



Giorgione, *I Tre Filosofi* ¹

¹ *The Three Philosophers* (c. 1505–1509) is an oil painting on canvas attributed to Giorgione (1477-1510), whose real name was Giorgio Barbarelli da Castelfranco. Giorgione was an Italian painter of the Renaissance who lived in Venice and served his apprenticeship under Bellini. Only about six surviving paintings are acknowledged for certain to be his work and the resulting uncertainty about the identity and meaning of his art has made him one of the most mysterious figures in European painting. This is one of Giorgione's last paintings and it is now displayed at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. It shows three philosophers - one young, one middle-aged, and one old - who are standing near a dark empty cave that has been interpreted as a symbol of Plato's cave.

"Celebrity is a person who is well-known
for his well-knownness."

Daniel Boorstin

Inspired by Giorgione's famous painting entitled *The Three Philosophers* - in which the three figures are considered to be representative of the three stages of men's thought, the Renaissance (the young man), the Muslim expansion age (the man wearing a turban) and the Middle Ages (the old man) - I have chosen as a topic for this essay to refer to three famous university professors of different nationalities, respectively Portuguese, American and French who lived at the beginning of the 20th century and at the transition to this century. They are Henrique Vilhena, a medical doctor who was a professor of Artistic Anatomy in Portugal, Lionel Trilling, a notable literary critic who

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taught Literature at Columbia University at the City of New York and Bernard Stiegler, the philosopher and superstar of the French academy, who is one of the most influential intellectuals of the 21st century.

I have entitled this article "Fans and Celebrities at the University" because, although living in very different ages, countries and cultures, they can all be considered real celebrities and had fans that give continuity to their ideas. I have chosen them as case-studies due to the fact that, in spite of their differences, they changed the way their diverse subjects are taught at the university and the innovative mark they have left in their respective fields sets them apart from other professors in their countries and even in the world. We can say that they also distinguish themselves among the star-professors because, in spite of their fame and visibility, they devoted themselves to their students and created what can be considered new ways of teaching in their areas. Considering the institution where the three of them worked and for whose transformation they contributed I will also make some references to the University and its evolution.

John Masefield, who was the English poet laureate from 1930 until his death in 1967, once wrote that: "There are few earthly things more beautiful than a university: a place where those who hate ignorance may strive to know, where those who perceive truth may strive to make others see"³. Nowadays, due to the multiple debates about the central role of higher education and the long-term future of the universities, we still hope that they will continue to be the beacons of wisdom and tolerance that Masefield praised and that they may contribute to shape the conscience of democratic, civilized, and inclusive societies⁴. However, we also know that it is a field in transformation for, along the time, there have been many changes to the cultural and academic landscape which now, in the wake of the present crisis, is facing various challenges and

³ Masefield expressed his ideas about the University in his address about the power of education when the University of Sheffield awarded the then poet laureate an honorary degree in 1946.

⁴ Lord Dearing (1997), *Higher Education in the Learning Society*, National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, known as *The Dearing Report*.

being urged to reconsider and re-conceptualise itself and to start developing partnerships and knowledge transfer.

Concerning the title of my essay, when we recall our university days we all remember one or several professors who left lasting impressions on our lives as well as others who were considered celebrities and had a cohort of fans either because they were excellent teachers or their book, or books, sold slightly better than everyone else's. But in the early 21st century, with the proliferation of media channels, there are more celebrities than previously in every field at the university for their increased exposure gives them "instant celebrity" and that transient fame fascinates their students - as celebrity worship is most pronounced in youth - as well as the public in general for we live in a celebrity-oriented society, which has been designated as the "Empire of Illusion"⁵ and led authors to write about *The Fame Monster*⁶. The well known Yale professor e literary critic William Deresiewicz says that the camera has created a culture of celebrity and the computer is creating a culture of connectivity and that, as the two technologies converge, both cultures betray a common impulse for they are ways of becoming known and the contemporary self wants to be recognized and to be connected⁷. We can thus conclude that as Lionel Trilling has taught us if what grounded the self in Romanticism was sincerity, and in modernism it was authenticity, then in postmodernism it is visibility⁸.

⁵ Chris Hedges in *Empire of Illusion: The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle*, New York: Nation Books, 2010, describes how corporate entertainment encourages people to desire to be rich and famous, to devote themselves to material things, reckless self-gratification and consumer spending, encouraging them to care more about news relating to celebrities than about genuinely important news.

⁶ Tom Payne, in *The Fame Monster: From the Bronze Age to Britney*, London: Vintage, 2009 and *Fame: What The Classics Tell Us about Our Cult of Celebrity*, London: Picador, 2010, studies modern fame in the light of ancient myths and rituals.

