

# Proceedings of the International Congress on Interdisciplinarity in Social and Human Sciences

5th - 6th May 2016



Research Centre for Spatial and Organizational Dynamics  
University of Algarve  
Faro, Portugal

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

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Please take in consideration that the articles language published in this issue correspond to the original version submitted by the authors.

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## INTRODUCTION

Interdisciplinarity is the main topic and the main goal of this conference.

Since the sixteen century with the creation of the first Academy of Sciences, in Naples (Italy) (1568), and before that with the creation of the Fine Arts Academies, the world of science and arts began to work independently, on the contrary of the Academy of Plato, in Classical Antiquity, where science, art and sport went interconnected. Over time, specific sciences began to be independent, and the specificity of sciences caused an increased difficulty in mutual understanding.

The same trend has affected the Human and Social Sciences. Each of the specific sciences gave rise to a wide range of particular fields. This has the advantage of allowing the deepening of specialised knowledge, but it means that there is often only a piecemeal approach of the research object, not taking into account the its overall complexity. So, it is important to work for a better understanding of the scientific phenomena with the complementarity of the different sciences, in an interdisciplinary perspective.

With this growing specialisation of sciences, Interdisciplinarity acquired more relevance for scientists to find more encompassing and useful answers for their research questions.

CIEO (Research Centre for Spatial and Organizational Dynamics) is the research centre organising this conference. As a research center in Social Sciences, CIEO has Interdisciplinarity as an important issue.

This research centre concentrates on the social sciences and it is funded by the Foundation for Science and Technology. The FCT rated CIEO as a “Very Good” research centre, and one of the main reasons for this good evaluation was surely our potential for Interdisciplinarity.

CIEO has researchers from various scientific fields, and one of its main features is to develop knowledge from the interactions between complementary scientific areas of interest.

This conference was an excellent opportunity for strengthening and enriching our interdisciplinary systematic approach, not only for the CIEO members, but also for all the delegates researching in different scientific fields.

It also can be an opportunity to show innovative research in social and human sciences, and to improve the networks between researchers from different scientific disciplines.

Themes of this conference included research topics from the following scientific fields: Economics, Management, Sociology, Psychology, Education, Sport, Tourism, Landscape Architecture, Geography, and Political Sciences, just to mention a few.

As the CIEO is structured along three research areas, we have tried to organize the communications in parallel sessions corresponding to these three areas: 1) Cities and Spatial Dynamics; 2) Organizations, Innovation and Learning Spaces; 3) Tourism and Well-being in Society. There was also a significant number of communications included in the category of “Other topics”.

In this conference we had more than 250 communications presented in symposiums, parallel sessions, conferences, and posters.

The diversity of papers and communications submitted enabled us to compile a scientific program which builds a bridge between theory and application. With its multidisciplinary focus, the scientific program covered a large number of topics, which we hope will provide many opportunities for stimulating exchange between participants in an interdisciplinary perspective.

Participants came from several countries, namely from Spain, Brazil and Portugal, and so, although the official language of the congress was English, presentations were permitted in Portuguese and Spanish.

At the same way, in this “Book of Proceedings” papers could be written in English, Portuguese and Spanish.

62 of the communications presented at the conference are published here. They are organized in six parallel sessions and posters, corresponding to the structure of the conference program.

We believe this book can be an important contribution to establish the state of the art in the field of Interdisciplinarity in Social and Human Sciences.

The editors  
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## CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP, EDUCATION AND MEDIA LITERACY ON THE IMAGINED EUROPEAN NORTH-SOUTH AXIS: FINLAND AND PORTUGAL IN CONTEXT

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“Let us be good neighbours, but, please, do not try to explain us.”

Gayatri Spivak in Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, June 2010

“The person who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong.”

Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, p.407

### ABSTRACT

Finland and Portugal are both peripheral European countries, at the fringes of the European Union. This paper sets out to discuss and compare some of the ways Portuguese and Finnish citizens are construed through present-day media literacy, be these distinctions historical and geographical, cultural, technological, educational or even ethical by character.

The idea of education (“Bildung”) as a stronghold of civilization used to lean on the concept of a nation-state that is constituted by the citizens of this nation-state. But nowadays citizens are being overruled by the technological changes and contemporary university students, then, may be seen as representing a positive paradigm shift from citizens of a specific nation-state to cosmopolites of a global civilization. The processes of construing and producing knowledge have been radically transformed by the information technologies: the open access approach makes it possible to shift the traditional classroom learning almost entirely to on line work. “In five years, the best lectures will be found on the internet free of charge, lectures that are better than in any universities”, predicted Bill Gates some time ago in Technomy Conference. Future citizens need to solve complex, ill-defined problems and learning becomes increasingly a combination of face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated learning environments.

