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## The Works of Sísifo: Memories and Identities of the Portuguese in Africa according to Fiction Films of the Twentieth Century

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### Abstract

The genealogy of Lusophony may be seen as an intersection of different memories, shaped through several temporal strata. The disparate senses of identity that are evoked by those memories are multiple and frequently opposite. The different narratives, that circulate on a given and identified cultural and linguistic space, always use the metaphor of the mirror, where people is seen through the dualities of 'we/others', 'inside/outside', 'civilized/wild', etc. Far from being a schema only applied to the colonizer/colonized, this paper focuses on how Portuguese identities still live under several *aporia* in these post-colonial times. It's inside these dynamic oppositions, mixing imagery, symbols and the reality that identities are built and rebuilt, nowadays under the strong influence of cultural industries that reflect, feed and transform our imagination. It is on this theoretical ground that we will try to understand two particular dimensions of the Portuguese colonial memories, which have left a deep and a long lasting trace in our colonial narratives, and also in colonialist and 'retornados' (returnees) identities.

Our study will focus on three movies made in Portugal during the 20th century. We conclude that the first and second examples (*Chaimite* and *O Zé do Burro*, respectively), compile an individual story and memory of the subjects and the groups which always serve the memories of the History of Portugal and of the Portuguese.

On the contrary, the film that we analyzed which was made post-April 25th, *Tempestade da Terra*, addresses the History, the individual story and the national memory that comprises multiple individual stories and diverse memories.

Finally, our study reveals the possibility of representing the reality of colonialism and post-colonialism in terms of the great diversity of relations between one side and the other.

### Keywords

Lusophony, memories, identity, (post-)colonialism, Portuguese movies

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## INTRODUCTION

Far from being a static repository of information, memory is one of the fundamental elements which constitutes identities, whether individual or collective. In terms of individual and collective memories, it may also be said that one inspires the other, and vice-versa, as they cyclically convene in tasks which reconstruct this sense of memory (Candau, 1996). This paper consists of the analysis of the relationships between identity and memory, as a kind of task which is very close to the works of Sísifo, in the context of the constitution of

autonomous subjects and communities which are free and self-regulated. Memory functions not only with self-identity but also with the identity of the other which is constantly mediated, regulated, thought and frequently legitimised and established in power relationship contexts where subjects and the communities interact. In their diversity, cultural products express and sometimes stabilize, through distinct languages, the state of those power relations. At times, they question them, other times they can justify and naturalise them, whether or not this is a conscious objective (Cabecinhas, 2007). One of the most impressive examples of self-identity and self-memory manipulation (and thus, simultaneous manipulation of the other identity and memory) was the process of colonisation, which the Europeans brought to bear in various corners of the world, and in its most intense form, at the end of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Africa.

This current study is specifically dedicated towards analysing the relations between the memory and the identity of the colonial Portuguese in Africa, based on the manner in which they were represented in Portuguese cinema until the end of the twentieth century. Three examples were chosen (two feature-length fictional films and one comedy), which we considered pertinent in terms of how the Portuguese represented their own identity as agents of civilisation for the African people. Without being an analysis of the importance of cinema, as a creator and an activator of images, identities and memories, this study also intends to underline the fecundity of this area of research, which, in Portugal, takes its first steps towards a serious and systematic investigation in the area of Cultural Studies, and more specifically, in the dominion of post-colonial Portuguese studies<sup>1</sup>.

### **FROM COLONIALISM TO POST-COLONIALISM: MEMORIES, IMAGES AND REPRESENTATIONS OF IDENTITIES**

The colonising presence of the Portuguese in Africa during the twentieth century greatly interests us, in two major areas: firstly to understand the way in which the memory and the Portuguese cultural identity was transformed during this century, specifically in terms of the Portuguese who went to Africa and established themselves there, and on the other hand, the way in which the new land was reinvented, in their memory identities, auto and hetero representations, when they had to return to the *Metrópole*, following the Revolution of the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, 1974 (Lourenço, 1983).

