

# THE HISTORY OF ECONOMICS SOCIETY BULLETIN AND JOURNAL OF THE HISTORY OF ECONOMIC THOUGHT (1979–2023)

BY

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The History of Economics Society (HES) initiated the *History of Economics Society Bulletin (HESB)* in 1979. Discussed at the 1978 meetings of the HES, the *HESB* was first conceived of as something “less” than *History of Political Economy (HOPE)*—i.e., an academic journal with a defined editorial line—but also “more” than just a newsletter for HES members (Caldwell 2021; Vaughn, this issue). Edited by Karen E. Vaughn (1979 to 1983) and William O. Thweatt (1984 to 1989), the *HESB* began by publishing short notes and abstracts of papers presented at the annual meetings of the HES. Research articles (i.e., peer-reviewed documents) appeared for the first time in 1988 and book reviews in 1989. A year after, the *HESB* became the *Journal of the History of Economic Thought (JHET)*, a full-fledged society journal under the editorship of Donald Walker (1990 to 1998). First published directly by its editor and the HES, the *JHET* started producing four yearly issues in 1998 under contract with Carfax as publisher. Carfax was eventually

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purchased by Taylor & Francis (Medema, this issue), and a new contract was signed with Cambridge University Press, both during Steven Medema's editorship (1999 to 2008).<sup>1</sup>

In this survey, we study the content of the *HESB/JHET* from both qualitative and quantitative viewpoints. The "History of Economics Journal Database Complement 1969–2009" (Edwards and Martin 2019), Clarivate's Web of Science, and the *JHET* website allow for compiling a dataset of all 1,825 documents published in the first forty-five volumes of the journal (1979 to 2023). In addition to 763 research articles and 660 book reviews (i.e., the two main document types), the journal includes 402 "other" documents, most of them specific to the HES. These documents comprise "notes," "abstracts," "short articles," "letters to the editor," "review essays" (i.e., long book reviews), "interviews," "symposia," "memories/lectures" (e.g., autobiographies/HES guest lectures), and "presidential addresses." Figure 1 gives an overview of this content by document types, revealing a few conspicuous elements in its history: an editorial adjustment in 1983 (i.e., with just one short issue produced that year), the publication of peer-reviewed research articles and book reviews since 1988–89, the shift to four yearly issues in 1998, and a "Smith at 300" symposium in 2023.<sup>2</sup>

Our analysis is based on the evolution of historiographical positions and research topics within the journal, and complemented with information from the broader history of the HES, the discipline, and other recent examinations of history of economics literature. By "historiography," we broadly designate both the methods of investigation and narratives created by historians of economics. These narratives include appraisals of the relationship between historians of economics and the economics profession, and concerns about the evolving relationship between the two.

A former editor wrote that the *JHET* "is the organ not of its editor but of a scholarly community" (Meardon 2014, p. 1). This sentence may seem mundane and one that applies to any academic journal. In this case, however, it takes on special significance as the historians of economics community has faced, even before the HES, professional and identity issues and methodological controversy. Depending on their background, ideology, or position within the academia, historians of economics have considered their discipline either as an integral part of economics or in connection with other fields, such as intellectual history or the history and sociology of science (see Schabas, Fontaine, Weintraub, this issue). Starting from the principle that successive editors of the *HESB/JHET* have fulfilled their mission of facilitating communication among the plurality of scholars in the field,<sup>3</sup> one may hypothesize that this society journal—more than *HOPE* or the *European Journal for the History of Economic Thought (EJHET)*—is a good barometer to observe the state of forces within the HES and, more broadly, the evolution of the history of economics discipline.

<sup>1</sup> Since then, Cambridge University Press remains the publisher of the *JHET*. Subsequent editors have been Evelyn Forget and Marcel Boumans (2008 to 2013), Stephen Meardon (2013 to 2018), and Jimena Hurtado and Pedro Duarte (2018 to 2025).

<sup>2</sup> A focus on page counts gives a somewhat different figure, as research articles are, in general, much longer than book reviews and the "other" documents. From 1979 to 2022, the available proportions by page counts are 75.9% articles, 13.1% book reviews, and 11% other documents. For 2023, proportions are 74.6%, 10%, and 15.4%, the latter due to the "Smith at 300" symposium.

<sup>3</sup> For the objectives of the *JHET*, see <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-the-history-of-economic-thought> (accessed February 12, 2024).

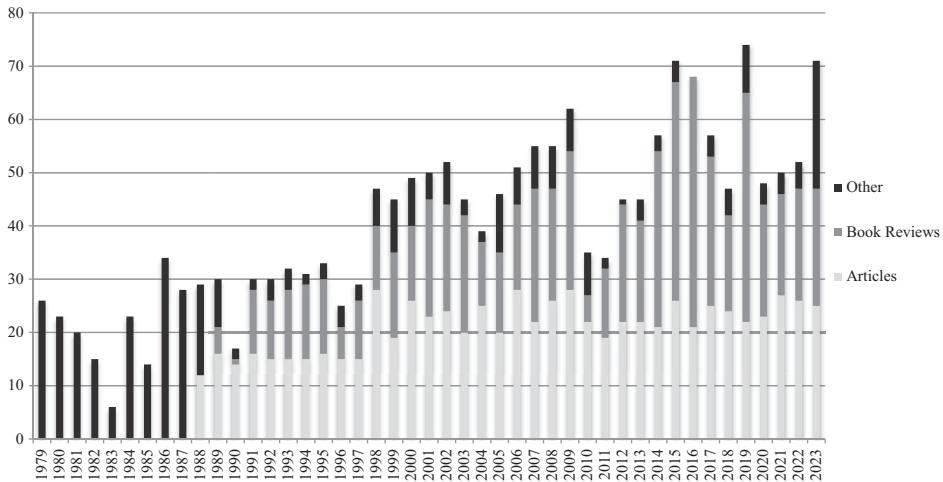


FIGURE 1. Document Type Counts in the *HESB* and *JHET* (1979–2022).

Section II offers a short survey of historiographic and professional concerns as published in the *HESB/JHET* through editorial notes, guest lectures, presidential addresses, symposia, interviews, and other documents specific to the HES (i.e., the 402 “other” documents). That literature reveals the following historical evolution: from antagonizing economists, to the emancipation and progress of the discipline, and then to historiographical pluralism and diversity. Section III follows with a quantitative examination of peer-reviewed research articles, together with a brief description of book reviews. Proceeding through network analysis and topic modeling, our examination of the articles uncovers several trends in the history of the journal. In addition to complementing our argument in section II, we describe the evolution of research topics in connection with other recent studies (Marcuzzo and Zacchia 2016; Edwards 2020; and references in Pinzón-Fuchs, Chassonnery-Zaïgouche, and Edwards 2021). Section IV briefly summarizes our main findings and discusses the current state of the discipline in connection with the HES. An online appendix to this article provides additional information about the dataset and methods used for our quantitative analyses.

