Iberian Atlantic Imperial Carcerality: Vestiges of Colonial Disciplinary Violence in Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, and Mozambique

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Romance Language and Literatures: Spanish)
in the University of Michigan
2016

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To my mother,

az eredeti "Nemzetközi Tudományok" Doktorának Doktora

Acknowledgements

This project would not have materialized without the support, guidance, and friendship of all the generous people in my life. I am profoundly grateful to Fernando Arenas, my co-chair, for his insight and enthusiasm. Since his arrival at the University of Michigan, I have benefitted from his courses, mentorship, and encouragement. I thank Juli Highfill, my co-chair, for her perceptive comments and detailed feedback. Her seminar on "The Spanish Historic Avant-garde: Politics, Esthetics, and War" was a vital space for reflection on connections between Spain and Africa. I am grateful to Frieda Ekotto for her generosity and support. Since my first years in the program, she has encouraged me to pursue a project focusing on Africa. I am thankful to Benita Sampedro Vizcaya for her invaluable advice before my first trip to Equatorial Guinea. I appreciate her joining my committee and offering her commentary. Thank you to Cristina Moreiras-Menor for generously offering her feedback and insight on this project.

I would not have been able to complete my degree without the support of the Rackham Graduate School, the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, the Department of African and Afro-American Studies, the African Studies Center, the International Institute, and the Department of Education Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Award.

One of my most treasured memories has been spending time abroad and meeting people throughout my travels. My studies were greatly enriched by time spent in Brazil, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, Portugal and Spain. En Guinea Ecuatorial, estoy profundamente agradecida a Juan Tomás Ávila Laurel, Recaredo Silebo Boturu y Gustau Nerín.

wisdom and mentorship. I thank Paulina Alberto for her support as faculty advisor of the "Luso-Hispanic Intersections Interdisciplinary Workshop."

This project has been a sum of experiences that began before I arrived at Michigan. At Mount Holyoke College, I had the fortune of a singularly supportive and intellectually open advisor, Nieves Romero-Díaz. I thank her for teaching me the foundations of working with theory and historical materials and inspiring me to go onto graduate school. Nicole Vaget encouraged me to take advantage of all the academic opportunities offered at MHC. I am tremendously grateful for all that she has taught me.

Most importantly, I thank my family who put all of this into motion. Köszönöm a világ legjobb nagymamájának, aki otthonról izgul és térképen jelöli az utaimat. I dedicate this to my mother. My earliest memories of her as a Ph.D. student inspired me to follow in her footsteps. Without her bravery, I would not have had my nomadic upbringing, my wanderlust, and my stubborn drive. Mind a te hibád, Anya! Last but not least, my gratitude to Tom without whom I could not have crossed the finish line. I thank him for his patience during our times apart, for his unfailing support, for catching me up on a decade worth of US pop culture, and for believing in me.

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the literary and historical representations of prisons and concentration camps during the struggle for independence and the post-independence period in Lusophone and Hispanophone Africa. I concentrate on the infamous and iconic prisons of Tarrafal in Cape Verde, Black Beach in Equatorial Guinea, and Machava in Mozambique as starting points to examine questions of carcerality. From the lens of carcerality, I will show how narratives—works of literature, films, historiography, and archival documents—question and nuance the notion of decolonization, not as a rupture with colonialism but as a renegotiation of colonial powers in post-colonial Lusophone and Hispanophone Africa.

I begin with a genealogy of penitentiaries to show that the emergence of prisons and penal colonies is inextricably linked to the active colonization and settlement of the Portuguese and Spanish territories in Africa. The pervasive networks of discipline and punishment in Africa suggest a colonial carcerality that I explore further in three separate case studies. I delve into the particularities of carceral violence in Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, and Mozambique from late colonialism to the post-independence period. I explore how the Concentration Camp of Tarrafal became a space of contention that allowed intellectuals to make historical claims about fascism, colonialism, and decolonization in Cape Verde. In addition to archival resources, I analyze memorialistic literature, namely *Testemunho de um combatente* (1990) by Pedro Martins, *Tarrafal – Chao Bom, Memorias e Verdades* (2010) by Jose Vicente Lopes, and *Tarrafal – Chao Bom, Porque Mentir?* (2012) by Eduardo Vieira Fontes. Then, I examine three contemporary

Equatorial Guinean novels: *Ekomo* (1985) by Maria Nsue Angue and *Cenizas de kalabo y termes* (2000) and *Autorretrato con un infiel* (2007) by Jose Fernando Siale Djangany. These texts theorize the aftermath of colonialism as a perpetuation of disciplinary violence in the post-colonial period. Lastly, I study how the figure of the New Men and the New Women was invoked to legitimate widespread policing of those who deviated from State ideologies, during late colonialism and the first decade of the FRELIMO Revolution. I study archival documents, FRELIMO publications, and the film *Virgem Margarida* (2012) by Licinio Azevedo.

Chapter 1

Cartographies of Discipline: Penitentiaries and Penal Colonies in Lusophone and

Hispanophone Africa

I.   **The Iberian Imperial Atlantic Space-Time: Historical Ambivalences of Carceral Colonial History**

In 2014, the Community of Portuguese Speaking Language Countries (CPLP)

unanimously admitted Equatorial Guinea as a full member, despite having no significant

Portuguese-speaking population.[1] The bid was met with outcry over the human rights violations

committed during Equatorial Guinean President Teodoro Obiang's 37-year reign. Nevertheless,

Brazil and Angola lobbied for the membership of the small Spanish-speaking nation in the Gulf

of Guinea in order to take advantage of an economic relationship with the oil-rich state.

Deemphasizing the economic nature of the agreement, Equatorial Guinean state officials offered

up historical narratives of cultural commonality to justify the union. The country's foreign

minister, Agapito Mba Mokuy, argued that Fernando Póo (now Bioko Island) was colonized

longer by Portugal than by Spain. [2] He was quoted by the news agency Lusa, claiming that

"joining the CPLP today is simply coming home" (n.p.).

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[1] The intergovernmental organization aimed at fostering cooperation among its member states (namely Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, East Timor, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, and São Tomé and Príncipe) was founded in 1996.

[2] Bioko Island (formerly known as Fernando Póo) was under Portuguese jurisdiction for 307 years (from 1492 to 1778) compared to 190 under Spain. Currently, Bioko along with Rio Muní, Annobón, Corisco, and Elobey Chico and Grande comprise the territory of Equatorial Guinea.

While in this study I do not focus on the CPLP directly, this topical news story points to larger questions I address in the following pages. I am interested in how historical narratives are deployed in order to construct ideas of the present. Invoking a common cultural and colonial heritage among Lusophone nations and Equatorial Guinea in the twenty-first century—decades after these countries achieved their independence— to legitimize economic partnerships indicates the power of historical narratives as political and ideological tools. The main case studies of this project—Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, and Mozambique—represent a varied set of histories of independence and diverse post-colonial fates. While Equatorial Guinea is known as one of the most brutal and long-lived dictatorships in the world, Cape Verde has been heralded as a success story of African democracies. Mozambique emerged from its 15-year civil war in 1992, successfully establishing peace. However, as of 2013 tensions and instances of violence have escalated between civil war-era adversaries, FRELIMO and RENAMO. These countries are representative of some common trends in history, yet fall along a spectrum of experiences of decolonization and post-colonial governance. I wish to highlight the specificities of each case study, while signaling general trends and convergence among these three countries.

The main objectives of this chapter are to construct the conceptual and historical foundations of carcerality in colonial Lusophone and Hispanophone Africa. First, I provide an overview of historiographies and theories of prisons and incarcerations in colonial Africa. These studies will serve as a foundation for my understanding of carcerality as simultaneously an edifice and a metaphysical phenomenon. Second, I will discuss two iterations of exceptionalism in modern historiography of Portuguese and Spanish colonization in Africa. While I refute these claims of exceptionalism, I will consider how discourses of the Portuguese and Spanish difference enables the reading of colonial history and its aftermath as composed of slippages,

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contradictions, and interconnectedness. In order to underscore the convergences of these histories, I refer to the Iberian Atlantic imperial space-time as a way to denote colonialism as a mutually transformative experience in Europe and Africa. Lastly, I providea brief overview of the origin of prisons or carceral institutions in early colonial Cape Verde, Spanish Guinea, and Mozambique.

I take as my starting point the idea that V.Y. Mudimbe elaborated in *The Invention of Africa* (1989) asserting that history "is a legend, an invention of the present [...] it is both a discourse of knowledge and a discourse of power" (201). Mudimbe defies traditional definitions of history as a narrative of past events. Influenced by Michel Foucault's concept of "archaeology," history is made up of narratives and silenced norms that privilege certain discourses in favor of the subjugation of other histories (*Archaeology of Knowledge* 155).[3] Drawing on Foucault's *archaeology,* my objective is to explore the "history of the present"; the silenced norms that allow for organizing past events into a coherent and linear narrative.

Though few historical works speak of incarceration directly, it was a widespread practice in colonial Africa as a means to ensure a steady supply of manual labor as well as to repress anti-colonial intellectuals. The relevance of these prisons did not end with the onset of the post-colonial period. These prisons were reopened after independence to repress political dissidents. Despite the political changes brought on by decolonization, I argue that the post-colonial period is defined, in part, by continuities in violence and discipline persisting from colonialism. The colonial prison is the lens through which I examine historical narratives of colonial disciplinary violence from the decolonization period. I engage with narratives in the form of literary fiction,

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[3] In contrast to "archaeology," the "history of ideas" is a traditional conceptualization of history based on "beginnings and ends, the description of obscure continuities and returns, the reconstitution of developments in the linear form of history" (*Archaeology of Knowledge* 137).

feature films, historiography, archival documents, and visual culture (paintings and photography) to show how these various media question and nuance the notion of decolonization, not as a rupture with colonialism but as a renegotiation of colonial powers in post-colonial Lusophone and Hispanophone Africa.

My study centers on the Iberian Atlantic imperial space-time during the twentieth century. Portuguese and Spanish imperialism in Africa has been widely understood as exceptional. On the one hand, "Hegel's omission of Spain, Portugal" Michael Iarocci claims, "and by extension, the colonial Atlantic world is symptomatic of the 'imperial difference' that from the eighteenth century forward came to characterize the conceptualization of European modernity" (8)[4]. Aníbal Quijano perpetuated the idea of an Iberian exceptionalism by claiming that "Spain and Portugal were by the nineteenth century too weak and underdeveloped, unable to exercise any kind of neocolonialism" in contrast to the Imperial powers "like the English and French were able to do in certain African countries after the political independence of those countries" (214). For being economically less powerful, the Spanish and Portuguese imperialisms in Africa were discounted as non-integral parts of a colonial historiography of the twentieth century of the African continent. From the outside, the Iberian imperial difference was defined by a sense of inferiority in relation to the economically powerful North. However, Iberian powers refashioned these discourses of economic inferiority. According to Lusotropicalism and Hispanotropicalist discourses, their exceptionality stemmed from

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[4] For Walter Mignolo, Hegel's "imperial difference" establishes a colonial hierarchy within Europe, with France, Germany, and England at the center and Spain and Portugal cast to the peripheries (165). For more on Hegel's imperial difference, see *The Philosophy of History*, pages 102-3.

imperialism free from economic exploitation and hierarchies. They saw their presence in Africa as a benign and harmonious civilizing mission.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the dictatorship of António de Oliveira Salazar appropriated lusotropicalist ideology to justify its colonial endeavors in Africa by maintaining that the Portuguese possess a vocation to adapt to the tropics due their intermixing with the moors and the Jews in the Iberian Peninsula. In turn, the dictatorship of Francisco Franco in Spain, inspired by Salazarism, articulated its own version: Hispanotropicalism. For Franco, Africa was the root of his own identity and thought. He declared in 1938 that his time spent in Africa as an Army Commander "viven en mí con indecible fuerza" (Casals Meseguer 207). For Franco, Africa proved to be the inspiration to revive the Spanish Empire. He asserted that "[a]llí nació la posibilidad de rescate de la España grande. Allí se fundó el ideal que hoy nos redime. Sin África yo apenas puedo explicarme a mí mismo, ni me explico cumplidamente a mis compañeros de armas" (207). At their core, Lusotropicalist and Hispanotropicalist discourses reveal interconnected processes of becoming, whereby imperialism fundamentally affects the sense of identity for the colonizer and the colonized. Yet, the post-colonial present is characterized by "European society's relentless refusal to incorporate its paradigmatic, colonial other into the imagined community of the nation" (Iarocci 130). European modernity is symptomatic of the negation of not just the colonial "other" but promotes a historical erasure of its own alterity. For European modernity, the notion of an Iberian imperialism is a confrontation of Europe with its own alterity.

I contend that the space of imperial difference and marginality, reveals that the historiography of imperialism in twentieth century Africa is replete with colonial epistemology, specifically the concept of an Iberian exceptionalism. It is necessary to refute both the

manifestations of Iberian exceptionalism—the notion of an inferior and inconsequential

expansionism as well as the idea of a harmonious, non-hierarchical colonization—because they

are two sides of the same coin. These contentious historiographies reveal the Lusophone and

Hispanophone imperial space-time defined by "ambivalences." According to Boaventura de

Sousa Santos, the Portuguese empire (and by extension the Iberian empires) simultaneously

occupied the role of colonizer and colonized. Iberian imperialisms occupy an intermediary

position that negotiates, on the one hand, the exclusion from European modernity, and on the

other, its domination over its colonies (28). Furthermore, Sousa Santos asserts that the

ambivalence establishes an oscillating relationship between the colonizer and the colonized.

Imperialism is a mutually constitutive process for the colonizer and the colonized alike. The

ambivalences offer an opening for an "archaeological" analysis of twentieth century Iberian

imperial space, shedding light on the intrinsic and interconnected histories that brought the

imperial world into being and continues to define the space until today. I wish to highlight the

ways these ambivalences, or slippages, can be reactionary and emancipatory. I contend that this

Iberian imperial paradox is a productive space to explore the complex consequences of twentieth

century imperialisms in Africa and Europe.

This ambivalence, in addition to a spatial dimension, possessess a temporal element. The

Iberian Atlantic imperialism in Africa points towards a rereading of history as interconnected in

space as well as time. As Frederic Cooper argues in *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present*

(2002)*,* the transition from the colonial to the post-colonial epoch is a "conventional dividing

point […] a division which conceals as much as it reveals" (4). While the prefix "post-" in post-

colonialism has come to signify the period after newly formed sovereign nation-states gained

their independence from colonial powers; post-colonialism is generally conceptualized in two

distinct ways. As Frantz Fanon and Anthony Kwame Appiah have noted, post-colonialism

signals a temporal marker ushering in a new historical era. The end of colonialism brought on the

"post-colonial era." It has also come to signify a paradigm shift, the "post-colonial condition".

Hereafter, as post-colonial studies claim, the colonial subject becomes empowered to be the

subject, gaining her or his voice and power to represent herself or himself. In both instances,

post-colonialism is represented as a definitive shift and rupture with the past. However, I argue—

as Sousa Santos warns—that the prefix "post" conceals some continuities of the colonialist

structure and system that continue to have a role today, as neocolonialism and internal

colonialisms. My claim is that carcerality—the penitentiary institutions and the disciplinary

violence they exert—is the prism through which I explore how state violence persisted in the

aftermath of colonialism.

Prisons are widely considered as spaces of exceptionalism, harboring the most barbaric

forms of violence. Yet as theorist Achille Mbembe notes in "Necropolitics" (2003) prisons are

not anomalies of extreme violence. Rather, "the death camps [are] the central metaphor for

sovereign and destructive violence as the ultimate sign of absolute power of the negative" (12).

While spatially, prisons are constructed at the edges of society, hidden from view, their

construction and operation are central to the disciplinary violence reverberating beyond the

bounds of their walls. Paradoxically, as prison walls are meant to confine and separate, the walls

are porous boundaries and penitentiaries serve as metaphors for the pervasive disciplinary tactics

practiced by authoritarian and colonial governments. Despite Mbembe's claim that carcerality is

the central metaphor of state violence, the role of prisons, penitentiaries, and concentration

camps in Africa is not well understood. What is more, existing studies of carcerality downplay

the role of prison institutions in colonial African society. *A History of Prison and Confinement in*

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Africa (2003) and *Enfermement, prison et châtiments en Afrique du XIXe siècle à nos jours* (1999) by Florence Bernault and "Imprisonment and Colonialism in Kenya, c.1930-1952: Escaping the Carceral Archipelago" by Daniel Branch are the most important works in the field of Anglophone and Francophone African studies that theorize the role confinement played in colonial punishment. Curiously, both Bernault and Branch examine confinement in colonial Africa from a comparative lens with regard to Foucault.[5] They conclude that foucauldian theory is insufficient to explain the case of the colonial prison. Thus, they trace how the evolution of incarceration in Europe and the West differs from colonial African. The atrocities committed against enslaved Africans as European and North American countries were modernizing their penitentiaries leads Bernault to posit disciplinary practices in colonial Africa as vestiges of the past and of *ancien régime* tactics. "Contrary to the ideal prison reform in Europe" according to Bernault, "did not prevent colonizers from using archaic forms of punishment, such as corporal sentences, flogging, and public exhibition" (Bernault, "History of Prisons" 3). While I concur that prison systems in colonial Africa are not monolithic impositions of Western structures, differences in punishment in colonial Africa did not necessarily mean discipline emerged independently and disconnectedly from Europe. Particularly, the idea that in Africa "the prison did not replace but rather supplement public violence" proves that the prison was integrated into a widespread system of discipline and punishment exerted over society at large.

Bernault asserts that while prison reform was sweeping North America and Europe, "African penal systems came mostly from the diffusion of antiquated devices of bodily restraint

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[5] *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975) by Michel Foucault revitalized carceral studies in Europe and North America. While the history of prisons of the African continent is scarce, Bernault and Branch contend that Foucault's claims are eurocentric and therefore not applicable to Africa.

and torture" ("The Shadow of Rule" 58). Defining African penal systems as antiquated in comparison to modernizing influences of Western prison reform implies that discipline in Africa belongs to a stagnant and past temporality of the *ancien régime* brutality. I believe that the temporal rupture that posits carceral trends in the West as progressive and in the colonies as retrograde establishes a false dichotomy. Carcerality in Europe and Africa was interlinked and in constant conversation. As Tsenay Serequeberhan points out "[the] tranquil existence of the colonizer is grounded on the chaotic, abnormal, and subhuman existence of the colonized" (235). At the heart of the divide is the complicity in the notion that modernity is endogenously European, and that European history develops in a linear and progressive fashion. "By imagining modernity as synonymous with Europe, we have misunderstood how much modern capitalism was a product of the colonial system" claims Susan Buck-Morss, insisting we have failed to consider that the colonies and the peripheries of Empire "[are] in many ways ahead of European developments" (100). As Buck-Morss shows, history develops interconnectedly in space and time. Whereas European prison reform introduced new penitentiary techniques with discourses of more modern and humane modes of punishment, the simultaneous brutal and violent repression techniques in the colonial territories must not be seen as divergent developments.

The end of the spectacle of public executions and the implementation of prisons as hidden spaces of rehabilitation was a response to the economic context of industrialization in Western nations. Rehabilitation within the prison served the purpose of coercing the body to be socially and economically productive in an industrial world dependent upon free labor. Therefore, discipline practiced within the walls of the prison, achieved by the partitioning of space into individual cells and time into regimented schedules, is a symbolic coercion which other "carceral" institutions like hospitals, schools, and factories, replicate to discipline the body

to be economically productive.[6]

In colonial Africa, forced labor for public and private entities was integral to economic production. Forced labor was the nexus of power exerted by the colonial regime, serving as a force of ecomonic discipline and political and cultural repression. Confinement worked alongside torture and forced labor as punishment in the colonies in order to create a regime of State violence and coercion that ensured an economically productive society. Nevertheless, Branch argues that confinement, as punishment, was non-existent in colonial Africa because it lacked the antithesis of a free society. Bernault agrees that colonial punishment relying on "[c]onvict labour masked the divide between the space of law (the prison) and the space of sovereignty (outside the prison)" ("The Shadow of Rule" 24). Both authors argue that punishment in colonial Africa differed from discipline described in Foucault's groundbreaking study. In the case of Francophone Central Africa, Bernault agrees:

> Prisons in colonial Africa did not serve to detain a marginal population of criminals, but instead were part of an intense policy of taming political, economic and cultural resistance to white domination. In this system delinquency was defined as a racial trait, encompassing the entire spectrum of the African population. ("The Shadow of Rule" 21)

The flexibility and porosity of the colonial prison wall and, by extension, the centrality of criminalization in colonial governance, is the reason Bernault and Branch argue to interpret the colonial case independently from foucauldian theories of Western prison reform. However, I argue for analyzing an interconnectedness between the colonies and the metropole. In other

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[6] The concept of the carceral archipelago is the term used by Foucault to describe the interplay of the prison with other disciplinary institutions.

words, making invisible ties of history legible, to show that the practices of brutal colonial punishment and the discourses of a humane prison reform in the Western world are constitutive phenomena.

In this spirit, I will engage with histories, narratives, and historiographies of colonial prisons in Lusophone and Hispanophone Africa in order to understand how carceral discipline was constitutive of European and African societies. Through the prism of the colonial penitentiary, the Iberian Atlantic imperial reveals itself as a complex temporal and geographical web. This approach decenters the colonial metropole, tracing a complex imperial cartography that resists Eurocentric notions of modernity and History and challenges "European society's relentless refusal to incorporate its paradigmatic, colonial other into the imagined community of the nation" (Iarocci 130).

My primary objective is to understand the connected network of disciplinary practices in the colonies and the metropole and their role in the development of Portuguese and Spanish imperialist ideology elaborated over the twentieth century. Prisons, penitentiaries, and penal colonies—bounded spaces of confinement and exclusion—paradoxically give insight into the connections across space and time, illuminating the oscillations of disciplinary practices between the colonies and the metropole. My aim is to understand the temporal and spatial tension within historiography as seen through the lens of the carceral as a symbol of state violence from colonialism to post-colonialism.

II.   Penal Colonies and Penitentiaries in Early Iberian Atlantic Imperialism

Given a lack of understanding on the emergence of prisons and penitentiaries in the Iberian Atlantic, I began by researching the first documented references of penal colonies and penitentiaries of the Portuguese and Spanish colonies in Africa in order to reconstruct a general

historical chronology. I found that the establishment of penitentiaries was inextricably linked to the Scramble for Africa, the proliferation of invasions, colonization, and settlements of the African territories from 1880 to 1914. In addition, the Portuguese colonies saw another wave of intensified efforts to colonize and build prisons after 1936 when Salazar took power. The Penal Colony of Tarrafal and the Machava Prison Camp are two emblematic cases of a movement to construct carceral landscapes beginning in the early twentieth century in Cape Verde and Mozambique, respectively. The planning of space, its fragmentation and partitioning, was crucial to interrupting existing social and urban organizations and exerting a symbolic and structural violence by dismantling and reconstituting order through space. The prison was the epicenter of reorganization. In addition to the spatial fragmentation imposed by the structure, prisons implied a reordering of social and political life.

In Spanish history, the year 1898 is popularly remembered in connection to *La crisis del 1898*, which symbolizes the decadence as well as the end of the Spanish empire as the last colonies in the Americas and Asia gained their independence from Spain. The loss of the Spanish empire with regard to the Americas is symbolic of the subaltern position Spanish culture would come to occupy within newly reconfigured global hierarchies dominated by the United States and northern European powers. Thus, Spain and Portugal were consequently written out of historical narratives of modernity as Michael Iarocci has argued (8). The crisis has been widely characterized as the end of the Spanish empire; however, the loss of colonies in the Americas and Asia led to increased efforts to settle and colonize the African territories, specifically the island of Fernando Póo in the Gulf of Guinea.

The first Spanish-language novel from Spanish Guinea, credited to Leoncio Evita Eloy, entitled *Cuando los combes luchaban: Novela de costumbres de la Guinea Española* (1953) is a

piece of historical fiction that artfully communicates the slippages from the peripheral African colony. While critics have classified the novel as "literature of consent"—a novel that uncritically reproduces colonial discourses—since it does not offer an explicit confrontation with colonial ideology. I argue that the critical voice of the novel nevertheless lies in its power to redraw the maps of the Spanish colonial world. By removing Spain from the center, it shows the elaborate exchanges among peripheral colonial spaces and paradoxically their centrality to the formulation of Spanish imperial ideology.

The plot narrates the legend of the *Combe* people, who are invaded by a mysterious leopard, killing their livestock and threatening their community. With the help of two Spanish adventurers they discover that the leader of the leopard sect is Penda Lengui, a man associated with the king. The narrative develops two parallel plotlines: the practice of *bweti* in the village and the *Combe* people and the clever recounting of Spanish imperial history of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, represented by the itineraries of Spanish adventurers, Martín Garrido and his nephew. Specifically, it connects the uprisings in Cuba, one of the last Spanish colonies in the Americas, with the intensification of imperialism in Spanish Africa. "A los finales del año 1894, cuando empezaba el aire de insurrección cubana," as Evita sets the scene in the novel: "España atosigada por las guerras, tenía abandonadas las cuestiones de África. Ahora se preparaban para una nueva aventura. Irían a Corisco para abastecerse de cuanto fuera necesario" (77).

The spiritual practices of *bweti* of the *Combe* people is juxtaposed with the arrival of the Spanish adventurer and his nephew, who having come from Cuba are looking for new colonial adventures. While they help the community's efforts to restore tranquility, the violence unfolds as the Spaniards gain a foothold in Guinean lands (63). The novel ends with Garrido addressing

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his nephew in a paternal tone: "Vamos, hijo mío, no podemos soñar, no podemos regocijarnos hasta que todas estas hermosas tierras estén bajo la soberanía de España" (101).

According to Benita Sampedro Vizcaya, Evita's novel is significant "not just [for being] the precursor of his *Combe* ethnic adscription within the country, but also an emblematic instance of the moment in which the local Guinean colonial library was opened" (350). Beyond its primacy, the novel is significant for radically shifting the spatial framework of colonial historiography. It is "archaeological" in the Foucauldian sense as it makes audible the silenced histories of the connections between Spanish colonialism in Africa and the larger Atlantic context, symbolically excavating previously forgotten exchanges between American and African colonies. At the same time, it displaces the Spanish colonial metropole from the center while undermining dominant discourses of "La crisis of 1898," as the end of Spanish imperialism. Thus, the novel ends with a premonition: "[l]a civilización de que tanto apetecemos es como una antorcha; alumbra mucho, pero quema todo lo que encuentra a su paso" (26). The image of the torch alludes to the Enlightenment ideals of progress and civilization, especially within the context of reviving the European "civilizing mission" in Africa, demonstrating that in the space of the colony the torch that illuminates also burns everything in its path.

In fact, the cartography proposed by Evita's novel opens up a space to examine the interconnected nature of Spanish imperialism in Africa and across the Atlantic, where the Spanish-American War in Cuba emerges as an excellent case. While the colonies in the Gulf of Guinea were ceded to Spain in 1778, it wasn't until almost a century later when the colonies in Africa took on geostrategic importance as a penal colony for the deportation of Cuban insurgents; *Krumanes*, as forced laborers captured from Liberia and Sierra Leone were known; and enslaved Africans captured off slave ships. The motive behind these deportations was to

alleviate the manual labor shortages. However, the historical moment characterized by liberal ideologies of freedom and equality and the abolishment of slavery revealed a conceptual and ethical paradox.

As early as 1845, the settlement of Spanish Guinea began to receive Afro-Cuban radicals deported from Cuba, known as *gente libre de color* or *emancipados* to the island of Fernando Póo, in order to simultaneously punish dissenters and alleviate labor shortages in the exploitation of the island's natural resources. While according to Spanish officials, the *emancipados* willingly went "back" to Africa, many were coerced or went under the terms that after several years of labor they would be granted unconditional freedom. However, as historian Ibrahim Sundiata postulates, the *emancipado* designation under which the deportees were sent to Fernando Póo was a strategy to circumvent anti-slavery treaties (Sundiata 51).

As Aline Helg explains in *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality* (1995), racial tensions were activated during the Spanish-American War as Spanish officials attempted to undermine efforts for Cuban independence. In late 1880 Spanish General Camilo Polavieja resorted to:

> [The] Haitian scarecrow tactic when he unveiled an alleged "conspiracy of the people of color" in Santiago de Cuba. According to Polavieja's findings, the majority of the raza de color of the Oriente was about to rise up in arms again, this time in a race war against whites that would coincide with the landing of Antonio Maceo in the province. [He] ordered the arrest of 265 "conspirators" [...] most were black, many were mulatto [... and banished them] to the dreadful penitentiary on the island of Fernando Póo, in the Gulf of Guinea. (50)

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The figure of the *emancipado*, as these conspirators were known, is fundamental in understanding the confluence of interconnected and contradictory phenomena of Spanish imperialism in Guinea. In the age of abolition, as the free labor model began to replace the institution of slavery, the changes of the late nineteenth century resulted in a complex web of contradictions.

The first page of Miguel Bravo y Sintiés's memoir *Deportación a Fernando Póo: Relación que hace uno de los deportados* (1869) depicts a map tracing the course of the ship departing from Cuba traveling via Puerto Rico, the Cape Verdean archipelago, and finally reaching the island of Fernando Póo, the seat of the Spanish Guinean colonial government (Figure 1.1). Bravo —an emancipado political prisoner, banished to the island of Fernando Póo, suspected of dissent against the Spanish government— retraced the navigation routes of millions of enslaved Africans who traveled as part of the slave trade.

