Postures and practices of economists:

Convergence or divorce?

Introduction

The French academic context is relativey tensed

Contradictions between:

	"us"...	...and "them"
Standard Mainstream Neo-classics	Claim for unicity of the discipline	
Heterodox (Old/Neo/New-)Institutionalists Post-keynesian Marxian Austrian school...	Contradictions about identities Corporatist level Epistemological level Normative level A priori diverse	

To what extent economists (which ones) share identity?

Question systems of thoughts and beliefs

Data and method

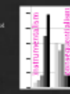
Survey to French economists

Testing agreement to Epistemological proposals

Clustering Method

Grouping together economists who evaluates the same way the same proposals

- Euclidean distances
- Ward method



4 Groups (24.2%, 27.4%, 20.2%, 28.2%)

Classification

1. Indentify these groups
   For each proposal, how different is the evaluation within the group vs. in the rest of the sample (Wilcoxon test)?

2. Proximity analysis
   Which groups are closer (more distant)?
   In terms of methodological practices

Conclusions: No definitive answer

Some shared foundations (instrumentalism)

Mainstream is as diverse as the heterodoxies

They dissemble more than they resemble

Improve the research design (eg. equivocal proposals)

AFSE Meeting - Paris - 14-16 May 2018

AGIR Equipe ODYCEE Gaël Plumecocq (gael.plumecocq@inra.fr)
Organisations, DYnamiques des Connaissances et des innovations dans les tErritoires

Contradictions between:

"us"...
(who are WE?)

...and "them"
(who are THEY?)

Standard
Mainstream
Neo-classics

Heterodox

(Old/Neo/New-)Institutionalists
Post-keynesian
Marxian
Austrian school...

Claim for unicity of the discipline

Contradictions about identities

Corporatist level
What is it to *be* an economist ?

Epistemological level
What is it to *be* a *good* economist ?

Normative level
What are the *admissible norms* that makes a *good* economist?

A priori diverse

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identities

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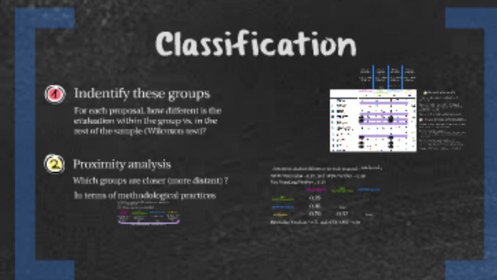

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Data and method

Survey to French economists

(1st semester 2015)

Testing agreement to Epistemological proposals

Beliefs on various status of reality (5)

The role of economics (6)

Relationship between economics and other social sciences (2)

Relevance of various rationality hypothesis (7)

Differences in how markets and coordination are conceived (9)

Clustering Method

Grouping together economists who evaluates the same way the same proposals

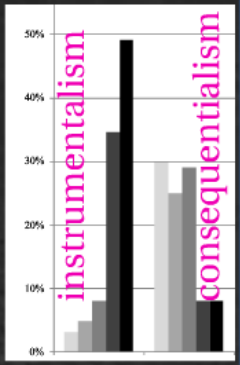
- Euclidian distances: $\sqrt{\text{Sum}[(V_{ai}-V_{bi})^2]}$

  with V_{ai}-V_{bi} distance between individuals a and b for proposal i

- Ward method

  NA = set to 3 (undecided)

  Keeping only the proposals that display variability (19/29)



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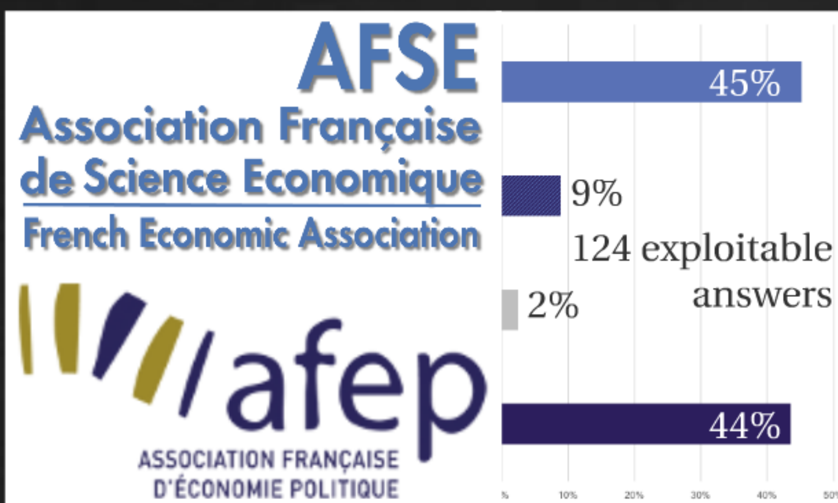

