

## **Lusofonia, Language Policies, and the Formation of Nation-States Mozambique**

---

**ABSTRACT:** The historicity of the Portuguese-language pathway as a symbolic object is not always visible. Portuguese, like all languages, exists in relation to other languages, and it is precisely this aspect that the term “Lusofonia” insists on silencing in multilingual countries, especially when it involves the long historical route that ranges from colonization to independence movements. The objective of this article is to present a set of linguistic and historical reflections on the Portuguese language in Mozambique.

**KEYWORDS:** multilingual countries, historicity, Mozambique.

---

### **Language as a Symbolic Object**

My focus has been to develop a discussion of the political in the organization of language policies, and vice versa, in countries linguistically colonized by Portugal.<sup>1</sup> I seek to understand how the language-production movement affects the political, producing the “need” for regulation. It is worth remarking here that the political is in the order of conflict (Orlandi 1990), and “it is typical of the division that affects language materially” (Guimarães 2004). The exercise of politics, in turn, is the exercise of legal and administrative regulation of conflict. As an example, I would mention a *découpage* of possible discussions concerning politics in language: deliberations about the name of the national language, or about which language will be the official one; considerations directed to linguistic protectionism, or whether teaching materials should be produced in minority languages; debates on behalf of a “lusophone community” in order to make it stronger, and so on. What we want to show with these *découpages* are discussions related to contexts in which the linguistic and the political cannot be dissociated in social practice but remain under the ideological effect of a naturalization of senses carried out by a historically hegemonic political-

ideological practice. The sociopolitical history of languages and linguistic ideas is also the history of the ever-confrontational route of national identities' sociopolitical construction.

### **Lusofonia: Past and Present**

Several articles collected in the book *A língua portuguesa: Presente e futuro* (2005), which includes papers presented at the international conference (2004) of the same title—both book and conference organized by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation—bring up the issue of “Lusofonia.” The expressions used, such as “lusophone space,” “Lusitanian-descendent communities,” “lusophone African countries,” and “lusophone world,” refer both to a geographical space and to a quality; therefore, they designate a territory not restricted to a specific geographical location since its unity is granted by the quality of being “lusophone.”

As it is well known, one's linguistic and cultural place of origin has a determining impact on one's linguistic practices and what one says. It is therefore quite understandable that many Portuguese politicians and intellectuals consider the term Lusofonia intrinsic to the history of Portugal. As Cristóvão states, “Lusofonia is not an artificial construct; it has gone through 500 years of history, it has many commercial, religious, scientific, and other relations of human dialogue. This is the reason why its existence finds justification” (Cristóvão 1991). Ferreira (1996) argues that, although there is no consensus on its use, the term always implies that the linguistic unity of the Portuguese language is an inheritance that favors homogeneous communication. Thus to speak of “Lusofonia” is to speak for or against a transnational territory marked by a language in its imaginary unity and homogeneity. Mello (1991), for example, attributes to the concept of Lusofonia “the sense of unity of the language practiced by speakers who keep a radical cultural identity between one another, in this case, the Luso-Christian culture.”

Here, the language issue is covered by a sociocultural policy, by a collection of ideas that adds to the term “Luso” a Christian value or a “symbolic return to the caravels,” as Aguiar e Silva (2005) remarks ironically. More recently, especially in discussions about the role of Brazil in formulating a state policy toward the internationalization of the Portuguese language, the concept of Lusofonia has begun to lose steam in light of new geopolitical configurations that give Brazilian Portuguese the leading role.<sup>2</sup>

### **Linguistic Colonization: Mozambique**

To discuss linguistic colonization (Mariani 2004) is to enter the core of the moments prior to the very idea of Lusofonia; that is, it is to seek to apprehend a complex and contradictory relationship between the homogeneity imposed by the colonizer and actual heterogeneity, between a desired imaginary unit and the fact of concrete diversity. In the discourses of colonization, the colonial Portuguese subject position, encumbered by six centuries of the Eurocentric gaze, guided by an ideology of *deficit*, and pointing to deficiencies in indigenous languages, affirms a completeness in the Portuguese language.

