

The Quandary of the Economic Science



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Abstract. *The economic science is passing through one of the most critical periods of its existence. The crisis it runs through has its origins in its methodological grounds as well as in its capacity to express the deep political and economical mutations nowadays.*

Throughout this article, we have tried to stress the inadequate characteristics of the present theoretical framework, the impossibility to reflect the new realities through a decayed conceptual framework, the need to re-examine some postulates and assertions that do not correspond to the present train of events anymore. We have also tried to identify the basis of the economic science restructuring, as well as the objectives and directions oriented towards this challenge. We have pleaded for a science configuration open to multi-disciplinarily framework, debate pluralism, and new, realistic and practical approaches.

Key words: economic laws; unique thinking; renewal; post-autistic economics; holistic vision.



Methodological debates

From its beginning, the economic science has been debated, methodologically speaking.

The interest for methodological and philosophical problems regarding the economic science was resuscitated during the intensification of the “crisis” this discipline has been passing through and which is confirmed by a high number of economists.

The pressure growth regarding the Economy changes asks for, more than ever, a public debate set up on its condition and future.

Many are the epistemological and methodological problems whose answers are expected: the knowledge achievement boundaries and basis, Economy existence as a science, its relationships with the nature sciences, the evaluation and comparison of the economic theories, etc.

The questions that could be raised exceed by far the number of the provided answers. The way these problems are solved, putting epistemologists and economists on different positions, has an increased signification not only regarding the economic science but also related to the role of the economists within society.

The existence of many methodological types agreed by the economic science is well known. The attempt to identify the dominating methodology can face difficulties. Among the remarkable methodological contributions can be noticed: Essay on the nature and significance of the economic science (Robbins, 1932) and Methodology of the positive economic science (Friedman, 1953), considered to be the most influent economic methodology text in its century.

Friedman has noticed that the most traditional critics regarding the economical theory had analyzed the ideas instead of testing the implications. The validity of the economic theory had to establish the accuracy of the predictions it refers to and not the descriptive “realism” of its premises (Blaug, 1992, p. 738).

The relevance degree of the empirical testing in establishing the truth of the economic theories, the investigation methods particular to researching the economic realities, the criteria to accept and establish their scientific character, etc. represent the central themes that have polarized interest and have generated debates.

The realistic approaches are grounded on the methodological and theoretical specificity and take into account the peculiarities of the economic theories. The phenomena and processes described by Economy are really different to those analyzed by the natural sciences. The Economy cannot be conceived outside the social relations sustaining it, the economic system being incorporated within the social and political areas. Its specificity resides in the laws functioning as a bias, by means of human activity which, at its turn, represents the reflex of some interests dictated by beliefs and values.

At same the time, the absence within Economy of some fundamental laws comparable with those in Physics and cannot be formulated general principles as precise as those of natural science. The economic laws are not independent of the social and political construction.

The fascination exercised by Physics is grounding the “naturalization” of Economy, its submission to the immanent natural pseudo laws, which ensures the massive presence of the economic scholastics principles and the obvious bent to occult the “black holes” of the economic science.

Can a natural law be tested? A law attests some regularity which allows the foretelling of the empirical phenomena. The Economy is not an empirical science. The impossibility of testing has been acknowledged after long time by the majority of the economists. Any economic assertion is based on circumstances not always testable directly. The economists are reasoning „toutes choses égales par ailleurs”, i.e. by approaching a phenomenon isolated, independent of any other human manifestation.

Who could test an exchange law could have the chance of a considerable rich growth.

The truth test for an economic theory is the coherence of the theoretical grounds and its practical conclusions acceptance.

The modern economy is a science based on methodological rigor, whose dominant lines are the concern for the permanent checking and ideas debate. As such, the economic science is opposite to any “sole perspective”, permanently testing the incoherence or the lack of security

of the theoretical grounds, as well as the conclusions concordance with the performed observations. Only those theories which prove the methodological coherence generate the progress for the economic knowledge. The necessity to debate some thesis and opposite ideas also arise from the fact that estimating errors can be extremely expensive, taking into account the deciding authorities’ incapacity to ensure the economic prosperity. A functional economic theory has to answer the practical requirements and also has to have initiative and be innovating.

