

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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In social and biological evolution, infelicity can operate as a driving motor to force change. In this essay, for life other than human, infelicity is equated with physical unfitness to compete for the resources of a specific niche. For humanity it is defined as the result of an incongruity between a nation's culture and its government. The purpose of this study is to investigate how, for irrational life, unfitness can stimulate the creation of a new species and, for men, how the unhappiness of a nation may enhance its opportunity to enter a new socio-economic order.

An evolutionary account about a possible way in which life could have evolved is offered, concentrating mainly on the transition from ape to a less remote ancestor of man, but also taking into consideration other life forms. Then, a parallel to social evolution is established. A study of the rise of capitalism in England, as well as the recent attempts to institute socialism in Latin America, are also explained as consequences of infelicity.

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The Consequences of Infelicity:  
the Effects of Unhappiness  
on Biological and Social Evolution

by

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THE CONSEQUENCES OF INFELICITY:  
THE EFFECTS OF UNHAPPINESS ON  
BIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL EVOLUTION

INTRODUCTION

*I will proceed with my history, telling  
the story as I go along of small cities  
no less than of great. For most of those  
which were great once are small today;  
and those which used to be small were  
great in my own time. Knowing...that  
human prosperity never abides long in  
the same place.<sup>1</sup>*

*Herodotus (c. 484-425 B.C.)*

Social and biological history attempts to plot the passage through time of certain events or populations. In history, events and life are inevitably observed as a function of time, whereas time is the independent variable which provides the necessary "room" for history to happen.

It is relatively easy to isolate a component of the universe and observe how it has been modified over time. The degree of difficulty increases, however, when several aspects of life are plotted against time. Aristotle made such an attempt and ended up visualizing life through time as an endless circle. The Christian faith's equation is a perfectly straight line. Hegel's conclusion was a line with a positive slope<sup>2</sup>

In this study the results are not as simple as a circle or a line. Nevertheless, a pattern common for both biology and culture, and closely

related to infelicity,<sup>3</sup> was detected. Based on that pattern we have tried to demonstrate how the unhappiness of a nation can be the driving motor of its future prosperity.

The argument concerning the nature and meaning of infelicity is very relevant to us and has been considered by several significant political scientists, philosophers, and psychologists. Thinkers like Thomas Hobbes, Jeremy Bentham, Sigmund Freud and Aristotle attempted to deal with the subject, and their conclusions on unhappiness impart fascinating inferences.

Hobbes did not believe that felicity could be achieved in this mortal life, but asserted that its pursuit was nevertheless a motor for behavior. For Hobbes, continual success is synonymous with happiness, or, in his own words, "*Continual success* [italics in the original] in obtaining those things which a man from time to time desireth, that is to say, continual prospering is what men call felicity; I mean the felicity of this life."<sup>4</sup> But because Hobbes saw human desires as unlimited, he believed that the achievement of happiness was an impossibility. Elaborating on this idea he stated: "felicity is the continual progress of the desire, from one object to another; the attaining of the former, being still but the way to the later...I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire for power after power that ceaseth only in death."<sup>5</sup>

Bentham saw humanity less pessimistically than Hobbes. For Bentham, happiness was "the central trunk [of life] and all human activities were branches of it."<sup>6</sup> Further, he defined happiness as "the general end of government"<sup>7</sup> and argued that a political constitution that does not pursue that general end was not appropriate for the constituents. One could say that in Bentham's opinion the acquisition of happiness is possible and, to a large extent, dependent on a good constitution.

Freud also considered happiness central for human activities and, contrary to Bentham and in agreement with Hobbes, it was not determined by a good constitution, but by human desires, the pursuit of which will affect the judgment of value. To put it in Freud's own words, "the judgments of value made by mankind are immediately determined by their desires for happiness."<sup>8</sup> Here we must equate "desires for happiness" with "sexual and aggressive instincts," which he argued are the product of natural selection or "natural necessities."<sup>9</sup> But Freud, above all, situated unhappiness, or the pursuit of happiness, over all things determining human behavior: "they [humans] seek happiness, they want to become happy and to remain so."<sup>10</sup> He recognized that our possibilities for happiness are remote and will depend on a very difficult balance of our personality, that is, a balance between what he called the id, ego and super ego --the characteristics of which are beyond the scope of this thesis. But what is important to us is that he recognized infelicity as the driving motor for human activity.

Aristotle defined felicity as "the most desirable way of life."<sup>11</sup> The best way of life for any living thing will be linked to its biological attributes. For example, a happy bird will necessarily need, among other things, a healthy pair of wings, as a happy fish will need operating gills. This is part of what biologists call fitness. But humans need other things beyond physical fitness to be happy. Aristotle, as Bentham, mentioned that "the best way of life will go together with the best constitution possible."<sup>12</sup> And the best constitution possible for a nation will arise from government that reflects its culture. The incompatibility between government and culture, as we will see below, is a major problem for many Latin American countries.

In 1986, when Mexican writer and philosopher Carlos Fuentes was asked his opinion of the major challenges faced by the human race, without hesitation he mentioned two areas of concern: first, the possibility of a nuclear holocaust and, second, the ever-widening technological gap between underdeveloped nations and already developed countries on this planet. Much as the Berlin Wall physically divided East Germany from West Germany, there is an invisible wall, a technological gap, separating the underdeveloped from the developed nations. As a result, most inhabitants of underdeveloped countries are very unhappy with their present situation, many of them living in sub-human conditions. This essay is an attempt to understand the nature of this technological gap and the consequences of the infelicity produced by it, visualizing Latin America as a group of backward countries with a high

potential for evolutionary progress. But, unfortunately, Latin American states exist in a world where their evolutionary potential could be curtailed by the will of already developed countries.

Our thesis is that infelicity works as a vector which increases the possibility of change for biological life and for social organization. Based on that premise we argue that Latin American countries, as well as other underdeveloped nations, have the potential to develop not necessarily a more thermodynamically-efficient<sup>13</sup> socio-economic structure than the ones that prevail in today's capitalist nations, but at least a better place to live for their citizens.

Infelicity is only one of the forces that affects social evolution. There are other factors, like cultural disposition, the international environment, economic capability, and natural resources, that are important, if not crucial, in the evolution of societies. As a result of the research, we have found that for the case of Latin America the cultural disposition and the economic capability are favorable forces that, together with the unhappiness that prevails in the area, form a formidable vector for positive change. But, unfortunately, it has also been found that significant foreign opposition to such an attempt is hindering the Latin American revolutionary process and its possibility for positive social evolution. We are referring to the United States' intervention during this century, which has hurt many Latin American countries with pro-socialist governments and those in the middle of a revolutionary process.

Not all the interventionist activity of the United States is focused on socialism; it has also been the policy of the White House to attack Latin American countries in order to preserve United States interest. But, because a big threat to the interest of capitalism is socialism itself, socialist countries and movements have been a prime target for intervention.

Our definition of socialism is wide, and in the case of Latin America it can have different styles or, as Nobel Prize winner Gabriel García Márquez argues, it could have as many forms as countries in the Americas.<sup>14</sup> Latin American socialism can be different from one country to another. For example, the Cuban system, which is characterized by a centralized economy, differed from the Nicaraguan model, which implemented a mixed economy. Our conviction is that Latin Americans must develop their own solutions and to a certain extent take advantage of historical opportunities and the mistakes of other nations. At this point, we are referring to Latin American countries that have experienced long and shaky periods of socialism. Nevertheless, they should not copy socialist models in a crude way. Ultimately, Latin American socialism should promote, without exception, the Marxist idea of equal opportunity and Saint Thomas Aquinas' notion of the common good.<sup>15</sup>

In general, socialism is characterized by several concepts that, in one way or another, should be present in any authentic socialist state. For example, there should be democratic participation of all workers in the decision-making process concerning their place of work. Also, the state should

be responsible for a widespread distribution of wealth among citizens. More important, it must be a social system in which the workers possess political power, the means of production, and the distribution of goods.

Furthermore, the process of socialism arises from a country's internal conditions and cannot be forcefully imposed by a more powerful socialist nation. The former so-called popular democracies of Eastern Europe are prime examples of how the imposition of socialism on a nation which is not ready for it can promote infelicity and, subsequently, change. Contrary to Latin American socialist governments, the Eastern European socialists were not confronted by strong CIA-backed counter-revolutionary activity or by total economic embargoes; nevertheless, their systems crumbled as soon as the nation that was responsible for the artificial implantation of socialism, the Soviet Union, stopped support for those artificial governments. On the contrary, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua held elections in 1990 under very unfavorable conditions created by the United States and its allies and managed to obtain more than forty percent of the vote. Even by losing the presidential elections, they managed to remain the most important political force in that country. It is hard to guess what would be the result of a future election in Cuba, but it is obvious that Castro's government holds a substantial amount of support in his country and, contrary to the Eastern European popular democracies, was, in spite of many economic difficulties, not shackled by the revolts of the Eastern bloc.

We believe that one of the reasons for these discrepancies is that the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions were indigenous movements prompted by their adherent unhappiness.

These concepts of socialism are to be taken into consideration by any nation that is trying to implement that system. But, without a doubt, Latin American socialists should analyze the conditions inside their own country before a crude implementation of any of these dogmatic concepts.

As with socialism, capitalism may change from one country to another. For example, the capitalism of many Northern European republics, France, Spain, and, up to a certain point, England and Germany, differs from the capitalism of the United States in that Europeans, as Canadians, have adopted some more socialistic measures and incorporated them into the capitalist system. Among them, we have the reforms many European nations have made to their educational and health facilities which are not present in the United States. But, generally speaking, the European and the United States' capitalist models are far away from implementing any of the characteristics of the socialist model of production mentioned above. Capitalism, as it operates in the 1990s, can be defined as an economic system marked by open competition in the free market, in which the means of production and distribution are privately or corporately owned and development is proportionate to increasing accumulation and reinvestment of profits. This holds true for any of today's so-called socialist-capitalist nations like Spain

and France, which have equated socialism with a few reforms to the capitalist system. These concepts of socialism and capitalism are critical for the following argument of the evolution of societies.

Our analysis of the evolutionary potential of underdeveloped nations rests upon an historical perspective. First, the technological gap is, in itself, a traditional one. That is, underdeveloped countries are historically backward in terms of the development and exploitation of energy when compared to industrialized nations. Second, throughout history, technological differences between countries have always existed. In effect, there has invariably been a "Third World," even if the countries that had been part of it have changed over time. For example, at the turn of this millennium Arab nations were considered to be at the vanguard in technology, but now, almost a thousand years later, they form part of today's "Third World." Another more recent example of ups and downs can be found in medieval times, when Roman nations (mainly France, Spain, Italy, and Portugal) dominated the Western hemisphere. Now they are far from being as powerful as they were.