First, it should be noted that the Portuguese language as the language of colonization had a place of its own in sixteenth-century Europe, for it had gone through institutionalizing processes that granted it a symbolic value, specifically (a) a written form and (b) grammatization (cf. Auroux 1992 and Orlandi 2002); its standard norms were organized by the grammars of Fernão de Oliveira and João de Barros. The language had a legal-administrative function that legitimized royalty, a use in literature and translation, and was being taught with primers of its own. When I speak about “the Portuguese language,” I refer not only to the different linguistic practices used in the Portuguese territory but also to the constitutive image of this language as an imaginary unit (in opposition to dialectal diversity, in opposition to Latin and other European languages).

In the early centuries of discovery, linguistic expansion was the result of an ideology of national legitimacy enacted in terms of both an internal language policy of the Portuguese nation and the whole range of other unknown tongues, yet to be grammatized, taught, and translated. Once established, this nation-language relationship became an emblem of the real Portuguese sociopolitical order that was taken to the colonies.

### **Mozambique: Linguistic Oppression and Resistance**

Nowadays, among the ten most important sub-Saharan African languages, each with more than three million speakers, four are Bantu: “Kirwanda, Zulu, Xhosa and Emakhwa (Macua), the latter spoken only in Mozambique” (Rocha 2006, 14). According to many historians and linguists, as well as Mozambique’s 1997 population census, around sixty languages in the Bantu family, with their dialectal variations, are spoken in Mozambique. More than six million Mozambicans (40 percent of the population) speak Makua-Lomwe (*ibid.*, 19). In general, indigenous languages are used in the rural areas of the country (Firmino

2006). These languages are also used on the radio and on television talk shows, and in official statements, music, and the news. There are also cases of bilingualism in various regions of the country. The Protestant religious environment relies on the use of indigenous languages; in the Catholic Church, local languages are used less and, following the colonial ideology, Portuguese is more frequent (*ibid.*, 63–65).

This complex linguistic situation in Mozambique is not a recent development. The Portuguese decolonization of Africa began at the end of the nineteenth century with the Berlin Conference (1885) and the Brussels Conference (1887), which determined Europe's partition of Africa on the basis of uniform international rules for the occupation of territory. Land possession no longer depended on the rights arising from the discovery of African lands but rather on their effective territorial occupation. As a result of that international political reorganization, Portugal began administering its overseas territories with socio-educational measures that aimed at an effective subjugation and "civilization" of the African people by the introduction of Portuguese language and customs.

As I have written elsewhere (Mariani 2005 and 2007), decrees issued in 1845 and 1869 inaugurated a new educational system that "defined the different types of education to be provided to Africans and Europeans" (Ferreira 1996, 63). In the case of religious policy, the *modus operandi* was no different from what it had been in previous centuries: "Those in charge of the mission schools were mostly concerned with getting conversions. . . . The teaching was generally done in the local African language, and sometimes in Portuguese" (*ibid.*, 65). Thus only in the late nineteenth century did Portugal begin to implement a policy of making Portuguese the hegemonic, civilizing language.

As Firmino puts it:

Portuguese became the official language in which colonial policies were implemented. Portuguese was imposed as the symbol of the Portuguese cultural identity and became one of the most important instruments of the assimilationist policy promoted by the Portuguese authorities. In the context of colonial ideology, the natives could only become 'civilized' after demonstrating a mastery of the Portuguese language." (2006, 69)

Portuguese was imposed as the language of civilization with the aim of silencing indigenous African languages, which were not allowed at the institutional level. However, only a small part of the African population had access to school-

ing. Thus Portuguese became the language of the elite, the means of expression of the social class that occupied the most important positions in the colonial government in all urban centers.

Portugal's language policy in Africa had the dual purpose of enforcing domination and exclusion through the so-called democratization of access to school, and the imposition of one language to the exclusion of all others (as evidenced, for example, in Decree 6322, dated 24 December 1919, the Colonial Act of 1930, and Decree 31207, dated 4 May 1941). The legal discourse of these government decrees described the "primitive mentality" of the inhabitants of the African colonies and the need to bridge the gap between them and the Portuguese in terms of their degree of "civilization." Command of the Portuguese language, especially in its written form, as transmitted by the schools, could lead to prestigious social positions, though not, of course, for everyone.

