Sharing Status and Appropriating Identity: The Case of the Conselho da Diaspora Portuguesa

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Abstract. On 26 December 2012 President Cavaco Silva announced the creation of the Conselho da Diápora Portuguesa, an association of 300 “notable” (notáveis) Portuguese to be individually invited by the Council’s Board. Their function will be to service as lobbyists working to improve the country’s image in the world. In other words, and according to the Council’s President Filipe de Botton, the Conselho da Diáspora Portuguesa will be able to “take advantage of the best that Portugal has to offer outside Portugal.”

Through remittances, Portuguese emigrants have long been a source of economic benefit to their relatives in Portugal as well as to the needs of the Portuguese Government. This initiative, however, is different; here, in addition to direct economic benefits that the Council’s members may provide, their identity itself as successful Portuguese is put into play. Using tools from discourse analysis, this article examines the presentation of the Council and its objectives, as well as the characterization of its members, by Portuguese President Cavaco Silva and Council President Felipe de Botton on the occasion of the Council’s establishment, with comparisons to Cavaco Silva’s speeches on the Day of Portugal, Camões and the Portuguese Communities (10 June 2013). The study focuses specifically on strategies of legitimization and delegitimization of Portuguese transnationals.

Keywords: Identity, discourse, citizenship, legitimization, status

Portugal ranks as one of the countries most affected by the European financial crisis of the last several years. Its foreign currency credit rating, determined by Moody’s, dropped from A1 to Ba3 between March 2011 and the same month in 2012 (“Rating”). One of the measures conceived by President Cavaco Silva to improve Portugal’s image abroad was to make use of influential Portuguese
living in the diaspora to serve as lobbyists for the benefit of Portugal in its time of need. To this end, and in collaboration with Filipe de Botton, the Conselho da Diáspora Portuguesa (Portuguese Diaspora Council, “the Council”) was created and launched. The timing of the inaugural ceremony, held on 26 December 2012, may have been influenced, at least in part, by estimates made in October 2012 by the head of the International Monetary Fund that the financial crisis would last a decade (Torres), Portugal’s participation in a general strike organized with Spain the same month (Minder) and austerity measures put into place in November (Euronews). In a press conference reported on by the Diário de Notícias, Cavaco Silva spoke of the role that the Council would play; its 300 notáveis (Portuguese of influence) chosen for membership would “reinforce the image of a different Portugal, a modern Portugal, a dynamic Portugal, and not a Portugal that is associated with other countries of Europe which are facing greater difficulties than Portugal is” (author’s translation) (Diário de Notícias). Cavaco Silva clearly has two aims here: a) to distance Portugal from other countries being plagued by the financial crisis; and b) to claim bragging rights for Portugal based on the achievements of those who have lived and been influential abroad. In the former, he does this by claiming that Portugal is “different” from other countries and its difficulties less severe. In the latter, he implies that Portugal’s image as “modern” and “dynamic” is due, at least in part, to the fact that Portuguese citizens have been influential abroad.

The signing ceremony of the Council was held in the presence of the Portuguese Head of State (Aníbal António Cavaco Silva) and the then Minister of Foreign Affairs (Paulo Portas), honorary president and vice-president of the Council, Filipe de Botton as the Council’s president, and some 22 founding members of the Council, all holding leadership positions in multinational companies. In various interviews that Cavaco Silva and Botton gave at the time, the central goal of the Council, simply stated, is to bring together within a single non-profit association 300 Portuguese who have worked abroad for at least three years holding positions of influence and who are, implicitly, willing to be called upon to lobby on behalf of Portugal, although no details are provided as to the Council’s operating guidelines or specific expectations to be fulfilled by members. Membership is by invitation, with potential members being chosen from four areas: business, the arts, science, and “politics” (alternatively referred to as
“citizenship,” *cidadania*). As influential people are often sought to serve as lobbyists, the existence of such a council is not necessarily noteworthy, but the inclusion of those in the arts and sciences seems to be the justification for Cavaco Silva’s claim that the Portuguese Diaspora Council is innovative (e.g., Rádio Renascença, 15 June 2013).

