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TOWARDS AN ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY OF ECONOMICS ? NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This new issue of the Economic Sociology Newsletter raises the question of the role of professional economists and the discipline of economics in public policy and the construction of the economy. This will be one of the central themes of the Newsletter during the coming year.

Especially since the "neoliberal revolution", there is a growing number of publications which deal with the role of economic experts and economic beliefs in the social construction of states and markets. One of the explicit aims of this issue of the Newsletter is to connect the sociology of the economic profession and economic discourse, which has developed under the influence of scholars such as Andrew W. Coats, to the sociology of economic practices. Economists and other economic experts have developed various languages, they have studied different sectors of social life and different regions of the world, but they share certain common interests, a particular perspective and specific methodologies. Part of these shared concerns are related to the Americanization of the discipline after the Second World War. This phenomenon is one of the critical aspects of the development of economic expertise in many regions of the world and is related to more general questions of cultural and political domination.

The comparative dimension of these questions, to which less attention has been paid, has recently emerged as a central issue: if economists have clearly gained a stronger influence in public and private policies in most countries since the 1970s, it must be emphasized that the institutional and social construction of the discipline and the profession remain to a large extent embedded in specific national contexts.

These and similar issues will be pursued in the Newsletter in course of the coming year, thus hoping to broaden the scope of economic sociology, to enrich and intensify the debates and to give birth to new research questions.

Frédéric Lebaron