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WORKING PAPER N° 17

THE STRENGTH OF MARKETS IN LATIN AMERICA'S POLITICAL DISCOURSE, 1750-1850 SOME PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

Ricardo D. Salvatore

June 1995

ABSTRACT: The paper explores the shifting 'strength' attributed to markets in some key texts of Latin American political discourse. To both Bourbon reformers and mid-nineteenth century liberals, the market was a weak agent unable by itself to carry the transformations envisioned by reformers --about the colonies first, about the nation-states later. Different conceptions of the economic realm as well as the historical context in which reforms were implemented conspired to produce an understanding of markets quite different from the idea of a self-regulating mechanism with high transformative potential over society and politics.

POLITICAL DISCOURSE / MARKETS / BOURBON AND LIBERAL REFORMERS

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The Strength of Markets in Latin America's Political Discourse, 1750-1850
Some Preliminary Observations

By Ricardo D. Salvatore*

In The Passions and the Interests, A.O. Hirschman traces the origin of the Smithian doctrine of private vices/public virtues back to a crucial transition in political discourse; the point where "interests" replaced "passions" as the main motivating force of human interaction. [A. Hirschman, 1977] Gradually, the search for a rational subject whose actions would lead to good government reinforced the Renaissance disillusion about the power of philosophy and morality to control human passions to produce, by the eighteenth century, a widespread discourse about "countervailing passions." Calmer and more beneficial passions could contain other passions, more violent and harmful. "Interest," the drive to accumulate wealth, was one of the calmer passions, said to be powerful enough to detract men and women from the pursuit of more harmful action. Commerce in particular came to be conceived as an activity that made conquest and war unnecessary, transformed the manners of barbarian nations, and keep the authoritarian pretence of the sovereign at bay. To Montesquieu and the men of the Encyclopedia, for whom the process of 'civilization' consisted of the taming and refining of human passions, commerce appeared as a civilizing force. This construct of a soothing, civilizing commerce (which Hirschman calls "deux commerce") was recaptured later by Smith and turned into an hegemon: (economic) "interest" became not just a countervailing passion but the king of passions, the common rationality of all human actions.[1] Based of this particular characterization of "interest," an ubiquitous passion, stronger and gentler than its precedent, Smith advanced the notion that

the market, a social institution formed from the coalescence of individual self-interests, could produce outcomes that would be beneficial for society at large.

The construct of a self-regulated market, then, emerged from debates centered around the control of passions and the containment of the monarch's power --two aspects of the emergence of modern political discourse. Within the discourse of economics, no construct is more central than the 'market.' Yet, economists have devoted little effort to explore the meanings of this construct and the role it plays in Western representations of social practices. [R. Dilley, 1992] As a central rhetorical construct that articulates and conveys meaning to a series of other signifiers (autocratic or seignorial power, mercantilism, freedom of conscience, etc.), the market produces ideal visions of social order and politics. Political and social discourse, in turn, convey historical specificity to conceptions of markets. Recent work on economic discourse[2] has served to re-evaluate the moral dimensions of economics in the origins of the discipline, the mutual borrowing between economics and physics during the marginalist revolution, and the continuous production of myths as a means of 'demonstrating' economic propositions. [D. Martin, 1990; Minowitz, 1993; Evensky, 1987; Mirowski, 1984; Ellerman, 1991] But, except for works dealing with 'development discourse,' the attention of scholars have shifted away from the consideration of 'economics' as a type of political discourse. [Escobar, 1984; Visvanathan, 1987; Parajuli, 1991]

The importance of conflicting views of market societies for the articulation of political discourse is duly acknowledged in European historiography. It was in relation to the market, constructed as a force able to erode community values, to destroy traditional ways of life, and to impart an unsavory materialism to social relations that important social movements of

the nineteenth century built their identity and political strategy. [Ch. Ryan, 1981; W. Grampp, 1982; D. McNally, 1993] Latin American scholars, on the other hand, had only recently become preoccupied with the specificity of market discourse and its deployment in elite politics, every-day life, and popular protest. [Greenfield, 1992; Martin, 1990; Gudeman-Rivera, 1990; Salvatore, 1993] Economic discourse deployed in the context of a given structure of power/knowledge can produce not only the strategies that guide state policies but also principles that purport to order social and cultural life. [K. Tribe, 1988; Boyland-Foley, 1992]

The market as a self-regulator of the social relations is perhaps not a recent innovation; but its usage in political discourse is. [Salvatore, 1993] In fact, I will argue in this article that the conception of a self-regulated market was absent in the arguments of Bourbon reformers and nineteenth-century liberals in Latin America. Or, put in other words, that the market was a weak agent to produce the transformations they envisioned. Bourbon reformers used the construct of a colonial 'market' to draw the blueprints for the rejuvenation of empire. To them, commerce was at the same time a strong and civilizing influence that could be applied to subjugate and assimilate colonial subjects and to displace competing imperial powers. Nineteenth-century liberals, on the other hand, saw the market as a fairly weak force unfitted to the task required by the formation of nation-states. They took as given the necessity of integrating the national economies to the world market but saw the construction of market economies as a natural corollary of the other, more urgent, reforms: the achievement of a legal/constitutional order, national unity, and political stability.

