

Collective Memories of Portuguese Colonial Action in Africa: Representations of the Colonial Past among Mozambicans and Portuguese Youths

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Focus:

Collective Memories of Colonial Violence

Guest Editors:

Chiara Volpato and
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Editorial (p. 3)

Introduction: Collective Memories of Colonial Violence

Chiara Volpato / Laurent Licata (pp. 4 – 10)

Learning About Our Shameful Past: A Socio-Psychological Analysis of Present-Day

Historical Narratives of Italian Colonial Wars Giovanna Leone / Tiziana Mastrovito (pp. 11 – 27)

- **Collective Memories of Portuguese Colonial Action in Africa: Representations of the Colonial Past among Mozambicans and Portuguese Youths** Rosa Cabecinhas / João Feijó (pp. 28 – 44)

Holocaust or Benevolent Paternalism? Intergenerational Comparisons on Collective Memories and Emotions about Belgium's Colonial Past Laurent Licata / Olivier Klein (pp. 45 – 57)

The Shadow of the Italian Colonial Experience: The Impact of Collective Emotions on Intentions to Help the Victims' Descendants Silvia Mari / Luca Andrighetto / Alessandro Gabbiadini / Federica Durante / Chiara Volpato (pp. 58 – 74)

Atoning for Colonial Injustices: Group-Based Shame and Guilt Motivate Support for Reparation Jesse A. Allpress / Fiona Kate Barlow / Rupert Brown / Winnifred R. Louis (pp. 75 – 88)

Dealing with Past Colonial Conflicts: How Perceived Characteristics of the Victimized Outgroup Can Influence the Experience of Group-Based Guilt Ana Mateus Figueiredo / Bertjan Doosje / Joaquim Pires Valentim / Sven Zebel (pp. 89 – 105)

The Dark Duo of Post-Colonial Ideology: A Model of Symbolic Exclusion and Historical Negation Chris G. Sibley (pp. 106 – 123)

Indigenous Suicide and Colonization: The Legacy of Violence and the Necessity of Self-Determination Keri Lawson-Te Aho / James H. Liu (pp. 124 – 133)

Open Section

Conflicts between Afar Pastoralists and their Neighbors: Triggers and Motivations Bekele Hundie (pp. 134 – 148)

Declining Fertility in Eritrea Since the Mid-1990s: A Demographic Response to Military Conflict Gebremariam Woldemicael (pp. 149 – 168)

Collective Memories of Portuguese Colonial Action in Africa: Representations of the Colonial Past among Mozambicans and Portuguese Youths

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Social representations of the colonization and decolonization processes among young people from a former European colonial power (Portugal) and from an African ex-colony (Mozambique) were investigated through surveys using open- and closed-ended questions about national history, focusing on the identity functions of collective memories. Hegemonic and contested representations were found of the most prominent events related to Portuguese colonization of Mozambique, arousing a range of collective emotions. A central place is occupied by memories of the Colonial War, which ended with the Carnation Revolution in Portugal and the subsequent independence of the Portuguese African colonies. Overall, the depiction of colonialism was more negative for Mozambican than for Portuguese participants. The violent effects of colonial action were very salient in Mozambican memories, which stressed the most oppressive aspects of the colonial period, associated with slave trade and brutal repression. On the Portuguese side, the idealization of the voyages of discovery persisted, obscuring the most violent effects of colonial expansion. However, collective memories of colonization of former colonizer and former colonized do not simply stand opposed. Both Mozambican and Portuguese participants reported ambivalent feelings towards the colonization process.

The last colonial empire collapsed thirty-five years ago. The Portuguese was the most enduring European empire and the last one to fall. The empire only finished in 1975, a time usually considered as “postcolonial.” After the end of World War II, self-determination movements spread all over Asia and Africa. Attempting to stop the tide, the dictatorial regime of António de Oliveira Salazar—the New State (1926–74)—renewed its efforts to ensure the continuity of Portugal’s African empire.¹ The idea of empire was firmly implanted in national consciousness and served as a main source of national pride. Meanwhile, in Portuguese Africa, resistance against colonial rule intensified from the late 1950s on, culminating in an armed liberation struggle (1961–74), which started in Angola and spread to Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, leading to the collapse of colonial

rule and, in a related process, to the end of dictatorship in Portugal (Lloyd-Jones and Pinto 2003).

The Revolution of April 25, 1974, which became known as the Carnation Revolution, brought about deep changes in both internal and external Portuguese politics. Measures considered to be priorities were symbolically conveyed by the “3Ds” slogan “Decolonization, Democracy, Development.” The end of the Colonial War became an imperative, and more and more frequently crowds cried out on the streets “no more soldiers to the colonies” (Vieira 2000, 171). Negotiations started at once for recognition of the autonomy of the various territories, and the independence of all African former colonies was recognized between by 1975.

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¹ Salazar ruled until 1968, the New State continued for another six years ruled by his successor, Marcelo Caetano.

About two decades after the decolonization process, the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa, CPLP) was established, a highly heterogeneous and dispersed geo-linguist community of eight “Lusophone” countries. According to Luís António Santos (2003), this community institutionally formalized a post-imperial relationship between Portugal and its former colonies. One of the difficulties faced by Portugal in attempting to establish this community was the need to avoid the charge that the CPLP was designed to support a “neo-colonialist” agenda in Africa.

In fact, nowadays in Portugal, Lusophone rhetoric frequently assumes the form of “imperial nostalgia” (Martins 2006, 80), giving rise to conflicts and misunderstanding, both in international affairs and in interpersonal relations. Despite the Lusophone rhetoric, people of African origin are still discriminated against and Portuguese people hold racial stereotypes that reveal the persistence of old dichotomies and paternalistic prejudices (Cabecinhas 2007; Vala, Brito, and Lopes 1999). These stereotypes are deeply rooted in social memory, with profound impacts on the everyday life of African immigrants in Portugal.

