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Gatekeepers of economics: the network of editorial boards in economic journals

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Introduction[1]

The academic community of economics may be explored through the observation of the editorial activities of scholars engaged as members on the boards of editors of relevant scientific journals, and through the analysis of the structural properties of the network generated by the editorial activities of the members of the boards of these journals. While a lot of literature on the sociology of science uses data on editorial boards for empirical research (e.g. Braun 2004), starting at least from the seminal work of Merton and Zuckerman (1971); only recently these data, starting from Baccini (2009), have been explored with network analysis techniques (Baccini 2009; Cronin 2009; Baccini and Barabesi 2010; Ni and Ding 2010; Baccini and Barabesi 2011; Cabanac 2012).

Traditionally, the main function of editorial boards was to determine which articles were appropriate for publication. In the last two or three decades this function has changed: the spread of the anonymous referee process allows editorial boards to concentrate on selecting and evaluating referees. In every case they act as "gatekeepers of science" (Crane 1967), "holding the fate of so many papers and so many careers"; they are "a small group, although growing in numbers as specialized journals continue to launch. These people are the chaperones of submitted papers, seeing the manuscripts through the peer-review process and ultimately deciding whether a paper gets published in the journal" (Powell 2010). They control "the system of manuscript evaluation and selection" occupying a powerful strategic position in the collective activity of science (Braun 2004; Braun, Diospatonyi et al. 2007); they "exert a special influence on the orchestration of the international research activity" (Braun and Diospatonyi 2005); and they contribute to shape the landscape of research in a discipline by encouraging or suppressing various directions through the definition of the editorial policies of their journals (Braun and Diospatonyi 2005; Braun, Diospatonyi et al. 2007; Hames 2007; Fogarty and Liao 2009). The role of editorial boards members in this respect could be stronger in the social sciences and humanities rather than in hard sciences. Merton and Zuckerman (1971) suggested that the role of editors in this respect is stronger when the degree of consensus of scholars about a scientific paradigm is weak, as in many subfields

[1] The section 2 and 3 of this paper are largely based on Baccini, A. and L. Barabesi (2010). "Interlocking Editorship. A Network Analysis of the Links Between Economic Journals." Scientometrics **82**(2): 365-389.

of social sciences and humanities. According to related studies, the selection of editors in the fields where the consensus is weak, tends to reflect particularistic criteria such as affiliation or the university from which a scholar graduated, rather than universalistic ones (Yoels 1974).

From a different point of view, scientific journals and their publishers are interested in assuring the presence of distinguished scholars on their boards. A cornerstone of the scientific ethos is that the selection of the editorial board members should be based on their scholarly achievements (Bedeian, Van Fleet et al. 2009). The competition between journals for talented scholars results in a partial overlapping of their editorial boards. If each member of an editorial board may influence in some measure the editorial policy of his/her journal, journals with overlapping boards may have partial overlapping editorial policies; or partially overlapping or complementary scopes. We will not be concerned with direct observations of the editorial policies adopted by the boards of journals, and of their contents –fields, subjects and methods covered. We will infer considerations about the similarity of editorial policies and consequently of journal contents by observing the "interlocking editorship" phenomenon, that is the crossed presence of scholars on editorial boards of different journals. The interlocking editorship analysis permits us to draw exploratory elements about some questions: which are the most central journals of the network and which are the most peripheral? Which journals have the most influence over others? Who are the most influent scholars from an editorial point of view? Does the community of scientists break down into smaller groups? If so what are they?

More in general, the interlocking editorship analysis permits us to explore the existence of separate schools of thought, methodologies, or patterns of research characterizing the scientific community under scrutiny. This last feature is particularly relevant for economics where the existence of different schools of thought, characterized by different methodologies, instruments or visions is a well known phenomenon. The identification of different schools is generally made, so to speak, in reference to the contents of science, as for example when the Austrian school is distinguished from the neoclassical one, or when heterodox economists are distinguished from mainstream ones. The classification of macroeconomists in freshwater and saltwater, although defined in reference to the university affiliation of scholars, is ultimately based on the different approaches to macroeconomics that are used in different universities. The interlocking editorship

analysis permits to work at an exploratory level where the identification of groups is made without any reference to the contents of science. The existence of the different groups identified through network analysis may be interpreted not only from a content-based point of view, but also from an academic-power point of view. Baccini (2009) for example interpreted the interlocking editorship networks in Italian economic journals as the result of the existence of academic cliques aiming to control disciplinary fields at a national level, rather than the result of different approaches to economics.

The scientific community surrounding economic journals is represented as an affiliation or dual-mode network where the vertices are divided into two sets (scholars and journals) and the affiliation connects the vertices from the two different sets only (Wasserman and Faust 1994; de Nooy, Mrvar et al. 2005). Dual-mode networks characterize some informetric phenomena: the author-paper links result in co-authorship/publication networks; the source-citation links result in reference-citation networks. In our case, the event of affiliation (being a member of the editorial board) connects a scholar to an economic journal. The duality specifically refers to the two alternative perspectives: on the one hand different editors are linked by their affiliation to the same journal, and on the other two journals are linked by the editors who are on their boards. Therefore, there are two different ways to view the affiliation network: as one of editors linked by journals (networks of co-membership), or as one of journals linked by editors (interlocking of events). It is possible to study the dual-mode network as a whole, or to transform it into two single-mode networks focusing only on the analysis of the network of editors or of journals.

2. The centre and periphery in the interlocking editorship network[2]

There is no evidence regarding the roles of different kinds of editors in the editorial process, with the only exception of editor-in-chief (Yoels 1974). A same position such as associate editor or managing editor may often entail very different roles for different journals. As a consequence a very broad notion of editor is adopted, covering all the individuals listed as editor, co-editor, member of

[2] This part of the paper is largely based on ibid.

the editorial board or of the advisory editorial board (Hodgson and Rothman 1999; Braun and Diospatonyi 2005; Baccini, Barabesi et al. 2009; Baccini and Barabesi 2011; Cabanac 2012).

The affiliation network database (two-mode) contains data for 746 economic journals present in the ECONLIT database and with an active editorial board in January 2006; the number of edges in the network, that is the seats available in the editorial boards are 21,525; they are occupied by 15,991 scholars.[3] The database was managed by means of the package *Pajek* (de Nooy, Mrvar et al. 2005; Batagelj and Mrvar 2006).

The first step of our analysis consists in transforming the original network, in the one-mode network containing only journals and their links: the interlocking editorship network.. The number of lines linking the journals in the one-mode network of journals is 6,407, and the density of the interlocking directorship network (*i.e.* the ratio of the actual number of lines to the maximum possible number of lines in the network) is 0.023. This means that only 2.3% of the possible lines is present (Wasserman and Faust 1994); the economic journals network is much more dispersed than other known networks (Baccini, Barabesi et al. 2009; Baccini and Barabesi 2011).

The graph of the (one-mode) network of journals is reported in Figure 1. The vertices in the graph are automatically placed by the package *Pajek* on the basis of the Fruchterman-Reingold procedure. In this graph two main subsets may be roughly recognized: a giant central component composed by the majority of economic journals and a small group of isolated journals.

