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**“Bewitched”: Africa as a Determinant in the Career of
Henrique Galvão, 1927-1970**

Michael S. Peres

In an autobiographical passage, written in 1961, the Portuguese Africanist and dissident Henrique Galvão stated that Africa had determined his fate.¹ Far from overstatement, this was an insightful and accurate summation of his life experience. Indubitably, “Africa”, signifying the Portuguese African colonies,² had featured uppermost in Galvão’s multifarious career as a colonial official, politician, writer, soldier and humanist. It had caused both the ascension and descent of his star.

For more than forty years, beginning with his maiden visit to Angola in 1927, the course of Galvão’s life was essentially decided by two elements: commitment to ideological colonialism and a profound affinity for Portugal’s African colonies. These twin personal traits were to lead Galvão, firstly, to the New State regime of Oliveira Salazar, and subsequently, to dissidence, and finally, ostracism from oppositionist groups.

Galvão’s relationship with the African colonies is a broad and complex subject, much of which still awaiting in-depth scholarly investigation. Our purpose here is merely to construct a synoptic framework identifying the main components of the Galvão-Africa link, and to correlate that link, as a determinant, with the crucial phases and events in his career. Therefore attention is focused on those aspects most intimately connected to African and colonial matters to the ineluctable exclusion of, among other facets, his anti-communism and engagement in controversial opposition politics in Portugal and in exile.

This essay attempts, firstly, to trace the origins and general outlook of Galvão’s colonialism in the context of contemporary Portuguese politics during 1927-31. Secondly, it provides a brief account of his involvement, as a member of the New State, in the reconstruction of Portugal’s African empire in the 1930s and 40s. And, thirdly, it looks at Galvão’s break with Salazar, his ensuing dissident activism and eventual isolation from the anti-Salazar movement (1947-70) as the direct outcome of an abiding colonialism and emotional attachment to an idealised Portuguese Africa.

Early life and career to 1927

Born in 1895, a native of Barreiro, district of Lisbon, Henrique Carlos Malta Galvão opted for a military career at the age of nineteen, on completion of his secondary education. He concluded the infantry officer course in 1917

¹ H. Galvão, *Santa Maria: My Crusade for Portugal* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1961), 40.

² This essay generally refers to Africa as meaning the Portuguese colonies of Guiné-Bissau, Cabo Verde, São Tomé e Príncipe, but especially Angola and Mozambique.

and was promoted to 1st Lieutenant in 1921. But, inexplicably, he never rose beyond the rank of Captain, attained in 1934.

Like many of his countrymen, the patriotic and conservative young Galvão disapproved of the First Republic, Portugal's maiden experiment with liberal democracy following the overthrow of the monarchy in 1910. Unable to find a cohesive ideology, the regime had entangled itself in a web of political, financial and social instability. Unbridled personalism and factionalism thrived alongside corruption and fiscal mismanagement in a combination that shook the state to its foundations. Forty-five governments, eight presidential elections and seven parliaments (four of which dismissed by military action) in sixteen years stood as an indication of the Republic's volatility.³

An idealist and self-professed man of action, Galvão engaged in some of the military political interventions of the day designed to topple the rudderless democracy. He actively supported the rightist *Nova República* (1917-18), a brief experiment in republican semi-authoritarianism under Major Sidónio Pais (1872-1918). And, on 28 May 1926, the dissident lieutenant adhered to the nationwide uprising that finally ousted the democratic regime and installed a military dictatorship (*ditadura military*) (1926-32), a transitional formula meant to restore public order, stamp out corruption, nurse the ailing economy and midwife the re-deliverance of republican ideals.

Despite the successful restoration of public order within its first two years, military rule was handicapped by internal divisions concerning political direction and unable to remedy the ailing economy. The *ditadura* seemed headed for the same turbulent waters that had claimed the Republic. In a series of articles, published in 1927, Henrique Galvão accused the government of straying from the reconstructive spirit of the 28 May revolution, of allowing the continuation of administrative corruption and failing to improve the financial situation.⁴ The following month he took part in an abortive radical rightist attempt against the *ditadura* for which he was arrested and deported to Angola.

Africa 1927-29

Galvão's stay in Angola had two distinct phases: forced exile and, subsequently, colonial ministry commission. The former ended in 1928 when Lisbon recalled its deportee only to ship him back as *chefe de gabinete* (chief of staff) of the Governor-general in Luanda, a post Galvão followed with that of governor of the district of Huíla in southern Angola (February-April 1929) before returning to Portugal.⁵

³ A. H. Oliveira Marques, *History of Portugal: From Empire to Corporate State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 162; D.L.Wheeler, 'Nightmare Republic: Portugal 1910-1926', *History Today*, Sept 1981, 6.

⁴ E. Montoito, *Henrique Galvão: Ou a Dissidência de um Cadete do 28 de Maio (1927-1952)* (Lisbon: Centro de História da Universidade de Lisboa, 2005), 21.

⁵ *ibid.*, 53.

The African sojourn in 1927-9 proved a climacteric that transformed Galvão into a decided colonialist fired up with the idea of imperial revival and inaugurated (what was to become) a personal lifelong affection for Africa. Years later Galvão would claim that physical contact with the African landscape actually released his latent talents as a writer, humanist, politician and 'man of action' whose passions included exploring and hunting. But, above all, Galvão stated, the Angolan experience made him a 'Portuguese-African at heart'.⁶

Imperialist outlook 1929-30

On his return to Lisbon in 1929, inspired by the colonialist afflatus, Galvão rapidly established himself as a specialist on African (especially Angolan) and colonial matters whose opinions were enthusiastically disseminated in books, monographs, articles and lectures. A talented, prolific writer and speaker, he dealt with diverse colonial topics ranging from policy and administration to fairs for the promotion of imperial products and packaging in the colonial trade. In two seminal publications in 1929-30, Galvão articulated his basic colonialist views and made various suggestions concerning the future of the overseas empire.⁷ Primarily about Angola, these works contain, nevertheless, the defining elements of his broader colonial outlook that remained basically unchanged throughout his life.

Galvão subscribed to a classic imperialist idea in which the colonies were held to be an integral part of the political, cultural, spiritual and economic identity of the Portuguese nation. Portugal and her African possessions formed a non-militaristic transoceanic unity that was at once indivisible and unalterable.⁸ This imperial conception was located within a broader interpretation that viewed the historical construction of Portugal as the outcome of a three-fold process beginning with the reconquest of Moor-occupied southern lands (718 A.D.) (European purpose) followed by the formation of the Portuguese kingdom in 1140 (peninsular purpose) and culminating in the maritime expansion of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (world purpose).⁹ The last stage inextricably linked Portuguese identity with the overseas territories. Lisbon, therefore, had an historical African mission which it could not shirk. Accordingly, only as a trans-continental plurality could Portugal define and assert itself in the world.

Galvão held that the establishment of Portuguese hegemony over the colonies required an intensive nationalisation of their societies. Numerous factors, however, militated against this, threatening the continuity of Portuguese rule in Africa. Internally, there were two main de-nationalising agents: absence of a defined colonial policy and its concomitant, an inefficient

⁶ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, op.cit., 40.

⁷ *Huila: Relatório de Governo* (V.N. de Famalicão: Minerva, 1929); *Nacionalização de Angola: conferência realizada na Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa em 13 de Janeiro de 1930* (Lisbon: published by the author, 1930)

⁸ Galvão, *Nacionalização de Angola*, op.cit., 8.