According to the Constitutive Declaration of the CPLP (July 17, 1996),² the relationship among its members is one of “cooperation” and “solidarity,” aiming to preserve “a historical link and a shared patrimony resulting from centuries of common experiences.” But what images do the young people of today have of this “shared past” and “heritage”? Does this “shared past” have the same meaning for the former Portuguese colonizers and for their former colonial subjects? How are the past conflicts between colonies and colonizer remembered today by people who did not directly experience colonial rule? Are these conflicts silenced or reaffirmed?

These questions were the starting point for a program of research on collective memories of colonization in Portuguese-speaking countries. This paper reports and discusses the results of an exploratory study conducted in Portugal and Mozambique. All participants in this research

were university students born after the end of Portuguese colonial empire, who were invited to freely remember their national history. Before reporting the method and main results of the empirical research, we will take a brief look at the historical and theoretical background.

1.1. Colonial and “Postcolonial” Times

According to Ravlo, Gleditsch, and Dorussen (2003, 525), “Colonialism—defined as the conquest and control of land and goods—is not a European invention but an old and pervasive feature of human history.” In different phases of human history, huge empires have subjugated a vast number of peoples and all kinds of outgroups. However, in historical accounts of colonialism there is a consensus that European countries were the most active colonial actors of the past few centuries, engaged in the conquest, control, and exploitation of most of the globe.

Ravlo, Gleditsch, and Dorussen (2003, 526–28) divide European colonization into three phases: the colonial period; the imperialist period; and the postcolonial period.

The early colonial period, up to the mid-eighteenth century, was based mainly on private commercial interests in overseas possessions. At this time, colonialism meant, above all, the establishment of trading posts in support of trade monopolies. Some colonies in the Americas gained independence at the end of this period: namely, the United States, Mexico, and Brazil. Subsequently, the European countries looked at their possessions in Africa as a way to ensure access to raw materials and markets. After Brazil gained independence, the Portuguese looked at Africa with the dream of forming a New Brazil (Alexandre 1999).

In contrast with early colonialism, imperialist colonization (1870–1945) was an active policy aiming to ensure a global role for European nations. Propelled by the impetus of the industrialization process, almost all European states engaged in competition for new territories and divided among themselves almost the entire land surface of the globe (Ravlo, Gleditsch, and Dorussen 2003, 526).

² <http://www.cplp.org>.

The “postcolonial period” started after World War II, when liberation movements gained ground. By the 1960s, almost all the African colonies had gained independence and the Portuguese was the only European empire that had not collapsed, probably due to the “overwhelming effect of the New State’s ideological apparatus on the formation of mentalities” (Alexandre 1999, 143), both within Portugal and in its colonies. One of the priorities of the resistance movements was to rewrite history to overcome the Eurocentric perspective and decolonize people’s minds.

Under the New State regime, the political ideology and national historiography, steeped in strongly nationalistic and Eurocentric assumptions, praised Portugal’s civilizing role—spreading the Christian faith and morality, civilizing “savage” peoples, and bringing government and infrastructure to the overseas territories (Catroga 1996; Torgal 1996). The regime’s propaganda aimed to legitimize the colonial rule, stressing the country’s natural colonial vocation and the indigenous people’s incapacity to develop on their own. A supposed absence of racism in the Portuguese overseas provinces and the existence there of multiracial societies perfectly integrated into the national whole—the pluri-continental and multiracial Portugal—were principles put forward by the state’s propaganda (Cabecinhas and Cunha 2003; Corkill and Almeida 2009). New State propaganda promoted this supposedly “pluri-continental and multiracial Portugal,” which was a core slogan of the dictatorship, by holding up the “voyages of discovery” (*Descobrimientos*) as the “golden age” of Portuguese history and the empire as a core symbol of national identity. Imperialistic narratives were reworked to emphasize Portugal as a major power with a colonial empire spread across the globe, popularizing the saying “from the Minho to Timor.” In schoolbooks, Portugal’s colonial possessions were superimposed on maps of Europe from the Mediterranean to Russia to underline that Portugal was not “a small country.” Colonial exhibitions were held to demonstrate the pivotal role played by Portugal in the world arena, to promote the advantages of empire for both the colonizers and the colonized, and to contribute to the reinforcement of a national mythology according to which the Portuguese possessed unique civilizing qualities that made them “good colonizers” (Corkill and Almeida 2009, 397).

According to the Luso-tropicalism theory (Freyre 1933), the Portuguese were more empathic and open to racial mixing than other European colonizers. Portuguese colonization was considered kinder and less conflict-ridden than Spanish or English colonization. Comparing with other Europeans, Freyre stated that the Portuguese “would be the ‘non-conflictual’ type—not with absolute ideas, nor inflexible prejudices” (translated from 1933, 191). This theory was selectively appropriated by Salazar’s dictatorial regime for legitimizing Portuguese colonialism (Vala, Lopes, and Lima 2008). However, in Mozambique, as in Portugal’s other African colonies, the Native Statute that ruled the rights of native people until 1961 was written in a way that allowed situations very close to slavery in the big tea and cotton plantations (Barradas 1991).

After the Carnation Revolution, the decolonization process provoked a huge migration movement from the former African colonies to Portugal, both of Portuguese colonials and of African colonized people. This traumatic return to the “former motherland” (Khan 2009) became a very sensitive issue, since the African colonized people, formally Portuguese, were now treated as foreign invaders, and the Portuguese colonials (*retornados*) also experienced strong hostility from the metropolitan Portuguese, who saw them as a threat to scarce jobs and a moral danger, as they brought new values and lifestyles. For about twenty-five years there was a “period of mourning,” where speaking about the Colonial War and the decolonization process was taboo. Only recently have people started to speak more easily about these issues, and the revival of interest in the “old times in Africa” has translated into bestseller publications (novels, photo books of a lost Africa) and even soap operas (e.g. *Jewel of Africa*).

