The Footballer, the Trickster and the Dictator:

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<td>Abstract:</td>
<td>In the context of a proposed multi-speed neo-Europe where the wealthier nations are allowed to accumulate more wealth and the less wealthy European nations such as Portugal are left to fend for themselves, this article looks at the staging of national stereotypes in Portuguese director’s Nuno Cardoso’s Shakespeare trilogy (Richard II in 2007, Measure for Measure in 2012 and Coriolanus in 2014). Each of these performances examined the relationship between those who govern and those who are governed, using strategies of disidentification with stereotypes of the nation and national identity.</td>
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The Footballer, the Trickster and the Dictator: Disidentified National Subjects and Failed European Identifications in Nuno Cardoso’s Portuguese Shakespeares

Portugal and Neo-Europe

In an interview published in the March 20 2017 edition of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and cited widely across the web, the head of the Eurozone, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, commented that while he believed that the Northern European countries had shown solidarity with the Southern European countries in crisis, the latter also had duties as ‘I can’t spend all my money on women and drink and then at the end ask for your help’. Dijsselbloem added that ‘This principle holds at personal, local, national and also at European level’. In the controversy that followed, Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa called the comments ‘xenophobic, racist and sexist’ and called for Dijsselbloem’s resignation. The incident illustrated the growing division between the wealthier countries in the Eurozone and those, like Portugal, Spain and Greece, who had been the object of severe austerity programmes in exchange for financial aid. While Dijsselbloem attracted criticism for the visibility of his remarks, the wider currency of such views within the European Union can be seen in moves towards what has been referred to euphemistically as a multi-speed Europe. If adopted, such a project would encourage the continued accumulation of wealth in the wealthier countries in Europe and would leave those in less wealthy countries like Portugal to fend for themselves.

In response to such developments, there have been calls within Portugal to leave the Eurozone altogether and arguments around national sovereignty resurfaced within a country that had been notable for its uncritical support of Portuguese integration within Europe. This withdrawal into the national and rejection of the European is a direct consequence of the neo-liberal vision of Portugal as a low-wage economy requiring extensive cuts in public spending pursued by members of the Eurozone in recent years. Such a view is illustrated by Dijsselbloem’s cynical suggestion that increased public spending is tantamount to wasting money on ‘drink and women.’ It obscures the ways in which European austerity programmes have greatly increased economic and social inequalities in Portugal and elsewhere in Europe.
In a chapter entitled ‘Another Europe is Possible’ in his aptly-titled 2012 book *Portugal: Essay against Self-Flagellation*, the Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos argues that the project envisaged by the original creators of Europe no longer exists as:

It was abandoned at the moment when the principles of solidarity and equality between states in the treatises were replaced by monetary, commercial and governmental logics defined by the interests of the most developed countries, thus creating the conditions for the emergence of a stratification between first class and second class states, between a European centre and a European periphery.  

Sousa Santos extrapolates from this that another Europe must emerge that takes into account ‘new relationships between capitalism, colonialism, patriarchy and democracy’. What role might performances of Shakespeare play in creating this alternative vision of Europe and exploring such relationships? How might they stage tensions around the European without resorting to exclusively national frames of reference? How might the European locations of the plays speak to contemporary Europeans through performance?

This article explores the work of the Portuguese director, Nuno Cardoso, and his parodic stagings of the nation and national identity. Cardoso directed three performances of Shakespeare for the national theatres in Lisbon and Porto: *Richard II* in 2007, *Measure for Measure* in 2012 and *Coriolanus* in 2014. Taken together, the three performances formed a state-of-the-nation trilogy that examined contemporary Portugal through the lens of a sustained engagement with Shakespeare. At the centre of these stagings was a concern with the relationship between those who govern and those who are governed and the vexed question of where performances of Shakespeare at national theatres stand in relation to both. In all three performances, national stereotypes were mobilised to reinforce the topicality of the plays and for easy audience recognition of national figures and contexts, but the construction and circulation of these stereotypes was also interrogated in the process. Images of Europe appeared in two of these performances, yet these representations appeared distant and somewhat irrelevant to national concerns. Similarly, England, Austria and Italy, the three European locations of the plays, took second place to stagings of contemporary Portugal.
I am interested here in the enabling and limiting features of Cardoso’s mobilisation of national stereotypes in performances of Shakespeare and their relationship to contemporary configurations of the European. I will argue that Nuno Cardoso’s three Shakespeares staged various forms of disidentification with stereotypes of the nation and national identity. The notion of disidentification was advanced initially by Judith Butler who enquired ‘[w]hat are the possibilities of politicizing disidentification, this experience of misrecognition, this uneasy sense of standing under a sign to which one does and does not belong. It may be that the affirmation of that slippage, that the failure of identification, is itself the point of departure for a more democratizing affirmation of internal difference’. The idea of disidentification as tactical misrecognition, a belonging that is simultaneously a distancing, has been more fully developed in the work of queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz, for whom ‘[d]isidentification is meant to be descriptive of the survival strategies the minority subject practices in order to negotiate a phobic majoritarian public sphere that continuously elides or punishes the existence of subjects who do not conform to the phantasm of normative citizenship’ (my emphasis). It is this ‘phantasm of normative citizenship’, its inclusions and exclusions, that structures my analysis of Nuno Cardoso’s deployment of national stereotypes in his Shakespeare trilogy.