⁷ We have only to think of Twitter or Facebook to conclude that the quality that seems to validate people nowadays is not how they become real to themselves but to be seen by others.

⁸ References to Romanticism pervade Trilling's work, especially in his influential essays on Wordsworth and Keats and in his well-known preface to the *Liberal Imagination* (1950), in *The Opposing Self* (1955), and in *Beyond Culture* (1965).

On the other hand, we also know that there have always been famous people, and that our obsession with celebrities and the symbolic meaning of our perception of the famous date from the times of the Romans who stamped the portraits of powerful men on coins and that, later on, it was the turn of works of art to enhance their fame. In the 19th century, with the increase of literacy, writers such as, Ramalho Ortigão, Alexandre Herculano, Walter Scott and Charles Dickens built up their popularity by publishing their work in newspapers and magazines. Therefore, when we reflect on the topic of the cult of celebrity we can say that it expresses a recent way of seeing the world.

Relating the above mentioned to the main topic of my essay we see that although universities have been defined as temples of education and, since the Middle Ages, students prefer those that claim to have famous professors and an excellent educational environment, nowadays some undergraduates choose the institutions that assure them future job opportunities and they overlook the quality of the education that they minister. Thus, when we analyze the situation, we see that a professor who is a celebrity contributes to boost the ranking of a university because the research he conducts increases the recognition of the institution. It is also evident that, with a high ranking, the investment in that university increases, which means that its infrastructure is improved and it may become a world class facility, and consequently attract the attention of employers thus granting its students their coveted better job opportunities. Therefore universities can declare that, from a job prospective as well as from the point of view of the scientific level of the ministered education, famous professors indeed help in building the careers of the students.

This is the justification why, instead of considering the quality of his teaching, when hiring a professor, universities seem to be more interested to know how many books he published and whether his work has been cited in scholarly publications. In conclusion, universities engage in competition to hire star or super-star professors who they "hunt" and entice by offering them - even when they cannot increase their salaries - innovative forms of compensation,

like cheap loans and research grants. As schools gain visibility, star professors acquire influence that extends beyond the classroom. In this way the universities become active participants in the process of reducing public culture to publicity as they disseminate advertising messages that celebrate the achievements of their academic superstars, in spite of the fact that their habits of self-promotion and egocentric posturing tend to isolate them from the rest of the faculty, whose research work - although it may not result in the production of best sellers and consequently does not meet with media interest - contributes to the advancement of the subject they teach.

I will refer to each of my "celebrities at the university" separately, ordering them chronologically and starting, therefore, by mentioning Henrique Vilhena and his original contribution to an interdisciplinary tuition of Artistic Anatomy, proceeding then to relating how Lionel Trilling changed the way the world saw and taught literature and ending with references to our contemporary Bernard Stiegler, whose philosophical way of seeing the world is indeed altering our intellectual universe.



Henrique Vilhena

"[A University] is a place of *teaching universal knowledge*. This implies that its object is, on the one hand, intellectual, not moral; and, on the other, that it is the diffusion and extension of knowledge rather than the advancement. If its object were scientific and philosophical discovery, I do not see why a University should have students; if religious training, I do not see how it can be the seat of literature and science."

John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University*

Henrique Vilhena (1879-1958) is considered one of the most prestigious Portuguese anatomists of his time. He studied at the University of Coimbra and, in Lisbon, at the Escola Médico-Cirúrgica, where he obtained his degree in Medicine and became "prosector" of Anatomy. In 1905, he was appointed Full Professor of Artistic Anatomy at the Higher School of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon. Later, he also taught Anatomy and Artistic Anatomy at the Faculdade de Medicina of the University of Lisbon, where he founded the Portuguese Society of Historical Studies of Lisbon and the Institute of Anatomy (1911-1948) and the Portuguese-Spanish-American Anatomical Society, of which he was nominated Honorary President in 1943. He was also the Professor-Librarian and

created the first and only Portuguese scientific magazine on Anatomy entitled *Arquivos de Anatomia e Antropologia* (1912-1990). Between 1925 and 1926 he was the President of the University of Coimbra. He also had several political functions between 1915 and 1926 and was a member of the National Assembly, having been decorated with the Spanish "Ordem Civil de Afonso X, o Sábio" in 1943.