During this period, the Portuguese colonizers invented the legal concept of assimilation. An African's status of being *assimilado* brought with it a "charter of citizenship" available to Africans who could successfully adopt Portuguese cultural, social, and linguistic practices. Mozambican society was thus divided into three categories: "White ('non-indigenous') Portuguese and their descendants, enjoying full rights of citizenship; 'assimilados,' Negroes who could read and write Portuguese and enjoyed, at least theoretically, the same rights as whites; and Negroes ('indigenous') that had no rights of any kind under the Portuguese law" (Rocha 2006, 47).

But there can be no linguistic colonization without linguistic resistance. In Mozambique, this resistance took the form of revolts in rural areas, strikes in urban areas, and cultural activities such as the foundation of the *Grêmio Africano de Lourenço Marques*—all ways to oppose the civilizing political ideology, with its overt language policy; African languages were still spoken, sung, and transmitted from generation to generation in the form of oral narratives. The resistance was carried out through the effective use and appreciation of those unwritten languages, and also by "journalists, writers and clerks," and other African professionals (*ibid.*), who devoted themselves to preserving African identity in general and Mozambican identity in particular.

In the early decades of the twentieth century a linguistic development gradually began to modify Mozambican communication practices (Auroux 1992), when African languages spoken in Mozambique started gaining traction in written form, primarily in the African press, a direct act of resistance and an

affront to the Portuguese colonizers. The press was run by a dissatisfied Mozambican elite “that used to circulate articles written in the local languages. . . . This presence of African references, however, was not enough to reduce the importance of the Portuguese language as an instrument of affirmation of the excluded” (Chaves 2005, 253, 236).

Thus resistance to the colonial oppressor materialized linguistically in two ways—in African languages, in both oral and written form, and in Portuguese. As a result, the communication practices of the Mozambican resistance, constitutively marked by linguistic heterogeneity, became contradictorily marked by more than one language of resistance in written form. When the struggle for decolonization began, the historicizing development of the Portuguese language gained another dimension: the language of independence began to compete with the colonizer’s language. That is, two senses of the Portuguese language started circulating: on the one hand, the memory of the colonizer’s language kept it as the language of oppression, while on the other hand, the (future) event of the revolution pointed to the Portuguese language as the language of revolution, a development made possible by the other local languages. Thus Portuguese linguistic colonization took place, as memory and oblivion did not lose their force but rather were absorbed and reframed by the elite and insurgents, causing a change in the uses of the Portuguese language as a symbolic object. This did not take place without tensions, as power relations work contradictorily and contradictions are inscribed in the language. This is what allows us to read the history of societies in the history of languages, and vice versa, as Orlandi (2002) has observed.

In Mozambique the ideology of the independence movement and the revolution was enshrined in armed struggle, in fighting for the dream of a socialist society, a revolutionary struggle that sought a political and ideological rupture with the previous political and social order. Beyond the separation from the colonial system, the revolution in Mozambique offers another alternative for the political system, based on another mode of production.

From a twenty-first-century perspective on the Mozambican revolution of the 1970s, the question of the colonizer’s language is added to the linguistic fact that there is an actual presence of local or native languages used by most of the population. The linguistic colonization of Mozambique did not take place in the same way as the linguistic colonization of Brazil: there was no investment in the grammatization of the Bantu languages, nor was there any investment,

until the twentieth century, in spreading Portuguese among the general population. During the revolutionary and postrevolutionary period, the question became how to speak to the rest of the modern world.

The revolution's leaders were in charge of making a difficult linguistic choice. Imposing Portuguese as the official language would allow external recognition—required for international relations—and lead to internal integration, as a single, unified language was fundamental for internal institutional balance. Although they chose the language of the former colonizer, it is worth posing the question: how could the language of a former colonizer, even as the official language, be considered the national language (Firmino 2006, 45)? After all, if a language is to be chosen for the sake of national integration, shouldn't it be familiar to all Mozambicans? Portuguese was a foreign language, spoken by a small elite, and it became a bargaining chip in the Portuguese assimilationist policy.

### **Frelimo and Political Discourse on Languages**

To present an outline of the Mozambican revolutionary movement and the politics of language proposed by the Mozambican government after independence, let us turn to the third edition of Armando Pedro Muiuane's *Datas e documentos da história da FRELIMO* (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, or the Liberation Front of Mozambique). This book (2006) is a compilation of documents of the First National Information Seminar, held in Maputo in 1977, two years after Mozambique's independence, and provides the basis for a discussion about language and political discourse in Mozambique. This political discourse was built on behalf of the collectivity and its future, and was produced by Mozambican leaders at two important historical moments: during the sixteen years of the revolutionary war and after the declaration of independence in 1975.