However, while Esteban Muñoz casts disidentification as a politically subversive strategy enacted by minoritarian subjects, the disidentified subjects in Cardoso’s Shakespearean performances were only sometimes subversive, and rarely progressive. Some were unthinkable within the dominant national culture as invisible or muted minoritarian subjects, others were produced volubly and visibly at its centre. As such, they were highly ambivalent stagings of national stereotypes with equal measures of attraction and repulsion, subversion and containment. Moreover, while the performances disidentified with stereotypes of the national, this did not lead to a compensatory identification with the European, the global or even with each other. The performances staged, therefore, a disidentification with national stereotypes at the same time as they staged the failure of alternative identifications with the European or other supra-national frameworks.

Disfiguring the Nation
In his influential book Portugal, Today: The Fear of Existing the philosopher José Gil
remarks that ‘[i]f Europe has entered us [the Portuguese], we haven’t yet entered Europe’. This paradoxical notion of the relationship between the Portuguese and the European is crucial to understanding the settings within which Cardoso staged his disidentification with the nation. At the heart of each of the three performances was a central organising stage metaphor through which Cardoso parodied stereotypes of national identification. In the case of Richard II, the performances took place under floodlights on a football pitch. (Fig. 1) They replaced the idea of a national soil as the territorial basis for citizenship with the artificial turf of the football pitch. This setting also referenced what is often referred to as the promiscuous relationship between politics and football and the ways in which such a relationship constructs notions of what it means to be Portuguese. Europe was merely gestured towards here in the association with the funds that helped to pay for a series of expensive new stadiums for the Euro 2004 championship held in Portugal.

This invocation of a Europe whose presence is felt only intermittently through its funding mechanisms was more explicit in Measure for Measure. The blue motorway sign to Vienna pointing downwards onto the stage reminded audiences of the end of the European funding which had financed Portugal’s motorway infrastructure and, as a result, of the disparity between wealthier and less wealthy European nations which had structured this exchange. (Fig. 2) On the stage itself, the white plastic chairs and drinks machine could have been found in any Portuguese café or bar and located the performances in a socially heterogeneous environment highly characteristic of Portuguese sociability. To one side, there was a miniature stage. On the one hand, this functioned dramatically to hide characters as they spied on others or for acts kept hidden from public view. The Duke hid here, for instance, as he listened to Claudio and Isabella (3.1) and Angelo and Mariana disappeared into it during the bed trick (4.1). On the other, the miniature stage functioned as a theatrical forum for a series of publicly-directed solo performances, most notably by the Duke on his return to Vienna (5.1). Such a miniature, fragmented, kitsch staging bought the nation quite literally down to size in contrast with the more self-aggrandising rhetoric of the nation espoused by political leaders.

The downsizing of the nation in Measure for Measure fed into the divided nation of Coriolanus. In these performances, the whole of the stage was occupied by a
series of large steps. (Fig. 3) For Portuguese audiences, this would have brought to mind a recent demonstration by striking police officers outside the Parliament building. At a certain point in the demonstration, the strikers stormed the steps all the way to the doors of the Parliament with the tacit approval of other police officers who had been guarding the entrance to the building. This highly mediatized event contrasted with an earlier occupation of the same steps by the young Indignados protesting at growing unemployment and precarious working conditions which was hardly covered by the media at all. Such a symbolically charged, divisive scenic metaphor keyed into contemporary political struggles over the occupation of public space and media visibility. Europe appeared in these performances only as absence, perhaps the most powerful representation of the failure of identification with Europe in a nation at war with itself. The cover image of performance programme keyed into this intranational conflict. An upturned skull with the names of the director and of Shakespeare printed on it sat above an anonymous mass of people with banners for food, wheat and Africa and who identified themselves as rats rather than people. Scattered among this crowd were the performers in Coriolanus, looking less like an artistic or political vanguard than a group of individuals as aimless and isolated as the rest of the people in the crowd.

