

On Getting Libertarianism Wrong

One of my mentors and favorite libertarian theorists, Hans-Hermann Hoppe, has once again gotten it dangerously wrong on libertarianism. Read his latest, published just today, titled “On Getting Libertarianism Right”.

I can agree with most of what he writes regarding the goals of libertarianism (the absolutely necessity of private property toward the goal of conflict reduction over scarce resources) and the conditions of different cultures around the world (lots of shitholes, he says “lawless hell-holes”). He’s not wrong that some cultures and societies are far more tolerant of crime or are crime-ridden than others. This is true, but its not limited to “other” cultures and societies. We see it everywhere, and some of the worst forms of crime (statism) are happily tolerated in even the most “enlightened” Western societies.

Here’s something else he writes in this article that I agree with (emphasis added):

*Real libertarians – in contrast to left-libertarian fakes – **must study and take account of real people and real human history** in order to design a libertarian strategy of social change, and even the most cursory study in this regard – indeed, little more than common sense – yields results completely opposite from those proposed by libertarian fakes.*

Real human history of real people. Got it. Understood. Let’s do that. Where does Hoppe take this? Exactly here:

Viewed from a global macro-perspective, it should be obvious also (especially to a libertarian), that all great libertarian thinkers which successively and gradually built up the system of libertarian law and order have been “Western Men”, i.e., men born and raised in countries of Western and Central Europe or their various overseas dependencies and settlements and intellectually and culturally united by a common lingua franca (once Latin and now English) and the trans-national Catholic Church or more lately and vaguely a common Christianity. That it is in these Western societies, where libertarian

principles have found the most widespread public acceptance and explicit recognition as “natural human rights.” That, notwithstanding their blatant shortcomings and failings, it is Western societies, then, that still resemble, comparatively speaking, a libertarian social order most closely.

You know what else “Western Men” successively and gradually built up, supposedly while it had “widespread public acceptance and explicit recognition” of “natural human rights”? Atlantic slave trade. US federal supremacy. Worldwide military interventionism. Communist and Socialist totalitarianism. Naziism and the Holocaust. Central Banking. Intellectual property protection.

These are not merely “shortcomings and failings”... they are *major* components of Western Civilization, directly following the introduction and growth by Western Men of the nation-state, which Hoppe, just a bit later, acknowledges:

No [nation]-State currently ruling over different parts of the Western World achieved this rank and position as ultimate judge and executioner immediately and at once, however. It took hundreds of years to bring this about and replace or displace a once, for a lengthy period in Western history highly decentralized system of social authority by the present system of centralized and monopolized State authority.

Western Man did that. Western Man, with its bigger brain and higher intelligence, figured out how to consolidate power inward, then violently colonize and consolidate power outward, expanded slavery, and when that ultimately came to an end, developed a different kind of slavery, smashing civil and economic liberties all the while showing Eastern Man how to do exactly what Western Man did to conquer its own people in every conceivable way, that even today, those who falsely claim the mantle of libertarian, left or right, look to Western Man’s creation, the state, to save them from those who would do them harm.

The legacy of Western society is not only the appearance of classical liberalism, it’s also millions upon millions of people conquered, displaced, and murdered. One could argue that Western society has been a major net *detriment* to humankind.

I understand Hoppe's lamentation on what allowing criminals or those who tolerate criminals into "our" society will do. I get that. What I don't get, is why government, who in every single way holds culpability for our current state of affairs, should be looked to, quite inconsistently and hypocritically, as our savior.

"These observations alone should be sufficient to reveal any libertarian advocate" of state control of anything, including it's arbitrary and imaginary border, "as a fool." Fin.