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"Now we don't have anything": remembering Angola through the lens of American missionaries

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Dedicated to Fred Brancel and Maddie Brancel

Resumo
"Agora não temos nada": Lembrar Angola através das lentes de missionários americanos
Este artigo considera as relações americanas de política externa com Angola ao explorar o papel dos missionários metodistas no país até à revolta angolana no norte em 1961. Concentrando-se em entrevistas de três missionários americanos que foram presos por três meses pelo governo português, exploro a sua perspetiva sobre o colonialismo português e o papel da memória – neste caso, memórias que vêm de uma perspetiva "de fora" – na formação de um melhor conhecimento da Angola colonial portuguesa.

Palavras-chave: Angola, Estados Unidos, missões, história colonial portuguesa, memória.

Abstract
This article considers American foreign relations with Angola by exploring the role of Methodist missionaries in the country until the 1961 uprisings in the north. Focusing on interviews by three American missionaries who were imprisoned for three months by the Portuguese government, I will explore their perspective on Portuguese colonialism and the role that memory plays – in this case, memories that come from an "outsider" perspective – in shaping a better understanding of Portuguese colonial Angola.

Keywords: Angola, United States, missions, Portuguese colonial history, memory

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Résumé
« Maintenant nous n'avons plus rien » – se remémorer l'Angola à travers la perspective des missionnaires américains
Cet article considère les relations américaines de politique extérieure avec l'Angola tout en explorant le rôle des missionnaires méthodistes dans le pays jusqu'à la révolte angolaise dans le nord en 1961. Je me concentrerai sur les entretiens réalisés avec trois missionnaires américains emprisonnés durant pendant mois par le gouvernement portugais pour analyser leur perspective sur le colonialisme portugais et le rôle de la mémoire, dans le cas présent, de mémoires issues d'une perspective « extérieure », pour contribuer à une meilleure connaissance de l'Angola coloniale portugaise.

Mots-clés: Angola, États Unis, missions, histoire coloniale portugaise, mémoire.

Introduction

"On Sunday, December 3rd, 1961, at 8:40am, three Methodist missionaries landed at New York international airport. They had come from a jail in Lisbon, Portugal where they had been held three months on charges of subversive activities in Portugal's African colony of Angola. Another charge was conniving with groups of terrorists. Suddenly, after three months imprisonment, they were taken to the airfield and deported to the United States" (Interview Drake).

This is the introduction of an interview by Galen Drake that was discovered by one of my ex-students who, one year ago, had taken my class on Portuguese colonialism. Coincidentally she is the great-niece of one the missionaries interviewed – Fred Brancel. Fortunately he is still alive and he agreed to receive both me and Maddie in his home where we spent an entire day excavating his memory. Both interviews, which I will transcribe partially here, opened doors to discussions on different levels of Portuguese colonialism: the role of American missionaries in Angola during colonial times, specifically, during the 1950s; their perspective on Portuguese colonialism; and finally, for the purpose of this article, the role of memory, i.e., how personal memories – in this case, those that come from an non-Portuguese perspective – can help shape a better understanding of Portuguese colonial Angola.

The three missionaries that were imprisoned by the Portuguese PIDE were Rev. E. Edwin LeMaster, Marion Way Jr., and Fred Brancel. A fourth missionary, Rev. Wendell Lee Golden, was also arrested and imprisoned; however, since he had only been back in Angola for a month after returning from Furlough, he was deported to London from where he traveled to Southern Rhodesia for reunion with his family and reassignment to a mission field elsewhere in Africa. Marion Way Jr. who was, at the time, a 30 years old layman from Charleston, South Carolina, had been a Methodist missionary to Angola since 1951. He was stationed at Luanda where he worked with youth groups at the Christian Social Center. Rev. E. Edwin LeMaster from Lexington, Kentucky, was 39

years old when he was sent to Angola in 1952, after a year's study in Portugal. Rev. LeMaster was stationed at the Quessua mission. He was the director of the Central Training Station and of the William Taylor Institute, a boys' elementary school, as well as, co-director of religious education of the Angola Methodist Conference. He also established the secondary education school for training teachers for village work. Fred Brancel, from Endeavor, Wisconsin, was 35 at the time of his imprisonment. He was assigned to Angola in 1952 as an agricultural missionary. He served at the Central Methodist Training School in Quessua, Angola. He worked with his African colleagues to improve health, education and agriculture in native villages.

It was in September 1961 that the four missionaries were imprisoned for three months. They were accused of "activities subversive" to the Portuguese government. They were imprisoned in Malanje, Luanda, and for the last ten weeks in Lisbon, Portugal[1]. According to the three missionaries interviewed, the Angolans have declared that their imprisonment was most effective in calling worldwide attention to the grievances of the Angolan people.

We will analyze three of the four missionaries' testimonies of their time spent in Angola and divide the testimonies into four domains: education, communist influence, justice and independence. Before doing so, a brief historical context of the presence of Protestant missions in Portuguese Africa, in particular Angola, during colonial times, will be presented. These historical accounts combined with personal memories will, hopefully, give a broader view of Portuguese colonial history.