But when some of the traditional values and practices of pursuing knowledge are nowadays rapidly being discarded, they are often being replaced by market-state doctrines of education and of humanity, thus producing identities of entrepreneurship, often unwilling to participate in enhancing general social welfare.

Keywords: Cultural Citizenship and Identity Construction, Cultural Geography of the European Fringes, Cyborg Identity, Hybridity.

Finland and Portugal are both peripheral European countries, at the fringes of the European Union, but, at large, represent rather different positions inside the European Community at the moment. This paper sets out to discuss some aspects of the roles of these two republics and the ways Portuguese and Finnish citizens are construed and imagine themselves in the European space, be these distinctions historical and geographical, cultural, technological, educational or even ethical by character.

*Citizenship*, like any other layer of *identity* is construed through difference. For the purposes of this paper, *citizenship* is seen to be constructed through a transdisciplinary approach – i.e., culture, society and language; this means the *theme of citizenship* is examined by combining several disciplinary orientations and establishing relationships between them. Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities* (1983) has written about the importance of printed texts in the formation of identity at a national level. According to him, communities are to be distinguished not by their falsity or genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined (1983:15). It is these *styles*, which Anderson mentions but,

it appears, never studies in his otherwise extremely inspiring work, that will be examined in this analysis. Or more precisely, it is the effect of the language of the *imagined styles of citizenship* that is the object of study. Moreover, *places* – not locations – and *people* are intimately linked. That is, place is not the same as location. The difference is that places have meanings for us and thus cannot be equated with their mere geographical location<sup>36</sup>.

The basic theoretical argument underpinning the concept of *citizenship*, like any other layer of *identity construction*, is that, first of all, it is always a culturally relational concept and it is built upon the notion of *difference*<sup>37</sup>. Difference is actually central for the existence of all meanings. Binary oppositions are no doubt over-simplified because there is always one who dominates; the dimension of power – and the continuous negotiation of it – is omnipresent in all cultural activities. In fact, we only construct meanings (remember Voloshinov's notions of dialogism and heteroglossia) and ourselves (psychoanalytic stance, for instance) through a dialogue with the other.

In the past, the cultural and political meanings of a *citizenship* as the unique, material proof of a national unity in the process of construing a modern 19th century nation–state apparatus have been widely explored. Max Weber (2004) argues that the state as a superior entity, as the protagonist of history is a myth. It is an imagined community (Anderson, 1984) that enjoys strong, uncritical credence in some people. At the core of the institutional identity of the state lies organized violence. Furthermore, the state monopolizes the means to the domination of people over other people, and, unlike other forms of political domination, all this is achieved by legal-rational legitimacy.

The notion of organized violence is at the core of experiencing the citizenship and it is closely tied to the complex notion of legitimacy (Weber, 2004). In short, legitimacy is about the underlying motivations of a person who receives a command to obey. The subject might obey because he has always done so and has never even thought about doing otherwise. In a second case, the subject is compelled, more or less self-consciously, to deliberate on how to react to the command, and on this basis decides to obey or not to obey. These two modalities of response to command – one totally based on a routine and unreflected, and the other highly reflexive – lead to the third one. Here, obedience, if it takes place, is on the basis of moral obligation, a kind of *ought-fulness* of obedience. It is to this third modality that the notion of legitimacy applies.

The most common form of legitimacy is traditional legitimacy, in which command is legitimate when it appears as the reaffirmation today of obligations and duties that already existed in the past. Typically, whoever commands presents himself as the current representative of a long sequence of forebears who, each in his own time, had exercised command over the descents of those who are to obey today.

Charismatic legitimacy, on the other hand, is sustained by the politician's extraordinary forces, with 'a gift of grace'. Such a gift manifests itself in unprecedented material or spiritual achievements; the proclamation of new, inspiring truths, and of new paths to moral justification and salvation. The obedience of the common people constitutes the homage of believers in the forces that the leader embodies, and which through him assert their superiority over all that is routine or traditional.<sup>38</sup> – Both Finnish and Portuguese citizens are guided by traditional legitimacy, but in Portugal charismatic legitimacy plays a greater role; aspiring politicians need to use their mediated market value in order to reach power, and rational arguments are sometimes overruled by the rhetoric skills of a politician. In Finnish society, probably due to a higher degree of literacy<sup>39</sup>, ordinary citizens are less likely to be taken over by discursive manipulation or emotional appeal<sup>40</sup>.

Given the continuous, ground-breaking technological changes, the bio political forces of a state apparatus tend to claim the sole legitimate ownership of its citizens and ultimately, even the core existence of each of its sovereign individuals. Consequently, the "sans papiers", that is, the illegal immigrants or refugees are pushed to the fringes of the state, to the mercy of the executive sphere of the state institution – the police – and denied free crossing of national borders, and are in all likelihood condemned to live underground instead. This administrative colonization, to use Pierre Piazza's (2004:17) term, plays an important role both in the making of national unity and personal identities as members of a specific nation. A citizenship represents symbolic violence exercised by a state. However, through a process of associating a bureaucratic act with a personal – even an affective – dimension, a citizenship simultaneously conflates the concepts of identity and identification and is always cultural by nature.

