

Socialism

About socialism it is spoken and it is written a lot. And it is of good note to show up as socialist of the XXI century. In Latin America are simply qualified recent governments of moderate and democratic left (Uruguay, Panamá, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador) as 'socialists', only for the fact of mixing their economic policies (sometimes enough neo-liberal) with a high sense of social justice and justness in the distribution of wealth. In Venezuela there is an entire revolutionary process that has been covered under the label of 'Socialism XXI century'. There is something in the same concept of socialism that recommends it like a form of in agreement life with the man's egalitarian and social nature. So political groups, movements and régimes want to appropriate of the name. But we notice that one cannot speak of socialism without qualifying. It is necessary to distinguish well between the *values of the socialism* (ideal, utopia) and the several realization intents through a *economic and political real system* when there are many, different and even opposed copies.

Socialism like ideal and like system

In the first place, it is necessary to take conscience that generally, when it is pondered to the socialism, one is speaking of an utopian ideal. Of a possible society in the one that perfect equality and justice exist for all the citizens, without it has privileged for their birth, their money or their social class. They are the values of the socialism, in reference to a such society that we all yearn sincerely. These socialist values -like he said Pope Pius XI in his time- "they approach a lot to the social postulates of the Christianity and no sensible person should oppose herself to them, but rather to want them."

But it is also necessary to focus the socialism like system, like concrete intent of embodying the socialist values historically:

1) in a first moment, the socialist system implies rationalization and modernization of the State.

2) in a second moment, it implies the proposal that the State favors the collective or social property, that is to say that the private property serves to the good of all and not only to privileged that of some few ones.

3) in a third moment, the socialism like system demands a type of socioeconomic organization of a country, based on the State property of the production means, at least of the most important.

Then we cannot forget that, as soon as system, the socialism has a multiple face. They are very different and even contradictory organization experiences that are covered under the same label of "socialist."

Several types of socialism

There are *moderate* socialisms that alone they look for a "rational organization" of the society, making that the property is social, that is to say that doesn't only belong to a group of individuals or families but to the whole society. And there are *extreme* socialisms whose base is the total "collectivization of the production means" (earth, industry, banking, transport, trade, education, media) There are *democratic* socialisms that guarantee the freedom of people and the groups, they facilitate the public debate and they allow the political active participation of the citizens in the handling of the public thing. And there are *totalitarian* socialisms that squash the man's fundamental rights; don't allow popular elections neither discussion of the public matters; they impose inside an absolute authoritarianism, with support in an unique party.

Combining two coordinates or fundamental factors, like they are the *economic* factor and the *political* factor, we can distinguish different types of socialism as it combines in them the political democracy (with pluralism) or non-

democracy (with unique party) with the partial collectivization or the total collectivization of the production means in hands of the State. The socialism like system of political and socioeconomic organization shows up, this way, divided in two big currents, to those that one can add a Third World group of certain socializing or community experiences that are very dissimilar.

Communist socialism

In the XX century it had special leadership a type of hard and extreme socialism, of inspiration Marxist-Leninist, called communism. Fortunately in the decade of the 80s, it didn't clot the tragic admonition that the English novelist George Orwell had made in his work "1984". There he predicted that for this year "Big Brother" would have implanted a totalitarian and dehumanizing domain in the whole globe. It happened just the opposite. The communist system that seemed unassailable from inside of the society (given the total control) and unbeatable from the outside (given its military and nuclear might that could compete with that of United States of North America), it began to wobble from 1985 and it collapsed boisterously in the 89. Hurricanes of freedom began to travel, by oriental Europe, the communist countries that rotated around the communist Soviet system. And a 'revolution of the mind' began (Mikhail Gorbachev speaking with John Paul II December 1° 1990). Revolution of the mind that produced events in progressively growing speed. In 10 years, in Poland, the union Solidarity finished replacing the communist régime. In 10 months, in Hungary, Communist Party changed its name and its symbols and it adopted those of a socialist democratic party. In 10 weeks, in Germany, it lay down the wall of Berlin, the door of Brandenburg opened up and they could circulate the citizens of both Germanies freely, changing the régime. In only 10 days, in old Czech-Slovakia, the "Spring of Prague" (that had been squashed in 1968 by the Soviet tanks) flourished again and a social democratic era began with Havel. And in 10 hours, in Rumania, it was shot expediteley the tyrant Ceaucescu, very seated per years with the support of repressive Securitate. In other regions of the world, the communist régimes disappeared (Albania, Yugoeslavia, Laos, Cambodia, Mongolia). They only stay two in all their ideological purity and political practice

