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Anarchism and anticolonialism in Portugal (1919-1926): Mário Domingues, *A Batalha* and black internationalism

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Abstract

This article evaluates the nature and resonance of the writings of the Príncipe-born journalist Mário Domingues. Domingues published numerous articles in the Portuguese anarcho-syndicalist daily newspaper *A Batalha* between 1919 and 1923 on colonialism as part of a programme of anticolonial and anti-capitalist struggle that was the earliest and most substantial campaign of the time. The contents of his work are analysed and the connections that he and *A Batalha* forged with black African organizations in Lisbon are assessed. It is argued that Domingues' work represents an alternative to both nation-centred and Marxist-oriented programmes of anticolonialism and its study aids in the reconstruction of the contours of a radical and active "Black Lisbon" of the late 1910s and early 1920s in Portugal and sheds new light on the associational culture of black political struggles during the period.

Keywords

Anticolonialism, Anarchism, Portugal, Mário Domingues, Black Internationalism

Introduction

In their book on anarchism, syndicalism and the colonial world, Steven Hirsch and Lucien van der Walt remarked that studies on the relations between the Portuguese labour movement and the country's former colonies were "strikingly absent" (Hirsch and Van der Walt 2010, xxxix). This article seeks to address this absence by providing an analysis of the place inhabited by Portuguese anarchism within the emerging politics of anticolonialism and "black internationalism" (Edwards 2003) during the late 1910s and early 1920s. In this exploration, which forms part of a broader project on the politics of early anticolonialism in Portugal, the article centres on the writings of the Príncipe-born libertarian activist, writer and journalist Mário Domingues (1899-1977). Domingues, born of an Angolan mother and a Portuguese father, joined the internationalist, anti-militarist and revolutionary syndicalist Juventudes Sindicalistas (Syndicalist Youth) (Freire 1989) and formed part of the anarchist group "Claridade", both of which were close ideologically to the predominantly anarcho-syndicalist Confederação Geral do Trabalho (CGT or General Confederation of Labour), a

trade union confederation with a membership of some 90,000 individuals at its October 1922 congress (Freire 1992, 128). Domingues, in addition to writing pieces of a general nature on Portuguese colonial rule and several articles on art and literature in the CGT's Lisbon-based newspaper *A Batalha* from September 1919 onwards, published a remarkable month-long series of articles in the same periodical under the rubric "For the History of Portuguese Colonialism" beginning on 30 June 1922 and ending on 25 July 1922. In this series, Domingues relentlessly unmasked the exploitative economic relations and racial oppressions engendered by colonialism in Africa and denounced the repressive measures taken by the Portuguese state and its representatives in the colonies against striking black and white workers. As well as opposing these injustices, he set forth what one author has revealingly argued were "the first words in imperial Portugal to make an argument in favour of independence for Africa, in a coherent, public form, in a large-circulation publication" (Garcia 2017, 126). This factor alone makes a study of Domingues' work compelling. In contrast to the unanimous national affirmation of the values of the empire that prevailed in Portuguese society and its press at the time, a veritable "wave of patriotic exaltation" (Peralta and Domingos 2018, 249; cf. Alexandre 1998), and in contrast to the more accommodationist discourse provided by some contemporaneous organizations representing Africans living in Lisbon, Domingues' thought has been considered the "only voice of discord" on colonial matters in Portuguese society in the 1920s (Castelo 2007, 61, n. 24; cf. Guimarães 2000; Varela e Pereira 2019, 3). His article on the "Ideal of Independence" (Domingues 1922a), to name but one example from the series, constituted a radical advocacy of freedom spurred on by the "espírito separatista" (separatist spirit) he detected as emergent across "Portuguese Africa".

Much current work on anticolonialism remains focused on the ways in which movements sought to construct an alternative form of nationhood within the different possibilities of a tripartite model comprised by what two authors have recently identified as "core nationalism", "nation statism" or "political nationalism" and "secessionist" nationalism within already established states (Go and Watson 2019, 34-35). Domingues and the newspaper *A Batalha* took a different route, that of libertarian anti-capitalist federalism. By acknowledging anarchism as a "gravitational force […] *between* militant nationalisms" (Anderson 2005, 2; emphasis added), the dominant story of anticolonialism as nationalist in projection or dedicated to the construction of new states is disrupted. Anderson's words evoke an alternative view of anti- and de-colonialism from the perspective of the libertarian left, a movement that was opposed to the creation of new states and that sought, in theory at least, non-statist alternatives for what it understood as legitimate class, regional, cultural or linguistic demands. Although there were tensions in the anarchist project over how far anti-imperialist and anticolonial nationalist movements should be (and, in fact, were) supported by libertarians (Turcato 2015; Ferretti 2017), it is precisely these tensions that shed new light on the intricacies of anticolonial and "black internationalist" movements at the time (Edwards 2003; Matera 2015, 4-5; 15-16) – and on the workings of anarchism itself.

This article develops an analysis of the interstitial position of anarchism as outlined by Anderson in order to contribute an alternative reading of anticolonial histories, which have focused primarily on established networks such as the series of Pan-African Congresses initiated by W.E.B. Du Bois and Comintern-inspired organizational undertakings such as the International Congress against Imperialism and Colonial Oppression held in 1927 and 1929 (Makalani 2011, 133-164), thus broadening understandings of the diversity of political positions driving anticolonial activism. An analysis of the Lusophone context allows us to add a further linguistic and organizational perspective to existing studies which, to date, have centred largely on French- and English-speaking connections (Slate 2012; Matera 2015; Umoren 2018) within organizations such as the International Trade Union Committee for Negro Workers (1930) (Makalani 2011) and other endeavours that were mainly Marxist in the inter-war period.[1] This perspective allows us to shift the focus from Paris, Harlem and London towards Lisbon, "one of the European capitals with the largest African populations" during the period (Garcia 2017, 127). In doing so, the article also seeks to assess critically the significance, operability and applicability of the cultural and linguistic commonalities potentially fostered by *lusofonia* in the past.[2]

With the above aims in mind, this article centres on Portuguese anarchism's most productive and influential, although relatively short, period of strength before the military coup of 1926, an event that entailed the suspension of *A Batalha*, the sacking of the CGT's offices in 1927, and the eventual illegalization of the union. It recuperates, in the process, an unknown and relatively early black African voice in the anticolonial struggle at a time of international ferment and divisions within the anti-racist and anti-imperialist movement, thus coinciding with an approach that seeks "to decolonize a historiographical tendency to foreground predominantly elitist accounts of the period" (Gabay 2018, 550), that is, accounts that concentrate on known actors within the anticolonial struggle. A productive approach in this sense has been taken by Umoren (Umoren 2018) in her study of black "race women internationalists". Here, it is argued that anarchist discourse and practice themselves, by fostering "voices from below", offer an alternative narrative to studies that centre on well-known advocates of anticolonialism to the detriment of hidden or forgotten activists. The article sees the analysis of Domingues' work as a contribution to mapping out, as part of a future project, what might be called, following Matera's study on London (Matera 2015), a radical nascent "Black Lisbon" before the silencing of all but the most complicit voices with the colonialism of the new order.

[1] As this example illustrates, the term "Negro" was employed as an affirmative term at the time by individuals from all races. In this article, I have opted to use "black" as a generic descriptor.

[2] For a recent critical assessment of the usability of the concept of "lusofonia", see Morier-Genoud and Cahen (2012).

A Batalha and the question of colonialism

In order to situate Domingues' work on the dynamics of the Portuguese empire and, in particular, his series of articles from 1922 on the history of Portuguese colonialism, we need to discuss the reception of such questions in the anarcho-syndicalist *A Batalha*.[3] The first issue of *A Batalha* was published on 23 February 1919 as the mouthpiece of the Portuguese labour movement, that is, the União Operária Nacional (UON), the forerunner of the CGT. It was printed in broadsheet style, was generally four pages long, rarely six and often two and was the periodical that had, at the time, the third largest print run in the country (Pereira 2013). The paper's contents were mainly trades union based but the syndicalist conception of the UON/CGT was broad and issues discussed ranged from concerns over non-hygienic workplaces (Anon. 1919a), to opposition to pogroms in eastern Europe (Anon. 1919b), through to the praise of naturism and natural living (M.D. 1920).[4] The last regular issue of *A Batalha* under the directorship of Mário Castelhano and editorship of Silvino de Noronha came out on 26 May 1927 (Baptista 1977, 131). From then on, it appeared sporadically and, for the main part, clandestinely.