The fact that "the practice of slavery did not dissappear with the advent of liberal modernity" is a late nineteenth century paradox that Spanish imperial discourse grappled with both discursively and legislatively. As Cubans fought for independence from Spain, Cuban elites emancipated slaves in order to recruit them as soldiers against Spanish imperial power. The guerrilla style warfare made the differentiation between soldiers and civilians difficult for Spanish troops. As a result, Spanish authorities implemented the policy of *reconcentración*, which according to Joël Kotek and Pierre Rigoulet, is the origin and first instance of the term "concentration camp" (49). Spanish authorities responded to the fear of the invisible enemy—the *guerrillero* fighting an irregular and impromptu war—by displacing and concentrating entire villages to Oriente region, wherein suspects, both civilians and guerrilla fighters were held under constant vigilance. This policy was "unprecedented at the time for its scale, intensity and

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efficiency" [as] at least 170,000 civilian internees, about one-tenth of the total population, lost their lives in these concentration centres." (Smith and Stucki 422). The fear of the invisible and internal enemy is a trope that will resurface in the early twentieth century; nonetheless, the indistinction between civilian and soldier blurred the distinction between free and confined therefore criminalizing entire populations.

Since 1861 when Queen Isabel II had ordered the establishment of a penitentiary, the legislative concerns of the settlement were expressed through a language of order and cleanliness (Miranda 32). In Spanish Guinea, the Cuban deportees were seen as the revolutionary pathogens that could inoculate society at large against docile submission to Spanish imperialism:

> El riesgo de que se introduzcan personas que, por resentimiento, por sus pasiones, por su mala conducta o por crímenes en que hayan incurrido, vicien las inclinaciones y opinión de aquellos habitantes, dificultando de este modo su dócil reducción y obedencia al domínio espãnol. (Miranda 17)

Therefore, according to colonial law, establishing public order and cleanliness was a priority; hence, drunkenness and public disturbances were punishable by fines and prison sentences, so that colonial Guinean society would become docile and obedient to Spanish powers (Miranda 17).

Similarly, on the island of Fernando Póo, the deported Cuban political prisoners were free to walk about the settlement. The geographic borders of the island were the prisoners' confines. They were housed in barracks, given daily rations of food and sent to work during the day. However, as the notion of the *emancipado* demonstrated in Spanish Guinea, the free man embodied the paradox of liberalism, as liberty and slavery existing simultaneously in space and time. In other words, the island of Fernando Póo was on the ideological fault lines of liberalism's

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ideals. Starting in 1862, when over 200 deportees were taken to Guinea and the forcible migrations continued until 1897 (Aranzadi 5). There is a small yet significant corpus of diaries and memoirs written by Cuban deportees to Africa. Manuel Miranda, deported in 1896, wrote to recount his journey but also to create awareness to "las crueldades con que los 'colonizadores' martirizan á los desgraciados africanos" (4). "[E]n esta prisión de sol y arena. [...]Llevo varios años confinado en esta Isla," as deportee Miranda described. "A veces voy hablando solo por la orilla del mar para sentir mi propia voz y saber que no he muerto, que todavía existo" (León 10). The juxtaposition of wandering images while in confinement, i.e. the state of being simultaneously free and enslaved, represents the existential paradox of Miranda's status as an *emancipado*. The paradox lies in that freedom and enslavement are exclusive yet constitutive. Freedom cannot exist if there is enslavement and vice-versa, nevertheless, the terms are rhetorically interdependent for meaning. Without enslavement, freedom would have no meaning. Thus, we may argue that the figure of the *emancipado* is emblematic of the simultaneous and contradictory existence of freedom and enslavement—in fact, not an aberration of liberal thought, but rather its founding principle.

However, as one deportee attested, the *emancipados* were sent to their imminent death, and indeed, Spanish officials informed them upon arrival: "vienen aquí a morir como deben morir los traidores a la noble España" (Balmaseda 34). Miranda testified to the cremation of hundreds of bodies of those who died from unknown illnesses. Even though deportations were officially banned in 1872, the same year in which Spain abolished slavery, the state of emergency declared in the settlement in Fernando Póo was not lifted until 1904 (Sundiata 54). While the Spanish-American War resulted in the loss of the last Spanish colony of the Americas,

the arrival of deportees in Spanish Guinea signalled the beginnings of colonial violence and

domination in Fernando Póo.

> Pronto hubo en Fernando Póo escenas de violencia, de robo y asesinato, y los
>
> pacíficos vecinos conocieron que si se quedaban allí serian víctimas de la
>
> crueldad y la rapacidad del godo. La primera guarnición no podia haber llegado
>
> más á tiempo para dar á conocer bajo su verdadero aspecto la dominación que
>
> acababa de inaugurarse y matar todo proyecto de empresas industriales y toda
>
> idea de permanecer en el país. (Bravo y Sentiés 134)

The deportee Bravo employs the symbol of the garrison sent to defend a fortress or settlement, to

demonstrate that the origins of imperialism in Spanish Guinea revealed a violent domination,

more specifically, a disciplinary type of violence, which is directly detrimental to

industrialization and modernization.

Curiously, while thousands had been deported to the island of Fernando Póo since the

1840s, debates on penal colonies in Spanish territories did not emerge until the 1870s. The

Spanish writer and feminist thinker Concepción Arenal—who wrote extensively on prison

reform in the Spanish context—began to debate in 1873 with penologists Francisco Lastres y

Juiz and Pedro Armengol y Cornet the appropriateness of establishing Fernando Póo and the

Mariana Islands as Spanish penal colonies. These debates continued into the twentieth century,

culminating with the extensive study published in 1933 by José Martínez de Elorza y Otero,

entitled *Proyecto de colonia penal: Annobon-Rio de Oro.*

It is notable that the debates surrounding the role of penal colonies within the context of

Spanish imperialism among Arenal, Lastres and Armengol framed the issue within a larger

context as the punishment and deportations, at a time when forced labor and banishment to

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overseas colonies had become a global phenomenon. Comparisons with the British convict

colony of Australia and the French penal colonies of New Caledonia and French Guyana,

showed that during the mid to late nineteenth century there was an interconnected web of

deportations and penal colonies. As Stephen A. Toth concludes in *Beyond Papillon: The French*

Overseas Penal Colonies, 1854-1952 (2006).

> In penal colonies we find a persistent oscillation between conceptual binaries:
>
> punishment/colonization, inhumane/humane, and perhaps most important—at
>
> least in terms of the institution's history—retribution/rehabilitation, subsumed
>
> within this universe of conflicting images—all missing, masking, or distorting—
>
> are the vague outlines of the penal colony's raison d'être. (152)

The penal colony, characterized by these conceptual oscillations, shows the close connections

between the "carceral" and the "colonial." The onset of colonialism on the island of Fernando

Póo in Spanish Guinea was legislated and constructed around its role as a penal colony—a place

of deportation for Cuban political prisoners.

As a result of the Scramble for Africa, culminating with the Berlin Conference of 1884-

1885, which divided up the continent according to borders drawn by European colonial powers,

Portugal began to lay claim to and settle its territories that had previously been trading ports

(Morton 234). In Portuguese colonial Africa, as in Spanish Guinea, settlement and colonization

of territories were related to the development of disciplinary institutions. According to João

Sousa Morais in *Maputo: Património da estrutura e forma urbana* (2009), the port of Lourenço

Marques expanded to solidify Portuguese colonial presence in Africa. Spatial discipline, and

more importantly, prison architecture, were fundamental in devising a modern city. The

following case of the Mozambican city of Lourenço Marques demonstrates a complex web of

forced labor and prison construction in order to create a modern and disciplined city. Alexandre Lobato, historian of the city of Lourenço Marques (known as Maputo following independence) summarized the transformation of the Mozambican colonial capital during the mid-twentieth century in the following way:

> Nenhum aspecto actual são reconhecíveis hoje: o antigo Presídio, a antiga vila, ou mesmo a primitiva cidade, e do que se sabe que foram, não há vestígios sensíveis à vida e ao povo. [...] O passado de Lourenço Marques consumiu-se ele próprio, sem deixar vestígios. (Lobato 9)

From the end of the nineteenth century, Lourenço Marques underwent several phases of urbanization, turning the small port into the capital city of colonial Mozambique. The colonial capital was constructed to reflect a modern imperial landscape, which entailed the erasure of its "primitive" vestiges. The city of Lourenço Marques thus became the space where the contradictions of the binary between the "modern" and the "primitive" played themselves out.

For Lobato, the epistemological reordering of the modern city centers around the Forte da Nossa Senhora da Conceição, a colonial military fort dating back to the eighteenth century, which was part of the vast slave trade network. As a result of occidentalist imperialism, the city of Lourenço Marques became a space defined along a new set of power relations. "O passado de Lourenço Marques consumiu-se ele próprio," as Lobato noted, is characteristic of the epistemological violence of erasure and reordering the colonial world through the delineation and fragmentation of spaces, boundaries and the imposition of a new historical and identitary narrative, disconnected from its past (9). Following the erasure of the "primitive" city and the Fort (and with it the subjugation of the history of slavery), the city was reconstructed to represent the imperial and modernizing ambitions of Portuguese colonialism in the late nineteenth century.

The *Plano de Ampliação* officially approved in 1892, laid out the colonial capital according to a grid plan with long, wide, and perfectly parallel and perpendicular avenues evoking the order of a modern city according to a military aesthetic (Morais 86). While the fort no longer dominated the landscape, new and modern constructions of prisons and penitentiaries were central to the urbanization of the city.

The construction of the *Cadeia Civil de Lourenço Marques* (the Civil Prison of Lourenço Marques) was first captured in a photographic expedition commissioned by the Portuguese government, which sent Manoel Romão Pereira to Mozambique in 1889 to document the Portuguese presence in the territories (Figure 1.2). These images were to be exhibited at the *Exposição Insular e Colonial Portugueza* in 1894 at the Palácio de Cristal in city of Porto. The prison was to replace the Island of Mozambique and the Forte of Lourenço Marques as the main penitentiary, and become an integral part in demonstrating a modern imperial presence in southern Africa. It points to the pivotal role that carceral architecture played in the way space was regulated; discipline was exerted; and the image of Portuguese imperialism was projected among European colonial powers. An aerial photograph showing the Avenida da República and the Mercado Municipal also depicts the first modern civilian prison of Lourenço Marques constructed between 1889-1891 (Figure 1.3). Situated alongside the wide main avenue and the central market, the first modern prison becomes literally and figuratively the center of the modern city.

Almost four decades later, José dos Santos Rufino, a merchant and publisher in Lourenço Marques, commissioned an extensive ten-volume *Photographic and Descriptive Album* in 1929 depicting cities and scenes of Mozambican colonial life with captions and commentary written in Portuguese and translated to English and French. With the construction of the elite Polana Hotel

and golf course, the city expanded North into the Sommerschield area. The erection of a new prison, which today is known as the Sommerschield prison, was an important part of this development and was celebrated in a full page spread (Figure 1.4). "Different Views of the New Jail in Construction" as the page is captioned, "near the 'Club da Polana' (Golf Club). This prison provided with all modern requirements will cost over £ 30.000" (Santos 35). Linked to the lavish Polana Hotel, the jail became intrinsically tied to a sense of modernity, especially considering that Sommerschield was the second modern prison for a relatively small city. Thus over a few decades, the military and slave fort was replaced by a network of prison institutions dispersed throughout the city.

Despite the proliferation of prison construction, the role of prisons and incarceration is rarely discussed in the historiography focusing on the development of colonial Lourenço Marques, even while repression is postulated in terms of forced labor. *African Workers and Colonial Racism: Mozambican Strategies and Struggles in Lourenço Marques, 1877-1962* (1994) by Jeanne Penvenne, is a crucial work that demonstrates the racism of colonial society. Curiously, the author frames racism around issues of labor relations and exploitation of workers. As Penvenne implicitly demonstrates, prisons and discipline were fundamental institutions in acquiring the necessary labor force to transform the city. The colonial official called this "[the] 'usual practice' of commandeering and summarily sentencing Africans to prison labor on public works for ill-defined offenses such as disobedience, drunkenness, vagrancy, 'morals,' disorder, and petty theft" (Penvenne 63). Notions of imprisonment in Penvenne's text therefore appear not only as simultaneously ubiquitous practices, but have been made invisible in historiography. Penvenne's text is representative of other studies on punishment in Subsaharan Africa arguing

that the comprehensive and pervasive nature of punishment and represention in the colonies, made prisons and confinement obsolete forms of punishment.

Daniel Branch argues that in colonial Kenya confinement and prisons were not important institutions of punishment, because the walls of the prison were porous and fluid forcing inmates to complete their sentences on public works projects outside of the prison. Moreover, the representation of Africans as a degenerate race resulted in a widespread criminalization of a population based soley on racial identity. Therefore, Branch concludes in the absence of liberty, confinement as punishment had no significance. The lack of liberty within a colonial context, therefore made punishment pervasive and devalued confinement as a disciplinary technique. Branch argues that punishment in colonial Kenya, "the assumed norms at the heart of Foucault's writings become utterly alien" (242). However, representing the colonial African case as radically different, disconnected and removed from European prison reform, imposes a false dichotomy between African and European historical phenomena. Historians, rightfully, point to the limitations of Eurocentric Foucauldian theory and diversified nature of punishment; nevertheless, a problematic dichotomy becomes reified when African and European carceral trends are represented as having emerged separately. Furthermore, incarceration existing in conjunction with other forms of punishment and torture does not diminish its importance as an institution, but rather speaks to its pervasive power.

Liberty and equality, main pillars of liberal thought that are represented as progressive, and more importantly, as endogenously European, were constantly defined through the contradiction created by the simultaneous existence of slavery, forced labor, brutality and torture. As Susan Buck-Morss argues "The slave" and I would argue, the forced laborer "is the one commodity like no other, as freedom of property and freedom of person are here in direct

contradiction" (827). Like the figure of the *emancipado* in the Spanish Guinean context, the fluid and widespread criminalization in Lourenço Marques was the discursive solution to the paradox posited by liberalism.

However, as I have shown with European colonization and settlement during the late nineteenth-century, the spatiality of Spanish and Portuguese imperialisms told a story of fragmentation, hierarchization, and pervasive criminalization. The incompatibility of liberal discourses such as the tropes of liberty and equality in the context of Lourenço Marques shows that the construction of liberal ideals relied on the existence and negotiations of vast criminalization and institutionalized inequalities. According to Penvenne, "the ideological focus of civilizing Africans to their moral obligations to work collided head-on with the inconvenient reality in Lourenço Marques" (64). As a solution, the colonial government stratified society into the categories of *indígenas* and *assimilados*, where the former continued to suffer from colonial oppression, subjugation, forced labor, while the latter, in theory, could attain Portuguese citizenship.

The new urban development plans of the mid-twentieth century, *Plano Aguiar,* inscribed the city with a new set of disciplinary ideological principles that revealed discursive contradictions in the Portuguese "civilizing mission." Named after the director of Public Works, João António de Aguiar, who traveled to Lourenço Marques in 1947, this wave of urbanization came at the height of the Salazarist architectural movement known as *Estilo Português Suave*. Under the auspices of this movement, urban planning and architecture became responsible for representing and formulating the regime's ideology through architectural language; city squares were transformed into monuments to honor and also create an image of an imperial historical tradition and modern civilization.

In order to inscribe Lourenço Marques with an air of civilization and imperialism, Aguiar was to resolve the contradiction between an orderly historic city center and its improvised suburban shantytowns. In Aguiar's Lourenço Marques the city center, a *cidade de cimento* (the cement city) was split from the shantytowns, the *caniço*, by the arching Avenida Caldas Xavier:

> Propõem-se outras zonas verdes, denominadas "reservas", com o objectivo de diferenciar a cidade "de cimento" da dos bairros indígenas (o caniço) advogando-se a proximidade destes bairros da cidade, por razões da órdem práctica, dado que a localização da mão-de-obra deveria estar posicionada a uma distância que permítisse a acessibilidade a pé. (Morais 158)

Aguiar further explained that in British colonial urban planning indigenous neighborhoods were isolated and distant from white settlements. However, in order to maintain an available indigenous workforce near-by, 'sanitization' and order were achieved by planting a buffer zone of trees. As shown in the case of Cairo according to Timothy Mitchell in *Colonising Egypt* (1988), the language of cleanliness was fundamental to the establishment of modern colonial cities: "intellectual orderliness, a social tidiness, a physical cleanliness, that was coming to be considered the country's fundamental political requirement" (63). While officially no segregation laws existed, the architecture and urbanization delineated Lourenço Marques along racial lines. Implementing strict building codes within the city of cement resulted in racial segregation. The city of cement was accessible to almost exclusively wealthy white colonizers, while black Africans and occasionally poor whites were ousted to the suburbs (Morton 242). In order to achieve the image of imperial grandeur and to establish of order, discipline and sanitization within the city of cement, the role of the prison was once again fundamental. These changes coincided with implementation of the *Lei Orgânica do Ultramar Português* of 1951. The law

incorporated the colonies into the Portuguese nation, as *Províncias Ultramarinas* (Overseas Provinces); the legislative expression of the Lusotropicalist ideology claimed that the Portuguese nation was a "sociedade pluricontinental e multirracial, formada sob a égide da tolerância racial, do convívio de culturas e da fraternidade cristã" (Castelo 67).

While Lusotropicalist discourses proclaimed racial harmony in the African territories, prison architecture paints an entirely different picture. In 1969, Lourenço Marques experienced the last wave of urbanization before independence, the *Plano Azevedo*, which aimed to regularize the shantytowns extending highways into the indigenous and increasingly industrial neighborhood of Machava. The Governor General of Mozambique, Gabriel Teixeira, began to call for the construction of a third prison for the city of Lourenço Marques since 1947. However, official plans for the construction of the prison camp in Machava in Lourenço Marques are missing from Portuguese archives. The prison in Inhambane, built in 1953 is representative of the trends in prison architecture and, more importantly, it provides insight into racial segregation as the primary taxonomy of inmates. Architect Pinto Lopes created a design that relied on the precise delineation of space separating confinement, recreation and meals of inmates according race, age, and sex. Architect Rodrigues Lima of the *Português Suave* architectural style was known for designing prisons throughout Portugal, as well as elaborating prison designs for the Mozambican cities of Beira and Nampula along with the Cadeia do Ultramar (The Overseas Prison), a generic blueprint meant to be replicated throughout the Portuguese colonies in Africa and Asia. The history of the Salazar-Caetano regime as seen through the spatial metaphor of the prison, illustrates a society constructed along a strict racial hierarchy to avoid contamination within the degenerate elements of society as noted by Adriano Moreira, Minister of the Overseas Provinces from 1961 to 1963. Therefore, the central contradiction of Lusotropicalist discourse is

spatially expressed within the prison. Order and discipline, expressed through the language of sanitization and contamination, was imposed and created by strict separation and fragmentation of society.

In the following chapters, I will elaborate on each case study (introduced here) by focusing on the fate of these prisons during the transition from late colonialism to the first decade of the post-colonial period. Specifically, Chapter 2 will engage with the history of the *Colónia Penal do Tarrafal*, which was in operation from 1936 to 1954 incarcerating political dissidents from Portugal. The political and legislative debates surrounding the construction of the Penal Colony in 1936 demonstrated that the prison served as a space through which Salazarism consolidated its power as a repressive and vigilant regime. In addition to legislative conceptualization, I explain how plans to construct prisons and work camps inflicted a spatial fragmentation and violence that allowed the Salazar regime to fashion itself as an imperial and fascist regime. The penal colony was reopened as the *Campo de Trabalho de Tarrafal* from 1961 to 1974, housing liberation fighters from around Lusophone Africa, who were deemed subversive and resistant to the Salazar regime. During its second phase of operation, the prison became a locus of political reflection with African intellectuals formulating political alternatives to the fascist and colonialist Salazar regime. While it is widely believed that the prison ceased to operate during decolonization, I explore the post-colonial history of the camp. The ruling party after independence, the PAIGC, reopened the camp to incarcerate members of the political opposition just months after the last inmates of Portuguese colonialism were liberated. In the decade after independence, I will show how the Campo de Concentração de Tarrafal (as the camp is known today) became, once again, a space of contention to define and negotiate the history of decolonization in Cape Verde. This chapter is an "archaeology" of incomplete

decolonization. I contend that memoirs and testimonies written by José Vicente Lopes, Pedro

Martins, and Eduardo Vieira Fontes redefine independence as characterized by continuities,

rather than a rupture, with Portuguese colonial power.

In Chapter 3, I examine literary representations of prisons and penitentiaries in fiction

written in post-independence Equatorial Guinea. *Ekomo* (1985) by María Nsué Angüe and

Cenizas de kalabó y termes (2000) and *Autorretrato con un infiel* (2007) by José Fernando Siale

Djangany are examples of "colonial carceral" narratives that recount the transition to

independence and the atrocities committed during the post-colonial Macías regime reflecting on

the vestiges of colonial violence. Most importantly, the novels grapple with historical narratives

and continuities of colonial violence in post-independence Equatorial Guinean literature by

providing meta-reflections on the politics of writing historical narratives in the aftermath of

colonialism.

Chapter 4 turns to the Machava Prison Camp in Mozambique. I look at the figures of the

New Man and the New Woman under the Salazar regime and during the FRELIMO Revolution

to demonstrate how the State promoted the politics of amity and enmity for national unification. I

contend that the politics of amity and enmity perpetuated the carceral regimes beyond the walls

of prison by exerting discipline over society. I trace the continuities of carceral violence through

the histories of liberation fighters, artists, and intellectuals, like Matias M'boa, Malangatana

Nwengya, and José Craiverinha, who were imprisoned by the Portuguese secret police during

colonialism and again by FRELIMO after independence. The continuities of violence beyond

independence have led to the disenchantment with the promises of independence in

Mozambique.

To conclude, I provide some final considerations on historical representations of

carcerality during the struggle for independence in contemporary post-colonial Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, and Mozambique. In addition, I will reflect on some underlying themes of this project. Specifically, I will entertain the implications of a comparative Lusophone and Hispanophone project and the concept of the Iberian Atlantic imperial space-time as a way to decenter the former colonial powers—Portugal and Spain. I maintain that carcerality forged an interconnected world across geographies and historical periods which allows us to consider how the present is to a degree still replete with relationships of coloniality.

Chapter 2

Geographies of Terror—From Penal Colony to Concentration Camp in Tarrafal, Cape Verde

*Sabes
que existe
una isla,
la isla de la Sal,
y Tarrafal en ella
vierte sombra?
[...]
En silencio
la palabra
anda con lentitud pero recorre
no sólo el Portugal, sino la tierra.*
Pablo Neruda, "Los presidios"

We must at all times see the part and the whole.
Amílcar Cabral, *Unity and Struggle*

I.   Introduction

Throughout its history, the penitentiary in the village of Tarrafal on the island of Santiago in

Cape Verde has been known under three separate names: penal colony, work camp, and

concentration camp. These designations represent not only three separate phases in the life of the

prison, but also reveal the prison as an archive of contentious discourses negotiating questions of

power, space, and history. Today, the prison stands as the modest *Museu da Resistência*

commemorating the struggles of Portuguese and African intellectuals who fought against the

Salazar regime. Yet, little is known so far about the role of the prison during decolonization

when the *Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde* (PAIGC)—the resistance

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movement turned one-party state—reopened the camp to suppress resistance from competing political movements. By examining each phase in the life of the penitentiary, I argue that Tarrafal represents a discursive archive through which political and historical discourses have been constructed, appropriated, negotiated and contested from Salazarist to post-colonial Cape Verde. [7] During the Salazar regime, the construction of the penal colony allowed for the conceptualization of the political prisoner and served as space for the consolidation of power through violence and surveillance. Immediately following Salazarism, Portuguese communists and anti-fascists appropriated the emblem of the penal colony as proof that fascism existed in Portugal. Reclaiming the prison as a symbol of atrocities committed against the Portuguese resulted in a silence and erasure of Tarrafal's significance in relation to Africa. Moreover, Tarrafal is representative of a convergence of historical and political phenomena that reveal fascism and colonialism as inextricably linked. Lastly, I examine how in the post-colonial era Tarrafal became a space for commemoration of colonialism, but also a locus for the elaboration of competing histories about decolonization.

II. Salazarist Geographies of Terror: Constructing the *Estado Novo* in the Penal Colony of Tarrafal, Cape Verde

The Penal Colony of Tarrafal is the most infamous symbol of Salazarist violence throughout the Portuguese-speaking world.[8] Tarrafal was in operation from 1936 to 1954 and reopened again from 1961 to 1974. In its first phase of operation the Salazar regime deported and

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[7] The history and the contemporary significance of the camp is rich. While I cannot address all of the complexities in one chapter, the book manuscript will dedicate an expanded chapter elaborating the role of the camp in Cape Verdean historiography.

[8] The Penal Colony of Tarrafal was part of a wide network of penitentiaries in Africa. In Cape Verde, the Portuguese constructed smaller penal colonies on the islands of Santo Antão and São Nicolau. In Guinea-Bissau, the Ilha das Galinhas (part of the Bijagós Islands) housed another penal colony.

incarcerated Portuguese communists, anarchists, and leftists to the Penal Colony found just outside the village of Tarrafal on the northern end of Santiago island in the Cape Verdean archipelago. In 1961, the camp housed anti-colonial intellectuals from Angola, Cape Verde, and Portuguese Guinea. Tarrafal represented the epicenter of Salazarist power as well as the diverse forms of resistance and struggle against the dictatorship. Today, the camp is the *Museu da Resistência*, a space for remembrance of the atrocities committed by the Salazar regime from 1936 to 1974.

Considering Tarrafal as the epicenter of Salazarist violence, I argue that the camp was not merely a space upon which Salazarism exerted its power, but rather Tarrafal (and by extension the African colony) was fundamental in defining power and discipline for the *Estado Novo.*[9] In other words, I argue for reading Salazarism as a regime in which Europe and Africa became intertwined. Just as Salazarism constructed and delimited Tarrafal, building a penal colony on African territories posed a set of legal and discursive dilemmas that deeply impacted how the *Estado Novo* perceived its own power.

Demarcations of space are pivotal in the processes of colonization. Invoking Frantz Fanon, Achille Mbembe in "Necropolitics" (2003) shows that the discipline and vigilance of space, through parceling, is a mechanism of colonial violence:

> Colonial occupation entails first and foremost a division of space into
> compartments. It involves the setting of boundaries and internal frontiers
> epitomized by barracks and police stations; it is regulated by the language of pure

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[9] The *Estado Novo* was a corporatist and authoritarian regime. Its main pillars—the Catholic Church, the Military, and the Secret Police—were responsible for enforcing order. The nature of the government is still disputed among scholars, with some scholars arguing that the Salazarist Estado Novo demonstrated all the defining characteristics of fascist regimes.

force, immediate presence, and frequent and direct action; and it is premised on the principle of reciprocal exclusivity. (51)

A team sent to the Cape Verdean island of Santiago in the 1930s to complete a study in order to construct a Penal Colony in the municipality of Tarrafal returned to Portugal with photographs of the region. The first image of an arid flat land, a tabula rasa representation of Achada Grande, was marked up by hand to designate the future locations of the penitentiary, barracks, headquarters, and the cemetery (Figure 2.1). The land is taken to be a blank slate, which could be written, built and conceptualized. Between the water wells in Chão Bom and the village of Tarrafal, a provisional and a permanent camp, the Companhia Indígena, and a cemetery were to be constructed.

The second image, taken from the same position, shows the buildings of the provisional camp in place (Figure 2.2). The changing landscape is labeled accordingly with the exception of the *frigideira* (the frying pan), a 6 x 3 m cement building without windows where prisoners were held in solitary confinement with temperatures often reaching 40-60 degrees Celsius. The empty land was transformed into an extensive prison camp. Next to the penal colony, the quarters of the Companhia Indígena were built, transforming Tarrafal into a carceral and military landscape. With the construction of eight pavilions in the penal colony, the space was partitioned and fragmented in order to keep inmates from congregating in masses.

As was the case in the settlement and colonization of Mozambique and Spanish Guinea, the parallel colonization, and the imposition of a carceral landscape were intertwined phenomena. As Mbembe shows through the interpretation of Fanon, both colonization and incarceration followed the logic of spatial fragmentation, expressed through a language of force

and vigilance. In order to understand this parallelism in the context of the twentieth century, it is necessary to understand the emergence of the *Estado Novo*.

Commonly considered the year of the *Estado Novo*, 1933 brought about many structural changes to the Portuguese government. With the leadership of Prime Minister António de Oliveira Salazar, state repression and a revitalization of imperialist ideologies became the main ideological pillars of the New State. The year 1933 also marked the first studies commissioned to begin the implementation of penal colonies in the overseas territories. The overseas penal colony as a space of "persistent oscillation," as argued by Stephen A. Toth, represented the coming into being of the New State as (1) persistent territorial oscillations between the metropole and the colonies; (2) these oscillations translated into an ideological binary between colonization and punishment.

