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THE COMMUNITY OF PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE COUNTRIES (CPLP) AND THE LUSO-AFRICAN IDENTITY¹

ABSTRACT

The article aims at searching for the correlation between the Luso-African identity, understood as a form of cultural identity based on the concept of Lusophony, and The Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), an international organisation that brings together countries whose official language is Portuguese. The CPLP is considered as an institutional emanation of the idea of Lusophony. However, for almost 25 years since its creation it still receives a lot of criticism. Despite the multiplicity of initiatives that it proposed, for a long time it seemed that the CPLP did not really move beyond the concept phase. Furthermore, until recently the organisation has focused mainly on cultural and political cooperation, leaving behind its enormous economic possibilities and provoking questions about an untapped potential of the CPLP. The paper attempts to reflect on the hypothesis that the limited capacities of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries regarding the African continent are, at least partially, related to the problem with Luso-African identity. The considerations presented in the article are based on the critical reading of the literature of the subject, qualitative analysis of the already existing data (official documents and the press, available statistics), as well as the author's reflections drawn from observations, interviews and informal talks conducted during field research in Mozambique (2015) and Guinea-Bissau (2016), along with multiple study visits to Portugal (2011-2016), while realizing the research project devoted to the problem of state dysfunctionality in the Lusophone Africa.

Keywords: CPLP, Luso-Africa, Lusophony, Portuguese language, international cooperation, cultural identity

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We need a policy of Lusophony, because we are not yet Lusophones. Whoever is, does not need to proclaim being one. Whoever is one, simply is. Wole Soyinka says: "A tiger does not proclaim his tigritude, he pounces."

Mia Couto²

INTRODUCTION

According to the Cambridge Dictionary 'lusophone' means "speaking Portuguese, usually as a first or main language".³ "Lusophony", although neither Cambridge nor Oxford dictionaries provide its definition, is basically understood as the use of the Portuguese language.⁴ By analogy we can speak of Francophony, Anglophony, Hispanophony etc., in each case having in mind not only the sole use of the language and linguistic proficiency, but also the community of its speakers and their cultural and historical background. The Lusophony seems to be the key to understand the grounds of Luso-African identity – if such a concept actually exists and is not merely an imagined one, constructed to extend a kind of neo-colonial domination.

The article aims at searching for the correlation between the Luso-African identity, understood as a form of cultural identity based on the concept of Lusophony, and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), an international organisation that brings together countries whose official language is Portuguese. The CPLP is an institutional emanation of the idea of Lusophony. However, for almost 25 years since its creation it still receives a lot of criticism. Despite the multiplicity of initiatives that it proposed, for a long time it seemed that the CPLP did not really move beyond the concept phase. Until recently, the organisation has focused mainly on cultural and political cooperation, leaving behind its enormous economic possibilities, as if ignoring the fact that the member states constitute a market of almost 290 million people, provoking questions about an untapped potential of the CPLP. Furthermore, the attitude of individual countries towards the organisation and their involvement in its work often differs greatly, i.e. in recent years much has been said about the CPLP domination by the largest and strongest member state – Brazil.

² Wole Soyinka is a Nigerian playwright, poet, and essayist. In 1986 he was awarded Nobel Prize in Literature, becoming the first person from Sub-Saharan Africa to be honoured in this category; M. Couto, "Afonía luzofónica: luzofonia między podróżą a zbrodnią", transl. by A. Kalewska, in J.C. Dias, J. Jankowski, D. Kwinta, *Naszyjnik z opowiadań. Wybór*, Warszawa 2008, p. 130. (Author's translation, consulted with the Portuguese version of the essay).

³ "Lusophone", *Cambridge Dictionary*, at <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/lusophone>>, 19 June 2020.

⁴ Even in Portuguese dictionaries and encyclopédias the term had not been present till 1990s. J.F. Pinto, "Da CPLP à Comunidade Lusófona: o futuro da lusofonia", *Revista Angolana de Sociologia*, no. 7 (2011), p. 2.

The paper attempts to reflect on the hypothesis that the limited capacities of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries regarding the African continent are, at least partially, related to the problem with Luso-African identity. The considerations presented in the article are based on the critical reading of the literature of the subject, qualitative analysis of the already existing data (official documents and the press, available statistics), as well as the author's reflections drawn from observations, interviews and informal talks conducted during field research in Mozambique (2015) and Guinea-Bissau (2016), along with multiple study visits to Portugal (2011-2016), while realizing the research project devoted to the problem of state dysfunctionality in the Lusophone Africa.

COMMUNITY OF PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE COUNTRIES AND THE DREAM ABOUT LUSOPHONY

The Community of Portuguese Language Countries (*Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa*, CPLP) is an international organization established in 1996 that consists of Lusophone countries (Portugal and its former colonies, including all Luso-African states).⁵ It is not a typical African regional international organisation aiming first and foremost at political and economic integration as, for example, the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) or the Southern African Development Community (SADC).⁶ Furthermore, although six out of nine of its members are African states, the CPLP membership is not limited only to the African continent.⁷ Among international organisations, the CPLP seems to have the most in common with the International Organisation of La Francophonie (*Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*, OIF), which is based on the community of francophones. In the context of historically conditioned community of language

⁵ The member states of the CPLP are Portugal, Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cabo Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, East Timor, Equatorial Guinea.

⁶ As far as integration initiatives are concerned, Africa is seen as a region where attempts to achieve deeper economic or political integration have not completely succeeded. The emphasis is mainly on the economic integration within the regions, with the East African Community being the most advanced in its efforts. One of the visible problems is the question of the overlapping membership of African states in various regional organisations. A. Mania, M. Grabowski, J. Mormul, "Regionalizm w Afryce, Azji i na Bliskim Wschodzie", in Eidem (eds.), *Problemy regionalne Azji, Afryki i Bliskiego Wschodu u progu XXI wieku*, Warszawa 2018, p. 22.

⁷ It is worth mentioning here that in 1979 there was an initiative undertaken to institutionalize cooperation between five traditionally Luso-African countries (Angola, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe) – Portuguese Official Language African Countries (*Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa*, PALOP), however, it was not very successful. In 1992, an attempt was made to resuscitate the previous initiative, but again without greater success. 22 years later – in 2014 the representatives of the PALOP countries met in Luanda and established a common forum – FORPALOP. For now, however, it seems that the activity of this organization continues to be only on paper. "Fórum PALOP foi criado em Angola", *RFI*, at <<https://www.rfi.fr/pt/africa/20140630-forum-palop-foi-criado-em-angola>>, 30 November 2020.

and culture one can also indicate the Commonwealth of Nations, however, formally it is not an international organisation, but “voluntary association of 54 independent and equal countries”.⁸ In both these cases, the former colonial powers play the leading role, while in the CPLP Portugal seems to be increasingly giving way to an emerging lusophone global power – Brazil.

