

## **LAUDATIO**

In honor of

Professor Dr. **Peter J. Boettke**

from George Mason University, USA

on the occasion of the award of ***Doctor Honoris Causa*** title of  
Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania

21 May 2013

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## **Laudatio**

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Dear Professor Boettke,

Dear Members of the Senate,

Dear Guests,

Mr. Peter J. BOETTKE is Professor of Economics and Philosophy at George Mason University, BB&T Professor for the Study of Capitalism, Director of the F.A. Hayek Program for Advanced Study in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. He began his career as “academic economist” more than 25 years ago, at the Department of Economics at the same university where he teaches today. It was a very good start, we could say, under the auspices of Goddess Fortuna, because the “School of Economics” of Virginia was developing and had gained uniqueness in the competition of ideas. Its tutelary figures, such as James Buchanan, Vernon Smiths, Gordon Tullock had created new research and economics education fields: Constitutional Economics, Experimental Economics and Public Choice Economics. Young scholars and teachers, being favored by the Goddess Athena, enjoyed the privilege of opening Economics towards other academic

disciplines, stepping over the edges of strict specializations. As Michael Oakeshott said in “The Voice of Liberal Learning”, the permanent conversation between different fields of study and erudition and between masters and disciples is the defining characteristic of a great university. This characteristic is necessary not only in cultivating the mind and the ineffable relationship between professor and students,

but also the fuel that feeds the production of new ideas. The intellectual climate, the dynamics of ideas and the diversity of scientific interests that the young “visiting assistant professor” knew between 1987-1988 remained the same and are flourishing today in the Department of Economics at George Mason University and also in the research centers such as Mercatus.

Afterwards, between 1988 and 1990, Mr. Peter Boettke has been Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics at the School of Business Administration, Oakland University, Rochester. Beginning with 1990, for eight years, he has been Assistant Professor at the Department of Economics at New York University. There he met Israel Kirzner and Mario Rizzo, who were his mentors and close colleagues. After that, in a chapter dedicated to Walter Block – “Reflections on Becoming an Austrian Economist and Libertarian, and staying one”, Professor Boettke confessed: “I had the great opportunity to join the faculty at New York University and work with Mario Rizzo and Israel Kirzner. I consider the 8 years I was associated with New York University to be my real education in Austrian economics. Grove City introduced me to these ideas and George Mason allowed me to pursue the study of them, but it was under the watchful eyes of Israel Kirzner that I really learned Austrian economics and classical liberalism”.

Between 1997 and 1998, Peter Boettke became “Associate Professor” at the Department of Economics and Finance of the School of Business Administration at Manhattan College, Riverdale. In 1998, he came back as “Associate Professor” at the Department of Economics of George Mason University. In 2003, he became professor in the same department. Since 2007 he is “University Professor” and in 2011 Affiliate Faculty at the Department of Philosophy of the same university.

The simple description of Professor Boettke’s career up to this moment, probably typical for an American academic, gives us some clues about his biography and availability for mobility to achieve personal goals but, in order to find out more about the search of “intellectual excellence” and the materialization of the purpose to become “teacher scholar and public intellectual”, further incursions are needed in his education and the experience of meeting remarkable personalities of the economic thinking from the past and present days. Somehow, the professional instruction and the intellectual training of our laureate completely reflect Adam Smith’s “invisible hand” metaphor, F.A. Hayek’s “spontaneous order theory” and Michael Oakeshott’s concept of “polycentric order”. Free people discover and follow their calling or vocation in good ways. An old Romanian popular expression says “the right person in the right place”. In modern terms, it could mean “meritocracy”. Unfortunately, most often, also in the modern world, meritocracy is designated through regulations, and the good order is considered to be the result of “system people” construction. “The order of law” is increasingly replaced with “the rule of man”, paradoxically in the name of a noble purpose – “a good society” or eventually “a better society”. The sentence is valid in almost

every aspect of social life and especially in education. A British scholar said, at the anniversary of Buckingham University 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, that education mostly remains, in several countries, a field of the dying socialism. This is actually not the real situation.

