

The Debate on Race Relations in the Portuguese Empire and Charles R. Boxer's Position¹

Diogo Ramada Curto²

Abstract

How do we read Charles Boxer's *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire (1450-1825)*? In order to identify the author's intention, three main analytical contexts should be taken into account. In England, Basil Davidson, among other journalists, took the lead of an anti-colonial discourse. In the US, academics like James Duffy participated in the same kind of debate. Finally, under the pressure of the emerging war in Angola at the beginning of 1961, Portuguese circles of academics and politicians prepared a variety of responses. Boxer arrived late to the debate on race relations and the nature of Portuguese colonialism, and his conservative views prevented him from becoming an anti-colonial intellectual. By the same token, his noble dream of objectivity in using the past also prevented him to accept established myths on Portuguese life in the tropics.

Keywords

Colonialism, Race relations, Charles R. Boxer, Historiography

Resumo

Como ler *As Relações Raciais no Império Colonial Português (1450-1825)* de Charles B. Boxer? Para colocar a intenção do autor nos seus contextos de pertinência, três exercícios analíticos deverão ser considerados. Em Inglaterra, Basil Davidson, entre outros jornalistas, foi pioneiro na elaboração de um discurso anti-colonial. Nos Estados Unidos, foram universitários, tais como James Duffy, que participaram no mesmo tipo de debate. Finalmente, sob a pressão do início da Guerra em Angola em 1961, os círculos portugueses ligados à academia e à política prepararam uma variedade de respostas. Boxer chegou tarde ao debate sobre as relações raciais e a natureza do colonialismo português. Do mesmo modo, o seu sonho nobre de objectividade nos usos historiográficos do passado impediu-o de aceitar os mitos que se estavam a estabelecer acerca do mundo que os portugueses criaram nos trópicos.

Palavras-Chave

Colonialismo, Relações Raciais, Charles R. Boxer, Historiografia

¹ Translated by Joshua Michael Marcotte. University of Minnesota. *E-mail:* marco084@umn.edu.

² New University of Lisbon, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, History Department, CesNova. 1069-061 Lisbon, Portugal. *E-mail:* dcur@fesh.unl.pt.

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In February 1957, Lord Hailey gave a talk at the Sociedade de Geografia as part of a conference titled “The Rising Spirit of Africanism.” Its published translation into Portuguese, which appeared in the Sociedade’s *Boletim* from the same year, misrepresented the spirit of the message that the former governor of various provinces in India (1924–1928, Punjab; 1928–1934, the region that is now known as Uttar Pradesh) and the coordinator of *African Survey: A Study of Problems Arising in Africa South of the Sahara* (1938) had delivered. According to the British conference participant, the large shift that had taken place in the last few decades was based in the emergence of the African voice.³ Sure, the attention given to the “native African”—not to be confused with nationalism, which had been imbued with a sense of what might more properly be considered tribalism—varied in scale: the attention given was quite noticeable in the British territories, also visible in the French, less seen in the Belgian territories, and even less so in the Portuguese ones. The reasons that determined such a difference were not just dependent on the political systems created by the colonial European states. Segregation policies and African responses to them correspond to reasons that are more structural, economic, and demographic.

According to Lord Hailey, in South Africa, one of the most discussed segregation cases in the world, the integration of close to two thousand Africans into an economy driven by another two thousand white people and the subsequent improvement of the Africans’ quality of life—despite their lack of leadership and the absence of a sense of community coupled with the strong positions taken by the white population—set up a context for the process through which the Africans were gaining consciousness of their important role. Generally, in the territories under British administration, only Kenya showed the violent side of “Africanism” with the Mau-Mau, who associated terrorism with superstition, though they only represented a small part of a tribal group. In the other territories under British administration, there seemed to be a natural propensity to favor local political institutions, which implicated self-governing ideals that fended off calls for independence. On the contrary, in the territories under the French colonial administration, integration of the colonies, an ideal enshrined in the 1948 constitution, was sought after, leading to a rebranding of the former colonies as “overseas provinces,” granting citizenship to Africans, and supporting representatives in the metropolitan parliament. In the case of Congo, it wasn’t clear if the 70,000 settlers had citizenship rights—an uncertainty that was

³ “Everywhere one becomes conscious that the African, who previously had only a silent role in the drama of Africa, now has a speaking part, and often indeed a crucial share in the development of the play” (Hailey, “The Rising Spirit of Africanism”). This topic had interested that author ever since the first edition of *Survey* had been published, cf. Lord Hailey, “Nationalism in Africa.”

even clearer with relation to the Africans there. Despite the improvement of their economic situation, they were refused any type of political representation. Whereas, with the Portuguese territories, Lord Hailey commented on the restricted forms of assimilation, but stressed the obvious forms of segregation for the majority of the African population:

There is even less evidence of the manifestation of African opinion in Portuguese territories. Portugal is a firm exponent of the principle of the integration of overseas territories with the metropolitan institutions, but this has taken the form of the complete assimilation of a small and careful selected body of Africans with the resident Portuguese citizens. To that extent she deprives the indigenous population of what might otherwise be its natural leaders. To all appearance the great non-assimilated indigenous population is an inert, or at any event silent mass.⁴

Also, in 1957 the second volume of the “Estudos de Ciências Políticas e Sociais,” which had been preceded by a first volume written entirely by Adriano Moreira, was dedicated to the *Enquête sur l’anticolonialisme* (Inquiry on Anticolonialism). Featuring contributions written mainly in English, though also in French and Spanish, it included authors such as Eduardo Mondlane, who was working on his PhD in New York. A year later, Raymond Firth, an anthropologist and the successor to Malinowski in the London School of Economics, performed the same kind of comparative exercises that Lord Hailey had done, which were all based on a system of variations in scale in order to demonstrate that the differences in skin color were not universally accepted, but socially and culturally produced:

In the Union of South Africa, and to some extent in the South of the United States, the racial segregation works the most stringently. But in the North of the United States, and in many parts of British Africa, it is much less strong. There seems to be no such segregation in Portuguese Angola, and a European government officer may marry a native woman and set up a household which earns respect and recognition of a full social status.⁵

The density of issues raised by that last ranking of racial segregation is, perhaps, less than that which is raised by Lord Hailey’s talk, which was limited to Africa. However, what is important to ascertain is the authorial intent when describing these situations in comparative contexts, using as much of the African voice, as Hailey does, as segregation

⁴ Hailey, “The Rising Spirit of Africanism.”

⁵ Firth, *Human Types: An Introduction to Social Anthropology*.

based on the color of one's skin, as Firth's book does. At a point, both seem to match up: the models of African assimilation and integration that the Portuguese put into practice in their African colonies were very limited, as the number of white settlers was low; additionally, according to Firth, these models were only put forth by the functionaries of the colonial state. In turn, according to Hailey, the majority of the African people who lived in Portuguese colonies represented "a silent mass," without voice and, as a result, still segregated.

Juxtaposed with the prudent and analytical perspectives of Hailey and Firth, Arnold Toynbee's ideas seem more like generalizations that were crafted to receive a warm welcome from the Portuguese officials. Indeed, a lecture delivered by him in Lisbon between 1959 and 1960 at the Instituto de Altos Estudos Militares resulted in applause from Marcello Caetano, as, in the speech, the renowned historian referred to the Portuguese Empire in the following words:

I suppose that the Portuguese tradition of liberalism regarding the question of racial mixing is one of the causes of the noteworthy durability of the Portuguese colonial empire in the present century. The Portuguese Empire is not just the first colonial power of Western Europe, it is also the one that has suffered the first losses. Its losses came about in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; the then-growing colonial empires, the British, French and Dutch, were, in part, built upon former Portuguese possessions. After 1945, these three younger Western European colonial powers melted as though they were icebergs that found themselves in tropical seas. In contrast, the remainder of the Portuguese Empire did not diminish. Could it be this way because, in the overseas territories of Portugal, mutual integration has formed at such a level that a very strong bond of sympathy has been created?⁶

The question was rhetorical, and in fact, for Toynbee, the relative advantages of the Portuguese were based on their suitability for racial mixing, which was sustained by the mechanisms of integration favored by religious conversions that not only the Portuguese

⁶ Toynbee, "O Ocidente e o Futuro." It is of note that, in that very year, Ortega and Gasset argued that Toynbee's work did not contain one word of praise towards England, whose colonial empire had been based in readings of the Old Testament and in racism; this contrasted with the Catholic colonial populations from Spain and Portugal who read the Bible less often and who kept a different kind of relationship with native peoples: "In effect, instead of exterminating them at first like the English did, or, later on, distancing themselves from them, what they did was join with them and create mixed races" (Ortega and Gasset, *Una interpretación de la Historia Universal: En torno a Toynbee*). Though the contrast between the colonizing models used by the Protestants and the Catholics was unquestionable, Ortega mused that Toynbee's sensitivity with regard to the tragedy of racism did not have any parallels with what happened with this "other tragedy, precisely that which comes from the existence of large numbers of mestizos and mulattos in the countries where it occurs, something well known to all that have traveled through the Americas and South Africa" (Ortega and Gasset, *Una interpretación de la Historia Universal: En torno a Toynbee*, 264–65).

but also the Spanish and Muslims (!) were able to put into practice. At his comments at Toynbee's talk, Marcello Caetano went just wide of the main point. For the former Minister of the Colonies, what mattered most in the British historian's discourse was his idea, extracted from his research, that civilizations demonstrated their vitality in terms of the responses to the challenges they faced. These challenges were thrust as much upon the civilizations as the nations "by the physical environment, by other civilizations or by groups of human rivals."⁷

The mere evocation of the names "Lord Hailey," "Raymond Firth," and "Toynbee" and their ideas about Portuguese colonialism implies the need to reconstruct the British context or, more precisely, the Anglo-American context. A discussion about the decolonization of the Portuguese territories and the beginning of the wars of independence, then, can easily be inserted. Within such a reconstruction, it will be possible to detect the use of both comparison based on the level of forms of segregation and the forms of knowledge that circulated between empires. The comparison and the inter-imperial circulation of models had served to legitimize as well as discuss the empires. And, of course, these discussions were intertwined in another debate relative to the nature of the dictator and the figure of Salazar, one which involved Hugh Trevor-Roper—an Oxford historian known for his anti-communist positions and for his propensity to make his opinions known about Africa not having a history.⁸

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In order to reconstitute the meaning of the debates about Portuguese colonialism, it will be necessary to begin by tracing its chronology—a simple, descriptive method that allows me to uncover some power narratives. To this end, it is important to always begin with the book by Basil Davidson—a journalist who came to play a significant role as an anticolonial activist—*The Africa Awakening*; designed as a travel narrative, the book established itself as one of the landmarks of critical thought on colonization, not only in relation to the Belgian Congo, but also to Angola. In this same year, F. Clement C. Egerton, who had already worked on a propaganda campaign in favor of Salazar, responded to Davidson's work in a pamphlet published in Lisbon with the support of the Portuguese

⁷ Caetano, "A África e o futuro," 89.

⁸ Roper, "Twilight of Dr. Salazar."

government.⁹ One of the most damning allegations Egerton made concerned the fact that Davidson had only stayed a mere ten days in Angola. Similarly, the book in which Gilberto Freyre reported his journey through the Portuguese Empire, *Aventura e Rotina* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympo, 1952), also solicited an identical critique from Commander Ernesto Vilhena.¹⁰ In the latter case, the criticisms were directed as much toward the virtues of “miscegenation” as a way of identifying Portuguese colonialism as they were toward Freyre’s interpretation of what happened in Lunda, where the Companhia dos Diamantes operated.