(Cuba and North Korea), and China advances in the Popular Republic the colossal cohabitation of political totalitarian régime and capitalist economy of market.

A socialism of hard edges

It affirms the fight of classes, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the concentration of almost all the power in hands of an unique and very organized party that is supposed is the vanguard of the revolution. The communism is dogmatic in its intent of to put an end to the private property and to nationalize all the production means, as first steps toward a future society without classes. There were some bankrupt intents of filing him the edges to this totalitarian socialism, to give it a human face and to allow the citizens certain game of freedom and political participation. Such the intent of "Spring of Prague", squashed by the Soviet tanks in August of 1968. Such the intent labor "self-management" of the means of production in Yugooslavia. Such Allende's parliamentary intent of implanting in Chile a typical socialism, without unique party, without dictatorship of the proletariat and guaranteeing the private property of enough companies. It had an abrupt end with the blow and dictatorship of Pinochet, in September of 1973. They were more successful the intents of the workers of the union Solidarity in Poland and the constitutional deep reformations adopted in 1990 by communist old countries as Hungary, Czech-Slovakia (today Czech Republic and Slovenia), Bulgaria, oriental Germany (today reunified in current Germany).

Ambiguous balance of results

It cannot refuse that this type of socialism achieves good realizations in the economic and social fields: heavy industry, arms and space career, employment, good education covering and health for the population. But next to it, real flaws has been evidenced.

From the *economic* point of view, these forced collectivist systems have gone accompanied by permanent failures in the agriculture, the manufacturing, the small and medium industry, the trade and the housing.

From the *political* point of view, these systems constitute an absolute power of dominance, controlled by the unique party and with a tremendous apparatus of police repression. There is not freedom of association, of expression, of displacement. Differing of the line imposed by Party (or its Secretary) is paid with forced works, with prisons or clinical psychiatric. The existence of archipelagos Gulag is not an accident but the way characteristic of these bureaucratic and authoritarian socialisms. One of the new philosophers of French left has said: "Among the barbarism of the capitalism that is censored itself in all moment, and the barbarism of the socialism that is censored never, I opt for the capitalism" (B-H. Lévy).

Warning

All this makes think that it is not easy to establish a socialism of human face while it stays a total attachment to the Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy. The 'stalinism', more than to be an aberration, it is a consequence. The archipelago Gulag, with its extermination islands, is not an accident in this type of rigid and autocratic socialism. "As well as the errors that Copernicus detected took to change the stellar system just as Ptolomeo had traced it, the big errors of the socialist Marxist-Leninist system impose this way a painful revision of the same system", it has recognized with sincerity the French Marxist Roger Garaudy, today converted Islam.

Democratic socialism

It is a type of less attractive 'revolutionary' socialism, it is but more effective and more durable in fact. It is a moderate and democratic socialism. It combines economic good development, social justice and political pluralism. Its purpose is to integrate the advantages of the socialism with those of an authentic democracy.