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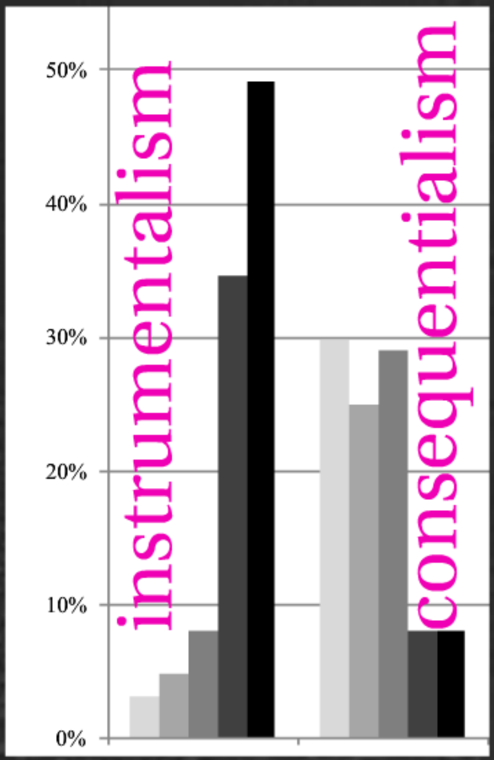

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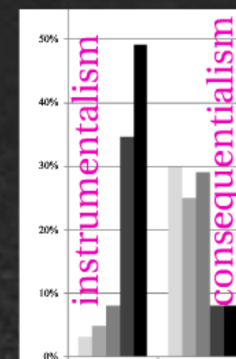

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		CRITICAL REALISTS		NEO-INSTITUTIONALISTS		INSTITUTIONALISTS		STANDARDS	
		Mea.	Diff.	Mea.	Diff.	Mea.	Diff.	Mea.	Diff.
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

General agreements

Instrumental posture (scientifically and politically)

Economic reality is defined by (i) situated rationality, and (ii) the importance of rules in coordination settings

Economics deals with social phenomenons

Characteristics of heterodoxies

Rejection of "optimality": neither markets nor economics define optimal society's functioning

Skeptical as regard to economics:
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Skeptical as regard to social role of markets
- markets do not enables reaching equilibrium and optimum
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Rejection of Naturalism (markets are not "natural")

2. Proximity analysis

Which groups are closer (more distant) ?

In terms of methodological practices

51% of the economists in the sample use econometrics (37% uses modeling)

Only 11% use experiment as a method

CRITICAL REALISTS	NEO-INSTITUTIONALISTS	INSTITUTIONALISTS	STANDARDS
Monographs (49%) History (56%)	Econometrics (98%) Modeling (37%)	Interviews (49%)	Econometrics (89%) Modeling (32%) Interview (5%)
2.9	2.2	2.8	1.7

Nb method declared (2.3 in gen. pop.)

Average of absolute difference for each proposal ($\frac{\text{Sum } |v_i^? - v_i^?|}{n}$)

AFEP/Heterodox = 0,07, and AFSE/Neither = 0,08

But, Neoclass/Neither = 0,31

	CRITICAL REALISTS	NEO-INSTITUTIONALISTS	INSTITUTIONALISTS
NEO-INSTITUTIONALISTS	0,99		
INSTITUTIONALISTS	0,48	0,65	
STANDARDS	0,70	0,53	0,62

Heterodox/Neoclass = 0,71, and AFSE/AFEP = 0,58

	members	members	members	members
		Women, Insecure employment, Youngests	Elders, (and non-HDR)	