From the very beginnings of *A Batalha*, the newspaper attended to the question of the Portuguese colonies from a number of perspectives. Indeed, Domingues wrote his first contribution to the debate on the subject of colonization on 9 September 1919 (Domingues 1919; Garcia 2017, 128). Here, he expressed support for rioting blacks in the USA who protested against racial oppression. He argued in this early comparison between racial and class oppression that the situation of the black population was analogous to that of workers who were exploited by the bourgeoisie (Garcia 2017, 128). As Garcia notes, this article set out the elements that would inform Domingues' collaboration in *A Batalha* in the months to come, a "constant critique of colonisation, the reference to slavery and forced labour, to violence" and an emphasis on the links between black and workers' struggles (Garcia 2017, 129). In addition to revealing the nature of the colonization process and the conditions of life and work in the colonies, the internationalist perspective of *A Batalha* cast these territories as extensions of the repressive apparatus of the Portuguese state and voiced its preoccupation with the politics of racial exploitation and discrimination. The colonies, nevertheless, were seen less as sites for workers' organization than for their punitive deportation, reflecting the policy of the Portuguese state to remove "troublesome" syndicalists and others from the national territory. Through the liberal use of the 1912 law on social vagrancy (Pereira Bastos 1997), anarchists were deported to the colonies, especially to Angola, as punishment for their participation in the attempted general strike of November 1918 (Bayerlein and Van der Linden 1990, 160; cf. Freire 1992, 229).

[3] Future work will analyse discussions reflected in other libertarian periodicals of the period.

[4] It is quite possible that this last article was authored by Mário Domingues. Its attention to the ravages of alcohol, an issue raised by Domingues in later articles, would point to this being so.

Earlier in the year, in February 1919, *A Batalha* had complained that many such comrades were being sent to different countries in Africa (Anon. 1919c), where the conditions of imprisonment were extremely injurious to health. The periodical claimed that no due process had been observed in the deportations and, as a matter of urgency, the legal commission of the UON was seeking the return of those deported or at least a guarantee of humane conditions while they were incarcerated. Pressure for the return of the deported comrades continued throughout the first half of 1919. Justice was continually demanded for them (Anon. 1919d) and for the children they had left behind (Anon. 1919e). The campaign finally bore fruit in late June 1919 as some of those deported were allowed to return to Portugal, having embarked on the "Zaire" due to dock at Lisbon on the 25th of the month (Anon. 1919f). A further ten individuals awaited embarkation in early July (Anon. 1919g). This was not, however, the end of the deportation of anarchist militants, either from Portugal or elsewhere. A mid-1920 article in *A Batalha* lamented the saga of some comrades who had been expelled from Brazil and had been sent "sem a menor consideração" (without the least consideration) to Cape Verde (Anon. 1920a). The misery of being separated from loved ones was compounded by the insalubrious conditions of their internment; each man would return with his "organismo arruinado" (body destroyed) (Anon. 1920a).

Deportation was, however, only one side of the coin. The other was that of emigration to the colonies in search of work, an opportunity taken up by a small number of white Portuguese who were "often poor, and sometimes socialist or anarchist" (Morier-Genoud and Cahen 2012, 13). By 1930, the white population in Mozambique, for example, had steadily increased to reach some 20,000 individuals (Castelo 2012, 113). The opportunity of inter-war emigration was taken up by some CGT members such as Raúl Neves Dias and José António de Almeida who left Portugal to work at the Imprensa Nacional in the centre of Lourenço Marques (now Maputo) (Anon. 1919h). These workers would probably have joined the mixed-race typographers' union, discussed below, allowing for the forging of links between local black workers and emigrant white Portuguese as well as between labour movements in Portugal and Mozambique. The conditions of work once emigrants had arrived in Mozambique were, however, a constant concern for the Portuguese libertarian movement. In 1930, the weekly supplement of *A Batalha* raised long working hours and poor conditions as major issues affecting workers in the colonies (Anon. 1930). In the 1940s, restrictions on emigration were introduced by the state, favouring technical workers and managerial staff as part of the Salazar regime's post-war attempt to develop the colonies economically (Castelo 2012, 109).

Such international flows of people and ideas, permitted in part by the shared language of Portuguese, sparked assessments on the ability of the syndicalists to organise in Africa, whether among European, foreign or local workers. A rather negative and patronising view, if not a quasi-nationalistic one, was proffered in May 1919 on this very subject. In a piece "on the colonial problem", J. Carlos Rates, a vociferous member of the CGT in favour of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" to be exercised by revolutionary unions (Pereira 2013),

proclaimed that the form of socialist organization that the trades unions defended in Portugal was not applicable to the colonies. In "our" colonies, he argued, "o negro não está organizado e preparado para conceber uma sociedade socialista" (blacks are not sufficiently organized and prepared to conceive of a socialist society) (Rates 1919). Such a verdict appeared to diagnose a condition that would be described more than thirty years later by the Algerian philosopher Malek Bennabi as one of "colonisabilité", the process whereby agency was consistently denied to subjected populations with the result that colonialism became a self-fulfilling "historical necessity" (Sardar 2008, viii; Bennabi 1954) – hardly, one would hope, a libertarian interpretation. Deserting the colonies now, Rates argued, would not be practicable for Portugal, which used them for the extraction of primary materials. Rates went on to suggest that the colonies could be turned into productive economies – whether for settlers or locals, it was not made clear – and could therefore be turned into models of socialist organization in the future. The socialization of property could be implemented and the territory could advance beyond the system in operation in the metropole. In a model that followed some strands of contemporary developmentalist socialist thought, Rates argued that each colonial nation could then enter the (recently formed) League of Nations as an independent state. As well as adhering to this somewhat questionable step by step developmental model, Rates' article also showed that *A Batalha* was not (and never would be) hegemonically anarchist.[5] In fact, Rates would eventually become the secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party from 1921 to 1926. Although he was pessimistic on the organizational potential in the colonies, the CGT's inaugural congress of September 1919 addressed more positively the possibilities for syndicalist organization in these territories (Anon. 1919i; Teodoro 2013: vol. I, 64). The plight of workers and the steps taken to bolster a trade union structure in the colonies were analysed in a series of articles beginning in April 1920 in *A Batalha* under the generic title of "From African lands".

"De terras de África"

This series of articles printed over several months in *A Batalha* was written by a set of mainly unidentified writers from the capital of Mozambique, Lourenço Marques. Despite this anonymity, the articles were replete with reflections on the potentialities and problematics of workers' organization in the capital and other parts of Mozambique. Referring directly to the piece by Carlos Rates and his criticism of the administration of the colonies under Portuguese rule, an evaluation opposed by those whose rational consideration was obliterated by "a bebedeira do patriotismo" (the clamour of patriotism), the author "C." addressed the possible integration of Lourenço Marques, and perhaps Mozambique itself, into the South African Union and its potential effect on labour

[5] The organization was divided over which labour International to join. It eventually joined the syndicalist IWMA/AIT, established in Berlin in 1922 but there were significant sectors supporting affiliation to the Red Trade Union International. The CGT at its congresses, however, repeatedly reaffirmed affiliation to the AIT.

organization (C. 1920). The threat, posed as an extension to Britain's control of the port area of Delagoa Bay and wider struggles by colonial powers such as Germany (Newitt 1981, 24-43), may well have countered Portugal's "raquítica administração" (rachitic administration) but it was nothing more than a shifting of the "peças do taboleiro de xadrez onde se joga o equilíbrio mundial e da Europa" (pieces on the chess board where European and world power dynamics are played out) (C. 1920). Whether one European power or another owned the colonies was irrelevant. As the author explained: "É que não dou o direito, a Portugal, de dispor, como de carneiros, dos muitos milhões de indígenas que [...] povoam [as colónias]" (I do not recognise Portugal's right to dispose of the millions of indigenous who inhabit [the colonies] like lambs to the slaughter) (C. 1920). Further, from an anarchist perspective, "[f]azer deles recheio duma casa que se trespasse" ([m]aking them into a commodity that is handed over between different owners) had nothing to do with "nossos sentimentos libertários" (our libertarian beliefs) (C. 1920).

