Carvalho Oliveira, an intelligent and well-qualified Portuguese businessman and economist who was ordained a priest and has produced this magnificent work.

Furthermore, the thesis itself is a summary of the contributions made by the Professor of Economics at Rey Juan Carlos University to the Social Doctrine of the Church from the perspective of the so-called Austrian School, of which he is a leading advocate and populariser.

I hope not to disappoint either Paulo Jorge or my great friend Jesús Huerta de Soto, and that this summary of the summary of the summary does not result in the impoverishment of such a rich doctrine and such a wise and enriching spirit, in accordance with the old principle that ‘copying impoverishes’.

Certainly, the Austrian School—which, like the School of Salamanca, is founded on the dignity of the human person and on Christian humanism, as championed from the time of Francisco de Vitoria, Domingo de Soto and Melchor Cano right up to the present day—will, through the contribution of Friedrich Hayek, add a systematic and exhaustive critique of the socialism of the 1940s and its current proponents; that is to say, state control over the free market and prices (41).

Professor Vieira will focus on Huerta de Soto's fundamental contribution in 'the entrepreneurial function in Huerta de Soto'. As for who will explain the main characteristics of the entrepreneur in market life.

Logically, the characteristics of today's entrepreneur differ from those envisaged by Francisco de Vitoria, as market life then was not the same as it is today. In any case, Huerta de Soto views the merchant as the entrepreneur, as a man who has taken upon himself the mission of serving the nation whilst also serving his family and his own community. The common good is therefore much more than the sum of individual goods (49).

Certainly, Francisco de Vitoria has a great influence on Huerta de Soto, since he attributes to freedom the key characteristic, as well as that of considering the whole of society in which one is working and the impact of one's actions on society as a whole (50). In this sense, he unites justice with charity, as two essential virtues for social life, alongside prudence. For Huerta de Soto, being an entrepreneur means being a 'homo sapiens' and an 'entrepreneurial man' (51). Undoubtedly, new technologies have contributed to a new vision of dignified and responsible human action.