

CYBERPOLITICS, ETHICAL FINANCES AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

Ângela Lacerda Nobre¹, Rogério Correia Duarte² and Marc Jacquinet³

¹ ESCE-IPS, Campus do IPS, Estefanilha, 2914-503 Setúbal, Portugal, angela.nobre@esce.ips.pt

² ESTSetubal-IPS, Campus do IPS, Estefanilha, 2914-503 Setúbal, Portugal, rogerio.duarte@estsetubal.ips.pt

³ Universidade Aberta, Rua da Escola Politécnica, 141, 1269-001 Lisboa, Portugal, marc.jacquinet@uab.pt

1. Introduction

The context of the knowledge economy presents new challenges to all levels of society. Three specific ecosystems interact closely, thus forming a whole. This whole forms a differentiated unity. At the top of this three levels' whole, there is politics, the political sphere of decision-making and of policy design and implementation. Within the context of a post-industrial setting this top sphere is strongly influenced by the presence on the internet, directly online, and through the use of social media for political purposes. This sphere is cyberpolitics. The next level is composed of the financial ecosystem. Within this sphere it is important to stress the importance of the growth of the ethical and alternative banking initiatives. These financial institutions are present across the European region. The third level is the digital system that is present in active citizenships initiatives. The argument of the present work is that societies evolve through learning processes and that such learning may be promoted through the use of charismatic and of paradigmatic examples. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to offer an illustration of how global change projects, such as the transition network, enable local and regional development to occur.

2. Methodology

The present work uses multi-grounded theory methodology, which enables the integration of both theory and practice through evidence based research, including case studies and social innovation global projects. Philosophical inquiry is present as a questioning framework, highlighting central issues of the ethical discussion. The links between the three levels of analysis – public policy, financial ecosystem and the digital world - are both theoretical and practical. In other words, conceptual frameworks illustrate the articulations and connectedness between such spheres of social behaviour. Issues related to empowerment and to the promotion of resilience in individuals and in communities are kernel to the promotion of more inclusive and just societies.

3. Results and discussion

A case study is used in order to illustrate the options available in terms of An Ethical Finance Cooperative has been formed in Portugal, in November 2016, which addresses the needs related to financial literacy, microcredit and the heavy indebted of both private households and enterprises. Such case study represents an example of an initiative that is not yet an ethical bank but that works towards creating the necessary conditions for the creation of such a bank. Several initiatives are considered, including psychodrama and playback theatre; arts-based research and arts-based promotion of social inclusion; arts-based education and sports for social inclusion; and initiatives for ecological and environmental sustainable growth. Social inclusion is indeed a multifactor phenomena, imposing new challenges for applied research.

4. References

- Castells, M. 2011. *The rise of the network society: The information age: Economy, society, and culture*. Vol. 1. John Wiley & Sons.
- Dader, J. L. 2009. "Cyberpolitics in political party websites: experiences in the 2008 Spanish presidential elections within the context of transnational tendencies." *Revista de Sociologia e Política* 17.34: 45-62.
- Goldkuhl, G. and Cronholm, S. 2010. "Adding theoretical grounding to grounded theory: Toward multi-grounded theory." *International journal of qualitative methods* 9.2: 187-205.
- Pedreira, J. G. 2013. *Resgate das Famílias e Empresas do Sobreendividamento Crónico*. Sopa de Letras.