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Building Nations After Empire: Post-Imperial Migrations to Portugal in a Western European Context

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Building on original research and dialoguing with scholarly works on Portugal, France and the United Kingdom, this article argues that decolonisation and migrations from the (former) colonies triggered and moulded a new, post-imperial nation-building in Western Europe. Analysing the highly significant but hitherto much-neglected case of Portugal in its broader Western European context, this claim is substantiated by surveying how these migrations affected citizenship and notions of the national community, the welfare state and public memories. Comparative and relational in its approach, the article links the histories of white ‘returnees’ from Portugal’s African colonies after the 1974 Carnation Revolution to those of non-white ‘immigrants’, arguing that we must situate in the same analytical field all those who migrated from (formerly) colonised territories to the metropole during the drawn-out end of empire.

The problem of immigration is a trap set up by history. Until now, France was used to colonizing a part of the world and, today, the third world is coming to us. (Pierre Messmer, 1974)

We are here because you were there. (Political slogan ascribed to A. Sivanandan, 1980s)

Was migration from the former colonies a Third World invasion, a pernicious ‘trap’ set up for Europeans by ‘history’ itself? France’s prime minister Pierre Messmer suggested as much at a time when Europe’s economically leading countries were banning immigration in the wake of the oil crisis. Or was migration a choice made by historical actors from the Global South but ‘caused’ by the prior actions of European soldiers, traders, missionaries and settlers who had initiated a violent history of imperial entanglements? This is what anti-racist thinker and activist A. Sivanandan asserted during the Thatcher years in Britain. Messmer framed immigration as a ‘problem’, and the hurt pride, repressed guilt and racist fears of the ex-coloniser permeate his words. By contrast, the slogan ascribed to A. Sivanandan and used to this day by activists across Europe puts the formerly colonised centre stage. It claims their right to live in and belong to the continent’s post-imperial societies, a right derived not least from a shared if unequal history that they recall, inhabit and require white Europeans to acknowledge.¹

A sudden invasion or a long entanglement – for all their differences, these representations point to a shared awareness that Europe, in the second half of the twentieth century, became an immigration

¹ All translations from French and Portuguese by the author. Messmer quoted in Cedetim, *Les immigrés. Contribution à l’histoire politique de l’immigration en France* (Paris: Stock, 1975), 347; Gary Younge, ‘Ambalavaner Sivanandan Obituary’, *The Guardian*, 7 Feb. 2018.

continent with substantial migrations gains. To be sure, people from outside of Europe had arrived for centuries already. But even if one in ten inhabitants of Lisbon in the sixteenth century was Black,² in later periods and across the continent their numbers had always been minor, especially in comparison with the outward mobility of Europeans. From the fifteenth through the mid-twentieth century, more than sixty-five million Europeans left their continent. Nine-tenths of them left after 1800,³ and especially from 1830 through 1950, when first Western, then Northern and finally Eastern and Southern Europeans emigrated *en masse* to the Americas. Fewer Western Europeans travelled to Asia, Africa and Oceania as colonial settlers, and still fewer went to plantation and trade colonies as soldiers, administrators, businessmen or in other roles.⁴ Around 1970, however, just a decade after the high point of decolonisation, there were, for the first time, more people coming into than leaving Europe.⁵ The outward movement had slowed down, while conversely, beginning already in the 1940s, ever more people arrived from Africa, the Caribbean and Asia. They came in search of work, education, career or family reunion, or because they were fleeing poverty, famine, violent conflict or persecution. From the perspective of many residents in former imperial metropolises, this meant that empire was coming home like a boomerang – and thus was more ostensibly present in their lives than ever before. This unexpected, and for many undesired, homecoming turned the second half of the twentieth century into a transformative period in the continent's history.

Using the much-neglected case of Portugal to zoom in on the sea change that post-imperial migrations indicated and contributed to, this article advances three related arguments. Firstly, building on the work of a number of scholars, I argue that decolonisation and migrations from the (former) colonies triggered and moulded a specifically post-imperial nation-building.⁶ I substantiate this claim by surveying how these migrations affected citizenship, the welfare state and public memories. The focus here is not primarily on how migrants contributed to the rebuilding of Western Europe – which of course they did, on multiple material and socio-cultural levels. Rather, the focus is mostly on how Portugal and other receiving societies, in reaction to post-imperial migrations, redrew the boundaries of their national communities. This rebuilding of nations after empire was, as I demonstrate, shot through with ethno-nationalist homogenisations and racist exclusions.

Secondly, the article suggests that to uncover this remaking of Western European nations in the age of decolonisation we must overcome an unhelpful compartmentalisation. The oftentimes separate treatment of white 'repatriates' and non-white 'immigrants', both from the (former) colonies, in two sets of literatures betrays a questionable racialisation of migration studies.⁷ It has also made it difficult to see how it is precisely race, or the colonial history of white supremacy, that has privileged the

² Kate Lowe, 'The Global Population of Renaissance Lisbon: Diversity and its Entanglements', in Annemarie Jordan Gschwend and K.J.P. Lowe, eds., *The Global City: On the Streets of Renaissance Lisbon* (London: Paul Holberton, 2015), 57–75, here 61.

³ Pieter C. Emmer and Leo Lucassen, 'Migration from the Colonies to Western Europe since 1800', *European History Online (EGO)*, 2012, <http://www.ieg-ego.eu/emmerp-lucassen1-2012-en> (last visited 15 Nov. 2021).

⁴ Dirk Hoerder, 'Migrations', in J.R. McNeill and Kenneth Pomeranz, eds., *The Cambridge World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 3–33, here 10–13; José C. Moya and Adam McKeown, 'World Migration in the Long Twentieth Century', in Michael Adas, ed., *Essays on Twentieth Century History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010), 9–52.

⁵ Klaus J. Bade, *Europa in Bewegung. Migration vom späten 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (München: C.H. Beck, 2000), 301f.

⁶ Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Pamela Ballinger, *The World Refugees Made: Decolonization and the Foundation of Postwar Italy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2020); Jordanna Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Elizabeth Buettner, *Europe after Empire: Decolonization, Society, and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016). The case has also been made for Japan: Lori Watt, *When Empire Comes Home: Repatriation and Reintegration in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

⁷ Andrea L. Smith, 'Europe's Invisible Migrants', in Andrea L. Smith, ed., *Europe's Invisible Migrants* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), 9–31.

settlers-turned-immigrants over the colonised-turned-immigrants. By contradistinction, the umbrella-term ‘post-imperial migrants’ overcomes such compartmentalisation.⁸ It situates in a single analytical field all those who migrated from colonised territories to ‘their’ respective metropolises in an outdrawn process that encompasses the late-imperial years, the moment of independence and the post-imperial decades since. It suggests a relational perspective that highlights differences, commonalities, interactions and racialised hierarchies between those who came (back) to Europe, settling into nations that had to reinvent themselves in the process of decolonisation.⁹

Thirdly, the relational perspective extends not only to different migrant groups but to processes of post-imperial nation-building more broadly. By bringing the literature on France and the United Kingdom into conversation with the Portuguese case, this article reveals similarities.¹⁰ By showing how developments in the United Kingdom and France at times guided the choices of actors in Portugal, it also suggests that some similarities resulted from observation and transfer. This in turn yields the question of whether mutual borrowing among Europe’s colonial powers, which historians have begun to analyse in the last couple of years,¹¹ continued beyond the formal end of empire. This article cannot comprehensively answer this question, but it does demonstrate that officials – as well as migrants – in Portugal looked to other European cases to navigate the aftermath of empire.

Why It Matters: Placing Portugal in Context

Portugal’s contemporary history enjoys little visibility in the historical profession, where many tend to think of it as enchantingly colourful yet mildly extraneous. But the country’s recent past of fascism and democracy, of empire and its ending, of mass emigration and immigration is neither exotic nor exceptional. Instead, it is deeply interwoven with Western European history.¹² This article shows how Portugal echoes trends observable throughout a region whose inhabitants experienced decolonisation-cum-immigration.¹³ At the same time, however, peculiarities of timing, scale and context make Portugal ideal for a contrasting comparison.¹⁴

Firstly, consider timing. The Portuguese built Europe’s first and last overseas empire. It dates back to the fifteenth century and was dismantled only in 1975. The Portuguese thus experienced post-imperial immigration later than France, Great Britain or the Netherlands, which had become more ethnically diverse already in the 1940s through 1960s.¹⁵ Once Portugal was forced to decolonise, these earlier cases were on the minds of politicians, international organisations, professional

⁸ The empire-immigration nexus is under-conceptualised, and discussions of ‘post-imperial migrants’ are sparse. My own understanding has benefited from: Rogers Brubaker, ‘Aftermaths of Empire and the Unmixing of Peoples: Historical and Comparative Perspectives’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 18, 2 (1995), 189–219; Ulbe Bosma, Jan Lucassen and Gert Oostindie, ‘Introduction: Postcolonial Migrations and Identity Politics: Towards a Comparative Perspective’, in Ulbe Bosma, Jan Lucassen and Gert Oostindie, eds., *Postcolonial Migrants and Identity Politics: Europe, Russia, Japan and the United States in Comparison* (New York: Berghahn, 2012), 3–22; Smith, ‘Migrants’.

⁹ For reflections on relational migration histories see Anne Friedrichs, ‘Placing Migration in Perspective. Neue Wege einer relationalen Geschichtsschreibung’, *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 44 (2018), 167–95.

¹⁰ A masterful comparison of decolonisation, migration, and memory in the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Portugal is Buettner, *Europe*.

¹¹ As a starting point: Christoph Kamissek and Jonas Kreienbaum, ‘An Imperial Cloud? Conceptualising Interimperial Connections and Transimperial Knowledge’, *Journal of Modern European History*, 14, 2 (2016), 164–82; and the blog launched in 2021: <https://www.transimperialhistory.com/> (last visited 15 Nov. 2021).

¹² Luís Trindade, ‘Introduction: Unmaking Modern Portugal’, in Luís Trindade, ed., *The Making of Modern Portugal* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2013), 1–16, 6. Two strong entry points into Portugal’s twentieth century: José Miguel Sardica, *Twentieth Century Portugal: A Historical Overview* (Lisbon: Universidade Católica Editora, 2008); Yves Léonard, *Histoire du Portugal contemporain, de 1890 à nos jours* (Paris: Chandeigne, 2016).

¹³ For these trends see Rita Chin, *The Crisis of Multiculturalism in Europe: A History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).

¹⁴ Similarly Buettner, *Europe*, p. 17.

¹⁵ Chin, *Crisis*; Buettner, *Europe*.

commentators and migrants. Prior experiences influenced the claims they made or the policies they devised, thus revealing a broader European pattern that had gradually emerged in dealing with immigration from the (formerly) colonised world.

Secondly, regarding scale. It is often assumed that immigration to Portugal pales in comparison to other Western European cases. And indeed, minorities from the colonies in France or in the United Kingdom were for a long time more sizeable. However, immigration did catch up after its timid beginnings in the late 1960s. It increased in the 1980s and soared in the 1990s. As a result, in 2014, the National Statistics Institute estimated that 13 per cent of the economically active population had a ‘migratory background’.¹⁶ Many of them had roots in Portuguese-speaking African countries or in Brazil. While Brazil has been independent since 1822 and dwarfs its former metropole in demographic, economic and political terms, Brazilians in Portugal have been discriminated against as an ethnicised minority.¹⁷

More importantly still, post-imperial migrations only seem of minor importance in Portugal if we restrict our understanding, as much of the literature has done, to those who came as foreigners and were perceived as non-white.¹⁸ But the *retornados* or ‘returnees’, the people who left Angola, Mozambique and other Portuguese (ex-)colonies between 1974 and 1979 and sought refuge in the metropole, were post-imperial migrants, too, even if the overwhelming majority held Portuguese citizenship and were white. Their exact number is unknown, but at least half a million, and possibly as high as 800,000.¹⁹ This means that with 8.7 million residents as of 31 December 1973, the returnees added between 5 and over 9 per cent to Portugal’s population within a very short period. Even in France, where settlers who left Algeria in 1962 numbered a million, their influx to a country of forty-seven million inhabitants led to a demographic increase of ‘only’ 2.2 per cent, i.e. less than half of the effect we see in Portugal.