Therefore, we must look back through time and explore what happened in countries that once were "on top of the ladder" but have since fallen from that position. Spain offers us a good example. Moreover, we can also study countries that once were dominated and later became dominant nations. Here we will look at England and the development of capitalism as an example.

Human development is an evolutionary process, and to think about the future panorama of the American continent--for instance, one thousand years from now--it is necessary to theorize about how societies evolve. Herodotus' principle of *discontinuity in command* --the antithesis of the Hegelian dialectic --has always been present in humans.

It appears to be true, as Hegel thought, that the tendency in human affairs has been toward socio-economic progress, but it is not from the more advanced nation that the next, more sophisticated (or thermodynamically speaking, more efficient) stage of history arises. Here lies Karl Marx's erroneous prediction about the emergence of socialism in England --at the time of the Russian Revolution the most advanced capitalist nation of the world. On the contrary, the first attempt to establish socialism (independent of its future success) was made by the most backward capitalist nation: Russia. Empires such as the Egyptian, the Roman, the Ottoman, the Spanish, the English, the French, the Austro-Hungarian and the Prussian all declined; not a single one seems to have evolved to the pre-eminent evolutionary stage (see Table 8); new inputs seem always to come from what, at the time, were backward nations.

Our analysis of the evolution of history and its change will include the biological past of humans. It would be ridiculous to argue that natural selection is present in the evolution of societies, but an astonishing similarity exists between the way living things and cultures evolve.

In the biological realm, among all species, less specialized individuals are those with the higher potential to evolve to a more advanced, or complicated, stage of life. By specialization we mean the degree of relatively effective exploitation of their ecological niche, and the relative level of fitness of those organisms. It is important to emphasize that this relationship between biology and sociology is only analogous because the mechanisms that operate in each realm are quite different. We are *not* arguing that natural selection is present in social evolution. But the motor that moves individuals toward *general* change is the same for both realms: unhappiness or dissatisfaction with their present situation.

In organisms without an advanced central nervous system, infelicity is more appropriately defined as the inability to adapt. In other words, the tendency to look for a new niche, either sociological or ecological, depends on the degree of satisfaction or comfort an individual, and consequently a population, may encounter in its present one. Satisfaction or fitness will promote specialization to better compete for the resources of an already developed niche; this will encourage specific evolution. In specific evolution, natural selection, or the survival of the fittest, operates. Dissatisfaction or unfitness will encourage the development of new alternatives; this will promote general evolution. Here evolution does not follow the rules of natural selection, and it is the unfit who has the potential to develop and populate a new niche. For example, because capitalism has been working relatively well

in the United States, attempts at social evolution (like Roosevelt's New Deal or Reagan's New Federalism) in that country have been made in order to make the capitalist system operate more efficiently; this is an example of specific evolution. It seems to be true that within the capitalist world only the fittest, or best capitalists, survive.

In Latin America, however, where capitalism has been largely a failure, the tendency in many countries has been to explore a new way of production different from capitalism: general evolution. This topic of specific and general evolution will be discussed in detail in this study and is the backbone of this thesis.

This essay will examine both biological and social evolution and will try to show how they are related to the invisible wall that divides today's Latin America from the United States and other contemporary economic powers.

Several books have been of particular inspiration for this essay. Among them are Thomas G. Harding<sup>16</sup>, et al., *Evolution and Culture*, which points out what the authors call the Law of Evolutionary Potential. It explains how historically backward nations have great potential to develop new and more advanced socio-economic structures (in the sense of distribution of wealth and exploitation of energy) and ways of living -- even more advanced than those of today's developed nations.

The second book, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, by Leon Trotsky, makes important contributions. It explains the advantage backward nations have in "borrowing" technology from advanced countries. Also, it argues that, in order for backward nations to take advantage of the technology already developed in the advanced countries, two things are necessary: economic potential to buy and develop technology, and cultural disposition to accept positive economic changes. Both conditions, as we will see, are present in today's Latin American nations. It is precisely the lack of cultural disposition on the part of Latin Americans toward implementing capitalist developed nations' economic policies that accounts for many of the blocks in that invisible wall. Latin American culture, as we will see in Chapter Two, is more tilted toward a centralized model of economy oriented to the common good than to a decentralized free enterprise society.

A third book, *The Hare and the Tortoise*, written by David P. Barash, argues that social evolution (if it ever happens at all) occurs very slowly when compared with technological change. Based on this theory we argue that the cultural traditions of countries included in our study have remained basically unchanged through history.

Three classic books have also been very useful, if not essential, in our study: Karl Marx's *Capital* (in particular volume II); Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*; and Charles Darwin's *The Origin of the Species*. From the first we derived an understanding of the

development of capitalism in England, and from the second, how cultural ethos are related to the acceptance or rejection of a way of life. This was the case in eighteenth century England when capitalism succeeded as an alternative to the feudal state. From the third book we learned some concepts of natural selection.

To help understand the concepts of general and specific evolution in a more tangible way, the biological analogy will be explained in the first chapter: "A Possible Parallel: Biological Evolution as a Consequence of Infelicity."

Then, in Chapter Two, "Social Evolution as a Consequence of Infelicity," some historical evidence will be presented and explained in light of cultural and economic capabilities and their relation to socio-economic change. This chapter is written based on the premise that cultural incongruity with an economic model will invariably produce economic disaster and social chaos. It establishes that the infelicity of many Latin Americans arises from the discrepancy between their culture and the ethics associated with the capitalist mode of production. Also, the situations for the rise of capitalism in the nineteenth century and socialism in the twentieth will be discussed. The Protestant ethos and its relationship with the spirit of capitalism, and the Catholic ethos and its relationship with the legacy of Saint Thomas Aquinas' doctrines of common good, which are consistent with the spirit of socialism, are covered in this chapter.

Chapter Three, *Negative Vectors*, is an account of United States intervention in Latin American countries with socialist governments (or where the struggle for socialism has been established) and discusses a series of possible rationales behind such a tendency. The last chapter offers a set of important conclusions.

Is it in the future of Latin America, as part of the so-called Third World, to be "swallowed" by its now more technologically advanced neighbor? Or will Latin Americans develop in time a new, in the Marxist sense more advanced (see Table 8), socio-economic system? This essay is an attempt to explore in detail both possibilities.

A POSSIBLE PARALLEL: BIOLOGICAL EVOLUTION  
AS A CONSEQUENCE OF INFELICITY

*May 1, 2093, was a tragic day for the human race. That morning, while the world celebrated general international festivities, President Zorg, of the planet Mars, decided to experiment with Earth's inhabitants. After a surgical laser bombardment, which destroyed most of Earth's physical infrastructure, he wanted to know the results of an application of a highly potent, lethal-for-man, electrical field on the already devastated planet. That electrical field was a very peculiar one: it was meant to be five feet tall and could only affect humans. In other words, a giraffe, a pine tree, or any other form of life could not be harmed by it.*

*At the beginning there were many deaths; almost all the members of the population standing above five feet tall died instantly; the members of that group who did not succumb were so affected that they never stood straight for the remainder of their lives.*

*But not everything was that tragic, and the individuals who were below five feet tall did not die; but of course, whenever they grew up and reached that height, they perished. The only individuals able to survive on Earth's surface for a full life-span were the ones **genetically predisposed** to be shorter than five feet tall: they were the fittest.*

*As a result, a million years later, the average human being stands four feet five inches tall.*

It is very unlikely that this Martian nemesis could ever occur (we know there is no life on Mars, at least not in the way we think of it), but if something like that would ever happen, you can bet that we humans would either shrink, die, or flee. In ecological terms, the electrical field is called a *selective agent* and is responsible for the way in which man evolved. It was the change-promoting motor that produced modifications in the characteristics of the individuals; it allowed small people, who because of their shortness were not affected by the powerful and unexpected selective agent, to evolve specifically on an altered planet Earth. It forced those who could not make it in those conditions to change or die. In the biological world, unfit individuals living in a state of unhappiness in their niche either perish or have to abandon their present niche for an alternate one, if available.

An excellent , and far less hypothetical, example of evolution in action and the workings of natural selection in guiding genetically diverse populations in particular directions is provided by studies of the peppered moths (*Biston betularia*) of Great Britain. Before the onset and spread of the Industrial Revolution, light-colored moths predominated, and dark moths were extremely rare, as seen in private collections of the time. As factory chimneys belched filth into the air and increasing amounts of soot settled on tree trunks and other places where these moths alighted, a corresponding increase of dark moths occurred. In areas that remained unindustrialized, light moths remained predominant. The change in frequencies of the dark and the light alleles of

the body-color gene was a direct outcome of the advantages of protective coloration in different environments. Light moths are conspicuous against the darkened backgrounds in industrialized regions and are subject to heavy predation by birds, but their body color remains advantageous in regions in which trees and buildings are not sooty. Dark moths have advantages on darkened backgrounds, but suffer heavy predation by birds in the areas that allow light moths to flourish. Each expression of protective coloration is advantageous in one set of conditions but not in the other. Interestingly, the frequency of dark moths in England decreased significantly after a program was introduced to reduce the emission of soot and other components of air pollution. Change in allelic frequencies thus accounts for evolutionary change guided by natural selection acting on allelic diversity. Allelic diversity allows dark and light moths to reproduce in both kinds of environments, but the fitness of each genotype is relative to the environment. Examples of industrial melanism, as noted in 1985 by K.S. Thompson in an essay that appeared in *Oxford Survey of Evolutionary Biology* ("The relationship Between Development and Evolution), exist in other insects and in spiders in different regions of the world.

Biological evolution means nothing more than a gradual change (or rapid change, in the event of mutations) in the quality (genetic make-up) of living things. Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection is widely accepted; his mechanism of evolution, natural selection, explains many aspects

of the biological world. Natural selection may be defined as differential reproduction and survival of individuals carrying *alternative* inherited traits. It occurs because genetically different individuals tend to leave different numbers of progeny in future generations; this allows the genetic composition of the population to change. For our Martian invasion, the individuals carrying the alternative inherited traits to survive on the surface of the Earth were the ones below five feet tall. For the real life example of *Biston betularia*, the alternative trait was the allele responsible for dark color, which might have saved the species from extinction. Later on, they tended to produce offspring with those genetic traits that accounted for the survival of their parents.