In 1957, the Englishman F. Clement C. Egerton wrote a defense of the Portuguese policies in Africa, confronting the different interpretations of what was happening in Lunda.¹¹ But it was the Canadian academic Richard Pattee that, as recognized in 1961 by the University of Coimbra, most zealously came to the defense of the Portuguese overseas policies in a testimony that he gave of his travels, amongst other texts.¹² The denunciations, however, of what was happening in so-called “Portuguese Africa” multiplied in subsequent years. Marvin Harris, a young assistant professor of anthropology at Columbia University—at which, decades before, Gilberto Freyre had finished his doctoral work—denounced the continuation of forms of slave labor that characterized Portuguese colonialism, following fieldwork he had done in Mozambique between 1956 and 1967.¹³ Meanwhile, another American, James Duffy, a professor at Brandeis University who had finished a thesis at Harvard in 1952, visited Angola and Mozambique between 1955 and 1956 and published a series of texts from 1959 on, in which he made the same type of denunciations.¹⁴ In New York, under a 1962 program by the Carnegie Foundation, Duffy and Richard J. Hammond, a well-reputed economic historian from Stanford who had dedicated his study to Portuguese imperialism, were invited to present their ideas.¹⁵

If the prestigious academic titles given to Harris, Duffy, and Hammond by American universities gave weight to their visions of Portuguese colonialism, another

⁹ Egerton, *Angola Without Prejudice*.

¹⁰ Vilhena, *Aventura e Rotina: crítica de uma crítica*.

¹¹ Egerton, *Angola in Perspective: Endeavour and Achievement in Portuguese West Africa*.

¹² Pattee, *Portugal and the Portuguese World*; *ibid.*, *Portugal em África: Reflexões e impressões de viagem*.

¹³ Harris, *Portugal’s African “Wards.”* See also in the same series, by the associate director of the American Committee on Africa and the editor of the periodic publication *Africa Today*, Homer A. Jack, *Angola: Repression and Revolt in Portuguese Africa*.

¹⁴ Duffy, *Portuguese Africa*; *ibid.*, *Portugal in Africa*.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, *Portugal’s African Territories: Present Realities*; Richard J. Hammond, *Portugal’s African Problem: Some Economic Facets*.

important part of the attacks on this institution was made by three journalists, two British and one Portuguese, who left Mozambique to go into exile in London. Curiously, the same editorial house, Victor Gollancz's, accepted the work of all of them. The first, the already mentioned Basil Davidson, laid the foundation for a history of Africa, attentive to its roots and decentralized from European influence, and simultaneously dedicated himself to studying slave trafficking through the centuries.¹⁶ Another of the journalists, perhaps even more prominent than the previous one, Anthony Sampson, was an Oxford graduate who had a wealth of experience as a journalist in South Africa, where he befriended Nelson Mandela and published a book that supported the direction of decolonization.¹⁷ Finally, António de Figueiredo—a native of Mozambique, where he had collaborated with Marvin Harris and was persecuted by the political police—published a work of great clarity and surprising maturity.¹⁸ This chronology of Anglo-American works that positioned themselves against Portuguese colonialism would not be complete without mentioning the work of Thomas Okuma, a Protestant missionary and professor from Hawaii who had stayed in Angola for close to eight years during the 1950s and who had received a grant from Boston University to prepare a book about Angola in which he denounced the myth of social integration.¹⁹ I would also be remiss to forget the book by the Marxist historian Perry Anderson, *Portugal and the End of Ultra-Colonialism*.²⁰ But it should always be noted that, at least with regard to England, the main criticisms against the Salazar regime came primarily from a highly politicized group of journalists.²¹

¹⁶ Davidson, *Old Africa Rediscovered*; *ibid.*, *Black Mother Africa: the Years of Trial* (the book is dedicated to William Cadbury [1867–1957]).

¹⁷ Sampson, *Common Sense about Africa*.

¹⁸ Figueiredo, *Portugal and Its Empire: The Truth*. Regarding the vigilance of the Portuguese authorities toward António de Figueiredo in his early years in London, cf. Arquivo Histórico Diplomático [AHD]/MU/GM/GNP/RNP/0255/10440. The information contained within this dossier does not entirely coincide with the author's own representation of it. For his own account, see: Figueiredo, review of *The Decolonization of Portuguese Africa* (1997) by Norrie MacQueen and *The Making of Portuguese Democracy* (1995) by Kenneth Maxwell.

¹⁹ Okuma, *Angola in Ferment: The Background and Prospects of Angolan Nationalism* (written with the collaboration of James Duffy). Another North American Protestant missionary with a wealth of experience in rural Angola who also garnered academic recognition upon finishing a thesis at Coimbra was Gladwin Murray Childs. See: Childs, *Umbundu Kinship and Character: Being a Description of Social Structure and Individual Development of the Ovimbundu*.

²⁰ Anderson, "Portugal and the End of Ultra-Colonialism."

²¹ Two supplementary cases confirm the importance of journalism in England with regard to the debate on Portuguese colonialism in Africa. The first is made up of the prominent American journalist John Gunther, who established himself in England, referring to Angola and Mozambique: "the interior is largely *terra incognita*, and the natives living there are among the backward and untutored on the continent" (*Inside Africa*, 572); p. 574, "The chief problems are poverty to an extreme degree . . . and lack of education" (*ibid.*, 574); "The worst thing about Portuguese Africa is forced labour" (*ibid.*); . . . each of the denunciations by Gunther was accompanied by an indisputable recognition that, in the Portuguese colonies, discrimination was not as evident as was the case in other European colonies. The second case involves Peter Fryer and Patrícia

This small rundown of authors and their works suggests a certain division of work between the American academics and the journalists that, in England, became interested in Africa. The academic integration of the works by a Protestant missionary is rather revealing of the centrality assumed by the university, at least in the United States. This fact contrasts with a secular tradition in which the denouncing of colonialism had been made by missionaries. The new edition of Henry Nevinson's work in 1963, which chronicled his travels through Angola between 1904 and 1905, was accompanied by a study by Basil Davidson, reinforcing the idea of strong participation on the part of journalists in the denouncing of Portuguese colonialism.²² The main themes within all of these works that attacked Portuguese colonialism were focused around racism; discrimination or segregation; the systematic return of slave labor or of forms of slavery; a colonialism that had scarce financial resources; and a colonial state whose infrastructural power, particularly with regard to health and education services, was considered weak and whose territorial implantation was also diminished. Some of the denouncements made by Henrique Galvão, who had considerable experience in the colonial administration in Angola, were reproduced explicitly in the books by James Duffy, António de Figueiredo, and Basil Davidson.²³

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The responses from Portuguese official circles to all attacks on Portuguese colonialism constitute a kind of official ideology, within which historical studies, with their instruments of evidence and the large resources offered by documental proof, occupied a significant role. However importantly the exploitations of Gilberto Freyre's work figured

McGowan Pinheiro (*Oldest Ally: A Portrait of Salazar's Portugal, maxime* pp. 159-182): the authors acknowledge their debt to Marvin Harris regarding their treatment of the system of forced labor (*ibid.*, 167), and they consider, in their bibliography, a reading of Duffy invaluable to their project, *Portuguese Africa* (*ibid.*, 256). About *Portuguese Africa* and the colonial question, cf. the revelations in Pinheiro, *Misérias do exílio: Os últimos meses de Humberto Delgado*, 24–25.

²² Nevinson, *A Modern Slavery*.

²³ Duffy, *Portuguese Africa*, 327; Figueiredo, *Portugal and Its Empire*, 105, 155–56; Thomas Okuma, *Angola in Ferment*, 61; Davidson, Introduction to *A Modern Slavery*, XIV. For Galvão's account from 1947, referred to in the previous works, cf. Henrique Galvão, *Por Angola (Quatro anos de actividade parlamentar) 1945-1949*, 234 (where the presentation made in 1947 before the Comissão das Colónias da Assembleia regarding indigeneous issues in the African colonies is referred to in a note); Fundação Mário Soares (Lisbon), "Documentos Mário Pinto de Andrade," folder 04356.001.004: "Rapport Galvão - I. Documents" / "Algumas passagens do Relatório de Henrique Galvão"; Francisco Teixeira da Mota, *Henrique Galvão—Um herói português*, chap. XII; Galvão, "Colonialism, Anti-Colonialism, Self-Determination. A Human and Democratic Solution for the Problem of the Portuguese Colonies," 190–212.

Henrique Galvão's ideas about colonialism came, as well, to represent the moderate perspective shared by others in opposition to the Salazar regime: the creation of a community that includes Luso-African territories and recognition that the nationalist African movements were not ready to assume independence, cf. an interview with him from 15 July 1963, Galvão, "Colonialism, Nationalism, and Independence," 34–39.

into such an ideology, it was not limited to the inspirations suggested by the writings of the Brazilian sociologist. Indeed, as the sharp criticisms made by Commander Ernesto Vilhena in 1955 demonstrate, Freyre's work, with all of its appeals to a colonial identity built on miscegenation, did not find consensus within official circles. In any event, among the many voices that were raised at the time to defend the Portuguese capacity to integrate its colonies and that referred to the historical absence of "racial problems" in Portugal was the anthropologist Jorge Dias. He also considered that the Portuguese patriarchal and communitarian tradition removed obstacles "against the gradual transformation of cordial race relations into family ties."²⁴ The geographer Orlando Ribeiro, as well, spoke about the dream of constructing "a vast land where all the races live in peace, with dignity and mutual respect, based in tolerance and in equality" in Angola; he added, as an aside, that the recent events in 1961 did not alter this image at all.²⁵ All the while, from the trips undertaken in the Portuguese Empire by Richard Pattee, Torquato de Sousa Soares emphasized a key idea: namely, the inexistence of any apparatus of coercion, attesting to Portugal's benevolent ability to integrate populations. "The most enduring impression I got of Portuguese Africa," the illustrious sociologist commented, "was of the absence of soldiers, of militiamen, of uniformed and armed men."²⁶ In turn, the historian Armando Cortesão stressed the exceptional character of the Portuguese for having gained "experience in their colonies with dealing with indigenous peoples and understanding their problems—which greatly contributed to the Portuguese way: friendly, affable and devoid of racial prejudice—which was unique among the colonizing nations and, as a result, we were never caught up with and much less bypassed."²⁷

As a historian particularly known for his work in the history of cartography, Armando Cortesão's positions took on a particular intensity, perhaps because they associated, more than the opinions of others, a demonstration of historiographical knowledge with a defense of the Portuguese presence in Africa and of the overseas policies

²⁴ Dias, "The Expansion of the Portuguese in the Overseas in the Light of Modern Anthropology," 241–42, 245, 250; *ibid.*, "Convívio entre pretos e brancos nas Províncias Ultramarinas Portuguesas"; *ibid.*, *Portuguese Contribution to Cultural Anthropology*, 105. ANTI, AOS/CO/UL-36, n. 7: "Actividade do Prof. Doutor Jorge Dias na qualidade de professor convidado da Universidade de Witwatersrand, em Joanesburgo" (In accordance with the opinion of the Portuguese consul in his first conference from October, 1959, Jorge Dias appealed to his audience by referring to "our traditional attitude regarding the difference in race, well known here" in a context in which the "racial matters" had an "explosive interest"; it is worth noting that the same anthropologist had been charged to the aforementioned Missão de Estudos das Minorias Étnicas, under which his study of the Makonde of Mozambique was prepared).

²⁵ Ribeiro, *Aspectos e problemas da expansão portuguesa*, 120.