Two further issues make the Portuguese case interesting. First, the economic context: A sharp rise of (post-)imperial migrations to France or the United Kingdom occurred to generally prosperous countries during a period of breath-taking economic growth to which immigrants’ precarious labour contributed enormously. By contrast, Portugal’s economy had been among Europe’s weakest for decades when returnees and other migrants from Africa arrived from the 1960s through 1990s. Larger numbers of labour migrants came only after Portugal started receiving transfers from the European Economic Community (EEC), which it joined in 1986. At the time, the Portuguese had only limited experience with immigration. They did have, by contrast, much experience with massive emigration: between 1957 and 1974, some 1.5 million Portuguese had left in search of work abroad.²⁰ Most found low-paid jobs in Western Europe, especially France and Switzerland, where they rubbed shoulders with other precarious ‘guest workers’. These not only originated from Italy, Greece and Yugoslavia, but also from Algeria, Morocco and other former colonies. Many Portuguese thus experienced a

¹⁶ See this estimate in Instituto Nacional de Estatística, ‘Situação dos migrantes e seus descendentes diretos no mercado de trabalho’, *Destaque. Informação à comunicação social*, 2 (2014), 1–11.

¹⁷ Igor José de Renó Machado, ‘Imigração em Portugal’, *Estudos Avançados*, 20, 57 (2006), 119–35. For a broad picture of Brazilians in Portugal see Jorge Macaísta Malheiros, ed., *Imigração brasileira em Portugal* (Lisbon: ACIDI, 2007).

¹⁸ In their overview of migrations to and from Portugal, for example, two leading scholars mention the *retornados* not once, not even as a ‘prehistory’ to the time from 1980 onwards that they study; see Pedro Góis and José Carlos Marques, ‘Retrato de um Portugal migrante: a evolução da emigração, da imigração e do seu estudo nos últimos 40 anos’, *e-cadernos CES [Online]* (2018), 29, 125–51. Conversely, most publications on the *returnees* fail to reflect on the co-presence of other, non-white post-imperial migrants. Some address both groups, however: Rui Pena Pires, *Migrações e integração. Teoria e aplicações à sociedade portuguesa* (Oeiras: Celta Editora, 2003); M. Margarida Marques, ‘Postcolonial Portugal: Between Scylla and Charybdis’, in Bosma et al., eds., *Postcolonial Migrants*, 127–53; Buettner, *Europe*.

¹⁹ Estimates are based on sociologist Rui Pena Pires’ analysis of the 1981 census data, when 471,427 Portuguese nationals declared having resided in a Portuguese colony by 31 Dec. 1973. Pires assumes that their total number must have been higher, however, since many do not appear in this statistic. For a discussion of the data see Pires, *Migrações*, 189–252.

²⁰ Victor Pereira, *La dictature de Salazar face à l’émigration. L’État portugais et ses migrants en France (1957–1974)* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2012).

subaltern status as economic migrants abroad before they received post-imperial migrants in their own country, something that cannot be said about France, the United Kingdom or the Netherlands.

Second, decolonisation impacted political institutions in many European countries, and especially in France, where the Algerian war precipitated the end of the Fourth Republic. Nowhere, however, was this impact as fundamental as in Portugal. Thirteen years of colonial war on three fronts (1961–74) not only led to the independence of all colonies but also to the downfall of the dictatorship in the metropole and its replacement by parliamentary democracy. This transition occurred in a country that prided itself on a five-century-long history of maritime expansion. Before the 1974 Carnation Revolution, Portuguese officials had understood their country as a grand imperial nation, partly to compensate for their marginal position in Europe. This ‘imperial mystique’ was not restricted to the elites and small urban middle classes. Rather, imperial and, after 1951, Lusotropicalist propaganda was disseminated through schools, monuments, exhibitions, radio broadcasts, but also through cinema, music, soccer and beauty pageants.²¹

After 1974, the unique combination of decolonisation and metropolitan revolution made this imperial nationhood obsolete. In this context, Portuguese returnees, Cape Verdean labour migrants or Angolan refugees, as living remnants of the defunct empire, were a reminder that Portugal’s place in the world had changed and that the ideas the Portuguese had held about their nation would need to change, too. With their experiences straddling both formerly imperial spaces, i.e. the colonies and the metropole, these migrants ‘served as sites of negotiation for the process of disengagement from empire and for the creation of new national identities’.²² This process was similar to, but also different from, other European nations, in that the collapse of the empire, which had dominated national self-images and policy choices to an unusual extent, was abrupt, total, inseparable from metropolitan revolution and not cushioned, as in the United Kingdom or France, by the Commonwealth, the *Françafrique* or any other neocolonial project. In short, given the similarities with better-researched cases, but also considering specificities of timing, scale and context, Portugal is an excellent place to study what happens ‘when empire comes home’.²³

Post-imperial Migrations to a Semi-Peripheral Country

Around 1950, only few people from the colonies lived in Portugal. A tiny elite socialised in the House of the Students of the Empire (*Casa dos Estudantes do Império*) which soon turned into a hotbed of anticolonial intellectuals, while some African sailors and dockers worked in the port of the capital.²⁴ The situation changed with the arrival of tens of thousands of Cape Verdean labour migrants beginning in the late 1960s. Replacing Portuguese workers who emigrated or were drafted for the army’s colonial war on three African fronts, they worked in construction and public works, literally building modern Portugal and its networks of water supply, electricity, telephone and metro trains, as well as Lisbon’s main suburbs.²⁵ The advent of Cape Verdeans in the dusk of empire marks the first of three phases of (post-) imperial migrations.

²¹ On Portugal as ‘empire-nation-state’ see for example António Costa Pinto and Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo, ‘Ideologies of Exceptionality and the Legacies of Empire in Portugal’, in Dietmar Rothermund, ed., *Memories of Post-Imperial Nations: The Aftermath of Decolonization, 1945–2013* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 97–119. On Lusotropicalism, see Cláudia Castelo, ‘O Modo Português de Estar no Mundo’. *O Luso-Tropicalismo e a Ideologia Colonial Portuguesa (1933–1961)* (Porto: Afrontamento, 1999); on Lusotropicalist mass culture, see Marcos Cardão, *Fado Tropical. O Luso-Tropicalismo na Cultura de Massas (1960–1974)* (Lisbon: Unipop, 2014).

²² As Watt, *Empire*, p. 1, remarks on the Japanese case.

²³ This is the title of Watt’s volume.

²⁴ Alexandra Reza, ‘African Anti-Colonialism and the *Ultramarinos* of the *Casa dos Estudantes do Império*’, *Journal of Lusophone Studies*, 1 (2016), 1, 37–56; Dalila Cabrita Mateus, *A Luta pela Independência. A Formação das Elites Fundadoras da FRELIMO, MPLA e PAIGC* (Mem Martins: Editorial Inquérito, 1999).

²⁵ Luis Batalha, *The Cape Verdean Diaspora in Portugal. Colonial Subjects in a Postcolonial World* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004), especially 130–92.

The second phase, the most significant one in terms of post-imperial nation-building, began with the 1974 Carnation Revolution and the independence of all Portuguese colonies by 1975 that followed. At least half a million *retornados*, overwhelmingly white settlers from Angola and Mozambique, now came to Portugal.²⁶ They fled the colonies because they disapproved of the single party, Black majority rule after independence; resented their loss of racial or social privilege and feared a deficit of political representation; dreaded the violence of civil war and the breakdown of basic infrastructures and services in the newly independent states; feared specific threats to their property, livelihood and personal safety; or departed because their lifeworld was waning before their eyes as everyone else from their communities left in a fit of collective panic.²⁷ Those associated with the colonial regime formed the vast majority of the migrants: white soldiers, administrators, engineers and settlers; their Black housemaids and servants; Black spouses and ‘mixed-race’ children; but also indigenous soldiers who had fought in Portugal’s army, or Cape Verdeans who had previously migrated as manual labourers or low-ranking civil servants to other parts of the empire. By contrast, a minority were not associated with colonial rule. Among them were African opponents of the Mozambique Liberation Front (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*; Frelimo) and the People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola (*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*; MPLA); Indian and Chinese minorities that fled Frelimo’s nationalisation policies or were expelled by the thousands in 1977 because they did not wish to obtain or had renounced their Mozambican nationality;²⁸ or the 1,525 East Timorese individuals who reached Portugal in 1976 after a botched independence and guerrilla war against the Indonesian occupation had uprooted thousands.²⁹

After the 1974 regime change and decolonisation, Portuguese governments strove to anchor their country in a new geopolitical context. Breaking with Portugal’s imperial tradition, they turned to Europe, initiating negotiations that led to the country’s accession to the EEC in 1986. This inaugurated a period of economic growth – especially via public works in the construction sector – and a third phase of post-imperial migrations. In 1985, Portugal counted roughly 35,000 residents who were nationals of an African country.³⁰ Within little more than two decades, their number had more than quadrupled, reaching 148,000 in 2007, before the financial crisis, coming on top of a period of stagnation and recession since the turn of the millennium, hit the country hard in 2008.³¹ In

²⁶ Several tens of thousands instead migrated to other destinations, however, either directly or after a stint in the metropole, notably to Rhodesia, South Africa and Brazil, from where many left again and came to Portugal during the 1980s and 1990s; see Isabel de Souza Lima, *Migrantes da descolonização: portugueses e luso-angolanos no brasil (1974–1977)*. *Dissertação de doutoramento em História Social* (Niterói: Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2014); Pamela Gupta, *Portuguese Decolonization in the Indian Ocean World: History and Ethnography* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), here 94–8, 109–124.

²⁷ For their motives see Christoph Kalter, ‘Rückkehr oder Flucht? Dekolonisierung, Zwangsmigration und Portugals *retornados*’, *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 44 (2018), 2, 250–84; António Rita-Ferreira, ‘Moçambique post-25 de abril. Causas do êxodo da população de origem europeia e asiática’, in Centro de Estudos Africanos, ed., *Moçambique. Cultura e história de um país. Actas da V semana de cultura africana* (Coimbra: Instituto de Antropologia, 1988), 121–69; Fernando Tavares Pimenta, ‘Causas do Êxodo das Minorias Brancas da África Portuguesa: Angola e Moçambique (1974/1975)’, *Revista Portuguesa de História*, XLVIII (2017), 99–124. Some short remarks also in Rui Pena Pires, Morgane Delaunay and João Peixoto, ‘Trauma and the Portuguese Repatriation: A Confined Collective Identity’, in Ron Eyerman and Giuseppe Sciortino, eds., *The Cultural Trauma of Decolonization: Colonial Returnees in the National Imagination* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 169–203, here 176–8. For a sociology of the group and its integration see *ibid.*, 179–87, and Pires, *Migrações*, 189–252. In 1974/5, there were no expulsion policies targeting settlers in the colonies. On 16 March 1977, however, Frelimo issued a resolution leading to the expulsion of several thousand individuals from Mozambique.

²⁸ Rita-Ferreira, ‘Moçambique’, 161ff.

²⁹ Comissariado para os Desalojados, *Relatório de actividades. Capítulo 2: IARN* (no place, 1979), 15.

³⁰ Around 95 per cent were from PALOP countries; see Maria Ioannis Baganha, Pedro Góis and José Carlos Marques, ‘Tendenzen der Einwanderung nach Portugal seit der Nelkenrevolution’, in Teresa Pinheiro, ed., *Portugiesische Migrationen. Geschichte, Repräsentation und Erinnerungskulturen* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2010), 57–70, here 59.

