Colorblind Colonialism?

Lusotropicalismo and Portugal's 20th Century Empire in Africa

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INTRODUCTION
The Portuguese Role in African Decolonization

In 1975, after some 13 years fighting nationalist wars of liberation, the African

colonies of Angola, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, Guinea-Bissau, and Cape

Verde finally achieved their independence from Portugal. The decolonization of

Portuguese Africa, which occurred only after a left-wing military coup ousted the so-

called New State dictatorship that had run the country since the 1920s, was remarkable in

two ways. Firstly, Portuguese colonies became independent far later than the colonies of

other, stronger colonial powers that had greater resources to fight for continued control of

overseas territories. Indeed, whereas France, Britain, and Belgium began decolonizing as

early as the 1950s, abandoning direct political domination on the continent by the 1960s,

Portugal reinforced its commitment to its African dependencies by promoting both

increased Portuguese settlement in Africa and increasing its military presence in the

region.[1]

Secondly, the independence of Portuguese Africa meant the close of nearly 500

years of Portuguese presence in the so-called "Dark Continent." Portuguese navigational

explorations, beginning in the 15th century under the aegis of Prince Henry the Navigator

and his legendary school of navigation, pioneered the concept of overseas colonization,

and Portuguese trade routes and navigational expertise opened the door for other nations'

great colonial ventures and trading empires. The Portuguese were the first to set up

trading posts in Africa, and the first explorers to traverse the African continents. During

the European "Scramble for Africa," Portugal managed to claim a remarkably large

amount of territory, given its economic and political weakness, ostensibly due to the

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[1] R.F. Holland, *European Decolonization, 1918-1981: Introductory Survey*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1985), 293.

nation's historical presence in the region. In terms of a physical European colonial presence in Africa, the Portuguese were truly the first to come and the last to leave.

Historical Lacuna: Limits in Scholarship on Portuguese Decolonization

Given that the decolonization of Portuguese Africa was rather remarkable, it is surprising that so little research comparing African decolonization has concerned itself with Lusophone, or Portuguese-speaking, territories. The majority of volumes on decolonization of the continent overwhelmingly devote their time to the end of the British and French empires, to the exclusion of Portuguese decolonization. For example, in Dissolution of Colonial Empires, Franz Ansprenger writes, "Seven powers shaped the age of imperialism with their advance into Asia and Africa. Britain, Russia, and France were the traditional colonial powers among these, Germany, the United States, and Belgium the newcomers. In addition to these was the non-white outsider, Japan."[2] Thus, in a 304-page book on African independence, Portuguese decolonization doesn't even receive its own chapter.

Comparative studies have been helpful in explaining the different reactions of colonizing nations as the age of European imperialism drew to a close. For example, decolonization is usually characterized as having been more psychologically traumatic for the French public than for the British.[3] Whereas the British Empire is largely associated with indirect rule, France, broadly speaking, pursued a policy of assimilation and direct rule. Scholars have cited the greater French psychological commitment to colonialism, evidenced by its more direct relationship with its colonies, as part of the

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[2] Franz Ansprenger, *The Dissolution of Colonial Empires*, (Cornwall: T.J. Press, 1981), 10.

[3] Henry S. Wilson, *African Decolonization*, (London: Edward Arnold, 1994), 7.; see also Ansprenger, *The Dissolutiono of Colonial Empires*, 208.

reason decolonization was more painful for the French than for the British.[4] Furthermore, France's sense of international political inferiority (indeed, its fear of being demoted to a second-rate power) is also believed to have contributed to the reluctance with which France decolonized. Whereas Britain saw overseas expansion in more pragmatic economic terms, France saw it as essential to proving its position as a world power.[5] France felt personally attacked by liberation movements and was thus more resistant to acknowledging claims to self-determination.

Unfortunately, the comparative approach applied to French and British colonialism is missing in the Portuguese case. If France's psychological commitment to assimilating colonies, and its fear of losing international political importance, is an explanation for delayed decolonization, a similar phenomenon may have occurred in Portugal. The erasure of the Portuguese narrative leaves many questions unanswered: Why did the Portuguese choose to maintain control of their colonial possessions when more economically and politically powerful countries had already thrown in the towel? Why was the Portuguese government willing to fight such long and expensive African wars rather than forfeit their colonial possessions? As a poor, underdeveloped nation itself, did Portugal have a different economic relationship to its colonies than other nations? Did it have a different relationship to its colonies in terms of national pride and sense of identity, given the long Portuguese history of exploration overseas? How did the fact that Portugal was still ruled by a dictatorship, led by Antonio de Oliveira Salazar and later by Marcelo Caetano, influence colonial policy? How did the growing international disapproval of colonialism affect Portugal's justification for retaining its colonial

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[4] Ansprenger, *The Dissolution of Colonial Empires*, 213-233.
[5] Ansprenger, *The Dissolution of Colonial Empires*, 76.

possessions? How did maintaining colonies and justifying them in the face of decolonization affect Portugal's place on the international scene? In short, what was the particular quality of the connection between Portugal and its colonies, and how can it explain Portugal's insistent refusal to decolonize?

Historians have disagreed about the character of Portuguese colonialism in Africa. The fact that Portugal was a poor, unindustrialized country led R.F. Holland to claim that Portugal was willing to fight for its colonies because it was unable to move from a direct colonial relationship with overseas dependencies to the profitable neocolonial exploitation that other, more modernized countries pursued. Holland writes,

> Clearly, if a European power (even a weak one) wished to break an African nationalism after 1960, it was able to do so, at a cost. Portugal's acceptance of these costs was predetermined by the nature of its domestic economy… Portugal, itself in a certain sense a dependency of more advanced industrial economies and effectively pushed to the margins of Europe's transforming capitalism, concentrated its stagnant pool of resources and skills on cultivating its African allotment. This connection was predicated on continuing formal political domination of colonies because the metropole lacked the economic magnetism necessary to make informal control a viable alternative. As Amilcar Cabral, the self-styled martyr of Portuguese decolonization, commented: 'Portugal cannot afford neo-colonialism.'[6]

Yet, while Holland argues that Portugal's precarious economy made it more dependent on direct colonial presence, others have assumed that Portugal's backwardness left it unable to effectively exploit economic resources. Gerald Bender writes,

> Portugal was too poor and lacking in manpower to develop the colonies or even to effectively exploit their resources for her own benefit…. Since national prestige could not be sustained with reference to Portugal's internal condition, it sought in the Portuguese records of exploits 'beyond the seas.' Thus the glorification of the colonizing mission principally

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[6] Holland, *European Decolonization,* 293.

served the psychological rather than the political needs of successive Portuguese regimes.[7]

Although Bender goes on to enumerate several ways in which an articulation of the glory days of empire *did* help Portuguese politicians realize important political goals, his initial dismissal of Portuguese economic and political capabilities allows for an interesting comparison with Holland's argument.

Indeed, what is most striking about both Holland and Bender's interpretations of Portugal's economic relationships to its colonies is not how thoroughly they contradict each other, but how closely both authors rely on standard narratives that represented Salazar's dictatorship as antiquated and eccentric, a doddering relic of a lost age. Such common images of Portugal have never been in short supply: One New York Times article from 1959, while complimenting the Salazar regime for its steady currency and improved infrastructure, nevertheless characterized the dictator's economic policies as "old-fashioned," and described the nation as a "…land of burro power and of women carrying burdens on their heads."[8] A 1961 New York Times profile of "Portugal's Shy Dictator" noted that Salazar "has spoken of the 'grace of being poor'" and "prefers to regard himself still a peasant."[9]

Narratives emphasizing Portugal's poverty and Salazar's austerity and eccentricities are not inaccurate; nevertheless, a realization that such images of Portugal were pervasive should force a critical interpretation of any analysis of Portugal's colonial enterprise that suggests that economics were the primary factor dictating the Portuguese relationship to its colonies. Such accounts rely on common stereotypes and presume a

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[7] Gerald Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese: The Myth and the Reality*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), xix-xxx.

[8] "Dr. Salazar's Portugal," *The New York Times*, 23 June 1959, 32.

[9] "Portugal's Shy Dictator: Antonio de Oliveira Salazar*," The New York Times,* 21 May 1960, 3.

lack of Portuguese political sophistication. An economic interpretation of Portuguese colonial policy obscures the complicated and nuanced relationship that Portugal had with its overseas territories, and the political capabilities of Portugal's New State politicians.[10] Insisting that Portugal clung to its colonies for economic reasons ignores the importance of an emotional or historical attachment to these dependencies (indeed what Bender calls a "psychological" need), and obscures the centrality of empire in creating a sense of national identity. Furthermore, it overlooks the possible importance of an international power dynamic at play in the refusal to relinquish control of the African provinces upon international insistence.

Conversely, the assumption that Portugal was too poor to exploit its colonies, and thus that its relationship to the colonies was spiritual and not politically or economically advantageous, fails to credit any political savvy in Salazar's regime. It is important to recall that Salazar's dictatorship was the longest-lasting in 20th century Western Europe, facing few credible threats to its power, and surviving even Salazar himself. While Salazar may have been an odd political figure, and while Portugal may have remained mired in poverty, it is problematic to assume that Salazar's colonial policy was premised only on fulfilling a psychological attachment to Portugal's glory days, and not on achieving real political or economic goals. In spite of his statements, Bender himself sees expedient political and economic rationale in Salazar's rhetoric of empire.

The assumption that economics underlay Portugal's relationship with its colonies is consistent with the fact that most research on Portuguese colonialism has been economic or political, rather than cultural. Indeed, while Gerald Bender's analysis of

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[10] The term New State refers to the title Salazar assigned to his regime.

Portuguese colonialism suggests a cultural interpretation for the Portuguese presence in Africa, his is a political book, intended to highlight the economic and social realities of life in Angola. His dismissal of Portuguese political and economic savvy is directly related to his goal of disproving Portuguese claims to benevolent colonialism. Similarly, although other authors have discussed cultural explanations for Portuguese colonialism, their concentrations have been on political and economic policy.[11] Far less work has been done to understand the *cultural* meanings of empire in Portugal.

Lusotropicalism and a Cultural Interpretation of Portuguese Colonialism

How, then, should we analyze the New State's complex reasons for increasing its colonial commitments in the face of world wide decolonization? Without dismissing the economic motivations for Portuguese colonialism, an analysis of the cultural impetus for defending the Portuguese empire is also important to understanding the complexity of Portuguese decolonization.