This essay explores the notion that constructs of markets are implicated in discussions that are basically political --that is, relating to the relationship between the state and civil society-- and that this political discourse attributes the market a shifting degree of 'strength' according to a multiplicity of circumstances. In particular, I reviewed the role and 'strength' of the market in two groups of texts about state reform: those produced by Bourbon reformers in the second half of the eighteenth century, and those left by mid-nineteenth century liberals in Latin America. It will be shown that the condition of coloniality in one case, and the primacy of nation-building in the other shaped statesmen's conceptions of the role of markets in the imagined social order. With the help of few but significant texts, I attempt to present the stylized story of this important transition in the history of Latin America's political discourse. Market activities (indistinctly referred as 'commerce,' 'industry,' or 'economic progress') evolved from a civilizing and strong influence to a weak, almost impotent field of force. These distinct conceptions of the role and strength of markets emerged out of the context of specific state reforms: the initial attempts to liberalize inter-colonial trade under the Bourbons; and the efforts by nineteenth-century liberals to build viable nation-states and to promote more 'civilized' and 'modern' forms of social interaction. These 'weakening' of the market in political discourse helps to clarify the modest role of economic liberalism in the formative period of Latin American nation-states.

Bourbon Reformers: Strong and Sweet Colonizing Commerce

In the second half of the eighteenth-century, a group of statesmen (Campillo, Campomanes, Campillo, among others) implemented a series of reforms destined to modify

the relationship between Spain and its colonies in the benefit of the former.[3] The protracted crisis of the colonial state moved Bourbons to search for means to regain control of colonial finances and commerce and, at the same time, rationalize and enhance the monarchical state. Improved taxation and the expansion of colonial trade constituted then the basis for the economic transformation of empire. Freer trade between the metropolis and its colonies, in particular, was presented as the solution to the Spanish Crown's loss of power and competitiveness within the Atlantic world economy. Economic reforms formed part of a vast array of interventions: the introduction of the salaried colonial bureaucrats, the creation of new territorial divisions within the empire, the organization of permanent military garrisons, the withdrawal of some church privileges, and the diffusion of agricultural knowledge, among others. [C. MacLachlan, 1988, 67-88; Lockhart-Schwartz, 1983, 346-68; Halperin Donghi, T., 1979, 47-59] But the opening of colonial markets to the products of the metropolis -and viceversa, the channelling of greater share of the colonies' production to Spanish industry- was key to the enterprise of imperial renovation.

Commerce stood at the center of economic reforms, for the revival of the colonial economy depended on expanding the participation of Spanish merchants in international trade. The habilitation of new commercial routes and additional ports (in Spain as well as in the colonies), together with better control of contraband could enhance the Crown's power vis-a-vis other European empires. [Campomanes, 1988 (1762)] To a large degree, mercantilist ideas still dominated views on colonial trade. A "vent for surplus" perspective guided policy concerning overseas commerce. Under this conception, Spain had to purchase abroad only goods essential the kingdom and to export only commodities that were not

necessary to its people --the price of goods transacted did not matter much.[4] Also, the expansion of commerce had to proceed within officially recognized corporate structures. The liberalization of trade, impressive when compared with the Habsburg period, fell short of the commercial freedom advocated by nineteenth-century liberals. Imprisoned within the walls of corporate privilege and meticulous regulations the market could not serve as an impersonal regulator of social relations or act as a wall of contention of aristocratic privilege and royal despotism. Commerce was conceived, instead, as a revitalizing force, as an instrument of imperial enhancement, as a potential solution for Spain's protracted crisis. The kingdom's happiness -the livelihood of its artisans and cultivators- depended crucially on the arteries of commerce.[5] [Campomanes, 1988 (1762), p.3]

Conceived as an instrument of imperial powers' rivalry, commerce was not a 'sweet' and soft influence. Though the encouragement of contraband, the control of asientos for the slave traffic, and the colonization and settlements of key nodes of navigation on the Atlantic, other colonial powers (specially England) had enhanced their economies and, consequently, their strength vis-à-vis Spain. Instead of pursuing the illusive wealth produced by gold and silver mines, these powers had discovered early on the equation of colonial economics: bullion stays with the producers of commodities demanded in the world market.[6] Regaining the control of the arteries of commerce required, then, to recover the vitality of Spanish manufactures and recapture Spanish colonial markets elbowing out the competitors that had dared to intrude in the Crown's economic territory. This involved acts of force and of possession; disputing with the force of settlers, soldiers, and armored ships the territory for Spanish trade. "Is it by fortune that in the Indies [our manufactures] cannot be sold and that

they do not find purchasers?" -asked Campomanes rhetorically- "Of course not, for all Europe finds outlets for its cloths in the Spanish Indies and only Spain does not achieve this benefit, being the owner of them (my emphasis)." [Campomanes, 1988 (1762)] Clearly, the strength of commerce -its power to revitalize the Kingdom- was predicated upon the legitimacy of colonial possessions.

A double equivocation -the initial bullionist illusion and the channelling of colonial trade through the Cadiz monopoly- had caused, in the perception of Bourbon reformers, the crisis of the Spanish economy and of the weakening of the Crown's power. Now, reversing that crisis entailed retaking possession not only of the territory of the empire (Campomanes and Campillo abound in their recipes of how to combat contraband and defend the fringes of the empire) but also of the productive and purchasing powers of the colonies. Commerce, the arteries of the empire, could revitalize and rejuvenate the Crown's power, if only colonial policy could re-direct its riches to its legitimate possessor.