The effective demarcation, domination, and administration of the Mozambican territory took place between 1850 and 1930 and saw many wars. While these internal events were occurring, Mozambicans were exploited as a workforce in a system of forced labor in the South African mines (Rocha 2006, 45). With the end of World War II, the Portuguese government increased and promoted white immigration, even as workers seeking opportunities began to flow in. Meanwhile, a "small assimilated elite" with access to nationalist ideas put into action the project for independence and decolonization. Portuguese repression was organized by the PIDE (Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado, or International and State Defense Police), which arrested, deported, and killed Mozambi-

can rebels but was not able to stop the production and circulation of literary and journalistic manifestos by João Dias, Marcelino dos Santos, the writers Bertina Lopes and Malangatana Ngwenya, the poet Noemia de Sousa, the journalist and poet Jose Craveirinha, and the musician Fany Mpfumo (ibid., 50, 59)

In an effort to secure its overseas territory, Portugal changed its colonial policy in 1961—abolishing the Statute of Indigenato (Decree 43.983, which defined the difference between settler-citizens and native subjects in colonial Mozambique), forced labor, and the compulsory teaching of culture—and started promoting schooling, even creating an institution of higher education (ibid., 50). With the abolition of the Statute of Indigenato, the “indigenous population” and the *assimilados* became citizens overnight, but this did not mean that access to education and opportunities available to the white elite became available to all Mozambicans. Nor did it mean that the Portuguese language would become the mother tongue.

After the assassination of Eduardo Mondlane and Sebastian Mabote, Samora Machel—another revolutionary leader and the president of the National Liberation Front—commented on the fallacy of the assimilation policy in a 1968 interview with the historian Basil Davidson:

I managed to get some education, and completed a technical course in nursing [one of the best job opportunities open to *assimilados* in Portuguese Africa]. During our practice, we socialized with white people, and only after receiving the diploma did we discover the different treatment, different attitudes toward us and them. We also found out that the level of wages was different. . . . Even so, they wanted me to accept the *assimilado* status. My father was against it and so was I. Why? Because I knew what the real situation of the assimilated was, it was the same as the indigenous. Later I had to become an *assimilado* in order to look for a better job, but I was never able to get it. (Quoted in Muiwane 2006, 93)

It is worth remarking here that the revolutionary leaders used both Portuguese and their own African mother tongues. Eduardo Mondlane, for example, at the request of a church minister, wrote his autobiography in the “Changane language” (ibid., 7). The language issue is addressed in Frelimo’s political discourse, and linked to a broader debate between honoring and upholding the language and customs of Mozambique’s many tribes and privileging the project of national unity.



At Frelimo's 1967 Congress, the party defined itself as a "nationalist political organization, composed of elements from all parts, from national tribes or ethnic groups" (ibid., 85). Frelimo sought to define the cultural traits in the Mozambican panorama that would allow a mapping of tribes and ethnic groups and an incorporation of their meaning in the struggle for national liberation. Examining the Mozambican population on the basis of linguistic criteria in 1967, the existence of seven ethnic or tribal groups can be inferred. Linguistic diversity, however, did "not mean 'that the cultural manifestations of a tribe are completely foreign to those of other tribes. . . . We all belong to our Bantu linguistic family, characterized by an identical grammatical form, words of the same origin, equal phrase and sentence structures'" (Muiuane 2006, 81, emphasis added). The designation of belonging was made in an inclusive and generalized way, marked by the use of the first-person-plural "we all" and "our Bantu linguistic family." The seven tribes or ethnic groups were all related by the "same origin" of "grammatical form," "words," and "phrase and sentence structures." The differences between ethnic groups were defined not as linguistic or cultural but as economic, based on material conditions, occupation, and region.

