

## **The spirit of the new *Latin-American Journal of Political Philosophy***

After several decades as one of the editors of a general journal of philosophy, I recognized the need often brought to my attention by a group of young researchers in political philosophy, public ethics, philosophy of right and of economics. Latin America and Spanish speaking countries should have a site of high academic level focused on a specific area where to publish and discuss the various issues and problems open to reflection in the ever changing world of global politics.

Political philosophy lies at the crossroads of various other empirical areas of research such as political science, political, economic and social history, law, as well as others closer to the field of reflection: ethics, logic and argumentation theory. In fact, it cannot overlook its considerably tight connections with all those areas without losing part of its competency and significance in the process. Consequently, a journal focused on political philosophy must include a wide range of articles with tenets on all issues related to politics in its most conceptual sense. The arguments grounding the theses proposed will be as important as the theses themselves as will the reliability and strength of the empirical data put forward, when necessary.

The profound economic, social and political changes currently shaking the world cannot but call our attention to the ideas that, explicitly or otherwise, are at the basis of the political agenda enacting them. As renowned British economist John Maynard Keynes pointed out near the end of his *General Theory*, at times as tumultuous as ours:

“[...] the ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic

scribbler of a few years back. I am sure that the power of vested interests is vastly exaggerated compared with the gradual encroachment of ideas” (1936, p. 383).

Movements as the *Tea Party* in the US, the German-influenced ultra-orthodoxy of the European Central Bank or the renewed commercial protectionism all over the world –despite the good intentions voiced in G-20 meetings– witness to the fact that Keynes’ sharp verdict is still applicable.

With no impairment of Keynes’ thought, the “material interests and ideals [that] basically dominate people’s actions” (Max Weber), not only follow the paths along which they are guided by ideas, as proposed by the great sociologist, but also sternly resist any change in such ideas. A journal of political philosophy as the one we are launching hopes to contribute through its critical work to dismantle the strongholds set up by those interests to protect their privileged positions. In his unrelenting analysis of political regimes in crucial books IV, V and VI of *Politics*, Aristotle ends by limiting all existent regimes to two: *oligarchy* and *democracy*. Leaving aside the deep gap that separates Greek city-states of IV century BC from present day nation-states, both main political types still host practically all actual regimes organized as states. As in the theory of colliding continental masses, the tension caused by the unceasing friction between the block (cultural, political, intellectual and social) that leans to one or the other end of the spectrum, eventually surfaces under the guise of more or less severe crises. We are experiencing one of those “interesting times” we were reminded of by E. Hobsbawm’s autobiography. It is our task, as philosophers, to reflect on those times.

RLFP will be an exclusively digital online publication. It will include articles and discussions, up to 10,000 words; notes and critical studies, up to 5,000 words, as well as a section of debates and brief comments on current events. Articles will be published in either Spanish or English.

O.G.