

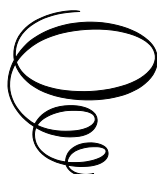
Challenges and Perspectives of Iberia and Beyond

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Edited by

Mark Gant, Deirdre Kelly, Siân Edwards and Susana
Rocha Relvas

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INTRODUCTION

MARK GANT, DEIRDRE KELLY,
SIÂN EDWARDS AND SUSANA ROCHA RELVAS

This volume has been developed from selected papers delivered at the 44th annual conference organised by the Association for Contemporary Iberian Studies (ACIS) and hosted by CITCEM—Transdisciplinary Research Centre for Culture, Space and Memory—held at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Porto in September 2023. The conference hosted both renowned academics and emerging researchers, who, encouraged by the interdisciplinary profile of ACIS, delivered groundbreaking and engaging presentations on a wide range of disciplines. These include political science, history, culture, literature and the arts, and encompass not only the full range of both Iberian national and regional identities, but also the transnational and the transatlantic world.

Since its foundation in 1978, ACIS has been a platform and a frame of reference for sharing and disseminating cutting-edge research in Iberian Studies. This growing area of expertise has witnessed an upsurge in interest, which has widened the scope of the theoretical and epistemological frameworks of Iberian Studies within the academic community. This dynamic and transdisciplinary field of study offers countless research possibilities in the most diverse domains, themes and topics. In line with academic trends, the association has witnessed a new shift since 2016, with the inclusion of Comparative Studies and Area Studies, which has enhanced interdisciplinary and multicultural approaches. Furthermore, the Association's range has broadened to encompass the wider Spanish and Portuguese-speaking worlds, and significant research has focused on transatlantic crossings and networks with South America, Africa and Asia. This new direction is driven by Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies, a field of study that, given its revisionist stance, seeks to reinterpret the past, breaking with ideological and geographical barriers. In line with Cultural Studies more broadly, ACIS recognises and supports cultural diversity within the Iberian Peninsula and gives voice to peripheral cultures and emerging identities.

Indeed, the transcultural and multilingual nature of Iberian Studies, along with its interdisciplinary perspectives, enrich this expanding field of research. However, this exponential expansion may also bring challenges to researchers. One of the most significant obstacles relates to academic training, which now more than ever, has a more eclectic and transdisciplinary profile. Another challenge arises with the locus of enunciation, which can either constrain or enhance the object of study. ACIS has responded to these challenges by moving beyond a purely Eurocentric position to encompass an open-minded approach reflective of world literature, and which takes into account not only Peninsular identities, but also Iberian relations with the wider world.

This is the seventh published volume on topics deriving from the annual ACIS conference. As in previous volumes, in the wake of Spain's memory laws—the 2007 historical memory law and the 2022 democratic memory law—memory and historical revisionism represent core themes of this book, encompassing the Spanish Civil War and dictatorships, resistance and exile. A significant number of chapters are devoted to Intra-Iberian approaches, focusing on dialogues and exchanges between Portugal and Spain. Some chapters concentrate on cross-border relations in Europe, particularly emphasising Anglo-Iberian contacts and influences in the political, historical and cultural domains. From the socioeconomic point of view, the volume centres on issues such as local economy, family and cultural heritage. Moreover, from a literary perspective, special attention is given to Portuguese literary awards and how they shape the literary canon—both at the Portuguese national level and in the Portuguese-speaking world.

Contributions in the area of social sciences and literature focus on the image and reception of stereotypes, myths and traditions in Portugal and Spain. In the political and cultural domains, scholars bring fresh new readings and interpretations of relevant figures, whether politicians or writers, and scrutinise the role they play in the nation's destiny, and how they bequeath to new generations an important political and cultural heritage.

The chapters in this volume not only cover Portuguese and Spanish national affairs, but also focus on regional cultural identities, mainly, Basque and Catalan realities in times of war and dictatorship. Challenges regarding translation and how this affects the author's representation and inner perspective are also a particular focus.

Research on Cinema Studies increased significantly in this year's volume, mainly with comparative approaches between Literature and the Seventh Art. This includes literary adaptations and artistic representations

of family relations, feminism and female voices, the appropriation of cinema itself by autocratic regimes and research on possible cross-border cinematic collaborations.

Transatlantic crossings and influences are also featured once again, within the scope of Lusophone and Hispanic domains, expanding the geographical and cultural boundaries of Iberian Studies. Therefore, cultural and social connections between Portugal and Brazil, Cape Verde and Angola are also represented, as are Spanish-Moroccan relations over the last few decades.

In keeping with our aims, eclecticism and diversity prevailed at the 2023 ACIS conference, enabling the association to reach new heights, and broaden its scope, embracing new perspectives and dimensions. Organised in five sections and seventeen chapters, this book comprises a temporal span from the early twentieth century to the present, while establishing links to previous historical periods and events.

The volume opens with section one, dedicated to Iberian Affairs: Literature and Culture. In the first chapter, “Characterisation and Function of Literary Awards in Portugal in the 21st Century”, Christian Rodríguez Fernández and Alejandro Vázquez Fabeiro focus on the evolution of Portuguese literary prizes convened between 1998 and 2023, power relations in the current Portuguese literary field and how literary awards have shaped the literary canon. The canonical functions are as follows: generic distribution, the winners’ position, the public or private nature of the promoting entities and the types of repertoires fostered through Portuguese literary awards of national application and of a Portuguese-speaking scope in the 21st century are considered.

In Chapter Two, Paulo Rodrigues Ferreira explores the context of cultural Iberism, to analyse Luis Taboada’s book *Portugal en Broma* (1902), in which the Spanish journalist recounts his trips to Portugal, mainly Castelo de Vide and Espinho. Through satire, Taboada narrates his experiences in Portugal and explores myths and stereotypes about Portuguese people with the aim of understanding how the Portuguese lifestyle and customs were perceived in Spain. The author contextualises Taboada’s ideas within the broader framework of Iberian relations. Rodrigues Ferreira examines not only whether Taboada’s descriptions of Portuguese habits, mentalities, and traditions outline a negative perception of Portuguese identity, but also if his writings about the Portuguese ways of being converge with those of other Spanish writers who travelled to Portugal with the purpose of portraying both Portuguese and Spanish societies.

In Chapter Three, “Viejas y nuevas miradas. Aproximación a la imagen española de Portugal en la época contemporánea”, Carlos Pazos Justo,

within the scope of cultural image, studies the evolution of the Portuguese-Spanish relational framework. He uses interview methods as an analysis tool, which allowed the assessment of mainly qualitative data, which the author calls “Imagologic capital” regarding the Spanish image and representation of Portugal. The author identifies two narratives. The first relates to how Spain looked at their neighbouring country in the past, marked by invisibility and lack of knowledge. The second refers to the present, under the aegis of Europeanization and the exponential growth of intra-peninsular tourist movements, which has promoted a new Spanish perspective towards Portugal and abroad.