## II. HISTORIOGRAPHIC AND PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS, AS SEEN THROUGH HES DOCUMENTS

### *Antagonizing Economists: The HESB 1979–89*

As pointed out earlier, during its first years the *HESB* published short notes, queries, and, for the first three issues, reports on the annual HES conference and other meetings. The conference reports, written by Timothy O’Neill, offered summaries of the different presentations together with remarks about the ensuing discussions. From 1980 to 1987 these reports turned into listings of abstracts, although in many cases they just included their titles with the mention “no abstract received.” As for the short notes, they differed

greatly from each other in both style and tone. Some were practical, such as David Levy's (1979) on the use of word processors for writing theses and articles. Others offered humorous texts, such as the following poem by John Whitaker (1979, p. 27):<sup>4</sup>

Leon Walras  
 Almost always  
 Had protracted cogitations  
 About simultaneous equations

Some other notes conveyed historiographical messages. In 1984, Warren Samuels, whose position in favor of a rapprochement between the history of economics and the broader intellectual history was no secret, described four history journals—the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, *Isis*, the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, and the *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*—as potential outlets for HES members. The tone was not preachy, but Samuels made it clear that historians of economics “should be aware of the total relevant journal literature” (Samuels 1984, p. 19). Similarly, a short review essay by A. W. Coats reflected on the publication in the *American Economic Review* of five pieces commissioned by the American Economic Association to commemorate its centennial. Noting that only one, Martin Brofenbrenner's, was written by an HES member, he wrote: “[T]his group of essays symbolizes the current status of the history of economics in the U.S., and, no doubt, the widespread ignorance of the excellent and wide-ranging research activity now in progress” (Coats 1987b, p. 61).<sup>5</sup>

Historiographic discussion is also present in longer pieces, such as presidential addresses and guest lectures delivered at HES meetings.<sup>6</sup> During the *HESB* period, these pieces were quite often critical of economists and their disdain for the history of economics. In Coats's case one finds differences between his HES presidential address (Coats 1987a) and some of his previous writings, most notably in *HOPE* (Coats 1969, 1983). Whereas in 1983 Coats displayed criticism, finding “no major conceptual or historiographical breakthrough in our subject since *HOPE* began” (p. 312), a few years later he nonetheless blamed economists for neglecting the historiography of their discipline (Coats 1987a). He opposed the economic historian Bill Parker, for whom

<sup>4</sup> At this point it may be tempting to compare the *HESB* with the *History of Economics Thought Newsletter* published by the UK History of Economic Thought Society (THETS), from 1968 to 2011. The *Newsletter* had its specificities, and was more rudimentary in certain respects than the *HESB* (as pointed out earlier, the *HESB* began decidedly as something “more” than just a newsletter). Typewritten until 1990, it published book reviews and quite uniquely detailed minutes of not just the annual UK meeting but also gatherings such as the HES meetings and conferences in Japan, Italy, etc. For more information, see <https://thets.org.uk/archive/> (accessed April 29, 2024).

<sup>5</sup> Backhouse and Fontaine (2010, p. 1) note how, compared with American economists, political scientists and sociologists invested more effort into the centennials of their respective American associations, by publishing large series of historical papers.

<sup>6</sup> Presidential addresses appear systematically since 1981, beginning with Royall Brandis's lecture at the 1980 meeting. Previous lectures were occasionally published in the *Journal of Political Economy* (Tarascio 1976) or *HOPE* (Goodwin 1980), whereas others remain unpublished. For an analysis of HES presidential addresses, see Marcuzzo and Zacchia (this issue). As for the guest lectures, we identified three in the *HESB*: Fetter (1981), Black (1982), and Samuelson (1987), and seven in the *JHET*. Those in the *JHET* correspond to Distinguished Guest Lectures delivered at HES meetings by economists, historians of science, intellectual historians, and a statistician: Stigler (2002), Porter (2004), Furner (2005), Mackenzie (2006), Buchanan (2008), Foley (2009), and Winch (2010).

the historiography of economics was “almost completely defunct,” to point out the vitality of the discipline as revealed by the attendance at the HES meetings (1987a, p. 2). In addition, he reiterated that historians of economics needed to draw inspiration from fields other than economics, in particular intellectual history, sociology, and the philosophy of science, a point previously made in *HOPE* (Coats 1969).<sup>7</sup> In this specific case, he mentioned the philosophically inclined “growth of knowledge” movement and its critique of positivism. By borrowing new tools, historians of economics would become “uniquely equipped” to “educate the economists,” and make them “more aware of the range and limitations of the subject before they do more damage to the profession’s reputation and to our society” (1969, p. 13). More than providing precise guidelines for new research, Coats addressed the HES on the delicate goal of lecturing economists, while simultaneously winning them back.

One may understand that presidential addresses delivered at a banquet are not necessarily intended to shake up an audience. A relatively consensual tone dominates, indeed, in most of the presidential addresses published in the *HESB*. Whitaker’s “Must Historians of Economics Apologize” (1985) claimed that the evolution of economics into a body of “scientific knowledge” had pushed historians of economics to inferior ranks within the discipline. It was the historians’ duty to preserve the philosophical roots of economics, thus taming any positivistic excesses. The historiography of economics, claimed Whitaker, was “frequently of greater and more lasting value than much which passes for economic research” (Whitaker 1985, p. 14).

The social utility of the discipline was also a topic in Mark Perlman’s (1986) presidential address.<sup>8</sup> For Perlman, the historians’ task was “[to teach] our colleagues where their ideas come from, where attacks on their ideas are likely to originate, and most of all why the quest for interpretations is so complicated, and, in the end, so critically important” (Perlman 1986, p. 25). Similar concerns regarding the relationship between economists and the history of economics were addressed by Donald Walker (1988), in ways perhaps anticipating his *JHET* editorship two years after. Walker asserted that all written economic ideas, including very recent ones, could be considered topics for historical treatment. Drawing distinctions between the uses of past writings by economists and historians, he showed how John Maynard Keynes’s writings were partly historical. For Walker (1988), the historiography of economics was evaluative in character: describing, explaining, but also appraising both past and recent economics. Other presidential addresses in the *HESB* referred to economics in similar terms. If historians sharpened their tools, they would produce better narratives and reconnect with economists.<sup>9</sup>

As for the three guest lectures published in the *HESB*, they also involved historiographic discussion. Whereas Frank Fetter and Collison Black offered two different reflections on the relationship between economic history and the historiography of economics, Paul Samuelson provided a few offhand remarks about the transformation

<sup>7</sup> Coats made similar appeals to the sociology of science in a presentation delivered at the 1984 UK meetings (see Wright 1984).

<sup>8</sup> Perlman was also editor of the *Journal of Economic Literature* from 1969 to 1981.

<sup>9</sup> Presidential addresses by William Grampp (1982), Warren Samuels (1983) or Martin Bronfenbrenner (1984) provided accounts of their own research and not necessarily normative views. Donald Moggridge (1989) provided a reflection on the role of biography in the historiography of economics.

of economics into a technical discipline and the subsequent abandonment of historical inquiry.<sup>10</sup> Samuelson (1987) attributed that transformation to four different “revolutions”: monopolistic competition, Keynesian macro, mathematization, and econometrics. Beyond his brash and somewhat condescending tone, he advocated for a “Whig history”—the study of the past from the standpoint of current economics—and offered a sort of summary of his own work, a narrative peppered with personal anecdotes.<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps in response, the *HESB* published two contributions on Samuelson the year after. Cigdem Kurdas reconstructed Samuelson’s so-called classical model showing different ways in which classical political economy uncovered “the weaknesses of the current orthodoxy” (Kurdas 1988, p. 21). Warren Samuels (1988) analyzed Joseph Schumpeter’s treatment of Samuelson in *History of Economic Analysis*. Both Kurdas and Samuels opposed Samuelson’s Whiggish narrative, an exchange illustrating how during this first period the *HESB* focused on the relationship between historians of economics and the economics profession.