Now that some basic concepts of natural selection have been reviewed, a less speculative scheme of life can be described. Refer to Table 1, where seven different forms of life of the animal kingdom have been plotted on a graph. The main idea of the table is based on Darwin's biological dialectic: "the more complex organs and instincts should have been *perfected* [italics added]...by the accumulation [through time] of innumerable slight variations, each good for the individual possessor."<sup>17</sup> But perfected in what direction? In a way that nature selects among those individuals with genes providing for a more efficient exploitation *inside* the niche in which they live (horizontally measured in Table 1)? Or should perfection be measured vertically, where the move to a new niche, which requires new skills associated with the central nervous system, is considered a step forward? Darwin did not address these

questions. Furthermore, the possibility of two different evolutionary realms was not noticed until a century later.

In 1960, a hundred years after the publication of *On the Origin of the Species*, Thomas G. Harding, et al., published a book called *Evolution and Culture*. The authors differentiate between two aspects of evolution: the specific and the general. In other words, there are two possible realms in which progress (or tendency toward perfection) may be achieved.

Specific evolution refers to the evolution that perfects the organisms to better exploit a particular niche. For example, in the section of the scheme concerning the kingdom protista (mostly primitive unicellular and acellular organisms comprising the protozoans, bacteria, algae, and fungi), point A in Table 1 is considered more specialized (genetically perfected to exploit *their* niche) than point B. In other words, individuals at point A have become more efficient than those at point B in the exploitation of their particular niche, which makes them more comfortable within it. As Harding states, "In the context of specific evolution, "advance" [quotations in the original] means that by adapting modification the population is enabled to maintain or better itself in the face of a threat induced by changing environment or that it is enabled to exploit *the same environment* [italics added] more effectively than before."<sup>18</sup> Specific evolution depends only on the features an individual has that enable it to exploit more efficiently its environment. Specific evolution is proportional to the degree of fitness (see Table 2). Individuals who are satisfied and live in

relative comfort in a particular niche have the tendency to evolve horizontally, sharpening their skills for a better thermodynamic exploitation of their own niche and becoming more specialized over time. In other words, satisfaction is a kind of passive response to a specific selective agent, allowing a population to continue evolving in an ecological niche.

General evolution is a completely different story. It is the overall view of the scheme without the branches, or "it is the emergence of higher forms of life, regardless of particular lines of descent."<sup>19</sup> For example, in Table 1, the protozoans in point A were more specialized but less prone to exploit other niches than were the ones at point B earlier in time. Furthermore, at point C, the *potential* of some protozoans to evolve into a higher form of life was very high because many of them were not satisfied with their niche. In other words, they were topped by the more specialized --i.e., satisfied-- individuals. It is accurate to state that today's advanced species (including humans, of course) are the product of unhappy protozoans!

A good way to explain how general evolution operates is to analyze the transition of man's ancestors from the trees to the ground. Those individuals who were genetically predisposed to keep hanging in the trees (perhaps the ones with longer tails and toes) did not need to step down to the ground because they could compete better and live in relative comfort in the branches (Table 2). The ones who changed niches were those who had smaller tails and toes and, more important, a more efficient brain to deal with the new niche,

which was more demanding of abstract thinking than the old one. Attributes needed in the grassland were not necessarily useful in the trees. In other words, those who were less specialized to exploit their original niche (the trees) were the ones more prone to leave because they were unskillful, which brought dissatisfaction and the tendency to evolve generally (Table 4). It was a matter of choice between migration and death. Some advantages in one niche were disadvantages in another.

Whether in a particular time an individual "chooses" to keep on exploiting its own niche (the trees) or tries to look for another one (the ground) depends mainly on three things: the degree of competition in its own niche and in any other possible new one (see tables 4 and 5), the biological attributes of that individual, and the availability of alternate niche(s) with a relative lower level of competition (see Table 6). All three things determine which individuals are satisfied and which are not; they also determine who will progress and form a new species and who will keep on perfecting and perpetrating their own.

Progress, in terms of general biological evolution, is associated with the ability to use the brain in a way that helps in the exploitation of a new niche. It is important to mention, however, that general evolution is not necessarily associated with progress. Individuals born with smaller mental capabilities than those needed in their own niche may find and occupy another niche that requires a smaller degree of brain activity. In this case it is not appropriate to

talk about progress but about degeneration. To make this point clear, let us take a look at Table 7, which is a classification from serological reactions.<sup>20</sup> At point A, individuals of the family Hominidae "branched" into three genera: Gorilla, Pan and Homo. As the diagram suggests (brain capacity increases from left to right), individuals more specialized in their niche did not deviate substantially from it; those are today's chimpanzees. Besides those specialized individuals, there were some with variations in the central nervous system, among other things, which forced them to look for their own space in order to survive. The specimens born with less mental capability had to move to another territory, one congruent with the abilities of the gorillas. They found comfort in a new territory compatible with their innate abilities. The ones with greater brain activity occupied, and later improved, a new niche; they are today's humans. Both gorillas and humans are the descendants of dissatisfied and unspecialized chimpanzee-like individuals that in a moment in time occupied the same niche.

Why do some organisms "choose" one kind of evolution over the other kind? The answer seems to be related to two simple words: satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Going back to our primate example, we can formulate an interesting question: Who was satisfied and who was not? The answer seems to be a simple one. The ones with better physical attributes (longer tail, appropriate brain capacity and so on) to compete in the trees were relatively more satisfied than the individuals who did not have those attributes, including

a smaller or larger brain capacity. Furthermore, the less specialized individuals were the ones who changed niches.

It is a matter of debate whether they voluntarily "took off" or whether they were "kicked out" of the trees, or if it were a combination of both, but that is beyond the scope of this essay. The important thing here is that the less specialized individuals were the ones who moved on; the more specialized stayed. This argument cannot be proved, but it is very logical, and it is considered as a good possibility by important biologists. For example, Helena Curtis, author of several essays on biological evolution and of a biology text book used in major universities in the United States, offered the following reasoning: "We do not know why one group of apes and not another moved into the grasslands. One possible explanation was that this group was driven out of the woodland, then contracting in size, by competition with other primates. Perhaps they possessed some important characteristic that we do not know about it."<sup>21</sup> What we know is that the group that was repelled from, or voluntarily evacuated, the woodland was, beyond any doubt, less fitted to compete in it; it was driven out by a group that was more adapted to the old niche.

One final but important thing remains to be mentioned: very few attempts by non-satisfied individuals to enter or form a new niche are successful. Most of them fail in such adventures and perish. It is highly improbable that the first primates that attempted to leave the trees and move to

the ground succeeded at once. Many of the experiments probably did not flourish for a variety of reasons; and even if the only thing we can do about it is to speculate, some reasonable arguments may be given. For example, a rationale for failure could be that some of the individuals who made an attempt were not smart enough to survive in the new niche, or perhaps they lacked the physical attributes to hold a stick or throw a rock. Maybe some groups did not step down at the right time and the weather hampered their success. Or it could be that those adventurous primates did not encounter the right setting on the ground because of too much competition or a rough terrain. But the important thing is that the ones that did succeed encountered at the time a series of advantageous conditions that, as physical vectors, added up and contributed to their survival and further specific evolution in the new niche.

To sum up, there are two distinct ways in which life may evolve. One is the specific evolution that operates by selecting those individuals who are born with the genetic traits that allow them to exploit their niche more efficiently than others. In Table 1 this specific progress goes horizontally from left to right. The other is general evolution, which selects those individuals who are less fitted to exploit their specific niche to move into a higher stage of life (or lower, in the case of degeneration). This can be observed in Table 1 from the bottom up.

## SOCIAL EVOLUTION AS A CONSEQUENCE OF INFELICITY

Conflict is the basic  
mechanism of change.

Ibn Khaldun<sup>22</sup>

It is our intention to show that the Theory of Evolutionary Potential present in the biological realm is also at work in the evolution of societies. In the social realm, as in biology, individuals, and the groups formed by them, who are unhappy in their environment have a tendency to look for new alternatives. Most attempts will fail, but for those few who are able to make it, the results can be rewarding: the evolution of a new species or the implementation of a new idea. To accomplish part of this goal we are going to discuss first the development of capitalism in England and then the attempts to establish socialism in Latin America in the twentieth century.

## The Rise of Capitalism in England

Since Herodotus' time, perhaps even before, scholars have noticed the non-linear form that characterizes social evolution: "human prosperity never abides long in the same place." Nevertheless, influenced by the Hegelian dialectic of the nineteenth century on the one hand and by Hobbes' theories regarding the inability of humans to change on the other, the non-linear nature of social evolution has been put aside by many scholars. For example, in his theory of capitalist development in England, Karl Marx argued that "the economic structure of capitalist society has grown out of the economic structure of feudal society. The dissolution of the latter set free the elements of the former."<sup>23</sup> In other words, feudalism, according to Marx, had to develop and then "dissolve" in order for capitalism to start its own development. Furthermore, Marx believed that England was the most advanced feudal country in Europe before capitalism (as a result of the industrial revolution) developed as a socio-economic alternative to feudalism. But that was not actually the case. In fact, according to many historians, England probably was from 1066 to the eighteenth century the country that benefitted least, or which was made most unhappy, by the feudal system. This infelicity was shown by the many rebellions and the lack of autonomy which characterized feudal England. This argument seems to be outlined by Marx himself when he acknowledged that the "Catholic church was [at the time of the Reformation]

... [a] feudal proprietor of a great part of English land."<sup>24</sup> This dominion started to be universal by the thirteenth century, when in May of 1213 John "Lackland" agreed to hold England as a fief of the Papacy<sup>25</sup> --from this incident his peculiar nickname originated. After 147 years of Norman rule, England still was unable to exert any control over its own lands.

Before the Reformation, England, as well as Germany, was controlled by a powerful Catholic church with a relatively efficient feudal system. English kings from William the Conqueror in 1066 to King Richard II in 1389 never lived in their kingdom and spent most of their time either in Normandy or France. Economic decisions concerning England were made by the kings of those countries taking into consideration French and Norman interests over England's.

This condition of vassalage felt very uncomfortable on the English side, and the Italian republics, France, and Spain were more satisfied in economic and sociological terms with the benefits of feudalism than England. Therefore, a key question posed by many English historians: Did the French succeed in imposing on England the ethics and beliefs necessary for the development of an efficient feudal system? We will venture to answer, unlike Marx, that the evidence indicates the contrary. Feudalism was never prosperous on English soil, neither during the Norman period nor in the prelude to the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century. This idea is consistent with the main argument of this thesis: in general evolutionary terms,

infelicity enhances the possibilities for a change in niche. Now, this point will be demonstrated.

