

DEPICTIONS OF TRAVEL IN A PORTUGUESE DIASPORA COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER IN SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract: The vast territorial expansion of Portugal during the colonial era resulted in a significant global diaspora network, with one such community situated in South Africa. Multiple waves of immigration from Portugal, its autonomous regions, and former African colonies have given rise to an established diasporic community in South Africa. Acting as a vital communication channel, the *O Século de Joanesburgo* newspaper played a crucial role in keeping the South African Portuguese diaspora informed about the broader Portuguese community both locally and abroad, thereby fostering connections between the community and their homeland. Throughout the years, the newspaper extensively featured travel-related content, employing various strategies to encourage travel to the homeland. This paper investigates how travel was depicted and promoted to the South African Portuguese diaspora through the newspaper. Using archival material from the newspaper, significant themes can be identified related to travel within the community. These encompass journeys to the homeland, encouragement for seaside property investments in Portugal, and indications of domestic tourism within South Africa. Overall, this research contributes to the broader discourse on the development of diasporic communities and emphasizes the integral role of travel in their existence.

Key words: diaspora tourism, media, community newspaper, Portuguese diaspora, South Africa

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INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, there has been a growing interest from scholars in migration and diaspora and their relationships to tourism. Especially in the context of diasporas, various sub-themes have emerged, comprising efforts to define the concept (Cohen, 1997; Brubaker, 2005; King, 2012; Quayson and Daswani, 2013; Alexander, 2017), its social organisation and integration into the host community (Greenman and Xie, 2008; Piedra and Engstrom, 2009; Schneider and Crul, 2010; Adinolfi, 2019), issues of identity construction (Georgiou, 2006; Ben-Moshe and Segev, 2007; Cappucci and Zarrilli, 2008; Hall, 2014), and links to tourism in terms of homeland travel via VFR travel and heritage tourism (Stephenson, 2002; Sim and Leith, 2009; Hughes and Allen, 2010; Iorio and Corsale, 2012; Pelliccia, 2016; Io, 2017; Rogerson, 2017).

Portugal has a long history of colonial expansion and overseas settlement which dates back to 1415, making it one of the longest-lived empires in European history (Costa, 2021). The historical record of Portugal's overseas expansion and the making of Portuguese diaspora is described and analysed in detail by several authors (see for example: Duffy, 1968; Basson, 1988; Barnes and McDuling, 1995; Newitt, 2004; Glaser, 2010, 2012, 2013; Adinolfi, 2019). The vast territorial expansion of Portugal during the colonial era from the first conquest of Ceuta, Morocco, in 1415 to the official handover of Macau to the People's Republic of China in 1999 resulted in a significant global diaspora network, existing in different contexts (Costa, 2021). South Africa is home to one such Portuguese diasporic community that has developed over an extensive historical period, spanning the 15th century through to the 21st century. Arguably, the South African Portuguese diaspora community provides a lesser known and a particularly noteworthy case in the African context as it represents a significant diasporic community outside of the former Portuguese African colonies of Angola and Mozambique. The development and maintenance of this specific diasporic community was supported for a long period of time via the most crucial communication tool, a community newspaper called the *O Século de Joanesburgo*. Over several decades this newspaper provided key information to the community with regards to news from the homeland, Portugal, news about South Africa and importantly encouraged the maintenance of links to the homeland through aspects such as language preservation and travel home. This study uses

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archival material from the *O Século de Joanesburgo* newspaper to identify significant themes related to travel within the diaspora community, such as encompassing journeys to the homeland, encouragement for seaside property investments in Portugal, and indications of domestic tourism within South Africa. Overall, this study contributes to the broader scholarship on the development of diasporic communities and emphasizes the integral role of travel in their existence.

STUDY CONTEXT

Diasporas and tourism

The links between diasporas and tourism are diverse and multi-faceted (Marschall, 2018). As noted by Coles and Timothy (2004), diasporas result from a historical scattering of people and their identities across space and time. At first glance, the noticeable link between diasporas and tourism would be through ancestral homeland travel (Stephenson, 2002; Etemaddar et al., 2009; Hughes and Allen, 2010; Iorio and Corsale, 2012; Duncan and Tucker, 2016) that cut across territorial boundaries and bridge cultures and families. Indeed, homeland tourism is often strongly supported through visiting friends and relatives (VFR) travel (Butler, 2003; King and Dwyer, 2015; Wagner, 2015; Rogerson, 2017), as well as heritage and roots tourism (Reed, 2013, 2015; Pelliccia, 2016). These connections are further reinforced through business relations and investment by diasporas in their home country (Elo and Riddle, 2016; Tichaawa, 2017; Williams, 2018; Rabbiosi et al., 2019), remittances to the homeland (Leblang, 2016; Busumtwi-Sam, 2019; Galstyan and Ambrosini, 2022), the development and maintenance of social capital and community networks (Peck, 2020; Li, 2020; Adinolfi, 2019), and place attachment (Otoo et al., 2021; Barcus and Shugatai, 2022; Diener and Hagen, 2022).

