

LUSOPHONY RISKS TO BE A HERITAGE WITH NO FUTURE

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Introduction

We are accustomed to think of Lusophony through the cultural value of the Portuguese language, which represents, in essence, a relatively consistent space of intercontinental dialogue, directed to the construction, as Manuel Castells (2010, 8) explains, of a certain identity process. The speech of Lusophony has almost always been associated with some kind of historical-cultural geopolitics, in a kind of unity in diversity, whose various components - namely in language, in the natives, in gastronomy, in music and lyrics, in customs, in published writing, painting, cinematography, and architecture - align themselves as if it was a search for immateriality between political and cultural myths.

This debate evolved, in a second moment, to the narrative of the economic value of the Portuguese language, understood here in the definition presented by Bart Vanspauwen (2011, 69) as a political, economic and cultural space. The discussion of the value of the language *tout court*, without other components, ends up being transposed to the limitation of the very size of the lusophone space, whose genesis constitutes a historical constant. In order to emphasize the importance of multilingualism, Émilie Tran² (2016) refers to the English language as the “frank language” of globalization, seeking to accentuate the inequality of the number of speakers, when the English and

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² Tran, Émilie. “Lusofonia e Francofonia: os desafios da diversidade cultural”. Plataforma Macau. <http://www.plataformamacau.com/seccoes/opiniao/emilie-tran-lusofonia-e-francofonia-os-desafios-da-diversidade-cultural/> (June, 2017).

Chinese languages are placed on one side of the scale and, on the other, languages like Portuguese and French. However, precisely because the value of Lusophony is multi-partisan, the discussion that this research seeks to open refocuses on another perspective, perhaps complementary.

In fact, as one who combines the fundamental elements of a certain Portuguese-speaking geo-economy, it is recognized that the sea also represents another element of geopolitical unity and that both - the history-language-culture and geographical position thought through the sea -, exactly what Ernâni Lopes called “*the potential of development as a network space*” (2008, 3). It is precisely this articulation between history-language-culture and geographical position, which is the essential element of the Constitutive Declaration of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) (1996), when it took as its main purpose “*to make the tricontinental dialogue consistent and to decentralize it*”, recognizing that the CPLP constitutes *itself* “as a geographically discontinuous space but identified by the common language.”

Thus, the main goal of this research lies in the study of one of the characteristics that confer geopolitical unity, the position in the “Lusophone Sea”, associated with the intercontinental territorial discontinuity of Lusophony, based on the Chinese One Belt, One Road (B&R), presented in 2013, by President Xi Jinping. In this perspective, we recall the words of Mia Couto, when she said that “*yesterday, the sea was what language can be today, just beat some adamastores*”. I believe that it is time to combine history, culture, language and the sea as geopolitically relevant elements, in the desirable conciliation of a certain economic-diplomacy of Lusophony, in the face of the Chinese B&R strategy, which articulates a new model of exchange based on investment and infrastructure, as accessibility platforms. Modern understanding of geo-economics combines history, culture and geographical position to create a positive-sum of economic security opportunities. The position and the historical-cultural-linguistic dimension should be understood as permanent facilitators in the relational reference space. In fact, the maritime domain associated with the geographical position gives a contextual meaning and is likely to build a privileged route of contact.

The MSAR in Lusophony

The historical-cultural-economic role of the Macao Special Administrative Region of China (MSAR) in the context of the special relationship with Lusophony can be organized in four essential areas: (1) the use of language - the official use of Portuguese in the apparatus judicial and public administra-

tion of the territory; the permanent support to the teaching of the Portuguese language to Portuguese teachers in Macao and mainland China by the hands of the Polytechnic Institute of Macau, the Portuguese Institute of the Orient, the University of Macau and the University of São José; the curriculum development of the Portuguese in the training of bilingual staff with particular emphasis on the Macau Portuguese School; and the continuous support for Patuá, as a historical heritage and part of the immaterial heritage of the Macanese people; (2) the organization of collective events - religious in nature such as the processions of Our Lord Bom Jesus dos Passos and Our Lady of Fatima; of an artistic and gastronomic nature such as the annual festival of Lusophony, the Rota das Letras initiative, the Macao International Music Festival, the Macao Parade, Latin City, Arraial de São João; of a sporting nature as were the first Lusophony games (2006), the existence of the Association of Portuguese Speaking Olympic Committees (ACOLOP); of economic nature, covering a wide range of trade fairs and conventions³, trade representations⁴ and bilateral meetings; (3) publications in Portuguese - particularly a large part of the daily press, the Macao Magazine, the publication in Official Gazette of all legislation applicable to Macao; (4) the institutionalization of practices - There are numerous aspects concerning the institutionalization of practices that are relevant to this context but, for space-saving reasons, we will point out only two that are interrelated. On one hand, the establishment of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries⁵ as a cooperation mechanism in the service of Chinese economic diplomacy, in which the MSAR functions as the administrative entity that operates it. On the other hand, the systematic use,

