Chapter 13

A Relational Anthropology for Contemporary Economics? Concluding Reflections

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“How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it.”

Adam Smith (Opening sentence of The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759).)

13.1 Introduction

In one way or another, all of the contributions in this volume respond to the opening paper in which we addressed the need for refining the *Homo economicus* model and explored the potential of a modified version preliminarily entitled *Homo amans*. We sincerely thank all respondents for their worthy contributions and their thinking along with us, whether in supportive or critical ways. Some engage directly with our discussion paper in a way that implicitly or explicitly support our thoughts on the *Homo amans* model; others also express concerns and raise critical questions. In this final paper, we take the opportunity to discuss some of these, using them to refine and reshape our thoughts on the *Homo amans* model. These final thoughts will be shared in the conclusion.

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13.2 Discussion

1. *Should anthropological models be imposed on free human beings?*

The contributions by Dennis Krebs and Deirdre McCloskey evoke the question of how biological determinism, free will, and moral responsibility are interrelated. While giving an answer to this question is beyond the scope of this essay,¹ it is important to say a bit more about the notion of freedom. McCloskey in her contribution praises the benefits of capitalism, being a strong advocate of free market economy without government interference. This position implies that the idea of *Homo amans* could be an obstacle as it imposes an idealistic anthropology on persons operating in free and neutral markets. For the rational *Homo economicus*, there are no restrictions on what sort of preferences are admissible. Adam Smith's emphasis on self-interest endorses the freedom of the individual. The contractual relationship between different parties guarantees basic equality and freedom of choice. So why interfere ideologically if it limits our freedom?

The problem, however, with a neo-liberal view on the human person is that it tends to reduce the meaning of freedom. Already in 1969, Isaiah Berlin (2002) helpfully distinguished between negative and positive liberty. Negative liberty is the absence of external constraints, obstacles or blockades. Positive liberty is the possibility of acting as an agent, to control one's life and realize one's primary purposes. Capitalism tends to focus exclusively on negative freedom, a "freedom from..." being rid of obstacles; positive freedom is a freedom of becoming, a "freedom to...". Theorists of negative freedom start from the postulation of the heterogeneity of human ends and preferences. Non-interference and absence of coercion is fundamental to freedom. Theorists of positive freedom believe that it is possible to distinguish a moral end, or at least some set of potentialities for people to pursue. McCloskey's focus on negative freedom and liberal allergy to coercion fuels her negative attitude towards government interferences. This bias makes it difficult to see the importance of positive freedom.

The *Homo amans* concept as outlined in the discussion paper understands freedom as both negative and positive within a context of community and relationality. The socio-psychological analysis of freedom by Erich Fromm (1941) may be of help here. His research was driven by the shocking impact of fascism in the 1920s through 40s in Italy and Germany. Fascism took everyone by surprise because man's rational side, based on calculated self-interest, was taken for granted. However, fascism relied on an appeal to irrationality, fear, and romantic nationalism. So, what is freedom in light of ideology? Fromm (1970) built on Freud's basic understanding of unconsciousness, which he criticizes, and turned psychoanalysis into a social heuristic tool. Individuals have "dark passions" and these need to be suppressed by society. This need for suppression creates culture. Capitalism is a form of culture dealing with our needs. This creates a paradox – the more we

¹For a recent study, see Willmott (2016).

suppress our desires, the more culture we create, but the higher the risk of neurosis, because the individual only has a certain propensity to cope with the suppression of his/her desires; the more freedom we are allowed to get, the less culture we create.

In his book *Escape from Freedom*, Fromm (1941) gives a profound social and historical analysis of freedom in modern society. For most of human history, man saw himself as part of nature, being one with it and driven by survival instincts. Yet culture developed and people were freed from the bonds of nature, which created a pre-individualistic society. In a pre-individualistic society a person is conscious of themselves as a member of the community. In this case, the person's actions are not based on self-realization. In other words, the person is still related to the world by primary ties as they do not yet conceive of themselves as an individual agent apart from their social roles. Freedom is defined by a sense of belonging, providing security, and identity. This notion of pre-freedom is seen, for instance, in tribal and medieval cultures. In extreme forms, the person was not an individual, but understood their duty in the community hierarchy and submitted to external forces, often confirmed by religious structures.