³¹ Pedro Góis and José Carlos Marques, ‘Retrato de um Portugal migrante: a evolução da emigração, da imigração e do seu estudo nos últimos 40 anos’, *E-cadernos CES*, 29 (2018), 125–51, here 129.

roughly the same period, the number of Brazilian nationals in Portugal skyrocketed from around 3,600 (1980) to around 107,000 (2008), making them the largest community of foreigners in Portugal today, followed by Cape Verdeans (roughly 35,000 or 7.2 per cent).³²

Parallel to this increase of migrations from a post-imperial space that at the time was being reorganised as the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (*Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa*, CPLP, founded in 1996),³³ there was a new influx from Eastern European countries, especially Ukraine, whose nationals came to form, if only for a brief moment (in 2002, around 62,000 individuals), Portugal's biggest migrant community.³⁴ In short, decolonisation, European integration and the end of the Cold War had changed Portugal's place in the world; at the intersection of various migration systems, the country occupied a semi-peripheral position, marked by immigration and emigration alike.³⁵ This also meant that post-imperial migrants used the country as a springboard to more prosperous parts of the continent, particularly during the financial and economic crisis (2008–15), when emigration from Portugal soared. Among those who sought better opportunities abroad, especially in the United Kingdom, were many migrants from African countries or Brazil that had been naturalised in Portugal.³⁶

Intertwined Histories: Post-imperial Migrations and the Welfare State

With the *en masse* arrival of returnees in 1975, Portugal's new democratic regime needed to clarify its responsibilities vis-à-vis the incoming migrants. Decolonisation thus became directly instrumental in the rearrangement of the welfare state – a development that started earlier in the United Kingdom and in France.³⁷ Yann Scioldo-Zürcher has analysed the integration dispositif that the French state set up for the one million *pieds-noirs* who arrived from Algeria around the time of the country's independence in 1962.³⁸ Debunking these repatriates' memory politics of victimhood, he demonstrates the French state's willingness to cushion the hardships they faced and to promote their reinsertion. They received extraordinary support in housing, employment, education, health and credit. A host of new laws, the creative adaption of administrative practices to their needs, but most of all the readiness to spend consequential sums for their establishment proved the French state's (racialised) bonds of solidarity and the flexibility of its welfare system in accommodating the settlers-turned-migrants.

³² Público e Lusa, 'Nunca houve tantos estrangeiros a viver em Portugal: são mais de 480 mil,' *Público*, 28 June 2019. In 2019, Brazilians numbered roughly 105,000 (or 21.9 per cent of all 'foreigners'), Cape Verdeans roughly 35,000 (or 7.2 per cent). These statistics list neither undocumented migrants nor migrants-turned-citizens or their children. Estimates for the 'ethnic group' of 'Brazilians' or 'Africans' in 2008 are therefore significantly higher (up to 160,000 Brazilians and over 350,000 Africans); see Marques, 'Postcolonial Portugal', 133.

³³ Sarah Ashby, *The Lusophone World: The Evolution of Portuguese National Narratives* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2017). See also Michel Cahen, "'Portugal Is in the Sky": Conceptual Considerations on Communities, Lusitanity, and Lusophony', in Eric Morier-Genoud and Cahen, eds., *Imperial Migrations: Colonial Communities and Diaspora in the Portuguese World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012), 297–315.

³⁴ See Maria Ioannis Baganha, José Carlos Marques and Pedro Gois, eds., *Imigração ucraniana em Portugal e no sul da Europa. A emergência de uma ou várias comunidades?* (Lisbon: ACIDI, 2010), 16. In 2019, they numbered 29,000 and came fourth after Brazilians, Cape Verdeans and Romanians; see Lusa, 'Nunca houve tantos estrangeiros'.

³⁵ Pedro Gois and Carlos José Marques, 'Portugal as a Semi-peripheral Country in the Global Migration System', *International Migration*, 47, 3 (2009), 21–50. An influential interpretation of Portugal as 'semi-periphery': Boaventura de Sousa Santos, 'Between Prospero and Caliban: Colonialism, Postcolonialism, and Inter-identity', *Luso-Brazilian Review*, XXXIX (2002), 9–43.

³⁶ See José Carlos Pina Almeida and David Corkill, 'On Being Portuguese: Luso-tropicalism, Migrations and the Politics of Citizenship', in Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez and Shirley Anne Tate, eds., *Creolizing Europe. Legacies and Transformations* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), 157–74, 166ff.

³⁷ Bailkin, *Afterlife*; Amelia H. Lyons, *The Civilizing Mission in the Metropole: Algerian Families and the French Welfare State during Decolonization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013).

³⁸ Yann Scioldo-Zürcher, *Devenir métropolitain. Politique d'intégration et parcours de rapatriés d'Algérie en métropole, 1954–2005* (Paris: Éditions de l'EHESS, 2010).

Scioldo-Zürcher's study provides a pertinent comparison for the Portuguese case. Until the mid-1970s, Portuguese welfare provisions were very limited. The first phase of migrations from the colonies led the authorities to create the Centre for the Support of Overseas Workers (*Centro de Apoio aos Trabalhadores Ultramarinos*; CATU). Between 1969 and 1973, some 11,000 migrants from Cape Verde relied on the CATU's services, which mostly consisted of orienting them towards the low-skilled labour market.³⁹ But beyond this small institution, there was no special provision for Cape Verdean workers. The level of state involvement, however, changed dramatically when the second phase of post-imperial migrations started in 1975. Officials now faced momentous challenges. The returnees, coming to a country with no recent record of substantial immigration, strained an economy that was structurally uncompetitive and suffered additional stress because of the Carnation Revolution and a worldwide recession. Portugal's state apparatus underwent a deep crisis; the political situation was tense, bordering on civil war.⁴⁰ Most returnees felt estranged in Portugal, and many looked with bitterness upon the new regime that they blamed for the loss of their homes. As for the resident population, many met the newcomers with a lack of empathy; with distrust regarding their political leanings or their competition in a tight labour and housing market; with envy because of the state support they received; or with outright hostility because of their privileges in the colonies that metropolitan conscripts had been sent to fight and die for. More generally, migrants and residents perceived each other as problematically different in terms of mentalities and lifestyles.⁴¹ In short, 'there seemed to be a recipe for disaster'.⁴²

Against this backdrop, the fact that most returnees soon ceased to depend on state subsidies or the material support of family and friends, but instead found housing and jobs and built new lives for themselves, is often rendered as an extraordinary achievement. Within just a few years, the returnees so thoroughly blended into the resident society that they became virtually invisible. Contrary to widespread fears, they failed to disrupt social cohesion and to jeopardise the Carnation Revolution; instead, their arrival boosted the economy, improved interpersonal relations and stabilised democracy. This is the success story of integration, told time and again by scholars, journalists and politicians, among them those who held the highest offices at the peak of the integration effort, prime minister Mário Soares (1976–8) and president Ramalho Eanes (1976–86).⁴³

While the success story captures some aspects accurately, it comes with two blind spots. First, not everyone had a smooth integration, as a closer inspection of the provision of state-paid housing demonstrates. Some returnees suffered discriminations because of their citizenship, class, race and gender in a system that organised all support around the male head of household. The state did not prevent these discriminations and sometimes reinforced them. Especially racism, documented

³⁹ Batalha, *Diaspora*, pp. 136–7, 142.

⁴⁰ António Costa Pinto, 'Political Purges and State Crisis in Portugal's Transition to Democracy, 1975–76', *Comparative Political Studies*, 43 (2010), 1119–47; Diego Palacios Cerezales, 'Um caso de violência política: o 'Verão quente' de 1975', *Análise Social*, XXXVII (2003), 165, 1127–57.

⁴¹ For these mutual perceptions and the experiences of settling in, see for example Isabel dos Santos Lourenço and Alexander Keese, 'Questioning Portugal's Social Cohesion and Preparing Post-Imperial Memory: Returned Settlers (*retornados*) and Portuguese Society, 1975–80', in Berny Sèbe and Matthew G. Stanard, eds., *Decolonising Europe? Popular Responses to the End of Empire* (London: Routledge, 2020), 181–96; Stephen C. Lubkemann, 'The Moral Economy of Portuguese Postcolonial Return', *Diaspora* 11, 2 (2002), 189–214; Pires, Delaunay and Peixoto, 'Trauma', here 179f.; and the life stories in Sarah Adamopoulos, *Volta. Memória do Colonialismo e da Descolonização* (Lisbon: Planeta, 2011).

⁴² Jim R. Lewis and Allan M. Williams, 'Emigrantes and Retornados: A Comparative Analysis of the Economic Impact of Return Migration in the Região Centro', in Eduardo de Sousa Ferreira and Walter C. Jr. Opello, eds., *Conflict and Change in Portugal 1974–1984* (Lisbon: Teorema, 1985), 227–50, 230.

⁴³ For a history of this success story, see Christoph Kalter, 'Traumatic Loss, Successful Integration: The Agitated and the Soothing Memory of "the Return" from Portugal's African Empire', in Elsa Peralta, ed., *The Retornados from Portuguese Colonies in Africa: Memory, Narrative, and History* (London: Routledge, 2022), 35–60. See also Lourenço and Keese, 'Questioning', who demonstrate how the government-influenced mainstream press contributed to shaping the story.

in the comments by social workers or state officials, helps explain why not only non-Portuguese but also Portuguese of colour seem to have been overrepresented in locales at the margins of mainstream society where housing conditions were worst.⁴⁴ Second, the established story mostly credits the migrants, their families and their wider networks with their successful reinsertion. Solidarity practices rooted in kinship and neighbourhood relations are highlighted, while the extent of state assistance is downplayed. But like in France a decade earlier – although with less of a budget – the state did create a comprehensive integration dispositive. Its kernel was the IARN, the Institute for the Support of the Return of Nationals (*Instituto de Apoio ao Retorno dos Nacionais*), which in 1975 came to replace the CATU created for Cape Verdean labour migrants.⁴⁵

In orienting the IARN's policy, António Gonçalves Ribeiro, who was at the helm of the institution, liaised in 1977 with the French government, hoping to learn from its experience. The fact that, fifteen years after Algeria's independence, the French Secretary of State for the Repatriates had not yet been dissolved and that *pieds-noirs* were overrepresented in many communities in the Parisian region and in southern France struck Gonçalves Ribeiro as a 'persistence of the phenomenon of the repatriates in French society' that he wished to avoid in Portugal.⁴⁶ A scholarly article reinforced his conviction that the French had failed to integrate their returnees appropriately.⁴⁷ The supposedly flawed integration of the *pieds-noirs* soon became a trope in Portugal.⁴⁸ Most commentators do not state clearly why they think the Portuguese integration was superior, but some argue that it was achieved through individual assimilation, while in France integration followed a communitarian logic that strengthened instead of dissolved the social, political and identitary bonds among repatriates. The Portuguese authorities are credited with having rejected the returnees' claims to indemnification for lost properties, with having sped up their dissolution as an administratively distinct population group and their transfer into the general social security system and with fostering the migrants' geographical repartition. All these measures are said to have discouraged a strong group identity detrimental to the migrants' integration.⁴⁹

This is not the place to engage further with these representations of national difference. Instead, let us highlight a similarity: just like its French counterpart, the Portuguese state accorded its settlers-turned-migrants a preferential treatment unavailable to other post-imperial migrants. The returnees were privileged⁵⁰ – even if their integration was uneven, since people of colour and/or with less socio-cultural capital suffered (more) discrimination. By defining *retornados* as entitled to the support of special institutions, the state created a group of people governable by an expanding bureaucracy, and it crafted, just as in France,⁵¹ an ideology of 'national solidarity' that officials mobilised to pacify society during a troublesome transition. This approach helped stabilise the nation from a

⁴⁴ See Chapter 2 of Christoph Kalter, *Postcolonial People: The Return from Africa and the Remaking of Portugal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming); Lynn Hoefgen, 'The Integration of Returnees from the Colonies into Portugal's Social and Economic Life', unpublished PhD diss, University of Florida, 1985.