Missionaries in Angola

Since the mid-fifties, in Angola, "a claim for Independence [was growing], being born from inside and outside the territory diverse organizations, more or less ephemeral, many times without any connection between themselves, other times interpenetrating, associating or dividing themselves in new groupings" (Neto, 2000: 186). Given the independence of the Belgium Congo, June of 1960, it was almost impossible to stop its effects and repercussions in Portuguese Angola. Several internal factors, according to Alexander Keese, contributed to a situation of unsatisfaction amongst the Angolan population,

> The growing importance of 'unpaid public labour' – forced labour 'helping' the 'temporarily unemployed' to 'learn' to work – was one push factor. Another was the extremely low wages paid to agricultural contract workers. Local Africans had to accept these contracts to escape situations of 'temporary unemployment,'

1 The interview by Galen Drake did not mention which prison in Lisbon the missionaries were taken to. In the more recent interview with Fred Brancel, he was not able to recall.

> situations that made them liable to forced labour in infrastructure construction and maintenance. (186)

Keese reminds also that "In some regions, such as the cotton-producing zone of Malanje, extremely repressive labour conditions (under the regime of the forced cultivation of cotton) led to the first clear signs of resistance, precursors of the revolt in the Baixa de Cassange which occurred in 1961" (189).

In the beginning of 1961 an uprise against the compulsory cotton growing occurred in the Baixa do Cassange. In February, a revolt happened in Luanda in which there is an attempt, without positive results, to overtake the prisons in order to free the political prisoners. This attempt resulted in an indiscriminate pursuit of the black population by the white militias. Finally, in March, an insurrection in the Congo culminated into a massacre of white colonials, mestizos and "assimilated" people. This insurrection marked the beginning of the colonial war. In Valentim Alexandre's words:

> The outbreak of the conflict in Angola shock strongly the New State regime. For the first and only time, over its thirty seven years of government, Salazar is facing the real risk of being removed from power, in April 1961, in the sequence of a military movement in which were involved high military patents, including the Defense and Army ministers. (Alexandre, 2000: 196)

The Salazar regime does not want to relinquish that control and a new politic strategy is defined so that the Portuguese presence in Africa would continue to be effective. At the same time a fast counter-offensive was being prepared in Congo; and, back home national feelings were the call of the day. New legislative measures were set in motion; such as the abolition of the indigenous status, of the compulsory cultures and of the forced labor. In Alexander Keese's words,

> it was only the presence of the Portuguese military on the ground in Angola (for the first time in 1961), with its more clearly defined hierarchical structures, that allowed for a more open discussion of social problems and a rapid implementation process. By then, much of the damage done over previous decades to the prestige of the colonial administration was already irreversible. The abolition of forced labour in late 1961, which was in large part due to the takeover by the military of the disparate reform attempts of the 1950s, came too late to have an effect on the war situation in Angola. (Keese, 2012: 200)

These measures have two main purposes: reply to the international pressure and withdraw the social base of support from the African movements. The most immediate of these steps was to use missionaries as scapegoats by imprisoning them and accuse them of subversive actions, as in the case of the three names mentioned above. In the interview, LeMaster, Marion Way Jr. and

Fred Brancel mention that "these actions were seen, on the Angolan side, as most effective in calling worldwide attention to the grievances of the Angolan people" (Interview Drake).

The presence of well-established congregational missions in Angola was a fact at the beginning of the twentieth century. Nonetheless, post-Civil War educational thinking became the basis for early 20th century American relations with Africa (Burlingham, 2015: 3). The so-called "adaptive" or "Negro" education fostered by the Galangue mission in Angola was one of the most successful in exporting early twentieth-century American pedagogies to Africa; Creating a foundation upon which according to Kate Burlingham, "… future, post-colonial, US-Africa relations would be based" (Burlingham, 2015: 4). The American Missionary Association (AMA) reformers "drew [in their mission work] a straight line between morality, to be instilled by the church, and free labor, a supposed result from the Civil War, as a key to the Southern black population's success after slaver" (Burlingham, 2015: 5). In order to instill values among black Americans, so they may have the opportunity to achieve economic success, the AMA built churches to teach morality and schools to provide the skills needed to become accomplished free laborers. Burlingham points out:

> black Americans who benefited from the AMA schooling would be among the loudest twentieth-century voices arguing that the lessons of the South should be applied to Africa. It was their wish to "reunite…the African community that had been shattered by the slave trade… [with the] reconciling spirit of the gospel" that ultimately led to the drive for the Galangue mission station. (Burlingham, 2015: 7)

The Galangue mission was settled without any apparent problem, in part, due to the Portuguese government's willingness to allow a black-run mission. The same type of pedagogical techniques that black missionaries received at AMA schools were then adopted and applied in Angola. Burlingham emphasizes that the success of these teacher-missionaries "rested on their freedom, flexibility, and creativity to navigate specific rural social and political settings. Schools were not only for learning, but acted as rural community centers" (Burlingham, 2015: 9). The community-centric aspect of these schools was welcomed by Angolans while, consequently, the most conservative aspects of their pedagogy was appealing to the Portuguese.

