

Colloque ‘Junior’ du CIERA
(Centre Interdisciplinaire d’Études et de Recherches sur l’Allemagne)

“Ideological Competition in Economics: Economists and Economic Discourses in Germany and France 1980-2007”

Maison Heinrich Heine, Paris, 17 and 18 June 2011

Call for Papers

Organisers: Jochen F. Mayer (University of Edinburgh) and Peter Schaefer (Universities of Trento / Paris IV - Sorbonne)

The recent economic and financial crisis revealed, among other things, an epistemological crisis in economics. For the first time in decades, both public and professional spheres are rethinking all the ‘big questions’ (e.g. growth, (un-)employment, distribution of wealth). It seems as if the consensus view that growth is best achieved by unshackling markets and investors has crumbled – and a whole new set of theories are competing to take its place.

On the occasion of such a double crisis (epistemological and economic-governmental), we will scrutinise the more recent ideological competition among economic expertise, the public sphere, the market, and the political arena in France and Germany since c.1980. More specifically, we are interested in the foundations of this particular scientific and political authority over the last three decades, and how it might be best described and analysed.

In both countries, economic ideas and concepts have arguably been developed within specific economic schools and scientific fields; their use as determinants of economic policy, or even societal development would need to be analysed within distinct political and social environments. For example, the influence of ‘mathematical formalism’ in post-war German economics might fruitfully be analysed as ‘epistemological generational conflict’ (Hesse 2010) in the context of the *Bildungsexpansion* during the 1960s, when ordo-liberal traditions were sidelined by upcoming generations of ‘modern economists’. Similarly, one might investigate how the appointment of an important number of new chairs in economics in East Germany influenced the evolution of the discipline.

In France, a more statist institutional make-up has arguably divided the production of economic discourse between technocratic and academic trajectories, with strong differences in training and conceptual orientation between the two (Fourcade 2009). Here, the cleavages rather seem to run through the *Grandes Écoles* (l’ENSAE, Polytechnique, l’ENA, HEC and Sciences-Po) and university-based economic practitioners, where particular heterodox schools were produced (e.g. regulation school and post-Keynesian trends). However, when it comes to alliances with the politico-administrative field, a comparably homogenous mix of economic theories, techniques, and models in economics seems to prevail (cf. Lebaron 2000).

We invite contributions to this debate that go beyond the usual interpretation of a ‘monetarist’ or ‘neoliberal’ revolution in economics since the 1980s. Rather we

encourage contributors to explore epistemological and political transformations in both spaces of knowledge in an empirically sound and plausible manner. Comparative case studies are also welcome.

The following questions may guide our workshop:

- Which economic discourses and agendas have been particularly important, and which have been sidelined in both countries? Following from this, which forces are to be held accountable for boundaries between orthodox and heterodox economics (e.g. mathematical formalism) and to what effect?
- What is the relationship in both settings between economic and non-economical discourses, such as the media, popular culture, other (quasi-) scientific disciplines (e.g. management theories) and politics? And how, with regard to specific cases, does the ‘rhetoric of economics’ (McCloskey 1998) rely on informal methods and metaphors to communicate its theories to non-economical spheres?
- What role do leading institutions play in terms of cognitive and normative agenda setting, such as the *Grandes Écoles* in France, economic research institutes in Germany, and international organisations (OECD, World Bank, IMF) or societies (e.g. Mont Pèlerin)?
- Are there typical careers for economists (e.g. transnationalisation of the profession, entanglement with banks and other private actors), and if so, how have hiring policies and patterns of research funding, as well as scientific job requirements (publications, methods of analysis) changed and what have been the effects of such changes?

We hope to be able to tackle these questions from an interdisciplinary perspective. In particular, we welcome papers with a science studies, economic sociology and geography, and/or economic history background, as well as empirical case studies.

Expression of interest (including institutional affiliation and discipline) and abstract (approx. 300 words in English, German or French, including title) should be sent by 28 March 2011 to: colloque_economists@ymail.com

Successful applicants will be informed by 31 March 2011 and are kindly asked to hand in their full paper version by 15 May 2011.

For successful applicants most of the expenses for travel and accommodation will be covered. We hope to publish a selection of the papers that are delivered at this conference.

For more information on a ‘Colloque Junior’, please see <http://www.ciera.fr/ciera/spip.php?rubrique136>

Preliminary Programme:

Friday, 17 June 2011

**On the Discursive History of Economics in Germany and France 1980-2007:
Hegemonic Ambitions and Epistemological Transfer**

From 13:00 Registration

14:00 Welcome and Introduction

14:15 Keynote Lecture Prof. Frédéric Lebaron (University of Picardie-Jules-Verne, France) and Discussion

15:15 Comments and Discussion of two Papers by Young Researchers

16:30 Coffee Break

17:00 Comments and Discussion of two Papers by Young Researchers

18:15 End of First Session

19:00 Conference Dinner

Saturday, 18 June 2011

**The Sociology of Discourse Production in Economics:
Scientific Careers and Institutional Landscapes in France and Germany 1980-
2007.**

9:00 Keynote Lecture Prof. Jan-Otmar Hesse (Université de Bielefeld, Allemagne) and Discussion

10:00 Comments and Discussion of two Papers by Young Researchers

11:15 Coffee Break

11:45 Comments and Discussion of two Papers by Young Researchers

13:00 Wrap-up and Final Discussion

13:45 Lunch