In short, a synthesis of the contemporary decentring of essentialist citizenships or identities and a commitment

<sup>36</sup> Places are people. A place usually becomes meaningful because of the people one sees and does things with there. Even when alone somewhere it is the absence of people in those surroundings that makes the place meaningful.

<sup>37</sup> Remember the classic metaphor of the game of chess, explored – although diversely – both by Ferdinand de Saussure (1916) and Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953). Just as the pieces of a chess game only gain their meaning in the game due to their value in relation to each other, all cultural practices are ultimately about attributing values to our surrounding life-world.

<sup>38</sup> There is a third kind of legitimacy, a legal-rational legitimacy that Weber considers extremely rare and a peculiarity of the modern politics. Here, obedience is expected as a dutiful observance of a whole system of norms. North Korea or Isis may be considered examples.

<sup>39</sup> Finland achieved full literacy in the beginning of the 20th Century, whereas Portugal is still struggling with the matter.

<sup>40</sup> Portugal's newly elected president Marcelo Rebelo Sousa is a well-known television personality to all Portuguese voters.

to politics, as for instance Homi Bhabha has argued<sup>41</sup>, may provide the basis for a social theory which overcomes the limitations of the two, giving way to political co-operation and to working and negotiating across cultural differences<sup>42</sup>.

*Citizenship* belongs to the same semantic field as the concepts of *civil society* and *civilization*. Historically, and also due to geographical factors, Finland and Portugal have very diverse hegemonic civilizational peaks. Given its ubiquitous landscape of the sea and arid climatic agricultural conditions<sup>43</sup>, Portugal became a maritime world power in the 15th century in order to realise the Christian mission of crusades, and has thus been experiencing an enduring economic and socio-cultural decline since the religious persecution of the Inquisition, which was promoted by the Jesuits<sup>44</sup>. The culturally Catholic Portuguese try to survive their financial and ethical (i.e., corruption and injustice in civil society and state apparatus) crises by overcoming their troubled colonialist and fascist past through poetic dreams of the overpowering, constant presence of the Atlantic Ocean, a presence that imbues both cultural and economic facets and future potentials. Fransisco José Viegas, Portuguese author and the former Secretary of Cultural Affairs, describes the devastating situation in the following words:

I believe that our relationship with Europe is not a happy one because an essential part of our origins remains still in Africa and in Brazil. Due to the financial crisis, many people have returned there. In the past ten years we have put into practice all the changes required by Europe (abortion, homosexual marriage). It has been undoubtedly fast, but at the same time our economy has been unable to create solid foundations. [...] The only thing we have left is our culture and the ocean as a touristic attraction. [...] We are living in a society that has lost its dreams. Portuguese fear the future, they are afraid of speaking aloud. And all this takes place three hundred years after the Inquisition and after fifty years of Salazar's fascism. Today, because of the crisis, the silence continues. It is dreadful.<sup>45</sup>

Finland, on the contrary, is living its high financial, technological and educational moment right now. Stereotypically, the culturally Protestant Finnish citizens of an economically stable<sup>46</sup> and functional welfare state are considered as innovative and industrious labourers who create world famous *brands* in technology, education<sup>47</sup>, digital arts and design. It is taken for granted that

Finland and other Nordic countries have probably the highest standard of living of all the ordinary citizens in the world, when the overall standard of living is measured with material possessions, such as access to digital technologies, cars, refrigerators, microwave ovens, mobile phones or gross domestic product *per capita*. Also immaterial indicators rate us right to the top. The possibilities to participate in cultural activities are more equally shared in Finland than in many other countries. Political and religious freedom are taken for granted and are commonplaces of everyday life.<sup>48</sup>

In short, in Finland ordinary citizens have daily open access to and co-habit with the high level technology. In Portugal it tends to be a privilege of the few<sup>49</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> "The language of critique is effective not because it keeps forever separate the terms of the master and the slave, [...] but to the extent to which it overcomes the given grounds of opposition and opens up a space of translation: a place of hybridity [...] where the construction of a political object that is new, *neither the one nor the other*, properly alienates our political expectations and changes, as it must, the very forms of our recognition of the moment of politics." (Bhabha 1994:25)

<sup>42</sup> The major *theoretical* contribution of feminism is, in my view, the insistence on the validity of personal experience and the breaking down of the traditional distinction between objective and subjective. This is captured in the clause "personal is political". Or, in Homi Bhabha's words: "[...] feminism specifies the patriarchal, gendered nature of civil society and disturbs the symmetry of private and public which is now shadowed, or uncannily doubled, by the difference of genders which does not neatly map on to the private and the public, but becomes disturbingly supplementary to them. This results in redrawing the domestic space as the space of the normalizing, pastoralising, and individuating techniques of modern power and police: the personal-*is*-the political; the world-*in*-the home." (Bhabha, 1994: 11)

<sup>43</sup> Even nowadays, Portugal is totally at the mercy of the water politics imposed by the Spanish governmental authorities because all the Portuguese rivers originate from the Spanish territory.