The innovation of including members from the arts and sciences is indirectly relevant to the main impetus for this study: Cavaco Silva and Filipe de Botton make clear references to the reinforcement of Portugal’s image by making use of the positive image of its citizens abroad, thus transferring the benefits of the individual into a benefit for the State. While Cavaco Silva must intend a financial gain for the country, the inclusion of members from outside the area of business and professional lobbying organizations supports the assertion that image renewal is the main mechanism at work.

This article takes a discourse analytical approach to the presentation and argumentation strategies used by Cavaco Silva and Filipe de Botton involving the creation and intended goals of the Council. The data come from interviews made just before and on the day of the Council’s official launching, as well as other information appearing in the news reports of those days. Additional data are taken from Cavaco Silva’s speech on 10 June 2013, the holiday whose official name is “Day of Portugal, Camões and the Portuguese Communities,” and from the Council’s Web site. The data reveal the relevance and importance of several concepts, either through their explicit use or through implication: status, reputation, legitimacy, status-sharing, status appropriation and citizen roles and responsibilities. After a brief examination of the interrelationship between status, reputation, and legitimacy, as well as consideration of citizenship roles in a transnational world, we will demonstrate through the presentation of various conceptual frames a composite picture as to how Cavaco Silva and Filipe de Botton conceive the identity and role of Portuguese in the diaspora. This discourse fits into a larger discourse of Cavaco Silva’s that affirms Portugal’s need for all its citizens, at home and abroad, to be part of the resolution of the country’s financial crisis. In this way, they weave conceptual frameworks into political policy. Despite apparent consistencies in these discourses, contradictions in the discourse strategies are evident. These inconsistencies have implications both in the way the identity of the Council and the diaspora are framed and also in the way status is conferred to those in the diaspora, and, therefore, these inconsistencies need to be addressed.
Legitimacy, Reputation, and Status

Deephouse and Suchman examine how legitimacy is determined overall in organizations, affirming that the prestige of an organization is tied to the interrelationship of strategies of legitimacy, reputation, and status. They describe how each of these elements serves to strengthen the other two, providing a diagram showing legitimacy, status, and reputation as the points of a triangle. Drawing bidirectional lines between each point, they describe how each affects and is affected by the remaining two attributes (Deephouse and Suchman 66). Elevated status is presumed to be a reflection of the moral order (referred to as the “presumption of propriety”), while membership in the status group relies on the idea that each member can legitimately claim to possess the qualities necessary for that membership. The relationships between legitimacy and reputation and between reputation and status are rather circular in nature as in both cases the increase in one leads directly to an increase in the other. More specifically, they present reputation as providing “standing,” which leads to greater status, with status leading to better performances and thus greater reputation. In the case of legitimacy and reputation, the former confers greater visibility and credibility, while a greater reputation leads to a more positive evaluation by legitimizing entities (Deephouse and Suchman 66).

Consideration of the interrelationship of these terms is useful for understanding the underlying political strategy for identifying future members of the Council. By selecting those whose stellar reputation and high status have already been conferred, Cavaco Silva and Button aim to achieve instant legitimacy for the Council. This goal is based on the assumption that from its inception the Council will enjoy high status, a strong reputation, and will, thus, serve as a legitimate lobby for the Portuguese Government. The relationship between these terms and their interaction is examined below in light of the data presented in this study.