3 Macao Exhibition and Conference. Feiras do Comércio e Convenções em Macau. <http://www.ipim.gov.mo/pt-pt/macao-exhibition-and-conference/> (July, 2017).

4 Delegation of Macao Special Administrative Region in Beijing, Economic and Commercial Delegation of Macao, in Lisbon; Macao Economic and Trade Delegation to the European Union, in Brussels; Macao Economic and Trade Delegation to the World Trade Organization (WTO); Macao Economic and Cultural Delegation in Formosa Island. https://www.economia.gov.mo/pt_PT/web/public/pg_eetr_tr?_refresh=true. (July, 2017).

5 The Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries (Macao), hereinafter referred to as the “Macau Forum”, was established in October 2003 on the initiative of the Central Government of China and in coordination with seven countries of Portuguese Official Language, namely Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Timor-Leste and with the cooperation of the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR). In March 2017, São Tomé and Príncipe, that became the eighth Portuguese-speaking country participant. The Macao Forum is a multilateral mechanism for intergovernmental cooperation and aims to consolidate the economic and trade exchange between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, using Macao as a platform for linking the Participating Countries. <http://www.forumchinaplp.org.mo/?lang=en> (August, 2017).

in institutional terms, of the concept of Portuguese-speaking countries. In fact, the Macao Forum marginalizes collaboration with the CPLP as such, to the detriment of its essential objective, that is, collaboration with the Portuguese-speaking countries *tout court*, always associating with a certain idea of Lusophony. As an example, see the existence of a China-Portuguese-speaking Countries Cooperation and Development Fund, and there is no financial mechanism for CPLP-China cooperation (note that it does not refer to China-CPLP). The Macao Forum discriminates against CPLP negatively, mainly because it has no political-economic dimension fixed. The confrontation between two approaches of the concept of Lusophony seems evident. On one hand, from the Chinese perspective, Lusophony seems to correspond to the result of a collective heritage in individual performance, taking it as eight differentiated cultural and economic units, which use a common language. Our approach to the concept of Lusophony believes that it is possible to give it a geopolitical meaning that is close to it, in the context of its whole, as a space of will, both cultural and economic. For this reason, we will use the idea of CPLP to the detriment of the concept of officially Portuguese-speaking countries.

Figure 1-CPLP and its Center of Gravity in the South Atlantic



Source: Elaborated by the Author

The CPLP and the B&R

The idea of the CPLP has been associated with a community of approximately 255 million inhabitants, spread over nine states that occupy about

10,742,000 km²⁶ in four continents, directly covering six (5 + 1) Regional Economic Communities⁷. In fact, the CPLP market and the three African regional economic communities represent more than 800 million consumers in 40 states. From the geopolitical point of view, the CPLP develops from its center of gravity, in a geographically discontinuous space, where the maritime dimension and the historical-cultural elements, namely the language, are the vectors of continuity and contact, with a network of other economic and cultural spaces, which are presented in the context of interregional and transcontinental relations. Indeed, the position of the CPLP, whose geopolitical centrality is based on the South Atlantic, especially in the area between the Tropic of Cancer and Capricorn, combined with the geo-economic and geo-cultural insertion of its Member States in the context of the Regional Economic Communities in Europe (European Union), Africa⁸, South East Asia (ASEAN) and South America (MERCOSUR), is one of the most promising aspects of this intergovernmental organization's potential achievements.

CPLP's geopolitical center of gravity is located in the South Atlantic zone, comprised in the space "between the tropics", developing from the maritime component to the terrestrial component. Considering the Exclusive Economic Zones of the nine CPLP Member States, the expansion of the continental shelf, the scope of responsibility for Search and Rescue (SAR), Flight Information Region (FIR), and the diaspora itself, the CPLP geopolitical center of gravity is only disturbed by the existence of two archipelagos over British sovereignty⁹. Thus, the CPLP's geopolitical center of gravity relies on three regional dominants and three interregional support points, which eventually connect the five continents. The three regional dominants are: Guinea-Bissau - Cape Verde; Equatorial Guinea - São Tomé and Príncipe - Angola; Angola - Mozambique. The three interregional support points are: Portugal, East Timor and Macao (China). Brazil represents the dominant regional basis.