Figure 1 about here
Figure 1. The economic journals network.

Table I contains the degree distribution of the journals considered; the degree of a journal is the number of lines which it shares with the other journals. The mean degree is 17.18 (while the median degree turns out to be 11) and the degree standard deviation is 17.55. The isolated journals (*i.e.* journals with zero degree) are 74 (10%). They are in part non-English language journals (as for example *L'impresa* or *Bancaria* in Italian, *Tahqiqat-e eqtesadi* in Arabian, *Investigación*

[3] The data on the members of the editorial boards was directly obtained from the website of the journals or - for the few cases when the site was unavailable - from the hard copy. The data was collected from March to July 2006 considering the boards published on the websites of the journals in that period. When the hard copy was necessary, the board considered was that of the first issue in 2006 or, alternatively, that of the last issue in 2005.

Económica in Spanish), journals edited by national scientific societies (e.g. *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Volkswirtschaft und Statistik/Swiss Journal of Economics and Statistics* edited by the Swiss Society of Economics and Statistics) or by institutions with a complete control of the board of editors (e.g. the *Antitrust Bulletin*) journals dedicated to very narrow topics (e.g. *Australian Commodities Forecasts and Issues* or *Agronomia Mesoamericana* ; *Australian Bulletin of Labour*); journals on the boundaries with other disciplines with only a minor emphasis in economics (e.g. *American Historical Review* or *Transportation Journal*).

A main concern in our analysis is to distinguish between the economic journals which have a central position in the network and those in the periphery. As suggested by Wasserman and Faust (1994), three centrality measures for each journal in the network may be adopted. The simplest measure for the centrality of a journal is represented by its degree: indeed, the more ties a journal has to other journals, the more central is its position in the network. For example, the *Pacific Economic Review* is linked with 124 journals, while *Journal of Development and Economic Policies* is linked with solely one. Hence, the first is more central in the network than the second. In addition, the normalized degree of a journal is the ratio of its degree to the maximum possible degree (*i.e.* the number of journals minus 1). Thus, the *Pacific Economic Review* is linked with about 16.6% of the other journals in the network, while *Statistical Modelling* is linked with only 0.001%. Table A1 contains the degree and the normalized degree for the journals considered.

Table I. Degree frequency distribution of the statistical journals.

Degree	Freq	Freq%	Degree	Freq	Freq%	Degree	Freq	Freq%
0	74	9,9	24	8	1,1	48	5	0,7
1	44	5,9	25	6	0,8	49	1	0,1
2	39	5,2	26	13	1,7	50	3	0,4
3	37	5,0	27	13	1,7	51	4	0,5
4	23	3,1	28	11	1,5	52	1	0,1
5	32	4,3	29	10	1,3	53	3	0,4
6	19	2,5	30	7	0,9	54	4	0,5
7	25	3,4	31	3	0,4	55	2	0,3
8	21	2,8	32	9	1,2	57	5	0,7
9	21	2,8	33	5	0,7	59	2	0,3
10	19	2,5	34	6	0,8	60	2	0,3

11	20	2,7	35	6	0,8	61	1	0,1
12	16	2,1	36	7	0,9	62	2	0,3
13	22	2,9	37	2	0,3	63	1	0,1
14	16	2,1	38	8	1,1	65	2	0,3
15	19	2,5	39	6	0,8	66	1	0,1
16	12	1,6	40	6	0,8	68	1	0,1
17	8	1,1	41	7	0,9	69	2	0,3
18	9	1,2	42	5	0,7	71	1	0,1
19	12	1,6	43	6	0,8	72	3	0,4
20	14	1,9	44	7	0,9	73	1	0,1
21	10	1,3	45	3	0,4	76	1	0,1
22	11	1,5	46	5	0,7	79	1	0,1
23	8	1,1	47	5	0,7	94	1	0,1
						124	1	0,1

The second centrality measure is given by closeness centrality, which is based on the distance between a journal and all the other journals. In the network analysis, the distance between two vertices is usually based on so-called geodesic distance. Geodesic is the shortest path between two vertices, while its length is the number of lines in the geodesic ((Wasserman and Faust 1994). Hence, the closeness centrality of a journal is the number of journals (linked to this journal by a path) divided by the sum of all the distances (between the journal and the linked journals). The basic idea is that a journal is central if its board can quickly interact with all the other boards. Journals occupying a central location with respect to closeness can be very effective in communicating information (sharing research, sharing papers, deciding editorial policies) to other journals. Table A1 contains the closeness centrality for economic journals.

The third considered measure is the so-called betweenness centrality. The idea behind the index is that similar editorial aims between two non-adjacent journals might depend on other journals in the network, especially on those journals lying on the paths between the two. The other journals potentially might have some control over the interaction between two non-adjacent journals. Hence, a journal is more central in this respect if it is an important intermediary in links between other journals. From a formal perspective, the betweenness centrality of a journal is the proportion of all paths between pairs of other journals that include this journal. Table A1 contains the betweenness centrality of the economic journals. For example, the *Pacific Economic Review* is in about 4% of the paths linking all other journals in the network. It is interesting to note that in the

statistical journal network, the two journals with higher betweenness are each in about 12% of the paths linking all other journals (Baccini, Barabesi et al. 2008; Baccini, Barabesi et al. In press).

3. Groups of journals in the network

We can now consider the strength of the ties linking journals: the value of a line linking two journals is the number of editors sitting on the board of the two journals linked by that line (Wasserman and Faust 1994).Table III shows the distribution of line values: 74.6% of the links are generated by journals sharing only one editor and about 94% are generated by journals sharing three or less editors. In social network analysis it is usual to consider lines with higher value to be more important since they are less personal and more institutional (de Nooy, Mrvar et al. 2005). In the case of the journal network, the basic idea is very simple: the editorial proximity between two journals can be measured by observing the degree of overlap among their boards. Two journals with no common editors have no editorial relationship. With an example: the *American Economic Review* and the *Australian Bulletin of Labour* have no common editors, so that their editorial policies can be considered independent of each other.

The opposite situation occurs when two journals have the same board; probably they have a common or, at least shared, editorial policy, i.e. they are *companion* journals. As an example, *Applied Economics* and *Applied Economics Letters* share all their 23 editors. In its "aims and scope" declaration for 2007, the latter explicitly stated that it is the "companion journal" of the former. In economics, there are a few journals that can be considered properly *companion journals* sharing all their editorial board members. The most common situation is the intermediate one in which two journals share only a part of their board members.

Table III. Line multiplicity frequency distribution.

Line value	Freq	Freq (%)
1	4780	74,61
2	934	14,58
3	297	4,64
4	145	2,26
5	89	1,39
6	51	0,80
7	33	0,52

8	24	0,37
9	15	0,23
10	10	0,16
11	8	0,12
12	6	0,09
13	3	0,05
14	2	0,03
15	1	0,02
16	4	0,06
19	1	0,02
20	1	0,02
23	1	0,02
24	1	0,02
40	1	0,02

Starting from this basis it is possible to define cohesive subgroups, *i.e.* subsets of journals among which there are relatively strong ties. In a valued network a cohesive subgroup is a subset of vertices among which ties have a value higher than a given threshold. In our case, a cohesive subgroup of journals is a set of journals sharing a number of editors equal or higher than the threshold. In our interpretation, a cohesive subgroup of journals is a subgroup with a similar editorial policy, belonging to the same subfield of the discipline or sharing a common methodological approach. Following de Nooy et al. (2005), cohesive subgroups are identified as weak components in *m*-slices, *i.e.* subsets for which the threshold value is at least *m*.

