

Solidarity: A Key Word in Allende's Social Experiment.

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*I ask the indulgence of the children who may read this book for dedicating it to a grown-up. I have a serious reason: he is the best friend I have in the world. I have another reason: this grown-up understands everything, even books about children. I have a third reason: he lives in France where he is hungry and cold. He needs cheering up. If all these reasons are not enough, I will dedicate the book to the child from whom this grown-up grew. All grown-ups were once children--although few of them remember it. And so I correct my dedication: To Leon Werth
When He Was A Little Boy.
Antoine de Saint-Exupéry*

I.

Since I started practicing teaching in the Anglo Saxon world, first at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, later at the University of Oregon where I served as a TA while completing my doctoral research, and even later when I was hired to teach at Ohio University in the foothills of the Appalachian mountains, I have consistently heard from my students throughout the years and landscapes that our egotistic behaviors were due to our human nature. Such matter-of-fact and unproblematic assertions were repeated to me (and to you, I am sure) many times as if we actually had arrived at an agreement based on facts about the meaning of human nature. We can speculate about it, of course, but yet, we can never be certain. Moreover, how can we know about human nature if we have no clear or factual idea of the basic structure and meaning of life itself?

It is necessary to clarify that this way of approaching the human condition is mere "Doxa" (to appear, to seem like) not Sophos, or real wisdom, to paraphrase Socrates (470-399 BC). In other words, we are wrapped up in a historical worldview of opinions that we accept at face value because is functional to us (or for what encompasses us), and hence, it is taken without hesitation or any critical thinking (like water to a fish). So, in order to understand why an American student can say without hesitation that we are evil by nature, it is better not to take it at face value, but to look for some tradition able to substantiate this more or less articulated blind belief.

In order to better understand this issue, we need to revisit some of the foundational narratives of the West, such as the book of *Genesis*, where humans were expelled from the Garden of Eden for disobeying God's will by accepting temptation from an alien source and "eating" from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Also, since one of my goals is to investigate modernity's historical/ ideological phenomena, we should remember Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* to see how humans were portrayed as depraved beings with homicidal tendencies, incapable of living in a state of harmony and social freedom on their own, without state repression. Two centuries later, Rousseau attempted to disprove Hobbes' claims with his *Emile* (expecting him to be "good" without a community, i.e. a socially validated context, to show him the social way), but in fact, Rousseau's *Good Savage* experiment gave Hobbes more wit and weight to his patriarchal/ hierarchical argument than disproving him, making *Emile* the ultimate proof that we really do need to be supervised. We need the Law to avoid killing each other: the idea of the *good savage*, although "falsified" with his failed "*social experiment*", at least proved the good intentions of (how *civilized* they were) the Encyclopedists.

In the XIX century, England was at the center of the new cultural paradigm: the industrial paradigm that would profoundly revolutionize the world. Starting from the Industrial Revolution on, the whole agrarian/ slave model was replaced by one of industry, and every institution changed accordingly. By incorporating a *civilized* colonial approach (i.e., without the use of slavery) that was based on the agrarian paradigm and originated in Spain in 1492 to its new industrial economy, England became the "model nation". So, as they like to say, England also had to fulfill its obligations to its subjects and colonies, considering the never-before-seen economic power based in a variety of new energies (coal, steam, gas, electricity, and so on) and massive production of goods: in fact, England developed in great scale the capitalist financial *market* born in the Medici Court. So in the XIX Century, England (with its already official bankers, the Rothschild, particularly strong after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo) began its journey to control and reshape the world we live in today.

Next, in the nineteenth century, Charles Darwin arrived at some interesting conclusions based in a European biological perspective. Darwin *ranked* humans, and

hence human cultures, within different levels of development and evolution. Darwin not only established a new *scientific paradigm*, but also a new value judgment eye (perspective) with which to see the world and its peoples. Now, the difference in the rights of humans will be justified not because non-European inhabitants do not have souls (as in 1492), but because in the evolutionary reality they are inferior to their European counterparts; basically, they are too late in the evolutionary race to become fully human¹. So now, it is not the tyranny of God against the undeserved, but that of nature against the inferior that takes the stage. In other words, surely we can expect injustice among humans because it is natural to expect it as such: Remember natural selection's cold heart. In any case, what is at stake for us here is whether civilization is human oriented or it is an insensitive machine for gadget *development* and selected convenience (the electric blanket syndrome)? Or is this Order a bare copy of a science fiction's literature collection working hard to colonize our imagination?