The idea of establishing the Community of Portuguese Language Countries dates back to 1983 and the official visit of the then Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jaime Gama, to Cabo Verde, where he encouraged the continuation of the tricontinental dialogue of the lusophone states in the decentralized form of rotative biennial summits of the heads of state and government, and annual meetings of the ministries of foreign affairs. However, this idea entered the decision-making phase only in the 1990s, thanks to the efforts of the then Brazilian ambassador to Portugal, José Aparecido de Oliveira. The Constitutive Declaration of the CPLP (*Declaração Constitutiva da Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa*) was signed 17 July 1996 in Lisbon by Portugal, Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cabo Verde, and São Tomé and Príncipe. The Lisbon Penafiel Palace was chosen for the headquarters of the CPLP. The highest representative of the organisation and its executive branch is the Executive Secretary elected at the biennial CPLP Summit for two-year mandate. The Conference of Heads of State and Government also meets every two years and prepares guidance and priorities for the next two-year period, while the Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers approves the organisation’s plan of action on its annual meetings. The presidency in the organisation is rotative and changes every two years on the CPLP Summits. The budget of CPLP is financed solely by its member states.⁹

The number of the CPLP member states grew in the 21st century. In 2002 the organisation was joined by newly independent East Timor and over a decade later Equatorial Guinea, which can be surprising, as it was Portuguese colony only from 1472 to 1778. After that period, it belonged to Spain (being also leased to the British for some time) until becoming independent in 1968. However, in 2010 its government adopted Portuguese as one of the official languages (next to Spanish and French). In consequence, in 2014 Equatorial Guinea was admitted to the CPLP.¹⁰ The admission was quite controversial due to the 35-year undemocratic rule of the president Teodoro Obiang Nguema and the country’s very poor human rights record. The then Portuguese president Aníbal Cavaco Silva was justifying this decision by explaining that isolationism serves

⁸ *The Commonwealth*, at <<https://thecommonwealth.org>>, 1 December 2020.

⁹ “Histórico – Como surgiu?”, *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa*, at <<https://www.cplp.org/id-2752.aspx>>, 30 November 2020; *Declaração Constitutiva da Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa – CPLP*, Lisboa, at <<https://www.cplp.org/id-2595.aspx>>, 15 November 2020; *Estatutos da Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa (com revisões de São Tomé/2001, Brasília/2002, Luanda/2005, Bissau/2006 e Lisboa/2007)*, Lisboa, at <http://www.cplp.org/Files/Filer/Documentos%20Essenciais/Estatutos_CPLP_REVLIS07.pdf>, 15 November 2020.

¹⁰ J. Mormul, “Portuguese Colonial Legacy in Luso-African States – a Factor Leading to State Dysfunctionality or Favorable to Development?”, *Politeja. The Journal of the Faculty of International Relations and Political Studies of the Jagiellonian University*, vol. 56, no. 5 (2018), p. 44.

no purpose and thanks to the admission of Equatorial Guinea, the CPLP will be able to work on improvement of the human rights situation in the country. A harbinger of future changes was to be the promised moratorium on death penalty and subsequently its abolition (that has not materialized yet). However, in the background of the politicians' version for the media, there were, much more unofficially, Equatoguinean petrodollars that could be invested in the CPLP member states.¹¹

With the admission of Equatorial Guinea, the list of potential future members of the organisation has been exhausted.¹² However, already during the 2nd Summit of Heads of State and Government in Praia in 1998, the CPLP created the category of an 'observer', which was further clarified during the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Luanda in 2005, when, in fact, two categories of observers were established: associate observers (*Observadores Associados*) and consultative observers (*Observadores Consultivos*). In line with the organisation's official statements, first one has opened the possibility of admission to the lusophone states and regions that accept and share the same values as the rest of the organisation. Associate observers can participate in the summits of the organisation, as well as in the meetings of the Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers, but without voting rights. It should be mentioned though that the category of 'lusophone' in this case is treated by the CPLP quite broadly, as "a real interest in the principles and objectives of the CPLP," and among the associate observers

¹¹ N. Ribeiro, "Cavaco compara Guiné Equatorial com a Coreia do Norte", *Público*, at <<https://www.publico.pt/2014/07/23/politica/noticia/cavaco-compara-guine-equatorial-com-a-coreia-do-norte-1664006>>, 20 November 2020; M. Queiroz, "Oil Lubricates Equatorial Guinea's Entry into Portuguese Language Community", *Inter Press Service*, at <<http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/07/oil-lubricates-equatorial-guineas-entry-into-portuguese-language-community/>>, 29 November 2020.

¹² The problematic is the question of Macao – the last Portuguese colony, decolonized in 1999 and transferred to the People's Republic of China as Special Administrative Region. As for 2020 Macao is not even an associate observer in the CPLP, as the consent of the state to which the region belongs is required. However, the PRC decided to establish in 2003 so-called "Macao Forum" – the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese speaking countries (at first without São Tomé and Príncipe, which at that time maintained relations with the Republic of China). "Forum for Economic and Trade Co-operation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (MACAO Forum)", *BRICS Policy Center/ Centro de Estudos e Pesquisas BRICS*, at <<https://bricspolicycenter.org/en/forum-for-economic-and-trade-cooperation-between-china-and-portuguese-speaking-countries-macao-forum/>>, 5 December 2020. The similar problem is experienced by Galicia – one of the autonomous communities of Spain, whose official language (next to Spanish) – Galician has common medieval ancestor with Portuguese – the Galician-Portuguese language (*galego-português/galego-portugués*). However, in the Galician case the efforts of the regional government, Xunta de Galicia, have paid off and the Spanish government though did not support the candidacy of Galicia, agreed to apply for an associate observer membership itself. In consequence, Spain has been invited for the CPLP Summit that was supposed to take place in Luanda in September 2020 but due to the COVID-19 pandemic the event was postponed to July 2021. J. Gómez, "La Xunta facilita la presencia de España en la comunidad lusófona internacional", *La Voz de Galicia*, at <https://www.lavozdeg Galicia.es/noticia/cultura/2020/02/02/xunta-facilita-presencia-espana-comunidad-lusofona-internacional/0003_202002G2P37991.htm>, 30 November 2020; "Covid-19: Cimeira da CPLP deve realizar-se em julho de 2021 em Luanda – secretário executivo", *Visão*, at <<https://visao.sapo.pt/atualidade/politica/2020-05-19-covid-19-cimeira-da-cplp-deve-realizar-se-em-julho-de-2021-em-luanda-secre-tario-executivo/>>, 29 November 2020.

there are, inter alia, such countries as Turkey, Japan, Argentina, Italy, France, Hungary, or Czechia. In each case there is almost always a reason given to justify their presence in the organisation and connection with Lusophony, however, sometimes it can seem a bit far-fetched. In turn, the status of consultative observers is granted to civil societies organisations based inside and outside the lusophone countries. Among the organisations with this status there are, for example, Academia Galega da Língua Portuguesa, Consello da Cultura Galega, Associação das Universidades de Língua Portuguesa, Fundação Agostinho Neto, Fundação Getúlio Vargas, Universidade de São José de Macau, or Médicos do Mundo Portugal and many more.¹³

