

## Filoponìa, from Cuba to the world - without debt: equality and freedom - *A paradigmatic utopia proposed in Cuba*

*Thanks to the diffused capital, Filoponia is an egalitarian society even without being a socialist economy, Filoponia is a society of entrepreneurship even without being a capitalist economy: Filoponia is the society of sustainable humanisation, environmentally and socially. Andrea Surbone - Filoponía*



Anonymous, 'The Ideal City', second half of the 15th century.

### Andrea Surbone

**T**he earth needs a new Copernican revolution: it must stop revolving around accumulation and embark on a new orbit. The environmental and the social are under ferocious attack by anthropisation, led by financialisation, the current point of the relentless advance of accumulation. The ecological and the social, accordingly, show how close and exacerbated the collapse of our world is.

To be defined as such and so in its essence, a new Copernican revolution necessarily entails the identification of a new gravitational centre; in Filoponía, this is the diffused capital, the structured presentation of which took place in Cuba.

These pages contain the two official documents of Filoponía's connection with Cuba. The first is the text of the intervention at the VIII CONFERENCE OF STRATEGIC STUDIES - Transforming the International Order: challenges of Transition and Proposals from the South, held in Havana on 25 September 2023; the second is the article I was asked to write by the CIPI ( International Policy Research Centre of Cuba).

It is all based on the desire to present a model to a socialist state, which, as mentioned in the opening sentence, creates a society of equals even without being a socialist economy: this is what is contained in the text of the speech at the Conference. The second text is the article written for the CIPI, which was born out of the questions that were addressed to me at the end of the speech at the Conference, centred on how to proceed to adopt the Filoponía model in Cuba.

A well-defined interest which provides for an attentive theoretical analysis of the model but also knows how to take the next step, that of practice. The theoretical analysis concerns, first and foremost, the new element proposed by Filoponía: diffused capital.

We can summarise - and trivialise very much - human evolution and its becoming of a society, understood as a community in which not everyone produces the same essential goods, especially food, but some engage in unproductive activities through the occurrence of the discovery of abundance (agriculture) - accumulation - debt - writing - money - accumulation capital. And it is precisely on accumulation capital that the whole economic theory is built and refined, becoming, with due differences, the common ground of the two opposing models, socialism and capitalism. Filoponía, on the other hand, places diffused capital at the basis of the economy and society.

The two texts on Cuba outline a definition and the theoretical and practical consequences of the latter. Consequences that a theoretical model can foresee; moreover, in my opinion - and this is what I based myself on to elaborate Filoponía - the model is obtained by starting from the consequences one wants to achieve. In this sense, although the coherence of the model states that this consequence relationship exists, Filoponía devotes a chapter to its experimentation, in which it analyses both how this can be carried out and the results expected from it; it also - and above all - analyses the need to test the model, in search of possible anomalous behaviours, as suggested by the economic evaluation to which Filoponía has been subjected, as well as how the model itself can be fine-tuned.

Thus, from the initial desire to present Filoponía, we first arrive at the will to discuss the model and then, should the possibility arise, consider applying the Filoponía experiment and how to use it. This resolve acquires significant importance, which can be interpreted as an awareness of the need for a new Copernican revolution and an indication to our globe of a feasible, innovative trajectory: from Cuba to the world.

## The presentation at the Conference

Thank you, and many thanks to Cuba, its Embassy in Rome, CIPI, and all the people who made this meeting possible.

Let us start with a premise. The economy is not natural; it is only a human construct. As Graeber wrote, Every morning we wake up and recreate capitalism; so if one day when we wake up we collectively decide to create something else, then capitalism would no longer exist. In its place would be something else. And Filoponía is something else: a new economic and social model.

The second premise is the conclusion I wish to draw with you today: with emancipation income, diffused capital; companies returned to ad personam ownership and the disappearance of debt, the economy finally returns to its etymology, the management of the house. An immense house encompassing the entire globe and all its components and inhabitants: in other words, a common house. Stewardship is needed, but it is no longer governed by an artificial economic science based on debt, which has utterly failed in the stewardship of the common house, leading the world to social inequality and environmental disaster. What is needed, then, is to think differently in the sense of imagining and advocating a new society that is finally built on the postulates of equality and freedom.

Filoponía - without debt: equality and freedom, a utopia is illustrated here with the dual purpose of underlining some fundamental drawbacks of the present economic order and the possibility - for the time being only a model - of the existence of an alternative order. Today, the model we live in is financialisation, which stifles freedom and denies equality; Filoponía, on the other hand, combines freedom and equality by achieving an easy economy through the abolition of debt.

How can Filoponía be an economic model in itself, in general, and in particular, with regard to the dualism between private and collective capital? There are three fundamental aspects to consider: the elimination of debt, the viability of the model and the possibility of anomic behaviour. Economic theories already propose that the State could create money according to its needs without limitations or inflationary repercussions. By extending this theory to the entire human race, money is available as if it were a common good open to all, like air, in other words, a virtual currency, that is, a currency disconnected from the productive reality. It must be said that this is already the case today: in 2010, the mass of value moved by finance was nine times the world's GDP; it is conceivable that this figure has increased over the years. This means there is no connection between production and liquid money, meaning money can be defined as "virtual" (but not in the sense of cryptocurrencies). The consequence is diffused capital, which differs from the two existing models today. It does not come from accumulation - expropriation, according to Marx. A diffused capital which, being available - a common good, like air - frees individuals and their organisations, from companies to states, from the subjugation of debt, leading them to true self-determination: it is no longer necessary to search for it, ask for it, borrow it, or even to use one's capital. Diffused capital is the true novelty of Filoponía.

Today, especially since the rise of industrial society, the economy is based on accumulation capital and is defined in equilibrium as follows. Everything produced in a year - GDP - is converted into purchasing power in the form of labour income or capital income. Equilibrium (or the proper accounts, from the point of view of capital and its accumulation by workers) is reached when the sum of labour income and capital income covers the three uses: private consumption, public consumption and investment—with public consumption and investment covered by savings, also defined as abstaining from consumption. In turn, savings are divided into voluntary savings - what individuals and their organisations manage to save - and compulsory savings - i.e. taxes. In terms of production, it means that the value of the

output of consumer goods must cover both itself and the production of investment goods, as well as public consumption (e.g. the production of justice or social welfare), which in turn means generating surplus value; in terms of value, workers (including those producing investment goods and civil servants) are paid for less than the value created.

In the socialist version, accumulation capital contemplates surplus value for the benefit of the collectivity, thus distinguishing it from surplus labour. Surplus value indicates only a difference between the value produced and the value remunerated, while surplus labour indicates the blackmail and subjugation of the worker by capital, which results in exploitation. Through surplus value for the benefit of capital accumulation, surplus labour imposes part of the cost of investment on the workers.

Similarly to the socialist economic model, Filoponía has a surplus value given by the remuneration of labour through the Standard Labour Value (SLV, which we will define later), a remuneration which, compared to the others, seems laughable. So much so that in Filoponía, surplus labour, understood as the subjugation of workers, disappears, but surplus value, which sanctions the equality of all human beings, remains for the benefit of the collective; moreover, the surplus value of Filoponía ceases to have the function of an element of balance in the system (the longed-for equality between savings and investments and public consumption); and this because both public consumption and investments are covered by diffused capital, thus creating freedom; in this case economic freedom, the freedom of human action. And here we have the clear separation.

As for the money used in Filoponía - the Certificates of Social Esteem (CSE) - being a commodity available to all and almost unlimited, it needs deliberation to establish the amount to be distributed, not creation or production; subsequently, its distribution to the people has to be governed and administered; and this governance and administration are tasks of the State assisted by the Temporary Drawn Juries (TDJs, which we will define below).