Consolidation of the democratic regime in Portugal and membership in the European Union have brought about huge socio-economic changes. However, the period of voyages of discovery is still presented as the “golden age” in state discourses and schoolbooks, where Portuguese kings and navigators appear as heroes. They are presented as active agents, as protagonists, whereas native people are portrayed as passive (Soares and Jesuíno 2004).

In Mozambique, on the other hand, new interpretations of history have been produced since independence, in order to

overcome the Eurocentric colonial paradigm. The new Mozambican historiography tends to highlight the social conflicts between the colonizers and the colonized, as well as political and economic aspects of colonial action, including the strategies adopted by the New State to ensure economic profitability in Mozambique and favor the colonizers' interests. These new approaches denounce the exploitation of the colonies as a result of asymmetrical social and power relations. The poor social and living conditions of the Mozambican population and various forms of resistance to the colonial presence have become the center of this new discursive strategy. The new approaches assume a nationalist, anti-colonial, and militant character (Feijó 2009). From the 1990s, new visions of history were developed with a new epistemological perspective, analyzing the influence of political and populist ideals in the Mozambican historiography (Magode 1996; Serra 1997).

The content of Mozambique's history schoolbooks emphasizes the role played by many Mozambicans in the long resistance to a foreign invader. Adília Ribeiro's study of official history textbooks provides an analysis of the ideological foundations underlying the respective versions of the country's history (1997). Pre-colonial African kings and emperors, the nationalist Liberation Front of Mozambique, and Mozambican heroes of the struggle against colonial rule are exalted not only in history books, but also in political speeches, in the mass media, in many monuments, and in urban toponymy.

About three decades after Mozambican independence, the political landscape has undergone significant changes. As the apartheid regimes in neighboring countries were dismantled, Mozambique experienced a democratic opening and transition to a multiparty system. However, liberalization of the economy and increased foreign investment did not prevent the persistence or worsening of phenomena such as corruption, regional disparities, and exclusion, subverting the political and social project conceived at the time of independence. The country is currently pursuing

the democratization of education, which has been translated, for example, into a proliferation of public and private universities.

1.2. Conflicting Versions of Colonial History

Before reporting young people's collective memories of colonization in Portugal and Mozambique it seems appropriate to look at the way national history is portrayed in government websites of the two countries. This quick snapshot gives an insight into how colonial history has been taught in formal education in these two countries, since its content is in accordance with the one portrayed in the history schoolbooks (Ribeiro 1997; Soares and Jesuíno 2004).³

On the Mozambican government website, the history section is divided into four parts: the pre-colonial period, colonial penetration, the struggle for independence, and postcolonial economy.⁴ In this account, little information is given about the history before the Portuguese arrived. There is only one paragraph dedicated to the "pre-colonial period," with short references to the ways of life of the "primitive people of Mozambique" and to the main African migration movements in the region.

In contrast, there is great emphasis on the economic exploitation of natural resources and slave trafficking during colonial penetration. The account explains that by the end of the fifteenth century there was "Portuguese market penetration" on the coast. Only later was there "a process of military conquest," initially aiming to control gold mining, and later the commercialization of ivory and slaves, "engaging in the slave trade even after its official abolition." At the Berlin Conference of 1884, "Portugal was forced to effectively occupy the territory of Mozambique. Given its military and financial incapacity, Portugal granted the sovereignty of vast territories to leasing companies" in the north of the country, dedicated mainly to the plantation economy, while the south remained under direct rule of the colonial state, developing a service economy, which "explains the current asymmetry between the north and south of the country."

³ Not all school history books reproduce the official version, but this provides an overview of the predominant approach.

⁴ <http://www.portaldogoverno.gov.mz/Mozambique/resHistorico>.

The account also explains that there was always resistance against Portuguese occupation and that the so-called pacification of Mozambique was not achieved until the twentieth century. Special emphasis is given to the liberation struggle and the declaration of independence: “Oppression for centuries under the Portuguese colonial regime would force the people of Mozambique to take up arms and fight for independence.” FRELIMO (the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) was founded in 1962 and began the armed struggle for national liberation on September 25, 1964, in the north of the country. Eduardo Mondlane, the first President of FRELIMO, was murdered in 1969. Samora Machel succeeded him and proclaimed the country’s independence on June 25, 1975.

After independence, the country faced “an armed conflict led by RENAMO (Mozambique National Resistance). This conflict claimed many lives and destroyed much economic infrastructure.” The conflict ended in 1992 with the signing of the General Peace Agreement, and in 1994 the country held its first multiparty elections, won by FRELIMO (which has remained the ruling party to this day).

In the post-colonial period, the account explains, the independent Mozambique inherited a colonial economic structure characterized by an asymmetry between north and south—and especially between Maputo (and Beira) and the rest of the country—characterized by the absence of economic integration and extreme oppression of labor in the north. The unfavorable regional and international situations, natural disasters, and an internal military conflict lasting sixteen years blocked FRELIMO’s planned strategy for developing the country. This account of history ends by explaining that many Mozambicans still live below the poverty line despite the remarkable economic growth that the country has recorded. The fight against absolute poverty is a major priority. In fact, Mozambique was until recently one of the poorest countries in Africa, and even if the end of the

civil war has allowed strong economic growth, the country still faces a huge rate of extreme poverty and occupies a very low position in the Human Development Index.⁵

On the official Portuguese government website, the period of Portuguese expansion is highlighted, since despite the difficulties resulting from the small size of the country, it created an empire that “lasted from 1415 to 1975.”⁶ The Portuguese routes in the Atlantic and Indian oceans are mentioned, with an emphasis on several “voyages of discovery.”⁷ Portuguese contributions to European scientific development and economic and political relationships with “African people” are stressed. The territorial occupation of the African land is described as unavoidable, due to pressure from more powerful European countries: “Despite having vast territories in Africa, Portugal had no means to settle and to defend its military presence in a context in which the great powers (which Portugal was not) were engaged in a policy of effective occupation of this continent.” Portugal had “no vision of territorial occupation (which was imposed by the circumstances in Africa), but the establishment of trading posts. However, it was *forced, in order to not lose the only thing that gave it world status*, to engage in the colonization of the territories of Angola and Mozambique through military occupation” (emphasis added). However, “the dream of a new Brazil” in Africa (from coast to coast, linking Angola and Mozambique) “was prevented by British imperial ambitions.”

