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## A QUESTION OF REMEMBERING 'MOTHER AFRICA': MEMORY AND IDENTITY IN TWENTIETH CENTURY ANGOLAN AND AFRO-BRAZILIAN POETRY

Kiara M. Paylor

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A QUESTION OF REMEMBERING 'MOTHER AFRICA': MEMORY AND IDENTITY  
IN TWENTIETH CENTURY ANGOLAN AND AFRO-BRAZILIAN POETRY

(Spine Title: A Question of Remembering Mother Africa)

(Thesis Format: Monograph)

By

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Graduate Program in Hispanic Studies

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of the requirements for the degree of  
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## ABSTRACT

The research problem in question is how African cultural memory is conveyed through Angolan and Afro-Brazilian poetry throughout the mid-to-late twentieth century. The socially constructed term ‘Mother Africa’ has been utilized as a cultural symbol of this memory. Collective memory theory, collective identity theory, cultural trauma theory, and Benedict Anderson’s theory on *Imagined Communities* are utilized in order to show how such symbols provide primordial-based sources for identity construction, belonging, and social cohesion. The analysis also reveals that such affiliations are consciously chosen by individuals within the African Diaspora who look to their slave history as a reference point for individual and national identities. The elected Angolan poets include Mario António, Antonio Jacinto, Aires de Almeida Santos, Alda Lara, Agostinho Neto, and Viriato da Cruz. From Brazil the poets include: Solano Trindade, Lepe Correia, Oswaldo de Camargo, Jose Carlos de Andrade, Luis Silva, and Edimilson de Almeida Pereira.

**KEY WORDS:** Mother Africa, cultural memory, collective memory, Angolan poetry, Afro-Brazilian poetry, cultural trauma, imagined communities, transatlantic slave trade, Brazil, Angola, primordialism.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my parents. I am eternally grateful to my father, Michael for his unwavering devotion and support, encouraging me to dream and helping me manifest those dreams into reality. To my mother, Leslie-Ann, who has always shown me unconditional love, I am so blessed to have you as both a mother and best friend. Both of you have provided knowledge, opportunity, and inspiration throughout every stage of my life and for that I am truly thankful.

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## Introduction

The main theme of this paper rests on a quote by Gabriel García Márquez that states, “What matters in life is not what happens to you but what you remember and how you remember it.” His assertion indicates that history is much more than just a fact or event that took place, but rather something that takes on a variety of forms and meanings to different people. *What* one remembers, therefore, must be intimately tied to *how* one comes to remember it. There can never be one memory that prevails over others just as there is never one history.

Memory and history are inseparable and mutually reinforcing. In other words, on the one hand the memories we sustain through time are all pieces of history. On the other, history does not exist if it is not remembered. They are also both variable and malleable. They will change according to each individual as well as over time. If what one remembers is tied to how it is remembered, it is safe to assume that memory must also be tied to people’s behaviour or actions. When we remember something of our past those memories have the power of shaping how we may act in the present and future. Conversely, our present may also have an impact on how we choose to remember our past. Whether we identify with a particular group (i.e. based on ethnicity or religion) or create a new individual identity, memory can influence both our perceptions of ourselves as well as others. For instance, we see this in the case of individuals of African ancestry growing up in the African Diaspora. After hearing stories of their past (i.e. slave trade), the youth may strengthen their affiliation with their ethnic group by identifying themselves as ‘African’ or a hyphenated ‘African – Canadian’ (for example). This is not to discount other factors that may in fact contribute to this identity, but, rather, these memories have the power of reinforcing and intensifying the associations felt with one’s



heritage. They also have the power of shaping how one perceives his or her group in relation to others. In an era of globalization this phenomenon of maintaining primordial ties to a “mother land” stems from an uprooting of people and their cultures to various locations as a result of force or of conscious choice. The maintenance of the *memory* of a common past results in the persistence of a remembered culture. The final stage is a firmly established sense of belonging or affinity to that place of origin. The main question then is why this necessity for primordial ties is so important.

Throughout this paper it will be demonstrated that the theme of ‘Mother Africa’, a return to African origins, perpetuates the myth of a cultural collective memory and thereby collective identity. Myths help to recapture the past but the past remembered does not remain faithful to the original. In the words of W.I. Thomas, “if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (in Allahar 2010: 1; forthcoming). In other words, if the myth of a united, beautiful Africa reigns true in the minds of Africans (both on the continent and the Diaspora) then that myth will become a reality. These myths are believed to provide a sense of belonging and unity and, as a result, aid in the creation of fixed identities. It must be stressed however, that like memory, culture does not withstand uprooting from its place of origin. The scattering of Africans from Angola and other colonized nations to the New World during the years of Portuguese domination has resulted in unique memories and representations of the ‘homeland’ before its conquest. Culture and memory, therefore, are fluid entities that are constantly changing, which demonstrates that both the cultural memory of Mother Africa and the identities founded upon such memories are socially constructed.

### Memory and Sites of memory

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have provided countless numbers of books, journals, films, art, and structures that recount events that have characterized human history. These can be referred to as ‘sites of memory’. Pierre Nora was the creator of this term which, in the original French, is *lieux de memoire*. By this term he means to denote a structure or place in which certain memories are found and maintained (1989: 7). These can be either cultural or historical sites, or both. For example, a cultural site of memory may be an oral narrative shared by elders of a community with its younger generations. An historical site of memory may be a holocaust museum or a library. Despite their difference in form, both of these sites have the power to be cultural and historical since their purpose is to bring forth different perspectives and information, thereby lending a voice to the individuals forgotten in traditional historical discourse. We can also refer to this as *historical truth*. It is only a partial truth because the recounting of history may exclude or ‘silence’ some aspects while highlighting others. Anton Allahar states, “[s]uch ‘silences’ in turn suggest that there are many ‘truths’, that, for a variety of reasons, are never uncovered or told by historians, and are not archived or catalogued.” (Allahar 2010: 2; forthcoming) Silence is typically assumed to indicate an absence. In relation to history, one could assume that a ‘silence’ of a particular viewpoint would indicate that it never existed in the first place. With the amount of resources available to the world today, we know this is not the case. Silence can also signify an absence of perspective, regardless of whether it was ‘silenced’ by another or whether an individual voluntarily withheld it. If this is the case, one has to question the origins of that history; who is telling the story, what is being remembered or forgotten, how that memory was conveyed, the significance of relaying that information, and in what context the story was

told. Uncovering these truths proves that the act of remembering and forgetting is intimately tied to our understanding of history. Furthermore, they allow us to better understand how identities (both individual and collective) are created and maintained.

### **Traditional vs. Narrative History**

A prime example of the intercourse between history and memory is the transatlantic slave trade. It is symbolic of the pain, death, and destruction experienced by the African people during the centuries of European conquest. It has typically been depicted by historiographers as a reality to be learned and remembered just like any other war or significant historical event. This is what we can consider to be ‘traditional’ history. However, this factual reality does not account for the various experiences of those that existed as slaves, how those individuals coped and/or changed over the course of its existence, nor does it explain how those individuals came to see themselves after its abolition. Dates, facts and numbers paint one truth of that history but they do not necessarily elicit a strong reaction by its audiences. This may be due to the inability of an individual to relate to the facts or even fathom the severity of the event itself. Narrative history, on the other hand, is what is communicated through story telling, biographies, music, and poetry (among others). It tries to compensate for the disparities of traditional historical discourse by looking at the facts and events through people’s experiences. History as seen through the eyes and words of those who endured it is what resonates in the minds of most. As a consequence, it also provides a more complete image of that history thereby enabling individuals to develop their own conclusions. For the purposes of this paper, poetry will be the main site of memory and source of history.

Poetry as a site of memory and narrative history reaches out to a far greater number of individuals due to its popular nature. Poets, like musicians, are able to

stimulate the emotions and senses of a population through their artistry with words. According to Jan Assmann, the preservation of cultural memory was originally the task of the poets, (2008: 114) as they took the role of communicating traditions and customs. They tell their stories from the perspective of the 'others' whose perspectives are not typically incorporated into history books. Also, their writings may be more readily available to the general public who are unable to access other forms of literature. For these reasons, it can be a useful resource in analyzing major events like the slave trade.

This paper will analyze the memories and histories conveyed through Angolan and Brazilian poetry in the mid to late twentieth century. These memories are used as binding forces to a certain past experience and, subsequently as creators of identity. As will be discussed in greater detail, there are a number of essential threads tying Angola and Brazil together between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. More specifically,

It was the trade in Angolan slaves which made possible the development of Brazilian sugar plantations and, towards the end of the seventeenth century, the exploitation of Brazilian gold mines. There followed a long period when Brazil and Angola were intimately connected (Mafalda Leite 1996: 103).

The purpose of studying the poetry of these two countries is to evaluate the similarities and/or differences both Angolan and African-Brazilian poets convey about their ancestry and history. Given the intimate relationship between the two nations, it could be assumed that a common place of origin could signify a common set of shared memories. Following this line of thought, however, it could also then be argued that the Africans who were exported to the Caribbean and North America would also have a shared memory. Such a belief would insinuate that there was a homogenous group leaving Africa which, as will be discussed, is not the case.

Cultural memory can serve a variety of purposes; the creation of new identities, the vindication of previously existing ones, maintaining a dichotomy between “us” and “them”, among others. When looking at memory the main component that needs to be recognized is time. What distinguishes cultural memory from communicative memory is an ‘absolute past’ versus a ‘recent past’ (Assmann 2008: 117). It is this absolute, historical and perhaps mythical past that is of interest. In order to fully comprehend what is meant by cultural memory, cultural/collective and national identity, and how they will be applied to the poetry analysis, conceptual definitions will be supplied.

Also, from these poems questions of memory and identity will be analyzed. This will be accomplished with the use of four theories. The first addresses the issues of memory. A brief explanation of the biological, sociological, and neuro-scientific factors involved in memory will be provided. What follows is a distinction between individual and collective memory. The second theory looks at Ron Eyerman’s interpretation of cultural trauma theory. Comparisons will be drawn between his application of the theory in the United States to both Angola and Brazil. The third theory will analyze cultural/collective identity. It will look at how identities are created and maintained. It will also address the importance of culture as a basis for the creation of identity. Myth will be discussed as a sub-genre within this section. The last theory revolves around the nation; the creation of nations, their authenticity, how they are built, and how nationalism can manipulate memory to reinforce the idea of community. Benedict Anderson’s book Imagined Communities will be the main source used throughout this part of the evaluation.

To begin, an historical summary of both countries and how they are connected through the transatlantic slave trade will be provided. The purpose of this is to show how

despite having the same colonizer and the same groups of Africans in both countries, any memory that essentializes Africa and its people overlooks the diversity across both the continent and within the individual nations throughout the (de)colonization process. Such memories are glorified accounts of the past that may seek to compensate for the centuries of abuse, violence, thievery and degradation inflicted on the Africans by the Europeans. A brief history of the development of literature in each country will also be provided with the intention of outlining certain motivations, themes, and writing styles during that time period.

The second part of this paper will look at the specific theories mentioned previously. The last part will utilize the history to conduct an in-depth poetry analysis of various poems chosen from writers within both countries. These poems will have common themes of ‘Mother Africa’, African culture before the “destruction” inflicted by the Portuguese, the presence of Africa in present day, and the significance of African cultural symbolism in modern poetry. From Angola the poets include: Mario António (1934-1989), Antonio Jacinto (1924 - 1991), Aires de Almeida Santos (1921-1992), Alda Lara (1930 - 1962), Agostinho Neto (1922 - 1979), and Viriato da Cruz (1928 - 1973). From Brazil the poets include: Solano Trindade (1908 - 1974), Lepe Correia (1954 - ), Oswaldo de Camargo (1936 - ), Jose Carlos de Andrade, Luis Silva (1951 - ), and Edimilson de Almeida Pereira (1963 - ).<sup>1</sup>

In order to get a sense of what *culture* is and how *cultural memory* is constructed, a brief explanation supplied with definitions will first be provided.

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<sup>1</sup> N.B. Bibliographic information is provided in Appendix C for each of the aforementioned poets.

### **Ideas of culture and cultural memory**

Culture is a complex term that generates a vast number of definitions and conceptions. Terry Eagleton's evaluation of the term notes this ambiguity. He explains it is a Latin-based term stemming from the original word *colere*, which can mean anything from cultivating and inhabiting to worshipping and protecting (2000: 2). In one chapter of his book, The Idea of Culture, he quotes several writers that have tried to define *culture*. To name a few, E.B. Tylor states "[it] is a complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and other capabilities" (Eagleton 2000: 34). Similarly, Stuart Hall describes culture as "the lived practices or practical ideologies which enable a society, group or class to experience, define, interpret and make sense of its conditions of existence" (ibid). These definitions seem to be quite broad. They incorporate everything from traditions and beliefs to fundamental parts of a society such as law and art. Part of the difficulty in defining such a term attests to the fact that it can be all encompassing and will vary according to each person's conception of it. However, regardless of the definition, one fact remains quite evident; when referring to culture neither race nor genetics plays a part. If we extend this definition to the idea of cultural memory, therefore, certain conclusions can be drawn. Primarily, that cultural memory is referring to many different aspects of the past (i.e. music, art, traditions, language) that are representative of that culture. Secondly, such memories are based on a broad conception of one's culture which may vary over time. Jan Assmann's theory of cultural memory indicates,

[I]t is a kind of institution. It is exteriorized, objectified, and stored away in symbolic forms that, unlike the sounds of words or the sight of gestures, are stable and situation-transcendent. They may be transferred from one situation to another and transmitted from one generation to another (Assmann 2008: 110).

Therefore, in relation to the previous example with youth of African ancestry, any symbolism of the slave trade, memorabilia or museums that commemorate it all contribute to the preservation of this cultural memory. It is transferred down through each successive generation and stored symbolically in their minds. Similarly, as mentioned previously, Pierre Nora calls this concept *lieux de memoire* or ‘sites of memory’. He states that such sites become necessary when there is an absence of *milieux de memoire* or ‘real environments of memory’. In other words, when people are displaced from the original location of that memory, they look to other sources to reinforce and sustain it. In summarizing Nora’s concept, Parham explains that “sites of memory are produced in response to specific needs and demands, coming into being through absence and literally placed in lieu of lost connections” (2007: 430). In other words, that cultural memories have the ability of being fabricated or embellished if they serve a certain purpose or when there is a severing between the individual and the ‘real environment’ from which he or she originated.

Another perspective on cultural memory comes from Vita Fortunati and Elena Lamberti. They claim that,

For an individual, as well as for a nation, cultural memory is a complex and stratified entity strictly connected not only to the history and the experience of either the individual or the nation, but also to the way in which every history and experience are read in time, individually and collectively. Each time, the past acquires new meanings and the same fact, even though it stays the same, is nevertheless shaped through remembrance (2008: 128).

This quote emphasizes the fluidity and flexibility of memory. Each time that memory is passed to the successive generation it will acquire new meanings and be shaped by that present. As a result remembrance of the past is influenced by those who remember it in



the present, thereby making “authentic” cultural memory as shared by a group nearly impossible.

For the purposes of this paper, cultural memory refers to an individual or group’s memory of a common past that may be based in shared knowledge, traditions, lineage, customs, religions or beliefs, etc. Assmann indicates that a successful transfer of cultural memory requires institutions of preservation and re-embodiment (Assmann 2008: 111). Poetry as a literary site of memory has been utilized for these purposes. However, my objective in utilizing the aforementioned concepts is to demonstrate that a cultural memory is consciously and deliberately constructed by individuals to suit certain objectives. To say that a cultural memory is authentic and real would imply that everyone from a certain religious or ethnic background originating from the same geographical location will come to attain such a memory. As a result, it will be argued that such affiliations tend to be used as bases for both personal and national identities but in doing so they often ignore the diversity among the populations or exclude those that do not fit that mold. As is the case with many multicultural societies, it cannot be assumed that a common past leads to the development of a single accepted culture by all.

## **Chapter 1: The transatlantic slave trade: Angola and Brazil**

It is no secret that the transatlantic slave trade was one of the most ruthless acts of inhumanity the world experienced. It is estimated that between ten and fifteen million people were taken from Africa over the course of approximately four centuries and traded as slaves. Of that total, the Spanish and Portuguese colonizers dominated the slave trade bringing about two-thirds to the Americas (Baranov 2000: 118). These numbers, of course, are merely estimates of the people who were actually recorded between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. The sheer multitude of people unaccounted for or killed throughout that time period remains lost to history.

Although the transatlantic slave trade has been the focus of many contemporary novels and journals, it was not the first time the world had witnessed slavery. Slavery (albeit in different forms) has existed for centuries and has been utilized by different ethnic groups around the world. This point is important to note since this section of the paper does not seek to place blame on any particular group who engaged in slavery between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, but rather recognize the impact it had on the people of West Africa and Brazil.

### **The beginnings of slavery in Angola**

Historical written records throughout most parts of Angola are scarce and in need of further research. As a result, what is known about the various African kingdoms and peoples throughout the colonial period varies from region to region and is in large part subject to interpretation. For example, in the Northern and Western regions they have combined oral information with some written. In the central regions they have derived some information through local contacts. In the south and east there are virtually no written records until the late nineteenth century or early twentieth century. Hence oral

information becomes central to any historical research. This lack of information is in large part due to a lack of consistent record keeping, ongoing wars throughout the country as well as the relocation of millions of people during the slave trading era. David Birmingham states that our understanding of Angola's history would be better facilitated if it were possible to determine what cultural unity, if any, existed during the first or second millennium among the people that lived in this region (1974: 191-2). Also, greater investigation and record keeping in this century is necessary for the maintenance of current tribal practices and traditions that, otherwise, may succumb to the same fate as their ancestors. What little is known about the history of Angola begins in the slave trading era but is mostly found towards the twentieth century.