⁹ Montoito, *op. cit.*, 64.

administrative apparatus.¹⁰ The advent of internationalist liberal ideas and a constitutional monarchy in 1820 had diverted the Portuguese from their imperial mission. Lisbon had strayed from its colonial mission and practically abandoned the African territories.¹¹ A burst of inspired imperialism (1890-1910), headed by António Enes (1848-1901), briefly interrupted the neglectful state of the colonies and saw the establishment of the legal, economic, social and political foundations of the modern Portuguese colonial state.¹² However, with sporadic exceptions - such as those of colonial governors José Norton de Matos (1867-1955) and João de Almeida (1873-1953) - the visionary administrative brilliance of Enes and his disciples had no immediate institutional sequence. The empire returned largely to a condition of semi-dormancy and decay.

As governor of Huíla, Galvão had experienced firsthand the effects of the colonial malaise when he felt compelled to govern 'without a leader, without a superior idea, without specific instruction'.¹³ He drew a logical conclusion: Portugal did not have a colonial policy since it did not possess a colonial doctrine, spirit, or method.¹⁴ Galvão quoted, approvingly, the lusophonist Aubrey F G Bell: despite their determination not to part with 'no inch' of imperial territory, the Portuguese were unable to think imperially.¹⁵

In the absence of a cohesive African policy, an aimless and corrupt colonial administration emerged in which individual officials from the colonial minister down to the *chefe de posto*,¹⁶ pursued their own ideas and methods. The colonies thus drifted on at the mercy of conflicting personal opinions.¹⁷ With typical flair, Galvão captured the confusion afflicting the empire: 'where there isn't an Idea, many ideas abound. Precisely because there isn't One (sic), many appear'.¹⁸ As a consequence, Lisbon and its African

¹⁰ Galvão, *Nacionalização de Angola*, op.cit., 11-2.

¹¹ Montoito, *op. cit.*, 60. For the most part from 1820 to 1910 Portugal had turned inward. Abandoning its centuries-long preoccupation with imperialism, Lisbon concentrated instead on a program of intensive modernisation in metropolitan Portugal. National efforts, particularly during 1851-86, under Secretary António Fontes Pereira de Melo (1818-87), were directed at the development of agriculture, communication and transportation networks, industry and so on. For a discussion of this topic see A.H. de Oliveira Marques, *History of Portugal: from empire to corporate state* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 1-75.

¹² For the administrative ideas of Enes see his *Moçambique: Relatório Apresentado ao Governo* (Lisbon: Agência-Geral do Ultramar, 1971). For an authoritative treatment of Enes and his circle in English see James Duffy, *Portuguese Africa* (Cambridge: Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1961); R.J. Hammond, *Portugal and Africa 1815-1910* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966) provides another solid account of the 1890-1910 period.

¹³ Galvão, *Huíla*, op. cit., 5.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, 3.

¹⁵ Galvão, *Nacionalização de Angola*, op. cit., 6; A.F.G. Bell, *Portugal of the Portuguese* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), 238.

¹⁶ The *posto* (post) formed the smallest structural unit of the Portuguese colonial administrative system in the twentieth-century. The *chefe de posto* was the highest ranking official in that subdivision.

¹⁷ Galvão, *Huíla*, op. cit., 5.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, 4.

satellites veered apart, weakening imperial ties and further exposing the latter to ever-lurking international designs.

Perhaps the greatest threat to transoceanic Portugal came from covetous ‘political and economic internationalism’.¹⁹ Seeking expansion into the Portuguese territories or, in the case of Russia, the ‘destruction of European civilisation’, various nations took advantage of the negative image of Portuguese colonial methods - construed as neo-slavery by critics such as Henry Nevinson (1856-1941), George Cadbury (1839-1922) and E.A. Ross (1866-1951).²⁰ Already at the Versailles peace conference (1918-9), doubts concerning Portugal’s ability to govern her colonies had arisen and proposals made to place Lisbon’s African territories under international administration.²¹ Later, using forced labour as a pretext, some member-countries of the League of Nations resumed the campaign against Portugal in Africa.²²

In the post-1918 climate, when the very nature and purpose of colonialism were under scrutiny, Portugal’s ‘poor’ African record made it particularly vulnerable to external attacks. *Sui generis* and only partially developed, Portuguese colonialism appeared anachronistic against an emerging international consensus that viewed colonies as transitory possessions to be elevated, within the shortest time frame, to an economic, political and social level that would make independence possible. The Portuguese were thus caught in a double paradox. They were being pressed out of their territories - by imperialist forces acting in the name of anti-imperialism – even before they had fully colonised them. Unlike other imperial powers, which had laid the foundations necessary to ensure the continuity of their influence in post-colonial conditions, Portugal had yet to establish hegemony over its African territories.²³

In Galvão’s understanding, the rising anti-imperialism, clothed in humanist ideology, provided a vehicle (and a mask) for expansionist schemes. He detected an international conspiracy against Portuguese rule in Africa to which Portugal, in its current colonial disarray, was vulnerable.²⁴ But there was no reason to despair. Galvão urged his countrymen to build on the

¹⁹ Galvão, *Nacionalização de Angola*, op. cit., 15.

²⁰ *ibid.*, 15; Nevinson, a prominent British journalist, his compatriot Cadbury, a philanthropist-chocolate producer, and Ross, a controversial American progressive and eugenicist, were prominent figures in a wide and aggressive campaign against Portuguese colonial methods in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

²¹ Franco Nogueira, *Salazar: Os Tempos Áureos (1928-1936)* (Coimbra: Atlântida Editora, 1977), 219.

²² Galvão, *Nacionalização de Angola*, op. cit., 14.

²³ Galvão’s argument seems to be supported by René Pélissier, renowned authority on Portuguese colonial history. Pélissier theorises that Portuguese colonisation only takes place in the 20th century. ‘Colonisation needs colonisers’, he states, and there were only ‘nine thousand Portuguese in all of Angola at the beginning of the 20th century.’ See interview by J.M. Rocha, ‘French historian René Pélissier highlights role of Amílcar Cabral and Cape Verdeans in Guinea Bissau’, *Público*, 18 April 2010.

²⁴ Galvão, *Nacionalização de Angola*, op. cit., 15.

greatness of their historical achievements and follow the trail blazed by Enes and others at the turn of the century.²⁵ The current apathy towards the overseas territories must be fought and the colonial spirit re-kindled among the Portuguese.

A new imperial policy was required in which colonial administration was subjected to a rigorous nationalist program - one that restored the African territories to the national political body and promoted the indivisibility of European Portugal and her colonies.²⁶ Such a process would coordinate all economic, cultural and political interests within the empire, tightening the link between Lisbon and its African possessions.

The nationalisation of the colonies should aim to increase Portuguese presence through a process of sponsored emigration from Portugal. It would also check infiltration of the colonies by external agents of denationalisation. Numerous foreign religious orders (German, Belgian, French, American and others), for example, had been operating on Portuguese soil. These, Galvão opined, were concerned with the dissemination of their own national interests rather than those of Portugal. Even the Portuguese Catholic Church, much praised for its nationalising work, was to be regarded with caution since the ultimate aim of its spiritual mission was the 'constitution of the colonies into independent states.'²⁷

Renewed imperialism under Salazar 1928-33

By 1930 the scenario in Portugal had changed substantially. The military dictatorship had found its financial *deus ex machina* in António de Oliveira Salazar (1889-1970). A gifted professor of political economics at Coimbra University, Salazar had within a year of his appointment as finance minister (1928) reversed the downward trend of the economy. But the Coimbra academic was more than a proficient economist. His powers, ideas and influence extended well beyond the limits of his portfolio.²⁸ Salazar's arrival at the finance ministry initiated a process of transformation that saw military rule dissolve into the traditionalist *Estado Novo* (New State). The meteoric rise of the finance minister (1928-33) culminated with his appointment as prime minister (1932) followed by the introduction of a new constitution (1933) which formally established the new regime.

