COMPENDIUM
Journal of Comparative Studies
Revista de Estudos Comparatistas

Inextricably Tied

Cultural Connections and Political Solidarity between Angola and Brazil through the Experience of Mário Pinto de Andrade[1]

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ABSTRACT:

In this article, I discuss Mário Pinto de Andrade's efforts to raise solidarity with Angola in Brazil, focusing on his presence in Brazilian publications of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Through diverse sources – including documents from Andrade's personal archive, records from other personal and institutional archives, as well as books and articles – I aim to map Andrade's collaborations with intellectuals and journalists who supported the independence of Angola and understand how the discourse about the Angolan liberation struggle was articulated in Brazil. Moreover, I want to reflect on Andrade's connection with Brazilian culture, starting from the premise that it played a crucial role in the intellectual formation of many Angolan nationalists. Finally, I point out how Mário Pinto de Andrade's influence went beyond politics and extended to the nascent field of African Studies in Brazil.

[1] This work was funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement 101062643.

RESUMO:

Neste artigo, analiso os esforços de Mário Pinto de Andrade no Brasil para fomentar a solidariedade com a luta de independência de Angola, focando na sua presença em publicações periódicas brasileiras entre o final dos anos 50 e os primeiros anos da década de 60. Através de fontes variadas – incluindo documentos procedentes do seu arquivo pessoal, de outros arquivos particulares e institucionais, assim como livros e artigos – mapeio as colaborações de Mário Pinto de Andrade com intelectuais e jornalistas, para entender como se articulava o discurso sobre a independência de Angola no Brasil. Além disso, reflito sobre as conexões do intelectual e homem político angolano com a cultura brasileira, partindo da premissa que esta foi crucial para a formação intelectual de muitos nacionalistas angolanos. Finalmente, mostro como a influência de Mário Pinto de Andrade no Brasil se estendeu além da esfera política até ao campo emergente dos Estudos Africanos.

KEYWORDS:

Angolan liberation struggle; Brazil; intellectuals; Mário Pinto de Andrade; solidarity movements

PALAVRAS-CHAVE:

guerra de libertação de Angola; Brasil; intelectuais; Mário Pinto de Andrade; movimentos de solidariedade

Submission: 10/01/2024
Acceptance: 17/05/2024

ESSAYIST, sociologist, literary critic, poet and editor of poetry, translator and tireless disseminator of African Cultures, Mário Pinto de Andrade – or simply Mário de Andrade, as he was best known abroad – was an Angolan intellectual who played a key role in the fight against Portuguese colonialism in Africa. One of the founders of the Angolan liberation movement Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) – of which he was also the first president – Andrade put his competences and his intellectual work to the service of the anti-colonial struggle.

Since he left Angola in 1948 to pursue his studies in Lisbon and later self-exiled to France to avoid being arrested by the Portuguese political police (PIDE), he travelled extensively in Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Americas, creating a wide-ranging international network of contacts with intellectuals, politicians, artists, and revolutionaries around the world. Thanks to this broad network, his lucid intelligence, and his dedication to his work, Andrade was able to publish books, anthologies of poetry, articles, interviews, and essays in different countries and in different languages, thus contributing to drawing attention to African culture and gathering worldwide support for the independence of Portuguese colonies in Africa.

Within the frame of a larger research project on Mário Pinto de Andrade and the international implications of his work as an intellectual and politician, in this article, I focus on Andrade's connections to Brazil. I examine Andrade's efforts to raise awareness about Angola and promote solidarity with the liberation struggle, especially with the liberation movement that he led, the MPLA. Through diverse sources – including documents from his personal archive[2] – I map Andrade's collaborations with Brazilian intellectuals, journalists, and political collectives to understand how the discourse about Angola and the fight to overcome Portuguese colonialism was articulated. I start from the premise that, before it became receptive to the call of solidarity with the Angolan liberation war, Brazil had played a crucial role in the cultural and political formation of many Angolan nationalists, and of many Angolans in general. Thanks to the circulation of a variety of cultural products coming from Brazil – music, cinema, literature – Angolans felt a strong connection to the South American country, in whose image they recognized their own. Mário Pinto de Andrade's connection to Brazil was also developed through contacts and exchanges with intellectuals living in Brazil, a network that proved effective when it came time to spread the ideal of Angolan independence internationally.

1. Project and Dream

In a letter[3] sent from Paris in 1957 and addressed to his friend, the writer Fernando Monteiro de Castro Soromenho, Mário Pinto de Andrade spoke of his intention of

[2] Mário Pinto de Andrade's personal archive is currently deposited at the Foundation Mário Soares and Maria Barroso, in Lisbon (hereafter cited as AMPA/FMSMB) and a large part of it has been made available on the website *Casa Comum*, http://casacomum.org/cc/arquivos?set=e_3944 (November 30, 2023).

[3] The letter belongs to the personal archive of Castro Soromenho (hereafter cited as ACS). I thank his son, Jorge Soromenho, for giving me access to this correspondence. Part of the writer's personal archive has been digitized and is available at https://sobrecs.wordpress.com/acervo-castro-soromenho/ (November 30, 2023).

travelling soon to Brazil: "As a matter of fact, I must visit Brazil, but only at the end of next year. Project and dream, for now".[4] Eventually, the trip did not take place and the project stayed just a dream. In 1962, when he was president of the MPLA, Andrade tried planning another visit to Brazil. While he was in Ghana for the Nationalist Conference of African Freedom Fighters, he contacted the Brazilian ambassador in Accra to explore the possibility of visiting the country to organize lectures and other events to raise public awareness about the situation in Angola.[5] Once again, the visit did not materialize. Even when, a couple of years later, Andrade was invited to teach a course in Political Science at the University of São Paulo (USP), adverse circumstances would prevent him from travelling. The invitation from USP, enclosed in a letter sent by Fernando Mourão,[6] is dated February 17, 1964, but Mourão was evidently writing after the coup that established a civil-military dictatorship in Brazil, for he says that "by virtue of different events…. [*the invitation*] is a little compromised since we cannot assure your safety. The invitation stands until a better opportunity arises".[7]