This internationalist and anticolonial argument elaborated by C. went on to discuss the possibilities for workers' organization in the colony's capital. The problem here, as many other libertarians would agree, not only in the Portuguese colonies but in other countries where anarchism had influence such as Egypt (Gorman 2010), was the lack of understanding between the nationalities present on the ground. The diversity of races, "divorciadas ainda uma das outras" (separated one from the other), presented "o obstáculo mais formidavel que se nos depara" (the greatest obstacle that is before us) (C. 1920). A survey of the operation of the various trades unions proved this point. The Building Workers' Union was weak and the phenomenon of "[r]aças atrasadas, divididas por línguas diferentes" (undeveloped races that are divided according to language) made organization among Chinese, British Indians and black Mozambicans difficult. All were shunned by whites. The printers (organized in the Associação Gráfica de Lourenço Marques) were stronger. Here, despite the "preconceito racial inglês" (British racial prejudice), there was some contact between Europeans, Portuguese Indians and native Mozambicans (C. 1920). It was this sector that held most promise and it was this union that most notably offered "desprêso pelos preconceitos de raça tendo na sua direcção três nativos" (a rejection of racial prejudices, having three natives [sic] in its leadership) (C. 1920).

Lucien van der Walt (Van der Walt 2007, 230) has argued that the explicit ideology of "White Labourism" did not develop in the workers' movement of Lourenço Marques due to the close links that unions there retained with the Portuguese anarcho-syndicalist and socialist movements. This would appear to be corroborated by C., who noted that black typographers in South Africa were forced to work in "lugares deprimentes" (depressing places), or, because of the racial prejudice of the British and those inhabiting the Transvaal were not even allowed to join a trades union (C. 1920). In Mozambique, C. observed, such impediments did not arise and "we" (showing C.'s probable origin as white Portuguese), were "mais humanos e menos orgulhosos" (more humane and less proud) (C. 1920). A different case was represented by the powerful port and railway workers' union, C. noted,

but this, perhaps somewhat naïvely, was explained to be the result of the mainly European origin of the workers. The railway workers were certainly one of the most powerful sectors of the organized working class in the country and their long strike starting in November 1925 in Lourenço Marques was put down with ferocity, "crushed early the next year [from March 1926], when the railway service was militarised, with strikers evicted from their homes, hundreds fired, and many key figures deported" (Van der Walt 2007, 230). The unprecedented scale of the repression was a "shocking example for all workers in the city" (Van der Walt 2007, 230; cf. Capela 2009, 199-214), white and African alike, and effectively ended all labour activity until the 1930s.

Despite this partially positive interpretation advanced by C. and, more than eighty years later, by Van de Walt, this latter historian also acknowledges that African workers were routinely marginalised in strike settlements (Van der Walt 2007, 230). As another historian, Jeanne Marie Penvenne, has observed, this marginalization resulted from what she identifies as the Portuguese labour unions' avoidance of "alliances with the majority African labor force" and their ambivalence "toward mulattos and *assimilados*" (Penvenne 1995, 82). Although papers such as *A Batalha* were widely read in Lourenço Marques (Van der Walt 2007, 235), such divisions and racist attitudes were deemed to be at the root of the failure to create a unitary workers' federation (C. 1920).

This lack of organization and unity was picked up in on-going debates in the libertarian press throughout the 1920s. In April 1920, despite the alleged racism of British workers, the author "Correspondente" acknowledged that workers of this nationality were better organized than their Portuguese counterparts. There were plans to set up a workers' federation along the lines of that promoted by *A Batalha* in Lisbon in the form of a "Casa dos Trabalhadores" (Workers' Centre) (Correspondente 1920; cf. Anon. 1920b). "Correspondente" was pleased to note that the Lourenço Marques pro-trades union libertarian socialist paper, *O Emancipador*, was in favour of such a development and welcomed the potential strengthening of the workers' movement that such an initiative would entail (Hohlfeldt 2008).

The close proximity of other countries, especially South Africa, to southern Mozambique and the work patterns and trades union dynamics that this supposed, were subjects of much discussion in working-class milieus in Lourenço Marques and in the metropole. The question of the influence of the South African Typographical Union (SATU), for example, was discussed in an article in *A Batalha* in late May 1920 (R.D., 1920a). Here, the struggle for higher wages by SATU was analysed and possible joint action with the Lourenço Marques typographers was broached. The Associação das Artes Gráficas de Lourenço Marques was affiliated to the Federação Portuguesa dos Trabalhadores do Livro e do Jornal and a members' meeting had also recently approved the Association's affiliation to the Portuguese CGT. The possibility of affiliating to the SATU, which was able to operate

exceptionally across borders, was likewise being examined.[6] Obstacles to this closer working relationship were put down, once more, to the limitations engendered by the "[o]rgulho de raça" (racial pride) prevalent in some sectors (R.D. 1920a: 2). The difficulties in cross-union and cross-national organization were returned to by R.D. the following month. In this second piece, a post mortem of the recent Lourenço Marques typographers' strike was provided. Racial divisions had once again prevailed in this dispute and the three white workers on strike "trairam o movimento" (betrayed the movement) by returning to work (R.D. 1920b), thus entailing defeat for their majority black brothers. More successful, however, had been the multiple events commemorating May Day. This positive outcome was put down by R.D. to the vigorous campaigning by *O Emancipador* and the expanding influence of *A Batalha*, evidence in itself of some cross-organizational and inter-ideological cooperation in Mozambique.

Imperialism and violence in Norton de Matos' Angola

The organizational imperatives examined above coincided with the internationalist tone of *A Batalha*, which was demonstrated consistently over this period, often by means of contributions from overseas. Such is the case of the series of articles in 1921 by the French anarchist, Auguste Hamon, on imperialism and, specifically, on the nature of the British Empire. In one of these articles, the anarchist antimilitarist provided an analysis of the crisis engulfing the British state as protests grew in countries as far apart as Australia, Ireland and India (Hamon 1921). *A Batalha* also turned to the imperial activities of other nations. The "monstrous crime" of war was denounced by *A Batalha* at the height of the Moroccan conflict in the mid-1920s (Bettencourt 1924) and the independence of Morocco from Spain was discussed in the paper in 1926 (F. de C. 1926).[7] The fact that the "Indian Tolstoy", Rabindranath Tagore, author of *Nationalism* (Tagore 1917), was reported to be passing through Lisbon not only placed Portugal on the route of transnational anticolonial activism but also confirmed the role of *A Batalha* in contributing to such a movement (Anon. 1924).

[6] This step was finally taken in July 1922 according to the Lourenço Marques based *O Emancipador*. See X (1922).

[7] Domingues, Garcia notes (Garcia 2017, 134), wrote a series of articles in mid-1921 on the "betrayal of the Negroes" in the context of the North African conflict in *A Imprensa Livre*. *Diário da manhã*. The editor of this daily was José de Sousa Palma and the director was Campos Lima. The paper was pro-CGT but was also, at times, in favour of the new Portuguese Communist Party as a "political guide" for the trades union. It maintained a staunch anticolonial line from its first number of 21 July 1921 (see, for example, Anon. 1921a, on the ravages of colonialism in Guinea). The first of Domingues' articles in *A Imprensa Livre* was Domingues (1921a). In July and August 1921, Domingues also published several articles in the daily on cultural and artistic issues, something he would continue to do in *A Batalha*.

