

National identity in the presidential addresses of 10 June, between 1977/1978 and 2006 – creation, transformation, and metamorphosis

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ABSTRACT: This article focuses on 29 (of a total of 45) presidential addresses delivered over the first thirty years of the post 25th of April democratic era, on the National Day of Portugal on June 10th. These speeches were given during the administrations of the following Portuguese presidents, who each served two terms between 1976 and 2006: Antonio Ramalho Eanes, Mário Soares, and Jorge Sampaio. The addresses are analyzed in terms of identity categories (Thiesse, 2000) which the speakers used when they refer to national identity. With this analysis I intend to determine which references to historical moments, illustrious figures, national heroes, and mentalities contribute to the construction of a collective ideology in which the Portuguese people can visualize themselves. On the suggestion of the organizers of this conference this study will be articulated with the concepts of creation, transformation, and metamorphosis of national identity over the course of the first 30 years of democracy in Portugal.

Keywords: National identity, presidential addresses, history, colonialism, discoveries

1 THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS ARTICLE

Since political speeches tend to be representative of different social groups, I thought that it would be interesting to analyze a series of presidential addresses to understand how we Portuguese see ourselves and our history.

In this article I will offer the reader an analysis of 29 of the 45 presidential addresses delivered during the solemn ceremonies of 10 June between 1977 and 2006, and I will order them into three categories of identity, based on Thiesse's definition (Thiesse, 2000). These speeches span the mandates of António Ramalho Eanes, Mário Soares and Jorge Sampaio, and have as a common thread the concepts of creation, transformation and metamorphosis, (as suggested by the organization of this conference).

Other addresses delivered by Aníbal Cavaco Silva and Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa between 2007 and 2022 will be part of a more extensive chapter in my doctoral thesis. Nonetheless, I believe that a reflection of the theoretical debates about creation, transformation and metamorphosis is not compromised using part of a common corpus of data.

Assuming that the modern meaning of the term “national identity”, which is based on the idea that national identity is an artificial creation of

a political nature – between 1976 and 2006, a period of general reconstruction in Portugal in the years following the end of the dictatorship - what categories of identity were mentioned in the presidential speeches and what transformations and metamorphoses occurred in those years throughout the democratic era?

2 NATIONAL IDENTITIES – A STUDY OF THE LITERATURE

When I began studying the literature related to national identity, I wanted to understand the different dimensions of the concept, to locate it chronologically and to find a definition to use as the basis for my investigation.

There is a great profusion of studies written on this topic, so I felt inclined to focus on specific aspects of the concept that would help me examine the contents of the presidential addresses, i.e., categories, characteristics, and materials, commonly accepted as defining factors of an identity.

Chronologically speaking, despite divergences about the origin of the notion of national identity, my starting point was based on the compilation and conclusion shared by Ana Cristina Gil:

os autores dividem-se em duas posições antagónicas essenciais: os que fazem remontar as raízes da nação à época medieval (Anthony Smith, Guy Hermet, Josep Llobera) e os que consideram a nação um fenómeno estritamente moderno, cuja origem é atribuída quer à Revolução Francesa (Hans Khon, Jean-Luc Chabot), quer à Revolução Industrial (Ernest Gellner), quer à comunicação de massas (Benedict Anderson). (Gil, 2015, p.23)

Thiesse belongs to the latter group, arguing that:

Os primeiros exemplos datam do século XVIII: antes desta data não existia nenhuma nação na acepção moderna da palavra, isto é, política. (Thiesse, 2000)

I embrace the more modern interpretation of national identity as a political concept; even though the studies that were used had a sociological, historic, anthropological, or social psychology focus, there is clear evidence of the artificial and political nature of national identity, as seen in Thiesse and Smith (below):

Anthony Smith claims that:

independentemente do que possa ser aquilo que entendemos por identidade «nacional» implica uma consciência de comunidade política. (Smith, 1997).

Moreover, the political sense of the term is the one that is more pertinent to the object of this study, not only because of the political character of the analyzed text, but also because of the repercussions that it may have in other areas of society and of knowledge.

It is essential to think of the concept of governance, that is, when we congregate as a nation that is governed by common principles, in the same geographical space, there is a need for identifying with a collective ideology.

Anne-Marie Thiesse categorically maintains that the idea of nation arises in an artificial and premeditated way:

O verdadeiro nascimento de uma nação é o momento em que um punhado de indivíduos declara a sua existência e pretende prová-lo. (Thiesse, 2000).

José Manuel Sobral insists on the unnatural nature of the concept because it is a *product of human action* (Sobral, 2012).

Estas identidades têm alguns séculos, mas não a longevidade multimilenar que alguns lhe quiseram conferir. São produto da acção humana que, a partir da formação de uma entidade política – um Estado medieval –, constrói lentamente um colectivo diferenciado. (Sobral, 2012).