But, as identity is always created in a relationship context, considering that it is only with the other that it can be constructed and defined (Baptista, 2007), we also need to understand and discuss the image and the representation of the other African, which would have been predominantly – and sometimes simultaneously - ‘indigenous’, ‘black’, ‘mulatto’, or even ‘assimilated’ (Cunha, 1994, 1995), as defined by the Portuguese of the Colonial Empire, in the territory that was subsequently designated as *Províncias Ultramarinas*.<sup>2</sup>

In effect, from a global perspective and from the point of view of the question that interests us in this context, the cultural identity of the Portuguese in Africa during the

<sup>1</sup> A very interesting study which inaugurated this subject of research in Portugal in terms of Cultural Studies and Post-Colonial Cultural Studies (Vieira, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> *Províncias Ultramarinas* is a Portuguese term to describe the Overseas Territories belonging to Portugal.

twentieth century passed through three distinct phases, which are articulated by three different modes and contexts in the Portuguese collective memory:

- a first phase, which we designate as 'The Invention of an Empire', lasting until the mid-1950s (which we highlight as a point of departure for the following phase, the revision of the Portuguese Constitution in 1951, which changed the political statute of the Colonies, but also Gilbert Freyre's programme of luso-tropicalism, which, from 1953, was gradually extended throughout the Portuguese Empire, with the objective to legitimise Portuguese colonisation in the context of constant international pressure to decolonise);
- a second phase, which we refer to as 'A special kind of Portuguese Colonialism' - which began in the mid 1950s and ended with the Carnation Revolution on the 25th of April, 1974, and the subsequent decolonisation, which obliged the Portuguese in Africa to return en masse to the Metropole;
- a third phase, which began at a time whence Portugal received half a million 'returners' from the 'ex-colonies' over just a few months, if we consider only those who travelled by air, but also, until the end of the century, those from the overseas provinces. Thus, after a brief pause, the discussions about the memories and the representations of Africa and of Portugal after 'returning' began to emerge in great quantity, diversity and depth between the Portuguese who lived in Africa. We identified this phase with the generic title of 'Exiled from no land'.

In order to illustrate and explain the complex dynamics which can be observed in each of these periods, in terms of the construction of memories and of identities, we use Portuguese cinema as a privileged scope of observation, which shapes and re-elaborates - in its own language (visual, metaphoric, symbolic and poetic) - the memories and identities of the Portuguese in Africa, as seen from the point of view of both the Metropole and the African territories under Portuguese jurisdiction<sup>3</sup>.

Thus, we use the film *Chaimite* (Canto, 1953) to evoke some of the identity traits and the memory of the Portuguese in Africa in the period which we designate 'The Invention of an Empire'. We subsequently discuss the film *O Zé do Burro* (Ferreira, 1971); in order to illustrate the turning point of a new representation of Africa which we call "a special kind of Portuguese Colonialism". Finally, we approach a recent post-colonial film, *A Tempestade da Terra* (Silva, 1997), which documents a process of profound reconstruction of the identity and memories reconstruction of the Portuguese returning from Africa who, finally, may be considered 'Exiled from no land'.

Aside from this discussion of relations between cinema, cultural identity and collective memory, we must also highlight the epistemological point of departure of this study. In effect,

<sup>3</sup> Based on a similar body of work research, Seabra (2011) provided a different view by using a different analytical and theoretical field of research. While we conduct our analysis in terms of Cultural Studies/Post-Colonialism (Barker, 2008), Seabra views this material specifically in terms of History. On the other hand, contrary to the work cited, these are not the representations of the Portuguese Empire with which we are primarily concerned in our research, but rather the cultural identity/identities, of both blacks and whites in Africa, and the way in which they are represented in Portuguese fictional cinematography from the twentieth century, and the memories which are thus constructed.

far from considering that cinema immediately 'reflects' the reality, it seems that it reconstructs it in another language (visual, poetic, symbolic etc), which far from mimicking reality rather re-elaborates and develops the cultural fabric from where it was born and then reintroduces it in society (Martins, 2005, Torgal, 2000).