The deliberation of the CSEs takes place in three ways: with the remuneration of the Filoponía, with the formation of prices and with the covering of costs by the state; and each way corresponds to a sphere: popular, market and state. Establishing the value of the remuneration of the Filoponía means deliberating about money; the people, united in the TSJ, do this. The disbursement is entrusted to the state. Even establishing the value of each profit margin means de facto issuing potential money since the amount of it is a decision of the enterprise; it is therefore up to the market as a whole (and strictly speaking outside the disbursement made by the state, which foresees, but only a posteriori, the distribution of profit, the actual money distributed); attributable, however, to the people, given the diffused capital and the new ad personam ownership structure of the enterprises. Finally, the state is responsible for deliberating both the CSEs necessary for its activities and emancipation income, and those linked to the quantitative part of the remuneration of work and pensions.

To put it even more explicitly, the CES will be deliberated and distributed free of charge; having established that person XY should receive 100 CES, 100 CES will appear on his application; to distribute the CES and credit them, where does the State take them from? It does not take them; it "invents" them - it deliberates them - and they appear as a credit on XY's application. That is all.

Legal entities will have no money; they will only have accounting records to draw up the balance sheet to determine the year-end balance. Natural persons, however, will have CES, but once this money disappears, it is no longer in circulation. Does a person go shopping? When he arrives at the cash desk, his CES amount will decrease by the number



of purchases he has made, and the trader will see the corresponding accounting entry in the income column. And all this without any physical transfer of money.

Managed by a state app through a blockchain and often disbursed under the control of the TSJ, CSE will be personal and expiring, as well as being fixed value, virtual and interest-free. Personal because they cannot be transferred to others and can only be used by the holder. Expiring because they will be cancelled once they have been "spent"; with the currency's velocity of circulation, therefore, corresponding to 1. For this to happen, the CSEs will not be commodities in themselves and, thus, traded on the market according to its laws; therefore, their value will remain fixed.

As for interest - a concept opposed by some great thinkers since the birth of money - we have seen how it is no longer necessary, thanks to diffused capital and the abolition of debt.

The first and most important consequence of virtual money and diffused capital is the abolition of debt, which in Filoponía has no *raison d'être* and from whose disappearance derives, above all, the disappearance of the monetisation of credit, i.e. the artificial creation of money by finance. Without the debt system, there is also a redefinition by subtraction of money, which, stripped of all its other peculiarities and functions, becomes again a mere unit of measurement, and therefore of fixed value, and a fiduciary instrument in economic relations. However, what has just been described is not enough: it is also necessary to dissolve the money/power binomial, an action that Filoponía carries out through proposals in both microeconomics and macroeconomics. Finally, care must be taken to place each proposal in its immediate and general context to assess its effects; in this way, Filoponía moves from another economic model to a new and innovative social order.

### *Macroeconomics proposals*

Macroeconomics sees the disappearance of its main actors to rescind the binomial at this level, which translates into an improvement in the quality of life of the entire world population. Central banks, rating agencies, the World Bank, the IMF, finance in general, etc., are *de facto* in control of policy, given the effects of each of their actions on people's lives. Freeing themselves from the search for the resources necessary for their functioning allows states and politics to emancipate themselves from the psychological subservience created by the economy and the market.

The abolition of the credit/debt system is the element that dissolves the money/power binomial more than any other, being situated between micro and macroeconomics.

### *Microeconomics proposals*

Let us start with the sources of money for individuals. Filoponía has five possible compensations: emancipation income, labour remuneration, Filoponic remuneration, dividends and pension. Lifelong income, however, disappears.

The emancipation income is a universal monthly basic income of equal real value for all and higher than what is necessary for basic necessities, linked to the local consumer price index and taking into account free services provided by the state. The emancipation income will guarantee both the satisfaction of basic necessities and a good life, i.e. secondary necessities and the occasional extra need. People must be able to find their place in the world to achieve emancipation, i.e. they must be able to fulfil themselves without this fulfilment being linked to economic distress, to having to earn money to afford it. As long as universal income, in whatever form, is limited to constituting only economic support, there can be no emancipation: such a universal income will be the umpteenth chain. Filoponía, in its

quest for a better society, also believes in achieving people's happiness and is committed to it by guaranteeing a real emancipatory income.

Labour cost is limited to the temporary part of labour. It will be expressed with a labour value on a global standardised basis (SLV) by standardising the hourly cost and thus eliminating, among other things, speculative delocalisation. Economic equality- at least - necessarily involves the uniformity of the value of human time, whatever the level at which this time is spent: in fact, its value is the same for everyone, everywhere and everyone, and without distinction of tasks. The amount of the SLV will be configured by considering the average cost of automation to preserve the possibility of making a wise choice between automation and human labour.

Filoponía's remuneration assesses the quality of human action and is located outside of work. It will be evaluated by a TDJ (Temporary Drawn Jury, which we will talk about later). Whereas today, meritocracy means giving preference to those who, by nature but also - and above all - by the social status to which they belong, already have an advantage, Filoponía means supporting everyone solely based on their commitment to what they do. Commitment is intrinsically endogenous: an act common to all. On the other hand, social or natural characteristics are not common to all, but the opposite. In order to be non-discriminatory, assessment must be based solely on what each of us can manage: commitment, Filoponía. While meritocracy is the artificial and arbitrary construction of a caste, Filoponía is the democratisation of society (in economic terms, Filoponía belongs to the productive forces, while meritocracy is an elitist and extremely luxurious commodity). The noun Filoponía means industriousness, emphasising fatigue/ponos, which is interpreted as commitment, thus broadening its meaning here.

Emancipation income combined with full employment makes workers free in their choice. There are no more rubbish jobs, and in the workplace, there are no more power relations but collaborative relations - while in today's society, the decision on the amount and disbursement of wages remains in the hands of the employer; in other words, power remains firmly anchored to money and those who own it. In the Filoponic society, removing income from the employer's control negates the subjection to the owner of the means of production: the money/power binomial is dissolved. The new ownership structure of companies, made up of entrepreneurs, i.e. natural persons directly involved in management, as opposed to the current figure of rentiers, often hidden behind trusts, Chinese boxes, etc., also contributes significantly to this. But that is not all; the ownership of the means of production ceases to be a factor of domination and is finally equated with the ownership of labour power (which every worker, including the employer, possesses), creating that collaboration between equals and indispensable for each other that realigns relations in the world of work, leading to equal dignity; thus dissolving the chains of the money/power binomial in the world of work. In the light of the theory of value - from Smith to Marx, to name but two - which defines value as the amount of labour needed to produce that commodity and with the quantification of labour given by the sum of the commodities required by the workers for their sustenance, perpetuation and preparation, the emancipatory income fulfils this task, indeed, precedes and surpasses it. It precedes it because it comes first, from birth, and continues throughout life, whereas work is only one phase, and in Filoponía, a very small one at that, of a person's existence. It surpasses it for two reasons: by guaranteeing a good life, we could equate the difference between a good life and subsistence to the surplus value of commodities and by adding to the compensations of labour and Filoponía.

Then there are the business relationships. This aspect is less conspicuous than that operating in the labour market. Still, it is nonetheless fundamental to the business system: insolvencies often cause bankruptcy and can bring down entire networks and supply chains. Above all, in this area, they represent the money/power binomial: when insolvency is the result of the decision to pay, how much to pay and when to pay, it becomes the exercise of a power that has nothing to

do with business activity, to the point of being an abuse. In the Filoponic society, payment is a consequence and does not depend on the will of the purchaser: it is only the purchaser's decision to buy. Thus, automatic accounting instead of the passage of money eliminates the money/power binomial from economic relations. Finally, CSEs are not inheritable, to abandon both the primitive system of accumulation or expropriation, according to Marx, and the impersonality of money.