These rich and versatile connections and attachments to the homeland have captured the attention of scholars in understanding the travel motivations of diaspora tourists and their specific socio-spatial contexts influencing and guiding the travel patterns (Butler, 2003; Io, 2017; Tören, 2021). Notwithstanding this growing body of knowledge surrounding the links between diasporas, tourism and global transnational communities (Coles et al., 2004; Hall, 2005), a gap still exists with regards to specific diasporic communities, especially those which continue to exist in the African context, outside of the former colonial holdings of their homeland. South Africa presents such a specific case study with a long-standing, historically rooted Portuguese diasporic community.

South Africa's Portuguese diaspora

Portugal's vast global diaspora network is deep-rooted in its territorial expansion during its colonial era from as early as the 1400s. The country's links to South Africa are anchored in the 15th and 16th centuries through Portuguese expansion into Africa for trade and later slavery routes. Significant waves of migration of Portuguese settlers to South Africa include the Madeirans from the late 1800s through to the 1970s, the mainland Portuguese between 1940-1980, and the most significant wave in number being the Angolan and Mozambican refugees between 1974 and 1976 (Glaser, 2010, 2012, 2013). Extant scholarship on Portuguese linked migration to South Africa has mostly been on the immigration and transit migration into South Africa of people from Portugal's former African countries of Angola but more specifically, Mozambique (De Vletter, 2006; Muanamoha, 2008; Nshimbi and Fioramonti, 2014). This study, however, concentrates on the two earlier waves of Portuguese settlement in South Africa (1940-1976), which were driven variously by unskilled and largely illiterate Madeirans, often entering the country illegally and seeking a better life; the Portuguese mainlanders who were escaping similar economic conditions as the Madeirans but were largely literate and skilled artisans and supported by the South African government; and lastly the Angolan and Mozambican refugees escaping the decolonisation and civil wars in their host countries, which tended to be far more skilled and literate than the other waves of immigrants. These refugees also represented the largest single wave of Portuguese immigration to South Africa.

Portuguese media in South Africa

News media, in general, is noted to play a major role in the relationship between diasporas and the homeland (Christiansen, 2004). Arguably, the role of the media in South Africa's Portuguese diaspora has been instrumental in maintaining homeland attachments by keeping the diaspora informed and reinforcing the connection to the homeland (Adinolfi, 2019). In general, media did have some contributions to the preservation of language (Barnes and McDuling, 1995) albeit mostly for the older generations, but in some cases, media was made little use of and did not support language preservation or influence cultural maintenance (Webb, 1999). Nevertheless, radio, television and print were the dominant forms of media for the diaspora. The literature also makes note of the role of media, particularly private radio broadcasting, in promoting Portuguese colonial policy (Ribeiro, 2017, 2022). Radio was a powerful vehicle for entertainment and a means to maintain connection. For South Africa's Portuguese community this included stations such as Radio Cidade (launched in 1976) which predominantly broadcast in English, Radio Paralelo 27, Radio RSA (a South African station featuring Portuguese programmes), Radio Clube de Moçambique, and LM Radio which broadcast from Mozambique and is still in existence today.

Television was also featured from the mid-1970s and included Portuguese and Brazilian channels offered by a dedicated channel (M-Net Portuguesa) on a private broadcaster (M-Net) and later by DSTV (Digital Satellite Television) (Glaser, 2010). The proliferation of the Portuguese culture and language in South Africa even prompted the launch of a dedicated Portuguese sports channel (Super Sport Maximo), which offered access to Portuguese sports as well as international sports with Portuguese commentary. It was the print media, however, that made the most impact, reaching a wide audience within the community. In the 1970s and 1980s, the *Jornal Popular* was one Portuguese language newspaper issued in Johannesburg, albeit since ceased in circulation. In terms of newspapers that had a longer lasting impact, the *O Século de Joanesburgo* and the *Vóz Portuguesa* (by the Portuguese Forum) were central, with the latter