⁴⁵ Nuno Dias, 'A mão esquerda do estado pós-colonial: O papel do IARN nas dinâmicas de incorporação das populações retornadas', in Elsa Peralta, Bruno Gois and Joana Oliveira, eds., *Retornar. Traços de memória do fim do império* (Lisbon: Edições 70, 2017), 123–40. The official documentation is Comissariado, *Relatório*. Various Portuguese archives contain the massive but for the most part unstudied paper trail left behind by the IARN.

⁴⁶ António Gonçalves Ribeiro, *A vertigem da descolonização. Da agonia do êxodo à cidadania plena* (Algueirão-Mem Martins: Editorial Inquérito, 2002), 415.

⁴⁷ The article Pierre Baillet, 'L'intégration des rapatriés d'Algérie en France', *Population (French Edition)* 30, 2 (1975), 303–14 is referenced by Gonçalves Ribeiro see his remarks quoted in José Silvas Pinto, 'Retornado: uma palavra a "abater" em 1980', *O Jornal*, 11 Feb. 1977.

⁴⁸ An example: Fernando Dacosta, *Os retornados estão a mudar Portugal* (Lisbon: Relógio d'Água, 1984), 17f. A contemporary variant: São José Almeida, 'Retornados. Uma história de sucesso para contar', *Revista 2 – Público*, 20 Apr. 2014, 14–21, 16.

⁴⁹ For a fuller version of these arguments see Pires, *Migrações*, 245–47.

⁵⁰ For a similar notion, see Rainer Ohliger, 'Representing Privileged Migrants in Germany, France, and the Netherlands: Return Migrants, Repatriates, and Expellees after 1945', in Hanna Schissler and Yasemin Soysal, eds., *The Nation, Europe, the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 35–60.

⁵¹ Scioldo-Zürcher, *Devenir métropolitain*; Claire Eldridge, *From Empire to Exile: History and Memory within the Pied-Noir and Harki Communities, 1962–2012* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 2016), 50f., 57.

short-term perspective and was instrumental in one of its most consequential mid-term transformations: the breakthrough of the welfare state.

Characterised by its ‘belated’ emergence, the Portuguese welfare state was weak in the mid-1970s, as compared to a Western and Northern European path seen as ‘typical’. As the returnees’ reception shows – think of the public-private partnership between the IARN and the Portuguese Red Cross – this weakness was cushioned by a welfare society where non-state actors played an important role.⁵² To be sure, the expansion of social policies towards rural populations had already begun in the 1960s. Reacting to the massive emigration of workers to France and other countries, it was a bid to increase the legitimacy of the dictatorship.⁵³ But it was the 1974 Carnation Revolution and the social struggles that followed, notably in the field of housing,⁵⁴ that marked the turning-point towards the ‘universalistic welfare state’,⁵⁵ which Portugal’s 1976 Constitution enshrined,⁵⁶ and which the bureaucracy for the returnees began to implement. The IARN was the first concerted attempt to address the vulnerability of a segment of the Portuguese population so as to make them, via the state aid provided, invisible.⁵⁷ When the returnees’ integration was deemed complete and the IARN was extinguished in 1981, its services and personnel were integrated into the Ministry of Social Affairs. Many benefits of Portugal’s social security system developed from 1977 onwards (that year, the social pension was created as a first universal and non-contributory protection), among them housing or family allowances and medical assistance, were first granted to the returnees before being extended to all Portuguese citizens.⁵⁸ The success story of integration therefore not only fails to account for the hardships and limits of reinsertion. It also blocks from view how the second movement of post-imperial migrations accelerated the new understanding of the nation-state as the guarantor of its citizens’ welfare, an understanding aligned with the Western European model that elites in Portugal wished to espouse – even if they portrayed French policies for the *pieds-noirs* as a negative example. The very definition of the citizen entitled to welfare, however, changed at the time – and once again, the second phase of post-imperial migrations was crucial in the process.

Tales of (Un-) Belonging: Post-Imperial Migrations and Citizenship

As a legal institution and political practice, citizenship draws a contested and historically shifting line between those who enjoy full rights and belonging within a polity and those who do not. Regarding post-imperial migrations, we might represent the citizenship factor in two ways. Firstly, we can tell a

⁵² Pedro Hespanha, Sílvia Portugal and Claudino Ferreira, ‘The Welfare Society and the Welfare State: The Portuguese Experience’, in Maurice Roche and Rik van Berkel, eds., *European Citizenship and Social Exclusion* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997), 169–83; António Dornelas, ‘Portugal: a construção do Estado-Providência em contexto desfavorável’, in Filipe Carreira da Silva, ed., *Os portugueses e o estado-providência. Uma perspectiva comparada* (Lisbon: ICS, 2013), 45–83; Pilar González and António Figueiredo, ‘The European Social Model in a Context of Crisis and Austerity in Portugal’, in Daniel Vaughan-Whitehead, ed., *The European Social Model in Crisis: Is Europe Losing Its Soul?* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015), 386–450; Boaventura de Sousa Santos, ‘Estado e sociedade na semi-periferia do sistema mundial. O caso português’, *Análise Social XXI* (1985), 3/4/5, 869–901.

⁵³ Victor Pereira, ‘Emigração e desenvolvimento da previdência social em Portugal’, *Análise Social XLIV* (2009), 192, 471–510.

⁵⁴ Pedro Ramos Pinto, *Lisbon Rising: Urban Social Movements in the Portuguese Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

⁵⁵ Alexandra Cristina Ramos da Silva Lopes, ‘Welfare Arrangements, Safety Nets, and Familial Support for the Elderly in Portugal’, PhD Thesis, London School of Economics, 2006, 66. On the interplay of civil society and the welfare state after 1974 see Rui Branco, ‘Entre Bismarck and Beveridge: Sociedade Civil e Estado Providência em Portugal (1960–2011)’, *Análise Social LII*, 224 (2017), 534–58.

⁵⁶ The 1976 Constitution of the Republic (Article 63.2) charged the state to ‘organise, coordinate, and subsidise a unified and decentralised system of social security’.

⁵⁷ Dias, ‘Mão’, 138.

⁵⁸ Júlia Cardoso, ‘Retornados e IARN. Um experimento no rumo de um Estado Providência em Portugal’, *Intervenção Social*, 23/24 (2001), 137–63; Nuno Dias, ‘Remigrar e Retornar. História e Estado na arquitectura das etnicidades pós-coloniais em Portugal’, *Cidades, Comunidades e Territórios*, 27, Nov.–Dec. (2013), 1–20.

story of citizenship as a ‘postcolonial bonus’,⁵⁹ a preferential treatment that European states have accorded to or upheld for those immigrants who had a connection to them via the history of colonialism. Secondly, we can tell a story of limited access and disenfranchisement, one that many immigrants experienced as a betrayal of earlier promises, and as a ‘postcolonial burden’ they had to carry.⁶⁰ While in tension, these stories, taken together, illuminate the messy change that decolonisation brought for the formerly colonised’s citizenship status and for Europe’s post-imperial nations.

A famous case of a citizenship bonus is the 1948 British Nationality Act. Defining a ‘Citizenship of the United Kingdom and Colonies’, it made colonial subjects and British citizens legally indistinguishable. It also afforded broadly identical rights to a second category, the ‘Citizens of Independent Commonwealth Countries’, among them India, Pakistan and Ceylon that had just won their independence from Britain. Citizens of both categories had the right to enter the United Kingdom, settle and work there. They did so until, in an atmosphere of increasingly violent racism, immigration laws in 1962, 1968 and 1971 replaced the free entry policy with a highly restrictive one.⁶¹ France experimented with imperial citizenship in the French Union (*Union Française*, 1946) and the French Community (*Communauté Française*, 1958). Both constitutions included the colonised into the nation and granted them freedom of movement and settlement. But both also denied them full citizenship and locked them in a legal space between nationals and foreigners when they entered the metropole.⁶² This half-hearted expansion of citizenship was a response to pressures from the colonised and the international community in the post-war era. It also betrayed a longer history of tension between France’s assimilationist ‘civilising mission’ on the one hand and the racialised (legal) hierarchies of colonial rule and immigration control on the other.⁶³ Independence terminated this (incomplete) citizenship. Through a quasi-rule of automatism in international law the colonised now acquired the nationality of their newly independent nations.⁶⁴ As long as it served her interests, however, France unilaterally upheld or bilaterally agreed on preferential treatment for post-imperial migrants in terms of their entry, settlement rights, work regulations, family reunification and access to citizenship.⁶⁵

Like the French, Portugal’s imperial citizenship emerged from the mounting pressures the country faced from anticolonial activists and in international fora like the United Nations (UN) after the Second World War. In 1951, a constitutional revision replaced the Portuguese empire and its colonies with what was now presented as a single pluricontinental and multiracial nation. The 1959 Nationality Act bestowed Portuguese nationality upon all born on the nation’s soil, irrespective of whether in the metropole or in the overseas territories.⁶⁶ In addition, in 1961, in a short-lived move towards colonial

⁵⁹ This ‘postcolonial bonus’ designates the social and cultural capital that migrants without a prior imperial connection could not muster; see Gert Oostindie, ‘Decolonization, Migration and the Postcolonial Bonus’, in Gert Oostindie, ed., *Postcolonial Netherlands: Sixty-Five Years of Forgetting, Commemorating, Silencing* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 23–47.

⁶⁰ Jennifer Reichelt, ‘Bonus or Burden? Understanding Postcolonial Migration to the Netherlands in the Twentieth Century’, unpublished term paper, MA Global History, Freie Universität Berlin, 2020.

⁶¹ Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-War Britain: The Institutional Origins of a Multi-Cultural Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁶² Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, ‘Empire, droits et citoyenneté de 212 à 1946’, *Annales HSS* 63, 3 (2008), 495–531; Alexis Spire, *Etrangers à la carte. L’administration de l’immigration en France (1945–1975)* (Paris: Grasset, 2005), 190–98. An exception was made for Algerians, who enjoyed full citizenship rights when in the metropole.

⁶³ Emmanuelle Saada, ‘Le “modèle républicain de la citoyenneté” au miroir de la colonisation’, in Benjamin Stora and Claude Hémerly, eds., *Histoires coloniales: héritages et transmissions* (Paris: Centre Pompidou, 2007), 75–81.

⁶⁴ Władysław Czapliński, ‘A Note on Decolonization and Nationality’, *Verfassung und Recht in Übersee/Law and Politics in Africa, Asia and Latin America* 18, 3 (1985), 329–34.

⁶⁵ Burbank and Cooper, ‘Empire’, esp. 526; Spire, *Étrangers*, 194, 208. On the revocation of such privileges see Vincent Viet, *La France immigrée. Construction d’une politique, 1914–1997* (Paris: Fayard, 1998), 287–92.

