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## States in the Mystical Body of Christ based on John Torquemada’s “Summa de Ecclesia”

In contemporary ecclesiological reflection there are frequent references to the relationship between clergy and laity. They are usually seen in a certain tension or dialectic, which is to be overcome by appreciating the role of the laity. The current ongoing synod on synodality (2023-2024) deals very broadly with the topic of the presence of the laity in the Church and enhancing their role. The broader context is the theology of the laity developed after the Second Vatican Council. In order to avoid simplifications in the analysis of the states of the Church, it would be necessary to turn to earlier ecclesiological concepts, which allow us to show a broader theological context for considering states in the Church, where there is a greater plurality of groups and states. Nowadays, the predominant concept is that of the people of God as showing the common path of believers, among whom clergy and laity are secondarily distinguished, who are valued by providing various ministries<sup>1</sup>. Previously, the concept of *societas perfecta* was particularly popular, in light of which the various states<sup>2</sup> were described using legal and theological terms, within the framework of certain social hierarchies. This analysis of states in the Church involves a theological consideration of how the various groups in the Church relate to each other within the framework of the concept of the Church as the Mystical Body of

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<sup>1</sup> On the diversity of ministries in the Church, see. K. Michalczak, *Posługa świeckich wiernych w życiu Kościoła*, “Teologia Praktyczna” 4(2003), p. 216. Fields and forms of the apostolate of the laity see: Vatican II, “Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity *Apostolicam Actuositatem*”, no. 9-27, 1965.

<sup>2</sup> In ancient Rome, a distinction was made between *ordo* and *status*. The former denoted the privileged state with their privileges, and the latter the general citizenry with their rights and duties. The early Church took over this division in that it referred to the *ordo* to the clergy as *ordo clericalis*, while it called the other members *status laicalis*. Cf. A. Kakareko, *Stany życia w Kościele*, “Studia Teologiczne” 22(2004), p. 282.

Christ. There is some dispute between two paradigms in ecclesiology, namely, the understanding of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ and as the People of God<sup>3</sup>, in light of which the interrelationship between the hierarchy and the laity cannot ignore the activity of the People of God, that is, the lay faithful<sup>4</sup>. Looking at the Church as a body gives the possibility of connectivity between the hierarchy and the laity without focusing on clericalism or “laicism” (fighting clericalism)<sup>5</sup>.

The source of the present study is *Summa de Ecclesia* by John Torquemada (d. 1468), a Spanish Dominican, cardinal and great apologist of the 15th century, relatively recently published in Polish (2019)<sup>6</sup>. In modern theology, little space is devoted to classical studies, the so-called treatises, which to a lesser extent also applies to fundamental theology and the so-called *demonstratio catholica*. There are even fewer references to and analyses of the work of John Torquemada, despite the fact that it was written in the crucible of controversy and is eminently apologetic in nature. The issue of the Church has been present in theology from the beginning, but the systematization of the content according to the canonical distinctions of sacramental and juridical authority and the vision of the Church as a body in the corporate-sociological sense took place in the Middle Ages. It took its mature shape as a treatise in the *Summa de Ecclesia* by John Torquemada<sup>7</sup>. He is considered the father of Catholic ecclesiology precisely because of his treatise, although earlier studies by James of Viterbo *De regimine christiano* and John of Ragusa *Tractatus de Ecclesia* were also written<sup>8</sup>. The treatise itself is divided into four books, the first of which contains interesting content from the point of view of the nature and genesis of the Church, the next are on primacy, councils and schism and heresy. The analysis of the work provides an opportunity to see an important testimony to the historical and theological formation of the key issues of ecclesiology and an undeniable contribution to ecclesiology in general. The evocation of the *Summa de Ecclesia* broadens the perspective of the debate on the Church with the classical treatment of the issue of the members of the Church and their divisions, now somewhat abandoned, and cognitively enriches through a distinctive method. *Summa de Ecclesia* was written using the hermeneutic-apologetic method, which means relying on the authority of Scripture and the

<sup>3</sup> For classic elaborations on the idea of the People of God as the best expression of the Church cf. N.A. Dahl, *Das Volk Gottes*, Darmstadt 1963, p. 264-267.