still in existence in an online format. Magazines were also in circulation albeit temporarily, such as the *Notícia* magazine which was often sold alongside the *O Século de Joanesburgo* newspaper. It is the *O Século de Joanesburgo* newspaper which was the most prolific in bringing the Portuguese community closer to the homeland and closer within their new home, and thus provides an important foundation for this study. These community-based records are critical in offering a record of the social history of such a noteworthy diasporic community (Rodrigues et al., 2014).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A qualitative research approach was used to examine the content of the *O Século de Joanesburgo* newspaper which is archived at the Cape Town campus of the National Library of South Africa. While the newspaper began in 1963 and ended in early 2021 (Sousa, 2021), the archive spans from August 1971 to December 2010. Despite this not being a complete archive for the lifespan of the newspaper, it is valuable for providing a rich source of nearly four decades of content that cover the most crucial waves of immigration for the community (Glaser, 2010). The archive was accessed during October 2022 and the editions were scanned through for evidence related to travel. Pages with such evidence were marked and digital scanned copies were made. In total 946 pages of the archive across the available archived period were scanned and used for qualitative analysis. Atlas.ti version 29 was used to code each scanned page and to identify key themes related specifically to travel. Using software such as Atlas.ti for qualitative analysis allows for the systematic and transparent analysis of data (Friese, 2019). Such an approach to the data is founded in grounded theory (Belgrave and Seide, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The *O Século de Joanesburgo* archive provides valuable historical evidence of a very strong diasporic community. The newspaper featured an array of information with regards to political, economic, social and cultural news about Portugal and South Africa, as well as other typical newspaper content. This included advertisements for Portuguese owned businesses and services, personal and job advertisements, real estate listings and property investment opportunities both locally and in Portugal, community news surrounding events linked to religion, culture, food and language, and more specifically for this study, strong evidence for the role of travel in the community. Key themes which were identified include the prominence of travel agencies, the nature of payment plans and the role of banks in travel, car rental services in Portugal, the encouragement of VFR and homeland travel, investment in coastal properties in Portugal, news about tourism in Portugal, travel to the former Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola, domestic tourism in South Africa, and airlines which facilitated homeland travel. These themes are elaborated further.

Prominence of travel agencies

One of the most striking findings was the proliferation of travel agencies, particularly those serving the communities based in the major cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria. The importance of travel agencies for diaspora communities has been noted by Leung (2007: 219), who asserts that travel agencies “foster the physical connections between family, friends and other community members in the transnational landscape”. During the study period of the archive (1971-1990) several agencies emerged, both in a formal travel agency format, as well as individuals offering travel services and products. In addition, there were advertisements by individuals offering administrative services with regards to documentation linked to travel such as passports. It was observed that a burst of new travel agency establishments occurred particularly in the first couple of decades, specifically 1970-1990. Their location also reflected the geography of the ethnic enclaves documented in the literature (Moyo and Cossa, 2015), with concentrations in the eastern and southern suburbs of Johannesburg, the city centre and certain key areas in the city of Pretoria. The role which these travel agencies played included not only the provision of travel booking services but also, they served as estate agents, sub-agencies of building societies and in some cases even assisted in job placements. Other travel agencies offered additional administrative services related to the Portuguese and South African identification and immigration documentation. Further, container shipping services for moving back to Portugal or Madeira also became a prominent activity of travel agencies especially during the early 1990s, the period of South Africa’s transition to democracy. Examples of these trends noted on travel agencies are illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Examples of travel agency trends (Source: *O Século de Joanesburgo*, left: 31.5.1976, 14, right: 9.4.1974, 4)

Payment plans and the role of banks in travel

A significant aspect of travel to emerge was the emphasis on making travel possible for the entire diaspora

