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Race, Culture and Liberation: African anticolonial thought and practice in the time of decolonisation

Abstract:

This article explores the contribution of Amílcar Cabral and his fellow militants to debates over culture, race and liberation which took place among Africans and beyond during the mid-twentieth century. By the late 1950s African struggles for independence had reached a point of urgency. Alongside complex negotiations over political settlement and many wars of liberation across the continent, equally complex conversations took place about race, culture and African-ness, and the form and futures of national liberation. In their thought and practice the leading figures of the liberation movements fighting against Portuguese colonial rule made a significant contribution to these debates. The key contribution of this article is to situate the thought of Cabral in the collaborative relations of the liberation movements and in broader debates. This reveals how understandings of culture and the consciousness of African-ness come to be articulated in very different ways, ultimately transcending the framing of race and arriving at a more radical understanding of culture. The thought of Cabral and his colleagues is situated within the continental and global context with reference to three key moments and sites of debate in Havana and Dakar in 1966 and Algiers in 1969.

Keywords:

Anticolonialism; race; culture; liberation; negritude

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Race, Culture and Liberation: African anticolonial thought and practice in the time of decolonisation

This article examines the thought of Amílcar Cabral and his fellow militants of the Portuguese colonies in Africa with regard to questions of culture, race, colonialism and liberation. The article explores Cabral's thought in its relational context, in two respects: in its collaborative context, and in its continental and global context. Cabral is one of the most well known of African anticolonial thinkers and political actors, alongside figures such as Frantz Fanon and Kwame Nkrumah. Stretching from his own times to today a substantial literature has grown about Cabral's political thought as well as his capacities and achievements as a military leader and international diplomat. While Patrick Chabal famously considered that Cabral's writings 'were essentially analyses of the events in which he was involved; they were not theories about, or inquiries into, abstract social or political questions',¹ others have examined his political thought especially in relation to Marxism and his work as an agronomist.² More recently Reiland Rabaka has situated Cabral's thought in the tradition of 'Africana critical theory'.³ Much of this literature focuses largely on the figure of Cabral, and the first aim of this article is to reinsert Cabral and his thought within the collaborative context in which he operated. Acknowledging the significance of Cabral's stature as a political thinker, the aim here is to bring to the fore the equally significant but less well known dimension of collaboration within which Cabral's thought developed and which was a central element of the practice of the anticolonial liberation movements of Portugal's colonies. Drawing especially on the archives of Amílcar Cabral and Mário Pinto de Andrade, the article explores the development of a Cabralian strand of political thought about culture, race, colonialism and liberation, examining the writings of Cabral and his fellow militants.⁴

The second aim of the article is to situate the development of Cabral's thought in its continental and global context. Major strands of pan-African, internationalist and anti-colonial thought and practice criss-crossed the twentieth century, indicating the contours of a world shaped by empire and increasingly being reshaped by reactions against empire. One strand of thought which was hotly debated within Africa was negritude, and it was Senghor's negritude which was most contested. This article focuses primarily on the increasing divergence between the Cabralian and Senghorian

strands of anticolonial thought. Equally important debates and ideas developed in Anglophone-centred contexts. Nevertheless, for largely historical and contingent reasons the leading figures of the liberation movements of the Portuguese colonies engaged more closely with francophone debates and contexts. Some have suggested that negritude resonated more clearly with those in the Portuguese colonies than it did with Africans of Britain's colonies, because Portugal's policy of assimilation was closer to the French colonial policy, whereas the British policy of 'indirect rule' had different implications for the colonised in terms of culture.⁵ The leading militants of the Portuguese colonies had a closer relationship with the French language for several reasons. Despite Portugal's longstanding close and subordinate relationship with Britain over centuries, during the mid twentieth century the dominant external cultural influence in Lisbon was France rather than Britain. The African students could read material in French with relative ease. French was the second working language of the struggles: a considerable proportion of the documentation of the liberation movements was written in French, because much of the external activity of the *Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde* (PAIGC) and *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) as well as the collaborative organisations *Movimento Anti-Colonialista* (MAC), *Frente Revolucionária Africana para a Independência Nacional das Colónias Portuguesas* (FRAIN) and *Conferência das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colónias Portuguesas* (CONCP) was based in Francophone countries – Guinea Conakry, Algeria, Morocco, Congo Brazzaville, and Senegal.

The article situates the contribution of Cabral and his colleagues within concrete contexts and processes in order to grasp the historically situated, lived and dynamic character of anticolonial thought. The central analysis of their thought is contextualised with respect to three key moments and sites of debate: the First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America in Havana, 1966, the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* in Dakar, 1966, and the *Premier Festival Culturel Panafricain* in Algiers, 1969. These constitute nodes of a dynamic configuration of anticolonial politics and debate through which we can situate and explore the Senghorian and Cabralian strands of thought. The core of the article examines the collaborative development of ideas about culture, identity, race and liberation on the part of Amílcar Cabral and his fellow militants, from their time

studying in Lisbon in the 1950s to the years of armed struggle in the 1960s and 70s. This analysis is framed on either side by a reflection on the contours of debate among continental and diasporic Africans and broader global anti-colonial currents from the mid fifties through to the late sixties. The three events in Havana, Dakar and Algiers together give shape to a constellation of African anticolonial debate, marking some of the central areas of difference and disagreement which unfolded during this time.

I Havana and Dakar 1966

One of Amílcar Cabral's most famous speeches is the one he gave at the Tricontinental Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America in Havana, January 1966. Widely known as 'The Weapon of Theory', its full title was 'Presuppositions and objectives of national liberation in relation to social structure'.⁶ In this speech Cabral addressed the strategic realities of national liberation movements in the context of colonialism, neocolonialism and imperialism. Arguing that revolutions need theory and can learn from others but need above all to examine the specificities of their own context, he elaborated an analysis of the internal contradictions facing liberation movements, arising from the structures of social relations shaped by colonial domination. While employing the terminology of class and modes of production, Cabral set out what today would be recognised as a rejection of a Eurocentric approach, strongly refusing the European thesis that African societies existed outside of history.⁷ Careful analysis of the relations of society and the situation, interests and outlook of different groups and classes was essential, he argued, to establishing the unity necessary for the national liberation struggle. In this speech Cabral did not directly address the question of culture, but his analysis was integrally related to his understanding of culture, as he elaborated in full a few years later at a lecture at Syracuse University in memory of Eduardo Mondlane.⁸ A central theme of his argument in Havana was the characterisation of the process and effects of imperialism in terms of the denial of the dominated society's historical process. Imperialism removes a society and people from history, subordinating its social relations and development to the interests of the coloniser, and thereby preventing the free expression of a society, of a people's personality. Therefore, he argued,

we can state that national liberation is the phenomenon in which a socio-economic whole rejects the denial of its historical process. In other words, the national liberation of a people is the regaining of the historical personality of that people, it is their return to history through the destruction of the imperialist domination to which they were subjected.⁹

Cabral's analysis in Havana elaborated the perspective regarding culture that he later made explicit: liberation from colonial domination is a fundamental requirement for the cultural expression of a people, and the struggle for liberation, the act of picking up arms, is an act of culture.