I propose that Portugal's arguments justifying a continued overseas presence provide a lens through which to understand why Portugal clung to its colonies. Indeed, Portugal's arguments resisting demands to decolonize before the international community were both unorthodox and rhetorically effective. When faced with growing international opposition to colonialism and post-World War II concerns with doctrines of racial superiority, Portuguese politicians articulated the theories of a Brazilian sociologist

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[11] Some examples of works that have proven instrumental in illuminating Portuguese colonialism in Africa, but have also concentrated on economic and political realities to the exclusion of cultural factors, include: Malyn Newitt, *Portugal in Africa: The Last Hundred Years,* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1981); in Eduardo de Sousa Ferreira*. Portuguese Colonialism in Africa: The End of an Era*, (Paris: The Unesco Press, 1974); Norrie MacQueen, *The Decolonization of Portuguese Africa: Metropolitan Revolution and the Dissolution of* Empire, (London: Longman, 1997).

named Gilberto Freyre to support Portugal's continued colonial presense. Freyre had claimed that the Portuguese were uniquely anti-racial in their treatment of other peoples. This concept, eventually dubbed *lusotropicalismo*, was soon co-opted by New State politicians. Salazar's regime argued that the Portuguese were uniquely capable settlers who created multi-racial societies free of the oppression, racial hierarchies, and economic exploitation of other colonial powers. Thus, insisted the argument, anti-colonialist accusations and decolonization efforts were not even relevant to Portugal. The nation's economic weakness was converted into a virtue.

Many observers dismissed lusotropicalism as a propaganda tool, employed by Portuguese statesmen to justify an economic exploitation of Africa.[12] Others argued that it was an attempt to cling to an antiquated vision of Portuguese colonial grandeur.[13] While both of these interpretations are partial explanations, it is telling that many observers believed the Portuguese arguments of an anti-racial presence in overseas territories, and such an argument encouraged Portugal's NATO allies to tacitly support Salazar's colonial ambitions without compromising their supposed ideological standards.[14] Indeed, Portuguese politicians espoused a doctrine of racial harmony at the same time that they argued for the importance of Portugal's continued "civilizing mission." This occurred in a historical moment in which doctrines of racial superiority were being questioned, but a fear about the outcome of decolonization was still widespread. While many Western nations paid lip service to the rhetoric of self-determinism, the Cold War provided incentive to support those countries opposed to

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[12] For a discussion of the common interpretations of lusotropicalism as a means for economic exploitation, see Thomas Henrikson, "Portugal in Africa: A Noneconomic Interpretation," *African Studies Review* (1973), 405.

[13] E.g. Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese,* xix.

[14] Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese,* xxii.

communism, and a fear of newly decolonized nations becoming communist was pervasive. In its timing and efficacy, the use of the theory of lusotropicalism by New State politicians could be considered rhetorically ingenious.

Thus, an analysis of New State colonial rhetoric demonstrates that any assumption that Portugal's relationship to its colonies was entirely determined by the metropole's economic weakness ignores a complex and nuanced relationship between Portugal and its empire and erroneously presupposes a lack of political sophistication on the part of Portuguese politicians. With this in mind, this paper intends to examine the doctrine of lusotropicalism, and the manner in which it was espoused by Portuguese public figures. This illuminates the myriad reasons for Portugal's refusal to give in to international pressure to decolonize, abandoning its colonial mission only after a left-wing military coup toppled the New State dictatorship.

By examining the theory of lusotropicalism, it becomes clear that the maintenance of empire served several important functions beyond the economic benefits Portugal accrued: In light of its long history of exploration and colonialism, continued colonial possession was a profound part of Portuguese national identity, and the loss of colonial territories was perceived as a politically disastrous demotion of Portugal's place in world politics; the articulation of Portuguese anti-racialism allowed Portugal, once criticized for miscegenation and racial impurity, to claim a moral superiority and colonizing gift that trumped the economic or political primacy of other nations; Portugal's articulation of a superior colonizing method and continued presence in Africa allowed the nation to "compete" with stronger political powers at least psychologically; by emphasizing threats to Portugal's empire from abroad, the Salazar and Caetano regimes were able to silence

internal dissent about colonial policy and create support for the New State dictatorship; lastly, by defying the UN and the ideological conventions of the moment, Portugal felt it was defending its national autonomy. All of these arguments imply that the refusal to decolonize was both coherent and politically expedient.

Logistics

In order to demonstrate a connection between the New State discourse of lusotropicalism and explanations for Portugal's protracted presence in Africa, Chapter One will briefly outline the history of the Salazar's New State, the relationship between the metropole and the African colonies, and the historical moment in which the debate over decolonization was framed. Chapter Two will examine the early statements on colonialism by the New State to demonstrate that the racial references found in later discourse is absent in earlier rhetoric. This analysis will also illustrate the historical tradition of using colonies to foment national pride, providing the groundwork for the insertion of the tenets of lusotropicalism that began in the 1950s. Chapter Three will analyze the rhetoric, political discourse, and propaganda of New State politicians made in the face of international pressures to decolonize, from Portugal's early bids to join the UN in the 1950s through the end of Marcelo Caetano's tenure as Prime Minister in 1974. The Epilogue will address the publication of the book Portugal and the Future, by General António de Spínola, leader of the coup that ended the New State dictatorship and oversaw decolonization. I argue that the book highlights the dissent over colonial policy within metropolitan Portugal, exposes a reluctance to decolonize, and demonstrates how the concept of lusotropicalism had become deeply imbedded into the national identity.

When I refer to the rhetoric and political discourse of New State politicians, I mean to include the available primary sources of Portuguese politicians in this era. Many New State bureaucrats were prolific writers, and published works by Salazar, Overseas Minister Franco Nogueira, and General Spínola are discussed. Additionally, copies of speeches presented by Portuguese politicians to the public in the metropole as well as speeches by Portuguese officials presented before the United Nations will be examined. I will also address available pamphlets distributed by the Portuguese Overseas Ministry, which discuss Portugal's colonies, as an example of political propaganda of the New State.

State rhetoric is not created in isolation; rather, it is a reflection of political realities, both domestic and international. I believe that an analysis of government rhetoric and propaganda produced by the New State reflects the changing view of colonialism in Europe, the impact of international political pressures on the Portuguese State, and the domestic understanding that linked Portuguese identity to colonial pursuits. This realization can help our understanding of why it was important, psychologically and politically rather than merely economically, for Portugal to maintain its overseas empire.

A Note on Portuguese Racism

One final note: I am aware that examining a colonizing power's doctrine of racial equality is a potentially controversial undertaking. Analyzing the degree to which lusotropicalism is accurate and to what degree it is flawed is outside the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, I feel compelled to state my personal opinion on the matter. I do not believe that all colonial empires are created equal, and I believe that it is possible for

different colonial empires to have different racial ideologies. A definition of racial ideology, of course, asks for a definition of racism. Portugal claimed that it was historically anti-racist, as evidenced by rates of miscegenation and a lack of racial hatred. I cannot speak to the degree of racial hatred that the average Portuguese citizen had in his or her heart, but my own examinations of Portuguese articulations of lusotropicalism have led me to conclude that imbedded in an argument of multiracialism was the assumption of a Portuguese "civilizing mission," premised, of course, on concepts of European superiority. Furthermore, I believe it is clear that if you define a racist colonial empire not by embedded racial hatred or by miscegenation rates, but by the creation of a social and economic structure that creates inequalities based on race, it is apparent that the Portuguese colonial empire was racist.

Nevertheless, while it is my conclusion that Portugal's empire was an inherently racist, exploitative enterprise, I believe that a dismissal of lusotropicalism as a Machiavellian mechanism for continued exploitation simplifies the motives behind Portuguese policy. Furthermore, such a simplistic view fails to explain why lusotropicalism and a belief in a historical Portuguese multi-racialism is still an important part of Portuguese self-image. The following thesis interprets how the theory of lusotropicalism illuminates Portugal's complex relationship to its colonies, Portugal's resistance to international decolonization efforts, and its insistence on fighting thirteen exhausting years of guerrilla warfare in the hope of preserving a political presence in Africa.

CHAPTER ONE
Salazar's New State and Portuguese Colonial Policy

The Rise of Salazar and the New State

In order to understand the New State's political commitment to its African colonies, it is necessary to explore the history of Salazar's dictatorship. The New State (*Estado Novo*) was imposed to restore stability in the wake of the disastrously unstable republic. The Portuguese Republic was created amid a wave of popular support that drove the last Portuguese monarch, Manuel II, into exile in 1910. From its inception, the Republic faced terrible economic and financial woes: the Portuguese currency continued to be devalued, the balance of trade deteriorated, and banks failed. As the professional middle class (to which the army officers belonged) became increasingly dissatisfied, the Republic became discredited and lost popular support. These problems created so much instability that in sixteen years, the Republic saw an average of one revolution and almost three governments annually.[15]

Thus, the right-wing military coup of 1926 that toppled the Republic was welcomed with even more public enthusiasm than when the monarchy fell. General Carmona, who was named president following the coup. Carmona was aware of the troubling economic state of the nation and tried to remedy the situation by wooing the distinguished professor of economics, Dr. António de Oliveira Salazar, from his post at the University of Coimbra to the position of Minister of Economics in Lisbon. Dr. Salazar initially declined the terms of the offer and returned to Coimbra. But as the

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[15] Neil Bruce, *Portugal: The Last Empire* (London: David & Charles, 1975), 24.

government proved unable to improve Portugal's bleak economic reality, Dr. Salazar was asked to return to the capital. This time, President Carmona granted him absolute control over the private budgets of all the ministries and the right to veto every increase in expenditure. Salazar accepted the position of economic minister, and the budget for the 1928-1929 fiscal year saw a surplus. Salazar continued to balance the budget and produce a surplus year after year, restoring economic stability and dignity in the eyes of the rest of the world, and earning Salazar the nickname "the savior of the nation."[16]

Salazar made an unusual political figure. Salazar had first studied to become a priest, and he remained a devoted Catholic for the rest of his life. Salazar valued simplicity, austerity, and avoided public speeches and events. While contemporary dictators across Europe built cults of personality, Salazar remained reclusive, presenting himself as a monkish and wise father of the nation. Salazar extolled the morality of the Portuguese peasant, promoting the virtues of prudence and thrift and poverty. While the economy and currency of Portugal remained stable, in the wake of a worldwide depression and grave economic disparities in the Portuguese metropole, rural employment fell, tuberculosis spread, infant mortality rose, and hunger loomed. Dissenters were violently repressed by the secret police, although Portugal never suffered the carnage of Spain or Nazi Germany. In addition to censorship and the use of the secret police, Salazar maintained social order by skillfully balancing the interests of the army, the middle class, monarchists, and the church.[17]

In 1932, Salazar, whose broad powers over the economy had made him the *de facto* head of state, was appointed Prime Minister, and his position as the political head of

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[16] Bruce, *Portugal*, 30.

[17] David Birmingham, *A Concise History of Portugal*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 156-160.

