

National Identity – a Revisitation of the Portuguese Debate*

Over the last twenty years I have wrestled with the question of Portuguese identity, a topic which, for at least fifteen of these years, I have examined in a still unfinished book entitled *The Obsession with Portugalidade* (Portugueseness), though dispersed segments of the project have already been published. When asked to speak on this subject I still find myself, after all these years, returning to a statement made by the philosopher Thomas Reid. Reflecting upon the position of David Hume concerning identity (in this case individual identity, although the fundamental issue is the same, as I have tried to demonstrate elsewhere), Reid wrote in 1785:

If you ask a definition of identity, I confess I can give none; it is too simple a notion to admit of logical definition: I can say it is a relation, but I cannot find words to express the specific difference between this and other relations, though I am in no danger of confounding it with any other.¹

Richard Sennett, a well known professor of Humanities at New York University responded with the following to Sheldon Hackney, the former president of the National Endowment for the Humanities, in an article entitled “The myth of identity” published in 1994 in *The New York Times*:

Mr. Hackney is the latest of a long line of Americans who have sought to counter society's fissures by discovering a national identity or an American character. These phrases, however, merely display the gentlemanly face of nationalism.²

* This is an expansion of an earlier version translated from the Portuguese by Robert Moser.

¹ Chapter 4 of "Of Memory", which is the third essay in Thomas Reid's *Essays on the Intellectual Power of Man*, first published in 1785. In *Personal Identity*, ed. John Perry (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1975), 108.

² *The New York Times*, January 30, 1994.

There is no shortage of similar claims, where cultural identity is used synonymously with national character. In neighboring Spain, Carolyn P. Boyd writes that “the debate on Spanish identity originated in the seventeenth century, but it has grown more intense during the last one hundred years”.³

Indeed, “cultural or national identity” and “national character” are analytically identifiable realities that osmotically diffuse into one another. It wouldn't be necessary to search out examples outside Portugal to demonstrate this form of conceptual analysis or the establishment of an important distinction between these two concepts. For more than two decades I have been collecting Portuguese texts that deal with this issue and can offer abundant examples for the purpose of this paper. Utilizing foreign paradigms can be beneficial, however, because they illustrate that conceptual confusions do not only occur to the Portuguese, a realization that helps us in Portugal not to fall into the bad habit of self-flagellation, a habit that we often cultivate over there with a good deal of gusto.

In Portugal the debate concerning national identity is very old. During the turbulent years following the Portuguese Revolution on April 25, 1974, it became a recurrent theme. In recent years the contribution of important intellectuals has elevated the quality of the debate. Until very recently the most notable writings on the topic were almost exclusively by the essayist Eduardo Lourenço. Now, however, he who decides to join the debate cannot ignore works such as *Pela Mão de Alice* (By the Hand of Alice) by the sociologist Boaventura

³ *Iberian Identity. Essays on the Nature of Identity in Portugal and Spain.* Eds. Richard Herr and John H. R. Polt (Berkeley, CA: Institute of International Studies, 1989), p. 181.

Sousa Santos; *A Identidade Nacional* (National Identity) by the historian José Mattoso; the collective volume organized by the historians Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto entitled *A Memória da Nação* (The Memory of the Nation); or the discussion published in a book organized by Augusto Santos Silva and Vitor Oliveira Jorge, a sociologist and an anthropologist respectively, entitled *Existe uma Cultura Portuguesa?* (Does a Portuguese Culture Exist?). Furthermore, one naturally cannot ignore everything that Eduardo Lourenço continues to publish about the topic.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. I have mentioned only those works that are obligatory reading. Equally obligatory are those modern classics that deal with the issue and are known to everybody, though not necessarily read: Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition*, Anthony Smith's *National Identity* and *Nationalism and Modernism*, Walker Connor's *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*, Ernest Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism*, Pierre Nora's *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, David Lowenthal's *The Past is a Foreign Country*, Dean Peabody's *National Characteristics*, Homi B. Bhabha's *Nation and Narration*, and Richard Rorty's *Achieving our Country*.

