Staging of Memory: Monuments, Commemoration, and the Demarcation of Portuguese Space in Colonial Angola

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Staging of Memory: Monuments, Commemoration, and the Demarcation of Portuguese Space in Colonial Angola
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Abstract

This paper demonstrates how Portuguese leaders created historical representations celebrating Portuguese settlement as the supposed beginning of Angolan history. The accounts of Angolan history presented to the Angolan public in the 1930s-1950s deliberately represented Africans as heathens to be conquered and converted, with their presence often serving as an exuberant and exotic backdrop to Portuguese dignitaries. This cultural form of imperialism made use of both traditional and newer forms of commemoration to reinforce the image of benevolent colonialism. After Angolan nationalists launched a war for independence in 1961, Portugal’s colonial narrative shifted to emphasize the creation of a multi-racial, modernizing Angola.

Key terms: Colonialism, Angola, politics of memory, monuments, film, international expositions

Introduction

From the 1930s until the end of colonial rule in 1975, Portuguese authorities pursued a period of intense commemoration in Angola. In order to assert their recently established authority over the whole of the demarcated colony, they erected statues, issued commemorative money, and hosted international expositions, all with the explicit purpose of celebrating the imperial idea and claiming Angola as Portuguese space. In Luanda, notable monuments included statues commemorating deliberately chosen historical figures: Afonso Henriques, the first king of Portugal; Paulo Dias de Novais, Portuguese founder of the city of Luanda in 1576; and Salvador Correia, who had re-conquered Angola from Dutch forces in 1648.¹ This pantheon of historical figures appeared on Angolan money and throughout the colony as the names of schools, streets, and towns. Even as late as

¹ Dutch forces controlled Luanda between 1641 and 1648.
1972, in the midst of a war between Angolan nationalists and Portugal, colonial leaders continued their commemorative mission by proposing and commissioning plans for a monument honoring the recently deceased New State [Estado Novo] dictator, António Salazar (ruled Portugal 1932-68).\textsuperscript{2} As W. J. T. Mitchell has written, ‘imperialism...conceives itself precisely (and simultaneously) as an expansion of landscape understood as an inevitable, progressive development in history, an expansion of “culture” and “civilization” into a “natural” space in a progress that is itself narrated as “natural’.’\textsuperscript{3} Portuguese imperial administrators utilized a toolkit of recognizable national symbols to present Portuguese colonial expansion into Angola as an inevitable and natural progression.

Inanimate monuments illustrated this expansion and celebrated Portuguese nationalism and imperial expansion, impacting how settlers and colonized subjects understood Angola as a historical and political site of memory. Within this article, I use the term “monument” to refer specifically to material objects (most often statues) that celebrate a person or event. This recognizes a distinction between memorials, which may be celebratory or mournful, and monuments, which, as cultural scholar James E. Young notes, are almost always celebratory and political.\textsuperscript{4} And yet, not all of the Portuguese commemorative products were inanimate

\textsuperscript{2} A military coup of 28 May 1926 overthrew Portugal’s democratically elected government and ushered in a period of dictatorship that lasted until 1974. António Salazar, first appointed as Minister of Finance in 1928, became the all-powerful Chief of Cabinet (Presidente do Conselho de Ministros) in 1932 until suffering a stroke in 1968. The Estado Novo (New State), as it became known from 1933, became increasingly fascist in its crushing of dissent and corporatist governance model.


monuments; many of them were theatrical in nature and staged colonial power within a theatre of objects. In addition to monuments lionizing early colonizers, New State leaders invested in a series of international expositions, designed to reinforce colonial narratives of power and development, most notably the 1938 Exposição-feira de Angola in Luanda, the first to be held in a Portuguese colony. The 1938 exposition not only capitalized on memorial symbols but also featured the presence of such dignitaries as the Portuguese president to highlight the economic, administrative, and religious achievements of Portuguese Angola. Officials stressed the shared sacrifices that made possible these same achievements whilst also eliding social and class divisions among white settlers. By 1963, when the first Feira Industrial de Luanda was held, planners focused almost exclusively on economic development, none of the pavilions highlighting aspects of the civilizing mission that had been so prominent in the 1938 Exposição-feira. The change reflected the reality of a nationalist war for Angolan independence begun in 1961 and the New State’s growing emphasis on economic development as a means to defeat the nationalist insurgency.

In each case, the memorial nexus generated by these objects, sites, and events was inherently attuned to articulations of power, control, and cultural hegemony. For this reason, Henri Lefebvre’s concept of “social space” is useful in deconstructing how Portuguese leaders – political, economic, and religious – used

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5 For a comparative case where ideas of shared sacrifice have been used to legitimize settler colonialism, see Jeremy Silvester, “‘Sleep with a Southwester’: Monuments and Settler Identity in Namibia’ in Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen (eds), Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 271-286.
6 Diário de Luanda, 5-27 October 1963.
monuments and fairgrounds to impose a political reality on a subjected African population. As a social space, for example, the *Exposição-feira* made a bold statement through a variety of aesthetic means, positing Angola as an integral part of Portugal’s cultural, political, and economic system. In terms of its design concept and integrated pavilions, the space reflected the superstructures of society and reinforced colonial hegemony, thus becoming a deliberate “stage” for the performance of an imperialist narrative.

Angola provides a distinct case study in which Portuguese leaders calculatedly used monuments and situated art not only to create a historical narrative celebrating Portuguese settlement as the supposed beginning of Angolan history, but also as a means of impressing its citizens and the local African population with technological display. Portuguese leaders emphasized the permanent and vital link between Angola and Europe (Portugal), not only as a starting point but as the guarantor of a “civilized” future. This cultural form of imperialism made use of both traditional and newer forms of commemoration to reinforce the image of a benevolent Portugal and to heroicize its political figures. One potent example of this marriage between the memorial and the technological also hails from the memorial period in question: the 1939 film, *Viagem do Chefe do Estado às Colónias de Angola e São Tomé e Príncipe*, directed by António Lopes Ribeiro. The film, which strategically utilized images from the aforementioned 1938 exposition, chronicled the first presidential visit to an African colony by a

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Portuguese head of state and thereby reinforced the “Portugalization” of African space.⁸

When considered as a memorial diptych, the staged 1938 exposition and its “documentary” realization became a persuasive piece of cultural propaganda for the New State and its interests, with a proposed audience that stretched from Lisbon to Luanda and beyond. During the 1930s-1940s in Portugal the leaders of the corporatist New State used the African colonies to support their concept of Portugal as a heroic, pan-continental power. The terminology “Portugal Maior” [Greater Portugal] captures this concept. In Angola, authorities venerated Portuguese colonial settlement as the founding of a “civilized”, Christian identity closely linked and descending from Portugal. The concept of Portugal Maior reflected broader trends among imperial powers to justify their overseas expansion. Consequently and strategically, African resistance – military and cultural – had no place in this construct. Africans themselves only found cultural acceptance if they submitted to Portuguese authority and adopted Portuguese culture as beneficiaries of a benevolent civilizing mission.