Throughout his evolutionary theory, whether implicitly or otherwise (standing as scientific thought and practice), Darwin and his followers, created a hierarchy between cultures where (not surprisingly) England became the top center of this *new* powerful awareness. In his 1871 *Descent of Man* work Darwin in Chapter 6, *On the Affinities and Genealogy of Man* states:

At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate, and replace, the savage races throughout the world. At the same time the anthropomorphous apes, as Professor Schaaffhausen has remarked will no doubt be exterminated. The brake between man and his nearest allies will then be wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilized state, as we may hope, even than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of, as now, between the negro or Australian and the gorilla. (209-210).

Darwin's discoveries, but above all, conclusions represented the *most advanced science* of his time, and the *scientific basis* for the creation of *human self-evolution*, also known as Eugenics. Another British subject nephew of Charles Darwin (Francis Galton-Darwin 1822-1911) created the concept and founded the first Eugenics laboratory at the University College in London (UCL). It was originally established in

1904, and interestingly enough became part of UCL's biology department in 1996. Galton's positive Eugenics (the perfect marriage) became the trademark and the main ideological lens of the Empire to read and assess the world and its colonies in its effort for expanding their geopolitical and cultural influence. At the end of the XIX century, this idea was crowned by R. Kipling poem *The White Man's Burden*, which is said to have been Teddy Roosevelt's favorite poem:

Take up the White Man's burden--
Send forth the best ye breed--
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild--
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.

(Fragment)

So what is there in common between *relativistic, organic or structural* Darwinism, and essentialist creationism? Or perhaps, between the medieval religious concept of humanity based in his/her (the Indian) lack of a soul and the modern concept of humanity based in biology, science, and evolution?

The answer is pretty straightforward: both systems divide humanity in superior and inferior sectors, one viable and the other not. Both concepts came from secluded and panoptic locations (Florence/ Madrid/ London) that were ruling others at the time they created these self-enhancing theories. Among the determining factors in shaping these sectors are shared geographical locations, skin colors, bone structures and hair types, similar cultures, rationalities, epistemologies, and so on. Inherent to this new kind of explanation is the notion of an uneven humanity, with all of the economic and political implications therein, as a logical consequence of the exercise and acceptance of unequal social rights. In short, the question here is to be able to assert whether a real growth ("progress") from superstitions and "obscurantism" was indeed developed by reason and science after the advance of British modernity. (Even in architecture you seem to see it, from the old, dark, tall spaces of the XVII/ XIX centuries to the lower ceilings and big open windows of the XX century; the Bauhaus, for instance.)².

The idea of civilization vs. barbarism, science vs. religion, divine right vs. republicanism, tyranny vs. democracy, etc., are some of the main issues that champions of modernity were writing about and supposedly trying to solve for the benefit of humanity at large (so, accordingly they were replacing an unjust and irrational system -Dark Ages- for one that will unleash all human energy and creativity). But, were in fact most *old-fashioned* human tensions finally solved by "liberating humanity", particularly the "less fortunate", with this new model? Was this new practice created to enhance the "anthropocentric model" (a challenge to the "backward" hegemony of the Church) in order to provide "civilized" justice and freedom for humanity at large?

We have been taught that we should expect to find human understanding, human intelligence, and human empathy in civilization, and the opposite in nature, as a racial metaphor of XIX Century opposition between civilization and barbarism was established (dark complexion, uncivilized; clear complexion, civilized). So, according to these ideas and feelings, civilization is a rational, humanitarian, safe, and functional enterprise. Notwithstanding, what if we asked ourselves if this change from the dark ages to the light (Enlightenment) were actually a change in consciousness (in terms of the recognition of humans (and life) as an incredible, rich, and complex world phenomenon where everybody had an ABSOLUTE (non-relativistic) right to live) and been able to enjoy the experience of life and consciousness? The answer is negative. I believe the motive for this bold negative answer is related to two powerful modern reasons: Darwinism and Nation State, and to one more powerful, but very ancient rationalization (between 6000 and 12000 years old): Patriarchy.