The main objectives of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries were included in the Constitutive Declaration of the CPLP, and then specified in the several times amended CPLP statute (article 3). They are primarily: 1. Political and diplomatic cooperation between the member states of the organisation, in particular to strengthen their presence on the international forums; 2. Cooperation in all areas, including education, health, science and technology, defence, agriculture, public administration, communications, justice, public safety, culture, sports and media; 3. Realisation of projects aiming at promotion and dissemination of the Portuguese language, particularly through the International Portuguese Language Institute (*Instituto Internacional de Língua Portuguesa*).¹⁴ The very creation of the CPLP and seemingly innocently formulated goals still raise concerns about neocolonialism or attempts to whitewash difficult colonial past. *Its stated ambition was to integrate the “lusophone territories” into an economic and cultural whole, drawing on the ties of language and a shared culture—all horrible histories, with the exception of the linguistic, being set adrift on an amnesiac sea. Thus we find that, much like the British Commonwealth, the CPLP pays scant reference to the brutality and exploitation of the Portuguese imperial past, choosing instead to emphasize such themes as diversity, equality, and free association.*¹⁵ Although one may argue whether this “economic whole”, to which the lusophone states would be integrated is actually included and well visible in the Constitutive Declaration and the Status of the CPLP because, since the very beginning, the organisation has been criticised for little involvement in the economic field. Even the critical remark quoted above clearly indicates some postcolonial concerns and the awareness of the foundation concept of the CPLP – the Lusophony (*Lusofonia*).

In the ranking of most spoken languages in the world, in 2020 Portuguese with its 252 million speakers occupies 9th position and that number is still growing. Currently, the largest (in terms of territory and population) member state, Brazil, is also the nation with the highest number of Portuguese speakers. However, by the end of the 21st

¹³ “Observadores Associados”, *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa*, at <<https://www.cplp.org/id-2765.aspx>>, 1 December 2020; “Observadores Consultivos”, *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa*, at <<https://www.cplp.org/id-2766.aspx>>, 1 December 2020.

¹⁴ It is one of the institutions created in the framework of the CPLP to promote the Portuguese language. Its headquarters is located in Praia. *Declaração Constitutiva...; Estatutos da Comunidade...*

¹⁵ C. Peters, “The Cultural Politics of Luso-African Identity: A Look on 7th São Tomé Biennial”, *Critical Interventions. Journal of African Art History and Visual Culture*, vol. 10, no. 3 (2016), p. 263.

century the majority of lusophones will be living in Africa, due to the demographic growth of Angola and Mozambique and projected decline in the population of Brazil.¹⁶ Meanwhile, the current linguistic situation of Luso-African states seems to be less optimistic regarding the development of Lusophony. Although in all of the Luso-African states Portuguese is an official language since their independence (with the exception of Equatorial Guinea, in which it was adopted in 2010 as a third official language), the number of real language users leaves much to be desired for its promoters.¹⁷ The highest percentage of lusophones can be found in Angola and São Tomé and Príncipe. 71 per cent of Angolans speak Portuguese at home, sometimes alongside one of Bantu languages, while in São Tomé and Príncipe over 98 per cent of inhabitants speak Portuguese, often alongside one of the creole languages of the archipelago.¹⁸ According to the 2017 Mozambican census only by less than 17 per cent of Mozambicans Portuguese language is considered as mother tongue (first language speaking at home), while around 38 per cent of respondents declared knowledge of Portuguese (and probably its use as a second language).¹⁹ It is not difficult to calculate that, in turn, over 80 per cent of Mozambicans pointed out as their mother tongue one of the Bantu languages spoken in the country. It is estimated that 99 per cent of the Mozambican population is able to communicate in the Bantu languages (at least in one of them). Over the period 1983-2003, Portuguese was the only language in the state education system in Mozambique, but since 2003, mother tongues have been included in formal primary

¹⁶ “What are the top 200 most spoken languages?”, *Ethnologue. Languages of the World*, at <<https://www.ethnologue.com/guides/ethnologue200>>, 2 December 2020; A. Queiroz, “Africa To Have Majority of Portuguese Speakers by Century’s End”, *Agência Brasil*, at <<https://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/en/internacional/noticia/2019-10/africa-have-majority-portuguese-speakers-centurys-end>>, 2 December 2020.

¹⁷ Equatorial Guinea, despite proclaiming Portuguese one of its official languages, does not really count with Portuguese speakers, although some efforts have been made to increase the presence of Portuguese in the school curriculum. Nonetheless, on the island of Annobón there are few thousand speakers of the Annobonese creole (*Fá d’Ambó*), which is a Portuguese-based creole. “O ensino do português na Guiné-Equatorial”, *Observatório da Língua Portuguesa*, at <<http://observalinguaportuguesa.org/o-ensino-de-portugues-na-guine-equatorial/>>, 2 December 2020.

¹⁸ “Resultados definitivos do recenseamento geral da população e da habitação de Angola 2014”, *Instituto Nacional de Estatística de Angola, Governo de Angola*, p. 51, at <http://www.embaadadeangola.com/pdf/Publicacao%20Resultados%20Definitivos%20Censo%20Geral%202014_Versao%2022032016_DEFINITIVA%2018H17.pdf>, 2 December 2020; “IV Recenseamento geral da população e da habitação 2012 (IV RGPH 2012). Resultados gerais sobre localidades”, *Instituto Nacional de Estatística de São Tomé e Príncipe*, p. 60, at <<https://www.ine.st/phocadownload/userupload/Documentos/DADOS%20LOCALIDADE%20PROJEÇÕES/Publicação%20dos%20Resultados%20sobre%20Localidades%20-%20IV%20RGPH%202012.pdf>>, 5 December 2020.

¹⁹ 10 535 905 Mozambicans have knowledge of Portuguese, 27 909 798 – population of Mozambique in 2017. “IV Recenseamento geral da população e habitação 2017. Resultados definitivos Moçambique”, *Instituto Nacional de Estatística, Maputo – Abril*, pp. 16, 94, at <<http://www.ine.gov.mz/iv-rgph-2017/mocambique/censo-2017-brochura-dos-resultados-definitivos-do-iv-rgph-nacional.pdf/view>>, 4 December 2020. Compared to the 2007 census, the figures show the percentage increase of Portuguese native speakers, while the overall percentage of Mozambicans speaking Portuguese decreased as a whole. J. Mormul, “Portuguese Colonial Legacy...”, p. 56.

education. The main argument behind this move was the fact that most Mozambican children start primary school without knowledge of Portuguese, what results in their poor academic performance and reluctance to continue education. In 2008, there were already schools offering bilingual education in all ten provinces of Mozambique (although they were in the minority).²⁰