The second section focuses on Iberian affairs: politics, economy and society and opens with Chapter Four entitled “Tradição Familiar em Quinta do Douro: Canaes-Bartol (sécs. XIX-XXI)”. In this study, Maria Otilia Pereira Lage analyses the life path of a Luso-Spanish family devoted to wine production in the North of Portugal, specifically, in the Douro Demarcated Region (the First Demarcated and Recognised Region in the World). The author scrutinises the journey of this family over 150 years and gives special attention to the transformations and evolution of the family, property and its management. The prevalence of women in leadership roles across decades is also taken into consideration.

In the following chapter, Marc Gràcia Garcia focuses on the controversial figure, Manuel Azaña, President of the Second Spanish Republic during the Civil War. Fiercely attacked by Francoist discourse and propaganda, he persisted as a shadowy and uncomfortable spectre in French Exile until his death in 1940. In the late Franco era and the Transition period, however, he became an unavoidable figure, a point of reference from which to think about the construction of a democratic society after the Dictatorship. He became what the author, in the wake of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, calls an empty or floating signifier. His name became a form of political and ideological legitimation, being claimed, since then, by all major national political forces, from the extreme right of Vox to left-wing Unidas Podemos.

In Chapter Six, Miguel Ángel Rubio focuses on the discourses on masculinities built by the communist political culture during the Second Spanish Republic based on the analysis of the official organ of the Communist Party of Spain, *Mundo Obrero*, between 1931 and 1936. The author shows, on one hand, how the projection of a specific type of masculinity served for the Spanish communists as a political instrument with the objective of legitimizing themselves as champions of the labour movement and of differentiating themselves from their anarchist and socialist competitors, undermining their virility and therefore their

revolutionary power. And, on the other hand, it tries to understand communist masculinity in Spain within a transnational political culture where the omnipresent presence of the Soviet Union and its attempt to build the “new Soviet man” played a transcendental role in defining the limits and contents of the masculine model.

Section Three addresses translation challenges and literary representations of Basque and Catalan identities in times of war and dictatorship through the lenses of two emblematic female writers, the Catalan, Mercè Roboreda and the Irish author, Kate O’Brien. In “Broken Mirrors: Translating Narratives of Catalanitat in the Work of Mercè Roboreda”, Daisy Towers explores the concept of Catalanism, *catalanitat*, in the works of the Catalan novelist Mercè Rodoreda, and to what extent this idea can fully be conveyed in translation. She focuses on the novel *Miralltrancat* (Broken Mirror) and the translation into English. This novel examines the tension between the enduring impact of the author’s connection with her home city of Barcelona and her experience of exile. She explores concepts of identity, belonging and the role of Barcelona as a city, and how the complexity of history, culture and identity which is so specific to the Catalan case can be transmitted to an English-speaking audience. In the context of personal and social narrative study, the author posits that people create stories for our lives that could over time become distorted. In a further layer of discussion, she questions if conveying meaning affects also the tone of the writing. More broadly, Towers explores what her findings could mean for the dissemination and reception of Catalan literature in translation in the global sphere.

In “‘Irún is burning’: Kate O’Brien on the Spanish Civil War”, Monica Varese examines the representation of the Spanish Civil War in O’Brien’s cultural and political memoir, *Farewell Spain* (1937) (misclassified as a book of travel writing), as well as in the Irish author’s two “Spanish novels”, the Bildungsroman, *Mary Lavelle* (1936) and *That Lady* (1946). The chapter focuses on O’Brien’s love for (yet not idealisation of) Spain, her sympathy for the Republic, her aversion toward the insurgents, and her fear for the future of Spain under the latter’s rule. Varese observes an evolution in O’Brien’s writing, from a simplistic portrayal of “fascism-as-Franco” in *Farewell Spain* to a more complex representation of Spain’s political circumstances in *Mary Lavelle* and in O’Brien’s “tale of anti-authoritarianism”, *That Lady*.

Section Four, which is devoted to Cinema studies, in particular, women’s voices and common projects during the Iberian dictatorships, opens with Zaya Rustámova’s chapter on “Imperfect Symbiosis: Memory and Family Affairs in *Sunday’s Illness*”. In the chapter, she examines the

evolving relationship between a mother and daughter represented through the cinematic techniques of the film and she makes use of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the Anti-Oedipus, in particular, to discuss trauma and liberation, conflict and reconciliation in the representation of the two women, which she compares to the polarising trauma of Spain's relationship with its dictatorial past.

Chapter Ten, "Women with a Voice: An Analysis of the Character Mollie Bidwell from the Baphy of Eça de Queiroz" by Filomena Antunes Sobral, explores the representation of the fictional character, Mollie Bidwell, in the Portuguese film, *Our Consul in Havana* (2020), directed by Francisco Manso. The chapter centres on the cinematic portrayal of Bidwell's subversion of the nineteenth-century archetypal female. It begins by contextualising women's roles and status in nineteenth-century patriarchal society. Subsequently, the analysis focuses on the representation of women in Eça de Queiroz's writing, and the final section explores the portrayal of Mollie Bidwell in the film as an avant-garde woman who challenges the rigid social and gender expectations of her time.

Carla Ribeiro's chapter, "An Iberian Brotherhood? Portugal, Spain and Joint Cinematographic Projects in the 1940s" examines cinematic collaboration between Salazar's Portugal and Francoist Spain in the 1940s. The chapter provides the contextual background related to cinema in Portugal in the 1930s and 1940s. It then explores the leading figures involved in this Luso-Spanish cultural agreement. Subsequently, the analysis focuses on the results of this alliance, specifically, the Luso-Spanish co-productions of the 1940s. Although the volatile circumstances of World War II prevented this Iberian cinematic collaboration from coming to full fruition, Ribeiro highlights the importance of the cultural negotiations and collaboration between the two countries at the time.

Section Five is devoted to the Lusophone space in the postcolonial era, where historical and cultural relations between Portugal and Brazil, Angola and Cape-Verde are highlighted. Therefore, in Chapter Eleven, entitled "Decolonising Cape Verdean Soul: Resistance, Emancipation and Identity in Corsino Fortes' Poetry", Susana Rocha Relvas analyses the impact of Portuguese colonialism in Cape-Verde, the search for lost identity and the establishment of free and prosperous country in Corsino Fortes' poetry. This chapter sheds light on the role of cultural magazines during the first half of the 20th century in creating a national conscience and allowing a structured and firm narrative around the independence process. This study then focuses, on the emblematic poetry book *Pão &*

Fonema, and the social, geographical and cultural challenges that the Cape-Verdean people must overcome in the context of a fledgling nation.