Referring to the Estado Novo and the construction of national identity, Luis Cunha mentions the

materials with which identities are made, particularly history, in line with the thinking of Maria Isabel João (João, 2006), who also refers to the role of history in the construction of the images and representations of Portugal.

Para se conseguir uma unidade, para se (re)descobrir a verdadeira natureza e para se orientar a nação para o seu destino singular é necessário que a verdade se mostre tão evidente e incontestável que se torne coisa natural. Dos materiais com que se faz essa verdade sobressai a história – representação de um passado exemplar –, a alma do povo – efabulação de traços de carácter tomados por imperecíveis – e a vocação imperial – expressão de um génio civilizador e fautor de mundos. (Cunha, 2001)

Regarding the political sense of the term “national identity”, it is important to determine the categories that define it. I thus turn to the words of Anthony Smith:

recordações históricas comuns, mitos, símbolos e tradições. (...) Território histórico, comunidade político-legal, igualdade político-legal dos membros e ideologia e cultura cívica comuns; são estas as componentes do modelo ocidental de nação. (Smith, 1997)

In contrast to Smith, Thiesse’s “Ikea system” enumerates the following categories of identity construction:

uma história que estabelece uma continuidade com os ilustres passados, uma série de heróis modelos das virtudes nacionais, uma língua, monumentos culturais, um folclore, locais eleitos e uma paisagem típica, uma determinada mentalidade, representações oficiais – hino e bandeira – e identificações pitorescas – trajes, especialidades culinárias ou um animal emblemático. (Thiesse, 2000)

Conversely, Guy Hermet claims that:

nacionalismo típico dos grandes Estados europeus», fá-lo assente na premissa de que os «traços» de cada Estado se baseiam em “(...) três iniciativas políticas bem simultâneas: a cidadania efectiva, através do sufrágio universal, o desenvolvimento de um sistema de escolas públicas e o serviço militar obrigatório, particularmente em tempo de guerra (Hermet, 1997).

Despite the different terms used, (Thiesse’s «categories», Hermet’s «characteristics», and Cunha’s «materials»), there is unanimity about the idea that the construction of national identity is created in an artificial way and is based on different elements that

characterize a group of people concentrated in a same area – an area delineated by political, linguistic, cultural, military, historic and geographic factors.

So, if there is general consensus among the aforementioned authors in regard to the artificial construction of national identity, why did I choose to do a study based on Thiesse's "categories"? Well, the reason is to introduce an idea that I think is very pertinent to this study: that national identity is associated with "historic continuity", with "heróis modelos das virtudes nacionais" e com a de uma "mentalidade" característica (Thiesse, 2000).

3 WHY THE CHOICE OF ADDRESSES OF THE COMMEMORATIONS ON 10 JUNE?

Considering the obvious fact that the presidents of the Portuguese Republic give addresses in different occasions, but that the contents of these speeches are not all relevant to the subject under analysis, we had to find a common thread from 1976 to 2022.

These presidential addresses were chosen because they were delivered on the National Day of Portugal, which is a commemoration of both the poet Luis de Camões and the Portuguese Communities and are a perfect example of a celebration of something that unites a group of citizens who belong to the same nation.

In the words of president Eanes:

o Dia de Portugal, de Camões e das Comunidades Portuguesas, é uma oportunidade renovada para um exame da forma como se processa a nossa caminhada colectiva, bem como para o reencontro em torno dos valores que cimentam a identidade nacional. (Eanes, 1985).

A selection was made of the presidential addresses delivered on the Portuguese National Day, since there are three sorts of emphases: speeches intended for the armed forces, speeches for the communities, and speeches for the formal sessions. As the latter are directed to a wider section of the public, they were the typology chosen for the study.

In what way did I organize the information obtained from these addresses?

The addresses were organized in three elementary categories of national identity creation, as described by Thiesse, and listed below.

Apart from looking for signs of national identity creation in these elementary categories, I established how these categories are emphasized throughout the chronological period under study (1976 – 2006), and whether or not there was any transformation and/or metamorphosis.

4 ANALYSIS OF THE ADDRESSES FROM 1977/1978 TO 2006

Interestingly, between the 25th of April 1974, and 10th June 1978 there were no big commemorations for the National Day of Portugal; the first big commemoration took place in 1978, two years after the president took office. During those first years a few discrete events were held, such as President Ramalho Eanes' visit to the city of Guarda in 1977 where he met with several communities of emigrants. At that time there was still a strong memory in this region of the former commemorations of June 10th held during the Salazar regime, a day also known as *Dia da Raça* ("Day of the [Portuguese] Race").

It was not until 1978 that the commemoration recovered some of its importance. That year the district of Portalegre was chosen for the celebrations, as it was an interior region with a high percentage of poverty and depopulation and was the area most affected by emigration and internal migration in continental Portugal.

