

# Knowledge in the Development of Economies

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# Knowledge in the Development of Economies

Institutional Choices Under Globalisation

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NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE MODERN CORPORATION

**Edward Elgar**

Cheltenham, UK • Northampton, MA, USA

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Published by  
Edward Elgar Publishing Limited  
The Lypiatts  
15 Lansdown Road  
Cheltenham  
Glos GL50 2JA  
UK

Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.  
William Pratt House  
9 Dewey Court  
Northampton  
Massachusetts 01060  
USA

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Control Number:



ISBN 978 1 84844 115 6

Printed and bound by MPG Books Group, UK

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## Preface

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This book is part of an ongoing long-term project, which began in our minds about in early 2005. It started as the exploration of an intuition about issues that, at that time, seemed to us to be relevant for understanding economic systems. Since then and the time of writing (early 2009), a number of significant changes have happened across economies and in our own, practical histories, and those changes have contributed to the shaping of the volume. Indeed, in certain respects we did not dare to disconnect the reflection about humans and their choices from an assessment of the significance of people's practical experience, from the way in which – to quote Bertolucci – humans move through time in the practical and in the historical sense.

The four years since the inception of the volume have enriched its final form with the perspectives of those who have experienced personal reflection and debate, at times in quite unusual contexts, about a common area of interest. As academics we have chosen to explore knowledge-related issues stemming from our background and from a specific concern for the governance of production activities and the development of localities. And with localities and the people within, we have started to interact in an original – or perhaps primeval – way: us looking at them and them looking at us, searching for what academia and other 'publics' had in common when conceiving choices about development.

In particular, this was possible thanks to the First Biannual International Festival on Creativity and Economic Development, which was held in Gambettola (Emilia-Romagna, Italy) in May 2007, and whose second edition is on the way as we write. Our appreciation and recognition goes to the Mayor of the town, Iader Garavina, and to the entire administration for having embraced the big challenges that such a project implied. Thanks to all the partners who supported the initiative, in particular Raffaella Bassi Neri, Pier Luigi Alessandri, Gabriele Galassi, Angelo Grassi, the Province of Forlì-Cesena and the Legislative Assembly of the Emilia-Romagna Region. Our appreciation goes to the community of the town, and especially to the teachers, the students and pupils of Gambettola's schools for having engaged in the number of activities that accompanied the Festival. Especial thanks to participants in the Festival's Ideas Laboratory, for having experienced academic debate in such an

eclectic context; part of the contributions included in this volume stem from that experience.

Thanks also to the participants in the sessions on Economic Analysis and the Role of the Academic convened at the EUNIP Conference 2008 (San Sebastian, Spain), including Johan Willner and James Wilson, both of whom also participated in and supported the Gambettola Festival. Moreover, thanks to the participants in the Dare Workshop 2008 (Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland), organised by Sonja Grönblom and Johan Willner.

We are also grateful to Ermanno Tortia, for having read and commented on various chapters of this book; to all of the authors in this volume; to the editor of this special series, Jonathan Michie, for having invited us to submit this project; to the publisher, for having put up with our constant breaking of submission deadlines.

Finally, we would most especially like to acknowledge three people. Marcela Valania, for her role and inspiration in the journey that the three of us have taken together these last few years. Throughout that time we have passionately and intensively discussed issues and promoted activities. Last but certainly not least, Giordano and Alessandro Tortia, who have taught us so much, not least that curiosity and imagination are at the heart of critical enquiry.

Silvia Sacchetti and Roger Sugden  
Birmingham and Stirling, 21 January 2009