It was, nevertheless, the deplorable situation in Angola that attracted the greatest amount of attention in the anarcho-syndicalist press.[8] As Newitt has observed, after the First World War, the Portuguese Republic put into operation its long-awaited plans for the devolution of power to the colonies (not, of course, their decolonization) (Newitt 1981, 177).[9] In 1920, two high commissioners, José M.R. Norton de Matos and Brito Camacho, were appointed for Angola and Mozambique, respectively. These high commissioners "held ministerial rank, controlled the armed forces, could rule by decree, and for the first time had financial autonomy" (Newitt 1981, 177). During his period in power (1921-1923) (Newitt 1981, 110; Meneses 2004, 239), Norton de Matos raised loans and proceeded to the construction of railways and roads and the extensive implementation of white colonization. Such developmental projects went hand-in-hand with strong-arm rule, which was, in turn, criticised even by some figures in the Portuguese establishment. Henrique Galvão, reflecting on the 1930s when he had been a senior official in Angola, and by the time of writing an oppositional figure to the *Estado Novo*, decried the "crushing of the chiefdoms" held by the indigenous population, thus depriving the state of "the agents best able to assist a policy of natural assimilation" (Galvão and Selvagem 1952, vol. III, 213, cited in Newitt 1981, 105).

A Batalha began a series of articles on the state of affairs in Angola with the title "No Império de Norton de Matos" (In the Empire of Norton de Matos) in mid-February 1922 and this lasted till the end of April that same year (Garcia 2017, 129). Following on from previous articles that voiced a critique of the arbitrary measures implemented by Norton de Matos in his attempt to outlaw trades unions, a dramatic article, denouncing the workings of a "new Sodom" appeared in *A Batalha* on 18 February 1922 (Anon. 1922a). Possibly penned by Mário Domingues, it revealed that while workers and locals "rebentam de miséria" (wallow in poverty), "the civilizers" were engaged in devoting themselves "bestialmente à luxúria e à embriaguez" (like animals to luxuriousness and drunkenness) (Anon. 1922a; Garcia 2017, 138). Prostitution of boys and girls, poverty and high living costs were all the consequences of the rule of a "bruto militar" (brutal soldier). Not only were the hierarchies of military and colonial organization brought into sharp relief; the author also denigrated the oft-cited justification for Portuguese colonization, the supposed "civilizing mission", in no uncertain terms.

The fiefdom established by Norton de Matos came in for further excoriation later the same year on 1 June, again quite possibly by Domingues (Anon. 1922b). Here, *A Batalha* condemned the violence that was meted out against the indigenous population as punishment for its protests. Such acts had also been denounced by what the paper referred to as the executive committee of the newly formed Federação Africana in Lisbon. In all

[8] There was, in addition, considerable attention paid to the worsening situation and repression in São Tomé in April 1921, which was denounced by *A Batalha* and African organizations in Portugal. See, for example, Domingues (1921b).

[9] Ferraz de Matos has illustrated how the Republic, established in 1910, "was every bit as colonialist as the monarchy it had replaced" (Matos 2013, 45).

likelihood, given that no such organization appears to have existed, the author would have been referring to one or other of the two rival African groupings in Lisbon. The first African organization created in Lisbon was the Junta de Defesa dos Direitos de África, formed in 1912 (Dos Santos 1968, 119-121; Pélissier 1978, 224). The Junta was dedicated to achieving the maximum economic and political liberties for the African colonies. It split at the end of 1919 and a dissident faction took the name of the Liga Africana. The Liga Africana was led by the São Tomé deputy (from 1921) in Lisbon, José de Magalhães and Nicolau dos Santos Pinto. It was a grouping to which *mestiços* and African organizations from across the colonies were affiliated (Dos Santos 1968, 121-123; Newitt 1981, 145; Pélissier 1968, 227), including bodies from Guinea, São Tomé e Príncipe, the Angolan League and the Grémio Africano in Lourenço Marques. The Liga was supported by the Portuguese Socialist Party (Dos Santos 1968, 123).

After suffering this split, the Junta was relaunched with a leftist orientation in March 1921, revised its statutes in accordance with the tenets of Garveyism (Dos Santos 1968, 124), following the black American activist Marcus Garvey, and became the Partido Nacional Africano (PNA, or, National African Party) under the leadership of Dr. João de Castro and Dr. Martinho Nobre de Melo (Pélissier 1968, 228). By 1930, the PNA was arguing for a decentralized and federative Portugal in which all African peoples could integrate in accordance with their particular ethnic and political characteristics (Dos Santos 1968, 124). Magalhães' Liga Africana, by contrast, opted for the more reformist line of Du Bois and this allowed the Liga, and some Lusophone Africans, to be represented at the Second Pan-African Congress at its session in Brussels in 1921. At this Congress, to the surprise and indignation of some, it was asserted that slavery no longer existed in the Portuguese colonies; rather, it was the big foreign companies that were responsible for the existence of servile labour (Dos Santos 1968, 88; Pélissier 1968, 228). Pélissier argues that, in denying the existence of slavery, Magalhães effectively opted for a position that held more in common with Portuguese patriotism than with the *contratados* working in the Angolan plantations.

The divisions between Magalhães, of the Liga, and Castro, of the PNA, constituted thereafter "uma cena de quase pugilato" (practically open war) (Dos Santos 1968, 125). In March 1921 *A Batalha* reported on the creation of the PNA and in the autumn of the same year began a series of articles analysing the nature of the Partido (Garcia 2017, 137; Anon. 1921b). Although there may have been initial support from *A Batalha* for the Du Bois faction of the Pan-African Congress, opposing the tendency led by the Senagalese Blaise Diagne, whom the paper accused of being a "serventuário do capitalismo" (servant of capitalism) (Anon. 1921c), evidence points to Domingues and *A Batalha* eventually supporting the PNA over the Liga.[10] As two authors have recently pointed out, Domingues would become the

[10] See the article "Partido Nacional Africano. A raça negra movimenta-se" from late September 1921 where it was claimed that the Pan-African Congress did not know how to present "o sentimento do mais justo e humanitário protesto dos negros de todo o mundo contra a ilegitimidade duma civilização que assenta todo o seu prestígio sôbre a injustiça do trabalho forçado e sôbre o doloroso extermínio das raças dominadas" (the

representative of African workers aligned to the Partido (Varela and Pereira 2019, 3) and certain synergies between him and the PNA would be consolidated, for a short-lived period, in late 1922, as we will see below.

"Preto também ser gente"

As the above discussion shows, when Mário Domingues began writing his series on Portuguese colonialism in June 1922, there had already been a sustained discussion in *A Batalha* of various aspects of the phenomenon particularly in southern and western Africa.[11] Domingues added complexity to the approach already developed in the newspaper by discussing the system of colonial rule established by the Portuguese and by providing a trenchant critique of the "politics of race" that prevailed in the colonies. His work also spoke of the ideological and organizational linkages that were beginning to be forged between anarcho-syndicalism and bodies that represented Africans living in Portugal, such as those who were members of the Liga Africana and the Partido Nacional Africano. His series also allows us to see the ways in which "race" and its multiple, contested meanings fostered alternative visions of imperial relations at the heart of the metropole. It will be argued that these alternative understandings went beyond what Marc Matera has identified as the majority position of Africans and Caribbeans active in London in decolonial movements, who advocated a "radical transcending of the empire" (Matera 2015, 3) but not a complete severance from imperial ties, thus demanding what they understood to be a "meaningful form of imperial citizenship" (Matera 2015, 4). While such an aim represented, without a doubt, a difficult and uphill struggle, we will argue that the kinds of new economic and racial relations that Domingues envisaged responded to a different expression of self-determination within an anti-capitalist, explicitly "humanitarian" frame. In the next section of the article, we will refer to a number of pieces through which Domingues' understanding of anticolonialism can be read. The final section will concentrate on three of Domingues' articles in the series "For the history of Portuguese colonization", namely, on the ideal of independence, pan-Africanism and the emancipation of the "black race".

Domingues, as stated above, began publishing his work in *A Batalha* in September 1919 when he was in his early twenties. Born on the Island of Príncipe to an Angolan mother forcibly brought there to work and a liberal father from Lisbon,[12] he came to the city at the age of eighteen months. As well as publishing in *A Batalha*, he wrote for the movement's cultural review, *Renovação* (1925-1926), and later went on to write hundreds of detective

feelings behind the just and humanitarian protest of blacks the world over against the illegitimacy of a civilization that draws prestige from the ignominy of forced labour and the brutal extermination of those races it oppresses) (Anon. 1921d).