<sup>44</sup> The Netherlands profited greatly from the expulsion of the Portuguese Jews; in addition to gains in philosophy (Spinoza), the Netherlands became a late world maritime power partly due to the scientific maritime knowledge of the Portuguese Jews.

<sup>45</sup> "Acredito que a nossa relação com a Europa não é feliz porque uma parte essencial das nossas raízes continua em África e no Brasil. Com a crise, muitos regressaram para lá. Em dez anos, fizemos todas as reformas pedidas pela Europa (o aborto, o casamento homossexual). Foi sem dúvida rápido, mas ao mesmo tempo a nossa economia não conseguiu criar bases sólidas. [...] Só nos resta a nossa cultura e o mar como oferta turística. [...] Vivemos numa sociedade que perdeu os seus sonhos. Os portugueses têm medo do futuro, de falar. E isto acontece depois da Inquisição, que foi há 300 anos, e de 50 anos de regime fascista de Salazar. Hoje, com a crise, continua. É terrível." (*Público*, 18/08/2012)

<sup>46</sup> Until very recently Finland was the only country in the Euro zone to retain its AAA rating; March 2016 it dropped to AA+, mainly due to sanctions in trade with Russia imposed by EU. Portugal, among some other Southern European countries, is considered *junk*, coined by Moody and Fitch, among other evaluating entities.

<sup>47</sup> According to the Pisa evaluation, the Finnish educational system is one of the best in the whole world.

<sup>48</sup> "Suomessa ja muissa Pohjoismaissa on ehkä maailman korkein koko kansan elintaso, kun elintasoa mitataan aineellisilla mittareilla kuten tietokoneyhteyksinä, autoina, jääkaappeina, mikroaaltouuneina, kännyköinä tai bruttokansantuotteena. Myös ei-aineellisilla mittareilla sijoitumme kärkeen. Kultuuriharrastukset ja osallistumismahdollisuudet jakautuvat tasaisemmin kuin monessa muussa maassa. Poliittiset ja uskonnolliset vapaudet ovat arkipäiväisiä itsestänselvyyksiä." Liisa Jaakonsaari in *Uusi Suomi*, 04/09/2012.

<sup>49</sup> Finnish access to high technologies is, unlike in Portugal, underpinned by efficient learning strategies of the global English in the secondary education in the Finnish school system. The number of years English is studied is equivalent in Portugal, Finland and Spain, but the learning outcomes are entirely different.

It seems appropriate, then to apply Dana Haraway's theoretical framework to Finnish cultural citizenship, as it is closely tied to the excellent level of *know-how* in information technologies. Dana Haraway's *cyborg*, a half-human, half-machine invention, embodies and materialises the breaking of traditional distinctions between human and machine, physical and non-physical. It is a metaphor for the social as a process of limiting the frontiers, constructing identities out of available material-semiotic resources, including fundamental biological categories, such as the body and gender, which were once considered the basis for essentialist definitions of identities. Haraway's *cyborg* is a central part of the contemporary post-industrial information society – an ideological apparatus that sees the concept of body simultaneously as a natural and a technological device<sup>50</sup>. In fact, we are once again in the presence of the all-encompassing power, which for Foucault (1977) is the foundation of all discourses, of all disciplinary technologies<sup>51</sup>. The role of the concepts of *civilization* and *ethics* in the process of constructing critical citizens through present-day media technology in education is founded on this intimate “cyborg” relationship.

The ideological foundations of the transcultural institution of *education* lie upon ideals of human intellectual and moral progress, be they scientific or aesthetic in character. That is, the idea of modern education as a stronghold of *civilization* originally leaned on the concept of a 19th century *nation-state* that is constituted by the citizens of this nation-state<sup>52</sup>. But nowadays citizens are being overruled by the process of *globalization*. Consequently, citizens as the inhabitants of a specific country are becoming cosmopolites, the inhabitants of the whole world. These contemporary students (Ronald Barnett, 2011: *passim*) may be seen as simultaneously representing a positive paradigm shift from citizens of a specific nation-state to the citizens of the world, cosmopolites of the global civilization, and, to something different.