Citizen Rights and Responsibilities

As Portuguese citizenship is a requirement for membership in the Council—potential members are referred to both as “influential Portuguese abroad” (Diário de Notícias, Rádio Renascença, among others) and variations of “Portuguese citizens with positions of influence abroad” (e.g., Associação Portuguesa de Arte Fotográfica), consideration of citizen rights and responsibilities are appropriate objects of analysis. Concerned with citizenship and identity in transnational situations, Joppke suggests that a full account of
citizenship should include consideration of three aspects: a) citizenship as status; b) citizenship as rights; and c) citizenship as identity (Joppke 38). While the target group for council membership is that of the Portuguese abroad, no mention is made of potential members possibly holding a second nationality; their role as Portuguese citizens is in focus. Joppke’s second category is that of citizen rights. The assumption that this group of Portuguese in the diaspora would, or even should, be interested in helping the homeland is an appeal to citizen obligations rather than rights. Cavaco Silva’s speech on the Day of Portugal on 10 June 2013 (Silva) makes this point very clearly, as will be analyzed below. Joppke’s third category is that of citizenship as identity; Portuguese citizenship is an identity token that, when combined with personal success, confers status and legitimacy in reinforcing Portugal’s image.

For Joppke the issue of citizenship as identity is intimately tied to the issues of unity and integration, with obvious connections to the expansion of access to citizenship (Joppke 44-46). In the case of the Conselho da Diáspora Portuguesa, the unity which is strengthened is that of the members who, despite residing around the world, are invited to come together to work for the benefit of Portuguese values, economic success, and greater stability generally. This initiative not only relies on the members’ continued identity as Portuguese and willingness to promote that image but through lobbying aims to strengthen those ties even further. Obviously, the recognition given to these successful persons is tied to their quality of being Portuguese.

Taking up the issue of citizen rights and obligations, it is worthy of note that while the Portuguese Constitution sets out several categories of citizen rights (personal, judicial, civic and political, and social), and delineates the obligations on the part of the State to guarantee these rights, citizen obligations are not similarly laid out. General mention is made of “deveres cívicos” (civic obligations, Article 41), and various references to obligations that are “consignados” by law (set out, e.g., Article 12), but these are not enumerated (Constituição). In the present data, this idea is turned upside down as no benefits to potential councilmembers are mentioned.

**Conceptual Frames (CF)**

Discourse analysis provides tools for analyzing presuppositions and conceptual frames underlying communication. In this study, three conceptual frames are at work. Underlying the Council’s *raison d’être* is the idea that successful Portuguese abroad will be successful lobbyists on behalf of Portugal.
Simultaneously, the concept emerges that this body of lobbyists will be at least as effective as their official counterparts (e.g., ambassadors). The third conceptual frame incorporates not only discourse data from the time of the Council’s creation but also from Cavaco Silva’s speech commemorating the Day of Portugal, Camões, and the Portuguese Communities on 10 June 2013 (Silva). These conceptual frames come together under an umbrella construction that Portugal is in crisis, and all its citizens are needed to help. In turn, these conceptual frames help in structuring the data and in determining saliency within the data set.

**CF 1: Successful Portuguese abroad will be successful “counselors of Portugal around the globe”**

The Telegrafia Sem Fios (TSF) Web site offers an audio file of an interview with Cavaco Silva, in which he identifies potential members as being heads of large projects or organizations who have an opinion which is “heard.” Several presuppositions are in play here: a) that leaders of projects and organizations have a skill set that includes lobbying; b) that the lobbying skills acquired for their normal endeavors transfer into this new domain and cultural environment; c) that the influence they possess is itself transferable and considered relevant; d) that their communication skills are up to the task; and finally, that all of these skills can be found in the individual at the time membership is granted to him or her.

**CF 2: Private lobbying initiatives are more effective than public ones**

In promoting the Council as a new and innovative endeavor and in order to reinforce the credibility and legitimation of the new “counselors of Portugal,” Cavaco Silva overtly affirms that the “notable 300” will be more effective lobbyists than the traditional elements (i.e., ambassadors and other government officials and bodies) because they have “credibility,” “an opinion which is heard,” and the ability to “sell the image” of Portugal without appearing to do so. The presuppositions in this conceptual frame serve to delegitimize the government officials, who a) are not credible because they are overtly engaging in lobbying on the part of Portugal; and b) may not even be heard. Moreover, there is a valorization of “discreet” (e.g., Telegrafia Sem Fios) lobbying over explicit and officially sanctioned efforts. While Filipe de Botton is more specific in tying the credibility of this select group to their reputation in the host country, his reasoning seems to be the same as Cavaco Silva’s in that he also
frames the lobbying to be done by councilmembers as “discreet,” i.e., not involving large investments (Dinheiro Digital). His message is more subtle than Cavaco Silva’s as he does not so completely delegitimize official government representatives. He states that those who have no official position but say the “same thing” have a credibility which is “completely different” (RTP Notícias).