²⁶ Soares, "Discurso proferido no dia 10 de Julho de 1960 na Cerimónia de imposição de insígnias doutorais ao Prof. Richard Pattee," 9.

²⁷ Cortesão, "Sobre alguns aspectos internacionais do problema colonial," 96.

of Salazar and his followers. With his republican past and his experience in exile, Cortesão had reconciled with the Salazar regime in 1952.²⁸ This reconciliation resulted in, for at least a fiery moment, not only an erasure of his demo-republican origins for the benefit of his services provided to the colonial cause, but also a defense of the personality of Salazar, one that reeked of naïveté. The latter was an example of his “sober virility,” as, “now in the autumn of life, he faced and faces attacks on the overseas patriarchy, which belongs to every Portuguese individual, whatever his political or religious beliefs, color of his skin, or place where he lives.”²⁹ Of course, the conditions of his reintegration into academia in 1952 had oriented him toward the creation of a breathtaking work, published in six large format volumes in collaboration with the naval officer Avelino Teixeira da Mota. The indisputable research, associated with issues of seafaring and cartography, that this book represented made it the largest and most important publication during the celebration of the death of Prince Henry the Navigator.³⁰ There is, though, a clear political purpose in this monumental work—not only of affirming five centuries of the Portuguese presence throughout the world but also of showing that this presence, in Africa though also in Brazil, was not limited just to the coastline, but extended to knowing and occupying their interiors.³¹ In that vein, Armando Cortesão himself summed it up in 1962: “since the

²⁸ Cummins and Rebelo, “The Controversy over Charles Boxer’s *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire 1415-1825*,” 237; Alden, *Charles R. Boxer: An Uncommon Life*, 376–79 (about the friendly ties between Boxer and Armando Cortesão); Ramos, “A erudição lusitanista perante a guerra (c.1960-c.1970): algumas observações sobre a polémica entre Charles Boxer e Armando Cortesão,” 189–218.

²⁹ Cortesão, *Realidades e desvarios africanos—Discurso proferido na Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa, quando da sessão de encerramento da Semana do Ultramar em 9 de Junho de 1962*, 11–12.

³⁰ Cortesão and Mota, *Portugaliae Monumenta Cartographica*.

³¹ Cortesão, *The Portuguese Discovery and Exploration of Africa*, in *Comptes Rendus de la IV^e Réunion Plénière de l’AETFAT (Lisbonne et Coimbra, 16-23 Septembre 1960)*; Axelson, *Portuguese Settlement in the Interior of South-East Africa in the Seventeenth Century*; Mota, *Dom Luís da Cunha e a Carta da África Meridional de Bourguignon d’Anville (1725)*; Cortesão’s *Os Portugueses em África* includes a series of articles published in newspapers in Lisbon, Porto, Luanda, and Lourenço Marques in the year between 1959 and 1960, within which the same kind of recognition and occupation of the interior of Africa by the Portuguese is intended to be established. Perhaps more subtly, Alexandre Lobato’s position is supported; that is, far from embarking on a demonstration of a Portuguese presence in Africa, he took on the following ideas: “The kinds of action by the Portuguese in the overseas territories are various but in each, commercial, social and political motives appear. The commercial interests are naturally the most relevant The preservation of an economic space in which many political interests are forwarded and the Portuguese diplomatic power to manage to isolate, to a large extent, this space, formed by coastal points, some inland areas, lines of penetration, adjacent seas, accesses and sea routes, were the decisive factors that created the integration of a historical type that formed the Portuguese Nation in its present configuration. Naturally, where there is lower social friction, there is less psychological resistance towards the allurements process. . . . This was the case in Brazil and in Black Africa” (Lobato, *Coexistência cultural e formação espiritual da nação* 27, 29).

fifteenth century, Portugal has been concerned with the exploration of the interior of the African continent.”³²

How, then, can the *honoris causa* doctorate that the agricultural engineer Armando Cortesão received in 1961 from the Universidade de Coimbra be interpreted, given that it was the year in which the conflicts in the North of Angola broke out? In this regard, it was long thought that the academy was a simple conveyor belt for the political regime and later that the doctoral degree was compensation for the job Cortesão had completed. The faster it was accepted, at least as a hypothesis, the faster the Universidade de Coimbra, with its autonomy and its own dynamics, upon recognizing a work of scientific nature and consecrating it in its own Faculdade de Ciências, which had given the honorary degree, could claim for itself a status of authority, able to validate scientific knowledge. That is, the Universidade de Coimbra wanted, as well, to participate as a full partner in the collection of institutions, centers, and missions which contributed their support to the regime’s overseas project. Because of this, it could not stop competing with other agencies involved, be they more directly or intensely, in the same project. As Cortesão himself recalled in 1962, the epicenter of these agencies was the Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, created by the Estado Novo, and the proof of its centrality was the fact that the one responsible to the Minister of the Overseas was, at the time, the former director of the Instituto Superior de Estudos Ultramarinos, a man that Cortesão showered with praise.³³ The production of scientific knowledge about the so-called “Ultramar” took on, as a result, the core of the grounds for justifying colonialism, and several attempts had already been made to categorize the different institutions.³⁴ It is worth adding that, by attesting to the degree of autonomy that the field of knowledge production held, it may be possible to discover, in its interior workings, that is, in the circulation of ideas and thoughts, readings that express the existence of a space, however small, where critiques and conflicting interpretations were placed.³⁵

³² *Realidades e desvarios africanos*, 17. Against the charge, raised by oppositional circles, that there was a clear presence, he always defended himself by stating that the Portuguese presence in Africa was insignificant until the twentieth century, cf. Soares, *Le Portugal baillonné. Un témoignage*, 162.

³³ Cortesão, *Realidades e desvarios africanos*, 38.

³⁴ Costa, “A Investigação Científica e o Ultramar português,” includes an important graphic representation of the different institutions that produced colonial knowledge (138-139).

³⁵ Carreira, review of “Alguns problemas da produção e mão-de-obra indígena em Angola” by, Labisa. Besides Carreira, there were other instances of intellectuals, historians, and sociologists that, despite working and publishing in institutions supported by the regime, always sought to preserve some independent space. It was perhaps this sort of case, with relation to Mozambique, for Rita-Ferreira and Lobato. Of the latter, his works published before 1961 must be considered: *Sociologia política da expansão e outros ensaios*, in *Revista do Gabinete de Estudos Ultramarinos*; *Estudos moçambicanos—Quatro estudos e uma evocação para a história de Lourenço Marques*.

In 1961, José Honório Rodrigues also spoke out about the historical relationship between Brazil and Africa in the context of forming an Atlantic economy. To this end, he recognized the importance of the major analytical works produced in the 1950s by historians Pierre and Huguette Chaunu as well as by Frédéric Mauro. He referred to and demonstrated the existence of forms of racial discrimination, even integrating some of Boxer's teachings, but finished by considering that the "Portuguese Atlantic Empire (. . .) based itself out of commercial capitalism and was militaristically defensive; the racial hierarchy did not impede miscegenation."³⁶ Or, expressed differently by not avoiding the treatment of racial discrimination within the history of the Portuguese Empire: "miscegenation was becoming unbridled, despite prejudices, through the influence of the master-slave economic system."³⁷

* * *

The three thematic areas that made up the official ideology bent on justifying colonialism in 1960 identified up to here are as follows: (1) miscegenation, social integration, and the absence of outbreaks of violence; (2) the historical and geographical affirmation of the Portuguese presence in the world, especially in Africa; and (3) the formulation of scientific politics around the production of knowledge, centered as much around a hierarchy as a network of centers and laboratories. Each one of these areas met specific developmental criteria. For example, in the second half of 1961, notions of political integration were passed to social engineering operations that transformed them into a series of legal statutes. Within this context, the end of the *Estado do Indigenato* (which was also the subject of criticism by many agents of the colonial state) is often referred to, though it is frequently decontextualized from the wider range of legislation that it belonged to. Following such a removal, discrimination was, at least in part, over, and yet it cannot be overlooked that such legislation was enacted on the same day as the *Lei das Regedorias*, which intended to reinvent a specific kind of self-governance for African communities, whose rulers came to occupy part of the colonial state's hierarchy and be officially named its collaborators. Simultaneously, a general awareness arose within the official channels that

³⁶ Rodrigues, *Brasil e África: outro horizonte*, 232. Regarding the friendship between Honório and Boxer, cf. Alden, *Charles R. Boxer: An Uncommon Life*, 371. Lobato, in 1963, accused the Brazilians of the same duplicity practiced by the American Committee on Africa (where Marvin Harris and others published their analyses and manifestos against Portuguese colonialism), referring to the "historians of the Itamarati's diplomatic school who also wanted to imitate them, as is clear by reading Rodrigues," cf. *Carta ao Embaixador do Brasil em Portugal por mão do Cônsul do Brasil em Moçambique*, 20.

³⁷ Idem, *idem*, vol. 1 - *Relações contribuições mútuas*, 64.

the African populations were crossed by important migratory movements, in particular those that were bringing mass exoduses from the countryside to the cities, preventing their way of life from being reduced to the model of a single community led by their respective leader. Thus, following a sort of geometrical calculation that sought to regulate a different form of local political representation, the city also became the subject of new regulations.³⁸

The field of miscegenation, integration and the absence of violence also saw the promotion of several studies focused on topics relating to the workforce. These studies were weighed down by the grave accusation that their subject was, in practice, the equivalent of forced labor, thus slavery. This is what happened with the reactions to the complaint filed by Ghana in international forums.³⁹ Similarly, the labor issues were directly related to the problem of migration—from the countryside into the cities, but also across borders—a phenomenon that caught the attention of several surveys and studies.⁴⁰ Finally, it serves to summon the current preoccupation with various scales of analysis: from regional surveys and monographs, where labor relations were part of “cultural contact;”⁴¹ to the “relationship between ethnic groups in contact,” a process of integration such as what would have happened in Angola;⁴² or even up to the comparisons made at the international scale regarding the “race question,” which revealed rather extensive collections of information.⁴³

Besides the history, the territorial presence in the cities was one of the major pieces of evidence for legitimizing the Portuguese Empire. It was this that represented—according to the ideologues—the Portuguese way of being in the tropics. As Orlando Ribeiro argued in 1961, in an exalting evocation of Luanda and Lourenço Marques:

³⁸ Moreira, “On Our Ways,” 107–8; Óscar Soares Barata, *Enquadramento legislativo da política social no Ultramar*, Ministério do Ultramar, *Organização das Regedorias nas Províncias Ultramarinas. Decreto n.º 43896, de 6 de Setembro de 1961*; Moreira, “Política de integração”; Monteiro, “Considerações acerca da revogação do Estatuto do Indigenato”; Freitas, “Conceito de indígena e regime de indigenato”; Coissoró, “As instituições de direito costumeiro negro-africano.”

³⁹ In 1961, two cases at the International Labour Organization prompted investigations: Ghana presented a case against Portugal for disregarding the convention from 1957, which abolished forced labor, in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea (International Labour Organisation, *Official Bulletin*, vol. 45); but in an evasive maneuver, Portugal also brought a case against Liberia on the basis of the convention regarding forced labor from 1930 (International Labour Organisation, *Official Bulletin*, vol. 46). Cf. Evangelista, *A queixa do Ghana e a conjura contra Portugal*; Mendes, *O trabalho assalariado em Angola*.

⁴⁰ Soares, *Política de bem-estar rural em Angola (Ensaio)*; Rita-Ferreira, *O movimento migratório de trabalhadores entre Moçambique e a África do Sul*.

