

ETHICS AND THE CUBAN TRANSITION

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Morality is a subject that interests us above all others:
We fancy the peace of society to be at stake in every
decision concerning it.

— David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*

PASSIONS AND REASON

My main concern with respect to the so-called Cuban transition is “transition to what?” It seems to me that all the discussions with respect to this theme appear to refer only about the way for transition to occur, while the final outcome seems to be taken for granted. That final outcome, of course, is democracy and liberty but nobody takes the time to define the meaning of these two over-politically correct words. It was Abraham Lincoln who once said: “we all declare for liberty; but in using the same word we do not mean the same thing... Here are two, not only different but incompatible things called by the same name, liberty.” I may say that the same semantic problem arises with respect to democracy and I may add that this confusion has had a long history in Western civilization.

Coming back to Cuba, it seems to me that there is a conviction that as soon as Fidel Castro fades away, we may expect a return to paradise. Well, maybe this is an exaggeration, but certainly it is obvious that with Castro there is no possible solution. But his disappearance at best is just the beginning of the road. However Seneca said, “for those that don’t know where they are going, there is no favorable wind.” And when we have a glimpse of the panorama presented by the democratic processes in Latin America, it is apparent that there is no favorable wind.

These skeptical words should not be construed as a despair or dismal pessimism. Pessimism is a determinant for the lack of action and that attitude is far away from my present disposition. But following Seneca, I am trying to find out where are we trying to go in order to find favorable winds. Cuba, as I have always said, is not different from the rest of Latin America, but an extreme case of the historical democratic failures in the region.

Allow me another quotation, in this case from James Madison, the American thinker who under the influence of David Hume most influenced the framing of American democracy. In letter 10 of the *Federalist Papers*, Madison wrote:

A common passion or interest will, in almost every case, be felt by a majority of the whole; a communication and concert result from the form of government itself; and there is nothing to check the inducements to sacrifice the weaker party or an obnoxious individual. Hence it is that such democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention; have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their death. Theoretic politicians, who have patronized this species of government have erroneously supposed that by reducing mankind to a perfect equality in their political rights, they would, at the same time, be perfectly equalized and assimilated in their possessions, their opinions, and their passions.¹

Forgive me for the length of this brilliant quotation, but it seems to me that once we share this view, it is possible to start being optimistic, not only with the Cuban transition but with the necessary transition of

the rest of the continent. And we may be optimistic because then it is not nature but a system that condemns us to the chains of oppression and poverty. Once we accept this spirit, we can start the cultural process of developing our virtues in the same way the Americans did.

Most unfortunately our perceptions of ourselves have gone from one extreme to the other. We have thought that we were superior souls endowed with generous feelings, not contaminated by the materialism that appears to affect the Americans. That was the approach of the Uruguayan Rodó in his *Ariel*, where he associated us to Ariel and the Americans to Calibán. None other than our José Martí had previously thought in those romantic terms, and so we learned to compensate our social failures with the conviction that that was the cost of our spiritual superiority. If that were the case, there would not be a solution to our maladies, because that would imply the selling of our soul to the devil. And talking about the devil, there is another explanation for our failures that was proposed by Max Webber concerning the apparent material superiority of Protestantism over Catholicism. If religion were the cause of differences in economic and political success, I would say that there is no hope for any successful transition.

My contention is that there is hope precisely because neither one of the above explanations is valid. On the one hand, there is no conflict between spirituality as such and material well-being, and it is not true that we are more spiritual than the Americans. On the other hand, the Webberian explanation clashes with European history, since capitalism was developed in England and not in Luther's Germany. Allow me to say that Argentina was during the second part of the 19th Century the main contradiction to Webber's theory. Without changing its religion, Argentina was ahead of other Anglo-Saxon and Protestant countries like Canada and Australia.

Where, then, lies the reason for the different results in the United States and Latin America? Before answering this key question, let me cross the Atlantic and remind you about European history. It was only after the Glorious Revolution in 1688 that the British started to liberate themselves from the oppression of the Tudors and the Stuarts, as David Hume showed in his *History of England*. Moreover, we should remember that in the Second World War, the Europeans offered the world to be Nazis or Communists, and democracy got there with the Sherman tanks.

After these historical reflections, I may answer the question about the reasons for the different performances. The origin of these different historical developments is found in the realm of ethics and its foundations. We should therefore start with what may be considered the foundations of ethics, Plato's *Phaedrus*. There, Plato states that the soul² is divided in three parts: a white horse, a black horse and a charioteer. The white horse is supposed to represent goodness in the sense of reason, whereas the black horse is madness as a result of passions. This dichotomy of good and evil is a tergiversation of human nature that most unfortunately has come to our days through the influence of Kantian moral philosophy as expressed in the categorical imperative.

It was Aristotle, however, the first philosopher, who challenged the Platonic approach to moral rationalism. In his *Nicomachean Ethics* he admits that judgement "is distinguished by its falsity or truth not by its badness or goodness."³ Then, it is most important to distinguish morality from reason, as Hume clearly explained when he wrote:

Since morals, therefore, have an influence on the actions and affections, it follows that they cannot be derived from reason and that because reason alone, as we have already proved, can never have any such influence. Morals excite passions, and produce or prevent actions. Reason is utterly impotent in this partic-

1. James Madison, *The Federalist Papers: Letter 10*.

2. Plato, *Phaedrus*. This expression is in the words of Socrates.

3. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*.

ular. The rules of morality therefore are not the conclusions of our reason.⁴

In this approach—that coincides with Aristotle’s—Hume recognizes the complexity of human nature, where passions (or feelings) are parts of humanity as much as reason and not its base animal side. Hume repeats Aristotle’s words when he says: “Reason is the discovery of truth or falsehood... Moral distinctions, therefore, are not the offspring of reason.” It is in this sense that Alfonse de Lamartine in his *The History of the Girondins* wrote with respect to the crimes during the French Revolution: “The theories which revolt the consciousness are just spiritual paradoxes in service of the aberrations of the heart... Everything that curtails part of man’s sensibility, deprives him of a part of his true greatness.”⁵

Here we have what we may consider the ethical *divortium aquarium* that arose from the enlightenment, which in Kant’s words, “was man’s emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one’s own understanding without the guidance of another.”⁶ In this definition we have the origin of what Karl Popper called epistemological optimism, which was the starting point of the development of knowledge and science. Unfortunately, from Descartes onward, there was rationalism, which meant the absolutization of reason as the substitute for truth. The main offspring of this absolutization of reason was the rationalization of morality in the hands of Kant, that brought us back to the principles of Plato *Phaedrus* and to what we consider a denaturalization of humanity.