Portugal's dictatorship was formally established. In addition to the reforms he brought to the metropole, Salazar's dictatorship also brought radical changes in African policy. While Portuguese sailors, the first to explore the African coast, had maintained a presence in Africa since the 15th century, this was limited to coastal outposts and forts. When Portugal was granted control over its African territories at the Berlin conference in 1888, it aimed to solidify control of its colonies in order to protect them from the claims of other European powers. But Portugal was slow to centralize control over its colonies, and it fell upon Salazar to organize an efficient public administrative service in the African colonies. The Colonial Act of 1930 declared that all colonies came directly under the control of the government in Lisbon. Colonial policies were determined by the central government, and the rest of the power lay in the hands of the Overseas Ministry. The structure of the administration of the provinces was unified, simplified, and there was a massive reduction in inefficiency and corruption.[18]

Additionally, the Colonial Act created two main communities in the African colonies. The first group was known as the *indígenos,* or natives. The indígenos included the vast majority of the black Africans in the provinces. The other category, the *não-indígenos* or the non-indigenous, included whites, *mestiços*, and *assimilados*. The assimilados were those black Africans officially sanctioned as assimilated. To become an assimilado, African subjects had to be over 18 years of age, with certificates of birth, residence, and good health. Candidates had to present two acceptable testimonials, prove they could provide for themselves and their families, and sign a declaration of loyalty to the Portuguese government. Essentially, assimilados had to prove they could dress,

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[18] Bruce, *Portugal,* 39.

converse, behave, and eat like an educated European Portuguese, after which point they were allowed to vote in the one-party dictatorship.[19] Thus, in spite of a clear racial hierarchy, Portugal could argue that technically the doors Portuguese citizenship were open to all inhabitants of the empire. This loophole would prove important as the international community became increasingly critical of colonialism.

The International Dynamics of Decolonization

Although Portugal managed to maintain neutrality through World War II, the nation was inevitably affected by the profound changes to the international system that the war left in its wake. By the end of the war, Western Europe had ceased to be the center of international power. With its cities shattered and its economies in ruins, Europe's position of economic and political primacy was replaced by that of the United States and the Soviet Union. Furthermore, although nationalist movements in many colonial territories predated World War II, the postwar period represented an opening for nationalist movements to challenge the colonial order in Africa and Asia. In a remarkably short time, colonial nations began to receive independence. The United Nations, created at the close of the Second World War to assure the global security that had eluded the League of Nations, became the forum of debate over African and Asian decolonization.[20]

Indeed, as more and more states achieved independence and were admitted to the UN, the louder the voice of international opposition to colonialism became. By the mid-1950s, Britain had realized the inevitability of decolonization and began to prepare for it instead of clinging to its imperial dreams. France too handed over most of its colonies in

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[19] Bruce, *Portugal*, 58-59.

[20] Wayne C. McWilliams and Harry Piotrowski, *The World Since 1945: A History of International Relations,* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers: 1990), 4.

Africa to nationalist leaders in 1960. Even its eight year war against the Algerian

nationalist movement ended in the Algerian independence of 1962, essentially marking

the end of France as a colonial power.[21]

In this new era of international organizations, growing doubts about doctrines of

racial superiority, and rapid decolonization, it was clear that Portugal's possession of

overseas territories would be called into question both when Portugal bid to join the UN

and after it became a member in 1955.

Origins of the Theory of Lusotropicalism

In order to understand the Portuguese justification for its continued colonial presence

to the UN, it is necessary to explain the theory of lusotropicalism. This doctrine of

Portuguese multi-racialism emerged in Brazilian academic circles and became widely

used by Portuguese politicians to claim that Portugal's overseas territories were not

colonies because Portugal was not racist.

The theory was not removed from the social context of its creation; indeed,

lusotropicalism had its origins in the crisis of self-identity in Brazil and was deeply

rooted in the rhetoric of nationalism and national pride. Throughout the early twentieth

century, Brazil struggled with issues of identity in the face of hegemonic European values

that promoted material wealth, industrialization, and the supremacy of the white race.

Brazilian elites in the early part of the century accepted the stance, based on European

cultural tradition, that Brazil was corrupted by its racially mixed society and remained

doomed to inferiority and economic stagnation.[22] But the 1920s offered the possibility for

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[21] McWilliams, *The World Since 1945,* 119-132.

[22] Bender*, Angola Under the Portuguese*, 4.

Brazil to escape Euro-centric concepts of superiority. The modernist movement began in Brazil in 1922 with São Paulo's Week of Modern Art, bringing to prominence a new generation of Brazilian artists and intellectuals who criticized what they saw as the belle époque pretensions of official high culture.[23] This generation produced a new anthropological and sociological literature of Brazil that embraced local traditions and rejected European measures of cultural value.

The most influential academic in this new wave of thinking was the Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre, who is largely credited with popularizing the view that African culture had positively impacted Brazilian society.[24] Influenced by the anthropologist Franz Boas (often considered the father of cultural relativism) during his studies at Columbia University, Freyre returned to Brazil and worked the conclusion from his master's thesis into the 1933 book Casa grande e senzala (published in English as The Masters and the Slaves, literally "the big house and the slave hut"). The book claimed that miscegenation had been a positive force in Brazil, and this argument helped turn the shame of a nation into a source of pride.[25] The art, literature, and music created by Afro-Brazilian culture and miscegenation were suddenly held in great esteem.[26] Racial mixing moved from a perceived liability to an asset, and Freyre credited the Portuguese tendency to miscegenation among colonized peoples for the uniqueness of Brazilian culture.

Although he had espoused tenets of the theory decades before, it wasn't until the 1960s that Freyre coined the term *lusotropicalismo*, or lusotropicalism. The theory states

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[23]Jeffrey D. Needell, "Identity, Race, Gender, and Modernity in the Origins of Gilberto Freyre's Oeuvre," *The American Historical Review,* Vol. 100, No. 1 (Feb. 1995), 59.

[24] Needell, "Identity, Race, Gender, and Modernity in the Origins of Gilberto Freyre's Oeuvre," 52.

[25] Needell, "Identity, Race, Gender, and Modernity in the Origins of Gilberto Freyre's Oeuvre," 67.

[26] Bender*, Angola Under the Portuguese,* 5.

that the Portuguese are uniquely capable colonizers of the tropics, due to their propensity for miscegenation and cultural integration with natives. According to Freyre, the specificities of Portuguese history, which involved a long contact with Jews and Moors, created in the Portuguese an aptitude for developing racially harmonious societies.[27]

Freyre argued that Portuguese multi-racialism could be evidenced in the intimate contact between Portuguese settlers and natives, exemplified in the acceptability of interracial sex in Portuguese colonies. He distinguished between the more egalitarian colonialism of the Portuguese and the exploitative colonialism of other Europeans, theorizing that "the marriages of such Europeans with the tropics have generally been marriages only of convenience, self-interest, or profit for themselves and for their few fellow countrymen born in the tropics. Portuguese contacts with the tropics have nearly always had a different configuration: convenience achieved through love…the love of a man for a coloured woman and for a hot country."[28] It is interesting to note the sensuality of Freyre's language, which highlights the importance of sexual attraction and miscegenation in order to demonstrate the unique Portuguese multi-\racialism that, in his estimation, differentiated Portuguese colonialism from that of other Western powers. Sexuality and sexual desire were seen as markers of Portuguese advancement, not incivility.

Using the example of the Portuguese propensity for miscegenation, Freyre saw Portuguese contact with natives as marked by integration, rather than by domination and subjugation: "Once the expressions 'integration,' 'assimilation,' 'subjugation' have thus

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[27] Gilberto Freyre, *The Portuguese and the Tropics*, Henel M. D'O. Matthew and F. de Mello Moser, Translators, (Lisbon: Executive Committee for the Commemoration of the Vth Centenary of the death of Prince Henry the Navigator, 1961), 46.
[28] Freyre, *The Portuguese and the Tropics*, 46.

been qualified, we see that in the Portuguese system of relations with non-European groups and non-European cultures, in spite of rare cases of crude subjection of the non-Europeans by the Portuguese…the most characteristic tendency of the system has been towards 'integration.'"[29] Thus, by Freyre's analysis, the Portuguese method of colonialism was both more effective and more moral than other colonialisms.

Although the theory was originally formulated in Brazil to combat the negative image of black influence on Brazilian society, lusotropicalism proved remarkably adaptable for use in Portugal. Portuguese politicians used the concept of a superior colonizing ability to bolster national pride and rebuff accusations of colonialism and exploitation by the international community. Indeed, at the same time that Brazil struggled with self-image, Portugal longed to recapture the glory of her early days of exploration in a European political landscape that, since the industrial revolution, had come to measure superiority in material terms.[30] Portugal was a small nation on the fringes of Europe that was largely poor, uneducated, and unindustrialized. Once the leaders of exploration and colonialism, the Portuguese had managed to cling to a surprisingly large colonial empire, but they lacked the political, economic, and military clout (and hence the prestige) of other European powers.

The lack of international prestige was most dramatically seen during the confrontation between Britain and Portugal in 1890 over the possession of the Zambezi basin. During Europe's "Scramble for Africa," Portugal pushed for possession of the central African territory that would link her colonial possessions in Angola and Mozambique, to form what the Portuguese termed the "rose-colored map." Meanwhile,

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[29] Freyre, *The Portuguese and the Tropics*, 276.

[30] Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese,* 5.

Britain hoped to gain access to the same territory to create the "Cape to Cairo" route that would link British African territory from the bottom to the top of the continent.[31] The two goals were obviously incompatible, and the British ultimatum of 1890 forced the Portuguese monarchy to cede its claims to the Zambezi heartlands, dividing Portuguese territory on the Atlantic from the colony on the Indian Ocean. The Ultimatum was a profound national embarrassment for Lisbon, challenging the concept of Portuguese imperial power and undermining the nation's monarchy.[32]

In addition to a lagging economy and lack of international political power, Portugal, like Brazil, was the victim of European racial rhetoric. Western European society was profoundly racist: If miscegenation was the source of Brazil's woes, the Portuguese settlers responsible for interracial relationships were to be similarly deplored as existing, in the opinion of countries such as England, "on the zoological scale between the monkey and black."[33] The critical attitudes of the Western powers towards Portuguese racial policy (and the Portuguese themselves) is further evidenced in the writings of an eighteenth-century British historian, who warned that admitting blacks into England could create a "whole nation [that] resembles the Portuguese and moriscos in complexion of skin and baseness of mind."[34] Lacking in political and economic power, and seen as racially impure, both Brazil and Portugal failed to meet the requirements for "civilization" as defined by the hegemonic European powers of the age. Thus, as he first entered the political arena, Salazar soon recognized that it was vital for the regime to mend not only the economic woes of the formerly great world power, but to assuage

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[31] David Birmingham, *Portugal and Africa, (*New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1999), 111.

[32] Newitt, *Portugal in Africa,* 31.

[33] Galvao, 1937, 221 [sic]. Quoted In Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese,* 7.

[34] Quoted in Jordan, 1968, 254-255 [sic], Quoted In Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese,* 7.

doubts about Portugal's place in a new world hierarchy. Fostering Portuguese national pride assured support for the new government in a time of political instability.