[11] *A Batalha* had also published a sustained set of articles on questions of race, theories of equality and black emancipation in the first half of October 1921. For questions of space, this series, possibly penned by Domingues, is not discussed here.

[12] http://jornalcultura.sapo.ao/dialogo-intercultural/mario-domingues-santomense-filho-de-angolana-foi-o-escritor-mais-fecundo-da-lingua-portuguesa?page=0&area=text.

and historical novels under a variety of pseudonyms.[13] Although he remained active in progressive circles and continued to write on matters relating to "race" and culture,[14] his most overt anarchist period is to be located between 1921 and 1925.

Over the first half of 1922 up to the end of July, nearly two dozen of Domingues' articles were published on colonial questions. Further wide ranging pieces were published in *A Batalha* anonymously, but most likely authored by Domingues, on related issues up to and including December 1922. Shortly after these last articles, in early February 1923, Domingues was beaten by police in a "cowardly" attack on the CGT headquarters. The assault on the CGT's premises took place as police attempted to disperse crowds that had gathered to protest against the occupation of the Ruhr (Anon. 1923), an act undertaken by the Allied forces in January. *A Batalha* denounced the occupation as an imperialist and nationalist undertaking and qualified it as a threat to peace. Repression, especially against the Syndicalist Youth of which Domingues was a member, increased in 1922 (Freire 1989: 129).[15] Despite this, Domingues continued to write for the paper throughout 1923 and 1924 on questions of art (Domingues 1923a) and literature, sometimes with libertarian themes as was the case of his comments on Victor Margueritte's banned book *La Garçonne* (Domingues 1923b). He also gave two public talks as a member of the Syndicalist Youth in the towns of Silves and Messines in January 1923 (C. 1923). *A Batalha* published numerous articles that same year on colonial issues and on the growing confidence of the PNA, some of which were probably written by Domingues. Later, in February 1925, divisions within the CGT forced the editorial board of *A Batalha*, including Domingues, to resign *en bloc* (Teodoro 2013: vol. I, 371).[16] The 1926 coup, repression, falling union membership and financial difficulties meant that the last regular issue of *A Batalha* came out on 26 May 1927.

In Domingues' piece of 7 January 1922, "Preto também ser gente" (Domingues 1922b), the Príncipe-born writer outlined the "considerations of a black man" on the treatment received in the Portuguese press by the Martinique-born Goncourt prize winner René Maran. Maran, born in 1887 of parents from French Guyana, published his *Batouala – Véritable roman*

[13] See http://mosca-servidor.xdi.uevora.pt/projecto/index.php?option=com_dicionario&view=militante&cid=897&Itemid=47.

[14] See, for example, his cultural and literary review *Africa Magazine* (1932) directed alongside Viana de Almeida. Many years later, his literary and political commitments were reaffirmed in "A mensagem poética dos negros", a text written on the occasion of the first Congress of Negro Writers and Artists of 1956 and which is held in the Mário Pinto de Andrade archive (http://casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=04354.005.004). This event would change its name to the Congress of Black Writers and Artists in due course. For a recent brief discussion of this congress and the more general relations between Lusophone anticolonialism and the wider world from the 1940s onwards, see Sanches (Sanches 2011, 9-43, esp. 27).

[15] Freire (1989: 129) observes that in March 1922 some 200 members of the youth organization were arrested and their offices in Lisbon, Almada and Évora were closed.

[16] Domingues was still active in the CGT in early 1926 when he gave speeches against the rising tide of fascism (Teodoro 2013: vol. I, 438). In early January 1927, however, after having been accepted once more as a writer for *A Batalha*, he was removed from his position for certain incompatibilities with the movement that Teodoro interprets as alcoholism (Teodoro 2013: vol. I, 488, n. 148).

nègre in 1921 (Renan 1921). The coverage of this fact in the newspaper *Paris - Notícias*, however, Domingues argued, although positive, was not without certain patronising tones. These were summed up by Domingues' interpretation of the newspaper's begrudging words that black men could also in fact be great writers. Indeed, as well as being human beings, Domingues retorted in a cutting mimicry of how many whites believed blacks thought and spoke, they could compose literary works: "*preto* também *ser gente* – ou *também ser grande escritor*" (*black man* is also *person*, or *is also great writer*) (Domingues 1922b, emphasis in original). In response to the newspaper's slight and against those who would wish to "apoucar a minha raça" (belittle my race), he reminded readers and writers that the black man could be "*tam inteligente como o branco*" (*as intelligent as the white man*) (Domingues 1922b, emphasis in original). For some, this very ability had been thrown into doubt by one unnamed Portuguese commentator, as "heroic" as Álvares Cabral, who had "found out", just as the explorer had "discovered" Brazil, "que René Maran criticava numa ironia forte, talvês contundente, o espírito português" (that René Maran criticised with heavy irony, perhaps even with open hostility, the Portuguese spirit) (Domingues 1922b). This polemical assessment of the Portuguese by Maran had reached the august *salons* of the Portuguese Academy of Science. The Academy had awakened from its "sono de múmia" (mummified slumber) and had also proceeded to criticise Renan's book. It petitioned the Portuguese ambassador in Paris to protest, "provavelmente no firme propósito de afirmar a sua académica inteligência *branca* [...] classificando de brutos todos os pretos que digam mal dos portugueses" (probably with the clear aim of affirming its *white man's* intelligence [...] classifying all blacks who speak poorly of the Portuguese as brutes) (Domingues 1922b, emphasis in original). It was in fact the Portuguese themselves, Domingues asserted, who were viewed by others as being of lower intelligence than most Europeans, as the contemporaneous British and German criticism of the management of the Portuguese colonies in Africa showed (Newitt 1981, 169). Domingues' acerbic remarks did not stop there. He wrote that the Academy, in order to dispel the rumour of Portuguese intellectual inferiority, would pass judgement on black people's abilities, placing them on a par with the millions of whites "que habitam para lá do Minho e Traz-os-Montes" (who live up in the Minho and Trás-os-Montes) (Domingues 1922b). This final comment drew on and ridiculed existing cultural and anthropological prejudices on the supposedly "primitive" nature of the rural Portuguese, particularly those in the north of the country. The primitive colonial "other" was thus located in the nether regions of the metropole as well as in the country's overseas possessions.

Months later, at the end of June 1922 when the first piece of his series on the history of Portuguese colonialism appeared on the subject of "the black man" (Domingues 1922c), Domingues and *A Batalha* had, as the above shows, broached colonial and racial questions

many times.[17] Domingues' article on the "vítima secular" (centuries-old victim) of Portuguese colonialism highlighted the historic and inter-related nature of oppressions experienced by black Africans under colonial rule. Although the discussion centred on the black man, the predatory and all-encompassing nature of colonialism was revealed in no uncertain terms. The colonisers, Domingues noted, had prostituted the black man's wife and daughters but he had resisted; they had robbed him of his goods and freedom and he had resisted; they had poisoned him with alcohol but still he resisted (Domingues 1922c).

Following on from the paper's previous discussion of the situation in Angola under Norton de Matos, further comment on the "proezas" (antics) of the High Commissioner formed the subject of Domingues' second article in the series (Domingues 1922d). The fact that Domingues' Angolan mother had been brought to Príncipe as a slave labourer will have added a personal element to his sharp critique of colonial rule in this particular country. The regime operating in Angola, he asserted, prevented the full emancipation of black workers who were confined to manual labour or, at best, to aspiring to the status of an *amanuense*. It was Angola that formed the subject of the following day's article also, this time with a focus on the propensity of the armed forces to prostitute local women in the capital Loanda (now Luanda) and to mete out violence against these women's children, as reported the previous day in the newspaper *O Mundo* (Domingues 1922e). An even worse story of violence was reported upon the following day in an article that spoke of the murder of three local black men and the generalised racial discrimination that prevailed in the colonies where black people were not permitted to drink from the same glasses as whites, a measure that was equated with the racial inequality prevalent in the United States (Domingues 1922f). These front page articles, others on the "state within a weak Portuguese state", the Nyassa Company in Mozambique (Domingues 1922g), and the ravages of alcohol caused in the same country (Domingues 1922h), provided the context for Domingues' next piece in the series, an analysis of the need for black independence and racial emancipation.