Filoponía aims not to limit freedom or curb generosity but to establish compensatory instruments so that wealth is a personal creation and not a received advantage. Filoponía arises from observation and takes the form of an instruction manual; the method used is the deconstruction of current society, the elements of which are recomposed in a different way. The only element not included in the recomposition is debt, with the abovementioned consequences. Filoponía does not invent anything; every element is already present and, therefore, proven. The economic and academic assessment to which it has been subjected considers the model coherent. Moreover, the Filoponía model is more stable than the current one and contains antibodies that counter inflation and deflation.

Let us now briefly mention a few proposals and return to diffused capital. It is, to respect its definition in its essence, both individuals and their organisations, and even states, which will use it to sustain themselves economically in the absence of taxation. The first and most important consequence is a complete welfare state, of which two aspects are mentioned: emancipation income, which has already been discussed, and, of course, for everyone, complete schooling and, above all, complete mastery of the tools needed to interpret reality, to arrive at reasoned choices, to avoid falling prey to naivety, to enjoy life to the full.

The positive outcomes of being a model in its own right are not only social: the environmental ones are equally important. If social inequality can be resolved through class struggle, the environmental question needs class unity; but to unite within the current economy is to consolidate the situation and thus validate the need for capitalism, which is currently the victorious model. If, on the contrary, the union were to take place in another social order, there would be no such consolidation and the struggle for the environment would open up to much more efficient and effective perspectives and instruments. Consequently, Filoponía has only one rule, absolutely unbreakable and valid for humanity and all its forms of organisation, from the family to the state: the global environmental balance. That is, the impossibility of exceeding what Mother Earth provides annually in terms of resources and resilience. A tool of application is the sustainability penalty: a surcharge whose amount increases over the various stages of a product's creation and life cycle - from raw materials to distribution and sale - and is calculated considering the consumption of resources required at each stage. Such a configuration leads to sustainable anthropisation, achieved by a society of well-being and sustainable comfort for all, thanks to the revision of consumption, which will be equalised: enough of waste and bulimic accumulation for a minority and misery and exploitation for the majority.

We have seen how the economy is now ideally inscribed in the GDP rectangle, with the consequences brought about by accumulation capital. In Filoponía, the global environmental equilibrium creates a new rectangle, given the limit of annually available resources. Let us now look at the possible imbalance.

As far as inflation is concerned, the provision of CSE may appear to lead to an excess of circulating money and the possibility of inflation, especially if combined with the constraint of having to operate within the overall environmental balance; in fact, it creates a contraction of production, imposed by the absolute respect of a limit that today we have already largely exceeded, and at the same time injects circulating money: a combination that could favour an indiscriminate increase in prices. However, there are three counterweights. The first is the expiry of CSEs, which slows

down their velocity of circulation at first use. The second is bargaining during sales negotiations, which slows down price increases and, consequently, the deliberation of money through trade margins. The third is the ease of access to doing business. When driven by the contraction of production and the inflow of circulating money (or by the greed of the producer trying to inflate the proceeds of a sale), the price of a commodity exceeds the "normal" profit threshold, a new firm will enter such a market by offering competitive prices. And nullifying the inflationary effect: it will be the producers themselves, avoiding price inflation, who will not open the doors of their market-wide.

As for deflation, on the one hand, it has an extreme limit given by the profitability threshold of the individual company, a threshold that the company will do everything possible not to exceed, as it would then be plunged into a vortex of penalties that could even lead to its closure. The company that does not know how to stay in the market is poorly managed or is being overtaken (by new technologies or more capable competitors). In the first case, action will be taken where the management deficiency lies and, therefore, either with a change in management or ownership of the sale of the company. In the second case, it is not in the community's interest for the company to continue draining resources, given the scarcity of resources; it will, therefore, be ordered to close down. In the new paradigm, there will be no concept of bankruptcy or failure: for companies, we will speak of closure; for people, of inadequacy.

Moreover, the emancipation income is calculated and then disbursed, month by month, on the cost of living in the place of the beneficiary of this income; it means that the here and now of the emancipation income will be the instrument to counter deflation. All this makes the Filoponic society, if not static, clearly more stable than today.

Moreover, finance is the common factor underpinning the entire economic system today. When a financial crisis occurs, it spreads to the productive system, even globally: once finance disappears—as it does in Filoponía—this kind of crisis cannot occur.

Once the book-entry system has replaced finance, crises due to lack of capital for investment also disappear. Still, not only that, this system also eliminates, as we have seen, the problem of insolvencies, which can drag entire sectors into the abyss. Finally, we must consider crises due to natural catastrophes. Here, too, the Filoponic paradigm, based on collaboration, seems better equipped than the current one to deal with catastrophic events. The tools are the same as those mentioned above: among them is the emancipation income that maintains the purchasing power of each person in individual places and the sum of which creates the greatest overall means to resolve the situation.

Going back to the positive results of the Filoponic model, debt abolition also contributes to sustainable anthropisation. Indeed, the plundering of the environment is deeply rooted in taking today what cannot be taken, postponing its repayment for tomorrow: this is the intrinsic thinking of debt.

The constant anticipation of Earth Overshoot Day on the calendar clearly demonstrates this. Thus, the social and environmental effects of debt elimination lead to the realisation that the new economy and debt are an oxymoron.

Integrated into the Filoponic model, full automation will lead to multiple, mutually equivalent scenarios between total non-employment and full employment. Filoponía, being able to anticipate a scenario thanks to its prerogatives, proposes full employment, basing this choice on several elements, among them the participation of all in creating, maintaining and improving the new Filoponic society. In this sense, work goes from being a right (mostly undervalued) to being a duty: human action for the benefit of the general and collective interest, impregnated, therefore, by a high civic and moral sense.



All this, and the many other proposals that are not discussed here, results in a society no longer of redistribution but of equal distribution from the outset and for all. On the other hand, redistribution is vicious at its base, sanctioning the existence of subdivisions and classes.

Whereas Filoponía has fraternity as its cornerstone, the most beautiful and convincing definition of which is that of Pope Francis: *Indeed, while solidarity is the principle of social planning that allows the unequal to become equal, fraternity is what allows the equal to be different.* It is enough to replace solidarity with the redistribution, and the effect remains, to stay with a more prosaic economic model,

With fraternity replacing classes and the struggle between them, Filoponía's real stake, then, is that of the intrinsic positivity of humanity, so far deceived by millennia of superstructure built on the supposed inherent selfishness of human beings and whose product is inequality, unhappiness and the plundering of the environment. On the contrary, and encouraged by sociobiological research on the instinct to cooperate, a Filoponía bet takes the form of people's continuous and active participation in decisions that affect individuals and the community: a participatory social democracy implemented through Temporary Drawn Juries. Composed of citizens, these will be the cornerstone of the society. I propose popular juries drawn by lot from the entire population with the aim of democratising certain decisions that today reside, instead, in closed centres of power. Such a task, therefore, can only rely on people's capacity for responsibility and deliberation, with the full conviction that a new society must be founded both on a new paradigm and - also and above all - on the active involvement of each individual, and knowing full well how much commitment is required from citizens.

Participation in the TDJs will be compulsory (and as long as physical and mental conditions allow), by lot, brief, non-repetitive and generic; let's see the reasons. Compulsory to involve all citizens. Based, in fact, on lists of voluntary citizens - as is often the case in experiments in direct democracy - it recreates a kind of oligopoly made up of active interest-bearers, thus privileging particular interests. In the Filoponía society, the goal is the common good, represented by respect for the environment and people.

