

## THE ECONOMICS OF FATE AND FREEDOM

ROBERT BURK

Philosophical discussions on freedom and the role of fate rarely bother to address economic issues. What is addressed more often than not is either the omnipotence of God or the determinism of nature. Many are the books written in which the author agonizes over the tension between the freedom of man and the power of God, human rights versus the state and free will and natural law. At other times discussion will pit democracy against private enterprise and the rights of the individual are contrasted with the needs of society. Writers discuss if man is freer in a democracy where the tyranny of the majority threatens minority rights or in an autocracy where the very absoluteness of the dictator may allow certain rights to be better protected. Dictators can implement policy even in the face of mass opposition, situations that may cause a government more dependent on the will of the electorate; to cave in.

Those who leave behind philosophy and cautiously enter the real world become aware of a new dimension to the question of fate versus freedom. We see, that we are all answerable to someone. Employees answer to a boss with the power to hire and fire and bosses are at the mercy of a fickle customer. Within private enterprise, the fate of employees are entwined not just with the fate of the company but also with our ability to manoeuvre through the politics of the firm. Our freedom is checked at the door of the factory and mind and body become assets rented to a company and under the supervision and direction of another human being.

Our freedom is not a phenomenological quality subject to obtuse speculations about 1<sup>st</sup> Order Principles and the nature of Free Will when it intersects with economics. When economics becomes factored in freedom turns into a question of the needs of business, the volume of orders, the number of co-workers off sick and the amount of holiday time accumulated and many other considerations. There is one factor that overshadows all others, that is money.

The philosophical department may obsess about ego and will and nature versus nurture conflicts, the real world citizen worries about money.

The common man may choose to read a treatise on Psychobiology and have cause to smile at the problems befuddling psychologists. The labourer is not impressed by Pavlov's dogs, he has been jumping at the sound of buzzers and alarms for hundred of years. He even admits he waits with anticipation for the sound of the bell indicating break-time. Freedom and fate are not arcane questions of conditioning, they are reality.

Now it may be true that philosophy professors do not major in money management but perhaps they should. How many dissertations feature good money management strategies? What discussion on freedom is complete without not just a reference to the purpose of man but also suggestions on how this purpose is to be paid for? What does freedom mean without a way to quantify freedom? Discussions on equality inform us that what is desired is not an equality of outcomes but equality of opportunity? We are not all headed in the same direction. To herd us into the same future is a fate few want. However, is the employed master of his or her fate? What use is talking about fate and freedom if we do not have money to buy a coffee or sufficient authority to determine when we will drink it? What is opportunity without money?

As Christians, we take it for granted that despite the absolute power of God, he has granted us free will, we may not understand it, but we know what we do is being measured and we are held accountable. Without free will, accountability is not possible.

No matter what our philosophical opinion on free will may be, we stop at red lights (for the most part). Those who go to court arguing free will is a myth are given into the care of a psychiatrist.

Christians are not immune from the speculative ivory tower abstractions that seem to occupy many of our secular colleagues. We speculate on whether God provided us with free to be exercised or constrained? Is free will possible when sin abounds? Paul testified saying, what he would do he cannot but the evil which he would not he does. Ro. 7:14-23. (1)

Paul experienced a war in his members. Revelations tells us that the war is not against flesh and blood but against principalities and power. The power we struggle against is

Babylon and Scripture tells us that the kings and merchants bemoan her passing. Re. 18:11 (2) This suggests that the freedom of the powerful and rich was associated with the economics used by the fallen world.

Despite economics being a topic for discussion philosophers prefer to avoid God said a fair bit about money. Aware of the issues that would occupy the philosophical community the bible speaks about those who formulate laws, philosophical, natural and legal. If we create laws and follow them religiously what is the meaning of free will? Is free will simply a determination to obey rules? God is also aware of those who see money as the answer. Freedom in this world is often associated with greed. Liberals seem to associate freedom with money, the more money the more freedom. This is especially visible in liberalism attitude to capital. Private property ownership gives liberals their sense of freedom, the more property a liberal owns the more freedom he or she thinks he or she has.

This view is not consistent with what the bible says. One of the most vivid if least preached verses is the statement that the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Yet, have we not equated with freedom with money? In too many eyes the love of freedom is really a love of money.

But there is a problem with this. Private property is dependent on the existence of the state. The state with its rules and regulations is not consistent with freedom or the free use of money. The state is a direct rejection of the suzerainty of God.

Yet, our fate, the fate of the church and indeed the fate of all mankind appear dependent on the functionality of the state. Our money-measured freedom enslaves us to our work. We lose freedom to have an occupation. Our fate is tied to the fate of our job.