The flip of that coin came when the political situation in Portugal changed after the overthrowing of the Republican government in 1926. From that point on tensions with the colonial government intensified since the continued success of Congregational missions underlined the failures of the regime in developing Angola. The *Estado Novo* and Salazar, in conjunction with the Catholic Church, started implementing more Catholic missions in Angola to counter the growing influence of the Protestant missions. In Burlingham's words, "the

increasing animosity between missions and the state would unexpectedly result in closer relations between Congregational missionaries and Angolans" (Burlingham, 2015: 12). According to Miguel Jerónimo, "The profusion of Protestant missions in Angola and Mozambique was considered detrimental and its effects adverse for the *nationalizing* purposes of the Portuguese colonial project (…)" (Jerónimo, 2010: 166. *my translation*). In order to disrupt this relationship, the Portuguese state began issuing new laws. For example the Decree 77 which required that Portuguese be spoken in all schools in the colony and that all teachers pass an examination in Portuguese. Consequently, hundreds of missions schools were closed; Teachers and pastors were arrested and sent to the army or to perform forced labor. These new laws also

> made it clear to Angolans that conversion to the Protest faith might lead to imprisonment, at the very least, by inflaming tensions with colonial authorities, who viewed Angolan membership in the Protestant Church as an anti-Portuguese, and thus an anti-colonial, stance. The Portuguese were convinced that missionaries were acting as agents of the United States. They feared that missions were "Americanizing" Angolans by making them beholden to a foreign power. (Burlingham, 2015: 12-13)

Though the missionaries inculcated a belief that was based on the American conservative response to emancipation, it was, nevertheless, a belief in the necessity of labor and industriousness to the salvation of black people worldwide. Paradoxically, this belief made sure that "black progress" did not interfere with the white power structure. Despite efforts by the Portuguese government to make the operations of Protestant schools difficult, they continued to flourish in infrastructure and popularity. Missionaries then took on the task of being civil negotiators between the white and black communities. They occupied a complex place in the racial and social colonial hierarchy. In Burlingham's words: "In Angola, the government treated black missionaries far better than Angolans and missionaries' education and profession gave them high status among government officials. As foreigners, the government afforded them more respect in the complex system of race, class, and color formulated by the Portuguese" (Burlingham, 2015: 18). Nonetheless, black missionaries also experience discrimination in the colony, during their trips and while in Portugal where they needed to learn Portuguese for at least a year to get the proper licensing from the colonial government. Missionaries were also supposed to establish and maintain friendly relations with the local administrators and colonial heads.

In the 1930s, the Portuguese colonial state began to invest in Catholic missions. The persecutions of Protestant pastors and teachers increased and the missionaries became targets of violent attacks. The Congregational missions began reforming themselves to better serve and integrate the Angolans by

amending their mission's spaces, adapting village structures and understanding the local's way of life. They also invested in the development of Angolan mission leaders. This was their way of surviving in colonial Angola to which they succeeded. On the other hand, as Michael Cross asserts, "Catholic missionaries … were almost totally 'domesticated' and controlled by the colonial state. A few Catholic missionaries rejected this situation, but only when the breakdown of Portuguese colonialism was imminent" (Cross, 1987: 550). State's control over the Church was conceived from an alliance established and consolidated by three main treaties: the Concordat between Portugal and the Vatican of May 7th 1940, the Missionary Agreement of 1940, and the Missionary Statute of 1941. Thus, "[t]he colonial State assumed the responsibility for education of Europeans, Asiatics, and other mixed groups including the *assimilados* (…). Education of *indígenas* (…) was left in the hands of the Catholic missionaries, but the missionaries were under direct control of the colonial state" (CROSS, 1987: 553). Cross also concluded that,

> The Missionary Agreement of 1940 and the Missionary Statute of 1941 guaranteed a hegemonic and almost monopolistic position to the Catholic missionaries in matters concerning African education. The Portuguese government committed itself to subsidizing African church missionary programs, restricting the activities of non-Catholic missionaries, and discouraging the influx of non--Portuguese Catholic missionaries. (CrossS, 1987: 560)

Despite all these measures, "State involvement in adaptation schools, which had shown a considerable increase from 1930 onward, began to decline, while the number of schools and children attending mission schools increased significantly" (Cross, 1987: 560). In sharp contrast, the Congregational Church continued to experience an increase in growth and popularity amongst Angolans throughout the Highlands thus during the relations between America and Africa became more profound during the 1950's. According to Burlingham, "these [Angolan] mission leaders and their children would become central actors in the anti-colonial battles to come. In the post-colonial period, they would be the newly independent nation's leaders" (Burlingham, 2015: 23). We can't then under minimize the legacy of Protestant missions in Angola, even though their role is somewhat ambiguous.

