Renegotiated (Post)Colonial Relations within the New Portuguese Migration to Angola
Waldorff, Pétur

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Spectrum

Renegotiated (Post)Colonial Relations within the New Portuguese Migration to Angola

Pétur Waldorff

Abstract: This article examines the new wave of Portuguese migration to Luanda in the first decade after Angola's civil war, a time characterised by extensive economic growth and shifting economic prospects in Angola. It frames Portuguese–Angolan relations in contemporary Angola, relations that are sometimes portrayed as amicable and influenced by a common brotherhood, as multifaceted. This article distinguishes different social, cultural, and historic interpretations of this migration and investigates how such interpretations influence people's relations, identities, feelings, and personal understandings of the social, political, and historic contexts that people confront on a daily basis in contemporary Luanda, a capital city where "colonial encounters in postcolonial contexts" have increasingly become everyday occurrences. It argues that at the intersections of Angolan and Portuguese contact in Angola, new configurations of power are being produced and reproduced against the backdrop of its colonial history and Lusotropicalist myths, where colonial and postcolonial inequalities, as well as economic opportunities, are brought to the fore in both Angolan and Portuguese imaginaries.

Pétur Waldorff is a social anthropologist and senior researcher at the United Nations University Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme at the University of Iceland. His research in Luanda, Angola, has focused on North–South migration; urban issues; post-conflict development; and informal economies. He is a former senior researcher with the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala, where he conducted research on the new Portuguese migration to Angola on which the present article is based. He has carried out fieldwork in Angola, Malawi, Tanzania, and Mozambique.
E-mail: <psw@hi.is>

During a period that has been referred to as the "age of migration" (Castles, Haas, and Miller 2014), human mobility today is playing an ever more integral role in the global economy (Global Commission on International Migration 2005), and migration has become an internationally and politically salient issue (Paoletti 2010: 1; Castles, Haas, and Miller 2014). Lately, much attention has been paid to migration originating from the so-called "global South," flowing mainly from Africa and the Middle East to Europe. In recent years, the migration of individuals and families to Europe in search of economic opportunities and improved living conditions, as well as refugees and asylum seekers who were forcibly displaced by wars, droughts, and other conditions, have incited political and public debates around the globe. These debates have manifested in part in the rise of anti-immigrant, anti-Islam, and extreme right-wing parties and the general shift to the right across the European political spectrum on issues of migration, diversity, and multiculturalism (Castles, Haas, and Miller 2014: 1). Concurrent to these developments, data confirms that the bulk of international migration actually takes place within the global South (Abel and Sander 2014), which indicates that the largest streams of human migration are absent from migration research, which has mostly been focused on migration from the global South to the global North. In this way, migration within the global South has remained under-theorised (Nawyn 2016: 163–164). This article contributes to a discussion on the less researched phenomenon of North-to-South migration, which runs counter to recent (postcolonial) flows of migration from Africa to Europe. More specifically, this article explores migration from Portugal to Angola, its former colony, and the subsequent emic perceptions of such mobility in Luanda, Angola's capital.

The recent Portuguese migration to Angola represents both ruptures and continuities in the postcolonial relationship (Åkesson 2016), with new configurations of power between ex-coloniser and ex-colonised, as well as a reversal of historical and conventional patterns of migration. It also epitomises a conversion in sub-Saharan African postcolonial history, with citizens of a former European colonial power seeking improved conditions in an ex-colony on a large scale. Until recently, Angolans had moved to Portugal in search of economic and personal security. However, from the end of Angola's civil war in 2002 until the global oil price crunch in late 2014, this migration flow reversed, with Portuguese nationals and their families becoming increasingly dependent on employment in Angola and the country's strong economic growth to secure their well-being and livelihood. These conditions have generated a spe-

cific postcolonial context, in which tensions arise and renegotiations of power relations between ex-coloniser and ex-colonised take place.

Through empirical examples and emic perspectives from interviews with both Portuguese migrants working in Angola and Angolans, many of whom are working with or for Portuguese nationals in Luanda, this article examines the new Portuguese migration to Luanda during a time that has been characterised by both extensive economic growth and shifting economic potentials in Luanda, a city that has been going through rapid post-conflict social changes. This analysis distinguishes different social, cultural, and historic interpretations of this migration and illustrates how these influence people's relations, identities, feelings, and personal interpretations of the social, political, and historic contexts in which they and others live. The article explores relations between Portuguese migrants and Angolans, the fluidity of identities, and perceptions of vulnerability and precarity. Portuguese–Angolan relations in contemporary Angola, which are sometimes portrayed as amicable and influenced by a common brotherhood (*irmandade*) between the two nations and their populations, are framed here as multifaceted. This article focuses on the interrelated themes and representations of the complex relations that emerge at the nexus between Portuguese migrants and the Angolan host population. It is a postcolonial context where the symbolism of colonialism is seldom far off, and yet, from a macro-economic perspective, the tables have turned between oil-rich, ex-colonised Angola and recession-struck ex–colonial master Portugal. Finally, it argues that at the interconnections of Angolan and Portuguese contact in contemporary Angola, new configurations of power are being produced and reproduced against the backdrop of the colonial history and Lusotropicalist myths. It is a dialectic process in which postcolonial inequalities and economic opportunities within Angola are brought to the fore in both Angolan and Portuguese imaginaries.