<sup>4</sup> L. Bouyer, *Kościół Boży*, trans. W. Krzyżaniak, Warszawa 1977, p. 413. For the author's comments on the relationship between the laity and the hierarchy, cf. *ibid.*, p. 413-442.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 414.

<sup>6</sup> J. Torquemada, *Suma o Kościele*, trans. J. Wojtkowski, Olsztyn 2019.

<sup>7</sup> S. Pié-Ninot, *Wprowadzenie do eklezjologii*, ed. 2, trans. T. Kukułka, Kraków 2007, p. 9-15. Girolamo Savonarola is the first to make the division between the Christological and ecclesiological parts in his work *The Triumph of the Cross*, cf. *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> G. Jankowiak, *Eklezjologia apologetyczna Juana de Torquemady na tle epoki – wybrane aspekty*, “Studia Paradyskie” 15(2005), p. 67.

solemnity of the Fathers in the lecture of individual issues and explaining them against the background of the objections, formulating a rationale and carrying out an apologia<sup>9</sup>.

### **The basis of the doctrine of the Mystical Body**

The doctrine of states in the Church in John Torquemada's ecclesiology is situated within the concept of the Mystical Body of the Lord, although the division between the corporative and people of God concepts is itself later. The framework of the corporative concept comes from St. Paul in his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians. It is about the theological and spiritual conclusions derived from the image of the Church as the Body of the Lord consisting of the Head and the members, which then provides an opportunity to show the different groups in the Church without rejecting the most obvious division between clergy and laity. It is therefore necessary to examine what groups (states) can exist in the Church understood as *Corpus Mysticum*. The starting point is the particular relationship of the various groups to the Head of the Church, i.e. Christ, and then consequently among themselves. Torquemada devotes chapters 43-68 of the first part of the work to the issue of the Mystical Body, and chapters 69-86 to the states. These will be presented below in the following order: the analogy of the unity of the human body, Christ as the Head and point of reference for the various groups of members, the parts of the mystical body as a type of the various spiritual functions, the historical continuity of the groups, the permanent and temporary assignment to Christ, the division of states and offices in the Church.

The theology of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ is described by Torquemada in a broader theological scheme in the first chapter of the *Summa de Ecclesia*, which includes first defining the name of the Church as distinguished from the Synagogue, the question of participation of the good and the evil in the Church, the marks of the Church, her beginning and periods, the founders, showing the marks of the Church after showing the various images and metaphors of the Church and justifying her antiquity and eternal duration, the various names<sup>10</sup>. Against this background, the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ appears as a certain culmination and deepest development of the previous ecclesiological issues. It includes, at the outset, the clarification of the *mysticum* as encompassing mystery, holiness, belonging to God, but above all the figurativeness of reference. This one refers to the multiplicity of members of the same nature, but different functions or duties serving the whole on the basis of the gifts received (Rom. 12:4)<sup>11</sup>. It is here that one can see the greatest

<sup>9</sup> P. Artemiuk, *Geneza i obrazy Kościoła w Sumie o Kościele Juana Torquemady*, "Studia Bobolanum" 31(2020), no. 1, p. 46.

<sup>10</sup> J. Torquemada, op. cit., p. 9-82.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 82-83.

possibilities for indicating the different groups in the Church and their importance and functions. The basis of diversity and unity is in the image of the body the connection of the members with the head through the neck, so that all the senses can work properly, cognition takes place and movement spills over into the whole body.

### Head and members

In the body of the Church, there is a major division between the Head and the members. In theological terms, the function of the Head of the Church is performed by the Son of God, who, by assuming a human nature, was able to become one with the people and at the same time their leader. Through the incarnation, the Head of the Church is co-extensive with the body, which is connected to it through the neck, or faith and love. In the body, all the senses send impulses to the head, and from there flows the decision to act and the impulse to act. In the human body, unity is ensured by the presence of the soul, which animates the body and governs it. Into the *Corpus Ecclesiae* the members are introduced by baptism and are animated by the Holy Spirit. It is He who causes the diversity of the members, as He gives them different gifts, while ensuring the unity of the person. The animated body constitutes one person in being and action, and likewise the Church, consisting of the Head and the members, constitutes a mystical personal unity such that Christ to the persecuting Church of Saul says: “Why do you persecute Me?” (Acts 9:4). It should be taken into account that here we are dealing with an analogy, which, however, exceeds the usual image, that is, there is a great connection and similarity, but not in everything. That is why the term Mystical Body of Christ is used. The human body consists of numerous members mutually united, among which the head and its union with the rest of the body through the neck are distinguished<sup>12</sup>. The essence is the assignment of believers to the Body as members and Christ as Head. The members are mutually united, although more important is the assignment to the Head. Torquemada then discusses the variety of members of the Church and points out their mysterious significance. Thus some can be compared to the eye, others to the hand, etc. He begins, of course, with the head, and then enumerates, based on the Song of Songs, the other members in the mutual relation of the Bridegroom and the Bride: head, face, cheeks, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, teeth, neck, breast, hands, belly, legs, feet<sup>13</sup>.