The attempt of some economists to impose and considered unique and rightful only certain theories, as well as the belief that the economic science laws are universal, has proved to be anachronistic. No theory is universal and no theoretical conclusion is valid without taking into account the space and time conditions. Too often the validity limit of a certain theory is being ignored.

Stressing the pertinence and validity of a certain economic theory takes into account multiple considerations. Sometimes, it seems that the Economy has developed based on symmetry principle, which require for each new theory to represent exactly the reverse of the old one. This does not exclude the possibility for the dominant theory to remain unchanged for a long period of time. If the law of development applied to knowledge is conditioning the magnitude and the dispersion degree, the hypotheses and theories end to be submitted to the law of decreasing efficiency.

An economic theory can be scientific, true, but less applicable under certain conditions. The theory is never true or false, and in the economic science field there are no rules to make a difference between the valuable theories and those less significant. Any analysis presumes the premises and ideological and political implications evoking as well. Various economic theories can represent intellectual constructions often seducing, sometimes conceived as ideological weapons of some political parties.

The economic science has grown mature as academic discipline and that was possible following some ideas and theoretical constructions of great value and large admission (meta-theories), which has contributed to the substantial alteration of the economic systems coordinates, methods and instruments by means of the economic life is oriented (mega-politics). Thus, the conservatory revolution, liberal revolutions that has circumvented the economy from under the state control, is considered to be the great revolution of the XXth century.

The increased complexity and the interdisciplinary character of many analyzed problems has imposed the appeal to theoretical and methodological mixes and has made possible the formation of some converging and theoretical complementarily areas.

An older epistemological debate is being carried out around the objectivity and the normality of the economical science.

The attempts to clarify the possibility of objective Economy, the role of the value judgments and the distinction between the positive analysis and the normative analysis have generated debates.

The concern to dissimulate and camouflage the relationships between the economy and politics and to proclaim the Economy as a neutral and objective science is dominant in a certain period. The “savant” economy prefers to ignore all power, force, psychologically dependent relationships, etc. A certain acknowledgment has encountered also the opinion according to which there are no economic laws and the economist has to be content with the modest role to observe the history of facts.

For L. Walras and V. Pareto, the Economy has to affirm itself as “neutral”, “scientific” and “pure”, which challenge its normative character. L. Walras, engineer and economist, was following the construction of a “pure” social science, to have the same virtues as the science of physics that is dominating the XXth century.

The opposite opinions claim that there isn’t a pure economic “law”, as physics law. An economic “law” is always affected by its normative characteristics. At what extent do economists manifest lack of interest?

M. Weber and F. Hayek have never denied the normative characteristic of any economic analysis. The problem of axiological neutrality at M. Weber can be resumed as follows: in essence, it is possible during the study of certain determined problems; to elaborate value judgments over some political measures represents the immediate and sole purpose of the economic science. In his turn, F. Hayek deems that the economic analysis has never represented the product of a detached intellectual curiosity, but of an imperative need to reconstruct the world (Moris, 2003, p. 59).

G. Myrdal, another great economist that was awarded Nobel Prize in 1974, also rejects the notion of economic “science”, for its incapacity to distinguish between the scientific assertions and the value judgments. The Economy is not a neutral science.

The opinions that deny the Economy as autonomous science, dissociated by any ethical and political reference, have acquired a more and more obvious profile. The economy assumes a given political order and the study isolated by the political cannot be profitable. The national and international economy is included not only within an interstate political system, but also within an internal political system.

Accordingly, the Economy is not a pure, objective science, and the economists’ prescriptions are not more valid than those belonging to other interest groups. It is

well known as the most normative and value dependent in all social (Capra, 2004, p. 221). It is hard to imagine the existence of a social science “without referring to values”. The Economy is build around a rationality normative theory and has a special relevance in elaborating the economic policy. The economic science complements itself and intersects with the moral philosophy regarding the used concepts and the covering of normative problems as well.

The own evaluation of the content and research methods, as well as the multiplicity of the problems that transgress the boundaries of various academic disciplines require the reconfiguration of the study object and abdication to some postulates and outdated conventions. Thus, the Economy cannot be defined anymore as the science to allocate some rare resources, as the knowledge is, by definition, inexhaustible.