### *Emancipation and Progress: 1990–2008*

In 1990, the *HESB* became the *JHET* without any official introduction by Walker, the new editor. The explanation to this may be that the biggest change had come earlier, in 1988, with Thweatt’s announcement that the *Bulletin* would produce peer-reviewed research articles and be referenced in the *Journal of Economic Literature*. Still, the new name created some distance between the journal and the HES meetings.<sup>12</sup>

The first *JHET* issue contains Mark Blaug’s “On the Historiography of Economics,” a research article standing among the most cited, and also deemed an important methodological entry for historians of economics. Seemingly following the “exchange” between Samuelson (1987), Kurdas (1988), and Samuels (1988) (see Maas 2013), Blaug’s article was also a contribution to the long-standing debate opposing relativist/contextualist versus absolutist/internalist perspectives in the historiography of economics (see also Maas, this issue). Blaug attempted to bring clarity, and perhaps some nuance, into that debate by appealing to Richard Rorty’s (1984) four categories for writing the history of philosophy: *Geistesgeschichte*, historical reconstruction, rational reconstruction, and doxography. Blaug depicted *Geistesgeschichte*, an extreme form of historical reconstruction, as the attempt to “identify the central questions that past thinkers have posed and to show how they came to be central to their systems” (Blaug 1990, p. 27). Similarly, he depicted doxography, “the attempt to fit all texts into

<sup>10</sup> For Samuelson’s own role in that same process, see Boulding (1971).

<sup>11</sup> More recently, Medema and Waterman (2014) have pointed at the lack of coherence in Samuelson’s narrative, affirming that his rational reconstructions for the eighteenth and centuries were different, in character, from his appraisals of recent economics. For Weintraub (2016), Samuelson never did history at all. While his “Whig history” may be considered part of his economic modeling, his narrative of recent economics was primarily an autobiographical self-appraisal.

<sup>12</sup> From 1989 to 2000, the HES produced an annual book series under the title *Perspectives on the History of Economic Thought*, based on the HES meetings. Published by Edward Elgar and then Routledge, that series also contributed to the “emancipation” of the *JHET* from the meetings. For more information on the history (and the reintegration to the *JHET*) of that book series, see Medema (this issue) and <https://historyofeconomics.org/book-series/> (accessed April 29, 2024). For accounts on the differences between “history of economics” (as in the *HESB*) and “history of economic thought” (as in the *JHET*), see Maas or Fontaine (this issue).

some recent orthodoxy to show that all those who have ever worked in the field have in substance treated exactly the same deep, fundamental questions” (p. 28), as the extreme version of rational reconstruction. This left historical and rational reconstructions in-between, two reasonable and therefore legitimate practices.

Blaug clearly signaled his preference for rational reconstructions, and claimed that historical reconstructions were “inherently problematic,” presuming that “the past can be recalled without knowledge of the present,” even though “no adult can be expected to recall his childhood as if adulthood had never happened” (Blaug 1990, p. 30). In practice, however, he argued that rational and historical reconstructions were often intertwined, with most defenders of either style making a mix of them. Blaug used Samuelson’s rational reconstructions to make this point, while citing his private correspondence with both Samuelson and Don Patinkin (published as Samuelson, Patinkin, and Blaug 1991). In the end, Blaug seemed to consider the historiography of economics as knowledge to be judged on its ability to contribute to economic analysis more than on criteria of historical veracity.

In another research article, Roger Backhouse (1992a) added to that discussion with a quite critical account of the relativist/contextualist approaches that continued to surge through the work of Philip Mirowski (1989), Roy Weintraub (1991), or Margaret Schabas (1992), inspired by the historiography and sociology of science. For Backhouse, if “historians of economic thought lose interest in methodology and the appraisal of economic ideas, the importance of their studies will be greatly reduced” (1992a, p. 33). That article prompted a response from Weintraub (1992) and then a rejoinder (Backhouse 1992b), an exchange on major historiographic questions, which is not clearly visible earlier in this journal.

Along similar lines, HES documents during this second period referred to the progress of the history of economics discipline. It was particularly through successive presidential addresses that the feeling of the field’s “making progress” was most clearly expressed. There was no consensus, however, on the precise nature of that progress, or on the directions towards which new research should be pursued. William Barber’s (1990) “Does Scholarship in the History of Economics Have a Useful Future?” predicted that the demise of the Soviet Union would offer new opportunities for historians of economics to provide detailed accounts of international transfers of knowledge, and shed light on the economic transition of former communist countries. S. Todd Lowry’s address the next year offered new promising perspectives through the long-run analysis of ideas (Lowry 1991). Drawing from both philosophy and his own research, Lowry showed how the identification of thought patterns that had endured centuries (instead of micro-histories, so to speak) could become central for economics teaching.<sup>13</sup>

In 1998, the *JHET* published four yearly issues for the first time and Steven Medema became editor the year after. As for the progress of the discipline, Medema’s editorial introduction claimed that, despite its “decline in the economists’ opinion,” the historiography of economics had reached “new heights” by integrating “tools and insights from the history of science” and using the increasingly available archival material (Medema 1999, pp. 5–6). Medema also mentioned a few changes to come with his editorship: the

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<sup>13</sup> As for the previous period, not all presidential addresses adopted normative stances; some presented views of their own research (e.g., Rima 1994; Rutherford 1997). At times, though, they revealed methodological leanings, such as Jim Henderson’s (1996) on the emergence of learned societies, or Robert Clower’s (1998) address, which could have been well given at an economics conference without historians.

inclusion of “review essays” on book-length research deemed significant to the discipline (i.e., in addition to the short “book reviews”; more below), and of symposia presented at HES conferences.<sup>14</sup> Although minor at first view, this shift created more space for historiographic discussion in the journal. One such example is a symposium on Jan Golinski’s 1996 book *Making Natural Knowledge: Constructivism and the History of Science* including contributions by Jeff Biddle, Ross Emmett, Esther Mirjam-Sent, Weintraub, and a rejoinder by Golinski (2001). That symposium concluded that constructivist history of science could be used as a model for the historiography of economics. By shifting from “ideas” to “practices,” constructivism had the ability to yield new narratives about economists.<sup>15</sup>

During the early 2000s, some presidential addresses proposed general narratives about the history of economics instead of the normative appraisals of the first period. David Colander’s (2000) “The Death of Neoclassical Economics,” to which John Davis (2002) replied by highlighting the pluralism of the “new mainstream,” sparked an interest for understanding, and at times even quantifying, the history of recent economics in its new variety (more below). Kevin Hoover’s presidential address was the first to use quantitative tools to show how causation had disappeared from postwar economics (Hoover 2004). He also argued that the “tide of History” was “clearly against internalist history,” with social contexts “given center stage” and historians of economics also “moving in that direction” (Hoover 2004, p. 150). Progressively, the upper-case Historiography of the previous decade was replaced by different lower-case claims. Whereas Dan Hammond (2003) showed how classifications and labels used by historians distort reality, Weintraub (2005) wondered about the extent to which the economists’ reconstructions of their own past could be trusted. There were also fewer professional concerns exposed in the *JHET* during the 2000s. Bradley Bateman claimed that the previous “lament” about their status within the economics profession had “largely disappeared,” as historians of economics focused “more and more on pure questions of scholarship” (Bateman 2008, p. 1). It may be that with graduate history of economics programs disappearing from North America, it was now time to turn that page over (Weintraub 2007, p. 279).