The *Decreto Lei nº 23203* signed on November 6, 1933 was key in defining the nature of political crimes, while establishing imprisonment and deportation to the overseas penal colony as punishment for suspected dissenters. This became a turning point for the authoritarian Salazar regime to define itself through the conceptual binary of colonization and punishment. Portuguese anarchist Manuel Firmo, who fought alongside Republicans in the Spanish Civil War before being deported to Tarrafal, observed that "um abismo separa o preso político do preso de delíto comum; porém, a ditadura fascista fazia tábua rasa desta dissemelhança de delito" (146). Unlike common criminals, political prisoners were not incarcerated on the basis of a crime but rather on a perceived threat to state ideology. Characterized as delinquents or degenerates, political prisoners were elements of society that inherently proved dangerous to the establishment, therefore needing to be removed or expelled. Criminality was no longer an act or a transgression of the law, it became an inherent characteristic or immutable identitarian mark among certain

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segments of society. This dynamic is reminiscent of the invisible enemy in the Cuban context of *reconcentraciones*, whereby the entire social body was criminalized and under constant vigilance on the basis of suspicion or criminal potential. Through the use of the term "degenerates" and retrogrades, the New State deployed a racialized language seen earlier in the colonial context of Mozambique, in order to describe the state's internal political enemies.

After the Portuguese Secret Police (*Polícia Internacional e Defesa do Estado*) was created to consolidate the powers of state violence, repression and vigilance into one governmental body, there was a sharp increase in the criminalization of suspected ideological dissenters, resulting in the overcrowding of prisons in Portugal. As a result, the construction of a large penal colony in Cape Verde became an urgent priority.

After considering several sites, a commission decided upon Tarrafal, on the island of Santiago in Cape Verde (Barros, "As ilhas" 63). Headed by the modernist architect José Ângelo Cottinelli Telmo, the father of the *Português Suave* style, the commission sent a study of the "Colony in Cape Verde" in 1935 to the Interior Ministry. The study lamented the lack of legislative support for the project, as the carceral question in the colonies had not been written into law. While the Cottinelli study was eschewed in favor of a more modest plan, its lasting contribution was the *Decreto Lei nº 26539* of 1936, which brought into legislation the Penal Colony of Tarrafal for political prisoners that specifically "se mostrem refractários à disciplina dêste estabelecimento ou elementos perniciosos para os outros reclusos." Elements of society, enemies, that were resistant to reform and likely to contaminate society, were to be symbolically and physically banished from the colonial metropole.

By 1936, the buildings were installed and the small plateau of Achada Grande de Tarrafal imprisoned anarcho-syndicalists, communists, and anti-Salazarists sent from Lisbon. As the New

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State centralized repression techniques in Portugal with the establishment of PIDE, the colonies were united under state power through the *Acto Colonial de 1930*. Imperialism became the ideological foundation of the Salazar regime. The revitalization of imperialism under Salazar in the 1930s began with the construction of a new and modern disciplinary landscape, as evident in the design of the Provisional Penal Colony. On the grounds of the camp, the New State was conceptualized as a simultaneously authoritarian and colonial state imposing its disciplinary rule throughout the colonies and the metropole.

As the construction of the Penal Colony of Tarrafal commenced, photographers captured images of the construction of the provisional penal colony showing a few unfinished barracks circumscribed by heavy cement walls horizontally bisecting the image (Figure 2.3). At the foot of Monte Graciosa, as the Tarrafal landscape is transformed into a large penitentiary, a laborer rests sitting at the gate, wearing a hardhat. The metaphorical power of the photo is quite striking, for the worker is sitting by the wall literally and figuratively at the borderline between incarceration and freedom, simultaneously inside and outside. The idea of walls as separation and connection between the inside and the outside of the prison is the central paradox of the construction and operation of the prison camp. Built in part through the labor of inmates themselves; the forced laborers from Cape Verde, however, rarely figure as part of official history.

Pedro Soares, a member of the Portuguese Communist Party and former prisoner, in his memoir, *Tarrafal: Campo de morte lenta* (1975) described the parallel suffering of the prisoners and the oppressed inhabitants of the Tarrafal municipality:

> Como únicos vestígios do mundo há ar carrancudo das guardas e das sentinelas
>
> negras que vigiam [...] os castigos, os trabalhos forçados, as doenças e a morte de

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alguns companheiros. Lá longe, nas encostas dos montes, há casas de pretos que

os guardas separaram pela violência dos seus companheiros de opressão. Como os

presos, eles levam também seus mortos ao cemitério. E é o som da música dos

seus instrumentos primitivos que põe na vida de todos nós a nota gritante do

infortúnio que pesa também sobre eles. (19)

Similarly, to the prisoners, Cape Verdeans in surrounding villages are implicated in the camp's

own mechanisms of oppression; they lead a similarly oppressed existence as the prisoners inside

the concentration camp. Taken with the intention of documenting the rise of the penitentiary, the

image of the worker at the gate reveals the "geographies of terror."

As in Lourenço Marques, the island of Santiago was first colonized as a trading post to

traffic enslaved persons to the Americas; in Cape Verde the military fortress in Ribeira Grande

(known as Cidade Velha today) marked the imperial landscape since the fifteenth century. The

uninhabited archipelago off the western coast of Africa, Cape Verde became geopolitically

important after 1460 as the islands emerged as "a key site in the slave trade due to its position at

the crossroads of transatlantic navigation" (Sarmento 526). As slavery was outlawed and wage

labor became more profitable, the fort fell into disuse as the colonial capital was transferred to

Praia in 1770.

Cape Verdean society, literally and figuratively emerged from slave trade as Africans

from various regions of the Western continental coast were captured and transported to the

Americas. Cultural geographer João Sarmento notes that the history of slavery denotes

"geographies of terror" where contemporary history is severed from the past. The history of

slavery became silenced and erased through tropes of creolization: "the physical and symbolic

violence that destroyed a great part of the ethnic memory of slaves has been read by Cape

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Verdean intellectuals (among others) as a "cultural fusion of Europeans and Africans" (Sarmento 526). The terror therefore denotes the historical trauma of slavery and the spectralization of the trauma through active silences and erasure in dominant discourses of creolization. The invocation of the image of Cape Verdeans living near the prison and suffering at the hands of the Salazarist regime, Pedro Soares links the suffering of the inmates with the inhabitants of Tarrafal. He demonstrates the various layers of the "geographies of terror" by juxtaposing Salazarist anti-communist repression and violence of slavery suffered by Cape Verdeans.

These "geographies of terror" are creations of the process known as "occidentalism," a term coined by Fernando Coronil, in which "space is naturalized and geography is territorialized" (77). It represents a re-ordering of space through the process of sectioning, dividing and splitting space into bounded units, thus severing their relational ties—a form of spatial violence practiced by European colonialism and expressed through the language of cartography. As a result, the creation of penitentiary spaces overseas, as Figures 2.1 and 2.2 show, even during its first phase of operation between 1936-1954 when it incarcerated Portuguese inmates, must be seen simultaneously as a colonial and authoritarian endeavor. In other words, colonialism was not simply an imposition of Salazarism upon Africa, but also the conceptualization of Salazarist ideology through the lens of the penal colony of Tarrafal, simultaneously in Africa and Europe.

III.   "Tarrafal Nunca Mais!": Occidentalization of Salazarist Fascism

Following the *Carnation Revolution* of April 25, 1974, Portuguese print culture was inundated with the memory of Tarrafal. Memoirs, testimonies and pamphlets contributed to the slogan "Tarrafal Nunca Mais!" in order to remember, bring the atrocities into public discourse, and prevent future expressions of inhumane violence. In the literary corpus that revised

Salazarist historiography to expose the atrocities committed, Tarrafal became proof that the Salazar-Caetano regime was indeed fascist.

On April 22, 1978, Coimbra City Hall in central Portugal inaugurated an exhibition and unveiled a monument to the memory of the victims of Tarrafal. The exhibition, *Homenagem nacional aos mortos do Tarrafal: O fascismo existiu em Portugal durante 48 anos,* was accompanied by a pamphlet emphasizing the cruelty of the Salazar regime. More importantly, just four years after the Carnation Revolution, a revisionist history of the regime emerged situating Salazarism within a broader context of fascist movements across twentieth-century Europe. Portuguese fascism paralleled the political trends of fascist Europe characterized "pela ferocidade da sua repressão. Quanto mais triunfantes eram os arengas do Hitler e de Mussolini, mais a perseguição aos antifascistas" (2). The Tarrafal Concentration Camp was a exemplar of the repressive nature of the regime:[10] "Não houve em Portugal prisão onde o fascismo mais se manifestasse" (2).

The end of Salazarism inaugurated an era of political openness. For the first time, former political prisoners of the regime were able to tell stories of the atrocities committed by Salazarism, more specifically, the debates and histories centered around the memory of Tarrafal. In addition to the act of recollecting past horrors, the space generated a public discussion that grappled with the political nature of the camp and the regime. More concretely, anarchists,

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[10] The collection of testimonies coordinated by Franco de Sousa, entitled *Tarrafal-Testemunhos* (1978), was prefaced by Francisco Miguel member of the Communist Party of Portugal: "Sobre o Campo de Concentração do Tarrafal, que o fascismo criou e manteve durante 19 anos, já se tem dito e escrito alguma cousa, mas nunca se dirá nem escreverá tudo o que sobre tão sinistra prisão haverá para dizer" (9). A commonality among these testimonies is designating Tarrafal as a concentration camp, thus linking the camp to fascism and expressing the impossibility of exhausting the accounts of such camp. The torture and violence enacted upon the inmates of the prison, furthermore its sinister nature, renders the pain and violence impossible and inexhaustible to represent.

communists, and anti-fascists argued that Tarrafal was a concentration camp because unlike

other penitentiary establishments, a concentration camp sought to eliminate members of society

who were deemed dangerous, even though they had not committed crimes, and were often never

put on trial.[11] Brito insists that a concentration camp by definition is constructed to physically

eliminate dangerous members from society:

> O campo de concentração permite expulsar para fora do limes (limite defendido
>
> por fortificações ou trincheiras), fazer desaparecer (em latim exterminare), separar
>
> do corpo social qualquer pessoa considerada suspeita ou objectivamente perigosa,
>
> do ponto de vista politico, racial ou social, como é o caso dos homens em idade de
>
> combater. [...]A função é concentrar (daí o seu nome) em quantidades
>
> consideráveis, não tanto indivíduos como membros de categorias 'nacionais',
>
> 'raciais' ou 'sociais' considerados, por definição, suspeitos ou prejudiciais." (47)

Moreover, the German architectural inspiration had been widely interpreted as proof of a

connection between Salazarism and Nazi oppression and furthermore to highlight the fascist

nature of the Salazar-Caetano regime.[12] Nélida Brito argues that direct comparisons between

Nazi concentration camps are inane, given that "condições de encarceramento variam, mas nunca

se encontraram práticas de tipo nazi [...] Comparar tudo com o nazismo é absurdo, sobretudo se

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[11] As Víctor Barros points out in *Campos de concentração de Cabo Verde: As ilhas como espaço de deportação e de prisão no Estado Novo* (2009), the name of the penitentiary in Tarrafal during this period was officially designated as Colónia Penal do Tarrafal. However, in three instances the Salazarist authorities did refer to the site as a concentration camp.

[12] In 1939, the Secretary General of the PVDE wrote the Minister of Public Works and Communications reporting the successful provisional installation of the "Colónia Penal de Cabo Verde montadas 8 barracas tipo alemão." Furthermore, jurist José Beleza dos Santos traveled to Germany to study the prison systems: among the six conclusions drawn from the German example to reform the Portuguese penitentiaries were the importance of separating inmates according to the degree of crime, the need for industrial and agricultural labor, and the construction of cells organized in barracks (40).

tivermos em conta que houve diferentes categorias de campos de concentração nazis" (34).

Nevertheless, some prisoners insist that while the destruction did not reach levels of Nazi

extermination, the tactic of leaving inmates to a slow and natural death echoed tactics found in

Germany.[13] The debates served to redraw the cartographies of Tarrafal in a post-Salazarist

Portugal, situating the Portuguese dictatorship within a larger authoritarian and fascist movement

in mid-twentieth century Europe. As the slogan "Tarrafal nunca mais!" proposed, grappling with

the atrocities of the past was a way of coming to terms and preventing future atrocities. While the

movement reclaimed the history of persecution of Portuguese leftists, it did not address the

repercussions of Salazarism in Cape Verde. The appropriated history of Tarrafal as symbolic of

European fascism split interconnected historical phenomena that took place on the African

continent. The debates that aimed at redrawing the cartographies of Salazarism, ultimately

exclude Cape Verde from Portuguese post-fascist historiography.

As discussed earlier, Cape Verde and the Penal Colony of Tarrafal were central to the

mode through which the Salazar regime fashioned its imperial identity and created its

disciplinary regime based largely on conceptualizing and delimiting the penal regime in Cape

Verde. The debates in Portugal after 1974 sever the atrocities of Tarrafal from the African

colonial space to incorporate it into its own national history. These accounts emphasize the

camp's first phase of operation between 1936-54 when it held Portuguese anti-Salazarist

dissidents. However, these same accounts silence the second phase when officials reopened the

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[13] While Brito explains that "O campo do Tarrafal, usou '[o] metodo, por sinal utilizado em grande escala nos campos alemães [que] era o da chamada 'morte natural.' (38). Former political prisoner José Correia Pires insists that "com a criação do Tarrafal inspirado e feito à moda dos Campos de Concentração da Alemanha e da Itália, cujos modelos foram tirados pelo célebre Antão Nogueira e João da Silva, segundo o próprio João da Silva, director do Tarrafal aos próprios presos o confessou" (190).

camp in 1961 to incarcerate African intellectuals and liberation fighters from the Portuguese colonies. As a consequence, the history of Tarrafal is whitewashed and fascism in Portugal is posited conceptually and geographically within the context of Europe.

Reinserting the camp of Tarrafal into the Cape Verdean geographies of terror enriches the debates that emerged after the April Revolution. "Tarrafal Nunca Mais!" is a powerful call against the repetition of violent atrocities that is concerned with the continuities and ruptures of state violence throughout history. Yet, in order to achieve this goal one must also examine the violence committed against African dissidents to erase the distinction between both groups of prisoners (Portuguese and African), as well as both historical moments (1936-45 and 1961-74). The incorporation of Tarrafal's history into an antifascist historical canon results in the privileging of communist and anarchist victims and the so-called European phase of history. Implicitly, Africa and fascism become mutually exclusive; in order to speak of fascism, one can only speak of Europe, Franco, Salazar, Hitler and Mussolini.

The debate surrounding the nature of Salazarism that commenced after 1974 is still pertinent today as scholars disagree whether the regime may be defined as fascist or authoritarian. Manuel Loff, Fernando Rosas, Luis Reis Torgal are among the prominent voices that consider Salazarism to be an expression of fascism in Europe. Yet António Pinto Costa labeled Salazarism as merely "fascizante," or possessing fascistic tendencies, because the regime was not unified under a self-denominated Fascist Party. My aim is not to dwell further on this matter for there exists a large corpus of debates ostensibly proving or disproving the fascist tendencies of the Salazar dictatorship. Rather, I wish to underscore the assumptions, parameters and frameworks through which Salazarism and Fascism are understood and constructed. In other words, in light of Salazarist history developing concurrently in Europe and Africa, how can we

expand, or even perhaps reformulate our understanding of the boundaries of fascism and twentieth-century colonialism? What is gained and what is lost as Tarrafal's cartography is redrawn?

In *Fascism* (1976), Martin Kitchen argues that "although the regimes of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy provide the best examples of fascism in action" (…) it would be a serious mistake to limit a definition of fascism to these forms, or even the period between the two World Wars. Such definition would make it impossible to analyse fascist dangers in the present day" (61). By rethinking fascism beyond a single historical event—existing in a set time and place— fascism can be reformulated to include diverse expressions of violence around the world. Daniel Woodley in *Fascism and Political Theory* (2009) advanced the argument to broaden notions of fascism to include "the eruption of fascist violence in Europe itself in the early twentieth century" within the broader context of "the uncontrolled violence employed by settlers against the indigenous peoples of the European colonies" (113).

Fascism and colonialism as interlinked phenomena is not new for thinkers such as Hannah Arendt, Frantz Fanon, and Albert Memmi.[14] This connection is poignantly developed by Aimé Césaire in his condemnation of colonialisms. In *Discourse on Colonialism* (1957) Césaire showed a multidirectional understanding of violence as the root of colonial and Nazi atrocities.

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[14] In the *Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) Arendt states that "through centuries the extermination of native peoples went hand in hand with the colonization of the Americas, Australia and Africa; slavery is one of the oldest institutions of mankind and all empires of antiquity were based on the labor of state-owned slaves who erected their public buildings. Not even concentration camps are an invention of totalitarian movements. They emerge for the first time during the Boer War, at the beginning of the century, and continued to be used in South Africa as well as India for 'undesirable elements'; here, too, we first find the term "protective custody" which was later adopted by the Third Reich" (440).

Yes, it would be worthwhile to study clinically, in detail, the steps taken by Hitler

and Hitlerism and to reveal to the very distinguished, very humanistic, very

Christian bourgeois of the twentieth century that without his being aware of it, he

has a Hitler inside him, that Hitler inhabits him, that Hitler is his demon, that if he

rails against him, he is being inconsistent and that, at bottom, what he cannot

forgive Hitler for is not crime in itself, the crime against man, it is not the

humiliation of man as such, it is the crime against the white man, the humiliation

of the white man, and the fact that he applied to Europe colonialist procedures

which until then had been reserved exclusively for the Arabs of Algeria, the

coolies of India, and the blacks of Africa. (14)

For Césaire, the outbreak of extreme violence entailed the "boomerang effect" of systematized

colonial violence exercised over the racial "other" in other parts of the world. That is to say,

colonialism and fascism were two sides of the same coin. Césaire demonstrates that colonial

violence seeps not only into the histories of the colonized, but also of the colonizers; as the

colonizers dehumanize the colonized, the colonizers become themselves part of this brutality (4).

To date, few studies have made the link between Fascist violence in Europe and colonial

genocide in twentieth-century Africa. Emerging studies on colonial violence make compelling

arguments, for example, on the link between German genocide against the Herero in Southwest

Africa and fascism.[15] Alfredo González-Ruibal suggests that Italian Imperialism points to

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[15] For an excellent study of the genocide and its links to Nazi Germany consult Jürgen
Zimmerer's study on *the Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War of 1904-
1908 and Its Aftermath.*

intersections between fascism and colonialism in Ethiopia.[16] Likewise, atrocities committed in

the Moroccan Wars, greatly influenced Francisco Franco, a young army general who became the

Spanish dictator after 1939. He famously declared that his sense of self was tied to his

experiences in Africa. [17]

In *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*

(2009), Michael Rothberg theorizes on how historiography writes and remembers the Holocaust

and Decolonization. As he poignantly argues: "European fascism inflects and infects colonial

discourse in the age of decolonization" (77). That is to say, the manner in which fascism and

colonization is inscribed in historiography, for Rothberg, is wrought with silences and ruptures

that inscribes fascism into colonial history, or to use Fernando Coronil's term "occidentalism."

Whereas history is decontextualized and disaggregated, to the point where fascist Europe can

understand itself endogenously, colonial Africa is understood either constitutively or negatively

through European colonialism.

The rupture of Tarrafal's history both temporally and spatially from the fortification of

Ribeira Grande, which was part of a vast network of human trafficking for centuries, is directly

interrelated to the violent expression of fascism in the twentieth century, which was not an

aberration of modernity but rather a continuing process that began as modernity was constructed

through the mass forced labor of the Atlantic slave trade. The space of the colonial camp or

prison is, therefore, not solely a site of mass atrocity but also a metaphor through which the

Salazar regime, alongside its surveillance, repression and banishment of political and ideological

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[16] Please see "Fascist colonialism: the archaeology of Italian outposts in western Ethiopia (1936-1941)."

[17] For more information see the article "Franco 'el Africano'" by Xavier Casals Meseguer, and Sebastian Balfour's *Deadly Embrace: Morocco and the Road to the Spanish Civil War*.

dissenters both in Portugal and in the African territories can be studied, as colonial and fascist ideologies converged. The prison camp of Tarrafal in Cape Verde and the labor camp in Machava, Mozambique, are two emblematic, but by no means the only examples, as the camps sprung up all over the Portuguese African territories.[18]

Franco de Sousa's play *Achada Grande do Tarrafal* (1979) is a rare fictionalized account and the only play focusing on Tarrafal's first phase of operation. Among the many testimonies and memories penned by inmates of the Camp in Tarrafal, the play is unique in its use of fiction to express the truth and reality of punishment and the disciplinar regime at the of the camp:

> A peça sobre o Campo de Morte Lenta, dá-nos quadros cheios de vida, em que ambiente, presos e carcereiros, nos aparecem revestidos de natural realismo [...] não falta também uma correcta visão do panorama político nacional e internacional da época, com as suas mutuações e com os seus reflexos na vida prisional do Tarrafal. (11)

The play, subtitled "Peça em quatro quadros e um epílogo," explores the notion of time and space as the first, second and fourth acts (or *quadros*) are based on similar settings referring to an extensive plateau, Achada Grande, in the municipality of Tarrafal, chosen for the development of the prison camp. The work is concerned with the space and topography of an arid plain that became the site of the camp, together with the new colonial-fascist order it imposed. The scene is set by the stage cut diagonally into halves by double walls with barbed wire, representing the inside and the outside of the camp. Rather than only depicting life within

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[18] Prisons and Camps were found on islands and remote parts of the Lusophone world, namely Missombo and São Nicolau in Angola, Machava and Mabalane in Mozambique, and Ilha das Galinhas, in Guinea-Bissau, among others found in Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, as well as Madeira and the Azores.

the camp, the play shows how the walls are at once a barrier and a link. Such contradiction is at the center of the camp.

In the first act, the penitentiary director accuses a Cape Verdean pastor of stealing cattle, demonstrating the coercive relationship between the authorities of the camp and surrounding community. Sousa sets the scene for the camp's everyday life involving a spatial and temporal interaction between 'Africa' and 'Europe,' as well as between the histories of slavery and fascism. As the Cape Verdean herder negotiates with the warden, who represents both colonial and fascist power, that moment unites African slaves held captive on the islands and trafficked across the oceans with 20th century carceral spaces, that held captive political enemies of a corporatist state:

> Não havia luz da noite. [...] Só em volta do campo ela não faltava, para que as sentinelas negras, selvagens e inconscientes, pudessem assassinar, em nome da 'civilização' e da 'ordem', o primeiro que se aproximasse. (Soares 21)

As this literary text expresses disbelief at the barbarism of twentieth century's cruelty, through the spatial juxtaposition by Sousa, twentieth century civilization (in direct opposition to the barbarism it posited itself against) is born out of the systematic violence of the slave trade. European colonialism professed to export civilization and modernity into its colonial territories, at the same time as the concept of modernity was posited as an endogenously European phenomenon. In response to this paradox, Césaire shows fascist violence not as an aberration of European historical progress, but rather as a phenomenon connected to colonial history at large. In addition to nuancing understandings of European history, the interconnected European and African development of fascism opens the possibility to "understand, at least partially the roots

of despotic (Socialist, Radical-Nationalist, and Neo-Fascist) development in the Third World"
(Eqbal 138).

IV.   Negotiation and Decolonization: The Reopening of Tarrafal

After a seven-year hiatus, the Penal Colony reopened in 1961 under the name Campo de
Trabalho de Chão Bom. Anticolonial uprisings in the Portuguese African colonies began to break
out while many British and French colonies were achieving their independence. Resisting the
trend, Portugal waged war in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique to thwart the opposition's
efforts. The Campo de Trabalho de Chão Bom received African national liberation fighters who
were deemed dangerous 'terrorists' intent on undermining Portuguese colonization efforts in
Africa. Novelists and poets from Lusophone Africa, namely António Cardoso, António Jacinto,
José "Luandino" Vieira, and Uanhenga Xitu are household names as founders of the literary
genre of mid-twentieth century Lusophone Africa grouped under the label "combat literature."
These authors denounced in the written Portuguese language the oppression, discrimination, and
dismal conditions of life under colonialism. These literary texts and their authors sparked a
national consciousness during the liberation wars (Arenas 162). Beyond having been born in
combat, this genre emerged from within the prison cell. Since canonical texts emerging in the
carceral space have received considerable critical attention, I will explore lesser known
publications on the history of Tarrafal.

From the 1990s to the 2010s, the question of Tarrafal reemerged in public debates with
publications of testimonies, memoirs, and historiographies. These works claimed to set the
record straight and provide nuance to the camp's history. In 1990, former political prisoner
Pedro Martins published *Testemunho de um combatente*. Journalist José Vicente Lopes published
Tarrafal – Chão Bom, Memórias e Verdades (2010) based on interviews conducted with former

political prisoners. Lastly, Eduardo Vieira Fontes, former director of the Concentration Camp of Tarrafal (1967-1974), published *Tarrafal – Chão Bom, Porquê Mentir?* (2012) in response to accusations against him in the aforementioned publications. These works constitute a corpus of historiographic material that renegotiates decolonization and post-colonial era history from the margins. Through a strategy of reviving the histories of Tarrafal Concentration Camp, they inscribe the prison space with memories and histories that provide complex, nuanced, and often contradictory ideas of decolonization and post-colonialism.

The Concentration Camp of Tarrafal closed on May 1, 1974, while all political prisoners of Salazarism were released. Yet, shortly after the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) took power, the camp was reopened to hold members of the Union of the People of Cape Verde (UPICV) and Democratic Union of Cape Verde (UDC), in order to "neutralizar" individuals who "eram considerados como susceptíveis de pôr em risco a tranquilidade e a paz no Arquipélago" (Fernandes Morgado n.p.). The reopening of Tarrafal during decolonization points to a perpetuation of colonial-era political violence in the aftermath of colonization. In light of this history, the transition from Portuguese colonial power to the one-party rule of PAIGC (later the PAICV) poses a challenge to the conceptualization of decolonization as the end of colonization. In fact, currently a group of Cape Verdeans, representing a diverse group of political thinkers, are complicating the idea of decolonization as a rupture. Pedro Martins, former liberation fighter, is a critic of the process of decolonization as process of negotiation and compromise. Journalist José Vicente Lopes has questioned the significance of this little-understood phase in the history of the prison camp. Lastly, former director of Tarrafal, Eduardo Vieira Fontes, has published a memoir citing the reopening of Tarrafal.

As a teenager Pedro Martins became involved with the PAIGC clandestine resistance movement.[19] He was accused of belonging to "uma organização terrorista que visa separar da Mãe-Patria" (Martins 51). As the only testimony written about the period of incarceration from 1961 to 1974 that housed inmates from Angola, Cape Verde, and Guinea-Bissau, Martins' memoir provides insight to the importance of the Camp as a space for the exchange of ideas about struggle against Portuguese colonialism. Books, radios, and documents were smuggled in by the prison guards who were sympathetic to the cause (86).

Despite being part of the movement, when Cape Verde gained its independence under the auspices of PAIGC, Martins found himself increasingly marginalized from the Party. Following his liberation from the Camp on May 4, 1974, Cape Verde experienced a period of instability and uncertainty as negotiations to grant independence and self-determination were unfolding. People mobilized in the streets, and in response Portugal sent troops to maintain order and authority in the colony (208). Cape Verdeans ranged from supporting independence to believing independence was an unattainable and utopian objective (212), including those who believed that Cape Verde should remain a part of Portugal, much like the island territories of the Azores and Madeira. Pedro Pires, the head of the PAIGC delegation, returned from negotiations with the Portuguese government in order to create a transitional independent government (234). Martins argues that the history of resistance leading up to this moment has been distorted and oversimplified. In an interview granted on February 25, 2013, Martins explained that decolonization resulted in the PAIGC taking power "sem apertura política" and under "um sistema de partido único" (Martins Personal Interview). As a consequence, contemporary politics

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[19] The PAIGC led by Amílcar Cabral fought the War of Liberation against Portuguese troops in Guinea-Bissau. The war did not reach Cape Verde.

in Cape Verde are plagued with "politiquismo," a partisan politics that is more concerned with power rather than democracy. For Martins, reviving the history of the Concentration Camp within the struggle for independence is imperative to open "um grande debate genuinamente democrático para uma reorganização objectiva da vida política" (248). True democracy, Martins contends, cannot exist without a dialogue about the history of Tarrafal and the involvement of former prisoners. "Os militantes da Resistência interna até ao momento, nunca tinham usufruído de oportunidade suficiente para dialogo e debate" (244).

At the end of his two-volume publication on the history of Tarrafal, José Vicente Lopes dedicates a chapter on the third (and largely unknown) phase of incarceration, which took place in December 1974. After the Portuguese liberated their political prisoners, the PAIGC reopened the Camp to incarcerate suspected members of the UPICV and the UDC. Though the UPICV was not against independence (as the UDC proclaimed), they challenged the PAIGC premise for Cape Verdean unity with Guinea-Bissau. Because both movements threatened to undermine the Transitional Government, suspected political dissidents were incarcerated, like PAIGC militants had been during colonialism. In light of this history, Lopes aims to nuance the history of Tarrafal and rethink the role of the PAIGC during decolonization as "a entidade supranacional, a força-guia ou dirigente, que pretendia ser na maioria das vezes a fundadora da nação e do Estado, ao mesmo tempo, o elemento congregador e orientador da vida politica e social" (98).

