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## THE INTEGRATED MAN AS A PRECONDITION OF HONEST BUSINESS

**Summary:** This paper is an attempt to depict the main preconditions of business, and honest business in particular. The author claims that in a free-market economy business is a kind of encounter between people. If such an encounter is to be effective, there must be provided some legal conditions and the human being must be integrated. By integration it is meant here a coalescence of the intellectual and moral dimensions. Thus, business is not only an economic phenomenon, but it is also humanistic and spiritual. If a dishonest person decides to do business, he will ruin all the contracts involved. Therefore contrary to what some authors claim, especially those who naively believe in the sufficient power of formal procedures, the paper holds that any person must be both intellectually and spiritually prepared for economic activity.

**Keywords:** economy, free market, integration, Mises, person.

*Never take a bribe, for a bribe  
blinds even the most clear-sighted and twists  
the words even of the just.*

Ex 23,8

### Introduction

The free market is an area of human activity. Human beings participate in various spheres of social life: cultural, scientific, religious, and economic. In all of them they make their respective decisions and take action or withdraw from action. Now freedom is a precondition of such decisions. Free decisions, like those that are not free, bring about their respective consequences and entail responsibility. The latter in turn is related to the scope of freedom people have in making their decisions. There are numerous components that come into play in the structure of a decision, but there is a common agreement that two of them are of the utmost importance: knowledge (the action of human reason) and intention (the action of human will). With this there are other components that

result from a more or less complex framework of circumstances. Human decisions are encompassed by a complicated network of social interrelations. They make up the human ethos. Charles Taylor has coined the term ‘social imaginaries’ and Michael Novak has invented the term moral ecology. No matter which concept we employ to cover the phenomenon in question we always speak from within a certain context, the context of our personal endowment as persons and the broad socio-cultural space in which we live.

This paper maintains that each decision, including economic, is an outcome of a painful process in which the person strives at integrating various disjointed elements. We claim that to come up with responsible decisions, i.e. to be at one with oneself, the individual should seek to integrate their numerous elements. In order to make an entirely rational and personal decision, the acting subject should know the respective components of his situation. More often than not, we are merely instruments of circumstances created by others. To use the language of logic, we would say that the set of components is finite. But we know that this is impossible, the acting subject does not even know of all the internal, let alone the external, elements of his situation. Our existence, to use Michael Novak’s phrase, is a pilgrimage “in darkness and in liberty.” (Novak 1989, p. 33.) There are many things that we take for granted.

This paper, therefore, assumes that in all our decisions we need to be involved in the constant work of integration, with some elements that are explicit and many others that are implicit. Negative freedom, with its primary focus on the lack of arbitrariness, is not enough. Negative freedom is a one-sided approach, with this being the approach of the institutions. In all the spheres of human activity, one should strive to develop a mature personality, namely one that is ready to assent positively when prompted by good. Such a personality responds to a given circumstance out of the depth of the human person, i.e. not in a reactive manner, but in an active reaction to the challenge. The following text has been divided into three chapters. Chapter I deals with the basic outlines of the free market, and shows the insufficiency of a purely economic point of view; chapter II focuses on how the human being is endowed with the appropriate tools to act, but originally is a being in a state of chaos; and chapter III shows the need for integration, and how the human person can respond to the challenges of a given situation.

## **1. The Economic and Philosophical Foundations of the Free Market**

There are numerous definitions of a free-market economy, also called a free economy (e.g. John Paul II prefers to use this term) or simply capitalism. The

concession on behalf of “capitalism” is qualified by some authors. John Paul II, for that matter, in his encyclical *Centesimus annus*, writes that “if by ‘capitalism’ is meant a system in which freedom in the economic sector is not circumscribed within a strong juridical framework which places it at the service of human freedom in its totality, and which sees it as a particular aspect of that freedom, the core of which is ethical and religious, then the reply is certainly negative.” (John Paul II 1991, no. 42) Generally, however, there are certain components that are common to all kinds of free economies. Here we usually enumerate private property, entrepreneurship, competition, risk, and freedom of exchange. For Friedrich von Hayek, our factual knowledge is limited. We do not and cannot know everything. If this is so, a state-planned economy sounds like a contradiction in itself since it presumes that the state is an embodiment of an omniscient reason, i.e. the reason that knows all the present and future states of society. Once we realize that omnipotent knowledge is impossible, as we can never predict precisely what will happen in all the areas of society, we must rely on the persons’ resources and their capacities of adaptation. The individual, in his action, observes the rules “which he has not designed and often does not even know explicitly, although he is able to honour them in action.” (Hayek 1982, p. 12).