Stereotypes of National Identity

Within these charged representations of the nation, the interactions between characters emphasized the embeddedness of national stereotypes in particular cultural environments whilst also distancing themselves from such stereotypes through processes of disidentification.

In Richard II, for instance, the transposition of disputes between late medieval nobles to the football pitch rendered struggles for power farcical. Notions of betrayal and treason were downplayed to the level of players exchanging shirts at the end of matches. This generic shift from history to farce was reinforced by the humorous bursts of music throughout the performances which heralded the crown being passed from character to character until the music stopped, rendering transfers of power both arbitrary and contingent. The slick professionalization of politics and football also seemed very distant from the amateurish, shabby nobles onstage. Richard (João Ricardo) was a slob with his socks around his ankles and Bolingbroke (Gonçalo Amorim), dressed entirely in black, lurked like a famished wolf waiting for his chance.
to seize the crown. Such uncharismatic performances, built around negative cultural associations with fatness and thinness, uncoupled the link between personal charisma and political power which invariably masks the economic basis of the promiscuity between football and politics in Portugal. At the end of the performances, with Richard safely dead, Bolingbroke’s calculated speech of remorse (5.6 38-52) was played as a cynical move for media attention by the new manager/political leader as he addressed the audience rather than the other characters onstage. Nevertheless, despite this visceral disidentification with ruling elites and its implicit parallel with a contemporary political right and left played as more or less indistinguishable, *Richard II* as a play gives little or no oppositional voice to those outside this elite. To counteract this, Cardoso introduced a group of unidentified, mute camp followers who packed and unpacked their suitcases as they followed the nobles from place to place. However, the fleeting presence of these rightless subjects, for whom a sense of national identity remained permanently out of reach, was less successful than the more consistent disidentification through ridicule with an uncharismatic ruling class. Indeed, in a play where claims to national sovereignty are fought over in several different localities within the nation, Cardoso’s parallel production *R2*, where non-professional actors from the marginalized, mainly black community of Cova da Moura played local municipal officials, may well have been more successful in recasting the politics of the play precisely because it seemed easier to envisage political change on a local rather than national level.

While *Richard II* staged disindentification with those who govern, *Measure for Measure* promoted an equally visceral disidentification with those they govern. The critic Jorge Louraço Figueira spoke of ‘a series of successful comic micro-performances that were not matched by an equal attention to longer, more complex speeches and major characters’. Yet this may have been precisely the focus the production intended and the translation by Fernando Villas-Boas reinforced this tendency towards micro rather than macro performances by making little distinction in terms of register between the different characters in the play. Louraço Figueira added that the performances were ‘saying something that everyone knows already, not something that disturbs us’. The sense of ‘something that everyone knows already’ resulted from the way in which the performances created direct parallels with contemporary political figures. As such, *Measure for Measure* went beyond the staging of particular national stereotypes to forge a series of political caricatures
engaged in a recognisable national farce. Like the Duke, the former Portuguese Prime
Minister José Socrates had fled Portugal to pursue a qualification in Philosophy at the
Sorbonne after his election defeat, leaving the newly-elected centre-right coalition to
deal with Portugal’s bail out from the European Union, the IMF and the European
Central Bank. The much-hated and much-mocked new Finance Minister, Vitor
Gaspar, fitted easily into the role of the harsh Angelo, counterpointing the more
lenient Duke/Socrates. When the Duke (Pedro Frias) returned at the end of the play,
recalling Socrates’ return from Paris to a successful career as a television
commentator,\textsuperscript{15} his mounting of the mini-stage amidst applause from his onstage
supporters was perhaps the defining moment of this use of parallels with national
political figures.\textsuperscript{16} The neat shift from sexual to financial austerity did not mean,
however, that sexual repression was absent from this staging of the nation. The poster
advertising the production emphasised the repression of female sexuality by using an
image of a naked woman with her genitals obscured by pixelated imagery and the
production itself began with a short sequence of very overt male sexuality as if to
preface the Duke’s claims of sexual anarchy. However, with hooded and stripped
prisoners later forced to stand on the white, plastic chairs in a form of sexualised
humiliation reminiscent of Abu Ghraib, the ambiance of easy sexual promiscuity gave
way to more oppressive social interactions with the assumption of control by Angelo
(Cláudio da Silva).\textsuperscript{17} Yet this emphasis on the state’s control of female and male
sexuality within a wider staging of Portugal under economic austerity led to a
somewhat confused representation of Isabella (Sara Carinhas). For one thing, there
was no obvious real-life parallel with a recognisable political figure within Portugal,
as with the main male characters. Additionally, her chastity represented a problem for
a production setting itself against sexual repression. Dressed somewhat bizarrely in a
school uniform for most of the play, her final solo dance with a wedding dress at the
opening performances in Guimarães rendered her presence in the play little more than
that of a sexual fetish.\textsuperscript{18} By the time the performances reached Porto, her moment
with the wedding dress had become more self-consciously subversive, as she threw
the dress angrily into the audience. However, while this was obviously intended to be
a disidentificatory moment with the gender politics of the marriage proposal, it was
rendered something of an empty gesture by its lack of contextualisation within
contemporary Portuguese politics and an unwillingness on the part of the director to
see that Isabella’s chastity, in a situation where women’s sexuality is controlled by a patriarchal state, might be signified as oppositional.