Rev. E. Edwin LeMaster, Fred Brancel, and Marion Way Jr., all belonged to the United Methodists, a congregation with a very strong history in Angola. Quessua Methodist Mission Station was thriving in the early 1950's when the three missionaries arrived in Angola. According to the missionaries, "the church had a positive reputation and strong support from the Angolan people" (interview Drake). Missionaries built Quessua in the early 1900s with help from the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM). Quessua became the heart and soul of the Methodists in Angola. According to the website for

the Yellowstone conference, "The Quessua complex is located a few kilometers from Malanje in the gently rolling countryside with beautiful vistas. Surrounding Quessua are fields and small villages. In the distance is a high hill on which the missionaries planted a cross that can be seen for miles" (2014, n/p). Also, the same source states:

> Quessua was built in style. The buildings were concrete and complete with plumbing. They were built with a gorgeous architectural style. The college provided higher education for hundreds of students, including many of today's government and business leaders. The theological seminary provided training for all of Angola. A huge hospital served a wide geographic area. Dormitories housed the men and women students, and there were houses for teachers and administrators. An enormous agricultural university is there (…) The schools were for everyone, not just Methodists, and the hospital served all of the population. (2014, n/p)

Arriving in New York

Upon the three missionaries' arrival in New York international airport, journalists were already eagerly awaiting to speak with them and to hear their impressions on the Portuguese colonial regime and the charges made against them. When questioned by journalist Galen Drake, Marion Way replies that the charges had been made against the mission as a whole since March when the first outbreaks occurred. These "attacks" against the mission were made in newspapers. Fred Brancel interjects with what he thought motivated the Portuguese action. He states that the Portuguese can make charges on anything that they really want. According to him,

> It seems to us that the Portuguese have difficulty acknowledging any fault that may lie with them. They have never acknowledge to our knowledge that they have any blame in this situation. (…) Every criticism of the government is not permitted. You don't have the Anglo-Saxon concept of the "loyal opposition." The Portuguese have no concept of that. You have to be 100% for or 100% against. (Interview Drake)

When asked if they had any association with the "terrorists" Brancel replied, "we don't know any terrorists" (Interview Drake). The Portuguese preferred to use the term terrorist. He thinks that the term "terrorist" had been distorted and the missionaries prefer not to use it. Instead, a more accurate term could be used; perhaps, *rebels*. Brancel, LeMaster, and Way also believe that these rebels were fighting for "a degree of justice" (Interview Drake). Galen Drake follows up by asking if they thought that Angolans felt righteous in their rebellious actions and if that there was an injustice being thrust upon Angolans? Brancel replied, "There is no question about the injustice. As to the

righteousness of killing, this is a position that we as Christians missionaries cannot defend" (Interview Drake). As a group they had not condoned any of the "terrorist" activities that took part in the northern region of Angola and, as far as they knew, none of the leaders of their church had. Nonetheless, "[the Portuguese] tend to put anyone who shows any type of opposition, immediately becomes a terrorist or a communist" (Interview Drake). Later they were asked if they have ever encountered any difficulty with the Portuguese government because of their work. Way stated that "… the mission has had difficulty ever since it was established…about 76 years ago" (Interview Drake). These problems were due to the fact that a Protestant church in a predominantly Catholic country always had difficulties and was always looked upon with suspicion.

The missionaries affirmed that they were not treated badly, however, they remained in prison for 90 days; all the while proclaiming their innocence. Their initial source of nutrients consisted of potatoes, rice, and bread; eventually augmenting that diet with 20 dollars a week. They were in prison in Luanda for two weeks and then sent to Lisbon. In Lisbon they were in one prison for about five days and posteriorly moved to another. Before being taken to Luanda, Brancel, and LeMaster had spent the night in Malanje's jail. In Malanje there were no threats of violence against them, rather against native prisoners. In Way's words:

> … once, when I was being questioned, in the next room a terrible noise arose of someone being hit and screaming. At the time, we were talking about what the Portuguese had done to nationalize the Africans and I asked the man who was questioning me if that was the way they nationalized the natives and he said, 'that was the only way they could make them talk.' (Interview Drake)

In the Malanje prison they had a separated room from the other prisoners, and the mission had provided them with a mattress and food. Though they had a separated room, they were able to integrate with other prisoners. They were glad for this experience because they saw some of the people from their Methodist Church. They met one of their students in jail who was put there because he was wearing the Methodist Youth emblem. He and his brother were put in jail and they were both beaten. As a result of the beatings, his young brother end up dying.