The period of the Norman Conquest was characterized by the forced imposition of French ethics in culture and government on Britain. Even rival political schools like those represented by Edward A. Freeman (admirers of the Anglo-Saxon culture) and John Horace Round (admirers of Norman political culture) agree on this point. In Edward Freeman's words, the Norman period "affected our blood, our language, and our arts;"<sup>26</sup> and for Round, "it gave us, suddenly, a strong, purposeful monarchy."<sup>27</sup> There is no doubt that the influence of the Normans deeply affected most aspects of English life, but, more importantly, it did not permanently change Anglo-Saxon culture; it was a "temporary overthrow of our national being."<sup>28</sup> The reason appears to be that Anglo-Saxon culture, which was more pluralistic than Latin culture, was not congruent with the ethics of feudalism.

Before the Norman invasion English society was characterized by private ownership of land. For example, the *Oxford History of Britain* stated that before the Norman conquest "land was reckoned in 'hides', each nationally the area needed to support a free peasant cultivator and his family...the most prominent figure in the early sources is the free peasant farmer or *cerol* [italics in the original], typically cultivating one hide of land."<sup>29</sup> This system drastically differs from the pyramidal and centralized feudal model, in which all land is property of the king and peasants have no

control over the fief they work on. The change the Norman conquerors imposed on England consequently brought a series of incidents that reflected the unhappiness experienced by many sectors of its population. Right after Duke William of Normandy defeated and killed King Harold of England at Hastings in October of 1066, a series of upheavals, never experienced in much calmer Anglo-Saxon society, occurred in England. Among them we find the English rebellions of 1067-1070; the Harrying of the North, 1069-70; the civil war of 1139-53; the Battle of Lincoln, 1141; the civil war of 1215; the civil war of 1321-22; the Hundred Years War, 1337-1437; the English Political Crisis, 1339-41; the Peasants' Revolt, 1381; and many more. All this instability was a sign of the incompatibility of English culture with the Norman and French feudal idiosyncrasy, which was a reflection of the values preached by the Roman-based Catholic Church. These incongruities in beliefs brought with them a crisis in authority that characterized the period. This crisis brought with it the climax of the events of the English feudal system: the conversion to Protestantism in the first part of the sixteenth century which in the long run put an end to the French and Catholic influence in England.

Many scholars have investigated the impact that the Norman Conquest had on England, and, as it is to be expected, there are different opinions on the matter. Edward Augustus Freeman (1823-92), one of the most distinguished English historians who wrote about the subject, was, as mentioned above, sympathetic to the pre-Conquest Anglo-Saxons. He

regarded the Conquest as a very important event in English history. However, it was an event that did not transform the anti-feudal tendencies of the Anglo-Saxons, or in his own words, "the older and stronger elements [as the private ownership of land] still survived, and in the long run they again made good their supremacy."<sup>30</sup> Freeman argues that the Normans never understood the idiosyncrasy of the Anglo-Saxon culture and that they tried to impose in a raw way their feudal-monarchic values without taking into consideration the nature of the displaced nation. To put it in his own words, he regarded the Norman Conquest of England as an "insoluble puzzle without a clear notion of the condition of England and the English people at the time when the Conqueror [William] and his followers first set foot upon our shores."<sup>31</sup> A kingdom purely Teutonic was brought within the sphere of the laws, the manners, and the speech of the Latin nations. The impact of the Conquest was definitely felt by the peasantry, which was gradually deprived of the land and liberties it had enjoyed under the kingdom of Harold Godwinson. Under these conditions it was not to be expected that England would exhibit social, as well as economic, stability. The many rebellions during the feudal period were, in fact, clear signs of the infelicity and political instability characteristic of countries with lack of trust and respect for their rulers, principles on which genuine authority is based.

Then, if our thesis is correct, England was in a position to experiment with alternative models of production. The first apparent important innovation

was the one called *bastard feudalism*, a term that was brought up first by Charles Plumer and later by K. B. McFarlane, who introduced the adjective *bastard* as something "having the appearance of, somewhat resembling [feudalism]." <sup>32</sup> During the two centuries that followed the death of Edward I in 1307, "the new order of patronage, liveries and affinities occupied the front of the stage... with an epilogue which far outran medieval times. It is this new order that we call 'bastard feudalism.' Its quintessence was payment for service."<sup>33</sup>

Thus, we can see this infelicity-driven innovation approaching capitalism. Of course, part of the new order was the emigration of landless peasants to the city, where the lucky ones found jobs in factories and where payment as exchange for service was also the rule. This period of "bastard feudalism," roughly from the early fourteenth century up to the late seventeenth century, was the result of England's attempt to rid itself of feudalism. As we all know, England made out of this new experiment a success story. How?

In Chapter One we mentioned that whether, in a particular time, an individual "chooses" to keep on exploiting his own niche (in which he can be dominant or be dominated) or tries to look for (or make) a new one, depends on three things: 1) the degree of competition in his own niche; 2) the biological attributes of that individual; and 3) the availability of an alternate niche with a lower level of competition. These three conditions also appear to

be present in the social realm for general evolution because the change-promoting motor called dissatisfaction is also at work here. Whether, in a particular time, a group of substantial and influential individuals in a society (which is nothing more than individuals tied by common goals) "chooses" to keep on implementing a certain socio-economic model or go for an alternative will depend on congruent factors: first, the degree of relative competition it confronts in the present socio-economic model; second, the economic and cultural capacity of a country --which is the sociological counterpart for the physical capability mentioned for the biological realm-- to assimilate a new socio-economic structure; and third, the availability of an alternate socio-economic model with relatively less competition.

To explain this argument in detail let us take a look once again at the English environment during the time of the Protestant Reformation, where, for the reasons given above and others that will follow, England's ability to replicate the relative success the feudal model had in other European countries was aborted. The relative competition England confronted within the feudal world was very high. Not only was all of Europe feudal, but Roman countries were more powerful at the time. Latin nations were in control of most of the New World in the sixteenth century, and their armies and navies were very powerful. English lands were the property of the Catholic church, which obstructed local initiative to make feudalism more productive because major economic decisions were not made by local government.<sup>34</sup>

England was, as Germany, outmatched by feudal Latin countries. If England were going to be better off, the alternative was not to defeat the Roman nations within their feudal socio-economic structure, but to find a new way of production in which it was capable of surviving. This new way of production, as we well know, consisted of the implementation of machines to produce manufactured goods.

In the new industrial capitalist way of production, contrary to the feudal one, competition was non-existent because there were no other industrial capitalist states. The use of machines allowed the English to develop a new economic niche that was thermodynamically more efficient simply because the use of machines increases labor productivity. But the English were very lucky with their experiment because the new ethos associated with the new Protestant religion was congruent with the capitalist system. This provided them with the necessary cultural receptivity that, as Trotsky pointed out, is necessary to assimilate a new socio-economic order.

The Protestant ethic in many ways contributed to the development of capitalism, first in England and then in the rest of the Protestant world. Max Weber's famous thesis found in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, which deals with Protestant influence on the development of capitalism, illustrates this point.

Weber's argument consists of an association between Protestant ethics and the production of capital, with its necessary continuous reinvestment. He

argues that before the Reformation capitalist enterprise was only used as a means to pursue material comfort or power; it was not really concerned with the accumulation of money. The Reformation, he states, changed that, and people began to be more interested in the accumulation and reinvestment of wealth by itself rather than in the material rewards associated with it. In a capitalist society man is, in short, "dominated by the making of money."<sup>35</sup>

The reason for the change, Weber argues, is the spirit of Protestantism and its notion of *calling*. According to him, the notion of calling was introduced by the Protestant Reformation. It consists of the idea of the moral obligation a person has to perform in this world. Contrary to the Catholic faith, this moral obligation is to be respected at all times. This idea of calling, obvious in the first of Luther's ninety-five theses in which he equated repentance to an entire life of penitence, became more developed in some Puritan sects, especially among Calvinists. Weber states that the concept of predestination introduced by Calvin was crucial to the development of the notion of calling.

The idea that only some humans were chosen for salvation created anxiety for the believers who wondered: Am I among the chosen ones? In Weber's opinion, accumulation of wealth was, and still is, associated with a sign of worth. This constituted the basis for capitalist development.

It must be emphasized that the notion of a Calvinist consensus does not necessarily imply that all the English who regarded themselves as Protestants

during the seventeenth century were explicitly Calvinists. We are concerned here with the opinions of an educated elite. The basic point concerns Calvinist hegemony. But hegemony is not monopoly. Nevertheless, Calvinism was predominant among influential circles of the English society, or, as P.G. Lake<sup>36</sup> argues, "the existence of such people [anti-Calvinists] and their silence represent powerful evidence of the extent to which Calvinism had established itself in control of the crucial cultural media of the day and was thus able to suppress overt criticism."<sup>37</sup> Puritanism gave England the cultural receptivity necessary to develop capitalism. But what about economic capability? Once again, Weber's argument seems reasonable. He mentions two socio-economic conditions present in England that facilitated the development of capitalism. First was the separation of the household from the enterprise, which provided a different frame to conduct business; second was the development of the modern city with a large working class.

So England's possibility of entering a new niche where competition was practically non-existent was only waiting for the necessary "physical" attribute for the new model to be successful: James Watt's invention in 1769 of the first steam machine, which "had begun the industrial revolution."<sup>38</sup> After this transcendental invention, the doors of capitalism opened to England.

In conclusion, the development of capitalism in England is rooted in the lack of socio-economic comfort it found during the period of the Norman Conquest. Then, feudalism was imposed on a nation with a culture not suited

for it. Today, as a historical parallel, in Latin America a similar historical situation is present; and the region is confronting the forceful imposition by the United States and other capitalist nations of a system that does not match the reality of Latin Americans.

## The Rise of Socialism in Latin America

It is *not* our argument that the United States and other developed capitalist nations are responsible for the ill state in which Latin American capitalist economies find themselves. In fact, it is our belief that the reason for the failure comes from within and not from without. The point is that Latin Americans are incompetent capitalists because their culture, contrary to the Protestant one, is not as consistent with the ethos associated to that mode of production---namely economic competition and physical exploitation between men to achieve accumulation of wealth. In other words, the cultural capacity necessary to be successful in the capitalist world is not present in the Latin traditions.