In Chapter Thirteen, Silvana Maria Pantoja dos Santos presents in “Landscape and Cultural Heritage Beyond the Sea in Maranhense poetry: Patrimony in Ruin” a thorough historical retrospective of the rise and fall of the city of Alcântara in the Brazilian state of Maranhão. Silvana shows how this reality is reflected in the poetry of Luís Augusto Cassas and José Francisco de Chagas. Space and memory are intertwined, paying tribute to a forgotten and empty city, where historic buildings in decay coexist with a modern but disconcerting space station.

Chapter Fourteen, entitled “Resistance Writings by Female Authors in Portuguese-Speaking African Literatures”, by Algemira de Macedo Mendes, reflects on the importance of memory applied to literary narrative, analysed in the novel *Essecabelo* by Djaimilia Pereira de Almeida. Within the scope of African Literature of the Portuguese language, the author stresses the role of memory in constructing the character’s self-image as a black woman. Resistance to racism and European stereotypes towards black people are at the centre of Djaimilia’s narrative.

The final section, entitled Transnational & Transatlantic Relations, focuses on literary and artistic influences, as well as Spanish political foreign policy. In “The Adventure of Modernism: Miro’s Journey from Mallorca to America, with a Stopover in Lisbon”, Maria de Lourdes Pereira follows Joan Miró’s steps on a trip to the United States. Despite its minor role in Miró’s trip, his stay in Portugal was a surprising discovery for the Catalan artist. He had the chance to meet the founders of the Portuguese Surrealist movement; he did not go unnoticed by the Portuguese press and met the most representative avant-garde artist and poet Almada Negreiros. However, according to the author, the most surprising detail regarding Miro’s passage through Lisbon is related to an art work with clay birds by the Portuguese artist Rosa Côta, which is part of Miró’s collection.

In “Representations of Magical Realism in the Ibero-American Context. Biblical References as a Bridge between Gabriel García Márquez and João de Melo”, Mirta Santos Fernández centres her study on Magical Realism. This literary phenomenon, in which strange, marvelous, magical, or mythical elements emerge, coexisting harmoniously with the real plan of action, is not exclusive to Latin America, but can be found in contemporary writers around the world such as Haruki Murakami, Günter Grass, Salman Rushdie, Milan Kundera, José Saramago and João de Melo, among others. In this chapter the author undertakes a comparative analysis

of the works *Cien años de soledad* and *O meu mundonão é de estemundo* and draws on the Bible as a point of convergence of the fantastic worlds devised by both writers and of its most famous novels.

In the last chapter of this volume, “Spanish Foreign Policy Towards the Maghreb (2010-2022): Domestic Factors, Strategic Interests and Regional Balance”, Mohamed DouiefMerras examines Spanish relations with the Maghreb region (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Mauritania) since the so-called “Arab Spring” in 2010 to 2022. The Maghreb has been a strategic area for the Spanish State for a range of reasons (geographical proximity, history, culture, security, economic and energy). Considering the volatile political and social situation in the region, successive Spanish governments have carried out a foreign policy focused not only on the fight against migratory flows and terrorism, but also in defence of strategic interests, especially the energy sector, and attempting, at the same time, to establish a balance among its Maghreb strategic partners.

Contributors are established academics and early career researchers from the United Kingdom, Portugal, Spain, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Morocco, and the United States of America. The editors would like to thank all the participating authors for their engaging and innovative contributions. We are also most grateful to the editorial team of Cambridge Scholars Publishing for their technical support and for agreeing to the inclusion of chapters in Portuguese and Spanish.

Four chapters (five, twelve, fifteen and seventeen) were translated into English by a member of the editorial team, Susana Rocha Relvas.

On behalf of the Association for Contemporary Iberian Studies (ACIS), the editors of this volume would like to honour the memory of one of our authors and CITCEM member, Prof. Otília Lage, who suddenly passed away at the beginning of this year. Despite our brief encounter with Prof. Lage during the 44th ACIS annual conference held in Porto, and then in the preparation process for the present volume, we immediately understood that she was a very committed academic with great sensitivity and empathy towards others. Prof. Otília Lage will remain in our hearts and minds as a dedicated educator that we should all try to emulate.

CHAPTER TWELVE

DECOLONISING CAPE VERDEAN SOUL: RESISTANCE, EMANCIPATION AND IDENTITY IN CORSINO FORTES' POETRY

SUSANA ROCHA RELVAS

Introduction

An undeniable point of reference in Cultural Studies¹, Stuart Hall (1990, p. 222) states that “cultural practices of representation always imply a position from which one speaks or writes,” which the Jamaican author refers to as “positions of enunciation.” The identity issue from which the subject of enunciation, a victim of colonization, positions itself, is constrained by the “colonial experience” (1990, p. 224). More than merely recovering lost time, the question of identity is related to how we position ourselves in relation to the narratives of the past (1990, p. 223).

Only in this way, as Hall suggests, can we understand the traumatic nature of that experience (1990, p. 225). The European presence in Africa, with its power and domination, culturally “expropriated” the “other,” converting it into something marginal and peripheral, imposing upon it a culture that becomes a constitutive element of its identity (1990, p. 233). Here lies the ambivalence of “colonial expropriation,” resulting in a dialectic of power and resistance, rejection, and recognition. Creolisation or cultural miscegenation is an example of this, manifesting itself in language and cultural representations. In this sense, the African continent represents the great aporia of cultural identity (1990, p. 234).

¹ Cultural Studies is an interdisciplinary academic area, which emerges in the English-speaking world at the dawn of post-colonial movements, seeking to understand practices of domination and resistance. Cf. Graeme Turner, *British Cultural Studies. An Introduction*. 3rd Ed. London, New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2003.

The theme of the transplanted man, uprooted from his ancestral culture, who experiences profound discontinuity, dispersion and fragmentation, constitutes the narrative of displacement (1990, p. 223) and is situated within the so-called aesthetics of the diaspora and post-colonial experience (1990, p. 236). The narrative of diaspora reflects the link between oppression and migration. The concepts of exile, expatriation, and economic migration, which characterise the term diaspora, discussed by theorists, have undergone various interpretations from the Cold War period to the current era of globalisation and post-modernity, evolving from the emigrant as a victim of exile to migrant or migratory communities or identities (Hawley 2001, p. 146).

In post-colonial societies, the return to Africa represents, for many voices of African emancipation—from political thinker Frantz Fanon to the poets of the Negritude movement, such as Aimé Césaire and Léopold Senghor, among many others—a circular journey to rediscover cultural identity. In Corsino Fortes's (1933–2015) Cape Verdean archipelago, just as in Stuart Hall's Caribbean, the people are destined for exodus and return in a continuous movement, replicated in other parts of the world, marked by the African diaspora.

