



SPP Masterclass:

What Economics and Economic History can learn from Memory Studies

Organizers: Stephanie Ettmeier (DIW Berlin and Freie Universität Berlin), Marie Huber (HU Berlin)

Topic

How are individual and collective memories of extreme economic moments produced in a community? How do these memories translate into the political economy and shape the realm of possibility of macroeconomic policies? Why is some statistical data and economic policy represented more factual than other in the historical narration of national economies? How do some economic indicators become more powerful symbolic frameworks than others and receive different degrees of affective intensity? How can methods and key concepts of memory studies inform and enrich the historical and economics analysis related to these questions?

Taking our own research projects – dealing with the postcolonial economy of Francophone West Africa, and the recovery of the German economy from the Great Depression under the Nazis from 1933 onwards, respectively – as a starting point, we want to invite others working on economic experiences and expectations to discuss these questions with us. In a critical thinking and discussion focused workshop format we want to strengthen interdisciplinary conversation and provide methodological impulses for a broad range of research topics.

Goals

The concept of **memory** takes the masterclass' center stage. By submitting a short essay to the workshop, participants have the chance to reflect in an interdisciplinary discussion the role of memory in their own research to further the methodological and analytical foundation of their projects. On a general basis, our workshop wants to contribute to the methodology of analyzing expectations and experience in economic research and find better ways to integrate social and historical background for analyzing them. The interdisciplinary dialogue in our workshop is helpful for both, historically and economically trained researchers:

Historians get the chance to reflect on processes of selection, convergence and transfer of knowledge in relation to economic policies and statistical tools. Economists get the chance to reflect and contextualize the behavior of economic agents against an historical and sociological background. Learning about each other's methods and questions is key and guides the workshop's dialogue. Preliminary research ideas, which still lack a concrete methodological approach, are welcome to be taken up in the essay.

Format

The workshop takes place in DIW Berlin, in the center of Berlin, 30.3.2021. Ute Rösenthaler, Universität Mainz, will give a keynote lecture and provide valuable input during the discussions. If necessary, we will organise a digital alternative.

We invite all interested persons to submit till 15.2.2021 a short essay (2-3 pages max.) which outlines the key idea of the project and raises some questions to be discussed to settmeier@diw.de. Authors

should also briefly state what they want to draw from the discussion. To facilitate discussion during the workshop, the accepted essays are pre-circulated to all participants.

As a common basis, we ask all participants to read a short selection of texts that include essential concepts and vital input for our discussion on memory and its implication for economic behavior. The text can also serve as a starting point to reflect the participants' own understanding of memory and its influence on our respective research.

- Appel, Hannah (2017): Toward an Ethnography of the National Economy, in: Cultural Anthropology 32 (2) p. 294–322. Online: <<https://doi.org/10.14506/ca32.2.09>>
- Berliner, David C. (2005): The Abuses of Memory: Reflections on the Memory Boom in Anthropology, in: Anthropological Quarterly 78, Nr. 1: 197–211. <https://doi.org/10.1353/anq.2005.0001>
- Middleton, David; Brown, Steven D. (2008): Experience and Memory: Imaginary Futures in the Past, in: Erll, Astrid; Nünning, Ansgar; Young, Sara B. (Hg.): Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook, S. 241–251.

Participants

We explicitly invite participants from all fields to submit a short essay as a basis for discussion. To allow in depth discussions, we limit the number of active participants to seven.