The degree of cultural capacity of a nation is related to its readiness to assimilate a certain economic model. By cultural capacity we mean that the cultural traditions of a country have to be congruent with the socio-economic requirements presented by a certain socio-economic niche. If this is not the case the result will be psychological infelicity, which in turn will produce economic and social chaos.

When the economical problems of a country are the result of natural disasters, wars, or any other factor that is not related to psychological infelicity, there can always be a light at the end of the tunnel. But when the problem arises from incompatibility between culture and economy, the

symptoms are the same we saw present in medieval England, which are not very different from those present in most of today's Latin American nations. Exponential inflation, astronomical external debt, and backward educational and medical conditions are to be expected.

But the psychological impact on society is even more astonishing and is exhibited in: homicides, civil and governmental corruption, prostitution, civil wars, military coups, and many other common social disasters. Even more frightening are the death squads that have appeared during the last decade in several Latin American metropolises, mainly in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This new edition of death squads do not kill for political reasons; they are hired by local merchants to kill the homeless, the small drug dealer, and street kids because they "slow down the business."<sup>39</sup> This disgrace could be explained in terms of breakdown of the community, or, as Arnold Toynbee inferred, "there is often a breakdown which occurs when the creative elite no longer function adequately, the majority no longer gives its allegiance to and imitates the elite and social unity disintegrates."<sup>40</sup> If one were to pay a visit to any Latin American country, one would see many of these symptoms of disintegration with one's own eyes; one would also be shocked by how much medicine for *los nervios* (the nerves) Latin Americans consume.

As a first step for Latin America to escape its social and economic calamities, one of these two prescriptions could be beneficial: to change its culture or to change its economy. The first possibility is very difficult, if not

impossible, as will be explained in detail later in this chapter. The second is also very challenging but not impossible. The formula could be to change the economy of the country from a capitalist one associated with individuality and competition (characteristics of Protestant culture) to a socialist one associated with central planning and popular participation to achieve the common good --characteristics of Latin American culture.

In the last chapter we tried to explain how Protestant ethos, among other historical accidents, was favorable to the development of capitalism in England. Now we propose to explain how the Catholic ethos is compatible with socialist principles oriented toward the common good of the people.

Today Latin American countries are in a situation similar to that of England at the time of the Reformation: citizens are unhappy with their present political situation and they cannot favorably compete within the capitalist world the same way England could not compete in medieval times inside the feudal world. Some Latin American nations might have today what England had when capitalism started its development: economic capacity and cultural receptivity to develop in a more efficient socio-economic order. In fact, some Latin American nations today have the economic and the cultural capacities to move up in the ladder concerning general evolution (see Table 8). First of all, the economic potential of the region, in terms of natural resources, is enormous. Second, cultural tendencies in Latin America are oriented toward the common good of the state. That is, Latin Americans are culturally

inclined to accept a society with socialist tendencies, which, within the right setting, is a step forward in the evolution of human relations. This will be explained in detail later in the chapter.

If, however, as was mentioned above, in those countries an infrastructure based on a capitalist economy is enforced, the present situation is to be expected --that is, inflation, external debt, unemployment, infant mortality, illiteracy, and many other calamities which are part of the present life of many Latin Americans. One thing is clear: capitalism has failed in Latin America. In more than one hundred fifty years, capitalism, externally imposed, has promoted social inequality and political instability.

It could be argued that capitalism has been present in the region since the Spanish and Portuguese conquest, but the system brought to Latin America by those nations was not capitalism. It resembled more what Immanuel Wallerstein and others called mercantilism,<sup>41</sup> in which the industrial production associated with investment and reinvestment is not present as it is in capitalism.

But the attempts to introduce capitalism in Latin America have also increased dissatisfaction, which is the motor that has been encouraging Latin America during the twentieth century to venture into a new social order. The failure or the victory of the new social order will depend on many factors. Some of them have been discussed; some others, such as the Catholic ethos and the spirit of socialism, will be discussed next.

Latin American political culture has its origins mostly in Catholic Spain and Portugal. This factor explains why many cultural beliefs were established resembling those of the Catholic religion. Perhaps the most influential scholar-priest in Spanish political thought was Saint Thomas Aquinas; his version of a just government was a political system aimed at the common good of the society. This was clearly stated in his *On Kingship*: "If...a multitude of free men is ordered by the ruler toward the *common good* [Italics added] of the multitude, that rulership will be right and just, as is suitable to free men."<sup>42</sup> For Latin Americans, to rule for the common good is to rule in a way in which personal interest is second to social justice. This concept is at odds with the spirit of capitalism where freedom is rather associated with free enterprise.

Saint Thomas Aquinas' common good policies became accepted in Catholic countries (which faced the threat created by Luther and his successors) during the Counter Reformation. Luther's revival of Saint Paul's and Saint Augustine's visions, besides exerting influence on the minds of those who joined the Reformation, also altered the way of thinking, and the faith, of many Catholics. This was clearly formulated by A. G. Dickens in his book *The Counter Reformation*. He noticed that in Catholic countries during the first half of the sixteenth century "many small men...transcended the old disputes over papal authority and began to question the whole status, ministry and organization of the Church."<sup>43</sup>

In the midst of the Renaissance and its authority crisis, Luther and the Protestants found an authority figure in Saint Augustine that gave a certain legitimacy to Protestantism, but the Catholic Church was lacking one. In order to conduct a search for authority the Church celebrated a high level meeting that started in December 1545 and ended two decades later, known as the Council of Trent or *Concilio de Trento*. This set of meetings was the most important Counter Reformation attempt of the sixteen century, and its resolutions are still valid for today's Catholics. Among the rules adopted by the Council was a deliberate defiance of Lutheran teachings by agreeing that "scripture and tradition should have equal validity as sources of truth."<sup>44</sup> Protestants base their faith only in the Bible's interpretation and not on traditional standpoints like secular philosophical works. By this measure Catholics placed ecclesiastical tradition on the same level as the Bible. But, more important, "it was a victory for the rising tides of Thomism (i.e., for the notion of common good as a Catholic tradition) and a defeat for those Augustinian...emphases [on scripture] which had helped to stimulate the Protestant Reformation."<sup>45</sup> This was the process by which Saint Thomas Aquinas' teachings were incorporated into Catholic's beliefs.

Cultures are not formed at random, and values tend to pass from one generation to another unless there is a radical movement, such as the Protestant Reformation, which changes the interpretation of the means (scripture and behavior) to achieve the end (salvation, eternity or immortality).

Latin American societies of today, as in Saint Thomas' times, are inclined to believe that just governments should place the interest of the many above individual freedom. In Latin American minds, the concept of the legitimacy of a government is associated with the concept of the common good. This has been pointed out by several Latin American scholars, notably Glen C. Dealy<sup>46</sup>, in an article in the 1983 Spring edition of *Foreign Policy* in which he made the following argument: "Latin American regimes eventually face a legitimacy test that divides them into one of two types: those which endeavor to rule in the name of the whole...and those which aim to govern in the name of a privileged part...The masses consider the first type of government legitimate but not the second."<sup>47</sup> Again, Latin Americans tend to agree with Saint Thomas Aquinas that the common good unites the community and a government that keeps those unitarian principles as legitimate.

The socialist tendencies many times expressed by Latin American revolutionary movements can very well be explained in terms of Aquinas' devotion to the common good.<sup>48</sup> Both notions are concerned with the well-being of the community above all things. This includes, of course, a refusal of the working people to accept capitalistic, privately-owned enterprises as legitimate institutions. History had told us that Latin Americans perceive enterprises that are publicly owned as a more legitimate alternative to private business. For example, when in 1938 Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas nationalized his country's oil reserves, the news was reason for national

celebration. Furthermore, in order to be able to pay the compensation the companies requested, the public turned out massively at the treasury's office offering whatever valuable belongings they had, as part of their contribution to the nationalization of oil.

The example of Mexico is also applicable for the cases of oil nationalization in Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela and other Latin American countries, which at different times took similar economic measures and were backed up by the working masses.

A more recent example concerns Puerto Rico, a country that has been a colony of the United States since being invaded in 1898. In 1990 the government tried to sell the phone company to private enterprise, and the result was a series of general strikes which paralyzed the country's economy on more than one occasion. These strikes not only included the workers of the telephone company but all public employees. As a result of the negative impact of this attempt, the government was obligated to cancel the projected sale of the Puerto Rico Telephone Company, better known on the island as *Nuestra Telefónica* [Our Telephone Company]. In spite of an equal monetary offer by part of the private sector, the workers wanted the company to remain public. It is obvious that even after almost one hundred years of United States direct control over Puerto Rico, the colonizer has not been able to impose its most fundamental values on such a small colonized country.

At this point (encouraged by the Puerto Rican example), one may ask how valid is our assumption that the Latin American cultural ethos has remained almost unchanged since Saint Thomas' time. To answer this question, it is important to notice two aspects concerning social evolution: culture and technology. Technological change occurs much faster than does cultural evolution. It is easier for a society to accept technological changes than to alter traditional patterns of cultural behavior. An excellent analysis regarding this was made by socio-biologist David P. Barash. In his book *The Hare and the Tortoise*, Barash argues that "we might further subdivide cultural evolution into two major components: social evolution and technological evolution...social evolution occurs in a time frame of decades, more often hundreds or even thousands of years...very slow compared with the other great pillar of cultural evolution, technological change."<sup>49</sup>

For example, social evolution includes religion, which changes very slowly. In contrast, the technology used for the spread of faith, in particular Christianity, has been changing very fast, from direct oral communication and papyrus scrolls in ancient times to today's satellite-televised preachers. To back up his argument Barash cites as an example the differences between today's United States society and that of 150 years ago. He notes that in the interval of 150 years, social change has been very slow. Technologically speaking, however, changes have occurred rapidly.

The contemporary Japanese society offers another example. It has accepted and developed many new technologies, but it is still firmly attached to most of the traditions associated with its culture and religion.

Another good example of this idea is Saudi Arabia, which, much like Japan, has accepted many kinds of Western technologies but has not significantly altered its traditional pattern of behavior. How many times did we see on television Saudi Arabians, in the midst of the 1990-1991 Gulf Crisis, operating a computer or piloting a jet while wearing their traditional clothing?

In sum, Latin American culture has not significantly changed its notion of common good, prevalent in that society since the Catholic conquest centuries ago; there is nothing apparent that might change or disturb that particular form of behavior. Its common good orientation is at odds with capitalist ethics and is more consistent with the socialist-centralized mode of production, where wealth is distributed more evenly among its citizens if compared to capitalism. The problem is: will the United States government allow a socialist government to succeed in its "backyard"?

