

PHILOSOPHY, HISTORY, AND METHODOLOGY OF ECONOMICS

Looking Beyond the Individualism and *Homo Economicus*
of Neoclassical Economics: A Collection of Original Essays
Dedicated to the Memory of Peter L. Danner,
Our Friend and Colleague
Edward J. O'Boyle (Editor)
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This volume, edited by Edward O'Boyle, is a collection of essays to honor the life and work of Peter Danner (d. 2008). Danner is best known for his personalist approach to economic science with its focus on an integral view of the human person as economic agent.

It must be said that the relevance and quality of the chapters in this volume varies. Regarding relevance, the chapters by Thanawala and Marangoni and Solari extensively comment on Peter Danner's work and cite most of his works. In contrast, the chapters written by O'Connell and Wisman each cite only a single work of Danner without much elaboration. In these essays, one gets the impression that the authors cited Danner *pro forma* because the omission of the reference would not in any way compromise the chapter's argumentation and flow, which appears entirely unrelated to Danner's work. Regarding quality, some of the chapters are conversant with high quality economics research, Catholic social teaching, or the history of economic thought and make specific claims supported by clear evidence and sound argumentation, while other chapters come across as opinion pieces without much theoretical or empirical support. To complicate matters, quality and relevance were not correlated, and thus I found some of the chapters with little relevance to be very high quality and interesting but largely unrelated to Danner's work.

Indeed, even when Danner's work is explored in detail, it is done within frameworks that are hard to reconcile with each other. For instance, Stanfield and Carroll's essay, "Beyond the 'Anguish of Affluence,'" finds commonalities between Danner's early work and Marxism, only to be contrasted by Maryann Keating's claim that Danner embraced the free market within a responsible personalist approach in her chapter, "Personalist Economics: Danner's Framework for the Good Life." Thus, a reader unfamiliar with Danner may become intrigued by his work and his network of intellectually heterogeneous friends but would not find in the volume a clear, well-articulated picture of the man and his work.

One of the chapters that passed both relevance and quality tests with good marks was Thanawala's, "The Economic Person in a Global Society." Thanawala, a past president of the Association for Social Economics, describes Danner's efforts to bring personalism into economics using many of his published works while discussing its implications for the current challenges posed by globalization. This chapter is complemented nicely by Anthony Scaperlanda's chapter, "Reigning in Multinational Enterprise in the Twenty-First Century," which investigates the implications of John Paul II's economic thought in the context of the differences between the European Union and the US antitrust regulatory and enforcement approaches, albeit only marginally referring to Danner's work.

Similarly, Marangoni and Solari's essay differentiating the solidarist tradition in economic thought with Danner's personalist approach is worth reading and complements the introduction to the volume. In the introduction, O'Boyle and his colleagues trace Danner's intellectual pedigree to solidarism. The differences between solidarism and personalism in economic affairs are ignored by some of the volume's other authors who routinely refer to a solidarist/personalist paradigm. These differences are of great interest to the serious scholar because, as Marangoni and Solari accurately explain, the field has changed the orientation of Catholic economic thought from a practical and policy orientation to a more speculative or theoretical approach.

The heterogeneity of the volume may be a strength when one gets used to it. For example, I found the essay on price and asset bubbles by Barry Keating intellectually stimulating and the discussion on sustainable development by Wilber a well-posed moral challenge. The chapters trying to link evolutionary theory and personalism were for me less interesting or persuasive, particularly because if one is serious about evolutionary theory one must present it with its nuances. Thus, I was surprised to find O'Boyle's chapter less compelling, in part, because I have read his books on personalist economics and human material need with great interest. Thus, in my opinion, this chapter does not represent O'Boyle's best work. Perhaps the task of integrating evolutionary theory with personalist economics cannot really be given a fair treatment in the confines of a single chapter.

Overall, this volume represents a kind tribute by colleagues and friends to a man who appears to have been rich in what matters most. The volume includes a comprehensive bibliography of Danner's works, which is useful for those readers—including this reviewer—who would like to read more.

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