

UNSOLICITED COMMENTS ON
ALFREDO L. DE ROMAÑA'S RESEARCH
(SELECTION)

The World Beyond Development ¹

Alfredo L de Romaña's writings comprise, on one hand, a critique of modernity, and on the other a multiplicity of ideas we refer to as post-modern. However, he points to an alternative to both modernity and post-modernity, through the elucidation of a "meta-modern" condition—a term he has coined and which I would like to adopt so to speak officially—, that rescues critiques of modernity from their usually empty, undefinable terminus; the concept "meta", in contrast to "post", implies rather transcending this to reach a position encompassing both modernity and tradition, the distinct possibility of whose synthesis now becomes apparent.

Michel Freitag,

Emeritus Professor of Sociology, *University of Québec at Montréal (Laureate of the Canada Governor General's 1996 Essay Prize) R.I.P.*

The Autonomous Economy ²

[From the standpoint of environmental economics, Alfredo L de Romaña's essay] is the best thing available since Georgescu-Roegen's 1971 work, "The Entropy Law and the Economic Process."

[1990] Thomas Berry, Riverdale Center, New York (author of *The Dream of the Earth*)

It's been my bedside reading !

[1990] Pierre-Marc Johnson,
former Prime Minister of Quebec

I am writing now to thank you. You have moved the discussion of alternative economics much beyond your predecessors and give substance to what Greens call for when they affirm "community-based economics".

Maynard Kaufman, Emeritus Professor, *Environmental Studies, Western Michigan Univ.*

Your essay is awesome. I believe it says in a correct vocabulary and powerfully the things that need most to be said in critiquing our way of doing economics. Your writing makes the point clearer than any I have seen by a person with credentials which qualify him for respect in the community of economists. Indeed this work ought to earn a Nobel prize.

James F. Berry,

Director, *Center for Reflection on the Second Law*, Raleigh, North Carolina

I was delighted with what I read. I had not come across Alfredo L de Romaña before and was very impressed by his essays. The thinking is one hundred percent in line with our own. I have shown the essays to others and would very much like to order six copies for circulation.

Nicholas Hildyard, Co-Editor,
The Ecologist, London

This book you are preparing is going to provoke, thunder, and shake people's minds and perhaps also their conscience.

Michel Jurdant, Professor of Ecology,
Université Laval (1984) R.I.P.

1. Former organizing narrative of "The Advent...", working version, circulated informally: unsolicited reactions from colleagues and acquaintances unbeknownst to the author at the time of the comment.

Who is Alfredo L. de Romaña ?

Ban Ki-moon once called for "revolutionary thinking and action" to avoid a "suicide pact" on climate and face the challenges needed to dispel the climate threat. This is what ALR has spent half a lifetime preparing.

After graduating with the top honour from high school (*Markham College*, Lima), studies in mathematics (*Pontificia Universidad Católica*, Lima), a B.A. in architecture (*Washington University*, St-Louis, Mo.), an M. Sc. in planning (*Université de Montréal*), two reluctant stints in student politics (where he nonetheless took power) and in the Canadian equivalent of a Ministry of Housing, he turned his back on an academic and professional career, which required complicity in an economic system that he questioned, to pursue an intellectual agenda as an independent scholar.

The first fruit of this effort was *Post-Crisis Equilibrium—Economic Implications of Human Welfare and Ecological Sustainability*,* a book-long study regarded in 1990 "as the best thing available since the [foundation of ecological economics]" (by Thomas Berry, a leading cultural historian of the field) among many analogous commendations (see attached testimonials). In this study, two years before the issue became topical in the Rio 1992 Summit, he highlighted a key call that remains unheeded to this day: "the international community cannot afford to delay elevating the greenhouse effect to the top of the foreign-policy agenda"; he showed in detail why GDP growth had little to do with prosperity, and called for a "post-growth macroeconomics" to preside over a historic shift toward sustainable economies...decades before these issues became topical. This is the ambitious theoretical agenda he has been quietly developing beyond the radar screens of mainstream thought.

Teaching Climate Change at the *University of Ottawa*, he then became aware of the prevailing confusion on the matter despite the urgency of action. So he redefined his research's narrative to write a book on *The Advent of Carbonocracy* (completion scheduled for 2017: many sections now available for a preliminary dissemination and communications campaign). After attending COP20 in Lima, he is designated Professor of Climate Change in March 2015, at the *Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería* (Lima), but the offer is not taken up when a concomitant offer to direct the *Instituto Habitat* does not materialize in a clear time frame.

He has since zeroed in one of the chapters —*Climate Plan B: Outline of a Six-Point, Quantified Climate Security Accord*—, and (given the urgency of preventing triggering of runaway climate change) launched an awareness-raising and policy instrument for a safe future: a *Global Carbon Initiative*. (Currently seeking a proper institutional home for their potentiation, for which he can bring the necessary financial resources). 25/08/16

Given the unconventional kind of responses needed to address a problem as unprecedented (and thus as unconventional) as climate change, the negligible credentials of this unconventional trajectory may be his *best* credential.

This is made apparent in one of the most viewed TED talks, in which author Simon Sinek explains "why the Wright brothers were able to figure out controlled, powered man flight when there were certainly other teams who were better qualified and better funded ...and they didn't achieve powered man flight" ...But "the Wright brothers beat them to it."

Samuel Pierpont Langley [... had been] given 50,000 dollars by the War Department to figure out this flying machine. Money was no problem. He held a seat at Harvard and worked at the Smithsonian and was extremely well-connected; he knew all the big minds of the day. He hired the best minds money could find. [...] The New York Times followed him around everywhere, and everyone was rooting for Langley. Then how come we've never heard of Samuel Pierpont Langley?" Because "in Dayton Ohio, Orville and Wilbur Wright [...] had no money; they paid for their dream with the proceeds from their bicycle shop; not a single person on the Wright brothers' team had a college education, not even Orville or Wilbur; and The New York Times followed them around nowhere. The difference was Orville and Wilbur were driven by a cause, by a purpose, by a belief."

Simon Sinek, September 16th, 2009, Newcastle, USA. <http://ow.ly/kvhCr>

² Editorial title of the essay: * *Post-Crisis Equilibrium - Economic implications of human welfare and ecological sustainability*, *Interculture*, Vol. XXII, nos 3 and 4 [Parts 1+2, total 187 pgs]), 1989 (pdf: <http://bit.ly/2cUqJfJ> — full list of testimonials in the last two pages)