During the New State dictatorship, Portugal strove to preserve its colonial heritage against the decolonizing trend of the times, fighting a long war on three fronts. The end of the longest dictatorship in the history of Western Europe arrived on April 25, 1974. After the decolonization process, “Portugal refocused its foreign policy and joined the European Union in 1986. However, as an important component of its national strategy, Portugal did not abandon the historical connection to the Portuguese speaking countries.”

⁵ According to the 2009 Human Development Report, Mozambique occupies 172d position in the ranking (HDI=0.402), while Portugal appears at 34th position (HDI=0.909). <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009>.

⁶ <http://www.portugal.gov.pt>.

⁷ The expression “discovery” is obviously ethnocentric: “as explorers, the Portuguese (the Europeans) were also discovered” (translated from Catroga 1996, 618). Moreover, most of the so-called discoveries—like the ocean route to India

found by Vasco da Gama—are discoveries only from the Western perspective, (Meneses 2008).

Thus, both Mozambican and Portuguese official websites emphasize the colonization period and mention the Colonial War (even if this particular expression is not used). The Portuguese account emphasizes “voyages of discovery” while the Mozambican one foregrounds the active struggle against foreign occupation and the heavy “heritage” of the colonial past that explains the problems the country faces today.

1.3. Identity Functions of Collective Memory

The (re)making of national history is always a comparative process, since the history of every nation includes relationships with others. Each nation’s interpretation of the past determines its positioning in the present and its strategies for the future that define relationships among and within nations in a dynamic process that may balance between stability and change, the definition of new borders or their abolishment.

As Halbwachs points out, memory is not an individual phenomenon but a social one (1950 [1997]). People can only remember things that are mediated by communication in their respective social groups and that they can accommodate in their existing social frames of reference.

There is a constant interplay between social identity and the social representations of history. As Liu and Hilton point out: “History provides us with narratives that tell us who we are, where we came from and where we should be going. It defines a trajectory which helps construct the essence of a group’s identity, how it relates to other groups, and ascertains what its options are for facing present challenges” (2005, 537).

According to Liu and László (2007), the memories that have proven to be important to the group are encoded into stories and preserved as public narratives, making it possible for new members to learn group history. People (re)create their group’s historical past according to the group’s actual needs and using social representation processes (Moscovici 1988). Social representations of history are organized through narrative templates (László 2003; Liu and László 2007). Their schematic nature is produced by repeated use of standard narrative forms (re)produced by instances such as schoolbooks, commemorations, monuments, and mass media.

Cross-cultural studies about social representations of world history show that people tend to remember mostly wars and political conflicts (Liu et al. 2005, 2009). As Liu and László point out there seem to be two reasons for the importance of conflict in social representations: conflict seems to be a basic template for human story-telling and it generates extreme emotions (2007). The social sharing of emotions promotes a sense of community and may play a crucial role in the processes of formation and transformation of social representations of history (Rimé 2005).

According to Liu and László, fights and wars are remembered more easily because they provide elements for a good narrative: they have protagonists (heroes) and antagonists (villains), a beginning (causal fact), action (exciting plot), and an ending, with relevance for the group’s definition (2007). Moreover, conflicts and war play a central role in nation building, frequently being considered the foundational events in a nation’s history. As pointed out by Charles Tilly: “War made the state, and the state made war” (1975). These processes are reflected in the content of social representations about history which (re)produce state-based narratives of history (Paez and Liu in press).

Licata, Klein, and Gély consider that collective memory fulfils four important identity functions (2007): contributing to the definition of group identity and to achieving positive distinctiveness (by processes of selective remembering and oblivion); providing justifications for a group’s actions (past, present, and future); and enabling collective mobilization by challenging the legitimacy and stability of the existing social order. In line with this perspective, we formulate the following hypotheses:

- a) Hypothesis 1 – Events related to the formation of a person’s nation-state and the establishment of its borders will be the most remembered and the most positively evaluated by both Portuguese and Mozambican participants.
- b) Hypothesis 2 – Each group will enhance their active role during the colonization period: Portuguese participants will focus on voyages of discovery while Mozambicans will focus on the successful fight for independence.

- c) Hypothesis 3 – The violent side of colonization will be more present in Mozambicans' responses; they will remember more negative events concerning the colonization period (slavery, massacres, economic exploitation) than Portuguese participants.
- d) Hypothesis 4 – The Colonial War will be more remembered and more positively evaluated by Mozambican participants than by Portuguese participants.

2. Method

Empirical research was conducted in Mozambique and Portugal. In each country, a questionnaire about world history and national history was administered to young people and their representations of colonial issues were analyzed. National groups are always very heterogeneous, comprising a wide diversity of individuals with different backgrounds, experiences, and social positioning. In this paper, we analyze solely representations of university students. The objective is not to generalize the results to the whole population, but rather to analyze the perceptions of these particular young people.

2.1. Procedure

Data were gathered using the same procedure in both countries for the purposes of comparative analysis. In Portugal, data were collected at the University of Minho in Braga, while in Mozambique data were collected at four universities in the capital city, Maputo: Universidade Pedagógica, Universidade Politécnica, Instituto Superior de Ciências e Tecnologias de Moçambique, and Escola Superior de Economia e Gestão.

The survey was conducted in university classrooms. Students were invited to participate in an international study on history. The cover page explained to participants that what mattered was their personal opinions about history, rather than their knowledge. After all participants completed the task, there was a debriefing explaining the aim of the study. Data from the survey was complemented by a series of face-to-face interviews in both countries.