Young Boettke began his university education under free order auspices, at Grove City College. The liberal education tradition was heavily preserved in the small American “colleges of Liberal Arts & Sciences”. This allows young students to search, during their studying years, without the constraint of a strict specialization, their suitable learning and formation field. Peter Boettke discovered at Grove City College, due to Professor Hans Senholtz, the opportunity to develop intellectual excellence and professional knowledge in Economics. Thus, the dream of training a highschool basketball team presented itself as an opportunity to study in order to become an “academic economist” or, better said in his own words, “economist as scholar of society and teacher of basic economic principles”. His readings from Milton Friedman, Henry Hazlit and Ludwig von Mises opened for him an unexpected world of ideas. Formal education has been happily completed with informal and non-formal training. Participating at seminars, workshops and summer schools organized by Institute for Humane Studies, CATO, Ludwig von Mises Institute and Foundation for Economic Education, the young student BOETKKE met Walter Grinder, Leonard Liggio, Murray Rothbard, Bettina Bien Greaves, Ed Crane, David Boaz, Tom Palmer, Israel Kirzner, Mario Rizzo, Roger Garrison, Gerald O’Driscoll, important representatives of liberal economic thinking and libertarian political philosophy.

The initiating journey through the “universe of liberal ideas” continued with consistent readings from the works of the authors he

had encountered, but also those of prominent figures of liberalism intellectual history (Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, Carl Menger, Eugen Bohm-Bawerk, Max Weber, Ludwig von Mises, F.A. Hayek). “By the time I graduated from Grove City College, - Professor Boettke later wrote -, I was deeply committed to Austrian economics and especially the teaching of Ludwig von Mises and the political philosophy of the libertarianism as found in the writings of Murray Rothbard”.

Matthew Arnold, quite an important literary critic and culture philosopher from the second half of the XIXth century believed that in the University it should be taught and learned all the beautiful things that have been said and written in the world culture.

Continuing his Master degree and doctoral studies at George Mason University between 1984 and 1988, Peter Boettke wholeheartedly enjoyed the “conversation” with the most profound and beautiful ideas of the liberal thinking. The friendly environment, the extraordinary professorial staff and intellectual emulation supported his studies and research activities. His mentor was professor Don Lavoie, polyvalent intellectual, talented researcher and generous master. Peter Boettke became his associate in editing the “Market Process”. Over the year, when evoking those circumstances, professor BOETTKE admitted that ”working closely with Don Lavoie on Market Process also put me in contact with all the leading Austrian economists at the time, as I would be reading their books and writing to them to get book reviews or essays to be published in this publication”. About the professors from the Department of Economics Peter Boettke thankfully and gratefully acknowledges that “these individuals were tremendously instrumental in our careers because

they engaged us not as graduate students, but as colleagues early on in the process of research and writing”.

Although Murray Rothbard wasn't his professor, this fascinating personality and original thinker influenced the young academic economist Boettke: “When I first started teaching (and even today), I would listen to tapes of Rothbard lectures and try to imitate his ability to combine theory, history and jokes to convey the principles of economics to those who are innocent of its teachings”. In a book published after the student movements in the 1960's – “The Degradation of Academic Dogma” -, the sociologist Robert Nisbet complained about the slow disappearance of the academic spirit and the University “intellectual values”, the respect of the scientific and professional authorities the disciples' gratitude for the masters, a moderate attitude, the generosity of professors towards their students, the recognition of intellectual excellence, the detachment from the circumstantial. Nothing of those aspects Robert Nisbet considered deplorable about radical deviations, “the managerial feds and fashionable ideas” are not to be found in professor Boettke's evocations and fabulous memory. An open and generous spirit, he is willing to admit any intellectual experience as a fundamental component in his scientific formation and professional development. We could be tempted to say, in spite of the observation stressed out above, that Peter Boettke's university education was completed only in 1998, at George Mason University. Furthermore, his admiration for the fellow colleagues could make us believe that professor Boettke's education is continuing today. Modesty and the ability to admire are very rare qualities in the academic environment nowadays. But they are truly impressive at professor Boettke, considering his intellectual magnitude

and the important academic authority. About his colleagues from the Department of Economics, he wrote in 2003: “..... the GMU staple of economists who make the place not only by far the most free market department in the world but also the one with the most variety of scholarly interests and style of research”.