The imperial question occupied centre stage in the Salazarian plan for national reconstruction and was thus promptly addressed. As interim colonial minister, in April 1930, Salazar introduced the Colonial Act.²⁹ This seminal piece of legislation – the foundation stone of Portugal's colonial policy until the 1950s - established the basic principle on which the renovated colonial

²⁵ *ibid.*, 7.

²⁶ *ibid.*, 29; 30.

²⁷ *ibid.*, 13.

²⁸ H. Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1970), 48.

²⁹ Co-authored by Armindo Rodrigues de Sstau Monteiro (1896-1955) and Quirino Avelino de Jesus (1855-1935), two significant figures in the formation of the New State.

edifice was to stand: a transcontinental imperial structure that re-defined the African territories as integral parts of the Portuguese state.³⁰

The empire was therefore conceptualised as a Pan-Lusitanian community, geographically scattered but fused into one political, economic, cultural and spiritual unity.³¹ Colonial autonomy, experimented with in the early twentieth century, was abandoned and the African territories again tightly bound to the Lisbon government.³² Colonial policy had for its ultimate goal the integration of the overseas lands with the mother-country via a common economy and the eventual spiritual and cultural assimilation of African populations into Portuguese citizenship.³³ The Colonial Act unequivocally declared the colonising of the African territories and ‘civilizing’ of their populations to be the ‘historic function’ of the Portuguese nation.³⁴

New State colonialist 1931-45

An association between Henrique Galvão and the New State seems logical, given the congruity of the former’s colonialist views and the precepts articulated by the Colonial Act. The budding imperialist glowingly welcomed Salazar as the ‘Man of Providence’ whose political vision, reforms and rehabilitation of public order made possible the resurgence of the ‘colonial idea’ in Portugal.³⁵

Galvão thrived in the patriotic atmosphere brought on by the New State. Particularly exhilarating was the re-discovery of the *rumo do Império* (imperial course) under the auspices of historical figures from Portugal’s imperialist pantheon with whom the regime sought to combat the atrophying effects of a century of national lethargy. The long-neglected Prince Henry, Vasco da Gama, Afonso de Albuquerque and a host of other heroic personages were resurrected as part of a campaign to reconnect the nation with its glorious past and thus regain the national pride necessary to rebuild the empire. With Salazar at the helm, Portugal had resumed the course of her historical ‘colonial mission’.³⁶ It was this promise of a new imperial dawn, above all else, that drew Galvão to the New State.

Under Armindo Monteiro, colonial minister (1931-34), the regime launched a campaign designed to mobilise popular support for, and participation in, the process of colonial reconstruction. This was to be achieved by a propaganda offensive promoting public awareness, at home and

³⁰ M. Newitt, *Portugal in Africa: The Last Hundred Years* (London: C. Hurst & CO., 1981), 185.

³¹ Nogueira, *Salazar: Os Tempos Áureos*, op. cit., 67-8; Kay, op. cit., 212.

³² Newitt, op. cit., 186; R. A. H. Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal: A History* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1979), 96; M. Caetano, *Colonising Traditions, Principles and Methods of the Portuguese* (Lisbon: Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1951), 38.

³³ J. Silva Cunha, *O Sistema Português de Política Indígena: Princípios Gerais* (Lisbon: Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1952), 59; Newitt, op. cit., 185; Caetano, op. cit., 34.

³⁴ Robinson, op. cit., 96.

³⁵ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, op. cit., 41; Henrique Galvão, *Angola: Para Uma Nova Política* (Lisbon: Livraria Popular de Francisco Franco, 1937), 3.

³⁶ Montoito, op. cit., 13.

abroad, of the transcontinental concept of the Portuguese nation. African expertise and adherence to Salazar made Henrique Galvão an ideal recruit for Monteiro's project.

The gates of the nascent New State opened wide for the colonial theoretician. For the next two decades (1931-49) Galvão assiduously contributed to the construction of a new Portuguese African empire. He began working for the regime in 1931 as director of *Portugal Colonial*, an official publication aimed at the dissemination of imperial propaganda. That same year Galvão was employed as organiser of colonial fairs and exhibitions and appointed Portugal's Representative at the Colonial Congress in Paris. In 1932 he was named director of the colonial fairs held in Luanda and Lourenço Marques and two years later was assigned (and given wide latitude to use his organisational and artistic talents) as technical director of the *Exposição Colonial Portuguesa* (Portuguese Colonial Exhibition) in Oporto.

Regarded as the fundamental phase of the colonial ministry's reconstruction plan, the 1934 Oporto Exhibition sought primarily to reawaken public colonial consciousness (*pensamento imperial*) and to build a sense of imperial identity, dormant since the early nineteenth century, by creating an awareness of the socio-economic realities of the empire.³⁷ Galvão's slogan 'Portugal is not a small country' neatly encapsulated the main thrust of the event and was illustrated by his own ingenious cartographic construction intended to impress the gargantuan dimensions of the empire onto the public's mental conception of national identity. By super-imposing the outlines of Angola and Mozambique over the map of Europe, Galvão conveyed, visually, the point that imperial Portugal occupied a geographic area larger than that of Spain, France, England, Italy, and Germany combined.³⁸ The message was unambiguous: the Portuguese had no reason to feel small.

A resounding success, the *Exposição Colonial* attracted 1.3 million visitors in the four months of its duration.³⁹ The colonial minister extolled Henrique Galvão as the 'true center of the *Exposição*', adding that the exhibition's technical director fully deserved the trust bestowed on him by the regime.⁴⁰ Naturally, in 1940, the state again called on its chief Africanist to organise the colonial section of the *Exposição do Mundo Português* (Portuguese world exhibition) commemorating Portugal's eight centuries of nationhood (1140) and 300 years of regained independence from Spain (1640). Broader in scope than its Oporto forerunner, the *Mundo Português* exhibition was to be a 'living lesson' in Portuguese history designed to disseminate an historical continuity (1140-1940) at once evolutionary and in

³⁷ *ibid.*, 181.

³⁸ H. Cairo, 'Portugal is not a Small Country: Maps and Propaganda in the Salazar Regime', *Geopolitics*, vol 11, 2006, 379.

³⁹ D. Corkill and J.C. Almeida, 'Commemoration and propaganda in Salazar's Portugal: the Portuguese World Exhibition of 1940' (<http://hdl.handle.net/2173/14342>) (2007), 15-6.

⁴⁰ Montoito, *op. cit.*, 181.

accordance with the ideological values of the salazarist state.⁴¹ Aimed primarily at an international audience, the event sought to showcase and legitimise the accomplishments of the regime with an emphasis on ‘how the Portuguese saw themselves and how they viewed the world’. Registering three million visitors, the exhibition marked the supreme moment in the ideological construction of the *Estado Novo*.⁴² Once again, Henrique Galvão was acclaimed for a sterling job and officially praised as ‘a colonialist’ whose spirit embodied the Portuguese Empire - someone who was ‘not just an organiser but a creator’.⁴³

Galvão’s association with Salazar, however, extended well beyond colonial fairs and exhibitions. Official confidence in his expertise and organising ability prompted a swift ascension of his star in the New State firmament. During 1935-41, for example, he was director of the *Emissora Nacional*, the national radio broadcasting service established by the regime. Under Galvão’s management the broadcaster became an agent of imperial cohesion. Its service was extended to all Portuguese territories thus connecting the far-flung imperial populations to the gravitational centre in Lisbon.

Of utmost importance was Galvão’s appointment, in 1936, as *Inspector Superior da Administração Colonial* (senior inspector of colonial administration),⁴⁴ a position that placed him in direct contact with colonial realities on the ground. As an inspector Galvão travelled extensively in all Portuguese overseas territories. These tours would provide the detailed information on colonial conditions that later formed the basis of his case against Salazar.