2.2. Participants

A total of 298 university students participated in this study: 180 Mozambicans (99 women and 81 men; average age 26 years) and 118 Portuguese (70 women and 48 men; average age 21 years). None of the Portuguese participants reported having visited Mozambique (or other African countries); two Mozambican participants had visited Portugal.

All Portuguese participants reported Portuguese as their mother language. A broad diversity of mother languages appears when it comes to Mozambican participants: Portuguese (31.11 percent), Chagana (23.33 percent), Ronga (10.56 percent), Gitonga (8.33 percent), Chope (4.44 percent), Macua (4.44 percent), Xitsua (3.88 percent), Chuabo (2.78 percent), Ndau (2.78 percent), Nyunawe (1.67 percent), Sena (1.67 percent), and others (6.05 percent). This great diversity of languages mirrors the linguistic scene in Mozambique, a country with one official language—Portuguese—and many national and regional languages.

Concerning the other languages spoken, Portuguese participants reported speaking one or two other European languages, mainly English and French. Mozambican participants reported speaking on average three or four further languages, including native languages and European ones. So there is a strong asymmetry in the samples: while the Portuguese had no contact with African culture and languages, the Mozambicans were strongly influenced by European culture: they all spoke Portuguese (about one third as their mother tongue) and two thirds spoke other European languages (mainly English and French).

It is also important to mention that there is a huge predominance of the populations of the south in the Mozambican sample, particularly the Maronga people, known in Maputo as the intellectual elite.⁸ This group had more contact with the Portuguese during the colonial period and therefore was more familiarized with Portuguese culture. There was also a predominance of Machangane (speakers of Changané, mainly originating from Gaza and the northern part

⁸ The Maronga group (who speak Ronga) lives especially in the area between Maputo City, Matola, and Marracuene. It is important to note

that the postwar migration movements transformed Maputo into an intercultural city where people from all the Mozambican provinces live.

of Maputo province), which was the ethnic group of great FRELIMO leaders such as Mondlane, Machel, and Chissano.

2.3 Survey Questions

The survey had the same structure in both countries, with only minor language and content adjustments, according to the pre-test conducted in each of these countries. The first part of the survey comprised open questions on world history, using an adaptation of the procedure pioneered by Liu et al. (2005), while the second part focused on national history following the same open procedure. The content of the first part of the survey was exactly the same for both countries because it covered “world history,” whilst the content of the second part asked about the specific “history of Mozambique” or “history of Portugal.”

The survey also included questions about social identity (national, supranational, ethnic, religious, etc.) and socio-demographic questions (participants’ sex, age, nationality, mother language and other languages spoken, countries visited, etc.). The questions relating to social identity and socio-demographic characterization had to be adjusted to each country.

Participants were asked to list the “five events” they considered to have been most important for their own country’s national history. Once this list had been completed, participants were asked to assess the impact (positive or

negative) of each one on national history and, finally, asked to assess their emotions when thinking about these events. No pre-established list was presented to the participants, so the evocation of the events was completely free. Emotions provoked by events were also expressed freely. However, the impact of events was assessed using a seven-point scale, from 1 (very negative) to 7 (very positive).

Participants’ identification levels with the ingroup and with several outgroups considered to be relevant to the study were measured. Identification levels were measured using a seven-point scale, from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very strong identification).

In this paper we discuss only the results pertaining to events related to colonial issues in national history, exploring the role of national (Mozambican or Portuguese) and supranational (African or European) identification on the impact attributed by participants to events relating to colonialism.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Collective Memories of the Colonial Past

Table 1 displays the Top 10 events spontaneously listed by Mozambican and Portuguese participants when thinking about their national history. Before interpreting the collective memories of colonization, we will briefly overview the pattern of events found in each sample.

Table 1: The ten most mentioned events in Mozambican and Portuguese national history

Mozambique (N=180)	%	Impact	Portugal (N=118)	%	Impact
National independence	81.67	6.80 (0.92)	Carnation Revolution	80.51	6.58 (0.88)
General Peace Agreement	43.89	6.74 (1.08)	Voyages of discovery	79.66	6.41 (1.13)
War of Liberation	36.11	6.35 (1.57)	Foundation of Republic	41.52	6.02 (1.01)
Civil war	32.22	1.89 (1.84)	Joining the European Union	36.44	6.00 (0.9)
Colonization	28.33	2.75 (2.18)	New State dictatorship	29.66	2.15 (1.26)
Multi-party system	22.78	6.18 (1.41)	Foundation of Portugal	20.34	6.75 (0.43)
Samora Machel's death	20.00	1.79 (1.62)	Colonialism	16.10	2.18 (1.11)
First general elections	17.78	6.45 (1.38)	Decolonization	16.10	3.53 (2.03)
Lusaka Agreements	15.00	5.50 (2.40)	Restoration of independence	11.02	6.75 (0.43)
Cahora Bassa transfer	14.44	6.16 (1.54)	Colonial War	10.17	1.27 (0.45)

% = Percentage of participants that spontaneously evoked the event.

Impact = Impact mean (and standard deviation); impact scale: 1=very negative; 7=very positive

Events related to national independence get a predominant place in both countries, along with events related to present-day political affairs. The country's independence elicits strong positive emotions in both groups (pride, joy, happiness). The present-day situation elicits milder or mixed emotions in both cases. Overall, the Mozambican participants report more negative emotions concerning their national history than the Portuguese.

