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“Economics and History, Economics in History: A Change of Perspective”

Abstract

After years of forgetting (Hodgson 2001), economists now seem to re-engage with history. This mainly has to do with the empirical turn in economics (Hamermesh 2013; Angrist et al. 2017) and with the growing specificity of economic research: increasingly less universal models are being built, more concrete applied questions are being asked, better techniques of dealing with the data (and the new datasets) are being developed. But how exactly could the engagement of economics with history look like?

In this talk, I review the literature on the new ‘historical turn’, refer to the idea of performativity, and draw on some approaches in international political economy to demonstrate, how one can make sense of reconnecting historical analyses of economies with the history and sociology of economic knowledge. I also provide examples that demonstrate how this change in perspective may prove fruitful in situating economic theories in complex historical contexts.