2. Long-distance nationalism, boundaries and the experience of racism among Santomean migrants in Portugal

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INTRODUCTION

Benedict Anderson (1998, 58-74) first coined the concept of "long-distance nationalism" for dealing with the important role of exiles and migrants in nationalism. Long-distance nationalism "resembles conventional localised nationalism as an ideology that links people to territory" (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001, 20). It includes a territorial homeland governed by a state that claims to be acting in the name of the nation and ideas of common descent and history. The main specific point of differentiation in relation to conventional nationalism is that this type of nationalism is a product of transnationalism, that is, of the keeping of a transnational field of social relations between those who migrated and those who stayed. As two of the more influential scholars in the field have emphasised, "Long-distance nationalism binds together immigrants, their descendants, and those who have remained in their homeland into a single transborder citizenry. Citizens residing in the territorial homeland view emigrants and their descendants as part of the nation, whatever legal citizenship the émigrés may have" (Glick--Schiller and Fouron 2001, 20). Immigrants remain attached to those who stayed, sharing a sense of "peoplehood", based not only on culture and history, but also on a continued commitment to the nation-state (*Idem*, 20-22). They also remain highly interested in national politics and try to intervene in local affairs, and there is political activism among them.[1] Indeed, not only is long-distance nationalism – or "diaspora nationalism" (Landau 2001) – closely related to homeland nationalism in its ideology and purposes, but, as has been emphasised in several cases, diasporas have played a historical role in nationalist projects of state-nation building, such as in Ireland, Israel, Armenia, Slovenia and Croatia (Dieckhoff 2017; Skrbis 2017). One of first scholars that, following the steps of Benedict Anderson, analysed long-distance nationalism pointed to the relations between this type of nationalism and globalisation: "Long-distance nationalism is still a nationalism but one that is profoundly adapted to the conditions of a modern global system" (Skrbis 2017 [1999], 79).

1 Although many Santomean migrants are interested in their "homeland politics" (Vertovec 2009, 93-94), only a political elite is militantly involved in objectives like "the constitution of a transnational nation-sate" (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2004, 21). In our view, we should not only consider the members of this minority as long-distance nationalists, but all those who claim an unrivalled attachment to the nation and express this in several ways, including those pertaining to banal nationalism.

In fact, "ethno-nationalism [his expression] and globalization thus need to be seen as complementary rather than contradictory processes" (Idem, 2). It is closely embedded in one of the building blocks of globalisation: migration. Indeed, a short definition of long-distance nationalism sees it as binding together "immigrants, their descendants, and those who have remained in their homeland into a single transborder citizenry" (Dieckhoff 2017, 273).

This study will pay attention to modalities of the expression and reproduction of long-distance nationalism among immigrants from S. Tomé and Príncipe in Lisbon – commemorations and conversations and narratives – that are also dimensions of social memory.

Building on the examination of these expressions, and complementing them with data gathered from interviews, we aim to show that immigrants – including the second generation, at least – remain attached to their Santomean national identity and offer some explanations for this. Like others before – Glick-Schiller and Fouron (2001) – we don't see long-distance nationalism as a phenomenon related solely to the migrants. On the contrary, we will argue that this attachment to homeland is the by-product of two types of processes: ones that bind them together as a collective with shared cultural expressions and memories; others that pull them apart as the Other of the so-called "host nation" (Triandafyllidou 2006). If the boundaries that demarcate them from the majority also exclude and stigmatise, this must be taken into consideration when explaining the strength of national feeling. As more than one stated in conversation with us, "I live here, but my heart lies in S. Tomé".[2]

S. TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE: A BRIEF LOOK AT ITS HISTORY

The archipelago of S. Tomé and Príncipe (STP) consists of two islands and some islets located near the coast of West Africa, in the Gulf of Guinea, with a total area of 964 km². According to the last census (2012), its population is around 180,000 people.[3]

2 A word of caution about our data must be given. It was gathered through ethnographic research and in-depth interviews. The people with whom the researcher has been interacting are mainly adult men and women. So, although the chapter also relies on information obtained through interviews with people under 25, the older ones are still over-represented in the data.

