

**Referee's report on
"The Great Recession vs. the Great Depression:
stylised facts on siblings that were given different foster parents"**

Typescript received on March 4, 2010

This is an interesting but largely descriptive paper on the "empirical evidence" available on the Great Depression of the 1930s and the current Great Recession, which, to be true, is not yet over and makes any analysis of it very tentative – a fact that the author should acknowledge first, if not consider in deciding to postpone submission of the paper under review here. The paper is very well written and structured: it offers a nice picture of the Great Depression and the Great Recession, comparing a lot of figures that seem relevant to understand how the two great events developed over time (so far).

The paper offers a number of relevant data, presented in both table and discursive form, which makes the paper wordy and too long unnecessarily. The author therefore ought to cut it short to a relevant extent. This is so much so that he provides no discussion of the causes that could have led to the Great Depression and/or the Great Recession. Indeed, a few factors are just mentioned, referring to a sort of "consensus" within the economics profession that is neither spelt out clearly nor critically analysed in order to offer at least the author's own view on this crucial point, which remains controversial to a very large extent.

On a number of minor points, the author ought also to be more precise and careful. For instance, is "inflation" measured by CPI? What about "core inflation" in Recent Crisis? Which kind of "monetary aggregate" does the author refer to in order to measure money supply? Is the evolution of M0, M1, M2, M3 similar over time (probably not)? Does the public sector share (with respect to GDP) include or exclude social security spending?

All in all, this paper offers an interesting and informed comparison between the two big events that affected the world economy in the 1930s and recently, but in the view of this reviewer it needs to be revised and resubmitted before being publishable in *Economics*. In that perspective the author should consider the above remarks to prepare an improved version of this work – whose results, in fact, would have to wait the end of the current Great Recession to obtain a better validation mark on empirical ground.