The Portuguese are said to be the first group of Europeans to have “discovered” Africa and Brazil<sup>2</sup>. It is estimated that the first contact between the Portuguese and the Africans of Angola was in 1482 by the navigator and explorer Diogo do Cão (Mafalda Leite 1996: 103). Upon arrival, the Portuguese were greeted by the king of the Kingdom of Kongo. Initially, this contact was an optimistic one, which encouraged Afro-European cooperation and relations. The Portuguese engaged in the trade of coloured cloth and ivory. In return, the king of Kongo hoped that the Portuguese would help bring power and modernization to his empire. However, these commercial interests of the Portuguese soon subsided as they started to discover more unique opportunities derived from the “rich lands of Brazil, the gold of Guinea and the spices of Indonesia” (Birmingham 1965: 7). In the pursuit of more economic interests, the Portuguese recognized that the real profits were to be reaped from the trading of African people. During this time period the

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<sup>2</sup> Discovered is in quotations since it is a fact that the land eventually known as Brazil was inhabited by native peoples prior to the arrival of the Europeans.

enslavement of blacks was merely part of a larger global enslavement process. Furthermore, despite what some history books say, the slave trade was not initiated by *direct* European force. Initially, the king of Kongo conducted wars and raids throughout the country in order to sell local captives to the Portuguese. As a result, the African followers were responsible for the capture and trade of their own people. One of the groups of people that suffered most from such raids included the Mbundus of southern Angola. According to popular Mbundu myth, the name *Angola* was derived from these people. It was said that a hunter by the name of Ngola came and imposed a monarchical governing system upon the Mbundu people. *Ngola* then became the word used for the kings of this region, Ndongo, and then eventually for the country, Angola (Birmingham 1965: 7).

Tensions between the Portuguese and the local Kings arose when the Portuguese Empire decided to forcefully colonize Angola, thereby leading to the Angola Wars of 1575. Even though slavery existed in the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, it was not until 1578 that the most prosperous and prominent slave port in Angola, Luanda, was founded (Blake 1977: 85-6). In order to maintain their control over both the colony and the commerce of slaves in its ports, many Portuguese immigrated to Luanda. Another important reason for this was to keep competing European powers, such the Dutch in the seventeenth century, and the British and French in the eighteenth century, at bay (Birmingham 1965: 43). They too had discovered the potential wealth and economic development that could be derived from cheap slave labour. In the city of Luanda, the Portuguese settlers coexisted with the local African population. There, the Africans were encouraged to assimilate by learning the colonizer's language and absorb the dominant European culture. However, "due to the absence of any political rights in the empire

there was little obvious benefit to becoming assimilated” (MacQueen 1997: 12). Those individuals who did not fulfill those objectives were relocated to the periphery of the city to live in the local *musseques* or slums. Unfortunately, there are neither official recorded statistics of the populations in Angola nor the ratio of Africans to European settlers and creoles during this time. It is also worth mentioning that systematic reports of the export of slaves from Angola did not begin until 1710, nearly two hundred years after Luanda’s success. The numbers of slaves provided later throughout this chapter are merely estimates based on whatever records remain in existence to date.

Located along the Western African coastline, Luanda provided a perfect docking station for ships travelling across the Atlantic. During the initial years of Portuguese conquest, the trade remained mainly between the African colonies and the Iberian Peninsula. However, exploration throughout the sixteenth century opened up new commercial trading routes that further contributed to Portuguese expansion. To be more specific, large numbers of the Africans transported out of Luanda were shipped to significant areas of the most prosperous Portuguese colony, Brazil. This was due in large part to the fact that the Portuguese considered Brazil a provider of economically important resources for export. Apart from the obvious economic advantages, they also saw political benefits. To be specific, they believed that the country and its people had greater potential of becoming a “civilized” Portuguese colony than Angola or the other African colonies. Rodrigues states that the belief in a vast Portuguese province in Africa is a myth created by Portuguese historians. In reality any imperial objectives were directed towards Brazil and those parts of Africa that best served Brazil (1965: 15). In other words, Portuguese interest never concentrated itself in the development and “Europeanization” of Africa but rather in the exploitation of her resources.

### **The discovery of Brazil**

Brazil was discovered on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April, 1500 by the Portuguese explorer Pedro Álvares Cabral. Its name comes from the discovery of a particular wood called *brasil* (De Medonça 1950: 2). Similar to the case of Angola, when the Portuguese arrived they were met by peoples native to the land. The only written historical records to depict the interaction between the two groups as well as the nature of their encounters are European travel journals. Their purpose was to reveal information about the physical attributes of these people as well as their languages, religions, and customs, to then be relayed back to the Monarchs. It is worth mentioning here that although these journals are useful, they should be analyzed critically for the imperial views illustrated by the Europeans of the encounters. Nevertheless, one could extrapolate from them the impact of the indigenous peoples and their cultures on the development of contemporary Brazilian culture.

The first commodity to contribute to the economic development of Brazil was sugar. As a consequence of its popularity, there was a high demand for labourers on the expanding sugar plantations, which the newly immigrated Europeans could not supply. They initially looked to the local indigenous population as a source of labour. However, though they had little difficulty in controlling the indigenous women they could not motivate or oblige the men to work. As a result, other sources had to be sought out in order to remedy the situation (De Mendonça 1950: 10). African or black labour became their primary target. Angola was not the only country that the Portuguese used for trading. They traded within and between both their other colonies such as Cabo Verde, and Mozambique, as well as other countries across the continent. The slaves taken from Africa were then relocated across various parts of Brazil. According to Baranov,

The West Africans went primarily to Bahia, Pernambuco and Rio de Janeiro, while those from Mozambique [...] ended up in São Paulo, Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro. The ethnic groups included Yoruba from Nigeria, Ewe and Aja from the Gold Coast (Ghana), Dahomey and Togo (of the Ashanti peoples), Hausa and Madinka from the Sudan and Bantu-speaking peoples from Mozambique (2000: 129).

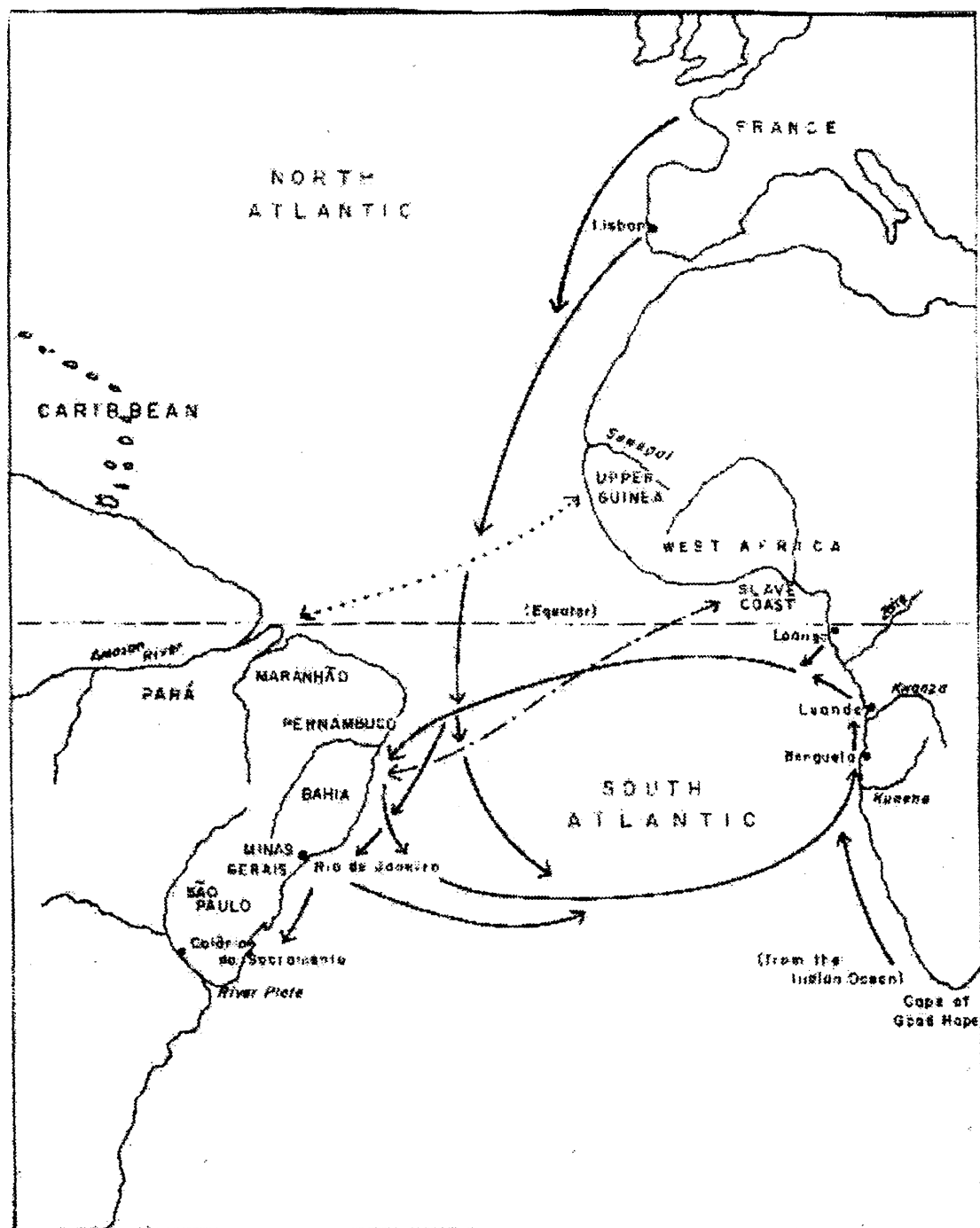
The Europeans believed that this mixture of ethnicities would impede African unification and any potential subsequent rebellions. This process was intended to secure European dominance and control. Similarly, the arrival of the Africans facilitated the creation of a hierarchical system based on race; Europeans, the indigenous and lastly the African slaves. This is not to discount the lasting effect the Africans had on Brazilian culture. Aside from the sheer variety of peoples originating from different geographic locations around the continent, slaves were taken from all classes of previously existing African societies, from the lowest levels to Kings and Queens. As a result, “both whites and Indians underwent a definite Africanization – in food, dress, language, music, religion, and folklore” (Rodrigues 1965: 45). In general, none of the African colonies reached the level of miscegenation that Brazil did. Further discussion on the development of Brazil will be provided later in the chapter.

The first Brazilian group to initiate trade with Angola was the sugar captaincies of the northeast, Bahia and Pernambuco. This trade was profitable for a period of time but met its decline with the rise of sugar plantations on British and French colonies in the Caribbean after the 1650s. Gold from the gold mines of Minas Gerais was the second largest commodity for export. The wealth generated from such trade not only contributed to their economic growth but also made them the leading traders for slaves in west-central Africa. From there, slavers from Rio de Janeiro dominated both the Luanda and Benguela ports, making them the most significant slave carriers into the mid-late eighteenth century (Miller 1992: 87).

### **The importance of Brazil in relation to Angola**

According to Miller, eighteenth century shipping and finance records provide an important source of information in relation to the numbers of Africans traded across the Atlantic. He determines that there were multiple groups of slave trade competitors. He places them into three distinct categories; west-central African suppliers who sold to potential buyers along the coast, Americans (in this case referring to Brazilians) who bought from west-central Africa, and European national groups who took their slaves to both the American coasts and the Caribbean. From the first group, trading was not limited to just the Portuguese. This group tended to work both with the American and European buyers. Competition among the European groups was another key component to this slaving network. The Portuguese claimed exclusive trading rights within West Africa. Other European groups, such as the French and English were not permitted to trade or purchase slaves within this area. However, due to the competitive nature of the slave trade, such laws were not always obeyed. African suppliers were able to send their slaves to whichever port provided the most advantage, therefore, the smuggling of slaves by other European groups became commonplace (1992: 78 – 84). Rodrigues states that the coast of Africa “was simply a hunting ground for slaves, a no-man’s-land where power belonged to the strongest, not to the first comers or those whom the Pope had declared to be the proprietors” (1965: 19). Despite the Portuguese’ best efforts, their small fleets could not prevent nor withstand the encroachment of other foreign traders onto their land. Not surprisingly, their biggest competition came from their most successful colony: Brazil. The Brazilians were at a far greater advantage for slave trading





**Figure 2 (sketch) The southern Atlantic in the eighteenth century (Brazil, Africa, main sailing routes)**

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<sup>3</sup> Map printed from Miller, Joseph C. 1992. "The Numbers, Origins, and Destinations of Slaves in the Eighteenth-Century Angolan Slave Trade." Ch. 4 in *The Atlantic Slave Trade: Effects on Economies, Societies, and People in Africa, the Americas and Europe*. Durham, USA: Duke University Press.

due to their geographic placement in relation to Africa and also the infinite commodities at their disposal for trading; sugar, ivory, spices, gold, coffee, to name a few. It was said that Brazil was the centre of a three-way commerce linked with Asia and Africa that Portugal was unable to take part in.

The systematic records of slave trading throughout the eighteenth century are more thorough than in past centuries, but far from complete. Between 1721 and 1772 there are twenty years of information missing from the official trade reports between Angola and Brazil. Miller found that “the inconsistencies and incompleteness of the extant records of the trade thus reflect the politics of slaving at least as much as the vagaries of time” (1992: 90). In other words, the amount of information missing from the record books combined with the inconsistencies of the record keeping over this extended period of time reveal the true nature of the slave trade. Among those years an average six to ten thousand slaves destined for different parts of Brazil were accounted for. A more substantial and complete series of reports begin after 1802 when Luanda’s trade was governed and inspected by officials. This consistency was maintained until 1826, which marked Britain’s recognition of Brazil’s independence from Portugal (Miller 1992: 94). According to some records, the numbers of slaves transported during this time period double from the previous century’s reports (SEE APPENDIX B). A summary of the numbers counted across these decades (1720-1820) reveals a total estimated sum of 433 279 slaves destined for Brazil. Of that number, Rio de Janeiro was the destination of choice, accounting for 48% of the total sum, with the cities of Bahia and Pernambuco taking second and third place. However, it must be stated that these numbers do not reveal information about the trade with other colonies, among other competing nations who smuggled slaves surreptitiously from the same land area, nor does it reflect those

who were killed or lost along the way. Also, since the actual records are not available, this history has to be imagined and/or reconstructed.

The amount of slaves brought to Brazil reached unprecedented numbers long after they achieved independence from Portugal in September of 1822. The British government attempted to institute laws for the abolishment of slavery throughout the 1830s but it continued illegally in Brazil until May 13, 1888. Rodrigues provides rough estimates of slave numbers throughout the nineteenth century as stated by different researchers:

Using as a basis the statistical data of the English commission on the traffic, Tavares Bastos states that from 1788 to 1829 the lowest annual number of slaves imported into Brazil was 18 000 and the highest 65 000. In 1823 Jose Bonifacio calculated the annual average at 40 000 and for the years 1826 to 1829 Walsh gives the respective totals of 33 999, 29 787, 43 555, and 52 600. As there are no systematically collected official data, the variation among the estimates are great, although all figures reveal a growing influx of slaves *beginning* in 1826. [...] From 1831 on the clandestine nature of the traffic makes it difficult to know the numbers involved. (1965: 158, Emphasis added).

One reason for the increase in slave trading can be attributed to the belief that Brazil's agricultural system required and depended upon slaves as their primary source of (cheap) labour. To complement this statement, Graden claims that a disappearance in coffee and sugar plantations in Haiti (due to the Haitian Revolution 1790-1) created an opening for Brazil in the international market. An increased demand for these two highly lucrative exports at that time resulted in an increased demand for slave labour. Aside from those advantages slaves provided urban transport (by carrying goods), domestic labour to the whites, education for themselves and their children, aid in architectural development and urbanization, cultivation of rich food crops, not to mention their cultural contribution (Graden 1996: 254). Psychologically, they provided the white colonizers with a sense of superiority.

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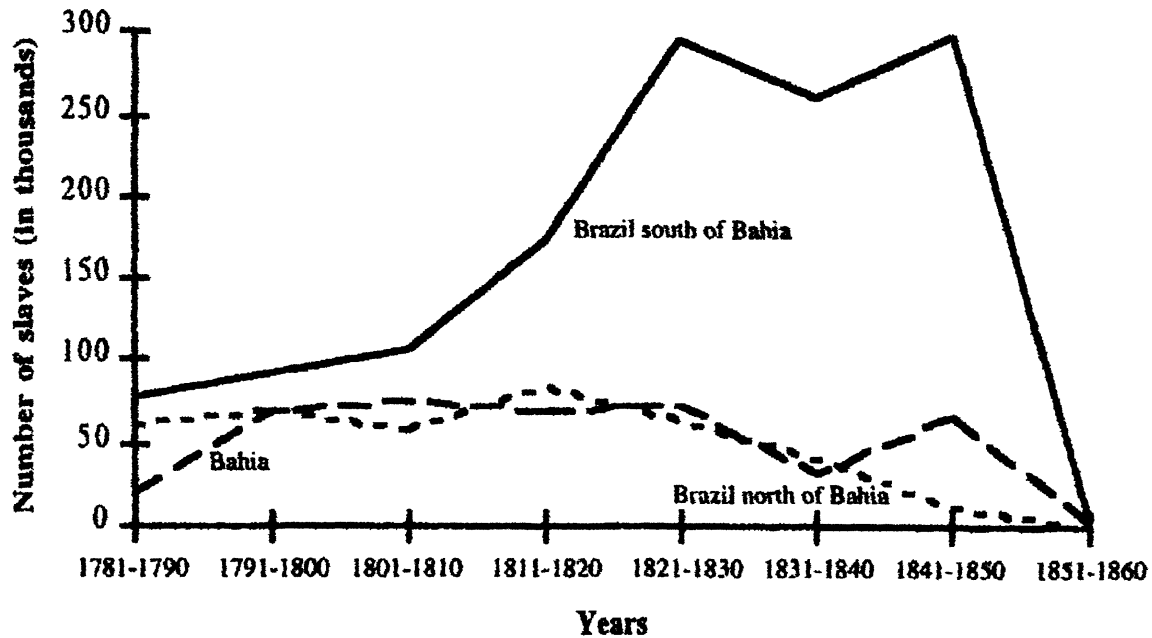


FIGURE 1: Annual Imports of Slaves into Brazil, 1781-1856

Source: Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 243-44.