Although there is no conclusive evidence that Andrade ever visited the country, simple research into his personal archive shows how he cultivated an interest in Brazil and Brazilian culture throughout his life. Alongside several newspaper clippings and documents of a political nature, such as those related to the Brazilian Communist Party, we can find a dossier about theatre, with manuscript notes about the show *Arena conta Zumbi*, a typewritten copy of *Morte e vida severina* by João Cabral de Melo Neto, books about Brazilian fables, lyrics of Brazilian song, photocopies of essays by renowned literary critics, etc. Archival records also reveal Andrade's fascination for what the Brazilian editorial market had to offer. In a letter sent in 1967 to Castro Soromenho – who had settled in São Paulo in 1965 – Andrade considers his friend's suggestion to reach out to a Brazilian publisher and propose a series of essays of "political and literary character" on issues related to nationalism in the Portuguese colonies in Africa. He writes that, because of previous commitments, it would take him some time to send the proposal, and then adds:

> As soon as I send the plan, I hope that the editor will propose a contract to sign. I can already tell you that I am interested in being paid in books to select from the best Brazilian publishers' catalogs. I don't care for Carioca money![8]

[4] "Com efeito, devo saltar para o Brasil, mas só no fim do próximo ano. Projeto e sonho, por enquanto." (Andrade to Soromenho, 23 January 1957, ACS). All translations are mine. When relevant, the original in Portuguese is reproduced in the notes.

[5] The information is reported in a letter to the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs written by the then ambassador in Ghana, Raymundo Souza Dantas (Reis 2021, 73).

[6] Fernando Augusto Albuquerque Mourão grew close to the cause of the liberation of Portuguese colonies when he was a student in Portugal during the 1950s. Active in the solidarity movements that supported the independence of Angola and other Portuguese colonies, he became a specialist in African Studies.

[7] "… em virtude de varias ocorrencias…. [*a carta convite*] está um pouco prejudicada na medida em que nao podemos oferecer segurança à tua pessoa. O convite está de pé para uma melhor oportunidade." (Mourão to Andrade, 19 April 1965, 04308.007.005, AMPA/FMSMB). http://casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=04308.007.005 (November 30, 2023).

[8] "Logo que enviar o plano, espero que o editor me proponha contrato para assinar. Desde já te posso avançar que me interessaria ser retribuído em livros a escolher nos melhores catálogos das editoras brasileiras. O dinheiro carioca não interessa!" (Andrade to Sormenho, 5 December 196, ACS).

The joke is very much in line with a distinctive sense of humor that emerges in Andrade's correspondence, but his intentions seem quite serious. He preferred the opportunity to receive books from Brazil over money, a fact whose relevance can be fully appreciated only if considering the precarious financial conditions in which Andrade lived all his life.[9]

2. Books and Writers Backing the Angolan Struggle

Andrade's interest in accessing books published in Brazil went back a long time. Between the 1930s and 1950s, Brazilian books – some of which entered Portugal only clandestinely (Cosme 2001) – circulated in Angola and became quite popular, providing new models to think about literature, culture, and politics[10] in a society suffocated by a repressive colonial regime. Angolan readers appreciated Brazilian literature as it portrayed a world much more like their own when compared to the one portrayed in the classics of Portuguese literature. Brazilian novels offered different representations of race and race relations in a postcolonial environment and presented black and *mestiço* characters as protagonists of their own stories, thus fostering feelings of identification and kinship among Angolan readers.[11] This feeling of "existential familiarity" (Couto 2012, 190) was not unique to literature, but it extended to other aspects of culture, such as sports (football in particular), dance, and music. As Mário Pinto de Andrade affirmed in an interview: "We were close to Brazilian music because there we found our roots, that had been re-elaborated. We assimilated a music that was ours, in the end" (Laban 1997, 31). Angolans – and, in general, Africans in former Portuguese colonies[12] – recognized a part of themselves in the cultural production that arrived from Brazil and grew a certain fascination for that country. But the impact of literature was perhaps the most explicitly political.

On different occasions, Mário Pinto de Andrade underscored the importance of reading Brazilian literature and literature from all over the world via Brazilian translations at a time when the education imparted by the Portuguese in Angola was "utterly obscurantist" (Messiant 1999, 196). In his words, during his childhood and early youth in Luanda, "Brazil compensated for the shortfalls of the Portuguese" (ibid.). Access to novels by Graciliano Ramos, José Lins do Rego, Guimarães Rosa, and Jorge Amado, together with the possibility of reading in Portuguese the works of authors such as Gorki, Tolstoy, and Gogol – but also Langston Hughes – broadened

[9] Filmmaker Sarah Maldoror, Mário Pinto de Andrade's longtime partner and mother of his two daughters, affirmed in an interview: "Podemos opinar tudo o que queremos de Mário Pinto de Andrade, menos a sua integridade intelectual… . Morreu como se devia – na maior pobreza. Morreu sem um centavo, não deixou nada às filhas. Mas era dono de uma honestidade e rectidão fora do comum" (Cardoso 2008, 16).

[10] Consider, for example, that the statute and program of the short-lived Angolan Communist Party was an almost identical copy of its Brazilian counterpart (Messiant 1999, 186-7).

[11] See, for example, "Poema da Farra" by Mário António, in which the poet identifies himself with the characters of Jorge Amado's novel *Jubiabá.* The poem has been set to music by Rui Mingas (Cunha 2011).

[12] This is how Mozambican writer Mia Couto describes his encounter with Brazilian literature in an article dedicated to the influence of Jorge Amado on African writers in the former Portuguese colonies: "Havia pois uma outra nação, que era longínqua, mas não nos era exterior. E nós precisávamos desse Brasil como quem carece de um sonho que nunca antes soubéramos ter. Podia ser um Brasil tipificado e mistificado mas era um espaço mágico onde nos renascíamos criadores de histórias…" (Couto 2012, 191)

the cultural panorama of young Andrade, as well as that of his peers. For those who became writers and laid the basis for contemporary Angolan literature, these readings offered new aesthetic options and new ways of experimenting with the Portuguese language,[13] while they also responded to the necessity of breaking with European literary models. For Andrade, these books were "a revolutionary universe" and awakened in him the awareness that, elsewhere, "there were countries in revolt … an oppressed world" (Laban 1997, 34). During his years in Lisbon, Andrade would return to the novels that he had read as a young boy, approaching them under a new, more critical light: "we did our 'revolutionary classes' with Jorge Amado – for the best and the worst, because there is also the worst in Jorge Amado…"[14] (ibid.).

