

THE COLONIAL WAR IN MEDIA NARRATIVES: HOW PORTUGUESE AND ANGOLAN NEWSPAPERS RECOUNTED AN EVENT 60 YEARS LATER

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ABSTRACT

March 15, 2021, marked the 60th anniversary of the Angolan insurgency that started the Colonial War. The date rekindled the memory of an intersectional milestone between the histories of Portugal and Angola, and, for having gained space in the mainstream news media, it was opportune to analyse the media narratives that recounted the conflict. The episode, in 1961, was motivated by a series of factors, with the native peoples' dissatisfaction with the exploitation regime standing out. For this research, inscribed in the field of postcolonial narratology, it is important to understand how Portuguese and Angolan newspapers reported this event. To this end, a qualitative methodology — critical discourse analysis — was used, and journalistic texts about the event in question published in the newspapers *Público* and *Jornal de Angola* were analysed in an exploratory way. This paper aims to understand the ideological differences between the approach of each of the media productions, pointing out matches and mismatches, and identify the discursive strategies that shaped such contemporary media narratives about colonial conflicts. One of the conclusions is the perception that the Angolan newspaper sewed its narrative from an internal perspective of colonialism, addressing the events from the accounts of people who experienced them. Meanwhile, the Portuguese newspaper was guided by the already postcolonial relations emerging with the increasing globalisation.

KEYWORDS

representation strategies, postcolonial narratology, discourse-historical approach, media narratives, Colonial War

A GUERRA COLONIAL NAS NARRATIVAS MEDIÁTICAS: COMO OS JORNAIS DE PORTUGAL E ANGOLA RECONTARAM UMA EFEMÉRIDE 60 ANOS DEPOIS

RESUMO

A 15 de março de 2021 completaram-se 60 anos da insurgência angolana que deu início à Guerra Colonial. A data reavivou a memória de um marco interseccional entre as histórias de Portugal e Angola e, por ter ganhado espaço nos média informativos *mainstream*, fez-se oportuna para que se analisassem as narrativas mediáticas que recontaram o conflito. O episódio, que

se deu em 1961, foi motivado por uma série de fatores, dos quais se destaca a insatisfação dos povos nativos com o regime de exploração. Nesta investigação, inscrita no campo da narratologia pós-colonial, pretendeu-se compreender de que forma os jornais portugueses e angolanos reportaram esta efeméride. Para tal, recorreu-se a uma metodologia de natureza qualitativa — a análise crítica do discurso — e analisaram-se, de modo exploratório, textos jornalísticos sobre a efeméride em questão publicados nos diários *Público* e *Jornal de Angola*. O objetivo era compreender as diferenças ideológicas entre a abordagem de cada uma das produções mediáticas, assinalando encontros e desencontros, e identificar as estratégias discursivas que moldaram tais narrativas mediáticas contemporâneas acerca de conflitos coloniais. Entre as conclusões está a percepção de que o jornal angolano costurou a sua narrativa a partir de uma perspetiva interna do colonialismo, com uma abordagem dos acontecimentos a partir dos relatos de quem os viveu. Por seu turno, o órgão português pautou-se pelas relações já pós-coloniais que se desenhavam à medida em que avançava a globalização.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

estratégias de representação, narratologia pós-colonial, abordagem histórico-discursiva, narrativas mediáticas, Guerra Colonial

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. INTRODUCTION

March 15, 2021, marked the 60th anniversary of the Angolan insurgency, considered one of the initial landmarks of the Colonial War for paving the way to more incisive struggles for the independence of the territories still under the power of the Portuguese empire in Africa. The date rekindled the memory of an intersectional milestone between the histories of Portugal and Angola. For this reason, and especially because it had space in the mainstream media of both countries — namely the Portuguese daily *Público* and the *Jornal de Angola* — it was appropriate to compare the media narratives that, now in a postcolonial time, recount the event.