The break with Salazar 1945-49

Henrique Galvão’s career entered a final phase in late 1945 when the regime called on him to represent Angola in the National Assembly, the lower house of the Portuguese parliament. Comprising 120 members, directly elected for a period of four years, the National Assembly functioned as a ‘watchdog’ whose power to legislate was curtailed by the fact that it could not initiate any measures requiring public expenditure.⁴⁵ Still, it provided a platform from which Galvão could articulate his views.

Having served the regime for nearly 15 years, Galvão had grown deeply concerned about its administrative record in Africa. He had called in vain for greater economic development and improved social integration in the colonies.⁴⁶ After 1937 the inspector’s appeals for corrective action in colonial

⁴¹ Corkill and Almeida, *op. cit.*, 11.

⁴² *ibid.*, 11; 8-9.

⁴³ Montoito, *op. cit.*, 181.

⁴⁴ Montoito, *op. cit.*, 75.

⁴⁵ Robinson, *op. cit.*, 49; M. Derrick, *The Portugal of Salazar* (London: Sands: The Paladin Press, 1938), 116-7.

⁴⁶ Raby, *op. cit.*, 154.

management became more pronounced and urgent.⁴⁷ Galvão feared that, if unchecked, the abusive, inefficient and corrupt tendencies of current colonial administration could well bring collapse to Portuguese Africa. Yet all his efforts to alert the government to the seriousness of the situation met with official silence. Feeling ignored and frustrated, Galvão became increasingly despondent.

Experience as a colonial official had convinced Galvão that only political intervention would get the leadership to act on the problems facing Portugal in Africa. As Angolan representative he would have the means to convey his case more forcefully before the central government. Within a year of his arrival in the National Assembly matters reached a turning point.

In January 1947, Galvão submitted to the National Assembly a controversial 52-page report on conditions in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau (commonly known as the ‘Galvão report’). Labeled *exposição* (exposition),⁴⁸ the document criticised the deficiencies of colonial administration and was discussed at a ‘secret session’ of the 17-member *Comissão das Colónias* (Committee of Colonies) on Galvão’s request.⁴⁹ Due to the sensitive nature of its contents the report was suppressed. A year later, in an interpellation to the government, the Angolan deputy reiterated his main charges in a speech at a public session of the Assembly.

As a decisive moment in Galvão’s career, the *exposição* requires further discussion. Detailed and comprehensive, it dealt with numerous social, economic and administrative difficulties related to a chronic shortage of labour threatening to paralyze Portuguese Africa. The situation was critical and, if not urgently addressed, would lead to the ‘tragic failure’ of Portugal’s colonial mission ‘after five centuries of glory’.⁵⁰

The product of extensive consultation with colonial officials, settlers, missionaries and African workers themselves, Galvão’s thesis tackled seven key problems:

1. Heavy demographic losses caused by growing illegal emigration to neighboring colonies since the 1930s. Mass emigration was stimulated chiefly by the prospect of better working conditions, higher salaries and lower taxes in the adjacent territories

2. Depletion of the African populations of Angola and Mozambique resulting from low birth rates, poor medical assistance, deficient diet and high mortality figures among infants and workers

⁴⁷ D. L. Wheeler, ‘*The Galvão Report on forced labour (1947) in historical context and perspective: trouble-shooter who was “trouble”*’ (paper presented at the African Studies Association annual meeting, November 16-19, 2006, San Francisco), 12.

⁴⁸ Henrique Galvão, *Exposição* (1947). The original manuscript of the report is stored in the *Assembleia da República* archives in Lisbon. This writer is greatly indebted to professor D. L. Wheeler for kindly providing a copy of the unpublished document.

⁴⁹ Wheeler, ‘*The Galvão report*’, op. cit., 17.

⁵⁰ Galvão, *Exposição*, op. cit., 1.

3. A disastrous labour situation that could not be sustained indefinitely
4. Disruption of the moral, political, social and economic structures of traditional African societies
5. The danger presented by the infiltration of subversive agents from neighboring colonies, especially the Belgian Congo where a decolonisation movement was already stirring
6. Abandonment of certain border areas by the Portuguese authorities
7. The colonial administration's inability or unwillingness to solve the problems mentioned above⁵¹

Central to Galvão's report is its discussion of the labour question, particularly in Angola where it was most acute. Indeed, shortage of labour is identified as the one fundamental problem upon which all others rested. Without a mass of African workers the colonial economy could not function and in Angola the shrinking availability of labour had reached critical proportions.

From the outset of their colonising efforts the Portuguese had grappled with labour shortage. In the process, an exploitative "contract system" had developed as part of a crypto colonial methodology and from 1921 firmly entrenched itself.⁵² Incidentally, Galvão himself had earlier been an apologist of carefully regulated compelled labour as an interim solution.⁵³ But in his 1947 report he rates the "contract system" as the single most significant cause for a "demographic hemorrhage" in which Africans emigrated at yearly rates of a hundred thousand⁵⁴ to the adjacent colonies in an attempt to escape the shackles of forced labour. If unchecked, Galvão warns, this emigrational trend would depopulate Angola within thirty years.⁵⁵

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the *exposição* is its indictment of the state, via its recruitment and supply of forced labour, as the driving force behind the nefarious 'contract' arrangement. This contravened the Colonial Act's basic guarantees to Africans of 'protection and defense in accordance with the principles of humanity' and legal punishment for 'all abuses against the person and property of the natives'.⁵⁶

What are the motivation and aims of the *exposição*? Firstly, it is the work of a humanitarian, reformist and loyal *Salazarista* seeking to 'agitate' the

⁵¹ *ibid.*, 9.

⁵² Douglas Wheeler, 'The Forced Labor 'system' in Angola, 1903-1947: reassessing origins and persistence in the context of colonial consolidation, economic growth and reform failures' (paper presented at II Colóquio Internacional "Trabalho Forçado Africano", Centro de Estudos Africanos, Universidade do Porto, Portugal, November 18, 2005), 2; 5.

⁵³ Galvão, *Huíla*, op. cit., 160-1.

⁵⁴ Galvão, *Exposição*, op. cit., 10; 13.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, 10.

⁵⁶ Quoted in F.C.C.Egerton, *Salazar, Rebuilder of Portugal* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1943), 261.

African question in order to draw the regime's attention to its urgency;⁵⁷ a last-ditch attempt by a concerned and frustrated official whose previous warnings had been ignored. Corrupt and lacking the pragmatic flexibility required to address its socio-economic deficiencies, Angolan administration had broken down. In Galvão's vivid diagnosis: 'the machine jammed'.⁵⁸ And it is within this context of administrative machinery in need of repair that the report is best considered. If no corrective measures are taken, Galvão contends, Angola's economy faced implosion and with it Portugal's imperial existence.⁵⁹ Secondly, evidence suggests Galvão might have harboured expectations relating to a promotion in the regime's hierarchy. Thus far he had held important but secondary level posts which hardly satisfied his ambitions. In an open letter to Salazar he expressed profound bitterness over the appointment, in 1947, of two individuals to key colonial positions.⁶⁰ Galvão's discernibly envious tone hints that he may have had in mind either of the two positions as a reward for services rendered to the regime. Some observers have identified additional reasons such as patriotic concern and even empathy with the African populations under Portuguese rule.⁶¹

The author himself explained the report as an act of conscience. He felt it his duty to run "all the risks" for a cause he had pledged to defend as Angolan deputy.⁶² Personal motives aside, it is clear that the criticisms of labour conditions stemmed from a wider concern with the survival of Portuguese colonialism which, as we have seen, Galvão conflated with patriotism: Portugal's African colonies were her *raison d'être* as an independent European country.⁶³

It took the regime four years to respond to Galvão's denunciations. Only in 1951 were the findings of an official inquiry made public. It was revealed that at least sixteen colonial officials had been investigated for misconduct. But whether any punitive measures were enforced remained undisclosed.⁶⁴

Although, for three years after submitting his report, Galvão retained both posts at the National Assembly and Colonial Ministry, the *exposição* had clearly numbered his days with the regime. The split came in 1949. It was the culmination of a 'progressive and accumulative' alienation process based on

⁵⁷ Galvão, *Exposição*, op. cit., 3.