In this way, the Salazar dictatorship has always been marked by a strong nationalist ideology,[35] which was necessary in bolstering the pride of a poor, weak nation. Conservative Salazarian reforms brought stability but not prosperity. Under the New State, Portugal's economy grew, but the nation remained mired in poverty, a situation that was exacerbated in the early years of the New State by the global depression. In later years, Salazar's economic policies proved too conservative, and the Portuguese economy stagnated. As political influence is often a function of economic power, and prestige a function of both, Portugal's prestige lagged behind her Western European counterparts. Unable to display material demonstrations of national grandeur, pride in the Portuguese nation began to be articulated by writers, artists, and government rhetoric that emphasized the glory days of Portugal's vast colonial empire and exalted the importance of her current colonies. Such pride eventually resulted in the Portuguese interpretation that the prime motivation for the colonial empire was not economic but somehow derivative of the special nature of the Portuguese themselves. An example of the initial iteration of this type of sentiment appeared in the lead editorial of the Portuguese journal *O mundo portugues,* published in 1935, which claimed "Africa is for us a moral justification and a reason for being as a power. Without it we would be a small country, with it we are a great nation."[36] It is clear that, for the Portuguese psyche, the colonies made the nation a player on the international scene despite her material setbacks.

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[35] Newitt, *Portugal in Africa,* 184.

[36] Qtd. In Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese,* 6.

Although the expressions of pride that were founded in colonial possession have had a long presence in Portuguese thought, Freyre's theory of lusotropicalism and the example of a multi-racial Brazil lent academic support for a model of Portuguese colonialism which could compete, and even outdo, the colonialisms of more economically powerful states. For this reason, New State politicians were keen to link the example of Brazil with other Portuguese colonial enterprises. The interest of the Salazar regime in Freyre's work was highlighted in the 1950s, when the Portuguese government itself sponsored Freyre's first visits to current Portuguese colonies in Africa. Following the trip, Freyre published Um brasileiro em terras portuguesas, in which he confirmed that the unique colonizing abilities of the Portuguese, as evidenced in Brazil, were present in contemporary overseas provinces.[37] Ultimately, the theory of lusotropicalism, whose tenets were articulated by New State politicians and transcribed into state propaganda and speeches, had such a great impact on bolstering national pride and forging a Portuguese identity that, as historian Gerald Bender argues, phrases like "God created the Portuguese and the Portuguese created the *mestiço*" were probably as well-known to metropolitan Portuguese as the words to the national anthem.[38]

Portugal After World War II: Challenging the United Nations

The theory of lusotropicalism proved useful for Portuguese politicians as the nation struggled to join the United Nations. Hoping to join the international organization during a time when many nations were ideologically committed to self-determinism and advocating for decolonization, Portugal began to reframe its discourse regarding colonies.

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[37] Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese,* 8.

[38] Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese,* xxii.

It was during this time that the concept of the uniquely multi-racial Portuguese presence abroad began to be promoted before an international audience that was increasingly hostile to colonialism. Additionally, Portugal began to rework some if its colonial legislation, most notably by ceasing to refer to its colonies as such. Indeed, before the Acto Colonial of 1930, Portuguese overseas territories were called provinces. The Acto Colonial had made these "provinces" colonies in law, but in 1951, the Portuguese government released a new constitution, renaming these territories Overseas Provinces of Portugal and making the Ministry of Colonies into the Overseas Ministry.[39]

These revisions were directed to address the United Nations' policies of internationalization and self-determination. Both goals appeared in Chapter XI of the UN Charter, which concerned the vaguely labeled "Non-Self-Governing Territories." Specifically, article 73 provided that member nations responsible for the administration of territories whose people are not entirely self-governing were obligated to provide political, economic, and social support for the people concerned. Furthermore, these states were to be responsible for submitting information regarding all territories under their authority to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.[40] By re-labeling, Portugal hoped to prevent roadblocks in the way of its admission to the UN by insisting that Portuguese possessions in Africa, India, and the Far East were extensions of the metropole and not colonies.

The strategy worked. In 1955, Portugal was finally admitted into the UN. Immediately, Portugal was questioned about her overseas territories. Lisbon responded by claiming that its overseas provinces were non-contiguous extensions of the metropole,

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[39] Peter Fryer and Patricia McGowan Pinheiro, *Oldest Ally: A Portrait of Salazar's Portugal,* (London: Dobson Books Ltd., 1961), 161.

[40] Hugh Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal,* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1970), 186.

not colonies, and thus did not fall within the scope of article 73 (e) of the UN Charter.

Between 1956 and 1960, the General Assembly passed measures that were meant to force

Portugal to fulfill its obligations to the administered overseas territories. Whereas Article

73 asserted the importance of autonomy for controlled territory, these later resolutions

made it clear that the UN would accept nothing but complete independence for all

colonies.[41] In spite of these efforts, Portugal continued to refuse to submit any

information on its colonies to the General Assembly.[42]

  As Portugal argued its case before the international community, other colonial

powers accepted the inevitability of decolonization and began to negotiate transfers of

power. Portugal reaffirmed its commitment to its overseas territories by promoting

Portuguese immigration to Africa and pouring aid into development, aimed mostly at

helping Portuguese settlers. During the late 1940s and 1950s, 50 percent of Portuguese

emigrants chose to move to Africa. The vast majority of white settlers were poor, and

many were illiterate. Many emigrants went to government-planned settlements known as

colonatos, while many more settled into the slums (*muçeques*) of the capitals of Luanda

and Lourenço Marques alongside poor black Africans. The increase of whites settlers in

Portuguese Africa is staggering: In 1940, the white population of Mozambique was

27,400 and in Angola was 44, 083. Just before independence, in 1973, there were

200,000 white settlers in Mozambique and 335,000 in Angola.[43]

  Many Portuguese politicians pointed to the *muçeques* as an example of

Portuguese anti-racism and racial harmony. And indeed, while blacks were rarely found

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[41] Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal,* 183-188.

[42] Evan Luard, *A History of the United Nations, Volume 2: The Age of Decolonization, 1955-1965*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 190.

[43] Newitt, *Portugal in Africa,* 164-166.

in the highest administrative levels, there were few hard and fast color lines dividing lower-class African society in Portuguese territories. Blacks and whites held many of the same jobs in African slums, and racial integration in housing patterns can be seen as the natural development of the arrival of unskilled and uneducated rural whites, whose racial advantages could not overcome their lack of formal training. But the growing numbers of white settlers eventually led to the development of white communities that were, for the first time in Portuguese Africa, large enough to sustain themselves. Accordingly, the acceptance of African customs and values declined along with rates of miscegenation and intermarriage. The prestige of the *mestiços* in administrative and military posts were gradually reduced, the importance of African and mulatto businessmen diminished, and a system of differentiated wages by race emerged. Additionally, government policies offered support and financial aid for whites, especially agricultural workers. The system of forced indigenous labor, in effect since slavery was outlawed, was not abolished until 1961, at the start of the African Wars.[44]

The Portuguese government augmented its resettlement and immigration schemes with an infusion of new investment to Africa. The biggest beneficiaries were the white settler communities, while the condition of black Africans changed very little. The two National Development Plans (1953-1958 and 1959-1964, respectively) provided infrastructure such as roads, bridges, railways, irrigation projects, ports, factories, and airfields. Lisbon itself spent 57 million British pounds on the first National Development Plan, and a total of 98 million pounds was spent on the second, from Portugal,

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[44] Newitt, *Portugal in Africa: The Last Hundred Years*, 168-170.

international sources, and internal revenue.[45] Nevertheless, Portugal's African provinces remained underdeveloped. In reference to Foreign Minister Dr. Franco Nogueira's claims that "Portugal's territories in Africa are more developed and progressive 'than any recently independent territory in Africa south of the Sahara, without exception,'" one historian responded that "Even the soberest of researchers, when confronted with language like this, may be inclined to clutch wildly at his hair and wonder if words in Portugal can possibly be thought to mean what they mean elsewhere."[46] The growth of the white settler communities and continued discrepancies in the treatment and aid provided to white and black communities combined to increase racial tensions at the very same time that Portuguese politicians extolled the virtues of Portuguese race relations.

Portugal's African Wars

Although Portuguese Africa remained relatively peaceful compared to neighboring countries during the 1950s, it seemed inevitable that indigenous anti-colonial movements would emerge and violence would erupt.[47] Liberation movements were spreading through Africa, and the Portuguese overseas provinces contained a white minority living with a black majority that, generally speaking, had yet to enjoy the benefits of the so-called interracial society.

Indeed, this era of relative peace was not to last. The rumblings of independence movements were already detectable before the outbreak of guerrilla warfare. The Front

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[45] Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal*, 215-216.

[46] Basil Davidson, Introduction in Eduardo de Sousa Ferreira. *Portuguese Colonialism in Africa: The End of an Era*, (Paris: The Unesco Press, 1974), 13. Interestingly enough, Dr. Nogueira wrote of the impasse between Portugal and anti-colonial powers in the U.N. "…[D]iscussion is impossible. On this particular subject Portugal and the Assembly do not speak the same language." [46] Franco Nogueira, *The United Nations and Portugal*, (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1963), 120.

[47] Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal*, 214.

for Liberation and Independence of Guinea Bissau (FLING) was created in 1953. In 1955, the Union of the Peoples of Northern Angola (UNPA, later renamed the UPA, and finally the FNLA) was formed under Holden Roberto in Angola. 1956 saw both the formation of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the creation of the African Independence Party (AIGC) in Cape Verde. Mozambique was the slowest to form an independence movement, forging the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) in June of 1962.[48] Thus, the groundwork for anti-colonial struggle had been laid in all of the Portuguese colonies in Africa by the early 1960s.

The international community first became aware of these rumblings during an incident on February 4, 1961. Three groups of Africans with sub-machine guns attacked two prisons and a police barracks in the Angolan capital of Luanda. Although the attack was suppressed, the incident produced sixteen casualties. Arrests followed, and reprisals between whites and black Africans continued with limited casualties. In mid-March 1961, Holden Roberto and the UPA attacked Northern Angola making it clear that peace had been shattered. By mid-1962 all the major territories in Portuguese Africa had active national liberation movement in place, and by the end of 1964, Portugal found itself embroiled in three separate guerrilla wars in Africa.[49]

Initially, there were solid economic and political reasons to fight for the African colonies. The wars restored the pride of the Portuguese army, and the colonies in Africa were proving rather valuable. Indeed, Angola, above all, emerged as a boom state. The nation's rich deposits of diamonds and iron were a boon for the Portuguese economy,[50]

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[48] MacQueen, *The Decolonization of Portuguese Africa,* 19-22.
[49] MacQueen, *The Decolonization of Portuguese Africa,* 23-24.
[50] Bruce, *Portugal*, 65-66.

while the development of coffee plantations and the discovery of oil coincided with the growth of the settler population. This provided a captive colonial market for Portuguese exports.[51] The substantial wealth in Portugal's provinces led many observers to conclude that economics lay at the heart of the nation's obstinate refusal to decolonize.[52]

While Portugal's African wars brought increasing criticism from abroad, real opposition by Western powers to Portugal's colonial policies was short-lived. Indeed, the Portuguese government proved itself remarkably astute: In exchange for a renewal of the military base on the Azores, the United States discreetly allowed military equipment to be diverted for use in colonial expeditions and withdrew its support of nationalist independence movements. As the US took a shift to the right in terms of policy on Portuguese territories, France, West Germany, and Britain supplied Lisbon with arms for the African Wars.[53] While these nations rhetorically condemned Portugal's colonial policy, their tacit support frustrated myriad attempts by the United Nations General Assembly to meaningfully reform Portuguese policy.