⁴¹ Martins, *O Contacto de culturas no Congo: achegas para o seu estudo*; Mendes, *A Huíla e Moçâmedes: considerações sobre o trabalho indígena*; Neto, *O Baixo Cunene: Subsídios para o seu desenvolvimento*.

⁴² Neto, “Política de integração em Angola e Moçambique”; *ibid.*, *Angola: meio século de integração*.

⁴³ Barata, *A questão racial: introdução*.

Luanda, apart from a few foreign technicians present in every site of economic development, is now a Portuguese city, with its spectacular “civilized” core surrounded by an inorganic concentration of *muceques*. Within the city, whites, mestizos and a few *assimilados* live together; within this last group are blacks with some mulattos and even some socially-fallen [*sú*] whites that perform humble jobs or are attracted by the urban mirage of regular work and rewarding compensation. Lourenço Marques, even disregarding the tourists from South Africa who come on vacation or on weekends, is a cosmopolitan city, a meeting place of different races, religions, and ways of life: white, black, mulatto, Christian Goans performing public functions, Hindus and Muslims from India and Pakistan engaged in petty trade, Khojas or Ishmaelites (Aga Khan’s religious subjects), derivative peoples from the same countries, and also Chinese businessmen who have a hand in the production and trade of vegetables and, in Eastern stores, show little wonderful craft techniques that do not ruin the incomparable refinement of the city to the eager eyes of tourists.⁴⁴

The Portuguese colonial cities were, therefore, considered by the defenders of the Salazar regime and of the colonial state as a social laboratory for miscegenation and integration, as well as a mirror of development and of local political representation embodied in municipal power. Adriano Moreira set the tone of the argument upon writing, against those that thought of colonialism as “a plundering of territories in favor of the metropole . . . that the most extraordinary phenomenon in urbanism in Sub-Saharan Africa is proved in the Portuguese territories, and that is more than enough of a sign to show that the proposed model does not apply to us.”⁴⁵ In turn, Armando Cortesão did not hesitate to adopt the same hyperbolic style, speaking of the “superb towns and magnificent settlements that have been built there.”⁴⁶

Education, particularly the number of schools and students, was another way of evaluating the direction of the civilizing mission against what was being used to defend the legitimacy of territorial occupation. It was an area of contention, as the statistics relative to education were constantly brought up by those who argued against Portugal. For the advocates of the Portuguese presence in Africa, the numbers pointed to a vague strategy of progressive and gradual education for Africans which was able to broaden the spectrum of topics in the first few grades while stressing a technical education oriented toward improvements of a practical nature, but was otherwise much more restrictive when it came

⁴⁴ Ribeiro, *Problemas humanos de África*, in *Colóquios sobre Problemas Humanos nas Regiões Tropicais*, 5.

⁴⁵ Moreira, 16. Regarding the assimilation doctrine, “in the natural course of Portuguese institutionalism,” by Moreira “to give a new life to the municipal spirit that was our strong supporter during many difficult times in history,” cf. the more than enthusiastic reception by Lobato, *Estudos moçambicanos—No II Centenário da instituição do municipalismo em Moçambique em 7 de Maio de 1761*, 7.

⁴⁶ Cortesão, *Realidades e desvarios africanos*, 41.

to university education. In other words, there was a sort of “small-steps” ideology that sought to avoid what happened in the English and French colonies, which had “prematurely” created “thousands of blacks, the majority of whom were incompletely civilized, whose disrespect and animosity for whites grew alongside their level of education because, even in the metropolises, they were continued to be treated differently, as I had seen myself many times.”⁴⁷ The education of Africans was thus seen as a process that had precipitated independence and hatred of the white population. For Armando Cortesão and others, the results achieved by these independence movements were rather questionable. Incidentally, the same sense of work-to-be-done or of a “civilizing mission” had, five centuries before, been wrought by the Portuguese when they founded healthcare systems and hospitals. It was what happened with “the fight against leprosy in our Guinea, where many natives of those republics are going to receive treatment,” as well as with the hospitals set up in Kochi (1506), Goa (1520), Mozambique (1530), and Luanda (circa 1630).⁴⁸

In order to understand the historical and geographical affirmation of the Portuguese presence in the world, and especially in Africa, it is necessary to consider two more aspects of a geostrategic nature. On one hand, there was a recurring argument made against the Protestant missions, whose assumed international connections were seen as an ancestral threat to the civilizing missions made by the Catholic orthodoxy. Father Silva Rego was one of the major proponents of this side.⁴⁹ On the other hand, a threat regarding the fate of the overseas territories was triggered by the intensification of the Cold War at the beginning of the 1960s. In this regard, the change that occurred in Armando Cortesão’s thinking in the space of one year is rather significant. In 1961, he noted that “two important factors are influencing current events in Black Africa, and particularly in Angola: Protestant missions and communism.”⁵⁰ However, a year later he did not hesitate to emphasize the responsibility of the Americans in relation to what was happening in Africa: “in their naïveté, or whatever one could call it, the Americans are competing against the Russian and Chinese communities with the same goal to discredit the Europeans and to promote their total expulsion from Africa.”⁵¹ In another passage, he states that “American

⁴⁷ Ibid., 33. Cf. Neto, *Problemas do ensino do primeiro grau na África Negra*; Soares, *Política de bem-estar rural em Angola (Ensaio)*; *ibid.*, *O ensino no Ultramar*.

⁴⁸ Cortesão, *Realidades e desvarios africanos*, 38. See also, Jorge Amaral Nogueira, “A evolução da assistência na província de Angola.”

⁴⁹ Rego, *Temas sociomissionológicos e históricos*.

⁵⁰ Cortesão, “Sobre alguns aspectos internacionais do problema colonial,” 97.

⁵¹ Cortesão, *Realidades e desvarios africanos*, 29.

neocolonialism is much worse than the old European colonialism and especially Portuguese colonialism.”⁵²

Finally, the politics of the production of scientific knowledge, centered as much in a hierarchy as in a network of centers and laboratories, located both in the metropole and in the overseas territories, is largely understudied. The resources at its disposal and its capacity to mobilize, in a setting in which there were no other competitors; its capacity to influence the process of political decision making and the construction of forms of social engineering; the way that scientific politics became an instrument of war and, in some instances, a facilitator for international relations—all of these aspects are poorly understood. Adriano Moreira played an indispensable role in this entire process. His influence and appeal was obvious, first as a the director of the Instituto Superior de Estudos Ultramarinos out of the old Escola Colonial; then as a secretary for the Administração Ultramarina and, with the onset of war in Angola, the Minister of the Overseas (at the time that Salazar assumed the role of defense minister) and as a promoter of “concentration of powers” politics, where examples of terrorization of “terrorist” populations were not lacking.⁵³ The integration, in September 1961, of the aforementioned Instituto Superior na Universidade Técnica clearly belonged to a process of favoritism toward a group formed around the minister at that time.⁵⁴ If the signs of a consensus generated around the director and minister are more than evident through a consultation of many publications, the dissensions are much lesser known. The dismissal of the historian Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, a tenured professor at the Instituto Superior in 1962, marks one of these divergences.⁵⁵ The dismissal came about during the academic strike, but there were clearly much deeper disagreements within the circles of the Salazar regime which came to light in connection with the commemoration of the death of Prince Henry the Navigator in 1960.⁵⁶ Whatever the case, it is important to retain two ideas that Godinho had as much about slavery (whose meaning was associated structurally with emigration) as racism:

⁵² Ibid., 23.

⁵³ Moreira, *Concentração de Poderes. Discursos proferidos pelo Ministro do Ultramar Prof. Dr. Adriano Moreira, em 31 de Maio e 17 de Junho, nos actos de posse do governador-geral de Moçambique, Contra-Almirante Manuel Maria Sarmiento-Rodrigues e do governador-geral de Angola, General Venâncio Augusto Deslandes*. Cf. Cortesão, *Realidades e desvarios africanos*, 38.

⁵⁴ Gonçalves, *Sociologia da Literatura (Breves considerações)*, 11 (referring to the legal diplomats for the integration of the ISCSPU); Barata, *O Ensino do ISCSPU e as novas aplicações das Ciências Sociais*.

⁵⁵ Godinho, *Peças do processo em que é recorrente o Dr. Vitorino Barbosa de Magalhães Godinho*; *ibid.*, *Alegações do recorrente Dr. Vitorino Barbosa de Magalhães Godinho*; Saraiva, *Album de memórias—Como íamos dizendo... (Memórias, confidências e lembranças)*, 23–32.

⁵⁶ Pinto, *O pseudopedestal do Infante D. Henrique e o Prof. Magalhães Godinho*; Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, *A economia dos descobrimentos henriquinos*.

Ultimately, the logical outcome of the structural conditions that remain throughout the peninsula's Old Regime: insurmountable obstacles to social and economic mobility for the underprivileged, pushing them to make a living in foreign lands or lands that they will value for the first time, while the persistent structure has to go seek outside labor that is needed. Society, therefore, is spilled out—"and if there had been more worlds, I would have gone there"—and bases itself on the diametric opposites of emigration and slavery.

[...] contrary to all of the myths, both the Portuguese and the Spanish acknowledged the illegitimacy of enslaving the Japanese and all other white and yellow peoples (even if, in practice, they were enslaved willingly), but this is not the case for black people, and they replaced slaves of other colors with black slaves as often as possible: this points, extremely strongly, to one racial prejudice.⁵⁷

* * *

Is the context of the international political debate, which was just mentioned and which was raised by the Portuguese resistance to decolonization not just in Africa but in Goa, the most pertinent through which to assess the meaning of Charles Boxer's work? Other explanations, by way of reconstructing the context, have been tested. For example, very recently, the North American debates about race relations have been taken into account as the most relevant for understanding the meaning and reception of the book that Boxer published in 1963: *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire: 1415–1825*.⁵⁸ It represents a highly questionable analytical perspective, in which any simple chronology is abandoned in order to make way for arbitrary connections. Perhaps the attempts to take stock of different historiographical perspectives are initially much more relevant than what Boxer's work tries to do.⁵⁹ In any case, the contextualization exercise tried earlier only has analytical merit when articulated alongside the author's intentions. These are discoverable through his published works as well as his statements relegated to the margin, particularly within his correspondence. Reconstructing them, continuing to build on a thread based on a simple timeline, is the work of which the fruits are presented below.

After having devoted two decades to the study of the Portuguese and Dutch empires in the East, beginning with Japan, Charles R. Boxer published a surprising book in which he writes the history of the South Atlantic, based around a single character: *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola, 1602-1686*. Its biographical delivery, that is, its centralization of the life of the noble captain and restorer of the commercial circuits that

⁵⁷ Godinho, *Os Descobrimentos e a Economia Mundial*, 519, 561.

⁵⁸ Cabral, "Charles Boxer and the *Race Equivoque*."