After the outbreak of the liberation war for independence in 1961, official newsreels and documentary films showcased economic development. Rather than portraying Africans as merely passive recipients of Portuguese benevolence, post-1961 films presented Africans as active participants in building a Portuguese Angola.

For Portuguese settlers in Angola, commemoration of the colonial project reinforced a worldview and marked Angola as Portuguese space.

Analysis of these varied memorial projects constitute the crux of this article, which contributes an Angolan case study to the historical literature concerning commemoration by colonial powers in Africa. New State leaders staged memory as a means to solidify their control over Angola and to convince Angolans and Portuguese of a shared culture and history. Here I focus primarily on strategically situated memorial activities and projects that occurred during two important political phases of the New State in Angola: the formational 1930s and the consolidating 1940s-1970s. Commemoration in the later period – particularly after the start of Angolans’ anti-colonial war for independence in 1961 – continued to emphasize the grand narrative of Portugal’s development of Angola, but now with an emphasis on the creation of a multi-racial, modern, and economically prosperous Angola, where all citizens were equally Portuguese. New State leaders also promoted *Lusotropicalismo*, an idea theorized by the Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre to the effect that the Portuguese were exceptional colonizers because of their ability to adapt to the tropics and miscegenate with local populations.9 From the 1950s, New State leaders utilized Freyre’s ideas to counter a growing international condemnation of Portuguese colonialism and to argue that Portuguese colonialism created multi-racial societies without the sort of racial segregation and tension found in other colonial empires. During the consolidating phase of memorial

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activities, images of Angolan flora and fauna functioned symbolically to situate Angola’s ecosystems within the borders of the Portuguese Empire. Like the white settler state in South Africa, Portuguese colonial administrators in Angola legitimized their conquest of the land by declaring themselves stewards of the flora and fauna. Portugal had long touted this stewardship through presentations of Angola flora and fauna at international expositions and in the promotion of botanical gardens in Portugal that featured native plants from the colonies.

Situating the Past in 1930s Angola

As Pierre Nora has written, ‘memory is blind to all but the group it binds.’ He explains how ‘memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects.’ Thus, Luanda’s built environment, including what Nora called ‘sites of memory,’ reinforced a heroic interpretation of Portugal’s overseas expansion. Statues provide perhaps the most obvious and concrete examples of Portugal’s commemorative efforts in Luanda and in sites across Angola during this formative phase. The selectivity of these statues conditioned the memory of all who lived in Angola (African subjects and Portuguese settlers) to focus on the heroic aspects of

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11 Nineteenth-century examples of Portugal using Angola flora to promote the Portuguese Empire included presentations showcasing Angolan botany by Friedrich Welwitsch at the Paris Exposition of 1855 and the 1862 Universal Exposition in London. Welwitsch attended both expositions as a delegate of the Portuguese government. Welwitsch worked in Angola for seven years (1853-1860) during which time he assembled a massive collection of flora specimens, including the eponymously named Welwitschia mirabilis.


13 Pierre Nora, ‘Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire’ in Representations 26 (Spring 1989), 8. Translated by Marc Roudebush.
Portuguese national identity and the nation-state’s conquest of foreign lands and peoples without consideration of its costs or victims.\textsuperscript{14} Within the literature, the Angolan context has been little considered, and therefore offers an opportunity to examine the specific ideological needs and aesthetic contexts that helped to shape its memorial landscape over time.

And yet, such memorials were certainly not unique to Angola; as other studies detail, similar memorial practices were widespread throughout southern Africa, such as in Mozambique, where Portuguese authorities honored the specific leaders of colonial conquest and pacification in that colony.\textsuperscript{15} German and British imperial projects in neighboring colonies likewise commemorated their own national heroes, conquering generals, explorers, and settlers, as a way of symbolically conquering and reordering their African colonies.\textsuperscript{16} As Martin Murray has written about white settler commemoration in South Africa, “The unmistakable message was that so-called nonwhite people never produced any material culture worthy of mention and that in fact they were “people without history”.”\textsuperscript{17} This power to control the historical past and present was important to all types of

\textsuperscript{14} For an interesting study of monument building in colonial Mozambique during the 1930s, see Gerbert Verheij, “Monumentalidade e espaço público em Lourenço Marques nas décadas de 1930 e 1940: Dois casos de estudo,” (M.A. thesis, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2011).


\textsuperscript{17} Murray, Commemorating and Forgetting, pp. 29-30.
political power, but particularly indicative of imperialism, for as Edward Said notes, in the imperialist view, ‘the outlying regions of the world have no life, history, or culture to speak of, no independence or integrity worth representing without the West.’

The conception of imperialist space as a theatrical stage for political expression has already been raised in the southern African context, most recently by Marion Wallace who has detailed the impact of official governmental tours in the early part of the twentieth century. After South Africa took control of South West Africa (SWA, now Namibia) in 1915, visits by Sydney Buxton, Governor-General of South Africa and thus Britain’s highest-ranked representative in southern Africa, reinforced British imperial power. The visits aimed to impress primarily the German settler population, but also local Africans, that they were now part of the British imperial sphere. Buxton’s highly choreographed tours ‘contributed to the binding together of white interests in the territory…the lavish ways in which power was performed during the repetitive ritual and ceremony of their visits to Namibian towns were intended to reinforce this end’. Wallace emphasizes these tours not merely as obligatory state visits, but as a performance of political power that necessarily had to straddle the various audiences it sought to convince. Angola presents another complex theater for such activities, and visits by Portuguese dignitaries to Angola also served to convince the local settler population and African subjects of imperial power and authority. This was especially important in the

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context of Angola because of criticism from Afro-Portuguese elites that Portugal was a weak power that had done little to develop Angola. As an Afro-Portuguese journalist wrote in 1901, ‘Portuguese Africa is despised, enslaved, without light, and abandoned in a criminal fashion by its conquerors to an ignorance for which it is not responsible’.21