(A) Firstly, the CPLP's geopolitical center of gravity is based on the dominant regional South Atlantic, which is developed from the exceptional geographical position of the Cape Verde-Guinea-Bissau axis, with possibil-

6 The terrestrial dimension of the CPLP occupies 7.2% of our planet, not counting the Exclusive Economic Zones and the spaces of responsibility in terms of search and rescue (SAR).

7 The Regional Economic Communities (RECs) of the African Union. United Nations. <http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/peace/recs.shtml> (July, 2017).

8 The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

9 In the space between the tropics, the Ascension Islands and St. Helena. Out of the space between the tropics, but still in the South Atlantic, the Tristan da Cunha Islands, South Georgia, the Sandwich Islands and the Falkland Islands.

ities to explore the relative proximity between its extremes. Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau are located in the Western part of the Sahel Region near the Gulf of Guinea, one of the areas with the highest commercial potential in Africa. Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau are members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a regional group composed of 15 Member States, including Nigeria, founded in 1975 by the Treaty of Lagos and representing a community of approximately 349 million consumers (2015), spread over an area of 5,144,162 km². In particular, Proença Garcia (2017, 99) refers to Cape Verde as having “... an integrating role of the entire Atlantic Area due to its geographic location that enhances diverse belongings”. Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau also occupy a unique geo-economic position, dominating the air navigation routes towards Europe and the American Continent, both to the northwest towards the USA, and to the southwest toward Brazil. Cooperation with China under the B & R initiative can boost its airport infrastructures by allowing a flow of materials and services to the entire Sahel region, Central Africa and the Mediterranean region, the European Union, the Strait of Gibraltar, The Middle East and North Africa (MENA), especially to and from the American Continent. Cape Verde’s position from a geostrategic perspective is also particularly interesting as a point of support in transcontinental access, especially in the maritime route of the Panama Canal or in the future maritime option, through the channel of Nicaragua, linking the Caribbean Sea to the Pacific Ocean. The position of Guinea-Bissau is of particular interest in maritime access in the so-called “Sahel Silk Road”¹⁰ context. Recent Chinese investment projects in Cape Verde¹¹ with the creation of a Special Trade Area, and in Guinea-Bissau¹² new Bissau International Airport, in the extension of the old airport, in the construction of the fishing port of Pikil, (northeast of Guinea-Bissau), and at the deep water port in Buba, leave no doubt about the value that the Cape Verde-Guinea-Bissau axis has for Chinese diplomacy in the context of the B&R initiative.

(B) Secondly, the CPLP’s geopolitical center of gravity is based on the regional dominant South Atlantic, which is developed in the context of the Guinean Gulf, supported by the Equatorial Guinean - São Tomé and Príncipe - Angola triangle. In fact, due to the geographic proximity of these states,

¹⁰ The name Sahel comes from the Arabic word “border or margin”. This region is associated with a sort of “southern border” between the Sahara desert and a transition zone between the desert and central tropical Africa.

¹¹ “China supports the creation of a Special Economic Zone on the Cape Verdean island of São Vicente.” Sapó 24 http://24.sapo.pt/noticias/internacional/artigo/china-apoia-criacao-de-zona-economica-especial-na-ilha-cabo-verdiana-de-sao-vicente_22406550.html (July, 2017).

¹² “China confirms investments in Guinea-Bissau”. RFI, France Médias Monde. <http://en.rfi.fr/guine-bissau/20160411-china-confirm-investments-na-guine-bissau> (August, 2017).

together with the ease of communicability from Naval Air from its river and island position, as well as the significant size that the Naval Air Space occupies in the context of the Gulf of Guinea. Equatorial Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe and Angola are members of the 10-member Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), which was set up in Libreville, Gabon, in December 1981. ECCAS now represents a approximately 163 million consumers (2015), spread over an area of 6,641,000 km², or 22% of the African territory¹³. The triangle Equatorial Guinea - São Tomé and Príncipe - Angola dominates a large part of the Gulf of Guinea and its accesses, especially from the south and extends into the central interior of Africa from ECCAS to Niger, to the Chad, the Central African Republic and Cameroon. In addition to these reasons, there is also the development of the so-called Western African Railways which will link Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad, further boosting trade, the position of São Tomé and Príncipe, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Equatorial Guinea, in particular regarding raw materials and value-added goods. Also in this context, access to Lake Chad (whose waters link Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad) is particularly important as a platform for access to the heart of Africa and the south-western part of the Sahel.