Therefore, if there were so many obvious advantages to slave labour, why did it meet its end in 1888? Some historians claim that it was the Brazilian government's promotion of foreign immigration and the humanitarian institution of their own anti-slavery laws. Others focus on the British influence (or pressure) and their diplomatic and physical interventions (i.e. the seizing of slave ships) in Brazilian affairs. Lastly, some claim that it was the prominence of slave resistance and organized rebellion that spurred in the Northern regions. After nearly five hundred years of trading, the African-Brazilian population greatly outnumbered the white or mestizo groups in certain areas throughout the country. With black uprisings occurring in other heavily slave-populated countries

<sup>4</sup> Chart from Graden, Dale. T. 1996. "An Act 'Even of Public Security': Slave Resistance, Social Tensions and the End of the International Slave Trade to Brazil, 1835-1856." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 76: 249-282.

(as well as their own soil), the fear of black domination played a major part in the trade's termination.<sup>5</sup> All of these reasons are verifiable and legitimate, but what became of Brazil after this period is of most interest in relation to this thesis.

#### **After abolition: Angola and Brazil's independence**

The power and influence of the Portuguese on Angola persisted until after the abolition of slavery. Angola did not reach independence until 1975, under the leadership of politician and poet Agostinho Neto. Within this hundred year period, the Angolan economy started to destabilize. Angola and its people were socially, economically and politically burdened by decolonization, civil wars, nationalist or liberation wars, and more. Although the Portuguese faced a number of challenges throughout the slave trading era by foreign competitors, their biggest challenges came from within the colony itself. Internal uprisings and revolts against Portugal and Portuguese domination were major inhibitors to the assimilation and miscegenation of the local African inhabitants to Portuguese language and culture. Nationalism and nation-based independence movements were sparked both by foreign influence (i.e. Brazil) as well as the establishment of the free press in 1842 (Wheeler 1969: 8). Between the year of its establishment and 1899, publications offered knowledge and information to the Angolan people. They also helped instigate the creation of public mobilizations or movements. Wheeler writes, "to the culturally deprived settler with some education, the *assimilado*, and to the ignorant but quick African apprentice, the Luanda press was a godsend, a forum, a sacred device, a focus of grievance" (Wheeler 1969: 9). Whereas some writers

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<sup>5</sup> For more information on this last argument and statistics on the black to white demographics see "An Act 'Even of Public Security': Slave Resistance, Social Tensions, and the End of the International Slave Trade to Brazil 1835-1856" Dale T. Graden *The Hispanic American Historical Review* vol. 76 no. 2 (May 1996) pp. 249 – 282.

argue that the assimilation of the African people to Portuguese culture was a failure (Rodrigues), Wheeler argues that it was one of the key components of change in the nineteenth century. Assimilated, educated black individuals were able to occupy more prestigious roles within the cities; government, military and managerial positions. In this way they were able to use the former colonizer's ideas, language and socio-political systems to their advantage in achieving their eventual independence. This is seen, for example, in the creation of groups such as MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola). This particular group was established in 1956 through a merging of former political parties. It comprised local ethnic groups and individuals of mixed-race and was integral in the war for independence between 1961 and 1975. They reached out to the local peasant populations with promises of social, economic and political reform, as well as a potential social revolution where the Portuguese would no longer dominate. Around the same time other political groups arose in other regions throughout the country; the FNLA (Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola) and UNITA (União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola). Unfortunately, the political bureaucratization of these competing interest groups (all fighting for the power, status, and prestige left behind by the Portuguese) obscured these initial objectives. As David Birmingham states, "Independence was gained through a liberation struggle fought on behalf of the 'worker's' and 'peasants' [...] but in practice has been driven by the circumstances of war to concentrate power in ever fewer hands until it looks like an inverted pyramid balancing precariously on a point consisting of a dozen families" (1988: 14). What started as a struggle for economic and political power through the oppression of Angolan people

appears to have remained that way even after independence, albeit under a different guise.<sup>6</sup>

### **Brazilian Independence**

As mentioned previously, Brazil reached independence in 1822 but the official abolition of slavery did not occur until 1888. What transpired between the time of independence and current day was significant in shaping the political face of the country. During the time of colonization, Brazil transformed from a colony to a kingdom to an empire and finally into a republic (Baranov 2000: 120). Between 1889 and 1930 there came a period named The Old Republic. According to Love, the president would assure the governors of each state that their political party would be elected if, in return, they supported presidential policies in congress as well as future presidential successors (1970: 9-10). Throughout this time period the “democracy” in Brazil was fraught with fraud and deception. Governors utilized individuals in each region to direct the common people how to vote. These individuals were called *coronéis* (coronel in the singular). According to Love, the official term used to denote this manipulation or abuse of liberal democracy is *coronelismo* or “rural bossism” (ibid). *Coronelismo* was a form of domination through intimidation. The local people recognized the perilous repercussions of resisting or opposing the rules of the coronel in their area. The creation and allowance of such a system was due in large part to the patriarchal nature of early twentieth century Brazilian society. Furthermore, as a repercussion of a patriarchal society, of the small population who *could* vote, women were not included. Constitutions drawn in 1891 recognized the importance of educating the local (rural) populations and raising their literacy levels as a

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<sup>6</sup> For more information on the history of the MPLA and their strained relations with FNLA and UNITA during the civil wars for independence see “Angola and Mozambique: Institutionalizing Social Revolution in Africa” by Timothy W. Luke. *The Review of Politics* Vol. 44 No. 3 (July 1982) pg. 413-436.

way of counteracting coronelismo. However, the coronel system of the Old Republic continued to function until the 1930s. Love writes, “urbanization and industrialization [...] coupled with a repudiation of ‘false’ democracy on an ideological level effected a breakdown [...] in Brazil in 1930 (the revolution of Getulio Vargas)” (1970: 15). Between this year and 1964, Brazil underwent another number of changes both politically and socially. Women were enfranchised, the voting age was lowered, and the literacy requirements were also extended. An increase in voter turnout throughout this period indicates an improvement in the participation of educated or knowledgeable individuals as well as a push for a more “true” democratic system<sup>7</sup>. The cities and urban areas were faster and more equipped to provide such literacy programs and opportunities. However, the rural population encompassed a key group in the progress of these changes, albeit at a much slower pace.

Alongside these political changes there were also cultural changes. The miscegenation between the European, indigenous and African peoples created a new identity that we know today as *Brazilian*. After abolition, the African-Brazilians still identified with their African roots, however, they also came to identify with this new identity. This internal conflict forms the basis for African-Brazilian poetry, art and literature.

### **Brief History of Literature in Angola and Brazil**

As mentioned previously, the economic and social crises in Angola in the nineteenth century promoted the creation of the first local printing press in 1845. This early form of writing was often used to express the injustices and concerns of the colonization period. During this era, the authors had the option of writing in the

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<sup>7</sup> “True” meaning a system in which the traditional idea of democracy (one person, one vote) was upheld.



predominant local language, Kimbundu, or in Portuguese. Language, both syntax as well as language choice, became an important element in Angolan writing. In fact, many poets focused on the tensions between these languages by incorporating both into their work for stylistic and symbolic appeal.

The topics varied from history and Angolan ethnography, to bibliographies and translations of radical European writers who were in vogue at that time (MacQueen 1997: 12). Between 1900 and 1960, the themes expanded. The new fashion was to write about a return to an Angolan nationalism, *angolenidade*, or base itself around cultural re-vindication. Such topics were central to revolutionary poets such as Agostinho Neto, Alda Lara, Mario Antonio, Antonio Jacinto, Costa Andrade, and Viriato da Cruz. These individuals sought to reconnect with the African people by revealing the social and economic ills under which they suffered throughout the pre-independence era. They utilized such themes in order to unite the people and raise awareness or *consciousness*, as Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels would say, against their oppressors. Liberation based on a common history and oppression, in other words, became a topic of choice throughout the 50s in 60s. It was not, however, the only way in which Angolan writers chose to show their individuality. The authors began using various techniques to demonstrate the importance of having their own literary style, specifically one that represented Angolan culture or nationality. This desire to recognize a national identity was the basis of many of the movements and revolts against Portuguese rule. According to Russell Hamilton,

The three strains of Angolan nationalism are basically formulated along ethnic lines: the peasant-based movement of the Bakongo people in the north; the Ovimbundo movement of the southern coast and south central highlands; and the Kimbundu movement in and around the city of Luanda [...]. It is from this [latter] intelligentsia that the majority of Angola's writers emerged (1982: 319).

Various writers tried to expand upon and experiment with various writing techniques. In some cases, this would include experimentation with the language in which one wrote. For example, the input of words or special forms of spelling that represented local Angolan vernacular, or the inclusion of chants, symbols and reflections of African rituals. On the other hand, some focused on the memories that were portrayed such as the recollections of traditions or ancient civilizations pre-colonization.

The pre-independence style of literature and poetic writing varied greatly from post-independence. The style throughout the late 1970s onward represented what Hamilton terms as “audaciousness.” By this statement he refers to the sensuality and eroticism that pervades the very essence of their writing. These poets do not detract from some of their predecessors themes of identity, aesthetic originality, etc., but rather “today’s poets, with their greater sense of creative freedom, are apt to play more experimentally off didactic tensions and juxtapositions (e.g. private/public voice, identity/alienation) for stylistic effects, and generally, aesthetic effects” (Hamilton 1995: 88). Regardless of how it is represented, the poets that came into being around the time of independence and thereafter were the forerunners for a new type of literature and art that advocated a return to an Angolan nationality or cultural identity. This will be the main focus of investigation throughout Chapter 3.

### **Brazil**

The earliest type of writing to be found after Brazil’s discovery can be dated back to ecclesiastic work done through the church, but others include notary forms and informal forms such as letter writing. Such writing stayed true to European tradition, belief and religion. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there was a move throughout the Enlightenment period in Brazil that brought national self-awareness,

which would eventually end in political independence (Candido 1968: 35). Candido explains that it was during this period that Brazil's "spiritual profile began to take shape with some clarity, with the configuration of some values which would influence the entire subsequent evolution of [their] society and culture" (1968: 36). From this point onward there was a greater push towards nativistic forms of writing that highlighted cultural syncretism, nature and social realities as experienced by all individuals in Brazil. However, there is a great dispute among literary critics as to whether Brazil had its own *authentic* literary form or if they simply modified pre-established European methods. For example, Daniel and Martins argue that, "the primary characteristic of Brazilian literature is that of being a "sociological literature" reflecting almost directly the society in which it has developed" (1972: 140). Candido, on the other hand, argued that Brazilian literature is actually European based and any cultural fusion from the other two cultures is only seen in folklore (1968: 29). Both men acknowledge that there has always existed a polarization in this literature between old (European) traditions and new ambitions that reflect the social realities of Brazilians. However, Candido states that such ambitions were initiated as a way for Brazil to distinguish itself from the 'mother country', and not necessarily because the nativistic portrayals were true to their origins. Furthermore, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the amount of recognition given to both "native" groups tended to be unequal. Whereas the 'Indian' was first typed as a literary hero, the image of the African was yet to be portrayed in the same light. Little was written in this time period either by or about the former slaves. One could argue that drawing distinctions between the three predominant groups runs contrary to the 'united' uniqueness that Brazilians were trying to achieve. In other words, regardless of whether it

is European, Indian or African-Brazilian, each form of literature falls under the greater rubric of Brazilian Literature. However, Almeida Pereira writes

African-Brazilian Literature written in this system is Brazilian Literature, as well, albeit a literature that expresses a world view specific to African-Brazilians. The dynamics of tensions and contradictions present in this literature help us to understand the attitudes of the authors who either downplayed, denied, or made their ethnic origin central to their identity; clarifies the necessity to denounce social oppression and gives evidence to a new sensibility that aesthetically apprehends the universe of African-Brazilian culture (1995: 876)

The need for this literary incorporation was thought to give voice to a group who had been silenced both physically and spiritually.

Early records of African-Brazilian poetry began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In fact, Oliveira writes that it wasn't until the 1860s that blacks eventually came to replace Indians as fictional characters through literature (2008: 20). This period marked the beginning of various social movements that sought to bring attention to the unequal conditions experienced by African-Brazilians at that time. Furthermore, the movements sought to promote the recognition of Africans as essential elements in the history and culture of Brazil. The poetry constituted part of a movement called *Modernismo Brasileiro*, or Brazilian Modernism. According to Malinoff, the creation of poetry during this period was a direct result of those movements and the sense of community that they created amongst the African people (1980: 43). The most recognized or famous movements included *Clarim* and the *Frente Negra Brasileira (FNB)*. The main objective of both was the identification and acceptance of a unique African individuality and culture. In contrast to other African colonies, specific African tribes or groups were organized into certain regions across the country. This allowed for the maintenance of some of their cultures or traditions (for example, the practice of certain religions, music, dance, language and oral narrative). One of the most famous

poets throughout the 1930s was Lino Guedes. He recognized the importance and necessity of revealing the racial identity of the African-Brazilian in order to encourage outsider acceptance of it. In the 1950s, the *Negritude* movement supported such ideas and also furthered the promotion of uniting the African past with the African-Brazilian present in order to create a new identity. At this point it is necessary to mention that not all black or *mestiço* poets wrote about black issues nor were such issues limited to coloured writers. However, it is from such forms of writing that an African presence was established in Brazilian literature and poetry.

An analysis of African-based poetry from both Angola and Brazil will show how the memory of 'Mother Africa' is maintained in both countries. In addition, it will show how such an idea is used as a reference point for the maintenance of a communal past and shared identity. It is my contention that such memories (or representations of Africa) are based on myth and folklore and not necessarily reflections of a *true* African past. The creation of such a reality provides a superficial and racialized basis for a cultural identity.

## **Chapter 2: The use of memory in collective identity construction**

*Memory is knowledge with an identity-index, it is knowledge about oneself, that is, one's own diachronic identity, be it as an individual or as a member of a family, a generation, a community, a nation, or a cultural and religious tradition* (Assmann 2008: 114).

What separates the human race from other animal species is our ability to recollect and store information gathered over long periods of time. In other words, our ability to *consciously* remember the past. As the aforementioned quote illustrates, memory is both a basis for knowledge and for the creation or building of personal identities and affiliations to greater collective identities. When one is asked the question, “Who or What are you?” what is the initial answer one gives? Why? Also, what memories are utilized to form such identities? Which are omitted? Where or from whom do we get these memories?

Given our current understanding of Angolan and Brazilian history and their correlation to one another through specific historical events, this analysis now turns to memory; how it functions, how it is created and maintained over time, and through what mediums. There are four principal theories that will be used throughout this study. To begin, a brief introduction to the biological functioning of memory will be provided. This foundation will allow for a greater understanding of the other types of memory under investigation in this chapter. The next part will discuss individual and collective memory, with an emphasis on the latter. Reference will be made to cultural memory, which was explained in the introduction. Cultural memory forms a part of collective memory and as such is an integral part of this study.

The next theory that is provided is cultural trauma. Within this section the effects of major traumatic events on group psyche and how it relates to collective memory will

be discussed. Next, how collective memory incorporates and depends on culture as a basis for identity construction will be addressed. Certain themes for analysis under this rubric will include myth and essentialism. From there, the analysis will look at the socio-political functioning of collective identity at a national level as seen through Benedict Anderson's theory of *Imagined Communities*. All of these theories will be utilized with the intent of highlighting the role of literature as a transmitter of cultural memory. More specifically, how such memories are portrayed through oral narratives and poetry, and how they can be used (or manipulated) in the present. I believe a thorough explanation of these various themes and theories will provide an adequate basis for the analysis of poetry throughout the chapter that follows.

#### **Memory as a biological phenomenon**

Everything from how the mind codes memories, where they are stored in the brain, how we remember, what kinds of memory exist, to how the brain retains or retrieves them has been the subject of heated debate and inquiry among scientists up to present day. What is clear from such research is that memory functions from and within a large system of connections or networks where different parts of the brain work cooperatively with one another to produce synaptic signals. Everything from controlling our motor abilities (instinctual reactions and habituations) to emotional responses (i.e. fear) to recalling past events (both long and short term) can be categorized under the rubric of *memory*. Therefore it is important to focus on the most pertinent areas in relation to collective and cultural memory. For the purposes of this thesis, the difference between *implicit* (unconscious, short term) and *explicit* (conscious, long term) memory are the most useful. While the former relates to certain functions such as habituation, sensitization, and classical conditioning (unconscious recall), the latter refers to the

conscious recall of facts and events, spatial memory and long-term potentiation for storage. In other words, explicit memory is deeply embedded in action, perception, and consciousness and requires conscious participation in memory recall (Kandel and Pittenger 1999: 2036-2038). This area remains under investigation as scientists have yet to find tangible answers. The main reason is that biological and neuroscientists have yet to understand both the anatomical system involved with explicit memory and the human ability for conscious recollection.

Other types of sciences, such as the social sciences and physical and cognitive psychology, have tried to look at different areas within memory research. For example, in 1972, psychologist Endel Tulving proposed that explicit memory can be further broken down into episodic (autobiographical) memory for specific events and semantic memory for abstract events. He stated that each human being is going to remember his or her own past in a different way and what they remember will also vary over time. Subsequently, he argues that autobiographical memory eventually shades into semantic memory where one is able to remember an event happening to him or her but cannot recall the details (Kandel and Pittenger 1999: 2028). Markowitsch elaborates upon this idea by stating that in actuality, explicit memory can be broken into five processing systems; procedural, priming, perceptual, semantic, and episodic memory. According to these systems (in their written order), explicit memory is created through motor movement, repetition, object recognition, general facts and emotion (2008: 277-8). How does this information relate to cultural or collective memory? Markowitsch states that cultural memory involves procedural, priming, and semantic processing stages. According to this perspective, the concept of culture is man-made and as such requires neuroscience to look past individual minds and focus, rather, on the social world.