In 1968, Salazar suffered a disabling stroke and was replaced by his finance minister, Marcello Caetano. Although the new leadership brought widespread expectations for reform to the metropole and Africa, key players in politics and the military remained committed to Salazar's policies, particularly on Africa. Thus, Caetano began his tenure doubly cursed, as the object of suspicion from the Right and of exasperation from the Left.[54]

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[51] Birmingham, *A Concise History of Portugal*,169.
[52] Henrikson, *Portugal in Africa*, 405.
[53] Birmingham, *A Concise History of Portugal*, 175.
[54] Wilson, *African Decolonization*, 182.

As the world wondered what to do with Portugal and its so-called African provinces, the nation moved forward with its war effort. In later years of the war, estimates indicate Portugal was spending over 400 million dollars a year for its colonial wars, or over 50 percent of its annual budget. In addition to the monetary drain of the wars, Portugal mobilized around 150,000 men for the army, 17,500 air force troops, and 15,000 men in the navy, up from a presence of 20,000 troops in the early 1960s. The reserves of 500,000 men in Portugal represented the country's capacity for mobilization, and men up to the age of forty-five could be called to service.[55]

In spite of the heavy burden of continued war in Africa, the government in Lisbon remained obstinate in its refusal to let go of the colonies. Caetano claimed in a Speech to the National Assembly as late as March 5, 1974, "[W]e must continue to protect populations whose desire is to remain Portuguese…We therefore consider it our duty to defend those who trusting in Portugal are loyal to its flag."[56] One Portuguese army officer observed, "The Americans can never win in Vietnam, because everyone knows that sooner or later they will be leaving. Here we will win because everybody knows we are staying."[57] The New State was insistent on retaining its colonies.

At the end of 1973, Portuguese troops had largely contained the liberation movements in Lusophone Africa, and there were no signs that their position was weakening.[58] Nevertheless, the wars clearly came at a high price in terms of capital and manpower. Rural Portugal suffered heavily from the African wars, as rural conscripts to

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[55] Arslan Humbaraci and Nicole Muchnik, *Portugal's African Wars*, (Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, Ltd., 1974), 35-38.

[56] Marcello Caetano, *Speech to National Assembly* (Lisbon: 5 March 1974), Quoted in Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese*, xix.

[57] Kenneth. W. Grundy, *The Guerilla Struggle in Africa,* (New York: Grossman, 1971), 92.

[58] Bruce, *Portugal,* 67.

the army were forced to leave their families in the metropole to face danger abroad.

Furthermore, in order to finance the war, Portugal had to abandon its tremendously

unprogressive economic policies and modernize. Portugal opened its homeland and

colonies to foreign investment in order to guarantee NATO support. As Portuguese

industry grew, so did the package tourist industry, which brought in hard currency and

material aspirations to many poor Portuguese workers.[59]

All these factors combined with a general distrust of Salazar's replacement,

Marcelo Caetano. In February of 1974, General António de Spínola, the former

commander-in-chief of Portugal's African war in Guinea, published the book Portugal

and the Future, which cautiously questioned continuing Portugal's wars in Africa and

suggested that a commonwealth-type community would be a better solution for the

Portuguese empire. The book articulated the frustrations of many metropolitan

Portuguese and provided the intellectual catalyst for many junior officers to organize a

coup. Before dawn on April 25, 1974, tanks rolled into Lisbon, cheered by crowds

throwing carnations as a sign of support. In the wake of the April revolution, which was

later arrested by a counter-coup and then replaced by a democracy, the Portuguese army

abandoned the wars in Africa. In 1975, the nations of Angola, Mozambique, São Tomé

and Príncipe, Guinea Bissau, and the Cape Verde islands were granted independence.[60]

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[59] Birmingham, *A Concise History of Portugal*,171-174.
[60] Birmingham, *A Concise History of Portugal*, 178.

CHAPTER TWO:
Early Salazarian Colonial Rhetoric for Domestic Consumption (1926-1951)

The New State regime, which ruled Portugal for nearly 50 years, saw great changes in colonial attitudes and policies. Many of these shifts can be seen in the political rhetoric of Salazar and other New State politicians. The following section examines the regime's early references to the Portuguese Empire, in order to compare it to the rhetoric that emerged in the 1950s during Portugal's campaign to join the United Nations.

Although there is a consensus that the tenets of lusotropicalism were commonly espoused from the 1950s onwards, historians have disagreed as to whether or not the concept of Portuguese multi-racialism was an important part of the national psyche before that point. Malyn Newitt contends that although the Salazar regime was always deeply nationalistic, the concept of benign colonial presence did not begin to play a role in Portuguese self-image until international pressure challenged Portuguese colonialism in the 1950s.[61] On the other hand, Norrie MacQueen argues that Portugal's imperial myths of a multiracial society were vocalized to a greater degree from 1932 onwards, although they were conceived during the scramble for Africa in the 1880s and 1890s.[62]

My own analysis of Salazar's early speeches concludes that the early rhetoric of the New State differs significantly from the discourse that was produced after Portugal began its bid to join the UN. Early references to the colonies do not uphold the image of a multi-racial society; rather, they refer to Portugal's unique colonizing gift by mythologizing the Portuguese settler and missionary. Overwhelmingly, they seem to have been directed at fomenting a sense of pride in national accomplishments for domestic

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[61] Newitt, *Portugal in Africa*, 184.

[62] MacQueen, *The Decolonization of Portuguese Africa*, 6.

consumption, emphasizing a moral or spiritual superiority of Portuguese culture in spite

of acknowledged economic backwardness.

Colonialism and National Pride

Using the concept of the Portuguese Empire to foster national pride is hardly

novel in Portuguese political history. Portuguese kings and prime ministers have often,

throughout the five centuries of Portuguese colonial presence in the world, defended their

colonial policies and emphasized the glory of Portuguese colonialism.[63] Portugal was

unable to exploit controlled territory or to improve the material situation of colonies as

effectively as more economically developed nations such as England and France.[64] Thus,

Portuguese statesmen have historically lauded the spiritual rather than material

contributions of Portuguese colonialism to its overseas territories: Extolling the heroism

of colonial exploration, conquest, and settlement have been features of Portuguese

literature and political discourse from the early days of the Portuguese Empire.

The following words, quoted from Major Veloso de Castro by Coronel J.M.

Ferreira do Amaral in 1925, are indicative of the historic Portuguese discourse that

emphasizes the grandeur of Portuguese colonialism and exploration:

> It is necessary that we become accustomed to viewing the colonies, in
> particular this one, (Angola) not only as a country in which we become
> upset by a duty that can be difficult to fulfill, or pulled along by a greed
> that can be precarious, but oriented by that spirit of grandeur and racial
> expansion that was one of the greatest gifts bequeathed by our forefathers.
> If our ancestors have already founded in America a great nationality, one
> that promises to be brilliant, why have we not cemented for our sons

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[63] Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese,* xix.
[64] This is not to say that Portugal did *not* exploit its territories, merely that it was restricted to a greater degree by economic constraints than more powerful nations.

>another, in the great African continent, that is today the El Dorado coveted
>by the greatest nations of Europe?[65]

Although Veloso de Castro mentioned Portuguese racial expansion, it seems to refer less

to a uniquely Portuguese propensity towards miscegenation and multi-racialism than to

the dissemination of Portuguese settlers and culture throughout the world. The ambiguity

of this statement stands in contrast to later, far more explicit, references to Portuguese

racial policies. In this quote, we see that by emphasizing a moral or heroic quest, one that

benefited the glory of the nation, Veloso de Castro downplayed Portugal's material

disadvantages and emphasized the superiority of its moral mission. Additionally, this

Portuguese moral superiority allowed the author to disparage more economically and

politically powerful states by underscoring the greed of wealthier (and presumably

morally bankrupt) Western powers. Indeed, Veloso de Castro was able to criticize those

very states that shamed Portugal politically, as in the Ultimatum of 1890, and morally,

with negative references to Portuguese racial impurity and backwardness.

It was in part this sort of nationalist rhetoric, which downplayed Portugal's

material deficiencies, that helped Salazar cement his political position after his rise to

power. Salazar's rhetoric did not focus on multi-racialism but colonialism's place in the

national agenda is clearly defined by the Colonial Act of 1930, which was written by

Salazar during his short tenure as Colonial Minister, and incorporated into the

Constitution of 1933. In Salazar's own words, "This Act constitutes the foundation stone

of the Portuguese Empire. Its conception of empire does not represent an expansionist

tendency, but rather aims at destroying in the mind of the world the false conception that

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[65] Qtd. [sic] In Julio Ferreira Pinto, "Prefacio de Ferreira do Amaral" in *Angola: Notas e comentarios dum colono,* (Lisboa: Oficinas da secção de publicidade do Museu comercial, annexo ao Instituto superior de comercio de Lisboa, 1926), xxxiii. Translation is my own.

Portugal is a small country. Portugal is, to-day, the third colonial power in the world, and it is intended that this should be recognized."[66] Clearly, Salazar was acutely aware of the international disregard for his small nation on the fringes of Western Europe, and the colonies were used rhetorically to aggrandize Portuguese culture, history, and international political importance.

The Portuguese Settler

Although the claim to multi-racial colonialism that overran later discourse was not present in Salazar's early rhetoric, he did extol what he perceived to be the unique Portuguese gift for colonization. This distinguished Portugal from other colonial powers on the basis of moral, rather than economic, virtues. In a 1934 address, Salazar noted, "Amongst the dominant characteristics of our nationalism – characteristics which clearly distinguish it from all other nationalisms adopted by the authoritarian regimes in Europe—is the colonizing aptitude of the Portuguese, a force which is not of recent growth but has been rooted in the soul of the nation for centuries."[67]

Salazar also emphasized the spiritual strength of the Portuguese character, in the absence of material wealth, by lauding the accomplishments of Portuguese settlers and missionaries. Salazar claimed, "It is only right that the efforts of the Portuguese should be given the place of honor, for they discovered, evangelized, and colonized the most distant and inhospitable regions, where they have left traces of their language, art, religion, and culture." Salazar continues by extolling the virtues of the Portuguese settler:

[66] Dr. Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, Chamber of the National Assembly, 13 June 1922, in *Doctrine and Action: Internal and Foreign Policy of the New Portugal 1928-1939.* Robert Edgar Broughton, Translator. (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1939), 172.