Using the "Ikea system" as a caricature of the creation of a national identity, I adopted three of Thiesse's ten identity categories:

1. History in continuity with illustrious pasts;
2. Model heroes of national virtues;
3. Mentality.

I established what the illustrious pasts and the model heroes mentioned by each of the presidents were. Both concepts can refer to individuals or to collectives, such as the recurring references to the Discoveries and an evocation of the Discoverers that compares them to the people, as if the entire population had got on board the caravels, thus converting a part (the hero) into a whole (the people).

4.1 *Creation of a national identity – Ramalho Eanes*

Before embarking on the analysis of the presidential addresses, I must point out that all the excerpts of speeches included in points 4.1., 4.2. and 4.3 were selected because they corresponded to the categories described in point 4.

The idea that I wish to explore regarding the creation of a Portuguese national identity is that it arose as a reaction to the identity that had been promoted by the propaganda of the Estado Novo in previous decades. The transition from a dictatorship to a democracy entailed a new political responsibility. There was a new desire to redefine the identity of a people and reconstruct the versions of "illustrious pasts" and "model heroes", and consequently, break away from former perspectives, narratives and reflections about Portuguese history.

The excerpts presented herein are presented in chronological order and are not extensive. In some

cases, they are compared with the ideas of one of the academics that contributed most to the creation of national identity during the Estado Novo – Gilberto Freyre.

In 1977, during his visit to Guarda, in what was an official but not yet very noteworthy commemoration, president António Ramalho Eanes said:

Nascemos [os portugueses] do entrecruzar de vários povos e de civilizações diversas e disso herdamos este nosso jeito de nos fundirmos com outras gentes, sem ambições colectivas e duradouras de domínio (Eanes, 1977).

Thirty-seven years earlier Freyre had claimed that the Portuguese were the most Christian colonizers, the most benevolent in the way they interacted with those whom they considered inferior, and that:

[o colonizador] Dominou as populações nativas, misturando-se com elas e amando com gosto as mulheres de cor. (Freyre, 1940).

Despite substituting the verbs “colonize and mix” with “merge and intermingle”, Eanes perpetuates the idea of amiable miscegenation, and underscores the absence of ambition to dominate; Freyre had maintained years earlier that this was one of the human solutions that had been the “mais significativas do nosso tempo” por promover, a longo prazo, “a democratização de sociedades humanas através da mistura de raças, do cruzamento, da miscigenação.” (Freyre, 1940)

Apart from mitigating the violence of colonization Eanes, by omission, transmits the idea that the colonies were dissolved naturally, ignoring the struggles for independence that lasted from 1961 to 1974 in certain African territories under Portuguese occupation. According to Eanes, this continuity with illustrious pasts can be seen in the Portuguese people today, having inherited that capacity for multicultural socialization.

Eanes alleges in the same address that:

o nosso país teve o raro privilégio de se construir no diálogo com a humanidade (...) a nossa personalidade cultural, como unidade orgânica, é o produto do intercâmbio e do confronto com outros povos e outras culturas. (Eanes, 1977)

Likewise, Freyre asserted that:

[a mestiçagem] baseia-se num acontecimento social ou cultural que é a negação do purismo étnico” e que os portugueses criaram a identidade “lusó-afrasiático-brasileira” (Freyre, 1940).

This is a Lusocentric perspective, and I deliberately cite the concept of Lusocentrism because I consider that it is separate from Eurocentrism, as referred to in

Araújo (2015). The perspective of the history of the Discoveries is largely influenced by Lusocentric motives, and therefore the Portuguese identity was, according to Eanes and Freyre, inherited a unique multicultural heritage, perpetuating the mixing of races carried out by their ancestors.

Without refuting this multicultural heritage, I question the use of the terms “dialogue” and “organic unity” in this context onde são referidos anteriormente?,

as they do not reflect the violent reality of colonialism - the subjugation of people, lack of freedom, forced labor, etc.

Also in 1977, in Guarda, Ramalho Eanes states (in line with the mentality and model heroes of national virtues) that:

[Camões] a sua vida e a sua obra são a síntese admirável das vicissitudes, da grandeza, do génio com que nos afirmámos como nação, e o exemplo da aventura e do desprendimento com que nos lançámos na tarefa de abrir, aos povos da terra, os caminhos do seu mútuo conhecimento. (Eanes, 1977).

Again, there is a connection with Freyre, when he says that:

o português, em tempo nenhum, um povo esquivo à aventura intelectual ou à experimentação científica e conformado ou satisfeito com a rotina.