The debate regarding the science character of Economy continues today. The difficulty of the demarche is amplified by the philosophical nature of its implications, as well as the challenges this discipline is confronting today. Therefore, the efforts regarding the elucidation of this old epistemological problem do not belong to the economists exclusively.

In time, this theme has had various solutions from the debate consistency point of view, characterized by frequent denials or supports, many times apathetic and lacking vigor and gravity.

The arguments used in order to support or deny the existence of Economy as a science are interesting though. For many specialists, this problem does not have a clear solution. Really, the answer is conditioned by the way the science is defined (Munday, 1996, p.12). In other words, the “science” appellation for Economy will correspond more or less to one definition compared to others.

The challengers of the Economy existence as science take into account, among others, the lack of perfectly repeatable relationships and certain universal valid principles, existent within natural sciences. The impossibility to perform experiments, considered to be one of the important characteristics of a “true” science is also invoked. „Tôt ou tard” represents an essential and magical expression in Economy.

The accent situated over the quantification confers to the economic science the appearance of an exact science. The message is puzzling for those who believe that Economy is or should be an exact science (Toffler, Toffler, 2006, p. 97).

The 60’ illusions on the possibilities of the new macroeconomic models have been quickly crumbled. More and more obvious are becoming the critical attitudes regarding the exaggeration of the econometric methods and techniques role, having implications over the accuracy

of the economic declamation. As a matter of fact, one of the main accuses against the micro-economy is focusing on the abuse of mathematic models, more and more sophisticated, without confronting the empirical reality.

For some orthodox theoreticians (R. Clower, P. Howitt), the Economy represents an “imaginary fiction”, and the contemporary theory depicts a portrait of the economic life considered rather “ethereal” and “unreal”. In this context, it is also stressed that many of the contributions of Nobel laureates are abstract and speculative, without essential references to the “real” economy.

The answer to the question above is conditioned by the methodology used. Although the philosophy of science has elaborated a set of conditions on what science could represent, the difficulties to apply the methodology on economic science are well known.

Dilemmas and debates

The Economy represents an evolutionary system that generates models under continuous changes. The study perspectives provided by the economists stress the existence of many debates on the interpretation of the causes and impact of the economic and politic evolution.

The major sources of the divergences and the fields they manifest in are especially interesting. Therefore, it is necessary to stress the argumentation sources peculiar to each theory and identifying the logical grounds. Therewith, substantial differences remain regarding the interpretation of the empirical obvious, ethical considerations, as well as the degree and type of ideological engagement. The understanding of the present economic debates imposes the acceptance of the points of view diversity and their valuable content.

The existence of the thinking wave different through their vision over the economic system and through the economic prescriptions targets multiple causes and fields. Although the approaches are carried out from multiple micro and macro-economic perspectives, on short and long term, in nominal and real terms, etc., each model has its own logic, and their synthesis is difficult enough. The contradictory theories regarding the state role in economy, the economic policy schemes, the ways of a good economic government, etc., as well as the debates and confusions, older or more recent, on the rates of interest, the role and consequences of the monetary, the implications of the budgetary deficit, rules vs. discretionary politics, are notorious theories.

The persistence in disagreements is due to some extent to the “ability” of the economic science to give up real easily to some consecrated theoretical acquisitions. Of course, the pluralism of points of view is not specific, but it is, at the same extent, present as in other social sciences.

Some of the disagreements within the economic theory reside in the Keynesian episode and subsequent evolutions.

After the Second World War, as the Keynesian implemented itself within the economic theory and practice, it was created the illusion of a single approach and of a sole answer to any economic problem. Several philosophers of the science, as the Economy has reached a real scientific statute, have argued that the discipline has displayed its maturity, becoming relatively more coherent and unitary than other social sciences. However, starting with the ‘60s, the practical shortages of the Keynesianism and economic positivism have implemented a new approach which has questioned the virtues of the old orthodoxy. There starts the break out for the economic Keynesian science and of the assertion of the alternative macro-economical theories. It is becoming more visible the competition between the rival macro-economic schools and approaches.

