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P E K E A

Political and Ethical Knowledge on Economic Activities



“PEKEA” : stone of hope ?

Marc Humbert

Rio- Reggen, 05-10-13.

“PEKEA” : stone of hope ?

I) Why and How PEKEA project has emerged

II) A Different Approach on Economic Activities

III) First steps with two building blocks

“PEKEA” : stone of hope ?

I) Why and How PEKEA project has emerged

- 1) Starting Point: Ineffectiveness of Heterodoxical Fights against Economic Orthodoxy
- 2) Take Stock of the Failure of Mainstream Theoretical and Practical Economics
- 3) Take Stock of the World Ideological Success by Economics in Colonizing Minds
- 4) Necessity for a Radical Change in Mind and in Practice

“PEKEA” : stone of hope ?

1) Starting Point: Ineffectiveness of Heterodoxical Fights against Economic Orthodoxy

- Change of Strategy : An “Argument” to restart from the beginning
- International Support from Regional Economic and Social UN Commissions and from UNESCO and UNCTAD to take into account a Political and Ethical view
- Launching Conference in Santiago at ECLAC premises, Sept. 2002
- Theoretical Outcome : Founding principles / definition of 4 Blocks of Knowledge to build
- Practical Outcome : Set up of an NGO associated to an International Network
- Project Content : to build a radically new Research Programme collectively in linking for that, Academics from all human and social sciences, the Civil Society and Individuals from Local Governments (elected or non elected)

“PEKEA” : stone of hope ?

2) Take Stock of the Failure of Mainstream Theoretical and Practical Economics

Mainstream Project is the Wealth of Nations and Prosperity for All

- Within “Rich” Countries Unemployment is Huge and Inequalities are Growing Even since 1929 and the advertised official fight against unemployment.
- Within “Poor” Countries and at World Level,
 - + 2 Billion people have to make a living from less than 2\$ a day
 - +800 million people (the same number as in 1979 at the time of Brandt report for survival) have not sufficient food to be at the minimum level of nutrition
 - + 100 000 deaths every day directly or indirectly linked with insufficient food
- Last but not Least, instead of bringing Wealth and Prosperity for All, Affluence is the privilege of a Minority who is exhausting the non-renewable resources of the Planet, polluting it and warming it to the point that survival for the future generation is jeopardized.

“PEKEA” : stone of hope ?

Conclusion : Economists and Experts of the Mainstream are not equipped to achieve their target of wealth and prosperity : they are equipped

as if we still were at the stone age....



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3) Take Stock of the World Ideological Success by Economics in Colonizing Minds

- Success in Nurturing Dreams of Wealth with Technology and to-day Knowledge Economy
Globalization and Internet for every global individual with a mobile phone
- Success in Nurturing Dreams of Individual Autonomy and Unlimited Capabilities, served by Democracy and Market
- The Fall of Berlin Wall (1989) led Francis Fukuyama stating “The End of History”

“PEKEA” : stone of hope ?

Conclusion : As we may watch what is the real state of humanity to-day, this is still more a non-humane humanity

and therefore we are still at a “Prehistory” stage and it is time to carve tools as at the stone age :

PEKEA



“PEKEA” : stone of hope ?

4) Necessity for a Radical Change in Mind and in Practice

- Endogenous Resistance of People and Societies were broken in 1973
The assassination of Allende (11 September) in Chile dates the first victory by neo liberals of Mont Pèlerin.
Later on Thatcher (1979) in UK, Reagan (1981) in the USA, helped generalization to the entire world of privatization and de-regulation to pave the way to “neo-liberalism”
- Thus as a symbol, we started to change and to move towards a new Paradigm for thinking and living
in Santiago de Chile, 11 September 2002

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II) A Different Approach on Economic Activities

- 1) Alternative must be searched elsewhere than first in merchandises
- 2) Alternative might be found in focusing first in people

“PEKEA” : stone of hope ?

1) Alternative must be searched elsewhere
than first in merchandises

- All Mainstream and Even Heterodox Economics is focused on the circulation of Things
- Any thing is defined by evidence and its free circulation is warranting its “optimal” quantity at an “optimal” price
- Thus let’s play the “Natural” “Law of the Market”, Remove all Barriers to free circulation
- “Laissez faire Laissez passer” and everyone on the Planet will be better off.

**The Dominant pattern of thinking the society
reduces it to a Market place
for free circulation of merchandises**



**Remove all barriers! Level the playing field !
Let free competition do its job
It ensures efficiency and a single price for any thing anywhere**

“PEKEA” : stone of hope ?

