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Brazil in TAP. Luso-Brazilian Representations in the Cultural Production of the Portuguese Flag Carrier

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Abstract

The combination of contributions from postcolonial, heritage, and mobility studies offers a privileged lens for analysing metaphors of travel and encounters. Just as Paul Gilroy (1993) regarded colonial ships as cultural and political entities navigating the various parts of the Atlantic world, it is equally possible to consider, in the postcolonial present, that transatlantic aircraft serve as mediators within the cultural and political dimensions of travel. Undoubtedly, over its nearly 80 years of existence, flag carrier TAP Air Portugal has played a pivotal role in connecting geographically dispersed Portuguese-speaking communities that remain politically, economically, culturally, and emotionally intertwined. Following key institutional developments, such as the founding of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries in 1996 and the Lisbon World Expo '98, postcolonial Lusophone relations have become more visible, both internationally and domestically. In the cultural representations expressed by TAP, Brazil has unquestionably held a dominant position. The aim of this paper, framed within debates on the promotion of social memories and cultural heritage, is to gain a deeper understanding of how Luso-Brazilian relations have been represented by TAP. Methodologically, a discourse analysis is conducted, focusing on the notions used by TAP (such as "embrace", "friendship", and "hospitality"). Theoretically, the paper critically engages with the concepts of "Portugueseness" and "Brazilianness" as key elements of the idea of "Lusophony".

Keywords

postcolonialism, mobility, expressive cultures, discourse, governance, TAP Air Portugal

O Brasil na TAP. Representações Luso-Brasileiras na Produção Cultural da Companhia Aérea de Bandeira Portuguesa

Resumo

A combinação de contributos dos estudos pós-coloniais, de património e de mobilidade constitui um prisma privilegiado para análise das metáforas de viagem e encontro. Tal como Tal como Paul Gilroy (1993) considerou os navios coloniais unidades culturais e políticas que navegavam nas várias partes do mundo atlântico, também é possível considerar, no presente pós-colonial, que os aviões transatlânticos servem de mediadores nas dimensões culturais e políticas das viagens. Sem dúvida, e durante os seus quase 80 anos de existência, a companhia aérea de bandeira TAP Air Portugal tem vindo a desempenhar um papel fundamental na conexão das comunidades de língua portuguesa dispersas geograficamente, mas ligadas política, económica, cultural e afetivamente. Após os importantes eventos institucionais, e relativamente recentes, como a fundação da Comunidade de Países de Língua Oficial Portuguesa, em 1996, e a Exposição Mundial de Lisboa de 1998, as relações pós-coloniais lusófonas ficaram mais visíveis, tanto internacionalmente quanto internamente. E nas representações de elementos da cultura

expressos pela TAP, o Brasil tem tido um papel dominante. Enquadrando o meu trabalho em debates sobre a promoção de memórias sociais e patrimónios culturais, pretendo compreender a maneira como as relações luso-brasileiras têm vindo a ser representadas pela TAP. A nível metodológico, realizo uma análise do discurso, que incide sobre as noções usadas pela TAP (tais como "abraço", "amizade" e "hospitalidade"); teoricamente, problematizo entendimentos sobre os conceitos de "portugalidade" e "brasilidade" como elementos-chave da ideia de "lusofonia".

Palavras-chave

pós-colonialismo, mobilidade, culturas expressivas, discurso, governança, TAP Air Portugal

1. Contextualisation

TAP Air Portugal, the Portuguese flag carrier, is one of the few remaining European state-owned companies with a colonial legacy. Over time, it has played — and continues to play — a central role in shaping Portuguese cultural identity (see, for example, A. Coutinho et al., 2013; B. Coutinho & Cotrim, 2016). Founded in Lisbon in 1945, TAP was established as a public service entity to connect the metropole with Portuguese communities, initially spread across the empire and later around the world. From its inception, with the Imperial Airline connecting Lisbon, Luanda (Angola), and Lourenço Marques (now Maputo, Mozambique), TAP has sought to forge bonds of identification with Portuguese populations both within the country and abroad, adapting its promotional discourse to the social, political, and cultural dynamics of each era.

Portugal has consistently demonstrated a strategic approach to its national and cultural representation practices as a European country with long-standing connections to its former colonies. Reflecting this positioning, TAP has launched several well-received cultural initiatives, often acting as a cultural ambassador for the country. In 2024, TAP operated approximately 2,500 weekly flights, connecting 90 destinations across 36 countries in Europe, Africa, and the Americas. The airline maintained its market leadership between Brazil and Europe, offering 76 weekly flights between Portugal and 11 Brazilian cities, with flight frequencies ranging from two to 18 per week, depending on the destination.

This article draws from ongoing research conducted within the *Sounds of Tourism* project[1]. The project's primary purpose is to explore the relationship between music, tourism, and mobility, focusing particularly on how TAP Air Portugal uses music and culture to shape the image of Lisbon and, more broadly, Portugal as a tourist destination. Research on TAP began in 2014 and has since led to the gradual development of a database on the company's cultural production (2014–2022).

Currently, this database includes: (a) personal interviews with TAP employees and crew, as well as staff from Portuguese national radio; (b) visual material sourced from archival recovery in the company's museum (including in-flight magazines and programming for in-flight audio channels); and (c) evidence of promotional content on TAP's

[1] Available at https://soundsoftourism.pt/

social media aimed at attracting and retaining customers, particularly through government programmes focused on tourism.

The contribution to this project centres on cultural production from a corporate marketing perspective, exploring how TAP has represented and integrated national and postcolonial cultures, memories, and heritages through its expressive outputs in sound, visuals, text, and material forms. This study specifically aims to examine TAP's role as a cultural mediator: how has this national airline incorporated cultural practices into a marketing model designed to engage and retain its customers?

This paper seeks to explore how Portuguese-Brazilian relations have been represented in TAP's cultural production since the turn of the century. To answer the question, "where is Brazil in TAP?" the article examines TAP's relationship with Brazil, focusing on its linguistic organisation and cultural affinity, employing methods from anthropology, as well as postcolonial, heritage, and mobility studies[2].

2. Intercultural Dialogues with Brazil: A Chronological Perspective

Intercultural dialogue is a dynamic exchange of ideas and values between societies essential to international relations. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Kutukdjian & Corbett, 2009) highlights its role in promoting mutual understanding and respect for cultural diversity. In Brazil, this process reflects the country's rich ethnic and historical diversity, incorporating indigenous, African, European, and recent immigrant influences (Hall, 2003; Ribeiro, 1995; Schwarcz, 2019). Portugal, in turn, has been profoundly shaped by its interactions with African, Asian, and American territories and diasporas, resulting in hyphenated identities in the postcolonial era (Cabecinhas & Cunha, 2008; Khan, 2008; Marques et al., 2012).