Freyre also states that:

o bom sucesso da obra portuguesa de desbravamento de mares, de descobrimento de terras e de organização de colónias; pela obra lusitana de alargamento antes suave que violento da civilização cristã na América, no Oriente, na África (...) (Freyre, 1940)

During the first official ceremony of the June 10th commemoration in Portalegre (1978), Eanes dedicated the initial message to Portuguese emigrants, establishing a parallel between the maritime expansion and the diaspora of the 20th century:

Tal como em Quinhentos, o português continua a receber e a assimilar as qualidades alheias (...) Ainda hoje povo algum se habitua, tão bem como o nosso, à variedade dos climas, das raças e dos costumes novos. Mas o português continua também a transmitir humanidade própria. Nunca nos limitámos, aliás, a receber influências das sociedades diferenciadas com as quais entrávamos em contacto. (Eanes, 1978)

There is a clear attempt to create a line of “continuidade com os ilustres passados” (Thiesse, 2000),

by comparing the seafarers of the maritime expansion with the emigrants of the 20th century. It is also evident in “heróis modelos das virtudes nacionais” (Thiesse, 2000), discernible in the exaltation of the Portuguese’ capacity to adapt during both the aforementioned moments in history, and a series of other qualities, such as having “humanidade própria” (Eanes, 1978).

In both points we can observe a parallelism with Freyre when he claims that the effects were the same on the “Metropolis” and on “the colonies”, for it is “ai que se apreciam as manifestações mais fortes dessa admirável unidade de sentimento e cultura.” (Freyre, 1940).

The following year (1978), in Leiria Eanes again compared the work of Camões with the lives of the Portuguese both in Portugal and abroad, underscoring once more a series of values that determined our identity, according to categories 2 and 3, as listed below:

Hoje, quatrocentos anos depois, a sua [Camões] obra está viva. Não tanto porque os eruditos o estudam, mas porque o nosso povo, na sua luta diária, na sua terra ou longe dela, continua a obra que ele cantou, continua a afirmar os princípios de tolerância, de convivência, de abertura e de respeito pelos outros. (Eanes, 1980)

Likewise, in Freyre we see that:

A acção portuguesa no Mundo (...) se caracteriza pela disposição aventureira do homem luso para confraternizar franciscanamente com o novo exótico na Natureza e nas culturas tropicais, sem que o confraternizador abandone o gosto pelas coisas familiares, quotidianas (Freyre, 1940).

In 1984, the year of the tenth anniversary of the 25th of April, Eanes states:

Historicamente, foi sempre no Atlântico que desenhámos o horizonte das nossas ambições. Assim encontrámos saída para a crise dos fins do século XIV, assim verdadeiramente começámos o ciclo imperial português, que persistiu mesmo depois da condenação dos impérios coloniais pela história, e que viríamos a encerrar há dez anos, em 1974. Neste percurso empolgante, de ganhos e de perdas, por mares e territórios, a independência do Brasil lançou-nos económica, psicológica e politicamente numa crise para a qual ainda tínhamos a alternativa do império africano. Foi este o último sonho imperial ao nosso alcance, e que uma vez mais, não soubemos aproveitar” (Eanes, 1984)

Besides referring to the imperial past as a memory of the fulfillment of Portuguese ambition, and at the same time using it as a synonym for the resolution of

national crises, Eanes speaks of losing the colonies, first Brazil and then the African countries, as a venture that the Portuguese did not know how to manage, seeming to deplore the final outcome.

In the same address he claims that the main qualities of the Portuguese are confirmed by history, which led me again to interpret these values in light of the expansion and colonization process:

Uma leitura correcta da nossa história revela que, no melhor da sua tradição, Portugal se identifica com valores de solidariedade social, de humanismo de costumes e de respeito pela pluralidade de convicções que fundamentam as modernas instituições democráticas. (Eanes, 1984).

Eight years after president Eanes began his first mandate, he reiterated that the national identity was synonymous with humanism and cooperation, an assertion which he would repeat throughout his time in office. He pointed out that the qualities of the Portuguese people included hard work, deliberation, serenity, sacrifice and creative spirit, as well as solidarity, universality and capacity to adapt. All these characteristics are frequently evoked as traits that the Portuguese had demonstrated long before, at the time of the Discoveries, and could do so again.

Between 1978 and 1986, Eanes used the following words to describe Portugal’s bond with the colonized populations: fraternal relationship, lives in common, exchange, contact, merging, dialogue, cooperation with other peoples and bonds. In my opinion, all these features indicate a simplification and mitigation of reality because they omit any mention of violence. Eanes portrayed a national identity based on the generosity and humanity of the Portuguese as colonizers, a theory that was also propagated by Freyre.

Throughout the ten years of Eanes’ presidency the model heroes/illustrious pasts referred to in his addresses included Camões, the Discoverers, and the Portuguese people (as part of the group of Discoverers). Camões emerges as the voice of history, but he is also depicted as adventurous and courageous – the archetype of the 16th century man.

In Eanes’ addresses the Discoveries and Portuguese colonization are often portrayed as an “exciting trajectory”, as a time that reflects the essence of being Portuguese, of a singular destiny and of Portugal’s universality.