By a lot, to avoid the creation of factions which, precisely through the TDJs, could seize power and overrule the others; in fact, the TDJs thus structured will see each one "judged" by others who will, in turn, be "judged" by the same "each one", in a circularity of examining each other which will be the democratic barrier to the emergence of potentates and factions.

Short, because each TDJ will last just long enough to perform the assigned task. Even this aspect, which does not provide for a permanently constituted TDJ, will underpin the democratic dam against the emergence of potentates and factions. Non-repetitive because the same task cannot be drawn a second time until all potential jurors have already participated and the drawing of lots starts again from the beginning.

Generic because anyone can participate in TDJs on any topic and still bring in the crowd's wisdom, even if they have no direct technical knowledge. Modern complexity—the great anathema by which people are kept at a distance—has indeed increased in technology and standards, not in human beings. At the same time, it is true that few of us are capable of unravelling technicalities; it is no less accurate that we can all understand the reason and the underlying human root of technicalities.

At the end of these pages, we can now indulge in a digression on work and inspiration. We are led to believe that work and inspiration coincide, which is more or less the case in practice, as work is the path to sustenance. However, work is also common to other animals: food search is work and is common to the entire animal and plant kingdom (even organised work is also animal; think of the bees and ants of old). On the other hand, inspiration is human: that mixture of knowledge and action that has led us to modify stones to turn them into tools, also becoming a conscious tension towards the social. I believe, then, that the distinction between human beings and other animals lies in thoughtful work, that inspiration that has led us both to flints turned into tools and to *scholé*, to *otium*, to contemplation and today to leisure, but also to countercurrent thought and opposition, to rebellion; with the part of thought that is increasingly detached from the action expressed in work, until it becomes dominant and independent. Inspiration belongs to self-realisation and work to sustenance. In Filoponía, having displaced sustenance upstream, inspiration can finally coincide with self-realisation, and the dignity of labour. The favourite child of the misinterpretation examined above, becomes social dignity.

In fact, in reference to the dignity of work and its connection with self-realisation, in Filoponía, work only belongs to the collective as a mere container of social dignity, i.e. the dignity of participating in the new society and its evolution; it thus helps to dissolve the money/power binomial, dignity in the world of work being no longer inherent to work itself, and therefore no longer for the benefit of the employer, but of the collective. Meanwhile, the rest of self-realisation through work remains outside this concept, belonging to the personal sphere of the pursuit of happiness.

Whether and how Filoponía can move from model to reality remains to be seen. The answer to this question is left to experimentation, which is possible *hic et nunc* (here and now) and whose modalities are well addressed and resolved, with the aim also of correcting any anomalous behaviour of the model; regarding this argument, together with Pietro Terna, former Professor of Political Economy at the University of Turin, we are carrying out an agent-based model <https://terna.to.it/Filoponia/v7.html>. On the other hand, Filoponía is designed precisely to have the particularities necessary for its application. Among these, mostly technicalities, one of a social nature stands out: conciliation. Imagining a new world that does not imply a correction of the current one - by abandoning it - aims to create a real inclusion, whose starting line is to avoid the division between good and evil.

Filoponía wants to contribute its thinking to the social debate, and this also defines the *cui prodest* (who benefits): humanity, which is called upon to engage in a social deliberation that will lead to a Filoponic society. Given the conditions of today's society, the need for a search for what to put in its place is equally unquestionable; a search that is becoming anguished, increasingly pressured by inequality and by the march of science with its presentation, in environmental terms, of ever closer and ever more apocalyptic scenarios. Regarding the debate in Italy, in addition to what has been said here, Filoponía offers to the *Economy of Francesco* fraternity as a pillar of the new society, to Fridays For Future an economic model built to achieve sustainable anthropisation, and to Degrowth to be part of this new economic model.

Going to the arguments of the Conference, Filoponía offers answers directly to 6 thematic lines, as well as prefiguring a different society, proposing a general approach reflected in the whole structure of society. The six thematic lines are:

- Environment, climate change and energy transition: arguments we have already discussed.
- De-dollarisation: diffused capital, freeing itself from the subjugation of debt, creates the self-determination of individuals and peoples, which is the necessary condition for de-dollarisation, applicable to any foreign currency.

- Globalisation and regionalism: the system of sustainability penalties rethinks the concepts of globalisation and regionalism. By protecting localism in practice, but without using barriers and customs tariffs, it inserts it into the world and opens it up to the world.
- Financing development: diffused capital and the self-determination it entails is the answer to financing development and further implementing equality.
- Economic dynamics and inflationary pressures: economic dynamics are so thoroughly democratised that inflationary pressures fade away, countered by the antibodies that the model entails.
- Communication and political discourse: in Filoponía, the state acts without taxation or debt, especially external debt; such a scenario emancipates the state from financial problems and, consequently, rethinks political discourse, both locally and internationally.

Experimentation with the Filoponía model has already been mentioned. I am not here to ask for anything but to illustrate a new model.

However, every society's problem is reacting to changes in context: the more identitarian a society is, the greater the problem, and a revolutionary society is on the cusp of identity.

The Cuban Revolution occurred in a capitalist context and a world divided into two blocs. Today, however, the world lives in globalisation and a context of financialisation: maintaining revolutionary ideals is an immense commitment. Thinking about the idea and the commitment to maintain and continue the Revolution, all that has been said about financing development; that is, the possibility of combining it with equality, freedom and sustainable humanisation, leads me to consider Cuba as a particularly suitable place for such an experiment.

### *In conclusion, and quoting the foreword of Filoponía:*

*In short, the abolition of debt, a viable model congruent first and foremost with the environment and social equality, a viable operational proposal for sustainable anthropisation and diffused capital make Filoponía a model in itself, thus outside the dualism between private and collective capital, and therefore a true, complete and genuine alternative.*

Thank you all for the invitation and your attention.

## The article

*REVOLUTION is a sense of the historical moment; it is changing everything that needs to be changed; it is complete equality and freedom; it is being treated and treating others as human beings; it is emancipating ourselves by ourselves and by our efforts; it is challenging powerful dominant forces, inside and outside the social and national sphere; is to defend values we believe in at the price of any sacrifice; is modesty, selflessness, altruism, solidarity and heroism; is to fight with audacity, intelligence and realism; is never to lie or violate ethical principles; is a deep conviction that there is no force in the world capable of crushing the force of truth and ideas. REVOLUTION is unity, independence, and fighting for our dreams of justice for Cuba and for the world, which is the basis of our patriotism, our socialism, and our internationalism.*

*Fidel Castro Ruz*

I read this beautiful and powerful fragment by Fidel Castro while walking through Havana, first in a shopping centre and later in a hospital. There are concepts in it that are also contemplated in Filoponía: the sense of the historical moment, propensity for change, full equality and freedom, defiance of the dominant forces, defence of values, boldness and realism, respect for ethical principles, openness to the world, unity, independence, justice for Cuba and the world; but the most pertinent phrase and the one by which the Filoponía model is governed is to emancipate ourselves by ourselves and with our efforts; that is, to finally be able to avail ourselves of self-determination, the potent tool that the diffused capital of Filoponía gives to individuals and peoples.