## NEGATIVE VECTORS

*It has been established  
that the strong do what they can  
and the weak suffer what they must.*

Thucydides<sup>50</sup>

As was mentioned in the last chapter, the United States is not responsible for the failure of capitalism in Latin America; Latin culture is to blame for such a debacle. But we firmly believe that the government of the United States, and to a certain extent the other Western powers, is responsible for many of the misfortunes suffered by countries that try to experiment with economic models of socialistic tendencies. This chapter is an attempt to demonstrate that many of the reasons for the failure in several tries to establish a successful socialist government in the region come not from within but from without.

If one is aware of the course inter-American relations (relations between Latin American countries and the United States) have taken in the twentieth century, a pattern of behavior can easily be discerned: the United States has done everything possible, legal or otherwise, to destabilize pro-socialist governments in the region. Furthermore, this pattern of behavior goes beyond the continent and has been consistent, particularly in underdeveloped socialist nations, e.g., Korea, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Laos, Ethiopia, Angola, and so on. Only when underdeveloped socialist nations

give up their policies and say "Uncle" (as was the case in Nicaragua) does this hostility seem to come to an end. The United States' antagonism toward socialism in Latin America ranges from Cuba's all-state controlled economy to Nicaragua's mixed one. From supporting the army trying to stop the advances of the *Farabundo Martí Para la Liberación Nacional* (FMLN) in the armed struggle in El Salvador, to the backing of Chilean General Augusto Pinochet's coup d'état in Chile, the United States government's strategy has always consisted of trying to stop the "advance of communism" in the region, or, in social evolutionary words, to prevent a successful attempt by any of these countries to develop a new way of production other than capitalism. This could threaten United States interests and potential investment in that country.

Unfortunately for many Latin American nations, the United States often has been able to frustrate these ventures. The last successful intervention (which does not have to be a directly armed one) was in Nicaragua, which culminated with the defeat of the *Frente Sandinista para la Liberación Nacional* (FSLN) candidate, Daniel Ortega, in the 1990 general elections. In that occasion, the United States-backed candidate, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, was the winner. One can not go so far as to say that the Sandinistas themselves are not to be blamed at all for their defeat, but most of the blame inevitably falls on continuous United States intervention for a decade. We are mainly referring to the economic embargo on Nicaragua (which at one point included the illegal mining of the two important ocean

ports of Corinto and Bluefields) and to the creation and continuous support, legally (in United States Congress terms of legality) and illegally (Iran-Contra), of the Contra rebels.

The United States government justified the treatment it gave to revolutionary Nicaragua by saying that the Sandinista government was not, according to United States standards, democratic. This was a weak argument because there were indeed democratic elections in Nicaragua in 1984 when Daniel Ortega easily won with more than sixty percent of the vote. In that year the United States was about the only country in the world that did not categorize the results of the elections as honest. With this kind of background there is little reason to doubt that if Ortega had won the 1990 ballot, the United States government would have invented another excuse (arms shipments to the FMLN rebels in El Salvador by the Sandinistas, for one) to continue its policy of belligerence toward Nicaragua. The United States government (the players might change, but the game is about the same) does not appear to care much about what kind of government Nicaragua has (it supported the Somoza Dynasty for decades) or how a particular government comes to power. The real concern of the United States is to prevent by all means possible the establishment of a successful socialist government in the hemisphere, and eventually in the whole world.

Cuba is another country that has been punished by the United States for more than three decades. The retribution did not begin immediately after

the triumph of the revolution in January 1959, but rather soon after that country gave signals of its intentions to establish a socialist government on the island. The United States Air Force strikes on the airports of Santiago de Cuba and Havana in 1961, followed by the invasion of Bahía de Cochinos (Bay of Pigs), marked the beginning of hostilities against Fidel Castro's new socialist government. After the invasion failed, United States aggression toward Cuba became quite open, ranging from the imposition of an economic embargo following the 1962 Missile Crisis to the broadcasting of *Televisión Martí*<sup>51</sup> beginning in 1988. Other countries of Latin America that have tried to establish socialist systems have been more directly affected than Nicaragua or Cuba by the United States' opposition to a new order. The best example is the Caribbean island of Grenada, which was invaded by United States armed forces in October 1983, four years after a socialist revolution overthrew the government of the pompous dictator Eric Gairy. His regime, as illegitimate and repressive and anti-democratic as it was, never felt threatened by the United States.

The Dominican Republic suffered the same fate when United States armed forces intervened in 1965. On that occasion the democratically elected socialist government of Juan Bosch was the target of the United States' leadership. His government ended abruptly with the landing of United States marines on that island.

What is the rationale behind this systematic hostility? Given the fact that some elected governments have been chosen as targets, while right-wing dictatorships (e.g., Chile, Paraguay, Grenada, Nicaragua, Cuba, Haiti) have not been disturbed beyond the point of artificial economic sanctions, the rationale for intervention is not the establishment of democracies. This argument is the excuse given by the United States government to its own people in its attempt to justify the reasons for intervention; it is an apology for internal consumption.

Then, why does the National Security Council (NSC) at times decide to make things tough for a specific country? We do not know whether the NSC has made a similar analysis to ours: those countries are trying to enter a superior socio-economic niche. If they do so, sooner or later, borrowing technologies from industrialized nations, they will be in a better economic position than the capitalist world. Some arguments (mainly made by dogmatic Marxists) persist that the aggression is mostly economic, because of the impending profit loss United States corporations might face in socialist countries. It is also argued by some right-wing theoreticians that the nature of the aggression is based on political chauvinism: be like us, have a United States-style democracy, and you will succeed. It could even be argued that a combination of all, or some, of the above is the rationale. But what is important is that for those taking an upward step in the general evolutionary scale, this aggression is making their venture very rough and its success

unlikely, and that is precisely what the United States government wants. The wrath of the empire is focused on socialism, and its government will not tolerate a socialist government in its "backyard." Several United States administrations have been concerned with the ends of its imperialist policies and not with the nature of its means. There is always a good rationalization for imperialist behavior. Or, in the words of William Appleman Williams:<sup>52</sup> "Empire became so intrinsically our American way of life that we rationalized and suppressed the nature of our means in the euphoria of our enjoyment of the ends."<sup>53</sup>

The nature of the aggression may change according to the specific conditions of the nation in question. Direct military intervention has been limited, due in part to the Viet Nam debacle, to countries the size of Grenada, where a quick strike will guarantee the overthrow of a socialist nation. This, and not the Khrushchev-Kennedy treaty,<sup>54</sup> is the reason why Cuba has not yet been invaded by the United States for a second time.

With relatively strong countries the actual strategy for the destruction of the socialist government seems to be one of economic deterioration, with the hope that internal conditions will reach a point at which people inside the country in question will not tolerate it any longer. This was exactly what happened in Nicaragua, where the majority of the people who voted were so unhappy with the new order (for the reasons given above) that many of them forgot about their own unhappiness ten years ago and voted against socialism.

In Cuba, the NSC is trying by all means possible to make things so desperate on the island that the revolutionaries are forced to make some kind of realignment in their position with respect to socialism. But with the relative success the United States' technology had in defeating the Iraqi army in the 1991 Gulf War, perhaps a more bellicose reaction from the United States can be expected. At least, this is our interpretation of George Bush's statements concerning the death of the Viet Nam ghost. Furthermore, the new bellicose approach of the NSC was stated very clearly when the United States army chief of staff, Collin Powell, uttered: "El Salvador's conflict, if necessary, can be resolved the way it was [in the same manner as] the Persian Gulf."<sup>55</sup>

One thing is certain: the aggression to which Latin American countries have been subjected, whatever its rationale, diminishes the possibility of success in the new socio-economic niche; it is a strong *negative vector*. The empire's strategy seems to be working; it has worked so well that if the FMLN guerrillas in El Salvador some day come to power, either as a military force or as a political party, almost certainly they will have to struggle against the capitalist empire's wrath. This is perhaps best expressed by what Arnold Toynbee called "pressures." In Toynbee's terminology, he defined several stimuli which confront and challenge civilizations and pointed out that "pressures," meaning a continual external threat, were of "major importance to the rise or failure of a society."<sup>56</sup> The *negative vector* is exerting a hard pressure, and it is succeeding, by now, in canceling the positive ones.

Nevertheless, the struggle of the Latin American socialists of the twentieth century, as well as the heroism of the *guerrilleros* of Central and South America in the last part of this century, are indications that the spirit of socialism is not dead in Latin America.

The fight against great odds represents nature at its best and has its analogies in history, or, as Toynbee asserted, "the growth of the civilization hinges on the behavior of a creative minority."<sup>57</sup> It has a resemblance with the many attempts made by several nations to abandon their old niche and enter a new one. It also has a similarity to those ancient unfitted apes which were driven out of the woodland. The parallel is that most attempts failed, but when for reasons beyond our imagination (without a doubt a combination of causes and chances) all vectors aligned and the attempt was successful, it was a step forward in climbing the steep hill in the evolution of this amazing animal kingdom.

Similarly, if all vectors mentioned above concerning social evolution align, socialism in Latin America will flourish not only because its spirit has an affinity with their culture, but also because socialism is the best evolutionary alternative.

## CONCLUSION

*No hay otra región en el mundo  
co mejores posibilidades y alternativas  
que América Latina. Somos un pueblo con  
un idioma y cultura de común origen; con  
dos océanos y un Mar Caribe rodeado de  
enormes extensiones de terreno y recursos  
naturales con los que podemos crecer y  
progresar hasta el límite de nuestras voluntades.*

Willie Colón<sup>58</sup>

Latin American countries have a good chance to develop socialism. This opportunity, however, has been curtailed by the actions of the United States government and other capitalist nations. As a result many attempts to establish socialism in the region have failed.

Nevertheless, some people in countries such as El Salvador, Colombia, Guatemala, and Peru still attempt to institute that socio-economic system. The desire for change in these nations can be explained as a consequence of infelicity which arises from the incongruity between Latin American culture, which resembles socialist ethics, and the government those countries have, which resembles capitalist ethics.

In all probability, the first group of apes that descended from the woodlands to the grasslands failed in adapting to the new niche. Nevertheless, the struggle continued and despite the thousands of failures that preceded the first successful group, despite overwhelming odds, resulted in the birth of humanity.

The failure or success of Latin Americans to establish socialism once and for all will depend on a series of vectors. Most of them will prove to be positive, e.g., culture, natural resources, too much competition within the capitalist system, and lack of competition within the socialist system. But there is a very important vector that counter-balances the positive ones: United States imperialism. The future will depend in part on which side is stronger; but chance also plays an important role.