There was no mention of the impact of colonization on other populations, nor any condemnation of the violence that occurred during that time. When Eanes referred to modern crises and the importance of the Portuguese’ response, he evoked the *prowess*, *courage* and *genius* once demonstrated in the *exciting course* of the Discoveries.

Portugal's national identity was thus rooted in the spirit of the 16th century, in the figure of Camões and in the values demonstrated during the Discoveries.

Therefore, I believe that during Eanes' first two presidential mandates there was no real creation of national identity, but merely a recycling and reutilization of certain categories that had been used for propaganda during the Estado Novo, as evidenced in Freyre's words.

4.2 Creation of a new national identity – Mário Soares

Twelve years had passed since the 25th of April when Mário Soares initiated his first mandate, ten of which had been under the presidency of Ramalho Eanes.

I analyzed ten addresses delivered by Mário Soares during both of his terms, from 1986 to 1996. Some of these included important historical landmarks, such as Portugal's entry into the EEC and the twentieth anniversary of the 25 of April, in 1994.

The same line of analysis was used, choosing passages that corresponded with the aforementioned categories and contemplating whether the contents represented a moment of national identity creation.

In 1986 Mário Soares' first address as president delivered in Évora at the June 10th commemorations coincided with Portugal's entrance into the EEC. In that speech he claimed that "Temos uma cultura multissecular que levou a Europa ao vasto Mundo." (Soares, 1986). He also mentioned the number of Portuguese language speakers worldwide, and how that fact unites us and makes us responsible within the new European Community, emphasizing the heritage, from a continuity point of view, of a culture that was spread across the world.

The following year (1987) in Lisbon, in his second address on June 10th, Mário Soares stated that the discoveries were:

assombrosa empresa [que] foi concebida, preparada, realizada e cumprida por antepassados nossos, portugueses como nós." (Soares, 1987),

Again, a line of continuity was established between the Discoverers and the Portuguese people of the 20th century.

In the same year (1987) Soares spoke of the Discoveries as:

extraordinária acção de todo um povo, cientificamente preparada, executada com prodígios de heroísmo, de determinação e de fé, foi levada a cabo com poucos recursos, mas com espírito ecuménico, com ardente e emocionada curiosidade, com sentido de disponibilidade e de amor pelo diferente, o outro, o estranho, o desconhecido. A estes traços que nos definem

o carácter de povo aliaram-se o sentido da unidade nacional, o sacrifício, o arrojo, a acção missionária, a coragem, a persistência. Em versos de pungente beleza, Camões revela-nos esse contraditório e estranho sentimento de quem abandona a Pátria e os seus em busca do ignorado e do novo (Soares, 1987)

Apart from finding reference to historical continuity, as current heirs of that past, to the virtues and mentality - characterized by curiosity, sacrifice, audacity, courage and persistence - and to the heroes embodied by the Discoverers - as identity categories, we could repeat his words:

disposição aventureira do homem luso"; ou "em tempo nenhum um povo esquivo à aventura intelectual ou à experimentação. (Freyre, 1940)

This citation appears to echo some of Eanes' speeches when he referred to the universality, generosity, curiosity and humanism of the Portuguese people, associating these qualities with the legacy of the Discoveries.

In Covilhã in 1988, in line with the messianic idea that the Portuguese had a destiny to fulfill, Soares states that:

aos portugueses coube, ao longo do tempo, essa tarefa tão natural e humana de aceitar e fundir raças e civilizações diferentes. Com efeito, a experiência portuguesa foi sempre de grande universalismo, caldeado na compreensão do que é diferente e na tolerância por costumes e crenças muito diversos, com os quais soube estabelecer fecundas formas de convivência. (Soares, 1988)

This statement is not only in line with historical continuity and a typical characterization of "being Portuguese", but it also aligns with the discourse of the previous president. It includes the verb "merge", thereby downplaying the violence of colonization and ignoring the other's perspective of the past, emphasizing that national identity is closely linked to the Discoveries and to colonization.

A year later, in Ponta Delgada, Soares asserts that:

Com o mesmo espírito com que desbravámos o mar ignoto (...) temos de ser capazes de responder aos novos desafios — o desenvolvimento nacional, a integração europeia, um novo e fraterno relacionamento com os países de expressão oficial portuguesa". (Soares, 1989).

A comparison between the past and the present is made repeatedly by referring to the period of the Discoveries, extolling the feats of the Discoverers and underscoring the responsibility of the Portuguese

to continue those feats; they were considered the best indicators of the grandiosity of the Portuguese identity.

In 1991 in Tomar Mário Soares says:

Olhando a janela manuelina, do Convento de Cristo, onde parece sublimar-se o melhor da aventura portuguesa, ao longo dos séculos, (...) terra de liberdade, de paz, de justiça social e de progresso, Pátria aberta ao Mundo. (Soares, 1991).