In addition to the predominantly North American conversation presented so far, in 2008 the *JHET* published a symposium on “The Future of the History of Economic Thought: Young Scholars’ Perspective.”<sup>16</sup> Expressing concerns about the institutional future of the discipline, it pointed at the “decreasing weight attached to history of thought in economics education, especially in top-ranked research institutions,” the “decline in opportunities to pursue graduate study in this field,” and the “small number of job

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<sup>14</sup> From 2000 to 2004, the June issue of the *JHET* published research articles presented at the previous HES conference together with the presidential address. Since 2005, presidential addresses are published in March issues. For a description of the transition to publishing four yearly issues, see Medema (this issue).

<sup>15</sup> For an analysis of the “practical turn” in the historiography of economics, see Maas (this issue). While not part of the symposium on Golinski’s book, Backhouse (2001) provided another historiographic claim in that same *JHET* issue by identifying six topics able to inspire new work: “the rise of technical economics,” “the movement towards quantification,” “the increased role of government in the economy,” “the evolving cosmopolitanism and national isolationism of economics,” “the changing relationship between orthodoxy and heterodoxy in economics,” and “the increased specialization within economics.”

<sup>16</sup> The symposium had been presented at the 2006 meetings of the European Society for the History of Economic Thought (ESHET) in Porto, and was partly reproduced in the *JHET*.



openings for historians of economics” (Tubaro and Angner 2008, p. 82). Conceived as an answer, somehow, to the 2002 *HOPE* supplement on the future of the history of economics, the symposium contained three contributions by young scholars affiliated to European universities. Reviving some “old” points discussed during the *HESB* period, they claimed that historians of economics should remain economists and that closer ties between the two disciplines should be built by either historiographically approaching economics or providing new philosophical references for economists. Perhaps anecdotal at the time of publication, the significance of this young-scholar symposium may be reconsidered in light of the demographic change happening in the HES over the past fifteen years or so (Svorenčík, this issue).<sup>17</sup>

### *Pluralism and Diversity: 2009 to Nowadays*

When Evelyn Forget and Marcel Boumans became *JHET* editors in 2009, they were both holding positions outside the US (respectively in Canada and the Netherlands) and were both knowledgeable about the historiography of science, in particular “science studies.” Their editors’ introduction (Boumans and Forget 2009) was clear in that they would not impose any historiographic preference as the “*JHET* has always been an ecumenical journal open to many different ways of doing history”:

A strong community is a diverse community, and we welcome submissions from a wide variety of perspectives that use a range of historical methods.... The only restriction we impose is that, as a journal in the history of economics, manuscripts that ultimately appear in print ought to be historically contextualized and economically literate. (Boumans and Forget 2009, pp. 1–2)

In 2014, their successor advanced a similar form of openness, while also desiring that the journal received submissions from “adjacent fields”: “I will welcome gratefully the submission of work that may push against the boundaries of the history of economic thought, whether or not such work ultimately finds a place in the journal” (Meardon 2014, p. 1).

While we know that the *JHET* editors have little, if any, influence on pieces such as presidential addresses or guest lectures, the sense of diversity in these two editorial notes is also reflected in those other documents. Unlike our analysis for the previous two periods, it now becomes difficult to identify normative, or even just methodological, trends as guidelines for pursuing new research. Virulent historiographic controversies seem put to rest, a feeling best conveyed in Medema’s presidential address, discussing historiography not in a normative way but through his personal experience of past controversies:<sup>18</sup>

Twelve years ago last weekend, the Executive Committee of the History of Economics Society asked me to serve as the next editor of [the *JHET*]. One of the unintended consequences of accepting this position was that I ended up in the middle of the

<sup>17</sup> For a description of the increasingly diverse authorship in the *JHET*, see our online appendix.

<sup>18</sup> The most common style of presidential addresses in the recent past is of an idiosyncratic kind, dealing with economists as travelers (Boianovsky 2018) or knowledge brokers (Forget 2020), instead of transmitting strong normative messages to the HES. The last address to date, by Boumans (2023), reflects on the responsibility of historians of economics in creating new narratives. In doing so, he discusses recent historiographic trends, such as the representation of minorities in the history of economics, or the “practical turn” in the history of science. For an analysis of Boumans’s presidential address, see Maas (this issue).

historiography wars.... I will admit to having an intrinsic disposal toward pluralism—or ‘horses for courses,’ as the old adage goes—and this disposition was undoubtedly nurtured by my mentor, Warren Samuels, who is perhaps the very embodiment of pluralism. But editing *JHET*, and thereby being forced to read so much good work on so many topics and grounded in such a variety of historiographic approaches, only further reinforced my commitment to the middle ground. (Medema 2011, p. 16)<sup>19</sup>

For the first time in decades, some presidential addresses also revived the earlier antagonism towards the economics profession. In “What’s Wrong with Economics?” Jerry Evensky (2012) argued against the neglect of morals, ethics, and virtues by economists, all of them present throughout the history of the discipline and well documented by historians of economics. Mirowski’s (2013) depiction of the flaws and biases in Samuelson’s historical narratives, using archival evidence this time, also recalls the *HESB* period.

Asides from presidential addresses, guest lectures, and symposia, the HES is also discussed in the *JHET* through a series of interviews published since 2019. Jimena Hurtado and Pedro Duarte’s (2019) editorial introduction to that series claims that with some notable exceptions—e.g., festschrifts or obituaries—very little about the history of the HES is actually published in its journal: how its main elements were created and then developed, which were the contexts for the controversies shaping the discipline, or what do the academic backgrounds of eminent historians of economics look like. The interviews started with Denis O’Brien’s (see Creedy 2019), and then Neil DeMarchi, Robert Hebert, Karen Vaughn, Roy Weintraub, Anthony Waterman, Margaret Schabas, and Evelyn Forget, all interviewed by fellow historians of economics (sometimes ex-presidents, such as Schabas or Bruce Caldwell). The interviews published so far have been more or less formal and conversational, with some being very factual (i.e., including childhood, educational background, first foray into economics, etc.). Others explore the world view and historiographic beliefs of the interviewees, with the selection reflecting a certain desire to create identity for the discipline by highlighting, for instance, the role of women in the HES. This feature, however, stands in stark contrast with the selection of the forty-six Distinguished Fellows of the Society so far: not all specialist historians of economics, and just four of them female fellows.

So far, our overview of the *HESB/JHET* testifies to the role that the journal has played in facilitating historiographical conversation among HES members, as well as reflections on the status of the discipline in its relation with the economics profession. A particularity in the journal, and the discipline more largely, is its self-perception as an economics subfield, a point also discussed by Philippe Fontaine or Weintraub (this issue). The story we see here is in many ways similar to that in a previous, although more detailed, study of *HOPE* (Giraud 2019). First were concerns about the history of economics being ignored by economists, then a more optimistic discourse realizing that the discipline had made progress towards higher historiographic standards, and, last, a transition to some form of historiographic dispersion, “fractionation” (Meardon, this issue), or “fragmented pluralism” (Davis, this issue). As we discuss later, in the *JHET*

<sup>19</sup> According to Medema (2009), A.W. Coats “was also both catholic in tastes and pluralistic in outlook. The continued growth and development of scholarship in our field requires no less of the rest of us” (Medema 2009, p. 390).

this recent dispersion comes together with a lack of appraisal and engagement over future prospects for the discipline.

