

Luca Meldolesi

**How to complicate economics: a few observations**

Come complicare l'economia is an anthology (of the series "I grandi economisti contemporanei" - Bologna, Il Mulino) assembled personally by Albert Hirschman and edited by me in 1988. Obviously, its title reminds the reader a well-known article by Hirschman: "Against Parsimony: Three Easy Ways of Complicating Some Categories of the Economic Discourse" (1984). But the book includes 17 articles and chapters; and, in so doing, it implicitly refers to the whole trajectory of the Author. As it were, the bulk of Hirschman's "complication of economics" (that covers more than half of the book) occurred during the 18 years he dedicated, almost exclusively, to development and Latin America. Actually, in that period Hirschman was able to break de facto the traditional turrus eburnea of economics and transform gradually the latter. Therefore, his "trilogy" - Strategy, Journeys and Development Projects - and the connected articles, though written to celebrate development (as Hirschman confessed in 1994), may also be observed from the point of view of "How to Complicate Economics". Eventually, intrigued by this conclusion, I decided to put down and present to the "Second Conference on Hirschman Legacy" a list of key points coming from that elaboration that have been indeed "basic" in the welcome metamorphosis of economics into a social science.