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Hayek once wrote: “Nobody can be a great economist who is only an economist - and I am even tempted to add that the economist who is only an economist is likely to become a nuisance if not a positive danger”. Education, extensive readings in several fields of social sciences, philosophy and humanities the intellectual experiences, as the result of meeting great personalities, the scientific preoccupations for which he showed remarkable intellectual abilities and perseverance, all these attributes define the profile of professor Boettke as “great economist”. Like the thinkers and scholars that influenced him and that he admires, professor Boettke descended in the study of Economics from the “realm” of a vision about the human being, the society and the world. Contrary to the positivism and scientism, as described by Karl Popper, no scholar can approach the study of nature and society without a theory, an idea, a philosophical conception. Even the most convinced followers of Bacon empiricism and logical positivism have a theory, a hypothesis before starting to investigate, without this idea, theory or hypothesis they wouldn’t know what to search for. If this rule applies to natural sciences, it is supposed that “the immersion in social processes without a mental construction” is moreover questionable. In the philosophical and social research tradition, the mental construction is called view of the world. This is not a contradiction between the imperative “wertfrei” (or “value



free”) and the view of the world, as long as the knowledge method is not mistaken for the nature of reality.

Professor Boettke’s vision places him in the family of great spirits concerned with social research. We mention here only those who are our contemporaries: M. Polanyi, F.A. Hayek, W. Ropke, M. Oakeshott, Irving Babbitt, referring to the perspectives on the individual and the world mentioned three categories of humanism: the sentimentalist humanism (holistic and collectivist, reflected in J.J. Rousseau’s work), the scientist humanism (derived from natural sciences, generating social engineering) and the classic humanism (generated by Christianity, the ancient classicism, Renaissance philosophy and Scottish Enlightenment). The former sees the human being as imperfect, but endowed with free will and reason, able to choose between good and bad, to govern herself and live decently. The classic humanism disavows utopias and proposes not only a study method, but also a understanding perspective (Verstehen – Max Weber) of the social. The critical rationalism and the methodological individualism are the expressions of the classic humanist vision in the knowledge theory and social philosophy. In Michael Polanyi’s works we find those philosophical milestones which are not ideal illusions of the scientist about the studied subject, but its features. Recently, professor Boettke wrote on “Coordination Problem” blog: “Early on in my intellectual journey I was reading the great Michael Polanyi – first Science, Faith and Society, followed by The Study of Man and then Personal Knowledge. Polanyi, more than any other figure in the philosophy of science has influenced the way I think about scientific inquiry and scientific progress...” (posted on December 14, 2012), Shortly, Peter Boettke’s vision on economy and society is the clear and

coherent expression of a humanistic philosophy which started with Aristotle, continued with Saint Augustine and Thomas D'Aquino (Thomas Aquinas) and preserved in time until today through the intellectual reflections of modern thinkers (Alexis de Tocqueville, Lord Acton, Michael Oakeshott, Christopher Dawson, Michael Polanyi, Jacques Barzun, Herbert Butterfield, Robert Nisbet, Wilhelm Ropke, Friedrich A. von Hayek). Someone could notice that such a vision predisposes an intellectual speculation, traces a kind of economic metaphysics, leaving behind the analytical thinking and the empirical investigation in favour of presumptions about the transcendental. Not at all. The philosophical tradition mentioned above is the only one that developed a realistic vision on knowledge, the man and society. Blaise Pascal's "poor thinking reed" has inherent limits of reason, experience and relations with his peers. It is imperfect and submitted to passions and prejudices. The ideas, actions of any kind as well as social organization of human beings can only be imperfect. Likewise are the intellectual reflections about human enterprises, may they be called social philosophy ideas, social research methods, social science theories or science of philosophy statements.