In the 1930s, imperial and white settler powers utilized the latest European propaganda techniques to advance their message. Highly choreographed political celebrations and their accompanying documentary films, such as those directed by Leni Riefenstahl for the National Socialists in Germany, served as a potent model. In 1938, for example, Afrikaners celebrated the centenary of the 1838 “Great Trek” into the South African interior with reenactments across the country lasting four months and culminating in a ceremony to lay the foundational stone of the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria. Africans did not participate in the festivities because they were not included as part of the Afrikaner “volk”.22 The aim of the celebrations was to unite Afrikaners around a common and exclusive history and future. Torch processions preceded the final proceedings and contributed to the emotive power of the ceremonies.23 Such celebrations were used to inculcate the so-called civilizing mission and white racial supremacy. That same year, colonial leaders in Angola also harnessed the latest propaganda techniques to craft their own cinematic and commemorative productions, but their ideological intent

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23 Grundlingh and Sapire, “From Feverish Festival”, p. 20.
contrasts with that of South Africa. In Angola, New State leaders sought to promote the notion of Portuguese cultural supremacy uniting a pan-continental Portugal [Portugal Maior].

These subtle contextual differences reinforce the assertion that such memorial performances are not interchangeable, for as Lefebvre argues in *The Production of Space*, social and political space should never be misunderstood as an empty and passive surface, ‘a *tabula rasa* that enables things to “take place” and action to ground itself somewhere.’ Rather, it is an actively produced stage that reflects the specific concerns and desires of its developers and audience. Therefore, one must resist the easy temptation to read similar memorial activities in Southern African countries as identical in meaning, in part because they are situated in very specific and distinct geopolitical contexts. For example, New State leaders “staged” their account of Angolan history for multiple publics: the Portuguese public in metropolitan Portugal as well as white settlers, “natives” and “civilized” in Angola. The South African “stage,” however, differed fundamentally from the colonial Portuguese model, in that South Africa’s link to Europe provided a foundational moment but not a continuous connection. Portuguese leaders sought to celebrate

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25 In 1926 the Native Statute (Estatuto Político, Social e Criminal dos Indígenas de Angola e Moçambique) created a special legal status for African ‘natives’, the *Indigenato*, which structured relations between *indígenas* [“natives”] and *não-indígenas* [“non-natives”]. These legal categories codified existing categories and practices. In order to be deemed *civilizado* [“civilized”, the legal term to refer to black and mixed-raced people who were not under the Native Statue, and considered Portuguese citizens], black and mixed-raced people had to pass an examination administered by a colonial official.
the benefits of continued control from Lisbon; whereas the South African state, independent since 1910, sought to justify white nativity and control.\textsuperscript{26}

In 1926 the Portuguese military overthrew the democratic First Republic and installed a military dictatorship until the installation of the autocratic \textit{Estado Novo} [New State] in 1932. In 1930, António Salazar, at the time Minister of Finance and Colonies, promulgated the Colonial Act, which ended financial autonomy for Angola and put the Angolan administration firmly under the control of the Colonial Ministry in Lisbon. In 1932 Salazar became the leader of the New State, and he ruled Portugal until 1968 when he suffered a severe stroke. Salazar believed fervently in what he considered the sacred duty of the Portuguese as a colonizing people, and he used his power to provide economic incentives to encourage Portugal’s economic elites to invest in the colonies and support the colonial mission. Salazar’s government fostered a mythologized “empire” where successive generations of Portuguese carried out their civilizing mission under a sort of “divine providence”.\textsuperscript{27}

Most of the monuments erected in Angola date from the period of the New State. Although memorial statues were not at the forefront of the nineteenth-century built landscape, a few examples of heroic commemoration that did exist would later become absorbed into the staged memorial efforts of the New State. For example, colonial authorities inaugurated a statue of Salvador Correia, who had reconquered Angola from the Dutch in 1648, on March 5, 1874, in the Praça Dom


Pedro V [King Peter V Square] in front of the Governor’s Palace. [See Image 1]

Leaders of the New State later used the statue as an official site for state memory, staging welcoming ceremonies for visiting dignitaries and formally celebrating national holidays. Correia's monument represented the founding and constancy of Portuguese rule, thus it became a focal point for celebrations and commemorations. For example, part of the official welcoming ceremony to Luanda for Portuguese President Carmona in 1938 included a wreath-laying ceremony at the Correia monument and filmmaker António Lopes Ribeiro captured the President’s arrival at the monument, against the backdrop of cheering crowds and flag-draped buildings in his documentary.28 Anthropologist Don Handelman defines these types of staged public events as ‘phenomenally valid forms that mediate persons into collective abstractions, by inducing action, knowledge and experience through these selfsame forms...Their mandate is to engage in the ordering of ideas, people, and things. As phenomena, they not only are cognitively graspable, but also emotionally livable.’29 The emotive power of staged events such as President Carmona’s wreath laying at the foot of Correia’s monument buttressed support for the New State’s colonial project and aligned New State leaders with Portugal’s seventeenth-century colonial expansion and perceived greatness.30

28 António Lopes Ribeiro, Viagem do Chefe do Estado às Colónias de Angola e São Tomé e Príncipe (1939)
30 For an analysis of ‘personal circuits’ – the visits by imperial dignitaries to colonial Africa and the role of these visits in the maintenance of power, see Marion Wallace, “Personal Circuits: Official Tours and South Africa’s Colony” Journal of Southern African Studies Vol. 41, No. 3 (2015): 635-652.
Under the New State there were no greater public events than the series of national and international expositions that took place between 1934 and 1940. In the 1930s leaders of the Estado Novo planned a series of expositions to celebrate the Portuguese Empire. The first of these major expositions, the 1934 Exposição Colonial Portuguesa, took place in Porto and touted the cultural and economic progress of each of Portugal’s colonies.31 Four years later Luanda hosted the 1938 Exposição-feira, a showcase for Angola’s economic development, future prospects, and cultural

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transformation into a proud partner in the Portuguese Empire. Two years later, New State authorities hosted the largest exposition of all, in Lisbon, the *Exposição do Mundo Português*.\(^{32}\) The colonies constituted a major focus of this final exposition, not only in the programming and cultural events, but also in the built environment; the grounds included a monument commemorating Colonial Will ['ao esforço colonial'], a Colonial Garden, and a Colonial Pavilion, all of which served as sites of memorial activity during the exposition.\(^{33}\)

New State leader António Salazar used Portugal’s colonizing history to launch an updated epic of Portugal as an intrepid, sea-faring nation with a long history of discovery and colonization. A popular image and slogan dating to the 1934 Portuguese Colonial Exposition in Porto states: ‘Portugal não é pequeno’ ['Portugal is not small'] emblazoned over a map of Europe with Portugal’s colonies superimposed to celebrate and emphasize the territorial extent of the Portuguese Empire.\(^{34}\) This account aimed to affirm a strong national identity and to convince a Portuguese public dispirited by economic stagnation of their country’s international importance.\(^{35}\) New State planners used each fair to refute international perceptions of an economically weak Portugal unable to manage its African colonies.