The “postcolonial” does not refer to an overcoming of colonialism or the period following the independence processes but to the transformations of relations and the maintenance of dependencies, underdevelopment, and marginalisation, typical of the high colonial period that occurred after the fall of empires and the consequent restructuring of global relations (Hall, 2001). With the end of the colonial regimes, in the middle of the Cold War, and the increased complexity of the globalisation processes, the United States became the main power, cumulatively economic, ideological, and cultural, within these new globally rearranged relations. Even today, with the empowerment of China as a non-western element of major influence in global political-economic dynamics (Jackson, 2012), Stuart Hall’s (1994) logic is still valid to help interpret the relations between territories previously intertwined by colonialism.

The decolonisation of the last Portuguese colonies, among other important factors such as the popular demand for independence, took place under United States imperialist pressures (B. Reis, 2020), which confirms the superimposition of the Lusophone hegemonic power by another power that fought for global hegemonic status, as explained above, and that still has undeniable influence today.

From the reflections proposed by postcolonial narratology, established as a kind of decolonisation of narratology itself, as a set of postcolonial lenses for looking at narratives (Herman & Vervaeck, 2019; Kim, 2012; Prince, 2005), and through postcolonial critical discourse analysis, we seek to determine the relations of power to which contemporary representation strategies of colonial conflicts are aligned.

This media analysis assumes the media's role is to provide the means of social understanding to individuals and interpreters of the socio-political conjuncture for common sense (Freitas, 2021). Because of this and the limitations imposed by hegemonic narratives to alternative versions of history and the development of critical stances (Macedo, 2016), the constant re-evaluation of these representations is deemed necessary, especially when past relations of subalternity historically connect them.

1.2. MARCH 15 IN PORTUGUESE COLONIAL HISTORY

The uprising that took place on March 15, 1961, by the União dos Povos de Angola (UPA) was motivated by several factors, the most prominent of which were: (a) the independence articulations of neighbouring countries, especially the Congo; (b) international pressures, translated into the United Nations debate about Portuguese colonialism and the United States need to exercise dominance over more territories during the Cold War; and, most importantly, (c) the dissatisfaction of native peoples with the colonial regime, their legal sub-status vis-à-vis the Portuguese, and the working conditions and land exploitation (B. Reis, 2020).

An Angolan nationalism had already begun to emerge as a response to the Lusotropicalism makeup of Portuguese colonialism. Before the intense episode of March 15, 1961, other uprisings had already occurred, but after this one, the Portuguese regime began to react more intensively, spurring what became known as the Overseas War and, later, the Colonial War (Pinto, 2019). The episode at issue consisted of attacks promoted by Angolan men against Portuguese settlers whose intensity “marked the end of colonial tranquillity” (Wheeler & Pélissier, 2016, p. 249).

The importance of pursuing the analysis of media narratives (journalistic and otherwise) about the colonial past can be seen through the reading of reference works about that war (Pinto, 2019; B. C. Reis, 2020; Wheeler & Pélissier, 2016). Newspaper articles from the “colony” and the “metropolis” are being rescued as objects of analysis. Those articles allow us to understand and apprehend how meanings were invested in the imaginaries by representing actions and people (Pinto, 2019). This perspective reinforces the understanding of the media institution as playing a “strategic role of composition and consequent homogenising cement of collective life” (Rodrigues, 2015, p. 39), whose performance is an important instrument of power in reinforcing hegemonic narratives.

The reports that recounted the colonial past are compared to understand how each media outlet — one Angolan and one Portuguese — tries to intervene and affect politically and socially the public space, as Carlos Reis (2018) points out. The intention of comparing them is justified by the fact that the contrasting narratives contribute “to

the understanding of the contemporary resonance and reconfiguration of colonial pasts, through the examination of the imaginaries, words, and silences that are incorporated in their discursive reconstruction” (Antunes, 2020, p. 3).