While Amado's books were influential in nourishing a revolutionary consciousness among young Angolans who were taking a distance from the Portuguese culture that was imposed on them, the writer himself became an ally of the Angolan cause. In the mid-1950s, Amado used his prestige, popularity, and influence in the editorial milieu to inform the Brazilian public about the aspirations of cultural and political independence of the Angolan people. In 1956, *Para Todos*, the bi-weekly magazine that Amado directed, published two articles by Mário Pinto de Andrade. Both were signed by Buanga Felê, who was supposedly writing "directly from Angola," though Andrade was living in Paris at the time. The first[15] was the Portuguese translation of "Qu'est-ce que le Luso-Tropicalisme?", an essay published the year before in the famous French journal *Présence Africaine*, in which Andrade aimed at unveiling the violent reality behind Gilberto Freyre's idealistic vision of Portuguese colonialism. The second article was an excerpt[16] of the introduction written by Andrade for the *Caderno de Poesia Negra de Expressão Portuguesa*, a small anthology of poetry that he published in 1953 in Lisbon together with Francisco José Tenreiro, which had marked the debut of the discourse about *négritude* in Portugal. In a country that lived under the myth of "racial democracy"[17] and that maintained close relations with Portugal,[18] Andrade's articles defied common sense and pushed for greater awareness of the dynamics of Portuguese colonialism in Africa.

[13] See, for example, the impact that João Guimarães Rosa had on Luandino Vieira, one of the most renowned Angolan writers (Chabal 1995, 27). For more general references on how Brazilian authors influenced Angolan literature, see Macêdo (2008), Cunha (2011), Carelli (2015).

[14] "…nós fizemos as nossas 'aulas revolucionárias' com Jorge Amado – para o melhor e para o pior, porque há também o pior no Jorge Amado." Although Andrade does not elaborate on this issue, one could speculate if the "worst" in Jorge Amado was a certain proximity with the Lusotropicalist imaginary and, in particular, the exaltation and hypersexualization of the racially mixed female body.

[15] Andrade's article appeared in two parts in the magazine's first and second issue. Available at memoria.bn.br/DocReader/124451/33167 and memoria.bn.br/DocReader/124451/33183 (November 30, 2023)

[16] The article appeared on issue 15. memoria.bn.br/DocReader/124451/33431 (November 30, 2023)

[17] The expression "racial democracy" referred to the supposed lack of racial prejudices in Brazil, to the idea that the country was "uniquely racially mixed and harmonious" (Dávila 2010, 2). For a history of the origins of the expression and what the concept came to represent over time, see Guimarães (2001; 2019).

[18] Brazil's relationship with the Portuguese Estado Novo was not only defined by the historical ties between the two countries, but also by the presence of a large and influential Portuguese community in Brazil. In this regard, see Dávila (2010, 24).

Página 14

PARA TODOS

QUE É O "LUSO-TROPICALISMO"?

de Angola escreve

BUANGA FELÉ

"OSCARINA" – Mario de Andrade

Quase 2.000.000 (DOIS MILHÕES) de Exemplares de Romances Brasileiros em Quadrinhos

O Livro Científico

"PSICOLOGIA SOCIAL – PROBLEMAS E PERSPECTIVAS"

Figure 1. The first part of Andrade's essay on Lusotropicalism in *Para Todos* (1956).
Acervo da Fundação Biblioteca Nacional – Brasil.

With the beginning of the armed struggle in Angola, Amado's commitment to side with the Angolan nationalists became more explicit. Writing in 1961 to the anthropologist Vivaldo da Costa Lima, a member of the recently founded Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais (CEAO),[19] Amado reaffirmed his support for the liberation struggle by stating that "…it will all be lies and deceit if we do not support Angola, unfailingly" (Reis 2021, 69). He also promised to release news about scholarships for Angolan students who were willing to go to Brazil, and on the Angolan question in general (ibid.). Through the report[20] of a PIDE informant, we know that in that same year, Amado was gathering material about the situation in the Portuguese colonies in Africa and corresponding directly with Mário Pinto de Andrade. Though no trace of this correspondence remains in Andrade's personal archive, the letters that they exchanged are likely to be at the root of a series of pieces published in the review *Tempo Brasileiro*.[21]

[19] Founded in 1959 at the Federal University of Bahia, the CEAO was the first academic centre dedicated to African Studies in Brazil.

[20] Report "Caso Mário Andrade – Jorge Amado", n.d., ANTT, PIDE/DGS, SC, SR, 442-50, NT 2668, fls. 424-5

[21] The editor of *Tempo Brasileiro* was Eduardo Portella, who had published a book titled *África, colonos e cúmplices* (1961) and was the first director of the Instituto Brasileiro de Estudos Afro-Asiáticos (IBEEA), an institution connected to the Presidency of the Republic, precursor of the Centro de Estudos Afro-Asiáticos (CEAA).

3. Angola Seen from Brazil

Before having its publications suspended by the military coup in 1964, almost every issue of *Tempo Brasileiro* hosted some article or note that referred to the Angolan question.[22] In the first issue, published in September 1962, there was an article by Jorge Amado titled "Conversa com Buanga Fêlê, também conhecido como Mário de Andrade, chefe da luta de Angola".[23] Unlike what the title may suggest, it was not an actual dialogue with Andrade nor an interview, but a virtual conversation that Amado entertains with the MPLA's leader while walking through the streets of Salvador de Bahia: "I walk with you, Buanga Fêlê, in the magical and compelling Bahia night. My heart is far away, in the jungle and villages of Angola. Your struggle is our struggle"[24] (Amado 1962, 30). In his article, Amado is less concerned with analyzing the social, economic, political, and cultural reasons behind the liberation struggle than with exposing the bonds that exist between Brazil and Angola and establishing a deep affective connection between the two countries.