In Sintra, two years later Soares reiterated that connection with the:

esses descobridores de então, em que nos reve-mos com tanto orgulho, convido-vos, portugueses, a que partamos de novo para essa bela aventura que é tornar Portugal uma terra de justiça e felicidade para todos, aberta ao Mundo e às grandes causas do progresso e da generosidade. (Soares, 1993)

Worth noting in this last speech is the insistence on continuity, the correlation of an action synonymous with *justice and happiness for all* with the Discoveries, and the reference to the Discoveries as an adventure, reminiscent of Eanes' words.

Also in 1993 Mário Soares commented on the fact that the Portuguese managed to remain:

fiéis à nossa vocação atlântica e aos laços que soubemos estabelecer com tantos Povos de quem nos consideramos irmãos (Soares, 1993)

Using the same adjectives as Eanes to portray the Portuguese people and in perpetuity with the Discoveries, Soares stated that:

O melhor que temos — sempre o pensei — é a nossa gente, e quanto mais humilde melhor! A sua qualidade, a sua generosidade, a sua inteligência e adaptabilidade, a sua capacidade de sacrifício, o seu poder de trabalho. (Soares, 1993)

A year later in Coimbra, reiterating the connection of the Portuguese with the *adventure of the Discoveries*, Soares reminisces:

Camões, símbolo da identidade e da aventura portuguesa no Mundo, certos de que a lição da sua vida e da sua obra continua actual e contém ensinamentos que voltam a inspirar-nos no presente.” (Soares, 1994)

As we can see, Soares uses the same adjectives as Eanes to list the qualities of the Portuguese. Like his predecessor, he refers to heroes/illustrious pasts, to Camões and the Discoverers (whom he mentions the most over the 10 years of his mandates). But Soares also refers once to the following prominent Portuguese figures: Miguel Torga, António Sérgio, Oliveira

Martins, Jaime Cortesão, Alexandre Herculano, Padre António Vieira, Almeida Garret and Fernando Pessoa.

In his references to the period of colonization, he uses the words: ties, relationship and fraternal bond to describe the relationship between the Portuguese and the colonized populations.

The verbs that were most repeated by both Eanes and Soares when referring to the Portuguese' relationship with the colonized populations are: fraternize, coexist, relate to, contact, dialogue, interact, cooperate and tolerate.

On the other hand, the nouns that were most used by both presidents to characterize both the essence of being Portuguese and the Portuguese presence in the world were: solidarity, generosity, humanism, plurality, serenity, adaptability, universality, hard work, deliberation, capability, sacrifice, prowess, courage, heroism, determination, curiosity, audacity, persistence, tolerance and coexistence.

4.3 Transformation of the National Identity – Jorge Sampaio

The two presidential mandates of Jorge Sampaio, between 1996 and 2006, were marked by three important events: the creation of the CPLP (Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries) in 1996, the Expo '98 World Fair hosted in Lisbon, and the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the 25th of April in 2004.

I examined two speeches from 1996, one delivered in Lagos and another broadcast by RTP. The former was on the occasion of the commemoration of June - 10th, and the latter was Jorge Sampaio's first official message as president of the Republic.

In the Lagos address Jorge Sampaio followed the format of the two previous presidents, exalting the traits of the Portuguese as the promoters of contact between different populations, referring to the *relationship between peoples*.

A Lagos está associada uma das mais significativas páginas da nossa história, aquela que rasgou novos horizontes à civilização ocidental e que permitiu que outros povos e outras culturas se relacionassem entre si (Sampaio, 1996).

However, the content of the address that was broadcast on RTP showed important changes, and focused mainly on the cultural, linguistic and political richness that would ensue with the creation of the CPLP and from the subsequent responsibility for Portugal.

Vamos constituir agora a Comunidade de Povos de Língua Portuguesa, que contará com 200 milhões de seres humanos, e que temos a obrigação de considerar como um desígnio estratégico fundamental, tornando-a realidade viva de cooperação e força activa de afirmação.” (Sampaio, 1996)

In Chaves, in 1997, Jorge Sampaio diverted from the tone of previous presidential addresses commemorating June 10th and introduced a critical view of the past.