[67] Salazar, address delivered in the Sala Portugal of the Geographical Society of Portugal, Lisbon, 26 May 1934, in *Doctrine and Action,* 229.

> While other people, who lose their business or fail in speculation, leave their settlements in search of new ventures, the Portuguese are even to-day obstinately rooted to their morsel of soil, stinting little by little their way of life, and adapting themselves to every difficulty and privation, until they sink into the lowest depths of poverty. They struggle against climate and disease, against flood and drought, against plague and falling prices. Yet, with heroic obstinacy, they relinquish neither the possessions nor the occupation of their corner of the earth, because, above all, and even with prejudice to their most legitimate interests, *Portugal is there.*[68]

Thus, the very backwardness of the Portuguese peasant settler that was ridiculed internationally was turned from a liability to an asset in Salazar's political discourse. This was also a way for Salazar to praise peasant qualities in a manner that resonated in Portugal itself. The peasant, in this view, was in touch or connected to the land in a way that was beyond materialism. Exalting colonialism simultaneously exalted the peasant, which was consistent with Salazar's insistence on the importance of the virtues of thrift, prudence, and spiritual strength.[69] The poor settler was heroic, loyal, and steadfast, even in the face of worsening material realities. This spiritual strength was linked, in the rhetoric of Salazar, with the Portuguese civilizing mission and the "humanitarian objective of spreading the teachings of Christianity."[70]

As seen above, Salazar's early political discourse did not discuss lusotropicalism or the unique multi-racial tendencies of Portuguese colonialism that later rhetoric emphasized. Nevertheless, the early propaganda of the New State does extol the Portuguese gift for colonization, emphasizing a spiritual rather than material mission in the colonies. This sets the groundwork for the more explicit praise of Portuguese colonization that would emerge in the 1950s, as the Portuguese government denied that its presence in overseas provinces was the result of economic exploitation.

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[68] Salazar, Corporative Chamber Palace of Sao Bento, Lisbon, 8 June 1936., in *Doctrine and Action,* 306.
[69] Birmingham, *A Concise History of Portugal*, 160.
[70] Salazar, Geographical Society of Portugal, Lisbon 26 May 1934, in *Doctrine and Action*, 229-230.

CHAPTER THREE:
Lusotropicalism and Resisting the United Nations (1951-1974)

The political discourse of the 1950s showed a tremendous increase in references to the tenets of lusotropicalism. Because the emphasis on a uniquely Portuguese anti-racial colonialism emerged only in the 1950s, it seems likely that this was largely due to Portugal's desire to join the UN and counter growing international criticism about Portugal's empire on the international stage. By arguing that Portugal's so-called "Overseas Territories" were non-contiguous extensions of the metropole and not colonies (never mind the fact that they were called colonies until the new constitution renamed them in the 1950s), Portugal hoped to make itself a more appealing candidate for entrance into the UN and, after gaining membership, to shield itself within the UN from decolonization efforts.

Thus, the theory of lusotropicalism was employed to demonstrate that Portugal had not, by virtue of the Portuguese character, created a racist, exploitative colonial enterprise. The basic arguments of the Portuguese government can be seen in the following speech by one Portuguese ambassador to the UN, who used Freyre's theory to explain Portugal's position:

> The Christian ideal, sincerely interpreted, together with the consequent absence of racial prejudices, led to the formation of true "Luso-Local" communities – by miscegenation, spiritual assimilation and interpenetration of cultures and interests. Such has been the permanent line of action of the Portuguese overseas; it gave rise to what we may call "Luso-Tropicalismo," an expression which was, incidentally, coined by the renowned Brazilian sociologist, Professor Gilberto Freire. That is why – as stated in Article 135 of the Constitution – all provinces are integral parts of the Portuguese State. We became the kind of people we are by the

strength of spirit, not by the force of arms – one people only, dispersed throughout four continents, but united by the same national faith.[71]

The tenets of the theory of lusotropicalism that emerged in the discourse of the 1950s were well adapted to the rhetorical strategies of the political discourse of the 1930s and 1940s. Indeed, the political rhetoric of the 1950s brought both a remarkable continuity, recalling the bravery and ability of the Portuguese settler to the tropics, along with a telling increase in references to race. This combination of old and new techniques can be seen in the following quote from a 1954 brochure, published in English by The General Agency of the Overseas Provinces, titled "Many Races – One Nation: The Traditional Anti-Racialism of Portugal's Civilizing Methods":

> In a general way, and so frequently as to constitute a norm, the Portuguese from the days of great Afonso de Albuquerque have shown their fellow-beings overseas that consideration which religion teaches…It was Afonso de Albuquerque who began the policy of not discriminating between races by promoting the marriage of Portuguese to native women…With D. João III this policy of fraternization between races reached a new level, on the landing of the Orphans of The King, sent out to marry in the East. The Portuguese women in overseas colonization served as a fascinating theme to Giberto Freire in Brazil.[72]

Here, author António Alberto de Andrade conventionally recounted a historical synopsis of Portugal's glorious imperial expansion and the virtue of the Iberian settler. Yet unlike Salazar's grand claims regarding the nobility of Portuguese settlers, this pamphlet was quite consciously concerned with basing its claims in racial arguments.

Tellingly, the pamphlet also grounded its claims in "empirical" evidence and academic support. Firstly, Alberto de Andrade referenced Gilberto Freyre to justify the

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[71] Ambassador Garin, "Statement made by the Representative of Portugal at the 656 plenary meeting of the General Assembly on 20 February 1957," In *Portugal Replies in the United Nations,* (Lisbon: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1974), 28-29.

[72] Antonio Alberto De Andrade, "Many Races - One Nation: The Traditional Anti-Racialism of Portugal's Civilizing Mission," (Lisbon: Agencia Geral do Ultramar, 1954), 5-6.

theories of Portuguese multiracialism. Furthermore, his historical argument was enhanced

by an appendix, which included photocopies of historical documents intended to support

De Andrade's claims. For example, Document No. 2 in the appendix is "Ordinance

declaring that the Christians of Portuguese India are in every way the equals of the

Portuguese," signed in 1761, while Document No. 5 is the Constitution of the Portuguese

Republic, stating that all natives of Overseas Territories were potential Portuguese

citizens.[73] Thus, it is clear that the pamphlet was self-consciously constructing an

"empirical" argument and providing "proof" in a way that earlier rhetoric did not. The

documents and speeches produced in the 1950s for an international audience, in contrast

to earlier propaganda, have a more defensive feel, structuring their debates around

documentary evidence. In this case, although De Andrade's pamphlet was published in

Lisbon by a branch of the Portuguese government, it was written in English. This implies

that it was created to defend Portugal's colonial practices from foreign critics.

The Specter of a Foreign Enemy

Indeed, the Portuguese campaign succeeded in convincing many observers of the

Portuguese claims regarding Portuguese anti-racism[74]; still, the fact that this was a

defensive strategy aimed at justifying a continued colonial presence did not escape

contemporaries, who more often than not saw economics as the main motivator behind

Portuguese policy.[75] As discussed in the introduction, these economic arguments

followed well-established narratives that paint Salazar's Portugal as backwards and

eccentric, a fact that may have obscured the complex emotional and political importance

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[73] De Andrade, "Many Races - One Nation," 48.

[74] Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese*,

[75] Henriksen, "Portugal: A Noneconomic Interpretation of Imperialism," 405.

of empire to Salazar's regime. While economics were certainly a contributing factor, close analysis of the rhetoric being produced by Portuguese politicians in this period also underlines political motivations for Salazar's colonial policy.

By perceiving Salazar as a thoughtful statesman, it becomes clear that the debates within the UN could have been used to foster domestic support for the New State regime. In their study of Salazar's Portugal, Peter Fryer and Patricia McGowan Pinheiro hypothesized that Salazar hoped to use the foreign anti-colonial pressure in the UN General Assembly, the foreign press, and among UN delegates of newly independent African States, to appeal to Portuguese patriotism by demonstrating that no friendship from abroad. Thus, Salazar hoped to shore up support for the domestic regime and silence internal dissention about colonial policy.[76]

By comparing the political rhetoric espoused in Portugal to what was argued in the UN before an international community, Fryer and Pinheiro's theory seems increasingly probable. Arguments before the UN did address concerns about the dangers of decolonization, but they did not viciously condemn other (former) colonial powers. For example, in his 1963 book The United Nations and Portugal: A Study of Anti-Colonialism, Franco Nogueira, Foreign Minister in the Portuguese Government, criticized inflexible UN ideologies that maintained that all colonial practices were wrong. According to Nogueira, the UN forced Belgium to grant independence to the Congo. When Brussels presented a plan for a thirty-year transition to independence, the UN pushed for faster results, insisting the transition take only one year. Nogueira explained, "The disastrous results for everyone, and in the first place for the people of the Congo

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[76] Fryer, *Oldest Ally,* 161.

themselves, are well-known. The Assembly, it might be thought, would have learned a

lesson from this experience, but it did not. It put the blame for all that happened on

Belgium and hastened to draw the political conclusion that here was another 'proof' of

the evils of colonization."[77]

While Nogueira was critical of the UN's lofty ideological goals, he didn't attack

Belgium itself. Indeed, the discourse that emerged in the UN did not attack Portugal's

NATO allies, whereas rhetoric addressed to the Portuguese public blatantly condemned

the hypocrisy of the United States and other European colonial powers. For example, in

his 1960 speech "Political Unity and the Status of Peoples" (incidentally delivered in

Porto during the Prince Henry Celebrations), Adriano Moreira concluded that,

> Among peoples who have been so incapable of transplanting the European
> historical experience to the tropics that, in the territories from which they
> withdraw, they commonly leave States whose unity is based not on any
> cultural unity, or common loyalty of the various population groups to the
> general community, but only on the pigmentation of the skin…We
> Portuguese, for our part, believing as we do in the equality of man never
> doubted the wisdom of transplanting to the tropics the European
> experience that had been completed by the beginning of the era of Henry
> the Navigator.[78]

Because Britain, France, and Belgium were all unable to properly colonize in spite of

their greater material resources and political influence, Portugal, in the words of New

State politicians, was vested with a moral superiority that challenged the old European

powers. Furthermore, Moreira did not find the international outrage incompatible with

contentions of Portuguese morality; indeed, he argued that Portugal had remained

righteous in the face of opposition by claiming, "If we are to estimate the merit of a

policy by its results, it is legitimate to draw the conclusion that the methods of defending

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[77] Franco Nogueira, *The United Nations and Portugal*, (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1963), 119-120.