Some pioneering examples of intercultural and promotional dialogue between Portugal and Brazil undertaken by TAP include (a) the "Voo da Amizade" (Friendship Flight; TAP-Panair) in 1961, connecting Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro with stopovers in Sal and Recife (Figure1 and Figure 2); (b) the retro posters in the 1970s (Figure 4), where "the carioca colour and rhythm were used to promote Rio de Janeiro as a touristic destination" (figure 5; TAP Air Portugal, 2018, para. 2); and (c) the album *De Ipanema a Alfama* (From Ipanema to Alfama, 1973, Figure 3). The latter contained two sides: one side featuring music from Portugal ("Uma Casa Portuguesa", "Canção do Mar", "Ai Mouraria", "Coimbra", "Lisboa à Noite", "Ai Chico Chico"), and the other side featuring music from Brazil ("Garota de Ipanema", "Apelo", "Ponteio", "A Lenda do Abaeté", "Samba de Verão", "Madalena"). On the back cover of this LP, there was no mention of an A or B side but rather of "fraternisation."

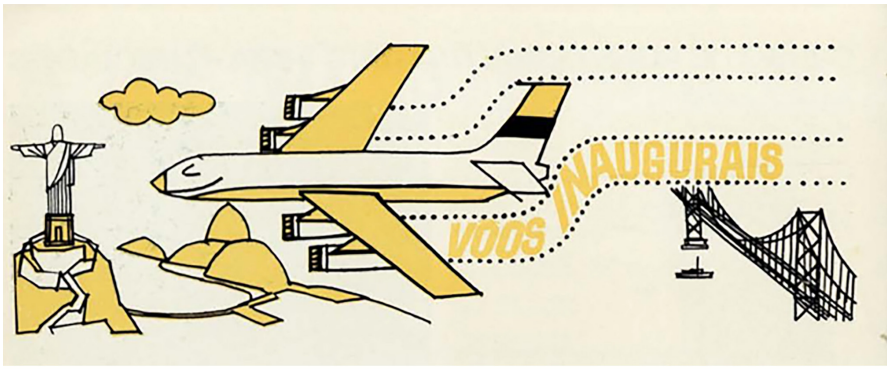
> we did not conceive of this album as one meant to please only Brazilians and Portuguese. (...) Immortal pages of Brazilian and Portuguese popular

[2] This article engages with the work co-authored with Iñigo Sánchez-Fuarros, "Embracing Postcolonial Diversity? Music Selection and Affective Formation in TAP Air Portugal's In-Flight Entertainment System" (Vanspauwen & Sánchez-Fuarros, 2023), in which we explored Radano and Olaniyan's (2016) concept of "audible empire".

> music, celebrated worldwide (...), might suggest various motivations, but not a mushy sense of *fraternisation* [emphasis added], which, after all, is a reality embodied by the album, making it unnecessary to proclaim. However, listening to the album, if nostalgia takes hold, if it becomes overwhelming, turn to TAP. (*De Ipanema a Alfama,* 1971, para. 1 e para. 3)

Figure 1. *Voo da amizade*

Source. From *Jornal InterTAP,* (16–17), 1966. (https://hemerotecadigital.cm-lisboa.pt/Periodicos/intertap/N16-17/N16-17_item1/P6.html)



LISBOA-RIO DE JANEIRO A JACTO

No dia 17 de Junho último, pelas sete da manhã, partiram de Lisboa com destino ao Rio de Janeiro, no «Santa Cruz», cerca de oitenta convidados, entre os quais os Srs. General Francisco António das Chagas, Secretário de Estado da Aeronáutica; Dr. Galba Santos, Ministro Conselheiro da Embaixada do Brasil; Prof. Dr. Marcello Caetano; Dr. César Moreira Baptista, Secretário Nacional de Informação; Dr. António Osório Vaz, Governador Civil de Lisboa; almirante Henrique Tenreiro; Dr. Joaquim Trigo de Negreiros; almirante Luís Noronha de Andrade; almirante Sarmento Rodrigues; Dr. Baltazar Rebelo de Sousa; eng.º Vaz Pinto e muitas outras individualidades, que, desta forma, inauguraram a nova carreira, a jacto, ligando Portugal e Brasil.

O programa da estadia dos convidados em terras brasileiras compreendeu várias visitas de carácter turístico, numerosas recepções, cerimónias oficiais, homenagens em honra dos visitantes. No entanto, é de salientar a visita ao Marechal Castelo Branco, Presidente da República do Brasil, que se dignou receber os participantes deste voo inaugural. O Sr. Eng.º Vaz Pinto ofereceu ao Marechal Castelo Branco uma mensagem alusiva ao acontecimento, um modelo do hidroavião em que Gago Coutinho e Sacadura Cabral realizaram em 1922 a travessia do Atlântico e um álbum de recortes de jornais portugueses da época, narrando o facto.

Ao agradecer, o Presidente da República do Brasil enalteceu a valentia de Gago Coutinho e Sacadura Cabral e despediu-se das entidades portuguesas utilizando a frase «Meus patrícios de Portugal».

A inauguração desta carreira da TAP, no dia 17 de Junho, comemorou um grande feito da história da aviação: a chegada ao Rio de Janeiro, precisamente há quarenta anos, de Gago Coutinho e Sacadura Cabral, a bordo do hidroavião «Santa Cruz». Assim, a TAP homenageou os heróicos pioneiros da aviação portuguesa.

No regresso, à passagem pela ilha do Sal, foi descerrada uma placa assinalando esta memorável viagem.

À sua chegada a Lisboa, o presidente do Conselho de Administração da TAP manifestou o seu contentamento e o de todos e afirmou que este voo constituiu um acontecimento de relevo nas relações luso-brasileiras.

Figure 2. *Voo da amizade*

Source. From *Jornal InterTAP*, (16–17), p. 6. 1966. (https://hemerotecadigital.cm-lisboa.pt/Periodicos/intertap/N16-17/N16-17_item1/P6.html)

Figure 3. *De Ipanema a Alfama*

Credits. Museu da TAP

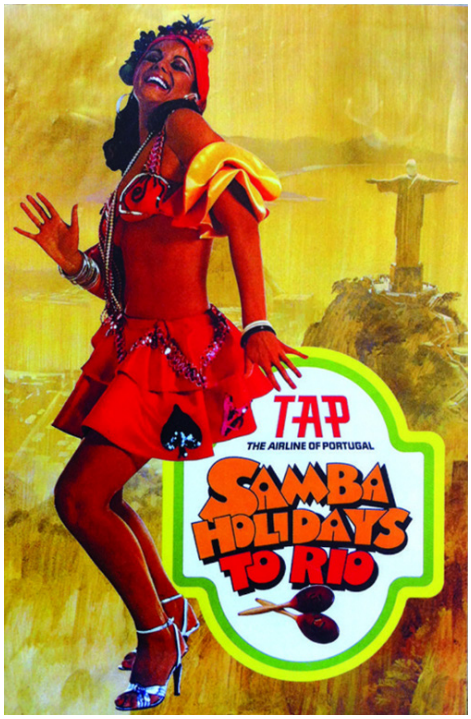


Figure 4. *Samba Holidays to Rio*

Source. From *Coisa Antiga* [Image], by TAP Air Portugal [@tapairportugal], 2018, Pinterest. (https://pt.pinterest.com/pin/573083121328526047/)

Figure 5. *Advertising in on board magazine* Atlantis. *'O Júnior convida: vem 'curtir' o Rio!'*

Credits. Museu da TAP

This article examines the last 15 years of TAP's activity, focusing on the culturally expressive elements conveyed for purposes of (inter)national affirmation, customer marketing, and corporate branding. Expressive cultural elements, or expressive culture, refer to cultural manifestations such as art, music, dance, literature, and other symbolic communication modes that convey a society's values, beliefs, and identities. These elements

serve as forms of expression, playing a fundamental role in preserving and transmitting cultural heritage, and are frequently analysed in academic fields such as anthropology and cultural studies.