Cabral's speech at the Tricontinental brought him international renown. Addressing the full assembly on the plenary session on 6 January 1966, Cabral spoke for all the liberation movements of the Portuguese colonies, in the name of their collaborative organisation, CONCP. He explained in his opening words: 'we wish to attend and take active part in this epoch-making event in the history of mankind'.¹⁰ The Tricontinental conference was historically unprecedented in bringing together representatives from Asia, Africa and Latin America. More than five hundred delegates from more than eighty countries or regions across the three continents gathered in Havana over two weeks.¹¹ The Cuban national Committee claimed: 'It will be the first time in history that revolutionaries from the three continents will meet, in a conference such as this. The representatives of anti-imperialist organizations from the most distant parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America who struggle for liberation or national consolidation, will meet to firmly confront the threat created by U.S imperialism'.¹²

A few months later a very different but also unprecedented event took place, this time focused specifically on culture: the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres* in Dakar, April 1966. While not the first gathering of 'men of culture' on the African continent, following the 1962 Conference of African Writers in Kampala, it was the first time that such a gathering of African and diasporic writers, artists and musicians took place in Africa. Senegal's president Léopold Senghor welcomed to Dakar thousands of artists and visitors from across Africa, the Caribbean, America and Europe, for three and a half weeks of art, literature, music, film, theatre and dance.¹³ Senghor's Festival followed two previous events addressing African culture: the

Premier Congrès International des Écrivains et Artistes Noirs in Paris, 1956, and the second Congress in Rome, 1959, organised by Alioune Diop and the publishing house *Présence Africaine*. In Paris Senghor had elaborated his thesis about negritude, a black cultural identity and essence shared by continental and diasporic Africans, reiterating ideas which he had first developed in the 1930s.¹⁴ By the time of the 1956 Congress Senghor had been in France for many years and was a prominent politician as well as an international poet, intellectual and literary figure. His politics were rooted in a pragmatic and utopian vision of cooperation between France and Africa, imagining a remaking of imperial structures to enable equal relations between Africa and France within a federal framework.¹⁵ Senghor's vision sought to promote the values of African culture alongside all other cultures in the world, with a view to the flourishing of world civilisation. He embraced the qualities of European culture but argued that the future development of a global civilisation required the contribution and therefore liberation of all cultures, including those of Africa.

In his speech in 1956 Senghor claimed that

cultural liberation is an essential condition of political liberation. If white America conceded the claims of the Negroes it will be because writers and artists, by showing the true visage of the race, have restored its dignity; if Europe is beginning to reckon with Africa, it is because her traditional sculpture, music, dancing, literature and philosophy are henceforth forced upon an astonished world.¹⁶

Ten years later, as President of Senegal, Senghor invited the astonished world to witness and enjoy the wealth of African culture in an independent African country, restored to its dignity. Senghor conceived the event as a demonstration and performance of negritude. Opening the Festival, he announced

We feel greatly honoured to be given the opportunity to welcome so much talent, coming from the four continents, the four horizons of the spirit, to the *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*. But what honors us above all and what is your greatest merit is that you will participate in an enterprise even more revolutionary than the exploration of space: ... the defence and celebration of Negritude.¹⁷

These events in Havana and Dakar, each unprecedented in its own way, were widely contrasting in their broader politics. Taking place in the same year, they constitute concrete markers of two increasingly divergent strands of anticolonial thought and practice. These two strands share common origins and concerns with decolonisation, both traced back to the Asian-African Conference held in Bandung, Indonesia, April 1955, an event whose ‘most fundamental legacy was to be a point of reference for divergent but significant directions’.¹⁸ One of these directions led to consolidating and expanding organisational solidarity among Asian and African countries through the Afro-Asian Peoples’ Solidarity Conference in Cairo, 1957, and the formation of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO). From 1961 Cuba obtained observer status in AAPSO, and discussions for linking AAPSO with Latin American movements led to the decision at the fourth AAPSO Solidarity Conference in Ghana, 1965 to organise a conference of African, Asian and Latin American states, to be held in Havana.¹⁹

Another direction focused on African culture. It was in the aftermath of Bandung that Alioune Diop and his colleagues at *Présence Africaine* conceived of the idea to hold a Congress of black artists and writers. The Angolan militant Mário Pinto de Andrade, who was working with the journal at the time, recalled: ‘that was the political content in which we were immersed ... during the year of 1955, with the Conference of Bandung as a primordial reference’.²⁰ He remembered that Alioune Diop characterised the Congress as ‘a great Bandung of the black peoples’,²¹ and in his speech Aimé Césaire similarly argued:

the historic meeting in Bandung may be said to have been not only a major political event; it was also a cultural event of the first magnitude. Because it was the peaceful rising of peoples thirsty not only for justice and dignity but also for what colonialism had above all denied them: culture.²²

This path continued from Bandung and Paris via Rome to Dakar: at the second Congress in Rome in 1959 plans were formulated for a third event to take place in Africa, leading eventually to the expanded Festival in Dakar.²³

These two divergent but significant directions differed not just in their focus and constituency but in their politics. The Afro-Asian-Latin American solidarity position became increasingly radical. The conference in Havana espoused a militant and

avowedly anti-imperial position, embracing delegations and liberation movements from across the three continents on terms informed by politics rather than race or cultural identity.²⁴ Inevitably the planning of the conference was partially afflicted by growing tensions between China and the Soviet Union, much discussed by Western as well as Chinese and Soviet commentators.²⁵ Nevertheless the actual dynamics and significance of this conference transcended such tensions. Notwithstanding Sino-Soviet disagreements, the conference resolutions identified imperialism as the central and shared enemy of liberation movements and oppressed peoples around the world, including within the United States itself. Mahler has argued in addition that the Tricontinental espoused a radical discourse with regard to race. The inclusion of the condition of African Americans was central to the Tricontinental vision. The discourse of the Tricontinental conference and subsequent publications articulated what Mahler calls a distinct ‘metonymics of color’, employing the language of colour to refer not to phenotypic difference but, rather, to opposed ideological positions in the global context of imperialism:

With this transformation of color into a political signifier, the Tricontinental articulates its critique of a global system of imperialism through a critique of racial inequality but simultaneously takes a radically inclusive stance that attempts to destabilize racial essentialisms.²⁶

In contrast, the widely varied positions on African culture at the first and second *Présence Africaine* Congresses culminated in Dakar in a Festival very much framed by Senghor’s vision of negritude. The Dakar festival embodied a relatively moderate and elitist position, hosted by a political figure keen to maintain close relations with the former colonial power of France in particular, and Europe more broadly. France contributed funding especially for the art exhibition, French figures were included in the planning, and Charles de Gaulle was acknowledged formally as a co-patron of the Festival.²⁷ While a wide range of cultural forms were presented, the festival celebrated a restricted, elite notion of culture in terms of the arts; it was neither a Festival of popular culture nor a popular Festival.²⁸ The question of culture was explicitly framed in terms of race but avoided questions of class, colonialism and national liberation.