[78] Adriano Moreira, "Political Unity and the Status of Peoples," Prince Henry Celebrations. Arts Faculty of the University of Coimbra. 18 Mar. 1960, (Lisboa: Agencia-Geral do Ultramar. 1960), 11-12.

the liberty of peoples, the rights of man, the equality of nations, must be changed and must have a more realistic objective than that of lining up with the majority."[79] By this analysis, the blocs and political maneuvering in the UN did not only represent an outside enemy, but was proof of Portuguese moral rectitude. Portuguese resistance was characterized as a moral struggle.

In his speeches to the Portuguese public, Moreira clearly elucidated the difference between perceived Portuguese morality and Western hypocrisy. As he (accurately) noted, the new ideology "which argues the necessity of doing away with a political power that was originally external to the group has grown up mainly among the peoples with a tradition of racialism."[80] Portuguese politicians were indeed correct to point out the irony that many of the nations arguing, at least in theory, for Portugal to leave her overseas territories were themselves (former) colonial powers. To a degree, this can be considered a continuation of the arguments of earlier New State rhetoric: It followed the tradition of condemning the moral bankruptcy and materialism of other Western powers. As Moreira argued, "Colonialism is characterized by the exploitation of territories in favour of the Home Countries and I see no reason to deny this in view of the wealth accumulated by so many countries which today think it their duty to line up against us. We can reply, however, that the most outstanding example of social planning south of the Sahara is to be found in the Portuguese territories."[81] In the same way that previous rhetoric exalted Portugal's moral superiority in the face of economic and political setbacks, Moreira's speeches demonstrate how condemning powerful nations for moral bankruptcy was

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[79] Adriano Moreira, "Provocation and Portugal's Reply", Casa do Infante, Oporto 18 Mar. 1961, (Lisbon: MCMLXI), 5.
[80] Moreira, "Political Unity and the Status of Peoples," 11.
[81] Moreira, "Provocation and Portugal's Reply," 18.

intended to create support for the New State by claiming an advantage to Portugal's material disadvantages. Politicians argued that Portugal was being unjustly held to a definition of colonialism that simply did not apply to its situation, since Portuguese poverty put it above the base economic interests of colonial powers. Portugal's inability to better exploit its colonies was thus converted into a virtue rather than a failure.

There is little mystery as to why Moreira's speeches to the Portuguese public were deeply critical of Western powers, whereas Portugal's arguments before an international audience were not nearly so hostile in their attacks of Portugal's NATO allies such as the United States, France, and Britain. New State politicians were well aware that while the Western powers paid lip service to self-determination by condemning Portugal's colonial practices in theory, the NATO allies nevertheless tacitly supported Portugal's claims to empire due to strategic Cold War interests. Thus, there was no reason to attack Western powers in the UN. The hostile statements delivered to the Portuguese public, such as those made by Moreira, demonstrate the way New State politicians built up an image of Portuguese moral superiority and the specter of a foreign enemy to cement support for the Salazar regime.

Asserting National Sovereignty

Another plausible explanation for Portugal's refusal to cooperate with the international community is that Portugal viewed the UN's stance as an illegitimate violation of Portugal's national sovereignty. Thus, resisting the UN became a way for a historically weak country, dismissed or pushed around by greater powers, to insist on its autonomy. In his beautifully written book analyzing of the impasse between Portugal and

the UN, Portuguese Foreign Minister Franco Nogueira emphasized the perceived impingement of national sovereignty by the General Assembly. According to Nogueira, Portugal's constitution did not recognize the existence of non-self-governing territories and the right to analyze the constitution belonged to the country itself. Making a legalistic argument, he noted that Portugal had unanimously been admitted to the UN in 1955, under the full understanding that it had overseas provinces. In the eyes of Portugal's politicians, doubts raised after Portugal's admission were unacceptable.[82] Also, the United Nations was not authorized to discuss national constitutions, and doing so meant interfering into domestic policies of the state. Nogueira summarized Portugal's complaints over the UN's perceived violation of Portuguese sovereignty as follows:

> To impugn the Portuguese reply on the basis of an interpretation of the Portuguese Constitution was therefore a flagrant violation of the Charter. But the consequences were even more serious. For it was an undeniable fact that no declaration by any member in the past had ever been discussed or impugned. The Assembly had always confined itself to taking note of the contents of the declaration, and nothing more. To proceed now to alter long-standing practice and to do so against a particular country was clear discrimination, and infringed another basic precept of the Charter which, in paragraph 1 of Article 2, established without restriction the sovereign equality of the member states of the United Nations.[83]

Nogueira's argument focusing on the equality and the sovereignty of nations may shed a new light on Portugal's reaction to the United Nations. Using the rules of the UN to assert its equality was emotionally satisfying to a tiny nation, pushed around for so long by stronger Western powers and historically dismissed as backwards and racially impure. In Nogueira's articulation, not only was Portugal characterized as a legal equal, but its adherence to the concept of a anti-racial tradition allowed the nation to compete on moral terms. In this unique historical moment, which cast doubt on racial ideologies,

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[82] Nogueira, *The United Nations and Portugal*, 78.
[83] Nogueira, *The United Nations and Portugal*, 79.

Portugal was able to overcome its material setbacks and claim a spiritual victory over traditionally powerful but racist nations such as England and France. Portuguese politicians were outraged by what they perceived as a breach of autonomy by an international organization: One ambassador to the UN stated, "…[M]y delegation has very strong reasons to state that the reply of the Portuguese Government has been subjected to discriminatory treatment – treatment to which no other Member-State has ever been subjected. Thus, for the first time in this Assembly, on a matter of this nature, the word of a Government has been questioned and challenged."[84] By attempting to illegitimate Portugal's claims to multi-racialism, the UN was feeding a historical distrust of the international community, further bruising the sore spot of the Portuguese inferiority complex. Considering how the British Ultimatum of 1890 upset the foundations of the monarchy, it is not unrealistic to assume that New State politicians saw bending before the international community as politically unwise.

Maintaining the Integrity of the Portuguese Empire

Clearly, a solely economic interpretation of Portugal's refusal to abandon its colonies ignores the political expediency of refusing to cave to international pressures. An economic interpretation alone does not explain why Portugal did not abandon its colonies as soon as the cost of occupation outweighed the benefits of retention. Additionally, an economic explanation does not factor in the historical and symbolic importance of colonies in Portuguese self-perception. This symbolic importance is probably what Gerald Bender was referring to when he wrote, "the glorification of the

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[84] Garin, in *Portugal Replies in the United Nations*, 26

colonizing mission principally served the psychological rather than the political needs of successive Portuguese regimes."[85] While this assertion overlooks a logical political rationale for the Portuguese refusal to decolonize, favoring images of an eccentric and antiquated Portuguese government, it is clear that the Portuguese historical connection to Africa was an important factor in the Portuguese decision not to decolonize. This historical connection undercuts the theory that Portugal clung to its colonies only for material gain.

Indeed, an economic interpretation does not explain Portugal's insistence on maintaining the entirety of its colonial empire. Salazar was insistent on not abandoning any part of its overseas territory, no matter how small or economically insignificant. In 1961, shortly after the former French territory of Dahomey gained independence, it requested that the Portuguese abandon a sixteenth century fort in the small town of Ajudá that was officially considered Portuguese national territory. Salazar ignored the request, and the Dahomey Government issued a deadline of one week for the Portuguese government to withdraw. Nothing was done until a few hours before the deadline, when the last Portuguese Governor of the "Portuguese territory of Sao João de Ajudá" drove out, the fort in flames behind him. Similarly, President Nehru had to send the Indian army to invade Portuguese enclaves of Goa, Diu and Damão after Salazar refused to leave the territory following Indian independence. Although Salazar lost Goa to the Indian army, he refused to acknowledge this fact, and official Portuguese literature and school textbooks continued to claim Goa as Portuguese territory, although they conceded that it was "temporarily" occupied. It wasn't until the 1974 coup that representatives for Goa

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[85] Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese*, xix-xxx.

ceased to be elected.[86] Thus, the *integrity* of the Portuguese empire, not just the

economically exploitable components of the overseas provinces, was of importance to

Portugal.

These stories seem so silly that it is not hard to understand why Portugal's

colonial policies began to be seen as increasingly unrealistic and odd, even if they did

make real political sense. Considering that the theory of lusotropicalism was premised on

Portugal's claims that the Portuguese population was inextricably intermeshed with

natives, and that the local populations wanted a continued Portuguese presence, the

incidents at Dahomey and in India seemed to contradict Portuguese claims. Additionally,

Portugal argued that the validity of lusotropicalism could be seen by the fact that

Portuguese territories had not experienced the kind of nationalist independence

movements that had exploded across the rest of Africa. When the African wars began in

1961, this view became increasingly untenable and international condemnation of

Portugal's brutal repression of uprisings continued to grow.

How did the outbreak of war in Portuguese territories affect Portuguese claims of

the validity of lusotropicalism? Before the UN, Portuguese politicians made surprisingly

few references to the growing unrest in Lusophone Africa. When the matter was

discussed, Portugal denied a state of war, and blamed foreign terrorists for the uprisings

in its territories. As Franco Nogueira reported in a speech to the UN on July 26th, 1963,

> … [W]e took measures of self-defense against the invading groups of
> terrorists and for the protection of those who had escaped the murdering
> and slaughtering; and then we restored law and order – which seems to be
> a primary responsibility of any Government … There are those who at any
> cost pretend that there is a war in Angola; but the fact, the bare fact, is that
> there is none. More than 400 foreign newspapermen and correspondents

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[86] Bruce, *Portugal*, 53.

have, in the last two years, been to Angola; hundreds of politicians, ambassadors, deputies, public figures of many nationalities have also been there. But not one – not a single one – has said or hinted that there is a state of war in Angola."[87]

Portuguese politicians continued to claim they were "profoundly convinced of the loyalty of the overwhelming majority of its populations in Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea" and that those populations hadn't demonstrated a desire for independence.[88] Thus, Portuguese statements before the UN continued to extol Portuguese multi-racialism, deny economic exploitation of overseas territories, and defend colonial practices as though the African Wars did not exist.

Denying unrest and insurgency in Lusophone Africa may have been the best approach if Portugal wanted to maintain control of its colonies. As the war continued, Portugal's NATO allies condemned Portuguese repression before the international community, but less publicly continued to supply arms and financing for the Portuguese war effort through investment in Africa. Maintaining the validity of the theory of lusotropicalism as it pertained to its African colonies allowed Portugal to provide Western allies like the United States with the opportunity to extol Portuguese multi-racialism and an excuse to ignore ideological commitments to self-determinism.[89]

Ultimately, the articulation of the theory of lusotropicalism emerged as a useful rhetorical device for New State politicians, both at home and abroad. The celebration of the Portuguese multi-racial mission minimized foreign pressure and solidified a national identity that was deeply linked to pride in the colonial enterprise. Thus, Freyre's theory of

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[87] Nogueira, "Statement made by the Representative of Portugal at the 1044th meting of the Security Council on 26 July 1963," In *Portugal Replies in the United Nations*, 356-357.
[88] "Statement made by the Representative of Portugal at the 1814th plenary meeting of the General Assembly on 20 November 1969," in *Portugal Replies in the United Nations*, 474.
[89] Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese*, xxii.