Ludwig von Mises synthesized in perennial terms these truths regarding human knowledge in general and the economic knowledge in particular. In "Human action", the great Austrian wrote: "There is no such thing as perfection in human knowledge, nor for that matter in any other human achievement. Omniscience is denied to man. The most elaborate theory that seems to satisfy completely our thirst for knowledge may one day be amended or supplanted by a new theory. Science does not give us absolute and final certainty. It only gives us assurance within the limits of our mental abilities and the prevailing

state of scientific thought. A scientific system is but one station in an endlessly progressing search for knowledge. It is necessarily affected by the insufficiency inherent in every human effort. But to acknowledge these facts does not mean that present-day economics is backward. It merely means that economics is a living thing--and to live implies both imperfection and change.”

Professor Boettke finds himself in the company of illustrious philosophers and scholars, historians, economists, politologists and sociologists and continues a great tradition of economic thinking. In order to detach from the dominant economic thinking and theory, professor Boettke appeals to the collocation “mainline economics” that he opposes to “mainstream economics”. He concisely explained his concept in the article “Living Economics”, published the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2012: “I use the term *mainline economics* – professor writes - to describe a set of propositions that were first significantly advanced in economics by Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century and then the Late Scholastics of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries at the University of Salamanca in Spain. These insights were further developed in economics from the Classical School of Economics (both in its Scottish Enlightenment version of Adam Smith and the French Liberal tradition of Jean-Baptiste Say and Frédéric Bastiat), to the early Neoclassical School (especially the Austrian version of Carl Menger, Ludwig von Mises, and F. A. Hayek), and finally with the contemporary development of New Institutional Economics (as reflected in the property rights economics of Armen Alchian and Harold Demsetz; the new economic history of Douglass North; the law and economics of Ronald Coase; the Public Choice economics of James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock; the economics of governance

associated with Oliver Williamson and Elinor Ostrom; and the market process economics of Israel Kirzner). The core idea in this approach to economics is that there are two fundamental observations of commercial society:

1. individual pursuit of self-interest and
2. complex social order that aligns individual interests with the general interest”.

Comprehensive and relevant for the economic and social realities, professor Boettke’s perspective implies four major components:

1. a conception about economic activity;
2. a method to study reality and implicitly a definition of the economic science;
3. a desiderate regarding the role of the economist;
4. a conception about teaching economic theory.

In the accepton of science philosophers, intellectual reflections of a person or a school of tking distinguish themselves by the others through ontology, epistemology and methodology. Peter Boettke’s thinking, as that of his great forerunners, covers mainly all the three important criteria. Writing about D. McCloskey latest work, „A behavioural approach to the political and economic inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations”, the Journal of Socio-Economics, 41 (2012, p. 755), professor Boettke defined the economic reality and, iplicitly as follows: ”... but the human animal that populates historical economies reasons, the human animal speaks, the human animal forms friendships, forges political alliances, gossips with their neighbors, and forms world views. Those world views shape social relations as they help form the understandings of cause and

effect in human action.(...). As economists, we want to study human economies, not toy economies”.

The economic science is not social physics and it doesn't propose "social engineering" patterns. For the most of the thinkers belonging to the "mainline tradition", the economic activity is one profoundly human, with expected limits (W. Ropke formulated the notion of "Humane Economy" and the study of this reality belongs rather to humanities than the nature sciences. Philip Wickstead discussed about "commonsense Economics", L. Von Mises about „Human Action”, Gerald O'Driscoll about „Economics for the real people” and Peter Boettke, like D. McCloskey, defines the economic science as "Human Economics" or "Humanomics". The imperfection of human enterprises, the social reality complexion and its continuous change are permanently surveyed by the economists from the same thinking tradition as professor Boettke. Its realism proposes a modest intellectual attitude. Hayek considered that „the curious task of economics is to demonstrate to men how little they really know about what they imagine they can design”. Peter Boettke consolidates Hayek's assertion, writing: "The mainline of economic teaching from Adam Smith to Hayek taught not only what economics tell us but more importantly what it cannot tell us. There are real limits to economic analysis and efforts at economic control. The main reasons economics got off track in the twentieth century are... a failure to recognize those limits and a confusion of the policy sciences with the engineering sciences". Healthy economic thinking, noticed professor Boettke, should focus on exchange relations between economic agents and the institutional background in which these exchanges should take place and analyse the emergence of complex social order through the free

