

Third Conference on Albert Hirschman's Legacy: a Passion for the Possible

*Sponsored by the
A Colorni-Hirschman International Institute and the Berlin School of Economics and Law
Berlin, 24-25 October, 2019*

The Third Conference on Albert Hirschman's Legacy will be held a few days before the thirtieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. We also remember that a quarter of a century ago, Albert Hirschman was busily preparing a European Colloque in Berlin that, as a consequence of his disastrous fall in the Alps, he had to cancel. Actually, during the Eighties of last century Albert turned his interests towards Europe. He had several books of his published in different European languages and received numerous honorary degrees by European Universities. Moreover, late in the decade, he joined the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin. In fact, during the early Nineties of last century, Albert Hirschman cultivated a project of living in Berlin six months a year. But, after a journey in the East German lands and in the liberated Central and Eastern European countries he came back and said: "it will need some time".

By now, we feel that "some time" has elapsed. And that a "Third Conference on Albert Hirschman Legacy: a Passion for the Possible" should be convened in Berlin. The present "call" is addressed to the Hirschmanian diaspora (and to his friends) of Germany, of Europe and of the whole world: the widespread community of people, academics and practitioners, that feel related in some way with Albert Hirschman by personal memories, engagement with some of his theories and concepts, admiration for his achievements, utilization of some of the social mechanisms he studied.

The very title of the Third Conference, "A Passion for the Possible", suggests that, in the small as well as in the big, in the developing as well as in the developed sections of the planet, present predicaments we are imbued with may be better dealt with by a true and competent passion for the possible. It is a thesis that needs to be verified in theory and practice. Examples on that, showing in detail ingenuities and results, would be welcomed – particularly in a perspective of effective changes in human conditions, in various sectors: the economy, environment, health, education, the public sector, art, culture, and more. In the dangerous world we live in, more and more intriguing is the eventual, concrete discovery of possible roads, in Europe and in other continents, for improving liberty, democracy, federalism, social justice, environmental sustainability, gender equality, fraternity, people empowerment... We feel that once all these inputs will be brought together, the dialogue between these different perspectives may be very fruitful and could provide us with better tools for addressing current dilemmas.

Building on the experience of the "First Conference: For a Better World" (Boston, Oct. 2017) and of the "Second Conference: A Bias for Hope" (Washington, Oct. 2018) we ask people interested in participating in the conference to propose an abstract about the topic they would like to deal with, so that we can slowly organize the Conference along a few dedicated sessions.

Please, send your abstract to info@colornihirschman.org possibly by February 28th, 2019.

PS - All those who will answer this call, and are interested in our activities, will receive the e-book "For a Better World" (from the First Conference) and the e-book "A Bias for Hope" (from the Second Conference, forthcoming). We will also ask them a few question about their opinion, so as to be able to better focus our work.