For Ludwig von Mises, capitalism is an area of personal risk, it is dynamic and contrary to “a state of undisturbed security and stability” in which a total control of the economy belongs to the “delusive plans” of the socialist economy. Because Mises holds the same anti-constructivist views as his collaborator Hayek, he calls the socialist scheme as being compatible “with the unrealizable imaginary constructions of an evenly rotating economy and of a stationary economy.” (Mises 1966, p. 256) Both Mises and Hayek stress the importance of individual human action as an essential element of the empowerment of the economy. Now when the individual person is supposed to be the driving force of economic action, and we have decided that his intellectual resources are insufficient, we must appeal to a more integral view of the human person. Therefore, I would like to discuss and criticise George Reisman’s approach to the matters in question. It seems to me that he has presented a narrow and limited view of capitalism, i.e. reduced to the rationalist elements of human life. As such, it is biased toward the constructivist scheme rather than “a living society of acting men.” (Mises 1966, p. 256)

In his monumental treatise on capitalism, the American economist George Reisman traces the origins of capitalism back to the Enlightenment. It is here that he finds the development of capitalist institutions. Among these he enumerates “a *this-worldly, pro-reason philosophy*,” the free exercise of a person’s right to life, and the free manner in which he chooses to exercise this life. (Reisman 1998, p. 19)

Aside from the material growth that is commonly (and rightly) attributed to capitalism (a free economy), is there anything else that speaks on capitalism's behalf? Reisman writes about the pro-secular and pro-reason bias reintroduced into the Western world and borrowed from Aristotle. Does this mean that the only precondition of economic success is secular reason? Now, Reisman would obviously give a positive answer, for he stresses "the ongoing cultural influence of the philosophy of the Enlightenment" (Reisman 1998, p. 19) that helped develop capitalism throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The issue here is whether the only intellectual source of the aforementioned free growth is found in the Enlightenment, empiricism, and materialism, or rather we should go to the spiritual sources that reach further back into the history of mankind. It is in the Book of Genesis that we find the first anticipation of future growth, indeed even a command to grow is found there: "Be fruitful and multiply," (Gen 1:28) with this command being found together with the prohibition against stealing. Therefore, there is no contradiction between the material world and the spiritual world. On the contrary, one finds in spiritual concerns many hints on how to live in this world.

Reisman argues on behalf of the prominence of the material over the spiritual as follows, "people's lives were dominated by the idea that the material is superseded by another, higher world, for which their life in this world is merely a test and a preparation, and in which they will spend eternity, they had little motive to devote much thought and energy to material improvement." (Reisman 1998, p. 19)

I think this kind of argumentation conveys some false presuppositions, and that the claim of the necessity of secularisation for the promotion of growth is too far-fetched and can easily be refuted. It can be refuted on both theoretical and practical grounds. In terms of theory, we can simply reverse Reisman's argument and say that if our life is continued in eternity our responsibility is also prolonged, or at least is continued. Thus, we must faithfully fulfil all our duties here because death does not ultimately terminate existence, it only transforms it into another kind of existence. Henceforth, we are accountable in our life to come for the actions undertaken in our life on earth. Indeed, if our existence is continued, our responsibility is additionally enhanced; even in eternity we shall not be able to deny what we have done here. Reisman's interpretation of the fact of eternity is therefore one-sided, reductive, or at least premature.