2) Alternative might be found in focusing first in people

Jean Bodin (17th Century) “Il n’est de force ni de richesses que d’hommes”
We must focus in people

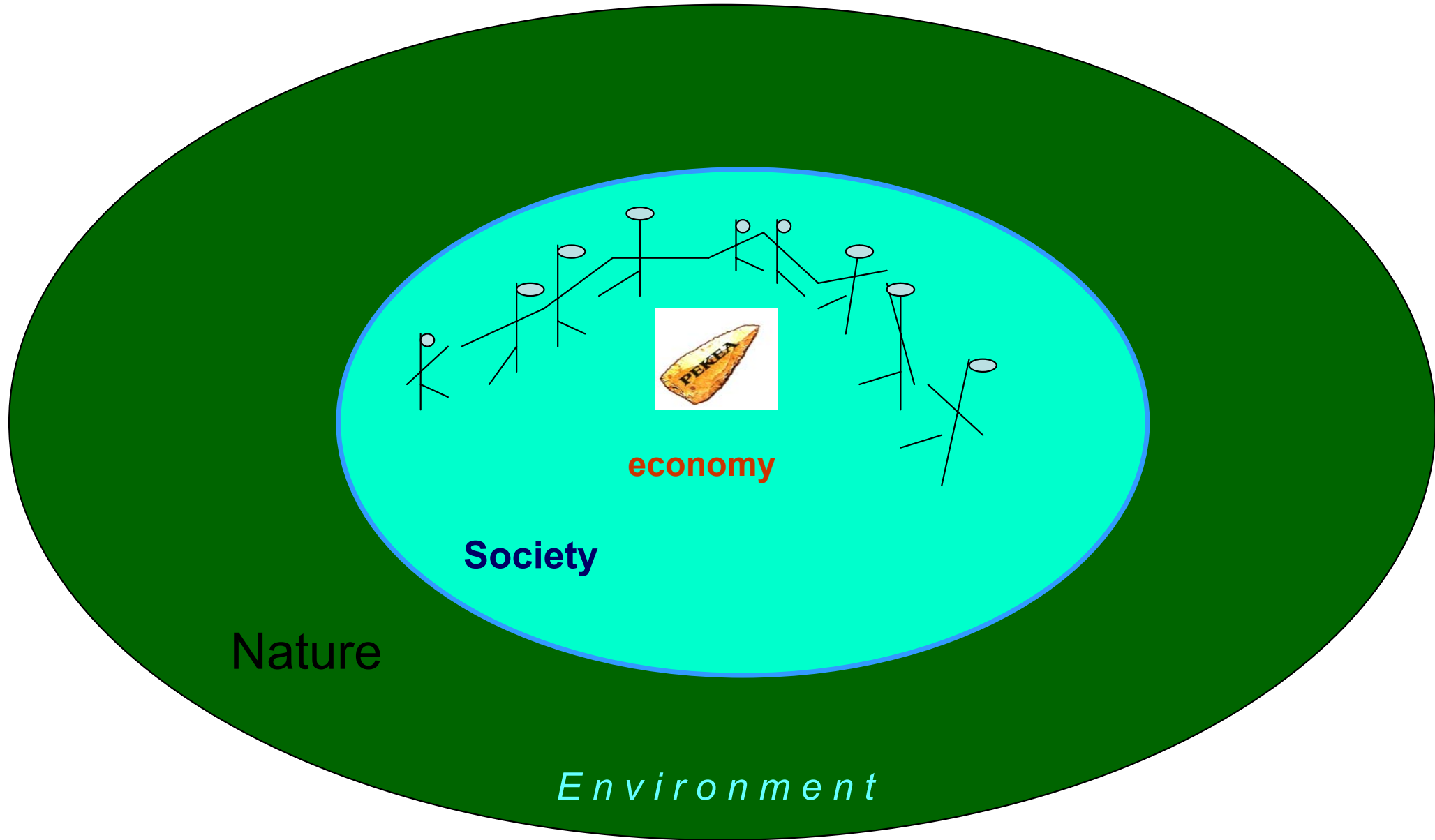
Things are the outcome of activities performed and organised by people

Their behaviour cannot be reduced to that of a universal Homo Oeconomicus
Searching with rationality its self monetary interest without caring of others
and without caring of any beliefs:

This question will be addressed
With our *3rd block of knowledge* to build :

Individual and Collective Behaviour, in 2006, in Dakar .