Thus, we take the cinema as a type of a 'symptom' (in the contemporary psycho-analytical sense), and as a cultural sign, from which its diverse feelings can be interpreted, in a cultural hermeneutical methodology, which is supported by historical information, but which also integrates the reflections based on interpretation and exploration of the researcher, in order to delve further into the available cinematography (Deleuze, 2004).

Finally, regarding the selected films – we chose not to use documentaries and instead opted for fictional films (drama and comedy). Curiously, there are less than twenty Portuguese films from the twentieth century which addressed Africa and the Portuguese in a fictional way. Identifying reasons for this exiguity should be the topic of another study, but for now, it is sufficient to conclude that the construction of a 'dreamed empire' (Lourenço, 1984), was the desire of the Portuguese in Africa, especially in the cinematic language which maintained a 'pact of realism' with the viewer<sup>4</sup>. This is not the way in which fiction operates, as by its nature, fiction is based on fantasy, emotion and creativity. In our understanding, here lies one of the most substantial reasons for the difficulties of national cinematic fiction about the Empire: fiction can de-stabilise identities and memories in its multiple reconstructions of identities and fictions. Thus, this type of production (despite the small output) is vitally important for our study, not only so that we can observe the diverse 'nuances' of the identities of the Portuguese in Africa, but also because it reveals to us in a very clear way (despite at times in an inverted or speculative form) the mechanisms that produce constant memory and identity contamination, continually re-figuring and reinforcing each other.

## **2 – MEMORY AND IDENTITY OF THE PORTUGUESE IN AFRICA IN FICTIONAL PORTUGUESE FILMOGRAPHY**

### *2.1 – THE INVENTION OF AN EMPIRE: CHAIMITE (1953)*

*Chaimite*, a film by Jorge Brum do Canto, was premiered in Lisbon in April, 1953. The film is set in 1894, during which time the Vátuas<sup>5</sup> were frequently attacking the Portuguese colonies. The Portuguese did not hesitate in their response, and the film recalls the campaigns in Marracuene, Magul, Coela and Manjacaze, which were initially led by António Enes, Caldas Xavier, Ayres Ornelas, Eduardo Costa, Paiva Couceiro and Freire de Andrade, and thereafter by Mouzinho de Albuquerque, whose infamous exploit was the capture of the great 'negro' tribal chief, Gongunhana, who was then brought to Portugal in 1897 and publicly exhibited to the delight of the Portuguese.

<sup>4</sup> This is the case of the documentary – referring to the proposition that during the same period (twentieth century), and regarding the same theme (Portugal and the Portuguese in Africa), there are more than three thousand documentaries archived in the ANIM (Arquivo Nacional de Imagens em Movimento), which reinforces the importance of the 'pact of realism' that the documentary supports in the context of constructing a 'dreamed empire', whether legitimate or indisputably real (for a deeper discussion see Paulo, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Vátuas – A term that names a tribe from East Africa.

In parallel to the 'Great History', we also have the 'individual story', of the Portuguese living in Lourenço Marques, of which the focal point is a romance which develops when two soldiers fall in love with the same girl.

This film, filmed mostly in Mozambique, is also of interest due to the inclusion of the director himself in one of the main roles: Paiva Couceiro. It is also the second great Portuguese fiction film about Africa, following *O Feitiço do Império* (1940) which was shown 203 times between 1953 and 1969, distributed both on the continent (175), Madeira (2), Azores (149), S. Tomé and Príncipe (1), Angola (7), Mozambique (3) and Canada (1) (Seabra, 2000, p. 264). In 1961, Manuel Gama remarked that, in terms of 'overseas cinema', Portugal was a total desert, except for *Chaimite*, which he considered "a dignified and highly esteemed work - the only bright star in the darkness of lost opportunities. It is not much," - he continued - "but yet it is still something!" (Gama, 1961).