⁶⁶ Maria Ioannisa Baganha and Constança Urbano de Sousa, ‘Portugal’, in Rainer Bauböck, Eva Ersbøll, Kees Groenendijk and Harald Waldrauch, eds., *Acquisition and Loss of Nationality. Vol. 2: Country Analyses* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 435–76, here 441; Rui Manuel Moura Ramos, ‘Nacionalidade e descolonização. Algumas

reform, Overseas Minister Adriano Moreira reacted to armed insurrection in Angola by abolishing the much-hated discriminatory legal system of the *indigenato*.⁶⁷ From 1959/61 onwards, therefore, all born in any part of Portugal had the same citizenship, irrespective of skin colour or education. Citizens' rights, however, were severely limited under Portugal's dictatorship, be it in the metropole or the colonies. More importantly, the *de iure* equality among citizens never translated into a *de facto* equality in the colonies, where racial hierarchy prevailed.⁶⁸

After all its colonies had become independent by 1975, Portugal maintained a citizenship bonus for their residents. Until 2006, migrants from Lusophone countries enjoyed shortcuts to Portuguese nationality, because they had Portuguese ancestry or, if they did not, because a shorter period of residence was required for naturalisation than for non-Lusophone foreigners. Accordingly, around 90 per cent of those who were naturalised until 2006 were from African Countries of Portuguese Official Language (*Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa*; PALOP) or Brazil.⁶⁹ Tellingly, however, privileges were accorded unevenly, thus continuing hierarchies that had granted different populations different rights within the empire. Consider Goa: Today the smallest state within the Republic of India, the territory formed the headquarters of the Portuguese Estado da Índia from the sixteenth century until it was incorporated into independent India in 1961 by force of arms. Portugal condemned this as an annexation of its territory and declared that those born in Goa before 1961 and their offspring would keep the citizenship they had enjoyed since the eighteenth century – a privilege that sharply set them apart from most Africans under Portuguese rule.⁷⁰ In force until today, this privilege allowed a six-digit number of Goans in India to successfully claim Portuguese citizenship, which also facilitates their access to other Western countries.⁷¹

The 'citizenship as a bonus' narrative shows how Portugal strove to uphold a special connection to its former empire, but also how legal distinctions among colonised populations were carried forth beyond independence. The flipside of this narrative, however, is a story of disenfranchisement and racialised exclusion. The second phase of post-imperial migrations is the key moment in this story. Facing the arrival of ever more returnees from the colonies, the government issued Decree-Law 308-A/75 on 24 June 1975. Declaring that independence nullified the 'Portuguese nationality' they had held 'until that date', it stripped most people from or in the colonies of their citizenship.⁷² A sizeable minority, however, continued to be Portuguese citizens: those born in the metropole; those born in the colonies who had a Portuguese parent or grandparent; the wives, widows and

reflexões a propósito do decreto-lei no 308-A/75 de 24 de Junho', *Revista de Direito e Economia* 1976, 121–51, 331–62, here 140.

⁶⁷ Christiane Abele, *Kein kleines Land. Die Kolonialfrage in Portugal 1961–1974* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2017), 93–101. Since 1926, the *indigenato* system had divided the colonised into a tiny minority of 'assimilated' citizens and the mass of 'uncivilised' natives, deemed unfit to be citizens and lacking key rights; see Cristina Nogueira da Silva, 'Natives Who Were Citizens and Natives Who Were Indígenas in Portuguese Empire (1900–1926)', in Alfred W. McCoy, ed., *Endless Empire: Spain's Retreat, Europe's Eclipse, America's Decline* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 295–305; Maria Paula Meneses, 'O "indígena" africano e o colono "europeu": a construção da diferença por processos legais', *E-cadernos CES [Online]* 7 (2010), 68–93, <http://journals.openedition.org/eces/403> (last visited 15 Nov. 2021).

⁶⁸ Gerald J. Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese: The Myth and the Reality* (London: Africa Research & Publications, 2004).

⁶⁹ On the 'Lusophone bonus' see Almeida and Corkill, 'On Being Portuguese', 166; Marques, 'Postcolonial Portugal', 138–40.

⁷⁰ On the complex legal status of Cape Verdeans in Portugal's empire, see Ivone de Fátima Brito Monteiro, 'A cidadania e o Indigenato: Uma confrontação sociopolítica e cultural no Cabo Verde colónia (1820–1960)', PhD thesis, University of Coimbra, 2017.

⁷¹ See Caroline B. Brettell, 'Portugal's First Post-Colonials: Citizenship, Identity, and the Repatriation of Goans', *Portuguese Studies Review*, 14, 2 (2007/8), 1–28. Aarefa Johari, 'Why Thousands of Goans Are Giving up Indian Passports for Portuguese Ones', 2019, <https://www.aresemares.com/index.php/noticias/milhares-de-cidadaos-de-go-a-obtendo-cidadania-portuguesa/> (last visited 15 Nov. 2021) estimates that '300,000 to 400,000 Goans have become Portuguese citizens since Portugal joined the European Union in 1986'.

⁷² Decreto-Lei 308-A/75, 24 de Junho 1975. The independence of Mozambique was scheduled for the following day (25 June), Cape Verde's for 5 July, São Tomé and Príncipe's for 12 July, Angola's for 11 Nov. Guinea-Bissau had unilaterally declared independence on 24 Sep. 1973 and was formally recognised by Portugal on 10 Sep. 1974.

divorced wives of Portuguese men in the colonies; and finally, those who had resided in the metropole for at least five years before 25 April 1974.

Importantly, only citizens qualified for returnee status. Several legal texts between March 1975 and May 1976 defined a *retornado* as a Portuguese national returning from an ex-colony, temporarily in need of assistance and entitled to government aid.⁷³ That *retornado* status and citizenship were (re-) defined around the same time was no coincidence. When Decree-Law 308-A/75 was passed in June, the wooden crates that settlers used to ship their possessions to the metropole had been piling up for months in the docks of Lisbon, and officials had begun to grasp the scope of the exodus, which would peak between July and November 1975. António de Almeida Santos, then Minister for Interterritorial Affairs and the author of the new nationality law, had himself returned from colonial Mozambique, where he spent twenty years as a lawyer in Lourenço Marques (today's Maputo). Looking back, he admitted that 'his' 1975 law responded directly to this second movement of post-imperial migrations, stating that it gave Portuguese nationality 'only to some in order to prevent that they come all'. Without these restrictions, Almeida Santos feared that, burdened by 'a million or more afflicted people', his country 'would perish'.⁷⁴

Almeida Santos specifically wished to block entry for African soldiers from the colonial army.⁷⁵ He acknowledged that they had strong motives for claiming citizenship and solidarity – having fought for Portugal they now rightly feared being persecuted in their countries – but still he wanted to limit their influx and considered the instrument he had created to this effect 'the most patriotic of laws'.⁷⁶ This echoed how the French had retracted citizenship status from the *harkis*, the indigenous auxiliaries of the French army, and barred most of them from entering France after Algeria's independence in 1962, accepting the fact that tens of thousands were massacred by the victorious national liberation movement.⁷⁷ The precedent Almeida Santos had had in mind, however, was the 1948 British Nationality Act – it had been 'too generous and London became the most Indian of capitals'.⁷⁸ Almeida Santos did not wish, it seems, to see Lisbon become the most Angolan or Mozambican of Europe's capitals.

Other officials shared the racism implicit in this statement. During a meeting of the Council of the Revolution in 1976, prime minister José Pinheiro de Azevedo fretted over the fact that 'many people of black colour were arriving through the airlift' that brought *retornados* to Lisbon and urged that 'we cannot close our eyes to the possible arrival of some thousands of individuals who cannot guarantee they are Portuguese'. Vítor Crespo, Minister of Cooperation, reassured him, declaring 'that concrete instructions had been given to the responsible entities in the sense that they should only authorize those individuals to embark in the airlift that fulfill all conditions of the Nationality Law'.⁷⁹ But as

⁷³ Decreto-Lei 169/75, 31 de Março 1975; Decreto-Lei 584-B/75, 16 de Outubro de 1975; Resolução do Conselho de Ministros, DR 105/76, Série I, Suplemento 1, 5 de Maio de 1976.

⁷⁴ Quotations in Almeida, 'Retornados', 17; Pires, *Migrações*, 126.

⁷⁵ Almeida, 'Retornados', 17. By 1973, roughly 61,800 men or 41 per cent of the troops fighting for the Portuguese side were recruited among the colonised; see João Paulo Borges Coelho, 'African Troops in the Portuguese Colonial Army, 1961–1974: Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique', *Portuguese Studies Review*, 10, 1 (2002), 129–50, 136, table 2.

⁷⁶ Quoted in Pires, *Migrações*, p. 126. Massive vengeance occurred in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, but not in Angola, where most men fighting alongside the Portuguese until 1974 afterwards became assimilated into the armed wings of the competing national liberation movements FNLA, MPLA and UNITA; see Pedro Aires Oliveira, 'Saved by the Civil War: African "Loyalists" in the Portuguese Armed Forces and Angola's Transition to Independence', *The International History Review*, 39, 1 (2017), 126–42.

⁷⁷ Todd Shepard, 'Excluding the *Harkis* from Repatriate Status, Excluding Muslim Algerians from French Identity', in Hafid Gafaiti, Patricia M.E. Lorcin and David Troyansky, eds., *Transnational Spaces and Identities in the Francophone World* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 94–114. The number of *harkis* killed is estimated to be in the region of 60,000–75,000.

⁷⁸ Almeida, 'Retornados', 17.

⁷⁹ Reunião de 26 de Janeiro de 1976, 26 Jan. 1976, Portugal/Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo/Conselho da Revolução (hereafter: PT/TT/CR), No. 2. Some nine months later, the 'problem' of non-nationals from the ex-colonies wishing to enter Portugal was discussed in similar terms in the Council of the Revolution; see Reunião de 8 de Setembro de 1976, 8 Sept. 1976, PT/TT/CR, No. 3.

a report approved by Portugal's four major political parties in 1977 shows, even some of those who could claim citizenship by virtue of the new law were suspected to have done so 'for reasons of opportunity' and 'with the clear goal of enjoying the aid that the Portuguese state grants his citizens', while 'intimately they did not consider themselves Portuguese' and 'intended to return to their native land one day'. Such suspicions fell mostly on Portuguese of colour, as is patent from the fact that the reports' authors stated that 'some' of the citizens they voiced concern about had 'ancestors' in Portugal, but most of them 'don't even have that'.⁸⁰

In short, Portuguese officials desired to reduce the influx of migrants and the assistance granted to those who did enter the country by instituting a racialised selection process.⁸¹ For various reasons – the legacy of the ostensibly non-racist discourse of Lusotropicalism, the left-wing profile of the new regime, and the non-acceptance of legally institutionalised racism by the international community – this selection could not overtly rely on race. Instead, the legislators chose the criterion of Portuguese citizenship, while simultaneously redefining this very citizenship in terms of descent. The effect of all this was an explicit equation of the *retornados* with Portugueseness and an implicit and incomplete, but nonetheless powerful, association of both the returnees and Portugueseness with whiteness.⁸²

Some migrants had to go to great lengths to maintain their citizenship.⁸³ Many others lost it. Among them were Carlos Simeão and his wife Anália de Victória Pereira, who would much later, in 1992, become the first woman to run for the presidency in her native Angola. She and Simeão arrived in Lisbon in September 1975, and founded LARA, the League for the Support of Angolan Refugees (*Liga de Apoio aos Refugiados Angolanos*) in 1977. LARA held Portugal responsible for the predicament of Angolan decolonisation migrants, whom it conceived of as political refugees. Writing to the Portuguese government, but also to the UN Secretary-General, the association insisted that 'we are more than 30,000 suffering social and economic discriminations' as 'Angolese [sic] refugees in Portugal'.⁸⁴ The representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Lisbon was aware of the problem, even if he advanced a lesser number, stating that 'some 20,000 persons of African origin (mainly from Angola) who do not enjoy Portuguese nationality . . . and are considered by Portuguese law as persons of undetermined nationality' lived in the country as a result of the 'decolonization process'.⁸⁵ LARA not only campaigned for their material support but also for the creation of a national refugee law in Portugal that would allow them to apply for political

⁸⁰ Armando Lopes (PS), *Diário da Assembleia da República* 107, 1977-05-11, 3636f.

⁸¹ For additional evidence of this see the *Resolução do Conselho de Ministros* 171/77 dated 14 July 1977, and its contextualisation by Pires, *Migrações*, 227f.

⁸² For a similar argument: Ricardo E. Ovalle-Bahamón, 'The Wrinkles of Decolonization and Nationness: White Angolans as Retornados in Portugal', in Smith, ed., *Invisible Migrants*, 147–68, here 157f.; also hinted at in Maria Paula Meneses and Catarina Gomes, 'Regressos? Os *retornados* na (des)colonização portuguesa', in Maria Paula Meneses and Bruno Sena Martins, eds., *As guerras de libertação e os sonhos coloniais. Alianças secretas, mapas imaginados* (Coimbra: Edições Almedina, 2013), 79–153, 135f. and in Stephen C. Lubkemann, 'Unsettling the Metropole: Race and Settler Reincorporation in Postcolonial Portugal', in Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen, eds., *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century: Projects, Practices, Legacies* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 257–70, 266.