As it is known, over three centuries, millions of Africans were captured, sold, and transported in chains to Brazil, where they were put to work in plantations, mines, and every other sector of the Brazilian economy. Of the total number of enslaved Africans brought to Brazil, nearly two million[25] came from the region roughly corresponding to the actual boundaries of Angola and Congo, a fact that has led historians to affirm that the very formation and emergence of Brazil depended on the use of Angola as a slave reservoir (Alencastro 2000, 9). Beyond building Brazil's wealth, enslaved Africans also built the country's unique culture. To survive in a hostile environment, they had to mingle with people brought from different parts of Africa, as well as with people of European and autochthonous descent, and over time they forged an original culture, both reminiscent of their origins and quintessentially Brazilian.

Amado's conversation with "the chief of the Angolan struggle" starts by evoking this culture and remembering an encounter with a woman who, during an Afro-Brazilian religious practice, declared to belong to the "nação"[26] Angola. It goes on with references to Pastinha, a well-known master of capoeira Angola, and then it speaks of music, seasoning, dances: "so much came to us from Angola and today is our blood

[22] In the second issue, under the title "Prisão e pensamento de um padre angolano", the journal published a brief note about the arrest of Father Joaquim Pinto de Andrade – brother of Mário Pinto de Andrade and future honorary president of the MPLA – together with a transcription of the statement he gave to the PIDE (issue 2). See also the articles "Salazar, ultracolonialismo e o Brasil" by Eduardo Portella (issue 4-5) and "Brasil e Angola: A independência sofrida", by Vamireh Chacon (issue 6).

[23] In March 1963, the article was partially reproduced in the MPLA's bulletin *Vitória ou Morte* with the title "Comício de Jorge Amado". https://www.tchiweka.org/documento-textual/0048.000.012 (November 30, 2023)

[24] "Ando contigo, Buanga Fêlê, na noite baiana mágica e envolvente. Meu coração está distante, nas selvas e aldeias de Angola. Tua luta é a nossa luta".

[25] Data retrieved from the database *Slave Voyages*. slavevoyages.org (November 30, 2023).

[26] In the context of Afro-Brazilian religions "the nações (singular nação) are collectives that reflect the social reconstruction of identity from the epoch of slavery. … With the passage of generations, the nação became primarily a specific liturgical tradition and social boundary within the broader category of Candomblé and less and less a denotation of descent from a region" (Johnson 2002, 56).

and flesh"[27] (id., 27). It is through these elements of Afro-Brazilian culture that Amado thinks of Angola, a country that he saw as an integral part of Brazil and its identity. It is in the name of the common past that Brazil and Angola share and in the belief that Brazil owed much to Angola that solidarity toward the Angolan people was particularly necessary and urgent. However, besides claims of a profound connection, the article shows how little Amado knew about contemporary Angola and the Angolans whom he called his "brothers on the other side of the sea" (id., 30). For example, when he addressed Andrade as "Buanga Fêlê to whom they gave the white name of Mário de Andrade, as Oxalá is the Lord of Bonfim and Omulú is Saint Lazarus"[28] (id., 26), Amado revealed a poor understanding of the complexity of the social formation of Angolan intellectuals and nationalists, imposing the logics of Brazilian syncretism onto a pseudonym[29] that Andrade only used to sign a few articles in the mid and late 1950s. It is curious to notice that Jorge Amado was not the only one confused about Andrade's name. On June 6, 1961, the newspaper *Última Hora* published a small profile of Andrade titled "Mário de Andrade, Herói Angolês", in which we can read: "Mário de Andrade is best-known in Europe and the African milieu with his Angolese name Buanga Felê, his *real* name with which he has always signed his essays and articles" (my emphasis).[30] One could question if the reason behind this misunderstanding is that Buanga Felê sounded like a more authentic name for an Angolan, if it better suited the idea of what an African combatant should be.

Like most Brazilians supporting the anticolonial liberation struggle,[31] Amado had no direct experience or knowledge of Africa. Unlike Angolans, who had learned about Brazil by reading its literature and following its cultural production, Brazilians had limited opportunities to get an insightful understanding of African affairs because of restrictions to the circulation of information imposed by the colonial regime. Amado compensated his lack of specific knowledge of Angola with familiarity with Afro-Brazilian culture and opted for a prose that, pivoting on affective connections, also resonated more with his Brazilian readers. Therefore, the image of Angola that comes through his article is an abstraction, a reflection of the Brazil he knew. Amado's whole argument in favor of Angola was articulated around references to Brazil: he shared the fight of colonized people against underdevelopment and oppression because Brazil itself was still enduring the consequences of centuries of colonial exploitation. He refused the "sentimental blackmail" (Amado 1962, 28) of those who believed that Brazilians should always side with their Portuguese "grandfathers," evoking the equal significance of their Angolan "grandmothers".[32]

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[27] "…tanta coisa que nos veio de Angola e hoje é nosso sangue e nossa carne".

[28] "Buanga Fêlê a quem puseram o nome de branco de Mário de Andrade, assim como Oxalá é Senhor do Bonfim e Omulú é São Lázaro".

[29] Andrade forged the "Kimbundu sounding" (Laban 1997, 112) pseudonym Buanga Fele to conceal his identity from the police during his first years in France, when he occasionally used different pseudonyms, including Ibn Majid and A.B.F. Once he passed to direct political action and became a public figure, he used his own name to sign articles, essays, and other publications.

[30] Newspaper clipping, "Última Hora de 10/6/961", ANTT, PIDE/DGS, SC, SR, 442-50, NT 2668, fl.507.

[31] As historian Jerry Dávila claims, "despite the symbolic importance of Africa to the constructions of Brazilian history and culture, there was scant information in Brazil about either African history or contemporary affairs" (Dávila 2010: 5).

[32] "E, se nossos avôs são portugueses como repetem os sentimentais, devemos responder-lhes que as nossas avós eram africanas, angolanas muitas e muitas delas, as avós de todo o carinho, dividindo seu puro

Nevertheless, the writer took a clear stance against colonialism and openly disagreed with sectors of the Portuguese liberal opposition that considered that the colonial question should be addressed only once the fascist government was overthrown. Instead, he wrote: "it is Angola that will overthrow Salazar, it is the Angolan people that will put an end to the sufferings of the Portuguese people oppressed by the dictatorship…" (ibid.).

