

AISPE - ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA PER LA STORIA DEL PENSIERO ECONOMICO

7TH AISPE CONFERENCE

**Conference venue and dates: Brescia, 23-25 January 2003**

**Local organisers:**

Marco E. L. Guidi (Università di Brescia - Dipartimento di Studi Sociali)

Daniela Parisi (Università Cattolica di Milano - Istituto di Teoria Economica e Metodi Quantitativi)

**General topic: "The Changing Firm. Contributions from the history of economic thought"**

**Official languages: Italian, English**

**Invited speakers:**

Gianfranco Dioguardi (Politecnico di Bari)

Arnold Heertje (Universiteit van Amsterdam)

Enzo Pontarollo (Università Cattolica del S. Cuore, Milano)

Nathan Rosenberg (Stanford University)

Malcolm Rutherford (University of Victoria, BC)

- The conference is divided into sessions devoted to the general topic and open sessions.
- Some sessions will be in English only

**Presentation of the general topic**

The conference title is intentionally ambiguous, due to open interpretation of the transitive or intransitive use of the verb "to change". A firm is indeed a place where change occurs, and it is also an introducer of continuous innovation which reverberates throughout the economic and social context.

This theme has been the centre of reflection for economists from the very beginning of this science. From Cantillon, Beccaria and Smith, up to recent days, research into technological, organisational and institutional change has hinged on business, considering firms both in their internal elements and in the relations with the outside world. The sources of development have been identified in the agents who compose firms and in the productive and organisational mechanisms which characterise them. This both where progress is considered endogenous to businesses, and in the opposite case, where it is assumed to be a termination of processes originating outside the enterprise. The reflections of economists on technological and organisational change has always been mixed with attempts to define the nature of a firm and to construct rigorous theory of its economic function and the evolution of its structures.

In summary, these development referred to problems regarding: (1) technical development within the firm; (2) institutional and organisational change in the firm; (3) relations between businesses and the external environment.

This conference is intended to collect contributions on the complex of themes in the light of certain unifying historic interrogatives regarding:

1. the relationships between the study of the diverse forms of progress generated by firms and the creation of the *general* analytical tools employed by the economists;
2. the relationship between continuity and discontinuity, in the history of thought, on this theme: the relationship between the controversies of theoretical, ideological, and social nature, and the progressive accumulation of knowledge (sometimes thanks to re-discoveries, sometimes rather by processes of conceptual hybridisation);
3. the relationship between the socio-cultural contextualisation of past theories (the typical attitude of the historian of thought), and the possibility of using these contributions to fertilise and renovate current theoretical research, enriching it with interpretative instruments and new investigative perspectives (the approach preferred by economists, business economists, economic historians and sociologists);
4. the identification of national styles and traditions – for example the Italian mode – which demonstrate continuous interest for these themes; the interactions and exchanges between these styles and traditions.

### **Aispe award**

An “Aispe award” will be assigned to the best paper presented at any session of the conference by a researcher who, at the expiry date for submission of papers, is under 35 years of age. Details on the Aispe award are available in the Aispe website.

The registration fee is free for all those under 35 not permanently employed by universities.

### **Deadlines**

Scholars who would like to give a paper either on the general topic or in open sessions are asked to send a title and an abstract of no more than 150 words by September 15<sup>th</sup> 2002.

The scientific committee will screen the proposals. Notice of acceptance will be sent by October 15<sup>th</sup> 2002.

The deadline for the submission of papers is December 10<sup>th</sup> 2002.

After the conference, the Scientific Committee will evaluate the possibility of publishing a selection of papers on the general topic in vol. 1 of “Quaderni Aispe”.

### **Scientific Committee**

Francesco Asso, Piero Bini, Riccardo Faucci, Marco Guidi, Daniela Parisi, Riccardo Realfonzo, Annalisa Rosselli.

### **Local organising committee**

Marco Guidi, Terenzio Maccabelli, Luca Michelini, Daniela Parisi, Giovanni Pavanelli, Claudia Rotondi, Mario Taccolini

Further information about the conference will be provided on our web site:

(<http://dipartimento1.dse.uniroma1.it/aispe/aispe/.asp>)

Marco E. L. Guidi  
Dipartimento di studi sociali  
Università di Brescia  
Via S. Faustino 74/B  
25122 Brescia Italy  
tel. +39 030 2988 878 (office)  
+39 030 2988 896 (department)  
fax +39 030 2988 893  
E-mail: [guidi@eco.unibs.it](mailto:guidi@eco.unibs.it)

Daniela Parisi  
Istituto di teoria economica e metodi quantitativi  
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore  
via Necchi, 5  
20123 Milano Italy  
tel. +39 02 7234 2471 (office)  
+39 02 7234 2918 (institute)  
fax +39 02 7234 2923  
E-mail: [daniela.parisi@mi.unicatt.it](mailto:daniela.parisi@mi.unicatt.it)