

The Fall of Reason and the Rise of the Reactionary Left

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Before beginning, I would like to say that this article has been inspired by an article by Félix Ovejero called *¿Hacia la izquierda reaccionaria?* (*Towards the reactionary left?*) which I will cite at the end of the article. However, this is not a translation nor a commentary on that article, it is simply my inspiration for writing this article. Although the article is about the new Spanish left-wing (particularly *Podemos*), I found that much of the content is pertinent outside of Spain, especially considering that where this phenomenon began is the U.S., where this kind of mentality has almost dominated the entire left-wing (even among those parties and individuals that claim to be communist/socialist). For this reason I wished to express my view of what I will refer to in this article as *the new left-wing*.

1 Introduction

In terms of political structure, the left-wing has progressed dramatically from the totalitarian model of the Soviet Union from which most Socialism aspiring societies (such as China and Cuba) were inspired. The new left-wing (at least in rhetoric) promotes a more democratic model of Socialism and defends the liberty of the people to choose how they wish to be governed. However, in terms of economics and ethics it has sadly strayed a great deal from the original socialist ideologies. The economic strategies proposed by the majority of the left-wing has gone from the abolition of capital and the wage system (or, simply put, the capitalist system in its entirety) to a social democratic/social liberal solution of simply reforming capitalism to be *more ethical*. In terms of ethics, the new left-wing has destroyed everything that the original socialists have worked to achieve. Instead of the classical internationalism that has always been associated with the socialist movement, the new left-wing is dwelling in personal identities (national, racial, gender, etc.);

instead of being critical of the forces of oppression and the means by which they do so, the new left-wing has decided to become *tolerant* of them; instead of working towards a united class-conscious working class, the new left-wing instead continues to divide the workers with the same identities which they claim are *liberating* when in reality they chain those associated to nothing more than a stereotype. But what is worse is that these aspects of the new left-wing are undermining the most essential part of Socialist thought, which is reason over all else.

The topic of the new left-wing's economic theory, although an interesting subject that demands debate, is not the topic of this article and must be left for another day. Instead, this article focuses on the new left-wing's ethics.

2 Dividers Regain Their Strength

The objective of the socialist movement has always been to aid the working class in achieving class-consciousness and unite as a single force against the ruling class that is the root of their oppression. This objective involves setting aside our differences and using reason as the universal tool for achieving our knowledge, independently of nationality, race, gender, religion, or any other factor that may divide us, for reason is universal. However, it seems that the new left-wing is emphasizing these differences and causing the working class to divide and destroy any progress that may have been achieved. What is more, the new left-wing focuses on just about any division except for class division. They will speak of race, religion, gender, nationality, and just about any other dividing factor except for social-class. Even on those rare occasions where the new left-wing rhetoric mentions social-class, it is usually only as a mask to make their rhetoric of identity seem more *radical*. Instead of focusing on the factor that unites us against the oppressors, the new left-wing chooses to focus on the factors that divide us as a class and cause us to fight between ourselves while the ruling class continues its reign with no opposition.

The new left-wing refers to these dividing factors as a person's *identity* (national, racial, or otherwise) and claim that it is an intrinsic and unchangeable part of who a person is, independent of reason, and focus on these identities to decide who is oppressor and who is oppressed, along with blaming anyone of a given identity for the actions committed by others (past or present) of their same identity. This mentality also causes the identity accused to react aggressively in its own defense causing division of the already divided working class.

3 Defined as the Opposite

Apart from constantly promoting divisive rhetoric, the new left-wing also has a terrible tendency to define itself as the opposite of another. Whenever the right-wing takes a stance on an issue, the new left-wing immediately takes the opposite stance even if they may agree if they were to use reason. This kind of behavior is extremely common in countries such as the U.S. where there are only two parties, and it is very easy to simply define yourself as the opposite of the other, completely disregarding reason or the opponents argument all together. This is evident to the extent that when asked for their reasons to oppose a piece of legislations or an executive action presented by the opposing party, most cannot reason much further than a few counter-arguments, and all of their arguments tend to be either slogans that they have seen on Twitter (because for some reason this generations thinks 140 characters are enough to express a proper political argument) or extremely simple but attractive arguments that they see on social media or news networks (in the worst of cases, from comedians).

Of course, this is not to say that the opposition is correct, however, sometimes it is, and we must accept this fact. Otherwise we are no better than a reactionary conservative who will block any attempt to change the existing system because it implies change. Opinions should be backed by an argument based on reason, for otherwise the argument hold no true value in the discussion/debate and it should be expected that it will be disregarded.

4 Bibliography

As stated at the beginning of this article, this article was inspired by an article by Félix Ovejero that can be found at this link: http://elpais.com/elpais/2016/04/13/opinion/1460545144_705532.html

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