

Italian Association for the History of Economic Thought (AISPE)
XVI Conference
11-13 April 2019
University of Bologna
Department of Political and Social Sciences

Call for papers

The rise of economic inequality. Contributions from the history of the social sciences

Economic inequality has become a defining issue of our times, both domestically and globally. Not only has economic inequality affected the lives of individuals, but it has been so prolonged, deep and widespread a phenomenon that it is starting to disrupt the social fabric of democratic societies. Domestic economic inequality always goes together with inequality in other dimensions—gender, race, education, intergenerational relations, health, mobility, and so on—in a perverse, self-reinforcing loop. Increasing domestic economic inequality, moreover, renders unsustainable efforts on the part of less developed countries to grow in the medium- and long-term. Non-democratic regimes will have to negotiate a difficult balance between consensus, political stability, economic growth, and inequality. The study of inequality dynamics is thus fundamental to understanding the economic, political and social development of countries such as China and India in the next decades.

International inequality has also been on the rise, and it explains the migratory pressures that we witness all around the world, such as in the Mediterranean Sea, on the borders between Mexico and the United States, and between India and Bangladesh. International inequality also reinforces political crises and cultural conflicts, and thus helps explain the barriers and controls that have been erected against the movement of people between Israel and the Palestinian territories, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, North and South Korea, Bulgaria and Turkey, and in the Strait of Malacca between Indonesia and Malaysia.

These dynamics have a history and specific mechanisms that must be understood if we want to examine and react to inequality issues, both domestically and internationally, in the near future. Though the discipline of economics has often neglected inequality as a relevant issue, the history of economic thought, in conversation with other social sciences, can help understand how the inequality discourse has developed (or has been marginalized) in different epochs and under different intellectual and ideological perspectives.

The Italian Association for the History of Economic Thought (AISPE) invites historians of economic thought, global historians, political scientists, sociologists, economists, as well as other social scientists and scholars of the humanities, to contribute to an interdisciplinary conversation about the evolution of economic inequality and of its analysis in historical perspective. We invite participants to contribute from their own disciplinary perspective, but also to make an effort to open doors and establish bridgeheads for an effective conversation with other disciplines.

An abstract of max 500 words for a paper and max 1000 words for a session should be submitted to segretarioaispe@gmail.com no later than **15 December 2018**.

Selected papers from interested scholars will be considered for publication.

Possible questions to be addressed are:

- The relationship between economic inequality and other inequalities in historical or comparative perspective;
- The role of multilateral organizations in dealing with global and domestic inequality;
- New assessments of inequality trends in specific countries or regions;
- The pros and cons of the statistical toolbox for inequality studies;
- Economic theories and inequality;
- Ideologies and inequality;
- The economics profession and inequality studies;
- The consequences of economic inequality on the political system;
- Historical cases of correlation between economic inequality and social and political phenomena;
- Old and new forms of inequality;
- The changing international order and global inequality;
- Long-term inequality trends;
- Inequality and institutions in historical perspectives;
- History of economic policy and the rise of (and the struggle against) inequality;
- How to measure inequality: contributions from the history of economics;
- Comparative analysis of regions that successfully reduced inequality and regions characterized by persistent inequality.

Other sessions

Suggestions for other papers and sessions on original topics in the history of economic thought are also welcome.

Keynote speakers

Pier Francesco Asso (University of Palermo)

Robert H. Wade (London School of Economics)

AISPE awards

The AISPE steering committee will award a prize of 500 euro each to three papers selected among those presented at the conference:

- to a paper that offers a relevant new contribution to the history of economic thought;
- to a paper offering a valuable, innovative contribution to the history of Italian economic thought;
- to a paper offering a valuable new contribution to the understanding of income distribution dynamics; this award is created by AISPE in memory of Terenzio Maccabelli.

Participants who are under 40 years of age at the time of the conference are eligible. The awards will be announced during the conference dinner.

Only full-length papers will be taken into consideration for the applications to the AISPE awards.

Official Languages

English and Italian

Schedule

15 December 2018: deadline for submitting abstracts
15 January 2019: notification of acceptance
15 March 2019: deadline for registration
15 March 2019: deadline for submission of AISPE awards papers
11-13 April 2019: conference

Scientific Committee

Michele Alacevich, Chair (University of Bologna)
Massimo Augello (University of Pisa)
Fabrizio Bientinesi (University of Pisa)
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Organizing Committee

Michele Alacevich, Mirek Tobiáš Hošman, Manuela Mosca, Sebastiano Nerozzi

For information concerning the conference, see www.aispe.eu