The combination of history and literature emphasizes the symbolic and subversive nature of literary narratives. Telling their stories through literary representation contributes to the history of African identity, to the history of Lusophone literatures, and to World Literature. The poetics of Corsino Fortes reflect an intercontinental polysystem formed by historically linked literatures and cultures, characterized by hybridity and hierarchical interrelations (peripheral and central), geographic and symbolic spaces where cultural representations and significant practices occur. His verses mirror a dialectic between continental and insular cartographies, the diaspora, and the transition from subordination in colonial times to the reconstruction of Cape Verdean identity in the post-colonial period.

Milestones of Colonial Resistance in Cape Verdean Culture

To reflect on the history of Cape Verdean literature, as Leticia Nunes Gomes (2010, p. 12) affirms, is “to consider the importance of periodicals for disseminating poetic expression. The literary trajectory of Cape Verde was built through magazines that fostered cultural diffusion and general literary knowledge.” The affirmation of Cape Verdean culture dates back to the late 19th century with the pioneering Generation of the 90's, centred

around *Revista de Cabo-Verde*, founded in 1899. Directed by Luís Loff de Vasconcelos, this periodical featured prominent literary figures such as José Lopes, Eugénio Tavares, Viriato Gomes da Fonseca, Januário Leite, and the peasant poet Gertrudes Ferreira, among many others.

In Cape Verdean literature, the symbolic universe was uniquely and particularly capable of transforming the social milieu. This occurred especially from the 1930s onward, when works from Brazilian literature of the 1920s and 1930s reached poets like Baltasar Lopes da Silva, Manuel Lopes, and Jorge Barbosa. Reading these works enabled Cape Verdean poets to begin contemplating their literature through the lens of the *Claridade* Movement, which emerged in 1936, identifying itself as ‘the generation of Cape Verde’ and representing a break from the literary themes of Portugal. The Claridosos (enlightened ones, inspired by the regionalism of Brazilian literature, displayed intellectual and cultural independence from the empire, writing poetry grounded in Creole culture. Jane Tutikian, cited by Gomes (2010, p. 12), notes that *Claridade*

Sought to embrace modernity, especially realism, the search for anthropological and cultural roots, manifested in an interest in Creole ethnography and philology, as well as the appreciation of popular creativity. In this way, it pointed to the discovery of a space marked by insularity, hunger, drought, and the sea, both prison and pathway of an essentially mythical culture.

The social and economic issues of the archipelago became literary themes, and Brazilian and Portuguese influences, along with the exploration of cultural and ethnic miscegenation in the 1930s, allowed Cape Verdean writers to produce a magazine that revealed regional characteristics of the space and history of the people, leading to the creation of the premise of Cape Verdean identity. Thus, the emergence of *Claridade*, fifty years before Cape Verde’s political independence, broke with

European linguistic and aesthetic archetypes and enabled a new consciousness regarding language, valuing elements of regionalism, Cape Verdean roots, and Creole. In this sense, the magazine’s motto called for grounding oneself in the land, allowing the voice to be directed toward the marginalized and peripheral peoples who built and are part of the archipelago’s identity (Gomes, 2010, p. 14).

The *Claridade* Generation laid, however, the foundation for modern Cape Verdean poetry and, despite criticisms, it influenced and continues to inspire much of Cape Verde’s poetic and fictional production.

In the 1940s, under the historical influence of World War II, the magazine *Certeza* (1944) emerged with literary activity until 1957. This periodical marks a shift from *Claridade*, which focused on regionalist literature as recognition of identity, to a literature aimed at political liberation.

The understanding of identity (*Claridade*), coupled with the awareness of the colonial process (*Certeza*), paved the way for cultural autonomy, replacing the colonized position with that of a free subject in Cape Verde. Tutikian (2007, p. 237, quoted by Gomes 2010, p. 19), who when discussing *Certeza* magazine, stated that it rejected “the narrow and tribal, replacing it with the struggle for the insertion of Cape Verde as a nationality within the African context.”

Claridade and *Certeza* marked decisive moments in the formation of Cape Verdean literature. On the one hand they provided an aesthetic and political horizon for the archipelago, and, on the other hand, they enabled an exploration of the country’s social issues. The magazines that followed carried traces of Cape Verdean regionalism and political freedom in the African context. Such was the case of the *Suplemento Cultural*, founded in 1958. Some poets who had participated in *Claridade* and *Certeza* contributed to this new magazine. Nonetheless, the *Suplemento Cultural* group aimed at replacing the concept of “regional” with that of “national.” This gave rise to a new perspective on the colonial situation, emerging in the 1960s, a time where they would prolong and delve deeper (Ferreira, 1987, quoted by Gomes, 2010, p.19), which differed greatly from the regional themes suggested by *Claridade* and the Marxist position that *Certeza* exploited. This is the period where the awareness of colonization began to be discussed and thematized in Cape Verdean literature.

In 1962, *Seló* magazine appeared, extending the claim for independence, and expressing the anguish and social issues of colonization. According to Manuel Ferreira (1987, p. 62), this magazine represents “a project that surpasses the realm of social conditions to encompass the very myths of the exhausted/outdated language, in an attempt to express the ‘hope’ and ‘dreams’ of the ‘new man.’”

For Cape Verde, the 1970s marked a period of intense intellectual and political activity in the colonial independence process. In the literary panorama, themes planted since the *Claridade* Movement emerged. However, this period was essentially, as Ferreira recalls (1987, p. 63),

the time of resurrection, and with it, what freedom means: the great necessity and pleasure of innovation, invention, and change, which implies the creation of a new space: a new language, a new way of writing—the voice of rediscovery toward the foundations of a new aesthetic.

Prominent poets of this time included Teobaldo Virgínio, Daniel Filipe, João Manuel Varela (with the pseudonyms João Vário and Timóteo Tio Tiofe), and, amongst others, Corsino Fortes, who would eventually play a crucial role in Cape Verdean literature due to his unique use of themes cultivated in his poetry where he revealed the Cape Verdean people and their space. Fortes distinguished himself, above all, for his meticulous crafting of language, merging the lyrical self with natural and representative elements of Cape Verdean identity, as seen in his 1974 book *Pão & Fonema*. The poetic generation to which Corsino Fortes belonged, the factors that distinguish the identity of the Cape Verdean people are evident². Many works explicitly reflect the desire for independence through a reinterpretation of history.

The literary scene saw both the emergence of new themes and the continuation of those cultivated in earlier periods. As Almada (1998, p. 152) notes, this included “pessimism, introspection, metaphysical questioning, surrealism or neo-symbolism,” as well as the marks of social change and the disintegration and helplessness of the archipelago as an independent country, struggling with economic, social, and environmental difficulties of those times.

The emergence of Lusophone African literatures was, on the one hand, the result of a long historical process, nearly five centuries of assimilation, and, on the other hand, the product of a consciousness that emerged in the 1940s and 1950s, which flourished with the level of cultural development in the former colonies and the rise of an active and controversial journalism that maintained a harsh critique of colonialism.

