

Salvador de Madariaga's meeting points with Julien Freund: 'Europe' as Construction and Evolution

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It's not trespassing to go beyond your own boundaries.

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As a precursor of “the idea of Europe,” Salvador de Madariaga defended a broad and inclusive conception of which territories should be included in “Europe,” advancing that this “idea” encompassed much more than a mere geographical continent. His approach was concomitant with that of Freund's in the sense that he also considered that “the political is always in preparation of new destinies, whether it's a matter of construction or of evolution”. Indeed, Madariaga's particular contributions to the European integration process have been regarded as a form of “constructive Europeanism” within a timeline to be guided by “new generations which are called to orient the transition” as Freund purported.

1. Madariaga and a 'New Europe': “The future lies beyond your own boundaries!”

During Madariaga's first period at the University of Oxford in the late 1920s, he launched a series of talks with the common denominator of “Europe” as a collective point of encounter which could echo Freund's analyses on “a project of edifying a new society and of creating a new man”. In this regard, we can observe the impact of Madariaga's experience as the Chief of Disarmament in the League of Nations after the end of WWI. Against this backdrop, Madariaga had aimed to center these European unity “team-building” dialogues on the slogan: “Europe: The future lies beyond your own boundaries!”¹ This ground-breaking premise would be continued by a sense of common enterprise among European intellectuals in exile in the second half of the 20th century, which deposited in Madariaga not only trust but also the freedom to mold a new paradigm for a common “transnational” existence as part of what also Freund had called “another type of civilization, because it will be the work of the generations to come”.

In Madariaga's eyes, the outcry “Europe: The future lies beyond your own boundaries!” meant the following: firstly, the future of the continent had its home in a rupture of internal and artificial “national” frontiers; secondly, it meant Europe should look for a second chance to reposition herself in the wider world as an actor defined by peace and cooperation purposes and modalities and finally, that this should be an inter- and a trans-generational enterprise, a further synergy with Freund's body of work.

According to Madariaga's contributions during his exile in the United Kingdom in the post-WWII period, this form of “affective glue” would be centered on dispelling the disruptive forces of fragmentation in the context of the Cold War. These contentious barriers in post-war Europe would give rise to Madariaga's counter-criticism through his notion of the so-called “forbidden places”.

2. The “Forbidden places”: Europe as a geography of possibility for future generations

Madariaga conceived of the emerging Cold War landscape as a seemingly inescapable prison, where every human being is suffering the effects of *The Blowing-Up of the Parthenon*,² as his book of the same title reminds us. However, despite the gloomy scenario depicted in his English language impactful poem “Forbidden Places,” politically, he always referred to Europe as “a geography of possibility,” thus counteracting the preeminence of decadence in Europe as studied by Freund.

In Madariaga’s own verses:

Cold faces barred access to the four forbidden places:

North – Hate

South – War

East – Challenge

West – Scorn.

Ancestors and time wore thin the traces

And when they drowned that dream in dust

Of strife

They lost faith in their own life

And cursed it in their hearts.³

In sum, in a map where all the coordinates are “forbidden places”, the territory is restricted to an internalized projection towards the future to be carried out by upcoming generations. Believing in the feasibility of such projection became, in Madariaga’s perspective, not just the most attainable way to live, but the only possible one. Plus, that was, for sure, the map of a political exile, but also the blueprint of a scenario designer committed to a hopeful future to come, which he might not even glimpse. In this regard, we can observe another meeting point with Freund’s ideas in the sense that he held an expectation in “the society of tomorrow, which will bring to fulfillment the beneficent tendencies which it already contains in a latent fashion”.

This sense of retrenchment within the inner self was concomitant with Madariaga’s experience of living the repressive consequences of an authoritarian regime from afar during his exile experience in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War. This seemed to lead to the building of an imaginary space where exile would not be needed; where moving freely (and returning to one’s roots) would not belong to an expanse populated by threats and where free speech would not be subjected to the arbitrary variables of brutal subduing. However, retrenchment does not move in parallel with liberation: It only reverberates with temporary refuge bringing back Madariaga’s poignant question from the time when he was in charge of the Disarmament Secretariat at the League of Nations: “Are trench scars closed?”⁴ In the post-WWII era, Madariaga considered that enhancing hope for a better future could be the best way to close those wounds., while learning from past darkness and focusing on the responsibility of the re-builder. In that matter, Madariaga’s reflection could find an echo in Freund’s considerations about how, generationally, “we have to harness ourselves to a task which is not finished.”