Angola’s Governor, António Lopes Mateus, led the effort for the 1938 *Expoção-feira de Angola* in order ‘to realize in Luanda an exposition that...


\(^{34}\) This is image may be found on Google Images.

progress, noted in all the vast territory of Angola.’36 The dramatic transformation of an undeveloped bluff overlooking the Atlantic Ocean on the outskirts of Luanda into a magical exposition fairground served as an important symbol of this progress. Planners, including the architect Fernando Batalha used electricity—new to the city in 1937—to highlight the aesthetic reference to modernity visible in the art deco motifs and clean architectural lines of the buildings. Tellingly, at the center of the exposition stood a monumental obelisk commemorating *Portugal Colonizador* [‘Portugal the Colonizer’],37 and at night electric lights illuminated the word ‘Portugal’ atop the monument.

Over 100 pavilions and stalls were spread out across the fairgrounds, and all of the buildings were temporary, erected specifically for the exposition. [Images 2 & 3] Private companies constructed many of the pavilions; others were built by the provincial administrations of Luanda, Benguela, Bié, Huíla, and Malanje, and public-private partnerships such as the Angolan Railways and the Port of Luanda. The official program listed among other themes: ‘colonization and demography, administration, agriculture and forests, geology, animal husbandry, industry, trade, tourism, communications and transportation, education and sports, health and hygiene, fisheries, and art.’38 The Grand Assembly Hall included individual stalls showcasing graphic statistics on topics such as: ‘White Agriculture’, ‘the Native Population’, and ‘Catholic Missions’. The fairgrounds also included a life-size replica

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37 In a 1950 book, Batalha describes the square as one of the most important urban planning techniques brought to Angola by the Portuguese. Fernando Batalha, *A Urbanização de Angola* (Luanda: Museu de Angola, 1950).
of the Fortaleza da Muxima, a seventeenth-century Portuguese fort located on the Kwanza River inland from Luanda. The fort had served as a headquarters and home to Portuguese colonists and loyalists who held out against a Dutch occupation of Luanda in the seventeenth century. Thus, the reconstructed fort both memorialized Portuguese sacrifice and reminded audiences of past sacrifice and resolve against foreign enemies.

From August 15 to September 18, 1938, the Exposição-feira attracted 70,000 visits. Local reporters estimated the crowd at the opening ceremony at 10,000. Planners intended the Exposição-feira to be the event of the decade in Angola, one to be remembered and referenced for years to come, and thus engaged staged rituals of political pomp and circumstance. Officials arrived at the fairgrounds and entered the main gate through an honor guard, including the First Company of Native Infantry. Luanda's Diario de Luanda newspaper described the scene:

Flags and banners flutter from the innumerable masts encircling the parade ground. In the distance rises the monument to the colonizing force of the Portuguese, beautiful and vigorous, it attests to the power of the race. On top, above everything, men and buildings, there high above, as a symbol and as reason for our own Exposition: PORTUGAL.39

The linear and symmetrical spacing of the buildings, the art deco architecture, the square and parade ground, all deliberately reflected the state’s new approaches to urban planning in the tropics. By the 1930s in Angola the ‘sanitation syndrome’, a set of policies that promoted the segregation of Europeans from Africans ostensibly as a means of protecting Europeans from diseases endemic among Africans, was

39 Diário de Luanda 16 August 1938.
used to justify increasing racial segregation. Pamphlets compiled by the Geographical Society in Lisbon in the 1940s instructed prospective colonists to construct barriers between themselves and Africans in order to guarantee continued Portuguese rule. The fairground’s built environment and location overlooking the sea exemplified these ideas by constructing – or in some cases reconstructing – ideological and symbolic Portuguese models for urban colonial centers.

The colonial agenda of these built spaces was only underscored by the events that were then layered upon them, thus imbuing them with both aesthetic and political rhetoric. The opening ceremonies included a series of talks focused on Angola’s historical, religious, and economic progress from a colonial standpoint: ‘Angola’s Destiny’, by Dr. Manuel Murias, director of the Arquivo Histórico Colonial; ‘Missionary Work in Angola’, by D. Moisés Alves de Pinho, the Bishop of Angola and Congo; and ‘The Colony’s Economic Situation’, by Dr. Carlos de Moura Carvalho, a local lawyer. In his opening remarks, Governor António Lopes Mateus, extolled Angola’s economic development and made an explicit link between the bravery and integrity symbolized in the recreated Fortaleza da Muxima, and the forms of

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progress showcased in the *Exposição-feira*.\textsuperscript{43} He reminded his audience that the fort ‘inspires our patriotism to defend the wealth of Angola, which pertains to us by historic right, against foreign aggression.’\textsuperscript{44} This idea of foreign aggression against Portugal’s right as a colonial power had been and would continue to be used as a rallying cry to support the *Estado Novo*.

Even the fair’s entertainment offerings included intentional messages about the superiority of Portuguese culture and the purposed primitiveness of African culture. A dancing pavilion featured an orchestra from the Teatro Variedades ‘one of the principal theatres in Lisbon’ and sporting demonstrations, including tennis champions Gabriela Cantarino, Eduardo Ricciardi, and Domingos Avillez.\textsuperscript{45} A group of Portuguese ballerinas performed on a special stage, with a separate stage designated, according to the official guidebook, for ‘native dancers who performed dances and songs...a spectacle of great interest, especially to foreigners.’\textsuperscript{46} The fair also contained an anthropological component highlighting African cultures and the positive impacts of Portuguese tutelage. A ‘model native village’ strategically situated on the edge of the fairgrounds allowed visitors to view a model of African village life and a pavilion of ‘native art’ and ‘native dancers.’ Colonial expositions often displayed indigenous peoples to highlight contrasts between colonial

\addcontentsline{toc}{chapter}{Notes}


\textsuperscript{44} Discurso de S. Ex. O Governador Geral, Coronel António Lopes Mateus, Proferido na Sessão de Abertura da Exposição-Feira de Angola,” *Actividade Económica de Angola* Números 9 a 12 (Março a Dezembro de 1938), pp. 7-12.