⁵⁸ Henrique Galvão, *Por Angola: Quatro Anos de Actividade Parlamentar 1945-1949* (Lisbon: ? , 1949), 231-34.

⁵⁹ Galvão, *Exposição*, op. cit., 2.

⁶⁰ Teófilo Duarte and José Agapito da Silva Carvalho were named Minister of Colonies and Governor-General of Angola respectively. Henrique Galvão, *Carta Aberta ao Dr Salazar* (Lisbon: Arcádia, 1975), 62.

⁶¹ Peter Fryer & Patricia McGowan Pinheiro, *Oldest Ally: A Portrait of Salazar's Portugal* (London: Dennis Dobson, 1961), 192; Franco Nogueira, *Salazar: O Ataque* (Coimbra: Livraria Civilização, 1980), 168.

⁶² Galvão, *Por Angola*, op. cit., 222-3.

⁶³ 'Discurso do Sr. Henrique Galvão', 16.

⁶⁴ *Diário de Notícias*, July 11, 1951, 2.

gathered information relating to the African question and articulated politically in the National Assembly.⁶⁵ Galvão's faith in Salazar had been eroded by disregard shown for his colonial investigations (1935-48). The Angola question, he would claim later, enabled him to see the premier in 'plain nudity'. It had convinced him of Salazar's unwillingness to correct his flawed colonial administration.⁶⁶ Salazar, whom he once revered, had turned out to be 'a man that did not exist' at all, whose regime was but an oligarchy of professors, bankers and bureaucrats ruling over an apathetic population that took refuge in *fado* and football.⁶⁷

Personal disenchantment, however, does not account fully for Galvão's estrangement. The government itself had been irked by the Angolan deputy's insistence on political autonomy and increasingly defiant attitude. By 1948 Galvão was under PIDE (International Police for the Defence of the State) surveillance following his court appearance as defence witness on behalf of his friend and co-author Col. Carlos Selvagem (1890-1973), on trial for seditious activities.⁶⁸

Disillusioned and seemingly intent on scuttling his regime career, Galvão's behavior in the National Assembly grew ever more confrontational with requests for information on specific colonial officials and other sensitive details of Angola's administrative structure. Matters came to a head when, in a decisive intervention in February 1949 (*aviso prévio sobre a administração de Angola*), the troublesome deputy depicted Angola's administration as a 'colossal lie' concealing its 'mediocrity and incompetence' from Lisbon.⁶⁹

A heated debate ensued, ending with a motion by Mário de Figueiredo (1891-1969), a close associate of Salazar and rated by some as one of the "highest intellectual and moral figures" of the regime.⁷⁰ Supported by all deputies, except Galvão, Figueiredo requested an investigation into the Angola representative's allegations. Unexpectedly, four days later Galvão reopened the issue on account of the media's coverage of information related to his accusations in the National Assembly.⁷¹ Figueiredo was annoyed, arguing that a debate, formally concluded, could not be simply reopened. In response, Galvão reminded the Assembly he had not voted in favour of Figueiredo's motion.⁷² Days later he published an article criticising Figueiredo and the National Assembly over the Angola question. This might have been the

⁶⁵ Montoito, *Galvão*, op. cit., 87.

⁶⁶ Galvão, *Carta Aberta*, op. cit., 14.

⁶⁷ Quoted in Montoito, *op. cit.*, 179; 177.

⁶⁸ Carlos Selvagem, *nom de plum* of Carlos Tavares de Andrade Afonso dos Santos, writer and former governor of Inhambane (Mozambique) and Huíla (Angola).

⁶⁹ Galvão, *Por Angola*, op. cit., 219. Galvão borrowed the 'colossal lie' phrase from a 1929 Salazar speech and repeatedly quotes it in his works: see *Por Angola*, 218; *Nacionalização de Angola*, 3; 'Um critério de povoamento europeu nas colónias Portuguesas', 6; *Angola: Para uma Nova Política*, 210.

⁷⁰ Montoito, *op. cit.*, 123-4.

⁷¹ Galvão, *Por Angola*, op. cit., 323.

⁷² *ibid.*, 325-26.

decisive straw. A vexed Figueiredo could not be placated, demanding that action be taken against the ‘*garoto*’ (scoundrel). Not even an appeasing letter from Salazar himself could calm him down.⁷³ As a result, disciplinary proceedings were instituted against the recalcitrant Angola deputy. It is this episode, according to Franco Nogueira, that marks Galvão’s *de facto* passage to the opposition camp.⁷⁴

Prison 1952-9

Once the gloves were off, the government moved rapidly to neutralise Galvão whom Salazar regarded as highly intelligent, enterprising and potentially dangerous to have as an adversary.⁷⁵ In 1952 PIDE arrested him on charges of conspirational and subversive activities against the state.⁷⁶ Found guilty, Galvão was sentenced to three years in prison.⁷⁷ That same year he was stripped of his military rank and expelled from the Army reserves to which he had been relegated in 1947.⁷⁸

The incarcerated Galvão continued denouncing state corruption and incompetence as well as inciting civil disobedience. His smuggled scurrilous writings were distributed countrywide in a campaign that brought further judicial punishment.⁷⁹ In 1954, the year he was to be released, PIDE charged Galvão with defamation of officials and publishing subversive propaganda. A new trial and a guilty verdict condemned him to a further eighteen years in prison.⁸⁰ However, in January 1959, the irrepressible Galvão escaped from the hospital where he had been kept (due to ill health). On 17 February, the fugitive was granted political asylum in the Argentine embassy.⁸¹ Three months later, Galvão was given official permission to leave Portugal for exile in South America.

Crusade against Salazar 1960-1

Much as they had motivated earlier affiliation to and break with the New State, Galvão’s colonialism, African affinities and, to a lesser degree, anti-communism would now largely decide the course of his career as an active revolutionist. By 1960, an obsessive preoccupation with Salazar, nurtured by nearly a decade in prison, had come to dominate Galvão’s thinking. He blamed the premier for virtually all the problems confronting

⁷³ In a letter to Figueiredo, in November 1949, Salazar attempted to persuade his friend not to take umbrage at Galvão’s article. Nogueira, *Salazar: O Ataque*, op. cit., 168.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, 167-8. Alberto Franco Nogueira (1918-1993), Portuguese Foreign Affairs minister (1961-69) and author of a monumental six-volume biography of Salazar.

⁷⁵ Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência*, op. cit., 74; 77; 194.

⁷⁶ For a detailed account of Galvão’s political activities and subsequent trial during this period, see Montoito, *op. cit.*, 140-71.

⁷⁷ Montoito, *op. cit.*, 155; 162-3.

⁷⁸ ‘A Defiant Portuguese’, *New York Times*, 10 Dec. 1963, 2; Wheeler, ‘*The Galvão report*’, op. cit., 18.

⁷⁹ Raby, *op. cit.*, 156; Galvão, *Santa Maria*, op. cit., 66.

⁸⁰ Montoito, *op. cit.*, 189.