price system and the entrepreneurial market process. "The mainline of economics" explained the way economic activity functions starting from real people recusing ideal circumstances ("Nirvana economics", as H. Demsetz called the "mainstream" economic analysis; "heroic assumptions" as Peter Boettke describes them) about the knowledge capacity of the individuals and the hypothesis of "good society" servants of the political decision makers. He investigated "the institutional framework that both constraints bad people so they do the least harm when in positions of power and ordinary motivations of humans and their limited cognitive capabilities to realize social cooperation under the division of labor. The mainline economics found that in the private – propriety, market economy and a constitutionally limited government... individuals's unique knowledge of time and place could be marshaled to realize a peaceful and prosperous social order". In the opinion of professor Boettke, the role of the economist is not to construct social engineering models, to invent economic reality but to study it and to offer the understanding of economic practice. This does not mean to philosophically meditate over the economic system, but rather implies analytical thinking and empirical investigation. Finally, the teaching and learning of economic theory are fundamental tasks for an economist because, as Ludwig von Mises noticed: „the body of economic knowledge is an essential element in the structure of human civilization; it is the foundation upon which modern industrialism and all the moral, intellectual, technological and therapeutical achievements of the last centuries have been built.". Not a very long time ago, in a discussion on the blog "Coordination Problem", Peter Boettke expressed, as clearly and concisely as possible his opinion about the economic activity, economic theory and the role of

economists in researching realities and the teaching of economic knowledge: " We need to think clearly, write clearly and speak clearly. And our thinking, writing and speaking should be about the mainline teachings of economics and political economy as passed down through the ages by the Scottish Enlightenment Moral Philosophers, the French Liberal Political Economists, the British Utilitarians, and the Austrian School Economists (and the subsequent development of economic thought in the second half of the 20th century that drew on these various traditions). To accomplish this task of providing sound theory and clarity of exposition, we rely on exact theory (pure logic of action), institutionally contingent theory (comparative institutional analysis), and empirical analysis (history, policy application, statistical work, ethnography, etc.)" .(posted on September 17, 2012)

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Professor Boettke's research and teaching activities are prodigious and quality-defining for the "academic excellence". It began early (during his graduate studies) and evolved multidimensionally and exponentially like the complex society within free order. In general, great professors are the former students of great professors. This statement is not meant to claim a universal truth, but rather reveal the relationship between the one who passes on knowledge and the one who receives it as an archetype of volunteer cooperation in the „big society". One of the reviewers of "Living Economics" said about Peter Boettke that he is a great professor. The simple analysis of his professional, intellectual and scientific activity of professor Boettke entirely justifies this opinion. He is a great professor not only because he has been the student of some important professors, but especially

because he adopted “the economic way of thinking as a 24/7 occupation”. For professor Boettke, Economics “is not a 9 to 5 job”.

At George Mason University he taught and teaches the following undergraduate and graduate courses: Contemporary Society in Multiple Perspective, Economics for the Citizen, History of Thought II, Constitutional Economics, Comparative Economic Systems, Advanced Topics in Austrian Economics, Austrian Theory of the Market Process I and Austrian Theory of the market Process II. Additionally, between 1999 and 2012, he coordinated more than 25 PhD. students. Some of his disciples already affirmed themselves as talented and reputable researchers (such as Edward Stringham, Benjamin Powell, Virgil Storr, Peter Leeson, Christopher Coyne, Anthony Evans and, nice historical coincidence, Adam C. Smith). Apart from the usual teaching activity, professor Boettke delivered numerous public conferences and lectures, at the invitation of many universities, research institutes and professional organizations. He was “visiting professor” at The Institute for International, Political and Economic Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, in 1993; “visiting scholar” at Hoover Institution, Stanford University, in 1995; “faculty fellow” at Max Planck Institute for Research into Economic Systems, Jena University, in 1997; “faculty fellow” at Stockholm School of Economics, in 2001; “F.A. Hayek Fellow” at London School of Economics, in 2004 and 2005 etc.