The practical argument can be explained by referring to some historical examples. The first colonies in the New World, for instance, were populated by very religious people and indeed it was their religion that geared them towards success. Hence it is not true, as Reisman claims, "that sensory perception is the only legitimate basis of knowledge," for the European pilgrims to America were

assured in their religious duties. It was their religion that helped them translate spiritual tenets into economic principles and become responsible stewards concentrated on investment rather than immediate gratification, on long-term planning rather than short-term success and consumption, with their religious experience making them feel responsible for future generations.<sup>1</sup> Religion and spiritual concerns were the allies of growth in this situation because all these aforementioned factors are rational economic prerequisites. In fact Reisman himself stresses that people “must accept responsibility for their future by means of saving” (Reisman 1998, p. 19) and this is what the first Christians in America did (drawing this knowledge from the Bible). All in all the prospect of eternity only augments the claim for economic development rather than diminish it. More than this, I am going to show that the prospect of eternity is also necessary for the successful completion of economic growth.

As regards private property rights, we can also find an abundant body of evidence in the Bible, with the most sacred interdict “thou shalt not steal” as its hallmark (and of which mention has already been made). Contrary to the views that seek to undermine the Christian origins of the western world, this proscription has been the solid foundation of respect for private property. Christianity holds that ownership is natural to human beings and should be protected. We share this view with the Aristotelian approach to ownership. Private property teaches responsibility, no matter whether a person receives one talent, two, or three.<sup>2</sup>

It is true that in his activity the human being must be assured of the working causal principle, i.e. that the contribution of labour and time should in return bring economic success. I do not, however, know why this attitude should merely “rest on a foundation of secularism or the recognition of the rightness of being concerned with material improvement.” (Reisman 1998, p. 20) I think that rather the contrary is true: in all his dealings man needs to be supported by values found outside the purely material sphere. Honesty, trust, and confidence – in themselves necessary virtues in any economic activity – cannot be deduced from a plain calculation of gains and losses.

The situation becomes even more complicated when the author adds other elements (apart from hard work, saving, and private property) to his foreshortened anthropology: limited government, economic and political freedom, and personal self-esteem. Reisman then intimates that these elements depend

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<sup>1</sup> For an extensive analysis of responsible stewardship. (Haymond 2017, p. 279–297)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mt 25:14–30. See also the respective passages in Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum* (no. 6), in which the pope stresses that contrary to socialists “every man has by nature the right to possess property as his own,” and John Paul II, in his encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, reaffirms this claim by writing about “the natural character of the right to private property [...]” (no. 30).

“on the influence of a this-worldly, proreason philosophy.” (Reisman 1998, p. 20) We can give to all of these a religious interpretation, and – to take again the example of the origins of America – they cannot become working principles without such an interpretation. Why is limited government necessary? Because the human being is a sinful creature, and therefore cannot be granted (or trusted) with unchecked power. While his sinfulness is primarily not a political or economic category, it does affect all the spheres of human activity, including politics and economics. Additionally, it is a very practical hermeneutic term.

Another interesting example can be found in the creation story. Where do we find a higher support for self-esteem than in the fact that man was created in the image and in the likeness of God? Now as regards economic and political freedom, people also function within certain well-ordered confines and rely on such virtues as trust, confidence, and respect. Naturalism is just a futile attempt of support, with supernaturalism at least having a chance of success.

Reisman reduces the essence of economics to abstraction and simplification. And he concludes: “If economics is to have cultural influence, it is indispensable that people have full confidence in logic and reason as tools of cognition.” (Reisman 1998, p. 20) Do these people also not need confidence in one another? Should not we have, first and foremost, confidence in other people? At least we should be confident that they really mean what they say, especially when we decide to sign a contract. This unconditional trust in logic and reason naturally presupposes that there is one universal logic and one universal reason we all share. I think it would be very difficult to find reliable grounds for Reisman’s reductive beliefs.

## **2. Chaos – the Human’s Original Situation**

The fact that intellect and cognition are still given so much attention by economic scholars, and are held in such esteem over and against spiritual matters, results from the Enlightenment belief that the human being is purely rational. If there are controversies, in which reason does not reign supremely, and agreement cannot be accomplished, it is assumed that the controversy follows from inadequate or insufficient arguments. The underlying presupposition in this proposal resides in a perception that only sees the source of conflict and misunderstanding as being of an intellectual nature. If we fail to agree with someone’s arguments, although we can easily understand them, the blame is laid on an inadequate explanation. This may well be the case, but more frequently it is not. The lesson that we learn from the British convert John Henry Newman and from the Spanish political thinker Juan Donoso Cortés is this: in