The Ideal of Independence

Domingues' article on the "Ideal of Independence" on 5 July 1922, positioned like the rest of the series on the front page of *A Batalha*, was published at a time of continued ferment on the Portuguese political front. Immediately above his article, alongside the masthead of the periodical, as was customary in *A Batalha*, there was a bite-size political message for easy reading. It proclaimed that there was talk of a coup to brush aside the government and install a military dictatorship. This supposed "revolution", the paper warned, would not change anything. Other articles on the front page of this issue discussed preparations for the upcoming CGT congress and factory owner opposition to worker mobilisations.

[17] It is likely that, among other pieces, the January 1922 article on black slaves (Anon. 1922c) was also written by Domingues. The previously cited items on Norton de Matos' Angola, as we have said, were also probably written by Domingues.

The subtitle of Domingues' article on independence was as revealing as its main one. It affirmed that the "espírito separatista existe hoje em quási toda a Africa portuguesa" (separatist spirit exists today across practically the whole of Africa) (Domingues 1922a). This assertion was followed by the comment to the effect that "**Os negros teem o direito de afirmá-lo e defendê-lo**" (**Blacks have the right to assert it and defend it**) (Domingues 1922a; bold in original). This separatist spirit had been encouraged, the article went on, through the tyranny exercised by "unscrupulous whites" in the Portuguese colonies. No-one, however, white or black, had shown the courage to reveal the facts or to acknowledge "nítidamente que o separatismo se alojou definitivamente no cérebro e no coração do negro escravizado e vexado por uma colonização iníqua" (that separatism has indisputably lodged itself in the brain and heart of blacks enslaved and oppressed by such iniquitous colonization) (Domingues 1922a). As Castelo and Garcia have stated (Castelo 2007, 61, n. 24; Garcia, 2017), this was the first mass circulation periodical where such a categorical critique of colonialism had been made. As Domingues would write: "Pois, afirmamo-lo nós, dizemo-lo nós!" (Well, we assert it and we say it loud and clear!) (Domingues 1922a). Why was it, Domingues asked rhetorically, that this fact not been revealed some ten, fifteen or twenty years before and why had the possibility that Portugal would lose its colonies, running the risk of being without "negros para tiranizar" (blacks to tyrannize) not been mooted earlier? The answer was that blind metropolitan patriotic loyalty had cast a veil of silence over the issue. Far from the metropole, in Africa, Domingues asserted, the black population had not spoken up through fear of the consequences that such an act may have entailed.

As can be seen, Domingues did not shy away from identifying who and what was at the heart of the oppression of black Africans – "white despotism" and the colonial system. The ideal of independence, therefore, was described as the only tool that could measure up to the "infâmias praticadas" (infamies practised) against the population. Elsewhere lay deception and defeat and, in tune with anarchist beliefs, any form of political saviour was cast aside as illusory – "Não julguem os africanos que um Norton de Matos dará, por uma questão sentimental, a liberdade e a independência aos africanos" (Africans should not think that a Norton de Matos will give them, through pure kindness, their freedom and liberty) (Domingues 1922a). Furthermore, freedom would not be handed over on a plate; again following anarchist understandings, it had to be fought for and claimed. In this process, Domingues identified black people living in the metropole as performing a key role, thus collapsing any distance between different types of colonial subject. He also foregrounded the need for and the possibility of trasnational solidarity through the linguistic vehicle of Portuguese and the ideological mechanism of anarchism. Black people in Lisbon, he declared, should add their voices to the growing chorus of demands: ideas of emancipation were not to be shut away under lock and key but were to be "clamadas bem alto, à luz do sol vivificante" (shouted from the roof tops, radiated by the powers of the sun) (Domingues 1922a). It was he who had, "absolutamente só" (entirely alone), formulated this

demand; its reception, however, had been profound and had achieved widespread impact: "sabemos que as nossas palavras de revolta calaram fundo na alma dos negros que nos lêem" (we know that our words of revolt reached deep inside the souls of the black folk that read them), acknowledging perhaps Du Bois' words (Domingues 1922a). Subscribing to the anarchist and more broadly leftist political aspiration with regard to human freedom, his article finished with the words "Desejamos ardentemente a independência do povo negro, porque somos partidários da independência de todos os povos, porque queremos ver a humanidade livre, absolutamente livre, vivendo em paz e em harmonia!" (We ardently desire the independence of black people because we believe in the independence of all peoples, because we want a humanity that is free, completely free, living in peace and harmony) (Domingues 1922a).

"Unam-se os negros e a sua causa triunfará!"

The series on Portuguese colonialism by Domingues formed part of what he described as "our campaign" for economic and racial justice. This campaign cannot be reduced to one of a merely personal nature although it was undoubtedly that also; it was evidently endorsed by *A Batalha* and, by implication, the whole of the Confederation. In his article of 9 July 1922, Domingues celebrated the fact that what he termed the Juventudes Africanas (African Youth, probably the youth section of the PNA) had made their voice heard and had supported his campaign (Domingues 1922i). The difficulties of the anticolonial movement were, however, by Domingues' admission, clear to behold. The campaign had been met "no meio dum silêncio desolador" (by a desolating silence) (Domingues 1922i) within society at large. The African Youth had, however, broken the silence demonstrating its capacity as an audacious "modern generation", free of "interesses mesquinhos" (petty interests) (Domingues 1922i).

On 7 July the Youth produced a statement on the situation of black women and men in the colonies and especially in Angola. Domingues reproduced the points of the agreement made at the plenary meeting of the organization: first, following the imprisonment of protesters in Angola as a result of the "arbitrary orders" of the High Commissioner of Angola, it was demanded that all concerned should be released; second, the African Youth saluted "o jornalista negro, Mário Domingues, pela justiça que se contem na sua campanha humanitária no diário *A Batalha* em prol das reivindicações de liberdade dos povos africanos" (the black journalist, Mário Domingues, for the words of justice contained in his humanitarian campaign in *A Batalha* in favour of freedom for African peoples) (Domingues 1922i). Third, the African Youth proclaimed that this was the moment for all black organizations in the country to take action against the "dictators in Africa". Fourth, the organization lamented the fact that the "deputy from São Tomé" – probably an allusion to José de Magalhães – had not condemned the on-going violence in Angola. The plenary also

agreed to promote a press campaign against Norton de Matos' regime and endorsed a plea for the lifting of press censorship within Angola itself.

The mention of Domingues and *A Batalha* by name gave materiality to the former's desire for unity among the black population in Lisbon and provided the impetus to extend the campaign. The resolution made public by the African Youth was, for Domingues, "extremamente agradável" (extremely pleasing) (Domingues 1922i). It was not sufficient, however, to impede further misfortunes that would "ultrajar toda uma raça" (violate a whole race) (Domingues 1922i). Greater unity was required, between old and young, to oppose oppression and to promote solidarity. Such unity was cast as a far-reaching libertarian project by Domingues: forging the energy to fight whereby the interest of blacks was "não apenas rácico, mas absolutamente humano" (not just racial but entirely human) (Domingues 1922i). Such a mobilization would restrain government repression and would pave the way to "o ideal da independência dos povos" (the ideal of the independence of peoples), an objective that Domingues hoped would triumph definitively in the future.

