

AE Discussion Group – ‘A Human Response to Globalization’ by Marc Desaulles

The Second Gathering was January 5th 7PM at the home of Victor, Nora & Carlos

Thank you Victor, Nora and Carlos for inviting us into your cozy home. First, at Lorene’s wonderful suggestion – a review: At the first warm up gathering last month at Marianna’s home, we got to hear from each other as well as extract a few key clues as to the nature of our journey into ‘A Human Response to Globalization’ by our Swiss colleague Marc Desaulles. 1) The book surveys recent economic evolution and starts by taking a fresh look at the relationship between the economy and the human being 2) then examining the problems of globalization and competition. 3) The axioms of economics are ‘thought’ through anew along with 4) the fundamental connection of the economy to the ‘social tool’ of money and its differentiation in modern accounting that acts as a 5) starting point for a practical path. The material in the book is a work in progress based on more than two decades of applied collaborative research and the work of the Associative Economics Institute.

This past Wednesday the 5th of January 2011. First Chapter, ‘Where there’s a will, there’s a world’

I enjoyed and was surprised at how ready everyone was to articulate key thoughts in connection with the material at hand. After a lively go-around we simply read the chapter. I liked reading all the way though and then engaging in a deeper conversation, as we did.

Some great questions emerged that are worth revisiting from time to time as we read. Victor highlighted the challenge in regard to the dominant concepts in modern economics to replace ‘competition and market forces’ with ‘responsibility and association. Rob’s passion bubbled up right away when he extracted a question from the first chapter, “How do we get beyond growth as the way to do sustainable economics?” Victor and Lorene both brought up the remarkable notion that money, accounting and figures could be used as a social tool for a new kind of perception. I look forward to working with this theme as we go along. “Why is economics education and financial literacy lacking at school?”, asks Carlos. Thanks in part to Lorene, most everyone was drawn into the conversation.

A lot of territory, key ideas and questions, was covered in a short period, as we left by 8:45 I think. It felt like a full and fruitful entry into this introduction to associative economics with Marc Desaulles.

This first part seems to be framing the major issues and describing the problems as he outlines the methods to be used. Among other things, the relationship of

the economy to the individual human being as examined in a fresh light. He also creates an imagination for a way forward based on the awakening of human beings as we meet each other in economic life.

The first chapter for me is a call to action. We are even asked to “Strike a new path.” The challenge is to reject the notion that competition leads to regulation of the economy. Rather, It is the responsible, yet free individual that is at the center of economic life. Now what do you do? I look forward to next months meeting at Marianna’s (February 2nd), where we can work with these initial economic thoughts and continue to ‘unpack’ them as we deepen the inquiry and come to a new level of understanding together, as Victor suggested. The next section Chapter 2 is short but contains a fundamental, if not evolutionary, theorem of value creation that has the potential to match explanatory power conveyed in conventional economic images like the ‘invisible hand’ and ‘market forces’. A twin theory of value.

I look forward to meeting again 7 PM Wednesday the 2nd of February at Marianna’s home on Washington St. Please feel free to send out comments and question in regard to any of our reading so far.

Best Wishes,

Daniel Osmer

AE Café

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