## Introduction

My relationship with Cuba began on 16 March, the day I was received at the Embassy in Rome, to which I had previously sent the text of Filoponía; my wish was to speak about the Filoponic model. The same desire has continued to accompany me, even during the lecture I had the opportunity to give in Cuba. Yes, even on that occasion, I had already hinted at a possible experimentation, but it was the ten days in Cuba that turned that hint into an objective. I observed I chatted with the other speakers and with other people; I brought a copy of the Granma of 25 September to Turin, and I read two exciting and relevant speeches by President Díaz-Canel, from which I will quote a few excerpts in this article. In short, even based on my brief experience, I have tried to draw an idea of Cuba, and I hope I have succeeded, at least in part, well aware of how complex it is to understand a reality so different from the one in which I live.

I am writing this article after the VIII STRATEGIC STUDIES CONFERENCE - Transforming the International Order: Challenges of Transition and Proposals from the South, held in Havana on 25 September 2023. On that occasion, I presented Filoponía, a socioeconomic model in its own right, far removed from the dualism between capitalism and socialism. The video of my presentation is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSVmZIWLLk0&t=571s>, or can be consulted on the CIPI website; what I would like to talk about is not Filoponía itself, but how it could be applied in Cuba.

To this end, I begin with the questions addressed to me by the Director of the CIPI, Ambassador José Ramón Cabañas Rodríguez, centred precisely on this argument: how can the Filoponía model be implemented, given that societies are not isolated but operate in an international context; why do I define Cuba as the perfect place for a Filoponía experiment; and why do I define Cuba as the ideal place for a Filoponía experiment? Finally, as a final consideration, what is the need to assimilate Filoponía? The answers to the three questions form a whole; I will try to group them by field.

## General considerations

I spoke of experimentation at the Conference because I do not want to sound like the salesman of an idea of mine; yes, it would be a social and economic experiment, but also, above all, a new beacon for the whole of humanity. Indeed, the current model has proven to be fallacious globally, both in social and environmental aspects. And continuing to think about how to fix it means taking away energy and space for new thinking to develop a different model.

Filoponía remedies this by moving away from accumulation capital and proposing diffused capital. The initial question, almost a premise, is what would happen if Filoponía's proposal for experimentation was rejected: what negative consequences would it have? I do not see any grounds for adverse consequences. Since it is almost arrogant to give an opinion on this, I leave the answer to a well-known Italian proverb: domandare è lecito, rispondere è cortesia (To ask is



lawful, to answer is polite). Undoubtedly, it is up to the Cuban nation and its people to deepen the argument and answer.

My task is to highlight the pros and cons of this experimentation; in doing so, it will emerge as a regretful dissertation precisely because it remains anchored to the Cuban reality that I have had the opportunity to know, even if my experience has been brief and incomplete.

This international context, which makes individual societies less fertile with regard to novelties, is undoubtedly a real problem if one remains in the dualism between capitalism and socialism. Capitalism, now overstretched and financialised, is impervious to its adjustments; proof of this is the failure of social democracy, whose best results - I am thinking of the various European types of social welfare - are rapidly deteriorating, and this is happening in concomitance with democratic systems that are increasingly fragile and distant from the citizens, prey to populism and plutocracy. This international context considers socialism unacceptable, precisely regarding the shams of democracy that the same context defends and spreads. Filoponía, on the other hand, places itself outside such dualism (thanks to diffused capital) and proposes now and concretely in Cuba the experimentation of its model. However, we cannot know what degree of acceptance this social and economic experiment will have.

A sure indication of this can be seen in the words of President Miguel Díaz-Canel in his speech at the Act of Solidarity with Cuba and Venezuela in New York on 23 September 2023: *We are more than 80% of the world's population, and we are the majority of the peoples who have been hardest hit by poverty, hunger, misery, deaths from curable diseases, illiteracy, human displacement and other consequences of underdevelopment.* How would more than 80% of the world's population accept the proposal to make Cuba the experiment of a new model that, among many other problems, would solve those mentioned by President Díaz-Canel? From this point of view, are we sure that the environment is not very fertile, or, on the contrary, do we have the pride, the strength and the capacity to tell the world that *we are Cuba and offer the whole world the Filoponía experiment?*

Finally, concerning the international context, supporting the Filoponía experiment does not mean creating debt with the countries that support it; keeping it means paying the costs of the experiment, whose return, as in any pure research (as opposed to applied research), is the positive result of the experiment itself.

When moving from the international to the Cuban context, one aspect struck me instantly: the total absence of advertising. One proof of this is the shopping centre with Fidel Castro's words on the concept of revolution, replacing the advertising messages to which we Westerners are more than used to. This lack of advertising does not create discomfort; quite the contrary, it allows us to understand how addicted we are to consumerism: in our society and minds, we would miss not the soap but the Palmolive of the day.

This does not necessarily mean we all have to have the same soap; this is not what the Filoponía model says. It does say that there can be no unsold production - although, in this case, the soap example is probably wrong, as it has no actual expiration date. Regarding the differentiation between soaps, in the Filoponía model, the recovery of local production may represent a first response. Regarding marketing and the availability of "exotic" products, the answer comes from inaccumulation for the sake of sustainability. It can, therefore, be affirmed that in terms of the lack of advertising, the Cuban context is fertile and favourable to the Filoponía model.

To continue, the economist who submitted Filoponía to his appraisal states: Of the classical utopia, Filoponía shares two fundamental characteristics: it is (theoretically) feasible [i.e. it is a coherent model], and it is based on the development achieved by technology in the broadest sense (this concept, used by economists, has the same meaning as the Marxist term development of the productive forces). [...] At this point, we have to address two things. The first is "yes, but how does it work in practice?" with what resources are investments financed, what about public spending, what rules should govern inheritance and foreign trade, and what happens when a company goes bankrupt? And so on. I will not deal with the above questions here because much of the book is devoted to delving into these and other arguments; chapter 17 (Synopsis) contains a rather clear set of questions and answers. Each of these problems has been perfectly solved. However, another, somewhat serious one arises: it is necessary to examine whether any of Filoponía's prescriptions might not generate the seeds of anomalous behaviour (to give an example: in a capitalist economy, a competitive market creates by its very nature a tendency to the emergence of monopolies, of which we already know their inefficiency, which does not theoretically invalidate the merits of a competitive market). [...]

The second thing, which I suppose must have preoccupied many other utopians, and certainly Plato, Savonarola, and Owen, is "how to reach it," "how to get from here to there," as they say in the jargon. Naturally, this problem is very difficult to solve; Surbone argues for experimentation, convincingly arguing that it is theoretically applicable in a local headquarters, "the Filoponía in a single country," and better if its territory is small.

The stakes, then, are high: concerning today's two most significant problems, inequality and environmental disaster, using a different economic and social model has great advantages over the current situation. Inequality and the various problems that drag along the economic crises disappear ipso facto by adopting the model. As far as the environment is concerned, following the right direction is indicated by the way forward, which is not necessarily short and definitive - on the pain of repeating the mistakes made.

The stakes are high: for the people, the nation, and the revolution.

To conclude, a few lines about the assimilation of Filoponía come to mind; given that, for the moment, there is only my text of some 150 pages, at least it is not necessary to internalise the thousands of pages of elaboration, interpretation and analysis that accompany other texts setting out economic models. Cuba, moreover, has the merit - which can also be interpreted as an advantage - of having been the first country to discover the Filoponía text. An advantage that goes beyond my witticism. The best thing for a new model such as Filoponía is that it can be experimented in a context such as the Cuban one, that is, in a revolutionary context accustomed to the social, cultural and scientific deepening of life and its relations and correlations. Therefore, the best thing for the first in the world to carry out the experimentation is to become, once again in the case of Cuba, a beacon for the world.