Along with the proliferation of testimonies, memoirs, and interviews of former prisoners of Tarrafal, former director of the prison, Eduardo "Dadinho" Vieira Fontes, was motivated by an interview with Jose "Luandino" Vieira in the Portuguese daily *Público* on May 1, 2009. Vieira, former political prisoner and Portuguese-Angolan writer, declared "Considero que os meus anos de cadeia foram muito bons para mim" (qtd. in Coelho n.p.). Fontes appropriated

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Vieira's statement to promote a benign narrative of his time as director of the prison camp which he published in *Tarrafal – Chão Bom, Porquê Mentir?*.[20] He asserted that Tarrafal was a paradise compared to other prisons in Africa (12). These debates demonstrate that the colonial past is still present on the national stage in Cape Verde. The Concentration Camp of Tarrafal serves as a space of contestation where previously silenced political voices renegotiate official historiographies.

Portuguese director Pedro Costa's short film, *Tarrafal* (2010), examines the history of the prison in conjunction with issues of immigration and deportation facing the Cape Verdean community in Portugal. In this short film, Costa continues to tell the story of the Cape Verdean community in the neighborhood of Fontainhas in Lisbon, a recurrent theme in his previous films: *Ossos* (1997), *No quarto da Vanda* (2000) e *Juventude em Marcha* (2006). The plot focuses on a coversation between José Alberto Tavares and his mother sitting around a table in a dark room. They reminisce about their house and town in Cape Verde. Abruptly, in the last take of *Tarrafal,* we see a letter affixed to a post with a dagger, informing Tavares of his deportation from Portugal. The letter represents a "uma versão 'administrativa' e banalizada daquela história mítica," without making explicit connections to the history of the camp (Costa 125). Costa constructs a symbolic parallelism and a historic continuity between the history of the camp and the contemporary practice of persecution and deportation of immigrants in Portugal. Costa argues that politics are founded on "um subterrâneo de prisões, campos de concentração, algemas" (21). Costa's short film proposes a way to think about Tarrafal as part of a historical

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[20] Vieira explained that the daily routine and intellectual exchanges with poets António Cardoso and António Jacinto revitalized his writing.

continuum between the colonial past and the post-colonial present, especially considering the vast Cape Verdean Diaspora and that majority of Cape Verdeans live outside of Cape Verde.

V.   Conclusion

The Concentration Camp of Tarrafal operated between 1936-54 as a space of deportation for communist, anarchist and antifascist dissidents away from continental Portugal. In 1961, Tarrafal reopened to incarcerate African nationalists who fought against Portuguese domination in the African colonies. As of 2009, with the help of a treaty of cultural cooperation with Portugal, the camp has been transformed into a modest *Museu da Resistência* commemorating the atrocities committed during the colonial period. In addition to testimonies of former prisoners, the museum possesses a small library with novels and poetry written by well-known Lusophone authors. These texts have been interpreted and appropriated into two distinct tendencies: the antifascist testimonies of Portuguese dissidents of the first phase published immediately after the Carnation Revolution, and the anticolonial literature written during the second phase by African liberation fighters and published in the 1980s. Categorizing these literatures as belonging to two distinct phases of history divides and decontextualizes these works. However, the Concentration Camp of Tarrafal demonstrates that history is interconnected. Each phase of imprisonment was informed by connections across geographies and historical time and wrought with tensions of official and silenced discourses. Reformulating the colonial and post-colonial incarceration at Tarrafal as belonging to a continual and multidirectional history, allows us to reconsider the historical phenomena of fascism and colonialism as mutually constitutive *lusotropicalist* phenomena. Fascist discourses purportedly elevated individuals to be part of a transcendent and mythical nation. The nation would be put on a path to redemption. In the same way, colonialism in Portuguese (and Spanish) Africa was

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expressed as a civilizing mission that would incorporate the African territories and its people into the Portuguese nation and place them on a teleological path to redemption. Lusotropicalism (and by extension Hispanotropicalism) is the nexus of fascist and colonialist ideologies.

Historiographies treat colonial prisons as an exception or an aberration. However, these numerous exceptions accumulate to show a vast network of prisons and penal colonies in various parts of colonial Africa. Challenging the presumption of fascism as an aberration and an anomalous outburst of extreme violence, Césaire demonstrates genocidal violence of the Holocaust to be congruent, even intrinsic to European modernity and a by-product of the systematized destruction exercised over the colonies. Complicating fascism as a concept is a necessary critical move in order to understand and reinterpret the late colonial histories of Lusophone and Hispanophone colonialisms. Considering how fascism and colonialism are linked allows us to see prisons, such as the Concentration Camp of Tarrafal, as part of a vast network of disciplinary sites that reproduce and perpetuate violence extending beyond the confines of territory and historical time periods.

Chapter 3

Colonial Carceral Narratives— History, Decolonization, and African Gnosis in Equatorial Guinean Literature

Colonial administrations were prolific producers of social categories.
Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*

Desde el 12 de octubre de 1968 no es nada recomendable establecer una marca e indeleble línea divisoria entre realidad y ficción.
Siale Djangany, *En el lapso de una ternura*

Yo os aseguro que en el seno de esta familia, que es una familia vuestra, os sentiréis, como nosotros entrañablemente acompañados. Habéis proclamado vuestra independencia, significativamente, en el día de la gran fiesta familiar, el Día de la Hispanidad.
Manuel Fraga Iribarne, *Discurso por la independencia de Guinea Ecuatorial*

I.   Introduction: Black Beach Prison and Historical Ontology

From the prison-island of Fernando Póo which received radical Afro-Cuban deportees, to the routine incarceration of Guineans as a source of continuous and cheap labor, to the repression of opposition in the post-Independence Macías and Nguemist regimes, the prison infrastructure has been a central institution of social, political and economic control. However, October 12, 1968, marked not only the shift from colonial rule to an independent and sovereign nation-state, inaugurating the post-colonial period, but also a shift in the way Equatorial Guinea related to its past and the role imprisonment played in these contemporary historiographies.

Perhaps there is no better symbol of the post-colonial rupture than Black Beach prison. The penitentiary, on the island of Bioko in Equatorial Guinea, is most commonly known for the human rights violations inflicted on its inmates during the dictatorships of Francisco Macías

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Nguema (1968-1979) and Teodoro Obiang Nguema (1979 to present). Notably, Macías died by execution at the prison during the coup d'état, ironically called the "Golpe de Libertad," that instated the brutal regime of Obiang. In popular culture, literature, and media, Black Beach is not only a metonym for torture but also a symbol of the disillusionment with the promise of freedom that independence from Spain would bring to Equatorial Guinea. Within few years of the democratic election of Macías in 1968, he had declared himself president for life and unleashed a brutal and repressive campaign against real or perceived opposition to his government. The prison was the locus of the most egregious tortures, and Black Beach became the synonymous with the regime. In the English language news media, Black Beach prison became a sensation after a failed coup attempt in 2004, reportedly financed by Mark Thatcher among others, that landed Simon Mann and some mercenaries behind bars.[21] Although these events presented the small nation and its infamous prison to wider international audiences, the media focus on exclusively Westerners victims obfuscates the vast history of violence and torture at Black Beach prison.[22] Media representations of Black Beach prison are symptomatic of historical discourses that link the facility to the post-colonial period of Equatorial Guinea.

Black Beach is but one infamous edifice of a vast network of carceral institutions, yet its history has not been systematically studied. The atrocities committed in Black Beach during the post-colonial dictatorships of Macías Nguema and Obiang Nguema have inspired authors, like

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[21] Journalists Adam Roberts, who published *The Wonga Coup: Guns, Thugs and a Ruthless Determination to Create Mayhem in an Oil-Rich Corner of Africa* in 2006 and Robert Young Pelton, who wrote *Licensed to Kill: Hired Guns in the War on Terror* in 2007 chronicle the events that led to the coup. For Ian MacPherson the coup was the inspiration for a fictional thriller novel entitled *Black Beach* (2006).
[22] This tendency understates the perpetual violence suffered by Equatorial Guineans at the hands of their own government and represents Equatorial Guinea as a space of exotic brutality and uncivilized alterity.

Juan Tomás Ávila Laurel, Donato Ndongo-Bidyogo, María Nsué Angüe, and Juan Balboa Boneke, to write highly political literature. These literatures shed light on the persecution and torture of the dictatorship, yet there are fewer accounts giving insight into incarceration during the colonial and the decolonization period. The history of incarceration in Equatorial Guinea is fragmented and deprived of its full historical context. The prison is scarcely mentioned in contemporary scholarly works and in historiography published prior to 1968. Whether under Franco, Macías Nguema, or Obiang Nguema, much of Equatorial Guinea's twentieth century history has unfolded during repressive dictatorships; therefore, it is unsurprising that there are no comprehensive historiographic works of Black Beach or incarceration in Equatorial Guinea.

For this reason, there remains much more to learn about the context and the history of Black Beach. Black Beach (sometimes referred to as Black Bich, Blay Bich, Blay Beach or Blaibich) remains a space of contention, whereby silenced and official historical discourses surrounding political violence are inscribed, negotiated, and contested. For example, Joaquín Mbobio Bacheng argued:

> En sólo unos años de independencia, los nuevos africanos en el poder han llegado a un nivel de sadismo y de crueldad que ningún blanco español pudo ni siquiera imaginar durante los 200 años de colonización en Guinea. La cárcel modelo de Bata y la prisión de Blay-Beach en Malabo se han convertido en escenario privilegiado de la dramática tragedia nacional. (8)

For Mbobio Bacheng, Black Beach represents the dire situation of post-colonial Equatorial Guinea. Yet by comparing post-colonial violence to the colonial history of Guinea, he implicitly establishes carceral violence as having emerged in the post-colonial nation and posits it in opposition to colonialism. Therefore, he resorts to hyperbole to raise awareness of the

totalitarian and brutal dictatorships, and consequently colonialism is constructed as more benign

in comparison. Author and jurist José Fernando Siale Djangany has noted this tendency to

describe the colonial past in a dichotomous relationship with the present.

> Si en las obras pioneras de la literatura nacional (*Cuando los Combes luchaban,*
> *Una lanza por el Boabí*) era fácil sorprender a los personajes en una actitud de
> flagrante admiración por el hecho colonial, esta acepción va licuándose
> progresivamente en las generaciones de escritores posteriores, cuya pluma da
> paso a cierto renuevo literario en ese sentido, a través de un naciente enfoque,
> primero de Reivindicación ideológica, y posteriormente Neo-independentista, que
> pone de lado, e incluso elude con un estruendoso silencio el hecho colonial en sí.
> (3)

After independence the celebratory tone of colonial era literature was replaced with

nationalist and neo-independent literary trends that as a consequence imposed a silence over the

colonial period.[23] The silence surrounding colonialism in popular discourse and literature

suggests a severed relationship between the post-colonial period and its precursory colonial past.

I draw on the idea of the "estruendoso silencio" to understand how discourses of the past, and

specifically incarceration in the past, are constructed and contested in literature, specifically how

official histories elevate one discourse by silencing another. For this reason, the "colonial

carceral" is the concept I wish to evoke in order to explore carcerality in colonial and post-

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[23] While Siale Djangany is correct in asserting that there is no overt anti-colonial sentiment in colonial era literature, Benita Sampedro Vizcaya warns against labeling them as "literatures of consent," for it would undermine the power of contestation and negotiation as ways to confront colonialist discourse and ideology under heavy censorship (355).

colonial Equatorial Guinea as a "zone of cultural negotiation" where "one culture is seen to be in negotiation with the principles of change imposed by another" (Harper 14).

In fact, in 1933 engineer Ramón Montalbán echoed the notion of the colonial carceral— as a pervasive system of power negotiations that reverberated beyond the prison walls—when he described the inadequacy of confinement as punishment in Spanish Guinea. "Una prisión en la Colonia con celdas, rejas, camino de ronda, murallas y […] el centinela fusil al brazo [canta] el alerta [será] antieconómico [e] inadecuado para un país donde los presos y detenidos indígenas no están sometidos a régimen de reclusión" (119). Instead, punishment in the African colony was based on a "régimen de trabajo consistente en chapear limpiando de la vegetación que continuamente crece las calles, plazas, caminos; el preso generalmente detenido a causa de los pequeños delitos que cometen los morenos, pasa la mayor parte del día fuera de la prisión" (119). Montalbán insists that "la vigilancia no es preciso que sea lo estrecha que es en las prisiones de Europa" (119). The pervasiveness of punishment in Spanish Guinea did not result in a more humane punishment, rather it provoked a general and inescapable criminalization of Guineans and other Black laborers sent from Nigeria and many other regions of West Africa.

The idea of the prison wall as a porous boundary did not exclusively apply to the colonies. Spanish prison reform advocate, Rafael Salillas, in *La vida penal en España* remarked in 1888 that the prison inherently interpellates its outside. For Salillas the prison "es entonces el centro, y la población su periferia. Un presidio cerrado crea necesariamente un presidio libre" (68). Echoing the concept of Michel Foucault's "carceral archipelago," Salillas reveals that the inside of the prison is interconnected with the outside, exerting a carceral power over free society. Certainly this was the case in Spanish Guinea, the archives are replete with records kept on men and women imprisoned for petty crimes, public drunkenness or disturbances for weeks

or months at a time and sent to carry out their sentences on the outside as laborers on public

works or agricultural projects.[24] The routine incarceration of Guineans meant that even in

freedom, the Black body was seen as inherently criminal.[25] In other words, the relationship

between inside/outside and freedom/incarceration was fluid and symbiotic. During the first half

of the twentieth century, maps produced of Santa Isabel and Bata, the major cities of colonial

Spanish Guinea, included police stations, schools, churches and hospitals, but curiously, omitted

prisons from the legends (with a few exceptions). Penitentiaries operated under a paradox,

existing as both ubiquitous and tacit institutions. Although there are no systematic studies or

records of prisons in Spanish Guinea, intermittent archival documents—correspondence among

colonial governors pleading for urgent prison constructions; architects and engineers debating

efficacies of their design; or boxes of meticulously kept records the incarceration of Guineans—

point the importance of prisons and incarceration in the colony. I contend that we can begin to

fill the gaps in knowledge about carceral practices by turning to literature as sources of historical

documentation and reflections on knowledge production.

In the pages that follow, I will analyze *Ekomo* (1985) by María Nsué Angüe and *Cenizas

de kalabó y termes* (2000) and *Autorretrato con un infiel* (2007) by José Fernando Siale

Djangany as historiographical novels that not only provide an alternative to official histories but

take issue with how historical narratives of the past are conceptualized within the present. In a

sense, their task is "historical ontology," a concept that Ann Laura Stoler uses to describe how

documentation and archival preservation are "productive and responsive" processes that ascribe

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[24] AGA Caja 81/08600

[25] There is an inherent contradiction in the notions of confinement vs freedom, given that even on the outside, according to racial ideologies, criminality was inherent and therefore incarceration was justified and inevitable.

categories, bring ideas and terms into being, and assign attributes to them (Stoler 4). Beyond a simple rewriting of history from a subaltern perspective, as post-colonial studies have defined the post-Independence moment in African history, these works of literature question and reshape commonly held concepts of time and history. They grapple with the "paradox of the colonial carceral," by representing prisons as concrete institutions of social and labor punishment, while theorizing the metaphysical role of the carceral in colonialism (Harper 4). What is more, these novels call into question the notion of decolonization, generally viewed as an end of colonialism and the inauguration of a new and "post"-colonial reality. Rather, Nsué Angüe and Siale Djangany explore the continuities of violence in the aftermath of colonialism. Curiously, in each of these works, the prison as a physical and metaphoric institution is omnipresent, but they have not been studied as such. I propose that these texts, rather than simply constituting a post-colonial corpus of literature, are "colonial carceral" narratives that propose a new "gnosis", alternate ways of knowing the past.

II.   "Fragmentos del Pretérito": Colonial Carceral Narratives in *Cenizas de kalabó y termes* and *Autorretrato con un infiel* by José Fernando Siale Djangany

Cenizas de kalabó y termes (2000) and *Autorretrato con un infiel* (2007) by José Fernando Siale Djangany are two novels concerned with the questions of decolonization and the aftermath of colonialism. My aim is to read Equatorial Guinean literature beyond the framework of the national or the post-colonial canon, for it obfuscates the interconnected, complex, paradoxical space and time traced by colonialism. These novels examine the historical connections through the lens of the carceral by representing remnants of disciplinary and political violence in the post-colonial period as vestiges of colonialism.

Cenizas de kalabó y termes is a work of historical fiction written in an autobiographical tone. The narrator and protagonist, Ildefonso Wilson Peleté comes of age during the unstable and dynamic period of the transition from colonialism to independence. The narrative is divided into three parts. The first part, composed of the chapters "Fragmentos del pretérito" and "Así fue mi vecindario" is an intimate reflection on Ildefonso's family history and upbringing in a working class neighborhood of Santa Isabel. The personal history of Ildefonso is interwoven with reflections on the colonial history of the island of Fernando Póo. The second part, composed of the chapters "Eterna esperanza," "Aquí y armaguedón," and "Seguiremos contando piedras," is a political reflection on decolonization. Ildefonso recounts how independence was welcomed with "aplausos revolucionarios" but hope and anticipation quickly descended into chaos and disillusionment of a repressive and punitive dictatorship (137). After independence, the dictator Ibanguche de la Reja assumes power, becoming increasingly hostile toward the former colonial power and suspicious of colonial attitudes and vestiges harbored by Guineans. Ildefonso is accused of dissent against the new government and imprisoned. The plot comes to a close as Ildefonso reflects on the parallelisms between the colonial past and the present (233). Siale Djangany's narrative helps to rethink the nature of the Macías dictatorship as the vestiges of fascist violence from the Franco era. Historian Max Liniger-Goumaz argues that the regime is "afro-fascist." As he explains, it was not only inspired by Francoism, but was characterized by political repression, suffocation of cultural and political pluralism, a dictator as an institutional incarnation of his people, and the fetishization of the *caudillo* as the father of the people (14).

Ildefonso and his father, who dreamed of leaving his job as a bureaucrat to dedicate himself to farming, travel to the interior with a group of laborers, to look for fertile land. Upon

encountering the ruins of an abandoned work camp overgrown by the forests, the narrator is confronted with the past coexisting with the present.

> Los senderos, caminos de antaño, estaban directamente camuflados entre la maleza y los helechos, que dificultaba la progresión, la orientación del grupo, encabezado por don Esteban Wilson, vestido con una vieja indumentaria manchada y botas altas de caucho, de tal suerte que recorrer toda la propiedad hasta descubrir los viejos y destartalados barracones arropados por la selva creciente [...] El patio de braceros, bajo la paternal vigilancia de las altas copas de las ceibas [...] Gruesos arbustos se cobijaban en el interior de la barracas [...] Ni cenizas de kalabó encontraron. Los termes eran dueños y señores. (103)

The infrastructure of the work camp had become overgrown with weeds making it difficult for Ildefonso's group to orient themselves using the paths carved by the laborers who once had inhabited the work camp. The ceiba trees are reminiscent of prison watchtowers as the work camp is devoured by termites, leaving no trace of the huts of kalabó in the effort to efface all vestiges of history. The work camp represents the vigilance, repression, and exploitation of the colonial past. The present, represented by the vegetation, grew around the camp preserving the atmosphere of repression but changing the landscape. Traces of the past remain legible, but the present is ruled by the termites, who feed off the past to create the present. Siale Djangany constructed a historical parallelism that places the present in tension with the past, which surfaces when Ildefonso and his father happen upon an abandoned work camp.

The space of the camp—consumed by foliage, camouflaged and watched over by ceiba trees—becomes a palimpsest of meaning allowing the novel to make historical claims about colonialism, post-colonialism and the transition of decolonization. The work camp references the

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ancestral history of Ildefonso who is descendent from Cuban political prisoner deported to
Guinea in the late nineteenth century. Their forced labor built the infrastructural foundation of
the colony, a colony that began as a penal colony. Siale Djangany juxtaposes the carceral and the
colonial vestiges with the repressive and punitive character of post-colonialism in Guinea. He
demonstrates how carceral institutions not only marked the beginning of Spanish colonization
and settlement, but characterized its power structures, its coercive state institutions, and
encompassed all aspects of daily life. The termites represent an inexterminable force of
destruction.

This scene, from which the novel receives its title, has been read as a condemnation of
the Macías dictatorship.

> The narrator's father is astounded by the rapid deterioration of what had once
> been a thriving work camp under colonialism. The termites are emblematic of the
> unrestrained, impulsive tendency to destroy everything within the government's
> grasp. The 'termes' are symbolic of the Macías government that functions like the
> most destructive insects in nature. (Lewis 174)

While the termites represent the infiltration of violence in post-colonialism, the ruins of
the work camp are not simple deteriorations of the past. The termites feed off of the remnants of
the past in order to nourish their own destructive force. They point to a persistence of past
violence into the post-colonial period. As Mudimbe argues, "vestiges of the past, especially the
survival of structures that are still living realities, [...] often continue to hide the new structures"
(5). By reading the work camp as a palimpsest, it does not merely represent the decadence of the
post-colonial period; rather, Siale Djangany creates a narrative in which past and present coexist,
showing how the past is not finite but constantly in dialogue with the present. The palimpsest of

the work camp is a provocative proposition on the part of Siale Djangany to reconsider the post-colonial period not as end of colonialism. The narrative of Ildefonso in *Cenizas de kalabó y termes*, tells a collective history by way of his family's dealings with the political changes in the aftermath of colonialism. The vestiges of the past force their way to the surface, causing tensions and contradictions between the past and the present.

While Siale Djangany's novel is mainly a reflection on the transition from colonialism to post-colonialism, the space of the prison and instances of incarceration figure as scattered and interwoven episodes within the narrative. Carcerality informs the narrative in overt and subtle ways. Such is the "paradoxical nature" of colonial prison according to Graeme Harper. He argues in *Colonial and Post-Colonial Incarceration* (2001) that the "colonial carceral" connotes both a "metaphoric and physical identity" (10). The concept allows for analyzing the carceral, as an institution and edifice of discipline and punishment while also considering the metaphoric carceral violence, inherent in colonial societies and totalitarian regimes, in which "one culture [is] imposed upon by another, one [is] made subservient to another, one [is] imprisoned by another" (14). Most importantly, the colonial carceral allows us to analyze carcerality as a set of power relations that reverberate beyond the prison and beyond the official end of colonization.

The colonial carceral considers the power of the prison as located within the bounds of its walls but with symbolic, legislative and often violent reverberations beyond. Harper defines it as "an instrument of discipline and punishment […] based in part on empirical fact and in part on myth, on explicitness and mystery, on reality and unreality, on knowledge and ignorance, on past and present" (10). The colonial carceral, as place and metaphor, allows to move beyond a rationalist and nationalist historiography, and consider the continuities perpetuated by carceral violence between the colonial and post-colonial period.

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In *Cenizas de kalabó y termes*, Siale Djangany is concerned with the threshold of *ley de autonomía* enacted in 1964 which granted autonomy to Equatorial Guinea and began a four-year transition to independence, finally granted in 1968. This period represents a moment of political crisis and negotiation. The protagonist/narrator, Ildefenso, is the son of an archivist, a guardian of the "historial patrimonial." Ildefenso accompanies his father to work where he discovers an unattributed document about the incarceration of the sympathizers of the "Bueti" sect, including "una leyenda sobre sus intenciones imperialistas" (101). Ildefenso identifies this moment as an impetus and "obligación de continuidad de nuestra historia, para culminarla en un reflejo que se extendería sobre todas las generaciones futuras de nuestras estirpes" (102). In addition to the repressive political violence of the camp, Ildefonso points to the violence of historical erasure and fragmentation.

Beginning in the 1950s, Spain started to face scrutiny and pressure in the United Nations by a group of African elites who joined in a nationalist movement to decolonize Spanish Guinea. However, political resistance under Franco was met with heavy repression, resulting in the deaths of Equatorial Guinean nationalists like Acacio Mañé who died under suspicious circumstances and Enrique Nvo who was assassinated (Campos 101; Nerín 93). Alicia Campos claims that the language of liberation, employed by nationalist movements and calling for decolonization, went unrecognized in fascist Spain (unlike in Francophone Africa where liberal discourses were effective political tools when turned against the colonial metropole); "[o]nly the idea of nation, so central to Francoist legitimation, and the precedent of Spanish American independence, could offer concepts with which to imagine the end of Spanish colonialism in Guinea" (102).

Siale Djangany focuses on the moment of independence in order to understand what

Marvin A. Lewis has called "a legacy of violence and brutality by its leaders, who act, ironically,

in the name of nation-building" (166). Violence and nation-building are inextricable in

Equatorial Guinea, given that unifying a group of territories and peoples under the idea of a post-

colonial state relies on and enacts symbolic as well as institutional violence. The anti-colonial

struggle formulated in terms of a narrative of overcoming the past and therefore "cast in terms of

what colonial power denied or negated" ultimately reproduces conceptualizations of history as

teleological, on path to redemption (Scott 209). This conceptualization of history is projected

onto the new nation.[26] Anti-colonialist ideology fought for considerably different ideals from

Francoist colonialism, yet history takes a similar shape, expressed in terms of a teleological

narrative and in the name of the nation.

In the novel, Ildefonso speaks not of liberation or decolonization but of a "rebirth" of

African dictatorships. The end of Francoism in Spain gave birth to the Macías dictatorship. He

makes reference to what Campos argues as the "paradox of a dictatorial regime, such as

Franco's, drafting a democratic constitution to its former colony" (115). For Ildefonso the

decolonization was characterized by the "hipocresía de democracia" of democratic elections

orchestrated by the Spanish dictatorship. The character Bonifacio Exquisito Ibanguche de la

Reja, the alter ego of Macías Nguema, is a vivid depiction of a post-colonial regime exorcising

its colonial vestiges through violence (109). Anti-colonialism, which originally sought justice for

those oppressed by colonialism, became appropriated by the brutal post-colonial dictatorship as a

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[26] Under Francoism through violence and sacrifice, individuals formed of a mythical community,
and abstracted to belong to a spiritual nation, united under the "espíritu de la raza" (Moreiras
Menor 268). As Spanish fascism under Franco, differences—be it, ideological, class, or
individual—were suppressed in favor of being united as belonging to the nation, the mystical and
mythical idea of a common destiny, in function of the nation.

justification for revenge. Anti-colonial justice is implemented as revenge, affirmed Ibanguche de la Reja, "en uno de sus discursos revolucionarios, que en adelante, los Blancos también irían a la cárcel y no como antes que sólamente se enchironaba a los negros" (101). With time he envisions post-colonial Guinea as a place of rigid rejection of aspects of life deemed incompatible with African tradition: "su incansable lucha por la restauración del pasado […] Un África sin ideas de allende. Sin coches, sin trenes, sin barcos ni idiomas extranjeros […] sin código penal" (175). The post-colonial revolution quickly descends into a dogmatic, paranoid, repressive African dictatorship subsisting as a carceral state, precisely because it posited its own existence and history by negating the colonial past. However, through negation colonialism was not overcome; instead, it established a direct (albeit negative) relationship with colonialism which in turn resulted in the reification the colonial carceral regime of the past. Paradoxically, Ibanguche de la Reja relies upon colonial carceral modes of governance in order to create the nation anew, independently from its colonial past. When state violence is critiqued from abroad, the dictator denies any relationship to the former colonial power and insists that "somos un país soberano […] Nuestras fúrmulas para la emplementación de la justicia son puramente Áfricanas" (175). By representing the ruler's speech in peculiar phonology, the irony of the claim for an African authenticity of a nation that was irreversibly molded by a heterogeneous mix of European and African influences.

In a cathartic moment, Ildefonso is overcome by disillusionment and laments the state of post-colonial African nations, because he believes that all have fallen in dictatorships that rule through a repressive carceral state.

> Los escribidores de por aquí y de allende, por una razón u otra tendrán todas las
>
> reticencias del mundo para matizar en sus folios todo lo que aquí acontece en

estos días, pero tú, tú no debes olvidarlo. Constata una cosa. ¿Por qué? Benín:

fraternidad, justicia y trabajo. Burkina Faso: la patria o la muerte, venceremos.

Burundi: unidad, trabajo, progreso. Camerún: paz, trabajo, patria. […] Siempre lo

mismo, siempre lo mismo. Como si fueran una sola mente[…] Nuestros países

han sido gobernados o son gobernados por soberanos vitalicios, todos guardamos

celosamente algún que otro preso político, sin excepción llevamos en conciencia

el peso de la muerte de ciudadanos libres y honestos, nuestros suburbios se erigen

con presunción hasta sitiar literalmente el casco urbano al que van los

desfavorecidos en busca de trabajo, caricaturescamente podemos seccionar África

en, por un lado, el grupo de los que se encuentran por encima de la ley y, por otra

parte, los sometidos a la ley dictada por aquellos…Esta similitud es obra de la

misma mente, el "Gran Zuar". (194)

According to Michel-Yves Essissima, the "Gran Zuar" is a homophonic allusion to the

concept of *Le Grand Soir*, a teleological notion of a revolutionary moment of rupture that ends a

previous regime. The concept of *Le Grand Soir*, at its essence is the notion of a history moving

in a direction, toward the end, which is conceptualized as a total overcoming or revolution. The

concept of *Le Grand Soir*, originating in communist discourse is a fundamental characteristic of

narratives of liberation, according to David Scott (96). Welcoming the surprise visit of the "Gran

Zuar," Ibanguche de la Reja prepared with parades and celebrations. There was an air of

disillusionment among intellectuals, who "habían abrazado un servilismo insospechado que

rayaba a veces en la prostitución mental empezaban a desviarse de la "idea" y hacerse eco e

imbuirse de nuevos conceptos." They had refused, as of recently, "[l]a misión que le

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encomendaron de crear una perfecta simetría y paralelismo entre el ayer y hoy se anunciaba como un rotundo fracaso" (233).