In Guinea-Bissau only 13 per cent of the population speak Portuguese, while around 98 per cent have knowledge of Guinea-Bissau creole (*Kriol*, *Kriol*), although often as a second language, while their mother tongue is one of over 30 native African languages spoken in the country. In regard to Cabo Verde there is no clear figure about the number of Portuguese native speakers, but they are probably very few. Although the official language in the country is Portuguese, mother tongue of the population of the islands is Cape Verdean creole (*Kriol*, *Kriolu*, *Kaboverdianu*), which has some dialectical variants, but still is the first language of nearly all Cape Verdeans. In recent years, in both countries there have been proposals to normalize the linguistic situation and make creoles official languages alongside the Portuguese. In 2011, Cape Verdean Minister of Culture, artist and poet, Mário Lúcio de Sousa argued in the National Assembly about the need for officialisation of *Kaboverdianu*. In February 2020, the Cabo Verde's government and the majoritarian party Movement for Democracy (*Movimento para a Democracia*, MpD) declared their openness for the debate about the revision of the constitution and inclusion of the Cape Verdean creole as an official language. In the same month Bissau-Guinean Secretary of Culture António Spencer Embaló talked publicly about the proposal to make *kriol* official language of Guinea-Bissau, aiming at normalising the linguistic situation already present in the country.²¹

Historically, the Luso-African states despite colonial resentments, had rather pragmatic attitude towards the Portuguese language. A good example can be Mozambique, a country that has a good track record in promoting Portuguese. At the first Congress of the Mozambique Liberation Front (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*, FRELIMO) that took place in 1962, it was decided that Portuguese would be recognized as an official language in the post-colonial state *in spe*. According to Mozambican writer and poet Mia Couto, whose quote opened this article, Portuguese was accepted *not as a legacy, but as the most valuable war trophy*. Eduardo Mondlane, FRELIMO's founding father, believed that Portuguese language was a useful tool in the creation of

²⁰ S. Patel, G. Chambo, F.F. Tembe, *Bilingual Education in Mozambique: Nowadays Situation*, 2008, at <<http://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/Legacy/sitefiles/file/46/10824/mozambiquepresentation.pdf>>, 25 September 2016. See more about language policy of Mozambique and the perception of Portuguese colonial legacy: J. Mormul, "Portuguese Colonial Legacy...", pp. 56-60.

²¹ H.H. do Couto, F. Embaló, "Literatura, língua e cultura na Guiné-Bissau", *PAPIA. Revista Brasileira de Estudos do Contato Linguístico*, vol. 20 (2010), pp. 45-47; S. Moreira, "Cabo Verde: O Crioulo no Dia da Língua Portuguesa", *Global Voices*, at <<https://pt.globalvoices.org/2011/05/05/cabo-verde-o-crioulo-no-dia-da-lingua-portuguesa/>>, 4 December 2020; "Governo aberto para debater elevação do crioulo a língua oficial em Cabo Verde", *Observador*, at <<https://observador.pt/2020/02/06/governo-aberto-para-debater-elevacao-do-crioulo-a-lingua-oficial-em-cabo-verde/>>, 4 December 2020; "Entrevista: Secretário da Cultura da Guiné-Bissau quer crioulo guineense como língua oficial", *ONU News*, at <<https://news.un.org/pt/story/2020/02/1705191>>, 4 December 2020.

the nation. This view was shared by his successor Samora Machel – first president of the independent Mozambique, who saw the greatest threat to the newly created state in its linguistic and religious diversity. Today, Portuguese language is much more spoken in Mozambique than during the struggle for independence. The Mozambican authorities have done a lot for the dissemination of the Portuguese language, but not because of a project called Lusophony, but in their own national interest, trying to maintain internal cohesion, while simultaneously creating their own national identity.²² This pragmatic view regarding the utility of Portuguese language was shared by Amílcar Cabral, the father of the independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde, in his words: *if we want to develop the nation, write, make academic progress, our language must be Portuguese. The only thing we can thank the Portuguese for is leaving us their language, after they had robbed us on our own land.*²³

The dissemination of the Portuguese language is only one of three main objectives of the CPLP, but it seems to be the one to which the CPLP has been most committed since the very beginning, as it was basing its own existence on the lusophone project. The organisation's low activity in other fields, however, met a lot of criticism, sometimes in a very harsh form, like in the words of the man considered the author of the term "Lusophony" – Fernando dos Santos Neves, who compared the CPLP to "a stillborn fetus" (*um nado-morto*). In fact, since the very creation of the CPLP, it was visible that each member state has a different hierarchy of priorities for the future of the organisation. Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe were first and foremost interested in stimulating their economic development, while Angola and Brazil placed cultural and technical cooperation at the top of their agenda. At the same time former colonial power, Portugal favoured a political-diplomatic consultation.²⁴ Although the objectives of the newly created organisation were ambitious as befits the first serious Portuguese attempt to frame the relations with its former colonies, in the first years after its establishment, the CPLP's efforts were not very visible on the international scene and included almost only cultural and technical cooperation. The exception was the organisation's involvement in the peace-making process in Guinea-Bissau during its 1998-1999 civil war. Both of Guinea-Bissau's neighbours, former French colonies, Senegal and Guinea sent their troops to intervene in the conflict on behalf of the President João-Bernardo Vieira. The move that had been encouraged (at least partially) by France, "what was seen as yet another French 'incursion' into the 'lusophone space' in west Africa", and, in consequence, motivated greater involvement of the CPLP. Furthermore, a successful peace-making intervention could be an opportunity to advance with the lusophone 'project', especially in the context of a certain "Francophonisation" already in place in Guinea-Bissau, which will be discussed later in the article. The CPLP achieved a considerable success as a mediator in the early stage of the conflict, however, later its

²² M. Couto, "Afonía luzofónica...", pp. 126-130; J. Mormul, "Portuguese Colonial Legacy...", pp. 57-58.

²³ I. Intumbo, "Gwinejska Wieża Babel", transl. by W. Orlńska, *Zupełnie inny świat*, vol. 38, no. 1 (2020), p. 9. (Author's translation).

²⁴ J.F. Pinto, "Da CPLP à Comunidade Lusófona...", pp. 3-4.

efforts were overshadowed by the ECOWAS. The latter was a regional organisation, valued by the United Nations, while the CPLP, not so far from the then stance of its own members – Angola and Brazil, was perceived as a mere “cultural” institution. Nonetheless, the organisation bore the real costs of its involvement, as Norrie MacQueen summed it up: *In Africa, Portugal was denounced for neo-colonialist meddling in Guiné and did not receive the absolution for its imperial past that it sought. In Europe, Franco-Portuguese relations were, at least momentarily, damaged by suspicion and recrimination.*²⁵

Having in mind the Guinean-Bissau crisis in the 1990s, the possibility (or the necessity) of cooperation in the field of defence (inscribed in the CPLP primary objectives) started to be perceived from a different angle. Since 2000 the CPLP has begun to organise joint and combined military exercises series – *Exercício Felino*, which has been developed in the framework of military and technical cooperation. The aim of these exercises is to enable interoperability of their respective armed forces and organise a joint action of the Lusophone states’ forces to use in peace operations under the aegis of the United Nations.²⁶