Neurological studies have demonstrated that memories are multiple and multi-functioning entities. In fact, neural networks channel bits and pieces called *engrams* to different places in the brain. Ultimately,

The process of remembering does not involve the “re-appearance” or “reproduction” of an experience in its original form, but the cobbling together of a ‘new’ memory. People do not perceive every aspect of a situation, they do not store every aspect they perceive, and they do not recall every aspect they store (Olick 1999: 340).

The main question in relation to memory, therefore, is ‘How do we know when memory is true or false?’ We also must ask ourselves if it is possible to have *true* memories. According to Meade and Roedigger and their study on memory, false memories are phenomena that occur when people remember events differently from when they actually occurred, or when they remember events that never happened (2002: 1000). What is the purpose of memory if this is the case? For some researchers, the conscious recollection of the past is used as a guiding tool for the achievement of present or future objectives. For example, Robert Prus states,

For memory to be valued “as memory”, there must be some sense of awareness that one is using something from the past to accomplish something in the present. Indeed, without some sense of purpose, activity, and desired outcomes, memory would hold no value to people (2007: 679).

In the cases of Angola and Brazil, memory of a beautiful united ‘Mother Africa’ was in some cases the focal point for social and political cohesion and the creation of a new identity in each respective country. However, representations and explicit memories of this history and ‘homeland’ were far from first-hand into the twentieth century. Therefore, how descendants of past slaves came to express such memories through poetry in this time period is worth investigation. Furthermore, whether or not these memories are truly reflective of a greater collective identity within those countries is integral to this study.

## **2.1 Theories behind Individual (Collected) and Collective Memory**

Since the emergence of memory research in diverse academic fields, many theories have developed surrounding the idea of individual/personal memories versus collective/group memories. The main difficulty one confronts in defining and studying such theories is attempting to separate one from the other. Is collective memory made up of individual memories? Or does the individual obtain memory from the collective? The most significant sociological theory that pertains to this research falls under the framework of *functionalism* and the work of Emile Durkheim and his pupil Maurice Halbwachs. Functionalists take a macro-sociological approach to understanding society and its social institutions. In other words, they look at society as a functioning whole. Individuals make up the various sectors within that society and therefore are integral to its overall functioning; however, no individual part of that society can be understood in isolation from the whole (Wallace and Wolf 2006: 17).

### **Individual Memory**

Supporters of individual memory assert that certain events can only occur and be experienced by individuals. The narrative discourse that is used to transmit a memory can only be derived from one's mind and the mental processes that go into reconstructing that memory. In this sense, the narration of the memory is just as, if not more important than the actual event or experience itself. Van Alphen claims that in the twentieth century, "experiences come to stand for a kind of consciousness that consists of a full, active awareness including feeling as well as thought" and consequently, this subjective testimony is considered to be both true and authentic (1999: 25). According to this line of thought, one cannot discount subjective testimony because it is founded in a personal or an internal experience. Susan Sontag, for example, argues that collective memory is not a remembering but a stipulating "that *this* is important, and *this* is the story about how it

happened” (2003: 85-6). Therefore, in her opinion all memory is and can only be individual because it is irreproducible and will perish along with the individual.

In addition, this theory asserts that individual memories provide a basis for collective or group memory. Olick refers to individual memory as *collected memory*. He claims that the fundamental presumption is that individuals are central to the formation of memory – they alone are able to remember and, as such, provide the memories to be commemorated collectively. Accordingly, they are also central to the processes of forgetting. Ultimately *collected memory* seeks to reify the individual and see any collective outcomes as aggregated individual processes (1999: 339).

### **Collective Memory**

The term collective memory, or *memoire collective* (in its original French), was coined by Maurice Halbwachs. It refers to the idea that collectivities themselves can have memories just as they can have their own identities independent of the aggregation of individual memories. This can be attributed to the belief that individual memories can only represent fragments of a “whole” memory, which is found in collective representation. Memory, for Halbwachs, is based on how a collectivity of minds work within a society, and therefore the collective recollection is what then makes those memories “true” (Marcel and Mucchielli 2008: 142). In support of Halbwachs, Olick explains that, “there are clearly demonstrable long-term structures to what societies remember or commemorate that are stubbornly impervious to the efforts of individuals to escape them” (1999: 342). In the case of institutions, some value certain histories over others, which may account for the imbalances witnessed in history books in past centuries. It may also account for the emerging need to recognize other histories that may have been unvoiced or “silenced” by the powerful majority. “Without such an approach”,

Olick argues, “we are both unable to provide good explanations of mythology, tradition, heritage, and the like either as forms or in particular, as well as risk reifying the individual” (ibid). So what does collective memory entail exactly? It is the recollection of a shared past which is transferred through future generations as something to be revered, commemorated and officially sanctioned through ritual. Furthermore, it unifies a group over space and time by giving them a narrative or story to base their identity on. As a result, this narrative gives each individual a sense of belonging to that collective. These stories are fluid over geographical place and time and therefore have the ability to spiritually reunite isolated individuals with the collective (Eyerman 2004: 161). Halbwachs argues that memory can only be found within a group, not the individual, because the individual derives from the collective. There are two fundamental reasons behind this thinking. Firstly, because it is impossible for an individual to remember anything in a coherent, persistent fashion outside of any group context, and secondly, because in accordance with the former argument, groups also share publicly articulated images of collective pasts (Olick 2008: 155). Eyerman explains Halbwachs’s logic best by stating that only the collective has the ability to become aware of itself through continuous reflection and recreation of shared memories (2001: 6).

Functionalists also make a distinction between what they call collective memory and what is traditionally known as history. The biggest difference being that whereas the former is regarded as fluid and constantly changing, the latter is associated with social facts, events, with a fixed, single form of remembrance. This distinction is best explained by Halbwachs.

Collective memory differs in at least two respects. It is a current of continuous thought whose continuity is not at all artificial, for it retains from the past only what still lives or is capable of living in the consciousness of the groups keeping the memory alive. By definition it does

not exceed the boundaries of this group. History divides the sequence of centuries into periods [...] it gives the impression that everything – the interplay of interests, general orientations, modes of studying men and events, traditions, and perspectives – is transformed from one period to another (in “Theories of Memory” 2007: 140).

Therefore, each society and each group within society is going to have different conceptions of history and memory, which renders it malleable over both space and time. If we take, for example, the case of Angola, this division in collective memories would be seen in how each individual group perceived and experienced the slave trade. What the Europeans believed, witnessed, and experienced was far different from the African people. Therefore, there are several histories of that country as oppose to simply one. History would consist of dates, facts, numbers, and at the same time exclude any shared narratives derived first-hand from those who participated in the creation of that memory. Furthermore, memory has the ability of outliving generations in that each successive one will interpret it according to what they are experiencing in the present. This leaves the metaphoric door open to both remembering and forgetting. What will be remembered or forgotten is a direct result of negotiation and decision-making amongst the collective, resulting in a general consensus.

Collective memory is applicable to this study for it shows how important the maintenance of a communal history or “story” is to a society and its members. More specifically, it will be used as a way of demonstrating how cultural (in this case African) memory has played a role in the formation of Angolan and African-Brazilian identities throughout the mid to late twentieth century. It also brings into question how and through what mediums such memories are maintained. Correspondingly, it provides some insight into what parts of that memory have been forgotten (or omitted). Most importantly, collective memory is based around culture and, as such, a society’s identity is intimately

tied to how and what memories their identity will be based upon. Cultural memory therefore looks at the conditions and social structures that groups use to connect themselves to an objectified supply of cultural representations available in diverse forms (Harth 2008: 91). These forms may be through physical structures (monuments, museums) or forms of art (literature, visual art, oral narratives). However, for some theorists, the most effective way of understanding how some societies form their identities is through the theory of trauma.

## **2.2 Cultural trauma theory: The relevance of the transatlantic slave trade on the African psyche**

Typically when one thinks of trauma or a traumatic event they think of the physical or psychological/emotional trauma that an individual experiences. However, Ron Eyerman defines another type of trauma that directly coincides with the feeling felt by a group of individuals who have a shared past or experience; *cultural trauma*. He defines this term for the purpose of obtaining a better understanding of the creation of African-American identity as a result of slavery; the existence of and the act of enslavement, as well as the history of racial inequality in the United States of America. Eyerman defines cultural trauma as follows;

Cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion. In this sense, the trauma *need not be necessarily felt by everyone in the community or experienced directly by any or all*. While it may be necessary to establish some event as the significant “cause”, its traumatic meaning must be established and accepted, which requires time, as well as mediation and representation (2001: 2; emphasis added).

Although he uses this term to discuss the impact of slavery on African-Americans, this particular theory provides an extremely valuable basis for comparison in the study of Angolans (post-independence) and especially African-Brazilians. As discussed

previously, the idea of a collective memory refers to a shared memory of a past experienced by members of a specific group. Cultural trauma theory highlights an important aspect behind collective memory which states that not all members of that group need to have experienced or directly shared trauma for it to be a part of their identity. The narratives or memories that are transmitted through each successive generation have the ability to awaken internal emotions or feelings about the historical traumatic event that impacted their ancestors. As a result, they feel even more attached to that history and to others that share it. Therefore, particular memories become part of the culture of the collective and protected by tradition.

Cultural trauma also involves an element of power. Power typically belongs to those groups (such as political elites, mass media, etc.) who have the ability to select which memories are most representative and which are to be forgotten. However, the narrative or discourse that is formed through cultural trauma theory is not considered to be myth. Eyerman explains that these particular memories lack “the all-embracing and ontological scope with which myth is usually associated [...] In all cases, however [they are] powerful in the sense of emotionally compelling” (2004: 163). In other words, the historical trauma may take on a type of discourse or narrative within that collective memory however, it is not considered to be a glorified account. This does not mean that the narrative is always negative or used for negative purposes. Even though trauma normally involves dramatic, negative reactions, in the case of cultural trauma theory the negative can be used for positive purposes. This idea coincides with Prus’ earlier quotation regarding the functionality of memories and their ability to reconcile certain present or future needs. Such objectives, therefore, could come in the form of independence movements, rebellion, human rights movements or a cultural revindication.

Cultural trauma theory is relevant to the study of Angola and Brazil due to the extremely traumatic event that linked them; the slave trade. This theory will look at the impact this event had on the African psyche and how that memory has been passed down to each generation since its emancipation. Just as Eyerman argues that it is responsible to a large degree for the creation of an African-American identity, this theory will also look at how it may (or may not have) contributed to the creation of a post-independent Angolan and African-Brazilian identity.

### **2.3 Cultural/Collective Identity Theory**

Marx once stated that memory provides individuals and collectives with a cognitive map, helping orient who they are, why they are here and where they are going. Therefore, memory is intimately and unequivocally tied to the creation of both a personal and collective identity (Eyerman 2004: 161). Theories behind identity construction began with the well known sociological theorists Mead and Cooley. Individual identity was the main area of interest before the more recent transition into collective identity. It is within the former area of investigation that Mead and his followers are most recognized for their theories behind the creation of the self or the “me”. These theories gained popularity throughout the 1970s due to their microsociological approach but lost ground into the 1980s with the emergence of a macrosociological “collective” identity. Cultural or collective identity theories are based on the idea of the “we-ness” of a group. Cerulo states that this conception essentially stresses the similarities and/or shared attributes of its members (1997: 386). Other individuals characterize it as a “unity of individuals, events and ideas through time and space” and positioned in this time and space “are group’s perceptions of their distinctiveness from other groups, boundaries between members and non-members, appropriate activities, practices and rituals, and interpretative



frameworks (Gongaware 2003: 486). Early work that stressed this concept included work by Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and Max Weber, but many others within both the social sciences and the humanities have followed since.

Collective identity theory has been studied from sociological, psychological and political perspectives by looking at such actions or events as social movements, rebellions and other group mobilizations. However, it can also be found within literature, particularly narratives. As was mentioned previously, individuals will attach or affiliate themselves to certain groups through symbols, forms of art and other sites of memory. It is through these various mediums that these memories are transmitted or maintained, and subsequently where individuals establish or affirm their collective identities. Eyerman claims that “both narrative and discourse have in common that they are framing structures which include and exclude, voice and silence, conditioning what can be seen and said and by whom” (2004: 162). Therefore, just as the collective negotiates what memories are to be remembered or forgotten, narratives provide the framework for the outcomes of such decisions. As such, a thorough examination of narratives provides insight into the processes of both collective identity and collective memory

### **Myth**

Myths have always been considered integral aspects of human life. They constitute part of our language and our history by teaching future generations lessons from the past and sharing the values, experiences and traditions of particular communities. However, despite its importance, myth should not be understood as being analogous with history or historical fact. Smith states,

Myth exaggerates, dramatizes and reinterprets facts. It turns the latter into a narrative recounted in dramatic form, and this is part of its wide appeal. For myths *are* often widely believed, and though their components change, they generally exhibit certain basic

forms. They generally relate present needs to future hopes through a reference, more or less elaborate, to the past (1988: 2).

Myths tend to refer back to a state of affairs or a set of customs that often took place in a distant past. However, that past is then reconstituted as a “pristine and golden” age whereby the myth serves to relate or legitimate both present and/or future purposes (ibid). Loyalty to these myths provides leaders of emerging states with a clearly defined idea of a past collective identity with which its followers will identify. The result is ultimately “inventions” of new states based on these conceptions.

### **Essentialism**

Certain critics of collective identity theories stress that there is a tendency within this theoretical framework to *essentialize* certain features of a particular culture, which inevitably leads to misrepresentations and generalizations. Essentialism means that the core features or attributes of a collective’s members are accepted as the unique property of that group. For example, by explaining what it means to be African-American one could essentialize certain customs or attributes of their culture as representative of all African-Americans or of Africa in general. Such generalizations tend to overlook the fact that Africa is not a country and that there exists an array of nations, people and cultures.

Collective identity theory is important to this thesis as it reveals the psychological and social motivations behind the existence of collectivities. Furthermore, it also aids in a greater understanding behind the creation of nations and nationalism. It not only demonstrates how individuals come to see themselves as part of a group but also their rationalizations for its existence, who can be included/excluded, and what essential ties link those group members together. Myth and Essentialism are integral to our understanding of Collective Identity theory because the former is used as a vital historical

and cultural learning tool and the latter shows how such myths can be misused. Collective identity theory will be argued against by using the following theory by Benedict Anderson.

#### 2.4 *Imagined Communities Theory*

Benedict Anderson is the founder of the theory “imagined communities” and the creation of nations. He begins his analysis by questioning the origins of nations and the subsequent nationalisms that have become attached to them. This theory questions our understanding of community on a national level as well as the authenticity of one’s attachment to their community. The previous themes of memory and identity are intimately tied to this theory as it takes the previously mentioned concepts and helps to extrapolate them from identity at a group level to a national level.

Anderson uses the term “imagined (political) community” to denote his understanding or perception of a *nation*. He claims that it is both inherently limited as well as sovereign. It is imagined as *limited* because regardless of their nation’s size, human beings recognize that other nations lie beyond its borders. It is imagined as *sovereign* because the concept evolved out of a time when Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of universal religion. Finally, a nation is imagined as a *community* because “even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each live the image of their communion” (1983: 6-7). In other words, modern day individuals of “nations” assume that everyone with similar origins, religion, or place of birth will be the same or share the same values, feelings and attitudes towards that “community.” In the case of Canada, this theory would argue that an individual in Prince Edward Island (P.E.I.) would feel a connection or sense of communion with an individual from British Columbia (B.C) even

if they never meet one another or even traveled to the other's province. Anderson states that in this case any reality within the nation (i.e. inequality, exploitation or social differences) is overlooked in favour of a deeper "horizontal comradeship" where people feel such an affinity towards the community that they are willing to die for such conceptions or imaginings (ibid: 7). In the days of globalization and improving technology, literature and print-capitalism have provided a significant medium for strengthening each individual's imagined ties to one another. In fact, Anderson asserts that the cultural products of nationalism are poetry, prose fiction, music and other forms of art because they enabled individuals to imagine something larger and greater than their immediate communities (1983: 141). Cultural and artistic mediums are the tools of everyday people and as such assume a prominent position in the mobilization of individuals into collectives.

This theory is integral to the analysis of African-based poetry from Angola and Brazil as it will demonstrate the significance of 'Mother Africa' as a symbolic tool that attempts to unite individuals of African descent based on perceived common interests and primordial ties. It will be argued that this sense of communion is based on both false and socially constructed pretenses such as skin colour, place of origin and common history. 'Mother Africa' provides the fiction of an imagined community that is founded upon black on black love. Even though it itself is not a nation, it depicts a homeland or a return to a history that once belonged to a united people. This conception will be analyzed and criticized with the objective of highlighting its essentialist nature. It is not this author's intent to state that collective memories, identities or communities do not exist, but rather to show how such conceptions can be manipulated by individuals to serve certain purposes. These purposes are not always negative, but we must recognize that human

beings have created these notions and as such hold the power to use them as they deem necessary.

### Chapter 3: Analysis of Angolan and Brazilian Poetry

The popular poetic styles and trends in Angola and Brazil throughout the twentieth century were strongly impacted by significant social movements that were simultaneously taking place in each respective country. As outlined previously in the historical overview, the twentieth century was characterized by social revolts and independence movements that sought to recognize and reaffirm the African significance in the creation of both countries. They also sought to deconstruct the eminent racial stereotypes and prejudices that consigned Africans to subservient political and social positions within emerging modern Angolan and Brazilian societies. For example, in the case of Brazil the prevalence of a myth of *racial democracy* persisted throughout the slave trade into the post-abolition era, which deemed individuals of colour biologically and socially inferior to the dominant white races. Such beliefs encouraged the practice of what is known as *embranquecimento*, which literally translates as the “whitening” of black individuals through miscegenation or inter-racial mixing with fair (European) Brazilians. This practice was not only encouraged by white or fair-skinned Brazilians but also came to be internalized by the black populations as a way to improve their socio-economic status. Therefore, particular social movements within Angola and Brazil throughout this time period were crucial for the raising of a collective consciousness that fought to reestablish a lost sense of pride and identity among the African people. Consequently, they were also integral to the formation of collective identities. As indicated in the previous chapters, these identities are believed to be constructed out of time-honoured traditions, common histories and ethnic origins. However, this author submits that the identities were formed out of necessity and as such drew on such myths in order to create an illusionary collective identity that intended to unify the African

populations against a common colonizing oppressor. Oliveira concurs with such statements arguing that identities interact to create a transitory sense of unity which are forged by the interaction among social actors. He states, “This constitutes an infinite process that does not lead to a fixed result or “closure”, since the interchangeable identities vary over time” (2008: 16-17). The meanings ascribed to that identity will vary over time according to the memories deemed most representative as well as the objectives such memories seek to attain. Therefore, as will be demonstrated, the search for a collective identity through the suggestion of a ‘Mother Africa’ fulfilled the purpose of creating an imagined community that gave individuals of African origin purpose, belonging, and social and political cohesion.