The Portuguese who leave for Angola are motivated by two concurrent factors: first, the strong economic growth in post-conflict Angola, which has for over a decade repeatedly registered some of Africa's highest economic growth rates, increasing its GDP tenfold since 2002 (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016: 24). The second motivating factor is the economic downturn in Portugal and a recession since 2008, coupled with severe austerity measures, a public debt crisis, and dramatic rises in the unemployment rate (Perelman, Felix, and Santana 2015). These migrants range from highly skilled workers who, for example, work in the IT and financial sectors, to private businesspeople running services such as cafés, restaurants, and/or hotels. They also include skilled and unskilled labour

migrants working in the booming Angolan construction sector. Some are descendants of Portuguese returnees or *retornados* who left Angola at independence and after returning to Angola have successfully acquired Angolan citizenship through their family history in the country. For those migrating to Angola from Portugal in order to work, double citizenship is a desirable asset in an environment where work permits for foreigners are hard to acquire. The bureaucratic process to acquire an Angolan work permit is notoriously riddled with corruption involving bribes, which, according to Portuguese informants in 2014 and 2015, could well exceed USD 10,000 (see Åkesson and Orjuela 2017: 12).

Although statistics for Angola have not been entirely reliable in the past, estimates put the figure of Portuguese nationals in Angola between 100,000 and 150,000 (Observatório de Emigração 2014), with some estimations as high as 200,000 (Correia, Ribeiro, and Montez 2015). One indicator of the extent of this reversal of migration patterns and economic potentials can be found in statistics showing that remittances sent from Angola to Portugal in 2013 were 16 times the amount of remittances transferred in the reverse direction (Observatório de Emigração 2014). However, after the global oil price crunch of 2014/2015 started to affect the Angolan economy, lowering salaries and influencing the termination of employment contracts, this North-to-South migration slowed down considerably, with Portuguese migrants in Angola returning to Europe.

This research took place in Luanda, a sprawling urban environment with a history of inequality and segregation woven into the urban fabric (Waldorff 2014: 12). Inequalities that become obvious when one travels outside the small enclave of downtown Luanda, which has been described as characterised by its political intrigue, sexual gossip, frivolous cocktail parties, and billion-dollar loan sharks (Birmingham 2006: 165). The majority of residents live without formal employment and access to public water and electrical networks in the informal areas of the city, or *musseques*. These *musseques* developed during colonialism as the home-quarters of indigenous Angolans, while the urbanised central areas of the Baixa became synonymous with the central and urbanised area of the white colonisers (Robson and Roque 2001: 21). Luanda was originally planned as a colonial city, "built according to the racial, economic and social stratification of the time" (Udelsmann Rodrigues 2009). Thus, the urban environment is still characterised by a socio-spatial distribution (Wacquant 2014) based on inequality and injustice. Gastrow (2014: 75) has pointed out that residents of Luanda feel that colonial racial economic patterns are re-emerging due to the inflation of real-estate prices in the city, with Angolans being pushed into the *musseques* while foreign-

ers take over the central city. However, although this perception is shared by many Luandans, the clearance and urban redevelopment of inner-city *musseques* is directly linked to Angolan elite economic interests and property speculation, and not specifically to foreign investment or economic interests. Thus, this article also shows how inequalities, which in the last few decades have been increasing and materialising in discourses within Angola between the common Angolan and the country's political and economic elite, are also experienced and expressed between lower- and middle-class Angolans, on one side, and the new Portuguese migrants in Angola, on the other.

Research Methodology and Conducting Research in Contemporary Luanda

Angola has been characterised as "an exceedingly difficult place to conduct in-depth research" (Schubert 2015) mainly due to difficulties in accessing visas (a problem researchers share with many of the Portuguese migrants in Angola), everyday logistics, and the high costs of living. This article is based on research data collected during three month-long field trips to Luanda in 2014 and 2015. The research methods used to gather data are qualitative and based on in-depth formal and semi-formal ethnographic interviews with Angolans and Portuguese migrants. In total, 54 interviews were conducted and recorded, and the interviewees included 40 Angolans, 12 Portuguese, and 2 expats of other nationalities with long-term experience in Angola. Interviewees worked in diverse sectors of the Angolan economy, ranging from oil and gas extraction companies to call centres, construction companies, telecommunications companies, consulting firms, schools, and retailing businesses. In these environments, Angolans and Portuguese nationals usually worked as colleagues under Portuguese management. Portuguese interviewees mostly belonged to the Portuguese educated middle class coming to Angola for work and business, and Angolan interviewees were from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, ranging from uneducated working-class labourers employed with or for Portuguese nationals to educated and highly skilled individuals working in the petroleum, banking, and telecommunications sectors.

Some of the Angolan interviewees had spent time in Europe, usually Portugal, during the Angolan civil war, only to come back when peace had been established and economic prospects improved. Thus, they had a comparative insight into working and living conditions in Angola and Portugal. Furthermore, there were informants of mixed des-

cent with double citizenship and Portuguese nationals with family con-
nections to the over 300,000 *retornados* who had left the country on the
eve of independence. Most of the *retornados* who "returned" to Portugal
in 1975 were born and bred in Angola with strong psychological, cul-
tural, and social connections to Angola. Therefore, informants referred
to as either Angolan or Portuguese in this article should be seen as indi-
viduals who identify themselves as such in a certain context, despite their
otherwise fluid, hybrid, and/or blurred identities. In addition to the rec-
orded ethnographic interviews, observations and informal conversations
took place throughout fieldwork with a diverse group of informants,
which fundamentally enlightened and influenced the research. Lastly,
year-long fieldwork in Luanda in 2009 and 2010 provided important
background information for the 2014 and 2015 field research.

   In general, it was easier to access Portuguese interviewees than their
Angolan counterparts. There were instances where Angolans showed signs
of apprehension and appeared worried about their job security were they
to talk on the record, for example, against their superiors at work, or
about corruption or other politically sensitive matters. This is, in and of
itself, a manifestation of Angolan interviewees' feelings of precarity and
the perceived workplace inequalities between them and their Portuguese
colleagues. Such reactions are also derived from existing high-level pol-
itical relations at play between Portugal and Angola, in which not only
Portuguese citizens come to work in Angola but individuals belonging to
the inner circle of Angola's political-economic elite have also invested
heavily in Portugal's economy. Thus, the topic of Portuguese migration
to Angola was perceived by many as a sensitive issue, and Angolans
sometimes felt that their Portuguese managers and co-workers were
protected by powerful Angolan political and economic entities and indi-
viduals who are, in the end, the real owners of businesses in Angola.
Such reactions can be traced to what Soares de Oliveira has described as
the "elite takeover of the Angolan economy," which "has been elevated
into national policy" (Soares de Oliveira 2015: 142) – this, coupled with
an extensive Angolan investment strategy in the former colonial power.
Thus, the subject is considered to be closely connected to elite interests
in both countries.