The central character in Measure for Measure was definitely Daniel Pinto’s lurid and vocal Lucio (Daniel Pinto) which drew its strength from one of the most well-known and ambivalent of Portuguese national stereotypes; the chico esperto. Translating literally as something like ‘wise guy’, the chico esperto can be located somewhere between the trickster and the hustler. José Gil argues that such a figure ‘traverses all classes, groups, genders and generations’ while the associated phenomenon of ‘chico esperismo’ is considered a central feature of Portuguese sociability. More importantly, while the Portuguese traditionally warn against being caught out by this permanent survivor and wheeler-dealer, there is also a certain degree of admiration for a figure who lives off his wits and manages to find a way out of even the most impossible scenarios. Within the context of these performances, where Mistress Overdone (Catarina Lacerda) added ‘austerity’ to her list of reasons for a shrinking clientele (1.2 67-69), Lucio stood in for all those who had survived or prospered from austerity, from the small businessman who fiddled his tax receipts to the wily banker and his speculative profits to the working-class woman who survived by working two jobs but only declaring one. The characteristic ambivalence about this figure was thus rendered highly topical by its political contextualisation and made of Lucio an interesting representation of a disidentified subject who was neither straightforwardly minoritarian nor uncomplicatedly transgressive. However, whether it was because of the censoriousness that accompanies admiration for the chico esperto, or, more probably, because of the too evident topicality of the production’s references, reaction to the performances was muted. In interview, Nuno Cardoso himself hinted that he might have ‘bitten off more than he could chew’. After having successfully staged disidentification from those who govern in Richard II, Cardoso’s Measure for Measure staged disidentification in terms of the inability or unwillingness of those who are governed to remove those in power, either because they are powerless to do so or because, as with Lucio, these leaders are in some way convenient for them. This is not, however, a message that goes down well with audiences, who tend to prefer the cleaner lines of villains and victims, oppressed and oppressor to these more nuanced representations of relations of power. What these performances staged, therefore, was a somewhat paradoxical disidentification with the disidentified subjects onstage as members of the audience failed to identify with
national stereotypes in which they did not want to see themselves reflected. Although not considered the most successful of Cardoso’s Shakespeare trilogy, *Measure for Measure* interested me precisely because of its keying into continuing ambivalences within national stereotypes: the charisma of irresponsible political leaders, the attractions of the amoral survivor and the energetic vigour of promiscuous sexuality. While events in Europe shadowed these representations of national stereotypes, they were not seen to shape them directly or to limit the possibility of their transformation.