In 1949, he was nominated President of the Society of Medical Sciences of Lisbon; Honorary member of the Anatomy Institute of Coimbra; member of the Academy of Sciences of Lisbon, of the Society of Normal and Pathological Anatomy of Argentina and of the Academy of Letters and Sciences of S. Paulo. He founded the Sociedade Anatómica Portuguesa and, in 1939, became Professor at the polemic Portuguese Popular University⁹. Between 1905 and 1943, he produced multiple publications, including, in 1908, his PhD thesis, entitled *Expressão Física da Cólera na Literatura*¹⁰ (The Physical Expression of Anger in Literature), in which, in a very innovative fashion, he intersected science and art, medicine and literature and reason and emotion.

He was a knowledgeable and cultivated scholar both in the area of sciences and of the humanities, having, besides his extensive knowledge of anatomy, a vast culture in the fields of art, literature, anthropology and psychology. Due to his strictness¹¹, he was feared and respected at the academy but, thanks to his personality, he had many followers and fans¹² and succeeded in asserting himself in a very elitist environment in which the professors and the students had an equally exceptional social and cultural status. Together with

⁹ The Universidade Popular Portuguesa was founded in 1919 by a group of intellectuals and workers, with the objective of disseminating education and culture in Lisbon following the idea that culture should not be only for the elites because it was an instrument of individual and collective emancipation. Due to its polemic project the University was compulsively closed in 1943.

¹⁰ Henrique Vilhena (1909), *A Expressão da Cólera na Literatura*, Lisboa: Typ. A. de Mendonça.

¹¹ We can see his calm and trusting face in the portrait painted by Helena de Bourbon e Meneses, who was one of his students of Artistic Anatomy. The painting (n/d) is nowadays at the Instituto de Anatomia of the Faculdade de Medicina of the University of Lisbon.

¹² His fans and disciples were not only medical students but also from the Law and Art School, where Vilhena also taught. Among these, he selected Carlos Bonvalot (1893-1934) to make the anatomical drawings he used for his classes, just as we do nowadays with our Power Point presentations.

other professors¹³, he transformed the way medicine was then taught at the University of Lisbon, creating research institutes that interconnected the tuition with the clinical praxis, thus following the famous Humboldtian model of the University of Berlin.

We can, therefore, say that, in 1911, Vilhena, initiated a new style in the tuition of Anatomy when, he opened the doors of the School of Medicine to the students of Fine Arts thus giving them the opportunity to have practical classes of the dissected human body that they did not have at their College. Consequently the undergraduates went to the Institute of Anatomy where they used as models the anatomical pieces prepared by the Assistant Professors of the School of Medicine¹⁴.

Hence Henrique Vilhena, with his decision of joining doctors and artists together in order to study the human body from different perspectives - and in this way getting to know it better - revived the classical tradition in the anatomical study in which art and science were united¹⁵ and there was a connection between the producers of images and the researchers of the human body¹⁶. He was thus going against the twentieth century paradigm of the separation of art and science¹⁷, which - since the Enlightenment - were organized

¹³ Among them, the most well-known are Victor Fontes and Manuel Barbosa Sueiro.

¹⁴ It is worth mentioning that today this interdisciplinary connection between the College of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon is still active but the current link is with the Department of Anatomy of the New University as this is the only medical school in Portugal where human cadaveric dissection is still performed. I thank Professor M. Alexandre Pires, who is the *Chefe de Trabalhos Práticos* of the Dept. of Anatomy of the Faculdade de Ciências Médicas of the New University of Lisbon, for this information.

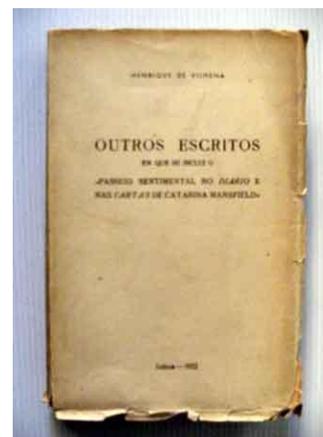
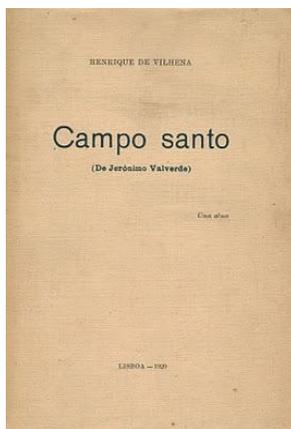
¹⁵ When can consider Leonardo's Vitruvian man (1487), which is the icon of the Portuguese Catholic University, as an image that represents this connection between art and science.

¹⁶ The link between knowledge and practice via anatomical representations has recently been the topic of an excellent exhibition entitled "Gabinete de Anatomia-Arpad, Vieira e os Desenhos Anatômicos do Museu de Medicina" (2011), which was organized by Manuel Valente Alves at the Arpad Szenes - Vieira da Silva Museum in Lisbon.