4. Popular and Institutional Solidarity

In the same issue that hosted Amado's article, *Tempo Brasileiro* also published the report presented in May 1962 to the United Nations (UN) Special Committee on Territories under Portuguese Administration by the MPLA. Published under the title "A questão angolana" and signed by the movement's president, Mário de Andrade, it is preceded by a few lines written by the journal's editors that describe it as "an indispensable document" to understand the Angolan question. Unlike Amado's article, the report was not just a statement of solidarity, but a well-documented account of the state of the conflict. It was rooted in the facts and events of the struggle and based on concrete data about Portuguese repression and the advances of nationalists.[33] In it, Andrade referred to the efforts to give international relevance to the Angolan struggle, mentioning some of the MPLA missions abroad, including the one in Brazil:

> As we try to awaken the sympathy of anticolonial and solidarity movements around the world, we appealed to all the forces capable of coming to our assistance. From December 1960 on, courtesy and information missions were sent first to Africa and Asia… America (USA and Brazil), and Europe… (Andrade 1962, 130)

Andrade made clear that receiving solidarity from governments of independent African countries was particularly meaningful for the MPLA,[34] but he did not underestimate the importance of solidarity movements all over the world. Indeed, a large part of his work as an intellectual was aimed at raising awareness about the Angolan struggle among the international public, spreading information, and persuading people of the righteousness of the nationalist cause. As he affirmed in an interview to *France Nouvelle*, which was eventually translated and published in Brazil, "solidarity with the struggle of a colonized people should concern all the democrats and

leite entre os filhos negros e os filhos brancos, dando-nos com ele o amor à beleza, à justiça, e à liberdade." (Amado 1962, 29). This passage reveals how Amado's discourse had many points in common with Freyre's Lusotropicalism and its vision of Brazil as an amalgam of Portuguese and African elements, where the African element was often feminine.

[33] It is possible that some data were inflated to gain more political leverage with the UN. See for example the claim about the presumed number of MPLA's members, counted in the report as 50.000.

[34] The solidarity of independent African countries was essential for the development of the armed struggle in Angola: they allowed nationalist movements to install their bureaus on their territory, offered logistics support, provided weapons and military formation to militants, etc. As Andrade writes in his report: "We've said it already and we repeat it: the solution to the Angolan problem will be African or it will not be. The success of our national liberation struggle is inscribed in the frame of a concrete action of African solidarity" (Andrade 1962, 130).

righteous men in the world…" (Rego and Morais 1962, 101). However, when Brazil inaugurated a new "Independent Foreign Policy" in the 1960s, Andrade hoped that solidarity could be conveyed not only through published opinions, but also at the institutional level, and result in effective support for the liberation struggle.

In December 1960, soon after the election of Jânio Quadros to the Presidency of Brazil, *Portugal Democrático*[35] published a telegram of congratulations sent by Mário de Andrade, in which the leader of the MPLA manifested hope that Brazil would finally condemn Portuguese colonialism. The last part of the telegram reads: "People Angola expect solidarity *Brazilian people government* for national independence struggle" (my emphasis).[36] Another article published by *Última Hora* in 1961 reported a meeting between representatives of the MPLA and a member of the Brazilian Parliament during his visit to Guinea. The delegation of the MPLA included Mário de Andrade who, according to the article, "expressly mentioned the hope that Angolans deposited in President Jânio Quadros" and "stressed that he expected substantial aid from Brazil once the independence had been secured".[37]

However, despite declarations of anticolonial sentiments made by Quadros,[38] the institutional solidarity which Andrade hoped for did not materialize. Brazil abstained from voting on the resolution on Angola discussed at the UN on April 20, 1961 (Dávila 2010, 97). Only in January 1962, during the presidency of Quadros' successor João Goulart, did Brazil vote favourably on resolution 1742 (XVI), which "solemnly reaffirm[*ed*] the inalienable right of the Angolan people to self-determination and independence".[39] Thereafter, Brazil would either abstain from voting or side with Portugal on all the other resolutions presented at the UN during the rest of the 1960s and the 1970s, until the fall of the Portuguese regime in 1974.

5. The MPLA across the Ocean

In the MPLA report published in the first issue of *Tempo Brasileiro*, among other things, Mário Pinto de Andrade emphasized the urgent need to attain unity among all nationalist forces in Angola in order to defeat Portuguese colonialism. However, no other forces but the MPLA are ever mentioned in the report. Readers of *Tempo Brasileiro*, largely unaware of the dynamics of the Angolan liberation struggle, may have not even known about the existence of other nationalist movements, let alone their name or political orientation.

[35] *Portugal Democrático* was a newspaper created by Portuguese exiles in São Paulo that operated between 1956 and 1975.
[36] Newspaper clipping, "Portugal Democrático. N° 43 de Dezembro de 1960", ANTT, PIDE/DGS, SC, SR, 442-50, NT 2668, fl.589
[37] Newspaper clipping, "Última Hora de 7/6/961", ANTT, PIDE/DGS, SC, SR, 442-50, NT 2668, fl.512
[38] As Quadros himself affirmed in a piece published in *Foreign Affairs* in 1961: "As to Africa, we may say that today it represents a new dimension in Brazilian policy. We are linked to that continent by our ethnic and cultural roots and share in its desire to forge for itself an independent position in the world of today" (Quadros 2019, 404).
[39] The resolution can be found at Dag Hammarskjöld Library, available at https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/167/95/PDF/NR016795.pdf?OpenElement (November 30, 2023)

Brief references to the União das Populações de Angola (UPA) and its leader Holden Roberto can be found in an interview with Mário Pinto de Andrade conducted in 1961 by Moacir Werneck de Castro for *Última Hora*,[40] and in the introduction of *Angola Através dos Textos*,[41] a book published in 1962 by two Portuguese exiles in São Paulo. In this last case, the authors mentioned the UPA just to explain that they decided to avoid all references to it, despite acknowledging that, at that time, it was the main force behind the armed conflict: "We omitted it on purpose. It is in our right" (Rego and Morais 1962, 5). The authors based their argument on their decision to endorse the political group whose principles and positions were closer to their own. Not only was the UPA seen as an ally of American imperialism, but also as an anti-white, "racist" movement because of its regional and ethnic background, while the MPLA did not officially discriminate against whites or Portuguese people. Within certain anticolonial intellectual circles in Brazil, then, the MPLA was seen as the only legitimate representative of the Angolan people in the fight against the colonial regime and support for the Angola liberation struggle equaled support for the MPLA. Further evidence of this argument can be found in the already mentioned invitation letter received by Andrade in 1964 from USP, in which the university's representative wrote that he hoped that the conditions offered would suit Andrade's needs and "serve the ultimate goals of the MPLA".[42]

