

José Manuel Sobral (ICS-ULisboa) | *Ties that bind, boundaries that exclude: immigrants from S. Tomé and Príncipe in Lisbon*

In this essay, we will explore how immigrants from S. Tomé and Príncipe living in the Lisbon area relate themselves both to homeland and Portugal. We'll purport to show that, individuals from the first and the second generation even when born in Portugal and possessing Portuguese citizenship, identify themselves in national terms as Santomean. This is achieved by keeping alive strong bonds with their country both at the private, family level – through multidimensional ties involving mutual help, solidarity, and, crucially, the sending of remittances – and at the public one, by participating in local political processes, such as the presidential elections. Although there is also an involvement of the State in keeping national bonds alive, this transnational identification is mainly a product of the agency of the immigrants, by formal or informal ways. The first, such as the celebrations of national holidays, derive from official or state-sponsored nationalism; the second ones, like the routine conversations and encounters, are best understood as aspects of banal or everyday nationalism. Both contribute to tie the members of the community among themselves and to keep them connected to homeland through long-distance or diasporic nationalism. These are processes of inclusion, of community-building. But national identifications depend on keeping boundaries that differentiate between the in-group and the out-group. Hence, in order to fully understand the strength of their transnational identifications, attention must be paid to the processes that, in their view, tend to exclude them from the settlement society, and from the full exercise of citizenship, racism being the mainly one.