During the Renaissance and Reformation(s), the focus was on negative liberty as people tried to free themselves from social and religious coercion. The emergence of capitalism demolished the old securities of the medieval social system. The individual was left to themselves. Everything depended on their own effort and no longer on the security of their traditional system. However, everyone experienced increasing insecurity and anxiety. Capital and entrepreneurship had now become the supra-personal force determining society and personal fate. Again, this is a paradox as capitalism shaped a world that was both limitless and threatening at the same time. Individual freedom, even though it brought independence and reason, isolated people as they became anxious and powerless. This isolation was hard to bear, and the alternatives were either to escape from the burden of freedom into new dependencies and submission, such as fascism, or to advance to the full realization of positive freedom which is based on the uniqueness and individuality of man. Since there is the danger of some kind of relapse into pre-individualism, Fromm argues, the only healthy way forward is that man forges new productive relations in love.

Against Fromm's reading of history and cultural evolution, the *Homo amans* concept should not be understood as a relapse into a pre-individual society. In that case, it becomes an escape from freedom and a coercive ideology. In a marketing driven society the person tries to adapt themselves to a sick society. Their role is defined by what they do, what is desired from them, they are as a commodity on the market. According to Fromm, the psychodynamics of marketing bear a certain relationship to the authoritarian character of political ideologies. Both orient themselves towards an object outside the person. In the marketing orientation, this object is not a leader or an institution, but rather the anonymous and constantly shifting authority of the markets. A narcissistic character can function well in such an environment. It is only from a deeper understanding of love that a new sense of identity and individual freedom can develop (Fromm 1956). A mentally healthy person is a person who lives by love and respects life, not only that of his own but also that of his fellow man. These type of characteristics are required for a sane society (Fromm

1955). Hence the idea of *Homo amans* is not meant as a means to limit freedom, but to help people become free persons.

2. *What about the nature of love? Is love a stable virtue inherent to human nature, or a structural dynamic to emerge in and through social interaction?*

In response to our argument in the discussion paper that love denotes a fundamental characteristic of human beings, Rebekka Klein remarks that “. . . the view that love is a general trait of human persons or actions is not helpful but only obfuscates the study of its phenomenality.” She then draws on Kierkegaard in emphasizing that love is complex and requires a special form of phenomenology. Making reference to various behavioral and neuroscientific investigations, she argues that love should not be seen as an innate virtue. “Love,” she argues, “is not a stable core of human nature or a character trait which can be educated or trained. Rather, it should be seen as a dynamic structure at work in human attitudes and behaviours, which arises out of a change of perspective concerning the world, oneself and others. This change of perspective cannot be determined but happens out of contingent reasons.”

Let us first clarify that, to us, faith, hope, and love are not descriptions of the essential nature of human beings; we are, of course, more than questing, longing, and loving beings. Wesley Wildman also warns against such an essentializing definition of the human person. We do believe, however, that the traits of faith, hope, and love are foundational to our relational constitution as human beings. Yet Klein’s Kierkegaardian view of love touches upon a weakness in our position, which is that we have not adequately taken into account the bipolarity of virtues, including that of love. We do not believe that love is an innate virtue that is stable throughout one’s life, but that all human beings from birth onwards have an innate potential to love. Whether or not external factors determine an act as an act of love, the very fact that people can act as such proves their ability to do so. We believe this is a capacity common to all human beings.

Perhaps some further thoughts on the nature of love are helpful here. Very often a contrast is drawn between an ethics of love as an unreal ideal and egoistic tendencies in terms of hedonism. This focus on contrast is a common pitfall in theological ethics. McCloskey in her contribution refers to the theologian Paul Tillich as an advocate of the contrast between “Christian love” and “economic and political egoism,” when she quotes from his co-authored essay: “The spirit of Christian love accuses a social order which consciously and in principle is built upon economic and political egoism, and it demands a new order in which the feeling of community is the foundation of the social structure.” Behind this contrast are some theological misunderstandings that are widely spread. Nicholas Wolterstorff (2011) refers to this approach as “agapism.” This approach was mainly influenced by Søren Kierkegaard and even more by Anders Nygren. Klein draws on Kierkegaard and distinguishes the uniqueness of Christian love from universal human need-loves. Kierkegaard (1874, pp. 86–89) distinguishes agapic love from natural loves. Christian love is unnatural, and foremost a radical change of perspective rather than a character trait. It is seeing the other as an equal child of God, which helps the