3. Madariaga's *Meditations on Europe*

Madariaga's later compendium, entitled *Meditaciones sobre Europa*, was imbued with a sense of positive foreboding, which "had" to be shared, as expressed in numerous letters of this period contained in his "Political Activity in Exile" archival collections. For instance, he conveyed this outright feeling of renovated hope in a common European future in these terms: "Europe is about to become a reality. We should better think of a renaissance."⁵ In his writings, a *renaissance* is seen as a trans-generationally perceived turning point that aims to supersede individual initiatives. This seems to reverberate in Freund's idea about the fact that "a union is spontaneously born of the will to realize a work together." In this respect, Madariaga was using the compelling energy of this call for arms to articulate collaborative bonds via the European Movement. From a symbolic and spatial viewpoint, Madariaga usually referred to the positive semantic charge of "roads, rivers, channels, railways, electric lines, telephonic and telegraphic lines..." as they formed, step by step "the cardiovascular system and the nervous fibers of this emerging political system"⁶ called "Europe," the common home, as he would later elaborate.

During the sixties, Madariaga repeatedly asserted how Europe started to rely on its own strength and how this "would channel our common united destiny."⁷ This is something we could find reflected in Freund's body of work on "new generations which are called to orient the transition." In this sense, Madariaga's earlier references to "a freedom to move" were focused on ways to transform former barriers into bridges and former conflicts into cooperation. Moreover, he often referred to transnational continental communications in all directions as further evidence that there was no such phenomenon as "national life." Transnational exchanges and dialogues were, indeed, to be seen as a manifestation of "an interconnected European life."⁸ This notion was backed by his historical essays, which purported the argument of defining *long-durée* European history as a history of interactions. In his eyes, superseding the brutal conflicts defining the past could only be brought about by an enhanced sense of community.

4. Madariaga's theoretical constructions through poetry: "The Home of Man"

The perception of an impending *renaissance* was accompanied in Madariaga's literary production, political activism and committed correspondence by the overarching concept of "The Home of Man," which he epitomized in his renowned poem of the same title:

Arise in your machine all things gyrate
In perfect order, even smoother, faster,
While you drift through disorder to disaster
Master of things arise and master Fate.
The Earth was meant to be your Paradise.
There at the Gates of Time
In History's Plan
The war-nightmare will sink in the sunrise
Arise and make the world the Home of Man.⁹

This metaphor of the cosmopolitan life aspirations was inextricably related to the experience of war and exile. In the first instance, it was directly linked to his experience of the Spanish Civil War and, in a second instance; it was deeply intertwined with his prolific career as writer, scholar and international political activist in the aftermath of WWII. The mindset expressed in this seminal poem by Madariaga also coalesced with the Kantian ideal of perpetual peace as “history’s destiny,” able to trigger the transformation of a common space (Europe) into a veritable “home.” This is, indeed, something that converges with Freund’s outlook of the future as a reality “to confront with perseverance, confidence and even enthusiasm.”

5. The “free movement of persons” idea in poetry and political analysis: Madariaga’s *Oxford Letters* and *Zurich Papers*

Madariaga’s most dedicated reflections about how persons being allowed to freely circulate in the European continent (the “common home”) could have an impact in the consolidation of “a new Europe” via the European integration process were particularly distilled both in his *Oxford Letters* and *Zurich Papers* with this formulation: “In the diversification of a free movement idea, there exists the potentiality of becoming mutually complementary. To be European is also to love the essences of others.” Indeed, Madariaga would place a special emphasis on the need for an admiration towards what makes others unique, as well as for a belief in their capacities.

Within these two works, he also launched an engaging metaphor on European integration:

Draws a mathematical formula in the garden...

Based on the square root of minus 1, which does not or cannot exist.

But the dynamo upon which this formula is based works...¹⁰

Surely, Madariaga was conscious of the fragility of a political union project based on economic means while sustained by theoretical principles and norms. But somehow he genuinely believed that the formula could work, and that it was the last and only viable alternative. This process was in and of itself Madariaga’s epitome of a progressive, cross- generational transition, converging with Freund’s views on this matter: “It’s during the periods of transition that it is wholly necessary to particularly cultivate the spirit of lucidity and courage”.

This notion was also embodied in Madariaga’s chief concept of “The Solidarity of Being.” He started developing this concept via three key European geopolitical coordinates: The Danube, the Rhine and the Rodano. The Rodano and the Danube were seen by Madariaga as “meta-national” and their waters were supposed to reflect “different firmaments which illuminated different “human mansions” with their light as they extended their horizons well beyond any conception of national perspective. From his perspective, “water,” traditionally associated with the unconscious could act as the nascent point of a renewed consciousness were the common would be highlighted over the particular while in a state of constant flux. In this sense, Madariaga was decidedly contravening the convention of setting waters (rivers, seas...) as a frontier to depict them as connectors.