Macro-economists have been mainly concerned with the differences expressed by their scientific findings, sustained under academic debates and materialized under economic policy “recipe” promoted in the public arena. Or, within the economic science, theories have been often replaced and have rarely disappeared. The mix of theoretical and economic policies currently dominates.

The celebrity of rival macro-economic schools is subject to the capacity to explain the macro-economic phenomena and to suggest solutions which would assign stability and dynamism to the economic systems. Each dominant thinking trend has its opinions and highlights, but also a high degree of superposing the achieved findings. Which highlights that, in practice, the border between the rival schools is blurred in many aspects. Also, there must be rejected the idea that a certain orientation would hold the final or total solutions and the acceptance of those who have a part in the understanding of the real life’s economic problems.

The studies made based on exploiting the ideas of some major leaders of the economic thinking have noticed the fields with significant disagreements. The perception of the existence of a deep disagreement between economists is deemed as mistaken.

The investigation regarding the opinions of some major American researchers in the ‘90s has identified differences regarding the money’s role in economy. The respective opinions seem to deem more important the interest’s rates than the target of the monetary offer and to consider inflation as main monetary phenomenon. A significant disagreement addresses the Philips curve on short term.

Another conclusion addresses the existence of reserves regarding the idea of a stronger agreement in micro-economy than in macro-economy and in positive enouncements than in normative ones. A more obvious

disagreement in macro-economy would be due to the features of the investigated topic and ideological orientation of the questioned subjects.

In what concern Great Britain, the economists' opinions are differently structured than those registered in the USA. Most concerns regard the prices' mechanism, the government's redistributive role, etc., acknowledging the significant influence of the Keynesian theory. The fields which have registered a significant agreement address the demand's management, budgetary deficits and monetary policies. Moreover, it has not been possible to identify the support for sustaining an increased agreement for the micro-problems related to the macro-economic ones. The comparative analysis of the opinions expressed on the two continents highlight a remarkable difference between the USA, Germany and Switzerland compared with France and Austria. The economists of group of countries have proclaimed themselves as supporters of market and competition on the detriment of the state's intervention. Also, the alternatives to the Keynesian economy are clearly shaped and more thoroughly settled than in any other corner of the world. Not by chance, the main post-Keynesian macro-economic developments are due to the American school.

Economy – between crisis and reform

The diagnosis regarding the state of the current economic science is a significant one. Some define it as a crossroad moment (Drucker, 1999, p. 150) or dead-end moment (Capra, 2004, p. 217), while others acknowledge the crisis (Fullbrook, 2003, p. 19). The opinions of those from the latter class is noticed both regarding the definition of the causes, nature and essence of such crisis and in terms of identifying the solutions, reformation directions and alternatives to the current economic science. Either profound causes are involved, endorsing this science's foundations (Dinu, 2007, p. 1), or there is involved a conceptual crisis or the used methods.

The crisis idea within the economic science has multiple interpretations and can be associated with various situations: controversies within the economic theory, inadaptability of former theories to new realities, absence of theories and patterns re-launching economy, presence of investigation concepts and tools characteristic to other disciplines, etc. In other cases, the crisis within the economic science is related either with the collapse of the potential to "raise" dominant economic theories or with high impact events and situations. The trend associating economic crisis with the state of the economic science is not random. Is the economic progress possible when the economic science is crossing a crisis period? The concerns regarding the surpassing of the detrimental consequences of a major

economic crisis can be materialized in significance theoretical acquisitions. Thus, a new period of economic prosperity (the glorious 30 years) has been possible due to the Keynesian revolution, triggered by the tremendous consequences of the global crisis during 1928-1933. As well as, the failure of the Keynesian related politics and the perspective of a new recession have triggered the occurrence of the monetary counter-evolution, deemed as reference moment in the evolution of the post-war economic theory.

For several authors, high impact facts and events have outstanding significance. Thus it has been launched the idea that the economic science would have collapsed together with the failure of the economic policy after the crisis triggered by the oil shock in 1973. Moreover, defeatist ideas have even foreseen the end of economy (Ormerad, 2004).