### III. PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH ARTICLES AND BOOK REVIEWS (1988–2023)

Aside from the documents specific to the HES (i.e., the 402 “other” documents), the *HESB/JHET* has served as an outlet for peer-reviewed research articles since 1988 and book reviews since 1989. These two document types are the most frequent since the *HESB* turned into the *JHET* (Figure 1), bringing the HES journal up to its current academic standard.

#### *Book Reviews*

Initially organized by Roy Rotheim under Thweatt’s editorship (i.e., the 1989 book reviews), the first plan was to solicit longer review essays instead of short book reviews (more below, see also Weintraub, this issue). The latter were established the year after, and were managed by Paul B. Trescott throughout Walker’s editorship (1990 to 1998). From 1999 to 2008 the book review section of the *JHET* was handled directly by Medema (i.e., the journal editor), and after that by Spencer Banzhaf (2009 to 2012), Maria Pia Paganelli (2012 to 2019), and Catherine Herfeld (2019 to 2025).<sup>20</sup> Barring the obvious differences between articles and book reviews, it is worth noting that the *JHET* serves both as a publishing space for research and as a screening device for selected book-length literature. The historiography of economics often requires book-length treatment and, through book reviews, the *JHET* reduces “transaction costs,” so to speak, in that research process (interview with Medema, September 2023).

Table A1, in the online appendix to this article, lists the most frequent book title-words and reviewers for three editorial periods: (1989 to 1998, 1999 to 2008, 2009 to 2023). As expected, Keynes and Adam Smith dominate among the Great Economists given book-length treatment and reviewed in the journal, a finding consistent with previous quantitative accounts on the historiography of economics (Marcuzzo and Zacchia 2016; Edwards 2020). Less expected, perhaps, is Friedrich Hayek, the third most frequently treated economist (i.e., in both book reviews and research articles), a point we discuss next together with other frequently published topics.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> In 2021, a Book Review Advisory Board was created in line with the current editorial mission of increasing diversity in the *JHET* at various levels. The new advisors will help in extending the book selection by increasingly including languages and regions beyond the English-speaking community, and covering research areas in neighboring fields, such as the history of science, science studies, the methodology of economics, sociology of science, and economic history.

<sup>21</sup> Due to significant decline rates for solicited book reviews and other particularities of the *JHET* book-reviewing process, it is risky to draw conclusions from the quantitative analysis of this kind of documents. However, it must be noted that the relative share of book reviews has increased in time among the different document types in the *JHET* (a trend visible in Figure 1). At the same time, the average number of reviewers has been decreasing: from 0.81 (i.e., eighty different reviewers for ninety-nine book reviews) during the first period, to 0.74 (1999 to 2008), and then 0.64 (2009 to 2023). This phenomenon owes, partly, to increased

### *Coupling Research Articles: A Network Analysis*

Unlike book reviews, the indexing of the 763 research articles in the *HESB/JHET* includes titles, abstracts, and extensive reference lists. This supplementary information allows for deeper quantitative examinations and applying different sets of tools to study the journal's content. In line with the methodology of bibliographic couplings, one may proceed through network analyses by pairing the different research articles (i.e., creating links between them), using the similarity of their reference lists. Those similarities allow for connecting the articles and then grouping them via network community detection. In this particular case we linked together the research articles in the *HESB/JHET* into two different networks (i.e., for 1988 to 2008 and 2009 to 2023). The two networks were then partitioned using a standard community detection algorithm.<sup>22</sup>

Table 1 lists the eighteen larger communities detected for the two networks (i.e., nine each period). These communities, together, contain 95.1% and 91.5% of the research articles published during the first and second period, respectively. They appear in decreasing order: from the biggest community in each network (first row) to the smallest (last row). These groupings will help us giving a general description of the content of research articles within the *HESB/JHET*, and also discussing a first few trends.

Community A, the biggest in our first network, includes “Walras,” “Quesnay,” “French,” “Mathematical,” and “Pareto” among its most frequent title words, and “Barnett,” “Eltis,” and “Walker” among its most frequent author last names. This community, together with communities D to I (all in the first network), is consistent with recent quantitative findings by Maria Cristina Marcuzzo and Giulia Zacchia (2016) or José Edwards (2020) about the predominance of Great Economists in the history of economics literature, especially up to the early 2000s. Whereas Marcuzzo and Zacchia (2016) discuss the cases of Smith, David Ricardo, Karl Marx, John Stuart Mill, Alfred Marshall, Schumpeter, Knut Wicksell, Léon Walras, Keynes, and Hayek, these Great Economists (excepting Schumpeter) are all conspicuous in our first network.<sup>23</sup> Another element consistent with the other recent studies is the persistence (and even rise) of research on three particular Great Economists: Smith (communities D and L), Keynes (communities E and O), and Hayek (communities H and R). The six communities containing work on these three authors are well defined, and group virtually all research

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publishing pressures on younger scholars together with the low value placed on short book reviews, a point in our final discussion also addressed by Weintraub (this issue).

<sup>22</sup> For methodological details of our network analysis, see our online appendix. Here, it is worth noting that we measured the similarity of the reference lists in our two networks using Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA) (Martin et al. 2007), an approach accounting for the different possible meanings of words and texts. Our examination yielded communities of research articles to be best understood as groupings of “similarly citing” documents. For that reason, the different communities in Table 1 are described through the most frequent title words and authors (i.e., title words/authors) of the different research articles. For network analyses applied to the historiography of economics, see Claveau and Gingras (2016); Claveau and Herfeld (2018); Edwards, Giraud, and Schinckus (2018); and Edwards (2020).

<sup>23</sup> Marcuzzo and Zacchia (2016) analyze articles in five specialized history of economics journals from 1993 to 2013: the *European Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, *History of Economic Ideas*, *History of Economics Review*, *HOPE*, and *JHET*. They identify a recent “stepping down from the shoulders of the giants” (p. 39) through: (i) a “move towards studies of ‘minor’ figures and/or economists from a more recent past”; (ii) the “blossoming of archival research into unpublished work and correspondence” (p. 39); and (iii) “a clear move out from the study of individual authors” (p. 42). Edwards (2020) detects a similar (although earlier) change in *HOPE*, apparent during the last two decades in that survey (i.e., 1999 to 2018).

on them within the *HESB/JHET*. But aside from the names of the three economists, it is worth noting that the most frequent title words and authors in these communities differ between the two periods, a shift visible in *HOPE*, too, and discussed in detail by Edwards (2020) for Smith and Keynes.

In addition to the seven communities clustered around Great Economists, our first network also includes two relatively large groupings. Community B, the second biggest, contains research about American economics and institutions by mostly North American historians of economics (see also Rutherford, this issue). At this point, it is worth noting that some historians of economics during the first period were themselves connected to institutional economics. As mentioned earlier, the *HESB* and early *JHET* contain a predominantly North American conversation about both the historiography of economics and the economics profession. The presence of such a large grouping of research articles for just the first period owes, at least partly, to the subsequent geographic dispersion of the HES (Fontaine, Svorenčík, Weintraub, this issue.) Community C, the third in our first network (and also absent in the second period), includes the historiographic controversy described earlier in this text. It contains several of the same authors and research articles (e.g., the symposium on Golinski's 1996 book), together with sets of research on economic dissent and the progress of heterodox economics (see Davis, this issue), and a few pieces on historiography and methodology for historians of economics.