In Cape Verde, as in Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe, the African writer/poet lived until the independence, at the crossroads of two realities that could not be ignored: the colonial society of European origin and the African society. Literary writing, therefore, expressed the tension between these two worlds, revealing that the African writer/poet was, as Maria Nazareth Fonseca and Terezinha Tabora Moreira (2017, p. 14) affirm:

a “man-of-two-worlds”, and his writing, in a more or less intense form, reflected the tension that arose from the use of the Portuguese language in deeply complex realities. In producing literature, writers were inevitably traversing both spaces, as they adopted the legacies of European and American literary movements and trends, as well as the manifestations resulting from contact with local languages. This clash within the field of literary language was the driving force behind the literary project’s

² The independence of Cape Verde happened on the 5th of July 1975.

characteristic of the five African countries that adopted Portuguese as their official language.

However, it is important to highlight that in Cape Verde, the impact of colonialism was not as severe or dramatic as it was in other African regions subjected to Portuguese colonization. This circumstance created the necessary conditions for the emergence of Cape Verdean literature.

Corsino Fortes – The Craftsman of the “Filigree of Cape Verdean Words”

Born in Mindelo, on the island of São Vicente, Corsino Fortes was orphaned at a very early age and was forced to suspend his studies at the age of twelve to work for the Companhia Ferro. It was only at the age of twenty that he returned to school, where he met João Varela, who would mark the beginning of his journey as a writer. Between 1957 and 1960, Fortes had the opportunity to interact with Abílio Duarte, one of the founders of PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde), who had returned from Guinea-Bissau with the aim of raising awareness and mobilizing Cape Verdean youth for the struggle for national freedom. Duarte’s influence on him was decisive. During this period, some of Fortes’ poems were published in the *Boletim dos Alunos do Liceu Gil Eanes*, in *Cabo Verde: Boletim de Propaganda e Informação*, and in issue 9 of the *Claridade* magazine.³

In 1961, Fortes went to Lisbon to study Law, and his time at the “Casa dos Estudantes do Império” contributed significantly to his political maturation. He completed his studies in 1966 and, from that point onward, held various legal, political, and diplomatic positions. In Angola, he served as delegate of the Public Prosecutor’s Office and judge (until 1975) and as a representative of PAIGC between 1974 and 1975. He also served as the Director-General of Judicial Affairs of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau and as a special envoy of the Republic of Cape Verde to the governments of Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe. From 1975 to 1981, he was the ambassador of the Republic of Cape Verde to Portugal.

He returned to Cape Verde in 1981, where he became Secretary of State Deputy of the Prime Minister. In 1983, he became Secretary of State for Social Communication, and between 1986 and 1989, he was the ambassador of Cape Verde to Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe, Zambia, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. From 1989 to 1991, he served as Minister of Justice in Cape Verde’s government, and in 1992, he was a diplomatic

³*Claridade* 9 was its last issue.

consultant for the first PALOP programme. Among the extensive list of activities that he carried out (political, diplomatic, and literary), it is also worth mentioning his presidency of the Amílcar Cabral Foundation and the Cape Verdean Writers' Association. His full life justifies the honours he received, among them the Ordem do Vulcão (Order of the Volcano) awarded by the Cape Verdean government.

His literary production began with *Pão & Fonema* (1974) and was consolidated with *Árvore & Tambor* (1986) and *Pedra de Sol & Substância* (2001), a trilogy included in the anthology *A Cabeça Calva de Deus* (2001). Each volume reflects different and emblematic moments in Cape Verdean history, from the liberation process that led to freedom, to independence in 1975, and finally to the deepening of Cape Verdean identity in its beliefs and traditions. As a whole, his work aligns with Neruda's verse "The homeland is a path," which the author himself chose as the epigraph to open his first book. As Fraga (2012) poetically writes of Corsino Fortes "he is a poet of the land, born to love and be loved. The author (...) constructed a poetics imbued with imagery that touches both lyrical, individual memory and concerning epic memory; it is collective, as it relates to the poet's feelings about the nation." Fortes' work embodies a humanistic vocation, a poet committed to the struggles of his people and a spokesperson for national imagination. In this sense, one of the driving forces of Corsino Fortes's poetry is his focus on change, which requires the commitment of all, with the motto "stay to develop." For this reason, his poems carry a Homeric tone, aiming to sing of the historical foundation of the island, the people, and the nation, calling for commitment and direct involvement of citizens with their land. It is necessary to return to the island to make fertile what is barren, to build a solid future in economic, cultural, and social domains.

Corsino Fortes revolutionised Cape Verdean writing, representing a "turning point in Cape Verdean poetics." The poet brought innovation and transgression to his poetry, abandoning traditional poetic structures (rhyme, meter, sound). This new language, which breaks away from European archetypes, sometimes presents obstacles to comprehension, as various scholars have noted, with the difficulty residing in the "ideological schemes" introduced by the author, which reflect the "individuality of Cape Verdean culture" (Mesquitela Lima, 1980, p. 92). His poetic discourse oscillates between serenity and aggressiveness, moods that align with the ideological weight underlying his work. He, himself, a writer of the diaspora, Fortes transcends the complex stigma or dilemma of the subordination of his mother tongue—Creole—by rescuing it from the

marginalization or peripheral status to which it had been relegated, placing it at the centre or canon of national literature.

The language becomes a rich field for experimentation, focusing on the purity of sound, on the phoneme as an “irreducible element of any phonetic system” (Mesquitela Lima, 1980, p.69), composed of vowels and diphthongs specific to the Creole language. This feature is associated with the absence of punctuation, enhancing the text’s evocative power. The author opts for a bold arrangement of verses that aligns with the prominence given to the content/message. On the one hand, the structure of the text into stanzas gives us a sense of order and harmony, but the arrangement of the verses conveys certain disintegration. The influence of Modernism and Surrealism, particularly Brazilian Concrete Poetry (Silva, 2012, p.171), and the Portuguese journal *Presença*, were decisive in the “liberation” of language concerning the awareness of Cape Verdean cultural roots, giving prominence to the Creole language, rich in sonic and aesthetic potential.

“Tempo de ser ovo/ ovo de ser tempo”⁴

One of the author’s most emblematic poems, “Tempo de ser ovo/ ovo de ser tempo” (Time to be an egg/ an egg to be time), was published in two different versions. The first was edited in the journal *Raízes* in 1980, in line with the Cape Verdean tradition of publishing literary journals as a vehicle for disseminating new themes and authors. This version is divided into three parts, while in the second edition, included in *Árvore & Tambor* (1986), the author opts for an arrangement in five parts. This change produces substantial shifts, both formally and in content. The tripartite division of the first edition highlights the torrent-like nature of the author’s writing, intensifying the rhythm, whereas the second edition’s inclusion of five parts results in a more coherent and measured composition.