community. The affordability of travel to the homeland was likely an issue for some, given the frequency of payment plans offered in the newspaper (Figure 2). The Portuguese airline, TAP, was the first to offer the options of paying for a flight in instalments. In the later years, travel agencies began to offer payment plans for their complete packages, beyond just flights to include accommodation and excursions. In the South African context, more recently, pay at your pace options have been acknowledged in the literature with regards to the domestic tourism issues the country has been faced with (Adinolfi et al., 2021) but not particularly specific to diaspora who may be naturalised or hold permanent residence and part of those domestic tourism statistics. The advertisements for payment plans also revealed elements of a sense of community with tag lines such as “*Os Portugueses ajudam os Portugueses*” (The Portuguese help the Portuguese), which referred to helping each other find a way to pay for travels ‘home’. Other means of funding included funds raised by sports clubs and beauty pageant winners who went to visit or represent the South African Portuguese diaspora in the Miss Portugal competitions. Additionally, the presence of banks alongside the advertisements of travel, further emphasised the push for homeland travel and the financial support for encouraging the diaspora to travel. It was observed that the Bank of Lisbon and South Africa Ltd was commonly featured in travel advertisements (Figure 3) as well as Nedbank which is a South African bank. The presence of South African banks in the encouragement of outbound travel signals the economic importance of the diasporic community in the country.



Figure 2. Examples of travel payment plans (Source: O Século de Joanesburgo, 18.1.1972, 4)



Figure 3. Involvement of banks in travel (Source: O Século de Joanesburgo, left: 16.9.1975, 3, right: 15.10.1979, 4)

Car rental services in Portugal

It was evidenced that car rental services (Figure 4) offered in Portugal were a frequent occurrence in the newspaper throughout most of the period under investigation. Seemingly mobility may have been an issue to some extent dependent on where the diaspora travelled to in the home country. Perhaps the family members may not have had vehicles available for visiting family members or there may have been a preference for car rental to allow for more autonomy and flexibility when travelling in the homeland. Those who travelled to the homeland potentially for heritage or roots tourism purposes may have relied on car rental as a means to navigate unfamiliar or forgotten landscapes and allowing for the exploration of cultural sites, family roots and heritage at their own pace. Additionally, the ability to explore different geographical regions opens up opportunities for contributing to the tourism economy of the homeland beyond just VFR tourism.



Figure 4. Car rental services in Portugal (Source: O Século de Joanesburgo, left: 3.11.1971, 20, right: 17.7.1973, 4)

The encouragement of VFR and homeland travel

The emphasis on VFR and homeland travel was observed in various ways. The support from the Portuguese consulate with regards to homeland travel included the sponsorship of trips for those who met certain criteria, such as the elderly who may not have had the means to afford such trips. Readers were constantly reminded of the importance of visiting the homeland through tag lines such as “*Conheça a sua terra nas asas da T.A.P.*” (Get to know your country on the wings of TAP) and images displaying the importance of the family unit travelling home such as that of the TAP airplane’s wings wrapped around a family in Figure 5. The strength of the South African Rand at the time was also emphasised with lines such as “*nunca o seu Rand valeu tanto!*” (never have your Rands been worth so much), hinting at

the value for money that the diaspora would get for their homeland travels. Another concept that was pushed to encourage homeland travel was that of “saudades” or longing and the need or time to “matar saudades” (quench that thirst or longing for ‘home’). Travel was also stressed more during key holiday periods such as Christmas or New Year, when advertisements would highlight this period as a key opportunity to reconnect with family.