The head is Christ as full of wisdom, in whom are hidden all her treasures (Colossians 2:3). It is shining, all of gold, that is, endowed with extraordinary glory. The rationale for why Christ is referred to as the head of the Church is based on being the loftiest part of the human body, elevated above the other members, possessing what is not in the others, that is, all the senses, while in

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 83ff.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 84.

the others there is only the sense of touch. This is a sign of the fullness of grace in Christ surpassing the other spiritual gifts present in the other members. Christ, moreover, pours into the other members the stirrings of faith, as the head is the principle of movement and from it all actions originate<sup>14</sup>. In this sense, to Christ everything is subordinate and He is the constant and absolute point of reference for the various states of the Church. Hence He is rightly called the Head of the Church, since He has to the Church as the head has to the body. Moreover, in reference to the Head, the members that were before Him, during His action and after Him are distinguished. There is an interesting natural explanation for the members of the Church that appeared earlier than the Head of the Body: at birth it sometimes happens that the head does not appear first<sup>15</sup>. The theological point is that the faith remains the same before the Incarnation, as well as after it.

An important division of members by virtue of connectivity with the head occurs in the case of connectivity with Christ of the righteous and sinners. To this issue the Ecclesiologist of Spain devotes considerable attention, dissecting in detail the situation of sinners belonging to Christ. Ultimately, in actual union with Christ are those who are in sanctifying grace. Here there is no perfect analogy with the human body, in which all the members together currently constitute one body. The Mystical Body, on the other hand, is made up of people who may be deprived of the grace connecting them to the Head at a given moment, but will have it later, or, conversely, are currently in grace, but will lose it. Therefore, members of the Mystical Body should be called those who are in the possibility of grace<sup>16</sup>. Thus, it is possible to distinguish three groups of members in current relationship to the Head and one in possibility. Thus, these are those who are currently united with Christ in glory, those who are united with Him through love, and those who are united with Him through faith. The fourth group is made up of those who are in the possibility, which, however, has not yet passed into the act of joining with the Head, but according to divine destiny will join in the future. Finally, a fifth group can be distinguished as those who are now in the possibility of being united with the Head, but will never be united with him, and by leaving this world, cease to be members of Christ<sup>17</sup>. So we have three groups of members currently united with the Head and two in the possibility. They depend on three factors: the saving power of Christ extended to humanity, the reliability of Divine Providence and human free will. The union of members with Christ is so great that even a single member can even be called Christ. This is because of the greatest unity of the Head and the members on the basis of 1 Corinthians 12:12. This unity is

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 112-113.

explained because of the likeness to Christ, the unity of the will, the one Spirit and the formation of the one Body of Christ<sup>18</sup>.