### **3.1 Angola: A Return to Africa**

Russell Hamilton identifies prominent themes within Angolan poetry leading up to and during the independence era. Such themes included evocation and invocation, identity, fraternity and alienation, and sounds, rhythm and spirit. He states, “Rare indeed is the modern Angolan poet who has not raised his or her voice to invoke the land, or Mother Africa, or even, in incantatory tones, black men of the world” (1975: 74). The existence of a traditional Angolan poetry was made possible by the publication of literary-cultural reviews. One of the most important reviews to emerge throughout the 1950s was called *Mensagem* (the message). Its initial publication called out to all Angolans who wished to submit their poetry or prose with the purpose of unveiling themes or motifs central to Angola. The target contributors were typically those individuals (black, white, or *mestiço*) from urban areas who had received secondary or post-secondary educations. It had a regionalist focus with the objective of demonstrating authentic *Angolanness* through literature. Throughout the 1960s, historically important

poets, such as Agostinho Neto and Viriato da Cruz, contributed works with strong nationalist overtones to the issue. Furthermore, as mentioned throughout the historical overview, such contributions also incorporated stylistic and linguistic techniques through the incorporation of local Angolan vernaculars. One poet especially known for this was Mario de Andrade.

The other review to display such themes and messages was called *Cultura* (culture). According to Russell Hamilton, “the African presence became a major concern of *Cultura*’s organizers, as evidenced in the eighth issue, which declares that no Angolan can repudiate his land’s African characteristics, the vestiges of which every Angolan must work to salvage” (1975: 67). It is stated that both reviews arose out of a realization that Angola’s encroaching “whiteness” was threatening the survival of African cultures in both the urban centres as well as the local *musseques*. Such a call for action came through these aforementioned literary reviews as a way of reaching out to all Angolans in order to raise their cultural and collective consciousness. From the 1950s onward, Hamilton states that

The evocation of childhood innocence and ancestral rites, the invocation of Mother Africa, the insistence on African cultural values, and the exposure of the oppression of the black masses carried an undeniable note of protest that would grow in intensity as the fateful year of 1961 approached (1975: 67)<sup>8</sup>.

Therefore, the present themes under investigation, especially Mother Africa, are not unique and have been studied to a great extent. However, in contrast with other analyses this “return” to Africa through poetry will be critically analyzed to show the

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<sup>8</sup> This date is in reference to the beginning of the fourteen year war for independence, which as stated earlier, was not achieved until 1975. According to Hamilton, after 1961 Angola witnessed both a forced and voluntary exile of key figures in the social movement (Agostinho Neto, Mario de Andrade, Antonio Jacinto, Antonio Cardoso, and Viriato da Cruz), which retarded the development of poetry of Angola after that point in time (1975: 73).



fictional nature of collective (national) identities based on embellished (or socially constructed) memories of the past.

### 3.1.1 'Mother Africa' through the Land and Cultural Symbols

#### Agostinho Neto

First president and renowned Angolan poet Agostinho Neto is recognized for the themes of “return” and remembrance of a purely African way of life. As a result of the suffering endured by Angolan people both individually and/or collectively throughout the slaving period, there remains for Neto an anxiety to reconnect with an ancient past through the land as it was prior to the conquest. Furthermore, the memory that he conveys promotes the reconstruction of an Angolan unity and identity through the recognition of this common lineage and history. Such representations of an African collective memory are seen through his poem *Havemos de voltar* (We shall return):

To the freshness of the fig tree  
                   To our legends  
                   Our rhythms and fires  
                   We shall return  
 To marimbas and finger piano  
                   To our carnival  
                   We shall return  
 To the beautiful Angolan homeland,  
 Our land, our mother, we shall return

(Translated by Wolfers 1979: 250)

These images correspond to a time prior to the historic oppression and domination of Black Angolans throughout the slaving era. He describes the richness of the land, the traditions and cultural customs such as song (particularly drum beat) and dance. Most evidently he refers to Angola as a “homeland” and in the last verse as “mother.” This is understood as a reference to Mother Africa. He identifies a variety of different aspects of a perceived Angolan culture that (presumably) existed before the Portuguese conquest.

This author is not stating that such customs and traditions *did not* exist but rather questions the motives behind addressing them in this fashion. By classifying each cultural element under the terminology of “our” it conjures up an image of a collective identity that all individuals from that place of origin would share. Similarly the name of the poem itself “we shall return” and the constant reference to “we” solidifies this assumption. Irene Marqués believes that such symbols were used for the purpose of mobilizing the Angolan peoples. In her analysis of “We Shall Return” she explains,

Such direct call to action is often coupled with very strong positive and colourful images symbolizing the repossession of the land by the Angolans and the regaining of a lost identity and dignity (Marqués 2003: 7).

Marqués interprets such symbols as representing a “loss” of identity. However, the term “lost identity” presumes that there was an established identity there to begin with. The identity that Neto is attempting to construct could also be understood as a new interpretation of the past that seeks to justify a future objective; revindication. Take into consideration, for example, the difficulty in ascertaining whether or not these poetic images are in fact accurate portrayals and/or representations of the entire Angolan population or if they are representative of a specific tribe. As mentioned in the history section, there was a variety of tribes in existence in Angola both during and after the conquest. Can it be assumed through his language “we shall return” that all Angolans, regardless of ancestral tribe, lineage, or class will come to identify with each other? Similarly, was there a united Angola before the conquest to where present day black Angolans could return? The latter question is impossible to answer due to a sheer lack of information throughout that time period. However, what can be inferred from this poem is that Neto utilizes the most integral, memorable elements of Angolan culture that will resonate in the minds of its black inhabitants; especially the land. Such themes are

glorified in order to preserve a living memory to be proud of and appreciated among those black populations. Benedict Anderson would state that Neto's attempt is a perfect example of how individuals come to create imagined communities. According to his theory, communities are distinguished not by their falsity or genuineness but by the style in which they are imagined (1983: 6). Also, he argues that nations inspire love (1983: 141). This love is evident through Neto's linguistic delivery and nostalgic appreciation of Mother Africa. The collective memory within "we shall return" therefore is intended to awaken the same sort of love in its audience.

A second poem that seeks to evoke emotion through remembrance of the land is titled *As Terras Sentidas* (The Grieved Lands). In this particular poem Neto not only identifies a common past, but seeks to show how the essence of Angola pervades each and every black Angolan through their entire being. He writes,

The grieved lands of Africa  
 In the tearful woes of ancient and modern slave  
 In the degrading sweat of the impure *batuque*<sup>9</sup>  
 Of other seas  
 Grieved [...]  
 The grieved lands of Africa  
 Alive  
 In themselves and within us alive  
 They bubble up in dreams  
 Decked with dances by baobabs over balances [...]  
 Even the corpses thrown up by the Atlantic  
 In putrid offerings of incoherence and death  
 And in the clearness of rivers  
 They live [...]  
 The grieved lands of Africa  
 Because we are living  
 And are imperishable particles  
 Of the grieved lands of Africa

(translation by Wolfers 1979: 13)

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<sup>9</sup> *Batuque* is an Afro-Portuguese term for a popular type of dance.

Hamilton writes that in this particular poem “polysyllabic words in long lines and the prevalence of sibilant sounds create a mood of melancholy accompanied by a distant but persistent drum cadence” (1975: 99). Therefore, we see a repetition in his theme of the drums where (in this case) the rhythm of the poem itself emits a sense of tribalism or nativism. Most obvious is the melancholic representation of the collective history as seen through the reference to both ancient and modern slave, the innumerable lives lost to the Atlantic, and even the “impure dance of other seas”, which tells of the sexual liaisons between slave and slave owner. One element that is apparent in both poems is the idea of “Africa” existing within each Angolan as if it were an inborn or natural entity. He states that these memories re-surface through dreams and stay alive because they live on through future generations.

To give a parallel example, in the case of the United States Ron Eyerman states that slavery (and the reconstruction of it in the present) was hailed by African-Americans as the origins of a distinctive African-American aesthetic. He argues that “slavery, not as an institution or experience but as a point of origin in a common past, would ground the formation of a black community” (2001: 16). However, one must ask at what point does that past become so distant that its successive generations cease to identify with it? In his article “The Politics of Ethnic Identity Construction” Anton Allahar states that “the issue of identity or identity formation is simultaneously psychological and political [...] one does not always see oneself as others do” (2001: 197). In other words, certain cultural, physical or ancestral attributes will not predetermine how one comes to see him or herself in relations to others. In reference to Neto’s all-encompassing “we” and his allusion to Mother Africa, it is clear that his assertion that all of those who come from that continent and share that history can be part of that “community” essentializes what it means to be

African. It cannot be assumed that the presented image of Mother Africa and the belief in its inherent existence within African-born individuals will be shared by all. Schwartz states that, “the basic fact of collective memory is that different individuals and generations interpret and commemorate the same event differently” (2005: 254). In other words, there will always be those individuals who rely on that contrived collective memory as a starting point for the creation of both collective and individual identities, and those who do not.

### **Alda Lara**

Alda Lara is unique from other poets not only because she is female but also because she is a white poet from the city of Benguela. Despite her skin colour, she promotes the strength of the Angolan community through the image of Mother Africa. She believes in the comradeship of *all* Angolans and the necessity to return to tradition. She also promotes the importance of primordialism, which like collective identity theory encourages “a corporate sentiment of oneness” (Allahar 2001: 201 quoting Geertz p. 260). Allahar understands the incorporation of oneness to mean a shared place or geographical space, common ancestors, common culture, language and religion (ibid). In her poem, *Rumo* (Direction) Lara depicts such affiliations.

It is time, comrade!  
Let us go together...  
Far off, the Land calls to us,  
And no one can resist the voice  
Of the Land!...

On Her,  
The same scalding sun has burned us  
The same sad moon has caressed us,  
And if you are black,  
And I am white,  
The same Land has engendered us!

(Translated by Hamilton 1975: 82)

Mother Africa is depicted here once again through the land and through a natural connection that should be felt between those individuals who derived from it. The sheer essence of these natural ties goes far deeper than skin colour. Mother Africa bore the Angolan people, raised them, nurtured them, and for this reason calls them to her bosom as does a real mother to her children. Hamilton believes that “white Angolans, through their identification with the land of birth or adoption, reach out to understand the African’s humanity” (1975: 81). Lara reaches out in order to bridge the gap between black and white and also impact her audience on a spiritual level that glorifies and celebrates Mother Africa to the point of uniting all Africans. Once again we see the use of the terminology “we” and “us” that was used similarly in the poetry of Agostinho Neto thereby accentuating the idea of cohesion and unity. Allahar states that this tie (natural tie) itself assumes a sacred quality so that members feel a “spiritual communion with their fellow members even if they do not know them directly” (2001: 201). Following this idea of spiritual and social imaginings, Benedict Anderson explains that the nature of political love for the nation is attributed to language, and as such can be deciphered through the words chosen to represent it. He explains that both idioms “motherland” and “home” denote something that is naturally tied (1983: 143). He states,

In everything ‘natural’ there is always something unchosen. In this way, nation-ness is assimilated to skin-colour, gender, parentage and birth-era [...] precisely because such ties are not chosen, they have about them a halo of disinterestedness (ibid).

Therefore, the natural tie that Lara envisions among her Angolan comrades is founded in all aspects of their being as well as physical geographic place of origin. She attempts to elicit an emotional response from her audience through her choice in vocabulary and the

“floating signifiers”<sup>10</sup> that are attached to them. The idea of the nation as being the primary birthplace for a collective identity is based on false notions of a collective memory and a glorified allegiance to a preconceived notion of home.

### 3.1.2 ‘Mother Africa’ through Myth, Tradition and Ancestral Past

#### Mário António

Mário António was a major literary influence during the same time period as Neto. He was also a part of a generation of poets categorized under the “Let’s Discover Angola” framework, whose main objective was the search for identity. Angola was not the only colony that saw a surge in this particular theme. Various authors from other colonies such as Mozambique, Cape Verde and São Tomé also used the symbol of Mother Africa as a personification of the land. Other symbols that tended to denote the significance of Mother Africa appeared through female relatives, grandmothers or any reference to black female figures. Hamilton states that these symbols served as “poetic points of contact” with a lost identity, and as such are at the core of an African ancestralism (1975: 80). Such symbols are seen in one of António’s earlier poems *Avó Negra* (Black Grandmother).

Little grandmother, sometimes,  
I hear voices  
The whisper yearningly  
Of your old village  
Of the hut where you were born  
Of the clamor of burial rites  
Of the tempting lies of the witch doctor  
Of the dreams of the bride-price

<sup>10</sup> Stuart Hall claims a “floating signifier” is a social construct that is constantly changing. For example, “race” serves as a sort of symbolic text. It is read subjectively by individuals who, from their reading of it, will generate different interpretations and assumptions. These interpretations are based on ideological concepts created over time in order to give it meaning (Allahar 2008, lecture). Cultural symbols such as drums, rituals, and land or the nation itself can also be understood in this fashion.

That you knew you deserved  
 And I think  
 If you could  
 Maybe you would relive  
 The old traditions

(Translated by Hamilton 1975: 81)

António uses the image of his grandmother as a portal through which he attempts to reconnect with an ancient past. It could be argued that the symbol of ‘grandmother’ seeks to evoke a sense of community or family for his audience. Furthermore, his reference to past customs reaffirms a yearning to return to old ways or traditions that were native to certain Angolan tribes. In this poem he does not use the same imagery and allusion to a collective identity the way Agostinho Neto did; however, his stylistic portrayals seek to recapture an essence of what it means to be Angolan. Hamilton explains that Angolan poetry throughout this time period has its foundation in oral tradition. From this he concludes “the traditional poetry of the peoples of Angola cannot be revived in any other than a thematic, stylistic, and philosophical way and [...] to the extent that oral tradition is preserved in Lusophone writing, both (Mario) António and Neto have succeeded” (71). Therefore, in reference to this particular author Hamilton would argue António is using poetry as a means of transmitting the same stories and myths that are characteristic of oral narrative. Just as the elders of a village were responsible for educating the young, António uses the life of his grandmother and the customs she practiced in this same way. However, Schwartz states that, “much of what Westerners call ancestor worship exemplifies [a] profound sense of debt, but the obligation involves neither true worship nor attitudes towards one’s ancestors; it is an ‘avowal of man’s indebtedness to all that has gone before’” (2005: 264). According to this statement, the memories and symbols that António provides for his audience are based on indebtedness to his ancestors and the



traditions that were valued. Such images are used for the purposes of reconstructing what is considered to be a lost (collective) identity. As a result, they provide a false sense of unity for those who identify with them.

### **Antonio Jacinto**

Jacinto was a famous white Angolan poet that broke away from a European literary tradition in order to connect with Africa. Like Lara, Jacinto tried to ignore the colour of his skin as an indicator of his identity. Instead, his writing sought to invoke the reality of social ills experienced by the coloured masses in Angola. According to Niyi Osundare, Jacinto's poetry all has a common aim: "the restoration of the Angolan soul, of the integrity of its languages and culture, the rehabilitation of its natural splendor, the foundation of a nation diverse but united, of human beings who respect one another" (2003: 34). As has been the case in the previous examples, Jacinto utilizes fundamental symbols associated with Africa as clear illustrations of his total identification with her. He exemplifies such ideas through his poem *El ritmo do Tomtom* (The Rhythm of the Tomtom):

The rhythm of the tomtom does not beat in my blood  
                                     Nor in my skin  
                                     Nor in my skin  
       The rhythm of the tomtom beats in my heart  
                                     In my heart  
                                     In my heart

(Osundare 2003: 35)

Unlike the previous poems that either directly referred to or subtly alluded to Africa living in their blood, skin or soul, Jacinto now refers to it as beating in his heart. Osundare writes in reference to this poem, "Here tomtom is rhythm, is life. It transcends the pigmentational accident of the skin so irrationally touted by racists; it beats in the

heart, the very foundation of life” (2003: 35). In other words, Jacinto’s allusion to Africa beating in his heart condemns the black-white division characteristic of Angola during this time period. The same essence of being “African” conveyed in Neto’s poetry and once again in the comradeship of Lara’s poem is evoked through Jacinto’s words. In other words, a return to Angola in this case is a return to solidarity among all Angolans despite difference in skin tone. It presupposes a united Africa that may or may not have existed previously. Furthermore, such images seek to create a sense of belonging and allegiance to both the nation and the continent as a whole.

#### **Aires de Almeida Santos**

Aires de Almeida Santos calls for a return of all of his “brothers” who were stolen from Africa. In his stylistic portrayals he incorporates words that have no Portuguese translation in order to evoke a sense of artistic authenticity, which only those from Africa (or Angola) would appreciate. The English translation of the poem is called *When my brothers come home*.