order to understand one needs to make a personal effort, to be converted (although not necessarily in a religious sense); understanding is a journey towards a certain destination rather than a grasping at some ready-made formulations. First, one needs to get off the wrong track, if necessary, to abandon the modes of thinking he has grown used to. Understanding and agreement resulting therefrom are not only matters of arguments, but it is more often than not, especially in essential matters, a matter of transformation. Now it is in vain for someone who has gone off the beaten track or is completely alien to the reality that is being discussed to persuade themselves that the new track is just as good as the previous one. One must return to the right track, and return to calls for a personal effort, which is much more than a mere intellectual persuasion.

Economics is a highly philosophical science and its conclusions rely on a proper understanding of human nature. The point is to have an adequate comprehension of the human being and his relations to other human beings. Let it suffice to mention that if we imagine these relations as a constant class struggle, the consequences will be entirely different than if we claim that the opposite is true. Once we have assumed that the source of inequalities in society is private property, as socialists will argue, then all economic solutions will serve to eliminate it.

Freedom consists in the fact that human action is not initiated by force, but is a result of human will. Limited government is a precondition for human freedom. As in the case of individual actions that are initiated by human free will, so the function of government should be reduced to protecting this initiation; it is satisfied with the defensive functions.

It follows from the previous considerations that Reisman reduces his understanding of freedom to its negative aspect: it is freedom *from* the initiation of physical force, freedom *from* arbitrary interference. The government possesses enormous means of force. Now, if force is eliminated, appropriate conditions for peace are created. Freedom is the precondition of peace and economic security, for under such conditions we can neither exert force ourselves nor induce the government to do it on our behalf. And economic freedom leads to economic security. We read in Reisman: "The interest of government officials is to get by in their term of office and leave the problems of the future to their successors." (Reisman 1998, p. 23)

Reisman rightly criticizes the anarchic conception of freedom and the growth of corruption. Here again respect for everyone's exercise of freedom of speech and honesty can only emerge from the support of wisdom that is not of this world. The proper conduct of economic affairs does need an adequate cultural ethos. Obviously, the right political conditions can be created, so that businessmen are not exposed to temptation if, for instance, they might bribe some



government officials. The idea of limited government provides such conditions. I can see no contradiction between the establishment of such structural conditions and the moral lesson that bribery is wrong in itself. The free market is not a mere economic mechanism. It is a cultural phenomenon just like all other economic proposals. As such, decisions cannot be considered in isolation from the whole complex picture of social life.

The situation of contemporary man resembles the situation of someone who is constantly in-between, doomed to this awkward predicament by his chronic predilection to reflective analysis and resulting therefore in indecision. This reflective attitude results from the fact that rational powers, though natural they may be, can be abused. Consequently, contemporary man abstains from making choices, for he has learnt to be non-judgmental. Where does this moment of indecision start? It starts when we remain in our indecisive stronghold, waiting for the accumulation of evidences to make us certain in our decision. This situation can be illustrated by picturing a bird that is hovering above an open space of land, but incapable of alighting upon it.

The position of being non-judgmental may seem a safe way out of responsibility. As long as we evade a final judgment, we believe to be innocent, for we are naturally of the belief that a judgment terminates a certain process of reasoning. Judgment creates a different reality. Taking all these factors into consideration, we have to admit that the human being indeed must pull himself together, must collect the dissipated parts of his personhood.

John Henry Newman calls the original situation of man's intellect "functional disarrangement." His mind is primarily "in disorder, and runs wild; his faculties have their rudimental and inchoate state." This diagnosis has not been made with a view to total scepticism, for – as Newman intimates – "man is a being of progress," (Newman 1955, p. 189) so he can learn how to fulfil his end. When we assent to falsehood, it is not the very act of assenting that should be blamed, but the falsehood to which man assents. Decision and certitude are the results of man's quest after truth, in itself a very dynamic process.