Towards an African Confederation

After his advocacy of independence for the African colonies, Domingues developed his ideas into what could be termed a form of "anarchist cosmopolitanism" (Levy 2011) that argued for the dissolution of borders and an acceptance of an explicit project of libertarian federalism. Such ideas were substantiated by his contribution of 13 July 1922 on the notion of an African confederation (Domingues 1922j). The main thrust of this piece was to reassert the projection of internationalism beyond borders by evoking the common situation of Africans as people colonized by European powers. Explicitly anticolonial in its message, the article argued that blacks in Africa owed no allegiance to the Portuguese nation or any other European state: "O negro não é português, inglês nem alemão" (blacks are not Portuguese, English or German) (Domingues 1922j). Such supposed loyalties were nothing but a trap on the road to freedom: "Isso são hábeis fixões inventadas para arrefecer o ânimo emancipador duma raça" (These are nothing but illusions invented to calm the emancipatory spirit of a whole race) (Domingues 1922j). Blacks in Africa were victims of Portuguese, British, Belgian and German injustice and their interests were not to be found in defending these countries but in the elimination of tyranny. Domingues wrote that submission to Portuguese rule and resignation before "as injustiças do poderio português, a fim de não lesar a pátria portuguesa" (the injustices of Portuguese control, so as not to harm the Portuguese *patria*) was nothing less than "recomendar paciência ao escravo para não prejudicar os interêses ilegítimos do negreiro" (to advocate patience for the slave so as not to undermine the legitimate interests of the slave owner) (Domingues 1922j). In a final internationalist flourish, Domingues argued that the affinities of the black population in Portuguese territories lay with "os negros submetidos à tirania dos outros países" (blacks subjected to the tyranny of other nations).

From this pan-African sentiment, deeply tinged with a humanitarian and emancipatory hue, arose Domingues' advocacy of unity across African nations in the form of a confederation of interests (not states) to fight the colonial powers. While clearly anti-nationalist, both in its expression of the lack of affinity that Africans had with the European powers and in its apparently supra-national message across the African continent, other elements did not feature quite as strongly in this particular articulation of the project. Domingues did not state, for example, as he had done in his article on colonization in September 1919, that black Africans had more in common with the British, Belgian, German and Portuguese working class, a community of interests that was signalled as necessary (although not always achieved) by some contemporary socialist movements. Such an alliance had, of course, been mooted by Lenin's thesis on imperialism of 1917 (Lenin 2010) and would be further identified as vital, for example, by the African American intellectual Ralph Bunche in his essay "Marxism and the Negro Question" in 1929 (Lubin 2014, 78). Such an absence poses a question mark over the nature of the revolution envisaged by Domingues. At its heart was the desire to see the end of colonial rule. But there was a degree of ambiguity in his article on African confederalism as to what may bring about this transformation and what form precisely the "confederation" would take. Domingues observed rather ruefully that "as colónias portuguesas, infelizmente, [não estão] tam adiantadas como as inglêsas ou alemãs em matéria revolucionária" (the Portuguese colonies, unfortunately, [are not] as advanced as the British or German in revolutionary deeds) (Domingues 1922j). By this, he probably meant in respect of an anticolonial mentality dedicated to the termination of European domination. Black Africans, he continued, certainly desired freedom and progress; they wanted to enter into the "conjunto harmónico de uma humanidade livre de todas as opressões" (harmonious collective of humanity devoid of all oppression) (Domingues 1922j). Rather than suppose that such a lack of concreteness represented incoherence on the part of Domingues, it is more productive to view it as an aspect that was not uncommon in utopian leftist discourse whether libertarian or socialist. Its open-endedness held a deep allure for both non-statist anarchist anticolonialism (Anderson 2005) and anticolonial nationalism (Kearns 2014, 130). Talk of harmony, free humanity and the need to combat multiple intersecting oppressions was, furthermore, a common anarchist trope. Indeed, similar allusions would be made less than a decade later by the exiled former editor of *A Batalha* when referring precisely to the need for a broad "Emancipação Humana" (Castelhano 1975, 15). In a striking reflection on the situation of black and white workers in Angola, one of the countries to which Castelhano was deported between 1927 and 1931, in addition to arguing for class-based associations to defend proletarian interests (Castelhano 1975, 99), he also provided a searing critique of the "civilizing mission" of the Portuguese and advocated the fundamental equality of all races (Castelhano 1975, 101-108).[18] Such

[18] Castelhano, writing in 1931, discussed the situation of both whites and blacks in Angola in his chapter on "A raça preta" (Castelhano 1975, 101-108). In addition to arguing that races had descended from different origins – a frequent trope to explain "racial difference" at the time – he also stated that it was environmental conditions that consolidated these differences.

thoughts, less theoretical and "structured" than many interpretations offered by later Marxists, held more in common with what Gilroy has identified as an expression of "planetary humanism" (Levy 2011: 273) as a means of making solidarity effective in a globalised world.

As Domingues' series progressed, nevertheless, his anticolonial project became more substantial. In an article that shifted focus from Angola to Mozambique, Domingues discussed the exploitative labour regime that prevailed in this eastern African country (Domingues 1922k). Capitalists in Africa, Domingues noted, had taken the workings of the Nyassa Company as a reference point, dodging the laws of the state and trampling over the rights of black workers "a seu bel-prazer" (as they saw fit). The result was that capitalist exploitation was felt particularly harshly in Africa. In order to sustain this argument, Domingues drew on comments made on colonial rule by José Botelho de Carvalho Araújo, the former governor of Inhambane district and a navy officer killed in action against a German U-boat, revelations that had been supressed by the Portuguese state. The account of the situation in Mozambique in Carvalho Araújo's report on Inhambane in 1917 (Carvalho Araújo 1920), showed how far the Portuguese state had fallen from its lauded "civilizing mission". Despite the efforts of the state to limit the distribution of the report, Domingues had managed to obtain a copy. It was quite possible, Domingues admitted, that even though *A Batalha* had let the world know about the crimes taking place in the colonies, its words may not be believed. But now that Carvalho Araújo, a national hero, had written about injustice in the colonies made the revelations more difficult to hide (Domingues 1922k).

For the Emancipation of the Black Race!

The final piece of Domingues' series discussed here is his article from 25 July 1922, "Pela emancipação da raça negra!" (Domingues 1922l). Having denounced the continuing violence against black workers as a method of "annihilation" of the black race through military action (Domingues 1922m) – the armed forces of the state being a common target for anarchist opprobrium – Domingues went on to outline what would be necessary "para que o preto se conduza até à Liberdade" (so that blacks may find their way to freedom) (Domingues 1922l). The article was framed as a set of final considerations on the "opening campaign" against Portuguese colonialism that had by now lasted nearly a whole month. The initial sentences of this article centred on the inequities of colonial rule and, once again, less on a discussion of the class nature of capitalism and state power. Indeed, Domingues framed the oppression of blacks in Africa as a result of the struggle between one "povo" (people) and another, one that was a victim and the other "envaidecido pela superioridade dos seus canhões, das suas espadas, das suas espingardas e da sua habilidade extrema para o roubo" (emboldened by the power of their cannons, their swords and their guns and by their excellent capacity for theft) (Domingues 1922l). On the other hand, Domingues blamed the Portuguese state for this situation and argued that he had revealed many of its secrets in his exposés of the

reality pertaining in the colonies. His blaming of the state, as to be expected from an anarchist position, was sharp and unforgiving. The state had allowed for the most grotesque forms of repression, control and dehumanization through the use of arms, the ready availability of alcohol and labour exploitation and had permitted connivance with "thieves" and "assassins".[19] Once more, rather than principally through the optic of class, it was "em nome da humanidade" (in the name of humanity) that he condemned "white tyranny". Again, however, this was not a simple critique of the "white race". His words harboured a critique of political and economic power in general, whoever held it and to whichever race the oppressor belonged: "em nome da humanidade condenávamos àmanhã com o mesmo ímpetu, com a mesma sêde de justiça, a tirania negra, se ela existisse" (in the name of humanity we would condemn tomorrow with the same energy, with the same thirst for justice, black tyranny if it were to exist). Such an assertion distanced Domingues from any form of political movement based on the expression of racial supremacy, whether white or black. It also suggested opposition to movements based on the reliance of the nation-state as a resolution to the colonial fix. Ultimately, the impetus for the emancipatory movement, echoing the slogan of the workers' International, would be provided by "blacks themselves" and not by any other agent (cf. Anon. 1921e).

