

Tension, trust and transformation: sociological insights, Europe and ESA's 30th Anniversary

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Portuguese Sociology: A Unique Form of Internationalisation

João Teixeira Lopes, Paulo Peixoto

Portuguese sociology could only fully develop as a university discipline and a widely recognised field of research after 25 April 1974, despite some early embryonic projects (1960s and 1970s) that sought autonomy in the borders of the dictatorial apparatus (Machado, 2020 and 2022).

This late institutional consolidation brought more than just inconveniences. In fact, it allowed for a peculiar form of internationalisation: on the one hand, looking at Europe, and on the other, at the Luso-Afro-Brazilian axis.

By scientific internationalisation, we mean the set of agents, practices and policies that are mobilised around the global visibility of national sociological production, both in terms of 'export' and the reception of scientific content in its many forms (publications, projects, networks, events and inclusion in transnational organisations). Here, we also comprise the reconfiguration of knowledge through communicating scientific repertoires, revealing new possibilities for enquiry and experimentation. After all, Portuguese society, finally

included in the European calendar, was a living laboratory of asynchronisms, of crossed times, of old and new inequalities, of intense and even sudden changes, coexisting with persistence and atavisms - which provided an immense source of raw material that aroused interest all over the world.

The semi-peripheral position of Portuguese society, the acceleration of the revolutionary historical period and the late institutionalisation favoured a particular angle in the circulation of knowledge, as it allowed them to escape some of the incapacitating scientific quarrels that crossed world sociology throughout the 20th century. It was clear to Portuguese sociologists that the accumulation and integration of scientific knowledge had to be done through 'synthesis theories' that went beyond reasonably useless aporias (subject versus object, structure versus agency, change versus reproduction, material versus symbolic, etc.) and that did justice to the relational way of thinking. By not incorporating the polemics of the centre, Portuguese sociology breathed easier, trying to relate, compare and integrate in a pluriparadigmatic logics without aprioristic exclusions and thus trying to take small new steps on the 'shoulders of giants', without the fury of academic quarrels, to which the maximisation of scientific capital is no stranger. Moreover, as many of the first sociologists came from non-sociological backgrounds (Law, Economics, Literature, even Engineering!), an interdisciplinary approach was encouraged, attentive to connections, bridges and imbrications.

Finally, Portuguese sociology opened up to discussions on public sociology from an early stage (Burawoy, 2021), taking participation in the formulation and evaluation of public policies to international arenas and dialogue with its potential audiences.

However, it has also suffered from various difficulties: a 'youthful' lack of visibility; the proliferation of intermittent, underfunded scientific policies that are essentially geared towards business applications; and the subalternity of the Portuguese language on international agendas.

Currently, Portuguese sociology is internationalising on different fronts: through the dynamics of its research centres (recognised, funded and evaluated by the Foundation for Science and Technology), the networks and projects of researchers and teams and the articulating role of the Portuguese Sociological Association, with its membership of the International Sociological Association and the European Sociological Association. Portuguese women have twice held the Presidency of the ESA: Anália Torres (2009-11) and Lígia Ferro (2022-24). Also within the ESA, several Portuguese researchers have endeavoured to create a space for dialogue on the sociologies and societies of Southern Europe,

embodied in the RN27 (ESA Research Network on Southern European Societies). The APS also participates in the Network of National Sociological Associations of Southern Europe (ReSu), which is made up of associations from Spain, Greece, Italy, and France. In a post-colonial context, essential links between Brazilian, Portuguese, Angolan, Mozambican, Guinean and Cape Verdean sociology are also being promoted through funding lines specially created for this purpose. In this context, comparative panoramas flourish, but also intersectional discussions about the (colonial) past and the (collaborative) future, revisitations and recompositions of the 'canon'.

Despite sharing problems of hyper-specialisation, discontinuity, insufficient collaborative sharing, excessive dependence on the research agendas of transnational bodies and a lack of cumulative integration with countless other national and international scientific fields, Portuguese sociology has fought to question the empire of hegemonic metrics and forms of publication, defending the plurality of ways of doing sociology and the professional development of sociologists inside and outside the academy. Being *a sociology in the world*, it does not give up thinking about the singularity of its social formation, without insularity, but with a permanent commitment to the 'terrain'.

References

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The complex reader of the classic. Dealing with ancient texts and their ambivalent state of closeness and distance from European values

Damianos Tzoupis

The classics of Greco-Roman antiquity lie at the heart of European culture. These texts have gone through historical processes of legitimation and attained the status of culturally authoritative and meaningful artworks. Álvaro Santana-Acuña successfully described classics as works uprooted from their original contexts: classics become consecrated because they cross spatio-temporal and cultural boundaries, and establish across contexts blueprints...

Genealogies of European heritage: deterritorialized identity and a future for the past

Dušan Ristić

This essay was written just before Europeans faced high-stakes elections in June 2024. One question concerning these elections is: to what extent do these voters define themselves as Europeans? (Lamblin-Gourdin, 2024). Are the stakes at the forefront recognized as such? According to the April 2024 Eurobarometer survey, most Europeans (60%) claimed to be interested in these elections. An interesting aspect of these elections is what Anne-Sophie...

The ESA's contribution to European Sociology and European Societies

Sylvia Walby, Martin Kohli, Giovanna Procacci, Claire Wallace, Anália Torres, Pekka Sulkunen, Carmen Leccardi, Frank Welz, Sue Scott, Marta Soler-Gallart, Lígia Ferro

The European Sociological Association was conceived as a positive response to developments in European society in the early 1990s. Divisions between east and west diminished, with the fall of the Berlin Wall signifying major changes in the form of the regimes in eastern Europe and sudden increases in engagement with western Europe. There was a dynamic search for ways to cooperate and exchange, and to understand the transformations taking...

The Austrian Sociological Association (ÖGS) and its role for European and (inter)national sociology

Susanne Pernicka, Bettina Stadler

In international comparison, the ÖGS with its more than 400 members and 19 thematic sub-sections is a relatively small sociological association. Nevertheless, the ÖGS stands out in hosting European and international conferences, in advancing sociology as a scientific discipline in public debates, sets activities for professional exchange and the visibility of sociology in Austria and provides master and doctoral students with the unique...