   Furthermore, such responses are in essence one effect of, and one
response to, Angola's autocratic governmentality, which has led to the
self-regulation and self-disciplining of its citizens (Waldorff 2014: 330).
This can be seen as a defensive tactic (De Certeau 1984) of the subju-
gated, particularly when it comes to issues and topics that could be con-

sidered as politically sensitive. Therefore, in order to conceal interviewees' identities, all informants have been given pseudonyms.

Discussing the issue of difficulties in accessing Angolan informants, Matilda, a middle-aged Angolan holding a Portuguese passport, informed me that these challenges have to do with class:

> It is easier to talk to the middle class [than to lower classes] but not so easy to talk to those politically connected [in the middle class].

Manuel, another Angolan informant of Portuguese descent, explained that it is not necessarily political sensitivity that explains difficulties in accessing Angolan interviewees but people's mixed feelings about, and complicated relations with, the Portuguese:

> The Portuguese are the ex-colonists but at the same time there is a lot of attachment to Portugal. In Angolan culture there is a lot of absorption of things from Portugal, but at the same time there is resentment. Political sensitivity does not apply in the sense that the Portuguese are not coming here under the MPLA [Angola's ruling party] umbrella. They are coming much more for economic reasons. They are not like the Chinese that are clearly coming under the MPLA umbrella.

Manuel is referring to the complex relations between Angolans and Portuguese derived from what I have called "colonial encounters in post-colonial contexts" (a terminology borrowed from Cunningham 2005), a theme that concisely captures current Angolan–Portuguese relations. Furthermore, he is referring to people's own complex and multifaceted identities, as well as their mixed feelings (which will be further broached below) as one barrier to Angolans' willingness to discuss their personal experiences and opinions of the new Portuguese migration to Angola.

From Boom to Bust: A Shifting Economic Context

Since achieving peace in 2002 after 27 years of civil war, Angola became the world's fastest-growing economy almost overnight (*The Economist* 2011), fuelled mainly by oil extraction, which accounts for 95 per cent of the country's export revenues (Adolfo 2012). The first decade of Angola's peace has been described by Soares de Oliveira "as nothing short of an economic miracle" (2015: 1), and the capital city Luanda has, since the war's conclusion, been described as "Boomtown Africa," possessing a "turbo-charged economy" (Schubert 2016) and attracting hundreds of

thousands of expatriates and international labour migrants. Post-conflict Angola acquired the status of a modern day El Dorado (Zuber 2012), promising excitement, exotic pleasures, and a life of means for Portuguese economic migrants who would come and reap the benefits of the country's impressive economic growth record and booming sectors in need of skilled labour with fluency in the Portuguese language. However, in 2015 the economic context had significantly changed from the booming Angolan economy that had characterised Luanda until late 2014. Oil prices on the global market had dipped considerably in 2015 with the consequent lowering of the country's GDP and drastic effects on the Angolan economy. The government's budget was severely affected and public spending on infrastructure development, construction projects, fuel subsidies, and social projects had been cut or frozen as a response to the plunging oil prices (Brock 2015). The national currency had dropped by roughly 50 per cent, as was best noticed at the city's informal currency exchange markets, venues that were used by both Angolans and foreign migrants to sell US dollars or euros for the local currency, and vice versa.

These changes in the economic conditions had begun to affect Portuguese migration to Angola in 2015. The oil-price crunch and the ensuing halting or cancellation of construction projects caused thousands of construction workers to migrate back to Portugal (*Público* 2015; *Notícias ao minuto* 2015). Remittances from Angola to Portugal had already diminished by 24.5 per cent in January 2015 as compared to one year previous, according to Portugal's Central Bank (*Jornal de Notícias* 2015). Other Portuguese migrants were re-evaluating their options as Angola was losing its previously exalted status. In interviews and conversations with Portuguese nationals working in Luanda the de-dollarisation of the economy, the lowering of salaries, outstanding salary payments, and salary payments in kwanzas (the non-convertible Angolan national currency) had become common complaints in October and November of 2015. However, Portuguese nationals interviewed in Luanda did not seem to be planning their return to Portugal, and younger Portuguese informants would often reveal that after their time in Angola they would not necessarily return to Portugal but rather try to find a job elsewhere in the world. Some would emphasise that the Portuguese are a migratory people, that it is in their nature to migrate, but statements would also be made as to how few employment opportunities there were in Portugal and how low the salaries were. Thus, despite a changing economic context in 2015, the Angolan economy still offered many Portuguese mi-

grants in Luanda employment and salary conditions considered unattainable in Portugal.

"Angola is to make money, Europe is to live"

There is a common perception of the Portuguese migration to Angola that it takes place mainly, if not only, for economic reasons. This was reflected in interviews and conversations with both Angolan and Portuguese informants. A furniture salesman of Portuguese descent explicitly exhibited this attitude when our conversation turned to why he was in Angola selling expensive imported furniture. He told me with a grin on his face: "Angola is to make money, Europe is to live," indicating that he was working to earn money in the booming Angolan economy, but intended to spend it back home in Europe. Similar sentiments were expressed by various informants throughout fieldwork in 2014 and 2015. Angolan informants were critical of the Portuguese, claiming that they were only in Angola because of the strong and expanding Angolan economy; indeed, many Portuguese informants would agree, asserting that "people, in general, only see Angola as a way to make money," others stating that "the majority [of Portuguese] is here because of necessity, not because they want to be here." Still others claimed that if they had a chance to go somewhere else they would leave, or, as declared by Teresa, a Portuguese expat and mother of an engineer in his mid-20s working in Angola,

> I have never met a 25-, 35-year-old here that wants to be here. All want to go back. They cope badly with the garbage and the traffic. Then there are racial clashes. The only reason they cope is because of the job, the money, the experiences they are getting here and how it affects their CV [becoming more competitive for the EU market]. None of my sons' colleagues and friends want to come to Africa, but there is no work in Europe.