He delivered conferences in prestigious series, such as Bowman Distinguished Lecture at Indiana Wesleyan University, in 1998; Henry George Distinguished Lecture at Saint John’s University, in 1998; Templeton Guest Lecturer in Bucharest, 2002; Sir Ronald Trotter Lecture at Wellington (New Zealand) in 2006 etc.



The aspects exposed above reveal only partially professor Boettke's status of "teacher and public intellectual". To have a wider perspective on the third state, -"scholar" - it is necessary to properly present professor Boettke's scientific activity. The publication list is impressive and comprises, at a first glance, over 230 articles, studies, chapters in conferences' volumes, chapters in edited and co-edited volumes, presentations in encyclopedias and dictionaries etc.; 11 author and co-author books and 8 edited books. The fields in which he published articles and books are: Austrian Economics, Law and Economics, History of Thought and Methodology, Economics and Entrepreneurship, Development Economics, Transition Economics and Public Choice Economics. Even the simple presentation of the titles, author, co-author and edited books, article and studies titles, academic journals, the title of contributions in collective volumes, dictionaries and encyclopedias and published reviews could make the card catalogue of an authentic Economics and History of Economic Ideas library. It is also worth mentioning the fact that all these publications present a special interest to Romanian economists and students. But, with the fallibility and the partiality inherent in a presentation and general exegesis, will only make reference to a few of the numerous publications of professor Boettke. We are convinced that the implicit advice to read and study his work which could result from our presentation will represent, in time, the compensation for this selective approach.

For several years, Peter Boettke dedicated himself to the economic analysis of the Socialism, through rational calculation and the institutional framework. On the bases of the arguments elaborated by Mises, Hayek, but also by neoinstitutionalists, he realized a

comprising study of the socialist system, stressing out the structural failures of the economy on command and its expected collapse. Later, he continued by investigating the reform efforts and the transition, “from the plan to the market“. He published three books: “The Political Economy of Soviet Socialism. The formative years, 1918-1928” (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990); “Why Perestroika Failed: The Politics and Economics of Socialist Transformation” (London: Routledge, 1993) and “Calculation & Coordination: Essays on Socialism and Transitional Political Economy” (London: Routledge, 2001). He also edited the volume “The Collapse of Development planning” (New York: New York University Press, 1994).

Gradually, although he never gave up to the “comparative economic systems” and “the institutional analysis”, professor Boettke’s preoccupations have been focused on the “History of Economic Ideas”, “Austrian School of Economics” and “Market Process Analysis”. A few author books, edited books, contributions in volumes and numerous articles are proof of a tremendous and substantial amount of work of our laureate. He published articles in: Critical Review, American Journal of Economics & Sociology, Advances in Austrian Economics, Constitutional Political Economy, History of Political Economy, Journal of Institutional Economics, Cambridge Journal of Economic Public Choice, Review of Austrian Economics, Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics and numerous other academic journals from France, Germany, Great Britain, USA, Spain etc.

In this period, he became co-author of an Economics textbook, together with Paul Heyne (the initial author and David Prychitko – “The Economic Way of Thinking” (10<sup>th</sup> ed. 2002; 11<sup>th</sup> ed. 2005; 12<sup>th</sup> ed. 2009 New Jersey; Prentice Hall).

Very well elaborated and clearly written in the spirit of “mainline economics”, this textbook is highly appreciated among professors and students alike. The 12<sup>th</sup> edition has been translated into Romanian in 2012. It is also worth mentioning that the textbook represents the basis of the Economics course for undergraduate students at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration starting with the academic year 2012-2013.

Professor Boettke has published with Paul Dragoş Aligiã “Challenging Institutional Analysis and Development: The Bloomington School” (New York: Routledge, 2009). John Groenewegen, professor at Delft University of Technology and Tinbergen Institute, Rotterdam School of Economics reviewed in very favorable terms this book in “Erasmus Journal for Philosophy and Economics”, volume 3, Issue 1, Spring 2010 pp. 108-113.