3 Instituto Nacional de Estatística, República Democrática de São Tomé e Príncipe, *IV Recen-seamento Geral da População e Habitação – 2012*.

The archipelago was, for centuries, an agricultural colony controlled by the Portuguese. The islands were uninhabited when the Portuguese arrived at the end of the 15th century. The first colonisers were a few white settlers, but mostly of the population were Africans imported as slaves. The first wave of colonisation in the 16th century was linked to the production of sugar in plantations that collapsed in the following century. The islands were then reduced to small farming and to the involvement in the slave trade. Then, after some centuries, a new plantation economy was established in the 19th century based on coffee and mainly on cocoa, supported at first by slave labour (Tenreiro 1961).

Cocoa production would reach its peak in 1920, when the output of its production was around 50 000 tonnes (Tenreiro 1956, 30), STP being the third biggest producer after the Gold Coast and Brazil. The plantations could be huge – one of the biggest had over 20,000 acres, 50 Kilometres of railways, 50 European employees and 2,500 contract workers (Seibert 2006, 40).

By the end of the 19th century, former local planters and smallholders retained less than 10% of the land (Seibert 2006, 41). The highest positions in the plantation system were occupied by white settlers and employees who, by the 1950s, accounted for around 2% of the total population (Tenreiro 1956). The colonists also controlled the most important businesses. Although people from S. Tomé were considered formally as Portuguese citizens (Tenreiro 1956, 25), in practice racism denied them higher positions and opportunities.

After the abolition of slavery in 1876, as the local inhabitants refused to do agricultural work they identified with their former bondage, they were replaced in the plantations by a workforce of indentured labourers mainly imported from other Portuguese African colonies. These formed a segregated group. The local population was heterogeneous and stratified. The former slaves, now freedmen – *forro*s – remained the broadest stratum of native-born Santomeans. This group owned land that was only of marginal value for the plantation economy, but which afforded them relative autonomy in poverty. The vast majority were either unemployed or had humble occupations. At the top were those who had occupied the lower and even some middle-ranking positions in the colonial administration; some of them owned small businesses or shops, particularly outside the capital (Tenreiro 1956, 25). Some would work on the plantations, but as carpenters or mechanics, for example, not as rural workers. At the bottom of the local population, there was a group

of small-scale fishermen and farmers, the *Angolares*, descended from former slaves who had escaped from the plantations into the jungle, and who were discriminated against by the dominant *forro* (Tenreiro 1961, 80).

S. Tomé and Príncipe became an independent state in 1975. The plantations, previously owned by the Portuguese, were nationalised. Lacking the training and the technical expertise that were the monopoly of the colonisers, who then left the country, the plantations were ruined and with them the main source of revenue of this new nation-state. Privatisation in the 80s followed a neoliberal agenda dictated by international funding agencies. Linked to cronyism and corruption, not only did it not prevent the decay, but it actually seems to have accelerated it. At the same time, the population experienced an exponential growth. From that time on, Santomean immigration increased massively, mainly to Angola, Portugal and from here to other countries of the European Union. According to the Portuguese authorities, the current number of legal immigrants in Portugal is around 9,000 (SEF 2016), but other sources who take into account both Santomeans with dual citizenship and illegal immigrants estimate that up to 25,000 could be in Portugal (Nascimento 2012, 123-124).[4]

We must take into consideration the history and the social configuration of the islands in order to get a full understanding of the practices and discourses that are major dimensions of their memories and national identification.

LONG-DISTANCE NATIONALISM, MEMORY AND REMEMBERING: FORMAL AND INFORMAL WAYS

The S. Tomé and Príncipe community in Portugal is concentrated in the poorer suburbs of the Lisbon Metropolitan Area. Male adults are mostly public works and construction workers, and many women are cleaners or care workers. There is also a small number who have mid-level occupations – such as nursing and primary school teaching – and a few higher ones: high school teachers, doctors, lawyers, civil servants, etc. Nearly all the members of this small elite will have Portuguese citizenship. A certain number of high school and university students whose parents remain in the country are also members of the community.