II.

Nation State and Darwinism are both ideologies that define and limit the rights of their social and natural *constituencies*. Nation States divide the surface of the earth into competing fragments (a similar process is carried out internally with the so called "national" population in which it is divided in layers from top to bottom according to certain predefined characteristics). On the other hand, Darwinism assigns people's position among the biological-hierarchical structure creating a rationalization to divide

the population into classes, races, genders, sexual orientations, age groups, and so on. It is a patriarchal view of society: a view where competition (in its modern version), will allocate their *fittest* in its most *righteous* seat and social position to perpetuate domination. The old commonsensical idea that the opinion of the majority will determine the political future seems to be pretty naive considering the context under examination, especially after reading Edward Bernays' book *Propaganda* (1928):

The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government, which is the true ruling power of our country. We are governed, our minds are molded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of. *This is a logical result of the way in which our democratic society is organized...*(emphasis mine). [I]n almost every act of our daily lives, whether in the sphere of politics or business, in our social conduct or our ethical thinking, we are dominated by the relatively small number of persons [...] who understand the mental processes and social patterns of the masses. It is they who pull the wires which control the public mind. (37-38).

I believe both theories of discrimination, i.e., the metaphysical ecclesiastic and the naturalistic scientific theories, have achieved something of utmost importance: the legitimation of the conqueror/colonial order through the imposition and, over the course of several generations, the acceptance of the rationality of the center (rulers) as the legitimate way of seeing the world from two different but complementary historical instances of domination.

III.

Marxism was born in the XIX century as a response to the hegemonic ways of liberalism and the evident exploitation of labor by the Romantic *New World Order* of the time. This new economy and technology, based on the intervention of industrialism, filled the minds of the masses with the motive for the definitive elimination of human oppression and the promise of freeing humans from superstition, lack of agency, and excessive work forever. From Marx and Engels' critique, we gain insight from another European set of ideas that challenged the powerful, newborn, capitalistic system that

promised Equality, Fraternity, and Liberty for all, but only delivered to the few. So, Marxism, in fact, was the other side of capitalism in dialogical terms (as M. Bakhtin will later put it), this time by taking sides on the real interests of the worker; but nonetheless within the very same oppressive structure based on social production and industrialism that defines capitalism. Marxism, notwithstanding, took the modern and capitalistic idea of progress to serve the concrete needs of humans, creating an economy for fulfilling the tangible needs of the population instead of being merely concerned with profit making, competition, and capital accumulation.

Considering all of the above, how do we expect to liberate the oppressed within a society since they were historically considered as soulless or savages *vis a vis* the ones considered the *fittest* and the *strongest*? Might this become, eventually, even by its own definition, a just and egalitarian society (without war, hunger, and abuse)? I believe this question should not have even been considered (although we assume it most of the time), because what it is at stake here is the creation of an efficient society, a society that should resemble *avant la lettre* something like George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, where *everyone can survive if they keep their rightful position in their assigned spot*. The drawback is that some animals are more equal than others.

Most studies concerning Allende's *Via Chilena al Socialismo* (Chilean Way to Socialism) have focused first on the sociopolitical and economical aspects of the administration, and second, on the political and military intervention of Chile by foreign powers (crowned by the military coup of 9/11/1973). In addition to all these valid and illuminating perspectives, Allende's government addressed, untiringly, the idea of *solidarity* among the working class and the middle classes in the Chile of the sixties and early seventies. By bringing the notion of "*El hombre nuevo*" (The New Man), Allende addressed a *paramount ideological theme* for the success of his socialist project.

IV.

Allende started this idea as one of his main ideological springs from which to activate a society where collaboration, not competition, should be the leading factor of his "Chilean socialist success". He mentioned it directly and indirectly during his

presidential campaign and, in his inaugural speech at the National Stadium (November 5, 1970), addressed it as one of the girders of his social and political project.