## Diffused capital

I took from the speech at the conference and tried to elaborate on some of the statements. Diffused capital becomes disruptive in the current economic landscape; no doubt financial power will hinder it, but it will be difficult to refute and reject the self-determination it entails. Will the world, and specifically what President Díaz-Canel mentioned (we are the majority of the peoples who have been most punished by the consequences of underdevelopment [...] we are the nations that suffer most from the consequences of climate change), be able to welcome Filoponía?

Filoponía uses virtual money, in the sense of availability, as if it were a common good available to all, like air. The consequence of this virtual money is a diffused capital, which differs from the two current models in that it does not come from accumulation. A diffused capital which, being available, frees individuals and their organisations, from companies to states, from the subjugation of debt, giving them genuine self-determination: there is no need to search for it, ask for it, borrow it or use the capital itself.

Today, especially since the rise of industrial society, the economy is based on accumulation capital and is defined in equilibrium as follows: Everything produced in a year - GDP - is converted into purchasing power in the form of labour income or capital income. Equilibrium (or the right accounts, from the point of view of capital and its accumulation at the expense of the people) is reached when the sum of labour income with capital income covers the three uses: private consumption, public consumption and investment, with public consumption and investment covered by savings, also defined as abstention from consumption. In turn, savings are further divided into voluntary savings - what individuals and their organisations manage to save - and compulsory savings - i.e. taxes. In terms of production, it means that the value of the output of consumer goods must cover both itself and the production of investment goods, as well as public consumption (e.g. the production of justice or social welfare), which in turn means generating surplus value; in terms of value, workers (including those producing investment goods and civil servants) are paid less than the value created.

In the socialist version, accumulation capital contemplates the surplus value for the benefit of the collectivity, thus distinguishing it from surplus labour. Surplus value indicates only a difference between the value produced and the value remunerated, while surplus labour indicates the blackmail and subjugation of the worker by capital, which results in exploitation. Surplus labour, through the surplus value for the benefit of capital accumulation, thus imposes part of the investment cost on the workers.

Let us go back to the accounts. In reality, equilibrium means keeping the system away from inflation or deflation. Equilibrium, therefore, becomes synonymous with accumulation and, in the Marxist sense, with expropriation: investments, as well as covering the costs of the state, the bastion in defence of established economic power, is largely covered by global savings (voluntary and compulsory); and it means subtracted from the people through savings and from the workers' wages through the surplus-value. Therefore, capital is unsatisfied with interest and uses resources other than its own, the surplus value, to accumulate in the form of investments. However, interest is already an artifice that makes capital self-accumulating, a perversion that has been opposed since its inception.

In the event of inflationary conditions, rising prices would also burden the people. Whereas deflation leads to increasing unemployment, capital is burdening the workers with this lack of balance. Equilibrium, therefore, is the alchemy that allows capital to accumulate at the expense of the people, and the workers in particular, but in conditions of acceptable social peace. Put even more explicitly; capital already has two tools for its growth: interest and the remuneration of invested capital, one of the foundations of microeconomics. However, with the emergence of industrial society and economics as an object of study, the concept of stability becomes apparent, which, thanks to savings, takes income away from the people to cover the costs of the state and, to a greater extent, investments. In the case of imbalance, it causes unemployment or price increases; in both cases, it imposes imbalances on the people and the workers.

Thus, capitalism is born, using all possible tools to accumulate capital. Moreover, today, the model is financialisation, which is the exaltation of accumulation insofar as it manages to separate it from production, to surpass it and crush it, thus becoming the real enemy of capitalism. While capitalism aims at profit - which arises from the production/trading of goods - financialisation aims at yield - from speculation. The predominance of yield over profit is one of the leading

causes of the numerous bankruptcies of local companies taken over by large corporate concentrations, such as multinationals. Filoponía, on the other hand, advocates business practice, which only apparently resembles capitalism but is completely detached from it because it is based on diffused capital and the self-determination it entails.

Returning to the socialist economic model, Filoponía also has a surplus value given by the surplus value of labour through the SLV (labour remuneration = Standard Labour Value x hours worked), a remuneration which, compared to the others, seems derisory. In addition to this, and as in socialism, in Filoponía, surplus labour, understood as the subjugation of workers, disappears. Still, surplus value, which ratifies the equality of all human beings, remains for the benefit of the collective. Moreover, the surplus value of Filoponía ceases to have the function of a balancing element of the system (the longed-for equality between savings and investments and public consumptions), and this is because both public consumptions and investments are covered by diffused capital, thus creating freedom, in this case, economic freedom, in human action. Freedom comes from the self-determination of individuals and peoples to act economically without the need for capital (a common good available to all, such as air).

In terms of equality, the SLV seems insignificant because of the various types of compensation in Filoponía's model; it is the lowest: it is a globally standardised cost calibrated in such a way as to allow a choice between human labour and automation, a relatively low cost, therefore. Added to this is the disappearance of surplus labour due to emancipation income (and here I refer to the full text of Filoponía). In contrast, surplus value, which in Filoponía is high due to the smallness of the SLV, becomes equality of all human beings, given by the standard value of the SLV for any work. All work is remunerated by a coefficient of equal value.

To better understand the importance of diffused capital and its consequences -in primis self-determination, considering also its scope of development and its economic terms- some excerpts from the speech above of President Díaz-Canel are helpful: we are the majority of the world's peoples who have been most punished by the consequences of underdevelopment [...] Today there is an international economic order that generates and perpetuates underdevelopment [...]. There is a lack of decent jobs, basic quality education systems, health services accessible to all and other forms of social justice to which all people should have access, to which all the peoples of the world should have access.

Adopting the Filoponía model means remedying the first two statements—underdevelopment and the international economic order—and giving a positive and full response to the third, social justice for all the world's peoples.

## The environmental issue

Having said that, I would now like to address the environmental struggle for three reasons. The first is the attention that the Cuban Revolution has always paid to the environment and its care. The second is that preserving the environment means saving the house that shelters us, humanity being an integral part of Nature. This is an essential part, increasingly less integrated and arrogantly detached from it, to put economic profit at the centre of anthropisation when the true centre, and the insurmountable limit, is set by Nature and respect for it. The third is that putting the environment first makes its own natural sense: the human species is part of evolution and has its beginnings there. We must also be aware that anthropisation leads us to an end: our end and the end of who knows which and how many other species.

Following President Díaz-Canel's words - *we are the nations that suffer most from the consequences of climate change* - they lead me to consider how the pernicious concomitance between environmental and social disaster generates the



unavoidable need for radical change. Filoponía provides a change so intrinsic and profound that it can be defined as revolutionary in its figurative sense that it brings radical changes to any branch of human activity.

Filoponía sets humanity on the road to sustainable anthropisation; it achieves this through global environmental balance - which reorganises consumption by equalising it, whether that of individuals, their organisations, or states - and through its tool of action, that is, through the end of accumulation to achieve sustainability. But also - or perhaps I should say above all - by revaluing the very concept of production of all kinds of goods, from large infrastructures to knick-knacks (which the Piedmontese, with gentle irony, define as *ciapa póer*, dust catchers, because they are objects that are forgotten forever on shelves and tables), or by dealing with abstract concepts such as speed, one of the current mantras in support of the plundering of the environment and the pre-eminence of profit over Nature.

It is precisely in the latter concept that we find *tachyproduction*, that is, the speed of production in pursuit of the haste to obtain the latest -fictitious- version of the fashionable colour for the winter season or the latest mobile phone model. Meanwhile, in Cuba, cars and mechanical means, in general, demonstrate, thanks to the Cubans' skill, that the rush to produce the latest version - of any item - is only the result of consumerism and the plundering of resources.

This makes Cuba a particularly suitable place to apply the Filoponía experiment.