\textsuperscript{45} Henrique Galvão, *Album Comemorativo da Exposição-Feira de Angola.* (Porto: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1938), pp. 4-5.

\textsuperscript{46} *Guia da Exposição-feira de Angola* (Luanda: Edição da Agência Técnica de Publicidade Patrocinada pela Direcção da Exposição, 1938).
development and so-called primitive society. For example, in 1936 organizers of the Empire Exhibition in Johannesburg displayed Khoisan people as “living fossils”.47 Other expositions held during the Estado Novo included staged ‘native villages’: the Lisbon Industrial Exposition (1932), the Portuguese Colonial Exhibition (1934), and the Exhibition of the Portuguese World (1940).48

Apart from the demonstrations of African cultural life and their supporting role as service personnel, black Angolans did not feature prominently in the fair, though presumably some attended as visitors. They remained only in a peripheral relation to European culture—at the edge of the fairgrounds, on separate stages, absorbed into the backdrop of the exposition’s workforce. In this regard, the fair reflected the colonial attitudes of the New State in the 1930s: its location outside the city, the organization of its representational infrastructure, the content of talks and exhibits, and even the cost of admission were all aimed to attract resident Portuguese colonists and international visitors, not black Angolans. The themes and physical space of the 1938 Exposition reflected a worldview of Angola as an extension of Portugal and of white settlers as the agents of the civilized world. By the 1950s, some within the white settler community would begin to think of an independent Angola run by whites, modeled after neighboring Rhodesia.49

Image 2: Overview of the 1938 A Exposição-feira de Angola

Image 3: Map of Exposição–feira e Angola
The ideological potential of the Luanda exposition was not limited to on-site visitors alone; its memorial backdrop was brought back to Portugal through the medium of film, which presented both the events and the imagery of the colonial site to a European audience. As noted, Portugal’s President Carmona made the first visit ever of a Portuguese head of state to an African colony, in order to open Luanda’s 1938 Exposição-feira. To document the trip, Portugal’s National Propaganda Office (‘Secretariado da Propaganda Nacional’ or SPN), which had been created by New State leaders in 1933 to inculcate support for the new regime, sent filmmaker António Lopes Ribeiro and a crew to document the president’s visit. In the 1930s, working for the National Propaganda Office provided consistent and lucrative work for Portuguese filmmakers, and state support helped move the project along in a timely fashion.

Ribeiro released his documentary film, Viagem do Chefe do Estado às Colónias de Angola e São Tomé e Príncipe, in 1939, the first of a series of films created for the New State that situated the regime’s colonial message among documentary images of colonial and memorial display: O Feitiço do Império (‘The Witchcraft of the Empire’) in 1940 and A Exposição do Mundo Português (‘The Exposition of the Portuguese World’) in 1941. For Viagem do Chefe do Estado, the state paid for a team of well-known artists to work on the film, including conductor Pedro de

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50 In 1944, the SPN became the National Secretariat of Information, Popular Culture, and Tourism (Secretariado Nacional de Informação, Cultura Popular e Tourismo, or SNI).
Freitas Branco, who oversaw the music, and Isy Goldberger and Manuel Luís Vieira, who directed the photography. Ribeiro clearly set out to document the President’s trip as cementing ties and affection between Portugal and the colonies. The film itself is essentially a montage of ceremonies and public events; Ribeiro films the president and his entourage leaving Lisbon followed by a series of arrivals and welcomes in specific colonial sites. Each ceremony shares the common characteristics of political spectacle: emotional crowds, banners reading ‘Viva o Estado Novo’ and ‘Viva Salazar’. The film’s opening credits also sought to elevate the images with the claim that the footage ‘gives only a pallid idea of the warmth and affection with which the peoples of São Tomé and Angola greeted the President of the Republic’. At times, visible emotion appears to overcome crowds of Africans as they encircle the president and his party or chase his motorcade.

The film follows the president on his journey to the coastal towns of Porto Amboim, Lobito, and Moçâmades. He visits factories and public works projects (Cassequel Sugar Refinery near Lobito and a dam on the Catumbela River), coffee plantations (São Tomé), and meets with cheerful-looking colonists. The impact of the film in Portugal cannot be underestimated. The film’s images made the colonies real and accessible for the Portuguese public, while seeing sites of Angolan investment and the cheering crowds greeting the president reinforced the message of a greater Portugal, bound by culture, history, and economics. Ribeiro deliberately

52 “Viagem do Chefe do Estado às Colônias de Angola e São Tomé e Príncipe” (1939) Directed by António Lopes Ribeiro. The original film may be viewed at ANIM, the archival facility for Cinemateca Portuguesa-Museu. For more information see http://www.cinemateca.pt/Servicos/Acesso-Arquivo-Filmico.aspx
chose the documentary aesthetic of a newsreel, which presumably added to the film’s documentary credibility. Portuguese viewers could not help but be impressed by these recognizable signs of technological progress as well as the adoring crowds, deliberately juxtaposed with scenes that promoted a more exotic vision of Angola, such as game drive near Moçâmedes and sequences featuring anonymous African leaders in ceremonial dress.

Within the film, all the memorial sites discussed thus far became political stages for the choreography of political spectacle. Ribeiro capitalized on their potent imagery and inherent subtexts; not only are the actions of the President noteworthy; rather, where these actions took place also contributes to the film’s political message. In Luanda, the president opens the *Exposição-feira*, lays a wreath at the monument to Salvador Correia, and then, contributes a ceremonial first stone to the construction of a new monument to Dom Afonso Henriques. [Image 4] A message on the screen informs the viewer that the monument is being “paid for by donations from natives,” again advancing the message that black Angolans embraced Portuguese colonialism. The film ends with the triumphant return of the president’s steamship to Lisbon. Crucially, the film offers another example of a staged public event aimed to inculcate in its target audience a reverence for and appreciation of the New State authorities and the idea of Portugal as a benevolent colonizing power. Moreover, it highlights the power of film to meld myriad memorial sites into a coherent narrative and to create a virtual means for Portuguese citizens to experience the colonies and their memorial symbols through a specific political lens.
Situating the Past after 1940

In the 1940s and beyond Portuguese authorities would continue to stress these same messages in currency, expositions, films, and monuments. One factor influencing these monuments was the significant population growth that marked the New State decades. For example, between 1940 and 1960 Luanda’s population quadrupled from 61,028 to 224,240, and these numbers nearly doubled to 480,613 in 1970. The growing population resulted from a boom in agricultural exports and state investment in infrastructure—both of which attracted tens of thousands of Portuguese settlers and African migrants from across the region. During this period Luanda’s assimilados [Africans who had assimilated Portuguese culture and thus received rights of Portuguese citizenship] and mestiços [people of mixed racial backgrounds] increasingly experienced prejudice as more prestigious jobs went to Portuguese immigrants.