By celebrating his victory at the polls, clearly the most crucial and original event of his whole 1000 days of presidential administration (specially for world perception), he stressed the idea of respect for the other by saying: "Respect for others, tolerance towards the other, is one of the most significant cultural belongings that we have"³ So, in a very different gesture than any other socialist revolution that had ever seized executive power in a liberal democracy, Allende's government promised, up to the last cent, to respect the enemy. If you read the rest of this tale, you will see that he fulfilled his promise to his political adversaries⁴, the very ones that will kill him in September 11, 1973. Clearly Allende was a little bit too optimistic by entertaining the belief about the democratic skills of those that had been expropriated by his administration (or those that were not and will not be expropriated, but lived in fear of the possibility). This fear was, as many others of its kind, instilled mainly by the propaganda apparatus that was kept intact by Allende's liberal democratic approach, since he did not ban or censor any media organ that regularly attacked his program while Allende was trying to implement his fair and empathetic social measures like the "Cuarentamedidas" of his program.

So, Allende understood very well the idea that the "old man" (not the wise man) will not be able or even interested in changing the world for a number of cultural reasons (class, race, gender, common sense, etc.) because their strongest feeling was to lose their real or perceived social privileges. He/ She will bring the familiarity of all his/her self-oppressed ideas, experiences, and behaviors that he/she believes are natural because they are familiar to him/her, considering they have been his/ her entire social context all his/her life: therefore, fully naturalized.

Allende accuses the rich for their violence by saying: "They were always the powerful that triggered the violence and shed the blood of Chileans, *disrupting the normal evolution of the country*."⁵ So in order to change the material world and the social relations created by it, he attempted, from a different context (the liberal democratic one), to do what in the Soviet Union and Cuba had also attempted to do by

force: the foundation of a new sense of humanity for this new social world founded in an economy based on non-privatized means of production. A world where people can share and help the destitute in order to eradicate deprivation, not by poisoning them, labeling them a demographic explosion, or sending them to FEMA camps, but by liberating them from poverty instead of spending their energy to make a fortune by denning the basic human rights in them. So, el "Hombre Nuevo" is a new man because he/she feels the need to share with others as opposed to competing and taking from them. He adds: "Is assumed to guide the country towards a more humane society in which the ultimate goals are the rationalization of economic activity, the gradual socialization of the means of production, and the overcoming class divisions."⁶ This *New Man* goes against the most basic and cherished principle of Darwinism and the later Social Darwinism: "The survival of the fittest". Instead, Allende's socialism welcomes all humans for simply being human, which was simultaneously been done in Liberation Theology. This *New Man* is in and of himself a revolutionary entity because his mind and purpose will be the one endorsing the success of the socialist revolution. Allende quoting a French graffiti said: "First, the revolution is made within people, after, on things".

First off, this statement does not sound too revolutionary to me, given that in traditional Marxism-Leninism you first change societies' materiality by implementing proletarian dictatorship and then a transformation in consciousness will follow in response to the change. Consciousness, according to this definition, can have several meanings such as awareness, understanding, intelligence, connection, realization, etc. Most of them share a common ground, but they can relate differently to the material or the non-material world depending on the connotation we have given them. Some "brand" of consciousness was pursued at the beginning of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, in China and Cuba for the creation of a new social identity and political unity. For Salvador Allende, the challenge was quite different. He had to transform one society into another, but without the luxury of the Red Army. The goal of this transformation was not a society without State (antithesis might be Bakunin), but one where all notions of selfishness, egotism, and so on, had to be historically eradicated.

More of a self contained Social Democratic project than a Leninist one. In order to do that, Allende quoted Engels when he referred to the particularities of the Chilean case:

It is conceivable a peaceful evolution of the old society to the new, in those countries where popular representation concentrated on it all power, which according to the Constitution you can do whatever you want, since you have behind it the support of the majority of the nation.

Frederick Engels.

So, Allende was very creative in how he went about changing the values of the country and the consciousness of the people in order to bring socialism to the forefront. The main problem was how to change the old men/women system of beliefs into a new consciousness of solidarity. Allende said:

We need to develop more awareness. She (awareness) must flourish in thousands and thousands of Chileans that while they were not with us are a part of the process they are now determined to join the great task of building a new nation with a new morality.

(September 1970, 5 Inaugural Speech).