This understanding that historical facts are discursively reconstructed puts the analysis’s interest on discourse. Within narrative studies, discourse is understood as the instance in which the compositional processes that individualise the narrative mode are articulated, and the interest in this component reinforces the transdisciplinary character of this field (C. Reis, 2018). From the Foucauldian perspective, discourse can be understood as the regulating instance of the senses, both in each narrative where these senses are ordered and in the social interaction itself, as Ruth Wodak (2005) explains. Therefore, it is important to perceive, within the constructed narratives, the forces that structure them.

2. POSTCOLONIAL CRITICISM, NARRATIVES, AND LUSOPHONE RELATIONS

Regarding narrative studies, postcolonial narratology is interested in understanding how new and old power relations shape identities. Postcolonial narratology, seen as a strong example of ideological criticism, focuses on the incorporations and resistances of subjects to hegemonic social powers and the unveiling of the unspoken political words, both in the text and in the context in which it was produced. About this problem that arises from texts and their social importance, one of the canonical names of postcolonial studies, Edward W. Said (1978/2021), in *Orientalismo* (Orientalism), discusses how important this problematisation is since certain texts acquire greater authority and use than the very reality they present/describe. The author refers to a “textual attitude”, pointing to literary studies, a field that has a much stronger approach to postcolonial studies. However, the author’s reflection, which seeks to read literary textuality and its effects on truth, is used because it is consistent with the understanding that there is a claim of the effect of reality by journalism.

Postcolonial narrative studies aim to identify the strategies of othering and how imperial power and knowledge and its influence still impact the positions occupied by subordinated populations within narratives (Herman & Vervaeck, 2019), whether those of former imperial centres or those of formerly colonised territories whose societies may have been colonially reconstructed after decolonisation, as Spivak (1988/2021) provocatively points out. Moreover, postcolonial narratology is itself an attempt to decolonise narrative studies. It transforms this field into an increasingly transdisciplinary space — as Carlos Reis (2018) highlights when addressing the importance of the study of discourses — but, above all, by proposing further development of the movements stemming from (post) classical studies through postcolonial lenses on narratives (Kim, 2012; Prince, 2005).

The constant analysis of the narratives concerning identities constructed under power conflicts is necessary because identity is not something established but a product arising from a never-ending construction process through representations (Hall, 1994; Herman & Vervaeck, 2019). From the influence of the thought of Homi K. Bhabha (1994/1998), another central theorist of postcolonial criticism, there is an important

question in the context of the narrative construction of identities: how historically marginalised peoples self-govern and self-determine themselves, in this case within texts that narrate historical colonial conflicts.

Eventually establishing an intersection between narrative studies and postcolonial studies, Edward W. Said (1984) drew attention to the fact that it was up to hegemonic powers to decide on the legitimacy of subaltern narratives. Concomitantly, the author also alerted to the importance of investigating western discourse's influences on the narratives of the rest of the world, mostly colonised by Europe.

Bringing this discussion to the Lusophone context, according to Macedo (2016), the Portuguese imaginary is guided by the idea of a past of glory, in which discovery, expansion, and colonisation are the main concepts that articulate it: this “emphasis on hegemonic narratives of national history and the colonial past limits individuals’ access to alternative versions of history, thus hindering the development of a critical perspective” (p. 271).

When it comes to the postcolonial Lusophone context, one must recognise a Portuguese claim for these relations’ central and articulating role (Cunha, 2007), which may imply the continuity of a hegemonic force over historical narratives. Nevertheless, such multicultural grouping, through the common language, according to Martins (2014), should have a heterogeneous virtue instead of an impoverishing discursive — and, consequently, narrative — homogenisation and a single meaning, both fostered by tendencies that still refer to coloniality.