⁵⁹ Bender and Isaacman, "The Changing Historiography of Angola and Mozambique."

linked the ports of Brazil and Luanda, contrasts to the approaches of the more structural history that Magalhães Godinho, Pierre Chaunu, and Frédéric Mauro had produced since at least 1948.⁶⁰ Boxer's biographical method, which was both erudite and empirical, distinguished itself from the narratives produced by French scholars aligned with *Annales*, as Boxer was attentive to the larger chain of historical events. As an illustration of this point, a collaborator of the French group, Gentil da Silva, characterized Angola, in the eighteenth century, as a colonial economy that was running out of capital and could not invest, and whose principal exports were based in the slave trade.⁶¹ At the same time, there was a clear consciousness in the French Africanist circles of the ongoing intensification of research on Africa in the Anglo-American world. The influence of Jan Vansina had already made itself felt across the Atlantic, and the creation of the *Journal of African History* in 1960 also indicated new possibilities.⁶²

In the meantime, Boxer published *The Dutch in Brazil 1624–1654*. The question remains open whether, through this work as well as through other works dedicated to the seventeenth century and to the dynamisms that Europeans, in their rivalries, expressed outside of Europe, Boxer sought to participate in the ongoing historiographical controversy surrounding the so-called crisis of the 1600s.⁶³ Two books were published after *The Dutch in Brazil*: the first a bulkier one entirely dedicated to colonial Brazil, which contained acknowledgments dated July 1960 and thus should be read in the context of the ongoing debate,⁶⁴ and the other more generic one, which was about a hundred pages long, was based on a series of conferences held in South Africa between May and June 1960 and also had a preface dating from July of this same year.⁶⁵ In this latter book, Boxer writes, “The oft-made claim that the Portuguese had no colour-bar [*visi*] cannot be substantiated. The most that can truthfully be said is that in this respect they were usually more liberal in practice than were their Dutch, English, and French successors.”⁶⁶

Additionally in 1960, Boxer, alongside Father Carlos de Azevedo, published a history regarding the Portuguese presence in Mombasa whose research and editing was funded by the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, in both English and Portuguese editions. In this work, they did not avoid making allusions to the precariousness of the Portuguese

⁶⁰ Godinho, “Le travail forcé dans le Mexique colonial”; *ibid.*, “Création et dynamisme économique du monde atlantique (1420-1670)”; *ibid.*, “Problèmes d'économie atlantique. Le Portugal, flottes du sucre et flottes de l'or (1670-1770)”; Pierre Chaunu, “Brésil et Atlantique au XVIIe siècle.”

⁶¹ Silva, “En Afrique portugaise: l'Angola au XVIIIe siècle.”

⁶² Moniot, “Pour une histoire de l'Afrique noire.”

⁶³ Hobsbawm, “The General Crisis of the European Economy in the 17th Century,” 44–46; *ibid.*, “The Crisis of The 17th Century-II.”

⁶⁴ Boxer, *The Golden Age of Brazil, 1695-1750*.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, *Four Centuries of Portuguese Expansion, 1415-1825: A Succinct Survey*.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 42.

presence, which was limited to the coastline, to the looting and the brutality perpetrated by the Portuguese soldiers, and to the racial discrimination the *Misericórdias* practiced.⁶⁷ Yet still in 1960, Boxer published two documentary articles in the *Boletim Cultural do Museu de Angola* in which he is identified as “a modern British writer and correspondent member of the Academia Portuguesa de História, he is the author of various works about Portugal, especially the Province of Angola, among which *História de Angola* and the English-language *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola, 1602–1686* stand out.”⁶⁸

The publication of documents relevant to the Portuguese context became a neutral space in which it was possible to get peer recognition; however, it could also be seen as a priority and, therefore, as a way of calling the more ideological uses of the past into question. This was the case in 1960, during the celebration of Prince Henry the Navigator, with the straightforward presentation of two documents that proved to be untouchable by each and every ideological manipulation.⁶⁹ Boxer thanked Armando Cortesão for his paleographical collaboration. With regard to the content of the letters, it is worth noting that in the one from 1534, João de Barros alluded to some existing power relations within the Casa da Índia e Mina, asking for a royal provision that would confirm a certain business deal that he had made involving pepper, without which he would be unauthorized in relation to his subordinate officers. In the second letter, from 1535, the most interesting piece of information concerned the slave trade from São Tomé to the West Indies.

As for those aforementioned articles published in Luanda, the first was about the manuscripts of *História Geral das Guerras Angolanas* by António de Oliveira Cadornega and had already been published the year before in Coimbra, and the second was a description that had been identified, though not transcribed, of the Battle of Mbwila in 1665.⁷⁰ Concerning the first of these articles, Boxer called attention to the need to compare the version printed between 1940 and 1942 under the charge of José Matias Delgado and Father José Alves da Cunha with the copies that were found in the Biblioteca Pública de Évora. However, his main concern fell on London’s manuscript, created from a partial copy made in Luanda between 1720 and 1745. The comparison between the manuscript and the published version emphasized that it was a partial appropriation of the original text

⁶⁷ Boxer and Azevedo, *Fort Jesus and the Portuguese in Mombasa, 1593-1729*, 18, 32, 42.

⁶⁸ *Boletim Cultural do Museu de Angola*, 1 (1960), 5. The *História de Angola* refers to a citation that is probably Boxer’s article about Cadornega already published in 1959 in Portugal.

⁶⁹ Boxer, “Duas cartas inéditas de João de Barros quando feitor da Casa da Índia 1534–1535.”

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, “A ‘História’ de Cadornega no Museu Britânico”; *Boletim Cultural do Museu de Angola*, 1 (1960), 73-80; *ibid.*, “Uma relação inédita e contemporânea da Batalha de Ambuíla em 1665”, *Boletim Cultural do Museu de Angola*, 2 (1960), 65-73.

probably written by a Jesuit, a fact that explained both the inclusion of references and praises of the Jesuits, which did not appear in Cadornega's original, as well as the group of texts taken from the work of Father Simão de Vasconcelos, S.J., *Vida do Padre Joam d'Almeida*.

If the positive nature of the documents Boxer published in Portuguese between 1960 and 1961, coupled with the book written along with a clergyman, created a kind of neutral space, the same cannot be said for the two other collaborations that Boxer undertook.⁷¹ The first—a contribution to the first issue of the *Journal of African History*—cannot be reduced to a mere summary. Alongside other African historians, such as Jan Vansina and Philip Curtin, and Eric Axelson, who surveyed one of the aforementioned books by James Duffy on colonial Portuguese Africa, Boxer denounced the successive factual errors, as well as the use of Portuguese colonial history for propagandistic ends, in the works of the South African historian Father Sidney R. Welch, author of *Portuguese and Dutch in South Africa, 1641–1806*.⁷² The terms that his denouncement uses are a worthwhile topic for future research. The arguments which most revealed the extent of Welch's ideological compromise were: Portuguese expansion demonstrated an exceptional character when compared with the other colonial powers, in that the Portuguese never behaved as aggressors, they did not become involved in the slave trade, they modeled their behavior according to the most peaceful gentlemen, they put their Christian principles and missionaries before their material interests, and they never had a racial issue in their colonies. Addressing racial discrimination, Boxer considered that it evidently could be proved as existing, as much by looking through the documents from the period as well as through the very eyes of the contemporary travelers. Including, in the latter case, the account of the journey through the Portuguese colonial empire made by Gilberto Freyre (*Aventura e Rotina*), in which the opposite of Luso-tropicalism, that is, racial discrimination, is shown. Despite all of this, Boxer introduced a comparative element, namely that such

⁷¹ The publication of documents can also be tainted with ideological leanings. This is what happened with a series of documents that Boxer put together in order to demonstrate that the Portuguese presence on the eastern coast of Africa had a direct connection to the Indian Run and the shipping routes from the Indian Ocean: Boxer, “Moçambique Island and the Carreira da Índia”; *ibid.*, “The Querimba Islands in 1744” [it is worth noting that, in the introduction to the documents that he put together, he began by quoting Basil Davidson's book about the slave trade, *Black Mother Africa: The Years of Trial* (1961), a start for the book that was anything but neutral, as it asserts the scholarly recognition of Davidson's work].

⁷² Boxer, “S. R. Welch and His History of the Portuguese in Africa, 1495-1806,” *Journal of African History*, vol. 1, n. 1 (1960), pp. 55-63. About Eric Axelson, a historian of South Africa, António de Figueiredo wrote, in Axelson's obituary: “Unlike some other notable Portuguese and international historians, including Charles Boxer, the leading authority on the history of the Portuguese and Dutch sea-borne empires, who were critical of the negative features of colonial expansion and racial supremacy, Axelson (most of whose works, anyway, are concerned with an earlier and less politically involved period), are more descriptive and correspondingly less controversial,” Figueiredo, “Obituary: Professor Eric Axelson,” *The Independent* (November 7, 1998).

forms of discrimination that were present in the Portuguese overseas colonies were not as strong as in the cases of the other European colonial territories, which tainted his overall point.

In 1961, also in the *Journal of African History*, Gladwyn Murray Childs, a Protestant missionary and an expert on Angola, wrote an article dedicated to the people of Angola, including Cadornega.⁷³ In the same year, Boxer also published a report in a popular English language magazine about *História Geral das Guerras Angolanas*, by Cadornega.⁷⁴ The book was written between 1680 and 1684, after the author had lived forty years in Angola, and Boxer's analysis highlights the third volume, which describes the people of Congo and Angola. Boxer maintained that the descriptive value amounted to an authentic "geography and ethnography," but did not stop short of pointing out that, "like many Europeans of the time," Cadornega was often naïve in his descriptions of Africa, outside of also being a believer in magical practices. Even still, the main analytical argument concerns one question: to what extent did the Portuguese presence intensify internal wars—undoubtedly, in the course of earlier internal conflicts, but also which grew in number to accommodate the increasing demand for slaves to work in the plantations and mines of Brazil and the Spanish Indies? The work of Cadornega also reveals its author's own interests, as it defends the use of force in maintaining control over the Africans. As for the population of mulattos or mixed peoples, the image Cadornega draws of them could be related mostly with his praise of their military value, which, according to Boxer, was linked to the life of the author, who had set up a contracted marriage with a mulatto woman. It is of interest, as well, to note that, in the context under which the article was published, there was clear wordplay between the full name of António de Oliveira Cadornega and the then Portuguese prime minister—a fact that, as will be proved later, must have irritated Salazar, connecting him to the debate surrounding race relations in the Portuguese Empire.⁷⁵

The list of Boxer's publications from the beginning of the 1960s indicates that his interests in Africa began merging with those about the Portuguese and Dutch empires in the East and in Brazil. It is not, therefore, surprising that he collaborated on a book organized by Roland Oliver, an important African historian from the School of African and

⁷³ Childs, "The Peoples of Angola in the Seventeenth Century according to Cadornega."

⁷⁴ Boxer, "Background to Angola: Cadornega's chronicle."

⁷⁵ Boxer, "Boxer on Boxer: A Conversation," 19. Against the author's own self-presentations and a certain play on contrasts between the figure of Boxer and the figure of Salazar (or the figure of Boxer fencing against Gilberto Freyre), it might be necessary to recognize that Salazar's reactions, or the reactions of his followers, in relation to the anticolonial campaign, are older, cf. Salazar, "Portugal and the Anti-Colonialist Campaign"; Moreira, "On Our Ways," 107–8.

Oriental Studies at the University of London and one of the founders of the *Journal of African Studies*.⁷⁶ The deepening amount of study on Africa, with special publications, went alongside the anticolonial protest movements. Although in the Portuguese case, it can be said that the struggles for independence also went through the so-called “Goan question” since at least 1955. If, in the circles of Anglo-American journalists and academics, there truly were many that opposed the Portuguese colonial policy, as we saw above, Boxer held off joining their ranks until 1960–1961. For him, history could not be the basis for the official ideology, which was forged by various authors by order of the Portuguese Government, eager to see their positions recognized by an international audience, and because of this he would have to expose the historians and other educated men that had falsified the facts in order to meet the colonial regime’s expectations (as Father Welch had done). He did this in two ways.