He who attentively reads the interventions made within the Portuguese debate notices that there exist three main groups.

The first group can be described as traditionalists, that is, direct or indirect descendants of movements such as *saudosismo*, the “Portuguese Renaissance”, and Portuguese

philosophy. Even within this group it is difficult to mold their respective positions into a single viewpoint, because there exist important divergences amongst them.

The second group is occupied by social scientists, especially anthropologists and sociologists, as well as historians, concerned with data, statistics and quantification, empirical verification and conceptual rigor. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that this group is equally determined to establish bridges and a continuous dialogue with social scientists outside of Portugal, thus disassociating themselves from what they consider to be uninformed and backward provincial arguments.

The third group is the one in which we may place Eduardo Lourenço, by far the most widely read and cited figure. The group is similarly comprised of the countless educated readers who identify with Lourenço's arguments. They represent a point of view that is complex, well-informed, and endowed with a certain intuition that, in Lourenço's case, is nothing short of brilliant. An historical perspective, an exceptional intellectual background and a profound existential questioning, form a vision that is further molded by its position "outside looking in", a fundamental component of this theoretical approach towards cultural and national identity.

In regards to the first group, almost two decades ago I published a critical analysis of their theses in which I hope to have demonstrated that their essentialist positions (commonly understood as fundamentalist today) are lacking in any degree of rigorous substantiation, and are based upon fragile philosophical conceptions, uninformed arguments concerning language and its role in the formation of world-views, as well as a deficient understanding of

the relation between thought and action. In short, their arguments suffer from a distressingly limited awareness of the serious implications imposed upon ethics by contemporary epistemology. While it is true that not all of the figures of this group are of the same feather, certain unifying characteristics allow us to refer to them collectively, for in one way or another they share an ontological stance that is based upon a universalistic or absolutist conception of values.

Ironically, this group's underlying suppositions are in accord with those on the opposite end of the political spectrum. Despite their adherence to some radically different assumptions, Marxists also firmly believe in the imperative of a worldview whose axiology is solidly grounded in unwavering principles. Even the idea of destiny, so dear to the fundamentalist and messianic view, does not differ significantly, in its nuclear structure, from the deterministic perception of history defended by Marxists.

The second group, that of the social scientists, is at the polar opposite end of the first group. It prides itself in being scientific, rigorous, quantitative, and distrusts and rejects the slightest hint of an essentialist characterization of a culture or people. Their hair stands on end when they come across expressions such as "national character", "national culture", or "the soul of a nation". It is their painful recollection of a not so distant time when a belief in these concepts resulted in catastrophic tragedies, that explains the vehemence with which this group seeks to separate themselves from them, avoiding any association with the "daydreams" suggested by philosophical, literary or theological thinking. They have faith in the scientific nature of their work, and in the methodological, conceptual and critical

superiority of their presuppositions. They are highly skeptical of the adjective “national”. They strongly prefer to immerse themselves in academic debates on an international level, and view the challenges posed to nations by globalization as a beneficial blow to the backward provincialism of nationalistic narrow-mindedness.

The third group resides in the middle. It rests its arguments upon an understanding of both history and humanity, an appreciation for the gradualness of the transformation of underlying structures that tie together the elements of a cultural group, and an awareness of the force of tradition and the symbolic importance of identity-forming factors. Their adherence to this position, does not imply however that they hold it to be true as an absolute model or pattern for the future. This position, while respected in the expression of its main proponent, Eduardo Lourenço, is not highly regarded by some segments of the social sciences. Within this segment Lourenço has been, and continues to be, a name politely referred to in public, yet almost entirely disregarded in bibliographies, and severely attacked behind certain doors. For many, he is the quintessential embodiment of a knowledge that, according to those social scientists most energetically positivist, the social sciences have worked to overcome: an impressionism cloaked in philosophical-literary language. Suffice to say, nothing could be more unjust.