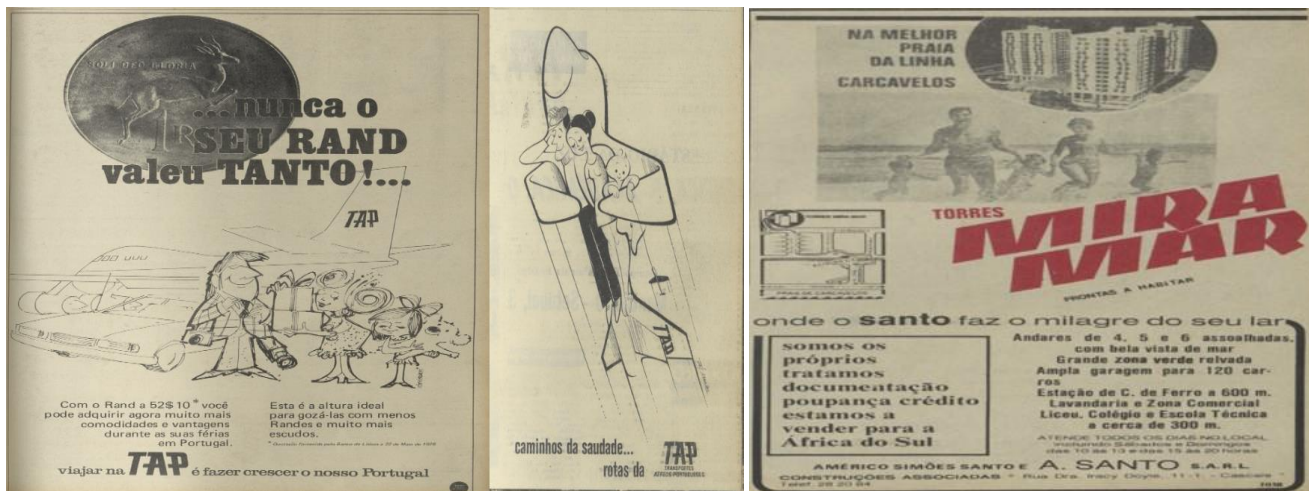


Figure 5. The encouragement of VFR and homeland travel (Source: O Século de Joanesburgo, left: 29.5.1978, 11, right: 23.4.1974, 7) Portugal (Source: O Século de Joanesburgo, 14.7.1980, 11)

Investment in coastal properties in Portugal

Calls for investment in property in the homeland were mainly associated with coastal property developments (Figure 6), both encouraging homeland travel and investment. Such investments also spurred homeland leisure travel beyond the typical VFR travel, and highlighted tourism seasonality with regards to peak travel in the summer months. Links to the diaspora for investment and remittance purposes have certainly been an important aspect of the diaspora literature (Elo and Riddle, 2016; Tichaawa, 2017; Williams, 2018; Rabbiosi et al., 2019). The economic value of the diaspora is thus two-fold, in the host country as well as in the homeland. Glaser (2010, 2012, 2013) points to the reasons surrounding the waves of migration from Portugal to South Africa with many looking for better economic opportunities given the harsh conditions which they chose to leave behind. Thus, given the opportunities in South Africa, it is assumed that at some point many would be in a far better position to travel to and invest in the homeland, as well as to send remittances (Leblang, 2016; Busumtwi-Sam, 2019; Galstyan and Ambrosini, 2022).

News about tourism in Portugal

Portugal’s tourism sector itself was also featured in the newspaper with information about tourist numbers and on how tourism was progressing overall. Whilst informing readers about the Portuguese tourism economy, articles would often hint at the importance of visiting Portugal and the array of beautiful landscapes and rich culture which the country offered. The role of the national carrier, TAP, was emphasised continuously and inextricably linked to the growth and development of Portugal’s tourism industry (Moreira, 2018). Articles on Portugal’s tourism industry also alluded to the importance of the value chain of the tourism industry with regards to the construction industry (Figure 7), thus contributing to the growth of other sectors. Discussions around seasonality were also shown, highlighting the importance of the summer season for tourism. Stories of personal experiences travelling to Portugal by the global Portuguese diaspora sometimes were featured, both promoting Portugal as a tourist destination and again encouraging homeland travel.



Figure 7. News about tourism in Portugal (Source: O Século de Joanesburgo, 3.7.1973, 16)

Travel to the former Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola

The shared borders between South Africa and Mozambique have made for important trade routes and the ability of South Africans to easily visit Mozambique for tourism related purposes. Lourenço Marques (now Maputo) was a focal point for urban tourism development for Mozambique, fuelled by the growth in accommodation establishments, the promotional efforts of both the South African Railways and the Mozambican railways (Caminhos de Ferro de Mozambique) (see Rogerson, 2023). Although Angola did feature as a tourist destination, its greater geographical distance made travel there more challenging than to Mozambique. Angola also served as a port of call for ships coming from Durban in South Africa, travelling through to Europe. Accommodation establishments were advertised in both countries and the “pensão” (guesthouse, see Figure 8) was a more common type available in Mozambique, while large hotel properties were more common in the advertisements for holidays in Angola. It was observed that the city of Xai-Xai in the southern region of Mozambique also featured as a key destination.

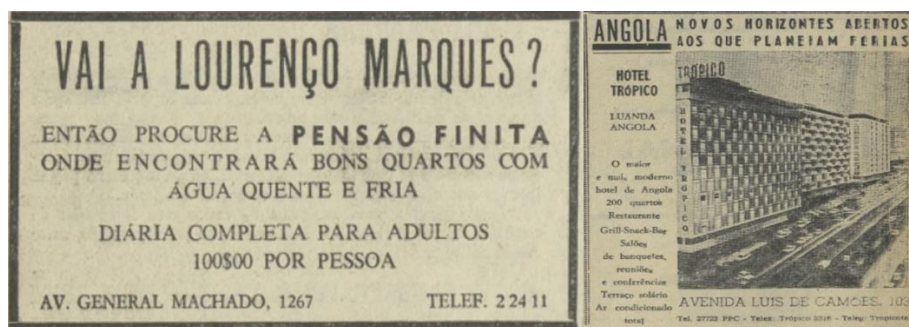


Figure 8. Travel to former Portuguese African colonies (Source: O Século de Joanesburgo, left: 3.11.1971, 20, right: 3.7.1973, 5)