This thought is particularly expressed in this passage:

Before reaching the Black Sea, the Danube follows a quiet pathway,
Uniting peoples in its way,

a union that any form of blind nationalism
is intent in dividing.¹¹

In Madariaga's sensibility, the air carried a similar symbolism, mingling the commonalities that are only perceptible as an overview, thus constituting a new, positive reverse of *The Home of Man's* premise: "The winds of the four directions of Europe melt in a single harmony of influences and an embracing atmosphere. The kind and luminous South meets the active and grey North, the cordial and spiritual East and the intellectual and critical West."¹² For Madariaga, winds evoked a compelling energy, which should never be left unused.

In that matter, Madariaga carried this metaphor farther away to the fringes of what we today know as Comparative Regional Integration with these words: "The long river reflects all these dimensions and runs towards the Black Sea, opening up Asian perspectives."¹³ Asia, on the fringes of Europe, was usually perceived by Madariaga as an instance of conversation for integration processes that are larger than continents, echoing a geographical contiguity that extends in potential partnerships. In short, Madariaga's concept of a "Solidarity of Being," directly focused on how to strengthen links at all levels by threading multilevel structures, a perspective that deeply resonates with our present in terms of growing global interconnections and interdependence. In his own words: "Mathematicians have a positive consideration of the extension of the axis from a common point of departure, as all extensions imply the deepening of a relation."¹⁴ Indeed, the "deepening of relations," either diplomatic, political, activist, creative or intellectual constituted for Madariaga the beating heart of a Europe capable of changing her meaning from exploitative to enabling, as strongly as rivers could cease to be frontiers by becoming sustainable ties.

Conclusions: Madariaga's *Fiat Europa!*

Madariaga's corpus on the notion of *Fiat Europa!* brings together his thoughts on the "Solidarity of Being" as a potential driving force for European integration. From this viewpoint, he strongly stated that "your responsibility as human being is not transferable. Never renounce your perspective in favor of a group, a party, a city or a nation. The community is a passport for a freedom of action. A community which needs (internal) passports is not free."¹⁵ These thoughts illustrate his search for a center of gravity in post-WWII Europe on the nature in the search for a viable "European Community." In this respect, Madariaga was devoted to connecting issues of individual responsibility of action, as well as independent and free thought beyond social pressure as inalienable elements towards the consolidation of fundamental human mobility rights as a cross-generational "construction".

He also critically addressed the overuse of the term "Europe" in European integration political and intellectual discussions of the post-WWII era by expressing: "What's the meaning of 'Europe will be a reality'? Europe has existed for centuries."¹⁶ The key question for Madariaga was then how to instill new meaning to a fragmented and often brutalized common space. At the same time, Madariaga sent an early warning regarding emergent conceptions of free mobility across the continent, implying that exclusionary practices might undermine the potential of an enabling principle: "A community which revises all passports between frontiers and refuses them if they do not pass immigration directives is not yet a free community or a true community."¹⁷ These cautionary critiques definitely resonate with one of the most salient issues of the present: How is it possible to actually create a "community" when selective exclusion, discrimination and humanly

exploitative business models substitute rights-based policy-making for the sake of the very same “community?” Freund’s focus would point in the direction of the political, which he saw as being “always in preparation of new destinies, whether it’s a matter of construction or of evolution.” Conversely, Madariaga would refer to his concept of a “Solidarity of Being”, proactively reminding us of a permanent capacity of trans-generationally saving ourselves from ourselves.

Notes

¹ *Zurich Papers* - Caja 137, *Archivos de Salvador de Madariaga*, La Coruña – Archivos de Salvador de Madariaga (ASM).

² de Madariaga, S., *The Blowing Up of The Parthenon*, 1960, Santa Barbara, Praeger.

³ Poemas – Salvador de Madariaga, 135 23 1, *ASM*.

⁴ January 14 1960 – *Letters from Oxford*, 135 14 3, *ASM*.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ 137 – Correspondencia – Actividad Política en el Exilio, *ASM*.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *De la angustia a la libertad*, Caja 135 carpeta 12, 135/12/3, *ASM*.

¹¹ Exile and future free movement of persons, 139/12/29, *ASM*.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Iberian Council communication, 22 12 1961, 135 18 1, *ASM*.

¹⁴ *El Fomento del Diálogo en la Política* (Zurich), Caja 135 carpeta 12, 135/12, *ASM*.

¹⁵ Exile and future free movements of persons, 139/12/29, *ASM*.

¹⁶ 1964 – *Cartas desde Lausanne*, 135 15 36, *ASM*.

¹⁷ *El Fomento del Diálogo en la Política* (Zurich), Caja 135 carpeta 12, 135/12, *ASM*.