According to Allende's own words, change could only be achieved through a profound shift in Chilean morality. These new set of values will alter the perception of ourselves and hence our role in the world. This is a thesis advanced by Antonio Gramsci when he developed the idea of the Historical Blocks in Mussolini's jails. In that same vein, Allende wanted to: *Create a society in which humans can satisfy material and spiritual needs, without implying the exploitation or sacrificing other humans beings*⁷.

The greater problem for Allende's project was the human factor. This was a huge issue for two central reasons: first, the need to implement a new social order in Chile (an order in which he could enhance his political endorsement from and for the masses), and second, the need to defeat individualism, caudillismo, egotism, etc. (all the ills of capitalist society), to create an egalitarian platform with an ethos of profound (almost metaphysical) solidarity and respect for one another. A very idealistic project, if you ask me, but inescapable if we want to implement a planetary family.

Clearly, Allende's project was not a typical materialist dialectic or even Marxian, as are the ones we are used to defining using Cold World Western narratives. I

published a book about it some years ago, "*Tomando Onces. Colonialidad, democracia y pacificación*" (Lascar, 2012), where I addressed this point and other related issues in some depth. As it was an ideological element of the overarching paradigm, one of the ideas that somehow influenced Allende's worldview was the belief in human dignity and equality similar to the one articulated by Liberation Theology that takes the "Sermon of the Mountain" as one of its most important starting points.

V.

The epigraph, *to his fallen from grace friend*, León Werth by Saint-Exupéry will simplify our phenomenological craving for understanding Allende's system of beliefs and mental paradigm much better. To better illuminate this point, it will be of some help to remember a little bit about the concept of civilization and barbarism according to XIX Century South Cone classics, such as Domingo F. Sarmiento. When we read Saint-Exupéry's inscription with attention, we notice the depth of his claim. These words set and project the whole imaginary and psychological plan for the *Little Prince* far in advance in a world contaminated by Eugenics and World Wars. Through his remarks, Saint-Exupéry sees beyond *the mere social imaginary construction of the homeless* (the weak) to see him with the dignity not only of a human being but, indeed, as a paradigm of humanity. So the basic question is: What kind of civilization is modern civilization? Is modern civilization a place where any human being can feel secure, beloved, and respected? In other words, are all humans socially and mentally sane in their "natural" environment called modern civilization? Let's see if I can give you an example.

We have been traveling for a month in the jungles of Indonesia, or in the Atacama Desert in Chile, or above the Arctic Circle in Alaska. After our research, exploration, vacation, etc., we drive back to a generic place where each of us came from: the city. We have been driving the whole day and we are a bit anxious. When we are close enough to see the artificial lights of the town, one of us says, "Oh my Gosh! Back to civilization!" with a wide smile and a feeling of authentic relief (we do not live

in nature, we just visit it, us Westerners). So, what are we really saying/ thinking when we articulate something like that?

In a first approach we are basically opposing the natural world to the cultivated one. It is, of course, a value judgment based on our familiarity and comfort. We feel more confident and secure in a civilized world than in nature. This is a commonsensical take that makes us believe that we belong more to an artificial world than to a natural one⁸. The fact is that we "belong to" where we are familiar with, regardless of the conditions, in the old saying "it is easier to take the peasant from the country than the country from the peasant", but it does not necessarily mean that one is better than the other.

Since we are talking about Chile, we should bear in mind that since the XIX Century the Southern Cone was considered one of the most European regions of Hispanic America (most first nation people were already eliminated or relocated with Roca's *Campaña del Desierto* and the official project –at least in Argentina– was to populate the "empty space" with northern European blood). The *Civilization/ Barbarism* project was shaped by the ideas of the 1837 *Liberal Argentinian Generation* (Esteban Echeverría, Juan Bautista Alberdi, Juan María Gutierrez, etc.) in general, and, in particular, by Domingo Faustino Sarmiento. Sarmiento, arguably the strongest figure of his generation⁹, advocated for the elimination of all Catholic remnants in the government (including Rosas) and the elimination of the people (blacks, Indians, dark mestizos, etc.) that he and his pals considered unfit for modern civilization in several of his works. So the basic question is: What kind of civilization is modern civilization? Is modern civilization a place where any human being can feel secure, beloved, and respected? Is it a place that functions according to the modern foundational democratic values of the French Revolution? Or is it something else... something more complex that hides an agenda secluded from mainstream public opinion?