This chronological analysis focuses on the musical events organised by TAP, contextualising and updating the connection between Brazil and Portugal since 2010. This year also marked the launch of TAP's official Facebook page and its official profile on the former Twitter (now called X), which was later expanded to include YouTube and Instagram.

The exploration of TAP's culturally expressive programme also began in 2010, when the airline brought folklore troupes to Campinas for the inauguration of its new route to Lisbon (Figure 6 and Figure 7). In the same year, TAP organised flash mobs[3] at Antônio Carlos Jobim Airport (Galeão) in Rio de Janeiro and Guarulhos Airport in São Paulo (Figure 8).

Figure 6. *Opening of the Campinas-Lisbon route*
Credits. TAP Air Portugal. (https://www.facebook.com/tapairportugal)

Figure 7. *Opening of the Campinas-Lisbon route*
Credits. TAP Air Portugal. (https://www.facebook.com/tapairportugal)

[3] A flash mob is a group of people who suddenly gather in a public place to perform a previously planned action, usually artistic or entertaining, and then quickly disperse.

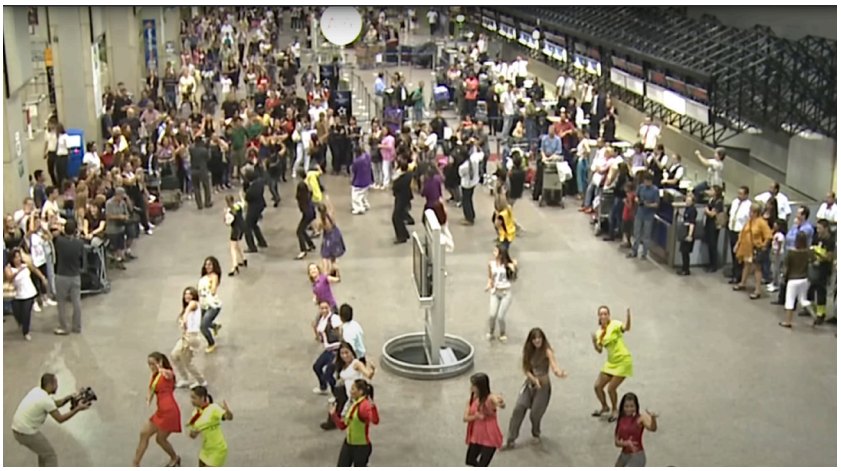


Figure 8. *Screenshots from the videos of flash mobs in São Paulo and in Rio de Janeiro*

Source. From *TAP e Aeroporto Internacional de São Paulo - uma homenagem cosmopolita* [Video], by marketingtap, 2010, Youtube. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_skpsg4qCRg)

In a video shared on TAP's official YouTube channel, the flash mob in Rio de Janeiro is described as follows: "Last January 20, TAP Portugal and Infraero paid tribute to the city of Rio de Janeiro and Antônio Carlos Jobim International Airport in a unique way" (as found in the description of this video). Similarly, the flash mob in São Paulo is introduced with the following description:

> TAP Portugal and Infraero organised another distinctive event on January 25, celebrating 456 years of cultural diversity in South America's most cosmopolitan city and the anniversary of Guarulhos International Airport.

Also, in 2010, the in-flight *UP Magazine - Ouse Sonhar Mais Alto* (Dare to Dream Higher, which had been launched in 2007 under the direction of Paula de Oliveira Ribeiro, a Brazilian living in Lisbon and former editor of *Cosmopolitan* magazine) featured an article on Carmen Miranda that highlighted the musical connections between Brazil and Portugal: "the story of the Brazilian Bombshell who conquered Hollywood and made samba known to the world". It notes that Carmen Miranda was born in Portugal, but her heart was 100% Brazilian (Brito, 2010, n.p.). It is interesting to analyse how this narrative constructs a blend of representations, positioning Carmen Miranda at the intersection of Portugal and Brazil, symbolically placing her in the Atlantic as a shared cultural space between the two nations.

> Carmen Miranda, a Portuguese from Marco de Canavezes, enabled Brazil to see itself in a new light, discovering samba and joy within its own culture. Laden with exotic fruits and trinkets, she brought her vibrant personality to Broadway, making Americans *sing in the language of Camões* [emphasis added] to the rhythm of the pandeiro, tambourine, cuíca, and guitar. (...) Never before had a woman been so famous in the history of Brazil. (...) Carmen Miranda was the dominant star on Brazilian records, radio, cinema, and stage in the 1930s. Perhaps audiences recognised in her a playful and

> coquettish spirit, one shaped by samba and the *joy of the Brazilian people* [emphasis added]. A joy that had long been obscured by the *Portuguese heritage* of fado and the melancholy of the *sugar plantations* [emphasis added]. (Brito, 2010, n.p.)

The following year, in 2011, TAP launched what it referred to as a "Lusophone anthem" on its official YouTube channel: the song "De Braços Abertos" (With Arms Wide Open), featuring Brazilian singer Roberta Sá, Portuguese fado singer (of Mozambican descent) Mariza, and Angolan semba singer Paulo Flores. That was part of a viral marketing campaign that marked the rebranding of TAP's image and name. In fact, the rebranding aimed to redefine the very notion of "Portugueseness" upon which TAP's historical corporate image had been built, explicitly embracing the concept of Lusophony as a strategy that balanced the commercialisation of culture with the promotion of Portuguese identity[4].

The relationship between Portugueseness and Lusophony, as evident in TAP's output, is complex, reflecting how Portugal perceives itself in the postcolonial context. Carvalho (1996) suggests that ethnic nationalism, shaped by the 20th-century dictatorship, continues to influence the Portuguese cultural imaginary, resisting an interpretation of Lusophony as a fusion of cultures. The concept of Portugueseness, associated with Portugal's global influence, often marginalises counter-narratives from other Lusophone countries (Almeida, 1998, 2008), thereby reinforcing a one-dimensional view of Lusophone culture. In order to overcome lusotropicalism and Portugueseness, it is necessary to incorporate the narratives of migration and the Lusophone diasporas in Portugal. Vítor de Sousa (2015) argues that Lusophony and Portugueseness are contradictory concepts, creating tension in the idea of a Lusophone community. The challenge lies in transcending Portugueseness to develop a more inclusive vision of the Lusophone world, one that values its diverse histories and voices (Martins, 2006, 2015; Rocha-Trindade, 1998). Drawing from a range of musical influences (semba, fado, and MPB [Brazilian popular music]) and set within a shared cultural and linguistic context, "De Braços Abertos" (With Arms Wide Open) exemplifies a cultural collaboration as a central component of TAP's commercial strategy, rooted in transatlantic identity representation. The lyrics reposition the common trope of hospitality as a defining trait of Portuguese speakers worldwide. In this way, the anthem serves to musically promote Lusophone interstitiality as a marketing strategy for the airline.