### Filoponía, from model to reality

There is a chapter in the book entirely devoted to this subject. For a detailed response, see the forthcoming publication of the book by CIPI. Here, I will limit myself to highlighting a few points.

The first is that, from a purely economic point of view, the transition to the Filoponic model is very similar to what happened on 1 January 2002 between the European national currencies and the Euro: a conversion at a pre-defined exchange rate. It is, therefore, a tried and tested transition. The real problem revolves around international relations: as this is a social and economic experiment, a global community is needed to support the costs; for example, the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor in Marseilles, promoted and supported by the European Union, Russia, China, Japan, the United States of America, India and South Korea, which foresees an investment of more than 15 billion Euros and an estimated annual operating cost of 290 million Euros; enormous sums that serve only as an example to demonstrate how at the international level experiments to try to solve global structural problems take place and are sustained. It seems this is not an economic problem but one of conviction and proposal.

As for conviction, it is linked to the adoption of Filoponía, from which the decision can emerge; the latter is fundamentally based on will: it is a matter of adopting a coherent model and advocating its experimentation, the aim of which will be the optimisation of the model itself.

Regarding the proposal, who proposes experimentation and how it is proposed becomes a question of international relations. This issue will be addressed below. A second aspect concerns the trade balance.

Filoponía is not an economy that can be assessed based on exports and imports. Indeed, diffused capital has as its economic characteristic the ubiquity of self-determination for individuals and peoples. This, combined with the penalty for sustainability, which is extremely severe for transporting goods, makes the Filoponía economy an economy that is not close to the world. Still, because it is locally centred, its valuation is unrelated to the variations given by international

trade exchanges, whose interrelationships govern the trade balance. Each company will be evaluated on the basis of its performance and not about its competitors and to the market, domestic or foreign.

Another aspect concerns the time needed and practical issues. Experimenting with a new social and economic model takes time to prepare and implement it. The preparation involves the presentation to national and international decision-making bodies and the people who are asked to make a social decision to approve and adopt the model. And there is more, because once national and international consensus has been obtained, new rules will have to be drawn up: for example, the abolition of debt and rates, as well as the abolition of taxes, will require a far-reaching revision of the various regulations.

In terms of time, a decade seems reasonable, marked by intermediate phases. The purpose of these pages is not to go into further detail. At this stage, it is necessary to concentrate on the pros and cons of adopting the Filoponic model, an action covered under several headings.

One of the "pros" should be highlighted: being a new model, in economic terms, its adoption implies the cancellation of the current situation, including the accumulated foreign debt, and starting again from scratch, which makes it possible to clean up any problems in the current situation. It seems like a magic wand, but it is not; it is about transitioning from a negative situation to a new system based on economic serenity, equality and freedom: words of Fidel Castro that you find everywhere in Cuba.

## The people

Are the Cuban people a fertile environment for implementing a model like Filoponía?

I believe the answer to this question is a resounding "yes". The Cuban people are temperamentally joyful and intrinsically revolutionary. In the sense of openness to the idea of revolution, to the concept that radical change is possible. By contrast, at least in the West that I know personally, a grudging acceptance of the status quo prevails, which most of the time leads to simple anger, individualism, isolation, depression, and almost never to engagement, to struggle. And the very engagement, when there is any, is aimed at adjusting to the present situation and not at getting out of it.

However, if the question were posed in terms of choosing between a model itself or opening up to the model prevailing in the world today, the answer would not be so blunt but rather the opposite. The direct memory of the Revolution and, above all, of the situation in Batista's Cuba has already disappeared, or almost disappeared, as has the indirect memory that excludes young people, so that only the historical memory remains, which is much more nuanced and, unfortunately, much more manipulable. This is the best condition for capitalism and its enormous force of communication. Under an attack of these proportions, the present and, above all, the future of the Revolution becomes more and more difficult.

Another element I have noticed is that Cuba is a paradise on Earth, but sometimes, it is not treated as such. We Italians are well aware of this, as we are so accustomed to the artistic and natural beauties that we take them for granted and even neglect them. On the other hand, both should be protected and pampered, especially by the people who are the main users. In this case, the problem is not only the neglect but the lack of care for the natural gift of beauty and, even more, for the care of a Common Good; in other words, the lack of a sense of citizenship and of feeling part of a collectivity. The sense of collectivity is fundamental in a context based on self-determination, which, although it is a

beautiful situation, one must know or learn how to live it. The benefits need to be collective and individual to make it a solid pillar.

For example, the widespread art of making a living can be used for personal gain and would thus be a formidable support for the penetration of capital. Should it be decided to open up more widely to foreign presence, such behaviour would encourage penetration to the very depths of the Cuban economy — or it can be done for the good of the collective.

All in all, what drives the answer towards a yes is that the Cuban people know how to think and act in terms of collectivity; as President Díaz-Canel says, *Cuban scientists, among them young people, created the vaccines that saved the country! Young scientists designed and built high-performance pulmonary ventilators, and thus, our disease control ranks among the best in the world, with vaccines, medications, equipment and protocols made in Cuba.*

In conclusion, and quoting President Díaz-Canel, *Cuba has the right to allow every citizen to fully develop as part of the community, a right that the self-determination from the Filoponic diffused capital fully respects and fully realises.*

## The State

As far as the state is concerned, we also start with the environmental question. There is an area that is neither macro nor micro-economic but supra-economic, and that is the environment, which is always fundamentally subjugated by the economy. In this area, the self-determination and emancipation entailed by diffused capital gives politics and the state the power to retake those decisions currently hindered by the money/power binomial. It means giving back dignity and full power to the state, which is currently cornered by the economy. Above all, it means a state free of subjugation, which can once again be the expression of the people, the quintessence of citizenship.

Let us now turn to geopolitical conditions in general. The "short leash" of accumulation capital and the blockade, in particular, have generated shortages, sometimes very accentuated, leading to discontent in the nation. The Filoponía model, on the other hand, provides sustainable sufficiency, the consequence of which can lead to euphoria.

State administration must be able to adapt to the new Filoponic society because euphoria can also become a problem, especially in a global context of scarce natural resources. This is where the state takes on an even more central role, not in the coercive sense - for example, the various prohibitions that every nation foresees in the political, social or economic fields and the penalties for those who violate them - but as a beacon to steer the course and a light to illuminate the path of a new society, of a renewed citizenship and a genuine collectivity.

And then there is the national context. President Díaz-Canel, in his speech at the meeting with the Cuban emigrant community in New York on 22 September 2023, said: "There are also internal problems of our economy, of the socio-economic structure of the country and of the necessary transformations that must be undertaken even in the context of the current difficulties. We are working tirelessly on these problems.

In my view, to address this problem, it is necessary to shed light on how to maximise efficiency. The state is more efficient than the market in producing essential services, while the market is more efficient than the state in producing goods (while religions are more efficient than both in the care of souls). Filoponía succeeds in purifying the market by breaking the chains of the money/power binomial, which eliminates the negative characteristics that form the empire of

oppression of exploitation; as stated in the text and presented in the Conference speech, the ownership of the means of production ceases to be a factor of domination and is finally equated with the ownership of labour power (which every worker, including the entrepreneur, possesses), creating that collaboration between equals and indispensable for each other that realigns relations in the world of work, leading them to equal dignity; thus dissolving the chains of the money/power binomial in the world of work, doing so in such a way that efficiency in the production of goods is advantageous to the collective; and also allowing respect for the different spheres of action - essential services and goods, as well as souls - in a context of self-determination, equality and freedom. An issue that Cuba has included in the Constitution, in ARTICLE 22 - Forms of ownership are recognised - in point d): private: that which is exercised over certain means of production by Cuban or foreign individuals or legal entities; with a complementary role in the economy; defining private ownership of the means of production as complementary, in the sense of not placing it at the base of either society in general or the economy in particular: the same sense that imprints all Filoponic enterprise.