Unfortunately, modern civilization does not include everybody in the project and this means that civilization imposes a double standard narrative: a reassuring narrative where everybody has the same voting rights and a silent narrative (if you allow me to

put it that way) where not everybody is included, welcomed, or accepted. This problem is becoming more acute within and because of the transformation of Northern hegemonic industrial society into a post-industrial one where finances or capital accumulation inspire the political and economic rationalities of the globalized ruling class.

If we paraphrase Antonio Cornejo Polar's main idea about the role of writing (European civilization) in AbyaYala (America for Europe) when he says, "Writing was introduced to the Americas as a tool of Power, not as a tool of communication." We can also say, "European civilization was introduced in America as a tool of Power, not as a tool of social enhancement and justice."

Learning from these examples, or others along similar lines that you have personally experienced, we find that modern civilization represents *acultural way* of doing things and being in the world based in capitalism and sophisticated technology (against a background of Divine rights, slavery, and mercantilism). But, it does not actually mean any metaphysical truth or special revelation, only perhaps an idealization of the human order and human understanding based in human exclusion and exploitation along the new segregation line of "race" not of Religion. Walter Mignolo pointed out that Emmanuel Kant, in his book, *Anthropology*, had only conceptualized this modern social divide for Europe and the world in the XVIII Century. All modern concepts of races (including the definition and locations of "color") are indebted to Kant's understanding of the word and the world.

VI.

So we have a clear contradiction between Allende's project and the foundational values of modernity, or at least the Southern Cone's modernity. For Allende, this was not an aporia since he believed in the historical evolution/ revolution represented by Marx and Engels' work in which the world was moving from a primitive state (primitive and prehistoric communism) to a fully developed reality, or mature stage of civilization, called communism, where there was no need for the privatization of property for means

of production and humans were happy simply because our human and humane capacities are fully developed.

Although in other places when they tried to build a socialist reality, the concept of human transformation was also present. For instance, in the Soviet Union the socialist project was furthering the *New Soviet Man*, in Cuba Ernesto Guevara believed that "In the attitude of the fighters (the revolutionaries) could be glimpsed the man of the future" (Guevara Reader 198), and in China with the Cultural Revolution's motto: "Let a hundred flowers bloom, and a hundred schools of thought contend." The transformation in Chile, however, had to be achieved by the individual: he or she without a proletarian dictatorship, in a liberal state within a weak and dependent economy. Time proved this ideal was a total impossibility.

It is thus not terribly mistaken to say that Allende was indeed the first *Hombre Nuevo* of his honest fantasy. He was indeed the main model (generous, energetic, fair, valiant, etc.) and the first promoter of this un-revolutionized revolution. The reason for this is that Allende was not a proletarian, a peasant, or any other member of an emblematic, oppressed, and disenfranchised class, but instead a medical doctor, an intellectual, a proprietor, a "bourgeois" (albeit a "bourgeois" with a big heart), as well as a man able and ready to sacrifice all his personal belongings for the cause of justice and camaraderie. He was a man who believed in the idea of the fatherland, nation-state, and so on, a man belonging to the privileges and amenities of the upper middle class, but also a man that, in spite of all his privileges and honors, was able to think out of the box (of his own personal minute interests) and fight for what he understood as and believed to be a more humanitarian social system for all.

So as the model for the New Man, Allende kept his humble public face until his last day in the presidential palace. In his government, he fought to implement 40 measures to improve the lives of the ordinary people of Chile. For example, when he realized that 600,000 Chilean children were malnourished and that this social factor would adversely affect their development into adults, Allende saw to it that every Chilean child could receive 1/2 liter of milk every day.

Allende rightfully thought that by accruing new experiences, Chilean people would have begun to change their egoistic ways and, little by little, would be able to share their long-term acquired privileges. The atavistic class and race separation between indigenous, mestizos, and whites will eventually end by income redistribution, by the softening of the heart of the rich, and the improvement of the understanding of the poor by feeding children neurons and improving the system of education. This was basically the nuts and bolts of Allende's social and psychological project to change Chile's mind and will. Nonetheless, if we have seen Andrés Wood's movie *Machuca*, it is very clear that it was mostly an idealistic enterprise more than a realistic one. His enemies were not democratic, interested in social responsibility or even good manners, for that matter. They just sat on the institution to gather the votes of the fearful and ignorant while maintaining their comfortable Status Quo.