The bias in favor of the MPLA was due to the lobbying of its leaders,[43] including Mário Pinto de Andrade, with Brazilian intellectuals, journalists, and politicians. But it was also the result of the engagement of common people committed to mobilizing public opinion, most of whom gathered under the acronym MABLA: Movimento Afro-Brasileiro Pró-Libertação de Angola.[44] In an interview, sociologist José Maria Nunes Pereira[45] – one of MABLA's first and most charismatic members – confirmed the favored position that the MPLA enjoyed in Brazil saying that,

> … [*in 1962*] in Angola there were two rival movements, and we were losing to our rival. It was a very hard period for us. The funny thing is that we were suffering in Africa, and in Brazil there was this shabby *little bureau* that made a lot of noise and even appeared in the international press. (Alberti and Pereira 2007, 129; italics in the original)

[40] The interview was later included in Castro's book *Dois Caminhos da Revolução Africana*, published in 1962.

[41] The book was published by Editora Felman-Rêgo (1962-1964), a publishing house founded by one of the authors of *Angola Através dos textos*, Victor da Cunha Rêgo, and his wife Yvonne Felman (Melo 2018, 408).

[42] Mourão to Andrade, 19 April 1965, 04308.007.005, AMPA/FMSMB. http://casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=04308.007.005 (November 30, 2023)

[43] According to the book *Introdução a Angola* published in 1975 by the Centro de Estudos Afro-Asiáticos (CEAA), the MPLA "foi o único movimento angolano a procurar o apoio brasileiro desde o inicio da luta nacionalista, propugnando o estabelecimento de laços especiais de Angola com o nosso pais" (in Pereira 1991, 101).

[44] Viviane de Souza Lima affirms that the MABLA was a heterogeneous movement articulated in three groups, two based in São Paulo and one in Rio de Janeiro. It gathered different personalities, including Brazilian writers, academics, and journalists, Portuguese opponents to Salazar in exile, African students who had been granted scholarships in Brazil, etc. (Lima 2017, 15).

[45] Born in Maranhão in 1937, José Maria Nunes Pereira studied in Portugal between 1947 and 1962, where he was politicized by African students linked to the Casa dos Estudantes do Império. He was close to Mário Pinto de Andrade, who should have been his son's godfather, had he succeeded in going to Brazil. For more information, see Alberti and Pereira (2007).

The MABLA was able to establish alliances across a large political spectrum (Santos 2010, 48) and collaborated with black Brazilian activists (Silva 2017) and the students' association União Nacional dos Estudantes (UNE). According to the report of a PIDE informant in Rio de Janeiro, in June 1962, the MABLA organized a space dedicated to Angola in the UNE headquarters where it was possible to read the official organ of the MPLA, *Unidade Angolana*, and see some gruesome pictures showing Portuguese soldiers holding sticks with severed heads of black Angolans on them. As the report says: "As it is natural, these pictures caused indignation among students and other people".[46] Presumably, they also drew more sympathy and consensus to the Angolan cause and the MPLA.

Mário Pinto de Andrade closely followed the work done by the MABLA, which he publicly praised in the pages of *Portugal Democrático*. Speaking as president of the MPLA – but in the name of the whole Angolan people – Andrade did not miss the opportunity to appeal to the historical bonds between Brazil and Angola. He hinted at a special connection between the two countries, describing them as "inextricably tied", presenting active solidarity with Angola as something that should come naturally to Brazilians:

> It is with great joy that, as president of the MPLA, I fulfill my duty to greet the MABLA. And, in the name of the Angolan people, I bring flawless gratitude. To the Brazilian people, to whom we are inextricably tied through tight historical bonds, I address a warm greeting for their active solidarity…[47]

However, if at the beginning of the 1960s it seemed that the MPLA dominated the Brazilian discourse on the anticolonial struggle, soon things came to a point of stagnation. In a series of letters sent to Lúcio Lara[48] in 1963, José Lima de Azevedo, an Angolan member of the MPLA who operated in Brazil, exposed his deep frustration with the movement's situation overseas. He expressed dissatisfaction with the few results achieved and complained about the behaviour of some of the members of his group. In a letter dated June 27, 1963, Azevedo mentions Andrade's intention of visiting Brazil to reorganize the MPLA group there, but he states that the visit would be useless without backup support from the entire leadership of the MPLA.[49] Azevedo explains that he contacted several Brazilian politicians, journalists, and intellectuals, including the philosopher Paulo Freire and the black activist Abdias do Nascimento, but he blames the MPLA leadership for not following up with them,

[46] Report "Relatório Geral", 12 June 1962, ANTT, PIDE/DGS, SC, SR, 442-50, NT 2666, fls.181-2

[47] "É, pois, com jubilo que, como presidente do MPLA, cumpro o dever de saudar o MABLA. E, em nome do povo angolano, fazer testemunho do seu indefectível reconhecimento. Ao povo brasileiro, a que estamos indissoluvelmente ligados por laços históricos tão estreitos, endereço uma saudação amiga pela sua solidariedade ativa …". Newspaper clipping, "Portugal Democrático. N° 52 de Setembro de 1961", ANTT, PIDE/DGS, SC, SR, 442-50, NT 2668, fl. 426.

[48] One of the MPLA's founders, Lúcio Lara was a key figure during the liberation war, and an influential politician once Angola became independent.

[49] Azevedo to Lara, 2 July 1963, 0114.005.067, ATD. https://www.tchiweka.org/documento-textual/0114005067 (November 30, 2023).

thus missing good opportunities to develop promising networks.[50] Indeed, above all, Azevedo lamented the little consideration that the work done in Brazil received from the movement's leadership, arguing that their inaction made all their efforts pointless.