Regarding our main focus in terms of this current investigation - the memories and cultural identities of the Portuguese in Africa in the twentieth century - this film demonstrates the manner in which the Portuguese reconstructed Portugal and the memory which they had of it in Africa: men and women dressed as they would in Minho, Portugal, although they were now in a tropical climate; in the bush or in the colonial towns, they built their 'Portuguese houses' (with eaves, flowers in the porch, a glass of wine on the table...) and were essentially rural, agricultural people, hard-working and honest, who had 'claimed the land' to build villages, towns and cities which replicated their homeland, the metropole, as loyally as possible.

Furthermore, the identity of the white colony was consistently conveyed in the established form of a Portuguese identity of brave and valiant warriors, always in the minority and in a hostile territory, but revealing an ever greater conviction and love for their homeland. The narrative structure of the victorious Portuguese in Africa coincides exactly with that of the *Miracle of Ourique*, the Portuguese model for all future victories (Lourenço, 1978).

Of particular significance is the way in which the film conveys the affiliation between the campaigns in Africa, in line with the Discoveries, as the Portuguese colonies had the same objective as the *Marinheiros de Quinhentos*<sup>6</sup>: to conquer more souls for Christianity; to implement the civilised behaviour of the Portuguese and also the Portuguese character.

*Chaimite* does not ignore the important role of the Portuguese women in the process of colonisation: for not only were they more beautiful, attractive, ladylike and serious than the foreigners, they were also indispensable due to their courage and resilience, encouraging and bravely accompanying and assisting their husbands, obviously not by fighting on the front, but rather by nursing, teaching etc.

With regard to the 'Negros', they are portrayed as savages (with the recurrent theme being the subtle agitation of the phantom of anthropophagy from the opening scenes of the film), uncivilised, without a face and without a name (except for those who worked directly with the Portuguese, and showed loyalty to them). In summary, the 'Negros' were generally portrayed as silent traitors and dangerous spies.

However, with a more delicate analysis, one can distinguish two types of 'Negros': the foreign traitors and the slaves sold to them (including the French and the English who were

<sup>6</sup> *Marinheiros de Quinhentos* is a term which refers to the sixteenth century sea-farers.

only interested in usurping the Portuguese possessions) or the civilised, docile people who co-operated with the Portuguese, obviously to a lesser extent but still, for the duration of the film, in near silence and without a name.

From our point of view, the scene of the film which simultaneously constitutes the final message, and in our understanding, that which best condenses the model of black/white relations in this period is exactly that of the imprisonment of Gungunhana: the whites begin to cold-bloodedly execute two of the 'Negro' chief's tribesmen, in a gesture that symbolises the total domination, coldness and rationality which the whites had over the blacks. Subsequently, the great chief Gungunhana is subdued, imprisoned and humble, confessing all.

Curiously, Bénard da Costa states that the importance of this scene of the film was the way in which '*the native actor who interpreted the role of Gungunhana crushes, just with a glance - in which centuries of humiliation can be perceived - the rhetorical theatre actor who took the role of Mouzinho (Jacinto Ramos)*' [italics added] (Costa, 1991, p. 111). However, in spite of their cruelty (seen here through the force and power exerted over the enemies) the Portuguese are also representative of humanistic characteristics such as mercy – in this same scene, Mouzinho ultimately embraces the mother of the traitor, who is the one left suffering, although she is not responsible for the acts of her traitorous son.

Finally, we wish to emphasize the very basic and low level of interaction between White and Black people: the blacks serve and work for the whites, plus they are violently interrogated because they are traitors and thus may kill the whites. On the other hand White people have a code of conduct, they are organised to ensure the security of the white community, in a climate of constant inter-ethnic solidarity. There is, however, at least one moment of complicity between the whites and the blacks, which occurs between two women, in the kitchen, instigated by a dish of rice pudding, which the Portuguese woman was making for Christmas. Still, the black character, a maid in the house, who appeared constantly throughout the film, never opened her mouth, and her name was never mentioned.