First, Boxer sought to show that the nature of the Portuguese colonial empire, far from being able to reach its ideological vision of cohabitation between races, other civilizations, and its political mechanisms of integration—as Gilberto Freyre and some of his followers wanted to believe—would have to be characterized by the countless instances of social discrimination, as well as by its use of coercion and violence. Secondly, the British historian maintained, especially against some of the points of view put forth by the church, that even the methods of the religious missions associated with the Portuguese presence included the use of force.⁷⁷ It is of note that, in this debate, the space occupied by erudite scholarship appears extremely sensitive, as it constitutes a source of authority for both sides of the argument and is also used by who opposed Boxer and defended the colonial ideology.⁷⁸

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The conference that Boxer held in February 1961 at the British Academy of London was the first attempt at systemically treating the racial question in the Portuguese Empire.⁷⁹ The clarity of the exposition did not betray any of the simplistic historiography

⁷⁶ Boxer, “The Old Kingdom of Congo,” 75–81.

⁷⁷ Boxer, “A Note on Portuguese Missionary Methods in the East, 16th–18th centuries.”

⁷⁸ In the 1950 Congress, for instance, Father Brásio asked Boxer for “photocopies of letters, as they raised questions not so much as to their authenticity but, without doubt, about their reading,” which may have been a veiled criticism of Boxer’s interpretation, cf. comments transcribed at the end of Boxer’s article, “Duas cartas inéditas de João de Barros quando feitor da Casa da Índia, 1534–35,” 72.

⁷⁹ Boxer, “The Colour Question in the Portuguese Empire, 1415–1825.”

that was able to serve ideological instrumentalizations. The central argument of the conference can be summarized by the following: the Portuguese colonial empire, from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth century, can be characterized by its various forms of racial discrimination, which were certainly less intense than those practiced by other European powers but, despite that, were numerous enough to destabilize the association of the Portuguese case with imagery of integration and harmony. The comparison which the authors that preceded Boxer drew serves as a way to relativize the behavior of the Portuguese in the tropics. Curiously, neither the Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre, who most directly shaped the colonial ideology used by Salazar, nor (primarily ecclesiastical) Portuguese authors were chosen as the first target for Boxer's attack. To exemplify the idealized images of the Portuguese Empire as an institution which did not distinguish between skin colors or races, he began with a text from 1923 by Edgar Prestage, his predecessor as the Camões Chair at King's College. However, it was in the documents from the time in question that Boxer found his primary sources of information. The result is a surprising wealth of data when we observe the variety of kind of social settings brought up. Let us shift our attention to some of these cases.

In the sixteenth century, the *lançados* or *tangomaos*, born in Portugal or with Portuguese heritage and mostly from Guinea, lived outside of the most institutionalized Portuguese presence. At first glance, they are one of the most revealing examples of the supposed Portuguese plasticity, its miscegenation developing alongside their activities as intermediaries in the slave trade. However, both the Church and the State expressed feelings of contempt and, indeed, persecution toward these groups, even to the point that the *Ordenações Manuelinas* considered them subject to the death penalty. A deliberate policy of miscegenation began to be tested in 1471 with the colonization of São Tomé. All single men were entitled to a female African slave provided by the Crown. And in 1515, the king granted freedom to the mulatto children and to their slave mothers. In fact, the economic interests of São Tomé—directly related to the development of sugarcane plantations and promoted by one of its governors, Fernão de Melo—sabotaged the maintenance of peaceful relations with the kingdom of Congo, which aimed to intensify traffic in the territories governed by Afonso I of Kongo (1506–1543). Thus, it is understandable that the principal slave markets had moved away from Guinea and been pushed farther south. In the seventeenth century, the extraordinary observer that was Cadornega—in a passage carefully pointed out by Boxer—was able to identify the type of Angolan mullato that was involved in local wars and, consequently, in the slave trade. But this same type of mullato,

the product of Portuguese miscegenation, also expresses racist sentiments against other Africans.

In Asia, the existence of racial barriers is easy to document with relation to the formation of a native clergy, whose existence seems, above all else, crucial. Early in 1548, a Jesuit reported the aversion of the Portuguese to go to confession under the local clergy, as they considered that only a Portuguese clergyman could perform the ritual. In another sense, it is possible to document how all religious orders, beginning with the Jesuits, sought to convert and train men who came from the castes that were considered higher, the Brahman, disregarding candidates from lower in the hierarchy. One of the most interesting social contexts is that of the man of Portuguese descent that has noble aspirations, also called *indiático*, which parallels the kind of Cadornega-referred mulatto in Angola and the Mamelucos in São Paulo. Throughout the eighteenth century, it is possible to detect various sentiments that divided these *indiáticos*, both in relation to the Brahmin caste, and in relation to the noblemen both in Portugal, who often expressed contempt toward these faraway aspirants. Illustrating this, Pombal attempted to halt a charter from 2 April 1761.

Looking, then, at the racist sentiments present in colonial Brazil, Boxer started by noting that only through romanticism (thus well after achieving independence) did the idealization of Amerindians emerge. Although one could say that those of African origins have always been considered inferior, compared to those with Indian roots, Pombal's point on 4 April 1755 was to promote marriages between colonists and natives, announcing the granting of promotions to those that did. Finally, there was a certain ambivalence in the treatment of mulattos, as it was very common for them to be excluded from public institutions such as the church, the army, and political positions.

Finished in 1960, though not published until 1962, Boxer's sizable work on colonial Brazil, on the period of gold and diamond discovery, included some passages that explored a different perspective. Instead of emphasizing racial discrimination, Boxer accentuated the forms of solidarity and integration, centered around brotherhoods, with feasts and processions, as well as around the *Misericórdias*.⁸⁰ At the same time, he relativized the aforementioned forms of discrimination, alluding to other types of behaviors such as those that revealed misogynistic tendencies, keeping women in a state of seclusion.⁸¹ It was also

⁸⁰ Boxer, *The Golden Age of Brazil*, 132–37.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 137–38. A line of research on gender, which Boxer pioneered with regard to the historiography of the Portuguese Empire, is located within the debate in which affirmations of the “virility” of the Portuguese were reiterated strongly. As an example, it suffices to point to the constant allusions to Salazar's “virility” that can be found in the writings of Armando Cortesão at the time: “De lusófilo honesto a lusófilo de má fé ou a

in this book that Boxer confronted—though not for the first time, perhaps with a greater awareness of the political weight of the subject—the question of the municipal government’s nature: “Brazilian historians differ on whether the municipal councils were genuine representatives of the people, or merely of a self-perpetuating and selfish oligarchy. They also argue over whether the councils were largely autonomous or were merely rubber stumps for governors and viceroys.”⁸²

A response to such a conflict of interpretations could only be given, in his understanding, analytically and empirically, as the importance of such an institution of political representation depended on the time and the place. In any case, a reading of this book, published after the war had already started in Angola, cannot be reduced to a mere part of a debate about the existence or inexistence of racial discrimination in the Portuguese Empire. It is an observation that suggests several interpretations: on the one hand, the existence of analytical interests which arose outside of political debates; on the other hand, the presence of a sort of prevailing circumstance that made it so that Boxer’s intentions changed depending on the time and place, that is, his intended audience. (In this case, it is, mostly, the Brazilian and North American academics interested in exploring the area studies about Latin America, including Brazil.)

Boxer’s conference at the British Academy failed to make waves in Portugal—unlike in Brazil, where it was immediately cited by José Honório—but in 1963, his small book entitled *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire 1415–1825* did not have the same fate.⁸³ The central theme of the book, as its title indicates, is to demonstrate the recurrence of the forms of racial discrimination within the Portuguese Empire. We will return to this topic, seeking to reconstruct its meaning within a constellation of arguments. But it is more important to start by referring to the fact that Boxer’s historical analyses, as presented in this book, directly connect to the context of war or of revolt present in Angola since the first third of 1961. There is a passage, early in the opening chapter, which can be considered rather rare among Boxer’s works, that directly addresses the present day, in which he establishes a close relationship between the distant past and contemporary events in Angola. It is, more precisely, a causal relationship conceived as follows: the areas where the Portuguese presence was historically stronger ended up being those that took place in the rebellion, the resistance, and the bloody events that took place in 1961. In northern

reviravolta do Professor Boxer,” *Diário Popular*, 12 December 1963; “A soberba virilidade [de Salazar]” Cortesão, *Realidades e desvarios africanos*, 11.

⁸² Boxer, *The Golden Age of Brazil*, 149.

⁸³ Alden, *Charles R. Boxer: An Uncommon Life*, 374

Angola, the old kingdom of Congo and Dembos was the site of the largest number of leaders baptized, each taking the title of *Dom*, some of them having their own chaplains. These same chiefs had some Portuguese traders and others who served in different positions under their jurisdiction. The use of the Portuguese language in those regions was frequent and many members of the local elite could read and write. However, the same people who had been allied with the Portuguese—as Cadornega said and as was said before the Conselho Ultramarino at the end of the seventeenth century, according to one of Boxer’s citations—sought to recuperate their independence: “because blacks hated our area and wanted badly to send us away from our conquest, and only through fear and respect for our armaments did they let us preach the gospel and bring in our trade.” Many, especially around the region of Dembos, lived in a state of constant revolt throughout the nineteenth century and were not actually taken over until 1917 by João de Almeida, according to Henrique Galvão as cited by Boxer.⁸⁴

Why would Boxer want to establish a causal relationship between the areas in Angola where the historical presence of the Portuguese was most felt and the behaviors of resistance and rebellion? First of all, so that it could not be argued that the 1961 riots in downtown Cassange, which was central to cotton production, or in Uíge, with its coffee plantations, were an isolated case for Angola. In other words, if these were the ancestral areas of the Portuguese presence, it had been exactly within them that the resistance had occurred. Then, by emphasizing the use of force—necessary even for missionary work—and the long-term collaboration efforts undertaken with the African leaders by the Portuguese, Boxer contradicts the idea conveyed by official propaganda, according to which the Portuguese resorted to only the most peaceful of colonization methods. It should be noted that involving Cadornega in a description of the Dembos opposing the Portuguese, as the simple antimony that it is treated as, may be a forced reading of the historian of Angolan wars that caters, mainly, to the internal wars of which the Portuguese supported one side. Finally, he insisted on the fact that the Portuguese territorial presence had always been precarious, having to deal with a permanent climate of insubordination, and that it was only in the early twentieth century that an effective occupation would be seen.⁸⁵ However, this latter event was only possible to undertake because of the use of

⁸⁴ Boxer, *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire 1415–1825*, 36–37.