In the last decade, the CPLP has continued to expand the catalogue of the areas of cooperation. Among most recent initiatives of the organisation related to the general direction the CPLP is heading, two issues deserve particular attention. First and foremost, the Portuguese government’s proposal made in 2015 to introduce freedom of movement and of residence between the CPLP member states. At first, the idea was met with a rather cool reception in Brazil, but over time it has gained favour with all the member states. In the case of its implementation, it would be a milestone in the development of the CPLP, the effects of which would be tangible for ordinary citizens, who so far have often criticised the “invisible” activities of the organisation. Unfortunately, the future mobility scheme will be limited by short-stay visas because of the Schengen Agreement, of which Portugal is part of.²⁷ However, as it has been declared by

²⁵ N. MacQueen, “A Community of Illusions? Portugal, the CPLP and Peacemaking in Guiné-Bissau”, *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 10, no. 2 (2003), pp. 1-2, 15; N. MacQueen, “Re-defining the ‘African Vocation’: Portugal’s Post-Colonial Identity Crisis”, *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2003), pp. 196-197; J. Mormul, “Historyczno-polityczne uwarunkowania kryzysów państwowości w Gwinei Bissau”, *Afryka*, vol. 46 (2017), pp. 46-47. On the other hand, getting involved in the internal problems of one of its members – Guinea-Bissau has always brought the CPLP into the PR-trouble. The presence of Portugal in the organisation ever and again brings the accusation of neo-colonialism, sometimes in an unexpected way, such as in October 2012, when the Guinean-Bissau Communications Minister Fernando Vaz accused Portugal and the CPLP of backing a coup attempt, when a group of gunmen attacked the military barracks in the capital Bissau. Earlier the same year the CPLP had been involved, together with other regional organisations, in seeking a solution to the coup d’état that took place in April 2012. “Guinea-Bissau Accuses Portugal of Coup Bid”, *Al Jazeera*, at <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2012/10/22/guinea-bissau-accuses-portugal-of-coup-bid>>, 29 November 2020.

²⁶ Each year’s exercises took place in one of the CPLP countries and have different fictional training scenario that often takes into account the local political and historical contexts. V. Martins, “The Armies of Common Language: CPLP’s Felino Exercises”, *IPRIS Lusophone Countries Bulletin*, vol. 17 (2011), pp. 12-13, at <<http://www.ipris.org/?page=pub&id=Z>>, 5 December 2020.

²⁷ It only exempts Brazil and East Timor.

Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs Augusto Santos Silva, in the case of longer stays with educational, work or business purposes, Portugal will be able to follow regime of maximum freedom of movement within the CPLP member states, as these provisions are of national nature. The adoption of the final document on mobility has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic to the next Summit of Heads of State and Government, scheduled for July 2021 in Luanda.²⁸ The second issue that could define the future of the CPLP is greater emphasis that is being put on economic matters, which is confirmed by the changed attitude of the two leading economies in the CPLP: Brazil and Angola. In the Brazilian case an increasing interest in the African continent already began during the presidency of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and was continued by his successor, Dilma Rousseff.²⁹ This impulse lost momentum after the 2018 presidential elections won by Jair Bolsonaro, but then Angola, whose future presidency of the CPLP will start in 2021 with a delay caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, stepped into the breach and it is projected that the Angolan presidency will be aiming to strengthen the economic pillar of the organization.³⁰ The importance of such a move can be enormous, as it is worth remembering that economic issues have not been a priority for this organization since its foundation and they are not even specifically mentioned in the CPLP's primary objectives.

Looking at the challenges faced by the CPLP, we cannot forget about the problem of overlapping membership. The issue all the African regional integration organisations are familiar with. With regard to the CPLP, two member states deserve special attention: Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. Squeezed into the francophone West Africa, with Senegal and Guinea as its neighbours, both former French colonies, Guinea-Bissau has been exposed to francophone influences since gaining independence in 1974. In 1979 it joined International Organisation of La Francophonie, according to

²⁸ M. Filho, "Portugal quer liberdade de circulação e residência entre países lusófonos: Brasil enxerga ideia com cautela", *BBC News Brasil*, at <https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/noticias/2015/12/151217_portugal_circulacao_paises_rm>, 5 December 2020; "Mobilidade vai aprofundar sentimento de comunidade na CPLP, diz chefe da diplomacia brasileira", *RTP Notícias*, at <https://www.rtp.pt/noticias/mundo/mobilidade-vai-aprofundar-sentimento-de-comunidade-na-cplp-diz-chefe-da-diplomacia-brasileira_n1191823>, 6 December 2020; "Schengen Agreement Limits Mobility in the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries", *Macau Hub*, at <<https://macauhub.com.mo/2019/06/13/pt-acordo-de-schengen-condiciona-mobilidade-na-comunidade-dos-paises-de-lingua-portuguesa/>>, 5 December 2020; "Aprovação de documento final sobre mobilidade na CPLP passa para julho de 2021", *RTP Notícias*, at <https://www.rtp.pt/noticias/economia/aprovacao-de-documento-final-sobre-mobilidade-na-cplp-passa-para-julho-de-2021_n1271229>, 6 December 2020.

²⁹ N. Kozloff, "Is Brazil the Inheritor of the Portuguese Empire in Africa?", *Al Jazeera*, at <<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2012/9/30/is-brazil-the-inheritor-of-the-portuguese-empire-in-africa/>>, 29 November 2020. Brazil and Portugal have also been long involved in a number of development aid activities provided to other CPLP members. W.E. Hewitt, S. Burges, I. Gomes, "The Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa at 20 Years: An Impact Assessment", *South African Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 24, no. 3 (2017), p. 296.

³⁰ "Futura presidência angolana vai dar impulso ao pilar económico da CPLP, diz secretário-executivo", *RTP Notícias*, at <https://www.rtp.pt/noticias/economia/futura-presidencia-angolana-vai-dar-impulso-ao-pilar-economico-da-cplp-diz-secretario-executivo_n1195195>, 6 December 2020.

which in 2010 247,000 Bissau-Guineans spoke French (as a foreign language), which was around 15 per cent of the Guinea-Bissau's population.³¹ Further "francophonisation", so feared by Portugal, took place in 1997, when Guinea-Bissau joined the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), becoming its only non-francophone member.³² As a consequence of this decision, Guinea-Bissau adopted West African CFA franc (XOF) as its currency and entered the customs union between WAEMU states. As WAEMU was established in the framework of the ECOWAS, it is worth to mention that Guinea-Bissau is one of the founding members of this organisation after having signed the Treaty of Lagos in 1975.³³

In the case of Mozambique, the challenge for its membership in the CPLP is related to the proximity with the anglophone world. In 1995 Mozambique joined the Commonwealth as the first state without colonial ties with the United Kingdom.³⁴ Although it can be perceived as some form of distancing from the former metropole, it was rather a pragmatic act that acknowledged the realities of Mozambique's regional situation, influenced by former British colonies – members of the Commonwealth. It should be noted, however, that among Luso-African states Mozambique had always been the least enthusiastic of language-based institutions (even when Portugal was not part of them, i.e. PALOP).³⁵ Furthermore, Mozambique, as well as Angola, is the founding member of Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).³⁶ According to the *Africa Regional Integration Index* (ARII) that measures the extent to which a given African state meets its commitments under various Pan-African frameworks, Mozambique is the second most integrated member of the SADC (after South Africa), while Angola is second least integrated (after the Democratic Republic of the Congo).³⁷ The same low level of

³¹ "Guinée-Bissau", *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*, at <<https://www.francophonie.org/guinee-bissau-959>>, 4 December 2020.