Moreover, the processes of construing and producing knowledge have been radically transformed by the information technologies: the *open access* approach makes it possible to shift the traditional classroom learning almost entirely to *on line* work. “In five years, the best lectures will be found on the internet free of charge, lectures that are better than in any universities”, predicted Bill Gates two years ago in Techonomy Conference in California. His prophecy seems to have become true. Almost everything we may learn can be learned *on line*; besides having the lectures of the world's highest ranking universities on the net, you also find the best speakers' lectures on academic subjects. An example of this is the website TED.com. There you can find 20-minute videos on a wide range of issues such as whether God exists or how research on cancer should be developed. The most frequently visited video is school critic Ken Robinson's lecture on how the present school system kills creativity. According to Robinson, in teaching it is equally important to provide good bibliography and to ensure that the teaching process is creative. The Internet has already proven to us that with the net teaching can be creative. This leads more people to question whether the more advanced stages of education could be completely moved to the virtual reality. Both the Internet and research in science are based on openness and sharing. The difference is that the members of a scientific community tend to share their own thoughts mainly among themselves, which may seem strange to a student who has grown up using Wikipedia.

Indeed, our society has profoundly changed in this aspect. Today our common, basic assumption is that all knowledge is available for everyone. To the young generation this is as obvious as taking a bus. Yes, the academic knowledge is indeed accessible to anyone, but the academic institutional researchers are not able to talk about it in ordinary language.

Education should target the active construction of knowledge. Traditional teaching methods focussed on the teacher may not be the best way to achieving this aim. The student has become the agent of his learning process and the teacher's role is to support him in this process. But unfortunately, especially in mass education, practices and conventions in education are still very much based on the idea that the task of the teacher is to transmit knowledge. Ideas of learning and epistemological beliefs are very slow to change, and teachers often have very conventional ideas of learning. Both intellectual and ethical challenges in education, thus, are crucial issues at the moment.

Future citizens need to be able to tackle increasingly complex problems. We need to constantly reconsider and reconceptualise our educational practices. Learning environments and learning tools, the nature of knowledge, and the goals of education are changing all the time. Technological tools, in particular, develop fast with new learning practices. Learning becomes increasingly intertwined with technologies, which means that face-to-face instruction is often combined with computer-mediated learning environments. It may no longer be useful to talk about “learning environments” or “technological tools”, but rather about new contexts of construing knowledge that enhance collaborative efforts to create and improve ideas.

There is, however, a darker side to all this incredible freedom of access to information. The negative outcomes of these educational changes should not be forgotten or ignored. As the traditional values of pursuing knowledge

<sup>50</sup> Haraway's position at this point is comparable with Fredric Jameson's (1984, *passim*) view, according to which postmodernism is the cultural facet of a new or purer stage of capitalism rather than its overcoming – and that the primacy of information over production (the post-industrial stage) was predictable in Marxism.

<sup>51</sup> Haraway's most basic claim is that cyborg politics is ultimately a politics of language. And her politics of language stands for the struggle against the notion of “perfect communication”, against the one perfect meaning, the so-called universalistic viewpoint which denies difference.

<sup>52</sup> In the German language, for instance, the notions of *civilization* and *education* are overlapping concepts; the term *Bildung* stands for and includes both of them.

and moral progress that used to be practised in the educational institutions of a civil society are nowadays being rapidly discarded, they are simultaneously often being replaced by neo liberal doctrines of education and of mankind, thus producing *identities of entrepreneurship*, i.e., competitive, unsolidarian individualistic players in the game of market exchange, often unwilling to participate in enhancing general social welfare. That is, the American style high competitiveness in Finland is replacing the previously solid sphere of civil welfare state. To illustrate: The World Economic Forum based in Switzerland in its recent survey on world economic competitiveness ranked Finland in the third position, just behind Switzerland and Singapore.

Consequently, media, and *culture industry* as a whole (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1944) aim to construe primarily consumer identities, passive couch potatoes, or vessels in order to pour alienation into us, that is the *homo ludens* observers in the society of spectacle (Debord, 1967). All this take place at the cost of losing the previously productive *homo faber* identity, to use Max Weber's (1905) well-known term.

Of course all cultural representations are already mediations themselves. But it is, nevertheless, my thesis that despite our contemporary society of spectacle (Debord, 1967), a spectacle in which *global media culture* has permeated all aspects of our daily practices, it is still possible to point out differences in Finnish and Portuguese life-world that construct specific cultural geographies of *Europe*.