Indeed, few scholars currently engaged in the national debate on Portuguese identity would recognize themselves in the profiles outlined above, not even Eduardo Lourenço – and I would be the first to admit that. It is true that in this case, as in almost all cases, any generalization is reductive. Rather than identifying individual authors, my intention here has

been, for strictly analytical purposes, to delineate the parameters of the various positions, knowing beforehand that no line is rigid and that the margins are porous and osmotic.

I am of the belief that one of the fundamental differences between the second and the third groups is directly associated with the point of view of the observer. The scholars who reside outside of Portugal are more apt to note this difference. Those from within tend to maintain a more microcosmic and multifaceted focus on reality and the inherent differences that an outside perspective sees in the background. These perspectives are not mutually exclusive. They are merely two focal points that complement each other in a kind of *Gestalt*. When Portuguese social scientists meet outside of their country they tend to be preoccupied with Portugal and Portuguese culture and are more sensitive to the differences that distinguish them from other cultures. Take, for example, the comments made by the anthropologist João Pina-Cabral at a debate that took place at UC Berkeley concerning Iberian identity, though in this case he was referring to Peninsular culture in the broader sense:

I am convinced that if we look at the different ways in which people organize their lives, we could find something that would amount to an Iberian ethnographic region. I started my paper by saying that the Iberian Peninsula, the Portuguese Atlantic islands, the Balearics, the Languedoc, and the French Pyrenees are all areas that, from a sociocultural point of view, present great coherence.

This is something which people who, in Portugal, are concerned with regionality, such as Rui Feijó and myself, cannot ever forget.⁴

⁴ "Sociocultural Differentiation and regional identity in Portugal", *Iberian Identity. Essays on the Nature of Identity in Portugal and Spain*, (Berkeley, CA: Institute of International Studies, University of California Berkeley, 1989), p. 230.

Rui Feijó, who was also present, concurred with this argument:

We came to look for Iberian identity, and we came out with an idea that there are different levels and different meanings of identity in Iberia, and this is quite important. But if we have come up with this idea of diversity, Iberia still stands, as João Pina-Cabral was saying, as something which might be profitably considered as a whole - not Spain and Portugal - for further comparative study.⁵

Another author who, though not a social scientist, shares the international perspective of the group of social scientists is Eduardo Prado Coelho, a literary critic but also the most visible Portuguese public intellectual. After a prolonged hiatus in Paris, Coelho made the following affirmation during a 1992 debate in Porto on the existence or non-existence of a Portuguese culture:

What I am going to say in some respects, and in a provocative way, echoes what has already been proposed by Eduardo Lourenço. The provocation is mine. I am also convinced, more and more, that one can identify profound cultural traces in the form of cultural identity. These traces may be manifested on a behavioral level, through a determined set of values, myths and tendencies, even on a corporal level, such as the body's relationship to space. I think that much can be explained by these traces and similarly much can be constructed around them. Clearly there is also a subsequent tendency to reinforce these constructs in a way that essentializes them, and it is this process that is most irritating to us, to the Portuguese, though it does possess its own density.⁶

In his book *A Identidade Nacional* (National Identity), José Mattoso concludes by weaving together observations about the characteristics of national culture in search “of that which can be truly substantiated”, and is ultimately unable to discard several⁷. Building upon

⁵ "State, Nation, and Regional Diversity in Portugal", *Iberian Identity*, p. 231.

⁶ A. S. Silva, V. O. Jorge, eds., *Existe uma Cultura Portuguesa? (Porto: Afrontamento, 1992)*, p. 133.

⁷ José Mattoso, *Identidade Nacional* (Lisboa: Gradiva, 1998), p. 97.