⁸³ For some accounts see Adamopoulos, *Volta*, 71–5. The combined number of (a) non-white returnees who maintained citizenship and of (b) African immigrants arriving between 1976 and 1981 who successfully claimed citizenship is estimated to be between 30,000 and 50,000; see Fernando Luís Machado, 'Luso-africanos em Portugal: nas margens da etnicidade', *Sociologia*, 16 (1994), 111–34, 115. See Antoine Acker, 'Entre deux drapeaux. Les ouvriers capverdiens au Portugal pendant la période révolutionnaire (1974–1976)', *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos*, 21 (2011), 123–45, 138–40 for the law's impact on the Cape Verdean workers who had come to Portugal before the Revolution.

⁸⁴ Letter by Carlos Simeão to UN Secretary-General, 25 Mar. 1977, UNHCR Archives, UNHCR Fonds 11 Series 2 Classified Subject Files 1971–84, Subgroup Refugee Situations – 100.POR.ANG Refugees from Angola in Portugal 1975–84, 11.02.BOX.0161.

⁸⁵ Letter by Guilherme da Cunha, UNHCR Branch Office Brussels, 'Situation of persons of Angolan Origin in Portugal', UNHCR Archives, 19 June 1978, in UNHCR Fonds 11 Series 2 Classified Subject Files 1971–1984, Subgroup Refugee Situations – 100.POR.ANG Refugees from Angola in Portugal 1975–1984, 11.02.BOX.0161.

asylum. It shared this objective with the UNHCR, which constantly pushed the Portuguese authorities on this issue.⁸⁶

Beyond the situation in Portugal, LARA also tried to influence the situation in civil war-torn Angola itself. In letters to Angolan president Agostinho Neto, to Portuguese prime minister Mário Soares, or to William Eteki Mboumoua, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, LARA campaigned against what it saw as the human rights abuses of Neto's government, particularly regarding political opponents. This campaign culminated in an utterly unrealistic bid to weaken Neto when Carlos Simeão in 1978 claimed to lead a 'government in exile'.⁸⁷ But while LARA's founders, whose association mobilised some 1,500 members in and around Lisbon, identified as 'Angolans in exile', they also insisted on a colonial history 'more than 400 years old' which had melded Angola and Portugal together like 'two sides of the same coin'. Referring both to the imperial project of assimilation and to the decolonisation that had obliterated it, they presented themselves as 'on one hand, the incomplete product of Portuguese colonization and, on the other hand, the victims of the [1975] Alvor Agreement' which had prepared Angolan independence and, arguably, the political turmoil following on its heels, prompting Simeão and Pereira to seek refuge in the former metropole.⁸⁸ Referring to the majority of decolonisation migrants who, unlike them, remained Portuguese, LARA criticised the government for channelling a disproportionate amount of international donations to the *retornados* instead of those Africans who had fled the colonies alongside the returnees.⁸⁹

Others refused to consider themselves as non-Portuguese exiles and instead protested their loss of citizenship and the resulting inability to receive support as *retornados*. Among them was Sadurdine Alimamade Hergy, an immigrant from Mozambique who initiated a one-man campaign on behalf of those who were stripped of what he saw as their fundamental right to remain Portuguese.⁹⁰ In a stream of skilfully composed letters (1975–8), Hergy delivered a fierce critique of Portuguese decolonisation, the new nationality law and what he perceived as institutional racism. Finishing most letters with the salutation 'For the Defense of the Human Rights', he threatened to accuse Portugal in a 'worldwide campaign' of violating universal justice and international law.⁹¹ He wrote to the highest authorities and all political parties in Portugal, to national and international media, but also to US ambassador Frank Carlucci, to Suleiman Vally Mamede, President of Lisbon's Islamic Community, to Aga Khan IV, the Imam of Nizari Ismailism, to Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, to the UNHCR, to the UN Commission on Human Rights and to the International League for Human Rights.

In a letter to prime minister Mário Soares on 28 September 1976, the bedrock of Hergy's attack was the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights that he quoted verbatim: 'Everyone has the right to a nationality. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality'. As Hergy saw it, Portuguese law-makers had stripped thousands of this inalienable right, disregarding the fact that 'all those born in territories where the Portuguese flag flew are Portuguese citizens, even after the independence of the overseas territories, as long as these citizens do not declare the opposite'.⁹² Additionally, Hergy

⁸⁶ The obstacles for a recognition of refugees and stateless persons under the UNHCR's mandate in Portugal were only removed when the Law on the Right to Asylum and the Statute of Refugee was proclaimed in 1980 (Lei 38/80 de 1 de Agosto 1980).

⁸⁷ [No author], 'Refugiados de Angola ameaçam fazer marcha a pé até Amsterdão', in *A Capital*, 16 Mar. 1978.

⁸⁸ LARA, Manifesto ao Primeiro Ministro, 2 Mar. 1977, UNHCR Archives, UNHCR Fonds 11 Series 2 Classified Subject Files 1971–1984, Subgroup Refugee Situations – 100.POR.ANG Refugees from Angola in Portugal 1975–1984, 11.02.BOX.0161. On the agreement, see Gilbert M. Khadiagala, 'Negotiating Angola's Independence Transition: The Alvor Accords', *International Negotiation*, 10 (2005), 293–309.

⁸⁹ See the correspondence in Portugal/Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino/IARN, folder 'Diversos – E.1-15-Alto Comissariado das Nações Unidas', section 'Liga de Apoio Refug. Angola', and Letter Carlos Simeão to Director IARN, 2 Mar. 1978, in Portugal/Arquivo Histórico Diplomático/Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros/S/6.124.P9./91847, Angola – Refugiados.

⁹⁰ Hergy's letters suggest that he belonged to the Indo-British minority in Mozambique, possibly in the colony's second largest city, Beira, and more specifically that he was a member of the community of Indian-Mozambican Ismaili, a branch of Shia Islam.

⁹¹ Letter Sadurdine A. Hergy to National Secretariat of the PS (Partido Socialista), 10 Apr. 1976, PT/TT/CR, No. 270.

⁹² Letter Sadurdine A. Hergy to Prime Minister, 28 Sept. 1976, PT/TT/CR, No. 270.

reckoned that ‘the Portuguese Government refuses citizenship to its children of the ancient overseas territories for the sole reason that they are not white or do not possess ancestors of white origin. Due to universal understanding’, he wrote, this ‘constitutes racial discrimination’.⁹³ Hergy maintained that the obliteration of citizenship was unlawful and detrimental to the migrants’ ‘social reintegration in the metropole’, but also immoral. Taking the ideologues of Lusotropicalism at their word, he reminded Soares that ‘Portugal always defended in front of the world and all international organizations its multiracial, multi-religious, and pluricontinental character’. In the African colonies, ‘for four centuries’, the ‘many generations’ who grew up ‘under the Portuguese banner . . . did not know any other fatherland than Portugal’.⁹⁴ Through Decree-Law 308-A/75, the metropole violated their unquestionable patriotic commitment, expressed not least through their loyal service in the army and rewarded with many military decorations.⁹⁵

Hergy’s letters resonate with the observation that the mid-1970s mark the breakthrough of human rights as a political language that provided ordinary people with new means to claim individual rights against the state.⁹⁶ But in Hergy’s case at least, this language proved ineffective. His letters seem to have gone unanswered, and certainly had no influence on Portuguese citizenship regulations. Indeed, Decree-Law 308-A/75 initiated a new predominance of *ius sanguinis*.⁹⁷ Six years later, the 1981 nationality law further accentuated the criterion of Portuguese descent. While its prime goal was to facilitate access to Portuguese nationality for millions of emigrants and their children abroad, it was also meant to keep at bay African immigrants and to accommodate the dominant *ius sanguinis* orientation of the EEC, which Portugal joined in 1986.⁹⁸ Access to citizenship was further restricted by Law 25/94 of 19 August 1994, when the breakdown of the socialist bloc brought many Eastern European migrants to Portugal.⁹⁹ Amendments to the nationality law in 2006 did not change its basic logic. The 1975 nationality law, then, was the first in a series of restrictive laws that impeded access to citizenship and favoured the perception of immigrants as outsiders to a national community defined by descent.¹⁰⁰ Responding to the second movement of post-imperial migrations, the legislators replaced Portugal’s inclusive imperial citizenship – which had failed to halt racist practice in the colonies – with a national citizenship that excluded the formerly colonised and surreptitiously ethnically defined citizenship. Decolonisation thus initiated a reordering of nationhood, whose impact by far exceeded the momentary urgency that had motivated it in the first place.

This reordering, as scholars, journalists, and activists have shown, hampers equal participation of migrants and their children in Portuguese society, and undermines their sense of belonging.¹⁰¹ There are still thousands with a ‘migratory background’ in Portugal today, often the children of Cape Verdean immigrants, who do not possess the citizenship of the country where they were born and went to school, where they work and pay taxes, and beyond the borders of which many of them have never travelled. They are especially vulnerable to police violence, incarceration, or discrimination in housing, jobs and education. Distinctions of citizenship, gender, class, race and urban space

⁹³ Letter Sadurdine A. Hergy to President of the Republic, 26 May 1978, PT/TT/CR, No. 270.

⁹⁴ Letter Sadurdine A. Hergy to Prime Minister, 28 Sept. 1976, PT/TT/CR, No. 270.

⁹⁵ Letter Sadurdine A. Hergy to President of the Republic, 26 May 1978, PT/TT/CR, No. 270.

⁹⁶ Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn, eds., *The Breakthrough: Human Rights in the 1970s* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

⁹⁷ Pires, *Migrações*, 128.

⁹⁸ Baganha and Sousa, ‘Portugal’, 448; Marques, ‘Postcolonial Portugal’, 140; Rui Manuel Moura Ramos, ‘Migratory Movements and Nationality Law in Portugal’, in Randall Hansen and Patrick Weil, eds., *Towards a European Nationality: Citizenship, Immigration, and Nationality Law in the EU* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 214–29, 218.

⁹⁹ Baganha and Sousa, ‘Portugal’, 446–9; Ramos, ‘Migratory Movements’, 223f.

¹⁰⁰ Pires, *Migrações*, 128–30.

¹⁰¹ Consider these three examples, each written at an interval of a decade from the next one: Joana Gorjão Henriques, *Racismo no país dos brancos costumes* (Lisbon: Tinta da China, 2018); Jorge Vala, Diniz Lopes and Marcus Lima, ‘Black Immigrants in Portugal: Luso-Tropicalism and Prejudice’, *Journal of Social Issues*, 64, 2 (2008), 287–302; Martin Eaton, ‘Foreign Residents and Illegal Immigrants in Portugal’, *International Journal of Intercultural Research*, 22, 1 (1998), 49–66.

intersect to reinforce discriminations and the stereotyped representations of these demographics in much of the mainstream media.¹⁰²

Recently, however, there has been an important development. In February 2017, the far-left Left Bloc (*Bloco de Esquerda*; BE) and the centre-right Social Democratic Party (*Partido Social Democrata*; PSD) presented their propositions for a new nationality law. While the PSD wished to extend nationality to grandchildren of Portuguese emigrants abroad, the BE had immigrants and their offspring inside Portugal in mind and stipulated a return to *ius soli* nationality law.¹⁰³ Soon after, a coalition of around forty anti-racist, feminist, LGBTQ and migrant-rights associations named Campaign for a Different Nationality Law (*Campanha por outra lei da nacionalidade*) started campaigning for the BE's proposition with the slogan: 'Whoever is born in Portugal is Portuguese. Full stop'.¹⁰⁴ Going beyond questions of rights, their campaign was about changing common-sense representations: 'Portuguese identity incorporates cultural markers brought by immigrants from all five continents. We cannot continue to let this diversity be ignored and made invisible'.¹⁰⁵ In 2018, parliament did pass a new nationality law with the votes of the governing Socialist Party (*Partido Socialista*; PS) and the BE; the Portuguese Communist Party (*Partido Comunista Português*; PCP); the Ecologist Party 'The Greens' (*Partido Ecologista 'Os Verdes'*; PEV); and a party called People-Animals-Nature (*Pessoas-Animais-Natureza*; PAN). The final text was a merger of these parties' propositions. While it extended nationality to the grandchildren of emigrants, as the CDS (which abstained) had suggested, the BE's straightforward *ius soli* approach did not prevail. Nevertheless, the law marks a turning point, as it automatically gives Portuguese nationality to those born to foreign parents who have resided in Portugal for at least two years.¹⁰⁶ The 1975 reordering of nationhood, brought about by the second phase of post-imperial migrations, was partially reversed – not least thanks to the political activism of those who came during the third phase.