The interstitial space refers to the intermediate spaces or interstices between established social, cultural, or identity categories. This concept, developed by theorists such as Homi Bhabha (1994/1998) and Manuela Ribeiro Sanches (2004), who focused on postcolonial interstitial spaces in Portugal, highlights the zones of overlap and hybridisation where new forms of identity and culture emerge. In sociology and anthropology, interstitial space is often associated with processes of cultural negotiation and identity formation in contexts of globalisation and migration. It challenges binary or essentialist

[4] For a more in-depth analysis of this subject, see Vítor de Sousa's doctoral thesis (2015), *Da "Portugalidade" à Lusofonia* (From "Portugueseness" to Lusophony).

views of identity, emphasising the fluidity and complexity of lived experiences in social and cultural "in-between places."

The year 2014 was the most remarkable in TAP's cultural history: the media trip of navigator Ricardo Dinis (Figure 9), who sailed with the FlyTap sailboat from Lisbon to Salvador da Bahia and Rio de Janeiro. The event included performances by Tito Paris (in the city of Praia, Cape Verde) and Roberta Sá (upon arrival), while Portuguese fado singer Cuca Roseta also performed over the Atlantic aboard a TAP aircraft.

Figure 9. *Photo cut-outs of Veleiro FlyTap.*
Credits. TAP Air Portugal. (https://www.facebook.com/tapairportugal)

In 2015, an article in the in-flight magazine *UP Magazine - Ouse Sonhar Mais Alto*, titled "Carminho, Fado Tropical", constructed a narrative of interstitial spaces between Portugal and Brazil through the personal experience of Portuguese fado singer Carminho in Rio de Janeiro (Figure 10), who — walking through the city — narrates the Portuguese genesis of the "marvellous city":

> a Portuguese Rio de Janeiro is not hard to find. Neither is that of the fado singer Carminho. Especially on a route that blends references. From colonial architecture to *boteco* gastronomy and to samba. In Brazil, because of the distance, everything is flavoured with more nostalgia. Mission: to go to the marvellous city to rescue Portuguese Rio with Carminho, the most carioca of Portuguese singers. (Veloso, 2015)

Figure 10. Carminho, Fado Tropical

Source. From *Carminho, Fado Tropical* [Photogrpahy], UP Magazine – Ouse Sonhar Mais Alto, 2015.

During her stay, Carminho not only came across history but also contemporary Portuguese presences, while she is herself compared to Carmen Miranda:

> "we see Portugal everywhere", Carminho notes. In the pork shank sandwiches at the Bracarense in Leblon, in the codfish fritters at the Semente bar in Lapa, or in the iconic Portuguese pavements that line the beaches of Ipanema and Copacabana. And with the full vibrancy of the language spoken by the Cariocas. (...) Passing the Telles Arch — the only part of the building to have survived the 1790 fire — traces of another Portuguese "Carminho" can be seen, though this one became known as Carmen Miranda. In Brazil and in Hollywood. (Veloso, 2015, n.p.)

In fact, even the very title of the article, "Fado Tropical"[5], makes an intertextual reference to the song of the same name by artists Ruy Guerra and Chico Buarque de Holanda. In this context, "Fado Tropical" was composed specifically for a theatre production during the period of the military dictatorship, which began with the 1964 coup. In a video found on YouTube (Silveira, 2013), the song is accompanied by the following description:

> It was originally composed as part of one of the character's dialogue. It should be understood within the context that prompted the authors to employ subtle irony to express the Brazilian elites' desire to view themselves

[5] In this context, it is worth noting Marcos Cardão 's doctoral thesis (2012), *Fado Tropical: Luso-Tropicalismo na Cultura de Massas [1960-1974]* (Fado Tropical: Luso-Tropicalism in Mass Culture [1960-1974]).

> as "civilised" in European terms. In a complete reversal of values, the colonising perspective is embraced without challenging the dependency inherent in the North/South relationship. By incorporating imagery that evokes the Carnation Revolution — the coup that overthrew the fascist regime of Oliveira Salazar on April 25, 1974 — it even expresses a wish for Brazil to one day become "an immense Portugal." This imbues the piece with utopian and revolutionary socialist connotations.

In line with Carminho's interview, TAP also posted a video on its official YouTube channel in 2016 entitled "Um Novo Rio de Janeiro" (A New Rio de Janeiro). Simultaneously, another video featuring Brazilian actors from the Porta dos Fundos collective was released, showing them recording new material aboard a TAP aircraft during a transatlantic flight.

In this context, Marcos Cardão's *Fado Tropical: Luso-Tropicalismo na Cultura de Massas [1960-1974]* (Fado Tropical: Luso-Tropicalism in Mass Culture [1960-1974]; 2012) offers a critical analysis of Luso-Tropicalism as an ambiguous cultural ideology initially associated with Estado Novo propaganda. Cardão explores how this concept was promoted through mass culture, examining the tensions between colonial control and creative expressions from the colonies. He highlights the contradictions inherent in the doctrine, avoiding normative analyses. In the Brazilian context, Cardão underscores the influence of Gilberto Freyre in shaping the notion of a *naturally* inclusive Portuguese identity, which softened the international image of Portuguese colonialism. Finally — aligning with Barreto (2008) and Almeida (2008) — he situates Luso-Tropicalism as a transitional stage toward a postcolonial and polycentric understanding of Lusophony.

In 2017, TAP released another video on its official YouTube channel, this time featuring actor Thiago Lacerda during a stopover in Lisbon. Part of TAP's digital series *Stopover Stories,* the video captures the actor's reflections on the identity emotions he experiences in the Portuguese capital (Figure 11). At the same time, it promotes the Portuguese government's air programme, Portugal Stopover, which allows travellers to spend a few days in Lisbon before continuing to their final destination within Europe.

Figure 11. *Screenshot from the episode of* Stopover Stories *com Thiago Larceda*

Source. From *Portugal Stopover Stories | Episode 6 with Thiago Lacerda* [Vídeo], by TAP Air Portugal, 2017a, Youtube. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNYofCK8IWI)

In the same year, the project "TAP Retrojet - Uma Viagem no Tempo até o Rio de Janeiro" (TAP Retrojet - A Travel through Time to Rio de Janeiro) was also organised, featuring Rio de Janeiro aviation blogger Jaime Drummond (Carioca no Mundo). This campaign was well-documented through videos on YouTube (Figure 12 and Figure 13). Additionally, during the Tourism Fair held that same year, TAP's stand was positioned next to the Brazilian Agency for International Tourism Promotion (an autonomous social service of the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism). TAP also hosted a musical parade featuring a Carmen Miranda lookalike, TAP flight attendants, and Brazilian instrumentalists (Figure 14)[6].