People are living in a Society: What is our common feasible feature?
It was our theme from the *4th block of knowledge* in 2004 for the Bangkok PEKEA conference



Political and Ethical approach of economic activities

-A collective project for a new paradigm with PEKEA
another way of thinking society

as Political :
organisation of cooperation between actors,
negotiation between powers

another way of living
as an Ethical way :
Acknowledge Fraternity

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III) First steps with two building blocks

1) Societal value

2) The feasible common future

PEKEA has indicated four interrelated blocks of knowledge to be built and addressing the following items :

- 1) Societal value – *ethical approach - Rennes 2003*
- 2) Democracy facing Ecocracy – *political approach – Rennes 2005*
- 3) Individual and collective behaviours - *Dakar 2006*
- 4) The feasible common future – *Bangkok 2004*

A project conducted

with academics from any disciplines and from any country in the world
with activists and citizens involved in practising a living
different from the dominant pattern of living
with local governments acting first not for free circulation of merchandises
but first for the sake of a better life for the whole society

1) Societal value – *ethical approach - Rennes 2003*

a few conclusions from this conference: *In Search of a Brotherly Economy*

The key role of Fraternity appears

First after the French Revolution

against the absolute Power from the King and against the fact that place of everyone in the society

was given according to the Birth privilege

Liberty - Equality - Fraternity.

However it becomes the motto of the French Republic only after 1848

and since, it is written on all official buildings of the Republic

Is it a specific French way of thinking? No....

1) Societal value – *ethical approach - Rennes 2003*

a few conclusions from this conference: *In Search of a Brotherly Economy*

In the preamble of the Indian Constitution (1947), it is written, in a similar way of thinking, that the people of India have resolved:

"to secure to all its citizens

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among
them all

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and
integrity of the nation"

1) Societal value – *ethical approach - Rennes 2003*

a few conclusions from this conference: *In Search of a Brotherly Economy*

On December 10, 1948

the General Assembly of the United Nations

adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

In the full text of which appears

Article 1.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of **brotherhood.**

In Search of a Brotherly Economy

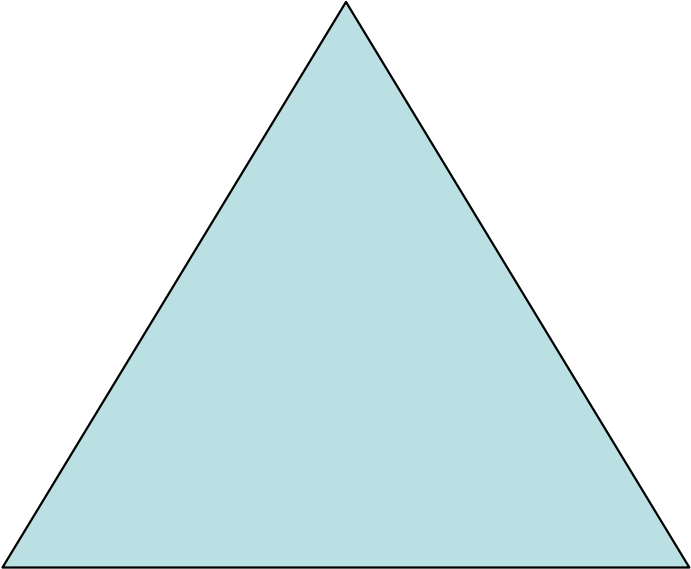
Fraternity has been forgotten everywhere and Ethics replaced by research for Economic efficiency.

The expression of this by the Liberal capitalism, which claims to represent Liberty, creates a society that produces inequalities and never fulfils its promise to reduce them - a society where solidarity is just sufficient to address, reluctantly, some forms of social exclusion.

Under the pragmatism of a specific way of Economic efficiency, State socialism claimed to embody Equality but did so at the expense of Liberty - and it was pressure for Liberty that led to its failure and the fall of the Berlin Wall..

For the last two types of society, Ethics and Fraternity comes second, at best. We should think of putting Fraternity and Ethics first instead.

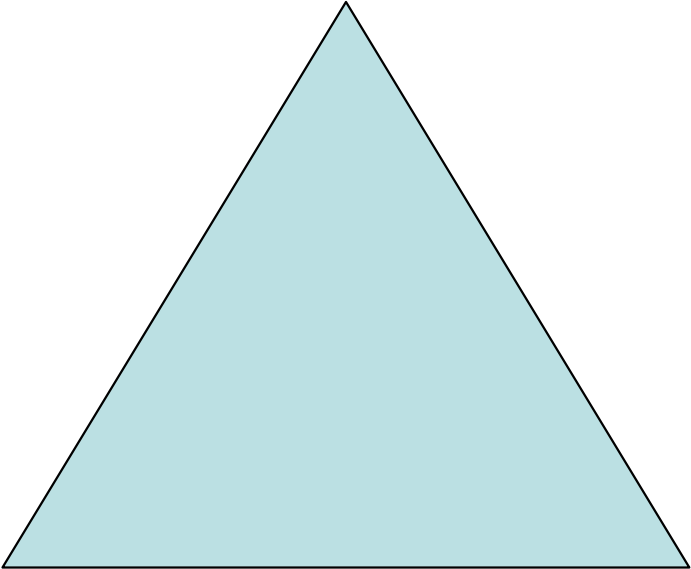
Fraternity



Equality

Liberty

Fraternity



Equality

Liberty

A Political and Ethical Knowledge on Economic Activities

In Search of a Brotherly Economy

A tentative definition:

“economic” is a qualification given to some activities pertaining to a whole set of collective activities.