Thus, as we have hoped to describe up unto this point, the model of relations between the blacks and the whites is that which that we would identify as 'aggressive paternalism', even if their principle mentors do not show that they have this consciousness.

In summary, *Chaimite* presents us with an identity of the Portuguese in Africa, according to the colonial battle whose gestures and work can be observed and better understood in the line of development of the Discoveries. On the contrary, the black identity was exchanged with a representation of a savage (sometimes good, other times bad), but always as an inferior creature, or, in the best cases, as an exotic one.<sup>7</sup>

The film ends with a *cliché* whereby the Portuguese couple founded a village, symbolising the fertility, progression and development of a civilisation of the Portuguese in Africa.

## 2.2. 'A SPECIAL KIND OF PORTUGUESE COLONIALISM': *O ZÉ DO BURRO* (1972)

The film *O Zé do Burro* (*Donkey Joe*) was made in 1971 (and first shown in 1972), by Eurico Ferreira (Ferreira, 1971). The comedy can be considered as belonging to the Portuguese

<sup>7</sup> This is strongly affiliated in the representation of the other, and in particular that of the 'Negro' grounded in German philosophy during the Enlightenment. (for more information, see Sanches and Serrão, 2002).

satirical theatre genre 'revista à portuguesa', but in its disconcertingly simplistic rhetoric and visual exposition, it clearly forms for us a representation of the cultural identity of the Portuguese in Africa which is markedly different to that which we had previously observed.

The plot focuses on the story of a man from Ribatejo, namely José Bandeira, who, whilst still in Portugal, had bought an excellent piece of land in North Mozambique, for a very low price. Thus, he travels with his donkey to Africa, trying to reach his house, which in the end is an old shack in the middle of an arid desert, because the local 'Negros' simply refused to work on it. Through his tenacity, humility and hard work, he manages to conquer everything and everyone, surviving the attacks from the Chinese communists whom he meets on his rounds (and thus 'Donkey Joe' also ends up victorious). The film ends with the foundation of a village and the wedding of the prosperous Zé from Ribatejo with a Portuguese lady, who was already living in Mozambique.

In the midst of all this, we are introduced to some folkloric groups, such as citizens from cities as Chibuto, Chidenguele, Charatuane and Vila Luísa, and also 'Marinheiros de Malange' and 'Venha Ver' of Inhambane<sup>8</sup>.

It is understood that this is generally considered 'an atrocious film'. In the words of another film director, Lopes Barbosa<sup>9</sup>, "casting aside the technical imperfections and the artificial silliness of the plot, the film is absolutely worthless"<sup>10</sup> – however, it has an important role in terms of cultural disclosure, due to the fact that the memory of this character is not part of the 'Great History' (of either Portugal or Africa), but is situated at a level which is only slightly distinguishable from that of the donkey (who is Zé's alter-ego – a principle character who is also shy, simple, affable and sweet, ignorant and without malice). The character does, however, address the memory of Portugal 'immemorial', unconscious and telluric, of a 'deep' illiterate Portugal, presenting the humility of a person from the lowest socio-cultural level, but a friend to all, beginning with animals (the donkey) and children.

This memory of rural, slow Portugal would oppose that of the Portuguese in Africa, already considerably urbanised and contaminated by the pleasures of city life, without the memory of a deeper Portuguese culture, traditional and authentic. Those urban Portuguese are presented as a kind of lost people, symbolized by the two Brazilian characters that also emerge during the film, living a very artificial and ridiculous (not at all Portuguese) way of life in Lourenço Marques. But only the traditional and deeply culturally rural rooted Zé do Burro will be able to re-found and re-invigorate, in other terms, the Portuguese colonial identity in Africa.