The openness of the economic system and the contradictory aspects of the current processes require the profound adjustment of the traditional debates and of the economic approach, based on new analytic paradigms and theoretical frames.

The issues' inter-disciplines character and the realty's more and more obvious alienation from the traditional theories render more difficult the classification into the existent economic categories.

New topics and approaches are being dealt with by means of old concepts and institutions. It is becoming more and more obvious the difficulty to manage the economy by means of traditional theories and patterns. The main events cannot be explained and foreseen any longer by means of standard economic theories.

The alert rhythm of the changes within the economic environment, given the amplification of the incertitude and ambiguous sources, adds to the increase of the theoretic renovation and innovation process.

According to the requirements of the stale knowledge law, as changes speed up, the speed of the stale knowledge increases as well (Toffler, Toffler, 2006, p. 107).

A new approach, based on proper theoretic foundations, must take into account the economic theory crisis and the necessity to re-think several fundamental aspects of the economy.

It is necessary to question both the validity of the general assertions and certain convictions (certitudes) regarding major economy aspects.

Often, the economic discourse is dominated by reductionist tendencies, simplifications, preconceptions and ideological fixations and obsessions. The analysis excessively focused on economism, the obsession of the material progress, its upshots, efficiency and profit highlight the exacerbation of the economic aspects on the detriment of the cultural and demographic factors and ethic

and social ones. The great challenges faced by the contemporary capitalism require the creation of new economic thinking and the switch of the emphasis from the economical criteria to the cultural-esthetical ones.

In terms of trends for the goals' reconfiguration, there are now, on the first level, the durable development, social cohesion and individual freedom, as finality of the economic growth (A. Sen).

The current economic science is accused by the blend of concepts, theories and patterns coming from different historical ages. Also, it is remembered the blend of elements from the economic and politic theories and economic situation. However, the main reproaches address the foundations of the economic theory, built on mechanics principles and the absence of social and political realities from the used economic patterns. The conclusion is that the old paradigms do not match the new realities any longer. Moreover, it is deemed that the economic science does not explain the contemporary economic realities nor favors an appropriate frame for the critical debate of the economic problems. Also, according to other opinions, the economic theory, inhibited by the non-historic approach and by a formalist abstract methodology, has only allowed a limited understanding of the complex economic behavior, under permanent change. The narrow methodological approach of the economic science has obstructed the possibility to generate pragmatic and realistic economic policy principles or to initiate a productive dialogue with other social sciences. The economic science seems to be little concerned, in terms of history of economic ideas, with the study of the relevant social institutions and the practices regarding the issuance and implementations of economic policy measures.

Lots of the "shortages" of the current economic science exist because of ideology's influence, sometimes significant and unjustified. It is acknowledged the massive dominance of pro-market ideology during 1948-1991 upon Western economy.

At the beginning of the '90s, it is proclaimed the global victory of the liberal patterns, the economy being both globalized and capitalist. It is noticed, upon such occasion, the triumph of the liberal values of the democracy and free market.

The obsession on the neo-liberalism's hegemony could not avoid the risk of the "liberal totalitarianism" imposed to the entire world.

The stands or attitudes characteristics to such theoretical developments sustain the association of democracy with market economy, as the only way to assure the economic prosperity (Ramonet, 1997, p. 29). Also, it is supported the (neo-liberal) pattern's uniqueness to lead a country's economic businesses and the convergence around a sole economic and liberal pattern. The discourse's vehemence in shaping the neo-liberal pattern is questioned

by the evolution of the economic realities and ideologies characteristic for the millennium's beginning.

Firstly, the decline of the neo-liberalism as politic philosophy has added to the denunciation of the unique thinking, which suggested the omnipotence assigned to the neo-liberal paradigm at the end of the XXth century. The generalizing trends regarding the uniqueness of the ways and means to organize the economic and social life are closely related with the theoretic ideas, which deem as correct only certain economic theories, which believe that the laws of the economic science are universal and which tend to render sacred certain "laws" of the capitalist economy. Within such approach, it is proved, once more, the topicality of the principle according to which the worst enemy of the truth is the "lie", but "believes".