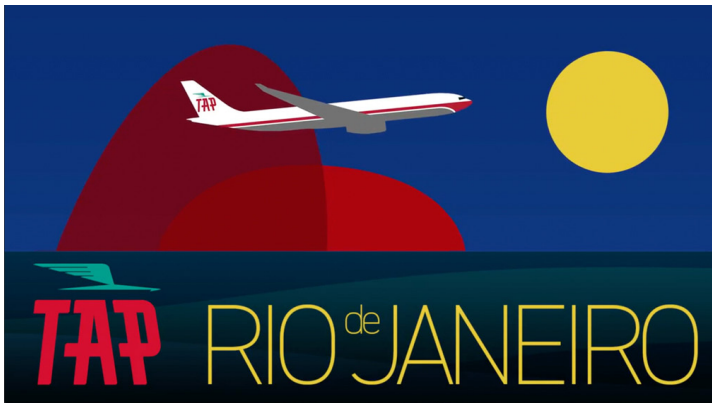


Figure 12. *Screenshot from the video* TAP Retrojet Uma viagem no tempo até ao Rio de Janeiro

Source. From *TAP Retrojet: Uma viagem no tempo até ao Rio de Janeiro* [Vídeo], by TAP Air Portugal, 2017b, Youtube. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AiSR5NQRImM)

[6] It is interesting to see another intertextual interpretation of Carmen Miranda by Brazilian singer Anitta during her first performance in Portugal at Rock in Rio Lisboa 2018. She began the show dressed in a costume reminiscent of Miranda's famous fruit hats while performing a version of "Tico-Tico no Fubá", a song popularised by the singer (*Anitta Aparece Vestida de Carmen Miranda no Palco do Rock in Rio Lisboa*, 2018). In doing so, Anitta not only paid homage to Carmen Miranda but also blended Brazilian funk with this cultural reference, demonstrating her pride in Brazil's musical heritage.

Figure 13. *Screenshot from the video* TAP Retrojet Uma viagem no tempo até ao Rio de Janeiro

Source. From *TAP Retrojet: Uma viagem no tempo até ao Rio de Janeiro* [Vídeo], by TAP Air Portugal, 2017b, Youtube. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AiSR5NQRImM)

Figura 14. *The TAP stand at FIL - Lisbon International Fair, with a musical and dancing representation of Carmen Miranda, March 19, 2017*

Credits. Bart Vanspauwen

Also in 2017, the promotional campaign "O que É que a Victoria Tem" (What Does Victoria Have; Figure 19), starring Portuguese actress Olívia Ortiz, made references to Carmen Miranda. This video clip featured two versions of the song — one in European Portuguese and the other in Brazilian Portuguese. For those who have seen the clip but do not know the actress, it is unclear whether she represents the Portuguese or Brazilian public, as she is not formally introduced but merely visits tourist sites in the Portuguese capital. This impression of interstitial identity also emerges in the video "Um Pouquinho do Brasil em Lisboa" (A Little Taste of Brazil in Lisbon)[7], as it seems to target TAP's travelling customers, whether they are residents, Brazilian tourists, or foreigners. In other words, the message is aimed at anyone visiting Lisbon or wanting to explore it further.

[7] Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMMDPtlnQkM

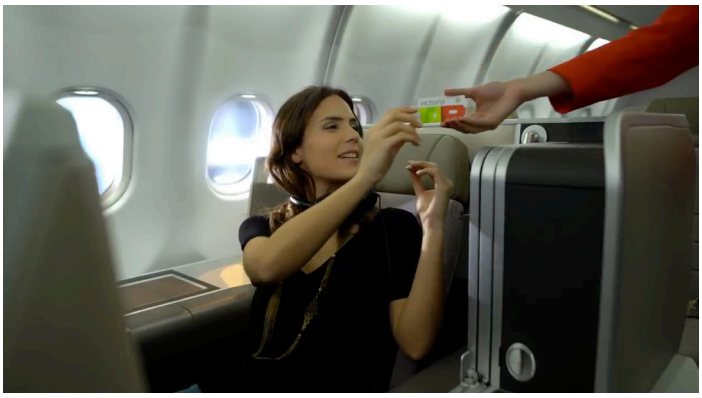


Figura 15. *Capturas de tela do vídeo O que É que a Victória Tem*

Fonte. Retirado de *Já sabem o que é que o #Victoria tem? Nós "cantamo-vos"! ;) Todas as #vantagens do #TAPVictoria* [Tweet], por TAP Air Portugal, 2017c, X. (https://twitter.com/tapairportugal/status/877926078676967426)

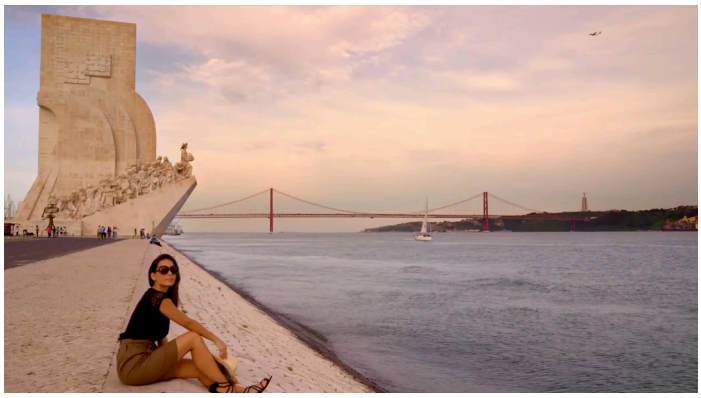


Figura 16. *Capturas de tela do vídeo O que É que a Victória Tem*

Fonte. Retirado de *Já sabem o que é que o #Victoria tem? Nós "cantamo-vos"! ;) Todas as #vantagens do #TAPVictoria* [Tweet], por TAP Air Portugal, 2017c, X. (https://twitter.com/tapairportugal/status/877926078676967426)

A final significant moment of cultural representation — albeit non-musical — was the official trip of Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa in July 2022 on a TAP aircraft named Santa Cruz as a tribute to the centenary of the first flight across the South Atlantic, accomplished by Portuguese aviators Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral. It took place just weeks before the official celebration of the bicentenary of Brazil's independence on September 7, 2022 (Figure 17).

Figure 17. *The Santa Cruz aeroplane and the celebration of the first aerial crossing of the South Atlantic*

Credits. TAP Air Portugal (https://www.facebook.com/tapairportugal)

According to the interview in *Diário de Notícias* with President Marcelo on this date — when he was received by President Bolsonaro, unlike the trip that took place in July — President Marcelo took the opportunity to recount the story of Pedro I to Bolsonaro and remarked that "it would be incomprehensible for Portugal not to be represented at the highest level in what is a unique historic moment in the life of Brazil and Portugal" ("Marcelo Conta História de D. Pedro a Bolsonaro em Encontro de 20 Minutos", 2022, para. 14). In the same article, the Portuguese President highlighted, as an additional reason for his presence, the loan of the heart of Pedro I to Brazil specifically for these commemorations. In this context, he also stated that

> Portugal, which held colonial rule over Brazil during the time of the empire, witnessed a unique coincidence in world history: it was the son of the King of Portugal who declared Brazil's independence and granted the country its Constitution. ("Marcelo Conta História de D. Pedro a Bolsonaro em Encontro de 20 Minutos", 2022, para. 19)

Finally, the President highlighted "the significant presence of Brazilians in Portugal, now approaching 250 thousand - which, for a population of 10 million, is a very considerable proportion" ("Marcelo Conta História de D. Pedro a Bolsonaro em Encontro de 20 Minutos", 2022, para. 9). In other words, the President of Portugal, who travelled aboard a TAP flight, made a point of underscoring the historical and contemporary ties between Brazil and Portugal, showcasing his remarkable mobility across the Atlantic, both physically and symbolically.