Imagined Communities: Post-imperial Migrations and Public Memories

Throughout much of the last half-century, most post-imperial migrants and their children had no widely recognisable voice in the public sphere. The *retornados*, as the privileged migrants they were, form a partial exception to this rule. For a decade or so after they arrived, a minority among them formed associations and ran the widely circulating illustrated weekly *Jornal O Retornado*. The latter sided more squarely with the far right than other publicly vocal returnees, but their politics of memory were overall, in a literal sense, reactionary. Defensively defiant in tone, they reacted to the twin delegitimisation of empire and the political right that the Carnation Revolution had brought. In demonstrations and publications, they took on a posture of victimhood and acquitted themselves from any particular responsibility for colonial rule, thus rejecting the scapegoating through which metropolitan Portuguese liked to hide their own roles in empire by stigmatising the returnees as colonial exploiters. In *JOR*, the returnees presented themselves as honest and hardworking people who had dedicated their lives to the economic, social and cultural advancement of Portugal's overseas

¹⁰² This intersectionality is demonstrated, despite the author's insistence on class to the detriment of the race factor, in Batalha, *Diaspora*. For media representations see also Isabel Ferin, 'Immigrants in the Portuguese Media', *Portuguese Journal of Social Science*, 7, 3 (2008), 181–94; Julia Suárez-Krabbe, "'There Are no Simplifications, There is Conviction": Racism and the Media in Portugal', *Working Paper at the Centre for Social Studies* (Coimbra: University of Coimbra, 2012).

¹⁰³ Joana Gorjão Henriques, 'Quem deve ser português? BE e PSD querem mudar Lei da Nacionalidade', *Público*, 1 Feb. 2017.

¹⁰⁴ <https://campanhaporoutraleidanacionalidade.wordpress.com/quem-somos/> (last visited 15 Nov. 2021).

¹⁰⁵ Joana Gorjão Henriques, 'Dezassete associações pedem nacionalidade imediata para quem nasce em Portugal', *Público*, 9 Feb. 2017.

¹⁰⁶ Maria Lopes and Joana Gorjão Henriques, 'Nacionalidade automática para filhos de imigrantes há dois anos em Portugal', *Público*, 20 Apr. 2018. Some additions to the 2018 law were voted by parliament in Dec. 2019, but the most liberal ones proposed by the BE and the Partido LIVRE did not receive a majority; see Lusa, 'Assembleia aprovou alterações da lei da nacionalidade do PAN e do PCP, projeto do Livre foi chumbado', *Expresso*, 12 Dec. 2019.

territories. Proud of having ‘completed a grand work of civilization’, which supposedly made Portuguese colonialism ‘very different from that of the English or French’,¹⁰⁷ they claimed to have created a melting pot of multi-racial harmony in the tropics. This paradise had been destroyed by decolonisation, i.e. by a mix of tribalism, communist subversion and foreign intervention in Africa as well as by the indifference, incompetence or treason of leftist politicians in the metropole.¹⁰⁸

This problematic representation of Portuguese settler colonialism and its demise was not limited to the associational sphere or the migrant press. In parliament, it was ventilated by several parties, and most notably the conservative CDS, for example by deputies Ângelo Vieira and Pinto da Cruz – both returnees from Angola themselves.¹⁰⁹ Additionally, part of the integration offer made to returnees by the state consisted in a public validation of their settler fantasies, as is patent in a speech by Gonçalves Ribeiro. In 1977, the head of the IARN recalled ‘the magnificent adventure that the Portuguese people have lived through during five centuries outside of their primeval borders’ and added, explaining the country’s turn from empire to Europe, that this adventure ‘must be transplanted into the continental European space now’. He presented the brave and industrious *retornados* as a vanguard in this process that would lead to the ‘nation’s resurrection’.¹¹⁰ In 1984, journalist Fernando Dacosta sang the same tune. The returnees, he thought, transformed the anger about their loss into the force to rebuild their lives – and to rebuild Portugal, acting as ‘settlers once again’. In a country debilitated by massive emigration, ‘everything was (and is) still to be done, just as was (and is) the case in the backcountries of the African memories’. The returnees, ‘builders of empire by nature’, were up to the task. With ‘their courage, persistence, ingenuity, inventiveness’, they ‘repeated here what they did there decades ago’.¹¹¹

The link of migration, memory and nation-building is clear enough in these quotes, but all in all, the space for these memory politics was limited, and the *retornado* associations never attracted the following or acquired the leverage that the *pieds-noirs* mustered in France. By the mid-1980s the returnees, privileged but also pressured by an ethno-nationalist conception of Portugueseness, had become near-invisible as a group.¹¹² Their memories circulated mostly in family conversations or at ostensibly unpolitical, festive gatherings. Perceived as uncomfortable reminders of a decolonisation process that many Portuguese saw as botched, the returnees hid their histories from the broader public and assimilated quietly.¹¹³ In this regard, they were like the veterans of Portugal’s colonial wars, even if – or precisely because – these wars, fought by an army of conscripts, had affected, often painfully so, practically every Portuguese family.¹¹⁴

The African migrants, meanwhile, remained just as invisible within public memories of empire and the nation as the returnees – at least until the mid-1990s, when a new multiculturalism, indebted to but also different from the late-imperial Lusotropicalism, entered society and politics. The new concept of ‘Lusophone communities’ now allowed the celebration of cultural-ethnic diversity – while at the same time it racially distanced the white ‘Portuguese’ from the ‘immigrant’ or ‘African’, be the latter a Portuguese citizen or not.¹¹⁵ Ironically, such migrantisation of citizens (and racialisation of

¹⁰⁷ [No author], ‘África ... África ... África...’, in *Jornal O Retornado*, 17 Oct. 1975.

¹⁰⁸ On returnee politics, see Chapter 3 of Kalter, *Postcolonial People*. The resemblances with other settler memory politics are striking; see Eldridge, *Empire to Exile*. For the *Jornal O Retornado*, see also Pires, Delaunay and Peixoto, ‘Trauma’, 187–92.

¹⁰⁹ See Morgane Delaunay, ‘La question des retornados dans le débat parlementaire portugais (1975–1976)’, *Portuguese Studies Review*, 27, 1 (2019), 177–99.

¹¹⁰ Quoted in José Marques Leandro, ‘Retorno de desalojados e retorno de emigrantes’, in Comissão Coordenação da Região Centro, ed., *Emigração e retorno na região centro* (Coimbra: Ministério da Administração Interna, 1984), 355–78, 362.

¹¹¹ Dacosta, *Estão a mudar*, 8, 12.

¹¹² Lubkemann, ‘Moral Economy’. On (non)-memorialisation see also Elsa Peralta, ‘The Return from Africa: Illegitimacy, Concealment, and the Non-memory of Portugal’s Imperial Collapse’, *Memory Studies* 15, 1 (2022), 52–69.

¹¹³ Peralta, ‘Return’, here 12; Elsa Peralta, ‘A integração dos “retornados” na sociedade portuguesa’, *Análise Social*, 54 (2019), 231, 310–37, here 327f.

¹¹⁴ Ângela Campos, *An Oral History of the Portuguese Colonial War: Conscripted Generation* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Maria José Lobo Antunes, *Regressos quase perfeitos. Memórias da guerra em Angola* (Lisbon: Tinta da China, 2015).

¹¹⁵ Kesha Fikes, *Managing African Portugal: The Citizen-Migrant Distinction* (Chapel Hill, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 46–50, 161; Bernd Reiter, ‘The Perils of Empire: Nationhood and Citizenship in Portugal’, *Citizenship Studies*,

migrants) went hand in hand with the idea, for a long time common-sensical among the wider public, that the Portuguese, having supposedly been non-racist colonisers, were also living in a benignly non-racist, postcolonial society.¹¹⁶ This myth was challenged by new activist groups like SOS Racism (*SOS Racismo*), and timidly questioned in mainstream journalism after the 1995 murder of Alcino Monteiro, a Portuguese citizen of Cape Verdean parentage who was beaten to death by a skinhead gang in Lisbon's famous Bairro Alto.¹¹⁷

Since the turn of the millennium, however, post-imperial migrants have acquired new visibility and agency in memory-making. Colonial rule and decolonisation have reappeared as relevant national memories, and the memorial activism of colonial war veterans has been a trailblazer in this regard.¹¹⁸ Partly in its wake, the *retornados* have reemerged in a memory boom of sorts, especially around the fortieth anniversary of the 1974 Revolution. Their voices returned to the public sphere, frequently as a by-product of old-age life-review processes and intergenerational communication. They resurfaced in academia, in an exhibition, in the arts, in high- and lowbrow literature, and journalistic works. Returnees emerged as the producers, commodities and consumers of a memory business that used nostalgia and trauma as its main selling points. They also reemerged in an array of memory politics whose protagonists had no unified political agenda.¹¹⁹

On the one hand, this boom belongs to a global memory moment that marks and connects many societies wrestling with the fallout of empire.¹²⁰ On the other, however, it is specific to Portugal,¹²¹ not least in the ways in which it allowed some commentators to link the returnees to the country's dire financial and economic crisis which peaked in 2008–15. Against the backdrop of the distrust with which many Portuguese then viewed the EU institutions that enforced harsh austerity politics in Portugal, a part of the settlers' public memories can be read as an escape back to the times when (trans-) national identities were anchored not yet in Europe and the diasporic communities of Portuguese emigrants around the world, but still in the African empire.¹²² Conversely, the success story of the returnees' integration, revived by journalists and politicians during the crisis,¹²³ applauded the entrepreneurial skills of the *retornados*. In the new context, it could be used as an exhortation to view the country's bleak situation as temporary, to accept the austerity measures and to embrace the neoliberal working ethos that the government of Pedro Passos Coelho promoted. This narrative was lent weight by the fact that the prime minister and four of his cabinet members were *retornados* themselves, and Passos Coelho tried to capitalise on this African connection during his 2011 electoral campaign in a meeting with immigrants.¹²⁴

12, 4 (2008), 397–412; Fernando Arenas, 'Migrations and the Rise of African Lisbon: Time-Space of Portuguese (Post) coloniality', *Postcolonial Studies*, 18, 4 (2015), 353–66; conceptual reflections in Cahen, 'Portugal'.

¹¹⁶ João Filipe Marques, 'Racistas são os outros! Reflexão sobre as origens e efeitos do mito do "não racismo" portugueses', *Lusotopie*, 14, 1 (2007), 71–88. Vala, Lopes and Lima, 'Immigrants'.

¹¹⁷ Fikes, *Managing*, 50f.

¹¹⁸ On the public memories of the colonial wars, see Campos, *Oral History*, 38–108.

¹¹⁹ Kalter, 'Traumatic Loss'; Peralta, 'Return'.

¹²⁰ The history of this memory boom still needs to be written. Important contributions are Eldridge, *Empire to Exile*; Itay Lotem, *The Memory of Colonialism in Britain and France: The Sins of Silence* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021); *Postcolonial Netherlands*, ed. Oostindie; *Memories of Post-imperial Nations*, ed. Rothermund; Buettner, *Europe*; *Geometrias da memória: Configurações pós-coloniais*, eds. António Sousa Ribeiro and Margarida Calafate Ribeiro (Porto: Afrontamento, 2016).

¹²¹ A masterful overview: Miguel Cardina, 'O passado colonial. Do trajeto histórico às configurações da memória', in Fernando Rosas et al., eds., *O Século XX Português. Política, Economia, Sociedade, Cultura, Império* (Lisbon: Tinta da China), 357–411.