Similar to *Cenizas de kalabó y termes, Autorretrato con un infiel* is a historical novel that recounts the decolonization of Equatorial Guinea by transposing the event to a fictional colonial world. The story unfolds in the capital city of Civilianjaïl. The novel possesses a satiric tone replete with anagrams for place names and historical actor names composed of synecdochic pseudonyms. The plot centers on as a pact between Nicomedes Espíritu Sesinando (a reference to dictator Francisco Macías Nguema), who takes power from Franck Nkóh ruler of Cabo Norte (referencing to Francisco Franco and Spain, respectively), and plunges the country into violence and brutality. In the city of Civilianjaïl, the narrative describes the life of the protagonist Baltasar Bulëtyé, a young men educated by missionaries. On the day of his baptism, he is stripped of the "eppá de tyíbbo" bracelet, the talisman of his ancestors. He defies the Claretian missionary Bosquejo Delatorre by breaking the safe and recovering the ancestral talisman and disappearing into the dense forest. The colony of Póor Donanfer (referencing Fernando Póo) descends into violence and political uncertainty as power is transferred from colonial leader Franck Nkóh of Cabo Norte to Nicomedes Espíritu Sesinando. Despite being pursued for his valuable talisman, Baltasar emerges from hiding to defend his community in the face of destruction. Fed up with the violence, the inhabitants from all the towns and cities rise up to seek revenge, brutally killing Nicomedes. Despite the relief and euphoria from killing the despot, the fervor of the revolution turns into the realization that hate and violence still reign in Póor Donanfer.

It is worth noting that the novel is unique for giving voice to the history of the Bubi ethnicity, which is autochthonous to the island of Bioko, and has suffered from repression and persecution at the hands of the Macías and Obiang dictatorships. By offering a fictionalized

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representation of a persecuted ethnic minority, the novel complicates the colonizer-colonized

binary by demonstrating how colonialism traced rifts and hierarchies among different races and

ethnicities within the colony.

Autorretrato con un infiel according to critics is emblematic of Equatorial Guinean post-

colonial literature.[27] However, I maintain that his novel complicates the idea of the post-colonial.

By focusing on the violent process of decolonization, Siale Djangany makes claims about the

continuities of colonial past in relation to the post-colonial period. Post-colonial literature in

Equatorial Guinea describes a group of literary texts published after 1968; however, the post-

colonial designation is reductionist for these literary texts are concerned with not only

understanding the present, but also gaining new insights about the colonial violence of the past.

Siale Djangany elegantly claimed in *En el lapso de una ternura* (2011), that "desde el 12 de

octubre de 1968 no es nada recomendable establecer una marca e indelible línea divisoria entre

realidad y ficción" (176). Literature, as a genre of metaphoric and symbolic representation,

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[27] According to some critics, contemporary Equatorial Guinean author José Fernando Siale Djangany belongs to a new trend of post-colonial literature, which emphasizes an Afro-Hispanic cultural identity. Gloria Nistal his work as "Euroafricanista," claiming that he "consigue armonizar e incorporar en su literatura las dos culturas de las que ha bebido, mediante una muy correcta utilización del lenguaje, […] una buena construcción de caracteres" (Nistal 126). Similarly to Nistal's prescriptive approach to evaluating the literatures of the former Spanish colony, Vicente Granados, prologuist to *Ekomo* claims that María Nsué Angüe has fought to "verter al español el lenguaje de los tambores," reassuring the readers that "María Nsue ha corregido en su novela los errores de dispersión del sistema vocálico del español guineano" (10). Notwithstanding the concession of exoticizing imagery of Africa, it is important to note that both Nistal and Granados (writing in 2008 and 1985, respectively) are concerned with delineating the Spanish and African elements found in the so-called culturally hybrid post-colonial literatures of Equatorial Guinea. It is not my intention to engage directly with the Afro-Hispanic identitarian issue; first, because there is a significant body of work dedicated to these questions and, second, because it is difficult to discuss colonial dichotomies without being limited by the narrow confines of their polarity. It is more compelling to question why this discourse is salient in post-colonial literary discussions and the historical context from which Afro-Hispanic hybridist rhetoric emerges.

allows us to hypothesize new ways of analyzing, conceptualizing and representing the present in relation to the past.

The history of Civilianjaïl, as the narrator explains, is based on the notes written in illegible handwriting of the copyist Juvenal de Golas, who unearthed an archive of the history of the city. With urgency, he decided to piece together the history "antes de que el tiempo borrase los detalles," with the help of "la infalible memoria y desbordante imaginación" of the nuns of Oblatas de la Virgen (20). He reveals that official colonial history is a composite narrative of memory, imagination, and the scrambling of sources originating from official state and religious institutions. To show that history is neither self-evident nor a neutral concept, especially within the context of post-colonial Africa, where a teleological historical discourse was a central justification for imperialism, Siale Djangany transposes Spanish imperialism in Guinea onto a fictitious cartography, therefore destabilizing history as natural and self-evident. Colonial history is constructed via narratives based on manipulations and untruths legitimated through archiving and recordkeeping: "Anotaciones revelaron cierto anacronismo y, por lo tanto, una intención malsana de ocultar o deformar intencionadamente la historia. Los estudiosos discutieron entre ellos […] realizaron una amplia confrontación de ideas y conjeturas mirando hacia el pasado" (23).

The narrator supplements the institutional histories with stories of the private lives the inhabitants of Póor Donanfer, giving insights into the violence and repression suffered under colonialism. For example, the narrator recounts the personal history of Segismundo Apëllë Lökká. He had been in and out of the jail cell since he was a young man, until colonial officials instated a program whereby "los protestantes, insumisos, vagos, y maleantes" were sent to work on a plantation on the island of Póor Donanfer. Segismundo was subjected to forced labor and

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corporal punishment sanctioned by the law. Five men per day "sin haber consumado acto reprensible alguno, recibían por la mañana veinte latigazos cada uno" (55). The beatings would serve "como ejemplo de lo que advendría a aquellos que durante la jornada cayeran en fechoría o infortúnio" (56). Segismundo's narrative exemplified the ubiquitous and arbitrary nature of incarceration in Civilianjaïl. Civilianjaïl is a play on the English and Pichi words civilian and jail. In his fictitious cartography, Siale Djangany superimposes the prison upon the city, as way to argue for the carcerality of the entire city, and by extension the colony. He creates an inextricable relationship between state and prison to demonstrate the state and the carceral system as mutually constitutive entities. The "insumisos and vagos," like Segismundo, who were deemed unproductive or subversive were subject to discipline and punishment as a way to be reformed by the state. Thus, the state depended upon the carceral regime as a force of social and economic control within the prison and in society at large.

The pervasive and tangled link between the colonial state and carceral institutions (like the work camp or the prison) is best explained by returning to Harper's notion of the colonial carceral, which he defines as:

> A set of literal, metaphoric, lexical, physical, metaphysical, public and personal artefacts which are as current as they are historical, and which have previously been included only in generic discussions of colonialism. They are, by any definition, distinct—both in their wider condition within colonialism, and in terms of their 'bricks and chains' identity. (10)

The carceral, as Harper describes it, is both the space of the prison and the shadow of discipline it casts over the city. Most importantly, it conceptualizes the oscillation between the real and metaphoric meanings of the prison. It is akin to Michel Foucault's idea of the carceral

archipelago, the carceral discipline that extended across the society through institutions like schools, factories, and hospitals. Harper develops this notion further to be able to understand the fragmented history of incarceration as interconnected through spatial, temporal, and symbolic reverberations.

In fact, for Siale Djangany the continuities of political violence experienced from colonialism to the post-colonial period are best understood through the lens of the carceral. By focusing on the pervasive carceral violence of the colonial period, he grapples with decolonization as a perpetuation of the death and torture into the post-colonial period. Decolonization does not constitute a renaissance. It is a negotiation and transition of power from Franck Nkóh (referencing Francisco Franco) to the incumbent leader of post-colonial Póor Donanfer, Nicomedes Espíritu Sesinando (alluding to Francisco Macías). Franck Nkóh explains that "El deseo de Cabo Norte es que Nicomedes tome el poder en Civilianjaïl. [..] Le he pedido a Nicomedes que […] limpien las ciudades de toda la chusma de facinerosos" (109). The decolonization of Póor Donanfer signified a change in leadership that perpetuated the repressive carceral discipline of the colonial period.

Before Baltasar is killed, he entrusts his cousin Hermenegildo with the safe keeping of the talisman. After burying Baltasar's body, Hermenegildo is taken to prison. When Nicomedes Espíritu Sesinando tours the prison establishment in order to get a hold of the talisman, he finds Hermenegildo's cell empty except for some bones and an inscription on the wall. On the walls of the prison in the city of Civilianjaïl, it reads:

>Mis sufrimientos no cesarán
>
>hasta el día de tus penas.
>
>Porque sólo tu dolencia

será la medida

de aquello que teatralmente apelas

alianza. (204)

To make sense of the verses, they called upon experts from Cabo Norte (analogous to Spain) to perform radiocarbon dating. The results showed that the inscription came from the eighteenth century, the same year as the death of the grandfather of Böyòlla Bulëtyé, who found himself imprisoned there. After committing it to memory, Nicomedes Espíritu Sesinando orders that the inscription be removed. The space of the prison is literally and figuratively inscribed with a carceral palimpsest, as the reader discovers that Böyòlla Bulëtyé's grandfather arrived at Póor Donanfer after having been rescued "por gracia o desgracia" from "Black Cargoes" or slave ships departing to the Americas (202). Through this colonial carceral narrative, Siale Djangany critiques how official historiography creates a fragmented and disconnected narrative of the past. Moreover, he constructs a historical narrative structure that offers an alternative way to think about the past in relation to the present. Hermenegildo was special for "tenía cuatro ojos, dos de ellos inmateriales con los que le era posible distinguir aspectos del mundo inmaterial, del mundo de lo oculto y también percibir a aquellos que ya no estaban entre los vivos"—These narratives offer a new way of thinking, analyzing, and categorizing present day Africa as a historical palimpsest of carceral regimes (37). Hermenegildo's four eyes see the past and the present as coexisting in the same space. For Siale Djangany, the palimpsest represents a historical narration that simultaneously considers the violence and traumas of the past and the present. The four eyes are representative of Mudimbe's notion of gnosis. The novel proposes a way to represent history in the form of a narrative that takes into account the material and immaterial world. In other

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words, he offers a reflection on visible and invisible discourses in operation at the heart of historical knowledge production.

The colonial carceral narrative, as seen in Siale Djangany's work, is a way in which past and present can coexist, connected, providing a carceral conceptualization of history. However, I argue that this novel is not a mere alternative or counter-representation of past events. Rather, Siale Djangany offers a history that reflects on the critical (mis)understanding of the colonial period, especially the "processes of invention and counterinvention" that colonialism engenders (Desai 4). Through the fictitious recreation of colonial and post-colonial Equatorial Guinea, Siale Djangany demonstrates how historical narratives are created, silenced and represented through the contestation of competing discourses. In other words, the novel makes visible the process of competing epistemologies becoming petrified as official discourses, offering both a reflection on the politics of historiography and alternative narrative structures to represent history. In *Autorretrato con un infiel* decolonization occurs as a negotiation and concession. Fanon argues that this "notion of compromise is very important in the case of decolonization [...] precisely because [African elites] have been careful not to break ties with colonialism" (91). Rather than a break with the past, Siale Djangany conceptualizes decolonization as a renegotiation of political leadership. Without restructuring colonial-era institutions, the newly independent government perpetuates colonial modes of violence.

Siale Djangany's *Autorretrato de un infiel* comes to a close as the cadaver of dictator Nicomedes Espíritu Sesinando is paraded around Civilianjaïl. Instead of relief and redemption, "a pesar de tantos años esperando ese día," the narrator ends in a premonition that "todavía subyacía una punzada de tristeza e insatisfacción: "¡Coño! Mira que no se nos acaba el podrido odio ese de toda la vida'" (224). Despite the euforia of deposing the despot, the narrator ends on

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a cynical note. Siale Djangany reflects on whether violence and atrocities fueled by hate and violence can be eradicated. The narrative is inconclusive and finishes with an open-ended question. How can we speak decolonization and post-colonialism when the promise of independence fell into disillusionment, given the violence and repression in the regimes of Francisco Macías (1968-1979) and Teodoro Obiang Nguema (1979-present)? Gurminder Bhambra argues that post-colonialism, the period inaugurated by independence, like any modern phenomenon, is based on the "ideas of difference and rupture that form debates about modernity"; moreover, the ideas of rupture "should be regarded as 'interpretative categories', whereby the 'unity' and 'integrity' of specific experiences are created by abstraction from wider interconnections" (7). Certainly, the designation colonial and post-colonial are useful taxonomies to describe and identify important political and historical shifts. However, representations of these shifts as definitive ruptures, signaling ends and beginnings, are reductionist representations of complex historical processes. The prefix of "post" has become the de facto way in which African historiography represents and creates African histories and realities. Siale Djangany reflects on the role of violence in bringing about political change, suggesting that decolonization, rather than a rupture with colonial governance, perpetuated its violence.

An additional significant contribution of Siale Djangany is his exploration of the limits between fictional and non-fictional (historical) narratives. He delegitimizes history as an ideologically constructed narrative, and by fusing fictional and historical narratives he makes legible the limits and confines of the *status quo*. For example, by setting *Autorretrato con un infiel* in a fictionalized world, Siale Djangany is able to construct a suggestive relationship with the plot and its wider historical context. The novel is introduced with an epigraph attributed to Ramiro de Maeztu "¡Viva la fuerza! A los que lloran, puñetazos en los ojos" (9). Politician and

member of the generación del '98, Maeztu was a propagator of the ideology of Hispanidad and

defender of Miguel Primo de Rivera's Unión Patriótica Española. This reference is significant

because it attributes the violence of colonialism to the ideology of Hispanidad which was based

on "la unión de todos los pueblos conquistados por España bajo una misma entidad común"

(Nerín 24). Later, Francoism appropriated this idea as the foundation of Hispanotropicalism, its

nationalist and imperialist project. For Siale Djangany this is the backdrop against which he

rewrites the history of Spanish imperialism in Guinea veiled in fictional terms.

The publisher of the novel, Ediciones el cobre distributed it as part of a special collection

entitled "La Diversidad" describing, on the back cover, Siale Djangany's novel as "vigorosa y

rebelde en la que el autor crea un mundo peculiar dominado por cierto realismo mágico

africano." The categorization is yet another example of an exoticizing description of the novel,

which simplifies how the author plays with the slippages created by colonial mimicry. Siale

Djangany recreates colonial history under the guise of fiction, or as the publisher termed,

"magical realism" to demonstrate how "reality" is constructed through historical narrative. The

'other' appropriating and reflecting back the dominant ideology through the process of mimicry

offers an implicit and even unintended critique, which in turn, constitutes an "immanent threat to

both 'normalized' knowledges and disciplinary powers" (Bhabha 85).

Critics who have explored this novel have focused on questions of self-representation.

The self-portrait (referenced in the title) originates at the beginning of the plot. During the

colonial period, the Spanish missionary Bosquejo Delatorre produces two paintings of Baltasar:

> *Autorretrato con un infiel*, donde el religioso se reflejó en primer plano a sí
>
> mismo y, en el fondo del cuadro, en el ángulo izquierdo inferior, realizó una
>
> bellísima representación del supuesto infiel. El segundo trabajo fue elaborado tres

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meses después de aquél. Su título era *Soy negro*, *pero hermoso hijo de Dios*; obra

pictórica de gran calidad en la que los ojos oscuros, los dientes y las córneas de

impresionante blancura, y la piel bruna de Bulëtyé se matizaron con extremada

maestría. (26)

According to Cristián H. Ricci, the painting is an "ironic statement asserting that the subaltern

cannot yet 'sketch himself'" (221). The painting due to its artistic quality and subject matter

resonated worldwide. Consequently, the infidel became "un icono conocido en el mundo

anecdótico y popular" (27). The representation of Baltasar in the context of Spanish

evangelization and colonization was popularized and circulated worldwide, disseminating a

colonial representation of Baltasar and by extension colonial society in Póor Donanfer.

Siale Djangany demonstrates that the question of whether the subaltern can speak (or

generally represent herself or himself) implies a set of conditions held as truths that must be

questioned, especially given that the subaltern is a heterogeneous subjectivity that is not isolated

from imperial epistemologies. Indeed, its difference is created, imposed, and reified through

imperial epistemologies. The discussion of whether the subaltern voice can return to a pre-

colonial African voice or express an untainted, authentic voice overlooks that it came into

existence in dialogue with its imperial context. Spivak, invoking Derrida's concept of *différance*,

warns us that "a nostalgia for lost origins can be detrimental to the explanation of social realities

within the critique of imperialism" (87). Siale Djangany offers a way to represent history that is

not concerned with genesis. His narrative rewrites colonial history as nexus of interconnected

historical phenomena, showing that historical events are results of the convergences of other

events. In addition to characterizing colonial history as multi-faceted and diverse, he also

contributes new ways of representing historical knowledge, or gnosis, by reflecting on how interconnected histories are to be narrativized.

Colonial epistemology is based on dichotomies; therefore, the subaltern has been brought into being by its imperial other. "It is because of *différance* that the movement of signification is possible only if each so-called present element […] is related to something other than itself" (Derrida 13). In 1991, Kwame Anthony Appiah discussed the question of self-representation in post-colonial Africa in "Is the Post- in Postmodernism the Post- in Postcolonial?" For Appiah, the representation of post-colonial Africa comes through a minority who operates at the peripheries of the global cultural market, creating an image of Africa for the West and an image of the West for Africa, "they present to Africa and through an Africa they have invented for the world, for each other, and for Africa" (348).

Siale Djangany plays with the limits of the genres of literature and history in order to question the limits of historiographic representation. The plots oscillate between fiction and reality, allowing the reader to recognize places, events and characters in a historical narrative under the guise of fiction. Siale Djangany creates an alternate debate by questioning the arena in which inquiries are constructed. Rather than asking whether the subaltern can represent her or himself, he transposes the issue to question the axioms upon which these histories and its characters are told. Moreover, he asks how and for whom these histories are written? Siale Djangany is concerned with colonial epistemologies of historical narratives and points to a possible reconceptualization of history that can account for these carceral palimpsests and show the persistence of violence.

III.   **Narrating the Past, Present, and Future: African Gnosis in *Ekomo* by María Nsué Angüe**

While María Nsué Angüe's *Ekomo* does not engage directly with imprisonment, like Siale Djangany's novel, the paradox of the colonial carceral is the driving force of its narrative.[28]

> Una daga se ha clavado en mi pecho. Las tinieblas y la oscuridad de la noche, bajando en copos negros, cayeron sobre mí dejando mi cuerpo clavado entre la cama y la nada, prisionera en el compacto sentimiento que trae consigo el desasosiego. [...] Y, dentro de esta incertidumbre, vi tus pupilas, brillando como brasas en la profundidad de mi alma, que preguntaban un sinfín de cosas. Necesitaría todo un libro para expresar todo lo que necesitas saber, aunque no hay palabras que pueda describir con suficiente claridad la congoja que vi en tus ojos. "No sé dónde estoy, si no es en la frontera entre la vida y la muerte." (15)

The narrative structure of *Ekomo* is based on a paradox, the need—and impossibility of—telling a story. The irreconcilable state of being between life and death is the impetus for Nsué Angüe's narrative. She goes on to describe the "esclavos en vida," people who are both dead and living, working for their owners: "Los esclavos en vida [...] son gente que, estando muertos, andan y trabajan para sus dueños [...] Son gente asesinada por sus dueños. Y una vez muertos les cortan las lenguas para que no puedan nunca hablar y contar a nadie lo que les ha pasado" (54). Like the narrator, the "esclavos en vida" are symbolically imprisoned within the paradox of life and death. Nsué Angüe demonstrates this as the epistemological impasse of colonial history, whereby

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[28] Ekomo, like other literary works from Africa, has been read for its ability to move between traditional and modern European elements: "transición de la vida tradicional Africana a la vida europea, el paso de una sociedad profana a una sociedad sagrada" (Osubita 49). However, critics tend to single out the authentic African elements. María Zielina Limonta, for example, has placed the novel within the Fang culture, for its "uso de la oralidad al delinear su texto como sistema sígnico-estrutural de la cultura fang" (Limonta 93). However, Benita Sampedro Vizcaya regards Nsué Angüe's work as "a profound engagement with Fang oral traditions and narratives," while nevertheless pointing out that it is not a mere monolithic, static recording of Fang culture, but rather a "complex process of translation, adaptation" (178).

Europe is deemed "the epitome of humanity in this dispensation, [and] Africa is conceptually its inhuman counterpart. Or, put another way, the term 'Black Human' is an oxy-moron" (Creary 2).

María Nsué Angüe engages with the linear conceptualization of historical time in *Ekomo* and questions fixed categories and concepts with its themes and narrative structures. The plot follows the journey of the narrator, Nnanga, and the protagonist, her husband Ekomo in search of a cure for his infected leg. They consult with practitioners of Western and local medicine to halt the disease that progressively rots his body. Woven into the fabric of the narrative are episodes in the history of the inhabitants of their village, which appear as fragments of memories, anecdotes and ghostly tales—blending past, present, and premonitions of the future. The narrator measures time in cyclical seasonal units, counting her "lluvias." Otherwise, plot is not rooted in either space nor time; rather, through the context the reader is left to deduce that the narrative takes place in West Africa during the nationalist movements of the 1960s.

Nsué Angüe thinks through the structure of historical narratives in two ways. First, the narrative structure is nonlinear; the plot is interrupted by inserting the past into the present, as the two temporalities coexist. In Nsué Angüe's narrative, the beginning is also the end with the premonition of an imminent death of Ekomo. Second, although this story recounts the personal relationship of a couple, told with an intimate tone, the work is not without a political engagement, that calls into question the concept and creation of history. It is precisely this intimate narrative voice, that follows a nonlinear plot oscillating between past, present and future, between reality and imagination that questions how history is written.

Nsué Angüe's narrative questions how histories can be told through narratives in modes other than rational historiography (referencing David Scott's concept) or historicism (as critiqued by Walter Benjamin). Like Nsué Angüe, Scott and Benjamin seek alternatives to the rational

historiography and historicism. These synonymous concepts are defined as a narrative representation of the past events as they occurred and evolved over time. This presumes a teleological historical narrative that defines historical time as a progression from the point of origin to a future moment of redemption. Benjamin and Scott critique historicism and rationalist historiography, because conceptualizations of history that rely on linear and progressive representations of time, which allow for the past to be represented as culturally and nationally self-contained, thus making the interconnections in space and time invisible and fragmenting events into isolated moments and spaces.

Rational historiography is inextricably linked to colonial epistemology. The purported civilizing missions of the Iberian imperial powers legitimated their existence through teleological historical narratives. According to Buck-Morss, Hegelian historical conceptualizations are responsible for how Africa is understood and created as a historical, political and geographic entity, placed on the margins of world consciousness, displacing "sub-saharan Africa, this 'land of children,' of 'barbarity and wildness,' from any significance for world history, due to what he deemed were deficiencies of the African "spirit." (859). For example, in *Autorretrato con un infiel* adventurers arrive at the island finding it "detrás de la historia," and used this historical justification to colonize and take it upon themselves to rescue the Africa from their ahistorical standing and be put on the path of progress (17). As Frantz Fanon explains, fundamental to the colonizing project was a discursive plan to convince the colonized that "if colonists? were to leave they would regress into barbarism, degradation and bestiality" (149).

For Nsué Angüe, reflecting on the conceptualization of historical temporality is fundamental to understanding the aftermath of colonialism in Africa. This question becomes the subject of a political debate between the village elder and Nfumbaha, a young man returning

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from completing his studies in Europe. Nfumbaha explains that "se habla mucho del Congo y de la lucha que está llevando a cabo para conseguir la libertad" and argues that the struggle for freedom is in fact a struggle for historical time: "África, como cualquier continente del mundo, necesita evolucionar y nosotros los africanos hemos de luchar para conseguirlo" (20). Nsué Angüe demonstrates how anti-colonial discourses—aiming to liberate Africans from colonialism—were informed by a teleological conceptualization of historical time. The anti-colonial struggles reclaimed the idea of a teleological path to history in order to argue that after centuries of European destruction and exploitation of natural and human resources in the African continent, and a purposeful underdevelopment of infrastructure, independence would signify returning to a path of cultural and economic evolution for Africa to reach full potential after colonial derailment.

For many African liberation fighters and intellectuals, the conceptualization of independence and decolonization was expressed in terms of an embryo growing and developing into its full potential. This idea is reiterated in Juan Balboa Boneke's *¿Dónde estás Guinea?*, a chronicle written for the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Equatorial Guinean independence. Despite the repression of nationalism and the assassination of Enrique Nvo, "[l]a semilla estaba echada, y, en esa tierra fértil se desarrollaba, lenta pero progresivamente […] el embrión que años después demostraría la tenacidad de unos hombres por la Libertad de su Pueblo" (60). Even in anti-colonial terms, the historical destiny of Equatorial Guinea, as a sovereign nation-state, was conceptualized through a progressive and teleological narrative.

Nsué Angüe, through the narrator, Nganga, thinks of alternatives to conceptualizations of linear time, not as a sign of progress, but as crisis. The fervor of tomorrow became an epidemic as explained by Nganga. "Se preocupa más por su mañana, aquel mañana siempre muy próximo

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y excitante que, sin embargo, no se presenta nunca tan brillante, como se espera [...]" (43). For the narrator, teleology is not synonymous with progress; rather, it is portrayed as an ominous and devastating force. Nsué Angüe not only provides a critique of the Enlightenment idea that privileges "normative European conceptions of thought and behavior over what its visionaries and statesmen were pleased to call the 'superstitions' and 'customs' of non-European peoples," she also provides an alternative way to think and represent historical narratives that do not replicate normative modes of history (Scott 178). Contrary to the ideas of colonial and anti-colonial conceptualizations of time, for Nganga, historical temporality is nonlinear, as past, present and future can coexist:

> No hay más allá de la vida. La muerte no existe. Sólo existe el tiempo. Lo único perdurable es el tiempo. Uno puede vivir en pretérito, presente o futuro, y la diferencia entre un tiempo u otro consiste en que unos piensan con más cordura que los otros […]Abro los ojos y resulta que he estado dormida otra vez. Mi mente, un poco aturdida, no sabe si está en el presente, pasado o en el futuro. (190)

In this passage, Nganga conceptualizes time as existing on multiple levels at once. The present, past, and future can exist interconnectedly within the same moment. For her the question of seeing or living this connection is "cordura," signifies a way of knowing or perceiving with sensibility.

After the death of an elder in the village, the premonition of the next victim being a young man came true. Ekomo succumbs to the infection decaying his body. The archetypes representing the past and future of Africa both having died, Nganga reflects on the question of time. The teleological progression of history accompanied by the fever for tomorrow had

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Nganga drowning "en aquel apocalíptico espectáculo, acogiéndolo con la sensación de ser una pieza no importante en el drama que se estaba desarrollando" (43). The anti-colonial master narrative, which is based upon a progressive temporality, creates a binary whereby those not belonging to the future and to progress are relegated to the past, as the character of the elder who exists as the antithesis of the young Nfumbaha. The elder is a man without a present nor a future, he is "hijo de ancestros. Es hombre del pasado," left behind in the past, and excluded from the post-colonial nation-state which is posited in the temporality of progress. In *Ekomo*, Nsué Angüe demonstrates the moments leading upto independence as renegotiation, or as a lost opportunity to rethink binaries of the past and future (Sampedro "Rethinking the Archive", 352).

For Nsué Angue, the tree embodies the reconceptualization of history. The ceiba contains the norms of the ancestors that drive their future, symbolizing both life and death. The representation of history is always between two opposites: past and future, life and death. In these oppositions exists an irreconcilable paradox. These are two poles that battle to annihilate each other. The end of life is marked by the arrival of death; hence, life ceases to have meaning without death. In other words, death gives meaning to life. The tension exists in that each element defines, or depends on the other for its meaning, but at the same time, one denies the other. Thus, the tree reveals a moment of crisis, a confrontation with the paradox of history. The premonition of the death of the elder and the young man, represents the crisis of the transition of colonialism to post-colonialism. The old man, described as "hombre sin presente. Hombre sin futuro. […] Hombre del pasado" is representative of the image of Africa constructed through colonial epistemologies, the continent cemented in the past, according to the Western paradigm, always in opposition to the future, to progress, to Europe. The young man who dies is representative of a future in contrast with the past, symbolizing the transition to independence.

Within this tension of past and future, wherein one tries to annihilate the other, we find an aporia, an unresolved conflict, that of decolonization.