There is an immigrants' association for those born in S. Tomé and Príncipe

4 Official data gathered from SEF (2016).

(ACOSP). Another, smaller one, only for the natives of the Island of Príncipe, and a more recent and active Organisation of the Women of São Tomé and Príncipe (MEN-NON, "Our Mother" in S. Tomé Creole). The ACOSP – to which I will be mainly referring, as many of the conversations took place there – has been playing a central role in immigrant life. In its modest headquarters, immigrants can get help in legal matters, such as the acquisition of legal residence or of Portuguese citizenship, support in health care issues, or even in searching for educational and employment opportunities. Besides, people can go there and listen to music from the archipelago, eat and drink, exchange information, discuss politics, and engage in conversation, keeping communal bonds alive. Mostly adult men go there. Officials from S. Tomé and Príncipe also regularly visit it when they come to Portugal. There is also another organisation, based in S. Tomé, that aims to connect people in the Diaspora with the homeland, the FDSTP, Fórum da Diáspora de São Tomé e Príncipe (Forum of the Santomean Diaspora).[5]

The Association (ACOSP) can be conceived as a "mnemonic community" (Zerubavel 2003a), because it is a place where "mnemonic socialization" – the transmission of narratives and representations of the past – takes place. It is a place where "communities of memory"– such as those of the nation and the family – are inextricably interwoven (Misztal 2003), as people meet there and recall, at the same time, their kin and their homeland. At this point, we must stress that our approach to collective memory is the one adopted by scholars like Misztal, who states that "Although memory is a faculty of individual minds, remembering is social in origin and influenced by dominant discourses. In other words, while it is the individual who remembers, remembering is more than a personal act as even the most personal memories are embedded in social context and shaped by social factors that make social remembering possible, such as language, rituals and celebration practices" (Misztal 2010, 27). Social memory is an ensemble of practices – oral, visual, ritual, bodily – through which a community's collective remembrance of the past is produced and sustained (Linke 2001; Connerton 1988; Olick and Robbins 1998). All these practices can be observed at the Association, which plays a most important role in Santomean long-distance nationalism.

Remembering the homeland is crucial in long-distance nationalism. For the sake of simplification, we can divide recalling in *formal* and *informal*

5 http://www.diasporastp.org/Home/QuemSomos, last accessed 1-11-2017.

ways, the first involving intentional actions and the latter non-intentional ones. By formal ways, I mean the rituals or commemorative ceremonies (Connerton 1988; Gillis 1994) related to the official national Santomean calendar (Zerubavel 2003b), hence bonding the homeland and the Diaspora in the same celebration, as is the case of the commemoration of Independence Day, July 12th, promoted by the Association. In these commemorations, iconic food such as *calulu* (callaloo, a stew similar to others found in the West Indies and Brazil), *molho no fogo* (literally "sauce in the fire", also a stew with smoked and salted fish) and boiled banana are usually served. There are performances of traditional dances and concerts by bands and singers from the islands or the community. Flags of S. Tomé and Príncipe – and, at least sometimes, also those of Portugal – are used in the decoration. The national anthems of both countries are usually also sung. However, even in this more formal context, informality tends to prevail. Most of the time is spent with people rejoicing, talking, dancing, eating, drinking, enjoying the conversation and the togetherness, recreating the type of commensality and interactions they would be having in their homeland.