¹⁷ G. K. Chesterton, with his usual wit, concerning this separation, noted that: "The virtues have gone mad because they have been isolated from each other and are wandering alone. Thus some scientists care for truth; and their truth is pitiless. Thus some humanitarians only care for pity; and their pity... is often untruthful".

as autonomous fields of knowledge and required that there would be no emotion in the anatomical representations.

We can therefore say that Henrique Vilhena has all the characteristics of a superstar professor who caused a radical change at the University and, being a celebrity, had lots of fans some of them superstars themselves as the famous painter Helena Vieira da Silva, who was one of his students of Artistic Anatomy.





Lionel Trilling

"This is the great vice of academicism, that it is concerned with ideas rather than with thinking."
Lionel Trilling

Lionel Trilling (1905-1975), who was a star professor and celebrity in the 20th century, remains today one of the most influential, admired - and at the same time most controversial - and perplexing American intellectual. In his time, he had one of the great reputations in the academic world and he himself confesses in his *Journal*: "I hear on all sides of the extent of my reputation - which some even call 'fame'".

In 1932, he became a Professor at Columbia University¹⁸, where he had been an undergraduate in 1925 (thus beginning a life-long association with that university) and, although he declared he did not consider himself a scholar, in 1948, he was promoted to Full Professor in the English Department¹⁹. Columbia was then - as it is today - a preeminent center for educational innovation and scholarly achievement. During Trilling's years there, there were plenty of genial and well-known public intellectuals among the faculty, such as John Dewey,

¹⁸ Columbia University in the city of New York was founded in 1754 as King's College by royal charter of King George II of England. It is the oldest institution of higher learning in the State of New York and the fifth oldest in the United States.

¹⁹ He was the first tenured Jewish professor in the English department of Columbia University.

Mark Van Doren, who was Trilling's teacher, and Jacques Barzun, Meyer Schapiro, Richard Hofstadter, and Daniel Bell, to name just a few of the great minds of the Morningside campus.

Trilling published his doctoral dissertation, on Matthew Arnold, in 1939, and it was reviewed with approval by famous critics like Edmund Wilson and Robert Penn Warren and admired by John Dewey. In 1943, *Time* devoted a seven-page article to his study of E. M. Forster entitled *E. M. Forster: A Study*. He also published a number of short stories and his ambition was to be a great novelist in spite of the fact that his first novel, entitled *The Middle of the Journey*, which appeared in 1947, had a bad reception and disappointing sales, but it was nevertheless widely noticed²⁰. Besides teaching, he wrote essays and reviews, and was a regular contributor to the *Times* and *The New Yorker*, being however prominently associated with the *Partisan Review*, which, being a member of the New York intellectuals²¹, he had joined since 1937.

He was great teacher, author and literary critic and even though he cultivated a circumspect distance from any group with which he might be identified, such as professors, public intellectuals, liberals or Jews, when his brilliant collection of essays entitled *The Liberal Imagination: Essays on Literature and Society* came out in 1950, it was a phenomenon, and, at the age of forty-four, he had already acquired a mystique among scholarly intellectuals. The main topic of *The Liberal Imagination* is that literature teaches that life can be complicated and that unfairness, snobbery, resentment, prejudice, neurosis, and tragedy are literature's specific subject matter and only the right economic system, the right political reforms, the right undergraduate curriculum, and the right psychotherapy will do away with those problems. He was a humanist who believed that works of literature can speak to us across time. This first book, which was a critique of post-war political and social attitudes, played a decisive

²⁰ It is worth mentioning that it was republished in 1975, the year Trilling died, and that it proceeded to sell fifty thousand copies in six months.

²¹ V. Maria Laura Bettencourt Pires, "Os Intelectuais de Nova Iorque" in Maria Laura Bettencourt Pires/Vítor Oliveira (Eds.), *Nova Iorque - De Topos a Utopos*, Lisboa: Universidade Católica Editora, 2009.

role in drawing international attention to his intellectual gifts and marked him as, as some critics said, as "a rising star."²²