As expected, the second network (i.e., 2009 to 2023 research articles) reveals a quite different picture. Community K, the largest, includes articles on a variety of recent topics: the internalization of externalities and Chicago economists, the emergence and workings of recent subfields (e.g., law and economics, environmental economics, geographical economics, behavioral economics, the economics of education, the economics of happiness), the Phillips Curve and history of recent macroeconomics, or the economics of Milton Friedman. Several authors in this community have been (and many remain) involved in conferences, projects, and research centers focused on advancing the historiography of recent economics, a phenomenon also detected in *HOPE* for this same period (Giraud 2019; Edwards 2020).

Besides research on Smith, Keynes, and Hayek (communities L, O, R), the other communities in the second network tend to group research on “new” topics (i.e., most of them not in the first network): finance, mathematical economics, econometrics, and Paul Samuelson (Community M); political economy and trade up to the nineteenth century mixed with early American political economy (Community N); twentieth-century American economics, including antisemitism, eugenics, monetary economics, Jewish economics, and home economics (Community P); French and Italian economists such as François Quesnay, Abbé de Mably, C. Richard de Butré, the Saint-Simonians, Ferdinando Galiani, L. Walras, François Perroux, Charles Coquelin, Jules Dupuit, and Antonio de Viti de Marco (Community Q); and development economics and economic missions (Community S). These strands of recent research are further described next, using a topic model.

### *A Topic Model*

Unlike the previous network analysis, which uncovered relationships between research articles, the method of topic modeling allows for associating the different documents to a

**Table 1.** Eighteen Communities in Two Article Networks (Counts in Brackets)

1988–2008 (410 research articles)		2009–2023 (353 research articles)	
A 17.3%	Walras (10), Quesnay (6), French (4), Mathematical (4) Pareto (4) / Barnett (5), Eltis (3), Walker (3), Creedy (2), Daal (2), Frobert (2), Guidi (2), Steiner (2), Tarascio (2), Weber (2)	K 15.9%	Law (5), Friedman (4), Chicago (4), Phillips Curve (4), Environmental (3) / Forder (3), Marciano (3), Berta (2), Cherrier (2), Edwards (2), Giraud (2), Medema (2), Rancan (2)
B 14.9%	American (6), Clark (6), Fisher (6), Institutions (6) / Dimand (5), Rutherford (5), Fiorito (3), Prasch (3), Barber (2), Gunning (2), Henry (2), Leathers (2), Raines (2), Steindl (2), Tilman (2)	L 13.6%	Smith (23), Wealth of (5), Money/ Monetary (4) / Paganelli (3), Evensky (2), Waterman (2)
C 13.4%	Heterodox (5), Golinski (4), Dissent (3), Historiography (3) / Backhouse (7), Weintraub (4), Bateman (2), Colander (2), Dow (2), Hands (2), Hoover (2), Hynes (2), Rutherford (2)	M 12.5%	Fisher (6), Financial (5), Model (4), Samuelson (3) / Backhouse (2), Biddle (2), Düppe (2), Hoover (2), Schinckus (2)
D 11.7%	Smith (19), Trade (5), Labor (4), Hume (3) / Noell (3), Rashid (3), Young (3), Hueckel (2), Khalil (2), Levy (2), Maneschi (2)	N 12.5%	Mill (9), Ricardo (8), Political Economy (5) American (4), Trade (4) / Depoortère (3), Baronian, (2), Besomi (2), Bianchini (2), Meardon (2)
E 10.7%	Keynes (10), Interest (5), Money/ Monetary (4), Wicksell (4) / Aslanbeigui (3), Oakes (3), Boianovsky (2), DeVroey (2), Moggridge (2), O'Donnell (2), Tilman (2)	O 11.6%	Keynes (18), Money/Monetary (7), Macroeconomics (4) / Barnett (2), Boianovsky (3), Kent (2), Rivot (2)
F 10.2%	Jevons (7), Mill (6), Ricardo (3) / Hollander (4), Moore (4), Peart (3), White (3), Aldrich (2), Churchman (2), Hirsch (2), Kern (2)	P 8.2%	American (5), Progressive–ism (5), Eugenics (3), Jewish (3), Commons (3) / Fiorito (5), Betancourt (2), Chasse (2), Medema (2), Vallois (2)
G 6.1%	Marx (9), Ricardo (9), Value (5), Profit (4) / Caravale (2), Howard (2), Keen (2), King (2)	Q 7.1%	Quesnay (4), Butre (2), Dupuit (2), Viti (2), Walras (2) / Charles & Théré (2), Fossati (2), Numa (2)
H 5.4%	Hayek (7), Austrian (2), Evolution (2), Mises (2) / Boettke (2), Leathers (2)	R 6.8%	Hayek (6), Robbins (6), Menger (2), Wieser (2) / Cachanosky (2)
I 5.4%	Marshall (12), A. Young (3), Development (3) / Bowman (2), Buchanan (2), Niman (2)	S 3.4%	Development Economics (6), African (2), Cycles (2) / Alacevich (2), Boianovsky (2)

**Table 2.** Twenty Topics (Average Proportions in Brackets)

Econom*/Poli*1 (27.53%)	Econom*/Poli*2 (15.48%)	Keynes/Money (7.53%)	Smith/Adam (5.84%)
Ricardo/Malthus (4.4%)	Friedman/Chicago (3.94%)	American/Institutions (3.84%)	Methodology/Science (3.31%)
Capital/Cambridge(s) (3.18%)	Quesnay/France (3.12%)	Marshall/Jevons (3.03%)	Hayek/Austrian (2.89%)
Schumpeter/German (2.35%)	Pareto/Giornale (2.29%)	Finance/Cycles (2.14%)	Minorities/Trade (2.1%)
Public/Buchanan (2.06%)	Becker/Others (1.76%)	Walras/Equilibrium (1.61%)	Scholastic/Medieval (1.61%)

The first two topics in our model, Econom\*/Poli\*1 and Econom\*/Poli\*2, are general in that they include terms common to most titles, abstracts, and reference lists in the journal (e.g., “economic,” “political economy,” “history,” or “thought”).<sup>26</sup> In addition to these two general topics, and in ways similar to our previous network analysis, our model reveals the higher proportions for Keynes/Money and Smith/Adam. As we shall see next, not only is this model consistent with the information in our network analysis, but it also allows for describing a few more trends within the journal, as the different topic proportions are available both on a yearly basis and for each individual article.

predetermined number of topics. In this case, we modeled twenty topics out of the titles, abstracts, and reference lists of the research articles in the *HESB/JHET* (1988 to 2022).<sup>24</sup> The twenty topics appear listed in Table 2 from higher to lower average proportions within the journal. For sake of clarity, we labeled them using the two words with higher probabilities for each topic, and, in a few cases, we took guidance from the abstracts of their most representative articles to pick up the two words.<sup>25</sup>

Figure 2 presents the yearly distribution of the twenty topics, ordered from highest to lowest average proportions (i.e., from bottom to top). Aside from the previously mentioned persistence (and even rise) of research on Keynes/Money, Smith/Adam, and Hayek/Austrian, Figure 2 also suggests declining trends for Ricardo/Malthus,

<sup>24</sup> For methodological references on topic modeling, see our online appendix and also Billi, Mascareño, and Edwards (2020). Here, it is worth noting that we used Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) (Blei et al. 2003), and that the twenty topics are *all* present in different proportions within the titles, abstracts, and reference lists of the different research articles. For an analysis of topic modeling and other quantitative techniques applied to the historiography of economics, see Edwards, Giraud, and Schinckus (2018).

<sup>25</sup> Throughout this subsection, by “most representative” we refer to all research articles with over 30% probability of belonging to a given topic.