*Coriolanus* scaled down *Measure for Measure’s* concern with those who are governed and returned to Cardoso’s earlier interest in the ruling class, although this time without the sense of farce that characterised *Richard II* and with a greater sense of political urgency. The performances warned against the rise to power of charismatic dictatorial leaders in periods of political chaos, a concern that predated by several years the rise to power of leaders like Donald Trump and Marine le Pen. The main role in the production was played by a handsome stage and television star (Albano Jerónimo) which focused this ambivalent attraction to strong leaders. Nevertheless, the consequences of the decision to hand over power to a militarised state were also clear from the beginning. At the start of the performances, the First Citizen was beaten, stripped and abandoned at the front of the stage after leading the protest for food. Muscular male figures dressed uniformly in combat fatigues and heavy boots stormed up and down the steps with seeming impunity while politicians in expensive suits gained political capital from the victories of the military while keeping them at a distance from political power. Cardoso spoke in interview of his concern that the performances were taking place ‘at the moment when we have become what we once criticized’ with a seeming breakdown between those who govern and those who are governed leading to an increased militarisation of public space and a collapsing of the boundaries between foreign intervention and domestic security. In the Portuguese context, where democracy remains a relatively recent conquest, such moves were seen as removing many of the democratic gains of the 1974 Revolution in an atmosphere that approximated what Boaventura de Sousa Santos has referred to as ‘social fascism’. For Sousa Santos, this phenomenon is located ‘in the emergence of social relations that generate inequalities between social groups which are so marked that democratic safeguards are unable to defend citizens or oppressed groups’, forcing large numbers to live under ‘micro-dictatorships’ within ostensibly democratic regimes. Such social fascism inflected these performances of
Coriolanus through the conflicts over public space, which defeated through violence the Citizens’ protest and marginalised another fleeting disidentified presence. While Volumnia consistently voices the values of family, class and nation to support her son’s military exploits. Virgilia, while never contradicting these beliefs, nevertheless desires above all the safety of her husband and son. In her first appearance in these performances (2.1), the actress playing Virgília (Catarina Lacerda) moved uneasily within a social setting made up primarily of military men and politicians unable to find a space from which to speak these conventionally female concerns. Her lack of space and voice in the militarised space of Rome, like the Citizens’ protest over food, figured her disidentification with what Muñoz has referred to as ‘a system of national signs that do not constitute one’s citizenship but instead one’s alienation, displacement and exile’. This suggestion of a female anti-war position gave way quickly, however, to her appearance as a trophy wife on the arm of her husband as she failed to influence him away from the military and nationalistic rhetoric espoused by Volumnia. In a post-performance discussion, Cardoso acknowledged that the actress had wanted to make more of the minor role of Virgilia on the basis of this initial appearance. The fact that this did not happen points to Cardoso’s tendency to cast women as conservative figures rather than explore the complexity of their (dis)identifications with the national.

The vicious cycle of failure
Cardoso’s bitter Coriolanus offered little sense of an alternative to the vicious cycle of failure binding those who govern and those who are governed which lay at the heart of his exploration of Portuguese national identity. In this sense, the mobilisation of national stereotypes in the trilogy keyed into the immediate lived experience of being Portuguese in the new millennium, even if the representation of these stereotypes tended to obfuscate the social and political contingency of such constructs and the possibility of their transformation. Similarly, the performances constructed Europe in terms of its intermittent presence rather than as increasingly intrinsic to notions of what it means to be Portuguese at the present moment. As such, the strategies of disidentification in these performances called attention to the limitations of national stereotypes by pointing to the exclusions and ambivalences at the heart of the ‘phantasm of normative citizenship’ without however suggesting alternatives to them either on a national or international level. Indeed, one of the problems of
disidentification as a deconstructive strategy is that the line between identification and
disidentification is never entirely clear and that its ironic sense of belonging and not
belonging often leaves such stereotypes more or less intact.

Having said this, Cardoso’s three Shakespeare’s represented a clear
disidentification with Shakespearean myth-making at national theatres, performed by
actresses and actors as minoritarian, though rarely muted, national subjects. The
vaguely Russian iconography of the masses on the front of the Coriolanus programme
and the banner for Africa suggested the need for further artistic and political
transformation based on the ‘new relationships between capitalism, colonialism,
patriarchy and democracy’, although the lack of diversity among this group in terms
of gender, race and nation also raised the question of who might carry out such
change and on behalf of whom.

