

CALL FOR PAPERS – INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

« ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY »

Sciences Po Lille – 21-22 June 2012, France

**Sciences Po Lille and the *Papers in Political Economy*,
with support of CLERSE (UMR 8019), Lille 1, l'Association
Charles Gide**

What is economic philosophy? The expression is well known. In France, in Europe and worldwide, reviews, research centers and academic programs refer to it. But what does it mean? Does she have an object, a method and references which would really distinguish her from economic theories? Is it just another name to indicate what we formerly called doctrine? Is it more or something different than what we today call economic epistemology? And what place does economic philosophy occupy next to other fields of philosophy? These questions and some other seem to have enough relevance for the *Papers in Economic History* to organize a conference on these with the aim of a special issue.

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In first estimate three possible meanings can be distinguished - as so many orientations for proposals. At first, there would be an economic philosophy in the way where there is an underlying philosophy in any positive science under the shape of an envelope which supports her or which hinders her. The study of this economic philosophy - as philosophy of the economy - would then consist in bringing to light the decisive notions from which the economic analysis draws its resources or on which on the contrary she has to operate an epistemological rupture.

There would then be an economic philosophy in the sense that the economic notions of optimum, collective well-being and social choice result in questions relative to the freedom of the agents and to the justice of their mutual relations. Economics would appear as a body in two complementary parts – a positive side or examination of the empirical conditions assuring the maximum efficiency of the actions relative to the production of wealth in a given society; a normative side or description of the ideal conditions under which these results assure the moral satisfaction of the members of this society. Economic philosophy would be this normative part. It would thus be another name for welfare economics, theory of social choice or economic theory of justice.

Finally, there would be an economic philosophy in the sense that the essential notions constitutive of the field of economy and economics are the objects of an analysis pushed until

its term. Economists know this level of inquiry on fundamental concepts of their domain under the title of pure theory. Pure theory is not the positive knowledge about how an economic device compared to others works at best. Nor does she normatively question the ideal conditions under which the economy can be just. Pure theory rises up to the upper floor of the so-called real or abstract definitions which command the deployment of economics in the coherence and relevance of its various parts.

But is it enough to say? Shouldn't we go further than this orientation under the only review of the possible meanings of an expression? Shouldn't we also understand an economic philosophy as the banner of a great philosophic tradition to unify economic theoretical propositions - as it is to see with political or moral philosophies? It would then be necessary to speak about Aristotelian, Hegelian or Marxist economic philosophy, economic philosophy inspired by J.S.Mill, the Vienna Circle or Wittgenstein or influenced by Hayek or evolutionism - all incentives for proposals.

PROPOSALS

An abstract (no more than 500 words) of the proposed contribution should be submitted by E-mail to philoeco@sciencespo-lille.eu in **English or French**, with a brief curriculum vita, postal and email addresses.

DEADLINES

- 15 October 2011: submission deadline
- 03 December 2011: meeting of the program committee
- 17 December 2011: notification to applicants
- 14 May 2012: full paper submission deadline

For more information, please contact: philoeco@sciencespo-lille.eu

EVENT

A selection of papers will be published in a special issue of the *Cahiers d'Economie Politique-Papers in Political Economy*

Organizers' intent is to publish other papers in a separated publication

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