³² Also known by its French acronym – UEMOA (*Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine*).

³³ "About UEMOA", *West African Economic and Monetary Union*, at <<http://www.uemoa.int/en/about-uemoa>>, 30 November 2020; P. Masson, C. Pattillo, "Monetary Union in West Africa (ECOWAS). Is It Desirable and How Could It Be Achieved?", *International Monetary Fund*, Occasional Paper no. 204 (2001), at <<https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/nft/op/204/>>, 30 November 2020. Guinea-Bissau is also a member of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD). "Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)", *Mapping African Regional Cooperation, European Council on Foreign Relations*, at <<https://ecfr.eu/special/african-cooperation/censad/>>, 5 December 2020.

³⁴ In 2009, another African state without British colonial past – Rwanda was also admitted to the Commonwealth.

³⁵ N. MacQueen, "Re-defining the 'African Vocation'...", p. 195. In 2003 one of Mozambique's neighbours – Zimbabwe (at the time governed by Robert Mugabe) withdrew its membership from the Commonwealth after the disputed elections. In 2018 the new Zimbabwean president Emmerson Mnangagwa applied to rejoin the association. "Zimbabwe Applies to Rejoin Commonwealth", *Al Jazeera*, at <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/5/22/zimbabwe-applies-to-rejoin-commonwealth>>, 30 November 2020.

³⁶ In 1980, both were among the African states that signed the Lusaka Declaration that established the SADC's predecessor the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC).

³⁷ The CPLP is not recognized by the African Union as one of the eight African regional economic communities, thus it has never been included in the ARII.

integration has been achieved by Angola in the other regional integration organisation, of which it is member – Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).³⁸

LUSO-AFRICAN IDENTITY AND HISTORICAL BAGGAGE OF LUSOTROPICALISM

The basis of Luso-African identity is Lusophony, which is something more than a shared language, something more than a common, often difficult and painful colonial past, yet still something less than already shaped cultural identity, although aspiring to being one. The concept of cultural identity is used in relation to both collective and individual identity. In the case of cultural identity in collective terms, their essence is culture (e.g. national or ethnic identities). While in regard to individual cultural identity, we are dealing with a certain set of identifications (national, ethnic, religious, territorial, linguistic) which, when taken together, constitute an individual's cultural identity.³⁹ The notion of collective cultural identity is broad and overlapped by disputes regarding its definition, concepts or cultural divisions, as well as the fact of being connected not only with nations, but also with racial, religious, ethnic, territorial or linguistic communities.⁴⁰ In the specificity of the postcolonial context, Stuart Hall distinguished two moments of cultural reconstruction after colonialism. First, when cultural identity is regarded as static and stable – *a collective true self which people with a shared history and genealogy have in common*. In consequence, such a group of people is provided with *a stable, unchanging and continuous framework of meaning and reference*, the examples of such cultural reconstruction we can find in the Black Power movement, the concept of *négritude* embodied by Leopold Sédar Senghor and Aimé Césaire, or Pan-Africanism.⁴¹ The second moment of cultural reconstruction is when the colonised cultural identity is seen as *discontinuous, heterogenous, and fragmented*. *Cultural identity in this sense is as much a process of becoming as a state of being*. In consequence, cultural identity is seen as a construct, a constant process of change, incessantly reinvented. A certain explication of cultural identity understood in this way can be found in the concept of hybridity explained by Homi Bhabha in his *Location of Culture*.⁴² *Cultural identity, in this*

³⁸ *African Regional Integration Index*, African Union Commission, African Development Bank, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, at <<https://www.integrate-africa.org>>, 1 December 2020. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has also its own web platform for ARII: *Africa Regional Integration Index (ARII) Platform*, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, at <<https://arii.uneca.org/en-US>>, 1 December 2020. More about regional economic integration in Africa: J. Garlińska-Bielawska, *Regionalna integracja gospodarcza w Afryce w świetle teorii i doświadczeń państw afrykańskich*, Kraków 2019.

³⁹ The concept of cultural identity adapted in this way is used in psychology.

⁴⁰ P. Ścigaj, *Tożsamość narodowa. Zarys problematyki*, Kraków 2012, pp. 191-192.

⁴¹ H. Wasserman, "Postcolonial Cultural Identity in Recent Afrikaans Literary Texts", *Journal of Literary Studies*, vol. 16, no. 3-4 (2000), pp. 94-95; S. Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora", in J. Rutherford (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, London 1990, pp. 223-224.

⁴² H. Wasserman, "Postcolonial Cultural Identity...", pp. 95-96.

*second sense, is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation.*⁴³

The future of the Luso-African identity lies in this process of constant change and the attempts to adapt Lusophony not only to the needs of the states and societies that constitute it, but also to the changing international environment. Meanwhile, one can get the impression that the entire Lusophony project intends to give it more static and stable institutional dimension, to some extent being the consequence of the politics of colonial times. Former Portuguese colonies in Africa are haunted by the theory of Lusotropicalism and its belief of the uniqueness of Portuguese colonial empire.⁴⁴ Its author, a Brazilian sociologist and anthropologist, Gilberto Freyre, emphasized the role of black people in shaping Brazilian society and drew attention to the specificity of Portuguese colonialism. The Portuguese as a tropical nation themselves, could adapt more easily to the conditions in the colonies, moreover, they were devoid of racial prejudice and had a unique tendency to miscegenation. Already in the 1930s, Lusotropicalism appealed to Portuguese intellectuals. It was recognized by senior state officials who convinced António de Oliveira Salazar that it was the ideal ideological foundation for Portuguese colonial policy. In consequence, Lusotropicalism was popularized among broader social masses, justifying the need to maintain the colonial empire and intensify colonisation efforts. According to this theory, Portuguese colonisers were better than the colonisers of other colonial powers, because they were devoid of racism.⁴⁵ Such visions aroused national pride and strengthened the attachment of the Portuguese to colonial possessions that were already treated as an integral part of the state.⁴⁶ Lusotropicalism has become a Portuguese version of the "White Man's burden" – a mission-of-civilization towards people at a lower level of development, perceived as a gift that Portuguese colonisers, devoid of prejudice, carry to colonised people, for example, by entering into interracial sexual relations with them.⁴⁷ These ideas and beliefs are also reflected in Portuguese propaganda posters, distributed by the Portuguese Armed Forces (*Forças Armadas*

⁴³ S. Hall, "Cultural Identity...", p. 225.

⁴⁴ The fragment on Lusotropicalism was partially adapted from the "Lusotropicalism" section of the article J. Mormul, "Portuguese Colonial Legacy...", pp. 48-50.

