



**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**

**GENEVA SCHOOL
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

The Paul Bairoch Institute
of Economic History

Presentation and history of The Paul Bairoch Institute of Economic History

Geneva is the only place in Switzerland, and one of the few in the world, to offer a complete curriculum (bachelor, master, doctorate) specialized in the study of economic history. The University of Geneva boasts of a long and proud tradition in the field. A chair in economic history was established in Geneva as early as 1902 with Eugene de Girard as the inaugural holder until his premature death in 1911. Originally, the chair in economic history was located in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. However, when the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences was founded in 1915, the chair was integrated into the new entity. Economic history at the University of Geneva subsequently developed under the auspices of several prestigious chairholders over a period of several decades: They included William Rappard, a specialist of the industrial revolution and a co-founder of the Graduate Institute of International Studies, until 1930; Anthony Babel, an authority on the economic history of Geneva, until 1963; and Jean-François Bergier, a renowned contributor to the economic history of the Renaissance period and a president of the International Association of Economic History, who held the chair until he moved to the ETH in Zurich in 1969.

Bergier's move coincided with the establishment of a Department of Economic History at the University of Geneva and the establishment of two professorial positions for Anne-Marie Piuz and François Crouzet. Anne-Marie Piuz, like Babel before her, focussed on the economic history of Geneva until she retired in 1986. François Crouzet was a renowned specialist of history of industrialization and of British economic history. When he moved to Paris in 1972, he was replaced by Paul Bairoch.

Bairoch was already internationally renowned when he arrived in Geneva, known especially for his work on the history of international trade and on long-run trends in inequality in the development process and, notably, in the Third World. Under his influence, economic history in Geneva entered a new era, with a greater focus on both international and comparative economic history as well as a stronger emphasis on quantitative methods. Bairoch retired in 1995 and died soon after, having made a defining contribution to the international reputation of the University of Geneva as a centre for excellence in economic history.