CF 3: Portugal is in crisis and needs the help of everyone

While the creation of the Council and the publicity surrounding it focuses only on the role that successful Portuguese abroad would come to play in helping to ameliorate Portugal’s financial situation, Cavaco Silva takes a broader approach in his 10 June 2013 speech: that the country needs the help of all, both those residing in Portugal and Portuguese around the world (Silva). As noted above, 10 June is the Day of Portugal, Camões, and the Portuguese Communities. Each year the President chooses a different city from which to present a speech designed to link the three areas of celebration. In his 2013 speech (Silva), Cavaco Silva mentioned the creation of the Council, referring to it as a way of “bringing together Portuguese abroad and contributing to the increase in the overseas credibility of our country.” He said there was a “duty to be innovative in the way that the Portuguese relate to their compatriots who live far away from the home country.” Addressing the diaspora, he added: “Portugal needs you. No one is excused from helping his/her country at the critical time in which we live” (Silva). Use of the word “excused” (“Ninguém está dispensado”) implies an obligation on the part of all citizens to help their country in a time of need. Cavaco Silva added that he “believes strongly in the potential in Portuguese communities spread around the world, and I know there are many, many who want to be active agents in reinforcing the reputation, the prestige and the credibility of Portugal” (emphasis added). Thus, after reminding people of their obligations as citizens, regardless of their place of residence, he claims that people want to help. Whether he believes this desire arises from saudade for Portugal, a desire to reinforce the sense of belonging to the home country, or something else is not clear. In any case, he claims that the strengthening of the communities of Portuguese and Portuguese-descendants around the world has been a great priority of his since his first day in public office (see conceptual frame framework of Cavaco Silva’s speech in Figure 1).

The Web site of the Portuguese Diaspora Council appears to support Cavaco Silva’s message that all are needed, as the Web site claims to embrace the diaspora as a whole:
The association’s purpose is to deepen the relations between Portugal and its diaspora, Portuguese and descendants, so that they, through their merit, talent and influence, may contribute to the worldwide affirmation of values and culture that links all Portuguese as well as for the uplift of the country’s reputation and thus for the development and prosperity of Portugal. (Conselho)

News items reflect both successes within Portugal and recognition of Portuguese nationals abroad—both those residing abroad as well as Portuguese residents achieving success abroad, for the moment with greater emphasis on the former. In October 2013, there were five items highlighting successes and opportunities in Portugal, and two in the latter category. Recognition to Portuguese citizens came in two forms: praise by President Obama of a small business construction company owned by Portuguese-Americans and the acknowledgment that tennis player João Sousa, winner of the ATP tour, was the first Portuguese to win the title.

Despite the apparent consistencies in the creation of the Council and its relationship to Cavaco Silva’s framing of a unified cause for the betterment of Portugal’s financial situation, there are a number of contradictions that underlie the entire conceptual framework.

**Contradictory Messaging and Linguistic Ambiguities**

While on the one hand the message that Portugal is in crisis and needs all its citizens to help, both those at home and those abroad, there is a clear contradiction: While all are called upon to help, only a few are chosen for member-
ship in the Council, which is portrayed as the way of utilizing the strengths of Portuguese in the diaspora. About 4.8 million Portuguese live outside Portugal, but membership in the Council is restricted to 300, selected by invitation only. The Web site purports to promote the tightening of the relationship between Portugal and the diaspora. Still, despite mentioning the talents and values that unite both, the Web site does not offer an open communication forum. Those who wish to send a message to the Council may do so, but all information is from the Council outwards—there is no interaction. Members can log on, and there is a button for members to request a new password, but non-members may not register for “reading rights”; there is simply no access to a list of members or to activities that take place behind the “door.”

