

Economic history into the perspective of economic thought and historiography: Between the Symplegades

Historia económica en la perspectiva del pensamiento económico y la historiografía: Entre las Simplégades

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ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

The aim of this article is to provide a brief review of the relation between economic theory and history by putting it into the perspective of the history of economic thought and of historiography. More specifically, it attempts to illustrate their interdependence through the examination of the evolution of economic history proper. Our analysis follows the evolution of economic thought and points out that the twin events of the Marginalist Revolution and the Methodenstreit (the battle of methods) were determinant in exiling history from economic theory. Relying on a critical discursive analysis as the analytical method used, the article reviews the legacy of the classical period of political economy and shows how the transition from political economy to economics played a pivotal role in erupting the relation between economic theory and history. In addition the article argues that the dominance of the narrative historiographical paradigm in historiography, till the first decades of the twentieth century, determined the absence of theory from economic history. Thus paper's main finding is that this twofold hiatus, in both economic theory and historiography, was decisive in the short history of economic history. As such its originality lies in providing the analytical framework for understanding the complicated relation between economic theory and history through the evolution of economic history. Thus it offers a historical and analytical framework to understand the spiral evolution of the discipline of economic history. The article attempts to delineate the gap between theory and history by showing that an organic symphysis between economic theory and history is indispensable in understanding economic phenomena. However, our choice to sketch out the whole spectrum of economic history limits the depth of our analysis. Evidently a thorough approach of economic history literature would enrich our understanding regarding the role of economic theory in economic history. Essentially, paper's originality is connected with the fact that it offers a historical and analytical framework to understand the spiral evolution of economic history proper.

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