Missionaries Brancel, LeMaster, and Way saw their role as missionaries "as helping the population" (Interview Drake). They stated that while they were practicing, the Portuguese were preaching. According to the missionaries, the Portuguese have "a wonderful philosophy" that comes from Salazar, a "wonderful racial policy" that does not trickle down to the local administrators. "This philosophy comes from Portugal but it does not get translated in Angola. In Angola, the Governor-General in Luanda and others have this philosophy and they expound it on the press and the newspapers; but, it does not trickle down to the local government official who really controls the lives of the people

in his area," affirms one of the missionaries. As missionaries, and guests in the country, they tried to abide by the laws and this is the reason why they have not spoken for the African cause. Regardless of the missionaries' inactions, Africans finally began to speak up and were willing to suffer the consequences. The African natives were speaking against what Miguel Jerónimo refers to as the "civilisational nurture" of the Portuguese empire "[which] depended on forms of forced and compulsory labour" (Jerónimo, 2012: 198. *my translation*). "The real 'mission' of the Portuguese civilizing programs in Africa," concludes Jerónimo, "was to create conditions to educate the native bodies and souls for work" (Jerónimo, 2012: 269. *my translation*).

After the first revolts, the Portuguese – who claimed that the attacks were circumscribed to the northern part of Angola – started to make arrests all over the country. This situation increased the hatred between the races. The Portuguese officials picked up forty-two African Protestant missionaries and, even after they were released, never announced their release in public. Marion Way's answer, when asked about the nature and development of the conflict in Angola, is very much a slap in the face of those who still believe today that the social and racial relations in the Portuguese colonial empire were harmonious and cordial:

> I don't see how it will get better if they don't begin making the needed reforms. Unfortunately they [the Portuguese] continue saying that everything is fine. In the papers we read that everything is fine in Angola, the blacks and the whites all live peacefully and happily, everybody can eat together and go to school together which are just *lies* [my emphasis]. If they [the Portuguese] would admit that something is wrong and try to do something about it, there might be some hope. (Interview Drake)

On Communism

During his interview with the three missionaries Drake focuses on three topics: Communism, Education and Justice. He begins with the influence of communism in Angola. He states that on Friday of that year [1961] and month [December] during a United Nations summit, the spokesman for Portugal said that a report, which had been issued by five countries in the UN, was false and the spokesman categorically denied everything that was written. The UN had an investigating body which was not allowed into Angola because the Portuguese government would not permit them; however, the UN was able to write a report on the basis of what they had learned about the current state of Angola from different sources – including missionaries. The report stated that there was a great deal of mistreatment and deprivation of the basic human rights by the Portuguese government. The Portuguese spokesman responded to this report by claiming that the only terrorists in the country were Mr. Holden Roberto's men.

Drake asks the missionaries: "Is this communist inspired? Is there any indication as far as you can see that the communists are behind the scene?" to which Way replied, "there are some influences, but I do not think there is very much communist influence." (Interview Drake). Way further stated:

> unfortunately, the communists are getting good propaganda out of this because they have been the chief critics of the Portuguese. Those who see the injustices tend to see that "here is somebody that is trying to help us," and unless other countries get also after Portugal to make the needed reforms, communism will have a good chance to come in. Right now I don't think that they have had much influence. I want to say how much we appreciated the vote of America in the United Nations. That did a great deal towards helping the Africans having a better understanding of America. If we could continue on that line, I think we would keep out a lot of communist influence. If they felt that the Western nations were behind them and had something to help them…otherwise they will feel that the communists are the only ones who are interested. (Interview Drake)

During the interview, Galen Drake insisted, again, on the subject of communism. He asserted that "if the situation gets worse the communists might get stronger" (Interview Drake). The missionaries replied that it was necessary to look back again to February when the "cotton people" in that area rose up and rebelled[2]. According to the missionaries, the native revolt didn't come necessarily from any outside instigation. The response that many African chiefs gave to the officials, when they were beaten and put in jail, was that they would die before going back to growing cotton; before they were raising cotton for the Portuguese, they owned their cattle, and gardens and were happy. "Now we don't have anything while your cotton is growing," affirmed one of the local African chiefs, in the missionaries' words (Interview Drake). According to the missionaries, "that is the rebellion, we think, [that] will grow more and more" (Interview Drake). The story the missionaries tell is that of a group of workers who decided not to work until they got better pay. The Portuguese, instead of negotiating, shot them down and forced them to go back to the fields. That set off a chain reaction in the area.

On Education

Galen Drake follows up by asking the three missionaries, "what reforms are needed in Angola?" They replied, "economic, political and educational reforms were the major ones" (Interview Drake). Only the Catholic and Protestant missions were providing education for the Africans. A small fraction of the Angolan people were able to go school due to the lack of school building in most areas.

2 Even though the Baixa do Cassange revolt was in the beginning of January, the missionaries refer to it as having occurred in February. This was most likely a lapse of memory.