As previously remarked, the network of statistical journals is not compact: there is a big component of 670 journals and all the others are isolated. The search for cohesive subgroups strengthens this path: fixing a minimum value of threshold to $m = 2$ the big component reduces to 474 journals, 13 components emerge of 2-4 journals, and the isolated journals grow to 242. With $m = 3$ the big component reduces to 284 journals and isolated journals grow to 369. With higher threshold value, the network gives rise to components worthy of being noticed here.

In particular we focused our attention on the weak components emerging in 6-slices network. It is possible to isolate 41 components including 176 journals. We comment, first, on the three weak components with the biggest number of journals

Figure 2 contains the representation of the central and biggest component of the network. The 36 journals in this subset of the network have at least 6 common editors. The dimension of each

vertex represents the betweenness centrality of the corresponding journal in the complete network. The centre of this component is occupied by the *Journal of Money Credit and Banking*. It is linked directly with 8 journals. Four out of eight have not other links (*American Economic Review*, *Journal of Monetary Economics*, *Journal of Macroeconomics* and *Federal Reserve Bank of New York Economic Policy Review*) and therefore they configure themselves as an efficient star at the centre of the network; the other four out of eight journals bridge the central star to four groups of journals. In the upper right of the figure, *Macroeconomics Dynamics*, is the bridge toward journal of macroeconomic dynamics and computational economics at the boundaries of macroeconomics;[4] on the right *The International Journal of Finance and Economics* is the bridge with a small group of other policy oriented and accessible to non-specialists journals. On the lower left *The Journal of Financial Intermediation* and *The Journal of Financial Services Research* are the bridge toward a group of financial journals; in this group the *European Financial Management* connects also a group of business and marketing journals. On the upper left the *Review of International Economics* is the bridge with a group of journals of international economics and development. So, the central component of the network contains journals of macroeconomics, monetary economics, international economics, a few journals of financial economics and the *American Economic Review* considered by all rankings the most important journal of general economics. This configuration is probably the outcome of the (now falling) consensus achieved in monetary policy and in macroeconomics by scientists and practitioners, as discussed by Goodfriend (2007).

Figure 2 about here

Figure 2. The central weak component in 6-slices network: macroeconomic, monetary and international economics journals (the dimension of vertices is proportional to betweenness centrality).

[4] In the aims and scope of *Netnomics* it is stated that "the journal also explores the emerging network-based, real-time macroeconomy with its own set of economic characteristics."

Figure 3 contains a second weak component with 12 journals devoted to economic theory, econometrics, game and decision theory. The centre of the component is *Games and Economic Behavior*. It is linked directly to seven journals devoted to the study of mathematical and quantitative methods (*Econometrica*, *Journal of Mathematical Economics*, *International Journal of Game Theory*, *Journal of Economic Theory*, *Review of Economic Design*), of theoretical public economics (*Social Choice and Welfare*), and experimental economics (*Experimental Economics*). In this case the network is not configured as a star, because there are direct links between some of the seven journals around the central one. It is useful to note that the *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* presents a relatively high betweenness centrality, indicating that this controls the links of the component with the rest of the network of economic journals.

Figure 3 about here

Figure 3. A weak component in 6-slices network: economic theory, econometrics, game and decision theory journals (the dimension of vertices is proportional to betweenness centrality).

The third weak component is drawn in Figure 4. It contains journals devoted to urban, spatial and geographical economics, and to real estate economics. At the centre of the component there is a pair of journals, *The Journal of Urban Economics* and *The Journal of Regional Science*. The first is linked through *The Journal of Regional Science* to other journals of geographical economics; the second to journals of housing economics and real estate economics and finance. The journals on the right of the Figure 3 are at the boundaries of economics, as for example the *Journal of Real Estate Literature* which is a general publication of the American Real Estate Society; but they are also relatively isolated in the network of the economic journals, as we can infer by their relatively low betwenness centrality values. The journals on the left of the Figure 3 are more central in the network.

Figure 4 about here

Figure 4. A weak component in 6-slices network: urban and regional economics journals (the dimension of vertices is proportional to betweenness centrality).

The other eight weak components of network containing more than three journals are drawn in Figure 5. The first component in clockwise contains five journals dedicated to insurance. The second is the component containing six journals of accounting research. In particular four journals out of six are linked in a complete subnetwork (*Accounting Review*, *Journal of Accounting Research*, *Journal of Accounting and Economics*, *Review of Accounting Studies*. The third group contains five journals of environmental economics; two out of five, *Journal of Environmental Economic and Management* and *Ecological Economics* are top ranked in CNRS (CNRS 2007). On the lower part of the figure there is a line network of five journals of applied finance; and another line network of four journals of finance. It is interesting to note that the journals classified by CNRS as "Finance and Insurance" when analyzed with our technique split in three specialized groups. On the left a component is drawn containing six journals of public economics: in this component there are three highly ranked journals by CNRS (*Journal of Public Economics*; *International Tax and Public Finance* and *National Tax Journal*) and three journals published in Germany. The public choice approach to public economics defines a weak component of three journals (*Public Choice*, *European Journal of Political Economy* and *Constitutional Political Economy*) presented in Figure 6. The last two components of Figure 5 are strongly characterized for their methodological approach. On the upper left there are six journals sharing an Austrian perspective on the study of political economy and political science. In the centre of the figure there is a component containing journals strongly characterized for the evolutionary approach to the analysis of economics, industrial organization and technological change.

Figure 5 about here

Figure 5. Weak components in 6-slices network with more than three journals (the dimension of vertices is proportional to betweenness centrality)

Figure 6 contains the weak components with three journals. Again in clockwise, on the right there is a group of law and economics journals; then a group of business history journals; the

already mentioned group of public choice journal; three journals devoted to the study of the economics of new technology; a component containing three review of development published by Oxford University; and finally three Brazilian economic journals.

Figure 6 about here

Figure 6. Weak components in 6-slices network with three journals (the dimension of vertices is proportional to betweenness centrality)

4. The network of editors

We can now consider the editors sitting at the editorial tables of the economic journals. The average number of seats per journal turned out to be 28.9, while the average number of seats occupied by each scholar (*i.e.* the mean rate of participation) is 1.35. The distribution of editorship held by scholars, that is the distribution of scholars per seats held, is described in Table IV. 12,742 out of 15,991 serve as editor of only one journals; 3,249 scholars are instead multiple editors. Only a small minority of scholars, less than 1%, sits in more than four different editorial boards.

Table IV. Distribution of scholars according to the number of seats held.

