



## The Economic Turn

Recasting Political Economy in Enlightenment Europe

*Edited by Sophus Reinert and Steven Kaplan*

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### A new look at the origins and diverse natures of political economy in the Enlightenment.

“A significant and wide-ranging collection.”

—Michael Sonenscher, Fellow, King’s College, Cambridge, UK

“The Economic Turn is a major addition to the history of political economy in eighteenth century Europe, which draws on the research of many of its finest scholars. Tracing criticism of Physiocracy across several decades and many nations, it offers an original and provocative way to reimagine the whole landscape of European economic reflection.”

—John Shovlin, Associate Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies, History Department, New York University, USA

The mid-eighteenth century witnessed what might be dubbed an economic turn that resolutely changed the trajectory of world history. The discipline of economics itself emerged amidst this turn, and it is frequently traced back to the work of François Quesnay and his school of Physiocracy. Though lionized by the subsequent historiography of economics, the theoretical postulates and policy consequences of Physiocracy were disastrous at the time, resulting in a veritable subsistence trauma in France. This galvanized relentless and diverse critiques of the doctrine not only in France but also throughout the European world that have, hitherto, been largely neglected by scholars. Though Physiocracy was an integral part of the economic turn, it was rapidly overcome, both theoretically and practically, with durable and important consequences for the history of political economy. The Economic Turn brings together some of the leading historians of that moment to fundamentally recast our understanding of the origins and diverse natures of political economy in the Enlightenment.

### About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Steven L. Kaplan is the Goldwin Smith Professor of European History Emeritus at Cornell University, USA. His books include *Bread, Politics and Political Economy* (1976/2015), *Farewell Revolution* (1995), *Le Pain maudit* (2008) and *Raisonner sur les blés* (2017).

Sophus A. Reinert is the Marvin Bower Associate Professor at Harvard Business School, USA. His books include *Translating Empire* (2011) and *The Academy of Fisticuffs* (2018).

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