Enrico, an Angolan working in the petroleum sector, pointed out that there are other elements at play when it comes to the new Portuguese migration to Angola. While economic factors are very significant, there were other motives as well:

> There are those who come here because they were born here and come back to have their papers registered here [acquiring Angolan citizenship]. And we should not ignore that there is an emotional side and emotional attachments [to Angola] in some cases. That is important. But if we look closer we can see that [in most cases] they are not establishing themselves here, they continue to send

their money to Portugal. That is, they are not buying a house here, setting up a family, etc.

Returning Angolan migrants who had lived in Portugal during the war but returned to Angola once peace was established would say that Angola is doing well, that a friend or a family member was doing well for him-/herself, but would then add that I should "remember this isn't Europe, it's Africa, things are still hard," suggesting that well-being is relative. The subtext is that Angolan well-being is different from European well-being, since in Africa you could have money but would still have to struggle with the worn-down or non-existent infrastructure that is taken for granted in Europe. The scarcity of electricity and water and having to deal with the psychological stress that life in contemporary Luanda can cause contributes to such feelings of malaise, as do the seemingly everlasting Luandan traffic jams, which force people living outside the central city but working in it to spend a large proportion of their waking hours in traffic. Stress is also reflected in Portuguese informants' claims that "here [in Angola] there is no quality of life," or as Ana, a Portuguese woman in her mid-30s who had come to Angola a year earlier to work for a cellular phone company, exclaimed in 2015: "We are suffering! It is very tiring and detrimental for the job. We return home at the end of the day exhausted, completely tired!" Thus, Portuguese sentiments about coming to Angola were conflicting in many cases. On the one hand, the informants praised the employment opportunities and high salaries that were missing in Portugal, while on the other hand, they complained about stress, various hardships, and qualities of life in the city.

Colonial Encounters in Postcolonial Contexts

Contested Lusotropicalist Worldviews

Discourses on Portuguese national identity are often defined by reference to Portugal's colonial past, its history of a (lost) empire, and its current relations to its former colonies (Cardoso 2015; Åkesson 2016). Thus, Portuguese national and cultural identity is somewhat synchronised with the symbolic power of Portugal's colonial past (Åkesson 2016). Linked with this past is Lusotropicalism, a colonial discourse that can be traced back to the Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre that essentialises the Portuguese as "a tolerant, brotherly, plastic people with ecumenical vocation" (Castelo 2015) and characterises Portuguese colonialism as unique, in that it promoted hybrid, creolised, and harmonious societies. This

perspective has been used to justify and upheave Portuguese colonialism (see, for example, Freyre 1998 [1933]; Almeida 2008). Castelo (citing Burke and Pallares-Burke 2008) refers to Lusotropicalism as a "quasi theory" about the relationship between Portugal and the tropics in which the Portuguese, due to their innate and creative empathy, have a special ability to adapt to the tropics. In Lusotropicalist argumentation, a Portuguese paternalism and fraternity exists between Portuguese colonials and African natives, and since Portuguese colonial settlers consisted mostly of rustic peasants of modest means, a special proximity between the colonial masters and their native subjects resulted, permitting a genuine assimilation between the two (Bender 2004: 224–225; Valahu 1968: 116). Castelo (2015) has explained how Lusotropicalism was used by the Portuguese colonial state apparatus to justify Portuguese presence in Africa to the world. In the 1960s António de Oliveira Salazar, the dictator and president of the colonial power, constantly emphasised the Portuguese "natural tendency to make contact with other people, free of concepts of superiority and racial discrimination" (Castelo 2015, citing Salazar 1967). However, critics have pointed out that this is a view of Portuguese colonialism which omits the racial oppression occurring in the colonies under Portuguese rule (Helgesson 2001). Under this rule, society was, for example, divided into three racial categories: indigenous Angolans; assimilated *mestiço* and black Angolans who could speak and write Portuguese and had been acculturated in Portuguese cultural values; and Europeans (Tvedten 1997: 27; Birmingham 1995: 92; Almeida 2008). An Angolan's civic rights, as well as their access to education and to certain jobs all hinged upon where s/he was positioned on this colonial and racial categorisation scheme (Hodges 2004: 43; Birmingham 1995: 92). Furthermore, Lusotropicalism omits colonial injustices, such as slavery, which in practice was abandoned only in 1910, as well as involuntary and forced labour conscription, which lasted until the nationalist war for independence began in Angola in the early 1960s (Ball 2005: 7; Bender 2004: 144). Thus, as pointed out by Castelo, and five decades earlier by Portuguese anthropologist Jorge Dias, the Lusotropicalist "quasi theory" was never upheld by Portuguese colonial action (Castelo 2015).

Cardoso (2015) has identified three persistent Lusotropicalist myths in her discussions on Portuguese cultural identities: a) the myth of Portuguese colonialism as being "softer" than that of other colonial powers; b) the myth of miscegenation and closer relationships between coloniser and colonised; and c) the myth of the Portuguese as a non-racist population (see also Oppenheimer 1997; Marques 2007). These are myths that can be seen playing out in the assertions of (some) Portuguese inform-

ants who emphasised that Angolans favoured being under Portuguese colonial control, stating,

> The Portuguese created conditions for themselves, and for the Angolans. Now there are *musseques* [urban slums] with almost no conditions at all.