According to Muiuane, the main vector of difference between the various tribes was defined by colonialism, which "imposed a forced geographical separation." Without colonialism, Muiuane says, "it does not sound like an exaggeration to say" that a "natural process of social and cultural assimilation . . . would have taken place, and after a few centuries the different ethnic groups would have merged into a single one" (82) as a consequence of the historical process resulting from intertribal wars that produced an amalgamation of usages and customs. This story is told from the perspective of the African rebel Eduardo Mondlane, who conveys the sense of an unfulfilled past and implies that a different history might have unfolded in Mozambique had Portugal not colonized the country: "Aware of the cultural and historical contradictions between us, the Portuguese used them, maneuvering one tribe against another. . . . We still lack a national consciousness" (quoted in ibid., 152, emphasis added).

Frelimo's political discourse builds links between the need to unite as a form of resistance, the struggle against the colonizer, and a suspended past. Mondlane's evocation of Mozambique's missed opportunity to transform tribal differences into a future of unity weaves a path between the struggle for independence—which might have failed owing to the quality of being Mozambican—and a potential future harmony. The construction of this political

discourse was felt to be a necessary unifying factor in the political war for independence. Mondlane is saying that only “in the unity of various tribal groups would our people have been able to resist the European invaders,” who “exploited all of us without any distinction” and “enslaved us all” (82). The past-subjunctive verb tense—“would have been able”—evokes the wistful hope of an unrealized potential. “The National Liberation Struggle,” says Mondlane, “is itself a process that *creates a new reality*. While our past was characterized by linguistic, cultural and historical divisions, our *future* is being established on the basis of unity” (85, emphasis added).

In 1970, with the death of Eduardo Mondlane, Samora Machel was elected president of Frelimo. Salazar’s government in Portugal fell in 1974, and on 7 September, after a twelve-year war, Frelimo and the Portuguese government signed a peace agreement. On 25 June 1975, the anniversary of Frelimo’s founding, Mozambique proclaimed its independence and the project of national reconstruction began.

### **Postindependence Discourse**

On 20 September 1974 the transitional government led by Frelimo published a long statement addressed to Mozambicans in which it enumerated the tasks ahead as well as the primary political and economic issues facing the nation, giving priority to education and culture. The statement put combating illiteracy on a par with the struggle against “ignorance, obscurantism, superstition, individualism, selfishness, elitism, greed, racial discrimination, [and] gender-based discrimination.” These were the foundations of a revolutionary movement that aimed to “create a new man with a new mentality” (Muiuane 2006, 217).

At the Mocuba Congress, held in February 1975, these goals were reaffirmed and the theme of national unity was reasserted, with educational and language policies at its center. An explicit policy on literacy and language was aimed at the majority of the population, which did not speak Portuguese. If the Mozambican people were to assume power and gain access to worldwide communication, “the provincial-level study of Portuguese” had to become “mandatory, since it is the vehicle of communication that attends to actual conditions” (Muiuane 2006, 301).

The Portuguese language is the medium of communication between all Mozambicans, and it can break the language barriers created by the mother

languages. Through it, FRELIMO's party ideology, which embodies the interests of the working masses and expresses the revolutionary values, is widespread and studied to be applied, guiding our people in the struggle for the creation of a more just, prosperous and happy socialist society. The Portuguese language is also the language of communication for scientific and technical knowledge. . . . Also, by using the Portuguese language we can communicate with other people in the world, transmitting our people's rich experience and receiving the contribution of the world's cultural heritage. (speech by Frelimo's minister of education and culture's, quoted in Firmino 2006, 141)

With independence, then, the Mozambican state established a policy under which Portuguese became the official language and was expected to operate symbolically as an element of national unity. This institutionalization of Portuguese (formalized in the 1990 constitution), cemented the disjuncture between the national languages and the official language of Mozambique, which was still a foreign language for most of the population.

The revolutionary government had decided that the best way to accomplish its legal and linguistic ideal of homogenizing and unifying citizens was through the adoption of Portuguese as the official national language. Both a restatement and a disruption of the "ancient equivalence" of language and nation (Auroux 1992), this decision envisioned a unified future for Mozambique by denying and silencing the other languages in use in the Mozambican territory.