human being to acknowledge the nearness of love and also its practicability. Christian love is a dynamic structure at work in human attitudes and behaviors, arising out of a change of perspective concerning the world, oneself, and others. This type of love, according to Kierkegaard, is not spontaneous; it is a matter of duty. As Klein rightly observes, Kierkegaard's understanding of love is deep and complex. Nygren goes a few steps further than Kierkegaard. His influence on modern agapism can hardly be overestimated. He believes that all forms of natural love are manifestations of *eros*, which are types of need-love in search for satisfaction and completion. Agapic love is a mystery and essentially different in nature. It is demonstrated in love for the enemy and it does not recognize any valuable quality in the object; it is pure benevolence (Nygren 1969, p. 78, 215). Agapic love is motivated by God's unconditional forgiveness. It is fundamentally different and cannot co-exist with natural self-love and our love preferences. It even goes beyond justice and principles. Agapic love is gratuitous generosity and not based on the requirements of justice. It is not based on the justice requirements of the other, it is not based on law at all. God chooses love over justice. According to Nygren (1969, p. 75), agapic love needs to be spontaneous, since God's love is spontaneous.

We believe that Wolterstorff rightly points out that this popular disconnection between love and justice is theologically and philosophically problematic. Agapic love incorporates justice and human dignity. It seeks to promote the good in the life of the other. Even more so, it incorporates *eros*-love and self-love (Wolterstorff 2011, pp. 93–100). Wolterstorff (2011, p. 101) describes this broad understanding of agapic love as “care”: “Care combines seeking to enhance someone's flourishing with seeking to secure their just treatment.” This tendency to care is quite natural. Yet there is malformed care, such as paternalism, or preferential and well-formed care which “incorporates reverence, respect for the recipient of one's care” and does not wrong others (Wolterstorff 2011, p. 102). Well-formed care, incorporating justice, natural love, and the overall well-being of others are very important for understanding love. In that sense love is always doing what justice requires.

The interesting point of an ethics of care is that it gives prominence to our capacity of concern and empathy. Interdisciplinary research indicates that our innate ability to empathize with other people is what makes us relational beings (Slote 2007). As primatologist Frans de Waal (2012) points out, we – like other primates – are strongly inclined to bond, to reach out, and to have empathy. This testifies (although it does not “prove”) to the deep-seated potential to love, which we posit as important to appropriate in a new economic anthropology.

3. *Does the Homo amans model aim to replace that of Homo economicus?*

Klein discerns a “strict opposition” in the way we have presented the *Homo amans* concept in relation to that of *Homo economicus*. It also strikes her that we seem to devalue the contents of the *Homo economicus* model on the basis that it appeared somewhere in the history of ideas. Consequently, Klein wonders whether some truth in the *Homo economicus* model can be found. These are all important observations, which need some clarification from our side.

First of all, we acknowledge that a phrase like “viable alternative” implies opposition. At the same time, however, we have stated that the *Homo economicus* model is in need of “modification” and that we aim to develop “a more refined anthropological model”. So, we answer in the negative the question of whether we see a strict opposition between *Homo economicus* and *Homo amans*. What we argue is that *Homo amans* is a necessary adjustment of *Homo economicus*, supposing that we are both rational and relational beings. The latter, we believe, is not sufficiently taken into account in the *Homo economicus* model. As such, the *Homo amans* model is complementary to that of *Homo economicus*.

This implies, second, that we do acknowledge that there is certainly some truth to the *Homo economicus* model. Admittedly, this is not sufficiently stressed in the discussion paper. In his recent book, Michael Pirson (2017) – on the basis of studies by Paul Lawrence and Nitin Nohria – argues that there are four core human drives that account for the complexity of human thinking and behavior: (1) the drive to acquire (Lawrence 2010), (2) the drive to defend (Lawrence and Nohria 2002), (3) the drive to bond, and (4) the drive to comprehend (Lawrence and Nohria 2002). The former two refer to things that people need, and need to protect, in order to survive. As such, they fit the *Homo economicus* model. The drives to bond and comprehend fit the *Homo amans* model as they refer to people’s sociality and desire to understand themselves and their environment. From this perspective, *Homo economicus* and *Homo amans* are complementary models.

Finally, we consider any normative anthropology to be the product of its time, and so we do not consider the *Homo economicus* model to be inaccurate simply because it is a late eighteenth century idea. We do think it is inaccurate, because scholarly research across various academic disciplines has revealed that there is a social component to human nature that is not sufficiently taken into account in the *Homo economicus* model.