Bishop Fulton J. Sheen put it excellently when he described modern times as the period of decomposition and disunity, i.e. a period of revolt against integrity. This American bishop characterised the modern man as "a confused bundle of complexes and nerves. He is so dissociated, so alienated from himself that he sees himself less as a personality than as a battlefield where a civil war rages between a thousand and one conflicting loyalties. There is no single over-all purpose in his life. His soul is comparable to a menagerie in which a number of beasts, each seeking its own prey, turn one upon the other. [...] If the frustrated soul is educated, it has a smattering of uncorrelated bits of information with no unifying philosophy. [...] Such a man projects his own mental confusion to the



outside world and concludes that, since he knows no truth, nobody can know it.” (Sheen 1954, p. 7)

Michael Novak came up with similar remarks: “Many men today are divided men, if not in their commitments yet nevertheless in their intellectual theories.” (M. Novak, 1966, p. 15)

### 3. Human Integrity

What is the practical lesson that should be drawn from the above texts? I think that it should make us conclude the following: whatever we do we should approach it as a whole, and as the whole person. In this way we have a chance to address reality as a united creature. Instead of being scattered across a rich gamut of diverse predilections, many of which are contradictory, we should integrate them within our personal endowment. This focus on human integrity is especially important when we consider the free-market economy, as I do, as one reliable on personal resources. In my consideration of integrity, I shall refer primarily to John Henry Newman as the author who in the nineteenth century had to come to grips with the enlightenment scheme of disengaged reason and the modern fragmented self that was its consequence. In this modern fragmentation, the intellect was isolated from morality, and the body (Cartesian *res extensa*) from the soul (Cartesian *res cogitans*). Obviously, I could address the whole tradition of pre-modern and modern thinkers who opposed this view, but such an attempt would exceed the modest confines of this paper.

We need to acquiesce in being judgmental rather than non-judgmental. The point is to make a moral judgment of what appeals to us, and that not merely for the sake of a possible success, but with regard to the action’s contribution to happiness. And happiness is understood here as an overall integral harmony, not a transitory satisfaction.

Without going into details of a particular economic system, we evaluate it as a whole because we choose either system A or system B. Now, choices imply moral judgments. It would be impossible to abstain from a system’s evaluation. It stands to reason that systems are different, some are better, and others are worse, otherwise making choices would be futile.

Ludwig von Mises rightly observed that the market is shaped by demand, and the latter in turn is a subjective factor. Therefore, it is the value judgments that are decisive, not objective values. (Mises 1966, p. 399–400) Where subjective choices are decisive, the burden of analysis is focused on the acting agent. It is on his knowledge, his moral condition, and his aesthetic preferences on

which his choices depend.<sup>3</sup> Following Newman we could say: it depends on the person as to what he assents. Is the option on behalf of the market yet another utopia? Or does it result from a belief in the natural course of things? One must remember that the very phrase “free market” is an example of a syntagm, therefore it is a phrase which in a dynamic manner combines two areas: market and freedom. Let us observe in this phrase two coexistent aspects of freedom, the aspects we know from Isaiah Berlin’s analysis. Hence, the market can be free when the state does not interfere in economic activity, or at least keeps a safe distance from it. The market, however, can also be regarded as free when its area is filled with free agents. The former aspect has a static structure, the latter is dynamic.

In view of this two-fold character of the term “free market” we may pose the following question: is it enough merely not to interfere in the market in order to make it function freely? In other words, does it suffice to adopt only the negative approach to freedom so that a free economy could operate?

These questions sound highly rhetorical. My firm belief is that one has to adopt an integral vision of the free market, for it follows from an integral vision of the acting person; action should not be considered only in regard to the negative aspect of freedom, but also in its positive aspect. In other words, it is not enough to eliminate all arbitrary intrusions into someone’s freedom, e.g. speaking somewhat colloquially to “leave him alone,” (the freedom *from*). To make personal decisions, one needs also to develop the right ability to make personally valuable choices. In this sense, the free market shapes economic relations without any interference from the state or else this interference is reduced to a minimum. It is presumed that – according to utilitarian logic – the man himself, by trial and error, when his good action is rewarded and bad action punished, can himself choose the most optimal way.