In his book *Media and Control*, in the chapter entitled *Bystanders' Democracy*, Noam Chomsky (1991:20) argues that in the so-called democratic countries, the powerful ones – i.e., politicians and their financial promoters and institutionally influential intellectuals – share the view that “we should not believe in the common sense democratic dogma that people know best their own interests.” The powerful ones are more qualified to decide what is best for the people, he ironizes, and “propaganda, that is, media control is to democracy what the bludgeon is to a totalitarian state. All this action is wise and morally justifiable because a confused herd or a pack does not understand its own good – and is incapable of figuring it out.” – Obviously Noam Chomsky, the *enfant terrible* of the American cultural landscape, can, without any real consequences, afford to display these anarchist, almost fanatic opinions from his ivory tower of the prestigious American academic establishment of MIT. Nevertheless, he is somehow on the right track about the overall role of media in our contemporary society of spectacle – to use Guy Debord's term<sup>53</sup> – about the role of media as a “moulder of people's minds”, as Matthew Arnold wrote in an educational context in the 19th Century. Indeed, the commodification process operating through the various media technologies transforms us easily into couch potatoes, that is, we are no longer active, participating and communicating members of a society but rather mere passive observers of a flow of media images transmitted to us by the dominant power groups of “faceless masters” (Fredric Jameson, 1984)<sup>54</sup>. This is a thesis several cultural industry critics have proved us since Émile Horkheimer's and Theodor Adorno's inaugurating work called *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* in 1944. The culture industry for these authors “no longer even needs directly to pursue everywhere the profit interests from which it originated. These interests have become objectified in its ideology and have even made themselves independent of the compulsion to sell the cultural commodities that must be swallowed anyway. The culture industry turns into public relations [...] each object of the culture industry becomes its own advertisement.” (Adorno, 1991:86) That is, different forms of domination – dominations of individual, of work, and of nature – are forms of control through commodities that define our life styles. We are constructed as consumers of, and, just to mention those relevant for the present discussion, consumers of various institutional processes, such as political elections, and consumers of brands, such as celebrities as human brands.

In Portugal, some of the most popular television series are about the power of the Catholic institution, produced by Germans, Americans and Italians, some of them with the Vatican monetary aid<sup>55</sup>. The Catholic Mass is broadcasted on state-owned television channels every Sunday, too. In Finland, as in all Nordic countries, crime stories are the privileged series, even in the field of literature. Why? Because many Portuguese still feel that there is no functional civil society in Portugal; for some Portuguese, fatalistically, “God will make up his mind”. In Finland, such as in other Nordic countries – Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland – narratives about a civil individual's struggle against the wrong-doings of the state apparatus are appreciated, hence the genre of detective stories being so strong<sup>56</sup>.

The historical process of the Reformation may provide an explanation to this north-south cultural difference. Martin Luther's main claim against Catholicism was that the Catholic institution denies a straightforward individual, personal and intimate relationship between Man and God, so that God necessarily has to be mediated by the overwhelming,

<sup>53</sup> “The commodity form reaches its absolute fulfillment in the spectacle, where the tangible world is replaced by a selection of images which exist above it, and which simultaneously impose themselves as tangible par excellence.” Debord, 1977:35

<sup>54</sup> One could argue that this view has been superseded by the Internet. Now anyone can post their views of the world to a global audience. This includes the ability to participate in the what was once the preserve of the media, e.g., mobile phone transmissions to the web of real-time images of demonstrations or the typical fodder of the television news such as we have seen with the terrorist attacks around the world. Some news stations also now provide time slots for viewers to show their images of events.

<sup>55</sup> *Lasko*, *The Borgias* and *The Pillars of the Earth* are good examples of these Catholic flavoured television series on Portuguese television.

<sup>56</sup> Mankell, Nesbø, Läckberg, Holt, Remes, Persson, Höeg, Nesser, just to mention a few Nordic authors of crime stories.

gregarious institution of Catholic Church<sup>57</sup>. Luther's first measure in order to transform this relationship was to make the Bible accessible to all people and thus to promote literacy and vernacular languages<sup>58</sup>. Consequently, since Man is in direct contact with God, he simultaneously becomes actively and thoroughly responsible and even guilty for all his actions<sup>59</sup>.

According to Max Weber (1905, 1992), the development of Capitalism was closely linked to inner-worldly Puritan asceticism and self-denial, most clearly represented by Calvinism, Pietism, Methodism and Baptism. In his seminal work *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber argued that the ascetic Protestantism played a central role in the development of an ethic that led to more production and accumulation as a duty towards God. "The Puritan wanted to work in a calling" (1992: 181), because "this worldly Protestant asceticism [...] acted powerfully against the spontaneous enjoyment of possessions; it restricted consumption, especially of luxuries. On the other hand, it had the psychological effect of freeing the acquisition of goods from the traditionalistic ethics. It broke the bonds of the impulse of acquisition in that it not only legalised it, but (in the sense discussed) looked upon it as directly willed by God." (Weber 1992:170-171) But, as the cultural studies theorists have shown us, both production and consumption are only two of the five moments of one single cultural circuit<sup>60</sup>, and one does not exist without the other, they work hand in hand. Without consumption, there would be no production. Therefore, to the productive selfdenying activity we may add the consuming self-gratificatory action. Thus, once again cultural ambivalence is at stake here; leaning on the concept of *homo faber*, the Puritan ethic simultaneously paved the way for the pleasure-seeking activities of consumption, the *homo ludens*.