Many of professor Boettke’s articles, studies and books have been well received and very appreciated, were favorably reviewed and debated upon by professionals. Probably, the citations number is relevant in this aspect: over 4000 in Google Scholar. But the best received work by the specialty press , the academic environment and the general public was “Living Economics: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow” (Oakland, CA: The independent Institute and Universidad Francisco Marroquin, 2012). The significance of “living economics” is a triple one:

1. the economic science is living thinking assembly which changes constantly and moves in different directions in relation to the problems that occur in time;
2. the study of Economics has a rich intellectual history and profound traditions, from which economic science derives;

3. those who take too seriously economical ideas of the free market and institutions process in which the market process takes place, adopt a perspective of the world, an economic way of thinking.

The intellectual and scientific contributions of professor Boettke were brought in all the research fields mentioned in the beginning of this section. But, taking the chance to be wrong, because of a fugitive and superficial approach, we could consider that two important contribution categories result from the extended and complex work of professor Boettke:

1. “Human Economics” or “Humanomics” – the restitution and revisal of the theories about the economic actors, the exchange relations and the institutional framework of the market process. “Economics teaches us many things – Boettke writes -, but to me the most important is how social cooperation under the division of labor is realized. This is what determines whether nations are rich or poor; whether the individuals in these nations live in poverty, ignorance, and squalor or live healthy and wealthy lives full of possibilities. If the institutions promote social cooperation under the division of labor, then the gains from trade and innovation will be realized. But if the institutions, in effect, hinder social cooperation under the division of labor, then life will devolve into a struggle for daily existence. Economics, in other words, gives us the key intellectual framework for understanding how we can live better together”. (“Living Economics”, The Freeman, May 30, 2012)
2. Robust Political Economy. A viable economic system should meet both the “easy case” and the “hard case” criteria. While

the former case needs a set of ideal conditions for a theoretical system to function, the later implies, in author's words, "the worst scenario": "Robust political economy requires that both the assumptions of agent benevolence and omniscience be relaxed so that both incentive issues and knowledge problems can be adequately addressed" (P. Boettke and P. Leeson, "Liberalism, Socialism, and Robust Political Economy", *Journal of Markets and Morality*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 2004, p. 101). In other words, "a robust political economy... is one is one that can withstand the test of the hard case. It is a political economy that can readily deal with various obstacles and problems with which it is confronted." (Idem, p. 102)

Professor Boettke enjoys a large academic recognition and a important professional reputation. He was awarded, during the 26 years of intense and perseverant intellectual work, several distinctions and prizes by professional associations, research institutes and universities. We will enumerate only some of them. In 2005, he received the "Charles Koch Distinguished Alumnus" from The Institute for Humane Studies and "Jack Kennedy Award for Alumni Achievement" from Grove City College. In 2010, he received the "Adam Smith Award" from the Association of Private Enterprise Education and "Distinguished Alumnus" from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, GMU. In 2012, he was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa of Universidad Francisco Marroquin.

Since 1998, professor Boettke is the editor of "Review of Austrian Economics" (Kluwer Academic Publishers) and up to that moment he was the editor of "Advances in Austrian Economics". The recognition

and prestige also brought him the honouring quality of editor of the "New Thinking in Political Economy" series at Edward Elgar Publishers starting with 2000, co-editor (with Timur Kuran, Duke University) of the "Economics, Cognition and Society" series at University of Michigan Press between 2006-2008; co-editor (with Timur Kuran) of the "Cambridge Studies in Economics, Cognition & Society" at the Cambridge University Press, since 2009.

Some time ago, Friedrich A. Von Hayek wrote: "We must make the building of a free society once more an intellectual adventure, a deed of courage". Professor Peter Boettke engaged himself entirely in an intellectual journey with talent, perseverance and a lot of courage, whose purpose is the search of truth and the restoration of free society.

Our university which has been engaged for a long time in a "common intellectual adventure" under the symbolical significance of PER LIBERTATEM AD VERITATEM is recognising today a great professor and is conferring the **Doctor Honoris Causa** title to **professor Peter J. Boettke**.

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