The sort of historical memories reported when evoking national history differed considerably between Mozambique and Portugal. The major difference related to the recentness of events brought up and their emotional tone. Taking the young age of the participants into consideration, it is natural that events that they have recently witnessed are much more present in their memory and

therefore more easily brought up than more distant events they have learned about from their family, school, and the media. Although both groups privileged recent events over those further away in time, displaying a recency effect (Liu et al. 2009), in the Mozambican case the focus on the very recent past was stronger. The violent and painful events of recent Mozambican history—of which these young Mozambicans had direct or very close experience during childhood—have to be taken into account when interpreting these data. On the other hand, the fact that the young Portuguese bring up the “glorious” distant past of the “voyages of discovery,” contributed to weakening the recency effect.

Two events were listed by the vast majority of Portuguese participants: the 25th of April 1974 and the voyages of dis-

covery, occupying respectively the first and second position in the ranking of Portuguese responses. Both events are perceived by respondents as very positive and are associated with very positive emotions: admiration, pride, and happiness. Both events are linked with colonization, since these are the moments that signal the beginning and end of the Portuguese empire. However, participants' responses reveal that the Carnation Revolution is associated with positive emotions because it is seen as the end of the dictatorship, not because it represented an important juncture in the decolonization process.

Portuguese participants also refer to the foundation of the Portuguese state in the twelfth century (20.3 percent) and the restoration of independence in 1640, after eighty years of Spanish domination (11.0 percent). Both events were considered to be very positive by the Portuguese participants and were associated with positive emotions: pride and joy. However, these events were cited less frequently than more recent events like the foundation of the republic in 1910 (41.5 percent) and accession to the European Union in 1986 (36.4 percent), which were also seen as very positive events, although less so than the first two. The Salazar dictatorship was evoked by 29.7 percent of the participants, viewed very negatively ($M = 2.15$; $SD = 1.26$), evoking disgust and frustration.

A huge majority of the Mozambican participants (81.67 percent) mentioned national independence, on June 25, 1975. This event is regarded as the most positive event in the history of the country ($M = 6.8$; $SD = 0.92$). The second most mentioned event was the General Peace Agreement that ended the sixteen-year civil war (43.89 percent), and was viewed as very positive ($M = 6.74$; $SD = 1.08$).

The War of Liberation was the third most mentioned event by Mozambican participants (36.11 percent; $M = 6.35$), closely followed by the civil war (32.22 percent; $M = 1.89$). These two wars have similar degrees of remembering, but very different emotional meanings.

The civil war of 1976–92 was negatively evaluated and associated with extremely negative emotions: frustration, disgust, hate.⁹ This is a recent event with a tremendously traumatic impact that these students had lived through during their childhood. On the other hand, the War of Liberation (1964–74) was positively evaluated and associated with mixed emotions, mainly pride, frustration, and joy, but also disgust and anguish.¹⁰

“Colonization” (labeled as such) was mentioned by 28.33 percent of the Mozambican participants and received an overall negative evaluation ($M = 2.75$; $SD = 2.18$). However, it was also the most polarized, in the sense that the evaluation ranged from very negative to very positive, with several participants rating it as neutral. On the other hand, the arrival of the Portuguese in Mozambique was seen as very positive by the few Mozambicans who made explicit reference to the beginning of the colonial process: the “arrival of the Portuguese” (3.33 percent; $M=6.33$; $SD=0.94$) and the “arrival of Vasco da Gama” (2.22 percent; $M=6.75$; $SD=0.43$).

The Cahora Bassa transfer agreement, signed in November 2005, ended long negotiations between Mozambique and Portugal about control of the Cahora Bassa dam, which is the largest dam in southern Africa and was the biggest infrastructure investment made during the colonial period. This event received huge and strongly nationalist media coverage in Mozambique, and was on the front page of all the Maputo newspapers. In Mozambique one still sees many people wearing T-shirts bearing the slogan “Cahora Bassa é nossa!” [Cahora Bassa is ours]. It figured in the survey as a very positive event (14.44 percent; $M=6.16$; $SD=1.54$).

The clearest divergences between the Mozambican and Portuguese patterns of responses are observed in the evocation and emotional tone associated with the Portuguese voyages of discovery, colonialism, and decolonization.

As already indicated, the “voyages of discovery” were the second most often mentioned event in Portuguese national

⁹ Some participants mentioned this event under other names: the sixteen-year war or the war of destabilization.

¹⁰ Some participants mentioned other labels for this event: War of Resistance or liberation struggle.

history and were consensually considered to be very positive (79.7 percent; $M = 6.41$; $SD = 1.13$). Considering that the voyages of discovery are a very remote event, Portuguese participants focus on them because they are permanently updated in schoolbooks and the media, where they are presented as the most “glorious” moments in national history.

Contrary to voyages of discovery, whose impact is consensually perceived as positive, colonialism is negatively evaluated (16.1 percent; $M = 2.18$; $SD = 1.11$), with the Colonial War being perceived as the most negative event in national history (10.2 percent; $M = 1.27$; $SD = 0.45$); both provoke strongly negative emotions: mainly frustration, shame and disgust. “Decolonization” (16.1 percent) turns out to be the most polarized event, as opinions on its impact cover the full range of the scale, resulting in a mean value close to midscale ($M = 3.53$; $SD = 2.03$).¹¹ The emotions associated with this event vary from the most positive to the most negative.

As mentioned before, young Portuguese and Mozambicans both tend to evaluate “colonization” negatively (respectively, $M=2.18$ and $M=2.75$). However, several violent events related to colonization are more salient in the Mozambicans’ answers.

Mozambican participants mention several events related to the struggle against Portuguese colonial rule. During the last decades before independence, various forms of Mozambican protest were violently repressed by the state. One of the most dramatic episodes happened in Mueda on June 16, 1960, where many protesters demanding the end of forced labor and the opening of free markets for products and food at affordable prices were brutally massacred with bayonets on the orders of the provincial governor (Hedges 1999, 241–43). The Massacre of Mueda was evoked by 8.33 percent of Mozambican participants and was rated as very negative ($M = 1.21$; $SD = 0.77$), being associated with strong negative emotions, mainly disgust and frustration. This massacre, which caused an unknown number of deaths (about fourteen according to Portuguese accounts and

about six hundred according to Mozambican accounts), led FRELIMO president Eduardo Mondlane to conclude that nonviolent protest would not bring about change, so the only hope for achieving independence was through armed struggle (Mondlane 1969).