This was not Gods Plan. The love of money has not freed us it has been the tool of our enslavement. The state and the merchants bewail the end of Babylon because the downfall of Babylon follows our emancipation.

If the state is antichrist then the legal rights the state provides are fallacious which makes private enterprise ungodly. The state has no right to allocate God's world or parts thereof to private parties. What we make and create belongs to us as persons

made in the image of God but the Created existence belongs to us all by virtue of the doctrine of Dominion. Those who abrogate nature to him or her self robs the rest of us. This world has never thought it important to separate the value we create from the assets that belong to us all. This is where the biblical understanding of freedom proves to be far superior to anything human based thinking has come up with.

Property rights gives us a freedom based on assets that do not belong to us. We believe our ownership of a forest is legitimate because the state bestowed a deed upon us. The document is invalid for it offends Scripture and the nature of human rights.

Hydro companies sell their clients electricity. Yet, the waterfall belongs to their customers by right of God. The builder of the dam and generator has a right to the added value but not to the base value. Understanding this allows us to formulate a workable Labour Theory of Value.

The Labour Theory of Value is applicable only to the value added component of a product or service. Society must separate out the value added from the base value that belongs to all. Any claim on society that is not based on added value is a social cost. Any economic freedom based on social costs is an illicit freedom and indeed can be construed as a Crime Against Humanity. The natural world belongs to all of mankind not to government and not to any private party. Any claim on the natural world that deprives the rest of humanity of what belongs to them is unlawful and immoral.

To have freedom it is not enough to have free will because free will choices require assets. It is not enough to have assets. If the assets we derive benefit from belong rightfully to someone else, the benefit claimed is theft. Using what is rightfully another's to create personal wealth creates social costs. The state is the primary source of social costs. By creating private ownership using the doctrine and vehicle of legal rights, the state takes value from the many and transfers it to the individual. All costs created by the existence of the state are social costs. Debt, inflation, waste, poverty, unemployment, pollution and taxation are all social costs. To eliminate these we need to eliminate the state and its fictitious legal rights.

The state cannot bestow rights on anyone because it has none to give.

To have freedom the world needs a new business model that recognizes the fiduciary interests of all persons in the prosperity of the planet. Each person has a right to his proper share and protection from the social costs created by others. We each must pay our own way. The elimination of social costs creates a rational economy. A rational economy is devoid of social costs thus a rational economy is also an ethical economy.

We are now in a position to define freedom as the absence of social costs. Freedom is the natural state of mankind but it is based on the possession of an equal share of the world's resources. The barometer by which freedom is measured is the freedom of a person to pay his or her own costs without the compulsion or necessity of paying costs generated by some other agent. We can also define fate as the pre existence of costs that we were not party to, billed to our account. Interestingly the sin of man is a cost Jesus paid willingly.

The glory of Jesus is that he paid this price willingly. As persons created in the image of God we have a right to be able to choose the costs we pay beyond the ones we create. We need to be free of the need to pay costs created by others yet, the grace to pay where this appears the righteous thing to do.

Private enterprise does not give us the freedom we need. Nor can private enterprise exist without the state and its illicit legal rights. The proper economic engine is a two-tier structure that encompasses the rights of all persons along with the rights of the one who adds value to the natural component. In recognition of our collective rights, a community ought to exist as a sovereign entity composed of the assets within its locality. Every member of the community is assigned one voting or Common Share. Common Shares entitle the holder to a vote and to an equal share of dividends, that is the value created by the community. In addition every member of a community is issued 500 Preferred Shares. Preferred Shares represent the equity of the Exchange or community. Remember a community is a pool of assets within a local geographical area. The community is the pool of assets and the employee/owners within that geographical area. Preferred Shares are issued in multiples of each value in the same way currency is printed. Preferred Shares double as a currency for internal transactions (transfers of assets). Buyers pay for goods and services using Preferred Shares (equity

for assets) and sell goods and services for Preferred Shares. Purchases create a debit entry and sales a credit entry. The use of Preferred Shares as a currency creates a cash based economy and eliminates the liabilities that are present in all conventional economic systems.

Shareholders can purchase Preferred Shares using fiat dollars, this income can they be used to purchase member debt from banks and credit card companies.

To start a new business members acquire the needed space and equipment using debits (Preferred Shares).

As businesses are created specialization increases. Specialization is the key to all productivity increases. Structure is generated automatically, trades emerge as separate enterprises. Roads and other social services are purchased directly from those who provide these goods and services. There is no longer the need for the state to act as broker between buyer (taxpayer) and seller (the actual service provider).

Freedom is no longer curtailed by a lack of money.

(1) Rom: 7:14-23 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

(2) Rev. 18:11 And the merch ants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.