It was in this context in 1940 that New State authorities inaugurated one of Luanda’s most prominent monuments, the statue of Dom Afonso Henriques, Portugal’s first king, standing in the centrally located Praça D. Afonso Henriques. As noted above, President Carmona had laid the monument’s first stone during his 1938 visit and filmmaker Ribeiro had captured the ceremony. The Liga Nacional Africana, a cultural association founded in 1929 by assimilados, paid for the

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monument’s construction.\textsuperscript{56} Ribeiro cited the sacrifice of the Liga’s members as evidence of their patriotism and devotion to Portugal. The fact that Ribeiro found it necessary to assure his Portuguese audience of the loyalty of assimilados revealed the tensions below the surface.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a nationalist sentiment developed among assimilados and mestiços living in Angola’s main coastal towns. Although they did not advocate independence from Portugal, these elites grappled with their ambiguous role as both critics of and complicit supporters of Portuguese colonialism. Newspapers were their primary vehicle to critique Portuguese colonialism and to discuss a growing sense of what it meant to be Angolan. Norton de Matos, who served as High Commissioner in Angola between 1921-1923, persecuted the assimilado and mestiço press under suspicion of promoting anti-Portuguese agitation.\textsuperscript{57} He also shut down assimilado cultural association such as the Liga Angolana (founded in 1912) and the Grêmio Africano (founded in 1913) for fostering ‘nativist’ ideas. Successive colonial governors after Norton de Matos censored the independent press, so that by the late 1920s their public voiced has been largely silenced.\textsuperscript{58}

\textsuperscript{56} According to the Liga’s Estatutos (Regulations), the organization focused on ‘the creation of schools and libraries for the literary, moral, and professional development of its members and their children.’ Membership required the payment of monthly dues and literacy in Portuguese. Excluded from membership were ‘married women without the authorization of their husbands’, and ‘those who demonstrated bad morals.’ “Governo-geral’ ‘Associações/Estatutos/Liga Nacional Africana’ 1930,” Caixas de Luanda, Caixa 1037, Arquivo Histórico de Angola (AHA).
It was against this backdrop that Ribeiro hailed the Liga Nacional Africana’s supposed patriotism. However, in a fascinating, twenty-five page letter sent in 1951 to the United Nations in New York via the diplomatic pouch of the U.S. Consul in Luanda, members of the Liga Nacional Africana painstakingly detailed the systematic abuses of African rights under the Estado Novo in Angola. They cited frequent requests to the government made by the Liga Nacional Africana to use part of the monies raised by the native tax [imposto indígena] to create a dedicated fund focused on uplifting the economic and social life of the native population. According to the letter, the government told members of the Liga Nacional Africana ‘to contribute to this monument [of D. Afonso Henriques] which had absolutely no utility for the natives.’ The implication being that if Liga members refused to raise money for the monument, they would lose their charter and would thus be forced to shut the organization down. This letter exposes how authorities manipulated the Liga Nacional Africana to pay for the monument of Dom Afonso Henriques and then used that financial support for propaganda purposes. The reality under the façade of African support for Portuguese colonialism was growing resentment of colonial racism and inequality.

On August 14, 1948, authorities unveiled a monument to Paulo Dias de Novais, who founded Luanda in 1573. The date of the unveiling marked three centuries since Salvador Correia (re)conquered Angola from a Dutch occupation,


thus the unveiling signified multiple layers of historical meaning. By erecting a statue and choosing an unveiling date of historical significance, the authorities aimed to build on the image of Angola as part of Portugal. In addition to the Paulo Dias de Novais monument [1948] monuments to Portuguese business, church, military, and civic leaders were erected in cities and town across Angola. Examples include statues honoring: General Henrique de Carvalho [1943], a nineteenth-century explorer who led an expedition to Lunda in eastern Angola, in the eponymously named capital of Lunda – Vila Henrique de Carvalho; General Artur de Paiva, who led the conquest of southern Angola, in the central square of the capital of Huíla Province, Sá da Bandeira; and General Norton de Matos [1962], who served as Governor of Angola (1912-15) and High Commissioner (1921-1923), in Nova Lisboa, the city he helped to build with the idea that it would become the capital of Angola. Towns (re)named for Portuguese explorers, conquerors, and businessmen often had a small monument to their namesake in a central square or public space. A few examples include: Salazar, Sousa Lara, Serpa Pinto, Teixeira da Silva, and Robert Williams. The celebration of the great men of Portugal in statuary across Angola resembled contemporaneous hagiography of Cecil John Rhodes in British colonies in southern Africa. As Carolyn Holmes and Melanie Loehwing argue, these statues ‘celebrate the power and might of the minority rulers, and celebrate the “civilizing mission” undertaken on the continent in the name of

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61 In 1923, colonial authorities changed the name of Lunda’s capital, Saurimo, to Vila Henrique de Carvalho.
62 Acácio Pereira de Matos, Portugal Angola Itinerários de Angola (Luanda: O Centro de Informação e Turismo de Angola, 1966).
religion, empire, and race.’ In Angola, the erection of these statues reflected several factors, including Angola’s growing economic wealth and the regime’s determination to Portugalize the whole of Angolan space, beyond the capital city.

