



Special Session Proposal

Culture and Narratives through Time and Space

Annie Tubadji, Swansea University (a.k.tubadji@swansea.ac.uk)

Talita Greyling, University of Johannesburg

Sasha Talavera, University of Birmingham

Frederic Boy, Swansea University

Abstract

Narrative Economics is an emerging cultural economics field with high empirical potential due to the profusion of narratives-related big data from social media such as Twitter, Facebook and alike. It is however highly relevant to ask deeper questions about the mechanisms of impact that narratives have on our socio-economic development.

Cultural economics has taught us about the importance of formal and informal institutions, about cultural persistence through time and the cultural relativity through space. The current session adopts the Culture Based Development (CBD) prism of analysing local culture in terms of local cultural capital that can be distinguished in two types: living culture and cultural heritage. Applying this CBD definition of cultural capital on the world of narratives, we distinguish between narratives that emerge at the current moment of time as living culture (as Facebook or Twitter messages), and narratives that get embraced and empowered by the existing institutions (such as publications that are passed through editorial approval and appear in established institutions embodying trust and authority, i.a. established newspapers and books that are preserved in libraries as important holders of truth).

We ask a host of relevant questions based on this distinction between living culture narratives and cultural heritage empowered narratives, such as: which narrative is more powerful in achieving impact on the perception of people about fake news, how are living culture narratives related to mental health, how are cultural heritage narratives related to path-dependence and socio-economic evolution. Following further the CBD approach, we explore the regional variation of the different impact

from living culture narratives and cultural heritage empowered narratives across time and space.

To address our novel conceptual take on the world of narratives, we will employ a variety of novel empirical and theoretical methods. We will demonstrate the use of big data from Twitter and Facebook, in comparison to using audio-recording and the incorporated emotion in the sound record as well as the Google Global Libraries digital archive. New pathways of understanding the world of narratives and language in the socio-economic development of place is revealed through these novel approaches to data in economic analysis.