

## A Tribute to John M. Virgo

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John Virgo was not simply my teacher, nor was he just a colleague, nor was he a casual acquaintance. As the founder of the International Atlantic Economic Society, he was all three of those.

A scholar and a visionary, he established the society not to further any personal goals he had, but rather to further the goals and the aspirations of potential members. John saw the economic societies of his day as fractured: those who had access and those who did not, or only had occasional access at best.

A society is made up of members who share similar learning experiences, similar aspirations, and the love of learning and dissemination of said learning to a wide audience. Existing economic societies, as John saw them, did not fulfill the aspiration of all its citizens. Access was limited; interactions among colleagues at different educational institutions and at different places were not altogether evident.

Looking at economic societies with a different vision, he envisaged a community that is open to one and all; a community where East meets West; North meets South, and where the admission price is fraternity among all members.

To achieve this vision, John founded the International Atlantic Economic Society. In establishing the society, emphasis was placed on the nature of the society being “international”. Scholars were invited to join independent of what institution or community they belonged to. It was the birth of a unique society. The rest, as the saying goes, is history.

I had the honor and privilege to have known John as a member of his society. I have served on several of the society’s committees and published in the society’s journals, but most significant of all about my association with John’s society is the fact that I have learned a great deal about what it is to be a member of a society founded by John M. Virgo.

Society members who are touched by his generosity and who were privileged to have known him will always reflect in wonder about the man who changed the nature of social interactions—from a local one to one that is global.

For John and for John’s partner, I offer my humble salutations.

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