



STOCKCERO TEACHING KIT (183)

TITLE: *La Falacia de la Civilización Occidental*

AUTHOR: Armando P. Ribas

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I. OVERVIEW & SIGNIFICANCE

In *La Falacia de la Civilización Occidental*, Armando P. Ribas presents a radical re-evaluation of Western history and political philosophy. Dr. Ribas argues that the contemporary world suffers from a profound confusion stemming from the belief that Western civilization is a single, unified entity. Instead, he identifies two diametrically opposed philosophical traditions that emerged from Europe: the Anglo-American tradition and the Franco-German tradition.

The work posits that the "Rule of Law," individual liberty, and unprecedented wealth-creation are exclusive products of the Anglo-American stream (Locke, Hume, Adam Smith). Conversely, the Franco-German stream (Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Marx) provided the intellectual rationalization for modern totalitarianism and absolute state power. For Ribas, the "Fallacy" lies in the syncretism that ignores this fundamental antagonism. This book is a crucial resource for graduate students exploring why certain societies thrive while others, particularly in Latin America, remain trapped in cycles of populism and economic stagnation. It offers an advanced pedagogical framework for discussing ethics, political economy, and the true origins of modern prosperity.

II. CONTEXT & CRITICAL APPROACHES

This collection of articles and lectures encourages a rigorous, axiological analysis of the relationship between ethics, law, and economics.

The Dual Nature of the West:

Analyze Ribas's claim that Anglo-American and Franco-German philosophies are as different as "day and night." How does he categorize the primary values of each tradition?

Discuss the role of the "Inquisition" and "wars between Christians" in Ribas's critique of a monolithic, virtuous Western history.

Economics as a Consequential Science:

Examine the "correct axiological order" proposed by Ribas. Why does he argue that economy is dependent on ethics, politics, and the legal system, rather than being an independent science?

Discuss the concept of the "Hand Invisible" vs. the "Visible Hand." How does Ribas defend the recognition that private interests can align with the general interest through a proper legal framework?

The Critique of Enlightenment Rationalism:

Analyze the role of Jean-Jacques Rousseau in establishing the "totalitarian vote" through the concept of the "General Will."

Compare the Humean "Science of Man" (based on real human nature) with the Rousseauian "ideal man" (a romantic abstraction). How does Ribas link this abstraction to 20th-century political violence?



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U.S. Constitutionalism vs. European Totalitarianism:

Examine the importance of the 1787 Constitution and the 1803 *Marbury vs. Madison* decision (Judicial Review) in limiting majority rule to protect individual rights.

Discuss why Ribas believes that if it weren't for the United States, Europe would have remained under Nazi or Communist rule.

III. ADVANCED DISCUSSION & RESEARCH PROMPTS

The Fallacy of Equality: Ribas argues that the "left has appropriated ethics in function of the fallacy of economic equality." Discuss how this focus on equality often results in the violation of property rights and the right to the pursuit of happiness.

The "Rule of Law" in Latin America: Using the section on "América Latina," analyze Ribas's comparison between José Martí and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento. How do these different intellectual lineages impact contemporary regional governance?

Thucydides vs. Alberdi: Discuss Chapter XII. How does Ribas use classical antiquity and 19th-century Argentine thought to explain modern international despondency and the role of power?

Stiglitz and Ribas: In the Economics section, Ribas engages in a direct critique of Joseph Stiglitz. Research Stiglitz's "The Price of Inequality" and discuss Ribas's counterarguments regarding public spending and market dynamics.

The "Welfare State" as "Ill-fare State": Analyze the concept of the "Crisis del Estado de Malestar." How does Ribas link high public spending (e.g., in the EU) to economic stagnation?

Nature Inmutable vs. Systemic Change: Reflect on the Humean idea that human nature is unchangeable and therefore we must change *circumstances* (the system) to change *behavior*. How does this apply to the transition from "Barbarism" to "Civilization" described in the book?

IV. SUGGESTED FURTHER READINGS & BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Text:

- Ribas, Armando P. *La Falacia de la Civilización Occidental*. Stockcero. (TK ORDER: 183)

Key Secondary Scholarship & Referenced Figures:

- **Alberdi, Juan Bautista.** *Peregrinación de Luz del Día*.
- **Bernstein, William.** *The Birth of Plenty: How the Prosperity of the Modern World was Created*.
- **Bowen, Catherine Drinker.** *The Miracle at Philadelphia*.
- **Hamilton, Madison, and Jay.** *The Federalist Papers*.
- **Locke, John.** *First Treatise of Government*.
- **Nordau, Max.** *Degeneration*. (For context on the critique of rationalism).
- **Revel, Jean-François.** *La obsesión antiamericana*. (Referenced by Ribas on 20th-century history).

V. RELATED STOCKCERO RESOURCES

- [Hispanic Heritage Thinkers: 7-Book Bundle.](#)
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- Other titles by Armando Ribas: *Rule of Law: The Path to Freedom*, *Los '90*, *La Falacia de la Civilización Occidental*.
 - Hugo Gambini's historical biographies on Che Guevara and Peronism.
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