This rejuvenating power of commerce functioned within the contours of colonial power; within a space in which problems were defined and legitimated in relation to the state.[7] In fact, the major attack against contraband (that is, the distinction between licit and illicit commerce), the debates about how to eliminate corruption in the colonial administration, how to mobilize resources controlled by the church and the nobility, and the question of the promotion of peninsular manufacturing, all belonged to the universe of colonial policy. Bourbon reformers did not conceive of a separation between economics and politics. They often referred to their discipline as the "science of the state," a science concerned with the administration of the Crown's estate, the kingdoms of Spain and its

overseas colonies. [Bustos Rodríguez, 1982, 97-100] In his Discourse on the Civil Economy, Jovellanos called "civil or political economy" to the science that inquires the sources of public property and the spread of its benefits throughout the kingdom. [Camacho y Perea, 1913, 26] "Government in the political sense" was almost the same thing: the art of sustaining the Crown's "family" (the subjects) and promoting its growth. Campomanes conceived government as the art to populate the kingdom, allocate property rights, and prescribe just legislation. [Campomanes, 1984, 55]. The "economy" had not separate ontological existence; it was part of government. As a result, "economic" reforms were a mere instrument for enhancing royal authority.[8]

With regard to colonial subjects, on the other hand, reformers expected commerce to play a civilizing role. Overseas trade was said to spread Spanish ways and fashions among non-peninsular colonials, promoting more civilized manners and greater deference to the Crown. Commerce promised also a peaceful integration of unacculturated Indians. In the best tradition of "deux commerce," merchants could persuade Indians to approach Spanish towns and purchase Spanish goods.[9] [Campillo, 1789, 210-12] The commerce that mattered in this regard, the only "civilized," was that mediated by money; the exchange of products against products --barter-- constituted a "barbarian" form of commerce. [Campomanes, 1984, 139-40] Indian peoples entered the imaginary of colonial economic reform as consumers avid to absorb European goods --their apparent wretchedness evinced the need for Spanish cloth, tools, and foodstuffs. In another way, colonial subjects supported Bourbon's ambitions of imperial renovation. Spain's "comparative advantage" in relation to slave-owning colonies lied in its "endowment" of a dependent Indian peasantry. Because the

subsistence of peasants did not enter the cost of agricultural production, Spanish producers could undersell French and English planters who depended on slave labor. [Campillo, 1789, 193-97]

Quite surprising is the attention devoted by Bourbon reformers, in their efforts to find viable solutions to the empire's economic and social crisis, to the "Indian question." Campomanes, for example, devoted long passages of his Reflexiones sobre el comercio español a Indias to report the available ethnographic knowledge of various Indian nations inhabiting the lands of Río de la Plata (Canguas, Charrúas, Guaraníes, Pampas). [Campomanes, 1988 (1762), pp. 108-109 and 111-121] His object was double: to show that the absence of settler colonies near Indian territory was leaving unexploited a great venue of commerce (that between Spaniards and Indians) and denying the 'civilization' of indigenous peoples; and, secondly, to argue that commerce -along with the example of industrious Blacks and the teachings of Catholic religion- could transform these "errant" and "miserable" bárbaros into civilized Spaniards. Commerce was conceived as an instrument of civilization and assimilation.[10] Key to the project of imperial renovation was the conception of indigenous peoples a willing consumers of Spanish goods, practicing Catholicism, and sharing a common devotion to the Spanish Crown.

The question of what would make indigenous peoples enter the Spanish economy remained open. In theory, the "persuasion" of merchants and the extended use of money would do the trick. For this, reformers emphasized the need to implant Spanish garrisons and towns near the areas where Indian congregated. In practice, however, colonial administrators of Indian villages (corregidores) found that coercion extended markets faster

than persuasion. By means of illegal repartos de efectos they forced the sale of Spanish goods onto unwilling Indian consumers. In 1751, in the midst of Bourbon renovation, the Crown legalized these arrangements.[11] Forced sales were justified on the grounds that they could break the "natural laziness" of the natives --compelling them to buy tools, seeds and draft animals would increase the cultivation of cash crops. [Golte, 1980, 84-5] Indian communities, forced to pay the allocated goods with money, wheat, or wool, would have to produce an agricultural surplus or to enter wage relations with Spanish hacendados and miners. Captive markets brought about an intensification of exploitative relations between corregidores and Indian communities. Commerce, the bearer of civilization, took the form of a coercive mechanism that disturbed the delicate balance between the communities' resources and the already heavy tributes paid to Spaniards. In the colonial context, sweet civilizing commerce turned into a strong force utilized for the continued subjugation of indigenous subjects.

Bourbon discourse on domestic, peninsular commerce (national and local) was significantly different to that used to present the revival of colonial trade. Better transportation and more diversified wants and incomes among the Spanish population could expand long-distance trade. Building a national market was a question of improving roads, building canals, and habilitating ports in navigable rivers; this required adequate planning and, sometimes, the resort to coerced labor. [Campomanes, 1984, 109-19] Home trade evoked technology, work, and a well ordered kingdom. Prices were important indicators of the expansion of domestic commerce; increased supplies of agricultural goods anticipated lower prices, abundance, and harmony. Campomanes' policies in favor of 'free trade' seem

consistent with this distinction between home and colonial commerce. While the 1765 Pragmática liberating the grain trade within Spain was presented as a remedy for domestic scarcity, the 1778 Free Trade Act (Reglamento de Libre Comercio) aimed at better exploitation of the American colonies' surplus. [Campomanes, 1984, 119, 131; Bustos Rodríguez, 1982, 251-62] A colonialist perspective separating the primitive from the civilized, the metropolitan from the colonial, the Spaniard from the Indian informed Bourbon's discussions about commerce. On the one hand, there was colonial commerce conceived as the revitalizing force of empire and the gentle force leading to the assimilation of indigenous peoples overseas, on the other there was home trade, an economic activity whose liberation should bring tangible economic benefits to peninsular Spaniards.