The problem, according to the missionaries, was that the Portuguese were afraid to give more economic conditions and education for obvious reasons. As missionaries, they faced problems like this all along. LeMaster explains:

> Eight years ago when we got six students ready to get their diploma from the second year of high school which is six years of education, we were told that we are educating too many. And there is where we are thorn in their flesh. Because we feel that it is our call to bring these people to be enlightened and to understand the worth of human dignity. And, we believe that through education they can also be the kind of Christians that we feel we're called to teach them to be. And probably it is not so good to pinpoint things but this has been our experience from growing to a body of high school students of about sixteen up to a hundred and eighty. That's what they don't like. And not only the Portuguese officials, I believe, don't like it, but we face opposition by these lawyers who are fortunately enough to be in charge of these local, private, schools. They get these schools started and a student to begin in those has to pay ten dollars a month. That student and his father probably won't earn enough a whole year to pay that tuition, much less to buy books and pay the other fees that are necessary even for him to do an examination after he has done his studies. And we are constantly having this thrown up at us by the officials, that we have too many students, that we don't need to educate them. And this students have a law that everybody is supposed to pay a head tax when they are sixteen-eighteen years old. And then they have laws regulating the matriculation in the schools. You have to do first grade when you are a certain age and second grade between certain ages and third between certain ages… Well, it is impossible for the Africans, the masses. Not only for them but also the children of poor white people. They don't have an opportunity to go to school sometimes until they are twelve-thirteen years old. So how is it possible for them to finish this first six years of school when they are eighteen? It is impossible? Yet, they have to pay this head tax. And how can they pay the head tax when they are in our schools on scholarships? Everything is being provided for them even the food that they eat. That lines up with the idea that they are jealous of us. That's what they have been pretending to be doing and that's what we've tried to do. And we felt that we were really cooperating with the Portuguese people and we have had a good experience in working in very close harmony and fellowship with the local officials. It was a shock when we were walked in and bedded down. (Interview Drake)

LeMaster explanation of the education system in Angola is well studied by Miguel Jerónimo in his book *Livros Brancos, Almas Negras*. Jerónimo shows that in the Portuguese colonial empire "education should have a practical and instrumental dimension, where the instruction of the Portuguese language should be a priority as well as an education oriented for an *art* and a craft. It should also be directed to educate the native bodies to work" (166, *my translation*). According to the missionaries, people were "wild for education" and felt that it was the only road out of this dilemma and they would sacrifice themselves to have access to it.

On Justice

When asked about working conditions in Angola, Brancel used the term "forced labor," and went on explaining that for two years he was in charge of a coffee farm that the mission owned. Brancel was required to submit work sheets to the administrator every month, and he would fill those out conscientiously. He proceeded to tell the following story:

> One month we had two absences. These men were forced to work for us. They had no choice. One man missed one day and I asked if he was sick and there was no proof of it and I put down that it was an unjustified absence. Another was a school boy who was working in the carpenter shop as an apprentice in the afternoons and going to school in the morning. He missed half a day. These two men, after the worksheet was sent in to the local administrator were called over to his office. The man who had missed the full day had his hands beaten with what they call "palmatória" which is a stick broad on one end. He came back with his hands swell so he couldn't close his fingers or work for the rest of the week. And the other boy who was not even of age, going to school, was held prisoner in the post and put to work on a government farm. And he worked three months without a pennies pay in penalty for having missed one half day. This is in the heart of the trouble area. And yet we were told that all the troubles come from the outside until we, who have been there for ten years, are accused of being the instigators and it becomes an internal question. (Interview Drake)

LeMaster interrupted and added that the change in terminology from "colony" to "province" meant very little other than the change of name. Forced labor was abolished in 1953 or 1954[3], yet, forced labor continued, thereafter. "Now they call it contract labor, but it is the same thing under a different name," he asserted during the interview. The missionaries also thought that the Angolans should had the opportunity to decide if they want their independence; even though they were not "ready" for this due to the fact that the Portuguese deliberately did not prepare them for independence. It was the missionaries' opinion that if the Angolans got their independence at that moment it would be a greater tragedy than in the Congo because the Angolans were even less prepared. Eventually Angolans would have to come to the point where Angolans would be able to decide if they want to be independent or become linked to Portugal.

3 This dates were mentioned by Le Master which don't correspond to the real date of the Constitutional review of 1951. Miguel Jerónimo affirms that "The *Regime do Indigenato* that was formed by the combined legislation of 1926, 1929 and 1954 continued the tradition of legalization of native forced labour (which retained many similarities with previous slave systems), and institutionalized and legitimized the production and administration of social, political and economic differentiation within the colonial societies; processes always shaped by enduring forms of practical and ideological racialization" (Jerónimo, 2012: 199).

Brancel, LeMaster, and Way equally believe that many Portuguese were sincere in their actions, however, they were blind. Regarding the local administrator behavior, the missionaries always had the impression that he was the "King of his little realm" and, as long as there were enough workers, no one really questioned what was going on. The entire system was built on graft because these local administrators were not paid fairly, rather then small salaries. They had to get what they could from the plantation owners by sending African soldiers and exploiting the people.