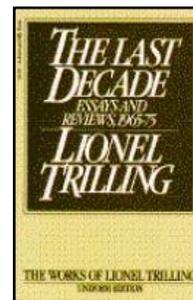
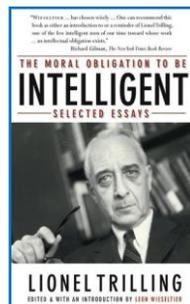
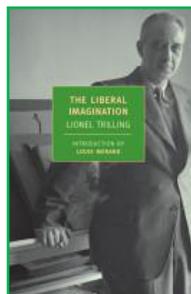
As he taught in his classes for more than thirty years, in Trilling's view, human betterment is possible and there is a straight road to health and happiness. Consequently, in his often quoted essay "On the Teaching of Modern Literature" (1961), which is the first essay in his volume entitled *Beyond Culture: Essays on Literature and Learning* (1965), he complained about the eagerness of his students "to engage in the process that we might call the socialization of the anti-social, or the acculturation of the anti-cultural, or the legitimization of the subversive". His fans and students included famous writers and critics, like Norman Podhoretz, Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, John Hollander, and Louis Menand. It is remarkable that he produced so many outstanding books while teaching wave after wave of grateful undergraduates. It is irrefutable that his influence both in the academic world and in journalism, was extremely important and that his solemn voice was heard when he claimed that: "This intense conviction of the existence of the self apart from culture is, as culture well knows, its noblest and most generous achievement" and defended the ideal of the wise man who becomes self-sufficient through virtue, attention to duty, and the putting aside of the angers and passions that govern others.

Lionel Trilling, who hated being regarded as a paragon, has taught us that at the university certain qualities like intellectual climate, commitment to students and corporate personality always matter and that the more common danger in academic life is lassitude and self-congratulating mediocrity. And we know that nowadays these characterize some superstar professors who act as lofty aristocrats and "sultans of the academy" thus encouraging a selfish atmosphere that injures their less famous, but more committed, colleagues who actually advise students and oversee dissertation research.

We can, therefore, conclude that we need to hear his words even more now than in his own time, because public discourse is riddled with the simple-

²² V. John Rodden (Ed.), *Lionel Trilling & the Critics: Opposing Selves*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

mindedness that he spent his life opposing. We should also remember what he said in "The Uncertain Future of the Humanistic Educational Ideal," the lecture delivered in the year before his death, in which he argues that: "This desire to fashion, to shape, a self and a life has all but gone from a contemporary culture whose emphasis, paradoxically enough, is so much on self."





Bernard Stiegler

"Today, we need to understand the process of technical evolution given that we are experiencing the deep opacity of contemporary technics; we do not immediately understand what is being played out in technics, nor what is being profoundly transformed therein, even though we unceasingly have to make *decisions* regarding technics, the consequences of which are felt to escape us more and more. And in day-to-day technical reality, we cannot spontaneously distinguish the long-term processes of transformation from spectacular but fleeting technical innovations."

Bernard Stiegler²³

Bernard Stiegler (1952--) is a well known French philosopher who obtained his PhD at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in 1992. He is a Professor at the Université de Technologie in Compiègne and a Professorial Fellow at the Centre for Cultural Studies at the University of London (Goldsmiths College), since 2009. He is also the director of the Institut de Recherche et d'Innovation of the Centre de Georges Pompidou in Paris - which was created at his initiative in April 2006 - and of the Collège International de Philosophie. He has held the positions of Director General at the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel and at the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique.

²³ Stiegler, Bernard (1998), *Technics and Time 1: The Fault of Epimetheus*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, p. 21.

In 2005, he founded the political and cultural group, "Ars Industrialis" that debates the problem of individuation in consumer capitalism, and the new possibility of an economy of contribution. In 2010, he started his own philosophy school²⁴, Ecole de Philosophie d' Epineil-le-Fleuriel, where there are courses opened to high school and graduate students and to everyone in the region. In those courses - which are filmed and transmitted in open access in the site of "Ars Industrialis" - Stiegler teaches Plato's philosophy using the methodology of Socratic dialogues. There is also a doctoral program conducted by videoconference for twelve graduate students of universities from different continents who can participate in the course via Internet, and a summer academy, which is constituted by an intensive seminar that lasts for six weeks. The school engages in research, critique and analysis and is totally organized according to Stiegler's ideas, which he designates as "pharmacological approach".²⁵ The topics studied at the school lie in Stiegler's argument that we are entering a period of post-consumerism and post-globalization. The main objective of the school of Epineil is to study philosophy as a way of living and to search its links to the making of citizenship thus initiating young citizens who will be more lucid and useful to their homeland, promoting an intrinsically interdisciplinary research and linking the academic world to the everyday world and not only to the economic universe.

Bernard Stiegler has published numerous books and articles on philosophy, technology, digitization, capitalism and consumer culture. Among his writings, the most widely noticed are *La technique et le temps*, *De la misère symbolique*, *Mécréance et Discrédit* and *Constituer l'Europe* in which he writes about the relation between technology and philosophy, not only in a theoretical sense, but also situating them in industry and society as practices.

²⁴ The designation "school" is used by Stiegler according to its original meaning, which was a place of *skholè*, a *skholeion*, that is, a place of exercise of a way of thinking which emerged for the first time in old Greece.