Let us remember that during the revolutionary war, language differences were both minimized and valued (considering "our common Bantu origin") and defended as part of the nation to be built. With the end of the revolution and the constitution of the Mozambican nation-state, language became both a tool that would promote national unity and a way to defend other tribal languages. Portuguese was already a "prestigious language . . . used institutionally, which would operate as a distinct mark of people's identity" (Firmino 2006, 164), whereas African languages had not yet been grammaticized, and no single native language was common throughout the Mozambican territory. Firmino observes that the choice of Portuguese was related to "the fact that elites integrated in state institutions . . . did not know the native languages well enough to use them as working languages in official activities" (ibid.). In other words, African languages had never been employed in prestigious, official, institutional contexts.

The state, however, recognized the political need to use native languages as a means of addressing Mozambicans who did not speak Portuguese. At the First National Information Seminar, held in Maputo in 1977, “it was decided that the Mozambican languages would be used in the mass media, especially on radio broadcasting, . . . as an irreplaceable means to make their action effective among broad masses. Every trace of regionalist and tribal content must be removed. . . . The programs in Mozambican languages and dialects shall be concerned with encouraging the learning of Portuguese” (Proceedings of the First National Information Seminar 1977, 73).

In the early postindependence years, the official political discourse ran the decolonization process in Portuguese and, at the same time, kept the prestige of other indigenous languages alive: as the minister of education put it, they were a “rich depository”; “the main constituent elements of our cultural uniqueness live and are preserved” in them (quoted in Firmino 2006, 164). However, without promoting the study and grammatization of those languages—that is, without providing them with grammars and dictionaries, the language tools necessary for their dissemination and institutionalization, especially in the educational environment—the “rich depository” was restricted to representing the roots of identity, the origins of the genuine native traditions, almost as in nineteenth-century romantic discourse.

For Firmino and other intellectuals, this is the locus of a strong contradiction in Mozambican official political discourse: on the one hand, the tribal languages were considered the expression of Mozambican identity,<sup>3</sup> symbolic objects of national identity, but nothing was done to give them the prestige of Portuguese; on the other hand, Portuguese could not play the symbolic unifying role that its proponents desired. As Firmino puts it, “The official discourse designates native languages as *Mozambican languages*, or *national languages*, but never as *ethnic languages*. In contrast, it refers to Portuguese as the *official language* or the *language of national unity*, but never as a *Mozambican language*, neither as a *national language*” (166, emphasis added).

Still, it is interesting that during those early years of decolonization nothing was said about the social differences produced by the use of Portuguese itself. Nothing was said, either, about the potential changes it would create in this African region. The Portuguese language was seen not as an inheritance but as an instrument intended to be neutral, an academic, educated, political tool for the use of politicians. Its use, however, delineated social position, drawing bound-

aries between those fluent in Portuguese and those illiterate in the language of the colonizers.<sup>4</sup>

In those early years, as José Luís Cabaço noted, not everyone shared the ideal of a “Portuguese language with a Mozambican personality.” Thus, paradoxically, instead of promoting national unity, the Portuguese language excluded and divided people, promoting internal differences between rural and urban areas, between the educated and the uneducated, the literate and the illiterate. Traces of the ideological function of Portuguese as the language of colonization, however unwelcome and unintentional, tainted the choice of Portuguese as Mozambique’s official language.

Only in the 1980s, after much resistance by intellectuals, writers, and members of the government, did a new phase in Mozambique’s linguistic and cultural history begin, with the mapping of linguistic diversity in Mozambique and a decision to promote some languages to the status of national languages, seeking to encourage bilingualism in schools and cultural activities (Firmino 2006, 168). Debate about the place and meaning of the Portuguese language in the Mozambican state started taking place. For the first time discussion began to include the notion of “Mozambicanizing” the Portuguese language. A 1983 report from the Department of Culture noted that “the Portuguese spoken in Mozambique shall necessarily change and distance itself from the Portuguese from Portugal because the Mozambican reality, different from the one in Portugal, has its own course of development” (quoted in *ibid.*, 169). This form of the language was given the derogatory name “pretoguês” (black Portuguese), which, according to Firmino, referred to “incorrect forms” of the language (146) traditionally associated with African speakers.

The opposition between Portuguese and pretoguês signifies a language with a stabilized writing system, on the one hand, and a form of the language that has been historicized and modified and has incorporated features of the native language and culture. One learned the aseptic language in school, but most of the Mozambican population, as we have seen, spoke the modified language, a function of the way in which linguistic colonization was carried out.