Cluster	Freq	Freq%	CumFreq	CumFreq%
1	12742	79.68	12742	79.68
2	2052	12.83	14794	92.51
3	638	3.99	15432	96.50
4	297	1.86	15729	98.36
5	145	0.91	15874	99.27
6	57	0.36	15931	99.62
7	28	0.18	15959	99.80
8	9	0.06	15968	99.86
9	11	0.07	15979	99.93
10	5	0.03	15984	99.96
11	2	0.01	15986	99.97

12	2	0.01	15988	99.98
13	1	0.01	15989	99.99
16	1	0.01	15990	99.99
18	1	0.01	15991	100.00

It is very difficult to interpret these data. From the point of view of academic reputation, multiple editorship could be considered as a sign of distinction for those scholars serving in a plurality of editorial boards (Rost and Frey 2011). The same logic, even if reversed, applies to the ranking of academic institutions on the basis of their representation on the editorial boards of top journals (Kaufman 1984; Gibbons and Fish 1991; Braun, Diospatonyi et al. 2007). The list of multiple directors is therefore the list of the most esteemed scholars in economics.

From a more critical perspective, the attention could be focused on the editorial power of multiple editors. A first question concerns the degree of connectedness amongst multiple directors. If we consider, for the sake of simplicity, the 32 editors with more than 7 editorial positions, we can see in Figure 7 that all these editors are connected in a single network. In Figure 7 a line linking two vertices means that the two scholars sit together on one editorial board; the width of each line is proportional to the number of editorial boards in which the scholars sit together.[5]

Figure 7 about here

Figure 7. The links amongst multiple directors (the number inside each vertex is the number of boards where the director sits in the complete network)

The density of the network between multiple directors is 0.28: that is a quarter is realized of the maximum number of links in a network with 32 vertices. The diameter of the network is 4, that is the longest shortest path between two vertices is 4.[6] The average distance among reachable pairs of vertices is only 1.99. This is a very small world.

[5] In the network 91 lines have value 1; 25 value 2; 14 value 3; 6 value 2; and 2 value 5.

[6] The one between Philip Arestis and David F. Hendry.

These editors, according to our hypothesis, have some power in shaping the editorial policies of the journals where they sit. It is therefore instructive to see how many journals are connected through this small group of multiple directors. Figure 8 draws the journals connected by this group of multiple editors. This small group of multiple editors influences 166 journals, which is about 23% of all relevant economic journals published in economics.

Figure 8 about here

Figure 8. Journals connected by multiple editors (sitting on more than 7 journals). The number inside each vertex is the label of the number of boards where the director sits in the complete network)

Legenda: Green vertices are journals, labeled according to Table A1. Yellow vertices are the following scholars: 1: Aggarwal Raj; 2: Arestis Philip; 3: Arrow Kenneth J.; 4: Basu Kaushik;5: Baumol William J.; 6: Besley Timothy; 7: Bhagwati Jagdish; 8: De Grauwe Paul; 9: Edwards Sebastian; 10:Eichengreen Barry; 11:Flannery Mark J.;12:Frey Bruno S.; 13:Hanke Steve H.; 14:Harcourt Geoffrey; 15:Harvey Campbell ; 16:Hendry David F.; 17:Hill Hal; 18: Hodgson G. M.; 19: Karolyi G. Andrew; 20: Krishna K.; 21: Krueger Anne O.; 22:McKinnon Ronald I.;23:Peltzman Sam; 24:Pestieau Pierre; 25:Quigley John; 26:Ray D.; 27:Rodrik Dani; 28:Selten Reinhard; 29:Sen Amartya K.; 30:Stultz Rene M.; 31:Tullock Gordon; 32:Wildasin David E.

Conclusive remarks

The affiliation network generated by scholars serving on the editorial boards of economic journal is explored through network analysis technique. Editorial activity is considered a duty for scholars; an invitation to sit on an editorial board of a journal is usually considered a signal of recognition by the scientific community. When a scholar sits on an editorial board, he or she acquires some power in the definition of the editorial policy of his/her journal. Consequently, if the same scholar sits on the editorial board of two journals, those journals may have some common elements in their editorial policies. Our working hypothesis is that it is possible to assess the proximity of the editorial policies of two scientific journals through the numbers of links generated by common editors sitting on their boards. The phenomenon of a same editor serving in the editorial boards of two different journals is called interlocking editorship. This is analogous with interlocking directorship which is the phenomenon of a same person sitting on the boards of directors of two different firms.

The editorial board members of the economic journals generated a very compact network where about 90% of the journals considered are linked directly or indirectly. If we consider the number of common editors as an indicator of proximity, it is possible to individuate into this network many different groups of journals. These different groups can be characterized in reference, so to speak, to their scientific contents. In economics competing visions or approaches to economic research prompt scholars to endorse different languages and visions about the correct view of how to conduct research. The groups of journals that emerged in the network analysis may be identified in relation to different approaches to economic scholarship: mainstream macroeconomics; mainstream microeconomics; public choice, evolutionary economics etc. The scholars holding multiple editorship are also identified as a small group of 32 multiple directors, serving as editor in as many as 166 journals.

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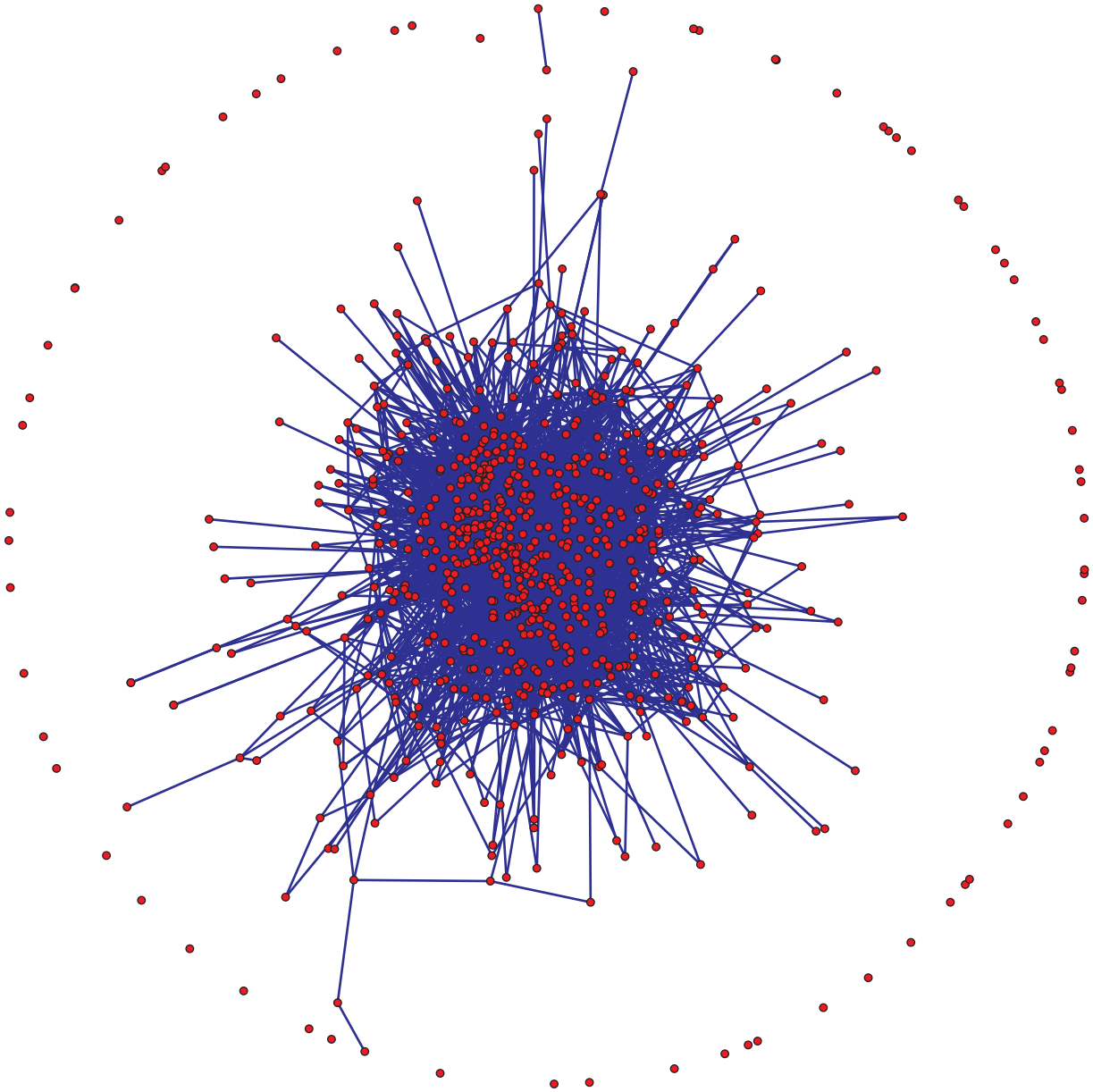