²⁵ V. Bernard Stiegler, (2010) *Ce qui fait que la vie vaut la peine d'être vécue: De la pharmacologie* and (2011) "The Pharmacology of the Spirit," in Jane Elliott & Derek Attridge (eds.), *Theory After 'Theory'* (New York: Routledge).

In this essay I am specially interested in Bernard Stiegler's most recent analyses of education, "telecracy", democracy and industry but the central theme of technics and transformation underlies all of his thought and writing, since *Technics and Time 1* (1994/1998) till today. According to Stiegler, what is being "profoundly transformed" is the nature of the human itself and technics and technology are temporally prior to "the human". Based on the anthropological and sociological ideas of André Leroi-Gourhan²⁶ and Gilbert Simondon²⁷, he claims that the human is the product, not the "cause" of technical evolution, an evolution whose grounding concept is "technics". In this sense, "the technical", "techniques", and "technology" are all manifest aspects and modes of operation of technics.

"The human" is a result, a subset, of technics and humans are, as Stiegler advocates in *Technics and Time 1: The Fault of Epimetheus*, animals "without qualities." For him the critical dilemma of our time is the growing gap between long-circuit maturation and short-circuited attention which defines a transformed relationship between technics/technology and its "product", the human. Stiegler, contrary to Descartes or Heidegger, denies that the computing machine is a danger or threat to the human beings - as so may thought in the 1950's - since, according to him, the human is and has always been "machinic".

In his most recently-published works²⁸ on democracy and education, Stiegler proceeds to analyze the "battle for intelligence" that, though it has always been a part of the human/technics interface, has now become more

²⁶ André Leroi-Gourhan (1911-1986) was a French archaeologist and anthropologist who was interested in technology and aesthetics and wrote *L'Homme et la matière* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1943) and *Milieu et techniques* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1945). Besides Stiegler, his ideas have also influenced Jacques Derrida and his formulation of the neologism, *différance* and Deleuze and Guattari in their *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.

²⁷ Gilbert Simondon (1924-1989) was a French philosopher whose theory of individuation inspired both Gilles Deleuze and Bernard Stiegler. He wrote, among other works, *Du mode d'existence des objets techniques*. Paris: Aubier, 1989 and *L'individuation psychique et collective* (Paris, Aubier, [1989] 2007) which has a preface by Bernard Stiegler.

²⁸ See Stiegler, Bernard (1998), *Technics and Time 1: The Fault of Epimetheus*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press; *Technics and Time 2: Disorientation*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008 and with Jacques Derrida *Echographies of Television*, Cambridge, Polity, 2002.

central than ever and is directly connected to his educational methodology and to his interrogations of the current state of culture and of education. Working with his group *Ars Industrialis*, in Paris, he scrutinizes the most fundamental questions addressed by contemporary cultural change in a wide variety of disciplines in order to help us understand the crisis we are facing at the beginning of the 21st century.

Another fundamental theme he focuses on in *Technics and Time 2: Disorientation* is a very specific sense of disorientation, and, since for him, as above-mentioned, "the human" is itself "technics", the discovery of this apparently counter-intuitive - and undoubtedly counter-humanist - interpretation of the human leads to a "disenchantment", that, in *Technics and Time 3, The Time of Cinema and the Problem of Malaise*, he designates as *malaise*, but which has much wider implications. For him, existence without participation, as opposed to "ex-sistence" through participation and critique, is the very definition of *malaise* that is the result of disorientation and disenchantment.

In the *Technics and Time* series and in other recent works, such as *Taking Care: of Youth and the Generations*²⁹, he deals with global technological and political conditions that need immediate attention. Stiegler's originality is due to the fact that he is practically the only scholar who juxtaposes these two perspectives in order to show how "the disenchantment/ re-enchantment diad" is at work in both popular and academic culture³⁰ for he acts both at the university and in political spheres³¹. Consequently, one of his leitmotifs is the possibility of "trans-formation": the forming and re-forming of consciousness which is imbued in a new kind of ontology that is a transformation of the phenomenological

²⁹ *Taking Care: of Youth and the Generations*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009 (English translation of *Prendre soin. De la jeunesse et des générations*. Paris: Flammarion, 2008).

³⁰ Stiegler, Bernard (2006). *Réenchâter le monde: La valeur esprit contre le populisme industriel*. Paris: Flammarion. Stiegler asserts that, when schools teach blind obedience and passive acceptance of orders rather than critical thinking, they transform themselves from programming institutions into programming industries.

³¹ See Bernard Stiegler (2006), *La Télécratie contre la démocratie: Lettre ouverte aux représentants politiques*. Paris: Flammarion.