The poem’s title encompasses a chiasmus, suggesting a circular and closed structure that encapsulates the entire theme developed within. Emerging from the colonial experience, marked by the drama of transculturation and uprooting, by despair and the torment of hunger from which it has yet to be freed, the poet calls for a return to the land, to the act of planting, building, and renewing words, the body, the soul, and the nation. In collective effort lies the overcoming of the climatic and

⁴Given the poem’s complexity, we opted for a verse-by-verse interpretation, focusing on the semantic and syntactic study of the text, thus seeking to offer an analysis with the greatest depth possible.

geographical fatalism, a fatalism that represents an oppression per se, as it deprives the Cape Verdean people of the basic resources for survival, forcing them into emigration.

The theme of emigration, already addressed in *Pão & Fonema*, is part of the Cape Verdean people's growth process—a process of ontological self-discovery that involves “leaving, organizing oneself, and becoming politically “literate”” (Mesquitela Lima, 1980, p.77), “drinking from foreign cultures” (1980, p.76) in order to return to one's origins more conscious and ready to rewrite one's destiny. In this call for return lies a reconciliation with the traumatic past, a breaking free from European cultural and political codes, and the reclamation of their identity.

In this call to action, the enunciating subject is the poet himself, addressing his discourse to a “you,” a fellow citizen, a mirror of his own reality, giving the discourse an autobiographical dimension, referring to the time he practiced law in Portugal: “Leave your robe / on the Court of Mafra/ And come!” The imperative “come,” repeated anaphorically throughout the poem, gives it a tone of litany, a persistent call. In the line “De lâmpadaacesapelopeito de Cabâ Fume” (With the lamp lit by the chest of Cabâ Fume), the author alludes to reason, intelligence, and wisdom that bring answers to the land's problems, following in the interventionist footsteps of the legendary figure Cabâ Fume. In “Pelo tambor que sacode/ o arquipélago Entre a multidão (By the drum that shakes / the archipelago Among the crowd), the poet evokes the African musicality of the drum, resounding throughout the archipelago, personifying it, as the musical instrument comes to life, fostering the fusion between the people and the land to which they belong. The musicality summons and helps to create roots in the land—a deep, earthly feeling that permeates all of Corsino Fortes's work.

In “E une/ o porto da ilha/ E as coxas da minhamãe/ às festas de São João,” (And unites/ the island's port/ And my mother's thighs/ to the feasts of Saint John), the author encapsulates three realities that define the idiosyncrasy of the Cape Verdean people: the port, the body, and the popular festivals. The port serves as a site of departure and arrival for people and the exchange of goods; the agile, muscular thighs symbolize labour and are associated with the maternal figure; the festivals represent moments of fellowship, intertwining transit, work, and sensuality as defining traits of this community's reality. From these verses emerge even interseccionist⁵ reminiscences in the wake of Fernando Pessoa,

⁵Interseccionism, along with Paulism and Sensationism, is an avant-gard literary movement created by the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa. It is characterised by the intersection in the poem of several simultaneous levels of reality: interior and

particularly reflected in the subsequent line “palavras que choviampordentro” (words that rained within).

“Vem! E abre/ o mundo do teu olho/ sobre a chama marítima// Que ‘Andros Pátria’/ ergueu/ sobre as nossas águas” (Come! And open/ the world of your eye/ over the sea flame// That ‘Andros’s homeland’/ raised/ over our waters), the poet is urging for the return of his people, guided by the lighthouse that illuminates the way. Conversely, the sea, which isolates the archipelago from the rest of the world, also serves as the sole means by which the people escape and return, referencing the eternal dialectic of geographical territorialism that the *Claridade* Generation transformed into an aesthetic. References to Hellenic culture are evident in the lines “That ‘Andros’s Homeland’/ raised”, characterized by the ambivalence inherent in the author's discourse. The poet alludes to the Greek island of Andros as a synecdoche for the Cape Verdean archipelago, simultaneously, imbuing it with a mythical origin in a prophetic tone.

In “Pelosangue da viola/ Que vestiu de guerra/ E pela vagem da terra/ Que a pазsazonou”(By the viola’s blood/ That dressed in war/ And by the pod of the earth/ Seasoned by peace), the poet juxtaposes seemingly incongruous metaphorical concepts. Two antithetical images emerge: on one hand, war—foreboding death—sung to the tune of the viola, a beloved instrument in lyrical expression; on the other, the vitality of a land that ripens fruit in times of peace. The lines “O Capitãoteaguarda/ De Bandeira a bombordo” (The Captain awaits you/ From Flag to port”) convey the need for a leader. This guide is Captain Ambrósio, “Nho Ambroze”⁶ who, like Cabâ-Fume, has become a legendary figure, embodying heroism and agency for change: “E a fome de Ambrósio É pão sobre o forno,” (And Ambrose's hunger Is bread in the oven), an antithesis recalling a man's sacrifice in the struggle for his rights, setting a precedent for the right to protest, which will serve as a reference for future generations.

In “Vem! E darás/ Ao carvão do meu peito/ o fogo da tua ilha” (Come! And you will give/ To the coal in my chest/ the fire of your island), the ambivalence of the word “carvão” (coal) is evident. While it may metaphorically signify the darkness of a heart burdened by oppression and sorrow, it also signifies the ignition of feeling, energy, and hope, fostering

exterior, objectivity and subjectivity, dream and reality, being a creative process used by Futurist painters. “ChuvaOblíqua” is the most representative poem under the Interseccionist movement.

⁶Nho Ambroze, born Ambrósio Lopes, (Santo Antão, 1878 – São Vicente, 1938), was a carpenter, who led the workers' revolt in Mindelo in 1934. Cf. Brito-Semedo (2010). “Revolta de Nho Ambroze”, *Esquina do Tempo*, 7th June. <https://brito-semedo.blogs.sapo.pt/14219.html> [consulted on 20-03-2024].

human warmth and striving toward a better future. Together, coal and fire ignite the combustion of change.

In “Vem! Pelo arco da tua cratera/ Que roda/ cicatrizes de rua a rua/ Que/ Na noite da tua promessa/ Há palavras sem dentes/ Com telhas ao vento” (Come! By the arch of your crater/ That runs/ scars from street to street/ That/ On the night of your promise/ There are words without teeth/ With tiles in the wind)

The author asserts the need for a connection to the land, embracing both its virtues and its vices through imagery and metaphor. He appeals to the honour of true words: “palavras que choviam dentro/ E inundam de estrelas/ o chão das barracas” (word that rained from inside/ And flooded with stars/ the ground of the tents), words that bring hope amidst persistent hunger and poverty.

The theme of education, a crucial factor in the emancipation of the people and the formation of a cultural elite (Madeira, 2015, pp. 127-137), is present in the lines “As crianças Que projectam/ bibliotecas,” (Children Who project/ libraries) where the capitalized “Who” emphasizes the child as the future of a people that must not be forgotten.