3. METHODOLOGY: NARRATIVE DISCOURSES UNDER ANALYSIS AND THE (RE)TEXTUALIZATION OF A COLONIAL CONFLICT, 60 YEARS LATER

In Portugal, on March 15, 2021, among the main newspapers in the country¹, only the daily newspaper *Público* gave attention to the event: the report entitled “‘Orgulhosamente Sós’ Começámos uma Guerra” (“Proudly Alone” We Started a War; Lopes, 2021) was allocated to a front-page and double-page space. In the daily edition of *Correio da Manhã*, no records were found, and in the *Jornal de Notícias*, in the section “Efemérides” (Ephemera), it was possible to read following the indication of the year “1961” (2021) the text: “UPA, Union of the Peoples of Angola, launches first attacks on farms and towns in the north of the country” (p. 37). This sentence, which only mentions the political organisation of Angolan citizens and puts them as the authors of the attacks on their own country, is the only mention of the fact. If we also consider the weeklies, only the magazine *Sábado*, owned by the same communication group that runs *Correio da Manhã*, has covered the issue in question, giving the colonial conflict the greatest prominence in its March 11-17 edition, with a 14-page report entitled “As Milícias da Vingança Branca” (The Militias of White Revenge; 2021).

¹ The main newspapers in the country are considered to be the generalist dailies that, according to the Portuguese Association for Print Run and Circulation Control (Associação Portuguesa para o Controlo de Tiragem e Circulação, n.d.), are leaders in paid and digital circulation. These are *Correio da Manhã* (Cofina Media), *Jornal de Notícias* (Global Media Group) and *Público* (Público Comunicação Social S.A./Sonae).

Curiously enough, keeping due proportions, the repercussion of this landmark in Angolan newspapers was equivalent to that conferred by Portuguese newspapers. Here one must consider some limitations imposed on this research regarding the access to Angolan productions, being limited in scope to two main newspapers in the country (*Jornal de Angola* and *O País*), which also motivated the restriction of the analysis to the Portuguese dailies only, so that some equivalence could be applied to the corpus. The report “*Protagonistas Revivem a Revolta de Kitexi*” (Protagonists Revive the Kitexi Uprising; Fortunato & Gomes, 2021) also deserved, in the daily edition of March 15, 2021, of the *Jornal de Angola*, a front-page headline and the same double-page space given by the *Público*. Like the Portuguese daily *Jornal de Notícias*, the second-largest Angolan newspaper, *O País*, only reported the date in the article: “*Nacionalista Defende Revisão do Subsídio dos Antigos Combatentes e Veteranos da Pátria*” (Nationalist Defends Revision of the Allowance for Former Combatants and Homeland Veterans; Mujoco, 2021). Nevertheless, it did not delve into the colonial conflict or mention colonialism.

That being said, to contemplate similar media narratives between Portugal and Angola about the 60 years after the Colonial War, the reports of the *Público* and the *Jornal de Angola*² are adopted as the corpus of this research, as they both covered the theme extensively and thoroughly on the exact date at issue. According to Simões (2016), the *Público*, which is currently one of the brands of the multinational Sonae and has been in uninterrupted activity since its launch in 1990, fits into the tradition of quality journalism, being an exemplary case regarding the modernisation and professionalisation of the Portuguese media industry. The *Jornal de Angola*, on the other hand, is the “unofficial” edition of the People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola from its foundation in 1975 to the present day (Rocha, 2019).

The journalistic narratives in question will be approached historically and discursively. It is of interest to know what discursive strategies were used in this (re)textualisation of the colonial conflict and the relation of these strategies to the colonial history that connects the two countries. For identifying discourse strategies, as Reisigl (2018) explains, some questions adopted as research questions must be answered: how are persons, objects, phenomena, events, processes, and actions discursively named and referred to in the narratives under consideration (nomination)? What characteristics or qualities are attributed to the social actors, objects, phenomena, events, processes, and actions mentioned (predication)? What arguments are employed in these media narratives to recount an episode from the colonial past (argumentation)? From what perspective are these nominations, attributions, and arguments expressed (perspectivisation)?