4. *Is the Homo amans model descriptive or prescriptive in nature, or both? Should it be studied from more distinctive perspectives?*

The response paper by Gerrit Glas provokes the question of whether the *Homo amans* model is descriptive or prescriptive in nature. Like the *Homo economicus* model, it is both. In this respect, as Glas rightly points out, our research moves within the broad philosophical tradition of eudemonic ethics. A statement about “the good life” is both descriptive and prescriptive. But recognizing this brings us into conflict with two important propositions that are currently seen as important. First, there is the well-known criticism of the “is-ought fallacy” as introduced by David Hume. Second, there is the argument about the role and moral scope of different scientific disciplines, in particular the scope of social sciences. It is not possible, in the confines of this essay, to address both issues in depth, but given the weight of both objections some clarification is needed.

Concerning the epistemological is-ought fallacy, or what G.E. Moore (1903) later called the “naturalistic fallacy,” Glas is absolutely correct to say that we should not uncritically draw values from facts, certainly not from religious motives. But while this is an important warning, the potential of the naturalistic fallacy does

not ask for a complete overhaul of our project; it is possible to argue for a connection between ontology and ethics; but this is not an automatic or self-evident connection. Hume's original argument was not about the epistemological impossibility of moving from an "is" to an "ought" (Smith 2010, pp. 386–96). He simply noted – and he was right to do so – that this is not a self-evident deduction. However, this epistemic criticism does not necessarily mean that we have to completely disconnect "is" from "ought," nor that one is scientific and the other quasi-religious. Recognizing the naturalistic fallacy simply means asserting that there is a step to be taken between "is" and "ought"; this calls for a normative premise. The teleological approach that we are introducing, by means of our conception of *Homo amans*, is meant precisely to form such a bridge from "is" to "ought." The "ought" has its *raison d'être* in a goal category: In order for agent A to achieve goal B, A reasonably ought to do C. Or, in other words, a knife *is* a sharp object that *ought* to cut through the apple. This goal approach to the problem was elaborated by, among others, Alasdair MacIntyre (1981) who mainly relies on Aristotle. It is precisely our criticism of the one-sidedness of *Homo economicus* and so-called "value-free scientific naturalism" that relates to this epistemological axiom. Especially in our times, with the earth being in danger of collapsing, we need to look more closely at how life is structured and what this means for our moral actions. We consider such a qualified relationship between "is" and "ought," therefore, to be not only possible, but also an urgent task for ethics.

Acknowledging the warning about the naturalistic fallacy, there is also the criticism that the task of social sciences is purely descriptive and not prescriptive. We tend to disagree. A human ontology (or anthropology) is always implicitly present and must now be made explicit and questioned on a coherent and factual basis. Charles Taylor (1989, pp. 2–8) points to the exaggerated fear of the connection between ontology and ethics in the current world of human sciences. He speaks of a suppression, an avoidance of the "inescapable frameworks," as if articulating the fundamental question of the essence of man is a legacy of an outdated pre-scientific past. Such a deliberate avoidance of normative frameworks is also criticized by Christian Smith (2010, pp. 78–88). He notes that while social scientists avoid ontological-ethical questions, they do not shy away from making powerful moral statements about what is conducive to human flourishing and what is not. They invoke equality, freedom, and human rights, but fail when it comes to providing an ontological basis for these (Smith 2010, pp. 3–5). According to Smith, this is a form of schizophrenia caused by a dominant reductionist methodology of the natural sciences. According to him, the gap between "is" and "ought" can be closed through the development of a teleological moral framework, which he then contributes to, describing individuals as "centers with purpose".

In terms of method, Glas proposes a multi-perspective vision taking into account the perspective of one's life- and worldview, the perspective of philosophy (core concepts; conceptual frameworks; paradigms; argumentative structures), the perspective of theoretical knowledge, and the perspective of practical (professional) knowledge and know-how. These four perspectives give the impression of a separation of estates and assume that each area uses a generally accepted methodology.

But is this really the case? Does Glas not have his own views on these four perspectives? To give an example, existential and phenomenological philosophers will have reservations when it comes to the distinction between experienced worldview and theoretical conceptual knowledge. The separation between science and practice also seems to us to be rather artificial and too much influenced by a scientific paradigm. Charles Taylor (2004), for example, refers to modern social imaginaries. These are not “worldviews,” but rather frames of reference or assumptions of social practices. Here, too, we see how perspectives merge together.