Furthermore, the cultural tradition of storytelling associated with the hero’s prophetic narratives, reminiscent of sebastianism, is present in the lines “Falavam de ti/ não como lava fria/ Mas / Entre a sombra E o sol que sangra” (They spoke about you/ not as cold lava /But / Between the shade And the sun that bleeds), Fortes oscillates verb tenses, likening his poetry to narrative structures, an epic narrative of a people told in verse. The antithesis “lava fria” evokes sterility and total lack of spirit, counterpoised by “transfusões de sangue” (blood transfusions), a metaphor referring to revitalization stemming from investment in the land and the fusion between the human being and the land to which they belong, as expressed in “Vem! Pelo relâmpago/ Que funde a árvore/ nas nossas entranhas” (Come! By the lightning/ That melts the tree/ in our bowels). In this way, the author bestows citizenship status to all who have endeavoured to develop their island, achieving personal satisfaction from their accomplishments: “E dareia o teu rosto/ os olhos da minha pátria.” (And I will give to your face/ the eyes of my homeland).

In “Vem! Pelo porto/ nocturno da tua dor/ Que desde ontem/ Caranguejos de craca/ devoram/ A pedra neurotica daquela infância” (Come! By the port/ night of your pain/ That since yesterday/ barnacle Crabs/ devour/ The neurotic stone of that childhood), the poet synthesizes the suffering borne by the people, whether due to their condition as emigrants, the wounds of colonial oppression, or the distance from their homeland that consumes them.

“Vem! Pelo umbigo/ Do batuque da Várzea/ Vem! Pelo sol da manhã/
Que rola/ Como um feto/ pelo ventre da revolução.” (Come! By the navel/
From the Várzeas’s batuque / Come! By the morning sun/ That rolls/ Like
a fetus/ through the womb of the revolution). These lines embody the
people’s emancipation; just as the sun brings renewal to the day, the
revolution will renew the Cape Verdean future.

“Vem... não de visita/ pelo olhoesgo da Agência” (Come..., not for a
visit/ through the Agency’s squinting eye), the poet warns against being a
tourist in one’s own land, in a fleeting journey organized by those who do
not truly know Cape Verde. The author employs imagery and rhythm to
engage the reader, investing in the connection between humanity, the sea,
and the land: “E nemquebres o remo da ilha/ Entre/ a rosa do vento E a
roda do mundo.” (And don’t even break the island’s oar/ Between/ the
wind rose And the wheel of the world.”

The narrative of the Cape Verdean nation is complex and laden with
suffering, marked by loneliness: “É órfão/o folk complexo de
talepístola.” (It is an orphan/ the complex folk of such an epistle). The
author recalls the tangible difficulties faced by his archipelago: diseases
threatening the people that require the dedication of committed men and
women: “Que da síndrome de Varela/ Ao leão daquelafarmácia/ Há
trauma/ no crânio de Notcha/ E dentescariados nas rochas da ilha.” (That of
Varela syndrome/ To the lion in that pharmacy/ There is trauma/ in
Notcha’s skull/ And decayed teeth in the rocks of the island). “Notcha”
serves as an archetype of the Creole, encompassing the past, present, and
future of a people and has also been cultivated by other writers such as
Timóteo Tio Tiofe, the pseudonym of João Varela, in *O Primeiro Livro de
Notcha* (1975).

“Vem! simples & redondo/ pelo sol pela gema/ E pela dor do ovo/ Que
o povo fecundou/ As colinas aguardam pela mão/ o gomo da sua herança.”
(Come! simple & round/ by the sun for the yolk/ And by the pain of the
egg/ That the people fertilized/ The hills await the hand/ the carpel of their
inheritance.) The sun and the yolk, as sources of life, stand in opposition to
death. The symbolism of the lack of bread is embodied by the “hand”,
symbolizing labour and construction, considering that all birth entails pain.
The woman, like the island, gives birth to a new being: “E pelo ventre de
Bia/ A cimboa/ dará/ terra/ terra nua/ terra virgem/ À árvore da tua
parábola.” (And through Bia’s womb/ The cimboa/ will give/ land/ bare
land/ virgin land/ To the tree of your parable.) In a tone of prophecy, the
Cape Verdean “Cimboa”, a one-stringed musical instrument, is
personified, accompanying the land’s vitality and the tree, as a sign of life,

ancestry, and resilience, embodying the parable, truth, or moral precept of the people.

“Oh filhos da ilha/ Que vão/ por Roma & Roménia/ Oh filhos da terra/ Que vão/ De pé nu sobre a península/ No poço do espírito/ há colónia de tantos séculos/ E tal livro é rosto/ no poço da colónia/ E tal Europa é noite na colónia dos sonhos.” (Oh children of the island/ Who go/ through Rome & Romania/ Oh children of the earth/ Who go/ On bare foot on the peninsula/ In the well of the spirit/ there is a colony of so many centuries/ And such a book is a face/ in the well of the colony / And such Europe is night in the colony of dreams.) Through the interjection “oh”, the poet reminds all Cape Verdeans that they are children of the island, and that in their exodus around the world, they seek chimeras “por Roma & Roménia.” At the mercy of poverty, “De pé nu sobre a península”, in the depths of their soul, “no poço do espírito”, they carry the spectre of colonialism. The colonial dialectic, established through the transit of peoples, acculturation, and miscegenation between Europe and the colony, is mapped by the author. The poor children of the land emigrate, yet in the abyss of the spirit, remains the memory of the colony: “Hácolónia de tantos séculos.”

Fortes, once again, refers to the pressing topic of education: “E tal livro é rosto/ no poço da colónia” (And such book is a face/ in the colony’s well); contrasting a dark, sorrowful Europe with the longed-for colony: “E tal Europa é noite/ nacolónia dos sonhos.” “E do ilhéu que foi ao ‘eu’/ do eu-ropeu que ficou.” “E do tambor que fora ao ‘or?’ / ao New York que restou.” (And such Europe is night/ in the colony of dreams.” “And from the islander who went to the ‘I’/ from the European I who stayed.” “And the drum that went to the ‘or?’ / to the remaining New York.) These geographical coordinates evoke the universalism, transnationality, and transatlantic character of Cape Verdean culture, characterised by antagonistic dynamics between the “self” and the “other,” of spaces, peoples, and places that define the diasporic adventure. While the emigrant is subject to the phenomenon of acculturation, absorbing foreign cultures, they also leave their mark on the countries they traverse, creating communities there while never forgetting their homeland: “Oh Diáspora de vela grande/ Bém! Na hora de boas 'hora/ Quando a ilha sonha.” (Oh Diaspora of the mainsail / Come! In good times/ When the island dreams”). The author alludes to the utopian hope of a flourishing land in harmony with the people who will make it productive: “Oh poços da terra /que se resgam /nasartérias dos homens” (Oh wells of the earth /that tear/ in the arteries of men).And, when least expected, the rain will come and the sea, once calm, will now be “Calema”, high waves from the African

coast: “E a chuva invade o sono das crianças” (And the rain invades children’s sleep). Animism represents a confluence of natural elements animated in harmony with the vibrant life of the earth: “E o mar pelo olho que dormia/ Ergue/ O oceano do rostosobre as ondas/ E vem/ Pela calema: calemaalta/ Beijam a face virgem das palmeiras” (And the sea through the sleeping eye/ Rises/ The face’s ocean above the waves/ And comes/ Through the calema: high calema/ They kiss the virgin face of the palm trees.)