Thus, this is an exploratory analysis, given the limited analysis corpus. However, as said, omissions and silences are also full of meaning. That is, in fact, the first relevant observation: an anniversary of a decisive episode in the recent history of Portugal and Angola was not highlighted or paid attention to by a considerable part of the press in both countries. The proposed analysis will allow us to identify ideological differences

² The online version of the reports can be found at <https://www.publico.pt/2021/03/15/politica/noticia/orgulhosamente-sos-comecamos-guerra-1954391> and <https://www.jornaldeangola.ao/ao/noticias/protagonistas-revivem-a-revolta-de-kitexi/>

between the approach of each of the journalistic productions — a claim that relates directly to postcolonial narratology —; to identify narrative matches and mismatches between the two productions; to understand the discursive strategies that have shaped contemporary media narratives. From this and the theoretical framework already presented, we hypothesise that narratives are no longer structured by colonial discursive strategies but are formatted in hybrid form by discursive strategies connected to colonialism and postcolonial rearrangements.

This study draws on the method of postcolonial critical discourse analysis as it is interested in both discursive strategies and the historical context and socio-political processes that influenced their formation and reproduction in media narratives. The postcolonial critical discourse analysis consists of “a theoretical and methodological framework that, drawing upon Postcolonial Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis, foregrounds the need to analyse media representations by placing postcolonial power relations at the centre of the enquiry” (Sabido, 2019, p. 19). The choice of this method strengthens the postcolonial movement of extending and deconstructing narratology itself and its possibilities. This methodological strategy is supported by the concepts and tools of discourse analysis pointed out by Richardson (2007) in *Analysing Newspapers: An Approach From Critical Discourse Analysis*, especially regarding the study of journalistic narratives and the indications of Machin and Mayr (2012) for identifying strategies of representation of people and actions.

The analytical focus of this study is the narrative discourse through which narrative content is appropriated and re-signified. Richardson (2007) explains this differentiation, pointing to narrative content as a supposed sequencing of events as they happened in actual history, while narrative form concerns the sequence through which events are presented. However, in line with Ricoeur (1983), the narrative process is believed to be constructed in three distinct moments, which do not conform to the more formal binary logic. The triple mimesis of the French philosopher has been recovered in the scope of narrative media studies, especially by authors such as Marc Lits (2008, 2015), Philippe Marion (1997), Gonzaga Motta (2013), and Fernando Resende (2009, 2011). Drawing from the Aristotelian conception of mimesis, Ricoeur (1983) defines narrativity as the product of the dynamic interaction of three distinct levels, which correspond to the pre-textual narrative potential (what Said, 1978/2021, calls “factuality” and corresponds to the real substratum), to textualisation (the *mise en récit*, which goes through the discursive and narrative organisation) and to the act of narrative reception. It is, therefore, a dialectical and dynamic process between a primordial “intelligence” that enables one to read history and the textual and discursive surface on which it manifests itself. In this way, as the various narratives textualise the world, they generate meanings that give it the status of a conceptual way of understanding the past (Babo, 2017). Now, here lies the power of the “narrative machine” (Babo, 2017, p. 74), which, resuming Said (1978/2021), has more force and authority than factuality itself.

The reports under analysis, more than the news and reports of everyday events, are a (new) view on factuality — discursively constructed — from which a critical maturation

is expected, provided by the passage of time and the debates that, in the meantime, took place around the colonial conflicts.

4. THE ANALYSIS OF TWO NARRATIVES ABOUT THE SAME CONFLICT

While the *Público* provides a narrative almost restricted to the movements of Salazar and his high military and political echelon — verifiable by checking the subjects mentioned, who are mostly military men — the *Jornal de Angola* builds a history based on the accounts of eight Angolans who actively participated in the insurgencies of March 15, 1961.

We will now reflect on the different strategies of representation used by both newspapers to understand which discourses contemporaneously guide these media narratives.