Manuel Villaverde Cabral's position (who openly professes that his concern is to belong to and interact with the international community of social scientists) Mattoso adds:

The greater part of those differences that separate [. . .] Portugal from the rest of Europe [. . .] may be most constructively described as differences of degree – and not of nature.” [José Mattoso continues in agreement with Villaverde Cabral:] “Thus, ‘the essential empirical differences between the values, attitudes and behavior of the Portuguese population and the rest of Europe may be [. . .] and ought to be explained by national history and its contingent character, and especially by the country's demographic, social and economic configuration.⁸

The aforementioned citations merely demonstrate that, while Mattoso and Villaverde Cabral do not subscribe to essentialist positions, they also do not fail to recognize differences of degree that exist between Portuguese culture and others. They are unable to discard with the legitimacy of the position represented, for example, by Eduardo Lourenço, despite all of their quantifications and scientific rigor. Moreover, to conclude that recognized differences are measured by degree is neither innovative nor brilliant.

Very few, if any, scholars make the claim that Portugal possesses a cultural individuality that radically sets it apart. The same is true for other cultures. I would like to give as an example that which occurs with colors: four primary colors make possible all of the paintings in the world. To conclude, therefore, that it is possible to detect, in all of the world's cultures, traces of yellow, blue, red and white is to make a trivial observation. No one in their right mind would argue that a Renaissance painting is equivalent to a Picasso even though both are

⁸ P. 99.

painted with the same basic four colors. The same may be said for the basic elements included in Mendeliev's now expanded table.

The conclusion to infer from this brief analysis is simple: the national dialogue on identity is comprised, to a large extent, of a series of monologues, occurring in Portugal, as in other places, without a mutual theoretical vocabulary shared by its participants. The result is a series of interesting interventions in and of themselves, but that ultimately ignore the existence of other arguments and thus the possibility of entering into dialogue with them⁹. (This observation is not intended to apply exclusively to the Portuguese, or meant to suggest a specific Portuguese characteristic.)

Furthermore, given the interest of Portuguese social scientists in elevating the debates on Portuguese reality to an international "scientific" level, it is curious to note that, at least with regards to the question of national identity, this does not in fact occur, even if in some cases we would be led to believe so by the list of works cited at the end of each article. I have yet to see, for example, an attempt to analyze the debate between Ernest Gellner and Anthony Smith – both recognized authorities on the issue – as it applies to the argument put forth by José Mattoso, according to whom "what creates and sustains Portuguese identity is, in fact, the State. For this reason, the emergence of national consciousness is so slow and its popular

⁹ I must note here the special case of Eduardo Lourenço, whose writings on the matter are brilliant. A selection of them is now available in English: *The Little Lusitanian House. Essays on Portuguese Culture*. Selection, Translation and Introduction by Ronald W. Sousa (Providence, Rhode Island: Gávea-Brown Publications, 2003).

expression so belated.”¹⁰ And later he adds: “To be Portuguese began through the process of being a subject to the king of Portugal, and not by belonging to a certain people.”¹¹

I am not one to refute the arguments of as qualified a historian as José Mattoso, but I would have liked to have seen his study concerning national identity in the context of his perspective on the debate between Smith and E. Gellner. This would have been particularly relevant in light of the fact that Mattoso aligns himself so closely with the latter, with the difference being that Mattoso’s argument, if correct, obliges Gellner to pull back, by centuries, his ideas about the origin of the State. Indeed, this immediately places Mattoso alongside Anthony Smith with regards to the possibility of a sense of identity emerging centuries prior to the time frame proposed by Gellner (Anthony Smith, as you recall, believes in a long gestation of a cultural consciousness before Statehood), and yet, according to Mattoso, the case of Portugal gives weight to Gellner’s theories. In other words, a scholar would have here an excellent opportunity to internationalize the study of Portuguese identity by placing it within the context of two important perspectives that are still being debated.

Without wishing to, I have perhaps prolonged my panoramic discussion of the national debate on identity and only now resume my initial affirmation, that is, that this debate consistently diffuses two analytically distinguishable realities: national character or characteristics (I prefer the later term) and identity. The former is in the domain of anthropology and psychology. It refers to the so-called “autognose” or self-knowledge, that

¹⁰ Pp. 82-3.