The basic assumption behind the *Hombre Nuevo* project is that as humans we tend to collaborate more than compete (humanity was built by molding and connecting people through language, through dialogue, and the concurrence of common effort). Competition is part of the survival instinct; but, once our needs are satisfied, our desire has also been appeased, at least until a new moment of psychological/desire imbalance¹⁰. The recognition of the Other as equal is paramount in order for human survival to keep a healthy mind and heart. We are running out of time while we are buried in plastic. The manipulated idea of genetics (former Eugenics), of transforming some of us into *transhumans*, is killing the appreciation and respect for the natural human and the natural systems. This is not only by the use of physical force, but mainly by creating a social division that resembles the *Brave New World*, this time, however, including the environment as a victim.

Almost forty years later, in September 2012, Étienne Balibar, in an interview by Pacal Sévérac and Nicolás Duvoux, says that in the West we have moved from the concept of the subject to the concept of the citizen. The main difference between both of these concepts is that the citizen has lost even more ground than the Althusserian subject in terms of liberty and self-expression. Balibar thinks that: "[T]he subject is contested from within by an otherness that undermines its isolated sovereignty, but

through witch, at the same time, it forms an always incomplete community."Then interviewers say:

The essence of Balibar's answer lies in the dialectic between, on the one hand, a subject with two dimensions- one anthropological (the subject of consciousness or affect), the political (being the subject to power and the subject of rights) and on the other hand, the citizen- or, better still, the "fellow citizen." Consequently, it becomes impossible to conceive of the subject becoming citizen (the subject as being-with-others) without at the same time imagining the citizen becoming a subject (the citizen emancipated through a process of subjectification.)

So the fact that the dialectic between the subject and the citizen implies the difficulty, or better yet, the impossibility of building a community because it implies living under the control and obeying an external entity (Nation-State, Government, etc.) while simultaneously believing that you are doing it for your own freedom, ultimately creating an ambivalence that clearly leads to mental illness. The double standard between the perception and the naturalized reality of the social context generates confusion and alienation within the citizen-subject, a confusion that he/she is not able to resolve with his/her own analytical tools (because he/ she "belongs" to the order or the order exists because of them) without any perceived distance between them.

Allende clearly understood that without a profound transformation in the subject's imaginary, it was not possible to make any radical change in the social arena and, therefore, in the equality of the Chilean society. Perhaps the word "compañero" (companion, partner, comrade) played a very important role in the Unidad Popular's (Popular Unit) project considering Allende was not the president but the *Compañero Presidente*.

It was a very illuminating example for teenagers like me to see Allende trying so hard to help the poor and the disenfranchised in this far away country without any aid (the Russians visited Chile, but were never a strong presence neither in Chilean politics nor in the Chilean economy). It was also very illuminating to see how the privileged classes were fighting Allende every step of the way in his efforts to improve the lives of the poor (and indigenous). Chilean oligarchy fought back by appealing to the most

engrained *preconceptions* of the masses (Russians will take your children away to eat them, Communists have a pact with the devil since they are Atheists and so on). They portrayed Allende as a "Moscow agent"; a kind of megalomaniac evil, like the way "the bad guy" is portrayed in *The Rocky and Bullwinkle Show*. Notwithstanding, and in spite of the fact that, in right wing radios, TV channels, newspapers, magazines, etc., Allende was consistently demonized, ridiculed, humiliated, etc., in every successive election (after he won the presidential campaign) his coalition, *Unidad Popular*, kept gaining more and more votes throughout his 1000 days of government, from 36% in September 1970 to 43% in March 1973. So the Hombre Nuevo was moving on, getting the idea, sharing the news. Traditionally, in liberal democracy there is not a match between the promises politicians make and the implementation of said intentions, on the contrary, Allende fulfilled his promises, created a government without the typical politician image where after three years, people trusted him more than when he was campaigning for the presidency. Some people understood his message.