The novel ends without a resolution. The narrator is moved by the need to tell and to understand: "Abro los ojos, eso creo, y veo un sinfín de cosas, que necesitaría todo un libro para expresar mi verdad exacta […] ¡Qué tremendamente sola estoy!" (194). Loneliness is not a condemnation here; it is not a resignation but rather the unsettlement that moves the narrator to become engaged in the reconstruction and narration of her history. History, for the narrator, is the loneliness that places the historian in a state of emotive tension. The novel thus ends with unsettlement, with unresolved tension instead of a finite and resolute conclusion. "To articulate what is past does not mean to recognize 'how it really was,'" Benjamin reminds us, "It means to take control of a memory, as it flashes in a moment of danger. For historical materialism it is a question of holding fast to a picture of the past, just as if it had unexpectedly thrust itself, in a moment of danger, on the historical subject" (255). It is to be as Nnanga says, "on the border of life and death," living the tension of past and future as a moment of crisis that disrupts a closed and fixed history. A fixed ending would banish the possibility of alternatives to the *status quo*, while tension, uneasiness, discomfort, and unsettlement allow for or better yet drive us, even if only for an instant, towards a possibility for change.

The aftermath of colonialism for Nsué Angüe is not post-colonial, nor does it imply a finite decolonization. Rather, it is an irreconcilable conflict, where the colonial cannot be fully overcome. The post-colonial is not "post" at all. The aftermath of colonialism is an aporia, an irreconcilable tension of past that cannot be overcome nor reconciled. Nsué Angüe suggests that the decolonization is impossibility insofar as the colonial past, which created the post-colonial present, cannot be overcome. Decolonization is the encounter of two forces "opposed to each

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other by their very nature" yet Fanon shows that "their originality to that sort of substantification [...] results from and is nourished by the situation in the colonies" (36).

Curiously, Nsué Angüe underscores that she was born in prison in 1948 while her parents were incarcerated for opposing the colonial regime (Sampedro Vizcaya 180). Though she does not deal with prisons and imprisonment directly, *Ekomo* is informed by carceral coloniality. It is a novel that deals with the reverberations of carceral regimes. It is my claim that Nsué Angüe grapples with the limits of fiction and historiography to produce, on the one hand, a counterdiscourse that retells colonial and post-colonial history, and on the other, to produce a rich meta-reflection on the historicity and the conceptualizations of temporality, informed by colonial epistemologies. I wish to call this discursive space created by these authors colonial carceral narratives.

Post-colonial crisis for Siale Djangany and Nsué Angüe sets in when the nation projects a redemptive destiny, enforced with symbolic and state violence, while disciplining those who stray from the historic mission and thus betray the nation.[29] Similarly to what occurred in Francoist fascist nationalism, under Francisco Macías "la manipulación de la Historia Nacional se tradujo en una mitificación y sacralización […] que rozaba lo mesiánico. La "etnicización" del estado y la consiguiente instauración de un universo en el que sólo el discurso nguemista tenía

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[29] As previously argued by Campos, decolonization was conceptualized as a means of accomplishing the Spanish civilizing mission. However, adherence to a linear historical narrative of progress after colonization was a way in which the new nation-states proclaimed an agenda of economic growth and development. Mudimbe suggests that "[...] In Africa a great deal of attention is generally given to the evolution implied and promised by the passage from [primitivism, implied by tradition, orality, agrarianism to modernity, defined by an industrialized, urban society]." (4). Decolonization occurred during the Cold War when freedom was associated with liberal economics. Economic development, therefore, became one expression of historical progress which the new nation-states, previously denied, aimed to attain.

cabida, mutiló la cultura" (Mbaré Ngom 387). The unit of the nation and its destiny, expressed

through historical progress was upheld through institutional and symbolic violence enforced by

the penitentiary. Jail, prison, work camps, boundedness and confinement play a central role in

these novels in overt, tangible and metaphoric ways. However, in these novels, prisons do not

simply symbolize the egregious violence during the dictatorships. Rather they represent an

analytical category which allows for alternative histories and reconceptualizations of knowledge

and history. Nsué Angüe establishes a relationship between fiction and history in a way that

questions the boundaries of both genres and creates an entirely new form of knowledge, an

African gnosis. Borrowing from V.Y. Mudimbe's concept, African gnosis, is a double process:

"first, a permanent reevaluation of the limits of anthropology as knowledge in order to transform

it into a more credible anthropou-logos, that is a discourse on a human being; and, second, an

examination of its own historicity" (186). Mudimbe contrasts episteme with gnosis, as a way to

accentuate that knowledge is created within its own historical context; and specifically for

disciplines like anthropology and history, knowledge is inextricably linked to colonialism. For

Nsué Angüe it is a process of self-inquiry, calling into question the limits, the legitimacy, the

genre and the context of narratives. The narrator, Nganga, sophisticatedly examines these

questions by ending the plot with the exaltation of "[a]bro los ojos, eso creo, y veo un sinfín de

cosas, que necesitaría todo un libro para expresar mi verdad exacta" (194). Yet Nsué Angüe

reflects on the impossibility of telling exact and whole stories and histories by dedicating *Ekomo*

to the grandmother and namesake of the narrator, "Nnanga, mi amiga vieja. Lástima que no sepa

leer" (Nsué Angüe 5). That is in fact what Mudimbe deems the power of African gnosis. Nsué

Angüe's narrative produces new ways of knowing while keenly aware of the limits of

representation. It is situated squarely within its reality and context, while at the same time

positing "a dramatic but ordinary question about its own being" (186). As a matter of fact, African gnosis is African "by virtue of its authors and promoters, but which extends to a Western epistemological territory" (186). African gnosis engages with Afro-Hispanic hybridity by recognizing its own peripheral and subaltern position while situating those designations within a colonial epistemological context.

IV.   A Note on Identity, Hybritidity and the Vestiges of Hispanotropicalism

I wish to deviate slightly from the central theme of this chapter to discuss some concepts that have framed critical debates on literatures from Equatorial Guinea, namely the question of cultural identity and an Afro-Hispanic heritage. I will briefly examine the contributions and the implications of some of these critical works. In Equatorial Guinea, historiography and literary studies have been framed through the notion of exceptionalism. On the one hand, historically, as having achieved its independence relatively late (in comparison with the Francophone and some Anglophone colonies) and on the other, linguistically, as it is the only Spanish-speaking Sub-Saharan African nation. As a result, critics have studied the post-colonial literatures written after 1968, with few exceptions, through the lens of this exceptionalism, particularly how Equatorial Guinean authors represent the peculiar realities of an Afro-Hispanic hybrid identity, at once Hispanic and African, and its complexity with diverse influences and multiple contradictions. The theme of cultural hybridity is a widespread trend of inquiry for post-colonial theorists throughout Africa. Frantz Fanon claims that whereas colonialism is characterized for imposing a dichotomy on the world, the task of decolonization is to reconcile the former colony "by a radical decision to remove its heterogeneity, by unifying it on the grounds of the nation and sometimes race" (10). Thus hybridity is a foundational problematic for new nation-states to define and delineate its borders and identitary boundaries.

In the context of Equatorial Guinea, hybridity has been a productive discursive tool to situate the literature of this little-known nation on the world literature market within the context of African literatures and Black Atlantic expressions of Negritude. The first anthology of Equatorial Guinean literature published in 1984 by Donato Ndongo-Bidyogo, the *Antología de la literatura guineana*, presented the complexities of a corpus of an Afro-Hispanic national literature influenced by decades of colonialism, repressive dictatorships and exile. In post-colonial African literary criticism, the main focus has been the capacity of these authors to negotiate traditional African cultures with modern European elements within the modern African national identity. Ndongo-Bidyogo insists that these concepts "no son antitéticos, se nos aparecen como complementarios y capaces, en armoniosa síntesis, de llevar a nuestro pueblo a un estadio de desarrollo creativo" (16).

I recognize that by calling attention to cultural traditions as a defining element of Equatorial Guinean identity and hybridity, writers aim to valorize local and autochthonous African cultures. This tendency represents a way to reclaim the cultural expressions were heavily repressed and almost lost during the colonial period. However, reclaiming and celebrating traditional and hybrid cultural elements in post-colonial Equatorial Guinean literatures without historical contextualization obfuscates and simplifies the inherent heterogeneity and hybridity of (pre-colonial) African cultures. Furthermore, it runs the risk of perpetuating the colonial hispanotropicalist ideology, which justified and prolonged colonialism beyond the mid-twentieth century.

In fact, discourses of Afro-Hispanic cultural miscegenation have deep historical roots for Equatorial Guinea. On February 24, 1956, when in response to the Spanish bid for membership to the United Nations, the Secretary General sent a letter inquiring about the state of Spanish

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colonial territories. Inspired by Portugal, Spanish officials responded by claiming that Spanish

Africa was not under colonial rule; rather an overseas province enjoying the same rights, laws

and responsibilities as mainland Spain, and therefore not in violation of Charter IX of the United

Nations which guaranteed rights to self-determination (Campos 98). This exchange took place in

the context of emerging independence movements throughout the colonial world and increasing

international pressure for decolonization. Within Equatorial Guinea, the nationalist movement,

headed by an educated class, responded by contesting its "provincialization," which resulted in

renewed efforts by the Colonial Guard to interrogate, fine and incarcerate the Guinean people

(Campos 101). At this moment, the Francoist Regime aggressively employed a

Hispanotropicalist discourse to justify colonialism in Spanish Guinea, arguing that the

relationship between Spain and Guinea is fraternal rather than hierarchical, an ideology founded

on five main pillars: "the total absence of racist attitudes, the innate Africanist vocation of

Spaniards, the missionary tendencies of the Spanish nation, the lack of economic exploitation of

the colonial territories, and the presence of racial mixture" (Nerín 12). The cultural and racial

miscegenation of Hispanotropicalism entailed repressive discursive weapon at the service of the

Francoist colonial regime from 1939 to 1968, reaching its apex in the decade of the 1950s.

 Literature, specifically fiction, carved a discursive space to negotiate the problematics of

Afro-Hispanic heritage, both as post-colonial reality and as a way of coming to terms with the

colonial vestiges of hispanotropicalism. *Ekomo* (1985), the only novel published by María Nsué

Angüe, is a sophisticated study of the cultural contradictions produced by colonial binaries. Its

beginning— "Entre un poco de sol y un poquito de sombra"—is characteristic of the narrative's

search for an escape from these binaries, contemplating the liminal space of binaries (19).

Binaries are intrinsic to the colonial system, according to V.Y. Mudimbe. In *The Invention of*

Africa (1988) he asserts that colonialism is "a dichotomizing system" positing Europe against

Africa in a Manicheaen relationship of "traditional versus modern, oral versus written and

printed, agrarian and customary communities versus urban and industrialized civilization." The

space between this polarity is the "intermediate" space which, according to Mudimbe, is "a

diffused space [...] between the so-called African tradition and the projected modernity of

colonialism" (4).

Ekomo has been read for its ability to move between traditional and modern European

elements: "transición de la vida tradicional africana a la vida europea, el paso de una sociedad

profana a una sociedad sagrada" (Osubita 49). However, critics tend to single out the authentic

African elements. María Zielina Limonta, for example, has placed the novel within the Fang

culture, for its "uso de la oralidad al delinear su texto como sistema sígnico-estrutural de la

cultura fang" (Limonta 93). Benita Sampedro Vizcaya's approach is more nuanced, describing

Nsué Angüe's work as "a profound engagement with Fang oral traditions and narratives,"

nevertheless pointing out that it is not a mere monolithic, static recording of Fang culture, but

rather a "complex process of translation, adaptation" (178).

Evaluating the Equatorial Guinean novels based on elements of traditional autochthonous

culture and modern European influences runs the risk of legitimizing the colonial epistemology

of a Manichaean world, or a world constructed in dichotomies. It also makes an underlying

assumption that pre-colonial African traditions were static and not products of cultural mixture

and dynamic transformations. As Terence Ranger demonstrated in "The Invention of Tradition

Colonial Africa," in pre-colonial Africa, Africans held complex, multiple and dynamic identities,

which were codified and categorized during colonialism by "transforming flexible custom into

hard prescription" (212). These "invented traditions" were manipulated by Europeans and

Africans alike to produce a distorted version of a so-called authentic past. For this reason, Ranger urges historians to "free themselves from the illusion that the African custom recorded by officials or by many anthropologists is any sort of guide to the African past" (262). The task of denaturalizing and historicizing the notions of tradition in a colonial African context also has repercussions for conceptualizing the post-colonial present and its relation to official discourses of the past.

The ceiba tree features prominently in Nsué Angüe's novel as a symbol of contention of tradition, authenticity and belonging. The ceiba, as noted in the prologue by Vicente Granados, is not native to nor an authentic choice for a novel from Equatorial Guinea. However, as noted by Sampedro Vizcaya, *Ekomo* is a novel that defies readers expectations by "migrating across African and European linguistic and cultural borders, and reconstructing a history—both personal and collective—that crisscrosses the confines of ethnicity, gender, and national identity" ("Ekomo's Intervention" 178). However, the ceiba is autochthonous to the Americas and of symbolic significance to Cuba. Its presence in the novel is not an error or a question of mere preference as suggested by Granandos; rather, by appropriating the Cuban symbol, Nsué Angüe constructs a counter-official historical narrative with the tree at its center. Nsué Angüe traces a transatlantic narrative that implicitly takes into account histories of slave trade and the deportation of Afro-Cuban radicals. She thereby situates the history of Equatorial Guinea within the wider Atlantic contexts and decentralizes Spain as a reference, providing a narrative framework that goes beyond the dichotomizing Afro-Hispanic framework. Joaquín Mbobio Bacheng claims that the defining characteristic of Equatorial Guinean literature is being "the product of a tri-dimensional cultural environment—that of Afro-Ibero-Americanism—and this is

what makes it unique […] It is an expression of the fight to deconstruct colonial hierarchy, a cry of anguish in its post-independence exile" (n.p.).

The tri-dimensional framework is how José Fernando Siale Djangany contextualized the urban space of Santa Isabel (present day Malabo), capital of the Spanish colony in the Gulf of Guinea. The city is the epicenter and microcosm of the Atlantic imperial world in both his novels. Siale Djangany's narratives are keenly aware of space, borders and vectors, and the protagonist, Ildefonso, traces his heritage back to a Cuban political prisoner sent to the island of Fernando Póo. He notes the multidirectional and unstable nature of identity by claiming that only a century before, "a través de la trata transatlántica, era africano" (20). Reconfiguring the Atlantic as a space created by colonialism, which he shows to be made of a web of multidirectional vectors, oscillating between the American and African colonies, Siale Djangany's historical narrations are nuanced beyond a monolithic and dichotomous relationship with the colonial metropole. What is more, the Atlantic interconnections in space and time, Siale Djangany argues, are traced by carceral histories: the capture and trafficking of Africans as slave labor in the Americas; Afro-descendant Americans as political prisoners and forced laborers in Africa, the Atlantic is forged by carceral narratives.

According to Martín-Estudillo, Siale Djangany provides a "polyphonic representation" of the transition to independence, thereby framing Equatorial Guinea within a new "symbolic cartography of historical trauma" (221). Within the context of Equatorial Guinean literature, *Autorretrato con un infiel* is unique for giving voice to the history of the Bubi ethnicity, which is autochthonous to the island of Bioko, and has suffered from repression and persecution at the hands of the Macías and Obiang Nguema dictatorships. By offering a fictionalized representation of a persecuted ethnic minority, the novel complicates the colonizer-colonized binary in order to

demonstrate how racial and ethnic differences and hierarchies were exploited during the colonial period. The ethnic diversity among Guineans played a significant role during decolonization. As a result, only the majority Fang ethnic group has ruled since independence. These real and perceived differences continue to function as a hierarchical ethnic structure in post-colonial Equatorial Guinea. While Siale Djangany does indeed engage with the hybrid Afro-Hispanic identity of Guinean culture, he also critiques fixed identitary categories by revealing how they are delineated, naturalized, and petrified. Siale Djangany's novel intervene in these debates by making visible the constructed nature of truth and reality, while "reflecting also on the fact that political formations in postcolonial Africa need to be rethought and remade" (Sampedro 358).

Nsué Angüe and Siale Djangany nuance official colonial historiographies by representing the cultural and political heterogeneity of the Guinean colony within a broader framework of Atlantic imperialism. However, the question remains how and why literary texts studied within the narrow framework of an Afro-Hispanic hybridity continue to be salient within the post-colonial period? Furthermore, why is this hybridity seen as novel to the post-colonial period and national identity, when hybridity expressed in terms of an Hispanotropicalist cultural miscegenation was intrinsic to Spanish imperial ideology?

V.   Conclusion

More so than any historiographical work, the fictional texts, *Ekomo, Cenizas de kalabó y termes* and *Autorretrato con un infiel*, attempt to understand how decolonization and the aftermath of Spanish colonialism did not constitute a rupture with the past, but a renegotiation of colonial paradigms in the new sovereign nation-states. These works portray the post-colonial era as replete with continuities of colonial-era violence, expressed through both symbolic and institutional violence.

Moreover, they are concerned with how historiography can be rewritten to reflect an interconnected relationship between the past and the present. The narratives by Nsué Angüe and Siale Djangany serve as discursive spaces to make visible how the colonial carceral functions in post-colonial society, thereby calling into question the prefix "post" as a marker of historical periodization and a paradigm shift. By foregrounding how violence has continued well into the post-colonial period, these novels demonstrate the impossibility of overcoming colonialism, because anti-colonialism holds colonialism as a referent through its negation. These colonial carceral narratives use the space of fiction as African gnosis to excavate silent discourse operating beneath official histories. The prison is central to demonstrating the duplicity of colonial discourse by showing the discipline as underworld within colonial discourse. These are the processes that Buck-Morss claims "place colonial events on the margins of European history" and that allow European history to be represented as occurring endogenously, separately from its own (post-)coloniality (39). These novels offer a way to rethink not only the post-colonial present, but how the present remains a construct from colonial epistemologies that brought the Iberian Atlantic into being.

Chapter 4

New Men and New Women—Redemption, Work and Punishment at Machava Prison

Camp from Late Colonialism to the FRELIMO Revolution

> *This century has shown that in every situation of organized oppression*
> *the true antonyms are always the exclusive part versus the inclusive*
> *whole—not masculinity versus femininity but either of them versus*
> *androgyny, not the past versus the present but either of them versus the*
> *timelessness in which the past is the present and the present is the past,*
> *not the oppressor versus the oppressed but both of them versus the*
> *rationality which turns them into co-victims.*
> Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*

I.   Machava Prison Camp during Decolonization

With scraps of paper, carbon and ink available to Malangatana Valente Ngwenya inside

his prison cell, the world-renowned Mozambican painter produced a series of drawings of prison

life. His typical style is replete with bright colors and the *horror vacui* of figures; however, these

drawing are notably empty and monochromatic. He drafted "A cela" (The Cell) while in the

colonial prison camp of Machava (officially known as Secção Prisional da Machava and locally

called Kadjamanguana), during his 18-month incarceration, between 1965 and 1966 (Figure 3.1).

In the foreground, a man sits on the ground at the far corner of the prison cell with objects and

food littered around him. He has monstrous features and proportions; his body is contorted and

outlined with broad strokes. He is bleeding from the mouth. The perspective guides the gaze to

the door of the cell represented in the upper right corner. From the door ajar, the spectator finds

herself or himself face-to-face with vigilant eyes that watch the inmate. Malangatana's piece

evokes the effects of the Panopticon as a "conscious and permanent visibility," elaborated by Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975). In the Panopticon, "the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action" guaranteeing then that the inmates are caught in a power relation of constant visibility independent of the guard exercising it, making the actual surveillance unnecessary (202). While the Panopticon dissociates "the see/being seen dyad" allowing the prisoner to be seen without seeing, Malangatana implicates the spectator of the piece to further disrupt and question the dyad (Foucault 203). The Mozambican writer Mia Couto, described the transformative influence of Malangatana's work as having the power to implicate the audience in the atrocities, in a contradictory and conflicting way:

> As visões monstruosas que ele partilhou connosco nesse curto espaço de tempo, fizeram-nos cúmplices dos corpos esquartejados, do sangue escorrendo com ternura além do vermelho. Afinal, fomos também esses ternos assassinos da arrumação natural do mundo, violamos a ordem das cores e dos contornos, redesenhamos com ele as linhas do Universo. (206)

As Couto notes, Malangatana's work provokes the audience by interpellating spectators in the voyeurism of suffering represented in the piece. He splits the dyad of prisoner and guard by having the spectators occupy ambivalent roles of the victims and the aggressors. Being at once the recipient and aggressor of this violence, the audience is subjected to a contradictory and disquieting position. The spectator sees and creates an empathy with the prisoner, though she or

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he also becomes complicit with the gaze that surveils, disciplines and punishes.[30] The disquieting

tension with which Malangatana fills the prison cell provides a grammar for redefining the

struggle for independence and the aftermath of colonialism in Mozambique beyond the

conventional terms of friendship or enmity or a dyadic confrontation.

I will complicate the dyads of victim/aggressors and colonizer/colonized by studying two

major continuities between the late colonial period and the Revolution of FRELIMO (The

Mozambican Liberation Front). First, the organization of politics into terms of friends and

enemies reveals that amity and enmity are flexible categories invoked as a tool for the

hegemonization of political ideologies through the language of national unity. Second,

redemption through labor was an idea that exerted a widespread discipline over the body through

the language of a gendered "work hygiene." Lastly, I wish to demonstrate that the prison and the

work camp were the loci where these policies were implemented and served as an epicenter from

which discipline reverberated into society.

With the implementation of *Lei Orgânica do Ultramar Português* of 1951, Portugal

incorporated the African colonial territories as *Provincias Ultramarinas*, which according to

official state discourses unified Portugal as a "multiracial and pluricontinental nation." [31] After

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[30] Images of atrocities inherently implicate the public in a disquieting position as the consumer.
Without the power to intervene, looking at images of atrocities, as Susan Sontag argues
spectators are relegated to "voyeurs, whether or not we mean to be" (42).
[31] The Salazar regime claimed that Portugal was a multiracial and pluricontinental nation,
whereby the question of national unity and integrity was based both on historical and racial
rhetoric (Castelo 67). The Salazar regime denied economically exploitative and hierarchical
relations between the metropole and the colonies, instead arguing for a non-racist and non-
hierarchical fraternal colonialism, *Lusotropicalism.* Its colonialism was based on spreading
Portuguese civilization and culture on the basis of a historical claim that the Portuguese were
historically and racially more apt at cultural and racial miscegenation, *mestiçagem,* due to its
cultural proximity and mixing with North African cultures centuries earlier, to legitimize
prolongued colonial presence in sub-Saharan Africa.

intermittent moments of resistance in the colonies, the War of Liberation erupted in Angola,

Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique in 1961, 1963, and 1964, respectively (in addition to the

networks of clandestine resistance of intellectuals in Cabo Verde and São Tomé e Príncipe). The

liberation fighters waging war for self-determination and nationhood fundamentally challenged

the integrity of the Portuguese empire and the idea of a harmonious multi-racial nation. At a

moment of acute crisis, Portugal clung to its colonies despite pressures to decolonize from anti-

colonialists in the colonies and international organizations, namely the United Nations. By the

1960s, a wave of liberation movements swept Anglophone and Francophone Africa, as ideals of

self-determination and autonomy became accepted premises of governance in the democratic and

capitalist free world, in order to (1) come to terms with the atrocities of World War II and

fascism and (2) to ideologically oppose communism and the Soviet superpower in the Cold War

era. At this time, Salazarist officials invoked and renegotiated Lusotropicalist ideologies to

justify Portugal's prolonged presence in Africa. Lusotropicalism, a political appropriation by the

Salazar regime in the 1950s was loosely based upon the theories elaborated by Brazilian

sociologist Gilberto Freyre, in *Casa grande & senzala* (1933), whereby Portuguese culture, due

to its historic North African cultural influence, was said to have a special vocation for conquest

in the tropics.[32] While the notion of a cultural and racial miscegenation was initially rejected by

the *Estado Novo*, Lusotropicalism was appropriated in the 1950s as a counter-argument to

international pressures on Portugal to decolonize its African territories.[33] To show that

Portuguese colonialism was not economically exploitative, but rather a fraternal relation to

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[32] The English translation, entitled *The Masters and the Slaves*, was published in 1946.

[33] The *Estado Novo* (1933-1974) evolved from the Ditadura Nacional, instated after the coup d'état of 28 May, 1926 against the democratic First Republic. The *Estado Novo* was a conservative dictatorship led by António de Oliveira Salazar. After falling ill in 1968, he was replaced by Marcelo Caetano.

spread Portuguese culture and civilization in the colonies, the trope of cultural miscegenation was invoked to construct the notion of a multinational and pluricontinental Portuguese nation (Castelo 66). Therefore, enemies were defined as those who threatened the integrity of the diverse and extensive Portuguese nation.

Categories of amity and enmity would become even more salient after Mozambique achieved independence in 1975. For example, Malangatana, once considered an ally of the anti-colonial movement, saw his role within the FRELIMO increasingly marginalized. Along with national poet José Craveirinha and liberation fighter Matias Mboa, he was subjected to a process of reeducation for opposing the hegemonization of party ideologies and "a visão monopolizadora da Frelimo sobre o sentido nacionalista" (Meneses, "Uma perspectiva cosmopolita" 96). Accusations against Mboa were the most severe. He joined the anti-colonial cause in 1964 to fight alongside Mozambican founding father Samora Machel against Portugal; yet shortly after independence Machel accused him of being a capitalist and an accomplice to South African forces attempting to destabilize FRELIMO. He served a five-year prison sentence at the Machava Prison Camp, the same facility where he served during the colonial period. From these anecdotes stem fundamental questions about how to understand decolonization, given that the anti-colonial movement that once opposed the Salazar regime revived colonial era institutions to punish dissent against the Revolution. These examples serve to demonstrate continuities in notions of amity and enmity around the moment of decolonization in Mozambique. I will demonstrate that the binary of friends and enemies was a malleable category deployed as a tool for political and social control during late Portuguese colonialism (1950-1975) and the post-independence FRELIMO Revolution (1975-1986).

Malangatana's "A cela" is a vignette that provokes a discussion of the historical moment of decolonization beyond the supposition of "a series of dyadic encounters between imperial states and colonized peoples: the former are figured as powerful nations possessing colonial territories, and the latter as not yet independent nations ruled by foreign colonizers" (Wilder 4). Inspired by Malangatana's "A cela", I will reread cultural productions (photographs, periodicals, political speeches, and films) of and about the moment of decolonization to demonstrate that the categories of amity and enmity, coupled with the disciplinary and penal regimes of carceral institutions, suggest continuities of colonial modes of violence that extend into the post-colonial period. I wish to explore how these works offer an analysis of colonialism and its aftermath beyond a dichotomous confrontation, suggesting instead, a contentious and often contradictory negotiation of the past in the present.

In 1975, with the end of colonialism and the onset of independence in Mozambique, the transition presupposed a rupture with the past. The provocative article "Independência sem Descolonização: A Transferência do Poder em Moçambique, 1974-1975" by Aquino de Bragança reconsidered the historical process of Mozambican independence by questioning the notion of decolonization as marking the end of colonialism in Mozambique. He saw it rather as a moment of contention and negotiation of colonial power.[34] Instead of a decisive rupture with the colonial past, the Carnation Revolution of April, 1974 was a moment of crisis, as Bragança argues, whereby compromises and divergences on issues around colonialism, neo-colonialism

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[34] Specifically, Bragança dispels the idea that the Carnation Revolution of April 25, 1974 served as the catalyst for decolonization. Rather it was a contentious moment, in so far as the Spínola government resisted recognizing and conceding self-determination to the former colonies.

and decolonization were debated.[35] Nonetheless, June 25, 1975 marked the official independence

for the Mozambican nation. However, as Bragança advises, independence does not necessarily

imply a simultaneous decolonization. Therefore, I wish to question this assumption by examining

cultural productions that nuance and cast doubt on decolonization and post-colonialism as an end

of colonialism. Rather, through the lens of the prison or work camp, these works analyze

historical continuities between two specific problem-spaces: the late colonial period in

Mozambique (1950-1974) and the early FRELIMO state (1975-1986).[36] While these two

historical moments tend to be represented as disparate and divergent, they are fundamentally

convergent in that they represent apices of a colonial and post-colonial crisis of national unity

and state legitimacy. The prison, or for that matter, any carceral institution played a central role

in the (re)creation and the negotiation of state authority, national unity, and official history. The

Salazar regime and the FRELIMO State employed the discursive tools of politics of friendship

and enmity and the idea of redemption through labor, whereby individuals were to become

constitutive elements of the body politic and its messianic project to redeem the nation. I argue

that carceral institutions reveal a failed decolonization; for colonial era infrastructure of

punishment and the notion of labor as a moral and not a material entity were ideas perpetuated

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[35] The Revolution of April 25, 1974 was a significant moment in Portuguese and African history. After many years of war in the colonies, costing many lives and national resources, the Portuguese Armed Forces were depleted. Growing increasingly dissatisfied with the government's insistence on waging war in the colonies, the military marched into the streets of Lisbon and peacefully overthrew the government.