¹¹ P. 83.

sphere of self-understanding that a group has, or seeks to have of itself. It is essentially a rational exercise formed by an understanding of reality. Identity, however, belongs to the realm of emotions, of becoming, associations or identifications that an individual consciously or unconsciously assumes in his or her life. Individual X may possess all of the characteristics that one would say, as a whole, pertain to cultural group Y, and yet, for whatever reason, the person does not identify with them, does not feel them. Many scholars refuse to consider identity because they fail to see this distinction.

Ultimately, each individual creates their own interpretation of the past and constructs it in their own way (much like a child builds objects with *Lego* pieces), and it is this construct that they identify with. Although it is natural that cultural groups share certain aspects of these interpretations, they do not necessarily coincide. Yet not everything is the result of a conscious, voluntary act, especially when dealing with collective bodies. Unconscious forces have a powerful sway over the spectrum of available options. Thus I feel that we cannot speak only in terms of invention, while recognizing the validity of Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's expression "invention of tradition", where the historical tradition fostered by nations is perceived to be an invention. At the very least, not everything is invented. For the same reason, I am disinclined to subscribe to Homi K. Bhabha's attempt to distill the question of identity into the form of a simile – *nation as narration* - inspired by theories that underscore the similarities between literary narrative and history. I am convinced that there is more to it than simply this.

In forging their identity, cultural groups do not only merely imagine themselves, as Benedict Anderson suggests in *Imagined Communities*. They do not imagine their community in the same way, for example, that one would imagine China having never been there. Therefore, it would be more accurate to use the term “cognitive communities”, to illustrate that these identifications exist in the minds of individuals as authentic realities and not as mere fantasies. However, the fact that these collective connections are cognitively conceived does not imply that they are only imagined. This proposal also does not resolve the problem, for it does not specify the nature of these cognitive realities. The often repeated expression “place of memory”, proposed by Pierre Nora to capture the idea of nation, also strikes me as insufficient. As I have tried to show elsewhere, memory is only one of the integral components in the process of identity formation. Walker Connor corrected the *cliché* that classified man as a “rational being”, preferring instead the term “national being.” Indeed, these different senses of belonging are not only mentally conceived because they are above all sensed, that is, experienced emotionally. Therefore, it would be closer to the truth to call them “communities of the heart”. For the mind works to establish links, to construct a narrative through which each individual connects the most intimate creations of both the mind and the heart, creations that were distilled from the conglomeration of experiences accumulated in the cultural arena of one’s upbringing.

When Boaventura Sousa Santos claims, and rightly so, that “Portugal has no destiny. It has a past, a present and a future”, he both makes a distinction between three different stages of history that are, however, unified, as well as refutes the idea that one stage necessarily will

be repeated in a subsequent stage¹². His is a current position that does not accept the kind of essentialist arguments that very few defend today, at least in Portugal. As I hope I have already made clear, his argument does not extinguish cultural differences, nor does it undermine the legitimacy of a debate on identity, at least when this is understood to mean “a path to be taken by a community”, rather than “an imitative repetition of the past”. Neither he nor any other participant in the debate would subscribe to the latter viewpoint. Thus, independent of the usefulness of the debate on a given culture’s character or characteristics, it is impossible to avoid discussion concerning the future that a community intends for itself. When dealing with the identification and creation of communities one’s focus necessarily returns to the question of identity, though in a manner that is significantly less rigid and fixed than before. We may think of identity as a union of volitions, rather than as a union of cultural or linguistic, and even less so biological, traces. Because there is a truth proposed by Eduardo Lourenço that I would like to recall and develop here: the only thing that unites the Portuguese is Portugal itself. Implicit in this statement is the notion that not even the State has absolute power over its people’s minds, their volitions. Each person constructs his or her own experience of Portugal differently (as it happens with another country), and it is through this process that people are moved or persuaded, although every individual fills in the content of their experiences differently. Symbols such as the flag, the national anthem, or the national soccer team, evoke emotions and embolden sentiments whose origins – though we will continue to recognize them – we are ultimately ignorant of. Thus, there is this tremendous

¹² Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Pela Mão de Alice. O Social e o Político na Pós-modernidade* (Porto: Edições

complexity underlying national identity, even when looked at solely from the point of view of the future and (in good oxymoronic fashion) absolute contingency.