The next two sections explore in more detail the thought of Cabral and his fellow militants in relation to these two divergent directions of anticolonial politics which had become clearly differentiated by 1966, crystallised in these two contrasting events. Reiland Rabaka has argued recently that negritude contributed to the development of Cabral's thought in a way that 'few have been willing to acknowledge ... By influencing Fanon, and Fanon in turn influencing Cabral'.²⁹ My analysis here brings to the fore the collaborative practice of debate which has been overlooked in most of the scholarship on Cabral's thought.³⁰ By doing so I add greater depth and nuance to the trajectory of thought sketched by Rabaka. Tracing the relationship between their understanding of culture and their analysis of colonialism, I show that Cabral and his colleagues were indeed influenced by Senghor and negritude, more directly than Rabaka allows. I also demonstrate how they moved beyond the limitations of negritude to develop a position which differed in significant ways from that of Senghor. Cabral's argument that the struggle for national liberation was an act of culture directly echoed the position set out by Fanon in Rome in 1959. However, I show that it was their shared critical reflections on their own predicament as much as the influence of Fanon which led Cabral and his colleagues to elaborate a radical analysis of the role of culture in national liberation. Drawing across material from the archives of Cabral and Andrade, I explore how the anticolonial militants of the Portuguese colonies developed their more radical understanding above all through critical reflection on their own situation as *assimilados* as the imperatives of armed struggle demanded increasing clarity with regard to race, culture and liberation.

II Les Etudiants Noirs Parlent: Lisbon in the 1950s

Cabral's thought, so prominently expressed to the tricontinental audience in Havana in 1966, is widely acknowledged as singular and pioneering. It was firmly rooted in a practice of collaboration with his fellow militants which is far less well known. This practice of collaboration began in Lisbon in the early 1950s. It is necessary to go back to that context in order to trace and understand their early embrace of negritude and their subsequent move towards a very different and far more radical analysis of questions of race, culture and liberation.

Just as in the French empire, so too in the Portuguese empire there were no universities in the colonies. The few African students of Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, Guinea and São Tomé who were able to continue their studies beyond secondary school had to travel to study in the metropole, just as, before them, Senghor, Césaire and Fanon had travelled from Senegal and Martinique to study in Paris. From very early on the experiences and activities of the African students in Lisbon and Coimbra formed a basis of conviviality and collaboration which would endure throughout the subsequent struggles for independence. Many of the African students in Portugal in the 1950s went on to play leading roles in the liberation struggles. Often sharing accommodation, their activities together ranged from playing football and trips to the beach to cultural discussions and debate and, for some, political engagement with Portuguese clandestine opposition groups, the Portuguese Communist Party and the youth movement of the Movement for Democracy, MUD-Juvenil. Above all, they engaged in determined debate among themselves. Much of this took place in the context of the *Casa dos Estudantes do Império* (CEI). The CEI was an association established by the Estado Novo in 1944, bringing existing student *Casas* under state patronage with the aim of consolidating the ideology of the regime.³¹ Though it later became an important site of anticolonial consciousness, in the early years the CEI was a more restricted environment.³²

The first generation of students from the colonies who would go on to lead the liberation movements – Agostinho Neto, Amílcar Cabral, Mário de Andrade, Alda Espírito Santo, Marcelino dos Santos, and others of their group notably Noémia de Sousa – were actively involved in the CEI, but found the association too politically restrictive for open debate and instead organised their own clandestine group, the *Centro de Estudos Africanos*, which met regularly on Sundays at the house of the São Tomean Espírito Santo family, to study and discuss a series of themes about Africa in the world.³³ Noémia de Sousa recalled those times:

I began to read many things that I had not read before, and to research, which was one of the objectives of the *Centro de Estudos Africanos*, which was for us to study our countries. I mean, it was something that was not studied in our education. In the teaching there [in the colonies and in Portugal] we studied Portugal, the history of Portugal, the geography of Portugal, the flora, fauna,

everything about Portugal, we studied nothing about [our own countries].

Which meant that we wanted to start to understand our own countries.³⁴

Mário de Andrade and Francisco Tenreiro drew up a schedule of research topics for the *Centro* under the heading '*Estudos de Cultura Africana*', which were distributed among the group, each one researching a topic and presenting it at their Sunday meetings. There were six general headings: Land and Man; African Socio-economics; Negro Thought; The Problems of the Portuguese Empire, and the Rest of Black Africa; The Negro in the World; The Central Problems for the advance of the Black World.³⁵ Their plan to produce a journal and to publish these research papers was not realised but their activities in the *Centro* resulted in two important initiatives: a collection of poetry, and a collaborative anonymous contribution to the 1953 special issue of *Présence Africaine*, *Les Étudiants Noirs Parlent*, entitled 'Situation of black students in the world, by the students of Portuguese Africa'.³⁶

This group of students engaged in a profound shared activity of research and debate.³⁷ As Andrade later recalled after the assassination of Cabral, their centre, though 'a modest enterprise in itself, consolidated among most of the participants an attitude of rupture with the policy of assimilation'.³⁸ They read widely, notwithstanding the limitations due to the censorship in Lisbon in the 1950s: they obtained books and journals through clandestine means from certain book sellers and from African sailors working for the state shipping companies which travelled between Portugal, Brazil and Africa.³⁹ The journal *Présence Africaine* was among the sources they obtained, as well as a broad array of literary and theoretical works including Marxist texts, Russian and Brazilian literature, the poetry and writings of Senghor, Césaire, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, René Maran, Richard Wright, Jorge Amado, Nicolas Guillén. They organised lectures at the *Casa dos Estudantes do Império*, contributed poems and essays to the *Casa*'s journal *Mensagem*, translated works by Senghor, Césaire and Langston Hughes, and published a collection of African poetry in Portuguese.⁴⁰

In addition to experiences of clandestine political activity and, for Neto, imprisonment, this time in Portugal was defined by their shared explorations of culture and identity. This practice of collaborative debate and organising which began in Lisbon in the early 1950s would endure and become a defining element of the

subsequent struggles for national liberation, formalised through organisations linking the national liberation movements of Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau, and São Tomé. By the mid 1950s the group of the *Centro* had dispersed, some returning to Africa, others to Europe. This was a time of increasing political and organisational activity in Angola and Guinea, and increasing surveillance and threat of imprisonment for the African students in Portugal. The Angolan Communist Party had been formed in 1955, PAIGC was established in Bissau in September 1956, and the MPLA in Luanda in December 1956. The *Movimento Anti-Colonialista* (MAC) emerged from a meeting of collaborative debate, the *Réunion consultative et d'étude pour le développement de la lutte contre le colonialisme portugais*, held over several days in Paris in November 1957 by Amílcar Cabral, Mário de Andrade, Viriato da Cruz, Marcelino dos Santos and Guilherme Espírito Santo.⁴¹ MAC was replaced by the *Frente Revolucionária Africana para a Independência Nacional das Colónias Portuguesas* (FRAIN) during the Second Conference of African Peoples in Tunis, January 1960. As the quest for liberation necessarily turned to armed struggle in Angola in 1961, then Guinea in 1963 and Mozambique in 1964, the need for coordination among the movements and the construction of support and solidarity within and beyond Africa became more urgent and so FRAIN was replaced by the *Conferência das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colónias Portuguesas* (CONCP) in 1961 in Casablanca. These organs embodied the shared values of the liberation movements, their strong commitment to a unified struggle within and across the colonies, and to collaboration and collective debate. In the aftermath of the meeting in Paris the MAC Manifesto was drafted in 1957, edited between 1957 and 1959 and finalised in 1960. After circulating among the militants over several years it was again published and distributed on the occasion of the second CONCP conference in Dar es Salaam in 1965.⁴² This substantial thirty-page document set out a historical analysis of Portuguese colonialism in the broader context of imperialism, the situation in each of the colonies, and the principles informing the liberation movements. It was the first formal statement of their shared and unified political thought.⁴³