The slave trade was mentioned by 11.11 percent of the Mozambican participants, being considered the most negative event of Mozambican history ($M = 1$; $SD = 0$). On the other hand, when thinking about national history, Portuguese mentioned the “Portuguese voyages of discovery” and no one mentioned the “slave traffic” (although two respondents referred to the “Abolishment of slavery”). Thus, issues related to slavery are much more salient for Mozambican than for Portuguese participants, who forgot this extremely violent side of the colonial occupation.

3.2. Social Identification and Memories of the Colonial Past

Table 2 displays the levels of national and supranational identification. Both groups declared strong national identification ($M = 6.32$ for Mozambicans and $M = 6.29$ for Portuguese) and less strong supranational identification ($M = 5.52$ and $M = 5.94$ respectively). In both cases, there was a significant correlation between national and supranational identification: for Mozambican participants the stronger the identification with Mozambique, the stronger the identification with Africa ($r = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$); for Portuguese participants the stronger the identification with Portugal the stronger the identification with Europe ($r = 0.60$, $p < 0.001$).

Interestingly, Mozambican participants reported a higher degree of identification with Portugal ($M = 3.46$), than Portuguese participants with Mozambique ($M = 2.34$), $t = 4.658$, $p < 0.001$. So, it seems that the “bonds” created by colonialism are stronger among the former colonized than among the former colonizer.

¹¹ We aggregated four participants who mentioned “independence of African colonies.”

Table 2: National and supranational identification

Identification with ...	in Mozambique (N = 180)	in Portugal (N = 118)
Africa	5.52 (2.04)	2.51 (1.33)
Europe	2.75 (2.05)	5.94 (1.08)
Mozambique	6.32 (1.40)	2.34 (1.22)
Portugal	3.46 (2.23)	6.29 (1.07)

Scale: 1 = not at all; 7 = very strongly

To explore the role of social identification in remembrance of colonial events, we calculated the overall mean impact attributed to the events related to colonialism freely evoked by the participants in each sample, and correlated it with levels of national and supranational (both ingroup and outgroup) identification. The variables with significant correlations in each sample were submitted to multiple regression linear analyses (MLRA), method *stepwise*, with the mean impact attributed to colonial events as the dependent variable.

For the Mozambican sample, the level of identification with Mozambique is the only predictor of the impact attributed to colonial issues: the stronger the national identification, the more positive the impact attributed to events related to colonialism ($\beta = 0.198$, $p < 0.021$). This is apparently a very intriguing result, since we would expect the opposite pattern to occur. However, this result is mainly due to the positive impact attributed to the War of Liberation, which was the most evoked event related to the colonial period. When the War of Liberation is excluded, the mean impact attributed to colonial issues drops significantly: from 5.37 (SD = 1.74) to 2.74 (SD = 2.28). A new MLRA performed for the Mozambican sample excluding the War of Liberation did not produce significant results, probably due to the reduction in the number of persons included in the analysis.

For the Portuguese sample, the mean impact attributed to events related to colonialism was positive ($M = 5.43$;

SD = 1.65). When the Colonial War (which is the Portuguese label for the War of Liberation) is excluded, the mean impact attributed to colonial issues increases slightly ($M = 5.83$; SD = 1.35). A MLRA performed for the Portuguese sample including all events related to colonialism did not produce significant results. However, a new MLRA excluding the Colonial War from the computation revealed significant results. The level of identification with Portugal is the major predictor of the impact attributed to events related to colonial period: the stronger the national identification, the more positive the impact attributed to colonial events ($\beta = 0.273$, $p = 0.013$). The level of identification with Mozambique is the second, marginally significant, predictor: the weaker the identification with Mozambique, the more positive the impact attributed to colonial events ($\beta = -0.181$, $p = 0.096$).

These results indicate a complex relationship involving patterns of ingroup and outgroup identification and the meanings attributed to colonial issues. Even if the explained variance of these models is quite low (adjusted $R^2 = 0.027$ for the Mozambican sample and $= 0.080$ for the Portuguese sample), they open fruitful perspectives for further research. For Portuguese participants, the stronger the national identification, the greater the glorification of the colonial past, mainly due to the evocation of “voyages of discovery.” For Mozambican participants, the stronger the national identification, the greater the exaltation of the War of Liberation, but national identification did not affect the evaluation of other colonial-era events. Results also indicate that it is important to study not only the role of ingroup identification, but also the role of outgroup identification, as stronger outgroup identification can encourage less bi-polar visions of the colonial period.

4. Concluding Remarks

The aim of this research was to analyze collective memories of the colonial past among young people in Portugal (as the former European colonial power) and Mozambique (as a former Portuguese colony). Freely recalling their national history, the participants of both countries brought up a common set of historical events related to colonial issues. However, the frequency of recall of these “common” events, their evaluation and emotional tone were differed consider-

ably according to the country's position as former colonizer or former colony.

The voyages of discovery are considered to be one of the most important events in Portugal's history, bringing up a consensus of positive feelings among young Portuguese, which suggests that idealization of this period persists. It is still represented as the "golden age." There is an idealization of voyages of discovery, from which the violent effects of colonization are set apart.

As pointed out by Lourenço (1990, 22), there is a "strange permanence within the core of the change" as the empire remains in the Portuguese imaginary. In line with this view, Alexandre (1999) states that the myth of Luso-tropicalism (Freyre 1933) did not end with the falling of the empire, still flowing in the background even among the younger generations. According to Alexandre, this persistence is due to the long-term consequences of the New State's ideological propaganda on the formation of mentalities, and the similarity between Luso-tropicalism and "some of the ideas based on Portuguese nationalism (colonizer competency, the ability to harmoniously relate to other races and peoples, the educational mission of the country)" (translated from Alexandre 1999, 143–44).