	Posture / conception	CRITICAL REALISTS 24,2% Moy.	Diff. (test)	NEO-INSTITUTIONALISTS 27,4% Moy.	Diff. (test)	INSTITUTIONALISTS 20,2% Moy.	Diff. (test)	STANDARDS 28,2% Moy.	Diff. (test)
Prop1.1	Realism	2,7	-0,8 (***)	3,5		3,8	0,6 (**)	3,3	
Prop1.2	Constructivism	2,9		2,9		2,7		2,4	-0,4 (*)
Prop1.3	Instrumentalism	4,2		4,1		4,1		4,4	
Prop1.4	Conséquentialism	2,4		2,6		2,7		2,0	-0,5 (*)
Prop1.5	Critical realism	4,2	1,1 (***)	3,2		3,2		2,9	-0,6 (***)
Prop2.1	Mecanistic	2,7	-0,7 (**)	3,9	1 (***)	3,2		2,9	
Prop2.2	Evolutionary	3,3		3,9	0,5 (**)	4,2	0,9 (***)	2,8	-1 (***)
Prop2.3	Forecasting	2,3	-0,7 (***)	3,6	1,1 (***)	2,8		2,5	-0,4 (*)
Prop2.4	Decision-making	3,7		4,1	0,3 (*)	4,0		3,9	
Prop2.5	Resource allocation	1,8	-0,6 (***)	2,9	0,8 (***)	2,5		2,0	
Prop2.6	Optimality	1,7	-1,2 (***)	3,5	1,3 (***)	1,8	-0,9 (***)	3,0	0,6 (**)
Prop3.1	Exclusive	4,7	0,3 (**)	4,1	-0,6 (***)	4,7		4,5	
Prop3.2	Inclusive	2,0	-1,2 (***)	3,4	0,8 (***)	2,2	-0,8 (***)	3,5	0,9 (***)
Prop4.1	Situated Rationality	3,8		3,7		3,8		3,5	
Prop4.2	Cognitive Rationality	2,2	-1,3 (***)	3,9	0,9 (***)	3,0		3,6	0,5 (**)
Prop4.3	Argumentative Rationality	3,3		4,1	1,1 (***)	3,8	0,6 (*)	2,3	-1,4 (***)
Prop4.4	Maximisation Rationality	1,6	-1,9 (***)	3,9	1,2 (***)	3,1		3,3	
Prop4.5	Calculator (perfect) Rationality	1,4	-1 (***)	2,9	0,9 (***)	2,3		2,1	
Prop4.6	Bounded Rationality	1,4	-1,4 (***)	3,8	1,7 (***)	2,8		2,1	-0,7 (**)
Prop4.7	Secondary hypothesis	3,1		2,5		2,7		2,6	
Prop5.1	Institutionalism	4,4		4,0	-0,3 (**)	4,7	0,6 (***)	4,0	
Prop5.2	Naturalism	1,6	-1 (***)	3,3	1,2 (***)	1,6	-1 (***)	2,8	0,5 (*)
Prop5.3	Contractualism	2,8	-0,8 (***)	4,2	1,1 (***)	2,9	-0,6 (**)	3,5	
Prop5.4	Negative	3,5		3,3		4,0	0,7 (***)	3,1	-0,5 (**)
Prop5.5	Perfect markets	1,9	-0,6 (**)	2,8	0,6 (**)	1,9	-0,6 (**)	2,7	0,4 (**)
Prop5.6	Fictional	4,3		4,2		4,4		4,1	
Prop5.7	How equilibrium is reached	1,7	-1,1 (***)	3,4	1,1 (***)	1,4	-1,4 (***)	3,3	1 (***)
Prop5.8	Political simulations	2,2	-1,2 (***)	3,9	1 (***)	3,0		3,4	
Prop5.9	Partial equilibrium	3,1		3,8	0,5 (**)	3,6		3,3	

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Rejection
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- markets

Rejection

80% are "heterodox"	20% are "heterodox" (44% of the "neoclass")	76% are "heterodox"	20% are "heterodox" 56% of the "neoclass")
73% are AFEP members	65% are AFSE members	72% are AFEP members	74% are AFEP members
	Women, Insecure employment, Youngests	Elders, (and non-HDR)	

CRITICAL REALISTS		NEO-INSTITUTIONALISTS		INSTITUTIONALISTS		STANDARDS	
24,2%		27,4%		20,2%		28,2%	
Moy.	Diff. (test)	Moy.	Diff. (test)	Moy.	Diff. (test)	Moy.	Diff. (test)
2,7	-0,8 (***)	3,5		3,8	0,6 (**)	3,3	
2,9		2,9		2,7		2,4	-0,4 (*)
4,2		4,1		4,1		4,4	