⁴⁵ Interestingly, such beliefs seem to be still alive in the Portuguese society. During her visits to Portugal, the author has heard such references in the informal talks with educated Portuguese people, indicating the distinction of Portuguese colonisation from other European colonial powers' policy, and above all emphasizing the lack of racism among the Portuguese, which can be "proved" by numerous mixed relationships leading to miscegenation. These beliefs have been challenged by Joana Gorjão Henriques in her book *Racismo em Português. O Lado Esquecido do Colonialismo*, Lisboa 2016.

⁴⁶ W. Charchalis, "Lusotropicalizm – dwa przypadki transatlantyckiej wymiany tej samej idei", in J. Łapott, E. Prądzyńska (eds.), *Ex Africa semper aliquid novi*, vol. 1, Żory 2014, pp. 126-131.

⁴⁷ P. Duara, "Between Empire and Nation: Settler Colonialism in Manchukuo", in C. Elkins, S. Pedersen (eds.) *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century*, Abingdon–New York 2005, pp. 70-71; R. Kłoso-wicz, *Państwa dysfunkcyjne w Afryce Subsaharyjskiej*, in Idem (ed.), *Państwa dysfunkcyjne i międzynarodowe wysiłki zmierzające do ich naprawy*, Kraków 2014, pp. 15-16.

Portuguesas) during the ongoing national liberation wars in Luso-Africa, two examples of these are provided below. The first one (Illustration 1), entitled *Muitas raças, Todos portugueses* (“Many races, all Portuguese”) fits in with the image of the Portuguese colonialism devoid of racism. While the second (Illustration 2) *Povo português é povo africano* (“Portuguese people are African people”) reflects the unity of the Portuguese and Africans. The figures on the poster embracing each other can symbolize the friendship between them and the “natural” presence of the Portuguese on the African continent.



Illustration 1. *Muitas raças, Todos portugueses* (“Many races, all Portuguese”) – one of the propaganda posters collected between 1969 and 1971, preserved and digitalized by Fernando Hipólito, a Portuguese veteran of the war in Angola.⁴⁸

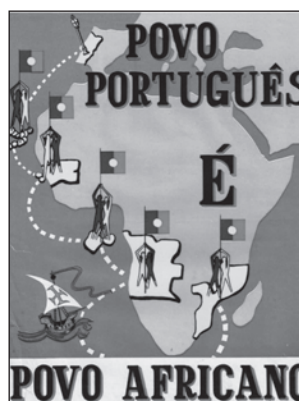


Illustration 2. *Povo português é povo africano* (“Portuguese people are African people”) – one of the propaganda posters collected between 1969 and 1971, preserved and digitalized by Fernando Hipólito, a Portuguese veteran of the war in Angola.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ “Guiné 63/74 – P12970: Os Nossos Cartazes de Propaganda (2): Parte II (Fernando Hipólito): O Portugal pluricontinental e plurirracial”, *Luís Graça e Camaradas da Guiné – blogue coletivo*, at <<https://blogueforanadaevaotres.blogspot.com/2014/04/guine-6374-p12970-os-nossos-cartazes-de.html>>, 30 November 2020.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

However, in reality Portugal's policy towards its colonies was far from such clichés as those presented by the Lusotropicalism theory. In the light of the most important colonial documents, such as: *Estatuto Político, Social e Criminal dos Indígenas de Angola e Moçambique* (1926), *Ato Colonial* (1930), *Carta Orgânica do Império Colonial Português e Reforma Administrativa Ultramarina* (1933), and *Estatuto dos Indígenas Portugueses das Províncias da Guiné, Angola e Moçambique* (1954) the indigenous population of the colony did not have in fact any public rights, but instead it could be forced to work on various types of public utility projects, such as the construction of a road or a bridge, in the form of so-called *contratados* ("contractors"). There was also a category of *assimilado* ("assimilated") – a Europeanized native who lived according to the social rules of the coloniser.⁵⁰ Until the early 1960s, a native who wanted to receive such a status had to demonstrate an excellent knowledge of Portuguese language in speech and writing, have a certain income, submit a number of documents and certificates, as well as pay the stamp duty.⁵¹ Even though such a candidate obtained Portuguese citizenship, he was not equal to white Portuguese citizens, even if they were the poorest illiterates. Furthermore, an *assimilado* always had to carry an identity card with him to be able to "prove his citizenship". He was paid less than a white settler in the same position, and in socio-cultural matters it was somewhat "required" from him to distance himself from the local community.⁵² As can be seen, the system introduced by the Portuguese did not have so much in common with all these grandiloquent slogans of 'predestination to colonialism' and 'better colonisers' embedded in the theory of Lusotropicalism.

The concept of Lusotropicalism and the exceptionalism of the Portuguese colonisers was already criticised in the mid- and late 20th century scholarship on Portuguese colonialism (the concept itself was especially popular in the 1950s). Among its critics was also Amílcar Cabral who expressed it in his foreword to Basil Davidson's book *The Liberation of Guiné: Aspects of an African revolution* (1969). The sole idea of Lusophony seemed to be, however, much more acceptable. In addition to its practical dimensions, important from the point of view of the newly emerged postcolonial states (which was discussed earlier), Portuguese language could be seen as a metaphor for a shared cultural identity which has today a strong transnational dimension and, in consequence, in the future could be considered as superior to any national identity, if needed.⁵³ It is worth mentioning here that among Portuguese colonies in Africa we

⁵⁰ W. Charchalis, "Luzotropikalizm...", pp. 125-126; M.P.G. Meneses, "O 'indígena' africano e o colono 'europeu': a construção da diferença por processos legais", *Identidades, cidadanias e Estado*, no. 7 (2010), e-cadernos CES, at <https://www.ces.uc.pt/myces/UserFiles/livros/693_04%2520-%2520Paula%-2520Meneses%252023_06.pdf>, 18 October 2018.

⁵¹ Among the requirements for the *assimilados* in Guinea-Bissau was also indicated a certificate of "good behavior" issued by the authorities of a district inhabited by a person applying for such a status. P.K. Mendy, "Portugal's Civilizing Mission in Colonial Guinea-Bissau: Rhetoric and Reality", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 36, no. 1 (2003), pp. 42-43, 57.

⁵² W. Minter, *Portuguese Africa and the West*, London–New York 1973, pp. 19-21.