### Particular body parts

As for the other members of the body, their discussion in the *Summa de Ecclesia* begins the face as a part of the body in which beauty shines, reflecting the holiness and religiosity of the persons in question. The face radiates inner beauty affecting the benefit of others. The face of the Church is pretty because it shines with the light of the saints, unlike the ugly face of heretics. To read this beauty can be done by one who is spiritual himself and knows how to study spiritual realities<sup>19</sup>. Cheeks, on which modesty and decency are reflected, signify all those who live in chastity and are ashamed of everything that degrades the dignity of the soul. One can see in them superiors who are refined in manners and teach others the virtue of chastity. Together with preachers, they are not ashamed of Christ crucified (Romans 1:16), but proclaim Him to others with words and deeds. The eyes, which symbolize the sense of sight necessary for the care of the whole body, refer in the Church to those who are characterized by perspicacity of mind. They are able to penetrate the revealed mysteries and skillfully, that is, according to the capacity for discernment, convey to others. Sight is used to recognize obstacles, which in the case of clerics means guarding against the wiles of evil spirits. Torquemada points out that there is a pair of eyes in the human body: the right and the left<sup>20</sup>. This can be interpreted as the ability to comprehend temporal and supernatural things, which corresponds to the virtues of prudence and wisdom. There is a natural connection between prudence, or the ability to manage temporal affairs, and wisdom as the knowledge of spiritual matters. In addition, two types of “seers” can be distinguished: prophets, who are given supernatural realities, and doctors who are able to explain them. Ears in the Church means the ability to hear the teaching of the Word and receiving the inner enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. Thus, there is a mutual exchange between teachers in the Church and those who listen to their teaching. Church speech should take into account the situation of the listeners. Not everything should be conveyed equally, but according to age and spiritual level. Another part of the body to which ecclesiastical significance can be attributed is the nose. It is the organ of discernment by smell. Distinguished in the Church, therefore, are those who have a basic discernment of life from death on the spiritual plane, followed by the smell of the individual virtues. Thus, they are those who distinguish between good and evil, and are not deceived by hypocrisy being only superficial goodness<sup>21</sup>. The mouth and lips,

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 128-129.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 84.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

according to natural symbolism, are used for the utterance of words, that is, through them are comprehended in the Church preachers and teachers, who are to convey doctrine through the grace of speech. The voice of the Church points to Christ and for this reason He is the object of teaching. The Church's teaching must first and foremost be orthodox, thereby distinguishing it from the unpleasant voice of heretics uttering blasphemies against God. The teeth in the body, which are used to grind food and participate in the formation of speech, have a similar symbolism. They refer in the Church to the best teachers, shining with purity and giving others the food they themselves have previously meditated.

The neck connects the body to the head and participates in the transmission of food. In this function in the Church are those who administer the sacraments, transmitting the grace of Christ and His Body. Others incorporate others into Christ, connect them to Him. They are thus the clergy. Torquemada's comment on the matter of food, which must first be annihilated in its previous form in order to in turn become food, is interesting. One can enter the Church through Christ's death and one's own spiritual death to sin through baptism. Thus, the pagan must be, as it were, "eaten" by the Church, having previously broken with the world and thus lost his previous form. In the body, moreover, the breasts stand out, which is particularly emphasized in the Song of Songs. They give milk to infants, transforming the nature of hard food into one adapted to the newborn. This refers to St. Peter's Letter, in which he writes about newborn believers, that is, being "without guile," desiring the basic food for growth toward salvation (1 Peter 2:2). The breasts are two and characterized by beauty, which in the case of the Church means the Old and New Testament, from which flows all the milk with which the Church feeds its children<sup>22</sup>. The duality can further mean the twofold nature of spiritual teaching: dogmatic and moral. A very important part of the body is the hands, because with them man works and fights (cf. Psalm 143:1). They symbolize in the Church righteous men who are dedicated to the active life. They exercise themselves in connection with temporality, while enduring hardships to the point of torment suffered from the world for eternal life. Such people are characterized by an example of patience. The belly in the body is the womb where new life is conceived and formed. It is a picture of spouses who prepare a crop of wheat for the Church through offspring and their upbringing and helping the poor. The legs in the body are used to support and move the body. In the case of the Church, they are persons outstanding in wisdom and holiness who sustain others. The pillars of the Church are the apostles. The feet in the body likewise as legs support and carry. They are the apostles and their disciples, who can be spoken of as the beautiful feet of those who bring peace and goodness. They carry Christ himself, the testimonies of faith and the examples of the saints.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

The totality of the members and their fulfillment of their role makes the whole body beautiful, complete – “You are altogether beautiful, my darling” (Song of songs 4:7)<sup>23</sup>.