⁸¹ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, op. cit., 76; Álvaro Lins, *Missão em Portugal* (Lisbon: Centro do Livro Brasileiro, 1974), 255.

contemporary Portugal. Of course, the brunt of his hostility focused on Salazar's African administration which he considered responsible for hanging the fate of the Portuguese empire on the balance.⁸² As might be expected, Galvão now saw the urgent removal of Salazar and a return to representative democracy in Lisbon as preconditions to a solution in the overseas territories.

From exile in Venezuela, Galvão promptly engaged in a physical campaign against the Lisbon regime. Africa and colonial matters featured prominently in this anti-Salazarist drive whose central event was to be operation *Dulcinea*, the sensational seizure of the Portuguese ocean liner *Santa Maria* in January 1961.⁸³ Galvão and twenty-three other Iberian activists had hijacked the ship with 600 passengers en route from Curacao to Florida (USA). Their aim: cross the Atlantic, establish a government in Luanda and initiate a general uprising to oust Salazar and install a democratic regime in Portugal.⁸⁴ After a thirteen-day maritime odyssey - that cost the life of one of the ship's officers and involved military and political intervention by the United States and Brazil - Galvão's floating utopia ended in Recife (Brazil) where the hijackers were granted asylum.

Galvão and his men failed to realise their utopian objective in Africa (the *Santa Maria* never reached Angolan waters), but as publicity stunt the operation achieved indisputable success. A hybrid of idealist politics, piracy and quixotic behavior, the seizure became the hub of global interest. For two weeks Galvão's antics at sea exposed the salazarist state precisely to the type of publicity that for years it had successfully avoided.⁸⁵ Extensive worldwide TV, radio and newspaper coverage highlighted the hitherto semi-obscure New State's record at home and, most importantly, in Africa. *Dulcinea* partially shattered the regime's carefully nurtured insularity, piercing the notion of Salazar's political invulnerability.

The *Santa Maria* affair was particularly damaging to a beleaguered regime whose refusal to disengage from its African territories, despite the prevailing decolonisation trend then sweeping the world, incurred much international hostility. Under mounting pressure at the United Nations, Lisbon found its case now seriously undermined by Galvão's criticisms splashed across the world's media. Matters were made worse by an unforeseen consequence of the seizure.

The excitement caused by *Dulcinea* accidentally contributed to a nationalist outbreak in Angola signaling the start of a thirteen-year war against Portuguese rule (1961-74).⁸⁶ A large contingent of foreign journalists had

⁸² Galvão, *Carta Aberta*, op. cit., 65.

⁸³ Named after Dulcinea del Toboso, Quixote's fair lady and central character in Miguel de Cervantes' masterpiece *Don Quixote*.

⁸⁴ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, op. cit., 95.

⁸⁵ A. Marshall, 'Portugal: A Determined Empire', *The World Today*, March 1961, 95.

⁸⁶ Organized African opposition to Portuguese rule began in 1954-6 with the founding of two of

hustled to Luanda on account of Galvão's initial intention to sail the hijacked liner to the Angolan capital. Their presence, along with *Dulcinea*'s suggestion of division among the Portuguese, may have acted as an incentive to African nationalists who, on the night of 3-4 February 1961, assaulted various colonial institutional buildings including prisons, a police station and Luanda's main radio station. This was followed, on 15 March, by a full-scale rebellion in rural northern Angola whereupon white settlers and sympathetic Africans were systematically massacred in a terror campaign designed to drive the Portuguese out of the country.⁸⁷ Colonial authorities retaliated with a degree of violence often matching that meted out by the insurgents. Ultimately, this orgy of violence exacted a harsh price in human lives.⁸⁸ By training the international spotlight on Angola with the *Santa Maria* hijacking, Galvão had inadvertently assisted in lighting the fuse that triggered these tragic events.

Dulcinea also added to the internationalisation of Henrique Galvão begun with the journalism of Basil Davidson whose successful book *The African Awakening* (1955) quoted extensively from the Angola *exposição*. By 1960 Galvão was known well enough to political and journalistic circles abroad to feature in the *New York Times*, the *Economist*, the *Nation* and other prominent publications. The nature of his denunciations coupled with his status as a colonial official - therefore he must have known exactly what was going on - drew the attention of those opposed to Portuguese colonialism.⁸⁹ The *Santa Maria*, however, turned her rebel skipper into an instantaneous household name. Global audiences were mesmerised by the pop-politico-piracy adventure, while its eccentric mastermind was catapulted into the headlines as an overnight sensation.

The awareness generated by *Dulcinea* was further enhanced by the publication, in English, of Galvão's own account of the operation, *The Santa Maria: My Crusade for Portugal* (1961).⁹⁰ An odd mixture of maritime logbook and personal political manifesto, the book allocates thirty-five of its 212 pages to colonial matters, indicating the centrality of Africa in the

Angola's main resistance movements, UPA (Union of Angolan Populations) and MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola).

⁸⁷ A British observer in Angola described the 1961 UPA terrorist campaign as "the biggest slaughter of Europeans in Africa" in the twentieth-century, adding that it had "passed almost unnoticed in the world press." Ronald Waring, "The Case for Portugal," in *Angola: A Symposium, Views of a Revolt*, ed. Philip Mason (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 31; World famous novelist Robert Ruark expressed a similar opinion: the massacres of March 1961 had been "worse than the combined atrocities of the Portuguese in 500 years of colonisation." See Bernardo Teixeira, *The Fabric of Terror* (Cape Town: Human & Rousseau, 1965), viii.

⁸⁸ Antunes, *op. cit.*, 189. Estimates range from 6000 to 50 000 African and 300 to 1300 European dead. See, for example, D. L. Wheeler and R. Péliissier, *Angola* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1971), 191; David W. Wainhouse, *Remnants of Empire: the United Nations and the End of Colonialism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 38.

⁸⁹ Newitt, *op. cit.*, 187.

⁹⁰ Published simultaneously in Britain (Weidenfeld & Nicolson) and the United States (World); a Swedish edition was launched in 1962.

‘crusade’ of its subtitle. The text includes an edited version of the 1947 report, focusing mainly on forced labour and related negative aspects of Portuguese colonialism. Excised of the reformist intentions of the original report, this abridgement presents Salazar’s African administration in the most unfavourable terms: exploitatitive, incompetent and oblivious to the welfare of African populations under Portuguese rule.

Appendix II, at the end of the book, is headed ‘*Colonialism, Anti-colonialism, Self-determination*’. It elaborates, over a length of twenty two pages, on the current political situation in the Portuguese colonies and what must be done in the way of a ‘humane solution’.⁹¹ The inclusion of the abridged 1947 report and the contents of Appendix II provide additional evidence connecting operation *Dulcinea* to Galvão’s concern with African matters.

Contra Mundum 1963-70

In the wake of the *Santa Maria*, Henrique Galvão carried out two more public interventions. In late 1961 he engineered the skyjacking of a Portuguese commercial flight from Casablanca to Lisbon. The three-hour operation succeeded in the aerial distribution of anti-salazarist propaganda leaflets over southern Portugal but had negligible political impact; one writer described it as ‘a marketing success without consequences’.⁹² Galvão’s next move, however, proved far more significant.

At the invitation of the Trusteeship Committee of the United Nations (UN), the Portuguese dissident appeared before the world body to testify on conditions in Portugal’s African territories. In a two-hour deposition in December 1963, Galvão voiced his opinions on Angola and the other Portuguese colonies in what resembled a defense of classic colonialism.⁹³ Defiance of the established anti-colonialist consensus, however, carried a high price. In New York, Galvão practically burned all his bridges. Thereafter he would be repudiated by most sectors of the exile opposition and international anti-colonialist lobby. What made the UN visit a point of no return? To answer that, one has to take a closer look at Galvão’s deposition and its underpinnings.