Within Spain the problem social discipline was not related to markets or commerce, it was rather a question of costumbres, that is, related to the habits and attitudes of the Spanish population. Ultimately, it was a matter of religious conceptions propagated or tolerated by the Catholic church. Idleness, for example, resulted from a tradition of charity (limosnas) that promoted the multiplication of beggars. The Catholic church, instead of inculcating industriousness among the poor, had attracted a large number of unproductive dependents. [Campomanes, 1984, 43-45] Reducing the number of church dependents and modifying people's tolerance of begging were necessary to improve the work habits of Spaniards. [Bustos Rodríguez, 1982, 83-93]

The home trade was not conceived as a civilizing force or, at least, not as a sufficiently strong force to enact basic transformations in Spaniards' habits. The transformation of Spaniards' habits had to proceed within the family, by means of proper

education and example. In society at large, the example from the upper classes would trickle down to the poor. Teaching the nobility into the value of work and thrift would be a good beginning. [Campomanes, 49-50] In this regard, the creation of "economic societies" promised to spread the new methods and ideas among the wealthy and educated. Conceived as a revolution of costumbres, Bourbon reforms attributed great value to the diffusion of ideas and the social elevation of Spanish producers. [Bustos Rodríguez, 1982, 283-308] In relation to the poor, persuasion was less effective. Campomanes recommended rounding up beggars, gypsies, and vagrants and confining them to asylums and prisons. [Bustos Rodríguez, 1982, 83-93] Resort to emulation and direct state force promised to produce a transformation that commerce could not.[12]

Latin America's first liberalization of trade was part of an imperial policy designed without much knowledge of colonial subjects and their markets. Since the beginning of empire, indigenous kurakas and principales played important roles in local and regional trade. [Gave, L., 1989; Spalding, K., 1973] This remained unknown to Campillo, Campomanes or Jovellanos. The latter's vision of imperial renovation, though based on the incorporation of Indian peasants to Spanish markets, denied the very existence of Indian markets. "Free trade" would empower Spanish merchants and bureaucrats in Spain and America in both sides of the Atlantic, not Indian or mestizo colonial subjects. The language of commerce as civilization translated into direct coercion (forced consumption) when applied to the reality of empire. The market, then, played no actual role in the disciplining of colonial subjects, a matter left to the religious and military arms of colonial state. In theory, merchants were expected to incorporate and acculturate indigenous tribes but nothing was

said about the content and rationality of the new order. Outside of the peninsula, the construct of a self-regulated market (individuals pursuing their self-interests and trading among themselves) could not engender the rejuvenation of the empire. On the contrary, as the visitador Arreche made clear, there was too much of private interest in the very management of colonial affairs (the repartos were after all, a private business of corregidores) and too little concern for the national or imperial cause. Colonial trade, imagined at the same time as a strong and sweet force, could only produce 'civilization' while acting as an instrument of colonial power.

Nineteenth-Century Liberals: The Market as a Weak and Indecisive Force

Nineteenth-century liberals in Latin America were remarkably successful in their struggle to integrate the export economies of the region into the world market and to dismantle (gradually in some cases, very rapidly in others) the Spanish restrictions on international trade.[13] Commercial liberalization found serious obstacles in the context of the post-independence political and social crisis but by 1860 most Latin American nations had implemented some form of liberal tariff reform. [Véliz, 1980, 185-87; Sowell, "Artisans and Tariff Reform"] After the fall of Rosas (1852), Argentina opened its rivers to international shipping lifting the most important remaining obstacle to export-import trade. By 1850, after three decades of debates, the main sectors of the Peruvian elite embraced the doctrine of economic liberalism. In contemporary Colombia, the liberal doctrine among members of the elite became virtually a dogma. In 1864 the Chilean Congress enacted a radical reduction of import duties. [Halperin Donghi, 1988; Gootenberg, 1989, 88; Safford, 1988, 36]

Despite the hegemony of free trade ideas and the ubiquity of tariff reform, other aspects of the liberal agenda remained unfulfilled. The creation of free markets in labor and land found powerful resistance among landowners, the church, and indigenous communities. The transfer of economic decision-making to the private sector took second place to the immediate tasks of building a centralized state. Free export-import trade was perhaps the only major accomplishment that liberals could show in the economic domain. This was not surprising for the social and political agenda of nineteenth-century liberals tended to overshadow the creation of free markets. In Mexico, trade liberalization constituted a minor element of contention compared to the energy devoted to constitutional reform and the dismantling of church power and privileges. The elimination of the spirit of monopoly was considered a precondition for the operation of a free market economy. [Hale, 1968, 258-9] Chilean liberals paid more attention to educational reform and the free expression of ideas than to economic reform. [Subercaseaux, 1981, 11-18] For Argentines of the Generation of 1837 modernization meant inviting European immigrants and investors, educating the masses into secular citizens, and providing the country with up-to date legislation. The creation of free land and labor markets, though upheld in theory, was not as pressing an issue in practice. [Romero, 1963, chap. 5]

The limited importance attributed to economic reform by nineteenth century liberals relates to the very disjunction in classical political economy between the social/political and the economic spheres. The liberalism of Adam Smith and Jean Baptiste Say that Latin American intellectuals readily adopted provided no answer to the urgent problems of social control and political order created by independence. The ideal of a self-regulating market

said little about how to re-insert the native/indigenous population in relation to the state once the cooptative power of the church was gone. Free markets could not solve the problem of political fragmentation and personalistic power relations that plagued post-independence society. That explains why Latin American liberals found more immediate use for the theories of B. Constant, J. Bentham, H. Mann, and Destutt de Tracy than for the treatises of Smith, Say, and Mill.[14] [Safford, 1987; Milliford, 1980]