III Race, Culture, Liberation

During their time in Portugal in the early 1950s Cabral, Andrade, Neto and their colleagues were undoubtedly inspired by Senghor's embrace of black African-ness

and African culture, and by negritude and the Harlem Renaissance more broadly. Andrade later reported ‘there is a letter from Amílcar to his fiancé at the time, Maria Helena, where he talks of his fascination with the poetry of negritude’.⁴⁴ In 1952 Agostinho Neto published a short article about the theatre of Guinean writer Keïta Fodéba in the CEI journal *Meridiano*. He described negritude in very Senghorian terms as a modern black poetry in which ‘Africa ... lives, in the similarity of rhythms and cultural concern. Not a static Africa, as a source, but an Africa with an emotional background, with a living and progressive cultural background.’ The works of continental African artists, he argued, were defined by ‘an essentially black African hallmark’, manifest ‘as rhythm, as authentic black African sensibility’.⁴⁵ Their small but significant collection of poetry, *Caderno de Poesia Negra de Expressão Portuguesa* organised by Mário de Andrade and Francisco Tenreiro in 1953 in the context of the *Centro de Estudos Africanos*, was conceived directly in relation to Senghor’s seminal *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Poésie Nègre et Malgache de Langue Française* of 1948.⁴⁶ The *Caderno* was explicitly framed as a contribution to negritude, which they considered the ‘vanguard of the path of a new authenticity’.⁴⁷ In his introduction Andrade described negritude as a new attitude, a new cultural movement of black poets which ‘comes from an urgent and anguished need to rediscover the traditional values that have been destroyed, ... the need to shout out their presence in the world’, confirming that ‘the black African poetry of Portuguese expression is integrated within this movement.’⁴⁸

It has been suggested that negritude resonated with Africans of the Portuguese colonies because of the similarity between the French and Portuguese policies of assimilation.⁴⁹ In 1926 Portugal introduced the *Estatuto dos Indígenas* which specified two juridical statuses for Africans in the colonies: *assimilado* and *indígena*.⁵⁰ Professing the ambition to bring Africans within the realm of Portuguese civilisation, the status of *assimilado* was conferred on those who, it was specified, had entirely abandoned the habits and customs of the black race; could speak, read and write the Portuguese language correctly; practised monogamy; and performed a profession or role compatible with European civilisation, or had funds obtained by legal means sufficient to support their and their family’s needs in terms of sustenance, housing and clothing.⁵¹ The status of *assimilado* granted additional rights denied to the vast majority of the African population, the *indígena*. Patrícia Ferraz de Matos

records that by 1950 the level of illiteracy among the *indígena* was nearly 100%, while the proportion of *assimilados* across the colonies was less than 0.02% of the African population.⁵²

If the experience of assimilation was the basis for the early embrace of negritude on the part of Cabral and his fellow students, their critical reflections on the condition of the *assimilado* also formed a core thread which led them beyond negritude. Over time their engagement with the question of African culture and the relationships between culture, colonialism and liberation increasingly differed from that of Senghor. Senghor's idea of African culture tended to an ahistorical notion of an essential black spirit and way of being. As many continental Africans observed, Senghor's ideas about African culture were informed by the writings of European anthropologists such as Leo Frobenius and Maurice Delafosse.⁵³ While promoting the worth of black African culture and civilisation, Senghor retained an idea of bounded civilisational cultures and advocated the appreciation of African culture as a valid contribution to world civilisation alongside European and other cultures. He contrasted the central features of African culture and way of being, expressed in language, music, sculpture and other forms, with those of Europe.⁵⁴ Senghor's ideas remained consistent over time: the Festival of Dakar was intended as the demonstration of a notion of negritude which Senghor had first elaborated in 1939.⁵⁵

As a younger generation studying together in the heart of a fascist empire in the early 1950s, the African students in Portugal were very aware of the violence of the Portuguese colonial regime and the extreme poverty and oppression of the majority of Africans of the Portuguese colonies, the *indígenas*, while equally aware of the struggles for independence elsewhere in Africa. Their reflections about culture were from the beginning rooted in concrete concerns about the suffering of their fellow colonised. This entailed a notion of African culture as living and dynamic, rooted in popular expression and African languages, and demanding serious reflection on the cultural alienation of the *assimilados*.⁵⁶ Their poetry of this time, which Neto called 'a poetry of commitment',⁵⁷ especially articulated the suffering of forced labour, for example in António Jacinto's seminal poems 'Monangamba' published in the 1953 *Caderno* and 'Carta dum Contratado' published in *Mensagem* in 1959.⁵⁸

But if this poetry expressed the ‘struggle to overcome the night of colonial oppression’, the African students were painfully aware that ‘the African masses do not yet participate in this poetic current’.⁵⁹ Their analyses of the condition of the *assimilado* emphasised both cultural alienation from their African roots, and political alienation from the rest of African society, the *indígena*. On one hand the small *assimilado* elite, educated in Portuguese with reference solely to Portuguese culture and history and required to adopt Portuguese customs and manners, suffered a ‘permanent attack on the human personality’.⁶⁰ In contrast to official doctrine, Portugal’s policy and practice did not constitute cultural assimilation but ‘an *imposition of values*’ for the *assimilado*.⁶¹ On the other hand, for the *indígena*, the promotion of the native ... is nothing but pure theory. The wrecking of the native in a material sense, the alienation they suffer from the cultural and moral point of view, is the crude and fundamental reality of Portuguese colonial practice, past and present.⁶²

Therefore the African intellectual ‘struggles in the near impossibility of bringing the results of his work to the consciousness of his people’.⁶³ Repeatedly pointing out that the proportion of *assimilados* was less than one percent of the African population in all of the Portuguese colonies, and that the *indígena*, receiving little to no education, were being deliberately held back in a condition of ignorance, they emphasised: ‘No other colonization has caused such a deep gulf between those who are usually considered “the elite”, “the civilized”, “evolved or evolving”, and the masses.’⁶⁴

By the late 1950s, with a firm commitment to political organising and anticolonial struggle, their explorations of culture manifest a clear move beyond the limitations of negritude. In an introductory lecture at a colloquium on Angolan poetry at the *Casa dos Estudantes do Império* in 1959 Agostinho Neto acknowledged that their poetry collection of 1953 had been constructed ‘under the sign of negritude’.⁶⁵ However, after discussing the question of language and the alienation of the *assimilado* from the *indígena*, he concluded that

this is the poetry of the uprooted. Its highest representatives are the black poets who express themselves in French. This poetry did not reach the African peoples who are the repository of our cultures. Poetry thought up in research offices, it only had distant links with the true problems of social reality.⁶⁶