⁵³ R. Fasselt, "Towards a 'New Africanity': Southern Connectivities and Lusofonia in Imraan Coovadia's Alternate History in The Institute for Taxi Poetry", *Current Writing: Texts and Reception in Southern Africa*, vol. 28, no. 1 (2016), pp. 29-30.

can distinguish settler colonies (Mozambique, Angola) and the rest of the territories, constituted of small colonies in West Africa (two island nations: Cabo Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Portuguese Guinea – today, Guinea-Bissau). After Portugal's withdrawal from Angola in 1975, hundreds of thousands of white Portuguese settlers fled to the metropole.⁵⁴ This stream of so-called *retornados* is now considered the largest 'reversed migration' from Africa to Europe since the events in Algeria in the beginning of 1960s. In case of Mozambique the *retornados* issue was not so dramatic, but instead much more protracted. Portuguese settlers in Mozambique were of rather conservative views and the Marxist policy of the newly independent state did not really suit them. Moreover, similarly as in Angola but apparently sharper, there were still unresolved disputes between recently independent state and the former coloniser over financial issues, so-called *contenciosos*.⁵⁵ In settler colonies there were also relatively small groups of Portuguese that after the decolonisation did not leave. They felt that Mozambique or Angola are their true homeland and were often involved in the anti-colonial struggle. One of the most known examples is the already mentioned Mozambican writer and poet Mia Couto (born in colonial Mozambique in 1955), once an active member of FRELIMO. An example from another generation is Luaty Beirão (born in 1981, both him and his parents were born in Angola) – an Angolan rapper (known under his stage name Ikonoklasta) and anti-corruption activist whose father was a well-known member of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*, MPLA).⁵⁶ The presence of the "Portuguese" Angolans or "Portuguese" Mozambicans can be of additional value to the efforts aiming at spreading and preserving the Portuguese language, although their importance in this particular field should not be overestimated, perhaps more significant is the growing influx of labour immigrants from Portugal, experienced by both Angola and Mozambique.⁵⁷

Wojciech Charchalis, however, sees the Lusophony as postcolonial Portuguese ideology, neo-imperial in its character and deeply rooted in the Salazarist propaganda.

⁵⁴ Before independence, Portuguese Angola was fourth colony in Sub-Saharan Africa with the largest number of white settlers on its territory. R. Kłosowicz, *Konteksty dysfunkcyjności państw Afryki Subsaharyjskiej*, Kraków 2017, p. 156.

⁵⁵ N. MacQueen, "Re-defining the 'African Vocation'...", pp. 190-193; B.C. Reis, P.A. Oliveira, "The Power and Limits of Cultural Myths in Portugal's Search for a Post-Imperial Role", *The International History Review*, vol. 40, no. 3 (2018), p. 639.

⁵⁶ In 2016, Luaty Beirão was sentenced to five and a half years in prison for allegedly planning a revolution against the then president of Angola José Eduardo dos Santos (who ruled Angola between 1979 and 2017). Along with Beirão sixteen other activists were given jail terms. They were arrested after discussing in their book club Gene Sharp's *From Dictatorship to Democracy: A Conceptual Framework for Liberation*. He was later released after three months in prison, including 36 days of hunger strike. "Angolan Rapper Luaty Beirão Jailed for Rebellion", *BBC News*, at <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35912505>>, 10 July 2020; L. Beirão, "Grande Entrevista", *RTP*, episode 42, at <<https://www.rtp.pt/play/p2234/e263226/grande-entrevista>>, 10 July 2020.

⁵⁷ Observation and informal talks conducted by the author's during field research in Mozambique in April 2015.

This is confirmed, in his opinion, by references to the theory of Lusotropicalism made by leading Portuguese politicians.⁵⁸ The best example is Mário Soares (President of Portugal 1986-1996), who in the 1950s and 1960s was an opponent of Lusotropicalism used by the Portuguese regime at that time, while years later during one of his official state visits to Brazil, expressed a wish to visit the grave of Gilberto Freyre, whom he could not praise more at that occasion. Over the years Portugal's experience in Africa has been much mythologised compared to other colonial powers. To quote Norrie MacQueen: *The cultural roots of the Estado Novo were to be found in this dark psycho-political loam and the African empire provided an essentially inward-looking Portugal with a consoling sense of itself through the years of economic stagnation, political repression and diplomatic isolation.*⁵⁹ This powerful myth about special relation between Portugal and its African colonies has been kept alive after the decolonisation, when in its new version the shared liberation struggle with an oppressive regime was strongly emphasised, what once again was to confirm the uniqueness of Portuguese colonisation.⁶⁰

CONCLUSION

Searching for the correlation between the Luso-African identity and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), one definitely can find it, as they are inextricably linked by the idea of Lusophony. This connection, however, raises a number of opportunities, as well as threats. As Portuguese researchers Bruno C. Reis and Pedro A. Oliveira remarked: *What cannot be in any doubt, however, is that the idea of Portuguese language as a shared community marker is not simple poetry – even if any literate Portuguese speaker will know Fernando Pessoa's famous verse: a minha pátria é a língua portuguesa (my homeland is the Portuguese language).*⁶¹

South African writer Imraan Coovadia in his novel *The Institute for Taxi Poetry* (2012) presents an alternate history of the world colonised by the Portuguese and post-colonial reality with a dominant role of Brazil. A world that confirms the ideas of Gilberto Freyre and the uniqueness of the Portuguese colonialism, a world with the prevalence of Lusophony. In this fictional literary world, the Portuguese colonialism is not “semiperipheral” or “subaltern” in comparison with, for example, British colonial rule, but rather the dominant colonial power, whose language in the postcolonial world is the language of prestige and domination, not only in literature, but in wider culture, politics, or economics.⁶² Without the possibility of turning back time, this literary

⁵⁸ W. Charchalis, “Lusofonia – entre mito, história e futuro”, *Studia Romanica Posnaniensia*, vol. 46, no. 3 (2019), pp. 96-99.

⁵⁹ N. MacQueen, “Re-defining the ‘African Vocation’...”, p. 182.

⁶⁰ B.C. Reis, P.A. Oliveira, “The Power and Limits...”, p. 633.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 648.

⁶² R. Fasselt, “Towards a ‘New Africanity’...”, pp. 26-27, 29-31; B. de Sousa Santos, “Between Prospero and Caliban: Colonialism, Postcolonialism, and Inter-identity”, *Luso-Brazilian Review*, vol. 39, no. 2 (2002), pp. 9-12, 19-20.

vision of the world is not likely to threaten us. Among the accusations of neocolonialism and modern Portuguese *soft power*, an increasing role of Brazil, position of Portuguese language threatened by progressive creolophony (Guinea-Bissau, Cabo Verde) and bantuphony (Mozambique), as well as the necessity of maintaining the attractiveness of the CPLP membership, the future of the Lusophony and Luso-African identity is of very dynamic and often uncertain nature.⁶³ It may also turn out that we are unnecessarily looking for a common Luso-African denominator. The critics of the Lusophony point out that there is no one Lusophone culture (or Luso-African one), because the fact of using the same language does not mean that we are immediately representatives of the same culture, while it is supposed to be the culture of such a huge and heterogeneous area. In an interview given a few years ago, Eugeniusz Rzewuski, former lecturer at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo and former Polish ambassador to Angola, expressed the opinion that there is no point in comparing the contemporary fate of the former Portuguese colonies, because these countries are different like “the five divorced wives of a polygamist”.⁶⁴ What if he was right?

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⁶³ W. Charchalis, “Lusofonia – entre mito...”, p. 96.

⁶⁴ E. Rzewuski, M. Lipszyc, “Pięć rozwiedzionych żon poligamisty”, *Literatura na Świecie*, vol. 490-491, no. 5-6 (2012), pp. 376-397.

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