Several studies have confirmed the limited impact of free trade on the internal economy of the region. [Platt, D., 1981; Love-Jacobsen, 1988] The formation of a national market took time, investment, and a great deal of government action. The creation of a "homo economicus" was even more problematic, involving profound transformations in the habits, attitudes and beliefs of Latin Americans. By 1850 this process was in its infancy. In the discourse of nineteenth-century liberalism, the heritage of colonialism, slavery, and landlordism appeared as obstacles to the penetration or diffusion of market relations. But free markets alone were considered insufficient to effect the transformations required to eliminate traditional relations of dependency and patronage. Liberal reformers did not conceive the national market as a disciplinary mechanism productive of a new rationality. While paying lip service to the "civilizing" role of commerce, liberals saw the connection between market discipline and the social/political order as indirect and ambiguous.

Argentine liberal J.B. Alberdi saw free trade as the opposite coin of a past marked by political despotism and bureaucratic restrictions. The victory over Rosas had given the country the freedoms and guarantees required to engender economic growth. Held back by previous restrictions and habits stemming from the hispanic legacy and by the arbitrary

policies of the dictator, commerce was now free to deploy its civilizing influence among the inhabitants of the pampas. [Alberdi, 1920, 165, 202, 211] In practice, however, "commerce deux" did not produce the expected cultural transformation. The revolution of 1852 had enacted the freedom of work --an advance over legally protected leisure during the colony-- but this by itself did not create modern work habits. The law could not produce "the intelligence, the habit, the honesty, the security, the activity, and the persistence" associated with "modern work." [Alberdi, 1920, 126] The integration of the country to the world market had a discouraging effect on people's habits and attitudes; it had only engendered conspicuous consumption among the wealthy leaving the poor in the same state of inactivity and poverty.[15] Extending civilization to the masses would not be the work of markets or of constitutions but that of immigration policy. Better endowed with attributes of industriousness and thrift, Europeans immigrants could gradually transfer to the "natives" traits necessary for economic progress. [442]

Like in the writings of Bourbon reformers, in Alberdi the distinction productive/unproductive labor evokes the polarity between civilized and primitive, a polarity loaded with racial and gender connotations. "Modern labor" meant "virile" and "intelligent" and appeared naturally associated with Europeans. "Primitive labor," on the other hand, was feminine, required little knowledge, and was commonly associated with Africans, Turks, or native Americans.[16] [Alberdi, 1920, 551] Only the former was endowed with the capacity for saving and self-improvement. Other enlightenment motif, "emulation" as the agent of social change, is present in Alberdi's Escritos económicos. Only the persuasive power of example, exercised within families or across ethnic groups could engender the traits

necessary for a modern social order.

Writing in a different social context, J. Silva Santisteban, a Peruvian liberal, arrived at a similar conclusion. Free trade could not guarantee productivity and labor discipline in the workshops, the true bases of lower prices. [Silva Santisteban, 1859] In an analysis of the artisan revolt of 1858, Santisteban suggested that, contrary to what artisans asserted, the high prices of local manufactures have prompted the competition of cheaper imported goods. He blamed this situation on the "monopoly" created by guild regulations but, above all, on the collapse of labor discipline facilitated by the artisan system. In the last analysis, the relative dearness of local manufactures reflected the "immorality" of local workers: their informality, fraud, avoidance of work, and lack of provision. [27-30] Borrowing from the Enlightenment, he presented the 1858 revolt as "a struggle of leisure against work, of monopolies against freedom, of barbarism against civilization." [25] To prevent such conflicts in the future, he recommended both education and repression. Political economy should educate the people on the benefits of comparative advantage while arts and crafts schools improved the productivity of local producers.[17] [6 and 49] Vagrants should be arrested and put to work and the police had to control craftsmen's punctuality and industriousness in the workshops. This vigilant overview of working-class attitudes, he suggested, could extend also to domestic workers (washerwomen, servants, cooks). [51]

For both Alberdi and Santisteban free trade did not guarantee the transformation of the native population into productive labor. Alberdi was led to rely on the transforming power of European immigration while Santisteban ended up supporting coerced labor and police surveillance of private spaces (workshops and households). Liberal economic doctrine

did not provided a clear and realistic link between markets and the social/political order. Both Alberdi's and Santisteban's texts continue to use the "deux commerce" motif but with much less conviction --commerce no longer seemed to civilize human agents in the direction of modern work and spending habits. As treatises on political economy provided few clues about the production of a "homo laborantis," Latin American liberals resorted to motifs of the Enlightenment (productive/unproductive, civilized/primitive, persuasion/coercion) to articulate their discussions of labor and social discipline.