Mário de Andrade later recalled that when they encountered Senghor's work for the first time, 'we received negritude without criticism, because the black man was evidently at the centre of Africa' and so it was 'natural that we would re-elaborate at our level that theory, the theory of negritude, ... as a response to the racism conveyed by the Portuguese dictatorship'. But, he explained, 'we soon liberated ourselves ... the reading of negritude was soon after a critical reading.' He relates this critique directly to their emerging analysis of the relationship between culture and anticolonial liberation: 'There is no doubt that the politics developed by us at that time, by the leaders of the CEA, was a nationalist form of politics, open to the affirmation of a national conscience. That national consciousness which would give rise to the movements born in Angola, in Guinea, etc, was evidently not limited to negritude, it always went beyond negritude.'⁶⁷

Cabral, Neto, Andrade and Cruz acknowledged that their earlier embrace of negritude, the 'struggle for the universal recognition of negro values' or what Cabral later called 'reaffricanisation of our spirits' had 'gradually been left behind'.⁶⁸ Nevertheless they did not elaborate any lengthy written critique of negritude. This is not surprising. Their reading, discussion, writing and contribution to broader debates were never simply for academic purpose but were strongly linked to the political situation and struggle of their peoples. To make this observation is not to criticise the many other Africans who did explicitly and at times at length denounce negritude and especially Senghor's negritude.⁶⁹ The debates which took place among the generation of Africans inhabiting the time of decolonisation were urgent and the positions articulated were sincere and deeply held. Rather it is to foreground that, especially from the late 1950s, the thought of Cabral and his fellow militants was elaborated in conditions increasingly shaped and delimited by the imperatives of clandestine political organising and then overt armed struggle. Their turn away from negritude is seen in occasional asides. For example in his analysis of the question of culture and national liberation in 1970 Cabral made no specific mention of negritude, but observed that 'The time is past when it was necessary to seek arguments to prove the cultural maturity of African peoples'.⁷⁰ It was also manifest in their elaboration of a far more radical position and set of concerns.

As their struggles for expression and political freedom confronted the brutal intransigence of the Estado Novo and they turned to armed struggle, their understanding of the question of culture grew more radical and their analysis of colonialism and colonial ideology more pointed. Speaking at the second conference of CONCP in Dar es Salaam in October 1965, a few months before the Tricontinental conference, Cabral characterised colonialism as ‘the paralysis or detour, or even the total halting, of the history of a people in favour of accelerating the historical development of other peoples’.⁷¹ In numerous documents they emphasised the specific features of Portuguese colonialism arising from the underdeveloped and largely agricultural base of Portugal’s economy, the fascist character of the Estado Novo regime and Portugal’s continued financial and military dependence on more powerful imperial allies. In order to evade responsibilities to the United Nations as a colonial power, in 1951 Portugal had revised its legislation. All references to the colonial empire were removed and the colonial territories were redefined as ‘overseas provinces’. The *Estatuto dos Indigenas* was revised in 1954 and finally revoked in 1961.⁷² The Estado Novo now insisted that Portugal was a harmonious, multi-racial and pluri-continental nation with a unified culture. In documents produced in the name of MAC, FRAIN and CONCP, Cabral and his colleagues strongly refuted this claim. In particular, Andrade elaborated a sustained critique of the thesis of ‘lusotropicalism’ proposed by Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre.⁷³ Freyre’s analysis, first elaborated in the 1940s and then embraced by the Estado Novo in the 1950s, claimed that the Portuguese people, due to their own mixed racial heritage, were uniquely equipped to live well in the tropics and to live harmoniously among indigenous societies, mixing through inter-marriage and forging a shared and unified culture.⁷⁴ Rejecting Freyre’s analysis as a deliberate apology for the Estado Novo and elaborating a critique at the level of method, analysis and empirical facts, Andrade equated Portugal’s policy of ‘spiritual assimilation’ with South Africa’s policy of apartheid: ‘the segregation of an entire black people from modern life’.⁷⁵ Portuguese colonialism in Africa, he argued, was a racist system based on extreme economic exploitation which reduced entire populations to forced labour.⁷⁶

Emphasising in general the ‘fundamentally contradictory’ relationship between colonialism and African culture,⁷⁷ they argued that it was nevertheless the endurance of culture among the masses which provided the original basis for anticolonial

struggle. As Cabral told an audience at Lincoln University, Pennsylvania in 1972, ‘the people are only able to create and develop the liberation movement because they keep their culture alive despite continual and organized repression of their cultural life.’⁷⁸ Referring to Fanon’s argument that the liberation struggle was in itself an expression of culture, Cabral and Andrade substantially elaborated this position.⁷⁹ First, defining culture as dynamically shaped by political and social relations in society, as ‘the vigorous manifestation, on the ideological or idealist level, of the material and historical reality of the society that is dominated’, the collective struggle of a people to regain control over historical development is therefore ‘necessarily an *act of culture*... the organized political expression of the struggling people’s culture.’⁸⁰ Second, the liberation struggle is in itself a vehicle for the forging of a new unified culture. Bringing different social groups and classes together in one coordinated and unified struggle is, Cabral argued, ‘a decisive cultural achievement’.⁸¹ For the *assimilado*, ‘daily contact with the mass of the people and the communion of sacrifices which the struggle demands’ enables them to overcome their cultural alienation. For their part the masses, through participation in the struggle, ‘break the fetters of the village universe to integrate gradually into the country and the world’.⁸² Third, the organisation of social life and especially the provision of education in the liberated zones enables new cultural life, ‘inserting our societies into the world’.⁸³ In short, ‘all the manifestations by which people apprehend their specific situation and look at their universe are undergoing radical change. We see the emergence of the cultural personality that will give meaning to the emergence of the nation.’⁸⁴

In redefining the relationship between culture, colonialism and liberation on a more radical basis, the leading figures of the liberation movements explicitly rejected the framing of race which had underpinned Senghor’s negritude. Again this position arose in part from the imperatives of popular mobilisation for the armed struggle and, in particular, the need to clarify the question of ‘who is our enemy?’. In his lecture at the CEI in 1959, recounting the early responses of the *assimilados* to their condition of alienation – uprooted, stuck between two worlds, without ties linking them to their people – Agostinho Neto had observed that ‘Angolan intellectuals ... forgot for a long time that African civilization existed... They concerned themselves somewhat more, but only superficially, with the social problems caused by racism. In sum: their concerns were merely epidermic.’⁸⁵ Years later in the midst of armed struggle, in a

lecture in Dar es Salaam entitled *Quem é o inimigo? Qual é o nosso objectivo?* (Who is the enemy? What is our objective?), Neto addressed the question of race at length. He acknowledged that 'The enemy in Africa is often confused with the white man. Skin colour is still a factor used by many to determine the enemy. There are historical and social reasons and lived facts which consolidate this idea in our continent.'⁸⁶ But, he argued, 'the phenomenon of colonial or neo-colonial oppression in our continent cannot be seen in terms of the colour of individuals. The very system which oppresses and exploits the peasant in Portugal is the same which oppresses and exploits the Angolan citizen'. It was therefore possible, he insisted, to establish just relations between the Portuguese and the Angolan, Mozambican and Guinean: 'Under certain conditions there are already cases where the racial problem is overcome. This is what happens in the war. There are conscious Portuguese who desert and, by one means or another, join the ranks of the nationalists.'⁸⁷ This position was shared across the liberation movements in their 'unified political thought'⁸⁸, though each faced very different challenges. In his speech to the CONCP in 1965 Cabral rejected the imperialist terminology of 'Black Africa' and stated 'we do not confuse exploitation ... with people's skin colour'.⁸⁹ And in his more extended analysis of the relationship between culture and national liberation, Cabral again confirmed: 'an objective analysis of cultural reality denies the existence of racial or continental cultures. ... culture – the creation of a community ... is a social reality independent of man's will, of the colour of his skin or the shape of his eyes'.⁹⁰