When my mother shall see my brothers  
 And embrace them  
 We’ll all go to live  
 On the Catete road  
 And we’ll eat dried fish  
 And drink *Quissangua*  
 Brought from *Bié*  
 And we’ll sleep on grass matting  
 Soothed by the light wind  
 Blowing on *Musseque* [...]  
 Oh, when my mother shall see  
 My brothers and embrace them  
 It will be small, our well-built house  
 (although I have millions of brothers)  
 When my mother shall see my brothers  
 And embrace them  
 We’ll go and sweep  
 Away the ashes of those who went before

(Chipasula 1985: 39)

This poem discusses a return in the same light as Neto and António by referring to past customs or traditions as a way of reconstructing identity. The use of the various local vernacular words such as “Quissangua” and “Bié” fulfills the same objective as the symbols of “mother” and “brother”, which have provided a constant theme throughout the other poems. In this last poem what is most evident is Almeida Santos’ discussion on exactly how his “brothers” will behave upon returning to the land; eating a traditional food, drinking a typical drink, “sweeping” away the pain of the past, etc. This imagery attempts to demonstrate how Angolans will utilize traditions of the past in order to reestablish a lost sense of identity. In addition, Almeida Santos’ description of how the mother will embrace her millions of sons upon their return depicts an imagery of an all-embracing love that Mother Africa has for her children. Mother Africa, therefore, comes to symbolize black on black love, which as has been discussed, is a fiction created by black individuals who feel that their identities and/or cultures are threatened. Geertz addresses the issue of lost identity as seen through the process by which new states sought independence between the 1940s to late 1960s. He claims that the first stage in the process involves the establishment of nationalist movements where individuals seek to make the state. Once that is accomplished the next stage consists in “defining, or trying to define, a collective subject to whom the actions of the state can be internally connected, in creating, or trying to create, an experiential ‘we’” (Geertz 1973: 240). In order to define this the collectivity first looks to “local mores, established institutions, and the unities of a common experience – to “tradition,” “culture,” “national character,” or even “race” – for the roots of a new identity” (ibid). The dependence on myth, tradition and

an ancestral past all fall under this rubric of identity construction for it was believed that in order to know where they were going the Angolans had to know where they were coming from. In order to accomplish this task through poetry, language as a form of systematized symbols, signs, or gestures with associated meanings, became an essential component for these particular poets. Up until this point the primary focus of this analysis has been on the semantic language that was used by Angolan poets in their poetry. In other words, the symbols and names (i.e. Mother Africa) that were used to achieve a desired effect on their audience. Language, as in the tongue in which these poets spoke and wrote also plays a key role in our understanding of this poetry and as an essential cultural symbol of Africa.

### **3.1.3 'Mother Africa' through Language and Artistic Authenticity**

In the central Angolan cities throughout the twentieth century the majority of renowned poets and prominent writers utilized Portuguese as their main literary form of communication (Fernández de Oliveira 1970: 82). However, it is debatable whether this choice limited or aided the Angolan writers. On the one hand, they were restricted because they felt denied the option of expressing themselves in their native language. Furthermore, it is possible that some of the expressions characteristic of local Angolan vernaculars were lost when translated into Portuguese. On the other hand, the Portuguese language gave poets an advantage by allowing them to enter into the colonizer's "arena". In other words, they had the option of exposing the abuses and prejudices they had experienced through the colonizer's own mother tongue. Most importantly however, it allowed them to connect with the rest of the literary world (both locally and overseas), which was not accessible to them previously. Irene Marqués shares this idea. She says in reference to the poetry of Agostinho Neto and his use of the Portuguese language:

[It] allowed Neto to speak directly with the colonizer and appeal to his/her sense of justice; it allowed him to state his people's right to independence as well as the legitimacy of African culture and its existence long before the arrival of the colonizers (2003: 8-9).

Portuguese was also extremely important for the independence movements of the 1960s and 70s. Hamilton states that the role of this language was to cross ethno-linguistic barriers amongst all of the colonies, not just Angola (1991: 611). Therefore, language and literature provided the ground work and voice for the mobilization of both Angolans and individuals from other countries.

### **Viriato da Cruz**

Many Angolan poets used their bilingualism as a way of reasserting their individuality and Angolan identities. The idea of return in this sense signifies not only a return to a geographic place or traditions, but rather a return to an ancient way of life through the use of language. Some poets experimented with the addition of certain words from their mother language as was seen in the case of Almeida Santos. Others used the incorporation of musical rhythms into the poetry itself. In this way they showed their possession over the poem and its literary uniqueness. Also, it showed their freedom to express themselves in such a way that enabled them to display their memories and the images associated with that culture. For example, Viriato da Cruz wrote a poem in the local creolized language spoken in the *musseques* of Luanda during the 1950s. The poem was written to the rhythm of a popular dance. The intention was for the poem to be sung as oppose to read. It is called *Sô santo* (Sir Santo):

Mauari-ngana Santo  
Dim-dom  
Ual'o banda o calaçala  
Dim-dom  
Chaluto mu muzumbo  
Dim-dom

(Hamilton 1975: 243)

There could be a variety of motivations behind the creation of this poem, one of which being a cultural revindication. The use of rhythms and African language reflects Mother Africa and the ancient customs that still constitute a large part of every day life in some villages. Traditionally, poems written throughout this time period could only be understood by educated individuals, European foreigners or individuals from other colonies. This particular poem is a representation of the African culture that only the local Angolans themselves could understand and appreciate. Memory, in this case, did not have to tell stories or portray symbols of Mother Africa in order to reunite the people. Language also performed that function. This particular representation was utilized to remind Angolans of their individuality or *angoleñidade* (as it would be stated in Portuguese).

Another example by Cruz is written in a mixture between the creolized Kimbundu language and “black” Portuguese (unstandardized Portuguese). He tells the story of two people speaking about the shame they feel when they see young Angolan youth who do not identify with their African heritage or participate in its cultural traditions. At the same time it also subtly condemns the European presence and/or influence on Angolan culture by alluding to certain European habits and customs.

Não sabe?! Todo esse povo pegô um costume novo  
 Que diz qué civrização:  
 Come só pão com chouriço  
 Ou toma café com pão...  
 E diz ainda pru cima,  
 (Hum... mbundo kene muxima...)  
 Que o nosso bom makezú  
 E pra veios como tu.

(Hamilton 1982: 317; emphasis added)

Upon translating this poem, we see a repetition of the use of African rhythms combined with the inclusion of a local Portuguese spoken in the *musseques* (i.e. simplification of words “pra” in stead of the standard “para”, “civrização” instead of “civilização”) and the Kimbundu dialect (i.e. “mbundo kene muxima”). Therefore, we could say that this is also a call for the acknowledgement of an Angolan identity and culture that represents the masses of people outside of the urban centres. It represents the modernity of the cities and the cultural collision between the Angolan past and the European present. This type of poetry was thought to be an important medium through which the consciousness of the African people could be raised and resistance against the Portuguese empire could be initiated. Allahar criticizes such manipulations of primordial-based identities. Primordialism, he states, “holds that group attachment and identity, especially in premodern or traditional societies, are natural; perhaps even biological” (2001: 198). He bases this idea on definitions of primordialism according to theorists Geertz and Weber. Geertz ascertained that,

Congruities of blood, speech and custom [...] are seen to have an ineffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves. One is bound to one’s kinsman, one’s neighbour, one’s fellow believer, ipso facto; as a result not merely of personal affection, practical necessity, common interest, or incurred obligation, but at least in general part by virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to the tie itself (Allahar 2001: 201-2).

Allahar questions the use of a primordial-based identity formation such as village, race or blood and the facility with which it can misconstrue the reality of any disparities (such as poverty, violence) that occur within those nations. In other words, the foundation of the antagonisms experienced during that time period were perceived to be based in a division between races (or cultures); African vs. European, as opposed to a larger, overarching reason such as the emergence of capitalism. Primordialism, in other words, can be

paralleled to racism. Concomitantly, Benedict Anderson argued that the attachments one feels to their village or community can be so strong as to bring people to die for them (1983: 7), and it is precisely this type of identity formation that nurtures political action and mobilization movements. Therefore, the myth of a Mother Africa in this sense is not as obvious as in the prior examples by Neto and António, but rather promotes a perceived distinction between linguistic categories of “us” and “them” (Angolan and European). This inevitably results in the encouragement of the former to stick together through their perceived commonalities.

According to Heidegger, poetry is the foundation which supports history. He also states that our entire human existence is fundamentally poetic. By this he means that poetry is not merely the appearance of culture or an expression of it, but rather provides a medium through which it can be vocalized (1998: 568). Poetry and language, in other words, are intimately connected. He states, “poetry rouses the appearance of the unreal and the dream in the face of the palpable and clamorous reality, in which we believe ourselves at home. And yet in just the reverse manner, what the poet says and undertakes to be, is the real” (1998: 568-9). Therefore, what the poet deems real will be real to both him and his audience. However, there is a danger in this form of cultural revival. The voice that all of these poets wish to raise is one of protest against an oppressor through the manipulation of the past. Furthermore, each one subjectively distorts his views of the past in order to achieve certain goals. Such distortions are part and parcel of an historical understanding since historically based accounts are always determined by the conditions in the present (Schwartz 2005: 256).

Jacinto and Lara are unique from the other poets in the sense that they feel an affiliation to an imagined collective memory that is typically associated with individuals



of African origin. Their individual internal conflict arises from a feeling of isolation from that community due to their skin colour and the history of their ancestors. However, Anderson states that “the nation was conceived in language, not blood, and that one could be ‘invited into’ the imagined community” (1983: 145). Both Jacinto and Lara felt invited into the African Angolan community and as such pledged this allegiance through poetry. This goes to prove how fluid the boundaries of nationalism are and how open the “nation” is to interpretation. If Anderson is correct in his statement, neither Jacinto nor Lara’s nationalist sentiment is stronger nor more legitimate than that of the black Angolan community for the nation itself is built upon language, myth and the desire for cohesion. Schwartz concludes his article on collective memory with a statement by Michael Schudson that states,

People...seek information to arrive at a view. They seek to know what is right, what is true. They seek some kind of direction when they are aimless. They seek in the past some kind of anchor when they are adrift. They seek a source of inspiration when they despair (Schwartz 2005: 268).

It is this type of despair and necessity throughout the pre-independence era that motivated all of these poets to seek out an “anchor” or past that would tie them to their nation and at the same time facilitate a sense of belonging, direction and reconstruction of a new identity.

### 3.2 Brazil: Reconnecting with Africa and the creation of an Afro-Brazilian identity

From the nineteenth century with social Darwinism and the “whitening” propaganda, to twentieth century notions of a “racial democracy”, very few positive references existed for Afro-Brazilians in relation to blackness and what it meant to be black throughout this time period (Oliveira 2008: 5). As a result, the emergence of literature movements and literary-review journals played a major role in counterbalancing overt displays of negativity and discrimination. The *Modernismo* movement was in the forefront throughout the 1920s with *Concretismo* following throughout the 50s. After that time period movements such as *Negritude* played a key role in the shaping of Afro-Brazilian literature. It was primarily due to key social and political transformations throughout the 1970s and 80s that major themes such as ethnic, gender-specific, or racial identities arose, which symbolized “group’s efforts to elaborate a defensive collective identity against the exclusionary practices of society (Oliveira 2008: 19).

Similar to the case of Angola, identity and identity construction has become a major theme for Afro-Brazilians as a direct result of their racially oppressive history. As stated by Oliveira,

Afro-Brazilian intellectuals have sought to reconstruct a political imagery that would enable blacks to envision themselves within a historical, cultural and political framework. They place themselves within a macro experience (liberation wars in Africa) and a micro scenario (the re-emergence of social movements in Brazil), thus allowing themselves to actively participate in the construction of their identities (ibid).

Therefore, as was seen in the Angolan examples, the use of cultural myth as well as collective “African” memory played a dominant role in the construction of a unique Afro-Brazilian identity. It has also played a dominant role in raising a collective consciousness among the black and *mestiço* Brazilian population. As in the case of Angola, it will be

argued that this identity is constructed for the purposes of political and social cohesion among the Afro-Brazilian people, and as such, manipulates histories of the past to fulfill certain present (and/or future) agendas of other ethnic political entrepreneurs.

### 3.2.1 Mother Africa in the Heart, Blood, Soul and Race

#### Solano Trindade and Oswaldo de Camargo

Trindade was a major influence in the *Negritude* movement in Brazil. While Negritude had already gained momentum in other parts of the world, it did not reach Brazil until the late 1940s, early 1950s. It was first introduced to Afro-Brazilians through Alberto Guerreiro Ramos, a sociologist who had formed the Black Experimental Theatre (Malinoff 1980: 52). Many of the themes that were characteristic of the Negritude movement were already widely known and utilized in Brazil throughout the 1920s and 30s for the social rights movements. What Negritude brought to Brazil in the 1950s, however, was a cultural philosophy, which placed the beauty of the black race and essential “black values” at the forefront. Trindade’s poetry already carried overtones of a collective oppression, history and memory leading up to that point. As such, “Trindade could not help but be affected by the strongly positive air of racial affirmation brought to Brazil by literary Negritude” (Malinoff 1980: 52-3). One of the poems most representative of this racial affirmation is called *Sou Negro* (I am Black), which was published in 1958.

I am Black  
My ancestors were burned  
By an African sun  
My soul received the baptism of the drums,  
*Atabaques, gonguês and agogôs*<sup>11</sup>  
It was said that they came from Luanda as  
Low-priced merchandise

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<sup>11</sup> Afro-Brazilian percussion instruments

They planted the master's cane at the new sugar mill  
And danced the first *Maracatu*

(Translation by Malinoff 1980: 53-4)

The first stanza of this poem set the pace for what followed. The theme of “blackness” and being burnt by the African sun establishes a primary social category for this type of literature; race. Here we also see an historical connection through the mention of Luanda, the most prosperous slave port out of Angola. Malinoff states that this particular poem is both a positive affirmation of Black racial identity as well as a testament to Afro-Brazilian cultural pride (ibid). The referrals back to a united collectivity and affiliation with Africa through a common history, geographic place of origin, drums (African symbols), and language (i.e. the African word “Maracatu”) all reflect what could be deemed Mother Africa. In this case the symbols of Mother Africa also extend to incorporate blood relations and the colour of one’s skin. It is not a call for return as was the case with many Angolan poets, but rather a pledge of allegiance to that history and memory. Many poems created an African imagery that emphasized and glorified such commonalities. Despite centuries of geographic separation, the umbilical cord tying the infant Diaspora to old Mother Africa appears to have remained intact.

Another poem that reaffirms this notion is called *Quem tá Gemendo?* (Who is Crying?). Through it, Trindade attempts to reach out to all humanity; black or otherwise.

There cries low in my soul  
The soul of the Congo  
Of the Niger, of Guinea  
Of all Africa  
The soul of America  
The Universal soul

(Translation by Malinoff 1980: 54)

As was the case in the aforementioned poem, the “baptism of the drums” carries the same connotation as the “soul of all Africa” in this particular poem. According to Trindade, Africa lives within each and every individual who derived from that land. The significance of the soul in this poem is an affinity for not just one particular tribe but rather all of Africa. In the second last stanza, Trindade acknowledges the soul of America as also living within his soul. This indicates a divide between an ethnic “homeland” and his birth place. Both the Americas and Africa are united as one in creating his Afro-Brazilian identity.

Oswaldo de Camargo was a follower of Trindade. He also used identification with his blackness as a way of feeling a sense of belonging and affiliation with his African kinsmen. Similar to Trindade’s second poem, in *Grito de Angústia* (Cry of Anguish) Camargo assumes a collective identity with *all* Black Brazilians as well as his black brothers of Africa.

Give me your hand  
My heart can move the world  
With its throbbing...  
I have within me the desire and the glory  
That they stole from my fathers.  
My heart can move the world,  
The same heart as the Congolese,  
Bantus, and other suffering men,  
It is the same.

(Translation by Malinoff 1980: 57)

The representation of Mother Africa is seen here symbolically through a beating heart. He states that his heart is the same as that of other men within Africa and its many tribes. The stanza that claims “the throbbing of this heart can move the world” creates an imagery that if all Africans around the world stay united, they can bring change to their social, political, and economic conditions. In this sense it can be assumed that he is

subtly proposing redemption of his forefathers' honour by reestablishing a social cohesion among his African "brothers" in the present day. Malinoff states in her analysis of this poem that, "the African past and the Afro-Brazilian past are united in the poet as representative of all Black people everywhere" (ibid). This appears to be the case for both Trindade and Camargo. Can it be assumed then that *all* individuals of dark skin and/or African origins will identify with the past that both Trindade and Camargo portray? Will they feel that all of their hearts beat to the sound of the same drums? The idea of an Afro-Brazilian identity is not nearly as straightforward as these poets portray it to be. The word "Afro-Brazilian" itself conveys a paradox in the formation of identity among the black people of Brazil (and correspondingly those of the Diaspora). Ron Eyerman attempts to explain this phenomenon in a similar example with the United States. He claims that the notion of an "African American" is not a natural concept or category but rather a historically formed collective identity self-imposed by the black people as a way of unification.

It was here, in this identity-formation, that the memory of slavery would be central, not so much as individual experience but as collective memory. It was slavery, whether or not one had experienced it, that defined one's identity as an African American, it was why you, an African, were here in America (2001: 16).

The same kind of identity formation that took place in the United States also occurred in Brazil as a way of empowering the black people. The same themes of authentic "africanness" and sharing of a traumatic historical memory as a way of reconstructing a new identity are seen through both the Angolan and Brazilian literature. However, whereas the reconstruction of this identity was used for the purposes of resistance against the Portuguese empire in the case of Angola, in the case of Brazil it was against the

inequalities and poverty that so many blacks experienced as a result of racially-formed social and political barriers.

### 3.2.2 Mother Africa as seen through *Negritude*

#### Luis Silva

Luis Silva (pen name “Cuti”) was another one of many black Brazilian poets who was impacted by the *Negritude* movement. He was also a key contributor to the literary journal *Cadernos Negros* that opened the door for social and political activism through language and literature. The initial contributors to this journal were black, educated, middle class entrepreneurs that were concerned with political participation and cultural forms of expression (Oliveira 2008: 50). This journal has greatly impacted the Brazilian literary arena and since 1978 has encouraged the promotion of black literature in Brazil. It was believed that this journal was a representation of Africa’s prominence and continued existence on the South American continent. It was also symbolic of the strength of the black presence, its perseverance and survival throughout a traumatic history. According to Oliveira, the ultimate aim of this particular literary journal was “a pursuit of a collective historical and social identity” through the use of literature (2008: 53). Oliveira describes the two major themes that were emphasized by the Afro-Brazilian writers of this journal; the first being the collective creation of identity by the symbolic reconstruction of a historical past, and the second being the idea of literature as a mobilizing/active force. In the poem *Meu Verso* (My verse) Cuti addresses both themes.