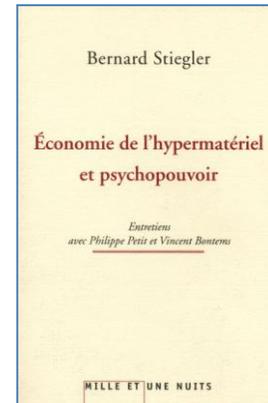
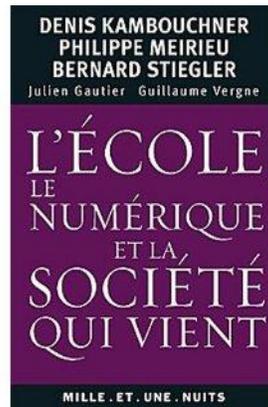
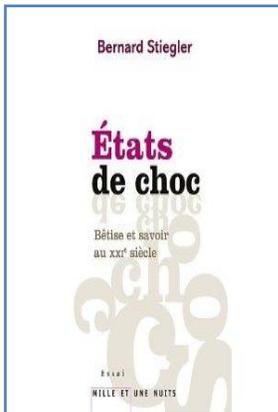
tradition from Descartes to Derrida. He thinks there must be "a total transformation" and that it is human cognition that must be re-conceived as a function of technics. We can therefore conclude that Stiegler's conception of technics redefines the relationship between mind and world and, since technics pervades the very nature of the human, we can use it to re-enchant the world³².

As such, all of the instruments which not only shape but create the mind are *pharmaka*³³ and are both poison and remedy for its growth and efficacy. He also speaks of knowledge-acquisition and of the reproducibility and producibility of knowledge³⁴, concluding that the strategy of the "programming industries" (television, internet, podcasts - to the emergent and not-yet-emergent technologies of control) is to "short-circuit" the learning process in favor of the development and nurturance of automatic responses to stimuli at the level of drives. Contrarily, the design of "programming institutions" (cultural relics, family histories and artifacts, the education and training systems) - which are interested in capturing attention (i.e. consciousness) and manipulating it for marketing purposes - as opposed to programming industries, which deliver an awareness and immersion in long circuits of cultural memory (and rely on their development), thus connecting and cross-fertilizing the generations and producing structured knowledge that is simultaneously "radically open." And Stiegler claims, that "the transmission of knowledge is its transformation" for only transmissible knowledge can contribute to the creation and perpetuation of both individual and collective "humanity".

³² *Réenchanter le monde*, p. 6.

³³ Stiegler is referring here to the role of the *pharmakon* in Derrida's "Plato's Pharmacy".

³⁴ *Technics and Time 2: Disorientation*, p. 136.



Final Considerations

As final considerations on the topic of this essay we can recall that it is high quality education that makes the students distinctive and renowned and that only suitable and profound learning enriches and enables them to achieve success in any future profession. And, this is one of the reasons why high-quality professors are so necessary at the university Stiegler is referring here to the role of the *pharmakon* in Derrida's "Plato's Pharmacy" for only those capable of imparting first-rate knowledge about their subjects can transform their students into future citizens who will turn the world into a better place.

These famous professors may be well known for their knowledge and research as well as for their prominent publications but only those who put their teaching above every other academic activity will be remembered by their pupils. The three academics that I have selected can be considered celebrities at the university and although very different, we can say that each one of them has left a mark of innovation and progress in his specific field, respectively medicine, literature and cultural theory, and have thus contributed to alter and ameliorate the academic life in Portugal, the United States and France at the 20th and the 21st centuries.

They deserve to be mentioned and considered as models in our times of crisis and disenchantment when the biggest rewards in the universities are

reserved for research rather than teaching, not least because research is easier to evaluate and because corporate sponsors are attaching strings to their donations in order to prevent competitors from free-riding on their research, such as forcing scientists to delay publication or even blank out crucial passages from published papers.

We also know that our 21st-century technology and the publishing trends are altering the roles of the professors and that there is a shift of power at the academia, when two or three professors want to be paid like a sport's superstar or a TV celebrity forgetting that their main objective should be to form and inform their students.

On the other hand, it is obvious that changes in the way learning is delivered are going to happen much sooner than expected. Regarding these changes, we have only to realize that, nowadays an e-university like, for instance, Cardean University, or any other virtual university, can draw its teaching talents for its online courses from universities including the best in the world, like the London School of Economics, Stanford University, and the University of Chicago, thus having an all-star team of superstars as professors. If this new type of educational institution - where intellectual reputation can serve as a coarse alternative for high standards - prevails and is successful, it will certainly contradict John Henry Newman who wrote that: "Education in its fullest sense will never issue from the most strenuous efforts of a set of teachers with no mutual sympathies and no intercommunion."³⁵

Then again, it may also seem to prove how right Christopher Lasch was when, in his work entitled *The Culture of Narcissism* (1979), he defined our culture of diminishing expectations as a narcissistic culture where every activity and relationship is defined by the hedonistic need to acquire the symbols of wealth, this becoming the only expression of rigid, yet covert, social hierarchies.