Now, since in individual action the lack of interference does not exhaust the experience of freedom, therefore a mere lack of interference does not suffice for a proper functioning of the market. Thus, we may proceed to a following step. It is man that makes the market free. The man liberates the market. Which man? The answer insists itself: the free person, for the effect cannot be greater than its cause. (Sometimes it can, as when we speak about some miraculous interventions). How could a captive man endow someone with freedom if he himself does not have it? The answer is obvious in view of what has been said so far: primarily, by the continuous effort of liberating himself. Only the free person is capable of making the market free. Utilitarian logic, or the purely praxeological perspective seems to indicate only the repelling mechanisms, e.g. do not cheat

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<sup>3</sup> Therefore Mises writes about the importance of “a holistic point of view”. (Mises 1966, p. 400)

because you are in for a punishment. Now the advocates of the radical free market say that under the conditions of the unfettered market, man himself learns the proper action. Each erroneous decision of the producer (seller) is immediately punished by the consumers.

The latter solution resembles training rather than a mature personality. It is rather the way of conditioning, as in Pavlov's well-known experiment, not a mode of personal formation and maturation. Besides, we learn from practice that no matter how many instructions are issued, there are always cases of disobedience. No matter how many rules are established, there are always people ready to violate them.

Does the free market need moral values? Naturally it does, and to a much bigger degree than the unfettered market. Where a top-down planning and order dominate, and in an area where personal decision has been reduced to a minimum, one does not need maturity for making decisions, since there is no room for individual decisions, there is no need for them. There remain only instructions and blind obedience.

Obviously, one must not ignore the mechanism of punishment and reward. These are coexistent elements. In any case, a mature freedom does not exclude the existence of its two aspects: negative and positive. If there is a norm: thou shalt not steal, its moral justification is independent of the punishment that is inflicted on man for its violation. It would be an abuse, however, to say that one must not (or it is not worth to) steal, for one may be punished for that. In that case we would have to deal with a purely naturalistic foundation of morality. The ethical norm says rather this: one must not steal, for stealing is wrong; not that one must not steal, for stealing entails punishment for us. Punishment is only a consequence of stealing, not its justification.

The free market does not come to us like a magical prescription from outside human experience. Rather, it is elicited from within human experience, or – if it is supposed to mean anything – can even be treated as synonymous with human experience. The human being is potential and dynamic at the same time, makes mistakes, and is never tired of trials. Being thus fallible and erring, he nevertheless strives after ever better results and products. The human being is not perfect, yet perfectible. The human being is a unity, therefore, negative discouragement from evil does not suffice. Deception leaves its negative consequences in the person. Each act has its transitive and intransitive results.

Fikkert and Rhodes observe, “Consider that while real income per capita tripled in the United States between 1946 and 2014, the self-reported happiness of the average American actually stayed the same or declined slightly over the same period.” (Fikkert, Rhodes 2017, p. 102) We find here the so-called “paradox of unhappy growth.” (Fikkert, Rhodes, 2017, p. 102)

Fikkert and Rhodes draw their explanation of the human being from the relational essence of the triune God. Therefore, the theological interpretation is set as a pattern of human relations. The authors say that God, i.e. divine relation, “defines human flourishing, not the autonomous individual represented by *homo economicus*.” (Fikkert, Rhodes 2017, p. 104) The human being is not an isolated individual, but is a being placed amidst various relationships: with God, self, others, and creation. Human decisions, if they aspire to be integral (taking into consideration the complexities of these relations), must harmoniously be interwoven with all relationships.

We can observe a general shift from *homo imago Dei* into *homo economicus*. The former is related to the transcendent sphere of the person; the latter is concerned with the material reality of the individual. This distinction, person versus individual, refers to the well-known text penned by Jacques Maritain.

The discussion about the integral human being should focus on this distinction. This well-known distinction elaborated by Jacques Maritain tells us that the individual pertains to what is material, and the person pertains to what is spiritual. The distinction in question confronts us with yet another key term, namely that of development. Benedict XVI reminds us in his encyclical letter *Caritas in Veritate* “that development is only true development when it is the development of the whole man and of all men.” (Spieker 2010, p. 263)

Spieker rightly observes “that societal development is dependent on human action.” (Spieker 2010, p. 264) Therefore, we deem it obvious that the question about the intellectual and moral condition of the centre of actions is of utmost importance.