In a nutshell, we can say that, in these commemorations, memory operates not only through discourse and the display of symbols that are reminders of the homeland, but also in an embodied way, such as through dancing and eating – both of them manifestations of a *habitus*, in Bourdieu's terms, acquired in the homeland.[6]

Although in these special moments the nation is formally invoked, we can say that by informal ways it is constantly recalled. For some years, during summer, when people could use a small backyard which provided more space, these gatherings were even formally organised on a weekly basis: they were the so-called "conversas no quintal" (conversations in the backyard). On Saturdays, people would bring food deemed typical of the Islands, hear the music and dance, joke and talk about private and public matters. S. Tomé and its tragic economic and social situation, old times, the prospects for the future, the recent past, were the main topics of conversation. But the Association is

6 Another formal commemoration is S. Tomé Women's Day (19th September). In this commemoration, the role of women is even more pronounced, because they are really the mainstay of the activities, in planning, arranging the spaces, preparing the food, cleaning, etc. But what makes this commemoration special is the fact that there has always been a debate concerning their educational role – for instance in matters preventing the spread of HIV – or the abuse and violence they are victims of. It is a specific vindication of women's role and value.

also open during weekdays, after work, to deal with occasional matters and to offer a place for the Santomeans who pass by after work or who are unemployed to talk and for informal conviviality on Saturdays.

In a very simplified summary of the recurrent topics of the ongoing conversation there, we can say that geography and history are always present and intertwined in the re-imagination of the islands. People remember roads, beaches, rivers, trees, flora and fauna, the settlements and the plantations: all function as mnemonic devices that trigger recollections. As plantations were the mainstay of the local economy, being at the same time the symbols of modernity, it is not surprising that they are central reference points when recalling in conversation. And this is certainly inflected by the fact that most of the individuals involved in these conversations are adults in their mid-fifties or above, whose youth was spent in the last years of the colonial regime.

So, informal conversation revolves around the dichotomy between the present and the past, with a tendency to turn into a kind of critical history of the years following independence. If the conversation draws on the forest, for example, there are complaints that nowadays, with the explosive growth of the population that relies on wood for fuel and building material, deforestation is gaining ground with negative implications for the environment, because it will be responsible for less rainfall and the increasing erosion of the soils. But, most importantly, conversation will deal with the present situation of the old plantations, which, according to their own representation of them, were bright examples of economic modernity. These acknowledged hallmarks of the colonial economy are now abandoned, their buildings in ruins, a sad shadow of their glory days.

They view their recent history since Independence with pessimism. And, although they hold the political elite as most responsible for the present situation, denouncing the effects of patronage politics and corruption, they are not afraid of producing an essentialist representation of what we could call their "national character": the blame is also put on local people who don't want to work (*o forro não trabalha*; the freeman doesn't work). This is a discourse that is heard from people who classify themselves as of freemen (*forro*) ascendancy.

This contraposition between the present and the past makes clear how present circumstances shape social memory. As one of the founding figures of the study of social memory, Maurice Halbwachs, made clear, memory is not a simple registration of the past waiting to be awakened. It is "a reconstruction

of the past" constantly made and remade in the present (Halbwachs 1994 [1925], 83-113; 1997 [1950]). In the words of a more recent scholar, "Social memory is concerned with both constancy and change, referring at the same time to continuity with the past, while reinterpreting that past to provide the justification for both political beliefs and needs of the present". The past is not something fixed but is continually reinterpreted "in relation to factors related to the present" (McAuley 2015, 130, 129). It is the angst provoked by the current situation of their country that explains this focus of the conversation.

This appraisal of the present doesn't involve in any way the condoning of the colonial regime, but rather, as is also the case in memories of the colonial past in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Mwembu 2008, 97-120; Rubbers 2008, 121-129), a critical view of the situation since the independence that forced many of them to immigrate. The contrast between the past and the present tends to favour a selected past, a past that, as in the case of the Congo (Mwembu 2008, 117), concerns the last decades of the Portuguese domination, when agricultural production was well managed; the estates where not derelict as they are nowadays; the capital city, the sanitation system, the airport, the roads were well kept and clean and there was better healthcare on the islands. This is clearly the Golden Age of the national narrative(s) that are reproduced constantly.

I've recalled in some detail this perspective on recent history because it really haunts conversations and recollections among immigrants. But remembering the homeland is neither reduced to commentaries on their history nor to discourse in general. They dance, listen to music, eat, touch each other and experience the togetherness of a (imagined) community. In sum, they perform nationality.