Some assertions by Portuguese interviewees claimed that the Portuguese were appreciated and seen as superior: "We here are appreciated. We are seen as superior beings. We have more culture, we are more developed." This view was ridiculed by the more critical Angolan informants who accused the Portuguese of suffering from a superiority complex. Other perceptions of Portuguese superiority, which often was referred to as arrogance by both Angolan and Portuguese interviewees, claimed that Angolans do not really know how to work properly or do not like to work, as expressed in the words of Adriana, a Portuguese teacher in Luanda:

> Angolans need the Portuguese to supervise them, because if not, they wouldn't do the job. They don't always do the job as they have promised or when they are asked.

Such expressions, although far from being shared by all Portuguese informants, can be perceived as colonialist in essence, as echoes from a colonial past when all "non-productive" Africans were considered to be "vagrants" and subject to non-paying labour contracts for the Portuguese colonial state or private Portuguese individuals (see Bender 2004: 139). Notions like the ones above were frequently critiqued by Angolans – for example, interviewee Mateus said that "some Portuguese are ignorant, they think they are superior, thinking that we are still living in times of slavery." Lusotropicalist interpretations of Portuguese–Angolan relationships and history are also one way to justify the recent Portuguese migration to Angola as necessary – that it is beneficial for Angola and the Angolans, who do not possess the same capacity as the Portuguese to develop and (re)construct the country. This is a discursive argument used by both Angolan and Portuguese nationals.

Another offspring of Lusotropicalism and the countries' shared colonial history is the sense of a special brotherhood (*irmandade*) between the two nations, which is sometimes referenced by both Angolans and Portuguese. At times, people refer to it as real, and one can see that even the harshest critics of the Portuguese migration and Portuguese colonialism share cultural attributes with their former colonisers, enjoying the same foods, drinks, and music, and cheering for the same teams in the Portuguese football league. Simultaneously, however, this brotherhood is portrayed as an imagined community (Anderson 2006) that is socially

produced and reproduced in the imaginations of Angolans and Portuguese and not necessarily "real" as elucidated in the critical opinions of many Angolan and Portuguese interviewees. Interpretations of the Portuguese migration to Angola that echo the Lusotropicalist colonial ideology and the (imagined) brotherhood between Angolans and Portuguese are a representation of how historic memory in contemporary postcolonial Angola is (re)negotiated.

Multifaceted Identities

In Angolan society there are complex relations and dynamics between race, class, and identity. As Manuel's earlier statement indicates, relations between Angolans and the Portuguese are multifaceted, and the categorisations of "Portuguese" and "Angolans" are not always clear, since the parameters between the identities are often blurred. Alberto, an Angolan-Portuguese businessman and entrepreneur of mixed descent, who was raised in Portugal but moved back to Angola a few years earlier, is a good example of such blurredness of parameters and the mixed feelings of belonging:

> In Portugal I was always a *mulato* foreigner, and now when I came back here I'm a Portuguese *mulato* foreigner. It doesn't matter where I go I'm always a foreigner. Identities are very complex here, the line between who is Portuguese and who is Angolan is not that simple. Look at Vanessa, for example, she is culturally much more Portuguese than me, I've become more Angolan than her, listen to how she talks, she talks like a Portuguese.

Vanessa, a black Angolan, had studied and lived for a long period of time in Portugal but now works in the Angolan banking sector. Alberto added that he had lived in a *musseque*, while Vanessa was living in a suburban housing complex, pointing out what to him expressed various degrees of Angolanness. The concept of Angolanness or *angolanidade* has been described by Moorman (2008) as an Angolan consciousness that emerged from Luanda's urban culture in the peripheral *musseque* shantytowns during late colonialism in opposition to Portuguese white colonial rule and the European city centre, and one that has been reproduced through, for example, the cultural production of music. Alberto's main point was that who is Portuguese and who Angolan is not clear-cut, that there are hybrid identities, and in many instances, even if you define yourself as Angolan you can be still perceived as Portuguese by other people and vice versa. Thus, identities are dynamic, fluid, and changing in nature (Lategan 2015: 91).

Racial identities are still a complex issue and source of tension in contemporary Angola, and are considered to affect one's socio-economic position and opportunities in Luandan society. One finds Angolans with double citizenship who would never define themselves as Portuguese despite holding Portuguese passports and being of Portuguese descent with family members in Portugal. At the same time, some Portuguese nationals who migrate to Angola and successfully acquire Angolan citizenship are accused of under-communicating their Angolanness or Portugueseness in certain circumstances while emphasising it in others, a behaviour commonly recorded in social research on migrants in their host countries (Hylland Eriksen 2010: 301).

Migrants are often portrayed as living in two worlds, switching between cultural codes when they move between contexts (Hylland Eriksen 2010: 301). Angolan informants working with Portuguese migrants would complain about how Portuguese co-workers holding Angolan nationality would claim that they are Angolan, emphasising their Angolanness to their Angolan co-workers, but when it came to signing their employment contracts they emphasise their Portuguese heritage and become Portuguese. Santos, who works with Portuguese nationals in the banking sector critically described this process of "chameleon-like" behaviour:

> When they come [from Portugal to Angola], they often claim to be Angolan, having parents or relatives [of Angolan descent]. However, when they get their contracts they are all of a sudden Portuguese, and get all the privileges Portuguese workers get.