To José Victorino Lastarria, a Chilean liberal, political freedom was the overwhelming preoccupation. Like Alberdi, Lastarria saw the Hispanic heritage (religious intolerance, a poor and retrograde education, the rejection of work, servilism) as a main obstacle in the progress of the Chilean nation. He blamed the burden of the past for creating the conditions that produced the "anarchy" of the post-independence period. At the top of his agenda was political reform, but in order to achieve it, the nation had to overcome serious cultural and institutional obstacles. The revolution had inherited a "monstrous legislation," a society lacking in civil virtues, and a set of costumbres (customs) inimical to progress. [Fuenzalida Grandón, 1911, p.242] The market -one of the systems of connections holding society together- found no place in Lastarria's agenda for reform. A doctrinaire defender of 'freedom', Lastarria was critical of those who emphasized the primacy of material progress. The moral improvement of the people -a process which depended crucially on political freedom and state reform- could not be achieved simply by material progress (railroad, telegraph, steam power, industry, etc.).[18] Believing that the progress of a nation was better reflected in its legislation than in its record of production and trade,

Lastarria devoted much of his legislative efforts to constitutional reform -the free market could developed as a natural result of the freedom and security granted by the constitution. [Lastarria, 1847]

Nowhere is the continuity between Bourbon reformers and nineteenth-century liberals more evident than in the treatment of native Americans. In consonance with the new-gained citizen status of Mexico's indigenous peoples, doctrinaire liberal José M.L. Mora advocated their total assimilation into the Mexican nation --indeed, he proposed the eliminate the word "Indian" from public use. [Hale, 1968, chap. 7] This implied a denial of the specificity of Indian culture --Indians were to enter the same schools, learn the same language, and apprehend the same ideas as non-Indian Mexicans. In order to accelerate the integration of indian villages to the nation, Mora urged the break-up of Indian communal property into private lots. Individual property came to replace commerce as the main civilizing agent. Indian villagers, impoverished and turned into self-sufficient production in the aftermath of independence, no longer qualified as consumers; they became producers, citizens, and proprietors. When faced with the two most important Indian rebellions of the mid-century (Yucatan and Huasteca, 1847-49), Mora's suggestions betrayed a duality characteristic of other liberal writers. He recommended to extend education to civilized the rebels and, at the same time, accepted U.S. military intervention to repress them. Like Alberdi and Santisteban, Mora found no connection between a self-regulated market and the problems confronting the construction of the Mexican nation.

Another element of continuity could be found in the doctrine of comparative advantage. Like so many others in his generation Domingo F. Sarmiento dismissed the

claims of protectionists with the simplicity of a natural impossibility: "we are neither industrialists nor navigators, so, for centuries to come, Europe will supply us with manufactures in exchange for our primary commodities; and we will both profit from such an exchange." [Véliz, 1980, 183] To Sarmiento this proposition appeared self-evident. His contemporary Alberdi also ridiculed the protectionist drive for being unreasonable.

> "One of the causes of the crisis in South America has been the ignorant and blind attempt to create a South American manufacturing industry rival of European industry, by means of protective legislation..." "...such an attempt is in the same line of insanity as Don Quixote's battle against the wind mills." [Alberdi, 1920, 113-14]

This blind acceptance of the doctrine of comparative advantage, far from being circumscribed to the a "nation born liberal" like Argentina, re-appear again and again in the writings of influential liberal thinkers elsewhere. Even Lastarria, whose doubts about the destructive force of free competition are well documents, was ready to dismiss suggestions that factories could prosper in Latin American soil.[19]

The comparative advantage, used as a rhetorical devise to dismiss protectionist arguments, provided no insights into public policy. It suggested that Latin American nation should specialized in the production of agricultural and mining goods but it did not entail an immediate support for these producers. In fact, liberals were quite disturbed by the negative propensities and innate traits of local landowners and agriculturalists as to condone the latter's monopoly of political representation. The ideal political order had to be grounded on Europe or the United States rather than on the actual Latin American producers. European "civilization" should expand from the cities toward the countryside, regardless of the productive structure. The "lower sorts," on the other hand, could not be conquered through

the expansion of the market. They were to be displaced by European immigrants, educated into "civilization" in common schools, and repressed into productive and honest work by the police. Unincorporated indigenous peoples remained, as in colonial times, the target of military raids, their markets dwindling in proportion to the expansion of the 'Christian' frontier. The market, a weak and impotent force, was unable to produce a constitutional order, stable representative governments, and the spirit or moral force that would sustain and reproduce the new republics and advance them into the path of "progress" and "civilization."

Continuities and Changes

Our examination of Bourbon and liberal discourses about reform has yielded interesting contrasts and similarities. Perhaps most salient among the contrasts is the position of reformers in relation to the separation of three distinct spheres of knowledge and human action: economics, politics, and morality. Bourbon reformers kept the "economic" undistinguishable from the "political" and the "moral" --the need to defend monarchical power, spread the Catholic faith, and control overseas colonies belonged to the same field of enquiry, i.e., colonial policy. Only when dealing with Spanish peninsular subjects, their discussions presented a distinction between the moralization of costumbres and the promotion of economic modernization. Nineteenth-century liberals, on the other hand, conceived the question of government as something separable from the question of free trade. They separated their social and political agenda (constitutionalism, immigration, elementary education, etc.) from purely economic reforms (free trade) and subordinated the latter to the completion of the former. In part, this separation related to a question of priorities: the

urgency of nation-building prevailed over the need for economic modernization. In part, it was a rejection of the postulates of British and French political economy as insufficient. As Alberdi explained in the Fragmento Preliminar, a truly comprehensive "science of the wealth of nations" should include both the economic and the moral aspects of human action. Moreover, the main "moral event" of the times --the transition from monarchy and aristocracy to republican democracy-- provided the context for the development of economic activities.[20]

A second contrast relates to the power or strength of the market in producing social, political, and cultural transformations. To Bourbon reformers market overseas commerce could bridge differences among cultures, civilize Indian subjects, and restore the imperial economy. Nineteenth-century liberals, on the other hand, de-emphasized the transformative power of markets on individuals. For them education, immigration, and police surveillance seemed more efficacious than commerce in modernizing Latin American societies. The idea of "deux commerce," present in the writings of Campomanes and Campillo, has vanished almost completely from the political discourse of nineteenth-century liberals. Far from promoting "gentle manners," commerce appears as a weak force, impotent to produce the cultural and political transformation that times require: effective government and a civilized social life. Later in the century, under the aegis of positivism and social darwinism, the market would recover its strength, turning into a grinding force that temples individual capabilities and propensities: it is the struggle for survival. In a later work, Alberdi himself conceived a history of commerce and industry as parallel and independent from the traditional history of the nation, framed around wars and military heroes [Alberdi, 1877].