Let us ask the following question. If the human being is a goal-oriented being, then which is our primary goal: do we want to succeed or be happy? A common sense answer would suggest that success is synonymous with happiness. If that is the case then each success, especially economic, is automatically coequal with happiness. Experience, however, teaches us something to the contrary, as Fikkert and Rhodes observed above.

Usually, we naturally wish to succeed, for life unveils before us parts and bits. Besides, it is easier to grasp success, as it often bears a concrete name. Success is visible, very often well-defined, e.g. we are waiting for an important exam. Once we pass this exam, we rightly deem it a success. Now, happiness is more complicated than success. Another question follows here. Is our life a succession of successes? If the answer is positive, then a mere collection of successes would amount to happiness. Such a set should be complete because, if it is not, we can always ask: how many successes make up happiness? Are we sure that the next step in this series of successes is yet another one, or what happens if we experience a failure? Therefore, we have the following series

$S_1 + \dots + S_n$ , but as long as life continues, we can always imagine yet another success  $S_{n+1}$ . In other words, the number of successes is always incomplete; happiness can only be made up by what is complete. The human being is always expecting something new. Besides, it turns out that despite the number of successes happiness does not rely on their collection. Practice informs us that in spite of our often desperate waiting for a success (or at least something that we hope to be such), once we have accomplished it, our feelings are quite contrary to what we expected. Rather than elevated, we feel despondent and frustrated. One should not wonder. Expectation is a mixture of hopes, experiences, and illusions that are imposed on something that is not-yet-in-existence. When what is only hoped-for is replaced by what is real, in the form of  $n + 1$  success, we realize that it is not quite what we expected. The results of human action can be positive or negative. Now, if “societal development is dependent on human action,” (Spieker 2010, p. 264) as we are right to believe, is the free market a sufficient counterbalance for destruction?

Integration can be considered in two forms: external and internal, or in other words: objective and subjective. As regards the external (objective) form, it follows from the fact that we learn objects by examining their aspects and then combining them into coherent wholes. In his *Development of Christian Doctrine*, John Henry Newman describes this precisely when he wrote, “The idea which represents an object or supposed object is commensurate with the sum total of its possible aspects, however they may vary in the separate consciousness of individuals; and in proportion to the variety of aspects under which it presents itself to various minds is its force and depth, and the argument for its reality. Ordinarily an idea is not brought home to the intellect as objective except through this variety [...]” (Newman, 1906, p. 34)

It follows from the above that an object under study is composed of multiple and varied aspects, that these aspects have their individual histories. Some of which can be revealed at a given moment, and others further on. The more aspects we learn, the better. A complete knowledge is a matter of time and patience. One should not formulate premature conclusions on the basis of selected aspects.

Now, with regard to the subjective form of integrity, it naturally relies on the knowing subject. Indeed, in the process of cognition two realities stand face to face in their rich confrontation: the reality of the object vis-à-vis the reality of the subject. It is true that potentially the subject is empowered with knowledge, nevertheless the process of cognition calls for discipline. We frequently take one another for granted, whereas in fact we are incomprehensible to one another in our individuality. Cognition is just as idiosyncratic as the object that it is given to know. On the level of logic, we share much in common; on the personal level there is a wide range of diversity.

Therefore, we are confronted here with a very fundamental question. Does negative freedom suffice to make a good choice? And there are some other questions related to this: is it proper for a person, as a person, to be satisfied with a mere calculation of losses and gains? Are we facing a mere plethora of open choices from which we are allowed to choose whatever we wish depending solely on a possible profit? Aristotle rightly observed in his *Nicomachean Ethics* that the golden mean we are supposed to seek on the way to virtue is not a choice between two kinds of evil, for there can be no mean in an area of what is intrinsically evil. The mean is only possible between different measures of good. (Aristotle 1955, p. 67) Consequently, it is the precondition of our choices that they are initially evaluated before we start acting. We are not standing in front of a blank chart. Our very being of a human person is somehow inscribed in the choice. Now, with regard to the free market, the human person is presupposed in the logic of its operation. I think that Adam Smith addressed the issue precisely when he claimed that the main end of human action is not profit, but happiness. And happiness cannot be attained without harmony between the invisible hand (the economic forces) and the impartial spectator (moral endowment). The human person cannot act merely on the grounds of costs and benefits, cannot modify his action only when frightened by risky moves.