In his *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant states:

From what has been said, it is clear that all moral conceptions have their seat and origin completely a priori in the reason, and that, moreover, in the commonest

reason just as truly as in that which is in the highest degree speculative; that they cannot be obtained by abstraction from any empirical, and therefore mainly contingent, knowledge.⁷

From this premise Kant concluded that principles dictated by reason “must have their source wholly a priori and thence their commanding authority, expecting everything from the supremacy of the law and the due respect for it, nothing from inclination, or else condemning the man to self-contempt and inward abhorrence.”⁸ It is with respect to this conclusion, according to which man becomes an automaton of pure reason, without feelings, that Ayn Rand wisely condemned it by saying that “what Kant propounded was full, total abject selflessness: he held that action is moral only if you perform it out of a sense of duty and derive no benefit from it of any kind, neither material nor spiritual: if you derive any benefit, your action is not moral any longer. This is the ultimate form of demanding that man turn himself into a shmoo.”⁹ And then she concluded that an unpracticable morality becomes an excuse for any practice. I am not going to insist on Ayn Rand’s analysis of Kant’s moral philosophy, but it should be acknowledged that it is the antithesis of the one that is at the heart of the ethical recognition of individual rights.

UNIVERSALS AND POLITICS

The second divergence in the so-called Western civilization relates to universals. This is a major issue that started in Greece and has lasted to our days. It has been ignored as a consequence of the apparent difficulty in understanding the meaning of universals and its necessary political implications.

Let us start by explaining the nature of the universals issue. It is not my purpose to delve into the ontological question as such, but only about its implications

4. David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, Book III of Morals.

5. Alfonse de Lamartine, *The History of the Girondins*.

6. Emmanuel Kant, *What is the Enlightenment?*

7. Emmanuel Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*.

8. Emmanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*.

9. Ayn Rand, *Philosophy—Who needs it. Faith and Force*.

in politics. Notwithstanding, it is necessary to know the nature of the argument in order to understand its political implications. Since Plato, some argued that universals, or so-called essences, were real and a condition for the existence of particulars. That was the position maintained by the realists. On the other side of the argument was the nominalist position, which maintained that universals were only nominal abstractions to better understand the real nature of the particulars. But as Tocqueville once said: “general ideas are not a proof of the strength of human intelligence, but its weakness, because there are no equal beings in nature, no identical facts.”¹⁰

There are profound political implications resulting from these two different approaches to the nature of the universals. What we may call the Franco-Germanic political philosophy, after Rousseau, believes in universal realism whereas the Anglo-American political philosophy is based on the nominalist approach. It was John Locke who in his *Second Treatise of Civil Government* challenged what may be considered the assumed perfection of the universals.

In his *First Treatise of Government* Locke had already denied the divine right of monarchs, but in this case he apparently was arguing against the Leviathan theory of Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes had tried to justify the necessity of absolute power of the monarchs in order to control man’s unsocial nature. So he insisted in the abstract reality of the Leviathan, which in my view he associated with Elizabeth I’s pattern of behavior and defined it as the mortal god inspired by the immortal one. It is obvious that Locke argument in this case was more related to Hobbes’ contention and he said:

But I shall desire those who make this objection to remember that absolute monarchs are but men; and if government is to be the remedy of those evils which necessarily follows from men being judges in their own cases, and the state of nature is therefore not to be endured, I desire to know what kind of govern-

ment that is and how much better it is than the state of nature, when one man commanding a multitude has the liberty to be judged in his own case, and may do to all his subjects whatever he pleases without the least question or control of those who execute his pleasure... As if when men, quitting the state of nature entered into society, they agreed that all of them but one should be under the restraint of laws; but that he should still retain all the liberty of the state of nature, increased with power, and made licentious by impunity. This is to think that men are so foolish that they take care to avoid what mischiefs may be done them by polecats or foxes, but are content, nay, think it safety, to be devoured by lions.¹¹

In the above contention Locke gives the major reasons for the need to limit political power, such as by the law, which would guarantee freedom through the limitation of powers. About 80 years later, Jean Jacques Rousseau overcoming in some sense what I consider his romantic period of the *Discourse on Inequality* and his love for the “noble savage,” entered the rationalist school and published *The Social Contract*. Coming from the antipodes of Hobbes’ views respecting human nature, Rousseau arrives at similar conclusions in his concept of sovereignty and the general will. So he says: “Just as nature gives each man absolute power over the parts of his body, the social pact gives the body politic absolute power over its members, and it is this same power which under this direction of the general will, bears the name of sovereignty...”¹²

Sovereignty is the new name of the Leviathan, and through it we return to the obvious realism of the universals as it is well expressed by Rousseau in his anthropomorphism of the sovereignty. We perceive there that rational approach which gives to the body politic the nature of the real men who compose it, and in so doing men become just a part of the universal that is the sovereignty. Hence Rosseau comes to the conclusion that the very idea of the distribution of power is a fallacy of composition that leads to

10. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*.

11. John Locke, *The Second Treatise of Civil Government*.

12. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*.

nowhere and so he says: “The sovereign, being formed only by the individuals who compose it, neither has nor can have any interest contrary to theirs; consequently there is no need for the sovereign power to give guarantees to the subjects, because it is impossible for the body to want to harm all its members...”¹³ According to the above principle, he rejects the necessity to divide sovereignty, against the best judgements of Locke and Montesquieu. Then as sovereignty is indivisible, he says that those authors “make the sovereign a fantastic being put together from various bits and pieces; it is as if they composed man of several bodies, each one with eyes, arms or feet and nothing more... After having dismembered the social body by a sleigh of hand trick worthy of a fair, they reassemble the pieces in a manner known only to themselves.”¹⁴

The above quotations give the essence of what has been called “reason of state” (*raison d'état*), which is evidently the source of the tyranny, since the sovereignty is provided with impunity and the false assumption that it cannot do wrong to the individuals and has no interest but the common one. Following Rousseau came Kant, who considered Rousseau the Newton of Moral Sciences. So in his *Theory of Right*, which is part of *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant expands on the impunity of sovereignty following Rousseau. So he says: “The legislative power can belong only to the united will of the people. For since all right is supposed to emanate from this power, the laws it gives must be absolutely incapable of doing anyone an injustice.”¹⁵ We can see that Kant has now included another universal as the source of political power: the people. So we have gone three hundred and sixty degrees back—from the divine right of the monarchs we have fallen into the hands of the divine rights of the people.