We also highlight the introduction of the commercial “&” as a form of emphasis, along with the recurrence of synonymous or antonymous nouns and verbs: “E mar &deserto” (And sea& desert), “Dança&bailam” (dance & dance). Without stone, there would be no fire; without the sun, there would be no germination of beings. Thus, the author frames elements intrinsic to Cape Verdean reality, presenting them on the syntagmatic axis: “A pedra de talLume E o sol de talgema” (The stone of such Fire And the sun of such gem)—stressing the capitalized “E” (And), which serves as a distinguishing element. In “Vem pelo arco-iris/ Antes da chuva” (Come through the rainbow/ Before the rain), advice or a prophecy is issued, a promise of how and when to return to the island, appealing to the fantastical.

The poem’s imperative word: action, calls for the urgency of intervention still in thought, with hope for realisation: “Quando a enxada é sonho/na gloria dos homens/ E a semente é pó/ namemória da ilha” (When the hoe is a dream/in the glory of men/ And the seed is dust/ in the glory of men/ And the seed is dust/ in the memory of the island.” The parallelism “Oh frescura/ Oh frescor...” (Oh freshness /Oh coolness...) and “Que levedam/ Que tecem” (That leavan//That weave) confer rhythm to the poem. The poet again refers to “mãos” (hands) a metaphor for collaborative labour: “De ser mãos Entre mãos” (To be hands Among hands). Another omnipresent metaphor in Fortes’ poetry is bread, synonymous of sustenance, peace, and freedom, but also the word that nourishes the spirit. The metaphor that conveys the gestation of new life is a constant in Corsino Fortes’s poetry: “Que tecem no ventre da ilha/ o utero de talrosto” (That weave in the womb of the island/ the uterus of such a face.) The true Africanisation of the Cape Verdean people, nearing a super/ supra-ethnicity, reuniting with other liberated African peoples, is a concern and necessity that the poet voices, interspersing reiterations and African toponyms, that he knows well: “Vem!/ Pelo músculo de Azânia”/ E o tambor da Namíbia/ Pela lâmina/ que vibra a alma de Zimbabwe/ É pólvora do povo de Luanda liberta/ (Come!/ By the muscle of Azania/ And the drum of Namibia/ Come! By the blade/ that vibrates the soul of

Zimbabwe/ It is the people's gunpowder of liberated Luanda/ Come!" Each toponym corresponds to a characteristic element of Africa. The encroachment of technology from Europe is present: "Peloinverno de mãocástica/ E veiatécnicaD'Europa" (By the winter of caustic hand/ And technical vein of Europe.)

In this way, the author presents us with a view of Africa, being a staunch advocate for ensuring the basic needs of Africans, such as freedom: "... de Luanda liberta" (of liberated Luanda,) presenting the African mysticism of the Namibian drum and the muscle of Azania (an ancestral name given to sub-Saharan Africans, as called by Black nationalists, invoking a pre-colonial Africa), the rivers of Sudan, and the rhythm of Khartoum in Egypt. There is an allusion to two figures from Greek mythology, a clear reference to Western culture, which aligns with the pagan beliefs of Cape Verdeans: "Pela estrela que cresce sob o rosto da Eritreia/ E pela roda que sangra o olho de Rovuma/ Pelocornod'África/ E pelocrânio da ilha"(By the star that grows under the face of Eritrea/ And by the wheel that bleeds the eye of Rovuma/ By the horn of Africa/ And by the skull of the island). Here are the identifying elements of the two toponyms: the Cape Verdean archipelago in particular, and the African continent in general. The genesis force of the land is again present: "Que raizes da terra/ Brotam / do suor da revolta" (That roots of the earth/ Burst/ forth from the sweat of revolt). At this point, the "complicity" of nature with man is evident in his feelings of revolt and struggle. The lyrical self calls for the "sedentarisation" of his people, "fincandopés no chão" (staking feet in the ground)—the motto of the first Cape Verdean movement, *OsClaridosos*. "E ergue a tuaárvore/ Aqui!" (And raise your tree/ Here!) The deictic serves an immediate purpose. Thus, respect and honour will be preserved for those who remain: "A porta da cabana/ onde/ A lança do teu pai é soberana" (The door of the hut/ where/ The spear of your father is sovereign.) The entire poem refers to an imaginary—habits, customs, traditions, and characteristic traits of the Cape Verdean people. This imaginary and representation of Cape Verde articulate with fundamental concepts that define a people: culture, language, and the human and physical landscape that constitutes the Cape Verdean nation. The imaginary that Fortes presents us is both dystopian and utopian. While it showcases the inhospitable side of the archipelago and the struggles faced by the people to survive in this space, it simultaneously invites (re)entry into this space as an argument to forge a collective ideal, as it operates a symbolic fabulation of the history of this people (Wendt, 2010).

Conclusion

“Tempo de ser ovo, ovo de ser tempo” (Time to be an egg, an egg to be time), a poem written after independence, is a cry for resurgence, a narrative of rescue and overcoming. Overcoming the oppressive forces that compel diaspora, be they the stigma of colonialism or the harsh nature that lashes out and forces evasion. This existential reality shapes Cape Verdean culture, marked by insular identity, between tellurism and *terralongism* (far-away land), themes that constitute the core of Cape Verdean literary representation. From the oppression to the liberation of the Cape Verdean people, the poet does not forget the colonial past, the suffering of the liberation war that affected fellow peoples, the “fome” (hunger) and the “cicatrizas” (scars) imprinted on the streets and faces. Yet this is a poem of futurity and hope, reclaiming cultural identity and the process of construction of the present and future of the Cape Verdean nation. Affirming the Creole language, a symbolic structure that forms the ideological basis uniting the people under a common ideal and affirming the (a)effective territoriality converging memory, action, and spirit, are distinctive marks of Fortes’s poetic creation. Following in the footsteps of Frantz Fanon or Stuart Hall, Corsino Fortes views cultural identity as a practice of production that transcends colonial experience and opens doors to a promising future of life and prosperity. By appealing to the return to the homeland, the poet reconstructs the saga of the Cape Verdean people.

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