5

A Beacon of Light

Lee Iglody

Lee Iglody, an attorney in Las Vegas, completed his Bachelor of Arts in Economics with honor under the guidance of Professors Murray N. Rothbard and Hans-Herman Hoppe at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

In my previous essay honoring Professor Dr. Hans Hermann Hoppe, I concluded by saluting his steadfast dedication to the pursuit of timeless truths, despite immense personal and professional costs. Here, I wish to focus more on how he has served as a beacon of light in the labyrinth of knowledge for those of us who have followed him personally in search of answers.

Like so many others, I traveled to Las Vegas to meet and study under Hans and Professor Rothbard. Upon first meeting him, filled with great trepidation, I approached him with some honest and sincere questions, which, let’s be honest, were somewhat silly. Thankfully, he recognized that I had at least attempted to grapple with and comprehend the source material. He required only sincerity and a modicum of intelligence from those of us interested in mastering the material. This was the beginning of a long journey into the light.

Eventually, he invited me to his informal Political Economy Club meetings, held in a humble yet warm and inviting location filled with cigarette smoke and the smell of cheap liquor—a place where a poor student’s meager dollars could stretch far. I fondly recall how a fellow student, Bud Benneman (now Professor Benneman), helped secure university funding for the endless pitchers of beer and plates of wings and fries that fueled our many late nights of vigorous debate over the years.

Over the years, those Political Economy Club meetings were a source of inspiration, our own little Vienna Circle, if you will. I sat there, watching Hoppe dismantle bad ideas, extol good ones, and, most importantly, continue his systematic approach to methodology. I may not be Alexander the Great, but I can imagine the excitement he must have felt sitting at Aristotle’s feet, seeing a universe of truth unfold before him. To this day, I apply the rigorous methodological tools in my practice as a trial attorney, constantly reminded of my fortune in studying under Hoppe.

I observed Hans’s thoughts evolve on many issues, both large and small, and was privileged to witness his deep humanity as he patiently (or, sometimes, less than patiently) corrected numerous errors in thinking. I particularly enjoyed his absolute disdain for sloppy thinking and methodological errors. It is one thing to feel the exhilaration that inevitably comes from delving into *Economic Science and the Austrian Method*,[[1]](#footnote-1) but it pales in comparison to the sublime joy of having Hans sit across the table, breaking it down in exquisite detail.

I was privileged to provide my modest assistance in getting his epic *A Theory of Socialism and Capitalism* published, and my children know that, when I pass, his autographed copy of the book will remain in the family for future generations to read and treasure. Sadly, those not-yet-born heirs will never have the thrill of taking Hans’s class, which carefully reviewed Marxist thought, its insights and errors, and gradually led the students to a deeper understanding of why capitalism is the only answer.

While studying under Hans, I developed friendships that have lasted to this day. Some, like Professor Dr. James Yohe, went on to complete their dissertations and enter the fabulous and well-compensated calling of academia. Others, like me, pursued different paths with less prestige but still offering opportunities to make a difference in the eternal battle between lies and truth, and between injustice and justice.

I can’t remember whether it was Hans or Rothbard who provided the most withering critiques of the then-dominant Chicago School and other erroneous methodological approaches. However, I do remember his transformative and incisive dissection of the methodological approaches of, for example, Karl Popper and Rudolf Carnap. The Austrian Method and its promise become more apparent when the deficiencies of the widely accepted, so-called mainstream methods are dismantled and shown to be flawed, leading humanity astray. Hans arrived at his conclusions with impeccable logic and a discerning appreciation for the works of previous masters, such as Mises and Rothbard. However, he undertook this arduous journey precisely because he cares deeply about truth and meaning, and the fate of humanity. His passion was infectious. He inspired all of us to keep reading, keep thinking, and keep searching for answers.

As a classroom professor, he was one-of-a-kind: fearless, exceedingly informative, and, when inclined, humorous. His dry, Teutonic delivery of jokes always left the room roaring with laughter. He managed to teach the complete fundamentals of Austrian economics even in introductory classes. I remember fondly, many years later, mentoring a young attorney who unexpectedly said, “That’s a performative contradiction,” during a case review. I paused, looked at him, and asked, “Where did you get that?” Hans, of course! Although the young attorney had no interest in further pursuing Austrian Economics, he had internalized its basic tenets during his undergraduate days, as I discovered over the course of our professional relationship. He was one of the many students who greatly admired Hans but did not muster the time or courage to approach him or join our Political Economy Club meetings. His influence, his ideas, and his ideals linger in many more individuals than we will ever know.