Notwithstanding Kant's apparent acceptance of the division of power, that does not diminish his decisive acknowledgement of the prerogatives of the supreme power. Forgive me for this long quotation but I think that Kant's words on political realm are the source of the rational absolutism that was the philosophical foundation of the totalitarian systems which became the Atilas of the 20th Century. Kant says:

For since the people must clearly be considered as united under a general legislative will before they can pass rightful judgement upon the highest power within the state, they cannot pass any judgement other than that which is willed by the current head of state. A law which is so sacred that it is practically a crime even to cast doubt upon it and thus to suspend its effectiveness for even an instant, cannot be thought of as coming from human beings, but from some infallible supreme legislator. That is what is meant by the saying that “all authority comes from God,” which is not a historical derivation of the civil constitution but an idea expressed as a practical principle of reason. ... From this follows the proposition that the sovereign of a state has only rights in relation to the subject, and no (coercive) duties... Indeed even the actual constitution cannot contain any article which might make it possible for some power within the state to resist or hold in check the supreme executive in cases where he violates the constitutional laws.¹⁶

It is obvious that the above principles are the fundamental basis of the absolutism that finally through Hegel and Marx gave rise to the totalitarian regimes of the Nazis and the Communists as the successors of the Jacobins who were entitled to the supreme power under the aegis of the goddess reason. Evidently this philosophy is the antithesis of the principles that are at the base of the liberal or open society as expressed most notably by Locke and Hume. Coming back to the *Second Treatise of Civil Government* one can read there the following: “This freedom from absolute, arbitrary power is so necessary to, and closely joined with a man's preservation, that he cannot part with it

13. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*.

14. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*.

15. Emmanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals; The Theory of Right*.

16. Emmanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals; The Theory of Right*.

but by what forfeits his preservation and his life together.”¹⁷ Locke, then, with full consciousness of the human character of governments and legislations, completely disagrees with the idea of a supreme and arbitrary power and he defends the rights of the subjects against the arbitrariness of governments. So he says: “the legislative or supreme authority cannot assume to itself a power to rule by extemporary arbitrary decrees, but is bound to dispense justice and decide the right of the subjects by promulgated standing laws and known authorized judges. ... Whereas by supposing they have given up themselves to the absolute arbitrary power and will of a legislator, they have disarmed themselves and armed him to make a prey of them when he pleases.”¹⁸

We can see that this approach is the opposite of the conceptual Leviathan arising from the political theories of Hobbes, Rousseau and Kant. Locke is even more specific in favor of the rights of the subjects when he wrote: “The supreme power cannot take from any man any part of his property without his own consent... Hence, it is a mistake to think, that the supreme or legislative power of any commonwealth can do what it will, and dispose of the estates of the subject arbitrarily or take any part of them at pleasure.”¹⁹ The very idea that the nature of government is sustained on the necessity to avoid the possibility that anyone could be judged in his own case, means that rights exist as such before government. Then it is the obligation of governments to protect those rights, which are life, liberty, property and the right of men to the pursuance of their own happiness. These rights, as Ayn Rand said, have been ignored by the Europeans who believe in the reason of state.

PRIVATE AND GENERAL INTEREST

The other basic question defining the difference between the open society and the totalitarian system is the moral nature of the private interest. In the previ-

ous section we explained the political implications of the arguments with respect to the real or nominal nature of the universals. Here we will analyze the political implications of the moral qualifications of the private interests with respect to the general interest.

This issue is deeply related to the controversy about the universals since the realism position is based on the assumption that governments are free from man’s frailty, which appears to be present only in private interests. It is obvious that Locke’s appreciation of individual rights as a precondition for freedom necessarily recognizes the *juris tantum* morality of private interest. We may say that the mere idea of individual rights is the juridical expression of the moral qualification of private interest.

Starting with Hobbes, the assumption that man is a wolf-man, is actually recognition that there is no rationality or moral content in private interest. This is so even though Hobbes considered that absolute power was a necessary condition for the defense of private rights. At the same time, his apparent adherence to nominalism is disqualified as such by his Leviathan, which ignores the private interest that prevails in absolute power. On the other side of the channel, Jean Jacques Rousseau, based on the opposite assumption of human nature, arrived at similar conclusions with respect to the antagonism between private and general interest. Rousseau had previously arrived at the conclusion that man’s nature had been corrupted by society as he explained in his *Discourse*, “Has the Revolution of the arts and sciences been conducive to the purification of morals?” and his response in the negative. Later, in his *Discourse on Inequality Among Men*, he blamed private property for that. Founded on these two assumptions, he wrote the *Social Contract*, where he clearly established the necessary antagonism between private and general interests. He wrote: “For an individual will by its na-

17. John Locke, *Second Treatise of Civil Government*.

18. John Locke, *Second Treatise of Civil Government*.

19. John Locke, *Second Treatise of Civil Government*.

ture tends to partiality, and the general will tends toward equality.”²⁰

Hence Rousseau contends that the “social pact requires each individual to relinquish only that part of his power, possessions and freedom which is important for the community to control; but it must also be acknowledged that the sovereign is the sole judge of that importance.”²¹ Based on his contention, he asserts that through the absolutism of the sovereignty, the individual will exchange independence for security. This is the opposite of Locke’s conclusion with respect to the necessary limits to political power in order to retain individual freedom.

But more than that, Rousseau is the originator of the idea that for society to survive, it is necessary to change human nature, or what later was proclaimed by the Marxists as the necessity to create a new man. Rousseau wrote: “Anyone who dares to undertake the task of instituting a nation must feel himself capable of changing human nature, so to speak; of transforming each individual who by himself is a complete and solitary whole into a part of a greater whole from which he in a sense receives his life and his being.”²² So Rousseau, by rejecting human nature as such, not only denies the morality of private interest, but transfers the very reason to exist to a universal which may be denominated the state or the nation. Hence, the individual has no rights per se but only privileges granted by the sovereignty.

As Kant later contended, Rousseau thinks that “the forces that move the state are then simple and vigorous: its principles are clear and illuminating; there are no tangled, conflicting interests; the common good is always so obvious that it can be seen by anyone with common sense.” Here we find the origin of Kant’s moral philosophy and hence the categorical impera-

tive. Again, Rousseau considers that in this assumed antagonism between private and general interests: “The better the state is constituted, the more public affairs take precedence over private business in the minds of citizens.”²³ This is certainly the starting point for the deification of the state that through Kant reaches its ultimate height in Hegel’s mind. And for that very reason Rousseau also thought that “the supreme authority can no more be modified than alienated; to limit it is to destroy it. It is absurd and contradictory that the sovereign should give itself a superior.”²⁴ In this assumption, Rousseau gave up any role for the rule of law and, of course, there is no role for a Supreme Court as a guardian of individual rights.