The crux of Galvão’s thesis was simple yet controversial: Portugal’s colonies were not ready for independence. Immediate emancipation would inevitably result in chaos.⁹⁴ Premature self-rule, he cautioned, was dangerously unrealistic. One of two possible outcomes could be expected: a descent into ‘barbarism’, in the form of interracial violence, or, automatic neo-colonial absorption of the newly independent countries either by the United

⁹¹ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, op. cit., 208-11.

⁹² Antunes, op. cit., 290. For more information on this pioneering aerial piracy raid see, for example, Henrique Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, op. cit., 54, and Felicia Cabrita, ‘O Aventureiro da Revolução’, *Revista/Expresso*, September 29, 1995.

⁹³ Thomas Hamilton, ‘Galvão, at UN, Angers Africans’, *New York Times*, December 10, 1963, 1; Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, op. cit., 276.

⁹⁴ Burnham, ‘Galvão Cautions on Quick Freedom’, *New York Times*, December 10, 1963, 3.

States or the Soviet Union. This UN delegates failed to grasp due to a 'preconceived idea' as to what should be done in the Portuguese territories.⁹⁵ They insisted on immediate self-rule without considering the wider consequences for the populations concerned, an approach with little bearing on the realities facing Portugal's colonies.

Galvão blamed Portuguese Africa's inability for self-rule on Salazar whose colonial policy had failed to deliver on its declared aims. Instead, under the New State, Portuguese colonialism had turned increasingly exploitative and debased whereby forced labour and administrative corruption thrived. Using methods of subjection, Salazar had imposed a condition of peace and order in Africa that only 'those in the cemetery were acquainted with'.⁹⁶ A low level of assimilation among African subjects was evidence that Salazar had retarded the establishment of Portuguese hegemony in Africa. Portuguese colonisation had caused the disintegration of traditional African societies without really availing them of an alternative. The Salazarist regime had thus induced a state of cultural, political and economic instability among colonial populations that left them stranded somewhere between the African and western civilisational models. Given the circumstances, immediate colonial disengagement was guaranteed to bring disaster.

Galvão was equally critical of African nationalists whom he considered as unrepresentative of the colonial populations as Salazar. Since neither had been democratically elected, they were therefore illegitimate belligerents in a clash between extremisms. Although presented by propaganda as a struggle for self-determination, on the one hand, and its negation, on the other, the conflict in Angola was about something entirely different. Underneath the rhetoric, the true fight was between the agents of colonial (*Estado Novo*) and neo-colonial (communist/capitalist sponsored African nationalist movements) interests. A victory for either party would be catastrophic. One would maintain indigenous populations chained to an inhuman brand of colonialism; the other was certain to plunge Angola and Mozambique into a "neo-colonial adventure" without the elementary conditions necessary to self-rule.⁹⁷

None of this, however, meant that Galvão rejected the principle of African independence. Thirty three years before his UN visit he had acknowledged colonialism as a transitory stage, contending that the establishment of Portuguese cultural and economic hegemony in the colonies was almost certain to translate in their eventual political independence. Self-rule, he told the Lisbon Geographical Society, in 1930, was a 'political fate' not in the power of Lisbon to alter.⁹⁸ Independence was, after all, the *terminus ad quem* of the colonial mission (however contrary to Portuguese political interests) and directly linked to the humanist nature of the European spirit.

⁹⁵ Galvão, 'Portuguese Africa Today', op. cit., 178; Burnham, op. cit., 3.

⁹⁶ Galvão, 'Portuguese Africa Today', op. cit., 173-5.

⁹⁷ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, op. cit., 278.

⁹⁸ Galvão, *Nacionalização de Angola*, op. cit., 11.

Citing Lord Cromer and G. Ferrero, Galvão argued that western civilisation actually liberated rather than enchained colonised populations.⁹⁹ Indeed, rebellion against European rule was an indication of a successful westernisation - Brazil, Canada and the USA were cases in point.¹⁰⁰

In 1963 Galvão's views on African independence remained mostly those expressed three decades earlier except that he now tied colonial emancipation to the ousting of Salazar. Galvão reasoned that it made no sense to discuss independence for Africans when metropolitan Portuguese themselves were deprived of self-determination; that democracy must be restored in Lisbon before the colonial problem could be addressed.

Galvão proposed a post-Salazarian reorganisation of the colonies into a federation of autonomous states as an interim and final stage of colonial rule preceding the granting of full independence in the overseas territories.¹⁰¹ At this point the colonies would be re-directed towards self-government and Africans offered a choice, by plebiscite, between independence and membership in a Euro-African federal republic of Portuguese states with Lisbon as its center. Galvão favoured the latter option as the natural outcome of 'four centuries of living together'.¹⁰²

In addition, the Portuguese colonies had to be viewed in the broader context of the African continent. There was more than one Africa, Galvão contended: the north and south of the continent were as distinct from each other as 'from the rest of the world'. Besides these two Africas, there were numerous others, mostly mythical: the Africas of the pioneers, marvelous fauna, slavery and "sub humans", of forests and deserts. African plurality was further extended by the appearance, after the Second World War, of a new identity. Created by politicians, financiers and scientists the new conception defined the continent in political and/or economic terms, disregarding 'human realities'.¹⁰³

Africa's future depended principally on tribalism. Yet less was known about its tribal structures in 1963 than fifty years before. Western intelligentsia had focused exclusively on the artificial construct that was urban Africa. As a result, contact with the human reality became superficial and distorted by 'academic preconceptions' concerned exclusively with transforming African societies by capitalist or revolutionary speculation.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Lord Cromer (born Evelyn Baring) (1841-1917), supreme British administrator in Egypt (1877-1907); Guglielmo Ferrero (1871-1942), Italian liberal historian and author of *Greatness and Decline of Rome* (1903-08).

¹⁰⁰ Galvão, *Nacionalização de Angola*, op. cit., 10-1. Interestingly, a relatively recent article by philosopher Pascal Bruckner advances a similar argument. See 'Europe's Guilty Conscience', *City Journal*, Summer 2010, 1.

¹⁰¹ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, op. cit., 210-11.

¹⁰² Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, op. cit., 279; Burnham, op. cit., 3; Galvão, 'Portuguese Africa Today', op. cit., 176; 178.

¹⁰³ Galvão, 'Portuguese Africa Today', op. cit., 167-9.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, 169-70.

Anti-colonialism, in Galvão's memorable phrase, was 'more political than humane'.¹⁰⁵ He criticised those who, turning a blind eye on the human problems inherent in African societies, sought automatic independence in order to gain power. Factors such as African psychological and cultural inadaptability to western institutions, political divisions rooted on tribalism and a heritage of intertribal violence made immediate independence into a recipe for disaster.¹⁰⁶

External interference in Africa presented another danger. Cold war adversaries entertained identical ambitions: the establishment of neo-colonial dependency as evidenced in the 'macabre game' played by the political interests of communism and capitalism in the UN. The Soviet Union's designs on the continent were no less imperialistic than those of the colonial powers but 'with all the defects and none of the latter's virtues'. Capitalist interests, on the other hand, used the guise of liberal democracy to mask intentions not much different from those of Moscow. Galvão pointed out that, after all, neo-colonialism was first introduced to Africa by the granting of independence to Liberia by the United States.¹⁰⁷

Finally, the current trend towards Africa's liberation was based on a tendentious reading of western colonialism which had come to be viewed 'more passionately than rationally' and 'more condemned than judged'. Despite its negative traits, colonial systems had produced much good. Two questions had to be asked: Was it fair to take colonialism out of the moral environment in which it originated? And, was it not from colonial rule that the basis for African emancipation had been created? It would be foolish to discard the experience and knowledge amassed by colonialism. No modern technique could, 'without time, blood, sweat and tears', replace the information bank built up by the imperial experience.¹⁰⁸

With Galvão's deposition, all the fat was in the fire. His sceptical view of African unity - illustrated by a reminder that Latin America had yet to achieve cohesion 150 years after independence - had antagonised his audience. Responding to Galvão's concept of multiple Africas, the Algerian delegate broke in on a point of order, insisting that the speaker limit his testimony to Portugal's colonies. The chairman upheld the protest, adding that the committee was not interested in 'two, three, four or five Africas'.¹⁰⁹ Angered by Galvão's arguments, various African delegates expressed their disapproval (the Algerian delegation actually leaving the room in protest). African disappointment was encapsulated by one representative who compared the appearance of the Portuguese dissident to "a mountain giving

¹⁰⁵ Galvão, *Carta Aberta*, op. cit., 65.