The creation of the Council that features the 300 notables predates the 10 June speech, so one might legitimately question Cavaco Silva’s choice to mention the Portuguese Diaspora Council in his speech and call upon ALL to help, knowing that the membership would be limited to 300. The likely conclusion is that he is insincere in calling upon all to help; at most, he is publicizing the Council, an endeavor he claims as his initiative and classifies as innovative.

In the discussion of CF 2 was included Cavaco Silva’s promotion of the view that council members will be “more effective” than duly authorized government officials. With few words he managed to convey the message that the Portuguese government has little credibility in promoting Portugal’s image in the international sphere. By extension, nor do the nearly 5 million Portuguese living in the diaspora but not considered “notable.” We are left, consequently, with the idea that non-governmental elites are the ones best able to accomplish the government’s goals. This thinking is not unexpected from a neoliberal, but it is surprising to see it spelled out so clearly.

In CF 1 we examined the assumption that, merely by virtue of being leaders, this group of 300 already possesses the qualifications to be Counselors of Portugal around the globe. This view is also contested by the very words of the council president. Reported in a Público newspaper article on 26 December is a statement by Filipe de Botton that the council members have a “strong reputation and very strong credibility” in the host country, but, referencing a meeting in May 2012 of 24 Portuguese directors of overseas companies, many of whom are founding members of the council, he noted that “there is not in this diaspora a ‘deep understanding of what happens in Portugal’ and therefore they had ‘a totally distorted image of what is going on in Portugal’” ("Cavaco
acredita”). This observation clearly suggests that training, at least of some of the new members, must be made available before successful lobbying can be accomplished on behalf of Portugal. If the training is to be done by the government, then the argument that the private sector is more effective than the public must be called into question. Even if the training is to be done through the private sector, the general premise that influential Portuguese abroad necessarily have the qualifications to be effective lobbyists is proven false.

The classification system which Cavaco Silva uses in his 10 June 2013 speech (Silva), while useful in terms of rhetoric, is itself contradictory. He makes a tripartite division into “portugueses,” “luso-descendants” and “compatriotas da diaspora” (Portuguese, Portuguese-descendants and compatriots of the diaspora), as if the three groups were mutually exclusive. While each term may provide different images, certainly most of those residing in Portugal are, by birth, descended from other Portuguese, as are most in the Portuguese diaspora. As he goes on to talk about those with an obligation to “their” country, he not only refers to Portugal, but he narrows the focus to those with Portuguese citizenship. Those in the diaspora who no longer claim Portuguese citizenship and Portuguese descendants who have never claimed Portuguese citizenship are naturally not being addressed here, as Portugal is not “their” country. Thus, no other category is needed beyond “Portuguese” or “citizens of Portugal.” Cavaco Silva could have substituted the tripartite grouping with “Portuguese citizens, no matter where you reside or were born.” By maintaining the division between the three groups, and attributing citizenship overtly to only one part, we can hypothesize an underlying conviction that there are two levels of citizenship, prioritizing those living in Portugal.

Before stating that everyone should do his or her part for the country, Cavaco Silva (Silva) affirms that “Portugal está a fazer a sua parte” (Portugal is doing its part), which again sets up a dichotomy that separates the diaspora communities from the homeland. In this case, the difference can be viewed in geographical terms as he implies that for those in the diaspora, Portugal is THERE and not HERE in the heart. Using a formulation that creates distance would seem to be counterintuitive, as the emotional link between Portuguese citizens, and certainly part of the rationale for agreeing to serve the country, is expressed in the word saudade. Often translated as “homesickness,” saudade gives credence to the idea that Portugal is always “HERE” in the hearts of
Portuguese, no matter where they are. Thus, there are contradictions in the way those living in the diaspora are portrayed. While appearing to be inclusive, Cavaco Silva creates a relationship between categories of citizens that ends up implying that those in the diaspora are somehow falling behind in their support of the country in its time of need. To say that no one can be excused from service implies that there is an obligation that is not being met. Those of us in the diaspora are therefore not doing our part.