The Portuguese/pretoguês opposition ascribes ideological value to the institutional knowledge of those who learn European Portuguese. It marks the difference between the official language—organized and systematized in grammar books and taught in schools—and the fluid language of the streets and hamlets (Orlandi 2009, 18). Perhaps the expression “pretoguês” reflects the way

in which the historicizing process of Portuguese developed in other places and times, something that the revolutionary government only began to appreciate and incorporate in the 1980s.

The process of acknowledging that the Portuguese language is not an asset to be preserved but a symbolic object, a language pervaded by a historical process in which other languages have interfered, is already under way in Mozambique. In its historical and ideological operation, the Portuguese language in Mozambique has been changing: phonetic-phonological alterations, lexical and morphosyntactic modifications, and neologisms have been observed and are beginning to be perceived as an indication of a truly Mozambican Portuguese (Firmino 2006, 146–50).

### **Final Considerations: The State and the Languages**

A review of Mozambique's language policy is now under way, with several plans and proposals being debated. The likely outcome of this debate is the continuation of Portuguese as the official national language. In addition, however, some native languages will probably also be granted the status of national languages. Bilingualism is likely to be promoted, with schooling in those languages and their use in public administration virtually guaranteed.

I have observed elsewhere, in a discussion of the relationship between language and economics (Mariani 2008), that nowadays we must pay critical attention to political discourses that see language as an economic variable. Some linguists argue that politicians and economists must take into account the relationship between languages and the labor market—the cost-benefit calculus of an employee's acquisition of a second language, for example. Unless there is a government incentive, or the prospect of a wage increase, workers tend to speak only their native language. But is that really the best way to look at the question? Does it really make sense to frame the issue as an opposition between learning a new language and forsaking one's native language for the sake of financial gain?

I have also called attention to other discourses that claim the benefits and the inevitability of globalization and the formation of a single world market, with a common currency and a common language. Those discourses maintain that the multiplicity of languages is a barrier to trade and to the mobility of labor and technology. Linguistic boundaries are thus viewed as obstacles to economic integration, and the problem is particularly pronounced for the poorest coun-

tries, where multilingualism can slow modernization. From this perspective, an “ideal” economy implies a single language.

But is this really the point? Should we really be asking people to give up their native languages for the sake of national economic growth? I would pose the following question: given that the term “Lusofonia” originated (or, as some maintain, was appropriated) some forty years ago, in the era of the African movements for independence, perhaps it makes sense that there would have been an attempt to defend the hegemony of Portuguese at that time. But haven’t things changed enough since then to make this term, and the ideology it embodies, obsolete?

#### NOTES

1. The archive I have built to write about Mozambique began with my trip to that country in 2010. I want to acknowledge here my deep gratitude to Brazilian researchers Rita Chaves (USP) and Laura Padilla (UFF). In Maputo, I thank the historian Antonio Sopa, director of the Historical Archives, and Matheus Ângelus, director of the library at the Portuguese embassy in Maputo. I also want to thank José Luiz Cabaço, who helped me understand how the history and economic and political direction of the Mozambican revolution is permeated by the language issue. I extend my thanks to Gregório Firmino, a Mozambican linguist whom I met in Brazil and whose book I quote countless times. I also want to acknowledge the importance of the intensive and extensive theoretical and analytical production of my fellow researchers involved in the History of Linguistic Ideas project, whose contribution is recorded in these pages. Finally, without the support of CNPq’s productivity scholarship, the trip to Maputo would not have been possible. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

2. Cf. Zoppi-Fontana’s edited volume (2009), especially Zoppi-Fontana’s article “The Portuguese from Brazil as a Transnational Language.”

3. It is worth quoting Firmino here: “In fact, I have already heard many people inquiring one’s Mozambican identity by asking the following questions: ‘What kind of Mozambican would not know a Mozambican language?’” (Firmino 2006, 66n64).

4. “Addressing a stranger in an autochthonous language in Maputo may be regarded as an offense or a sign of tribalism,” Firmino observes (2006, 144). Firmino calls the Mozambicans’ appropriation of Portuguese “nativization.”

#### WORKS CITED

Aguiar e Silva, Vitor. “Contributos para uma política da língua portuguesa.” In *A língua portuguesa: Presente e futuro*, ed. Adriano Moreira et al., 25–36. Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2005.