In Thorstein Veblen's classic *Theory of the leisure class* (1992, original 1899), the leisure class avoids anything to do with productive labour, and time is occupied with activities like studying dead languages, for example. The important issue is to make a clear distinction between a "well-educated" and a "well-trained" person, between an individual who *thinks* and one who *does*<sup>61</sup>. The pecuniary canons of taste, according to this author, stand for the pecuniary power that the leisure class exercises in relation to the working and producing social groups.

In our contemporary societies, almost everybody must work for a living, and a leisure class in Veblen's sense has become apparently non-existent<sup>62</sup>. Consumption as a manifestation of one's monetary power has come to replace the previously honourable leisure. This shift of emphasis from leisure to consumption, Veblen explains, stems from the underlying societal changes; there is a change from smaller societies of non-strangers to larger communities of strangers, from upper class feudalism to middle- and lower-class (economic) capitalism, and from unproductive consumption of time to unproductive consumption of goods. In other words, the cosy and friendly *Gemeinschaft* has been taken over by the impersonal and often alienating *Gesellschaft*.

Moreover, one should know *how* to consume in a proper manner; the longer one has been attending educational institutions, the greater is one's *cultural capital*, in Bourdieu's terminology. Therefore, wealth and time are part of cultural capital, too. Taste classifies the classifier<sup>63</sup>. The most appealing aspect in Bourdieu's theory is the explicit connection between the concepts of *habitus* and *taste* – when taste, *aesthetikon*, is taken in the classic Greco-Roman perspective of the five senses. To Bourdieu "taste, the propensity and capacity to appropriate (materially or symbolically) a given class of classified, classifying objects or practices, is the generative formula of life-style, a unitary set of distinctive preferences which express the same expressive intention in the specific logic of each of the symbolic sub-spaces, furniture, clothing, language or body hexis." (Bourdieu, 1977: 173) The concept of *taste* enables Bourdieu to avoid traps and discussion on the distinctive value between the manifestations of high and mass culture<sup>64</sup>. Bourdieu's cultural sociology tries to answer questions about who produces, what and why – issues normally considered to be outside the sphere of the social functions of culture. He argues that "taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classification is expressed or betrayed."

<sup>57</sup> Therefore the Pope's supremacy and the ecclesiastical hierarchy acting through the rite of confession and the cult of saints and Virgin Mary were to be abolished.

<sup>58</sup> Naturally Gutenberg's invention of print also played a crucial role in the uniquely efficient Protestant massification of literacy.

<sup>59</sup> Protestant cultures are commonly designated as guilt cultures, while Catholic cultures are often called shame cultures.

<sup>60</sup> In the Birmingham School theory of cultural articulation, a cultural circuit consists of the moments of representation, regulation, identification, production and consumption.

<sup>61</sup> This distinction is of course entirely against Ludwig Wittgenstein's pragmatic philosophy. There is no thinking without doing according to him, and utterly, "thinking as a bodily function" (i.e., doing philosophy) may help us find better methods (i.e., improved therapies) to deal with common issues of everyday life.

<sup>62</sup> This may be a temporary phenomenon because the gulf between the super-rich and the extremely poor is widening all the time. In Portugal, the financial differences among different social groups are the greatest in the whole European Union; the minimum wage is 530 euros and, at the same time, there are some five Portuguese families in the Forbes list among the 100 richest in the world.

<sup>63</sup> "Consumption is the articulation of a sense of identity. Our identity is made up by our consumption of goods – and their consumption and display constitutes our expression of taste. So display – to ourselves and to others – is largely for symbolic significance, indicating our membership of a particular culture." Mackay 1997: 4

<sup>64</sup> Terry Eagleton (2000:115) asks the following question: "Culture is *habitus*, in Pierre Bourdieu's term, but it is also, contradictorily, the most finely self-reflective existence of which we are capable. [...] the very word includes both organic growth and the active tending of it. [...] How can culture be at once what we don't need to think about, and the finest fruits of our consciousness?" The notion of *taste (aesthetikon)* articulates the solution and answers Eagleton's rhetorical question.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 6)

The human species, in the long run, however, does not yield to a mere *homo economicus*, whose sole and most important leisure activity is to consume. It is impossible to rip out people's will for social voluntary action. There is abundant evidence of this, such as urban agriculture, protection of urban woods, or urban art as a whole. Nonetheless some consuming citizens are devoured by mediated events and enjoy a taste of voyeurism, such as the school killings in Finland or the Breivik massacre in culturally Lutheran Norway. These horrible incidents are the most striking evidence of this twofold impact of the shaking frontiers of personal and public. The ethics stemming from the early years of personal life in the incidents mentioned above may have become meaningless, devoid of significance, and have been taken over by the overwhelming sphere of virtual existence. The inconvenient truth is that "Finland is the world's leader in many "evil matters", such as domestic violence, child abuse and the abandonment of the elderly. The regrettably frequent cases of child abuse in many extremely poor developing countries are completely unheard of. What is wrong with us? The answer is: indifference, coldness, hardness and the strong decline in gregarious values. – Money does not solve things, only love does."<sup>65</sup>