Is it likely that the internal crisis[51] that the MPLA was experiencing between 1962 and 1963 turned the movement's attention away from Brazil and resulted in a progressive neglect of that front. The civil-military coup that ousted Brazilian president João Goulart on April 1, 1964, further reduced the opportunities to mobilize and express solidarity with Angola, while definitively inhibiting the possibility of providing material support to the liberation struggle. Soon after the coup, some MABLA members were detained and tortured, the group was disbanded, and periodical publications in Brazil became less vocal in their backing of the Angolan cause.[52]

6. Studying Africa in Brazil

In a context in which interest in Africa and support for anti-colonial struggles could no longer be conveyed through the efforts of organized groups pushing for political action, some activists found new means to "give continuity to their militancy" (Lima 2017, 136). Some, for example, committed to the establishment of research centers dedicated to African Studies. Fernando Mourão and José Maria Nunes Pereira, who had studied in Portugal and had been close to African nationalist movements since their time at the Casa dos Estudantes do Império,[53] were responsible for the creation of the Centro de Estudos Africanos (CEA)[54] at USP in 1965 and the Centro de Estudos Áfro-Asiáticos (CEAA) at the University Cândido Mendes in Rio de Janeiro in 1973, respectively. Despite the authoritarian climate that defined the country after the military seized power, these research centers were tolerated by the new government and enjoyed relative freedom. As Nunes Pereira affirmed

> [*the CEAA*] ministered courses on Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, in which the guerrillas and the liberation movements were in the background, and the actors were by the likes of Frantz Fanon, whose book *The Wretched of the Earth* was prohibited by censorship. (Pereira 1991, 121)

[50] Azevedo to Lara, 18 June 1963, 0114.005.064, ATD, available at https://www.tchiweka.org/documento-textual/0114005064 (November 30, 2023).

[51] Because of political divergences and personality clashes, the MPLA underwent a reshaping of its directive organs and faced the controversial departure of some of its founding members, including the poet and ideologue Viriato da Cruz. Mário Pinto de Andrade – who had ceded the presidency to Agostinho Neto to become head of foreign relations – also left the movement in 1963 but rejoined it soon after, in 1964. For more information, see Mabeko-Tali (2019, 148-88).

[52] *Portugal Democrático* constituted an exception and continued its activities, though it had to adjust its editorial line (Lima 2017, 159-66).

[53] Probably because of this connection, both Mourão and Pereira were identified as "Portuguese anti-colonial militants" in a press release distributed by the MPLA in August 1964 to protest against the arrest of pro-Angola activists. https://www.tchiweka.org/documento-textual/0065000028 (November 30, 2023)

[54] From 1965 to 1968, the center worked under the name Centro de Estudos de Cultura Africana and changed its name to Centro de Estudos Africanos in 1969 (Mourão 2010, 9).

After the coup, then, Mário Pinto de Andrade's name faded from Brazilian newspapers that reported on campaigns to promote solidarity with the liberation movements in Africa, but it resurfaced in the academic context of these newly established research centers. Records available in his personal archive show that Andrade was informed about – and in some cases contributed to – their activities. For example, a few documents refer to the activities at CEAA, including programs of courses on "African contemporary thinking" and "African literature of Portuguese expression".[55]

The importance of Andrade's scholarship in the field of African studies is confirmed by the fact that these courses' bibliographies included several books edited by him or made use of some of his essays as reading material. It is the case of the preface that Andrade wrote for *A Vida Verdadeira de Domingo Xavier*,[56] in which he retraced the crucial phases of the development of Angolan literature, from Pedro Félix Machado and his *Cenas d'África* (1880) to Luandino Vieira.[57] Or yet, of "Poesia como património nacional",[58] in which Andrade looked at poetry in Africa, describing it as an act of apprehension of reality and of social and political liberation. With references to Cameroon, Algeria, South Africa, Guinea, etc., this essay is exemplary of Andrade's pan-Africanist approach to the literary phenomenon and of an expertise that went beyond the limits of Lusophone Africa.

Through his correspondence with Fernando Mourão, we can see how Andrade became aware of different projects developed by the CEA, including the launch of a series of books dedicated to works by African writers of Portuguese expression,[59] and the creation of the academic journal *África*, which over the years hosted several articles written by Angolan intellectuals. In 1987, Andrade himself was invited to send a contribution for a special issue on Castro Soromenho to be published in *África* but, for reasons that we cannot ascertain, he did not submit an article (although he seemed intrigued by the proposition and scribbled some notes and ideas for a piece right on the invitation letter).