¹⁰⁶ Galvão, 'Portuguese Africa Today', op. cit., 177.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*, p. 171; Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, op. cit., 227.

¹⁰⁸ Galvão, 'Portuguese Africa Today', op. cit., 174-75; 177.

¹⁰⁹ Hamilton, *op. cit.*, 1-2.

birth to a mouse". Most delegates seemed unanimous in their objection to Galvão's deposition which they voted to have struck from the record.¹¹⁰

The adverse reaction of the UN delegates is somewhat surprising considering that Galvão's testimony had been consistent with his viewpoints on record. It seems, however, that his audience underestimated the depth of his colonialist beliefs and determination to see Portugal's African mission to its conclusion (on its own protracted timeframe). Perhaps critics expected the Portuguese dissident to whittle down his opinions to suit their own anti-colonialist project. To be fair, Galvão himself might have unwittingly encouraged these false expectations by way of pragmatic gestures articulated in confusing arguments and designed, it would appear, to accommodate the mood of the times with its overriding hostility to all things imperial. In the *Santa Maria* book, for instance, he unexpectedly denounces colonialism as an 'out of date' and 'odious' phenomenon whose practice was no longer justifiable - a statement he immediately contradicts with a classic colonialist thesis holding 'political infancy' as the main obstacle to African self-determination.¹¹¹ In any case, Galvão's deposition in New York should have clarified any lingering misconceptions concerning his location in the debate on Africa's future.

Attitudes towards Portuguese colonialism were polarized by the outbreak of armed insurgencies in all three of Lisbon's African territories (1961-4).¹¹² It became generally accepted, outside the Lisbon government, that a solution for the African problem was no longer a matter of reforming colonial machinery but discarding it altogether. On account of his colonialist views, Galvão was excluded from the fight over the future of the Portuguese colonies; deemed retrogressive by African nationalists and their supporters, and untrustworthy by pro-imperialists. Never one to give up a fight, the rebel Africanist resorted to the typewriter, his chosen weapon, in a solo campaign against Salazar and anti-colonialist forces.

The printed word had always been Galvão's true vocation. Beginning in the late twenties, he had established himself as a widely-published author whose literary ambitions were intertwined with a career in the colonial ministry and the army. African and colonial themes dominated the corpus of Galvão's varied works - ranging from technical texts, politics, history and colonial administration to plays, novellas, fables and translations. A talented writer with a distinctive style and a knack for vivid description, Galvão remained spellbound by Africa to the end. In Brazil he authored a significant amount of journalism, mainly on colonial and African topics. In 1966, incapacitated by ill health, Henrique Galvão was interned in a São Paulo sanatorium where he was to die four years later.

¹¹⁰ Nogueira, *Um Politico Confessa-se*, op. cit., 83; Hamilton, *op. cit.*, 2; Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência*, op. cit., 544.

¹¹¹ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, op. cit., 190-1.

¹¹² Nationalist wars broke out in Angola (1961), Guinea-Bissau (1963) and Mozambique (1964).

Conclusion

For forty three out of his seventy five years of life almost everything Henrique Galvão did was fuelled by an enduring political and emotional preoccupation with the Portuguese colonies in Africa. Three crucial events illustrate the preponderance of African affairs over his career: the Angolan stay in 1927-9; the 1947 report on colonial conditions; and the 1963 UN appearance. They are all transitional points, marking respectively the birth of the colonialist-Africanist in the service of the New State, the anti-Salazarist and, finally, the pariah-dissident in exile.

After 1927 Galvão rapidly developed into an Africanist, a colonial theorist and propagandist consumed with the idea of Portuguese Africa. Conversion to imperialism was not unnatural for someone with rightist tendencies. It was Galvão's close emotional bond with the African territories that set him apart. He appeared as if bewitched by the Angolan sojourn in the 1920s. In fact, there is reason to believe that his claim to feel 'Portuguese-African at heart' was no mere rhetoric but the admission of an inexplicable attraction transcending politics.

Galvão was drawn to the New State by (what seemed to him) the Salazarist promise of colonial rejuvenation. Two decades as a senior colonial official, however, convinced him he had bought into a pseudo-dawn of imperialism. Salazar, Galvão concluded, had turned out to be a man with a mask whose unwillingness to rectify a deviant African administration was finally exposed by the 1947 report on colonial conditions and subsequent debate in the National Assembly.

The report was to act as the catalyst to a complete break with the regime in 1950. By then Galvão was sure that the greatest threat to Portugal in Africa resided in the distortion of the traditional Lusitanian colonial mission by Salazar's administration, which he saw as inept and corrupt. He formulated his thinking thus: in Africa, if Portugal was to stay, Salazar had to go. Ironically, the very spectre of imperial dissolution that had earlier propelled Galvão to the New State now drove him to dissidence.

1952, the year Galvão was arrested, marked the definite beginning of his anti-Salazarism. Chiefly motivated by the colonial concerns mentioned above and invigorated by seven years of incarceration, antagonism towards Salazar escalated into an obsessive preoccupation. Galvão blamed the premier for just about everything that was wrong with Portugal. Above all he charged that, by condoning abusive practices, Salazar was running the colonies into the ground while providing ammunition to the proponents of the case against Lisbon's colonialism, jeopardising the very survival of Portuguese Africa. Considering Galvão's intense criticisms of Salazar one may well ask whether the latter did not serve as a proxy for what was perhaps the former's true affliction: the looming demise of colonialism.

The implosion of most imperial systems in the early 1960s turned Galvão into an anachronism. Yet he stood firm in the teeth of the decolonisation juggernaut, making a belated stand at the United Nations

against the international scramble to eject Portugal from Africa. The appearance before the world body had provided an opportunity for Galvão to ingratiate himself with anti-colonialists and African nationalists alike which he declined by articulating views that, paradoxically, partly endorsed Salazar's colonial policy in the name of anti-Salazarism. Not surprisingly, after his New York visit, Galvão was repudiated by most sectors of the opposition to Salazar on account of his public defence of colonialism and rejection of the African nationalist project for immediate independence. Politically isolated for the rest of his life, Galvão remained nevertheless a decided colonialist to the end.

Finally, part of the motivation for some of the major events in Galvão's life is shrouded in mystery and likely to remain so. We do not really know, for example, the full reasons for the 1947 report, the seizure of the *Santa Maria* or the trip to the United Nations. Conversely, we do know that African affairs were at the pivotal centre of his career from 1927 until at least his last journalism in 1966. Given the evidence, it would be difficult not to concur that Africa decided Galvão's life trajectory. However, were the composition of a posthumous auto-memoir possible, Henrique Galvão might do well to revise his original 1961 statement (cited at the beginning of this essay) to include Salazar as a co-determinant of his fate.