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Abstract: The unrelieved state of dissatisfaction about the right method of inquiry seems to have become a characteristic of the philosophy of social science. Economics has played a crucial role in the modern extensions of the debate. The echoes of Methodenstreit remind us about one unfinished goal ahead, namely the search for historical specificity in the study of social phenomena. The task of this study is to discuss the degree to which such a claim is valid. After reviewing the existing scholarship, the argument comes down to a simple thesis: a successful test of the scientific exercise in the study of social phenomena is not associated either with its degree of formalism, or its predictive power, or still with its capacity to unearth causal relations; it is specifically about understanding the sequential classes of events that affect human development and that undergo historical and cultural transformations under the influence of short-lived, recurrent events.