⁸⁵ “A África negra, isto é, a África dos povos de raça negra, onde se situam cinco das nossas colónias e três das mais vastas e importantes, é continente económico de formação moderníssima, de expressão ainda indefinida de coisa inconquistada . . . Até ao alvorecer do século passado, e graças às descobertas dos portugueses e à sua fixação em muitos pontos, da África negra apenas se conheciam pouco mais que os contornos. As próprias penetrações comerciais e missionárias do interior, ainda devidas aos portugueses, não

force. Moreover, the explicit reference to Henrique Galvão should have greatly irritated the Salazar regime, given their involvement in the case of Santa Maria in 1961. However, instead of what had happened with the older English language anticolonial writings, in which Galvão was mentioned in a report from 1947 on the issue of forced labor, Boxer cites his book about the Dembos. In this work, as in other works, Galvão glorified the military stature of João de Almeida, who with his knowledge of raiding and terrorism helped Paiva Couceiro in the so-called pacifying campaigns. Regardless, mentioning Galvão was sufficient to define an attitude against Salazar.⁸⁶

If, with *Race Relations* (1963), Boxer had joined an already-ongoing debate and acted much like a latecomer does, claiming a centrality for himself that may not have belonged to him. Of course, this centrality ended up being granted to him anyway following the response the book solicited from Armando Cortesão in the pages of the *Diário Popular*.⁸⁷ Do not forget, though, that it was Cortesão himself that had originally responded to those who opposed the Portuguese colonial policy via at least a pamphlet and some older correspondences⁸⁸ Boxer's conservativeness had perhaps delayed his adoption of the anticolonial cause. It was this conservatism, after all, that had helped him foster cordial relationships for many years with Father Silva Rego and with Virgínia Rau.⁸⁹ It is difficult to identify the reasons that led Boxer to this about-face, which had been developing since 1960, when his works were so well acknowledged by the circles of historians who specialized in Sub-Saharan African that, in 1962, he did not hesitate to cite a book by Basil Davidson. In this sense, how can we interpret Boxer's expectations for the book on 2 January 1964, considering that, after the first wave of shock and unpopular reaction the book had raised—"and not only with Cortesão"—subsided, it might perhaps have come to

tinham logrado interessar pela África, como continente económico, os povos expansionistas da Europa.. E o século XIX surgiu como uma África periférica, que os portugueses tinham penetrado profundamente em alguns sentidos, mas de cujas viagens e estabelecimentos as próprias ciências geográficas andavam distraídas. O grande continente reduzia-se, na verdade, a pouco mais que uma série escalonada de feitorias litorais—verdadeiras feridas pelas quais escorreu a maior hemorragia demográfica da História” Henrique Galvão, *Por Angola (Quatro anos de actividade parlamentar) 1945–1949*, 229–30.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 37 (Boxer is referring to Galvão's book on the Dembos as being composed of only two volumes). Galvão, *Dembos* (vol. 2, 11, about the “movable columns” in Lunda, Huíla, the Congo, and Dembos; vol. 3, 41, about the raids); *ibid.*, *História do nosso tempo (ação e obra de João de Almeida 1904–1910)*, 321 (about the raids).

⁸⁷ Alden, *Charles R. Boxer: An Uncommon Life*, 374–79.

⁸⁸ Cortesão, “Sobre alguns aspectos internacionais do problema colonial”; *ibid.*, *Realidades e desvarios africanos—Discurso proferido na Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa, quando da sessão de encerramento da Semana do Ultramar em 9 de Junho de 1962*.

⁸⁹ Boxer, letter to Ruben A. Espólio, dated 25 August 1951 [in this very same letter, there is a reference to a friendship that he had with a certain group, in which there was a likely competency in spoken English, which Rui Cinatti, a poet, participated in.]

be considered “deeply and dispassionately”?⁹⁰ Two days later, Boxer revealed that Cortesão’s criticisms had been sent to him by not only Father Carlos de Azevedo but also by Ruben Anderson Leitão.⁹¹ At that time he stressed that, if he were to respond to Cortesão, he would obey the advice of Ruben Anderson Leitão and aim to be “short, courteous, and to the point,” as Leitão did not want to see his friend and correspondent involved in any sort of public defense of his character; he also pointed out that the book had irritated people more sensible than just Cortesão, a fact that worried him and that he would take into consideration.⁹² On 14 January 1964, he had completed his response in a letter entitled “Armandine Ravings,” a name which mocked the pamphlet Cortesão had published in 1962; he had to send the text as quickly as possible to the *Diário Popular* and, in case that newspaper wouldn’t publish it, he thought about sending it to *Stvdia* (a magazine that was rather outspoken) or to Brazil; finally, in a note riddled with condescension but also with discomfort in the situation he was getting himself involved in, he concluded about the Portuguese supports of Salazar and of Salazar’s colonial policy that:

These people must grow up, and learn that the continuation of the Portuguese presence in Africa is to be justified on the grounds of what has been accomplished there since about 1875 (and, more especially) in this century, and cannot be justified by patriot-cries about the “obra civilizadora” of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which was practically the “obra escravatura” as can be seen from any history of Angola and Moçambique.⁹³

On 16 January 1964, Boxer’s response to Armando Cortesão’s articles, which were published between 27 December 1963 and 4 January 1964, was sent.⁹⁴ According to Dauril Alden, close to one hundred copies were made of the typed version and distributed by Boxer’s friends, among whom was Ruben A. Espólio; Salazar authorized its publication on the twenty-fourth of that month, and Cortesão replied the next day.⁹⁵ The first point of Boxer’s piece concerned the central argument of the work in question: statements such as

⁹⁰ Boxer, letter to Ruben A. Espólio, dated 2 January 1964.

⁹¹ According to Dauril Alden (*Charles R. Boxer: An Uncommon Life*, 376), it was Dr. Carlos Estorninho who indirectly sent the copies of Cortesão’s articles to Charles Boxer.

⁹² Boxer, letter to Ruben A. Espólio, dated 4 January 1964.

⁹³ Boxer, letter to Ruben A. Espólio, dated 14 January 1964 (this letter is accompanied by Boxer’s response that would end up being published in the *Diário Popular* on 24 January 1964).

⁹⁴ Reproduced in Boxer, “Resposta a artigos de Armando Cortesão.” It is worth noting that the release of this article in São Paulo should be put into context with the debate surrounding the warm welcome that was given in the same magazine to the important anticolonial militant Frantz Fanon: Fernando de Albuquerque Mourão, review of *L’An V de la Révolution Algérienne* by Frantz Fanon; Eurípedes Simões de Paula, “Carta do Prof. Robert Ricard a propósito da resenha do livro de Frantz Fanon: *L’An V de la Révolution Algérienne*.”

⁹⁵ Alden, *Charles R. Boxer: An Uncommon Life*, 379.

the ones that Cortesão made, that “the Portuguese never had racial prejudices or prejudices against any skin color,” lacked justification “in light of historical facts and events.” Boxer’s second point related to the nature of the sources used. Being criticized for not having made a “show of scholarship” and citing “passages that have been isolated or removed from their context,” Boxer responded that he limited himself to citing Portuguese sources already published in easily accessible sources, putting aside the accounts made by any detractors, especially travel narratives of Portuguese foreign rivals.⁹⁶ The third point—perhaps the most important in order to illustrate Boxer’s conservativeness, moderation, and lack of radicalism—concerns a repeated comparison: religious intolerance, the mistreatment of slaves, and racial discrimination practiced by the Portuguese were considerably less than that exercised by other white peoples, such as Castilian, English, Dutch, French, etc. Within this comparative gradient, which is reminiscent of Lord Hailey’s and Raymond Firth’s ideas, Boxer maintained that the Portuguese had less bias based on skin color. Once these differences of degree were established, Boxer could still not accept that any of the following had never existed in the “old Portuguese Empire:” religious persecution, such as what was exerted over Hindus and Muslims from 1561 to 1761; discrimination against indigenous secular clergy; and slavery practiced by the Portuguese under the belief of the racial superiority of the white man over the black.

The next point, the fourth, is practically a copy of the tirade he had put forth with Espólio: the contemporary presence in Angola, as the “heart of the empire,” must be justified on the “work done in the last quarter century and onwards” when the Portuguese took root in the territory; as a result, their presence there could not be justified by the work undertaken during the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, a time when the presence was more maritime with little territorial settling and when Angola was “practically speaking, a place of exile for white convicts and an inexhaustible market of black slaves for Brazil.” Notice, though, in light of this defense, that the previously cited passage from *Race Relations* and the use of Henrique Galvão is more understandable—in short, the justification of the Portuguese colonial project should be based on what had been done since the Berlin Conference. In no way was Boxer expressing ideas against the continuation of the Portuguese colonial project. His fifth and final point, in which one can also detect a continuation of Boxer’s political moderation, was that he was convinced, as he had already written in a private letter, that when the dust settled and the controversy had died down, it would be plain to see that he himself had never praised the deeds of the Portuguese, nor

⁹⁶ Boxer, “Resposta a artigos de Armando Cortesão.”

had he dared “to censor their mistakes and crimes without keeping the conditions and mentalities of the time in mind”; as a result, he could not be identified as either a soldier of the Fifth Empire (an image he perhaps intended to associate with Cortesão’s constant use of mythical and idealized images of the Portuguese Empire) or a supporter of Holden Roberto.

* * *

It is not the most important thing here to reproduce the terms of the controversy in an analytical lens, though that task proves difficult. What is, however, of particular relevance is that Boxer did not address the image of an author of “bad faith” that Cortesão had attributed to him. He intended, rather, to preserve the space for a moderate attitude, more in line with his conservative perspective. He also maintained a historian’s analytical rigor, which prevented him from undertaking myths and exploitations of history, crafted at the expense of distorting and manipulating the past. Of course, political struggles have little to do with the more subtle ways of dealing with issues, which rarely go beyond simple rivalries. But the truth is that Boxer did not reiterate the myths of the Portuguese not practicing racial discrimination, nor did he want a radical condemnation of the Portuguese colonial empire to be made as a result. He hadn’t become militant toward the anticolonial cause. Because of his moderateness or conservatism, it was all a question of comparison, and the Portuguese were not the worst in terms of racial discrimination and their use of violence. As he stated in one of his points, the Portuguese had undertaken the job of colonizing Angola at very least since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as they had begun settling there. Father Silva Rego, who knew Boxer well, in a public review published in 1963 affirmed that the purpose of the book in question was an exception; in other words, it was an isolated case within the vast span of Boxer’s work:

By writing this, he offered, to the enemies of Portugal’s history who he knows so well, a sampling, composed solely of the “fleurs du mal,” when he could have arranged a more beautiful and more truthful bouquet. This book will be a primer that the enemies of Portugal will henceforth have to read. This perspective certainly will not please the diligent and scientific spirit that Professor Boxer has. . . . Professor Boxer shifted his values in this book, one that the international political community will certainly make a bestseller. The culture of Portuguese history owes him sincere gratitude for what he has produced in the

past, and, having forgotten this incident, hopes to continue counting him as a part of its community of impartial and independent scholars.⁹⁷

* * *

Treating Boxer's book about race relations as a special case apart from a *corpus* that had already given so much to the "culture of Portuguese history" was an attitude rather similar to what Boxer had hoped for. According to Father Silva Rego, Boxer and his work could not be taken as the equivalent of "the enemies of Portugal's history who he knows so well." This was so much the case that, just like Father Silva Rego had stated, Boxer's studies that followed the book were considered a return to true history. They did not limit his praise, either, not only by continuing to recommend the book he coauthored with Father Cummins to anyone who was interested in the history of the Church, but also in relation to his study on municipal political structures, framed in "respect for tradition, overall in Portugal."⁹⁸ As important as this Portuguese context may appear, overlapping with the onset of war in Angola, there were other contexts that gave meaning to Boxer's work and may have influenced the choices he made. Perhaps the most important of these was the one that brought him to dialogue with Africanist historians from both sides of the Atlantic, an experience that seems to be well represented in his previously cited contribution to the *Journal of African History*.

This piece, here, is not about defending Armando Cortesão's or Silva Rego's points of view about Boxer and *Race Relations*. The former had no qualms about referring to Boxer's "about-face" when he sought to attack his friend of many decades in the *Diário Popular*. The latter, less contentious and more prudent in his attempt to win Boxer back to his side, predicted that if the book became an anticolonial textbook, given the international situation, such a use would not meet Boxer's approval. After clarifying these issues that, having marked a sort of return to his positions which had nothing to do with the anticolonial struggle, surrounded the reception of Boxer's book in Portugal, it is worthwhile to explore the author's own intentions. Reformulated as a straightforward question, we might ask, might Boxer have meant to write an anticolonial manifesto? The answer is plainly no. His contributions toward the destruction of the myth that there was no racial discrimination, under which the government pushed to justify its exceptional

⁹⁷ Rego, review of *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire 1415-1825* Charles R. Boxer, 552, 554.

