

## POPPER AND HAYEK ON PREDICTION IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

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The contribution deals with the notion of “prediction”, considered both in Popper and Hayek. Particularly, their viewpoints about its role within the social sciences field are examined. Popper stated that “prediction” has a relevant place in scientific method, because it is the central issue in falsification. Nevertheless, several problems regarding the application of this claim to the methodology of the social sciences were discerned. For his part, Hayek showed his acceptance of essential falsificationist principles in methodology, mainly based on its logical apparatus. He assumed the Popperianesque D-N model for explanation and prediction. Because of this, he changed his mind with respect to the methodological unity of the sciences. But in his interpretation of Popperian methodology he also presented two new ideas, namely, the notions of “explanation of the principle” and “pattern prediction”. So he introduced relevant gradations and proposed a different use of these concepts for the social sciences, specifically in the case of economics. The analysis of both positions on prediction reveals that Hayek’s version of Popper’s methodology does not fit with the Popperian original aim and this also shows the general difficulties of falsificationist methodology in the social sciences domain, especially in economics.