Why did almost the entire Portugal explode when the national soccer team came third in the 1966 World Cup in London? If it was due to the dictatorship, why then are our hopes rekindled so fervently every four years, only to be dashed without fail, leaving the country in a collective state of depression?¹³ How do we explain the national jubilation after Carlos Lopes won the gold medal at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, or the enthusiasm with which the Portuguese embraced the success of the 1998 World Expo in Lisbon? The endless discussion with regards to *Lusofonia*? And the debate about our integration into the European Union, historical preservation of Portuguese architecture, or the resistance to complete globalization? Only because the State wants us to be moved by these things? Clearly neither the State is responsible for unleashing all of these sentiments, nor are the figures who make up the first group I outlined at the beginning of this article capable of evoking these kinds of impulses. Not too long ago Lúcia Jorge, a leading Portuguese writer, stated the following in an interview:

...what is always in question from Eça de Queiroz to Lobo Antunes (two exponents of Portuguese literature, one from the 19th and the other from our times) is the myth of Fatherland, the search for collective identity. Cardoso Pires, Saramago, all those writers center themselves around one sole myth.¹⁴

Afrontamento, 1994), p. 64.

¹³ One is reminded of a statement by the captain of the Croatian national team, Igor Stimac, during one of the recent editions of the Football World Cup: "This is about football, but it is also about our country. /,,/ We want to show the world that we are a great country, and a great people." Quoted in Geoffrey Wheatcroft, "Much more than a game", *The New York Times*, July 11, 1998.

¹⁴ Z. S., "Portugueses e Espanhóis falam de literatura e identidade", *Jornal de Letras, Artes e Ideias*, 20-11-90.

All of this leads us to the conclusion that the debate surrounding identity will not cease, precisely because it is a deeper, more serious question than most social scientists would admit. At stake are profound questions and value systems whose origins we are still unfamiliar with. The positivism of the new Portuguese generation of intellectuals is understandable, as is their desire to tidy up the house, airing out musty concepts and cleaning old stains and blemishes. But is it necessary to throw the baby out with the bathwater? Globalization will continue to usher forth its opposite: the defense of individuality, that in the Westernmost corner of Europe will be outwardly exhibited through a collective expression defending Portugal, and from within will subdivide into regional groups. One perspective does not exclude the other. It was the philosopher George Santayana who best summed up this dichotomy: “a man's feet should be planted in his country, but his eyes should survey the world.”¹⁵

There are those who fixate more on the firmly planted feet, and those who prefer to gaze out over the horizons. These two perspectives are not exclusive and any exaggeration one way or another proves to be deficient. Moreover, this tension is part of other more vast tensions that divide the world today and that will be impossible to ignore, in this global village in which we now live. But it is alienating to pretend that one is first European or an abstract citizen of the world for that matter. It is the belief of many serious scholars with universal concerns – a group that I see myself a part of – that globalization will never eliminate the presence of nation-villages within the global-village. Portugal is an eight

¹⁵ George Santayana, *The Life of Reason* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1906).

hundred year-old nation and, while things could have occurred differently, it is what it is, and the Portuguese derive satisfaction from this. Individually one might alter one's tastes, but it would be impossible to alter at the same time the tastes of ten million Portuguese. Therefore, whether we like it or not, a huge mass of people have become accustomed to, and become fond of, the “cultural customs” of their upbringing. This is the weight of tradition, “the sweet tyranny of the past” that Richard Wollheim refers to, that all of the social sciences in the world will be incapable of eliminating¹⁶. Quebec’s resistance, caught in the jaws of the Anglo-American giant, is proof of the existence of cultural forces that transcend those of the State. Why then, to the detriment of our focus as scholars, do we constantly return to the question of the chicken or the egg: if nations were created by States, who then created the States? What underlying values are present in the similar case?

