

(1966)

Further Thoughts on Corrado Gini's
Delusioni dell'econometria

One of the many academic enterprises which Corrado Gini, the scholar whom we are honoring today, encouraged or supported with his scientific prestige is the Econometric Society. For Gini, it is proper to remember on this occasion, was a founding member of that society. But Gini did not have to wait for the Econometric Society to be founded. He had been an « econometrician » in the true sense of the word for a long time before this term was coined. Therefore all the greater is the significance of the message which Gini, during the later part of his life, wanted to send to his fellow econometricians and which he crystallized in the title of a short article: « *Delusioni dell'econometria* » (1). Coming from a scholar who had already devoted many good years to devising new quantitative tools and to applying them successfully to the analysis of many social phenomena, the message cannot be interpreted as a denial of the value of quantitative analysis in economics. Gini wanted only to impress upon us the danger created for the economic science by the ostentatious yet decidedly false claims econometricians ordinarily make for the scientific superiority of many of their procedures. In one place (2), he even alluded to an additional danger, of far greater consequences, which may confront the student of economics if the ostentation of the econometric *Akademia* turns into scientific intolerance — a thought which though not absurd

(1) *Giornale degli economisti*, Anno XV, 1956, pp. 174-177. See also his "Au sujet de l'utilité et de la limitation de l'emploi du calcul des probabilités en économie politique", *Economie appliquée*, t. X, n. 1, 1957, pp. 49-55.

(2) "Delusioni", p. 176.