- Auroux, Sylvain. *A revolução tecnológica da gramatização*. Campinas: Ed. da Unicamp, 1992.
- Balibar, R. *Le français fictif*. Paris: Hachette, 1974.
- Bonvini, E., and Margarida M. T. Petter. *Portugais du Brésil et langues africaines*. Paris: Larousse, 1998.
- Chaves, Rita. *Angola e Moçambique. Experiência colonial e territórios literários*. São Paulo, Ateliê Editorial, 2005.
- Cristóvão, Fernando. “Hoje ninguém se acha dono da língua portuguesa—Todos nos entendemos como condôminos da língua.” *Nortisul* 1 (July–September 1991): 16–34.
- Ferreira, Maria José Simões de Brito Lopes. “A lusofonia e a política da língua e da cultura: A cooperação com os países africanos lusófonos.” PhD diss., Universidade Aberta, Lisbon, 1996.
- Firmino, Gregório. *A questão lingüística na África pós-colonial. O caso do Português e das línguas autóctones em Moçambique*. Maputo: Texto Editores, 2005.
- Guimarães, Eduardo. *História da semântica: Sujeito, sentido e gramática no Brasil*. Campinas: Pontes, 2004.
- Gonçalves, Perpétua. “A formação de variedades africanas do português: Argumentos para uma abordagem multidimensional.” In *Moreira, A língua portuguesa: presente e futuro*, 223–42.
- Mariani, Bethania. *Colonização lingüística: Língua, política e religião (Brasil e Estados Unidos da América, séculos XVI a XVIII)*. Campinas: Pontes, 2004.
- . “Da colonização lingüística portuguesa à economia neoliberal: nações plurilingües.” In *Gragoatá*, número 19. Niterói: EDUFF, 2005.
- . “A institucionalização da língua, história e cidadania no Brasil do século XVIII: O papel das academias literárias e da política do Marquês de Pombal.” In *Construção do saber metalingüístico e constituição da língua nacional*, ed. Eni Orlandi, 99–124. Campinas: Pontes, 2001; Cáceres: Unemat Editora, 2001.
- . *Língua e conhecimento lingüístico: Para uma história das idéias no Brasil*. São Paulo: Cortez Editora, 2002.
- . “Quanto vale uma língua? Custo e benefício político nas relações econômicas e lingüísticas.” In Ana Cristina dos Santos, Claudia Almeida, and Geraldo Pontes Jr. (orgs.), *Relações Literárias Internacionais II; Interseções e fricções entre fônias*. Niterói, Rio de Janeiro: Editora da Universidade Federal Fluminense & de Letras, 2008.
- Mello, Gladstone Chaves de. “Lusofonia.” *Nortisul* 1 (July–September 1991).
- Moreira, Adriano, et al., eds. *A língua portuguesa: Presente e futuro*. Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2005.
- Muiuane, Armando Pedro. *Datas e documentos da história da FRELIMO*. 3rd ed. Maputo: Ciedima SARL, 2006.
- Orlandi, E. *Terra à vista. Discurso do confronto: velho e novo mundo*. São Paulo: Cortez Editora, 1990.



- . *Língua brasileira e outrashistórias. Discurso sobre a língua e ensino no Brasil*. Campinas: RG Editora, 2009.
- Proceedings of the First National Information Seminar*. Maputo, 1977.
- Rocha, Aurélio. *Moçambique: história e cultura*. Maputo: Texto Editores, 2006.
- Zoppi-Fontana, Monica G. *Português do Brasi como língua transnacional*. Campinas: RG Editora, 2010.

BETHANIA MARIANI is professor of linguistics at the Universidade Federal Fluminense. She specializes in discourse analysis and the history of linguistic ideas. In 2006 she edited a book on discourse analysis and psychoanalysis. She has been a visiting scholar at Stanford University (2001–2002). Dr. Mariani is a senior researcher at CNPq. Her current research project focuses on “O brasileiro hoje: língua, cultura e novas relações sociais.” She is the editor and author of several books, among them *Colonização linguística: linguas, política e religião no Brasil (séculos XVI a XVIII) e nos Estados Unidos da América (século XVIII)* and *O PCB e a imprensa: o imaginário sobre o PCB nos jornais (1922–1989)*. She may be reached at [bmariani@terra.com.br](mailto:bmariani@terra.com.br).