High suicide rates are another "evil matter" in the Finnish society, especially among the youth. Why? One possible explanation is the fact that the social transformation from an agrarian peasant society to a contemporary urban culture has been extremely fast; it took place in the late fifties and early sixties, so most of the young generation are grandchildren of first generation city people and often unable to relate to their parents' experience, let alone to their grandparents'. This reinforces the generational gaps in the Finnish society because young people hold loose or no ties to their family ancestors and an increasing number of the young population is receiving invalidity pensions for mental health issues, even as early as in their twenties. By contrast, in Portugal families take care of their own kind. Issues of civic behaviour may not be on their first plane, but individual tragedies of social isolation mentioned above are far less frequent in Portugal than in Finland.

There is a common denominator of these two geographical and cultural extremes, the apparently suffering southern Portuguese and the apparently successful Finland in the north at the top of the occupation scale. Both of these societies are positioned on the fringes, in the margins of the main-stream centre. What is salient at the present moment is that the important social and cultural changes we are witnessing are caused by the reversibility of the margins and the centre. Simply, margins – or difference – more than ever before are the chief promoters of fundamental cultural changes. In his essay "The local and the global", Stuart Hall says that "it would be an extremely odd and peculiar history of this part of the twentieth century if we were not to say that the most profound cultural revolution has come about as a consequence of the margins coming into representation – in art, in painting, in film, in music, in literature, in the modern arts everywhere, in politics, and in social life generally. Our lives have been transformed by the struggle of the margins to come into representation. Not just to be placed by the regime of some other, or imperialising eye but to reclaim some form of representation for themselves." (Hall, 1991: 34)

This is also the view shared by Lilie Chouliaraki and Norman Fairclough in *Discourse in late modernity* (1999), when stating that hybridity does not stand in opposition to 'pure' discursive practices: "hybridity as such is inherent in all social uses of language. But particular social circumstances create particular degrees of stability and durability for particular articulations, and particular potentials for articulating practices together in new ways." (Chouliaraki, Fairclough, 1999: 13) All discursive practices are actually hybrid; the example they offer is the mixture of academic and everyday language in political discourse. The central issue here is the act of rearticulation that takes us to an articulatory change. Living on the borderlines, in and between cultures, causes *hybridisation*, a process in which two (or more) cultures retain their distinct characteristics and simultaneously *build something new*. The margins displace the centre, and the ones positioned in the periphery re-write history. Furthermore, cultural totalisation becomes impossible, as Bakhtin has argued<sup>66</sup>.

Julia Kristeva in *Étrangers à nous-même* (1988, *passim*) has shown us that we are actually *all* in the process of becoming foreigners in a universe that is growing more and more heterogeneous underneath its apparent scientific and media-centred unity. In conclusion, to become a foreigner is not necessarily about physically moving from one place to another. It may be a refusal to become fully part of the surrounding environment but rather to build an autonomous relationship towards place as such, a position time and again favoured by artists or intellectuals<sup>67</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> "Suomi on maailman kärkimaita monessa "pahassa" kuten perheväkivallassa ja lasten pahoinpitelyssä sekä vanhusten heitteillejättössä. Suomessa valitettavan yleiset lasten pahoinpitelyt ovat useissa rutiköyhissä kehitysmaissa tuiki tuntemattomia. Mikä meitä oikein riivaa? Vastaus on : välinpitämättämyys, kylmyys ja kovuus sekä yhteisöllisyyden rankka rapautuminen. – Raha ei ratkaise, mutta rakkaus ratkaisee." Liisa Jaakonsaari in *Uusi Suomi*, 04/09/2012

<sup>66</sup> "The hybrid is not only double-voiced and double-accented [...] but is also double-linguaged; for in it there are not only (and not even so much) two individual consciousnesses, two epochs [...] that come together and consciously fight it out on the territory of the utterance [...] It is the collision between differing points of view on the world that are embedded in these forms [...] such unconscious hybrids have been at the same time profoundly productive historically: they are pregnant with potential for new world views, with new 'internal forms' for perceiving the world in words." Bakhtin, 1981: 360

<sup>67</sup> In *Liquid Modernity* we can read: "The distinguishing mark of all exile [...] is the determination to stand out from the physical space, to conjure up a place of one's own, different from the place in which those around are settled, a place unlike the places left behind and unlike the place of arrival." Bauman, 2000: 208

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<http://teamtreehouse.com/>

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