But this film is also deeply ambiguous. In a form which is somewhat negative (and even uncomfortable, as we see from the words of Lopes Barbosa), the Portuguese cultural identity represented by the native of Ribatejo who arrived in Lourenço Marques transforms itself into an object which is now exotic, characteristic of the way in which 'Negros' were exoticised in the eyes of Europeans. In our opinion, this very interesting inversion has only been possible because the filming took place entirely in Mozambique and was the responsibility of the

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0066610/> <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0066610/>

<sup>9</sup> Lopes Barbosa was the director of the 1972 film, *Deixem-me ao menos subir às palmeiras*, which exposed the violence of the colonial system. This film was censored by the PIDE.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.buala.org/pt/afroscreen/deixem-me-ao-menos-subir-as-palmeiras-um-filme-da-frente-de-guerrilha>

local production company (Somar Filmes). We must ask ourselves if this audacity would be possible if this film had been made by metropolitan directors: for example, the ironic allusion that determines some moments in the film, such as the Portuguese crossing the African jungle at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with only a donkey as transport and an umbrella as a gun seems only possible to address in a film produced in Mozambique.

In any case, the Portuguese man that we are introduced to in this film is a naïve creature, simple – to the point of being ridiculous – with weaknesses that also constitute his strengths, as they are accompanied by values such as persistence, hard work on the land and strong convictions such as, for example, the belief in the great virtue of a simple and austere life. Thus, the Portuguese man in the colonies now abandons the use of force and instead decides to persuade with the enthusiasm of the example which he shows, apart from explicitly demonstrating that not all of the Portuguese already knew how to colonise: for this, it would be necessary to follow one's own instinct and to have the purity and naivety of deep Portugal, and its rustic and instinctive culture.

Regarding the role of the blacks in this film, we can verify that they appear with a face and a more defined identity, but continue to be divided into two types: the good, who collaborate in the development of the African land and the bad foreign traitors (who are now neither English or French, but Chinese Communists that provoke war, whereas the Portuguese promote peace). In the end, the bad, or at least those that do not understand the ways in which the Portuguese colonization was achieved (the Chinese end up thinking that the secret of Ze's success with the 'Negros' is due to the donkey, hence deciding that they should rob the animal), are converted to the good (Portuguese) side, without the need to have more than Zé's example to follow.

For his part, Zé's character leads the whites to the conclusion that, in the end, the blacks are not dangerous, but must be exposed to the 'correct' models and the best Portuguese colonialist leaders (and a good model is Zé do Burro).

Hence, we are now presented with a model of colonial relations which we can describe as co-operative paternalism, which is essentially characterized by the powers of persuasion, replacing the power of physical force.

The film ends, as always, with the Portuguese founding a village in which the Portuguese and the African cultures can co-exist without any difficulty (in an allusion to the multiculturalism of Freyre (Freyre, 2010 [1940]), which now even includes the war-like but defeated Chinese). But, not surprisingly, outside of this particular tolerance and gentle civility, the movie does not show any possible cultural hybridity: the blacks marry blacks and Donkey Joe marries a white Portuguese lady.

Indeed the question of mixture, hybridism or even the existence of a mixed-race population is never referred to in any of the films which we have had the opportunity to analyse, at least not until the Revolution of April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1974.

### 2.3. *EXILED FROM NO LAND: A TEMPESTADE DA TERRA (1997)*

*A Tempestade da Terra* (1997), by Fernando d'Almeida e Silva, benefits from an excellent interpretation of the main character (Lena), by Maria de Medeiros. The film, comprising



numerous flashbacks, works mostly on the question of memories and identities. It develops the narrative from Lisbon, where, in 1975, many white Portuguese who had been based in Africa 'returned'.

From the disappearance of Lena, the film parades the past life in Mozambique of an adolescent who, in the 1950s, had a little black friend, (Ningo<sup>11</sup>), who was her family's servant. The plot of the story develops showing the golden years of Mozambique, after the colonial wars, and finally, the independence of the country.

Lena is transformed into an adult who revolts against being part of the dominating white community, although neither is she convinced by the Mozambican revolution.

The father, a successful engineer who acts benevolently towards the 'Negros' at first, becomes a convicted colonist when the colonial war begins. After the 25<sup>th</sup> of April Revolution he returns to Portugal and passes away.