³⁵ John Henry Cardinal Newman (1907), *The Idea of a University*, London: Longmans, Green, And Co.

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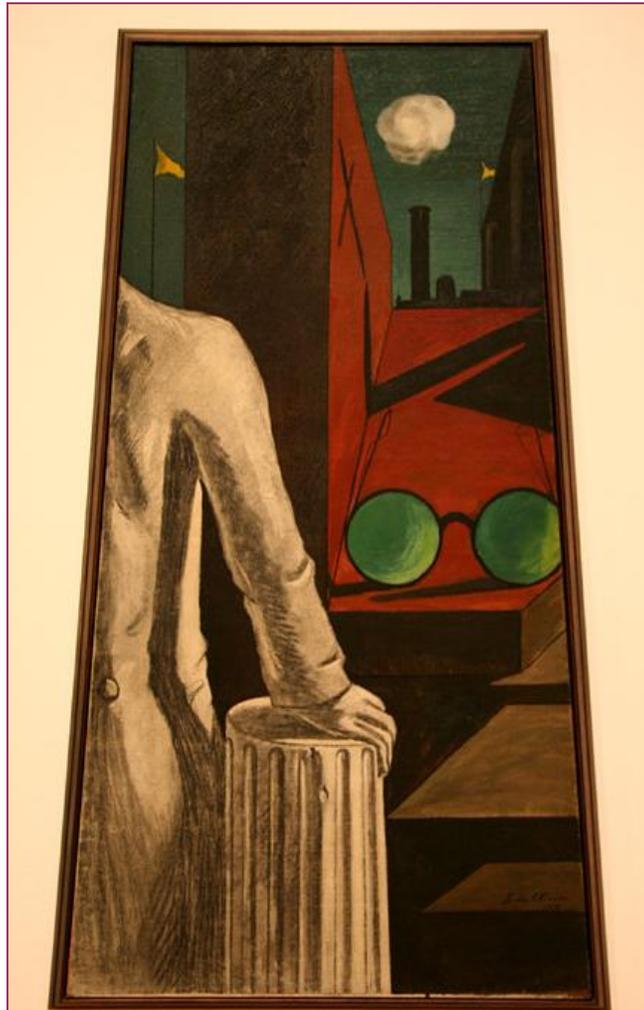
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Resumo

Nos nossos dias, tanto o número de professores que são celebridades na universidade e como o dos seus fãs tem aumentado em todo o mundo. Tal pode estar relacionado com a recente proliferação dos *media* que dão aos professores *superstars* uma fama imediata e efémera que fascina os seus estudantes devido ao facto de o culto da celebridade ser mais acentuado na juventude. Porém, ao olharmos para trás, vemos que recordamos mais os professores que nos transmitiam excelentes conhecimentos. Consciente de que, na nossa época de crise, necessitamos de modelos, seleccionei um professor português, um americano e um francês, que, nos séculos XX e XXI, nas áreas de Medicina, Literatura e Filosofia, mudaram e revolucionaram a universidade tendo, por isso, fãs e discípulos e merecendo serem considerados celebridades na universidade.

Key-words: celebrity; university; Vilhena; Trilling; Stiegler

Palavras-chave: celebridade; universidade; Vilhena; Trilling; Stiegler



De Chirico, *La Serenità del Saggio* ³⁶

³⁶ *The Serenity of the Scholar* (1914) is a painting in oil and charcoal on canvas by Giorgio de Chirico (1888-1978) now displayed at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. De Chirico, who was a writer, theatre designer, sculptor, printmaker and pre-Surrealist and Surrealist Italian painter, has been considered the inventor of a revolutionary approach to painting. His "enigma" paintings formed the nucleus of the art movement *Scuola Metafisica* that he founded. He studied the German philosophers Friedrich Nietzsche and Arthur Schopenhauer, whose texts, according to him, coalesced into visions the artist could "see with his spirit" and put on canvas thus becoming known for his metaphysical and dreamlike images. His paintings are characterized by a visionary, poetic use of imagery, in which themes such as nostalgia, enigma and myth are explored. He was an important source of inspiration for artists throughout Europe in the inter-war years and again for a new generation of painters in the 1980s.