There are discursive advantages, however, for Cavaco Silva to structure his speech along these contradictory lines. First, tripartite constructions give a speech rhetorical force, even when the three elements are of different length. Thus, while “portugueses, luso-descendentes e compatriotas da diáspora” neither rolls off the tongue nor is it a pure hendiatris, as the third element contains more than a single word, the tripartite structure builds an image of country’s people which transcends its borders, creating a larger unit for its citizens. This is in line with official policy that a fundamental element in the construction of Portugal’s national identity is its communities in the diaspora. The construction of Portugal’s national identity is not at issue here; suffice it to say that the name of the holiday celebrated on 10 June clearly notes the importance of the Portuguese communities in the diaspora, as it is clearly linked with Portugal.

**Revisiting Legitimacy, Reputation, and Status**

With the discursive strategies used by Cavaco Silva and Filipe de Botton having been analyzed, and some of their contradictions revealed, we are now in a position to determine whether the interrelationships between legitimacy, reputation and status identified by Deephouse and Suchman and described above hold true for the present data. Each of the three terms has a closed loop relationship with the others, making three axes: Legitimacy-Reputation, Legitimacy-Status, and Reputation-Status.

In the Legitimacy-Reputation axis, so-called “legitimate actors are often both more visible and more credible” (Deephouse and Suchman 66). Completing the closed loop is the recognition that the heightened reputation will lead to recognition by the legitimization sources. In the case of the Council, clearly the 300 “notables” are selected on the basis of their visibility as influential Portuguese abroad. This visibility on the part of potential members not only brings them to the attention of the Council in the first place, but their visibility as “Portuguese of influence” abroad is presumably a factor in their
continuing success once they begin to work as lobbyists. Therefore, the visibility-credibility factor is a direct factor in the selection or “affiliation” process (Deephouse and Suchman 66).

In the Legitimacy-Status axis, legitimacy concerns provide the criteria for acquiring status while the conferred status provides “cover” for minor infractions. In our data, the Council determines the criteria for membership (Portuguese citizenship, residence abroad for at least three years, and influence abroad). Solid knowledge of the current situation in Portugal would seem to be another firm qualification for consideration; the lack of such knowledge on the part of present and potential members is a motive for frustration on the part of Filipe de Botton, but it does not seem to be a disqualifying factor for membership, although Filipe de Botton may have envisioned a training plan. Thus, lack of knowledge of Portugal must, therefore, be considered what Deephouse and Suchman would refer to as a “minor violation” (66).

The Status-Reputation axis relates to behavior of individuals or groups who are already functioning in their group, so it is not a relevant point at the Council’s moment of creation. In this closed loop, reputation determines, at least in part, the degree of status conferred on the individual or group, and increased status, in turn, provides rewards and recognition (Deephouse and Suchman 66). Filipe de Botton has spoken of the Council’s intention that the lobbying be “discreet” (e.g., Sol), so it may not be possible to evaluate this parameter directly.

Conclusions and Avenues of Future Research
In the overall scope of political affairs, diplomatic relations and financial lobbying, and certainly in regard to the resolution of Portugal’s financial crisis, the creation of the Portuguese Diaspora Council is but a minor initiative. Nevertheless, this study has revealed ways in which Portuguese in the diaspora are framed in discourse, and it is clear that beyond the resources traditionally associated with those living abroad, i.e., remittances, which in 2012 exceeded 525.5 million euros (Pordata 2013), the identity and positive social image of Portuguese abroad are viewed as commodities available to the Portuguese nation by virtue of citizen obligations and by invitation. This core concept of the commodification of identity underlies each of the discourses analyzed, despite contradictions as to which tokens will ultimately be put to use.