(C) Thirdly, the center of geopolitical gravity of the CPLP is strengthened by the axis of the states of Angola and Mozambique that have a unique coastal position in relation to the control of the air routes between American, African and Asian Continents. This axis dominates the access routes to inland states, such as Zambia, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo, from its continental and riverine geographical position. In addition to this fact, the presence of the CPLP materializes in two Oceans: Atlantic and Indian. Both states are members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), established in 1992 based on the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) established in 1980. The SADC comprises 15 member-states and represents (2009) approximately 277 million consumers, distributed over 554,919 km². Angola is also the only



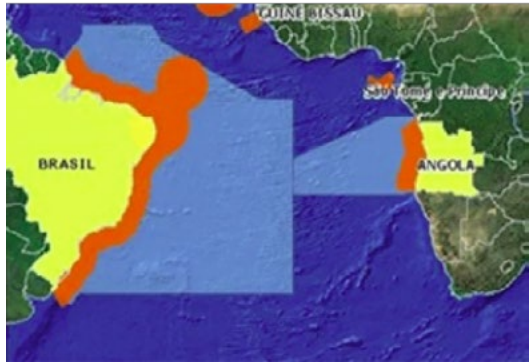
Source: Thompson and Muggah (2015)

¹³ Africa's Trade Potential 2016: The ECCAS Region: the belly belt of Africa, 5. <http://coega.co.za/DataRepository/Documents/AJmQ1w9dNAL77ToKQZuBcCP6i.PDF> (July, 2017).

State of the CPLP that integrates two African economic communities: EC-CAS and SADC. In particular, Angola and Mozambique constitute important points of support for maritime navigation through the Cape Route, as an alternative to the Suez Canal. The Strait of Mozambique plays a key geopolitical role in accessing African markets, from the sea routes that sail to the southwest, from the Strait of Malacca or simply from the Adamam Sea or the Arabian Sea (from a Chinese perspective). The penetrating railroad - Zambia - Angola - Malawi - Tanzania (Mtwara) - from the Nacala corridor and the deep water port of Beira, offer privileged land access to the heart of Africa (i.e. the Victoria Lakes region, Malawi, and Tanganyika). In turn, Angola has been the subject of large Chinese investments, especially airport and railway infrastructures. Also in this area, the Lobito (Angola) - Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania) rail link, the trans-African motorway (Angola-Mozambique) and the continued development of Luanda's international airport as a regional commercial transport hub represent elements of relevant geopolitical value.

Fourthly, Brazil not only forms the basis of the dominant regional center of gravity of the CPLP, but also integrates the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the BRICS¹⁴ group and the G20, without forgetting that it is one of the G4 members, i.e. candidates for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. The Federative Republic of Brazil gives the CPLP the dimension that makes it the economic-cultural

Figure 3 - EEZ and FIR of Brasil and Angola



Source: Defesanet (s.d.)

set capable of acting as a singular actor in the international system and turns the CPLP into a space of presence and future. Brazil in its prerogative of regional power can give the geopolitics of the CPLP a specific weight, without which it is diminished in its perspective of economic diplomacy. In fact, Brazil, acting in the context of the CPLP and in particular in an articulation with Angola, which is also a regional power, has the presence and influence in the South Atlantic, on one hand, capable of rebalancing the North American

¹⁴ The term “BRICS” was first used in 2001 by Jim O’Neill (Goldman Sachs) to refer to the growth of the economies of the Brazilian Federation, the Russian Federation, India and China, and a regular cooperation between these four States began in 2006. In 2011, South Africa was invited to part of the group (BRICS), and this group of five states developed a model of cooperation distinct from most existing financial institutions.

hegemony and, on the other hand, to protect and enhance the green and blue Amazons¹⁵.