IV Algiers 1969

Since the 1950s debates among continental Africans about the question of culture had increasingly diverged. In particular, we have seen that the Senghorian and Cabralian strands came to elaborate very different understandings of the meaning of culture and its relationship to race, colonialism and national liberation. This final section first considers how these divergences were most starkly manifest in Algiers. Three years after the Havana and Dakar events the Algerian government hosted the *Premier Festival Culturel Panafricain*, which took place over two weeks, July 21-August 1 1969. This Pan-African Festival was animated by a revolutionary understanding of African culture and African-ness: the liberation movements of the Portuguese

colonies were lauded, while Senghor's negritude was proclaimed dead.⁹¹ The resonances of these contrasting positions for the politics of anticolonial struggle are then addressed.

The Pan-African Festival of Algiers was, like its predecessor in Dakar, a vibrant and multi-stranded event over many days, with continental and diasporic Africans converging to celebrate African culture. Alongside parades, dance performances, concerts and plays, intellectual debate took place in the Symposium held in the Palace of Nations. However, as several commentators have observed, the politics of the Algiers festival differed in many ways from that in Dakar three years earlier.⁹² Symbolic of such differences was the fact that while the Festival of Negro Arts had received financial support from France, the Pan-African Festival was 'a much more indigenous affair' supported by the OAU.⁹³ In both cases numerous divergent views were expressed: critics of negritude such as Ousmane Sembène were present in Dakar, and adherents vociferously defended negritude in Algiers. However the official vision and imagination of culture informing the two festivals differed, in particular with respect to race, class and colonialism.

The Festival in Dakar, intended as a performance of Negritude, was framed in terms of black culture. North African nations, not considered to be black, were granted only observer status at the Festival and excluded from official competitions, though some North African art works were included in the overall programme.⁹⁴ It was in Algeria, previously excluded from international forums debating African culture, that a non-racial, truly continental politics of African-ness was first explicitly embraced and performed. The Festival in Algiers articulated African-ness with reference not to race but to the shared historical experience of colonialism and anticolonial struggle. While the politics of the Tricontinental, as Mahler has argued, sought to appropriate racial discourse by deliberately subverting the language of colour, in Algiers the language of colour was transcended altogether. Algerian President Houari Boumediène said in his opening speech:

Our continent, three-quarters liberated but in full control of its destiny, is undertaking in this first Pan-African Cultural Festival the greatest assemblage of arts and letters in its history, continental in scope and expressing the full range of its achievements.... The Festival ... is at once the primary affirmation

of African unity in its thought, spirit and soul, and a recognition of the role that this Africanness has played in the preservation of our national personalities and in our liberation struggles.⁹⁵

Refusing a racialised understanding of African culture, the Festival of Algiers also refused to consider culture apart from class, colonialism and imperialism. Artists absent from Dakar in 1966 such as Miriam Makeba were present in Algiers, as were the Black Panthers. The Dakar festival had excluded many ordinary Senegalese due to entrance fees and elite locations; the Algiers festival was more of a street festival open to all.⁹⁶ Delegations from across the continent participated and, as in Havana, this included several national liberation movement delegations – MPLA, FRELIMO, PAIGC, ANC, SWAPO, ZAPU and FRONILAT.⁹⁷ The liberation movements of the Portuguese colonies, in their shared presentation under the banner of CONCP, set out their radical understanding of culture in relation to liberation, and their vision of the centrality of culture for Pan-African futures. They described their struggle as ‘a violent confrontation caused by the contradiction between the national cultural affirmation presented by our political organizations and the assimilationist alienation imposed by the colonial bayonets’⁹⁸ and they explained that

It is in the very fire of armed action, in the midst of ambushes set against the enemy, in the attacks on barracks or under a shower of bombs that the features of our peoples' cultural physiognomy are revealed. Because the armed struggle for national liberation leaves in the shadows none of the aspects that make up the community life of people in combat situations, it appears as a cultural act, par excellence.⁹⁹

The distance between positions in this continental debate as reflected in Dakar and Algiers ultimately related to differing politics with regard to colonialism, decolonisation and anticolonialism. African debates about culture, taking place alongside Africa's political decolonisation, thus had important political resonances. While many African states gained their independence through negotiated agreement with the colonial power, in several cases independence was achieved only after lengthy wars: wars of independence from France in Algeria (1954-1962) and Cameroon (1955-1960 and beyond); the Mau Mau war against British colonialism in Kenya (1952-1964); South Africa's war against Apartheid (1961-1990); Zimbabwe's

war of liberation from white minority rule (1964-1979); Namibia's war of independence from South Africa (1966 to 1990); and the wars against Portuguese colonial rule in Angola (1961-1974), Guinea-Bissau (1963-1974) and Mozambique (1964-1974). Equally important was the Congo crisis and the internationally-orchestrated assassination of Patrice Lumumba in 1961. The positions of independent African states with regard to armed liberation movements and the Congo crisis varied considerably, as did their visions of political and economic unity, though the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), established in 1963, managed to achieve universal agreement for support to national liberation movements coordinated by its Liberation Committee.¹⁰⁰ The diplomatic and strategic positions of states are another element of the difficult tensions and disagreements within Africa over the challenge of decolonisation, and they indicate some of the broader political stakes surrounding contending understandings of race, culture and liberation. Debates about culture operate in a different register from the foreign policies and diplomacies of African governments and leaders. It is nevertheless important, as Edward Said noted in a different context, to map affiliations across these realms, because 'territory and possessions are at stake, geography and power', and here, freedom and liberation.¹⁰¹