I do this by force  
 My verse enforces walls  
 Easy, it is made of bone, flesh, and blood  
 And a pinch of Black Mamma  
 My verse speaks of the shrunken hate  
 [.....]  
 Of nights that I never lived

But live in me in my blood  
 At the command of *Zumbi*  
 Who speaks loudly to his brothers  
 And smiles...  
 Smiles...  
 Smiles.

(Translated by Oliveira 2008: 61)

The first theme is seen through his representation of Mother Africa; he acknowledges her overtly by naming her the “Black Mamma.” He also speaks of the ancient past of his enslaved ancestors living inside of him and his blood. The word *Zumbi*<sup>12</sup> is representative of this ancient past. The second theme is not as evident but can be understood through the stanza “my verse enforces walls made of bone, flesh, and blood”, or in other words, the power of his words will create united action. In addition, the wall could also symbolize a metaphoric barrier against the oppression, inequalities and racism that has pervaded black Brazilian society throughout each century since the enslavement period. According to Oliveira, Afro-Brazilian poets create a poetic “I” that is both individual and collective. Such poems are said to be a response to oppression and are often invoked by Third World poets that want to instigate collective mobilization against a dominating force (Oliveira 2008:62). Similar themes are also seen in his poem *Vento* (Wind).

It comes from Africa  
 Blowing the people through all the pores of the world  
 It comes from there  
 In the tide  
 That wind of faith  
 It comes  
 It comes from the warm womb of the earth  
 And fills the black sail  
 [.....]

<sup>12</sup> Zumbi is an Afro-Brazilian hero; a slave who defied Portuguese masters and the whole colonial system. It represents a mythological past that seeks to evoke an Afro-Brazilian collective identity and also a call for social and political action (Oliveira 2008:60, 92).



It is a constant-constrained-cry that finds  
 Rest in the blood  
 Refreshment in the words  
 Harmony in the body

(Translated by Oliveira 2008: 63)

At the superficial level, the “it” that Cuti paints for his audience represents the wind. However, delving deeper into the many interpretations of wind one could also imagine that he is speaking of a certain African presence or essence. This essence reflects a state of remembrance of an African slave history. Just as wind carries new seeds to germinate across vast fields, this wind spread its African people across several continents. The tide that is identified in the third stanza is reflective of the middle passage used during the slave trade. The last three stanzas of the wind “resting in the blood, in the words, in the body” are all echoes of an Africa that finds a home in her children’s mind, body, and soul. Therefore, if we follow this line of thinking, whether in Brazil, Cuba, the United States or any other colony within the Diaspora, it would be assumed that all individuals of African descent are connected through Mother Africa. Oliveira claims that through this poem “Africa is the beginning of a journey toward a black utopia” (2008: 63). Literature and poetry, therefore, were expected to facilitate the creation of an Afro-Brazilian identity through the use of these images, memories and histories. To support this idea, Erll and Rigney claim that “by imaginatively representing acts of recollection, literature makes remembrance observable. As such it not only helps reproduce collective memory [...] but also cultural knowledge about how memory works for individuals and groups” (2006: 113). However, this author contends that although it is without a doubt that the transatlantic slave trade occurred and that certain stories surrounding that experience live on through each successive generation, when analyzing these poems, one cannot ignore

the possibility that such memories are being used for purposes other than historical knowledge. Calhoun explains that,

The modern discipline of history is very deeply shaped by the tradition of producing national histories designed to give readers and students a sense of their collective identity. At the same time, however, nationalists are prone, at the very least, to the production of *Whig* histories, favourable accounts of “how we came to be who we are (Calhoun 225).

Therefore, the history (and memories) that Cuti, Trindade, Camargo and many others portray is subjectively formed through the choice of what memories are most integral to the establishment of a national identity. In effect they have essentialized the attributes most reflective of Mother Africa and her various cultures, thereby resulting in a *consciously chosen* collective identity based on these elements. The identity they seek to disseminate manipulates, embellishes and reshapes a history that is presumed to resonate among black Brazilians as well as black individuals throughout the Diaspora and the motherland. What they fail to acknowledge is that black is not considered “black” in Africa the way it is throughout the Diaspora. Even the term “black” itself was socially constructed in the West. When individuals of African heritage return to their “homeland”, more often than not they find that their identities are not reflective of what their “brothers” consider African. In other words, the identities that they have constructed are not truly African, but rather an imagined idea of what it means to be so. Therefore, it could be argued that they use this constructed identity for three reasons; opportunity, exoticism, and belonging. For example, in the case of Canada, opportunity is used when “blackness” is manipulated for the purposes of obtaining employment as a visible minority. Exoticism is used when one wishes to distinguish him or herself as unique from their peers. Finally, belonging (as was the case in the United States) where communities can be premised on certain cultural and social characteristics.

### Márcio Barbosa

Another key contributor to *Cadernos Negros* was Márcio Barbosa. He further exemplifies the idea of reconstructing an ancient past in his poem *Somos Canto* (We are the song). Once again, we see the use of a perceived African ancestry as a basis for his poetry.

Beneath our skin  
And within our veins  
Run African rivers  
We are the song  
We are the laugh of the drum  
Made of black leather  
From our bodies  
And from the voice  
That is born in our souls....

(Oliveira 2008: 89)

The same two relevant themes that were characteristic of *Cadernos Negros* work are once again displayed here. Oliveira states that in this poem the past and the present appear together because the poet uses the linguistic present tense to talk about black origins; the process of creating identity is on a continuum (ibid). This idea corresponds to Trindade and Camargo's attempts at trying to identify with both their African past and Brazilian present to create their own Afro-Brazilian identity. Also, as was the case with Angolan poets Neto and Lara, we see the use of the words "our" and "we" that was argued previously to convey a sense of collectiveness or cohesion. Another one of Barbosa's poems that reflects these themes is *Um canto de liberdade* (A song of liberty):

Lift high  
Your drum-voice  
And sing  
People, rise up  
And touch the sky  
And the hearts of these cruel men  
Your song of the African jungle  
People, lift high

Your drum-voice  
 Demands hymns of Liberty  
 [.....]  
 That the samba of your skin  
 And the boom-boom of your words  
 (They are the *quilombo*<sup>13</sup> that is reborn every day)  
 They are the muted cry of liberation.

(Oliveira 2008: 88)

In this poem, Barbosa leans further towards the second major theme; a call for action or mobilization. He is calling his people to “sing” and rise up against their oppressors, which are characterized as “cruel men.” This particular poem was meant to be sung and demands that it be sung by all, in unison, in order to obtain freedom. His use of language; “drum-voice”, “samba of your skin”, “boom-boom of your words”, all create a certain tribal rhythm for the reader. The prevalence of the drum and its intense reverberation has been a key element in most of the poems analyzed throughout this chapter. Music, therefore, is intimately related to poetry for both the Angolans and Afro-Brazilians as a way of reuniting their kinsmen. Anderson claims that there is a special kind of contemporaneous community in the form of poetry and song. If one is aware that others may be singing the same song, at the same precise moment and in the exact same way, it does not matter that we have no idea who the “others” may be, or even where they are singing, what matters is that we are connected through this imagined sound (1983: 145). Hall offers an explanation for this *imagined community* among individuals of a nation. He terms this phenomenon a “will-to-manifest-identity” where the individual and the collective are mutually reinforcing; each individual feels a sense of loyalty towards a group that inevitably forms a consensus among its members, thereby resulting in a self-fulfilling or manifested identity. Any threat to the group’s identity (or existence) is

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<sup>13</sup> Communities of runaway slaves

henceforth seen as a threat to the individual's self-identity and their sense of self worth (1999: 37). Moreover, this feeling of threat to oneself or one's culture seems to be when primordialism is most likely to be employed.

### 3.2.3 Mother Africa through sacred text and religious symbols

#### Lepe Correia

The biggest difference that can be seen between the poetry of Angola and Brazil are the underlying motivations. In the case of the former, poetry surrounding the idea of Mother Africa was used as a source for cultural revindication, whereas in the latter it was used as a source of knowledge and action. Poetry was considered a sacred source that was to remind the Afro-Brazilians of their roots, lineage and history; however these elements were not intended solely for this group to experience. The poets also wanted to reveal the traditions, narratives and stories to the rest of the world in order to voice the "other history" that was not typically written in scholarly works. The hope was to put African cultures on the same metaphoric playing field as the other dominant cultures of Brazil. In his poem *Resistencia: Corpo africano* (Resistance: African Body), Correia tries to express this notion.

Our children are losing their childhood  
 So that soon they will have no memory  
 Of "having heard about" which means knowing glory [...]  
 And what kind of nation can be made when history  
 Gives the lie to the people and becomes fiction [...]  
 But there's still the dark sound of the drums  
 That the masters will never silence  
 In that sound we have the Axé of the Orishas [...]  
 And if cruelty cuts off our tongue  
 The dance remains in our body

(Translation by White 1997: 102)

This poem exemplifies the fear of losing an African identity. When Correia talks about the children not having a memory of “having heard about” he is referring to the oral narrative. Correia perceives a decrease in its significance and presence in both Brazilian classrooms and history books. For this reason he states that the nation’s history is becoming a fiction. Furthermore, once again we see the inclusion of drums as a perpetual symbol of African culture and, by extension, Mother Africa. In the concluding stanzas, all of these elements culminate in the perspective that although the *conquistadores* have relentlessly tried to oppress them, the African Brazilians will always have a common connection and history with Africa. As was seen in the poetry of Angola, Brazilian poets tried to use their poems as an alternative to oral narrative. According to some advocates, the perspective of Afro-Brazilians is necessary in order to tell the “other history” of oppression, rebellion, and conquest. As such, it also allows for the reestablishment of a collective memory and identity. In opposition to this belief, Stuart Hall argues that the representation of Africa as the predominant basis for various black civilizations is directly related to the experience of the people themselves. In other words, “Africa symbolizes a figure of imaginary coherence and cohesion” (Hall, Cultural Identity and Diaspora 394 quoted in Oliveira 2008: 53). He also states that,

Re-imagining Africa is not only reconstructing the past according to the black experience, but also reshaping a new future for this community. Within the dialectical attempt to reconcile the past and present lies the process of identity formation (Oliveira 2008: 53).

Therefore, such poetry attempts to use historical trauma (as was demonstrated through Trindade’s poetry), history and traditions as a way of reaffirming a perceived collective identity. However, Stuart Hall explains that although cultural identities exist and have histories, “like everything, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialist past, they are subject to the continuous play of history, culture

and power” (394 quoted in Oliveira 2008: 54). Consequently, collective memories and identities are not created solely out of historical fact but rather a culmination of traditions, religions, languages and symbols that the African community deems most cherished and valued in the present day communities.

#### **Edimilson de Almeida Pereira**

In addition to sacred knowledge, another prominent theme characteristic of Afro-Brazilian poetry is that of religion and religious symbols. As mentioned in the historical summary, various ethnicities that were displaced to the *New World* were situated in certain regions throughout the country. As a result, they were able to maintain some of their customs, beliefs, etc. Memory, therefore, has attempted to survive through these mediums thereby prolonging the connection with Mother Africa. For example, we see in Correia’s poem *Resistencia* the inclusion of the Orishas. These are spiritual forces (or archetypical heroes) that constitute a main part of the *candomblé* religion that originates from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, and Congo-Brazzaville (Sterling 2003: 44-5). The group that originally practiced this religion spoke the Yoruba language. They are also known as the Yorubas. Candomblé is still a dominant religion in the North Eastern region of Bahia, especially in the city of Salvador. Its myths and beliefs united not just the Yorubas but also the other Africans that came into contact with them through geographic proximity during the slave era. They served as a binding force that could cut across ethnic barriers, just as the Portuguese language was intended to do in the Lusophone African colonies. Sterling explains that,

Candomblé represents the living memory of Africa in Brazil [...] it is apparent in one’s subjective orientation through the communal ethics, shared affiliation, and sense of belonging to a larger continuum which are all hallmarks in the formation of a diasporic consciousness (2003: 59-60).

An example of a religious representation of Mother Africa reveals itself through the poetry of Edimilson de Almeida Pereira and his poem *Inquices* (divinities of Angolan-Congolese origin). The image of Africa as living through the blood, bones and soul of Africans is once again exemplified here but as seen through these divinities.

They are the ancient ones  
 They die one way,  
 Live another.  
 They live in us  
 Not being blood.  
 Not being blood,  
 They soak our bones.  
 They are the same ones  
 They weren't before [...]  
 From them we know  
 Their names.  
 To call is to feel them  
 Walking in us.

(Translation by White 1997: 84)

Religion, then, and sacred symbols are the last integral element in the creation of a collective identity. It is this compilation of sacred and religious symbols that forms the basis for a perceived common religious system that is shared amongst the Afro-Brazilian population. As such, “for those who are committed to it, such a religious system seems to mediate genuine knowledge, knowledge of the essential conditions in terms of which must, of necessity, be lived” (Geertz 1973: 129). However, when accepting these symbols, stories, and myths as reflective of the entire Afro-Brazilian population, it overlooks how each individual may feel towards that particular group identity. Mintz states that, “the assimilation power of a national identity – that is, of a national culture and ideology – hinges upon the presence of a body of values and behaviours that can serve to unite a people in spite of social and economic differences” (1971: 34). In other words, it is impossible for individuals to unite under such pretenses if they perceive



inequality within the group itself. Race, blood lines, history, religion and traditions do not erase the disequilibrium experienced by some members of a shared culture. It cannot be assumed, therefore, that the middle class, educated black Brazilians who are creating these poems will strike a cord with the uneducated populations within the *musseques*.

Ultimately, all the aforementioned poets were relying on the black Brazilian's identification with and loyalty to this created collective identity as a way of resisting European dominance. Unfortunately, the politically charged foundation through which these memories were conveyed actually had the converse effect for black poets in Brazil. Instead of leading to a uniquely black Brazilian literature or school of black literary thought that would facilitate an Afro-Brazilian national identity, these particular poets were condemned to marginal positions within a pre-existing (and dominant) literary canon (Oliveira 2008: 69). This could be attributed to each poet's erroneous assumption that all individuals will promote the aggrandizement of a collective identity that is based on such factors as an ancient past, skin colour, language, tradition and other culturally-based symbols.

In summary, the representation of Mother Africa through Angolan and Afro-Brazilian poetry exists through a variety of forms. The predominant forms discussed throughout this chapter have included the land and cultural symbols, myth and ancestral past, language, body and soul (race), *Negritude*, and religion. Throughout the analysis it has been argued that the creation of a collective national identity through the emphasis of a common ancestry and memory is not reflective of accurate claims to that historical origin, but rather a manipulation of these images as claims to an absolute truth. Consequently, Mother Africa provides a false sense of social cohesion for individuals both on the continent and within the Diaspora, which finds as its foundation a collectively

contrived (and glorified) notion of an ancestral legacy. This is not to say that these African traditions and cultures did not exist, but rather their most positive elements have been chosen as symbols of who “Africans” are and where they come from. After all, as Mintz states, an “African cultural impact” in both of these countries “did not consist of the diffusion of some undifferentiated, uniform body of beliefs, attitudes, linguistic forms, or other cultural materials” (1971: 26) but rather a diverse, multi-faceted array of individuals, traditions, languages and cultures.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, *what* people remember of their past is directly connected to *how* they remember (or forget) it. In turn, people's behaviour is determined by the memories they possess. In the cases of Angola and Brazil, writers and poets of the black literary movements depended on a perceived common history and ancestry as a unifying force amongst the African peoples. Their idealistic portrayals of Mother Africa promoted the political, cultural, and social cohesion of Africans both within their own countries and also within the Diaspora.

It has been argued that the poet's attempts at recreating an *authentic* Angolan and Afro-Brazilian collective national identity was wrought with mythical, exaggerated, notions of an ancestral past that existed before the Portuguese conquest. Emphases on cultural symbols such as the drums, songs, and dance essentialized key attributes of certain tribes by extending their significance to emblemize all of Africa. Similarly, glorified notions of the land, its people, riches and beauty enhanced the appeal of Mother Africa as a place to return home to or, in the case of Brazil, keep sacred as a reference point for the formation of new individual and collective identities. As was discussed, many individuals of African descent within the Diaspora find they no longer identify with Africa if or when they return after so many generations. Therefore, it would be false to make certain assumptions about Mother Africa and her children; firstly, it cannot be assumed that there existed a united Mother Africa before the conquest, or secondly, that all individuals of African descent will feel a strong devotion to this primordial heritage.

Whether identified forthright or surreptitiously through imagery and symbolism, Mother Africa has been manipulated by some poets in an attempt to gain unified strength against a common oppressor. In the case of Angola that oppressor was the Portuguese

empire, whereas in the case of Brazil it was the racial democratic system with its various socio-economic inequalities and discriminatory practices. The poetry that has been analyzed all revolves around the same general time period; the 1950s to 1980s, which indicates that the present day circumstances in both Angola and Brazil had a significant impact on the literature being produced and the literary movements being established at those times.

The theories that were utilized in explaining the motivations underlying each poem and arguing against their representations of Mother Africa included: collective memory theory, cultural trauma theory, collective identity theory, and *imagined communities* theory. Whereas the first three theories were used in accordance with the poetry, the last was used to show their many ambiguities. Anderson effectively demonstrates how and why new nations emerge out of a consciously constructed identity whose key elements are determined by a collective's members. Furthermore, his theory critically refutes the shared feelings of belonging and *one-ness* that individuals of African descent display towards their fellow "brothers" as well as their "homeland." He claims that such feelings are based on imagined ties to a perceived community in which primary importance is placed on the shared history, culture, race, religions, and languages of its inhabitants. In relation to this thesis, it has been argued that these features are not necessarily shared by all members of that community nor do they carry the same significance for all. For instance, the *Cadernos Negros*' promotion of a national Afro-Brazilian identity amongst black Brazilian followers is an ideal example. Although their main objective may not have been the establishment of a firm national identity, it certainly played a part in its formation. Despite their best efforts, the messages that were

conveyed through this politically and socially charged literature did not provide sufficient grounds for the formation of a collective.