In its relationship with China, among many other projects of strategic value, the interoceanic railway¹⁶ linking Brazil-Bolivia-Peru (Porto de Ilo, with a possibility of connection to Chile - Arica) stands at 4,700 km¹⁷ of extent. This project is related from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, as infrastructures of the new Açú Port (Brazil) and a connection through the Paraná River between Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina and Uruguay. Likewise, a high-speed line between Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (as Brazil's two largest cities) constitute infrastructural elements of singular geopolitical value. The Federative Republic of Brazil in its articulation with the emerging powers of the BRICS has the possibility of becoming a geopolitical engine of the CPLP and also, in this way, restore the potential of an organization that is not yet the reality of its aspirations. Brazil as a member of the CPLP and the CPLP as a subject of international law, do not contribute to the various development funds such as the Asian Investment Bank (AIIB) or a partnership between the "CPLP Bank" and the Silk Road Bank. In other words, China has a strategy for officialy Portuguese-speaking countries, but the CPLP does not have a strategy for China. Brazil can only balance its strategic relationship with China through the CPLP and its regional economic insertion. Brazil, the officialy Portuguese-speaking countries and, in particular, the Portuguese language as a cultural vehicle (and therefore a business instrument) represent important leverage factors in the process of internationalization of the Yuan (元) (Chinese currency), which is part of the foreign policy of the Middle Empire. Figure 3- Brazil and Angola EEZ and FIR . Source: Defesanet (nd)

Lastly, the MSAR of China, East Timor and Portugal are three inter-regional and association points of support for the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Australia-Indonesia group, the European Union (EU) and indirectly via Portugal as a member of the EU, the G7 and the G20. In this context, the MSAR also represents a foothold in facilitating multilat-

¹⁵ The Blue Amazon or Brazilian maritime territory is the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of Brazil, whose area corresponds to approximately 3.6 million km² - equivalent to the surface of the Amazonian forest. The area could be expanded to 4.4 million km² in light of the Brazilian proposal to the United Nations Boundary Commission. With the extension, the zone will become more contiguous, including the areas of the Brazilian archipelagos in the South Atlantic. Image credits - figure 2: <https://igarape.org.br/the-blue-amazon-brazil-asserts-its-influence-across-the-atlantic/> (August, 2017). Image credits - figure 3: <http://www.defesanet.com.br/sisgaaaz/> (August, 2017).

¹⁶ Also known as the Inter Oceanic Railways or the Twin Ocean Railway or even the Trans-Andes Railway.

¹⁷ Or 3,755.5 km depending on the different route options.

eral economic and cultural interactions in the EU-CPLP-Brazil triangle and the People's Republic of China. If we also consider the privileged position in relation to the MSAR and the People's Republic of China, as well as the Chinese B&R initiative, then the projection from the CPLP center of gravity has three support points (one in Europe and two in Asia), the third being materialized by the MSAR. The CPLP is entirely in the context of the Silk Sea Route, with Portugal being the only member state where the sea route and the land belt cross. Thus, in the context of the maritime Silk Route, the MSAR extends the scope of the CPLP to 5 continents (at least until the accession of Timor to ASEAN), and confers a particular link to the South Atlantic, recognizing the unique geopolitical value of the center position of CPLP, in relation to the potential for projecting dynamism and new opportunities. Regarding Timor-Leste, on one hand, closer cooperation with China in the perspective of the B&R initiative may enhance the negotiating relationship with Australia and Indonesia, in particular the issue of the Timor-Gap¹⁸. On the other hand, the proximity of the Straits of Macáçar and Torres¹⁹ as well as the possibility of an accession to ASEAN increases the geopolitical interest of Timor in the context of the B&R initiative. In relation to Portugal, Carlos Rodrigues (2016, 45) stated that China's interest in Portugal relates to the deep-water port of Sines, arguing that this would be the first infrastructure directly related to Chinese initiative B&R. Sines, even considering that it is the most accessible deep water port from Madrid, such as the ports of Tunis (Tunisia), Marseille (France), Piraeus (Greece) and Venice (Italy), represents just one more among the various points with the B&R initiative in terms of access to Europe. The Sines-Madrid-Bilbao-Le Havre-Rotterdam railway corridor could become the second land access route to central Europe, just past the Budapest-Belgrade-Skopje-Piraeus corridor (BBSP) and, just like them, create the European bridge between the sea route and the land belt of the Silk initiative. Considering the connection to North Africa via Gibraltar, it makes sense to the railroad between Sines and Madrid, in the heart of the Iberian peninsula, with the purpose of obtaining greater energy security by diversifying the transport alternatives. However, this is only part of the question. There is certainly an interest in the so-called Portuguese triangle-strategic (Azores archipelago - Madeira archipelago - Continental Portugal), especially in the context of the expansion

¹⁸ Timor Gap is the area of the maritime domain between Timor-Leste, Indonesia and Australia where the maritime border between these sovereign States is located and is the subject of dispute over the exploitation of resources.