Lena's mother, always a staunch colonist, is left alone in a small apartment in the suburbs of Lisbon, but by the end of the film she is seen asking for Ningo's forgiveness in order to enlist his help in finding her missing daughter.

Other characters have identities which don't fluctuate to such an extent, whether between those that support the regime and the repressive International and State Defence Police (PIDE) system and never leave it (Jorge), or between those whom support the African revolution (Geraldo) and who also, despite everything and all the difficulties in their paths do not change their position.

In our opinion, this film represents an excellent exercise regarding memory, or even better, regarding the memories which all those involved in the plot carry (white and black, the returning children of the empire and the Africans from countries whose official language is Portuguese), and is still an exercise in the reconstruction of identities, which constantly oscillate for the duration of the film.

Thus, the mono-thematic white memory of the end of the 1950s in Lourenço Marques – that describes a bourgeois and happy life, which was supported by a social and economic structure which dominated the 'Negros' - is de-stabilised in the film by the black memory of resistance and the Negro revolt at the beginning of the war, as well as by the memory of the persecution of those who opposed the regime (in which the white Portuguese also participated).

But, this reconstruction of contradictory and ambiguous memories is reinforced by the white's return to continental Portugal following the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, and the deep internal contradictions of the two countries amidst a revolution as were Portugal and Mozambique at that time. For example, Lena, a white revolutionary African activist is arrested in the post-independence times at the entrance to the cinema in Maputo, accused of being a prostitute and obliged to follow a 're-education programme', which consisted of forced agricultural work.

In synthesis, the identities of the main characters in this film are very unstable, whether black or white (there are good people and bad people, on both sides), varying due to the historical circumstances in articulation to personal characteristics.

<sup>11</sup> In this film, the 'Negro' has a name which is not Portuguese; he is neither infantilised nor humiliated as is common in the other Portuguese films which represent 'Negros' with names such as 'Sabonete' (*Chikwebo! Sortilégio Africano* - 1953) or 'Bijagós' (*O Costa de África* - 1954), revealing a change in attitude in relation to the identity of the 'Negro'.

This is countered by, for example, the whites moving from the position of dominators (with a certain degree of violence) to the dominated (after the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, whether as part of the Great History or the individual story), with pangs of regret, whilst the blacks lived a silent resistance whereby they were infantilised, within the model of paternal colonialism (they were not able to study, they were beaten and humiliated, etc.), which is proof of their great resilience, but which is not without resentment towards the whites. In any case, the whites end the film between repentance and death.

It is still possible to observe that the interaction between the whites and the blacks, which is already much greater than in the other movies we analyzed, reveals a strong and consistent affection (both negative and positive), in the context of a diversity of relational models, which can go beyond the dominant paternalism to solidarity and complimentary relational models (whether in the initial scene of Africa in the 1950s or at the end of the film in post-colonial Portugal).

The final scene of Africa that the film show us is a view of the destroyed homes and belongings of the Portuguese who had escaped from Lourenço Marques, thereby expressing the memories of the whites returning to their heartland, where they felt uprooted, living with remorse, homesickness or dying.

Finally we would like to signal how the film shows an impossible symbolic return to Portugal of those 'returnees' by developing a final scene in the wintry and inhospitable region of Serra da Estrela, magnifying the tragic end of the story. The final sentiment is one of profound nostalgia...Portuguese 'returnees' are exiled from nowhere.

In Lisbon, they return to Cais das Colunas to look again at the Tejo, which they left by ship in sadness, coming from Africa. Such a nostalgia is expressed in the film by the music of Madredeus and the voice of Teresa Salgueiro to evoke this tragic ending of the Portuguese African Empire.

### **3 – THE PORTUGUESE IN AFRICA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: MEMORIES, IDENTITIES AND THEIR REVERSAL**

In synthesis, through the analysis of the three films which we have chosen to study, in order to appreciate the different models with which the Portuguese cinema has treated the identities and the memories of the Portuguese in Africa during the twentieth century, we may conclude that the first and second examples (*Chaimite* and *O Zé do Burro*, respectively), comprise an individual story and the memory of the individual and of groups, which always serve the memories of the History of Portugal and of the Portuguese.