Brancel ends the interview with another explanatory story. He conveys with simplicity the core of the social relations in the Portuguese ex-colony:

> One day I went to the local administrator on business and encountered there some people from the neighbor village. I greeted them, shaking hands as I naturally would. The administrator called me aside and said 'You shouldn't be doing that. I'd been punishing these men for things they have done and it doesn't look right for you to be shaking hands while I am punishing them.' I said, 'If your punishment is just, I don't think it matters that much what I do.' And he spoke very frankly and he said, 'I don't punish to get justice. I punish to defend my own interest.' And those are his very words. (Interview Drake)

The journalist wrapped up by asking what their plans were for the future. The missionaries had none. They didn't know what they were going to do next.

Fifty-four years have passed

In today's academic world, studies on trauma, memory, and identity are abundant. Most studies underline the fact that memory does not correspond to processes of linear transmission; instead, it happens in a multidirectional way (Rothberg, 2009). Those processes do not simply occur on the individual level; rather involves "communities of memory" represented by the familiar universe (Pickering, Keightley, 2013). Nonetheless, memories can involve other dimensions such as the generational. In Portugal, studies on memory commonly reflect upon the traumas, memories, and post-memories unwinded by the Colonial War. One example is Margarida Calafate Ribeiro and António Sousa Ribeiro's essay, "Os Netos que Salazar não teve: Guerra Colonial e Memória de Segunda Geração." According to Ribeiro and Ribeiro:

> …with the children, with the parents, with the disperse fragments of narratives composed by the shrapnel of what was the greatest tragedy of the recent history of Portugal, a post-memory of the Colonial War is being built (…). In this way, we watch the construction of a cultural memory of the Colonial War which (…) constitutes itself as a multifaceted and multidirectional discursive net rooted in a dimension of contemporaneity. (Ribeiro and Ribeiro, 2013: 34-35)

The collection of different memories, from different generations, and coming from diverse geographical regions in the world; thus, creating the possibility of new meanings in the long complex historical, political, social and racial relationships in Angola. These collection(s) of memories opens up, according to Ribeiro, the "possibility of consolidation of a democracy with memory" (Ribeiro and Ribeiro, 2013: 35). In this case, the role of the missionaries' memory about the colonial circumstances that led to the outbreak of the Colonial War, is one more piece of the puzzle.

Fifty-four years after his imprisonment by the Portuguese government, Fred Brancel, now 88 years old, still remembers – although with the difficulty of time that erases – the events of the distant past. Currently living with his wife in an assisted community in Madison, Milwaukee, he is still active in the Protestant Church; He has dedicated most of his life to human rights. When I met him he was reluctant to speak about Angola because he was afraid that his words would be printed. He was also worrying that the interview would cause trouble for my parents, who live in Portugal. He suppresses traumatic memories by playing board games[4]; so it took some time to get him to talk about the subject of colonialism in Angola. Brancel still remembers many people in Angola. One person he remembers is Senhor Júlio, an African pastor, whose son studied in Brazil and became the first African bishop in Angola. He stated that the Portuguese were mostly Catholic, not Methodists, and there were some conflicts between the two churches. Brancel does not remember having any Portuguese friends. Methodists were located to the north of Angola and their work emphasized education. The Portuguese refused to educate the African population. Brancel mentioned that the Portuguese called the "Angolan language"[5], Kimbundo, "*a língua dos cães*" [the dog's language]. Brancel asked if I knew what *cães* meant. This was his way of underlying the racism and violence in colonial relations. "The Portuguese put down the African indigenous," he exclaimed. When I asked if he saw any type of violence or discrimination, Brancel replied that there was forced labor to do road work, and that forced labor was not uncommon. The missionary told me that I had to realize that he had a different perspective. When I asked him what his perspective was, he compared the Portuguese treatment of Angolans to the Europeans treatment of native-Americans in the United States:

> I am an old, old guy. Well, I think that the colonial treatment in Angola was similar to the treatment that the native-Americans received in the United States. My family emigrated from Germany. (…) I don't think we treated the

4 Fred Brancel was clear not very comfortable speaking about certain issues in Angola. Even though we spent a lot of time with him trying to get things out, he refused to speak about what he refer to as "delicate subjects."

5 Expression used by Fred Brancel.

> native-Americans particularly well. I have some recall that native-Americans were not enjoying equality. (Interview Sousa-Brancel)

Brancel's comparison is a clear example of Rothberg calls the multidirectionality of memory, i.e., memories do not occur in a linear way but, in most cases and depending on individual experiences, as part of an inclusive process of connection and inclusion.

He explained that he spent ten months in Portugal studying and taking the exams in Portuguese; Not only in the language, in History and Geography as well. The missionaries could not obtain a permit to work in Angola until they passed those exams. Initially, he was stationed in Malanje, however the Portuguese government was threatening to take the church property in a coffee growing area called Dembos. He was sent to the Dembos to plant coffee and secure the church property.