Portuguese anti-racialism emerged as a crucial factor in explaining why the Portuguese

presence in Africa continued after other European powers had decolonized.

EPILOGUE
Reluctant Retreat from Africa

The African Wars initially helped solidify support for the New State regime and failed to bring decisive action to ending colonialism from the international community. Nevertheless, they were central in toppling the New State regime, which had lasted forty-eight years.[90] It is clear that as the wars dragged on at a tremendous cost, dissent grew in the metropole. If Portugal had begun to fight the African Wars for economic reasons, its resources were now being sucked dry, with nearly half of the national GDP going to fighting insurgencies in overseas territories.

How can we reconcile the fact that the African Wars were seen as decisive in Caetano's overthrow[91] with the Portuguese belief (that persists to this day) that the Portuguese were an inherently benign colonizing power?[92] Did the coup of 1974 symbolize the failure of the New State, "burdened to breaking-point by traditions of [Portuguese] glory,"[93] in the words of one historian, to respond to growing metropolitan discontent regarding to colonial policy? And, if the coup is linked inextricably to Portuguese discontent with Caetano's refusal to leave Africa, does that minimize the utility of the lusotropical argument in political rhetoric, or confirm stereotypes of the New State dictatorship as eccentric, out of touch, and mired in the past? Finally, if the economic and social strain of the African wars alone is cited as the reason for the overthrow of the New State regime and the eventual decision to decolonize, how do we explain the reluctance with which Portugal let go of its overseas territories, or the

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[90] Birmingham, *A Concise History of Portugal,* 175.
[91] Bruce*, Portugal,* 109.
[92] Marta Araujo, "The colour that dares not speak its name: schooling and 'the myth of Portuguese anti-racism,'" (Paper presented at the 2006 International Conference Equality and Social Inclusion in the 21st Century: Developing Alternatives, 1-3 February, Belfast, Northern Ireland), 6.
[93] Ansprenger, *The Dissolution of Colonial Empires,* 266.

longevity of the concept of Portuguese anti-racialism in constructing a conception of national identity that exists this day?

To help answer these questions, it is important to examine General António de Spínola's 1974 book <u>Portugal and the Future</u>, which is often seen as the intellectual catalyst for the April revolution and eventual decolonization. In actuality, the immediate cause of the coup in April of 1974 was grievances over army pay[94]; however, the decision to decolonize needed a certain psychological preparation, which Spínola's book provided. An analysis of the text helps shed light on the complexity of Portugal's decision to decolonize, and illustrates the reluctance with which Portugal abandoned its colonial enterprise. Indeed, Spínola advocated not for the abandonment of African colonies but for the creation of a commonwealth-style Portuguese community, which he argued would allow for self-determinism while keeping Portugal's relationship with its historical empire intact.

Certainly, General Spínola saw the incompatibility of the Portuguese civilizing mission and its assertion of a multi-racial society. According to the general,

> The myth will also have to be exploded that a civilizing mission is part of the essence of the Portuguese nation, as if, as a corollary to that assertion, it could be accepted that we would cease to exist as a nation when we fulfilled that mission or were prevented from doing so. And not even we can restrain ourselves from confirming the profound contradiction which that myth entails, for to civilise requires the acceptance of the pre-eminence of one culture, which conflicts with the concept of a multi-culture.[95]

Spínola recognized the irony of Portugal's paternalism; nevertheless, he was swayed by the argument that Portugal was, by nature, not racist. While other, newly independent nations were tied to the yoke of neo-colonialism, Spínola argued that a Portuguese

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[94] Wilson, *African Decolonization*, 186
[95] Antonio de Spínola, *Portugal and the Future*, (Johannesburg: Perskor Publishers, 1974), 77.

commonwealth would be spared such an exploitative relationship on the basis of Portuguese anti-racialism. According to the general, "In this we have an unusually advantageous position: we know that we can count on acceptance due to our lack of racial prejudice; we know how to get along with people of different cultures and win their friendship. Even today the Africans prefer the Portuguese, they do not feel towards them as they do towards Belgian and English and, although to a lesser extent, to the French."[96] Significantly, even as he argued for decolonization and understood the inherently racist underpinnings of the Portuguese civilizing mission, Spínola remained attached to the concept of a Portuguese multi-racialism that mirrored Salazarian rhetoric by offering the admittedly weak nation a form of moral superiority over its stronger rivals.

Ultimately, the coup that toppled Caetano and installed Spínola as the new president of Portugal brought the total decolonization of Portuguese Africa. The collapse of the Estado Novo brought about the end of the entire colonial administration, as soldiers returned to their barracks and, in the absence of a centralized authority, civilians simply ignored Portuguese officials and regulations. Spínola's original vision of a Lusitanian Federation proved unfeasible, with metropolitan Portugal too weak to enforce such a system.[97] On July 27th, 1974, Spínola announced that negotiations for a transfer of power would begin. By 1975, negotiations had been settled with all of Portugal's African territories, which were granted independence.[98]

Clearly, Portuguese colonialism proved to be unsustainable, and metropolitan Portugal was largely tired of the high costs of fighting wars in Africa. Nevertheless, examining Spínola's text demonstrates that while the African wars were critically

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[96] Spínola, *Portual and the Future,* 92.
[97] Holland, *European Decolonization 1918-1981,* 296.
[98] Wilson, *African Decolonization,* 186-187.

important in creating the metropolitan dissent that led to the coup of 1974, and while the New State's inability to respond to that dissent proved fatal to the regime, Portugal was still reluctant to abandon its colonial enterprise and shut the door on 500 years of colonial expansion. Furthermore, Spínola's assertions of Portuguese multi-racialism demonstrate how deeply ingrained the Salazarian rhetoric of lusotropicalism was in the Portuguese psyche. Thus, while a continued war effort was economically and politically untenable, the decision to decolonize should not be seen as an economically or politically expedient solution that emerged in opposition to Caetano's dated policies; rather, the crucial interplay between national identity, the colonial enterprise, and the myth of Portuguese anti-racism continued to manifest themselves during the decolonization effort.

CONCLUSION
Lusotropicalism, Pride, and Portuguese Identity

Portugal had a large economic stake in retaining its colonial possessions, but other considerations played an important role in mediating the Portuguese relationship to its empire. In spite of the fact that economics and the cost of maintaining the African wars were critical in creating support for the 1974 coup and eventual decolonization, the decision to decolonize was made with great difficulty. While the tenets of lusotropicalism were deeply flawed, their articulation by New State politicians had come to represent more than just a calculated rhetorical attempt to justify continued economic exploitation: They emerged as a fundamental part of Portuguese identity.

It is my position that the tenets of the theory of lusotropicalism and their emphasis on an anti-racial Portuguese presence in the tropics only emerged in the 1950s, during Portugal's struggle to join the United Nations. Although it was an after-the-fact justification, any assumption that the theory was used only to support Portugal's *economic* interests is deeply misleading. The view that Portugal's inherent backwardness necessitated its continual exploitation of its colonies rests on an assumption that Portugal's New State regime was too antiquated and eccentric to be politically savvy. In actuality, Salazar and other New State politicians understood that a continued colonial presence was vital to the sense of Portuguese national prestige and that emphasizing and standing up to foreign criticism of Portuguese policy consolidated support for the domestic regime. Indeed, the mythology of the grandeur of Portuguese exploration and empire was so pervasive that Salazar continued to cling to all of Portugal's colonies, including Goa and a fort in Dahomey, because they were representative of the whole, undisturbed Portuguese colonial project. One does not have to think hard to compare such

a position with, for example, the British refusal to relinquish control of the Falkland Islands even today. This is a compelling testament to the emotional and mythological value of empire, not merely its economic component.

Furthermore, I argue that Portugal's refusal to cooperate with UN attempts to decolonize was partially motivated by a historical distrust of the international community. Portuguese challenges to the UN represented the recalcitrance of a small nation, often disregarded or pushed around, now emphasizing its right to determine what it perceived as its own domestic policy. With the tacit support of NATO allies, Portugal was able to maintain its colonial possessions, quiet metropolitan dissent with the specter of external enemies, and demonstrate that it would not be pushed around by the United Nations and international disapproval.

Finally, I would argue that although Spínola's manifesto <u>Portugal and the Future</u> is often seen as the first step to decolonization, it is clear that Spínola's original intentions were not Portuguese abandonment of its overseas provinces, but the creation of a Lusophone Community. In articulating his desire for such an entity, Spínola, although fully aware of the pressures of the international community and the contradictions of Portuguese colonial policy, nevertheless invoked tenets of the theory of lusotropicalism. Lusotropicalism had become part of the national consciousness. It was a political or spiritual justification for Portuguese presence in Africa as much as an economic one.

Indeed, the Portuguese insistence on its anti-racial attitudes has long outlived its political expediency. Although the colonial project was abandoned in 1975, contemporary observers have pointed out that many Portuguese continue to insist on a historical anti-racialism, underscoring the fact that the theory resonated long after it

served as a justification of economic exploitation. In a paper presented at the 2006

Conference *Equality and Social Inclusion in the 21ˢᵗ Century: Developing Alternatives*,

Marta Araújo explored the concept of lusotropicalism and its impact on education:

> …[L]usotropicalism has survived to present days. The myth that the Portuguese are not racist by nature and are actually more tolerant than other peoples is occasionally present in official discourses…. The media has also preserved the myth: 'Portugal is the most tolerant country in Europe' still make newspapers' headlines. All these discourses have been helping to promote the idea that the Portuguese are less racist than other peoples. This is particularly significant as a large number of teachers in Portugal were socialized into this idea…. When talking about the usefulness of intercultural education, a teacher told me that he felt no need for it, because "…integration is easy…We…And we have that advantage and I tell them that, so they can see… Which were the countries that integrated Black people like Portugal did?[99]

Indeed, if the theory of lusotropicalism were used only as the premise for economic

exploitation, it would have long ago lost its utility. But the theory's continued prevalence

implies that lusotropicalism served to create a shared sense of Portuguese identity that

has outlasted its political expediency. Salazar's emphasis on Portuguese multi-racialism

can be seen as truly effective and enduring. Lusotropicalism created a legacy that has

survived to this day not necessarily because it speaks so well to a realistic image of

Portuguese racial ideology, but because it fits a cultural narrative that has connected

Portuguese exploration and empire to a sense of the impact of the Portuguese character

on world history.

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[99] Araújo, "The colour that dares not speak its name," 5-6.

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