Domestic tourism in South Africa

Domestic tourism in South Africa is an important area of research given the country’s political background (Adinolfi and Ivanovic, 2015; Adinolfi et al., 2021). The Portuguese diaspora living in South Africa, many of which had been naturalised, with the exception perhaps of the illegally or undocumented (Glaser, 2013) that had arrived in the earlier stages of the timeframe covered in this study, would thus form part of the domestic tourism market at the time. It is certain that the newspaper content did emphasise travel with regards to outbound travel to Portugal. However, there is some evidence of domestic tourism promotion for the diaspora. Visits to the Lion Park (Figure 9) in the surrounds of Johannesburg, and Sun City Resort in the North West province in particular were featured frequently. Other foci included that of coastal hotels in the Cape Province being advertised to readers as well as occasional social features where readers discussed their December holiday plans to travel in South Africa or how much they knew about the country. Domestic travel by the Portuguese diaspora thus further emphasised their importance in the South African economy.



Figure 9. Domestic tourism in South Africa by the Portuguese diaspora (Source: O Século de Joanesburgo, 5.5.1980, 13)

Airlines facilitating homeland travel

It is undeniable that the proliferation of transportation technologies including air travel has increased the mobility of people, thus contributing to patterns of migration and the existence of diasporic communities (Sahoo and Pattanaik, 2014). Indeed, air travel allows for the efficient and easier physical connection between a host country and the homeland. By reducing the barriers of geographical distance to a matter of hours, air travel has thus facilitated the growth of tourism globally, such as in the case of VFR travel, making it easier for people in the diaspora to maintain and strengthen connections with the homeland as well as with the family and friends they left behind. For the South African Portuguese diaspora, air travel to Portugal or Madeira was supported mostly by five different airlines (Figure 10).

These were TAP (Transportes Aéreos Portugueses, Portugal’s national carrier), SAA (South African Airways), Varig (Brazil’s first airline), TAAG (Transportes Aéreos de Angola, Angola’s national carrier), and DETA (Linhas Aereas de Moçambique). The latter being the national carrier of Mozambique and often advertised alongside the national railways (Caminhos de Ferro de Moçambique) that connected Mozambique and South Africa, which was provided an essential

connect between the Portuguese diasporas in both countries as well as for the South African tourist market for Mozambique (Rogerson, 2023). The first three airlines also offered travel to other destinations, particularly Brazil, North America and other European countries. Advertisements by airlines often emphasised the need to connect with family in the homeland and encouraged people to ‘get to know’ the homeland.



Figure 10. Airlines facilitating homeland travel (Source: *O Século de Joanesburgo*, left: 30.1.1973, 3, centre: 23.2.1976, 5, right: 17.8.1971, Sports Supplement, 5)

CONCLUSION

This study contributes to the undeveloped literature about diasporas and travel in Africa. In particular, the paper addresses the role of the media in fostering connections and travel between a diaspora community and their homeland. Despite some evidence in the literature of a limited use and influence of media in the Portuguese diaspora in South Africa, the *O Século de Joanesburgo* newspaper played a crucial role in maintaining linkages between the Portuguese diaspora in South Africa with the homeland and continuing the connections within the diaspora itself. Travel was revealed as a prominent feature in the newspaper and there is a clear indication of the desire for the diaspora to remain connected to the homeland through travel. The emphasis on homeland travel derived from various actors such as travel agencies, individuals offering travel and administrative services, banks, and airlines.

The findings of this study suggest that the role of travel agents in diaspora studies merits further exploration. Additionally, the historical travel behaviours and preferences of the Portuguese diaspora in South Africa as well as the changes therein can serve to inform the current and future needs of diaspora tourist both in South Africa and Portugal. Thus, the newspaper has provided a very rich archival resource, capturing key elements of the Portuguese diaspora society, which should continue to be investigated to unpack other social, economic and cultural elements of the community. In final analysis, the study of community newspapers can provide valuable insights into the developments and intricacies of diaspora communities and requires further scholarly examination.

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