On the contrary, the film that we analysed which was made post-April 25<sup>th</sup>, *Tempestade da Terra*, addresses the 'History', the individual story and the national memory that comprises multiple individual stories and diverse memories (Ricoeur, 2000). It is truly a post-colonial film.

We also found, through the course of this research, a very stable image and identity for whites and blacks: the white is the only one to have a voice during the colonial process, as the 'Negro' is always silent, without a face, identity or memory. The white people are modern (continuing with the Great Story of the fatherland, the History of Portugal). The black people are not modern or up to date or inside the historical process: because they are not civilised.

Thus, they are both outside and before History, as an immensely spineless, pithless and spiritless mass, disguised in the landscape, waiting to be seen by the eyes of those (the whites) who have the right and the legitimacy of producing the political, economical and cultural discourse of identity.

Only under the condition of being seen by the whites, may the colonised blacks acquire an 'human nature', but only if they accept the coloniser's rules and laws that will discipline their bodies and their minds, in a process of appropriation of their time, their space, their wishes, their memories and their identities, in accordance with the mechanisms, which constitute the exercise of power, as explained by Foucault (Foucault, 1975, Martins, 2002).

However, even this process of legitimization of identities (of the black, but also its white counterpart) has a history. In the films we analyzed we found that different historical contexts produced different dynamics and stabilized contents of memory: one can verify, for example, that at the beginnings of the Portuguese colonisation of Africa the identity of the blacks, is, in the best case scenario, an object of curiosity, which is transformed into exoticism by the whites (Sanches & Serrão, 2002). On the contrary, in the final decades of colonisation, as we could see in our second film, the European whites start to have the consciousness of their own exoticism in Africa, a mirror effect, when they stopped looking just at themselves as the source of all human kind.

This phenomenon, which the cinema itself reveals in a very indirect mode, corresponds equally to the journey through the relational model of aggressive-paternalism and the other model, which we term co-operative paternalism (also because of the Colonial War and the international pressure to decolonise and the theses of luso-tropicalism).

Nevertheless, it is important to stress the ways in which this white exoticism symbolise the creation of a split identity, and at the same time a kind of doubt which started to be installed in the heart of the colonial system, whom for decades, and practically until the end, made all efforts to survive without the shadow of a blemish or ill-conscience (Martins, 1990).

Finally, our study reveals the possibility of representing the reality of colonialism and post-colonialism in terms of a great diversity of relations between one side and the other. This is demonstrated in the last film which constantly analyses the possibility of sustaining and maintaining a discussion of multiplicity and equality, based on the relations which are constructed from the lives and daily lives of concrete people who participated directly or indirectly in the European colonial experience (Sherzer, 1996), and which in part, also contributed to the implosion with the immediate and socially common subjects' identification with the stereotypical black and white categories.

*A Tempestade da Terra* inevitably directs us towards the idea that, even within a system which rigorously codifies identities and infinitely manipulates the memories (as was the case of the Portuguese Estado Novo colonial regime) it is always possible to construct other views (tense and contradictory, also accepting moving identities) which subvert the hegemony of the view of the colonist. As we may see throughout our last movie this is possible if we articulate categories such as age, generation, gender, education, the time in history, the history of each life and political stance, amongst other dimensions comprising the concrete life of the individuals.

In conclusion, a brief and purposive overview of the Portuguese cinema of the twentieth century, directed us from the monotheism of identity and the official memory to the hard and unstable pluralistic dynamics, which some individuals, groups and societies try to maintain nowadays, in order to sustain the possibility of keeping a degree of openness, flexibility, multiplicity and pluralism which has to be in the heart of the process of building memories and identities (Martins, 1996).

Endless by nature, these works of Sísifo stand at the heart of the process of human kind self-construction, and still constitutes the essence of millions of concrete human daily struggles for individual and collective liberty.

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