The (re)naming of streets, squares, schools, towns, and cities across Angola after Portuguese national heroes contributed to the colonial perception of Angola as an uncivilized and ‘blank space’ waiting for the inevitable occupation of Portuguese civilization. The act of naming helped Angola’s colonial rulers to create a new, Portuguese Angolan reality. As Martin J. Murray has argued for colonial South Africa, this kind of naming is an essential component of identity formation. The Portuguese names helped colonists and African subjects to understand Angola as an extended Portuguese space. Of course, how individuals refer to a place, especially one renamed by an authoritarian government, does not always conform to official dictates. Individuals may, for example, refer to a place by its pre-colonial name, or give a statue an alternative designation. For example, in 1935 the colonial government of Angola constructed an allegorical statue in Luanda memorializing the Portuguese soldiers killed in the “African campaigns” against the Germans in the south of Angola during World War I (1914-1918). The marble statue was located in what was officially called the Largo Lusíadas in central Luanda. However, for the Angolan population, the place was known as the Largo da Kianda (Mermaid). Among Luanda’s white population, the place was known colloquially as the Largo Maria da Fonte (a Portuguese heroine thought to have lead a popular uprising in

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63 Holmes and Loehwing, "Icons of the Old Regime," 1212.
64 Murray, *Commemorating and Forgetting*, pp. 42-43.
65 Interview with Angolan historian Maria Conceição Neto, 24 June 2014, Luanda.
66 After independence the same place became known as Largo Kinaxixe.
1846 in northern Portugal). This example of appropriation demonstrates that naming was not a closed process and that sites could be re-inscribed by specific constituencies, and yet the authority to name places was one of the most powerful tools colonial authorities used to lay claim to Angolan space.

**Image 4: D. Afonso Henriques**

Images of Portugal Maior in the 1950s and 1970s

During the consolidating phase of memorial practices, Angolan currency (coin and paper) was another staged space to represent colonial expansion. In addition to the usual symbols of Portugal Maior, authorities used images of flora and fauna and economic development to memorialize imperial modernity. Many of the same explorers, generals, and administrators honored in toponyms and celebrated in monuments were also featured on Angola’s money. In the 1950s, the angolar(es), Angola’s currency between 1928 and 1958, included scenes of the landings of Diogo Cão (1,000 angolares bill) and Salvador Correia (20 angolares bill). The reverse side of these notes depicted Angolan wildlife. According to the Organic Law of the Overseas Provinces of 1953, the Portuguese escudo became the monetary unit in all the Portuguese territories.67 In 1956, the Bank of Angola issued a new series of bills with effigies honoring Angolan explorers: Brito Capelo, Roberto Ivens, Serpa Pinto, Henrique de Carvalho, and Silva Porto, in the respective values of 1,000$00, 500$00, 100$00, 50$00 and 20$00.68 [Image 5] Engravings of animals continued as a motif on the bills, which for the first time showcased symbols of Portuguese economic development in Angola: the bridge on the 100$00 angolares; the airport on the 50$00 angolares, and the port on the 20$00 angolares. The use of Angolan fauna may be said to confirm the argument (by Mitchell, cited on p. 2) that imperialism

conceives of itself as an expansion of “culture” and “civilization” into a “natural” space, and in this case the Angolan natural environment finds itself encroached upon by modern symbols of economic development that reclaim Angolan space within the strategic representational sphere of currency, itself the vehicle of economic power. The decision to include examples of economic development for the first time on the currency reflected the broadening of the imperialist narrative beyond the “great men of the empire”. The new currency emphasized Angola’s flora and fauna and emerging economic power. In South Africa, white settlers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century used the country’s flora and fauna to construct a sense of national identity. In Angola, the symbology of flora and fauna functioned not to construct a national identity as in South Africa, but to bolster the Portugal Maior assertion that unique and disparate colonies formed a pan-continental Portuguese Empire. For Angola’s growing white settler population – which grew from 44,000 in 1940 to 172,000 in 1960 – flora and fauna alongside the great men of Portugal Maior provided a unique and comforting symbolic pantheon.

Image 5: Angolan Paper Currency


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The redesign of the Angolan currency was not merely a trivial aesthetic decision; rather, it contributed strategically to the representational stature of the Portuguese Empire as powerful and progressive. After Angolan nationalists launched the war for independence in 1961, Portuguese authorities increasingly emphasized economic development as the keystone to maintaining control. In order to celebrate and encourage further economic development, the Economic Associations of Portugal, Mozambique and Angola (Associações Económicas da Metrópole, de Moçambique e de Angola) organized the Industrial Fair of Luanda (a Feira Industrial de Luanda, (FILDA)) in 1963. This was the first major industrial fair held in Luanda since 1938. It took place in the context of Portugal’s propaganda offensive to win the hearts and minds of Angolans and to defeat the nationalist war for independence. FILDA highlighted Angola's growing economy and its place within the larger Portuguese economy. The fair consisted of three great halls representing Portugal, Angola, and Mozambique. Unlike the 1938 fair, the 1963 fair focused exclusively on business and industry. There were no pavilions showcasing Portugal’s ‘civilizing mission’ or providing living museums of African customs. Organizers emphasized ‘going the distance’ and ‘having complete confidence in the future of the eternal homeland.’71 Editorials in the daily bulletin published by the fair’s organizers, argued that economic growth and industrial development were ‘in the interests of Angola, without ever failing to put first the sacred interests of the whole nation.’72 This emphasis on economic growth and development had become central to Portugal’s argument as to why the African colonies should remain

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71 5 October 1963, Diário de Feira Industrial de Luanda (1963)
72 11 October 1963, Diário de Feira Industrial de Luanda (1963)
Portuguese territory, even after the outbreak of the war for independence in 1961 and an international context in which the major colonial powers had agreed to political independence for most colonies. This focus on business would characterize the Industrial Fairs of Luanda (Feira Industrial de Luanda, (FILDA)) held annually between 1969-1974.

As we have seen, Estado Novo leaders used film effectively to convince the Portuguese public to support the idea of Portugal as an imperial power.\textsuperscript{73} This medium would become even more important for the regime after 1961. The government used newsreels, Imagens de Portugal, to persuade the Portuguese public that the colonies were crucial to the nation. According to Cordeiro da Silva Dias, ‘The main topic was therefore the Ultramar, the extension of the territory, of its people, and the civilizing mission of the Portuguese, and the second most important topic was the war. The reports usually focused on the economy (agriculture, industry, tourism, mining), sports, culture, and political and military events. Whenever possible, racial inclusion was emphasized.’\textsuperscript{74} This was similar to the messaging used by colonial propagandists in the 1930s at the Exposição-feira de Angola and in António Lopes Ribeiro’s film Viagem do Chefe do Estado às Colónias de Angola e São Tomé e Príncipe, but with the added themes of war, economic development, and the inclusion of Africans into a multi-racial society. The colonial government of Angola also produced a newsreel, Actualidades de Angola, which


began in 1957 and had 55 editions until 1961, when it halted production until 1967 (presumably because of the war), and then began production again until 1975. This second series (1967-1975) was produced by the Center for Information and Tourism of Angola (o Centro de Informação e Turismo de Angola, (CITA)).

