

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS FOR SPECIAL ISSUE

From Academics and Reflective Practitioners

POLITEIA, *Centre for research in politics and ethics*, announces the Seventh Annual Forum on Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility in a Global Economy - Milan, 19th - 20th May 2011:

The Corporation as a Political Actor: a New Role of Business in a Global Society

The debate on the relationship between business and politics is traditionally based on a model that considers state agencies the only political institutions that directly focus on the well-being of society, while business firms are conceived of as economic actors only. According to this vision the coherent regulatory framework of business behavior in modern societies is made by the law and by moral rules. Current theories of corporate social responsibility are also built on the assumption of a coherent regulatory framework, in which national legislation and values and expectations of social communities define the responsibilities of the firms.

Over the last decade, however, the neat separation between the political and the economic sphere has become hazy. In fact, the process of globalization and the pluralism of modern society has brought the loss of cultural homogeneity and has eroded the national context of governance. In several cases the state system has failed in regulating the economy, dealing with transnational social and environmental problems, providing public goods, administering citizenship rights, and serving the public interest. Under these conditions, multinational corporations as well as civil society groups have started to participate in the formulation and implementation of regulation in policy areas. These areas include the protection of human rights, the implementation of social standards, the preservation of the environment, the struggle against corruption and the production of global public goods. This kind of development shows a shift in global business regulation from a state-centric mode toward new multilateral non-territorial modes, with the inclusion of private and non-governmental institutions as key actors. On the global level, therefore, non-state actors play an active role in what has been called “governance without government”. The result is that some multinational corporations promote positive social change and assume direct political responsibilities traditionally belonged to government, as it is shown by their widespread participation in the UN Global Compact (Rasche and Kell (eds.), 2010).

For this reason, globalization and pluralism need to be embedded in a new concept of the firm as an economic *and* political actor in market societies.

In management studies, some scholars have begun to analyze the consequences of globalization on the concept of corporate responsibility and corporate citizenship. Palazzo and Scherer (2006; 2007) have proposed a new theory of “political CSR” or “corporate citizenship”, while Crane, Matten and Moon (2008) have argued that firms should be considered as state-like agencies and not so much as citizens, as firms often adopt a state-like role and protect citizens’ rights in cases where governments are neither able nor willing to perform this function.

Aim of the Forum is to discuss the consequences of a political mandate of the business firm - especially, but not limited to, the context of developing economies -, to analyze the interaction between business firms and other societal actors, to research whether and how voluntary corporate responsibility practices represent a way to fill the governance voids, and to examine the implications for the theory of the firm, being aware that the political nature of firms is highly contested, partly because it challenges existing notions of the role of business in society, but also because of substantial concerns about the implications of this shift for the idea of democratic accountability.

The aim of Politeia is to organize a conference in which managers of national and international companies and experts in business ethics and corporate social responsibility from the most prestigious international research centres will have the opportunity to discuss the emerging ethical issues in the global economic system.

Politeia

Politeia is a non profit organization based in Milan and founded in 1983 with the purpose of promoting theoretical discussion in Italy on the relationship between ethics and public choices. Since 1985 Politeia publishes *Notizie di Politeia*, a bilingual (Italian and English) quarterly journal. The journal hosts in special issues the Politeia Annual Forums proceedings.

The proceedings of the previous editions of the Forum, edited by Emilio D'Orazio, are published respectively under the title "Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility in a Global Economy" (vol. 74, 2004), "New Perspectives on the Stakeholder View of the Firm and Global Corporate Citizenship" (vol. 82, 2006), "Corporate Integrity, Ethical Leadership, Global Business Standards. The Scope and Limits of CSR" (vol. 85/86, 2007), "Restoring Responsibility: the Accountable Corporation" (vol.89, 2008), "Corporate and Stakeholder Responsibility. Theory and Practice" (vol.93, 2009) and "Corporate and Stakeholder Responsibility for Sustainability" (vol. 98, 2010)

The Politeia Forum on Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility in a Global Economy

The Forum is organised by the Research Centre Politeia in cooperation with the University of Milan and a Promoting Committee composed by several well-known Italian companies and organizations. The aim of the Forum is to increase awareness and knowledge among companies about the ethics and social responsibilities of economic organisations - and to contribute to filling the gap between 'practitioners' and 'experts'.

Thematic Framework

The Forum focuses on three main topics:

- I. Ethics and Economic Success
- II. Global Corporate Citizenship
- III. Ethical Values in Global Business

Speakers include: Alberto Martinelli (University of Milan), Guido Palazzo (Professor of Business Ethics, University of Lausanne), Andrew Crane (Professor of Business Ethics, Schulich School of Business, York University, Toronto), Frank G.A. de Bakker (Associate Professor of Strategic Management, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam), Andreas Rasche (Assistant Professor of Business in Society, Warwick Business School), Alessia Di Pascale (University of Milan), Giacomo Manetti (University of Florence), Pia Acconci (University of Teramo), Maria L. Agrò (OECD NCP), Emily Sims (Senior Specialist, ILO, Geneva), Paolo Nazzaro (Telecom Italia), Fulvio Rossi (Terna), Antonio Giacomucci (ABB Italia), Flavia Mirabelli (Bombardier Italia), Maurizio Gubbio (Legambiente), Lucina Mercadante (INAIL), Lamberto Prati (Barilla), Sabina Ratti (ENI), Riccardo Facchini (Amnesty International), Silvio De Girolamo (Autogrill Group), Ludovica Lardera (UniCredit Group), Maria T. Brassiolo (Transarency International Italia).

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS FOR SPECIAL ISSUE OF *NOTIZIE DI POLITEIA*

Politeia invites full papers and abstracts on any of the above three main topics to be published in a special issue of *Notizie di Politeia*. Papers discussing other relevant issues on business ethics and corporate social responsibility will be also considered for publication.

Academic rigour as well as relevance to business, civil society actors and policy makers as stakeholders in knowledge creation are important criteria for selection. Submitted papers should be ready for blind peer review.

All papers should be submitted in full by **August 31st**. and will receive notification of acceptance by **September 30th 2011**.

Papers should be of maximum length of 40,000 characters (including space), written in Word or RTF format and should be submitted by email to politeia@fildir.unimi.it

For further information and program details see www.politeia-centrostudi.org or contact Emilio D'Orazio, editor of *Notizie di Politeia*, at the above email address.