4.1. STRATEGIES OF NOMINATION AND PREDICATION

The narrative constructed by the *Jornal de Angola* is based on the witnesses of eight participants in the March 15, 1961, uprisings. The newspaper uses racial and nativist markers³ as predications to identify the Angolan population. The word “White” appears twice, but only in the testimonies cited. The words “Black” and “Mulatto” are used about 10 times throughout the report by the voice of the reporter (narrator-journalist). They are always identifiers of the subject’s origin to which they are linked. In the text’s first two paragraphs, it is possible to see examples of both racial and nativist markers:

at 8 o’clock on March 15, 1961, on a Wednesday, the *cipaio* [indigenous police or military recruited usually for local or rural policing] Ferraz Fama Panda rang, for the last time, the bell that would change the lives of the *settlers* in the Kitexi village and their relationship with the *natives*. The action also dictated the trajectory of the struggle until the National Independence, which would happen 14 years later.

The *settlers’ children* had barely entered the only classroom when they heard shouting. Then panic ensued in every corner of the village. They were *young Black men*, machetes and *canhangulos* (handmade weapons) in hand, ready to put an end to the injustices and the ill-treatment they had suffered for many years [emphasis added]. (p. 4)

The excerpt demonstrates the division made between “settlers” and “natives” (a word that gives the other the connotation of non-native, alien to the land, or foreigner) and between the “the settlers’ sons” and the “young Blacks”. In fact, this introduction is built on an antagonism opposing the young Blacks — who, with weapons in hand, were going to put an end to injustices as national heroes — to the settlers’ children — who

³ Racial and nativist markers are predications referring to the racial characteristics — commonly skin colour — and origin of the subjects concerned. In this case, markers are considered forms of differentiating subjects used in the analysed narratives as a form of representation.

were at school — while demarcating the privilege of one group being able to study, whereas the other needed to fight for the independence of their country.

Resorting to strategies of personalisation and/or collectivisation (Machin & Mayr, 2012), the *Jornal de Angola* uses names whose meaning in the narrative refers to the legitimacy of the insurgency (such as “protagonists” or “combatants”) and/or a connection to the territory concerned — nativist markers (such as “Angolans”, “citizens”, “compatriots”, or “nationalists”). Pinto (2019) explains that, in the colonial propaganda disseminated by the media until mid-1974, when independence took place, Angolans were denied the status of “Angolan citizen” since the then Portuguese government wanted to nurture an imperial homogeneity, treating Africans as “friends” and “loyal” to the Portuguese. That may explain the frequent recourse to nationalist/nativist nomination strategies in Angolan newspaper coverage.

Rarely, as can be observed in the Angolan article’s subtitle, the colonial representatives are named, appearing, most of the time, collectivised and/or generalised (Machin & Mayr, 2012):

60 years ago, on a day like today, began the Kitexi Uprising. The *Jornal de Angola* has heard *eight participants of the action that would mark the course of the struggle for National Independence*. On the Day of the Expansion of the Armed Struggle for National Liberation, the protagonists relate the motivations and *talk about the countless Portuguese settlers killed*. Among the *insurgents, they count five deaths* [emphasis added]. (p. 4)

When they speak of “eight participants” and “five deaths”, they are precise in the information, communicating closeness and care. When referring to the “Portuguese settlers”, they are imprecise and distant — particularly striking when compared to the precision of the numerical referents (“eight participants” and “five deaths”) —, demarcating this group as one to which the same care and importance are not owed.

While the *Jornal de Angola* establishes these differentiations, although it keeps the presence of the colonial representatives, the *Público* focuses on the main figure of the Portuguese dictatorial government, António de Oliveira Salazar, his ministers, and Portuguese international relations at the time. More evident in the Portuguese newspaper’s narrative is the strategy of suppression, which consists in attributing the authorship of actions to non-subjects, that is, to agents who have no power to act and whose function in the text is to suppress the real agents (Machin & Mayr, 2012), as is perceived by analysing the excerpt below:

internationally isolated, the *regime* seemed to be crumbling when, 60 years ago, *Portugal* started the Colonial War (...). On March 15, the massacres of Holden Roberto’s UPA in northern Angola took the government and military leaders by surprise. Although on March 4, *the military attaché at the US embassy warned Lisbon that the US government had information that the Union of the Peoples of Angola was preparing violent actions “to draw the*

attention of the United Nations, where a debate on the Angolan problem was to be held”, no one paid attention. On the same March 15, the *UN Security Council* rejected a motion of censure against Portugal for the situation in Angola – the upheaval had begun on February 4, with the raid on the Luanda prison – but the United States voted for the motion of censure against Portugal [emphasis added]. (p. 6)