These examples support the hypotheses regarding presidential speeches raised by Vítor de Sousa (2021) and Miguel Cardina (2012). Vítor de Sousa (2021) examines how a lusotropicalist vision influenced President Marcelo's rhetoric during his first term (2016–2021), concluding that he combined elements of "Lusitanian identity" with an inclusive perspective on the cultures of Portuguese-speaking countries, as reflected in his speeches and policies. Similarly, the postcolonial "erasures" — through a dual mechanism of revelation and concealment — frequently appear in the discourse of former Portuguese President Cavaco Silva (2006–2014). Cardina (2012), in his analysis of this case, argues that elements such as language, heritage, and the sea, which differentiate the Portuguese colonial experience, are prioritised over historical colonial processes involving racism, slavery, and economic and cultural domination. This, in turn, exposes the challenges in addressing the violent aspects of colonialism, the traumatic nature of decolonisation, and its enduring repercussions.

3. Brazil in TAP: Conceptual Fluidity and Identity Ambiguity

As noted in the journalistic piece "A TAP Deu Asas aos Brasileiros e Eles Voaram" (TAP Gave Wings to Brazilians and They Flew; Correia & Almeida, 2014), which focuses on the event known as the *Year of Brazil in Portugal* (*Ano do Brasil em Portugal "Ficou Muito Acima das Expetativas"*, 2013), TAP played a central role in mobility between Brazil and Portugal,

not only for the Portuguese but also for many Brazilians. Today, TAP operates direct flights between Lisbon and Porto to 12 destinations in Brazil, including São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Brasília, Belo Horizonte, Salvador, Recife, Fortaleza, Natal, Maceió, Belém, Porto Alegre, and, most recently, Florianópolis (*TAP Lança Rota Para Florianópolis*, 2024). With this, TAP now offers a total of 96 flights per week, facilitating travel between Brazil and Portugal for both Portuguese and Brazilian passengers — including Brazilian managers. Notably, former TAP CEOs Fernando Pinto, previously head of VARIG, who led the airline from 2000, and Antonoaldo Neves, who joined after TAP's private takeover by David Neeleman between 2017 and 2020, are prominent examples.

The examples of intercultural dialogue highlighted earlier reflect the strong Brazilian presence in TAP's promotional efforts. However, it is notable that TAP's videos often target Brazilians and Portuguese as distinct audiences. For instance, "O que É que a Victoria Tem" (What Does Victoria Have) features versions sung in two different accents to appeal separately to Portuguese and Brazilian audiences. Similarly, the videos "TAP Retrojet - Uma Viagem no Tempo Até o Rio de Janeiro" (TAP Retrojet - A Journey Through Time to Rio de Janeiro) and "Um Novo Rio de Janeiro" (A New Rio de Janeiro) portray Rio de Janeiro's historical and contemporary aspects, respectively, for Portuguese audiences. Meanwhile, series like *Stopover Stories*, including the episode featuring actor Thiago Lacerda, provide a platform for Brazilian tourists in Portugal. Finally, "Um Pouquinho do Brasil em Lisboa" appears to be aimed at an international audience.

Based on the material presented above, an exploratory discourse analysis was conducted, revealing the fluidity of tropes such as "embrace", "friendship", and "hospitality." In line with Helena Sousa's (2000) insights, TAP leveraged digital media to reinforce the imaginary of Lusophony, or at least the Lusophone relationship between Portugal and Brazil. The concepts of Portugueseness and Brazilianness (Figure 18 and Figure 19) as central to the Luso-Brazilian relationship are problematised here, juxtaposed with other foundational elements of Lusophony, such as "creoleness", "miscegenation", and "Afro-", which are often overlooked or omitted in the Atlantic equation.

Figure 20. *Screenshots from the video* Um Pouquinho do Brasil em Lisboa - A Little Taste of Brazil in Lisbon

Source. From *Um Pouquinho de Brasil em Lisboa* [Vídeo], by TAP Air Portugal, 2017d, Youtube. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMMDPtlnQkM)

Note. Brazilianness (feminine noun)
Characteristic or peculiarity of what or who is Brazilian; nature of what or that which is Brazilian.
A feeling of sympathy and love for Brazil.

Figure 21. *Screenshots from the video* Um Pouquinho do Brasil em Lisboa - A Little Taste of Brazil in Lisbon

Source. From *Um Pouquinho de Brasil em Lisboa* [Vídeo], by TAP Air Portugal, 2017d, Youtube. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMMDPtlnQkM)

Note. This here ô, ô is a little taste of Brazil iá, iá in Lisbon

From both a semiotic and historical perspective, Brazil is often portrayed as an extension of Portugal and, in contemporary terms, a secondary hub for TAP, facilitating flights in both directions — between Rio de Janeiro and Lisbon — as if symbolically returning home. This notion was explicitly highlighted during the 2015 exhibition at the MUDE Museum, commemorating TAP's 70th anniversary. One historical text (n.d.) displayed during the event encapsulated this sentiment:

> we fly to Brazil as we fly home. We discovered Brazil 500 years ago. And we can help you discover it today, too: we fly to (...) destinations in a country that speaks our language: Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Salvador da Bahia, and Recife. It's no wonder that TAP Air Portugal is the European airline that knows Brazil best. (...) Let us discover the country for you.

This notion of familiarity when visiting a place perceived as familiar is also evident in TAP's marketing messages (for example, in 2016, on social media such as Facebook) such as: "swimsuit, flip-flops, and sunglasses ready? That's all you'll need in your suitcase to set off to discover Brazil. Our campaign is like bossa nova — music to your ears!" or "in Brazil, there's a place to discover".

At the same time, with the growing popularity of social media, identities and representational discrimination are continuously debated and re-examined. Platforms like WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, Telegram, Facebook, and Twitter amplify the visibility of those who communicate, both in celebratory contexts (for instance, regarding new Royal Portuguese Cabinets of Reading in Brazil; the journey of the heart of D. Pedro I (Bergamaschi, 2022); or the activities of the Portuguese-Brazilian Chambers of Commerce) and in decolonial and reparative contexts. Examples of the latter include peaceful protests by Black Brazilian women in Lisbon's Terreiro do Paço in 2019, featuring artistic performances and speeches, as well as journalistic initiatives such as the virtual publications "return our gold! Portugal owes Brazil forgiveness and reparation?" (DW Brasil, 2022) and "how Portugal deals with Brazil's colonial past", both in 2022. These instances demonstrate how various forms of expression and protest address discriminatory narratives and colonial legacies, fostering a more inclusive and conscious dialogue about identity, memory, and social justice.