As emphasized by Sobral, the persistence of this euphemistic picture of Portuguese colonization hinders acknowledgement and representation of "the most brutal effects of colonial expansion" (2004, 425). By contrast, these brutal effects are very visible in Mozambican memories.

However, some events of recent Mozambican history evoke more negative evaluations than colonization. The suffering of their ancestors under Portuguese rule was learned vicariously through the social sharing of emotions with their relatives and by formal education and national media. The civil war, on the other hand, was a painful first-hand experience.

The Portuguese participants considered the 1961–74 war, which they labeled as the *Colonial War or Overseas War*, the most negative event in the Portuguese history. This event was evoked by about 10 percent of the Portuguese participants. The same event was evoked by about 36 percent of the

Mozambican participants, who labeled it the *War of Liberation, War of Resistance, or Armed Struggle*. In contrast to the Portuguese, Mozambican participants considered the impact of this war very positive since it led to independence. Feelings towards the War of Liberation were mixed, but predominantly positive.

The kind of events spontaneously evoked by Mozambican and Portuguese participants about colonization are in accordance with our hypotheses, illustrating the identity functions of collective memory (Licata et al. 2007).

The events related to the formation of each nation-state were remembered more than other events and/or evaluated more positively by both Portuguese and Mozambican participants (hypothesis 1), showing the importance of collective memory in the definition of group identity. Each group emphasized its active role during the colonization period: Portuguese participants focused on voyages of discovery while Mozambicans focused on the successful fight for independence (hypothesis 2), showing that collective memory contributes to the achievement of positive distinctiveness. Findings also show that the stronger the national identification and the lower the outgroup identification, the stronger the tendency for exaltation of past ingroup actions, leading to oblivion of the violent negative consequences of past ingroup actions.

Mozambicans remembered more negative events concerning the colonization period (slave trade, massacres, exploitation) than Portuguese participants (hypothesis 3). The Colonial War was more remembered and more positively evaluated by Mozambican participants than by Portuguese participants (hypothesis 4). This pattern of remembrance provides justification for the group's actions: Mozambican engagement in armed struggle for independence. Even though this war caused a lot of casualties and suffering, it is positively evaluated by Mozambicans as it is considered as a necessary and just war to liberate the country from colonial oppression.

When spontaneously evoking "colonization" (labeled as such), both Mozambican and Portuguese participants evaluated it as negative and reported negative feelings about

it. However, the impact rating and emotional resonance of colonization cannot be explained on a simple national basis: both Mozambican and Portuguese samples reported ambivalence toward colonization.

In order to better understand these ambiguous representations of colonization, further research should be conducted in order to deepen issues like the influence of ethnic group, gender, and age, and their complex interactions. Researching the collective memories of different regional groups is particularly important in Mozambique, since it is still a country with huge regional disparities in terms of access to education, infrastructure, and development (and different ethnic groups played different roles in the colonization process and the resistance). In addition, Mozambicans' representations of colonial issues should be compared with those prevailing in other former Portuguese colonies in Africa. Finally, it would be also pertinent to compare the pattern of results obtained in Portugal with the results in other European countries, whether former colonial powers or not.

Collective memories may play an important role in the shaping of present-day relations between former colonizer and former colonized peoples, and may have profound impacts on their visions about future relations between Europe and Africa (Cabecinhas and Nhaga 2008; Licata and Klein 2005).

Findings in Mozambique and Portugal clearly show that historical memories comprise both consensual and conflictual elements, between and within groups; there is also some degree of internal ambivalence as, in some cases, a given event elicits emotions of opposite valence in the same participant.

Globally, a negative depiction of colonization prevailed, and it was associated with negative emotions. Colonization brings to mind a set of negative elements to many students who never lived through the colonial period. This was particularly evident among Mozambicans, who stressed the most oppressive aspects of the colonial period, associated with the slave trade and violent repression. Participants in this research did not live the colonial period, but they learned about the Portuguese presence in Mozambique, the colonial socio-economic system, Mozambican resistance to

the foreign presence, and the previously conflictual relationship between the Portuguese and the Mozambicans, from school and their families.

As mentioned above, there are some inconsistencies and ambivalences in the opinions of students concerning the colonial period, especially in the Mozambican sample. In face-to-face interviews, many students mentioned contradictions between the discourse learned in the classroom and the testimonies of family members, parents and grandparents (as expressed by one participant, "My parents remember all good"). When evoking conversations held in their family, some students made references to the positive side of the colonial past (construction commercial infrastructure, communication, health, and education) that they usually contrasted with the problems experienced now. The high unemployment rate, low wages, financial instability and price inflation, as well as periodic shortages of essential goods, especially during the sixteen-year civil war, facilitated oblivion of the difficulties experienced in the past in these oral accounts. This appreciation of some aspects of the colonial past can be understood as a criticism of the present day situation. These are opinions expressed by the young African elite, aware that much of the existing infrastructure in Maputo has been inherited from the colonial period. As stated by one student, in a clearly measured tone: "Independence ... was an evil that came for the good. Because there were negative things, for example, a situation where we did not develop. We remained behind in development. Because I think that the Portuguese came to bring civilization to Mozambique. Therefore, we suffered. There were many deaths."

European colonialism was much more than conquest and control of land and commodities. Due to its endurance and systematic exploitation, colonialism translated into soft power that lasts until the present-day. Formally we are living in postcolonial times, but colonialism persists in people's minds, shaping personal trajectories and intergroup relations. As Frantz Fanon points out, "Colonization is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it" (Fanon 1963, 70).

The myth of Luso-tropicalism seems to continue to structure the representations of the colonial process in Portugal, leading to oblivion of their more brutal aspects. Nor is it

completely absent in Mozambican answers, illustrating the pervasiveness of the oppressive effects of the colonial process.

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