In all this emphasised excerpt, only Holden Roberto, spokesperson for the UPA (Wheeler & Péliissier, 2016), is mentioned by name. Representing a hostile act with his name associated with the “massacres”. This subject is one of the common elements between the two narratives, as the only figure mentioned in both. All the others, agents, or patients, are represented through suppression strategies, relativising historical responsibilities.

Another aspect to be highlighted in the Portuguese daily report is the way the journalist discursively refers to Portugal, sometimes called the “colonising power”, sometimes the “capital of the empire”, in a kind of representation of the country as a subject using purely colonial honorifics (Machin & Mayr, 2012) that suggest importance, authority, and even certain authoritarianism.

Also, the interruption of the subaltern relation is treated by the *Jornal de Angola* as “independence”, making Angolans “protagonists” of the process. In contrast, the *Público* uses “decolonisation”, which, according to Pinto (2019), makes the Portuguese protagonists by creating a sense that it was Portugal who liberated (decolonised) the dominated.

It is possible to compare the forms of nomination and predication of the March 15 event between the two narratives. While the *Jornal de Angola* describes the episode as the “Kitexi uprising” and the actions as an attempt to end “injustices [and] ill-treatment” (p. 4), the *Público* reports the “UPA massacres” and the “violent actions” (p. 6). Thus, the first relates to dissatisfaction and struggle for justice and the second to crime and barbarism. However, associating words that feed negative meanings to the actions of the other is also practised in the narrative of the Angolan newspaper when it uses the term “revenge” to describe the Portuguese response to the independence movements.

It is also worth noting how each newspaper describes the movements of March 15, 1961. In the *Jornal de Angola*, the “Kitexi uprising” is described as an “action that would mark the course of the struggle for National Independence” (p. 4), and in the *Público*, “the massacres of the UPA” are “violent actions ‘to draw the attention of the United Nations where a debate on the Angolan problem would be held’” (p. 6). It should be noted that the Portuguese newspaper builds its argument on the speech of Franco Nogueira, identified as a friend and biographer of Salazar and who is regarded as the main source in the report.

4.2. ARGUMENTATION AND PERSPECTIVIZATION STRATEGIES

Regarding argumentative processes, it is important to highlight that while the central figures in the narrative of the *Jornal de Angola* are the “eight interlocutors” who

participated in the independence movements 60 years ago, in the *Público*, this role is played by António de Oliveira Salazar. The Angolan perspective is regionalist, justified by the fact that the story unfolds essentially in Angolan territory: villages, regions, commands are mentioned; the nominal reference to Angolans themselves is prioritised, and the other is the colonists who lived with them. In contrast to this regional spatialisation, *Público*'s narrative is globalised. It is as if we could observe a colonial version (*Jornal de Angola*) and a postcolonial version (*Público*) since the Portuguese periodical refers to Portugal, the United Nations, and the United States as the main characters of its recounted history. In the double-page text of the *Público* newspaper, nowhere does one read about a possible and organic Angolan demand for independence. The only passage that refers to independence attributes the triggering of this feeling to the United States: “Salazar had the trump card the Azores to play, and he played it — diminishing the pro-independence pressure from the African colonies triggered by the United States” (p. 7). In this way, these peoples represented as barbarians are denied agency, evidenced in the few times that reference is made to the independence movements as “massacres” and “violent actions”.