1 All quotations taken from Maria Tadeo and Corina Ruhe ‘Eurogroup Head
Pressed to Quit after “Sexist, Racist” Remarks about “Women and Drink”’,
Independent, 23 March 2017. Available at:
http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/eurogroup-head-jeroen-
dijsselbloem-sexist-racist-quit-women-drink-eu-frankfurt-a7645111.html (accessed 5
May 2017).
2 Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Portugal: Ensaio Contra a Autoflagelação, (Coimbra,
Almedina, 2012), 141. Sousa Santos has suggested elsewhere that Portugal’s semi-
peripheral status locates it between Caliban and Prospero. See Boaventura de Sousa
Santos, ‘Between Prospero and Caliban: Colonialism, Post-colonialism and Inter-
3 Sousa Santos, ‘Portugal’…,144.
4 In an interview given around the time of Richard II, Cardoso noted ‘Nowadays,
the ways in which people exercise power and the ways in which those over whom
power is exercised react to it is a question about which, it seems to me, we don’t
reflect enough in democracy’. Unattributed article entitled ‘I Enjoy Taking Risks and
I Take Risks Constantly’ in the National Theatre’s Jornal do Teatro, 11 May 2007, 4.
On this production, see also Francesca Rayner, ‘History Recycled: Contemporary
Performances of Shakespeare’s Richard II at Portuguese National Theatres’,
5 Judith Butler, Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”, (London &
6 José Esteban Munoz, Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of
Politics, (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 31.
7 Esteban Munoz himself positions live performance as a privileged site for exploring
questions of disidentification. In Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer
Futurity (New York & London: New York University Press, 2009), he argues that
because disidentification ‘focuses on the way in which dominant signs and symbols, often ones that are toxic to minoritarian subjects, [it] can be reimagined through an engaged and animated mode of performance or spectatorship’ (171).

8 José Gil, Portugal Hoje: O Medo de Existir, (Lisboa, Relógio d’Água, 2004), 62.
9 It is often said that Portuguese identity is based around the three F’s: Football, Fátima and Fado.

11 Both Meneneus (1.1.145) and Coriolanus (1.1.233) refer to the citizens as “rats” in the early part of the play. William Shakespeare, Coriolanus, ed. Lee Bliss, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010). In the contemporary context, the notion of rats would have been reminiscent of the PIGS (Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain) acronym which expressed the anger and frustration of the Southern European countries most affected by austerity programmes.

12 Bolingbroke claims that ‘Lords, I protest my soul is full of woe/That blood should sprinkle me to make me grow./Come mourn with me for what I do lament,/And put on sullen black incontinent.’ (5.6.45-48) He does not, however, wish the deed undone. William Shakespeare, King Richard II, ed. Andrew Gurr, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003).

13 The only popular presence with a speaking role in the play are the Head Gardener and his two men who opine that ‘Oh, what pity is it/That he [Richard] had not so trimmed and dressed his land/As we this garden! (3.4.55-57)’ yet such comments tend to reinforce the political status quo with the ruler at the head of a well cared for nation. There are, however, references throughout the play to Richard having lost the love of the people. William Shakespeare, King Richard II.


15 This success was short-lived however, as Socrates was later arrested and imprisoned on charges of corruption.

16 These references to contemporary figures were first highlighted by Miguel Ramalhete Gomes in a 2013 European Shakespeare Research Association seminar paper ‘Measuring Austerity’ in Montpellier and form part of his forthcoming book project.

17 This sense of the prison as a darker place of humiliation and torture also owed its success to Cardoso’s theatrical work in Portuguese prisons.

18 The fact that the performances opened in Guimarães before transferring to the national theatres in Lisbon and Porto suggests that such performances act as a way of tightening up performances before they reach the national theatres.

19 José Gil, Em Busca da Identidade: O Desnorte, (Lisboa, Relógio d’Água, 2009), 30. Gil argues that ‘[t]he chico-esperto is not a liar, a major criminal or a corrupt individual. On the contrary, s/he takes advantage of a space unoccupied by the law to commit an act which is almost legal, even when this implies minor transgressions of legal norms’ (32), my emphasis. He also suggests that this figure was particularly prevalent during the time Socrates was in power.

20 William Shakespeare, Measure for Measure.
This comment was made during an interview for the production programme with the author of this article but the offhand comment did not make its way into the eventual interview published in the performance programme.


Sousa Santos, ‘Portugal’…,32.

In this scene, as elsewhere, Virgilia hardly speaks at all. The translator of the play, Fernando Villas-Boas, refers in his introduction to Virgilia’s ‘silent intensity’ and notes in parentheses that this silence was ‘(somewhat hidden in the more marked stage performance)’. Fernando Villas-Boas, Coriolano, (Lisboa, Bicho do Mato, 2014) 11.

Esteban Munõz, ‘Disidentifications’….80.
Figure 1. The nobles in Richard II. Photograph by Margarida Dias. Courtesy of the Teatro Nacional São João.

705x470mm (72 x 72 DPI)
Figure 2. The inhabitants of Vienna. Photograph by Victor Hugo Pontes. Courtesy of the Teatro Nacional São João.

338x226mm (72 x 72 DPI)
Figure 3. The soldiers in Coriolanus. Photograph by Victor Hugo Pontes. Courtesy of the Teatro Nacional São João.

1676x1117mm (72 x 72 DPI)