Despite the stated goal to bring diaspora communities closer to each other and to the Portuguese residing in Portugal, the reality differs from the
rhetoric. Only few people are being called into service or incorporated into the organization or functioning of the Council. Additionally, rather than strengthening the governmental offices and officers already established, Cavaco Silva prefers to bypass the government to create what Filipe de Botton refers to as a “discreet” lobby. As regards the targeted notáveis and their deficient understanding of Portugal, this lack is obviously not considered an impediment to future lobbying activities. However, and borrowing a metaphor from soccer, it seems to be an unforced error on the part of the Council’s president, Filipe de Botton, to make this information public while, in the next breath, praising the future council members for the excellent work they will be carrying out.

From the foregoing, what can we conclude about the sharing, appropriation, and/or commodification of identity of members of the Portuguese diaspora? Cavaco Silva, in his interview with the Diário de Notícias, stated that influential Portuguese abroad, that is, those with a positive public image abroad, would be called upon to use their efforts to promote a positive image of Portugal. In that sense, they would be urged to share their status, acquired through individual efforts, with their home country. There seemed to be a note of desperation on the part of Cavaco Silva—a desire to use the council to somehow “save the country” because the government was not functioning as it should. Ironically, the headlines of 10 July 2013 (e.g., Natário) spoke of Cavaco Silva calling for “compromissos de salvação nacional” (“compromises for national salvation”). While the latter is a crisis in the structure of government rather than the economic crisis in particular, the sense that national salvation is needed is still evident seven months after its mention in relation to the Council’s composition and activities.

To state that the credibility of successful Portuguese abroad lends credibility to Portugal is to imply that the positive image of the former is to be shared with the latter. The online version of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary provides three definitions for the verb “to appropriate.” One refers to taking “exclusive possession of”: clearly council members will not be literally transferring their status to another entity, losing it in the process. Another definition refers to making use of something without authority or right. As membership is voluntary, it implies permission on the part of the status-holder. The third definition, “to set apart for or assign to a particular purpose or use” is most relevant for our discussion. The achievement of success abroad is an identity feature that is seen as having a specific purpose—helping the Portuguese nation renew its credibility in the world. In Cavaco Silva and Filipe
de Botton’s own words, the prime focus is not on particular skill sets or contacts but on the identity of the person as being influential and successful. This state of affairs provides the link to commodification. Not only has the identity been set aside for a purpose, but that purpose is to provide economic as well as social benefit to another. Thus, the personal identity of a successful transnational becomes a means of providing economic wealth to another party. In this way, identity becomes a commodity, an economic “good.”

Throughout this article we have examined discursive strategies used to characterize present and potential members of the Council, as well as Portuguese in the diaspora generally, in three different communicative situations: the Council’s inaugural ceremony and interviews with Cavaco Silva and Filipe de Botton on 26 December 2012, Cavaco Silva’s 10 June 2013 speech celebrating the day of Portugal, Camões and the Portuguese Communities, and the presentation of the Council on its own web site. The evidence indicates that these discursive strategies are not entirely consistent; that is, we find both strategies of legitimation and delegitimation of councilmembers, as well as an apparent disparity between Portuguese citizens at home, already “doing their part” and those of the diaspora, who cannot be “excused” from helping the Nation. Finally, within the diaspora itself, a division is made between those whose identity is deemed worthy of being commodified, and whose obligation to the Nation must therefore be met in another way. In terms of the Council itself, given its goal to be “discreet” in its lobbying, its success is difficult to measure. As of this date, neither the current list of councilmembers nor the lobbying activities of the Council are found on the pages of the Web site which are open to all.

Notes
1 Similar news reports were filed in Almas, Azevedo (RTP Notícias), “Cavaco Silva” (Jornal de Notícias online), Coutinho (O Povo online), Dinheiro Vivo and Mendes.
2 See Kaplan’s discussion of ways that framing can “provoke political strategies aimed at mobilizing support” (219).
Works Cited


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