The benefits that their Portuguese citizenship can secure for them frequently include higher salaries and fringe benefits such as social insurance, paid-for tickets for visits abroad (usually to Portugal), accommodations, transportation, and so on. These are privileges that Angolan employees seldom enjoy. Such fluidity between national identities and the cashing in on one's double citizenship in Angola for economic gain is perhaps best described as, to use Aihwa Ong's terminology, "flexible citizenships" (1999). These are examples of how individual agency plays out in scenarios where strategies of migration and capital accumulation take place and where tensions between national and personal identities come to the fore. Borrowing from Harvey's (1989) concept of flexible accumulation, Ong uses flexibility of citizenship, which transcends identity parameters and national borders, to explain what she refers to as "human agency and its production and negotiation of cultural meanings" (Ong 1999: 3) in the context of globalisation and increasing large-scale "global flows" (Appadurai 1996), or what Ong (1999) refers to as "the cultural logics of transnationality."

From such transnational contexts a certain fluidity of identity materialises. The chameleon-like behaviour, referred to above and in the frequent critical comments on this phenomenon by Angolan informants, is another result of a postcolonial context in which fluidity of identities, flexible citizenships, and cultural logics of transnationality emerge at the nexus of Angolan–Portuguese relationships. Thus, these interactions create new and hybridised power relations between the two against the backdrop of Portuguese colonialism and Angolan postcolonial economic potentials.

Workplace Inequalities and Grievances

In 2014 and 2015, unlike five years earlier, the new Portuguese migration to Angola was increasingly visible in central Luanda. At some of the restaurants at the Ilha de Luanda – a section of the city filled with beach-front restaurants where well-off Angolans and expats enjoy their weekend lunches and cool down in the Atlantic Ocean in between their Brazilian *caipirinhas*, cooled Portuguese wine, or ice-cold draught beer (Waldorff and Moreira 2017) – one was likely to be greeted by a white waiter, who spoke with a European Portuguese accent. These conditions had changed quite rapidly, as this was not the case in 2010 when the Portuguese immigrant population was considerably smaller. Today, Portuguese managers are in charge of some of these expensive dining establishments, with Angolan waiters occupying subordinate positions within the workplace hierarchy, as became clear in interviews with Angolan waiting staff in Luanda.

In Luanda's social and political context, Portuguese supremacy, higher wages, work-related fringe benefits, and colonial attitudes and arrogance are condemned by Angolans; however, Portuguese migrants are concurrently dependent on Angolans for employment and work permits. Complex postcolonial relations surface and resurface in this context – for example, in workplace clashes between Portuguese and Angolan employees. Workplace inequalities between Portuguese migrants and Angolans cause grievances among Angolan co-workers, as Santos explains: "There is total salary inequality between the Portuguese and Angolans, there is no equality at all!" He adds: "They are favouring one group [the Portuguese] over the other [the Angolans]." Angolans working with Portuguese in various sectors, including construction, banking, and automobile retailing had the perception that the Portuguese were strategically hiring "their own." That is, Portuguese nationals, and their friends and family members from Portugal. Some would talk of racial and psychological predispositions, claiming that there is a certain

racism taking place among the Portuguese migrants. As expressed by Enrico, an Angolan who identifies himself as a *mestiço* social worker with degrees in psychology and sociology,

> There are Portuguese who prefer to work with *mestiços* rather than blacks, and in general in the Portuguese companies the Portuguese prefer other Portuguese employees. This is a psychological predisposition. They [the Portuguese] can be friendly, but they will always prefer the Portuguese over the Angolan.

Thus, in conversation and interviews with Angolans resistance to the immigration of Portuguese nationals to Angola was frequently conveyed, and informants made accusations of Portuguese racism and colonial behaviour. However, other Angolan informants would steer away from the term "racism," emphasising that injustice is taking place, but not racism.

Portuguese arrogance and workplace inequalities, epitomised by salary inequalities and workplace segregation, in which Portuguese eat and socialise separately from Angolan work colleagues, are the grievances most commonly mentioned by Angolan informants who are working with the Portuguese. Segregation during workplace mealtimes was a theme that repeatedly came up in interviews with Angolans. Some informants complained that Angolan and Portuguese employees would use different canteens at work. There were also instances of complaints over how in Portuguese–Angolan shared lunch canteens Portuguese employees would get special treatment, such as being served at the table by waiters, while Angolan employees would have to line up for lunch services. In cases where there were no workplace canteens, various Angolan informants would complain that Portuguese employees would not utilise the same restaurants or lunch services as the Angolans. This was justified by some Portuguese interviewees, who claimed that since Angolan employees were paid considerably less, they would therefore not be able to afford the same lunches as their Portuguese colleagues.

Grievances were also frequently expressed about double standards and unequal working pressure between Angolan and Portuguese employees. Angolans working under Portuguese management would complain about being continuously monitored, with systems in place of salary penalties in which amounts were deducted from their salaries were they not performing according to their managers' standards, while Portuguese employees would enjoy more freedom, for example, by being able to take time off during work to socialise over a cigarette or coffee without any complaints from the management. In the minds of some Angolans, these grievances brought forth comparisons to the era of Portuguese colonial rule in the country, of racial categorisation schemes,

and of forced labour under white colonial supervision, and reminded them of a time when the white colonial Portuguese would earn wages 10 to 100 times higher than those of African employees (Bender 2004: 226). Some informants went as far as to say, "They [the Portuguese] are coming to recolonise us. This is a form of neocolonialism," while others would emphasise that the status quo would undoubtedly lead to xenophobia, racism, and more radicalised politics that, ultimately, will cause various social problems in the country.