The best situation for Latin Americans would be if the United States government voluntarily stopped its intervention. But this possibility seems unlikely in the short term because changes in Washington appear to be cosmetic: Democrats and Republicans alike seem to be only interested in the establishment of capitalist democracies and do not rule out intervention to achieve such a goal.

The evidence presented indicates that the struggle for socialism in Latin America will continue for a long time.

TABLE 1

## General and Specific Evolution

*Time and levels of general  
progress (general evolution)  
increase*

Mammals

Birds

Reptiles

Amphibians

Fish

Invertebrates

C

B

A Protozoa

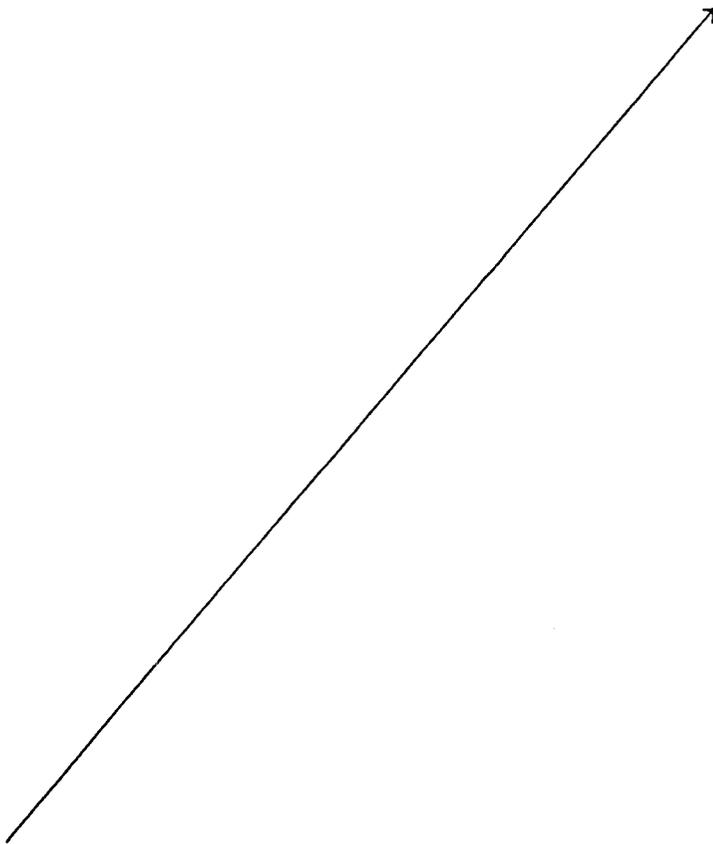
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*Time and Specialization (specific evolution) increase*

TABLE 2

Fitness Compared to Specific Evolution

*Fitness  
increases*



*Time and Specific Evolution increase*

TABLE 3

Fitness Compared to General Evolution

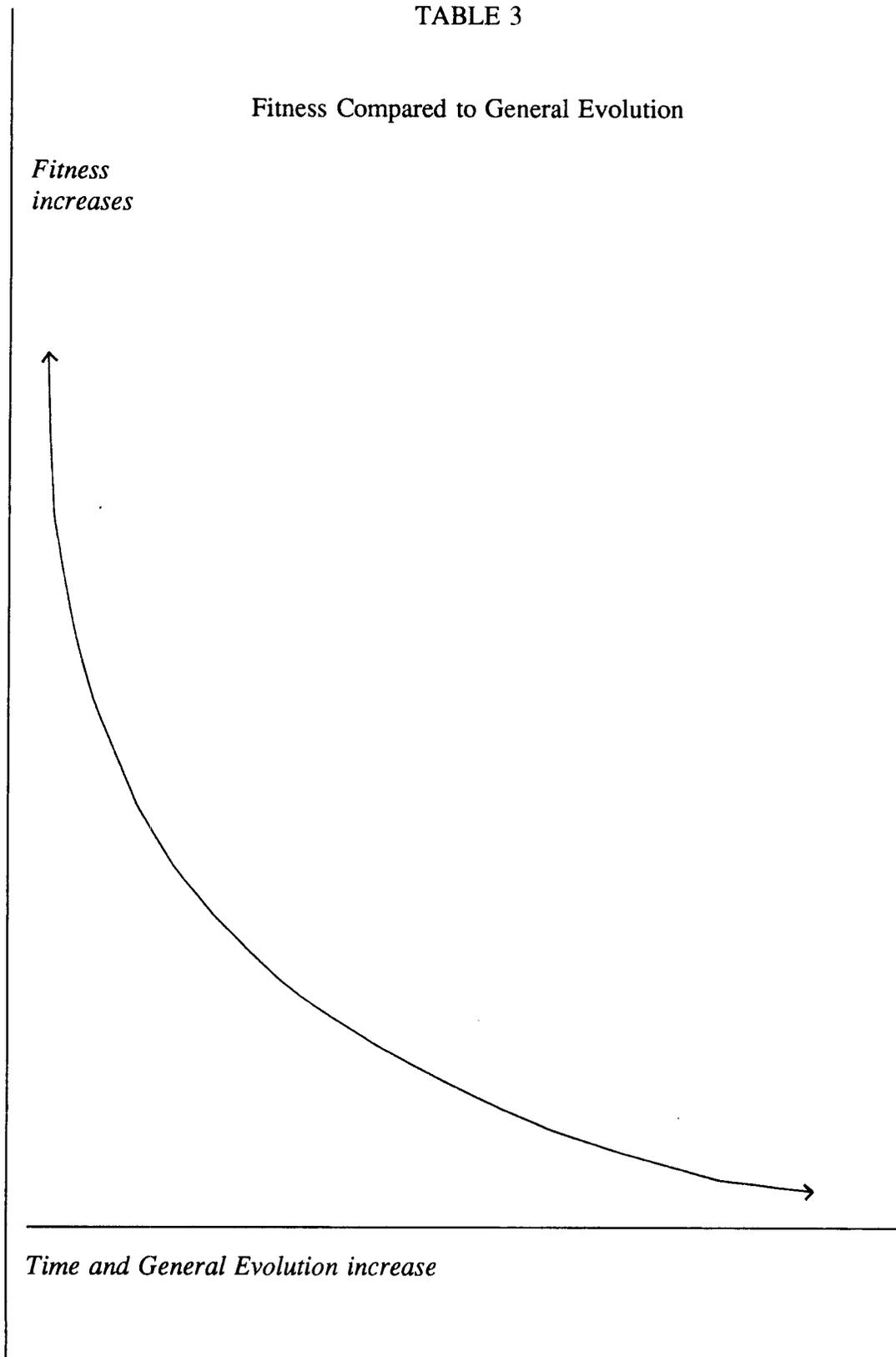
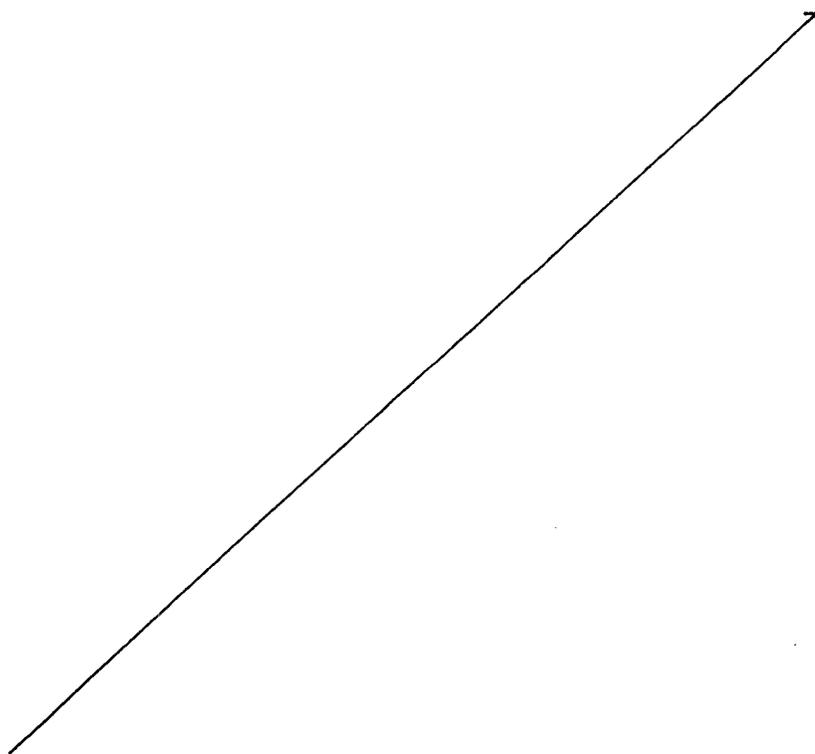