What form should the action of the black population take against "despotic whites"? Domingues advocated the organization of the colonized within their "organismos de defesa de raça" (organizations of racial defence), echoing workers' organization in their "organismos de classe" (organizations of class). It was up to these organizations to "canalizar, disciplinar, coordenar" (channel, coordinate and direct) all efforts towards emancipation and to foster the "separatist spirit" that white tyranny had created. First steps would include the demand to prohibit sales of alcohol, an end to corporal punishment, an end to the hut tax (the "imposto de palhota"), freedom from military service, freedom of the press and labour reform, amnesty for all political and racial prisoners and equal wages for whites and blacks. Such important but "partial" measures, he argued, would prepare the road for more decisive action towards full emancipation, a step already taken in other colonies. Black Africans should also join the revolutionary pan-African movement whose objective was the complete liberation of each nation across the continent. With these words, Domingues formally closed this initial chapter of the anticolonial campaign but vowed to return in the future to consider on-going developments in the emancipatory movement.

The situation in "Portuguese Africa" was revisited often in the pages of *A Batalha* after Domingues' extraordinary series. In December 1922, an anonymous author gave an account, following information circulated in *O Século*, of the revolt in the Portuguese Congo, a rebellion that had been repressed by none other than Norton de Matos. Blacks, "tam escravizados por americanos como por euopeus" (enslaved by Americans as well as

[19] On the alcohol trade between Portugal and the colonies with special reference to Angola, see Bender (2004: 144-147).

Europeans), the author wrote, wanted nothing more than their complete freedom (Anon. 1922d). Domingues' desire to see closer collaboration between different organizations engaged in the anticolonial struggle came to fruition later the same month. *A Batalha* announced that a series of conferences would be organized by the Supreme Council of the PNA. These would be given by the leading lights of the PNA, Dr. João de Castro and the future editor of the PNA's paper, *O Protesto Indígena*, Dr. Borja Santos. *A Batalha*'s "very own" Mário Domingues would also be speaking at the meeting, which planned to cover economic and political issues, slave labour, federalism and independence (Anon. 1922e). Such a coming together of these various players represented the fusion of black African and anarcho-syndicalist tactics and concerns.

Anticolonialism and the "Black Lisbon" of the 1920s

Although the conversations between anarchist anticolonialism and black internationalism in the 1920s were to be curtailed, before it was outlawed *A Batalha* provided a distinct and influential forum for oppositional voices to emerge against colonialism in Portugal. It provided a generative space in the intersection of "coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" that constituted the "contact zone" (Pratt 1992: 6) between peoples of the empire as part of a Portuguese-speaking "Black Atlantic" (cf. Gilroy 1993). This alliance did not simply reject capitalist modernity from a libertarian perspective; it sought to engender a counter-cultural project that was creative of new economic and racial relations in their own right (cf. Naro, Sansi-Roca and Treece 2007, 5). It also posited a different kind of future relationship between races, being "concrete in its futurity" as to its imaginary transformative repertoire (cf. Goswami 2012: 1464). Domingues' project was grounded in his personal experience and the experience of other colonial subjects across "Portuguese Africa" and, in many ways, his articles constitute an example of advocacy and militancy through the written word or, indeed, a militant "writing of self" (Summerfield 2019; Silva 2019). It was heavy, to use the words of Reinhardt Koselleck, with "the weight of expectation" (Koselleck 2002, 128) heralding an emancipatory future and acted as a motor of change in their own right.

In tune with the tenets of anarchist transnationalism and utopian ideals (Bantman and Altena 2017), what *A Batalha* effectively achieved was the advocacy of practical organizational and ideological strategies across racial and national divides. It did this through cross-continental trades union organization, unified by a common language, Portuguese, and by a common enemy, the Portuguese colonial state. Such an approach, however, had its limitations: not everyone in the colonies used Portuguese as their first or even second language, the physical distances between the metropole and the colonies were large and there were acute racial divisions between workers in the colonial arena. In addition, as a practical step in the metropole, *A Batalha* gave voice to Domingues' suggestion that black workers should organise in their "organismos de defesa de raça"

(organizations of racial defence) (Domingues 1922l). Domingues went some way to achieving these aims through *A Batalha*'s anticolonial campaign, which evidently resonated with affiliates of the PNA, not least through his representation of African workers aligned to the Partido. This commitment to the forging of what Leela Gandhi has termed an "affective community" via the "politics of friendship" (Gandhi 2006) and through the articulation of an anarchist ideological approach (cf. Laursen 2019a) places Domingues and *A Batalha* within a long tradition of anarchist anticolonialism. As he developed his campaign, Domingues provided a fusion of "race-based" concerns and "class-based" strategies through the "organismos de classe" (class-based organizations) that the CGT advocated. The "race-based" and "class-based" elements were played out in uneasy equilibrium, especially as the PNA became more infused with Garveyism.[20]

This complex positioning between the politics of "race" and class, nevertheless, distinguished Domingues' ideas from those of some contemporaneous movements such as the Pan-African Congresses led by Du Bois.[21] These organizations were, in Von Eschen's words, more "accommodationist than anticolonial" and "were led by an elite who believed that educated Africans in the diaspora had a special role to play in the liberation of Africa by virtue of their education and their relatively greater access to political power" (Von Eschen 1997, 45). Domingues' approach was also distinguished from the later Marxist-inspired movements such as those envisaged and supported by the Comintern especially from its fourth congress in December 1922 onwards (Wilson, 1974: 121-142). Although Domingues would probably have concurred that racism and imperialism were symptoms of capitalism and would have rejected civil rights based discourse and black nationalism as failing to address the capitalist roots of inequality (Lubin 2014, 82-83), what he advocated also coincided with what Gary Wilder has termed a process of "colonial overcoming" as part of the creation of "forms of *nonnational* colonial emancipation" (Wilder 2009, 103, emphasis in original).

These non-national expressions of anti-colonialism were not, therefore, an expression of revolutionary nationalism. Although Domingues' ideas did not have the opportunity to become "fully formed" – his articles were practically oriented rather than anarchist theoretical exposés – they were based on international federalist principles in accordance with anarchist tenets. This approach had been advanced by anarchists such as Jean Grave before the end of the nineteenth century (Grave 1899 in Graham 2005), were developed by contemporaneous individuals such as the Indian anticolonialist M.P.T. Acharya (Acharya 2019) and would be elaborated upon years later by anarchist intellectuals such as Rudolf Rocker in his *Nationalism and Culture* (Rocker 1998 [1937]). In arguing for a combination of

[20] The argument that Garveyism embraced transnationalism but not a trans-racial approach is to be found in Slate (2012: 48).

[21] It also suggests certain parallels between him and the Senegalese Lamine Senghor who between 1924 and 1926 shifted away from class analyses and communist affiliation towards a race position and proximity to Garveyism. See Murphy (2015).

anti-racism, federalism and anti-capitalism, furthermore, Domingues provided a more radical outlook than that offered in the 1930s by individuals such as Gilberto Freyre who posited "harmonious" racial relations in the "Portuguese world" as the cornerstone of the nation and as a model to be emulated (Anderson, Roque and Santos 2019). His vision, perhaps "untimely" like that of the Martinique-born Aimé Césaire (Wilder 2009), preceded the development of the *négritude* movement of the early 1930s and the federalist decolonizing project advocated by Césaire in the late 1940s and 1950s (Wilder 2009, 116). Domingues' campaign may well have sought to obtain "economic viability, cultural autonomy, and political self-management" as Césaire wished for Martinique (Wilder 2009, 116) but the unit of analysis upon which it was based was certainly neither capitalist nor was it statist.

If these kinds of organizational ties and ideas could have been developed further, they would have continued to shape the destiny of the anticolonial movement in Portugal as well as the fortunes of Lusophone anarchism as an anticolonial movement in the 1920s and 1930s. As it was, the destruction of anarchist and syndicalist organizations and their press halted such synergies until at least the 1960s. While the broader contours of the anticolonial movement making up the "Black Lisbon" of the 1920s and anarchism's role within this milieu are still to be mapped out, Domingues' vision of an alternative imagined future for the colonies within a paradigm that sought the destruction of the colonial state was bold, original and heralded new relations in the associational life of both anarchism and black organizations in Portugal at the time.

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