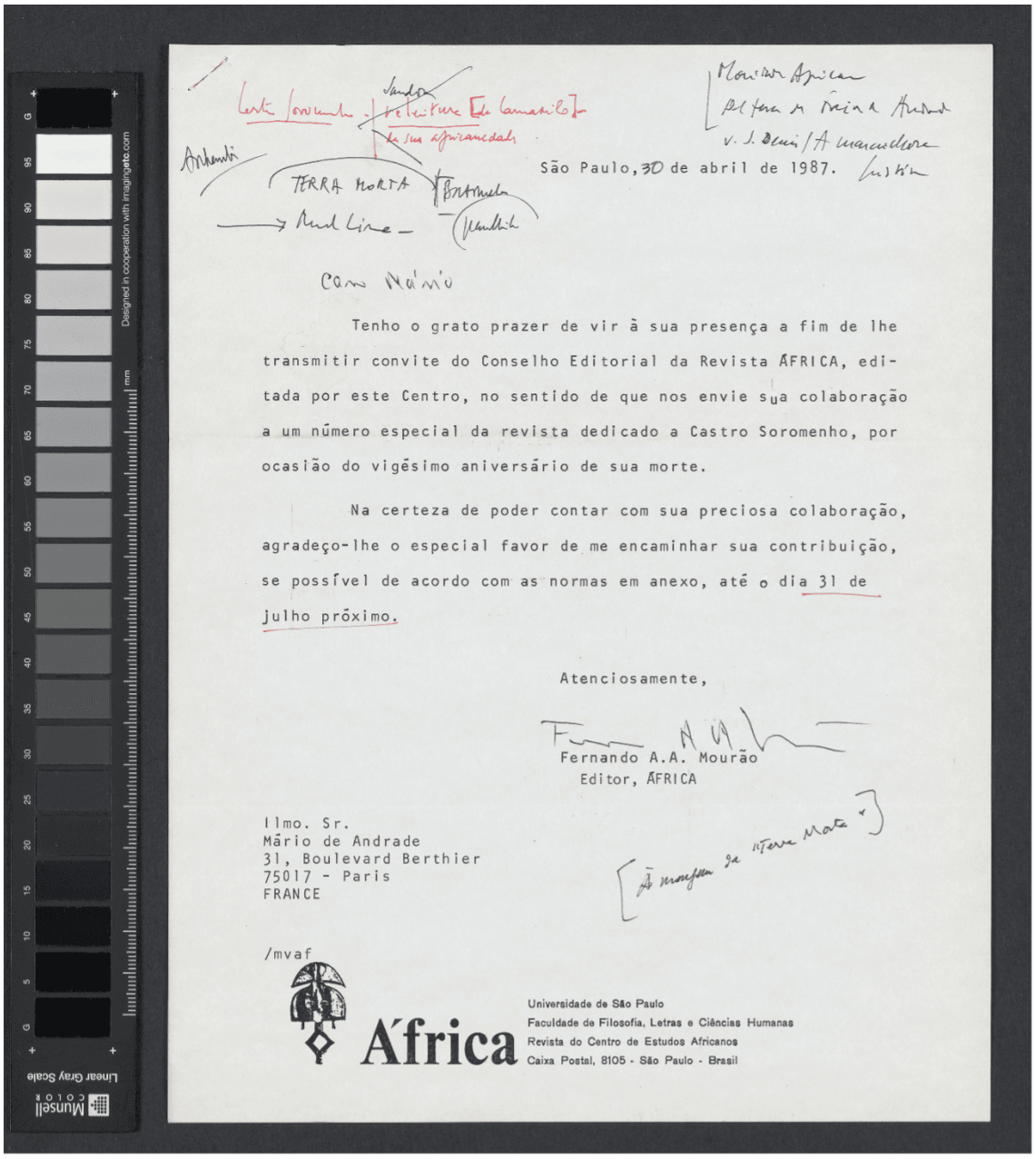
[55] Series of records "Centro de Estudos Afro-Asiáticos (CEAA), Conjunto Universitário Cândido Mendes", 10192.001.034-043, AMPA/FMSMB. All records are dated 1977, except 10192.001.034 which has no specific indication. http://casacomum.org/cc/pesqArquivo.php?termo=10192.001* (November 30, 2023)

[56] The book, translated by Chantal Tiberghien and Mário de Andrade, and prefaced by the latter, was published for the first time in 1971 in France by *Présence Africaine*.

[57] Reading material "Literatura africana de expressão portuguesa. Textos de Apoio X", 1977, 10192.001.042 AMPA/FMSMB. http://casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=10192.001.042 (November 30, 2023)

[58] Reading material "Literatura africana de expressão portuguesa. Textos de Apoio III", 1977, 10192.001.036 AMPA/FMSMB. http://casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=10192.001.036 (November 30, 2023)

[59] I am referring to the "Coleção de Autores Africanos" published by Editora Ática between 1979 and 1991. For more information, see Cruz (2020).



São Paulo, 30 de abril de 1987.

Caro Mário

Tenho o grato prazer de vir à sua presença a fim de lhe transmitir convite do Conselho Editorial da Revista ÁFRICA, editada por este Centro, no sentido de que nos envie sua colaboração a um número especial da revista dedicado a Castro Soromenho, por ocasião do vigésimo aniversário de sua morte.

Na certeza de poder contar com sua preciosa colaboração, agradeço-lhe o especial favor de me encaminhar sua contribuição, se possível de acordo com as normas em anexo, até o dia 31 de julho próximo.

Atenciosamente,

Fernando A.A. Mourão
Editor, ÁFRICA

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/mvaf

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Figure 2. Letter from Fernando Mourão inviting to send a contribution to the journal África, with Mário Pinto de Andrade's handwritten notes. 30 April 1987, 10189.002.017, AMPA/FMSMB

7. Conclusions

It is from the pages of *África* that Fernando Mourão pays homage to Andrade on the occasion of his death. In his brief article, Mourão remembers how he met Andrade, how their friendship evolved, and how influential he was for his formation as an African scholar. Mourão reports an excerpt of a letter received by Professor Fernando Costa Campos that reads: "About Mário, the politician, the historian, the scientist, the scholar, about this wise man of Africanity, our illustrious contemporary and comrade who will go down in History as a giant of the struggle for African emancipation,

there is still much to say" (Mourão 1992, 177). More than three decades later, there is still much to say about Mário Pinto de Andrade and his transnational efforts to promote the liberation struggle of Portuguese colonies in Africa, as well as his work as the "first, most persistent and lucid theoretician and promoter of African literatures in Portuguese".[60]

Following the traces of Mário Pinto de Andrade, it is possible to explore some of the connections between Angola and Brazil at the time of the Angolan liberation struggle, and beyond. Brazil was influential in the cultural and political formation of the generation of Angolans that participated in the struggle, and it became an active ally once the liberation war began. Members of the Brazilian civil society gathered in movements (such as the MABLA) that promoted solidarity with the Angolan people and the representatives of the liberation movement MPLA established a local cell – though apparently dysfunctional – in an attempt to advance relations with politicians and intellectuals. Progressive media published stories, raising awareness about the situation in the then Portuguese colony, though Angola was seen and understood mostly through Brazilian lenses. References to the historical ties between Angola and Brazil set the tone of the discourse about the Angolan liberation war, which was marked by sentiments of affection and proximity. In articles, releases, and reports both Angolans and Brazilians frequently evoked their common past and shared heritage to urge more and more people – and ultimately the government – to take a stance against Portuguese colonialism. Many Brazilians embraced this call for action and found ways to keep alive their interest in Angola even after the establishment of an authoritarian regime in 1964.

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[60] Quoted from the biographical note by Manuel Ferreira that accompanies the essay "Poesia como património nacional". http://casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=10192.001.036#!4 (November 30, 2023)

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