Interviews with Angolans working with or for Portuguese revealed that critiquing or complaining about such workplace injustices could cost them their employment. However, others would claim that a more likely scenario would be that their upwards mobility within the workplace would be halted and they would be stuck in their current position. "So people don't say anything," one informant exclaimed, a telling sign of how acutely such workplace inequalities were experienced by Angolan informants. Angolan professionals would express deep-rooted frustrations and precarity when talking about their workplace environments. Such frustration was clearly visible when conversing with informants in the banking sector. Santos, an Angolan informant with years of experience in the banking sector, was very disappointed at the discrimination he witnessed at work. He claimed that the Angolan banking sector is dominated by the Portuguese and that there is a structural inequality and segregation between Portuguese and Angolan employees, in which the Portuguese are favoured over the Angolans. He felt like he was stuck without any possibility of upwards mobility within the Angolan banking sector, despite his vast experience and reputation within it. He had gotten "demoted" when a Portuguese national who had started as his subordinate and apprentice, and whom he had trained at the bank, was hired as his superior. This injured his pride and resulted in his termination from the bank, necessitating a move to another one:

> When you enter a bank, you never see a Portuguese working at the counter, they are always somewhere behind [higher up in the hierarchy]. The managers are Portuguese, but on the floor the people who service the day-to-day customers are always Angolan.

These sentiments were also shared by other Angolan informants who worked in Portuguese-dominated sectors, such as car importation and retailing industries, and Angolan informants would complain about Portuguese arrogance and even verbal abuse. As one middle-class *mestiço* woman who had resigned after having had enough of the inequalities she experienced at work exclaimed,

> The Portuguese have ugly attitudes [… and] there is a lot of lack of
> respect on behalf of the Portuguese towards the Angolan. I wouldn't
> suggest to any Angolan to work there!

Thus, both lower- and middle-class Angolans working for Portuguese-
run companies frequently describe their situation as vulnerable. At work-
places where there is a clear bias in terms of how people are treated,
which depended on whether the employee is Portuguese or Angolan, the
atmosphere is lousy, Angolan informants claimed. However, as one inter-
viewee added,

> But we [Angolans] are not aggressive people; people don't complain
> or make a fuss about it. If this were Nigeria or Brazil this would be a
> big problem for them, but not here.

Pedro, an Angolan working in the oil sector, shared similar perceptions
of Angolan peacefulness but reminded me of Angola's history of vio-
lence, "which should not be forgotten." He claimed,

> The Angolan people are very pacific, but they do not tolerate abuse.
> And history shows us that the Angolan people have, in the moment
> of affliction, searched for solutions by means of weapons. Histor-
> ically, that is how it has been. So we don't want to find ourselves in
> a situation where Angolan indignity can be tolerated in their [An-
> golans'] own home. If that becomes the case it will become difficult
> to stop this population [from revolting].

Instances of Complicit Colonial Behaviour

Portuguese and Angolans are, at times, equally complicit in colonial racial
and identity politics and the consequential power dynamics that emerge
and which they so often criticise. Representations of Angolan complicity
can be found in Angolan businesses, of both large and small scale. For
example, Antonio, an Angolan working in international development,
explained how Angolan business owners such as his brother, his business
partner, and himself,[1] would rather hire a Portuguese to run their small
businesses, which he defined as "restaurants, cafés and such," even in
cases where they were less qualified than an Angolan. The reason for
this, he claims, is the simple fact that it is good for business. The Portu-
guese are respected and people would rather buy services from them,
since they represent an image of professionalism, orderliness, and ac-

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1   It is common for Luandan professionals to be involved in (often several) eco-
    nomic activities parallel to their everyday employment.

countability that the Angolans do not, according to him. So the belief, as portrayed by Antonio, is not necessarily that the Portuguese are better at doing business, but that clients and the general population think more highly of the business if it is managed by a Portuguese person.[2] Such perceptions of symbolic representations of professionalism are widely found in Luandan businesses. As asserted by Soares de Oliveira, "behind every Angolan tycoon, there is often a mostly Portuguese managerial team." He goes on to describe that, due to suspicion regarding capacities, work ethic, and honesty among their fellow countrymen, a number of wealthy Angolan business owners dislike hiring Angolans for even insignificant tasks (Soares de Oliveira 2015: 76).

Pedro, an Angolan employee in the oil and gas sector, elucidated during an interview in the luxurious swimming pool area of his company's building his apprehensions regarding the developments of Angolan business and reaffirmed the viewpoints presented by Antonio:

> The big problem in my opinion comes from the fact, which I have mentioned earlier, that a big part of the new businessmen in Angola, they often prefer Portuguese to manage their business. And when the owner of a company gives you powers, soon you will have unlimited powers, you can guarantee jobs to other people. For example, the banks, the banks here in Angola are dominated by the Portuguese. The hotel industry as well. The security industry is also influenced heavily by the Portuguese. China has brought some equilibrium to the construction sector but a lot of construction projects are still heavily influenced by Portuguese companies. So we are talking about sectors and companies that have Angolan owners who later give them [the Portuguese] the green light for them to go ahead and act as they please, which often does not dignify Angolans.

Concerns over such trends in Angolan business were on many Angolan interviewees' minds. As expressed by Angela when she reflected on her brother's changing fortunes within Angola's banking sector,

> Now after the arrival of the Portuguese he has difficulties in finding a job that fits his experience. He is a well-known name in the Angolan banking sector. You can ask anyone in banking and they will recognise his name.

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2   During colonial times, the Portuguese also dominated the retail and food services sector, something that changed overnight at independence when Portuguese Angolans migrated en masse "back" to Portugal.

Miguel, a young Angolan who in 2013 and 2014 had worked as a primary- and middle-school teacher for newly arrived uneducated Portuguese immigrants between the ages of 25 and 35 in one of the city's *musseques*, critically reflected upon his students' opportunities in Angola in one of our interviews: "There is a preference for the white colour – even without education they have 10 times more opportunities than an educated Angolan." His students, he explained, were descendants of poor *retornados*, white Angolans who had, since their "return" to Portugal at Angolan independence in 1975, struggled as the uneducated, poor Portuguese lower class, but had now returned to Angola in an attempt to reap the benefits of Angola's economic opportunities.