Standing on the shoulders of Rousseau and Kant, Hegel developed further the absolutism of power through the final deification of the state. According to Karl Popper, Hegel’s radical collectivism where the state is everything and the individual nothing comes from Plato, but I think that he owes even more to Rousseau’s and Kant’s ideas on rationality and morality. It was Kant in his *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* who first developed the idea of reason in history and the antagonism as the dialectical dynamics of history. He wrote there: “The only way out for the philosopher, since he cannot assume that mankind follows any rational purpose of its own in its collective actions, is for him to attempt to discover a purpose in nature behind the senseless course of human events, and decide whether it is after all possible to formulated in terms of a definite plan of nature a history of creatures who act without a plan of their own,”²⁵ and in his fourth proposition he writes: “the means which nature employs to bring about the development of innate capacities is that of antagonism within society in so far

20. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*.

21. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*.

22. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*.

23. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*.

24. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*.

25. Emmanuel Kant, *Idea for Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*.

as this antagonism becomes in the long run the cause of a law governed social order.”²⁶

There is no doubt that it was from Rousseau’s and Kant’s thinking that Hegel developed his philosophy of history as well as his philosophy of state, which are decidedly intermingled through the dialectical reason. He wrote: “The universal is to be found in the state; the state is the Divine Idea as it exists on earth ... the State is the march of God through the world.”²⁷ Hegel established the absolutism of reason and rationalized collectivism through the state and the assumed morality of bureaucracies as representatives of the general interest against what he called the concupiscence of the corporations. That is the State is the very idea of ethics, and in his philosophy of right he says: “The State is the actuality of the ethical Idea.” Following this statement, he disqualifies private interest and says: “If the state is confused with civil society and if its specific end is laid down as the security and protection of property and personal freedom, then the interest of the individuals as such becomes the ultimate end of their association and it follows that membership of the state is something optional.”²⁸

That is why only those who care for the general interest are moral, and that is the case of the bureaucracy that he calls the universal class. He wrote: “The universal class, as more precisely the class of civil servants, must purely in virtue of its character as universal, have the universal as the end of its essential activity.”²⁹ It is not the purpose of this paper to analyze all Hegel’s philosophy, but only those aspects that relate to the idea of the morality of private interest and the consequent rights of individuals. For that purpose it is important to remember his theory of alienation according to which existence is perceived as self-conscience: “This conscience implies the dual-

ism of men between the finite and the infinite, between the particular and the universal. So the individual finds a tension between his own being and he as part of a totality which is his nature as a citizen.”³⁰ That means that he faces a world in which he is the other, so he is objectified and he feels alienated in society.

Among other considerations concerning what Hegel calls the negation of the negation by accepting the phenomenological character of the world, he sustains that the state is that rationality which represents the absolute spirit and subsumes the individual in the dialectical designs of the Idea. We can see in this philosophy the rejection of individual rights and in particular the right of men to the pursuance of their own happiness. It also ignores the real human nature in favor of the rationalization that depriving man of his right to the pursuance of happiness actually destroys the possibility of freedom and then of the creation of wealth.

This moral philosophy is exactly the opposite of Hume’s approach, according to which reason has nothing to do with morality that is in the realm of passions. So he contends that: “For whether the passion of self-interest be esteemed vicious or virtuous, it is all a case; since itself alone restrains it. So that if it be virtuous, men become social by their virtue; if vicious, their vice has the same effect.”³¹ Given this realism of human nature, Hume distinguishes between morality and justice and so he sustains that the stability of society depends on the stability of possession, the transference by consent and the fulfillment of promises.

Moreover, Hume realizes that if men were benevolent and nature generous, the very idea of justice would disappear, because it would become useless. That is why he also states very clearly that “in gener-

26. Emmanuel Kant, *Idea for Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*.

27. Wilhelm Hegel, *The Theory of the State*.

28. Wilhelm Hegel, *The Theory of the State*.

29. Wilhelm Hegel, *The Theory of the State*.

30. Wilhelm Hegel, *The Phenomenology of the Spirit*.

31. David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*.

al, it may be affirmed that there is no such a passion in human minds, as the love of a mankind merely as such, independent of personal qualities of services or of relations to ourselves. It is true that there is no human and indeed no sensible creature whose happiness or misery does not in some measure affect us when brought near to us and represented in lively colors.”³² To pretend otherwise is to universalize particular feelings that actually exist in human nature. That is a rationalization as a sort of political romanticism that has been the source of much demagoguery in the struggle for power.

THE MARXIAN APPROACH

It was Karl Marx who, using Hegel’s dialectics, arrived at opposite philosophical conclusions that in practice developed into another totalitarian system. It was Engels who said that since Hegel had reached the ultimate heights of German philosophy, the only choice was to discuss him from within his system. Hence Marx tried and succeeded in placing Hegel’s philosophy upside down. As Von Mises once wrote, Marx believed that he knew better than Hegel the wishes of the Geist. So accepting Hegel’s and Kant’s antagonism as the driving force of history, Marx contended that actually world history was not the war among the states but the class struggle.

Hegel took to the logical conclusion Kant’s theory of antagonism and forecasted a never-ending dialectical process of war among states and the winner was the one who better read God’s wishes. Marx, on the other hand, decided that history has nothing to do with God, and the dialectical process of antagonism between classes will ultimately reach a synthesis in which the proletariat will be the real universal. That was the final stage of communism, in which freedom had been reached overcoming scarcity, which was not a natural fact but the result of a particular way of production established by the bourgeoisie. That was the theory of exploitation of man by man, according to which the workers were deprived of the value of their product by the capitalist.

For Marx, then, Hegel’s theory of State was another philosophical rationalization that tried to explain and justify the actual phenomenological situation. In his *Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of the State*, Marx argues that the state is the proof of the antagonism of classes and it represents the machinery to impose the freedom of the bourgeoisie at the expense of the exploitation of the labor class. At the same time, Marx criticizes the assumed ethics of the bureaucracy as representative of the general interest. He wrote: “Transcendence of bureaucracy can mean only that the universal interest becomes the particular interest in actuality and not as with Hegel merely thought and abstraction. This is possible only when the particular interest becomes universal. ... For the individual bureaucrat, the state purpose becomes his private purpose of hunting for a higher position and making a career for himself.”³³ Thus, Marx’s philosophy is not only anarchical, but actually it is dictatorial, as was showed in theory and practice by Lenin.