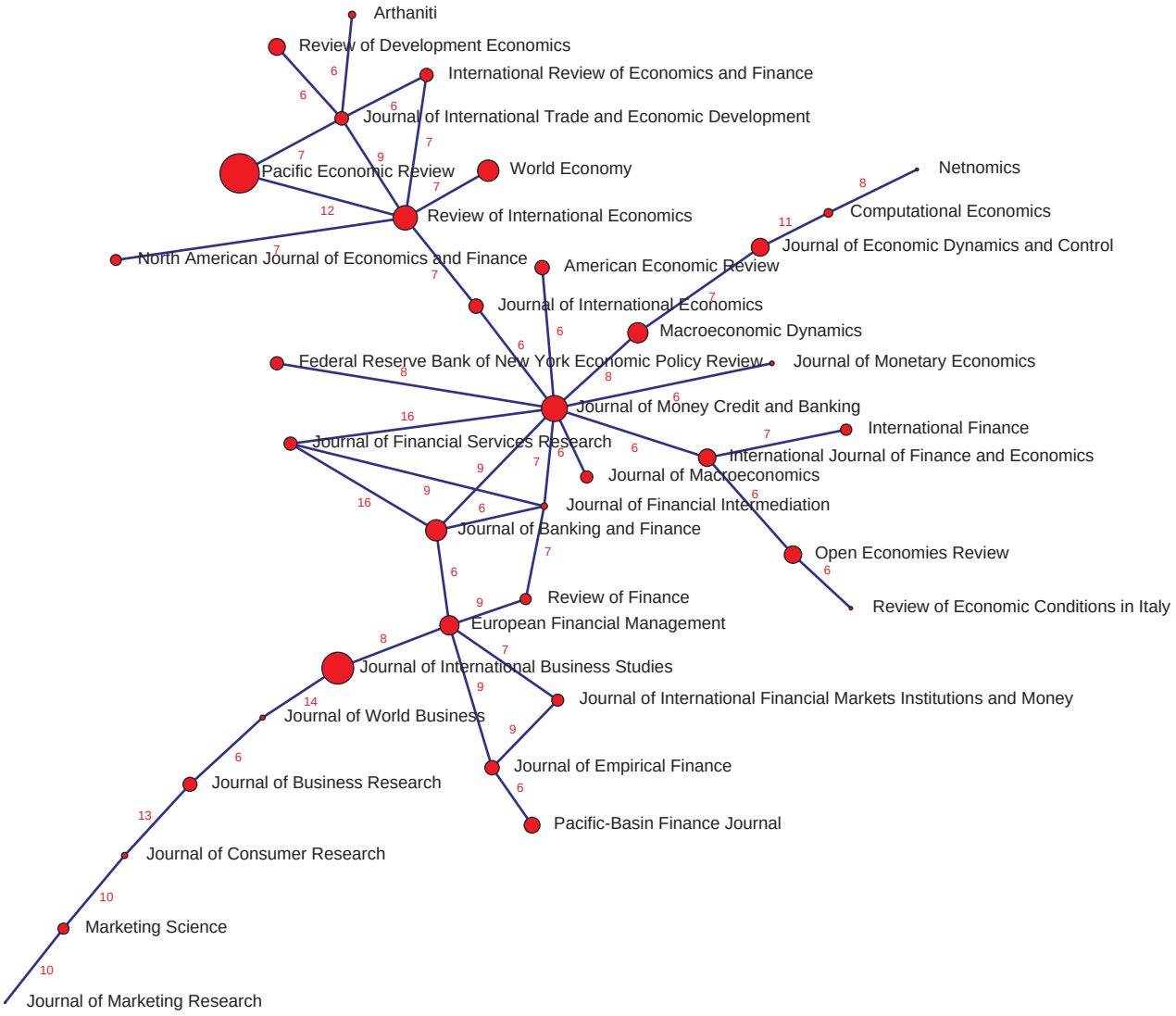
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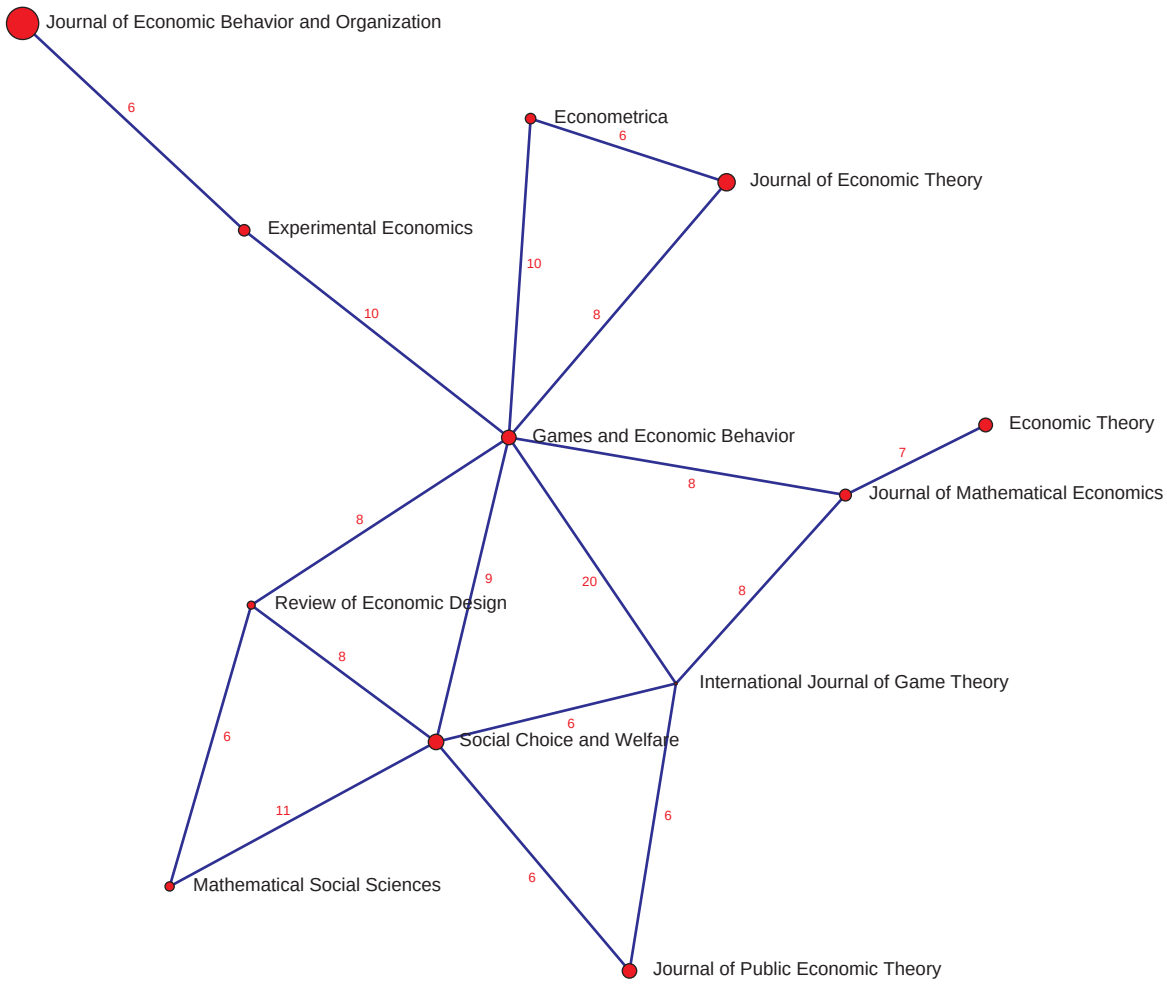
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