<sup>26</sup> Econom\*/Poli\*1 is prominent for 1979 to 2008 and Econom\*/Poli\*2 for 2009 to 2022, due to the indexing of the dataset (more in the online appendix). Together, they account for 43% of the average topic proportions, with 583 research articles including over 30% of these general topics in their titles, abstracts, and reference lists.

Capital/Cambridges, Marshall/Jevons, Schumpeter/German, Pareto/Giornale, and Walras/Equilibrium. In general, these dynamics support our former claim about the recent decline of research on Great Economists such as Ricardo, Thomas Robert Malthus, Marshall, William Stanley Jevons, Schumpeter, Vilfredo Pareto, or Walras.<sup>27</sup> Before moving forward, however, it is worth noting that the proportions of topics within the *HESB/JHET* are highly variable year to year due to the size of the journal (Figure 1). For that reason, our analysis is also based on the examination of the most representative articles for each topic, and not just the trends visible in Figure 2.<sup>28</sup>

A finding in our network analysis were two relatively large groupings including research on American economics and institutions (Community B), and historiographic discussion (Community C) for just the first period (1988 to 2008). Quite similarly, our topic model identifies two related declining topics: American/Institutions and Methodology/Science. Among the thirty-six most representative articles for American/Institutions, only ten were published during the last decade. That subset (which is also contained in Community P, above) includes research on eugenics, antisemitism, John Commons, and home economics, and is written by an international set of authors (i.e., not just North American historians of economics). Something similar happens with the topic containing Methodology/Science, with just four of its twenty-seven most representative research articles published in the last decade. Most of the twenty articles published between 1989 and 2008 appear also in Community C (first network), and deal, again, with Golinski, economic dissent, the future of the history of economics discipline, and historiographic/methodological subjects.

Unlike the previous declining trends, our topic model suggests recently rising proportions for Friedman/Chicago, Quesnay/France, Finance/Cycles, Minorities/Trade, and Becker/Others (“others” meaning several other recent figures). Among the most representative articles for Friedman/Chicago, only four were published before 2009. The rest (thirty-two research articles) is consistent with Community K in our network analysis, the study of recent economics. Becker/Others, a small topic most represented in just fifteen documents (thirteen of them after 2009) is also contained in Community K. Aside from Gary Becker, this topic includes expected utility theory, welfare economics, economics and psychology, or happiness, all treated through the life and work of specific authors (i.e., not always economists), such as Tibor Scitovsky, John Harsanyi, Amartya Sen, Richard Posner, Leonard Savage, Polly Hill, or Harry Helson.

Finance/Cycles and Quesnay/France, also recently rising topics, appear well connected to communities M and Q, respectively, in our previous network analysis for the second period. Finance/Cycles (twenty-two most representative articles) includes recent research on econophysics, performativity, the analysis of cycles by Russian economists (e.g., Isaak Illich Rubin, Moscow Conjunction Institute), or Ragnar Frisch’s Rocking Horse Model. It also includes earlier research on the economics of Eugen Slutsky, Nikolai Kondratiev, or Mikhail Tugan-Baranovsky. Quesnay/France (thirty-two most

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<sup>27</sup> For the decline of research on Great Economists in *HOPE*, and the case of Schumpeter in particular, see Edwards (2020). As for the Capital/Cambridges topic, it includes research on Marx, E. Böhm-Bawerk, M. Dobb, N. Kaldor, J. Robinson, and other post-Keynesians, with just five of its twenty-nine most representative articles published during the last decade.

<sup>28</sup> For an update of our topic model (i.e., including 2023) and a color version of its Figure, see our online appendix.



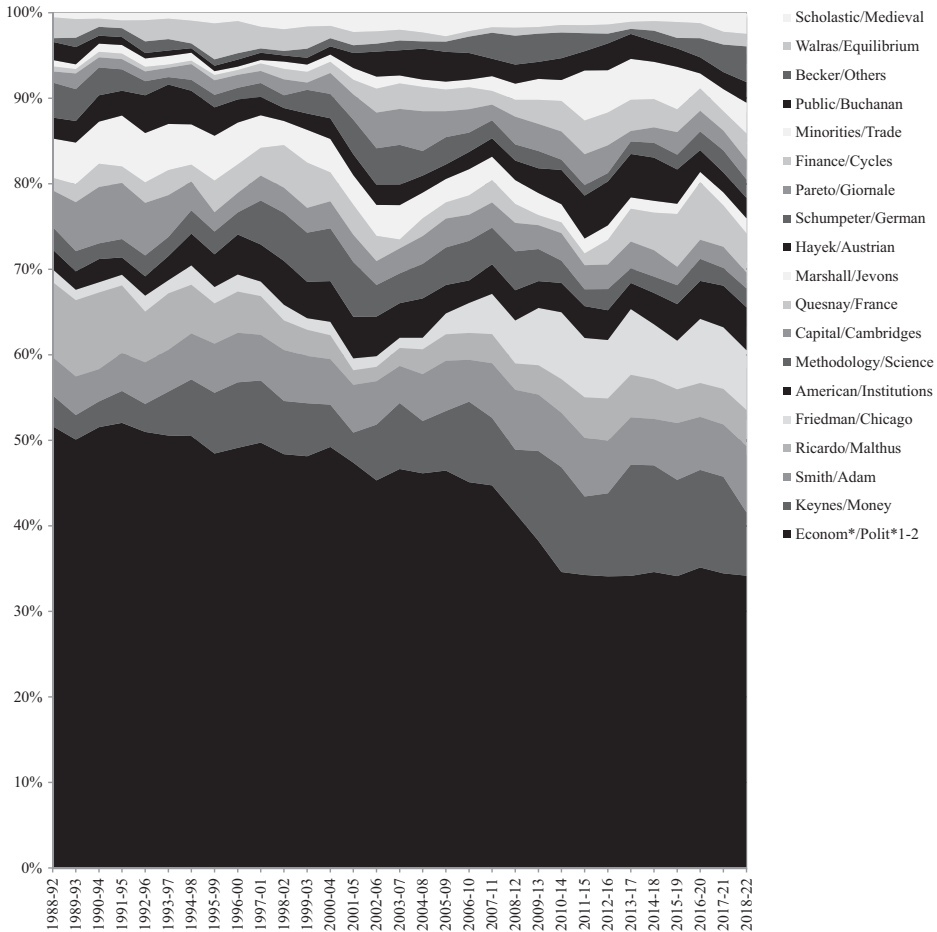


FIGURE 2. Evolution of the Twenty Topics (Five-Year Probability Averages 1988–2022).

representative articles) includes research on French economists such as Quesnay, Étienne Bonnot de Condillac, Jean-Baptiste Say, and Albert Aftalion up to the early 2000s, together with the new research on the variety of continental European authors grouped in Community Q (above). Minorities/Trade, our last recently rising topic, is most represented in twenty documents (eighteen since 2009), and includes research on Jewish social science, Black colonization, Indian economics, Buddhist economics, secession, abolitionism and trade, Henry Carey, and trade in Korea, much like Community P in our second network.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

##### *Towards Pluralism, Diversity, Dispersion?*

Throughout this survey, we first examined the history of the *HESB/JHET* through documents specific to the HES (presidential addresses, guest lectures, etc.) and identified

three moments. First, during the *HESB* period, we recognized some sort of crisis similar to that depicted by Roger Backhouse and Philippe Fontaine (2014): historians of economics perceiving themselves as economists, antagonizing their colleagues for ignoring their work, and, more generally, criticizing their lack of historical sensitivity. Those views apparently receded during the 1990s, with some sort of emancipation from economics, a deeper historiographic engagement, and the *JHET* revealing perceptions of progress within the discipline. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, with the history of science quite often invoked as a disciplinary model and the HES becoming more diverse, calls for pluralism became frequent and intended to build both consensus and a certain sense of community. Lastly, during the last fifteen years or so, calls for pluralism have been complemented with calls for “diversity,” two terms expressing different things. Whereas the idea of pluralism relates most often to “historiographical pluralism,” diversity refers to the scholarly community publishing in the journal.