We have seen that since the early fifties the differences between the Senghorian and Cabralian strands of thought increased and crystallised, according to the actual stakes of anticolonial struggle. Léopold Senghor and Amílcar Cabral were drawn into these debates not just as intellectuals at Congresses and Festivals but directly as political leaders in the concrete politics of anticolonial struggle. As President of Senegal, Guinea-Bissau's neighbour, Senghor maintained cordial relations with Cabral and PAIGC. Senegal cut off relations with Portugal in 1961 and provided token military support to PAIGC, offering a base for political organising and health facilities for wounded combatants. However, unlike some other African states (including Algeria, Morocco, Guinea-Conakry and Tanzania), Senegal did not provide direct military support.¹⁰² PAIGC's relations with Senegal and Senghor were often strained.¹⁰³ Senghor initially supported the smaller and more moderate FLING (*Frente de Luta pela Independência Nacional da Guiné*) rather than PAIGC. He sought to encourage compromise and negotiation between Portugal and FLING, and tried to persuade the OAU to recognise both groups equally. It was only in 1967 that Senghor recognised Cabral as the leader of the independence struggle in Guinea-Bissau.¹⁰⁴ Throughout,

Senghor's position remained consistent in favouring dialogue rather than war. Senghor reaffirmed his position in a declaration made in 1969 at Oussouye in the south of Senegal, near the border with Guinea-Bissau:

We cannot do other than morally support our brothers from the South. Equally we were among the first, in 1946, to ask for self-determination for the colonies of the time with a view to their independence. But since that date we have always thought and said that violence, war, was a solution of despair; that before and during war, it was necessary to seize every occasion to renounce war or to cease fire, to initiate a dialogue which would lead to peace through negotiation. It was our thesis regarding the war of Algeria, it is our thesis, today, regarding the war of Guinea-Bissau. History proved us right about Algeria; she will prove us right about Guinea-Bissau.¹⁰⁵

Underlying their divergent positions was a fundamentally different apprehension of the character of colonialism. While a tireless advocate of negritude over decades Senghor remained an explicit admirer of French and European culture, and this admiration extended to his politics. Senghor was always to some extent on the side of African independence, but his was an ambivalent position defined by a liberal cosmopolitanism aspiring to a notion of universal civilisation and a utopian vision of federalism based on transformation within Europe as well as Africa.¹⁰⁶ This overlooked the violent realities and consequences of colonial and imperial interests and strategies. France had fought a brutal war to retain its hold on Algeria. Portugal had followed suit, waging wars against the liberation movements of Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola with equal brutality, both powers demonstrating their determination with the ultimate imperial weapon of napalm. Yet Senghor persisted in advocating his preferred vision of dialogue, inter-cultural understanding and European-African cooperation and community, even as African villages were repeatedly bombed by European weapons. He considered that negritude, 'the sum of the cultural values of the black world', 'an opening out to the world, contact and participation with others' was 'not just affirmation: it is rooting oneself in oneself, and self-confirmation: confirmation of one's *being*'; and that continental Africans had 'developed it as a weapon, as an instrument of liberation'.¹⁰⁷ This, he argued, was because the African way of being was based on dialogue and reciprocity:

It is through these virtues of negritude that decolonization has been accomplished without too much bloodshed or hatred and that a positive form of cooperation based on 'dialogue and reciprocity' has been established between former colonizers and colonized. It is through these virtues that there has been a new spirit at the United Nations, where the 'no' and the bang of the fist on the table are no longer signs of strength.¹⁰⁸

'It is through these virtues', he went on to argue, 'that peace through cooperation could extend to South Africa, Rhodesia, and the Portuguese colonies, if only the dualistic spirit of the whites would open itself up to dialogue.'¹⁰⁹ This principled position came from an approach which defined African culture in contrast with European culture, but did not situate either in relation to the inherent violence of colonialism and imperialism.

In contrast Cabral and his fellow militants defined African culture as that which remained among ordinary Africans, the masses, *despite* the onslaught of European colonial oppression, and which formed the kernel for anticolonial resistance.¹¹⁰ For them African culture was also the weapon of liberation, but an African culture and being which ultimately would demonstrate itself, in face of colonial brutality, by taking up arms.¹¹¹ They knew very well the limits of dialogue with colonial powers. The liberation movements had made repeated efforts to reach a peaceful political route to independence. The turn to armed struggle came only after numerous massacres and imprisonments across Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique and São Tomé from the early 1950s.¹¹² They also knew that Portugal enjoyed substantial support from Western allies in the form of finance, warships, tanks, armoured vehicles, fighter planes, and napalm. Their analysis and experience of Portuguese colonialism and the imperial relations by which it was sustained prevented any hope of dialogue. Indeed they noted they had been waiting for five hundred years for the benefits of Western civilisation and were not prepared to wait any longer.¹¹³

Addressing the United Nations Committee on Decolonization in 1962, Amílcar Cabral was asked what the people of his country thought of the possibility of liberating the Portuguese colonies by peaceful means. He responded:

If the delegations that urge the people of the Territory to be patient had been in their position, colonized on their own soil by the Portuguese, they could no longer have preached pacifism. When the Nazis had trampled all freedoms

under foot, none of those who now preached patience would have found it possible to witness the Hitlerite abuses without reacting. No people love peace more than the people of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands, but not the peace of the cemetery.¹¹⁴

Conclusion

Amílcar Cabral was in his own times and is still today embraced as an anti-colonial thinker of global stature, above all in light of his speech ‘The Weapon of Theory’ at the Tricontinental conference in 1966. He was feted as a revolutionary thinker, in contrast to Léopold Senghor whose ideas about negritude came under widespread attack by critics across Africa. This article has demonstrated that Cabral’s thought, especially with regard to the question of culture, emerged from a practice of collaborative debate among the leading figures of the anticolonial liberation movements of Portugal’s colonies. This distinct practice of anticolonial thought, institutionalised first in the *Centro de Estudos Africanos* in Lisbon in the early 1950s and then in MAC, FRAIN and CONCP, was a defining feature of the liberation struggles waged by PAIGC, MPLA and FRELIMO.

Drawing on writings by Cabral, Andrade, Cruz, and Neto, this article has shown that the African students of the Portuguese colonies were initially very much influenced by negritude. Their seminal *Caderno de Poesia Negra de Expressão Portuguesa* of 1953 was conceived as a successor to Senghor’s *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Poésie Nègre et Malgache de Langue Française* of 1948, and their early formulations of African culture were articulated in terms that directly echoed Senghor’s. However, by the late 1950s they had moved beyond the framing of negritude to develop a much more radical thesis about the role of African culture in the struggle for national liberation. While their position resonated with Fanon’s, it emerged above all from their shared critical reflections on their own experiences and predicament. Central to this development in their thought was their critical analysis of the Portuguese policy of assimilation. For the *assimilado* to overcome the cultural alienation imposed by colonialism required not just a recovery of African tradition and culture but, far more importantly, political identification with the *indígena*, the African masses, in the

context of a unified popular armed struggle against colonialism. In rejecting the harsh racism of Portuguese colonialism they also rejected the framing of race.

The anticolonial thought of Cabral and his fellow militants was developed in the context of broader debates within Africa and the world. As students in Lisbon they read widely, engaging with strands of thought from across the globe. As anticolonial militants they actively participated in these debates in many locations. The Tricontinental conference in Havana, the Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar and the Pan-African Festival in Algiers mark the increasing divergence of positions within African and global anticolonial politics. If the Festival in Dakar was the living embodiment of Senghor's negritude, the Festival in Algiers was a performance of Cabral's pioneering analysis of the national liberation struggle as an act of culture. While it was Fanon who first articulated this position, Cabral and his fellow militants gave the argument substance and, above all, liberated the idea of African culture from the trappings of race.

