

LIBERALISM VS. LIBERTARISM

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The Social Market Economy is a moral idea:

- “If one of our pilgrims to Moscow and tourist *snob* [...] would come to tell us that in the communistic paradise would be a material abundance and that in our capitalistic hell would be the misery and an anti-economistic situation, there would be given the case to answer in good Geneva dialect “*tan pis*”, we are sorry, but this cannot impress us. Because not this we expect from the market economy. We expect from it first of all the achievement of super-economical ideals” (Ropke).

Hayek: Social justice?

- «mirage», «atavism», «great weasel word»
- «empty formula», «meaningless»
- It would lead to the “destruction of the indispensable environment in which the traditional moral values alone can flourish, namely personal freedom”.
- Social justice as (re-)distributive justice?

Ethical and juridical order:

- “The catastrophic error has been to considerate the market economy (or the economy of competition) as something autonomous which stands in itself, as a natural condition which has no need of help in assistance and defense, and to put him outside of the political sphere. It was an error to neglect the decisive importance of an ethical and juridical context of institutions which would be appropriate to the principles of the same economy” (Ropke).

Rights of society?

- “Society has its rights as they were individuated by the individual; but the exaggeration of the social rights in the collectivism is not less dangerous than the exaggeration of the individual rights which would become, in its extreme ends, anarchy” (Ropke).

What is the tradition of liberalism?

- “Liberalism in its essence is not [...] abandonment of Christianity, but its legitimate spiritual son, and only an extreme reduction of the historical perspectives can lead to confuse liberalism with libertinism. Rather it realizes in the field of social philosophy the best that three millenniums of occidental thought could have passed on: the idea of humanity, the right of nature, the culture of person and the sense of universality” (Ropke).

- “This abortive form of economy – the modern industrialized and financial capitalism with its very potent connections of capital and power, with its proletariat of the masses, its centralization, its gigantic cities and industrial zones – is not the form in which this economic system ought to be developed according to the proper natural laws. Therefore, it is in no case the creature of the historical fortune, so often cited, that the empty minds fantasize on, and it is not the technical power to what we would have to subordinate ourselves without any conditions [...]. It is the result of history how it is made by people who could have also regulate diversely: it is the result of a pre-liberal and feudal society, and in the end and more again of miscounseled lawgivers and lawyers” (Ropke).

1. competition

- “Not the economy of competition but the disregard of the rules of the game of competition by capitalism or historical liberalism of the 19th century has the major blame. [...] If you leave free every game to the laissez-faire laissez-passez, only the agreements and the breakdown of the few against the much, of the rich against the poor, of the strong against the fragile, of the smart against the naive. But this destructive critiques of the historical liberalism obligates only the return to the pure origins of the system of competition” (Einaudi).
- “If men who compete on the market – and on the market aim to profit – are not strongly conjunct with society by moral and social bounds, also the competition degenerates heavily” (Ropke).

2. anti-perfectism

- Antonio Rosmini
- The government “covers the surface of society with a network of small complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate, to rise above the crowd. The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided; men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting. Such a power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd” (Tocqueville).

3. rules

- «Because also the right of the free market economy knows the truth only in the framework of order. In the conflict between liberty and order, the absolute predominance is to the point of view of the order» (Bohm).

4. social justice and common good

- “Social justice means that the persons have to participate actively and productively at social life, and that society has the duty to make possible this participation for the individual” (Bishops USA).

Actual challenges

- Demographic problems
- Increasing unemployment
- Enviromental questions
- Sustainability

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