¹²² Elsa Peralta and Lars Jensen, 'From Austerity to Postcolonial Nostalgia: Crisis and National Identity in Portugal and Denmark', in Stefan Jonsson and Julia Willén, eds., *Austere Histories in European Societies: Social Exclusion and the Contest of Colonial Memories* (London: Routledge, 2017), 74–91; Buettner, *Europe*, 399–402.

¹²³ Two prominent examples: Almeida, 'Retornados', and Fernando Dacosta, *Os retornados mudaram Portugal* (Lisbon: Edições Parsifal, 2013).

¹²⁴ Pedro Passos Coelho (in office 2011–15) was born in Portugal but spent his childhood in Angola until his family returned in 1974. The other *retornados* in his cabinet were Paula Teixeira da Cruz, Assunção Cristas, Miguel Macedo

The 2013 historical fiction TV show *After Saying Goodbye (Depois do Adeus)*, which portrayed a likeable family of Angolan returnees,¹²⁵ points to yet another way in which these migrations have been incorporated into representations of the nation. The Carnation Revolution is the cornerstone of Portugal's memory as a nation-state that achieved a combined success of democratisation, liberalisation and Europeanisation. This 'positive' event, however, is historically inseparable from decolonisation – for most returnees a 'negative' event in which they lost racial privilege, material goods, a way of life, a notion of home, and more. *After Saying Goodbye* tries to resolve this tension, or at the least to blur the dividing line between former settlers and residents of the metropole. It includes the returnees into the master narrative of the Carnation Revolution not only by recognising their hardships, but also by stressing how, in overcoming them, they helped to modernise, democratise and liberalise Portugal through their skills and work ethics, through their resistance against what the TV show presents as the leftist folly of the 'hot summer' of 1975, and through the cultural change they triggered. In short, the show represents the returnees as true (co-) founders of the Portuguese nation after empire.

As for the non-white migrants and the Portuguese of colour, they have increasingly been incorporated into an emerging post-imperial identity. In 2016, a leading daily celebrated the 'new Lisbon' of those who are 'young, gifted, and Black',¹²⁶ while a music critic urged the minister of culture in an open letter to promote Lisbon as 'capital of Africa'.¹²⁷ Two years later, when Portugal hosted *Eurovision 2018*, the world's largest music event, the organisers used the interval performance to showcase the music created by young artists from Portugal's black diaspora to millions of viewers worldwide. Ethnic and cultural diversity has become a hallmark of national self-representations – as well as a marketing tool for city-branding strategists selling Lisbon to some six million visitors per year. That tourists who prize the internationally acclaimed electronic music scene never set foot in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods where this music originated, but instead tour the imperial memory sites of Lisbon's Belém neighbourhood,¹²⁸ is just one of the many ambivalences of post-imperial Portugal today. Another one is that while the legacies of colonialism have contributed to the socio-economic inequalities between racialised groups in Portugal, 'music has created new egalitarian and multicultural urban spaces in which these differences can be addressed'.¹²⁹

Meanwhile, Portuguese of colour address these differences also through direct protests, for example in a 2019 demonstration against the police violence that ethnic minorities in Lisbon's suburbs endure.¹³⁰ Additionally, and in ways that are partly reminiscent of the new anti-racist movements that emerged in France around 2005,¹³¹ they also use memory politics that directly engage the nation's official self-representation. A prime example are the plans for a memorial to the four and a half to six million enslaved Africans who were transported on ships under Portuguese or Brazilian flags. The

and Miguel Relvas. [No author], "Sou o mais africano dos candidatos." Pedro Passos Coelho diz que tem uma ligação pessoal a África que lhe confere uma sensibilidade especial para os problemas dessas comunidades', 16 May 2011, <https://noticias.sapo.ao/actualidade/artigos/pedro-passos-coelho-sou-o-mais-africano-dos-candidatos> (last visited 10 Feb. 2020).

¹²⁵ Teresa Pinheiro, 'Negotiating the End of the Portuguese Empire: The Retornados' Perspective in the TV Series *Depois do Adeus*', in Elsa Peralta, ed., *The Retornados from the Portuguese Colonies in Africa: Memory, Narrative, and History* (New York: Routledge, 2022), 243–64.

¹²⁶ Mariana Pereira, 'A Nova Lisboa Africana. Jovens, talentosos e negros', *Diário de Notícias*, 13 Aug. 2016.

¹²⁷ Rui Miguel Abreu, 'Lisboa, capital de África. Uma ideia para Lisboa, ao cuidado do novo Ministro da Cultura, Dr. João Soares', 19 Jan. 2016, <https://blitz.pt/principal/update/2016-01-19-Lisboa-capital-de-Africa> (last visited 15 Nov. 2021). Note how while 'Africanising' the 'European' city, this formulation nonetheless continues to imagine Lisbon as the centre. On the immigration-music nexus: Fernando Arenas, 'Migrations'.

¹²⁸ Elsa Peralta, 'A composição de um complexo de memória: O caso de Belém, Lisboa', in Nuno Domingos and Elsa Peralta, eds., *Cidade e império. Dinâmicas coloniais e reconfigurações pós-coloniais* (Lisbon: Edições 70, 2013), 361–407.

¹²⁹ Harry Edwards, 'Musical Lusofonia and the African-Diaspora in Postcolonial Portugal: Batida and Lisbon as a Global Cultural Capital', *Global Histories*, 5, 2 (2019), 8–23, 22.

¹³⁰ Ana Naomé de Sousa, 'Lisbon's Bad Week: Police Brutality Reveals Portugal's Urban Reality', *The Guardian*, 31 Jan. 2019.

¹³¹ Itay Lotem, 'Anti-Racist Activism and the Memory of Colonialism: Race as Republican Critique after 2005', *Modern & Contemporary France*, 24, 3 (2016), 283–98.

memorial is the brainchild of *Djass*, an association of Afro-descendants in Portugal whose president, Beatriz Gomes Dias, a Portuguese citizen born in Senegal to a parent from Guinea-Bissau, has in 2019 been elected as one of the three first black women to ever win a seat in the national parliament.¹³² In November 2017, *Djass*'s memorial to enslaved people won the support of a majority of voters in Lisbon, where it is planned to set it up on the banks of the river Tagus.¹³³ Soon after the vote, however, controversy exploded – not least because Lisbon mayor Fernando Medina simultaneously promoted his own plan for a new 'Museum of the Discoveries'. In the aftermath of a much-criticised speech that president Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa had delivered in April 2017 at Gorée Island, an infamous departure point for slave ships in Senegal, many criticised Medina's museum project as an attempt to whitewash colonial history.¹³⁴ *Djass* had more in mind, however, than a mere reassessment of the country's past. Positing a clear link between slavery and present-day discrimination, Dias explained: 'We want this monument to bring life to the debate around racism today'.¹³⁵

Undoubtedly, this debate has taken off. The memorial consensus, publicly performed from the 1980s around the memory of the Carnation Revolution, the early modern 'discoveries' (rebranded as a philanthropic adventure of cross-cultural contact) and the alleged disposition of the Portuguese people to embrace ethnic diversity, has become shaky. There had always been dissenting voices, of course, but only recently have they reached a critical mass, and they now often belong to actors who find inspiration and tools of critique abroad. The internationalisation of research on colonialism and migrations is partly driving this dynamic, as more Portuguese scholars train abroad or research with European funding, while conversely, more foreign scholars work on Portugal.¹³⁶ Outside academia, Portuguese activists, often with a 'migratory background', also connect with social movements abroad that seek to decolonise education, the arts and other public spaces. *Djass* members, for example, were inspired by the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool, which, while state-funded, is an activist museum that challenges older narratives of slavery and abolitionism.¹³⁷ And in Portugal, just as in France or the United Kingdom, massive anti-racist demonstrations followed the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer on 25 May 2020.¹³⁸

All in all, the memorial effects that post-imperial migrations had are less directly traceable than the ways in which they moulded nationality law and the welfare state. They are, however, just as significant, as they affected the ways people imagine (and feel about) the nation as a community bound together or divided by history. Whether in their reactionary, nostalgic or critical forms, and whether meant to unify the nation or to unpack its supposed homogeneity, public memories are a prime site of the nation-building driven by post-imperial migrations.

¹³² Maria João Caetano, 'Joacine, Beatriz e Romualda. As três mulheres que trazem a diversidade ao Parlamento', *Diário de Notícias*, 7 Oct. 2019.

¹³³ Updates on the state of the project's realization can be found here: <https://www.memorialescravatura.com> (last visited 15. Nov. 2021).

¹³⁴ Jenny Barchfield, 'Lisbon Museum Plan Stirs Debate over Portugal's Colonial Past', *The Guardian*, 17 Sept. 2018; Pires, Delaunay and Peixoto, 'Trauma', 196.

¹³⁵ Quoted in James Badcock, 'Slavery Memorial Highlights Portugal's Racism Taboo', *BBC News*, 29 July 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44965631> (last visited 15. Nov. 2021).

¹³⁶ Inês Beleza Barreiros, Patrícia Martins Marcos, Pedro Schacht Pereira and Rui Gomes Coelho, 'O padre António Vieira no país dos cordiais', in *Público*, 2 Feb. 2020. See for example the ERC-funded research project CROME coordinated by Miguel Cardina, https://crome.ces.uc.pt/index.php?&id_lingua=2 (last visited 15. Nov. 2021).

¹³⁷ Email interview with Evalina Dias from *Djass* on 4 Sept. 2018, cited in and conducted by Amelia Schofield, *Slavery and the Imperial Memory: A Comparative Study of Slavery Memorialisation in Britain, France and Portugal*, unpublished Seminar Paper, MA Global History, Freie Universität Berlin, 2018.

¹³⁸ Marta Leite Ferreira, 'Milhares em protestos contra o racismo em Lisboa, Porto e Coimbra. As fotos das homenagens a Floyd', in *Observador*, 6 June 2020, <https://observador.pt/2020/06/06/fascista-o-teu-nome-esta-na-lista-a-manifestacao-contra-o-racismo-em-lisboa/> (last visited 15 Nov. 2021).

Conclusion: Transnational Nations

Post-imperial migrations to Portugal and their representations prompted momentous changes of citizenship. They were a laboratory of the welfare state, and they brought forth memories that compete for recognition in the public sphere. This article has argued that the combined effects of these developments amounted to a profound change of the institutions and representations of the nation in Portugal. While specific, this post-imperial nation-building resembled and was in conversation with similar processes in other Western European countries. The full scope as well as the difference-producing, racialised dynamics of this remaking of nations after empire are only discernible, however, when the arrival of predominantly white returnees from the colonies is analysed together with the advent of people of colour from the same places and as part of the same history of colonialism and its drawn-out ending.

I hope my discussion of welfare, citizenship and memories has made it clear that my focus on the nation as institution and imagined community should in no way be read as the return to the national container-model of history writing that has rightly come under attack in the last decades. On the contrary, what this article shows is that the specific shape that the nation takes after empire is in considerable part the result of global and transnational processes: of decolonisation and the migrations that it triggered. These processes have done little to dethrone the primacy of the nation-state for Portuguese society. If anything, they have reinforced it. The returnees, as well as the legally non-Portuguese immigrants that have preceded, accompanied or followed the returnees on their way to the (former) metropole, have increased Portugal's ethnic, social and cultural diversity. Somewhat paradoxically, however, their arrival partly provoked and partly accompanied the country's transition from a multi-continental empire to a post-imperial nation-state that has reinvented itself as metropolitan, European and implicitly white. Only in recent years have post-imperial migrants, their descendants and other activists mobilised effectively to question this ethno-nationalist logic of Portuguese nationhood after empire. Whether this questioning will continue and help diversify the understanding of what Portugal is or should be remains to be seen. Since similar battles are being fought in other parts of Western Europe and will continue to inspire the people of Portugal, their nation-building will remain a transnational affair.

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