This thesis does not wish to imply that *all* black writers throughout this time period were writing on these precise topics, nor were they all involved in the movements for black liberation. These arguments, rather, critically question the establishment of a cultural and national identity by some individuals within Africa and the Diaspora. The basis for these arguments are founded in the quote by W.I. Thomas, “if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.” Therefore, for those African descendants who believe in the memories being portrayed by these poets such imaginings of Mother Africa will become real. However, one cannot discount the individuals who do not identify with those images. Accordingly, it cannot be assumed that a primordial “home land”, heritage, traumatic history and skin colour are grounds for the creation of a united community nor the effective recreation of a national identity. Butler states that this is considered a strategic use of identity because “multiple identities are possible and subject to change depending on the socio-historical context. [...] Not only is identity largely a matter of choice within contextual constraints, race itself is a social construct not supported by genetic reality” (2007: 24). Therefore the idea of “blackness” or a cultural “African-ness” throughout the Afro-Atlantic Diaspora will be as diverse as the individuals themselves, for the historical and demographic conditions, intermixture of cultures and other social influences will greatly impact the miscegenation and subsequent development of each particular nation.

Despite the frailty of the use of Mother Africa as a cultural symbol, however, this image has been useful in the increased awareness of an African cultural legacy. In other words, it has provided the means by which certain memories and cultural symbols could

be (re)created. Its ability to bring hope and belonging demonstrates the power of nationalistic symbols and beliefs and the influence they have over people, memory and history.

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## APPENDIX A

Figure 1

Table 1 Slaves leaving Luanda, 1723–75, 1794, and 1802–26 (selected years), by destination in Brazil

Year	Port								Total
	Rio de Janeiro	(%)	Pernambuco	(%)	Bahia	(%)	Other	(%)	
1723	3,403	(50.4)	519	(7.7)	2,830	(41.9)			6,752
1724	2,869	(47.0)	1,031	(16.9)	2,208	(36.1)			6,108
1725	3,080	(47.5)	703	(10.8)	2,701	(41.7)	242 <sup>a</sup>	(3.6)	6,726
1726	3,559	(42.3)	318	(3.4)	4,156	(48.4)	497 <sup>a</sup>	(4.8)	8,440
1727	3,591	(47.0)	842	(11.0)	3,200	(41.9)			7,633
1728	3,229	(37.8)	1,248	(14.6)	4,055	(47.5)			8,532
1731	3,111	(53.6)	318	(5.5)	2,379	(41.0)			5,808
1734	4,378	(50.2)	746	(8.6)	3,589	(41.2)			8,713
1738	4,735	(61.4)	617	(8.0)	2,361	(30.6)			7,713
1740	5,254	(64.6)	1,051	(12.9)	1,832	(22.5)			8,137
1741	6,143	(69.8)	980	(11.1)	1,675	(19.0)			8,798
1742	6,218	(64.1)	1,096	(11.3)	2,385	(24.6)			9,699
1744	5,123	(62.1)	1,515	(18.4)	1,618	(19.6)			8,256
1747	4,159	(48.9)	2,188	(25.7)					8,512
1748	5,834	(54.0)	2,661	(24.6)	1,917	(17.7)	384 <sup>b</sup>	(3.6)	10,796
1749	2,839	(29.0)	1,455	(14.9)	3,502	(35.8)	1,981 <sup>b,c</sup>	(20.3)	9,776
1758	4,870	(49.0)	3,235	(32.6)	821	(8.3)	1,012 <sup>d</sup>	(10.2)	9,938
1762	3,808	(45.3)	1,666	(19.8)	1,347	(16.0)	1,594 <sup>d</sup>	(18.9)	8,280 <sup>e</sup>
1763	3,698	(48.4)	2,689	(35.2)	1,247	(16.3)			7,525
1764	3,491	(45.6)	1,834	(24.0)	519	(6.8)	1,720 <sup>f</sup>	(22.5)	7,648 <sup>e</sup>
1765	5,754	(52.0)	3,217	(29.1)	1,626	(14.7)	467 <sup>d</sup>	(4.2)	11,065 <sup>e</sup>
1766	3,617	(38.8)	2,380	(25.5)	3,333	(35.7)			9,330

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<sup>14</sup> Source: Miller, Joseph C. 1992. "The Numbers, Origins, and Destinations of Slaves in the Eighteenth-Century Angolan Slave Trade." Ch. 4 in *The Atlantic Slave Trade: Effects on Economies, Societies, and People in Africa, the Americas and Europe*. Durham, USA: Duke University Press.

Figure 2  
Table 1—Continued

Year	Port								Total
	Rio de Janeiro	(%)	Pernambuco	(%)	Bahia	(%)	Other	(%)	
1767	4,824	(53.5)	2,649	(29.4)	1,543	(17.1)			9,016
1769	3,432	(59.9)	758	(13.2)	1,543	(26.9)			5,733
1770	3,498	(46.4)	1,685	(22.3)	2,354	(31.2)			7,537
1771	3,462	(46.8)	1,704	(22.4)	2,341	(30.8)			7,606
1772	4,439	(59.0)	1,580	(21.0)	1,499	(19.9)			7,518
1774	4,000	(50.3)	2,082	(26.5)	1,853	(23.1)			7,935
1775	3,010	(38.6)	2,110	(27.1)	2,675	(34.3)			7,795
1794	7,502	(79.0)	—	—	1,607	(16.9)	384 <sup>c</sup>	(4.0)	9,493
1802	5,160	(44.8)	3,622	(31.4)	1,881	(16.3)	855 <sup>f</sup>	(7.4)	11,518 <sup>g</sup>
1803	5,440	(39.2)	4,013	(29.2)	2,335	(17.0)	2,042 <sup>d,f</sup>	(14.7)	13,830 <sup>g</sup>
1804	4,556	(34.8)	3,325	(25.7)	2,063	(16.0)	3,071 <sup>d,f</sup>	(23.5)	13,018 <sup>g</sup>
1805	4,710	(34.4)	4,401	(32.1)	2,100	(15.3)	2,595 <sup>d,f</sup>	(18.2)	13,711 <sup>g</sup>
1809	7,323	(74.1)	2,492	(25.2)	72	(0.7)			9,887
1810	8,837	(75.3)	1,254	(10.7)	888	(7.6)	757 <sup>d,f</sup>	(6.4)	11,736
1811	9,098	(77.9)	2,010	(17.2)	564	(4.8)			11,672
1812	6,891	(56.7)	2,489	(23.7)	401	(4.8)	700 <sup>d,f</sup>	(6.7)	10,481
1813	6,126	(61.9)	3,265	(33.0)	169	(1.7)	334 <sup>f</sup>	(3.4)	9,894
1815	7,370	(58.3)	3,911	(31.0)	1,028	(8.1)	325 <sup>f</sup>	(2.6)	12,635
1816	6,115	(41.4)	5,499	(37.3)	1,700	(11.5)	1,446 <sup>d,f</sup>	(9.8)	14,760
1817	5,425	(34.8)	5,932	(38.0)	1,213	(7.8)	3,025 <sup>d,f</sup>	(19.4)	15,595
1818	4,645	(28.3)	7,702	(47.0)	1,329	(8.1)	2,703 <sup>d,f</sup>	(16.5)	16,379
1819	4,873	(28.2)	6,863	(39.7)	1,566	(9.1)	3,997 <sup>d,f</sup>	(23.1)	17,293
1820	8,215	(41.0)	7,816	(39.0)	1,034	(5.2)	2,987 <sup>d</sup>	(14.9)	20,052
1822	9,415	(52.9)	3,203	(18.0)	637	(3.6)	3,120 <sup>d,f</sup>	(27.5)	17,806
							1,430 <sup>c,h,i</sup>	(8.0)	
1823		(41.4)		(17.7)		(2.3)		(17.5) <sup>d,f</sup>	
								(8.1) <sup>c,h,i</sup>	
1824		(62.2)		(23.4)		(10.1)		(4.3) <sup>f</sup>	
1825		(63.6)		(21.6)		(5.5)		(5.7) <sup>h,j</sup>	
1826		(60.0)		(21.6)		(5.5)		(4.5) <sup>f</sup>	
								(8.6) <sup>c,k</sup>	

Sources: E.g., *Relação dos navios que saíram despachados desta cidade de Loanda para os portos do Brazil* (1724), enclosed in letter from Francisco Pereira da Costa (*provedor da Fazenda Real*), 15 January 1725, Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (Lisbon), Angola caixa (cx.) 16, and similar documents copied from the *livros de despachos* kept at Luanda in cxs. 17, 21–27ff. (old system). Cited in Miller, 1986.

<sup>a</sup>Unknown destination.

<sup>b</sup>Colônia do Sacramento.

<sup>c</sup>Santos.

<sup>d</sup>Maranhão.

<sup>e</sup>Includes small numbers of others.

<sup>f</sup>Pará.

<sup>g</sup>Original records list additional “children” without attributing them to individual ports.

<sup>h</sup>Rio Grande do Sul.

<sup>i</sup>Ceará.

<sup>j</sup>Montevideo.

<sup>k</sup>Santa Catarina.

Note: Not listed: intra-African destinations, three to São Tomé in 1803 and five in 1804; two to Cabinda in 1822.

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<sup>15</sup> Source: Miller, Joseph C. 1992. “The Numbers, Origins, and Destinations of Slaves in the Eighteenth-Century Angolan Slave Trade.” Ch. 4 in *The Atlantic Slave Trade: Effects on Economies, Societies, and People in Africa, the Americas and Europe*. Durham, USA: Duke University Press.

## APPENDIX B

Figure 3:

## THE END OF THE BRAZILIAN SLAVE TRADE

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TABLE 1: Population of Salvador and Rio de Janeiro, 1775-1855

	Free population	(%)	Freedpersons	(%)	Slaves	(%)
Salvador						
1775	20,557	(58.4) <sup>a</sup>	—	—	14,696	(41.6)
1835 <sup>b</sup>	38,000	(58.0) <sup>a</sup>	—	—	27,500	(42.0)
1855	38,595	(68.9)	2,027	(3.6)	15,378	(27.5)
Rio de Janeiro						
1808 <sup>c</sup>	47,090	(78.5)	1,000	(1.5)	12,000	(20.0)
1821	45,947	(54.0) <sup>a</sup>	—	—	36,182	(46.0)
1838	60,025	(62.0) <sup>a</sup>	—	—	37,137	(38.0)
1849	116,319	(56.5)	10,732	(5.2)	78,855	(38.3)

Note: Figures are based on population censuses except as noted.

<sup>a</sup> Includes freedpersons.

<sup>b</sup> Estimated by Reis, *Slave Rebellion*, 6.

<sup>c</sup> Estimated by Luccock, *Notas sobre o Rio de Janeiro*, 28.

Sources: For Salvador: Reis, *Slave Rebellion*, 5-6; Nascimento, *Dex freguesias*, 65, 97. For Rio de Janeiro: Leila Mezan Algranti, *O fettor ausente: estudos sobre a escravidão urbana no Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1822* (Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1988), 30; John Luccock, *Notas sobre o Rio de Janeiro e partes meridionais do Brasil* (Belo Horizonte: Livraria Itatiaia, 1975), 28; Karasch, *Slave Life*, 62-66.

<sup>16</sup> Source: Graden, Dale. T. 1996. "An Act 'Even of Public Security': Slave Resistance, Social Tensions and the End of the International Slave Trade to Brazil, 1835-1856." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 76: 249-282.



## APPENDIX C

### BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

#### Agostinho Neto (1922-1979)

Neto was born in Catete, Bengo in Angola in 1922. He was not only a well-known poet but also a political activist throughout the wars for independence. He eventually came to be the first president of Angola in 1975 when they finally reached independence from Portugal. Leading up until that time, he helped form the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) group alongside Viriato da Cruz. He died in 1979 after undergoing surgery for cancer.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agostinho\\_Neto](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agostinho_Neto)

#### Viriato de Cruz (1928 – 1973)

Cruz was born in Kikuvo, Angola in 1928. Viriato da Cruz was considered one of the most important Angolan poets of his time. Additionally, he was also a politician. Through the wars for Independence he fought alongside other influential poets such as Mario Pinto de Andrade and Agostinho Neto. He eventually became the Secretary General of MPLA, a position which he maintained until his exile to China in the 1960s. He died in 1973 in Beijing, China.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viriato\\_da\\_Cruz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viriato_da_Cruz)

#### Antonio Jacinto (1924 – 1991)

Jacinto was born in Luanda, Angola in 1924. He was both poet and also a political militant. After several acts of militancy, he was arrested and sent to a concentration camp in Cape Verde. There he was eventually transferred to Portugal where he escaped and returned in Angola. Upon his return he joined the MPLA. After reaching independence, Jacinto became the Minister of Education and Cultural Secretary of State. He died in Portugal in 1991.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio\\_Jacinto](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio_Jacinto)

#### Mario António (1934-1989)

António was born in 1934 in Angola. He was a student of social and political science at an institute known as the Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas. He obtained his doctorate in African literature and Portuguese language from the Universidade de Nova Lisboa. António was an influential poet, but unfortunately his dissidence through his involvement with the MPLA relegated his literary success to the background. He died in Portugal in 1989, his place of residence since 1963.

Source: <http://portalsaofrancisco.com.br/alfa/mario-antonio/mario-antonio.php>

### Alda Lara (1930 – 1962)

Alda Lara (full name Alda Ferreira Pires Barreto de Lara Albuquerque) was born in 1930 Benguela, Angola. She obtained a degree from the University of Coimbra through the Faculty of Medicine. However, she is most known as one of the most famous female poets and writers of her time. She was a regular contributor to literary journals, specifically *Mensagem*. Lara eventually married another poet and writer, Orlando de Albuquerque who, after her death, went on to publish her work in a variety of books and other literary journals. The Alda Lara prize for poetry was created in her name. She died in 1962.

Source: <http://www.colegiosaofrancisco.com.br/alfa/alda-lara/alda-lara.php>

### Aires de Almeida Santos (1921 – 1992)

Almeida Santos was born in 1921 in Bié, Angola. Aside from being a poet, he was a professional accountant for over 20 years until he was arrested for activities related to the MPLA. In 1961 he set himself up as a book-keeper in the city of Luanda. In 1970, he entered journalism. Other achievements include his co-founding of the União dos Escritores Angolanos (Union of Angola Writers) before his death in 1992 in Benguela.

Source: <http://forum.angolaxyami.com/poesia-angolana/12156-biografia-de-aires-de-almeida-santos-importante-na-poesia-africana-de-expressao-portuguesa.html>

### Solano Trindade (1908-1974)

Trindade was born in Recife, Brazil in 1908. He was a poet, political activist and a man of the theatre. Throughout the 1930s, he was an active participant in Afro-Brazilian conferences, where his reputation as a defender of the Afro-Brazilian condition became known. Trindade established the Frente Negra de Pernambuco and Centro de Cultura Afro-Brasileira and he was also the founder of the Teatro Experimental do Negro (Black Experimental Theatre). He died in 1974.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solano\\_Trindade](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solano_Trindade)

### Lepe Correia (1954 -)

Correia was born in Pernambuco, Brazil in 1954. He was a psychological, communicative specialist, with an advanced degree from the University of Pernambuco. However, he is most recognized for his work as a poet and writer. One of his more famous works is “Caxinguele: Poemas de Negritude e Resistencia Negra Urbana em Pernambuco”.

Source: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/2252704/refazenda>

### Edimilson de Almeida Pereira (1963 - )

Pereira was born in Minas Gerais, Brazil in 1963. He received a degree in Languages from the Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora (UFJF). He was also a professor of Brazilian and Portuguese literature at this same institution. He is a well-known poet and writer who has published works in various journals world-wide.

Source: White, Steven. 1997. "Reinventing a Sacred past in Contemporary Afro-Brazilian Poetry. Five African-Brazilian Poets." *Callaloo* 20: 83-105.

### Luis Silva (1951 - )

Luis Silva, pen name Cuti, was born in Ourinhos, Brazil in 1951. He is a multi-talented writer who has produced works of poetry, fiction, theatre, essays, and even juvenile or youth literature. He is said to be the voice of contemporary Afro-Brazilian literature. Throughout his work, such themes as the condition of the Afro-Brazilian, and the Afro-Brazilian's place in Brazilian society are most prominent. Silva received his doctorate of literary theory through UNICAMP.

Source: <http://www.irohin.org.br/onl/new.php?sec=news&id=602>

### Oswaldo de Camargo (1936 - )

Camargo was born in Braganca Paulisa, Brazil in 1936. He is a journalist, poet, and critic, but is known for his life-long dedication to Afro-Brazilian literature or "black literature". His is a strong advocate for the existence of this literature, in which he states that "from the moment the black looks at himself he will come to tell of his experiences as a black individual, their memories, their life, their differences, their identity."

Source <http://www.portalafro.com.br/literatura/oswaldo/oswaldo.htm>

### Jose Carlos de Andrade

Andrade, pen name Jamu Minka, was born in Varginha, Brazil. He is a journalist and poet and an active participant in the black movements of Brazil. He believes in the raising of a positive consciousness in relation to African ancestry. He wrote in the journal *Árvore das Palavras*, *Versus/Afro-Latino-América* and *Jornegro*. He was also involved in CECAN - Centro de Cultura e Arte Negra as well as Quilombhoje. He was one of the founders of the series *Cadernos Negros*.

Source: [http://bayo.sites.uol.com.br/poemas\\_jamuminka.htm](http://bayo.sites.uol.com.br/poemas_jamuminka.htm)