⁹⁸ Rego, review of *Two Pioneers of Tropical Medicine: Garcia d'Orta and Nicolas Monardes* by Charles R. Boxer; Rego and J. S. Cummins, "The Dominican Mission in Japan (1602-1622) and Lope de Vega"; Rego, review of C. R. Boxer, *Portuguese Society in the Tropics. The Municipal Councils of Goa, Macao, Bahia and Luanda, 1510-1800*.

colonialism, could not have been taken as a deliberate push to put an end to the Portuguese Empire. As Boxer wrote in a 1963 summary of the book and repeated in a letter, in order to justify the continuation of the Portuguese Empire in Africa, one would have to focus on the period when occupation effectively began, in 1875 or, more properly, at the dawn of the twentieth century. Beyond that, the aforementioned reference made by Boxer to Henrique Galvão may indicate that João de Almeida's pacification campaigns in Dembos, glorified by Galvão with a particular emphasis on the raiding operations, were just one of the points from which occupation might be justified. The same citation might have indicated, on Boxer's part, an agreement with certain moderate perspectives that opposed Salazar's colonial policies. It should be recognized that in Galvão's case, such an opposition was made in the name of defending a Portuguese community that had integrated into the African communities and become associated with a general suspicion regarding the characteristic unpreparedness of the African nationalist movements.⁹⁹

Race Relations and other books by Boxer remained as works in which a quality historical analysis was presented with a critical and objective point of view. At least, that was how the authors that were more closely aligned with the anticolonial cause saw it. As a result, Ronald Chilcote referred to them as "outstanding works" and considered *Race Relations* in particular as capable of putting "the race question in proper perspective."¹⁰⁰ William Minter suggested reading Boxer, considering him a "distinguished historian," right after suggesting reading James Duffy.¹⁰¹ In the circles surrounding Salazar and his colonial policies, many different ways of appropriating Boxer's work began to appear. David M. Abshire, for example, did not hide that the racial question of the Portuguese was a controversial matter, but he did take advantage of certain passages within Boxer's writing in which he declared not only that Portuguese racial discrimination was lesser than elsewhere but also that the friendly relationships that the Portuguese maintained with other peoples were the object of envy of other European nations.¹⁰² At the governmental level, the small file on Boxer at the Minister of the Overseas's Office of Political Affairs contained information regarding his trip to Macau in 1971, when he was given an honorary doctorate by the University of Hong-Kong. The most important information that had been sent to

⁹⁹ Note that in 1961, outside of the Henrique Galvão's actions, there were others that took the position of self-determination, though with less recognition, cf. Leal, *Coisas do tempo presente. A gadanha da morte. Reflexões sobre os problemas africanos*.

¹⁰⁰ Chilcote, *Portuguese Africa*, 130–31

¹⁰¹ Minter, *Portuguese Africa and the West*, 163.

¹⁰² David M. Abshire, "The Portuguese Racial Legacy," 91.

Lisbon was that “Professor Boxer referred to Macau and to the actions of the Portuguese in the East with friendly terms.”¹⁰³

In spite of the routine reference to it, especially in works which aimed to upend the Portuguese presence in Africa, the attack on Boxer was not seen as a priority. As much as the *Race Relations*'s author's participation in the debate about Portuguese colonialism in Africa had been characterized by its late arrival to the context already established by Basil Davidson, James Duffy, and Marvin Harris, it was also characterized by the haste with which he withdrew from it. In other words, it was as if Boxer had become inadvertently involved with the one side of the debate he wanted no part of, feeling the need to recede very quickly to a position more consistent with his conservatism and liberal moderateness. In this respect, it is quite significant that the main response from governmental circles—made with the decisive support of a man of the regime and involving an important research center at Georgetown University in Washington—was made against James Duffy's book, *Portuguese Africa*. Pedro Teotónio Pereira, an ex-ambassador who was, at one time, considered the most likely successor to Salazar in his capacity as administrator of the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, led the book project, which owes quite a bit to Alexandre Ribeiro da Cunha from the Minister of the Overseas's Bureau of Political Affairs. Joining seven American authors who visited the former colonies and had the opportunity to meet with dozens of Portuguese individuals, who were deemed trustworthy—among whom was the anthropologist Jorge Dias—the so-called “Projecto David” was granted funding by the Gulbenkian, and assistance was promised by the Minister of the Overseas, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Portuguese Embassy in Washington. Integrated in the process through which studies regarding the Cold War and communism came to have two realities, the result was the publication of *Portuguese Africa: A Handbook* in 1969, organized by David M. Abshire, director of the Center for Strategic and International Studies at Georgetown University, and Michael A. Samuels, a member of that Center. The book, begun in February 1965, came to light in 1969—the year in which Boxer published his great work of synthesis, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire*, within which he was able to sum up his moderate political and analytical perspectives.¹⁰⁴ In short, as Pedro Teotónio Pereira wrote on 8 January 1970 to Alexandre Ribeiro da Cunha:

¹⁰³ AHD/MU/GM/GNP/RNP/0654/02988.

¹⁰⁴ Diogo Ramada Curto, “Uma história conservadora do Império marítimo português?” in C. R. Boxer, *O Império marítimo português, 1415-1825* (Lisbon: Edições 70, 2011), pp. I-XVI.

I had the great pleasure to speak with you on the topic of our book about Africa. It was an undertaking full of risks and extreme difficulty. Your cooperation was crucial and, without the patience with which you retrieved the thousands of records of overseas travel and attended to the changes in scenery and schedule that were constantly happening, it would not have been possible to arrive at the end of our work.

I have read and reread the chapters of the book and, each time, I am convinced more and more of the impact in Africa that this will make.

I am coming to bring you a copy to deliver by hand to the Minister of the Overseas. You are owed the deepest gratitudes on behalf of all those that worked either towards the research or the content of the book. The help we received from you was precious.

I asked Dr. Franco Nogueira to write a critical article about the book. It is to our advantage to distribute it as widely as possible, as it is, truthfully, the most comprehensive and most current study that could be done.¹⁰⁵

* * *

To make sense of Charles Boxer's work, and more specifically his 1963 book *Race Relations*, it was necessary to reconstruct three major contexts (Portuguese, English, and North American), through which a kind of inter-imperial circulation of knowledge (where forms of collaboration and conflict were found) could be identified. It was also necessary to take into account both the intention of the author as much as his responses to the unexpected consequence of his own actions. Aiming to emphasize that the book fits into a broader timeline, which preceded the events that took place in Angola in 1961, it was equally necessary to look backward to the earliest manifestations of attacks on Portuguese colonialism that appeared in book form. Basing ourselves in the works of Basil Davidson (after 1954), Marvin Harris, James Duffy, Anthony Sampson, and António de Figueiredo, it was possible to trace that path, which was already half covered by the time Boxer entered the debate. In a similar manner, research continued until the end of the 1960s, when a response was launched by the Portuguese authorities, financed by the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, and executed by an American university in Washington. If doubt exists regarding how the war of books produced by the war in Angola participated in the Cold War, "Projecto David" is quite revealing of how the production of academic knowledge within American universities became utilized by the geostrategic attack on communism. This latter episode is also very representative of the increasing centrality assumed by US college campuses in comparison to the work of journalists and newspapers in England.

¹⁰⁵ AHD/MU/GM/GNP/RNP/0328/03142. About James Duffy, AHD/MU/GM/GNP/RNP/3149 or A05.G.1.M018

Incidentally, it is worth noting that this opposition between academics and journalists does not reflect any type of growing academic autonomy of knowledge compared to a secular tradition of positions and debates in circles made up of public opinion. Perhaps, this opposition corresponds solely to different ways of practicing, at different moments, American versus British imperialism.

In this scenario, it is significant that *Race Relations* is based on a series of lectures that Boxer gave in late 1962 at the University of Virginia, one of the well-reputed centers for the study of slavery, and that *Portuguese Society in the Tropics* corresponds to a series of conferences held at the end of 1964 at the University of Wisconsin, already at the time one of the principal sites for the study of Africa. However, in this article's context, the most important piece of information is perhaps the way that Boxer went against the grain in this second book. The historical comparison between the municipalities of Bahia, Luanda, Goa, and Macau, while responding to the call of John Leddy Phelan—a major historian of colonial Spanish America, responsible for a program of Comparative Tropical History—emphasized the institutional apparatus of the Portuguese Empire. Beyond merely that, the comparison corresponded well to the idea of a Portuguese political tradition of representational politics at the local level and of autonomy for the white elites (as had happened in Rhodesia with Ian Smith in 1965, the year Boxer's book was published). This was heavily valued by the circles close to the Salazar regime since the beginning of the 1950s. Its appropriation as an issue with a positive connotation, endowed by Boxer with a strong scholarly and analytical dimension, was a way to moderate the previous denouncements regarding Portuguese racial discrimination.

Apart from the specific connections that could be made with the universities at which Boxer taught, as happened in a more stable form with Yale University, it is far from being understood how American universities, which benefited from conditions and research programs conditioned by political agendas as defined by the Cold War and the creation of the so-called "Area Studies," had conditioned historical research on Portuguese Africa or European colonial empires. There are issues of the political connotation of the social sciences, their hierarchy, and their autonomy in relation to political pressures that are still unresolved. In this regard, one of the most difficult individual cases to grasp is that of Richard Hammond, an economic historian from Stanford University, who was interested in Portuguese Africa at a late part of his career; he was perhaps the most prestigious historian or social scientist from an American university that intervened on the debate on Portuguese

Africa.¹⁰⁶ Why did his approach toward Portugal in Africa between 1815 and 1910 constitute a prime example of “uneconomic imperialism”—an extension of Schumpeter’s theories about imperialism as a sign of archaism, in which the ratio of costs and benefits serves to put limits on the American imperial expansion, put into evidence by the Vietnam War? This is a question that deserves further exploration.

What is certain is that, at the time of Hammond’s biggest book, Standard University had already set up the conditions to progress the career of a young political scientist and economist, Ronald Chilcote, who was particularly interested in the voice and the arguments of the anticolonial movements. In turn, the Department of Anthropology at Columbia, where Marvin Harris worked, adopted a progressive agenda and sought to denounce forced labor in Mozambique. However, it was also out of Columbia that came three of the seven collaborators (Norman F. Bailey, Michael Samuels, and Irene van Dogen) of the book that Abshire and Samuels organized out of Georgetown University—each of them associated with strategic studies, international relations, and political science. In sum, all of these elements, however loose they may appear, suggest the existence of a certain autonomy that American universities held with regard to press and to the circles of power that characterize other settings. But this also suggests that, through programs and funding provided by foundations, the American university autonomy had limits. It is clear that, in England, the terms of the anticolonial debate were set by newspapers and journalists that, along with their autonomy, showed themselves capable of calling the Portuguese colonial policy into question. Where there were perhaps slight possibilities for as much autonomy in academia as in the press, was in Portugal. There, university professors, journalists, columnists, and politicians overlapped and overrode each other, all following the same agendas, and those that were not aligned with the government were simply excluded—fired or cast into exile.

¹⁰⁶ R. J. Hammond, *Portugal and Africa 1815–1910. A Study in Uneconomic Imperialism*.

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