The fundamental aspect of Marxism is its polylogism and its false theory of exploitation as the basis of private property. So it comes out to be another kind of collectivism that incorporates all the ethical assumptions respecting to which men nature should be superseded by the new man who will overcome scarcity in a world of true freedom. This kind of heaven on earth was to come after the dictatorship of the proletariat had expropriated the expropriators. As Karl Popper said, Marx philosophy was the worst kind of historicism or historical determinism. It still prevails in the world in spite of the implosion of the Soviet empire and the crumbling of the Berlin wall.

Social democracy, as presented by Eduard Bernstein, has been the successor of the original revolutionary Marxism. After been saved by the Americans of Nazism and Communism in the Second World War and during the so called Cold War, universal suffrage as had been forecasted by Bernstein in the *The Revolutions of Socialism* has succeeded and social democracy prevails in Europe, even with governments that

32. David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*.

33. Karl Marx, *Criticism of Hegel: Civil Society and Bureaucracy*.

are supposed to be of the right. So we cannot be surprised by the present antagonism between Europe and the United States, which is just a reflection of the actual profound differences in political philosophies.

CONSTITUTIONALISM VS. MAJORITY RULE

In the previous sections, we have explained the two opposite political and moral philosophies which arose from the enlightenment and which may be called collectivism and individualism. Here we are going to analyze the important contribution of American political philosophy, which made the United States the greatest society in history in only two hundred years. We may say that it was in the United States where the fundamental principles of constitutionalism were developed. In *The Federalist Papers* we find the fundamental tenets of a Republic subject to the rule of law. Those principles, which are the basis of American society, are mainly ignored or even worse despised and hated in the rest of the world, including Latin America.

The actual meaning of the Rule of Law is the change in the relationship of the government with the governed, that is, the citizens. Thus, the Rule of Law is the antithesis of the Reason of State and according to it, there is a major change with respect to the role governments and the limits of political power. As Madison said: "In Europe charters of liberty have been granted by power. America has set out the example ... on charters of power granted by liberty."

The most important character of the American Republic is the Bill of Rights, which is based on the assumption that the end of governments is justice, which is the protection of individual rights. The most distinguished characteristic of the American democratic process is the consciousness of human frailty. So in Letter 2 of the *Federalist Papers*, Alexander Hamilton wrote: "... a dangerous ambition more often lurks behind the specious mask of zeal for the rights of the people."³⁴ Regarding this perception of human nature, Jack N. Raskove in his *Original*

Meanings says with respect to Madison: "It took a decade of experience under the state constitution to expose the triple danger that so alarmed Madison in 1787: first, that the abuse of legislative power was more ominous than arbitrary acts of the executive; second, that the true problem of rights was less to protect the ruled from their rulers than to defend minorities and individuals against factious popular majorities acting through government; and third, that agencies of central government were less dangerous than state and local despotism."³⁵

We can see then that the major concern of the Founding Fathers was the protection of individual rights, which were life, liberty, property and the right of men to the pursuance of their own happiness. This last right, which has been ignored or disqualified in the rest of the world (Europe and Latin America included) is of major moral importance, because this is the ethical admission of private interests. Never in the minds of the Founding Fathers was the idea that they were creating an economic system denominated capitalism, but a new political organization in which the major contribution was the consciousness of human frailty, as had been acknowledged by Christianity.

This principle was certainly derived from Hume's moral philosophy, who wrote: "But it is evident, that the only cause why the extensive generosity of man, and the perfect abundance of everything, would destroy the very idea of justice is because they render it useless."³⁶ On the basis of this analysis, as well as Locke's "discovery" of the human nature of monarchs, Madison wrote in Letter 51 of *The Federalist Papers*:

But what is government itself but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men

34. Alexander Hamilton, *The Federalist Papers: Letter 2*.

35. Jack N. Raskove, *Original Meanings*.

36. David Hume, *A Treatise on Justice*.

the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is no doubt the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions.³⁷

In the above quotation we may find the evident difference between the American and the Franco-German political and moral philosophy, as expressed by Montesquieu, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel and finally Marx. Here we find the fundamentals of such philosophy. In the first place, the recognition of the human frailty in both the governors and the governed. That is why governments are needed in the first instance, because as Locke said, without law there is no freedom, because the very idea of justice is freedom under the law. But at the same time—and this is the Anglo-American contribution to political philosophy—there is self-control of the government through the role of the Supreme Court as the guarantor of individual rights. That is, the essence of the rule of law is that it is applicable also to the government, which is not an entelechy but an administration of men over men.

Another important aspect is the relative importance given to universal suffrage as a means to control the government and so Madison also says: “In a society under the form of which the stronger faction can readily unite and oppress the weaker, anarchy may as truly be said to reign as in a state of nature, where the weaker individual is not secured against the violence of the stronger.”³⁸ It is evident, then, that the system is based on the assumption that majorities cannot violate individual rights, as Locke had postulated, and so the very idea of constitutional rights is the limit of the power of the majority. When majorities rule, there is no right and in fact there is no constitution.

Moreover, Madison had expressed the need for additional precaution to limit political power. He said: “In a free government, the security for civil rights must be the same as for religious rights. It consists in the one case in the multiplicity of interest and in the other, in the multiplicity of sects.”³⁹ We can see in this citation the different approach with respect to private interest that is not contrary to the general interest. That is, the morality implied in private interest becomes the rationale for the protection of civil rights, against the arbitrariness of majorities acting through governments.

At the same time, religious liberty was accepted on similar basis. This was the first time that a country went from religious tolerance to liberty, as it accepted the wisdom of Adam Smith who in his *The Wealth of Nations* had established the principle that religious freedom depends on the multiplicity of sects. This was also a major achievement in the road to the open society because religion had been the source of dictatorial governments. In that sense, Adam Smith had said in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*:

The administration of the great system of the universe, however, the care of the universal happiness of all rational and sensible beings, is the business of God and not of man. To man is allotted a much humbler department, but one much more suitable to the weakness of his powers, and to the narrowness of his comprehension; the care of his own happiness.⁴⁰

Again, the right of man to the pursuance of happiness is a moral principle, and it is the obligation of the government to protect that right. This is the opposite of the unlimited rights of the majorities, which has been the main character of the democratic processes in Latin America, and that is why Madison also said: “An elective despotism is not the government we fought for.”⁴¹

37. James Madison, *The Federalist Papers: Letter 51*.

38. James Madison, *The Federalist Papers: Letter 51*.

39. James Madison, *The Federalist Papers: Letter 51*.

40. Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*.