In section III, we continued by briefly discussing book reviews, and then with a quantitative examination of research articles. In line with other recent quantitative analyses on the discipline, we identified Smith, Keynes, and Hayek as the three Great Economists in the *HESB/JHET*, now and then. In addition, we discussed a few trends. On one side was the recent decline of research on Great Economists (other than Smith, Keynes, and Hayek), American institutionalism (i.e., by North American historians of economics), and historiographically engaged topics. On the other side was the rise of research on different aspects of recent (i.e., postwar) economics, and investigations about the life, connections, and works of myriad “new” figures (i.e., not necessarily economists), both old and new.

At first view, the *HESB/JHET* reveals a similar story to *HOPE*'s (Giraud 2019; Edwards 2020), especially for the research articles. As we shall see next, the main difference between the two journals comes from the “other” documents: “annual supplements” and “surveys of recent scholarship” in *HOPE*, and HES documents (e.g., presidential addresses, interviews, symposia) in the HES journal. An important concern in *HOPE* during the early 1980s was shifting “the spotlight away from the ‘great men’ who continue to feature so prominently” (Coats 1983, p. 317), a transition accomplished in both *HOPE* and elsewhere (Marcuzzo and Zacchia 2016; Edwards 2020). A more recent concern has been helping scholars to overcome “some real barriers to entry to historical topics distant from their own research activity” (Weintraub 2015, p. 361), a sort of historiographic fragmentation addressed through *HOPE* Surveys of Recent Scholarship in the History of Economics (Weintraub 2015; Pinzón-Fuchs, Chassonnery-Zaïgouche, and Edwards 2021). As in other academic disciplines, the internationalization and specialization of historians of economics have resulted in an increasingly dispersed research community.<sup>29</sup> For different reasons—editorial efforts, the effects of a greater dispersion in economics itself (i.e., with the recent growth of applied fields and proliferation of new methods), and desire to make some impact on current economics (especially by younger scholars)—focus on the history of recent economics and research on previously “neglected” figures (such as women, or non-

<sup>29</sup> For descriptions of the greater dispersion of both topics and authors in the *JHET* since 2009, see our online appendix. In a few words, unlike our finding for book reviews, there is a greater variety of authors by *JHET* article since 2009: 0.73 different authors by article for 1988 to 2008, and 0.99 for 2009 to 2023. For an analysis of the composition of the HES, now and then, see Svorenčik (this issue).

economists) have generated intensive work on many specific subjects but at the cost of losing, perhaps, the bigger picture (see Davis, this issue).

### *Engagement, Outreach, and Appraisals of Book-Length Research*

Since the early 1990s, *HOPE* has promoted explicit initiatives “to advance the cutting edge of research in the history of economics” (see <https://hope.econ.duke.edu/conference/hope>) through *HOPE* annual conferences and their corresponding *HOPE* supplements (Giraud 2019; Edwards 2020). Such initiatives include the analysis of the increasingly available archives, producing histories of economics in its relation to other disciplines and practices (e.g., psychology, engineering, journalism, politics), and integrating appraisals of economics by scholars from adjacent areas, such as the history of science or science and technology studies, who have, in recent years, produced significant contributions to the historiography of economics by reframing otherwise “tired conversations and themes” (Weintraub, this issue). This year’s *HOPE* conference, “The History of Economics in the Expanded Field,” includes contributions from such scholars, a form of engagement hardly detectable in the *JHET*.<sup>30</sup>

Instead, the *JHET* promotes a certain form of catholicity with regards to the different historiographic perspectives within the HES by seeking to give space in the journal to the different factions that make up the historians of economics community proper (Medema 2009; 2011).<sup>31</sup> After all, editors of a society journal are not expected to editorially shape its content but to respect the inherent diversity of its scholarly community. Such an approach is explicit in the journal’s presentation text at the Cambridge University Press website: “reflecting the full spectrum of scholarly analysis within the history of economic thought and history of economic methodology.” However, as pointed out by Fontaine (this issue), there is still space to increase diversity within the HES. Composed primarily by historians of economics trained as economists, current initiatives such as the HES Growth and Outreach Fund or the *JHET*’s writing workshops (Maas, this issue) could well reach out to research on economics by non-economists, including historians of science, science studies scholars, philosophers and sociologists of economics, or journalists. As things turn, this larger scholarly community tends to approach economics in ways that may help the HES engage in deep conversation about new prospects for the discipline.

Another element to keep in mind is the increased publishing pressure by academic institutions, especially on younger scholars. Relying on metrics such as Journal Impact Factors (Edwards and Meardon 2021; Pardo-Guerra 2022), such pressures stimulate

<sup>30</sup> That the *JHET* has not explicitly promoted such research does not mean that approaches coming from the history of science or intellectual history do not have space in the journal. As we have seen, during the 1980s, people like Samuels or Barber mobilized intellectual history through their own writings. More recently, from 2002 to 2010, we saw that the *JHET* also published a series of Distinguished Guest Lectures by economists, historians of science, intellectual historians, and a statistician. All in all, the *JHET* has, less explicitly than *HOPE*, engaged in historiographic conversation through the publication of symposia, interviews with scholars considered eminent contributors to the HES, or occasional editorial initiatives (see Meardon, this issue).

<sup>31</sup> It is worth noting that something similar happens, indeed, with the regular research articles published in *HOPE* (Giraud 2019). Paul Dudenhefer, managing editor of *HOPE*, once affirmed that Craufurd Goodwin, the journal’s editor, “perhaps relied too much on the advice of referees” (Dudenhefer 2019, p. 150). It is also worth pointing out that editorially respecting the plurality of historiographic approaches within the historians of economics community does not mean an absence of editorial input, which operates through the choice of reviewers and handling of the revision process, to name just two avenues (more in Meardon, this issue).

“quicker” publication strategies instead of book-length projects (i.e., publishing monographs, books, book chapters). If one believes that books, unlike articles, are better suited for structured analyses of big questions (Cardoso 2021), then a greater focus on such research would allow for deep conversations about the reciprocal influences between society, politics, and economics. Our investigation and revisions carried out to write this project, a previous article on *HOPE* (Edwards 2020), and also Weintraub (this issue) show how short book reviews on history of economics literature have gradually lost value, even for historians of economics. If historians of economics are still “people of the book” (interview with Medema), then an important issue for current and future *JHET* editors is to come up with better ways to incorporate book-length research into the journal. Unlike short book reviews, review essays (Pinzón-Fuchs, Chassonnery-Zaïgouche, and Edwards 2021; Weintraub, this issue) may prove an efficient way to appraise that research (see also Meardon, this issue). Treated like peer-reviewed articles, review essays on one or multiple books may well bring engaged conversation back to the HES.

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

To view supplementary material for this article, please visit <http://doi.org/10.1017/S1053837224000208>.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

The author declares no competing interests exist.

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