*Actualidades de Angola* No. 101 of 1969, for example, focuses on the visit of Marcello Caetano, who had replaced an ailing Salazar as head of the Estado Novo. The title of the montage is *Triumphant Journey: Angola’s Embrace of the Prime Minister* (*Viagem Triunfal: O Abraço de Angola ao Presidente do Conselho*) and it is similar to the 1939 visit depicted in Lopes’ film. Much of the thirteen-minute newsreel is Caetano shaking hands of cheering crowds in various cities. The crowds are multiracial, thus supporting the regime’s argument that Angola is a multiracial land of opportunity. Other prominent themes in the *Actualidades de Angola* include: progress in defeating ‘the enemy’ that is fighting for independence, industrial development, and tourist sites – including swimming pools, gardens, hunting, and places of natural beauty like the Duque de Bragança Falls (renamed Kalundula Falls after independence).

Newsreels were screened before films in the movie theatres of mainland Portugal as well as in the colonies. The regime also sponsored the production of documentaries that reflected the themes of the newsreels: economic development of the colonies, success in the war against ‘the enemy’ or ‘the terrorists’ (as Angolan nationalists were dubbed), the integration of Africans into colonial society, and the

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good life of colonists. Documentaries created soon after 1961 make a clear
distinction between the savage acts carried out against colonists and their African
supporters, and the hard work of Portuguese colonialism. For example, in the
opening scenes of Angola – Decisão de Continuar, Vasco Hogan Teves’s 1962
documentary, a narrator declares: “This province that the Portuguese created with
their work and sacrifices to create a civilized land and a future of promise with
progress and greatness…where there is no distinction between colors…and the only
preoccupation is to work, to improve more land and people”. Director José Elyseu’s
1969 documentary, Marcello Caetano en África, about the Prime Minister’s visit to
Angola, focuses on the hero’s welcome give to Caetano. The film celebrates
colonial support for the war effort. Most of the crowds are whites, some of who go to
great lengths to touch, hug, or kiss Caetano. Signs reading ‘Portugal Maior’ and
‘Angola é Nossa’ (Angola is Ours) are seen repeatedly at each stop. The expression
‘Angola é Nossa’ came from a hymn, with music by Duarte Pestana and lyrics by
Santos Braga, composed in June 1961, to gather support for the Portuguese war
effort. In Angola, Portuguese troops marched to the hymn, it was sung in schools,
and used to open and closed radio broadcasts. The song’s evocative lyrics include
the finishing lines, ‘Angola é Nossa; Angola é Portugal’ (Angola is Ours; Angola is
Portugal).

In 1972, the Portuguese authorities commissioned plans for a memorial
pavilion with a monument to commemorate the life of recently deceased New State

76 Inês Cordeiro da Silva Dias, “Film and Politics in the Lusophone World (1960s-1970s),” (Ph.D.
77 Angola – Decisão de Continuar, Directed by Vasco Hogan Teves, 1962. 23 minutes.
78 Marcello Caetano en África, Directed by José Elyseu, 1969.
dictator António Salazar. [Image 6] Plans for the site reflected a modernist aesthetic consistent with what Portuguese-trained architects designed in Angola’s commercial centers during the 1950s-60s.\textsuperscript{79} Planning for Angola’s cities was centralized in Lisbon in the Office of Colonial City Planning [‘Gabinete de Urbanização Colonial’]; in the 1950s the name changed to the Office of Overseas City Planning [‘Gabinete de Urbanização do Ultramar’]. This office oversaw urban planning and commissioned Portuguese architects such as Fernando Batalha.\textsuperscript{80} Though the Salazar Memorial was never built—the overthrow of the Estado Novo in April 1974 led to Angolan independence in November 1975—its commissioning reflected the determination of Estado Novo leaders to remain in control of Angola. During the anti-colonial war for Angolan independence (1961-1975), many supporters of Portugal’s continued rule interpreted the commemorative statues as examples of courage, patriotism and state power.\textsuperscript{81} A Salazar Monument would add to the historical pantheon of colonial conquerors.

\textbf{Image 6: Proposed António Salazar Luanda Memorial}


\textsuperscript{80} Fernando Batalha is known for his modernist designs in Luanda. He also wrote and published on Angolan urbanization, for example, see Fernando Batalha, \textit{A urbanização de Angola} (Luanda: Edição do Museu de Angola, 1950).

\textsuperscript{81} See for example, Jerónimo Ramos, “Pedra que faz história” \textit{A Cidade Revista de Divulgação} (Luanda: No. 1 Dezembro 1971), pp. 12-15.
Conclusion

As this article demonstrates, the Portuguese state harnessed the power of nationalist propaganda in various monumental and media forms to galvanize people around a particular set of ideas. In most respects, Portuguese colonial policy-makers made arguments similar to ones promulgated by British colonial leaders, and white settlers, in neighboring SWA and South Africa about the so-called superiority of European culture and “natural” expansion into African space. Portuguese propaganda techniques to legitimize and strengthen their colonial power were contemporaneous with those of other powers in southern Africa. Estado Novo leaders used Portuguese imperial expansion to extend their view of Western
civilization and implement the “civilizing mission” in Angola in order to garner support for colonial rule from the Portuguese public and at least some sympathetic Angolans.

Perhaps the significant difference between Portuguese colonialism and other forms, however, was the insistence as late as the mid-1970s that the imperial connection retained legitimacy, even in the face of Angolan nationalist movements demanding independence. Assessing Angolan responses to Portuguese nationalist propaganda is difficult due to colonial-era press censorship and the silencing of Angolan voices in the archives. The opposition of the Liga Nacional Africana to the construction of the Afonso Henriques monument in the late 1930s, however, indicates that significant opposition to such narratives existed. After 1975, Angolan leaders rejected the basic tenets of colonialism including the greatness of Portuguese explorers and conquerors and the idea that the Portuguese brought civilization to Angola. Immediately following independence, the new government dismantled the vast majority of colonial-era monuments in Luanda and across the country as relics of a discredited regime. The currency changed from the escudo to the kwanza and most toponyms were changed to reflect a new pantheon of Angolan heroes and place names. Films produced in the first couple of years of independence celebrated the war for independence as the birth of a new country and celebrated an almost mythical connection between the land and the country’s new leaders.82 It was, in many ways, the birth of a new monumental culture.

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82 See, for example, ‘Uma Festa para Viver,’ directed by Ruy Duarte de Carvalho (1975) and ‘No Caminho de Estrelas homenagem ao poeta comarada António Agostinho Neto,’ directed by António Ole (1980).