41. James Madison, *The Federalist Papers: Letter 48*.

We see, then, that the Constitution or even the Bill of Rights are the limits of political power. And we can say that freedom is no more than the limitation of political power. Hence, as Locke had already said in his *Second Treatise of Civil Government*, the legislative could not be arbitrary with respect to the lives and fortunes of the people. Any law that violates the principles established in the Bill of Rights is necessarily unconstitutional. In that sense, Alexander Hamilton in Letter 78 of *The Federalist Paper* says: “No legislative act therefore contrary to the Constitution can be valid. To deny this would be to affirm that the deputy is greater than his principal; that the servant is above his master; that the representatives of the people are superior to the people themselves.”⁴² And Hamilton continues: “A constitution is in fact, and must be, regarded by judges as a fundamental law.” This is the principle that actually decided the viability of democratic governments, and it was decided as such in 1803 by John Marshall in the famous case *Marbury v. Madison*. There he established:

... all those who have framed written constitutions contemplate them as forming the fundamental and paramount law of the nation, and consequently the theory of every such government must be that an act of the Legislature, repugnant to the Constitution, is void. ... It is, emphatically, the province and duty of the Judicial Department to say what the law is. Those who apply the rule to particular cases must, of necessity, expound and interpret that rule. If two laws conflict with each other, the courts must decide on the operation of each. ... If, then, the courts are to regard the Constitution, and the Constitution is superior to any ordinary act of the legislature, the Constitution, and not such ordinary act, must govern the case to which they both apply.⁴³

THE ROAD TO LIBERATE LATIN AMERICA FROM ITS LIBERATORS

In 1910 Luis Alberto de Herrera wrote a book, *La Revolución Francesa y Sudamérica*, and there he said: “The inflexible dogmas of the French Revolution

commanded to collide against reality.⁴⁴ On its behalf, and in order, every South American society has fallen and continues falling in the abyss of institutional fraud, which leads to civil war.” *Mutatis mutandi* this observation more than explains the continuing failures of democratic processes in Latin America during the twentieth century, which appear to continue in the third millennium.

Evidently, as Herrera had discovered, our historical failures result from the original error of confusing the American Revolution with the French Revolution, which were actually antithetical. More than that, we also ignored the so-called Glorious Revolution of 1688 in Great Britain, led by the sound principles of John Locke, as expressed in his *Second Treatise of Civil Government* as well as the *Letter Concerning Toleration*. Hence, democracy in Latin America—under the aegis of the *Social Contract*—was the realm of majority rule, ignoring the major achievement of civilization which was the recognition of individual rights: “life, liberty, property and the pursuance of happiness.”

The alternative to the *Social Contract*, which through the *Communist Manifesto* led to communism, was the *Leviathan* which was represented as expressed by Thomas Hobbes by the state which was the “mortal god as inspired by the immortal God.” Latin America then changed, through its independence, from the divine rights of monarchs to the divine rights of the people. No one realized the important finding of Locke regarding the apparently historically-ignored fact that monarchs were also men.

That was the confusion that so wisely explained Juan Bautista Alberdi in his *Conferencia de Luz del Día* between external freedom (independence) and domestic freedom as individual freedom. So he said: “What is the condition of the Latin liberty? Is the liberty of all refunded and consolidated in one single collective and solidary liberty, that is exclusively exercised by an emperor or a liberator czar? It is the liberty of the

42. Alexander Hamilton, *The Federalist Papers: Letter 78*.

43. John Marshall, *Marbury vs. Madison*.

44. Luis Alberto de Herrera, *La Revolución Francesa y Sudamérica*.

country personalized in the government and the entire government personalized in one man.”⁴⁵ And Alberdi suggested: “South America will be free when it becomes free from its liberators.” This distinction between external freedom or independence from foreign governments and internal freedom as individual rights is of major importance to understand the causes of domestic failures in Latin America. As an example we should realize that Puerto Rico is not independent, but the Puerto Ricans are free, whereas Cuba is independent but the Cubans are not free.

Evidently, the father of the Argentine Constitution of 1853 had realized the difference between Franco-German and Anglo-American political philosophies, which as Balint Vazonyi argued, are as different as day and night. Unfortunately, not even at this stage of history have we realized this obvious opposition and we insist in the fallacy of shared values in the history of Western Civilization. Argentina in 1853 chose the Anglo-American political philosophy and in only fifty years—at the beginning of the 20th century—developed as the eighth richest country of the world. That was not the case with the rest of the Latin American countries, which continued torn between the *Leviathan* and the *Social Contract*.

My major concern is that not only Latin America ignores the opposition between these philosophies, but that the whole world appears to have this philosophical confusion, as the so-called globalization becomes the new philosophy of history, which according to Fukuyama has led to the end of history. But we should remember that it was Emmanuel Kant who in his essay “What is Enlightenment?” said: “Enlightenment is man’s emergence from his self incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one’s own understanding without the guidance of another. The motto of Enlightenment is therefore ‘Sapere Aude.’ Have courage to use your own understanding.” Unfortunately, from that very motto surged what I have called the obscurantism of reason. That is, Cartesian rationalism, which postulated that at the end

reason was the unfailing way to truth. Then came the Kantian reason in history aside from reason in men’s minds and this was followed by the Hegelian dialectical process in which reason per se closed the gap between reality and rationality.

On the other side of the British Channel a different approach to the validity of reason, gave rise to a completely different and opposing view of human nature. Reason was another imperfect instrument to the difficult road to knowledge, which is always contingent. As Hume had said: “It is from the non-rational elements of our minds that men are saved from total skepticism.”⁴⁶ From the very source of superseding immaturity surged a different approach whose motto could be “non sapere aude.” That is, to acknowledge that we live in a world of uncertainty and that men’s frailty is a fact of nature and not the lack of courage to know.

Recent history throughout the 20th Century showed how these two opposing views of the world developed into the final antagonism between freedom and servitude. The Franco-German political philosophy, arising from “sapere aude” or what I have called the obscurantism of reason, gave rise to the oppressive ideologies of Nazism, Fascism and Marxism (Communism). Meanwhile, liberal democracy prevailed through the Anglo-American political philosophy under the consciousness of men’s fallibility.

Unfortunately, the demise of Communism in the Soviet Empire in no way determined the disappearance of Marxism. Social democracy is Marxism through Bernstein rather than Lenin. Hence we can see that in Europe, now including Great Britain through the Labour Party, social democracy and not liberal democracy is the new name of the game. Eduard Bernstein, who should be included as a “master thinker,” as la nouvelle droite called the German philosophers, wrote the main tenets of social democracy. In his *The Preconditions of Socialism*, Bernstein wrote: “Socialism was the legitimate heir of liberalism... there is no really liberal thought which does not also belong to

45. Juan Bautista Alberdi, *Conferencia de Luz del Día*.

46. David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*.

the elements of the ideas of socialism.” This is the greatest mistake of social democracy, because socialism is not the heir of liberalism but its antithesis, as Marx very well explained.