As the Portuguese journalist Joana Gorjão Henriques (2016; with extensive experience in Brazil, as demonstrated in her book *Racismo em Português - O Lado Esquecido do Colonialismo* [Racism in Portuguese - The Forgotten Side of Colonialism]) argues when interviewed for the article "Como Portugal Lida com o Passado Colonial Brasileiro" (How Portugal Deals with Brazil's Colonial Past), "there is still this complex of superiority between the Portuguese and Brazilians, which leads to anti-Brazilian sentiment, xenophobia and racism, particularly when the issue of skin colour is involved" (Lisboa & Azevedo, 2022, para. 26). Similarly, Brazilian researcher Luciana Martinez, from the University of Coimbra, states in the same article that, in recent years, there has been a greater effort in Portugal to rethink its colonial past; however, she observes that such reflections remain largely focused on the former Portuguese colonies in Africa. Martinez contends that:

> the remnants of the colonial past and colonisation persist on both sides of the Atlantic, with racism standing as their most visible manifestation. (...) While it may no longer be as overtly articulated, Brazil continues to be framed as a testament to a supposedly less violent colonialism. This notion is, of course, entirely unfounded. (Lisboa & Azevedo, 2022, para. 22)

The book *Volta pra Tua Terra: Uma Antologia Antirracista/Antifascista de Poetas Estrangeirxs em Portugal* (Go Back to Your Country: An Antiracist/Antifascist Anthology of Foreign Poets in Portugal), published in 2021 and organised by Brazilian poet and researcher Manuella Bezerra de Melo (2021) along with Wladimir Vaz, compiles 49 poems by immigrant authors living in Portugal. In the article "Volta Pra Tua Terra. A Memória do Portugal Colonizador Ainda Está Muito Viva" (Go Back to Your Country. The Memory of Colonising Portugal Is Still Very Much Alive); Cardoso, 2021), Bezerra de Melo highlights that the book's title is "a very emblematic phrase familiar to those who have experienced instances of xenophobia" (para. 4). However, she adds that "although it focuses on the social problems experienced by foreigners in Portugal, (...) it is not an anthology against Portuguese people" (para. 4), as it also conveys "not only the pain of the authors but also the pain of Portugal, because those who hurt are also being hurt; Portugal is also hurt" (para. 7).

Finally, while it is commonly stated in discourses promoting ideals of Lusophony that shared language unites more than it divides (as evidenced by the naming of the Camões — Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua (Camões — Institute for Cooperation and Language)), the issue of language barriers persists, even when the language seems to be the same. As Bezerra de Melo observes, "the issue of variation in the Portuguese language has been extensively addressed by Brazilian authors, particularly in terms of oppression, with language acting as a tool for segregation and hierarchical treatment" (Cardoso, 2021, para. 6).

The statements made by the authors above align perfectly with the growing body of academic literature on this topic, which has gained significant momentum since the early 21st century. Notable contributions in this regard include Cláudia Castelo's (1998)

work on Luso-tropicalism and Portuguese colonial ideology, Manuela Ribeiro Sanches' (2004) exploration of postcolonial interstitial spaces in Portugal, Fernando Arenas' (2005) analysis of the postcolonial globalisation of the Portuguese-speaking world, Miguel Vale de Almeida's (2008) study on Portugal's (post)colonial complex, and Elsa Peralta's (2011) examination of the construction of a fictitious identity for Portugal as one creole nation. As the Brazilian anthropologist Bela Feldman-Bianco (2001) observes, "since 1996, when the socialist government [of Portugal] reimagined a Lusophone ideology, European multicultural policies have been redefined in light of Gilberto Freyre's lusotropicalism" (p. 627). Feldman-Bianco (2001) further explains that by referring "implicitly to the plasticity and, by extension, the 'positive miscegenation' of Portugal", the Portuguese Government "deemed it essential to reassert the cultural and linguistic commonalities that unite Brazil and Portugal in the consolidation of a supranational Lusophone bloc led by Portugal, which also included the Portuguese-speaking African nations" (Feldman-Bianco, 2001, pp. 627–628). In this regard, Rosa Cabecinhas (2014) asserts that Lusophony was created as a strategy of "active forgetting" or "collective amnesia", which serves to obscure certain critical aspects of Portugal's history vis-à-vis its former colonies. Similarly, Adriano Freixo (2010) argues that the notion of a Lusophone identity, grounded in a cultural matrix of Lusophone or Portuguese origin, hinders the true consolidation of a Lusophone community. As Vítor de Sousa (2015) further emphasises, "there can be no Lusophony with Portugueseness, and it is even nonsensical to proceed with such an association" (p. X).

The conceptual "plasticity" of the term Lusophony — or perhaps its lusophone "fluidity" — has been notably reflected in Portuguese society, especially after the Portuguese President's recent remark that "there is no point in denying that there are, unfortunately, racist and xenophobic sectors among us" (*Presidente da República Contra o Racismo e a Xenofobia*, 2022). During the celebration of Brazil's bicentennial at Lisbon's São Bento Palace (the official residence of the Prime Minister), António Costa addressed the Brazilian community in Portugal attending the event in the adjacent gardens, stating that

> among the "many ways" of commemorating 200 years of independence, through "solemn and official acts and symbolic gestures", the celebration with this community was the "one that could not be overlooked" (...). Portugal "truly is home" for Brazilians who wish to live here. ("Portugal 'É Mesmo a Casa' dos Brasileiros que Aqui Queiram Viver", 2022, para. 3)

In the words of Costa, who attended the scheduled concerts alongside the Brazilian ambassador in Lisbon, Raimundo Carreiro Silva, and the President of Casa do Brasil, Ana Paula Costa, "much more often than the heart of D. Pedro, the hearts of all of us have travelled" ('Portugal 'É Mesmo a Casa' dos Brasileiros que Aqui Querem Viram Viver', 2022, para. 4), and "the way Brazilians have enriched the Portuguese language and made it easier to learn" (para. 2). In fact, in the same interview, Costa acknowledges Portugal's historical debt to Brazil but notably opts to focus on the euphemism of music and expressive culture, carefully avoiding the contentious topics of forgiveness and reparation towards Brazil:

> this is a challenge that we constantly face, but it is also our great wealth: the ability to get to know each other and to use a language that reinvents itself. *Portugal also owes a huge debt to the Brazilians* [emphasis added], particularly in the way they have enriched our language. They have enriched it with new words, but above all, with a beautiful musicality that we are very envious of not having. They have also made Portuguese much clearer for those who want to learn it. (para. 9)

Portugal–Brazil relations are shaped by a complex interplay of identity, memory, and power, reflecting both colonial and postcolonial tensions. Almeida (2004) and Feldman-Bianco (2001) investigate constructions of similarity and difference between Portuguese and Brazilians, while Cabecinhas (2007, 2014; Cabecinhas et al., 2006) examines social representations of history and national identities, emphasising how they either perpetuate or challenge hegemonies and address the naturalisation of racial discrimination. Freixo (2010) addresses Lusophony as an ambivalent concept, unveiling asymmetries in Portuguese-Brazilian relations, and Santos (2020) explores the difficulties faced by Brazilian students integrating into Portugal. Collectively, these studies highlight the need to reassess Luso-Brazilian relations, acknowledging historical ties and persistent tensions, in order to foster a more equitable intercultural dialogue.

