

History of Economic Thought: from Scholastics to the 19th Century

At the beginning of *History of Economic Analysis*, J. A. Schumpeter wonders if there is any sense to study the history of science, and particularly the history of economic science. Also, he questions if there is any reason that justifies studying theories produced years, decades and centuries ago, whose applicability is today already inexistent. Without hesitation, Schumpeter responds affirmatively and claims to revise the history of economic thought, sustaining –amongst many other causes– that “every one of us may glean lessons from the history of his science” and those lessons “we learn about both the futility and the fertility of controversies; about detours, wasted efforts, and blind alleys; about spells of arrested growth, about our dependence on chance, about how not to do things, about leeways to make up for”. In other words, the history of economic science does not consist in a mere chronological cluster of erudite information. On the contrary, it guides the recognition of those great men whose works laid the foundations for that discipline; it also raises awareness about the complexity that have accompanied –and always will– the adventure of knowledge. Therefore, each step taken is the result of dedication, efforts and chance of those who have dedicated their lives to develop a better understanding of economics.

In our domain, a similar appraisal about history, and also about history of economic and social thought has been sustained by Néstor Auza and Oreste Popescu, to whom we especially remember in this number. The first one has been member of the Academic Board of *Cultura Económica* until his recent death; he had lighted us up with his works about social, education and ecclesiastic Argentinean history, also with his wisdom and optimism to think and develop a better future for our country. Oreste Popescu was Professor in our University for many years and mentor of many professors. Apart from this, he launched fertile basis for historic research with his studies about Latin American scholastics contributions.

Inspired on these ideas, the aims of the current number of *Cultura Económica* is to focus on the to history of economic thought and recognize in it the beginnings and developments of this science. Accordingly, we present in the first place an article by Alejandro Chafuen, where he aims to analyze the thoughts done by Spanish scholastics regarding to goods of nature, especially from the standpoint of domain theory and private property. In the second place, Idoya Zorroza focuses on some authors from the Second Scholastic, she particularly analyzes the anthropological foundations of the application of usury according to Francisco de Vitoria. Thirdly, Marcelo Lascano’s article describes the scientific foundations of taxes characterized by Francisco Suárez, another author of that same period, and centers his study on the Grenadian's thoughts about tax rules. The papers that follow focuses on authors from the 19th Century. Alejandro Gómez and

Carlos Newland analyze in their article the vision of the businessmen proposed by J. B. Alberdi. As the authors describe, Alberdi considers that businessmen are social progress producers, and should be valued as they hold an essential role for development. Florencio Arnaudo's article centers on the theory of surplus value developed by Karl Marx, reviewing some cardinal concepts from that theory.

As we have described, this number pretends also to devote a tribute to Néstor Auza and Oreste Popescu. Therefore, we publish a chapter from the original and unpublished book by Doctor Auza, *Emilio Lamarca, economista y organizador social*, where he studies some aspects of the economic and social thought of Emilio Lamarca.

In addition, we publish as well a review about the life and work of Oreste Popescu, presented by Daniel Díaz Fuentes and Julio Revuelta, to remember the 100th anniversary of his birth.

As culture reflects human activity, in time and history, *Cultura Económica* dedicates this number to deepen and reflect about the economic thought in its historical dimension. We expect this number to provide new perspectives in these aspects which are always exciting.

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