

Is it still relevant to study the national histories of economic thought? The Portuguese case

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Abstract

History of economics textbooks are, in general, histories of the scientific contributions to knowledge at the core of the economics profession. The histories of economics in intellectually peripheral countries, like Portugal or Spain, apart from a few well-known cases, are neglected.

Lluch (1980; 1999), Cardoso and Lluch (1999) and Cardoso (2003), among others, maintained that due attention should be given to national realities. On the same track, Llombart (2006) stressed the need of developing “internationalist” national histories of economic thought.

However, several voices have been arguing that science is becoming more and more a collegial, networked *global* system (e.g. Marginson & Xu, 2021). Fourcade (2006) wrote about the “transnationalization of economics” claiming that the discipline is increasingly becoming a “global profession”. More recently, Boianovsky (2022) elaborated about “contributions from the ‘periphery’” (Brazil) to “transnational” science.

In such a context it is reasonable to ask: apart from intellectual curiosity, is the investigation of “local specificities” and of the history of economics in intellectual peripheries still relevant? What is the aim?

This paper is a contribution to answer these issues. For this purpose, I will present the Portuguese experience in economics in the recent past.

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