### States, offices and ranks in the Church

Having discussed the foundations of the concept of the Mystical Body of Christ and the resulting ecclesiological divisions into various groups, it is necessary to move on to the issue of the precise variety of states, offices and ranks in the Church. The basic division concerns the laity and the clergy, who, like two sides of one body, constitute a whole and complement each other. The laity are concerned with earthly matters and temporal needs. They are pictured by the left side of the body and the clergy, because of their spiritual ministries, by the right side. The human body has many organs in addition to its sides, which can be related to the Mystical Body in different ways and levels. The diversity is evident from the Apostle’s words in 1 Corinthians 12:19. The Church Militant is a model of the Church Triumphant in heaven, where there are various choirs of angels, degrees of rewards and glory, crowns. As justification for the distinction between states and offices, Torquemada cites the contribution to perfection, which, because of God’s simplicity and uniformity, cannot be fully expressed in created things except through multiplicity. The fullness of grace in Christ as Head is poured out in various ways upon the members for the perfection of the whole (cf. Ephesians 4:11-12). Secondly, the diversity of offices is due to the necessity of different activities in the Church so that they can be carried out more efficiently and without confusion. Thirdly and finally, it is a matter of showing the order which indicates the dignity and beauty of the Church, how the different members affect the strength and beauty of the whole body<sup>24</sup>.

Within the Church, a distinction is made between states, offices and degrees. A state implies something stable, an office results from a difference between different activities and degrees indicate different levels of hierarchy within a state. The most stable is the state as something resulting from the nature of things, such as the state of free and bondage, and is distinguished from, for example, dignity. In the Church, therefore, three states are distinguished: prelates, religious and spouses, as those in charge, serving in orders and in the world. Each is valid within the framework of solemn consecrations, vows and the bond of marriage and is therefore characterised by permanence. States are defined according to freedom to certain actions and bondage to justice, which theologically translates into beginner, progressive and perfect<sup>25</sup>. Perfection means having a love that unites one with God, which is the goal of human life,

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 139-140.

but in the spiritual state it is to be observed the most. Of course, it is not the same to be in a state of perfection as to be perfect, because a person's inner disposition may differ from his outer state. Someone may commit to something but not fulfil it. Specifically, in a state of perfection are bishops and religious. In the case of bishops, this is due to the sublimity of the pastoral office they occupy and, in the case of religious, due to their commitment by vow to give up worldly things in order to give themselves to God in contemplation. The Dominican from Spain subtly considers their interrelationship in the state of perfection as passive and active, and what is the affiliation of presbyters to such a state and in relation to religious, as well as what is the state of cardinals in relation to the above and what dignity they are entitled to by virtue of it<sup>26</sup>.

Turning to the offices in the Church, Torquemada points to their necessity for the sake of action. God's wisdom, which shines forth in the proper arrangement of temporal and spiritual things, wishes to support in this way human weakness, which does not allow one to fulfil all that pertains to God's mysteries and has to make use of numerous offices<sup>27</sup>. Furthermore, through the offices, people are given a path of progress as co-workers with God (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:4-11). They include numerous ministries. Offices are designated because of the basic division of activities into those concerning the contemplative life and those concerning the active life. Offices pertaining to the clergy are in turn divided into seven clerical ranks from ostiary to bishop, then there is a four-part series of bishops - up to patriarchs, and there are other officials appointed, for example, due to the considerable size of a particular church, such as archdeacons or arch-presbyters. The differentiation of ranks and offices is hierarchical in nature, so that some offices are nobler than others, and ranks are higher or lower. Individuals are appointed to particular degrees because of their fuller participation in graces and virtues. The whole adds to the Church's growth and the glory of God.

The totality of states, offices and ranks in the Church functions within the framework of ecclesiastical authority, which is analogous to that of the Christian state. The basic division into laity and clergy distinguishes two types of authority: spiritual and temporal. The former secures the goods of the spiritual life and the latter what is necessary for earthly life. Their relationship and nature are illustrated by the two columns in the portico of Solomon's temple<sup>28</sup>. On them the church and the state are supported, with the right column dominating the left as the spiritual things to which it refers outweigh temporal matters. Under one head there is a power divided into two parts, derived from a common divine source. The spiritual authority has as its visible head the pope, and the temporal authority the king. Each in turn is divided into different degrees and offices, which find their foreshadowing in the Old and New Testaments.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 147-154.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 156.