I will conclude by applying to the Portuguese case those arguments that I made almost a decade ago with regard to the Azorean situation, the Azores being a smaller community that belongs within the greater Portuguese space.

As I proposed fifteen years ago upon revisiting the then much discussed question of Azoreanness, which is an abbreviated version of this other debate on Portugueseness, Azoreanness – in this case Portugueseness – *is the Portugueseness of each and every individual*. These vague terms carry with them a force that comes from personal experience derived from the memory and heart of each person. But not even this sentiment is fixed or isolated, nor does it cease to be modified when confronted with different contexts. It was for

¹⁶ Richard Wollheim, *The Thread of Life* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 130-161.

this reason that, as I have also already written, I felt *micaelense* (a native of the island of S. Miguel) when I went to Terceira (another Azorean island) at 13, but felt Azorean on the Portuguese mainland and, in Spain, felt Portuguese. In France I felt Iberian. Later, in the United States, I felt European and, in China, I know that I felt Western. If I visited Mars naturally I would feel like an Earthling. But none of these sentiments occurred to the exclusion of the others. During the course of life our identity (or identities) expand toward the universal. Meanwhile, every universal aspect has its ground floor. To deny that would be to fool ourselves into the sad illusion that we only belong to the whole human race. We would be the only ones to think this way. Others naturally call us by our name, whether we like it or not. In my case and that of my countrymen – Portuguese. And we know so well that this is how things are, that we only react when this label is used negatively. If we are awarded the Nobel Prize, we immediately want the entire world to place before the name of the laureate, in bold letters, the adjective PORTUGUESE.

That is how I see the mysterious labyrinth of identity. I shouldn't dare to extrapolate, but I suspect that my fellow inhabitants of this continent now almost unified and called by the generic name of Europeans may not feel too differently from the way I do.

List of publications to date:

- No. 1.** *The American Dream in Spanish Poetry: Some Early Twentieth-Century Visions of the United States*, **Dr Terence McMullan**, Queen's University Belfast, February 2000.
- No. 2.** *Autobiography and Intertextuality in Carajicomedia by Juan Goytiso*, **Dr Stanley Black**, University of Ulster, November 2000.
- No. 3.** *Radical Propensities and Juxtapositions: Defamiliarization and Difficulty in Borges and Beckett*, **Dr Ciaran Cosgrove**, Trinity College Dublin, February 2002.
- No. 4.** *Voices From Lusophone Borderlands: The Angolan Identities Of António Agostinho Neto, Jorge Arrimar And José Eduardo Agualusa*, **Dr David Brookshaw**, University of Bristol, March 2002.
- No. 5.** *National Identity – a Revisitation of the Portuguese Debate*, **Professor Onésimo Teotónio Almeida**, Brown University, Rhode Island, USA. October 2002.
- No. 6.** *Translation for the Stage: Product and Process*, **Professor David Johnston**, Queen's University of Belfast, November 2002.
- No. 7.** *Sujeto femenino en contextos de modernidad tardía*, **Professor Francisca López**, Bates College, USA, March 2003.
- No. 8.** *Antonio Machado And The Royal Art: Fact And Fiction*, **Dr Philip Johnston**, University College Dublin, October 2003.
- No. 9.** *The Censors' Confusion: (Mis)Interpretations of the Works of Alfonso Sastre*, **Dr Catherine O' Leary**, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, February 2004.
- No. 10.** *East Timorese Poems of the Revolution and Beyond: The Poetry of Francisco Borja da Costa and Celso de Oliveira*, **Mr Anthony Soares**, Queen's University Belfast, March 2004.
- No. 11.** *Borders, Batos Locos and Barrios: Space as Signifier in Chicano Film*, **Dr Catherine Leen**, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, November 2004.
- No. 12.** *"Camões, Portuguese war propaganda, and the dream of a safe colonial empire, 1914-1918"*, **Dr Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses**, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, March 2005.