Conclusions

When we compare Allende's *Hombre Nuevo* to the Eugenic's *New Human/superhuman*, we find that Allende's model implies a transformation in consciousness, both at the personal and collective level, because without the renewal of the modern subject's world-view is not possible to stop self-oppression and the creation of a shared and caring society. On the other hand, for the Eugenicists based in Darwinism and Social Darwinism, the main issue here is not the transformation of consciousness but the alteration of the physical body (Does the name, Mengele, ring a bell?). So clearly we have two very different perceptions of and models for the world. The eugenicist's is a project from top to bottom while Allende's was bottom to top. For the eugenicist, the Western world is the best possible world, and the future of Western culture is just a matter of being more powerful and capable of conquering other worlds. For Allende and the remaining Third World at the time, the problem was not creating a superhuman or

conquering Venus and Mars, but feeding the poor and creating a just society for all: A smile in every children face.

When we feel relieved and happy driving our four-wheel drive Subaru while we are approaching the radiance of the city lights, it is because we were and are familiarized with our synthetic society, not really because it is more advanced or better than nature, but because it is familiar to us. (Similar to the way a dog feels rejoining his pack, or an orca that has lived in the tanks of an aquarium in SeaWorld returning to the open ocean, or an Indian going back to his/her tribe.) We feel connected with what is familiar (Tambiah, Eagleton), even if that familiarity is destructive; that is how our minds work. Domestic violence very clearly proves this claim: The victim minimizes or justifies the physical violence of the abuser.

If you think in terms of advance, nothing can be *so advanced* as nature, since Nature is the only source of life, energy, imagination, engineering, philosophy, design, and mystery; a mystery in which all possibilities seem ready to materialize. Every invention is based in nature: planes (birds), radio and TV (by the use of frequencies and energy), space ships (comets), computer codes (DNA), and even the Hydrogen Bomb (solar flares), etc. With Aristotle we can say that things are not invented, but rather, discovered.

Finally, am I asking too much to remember that the Solar System is a by-product of a star explosion? An explosion of an old star that had gone supernova and in its *cosmic dance* formed all the basic materials necessary to create the Earth and our specific form of universal life?

To understand properly the implications of this hallucinogenic fact we need to become el *hombre nuevo*.

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Notes

- 1 In a way this *realization* is similar to the one Hegel made in Germany when in 1809 wrote *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, establishing that the *Absolute Spirit* was aware of himself by the act of the philosopher recognition. So Germany was the location of this revelation and Frederick Hegel was the human subject making it possible.
- 2 Some writers of this time understood the new way of modern domination creating the Gothic Novel.
- 3 "El respeto por los demás, la tolerancia hacia el otro, es uno de los bienes culturales más significativos con que contamos".
- 4 The best example of this sort of Allende's attitude was when one week before the 9/11 *coup de état* he gather more than one million people by the presidential palace and the million people yield to him requesting him to close the Congress (because the Congress was stopping him from governing the country) and he said no but at the same time he announced that he will call a plebiscite the coming 11th of September of 1973.
Therestishistory.
- 5 "Fueron siempre los poderosos quienes desencadenaron la violencia, los que vertieron la sangre de los chilenos, interrumpiendo la normal evolución del país".
- 6 "Lo asume para orientar al país hacia una nueva sociedad, más humana, en que las metas últimas son la racionalización de la actividad económica, la progresiva socialización de los medios productivos y la superación de la división de clases".
- 7 "Crear una sociedad en que los hombres puedan satisfacer sus necesidades materiales y espirituales sin que ello signifique la explotación de otros hombres".
- 8 Without going any further we can say that the British legitimized their invasion into Abya Yala (America) by asking the Indians where were their documents proving that they belonged here. Clearly they did not have them because the British run into oral cultures: another world. That question would not have had any sense for the Mayan or Aztecs since they did know writing without reading Cornejo Polar.
- 9 In love with the British, like everybody else in this generation.
- 10 Laques Lacan thinks otherwise about this. He believes that *Objet petit a* (consummation of desire) keeps us eternally frustrated and looking forward for more Jouisance. An answer that can counteract this Post-structuralist concept is "cultural relativism".

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