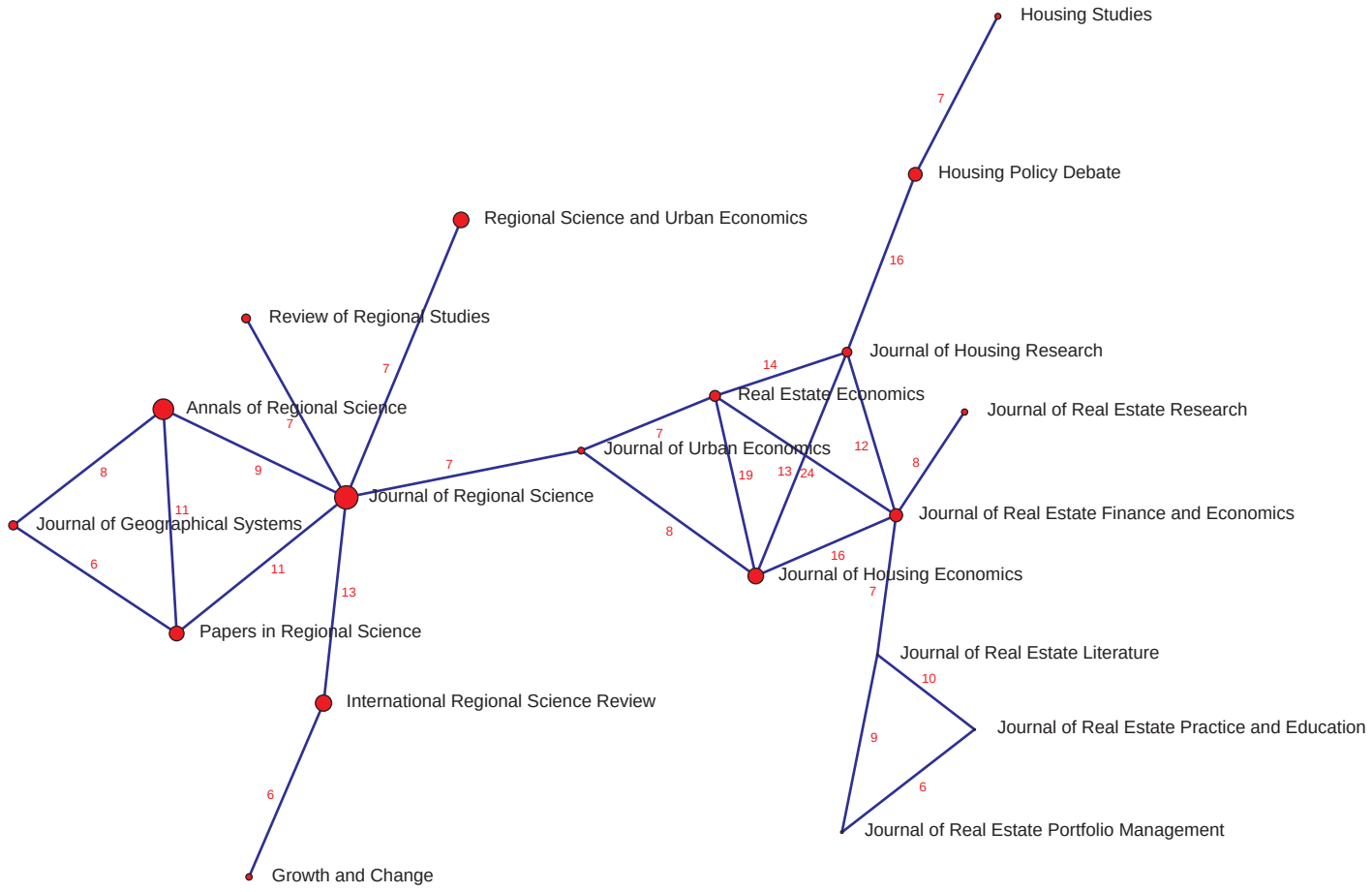
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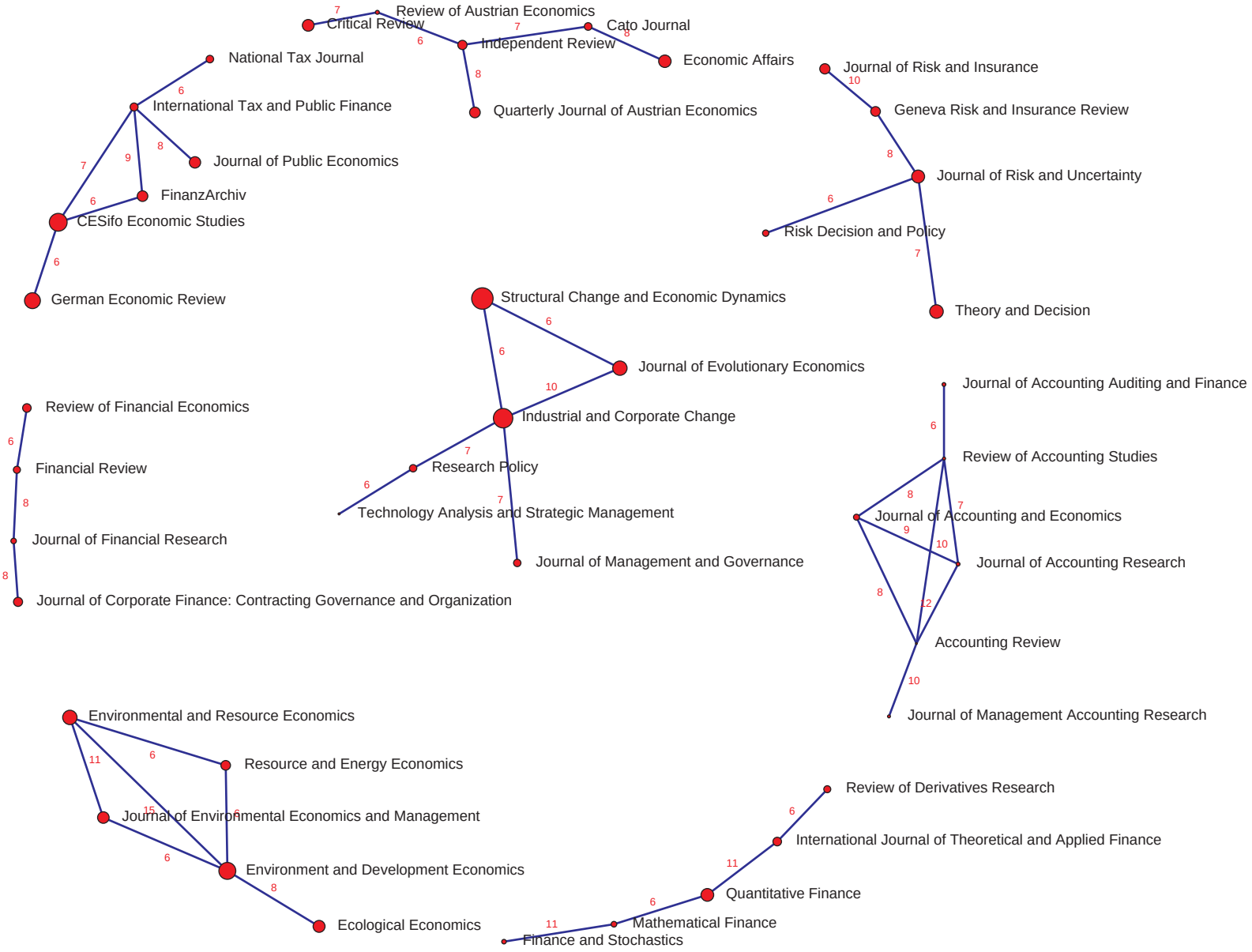