Thus, I have defined Cuba as a perfect place for Filoponic experimentation, and I confirm it. I add that this is the right time: Cuba's serious crisis must be faced with firmness and lucidity. To do so, there are only two options: open up to foreign capital or dream and realise a different world. Is it viable?

Filoponía has the limitation of being a model for a different society: it cannot contribute to improving the current situation, not even by adopting individually, in the current situation, some of its aspects. The basis on which it is governed - diffused capital instead of accumulation capital - makes it a model in itself, capable of resolving the current situation and transforming this characteristic from a shortcoming into a virtue.

In any case, implementing an economic theory that corrects the current model seems the easiest way to go and, above all, to fix it. There is always a way back (although history has shown that it is quite difficult to return from openness to capital). But it is precisely in this difficulty that its attraction lies: adopting the Filoponic model to make it an experiment means showing the World a new way; it means being a beacon and a light for the World; adopting the verses of a beautiful revolutionary song we can sing: Today, Cuba gave the way, and the World followed.

## International relations

Breaking chains also occurs internationally, between states. The need for spheres of influence disappears, with results such as the blockade or the current war between Ukraine and Russia. The self-determination provided by diffused capital leads to sustainable internationalisation between states on an equal footing without subservience to each other.

Of course, issues with rare commodities or commodities that are hard to find everywhere remain. However, the Filoponic way of doing business, i.e., restored to its essence and free of the current prevarications, will be able to manage supplies according to the logic of a true free market. Today, economic internationalisation even takes the military form, which is a prevarication, not freedom.

That said, carrying out a Filoponic experiment means obtaining from the international community - or part of it - consistent initial economic support, both in the form of essential consumer goods, which are in short supply, and support for creating, on the one hand, a production structure that will lead Cuba to food self-sufficiency and, on the other, an economic structure made up of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, typical of a country that is fundamentally agricultural and tourist-oriented.



Support for the Filoponic experiment can come from the various attempts proposed by less strong economies to build partnerships and trade exchanges based on more parity-based concepts, and ALBA-TCP is a shining example of this. Thus, just as the leading powers might oppose it, other countries would be interested in such an experiment. Moreover, international solidarity is recognised, present and appreciated. An example is the news item published in the Granma of 25 October 2023 - Rice donation for Cuba ready in Ho Chi Minh City.

Cuba's foreign debt places the island in 86th place in the world relative to the other countries of Central and South America; it is on an equal footing with the Dominican Republic, behind Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Puerto Rico, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru and Ecuador ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_external\\_debt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_external_debt)). Therefore, a situation that may be defined as "normal" is not a significant obstacle to adopting the Filoponic model, which would cancel out and not allow such a foreign debt to recur. To quote President Díaz-Canel: The task is to achieve an even better country, one that protects and reinforces social justice, without foreign interference. The same goal that Filoponía achieves.

Finally, proposing the Filoponic experiment to the international community does not imply hostility to existing relations, nor is it a proposal in opposition to them: Filoponic is a different model, not a model opposed to the existing one.

Some examples of the economic benefits that can be derived from adopting the Filoponic model may be helpful. In agriculture, both the achievement of self-sufficiency and the search for excellence would be obtained - as, for example, is already the case with tobacco - which would translate into a considerable increase in sales and profits. Not only that, but the entire agriculture, livestock, and fisheries sector would produce waste that could be used to generate electricity and sustainable fuels and achieve energy self-sufficiency.

Applied to tourism, it would at least partially change the user segment and lead to more interested and responsible tourists. Filoponía is a captivating social and economic experiment for people who are careful and attentive to these issues and willing to get a direct idea; it would also attract social scientists worldwide. It is a type of tourism that Cuba is already familiar with, as one of the few remaining socialist countries with more than half a century of history. Adopting the Filoponic model would make Cuba the first and only one: anyone who wants to see it with their own eyes must necessarily go to Cuba. It would significantly increase this type of tourism and become a social experiment capable of attracting the attention of world academic research.

The university, which is still based on the idea of knowledge, education, and learning, represents a radical alternative to today's society's new approach. In this approach, Universities are no longer aimed at students but at consumers, which consequently degrades the supply of knowledge. Attracting students is an economic opportunity similar to tourism, with benefits from extra-university spending.

These are only three examples, the most immediate ones; but the creativity of the Cuban people, to which we have already referred, will be able to find countless different opportunities for economic benefit from the self-determination that the Filoponic model entails.

Returning to the speech delivered on 23 September 2023, President Díaz-Canel said: "Peoples have the right to determine their destiny without foreign interference or imposition [...] Nations have the right over their sources of wealth and their natural resources. The Filoponic self-determination is the affirmative and categorical response to the words of President Díaz-Canel, based on revolutionary ideals of equality and freedom outlined by Fidel Castro.

## Cuban Revolution and Filoponía

What would happen to the Revolution if it were to get off the "short leash" of accumulation capital? In effect, the aim of accumulation capital is to accumulate, while that of diffused capital is self-determination, both of individuals and of nations. Cuba indeed belongs to it, but in the socialist version, with the surplus value for the benefit of the collectivity and without surplus labour. However, the current economic situation, as well as the national and international debate, is a possible way out of the crisis and recovery by opening up to foreign capital, albeit controlled by laws and limitations.

Of the Conference's arguments, one in particular fits into this section: de-dollarisation. While reaffirming Filoponía's self-determination and its emancipatory function, what I believe must be emphasised is that de-dollarisation, especially in the Americas, is the overriding issue. However, debt is an issue even higher up on the scale, which is the stumbling block to be overcome and brought down. Whatever the currency of the debt, it is always an almost insurmountable chain that creates a deep and heavy subordination. This is precisely the aspect in which Filoponía manifests itself, whose model has been developed based on the abolition of debt.

To use an image, Cuba is a mighty tree laden with tasty and ripe fruit, which can be picked and eaten, or the tree can be left to follow its natural course, which is to sow its seeds, give rise to more trees and continue to bear fruit. The first case is what happens with the opening up to foreign capital, the aim of which is to continue accumulating; the second is the Filoponic proposal. And history tells us how difficult, if not impossible, it is to stop this constant and bulimic capital accumulation.

The only way out is to break their paradigm. It is not necessary to depart from the ideals and revolutionary proclamations of equality and freedom since it is only a different contextualisation: Filoponía does not propose a new socialism but a model that adopts such ideals without ceasing to be a model in itself.

To conclude these pages, I would like to express one consideration: in philosophical terms, socialist Revolutions, from the Paris Commune to the Cuban Revolution, are Revolutions for justice; we can, therefore, define Filoponía as an evolution for happiness.

## Conclusions

I did not want to dwell on the blockade and its consequences. Simply because, in proposing a new model, I can't predict the reaction to the proposal to experiment with the Filoponía model in Cuba. I wanted to dwell on other aspects. Above all, I have tried to contextualise the primordial question in Cuba's reality: to understand if it is useful, how much it is useful, and to whom it is useful. In Filoponía's text, the answer is to the debate on the future; in these pages, and thanks to the Cuban contextualisation, I venture to give a broader answer: to humanity.

Once again, I quote President Díaz-Canel's words at the meeting with the Cuban émigré community: *All those who want to build are welcome. Let's fulfil together the Marxist desire for a Republic with all and the good of all.*

With this article, I include Filoponía among all those whom President Díaz-Canel urges to build.



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