The twofold authority of different degrees in the Church over the congregation of the faithful derives from the wisdom of God, which the lower enlightens through the higher, and from the natural order appoints subjects and rulers. As such, authority serves to restrain people from evil and to guide them towards good (cf. 1 Peter 2:14; Romans 13:3). Since the good as the goal of man transcends the purely political sphere and the natural virtues of prudence and justice must be complemented by the supernatural virtues by virtue of the supernatural goal to which one must be led not only by exhortations but also by punishments, hence the postulate for the existence of a spiritual authority. Alongside the temporal life there is the spiritual life and in both there must be justice and benefit, hence the need for a dual authority<sup>29</sup>. In the interrelation of the two authorities, the relationship of earthly and spiritual purposes must be taken into account. From the superiority of the spiritual follows the superiority of the spiritual authority. Moreover, spiritual authority is older because it derives from Abel, in whom there are foreshadowings of supreme righteousness through virginity, priesthood and martyrdom. It comes directly from God, especially in the New Covenant, whereas temporal authority came from the great centres of state, namely Assyria, Babylonia, the Persians, the Greeks and the Romans, where the assumption of power was often by violence. Overall, the Cardinal gives nine reasons for the superiority of spiritual authority over secular authority, and then examines the authority of ordination and jurisdiction in detail.

### **Ecclesiological conclusions**

Juan Torquemada's doctrine of states provides an excellent starting point in the debate on the relationship between laity and clergy in the Church. There is no juxtaposition in this doctrine, while at the same time the classical corporative-juridical doctrine is preserved. The context of the corporative concept of the Church enriches the doctrine of the states by showing their theological and spiritual nature, avoiding sociological simplifications. An important element of the ecclesiology of the Cardinal of Spain is the Christological reference, which must not be overlooked in the secular-clergy debate. There is no more essential union in the Church than with Christ. Fundamental to the *Corpus Mysticum* is the division between the Head and the members. Herein lies the most important task of every lay and clerical believer to preserve this unity for the rest of their lives, drawing from it the necessary graces. A logical consequence arising from the corporative conception of the Church is the attempt to attribute spiritual significance to the individual members of the human body. This is something original in Torquemada's ecclesiological reflections, unheard of in other authors. He ascribes to individual parts of the face and the whole body a symbolic meaning that relates to numerous groups and determines their proper functions. It also explains the duality of the right and left organs or parts in question in

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 158.

relation to the differentiated tasks of specific groups. Here lies the overcoming of the dialectic of states in the Church in favour of the striving of all within their order for a deeper understanding of spiritual realities. The body of the Church thus acquires concreteness in the differentiation into numerous unequal members, each of which performs a specific function for the good of the whole. This emphasises the complementarity of believers in spiritual matters, rather than their horizontal opposition.

The Dominican then identifies three fundamental states in the Church, instead of the typical two, emphasising the importance of the religious state and relates their definition to the solemn act of establishment and the pursuit of perfection proper to the state. He ascribes the married state to the laity, and does not place them in an individualistic key, as is the case today, but points to their tasks within the family and national community. In addition to states, he distinguishes offices and ranks, which indicates a much greater differentiation of possible groups than a simple division into clergy and laity. In this way, it more realistically reflects the reality of a Church in which the whole depends on the harmoniously arranged tasks of the various groups mutually arranged within specific hierarchies. The overriding theme of the link between laity and clergy in medieval ecclesiology is the concept of the two authorities of laity and clergy as the culmination of two orders of states, offices and ranks. The issue of the relationship between Church and state has remained at the centre of interest in theology and political science over the centuries, so it is a gross oversimplification to ignore this context in describing the relationship between the laity and clergy. Consideration of the dual authority and its interconnectedness and subordination influences the way the lay-clergy issue is viewed.

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### Summary

The article analyses John Torquemada's doctrine as expressed in the *Summa de Ecclesia* concerning the relationship between laity and clergy in the Church. In it, there is no opposition between the two groups thanks to the preservation of the classical corporate conception of the Church. Torquemada enriches it with developed theological and spiritual elements in which Christ as head of the Church plays an important role, which is crucial for unity among the members themselves. Particularly original and interesting is this theologian's attempt to point out groups of believers in symbolic relation to indicated members of the human body, such as eyes, ears, legs, etc. On the basis of these remarks, the states of the Church, the offices and ranks are analysed, and everything will be crowned with a teaching on authority in the Church.

**Keywords:** ecclesiology, Mystical Body of Christ, states in the Church, Head and members, laity and clergy.

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