The topics regarding the uniqueness of the economic organization ways and means are accompanied by fundamental disagreements both in terms of inspiring ideologies and actual achieving means. It has been proved along the history that no ideology is definitive and no intellectual system can claim that it is the last stage of a process (de Montbrial, 2003, p. 33). Also, it has been widely accepted the idea that there is no universal pattern, but patterns likely to improve the understanding of certain types of phenomena.

The interpretations focused on the pattern's universality and convergence towards a sole pattern have proved their weakness. The patterns' ephemeral character has been highlighted since the '70s. Thus, the acknowledgement of the existence of a liberal fundamentalism might trigger the construal that the "neo-liberal" thinking has no place for doubt, which obviously contradicts the essence of the authentic liberalism, the idea of pluralism and openness.

Re-thinking already outdated conventions also endorses the former ideological polarity. For ages, the laissez-faire and state internationalism have alternatively dominated, competing and excluding each other. Today, the offensive against neo-liberal policies is more obvious. Most economists are not followers of the "ultra-liberalism" and their message is not ideological. The loss of privileged positions held by dominant ideologies has added to the establishment of a pedant mix and to the acknowledgment of the practical judgment's role, highlighted by means of actual economic and social conditions. In a rational society, strategy and action are not ideology subordinates (Galbraith, 1997, pp. 26-27).

Despite of their innovative potential, it is becoming more visible the tendency to terminate the "potential" of the dominant economic and politic ideologies. At the beginning of the XXIst century, liberalism becomes victim of its own efficacy and the internal and external liberalization contradictions express themselves significantly (Lafay, 2002, pp. 93-96).

The exacerbation of the free market's role and the ideological obsession about "liberalization" have triggered the occurrence of theoretical reflections, some truly fantastic, regarding the vocation of the free market as mechanism of economic and social settlement.

The analysis excessively focused on the market's primordial nature, for which the "market's laws" have become the new religion that must be worshiped (Ramonet, 1998, p. 29), alternates with opinions which deem the market as source of all misfortunes (Bruckner, 2002, p. 53).

It is becoming more visible the action denying the market's omnipotence and which has a part in acknowledging its limits and failures.

Any hypothesis supporting the efficient allotment of rare resources through the market is deemed economic dogma (Bailey, 1995, p. 7). Also, it is very difficult to imagine an economy's organization according to the logics of the pure market (Boyer, Drache, 1996, p. 6).

The acknowledgement of the market's limits has played a part in the decrease of the trust in the invisible hand. The intellectual support of the "market's fanaticism" has completely disappeared. The doctrine according to which markets spontaneously lead to balance and efficacy is considered deeply flawed (Stiglitz, 2006, pp. 13-15). The evolutions of the countries with a dynamic and performing economy have not been achieved by "naturally" or "spontaneously" implementing the market mechanisms. On the contrary, it has been proved that for the markets to be efficient, they need a set of rules, control and thorough institutional and legal framework. The influence of the economic institutions is essential for the economic performance. A market is viable given an extended social and political order (Brender, 2002, pp. 165-169).

The re-acquirement of the statute of the economic science and the increase of its contribution to the settlement of major and multiple problems of economy claims the engagement of real and aware debates regarding the pertinence of dominant theories and ideologies and the validity of their theoretical fundaments. Therefore, changes become possible within designed policies and institutions that would promote in order to build an economic and politic system based on values and principles. The review of standard economic ideas and theories must be achieved according to the accruals within the main economic research fields and the politic and economic realities and mutations. Such step, presuming major methodological efforts, mainly endorses the disconnection from the general assertions and postulates deemed by experts as myths and economic dogmas.

The significance and emergency of a radical reform within the economic science have triggered the occurrence of a vast movement in June 2000 in France. The protest of the French economist students and professors endorsed

both the reformation of the economic education system and economic discipline.

This movement has had a significant international echo, being attended by a high number of renowned experts (A. Sen, B.Guerrien, J.P. Fitoussi and others).

The main causes address the lack of realism of the economic education, repressive domination of the neo-classical theory and derived approaches and the use of mathematics as purpose on its own and not as tool. Under such circumstances, it is ascertained the alienation of the Economy from real conditions and its transformation into an "autistic" science.