Pertença a uma comunidade que faz do sentido do passado impulso para o futuro e que retém da história a lição válida para os nossos dias, considerando-a com espírito crítico e ânimo prospectivo. (Sampaio, 1997)

Also in 1997, Jorge Sampaio talked of freedom, dignity, respect, civility – all this applied to the relationship we should have with the Other instead of the relationship we had with the colonized peoples:

Pertença a uma comunidade de mulheres e homens livres, que sabem que a liberdade é o fundamento da dignidade de um povo e a condição do seu progresso. Partilha que é participação, diálogo, tolerância, civismo, respeito pelos outros e pelas suas diferenças.” (Sampaio, 1997)

That same year Sampaio introduced a new way of seeing the national identity based on new identity categories, such as heritage and natural resources:

Um dos modos mais valiosos e activos de praticar um patriotismo moderno é empenharmo-nos na valorização dos portugueses e na afirmação da nossa cultura, da língua, do património, dos nossos recursos naturais. (Sampaio, 1997)

Until then no presidential address had ever tackled the issue of the other's perspective of the history of expansion and colonization, and the violent implications of the Discoveries and of colonization on the lives of other peoples. But from 1997 onwards we begin to see a transformation in the content of the June 10th presidential speeches when Jorge Sampaio spoke of the necessity of adopting a new approach to history. In 1998 he condemned the lack of critical vision in the exaltations of past glories in a speech he gave in Lisbon:

O regime da Ditadura procurou instrumentalizar as Descobertas ao objectivo de legitimação do conceito de império colonial. Construiu uma interpretação única da história que pretendeu fixar para sempre. O espírito com que nós comemoramos o papel de Portugal no movimento de abertura de horizontes geográficos e de horizontes do conhecimento dos séculos XV e XVI não é o da mera exaltação de glórias passadas. Move-nos o desejo de valorização da história junto das gerações mais jovens. Sobreretudo, acreditamos que a história é sempre susceptível de novos ângulos de abordagem, e que cada época acrescenta novos temas e perspectivas ao conhecimento que sobre o passado recebeu de épocas anteriores. (Sampaio, 1998)

Also in 1998, in an especially symbolic address during the inaugural ceremonies of Expo '98, Jorge Sampaio mentioned the need to preserve a memory of the past, comparing it with the view of the Other.

A riqueza das nossas comemorações reside na possibilidade que hoje existe de comparar o olhar com que vimos os outros com o olhar com que os outros nos viram, e de compreender que esse novo mundo que demos ao Mundo tem também uma memória desse encontro de civilizações. Essa memória é tão importante como património cultural e tão decisiva para a compreensão da História como a nossa própria memória. E que uma e outra é que são a história da nossa História. Esta é a visão humanista que importa preservar. Hoje, aliás, as nossas sociedades são multiculturais e multiétnicas. Por isso, é tão importante cultivar uma visão aberta da diversidade da história como cimento de uma cultura de tolerância. (Sampaio, 1998)

This address is especially important because it is one of the June 10th speeches that address the need to review how we look at history, and it is the first to talk about the multicultural and multiethnic reality of today's societies. It mentions the importance of all of society to feel included in how we view and narrate history. Nonetheless, the word Sampaio used to refer to the contacts initiated with the colonization process is the euphemistic expression “encontro de civilizações”.

In Angra do Heroísmo, in 2003 Jorge Sampaio continued to refute the tendency of previous addresses, and he introduces a critical tone regarding all references to the grandiose past:

Durante décadas, acreditou-se que o culto da história e a evocação das grandezas do passado eram suficientes para alimentar esse vínculo. (Sampaio, 2003)

The following year in Bragança, during the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the revolution, Jorge Sampaio, like his predecessors, referred to Portuguese universalism, establishing a bridge between the universalism of the Discoveries and the entrance into the European Union. Although Sampaio focused on the same topic as Eanes and Soares, he presented a slight variation, focusing on universalism in a European context and not universalism in the colonial past.

Olhando para trás, temos a impressão de que os Portugueses criaram Portugal para depois alargarem o Ocidente e a seguir irem em busca da unidade do Mundo. Esse traço permanece como parte integrante da nossa identidade e justifica também, numa linha de continuidade histórica, o nosso empenho na construção da Europa, que é o continente do universalismo. Está aqui a prova da visão dos Portugueses. (Sampaio, 2004)

A year later, in Guimarães, Sampaio upholds a new way of thinking as a country and as a Portuguese citizen, based on the CPLP allegiance:

Conseguimos, para lá de todos os obstáculos, estar ao lado de Angola, de Moçambique, de Cabo Verde, de São Tomé e Príncipe, da Guiné-Bissau para fortalecer a independência desses novos Estados, garantir a autodeterminação democrática de Timor-Leste, e fomos capazes de reunir todas as nações irmãs, incluindo o Brasil, para participar na formação da Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa. (Sampaio, 2005)”

This was the last June 10th address delivered by Jorge Sampaio as president. In all the speeches I read, between 1996 and 2005 Sampaio refers to the following figures as “ilustres”/“heróis”: Vasco da Gama; Almeida Garrett; Fernando Pessoa; Grão Vasco; Leite de Vasconcelos; Aquilino Ribeiro; Azeredo Perdigão e Orlando Ribeiro. He repeatedly applies the words: freedom, community, responsibility, and sovereignty to the present rather than to the past.

Among the descriptions of the relationships that existed between the Portuguese and the people of the formerly occupied countries, he uses: sister nations, encounters, and relationship, which I consider, as mentioned above, euphemistic and not at all indicative of the reality of that “relationship”.