Being part of a collective is something enjoyable (Skey 2013, 87). As Peter Bratsis states there is "libidinal value" in national identity (quoted in Skey 2013, 87). They enjoy shared practices and understandings rooted in the homeland and reproduced in the Diaspora. As Hage put it, in his study on Lebanese immigrants in Australia, "it is the positive encounter with a person, a sound, a smell, or a situation that offers an intimation of an imagined homely experience in the past, an experience of "back home". These intimations operate like "imagined metonymies" in that they are fragments that are imagined to be traces of an equally imagined homely whole, the imagined past "home" of another time and another space" (Hage 2010, 412-422).

Homeland means intimacy and familiarity (Grosby 2001). Their attachment to homeland is, first, a product of their upbringing in the archipelago that constituted their experiences – their feelings – of place, home and homeland. This is very different from learned knowledge. As the humanist geographer Tuan stressed, "Abstract knowledge *about* a place can be acquired in short order if one is diligent. The visual quality of an environment is quickly tallied if one has the artist's eye. But the "feel" of a place takes longer to acquire. It is made up of experiences, mostly fleeting and undramatic, repeated day after day and over the span of years. It is a unique blend of sights, sounds, a unique harmony of natural and artificial rhythms, such as times of sunrise and sunset, of work and play. The feel of a place is registered in one's muscles and bones" (Tuan 2005, 183-184). The nation is incorporated in the body forming a national *habitus*, as emphasised by Bourdieu (1997). In our view, these experiences are constitutive dimensions of long-distance nationalism.

LONG-DISTANCE NATIONALISM, BOUNDARIES AND THE EXPERIENCE OF RACISM

The discursive and non-discursive practices that evoke S. Tomé and Príncipe, such as those observed at the Association, are components of what Michael Billig calls "banal nationalism" (Billig 1995). He claims they play a crucial role in reproducing national identity. This kind of identity is not a "thing" but a "way of life". It implies discourse – reiterating the distinction between "us" and "the others" – and practices through which attachment to nation-states and nations came to be seen as something taken for granted, natural. National identity is embedded in the most mundane aspects of everyday life and it is not "shaped necessarily, or even mainly, by a conscious and reflective identification" (Edensor 2002, 28). National identity affords them "ontological security" (Giddens 1990), a place of their own in an insecure world.

Immigrants from S. Tomé in Portugal – regardless of class, gender and generation – assume without questioning that they form a specific community endowed with its own ancestors, history, culture, territory, memories and nation-state. Like the Haitians studied by Glick-Schiller and Fouron (2001, 2002) they are tied by "long-distance nationalism" to the Santomeans in the Archipelago, as well as to those who targeted other places in the Diaspora.

Even members of the second generation, born in Portugal, or people with Portuguese citizenship – dual citizenship – express a strong identification with their ancestral homeland (Nascimento 2012, 124). The ties that bind them are in no way reduced to the commemorations and other performances, narratives or conversations mentioned. They are embedded in the practical dealings that involve family and friendship networks, which are of vital importance in providing mutual assistance in migration and in sending remittances to family and kin who stayed. It is through processes like these, and through intense communication by phone or the Internet, that national identification is also maintained and reproduced. As has been pointed out, there is no contradiction between globalisation and national identification. Several authors have pointed to the role of the "communications revolution" (Television, the Internet, social media) in maintaining the "emotional attachment of the diasporans towards the homeland" (Dieckhoff 2017, 273). Cyberspace is crucial (Bernal 2014). And we can see this in action every day among the Santomeans that stay in touch with the country and family through, mainly, mobile phones, and, when the Internet is available, through e-mail messages and images that constantly remind them of S. Tomé.

But in order to more fully understand their attachment to the Santomean identity, we must take into consideration their situation in Portugal. Being poor, or relatively poor, in their majority, besides the social barriers of poverty they also have to confront the boundaries (Barth 1969; Jenkins 2011) – that is to say, "specific patterns of relations and representation between groups located on one or the other side" (Faist and Ulbricht 2015, 190) – represented by *nativism* and *racism*. As Skey emphasised, "the rights and entitlements that come from being a citizen are still generally tied to (and expressed in terms of) nation-state boundaries" (Skey 2015, 107). Also, boundaries make possible the distinction between in and out groups, and offer a privileged social position to dominant groups. Even if nationals and migrants are heterogeneous collectives, the distinction between the natives and non-natives applies. Belonging to the nation confers security, familiarity and power to the dominant group (Idem, 108-109). This land is unquestionably "theirs".