4. TAP Air Portugal: Navigating Between Portugueseness and Lusophony

Commercial aircraft have gradually replaced ships and other means of transportation as the primary connectors between countries and continents. Beyond just carrying passengers, flag-bearing airlines with a colonial legacy are increasingly functioning as dynamic vehicles for transmitting cultural content — a showcase in constant motion.

Mobility studies, postcolonial studies, and intangible heritage studies offer an insightful lens for examining metaphors of travel and encounters. In this regard, Urry (2000), along with Cresswell (2006), revisits the metaphor of the colonial ship — a living, micro-cultural, and micro-political system in motion, crucial to the development of the hybrid culture of "The Black Atlantic", as described by English researcher Paul Gilroy (1993). Just as Gilroy views ships as cultural and political entities that facilitate convergence within the Atlantic world, we can also perceive modern aircraft on transatlantic routes as mediators of cultural productions and categories that hold significant value in the exchange of cultural and political relations. In line with Featherstone et al. (2005), it is essential to identify the diverse sites through which national belonging persists. While it may seem that national identity is waning in an age marked by de-traditionalisation, informalisation, and global media, Featherstone et al. (2005) contend that, in reality, it is being redistributed across a broader spatial scale. In this view, the epistemological and ontological influence of the nation has not diminished; hegemonic efforts to fix networks of national meaning endure, and the creation of identities continues to shape connections through an ongoing global nodal network.

Indeed, from TAP's synchronic and diachronic marketing efforts, a blended and even reversed sense of belonging arises — TAP crews fly to Brazil (or Cape Verde) as though

they are flying home. They are highly skilled in navigating the vast Atlantic expanse and are prepared to assist others in discovering the places and cultures that now constitute the Lusophone world. Also, in the new millennium, following significant political events such as the establishment of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries in Belém in 1996 and the Lisbon *World Expo '98*, TAP has become an essential tool for connecting and uniting the emotionally charged Portuguese-speaking communities, with the cultural dimension of Lusophony emerging not only as an economically relevant factor (Pereira, 2012) but also as a strategic priority (cf., Lopes, 2011).

In this context, Brazil occupies a key position, distinct from the other Portuguese-speaking destinations once colonised by Portugal and to which TAP operates. Due to its hybrid foundation, blending both Portuguese and Brazilian influences, and its 200 years of political independence, Brazil stands apart from the other former colonies. In a symbolic complementarity, Brazil did not come second; on a global scale, it could even be seen as having come first. As the Brazilian ambassador Mário Vilalva noted during his tenure in Lisbon, it is the giant Brazil that strengthens both Portugal and Lusophony within the European context (Ferreira, 2016).

As previously mentioned, the corporate anthem "De Braços Abertos" (With Arms Wide Open) positions TAP as a mediator of national culture and Portuguese values — evident in the metaphorical embrace that recurs across various events, evoking emotions of closeness, connection, friendship, or regard. This fosters and sustains the Portuguese postcolonial and/or diasporic dimension symbolically — sometimes emphasising Lusotropical, bilateral, or even Lusophone elements (in the transnational context of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries).

Over the past 15 years, TAP has conveyed universal values such as cooperation, linguistic connections, cultural affinities, human warmth, and respect — symbolically represented by the embrace ("with arms wide open"). These values appear to suggest a gradual overcoming of the painful memories shaped by colonialism in recent history — an act of forgiving the past and embracing the future, perhaps exemplified by the image of Christ the Redeemer in various TAP marketing campaigns. This shift in approach has been crucial, not only in redefining TAP's market value as a global player in an increasingly competitive industry but also in encouraging the Portuguese themselves to reconsider their cultural and historical heritage within a transnational framework.

TAP has championed universal values such as cooperation and respect, suggesting a reconciliation of colonial memories through the metaphor of the embrace. While this strategy appears benevolent, it prompts questions regarding the negotiation of postcolonial relations within corporate narratives. By prioritising reconciliation, TAP positions itself as a bridge between the colonial past and a harmonious future, which risks oversimplifying historical tensions and could be seen as a form of subtle cultural neocolonialism. The concept of Lusophony, as employed by TAP, may reflect what Baumann and Gingrich (2004) describe as a "strategy of encompassment", in which the other is integrated into the self from a position of power. This hierarchical and exclusionary process can sustain an ostensibly peaceful coexistence, permitting contradictory discourses to emerge

depending on the context. Almeida (2008) attributes this ambivalence to institutional conservatism, describing it as a reluctance to offer alternative narratives for national identity. In the case of TAP, the institutional discourse serves a commercial purpose, engaging diverse audiences by referencing Portugueseness or Lusophony, depending on the situation.

In summary, this analysis suggests that seemingly innocuous representations of cultural practices can expose underlying tensions, creating intermediary spaces where old imperial tendencies and neoliberal ideals intersect. TAP's cultural production continues to reflect imperial sentiments, as its discursive, auditory, and visual elements remain deeply connected to historical power structures. However, one might question the extent to which TAP's semantic reconfigurations over the past 15 years (the focus of this analysis) have contributed to the decolonisation of minds, culture, and society more broadly.

In search of a conclusive answer, alongside Castellano (2018), this analysis aims to position TAP — more than just a "national equity"[8] (cf. Coelho, 2006, p. 60) — as a kind of narrator-curator that navigates both the legacies and the dilemmas of colonialism today. On a macro level, TAP is "clearly in the process of negotiating the myth and grandeur of the discoveries to 'mirror a democratic and multicultural Portugal of today'", and various narrative elements "reveal evidence of postcolonial thinking" (Castellano, 2018, p. 104). At the same time, TAP seems to show some anxiety about portraying a 'different' Portugal — one that is cosmopolitan and modern rather than traditional, mixed rather than white, Lusophone and transatlantic rather than peripheral and Southern European — its cultural marketing efforts still forge an idea of modernity and interculturality. Meanwhile, these efforts echo aspects of a lusotropicalist discourse, seemingly avoiding direct engagement with explanations of the colonial past, the return movements that followed, or even the significance of the journeys made by Lusophone populations from former colonies who chose Portugal as their new home. From an academic perspective, and in line with recent decolonial approaches to flag carriers (cf., Paludi, 2017), this can be seen as a subjective construction or even a distortion of history, particularly concerning the concept of Lusotropicalism — the notion of Portuguese imperial exceptionalism — which is never explicitly acknowledged as such. Following Martins (2015), the expectation is that Lusophony will increasingly be experienced as lived interculturality; in other words, it should evolve from being merely a promise to becoming a genuine journey.

Translation: Anabela Delgado

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[8] In other words, "national capital", which may refer to the assets or (economic or financial) wealth belonging to a nation.

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