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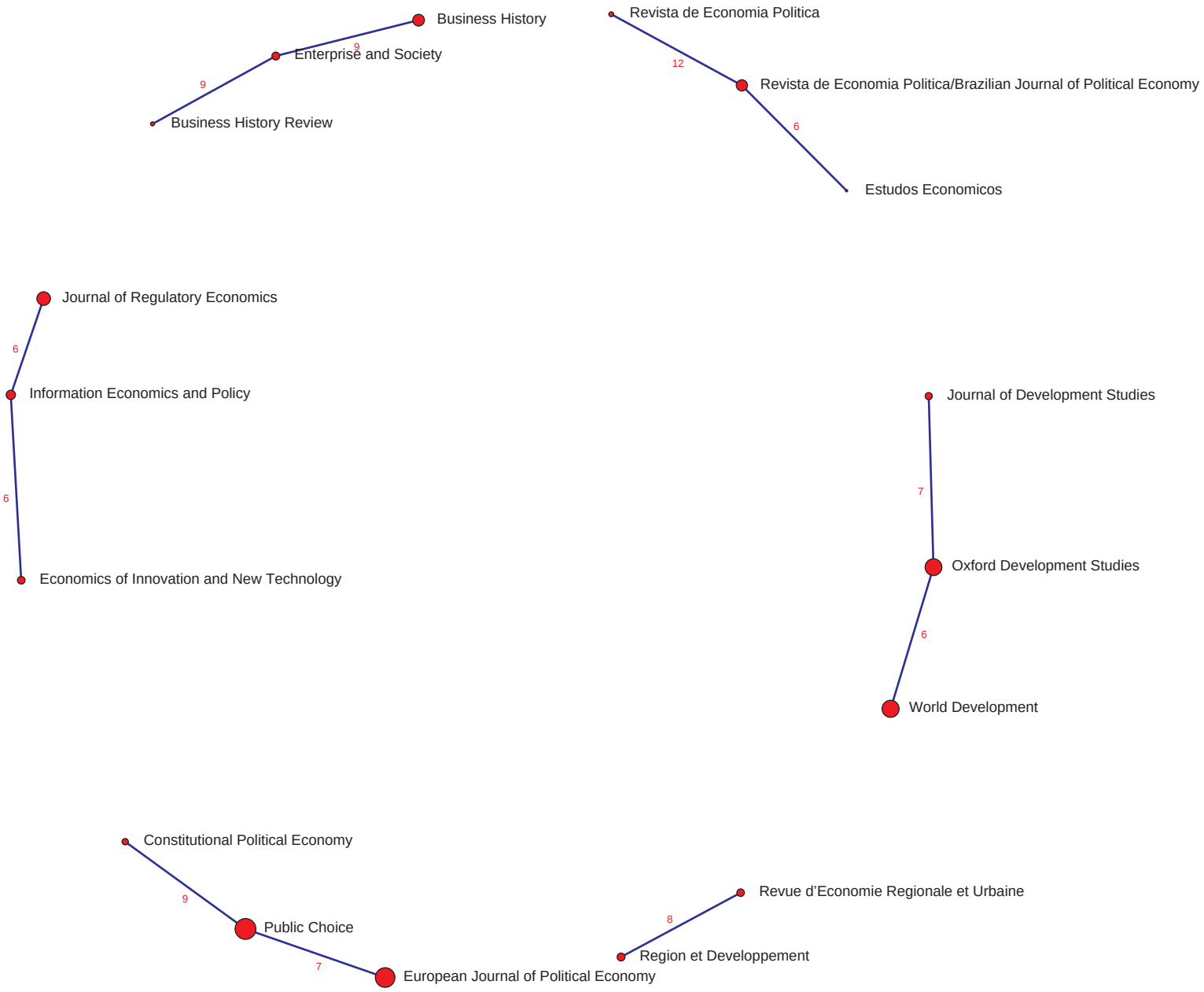
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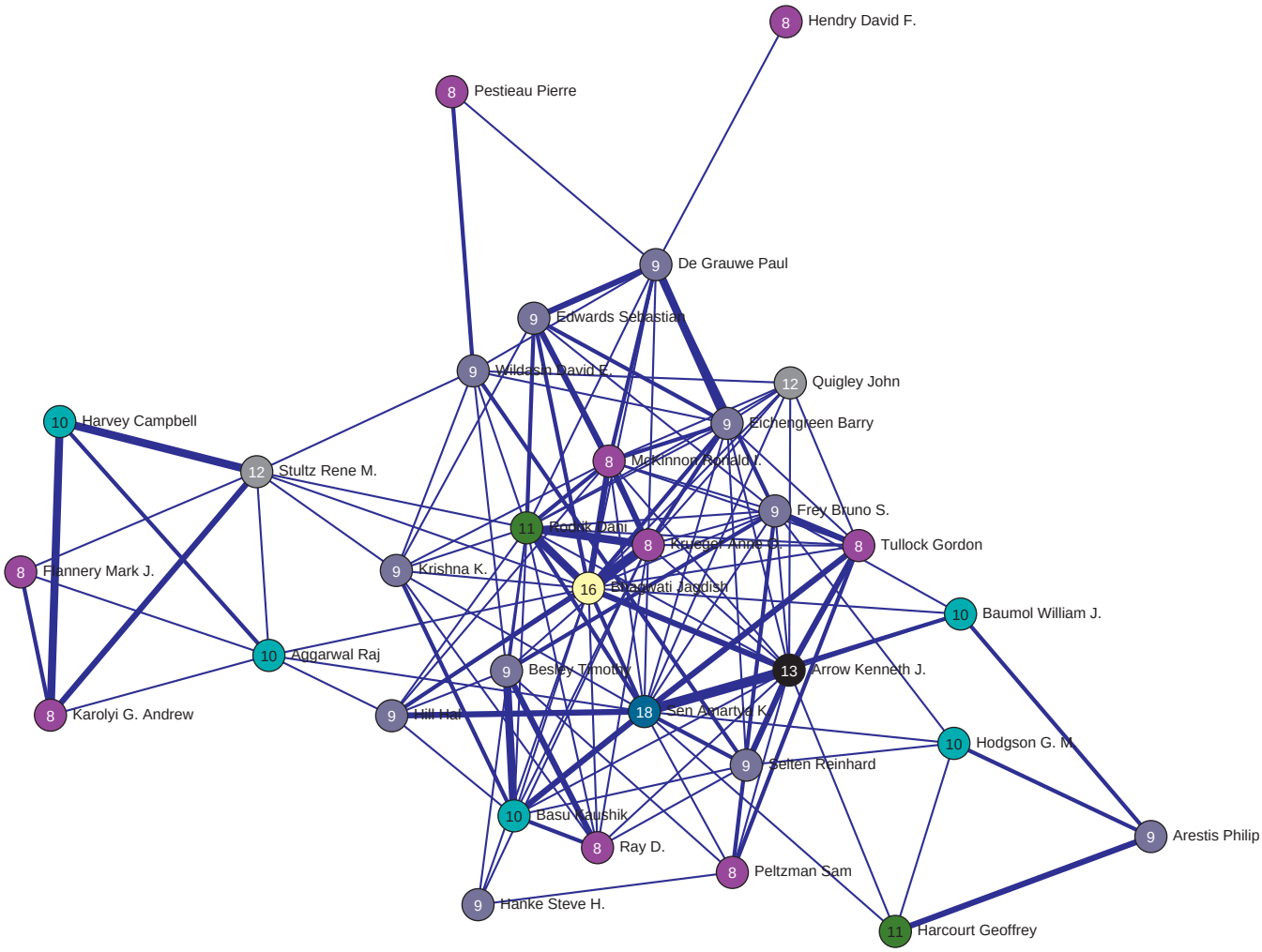