Something of history

Theoretical sketches of this type of political-economic system had begun to show up in the socialist European field starting from January of 1934, with the first project in French of an Fourth International that picked up ideas of Trotsky. It was looked for to overcome the hegemony of the hard Marxist-Leninist line adopted by the Soviet Union and to avoid the errors in which had incurred Third Socialist International (been founded in Moscow in March of 1919, also called 'Conmitern' in English abbreviation). It was questioned the old rigid line imposed to take to the practice the precepts of the Marxism, to carry out the ideals of the socialism and to organize the labor movement in the world. The German Social Democracy is born in Bad Godesberg in 1959, breaking up with the fundamental dogmas of the Marxism-Leninism one. A similar radical change pushed, in Spain, Felipe González to PSOE (Party Socialist Spanish Worker) in the Congress of 1979, in which was suppressed all reference to the Marxism-Leninism one. PSOE governed for several periods from 1982, inside a not very ideological and very pragmatic socialism. It gave the power in elections to José María Aznar PP (Popular Party). And he has presided over from 2004 (with González Zapatero) the destinations of Spain that it is today an attractive model of development with democracy, again exactly classified as one of the best of European Union. English Labourism (socialism) didn't have necessity to make this radical change, because its inspiration not comes him from the communism but from a biblical and Christian humanism (Fabian) that allowed him in Great Britain to influence from 1922 as the second bigger party, to develop from 1940 a wide program of social reformation, and to carry out from the government (1945-1979) one of the biggest social effective 'you revolutionize' of the world. The Labourism with Tony Blair was all heart during 10 years and with his recent successor Brown, now uses more the head.

Socialism without edges and wide acceptance

This type of socialism admits the pluralism of ideologies and political forces. It rejects the omnipotent State and the dictatorship of the proletariat. It gives up the collectivization to the force and it accepts a mixed economic system, in which there is also place for the private property of some production means. There is not an

unique party but rather other autonomous parties are admitted. It accepts that in some popular elections you can end up losing the power, like it happened in Sweden in 1976, after being 44 years old the government, and like it happened in Spain after Felipe González's socialist moderate government.

This democratic socialism presents its advantages on others. It has achieved economic good development, with respect of the fundamental freedoms. It guarantees justice democratic social and at the same time free game. It promotes a socialized economy (that it serves to the general interest and not to the interests of some few ones), but with human face (economy that doesn't squash the individual persons).

However, we cannot forget that in all socialist system one runs the risk of an exaggerated growth of the central power that easily becomes a devouring octopus of people and of intermediate groups. With reason the socialist leader from India, Asoka Mehta, he has affirmed that

"the socialism is an attractive goal, but the concentration of power is as dangerous as the capital concentration. Neither we could forget the danger of elephantiasis of the official bureaucracy, with the waste of the public money, administrative non efficiency and pervasive corruption. In general, the State is not well administrating. The socialized and officials sectors usually recharge of bureaucracy and they work carelessly."

In this, the experience lived in our Latin American countries has been disastrous, under all type of régimes.

In the decade of the years 80, it was spoken with laudatory sentences, of 'the seven socialists' Europe.' In Portugal, Mario Soares who continues figuring in the political scene. Although in Lisbon it is said popularly that "Mario is a believing socialist but non practitioner." In Austria (country of single six million inhabitants) -where the democratic socialism is well acclimatized- Kreisky and Sinowatz. In Sweden, Olof Palme, in 1982 returned to the power after government's of the

conservative party six years. It was murdered in 1986. The Scandinavian has been a socialism with a very light State, in freedom citizen and with human face that has worked well with his small ones but constant reformations. In Greece, Andreas Papandreu, during seven years made of PASOK (movement socialist panhellenic) the first party of the country. In France François Mitterrand, from May 1981, it governed as constitutional president the French State. In 1995 he is elected Jacques Chirac, president of center-right, with socialist prime ministers that he designated. And recently it won the elections in France the president Sarkozy, of center-right, in front of Ségolène Royal of Socialist Party.

Liberal or new left socialism

Today the experiences of a "third via" are recommended. They intermediate among the social democrat experience and capitalist neo-liberal one. They appear new rulers of a different Left and, for the same thing, viable in this XXI century. Such 'Lula' da Silva in Brazil, Kirchner in Argentina, Vázquez in Uruguay. With the title of "The government in the future" it has just reissued the thinker Noam Chomsky's famous conference (Bogotá, Anagram 2005), in which analyzes four political current orientations, with their pros and their contras: the capitalism, the socialism of State, the neoliberalism, and the liberal socialism). And he takes left by the fourth that recommends as the political best utopia for this new century.