Thus, the reinforcement of colonial racial stereotypes and representations of complicity – as exemplified by the idea that it is better to work with (and for) the Portuguese, who are "professionals" and "orderly," rather than Angolans, who variously lack "work ethics," "honesty," and/or "capacity" – is present in Angolan society today. This could perhaps be traced to more than 500 years of colonial history and the subsequent unequal relationship between the two countries and their citizens. For example, one interviewee stated that his father, an old black *assimilado* from Angola, still says to him, "I do not work with *negros*, only with whites" – a view deeply contested by his son.

Conclusion

Through empirical examples from the Angolan context, this article has revealed how Angola's strong, oil-based economy attracted thousands of Portuguese migrants to Angola during the period – more than a decade long – of Angolan peace and robust economic growth. This was a time when Angolan capital accounted for the majority of foreign investments in Portugal's economy, which was referred to as both frail and crisis-ridden. The North-to-South migration between the two countries, which initially was almost univocally rationalised as an economic labour migration, evokes complex feelings and interpretations, reflected in the two nations' past colonial relations, their close economic and political relationships, and in the vast social inequalities found in contemporary Angola. From the empirical data, various conclusions emerge that are at times closely interrelated and that can be interpreted as replicating scenarios and interpretations that could be described as colonial encounters in a postcolonial context. As elucidated in this article, we can see that after 40 years of Angolan independence, conflicting interpretations of Portuguese–Angolan history and relations persist and are recapitulated in

contemporary Luanda. This is a testimony to how, in the contemporary context of Portuguese migration to Angola, colonial history has persisted in people's perspectives, conceptualisations, and classifications.

First, Lusotropicalism is evoked by both Angolan and Portuguese interviewees, which bears witness to its persistence as a conceptual account of Angolan–Portuguese relations even today. On the one hand, Lusotropicalist myths are used to upheave Portuguese postcolonialism and superiority; on the other, Portuguese–Angolan workplace inequalities and Portuguese arrogance and superiority complexes are cited. Second, Portuguese–Angolan relations in Angola are often interpreted through racial and colonial hierarchies that the Portuguese and Angolans are at times equally complicit in exercising, although such hierarchies and socio-economic inequalities are simultaneously critiqued in contemporary Luanda. Third, the transnational context of global migration and capital flows in contemporary Angola, in tandem with the close historic Portuguese–Angolan relationship and family interconnections, as well as complex bureaucratic processes of achieving work permits in Angola, has rendered identities fluid and citizenships flexible (Ong 1999). In this context, Angolan citizenship has become an asset for work permits in the country, yet expatriate identities can garner higher salaries and fringe benefits. Workplace inequalities and grievances between Angolans and Portuguese are portrayed as rampant in interviews with Angolans working with or for Portuguese-run companies in contemporary Angola. Finally, several instances came up in interviews with Angolans in which what could be interpreted as tacit warnings and/or threats became discernible, referring to the country's colonial and war-torn past, and how this violent past should be kept in mind when analysing the recent Portuguese migration to Angola.

Thus, in this article I have introduced a postcolonial context in which tensions arise and power relations are renegotiated between ex-coloniser and ex-colonised. Representations of such tensions and renegotiations materialise through various scenarios and themes in contemporary Angola. The current postcolonial context engenders the risk of interpreting the new Portuguese migration to Angola as generating a repetition of the colonial past, or as a renewed form of Portuguese neocolonialism, as sometimes referred to in interviews. However, such forecasts for Angola are not entirely fair to the status quo, which is far more complex. It is not a context in which a repetition of the colonial order is taking place, since economically the tables have turned between the two countries (Åkesson 2016) and real power in contemporary Angola lies in the hands of the strong Angolan state and the country's political and economic elite

and not with the Portuguese. Rather, as argued in this article, it is a context in which complex postcolonial relations arise, historic memory is renegotiated, and in which both Angolans and Portuguese nationals express sentiments of precarity. As exemplified herein, complex identity politics and workplace hierarchies from the past are being reinforced in tandem with the forging of new politics of identity through new and changing relationships between the two nations and their citizens. These relationships are multifaceted and influenced by a long history of colonial relations and inequalities between the two countries. It is a postcolonial context in which politics of representation and the symbolic power of colonialism are repeatedly evoked in an era of shifting social, political, and economic power relations at both micro and macro levels for Portuguese migrants and Angolans alike.

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Neu ausgehandelte (post)koloniale Beziehungen unter portugiesischen Migranten in Angola

Zusammenfassung: Der Autor untersucht die portugiesische Migrationswelle nach Luanda im ersten Jahrzehnt nach dem angolanischen Bürgerkrieg, in einer Phase also, die von extensivem Wirtschaftswachstum und neuen wirtschaftlichen Perspektiven gekennzeichnet ist. Er zeichnet ein differenziertes Bild der portugiesisch-angolanischen Beziehungen im heutigen Angola, die anders als in manchen offiziellen Darstellungen nicht unbedingt freundschaftlich und gar brüderlich sind. Der Autor unterscheidet soziale, kulturelle und historische Interpretationen der Migrationswelle und untersucht die Wirkung dieser Interpretationen auf Beziehungen, Identitäten, Gefühle und individuelle Einschätzungen des sozialen, politischen und historischen Umfelds, mit dem Menschen im heutigen Luanda tagtäglich konfrontiert sind – einer Hauptstadt, in der „koloniale Begegnungen in einem postkolonialen Umfeld" immer alltäglicher geworden sind. Geprägt von kolonialgeschichtlichen und lusotropikalistischen Mythen stehen in der Vorstellungswelt von Angolanern und Portugiesen (post)koloniale Ungleichheiten und ökonomische Chancen im Vordergrund, und an den Schnittstellen angolanischer und portugiesischer Kontakte in Angola bilden sich neue Machtkonstellationen.

Schlagwörter: Angola, Luanda, Portugal, Nord-Süd-Beziehungen, Internationale Arbeitskräftemigration, Gesellschaftliche Prozesse