Influenced by H. Spencer, he granted the market, technological innovation, and foreign entrepreneurs a greater role in shaping the nation's history. Economic progress and integration into world markets became the 'true revolution.' But until that time, that is, before the unification of the nation, market activities appeared as insufficient evidence of 'civilization' --the propensity to barter was too widespread to provide a solid basis for a distinction between the modern and pre-modern.[21]

In their perceptions of poor, indolent, and uncivilized but assimilable 'others', Bourbon and liberal reformers shared common assumptions. The construction of the "Indian" as the recipient of commercial colonization and of "vagrants and gypsies" as the destinataries of state coercion, typical of eighteenth reformers' discourse, finds its analogue in the construction of "native workers" as the culprits for national backwardness. Whereas for Campomanes the church represented the source of inefficiency and corruption in the people's habits, Alberdi and Sarmiento presented two interpretations of the inadequacy of the rural poor to affront the challenges of modernization. For the former it was the hispanic heritage the cause of the national backwardness, for the latter it were the marks of the geography (the 'desert') upon the 'characters' of the Creoles what created both despotic government and the persistence of traditional social arrangements.

Both groups of reformers shared an agenda of integration and assimilation of the poorer and ethnically different part of society; they differed only in the power they attributed to markets as factors of integration and assimilation. The Enlightenment ambivalence between persuasion and coercion remains in both types of texts. The Bourbon emphasis on "emulation" and the didactic function of "economic societies" appears replicated in the

activities "liberal clubs" of the nineteenth century. Clearly with the transition from a colonial to a post-independent situation, the center of the debate shifted from agricultural promotion and colonial commerce to topics of education, republican government, and the legal order. But the close association between force and enticement remained. Coercion was for both types of reformers a necessary ingredient for transforming a 'traditional' order; markets were not enough.

Other contrast refers to their conceptions of political and administrative reform. Whereas Bourbon reformers were ready to accept the decentralization in the administration of empire as a means to economic reconstruction, nineteenth century liberals found that fragmented states to be inimical to progress and civilization, centralization (and the passage from politics to administration) was their goal. But in both political imaginaries we find the same lack: the idea of a self-regulated market acting as a brake of political ambition. In early nineteenth-century liberalism the creation of ideal subjects was grounded on notions of citizenship, productive labor, and social peace, not on the notion of a self-regulated markets. Similarly, Bourbon reformers tried to revitalize an economy that would strengthen colonial power and create the conditions for good government. The functioning of an expanded colonial trade was predicated upon the assumption of a key political relationship, that between the Crown and its subjects, graduated the latter according to social hierarchy, race, and colonial condition. The market was not imagined as a competitive ordering of this corporate colonial situation. The market as the organizer of social life, as an external force compelling people to conform, seemed to be absent in both discourses.

The persistence of the comparative advantage throughout this period requires also a

moment of reflection. Under the Bourbons, the specialization of colonial America in the production of raw materials and foodstuffs not produced by the metropolis was entirely a matter of imperial prerogative. In the language of nineteenth century liberalism, on the other hand, the comparative advantage was naturalized: it became a national trait of Latin American communities. Neither of the two used the argument of the welfare effects of allocating national resources according to the principle of comparative advantage. Bourbon reformers because they did not consider metropolitan and colonial traders to be on an equal footing (welfare gains of latter were subordinated to the welfare gains of the former). Liberal reformers because they considered the alternative arrangement (Latin Americans exporting industrial goods) unimaginable.

Notes

1. In a later book, Rival Views of Market Society, Hirschman extended his analysis to a whole gamut of discourses surrounding the idea of the market: different versions of the "deux commerce" thesis as well as the contrary thesis of the self-destruction of capitalism, and the inversion of the original thesis produced by different variants of the "feudal ties" argument. [A. Hirschman, 1986]

2. Essential works on the subject are S. Warren, 1990 and D. McCloskey, 1985.

3. The literature on the Bourbon reforms in Hispanic America is abundant. See Jacques Barbier, Reform and Politics in Bourbon Chile, 1755-1796 (Ottawa, 1980); David A. Brading,

Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico, 1763-1810 (Cambridge, 1971); Brian R. Hamnett, Politics and Trade in Southern Mexico 1750-1821 (Cambridge, 1971); Peggy K. Liss, Atlantic Empires: The Network of Trade and Revolution 1713-1826 (Baltimore, 1983); Stanley Stein, "Bureaucracy and Business in the Spanish Empire 1759-1804: Failure of a Bourbon Reform in Mexico and Peru," Hispanic American Historical Review 61, no.1 (1981); Miles Wortman, Government and Society in Central America 1680-1840 (New York, 1982). Recent contributions include: Anthony McFarlane, Colombia Before Independence: economy, society, and politics under Bourbon rule (Cambridge, 1993); John R. Fisher et al, Reform and insurrection in Bourbon New Granada and Perú (Baton Rouge, 1990); Richard Garner and S. Stefanou, Economic growth and change in Bourbon México (Gainsville, 1993); Susan Deans-Smith, Bureaucrats, Planters, and Workers (Austin, 1992); Colin M. Maclachlan, Spain's Empire in the New World (Berkeley, 1988); and John Lynch, Bourbon Spain, 1700-1808 (Oxford, 1989).