Glas sees value in the clear distinction between perspectives and is critical when it comes to “logical transitions.” He claims: “For the understanding of the current project, the above implies that there are no such (logical, deductive) relationships between economic theory and economic practice, between philosophical views on man and labor and economic theory; nor between the images of man based on life- and worldview and economic theory.” His separation of “is” and “ought” leads, among other things, to statements such as: “Understanding how empathy develops does not lead to recognition of empathy as moral virtue.” While this is true, it does say something about how empathy can develop as a virtue, and this development or character growth is the very essence of virtue ethics. There is an intuitive linkage between understanding the phenomenon and normative valuation. But even more so, we see effectively that people living without empathy show destructive behavior. Integrating these themes is not a “dreaming away” but an existential necessity. Reducing the logical step towards ethics to a question of “moral and religious reasons” ignores the great impact that scientific insights have on our contemporary moral positions.

According to Glas, if we understand him correctly, the place where different perspectives would come together is in professional practice. This is a very interesting idea that fits in with the global crises as we are currently experiencing them. When we talk about an economy that takes into account the limits of growth (Raworth 2017) or an economy at the service of the common good (Felber 2019), we are indeed talking about the need to change our current practices. But these innovative practices are supported by an implicit vision of human happiness and man’s place in nature. Reality thus forms a whole, and the problem is that economic science has lost this breadth and is now trapped in its own reductionist perspective, the dead alley of a science that does not want to contribute to the articulation of what is, or is not, humane.

5. *How will the philosophical concept of Homo amans bring about social transformation in terms of economic action?*

This question is asked in various ways, especially by Hendrik Opdebeeck, Gerrit Glas, and Wesley Wildman. The latter, for example, warns us against philosophical overreach, i.e. in reality, policymakers and educators do not get their ideas from philosophers. Instead, he notes, philosophers need policymakers and educators more than the other way around. We tend to disagree, but Wildman is certainly right

to wonder about the real-world implications of the *Homo amans* model (but see the contribution of James Van Slyke, who gives a good practical example). It reminds us of Marx's famous words that "[t]he philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways. The point, however, is to change it" (Marx 1845, p. 535). In recognizing this, we admit that the discussion paper does not contain much concrete advice on how *Homo amans* is to bring about social transformation.

However, we certainly had social transformation in mind when we wrote the discussion paper, and we will endeavor to operationalize the ideas contained in it towards realizing social transformation. However, before indicating further how we envision this, we would like to first challenge Wildman's thesis that in reality, philosophers primarily play a second-order role. While it is true that ideas often seem to be second-order, theoretical reflections of already established practices, this does not make philosophy the handmaiden to practice. The history of philosophy has shown that a philosophical view can also strongly shape human attitudes towards practice, both for good and for bad. This can be illustrated by means of a reference to the inception of the capabilities approach by the Indian economist and philosopher Amartya Sen (1980) who developed this new approach to human development based on extensive field research which he did in India. It was in pondering the realities of deep poverty and inequality that he realized the need for a new approach, which he then began to develop theoretically. His extensive research earned him the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1998. In this new approach, the focus on growth of GDP is complimented with a focus on the empowerment of human capabilities. The primacy of either theory or practice is hard to establish in the development of the capability approach, but the overall model was, in the end, a result of the interaction between theory and practice.

This is a positive example of how new thinking in the face of old realities can lead to changed practices. However, history teaches us that this mechanism can also have detrimental results. When it comes to economics, for example, there is evidence that students of economics experience a marked drop in their level of altruism during their studies. In effect, they become more selfish, in various ways, as has been illustrated by different studies (see Frank and Schulze 2000; Wang et al. 2012; Frank et al. 1993).

These examples show that theory matters to socio-economic life, either for good or bad. The second example, in particular, illustrates the importance of education. It is a long-established truth that education plays a major role in either bringing about or in stifling social change (Burns 2002). We therefore recognize it as a challenge, not only to nuance and further develop our concept of the human person as a *Homo amans* but also to develop a concrete training program for faculties of economics and for business schools. As such, we hope to stimulate and empower students of economics and business to develop a richly sourced anthropology, drawing on various academic disciplines, in order to challenge them to resist reductionism and dogmatism of any kind.