[36] David Scott explains that the notion of problem-spaces is a "more fruitful approach to the historical appreciation of prior understandings of the relation between pasts, presents, and futures to think of different historical conjunctures as constituting different conceptual-ideological problem-spaces, and to think of these problem-spaces less as generators of new propositions than as generators of new questions and new demands" (Scott 7). In this case, considering the late colonial period (1974-1950) and the post-colonial FRELIMO Revolution (1975-1986) as problem-spaces allows us to redraw the relationship between these two periods as being composed of tensions, agonisms, and continuities.

beyond the official end of Portuguese rule. Specifically, the New Man and New Woman—redefined by the FRELIMO State in opposition to the Salazarist New Man—established a coercive and disciplinary regime whereby the State subjected individuals to its hegemony.

By focusing on literary and cultural productions emanating from carceral institutions, my objective is to demonstrate how the language of discipline and redemption reveals decolonization in Mozambique as a process wrought with contradictions, continuities and compromises. For this reason, I wish to return to Malangatana's eye in his sketch of the prisoner, for it symbolizes the task of rereading decolonization beyond a dyadic confrontation. By interpellating the viewer into both suffering and violence, the spectator is placed in the role of victim and the perpetrator of colonial violence. Malangatana's grammar, in turn, allows for a non-dichotomous reading of decolonization beyond a confrontation.

II.   Amity and Enmity: Rehabilitating "Terrorists" in Late Colonial Mozambique (1950-1974)

The War of Liberation led by anti-colonial intellectuals from 1961 to 1975 sought to end the colonial occupation of Mozambique; however, for Portuguese officials who claimed that Mozambique was an overseas province, the war signified a direct threat to national unity. In *The Concept of the Political* (1927) political theorist Carl Schmitt asserts that "political thought and political instinct prove themselves theoretically and practically in the ability to distinguish friend and enemy" (67). The recognition of the enemy is fundamental to the construction of national unity because the nation can be unified in opposition to those elements that threaten, challenge and create dissent. In *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983), Benedict Anderson identified limits as a fundamental component of nationalism, given its imperative to draw a boundary "beyond which lie other nations" (7).

During the War of Liberation, with Mozambicans waging guerrilla style warfare against Portuguese troops, the boundary of the nation was defined and revealed to be illegible, porous and vulnerable. In order to uphold the idea of a unified, seamless community, the nation was mobilized to identify and eliminate the enemy. The colonial government produced propaganda materials—namely photographs, newspaper articles, and magazines—to define political dissent in terms of "terrorism" and to disseminate success stories of the rehabilitation of former political "degenerates."

In 1973, officials from the propaganda branch of the Portuguese Secret Police, accompanied by foreign journalists, visited the Secção Prisional da Machava (the Prison Camp of Machava) in Lourenço Marques and produced a series of photographs meant to document the leisure and educational activities of inmates. The visit orchestrated a public image of benevolence and humanitarianism in order to counter the International Red Cross findings of severe mistreatment and torture of prisoners.[37] In fact, the visit coincided with the commemoration of the "Revolução Nacional" of May 28, 1926, the coup d'état that ended the Portuguese First Republic and instated the Salazarist government. The prison served as a locus where Portuguese officials (re)negotiated historical discourses, national identity and disciplinary regimes. Through performative celebrations of imperialism in Mozambique, they inscribed a sense of the political legitimacy of the regime, with the Machava Prison Camp as the stage. The celebrations and the staged photographs function as discursive spaces, whereby the late colonial Salazar regime

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[37] Among the foreign press were Aida Leslie Frederika Parker from South Africa and Andrew Jaffe of Newsweek from the United States.

(re)conceptualized the historical legitimacy of Portuguese imperialism through the space of the prison.[38]

Since 1935, when the Salazar regime imposed the *Nova Ordem* in Portugal, the State held itself responsible for rescuing the souls of the Portuguese people by elevating the nation on a spiritual path to historical redemption (Rosas 1032). To this end, Salazarism invoked the figure of the "new man" who embodied the image of a "chefe de família camponês, probo, devoto e ordeiro" (Rosas 1053). The "Plano de Recuperação de Presos," implemented at the Machava Prison Camp, claimed that the rehabilitation and discipline exerted on the Mozambican inmates would elevate them to the same spiritual and providential historical destiny as the Portuguese new man.[39] Despite the humanitarian discourses of Salazarism, the rehabilitation exerted a physical, psychological, and symbolic violence of discipline over the inmates. These discourses reverberated beyond the prison to society at large as a symbolic discipline. The focus on the individual, the new man, symbolizing the soul of the nation, legitimated the surveillance of private life by the State and the Church (Rosas 1054). The enforcement and punishment of these policies within the prison effectively allowed for a carceral coercion and discipline to emanate into society, thus sanctioning the authorities to identify any dissent or non-compliance with the ideals of the new man.

The photographs taken at the Machava Prison Camp chronicled the daily activities of inmates as they learned carpentry trade, reading, and writing in Portuguese, and engaged in

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[38] Even though, in 1968 Marcello Caetano replaced Salazar as the Prime Minister, I will use the term "Salazarism" or "Salazar regime" to describe the political continuity of Salazar's Estado Novo that Caetano preserved until 1974.

[39] Official documents refer to the prison as Secção Prisional de Machava, but popularly it was also known as Kadjamanguana, Campo de Trabalho de Machava, and even Campo de Concentração de Machava. For ease and clarity, I will refer to the Machava Prison Camp from here on.

leisure activities. These photographs were meant not only as evidence of the rehabilitation of those the regime deemed "degenerates," but also as celebrations of the widespread success of Portuguese imperialism in Africa. The first image captured the backs of inmates looking toward a blackboard in the foreground (Figure 3.2). Above the blackboard, symbols of the ideological pillars of Salazarism, "Deus, Pátria, Família" hanging on the wall. The vertical composition of the background imposes a symbolic hierarchy over the inmates. Visually, they appear as subservient to the Portuguese fatherland as they stand below the map of continental Portuguese. Above the map, hangs a cross, symbolizing the reign of the Catholic Church and its teachings over the men. The image represents a composition of colonial hierarchy, positing the incarcerated men as an inferior, homogenous mass. The men, dressed uniformly in white, are reduced to an indistinguishable mass of inmates without distinctive features, faces, or identities. They are not afforded personhood. While officials wished to showcase the humanitarian rehabilitation of the prisoners, the photograph reveals the contradictions between the discourses and the practices of the Lusotropicalist project.

In another photograph, a white Portuguese teacher gives a lesson in Portuguese based on a text that reads "A família é constituída de pai, mãe e filhos. Desde os tempos mais remotos o homem sentiu a necessidade de viver no seio familiar" (Figure 3.3). Teaching inmates about Catholic and patriarchal family structures was purportedly to rehabilitate the "degenerates" so that they might return to society. According to the press release published alongside the photographs, prisoner rehabilitation signified not only "uma arrancada […] dos seus destinos individuais" but also a collective national salvation, or "seus compatriotas portugueses" (9). The emphasis on the family unit allowed for the State and Church intervention in the private and domestic spheres in the name of the nation. The discourses represented a discipline that

reverberated beyond the prison populations, infiltrating the intimate and communal spaces of Mozambicans with the aim of disrupting community structures that strayed from State sanctioned models. In turn, these discourses justified the targeting of polygamous families and community structures aiming to undermine and eradicate non-heteronormative modes of community structures. Even though prison officials claimed rehabilitation would eradicate subversion, the threat of subversion was a political tool to incite fear, repression and punishment in the name of national unity.

The figure of the subversive political enemy legitimated the State insofar as it created a sense of crisis and a need for its coercive policies to quell dissent. In other words, ethical new man and the enemy are interconnected elements for State politics. For State propaganda, the "terrorist" was a ruthlessly violent and elusive figure threatening the integrity of the Portuguese nation. The newspaper *O Primeiro de Janeiro* reported the murder of a local leader in the Zambeze province who was ambushed and killed by group of "terrorists." When the body was found, "verificou-se que a vítima, para testemunhar a sua fidelidade ao Governo português, se envolvera, antes de morrer, na Bandeira Portuguesa" (n.p.). The vivid imagery in the article demonstrates that the power of the figure of the terrorist lies not simply in inflicting fear and violence on civilians, but also in his ability to threaten the integrity of nation. For this reason, the terrorist was necessarily an elusive yet omnipresent figure. The threat of the terrorist consisted in his capacity to lurk, being simultaneously present and absent. The duplicitous nature of the figure of the terrorist allotted the punishment and discipline of dissent a wide reach, pervasive and all-encompassing. The Machava Prison Camp housed politically subversive inmates who forcibly underwent rehabilitation for presenting a socio-political threat to the nation.

One such inmate, Elias Raimundo Ouana, was forced to publicly repent and repudiate his

political involvement with FRELIMO by publishing editorials in the monthly prison magazine,

Ressurgimento. In 1972, he published an article entitled "O Terror sistemático e a mentira," in

which Ouana described FRELIMO as the Mozambican people's greatest enemy. [40] "A Frelimo é

uma das aquelas seitas que se contenta em ver lares destruídos, noivas por casar, crianças sem

pais, enfim é uma miscelânea de influências comunistas, com a finalidade de levar o povo

Moçambicano à miséria!" (12). Ouana, in accordance with Salazarist ideologies, defined

terrorism as a threat to private and public life. In other words, threatening the integrity of the

family posed a danger to the nation. To prove himself rehabilitated, Ouana was coerced into

rejecting FRELIMO ideologies and reaffirmed his allegiance to the Portuguese nation.

The purpose of the monthly publication was to show the successful rehabilitation of a

"terrorista recuperado" or a "terrorista arrependido," according to journalist Albino Magaia, who

served in the prison. Yet as he claims, nobody within the prison walls read the publication;

rather, it was an act of performativity for the outside world. Moreover, for inmates the

repudiations constituted a form of psychological torture and discipline through public

humiliation (Cabrita Mateus 46). Manuel dos Santos Matsinhe, another political prisoner,

repudiated his anti-colonial activities, describing the benevolent nature of Portuguese colonial

prisons:

> [A]lém fronteiras o crime de traição é punido com a morte. Aqui não. Aqui, o
>
> generoso coração português mesmo aos que se deixaram seduzir por miragens e

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[40] The inmates wrote monthly fictional short stories, often featuring interviews with prisoners
about life in the prisons. Occasionally, the newspaper would feature current events from
Mozambique and other Portuguese colonies, all in the name of renouncing FRELIMO and other
anti-colonial movements and at once, upholding the Portuguese nation.

seguindo-as se desviaram do caminho da honra, não permite que a vida, que

pertence a Deus, termine tão infamemente. [...] assim poderemos emendar os

erros cometidos a consagrar à Pátria o que resta da nossa existência, arrependidos

de contra ela termos atentado e certos que tal delírio jamais se repetirá. (8)

Matsinhe's allegiance to the Portuguese cause reveals the act of repudiation as a complex

performative mimicry of colonial discourses. The oscillating and ambiguous position of the

traitor or terrorist, as simultaneously the political "other" while internal to the nation, at once

legible and illegible, "arguably attract[s] a particular aversion because they are not a distant

'other' but the enemy within" (Thiranagama and Kelly 2). Ouana's political subversion, which

landed him in prison, was threatening yet necessary for the creation of national unity. His act of

repudiation was mimetic insofar as it publically upholds colonial ideologies; yet Ouana's ability

to modify his stance and assume a colonial discourse reveals the colonial discourse as inauthentic

and reproducible. Ouana exposed the Salazarist discourse to be a "split between its appearance as

original and authoritative and its articulation as repetition and difference" (Bhabha 107). For this

reason, the conflict produced by this display of difference, according to Homi Bhabha,

demonstrates colonialism to be a regime not of antagonism but "agonism." The late colonial

regime perpetuated itself as an agonistic regime that implied a conflictual relationship but only

insofar as it was composed of these conflicting parts. In other words, for national unity "those

who seek to undo it, and so make it not to be," despite posing a threat, were also necessary to

perpetuate the need for unification (Schmitt 68). Shakira Thiranagama and Tobias Kelly go as far

as to argue that "treason is at the heart of the process by which modern states are made […]

Accusations of treason have […] historically played a central role in the attempt to maintain

social and political authority" (3). Treasonous elements of society occupy the role of the "other" or outsider, while also residing at the heart of the process of becoming for the nation.

Yet, the rhetoric of a unified multi-racial nation spread across different continents was destabilized and challenged when the anti-colonial movement questioned Portuguese imperial legitimacy in Africa. For Lusotropicalist ideology the notion of otherness played contradictory roles. On the one hand, otherness, in terms of race and culture, was ostensibly celebrated to present a harmonious coexistence of the Mozambican and Portuguese cultures as diverse and miscegenetic nation. At the same time, ideological and political alterity from Portuguese hegemony was heavily repressed and regarded as terrorism against the State. Otherness, in a sense, was fundamental to Portuguese national self-conception as a multi-rational nation; however, ideological otherness threatened the national unity of the amalgamated nation. The "terrorist" was an amorphous figure who embodied the contradiction of being simultaneously internal to the nation and its "other," both in terms of race and ideology.

The confluence of racial and ideological alterity became explicit by late colonialism. All Black Africans were suspected of harboring politically subversive potential. "Aos olhos da PIDE," as Luís Bernando Honwana explained, "todos os moçambicanos eram potenciais 'terroristas'" (Vieira 9). Positing the realm of the political as a confrontation between amity and enmity imposed a strict dichotomy whose boundaries were constantly threatened by illegibility and indiscernibility. In order to eradicate a potential threat, the regime set out to "conquistá-los e comprometê-los activamente na defesa da ordem colonial," which meant a widespread and arbitrary campaign to identify, imprison, and discipline all those Mozambicans who harbored the potential for treason and subversion (Borges Coelho 179).

The fear and eradication of subversion in the name of national unity did not end with the liberation of Mozambique from colonialism. On September 20, 1974 only a few months after the Carnation Revolution of April 25, FRELIMO led by President Samora Machel, the Governo de Transição de Moçambique took over. Thus began the decolonization, which Machel defined as the process of "desmantelar o sistema politico, administrativo, cultural, financeiro, económico, educacional, jurídico e outros que como parte integrante do Estado colonial se destinavam exclusivamente a impor às massas a dominação estrangeira e a vontade dos exploradores" (23). For Machel, the Revolution signified a processual dismantling of colonial structures in order to replace them with nationalized and egalitarian systems. However, the process of institutionalization and hegemonization of the liberation movement into the State was wrought with tensions, oppositions, and dissent. In the face of hostility, FRELIMO relied on politics of amity and enmity to create a unified national identity and solidify state power.

III. Prostitutes and Xiconhocas: The Reeducation of the New Man and New Woman during the FRELIMO Revolution (1975-1986)

With Bhabha's notion of agonism in mind, I wish to reread the moment of decolonization in Mozambique—defined as a rupture with or an undoing of colonialist modes of exploitation—but which in reality perpetuated colonial modes of violence and discipline beyond the official political end of colonialism. As was the case under Salazarism, unifying the nation and eradicating threats against its integrity was at the heart of the FRELIMO Revolution. To this end, government discourses and publications perpetuated a politics of amity and enmity by targeting prostitutes who embodied colonial vestiges of exploitation and by invoking the figure of Xiconhoca, a caricature personifying the evils of colonialism and capitalism.

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Virgin Margarida (2012) is a feature length film by Brazilian-born Mozambican director

Licínio Azevedo, which questions the inherent contradictions within revolutions. The film opens

up a discursive space to revive the taboo history of repression and violence against female sex

workers, and in light of this history allows us to reflect upon the conceptualization of

decolonization characterized by violence, repression, and punishment. [41]

In the middle of the night, suspected prostitutes were rounded up in the streets of

Maputo.[42] Among the group of delinquents, euphemistically called "mulheres de má vida," were

prostitutes, cabaret dancers, and an adolescent named Margarida, a peasant girl who traveled to

the city to buy a wedding dress. Being in the wrong place at the wrong time, she was rounded up

and taken to the Northern provinces.[43] The women were condemned to a process of reeducation,

despite not receiving a trial. As part of their reeducation, they engaged in forced labor, including

the clearing of the land and the construction of the camp barracks that would ultimately confine

them. At the camp, they would be transformed into ethical "new women" by unlearning their

colonial mentality through hard labor, thus becoming productive members and workers of

Mozambican society. The reeducation camps were part of a comprehensive decolonization

project, whereby FRELIMO's revolutionary government aimed at counteracting "the

degeneration of values, culture, and human ways of being under the Portuguese colonial regime"

(37). The embodiment of revolutionary values was the "new ethical person—*Homem Novo*"

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[41] Even though Azevedo was trained at the Instituto de Cinema de Moçambique, created by the FRELIMO government in 1975 to fund and disseminate educational and propaganda films (Arenas 110), he takes a nuanced and rather critical view of the corruption and contradictions plaguing the decolonization process.

[42] The film is a fictionalized account based on true events, inspired by the photograph "O último pão?" by photojournalist Ricardo Rangel, in which a prostitute is detained by two soldiers just months after Mozambique declared its independence.

[43] The reeducation camps were mainly located in the northernmost provinces of Niassa and Cabo Delgado, near the borders with Malawi and Tanzania, respectively.

(Buur 37). Even though the film focuses exclusively on women, detentions and forced relocations to reeducation camps of men and women deemed delinquent was an important component of the "Operação Produção" program, a policy officially adopted in 1983 in order to boost the national economy.

Arriving at the camp, the women answer to Commander Maria João, a strict yet sincere believer in the principles of the Revolution. She is responsible for reeducating the women through manual labor, discipline, and punishment in order to "cleanse the colonized mind" and rid them of threats to the national unity: regionalism, obscurantism, and bourgeois activities. The women are forced to clear land in the forest, cook and clean, and construct huts. Maria João punishes dissent through severe techniques, such as submersion in barrels of water, staking to the ground under the hot sun, and exhausting military drills.

Margarida insists she had been taken mistakenly, claiming she had never been with a man. The women plea with Commander Maria João, who in turn persuades her superiors to allow Margarida to return home. In the case of Mozambique, the illusion of a utopian renaissance is personified by the Virgin Margarida, whose innocence represents the promise of the liberation struggle and the creation of New Men and New Women free from the contamination of colonialism and capitalism. Yet the final disillusionment arrives when Margarida, presented with the opportunity of leaving the camp, is raped by military generals. Violated and ashamed, she insinuates ending her life by picking a poisonous fruit instead of returning home to her family. Her suicide serves as a premonition of the imminent Civil War that will destroy and traumatize this new nation, perpetuating the violence from which the nation was born.

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Longshots of roads and paths are a notable feature of Azevedo's compositions (Figure 3.4). The linearity represents the revolutionary historical project, a teleological and progressive history: a utopian projection of how a society divided by colonialism into tribes, regions, and socioeconomic classes will one day form a single and united nation. However, the opening scene with a truck driving through the streets carrying supporters of the Revolution with flags proclaiming "A luta continua," reminds us that the Revolution rose out of conflict—the devastating War of Liberation (Figure 3.5). Rather than a total rupture with the past, the Revolution perpetuated the symbolic and disciplinary violence of the past into the future. David Scott argues that anti-colonialist historical narratives create a reference, albeit a negative one, of the colonial past. The anti-colonial narrative posits "the relation between past and the hoped-for future (one emplotted as a narrative of revolutionary overcoming)" (210). In the attempts at overcoming the colonial past, FRELIMO created the "new man" as a counter image to colonial values, but enforced its new policies through punitive and disciplinary measures reminiscent of colonialism.

In 1978, FRELIMO official and former Minister of Security, Sérgio Vieira, declared "Não sabemos dizer o que é Homem Novo. Sabemos aquilo que ele não será" (30). His speech "O homem novo é um processo," delivered at the 2.ª Conferência do Ministério da Educação e Cultura on the revolutionary process, posited the creation of the new man in terms of negation. The new man and new woman would be achieved through a suppression of the colonial past. In fact, the new man would embody the process toward a definitive rupture with a colonial past and "a negação do fenómeno que devemos fazer para caminhar para um fenómeno mais avançado, compreendermos qual deve ser a antítese, a negação desta situação" (Vieira 30). As a consequence of defining the revolution against the past, which it sought to overcome, it

implemented repressive and punitive measures to eradicate the bourgeois, capitalist and imperialist ideologies of the past. Despite establishing a negative association with the past, the Revolutionary new man and new woman were created with reference to the colonial past.

In the newspaper *Notícias*, journalist Fernando Lima published an article on confronting prostitution. Lima defined prostitution as a system of inequality inherited from colonialism and capitalism (4). Yet for Lima the eradication of prostitution entailed a radical transformation in the notions of justice. Efforts at eliminating the old, the bad, and replacing it with the new implied, for Lima, a permanent contradiction. He asserted his opposition to the reeducation camps by claiming that "[o]nde existe o novo, existe o velho" (4). Similarly, *Virgem Margarida* provides a nuanced critique of the Revolution by taking issue with the notion of eradicating the past. The corruption within the leadership of FRELIMO, represented by the officials who violate Margarida, shows that punitive measures reinforce and perpetuate that which they claim to eradicate. Azevedo focuses on the narrative structures of the revolutionary project to show that all utopian ideologies have at their base a historical structure projected in terms of a progressive, teleological narrative. By wishing to overcome the old, the revolution constructs a linear utopian narrative, which at its core holds the old as the basis of the new. As a result, the revolution perpetuates historical narratives of the past and enforces its ideology through colonial modes of violence. In this manner, the film reveals how the anti-colonial struggles, in the process of their hegemonization and institutionalization, end up rewriting historical narratives by opposing yet reproducing historical narratives and colonial structures of discipline and coercive violence.

The reformation of the prostitutes was only one covert operation belonging to a widespread movement to identify and eliminate opposition to the Revolution. In 1976, the figure of "Xiconhoca", a cartoon representation of the internal enemy began to circulate in the

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magazine *Tempo*, as well as in posters, schoolbooks, and newspapers (Isaacman and Isaacman

133). Xiconhoca is a combination of Xico, after the infamous agent of the Portuguese Secret

Police, Francisco Langa (nicknamed Chico-Feio), and *nhoca* the word for serpent in several

Mozambican languages. Xiconhoca represented a lurking danger, a duplicity of the vestiges of

imperialism threatening the FRELIMO revolutionary government. In a propaganda publication

disseminated by Frelimo entitled *Xiconhoca: O Inimigo* (1979), Xiconhoca is seen announcing

support for Frelimo, waving the Mozambican national flag (Figure 3.6). However, his raggedy

clothes are adorned with the acronyms PIDE and GE, references to the secret police during

Portuguese colonialism and the Special Groups of the Portuguese Armed Forces that carried out

airborne strikes in Mozambique from 1966 to 1974. The Xiconhoca represented the duplicitous

danger of an enemy hiding in plain sight, showing support for the revolutionary government,

while at heart harboring support for the colonial cause. Alcoholism, vagrancy and idleness

characterize the other representations of Xiconhoca, depicting him as a burden to the economy

and national development. Another propagandistic cartoon shows Xiconhoca sleeping on the job

at the factory, beside him a bottle of beer with a three-leafed flower, representing cannabis

(*suruma*), which was said to render "the rural population docile and unproductive" (Buur 359).

The image identifies Xiconhoca as a deadweight for the national economy (Figure 3.7): "É um

sabotador da economia nacional, não tem consciência de classe, é um peso morto na oficina, em

resumo, é um Xiconhoca." FRELIMO defined Xiconhoca as an ideological enemy responsible

for so-called economic and political crimes against the State.

Part of the propaganda campaign served to identify and eradicate the enemy, yet even

more important was the performative act of accusations. The denouncement of the "other" as an

internal enemy, according to Maria Paula Meneses, was a tool for FRELIMO to exercise and

maintain a "lógica binária de construção de unidade: ao grupo dos revolucionários […]

opunham-se os reacionários" (Meneses 29). By invoking the symbol of the Xiconhoca, the State

created subjects (in an Althusserian sense) whereby individuals were interpellated into State

ideology as an "always-already subjects" perceived as harboring treasonous potential (Althusser

164). By fomenting the propaganda campaign, FRELIMO justified the reintroduction of severe

punitive measures, namely corporal and capital punishment, imprisonment, and public execution

by firing squad (Macamo 7 and Machava 595). As a direct consequence, Interior Minister

Armando Guebuza (who would go on to serve as President of Mozambique from 2004 to 2014)

was put in charge of Operação Produção which historians estimate incarcerated 30,000 to 50,000

men and women in reeducation camps in remote parts of the country (Buur 25).

As Carl Schmitt reminds us, "all political concepts […] are focused on a specific conflict

and are bound to a concrete situation: the result (which manifests itself in war or revolution) is a

friend-enemy grouping, and they turn into empty and ghostlike abstractions when this situation

disappears" (30). Like the Salazar regime, which had preceded it, the FRELIMO Revolution

relied on the friend-enemy conflict for its own legitimation and solidification. The new man and

new woman were the embodiments of revolutionary values, and just as it had been under

Salazarism, work was a critical component in the process of creation of the ethical new man and

new woman.

IV.   Redemptive Labor: Work and Freedom in Colonial and Post-Colonial Machava Prison Camp

As the steel gates of concentration camps bore the sign of the Nazi slogan, *Arbeit Macht*

Frei or *Kraft Durch Frei,* there has been an inextricable relationship between notions of work

and freedom, precisely freedom or redemption through work in Fascist regimes. In 1935, at the onset of Salazarist fascism, the New State created the Fundação Nacional para a Alegria no Trabalho (FNAT), which celebrated joy and fulfillment in work. "[W]ork as a liberating experience" according to Mark Neocleous was fundamental to the notion that work "could unite the nation" (50).[44] These organizations represented a significant shift away from labor within the material realm by raising (or elevating) work to a higher moral order, through the rhetoric of beauty and joy (59). With the emphasis on work, as Fernando Rosas argues, the State became responsible for surveilling and accompanying the new man in attaining historical redemption (1043). Yet the notion of redemption through transformative labor was not exclusive to fascist or right-wing authoritarian regimes. The Cuban revolution emphasized volunteer labor and relied on labor camps, known as *Unidades Militares de Ayuda a la Producción (UMAP)*, to enforce the creation of the new man. The Chinese Cultural Revolution under Mao and the Soviet Union under Stalin sent political dissidents and criminals to remote labor camps. Such was the case in the Marxist-Leninist Revolution of FRELIMO**.** Production was central to the fulfillment of revolutionary ideals; additionally, labor was also employed as a powerful tool of social control exerted over the individual body. Work as a way to achieve redemption was at the heart of both Salazarist and FRELIMO ideology. Furthermore, work was a way to punish and exert discipline over the body constructed through the grammar of hyper-masculinity and a notion of a hygienic revolutionary race.

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[44] The organization served similar purposes as the *Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro* and *Kraft durch Freude* and offered cultural and leisure activities to workers. However, Fernando Rosas and Luís Reis Torgal argued that FNAT was a reproduction of national ideologies and represented a totalizing experience of living under the Salazarist dictatorship.

In the photographs based on the official visit at the Machava Prison Camp in 1973, there is an emphasis on work not as punishment but rather as a crucial activity of inmate education. In the attempts to convey a benevolent image, labor was reframed as part of the educational and rehabilitative efforts of prison life, which were constitutive elements of the Portuguese civilizing mission.[45] Inmates were photographed displaying their handicrafts as evidence of professional competencies and technical training (Figure 3.8). While education in prisons is widely considered an emancipatory and progressive activity, in the Mozambican case, education and culture were "employed to hide the imposition of repression and human suffering in prisons behind pretensions of humanistic care" (Cheliotis 2).[46] In *Ressurgimento*, the monthly prison magazine, officials emphasized the sense of joy and fulfillment that work brought to the inmates. As the article claimed, the visitors left with a sense of satisfaction "por ver os que nele vivem em constantes divertimentos: […] serrarem ou plainarem alegremente na Carpintaria; forjarem ferro na Serralharia; assentarem blocos de cimento alevantando pavilhões, oficinas e diversas obras" (9). Beyond a public relations propaganda campaign, these discourses were representative of a comprehensive ideology that reverberated beyond the prison wall into society, promoting an idea of "healthy" attitudes toward work (Eley 113). Enjoyment through work constituted a work "hygiene" which had reverberations beyond the ideological apparatus of the prison by infiltrating

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[45] The training received by the prisoners at the Machava Prison Camp was part of a larger mechanism of discipline, found in official work camps in the countryside (like the infamous work camp in Mabalane) and forced labor of cotton cultivators for very little compensation (Cabrita Mateus, *Memórias do Colonialismo e da Guerra* 53).

[46] For example, Cheliotis elaborates that arts in the Nazi concentration camp of Theresienstadt was a propaganda tool to give the impression of a "benign place" (2). Prisoners were to be reeducated, through discipline exercised over the body in order to align with the norm. As Salazar proclaimed: "[E]m todas prisões portuguesas o fim que se procura é o mesmo: trazer os homens para a vida honesta, sem os amesquinhar, criando-lhes pelo contrário uma existência relativamente agradável" (Garnier 118).

family life with a sense of "self-responsibility" (Eley 113). In fact, Albino Magaia, a journalist

and former political prisoner at Machava, remarked that *Ressurgimento* "tinha sempre uma

página de humor, antecedida por duas páginas sobre questões de higiene e saúde" (Cabrita

Mateus 47). The focus on hygiene and work ethic was a disciplinary measure that reflected a

purging and cleansing of undesirable elements threatening the cohesion and homogeneity of the

body politic. For Salazarism, the prison was a central institution of a comprehensive Ideological

State Apparatus that purported to liberate through incarceration. As Víctor Barros claims, the

prison served to rehabilitate and symbolically cleanse the inmate and "saneamento do ambiente

político," at large (Barros 57).