4. Echoes of this perspective could be heard in the colonies. Lavardén in his Nuevo aspecto del comercio en el Río de la Plata adhered to the view that "active and invigorating commerce" is the one that exports what the nation does not need and import what the nation cannot produce or lacks. [Chiaramonte, 1982, p.71]

5. The metaphor of commerce as the blood system of the empire is present in Campillo in his Nuevo sistema de gobierno. [MacLachlan, 1988, p.74] This metaphor seems to have an old history in Western representations of commerce. [D. Trotter, 1988]

6. "Por más recomendable que sea el oro y la plata, no son estos metales más que unas señales equivalentes al valor de las cosas necesarias a la vida humana o al luxo. El que tiene estos géneros necesarios o de gusto atraerá a sí, necesariamente, el oro del que carece de ellos y los necesita indispensablemente." [Campomanes, 1988 (1762), p.101]

7. C. MacLachlan presents a different view: using Bernardo Ward's Proyecto económico as an example, he suggests that individual initiative responding to opportunities created by reformers played a major role. Prosperity in Ward's view depended on the activities of many private individuals attending their own interests. [MacLachlan, 1988, p.75]

8. In his "Elogio de Carlos III," Jovellanos conceived of economics as a science of administration which could enhance the power of Crown and its bureaucracy. [Fernández de la Cigoña, 1983, 11]

9. Intent in reducing the power of the church in the control of native Americans, Bourbon reformers elevated the figure of the benevolent merchant over that of the missionary.

10. Campomanes believed that continuous trade relations between settlers and indigenous peoples could produce the total assimilation of the latter. In fifty years time, he argued, the Indians that deal with English and French settlers in North America would become Englishmen or Frenchmen. [Campomanes, 1988 (1762), p.121]

11. Later reformers, like visitador Areche critized this practice accusing corregidores of tyranny and exploitation. Near the eruption of the Tupac Amaru rebellion, this enlightened reformer realized that repartos were synonymous with venta forzada and that only by extending free trade to the colonial, domestic market would indigenous peoples liberate themselves from this source of oppression. [Golte, 1980, 196-7]

12. In reference to colonial Indians, Campomanes believed that commerce's power of persuasion needed to be complemented with the 'divide and conquer' approach and with defensive, strategic settlements.

13. The radicalism of early liberals clashed, however, with the reality of the post-independence period. Revolutionary governments had to retain some hideous reminders of the Spanish system like the alcabala, the tobacco monopoly, internal customs, and even Indian tribute in order to sustain the revenues of the state. [Bushnell-Macaulay, 1988, 47-8]

14. Of these, the most widely read was J.B. Say's Traité which was translated in full. The translation of the Wealth of Nations mutilated and abridged the original so much that it failed to sparkle the imagination of Latin American readers. [Hale, 1968, 252]

15. "The civilization of expenditures and consumption has marched faster and longer than the civilization of work and thrift in the products of labor." [Alberdi, 1920, 140]

16. "That who only works and produces like an African or a Turk cannot spend like a European. Morally, luxury belongs only to that who knows how to produce in abundance by means of intelligent and virile work."... "There is labor in Egypt, in Persia, in Bulgaria, there is in the very savage America --[however] there is no wealth in these countries that is the result and product of this labor. Why? --Because [this] is not intelligent, able, moral, cultivated, civilized labor, like the labor of the English or of the French. Because this primitive labor is not accompanied by the thrift that preserves the product of civilized labor and makes it fecund." [Alberdi, 1920, 552]

17. P. Gootenberg has suggested that free trade itself could be a means "to crush the pretensions of an aggressive protectionist lobby led by the artisans," a "real politik" use of the liberal doctrine that contrasts with the "persuasive" approach presented by Santisteban. [Gootenberg, 1981, 216]

18. "Los ferrocarriles i telégrafos -he wrote-, el vapor i la electricidad, no sirven solamente al progreso material sino que, como arma de dos filos, sirven también para atacar la libertad personal y para ahogar la voz que demande justicia, verdad i libertad." [Fuenzalida Grandón, 1911, p.251]

19. In a letter to Bartolomé Mitre he wrote: "Ojalá no tenga [el Perú] la tentación de hacerse más fabricante, lo que no sería extraño, puesto que aquí, como en Chile, abundan hombres que miran como el mayor progreso de estos países el establecimiento de fábricas. Error es éste que ha hecho perder a la América del Sur muchos capitales y mucho tiempo, bien que el tiempo

abunda por acá, que no se siente su pérdida. La experiencia vendrá a enseñarles que no pueden rivalizar como fabricantes con la Europa y que su proveho está en producir las primeras materias con la mayor perfección posible, para que otros les den la última mano." [Oyarzún, 1988, p.289]

20. "Así pues la economía monárquica que había seguido a la economía feudal, va a ser reemplazada por la economía democrática, es decir, por la economía que, de acuerdo con la faz democrática de la moral que viene, dará por resultado la mayor satisfacción posible, no de algunas naturalezas individuales, sino de la naturaleza unitaria, y sintética de la humanidad entera, por el triple desarrollo de la faz material, moral, intelectual de la humanidad." [Alberdi, 1984, p.227]

21. Even indigenous peoples (now denied full citizenship) rise to the defense of free trade.

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