We know that we should avoid extremes, i.e. deficiency and excess. Therefore, profligacy and avarice are to be avoided. Now, spending money and saving it may be good in themselves. We need to spend money to maintain our existence, or to help those in need. We should also save money for future investment. These two otherwise positive activities can be abused and distorted. Therefore, we sail between the Scylla of spending and the Charybdis of saving. There is no such dilemma in the case of theft. Theft is bad as such, hence it has no golden mean.

The knowledge of virtue is not theoretical, it is practical; the point is not to know the principles of right conduct, but to act rightly. Our daily life is composed of such practical matters for which there is no blueprint, “but those who are following some line of conduct are forced in every collocation of circumstances to think out for themselves what is suited to these circumstances [...]” (Aristotle 1955, p. 57)<sup>4</sup>

Hence, much depends on the agent’s integrity of character, and such is the ethos of the free market. In the area of free action, the free agent is expected to mete out the right measure of good. Now, if we claim, as I do, that the human person cannot approach any sphere of activity as a fragmented being, there is no other way but to face activity as one being. Man’s action aims at the goodness of action.

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<sup>4</sup> In the translation by Ross we read: “for they do not fall under any art or precept but the agents themselves must in each case consider what is appropriate to the occasion [...]” (Melden 1967, p. 102).

## Conclusion

The often repeated phrase “the invisible hand of the market” is allegedly attributed to Adam Smith. Strangely enough, Smith never said it. Rather, this term is a production of journalism. But why do people eagerly combine these two elements: the free market and the invisible hand. I think it is common among those who take it for granted that the market itself is incapable to bring about long-standing economic effects. They have grown accustomed to state planning, so there must be someone planning in advance all the strategies of the economy. Now, the invisible sphere cannot provide any positive planning. The invisible is coequal with non-existent. The irony in combining the invisible hand and the market is indirect and subtle. How can we expect economic success if the state is not planning? The visible hand of the state guarantees success. The phrase therefore, contains a criticism of market forces, as if it contained some magic efficient power. Thus, we first compose something that does not exist, except in journalism, and then attempt to ridicule it.

The free market is not the Great Magician that safeguards the right results no matter what one does. Morality is more important to the free market when human action is all that matters. The human must put under control all these struggling and often contradictory drives. It seems that just as the state planner has many strategies which he eagerly imposes on society, in a similar manner the free market provides, yet invisible, strategies. In reality, however, strategies do not come from the market, but from acting people. The free market is not an institution that guarantees success to its clients. It is rather an opportunity that participants can take advantage of, depending on their personal efforts at the unity of intellect and morality, on spirit and matter.

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## CZŁOWIEK INTEGRALNY JAKO WARUNEK UCZCIWEGO BIZNESU

**Streszczenie:** W niniejszym artykule podjęto próbę ukazania podstawowych uwarunkowań niezbędnych dla biznesu, a w szczególności uczciwego biznesu. Autor twierdzi, że w gospodarce wolnorynkowej ma miejsce pewien rodzaj spotkania między ludźmi. Jeśli takie spotkanie ma być efektywne, należy zapewnić określone warunki prawne, a człowiek musi być wewnętrznie zintegrowany. Przez integrację rozumie się tu skorelowanie wymiaru intelektualnego i moralnego. Tak więc biznes jest nie tylko zjawiskiem gospodarczym, ale także ma wymiar humanistyczny i duchowy. Autor podkreśla, że jeśli nieuczciwa osoba zdecyduje się na prowadzenie interesów, ten jej niszczący wpływ odczują wszystkie faktory z nią współuczestniczące i nie powstrzymają tego procesu zawarte i obowiązujące umowy. Dlatego też, wbrew temu, co twierdzą niektórzy autorzy, zwłaszcza ci, którzy wierzą w wystarczającą moc formalnych procedur, autor artykułu utrzymuje, że każda osoba musi być zarówno intelektualnie, jak i duchowo przygotowana do działalności gospodarczej, bo to rzutuje na istotę biznesu z ludzką twarzą.

**Słowa kluczowe:** gospodarka, wolny rynek, integracja, Mises, osoba.