During the same visit, the official photographer captured an exhibition of athleticism and

fitness in the prison patio (Figure 3.9). The inmates are standing in military formation, wearing

only white shorts displaying their athletic bodies to the visitors. The image represents the

inmates as uniform and homogenous. The hyper-masculine bodies on display showcase the

discipline exerted upon the black body achieved through training and work.[47] According to Klaus

Theweleit, the allure of marching and parades under fascism is that it represents a symbolic

"dawn of freedom" whereby the individual is empowered by his participation in the spectacle,

yet adheres to the principle that suppressed his individuality upon joining the mass party (430).

The inmates stripped of their individuality, personhood, and autonomy become "monuments" of

the Salazar regime, whereby they form a spectacle of self-expression that furthers the Salazarist

ideology. The disciplined mass spectacle was not a healing mechanism of the Salazarist colonial

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[47] Klaus Theweleit explains that the marches represent an antagonism between feminine
elements of society which masculinity aims to overcome. The military formations and parades
"represent the taming of the fluid," where fluid is synonymous with the feminine, organizing
individuals "into rigid masculine columns" (Theweleit 429).

state. It was implemented as a tool for the creation of a new society, to further the creation of the new man. The composition of this image evokes notions of order, discipline, militarization, and masculinity:

> Fascism, therefore, marked the apex of the stereotype of masculinity, virility, courage and aggressiveness. Physical fitness was considered so important that anyone who was "different" was to be held in contempt. Meanwhile the conflict between type and countertype, between male and anti-male, reached such exasperated levels that it opened the door to racism. (Benadusi 30)

Lorenzo Benadusi's extensive study on homosexuality in fascist Italy, *The Enemy of the New Man* (2012) argues that social discipline was in large part exercised through the regulation and regimentation of gender norms by privileging hyper-masculinity against the undesirable traits of femininity and childhood. Within the colonial territories, femininity and childhood was also constitutive of primitivism. Especially within the colonial context, hyper-masculinity (unlike primitivism) became linked to achievement and productivity (Nandy 37). The body was the site of gendered discipline that coerced men and women into becoming productive members of Salazarist society. The prison, as we can see in the photograph, was the epicenter of the State Apparatus. Yet the gendered discipline had far-reaching reverberations in society at large through the grammar of the work ethic and productivity, which claimed that discipline could raise and liberate the individual by absorbing him into a spiritual nation.

Similarly, redemption through labor is central to the revolutionary process of FRELIMO. For the *New Man* and the *New Woman*, labor and production were at the heart of the process of becoming. As Vieira insists, "trabalho não é punição [...] O trabalho cria e liberta o Homem" (38). Samora Machel elaborated the relationship between work and liberation in a series of

speeches and pamphlets after FRELIMO assumed power and began constructing its project of a

transitional government appointed on September 20, 1974. Samora Machel declared, in a

brochure published on October 18, 1974, "Ninguém lutou por uma região, por uma raça, por uma

tribo, por uma religião. Lutamos e continuaremos a lutar todos pela mesma nação, pelo ideal

único da libertação da nossa terra e do nosso Povo" (7). For Machel, production and national

liberation are inextricable. In a political pamphlet published by FRELIMO, Machel declared

"produzir é aprender. Aprender para produzir e lutar melhor" (1). Work constituted an essential

component of the revolution in its fight to boost the economy by developing agriculture and

industry. Instead of cultural or ethnic divides, Machel sought to unite the nation through an

identity of a shared work ethic. He represented work as an act of national solidarity, elaborating

that "[q]uando eu nianja estou a cultivar lado a lado com o ngoni, estou a suar com ele, como ele

a arrancar vida à terra, eu estou a aprender com eles, estou a apreciar o seu suor, estou-me a

sentir unido a ele" (4). Work was a path to development and equality.

For Machel, women's liberation was also a fundamental question of the Revolution, for

true liberation could not exist without eliminating all vestiges of oppression and exploitation

(Machel "A libertação da mulher" 5). By eradicating the institution of prostitution, Machel

sought to free women from a relationship of exploitation. The new man and the new woman

were defined as a constitutive element and as an "agente transformador" of the revolution (Vieira

28). By defining the new man and new woman as an "agente que destrói a velha sociedade e

constrói a Nova Sociedade," the revolutionary discourse drew a relationship of equivalence

between man/woman and nation. Thus, the liberation of the nation depended on the liberation of

its constitutive parts, men and women (S. Vieira 28). *Virgem Margarida* demonstrates the

tension at the heart of revolutionary policies by claiming to liberate women from exploitative

relationships through repressive and punitive measures. The focus on the individual, transformed into collective agent of the nation, did little to dismantle the system of exploitation; rather, it elaborated vast structures of discipline and punishment, which perpetuated institutional coercion of the body.

In an effort to eradicate the bourgeoisie (of which prostitution was a symptom), the revolution elevated women's work to a moral and ethical category. However, work or "trabalho como valor, no sentido de criar qualquer coisa com a mão," was defined through the ideal of hyper-masculinity. In his speech Vieira called for pride in the image of calloused hands yet he claimed it would only be possible through a rejection of bourgeois ideology which placed value on "uma mão delicada, suave, sobretudo numa mulher ?!" (34). The rejection of bourgeois values therefore signified a rejection of soft, delicate femininity for the new man and new woman. Azevedo demonstrates the complex ways in which the emphasis on female liberation, as a central preoccupation of the Revolution, cemented gender exploitation within the leadership. In attempts to tackle prostitution, women were punished and held responsible for their own exploitation. The male officers wielded their power over the women, accepting sexual favors in exchange for the basic necessities lacking at the camp. The epitome of sexual violence occurs when Officer Felisberto rapes young Margarida and offers her to an accompanying officer. The corruption among the male officers of FRELIMO reflects the failure to conceptualize gender liberation inclusively, in terms of women and men. As Azevedo demonstrates, in the name of gendered liberation, the women at the camp are subjected to patriarchal violence and discipline, whereas hyper-masculinity was valued in women and men.

The "derrubamento do Homem Velho, da mentalidade […] burguesa e colonial" and society's liberation from the bourgeois and colonial past could be achieved through physical

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labor, physical and mental discipline (35). The transformation was defined in terms of destruction whereby the disciplined body of the new man and new woman were turned into the weapons of the revolution. In *Modernism and Totalitarianism: Rethinking the Intellectual Sources of Nazism and Stalinism, 1945 to the Present* (2012), Richard Shorten explores the ideological commonalities at the heart of disparate political movements. He argues that utopian thought, be it in the name fascism or communism, "pictures the New Man in harmony and concord with the 'perfected' community; scientism provides the knowledge that makes the New Man possible (and also clarifies exactly who he is); and revolutionary violence gives him final shape, enabling him to emerge reborn from struggle and conflict" (14). By positing the new man and the new woman as the transformative agent—or as Shorten calls them "the object of re-creation [of] the collective political subject"—their liberation and the creation of a new society is exercised through disciplinary violence and coercion (Shorten 120).

The 1973 commemoration of the Salazarist Revolution of May 28, 1926 at the Machava Prison Camp and the FRELIMO slogan of "A luta continua" demonstrate that revolutions are at their core palingenic, their *raison d'être* being the process of rebirth. The realization of the process of becoming for the new society is destruction, "totalitarian revolutionary violence entailed that the activity of conflict and upheaval would itself give man a new direction" (Shorten 103). Modern ideologies of revolution legitimize old notions of violence veiled in ideas of "anthropocentric doctrines of secular salvation, in the ideologies of progress, normality and hyper-masculinity, and in theories of cumulative growth of science and technology" (Nandy 10). For Ashis Nandy this constitutes colonizers and colonized as intimate enemies in a shared process of violence and destruction. Vieira echoes the sentiment by claiming that the new man

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will reach his full creation "[n]o momento em que ele morre," only then, "terminou o seu processo de ser Homem Novo" (Vieira 38).

V.   Conclusion

In January of 2016, Mozambican Ministry of Defense announced that it would review and register 170,000 young people for compulsory military service (SMO). This announcement came as the ruling party FRELIMO and the opposition RENAMO had engaged in sporadic clashes despite the ceasefire signed in October of 2014, two decades after the end of a brutal 16-year civil war devastated Mozambique. Even though Mozambique celebrated 40 years of Independence from Portugal in 2015, these recent clashes echo the conflicts from the decolonization era. Following independence, Mozambique fell into a brutal civil war (1977-1992), fought between FRELIMO and the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), backed by White Rhodesian officers, and later supported by the South African Apartheid regime. Peace accords were signed in 1992 after the brutal conflict had cost the lives of one million and displaced five million Mozambicans. Mozambique became a multi-party democracy, counting on the participation of RENAMO following its disarmament.

Even though RENAMO was financed by foreign powers, novelist Lina Magaia claims that the conflict was instigated by former officers of the Portuguese Secret Police (PIDE), and due to the devastating civilian death toll, the conflict should be categorized as a genocide, rather than a civil war. She emphasizes that the killings happened among Mozambicans, who after the conflict would have to find a way to coexist. Her suggestion is particularly powerful for stating that victims and aggressors have and will continue to share a common place in Mozambique.

The sense of disillusionment vis-a-vis the failed promise of the anti-colonial movements that characterized much of the Mozambican post-colonial period, serves as a point of departure for rereading the historical narratives produced from and about the period of decolonization. For David Scott, the mode of Tragedy allows to reframe the vantage point from which anti-colonial history is written. Tragedy gives a narrative structure to question "history as moving teleologically and transparently toward a determinate end, or as governed by a sovereign and omnisciently rational agent" (12). These considerations are fundamental to be able to represent historical time as the past interconnected with the present and allow us to consider historical discourse as simultaneously myth and reality.

In present-day Mozambique, instances of old tragedies are once again resurfacing as there are reportedly sporadic clashes and tensions between FRELIMO and RENAMO. In recent years, discoveries of natural gas reserves in Northern Mozambique attracted the attention of multinational companies seeking to profit from the extraction of natural resources. The influx of wealth has exacerbated tensions with RENAMO, which accuses FRELIMO of unequal distribution of riches. FRELIMO has become increasingly repressive in response to the threat of conflict. Despite the anticipated economic boom, Patrick Chabal argues that raw material extraction does not bring economic growth. In fact, interventions by multinational companies and international organizations have resulted in an increase in inequality and "a decline in the provision of social and human services" (127).

It is with this context in mind that I explore the ideological and discursive similarities of Salazarism and the FRELIMO revolution; not with the intention of conflating two disparate ideologies, but rather to demonstrate that anti-colonial movements constructed their own processes of national becoming in relationship to the colonial past. Paradoxically, by attempting

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to eradicate the past, the revolution petrified colonial modes of coercive violence and discipline, perpetuating past atrocities into the future. The notion of colonial continuities beyond the official end of colonialism opens the possibility of reexamining the ways in which colonial epistemologies live on into the post-colonial period. Such considerations might enable us to rethink decolonization not as a dyadic confrontation, but rather as Malangatana's interpellating eye that suggests a nuanced and disquieting space where victims and aggressors are malleable and unstable categories, invoked during political crises to solidify State power.

Conclusion

This dissertation is an initial step towards exploring the representations of prisons and carceral violence in Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, and Mozambique, at the time of decolonization and its aftermath in the post-colonial period. While imprisonment is a punishment based on confinement, I contend that the prison wall is a boundary with a double function. It is an exclusionary boundary that purportedly eliminates dangerous factions from society. But its modes of violence and punishment reverberate beyond in order to exert discipline over free society. Imprisonment has been a fluid and ubiquitous tool of social and economic control. Convictions for petty thefts, debt and social disturbances provided a steady and virtually free labor supply for public works projects and private companies.

Carcerality is inextricably linked to the "Scramble for Africa" at the turn of the twentieth century. Carcerality in the Iberian Atlantic imperial space-time emerged concurrently with active settlement and colonization of the African territories. The core objectives of colonization and carcerality are to fragment space and divide society in order to produce a docile and lucrative workforce. By criminalizing the population, carceral colonialism ensured its disciplinary violence inside and outside of the prison. Therefore, carceral violence cannot be seen as exceptional to the prison or the penitentiary, but rather it must be seen as part of a carceral regime reigning over society as a whole.

I employ case studies to focus on three (in)famous prisons that became emblematic of State violence in Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, and Mozambique. By historicizing each case,

my aim is to explore the prisons as a space of historical contention and make visible the myths and silent discourses in operation to produce ideologies and official histories surrounding these prisons. The concentration camp of Tarrafal in Cape Verde has become emblematic of the Salazar regime in the colonial era. I contend that the colonial violence produced by the fragmentation of space, people and histories obscures the interconnectedness of violence and trauma that inhabits the space of Tarrafal. The Salazar regime conceptualized its own disciplinary and punitive regime and exerted its violence over Portuguese dissidents and African liberation fighters and intellectuals. I argue that colonialism and Salazarist fascism are an interconnected phenomenon, a confluence of reactionary and imperialist ideologies. Given that Tarrafal has come to symbolize colonial violence, I reflect on the largely unknown history of the reopening of the prison camp after the end of colonialism. The continuities of colonial modes of violence in the aftermath of colonialism have yet to be grappled with in the post-colonial period.

Unlike in Cape Verde, Black Beach prison in Equatorial Guinea is mostly associated with post-colonial atrocities. By analyzing the novels by renowned writers María Nsué Angüe and José Fernando Siale Djangany, I question the relationship of the past with the present, and history and fiction, to provide alternative narratives to official historiographies. With regard to Equatorial Guinea, the question of historical time is essential to my investigation. Today, Black Beach prison is the infamous emblem of the brutal post-colonial Macías and Nguemist dictatorships. However, through my close-readings of novels and based on my archival research, I argue that Black Beach prison is a palimpsest of historical and colonial continuities. The narratives of Nsué Angüe and Siale Djangany write fictional narratives that explore continuities of violence in the aftermath of colonialism. Their novels are reflections upon the politics of writing history, while producing new modes of knowing and representing the colonial past.

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In Mozambique, my project explores the notion of the New Man and Woman during the Salazarist period, as well as during the post-independence Marxist-Leninist government headed by FRELIMO (Mozambican Liberation Front). Examining prison periodicals, photography, paintings/drawings, film, and autobiographies by former political prisoners in Mozambique, I show that prisons and re-education camps during the post-colonial period were sites where gendered discipline was exerted on the body through notions of work as freedom, echoing colonial and fascist ideas and Portuguese iterations of the Nazi motto, *Arbeit macht frei*. I explore the friend and enemy dynamic of colonial and post-colonial politics. The Salazar regime and the FRELIMO State deployed the New Man and New Woman as representative of the national ideal. Those citizens not adhering to the ideals were deemed economic, ideological, and political enemies of the State.

While these case studies offer new ways of understanding the moment of decolonization in Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, and Mozambique, together these cases represent convergent trends in Iberian Atlantic imperialisms. These pages are an attempt at formulating a unit of analysis designated as the Iberian Atlantic imperial space-time. The Iberian Atlantic space-time privileges the multidirectional geographic and historical connections among the regions of the Lusophone and Hispanophone worlds. This concept proposes to displace the colonial *metropole*—Spain and Portugal—from the center by representing the Iberian Atlantic as a network of interconnections.

Today, the worldwide proliferation of immigrant detention centers, refugee camps, and privately owned prisons, demonstrates that power continues to be exerted through carceral regimes. Carcerality is a means of drawing connections across space and time, and it underscores "the deepest contradictions and the darkest secrets of our age" (Wacquant 389). Therefore, the

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histories of carceral institutions are relevant to understanding how the present is connected to the

past and how the present is in many ways (still) profoundly colonial.

Figures
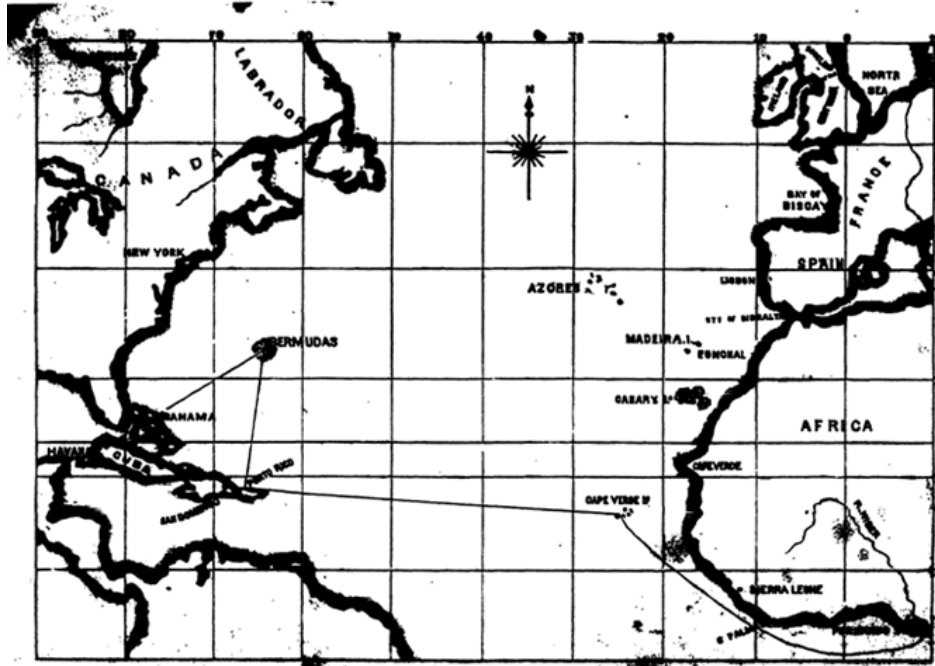
(Fig 1.1). Map of Deportation from Cuba to Fernando Póo (1869)

(Fig 1.2). The construction of the *Cadeia Civil de Lourenço Marques*. Pereira, Manoel Romão. Lourenço Marques - Cadeia Civil do Districto, Edifício Novo do Estado. 1889-91. PRA/PM194. Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon, Portugal. 02 July 2016.
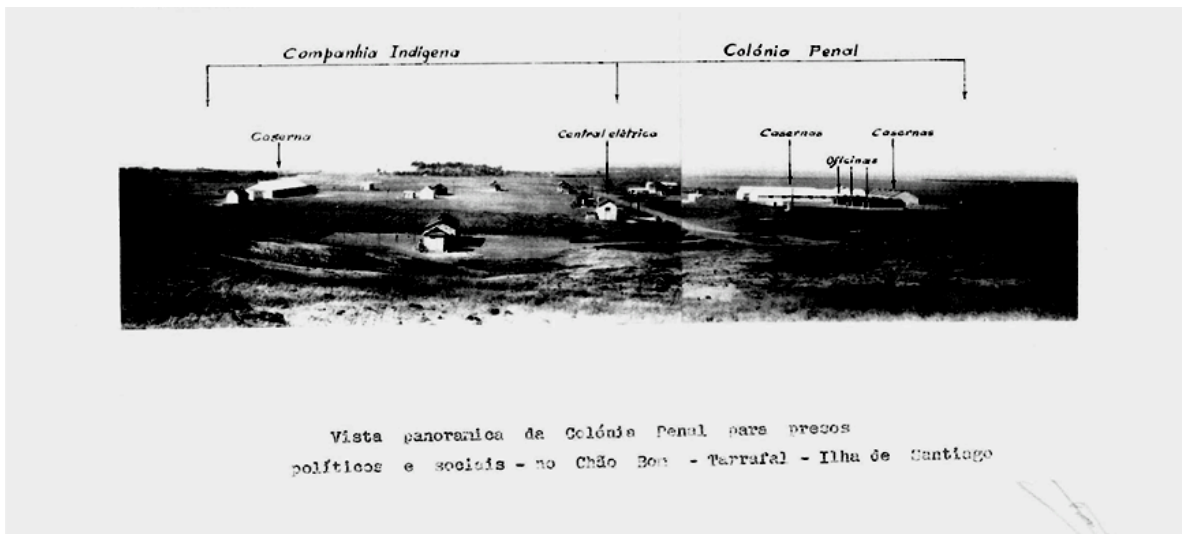

(Fig 1.3). Avenida da República and the Mercado Municipal showing the first jail of Lourenço Marques (1889-1891)

(Fig 1.4). Sommerschield prison in Lourenço Marques (1929)

(Fig. 2.1). Plans for the future locations of the penitentiary, barracks, headquarters, and the cemetery in Tarrafal, Cape Verde. Colónia Penal do Tarrafal / Museu do Tarrafal. 1933. IPA.00019869. Sistema de Informação para o Património Arquitetónico, Sacavém, Portugal. 02 July 2016.

Vista panoramica da Colónia Penal para presos
políticos e sociais - no Chão Bom - Tarrafal - Ilha de Santiago

(Fig 2.2). Buildings of the provisional camp. Colónia Penal do Tarrafal / Museu do Tarrafal. 1936. Sistema de Informação para o Património Arquitetónico, Sacavém, Portugal. 02 July 2016.


(Fig 2.3). Construction of the Penal Colony of Tarrafal. Colónia Penal do Tarrafal / Museu do Tarrafal. 1936. IPA.00019869. Sistema de Informação para o Património Arquitetónico, Sacavém, Portugal. 02 July 2016.
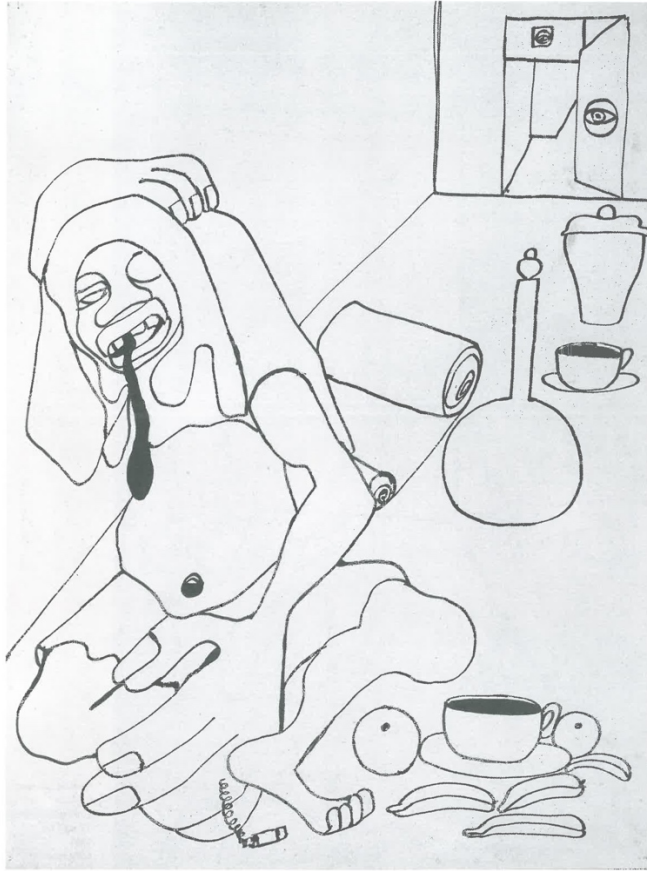
(Fig. 3.1). "A cela" by Malangatana (1967)

(Fig. 3.2). Deus, Pátria, Família at the Machava Prison Camp. Secção Prisional da Machava. 1973. PT-TT-PIDE-DGS-Cl-11542-NT7628-c0001. Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal. 12 November 2013.
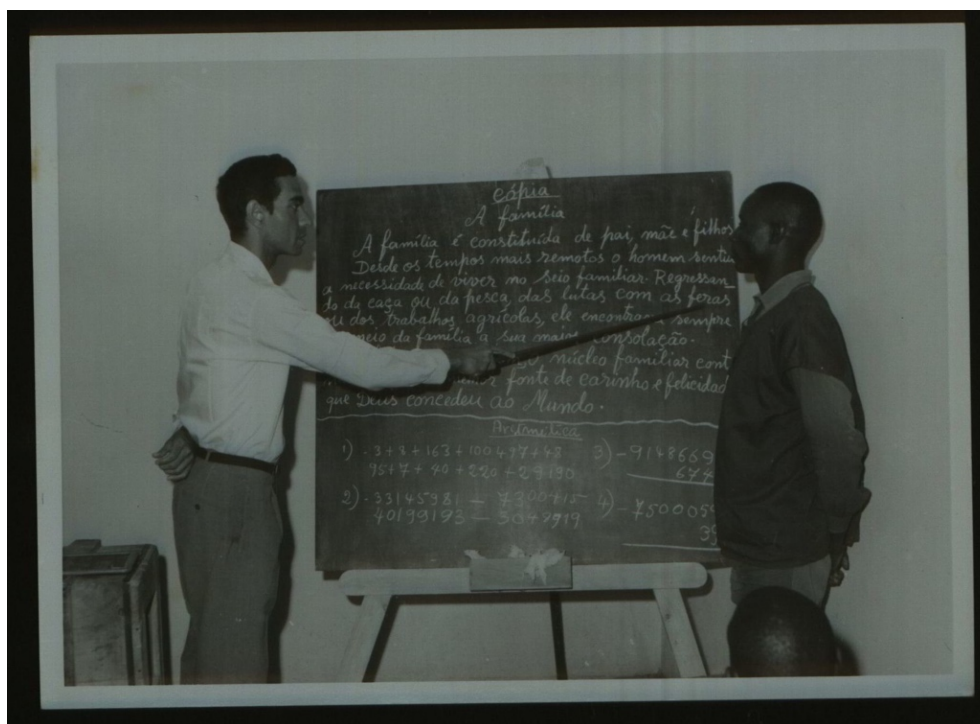
(Fig. 3.3). *A família*. Secção Prisional da Machava. 1973. PT-TT-PIDE-DGS-Cl-11542-NT7628-c0002. Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal. 12 November 2013.
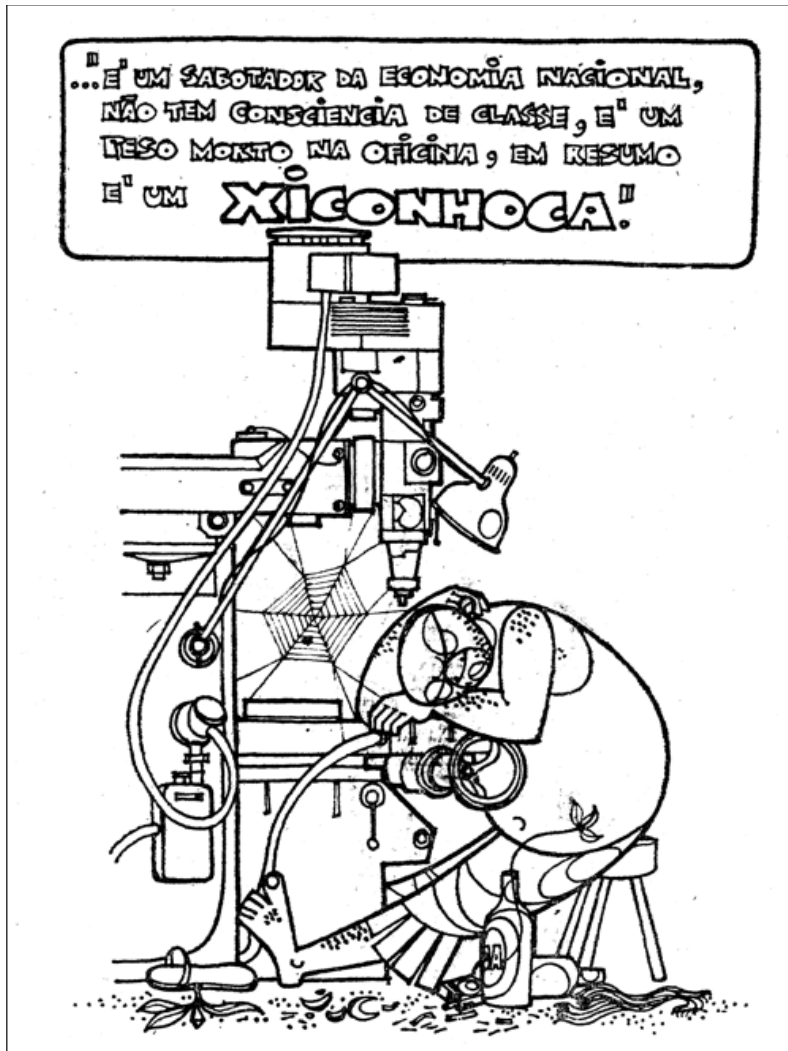
(Fig. 3.4). Roads leading to the Reeducation Camp in *Virgem Margarida* by Licínio Azevedo (2012)

(Fig. 3.5). *A luta continua!* in *Virgem Margarida* by Licínio Azevedo (2012)

(Fig. 3.6). The duplicitous enemy. *Xiconhoca, o inimigo* (1979)

(Fig. 3.7). The saboteur of the economy. *Xiconhoca, o inimigo* (1979)

(Fig. 3.8) Man with handicraft at the Machava Prison Camp. Secção Prisional da Machava. 1973. PT-TT-PIDE-DGS-Cl-11542-NT7628-c0001. Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal. 12 November 2013.

(Fig. 3.9) Men in militar formation at the Machava Prison Camp. Secção Prisional da Machava. 1973. PT-TT-PIDE-DGS-Cl-11542-NT7628-c0001. Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal. 12 November 2013.

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