When asked if they had to conform to the laws of the Portuguese administration, Brancel stated that they were expected to comply. Nevertheless, his time was spent with the Africans; it was only for business that he would go to the administrator and have an interaction with a Portuguese citizen. I inquired about his impression of the Portuguese administrator, Brancel put his hands in his head and said: "Don't tell him!" According to Brancel, the administrator was "normal;" he had rules that were never to be bent. Brancel also mentioned that he carried a bias experience. When confronted with the Lusotropicalist ideology of the New State, the missionary affirmed that he had not experience the ideology in practice. He turned to me and asked: "Where did you hear that? Do you believe that?" (Interview Sousa-Brancel). At that moment his wife intervened; prompting him to tell me "that" story. Brancel sadly continued, "We had an issue because one of our men missed a day of work, so he was taken away. I had to report that he was absent. That man had to do forced labor." And he added, "we would like to think it is true [the benevolence of Portuguese colonialism] but it is not factual" (Interview Sousa-Brancel).

Brancel mentioned that there was never any legal reasons (or any legal arrest or procedure) given by the Portuguese government to hold him and his colleagues for three months. He has no idea why they were selected. He does not think the government saw them as revolutionary, rather as antagonist. According to him, this happened because "they were already aware that the Africans were beginning to think like the Congolese" (Interview Sousa-Brancel). His mission supported the Angolans "but not in any military way." Brancel stated: "Our mission was basically with the African people. I don't know if there was ever a white Portuguese in our church population" (Interview Sousa-Brancel). Once again, his wife intervened saying that, if his church was preaching the gospel, that was revolutionary enough for the Portuguese to take measures. The only thing that Brancel could see as being used by the

Portuguese to justify their arrest "was a booklet that we had put together for what we called community development or village improvement. I still think that was sort of the cause for our imprisonment. We called it 'You are the Temple'" (Interview Sousa-Brancel).

Brancel does not remember how the Portuguese were portraying the riots in the north. He, however, remembers being interviewed when he arrived in New York. He thinks that Ed LeMaster was a more verbal person: "Ed LeMaster was the head of the secondary school and he is a better spokesperson" (Interview Sousa-Brancel).

"Forced labor was a very common practice at the time that we were there and it took really no excuse for an individual to be taken and forced to work on the roads or whatever was needed or wanted by the government" (Interview Sousa-Brancel). Fred Brancel remembers being concerned with the situation in Angola, and he wanted to make a difference by helping those who were being oppressed. "After we were released from the three months in prison, we divided into teams. Two of us traveled east of the Mississippi and two traveled west of the river. Malcom traveled with me for two months to share our experiences; but Malcom was the person who was better with his tongue. I have never been particularly gifted with my tongue" (Interview Sousa-Brancel). This suggested that some missionaries were more outspoken than others. Brancel was an agricultural missionary and he never felt that he was particularly gifted or talented.

My last question to Brancel was, "Do you feel the mission of the Church aligned with the mission of the US as governmental entity or do you think they held two separate intentions?" Brancel replied:

> I never saw the United Stated participating in anything that favored the African population. When we took the goats and chickens, we sat there for a week on the boat, and we saw the exchange of manufactured goods being unloaded and returned for the raw materials coming out. I think that was the United States position. I don't think the United States was ever actively involved in bringing independence to the African population. The missions were certainly indirectly involved in bringing independence. That's part of education is about, I think. You can't educate without wanting a degree of equality. (Interview Sousa-Brancel).

Kate Burlingham affirms in her article that "we can begin to appreciate how the complex and enduring legacy of slavery shaped, and continues to shape, the United States relations with Angola and Africa, in general, in unexpected ways" (Burlingham, 2015: 25). The memories of missionaries like Fred Brancel is one more variable that complicates these relationships; not just between the United States and Angola, between Portugal and Angola, as well.

According to António Sousa Ribeiro, Cecília MacDowell Santos and Silvia Rodríguez Maeso:

> the work of the testimony, as a way of representation of traumatic memories, constitutes a gesture of re-composition that allows the reconstruction of a discursive space in which the voice of the victim of violence can not only articulate itself, but also to be heard, be part of a public sphere whose communicative reason had been broken by the logic of violence and by the state of exception. (Ribeiro *et al*., 2010: 6)

Brancel and his missionary colleagues were victims of the Portuguese government's "irrationality," and at the same time witnessed the violence that was imposed on the Angolan population. Their memories shouldn't be overshadowed. They are part of a collective corpus that enhances our understanding of colonial Angola as a whole. Fred Brancel ended the interview by saying that he feels and thinks that he had a privileged life, with the exception of the loss of his two wives [the first was with him in Angola, the second in Congo]. His first wife, Margaret Jones, was a popular musician who would crack open the church windows to let the pagan music in: "She was very progressive," he stated. His memories are now engraved in his niece, Maddie, memory. She is the present repository of the memory of a family past in colonial Angola. Her way of telling that specific story in the future will certainly be "contaminated" by her own experiences.

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