

Time for new paradigms

A phrase, wrongly attributed to Albert Einstein, says that insanity is nothing more than expecting different results by always repeating the same procedure. Even though this reflection was not said by the German physicist, its lesson undeniably remains relevant, especially within the context of the social sciences. Indeed, a quick look at the history of science, and at the history of the social sciences in particular, allows us to recognize moments when prevailing paradigms were strongly questioned, both by facts and by theoretical critique. In those moments of crisis, when paradigms seemed no longer effective, the solution was none other than to review, improve, and eventually make substantial changes to the theoretical framework from which the issues at hand were being addressed. It was clear that if the approach was not changed, the expected results would not be achieved. One cannot expect different results if one does the same thing.

Perhaps a characteristic feature of our time is the recognition of a certain crisis at the theoretical foundations of several social sciences. In other words, it is possible to identify contemporary critiques of prevailing paradigms in economic sciences, education sciences, management sciences, and even accounting sciences. In this issue of *Cultura Económica*, we aim to address the challenge of presenting a series of works that invite a discussion of central elements of the paradigms that govern these different disciplines.

First, we present the article by Sebastián Vázquez on the highly problematic issue of educational funding and its relationship with the longed-for equity. In his article, Vázquez, based on a detailed analysis of the reality revealed in the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, seeks to open the debate on the extent to which what he calls the state's quasi-monopoly in education is equitable, and whether the benefits derived from it are truly proportional to its inherent costs.

Secondly, Silvio Spiri's article aims to review the proposal of Adriano Olivetti, showing the relevance of some central points of his ideas in the philosophy of economics. According to Spiri, Olivetti proposed an alternative model that overcomes certain points considered crucial within economic science. This overcoming would occur by placing the human person and labor at the center, and prioritizing the common good over merely seeking profit as the ultimate goal of economic activity.

Thirdly, Milica Kočović De Santo seeks to show that certain theories and practices of self-management that occurred in Yugoslavia have their intellectual roots in theoretical positions close to anti-capitalist and anti-colonialist ideas. Moreover, the article argues that many of these cases can be linked to the theory of degrowth.

Fourthly, Enrique Martín Fernández analyzes the relationship between the International Sustainability Standards S1 and S2 and the Social Balance according to the regulation arising from Technical Resolution No. 36. His work aims to demonstrate, on one hand, the necessity of incorporating these elements into the aforementioned Technical Resolution, but it also focuses on the role of professionals in economic sciences and the need for them to stay informed on these topics.

In the Essays section, Luigi Pisoni's work analyzes European policies for rural areas, and specifically, the epistemological foundations of these policies. According to Pisoni, there is a shift away from a technocratic model towards a pluralistic and interdisciplinary paradigm. This approach also includes, in his view, the recognition not only of the various disciplines involved but also of the different territorial levels, acknowledging the importance of incorporating local voices into the debate on this issue.

The issue concludes with Marcelo Crocco's essay, in which he proposes to analyze the connection between the so-called "utilitarian ethics" and the epistemological framework that governs contemporary economics. Crocco seeks to discuss the link between this ethical view and the desire to achieve unlimited profitability from resources that are assumed to be limited.

I mentioned at the beginning of this presentation that one of the central elements of our time is the strong questioning that paradigms in all (or almost all) social sciences are undergoing. In this context, this issue is more of an invitation to discuss questions that lie at the core of disciplines such as education, economics, business management, and accounting, rather than providing answers. One is aware that many of the proposals presented here touch on the crucial aspects of each of these fields. It is also clear that it is possible (and even healthy) not to agree with some or all of the elements presented here. However, what cannot be avoided is addressing, in a serious and rigorous manner, the objections (both those presented here and many others) that are being raised before

us. For, as I mentioned at the beginning of this presentation, if we simply repeat the same things, we will surely get the same results, not the desired solutions.

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