13.3 Conclusion

Given the contemporary challenges in society, we hope to foster an increasing awareness of the importance of anthropological assumptions in economic thinking. Because the dominant paradigm of *Homo economicus* is too narrow a basis for a just and well-functioning society, it must be seriously called into question. This quest leads inevitably to an interdisciplinary dialogue and a prominent role for the humanities. We are human beings or persons in an evolving cultural community. However, the overall conclusion of this multidisciplinary dialogue is that reforming anthropology in contemporary economics is anything but easy. Questioning the accuracy of the rational *Homo economicus* model, we have started the conversation by introducing the *Homo amans* model, suggesting that people are socially conditioned in their natural ability to search for meaning (“to believe”), to project their longings unto the future (“to hope”), and to relate meaningfully to others (“to love”). The following lessons have been learned from our conversation with the respondents in this volume:

- *Homo amans* as an isolated concept cannot serve as an independent model for a more humane economy. It is a crucial element of a much-needed change in social imaginary. However important the traits of faith, hope, and love for the social condition of man, there is more to human beings that needs to be taken into account. As such, *Homo amans* cannot but serve as a complementary model to that of *Homo economicus*. What needs more study is the exact relationship between the rational and relational qualities of people in relation to trust. As Harry Hummels remarked in his foreword to this volume, “[a] dialectic relationship, leading to a constructive discourse between the self-interested *Homo economicus* and the other-oriented *Homo amans*, is more likely to clear the path towards the change that is needed in our current society.”
- In light of this, perhaps the term *Homo amans* should be dropped altogether. It focuses too much on the quality of love, which in the discussion has turned out to be a complex and ambiguous virtue for economics. We have also learned that it should not be equated with altruism as there is more to love, including justice and human dignity. We suggest that perhaps the term *Homo florens*, as once used by Cicero (Romeo 1979, p. 50), more accurately focuses on the goal of the project, allowing more room for the rational qualities of man and also giving more prominence to the virtues of faith and hope. However, what is crucial is that the idea of *Homo florens* is not perceived as an isolated individual looking for calculated self-interest, but a person who lives in a complex network of trust relationships. The broad ethical concept of care, integrating justice and love, might be an interesting avenue for further investigation. The ethics of care does not start with our individuality but with relationality. It recognizes that human beings are highly dependent for many years of their lives and only partly dependent for the rest. Progress is only possible if we take into account the needs of those who are dependent on us (Held 2007). Our broad understanding of care can be integrated with the capabilities approach in economics. Are we naturally caring beings

seeking to enhance not only our own well-being but, driven by empathy, also the flourishing of others? In short, “do we care?”

- In our discussion paper, too little attention was given to the dark side of *Homo amans*, namely that the wrong loves can obstruct or even destroy human flourishing. Virtues, including that of faith, hope, and love, are bipolar. The life sciences, in particular, have shown that we are biologically preprogramed to search for meaning, project our desires, and relate to others. Yet we should be careful about thinking that everyone cannot but develop into a *Homo amans*. Future research may want to focus on how people can be encouraged to search for meaning, to hope, and to love in the context of work, and how developing into the opposites of these can be prevented.
- The *Homo amans* model potentially has transformative power. What we need, as Emilio di Somma demonstrated in his paper, is a change in our epistemic structure or social imaginary. This transformative process can start as a set of claims belonging to a restricted group niche and then expand to embrace the whole community. Therefore, a theory of change needs to be developed in order to harvest the fruits of the *Homo amans* model. Yet along with theory there is a need for praxis. Our focus should be on what the philosopher Hanna Arendt (1960) calls not the contemplative live but the “active life,” our lives as citizens, workers, consumers, caregivers, teachers, policy makers, etc. Praxis is not simply applying some theory. Praxis is the cyclical process by which concepts such as human flourishing and *Homo amans* are embodied and realized. And through this process of embodiment our theories adapt continually. Accordingly, more attention will have to be given to how the model can be implemented in the curricula of management and business education, and how future leaders and policy makers can embody the model. Ultimately, it is about creating influencers who are able and willing to situate their own professional mission within a broader framework of human dignity, trust, sustainability, and relationships.

These thoughts will certainly not settle the debate, but hopefully will be taken into account when we continue to explore relational anthropology for a more humane and sustainable economy.

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