Liberalism in the Anglo-American philosophy is an ethical approach to society based on the awareness of the fallibility of human nature. It is for that very reason that liberalism proposes the limits to political power as a safeguard of individual rights. In that sense, civilization is a learning process of controlling the base passions of humanity through justice and property. It is not the reason in history as a fateful process of liberty based on the improvement of human nature. In contrast, Socialism is conceived as the historical process of liberation in order to overcome scarcity. This is the Marxian approach and it was later admitted by Bernstein himself.

That is what I have called the syncretism of Western philosophy that has politically developed in the so-called human rights. This divinization of humanity as such ignores man’s fallibility as recognized by the gospel. In this process, private interests are anathematized and the state as the representative of general interest becomes, in Hegelian terms, the “Divine idea as it exists on earth.” This concept, according to which the state monopolized morality, means that all idea of limited political power is actually precluded. By the same token, this monopolization of social morality by the state means the actual power of bureaucracy to violate individual rights in order to achieve equality through social rights. Hence, philosophical syncretism was politically transformed into the intermingling of individual rights and its opposite, the social rights or social privileges granted by political power.

The striving for equality through the manipulation of social rights, has produced the worst political mistake, which in the end means the legitimation of violence in the name of income equalization. As Karl Popper had said: “Utopianism is self defeating and it leads to violence.”⁴⁷ In my view, this political utopianism comes out of three different sources. The first

one is religious fanaticism; the second one is rationalism, which is what I have called the obscurantism of reason. This is the pretension that reason *per se* equals truth. And the third one is political romanticism, which ignores the Hume dictum respecting the fact that there is not such a thing as the love to humankind. Love is a particular feeling and political romanticism is the universalization of such feeling, as a categorical imperative. I may add a fourth source, which is the ignorance of the people, and the natural tendency to envy. That is why I have argued that the so-called globalization can hardly tend to a unified system of common interest, because what people learn through communications is precisely the huge differences in wealth and not its determinants. Little by little, the original European confusion between democracy and socialism, as developed since Montesquieu, degenerated into the political mess that has affected democracy in Latin America.

As had been brilliantly perceived by Herrera, French philosophical and political muddle as rationalized by the “Master Thinkers” has produced the ongoing civil war, whose worst result was the Cuban Revolution. An illuminating book by the Venezuelan Carlos Rangel, *From the Good Savage to the Good Revolutionary*, describes the political mythology that García Márquez defines as magic realism. But Rangel knows that we did not invent the myths, but inherited them from Europe, and so he says: “the fundamental myths of America are not American. They are myths created by the European imagination or they even came from afar, from the Judeo-Greek antiquity...”⁴⁸

Cuba, in my opinion, was not an exception in Latin America, but the final outcome of this political mythology confronted with reality, which ended in civil war. The difference is that in Cuba the guerrillas defeated the army, that was the exceptional circumstance. But actually it was not. In my view, there are two main reasons that explain why Cuba fell under communism.

47. Karl Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*.

48. Carlos Rangel, *Del Buen Salvaje al Buen Revolucionario*.

First, Cuba had enjoyed a very special economic relationship with the United States, which saved her from the poverty that other Latin American countries experienced and continue to experience on account of their own ignorance with respect to the main tenets of a Republic, which are individual rights. The stupidity was the same but, thanks to the Americans, we did not pay for it. So the main reason of our support of Castro's anti-Americanism was the gap between our relative wealth and the lack of knowledge about the reasons that created it. We believed ourselves to be above the other Latin Americans and of course we assumed that we could challenge the greatest civilization ever achieved in the history of mankind with no cost.

The second determinant of this fatal destiny was the fact that the Sergeant Fulgencio Batista and Saldívar had decapitated the Cuban army in 1933. The sergeants became generals and got power with the support of the revolutionaries. In 1959, the sergeants turned the power back to the revolutionaries thinking that they were going to share it, but actually they lost their heads. The United States had two opportunities to revert this setback to Western civilization, but the New Frontier—with Mr. John Fitzgerald Kennedy at the helm—decided to exchange crocodiles for missiles in what Paul Johnson defined as “America's suicide attempt.”

The lesson was learned in the rest of the continent, where the military, notwithstanding their political weaknesses, had been the one and only safeguard against the communist assault. At the same time that the guerrillas lost the war against the Army in Latin America, the left, under the umbrella of the European social democracy, is winning the peace and the so-called populism appears to be the alternative to the economic failure of the pejorative misnomer of neoliberalism. The latter is the democratic attempt to liberalize and stabilize the economy and privatize state enterprises.

Apparently no one even tries to recognize that the only Latin American exception to this democratic failure has been the Chilean case. While Castro remains the very symbol of anti-imperialism, General Pinochet barely overcame the Europeans attempts to

imprison him while forgetting their own historical sins. His main fault was that he succeeded while all the other military governments failed. His success was so great that he changed the course of history of a country where, for the first time in the world, communism won a presidential election. Today Chile has become an example for the rest of the Latin American countries. But the left once again has succeeded in confusing the mind of the people, associating the militaries with the right and the right with capitalism in collusion with imperialism. In Europe they succeeded in confusing aristocracy with capitalism, when actually it was through capitalism that aristocracy lost power. Commerce and labor, which are the determinants of wealth, replaced war as the main object of the state.

We insist, however, in ignoring that the aristocratic character rests on the assumption that distribution, and not wealth creation, is the foundation of ethics. So we go back to square one, and private interests are a priori considered to be contrary to the so called common good and efficient production is pure materialism while distribution through political power is spiritualism. Thus, Hegel is back and the increase in government expenditures is the economic outcome of that ethical approach.

The irruption of the military into the Latin American political arena and uncontrolled inflation were considered the political and economic maladies that destroyed the natural well-being the Latin Americans deserved. The recovery of democracy and the economic stabilization that occurred during the 1990s while Latin America collapsed under political upheavals and deep recession has shown the fallacy of such assumption.