Sampaio introduces explicitly, in the identity categories, the terms: culture, language,” “heritage and natural resources (the last two for the first time).

5 FINAL OBSERVATIONS

During the first twenty years of democratic presidential addresses, from 1976 to 1996, the identity categories were focused mainly on the Discoverers as illustrious heroes, and on the Discoveries as key moments in Portugal’s history, defining models of the Portuguese mentality and character. They also defined moments that are inspiration for the Portuguese of today, and for future projects of the nation and the people.

The Discoverers and colonizers are presented in the presidential addresses as characters that combine all the virtues of the people, like those mentioned by Eanes and Soares: solidarity, generosity, humanism, plurality, serenity, adaptability, universality, hard work, deliberation, capability, sacrifice, prowess, courage, heroism, determination, curiosity, audacity, persistence, tolerance and coexistence. Proof of the virtuosity of the Portuguese identity could be found in the historical period of the Discoveries and the Eurocentric and Lusocentric interpretation of the interaction between the Discoverers and colonizers, and on the other hand, the people of the colonized lands.

The attempt to create a national identity, as seen in the presidential addresses under study, during the first twenty years of the democratic era was characterized

by a slight distancing from the national identity portrayed in the propaganda of the Estado Novo. In some cases that propagandized concept was based on the same Luso tropicalist imaginary described by Freyre.

I refer back to Cunha’s assertions that national identity is constructed by insistence on the idea of an exemplary past that represents the soul of the people and is based on imperial vocation as an expression of the civilizing genius. (Cunha, 2001). Eanes and Soares use the words “genius”, “espírito ecuménico” and “espírito criativo” to reinforce the character of Portuguese identity, always associating these virtues to the Discoveries, which were the exemplary past.

I find this tacit conflict of identity between democracy and the acknowledgement of a violent past versus the historical nostalgia and praise of the Discoveries, and a romanticized coexistence between colonizers and colonized – comparable to that described by Margarida Calafate Ribeiro (Calafate, 2003) a few years after the independence of Brazil (1825). Calafate’s discourse was based on the letters exchanged between Eça de Queiroz, Oliveira Martins, Alexandre Herculano and Pinheiro Chagas, and articles written by them about what being Portuguese meant.

Margarida Calafate Ribeiro notes the anguish, doubts and criticisms of these authors regarding the national identity and how, at that time, it was closely connected to the idea of imperialism.

According to the above-mentioned authors, the independence of Brazil called into question Portugal’s national identity.

Daí que o tema principal dos historiadores e escritores portugueses do século XIX seja o problema da identidade da nação, não no sentido do seu alargamento, como na Europa, mas da sua própria existência. «Somos ou não somos uma nação imperialista?».

(Calafate, 2003)

In the 19th century being Portuguese implied having a perception of themselves as belonging to a more extensive geography than that in which they actually lived; questioning that ideal meant questioning the identity of the country and of its citizens.

I believe that, as in the 19th century, when Brazil gained independence, the first twenty years of presidential addresses of Portugal’s democratic regime revealed a need to find references to construct the imaginary of the people, and without a critical attitude, a repetition of pre-conceived identity discourses was largely preferred.

After reading these 29 addresses, I observed that the identity categories found in the first points were: historical continuity with the illustrious pasts, and model heroes of the national virtues and mentality, and that Eanes’ and Soares’ speeches included very similar contents to Freyre’s ideas. The main difference is that there appears to have been an attempt to rewrite and

reinterpret the facts, substituting the words “colonize” with “merge”, “interact”, or “encounter”, validating a violent past.

In an apparent attempt to justify the past, there was a tendency to romanticize it, without any critical analysis of the different periods of Portuguese history.

Following the common thread suggested by the organization of the congress, during the first twenty years the idea of creation prevailed, in the sense that presidential addresses de-emphasized the more violent moments of Portuguese history.

Therefore, following the rationale that evolution can be interpreted in three stages: creation, transformation and subsequent metamorphosis, I believe that after 1997 Jorge Sampaio introduced transformative elements, namely a critical view of history and its exaltation. He introduced the element of transformation of the discourse and critical evaluation of history, and consequently, transformation of the national identity.

As far as metamorphosis is concerned, and the fact that it represents a new form, I don't believe that it had occurred yet over the course of the thirty years analyzed.

For metamorphosis to have taken place, we would have to see new references to the three identity categories. If, on one hand, Jorge Sampaio introduced the category of natural heritage, corresponding to one of Thiesse's other ten categories, it is also true that Sampaio didn't do so persistently, but only as a critique of previous attitudes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This chapter had the support of CHAM (NOVA FCSH/UAc) through the strategic project sponsored by FCT (UIDB/04666/2020) — <https://doi.org/10.54499/UIDB/04666/2020>

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