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2,9		2,9		2,7		2,4	-0,4 (*)
4,2		4,1		4,1		4,4	
2,4		2,6		2,7		2,0	-0,5 (*)
4,2	1,1 (***)	3,2		3,2		2,9	-0,6 (***)
2,7	-0,7 (**)	3,9	1 (***)	3,2		2,9	
3,3		3,9	0,5 (**)	4,2	0,9 (***)	2,8	-1 (***)
2,3	-0,7 (***)	3,6	1,1 (***)	2,8		2,5	-0,4 (*)
3,7		4,1	0,3 (*)	4,0		3,9	
1,8	-0,6 (***)	2,9	0,8 (***)	2,5		2,0	
1,7	-1,2 (***)	3,5	1,3 (***)	1,8	-0,9 (***)	3,0	0,6 (**)
4,7	0,3 (**)	4,1	-0,6 (***)	4,7		4,5	
2,0	-1,2 (***)	3,4	0,8 (***)	2,2	-0,8 (***)	3,5	0,9 (***)
3,8		3,7		3,8		3,5	
2,2	-1,3 (***)	3,9	0,9 (***)	3,0		3,6	0,5 (**)
3,3		4,1	1,1 (***)	3,8	0,6 (*)	2,3	-1,4 (***)
1,6	-1,9 (***)	3,9	1,2 (***)	3,1		3,3	
1,4	-1 (***)	2,9	0,9 (***)	2,3		2,1	
1,4	-1,4 (***)	3,8	1,7 (***)	2,8		2,1	-0,7 (**)
3,1		2,5		2,7		2,6	
4,4		4,0	-0,3 (**)	4,7	0,6 (***)	4,0	
1,6	-1 (***)	3,3	1,2 (***)	1,6	-1 (***)	2,8	0,5 (*)
2,8	-0,8 (***)	4,2	1,1 (***)	2,9	-0,6 (**)	3,5	
3,5		3,3		4,0	0,7 (***)	3,1	-0,5 (**)
1,9	-0,6 (**)	2,8	0,6 (**)	1,9	-0,6 (**)	2,7	0,4 (**)
4,3		4,2		4,4		4,1	
1,7	-1,1 (***)	3,4	1,1 (***)	1,4	-1,4 (***)	3,3	1 (***)
2,2	-1,2 (***)	3,9	1 (***)	3,0		3,4	
3,1		3,8	0,5 (**)	3,6		3,3	

General agreements

Instrumental posture (scientifically and politically)

Economic reality is defined by (i) situated rationality, and (ii) the importance of rules in coordination settings

Economics deals with social phenomenons

Characteristics of heterodoxies

Rejection of "optimality": neither markets nor economics define optimal society's functioning

Skeptical as regard to economics:

- economics cannot and sould not define optimal society's functioning
- economics concepts and tools are not fit to understand social phenomenon)

Skeptical as regard to social role of markets

- markets do not enables reaching equilibrium and optimum
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Rejection of Naturalism (markets are not "natural")

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1 Indentify these groups

For each proposal, how different is the evaluation within the group vs. in the rest of the sample (Wilcoxon test)?

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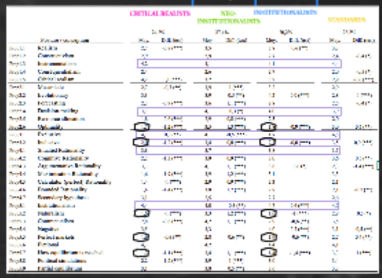

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Which groups are closer (more distant) ?

Average of absolute difference for each proposal ($\frac{\text{Sum } |v_i^a - v_i^b|}{n}$)

AFEP/Heterodox = 0,07, and AFSE/Neither = 0,08

But, Neoclass/Neither = 0,31

	CRITICAL REALISTS	NEO-INSTITUTIONALISTS	INSTITUTIONALISTS
NEO-INSTITUTIONALISTS	0,99		
INSTITUTIONALISTS	0,48	0,65	
STANDARDS	0,70	0,53	0,62

Heterodox/Neoclass = 0,71, and AFSE/AFEP = 0,58

In terms of methodological practices

51% of the economists in the sample use econometrics (37% uses modeling)

Only 11% use experiment as a method

CRITICAL REALISTS	NEO-INSTITUTIONALISTS	INSTITUTIONALISTS	STANDARDS
2.9	2.2	2.8	1.7

Nb method declared (2.3 in gen. pop.)

Prop5.9	Partial equilibrium	3,1	3,8	0,5 (**)

Average of absolute difference for each proposal ($\frac{\text{Sum } | v_i^x - v_i^y |}{n}$)

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Monographic (45%) History (30%)	Econometrics (90%) Modeling (37%)	Interviews (40%)	Econometrics (88%) Modeling (33%) Interview (5%)
2.9	2.2	2.8	1.7

Nb method declared (2.3 in gen. pop.)

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Monography (48%) History (58%)	Econometrics (38%) Modeling (35%)	Interviews (40%)	Econometrics (30%) Modeling(33%) Interview (3%)
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Heterodox (Old/Neo/New-)Institutionalists Post-keynesian Marxian Austrian school...	Contradictions about identities Corporatist level Epistemological level Normative level A priori diverse	

To what extent economists (which ones) share identity?

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