The Fitoussi Report, in 2000, suggested two fundamental changes in the French educational system. The first addresses the implementation of the contemporary economic problems' debate in the content of the academic courses. The second has as objective to place the multi-disciplines within the center of the economic education. To such end, there has been suggested an increased emphasis on the study of related disciplines so that future economists would become accustomed with the testing methods of the social-economic phenomena.

Mainly, the movement named "post-autistic economics" has as major objectives the removal of the dominance of the neo-classical theory regarding the abuse of quantitative methods and mathematic tools and the implementation of pluralism for the analyzed approaches.

The stand against the neo-classical status-quo takes into account the fact that the demand based on the neo-classical theory or derived approaches is not up to expectations.

The understanding of the occurrence of the "neo-classical" agreement is grounded on the false belief that the neo-classical theory is the only scientific science, which made for the economic science to be enclosed by a sole approach regarding the explanation and analysis of the economic phenomena.

The neo-classical theory dominates for it is supported by a simple set of axioms and presumes that individual preferences are established outside the economic system and are not influenced by economic interactions.

Another objection addresses the fact that the monopoly of the neo-classical economy is not compatible with democratic ideas. Similarly, limiting the economic science to the neo-classical paradigm implies implementing a severe ideological limitation.

We have recalled only a few arguments justifying the appeal regarding the removal of the neo-classical theory's hegemony and the need to implement pluralism, which assures the promotion of other approaches, especially those allowing the consideration of "actual realities".

The pluralism is not only a question of ideology. To offer a sole approach within the economic science, which

explains everything by means of a pure axiomatic process, means to exclude the possibility of reflection. What justifies the refusal of such dogmatism and the option for approaches' pluralism, adjusted to the complex realities and incertitude of major economic problems.

The movement against "autism" in the economic science has as dimension the opposition against the excessive use of mathematics. The opinions do not converge. A. Sen deems the debate regarding the role of mathematics as a pseudo- debate. Others think that the quantitative techniques lead to the "dematerialization" of the economic declamation.

The utility of the mathematic instruments is obvious in the economic analysis. Their use as a purpose by itself may lead to a real perturbation in the relationships with the real world. The formalization eases the construction and the manipulation of the models whose significance resides in the identification "good result". This usage, with the pretention to be scientific, does not answer the exigencies imposed by the present economic debates.

The new challenges the present economy is confronting with require a radical reform whose essential objectives focus on the change of approach as well as on the content of the economic science.

Any renewal means considerable methodological efforts. On one hand, methodological changes are necessary associated with the doctrinal and ideological evolutions and, on the other hand, the identification of the economic science reconstruction basis is imperative, taking into account its dual status of science and policy. The solutions to the present problems cannot be found using the existent theoretical framework. It is necessary the reconfiguration of the Economy according to the present values system, building realistic and viable models of the economic

phenomena, as well as the construction of a science based on methodological rigor, ideas debate and at the end of singular thinking.

The exclusion of the XXth century dogmas must be accompanied by the occurrence of certain paradigms, re-examination of previous concepts and theories. The new realities impose not only the "make up" of certain previous theories and assertions, but also the study of the possibilities of a new synthesis.

The escape of the economic science is possible only by reevaluating the conceptual ground and passing from the Cartesian paradigm to the holistic and ecological vision (Capra, 2004, p. 225), as well as by "identifying some modern synthetic vision and a unifying principle able to render theoretical the economy in its whole" (Drucker, 1999, pp. 159-160).

In order to obtain a reformed economic science it is also necessary the redirecting towards the reality exploitation and a larger opening to the solving some practical problems.

It is obvious the utility of the research that contain the participation, the responsibility or other democratic dimensions. All these requirements remain simple desiderata in the absence of a real economic progress.

The advocacy for opening the economic science takes into account the area of the investigated aspects and also the interdisciplinary and alternative approaches.

In order to achieve a functional economic theory the use of adequate concepts appears to be obvious, to reflect new realities, but also the interdisciplinary exchange of techniques and scientific investigation instruments.

The change in vision, the opening to a non-conformist thinking, the new approaches, both realistic and practical, represent essential dimensions of an economic science deeply humanist.

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