Santomeans, like other immigrants, are not seen as part of a community conceived as autochthonous inhabitants of the country, i. e., as Portuguese. In spite of their special legal status, which derives from a shared history and official language, hence offering them a more favourable treatment in terms

of the acquisition of citizenship compared to other migrants coming from outside the European Union; and, in spite of being mostly Catholics, like the majority of Portuguese people, they are still perceived as different from the natives, "the keepers of the nation's traditions" (Foner and Patrick 2015, 4). Their music, narratives and food, even, in many cases, their polygamy, marks them as foreigners. They have a different "national habitus" (Bourdieu 1997; Edensor 2002) from the native one, which is the norm, the fruit of dissimilar processes of socialisation. National identity depends on defining who belongs or not, and the immigrants are the Other (Castles 2000, 187). This is still true when the Santomeans have acquired Portuguese citizenship by birth or naturalisation – they have dual citizenship – something that entitles them to a range of civil and political rights almost identical to the majority, allowing them to be civil servants or to fully participate in political life in Portugal.[7]

And to that we should add the experience of racism, colour-coded racism – a major boundary – that they share with other migrants. As in other cases, citizenship is not enough to guarantee integration, due to discrimination based on race or culture (Triandafyllidou 2006, 288). And their experience of racism in Portugal, widely shared, is deeply resented. There are very, very rare claims that the Portuguese are not racist or, in a relativising tone, not as racist as other people. Their experience of racism is expressed in complaints involving, for example, relationships with neighbours, feeling that their proximity is avoided in public places and transport. Besides this, they complain they are subject to malevolent stereotyping, discrimination in the workplace, or that they are submitted to unfair treatment by the authorities because they are black. A young man experienced an open and extreme form of racism expressed by a neighbour, who would call him a "nigger", threaten to kill him, and would tell him to go home. He also complained that people in the underground hold onto their bags when a black person approaches, because of their preconceived idea of African people. A woman claimed that she was only accepted in her job after the agreement of her colleagues, being subjected to the same discriminatory treatment that a disabled (white) woman had also endured. And we could go on quoting testimonies. The intervention – respectful – of the police during a ball on a Saturday afternoon at the Association premises led to an enormous tension and to the suspicion that (white) neighbours – motivated by racism – had unfairly complained

7 Those who acquired citizenship by naturalisation cannot be elected presidents of the Republic.

about the noise. Racism is the most powerful of the exclusionary practices they have to endure in the so-called "host country". It is a most powerful boundary that, segregating them from the majority, contributes to the strengthening of their Santomean national identity.

CONCLUSION

Much has been written on the fact that globalisation, with wide migrations, has substantially weakened the appeal of more localised collectives, like the nation. For Stuart Hall, writing some time ago, there was "considerable evidence that late modern globalization (…) it is further undermining and putting into crisis those centred and united formations of cultural identity, including that most powerful of modern identities, the nation" (Hall 2017, 111).[8] And although he resisted the idea that "cultural homogenization would follow", pointing to the "unexpected revival and unexpected return of new kinds of national identifications" (Idem, 115), these couldn't be mapped "within the terms of nations and national identities" (Idem, 117). But this diagnostic didn't take into account either the strength of contemporary nationalism in established states or among nations without states, or the importance of "long-distance nationalism", precisely a form of nationalism born in the Diaspora. We have delved into it on researching the Santomean community in Lisbon, pointing to the importance of boundaries and the processes of inclusion and exclusion that, in our view, are its core.

8 Although only published in 2017, this is from Stuart Hall's W. E. B. Dubois Lectures delivered at Harvard University in 1994.

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