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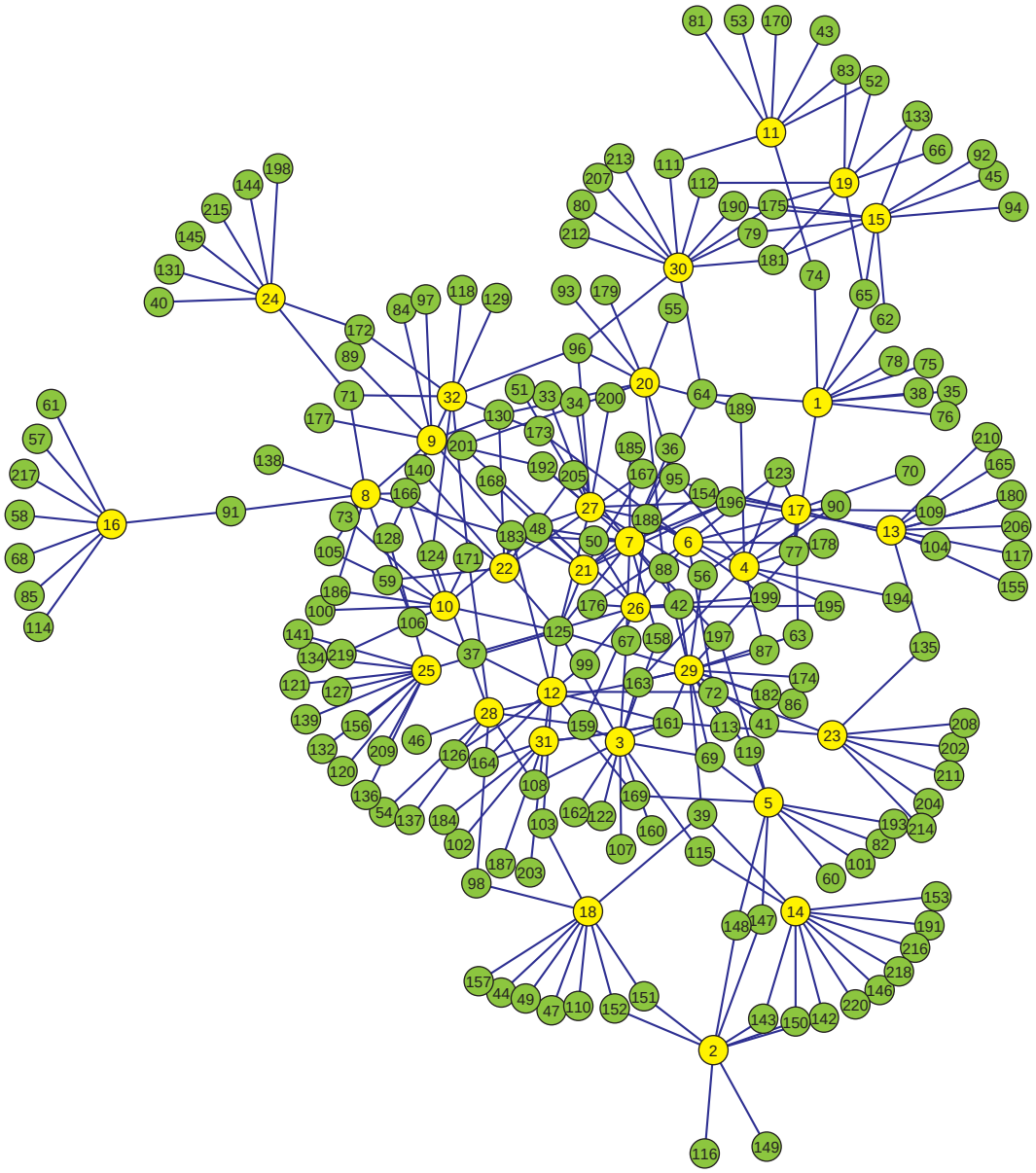
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