¹⁹ The Torres Strait is an important commercial shipping line associated with the far north of Australia, New Guinea, Melanesia Island, part of the independent state of Papua New Guinea and another part of Indonesia. It allows for naval transit between the Arafura Sea and the Coral Sea.

of the continental shelf, which will make Portugal one of the largest states in Europe in terms of EEZ²⁰. In addition to this, the Lajes (Azores) air base is one of the essential elements of Portugal's geopolitical value, especially in access and presence in the North Atlantic, both in terms of resources and in relation to maritime navigation and area. The Global Traffic Map 2010 indicated precisely this area as the one with the largest transcontinental activity in the world. Finally, the archipelago of the Azores in addition to its value in Europe-North America relations still represents an excellent point of support in the access to the Arctic Circle.

Figure 4- Diagram of the Extension of the Portuguese Continental Shelf



Source: EMEPC (2009)

Conclusion

As a conclusion, it is important to state that the true potential of Lusophony is affirmed through the CPLP and not based on a concept of Lusophony, which considers each political unit per se, making use of a common language. The CPLP has a potential for unity in culture, offers a platform for political dialogue, promotes the dissemination and teaching of language, must act in the field of concerted common interests, in particular in agriculture, health, in certain aspects of security, cooperation industrial and financial services, infrastructure, trade and services. The geopolitical component of the CPLP associated with its geographical position can identify common objectives and thereby transform it and relate it to the Regional Economic Communities. This can make the CPLP evolve into an organization with a quasi-global intercontinental network with its center of gravity in the South Atlantic. Geopolitics teaches that space is power. However, in the case of the CPLP, space exists, is studied, but power is only exercised deliberately, through a will. In this regard, Brazil presents itself as the decisive actor in catalyzing this will, both for its critical mass and for its international status. Thus, China, through the MSAR, gives value to the geopolitical understanding of Lusoph-

²⁰ Portugal has the tenth largest Exclusive Economic Zone in the world with a total of 1,727,408 km². In 2009 it submitted a proposal to the United Nations Boundary Commission to add 2.15 million km². This proposal, if approved, will give Portugal a total area of 3,877,408 km².

ony, through the concept of Portuguese-speaking Countries, taken individually and considering Brazil in particular in their bilateral relations. The CPLP should give value to the geopolitical understanding of Lusophony, through its elements of history-cultural-language and “lusophone sea”, gathered under a collective will to exercise consistent power. Vitor Santos (2005, 77) states: “The lack of coordination underlying the lack of strategic planning integrating policies, polarizing and guiding the lines of action, in the sense of permanently promoting a coherent and consistent strategy for the defense of Lusophony. This should, in turn, acquire expression through a foreign policy structured around national goals converted into concrete objectives and, in this context, an exogenously directed cultural policy of active and consequent promotion of Portuguese language and culture, projected as decisive instruments in the process of achieving these objectives, thus, achieving the national interest”.

Language-culture and geographical position, where the sea emerges as an element of unity in the context of the CPLP’s geopolitics, are two elements of continuity that, as Ernâni Lopes (2008, 17) has said, make it possible for us to go beyond ourselves, because “we will only become us when we go beyond us”. The true geopolitical value of Lusophony takes into account history, culture, the unity of the language and, as we have seen, also the position at sea, but resides essentially in the will to go beyond us and this can only be exercised collectively. Lusophony can not and should not be built only by language, it must represent an effective sharing of determining interests in relation to other initiatives, and this has to be done also taking into account a certain geopolitical unity. It is Brazil’s responsibility to extend and strengthen the CPLP. In the present state of things, Lusophony risks becoming an inheritance without the future it deserves.

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ABSTRACT

The discourse regarding the value of the strategic space of Lusophony has been centered in the debate around the Portuguese language. The main goal of this article lies precisely in the study of one of the characteristics that provide geopolitical unity, the position in the “Lusophone Sea” associated with the intercontinental territorial discontinuity of Lusophony, based on the Chinese initiative “One Belt, One Road” (B&R), presented in 2013, by the Chinese President Xi Jinping. In fact, the B&R initiative has re-launched the need to study the CPLP’s geopolitics, particularly from the South Atlantic center of gravity. It is time to think of the CPLP (Community of Portuguese Language Countries) as a quasi-global network space, capable of effectively sharing interests, and this must be done, also taking into account, a certain will to generate a geopolitical unity.

KEYWORDS

CPLP, Lusophony, One Belt One Road.

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