

**“Two decades discourse about globalizing
social sciences – concepts, strategies,
achievements”**

**International Conference
for Europe**

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**Lisbon, Portugal
University Lisbon**

Call for papers
Deadline for abstracts 30. November 2017

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Issues

Towards the end of 20th century the social sciences discovered a new phenomenon, they coined as globalization. Responding to this “global turn” the social sciences across the world since then discuss for about two decades that and how the social sciences also need to be “globalized”.

What have we learned from the two decades discourse about the globalization of the social sciences? What has been discussed about what the globalization of the social sciences means and what globalized social thought aims at?

What does it mean if social sciences advocate the need of a globalization of social thought, those very social sciences which forced the rest of the globe with their institutional power to take them as the one and only way to theorize about the world? What is the shift they are proclaiming, shifting the existing world reign of social sciences towards globalising social sciences?

Reflecting on the achievements of a discourse provides shared views on what globalizing social sciences aims at and the two decades discourse shows anything else but such shared views about what globalizing social sciences are and what they are aiming at.

For national science policies across the world it is very clear that globalizing social sciences means aiming at promoting national science communities to hold a strong position in a competition about which national sciences have the say in the global production of knowledge. Therefore they establish all sorts of incentives supporting their national sciences in a global battle about ... about what? About knowledge? What is a competition about knowledge? What is the scientific substance of competing “flagships” and what is their role in globalizing social science theorizing about the world?

Discussing the global competition of nationally constructed knowledge bodies such as southern, western knowledge are categories populating also the debates among academic social science thinkers when they theorize about globalizing social sciences. How do they create these political knowledge bodies? How does a theory become part of such politically constructed bodies of knowledge? And: What are national science communities, a creature of the discourse about globalizing social sciences? Are national science communities, an entity that may be only exists in the minds and policy agendas of national sciences or in scientific discourses, which discuss globalizing social science from a view sharing the view of national science policies?

How come that also critical views on the debate about globalising social sciences, mainly articulated by social sciences from the “developing world”, also preferably argue about the status of national science communities and critique “inequalities”, “scientific imperialism”, or – borrowing a category from the military jargon - oppose a “scientific asymmetry”? Is it a shared view across the world, shared also among social scientists as between academics and science policies that globalising social sciences is, rather than about shifting social thought towards thinking about the world about creating social thought as the material for representing nation states positions in global political-scientific rivalries?

What is the discourse about globalisation of social sciences about and aiming at if these discourses argue about “Northern” versus “Southern” theories, if they create and argue about such political distinctions between political entities as “Western” theories, categories that replace the older notion of “European” social sciences, once critically coining an *approach* to

social sciences, now replaced by categories that are constructing global social thought as a matter of political knowledge entities? Is this idea of globalizing thinking aiming at knowledge about the social world? Or are these discourses engaged in how measuring global social thought aiming less at knowledge about the world, but at the concern which national knowledge bodies have the say in interpreting the social world?

As much as it is the case, that the world beyond the secluded nation social entities has gained the attention of social science theorizing, there is also no doubt, that the main body of these globalized theories consist of comparing phenomena, which are inter-nationally defined topics, but which still not only confine their theorizing towards nationally confined contexts, but which also explicitly advocate to reflect about these entities through national perspectives. Is this, the agglomeration of nationally constructed knowledge what globalizing social science knowledge is about? Moreover, do these nationally constructed theories really understand what is going on in any individual country if they theorize about them through national perspectives? Do social sciences understand the world if they now in globalized social sciences theorize about what is going on in more than the country they come from, all created through such explicitly biased theories?

Is globalising social sciences then after all creating a multiplicity of locally provincialised theories? Globalising social sciences is knowledge that consists of a gathering and comparison of the many local knowledges? And: How to compare knowledge constructed through national perspectives?

Reflecting on these and certainly many other questions, including their critique as well as the development of alternative questions, the Lisbon conference welcomes abstracts progressing with the knowledge about what globalizing social sciences are or should better be.

The following topics might be addressed

A. Concepts of global social thought

- **What is/are differences between post-colonial globalizing social thought and the universalization of social sciences during colonialism?**
- **How is this related to the notion of a globalising world?**
- **What is globalization and what are globalizing social sciences?**
- **What are the main theories about globalizing social thought?**
- **What are local, global, glocal, or universal social sciences?**
- **How are social sciences made global, glocal or local?**
- **What are the differences between the globalisation and the internationalizing social sciences?**
- **What are the main discourses and controversies among global social sciences about?**
- **What are the driving forces making social sciences global or local?**
- **Who are the scientific players - and who are not?**

B. Strategies

- **What are common practices making social sciences global, international, local?**
- **Are the creation of social science theories and the discourses about them affected by globalizing social science and how?**
- **Are there particular methodological approaches making social sciences global, local, international?**
- **Have global/local/...social sciences changed the topics social sciences theorize about?**
- **Have they changed the ways social sciences create theories and the ways they are debated?**
- **What are the main topics addressed in global/local theorizing?**

C. Achievements

- **Have social sciences been globalized, localized and how has this affected the social sciences as a whole?**
- **Have the social sciences changed thanks to their globalization or localization?**
- **Has there been any progress in the creation of knowledge about a globalized world thanks to globalize/localize social science theorizing?**
- **What have we learned from 20 years discourses and controversies?**
- **Has the globalization of social sciences affected the role/position they have in the globalizing world?**

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Abstracts/papers should be kindly sent by the 30 November 2017

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