Hans’s writing style is so precise and discerning, but he, the man, the professor, the paragon of wisdom and guidance, had a rapier wit. What better way to help explain the concept of time preference (i.e., preference for immediate gratification over delayed satisfaction) than with the following illustration (with a pleasant German accent): “Ja, ja, so, all other things being equal, if a man with lower time preference seeks intimacy with a woman, he gets to know the woman, invites her to dinner, buys her some flowers, listens to her blah, blah, and then he scores! A higher time preference man, *ceteris paribus*, will just hit her over the head with a stick and have his way with her.” (Another beloved version compares a hypothetical situation involving two young lads with different time preferences, both of whom really want the latest Air Jordans. The one with the low time preference gets a job, saves his money, shops around for the best price, and scores! The other lad finds a stick, locates a kid wearing the desired Air Jordans, hits him over the head, and takes the sneakers. Score!) In his lessons, Hans always made sure to remind his students that education is not merely about career preparation but also about character formation. A touch of hyperbole helped to clarify how abstract concepts, such as time preference, hold significant relevance for life. He emphasized that students should choose wisely, as we all bear the burden of civilization on our shoulders.

The march through the institutions made Hans’s time at the university unnecessarily difficult. I watched Hans fend off various attacks while I was a student, and then again as a young lawyer helping to protect Hans from the forces of darkness that could not tolerate a very popular and charismatic truth-teller enlightening students. It is unconscionable what they did to harass Hans, taking his time and energy, and thus depriving humanity of untold spectacular insights and discoveries that he might otherwise have shared with the world.

Eventually, thankfully, he met the love of his life, Dr. Gülcin Imre, and a new, even more fantastic chapter in his life began, eventually leading to the founding of the Property and Freedom Society. I will forever cherish the memory of watching Hans and Gülcin exchange vows, knowing this would bring Hans happiness and the renewed energy to immerse himself in his creative work.

Soon thereafter, Hans and Gülcin formed the Property and Freedom Society (PFS). I have traveled the globe attending educational and professional seminars, retreats, events, and conferences, but nothing compares to PFS. It is the premier annual gathering of the world’s best and brightest individuals, who come together to enjoy a grand salon experience. With Hans and Gülcin serving as the impeccable hosts, thoughtful individuals from all over the world gather at the gorgeous Karia Princess in beautiful Bodrum, Türkiye, to converse, debate, discuss, and find solace, adhering to just one caveat: be pleasant and open-minded. Some of the most mind-opening conversations of my life have taken place at PFS.

Herodotus, the father of history, was a native of Bodrum. One day, history will remember that Hans, the father of modern praxeology, held his prestigious PFS meetings there. I have attended ten PFS conferences and met the most erudite and gracious men and women who share the common goal of increasing their knowledge through conversation. Although the participants are predominantly European, Hans’s reach attracts attendees from Asia, Africa, Central and South America, and, of course, includes a sprinkling of “ugly Americans” like myself. I have so many fond memories, but one that stands out is an evening when our Austrian heavyweight methodologists, Hans and Guido Hülsmann, squared off against, among others, the great Peter Duesberg, in a debate over methodology. *Ach, du Lieber*, they argued into the wee hours! My only regret is not recording it for future generations to enjoy.

Over 35 years, Hans has filled my heart and mind with joy and wisdom. I have traveled the world and met many fellow travelers on the Hoppe Highway to truth and understanding. Thank you, my   
beloved Professor, for being our guide, our philosopher, and our sage. Your teachings will continue to resonate within us as we journey forward, carrying the torch of knowledge and wisdom that you have so passionately ignited. May your light continue to illuminate generations who strive for truth, and may they, in their thinking and acting, live as an echo of your wisdom.

1. Hans-Hermann Hoppe, *Economic Science and the Austrian Method* (Auburn, Ala.: Mises Institute, 1995; www.hanshoppe.com/esam). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)