Público's narrative ascribes the “situation in Angola” to United States interests. It builds its version of history by relativising the responsibility of António de Oliveira Salazar and his regime on the relations held at that time: “would there have been Colonial War if the coup Botelho Moniz, the Minister of Defence allied with the new times and advocate of a political solution for the colonies, had succeeded? Probably not” (p. 6). In the conclusion of the article, the Portuguese newspaper concludes on a note of appreciation. Adjectivising the Salazar regime as a “phenomenon”, the reporter emphasises the resilience of an empire that for 500 years had kept those territories subordinate: “if the signs of the regime’s disintegration were already evident at the beginning of the war, its ability to last... with battlefronts in several African countries is a phenomenon that will remain a source for historians” (p. 7). At no point is the articulation of the colonised peoples nor the force with which the uprisings that culminated in independence years later were referred to as an equally noteworthy “phenomenon”.

5. CONCLUSIONS: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The end of the *Público* article features an interview with a political scientist who is asked two of the three questions, “how did the colonial war and the end of empire mark our collective identity?” and “will it take us as long to recognise the crimes of colonialism as it took the Catholic Church to recognise its own?” (p. 7). By reflecting on these questions in light of the theories that underpin this study, one understands what Macedo (2016) means when she states that Portuguese national narratives are centred on glories, which makes it impossible to take a critical stance towards the events of a not-too-distant past. In fact, the newspaper uses most of the space dedicated to the theme focusing on Salazar’s discourse: it resorts to artifices of suppression and denies or relativises the Angolan empowerment, while leaving completely out any critical discourse or alternative source that could counter or deepen the discussion that is proposed. Moreover, one can perceive the

Portuguese daily's admiration for the so-called duration of the colonial regime ("capacity to last"), when, in fact, what should be at issue in such coverage was the duration of a war that lasted more than a decade, in a context where, on the one hand, there was the desire for independence and the end of colonialism and, on the other, the insistence on maintaining exploitative relations. Such remarks can be important tonics for discussing the post-imperial relations between Portugal and its former colonies, especially regarding common history. It is believed that the denaturalisation of hegemonic narratives makes room for critical interventions and the legitimisation of independence struggles — in all their complexity, just as it is done with geopolitical redesigns in the postcolonial period.

Historians, such as those cited throughout this study (Pinto, 2019; B. Reis, 2020; Wheeler & Pélissier, 2016), draw on media productions as discursive markers in their historical narratives, drawing attention to the importance of analysing these productions to understand changes, shifts, and alterations in different views of historical actualities. In these cases, analysed here, it is possible to see that these changes happen through a slow process since imperial and Salazar discourses still have uncritical space in Portuguese narratives that, again resorting to Macedo (2016), are still guided by colonial imaginaries of glorious past, expansion and discovery.

When thinking of postcolonialism as the transposition of colonialism by other relations of power and subalternity, as Hall (2001) suggests, from the conclusions that could be reached with this exploratory study, Portugal is perceived as an imperial power that began to lose its legitimacy under the questioning of colonial relations and whose territories under its domains become the target of the new global power, the United States. Therefore, Portuguese narratives seem to be driven by the concern with the place that the nation will occupy in the new order, almost completely forgetting the necessary critical positioning vis-à-vis a past that imposes itself over the present, both of the former "colonising power" and the former colonies. For this reason, the need to engage in critiques inscribed in postcolonial critical discourse studies is clear since the narratives keep perpetuating and reinforcing visions of favouritism, relativisations, and maintenance of certain relations (Sabido, 2019).

Finally, it is important to insist on the different perspectives perceived in the construction of both narratives. On such an emblematic date, the 60th anniversary of one of the revolts that started the struggles against Portuguese colonialism, it was possible to perceive not a reliable memory of the facts but how both newspapers, within their respective contexts, look at the factuality, reconstruct and re-signify it. Strategically, both the newspapers recount the event and, with a strategic attitude, as Bhabha (1994/1998) warns, the relations of force are manipulated, in this case, from the discursive and narrative attitude.

Translation: Gustavo Freitas

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Gustavo Freitas was responsible for the conceptualization and collaborating on the formal analysis of the proposed article. He participated in the writing – original draft. Ana Teresa Peixinho collaborated on the formal analysis and was responsible for the writing – review & editing.

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