The political problem was not the rise of the military as such, just as inflation was not the economic problem. The rise of the military and inflation were the consequence of a deeper political and ethical problem, the lack of juridical security. That is, the ignorance of the rule of law, which is the respect of individual rights. Unfortunately the European example is more and more the main problem faced by the world, and in particular the Latin American countries, which tend to be a farse of the European trage-

dy. While the European economies, including France, Italy and Germany, collapse under the burden of an overwhelming welfare state, protectionism is again the main threat to the world economy. Socialism is a very expensive way of organizing production, and protectionism appears to be the only wise and ethical political solution. If the developed economies are fumbling under social democracy, it is not difficult to imagine that such a recipe is a great stumbling block to development.

The failure of the so-called neoliberalism was not the opening of the economy, or the privatization process as the left argues, but the impossibility to control government expenditures coupled with the inflexibility of the labor system. As long as we continue believing that distribution is ethical whereas the creation of wealth and profit is materialism, the producers of poverty will always get the votes to be in power. The very appeal of the distribution of wealth is the main cause of the unequal distribution of wealth as well as of the pauperization which comes about as a consequence not of capitalism, but of the corruption implied in socialism. As Marx brilliantly explained in his criticism to Hegel's *Theory of the State*, the bureaucrats convert their own private interest into general interests. Unfortunately, the so-called globalization is a fallacy, while communications have globalized information but not formation. The very system that produces the wealth that is known through the communication system is not only ignored, but resented, by the majority of the countries of the world and not least by the European Union, where social democracy prevails.

It is very important, then, to understand the real nature of the failure of the so-called neoliberalism, because otherwise the left will succeed in reverting to populism and violence. This lesson has to be learned more than anyone else by the International Monetary Fund, whose dogmatic approach to adjustment and monetary and fiscal equilibrium has been unable to solve the recent financial crisis in the world. I may say, then, that, as George Gilder explained in his

Wealth and Poverty, government expenditures are not part of the product, but a factor of production, in other words part of the cost of producing. Coming back to basics, macroeconomic theory has forgotten the fundamental source of wealth, which is microeconomic, and so Gilder says:

Sooner or later, the American liberals like the British Laborites are going to discover that monetary restrictions are a wonderful way to destroy the private sector while leaving government intact and offering pretexts for nationalizing industry. Since government has become a factor of production, the only way to diminish its impact on prices is to economize on it—just as one would economize on the use of land, labor or capital—by reducing its size or increasing its productivity.⁴⁹

And he continued: “It is not principally the federal deficit that causes inflation. If the deficit were closed by higher tax rates—and the money supply were held constant—the price level would likely rise in the orthodox way of the law of cost.” I would add that interest rates would also rise and a fundamental disequilibrium would be created as market interest rates are above the profitability of the business sector, or what Keynes called the marginal efficiency of capital.

In Argentina, we have experienced once and again the deleterious results of the attempts to compensate for the increase in government expenditures by higher taxes, monetary controls, and a fixed nominal exchange rate. The last experience of the so-called convertibility was worse than others because it lasted longer and while inflation is an equilibrating process of disequilibrium, real interest rates above the rate of return creates cumulative disequilibrium, which finally explodes and the economy collapses and ends up in a banking crisis. The problem is that utopianism determines the expansion of government expenditures, and monetary orthodoxy is the dogmatic rationalism that is tantamount to what I have called the obscurantism of reason. This lethal symbiosis of “solidarity” and “dogmatic rationalism” has been at the center of all of the recent financial crisis. We have acknowledge that once you cannot control govern-

49. George Gilder, *Wealth and Poverty*.

ment expenditures, you cannot control the nominal exchange rate or the money supply.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From what I have set out in previous sections, it is evident that the Cuban problem is not Castro but the final result of a rationalist ethic that necessarily leads to tyranny. That is, as Tocqueville had said: "It was believed that there was a love for freedom but it was discovered that only the master was hated." I think that this phrase summarizes the confusion that reigns in the world, and in particular among intellectuals, and not least the economists.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the implosion of the Soviet Empire has added to the reigning confusion about the new historical determinism contained in the so called globalization. This new historicism was presented by Francis Fukuyama in his *The End of History*, where misreading Hegel, he forecasted the end of history as a result of the final triumph of liberal democracy over socialism. According to Fukuyama, the ideological antagonism had ended in the opposite way than foreseen by Marx, and the so-called socialist synthesis had reverted to the capitalist antithesis. The history of our time shows that actually the crumbling of the Berlin Wall has been far from the final triumph of liberal democracy in the world. Even in Europe, the prevailing political system is social democracy, which is Marxism without revolution through universal suffrage. Another recent book which has certainly contributed to the confusion respecting globalization is Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations*. His theory is a reductionism which ignores the clash within the so-called Western civilization and to some extent confuses culture with civilization, reducing terrorism to religious causes.

The truth of the matter is that communications have globalized information, but ignore the formation required to reach the heights of civilization, which is the recognition of individual rights. Regardless of the universal ignorance about Marx's fundamental ideas, the rationalist ethics of the West intermingles with the religious fanaticism of the East. Latin America is evidently the realm of rational obscurantism, where individual rights are ignored in favor of so-called human rights, which include social rights that are actu-

ally privileges granted by governments ignoring the rule of law.

Widespread information regarding the wealth differentials globalizes the feeling of envy that leads to the justification of violence and terrorism. Castro will finally die, no doubt, but the problem that leads to tyranny will remain as long as we do not learn and teach the fundamental principles of the rule of law as the basis of a viable democracy, and not what Madison called an "elective despotism." As long as democracy in Latin America continues ignoring the rule of law in favor of majority rule, we will fail in our purpose of attaining freedom and well being. The Cuban experience in Florida should be an example of what can be achieved by Latin America provided that we accept the "rule of law." And the problems that Cuba will encounter after Castro will not be very different from those that Latin America as a whole, with the possible exception of Chile, is presently facing.

Majority rule based on fallacious rationalist ethics according to which there is an a priori contradiction between general and private interest, is the reason of the impunity of governments and the insecurity of rights. As increasing poverty will affect our economies, increasing envy will lead more and more to violence and terrorism. We have to acknowledge that poverty is not an economic problem, but a moral one, and unless we fight socialism in moral terms, proponents of socialism will keep the moral edge that leads to unlimited power and limited rights. That is, it will lead to oppression and actual inhumanization not because of neoliberalism, but for the lack of it.

Sovereignty and solidarity have been the main political instruments to achieve political power in the name of the nation and the people. To defeat them, it is of utmost importance to learn and preach the moral philosophy that sustains the rule of law. As long as we remain in this continent thinking that universal suffrage is the landmark of democracy, forgetting Madison's advice respecting auxiliary precautions to control the government, we should not be surprised by democratic failures. And let us not forget that socialism is not, as Eduard Bernstein pretended, the heir of liberalism (conservatism) but its ethical antithesis.