TABLE 4

Level of Competition in Niche One  
Compared to General Evolution

*Competition in  
Niche One (old Niche)  
increases*

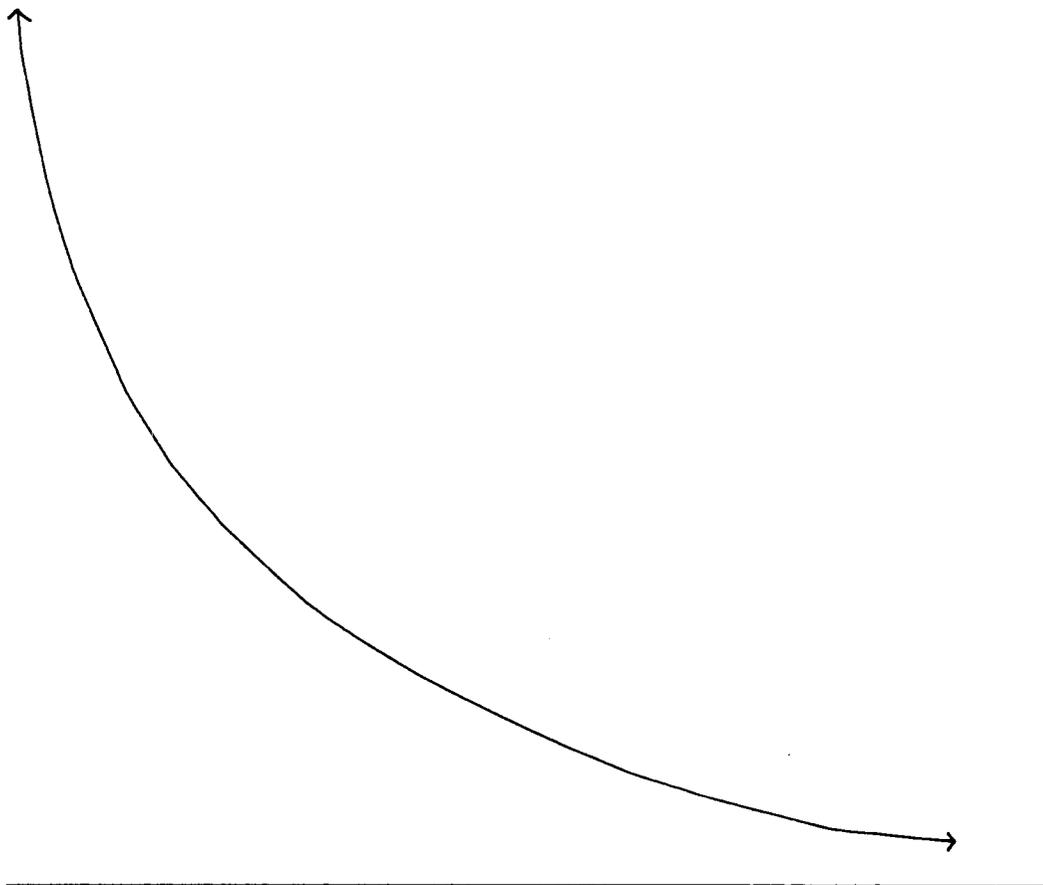


*General Evolution increases*

TABLE 5

Level of Competition in Niche Two  
Compared to General Evolution

*Competition  
in Niche Two  
(new niche)  
increases*

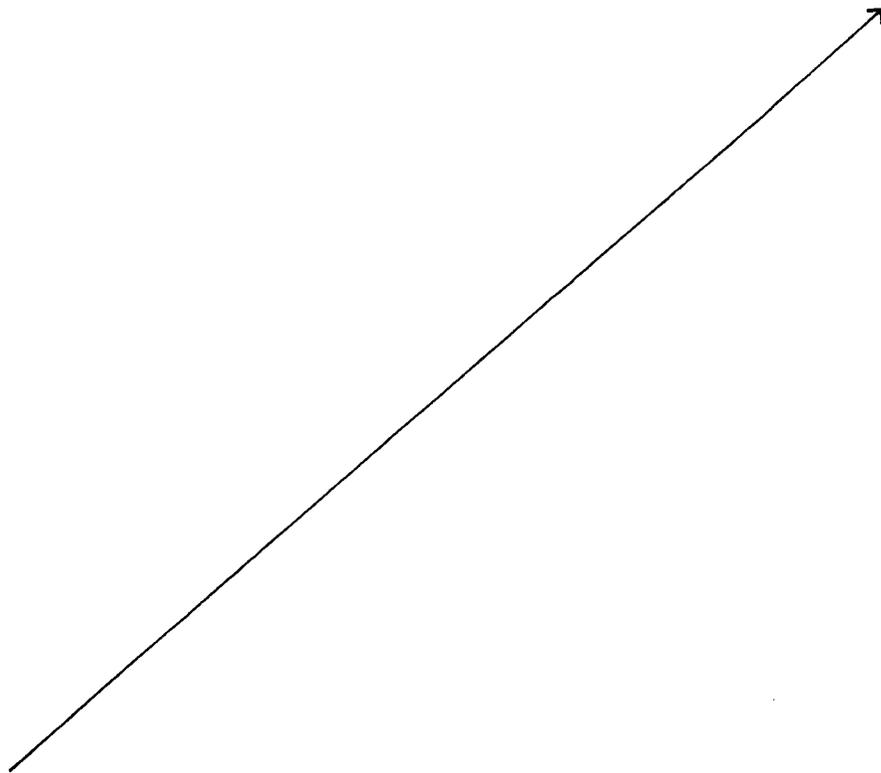


*General Evolution increases*

TABLE 6

Availability of Alternate Niches  
Compared to General Evolution

*Number of  
New Niches  
Available  
increases*



*General Evolution increases*

TABLE 7

## A Primate Classification from Serological Reaction

*Time increases*

gibbon	orang-utan	<b>GORILLA</b>	<b>CHIMPANZEE</b>	<b>MEN</b>
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Hylobates	Pongo	<b>GORILLA</b>	<b>PAN</b>	<b>HOMO</b> Genus
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Hylobatidae	Pongidae	<b>HOMINIDAE</b>	(A) Family
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*Brain Capacity increases*

TABLE 8

## Modes of Production

*Time and Level of  
General Progress  
increases*

Socialism, which by specific  
evolution evolves into communism.

Capitalist State

Feudal State

Primitive Society

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*Time and Specialization (specific evolution) increase*

## NOTES

1. Herodotus, *The Histories* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1987), 43. When Herodotus argued that "prosperity never abides long in the same place," or, as Paul Kennedy asserts in *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers*, that "the history of rise and fall of great powers has in no way come to a full stop," 69. the concept of social evolution is not present. Rather, they are referring to change in command within the same socio-economic structure and not from an inferior economic structure to a superior one, which is our area of concern. Nevertheless, they introduced an important concept different from the Hegelian dialectic of lineal progress, which is the basis for Marxist-communism.
2. The slope of a line is the ratio of the vertical change of distance compared to the horizontal change of distance as we move from one point on a line to another. A line with a positive slope increases from left to right. Hegel's dialectics expected that the history of men would progress through time without interruption. For an example of a positive slope, see Table 2.
3. The terms felicity, happiness, comfort, and fitness will be treated in the text, for reasons of style, as synonyms.
4. Frederic J. E. Woodbridge, *The Philosophy of Hobbes* (Minneapolis: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1903), 164.
5. *Ibid.*, 208.
6. Mary P. Mack, *Jeremy Bentham: An Odyssey of Ideas 1748-1792* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 110.
7. *Ibid.*, 174.
8. Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents* (New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith, 1930), 143.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*, 27.
11. Aristotle, *The Politics of Aristotle* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 271.
12. *Ibid.*

13. The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that in all energy exchanges and conversions, if no energy leaves or enters the system under study, the potential energy of the final state will always be less than the potential energy of the initial state. For our example, a thermodynamically efficient individual is nothing more than a relatively good converter of energy. A thermodynamically efficient system will maximize production of goods with a minimum of natural resources.

14. Gabriel García Márquez, *El olor de la guayaba* (Mexico, D.F: Editorial la Oveja Negra, 1982), 105.

15. It could be argued that poor sectors of the community of any country behave in a way that resembles common good. We think those are only tides of dependence, which become stronger as the social classes go lower. The real meaning of common good is a centralized system where the state makes its policies taking into consideration all sectors of the population.

16. Thomas G. Harding was a professor of evolution at the University of Minnesota; he wrote several books and essays about social evolution.

17. Charles Darwin, *The Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection* (New York: Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1980), 359.

18. Thomas G. Harding, et al; *Evolution and Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960), 14 .

19. Ibid., 22.

20. A serological reaction is a chemical procedure performed in order to detect the amount of serotonin present in the brain. The present of serotonin in the brain increases proportionally to its capacity. This information is relevant for the understanding of Table 7.

21. Helena Curtis, *Biology* (New York: Worth Publishers Inc., 1984), 1052.

22. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 30.

23. Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. II (New York: International Publishers, 1984), 668.

24. Ibid., 675.

25. Kenneth O. Morgan ed., *The Oxford History of Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 150.
26. Warren C. Hollister ed., *The Impact of the Norman Conquest* (Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1982), 69.
27. Ibid., 24.
28. Ibid., 20.
29. Morgan, *The Oxford History*, 75-76.
30. Hollister, *The Impact*, 20.
31. Ibid., 21.
32. G.L. Harris, ed., *England in the Fifteenth Century: Selected essays of K.B. McFarlane* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 127.
33. Ibid.
34. Since the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 until late in the fourteenth century, all English kings lived most of their lives in France as vassals of France's king. Therefore, their economic and political decisions were highly influenced by the king of France who was the suzerain. At the time, the Catholic Church controlled the French monarchs.
35. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Boston: Peter Smith, 1988), 153.
36. P. J. Lake is an English history professor at Oxford University.
37. P. J. Lake, "Calvinism and the English Church 1570-1635," *Past & Present* (February 1987), 34.
38. *Capital*, 352.
39. CBS Television Network, *60 minutes*, "Corruption in Brazil," May 19, 1991.
40. Robert H. Laurer, *Perspective on Social Change* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon Inc., 1982), 39.

41. Wallerstein differentiated between mercantilism and capitalism mainly in the part concerning the accumulation and reinvestment of capital. For example, he mentioned that The Netherlands had the first successful mercantilist system because of the efficiency of its fishing float, but that by itself is not considered to be a capitalist enterprise.
42. Thomas Aquinas, *On Kingship: To the King of Cyprus* (Amsterdam: Academische Press N.V., 1967), 7.
43. A. G. Dickens, *The Counter Reformation* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1979), 19.
44. Ibid., 114.
45. Ibid., 132.
46. Glen C. Dealy is a Latin American scholar and author of several books on the subject. He is a political science professor at Oregon State University.
47. Glen C. Dealy, "The Pluralistic Latins," *Foreign Policy* (Winter 1984-85), 123.
48. Carlos Fuentes, Conference at Oregon State University (Spring, 1990).
49. David P. Barash, *The Hare and the Tortoise: Culture, Biology, and Human Nature* (New York: Viking Press, 1989), 41.
50. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (New York: Modern Library, 1951), 90
51. Televisión Martí, which broadcasts from Key West, Florida, started in 1988 as part of Reagan's plan to destabilize the socialist government of Cuba.
52. William Appleman Williams was professor of history at the University of Wisconsin and Oregon State University and was James P. Harrison distinguished professor at the College of William and Mary. He is the author of a number of works in revisionist history.
53. William Appleman Williams, *Empire as a Way of Life: An Essay on the Causes and Character of America's Present Predicament Along with a Few Thoughts About an Alternative* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1982), xi.

54. The Khrushchev-Kennedy treaty was signed after the Cuban missile crisis of October 1963. It consisted of an agreement between the Soviet and the United States governments, in which the United States promised not to invade Cuba if the Soviet missiles were withdrawn.

55. News Synthesis on El Salvador (Salpress, April 9, 1991).

56. Laurer, *Perspective*, 41.

57. *Ibid.*, 42.

58. Willie Colón, *Honrra y Cultura* (New York: Sony Records, 1991). Willie Colón is a popular Puerto Rican composer and singer.

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