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¹ Patrick Chabal, 'The Social and Political Thought of Amílcar Cabral: A Reassessment', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 19, 1 (1981), 31. See also Patrick Chabal, *Amílcar Cabral: Revolutionary Leadership and People's War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

² Bernard Magubane, 'Amílcar Cabral: evolution of revolutionary thought', *Ufahamu*, II, 2 (1973), 71-87; Angel Mwenda Mukandabantu, 'The Political Thought of Amílcar Cabral', *Review of African Political Economy*, 27/28 (1983), 207-213; Jock McCulloch, *In the Twilight of Revolution: The Political Theory of Amílcar Cabral*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983); Ronald H. Chilcote, *Amílcar Cabral's Revolutionary Theory and Practice*, (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1991); Mustafah Dhada, *Warriors at Work: How Guinea Was Really Set Free*, (Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 1993).

³ Reiland Rabaka, *Concepts of Cabralism. Amílcar Cabral and Africana Critical Theory*, (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014). See also Isaac A. Kamola, 'Realism without Abstraction: Amílcar Cabral and a Politics of the World', in Shiera el-Malik and Isaac A. Kamola (eds) *Politics of African Anticolonial Archive* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), pp. 99-115 and Firoze Manji and Bill Fletcher Jr. (eds) *Claim No Easy Victories: The Legacy of Amílcar Cabral* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2103) for analyses of Cabral as a postcolonial thinker of broad contemporary relevance.

⁴ This paper forms part of a larger project drawing on various sources including archives of Amílcar Cabral and Mário Pinto de Andrade held at the Mário Soares Foundation in Lisbon; the archive of Lúcio Lara, *Um Amplo Movimento: Itinerário do MPLA Através de Documentos e Anotações* Vols. I-III, Luanda (1997-2008) and at the Associação Tchiweka de Documentação in Luanda; the archive of Agostinho Neto's records compiled by the Agostinho Neto Foundation; and the Casa dos Estudantes do Império journal *Mensagem* at the Biblioteca Nacional, Lisbon.

⁵ Davidson Nicol, 'Alioune Diop and the African Renaissance' *African Affairs*, 78, 310 (1979), 3-11.

⁶ Amílcar Cabral, 'The Weapon of Theory: presuppositions and objectives of national liberation in relation to social structure, speech delivered at the First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America, Havana'. *Unity and Struggle: Speeches and Writings*, (London: Heinemann, 1980), 119-37.

⁷ *Ibid*, 126.

⁸ Amílcar Cabral 'National Liberation and Culture', Eduardo Mondlane Memorial Lecture, Syracuse University. *Unity and Struggle: Speeches and Writings* (London: Heinemann, 1980), 138-54.

⁹ Cabral, 'Weapon of Theory', 130.

¹⁰ Cabral, 'Weapon of Theory', 119.

¹¹ *Ibid*; Hsinhua Correspondent, 'Report from Havana: The First Afro-Asian-Latin American Peoples' Solidarity Conference', *Peking Review* 4, January 21 (1966), 19-25.

¹² US Congress Senate Committee on the Judiciary, *The Tricontinental Conference of African, Asia and Latin American Peoples: a staff study prepared for the Subcommittee to investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1966), 8.

¹³ David Murphy, 'The Performance of Pan-Africanism: Staging the African Renaissance at the First World Festival of Negro Arts' in David Murphy (ed) *The*

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¹⁴ Léopold S. Senghor, 'The spirit of civilization, or the laws of African negro culture', *Présence Africaine*, 8-9-10 (1956), 51-64.

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¹⁶ Senghor, 'The spirit', 51.

¹⁷ Léopold S. Senghor, 'Discours inaugural du Président de la République', in *Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*, Paris: Société Africaine de Culture, 1966, cited in Harney, *Senghor's Shadow*, 72-73.

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¹⁹ Mahler, *Tricontinental*, 74-76; Grovogui, 'Remembering Bandung'; Manuel Barcia '“Locking horns with the Northern Empire”: anti-American imperialism at the Tricontinental Conference of 1966 in Havana', *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 7, 3 (2009), 210.

²⁰ Mário Pinto de Andrade, *Mário Pinto de Andrade: Uma Entrevista Dada a Michel Laban* (Lisboa, Edições João Sá da Costa), 125.

²¹ Ibid, 133; Alioune Diop, 'Discours d'ouverture', *Présence Africaine*, 8-9-10 (1956), 9.

²² Aimé Césaire, 'Culture et Colonisation', *Présence Africaine*, 8-9-10 (1956), 194.

²³ Nicol, 'African Renaissance', 8; Murphy, 'Performance', 19.

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²⁵ Committee on the Judiciary, *The Tricontinental Conference*; Hsinhua Correspondent, 'Report from Havana'; 'The Havana Three Continents Conference' *Communist Affairs*, 4, 1 (1966), 8-12; Leo Huberman and Paul M. Sweezy, 'The Tricontinental Conference and After' *Monthly Review* 17, 11 (1966), 1-11; A. Sofronov, "Rukopozhatie kontinentov," *Ogonyok*, January 2 (1966), 5-6. Thanks to Sergey Radchenko for pointing me to the latter reference. More broadly see Sergey Radchenko, *Two Suns in the Heavens: The Sino-Soviet Struggle for Supremacy, 1962-1967* (Stanford University Press, 2009) and Jeffrey Friedman, *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World* (University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

²⁶ Mahler, *Tricontinental*, 79.

²⁷ Murphy, 'Performance'; Harney, *Senghor's Shadow*.

²⁸ Murphy, 'Performance', 27.

²⁹ Rabaka, *Concepts of Cabralism*, 31.

³⁰ An important exception is Dalila Cabrita Mateus, *A Luta pela Independência: A Formação das Elites Fundadoras da FRELIMO, MPLA e PAIGC* (Lisboa: Editorial Inquérito, 1999). See also Miguel Cardina e Bruno Sena Martins, *As Voltas do Passado: A Guerra Colonial e as Lutas de Libertação* (Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2018).

³¹ Cláudia Castelo and Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo (eds) *Casa dos Estudantes do Império: dinâmicas coloniais, conexões transnacionais*, (Lisboa: Edições 70, 2017).

³² Pires Laranjeira, 'Introdução: Uma casa de mensagens anti-imperiais', in Manuel Ferreira (ed) *Mensagem: circular dos Serviços de Cultura da Casa dos Estudantes do Império. 1o Volume*, (Lisboa: Edições ALAC, XVII, 1996), xi-xxxi.

³³ Andrade, *Entrevista*, 69-80.

³⁴ Noémia de Sousa in Michel Laban, *Moçambique: Encontro com Escritores*, vol. I, (Porto: Fundação Eng. António de Almeida, 1998), 330.

³⁵ Andrade, *Entrevista*, 71-72.

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³⁹ Andrade, *Entrevista*, 74-5, 80-83; Lúcio Lara, *Um Amplo Movimento: itinerário do MPLA através de documentos e anotações. Vol. 1 Até fev. 1961* (Luanda, 1997), 30.

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