These activities are a collective **creation of societal value**.

The society organises a collective sharing of activities among members; all these activities are necessary to the present and future life of the society.

In this sense relationships between persons are more important than the management of things. To make community, cooperation is more important than competition.

To make community at the planet level, we must extend this primacy of cooperation to relation between societies and responsibility to others welfare.

2) The feasible common future – *Bangkok 2004*

a few conclusions from this conference: *What feasible common future?*

To build – a Common - Future

To build means first that we cannot only go on as in the past.

There is no track to follow, we have to decide and to build the path.

A common means to acknowledge that we have to take care of the others and care of our planet

and to decide in common

A life in common is a brotherly life, a brotherly civilisation and it is first based on
Responsibility

4) The feasible common future – *Bangkok 2004*

a few conclusions from this conference: *What feasible common future?*

To build – a common - Future

Future means that we hope something better for us

and for the generations to come

This future will be better if our collective power of creation for living and acting is greater

It will keep to be common if this power is not exerted at the expense of the possibilities of living and acting of the others or of nature,

and if this power is not extended for its own sake;

in case of damages there must exist remedies.

Democratic negotiations will ensure this observance

It will be built : markets – individual, independent acting- are not able to define a future, to organise peace and collective march towards a common target.

What feasible common future?

At any local level, any group is organising, by direct participatory democracy, according to its culture, an arrangement of localised activities to ensure the exercise by the group of its creation power for living and acting in the better way it has chosen.

Between groups, and/or at national levels inter-local arrangements of activities including various types of collective and inter-individual exchanges have to be organised; conflicts must be resolved thanks to some kind of representative democracy, as at this scale, it is necessary to organise some debate and discussion between groups and for a good workings, the groups must have representative fellows. Some questions are directly tackled at this level.

At the planet level, there also relevant environmental issues ; global warming, non renewable resources exhaustion etc..But also other general issues for the workings and inter-workings of any societies.

Intergovernmental conferences must be backed and oriented by an emerging world civil society and a general world democratic opinion.

What feasible common future?

Limits : no possibility to replicate for the whole world the type of society created in the US, Western and in Japan. These are not models to follow and they must change for a better future for them and for the whole planet and its future.

Priorities : at least one third of the inhabitants of the planet are still expecting access to land, to water, to sufficient food, to basic education and to elementary health care. Interesting experiments like: fair trade, microfinance, lets, and many tools of solidarity economy are moving the opinion against dominant thinking but are still dwarfed by dominant practices and official government actions with WTO and Washington Consensus

Conflicts : the domination of the USA is hegemonic. However, US and OECD richest countries' dominance is challenged by a few countries playing the liberal rules : China, Brazil, India, and some Asian and Latin American Nics .. They are trying to exert their will to create for themselves a greater power for living and acting at the expense of the others and of nature as the richest have done in the past.

What can be done ?

There is no solution on the self, and there is no technical solution.

The work to be done is ours, not that of experts.

There is no alternative from economics but outside economics, in democracy.

[2) Democracy facing Ecocracy – *political approach – Rennes 2005*]

Democracy means the sovereignty of Peoples and they have to decide the **Priorities** and to organise the workable solution of the **Conflicts** :
these conflicts are necessary to ensure a debate.

Thus Peoples have to say the rule, the good and not to let it to the “market” (markets are only able to say what can be sold), and to organise cooperation at all levels.

A keyword for guidance could be Responsibility and the main lines to ensure it,
could be to design and write a short guideline as a
Universal Declaration for Individual and Collective Responsibility

This could be an outcome of PEKEA conference in Dakar in 2006.

PEKEA

Political and Ethical Knowledge on Economic Activities



PEKEA a global think tank network

With more than 700 researchers, and thousands of people involved in partner associations and local authorities

PEKEA

Political and Ethical Knowledge on Economic Activities



a Planet for humanity and solidarity

<http://www.pekea.org>

another world is possible



**the civil society is invited to devise an
economy with a human face,
for a world
where we will live happy altogether.**